The Ranches of Bodega Bay Hollis Hitchcock - Little Buckhorn Ranch

Hollis Hitchcock born: 24 Oct 1822 Vermont, died: 3 Jan 1896 San Francisco California, buried: Bloomfield Cemetery, Bloomfield, Sonoma County California, married: Amelia Farnsworth 1869 Quebec Canada (she was born: 1847 Quebec Canada, died: 21 Jan 1899 Compton, Quebec Canada, divorced: 1875) no children Little Buckhorn Ranch, a 446-acre ranch on Coleman Valley Road, was part of the original 35,000 acre Rancho Bodega Land Grant from Mexico. Carved from coastal Buckhorn Ranch, owned by WSM Wright, Little Buckhorn was formed sometime before 1877. The first owner was a land man named Hollis Hitchcock. It is likely the next owner was the North Coast Pacific Railroad, using train tracks to haul

logs and goods to coastal boat landings and onto San Francisco. After the Railroad's short tenure, James Coleman became owner in the 1880's. When Captain Stephen Smith allowed settlers to live on his land and make it productive. He then helped them get their products to market on his ships that plied the seas between Bodega Port and the growing San Francisco.

RANCHO BODEGA ENJOYED HARMONY .. UNTIL THE WAR IN 1847. Captain Smith's 1855 death and the remarriage of his wife Manuela to the scheming Tyler Curtis, brought an end to harmony in Rancho Bodega, when Curtis evicted Captain Smith's "squatters" as Curtis called them. The December 1857 eviction lawsuit by Tyler Curtis named fifty-eight defendants, including Hollis Hitchcock and James Coleman, who had built homes and ranches on Rancho Bodega lands. In March 1859, Curtis received judgment in his favor on the eviction action, but the settlers refused to move. Three months later the "Bodega War" erupted where "nary a shot was fired," when Curtis tried



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to take the law into his own hands with a band of armed ruffians from San Francisco. Curtis and his militia men were sent packing, but Curtis ultimately prevailed. In short order, land parcels were surveyed and sold; and the patchwork quilt across Rancho Bodega of individual ranches was started.





RANCHO BODEGA IS CARVED INTO CATTLE RANCHES and LOGGING OPERATIONS.

Wright was not named as a defendant in the eviction proceedings because he bought his land from Capt. Smith's Estate. Winfield Scott Mullen Wright ("WSM" 1822-1892) was a '49er from Missouri, married in 1845 to Sarah Boone, granddaughter of frontiersman Daniel Boone. WSM and Sarah had two children, Sampson Boone and Olive Mahala. After a year in California, WSM returned to Missouri and came back to settle in California in 1853 with his young family, his parents and 400 head of cattle. First, he purchased his family homestead further inland, named "Wright Ranch," located at Stony Point and Sebastopol Roads.

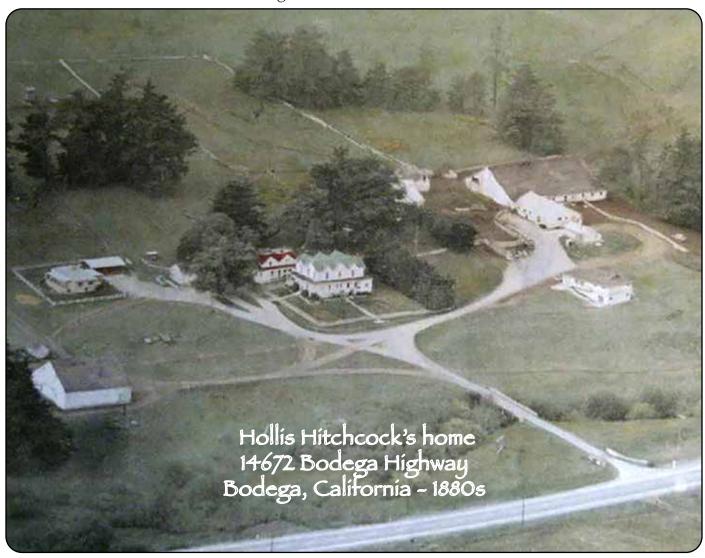
Then, c. 1857, WSM bought nearly 4,000 acres of coastal ranch land, stretching from what we now know as Wright's Beach to the Russian River. WSM called his coastal ranch "Buckhorn." A "buckhorn" is the horn of a deer, used typically to make knife handles, small containers, or rifle sights. After his wife Sarah died. In 1859, WSM then married a widow, Jarena Brown Clark.

A GAMBLING DEBT CREATES A GEM: LITTLE BUCKHORN RANCH. The 1877 Atlas shows Little Buckhorn Ranch was owned by Hollis Hitchcock. The story goes that WSM incurred a gambling debt to Hitchcock, one of Tyler Curtis' evicted settlers.

To pay off his debt WSM deeded 446 acres of Buckhorn Ranch to Hollis, creating the "Little Buckhorn Ranch."

Hollis Hitchcock was born in 1822, probably in Vermont, later moved to Quebec, and then to California. Hollis came to Bodega at the age of 34 looking for pasturage for his cattle stock and became a significant land investor.

Described in the 1892 Register as a short man at 5' 4 ½" and farmer from Freestone, Hollis was known to be a tough businessman and stickler for collecting rent from his tenants. Hitchcock married Amelia and divorced in 1875 leaving no children. By the time of Hitchcock's death in 1896, he owned approximately 20 ranches in the Bodega area, plus more in Sonoma, Mendocino, Marin, Solano and Monterey Counties. The beneficiaries of his estate were a brother, two sisters, and numerous nieces and nephews. Perhaps surprisingly, in his Will he showed his appreciation for his community by leaving \$20,000 in trust for construction and improvement of the roads in the Bodega Township. The gravesite of Hollis Hitchcock is an elaborate memorial set in the beautiful Bloomfield Cemetery. -- Robin Rudderow 2016

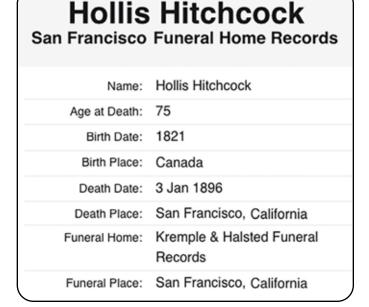


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Hollis Hitchcock in the 1870 United States Federal Census Name: Hollis Hitchcock Birth Year: abt 1828 Birthplace: Vermont Home in 1870: Bodega, Sonoma, California Occupation: Live Stock Dealer & Farmer Personal Estate 18000 Value: Real Estate Value: 57400 Household Name Age Members: Hollis Hitchcock 42 Amelia Hitchcock 23 Henry Farnesworth 27

	Hitchcock d States Federal	_	
Name:	Hollis Hitchcock		
Birth Date:	Abt 1823		
Birthplace:	Vermont		
Home in 1880:	me in 1880: Bodega, Sonoma, California,		
Marital status:	Divorced 1875		
Father's Birthplace:	Vermont		
Mother's Birthplace:	Massachusetts		
Occupation:	Stock Raiser		
Household Members:	Name	Age	
Members.	Hollis Hitchcock	57	
	Fedora Pool	43	
_	Mary Pool	10	

Hollis Hitchcock Quebec, Canada Church Records Name: Hollis Hitchcock Event Type: Mariage (Marriage) Marriage Date: 1869 Marriage Place: Compton, Québec Place of Worship or Institution: Methodist Church Religion: Methodist Spouse: Amelia Farnsworth



Hollis B. Hitchcock

BIRTH 24 OCT 1822 • Vermont **DEATH** 03 JAN 1896 • San Francisco, California

Amelia Farnsworth

BIRTH 1847 • Quebec, Canada

DEATH 21 JANUARY 1899 • Compton Québec



HAN FRANCISCO CALL, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1895.

THE KING OF BODEGA

Millionaire Hitchcock Has Made His Will and Is Sinking Fast.

DIAGNOSIS OF DOCTOR LAME.

Eccentricities of a Man Whose Vast Fortune Will Be Divided Among Many Relatives.

The exclusive story in THE CALL yesterday that Hollis Hitchcock, the eccentric millionaire of California, was sick unto death at Dr. Lane's hospital caused a great deal of talk among the tens of thousands who know him.

Throughout the Sonoma Valley the name of Hitchcock is good for loads of gold. He owns thousands upon thousands of rich land there, and the seat of his residence is at Bodega, where as the king of Bodega he was master of the finances.

But his domain extends to a vastly richer region, and his lands and possessions otherwise appear on the taxlists of many counties. In Sonoma he owns in many banks—the one in Tomales, all of those in Petaluma, and in one in Santa Rosa; how many others nobody knows.

When it comes to talking of Monterey, Fresno and other counties, the old gentleman owns rolling acres in them, reaching over many miles. It is hard to tell just what he has got. Even his most intimate friends scarcely know, and his real wealth, therefore, can only be guessed at. It is big, however.

As a Czar of Grizzly Island, in the Sacramento River, where the landed financier a few years ago secured 3000 acres, he is well known in that part of the country.

The \$1,000,000 which he was at first quoted to be worth is said to be much too low a figure. If property was worth as much now as it was four or five years ago in California he would be worth probably \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000. As it is his estate should approach \$2,000,000 or \$3,000,000, so those who know him well aver.

"His land is worth more than \$1,000,000, to say nothing about his other property," said one of his neighbors yesterday. "Besides the land he has \$75,000 or \$100,000 in the Donabue Railroad and interests in the Tomales. Petaluma and Santa Ross banks. No doubt he has large areas of land and other property also that I know nothing of."

The old gentleman, who is now 75 years old, has neither wife nor children. After he came here from Eastern Canada in 1852, and had made some money, he returned home and brought out a wife. There was a disagreement after a few years, however, and the wife went back and has since died. He never had any children by this marriage.

Though he has no immediate heirs, however, he has a host of nephews, nieces and other relatives in California and Canada. It is said the number will reach thirty or forty anyway, and these, or at least some of them, it is presumed, will fall heir to his great patrimony.

The old man has become convinced that he cannot in all probability survive the Bright's disease of the kidneys with which he is afflicted. Accordingly his nephew, L. V. Hitchcock, ex-District Attorney of Tehama County, came down at his request in reference to his will. The will has since been made and the designation of his millions indicated.

Dr. L. C. Lane, at whose hospital on Clay and Websier streets the old money king now is, said yesterday that the afflicted man could not possibly get well.

"He may live a day or two," he said, "and it is possible he may live longer, but this kidney disease is fatal." It is said that seven or eight relatives of Hitchcock will, according to the will, get the fortune. Those who know him, however, anticipate the not unusual dissatisfaction among other relatives at such a time, with the possibility of struggles for a portion of the property.

Hitchcock, who laid the foundation of his fortune by driving beef-cattle to the gold mines, has lived an eccentric life for many years. He would not spend a dollar unless there was an absolute need of it.

He acquired in the course of his land accumulations a large house near Bodega, designated as a castle by his neighbors, and here for a long time he lived alone.

When he grew sick finally he was taken to the family of his nephew at Valley Ford, not far away, and they cared for him till he was finally brought to the City for treatment.

Then he went to Dr. Lane's hosvital. Though having an income of from \$35,000 to \$40,000 a year, he bewailed the expense, and said the cost was liable to ruin him. Two small rooms there, with the auxiliaries, cost \$3 a day each. The money king said it was too much, that he couldn't stand it.

As there was no fire in the room, and as one was necessary, the relatives moved him to two larger and better rooms, where he could have sufficient warmth and other comforts. The relatives had to assure him, however, that his new rooms did not cost as much as the others, in order to pacify him and make him satisfied.

In later years the money-getter has added materially to his wealth by interest on loans. In this way it is said many very valuable ranches have come into his possession.

The farmers who gave the mortgages could not stem the tide of big interest and succumbed. In this way thousands on thousands of acres were added to the nucleus of acres.

Both ex-District Attorney Hitchcock and Ben Hitchcock, nephews, who have been visiting the old man, left for their homes in Red Bluff and Salinas, respectively, yesterday.

An Ungrateful Rascal

AN UNGRATEFUL RASCAL.—A few days since a young man came to the residence of Hollis Hitchcock, near Freestone, and asked permission to stay over night, which was granted. During the evening he told a very pititul story of misfortune and inability to secure work, which tale excited Mr. Hitchcock's compassion so much that he invited the stranger to remain at his house until the mills should open up, when he would assist him to secure employment. The stranger grat-fully accepted the offer and everything went along smoothly for several days. Thursday evening Mr. Hitchcock, before retiring, placed the sum of \$200 upon a table in the sitting room, and when he arose in the morning it was missing, together with the stranger. Mr. Hitchcock is naturally considerably exasperated at such a return for his kindness, and has, we understand, offered a reward of fifty dollars for the arrest of the guilty party.—Santa Rosa Democrat.

San Francisco Call, Volume 79, Number 38, 7 January 1896

Twenty Relatives of the Late Hollis Hitchcock Enriched

by His Death.

Others Against Whom He Had a Griev-

ance Cut Off With Small

Sums Each.

SANTA ROSA, CAL., Jan. 6.-Hollis Hitchcock, the late deceased millionaire, has acted generously toward most of his relatives. His will has not been filed yet, but is expected here by to-morrow. From one of the witnesses to the will it has been ascertained that he directed that his estate, outside of a few specially named bequests, be equally divided among twenty of his relatives, share and share alike.

To H. M. Le Baron, his nephew and business agent, he left, in addition to the regular pro rata, a sum of \$20,000. He seemed to have had a grievance against a few of his relatives, as he left them but \$100 each. To the Bodega Road District he bequeathed \$20,000. This latter gift is to be placed in the hands of three men, who will superintend the expending of it; \$2000 with the accumulated interest will be spent each year until the whole sum is used up.

Just what the estate will be worth is not known. At one time it was worth a full million of dollars. Land, which forms the major portion of the dead man's wealth, has depreciated of late years, and probably \$800,000 would come nearer the mark. This would give each of the twenty heirs

about \$40,000.

The executors are George McNear of Petaluma, H. M. Le Baron of Valley Ford and H. E. Lawrence of Petaluma.

San Francisco Call, Volume 79, Number 40, 9 January 1896

THE WILL OF HOLLIS HITCHCOCK.

He Was Worth Half a Million and Was Liberal in His Bequests.

SANTA ROSA, CAL., Jan. 8.—The will of Hollis Hitchcock, dated December 13, 1895, was filed here to-day.

No appraisement has yet been made, but the petition for the probate of the will estimates the value of the property at about \$500,000.

The property of the estate is situated in Sonoma, Solano, Monterey, Marin and Mendocino counties. It is subdivided as follows: Real estate, Sonoma \$200,000, Monterey \$60,000, Solano \$20,000, Marin \$15,000 and Mendocino \$5000. The personal property is as follows: Railread stock \$75,000, bank stock \$100,000 and personal effects \$16,000.

The executors of the will are H. E. Lawrence, George McNeac and H. M. LeBaron.

Twenty thousand dollars is left to Bodega township and Tomales township, in Marin County, for road improvement. This sum is to be expended at the rate of \$2000 a year till the legacy is used up.

All of the tenants of the deceased in Sonoma and Marin counties are to be

given six months rent free.

H. M. LeBaron of Valley Ford is left \$20,000 and a \$30,000 bequeathment is to be held in trust by the executors for the benetit of two sisters and one brother now living. They are to receive a yearly stipend of \$500 each. At their death the residue goes to the children of deceased's sisters and brother and to the child of a sister now living.

Five hundred dollars is left to each of his numerous nephews and nieces, save the children of his brother Benjamin, who are

cut off with \$100 each.

The dead man declares he was never married, but in case proof be shown that he had a lawful wife or child, he directs that they be given \$25.

The executors are empowered to sell or convey any or all of the estate, if so desired, without order of the court, and are

to act without bonds.

3 Dec 1895: Will of Hollis Hitchcock

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of Baken Country of Surviva. State of California. and I himse that they shall have out suit money at interest out shall expect therefore yearly the sum of I was thereast hallows on said made in more about parts out parts out protions thereof	macalonizing	see quelle was in the James	wit.
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som of two Houseald hallows on said world in moradamizing such parts and goodions through	and I himm	that they shall been out said a	games
marchanizing such parts out gordious through	at interest and	- shall impered therefrom your	ly se
macadamizing such parts and postered thereof	sum of Two the	about hills in another humans	نب
So they were here titled bail many on fund	macalamijing	It emited has along such	per
A A	as they may it	men but make said many ~	fund
shall become exhausted. Such june shall be could	shall become	exhausted. Such fund show he e	atted
the Hollie Hildrenk Badya Jamuelik James and Road	Me Hollis Hildho	cook Badya Imudia Jermanuch	Sunh
3	3	o a constant of the constant o	

	Fourth.
	I give and bequeath to my nephew H.M. he Baron, the
	un of Twenty Thousand dollars in Consideration for
	the faithful services that he has rendered me.
	Fight.
	I give and bequeath to each one of the children of
	my deceased brother Benjamin, the sum of One Mundred
100	Collars.
	Sixth.
	I give and bequeath to each one of the chiedren
	I my deceased nieces and nephenos the own of
1 4	ine Hundred dollars.
-4	Seventh.
	give and bequeath to Henry & Lawrence, Geo. J. Mc near
0	ut It. M. he Barow, my nephew, the seem of Thirty Thou
b	und dollars in trust and I himsel that they shall
- 1	on out said money at interest and shall pay
	on said money or fund the sum of Fine Hundred
	ellars yearly to may distor ducy during her lifetime
- a	ud the same amount yearly to my sister Eliza am
9	wing her lifetime and a similar amount yearly
1	o my brother Samuel during his lifetime, and upon
	he death of the last survivor of them. I direct that
2	a money or fund remaining shall be paid to the
2	aldrew of my deceased brother Hiram and the children
1	my deceased sister Cordelia and the children of my
	record dister Tamelia and the oney child of my
٩	when aliza ann, share and share alike, that is
	wh shill shall necesse the same amount.
3	hereby declared by a second
2	hereby hed are that I am a dingle man and that
_ b.	weren was the father of a child but should it
	established by testimony or otherwise that I have haufil wife or a legal child or children them I

1	give and loqueally to each one of them the sum
	of Twenty fine dollars.
	ninth.
	The raidue of my property I give denice and bequeat
100	to the children of my deceased brother Hiram, to the
	children of my deceased sisters Cordelia and Famelia,
5	and he the only chied of my living dister Eliza
	ann, share and share alike, that is, each one of
	said children shall receive the same amount.
1	Teuth.
	I hereby appoint the above reacced Herry to downer
	Des. B. M. Near, and H.M. Le Baron the Expecutors of this
	my last well and Testament, and having full
	confidence in their prudence and housely I do
grania	not wish any bound or other security to be required
	of them for the faithful carrying out the prouses
	of this will as executors or trustees, and I do not
	wish any boul or other security to be required of the
-	parties warred in the 3th paragraph of this will
	in corroging out the trust therein but forth.
	Edeventh.
	I hereby authorize my aforesaid executors to dell
	and convey any or all of my property without the
	order, authority, or interposition of any Court o
#	
AD .	Judge thereof, either at public or private sale.
	Jane Jane Jane Jane Jane Jane Jane Jane
	I hereby declare that the parties would in the
N .	Third and Seventh paragraphs of this well are all
	residents of Sanoura Country, aforesaid.
700	Thirteenth.
	I hereby revolte all former wills made by me.
	The witness whereof I have herewite det
	my hand and seal this Thirteeth day of December

and minery fine. Hallis Hilchard beat	
Hollis Hitchcock Joseph	
The foregoing instrument consisting of four pas	, is
besides this was at the date hereof, by the said H	
Hitch cook signed and seared and published as, a	ud
declared to be his last will and Jestament in pre	
of us who at his request, and in his presence, and	
as witnesses thereto.	دسده
L. C. Sauc	
Resides n. C. Clay and Buchanan Sts. San Francisco m. D. Merritt	
1037 Linden St. Oakland, Cal.	
Geo. R. Williams	
Residence No. 1466. 10# ave. Oakland, Cal	-
(and orsed y	724
Sonoma County Cal. Jan. 8- 1896.	4
Somers B. Fullow, Clark	
By m. S. Hall, Dep. clark.	
	-
In the Superior Court of the Country of Source	<u>a</u>
State of California.	
In the matter of the Estate of Certificate of Front of will	
Hallis Hitchcook, Deceand (7 + + +	
3, S. K. Daugherty, Judge of 1	the
Superior Court of the Country of Soura, do her Certify:	reby
, 0	
That on the 20th day of January Q.D. 1896, I amered instrument was admitted to probate as I	he