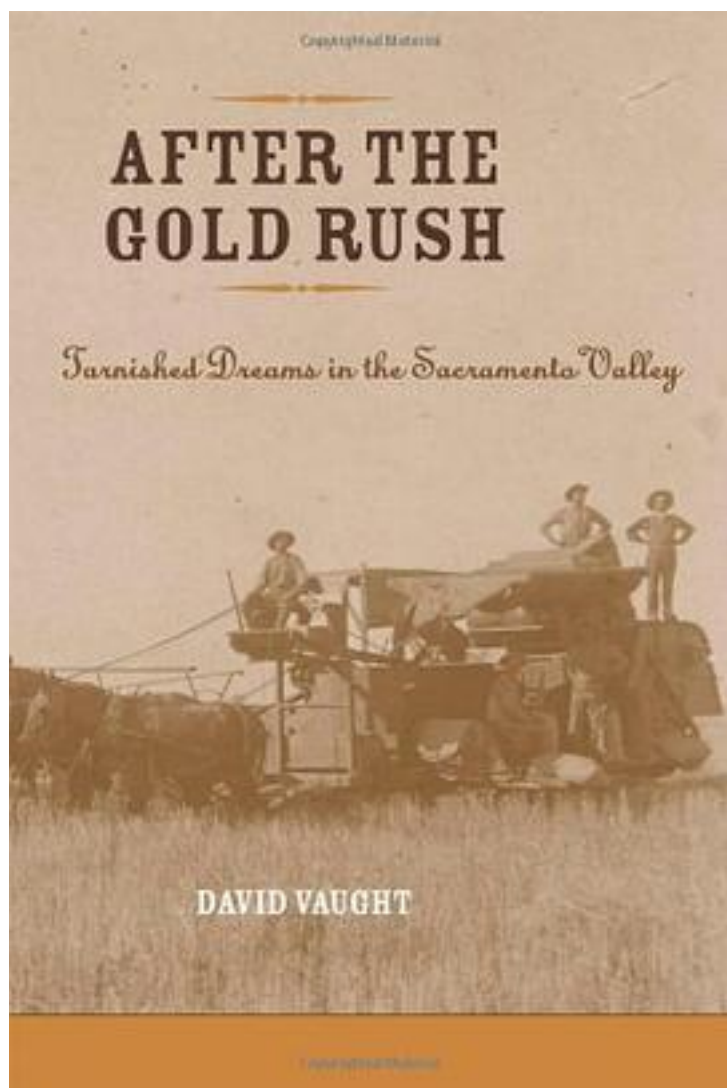


# After the Gold Rush



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"It is a glorious country," exclaimed Stephen J. Field, the future U.S. Supreme Court justice, upon arriving in California in 1849. Field's pronouncement was more than just an expression of exuberance. For an electrifying moment, he and another 100,000 hopeful gold miners found themselves face-to-face with something commensurate to their capacity to dream. Most failed to hit pay dirt in gold. Thereafter, one illustrative group of them struggled to make a living in wheat, livestock, and fruit along Putah Creek in the lower Sacramento Valley. Like Field, they never forgot that first "glorious" moment in California when anything seemed possible. In *After the Gold Rush*, David Vaught examines the hard-luck miners-turned-farmers-the Pierces, Greenes, Montgomerys, Careys, and others-who refused to admit a second failure, faced flood and drought, endured monumental disputes and confusion over land policy, and struggled to come to grips with the vagaries of local, national, and world markets. Their dramatic story exposes the underside of the American dream and the haunting consequences of trying to strike it rich.

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