



# **Six Months In the Gold Mines: From a Journal of Three Years' Residence in Upper and Lower California 1847- 48 - 49**

*Edward Gould Buffum*

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Six Months In the Gold Mines: From a Journal of three years' residence in Upper and Lower California 1847- 48 - 49. By Edward Gould Buffum. Published in Philadelphia in 1850. (180 pages)

Edward Gould Buffum (1820-1867), a New York journalist, came to California as an officer in the 7th Regiment of N.Y. Volunteers during the Mexican War. He stayed on to seek gold and edit a California newspaper before returning east to become Paris correspondent of the New York Herald. Six months in the gold mines (1850) is Buffum's vivid account of his regiment's voyage west in 1846 to help secure California for the United States. He describes his discharge from the army in Monterey and his subsequent adventures as a gold seeker, sailing up the Sacramento to reach the Sierra Nevadas above Sutter's Fort. He describes prospecting along the Bear and Yuba Rivers, Weber Creek, and Middle and South Forks of the American River, Foster's Bar, and Weaver's Creek, 1848-1849. He concludes with the story of his work for Alta California in San Francisco and the growth of San Francisco.

The Publisher has copy-edited this book to improve the formatting, style and accuracy of the text to make it readable. This did not involve changing the substance of the text. Some books, due to age and other factors may contain imperfections. Since there are many books such as this one that are important and beneficial to literary interests, we have made it digitally available and have brought it back into print for the preservation of printed works of the past.

### Introduction.

...On the 26th day of September, 1846, the 7th Regiment of New York State Volunteers, commanded by Colonel J. D. Stevenson, sailed from the harbour of New York under orders from the Secretary of War, to proceed to Upper California. The objects and operations of the expedition, the fitting out of which created some sensation at the time, are now too well understood and appreciated to require explanation. This regiment, in which I had the honour of holding a lieutenant's commission, numbered, rank and file, about seven hundred and twenty men, and sailed from New York in the ships Loo Choo, Susan Drew, and Thomas H. Perkins. After a fine passage of little more than five months, during which we spent several days pleasantly in Rio Janeiro, the Thomas H. Perkins entered the harbour of San Francisco and anchored off the site of the town, then called Yerba Buena, on the 6th day of March, 1847. The remaining ships arrived soon afterwards.

...Alta California we found in quiet possession of the American land and naval forces — the "stars and stripes" floating over the old Mexican presidios. There being no immediate service to perform, our regiment was posted in small detachments through the various towns,

...The now famous city of San Francisco, situated near the extreme end of a long and barren peninsular tract of land, which separates the bay of San Francisco from the ocean, when first I landed, on its beach was almost a solitude, there being not more than twelve or fifteen rough houses, and a few temporary buildings for hides, to relieve the view. Where now stands the great commercial metropolis of the Pacific, with its thirty thousand inhabitants, its busy streets alive with the hum of trade, were corrals for cattle and unoccupied sandy hills.

...With the discovery of the gold mines, a new era in the history of California commences. This event has

already changed a comparative wilderness into a flourishing State, and is destined to affect the commercial and political relations of the world. Between California as she was at the period of the cession to the United States and as she is at this time, there is no similitude. In two short years her mineral resources have been developed, and she has at once emerged from obscurity into a cynosure upon which nations are gazing with wondering eyes. Her mountains and valleys, but recently the hunting grounds of naked savages, are now peopled with a ...

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