

# Gold in Australia



Author: M. Guile  
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 Extent: 32 pages  
 Age Level: 10 to 14 years  
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**Gold in Australia** looks at Australia's involvement in each of the three 20th century wars both on the battlefields and at home: World War I, World War II and the Vietnam War. Each book examines the reasons for the war, why Australia was involved, where Australians fought, famous battles, women at war, the war effort at home and how the wars ended. The series is supported by maps and historical photographs.

## Features of this book include:

- ★ clear and concise text accompanied by large contemporary and historical photographs
- ★ location maps
- ★ a glossary explaining new words and phrases
- ★ ideas for internet research
- ★ an index.



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## Finding gold

The first gold find in Australia was made in 1823 near Bathurst, New South Wales, by a road surveyor named James McBrien. Other small finds were made over the next 30 years, but the government and wealthy landowners did not want a gold rush. However, gold strikes overseas made people change their minds.

**Rush to California**  
 In 1848, gold was found in California, North America. People from all over the world rushed there to try to find gold for themselves. News of the gold rush reached Australia in 1849. Many Australians joined the rush, leaving their jobs and families. Not all of them got rich, but they did learn how to look for gold. Some diggers returned to Australia determined to find gold at home, too.

**Gold finds in New South Wales**  
 A businessman, Edward Hargreaves, had heard talk of gold finds near Bathurst, so he went there on horseback to look for gold. On the way, he met a hotel owner's son named John Lister, and together the two men found a few specks of gold at Lewis Ponds Creek (later called Ophir). Hargreaves returned quickly to Sydney to claim the government reward.

Australia. Meanwhile Lister and two neighbours found whole nuggets of gold. In May 1851, thousands of diggers rushed to the area. Then a huge nugget was found near the Turon River, and more men rushed there.

**Gold finds in Victoria**  
 When news of the New South Wales rushes reached the place now called Victoria, thousands of men left their jobs for the goldfields. Governor Charles La Trobe, fearing that there would be no workers left in Melbourne, set up a Gold Discovery Commission. They offered a reward in June 1851 to anyone who found gold within 320 kilometres of Melbourne. In July 1851, timber worker James Esmond dug gold from the creek at Clunes and brought it to Melbourne. Only a few days later, hotel owner Louis John Michel discovered gold at Warrandyte. Blacksmith Thomas Hiscock then found gold near Ballarat.



This map shows the sites of the main gold discoveries made in Victoria and New South Wales in the mid-19th century.

This 1849 picture shows men panning for gold in a stream in California.

**Lucky strike**  
 In 1851, Aboriginal shepherd Jimmy Diving was working for Dr William Kerr on a cattle station 50 kilometres from Ballarat, New South Wales. In July, Diving hit a rock with his own sand discovered to have traces of gold inside.

## Actual text size:

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**Curriculum Links:**

Australian Curriculum in History and English at years 5–9



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