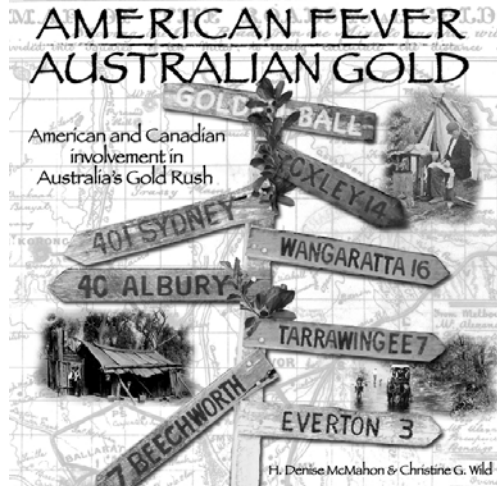


NOTE FROM ALLAN J. TOMPKINS – JULY, 2008.

I'm very pleased to recommend AMERICAN FEVER AUSTRALIAN GOLD as a wonderful collection of information about the activities of a large number of individuals who came Down Under in their quest for gold. Amongst the individuals singled out for detailed attention, six passengers on the Brig AUSTRALIA are included in this work – Christopher Dockendorff, Gilbert and John Prince, Henry and William Charlton and Robert Hazen. Available as a PDF file on CD – refer to the publicity release below for further information.



American Fever Australian Gold re-enacts the daily life and experiences on and beyond the goldfields, primarily in the Ovens district of northeast Victoria, Australia. With a combined 18 years of research, Australian authors Denise McMahon and Christine Wild have devoted the last five years retracing the footsteps of North Americans who braved the high seas to seek their fortune in Australia during the gold rush years, 1850-1870.

Many of these men tried their luck on the Californian fields, but as the news of great finds in Australia, and in particular the diggings at the Ovens, made headlines around the world, the rush

to the land down under began. Bringing with them their mining techniques, equipment and experience, these men were already 'streets ahead' of the many diggers, who in reality were men from varying occupations, who had rushed to the goldfields in the hope of making a quick fortune. The cradle, the rocker, the long-tom and river damming were all unfamiliar terms until the arrival of the Americans. Mining boomed, canvas cities sprung up and soon the need for administration on the fields brought with it the development of many towns.

The lack of recognition of the endeavours of these influential men in the history books of northeast Victoria was the driving force behind, and the creation of, American Fever Australian Gold. Whether these men and women remained in the northeast (and many did), or moved to other areas of Victoria, Australia, or the world, the authors followed them. An array of personalities has been portrayed within the 170 stories narrated. Anecdotal material exposes a scoundrel-ridden guy who kept changing his name; another story portrays the influence a single man had on his fellow countrymen who had amassed a small fortune after spending only months on the Australian goldfields. Optimism, determination, and hardships are common denominators of these early men, before, during and after gold.

As much of the research is based on original source documents, from this study new information has emerged never before previously known to exist. Old newspapers of the time, letters, diaries and journals written by these men from the goldfields or onboard ship describes their precarious lives as they hunt for a sustainable income. A painstaking analysis of primary and secondary data, it consolidates the value of American immigrants and their involvement in early Australia.

With over 1,700 names listed in the Contents page, this voluminous work with over 1,000 pages is a flourishing piece, not only of genealogy, and history pertinent to areas of the United States and within Australia, it also reveals a 'plotted history' of the major regions within the Ovens district goldfields of northeast Victoria. An assortment of photographs also compliments the text.

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