

California: Its gold and its inhabitants

H. V Huntley



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Mal Huntley is the owner of an insurance agency in Marysville, California. He lives in the foothills at the edge of the valley outside of Marysville. In May of 1981 he took his daughter Jen to the United Kingdom for a vacation. While in England they made a trip to Boxwell Court near Tetbury in the Cotswolds. Boxwell Court was, and is to this day, the ancestral home of countless generations of Huntleys dating back to 1582. The property, it seems, had been in the Huntley family continuously since 1582 with the exception of a 40-year period in the nineteenth century when the owner, Sir Henry V. Huntley, was forced into chancery (bankruptcy) by imprudent business investments. Sir Henry, we were told, was something of an adventurer and spent most of his adult life in the New World, both on the African coast and the Pacific Northwest of the American continent. He also served for a time as the governor of Prince Edward Island in Nova Scotia. Several years later Mal Huntley happened to be in an antiquarian book store in Chicago. While browsing through the books, Mal's companion spotted a book entitled California. Its Gold and Its Inhabitants by Sir Henry V. Huntley, which was immediately purchased. When Mal returned home and read it, he discovered that it was Sir Henry's account of his travels in Northern California in general, and his life around Marysville in particular, at the time of the Gold Rush. Amazingly enough, the imprudent business venture that caused the Huntley family to lose Boxwell Court for forty years was the Dicksburg Mine located near Hansonville, now Rackerby, ten miles from Mal Huntley's home.

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