

## Gold Rush Timeline

**1846** – The Native American population in California was approximately 150,000.

**1846** – The Mexican-American War began.

**1847** – The population of San Francisco was approximately 500.

**1848, January 24** – Gold was discovered at Sutter’s Mill in Coloma, California.

**1848, February 2** – The Mexican-American War ended. The United States won and annexed California.

**1848, March** – California newspapers began reporting the discovery of gold.

**1848, May** – Populations of cities in California dropped as people left to mine gold.

**1848, August 19** – *New York Herald* published a story about the discovery of gold in California.

**1849** – Approximately 80,000 people, mainly men, from around the world came to California.

**1850** – Most of the easily accessible gold was gone. Miners moved from panning for gold to more advanced methods of sluice and hydraulic mining.

**1850** – The California Legislature passed the Foreign Miners’ Tax, which required all foreign miners and Mexicans born in California to pay \$20 a month. There was an exemption for any “free white person.” The tax forced many Chinese and Mexican miners to leave the mines.

**1850** – California Legislature passed the Indenture Act, which made it legal to capture Native Americans and use them as indentured servants.

**1852** – The population of San Francisco was approximately 36,000.

**1870** – Due to disease, dislocation, enslavement, and widespread violence against Native Americans by settlers, the Native American population in California dropped to approximately 30,000.

## Document A: Ernest de Massey (Modified)

*Ernest de Massey was a French immigrant who sailed to San Francisco in May 1849 after hearing about the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill. After a seven-month voyage, he arrived in San Francisco, where he kept a journal of his experiences. Below is an excerpt from one of his journal entries.*

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12/15/49: At noon the boat dropped us not on solid ground, but in the mud and slime which is everywhere. There is no dock, and only one or two landing-places for the ships. The streets, which are very broad, cut the city up into right angles. Close to one hundred houses are being built a month, which are immediately rented. **Scores** of immigrants live in tents in the neighborhood waiting for more comfortable housing. Few houses are built of brick. The biggest buildings are two-story wooden structures painted in bright colors. Several are even elegant on the outside and luxurious within. But only millionaires are able to afford such luxury.

All the business streets are **teeming** with activity. In fact they seem as active as any in Paris. Over here, however, the men seem more businesslike and in a greater hurry; **loafing** is an unknown quantity. During the day every one plows knee-deep in mud through the lower streets which get the heaviest travel for this is where the banks and the important commercial establishments are located. All are focused on getting business and social **prestige** regardless of their qualifications and trying to make a fortune.

In the midst of this chaos you can hear many languages. Ask a question in English and your reply may be in German; if you speak in French you may perhaps be answered in Spanish, Italian, Russian, Polish or Chinese. This would be amusing if it were not such a handicap. However, those who can speak three languages, English, French and Spanish, can make themselves understood anywhere.

**Source:** Ernest de Massey, journal entry for December 15, 1849.

### Vocabulary

score: a group of twenty things

loafing: being lazy

teeming: to be filled with something

prestige: importance in the eyes of other people

**Document B: Henry V. Huntley (Modified)**

*Sir Henry V. Huntley was a British Naval officer. He lived in San Francisco in 1852 and worked as a representative for a British gold mining company. He wrote a book about his experiences in California. Below is a chart made from an excerpt of the book where he discussed the growth and economy of San Francisco.*

SAN FRANCISCO has now been a city less than three years, and here is a statistical account of the arrivals of **emigrants**; **tonnage** employed; and **bullion** exported; during three months: March, April, and May.

Arrival of Emigrants from Foreign Ports	Arrivals of Ship (in tonnage)	Bullion Imported and Exported (in dollars)
Males: 18,990	American: 36,272	Import: 10,120,828
Females: 1,398	Foreign: 40,336	Export: 9,533,970.
Children: 535		
Total: 20,923	Total: 76,608	

**Source:** Henry Huntley, California Its Gold and Its Inhabitants. Published in 1856.

**Vocabulary**

emigrants: people who leave their home countries to live somewhere else  
tonnage: weight in tons of a ship's cargo  
bullion: bars of gold

Image	Sourcing Questions	Observation Questions
<p><b>Image 1</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the title of this image?</li> <li>2. What kind of image is it?</li> <li>3. When was this image created?</li> <li>4. Who created this image?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you notice about the setting?</li> <li>2. What do you notice about the streets and houses?</li> <li>3. What do you notice about the boats?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Image 2</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the title of this image?</li> <li>2. What kind of image is it?</li> <li>3. When was this image created?</li> <li>4. Who created this image?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you notice about the setting?</li> <li>2. What do you notice about the streets and houses?</li> <li>3. What do you notice about the boats?</li> </ol>



## Guiding Questions

### Document A: Ernest de Massey

1. (Sourcing) Who was Ernest de Massey?
2. (Sourcing) When did he write this journal entry?
3. (Contextualization) What was happening in San Francisco when he wrote it?
4. (Close reading) How did de Massey describe the city?
5. (Close reading) How did de Massey describe the people in San Francisco?
6. (Corroboration) How does de Massey's account corroborate the images from the first part of the lesson?

## Document B: Henry V. Huntley

1. (Sourcing) Who was Henry V. Huntley?
2. (Sourcing) When did he write this entry?
3. (Close reading) Were there more men or women arriving in San Francisco?

What might have caused this difference in the number of men and women arriving in San Francisco?

4. (Close reading) What does the amount of goods being shipped through San Francisco suggest about how the Gold Rush affected the city?
5. (Corroboration) How does this document corroborate Document A and the images?