PREFACE (*Unvanquished*, xiii-xiv)

**I**n the fall of 1908 some interest was stirred in the newspapers by a story to the effect that hunters with a survey party had encountered in the State of California, a tribe of Native people who were still in the Stone Age. The idea of a “wild” tribe in
a thickly populated region like California, was so novel that it served to awaken an interest that would not fade away. The three dark-skinned individuals witnessed, however, had meanwhile vanished.

The two surveyors, who the day before, first encountered “a disheveled man,” thought he was African.” They took him for “wild,” because he was “not wearing city clothes,” a polite way of saying, “he was naked.“

Some three years later, an individual who had the appearance of belonging to this group was captured in northern California. He was put in jail, and a few days later turned over by the Butte County sheriff named John Brooks Webber, to the University of California. On September 1, 1911, Thomas Waterman of the University’s Anthropology Department, arrived by Western Pacific Overland train, and became the first to open communication with the prisoner.

On September 4, 1911, Waterman and an elderly Yana language interpreter named Sam Batwee, escorted the “Indian” in the night to San Francisco (Chapter 1 “Journey to the Outer Ocean”).

That next morning was a beautiful, clear day, the first full day for the people of San Francisco to witness the two California Indian visitors, the unnamed “wild man of Oroville” and Sam Batwee, the “civilized interpreter” of English and Yana (Chapter 2 “Standing on Parnassus”).

The former had no name, and had been received everywhere as the last survivor of his tribe, an aboriginal Indian, apparently the last of the Deer Creeks.

The two stood side-by-side, outdoors in the morning sunshine. They stood in front of a large three story, yellow-stone building, with a large basement floor. This building was the University of California Museum of Anthropology, part of the Affiliated Colleges campus.

Looking northward, they were afforded a grand view of Outer Ocean’s blue waters that made for a huge natural harbor with- green islands. The backdrop was Bay Mountain / Mount Tamalpais, that looms, an ancient and sacred site of the Ohlone California tribe.

Thomas Waterman and his colleague and anthropology department’s chair, Alfred L. Kroeber, could barely contain their excitement when they stared at the “Special Dispatch” to The *Call (*San Francisco newspaper) dated August 31, 1911, that contained the first published photograph of the mysterious Indian prisoner.

The anthropologists quietly hoped that he would be uncorrupted of Western conventions. If he was unspoiled, then they would have a “Time Traveler“ amongst them, a man whose culture was unchanged since the twilight of the last Ice Age.

Anthropologists and psychologists have predicted that such an individual would see our world differently. He would call attention to what we think are the “little things,” but to him they would be the “big things.” Just as it would hardly be fish who discovered the existence of water, witnessing what a genuine Time Traveler thinks and sees would hold up a great mirror to our own world-view.

*Unvanquished: Ishi’s Story* goes beyond the barriers of culture. It gives us hope. Told with unvarnished honesty is the remarkable life and tragic death in San Francisco of Ishi, 1911-1916.

If the reader wants to learn more about true hardships, loss, resilience, and acts of kindness and forgiveness, this is the book for you.