



# The Associates: Four Capitalists Who Created California

*Richard Rayner*

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**The Associates: Four Capitalists Who Created California** Richard Rayner

**A true-life tale of ruthless ambition, staggering greed, and the making of a nation.**

One hundred forty years ago, four men rose from their position as middle-class merchants in Sacramento, California, to become the force behind the transcontinental railroad. In the course of doing so, they became wealthy beyond any measure—and to sustain their power, they lied, bribed, wheedled, and, when necessary, arranged for obstacles, both human and legal, to disappear. Their names were Collis Huntington, Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker, and Mark Hopkins, and they were known as “The Big Four” or “The Associates.” Their drive for money—nothing more, nothing less—was epic. Their legacy is a university, public gardens, museums, mansions, banks, and libraries—and to a large degree California itself, a state that even today owes its aura of “can-do” and limitless possibilities to *The Associates*.

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