

pose of exchanging goods with the Californians for hides and tallow, which made his return cargo. With him I arranged for the use of one of his boats, with which he met me at the landing before daylight in the morning. I took with me twelve of my men singled out as the best shots;—Captain Phelps and his boat's crew excited and pleased to aid in the work on hand. The captain happened to have on board his ship a quantity of rat-tail files, with some of which we supplied ourselves. I had learned that little or no guard was maintained at the fort, which was at the point on the southern side of the gate which makes the entrance to the bay and which I named *Golden Gate*. Pulling across the strait or avenue of water which leads in from the Gate we reached the Fort Point in the gray dawn of the morning and scrambled up the steep bank just in time to see several horsemen escaping at full speed towards *Yerba Buena*. We promptly spiked the guns—fourteen—nearly all long brass Spanish pieces. The work of spiking was effectually done by Stepp, who was a gunsmith, and knew as well how to make a rifle as to use one.

The measures which I had taken, ending with the retreat of De la Torre, had freed from all Mexican authority the territory north of the Bay of San Francisco, from the sea to Sutter's Fort.

Leaving a force to protect San Rafael, I returned to Sonoma upon the 4th of July, when the day was celebrated by salutes and a ball in the evening.

During that and the following day the settlers were organized into a battalion consisting of four companies numbering two hundred and twenty-four men. The force with which I had recently been acting was one hundred and sixty men.

It had now become necessary to concentrate the elements of this movement, in order to give it the utmost efficiency of which it was capable. As was reasonably to be expected under the circumstances, the people desired me to take charge of it. Its existence was due to my presence in the valley, and at any time upon my withdrawal it would have collapsed with absolute ruin to the settlers.

Accordingly, the settlers having met together, I addressed them briefly, accepting the position. In doing so I dwelt on the responsibility which I had assumed as an officer of the United States Army, trusting to them to do nothing which would discredit themselves or our country.

I sent out parties for horses to mount the battalion and to bring in cattle for their support. The horses were taken principally from the estate of General Vallejo, and the cattle from the government stock-farm at Suscol.*

*The value of these and all other supplies taken during my operations in California was afterward estimated by a Board of Officers at Washington appointed by the Government, and the estimated value was appropriated by Congress and paid to the respective owners. Sutter also was paid for the use of his fort.
J. C. F.

U. S. SHIP PORTSMOUTH,
SAUSALITO, June 23, 1846.

SIR: By Lieutenant Hunter, who reached the ship on Saturday evening from your camp, I had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 16th inst., announcing the seasonable reception of the stores forwarded by him. The last few days have teemed with important events; pointing, in my view, to results momentous to the interests of California and our own country. I have determined to remain where I am at present, looking after the interests of our country and countrymen requiring to be watched at this crisis, and readily comply with your suggestion to keep open the communication with your camp, by means of my boats; in pursuance of which it is intended to send a boat in the morning (to-morrow) in charge of Lieutenant Revere (who will hand you this) and another on Saturday next, by the return of which you will be pleased to inform me whether a third boat will be likely to reach you at your present camp or not. The surgeon of the *Portsmouth*, Dr. Henderson, goes in the boat with the orders to remain with you until the return of the next boat, or longer should you desire it. Although aware that the public mind in California was prepared for a change of government, I little expected the movement to take place at this time or in the manner it has. The capture of the horses and the surprise of Sonoma were master-strokes, but should have been followed up by a rush upon Santa Clara, where Castro, with the residue of ordnance and munitions of the country, might have been taken by thirty men at any time previous to Saturday evening. Castro must feel sensibly the loss of the two Vallejos and Pruden, as well as that of the arms and munitions taken at Sonoma. I have exchanged communications with the commanders on both sides, and others, preserving a strict neutrality and avowing my purpose of scrupulously adhering to this principle; while I confess my sympathies are wholly with the gallant little band in arms for mutual defence.

Individuals and small parties from this section have been joining the insurgents at Sonoma daily, I am informed, and Lieutenant Hunter brings intelligence of Sutter's union with them. An irregular force of one hundred and fifty are said to have joined Castro at Santa Clara on Saturday, brought from the vicinity of Monterey by Manuel Castro, the sub-prefect of that place, and I am just informed that they are expected to cross the straits and take horses at Point San Pedro, where a number have been collected for their use, this evening, and move directly upon Sonoma. If this is the case we shall soon know the result. I yesterday heard of the arrival of the United States ship *Cyane* at Monterey, where the *Congress* is also daily looked for from the Islands, where she arrived on the 13th of May. Not a word of news have I yet received by the *Cyane*, but I think she must bring from Mazatlan something respecting our Mexican concerns.

I received a letter from Castro a few days since, a copy of which, as it related solely to your imagined operations, I have thought it well to send you with my reply. Also two proclamations this moment received. Should anything of consequence reach me from the *Cyane* before sending the next boat I will not fail to communicate it to you.

In the meantime permit me to subscribe myself

Your obedient servant,
(Signed) JNO. B. MONTGOMERY,
Commander U. S. N.

To Captain J. C. Frémont, U. S. Topl. Engineers, Sacramento, U. California.

N.B.—Since writing the above I have heard there is no probability of Castro's movement upon Sonoma for several days; they are using great efforts to purchase arms, etc.

Respectfully,
(Signed) JNO. B. MONTGOMERY.

U. S. SHIP PORTSMOUTH,
YERBA BUENA, June 26, 1846.

SIR: Since writing to you by Lieutenant Revere a force of seventy Californians, moving from Santa Clara towards Sonoma, after passing the narrows of this bay twelve miles to the North of my anchorage, were met by a party of fifteen of the revolutionists, and checked or, as reported, compelled to fall back with the loss of two killed and two wounded, two of the

fifteen also falling by the fire of their opponents. This first success, though seemingly a small affair, cannot fail I think to give a favorable impulse to the operations of the insurgents and attract at once numbers of the foreign residents to their aid. Although neutral in my position, I cannot be so in feeling and am anxiously looking for farther intelligence, believing that inactivity in the circumstances can form no part of the policy of the Sonoma party.

Castro has written to me, saying that "he had received advice from various sources, that the boats of the American ship *Portsmouth* go about the Bay of San Francisco armed for the purpose of examining its trade, etc." This, of course, I have very honestly denied, but informed him that I had sent two boats since the 10th inst. to your camp, and deemed it proper in the circumstances to notify him of my intention to despatch another for the purpose of communicating with you at the close of this week, since which I have heard nothing from him. He is at Santa Clara with about seventy men, it is said.

I have directed Lieutenant Bartlett to bring Surgeon Henderson with him when he returns, unless your detention beyond the period named for your final departure for the United States should render his further continuance important, of which you will please be the judge. Lieutenant Bartlett will hand you, sir, a package for the Honorable Secretary of the Navy, which (if perfectly convenient, not otherwise), I will thank you to take charge of, and forward from any point of communication most convenient to yourself.

Wishing you, sir, a safe and pleasant journey to your country and home, I have the honor to subscribe myself,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
(Signed) JNO. B. MONTGOMERY,
Commander U. S. N.

To Captain J. C. Frémont,
U. S. Topl. Engineers, Upper California.

TRANSLATION OF GENERAL CASTRO'S LETTER.

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT-GENERAL OF UPPER CALIFORNIA,
HEADQUARTERS, SANTA CLARA, June 23, 1846.

The undersigned, Commander-in-Chief of the Department, has had advice from various sources, that the boats of the American ship of war *Portsmouth*, now anchored in San Francisco, go about the bay armed for the purpose of examining its trade, and as in the opinion of the undersigned, the aforesaid ship cannot practise such acts in a port which belongs to the Mexican nation, he addresses himself to the commander of the aforesaid ship, to the end that he will please inform him, in reply, with what object he takes those measures; that, in consequence, he may act in conformity with his orders from his Government.

The undersigned has the honor to repeat to the commander of the aforesaid ship assurances of his most respectful consideration.

God and Liberty. (Signed) JOSÉ CASTRO.

To the Commander of the American Sloop of War *Portsmouth*,
anchored in the Bay of San Francisco.

SAUSALITO, July 1, 1846.

SIR: Captain Frémont has requested me to address you upon the subject of a surgeon being ordered to his command. The daily application of sick alone induces him to urge the necessity of his having a medical officer; and he hopes you will feel that he would not make the request, without being satisfied of your concurrence with the application solely with reference to the return of Dr. Henderson to the ship.

Captain Frémont would address you himself, were he not so much occupied, and being away from his writing utensils, which are left at San Rafael.

We move to San Rafael to-morrow morning. In the meantime we hope to learn your favorable decision as to the foregoing application.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,
(Signed) ARCHI. H. GILLESPIE,
Lieut. U. S. Marine Corps, etc., etc.

To Captain J. B. Montgomery,
Commanding U. S. Ship *Portsmouth*, Yerba Buena.

P.S.—I write this in haste on board the Barque *Moscow*.

Respectfully,
(Signed) ARCHI. H. GILLESPIE.

U. S. SHIP PORTSMOUTH,
YERBA BUENA, July 1, 1846.

SIR: I have just received your note by Captain Hall, requesting, in the name of Captain Frémont, that one of the medical officers of the *Portsmouth* might be ordered to his command. However happy, sir, I should feel in complying with the wishes of Captain Frémont in this respect, there are reasons why, in my view, it would be improper to detach one of them for an indefinite period of time from the ship; but be pleased with my respectful regards to Captain Frémont to assure him of my readiness to send one of my medical officers to his camp, wherever that may be, at any time he may require his services, and also, that I will receive such of my sick or wounded countrymen, or others under his command, as shall stand in need of accommodation and medical attendance on board the *Portsmouth*.

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) JNO. B. MONTGOMERY,
Commanding U. S. Ship *Portsmouth*.

To Lieutenant A. H. Gillespie, Sausalito.

SONOMA, July 5, 1846.

SIR: I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt at this place of your two communications, dated June 23d and 26th, the latter highly interesting, in connection with the present crisis. I trust that by the time you receive this note, the arrival of Commodore Sloat will have put an end to your neutral position.

Besides owing you my acknowledgments for the professional aid of Dr. Henderson, I am much indebted to you for the pleasure of his acquaintance, as our pursuits appear to have been somewhat similar. I found him with Lieutenant Bartlett here on my arrival, two days since.

A military organization of the force under arms was yesterday made at this place, and farther than this I have nothing of present interest to communicate to you. I shall to-day continue my road towards Sutter's Fort, on the Sacramento. Foreigners from below are daily arriving at this post, and we have information that upwards of a hundred good men are now in the upper part of the Sacramento valley, on their road from Oregon. The intelligence was brought by a party of seven men who were in advance. Of these, five were wounded, one very dangerously, in an attack by the Indians. This man was shot through the body and is lying at one of the upper settlements.

I forward this by Lieutenant Bartlett, who is about starting, and to my great regret, Dr. Henderson accompanies him.

I trust that in case anything of moment should occur, you will not find it inconsistent with your convenience and the strict neutrality of your position to give me some information. Thanking you in the meantime for your recent kindness,

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) J. C. FRÉMONT,
Bt. Capt. U. S. Topl. Engineers.

Captain Jno. B. Montgomery,
U. S. Ship *Portsmouth*, Bay of San Francisco.

Leaving one company of fifty men under Captain John Grigsby in command at Sonoma, on the 6th I set out on my return; taking with me some small brass field-pieces from the fort, and reached my encampment on the American Fork on the 9th. Before we arrived at that place, General Castro had evacuated Santa Clara, and with a force reported to be about four hundred men and two pieces of artillery, commenced his retreat upon San Juan, a former mission near Monterey, now occupied as a post and fortified with eight pieces of artillery.

On the evening of the 10th we were roused into enthusiasm by the arrival of an express from Captain Montgomery, to inform me that Commodore Sloat had raised the flag at Monterey—that he had hoisted the flag at Yerba Buena, and sent one to Sonoma to be hoisted at that place. He also sent one with a request to have it hoisted at Sutter's Fort; and accordingly with great satisfaction I had this done at sunrise the next morning, under a salute of twenty-one guns amid the general rejoicing of the people. This event paralyzed all opposition.

The raising of the flag at Monterey was communicated by Commodore Sloat to Commander Montgomery, who made known to me the contents of the letter as requested. The following is a copy:

FLAG-SHIP SAVANNAH, MONTEREY, July 6, 1846.

SIR: Since I wrote you last evening, I have determined to hoist the flag of the United States at this place to-morrow, as I would prefer being sacrificed for doing too much than too little.

If you consider that you have sufficient force, or if *Frémont* will join you, you will hoist the flag of the United States at Yerba Buena, or at any other proper place, and take possession, in the name of the United States, of the fort, and that portion of the country.

I am very anxious to know if *Captain Frémont* will co-operate with us. Mr. Larkin is writing to him by the launch, and you will please put him in possession of this letter as soon as possible. I have no time to write more at present.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

JOHN D. SLOAT,

Commander-in-Chief, etc.

Commander J. B. Montgomery,
U. S. Ship Portsmouth, San Francisco.

On the 12th I received an express from Commodore Sloat, transmitting to me his proclamation, and with a request to proceed with the force under my orders to Monterey:

FLAG-SHIP SAVANNAH, BAY OF MONTEREY, July 9, 1846.

SIR: You will, no doubt, have received the information before this that I have hoisted the flag of the United States at this place, on the 7th instant; as yet all is quiet and no resistance of any kind has been made.

I immediately sent to General Castro a copy of my proclamation to the inhabitants of California, and a summons to surrender forthwith to the American arms the forts, military posts, and

stations, under his command, together with all troops, arms, munitions of war, and public property of every description under his control and jurisdiction, with an invitation for him to meet me immediately at this place to enter into articles of capitulation, that himself, officers, soldiers, and the inhabitants of California, may receive assurances of perfect safety to themselves and property.

I have this moment learned, by an Englishman just arrived from General Castro, at the Pueblo, that General Castro was probably at St. John's last evening, and that you would probably be at the Pueblo at the same time.

I have not as yet received any communication from General Castro.

It is thought he will be in to-morrow, or send some communication. This Englishman says that when the general read my proclamation to his troops, he expressed his approbation of it; if he is wise, he will make no resistance.

I have here the frigate *Savannah*, of fifty-four guns, the sloops of war *Cyane* and *Levant*, of twenty-four guns each, armed with 32-pounder long guns, 68-pounder shell guns, and 42-pounder carronades, with a large complement of men, and am every moment in expectation of the arrival of the frigate *Congress*, with sixty 32-pounder long guns, at this place, and the sloop *Erie* with long 18's at San Francisco. I am extremely anxious to see you at your earliest convenience; and should General Castro consent to enter into a capitulation, it is of the utmost importance that you should be present. I hope, therefore, that you will push on with all possible despatch, or, at any rate, let me hear from you immediately.

Captain Montgomery sent his launch down, which I despatched on the 6th, informing him that I should take possession of this place on the next day in the name of the United States, and sent him a copy of my summons and proclamation, and also orders to take possession of Yerba Buena and the Bay of San Francisco immediately, requesting him to inform you of these facts without delay. I have also sent him three couriers with the same orders (in cipher), which I have no doubt have reached him, and am confident that the flag of the United States is now flying there.

Although I am in expectation of seeing General Castro, to enter into satisfactory terms with him, there may be a necessity of one hundred men, well mounted, who are accustomed to riding, to form a force to prevent any further robbing of the farmers' houses, etc., by the Indians. I request you to bring in as many men up to that number with you, or send them on under charge of a trusty person, in case you may be delayed for a day or two. Should you find any Government horses on the road, please bring them in.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN D. SLOAT,

Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Naval Forces in the Pacific Ocean, etc.

Captain J. C. Frémont.

A few days had been occupied in mounting guns, preparing ammunition, and making other preparations for a campaign, and in arranging for the tranquillity of the Sacramento valley during my absence. Before I set out on this third expedition the emigration from the Western States had received a strong impulse from the accounts spread abroad of the singular beauty and fertility of the California valley; and I considered it safe to count upon the incoming emigrants for a steady increase of our strength. Of their hearty support I had no doubt.

Shortly after the receipt of the message from Commodore Sloat, I set out upon the march to Monterey, going by the way of the San Joaquin valley and crossing the mountains to San Juan. General Castro had made here but brief halt, and with the force which he had collected was withdrawing towards Los Angeles; realizing that war had begun in earnest, and that he

was unable to contend with the land and naval forces suddenly combined in the north. I took possession of San Juan, putting only a few men in charge, for the reason that no further opposition was to be apprehended in the north. A few hours after my arrival Lieutenant McLane and Mr. Fauntleroy came in with a reconnoitring party.

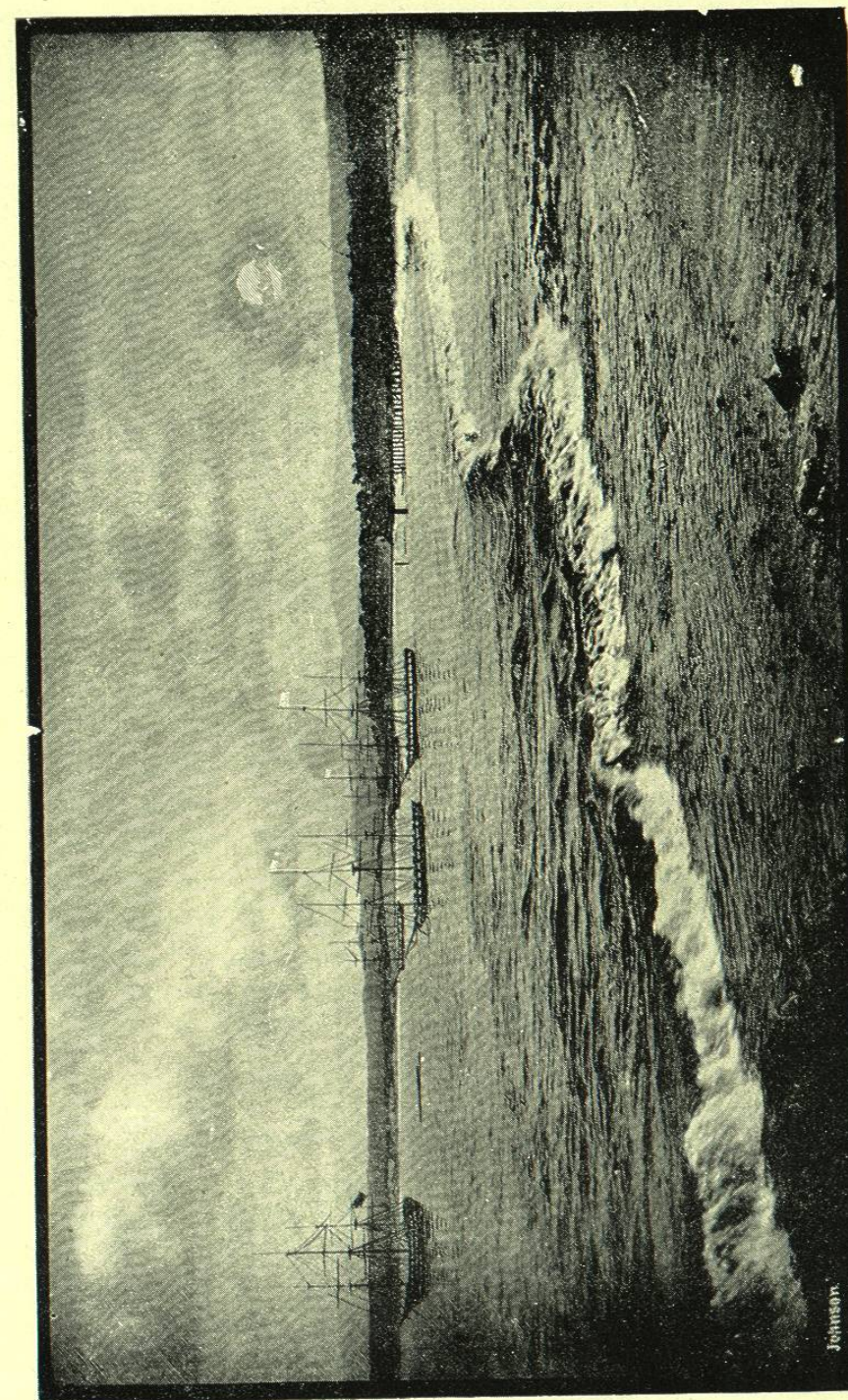
On the 19th we continued our road through the Gomez Pass towards Monterey, giving on the way a marching salute to the Cavilan Peak, where in March, four months before, we had hoisted the flag.

It was a day of excitement when we entered Monterey. I was glad again to meet the ocean breeze and surf. Many of my men had never seen the ocean, or the English flag. Four of our men-of-war were lying in the harbor, and also the *Collingwood*, eighty guns, flag-ship of Admiral Seymour. The men looked upon the *Collingwood* with the feeling of the racer who has just passed the winning post.

On the 16th a sail hove in sight which was made out to be an English line-of-battle ship, and the vessels of the American squadron were signalled to prepare for action. I learned from Midshipman Beale, who was on shore at the time with a party of men engaged in building a block-house on the hill, that the signal was also made recalling to their ships all officers and men from shore; and when he reached the *Congress* he found the men at quarters. The stranger vessel proved to be the eighty-gun ship *Collingwood*, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Sir George Seymour.

The uncertainty which existed in the American squadron concerning the action which might be taken by the English admiral is shown in the following extract from a letter of the 11th of July from Commander Montgomery to Commodore Sloat:

"This afternoon the *Junco* arrived and anchored at Sausalito. I sent a boat with offer of service, and, at the same time, notified Captain Blake of the existing state of things in California, and that the flag of the United States was now flying at Yerba Buena, which he appeared satisfied with on receiving information of the commencement of hostilities between the armies of the United States and Mexico. On the appearance of that ship, the necessary preparation was made to defend our position in the event of English opposition to our claims. In such a contingency being twenty odd men short, it would become absolutely necessary to withdraw the marines from the shore to the ship; and to show the spirit of our 'Volunteer Guards of Yerba Buena,' I will add, that to-day they were assembled and informed by Mr. Watson that the flag of the United States would, by our necessity, have to be committed to their care, and that we trusted to their spirit and honor to keep it flying; when they unanimously gave the strongest assurances that it should wave while a single man of the 'Guards' lived to defend it."



AMERICAN MEN-OF-WAR.
ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES AT MONTEREY.