**Songs of the Goldfields**

**Lyrics**

**Introduction**
This collection of ten songs about the goldfields and goldfield experiences’ contains only three numbers that were originally published as complete entities: *To the California Gold Diggers; To the Goldfield* and *Pull Away Cheerily*.

The composers of the remaining songs, either named or anonymous, used already published, and in most instances, quite well known tunes to support their lyrics.

Sometimes, however, the lyrics and tunes were not an entirely comfortable knit; as with the broadside numbers, *Will you go to Australia Oh!*, verses were set by their composers to poorly remembered melodies.

In all of the songs presented here, and as with most mid-Victorian songs, a considerable degree of theatricality was involved in their performance — effusive delivery, dramatic pauses and perhaps one or two ad lib spoken passages.

In theatres and concert halls the songs were sung without the aid of mechanical amplification, though the singer was compensated for in some small degree by the fact that the apron of the stage was likely to project well into the auditorium.

A critic remarking on the performances of the Inimitable Thatcher reported that:

*He was always ready with a song — so happy were his hits, and so racy and piquant was his style, although he had only an indifferent voice, that amongst vocalists of the highest order he ranked as first popular favourite.*

So, it would seem that all that is needed for an acceptable performance of any of these Goldfields Songs is a moderately tuneful voice, a sense of theatricality — and enthusiasm. Good luck!
The California Gold Diggers
Lyrics: Jesse Hutchinson Jnr.; Music: Nathan Baker

1. We've formed our band, and we're all well mann'd,
   To journey afar to promised land;
   Where the golden ore is rich in store,
   On the banks of the Sacramento shore.

Chorus:
Then ho, boys, to California go;
There's plenty of gold in the world we're told,
On the banks of the Sacramento
Heigh ho! away we go, digging up gold on the Francisco.

2. As off we roam rough the dark sea foam,
   We'll ne'er forget kind friends at home,
   But memory kind shall bring to mind,
   The love of those we left behind.

3. We expect our share of the coarsest fare,
   And sometimes sleep in the open air
   On the cold damp ground we'll all sleep sound
   Except when the wolves come howling 'round.

4. As we explore the distant shore
   We'll fill our pockets with shining ore
   And how 'twill sound as the word goes 'round
   Of our picking gold by the “dozen pound.”
Will you go to Australia Oh?
Broadside. Pub. John Lindsay Stationer, Glasgow. No tune given
Probably 'Bay of Biscay O!'/ 'Ye Gentlemen of England'
Melody John Phillips, c.1660.

1. To high and low of all degree, a tale I will unfold,
   And tell you where across the seas, you may find lots of gold:
   In the land of Australia, if you're inclined to go,
   Make no delay, but haste away, to Australia, O. (Rpt.)

2. What pleasant news for young and old, one moment don't despair,
   Make up your mind to deal in gold, and banish grief and care.
   The Queen shall have a golden horse, Prince Al. a golden cap,
   Earl Derby shall have golden hose, Little John a golden cap. (Rpt.)

3. And when the British lasses to the land of riches go,
   And get among the shining stuff of Australia, O,
   They shall have golden bustles, golden petticoats and smocks,
   With golden boots and trousers, and golden bantam cocks. (Rpt)

4. In England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, young people seem so glad,
   But them that is bow'd down with age, are going raving mad,
   Because unto the shining land they won't be let to go,
   To poke their nose among the gold in Australia, O. (Rpt.)

5. The lawyer says abroad he'll go to deal in golden wills,
   The doctor says, his patients, he'll drug with golden pills,
   The grocer says he'll cut his stick, he will, so help his bob,
   And Paddy says he'll but himself a golden silver hod. (Rpt.)

6. There are golden penny loaves, and tops for little boys and girls,
   There's golden German sausages, and golden saveloys,
   There golden taters smoking hot, for ladies, when they go,
   And lots of golden chamber pots in Australia, O. (Rpt.)
To the Gold Field or the Song of the Emigrant
Lyrics Henry Abrahams; music W.H. Montgomery
D'Almaigne & Co. 20 Soho Square, London

1. Old England! Dear England we now bid thee farewell,
In the land of the stranger henceforth must we dwell,
Yet there’s hope in our hearts, for there’s strength in our hand,
And there’s wealth to be won in a far distant land;
So with courage to dare, and God to watch o’er us,
We look forward with hope, to the home before us.
Still wherever we wander, wherever we rest,
We will never forget the dear land we love best;
No, England! Dear England, we bid thee farewell,
We will never forget thee wherever we dwell.

2. Although friends throng around us with many a sigh,
There are tears on our face as we bid them goodbye,
Yet, with Englishmen near us, our perils to share,
The great deeds of our fathers forbids to despair.
So, onward brave hearts to the regions of gold!
For success ever waits for the true and the bold,
And tho’ foremost in danger for richer or fame,
Still Old England, thy sons ne’er will sully thy name;
No, England! Dear England, we bid thee farewell,
We will never forget thee wherever we dwell.
As it is in Australia
J.M. author of ‘Bill Buggins’
Ballarat Times 2nd September, 1854
To the tune ‘The Merry Maids of England’.

1. The rivers of Victoria, they are beautiful and grand,
   In mighty torrents rushing on to fertilize the land,
   Through scenery that is beautiful her creeks and streamlets run,
   But they’re dried up in the summer by a hot Australian sun (rpt.)
The roads of this great colony are very fine indeed
   O’er which your horse can travel with ease at railway speed.
As you dash o’er rocks and crab-holes, your heart will loudly beat —
   And the hot winds are refreshing; when you’re overcome by heat (rpt.)

2. The squatters of Victoria they are such a splendid race —
   Gold digging’s ruined the country; they’ll tell you to your face —
   Enlightened men you’ll find them, and faultless as can be,
   With pantaloons, and worsted-cord and hat of cabbage tree (rpt.)
Bullock drivers are intelligent, and are apt to make you stare,
   Their language is so classical — my word, and can’t they swear.
   Their features so expressive as they tan a bullocks hide,
   Convinces you they’re new chums, who’ve not seen the other side (rpt.)

3. The diggers of Victoria comprise men of every clime,
   Infractionary ingrates who have been logged for crime —
   Associate with gentlemen of proud patrician birth —
   And are united in the work of farming mother earth (rpt.)
But the miners as a body are now a source of wealth,
   To disclose vast hidden treasures they risk both life and health.
I’ll tell you my conviction, I will carefully unfold,
   Victoria is a shicer once the digger’s got no gold! (rpt.)

4. What a blessing to Victoria are her brilliant auctioneers,
   Whose eloquent catch-calling often fills the eye with tears.
   They never can reproach themselves, but sometimes heave a sigh
   When selling very swampy land, described both high and dry (rpt.)
Shopkeepers on the diggings used to drive a roaring trade,
   And fondly hope that in 12 months their fortunes would be made,
But the market now is overstocked, there’s grog in every store
   And most of that fraternity must go and dig once more (rpt.)
English Notions of a Digging Life
A new original song by Thatcher. Thatcher's Colonial Songster.
Tune — "Unhappy Jeremiah" [alt. The Brats of Jeremiah/Devilish Mary.]

1. I was digging some few months ago,
   And thought it would be better
   To let my friends in England know,
   And so I wrote a letter.
   I cannot tell you what I said,
   Indeed I can’t by jingo;
   But it seems I licked them off their perch
   With my rum colonial lingo (rpt.)

2. My sweetheart read the letter,
   And set about replying;
   But pondered o’er it long in vain,
   To find my meaning trying.
   I’ll read you just a few extracts,
   They’ll make you laugh like blazes
   And show what folk in England think
   Of our colonial phrases (rpt.)

3. She writes, “dear Charley, I’ve perused
   Your letter with attention,
   And I must say that I’m quite surprised
   At the curious things you mention:
   To hear you’re ‘on the gutter’
   Shocks me and Isabella,
   For we both agree that you must be
   A very nasty fellow (rpt.)

4. “You say you’re driving every day,
   But it’s plain you write at random,
   For here you quite omit to say
   Whether it’s a dray or tandem.
   T’other day a German friend of ours,
   His name is Mister Kaiser,
   Blushed like a girl of sweet sixteen
   When I mentioned the word ‘shicer’(rpt.)

5. ‘And when you talk of surfacing,
   Of what can you be thinking?
   And you mention quarts so frequently,
   I s’pose you’ve took to drinking.
   You talk about the drift, but now
   T’explain it all endeavour,
   For throughout the whole of what you write
   I see no drift whatever (rpt.)
Laying Information
Thatchers Colonial Minstrel
C. Thatcher Tune ‘The Standard Bearer’ P. Lindpainter.

1. Tis twelve at night and there upon the camp,
   A foot policeman silent watch is keeping,
   And thus he talks and chuckles to himself,
   Whilst all his brother traps in bed are sleeping;
   The tents I’ll stick up next I will not name,
   But I’ll go and take an observation,
   And if they’re green enough to sell me grog,
   Why then I’ll go and lay my information. (rpt.)

2. The night is past, the sun resplendent shines,
   As a digger then this trap himself disguises,
   And then he goes into a sly-grog store,
   Handles things and asks their various prices;
   He blithely talks about the Russian war,
   Descants upon the policy of nations,
   And brings away a bottle of brown stout,
   Then coolly goes and lays an information. (rpt.)

3. He enters, then, another well know store,
   There as before, he pitches them his gammon,
   He buys some fish, and asks for Bass’s ale
   To help wash down the tin of pickled salmon;
   The man, completely taken off his guard,
   Supplies the bitter, without hesitation,
   And having done a jolly morning’s work
   The trap goes of and lays an information. (rpt.)

4. Next morning the delinquents there are seen
   Up at the court, with blank and dismal faces,
   And soon the sitting magistrates come in,
   And on the bench they take their various places;
   They have to fork out fifty pounds of course,
   And view the trap with bitter indignation,
   Who, on conviction pockets his five notes,
   Beside his pay, for every information. (rpt.)
First Impressions of the Goldfields
Air: ‘Seven Ages’. Lyrics: Joe Small

1. As I view the prospects vast —
   Amid which my lot is cast —
   I am struck with wild surprise,
   For unfolded to my eyes
   Lies a diorama grand,
   Eclipsing sights of fairyland!
   Developed in this magical scene, O!
   Folks amazed, others crazed,
   Driving, sinking, swearing, drinking;
   Hey down, etc. A novel and a magical scene, O!

2. A waving forest all around,
   Impromptu camping ground;
   Ten thousand tents or more,
   Grog shops by many a score,
   Round holes without number,
   With piles of slabs and lumber
   On the surface of this magical scene, O!
   Cooey here, cooey there,
   Revelations, strange sensations;
   Hey down, etc. Oh the wonder of this magical scene, O!

3. What shots are those untiring?
   Only lucky diggers firing;
   Bullocks bellowing, dogs barking,
   Dancing, singing and skylarking;
   All is revelry by night
   Everyone mad with delight
   Who inhabits this magical scene, O!
   Cattle bells, drunken yells,
   Wild carouse, horrid vows,
   Hey down, etc. Many battles on this magical scene, O!

4. In the morning all is life —
   Like an army ere the strife —
   Men working with a will
   On every gully, flat and hill;
   Others off with madden’d speed
   To discover some new lead
   In the bowels of this magical scene, O!
   Diggers smoking, new chums joking,
   Come my hearty, join our party;
   Hey down etc. Fun and frolic in this magical scene, O!
Digging for Gold
James Lindsay, Glasgow: Broadside: Lyrics Anon.
Music: Tubal Cain; Henry Russell c. 1846

1. Oh, have you heard the news so grand,
The last and best that’s come to hand,
About the rich and golden land — Glorious Australia;
’Tis flying fast o’er land and main
Through every house, square, field and lane,
And if ‘tis true, ‘tis very plain
The golden age has come (again);
But whether ‘tis true or not, we’re told
The rich the poor the young and old,
Are all a-going to dig for gold — Over in Australia.

2. If a fortune you would make’
Go procure a shovel and a rake,
And two or three odd things to take — Over to Australia.
A washing tub you get the first,
A dung fork next to break the crust —
A broom to scour away the rust,
A chummy’s bag for dust.
Then pack them up and take your route,
And when you find the goldfields out
Just take your pick and use it stout — For gold in Australia

3. Now if you’ve got relations poor,
And wish to cut them nice and sure,
Take and write upon your door — Gone to Australia
Tradesmen, when you bills come in,
With fear you need no longer grin,
You’ve got to use, and that’s no sin,
A little brass instead of tin.
And when the beagles are on your track,
Just say, as while your hands you smack,
I’ll pay your bills when I come back — I’m going to Australia.

4. So, now good people, young and old,
The truth to you I will unfold,
Go where you’ll get a lump of gold — Over in Australia.
The beggar there his wallet fills,
The doctors treat with golden pills,
There you’ll meet, if fortune wills,
The sovereign balm for all your ills,
The glorious times are coming quick,
So if the lucky hour you nick,
Sell all your traps and cut your stick — Right off to Australia.
Look Out Below!
Charles Thatcher Songster
Air: ‘The Smuggler King” Music: Stephen Glover

1. A young man left his native shores,
   For trade was bad at home;
   To seek his fortune in this land
   He crossed the briny foam;
   And when he got to Ballarat
   It but him in a glow,
   To hear the sound of the windlasses
   And the cry, “Look out below!” [Rpt. Last two lines.]

2. Where ’er he turned his wandering eyes
   Great wealth he did behold,
   And peace and plenty hand in hand,
   By the magic power of gold;
   Quoth he, I am both young and strong,
   To the diggings I will go,
   For I like the sound of the windlasses,
   And the cry “Look out below!”

3. Amongst the rest he took his chance
   And his luck at first was vile,
   But he still resolved to persevere,
   And at length he made his pile,
   Says he, I’ll take my passage now,
   And home again I’ll go,
   And I’ll say farewell to the windlasses
   And the cry, “Look out below!”

4. Arrived in London once again
   His gold he freely spend,
   And into every gaiety
   And dissipation went.
   But pleasure, if prolonged too long,
   Oft causes pan, you know,
   And he missed the sound of the windlasses,
   And the cry, “Look out below!”
5. And thus he reasoned with himself,  
   Oh, why did I return,  
   For the digger’s independent life  
   I now begin to yearn.  
   Here purse-proud lords the poor oppress  
   But there it is not so;  
   Give me the sound of the windlasses,  
   And the cry, “Look out below!”

6. So he started for this land again,  
   With his charming little wife,  
   And he finds there’s nothing quite comes up  
   To a jolly diggers life;  
   Ask him if he’ll go back again,  
   He’ll quickly answer, no;  
   For he loves the sound of the windlasses  
   And the cry, “Look out below!”
Pull Away Cheerily!
Lyrics by Harry Lee Carter; Music – Geo. Henry Russell

1. Pull away cheerily, not slow or wearily,
Rocking your cradles, boys, fast to and fro;
Working the hand about,
Sifting the sand about,
Seeking for treasures that lie hid below.
Rocking your cradles, boys, fast to and fro;
Working the hand about,
Sifting the sand about,
Seeking for treasures that lie hid below.

Here’s a brave nugget, like children we hug it!
Courage my lads, fortune favours the bold!
What are our thoughts about,
Knocking the quartz about?
Thoughts that we’ll soon send out parents some gold!
So, pull away cheerily,
Pull away merrily,
Pull away cheerily, fast to and fro;
Working the hand about,
Working the hand about,
Seeking for treasures that lie hid below.

2. Here’s Dick a young digger, works with a cradle much bigger,
Than his own little self,
While Sally, she must
Add her mite to the store, by collecting the ore,
And filling her apron with bright yellow dust.
Rocking your cradles, boys, fast to and fro;
Working the hand about,
Sifting the sand about,
Seeking for treasures that lie hid below.

Here’s a mere manakin (sic), brings a panakin,
He scarcely can grasp in his small tiny hand,
While tilting his dish up,
We merrily fish up
Another supply of the glittering sand;
So, pull away cheerily,
Pull away merrily,
Pull away cheerily, fast to and fro;
Working the hand about,
Working the hand about,
Seeking for treasures that lie hid below.