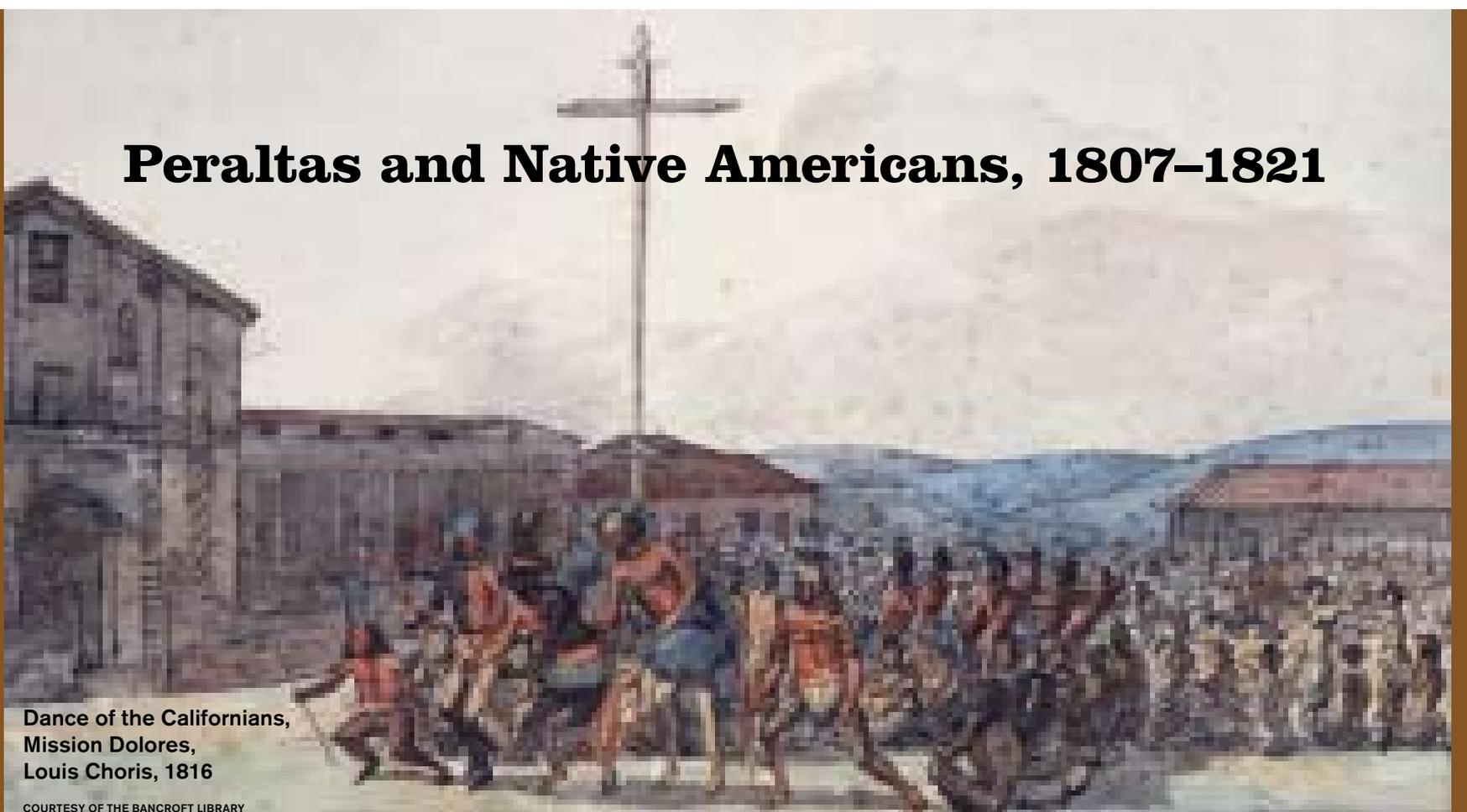


Peraltas and Native Americans, 1807–1821



**Dance of the Californians,
Mission Dolores,
Louis Choris, 1816**

COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY



Scene at San Francisco Presidio, 1816, Louis Choris

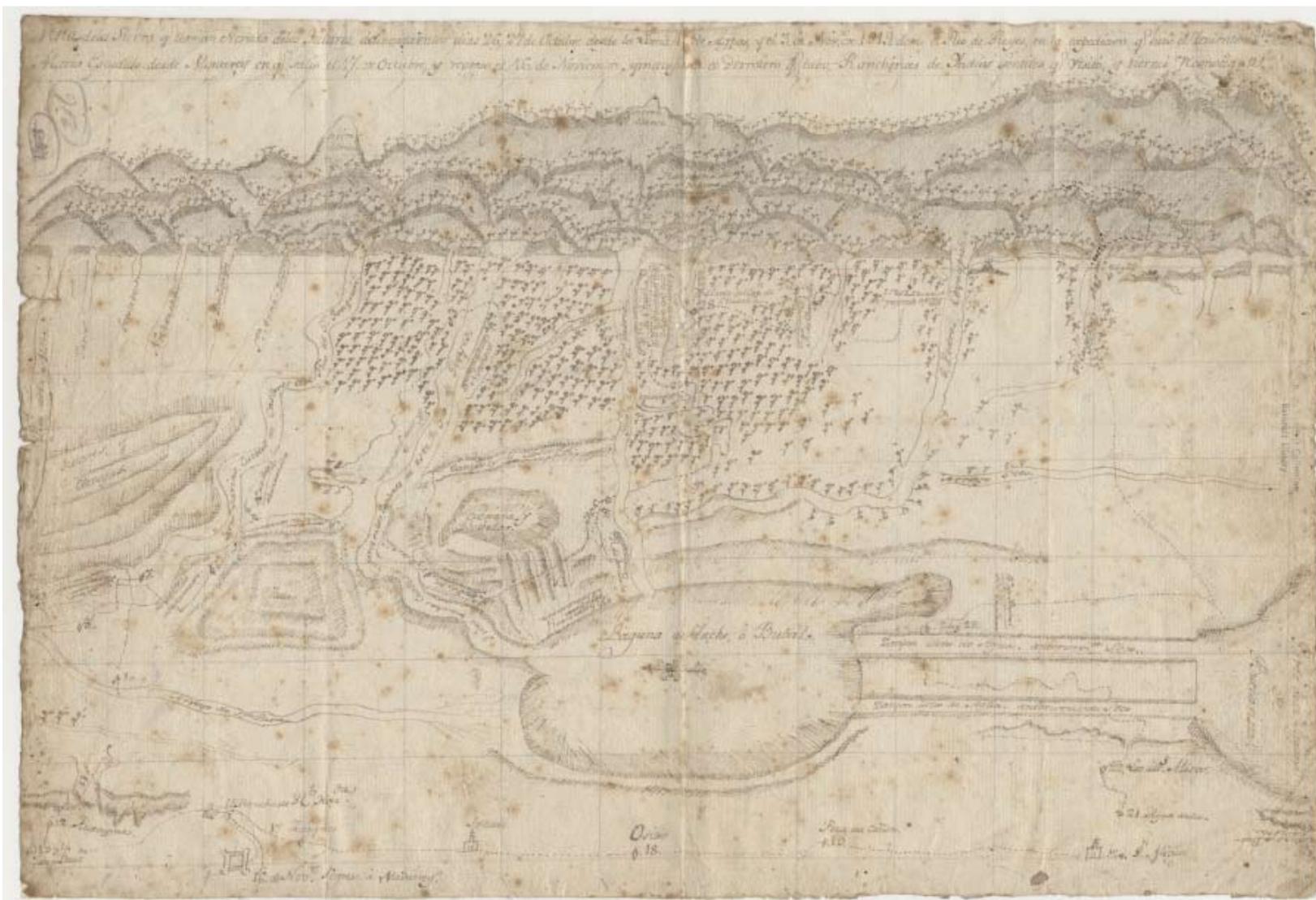
COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY

*I am weary of so many sick and dying Indians,
who are more fragile than glass.*

NARCISO DURÁN, HEAD OF MISSION SAN JOSÉ, 1812

Mission workers despaired of a new way of life over which they had little control, and the loss of family members to disease. In such conditions, many wished to return to their former lands.

Why did mission workers run away?



José María Estudillo mapped the Central Valley on his expeditions to the interior in search of laborers.

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Spanish military expeditions went further inland to get workers, into the San Joaquin and Central Valleys, and the Sacramento River delta. These were the lands of the Yokuts people.

Epidemics began to sweep through these areas in the wake of the military expeditions. The neophytes who fled the missions, and the soldiers who chased them, also spread disease inland.

Where did the missions get more workers after most of the Ohlone had died?



“Cattle growers near the town of San José, and their brands.”
Luis Peralta, 1819

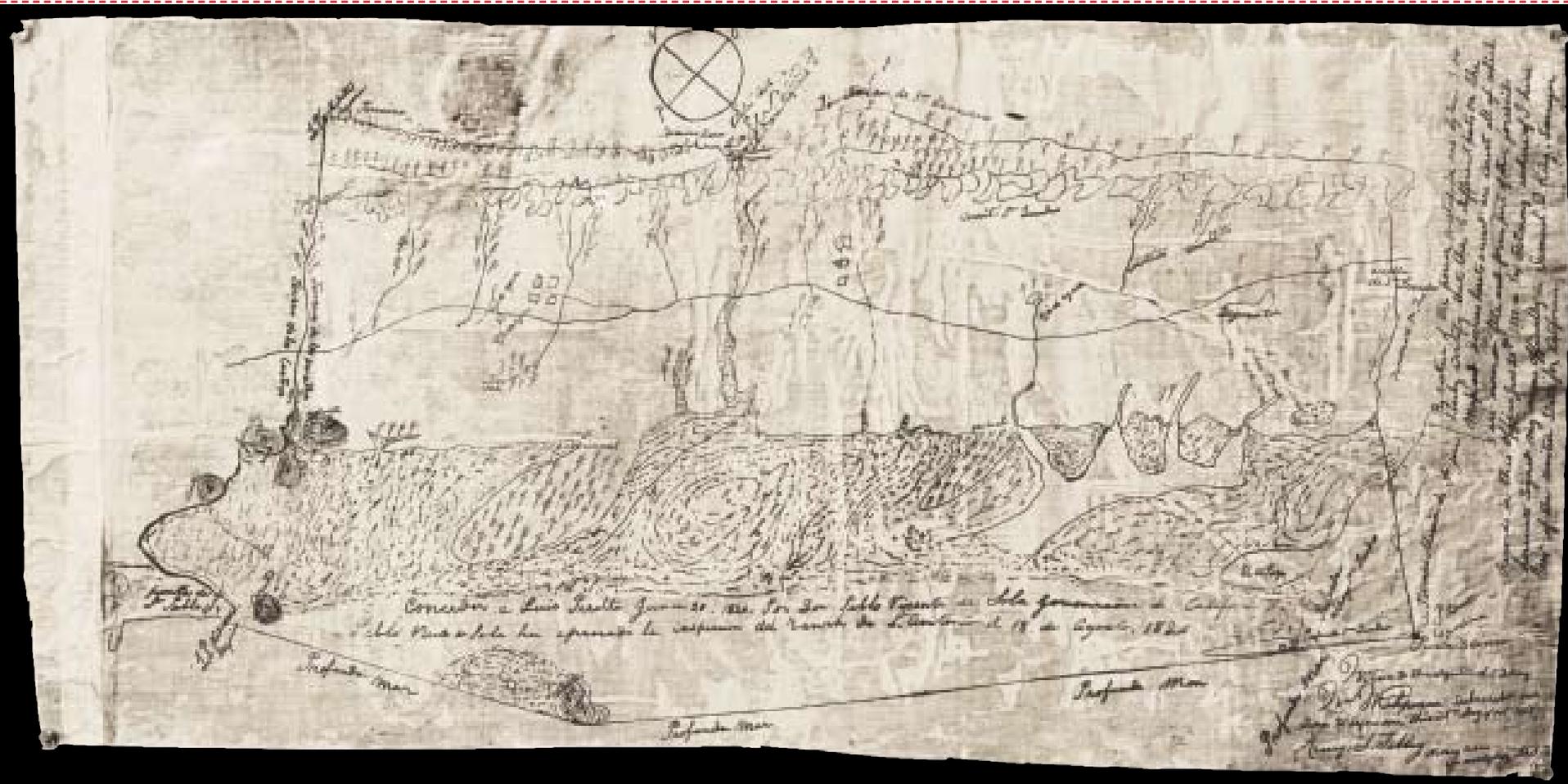
COURTESY OF THE HONNOLD-MUDD LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

In 1807, Luís Peralta’s active military career on horseback ended. His commander at the San Francisco presidio stationed him in the town of San José to work an administrator (*comisionado* in Spanish).

From then on, much of Luís Peralta’s work was to settle disputes between the Spanish settlers over cattle grazing and land rights.

By this time, Luís Peralta’s son Antonio was 18 years old, living with his family in the pueblo of San José with his four brothers and five sisters. His father, Luís, began to petition for land, for the sake of his growing family.

What did Luís Peralta do after his active military career was over?



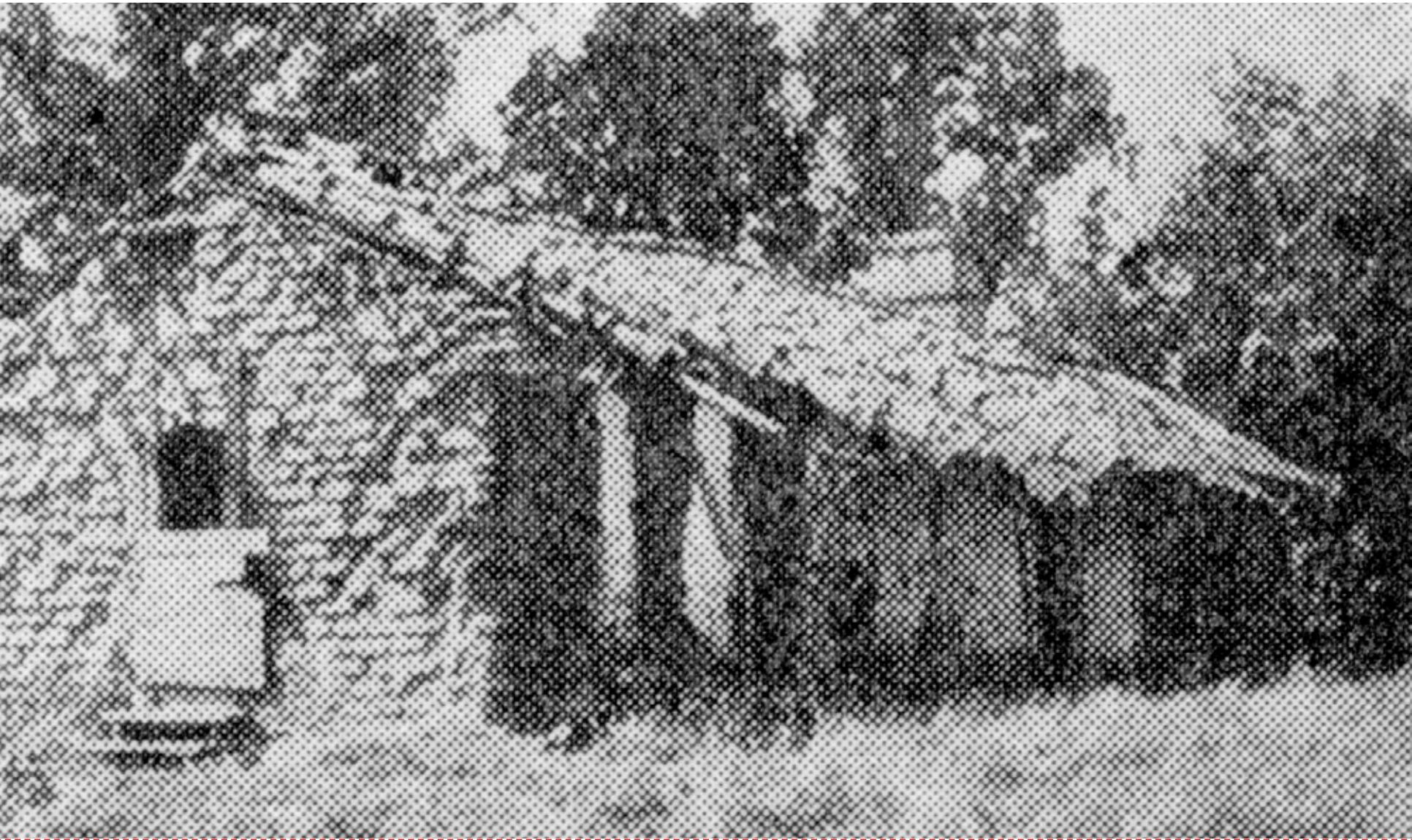
Original *diseño* (drawing) of Rancho San Antonio, the East Bay hills at the top and the shoreline at the bottom.

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In August of 1820 Luís Peralta asked for land in the East Bay. The Spanish Governor Vicente Solá replied, granting him 44,800 acres. It took him several years of red tape to confirm the claim.

Peralta named his land grant Rancho San Antonio after a hill on the northern edge called El Cerrito de San Antonio, where the priests at Mission Dolores grazed their sheep. It is Albany Hill today.

How did the Peraltas get their land?



This photo is probably the 1821 adobe, the first non-Native dwelling in the Oakland area. Outside, in the Historic Core of the park, you can see the outline of the spot where this small house of clay bricks once stood.



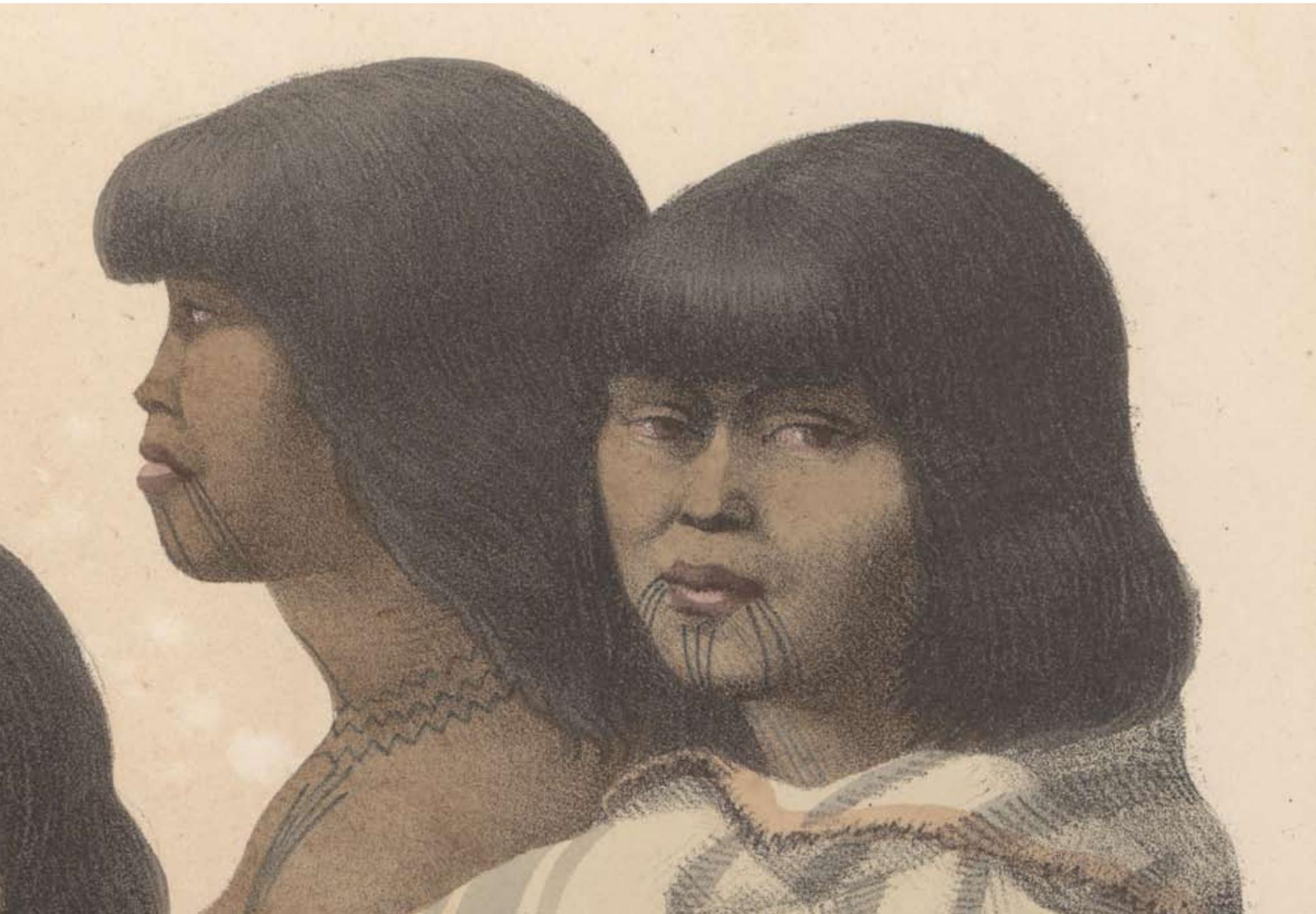
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Antonio Peralta visited the *rancho* only occasionally for the first eight years to see how the family's longhorn herds were growing. Therefore, the first to live in the 1821 adobe were most likely Native American herders.

They might have been from any of the Native American groups associated with the missions. We have chosen a Huchiun face drawn by Louis Choris in 1816 to symbolize the adobe's first residents. The Huchiun Ohlone were from the Oakland area.

The Native Americans most likely built the adobe house, too.

Who first lived in the 1821 adobe?



Face of Saclan Miwok man, Louis Choris, 1816

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Mission laborers worked—and died—on the Peralta land in the 1820s. A military report of 1826 records the death of a neophyte on Antonio's section of Rancho San Antonio, where Redwood Park is today. He might have died of one of the diseases common in the missions:

On July 29, the mission worker Agustín died suddenly in the redwoods on Sergeant Luís Peralta's ranch. He was with companions cutting boards.

En 29 julio murió repentinamente en los palos colorados del rancho del Sargento Luís Peralta el neófito Agustín. Estaba con compañeros cortando tablados.

Land grants in the Spanish period (until 1821) were little more than permits from the missions to graze cattle and sheep. The missions retained lumber rights on the private ranchos.

Why did mission workers come to Rancho San Antonio?