

Finch & C^o



A CALIFORNIAN GOLD RUSH NUGGET

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MOUNTED ON A GOLD BROOCH

CIRCA 1849 – 1852

SIZE : 4.5 CM WIDE – 1¾ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

THE CALIFORNIAN GOLD RUSH OF 1849 EPITOMIZED THE HOPEFUL IMAGININGS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD, AND WELL OVER A 150 YEARS LATER THERE ARE STILL ECHOES OF THE ENTHUSIASM WITH WHICH THE NEWS OF THE GOLD DISCOVERIES WAS GREETED. COMMUNICATIONS IN THE 1840'S MEANT THAT IT WAS MANY WEEKS BEFORE WORD REACHED THE CITIES THAT FLAKES OF GOLD HAD BEEN FOUND IN THE TAIL-RACE OF CAPTAIN SUTTER'S NEW SAWMILL ON THE AMERICAN RIVER. HOWEVER, ONCE IT HAD, AN ALL BUT UNIVERSAL DESIRE TO SET OFF AT ONCE FOR THE NEW EL DORADO BEGAN. AN ESTIMATED 80'000 PEOPLE, MOSTLY MEN, TRAVELLED TO CALIFORNIA IN SEARCH OF A FORTUNE. THERE IS A SAYING 'GOLD MADE CALIFORNIA' AND ALTHOUGH THE GOLD RUSH HAD SPENT ITSELF BY 1854 IT HAD A LASTING IMPACT ON CALIFORNIA'S DEVELOPMENT DEFINING THE STATE AS MUCH CULTURALLY, AS ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY.