

# THE DESTRUCTION OF CALIFORNIA INDIANS

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*A collection of documents from the period 1847 to  
1865 in which are described some of the things that happened  
to some of the Indians of California*

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by Albert L. Hurtado



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE BISON BOOK EDITION

By Albert L. Hurtado

Robert F. Heizer, the anthropologist who compiled this volume, was angry about the history of California Indians. To understand his wrath, one need look no further than the basic facts of California Indian history. After the arrival of Europeans in 1769, the native Californian population plunged from over three hundred thousand to about thirty thousand by 1860.<sup>1</sup> This appalling rate of decline resulted from disease, cultural dislocation, dispossession, and—to a lesser extent—outright homicide. Newcomers—Spaniards, Mexicans, and Anglo-Americans—were responsible for these shocking developments. Heizer's outraged reaction to this terrible story was not uncommon. Contemporary observers, modern historians, and Indians alike have railed against the human and impersonal forces that devastated the California Indians.<sup>2</sup>

The first European settlements brought disaster. Beginning in 1769, a Spanish military and religious expedition founded a series of Catholic missions, presidios (forts), and pueblos in Alta, California. The missions were supposed to Hispanicize and Christianize the Indians of California, and they were partially successful. The Crown authorized the missionaries to create vast farms and livestock ranchos where Indian neophytes provided a convenient labor force. Twenty-one missions became the homes of tens of thousands of Indians until the Mexican government, which ruled California after 1821, disbanded these institutions.<sup>3</sup>

From the Spanish perspective, Franciscan missionaries had humanitarian goals, but they unintentionally introduced diseases new to California Indians, who died at a stunningly rapid pace. During the mission era, the Indian population fell by perhaps one hundred thousand.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, Indians began to form raiding societies

in the California interior whence they harried religious and lay stock owners alike. Mission refugees and unconverted Indians discouraged settlement in the California interior until 1839 when John A. Sutter established his famous fortified colony, New Helvetia, near the confluence of the Sacramento and American rivers. Sutter's activities further weakened Indian society in the early 1840s. The Indians were at first cautious, but eventually hundreds of them accepted employment as field hands, cowboys, and soldiers for Sutter. The master of New Helvetia used his native army to compel Indians to work for him as well as to defend his fields and flocks. Sutter's success encouraged Anglo-American immigrants to build farms and use Indian labor in California's Central Valley. Eventually, Sutter became a labor contractor who provided Indian workers to rancheros throughout northern California.<sup>5</sup>

The Mexican War heralded U.S. sovereignty over California. Within a few days of the war's end in 1848, Sutter's workers found gold in the mill race they were building on the American River. News of the bonanza set off a world-wide rush to California. For California Indians, the discovery amounted to a disaster. Hundreds of thousands of white miners invaded the last Indian refuges—the Sierra Nevada foothills and mountains and the northern reaches of the state. Miners had slight sympathy for Indian life and little need for their labor. Some newcomers clamored for wars of extermination and the new state government tried to accommodate them. Meanwhile, federal authorities negotiated treaties that would have set aside reservations, but—acceding to the demands of the state legislature—the U.S. Senate refused to ratify. Then the federal government resorted to a series of temporary reservations that served only a fraction of California natives. Thus, in the 1850s Indians were left substantially at the mercy of private interests and the state government. Between 1848 and 1860, the Indian population plummeted from about one hundred fifty thousand to about thirty thousand. Indian numbers did not begin to increase until the turn of the century.<sup>6</sup>

In the late nineteenth century scholars began to examine California's Indian past. Alfred L. Kroeber of the University of California became the acknowledged leader of these investigators, many of whom he trained at Berkeley. Their research and publications laid the foundation for modern California anthropology. Kroeber was primarily interested in reclaiming cultural knowledge from living Indians. He worked with a sense of urgency because he believed that when elderly Indian informants died, knowledge of California In-

dian society that predated the upheavals of the gold rush would be lost.<sup>7</sup>

Robert F. Heizer was one of Kroeber's graduate students at Berkeley, but he added a new dimension to California Indian studies: archaeology. Heizer became interested in archaeology growing up in Lovelock, Nevada, where he collected Indian artifacts. He wanted to go to Berkeley, but his high school was unaccredited so he went to Sacramento Junior College. The college president, Jeremiah Beverly Lillard, was an amateur archaeologist who took Heizer under his wing. Heizer and other enthusiasts spent much spare time digging for Indian relics in the Sacramento Valley and this experience confirmed his determination to be an archaeologist.

Before Heizer arrived at Berkeley, Kroeber had dismissed California archaeology because he believed that prehistoric change in California was so negligible that archaeological evidence would reveal little. There was no archaeologist on the Berkeley faculty.<sup>8</sup> Kroeber insisted that he write a dissertation about aboriginal whaling, but Heizer continued to hone his archaeological skills until even Kroeber was convinced that excavation could reveal important information about Indian culture. Heizer also attracted the interest of Berkeley historian Herbert Bolton, who in 1940 arranged California Historical Society funds to excavate a site at Drake's Bay, an alleged anchorage of Sir Francis Drake in 1579. Heizer turned up no Drake artifacts, but found evidence of a later Spanish voyage.<sup>9</sup> Other benefactors helped to finance Heizer's field work. After a brief stint at the University of Oregon and working as a marine pipe fitter in the Richmond, California, shipyards during World War Two, Heizer was called first to the University of California at Los Angeles, and then to Berkeley. In 1947 Heizer was the first archaeologist on the Berkeley anthropology faculty. He extended Kroeber's tradition of California anthropology until his death in 1979.<sup>10</sup>

At Berkeley Heizer established an archeological survey that revealed ever more about the California Indian past. He regarded archaeology as "a kind of condensed social history." Although Heizer is best known for his archaeology of California Indians, he undertook several important non-Indian historical projects, including excavations of Sutter's sawmill and California missions. His publications also include collections of documents, books and articles about the history of California race relations.<sup>11</sup> Heizer also did a great deal of interdisciplinary work with several collaborators. Sherburne F. Cook, the brilliant Berkeley physiologist, who pioneered native

American historical demography, was one of his most frequent coauthors. Cook wrote extensively on California Indian population decline, and his writings influenced a generation of historians and anthropologists.<sup>12</sup> Heizer did not confine his interest in Indians to academic work. He worked on behalf of California Indians' claims against the federal government and consulted with the Legal Assistance Program for California Indians.<sup>13</sup>

Heizer's scholarship and advocacy for California Indians made him determined to publicize how the federal government and white people had victimized them. In 1971 he coauthored *The Other Californians*, a sweeping indictment of racism in the golden state.<sup>14</sup> Three years later he published two documentary volumes bearing on California Indian history in the mid-nineteenth century, the present volume and *They Were Only Diggers*.<sup>15</sup>

Heizer wrote these volumes during a time of great ferment among American Indians and university students. In the 1960s the civil rights, free speech, and anti-Vietnam war movements shook American complacency. The Berkeley campus and San Francisco Bay area became the scene of various political demonstrations and protests.<sup>16</sup> In 1968 Indians founded the American Indian Movement (AIM), which confronted the Bureau of Indian Affairs with militant demands for the return of Indian lands and self-determination. A year later Indians and other minority students founded the Third World Liberation Front and made demands for student control of minority programs at Berkeley. The university administration turned them down. In November 1969 Indians occupied and claimed Alcatraz Island, a former federal prison in San Francisco Bay. The occupiers made various unsuccessful demands of the government until federal marshals removed the last protesters in June 1971.<sup>17</sup>

These upheavals made Berkeley a center of controversy and greatly affected Heizer because of his deep knowledge of Indian history. He identified with protestors and believed that the students who participated in the "exciting days of the Free Speech Movement" were his "best students, not in being political activists, but in being more intellectually alive."<sup>18</sup> In his preface to *They Were Only Diggers*, Heizer was explicit about connecting his interest in Indian history to contemporary American concerns like the Vietnam war. He believed that racism in the past was the parent of bigotry in his own time. He argued that "the breakdown of the family structure and the 'youth revolt' of today are correlated with the deep objections against the longest war which America has ever engaged in—a war which is against 'non-persons' analogous to the California Indians in 1850—

1870. If the 'generation gap' is really that, and by this I mean that if the new generation is not simply accepting the values of the one which produced it, then there is some hope for the future."<sup>19</sup>

Conceived as a documentary volume, this work is also a document of its own time. The texts presented here, Heizer frankly admitted in his introduction to the first edition, appear to be one-sided. He argued, however, that they presented a fair picture of the general conditions that existed in California during the gold rush and Civil War eras. The passage of time and new scholarship seem to have vindicated Heizer's judgment, with but a few exceptions. Because Heizer was determined to illustrate the horrors of Indian life in the mid-nineteenth century, he compiled a volume that portrayed Indians as mere victims rather than as thinking actors upon the historical stage. He might have included documents that showed how Indians fought for their rights and attempted to manipulate the federal reservation system. While it is true, as Heizer argues, that the flood of whites overwhelmed native Californians in the 1850s, Indians actively attempted to shape their destinies, as recent scholarship has shown.<sup>20</sup> The volume also lacks chronological balance. The documents give only slight attention to the years 1847–1852. Heizer presented nothing for the years 1848 and 1849, and just a few selections for 1850, the period when the gold rush exploded and changed California forever. Nevertheless, these pages reveal the hellish world of California Indians during the crucial middle decades of the nineteenth century. When Heizer selected these documents, he intended to shock his readers. I suspect that they will continue to have that effect.

#### NOTES

1. Sherburne F. Cook, *The Population of the California Indians, 1769–1970* (Berkeley, Calif.: 1976), 1–43 and *passim*. Heizer cites different figures in the introduction (p. vi), but he is considering only a part of California. In any case, estimating California Indian population and its rate of decline is a difficult business that has confounded many scholars. See Albert L. Hurtado, "California Indian Demography, Sherburne F. Cook, and the Revision of American History," *Pacific Historical Review* 58 (August 1989): 323–43.

2. For examples of nineteenth-century opinions, see Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California*, 7 vols. (San Francisco: The History Company, 1886–90), 7:476–77; and Stephen Powers, *Tribes of California* (1877; reprint., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 400–401. A recent critical work is Douglas Monroy, *Thrown among Strangers: The Making of Mexican Culture in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 3–96,

*passim*. A modern Indian critique of the missions is found in Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo, eds., *The Missions of California: A Legacy of Genocide* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1987).

3. Monroy, *Thrown among Strangers*, 1–126, *passim*.

4. Sherburne F. Cook's pioneering essays on California historical demography are collected in Cook, *The Conflict between California Indians and White Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976). See also Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, "Mission Registers as Sources of Vital Statistics: Eight Missions of Northern California," in Cook and Borah, *Essays in Population History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971–79), 3:177–311.

5. Albert L. Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 32–71.

6. Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 125–48, 193–210.

7. Robert F. Heizer, "History of Research," in Heizer, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, Vol. 8, *California* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 8–10.

8. M. A. Baumhoff, "Robert Fleming Heizer, 1915–1979," *American Anthropologist* 82 (1980): 843.

9. Heizer, "Archaeological Evidence of Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeño's California Visit in 1595," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 20 (1941): 315–28; Heizer, *Elizabethan California: A Brief and Sometime Critical Review of . . . the Drake Expedition, June 17–July 23, 1579* (Ramona, Calif.: Ballena Press, 1974).

10. Heizer, "Robert F. Heizer," in Irving Stone, ed., *There Was Light: Autobiography of a University, 1868–1968* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1970), 210–11; Baumhoff, "Robert Fleming Heizer," 844.

11. Quote is from J. Desmond Clark, "Memorial to Robert Fleming Heizer (1915–1979)," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 1 (Winter 1979): 241. For a comprehensive list of Heizer's works see "Published Works of Robert Fleming Heizer," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 1 (Winter 1979): 246–67.

12. Albert L. Hurtado, "California Indian Demography, Sherburne F. Cook, and the Revision of American History," *Pacific Historical Review* 58 (1989): 323–43; Wilbur R. Jacobs, "Sherburne Friend Cook: Rebel-Revisionist," *Pacific Historical Review* 56 (1985): 191–99; Baumhoff, "Robert Fleming Heizer," 844.

13. Hester, "Robert Fleming Heizer," 103.

14. Heizer and Alan F. Almquist, *The Other Californians: Prejudice and Discrimination under Spain, Mexico and the United States to 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

15. Heizer, ed., *They Were Only Diggers: A Collection of Articles from California Newspapers, 1851–1866, on Indian and White Relations* (Ramona, Calif.: Ballena Press, 1974).

16. W. J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 1–88, and *passim*.

17. Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 1116–17; Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 85.

18. Heizer, "Heizer," 212.

19. Heizer, *They Were Only Diggers*, pp. x–xi.

20. Hurtado, *Indian Survival*; George Harwood Phillips, *Chiefs and Challengers: Indian Cooperation and Resistance in Southern California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

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## 6

### INDENTURE, KIDNAPPING AND SALE OF INDIANS

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*The Act for the Government and Protection of Indians was passed in the first session of the California State legislature. It was amended in 1860. Securing Indian children for indenture or outright sale was common in California from 1850 to 1863, when the Act was repealed in conformity with federal emancipation procedures. The capturing and disposal of Indian children was, of course, not a matter of record, and the letters and newspaper accounts presented here (see also 2:7, 2:8, 2:10) attest to existence in California of what can only be classed as a particular and local form of slavery. It has been estimated that about 10,000 Indians may have been indentured or sold between 1850 and 1863.*

An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians  
April 22, 1850

The People of the State of California, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1. Justices of the Peace shall have jurisdiction in all cases of complaints by, for, or against Indians, in their respective Townships in this State.

2. Persons and proprietors of land on which Indians are residing, shall permit such Indians peaceably to reside on such lands, unmolested in the pursuit of their usual avocations for the maintenance of themselves and families: *Provided*, the white person or proprietor in possession of lands may apply to a Justice of the Peace in the Township where the Indians reside, to set off to such Indians a certain amount of land, and, on such application, the Justice shall set off a sufficient amount of land for the necessary wants of such Indians, including the site of their village or residence, if they so prefer it; and in no case shall such selection be made to the prejudice of such Indians, nor shall they be forced to abandon their homes or villages where they have resided for a number of years; and either party feeling themselves aggrieved, can appeal to the County Court from the decision of the Justice: and then divided, a record shall be made of the lands so set off in the Court so dividing them and the Indians shall be permitted to remain thereon until otherwise provided for.

3. Any person having or hereafter obtaining a minor Indian, male or female, from the parents or relations of such Indian minor, and wishing to keep it, such person shall go before a Justice of the Peace in his Township, with the parents or friends of the child, and if the Justice of the Peace becomes satisfied that no compulsory means have been used to obtain the child from its parents or friends, shall enter on record, in a book kept for that purpose, the sex and probable age of the child, and shall give to such person a certificate,

authorizing him or her to have the care, custody, control, and earnings of such minor, until he or she obtain the age of majority. Every male Indian shall be deemed to have attained his majority at eighteen, and the female at fifteen years.

4. Any person having a minor Indian in his care, as described in the foregoing Section of this Act, who shall neglect to clothe and suitably feed such minor Indian, or shall inhumanly treat him or her, on conviction thereof shall be subject to a fine not less than ten dollars, at the discretion of a Court or Jury; and the Justice of the Peace, in his discretion, may place the minor Indian in the care of some other person, giving him the same rights and liabilities that the former master of said minor was entitled and subject to.

5. Any person wishing to hire an Indian, shall go before a Justice of the Peace with the Indian, and make such contract as the Justice may approve, and the Justice shall file such contract in writing in his office, and all contracts so made shall be binding between the parties; but no contract between a white man and an Indian, for labor, shall otherwise be obligatory on the part of the Indian.

6. Complaints may be made before a Justice of the Peace, by white persons or Indians; but in no case shall a white man be convicted of any offence upon the testimony of an Indian.

7. If any person forcibly conveys an Indian from his home, or compels him to work, or perform any service against his will, in this State, except as provided in this Act, he or they shall, on conviction, be fined in any sum not less than fifty dollars, at the discretion of the Court or jury.

8. It shall be the duty of the Justices of the Peace, once in six months in every year, to make a full and correct statement to the Court of Sessions of their county, of all moneys received for fines imposed on Indians, and all fees allowed for services rendered under the provisions of this Act; and said Justices shall pay over to the County Treasurer of their respective counties, all money they may have received for fines and not appropriated, or fees for services rendered under this Act; and the Treasurer shall keep a correct statement of all money so received, which shall be

termed the "Indian Fund" of the county. The Treasurer shall pay out any money of said funds in his hands, on a certificate of a Justice of the Peace of his county, for fees and expenditures incurred in carrying out the provisions of this law.

9. It shall be the duty of Justices of the Peace, in their respective townships, as well as all other peace officers in this State, to instruct the Indians in their neighborhood in the laws which relate to them, giving them such advice as they may deem necessary and proper; and if any tribe or village of Indians refuse or neglect to obey the laws, the Justice of the Peace may punish the guilty chiefs or principal men by reprimand or fine, or otherwise reasonably chastise them.

10. If any person or persons shall set the prairie on fire, or refuse to use proper exertions to extinguish the fire when the prairies are burning, such person or persons shall be subject to fine or punishment, as a Court may adjudge proper.

11. If any Indian shall commit an unlawful offence against a white person, such person shall not inflict punishment for such offence, but may, without process, take the Indian before a Justice of the Peace, and on conviction, the Indian shall be punished according to the provisions of this Act.

12. In all cases of trial between a white man and an Indian, either party may require a jury.

13. Justices may require the chiefs and influential men of any village to apprehend and bring before them or him any Indian charged or suspected of an offence.

14. When an Indian is convicted of an offence before a Justice of the Peace punishable by fine, any white may, by consent of the Justice, give bond for said Indian, conditioned for the payment of said fine and costs, and in such case the Indian shall be compelled to work for the person so bailing, until he has discharged or cancelled the fine assessed against him: *Provided*, the person bailing shall treat the Indian humanely, and clothe and feed him properly; the allowance given for such labor shall be fixed by the Court, when the bond is taken.

15. If any person in this State shall sell, give, or furnish

to any Indian, male or female, any intoxicating liquors (except when administered in sickness), for good cause shown, he, she, or they so offending shall, on conviction thereof, be fined not less than twenty dollars for each offence, or be imprisoned not less than five days, or fined and imprisoned, as the Court may determine.

16. An Indian convicted of stealing horses, mules, cattle, or any valuable thing, shall be subject to receive any number of lashes not exceeding twenty-five, or shall be subject to a fine not exceeding two hundred dollars, at the discretion of the Court or Jury.

17. When an Indian is sentenced to be whipped, the Justice may appoint a white man, or an Indian at his discretion, to execute the sentence in his presence, and shall not permit unnecessary cruelty in the execution of the sentence.

18. All fines, forfeitures, penalties recovered under or by this Act, shall be paid into the treasury of the county, to the credit of the Indian Fund as provided in Section Eight.

19. All white persons making application to a Justice of the Peace, for confirmation of a contract with or in relation to an Indian, shall pay the fee, which shall not exceed two dollars for each contract determined and filed as provided in this Act, and for all other services, such fees as are allowed for similar services under other laws of this State. *Provided*, the application fee for hiring Indians, or keeping minors, and fees and expenses for setting off lands to Indians, shall be paid by the white person applying.

20. Any Indian able to work and support himself in some honest calling, not having wherewithal to maintain himself, who shall be found loitering and strolling about, or frequenting public places where liquors are sold, begging, or leading an immoral or profligate course of life, shall be liable to be arrested on the complaint of any resident citizen of the county, and brought before any Justice of the Peace of the proper county, Mayor or Recorder of any incorporated town or city, who shall examine said accused Indian, and hear the testimony in relation thereto, and if said Justice, Mayor or Recorder shall be satisfied that he is a vagrant, as above set forth, he shall make out a warrant under his hand and seal,

authorizing and requiring the officer having him in charge or custody, to hire out such vagrant within twenty-four hours to the best bidder, by public notice given as he shall direct, for the highest price that can be had, for any term not exceeding four months; and such vagrant shall be subject to and governed by the provisions of this Act, regulating guardians and minors, during the time which he has been so hired. The money received for his hire, shall, after deducting the costs, and the necessary expense for clothing for said Indian, which may have been purchased by his employer, be, if he be without a family, paid into the County Treasury, to the credit of the Indian fund. But if he have a family, the same shall be appropriated for their use and benefit: *Provided*, that any such vagrant, when arrested, and before judgment, may relieve himself by giving to such Justice, Mayor or Recorder, a bond, with good security, conditioned that he will, for the next twelve months, conduct himself with good behavior, and betake to some honest employment for support.

#### Amendments in 1860 to the Act of April 1850

Chap. CCXXXI—An Act amendatory of an Act entitled “An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians,” passed April twenty-second, one thousand eight hundred and fifty. [Approved April 18, 1860.]

The People of the State of California, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

*SECTION* 1. Section third of said act, is hereby amended so as to read as follows:

Sec. 3. County and District Judges in the respective counties of this State, shall, by virtue of this act, have full power and authority, at the instance and request of any person having or hereafter obtaining an Indian child or children, male or female, under the age of fifteen years, from the parents or person or persons having the care or charge of such child or children, with the consent of such parents or person or persons having the care or charge of any such child or children, or at the instance and request of any person desir-

ous of obtaining any Indian or Indians, whether children or grown persons, that may be held as prisoners of war, or at the instance and request of any person desirous of obtaining any vagrant Indian or Indians, as have no settled habitation or means of livelihood, and have not placed themselves under the protection of any white person, to bind and put out such Indians as apprentices, to trades, husbandry, or other employments, as shall to them appear proper, and for this purpose shall execute duplicate articles of indenture of apprenticeship on behalf of such Indians, which indentures shall also be executed by the person to whom such Indian or Indians are to be indentured; one copy of which shall be filed by the County Judge, in the Recorder's office of the county, and one copy retained by the person to whom such Indian or Indians may be indentured; such indentures shall authorize such person to have the care, custody, control, and earnings, of such Indian or Indians, as shall require such person to clothe and suitably provide the necessaries of life for such Indian or Indians, for and during the term for which such Indian or Indians shall be apprenticed, and shall contain the sex, name, and probable age, of such Indian or Indians; such indentures may be for the following terms of years: Such children as are under fourteen years of age, if males, until they attain the age of twenty-five years; if females, until they attain the age of twenty-one years; such as are over fourteen and under twenty years of age, if males, until they attain the age of thirty years; if females, until they attain the age of twenty-five years; and such Indians as may be over the age of twenty years, then next following the date of such indentures, for and during the term of ten years, at the discretion of such Judge; such Indians as may be indentured under the provision of this section, shall be deemed within such provisions of this act, as are applicable to minor Indians.

*SEC.* 2. Section seventh of said act is hereby amended so as to read as follows:

Sec. 7. If any person shall forcibly convey any Indian from any place without this State, to any place within this State, or from his or her home within this State, or compel him or her to work or perform any service, against his or her

will, except as provided in this act, he or they shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined in any sum not less than one hundred dollars, nor more than five hundred dollars, before any court having jurisdiction, at the discretion of the court, and the collection of such fine shall be enforced as provided by law in other criminal cases, one-half to be paid to the prosecutor, and one-half to the county in which such conviction is had.

## 6:2 *Letter, White to Henley*

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T. J. Henley Esq.  
Supt. Ind. Affrs.

Mendocino, May 13th 1855

Dr. Sir: I expected to have heard from you, or to have seen you here, in person, and consequently delayed writing to you for some time, but now the clamors of the people here are so great and the cause so just that it is actually necessary to do something with the Indians. I forward you a letter on the subject written to me by the inhabitants settled on this coast, and would suggest that their requests be complied with, if possible, and also that you give me authority to hunt for them (the Indians) and employ a couple or three men to help me as game is abundant, and a few men could feed several thousand, and thereby prevent them from coming down to the Coast for fish, and the Coast being the cultivated part of this country, would thereby be in a great measure rid of the evil. I wrote to you about three months ago. I should like an answer to this letter as soon as possible.

With respect, Yours and etc.  
Robt. White

P. S. May 17th, 1855. Since writing the foregoing (May 13) I have just learned that a man named McDonald, with others who live on Cache Creek, has stolen three Indians, a woman and two boys, and started for home with them by a

by-road and intends to sell them or trade them for cattle, which has been much practiced of late by parties from a distance. If you wish me to follow them and recover the Indians, let me know when you write, and also give me some general directions.

I remain Yours, with respect,  
Robt. White

## 6:3 *Letter, White to Henley*

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Col. T. J. Henley

Mendocino Aug. 9, 1855

Sir

I have just returned after a twenty day hunt amongst the mountain Indians with the intention of hunting for those on the Coast, but I am compelled to return on account of some Spaniards that have been kidnapping some Indians belonging to the Metomas tribe which live about 25 miles from the Coast. According to the Indian reports they say the Spaniards stole twenty or twenty five young women and killed one. They say they know where the Spaniards live and want me to go with them and get their people back. They were taken to Belloncki Valley which is about 20 miles East of (Metom Ki) or Big Valley. I intend starting in the morning after them and will use every exertion to get them back, and if possible, have the offenders brought to justice.

I remain yours with respect  
Robert White

## 6:4 *Letters, White to Henley (2)*

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Col. T. J. Henley

Mah-to Valley  
Aug 20th 1855

Your letter of July 23rd came to Camp on the 17th Inst. in which you informed me that you expected to pay us

a visit this month, and I am anxiously looking for your arrival.

I informed you in my last that I was going to start in pursuit of some kidnapers, but when I visited the tribe the children were stolen from, I learned that they had made their escape, and returned to their tribe. On the 17th inst. an Indian came to our Camp and reported that two white men and a party of Indians had stolen from their tribe a lot of Squaws and children and were taking them away. I immediately started in pursuit and succeeded in getting them all back, which was thirteen in number, all females. The two white men said that they were from Clear Lake and was on an Elk hunt, and pretended not to have anything to do with the prisoners. The Indians with them numbered between fifty and sixty, and were all well armed, some having guns. After they had left, I learned that they had killed one old Squaw and shot a little boy with an arrow, which I think will kill him. After learning the above, I immediately started in pursuit of the two white men, but they had too much the start, and I could not overtake them.

I remain Yr. Obt. Servt.  
Robt. White

Col. T. J. Henley

Mendocino Sept. 1st 1855

Sir

Since writing my last I have been busily engaged among the Indians in hunting and looking after them. I have heard nothing more about kidnapers, and the Indians have become quiet again. Since my commencement of hunting for the Indians, they have been very peaceable and have committed no depredations worth speaking of. I have visited and hunted for 15 different tribes of Indians numbering, as near as I can ascertain, from four to five thousand. Since June 4th (which was the day I commenced hunting) I have killed twenty three Elks, two hundred and sixteen deer, and seven Bears, which I distributed as equally as I could among the above number of Indians.

Very Respectfully, Your Obt. Servt.  
Robert White

## 6:5 Letter, Dillon to Lovell

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Fort Bragg Cal.  
May 31st 1861

Captain

I have the honor to report that there are several parties of citizens now engaged in stealing or taking by force Indian children from the district in which I have been ordered to operate against the Indians.

I am reliably informed that as many as forty or fifty Indian children have been taken through Long Valley within the last few months and sold both in and out of the county.

The parties, I am told, at least some of them, make no secret of it; but boldly assert that they will continue to do so and that the law cannot reach them. It is pretended I believe that the children are purchased from their parents; but all who know these Indians can fully appreciate the value of this assertion. It is needless to say that this brutal trade is calculated to produce retaliatory depredations on the part of the Indians and exasperate them to a high degree; as how as to interfere materially with our efforts to find and chasten those Indians that deserve punishment, for these men keep the Indians constantly on the alert, attacking and chasing them before us and following in our wake for the purpose of obtaining children.

Very respectfully your most obt servt  
Edward Dillon 2d. Lt., 6th Inf.

Capt. C. S. Lovell      Comdg. Detachment in the Field  
Comdg. Sixth Infy., USA  
Fort Humboldt, Cal.

### 8:1 Newspaper article, Sacramento, 1852

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#### Indian Difficulties

The Yreka correspondent of the *Shasta Courier* states that a fight took place a short time since at Wright's Camp with 21 Indians. Two citizens were severely wounded. On the arrival of the party at Yreka, they paraded through the streets—the wounded being borne in litters—each of the party, consisting of 16 whites, 2 Indians, and a negro, having a bow and arrows, and the muzzle of his gun decorated with a scalp taken from the enemy.

### 8:2 Newspaper article, Marysville, 1859

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A new plan has been adopted by our neighbors opposite this place to chastise the Indians for their many depredations during the past winter. Some men are hired to hunt them, who are recompensed by receiving so much for each scalp, or some other satisfactory evidence that they have been killed. The money has been made up by subscription.

### 8:3 Newspaper article, Marysville, 1861

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A Bounty Offered for Indian Scalps — That sounds barbarous, but it is true in Shasta county, as will be seen by the following extract from the *Shasta Herald* of May 9th:

The party who started in pursuit of the Indians who committed the depredations we noticed in our last issue, overtook them on Mill Creek, in Tehama county, and succeeded in killing four of their number. Mr. Waggoner recovered his horse, but the rest of the stolen animals had been killed and eaten. A meeting of citizens was held a day or two ago at Haslerigg's store, and measures taken to raise a fund to be

disbursed in payment of Indian scalps for which a bounty was offered. A Committee was also appointed to confer with a meeting to be held during the week at Antelope Creek. The initial steps have been taken, and it is safe to assert that the extinction of the tribes who have been to settlers such a cause of dread and loss, will be the result.

In 1850 we saw the scalps of Diggers hanging to tent-poles in the Shasta and Trinity country. The Oregon men who first settled that part of the State thought it sport to kill a Digger on sight, as they would a coyote. The Diggers can be saved from forcible extermination only by the intervention of Uncle Sam. There should be troops enough employed at each Reservation to keep them corraled.

### 8:4 Newspaper article, Marysville, 1862

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#### Fight With The Indians

From private information, we learn that Capt. Good's company of volunteers overtook a party of Indians near the site of the late massacre in Butte county, near Chico, and gave them battle. Seventeen of the Indians were killed and scalped by the volunteers, who, being from the immediate vicinity of the former massacre, are highly exasperated at the red-skins. None were killed on the side of the whites. They are determined to drive off or exterminate the Indians, it is said.