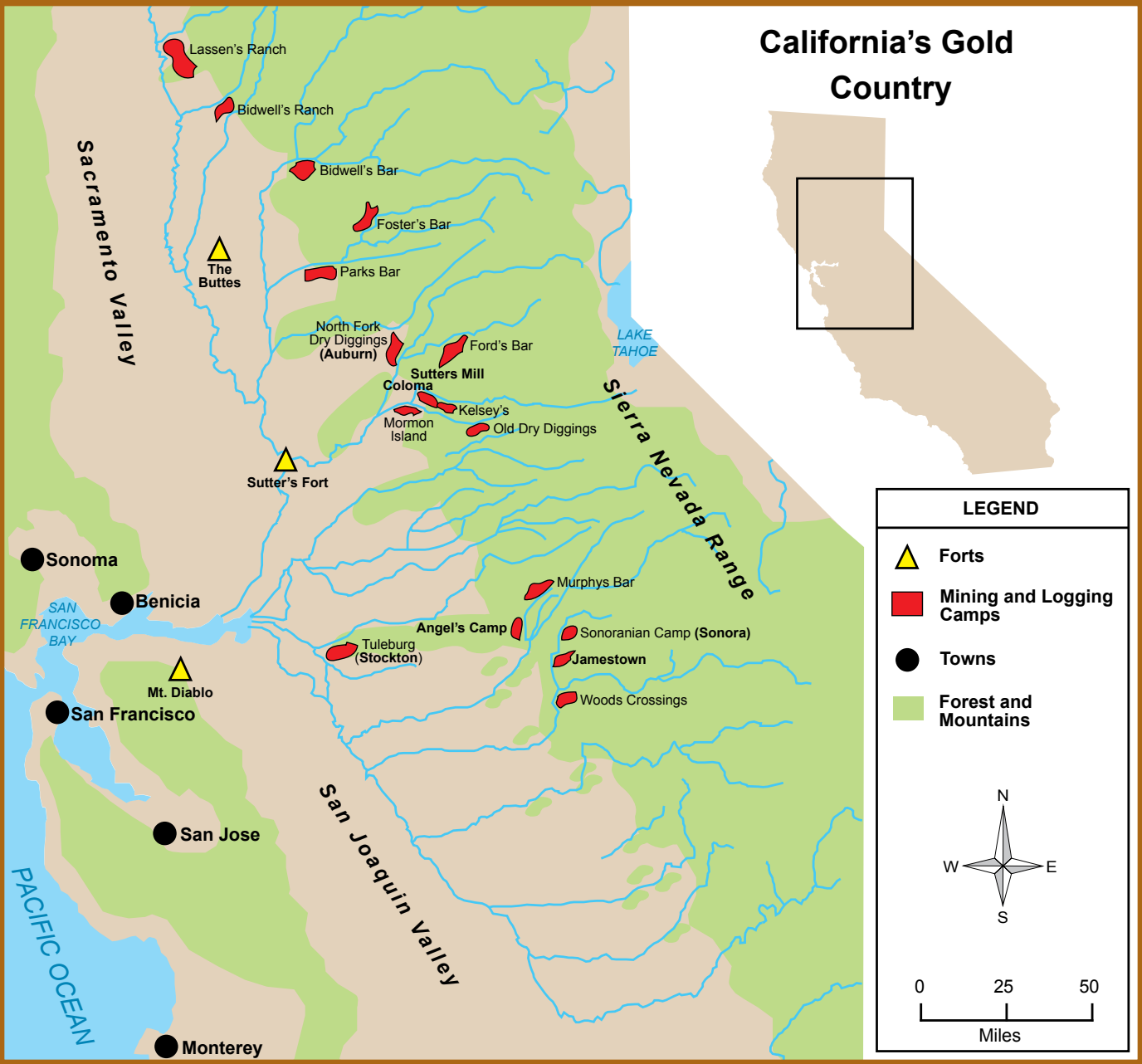
VA #1 California Before the Gold Rush

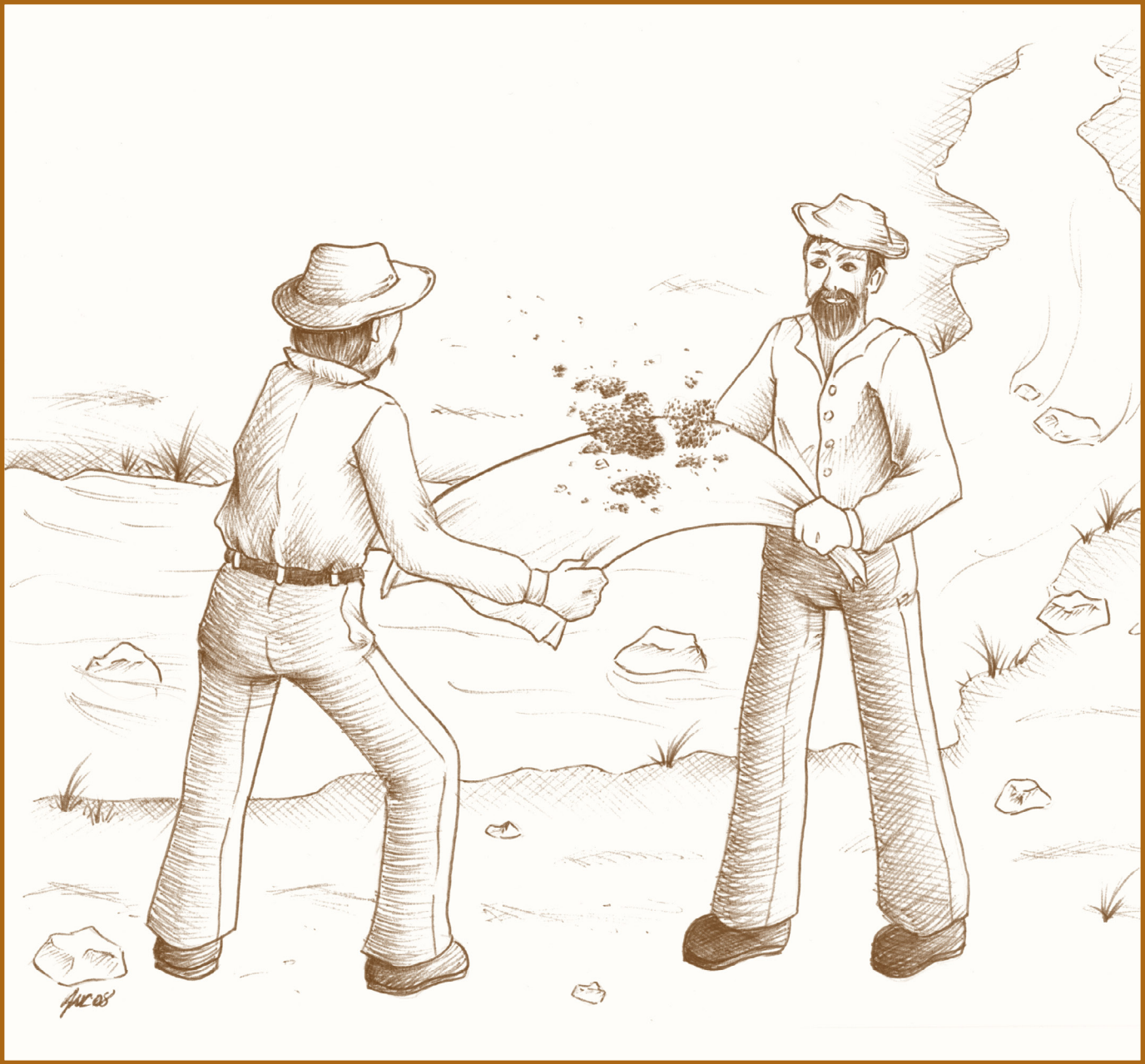


VA #2 John Sutter and Sutter's Fort

- Sutter was born in Germany to Swiss parents and grew up in Switzerland; he came to California in 1839.
- After getting permission from the Mexican government, Sutter built a fort in what is today Sacramento.
- He grew grapes and wheat on farmland there, along with raising large herds of cattle and sheep. Sutter’s Fort became a place where the goods from his farm and ranch were stored and sold to other settlers.
- Sutter and his business partner, James Marshall, decided to go into the lumber business. They wanted to build a water-powered sawmill on one of the rivers near Sacramento. At the sawmill, Marshall discovered gold in 1848.

VA #3 Early Mining Methods — Panning

VA #4 Early Mining Methods — Dry Washing



VA #5 Early Mining Methods — Rocker (Cradle)

VA #6 How to Pan for Gold 1

Purpose:

To collect the most gold in a given amount of time, by panning in a streambed pool.

Your team needs:

- plastic tray
- two spoons
- cup
- streambed pool (prepared by your teacher)

What's in your streambed pool:

- sand—riverbed sediment
- brown beads—riverbed pebbles
- red beads—fish eggs, animal nests
- pennies or gold beads—gold nuggets
- small plastic plants—river plants

VA #7 How to Pan for Gold 2

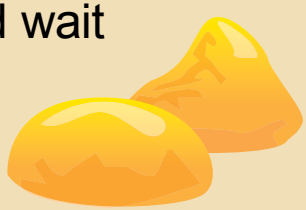
Follow these steps:

- **Step 1:** Go to your team's assigned "streambed pool." Then take a "pan" (spoon) from the plastic tray and place the cup in a safe place.

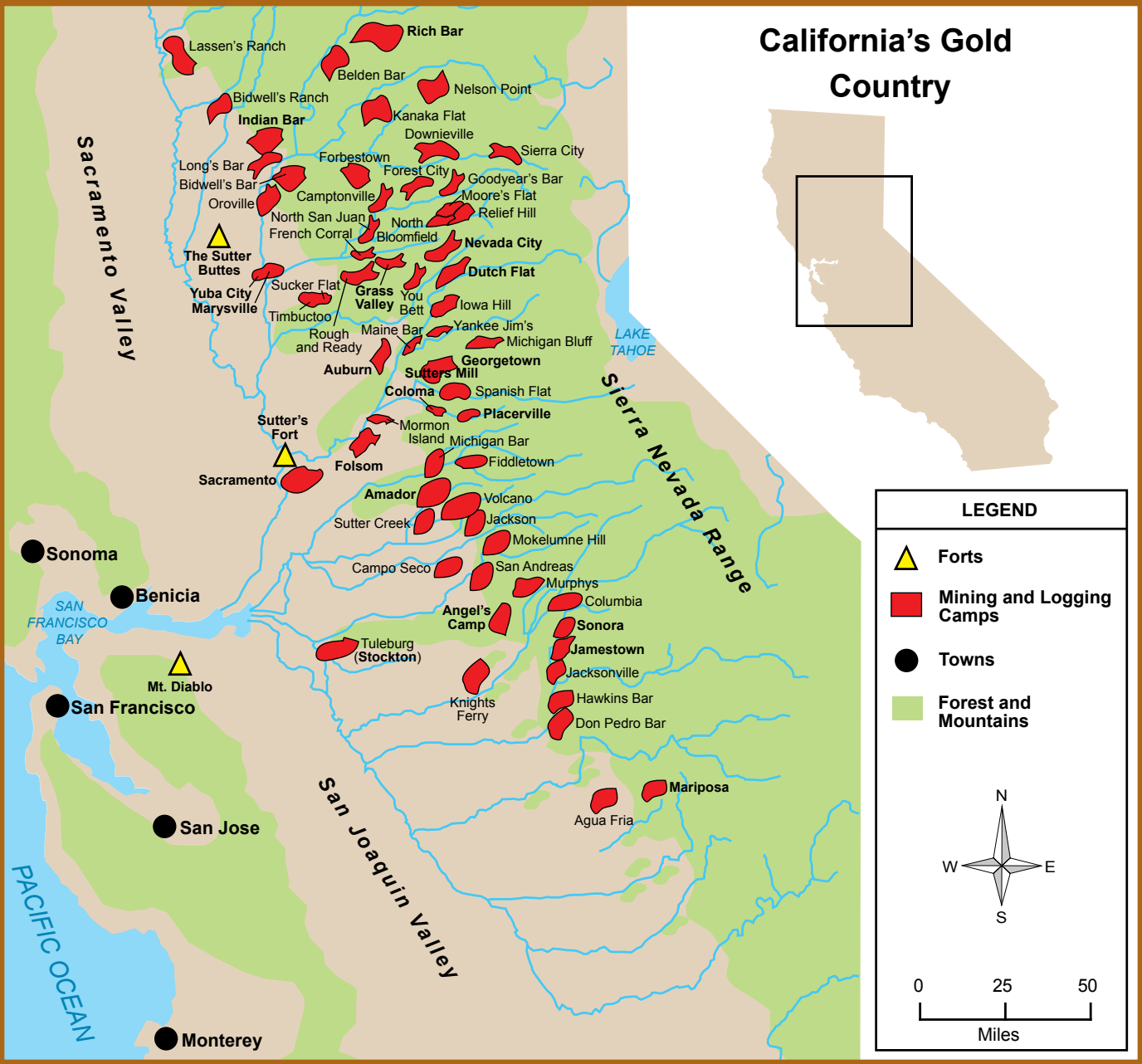
- **Step 2:** When the teacher gives the signal to begin, your "prospector" partner and you may begin to "pan" for "gold" using ONLY the spoons—**no hands**. Place the "nuggets" that you find into the cup. If you remove sand or rocks (brown beads), fish eggs (red beads) or plants from the river, put them on the plastic tray.

- **Step 3:** After you have collected all of the gold in your pool (or time is up), ***walk*** to the "Claims Office" to record your find.

- **Step 4:** Once your find has been recorded at the Claims Office, return to your pool and wait for instructions.



VA #8 California During the Gold Rush



VA #9 California's Changing Population

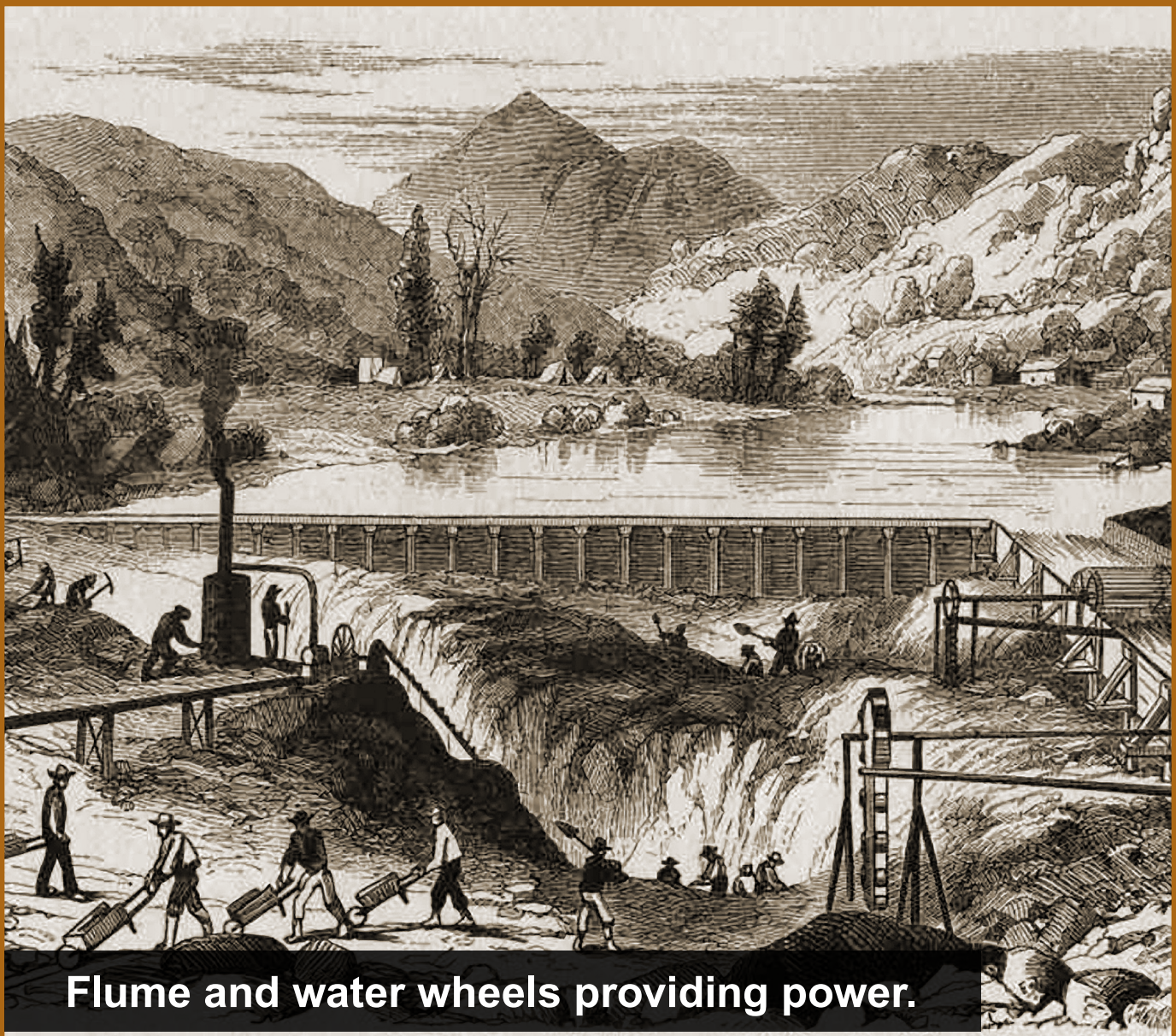
1848	1850
Total Number of People:	**Total Number of People :**
13,800	**92,597**
▪ Californios: 6,900 ▪ California Indians: 6,200 ▪ People from Other States (mostly): 700	▪ Californios: 7,696 ▪ People from Other States: 61,866 ▪ People from Other Countries: 21,629

VA #10 Louise Clapp

- Louise Clapp and her husband moved from New England to California in 1850.
- In 1851–1852, Louise and her husband lived in two mining camps: Rich Bar and Indian Bar.
- Under the pen name “Shirley,” Louise wrote 23 letters to her sister in Massachusetts about what was happening in California.

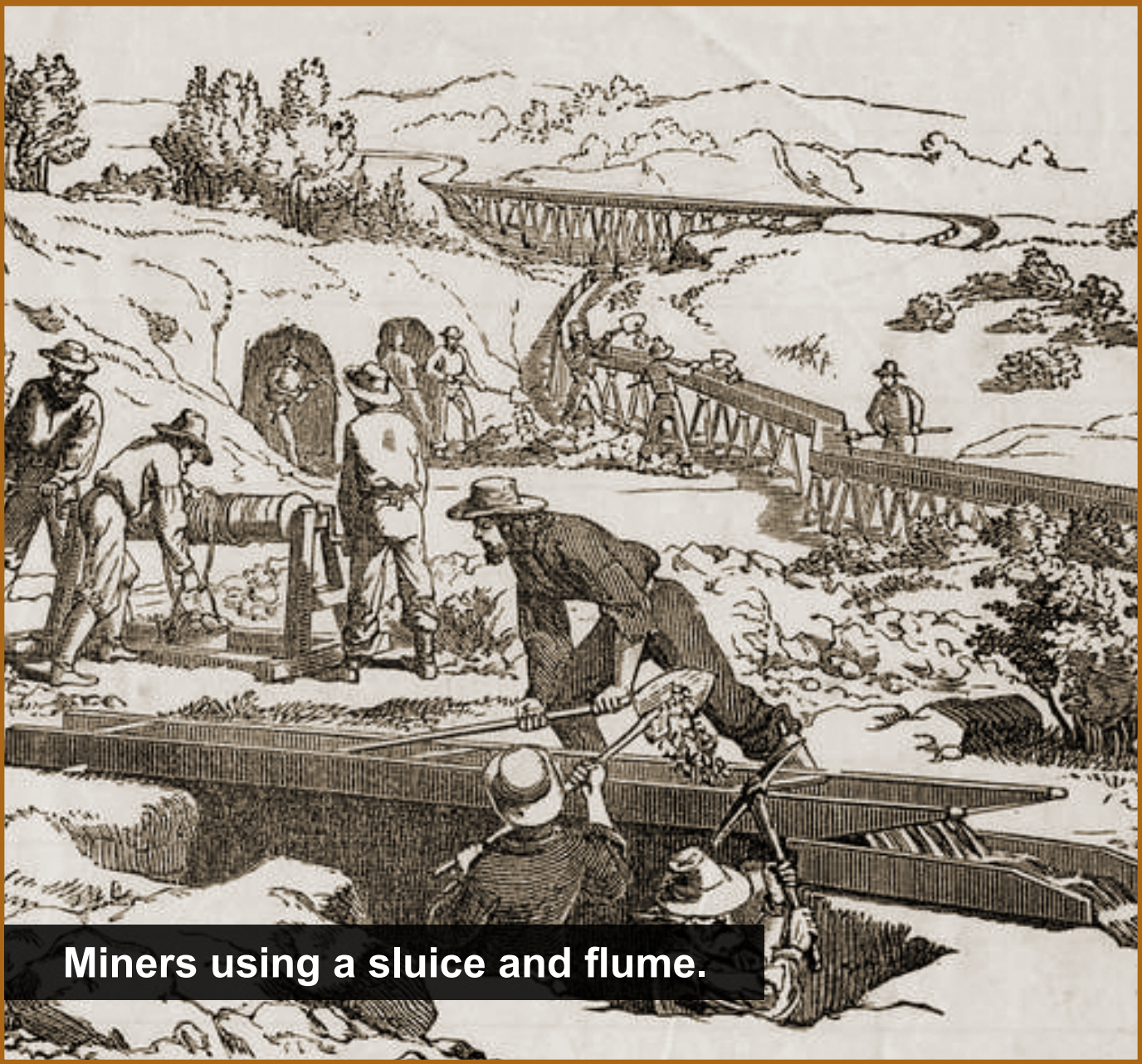
VA #11 Jamestown Mining Camp

VA #12 Advanced Mining Methods — Water Wheels



Flume and water wheels providing power.

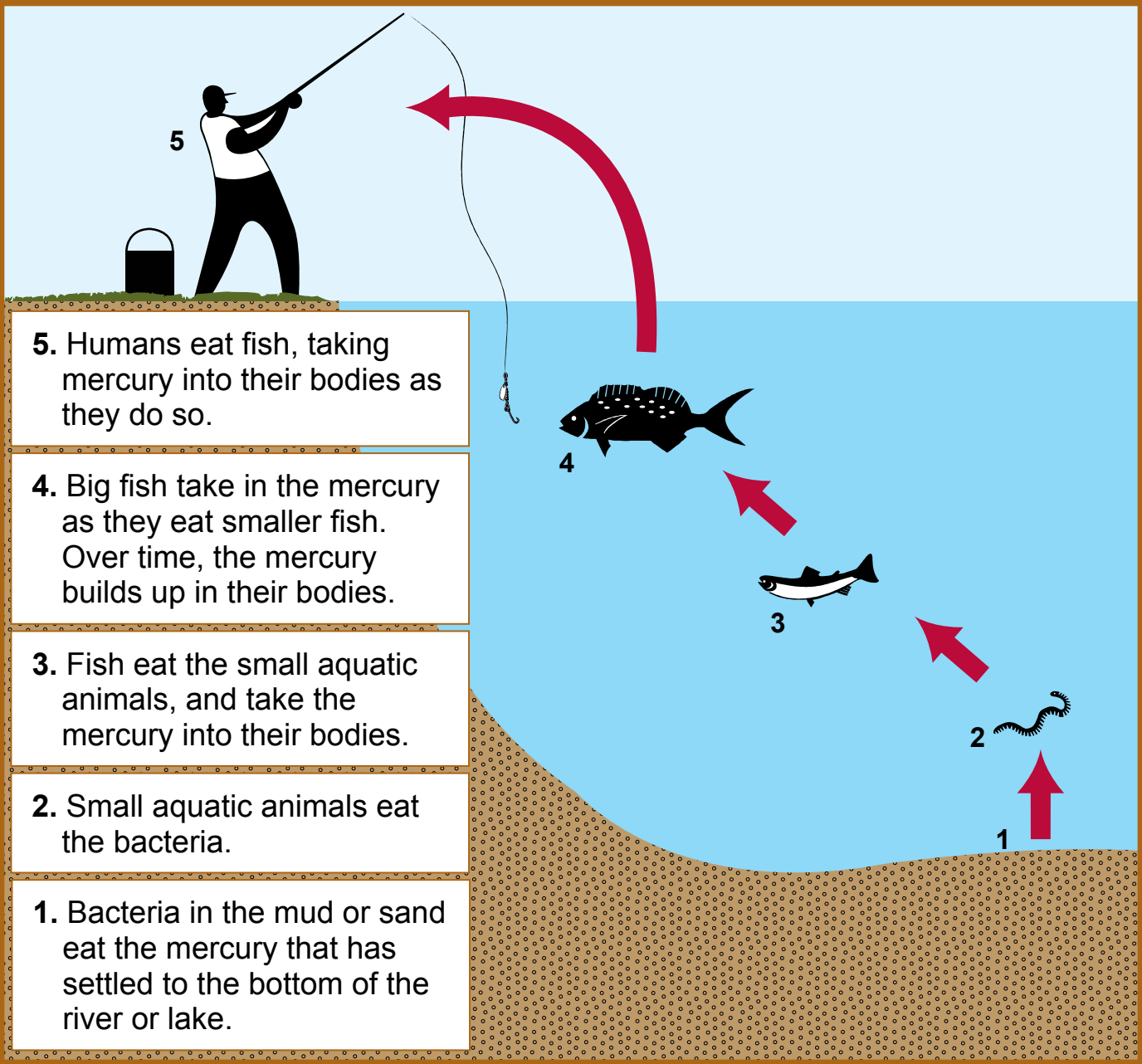
VA #13 Advanced Mining Methods—Sluice



Miners using a sluice and flume.

VA #14 Hydraulic Mining Operation

VA #15 Mercury in the Food Web



5. Humans eat fish, taking mercury into their bodies as they do so.

4. Big fish take in the mercury as they eat smaller fish. Over time, the mercury builds up in their bodies.

3. Fish eat the small aquatic animals, and take the mercury into their bodies.

2. Small aquatic animals eat the bacteria.

1. Bacteria in the mud or sand eat the mercury that has settled to the bottom of the river or lake.

VA #16 Mercury in California's Water

VA #17 The Debris Debate

Farmers	Merchants

Townspeople	Miners