

California Gold Rush

By Leola Motley



When you hear the word California, do you think of beaches and Hollywood? Do you think of Los Angeles and driving down in a sun-kissed convertible car? When I say California, you probably think of a lot of things that revolve around various aspects of the sunny land of happiness. However, when people thought of California in 1848, they thought of gold.

The Discovery

This came as a result, of the discovery of fragments of a precious metal that brought people together in California. Flakes of gold was found in the American river, by a carpenter named James Wilson Marshall.

Nevada Mountains near Coloma, California. His discovery, sent America into a period called the California Gold Rush. This was perhaps one of the most momentous events in shaping the history of America as we know it.

The Mass Migration for Fortune

Marshall and Sutter, and his employer, tried to keep the discovery under wraps, word soon spread about the presence of gold. This led to a barrage of immigrants who came to the state in search of their share of the gold. In 1949, the non-native population of California had gone up from one thousand to one hundred thousand. All in all, over 750,000 pounds of gold was mined in California, transforming the state and the country forever.

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