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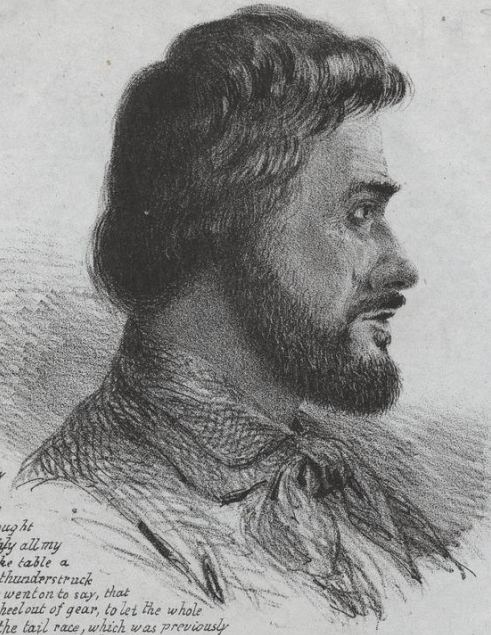
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Capt. Sutter's account of the first discovery of the Gold.

I was sitting one afternoon," said the Captain, "just after my sister, engaged by the bye, in writing a letter to a relation of mine at Lucern, when I was interrupted by Mr. Marshal a gentleman with whom I had frequent business transactions - bustling hurriedly into the room. From the unusual agitation in his manner I imagined that something serious had occurred, and, as we involuntarily do in this part of the world, I at once glanced to see if my rifle was in its proper place. You should know that the mere appearance of Mr. Marshal at that moment in the Fort, was quite enough to surprise me, as he had but two days before left our place to make some alterations in a mill for sawing pine planks, which he had just run up for me, some miles higher up the Americanos. When he had recovered himself a little, he told me that, however great my surprise might be at his unexpected reappearance, it would be much greater when I heard the intelligence he had come to bring me. 'Intelligence,' he added, 'which if properly profited by, would put both of us in possession of unheard-of wealth - millions and millions of dollars, in fact.' I frankly own, when I heard this that I thought something had lashed Marshall's brain, when suddenly all my misgivings were put at an end to by his flinging on the table a handful of scales of pure virgin gold. I was fairly thunderstruck and asked him to explain what all this meant, when he went on to say, that according to my instructions, he had thrown the mill-wheel out of gear, to let the whole body of the water in the dam find a passage through the tail race, which was previously too narrow to allow the water to run of in sufficient quantity, whereby the wheel was prevented from efficiently performing its work. By this alteration the narrow channel was considerably enlarged, and a mass of sand & gravel carried off by the force of the torrent. Early in the morning after this took place, Mr. Marshal was walking along the left Bank of the stream when he perceived something which he at first took for a piece of opal - a clear transparent stone, very common here - glittering on one of the spots laid bare by the sudden crumbling away of the bank. He paid no attention to this, but while he was giving directions to the workmen, having observed several similar glittering fragments, his curiosity was so far excited, that he stooped down & picked one of them up. 'Do you know,' said Mr. Marshal to me, 'I positively debated within myself two or three times whether I should take the trouble to bend my back to pick up one of the pieces, and had decided on not doing so when further on, another glittering morsel caught my eye - the largest of the pieces now before you. I condescended to pick it up, and to my astonishment found that it was a thin scale of what appears to be pure gold.' He then gathered some twenty or thirty pieces which on examination convinced him that his suppositions were right. His first impression was, that this gold had been lost or buried there, by some early Indian tribe - perhaps some of those mysterious inhabitants of the west, of whom we have no account, but who dwelt on this continent centuries ago, and built those cities and temples, the ruins of which are scattered about the solitary wilds. On proceeding, however, to examine the neighbouring soil, he discovered that it was more or less auriferous. This at once decided him. He mounted his horse, and rode down to me as fast as it could carry him with the news.

At the conclusion of Mr. Marshal's account, and when I had convinced myself, from the specimens he had brought with him, that it was not exaggerated, I felt as much excited as himself. I eagerly inquired if he had shown the gold to the workpeople at the mill and was glad to hear that he had not spoken to a single person about it. We agreed not to mention the circumstance to any one, and arranged to set off early the next day for the mill. On our arrival, just before sundown, we poked the sand about in various places, and before long succeeded in collecting between us more than an ounce of gold, mixed up with a good deal of sand. I stayed at Mr. Marshal's that night, and the next day we proceeded some little distance up the south fork, and found that gold existed along the whole course, not only in the bed of the main stream, where the had subsided but in every little dried-up creek and ravine. Indeed I think it is more plentiful in these latter places, for I myself, with nothing more than a small knife, picked out from dry gorge, a little way up the mountain, a solid lump of gold which weighed nearly an ounce and a half.

Notwithstanding our precautions not to be observed, as soon we came back to the mill, we noticed by the excitement of the working people that we had been dogged about, and to complete our disappointment, one of the Indians who had worked at the gold mine in the neighbourhood of La Paz cried out in showing to us some specimens picked up by himself, - Oro! - Oro - Oro!!!



POrTAIT OF MR MARSHAL, TAKEN FROM NATURE AT THE TIME WHEN HE MADE THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN CALIFORNIA



VIEW OF SUTTER'S MILL OR PLACE WHERE THE FIRST GOLD HAS BEEN DISCOVERED