

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIRST GOLD DISCOVERERS.

IT is difficult to say when and by whom gold was first discovered in Otago. The Maoris were aware of its existence before the colonists arrived, as Mr. Palmer of Moeraki has stated that he had been assured by the Native chief, Tu-hawaiki, that plenty whiro or yellow stone could be obtained in the interior of the Island. Other natives confirmed this, and at least one party of settlers attempted to discover El Dorado. In 1851, while James Crane was at Henley, some natives came there from the Molyneux. All the talk at that time was about the finding of gold in Australia. As the talking progressed, a native named Raki Raki told those present that while towing his canoe up the Matau, near Te Houka beach, he picked up a stone the colour of a pakeha sovereign. He carried it in his hand for a while, and then threw it into the canoe to the children. The story roused some of the listeners, who made up a party consisting of William Palmer, James Wybrow, John Bennett, two natives, Teraki and Tuera, and James Crane, to go prospecting. On reaching the Molyneux, the party got Mr. Redpath's boat and went as far as the Pomahaka Falls, where the natives were eeling, but had to return without finding any gold. In March, 1852, a party of five started up the Clutha River in a whaleboat brought by Mr. Thomas B. Archibald from Dunedin, and prospected the bars and banks of the river as far as the Creek now called Beaumont; but, as none of the party knew anything about gold-mining, they returned after a three weeks' cruise, having got nothing but the colour. In 1853, a small quantity of fine sealy gold was got at the Fortifications in West Taieri Goldfield.

In 1856, Mr. C. W. Ligar reported to Captain Cargill that he had found gold distributed in the gravel and sand at Tuteurau, but no effort was made to test the value of this discovery. The Superintendent observed that in no circumstances would it be advisable to allow searchers

to go upon a run without leave of the lessee, or upon native lands without leave of the natives. In 1857-58, Mr. Alex. Garvie reported traces of gold to be found in Clutha, Manuherikia, Tuapeka, Pomahaka, and Waitahuna Rivers. The best sample brought to Dunedin had been procured in 1859 by Edward Peters, a native of Bombay, at what became known as the Woolshed Diggings. Peters also obtained gold on Messrs. Davy and Bowler's run, near the Tuapeka River, and not far from Gabriel's Gully. On behalf of Peters, Mr. A. McNeil put in a claim for the reward (£500) offered by the Provincial Government, but it was not granted. In 1858 the Chief Surveyor found gold in the Lindis River, and in March, 1861, some men forming a road in the Dunstan Mountains struck a deposit of the precious metal. A small rush set in, but the yield was not encouraging. Scarcely had the brief excitement subsided when Mr. Gabriel Read reported on 4th June, 1861, to Major Richardson, Superintendent of Otago, that he had made an extensive trip of about thirty-five miles and had found gold which would pay for proper working. With a pan and butcher's knife he had got seven ounces for ten hours' work. Read's statements found their way to the Press, and a rush set in to the gully called in his honour Gabriel's Gully.

In August, 1861, the first escort brought 5,056 ounces of gold to Dunedin, and at once excitement rose to fever heat. The rush to Otago soon assumed enormous proportions, and in December, 1861, the population had increased from 12,691 in December, 1860, to 30,269.

Weatherstone's and Munroe's Gullies were shortly afterwards opened up, and in July, 1861, Gabriel Read and Captain Baldwin discovered a rich field in Waitahuna River, where the first two dishfuls of gravel yielded three-quarters of an ounce of gold. In November, 1861, the aggregate amount of gold brought in by the escorts totalled 73,904 ounces. Early in 1862 further discoveries were made on the Waipori River, and at the Woolshed, Tokomairiro.

During the winter months of 1862 some discoveries of lesser extent were made, and in August, 1862, Hartley and Riley lodged at the Chief Gold Receiver's office in Dunedin 1,047 ounces of gold. They refused to divulge the name of the locality until the Government had guaranteed them a reward of £2,000, conditionally on 16,000

ounces being brought down by the escort in three months. They then stated that the place was on the Clutha River, between the junction of the Manuherikia and the Kawarau Rivers. A rush of unprecedented magnitude then set in with the inevitable result; a reaction followed, hastened by the scarcity of provisions. Half a crown was readily paid for a pound of flour, wood for making cradles sold at fabulous prices, as much as £3 being paid for an old gin case. Many left the field in disgust with greater haste than they had gone to it, but those who remained were amply rewarded.

The banks of the river on either side became occupied by a numerous population, which gradually extended for a distance of seventy miles.

In September, 1862, another discovery was made at Nokomai River, and before the close of 1862, 70,000 ounces of gold had been sent to Dunedin. The Clutha River was badly flooded in September, 1862, and this flood drove the miners from their claims. They explored the neighbouring gullies, and gold was discovered in many places. The most important was named Conroy's Gully. Three miners crossed the Carriek Range, and in one day took two ounces of gold with a tin dish and a shovel out of a place afterwards called Potter's Gully.

Discoveries of greater importance were soon made, and in October, 1862, a miner named Fox stated he had made a very rich find. Numbers went in search of the new field, but for a time were unsuccessful, and began to look upon the report as a fraud. One party, however, struck gold at Cardrona Creek, and in one afternoon they got 9oz. 6dwt. 12 grains. Following up the Cardrona Creek, a party of miners came upon Fox's party working in a gorge in the Arrow River, and an extensive rush again took place to this spot. The miners then turned to the Shotover, where Mr. Thomas Arthur, with three mates, obtained 200 ounces of gold in eight days by washing the sands of the river beach.

Higher up the Shotover numerous rich gullies were discovered, and the beaches of the river itself were successfully prospected. One of these beaches was named Maori Point, owing to its discovery by two natives of the North Island, Dan Ellison and Zachariah Haeroa. As these men were travelling along the eastern bank of the river they found some Europeans working in a secluded gorge. On the opposite shore was a beach occupying a

bend of the stream, over which the cliffs rose perpendicularly more than 500 feet high. The Maoris plunged into the river and managed to reach the shore, but their dog was carried away by the current, and drifted to a rocky point, where it remained. Ellison went to its assistance, and, observing some particles of gold in the crevices, he commenced to search, and with the assistance of Haeroa secured 300 ounces of gold before nightfall.

Other gullies and beaches were opened up, the chief being Skipper's Gully. In 1863 gold was discovered at the Tallaburn, at Manuherikia Valley, at Campbell's Creek, and at Mount Ida, and the first escort brought 4,320 ounces from the last field. For the first three years and nine months after Gabriel Read's discovery 1,699,667 ounces of gold had passed through Dunedin Custom House, and 63,970 ounces through other ports.

The news of the gold discoveries spread like wildfire, and diggers began to pour in from all parts of New Zealand and from the neighbouring colonies. All Dunedin was in a whirl of excitement, and merchants wondered if they could put their stores on wheels and transport them bodily to Tuapeka. The road, which ran by way of Waihola and Tokomairiro, soon got into a terrible state, and it was no uncommon sight to see a team of bullocks stuck fast in a deep hole, where the drivers had to wait till the next team came along, when the combined teams pulled one waggon at a time out of the obstruction. Laughable scenes were often witnessed, and on one occasion a party of sailors was seen en route for the diggings with a hand-cart, with a man in the shafts acting as steersman and a sail up to catch the wind. The steersman had to run like the wind, and the various antics he cut evoked roars of laughter from onlookers.

The following incidents in connection with the diggings in various parts of Otago may be taken as samples of what occurred during this wild and unsettled time. Mr. T. Blatch was a member of the police force, and had good opportunities of observing the events which came under his notice, while the other accounts are from those who personally took part in the wild rush to the diggings.

When the Gabriel's Gully rush broke out, Mr. Hay, Mr. John Sharp, A. Bell, Henry Begg, and William Hay started with a team of bullocks, and after great difficulty got as far as Balclutha. They were in Balclutha two

solid days before they could get the bullocks across the river. When they reached the diggings they camped in the first place at the top of the Blue Spur, among the manuka bush. Bell and William Hay went across to Weatherstone's prospecting, and got very good colour, while Mr. Hay and Sharp sank a hole in Gabriel's Gully right under the Blue Spur. At night they compared prospects, and as these were better at Gabriel's they decided to stay there, and immediately pegged off their claim. Next day they put a little bit of a dam across Gabriel's Creek to bring the water in to the claim, put down their sluice-box, which they had brought with them, and the wash that was taken out the day before was run through the box. The gold for the first day's wash was eight ounces. The claim was so rich that they cleared £500 each. Their party was the first to put a hole at the foot of the Blue Spur. With his £500 William Hay bought 300 ewes from Mr. Clapcott, paying him 30s. each for them. The only discount he got for paying cash was a merino ram, which afterwards got smothered in the snow.

When the Gabriel's Gully diggings broke out Walter Nicol formed a party to go there. They bought a pair of horses, and, loading up with swags, tools, and some timber, set off. Arriving at Waihola, they had to take the horses out of the dray and pull the load themselves along the beach till they reached ground where the horses could get good footing. On reaching Mount Stuart this performance had to be repeated, but at last they reached Gabriel's. Nicol's mate, an old digger, went to the head of the gully, but after sinking several holes and getting no gold they had to return below the Blue Spur. Noticing a party working in the bend they waited until the hole was bottomed, when there was the gold thick on the bottom. Fired by the sight, they sank a hole behind, but water came in and they could not bottom. They then sank another hole on the other side, and got seven ounces of gold out of it. The first hole was then abandoned to another party who had a pump. This party managed to bottom the hole, and got two pounds weight of gold for their labour.

Nicol and his party then bought a claim from another party, and out of two paddocks took over £200 worth of gold. Provisions were exceedingly dear on the field, flour being sold at £14 a bag and sheep at £2 each. They then went prospecting in Munroe's Gully, but did little good.

They sank four holes in a small piece of ground at the junction of Munroe's Gully and a gully called Holy Joe's, but got only about £1 a day. This was not considered good enough, so they left. On their return to Dunedin, Nicol heard that another party had taken up this same piece of ground, and had made £600 a man out of the unworked part.

Petrie's party consisted of six, made up of Tolmie Brothers, Robertson and son, George Cooper, and Petrie himself. Tolmie Brothers had made a dray with wooden wheels and wooden axles, and it had eight bullocks in it. On reaching Gabriel's they took up a claim and were very successful, and Petrie was the first to sink a hole in Blue Spur itself. After a time the party broke up, and John Tolmie, Petrie, George Cooper, and two men named McKenzie and Noble, made up a fresh party. They dug a bit here and there, and were fairly successful. Petrie was there about twelve months. As he was the only one who had a horse and revolver, he was appointed to take the gold, which was valued at about £500, to Dunedin. When he got into the bank and wanted sovereigns for it, a man took a big scoop and shovelled the sovereigns into the scales, and then put them into a bag which he handed to him. Petrie thought they had rather a loose way of doing business, but did not know what to do as he could not stay and count it there. However, it turned out all right. As there were tales of sticking up, he was glad to get back again. His next experience was driving to the diggings from Kaitangata. He had a team of eight bullocks carting provisions for Webster and Alexander.

Dunstan broke out shortly afterwards, and he started carting there. He went with a load from Tuapeka through Waipori to Dunstan; the carriage rates at that time were £120 a ton, and he had 30 cwt. in one load. He was five days crossing the Rock and Pillar, as it was all bogs and snow was falling all the time, and he had to sleep all night under the dray on the snow. At night the bullocks were so hungry that they went into the swamp, and were continually getting bogged. Altogether it took him about a month to do the trip. He then followed his occupation as driver for several years between Dunedin, Kingston, and Invercargill. On one occasion he took a contract to deliver a store about 30ft. by 20ft. from Weatherstone to Queenstown. It was built of iron and American timber, and he had a great job for fear of his bulky load

being capsized, especially crossing rivers where the banks were very steep. He delivered it on the steamer at Kingston, and was glad when the journey was over. As there were several teams carting, he had to go to Queenstown to lift the money for the lot, and left his horse hobbled by the lake at Kingston, while the others took his team out. On this occasion he had a notable ride. The teams were going to Invercargill, and he wanted to come down to Waitepeka first and then catch the teams at Invercargill. He mounted his horse in the evening and rode twelve miles to Trotter's Station, leaving there next morning about three o'clock, and rode right through to Waiwera, a distance of something over 100 miles. He stayed at home a day or two and went back leading a horse. He got to Matura and it *was* dark. He had never been over that ford before and did not like the look of it, as he saw the river was high. However, it was a cold night, so he drove the horse he was leading in first to see how it would get on. It managed to get over all right, so he followed. Next morning he handed the ferryman £1, to which he stuck. Petrie asked him what that was for, and he said 10s. for crossing the river and the other 10s. for his night's lodging. Petrie said: "Ten shillings for nearly drowning myself!" but he only said: "You should have called for me to come and assist." Petrie did not get his money back, but, as he was passing pretty often, he managed to torment the old man a good deal and in that way got his money's worth.

While at Gabriel's Gully diggings, D. Hudson and party, being new-chums at the game, did not take enough care in measuring their ground, so that they often lost the best part of it when more experienced men came to the field. A party of Victorians dropped on their ground, and, finding that they had too much, quietly pegged off a piece from which they took £500 worth of gold. Somewhat disgusted with this the party went to Weatherstone's, where gold had been found, but they quarrelled, and, being rather foolish, gave up their ground after sinking some four feet. Weatherstone, from whom the place took its name, then took up the place and made a pile out of it—such was the fortune that dogged their steps. When the Nokomai broke out a party consisting of Gilbert Stewart, James Stewart, and David Hudson went to it, but did little good. At Dome Creek they set to work getting water to their claim, and had just worked one and

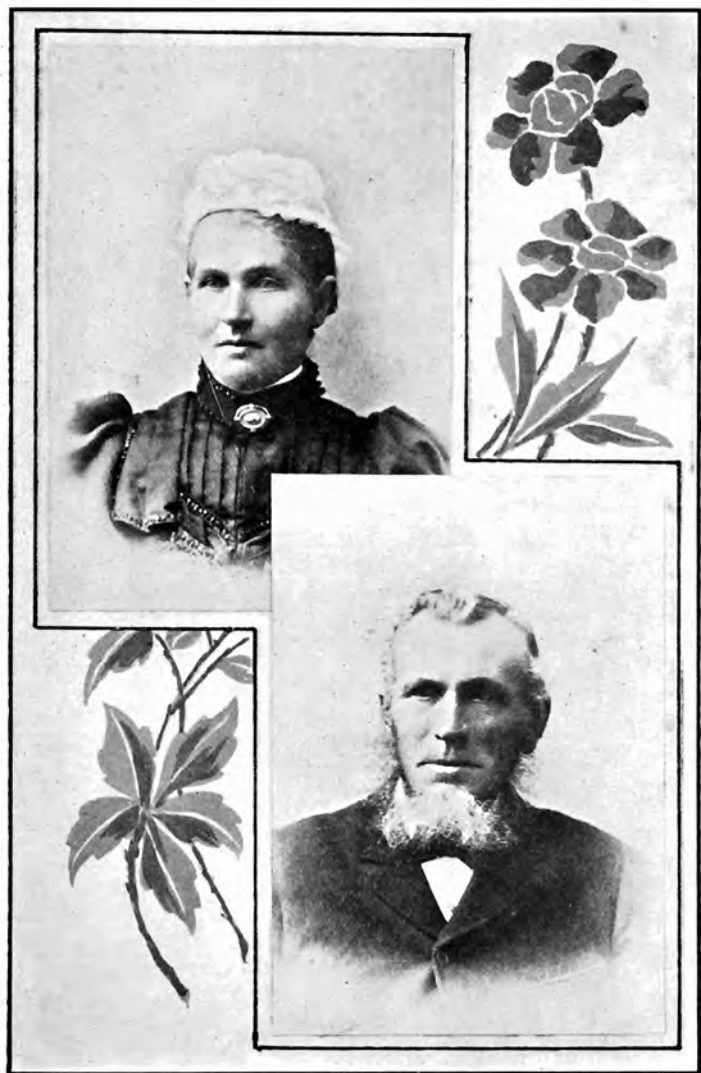
a half hours when a flood came and smothered everything. They got seven and a half ounces of gold for their labour, but saw the gold lying thick on the bottom, when they were compelled to rush away to save their lives.

When at Switzers diggings with a Hobart Town native, Hudson took a walk one Sunday afternoon down the creek, and while sitting on a rock commenced poking with his knife among the crevices. To his surprise he found one crevice full of gold, and took out 15 dwt. in the first dishful and 14 dwt. in the second. They tried to keep the find secret, but failed, and in a very short time the place was literally thronged with men. They remained in that quarter six months, averaging £10 a week. It cost £2 a week for board, and they paid 1s. a lb. for beef. Hudson then became dissatisfied and left. His mate refused to leave, and he and another afterwards took out £300 each from the same holes Hudson had been working in. He had been working on a false bottom, and the real bottom was found full of gold only a few feet deeper down. At Gabriel's, provisions were very dear, especially flour, for which one storekeeper charged £10 a bag. On his return trip over Maungatua, Hudson slept in a straw stack, and on waking in the morning found he had camped in the midst of 300 Victorians on their way to the diggings. As he had several pounds of gold in a belt round his waist he was glad to get away from them.

W. Griffiths landed in Port Chalmers in 1861, and came from there on New Year's Day, 1862. He and his partner, W. Major, went out to the suburbs and put up a tent. Every second man they met was as drunk as a lord, and each had a bottle of whisky and all invited them to have a nip. They engaged a waggon in Dunedin to take them to Lawrence. By this time their party consisted of six. Griffiths' impression of the country was not very favourable, as it took them three days to get to Lawrence. They pitched their tent on the side of a hill. As it was raining the river rose rapidly and swept a lot of tents away. One of their men in attempting to go to the Blue Spur was drowned. Next day Griffiths met a baker who had come from Victoria, and he directed them to a claim which had been abandoned a week. They took the claim, but after they had been in it a week the three men who had previously held it tried to jump it again. One of these men, by name William Curran, said he would

soon show the new-chums something, and jumped into the hole, which was about three feet deep. He had hardly got on his feet when Griffiths knocked him down. His mates said they would split his skull with a long-handled shovel. W. Major, when he saw one of the men raise the shovel, put him on his back in an instant. At last the two men ran away and left Curran, who said they would be mates no longer with him. He then asked if the new-chums would take him as a mate, which they did. They made about £4 a week each out of this claim. After being a short time on the claim they heard of a rush at Waipori, and Griffiths said he would go and see if it was any good. He started at night and reached his destination early next morning. He saw some smoke rising, and on making his way to it found that the place belonged to two brothers, Gascoigne, who told him the rush was no good. However, he started sluicing at Waipori, and sent orders to a carter to take the sluice to Waipori from Lawrence, and he had seven miles to take it to the sluicing claim after that. The whole party went for the sluice box, but it had not come. It was night when they returned, so they walked abreast, following the ridge near the river. Griffiths was next to the river, when all of a sudden he felt his feet going; he jumped, and went up to his neck in a moss bed, a fall of about fifty feet. Next day his mates went for the sluice box, and on taking a look at the spot where he had jumped, they found that he had landed on the other side of a great boulder. They stopped a month at Waipori, their claim being on the Burnt Ridge. They then returned to Lawrence and went down the Tuapeka River, staying there till the Dunstan rush broke out. They engaged a waggon to take provisions and tools, got as far as Waipori the first day, and cast lots for two to go on. Cornish Jack and Griffiths went on ahead. They went across the ranges in the direction of Campbell Thompson's, but when they were about half-way Griffiths' mate jibbed and would go no further, as he said they would be lost. He tried to make Griffiths return, but he took two dogs with him and went on. About two miles from Thompson's he came to a shepherd's hut. He knocked at the door, but getting no answer raised the latch and went in. He found some food and had a good meal. Leaving 2s. 6d. on the table he went on to Thompson's station. On the top of the ridge he met one of the Thompsons, who was looking for

bullocks, and who told him that there were 250 diggers at the station and they had frightened all the cattle away but one big bullock which was in the stock yard, but no one would go near it for fear of his breaking through. Griffiths said he would shoot the bullock, and went into the yard. It came tearing up to the fence at him, but he dodged round to the gallows, and had no sooner got there when it charged him, but struck its head against the post and fell stunned. That was Griffiths' chance and he shot it. After getting some food he went on, and got as far as Boggy Creek, when it commenced to snow and rain. He had to camp all night under the ledge of a rock. Next morning he went down to the crossing place, got a pannikin of coffee from a man who had a horse, and wanted him to put him across the creek, but he refused. It was a blind creek which was between them and the ford, and by following it up you would come in at the top and go down to the proper ford where it was a gravel bottom. Griffiths turned to go back to Thompson's, but on reaching the top of the hill he met three men with two bullocks in a dray. He told them the way to cross the creek, and they persuaded him go back with them. They gave him some whisky, and said they would give him a dry suit if he took them across the creek. He took them to the proper ford, and gave them the bullocks to drive while he hung on behind. After getting across he had another whisky and changed clothes. They were now desirous of having a drink of coffee, and as Griffiths was the only one who knew a suitable spot for boiling the billy, he was told off to attend to the business. When he had completed his job, the others were so long in turning up that he went back to look for them, when he found that they had got off the road and were bogged, and they all had a great job getting on terra firma again. Started again for the Upper Taieri, but when they reached it the river was in flood, and they would not cross. Griffiths then left them and went on. When he got to the river there were about 150 men just getting across hand in hand. He started to cross, but when half-way over the bottom began to go from under his feet. He had his clothes tied to his gun slung across his shoulder, but they were carried away. He was about an hour struggling in the water before he got to the other bank. His two dogs were drowned here. When he got to the bank he was so weak he could not stand. He found a pair of drawers on the bank and put them on,



MR. AND MRS. JOHN WRIGHT
1860—"Gala."

and had to go seventeen miles in this pair of drawers, a singlet, and a shirt, before he got to camp. He knew a good many of the men at the camp, and they soon attended to him. After the Dunstan rush he got snowed in, so he returned and met his mates with the waggon, which they had capsized in the Taieri and had lost all the provisions. He got some money from them, and at last reached Lawrence, having 2s. 6d. left in his pocket out of £700.

When the Nokomai diggings broke out hundreds of men passed through Clutha, and there were some great thieves among them. Dinner was 2s. 6d., and numbers did not pay. They had dinner and then sneaked off without paying. Woods tried to make them pay beforehand, but did not manage it. He seldom got half paid. On one occasion Mrs. Woods wanted to boil some meat outside, and gave a lad who was with the would-be diggers 2s. 6d. to watch the boiler. When she went to see if the beef was boiled both beef and lad were missing. On another occasion the men went to the store for some goods, and while Campbell, the storeman, was serving some, the others handed out stuff to their mates at the door. By this means they stole a whole case of long-handled shovels without Campbell's knowledge, and when he went in the morning to get a shovel for a man, they were all gone. At this time meals were 2s. 6d., beds 2s. 6d., drinks 1s., and 2s. 6d. a lb. was paid for candles.

Blatch was on escort duty from Queenstown. When on one trip he had to go with gold buyers to Arrowtown, and after buying as much gold as possible the buyers returned to Queenstown. Sergeant Morton and he had two horses, and they agreed to pack all the gold on one, and as Blatch was the lighter man he had to ride this horse. They started for Queenstown, and after crossing the Shotover, as they were going along a narrow beach between the water and scrub Sergeant Morton dropped behind and Blatch went round a point to where there was a little bay. Looking round he saw a man covering him with a double-barrelled gun. He had so much gold on the horse that he could not go beyond a walk, and could not get off its back. He tried to get at his revolver, but says he never had so much difficulty in his life in getting at it. He expected a shot every minute, and only hoped the Sergeant would gallop up and make the man miss him. At last he got the revolver and covered the

man, who dropped his gun and ran for the scrub. The Sergeant galloped up crying: "Don't fire." He rode up to the man and asked what he meant. The poor fellow was terribly frightened, his face being as white as clay, and he said it was only a lark. He and his mates had worked out a claim on the Arrow and were camped on the next bend. Sure enough the men were there, and seeing their mate in charge they wanted to know what was up. They then abused him for being such a fool, and gave Morton and Blatch a drink. This incident arose out of some diggers boasting that they could stick up the escort any time. The man thought that, being hampered with the gold, Blatch would give up, and he would be able to brag about what he had done. The police then went on to Queenstown and camped, but set up no guard. They put the gold under the head of their field bed. Blatch was last to get into bed, next to Sergeant Morton. He said in joke: "I shall lay my revolver handy, and pity the man that comes to the tent to-night." "Oh, don't be in a hurry to shoot. It might be someone wanting something," said Morton. Blatch laughed, and they had just got to sleep when some fellow came stumbling against the tent. Starting up, Blatch grabbed his revolver, and the next thing he knew was the Sergeant catching him round the body and saying: "You Otago men are regular devils." After this, Blatch was called one of the Otago devils.

A man named Acton had a store at Switzers. One night some men came to the store and asked permission to make a shakedown. He gave them supper, leave to stop, and their breakfast in the morning, when they left. During the evening they learnt that he intended to make a trip to Invercargill next day. In those times when a storekeeper made such trips it was well known he always had gold and money with him. Some hours after Acton had left home he saw a tent in the scrub, and suddenly several men jumped out and caught his horse. One of them put his revolver in his face and without speaking fired. The bullet struck him over the eye on the temple and ploughed its way along the side, leaving a track that you could lay your finger in. The men were masked, but Acton thought he recognised them. They then tied him up and put him in the tent. They took the gold and money, and told him if he uttered a word they would shoot him. Thinking he was thoroughly frightened, they

removed the masks, and by looking through a hole in the tent he could see them dividing the spoil. He then recognised them as being the men he had helped the night before. After their departure he managed to get loose, and reported the case at Invercargill, but the men were never caught, and the next heard of them was in connection with the murders on the West Coast.

Garrett's band broke into Mills' gunsmith's shop in Dunedin and secured arms and ammunition. They camped on the road at Maungatua for a week and stuck up everybody that passed. They lay hid in a gully that is still called Garrett's Gully. Close by they dug a big hole. After sticking a party up they tied them to trees. A masked guard was left over them, and he said if they had to shoot any they would shoot the lot; the hole was big enough for all. Among the stuck-up was a man from Popotunoa, Clapeott's manager, and when Garrett was captured this man's watch was found on him. Another of those stuck-up stayed the next night at the Buckeye Hotel, Outram, and during the evening he felt sure he recognised the man who had been on guard over them. He kept looking at him until at last the man gave him a sign that he wanted to speak to him outside. They retired, and the suspected one said: "I see you know me. How much did you lose yesterday?" The man told the amount, and he handed it to him, saying: "Hold your tongue about the affair." The two then chummed together and went to Tuapeka, where they worked out a claim together.

One of the richest diggings was on the Arrow River. The gold buyers made regular trips to the place, and Bracken was Acting Commissioner for the district. On one of his trips he asked Blatch to go with him up the river to settle some disputes. After the business was over they were going to the township when they came across six men working in a claim about twelve feet square. They could see the gold lying in the crevices of the rock. On seeing such a wash Bracken said: "Oh, my God! Let me wash a dishful of that." One man scooped up some on a shovel, put it in a dish, and gave it to him, but, as he was not making a good job of it, the man took it from him and panned off fully an ounce of gold. They then showed a tin dish containing four pounds weight of gold for their afternoon's work.

Before the Andersons left Tapanui there occurred what was known as the Blue Mountain rush. Some hundreds of diggers came from Tuapeka to Oliver's Station at the Molyneux, now known as the Upper Clydevale Steading. Mr. Oliver was away from home, only Mrs. Oliver, the shepherd, and a lad being on the premises. Joseph Anderson says that these diggers behaved in a very gentlemanly manner. Those who could handle an oar took charge of the boat, while others assisted Mrs. Oliver in dealing out stores, and, as she had very little idea of the prices of these stores, the diggers fixed them themselves in a very liberal manner. Next morning they put up their swags and departed over the Blue Mountains to the Tapanui side, over an almost impassable track. On arriving at Tapanui they found the rush to be a hoax. While the Andersons were in Tapanui another great rush took place, known as Sam Perkins' rush. Sam was an old whaler, who knew the country well, and offered for a consideration to take the diggers to a new goldfield, and he guided them through the Clutha district, on through Popotunoa Gorge in the direction of Maitara. The diggers began to get suspicious of Sam and watched him closely, and on his attempting to slip away from them made him a prisoner, giving him some very rough usage. In fact, there was a certainty of his being lynched if a party of mounted troopers had not followed up the rush, and forcibly took him from the diggers and placed him under arrest. This rush also proved to be a hoax.

Of these rushes further particulars are given by Mr. Dickie, of Tutarau, and published in the "Maitara Ensign" by H. Beattie:—"In the month of November, 1861, the rush to the Tuapeka and Waitahuna diggings was at its height. The fortnightly gold escorts had gradually taken more and more of the precious metal until the amount increased to 35,000 ounces a trip, when a weekly escort was instituted, the first one taking down 30,000 ounces. Crowds were still rushing in, although the best ground was all taken up. The diggers had looked over the surrounding country and some said the Blue Mountains was a likely place for gold. A rumour spread that there were diggers getting good gold over there, and parties began to make their way over. One party took a bullock hide with them to make a boat to ferry across the Clutha, but it was capsized on the second trip across and at least one man was drowned. This was at the

Beaumont, and the diggers who had been streaming out in that direction for a couple of days turned back to Tuapeka, whence they made a fresh start, some going by Archibald's station, now Clydevale, others by way of the Clutha Ferry. The party I was working with had determined not to leave our claim as we were getting a little gold, but on the third day we could stand it no longer, so we shouldered our swags and joined the throng. We got to the ferry the second night and camped in McNeil's Bush. The weather continued very stormy for several days, and, although it was summer time, there was a sprinkling of snow. The crowd increased daily, as a lot who could find no diggings and very little trace of gold on the Blue Mountain side were coming back. The weather cleared up on a Monday morning, and we decided to return to Tuapeka. I suppose about 200 of us were having dinner at a camping place near the top of Mount Stuart, when we spied a large crowd appearing over the hill and bearing down on us. One stalwart fellow had got a good lead, and when he came near enough we hailed him, asking 'What is up now?' 'Oh,' said he, 'it is all right this time. There's an old man back here who knows all about it and where the gold is,' and with that he pegged on. By the time we had swallowed our dinners and got our swags ready the crowd was on us. The man was no other than Sam Perkins, with a bodyguard of diggers, two of whom marched alongside of him with revolvers in their hands. No one, as far as we could learn, knew where the crowd was going, but someone had heard Sam say that 'he knew where there were lots of gold.' Of course, we joined the crowd, which by this time must have numbered well over 400. Before we reached the ferry we met a small party coming back from the Blue Mountains, and amongst them was a tall Highlandman who had been shepherding down about the Toi-tois and knew Sam of old. He accosted him and asked, 'Where are you going?' 'To Dunedin,' said Sam. 'Oh, that won't do, Sam; you are going straight away from Dunedin.' With that he caught Sam by the shoulders to make him tell where he was taking all these men. On this Sam appealed to the guards by wanting to know if they were going to stand by and see an old man ill-used. Well, to be brief, when the bodyguard began flourishing their revolvers, the Highlandman let Sam go, but he stood out on a hillock and told the crowd 'that they would be

very foolish to follow the old man, 'as he pe the biggest — story-teller effer pe goin' in a two shoes.' The crowd thinned out after this, and I went no further. The party from Waitahuna had three drays with provisions and tools with them, and they stuck to Sam until they arrived at the Mataura. On the Saturday night they camped on what is now Bothwell Park farm on the ridge beyond the Maori Bush, Tukurau. The drays were blocked here, as there was no track across the gully beyond. Sam was asked if it was far to the diggings, and he replied that it was quite near. A council was held and it was decided that a selected party should go with Sam next morning and report upon the field, while the rest of the crowd should start and make a dray track across the gully, no claims to be recognised that were pegged out before Monday morning. Sam and his party started, but had not gone very far when in rounding the head of a gully one of the party remarked that it was a likely-looking place. 'Yes,' said Sam, 'it is a splendid gully,' and, he added, 'two men took several pounds' weight of gold out of here last winter.' Well, it was suggested that they should go and see the working. They went down, and there was not a digger's hole from the one end to the other. Sam knew he was in a bad fix, but whatever he was as a story-teller, he was no coward, and when they threatened to shoot him, he opened out his blue shirt, bared his chest, and told them to fire away. They decided, however, to take him back to the drays and see what the crowd would do with him. After a lot of wrangling, it was agreed that he should have thirty lashes on the bare back, and that he should have the same every morning till they got back to Waitahuna. The lashes were duly administered by a person who was pressed into the job, and who was blamed for causing the Blue Mountain rush. Afterwards the whip was put into Sam's hands, and he was told to give the other fellow just as good as he had got. Sam was more than willing. 'Oh, the wretch, he well deserves it,' shouted Sam, as he flourished the whip and proceeded to business. Before Sam's second instalment was due Constable Fraser, of Invercargill, came along and took him out of the diggers' hands. The gully has always been known as 'Sam's Grief' since that day. On the whole the diggers behaved with great moderation, and I believe that the leaders and more respectable members of the crowd were

rather pleased when the constable took charge of Sam, as some of the turbulent spirits had wanted to lynch him right away. In conclusion, I may say that a few months afterwards Sam was drowned in the Mataura River."

In 1862, when Robert Grigor was up the River Clutha surveying near where Clydevale Punt is now, two large boats belonging to Hartley and Riley, the discoverer of the Dunstan Rush, capable of carrying about five tons, and looking like ship's boats, passed up, accompanied by about seventy men. These were being taken to the Dunstan Rush diggings by "Riley," the original discoverer, and in return they tracked up his boats for him, containing large quantities of flour and gin. These seventy men were the most wonderful crowd Grigor ever saw, quite different from the ordinary diggers. They seemed to be the derelicts of their class—ragged, desperate, and torn; without swags they lay down on the gravel spit alongside his camp. They made a make-shift of boat sails for shelter. Later in the night he was roused up by unearthly noises and yells that sent a creepy feeling through him. Mr. Riley, having gone across to try to borrow or purchase a tracking line from the Archibalds on Clydevale Station, did not arrive till late in the night. During his absence these men broke into the gin, and by the time Riley got back they were simply maniacs.

Riley was some time getting them in order, firing his pistol freely among them, taking care, as he told Grigor afterwards, not to wound any of them, and threatening them with neither rations nor gin on the journey to the diggings.

The next day towards evening Grigor saw the boats pass Tuapeka Mouth on their arduous voyage. He heard afterwards they arrived safely at their destination near Cromwell, and that the boats were afterwards made into a punt. What became of that motley crowd, in which he thought all nations were represented—white, black, brown, and whity brown—no one knows.