

America the Just – The Beginning

America the Just

Book One – The Beginning

A Pictorial View through the Eyes of a Veteran Attorney

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American Justice Foundation ®

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Preface

We look at America in a new way!

We examine the *heart* of America, what she's been, what she is today, and what she may become that she has never been.

We lift the veil from a few of America's secrets.

We'll see prehistoric dwellings, humble homes of settlers who struggled to tame the land, marble government buildings where our law is made and is supposed to be justly enforced, and the mansions of those whose wisdom and finances laid the foundations for our present prosperity.

We'll visit fishing villages, farms, and factories where we Americans work. We'll explore public parks preserved for recreation and enjoyment when we're not at work. We'll walk through silent battlefields where monuments stand as memories of those who gave their all to protect America's promise for each of us and for our children.

Our journey will show America making its mark, struggling to survive.

Preserving Liberty by all that Liberty costs.

Working for Justice that too often still is not for ALL.

America has a long road ahead. There's lots of work not yet complete.

To understand what we in this generation are called to do, we start at the Beginning with this first in our series of books: America the Just.

Are we a nation truly dedicated to The Rule of Law and human rights for every individual, or are we merely a military might protecting an oligarchy of powerful corporations run by a small group of elitists calling shots for the rest of us, lying about our rights so we will work for their economy?

Are we America the Just?

Or, is there only "Liberty and Justice for Some"?

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Are we becoming a godless nation with justice only for the rich?

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Introduction

This first in our series of books entitled America the Just shows how we began, where we came from, our beginning.

In later issues we will explore where we are and where we hope to be as we carry forward the vision of those who lived here long before we came.

Our illustrated series explores our ancient past, the lives of early settlers, the struggles of pioneers, the wars and battles by which tides of our times shifted between competing ideas and ideals by the murderous mechanism of military force, and the mind of America making and enforcing laws by which our shared morality is formed, while the march of technology takes us forward to a world beyond the reach of our wildest imaginations.

Through it all runs a golden thread tying us together as one. All humanity has a common ground, the reality we and all who came before us share.

Throughout history we have worked together, first in tribes and today in a vast collective of interdependent networks, while wisdom calls us to work for the common good while protecting the right of individuals to find for themselves the best life can provide.

The ancient dream of liberty and justice for all is far from reality, yet we can make the dream possible for greater numbers as we learn more about where we came from, how we came to be as we now are, and how we may see ourselves becoming better in future generations.

America the Just books provide a view of the past, a vision for our future, and a challenging perspective on the ever-changing present that is now.

In the long run, we are only what we may become. What history makes of us. Tomorrow built by wisdom looking back as well as forward.

We grow stronger by strengthening our understanding of others, for only by working together can we make our American dream come true.

Justice for ALL!

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Our Early Homes

As every schoolchild knows, before Europeans came to our continent, indigenous tribes of independent people lived here in the Americas.

Some of those tribes joined as nations, but life remained tribal and remote, struggling for the bare necessities by which life is sustained and carried forward with each succeeding generation.

These people made their homes from the farthest northern reaches of what we now call Canada and Alaska to the most southern reaches of Chile and Argentina.

They lived in dense forests, rugged mountains, arid deserts, and frozen tundras of the farthest northern reaches of our continent.

This was *their* America.

Some lived in mud huts like these replicas you can see today.

No internet.

No television.

No grocery store to provide an easy way to get their food.

Life was harder for them than anything we face today!

They struggled each day just to stay alive.

Thousands died of starvation and other thousands perished by disease.

They lived in intimate contact with nature and honored it as friend, for it alone sustained them, it alone provided their every need.

We call those ancient people Indians.

They called themselves Human Beings.

And they were.

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It's impossible for us to imagine living in such "primitive" conditions as were their commonplace everyday experience.

Yet these replicas are just as many Indian homes were hundreds of years before the first Europeans came to "civilize" our American ancestors.

Shelter from the rain, a place to call one's own, a door through which to walk out into the wide, wide world beyond their meagre dwellings.

A fireplace to gather round in the evening.

A comfortable place to sit.

A soft place to lie down and sleep with the myriad musical sounds of the surrounding world of nature just outside, alive with living.

Before Europeans came some 700 years ago, human beings lived here in a multitude of conditions unlike anything we would consider today.

They occupied every area of our continent: north, south, east, and west.

They laughed.

They sang.

They danced.

They loved.

They shared the joys of watching their children grow in mind and body.

And they passed on as all of us must do at the end of our brief visit to this amazing and beautiful world in which they also lived and died.

In ways that truly matter, they weren't much different from you or me.

They had languages, conversations, and stories of who they were, where they came from, how the world was formed, and what God is all about.

They told jokes and chatted about the weather, just as we do today.

They worked and played in communion with nature.

They lived in tribes to share burdens, making life easier for everyone, and keeping watch against the constant threat reality persistently presented.

They had homes, history, children, and dreams for a future of their own.

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Some lived in tents erected on long poles covered with cloth or animal hides, often decorated with images of wildlife.

Tent dwellers were unlike those who lived in fixed houses.

Tent people were nomadic, carrying their homes along in their travels.

They moved south when winter set in to escape the freezing cold and the dwindling food supply.

They moved north Spring melted the snow and ice to reveal the budding plants and stir hibernating animals from their long winter slumbers.

They were a people who followed the sun.

The tent shown here is made of canvas, obviously a replica, but those of original tent dwellers were made of animal hides painstakingly stitched together with fibers stripped from animal skins or the bark of trees.

Tents made of hide were waterproof and warmer in winter than this canvas replica but all were generally the same basic structure and design.

Notice the gap at the top. In warm weather it would be left open as seen here to provide ventilation. In colder weather both the top and entryway were covered tightly to shut out the freezing wind and remind them it was time to move farther south.

For them, this was the only home they knew ... portable as it was.

Its occupants could literally “pull up stakes” as food supplies or inclement weather suggested it was time to move to more hospitable climes.

When one pauses to think about it, the design is quite ingenious. Strong enough to withstand fierce winds, warm enough in winter, cool enough in summer, and able to be moved at a moment's notice.

Not much good for defending the attacks of those who wished to displace them to a reservation or slaughter them and their children at the order of some self-important men far away in the East who wanted them gone!

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Some Indian shelters, not quite so moveable, were made with bark as well as animal skins, like this sturdier looking structure.

These were harder to move but more impervious to sudden changes in the weather, allowing the occupants time to do a bit more fishing or hunting before changing weather signaled it was time to move.

These shelters were common in the temperate areas of America, where it never got intolerably cold nor insufferably hot, but if inclement weather demanded, they could be disassembled and moved fairly easily.

Many Indians simply stayed in one spot, hot or cold, wet or dry.

This one isn't what you might call "roomy", yet structures like this served well for those who cared little for community life, preferring instead to set up camp in the wilderness to fish and hunt.

There were no neighborhood grocery stores or giant supermarkets, no farmers' green markets on weekends, no bakery on the street corner.

Everyone has to eat. Our ancestral Americans were no different.

Their struggle for food was constantly at the center of everyday thought, essential to existence, forever on their minds.

What shall we eat?

Where can we get the food we need?

When will we find it?

How will we obtain it?

Fish, fowl, wild animals ... or beans, corn, and native grasses?

For food and water, many tribes stayed in one place all year round.

Others lived constantly on the move, just to survive another day.

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Some of our wise ancestors leaned trunks of trees together, covering them with mud, branches, twigs, and vines to escape the harsh elements.

Some of these structures have survived hundreds of years, evidence of the way of life once commonplace to human beings who had feelings just like you, ambitions, hopes, and dreams of a better way of life.

We too soon forget the humanity of those who lived on our land before us.

We rarely think of their family life, their perpetual need for food that had to be grown by the labor of their hands (without tractors or steel plows) or hunted and killed with primitive weapons made by hand, from sharpened sticks tossed like spears or stones thrown long distance with leather slings.

They had no rifles, handguns, or fiberglass compound bows.

What little animal meat they enjoyed was killed out in the wilderness that surrounded their homes on every side or snatched from a lake or stream using makeshift methods that required a great deal of back-breaking labor.

Still, they survived.

They prospered in most localities.

Until Europeans came to take their land, destroy their homes, drive many to remote areas called reservations or murdered men, women, and children to make room for what the Europeans called “progress and civilization”.

Perhaps you remember (as I do) creating makeshift huts and treehouses in the woodland areas around your childhood home. We played Indian and had an early, albeit artificial taste, of what it must have been like to live off the land without bicycles, automobiles, airplanes, or any of the other commonplace facilities we take for granted today.

At the end of our games, however, when the sun dropped below the west horizon, we went to our homes of wood or stone and slept in comfortable beds on softly padded mattresses with a hot meal in our little bellies.

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Home for our native ancestors was anywhere they could go to escape the weather, wild animals, and men seeking to do them harm.

Some made homes by digging into the side of a hill, as seen in this replica of an Indian dwelling at the museum in Cherokee, North Carolina, where many thousands of a peaceful agricultural people lived in harmony with their neighbors until they were driven west to Oklahoma by order of the cruel President Andrew Jackson who acted in spite of U.S. Supreme Court orders to leave the Cherokee where they were.

At Jackson's illegal command thousands of innocent men, women, and far too many little children died in their march west along the "Trail of Tears" where bitter cold and starvation dwindled their ranks until only a few of them remained by the time they reached Tahlequah, Oklahoma where you can visit today to learn more of their terrible, tearful journey.

They were driven out of Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and parts of Northern Florida ... in defiance of a U.S. Supreme Court order, all because Europeans wanted more land and the gold found there.

Today, anyone driving through these states can see just how great an area of land remains today uncultivated, land once home to peaceful Indians, land that could have been left to them as the high court commanded.

Such a home as this is not something you'd like next door to your house, dropping neighborhood resale values, but it was home to them, and they didn't come to move in next to us. They were driven out!

Such dwellings were commonplace three hundred years ago.

They now stand empty, showrooms for tourists to visit and take pictures.

Primitive as such structures seem to us today, the human beings who lived here enjoyed an advanced culture, with language, religion, and traditions that kept them united as a people with common hopes and dreams.

This author is proud to report he is one-eighth Cherokee, descendant of a proud but peaceful people who deserved much better than they got.

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Handiwork

They wove baskets out of strips of bark, pine needles, and reeds.

There was no Tupperware® or Teflon® coated pots and pans.

Life was simple ... and harsh.

They made their bowls, dishes, and eating implements from whatever lay at hand ... and it was hard, painstaking, time-consuming labor to do so.

To weave a single basket like these required days of finger-straining work, twisting the fibers, arranging them in attractive practical patterns.

They knew nothing better, and so they were content with what they had.

They were a people of tradition, where life skills were handed down from mother to daughter, father to son.

Baskets like these along with artifacts of bowls and eating implements are preserved in museums found on Indian reservations and in modern cities wherever the past is preserved as a lesson to the people of today and our posterity.

We thank those who preserve the memory of Indian life in this manner.

If you have occasion to visit a restored Indian village, by all means do so.

Go back in time.

Be one with those who lived and died so long ago.

Then please ask yourself and your children, "Why?"

Why did they have to be driven from their homes and massacred like wild animals?

Why did they have to be treated like soul-less beings undeserving of life?

And, why is their unique racial heritage ignored as it is?

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Their children laughed and played just as ours do today.

There was no football or tennis, but games were common among them.

There was always time for children's play and friendly sports activities.

The implement shown here was used to toss and skillfully catch round stones in competitions not unlike our Jai Lai games today.

Such games were valuable training for the youth who later were required to use the competitive skills they learned by gaming when as adults they would be responsible for hunting and foraging food for the tribe.

Similar artifacts of Indian life can be seen at the North Carolina Cherokee site and on the reservation at Tahlequah, Oklahoma as well as many other museums and reservations where the commonplace of everyday Indian life is preserved for modern man to contemplate and ask, "Why were they so harshly treated?"

In many such places you can see both the outside of their natural habitat or retreat into the air conditioning of modern museums where a host of other interesting items can be viewed.

It is sad that so much of our literature and Hollywood depictions show the Indian as savage.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. They wanted to be left alone in peace. We did not do to them what we would wish others to do to us.

Can you feel the heft of that stick as you toss that ball to a friend?

Can you hear the competitive, sometimes taunting shouts of the players?

Would you laugh with your mates when an opponent dropped the ball or give a victory shout when a member of the opposing team failed to pass the ball successfully and thereby failed to score his point?

Can you imagine what it's like to be a human being at play?

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They enjoyed artwork, too.

Beads, feathers, blankets, paintings and designs on pottery, even a carved wooden head like this one intended to entertain the children or ward off any nearby evil spirits.

These people were not the savages they're made out to be by our movies and pulp fiction literature.

They were "human beings" just like you!

They enjoyed being creative, just like you!

They made many figures like this doleful wooden face.

They made toys for children carved from wood or fashioned from other materials that occurred naturally where they lived.

There was beadwork, necklaces, bracelets, colorful clothing, and jewelry hand-made by boring holes in soft stones and threading them with twisted or braided fibers from grass or trees.

Their simple pots and other containers were adorned with intricate designs and images of plants and animals.

They may not have had TV and automobiles, however they were not at all a "primitive people" as many believe without considering the hardship of their time and what they had to work with in a land seldom friendly or in any way accommodating to their constant struggle to survive.

They were human beings with as much right to live as you or I.

As much right to the pursuit of happiness.

As much right to the promises our founding fathers made in the earliest documents that formed our nation and should be guiding us forward.

However, those rights were denied to these earliest Americans.

Why?

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They were people, not savage beasts!

They made bowls and cooking utensils like these out of fire hardened mud, and many we find today are quite beautiful.

They served their purpose and show the Indians' artistic creative spirit.

Containers for storing, cooking, and serving food.

Containers for storing precious water that in many places had to be carried long distances from its source to where the people lived.

Containers for milk of animals.

Containers for knick-knacks and personal possessions.

Mud made useful by human hands.

Every shape and size imaginable made in the same, time-tested way pots and pottery are made today.

Mud shaped, dried, then heated by fire until fused imperviously solid.

Far from the fine porcelain and modern pottery we know today fired in modern kilns from purified clay, yet these served the Indian purpose well.

Perhaps not suitable for the kitchen table of a modern home, but altogether proper and essential for use in an Indian community like this.

What is perhaps most striking and difficult for us to contemplate with any genuine understanding is how commonplace all of this really was.

It was the Indian way.

It was what they knew.

It is what their ancestors taught them.

It was good enough.

It was home.

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Their workmanship often lacked finesse.

Each pot and other implement was made for a special purpose.

Each to serve an essential, practical need.

Purpose compelled creation. Necessity came first.

Yet see here the imprint of design on the outside of even this somewhat lumpy hanging bowl.

Always the soul of humanity seeks to make its mark, its design, to show a future world that someone who once lived left part of self behind.

Art is the hallmark of humanity.

It was no different for these ancient peoples.

Everywhere we see, as archaeologists uncover ruins or discover remains of tribal settlements, hands now still were active years ago putting a piece of their soul in even the simplest things they made.

As essential as breathing in and breathing out. Humanity seeking to reach beyond the boundary of death by leaving its mark for history to find.

Though surely intended as little more than a hanging receptacle to store nuts, berries, and herbs beyond the reach of squirrels and other thieving critters, a merely practical thing, yet its maker left a mark of humanity, a piece of himself or herself indelibly marked in hastily molded clay.

So, even in this misshapen bowl, we see the mark of humanity left behind by a people far too many in our past saw as savages, heathen unworthy of life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness.

A human being made this bowl.

Perhaps it was to keep things safe from the hands of curious children, no different from children today who sneak into cookie jars or find their way into other places where we hide things from their inquisitive fingers.

Here, in a simple contrivance pre-dating the European invasion, we see an application of common-sense and practicality.

The human mind at work.

Simple as it is, this hanging bowl reveals the silent hands that made it.

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Weaponry

Indian weapons were crudely made and only marginally effective.

However, unlike the multitude of Hollywood stories to the contrary, these people used weapons such as these to kill wild animals for food ... not to attack defenseless wagon trains without provocation.

The historical truth is that Indians fought to protect their own people. They tried, unsuccessfully, to prevent the buffalo herds from being slaughtered by Europeans just for the fun of it, leaving the big furry animals to rot on the prairies instead of providing food and other valuable commodities for tribes who lived there before fools arrived to kill animals for no reason but the sick joy some men get from taking the life of another living being.

Fiction writers make money selling action scripts to movie makers with a cliché too common and too frequently false in which Indians, without any provocation whatsoever come riding in over a distant hill to descend on an innocent settler's farm and make off with the farmer's wife and children, leaving the house and barn in ashes or some similar nonsense.

Indians used weapons against other Indians only when some member of a nearby community provoked the tribe by violating a young girl, stealing food, or encroaching on established fishing and hunting grounds.

Neighboring tribes' knowledge that such weapons stood ready in case of need was enough to deter the kind of human violence common today in the impoverished inner-slums of our so-called modern "civilized" cities.

The shapes of such devices varied widely, since each was the product of a single individual ... not the product of a modern factory turning out mass-produced firearms and other gadgets intended only to destroy human life.

Getting food was the principal use of Indian weaponry, until soldiers in blue uniforms brought slaughter with weapons of advanced manufacture. Indians stood no chance of stopping the advance of "civilization". Peace was forced by death to stand aside for the European wave of "progress".

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There was no poison gas, atomic warheads, or smart bombs to kill others.

How could such meagre things as these simple handmade arrowheads stand against repeating rifles, roaring cannon, or Colt revolving pistols?

Lies about our past are a horrid shame we in this age must overcome with the truth we so proudly proclaimed in 1776.

All men are created equal.

It was true before July 4th in 1776, and it will be true throughout eternity.

Yet our children are taught that Indians who lived here before “we” came were cruel, blood-thirsty savages scalping innocent people and resisting the approach of progress and our so-called honorable better world.

There was and still is plenty of room in America for all of us to co-exist in peace, cooperating to preserve our planet for future generations, living in harmony, and doing all we can to calm the angry minds in our midst.

The arrowheads you see here were meticulously chipped from pieces of flint and used to kill wild game for food, not to displace entire nations or impose on them a government not to their liking. How could they come anywhere close to the killing power of bullets and cannon balls? It was not possible for these indigenous people to be so “dangerous” or primitively savage as to present any threat whatsoever that required them to be taken from their homes, re-located to reservations, or murderously eradicated.

These simple objects were used to spear fish or kill game for food until it later became necessary to put them to another use in defense of home and family when lighter-skinned men and women sought to occupy the Indian lands, displacing those who lived there peaceably for hundreds of years.

For the most part, our American ancestors got along well with each other.

Most Indian tribes traded peaceably with neighbors.

They lived as families of families for thousands of years before Europeans came to teach them by force the white man’s *better* way to live.

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Their homes were peaceful.

Laughter, love, and children were the central purpose of their lives.

Wisdom we'd do well to learn in these present times of turmoil, terror, and treachery that infects nearly every aspect of modern societies.

Indians spent quiet evenings gathered round a common fire, just as we do when vacations allow us to go "camping" with our modern tents or RVs, portable propane stoves, digital cameras, smartphones, and other modern paraphernalia without which we wouldn't think of leaving home.

There were stories told by the old ones ... some true, many exaggerated to catch the interest of children who raptly listened to tales of yesteryears on prairies, mountains, and forest floors where Indians made their homes.

Food.

Shelter.

Family.

What else mattered?

Is home not home without street signs, brass buttons, and military bands?

Is home not home without TV, a refrigerator, and a comfy bed made from fibers manufactured from a rapidly dwindling supply of crude oil?

Is home not home if it has no air conditioning, no garage with automatic door opener, no sprinklers in the yard to keep grass green in all seasons?

If one is surrounded by loving family and friends, what more is required?

If joy and peace live inside, does it matter what kind of house is home?

Does it have to be pretty?

Does it need a number on the door and a mailbox by the street?

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Does the joy of life depend on owning fancy things to call one's own?

Surely people who lived in this makeshift structure were able to endure the winters, supply themselves with enough food to stay alive together, and find some modicum of enjoyment during their short stay on Earth.

Few of us would choose to live in a place like this.

But, cannot happiness and contentment live in such a place as this?

If you think not, please ask yourself, "Why not?"

Friendship requires no riches.

Love is love for both rich and poor ... or it is not love at all.

If this is all that was required of those who made this home, then this is all they needed, so long as they were left alone to live their lives as they saw fit, to live and love as they wished, without being forced out by strangers who believed the Indians' primitive life was not worth living.

Today's global society has expectations and puts demands on us, too.

Indian society was less fast-paced, less acquisitive, less anxious to wear the "right" clothes or own all the "right" possessions.

Life and love were enough for these people, even though life was hard and personal possessions meagre by modern standards.

Keeping warm in winter was far more important than keeping up with the Joneses next door.

Yet, a society of keeper-uppers is exactly what Europeans brought, a life lubricated by money, sustained by money, and built entirely on money.

Life for our American ancestors was certainly difficult, however, the ones who made this humble structure home also owned the moon and stars.

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This is an actual spring where water flows freely out of Indian land on the reservation at Tahlequah, Oklahoma today.

Water.

None of us can live without it.

The rocks around this freely flowing source are piled there to protect the vital liquid from contamination and the spring itself from damage that, if allowed, could destroy the source of life's most essential need.

Tribes often settled near such springs as this, where water could be gotten easily without walking miles to and from a river, lake, or stream carrying heavy earthenware pots or crude containers made of animal skins.

Water is water. It knows no race, no creed, no nationality.

Yet it sustains us all and, in a certain sense, binds us as one people with no notice of skin color or size of the house we make our home.

Whether man lives in a sprawling city where inhabitants rush anxiously about to earn their money to buy what they think they need, or whether they live in a forest or mountainside far from the madding crowd, there is this one required commodity that rich and poor alike require.

It was so with those who lived in America before "we" came.

Do you imagine water flowing from the ground is less potable than what flows from the pipes where you live when you turn the faucet handle or push your drinking glass against the lever mounted in the door of your new-fangled refrigerator?

All fresh water flows first from hills and mountains, and all of it flows eventually to the sea, returning to us once again as rain or snow.

Here you see fresh, clean water flowing freely from Cherokee ground!

Must one drink spring water only from a plastic bottle?

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Pliny the Elder was right when he said, “Home is where the heart is.”

This doesn't look like a home you or I would want to make our permanent abode and, certainly, it is not a showplace where we'd wish to invite our friends to enjoy a formal dinner party.

Yet, this *is* what homes were like for tens of thousands of human beings who lived and died here and were at all times *biologically identical to you!*

The only difference was lack of what we proudly call modern education and the absence of those everyday amenities we take for granted, much of which we'd be better off without!

They had little, yet they made do and survived generation after generation just as they were ... with the little they had.

To them, the little they had was all they knew, all they needed.

Their little was enough.

To imagine they were unhappy with their bit is to allow a shameful and blind elitism to color our perception of who these people were and how they lived for thousands of years before “we” came to show them what “civilization” was and compel them to accept our “better” way.

They walked on two legs just like you.

They marveled at the starry skies above each night, as you do when you take time to go outside after dark, instead of remaining glued to the TV or video game so many are tricked into believing is real life.

These people knew real life.

They lived it day by day ... every day

No cyber world for them to hide within. No virtual reality.

Nothing was artificial or masked by imitations.

And, when wounded, their blood ran red like yours.

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Central America

Long before our Constitution, before the Revolutionary War that freed us from the rule of England's King, before the Pilgrims and Viking Explorers came, this is how the American People lived.

There were no political boundaries. No United States, no Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia, or any of the nations that now set boundaries from the North Pole to the frozen tip of Cape Horn at the far south end of this great American land mass that remained hidden and unknown by Europeans and Asians until a mere 700 years ago.

They invaders called these people primitive.

Yet, many enjoyed advanced civilizations with technologies in agriculture, architecture, even astronomy and the sacred art of government.

Temples are found throughout the two American continents.

Most are constructed with great skill and amazing artistic design.

Though tribal people relied on medicine men to promote peace and unity through fear or noble inspiration, in some places we find the remains of ornate temples where wise leaders ruled their people in peace.

These structures not only gave priests more power over the minds of the people but also served as fixed locations around which communities were built and from which their civilizations expanded.

They drew people together to enjoy the benefits of life in common but also to provide for defense and more effective means of providing constantly available food supplies.

Many temples were primitive celestial observatories that allowed priests to predict events from changing positions of stars as the seasons changed.

Being able to pronounce celestial events in advance kept the people under their control. Remember, it was people not priests who built the temples!

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Always in every early culture religion plays its role hand-in-hand with the ruling and military classes.

Kings know the necessity of prevailing on the people to work for the good of the cooperative and, of course, the security and comfort of the rulers.

Shared religious beliefs, or outright fear of rebelling against them, held the people together, allowing complex cultures to survive and, in many cases, achieve an appreciable degree of cultural advancement.

Temples in Mexico provide tourists with a view of what life might have been before the flood of European influence and disease and destruction brought to America by those who sought to obtain riches by subjugating indigenous people by relentless force of arms that continues to mar human experience even in these so-called modern times today.

Ruins of these masterpieces of architectural skill are amazingly complex.

All pre-European peoples shared languages and religious views in their separate communities, whether in rickety teepees or solid stone temples.

Whether they erected complex temples, made their homes in caves, tied skins of animals to frameworks of poles to provide shelter for families, or dug homes out of mud plastered together with straw, they all sought the same essentials each of us requires today: food, water, shelter, and love.

These ruins at Tulum near Cancun, Mexico date from the 13th Century.

They were here long before European explorers came bringing infectious disease and spilling innocent blood in search of gold and silver to fill the treasure chests of their monarch sponsors back home.

Monarchs financed most of the early ventures to this New World for the sole purpose of acquiring riches and greater power in the Old World.

If the people who lived here before the invasion had possessed weapons more powerful than arrows, spears, and poison darts, American history would tell a much different and, perhaps, a much happier tale.

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Monument Valley

Can you make out the images of animals marked on this rock?

This is on one of the giant monolith mesas in Utah's Monument Valley.

The animals depicted seems strange to us.

They don't look like anything we are familiar with today.

They may be the product of some long-ago imagination or, perhaps, this strange animal once roamed the desert floor until hunted to extinction.

If the artist had recorded an image of himself or of certain of his neighbors we would see a more familiar form, a form exactly like our own, because the people who lived here were human beings just like you.

Notice the markings under the somewhat faded image of the larger animal on the left. Those symbols might have spelled words or a name, and this is altogether possible, since these ancient people communicated in words and likely invented symbols to represent those words ... as did others in many places across pre-European America.

Try to imagine what was happening on the day these playful pictures were placed where tourists to this mystical place now see them.

This artist was not under attack or threatened by harm in any way.

He or she was having fun doodling one morning or afternoon, drawing the pictures you see here, exactly as young children do today.

We all have a right to doodle now and then.

Shouldn't we all be free to have a bit of fun, without regard to demands of the collective and its ever-changing requirement that our souls behave in accordance with the collective's established norms or suffer some adverse consequence for failure to stay in our place on its imagined bell curve?

Whoever made these images was free to have a good time doodling.

America the Just – The Beginning



It isn't difficult to imagine why the people who settled in this desert area thought this place was sacred.

Though a remote area in the arid Southwest where there's so little water it is nearly impossible to grow food, our native ancestors lived here in large numbers attracted by the mystic majesty of its rock formations.

They worshipped the Great Spirit who fashions rocks.

They left their amusing etchings of strange, four-legged, horned animals.

They saw the hand of the Great Spirit in the strangely shaped formations surrounding them on all sides.

Such scenes as this are never seen in Europe or east of our Mississippi.

This was sacred ground, and the people who settled here were worshippers of God who stayed, in spite of the discouraging dryness, because their God lived here, the God they loved and wished to be near.

Yet, even here, in this parched and peculiar world, plant life *is* found, as seen on the small mound of sand below the awe-inspiring opening that strangely pierces through this giant rock formation.

Not much to eat, no brussels sprouts or collard greens, but enough to keep people going and give desert animals sufficient sustenance that the people could subsist on what they killed as well as what they could dig from the sandy soil.

Nowhere in America are such strange rock features found as here in sunny Utah's Monument Valley.

It is far from the beaten path. There are no nearby interstate highways, yet if you are able to visit this place you will feel the presence of God just as did its early Indian inhabitants.

Majestic.

Powerful.

America the Just – The Beginning



Here a red-shirted man on horseback poses for camera-wielding visitors to this wild and strangely beautiful place where native people still believe the Great Spirit is near to them.

This relatively small area is but a few miles from one end to the other, yet it is unlike any other place on Earth.

Put yourself behind those Indian eyes for just a moment.

Look out across this amazingly strange landscape.

Wonder in awe, as they did so very many years ago.

Why is this place so different from other places less than ten miles distant?

Why here and not beyond the broad plateau you see in the distance beyond the red-shirted rider and strange pinnacles of stone?

Many Hollywood westerns have used this remote region as a backdrop for their shoot-em-up adventures, however if you watch those movies closely you will see the same mesas shot from many different angles, but always the same mesas.

There are just a few.

The immense ones like these are found only here.

The entire valley comprises only 28 square miles, roughly 3 miles on one side and 7 on the other, and all these massive mesas and intricate rock formations are contained within that small space.

It is truly as if God decided to create a masterpiece of stone in the middle of a desert, a handprint of herculean workmanship, stark beauty that only is appreciated by those fortunate enough to go and see it all in person.

Nothing much to draw a people to make this home, except the monuments themselves, marking this place where God worked miracles.

Great background for movies. Not much for housing and feeding a family.

America the Just – The Beginning



However, the Majesty of God is seldom seen more clearly than here.

The sun rises over this mysterious place each day as it has for thousands of years before the first light-skinned man discovered it.

It rises here each day as it does for you and me, no matter where we are.

The majesty of sunrises such as this is seldom seen elsewhere!

This moment captures the rising sun hiding behind a chance gathering of a patch of early morning desert clouds.

Almost heart-stopping by its beauty and peculiar majesty.

Strange and wonderful beyond compare.

Here many thousands of people made their difficult homes so they and their children could be part of it all, a place for meditation and reflection, a place to know oneself and what it truly means to be humans riding on a planet.

Put yourself there.

See what dwellers of this magic place witnessed day after day and wonder at it as they did long ago.

They knew their Maker in a way we miss with our hectic daily schedules, our highways and skyscrapers of concrete and steel.

No concrete or steel girders here!

This is as it has been for thousands of years, a place of solitude and worship.

Put it on your “bucket list” and go there to bask in the wonder confirming the right of every one of us to enjoy our place in this universe.

We are all here for a purpose. This planet was made especially for us.

We are created beings. We did not create ourselves.

We must share our planet wisely, with justice for ALL.

America the Just – The Beginning



Towers?

Temples of stone?

Monuments surely.

But, monuments to what ... or to whom?

Why are they here in this place unlike any other?

The Great Spirit created these stone formations to inspire human beings of long ago to hold fast to their mortality and know that all we are is passing quickly by, while God alone remains steadfast.

Our American ancestors were inspired as is everyone who visits this place of wonder.

Their humanity, as all humanity, is measured by the depth of soul that can feel the Eternal Presence and be One with it and with each other.

What measures our advancement as a species?

Are we wiser than those who knew what we've forgotten?

Were they "savages" because they did not know God from the preaching of some synagogue, church, mosque, or gurdwara?

Those who lived here did not leave to make war on the white man. They wished only to be left alone in the midst of their temples that are nowhere exceeded by modern man's most imaginative architecture.

Home like no other.

The towering stones were like magnets drawing our true forefathers to this place and holding them enraptured by its beauty.

Only twenty-eight square miles, a world apart, a place far from the hustle and bustle of the surrounding world, even back then, many years ago.

How do we measure the depth of a human soul if not by how that soul is connected to the infinite? What more matters?

We are only here for a brief season, as were those who lived here long ago in the shadow of these ancient, towering monoliths.

Are we wiser than they? Or did they possess deeper wisdom, deeper soul?

America the Just – The Beginning



No, that “Mexican Hat” was not placed there by the ancient inhabitants of this mysterious land.

Nor was it set atop its underlying rocks by the green hand of some invader from a distant planet leaving behind a record of his celestial visit.

It is naturally occurring.

It’s been tottering there as long as history can recall.

It sits silently defying wind, earthquake, and even the impish hand of the many vandals tempted to climb the pile of rocks and dislodge it from its peculiar perch.

The hat is just a few miles east of the great mesas of Monument Valley.

It sits higher up by the side of the road that descends from there into the valley below, almost as if it were an early announcement of what you’re about to see a few miles farther on along the two-lane road that leads into the mysteries ahead.

Any wonder why Indians know this strange land was specially created by the Unseen Hand for them?

These formations confirm the Great Spirit in whose grasp all things are.

They knew it was God’s will alone that keeps this wonderful world of ours spinning endlessly on its eternal journey through an infinite field of tiny lanterns shining down on each of us while the sun sleeps at night.

They knew God alone can balance such giant rocks.

That rock teetering up there weighs hundreds of tons.

It’s 60 feet across and 12 feet thick!

An extreme oddity in this harsh environment.

Not such a great place for farming, though.

America the Just – The Beginning



So many wonders!

So much evidence of what we cannot see with our eyes yet deep within know in our hearts when we listen with our souls.

We are not alone. We have never been.

All is as it is because it is.

Our American ancestors knew what we today are too busy to imagine.

The evidence remains.

We are not alone.

God is.

The Great Spirit is.

And this amazing planet is.

We can take a lesson from our early Indian ancestors that were more in tune with what we now call ecological concerns, because unlike us in our blindness they knew their lives depended on the Earth and its bounty.

The Earth. Our marvelous planet.

Hundreds of years ago people lived here who knew intuitively what many of us have lost in our haste to have, the haste that lets us drive quickly past such miracles as this rock formation near Monument Valley.

Such wonderful things too quickly become commonplace in our minds.

I remember a small child mesmerized by a battery-powered toy sold by a hawker at the circus. Just below the bleachers where the boy sat, a real live bear was dancing on a large colored ball. The child had seen it all on TV. A dancing bear? Old stuff to the busy, worldly people we are today.

But, to those staunch and stalwart human beings who lived here before we came, every balanced rock, every blade of grass, every living thing was as a sign from the One they *knew* was their Creator and their God.

Then Europeans came, claiming to act on orders from their governments, torturing the Indians they did not murder.

America the Just?

America the Just – The Beginning



Imagine yourself a thousand years before today.

You are crossing a flat, arid landscape when you come to the edge of a cliff and look out across the mind-blowing view you see here, looking down and across the great wide valley below.

Never have you seen such a place as this.

Can you feel it drawing you to climb down and walk among those rocks where giants must have walked in ages past?

Could you turn your back on this scene and return from whence you came without exploring the wonder that lies before you?

Of course not.

You'd be compelled to go down in the valley, to see what lies below.

So were our ancestor Indian human beings, the ones we slaughtered or displaced from beautiful places like this.

Can you see how their occupying this strange little 28 square mile valley posed no threat to settlers who could neither farm nor raise cattle here?

Ask why the indigenous people who lived here before we came had to be displaced at gunpoint, driven out or murdered.

By tens of thousands!

Driven from this holy land to a reservation where they were constrained by force to remain, to build new homes, to eke out a living in a new land, far from the pillars of stone they loved.

Justice is not a complicated concept.

It gives to each what each is due and takes not from one to give another.

Yet in those tumultuous years when our nation was just getting its footing, justice was perverted ironically for the purpose of establishing justice!

America the Just – The Beginning



What more can one say about this formation but that it is a monument to something even greater than itself?

It is a temple of stone not laid by human hands.

It speaks with silent eloquence the sublime wonder of creation.

It stands majestic, high above the desert floor, a mute testament to the eternal intelligence that formed it and the world around it.

Why should it “belong” to anyone?

If it must belong, who is more entitled to call it theirs than the indigenous people who lived and died here hundreds of years before the European invasion that unjustly ignored the Indians’ claims?

Racism is not a contest between the “black” and “white” so-called. It is a blight on the human experience, a lie that tells one group of people they are “better” than another and so entitled to a better life, better everything.

But, if we Americans stand for anything at all then we must stand for what our Declaration stated: All men are created equal. All endowed with rights by our Creator, whether we are any particular shade of brown, yellow, red, or any other skin tone.

Such was not the thinking of those who acted on orders from Washington to displace the indigenous populations from even such barren places as this valley that could have no value whatsoever beyond its beauty.

Why steal it from the Indians? Who was to gain?

Was there another motive?

Was it the hateful idea that continues hiding still in the minds of men and women of every skin color that people of any particular color have rights superior to others of another color?

The hallmark of this nation’s heritage is and always must be equality.

America the Just – The Beginning



This is how the mystic ancient valley looks today.

This is how it's looked for uncountable thousands of years.

A few Navajo still live here today.

Utah's Monument Valley is part of a reservation set aside for the tribe by the blue coated European invaders who murdered any who would not move to the reservation, stay there, and do as they were told.

A few miles away, outside the national park itself, are small settlements of mostly shabby houses, a few small stores, and narrow streets paved for the most part with sand or crushed gravel.

It is a ghetto where poverty is commonplace.

The once proud Navajo Nation that wandered freely long ago through the beautiful valley now live like most Americans, glued to their televisions, influenced by cultural imperatives they learn through electronic media that tell them what "normal" life is in America and how to be "normal" within a nation where immorality increasingly trumps the values they once held dear and destroys the honorable lifestyle they once led.

They are in a sense no longer Navajo, just as the Cherokee are no longer Cherokee, and the same with other tribes whose members are assimilated into our current faddish, worldly way of life.

Like us, they buy groceries off shelves at a local market and pay for them with dollars, instead of hunting for food with spears and arrows.

Better off? It is a question human decency calls us all to ponder.

Ask the Navajo who live in their sparse, sand-blown, restricted world.

Are they happy there? The expressions of forlorn faces speak volumes.

Ask them. Go there to learn the truth for yourself.

The sacred valley is their home no longer! They were forced out.

America the Just – The Beginning



Mesa Verde

A bit farther north of Monument Valley you will find other mesas (flat topped peaks rising from the floor of the land around them).

This is what you see as you enter Mesa Verde National Park.

That giant, imposing mesa stands out from the surrounding land 40 miles west of Durango, Colorado.

Notice the green missing from Monument Valley where dry dusty shades of sandy tan and deeper rusty brown prevail.

Here in Colorado there is plenty of land the tribes could cultivate for food, but competing tribes fought for the best land. So, the unique people who lived here long ago solved the problem with an equally unique solution.

Hidden behind that massive mesa is one of the most peculiar habitats that anyone has ever seen ... so well hidden it was only recently discovered!

Deep within rugged mountain crags that surround and shroud it from view are the remains of one of the strangest human settlements in America.

Out of view of any casual observer is the ancient home of a tribe known as the Anasazi, an indigenous people who dug their homes in a mountainside under overhanging cliffs so enemies passing above on the plateau could catch no glimpse of the people living below.

They are called Ancestral Puebloans because their homes were “pueblos”, dwellings constructed from carefully shaped blocks of dried mud.

The Anasazi took pueblo architecture to an advanced level.

Their ancient homes were far more than mere mud huts.

For the times and conditions in which they lived, their city in the hill is a masterpiece of architectural wonder.

A place these people could live in peace and safety.

America the Just – The Beginning



What pueblos they were! Dwellings constructed partially within caves or below overhanging rock outcroppings, sufficiently above the canyon floor to protect them from marauding enemies as well as inclement weather.

The canyon floor frequently flooded.

The stone roof above them provided these cave dwellers with protection from enemies above who had no notion that an inhabited city was a few hundred feet below them.

This is one of the more prominent Anasazi settlements where a complex society of human beings existed together in harmony at least 300 years before Columbus set sail heading west across the wide Atlantic.

Notice how the dwellings huddle safely below the massive overhanging cliff of solid rock. Before the Anasazi moved into their cave city they dwelled on the top of the mesas, prey to wild animals and unfriendly competitive humans. Below the cliff, they were safe.

Note that below the cave city are *tops* of trees growing up from the valley that extends farther down, deep below the pueblo dwellings.

The Anasazi lived literally “in the side of a mountain” as you see here!

As many as a thousand people lived here, hiding from those who would steal their food or otherwise disturb their tranquility.

A marvel of human intelligence, cooperation, and ingenuity!

Most of what you see is made solely from hardened mud bricks.

Other parts of the city are carved directly into the soft sandstone right into the walls of the giant cliff.

One might wonder what sort of government they had, if they were just to each other, fair, loving, and kind. To build such a city, they must have lived agreeably with each other and treated each person with justice.

America the Just – The Beginning



A closer view of the strange but well-constructed Anasazi apartments.

See how very many lived here, certainly more than a few hundred souls all sharing a small space for the common good and friendly fellowship.

The Anasazi were a gregarious peace-loving people.

Their close living quarters required them to get along with each other.

There were traditional songs, laughter of children, and dancing under the stars. Ancient tales were told by the elders. This was a community where each had a strong sense of belonging to the tribe, depending on each other.

Theirs was a highly-organized culture with wise leadership keeping things on an “even keel”, each person respecting his neighbor’s rights and space.

They needed a strong leadership mechanism to inculcate in the people a strong sense of shared ideas and ideals, each looking out for the others.

They were united as one by their need to work together as a community.

They were prepared for whatever might happen within or beyond their unusual place of abode by the strength of their mechanism of leadership built on ideas and ideals the people themselves believed in and supported.

Without such a strong mechanism of leadership there would have been chaos, yet you see the order and the spirit of sharing that allowed them to build and live safely in such close quarters without violence or dissent.

If they’d not been wisely led to get along with each other, this city beneath its overhanging protective cliff could not have been built in the first place!

They and the community were one, and each got along with his neighbor.

If their mechanism of leadership had not included a set of rules to secure justice for all, this settlement could not have survived as it obviously did.

In every country, every culture, it is the ideas and ideals of the leadership mechanism and mentality that motivates people to live together in peace.

America the Just – The Beginning



Here's another nearby "cave city".

This was home to only a few dozen families.

Those who lived here possibly did not agree with the ideas and ideals of the mechanism of leadership adopted by the nearby larger settlement, or perhaps they believed this place was safer, better hidden, harder to reach from above or below.

Or, they may have been ostracized for their refusal to follow the rules!

They carved out their own homes not more than a few hundred yards away for some purpose we may never know. It could be so they could live as they saw fit and not according to the rules imposed by leaders of the larger group. But, they still had rules. Their *own* rules!

There must always be rules, or there can never be peace or justice.

Their hideaway was much smaller than the complex community shown on the previous page, but it is built in the same way with adobe bricks of sun-dried mud laid by hand.

They probably chose this spot because it was harder to see from the top of the plateau opposite, or because it was closer to the precious water flowing in the stream hidden below the trees.

They had no written language, though they spoke at least six dialects.

Their history can only be partially deciphered from the petroglyphs, i.e., pictures left on the stone walls. We know very little about them

A place of peace and safety for *true* Americans.

Did these people differ from the nearby cliff dwellers? Were they friends or enemies. Did they trade with each other?

Or did they build here because they were newly arrived and there was no longer room to build more homes nearer the others in the larger cavern?

America the Just – The Beginning



We know they were wise. Wiser by far than many alive today!

Here's a view of the beautiful canyon seen from the top of the plateau.

Notice the rugged nature of the surrounding mesas and deep valleys that offered protection as well as necessary food and water.

Far bottom right is what appears to be the beginning of another cave with windows cut into the rock face.

How difficult it must have been for outsiders to bother these wise people!

There was no way for a company of cavalry to ride in on horseback with their rifles and cannon to drive them out.

One could not possibly maneuver a heavy cannon into such a place as this or ride horses down from the plateau above to slaughter the innocent men, women, and children there who wished only to be left alone in peace.

Nor would it be easy for another tribe of Indians to attack them there or, for that matter, to even see their clever hideout from the adjacent plateau.

Many of these cave dwellings, are so well hidden they were only found in very recent times, invisible as they are for any casual viewer riding by.

They were discovered in 1888 by a couple of cowboys riding herd along the top of the mountainside. The Anasazi had long before disappeared.

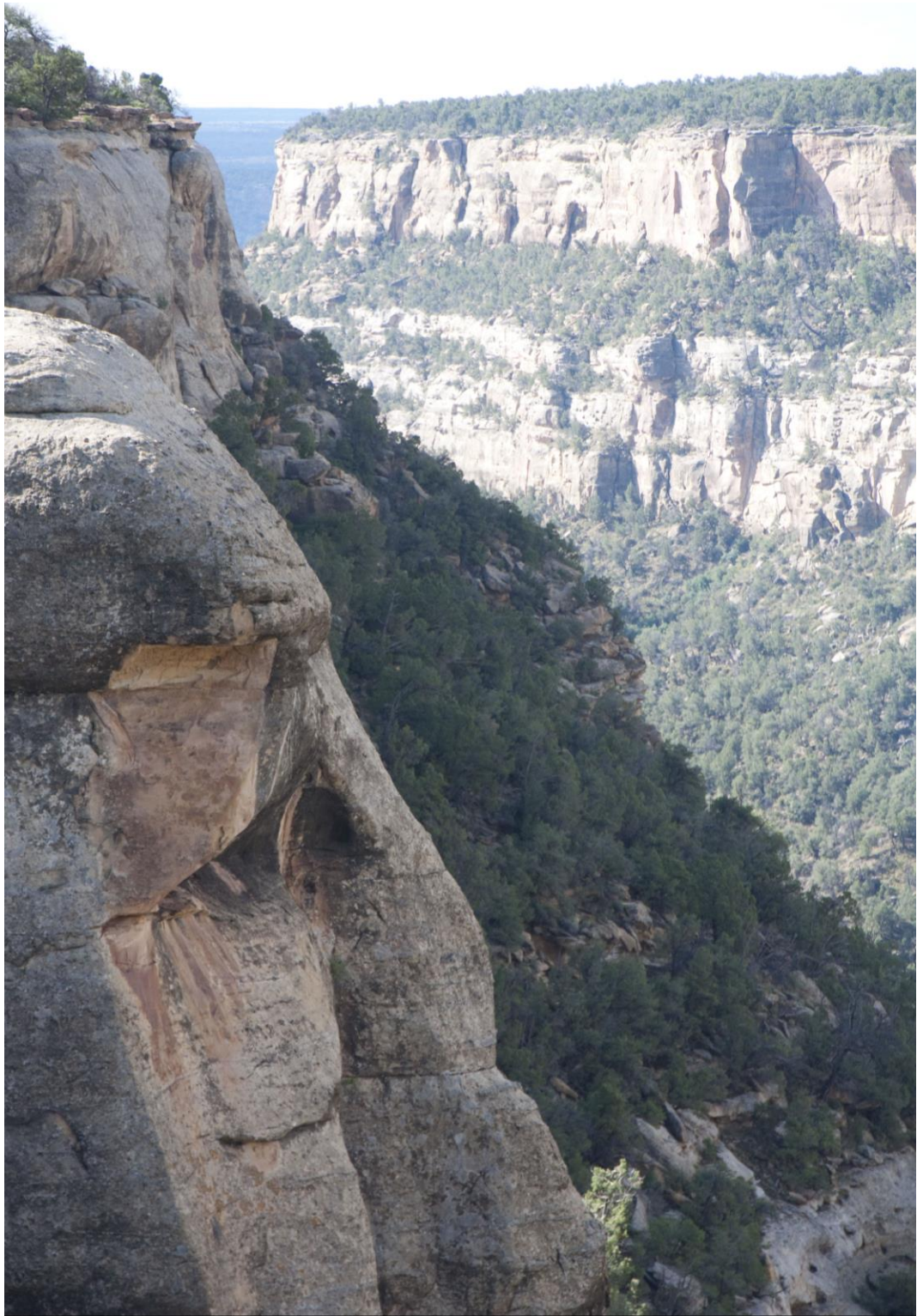
A blight of shame on the dark history of mankind.

Another symbol of our species' blindness to the principles of justice.

Sad to imagine a peaceful people required to build their homes under the overhanging cliffs of a mountainside just to keep their families safe from harm at the hands of other human beings!

Yet the truth of the Anasazi is just that. Humans hiding in a mountainside to protect their families and their simple way of life from hateful harm at the hands of other human beings.

America the Just – The Beginning



Here's a more detailed view of some Anasazi homes.

Imagine them populated as they were 1,000 years ago.

Imagine children playing, laughing, dancing, singing.

The large round holes are called Kiva. They were ceremonial pits where families practiced religious and social ceremonies.

Religion and humanity's perpetual questions of where we came from and what life is all about is the ubiquitous characteristic of all people, ancient and modern.

Always the same questions. Who are we? Why are we here? Where do we go when we die?

And always a priest or shaman of one kind or another is nearby to give the frightened people answers they want to hear, "truth" nobody really knows.

Like us these were also a questioning people, huddled together in cities for safety, whether beneath an overhanging cliff above a deep valley or near a harbor, farmland, or mine where they can seek a better life for themselves.

Justice and peace the primary goals of all mankind.

We are much more similar than we give ourselves room to admit.

Why can't we choose to be brothers and sisters, instead of separating into competing cultures based on skin color, lifestyle, or our many varied ideas of who or what God may be, what God expects of us, or what God will do to us when we die?

Every civilization has revered the unknown we call God, including the people who lived here more than 1,000 years ago.

Many names. Same God. Unknown and unknowable, no matter what some among us so pompously claim to the contrary.

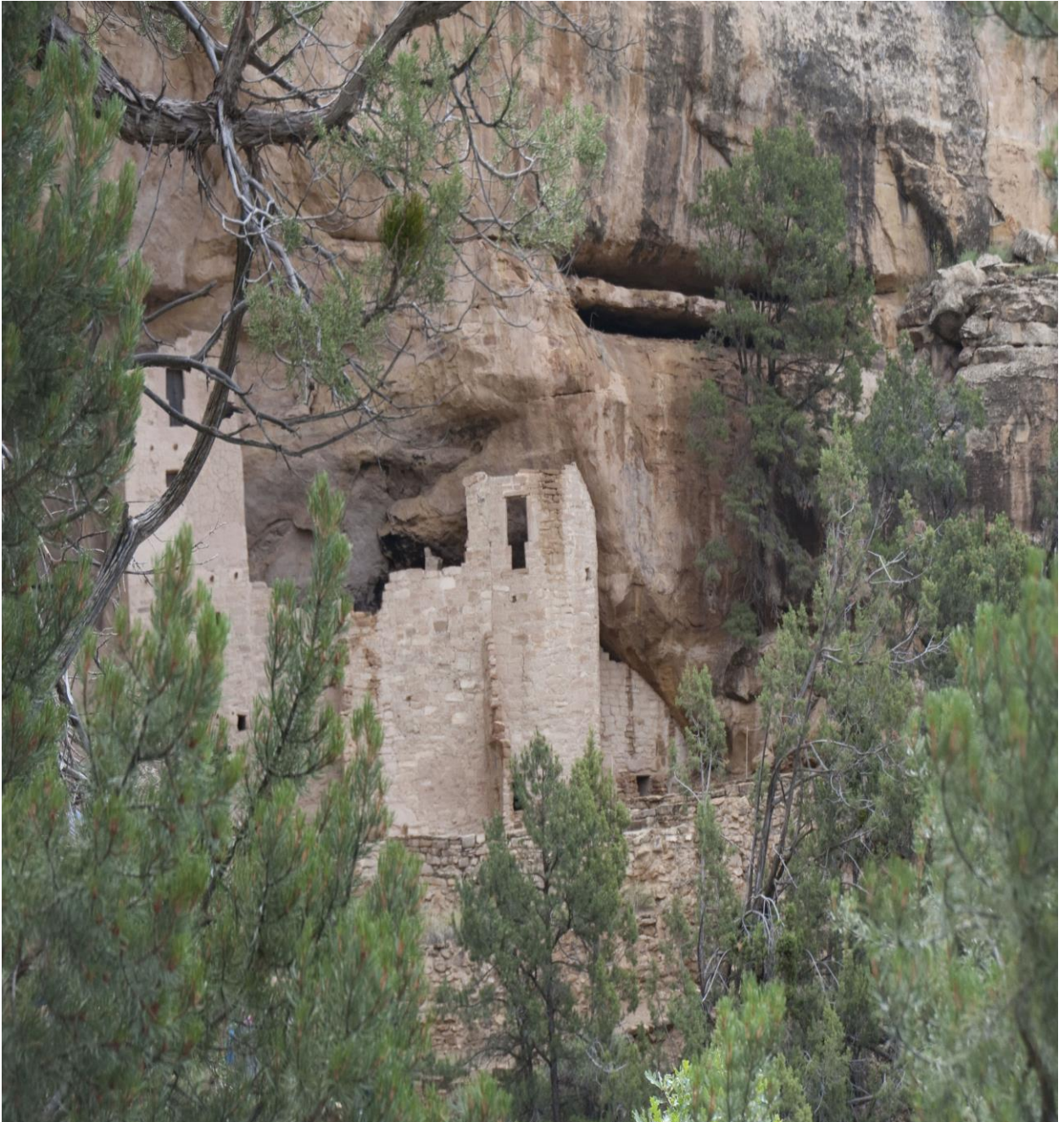
Always this mystery that should bind us together as one global family.

America the Just – The Beginning



The Anasazi architecture is truly inspiring considering its ancient age.
It must have been back-breaking work to stack all those dried mud bricks.
Yet, these people worked for a shared cause, guided by ideas and ideals.
They worked to enjoy justice and peace away from the rest of the world,
enduring a harsh life in a harsh land because here alone they could protect
and provide sufficiently for their families.
So very much we have in common!
They built this place to be their home.
Many generations lived here. Many were born here. Many died here.
They were guided by a powerful shared wisdom, for such a place as this
could never be built by a foolish people nor a people compelled to work
by the sting of a whip or the threat of a sword.
Men will not suffer long to be ruled unjustly.
This wonderful, strange little city of mud was built with love.
Mud brick by mud brick.
One upon another.
Family by family.
Year after year.
Bearing children.
Passing away.
And every bit of it a mystery to us today as it always will be.
Peace was their plan.
Peace was their hope.
And, peace is what they enjoyed for several centuries.
Peace so hidden from others that their home remained undiscovered for
more than one-thousand years!
The same peace we all desire.
Peace with justice for ALL.

America the Just – The Beginning



These are the remnants of an advanced but long-forgotten culture.

People living together in harmony and cooperation.

All for one and one for all.

A complex city cleverly hidden in a mountainside.

Here you can see some of the walkways, paths for the Anasazi people to stroll along in the evening chatting with each other about the weather.

Pathways connecting them in community.

One can imagine them dressed in colorful clothing carrying burdens from place to place, perhaps trading with each other, or just out for an afternoon visit with their neighbors.

Some of the structures seem to be built with intent to display the builder's unique talent or the occupant's claim to higher status in the community.

Each has its own peculiar flair, its own distinct character.

Each of the occupants must have taken pride in being different from their close neighbors.

Just as we do today.

Humanity is as humanity does.

One people, ancient or modern, living today or forgotten in some bygone yesterday beneath the overhanging cliff of a mountainside.

All created equal.

All endowed with certain rights.

Life.

The pursuit of happiness.

And, liberty that's possible only where justice is secure and fair to all.

America the Just – The Beginning



High above other structures in this city of stone are these small windows seemingly carved into the wall of the mountain but actually built with mud brick, as all the structures below them.

They remind one of the field house at an athletic stadium.

A place from which the players below can be watched and monitored.

Perhaps here that the leaders lived or from which they monitored the daily doings down below.

Or, it may have been built by someone particularly frightened of the world outside, someone who wanted to get as far from danger as possible.

Always there is danger and our nagging doubt about tomorrow's safety.

Then as now.

Always our only hope for peace is sharing knowledge and understanding of the various competing mechanisms of leadership at work in our world.

We long for the day when everyone shares the same ideas and ideals.

Leadership laced with love.

Leadership constrained by rules based on ideas and ideals that are shared by everyone, instead of despotism whereby certain men and women rule haphazardly and with an irresistible iron hand.

What do we want, we human beings? Do we not all want the same as these ancient Anasazi wanted?

Does not the desire to be free from hardship and hazard burn in the heart of every human being, no matter what our political or religious views may be?

Do we not all wish to be understood even as we yearn to understand this mystery of life we all experience together?

My dear wife and I walked here where the Anasazi walked.

America the Just – The Beginning



A closer look shows how crisply rectangular the Anasazi made “windows” through which they looked out on the world around them.

How amazingly unique each structure is!

And, as in our world today, there is a sliding-scale difference in affluence between one set of dwellers and another.

Some have large dwelling places.

Some much smaller.

A few are little more than holes into which the occupants must have been required to crawl on hands and knees to enjoy shelter, a place of their own.

Note where giant chunks of mountainside have fallen into the midst of the Anasazi city here at Mesa Verde.

The constant threat of marauding foes and falling rocks.

Yet, they survived for many centuries here in this very place long before the Europeans arrived.

They lived here in peace 1,400 years before the white man came.

They remained until around 1,200 A.D. when drought is believed to have made their essential farming methods untenable. They grew beans.

They migrated south to join similar Puebloans where they could enjoy more rainfall and better yield for their crops.

The drought ended, as droughts usually do, however the Anasazi never returned to their strange city in the mountainside.

The hidden city lay abandoned more than 1,000 years before it was found by those two cowboys riding along looking for cows that had strayed from their herd.

Lost for a millennium, yet once a thriving, advanced Indian culture.

America the Just – The Beginning



When the Anasazi first saw this hollowed out wall beneath its overhanging cliff, it's easy to see how they must have thought, "Here looks like a good place to dwell with our families in peace."

They built their little city here intending to stay, and they might have still been there when the cowboys found the place but for the terrible dry years that drove them to their new home farther south.

One wonders how they came to an agreement on leaving together.

What makes people agree with each other?

What values did these people share that made them want to live together?

What ideas and ideals bonded them as a community?

What ideas and ideals do we Americans hold dear in common to unite us today as a people dedicated to preserve our way of life and our homes as these people did?

They agreed to build their city here.

They shared a common purpose.

They occupied a common ground.

Their purpose was supported and sustained by their agreement on a set of rules by which they organized their society and preserved their ideas and ideals for generations.

Eroding winds and water made this an ideal place to settle.

Other eroding forces are at work today eating away at our shared ideas and ideals that once bound us together as a people.

Must other humans be our enemies? Can we not find peace as these did?

Is it us or only our enemies who erode and undermine our shared ideas and ideals that alone can bind us together and preserve justice for everyone?

America the Just – The Beginning



Not all was perfect for the Anasazi.

As their city grew, structures were built on many levels.

Wooden ladders were required to access parts of the city.

Replicas of those ladders can be seen at Mesa Verde National Park today.

Tourists can climb the ladders to explore the city and experience what it was like to live each day, day-after-day, in such a strange place.

Was everyone “equal”?

Is that a question we should ask?

Some clearly occupied a station in their society over others.

If one measures “equality” by what one has, the quality of life, the level at which his home is built, then certainly “equality” is an unachievable goal.

Yet, if by “equal” we mean entitled to the same opportunities, the right to express whatever talents God has given without repression by others, then “equality” is most certainly achievable through the mechanisms of justice that should treat each of us *exactly* the same.

There has never been a people or a culture on this planet where everyone enjoyed the same material advantages, as can be clearly seen here in this adobe village where different people occupied different levels of homes.

However, justice for all *is* possible.

And, with justice for all comes opportunity for all.

Only with justice for all can everyone enjoy the same opportunities.

The ladders of life, like those in this adobe village, are here to stay.

However, as we honor our highest calling, we can make certain that each person is provided an equal footing and climb as high as his or her talents, courage, and committed determination can reach.

America the Just – The Beginning



What a view they had looking out from under the roof of that overhanging cliff that hid their dwellings so well and for so very many centuries!

Is it any wonder they believed in the Great Spirit?

An amazingly beautiful world surrounded them on all sides.

The same amazing world many of us are too busy to notice.

Blue skies. White fleecy clouds.

Rocks and trees. Birds and bees.

Mankind with a mind to contemplate it all and wonder at its marvels.

The Anasazi, Cherokee, Navajo, and all our other American ancestors had similar minds and similar wonder. We are all the same in that regard.

All of us are smitten with amazement, when aren't busying ourselves with mundane occupations that distract us from the beauty all around, when we purposely pause to *see* what we too casually pass over in our hasty rush to do things that get in the way of knowing life in all its natural grandeur.

It must have been so when the Anasazi first found this valley with its high protecting walls and convenient, mysteriously hidden caves.

See the top of that wooden ladder lower right in the photograph? Can you imagine climbing up to sit and wonder at the sky above, the ancient rocks, the tenacious trees and green foliage clinging for life to dry stony walls?

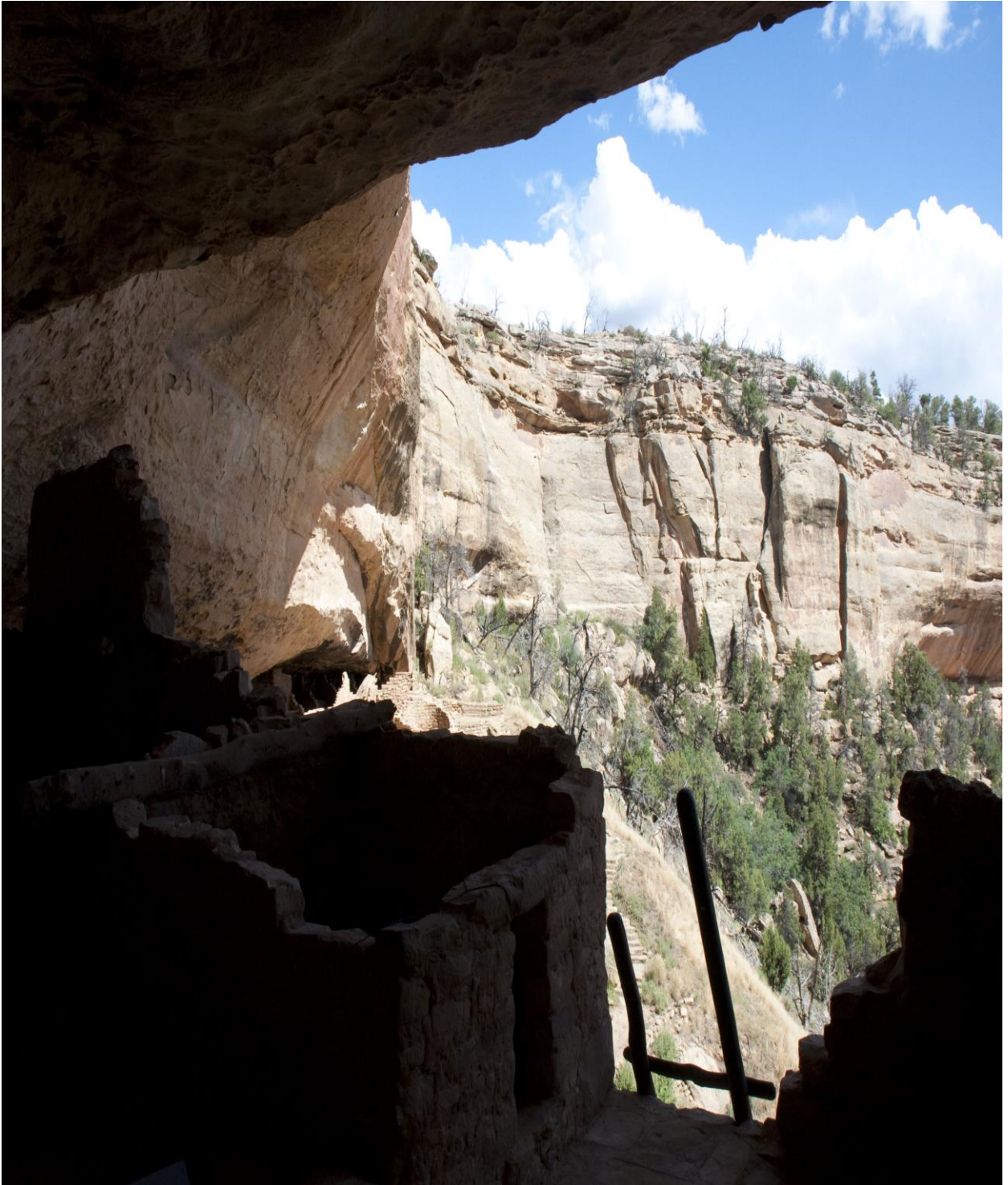
These indigenous people were surely inspired to believe their God is real, that stories told by the old ones are true, that there is a Great Spirit strong and true who brought reality into being before any of us were born.

Faith in God's provision for all who labor with good will and seek Truth.

Fear of God's punishment for all who do evil and attempt to evade Truth.

Twin keys to peace and prosperity for all societies and cultures.

America the Just – The Beginning



Can you imagine climbing ladders like these to visit neighbors or trade your hand-made goods for groceries?

This was their home thousands of years before the steam engine.

Count the blocks of dried-mud bricks they laid to build their hidden city.

See how they fit together, side-by-side, one atop another, so strong that even today those walls remain in spite of weather and the wandering hands and inquisitive feet of tourist children climbing them as Anasazi children did a millennium ago.

All made possible by people working together for a common purpose.

Labor motivated by shared ideas and ideals embraced by everyone.

There were millions of square miles all around them for the disgruntled to relocate if they didn't like the rules of this society, yet the city grew and remains today a testament to their intention to dwell in peace with each other, guided daily by their shared ideas and ideals, emboldened by hope.

Such a place as this could never be built by a people divided by animosity, pride, bias, and contempt for the mechanism of leadership that guided it.

Justice prevailed here, as it does sometimes in other places, to protect the innocent and subdue those who seek gain at others' expense.

Justice administered and supported by willing consent of the governed.

Consent rooted and grounded in the shared ideas and ideals of a united people working in concert with each other to provide a better life for all.

Is that what we seek for ourselves?

Can we be guided by the wisdom of this long-forgotten people?

Can we find room for the agreement without which there can be no hope of life, liberty, happiness, or justice for anyone?

Can we be as wise as they?

America the Just – The Beginning



As we saw on the stone walls at Monument Valley in Utah, here also in Colorado's Mesa Verde primitive artwork proves humanity was here.

These ancient drawings depict, more than anything they were intended to represent, the irrepressible desire we all share to be remembered by future generations for something of value we can leave behind.

In caverns, mountaintops, mounds along so many riverbanks, pyramids and other monuments to man's perpetual passing this way, we see such paintings and markings having no utility beyond the art itself that says to us in silence, "A human being created this knowing someday you would see and remember its creator put it there for you."

Art.

Something no other species does.

To remember or be remembered?

To illustrate or replicate?

What is in the artist's mind when he lifts his chisel, brush, or pen?

Does he intend something permanent?

Are the marks and symbols he leaves behind a part of himself?

Or are they mere markings made by a child with a penchant for doodling?

Or, perhaps, put there in spite of parental scolding.

Are they mere graffiti or something more meaningful?

And, if intended to be meaningful, what do they mean?

What do they say?

What do they communicate?

What is transmitted from them to us across the ages!

America the Just – The Beginning



Perhaps it is the wonder of life itself, the undefinable, uncertain, unstable moment of time each of us given.

Mankind is sometimes wiser than we know.

However, sometimes mankind is far too foolish for our own good.

Sometimes too blind to see what we are offered by the Great Spirit from whom all things are given, the One these Anasazi knew in a way we may be rushing too far along our modern industrial path to recognize.

It may not be too late to stop and realize we are, after all, created beings.

We are no wiser when we're born than the baby children of this ancient people who took their first tiny breath beneath this mountain's edge.

Who can view this scene and not know God is?

Who of us today has a lovelier view than this from our front porch?

See how deep the canyon is below the city and how high above lies the tree-lined top of the ridge from which the Anasazi were invisible.

This was surely a safe place to build one's home and start a family.

Built by an intelligent and socially well-adjusted people with customs and daily habits untainted by the divisive spirits that infest our lives today.

The canyon is deep and extends for miles either side of the hidden Anasazi city.

All were free to move away. Yet here for centuries they made their home.

They came around the time of Christ's birth, more than 2,000 years ago.

Construction methods they used are similar to those of Ancient Israel and other middle-east areas where mud brick-laying was a common method employed by builders. The builders' skill is certainly advanced here.

Could they have come here from the Old World before the Christian Era?

America the Just – The Beginning



This odd-shaped structure appears to be a temple of some sort towering above the others.

The small window at the top appears to open into a very small room.

It may have been a perch for the priest or shaman to sit when delivering his or her instructive sermons and mystic messages to the people below.

Or it might have been just another family home.

If a home, it was the abode of one of the more well-to-do inhabitants of the Anasazi city who wished to rise above his less fortunate neighbors.

Or an odd-ball wanting to build his house in an odd shape to match his or her odd personality.

We are laughable creatures, posing and preening ourselves, as if our lives will last forever and our vain imagined superiority over others is a thing we can hold fast to and savor for eternity.

Whoever chose this strangest of structures in the Anasazi city might have built it to just to amuse his fellow inhabitants, or it may have served some special social purpose for the common benefit of everyone.

Time is fleeting. Not a moment to waste on selfish notions.

Temples are for God, not for men, yet men build temples to themselves as if they could forever remain here on our planet to admire them or bask in the admiration of others.

Let us believe the Anasazi were too wise for such foolish vanity.

Like the tens of thousands of adobe bricks by which their city is built, we human beings are urged daily by the Great Spirit to fit together in unity.

Bricks, like people, need to stick together.

The people who long ago occupied this strange city knew well the lesson we need to learn from those thousands of bricks.

Rightly fitted together by hands working in unity, mud can become a city.

America the Just – The Beginning



This view is from the lower level of the city looking up toward that odd temple-like structure.

It faces this way looking toward the rest of the city, a viewpoint.

It commands the people to pay heed.

It may have been for priests to call people to prayer or reverent attention to their teachings that offered answers to mankind's perpetual questions.

Questions never completely answered in our brief lifetimes.

Questions that persist through all ages.

Questions that remind us we are one together, too apart.

Sublime is this essence we call life.

Sublime forever beyond our understanding.

This ancient human habitat remains as you see it after two thousand years, brick upon brick, hope upon hope, dream upon dream, life upon life.

Built by humans with hands like yours. Four fingers and thumb on each.

Two eyes that saw what you see now with your own two eyes.

Two ears that heard songs of birds, whispers of wind, echoes of a thunder clap deep in the canyon, pitter patter of gentle rain, babies' cries, laughter of children, and death rattles of those passing on to that realm from which none returns and of which none can know for certain what we find as each of us continues our eternal journey.

We are foolish to look on such a place as this and think it primitive.

No steel and concrete. No molded plastic parts. No electric lights to drive darkness away when the sun goes to sleep each night on the far side of the distant mountain.

Yet, here lived people with the same hopes and fears that you have.

The same right to live a full life, undeterred by the imperatives of others.

Although they abandoned it 1,000 years ago because there was not enough water to sustain them, yet part of them remains, their humanity, art, and a faint, fading echo of their children's laughter and the old ones' tall tales.

America the Just – The Beginning



A cave hides deep beneath overhanging rock.

Though many caves carve holes in our western mountains, few promise more comfortable accommodation than those at Mesa Verde.

Other pueblo cities are found west of the Mississippi.

Many were built and occupied more than 2,000 years before us.

Brick by brick. Human hand by human hand.

All for one purpose: homes for people who lived, loved, and died.

Considering how other indigenous Americans lived before the European invasion, we praise these people's fortitude, wisdom, and good fortune to have abided together in safety as they successfully did for many years.

They were blessed to live before the Nineteenth Century when the worst of Indian slaughter and forced removal to reservations took place.

They endured a harsh subsistence on wild game and such fruit and nuts as they could gather in surrounding forests, yet they did not live to see their children and loved ones cruelly massacred by soldiers who used steel and gunpowder to impose a hateful, lawless campaign to destroy the race.

There were skirmishes with neighboring tribes before the Europeans came, but in those battles men faced others similarly armed, not organized force using advanced weaponry produced by the steam power of that industrial revolution that made spears and arrows obsolete.

Smart bombs and unmanned drone weapons, of course, would easily wipe out a brigade of Nineteenth Century cavalry with their rifles, cannon, and swords ... but where does warfare lead us?

What are we humans heading toward today?

We should look more closely at the Anasazi and see what life can be away from conflict, where people share ideas and ideals that unite them as one?

We should find a way to share similar ideas and ideals that may yet unite us all here on this tiny planet.

Can we become one united people with a shared common purpose?

Should we hurry to do so?

America the Just – The Beginning



If you have a chance to visit this place west of Durango, Colorado plan to spend several days exploring the ruins.

Don't just take pictures to show the folks back home then leave.

Stay to climb the ladders.

Sit inside some of the Anasazi homes.

Look out their windows at the valley below and the sky above.

See what they saw.

Feel what they felt.

Know what they knew and hope what they hoped.

Imagine the daily lives of these isolated people, the adults, their children, their leaders, their priests, their hopes and their fears.

Go in the middle of the week when there aren't many visitors.

Walk where they walked. Put your hands and feet where they put theirs.

Time-travel is easy in such places as this.

Listen silently with your heart and you will hear them busy with everyday chores, laughing at jokes told by friends, joining together in singing songs familiar to the tribe, scolding their children for defacing the walls of their city with graffiti, weeping with the bereaved, falling in love.

In mid-week there may be fewer than a dozen people there, and you can imagine yourself a member of their tribe, eating what they ate, living as they lived, thinking their thoughts.

When you return to civilization so-called, you will have a deeper sense of what it means to be human and how we owe each other far greater respect and care than we give to those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

The Anasazi taught us a lesson.

Time alone does not determine what is primitive.

Primitivity dwells in the mind of those who think they are more than they are because, when the final bell tolls for each of us, we are the same.

America the Just – The Beginning



Here the Anasazi hid in the side of a hill nearly 2,000 years before a pair of cowboys on horseback discovered their city by accident in 1888.

It is hard to make out what's down below.

This photograph was taken from the top of the adjacent mesa that forms the opposite wall of this deep, majestic canyon.

For miles around, even in this modern era, there is nothing but rocks and trees as you see here.

The nearest town today is Cortez, a good 12 miles *as the crow flies*.

You must visit to understand how remote the Anasazi city is even today.

Use Google maps (<http://maps.Google.com>) to find Mesa Verde National Park on your computer screen.

Use regular map view to see the winding narrow road that brings you into the park from highway 160 several miles to the north.

Hover over the little red marker in Earth view mode then zoom in.

You'll see the parking area, the bookstore, the museum and headquarters building and immediately east of these where the deep canyon begins.

Down in that dark canyon is the hidden city.

Now you understand in part.

Once you visit and follow the trail down to the canyon floor then climb up on the other side to enter the city, you will appreciate what it meant to this people to be hidden from view.

Tour the museum.

Spend time in the bookstore.

Take lots of pictures.

But more than this, spend time sitting where the Anasazi sat and see what they Anasazi saw.

Listen carefully to the gentle breeze in the trees and the silent whispers of ancient Indian voices that can still be heard in this wonderful place.

America the Just – The Beginning



The intricate stonework is amazing and certainly not primitive in any way. It is actually quite beautiful.

This city was built entirely by hand hundreds of years before Christopher Columbus made his daring voyage across the broad Atlantic from Spain to what we call the New World.

Our New World was already old to them centuries before Columbus came. It is inexcusably ignorant for anyone to brand these people “primitive”.

Indeed, only a primitive mind would do so.

Primitive is as primitive thinks.

The Europeans did so just because the Indians communicated in strange languages and chose to live in caves, mud huts, or shelters created from felled trees, while in Europe many people lived in even worse conditions!

We now know our true American ancestors were wise, highly organized, able to survive for many generations without the useless gewgaws offered them by Europeans in trade for their valuable furs and precious metals.

Those who came across the seas to kill and plunder the American Indians were, in many ways, more primitive than those they killed and plundered.

What could be more primitive than to drive peacefully settled families out of their carefully constructed ancestral homes?

What could be more primitive than depriving other human beings of their dignity and means of livelihood.

What will ever be more primitive than mercilessly slaughtering both men, women, and children to prepare room for “progress”?

The European conquest of America’s Indigenous Peoples is nothing short of barbaric.

Our true American ancestors were not primitive people, yet their slaughter is sadly an inescapable fact of our American Heritage.

Must peace forever stand aside for progress?

Will war be forever waged against the Truth?

Or, will we begin to join as brothers and sisters against the darkness?

America the Just – The Beginning



The Early Europeans

Norsemen visited Newfoundland on the icy easternmost coast of what is now Canada and may be considered the discoverers of our continent.

They encountered and engaged in warfare with an indigenous people they called Skraeling (Norse for “skin wearers”, since the clothing of those who lived in that frigid land was made mostly from the hides of animals).

Five hundred years later the Portuguese adventurer Christopher Columbus, funded by Spanish monarchs, brought war on a peaceful Caribbean people known as Arawak, people who had no weapons, knew nothing of war, and were wiped off the face of the planet by Columbus and the Europeans who followed in his bloody wake.

One of the first recorded settlements on mainland of North America was at Jamestown around 1607.

They were about 100 English, organized as the Virginia Company.

They came, as Columbus did, in three small ships: the “Godspeed”, the “Susan Constant”, and the “Discovery”.

Replicas of these small vessels can be seen at the Jamestown Settlement living history museum in Williamsburg, Virginia (of which much will be said in later books in this [America the Just](#) series).

This was the first permanent settlement of Europeans in the Americas, at least 13 years before Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Sadly, for the settlers, the area was inhabited by a Powhatan tribe that did not take kindly to European invasion and the occasional killing of Indians and burning of Indian homes and cornfields between 1610 and 1615.

The die was then cast for further bloodshed that has stained the pages of more than 400 years of our seldom told American history.

There was tension between the English and Powhatans from the outset, but historians tend to agree first-blood was spilled by English, not Indians.

What a dreadful way to start a new world.

What a shameful way to present the Indians with Christian principles.

America the Just – The Beginning



English came by ship to this first European settlement on our continent, a perilous journey in such tiny boats as you see here, at a time when ocean navigation was an arcane art and not the advanced science it is today.

They found a wooded shoreline sparsely occupied by the Powhatans with whom they traded tenuously for a brief time.

All was wilderness to these daring people who crossed the wild Atlantic from what they considered an advanced cultural civilization in England where Shakespeare was still putting on his plays, Sir Francis Bacon was writing about the scientific method, and René Descartes was calling on people to doubt everything.

The cultivated countryside of England was nothing like the wilderness they found here, where they decided to start afresh.

The shore was dense forest and beyond the beach an unknown interior.

Today there's a lovely modern dock, a museum with its ubiquitous gift shop, and these tiny ship replicas kept spotlessly clean by employees.

One may only imagine the state of cleanliness of those tiny vessels after a voyage of 144 days from the distant shores of England they left behind!

The original three ships left London just before Christmas 1606.

They landed at Cape Henry (near today's Virginia Beach) after an arduous voyage of 3,000 miles across a stormy North Atlantic in icy mid-winter.

It was the worst of all possible times of year to attempt settlement in a new and unknown land, and many did not survive that first year.

Famine, disease, and a growing tension with the indigenous Powhatan.

Still, there was lots of land to occupy, forests to fell, fish to catch, freedom from English aristocracy, opportunity for individuals to go beyond social boundaries imposed on them by the customs and bigotry of the homeland from which they were seeking to escape.

The hardships were hard indeed.

Mortal battles would soon ensue to deter them from remaining.

Yet remain they did in spite of near impossible adversities.

They stayed to start a new society with liberty and justice for all.

America the Just – The Beginning



A replica bed is located in a replica tent near shore at Jamestown today.

The bed is sheltered from sun but with no netting to keep out mosquitoes and diseases they carried for which the English had no natural immunity.

The tent contains replicas of things we know they brought with them.

Things designed for mortal battle they planned to wage here in America.

Beside the bed is the occupant's suit of armor.

The Jamestown settlers came anticipating problems with Indians.

The history of England and Europe in those years was constant conflict, as it still is in our own as yet uncivilized age.

Jamestown settlers were prepared for battle.

War is what they got when the Powhatan had enough of English raids on Indian homes and agriculture.

Many original settlers went back to England, leaving only one of the ships, the "Discovery", behind.

That first year nearly ended their adventure.

However, more ships came, more settlers, more tools, more gunpowder.

Jamestown grew, albeit slowly.

The English built forts along the James River to protect them from Indians that did not take lightly to the invasion and ill-treatment of their tribes.

A system of laws was introduced to control the settlers and promote better relations with the nearby Algonquin tribe that helped the English learn to endure the hardships with techniques of architecture and agriculture that saved the fledgling settlement from extinction.

When John Rolfe married the Powhatan chief's daughter Pocahontas, the animosity with local tribes was tamed for a season.

The colony established a local government based on a General Assembly of land owners that is said to have been a model for later representative governments adopted by other settlements as Europeans established their foothold on our continent *by force*.

America the Just – The Beginning



The English tools and implements brought by the settlers to the uncharted Virginia wilderness were products of the military industrial world of Olde London and Liverpool where English civilization depended on conquest of other lands using soldiers and the most powerful armed navy in the world.

These are not farming implements.

That long tubular gadget is a small-bore cannon.

The framework upon which it is mounted is designed to be angled up and down depending on the trajectory distance of the target.

Everything English depended on subjugating other people by force.

This was the philosophy of those who founded our first settlement.

That same philosophy has lasted, in greater or lesser degree, for these past tumultuous 400 years of nearly constant warfare.

The English saw Indians in the way of the European concept of progress and civilization.

Kill them all, or drive them by force west of the Mississippi River to live on unfarmable reservation land where they are out-of-sight, out-of-mind, and out of the way of European progress and the rapid spread of European concepts of what civilization should be and how it should be controlled.

That was the plan, whatever your modern history books may say to the contrary about their attempting escape from persecution, etc.

They came to import their way of life on a continent where there was more room to expand than on their tiny green island in the North Atlantic.

They came here to steal just as they did in India, Australia, New Zealand, Burma, Iraq, Egypt and nearly nine out of all countries of the world.

All English invasions and occupations were by force, subduing those who lived in those distant countries before the English came.

Promising The Rule of Law they brought slavery, hierarchy, and a way of life that treated indigenous peoples as less than English, uncivilized, and worthy only to serve their conquerors with English tea and cocktails made with English gin and the absolute best of everything.

History indelibly records all this is true.

America the Just – The Beginning



English were good sailors and excellent ship builders. Their colonization of the rest of the world depended almost entirely on their seamanship.

Unlike the French and Spanish, who never learned how to build a vessel that could cut through water like marlin or swordfish but plowed through by main force, great hulking craft with blunt bows and bulging bilges, an English ship was agile, fast, and strongly built.

Moreover, English sailcloth was far superior to that of other nations. It withstood the strain of gale force winds and presented less drag to air flowing over its surfaces.

For these and many other reasons, not least of which was the superlative training given to new officers in the monarchy's service to sail "behind the mast", as they referred to men not enduring fof'sl life, and manage the tasks of navigating the ship while controlling what were frequently unruly crew members, English seafaring took colonizing adventurers to the far corners of our planet ... especially to our own shores where opportunity for wealth and social advancement was most promising.

This is the mast and forward section of a replica of one of the ships they brought across the angry seas to make their home here.

It was in this type of tiny ship they risked their lives to reach our shores.

They were a hardy people at heart, able to brave the worst weather and the highest waves the oceans tossed at them, however many were susceptible to the new diseases they encountered here.

They fought like lions but fell prey to microbes, viruses, and bacteria for which they'd developed no natural immunity at home in Europe.

Still, the English saw themselves masters of all they surveyed. For year upon year they were just that, weakened only by occasional diseases.

Our common law derived mostly from decisions of old English courts.

The English were clearly master race on this continent when they came.

They were a people destined to do great things, albeit by force of arms.

A people of advanced vision, creative thinkers, effective communicators, and fearless warriors ready to do battle against any opposition to the goal of conquering and colonizing other cultures.

America the Just – The Beginning



This is a view below looking forward in one of the replica ships. Their little boats had just one deck inside to escape the harsh elements. They were not multi-deck vessels. Those came later with the big guns. These were more yachts than warships, tiny vessels barely suitable for ocean crossings yet sturdily built and courageously manned.

That white brick structure is where cooking was done. Those bricks were surely sooty black and greasy by the time they arrived at Jamestown.

Above the cook space hang a spatula and long-handled spoons used in the preparation and serving of what could only have been primitive provisions during that long sea journey where the ship's rolling and pitching motion was constant and risk of death by drowning at all times imminent.

In those days there was little fear of encountering other ships manned by foreign crews or pirates, so there was no need for gun ports or large bore cannon. Every space was maximized for accommodation of the crew and passenger as well as storage of essential food, water, and the cordage and other sailor gear necessary to stay ship-shape Bristol fashion.

Nothing they brought was familiar to the Indians they met upon reaching the Virginia shore. All their gear and gadgetry were products of English ingenuity and power of steam machinery in factories back home, where impoverished men, women, and children worked long hours for little pay to provide for the English nobility's way of life that thrived on the sorrow and suffering of starving labor. Those who came to Jamestown were not from the working class. They were the average well-to-do middle class.

Manufactured weaponry gave the English a decided advantage when it came to subduing Indians who refused to submit to English rule and the English way of life.

There were no steam engines in Indian villages when Europeans arrived. Indians had no manufactured weapons able to strike down another human being at long distance. Indian weapons were hand-made. Spears, arrows, and the advantage of being familiar with the forest hiding places was all they had in their favor to resist the stronger force coming against them.

The battle for English supremacy began with uneven odds.

Indians would lose.

America the Just – The Beginning



This cask with hinged lid contained hard tack, a type of biscuit made with raw flour and molasses, a staple food for men at sea in those days. Food for sailors. Good for keeping a man warm inside on cold nights out on the open winter sea.

Long voyages in tiny boats like this was hard.

Yet the life they longed for, the life they'd dreamed about for years before setting out on their hazardous journey across monotonous miles of waves, in calms and storms, with shipboard conditions uncomfortable at best and unhealthy in the extreme, was a life of ease and liberty they set out to find on our distant Virginia shore.

Until you've stepped aboard a little boat like this and imagined sharing the space with dozens of other passengers crowding for a private area of your own, you cannot imagine the hardship they were willing to endure to reach this promised land where they planned to prosper come hell or high water.

Would *you* set out in such a miniscule wooden ship dependent entirely on wind and sails spread from wooden masts and scanty rigging, without any radio or GPS, with inadequate charts, no engine or sanitary facilities?

Who would do such a thing?

Only the most intrepid.

Only the most determined.

The kind of stock that braved the ocean deep and settled here to build a nation dedicated to The Rule of Law and due process justice.

Would they had stuck more closely to their principles.

Would they had treated the Indians as equals.

Would they'd been less intimidated by red-skinned natives and remained true to the high principles of charity to all and malice toward none.

There alone we find the loving heart of true justice.

Mercy.

Forgiveness.

And willingness to be one's own harshest judge.

America the Just – The Beginning



These sand glasses were the only timepieces they had. They were no good for navigation, useful only to tell when it was time for sailors to take their alternating turns on deck to handle the sails and help with navigation.

Do you see any radios? Any radar screens?

There is a mortar and pestle used to mix medicinal ingredients for ailing crew members, a rectangular candle lamp hanging above the table, a few flags, and a set of compasses lying on a primitive chart that was all each vessel's master had to navigate safe passage to their destination.

This was 1607, a very long time before safe navigation was developed.

The first reliable chronometer for keeping time so one could use the stars to tell how far east or west he was (i.e., to measure longitude by sextant or quadrant angles) did not appear until more than 100 years later when John Harrison made the first portable timepiece sufficiently accurate for use in navigation. It was made of wood.

The best a skipper could do on the Jamestown expedition in 1607 was to guess his distance from the equator (his latitude) using crude instruments to measure the sun's angle above the horizon at noon or that of the dim North Star that's only visible on very clear, very dark nights.

Shipwreck and drownings were commonplace in those days.

That they arrived at all is a miracle, considering their lack of technology, small size of their tiny boats, and their choice to cross in mid-winter.

Yet came they did, determined to push on toward an unknown destiny.

With what cannot be described other than imperialistic and militaristic motives these people came to America, followed by many others.

They came to take what they could get and let no one stand in their way.

They came for gain, regardless of the loss to others who lived here before they came, people who live here thousands of years before they came.

The English believed they were civilized and that their way of life must be imposed on all the world, believing their way of life superior to the way of life they found among the Indians when they arrived.

America the Just – The Beginning



Were the English invaders superior to indigenous Indian people?

Were any of the European who came later more “civilized”?

In this photograph of artifacts discovered at Jamestown Settlement we see not replicas but original objects. Compared with that of the “primitive” Indians there seems no measurable advancement.

Again, this was 1607, a very long time ago when “civilization” in Europe was nothing to be proud of, considering how English monarchy treated its people in those days, when disease and hunger were handmaidens in most homes, where want and poverty ruled the streets and back alleyways.

In Europe people were being imprisoned for their debts. The government maintained work-houses for the poor where death from deplorable dirty conditions was an everyday commonplace.

At the time of the settlement, less than half the people in England could afford to eat meat more than occasionally. Those who refused to work were beaten and imprisoned. Children of the poorest class were taken from their parents’ homes and made to work as apprentices in various trades and often when the children were as young as 10 or 12 years old.

The rich were very rich. The poor were dying of hunger and disease.

In most impoverished 17th Century towns, people through trash into the streets, and “dirty water” ran in the gutters as classy carriages rode past.

Four years before Jamestown settlers arrived, plague broke out in London killing thousands, plague resulting from bites of fleas that had previously bitten and fed on blood of rats that were plentiful in that “civilized” town. Plagues continued to kill Londoners and others in England years after the Jamestown settlers landed here.

The streets of cities were unlighted. Travel at night was hazardous due to a decidedly un-civilized and mostly uncontrollable criminal element.

The myriad poor could afford no chimney, so smoke filled their homes.

Glass was unknown to the impoverished who covered their windows with sheets of linen soaked in linseed oil to let a bit of light into their hovels.

Instead of “civilization”, what came from Europe was a violent attack on a peaceful way of life previously enjoyed by the indigenous Indian people.

America the Just – The Beginning



The English did bring an effective written language and manufacturing as legitimate claims to “civilizing” our continent.

The Indians at that time made everything by hand.

English had machine made goods and could communicate effectively on paper as seen here with quill, ink well, and log book.

However, the English poor still ate from wooden bowls and drank from clay stoneware not one whit advanced beyond the Indians’ clay utensils, and the poor back in England subsisted primarily on bread, cheese, and porridge made from boiling raw grains.

The well-to-do ate fancy foods from pewter plates with fork and knife and drank imported wine from pewter goblets, ignoring or going out of their way to disparage their underclass as nothing more than ill-bred laborers.

Civilization is as civilization does.

The English treatment of Indians, therefore, was far from civilized, with only a few exceptions where leaders of certain tribes were Christianized and taught the English tongue. For the most part the intent and practice of settlers was to oust those who lived here before and expand their foothold in the New World at whatever crimson cost required.

And, so they did.

After a shaky beginning, which many abandoned due to the harsh weather and disease, more Europeans came. They came by tens of thousands.

They settled vast areas and chose for themselves the better parcels of land along rivers providing easy transportation and fertile valleys where they could sustain their fledgling venture with easily cultivated crops.

It’s not at all surprising that Indians were unhappy, displaced as they were from the best land and driven out from their ancestral homes, where they had reared children for generations and buried their dead. You’d be angry, too. And, like the Indians did, you’d fight to keep what was yours.

The stage was set. Indians were treated no better than the poor in England who were whipped, imprisoned, and hanged by the neck until dead.

What some call civilization is not always civilized ... even today!

America the Just – The Beginning



However, civilization does bring mechanization and modern methods for the manufacture of products useful to use human beings, products we all desire to have, products that make our lives easier.

Products that give us power over those who do not have them.

Here's a replica of one of the first things English made upon arrival.

It was a centerpiece of their settlement, essential to their success.

The first sign of American Industry.

A forge!

Hammer and anvil symbolized civilization's progress in those early years, tools to manufacture what Indians could not make by hand.

Armor and weapons of iron and steel.

Armor and weapons against which the spears and arrows of our American ancestors were useless.

Iron and steel against flint arrowheads and spears tipped with sharpened bones of animals.

War was on its way, and Indians were on their way out!

War that continues even now in the Twenty First Century, motivated then, as it is motivated today, by unquenchable thirsts for power and dominion over other peoples and their natural resources (e.g., mid-Eastern oil).

Had early settlers come with olive branch, humility, and a genuine desire to coexist with previously settled inhabitants, each teaching the other to speak their respective languages, working together to cultivate farmland with greater efficiency, extending a hand of brotherhood, and mingling in harmony as fellow human beings, the world would be far different today.

That same spirit of brotherhood that could have been initiated here on our Virginia shore might have prevented the abuses of human rights that slew so many on our Civil War battlefields and ushered in that age of peace all reasonable men and women with honorable hearts desire.

But, the past is what it is. European bigotry was planted here in 1607 by those who brought "civilization" to Jamestown.

America the Just – The Beginning



This is what became of one early European settlement here in America
It is no more.

The sign tells how in 1587 European settlers came to this place, repaired the “huts” of those who failed the attempt earlier, and built new structures to establish for themselves a home in this new land.

The interlopers were wiped out, just as soldiers on horseback later wiped out Indians as “civilization” burned its way westward 200 years later.

The sign tells how their leader, John White, returned to England for more supplies. When he came back three years later he found the place deserted. Nothing of the original structures could be found.

The original settlers simply disappeared.

Where they went or what became of them is unknown.

It is likely they attempted to build on sacred Indian land or near where Indians wished to protect their families and children from the crazy wild white men who abused alcohol, as was a common custom back in Europe, making them untrustworthy, unpredictable, and usually ruthless.

As the Lakota chieftain asked, would you not also fight to protect your family from violence against your home and children?

Indians were not alcoholics until Europeans brought distilled fire water.

Indians smoked the pipe of peace.

Indians were not fools when men made violent by their abuse of the fire water they brought took unjustified vengeance on the innocent.

It was inevitable the two could never peaceably co-exist.

The peace pipe and the bottle are antipodes.

The spirits of each are opposed.

Alcohol fuels violence, and violence brings an end to peace.

In the City of Raleigh, however, the opposite was true in this rare instance of peace successfully resisting the unwanted imposition of violent force.



This is all that remains of a raised earth battlement within which the early settlers attempted to protect themselves from the original Americans who did not take lightly to their unwanted, forceful invasion.

Few artifacts have been found to indicate Europeans were ever here.

This land was foreign to the European invader.

It was home to the Indians, who knew every tree, every bush, every hill and stream, giving them a decided advantage in battle.

The early Europeans were lost in the woods and widely outnumbered.

When tens of thousands came in strength permanent English settlements were able to take Indian lands and drive the indigenous people away.

This process continued more than 200 years.

In the 19th Century the cruel “civilization” project was still in full swing.

In the early years, however, it was not so easy to steal land from Indians determined on remaining where their ancestors lived, where their children had been born, and where they toiled to build homes and cultivate land.

Europeans pressed on, of course, heedless of the Christian teachings some believed they were here to share with a profane indigenous people!

Think of that for a moment or two. Stop and think.

Some Europeans were so spiritually arrogant as to believe that violating Christian principles was their high calling to Christianize the Indians!

Where was Justice?

Looking back on the “civilization” of America we see what *must* be seen and fully understood if we are ever to become a nation that is truly just, a nation that opens its arms to all people, a nation that wins the respect and admiration of other nations and people who will want to be as we are.

This we can do. This we *must* do. And we must do it *quickly indeed!*

Or, we will surely perish as did those early settlers who once lived here.

America the Just – The Beginning



This monument placed in 1896 tells a story of those who came and tried to make a new home here.

it reads:

“On this site in July-August 1585, colonists sent out from England by Sir Walter Raleigh built a fort called by them ‘The New Fort in Virginia’. These colonists were the first settlers of the English Race in America.

“They returned to England in July 1586 with Sir Francis Drake.

“Near this place was born on the 18th of August 1587 Virginia Dare, the first child of English parents born in America, daughter of Ananias Dare and Eleanor White, his wife, members of another band of colonists sent out by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1587.

“Virginia Dare was baptized.

“Manteo, the friendly chief of the Hatteras Indians had been baptized on the Sunday preceding.

“These baptisms are the first known celebrations of a Christian Sacrament in the territory of the thirteen original United States.”

The lowly carpenter from Nazareth who perished on that hateful cross so many years ago was seen by some of our native ancestors as one of their tribe, a man persecuted without cause. They loved Him as some do today.

Persecution of innocent souls has no place in any “civilized” society.

We must learn from the horrid tales our history tells.

Forced civilization is an oxymoron, a contradiction of terms.

Only by love, acceptance, and genuine fellowship in which each holds his brother and sister as an equal can true civilization ever exist.

As the old Dutch saying goes, “Too soon we grow old. Too late smart.”

Time ticks inexorably past our opportunities to change. It waits for none. The fleeting time for our changing must be captured and used today!

We must grasp every opportunity to *be* a civilized people before we can hope to civilize others in this world of accelerating terror and turmoil.

America the Just – The Beginning



What a fair and lovely land the early settlers found on our shores.

Fresh water streams like this ran through green wooded hills, surrounded by fertile land to grow crops, and with unlimited room to expand.

If only those early settlers could have made friends with those who were here before them, like the friendly Hatteras Indians.

Sadly, that is not our history, so we must change our public policies today!

Sharing this bounteous beauty without bloodshed would have ushered in a truly New World of peace and prosperity for each and every one of us!

America could have presented an example for the human race to desire for themselves in every far continent where war and oppression of the weak has too long been commonplace, thousands of years of commonplace.

It is not too late for us to build the peace that might have been.

We can heal the hurts so hatefully caused by those who came before us.

We can find and follow the path to peace too soon broken by the English in their unjust determination to force “civilization” on a people who were *already civilized* and completely content with their Indian way of life.

Was that not the plan of those who sought to bring to our continent a new government conceived in the principle that all men are created equal?

Did not Thomas Jefferson promise the Indians we would all share in the American dream, all Americans, red and white?

What happened was, as so many evils are, driven by money and unbridled desire for power, the spirit of expansionism, and human bigotry that has too long imagined what is not true and must as soon as possible be driven from our land, from our minds, and from the world entire.

What joy there can be but for the lies men choose to believe!

What pleasurable peace could unite us as a people free from inexcusable cost of lives and destruction of property that follows in the wake of stupid ignorance, unbridled greed, and the persistent penchant humans have to judge their fellow man and not themselves.

The land itself said, “Peace is here. Enjoy it. Preserve it. Honor it.”

America the Just – The Beginning



Killing Indians

Post-European American history is anything but just.

One example is the shameless egomaniacal murderer seen in Hollywood's multiple make-believe stories as George Armstrong Custer.

Custer was too-real, no mere character in a harmless movie.

He was no make-believe, sadly.

Nor were his horrific deeds in any way the fiction as they are sometimes portrayed on the silver screen and in other modern media.

Custer was monster, murderer, and fool.

He honestly believed it was his duty to wipe out native Indian Americans.

Like others, he took his orders from those who occupied that tiny District of Columbia far away in the already settled East, where Washington men (sadly there were no women in political office at the time, mores the pity) sent orders by courier to men like Custer directing them to kill or relocate all Indians to reservation settlements west of the Mississippi.

Why we may never know, for there was room enough for Europeans as well as millions of Indians both east and west of the Mississippi.

As God would have it, however, Custer got his greatest surprise and his overdue come-uppance and demise at the Battle of Little Bighorn where he and hundreds of his bluecoat soldiers were slaughtered by tribes of our American ancestors who'd had enough of being pushed around by the blonde bully and his mindless soldiers who obeyed his orders without a single thought or hesitation.

Many of Custer's soldiers made killing Indians something of a sport.

Today in the tall Montana grass stands a monument marking the very spot where the coward bled his last and died.

Not a well-kept cemetery but open to the public, if you care to go.

The grass grows freely here, as it has for hundreds of years, long before Custer's bluecoats rained thunder down on an innocent people.

America the Just – The Beginning



Here's a closer look at the marker where Custer fell.

A somewhat insignificant monument nearly lost in the weeds.

Here he bled from wounds like those he and his men inflicted on so many innocent others in the blood-stained years before he, too, discovered what it's like to be struck down without mercy like a mangy dog.

Whatever good writers today may errantly ascribe to this narcissist ass, his memory will be forever tainted by the cruelty with which he used superior force to mercilessly destroy the homes and lives of innocent human beings who deserved the justice our nation should stand for at all times, no matter what expedience may call for. Heinous acts like his are inexcusable under any and all circumstances, expedient or otherwise.

Custer's rank at Little Big Horn where he fell was Lieutenant Colonel.

He is frequently referred to as "General Custer", because he held the rank of major general for a time during the Civil War.

After the War, however, his rank was reduced to captain. Later, when he joined the 7th Cavalry Regiment he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.

While he was noted for his skill in leading Cavalry at Gettysburg, fought in skirmishes around Appomattox, and was present at ceremonies when Lee surrendered to Grant at the Courthouse, he was ruthless to the Indians for nearly nine years before our native ancestors got the better of him. He died at Little Big Horn after leading his troops to a wholesale massacre by Indians, a massacre he could have anticipated and therefore avoided but for his egomaniacal narcissism.

Custer was one of the many who think they knew more than they do.

Sadly, he was not the only one who paid for the egomaniac's bravado and cold-blooded cruelty. His soldiers and many Indians died that day.

He refused to follow orders of his superiors.

He refused to listen to advice of his scouts.

He allowed his troops to be divided on the field.

And, in consequence of his arrogant conceit, he was ambushed by the victorious Indians who now had firearms as powerful as his cavalry.

America the Just – The Beginning



Little Bighorn wasn't just another riverside slaughter of innocent women, children, and old men defending themselves with arrows and spears.

Tables were reversed this time.

More than 250 unfortunate bluecoat soldiers were killed at Little Bighorn battlefield, victims of their leader's megalomaniacal determination to wipe out Indians he believed unable to outwit his strategic brilliance.

The memorial states that officers' remains were re-interred elsewhere, that Custer's body was taken to West Point (his *alma mater*), but the rest of the regular soldiers lie mouldering there beneath the tall Montana grass.

Nothing is said of relocating bodies of more than 200 scouts and civilians who died here. And, of course, there are no headstones to mark where the Indians fell defending their land and families from this madman.

It was an irresponsible and unnecessary attempted genocide to clear a land that is today as empty and wide-open as it was back then.

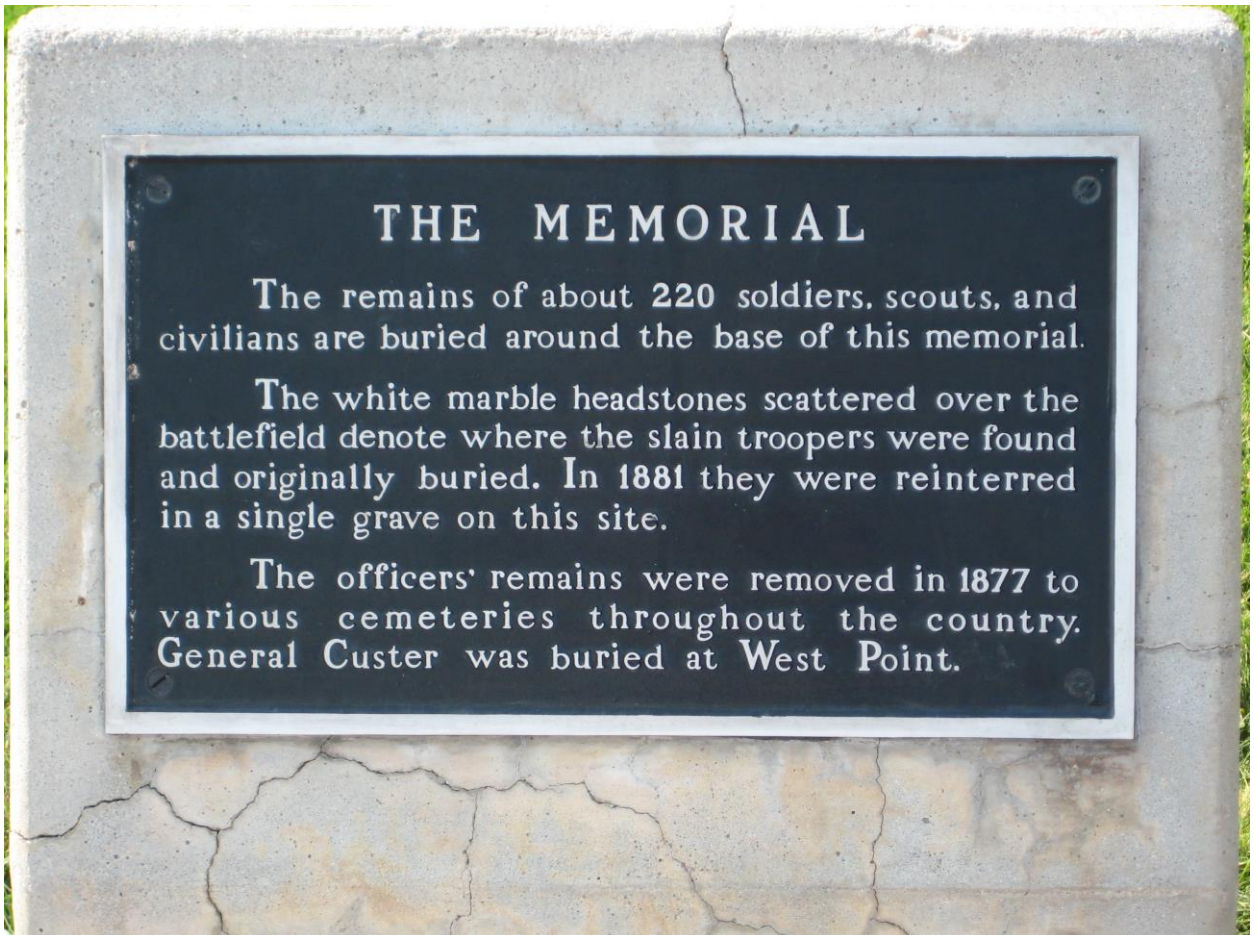
Montana today, 150 years later, still has room for white, red, black, brown, yellow, and every other color, religion, and culture of human life.

There never was a need to kill and drive the indigenous Americans west to reservations. Much of the slaughter of Europeans at the hands of Indians was pay-back for what the Indians had received at the white man's hands already ... death of Indian babies in their mothers' wombs or arms, useless burning of Indian villages that were in nobody's way, senseless killing of herds of roaming buffalo so essential to Indian life, and more than you will find in the history books of today's schools or ignorant movie portrayal of whooping Indians in full feathered headdress attacking wagon trains.

Drive from Duluth, Minnesota to Fargo, North Dakota then on to Montana across Idaho and all of Washington State until you reach the Pacific Ocean at Seattle and you pass very few farmhouses and only a handful of people who live exclusively in the few cities along the way, none of which towns are large by any means.

Indians were killed because they were not English, plain and simple! They were in the way of English culture, English religion, English lifestyles.

Sadly, progress too often demands destruction of the past.



This pitiful cemetery in the midst of tall grass on a rolling hill literally in the middle of nowhere is all that's left to remember the senseless battle that took place here.

Few people visit this place.

Even fewer wonder why.

Some are inspired to work for a better world, without such men as Custer to lead them and their children to war against Truth.

The honor here, if honor there can be, is to the men who dutifully followed orders on both sides of the battle.

When you go there, and I hope you do, look around you from atop the hill and see the empty land all directions, room for peace to have its victory.

The land is mostly grass these days but would support cultivation of many diverse crops, if anyone lived there willing to plant and harvest food.

Of all the lessons to be learned here, the one that stands out most is the absolute futility of what was done here. A waste of lives and opportunity.

Peace could have been negotiated *before* Indian tribes had their fill of the senseless slaughter they suffered for more than 200 years before the battle of Little Big Horn, *before* the Indians acquired firearms as good or better than those the cavalry had.

But peace is not big business for those who manufacture weapons and sit in high-backed leather chairs hundreds of miles from the bloodshed and pontificate on what is right and wrong or which party should win the next big election to keep their war machine producing dollars for the rich.

Peace *is* possible.

Peace is *always* possible.

However, peace can only be won by words, not warfare.

At the end of every age of hostility on this old planet of ours, bloodshed only stops when ink is forced to flow from pens wielded by wisdom.

The ghosts of those who died here on both sides, pray for that wisdom.

We, too, should pray for peace as well as *work* for peace with wisdom.

America the Just – The Beginning



Here they died and for what?

Americans of two kinds died here. True Americans and new Americans.

Warriors came here from other nations to use and enjoy the bounty of our land from sea to shining sea and to hell with anyone who got in the way.

Indians had been here thousands of years enjoying the bounty of our land from sea to shining sea, and they were “in the way”.

If it were a matter of who had the greater “right” to be here under English common law, then certainly Indians, because the common law of England (that each of our states with the exception of Louisiana) adopted by acts of legislatures. The common law favors original occupants of land against all interlopers who attempt possession by force.

But, the early history of our nation tells a different tale.

A bloody tale of “lawful lawlessness”, ignoring the common law.

It was as if to secure The Rule of Law here on our continent, The Rule of Law must first be shattered by gunfire ridding the land of people who had no notion of the Christian catechisms that also were violated to make the nation safe for Churchianity that came in the name of Christ but failed in every way to honor the principles of Christ.

Innocent blood was spilled at Calvary when the Lamb of God was nailed to that cruel cross 2,000 years ago to inspire men to see the hateful cost of self-interest, bigotry and ignorance.

When innocent blood was spilled to rid our continent of an entire race of indigenous people, Christian values and The Rule of Law were ignored.

And, they were not only ignored by soldiers who spilled the blood.

Those values that were supposed to be the philosophical bedrock of our fledgling nation were ignored by men who held the highest offices back East where they could not hear the screams of women and children who were mercilessly slaughtered on direct orders from those high offices.

Truth is what it is, self-serving rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding.

America violated her most sacred founding principles.

America was not just

America the Just – The Beginning



No more than 50 yards west of the cemetery at Little Bighorn, separated from the hallowed graves of English soldiers by a concrete sidewalk that runs through the park from south to north, other mute monuments tell a different story.

A story far too seldom told.

English soldiers lie buried a few yards east of the concrete sidewalk.

A few yards west of that sidewalk stand stark reminders of the bloody price Indians paid in their ultimately vain attempt to stop the lawless English raids on their lands and merciless killing of their people.

A human being just as entitled to life's benefits as either you or I or the monsters who came with their guns in the name of English religion and English law is remembered by this stone.

June 25, 1876 Closed Hand, a Cheyenne warrior gave his life in the vain hope his sacrifice might preserve the lives and lifestyles of his people.

He is only a memory today, remembered by the very few who visit here.

His people were planning to move north, out of the southern reservation where he and his people had been imprisoned by the force of soldiers of the pubescent government of the new United States.

They simply wanted to live free from oppressive rule of white men's laws that white men bent and broke according to white men's selfish whims.

Closed Hand and nearly 100 brave warriors died defending their way of life, a way of life the law of this land is required to protect!

The battle lasted less than an hour.

For many years thereafter the public was told about "Custer's Last Stand" and a heroic 7th Cavalry being overrun by bloodthirsty savage Indians. The battlefield was later named "Custer Battlefield National Monument".

However, in 1961 Custer's name was removed. The property was renamed Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

Congress ordered that an Indian Memorial be included on the property to honor the original Americans who died here in their vain attempt to save their families and their way of life from the encroaching Europeans.



These signs are on the west side of a concrete sidewalk that runs through this hallowed ground.

Shamefully, the sidewalk separates white from red. The red-skinned race was given space late in 1991 to tell their side of this sad American story.

No concrete sidewalk, wall, or legal doctrine should ever divide us!

We are all human beings.

True justice *never* favors one above another. For such is not justice at all.

If ever we are true to the Principles of Peace, we will understand what is written on the Indian side of that sidewalk, and we will honor it.

Black Elk urges all of us to share the sacred pipe and know the power that is peace.

Who dares to question the wrath of Sitting Bull whose people were killed in unmerciful attacks? Who would not stand up and defend his home? It is not savagery to defend one's home. The common law of England gives us each that right. It is in writing. It is the law of the land!

Every child should be taught the words of Crazy Horse. "We did not ask you white men to come here. The Great Spirit gave us this country as a home. You had yours. We did not interfere with you. We do not want your civilization."

Yet at this present hour nations east and west use military force and stealth murder to impose on other nations what they wish the entire world to be.

When will we learn that an economic or political system that works well in Chicago may not be appropriate for the people of Beijing or Tehran.

We are different the world around even as we are essentially the same. We enjoy diverse foods, wear different styles of clothing, listen to music that is unique to our separate cultures, and spend our leisure time in activities that vary widely on climate, proximity of beaches and mountains, and a host of other variables where each of us should be free to choose.

It is written in the books of every religion that our God loves those who do good to others.

When will America be truly just to everyone?

*“Give them now the flowering
stick that they may flourish, and
the sacred pipe that they may
know the power that is peace.”*

- Black Elk, Oglala Lakota

*“They attacked our village and we killed them all.
What would you do if your home was attacked?
You would stand up like a brave man and defend it.”*

- Sitting Bull, Lakota, 1881

*“We did not ask you white men to
come here. The Great Spirit gave us
this country as a home. You had
yours...We did not interfere with
you...We do not want your civilization!”*

- Crazy Horse
Lakota

This structure on the Indian side of that narrow dividing walkway calls us to remember a once proud and powerful people.

They simply wanted to be left alone in peace.

Instead some foolhardy egotists concluded that everyone on our continent must think the same, wear the same clothes, eat with fork and spoon, and vote in the popular elections so “civilization” may one day rule the world.

It is not working.

Not yet.

Not by a million miles.

We still kill or incarcerate people who disagree with how our government leaders think things ought to be. We still force our will on others who, like the American Indian, wish merely to be left alone.

Where will it end?

And at what cost?

While it is true that some of our ancient American ancestors were savage in their dealings with the European intruder and even with some people of their own race long before we came, still it must be admitted that the white man has been savage also and, if we are willing to be honest, in far worse ways than the American Indian ever dreamed.

Imagine poison gas snaking its invisible way through muddy trenches dug in the fields of Europe in 1917 during that horrible conflict fools believed would be the last World War.

And how can we defend the deaths of helpless children vaporized in the blink of an eye by the white flashes of light that leveled Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the World War II? Why were two bombs needed? Surely one was enough to prove the frightening power we now possess!

We pride ourselves on seeking peace then slaughter the innocent to make peace possible, instead of sharing the sacred pipe as Black Elk urged and know the power that is peace.

If we want to get along with our neighbors, we must keep our soldiers out of their backyards. If we want peace we must be just!

America the Just – The Beginning



How wise the so-called savage Indian.

The Cheyenne Elder, Austin Two Moons, is quoted on the Indian side of that hateful sidewalk separating white from red on that grassy Montana hill where death defeated hope.

Two Moons is quoted there because his words are precious and wise.

His thoughts should be on the minds of every one of us.

“We want peace on earth.”

We don't want war!

We must get our minds and hearts together, a goal that can never be reality until we pray together, asking our creator for “peace throughout our cities and throughout this war-torn world.”

What foolish man thinks he created himself?

What foolish man thinks his will never end?

What foolish man does not yet know there is a center to this Earth?

The price of our blind ignorance is riot in the streets today, bombs that fall on hospitals and schools, political tom-foolery that threatens the Rule of Law instead of striving willfully to strengthen it.

The pain and destruction we see today results from nothing but our blind ignorance that will continue to threaten our children's future until Two Moons' wisdom is our own.

Until we know the power that is peace.

Militance is not peace.

Aggression is not peace.

Belligerance is not peace.

Arrogance is not peace.

The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace.

Let the words of the wise who've gone before us ring in our hearts today.

Teach America to be just.

America the Just – The Beginning



Photograph courtesy of
Austin Two Moons family

“We want peace on earth, and that’s what I have strived for....I’ve prayed here every June 25th; every summer for the future of our young...I don’t want no war here again in the United States. I need your help....to get your minds and your hearts together. Pray together. Ask the creator for peace throughout the country and throughout the world.”

- Austin Two Moons, Northern Cheyenne Elder

Austin Two Moons' prayer may soon be realized.

Perhaps it won't be long until all human beings live in peace.

Perhaps we're on the threshold of that coming age when there'll be justice for all and not just some.

Perhaps we will yet enjoy the beauty of this amazing planet as brothers and sisters, human beings every one.

Perhaps we'll destroy the lie that any is more perfect than another.

Perhaps we'll learn we are no more nor less than what God's grace allows.

Because, dear friend, *we must!*

Look out across the hills beyond the graves on this lonely Montana land.

See the future, beyond the tombstones.

Count the cost.

Pay the price.

Make peace today. Work for justice!

Or, as Charles Dickens wrote, reality may take a wolfish turn and make an end of us all.

This time in which we live is nothing like the age when Custer foolishly sacrificed the lives of his men on this hill.

We are no longer hampered by the short range of a Henry rifle or Colt .44 revolver to destroy our so-called enemies.

We have within our grasp, at the push on one red button, the power to take the lives of every plant, every animal, every human being, and turn this beautiful world into a silent barren stone circling a distant star somewhere within a universe that has no boundaries.

We don't ride horses into town, as some still did when I was just a boy.

We don't depend on wind to fill the sails of wooden vessels to cross wide oceans.

We cannot go back to those lost days again.

What we do about tomorrow must begin today, and it is entirely up to *us*.

America the Just – The Beginning



Authorized for Murder

After the battle at Little Bighorn 700 wounded soldiers were brought here to Fort Abraham Lincoln, where Custer built this luxurious home.

It was here he resided during his many campaigns to exterminate Indians.

The fort and home are in North Dakota, overlooking the Missouri River.

Custer's home is the centerpiece for Fort Abraham Lincoln (maintained by the federal park service today) where re-enactors dress in the blue garb of soldiers who slaughtered Indians by the thousands little more than 100 years ago. Soldiers who were ordered to kill without mercy.

Orders from the conceited man who slept in in this very house.

His ambition knew no limit.

Some believe he aspired to become President of the United States.

His ego was unbounded.

Like Nero 2,000 years earlier, he thought no more of taking the life of another human being than swatting a mosquito biting his neck.

What did he know of ideas and ideals to inspire *everyone*?

What did he know of justice?

What did he know of the fundamental principles of common law on which the American experiment was launched?

All men equal? Not to this man.

What did he know of the America we today must work for as one people?

Nor was Custer alone in that military narcissism that puts obedience to a superior's orders ahead of common sense and moral decency.

There were dozens of anti-Indian leaders in the United States Army west of the Mississippi willing to strike down the Indian population as if they were nothing but a ragged pack of rabid dogs.

Yet Custer stands out among them as prime exemplar of their ilk.

Slaughtering Indians was considered heroic, an American duty.

America the Just – The Beginning



Custer actually wore this hat!

Says a lot about the man, doesn't it?

Imagine him mounted high in the saddle of his war horse.

Imagine this helmet on his head.

Imagine his long blonde hair trailing out behind him as he rode toward the homes of those indigenous people he considered vermin.

Imagine him shouting orders to slaughter those whom he believed to be unworthy of life, unworthy of a piece of land to call their own.

The West in those days was wide open spaces, prairies and forests as far as the eye could see. There was no pressing need to rid the land of Indians.

Yet soldiers followed this man and his fancy helmet to do his hateful dirty work, obedient, guilty forevermore.

Some must have wondered if what this maniac ordered was what America should be doing, whether he was truly acting on orders from his superiors or merely carrying out a private vengeance on innocent souls.

His soldiers were ordered to murder little children.

His soldiers were ordered to murder women and unarmed old men.

Surely in the minds of some there lurked a doubt about the man's sanity.

Merciless slaughter was not an expression of the American Spirit they'd been taught at home or church.

They knew Thomas Jefferson wrote in our Declaration of Independence before this madman was born, "All men are created equal"?

Not equal in Custer's mind.

What sort of person would wear a helmet such as this?

Would you?

What sort of soldier would blindly risk his life to follow a man wearing such an egotistic hat?

Surely there were questions and hesitations in the ranks.

Perhaps even a bit of secret laughter behind the madman's back.

America the Just – The Beginning



High atop a hill a few hundred yards from the fort itself is this blockhouse, from which the surrounding countryside can be seen for many miles.

It was designed to protect the men of Fort Abraham Lincoln from reprisals by Indians who, by now, were all too clearly aware their way of life, their families, and their very lives were threatened by the men who built the fort and its blockhouse.

The soldiers made this and many others like it that can be found replicated in state and federal parks across our nation today.

These strange wooden structures are uniquely designed to allow soldiers to fire down on Indians through small open ports or holes.

If an Indian were able to approach the base of the structure and huddle near its wall, above him were ports through which the fire of cavalry rifles and pistols would rain down certain death.

Notice here again the wide-open spaces on all sides of this hill even today!

There was room for every American to live together in peace.

Unlike the Indian way of thinking, motives of “civilized” men were driven by desire for money and power, not peace.

Money was something early Indians had no need of.

The merit of an Indian was measured by courage and wisdom, not money.

The merit of the average European in the eyes of other Europeans was, as has been the cause of sorrow for so many centuries, measured by one’s wealth, his bloodline heritage, or how high his political connections go, not by any genuine worth or virtue inherent in the individual.

The European measure of a man was not *within* the man but outside him.

Indians valued others by the strength of spirit dwelling in their hearts.

There is so much we might have learned from the lowly Indians murdered by our soldiers or driven from their homes rather than being befriended.

There is still much we can learn from Indian wisdom all but lost in today’s modernized industrial “civilization” that values what a man possesses, not who or what he is inside.

Will we learn, or will reality take a wolfish turn?

America the Just – The Beginning



A closer view of Fort Abraham Lincoln's blockhouse.

The peaceful Missouri river flows in the distance?

Notice the ports through which defending soldiers could mercilessly kill nearby attackers by shooting down on them with superior weaponry.

Notice the observation cupola atop the structure, from which a lookout can see for miles on a clear day and know in time to warn the others if a threat of attack is imminent?

You can visit this structure and explore its interior today.

You can walk down by the river's edge.

You can feel the peace.

You can hear birds sing.

You can watch fish jump.

You can imagine how this North Dakota outpost must have looked two hundred years ago and imagine the violence it stood for.

Those who fought here were told Indians aren't "people", not human!

Those who fought here were told Indians were wild animals to be treated as such and killed without mercy.

Why?

Was it just?

Certainly, if Indians were attacking, the soldiers had every right to hide in this structure and shoot down on them.

But, why was the fort built here in the first place?

Why was a fort necessary?

Was there not a better way?

Were any of the Indians unwilling to make peace in the early years?

Did Indians attack before they and their villages were attacked?

Did they fight before they were driven out of their ancestral homes?

Do the research. Learn the truth for yourself.

America the Just – The Beginning



Nearby you can visit the replica of an Indian village where people lived in peace hundreds of years until moving south to escape the freezing North Dakota winters around 1781, before Custer and Fort Abraham Lincoln.

These people were known as the Mandans, a peaceful people, living from agriculture, fishing, and great herds of buffalo that roamed nearby before white men came to slaughter the fuzzy animals for pure sport, leaving the Indians' principle source of food and clothing rotting as carcasses lying out on the open plains.

Until the white man came, the Mandan were happy with their way of life, cold in winter but in the warmer months enjoying fertile land, plentiful buffalo, and fresh fish from the nearby Missouri river.

Like other Indians, they wished only that the influx of new white-skinned settlers would leave them alone to live their lives in peace.

They lived together in this particular place for 200 years before the men in Philadelphia declared a newly formed white man's nation to be free from British rule in 1776.

They were here before we declared ourselves an independent nation on the new continent we called America.

The Mandan wished only to be unmolested by the new intruders.

Why?

They were human beings like you, unwilling to be interrupted by violent force of arms removing them from their homes, just as you would be if an armed force threatened to remove you from *your* home.

There was plenty of room in North Dakota for all to live in harmony?

As you can see, these homes were intended to be permanent, erected with hard labor, each requiring several months to build.

By the time Custer arrived at the nearby fort, the Mandan were long gone, forced to live in reservations on land not nearly so ideally suited to their chosen way of life.

America the Just – The Beginning



This inside a recent reconstruction of one of their homes.

The structures are built by assembling logs then, as seen in the foregoing picture, covered over with sticks and sod.

Winters here in North Dakota are brutally cold.

A tee pee or log lean-to not provide enough insulations keep them warm.

The bearskin you see near the crude fireplace was no doubt a comfort to a Mandan Indian trying to keep soul and body together in the deep chill of a North Dakota winter when snow piled on the ground outside and atop the roof of their homes to depths of several feet.

The hole in the ceiling released smoke from the tiny fire they built in the center of their home, however this was likely closed in winter.

This wasn't home as we know home, but it was home to them.

Were they a "primitive" people?

That depends entirely on what one means by "primitive".

They actively traded with other Indian nations with whom they shared treaties that were honored by most of the tribes.

They were accomplished hunters, fishermen, and farmers.

They enjoyed family life just like people today, rearing and teaching their children how to live the Mandan life.

They had no notion of the European extravagance enjoyed by those who lived on the Eastern Seaboard of our nation. They were unaware of the conveniences created by burgeoning European technology of the Industrial Revolution. They had and enjoyed their own technologies. To judge them primitive because they did not have what the English factories produced is bigotry of the first order.

If you didn't know there were such things as televisions, smartphones, and microwave ovens, it would be unkind in the extreme to call you primitive and certainly inaccurate.

Yet, that was the mindset of European newcomers.

Sad

America the Just – The Beginning



Look out through the door of that same Indian home, home like hundreds and thousands of other Indian homes dotting the landscape from Maine to California in those early days.

See the children playing games outside in the sunshine. Hear their long-silent voices laughing like other children, not one bit different from your children who laugh and should never have cause to shed a single tear.

Hear their screams as soldiers drive them from their homes, murdering them and their parents without remorse.

At the beginning of the European conquest of this nation, Indians posed no threat to the “civilization” movement. Indeed, many of them embraced the European way of life, and a great many were far more civilized than the drunken rabble of in-bred white men who thought it sport to kill Indians for the fun of it.

Indians were farmers, fishermen, hunters. Human beings like you and me. They lacked the modern conveniences we enjoy and take for granted?

Yet they were human beings just like us. Did they have to be driven from their homes? They had no desire to interfere with the lighter-skinned men who came to hunt them down and drive them out.

They wanted to be left alone to live in peace. They wanted to net a few fish in the river or take an occasional buffalo for food and clothing. They wanted to sit around fireplaces in the winter cold and enjoy fellowship awaiting the warmer weather.

Instead, light-skinned men came with guns and swords.

American was not just then! America is not just now!

We say the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag, ending with words that are either a promise of something yet to come or simply a falsehood intended to promote an idea that has no basis in reality. The power of our courts and how to use that power belongs *only* to those who either know how to play the game or have enough money to hire a lawyer. Not “all” have justice as we say in the Pledge.

With liberty and justice for all? No. Today’s justice only for “some”?

Is this the generation that will make things right?

America the Just – The Beginning



Fort Abraham Lincoln Infantry Post. Part of North Dakota history. Is it a proud heritage of greatness or a shameful reminder of unfortunate truth?

The fort is a memorial to times when men were unkind and “civilization” was a cruel political movement advanced by savage, merciless, murderers working for the monetary gain of a few light-skinned men and women.

True justice treats each one of us as absolute equals. True justice measures right and wrong in an honest balance.

True justice is blind.

What was this when Custer rode from this very fort to meet his doom with the 7th Cavalry at Little Bighorn Battlefield? It surely wasn't justice!

What are we about today as innocent unarmed men and women are shot dead in our streets by thugs and law enforcement officers alike?

What are we about when we allow ourselves to foolishly believe we can eliminate the hatred that springs from radical thinking by taking the lives of those who think radical thoughts? Has any thought, belief, or religion ever been silenced by force of arms? Can sheer force alone eliminate the beliefs of any culture? Or does it serve only to inflame and enforce those beliefs and intensify the violence that always resists forced change? What are we doing to *win* others to practice peaceful thinking?

History has shown too often that force cannot stifle thought. Thought is the motivation for everything we humans do. Thought makes decisions affecting us all. Thought cannot be killed. It must be transformed.

Thought builds monuments to the past like this, yet thought can also reach forward with hope, labor, and determination to build a better future.

Thought alone leads people peace.

Lasting peace will never be gained by bloodshed.

Peace grows gently within a people who think good thoughts and follow those thoughts with action to put an end to warfare, bigotry, violence, and the ills that too easily beset us when we stop thinking good thoughts.

Smokey Bear used to say, “Only YOU can prevent forest fires.”

We say, “Only YOU can encourage good thinking and positive values.”

America the Just – The Beginning



Custer's lavish home in the wilderness of North Dakota.

A taste of European luxury in what was then and is today a land with room enough for everyone, regardless of race or color or religion.

As one drives across most of North Dakota the most striking reality we see is its vast miles upon miles of absolute emptiness.

Miles upon miles of standing forest and uncultivated open grassland.

Plenty of room for millions of humans to coexist in peace and prosperity.

Perhaps more than any other of our states, North Dakota has vast area for humanity to build towns and settlements, farms and factories.

More than 70,000 square miles to grow crops, fish, hunt game, and live in peace with abundance for everyone to share.

There is not and never was a need for men like Custer to murder innocents until entire Indian cultures rose up with arms in self-defense fighting for their children's safety and their ancient, peaceful way of life.

Yet Custer and far too many others came long ago to drive out those who previously lived peaceably in these empty lands with wives and children, songs and laughter, games and hard work to gather food and stay warm through long winters.

How sadly some men are infected with the idea they are better than others.

How sadly men believe themselves entitled to take from others what they would not wish to be taken from themselves.

How sadly vengeance acts without mercy to destroy human hope.

The Golden Rule played no part in this part of our American history.

The Golden Rule *must* be made to play the pivotal part in our future.

Or we will perish as a nation as surely as night follows day.

One might argue Custer was an unwitting product of the age in which he lived, a soldier following orders issued in faraway Washington City by a handful of men in high-backed leather chairs smoking expensive cigars, sipping expensive cognac from crystal glasses.

But each one of us stands solely responsible for our own actions.

America the Just – The Beginning



As with men so with nations.

There is an unavoidably unpleasant consequence to wrong-doing that is too seldom corrected when correction is possible.

The only way to avoid the looming, growing unpleasant consequence we are beginning to see in our land and around the world today is to admit we have been wrong, apologize to those we've hurt, and pledge to be a force for good from this day going forward.

The excuse, "I was only following orders," is no excuse at all when what's done is inhumane, whether slaughtering Indians by the tens of thousands, sending entire races of people to their deaths by millions, or incinerating babies and children in the momentary flash of an atomic bomb.

Kindness is the medicine we must apply to ourselves and to the wounded souls of our world, souls suffering under tyrannical rule and mad merciless slaughter at this very moment.

This man is not an Indian fighter. He is a Park Service employee working at Fort Abraham Lincoln as a tourist guide. He wears the uniform worn by Custer's troops who occupied the fort at the time of the infamous battle at Little Big Horn. He was very pleasant to us when we toured Fort Abraham Lincoln, yet one can imagine a fellow dressed similarly when orders from Custer required him to kill men and women of all ages, including children of all ages, with cannon, rifle, pistol, and sword.

Three abiding questions:

Was it necessary?

Who benefitted?

Was there a humane alternative to the hateful slaughter?

Nations, like men, are marked by past deeds. Our nation wears a shameful crimson stain from far too many errors for which we must apologize.

If time has not too deeply ingrained that stain in our national character, we may yet find ways to erase the ugly reproach of that stain by learning and putting into practice the ancient, time-proven principles of justice that will treat us all as equals ... every last one of us.

We must, or all but the rich and powerful shall all too soon be slaves.

America the Just – The Beginning



America the Beautiful

Our nation is such a beautiful place.

There is plenty of room for everyone ... no matter what color, gender, or religion.

Plenty of room to share.

Just as diverse colors of autumn foliage glisten from trees without fighting or competing with each other, without crowding each other out, so we may similarly live together in harmony ... each with our own color, creed, and individuality.

But!

There must be justice for everyone, equal, fair, and blind!

Peace cannot exist without it.

Warfare and hardship spring up where individuals or groups of individuals believe they aren't being fairly treated.

When any of us believe our laws are being used to protect others, to make others rich, to keep the little people down and lift powerful people up, we have the making of war and rebellion.

It has been so throughout the ages.

Beauty never shines so brightly as it does when Justice prevails.

After all, what else is there to fight for, to work for, to pray for?

If justice fails, all else fails with it.

There is no liberty without justice, and justice must above all else be *just!*

America must be just.

Are we?

Can we be?

Is there a part for *you* to play?

Is going to the voting poll enough?

Can you do more to promote justice and the peace it makes possible?

America the Just – The Beginning



The beauty of vast open spaces in our nation can take your breath away.

Soaring mountains show the majesty that calls us to a higher walk.

Land of the free.

Home of the brave.

But, first we must be just.

Our laws must treat each person equally ... without regard to wealth or the financial ability to hire a competent lawyer.

At this hour as I write these thoughts to you, America is not yet just.

Politics has never been and never can be an answer to our justice problem, for in politics battles are between conflicting opinions and rhetorical skill.

Justice must be protected in courts, where politics should have no place.

Yet, today, politics plays a part in what our judges do, contrary to the rules of justice judges are supposed to follow.

My favorite bumper sticker: "Want Peace? Work for Justice!"

We are called to be peacemakers.

Someone famous said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

What does peace require?

Some foolishly believe peace can be won by threat of war or war itself.

What then?

What follows war fools wage to win peace?

What does peace look like when all dissent has been quashed?

What does peace look like when all who disagree with thoughts prevailing in the minds of our leaders are slaughtered?

Is the peace we seek a world in which all peoples are constrained to be and act the same, to share the same beliefs, to pledge allegiance to Big Brother or be summarily blindfolded at a wall and shot for disagreeing?

Justice must come first. Not war nor violent protest in our streets.

America the Just – The Beginning



Justice alone can win the peace we all desire.

Justice with each other.

Justice toward each other.

Justice in our courts.

Justice in our streets.

Justice in businesses.

Justice in our families, ruling our homes with an even hand.

Justice assured by all nations.

Justice among the vast religions and religious people of the world.

Justice that obeys strict rules, instead of judgments meted out by judges moved by personal whims, influenced by minority views of what is the kaleidoscopically changing political correctness of the day, or rules that defy Constitutional prerogative in the name of public interest (whatever that forever changing idea might be at any particular moment).

We must remember where we came from. We must remember those who were here before “we” arrived with our guns, steel swords, superior forces, and a brave and wonderful ideal that we have yet to fulfill.

We have denied justice to tens of thousands of human, perhaps hundreds of thousands, indeed, perhaps millions!

This was their land.

Now it is ours.

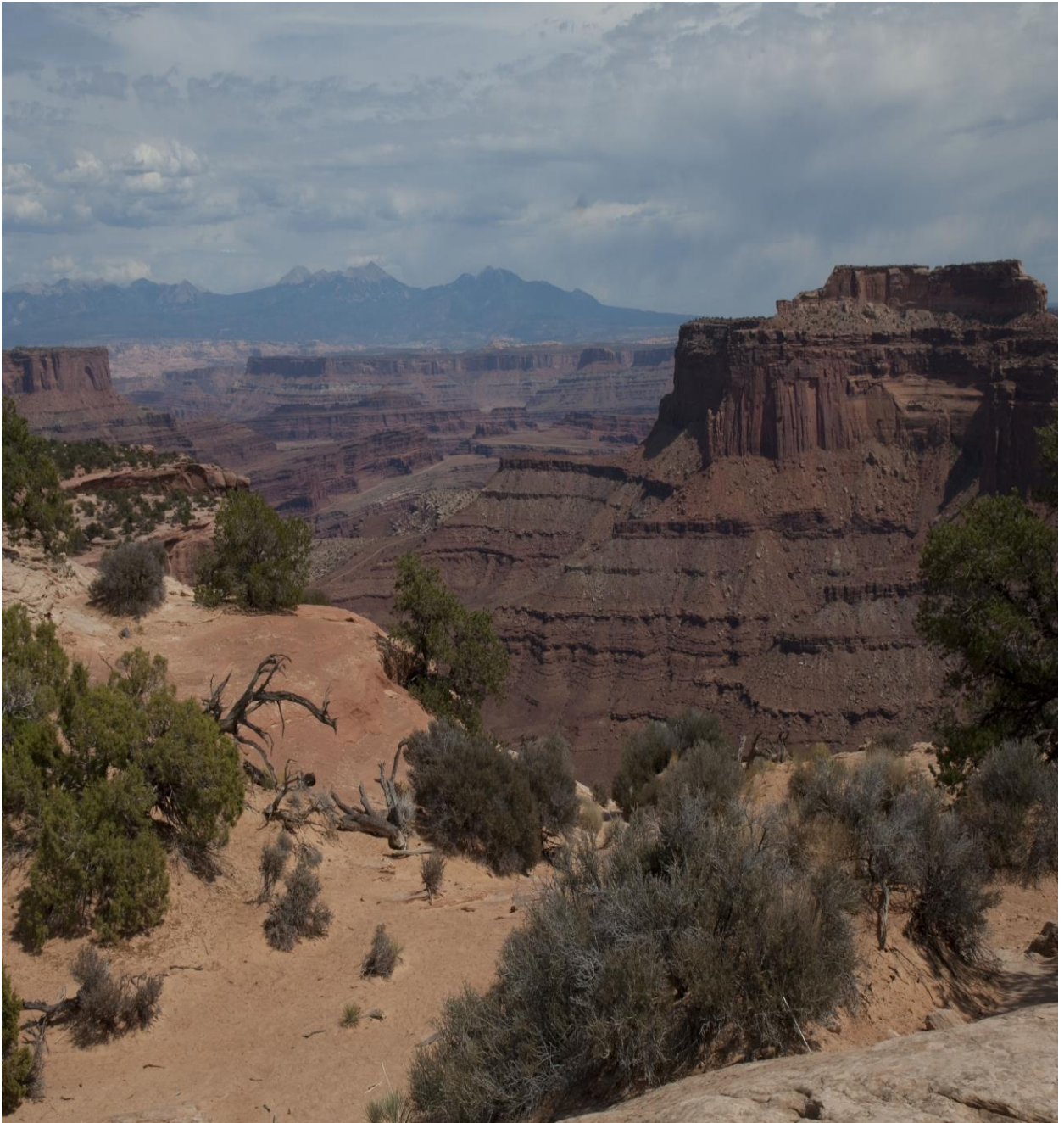
Majestic mountains and canyons staggering the imagination.

The Hand of God was seen through the eyes of our native ancestors, and the Hand of God needs to be seen more clearly through the eyes of modern man with his present God denying philosophies that cannot but wound us all if we refuse to judge ourselves more closely and change the status quo while there yet is time for us to do so.

These mountains change very little over time. They are much the same as they were tens of thousands of years ago.

We, however, cannot remain like these stony mountains. We must change!

America the Just – The Beginning



Arable land galore!

Anyone who's traveled through the United States and Canadian provinces, knows there's land enough for all of us!

No need to kill for it.

No need to hoard it.

No need to drive indigenous people from the better parts of it nor to deny human beings with darker pigmented skin any of the benefits us lighter pigmented people enjoy as a matter of course.

We should take a cue from our true American ancestors.

They knew how to share their land.

They knew how to live together peaceably.

They knew justice of a different kind.

Nearly every one of the various tribes and Indian nations knew in their hearts there is a One who made us all, who made the earth and stars, who judges every action and rewards or punishes accordingly.

Their Great Spirit is the God of Abraham, Mohammed, Christ, the Sikhs, and all other major religions imported here from Europe and Asia.

They had different views of their Great Spirit, just as the rest of us have different views of that which we call God.

But, each day of their lives they lived in intimacy with their Great Spirit.

The wind, the flowers, the birds, the mountains, everything around them spoke of the Great Spirit's presence and humbled them to pray for mercy, strength, and good harvest.

We are not alone, no matter what foolish atheists believe to the contrary.

The Great Spirit is alive and well, ruling the heavens as well as this planet.

The Great Spirit *is* Justice, absolute and inescapable.

Either we work for justice in our society today, or that greater Justice will impose its irreversible will upon us all.

Without justice every man and nation is doomed to a savage end.

America the Just – The Beginning



America!

From sea to shining sea.

Amazingly beautiful when seen beyond ghettos, squalid public housing, street shootings, and hatred other people increasingly hold for us and the lifestyle we teach our children to accept as normal.

Not everyone agrees with our American way of life.

Not that we have failed to do great things.

Not that we have hesitated to lend a hand to other nations in trouble.

But, that we have lost our compass and are losing our way.

The Unseen Hand is everywhere.

We are each passing day becoming more blind to that compass that should guide and inspire us to be a people worthy of the world's admiration.

This nation, because of its geological and agricultural riches has not yet begun to appreciate the tremendous value we can offer by being just.

We once had a plan. A just plan.

As Abraham Lincoln remarked, "A nation dedicated to the principle that all men are created equal."

It was not brown-skinned men alone of which he spoke.

It was native Indian, Asian, and the little Mexican boy born in poverty on the wrong side of town where too often the only way out is crime.

We spend trillions on mechanical and technological weaponry.

What do we spend on ideas and ideals to bind us as a people under God?

How much is said taught to our people about justice. Indeed, how much of the principles of law and the practices of justice in our courts is known to any of us average Americans.

Not much!

As the bumper sticker said, "If you want Peace, work for Justice."

To work for justice, however, one must be taught the principles on which justice is built. Principles too long hidden from us by the legal profession!

America the Just – The Beginning



Why Not Make Peace?

This man, though a re-enactor at one of many celebrations of Indian life we found traveling throughout our land, is not unlike the men and women found here by the Europeans when they landed.

He doesn't seem so fierce.

He is Indian.

He wants peace, as do you and I.

He wants to live as long as the Great Spirit allows him to live.

He wants to enjoy the bounties of this amazing planet, to go for walks in our deep forests, to share some stories of the ancient past with friends, to be accepted as an equal and benevolent member of our human race.

Would it not have been better to make friends with those here before us?

How hard would it have been?

Is it not *always* better to make friends whenever we can?

It was Indian men about whom Thomas Jefferson pledged a pact by which we'd *all* be joined as Americans, that we'd work as a single people, that we'd eventually assimilate, that our racial and religious differences would someday disappear as we grew closer to each other in our understanding of the common human experience.

Jefferson's dream fell victim to the Europeans' disgraceful land-grabbing, money hungry push for power, determined to drive every impediment out of their way, especially the "primitive" Indians.

So, men like this, with their wives and little children, were slaughtered as savage beasts while the elite in Washington, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston enjoyed their afternoon tea and their evenings of champagne and dancing ... oblivious to the horrors that were violating all they claimed to stand for as the "civilized" people who came here from their "civilized" nations where, as we have pointed out, the poor went hungry and died in streets where plague-ridden rats and raw sewage ran in their gutters.

Civilized is as civilized does.

America the Just – The Beginning



Why Not Make Peace?

As we all know, Europeans who settled here brought weapons prepared to fight and kill anyone who got in the way of their intentions to settle here.

They may have claimed, some of them, that their muskets and rifles were solely to kill a few squirrels or a marauding grizzly bear, but history tells too clearly how those weapons were used to put an end to pesky primitives whenever they were in the way of European progress so-called.

It was how life had been in Europe as far back as anyone can remember.

Killing and conquering others was as old as the Golden Age of Rome.

Through the ages soldiers killed their way as far north as the British Isles.

Dating even earlier, Huns, Visigoths, and many dozens of other marauding bands of men discontented with what they had, unhappy with where they were, used murder to take other people's land and possessions by sword, spear, and broad axe.

Was their savagery lessened by the modern invention of muskets, rifles, and revolvers?

What of the tanks and machine guns that mercilessly killed millions in the fields of Europe and islands of the Pacific? Were they less savage or death and destruction they rendered more humane than the broad axe and spear?

What of innocent children vaporized instantly by missiles launched from ships far away or dropped from silent drones over the heads of unwitting victims carrying out their daily chores. Are those weapons less savage?

We humans are a crazy species, murdering ourselves as we do.

All our claims of being "civilized" or exporting "civilization" to those whom we adjudge to be in need of fast food, short skirts, faster cars, and the ubiquitous internet are nothing but lies intended to line the pockets of modern industry or motivated by a few who simply do not think.

Where does it end?

Where will it end?

When will it end?

Will it ever end?

What can *you* do to promote justice and peace today?

America the Just – The Beginning



Here is the flag of Britain that once flew in every continent.

In most it still flies today, symbol of an entire race of people who believe they have the right to rule those whom they consider inferior, those whom they can subdue with impunity by military force.

Some say they spread throughout the world to “Christianize” pagans.

They claim British expansionism was justified to bring the love of God to wild, untamed races in need of Christian Salvation and Grace.

Honest historians know better.

The empires of Britain, Spain, and to some extent France and a few others were not expanded to tell the untamed world of Christian Love but, rather, to force on them an irresistible rule of superior military force intended to obtain war’s spoils to enrich the wealthiest inhabitants back at home.

They raped the world of its valuable goods, transporting shiploads of ore, spices, silk, and even human beings to better the lives of the British and all at the expense of the innocent people whose lands they invaded by force.

To deny this is to turn a blind eye to truth.

To labor resolutely against this “Imperial Will” so sadly prevalent among many nations’ ruling classes today, is to serve the greatest good for all.

Justice requires change from what we had today and all our yesterdays.

Our tired old ways of compelling other nations by force must fall away.

Even George Washington in his final address upon leaving office as this nation’s first President warned us against our all-too human tendency to meddle in the affairs of others ... especially other nations and people far away on other shores.

When will we stop trying to establish peace by waging war?

Someone once wrote, “The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by them who make peace.” When will we learn this truth?

When will we learn to be peacemakers first, warriors only by necessity?

Peace, like Christian love, is won by words and loving deeds, not swords.

This will never change.

America the Just – The Beginning



Why Not Make Peace?

This cannon looks out from a stone wall at Fort Ticonderoga.

It is there to protect the fort from ships attacking from a lake that is not navigable from the sea by anything but canoes and very small boats!

It overlooks the lower reaches of land-locked Lake Champlain.

On the right is Vermont.

On the left is New Hampshire.

In the distance the lake narrows down to nothing. Several hundred miles to the north and through a very narrow creek it empties into the St. Lawrence River 45 miles northeast of Montreal.

It controlled passage on the lake (back when smooth bore cannon were the latest trend in weaponry) but for what purpose?

You can visit Fort Ticonderoga today and learn about its history there on the lake. It is most impressive.

However, forts are symbols of failure.

Cannon and walls like these should remind us we are not yet the people we can and must become.

We are not yet the humanity we can be, united by shared hope and secured by an undaunted determination to make kindness and mercy our highest priorities.

We are not yet standing on that common ground whereon all are brothers and sisters sharing this beautiful planet together in peace and prosperity.

War is not the path to Peace.

Wisdom is.

Wisdom that must start today.

Wisdom that knows justice is essential to liberty, just as liberty is essential to peace.

Want Peace? Work for Justice!

We've given the work of justice to lawyers and judges who hide the keys of knowledge so they can make money at our expense, a profession whose self-interest is not always in our best interest.

America the Just – The Beginning



Reminders of our error.

It is right that cannon like this should dot our countrysides as they do.

They are more than memorials.

They are weapons against the ignorance of war we must stop as quickly as possible. They are now disabled, but once they killed and maimed others for crossed-purposes that could have been settled by words of wisdom.

We human beings have not yet learned to manage ourselves according to established principles of justice that should, and certainly could, guide us to build a better world for our children.

War is a symptom of our inability to get along.

Our inability to get along exists because we have not yet agreed on those ideas and ideals that all can adopt and embrace, the principles that should form a framework of our systems of government throughout the world.

We need to work together for that system where all are treated equally.

Where all have equal opportunity in court to have their grievances fully heard without bigoted bias or clever chicanery.

Where each of us accepts our individual responsibility to know what goes on in our courts where too often individual liberty is kicked aside on the specious argument it is not in the “public interest”.

Where each of us may question what, exactly, is meant by “public” and to whom do we owe our allegiance.

We can make peace.

We need a plan.

Then we need to work our plan.

But first we must agree that justice comes first!

We must discuss these things without fear of falling short of what today is euphemistically called political correctness.

We must stand up for what is right, do right, and teach the world to follow our example.

America the Just – The Beginning



Why Not Make Peace?

In the age when this weapon was commonplace, men had not yet seen the high-tech tools for human devastation that are commonplace today.

Those long-ago warriors had not imagined war could be more terrible than what they knew on the smoky battlefields of smooth bore cannon, rifles, and single-action revolvers.

Weapons were hauled about through mud or mountainsides by horses or the sheer grit and brute force of manpower alone.

Inaccurate muskets and bayonets were the mainstay of warfare during the infancy of our nation.

Weapons were carried on foot or horseback through forests and fields.

Mechanization of man's murderous habit would not rear its terrifying head until the first part of the Twentieth Century when the fields of France were choked with poison gas, muddied by tracks of tanks, shadowed by wings of gun-wielding airplanes, and soaked with the same color spilled too long in the insane quest for the elusive goal of gain at the cost of others' loss.

Mankind has not yet the wisdom to agree about ideas, ideals, and a system of government that provides more liberty through unrestricted justice for all without exception and without cost.

Hate it as we may secretly do lest we offend our unknown patriot brothers and sisters who tolerate continuation of violence as if there were no other path to peace, this *is* the sad story of America.

We are, as we have been since our beginning, a nation at war.

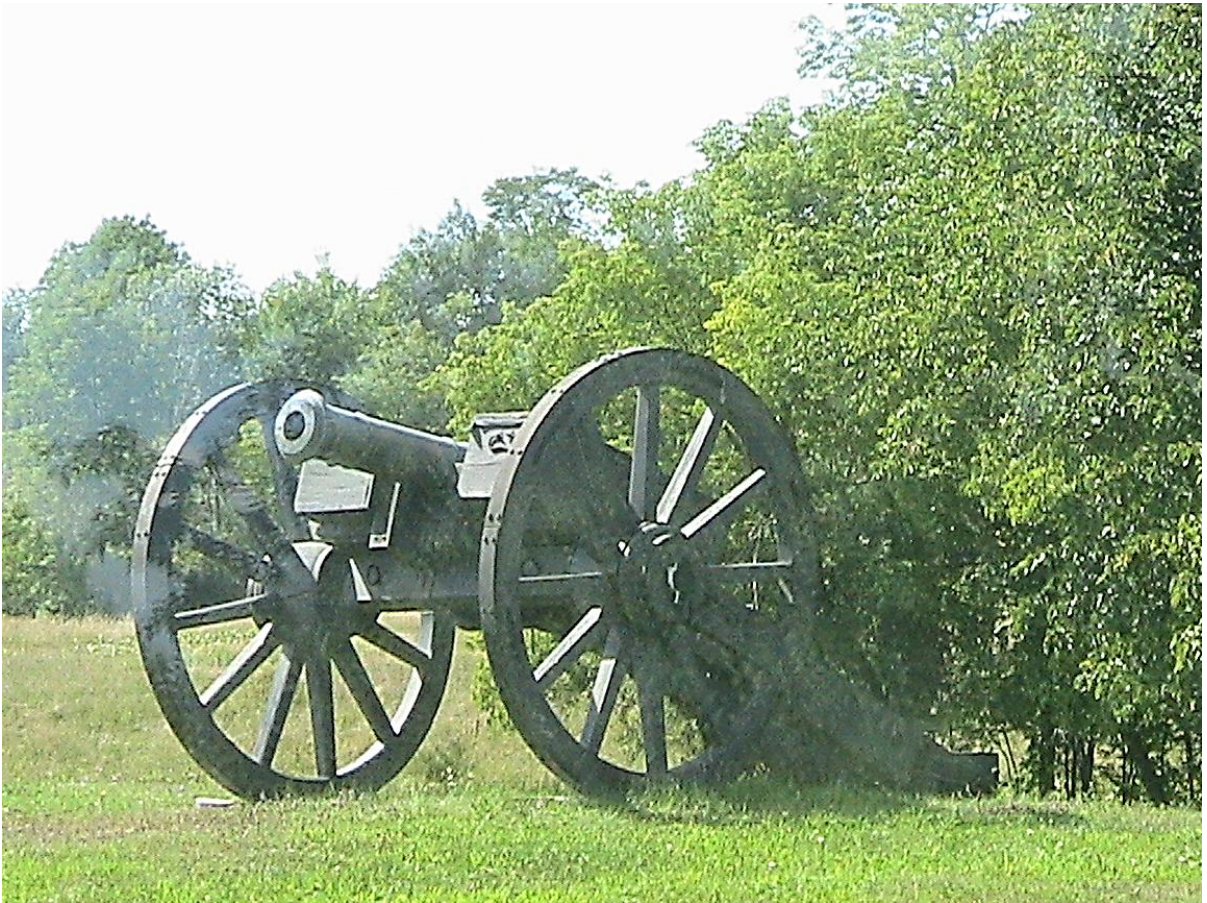
Battle and bloodshed blind us to the opportunities presented every day by the promise of a new beginning where understanding and agreement can put the agony of war forever far behind us.

Let us agree that someday such weapons as these will be mere reminders of a long-ago age when "manunkind" (as poet C.S. Lewis once called us) was still intensely ignorant and unnecessarily insane.

Let us work for that day when we can show to our children these horrid implements as silent relics of a bygone era never again to revive.

If we wish peace, we simply *must* work for justice on all fronts, both here and around the world. There is no other path to where we wish to be.

America the Just – The Beginning



Why Not Make Peace?

Our planet is too beautiful not to share it is peace and prosperity.

Too beautiful for warfare's ugly scars.

Too beautiful for streams of hungry refugees in search of food and shelter.

Too beautiful for bombs that level buildings and burn babies to death.

Too beautiful for children dying in their mothers' arms because we are too stupid to publish those ideas and ideals that make justice a way of life.

One for all.

All for one.

Humanity at peace!

To say, "Peace is impossible," is the greatest wrong.

Rivers and hillsides sing to us of the beautiful promise peace can bring.

There is no warfare here where water flows eternally to the sea.

There are no burnt-out buildings, no shell craters, no bloodshed.

As we draw near the end of this first book in our series, ask what is it that *prevents* war in the first place.

When wars come to an end at last, what will bring cessation of hostilities and establish the peace that follows every war?

Is it bombs and bullets that brought peace at previous wars' conclusions?

No!

It was words!

Not just any words, but words that promised justice for all.

Words that promised *everyone* a better life.

Ideas and ideals inspiring souls to work for peace by seeing that peace is possible for those who agree on the ideas and ideals that promise a better life for *everyone*.

We must remember those words and teach our children.

We must make America just.

America the Just – The Beginning



The Need for Change

In the preface of Charles Dickens' novel Hard Times wherein he tells the sad truth about life for the masses in mid-Nineteenth Century England, he writes, "The poor you will have always with you. Cultivate in them, while there is yet time, the utmost graces of the fancies and affections, to adorn their lives so much in need of ornament; or, in the day of your triumph, when romance is utterly driven out of their souls, when they and a bare existence stand face to face, Reality will take a wolfish turn, and make an end of you!"

Here sits a modern-day American Indian begging by the wall that borders an impressive government building. He wears modern clothes, but his gray hair tells us he is not a young man, and his knapsack tells us he has all he owns with him as he sits near this public building hoping for help.

Many of his ancestors were wiped out by Europeans determined to drive such people from the land where modern structures would replace forests and river valleys with what we today call essential conveniences.

Yet, Dickens' prediction remains as true today as it was nearly 200 years ago and, if we do not do all we can to cultivate in *all* people the "utmost graces" to adorn their lives, then when our modern way has driven hope from their souls, "when they and a bare existence stand face to face", we may see reality take that "wolfish turn" of which Charles Dickens warned the leaders of his time *and make an end of us!*

Albert Pike wrote also nearly 200 years ago that a man will not long suffer himself to be whipped, and the underworld is forever a danger to us all.

Let kindness temper and public education temper our American Justice.

We of American Justice Foundation ® pray *you* will work in any way you can to make our nation just by promoting greater understanding of the Rule of Law and the principles and practices of due process in our courts.

As it has never been before. As it must be if we are to survive the coming age when there is not enough food, not enough water, not enough shelter from the elements of nature to protect *everyone!*

Lest Reality take a wolfish turn!

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This is a man's home in San Francisco.

He was down by the docks, sitting all alone, out of everyone's way, just asking for help from the people of a nation he served as a soldier.

Most of what you see is stuff he gathered along the way. He has no TV, no microwave ovens, no refrigerator, nor even an engine on his bike to help him climb the San Francisco hills on his antiquated big-tire bicycle.

That's his home.

All his earthly belongings.

Everything he owns is piled up and tied to his old bicycle.

His bed is the sleeping bag he uses to add a bit of comfort to a park bench where he sits without hope, without love, without justice.

He doesn't drink.

He doesn't use drugs.

He wants food.

This busy city and its thousands of visiting tourists pass him by.

He is a homeless veteran of our armed services living on the streets of one of our most affluent cities, begging for food in a nation that has forgotten him and his brothers in arms.

It was not this way when I was a boy.

I was born in 1943 and grew up in the post-war era when, for a season at least, we were kinder to each other, sharing a sense of union born of the necessity of struggling as a united people against foreign foes and what could have been a global catastrophe.

Today we are drifting away from what is just.

America the Beautiful.

Yes, it still is beautiful.

But are we just?

America the just?

Not yet ... not for all.

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Epilogue

Work for justice with us in any way you can.

We are American Justice Foundation ® - a common law non-profit trust.

Our mission statement is, “Promoting the People’s peace and prosperity through greater understanding of the Rule of Law and the principles and practices of due process.”

Public legal education is a moral imperative.

The errors of our past, all of them, have resulted from public ignorance of the principles of justice and the benefits we miss when justice is perverted.

Please help us. We need workers. We need prayers. We need funding to expand our operations.

Our website is www.AmericanJusticeFoundation.com.

Our shorter URL is www.AmJustFound.com.

Justice should not be only for the rich who can hire competent lawyers. It should be readily available to *all* of us, rich and poor alike.

That is *not* what we have today, and, we are a very long way from having it any time soon if work does not begin now and continue enthusiastically for years to come.

America must be more just.

Until she is, she can never be as beautiful as she can become.

Help us any way you can or contribute to our cause so we can hire the talented people we need to fill the many jobs this mission requires.

Email us at funding@americanjusticefoundation.com

Or call toll free at 866-529-3279 the number we use for Jurisdictionary® and our www.HowToWinInCourt.com online court procedure self-help course for those who cannot afford a lawyer.

This is *your* nation.

Help us make it a nation of “justice for ALL”.

Preserve justice for you and your children.

Without your help we can do very little and certainly not nearly enough.

America the Just – The Beginning

Promote the People's peace and prosperity through greater understanding of the Rule of Law and the principles and practices of due process.

You and all the people of this nation have a God-given right to know what members of the legal profession have for too long hidden from you.

We provide that knowledge, explaining the Rule of Law for which far too many young people have died and continue to perish on the field of honor.

We teach the tactics of courtroom due process using every medium we can afford, so the poor can have their day in court, know how to make their record clear, and get this nation's promised redress for their grievances by obtaining court orders without having to mortgage their homes to hire a lawyer who may or may not fight effectively for them.

We need our work in public and private schools at all grade levels.

We need to publish magazines, periodicals, and newsletters.

We need to erect billboards from one end of this land to the other!

We need people like you to write press releases.

We need people like you to make public appearances.

We need people like you to promote our mission.

We need people like you to get the word out using social media.

People like you who care about our children and the future of America.

People who will help us.

People who will support us with prayers and financial contributions.

People who want to make our nation "America the Just" once and for all.

People who will work for justice.

Dr. Frederick David Graves, Trustee

American Justice Foundation ®

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“People perish from lack of knowledge.” *Hosea 4:6 K.J.V.*

American Justice Foundation ® needs your help now!

If not You, then Who?

If not Now, then When?

Please contact us NOW to ask how YOU can help.

America the Just!

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