

THE PROSPECTORS
48 Minutes
by
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Final Draft MM

EXT. LEEUWIN AT SEA - SUNSET

OLD FILM LOOK SEPIA images

Of the Leeuwin in sail

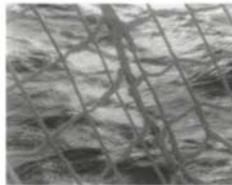


Recreates a time gone by.

Close-ups of

Water

And rigging.



NATURAL sound effects.

DON V.O.)

This is the story of men and women who have made nations great. Those who had a dream, and in many cases died for it. It is the story of courage, perseverance, tenacity and greed. It is a world story, for these people belonged to the world community.

EXT. LEEUWIN - EVENING

We match dissolve out of OLD FILM LOOK to COLOUR as our

Presenter stands next to rigging on deck of the Leeuwin.



Sunset background.

DON

And whilst this story is set in Australia, it could be in any country, where people driven by the insatiable search for great wealth risked all. The stakes were high and the success rates were low. Many characters became part of our folklore, in some cases the myth overtook the fact, but there is no denying one fact, these were no ordinary people, they were the prospectors.

MUSIC up.

INT/EXT. GRAPHICS/MONTAGE - DAY/NIGHT

Stylised OLD FILM LOOK jittery titles:

ILW and GRUBSTAKE PRODUCTIONS

Present

THE PROSPECTORS



Over OLD FILM LOOK layered silhouetted images of:

Men pushing wheelbarrows,

Digging,

Panning,

Dryblowing

And the Leeuwin sailing.

This is the story about men and

MUSIC down.



INT. PAINTINGS

An early painting of sparsely populated Sydney.



DON V.O.)

Australia in the 1850's was a far cry from today. Few people ventured from the coast and to travel any distance was an accomplishment.

EXT. DIRT TRACK - DAY

A OLD FILM LOOK image of an approaching man on a horse.

Small sub-title; 'Re-enactment.'

DON V.O.)

A bullish man by the name of Edward Hargraves was about to change all that.



EXT. BUSH - DAY

Continuing OLD FILM LOOK as Hargraves rides his horse through the bush.

DON V.O.)

Hargraves had recognised the similarity between Bathurst and the Californian goldfields which he had recently returned from. He was certain there was gold there and after much ridicule from the Sydney public the lone figure rode

into the bush in the beginning of
1851. It was a ride into history.

Introduce another rider.

DON V.O.)

Along the way he recruited a guide,
a young man by the name of John
Lister, and on the 12th of February
they arrived at Lewis Ponds creek.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK of the two men riding along the river bank.
(They carry with them a small pick, tin dish, bricklayers
trowel, pen knife and grease proof paper.)

HARGRAVES V.O.)

I found myself in country I was
anxiously longing to behold again.
My recollection had not deceived
me. The resemblance to that of
California goldfields could not be
mistaken. I felt myself surrounded
by gold.

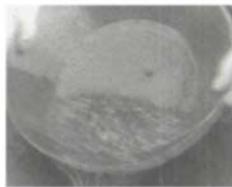
The young rider dismounts and scoops up handfuls of water.

HARGRAVES V.O.)

My guide went for water to drink
and after making a hasty repast, I
told him that we were now in the
gold fields and that the gold was
under his feet. I dug a panful of
dirt and washed it.

HARGRAVES dismounts and with his small pick digs at the
river bank.

He scrapes the dirt into his dish, adding water.



And swirling with a rhythmic motion.

Anxiously he palms away the top layer of gravel from the
dish and swirls again.

HARGRAVES V.O.)

The young boy stared in disbelief,
their in the bottom of the pan lay

specks of the precious metal.

With his pen knife he lifts the grains of gold and puts them in a slip of greased paper.



HARGRAVES V.O.)

I then washed five panfuls in succession, obtaining gold from all but one. To describe my feelings at that eventful moment would be impossible.

EXT. ACROSS RIVER - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK image of the jubilant men panning for gold as two young men, TOM and WILLIAM TOMS, ride up.



DON V.O.)

And so the first gold rush in Australia was about to begin. The two men were joined by Lister's friends, James and William Tom and Hargraves set off to claim his reward for discovering Australia's first goldfield.

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

A match-dissolve from OLD FILM LOOK to COLOUR of DON as he walks along the river's edge.

DON

Meanwhile the boys continued to work along the river bank where they achieved little success. In April they moved several miles to the junction of Summer Hill creek where in five days they recovered four ounces of the precious metal. Finally this was payable gold.



INT. NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Old clippings of the time.

DON V.O.)

Word spread slowly when Hargraves first announced his discovery.

INT. PAINTINGS

We pan through paintings of the early goldfields.



DON V.O.)

In May over four hundred claims were being worked but in the following months hundreds more crazed gold seekers arrived. The Government quickly imposed a tax of 30 shillings a month on each digger and in June the Commissioner of Lands reached Ophir, as it was now been called.



COMMISSIONER V.O.)

I saw over 1000 prospectors camped along the creek and I collected the tax with little trouble as fortunes were being won by the early diggers.

DON V.O.)

As the rich surface gold quickly ran out and new ground was found in the surrounding areas.

INT. PAINTINGS/NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

July 1851, The Sydney Morning Herald reports on the massive nuggets.



DON V.O.)

In July, fifty miles to the north of Bathurst a prospector brought into town several gold studded quartz nuggets totaling over 1200 ounces of gold, and Bathurst went mad again.

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

DON sits by a large fire.

DON

In recognition of the initial discovery, Hargraves was given a reward of ten thousand pounds from the New South Wales government. However storm clouds started to appear on the horizon. Lister and the Tom brothers protested about Hargrave's reward claiming they were the true discoverers of the first payable goldfields. The tenacious Lister perused justice for over forty years and finally, just before Hargraves death, the second inquiry found in favour of the boys.

INT. OLD COURT ROOM - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK of a moodily lit wood lined room sits a judge, in reflective mood and in period costume.



JUDGE

Although Mr Hargraves is entitled to the credit of having taught the claimants, Messrs W. and J. Tom and Lister, the use of the dish and the cradle, and otherwise the proper methods of searching for gold, which his visit to the californian goldfields enabled him to do, your committee are satisfied that Messrs Tom and Lister were undoubtedly the first discoverers of gold in Australia in payable quantities.

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

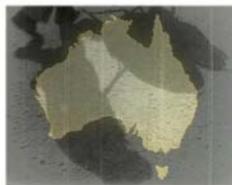
COLOUR and DON still sitting by the fire.

DON

After forty years and two official enquiries justice was finally done, or was it? For their efforts, Lister and the Tom brothers received the sum of just over three hundred pounds each. But Hargraves find had captured the imagination of the population and thousands of prospectors started moving into the interior searching for gold.

INT. SOVEREIGN HILL - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK images of various dressed people in period costume serve behind shop counters.



WENDY V.O.)

The finds at Bathurst spurred Victorian businessmen into action. Fearing the newly separated colony of Victoria would loose its population to New South Wales, it

also offered substantial rewards.

INT. SKETCHES/PAINTINGS

Relevant sketches and paintings of the early days in Ballarat.



WENDY

In August of 1851 a prospector named Regan took shelter from the rain under a wattle tree. While sitting there he idly scratched at the mud with his foot and found gold and the incredibly rich Ballarat goldfields.

MUSIC UP

Continue relevant paintings.

Sketches

And

More paintings.

Reports in the MELBOURNE ARGUS



WENDY V.O.)

The early prospectors would dig hundreds of ounces in a day, ten years wages, while others would return shortly to Melbourne with twenty thousand ounces or more of gold concealed in their Drays. Melbourne went mad with gold fever.

INT. PAINTINGS

Prospectors leave Ballarat.

WENDY V.O.)

Within a month, Ballarat's thousands of shallow pits were soon depleted of their rich pickings.

EXT. SOVEREIGN HILL - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK of prospectors working sluicing cradles by the waters edge.



Period dressed people go about there business while others ride in stagecoaches.

WENDY V.O.)

It wouldn't be till later that the huge underground reserves would be discovered. The prospectors then rushed to the next find just 40 miles to the north, at Mount Alexander. Here 15 square miles of rich ground was there for the taking.

EXT. OLD SHOP FRONT (KAL. TOURIST MINE) - DAY

Old shop front MORPHS to COLOUR and WENDY, our female presenter is now introduced as she walks out.



WENDY

Thousands walked away with tons of gold dug out of the shallow ground in the first few weeks. Victoria rapidly took over from New South Wales as the golden capital of Australia as thousands of gold seekers flooded to the new fields. 1851 was a big year in Australia for gold discovery and in November, Margaret Kennedy discovered another massive find at Bendigo.

INT. PAINTINGS



MARGARET V.O.)

We got a great deal of gold in the first few weeks while working alone. We found a lot in the banks of the creek and in the sods of the grass. You could shut your eyes and get gold in a dish anywhere.

INT. NEWSPAPER CLIPPING

The 'Argus' newspaper, 13th December, 1851.

WENDY V.O.)

When the journalist Henry Frenchan announced the find as "The christmas Box to the Nation" in December, Bendigo was rushed.

EXT. OLD SHOP FRONTS (KAL. TOURIST MINE) - DAY

WENDY walks down the isolated street.



WENDY

The pedestrian population of Melbourne was visibility depleted as the town went crazy in the haste to find their own El Dorado's. Ships lay idle in the harbour as whole crews deserted. Businesses closed as staff and managers left for the fields. The roads were crowded with drays and wheelbarrows in a mixed confusion of professional people and labourers. The next couple of years saw new fields opening up all over the state and Melbourne boomed as tens of thousands of hopefuls arrived from all over the world and the Governor of the time became increasingly

concerned.

EXT. PAINTINGS

An authoritarian voice picks up the story over paintings of Melbourne and the workings at Ballarat.



GOVERNOR V.O.)

The fledgling community is being put to great inconvenience when servants and labours head off to the fields. Masters have been seen driving their own drays. Ladies of respectability and ample means are obliged to do their own washing.

INT. OLD BANK (KAL. TOURIST MINE) - DAY

Wendy walks into the deserted bank.

WENDY

To restrain the population and raise more money for the cash strapped colony, Governor Hotham increased the licenses for digging. For the large sum of three pounds per month a digger was allocated eight square feet and each square rarely produced enough gold to pay for the licence. By mid 1854, events were escalating towards what was to become Australia's first rebellion against government.

INT. PAINTING

A uniformed man next to a shabby digger.



WENDY V.O.)

The prospectors were becoming increasingly frustrated with the harsh and unreasonable methods used in checking licenses. There were other injustices too which compounded their grievances. The prospectors wanted the right to vote, to parliament representation and an enquiry into police intimidation.



DON

In 1854 a young prospector named Scobie was kicked to death by the owner of the Eureka hotel. He was later acquitted by the corrupt magistrate, but his hotel was burnt down by the angry locals.

INT. NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

November 25th 1854 the 'Ballarat Times' encouraged revolt.

DON V.O.)

The Ballarat times called for revolt.

INT. PAINTINGS

Slow pan up a painting of Lalor.



LALOR V.O.)

The grievances under which we had long suffered and the brutal attack of that day flashed across my mind [and with the burning feelings of an injured man] I mounted the stump and proclaimed "Liberty."

EXT. MINE HEAD (KALGOORLIE TOURIST MINE) - DAY

DON

A young Irishman by the name of Peter Lalor became the prospectors leader and in November of 1854 a stockade of timber was built.

INT. PAINTINGS - AFTERNOON

Pan across a Eureka painting.

OLD TIMER 3

(poetic voice)

Brave Lalor with dauntless dare,
his men inspiring to wolf or bear,
defiance bidding he made us swear,
be faithful to the standard, in
victory or death.

Together 500 old timers swear the oath;



OLD TIMERS 500

We swear by the Southern Cross to stand by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties.

EXT. TENT (KALGOORLIE TOURIST MINE) - AFTERNOON

A sweaty DON walks around a miner's camp.

DON

In these hot and humid conditions the prospectors were preparing to defend their rights and the Eureka flag was raised. By december the second, one thousand occupied the stockade with four hundred troopers and police in the hills nearby. A tense stand off developed over two days, and at three A.M. on Sunday the 4th, when just one hundred and twenty people remained, as most had returned to their tents, the troopers attacked.

INT. PAINTING



The Painting lit by explosive and flickering light.

Dramatic MUSIC.

Sound effects of

GUNS FIRING.



GUNS RELOADING.

Images of the fighting.

More images of fighting.

Several more images of the fighting are portrayed.

MUSIC down.

EXT. TENT (KALGOORLIE TOURIST MINE) - SUNSET



DON now sits around a campfire outside the miner's tent.

DON

Within thirty minutes the rebellion was smashed. As dawn rose, the carnage was obvious, the stockade was burning and history had been written.

INT. PAINTING

A painting depicts the aftermath of Eureka.

Solemn MUSIC.



DON V.O.)

Five police were killed and the prospectors losses are not known exactly.

EXT. KALGOORLIE CEMETERY - DAY

WENDY strolls into shot.



WENDY

Lalor listed 14 dead and eight fatally wounded. The battle at Eureka was a vital chapter in Australia's history. The Government finally conceded the prospectors demands and replaced the expensive monthly licence fee with a yearly 'Miner's Right', which also carried with it the right to vote.

INT. PAINTING

A painting continues to depict the aftermath of Eureka.

Continue Solemn MUSIC.



LALOR V.O.)

I said my young Australian that
the fight was lost and won. But
oh our hearts were heavy at the
setting of the sun. Yet ere the
year was over freedom rolled in
like a flood. They gave us all we
asked for, when we asked for it in
blood.

EXT. KALGOORLIE CEMETERY - DAY

We see a close-up of WENDY only.

WENDY

From the turmoil and chaos came
recognition and Peter Lalor went
on to become a member of the
Victorian government.

INT. PAINTINGS

Relevant paintings of Europeans setting up camp while
Aboriginals look on.



DON V.O.)

Australia in the 1850's was
essentially a European settlement
in an Aboriginally dominated land,
but the discovery of gold changed
all that. Over the next ten years
hundreds of thousands of prospectors
converged on the country from all
over the world trebling the
countries's population.

INT. PAINTINGS

Relevant paintings of Chinese prospectors working at the diggings.



DON V.O.)

The industrious Chinese arrived by the thousands. By mid 1850 there were over 60,000 Chinese on the goldfields. At Ballarat, they were making good money out of abandoned European workings and their presence began to be resented. The Government, through taxes and other measures began to restrict Asian immigration. The Chinese prospector were then forced to supply more of the ancillary services, such as market gardens and laundries, as these were occupations which offered little competition to Europeans.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS



WENDY

The mines in Victoria went deep as huge reserves were discovered in the ancient creek beds below. The 'Welcome Stranger' nugget was unearthed just 1 foot below the surface. A massive lump of gold weighing over 2000 ounces. The largest nugget in the world.

EXT. TENT (KALGOORLIE TOURIST MINE) - NIGHT

DON still sits around a campfire outside the miner's tent.

DON

Australia was becoming an Alladians

Cave of precious metals as the prospector made his way up the east coast of the country. Queensland had seen a few small finds before and Conoona, 20 miles outside of Rockhampton was rushed in 1858, when 60 ounces of its course dark gold was put on display in a shop in Sydney. Gold around the Bathurst region was being overworked and prospective diggers deluged ship owners with demands for travel. Thousands descended on the small field and the local residents of Rockhampton believed a second Bendigo had been found. But the diggings dried up just as quick as they were found. While prospectors fought over a few ounces behind them an 'Ironstone Mountain' containing an astonishing 250 tons waited to be discovered. Thousands turned back for home and passed the mountain and Rockhampton returned to become what it had before the rush. Four houses and a pub. It wouldn't be till 15 years later that the town's rich secret would be unlocked.

EXT. OUTBACK CREEK - (SWAN VALLEY) - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK image of James Nash panning for gold. His billy boils nearby.

His laden horse grazes nearby.



WENDY V.O.)

Australia's next major discovery was in Gympie, in 1867. James Nash, like thousands of others had come north from the New South Wales and Victorian goldfields. He was a quiet and secretive man who always travelled alone. At a creek while waiting for his billy to boil he panned for gold and hit some colour. Further up the creek he found a spot rich in nuggets.

EXT. OUTBACK CREEK - (SWAN VALLEY) - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK morphs to COLOUR with WENDY now in the same location.

WENDY

Nash rode the 60 miles to Maryborough to restock and buy tools. He tried to pay this with the gold he had found but had trouble trading the nuggets.

INT. PAINTINGS



JAMES V.O.)

I tried several stores and two banks but could not sell my gold. Times were so bad that they hardly knew what gold looked like. At last I tried Mr Southerden's store a second time and he allowed me three pounds for it, one in money and the rest in tools and rations.

EXT. OUTBACK CREEK - (SWAN VALLEY) - DAY

WENDY strolls around the creek bed.



WENDY

While at Maryborough, Nash managed to keep his discovery at Gympie Creek a secret, no mean feat in those times when even the hint of a gold find would have spread like wildfire. He slipped out of town making sure he wasn't being followed. Back at Gympie, Nash recovered 75 ounces of gold in six days. Now convinced he was onto a genuine discovery he raced back to Maryborough to register a claim.

INT. PAINTINGS



WENDY V.O.)

Word spread and there was a stampedede with most of the stores being cleaned out within a day. Pandemonium broke out and fights flared up all over the fields as each tried to peg a claim.

EXT. OUTBACK CREEK - (SWAN VALLEY) - DAY

WENDY

Once the richness of Gympie field was realised, even more people came. Farmers left their land and the sugar harvest came to a standstill. Those too late moved further north to the new discoveries at Ravenswood and Charters Towers, then eventually all the way to the harsh tropics of the Palmer River.

EXT. ROCKY OUTCROP 1 (DARLING RANGES) - DAY

DON walks around a rocky outcrop.



DON

The 'Ironstone Mountain' still held its secret. Traditionally Ironstone wasn't gold bearing rock so the early prospectors who had seen it quickly moved on. And when the Morgan brothers brought the renown Sydney geologist, Dr James Robertson, to the area to look over a couple of potential copper prospects they showed him the mountain too.

EXT. ROCKS - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK tracking shot of a granite outcrop.



ROBERTSON V.O.)

There's complete absence from the stone. It's ferruginous in character, without a trace of copper in it.

EXT. ROCKY OUTCROP 1 (DARLING RANGES) - DAY

DON continues at the rocky outcrop.

DON

After several frustrating days looking over various sites he became increasingly annoyed at the Morgans who brought him all this way to "non-existent copper deposits." Undeterred the Morgans went back another day. Rain had set in this time and the water glistened on the rocks. Boulders that looked deceptively ordinary before when dry now sparkled in the sunlight. They were too ignorant to share in the geologists prejudice against ironstone and had it assayed anyway. And Mount Morgan went on to contained 250 tons of the yellow metal. A mountain of gold. It was so wealthy in fact that one of its owners financed further prospecting in the Persian Gulf area which eventually lead to the formation of British Petroleum.

EXT. SALT PLAINS (KALGOORLIE SALT PLAINS)- DAY

At a desolate salt plain WENDY picks up the story.



WENDY

The prospector were a special breed
and in those early pioneering days
they tolerated incredible hardships.
They were at the mercy of the
elements both natural and human.

INT. PAINTINGS

The paintings portray confrontation with the Aboriginals
and early settlers.

WENDY V.O.)

The local aboriginals were
suspicious of these new people
walking their land and their
attitudes often led to fatal
confrontations.

INT. PAINTINGS/SKETCHES

Sketches of early prospectors dying in the desert.



WENDY V.O.)

Water was always a problem as the
prospector moved further north,
and the lack of it for most of the
year killed many in a painful death.
And when it did rain, floods and
disease wiped others out. Dead
prospectors would be found with
pounds of gold on them while others
had eaten their boots to survive.

INT. EARLY PAINTINGS OF TASMANIA



WENDY V.O.)

They encountered different hardships in Tasmania. The arid hostile desert and oppressive heat became impenetrable forests, mountainous terrain and freezing temperatures.

EXT. HEAVILY WOODED AREA - DAY

In a deeply forested area our presenter fights his way through the bush.

DON

In 1871, James Smith ventured on a five month trek into this almost impenetrable region of Tasmania. With nothing more than his bush skills and a gut instinct he panned the creeks that eventually led him to Mount Bischoff and a fabulously rich mountain of tin.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Old photographs of the mining company.



DON V.O.)

The Mount Bischoff Mining Company was formed and Smith received over four thousand of the twelve thousand five pound shares. Years later the price quoted never fell below eighty pounds and dividends paid by the company eclipsed those of any other mine in Australia.

EXT. HEAVILY WOODED AREA - DAY



DON

Smith's discovery changed the course of Tasmanian history and was the forerunner of several mineral discoveries which dragged the state out of recession and laid the foundation for what became a thriving mining industry.

INT. PAINTINGS/PHOTOGRAPHS

Old photographs and sketches of the Adelaide to Darwin telegraph line being built.



WENDY V.O.)

The first traces of gold in the Northern Territory were discovered in the early 1870's by workers on the overland telegraph line between Adelaide and Darwin. A prospecting company formed in 1872 by a South Australian grazier, X.X. Bagot, found the first gold bearing reef at Yam creek.

INT. OLD PAINTINGS/PHOTOGRAPHS

Old paintings and photographs depict Darwin during this era.



WENDY V.O.)

A second reef was discovered in the Howley district and these discoveries caused the inevitable rush as the word spread to the other states. The town of Darwin was seething with gold fever. New parties arrived every week, but many weren't equipped for the rigors of the Territory's hot tropical climate. Disease was rampant and the incessant rain and humidity had a detrimental effect on many.

EXT. ROCKY OUTCROP 3 (KALGOORLIE) - DAY

WENDY walks around another interesting rocky outcrop.

WENDY

There was no fresh food or vegetables, flour and rice was infested with weevils and like life on many other goldfields, alcohol was the undoing of many. Some less scrupulous merchants peddled a concoction of kerosene, flavored with Worcester sauce, ginger and sugar. Malaria became wide spread with scurvy and dysentery killing many others.

INT. OLD PAINTINGS/PHOTOGRAPHS



OLD TIMER 2

The misconduct in the Northern Territory was beyond anything in the history of gold mining. A number of costly equipped prospecting or picnic parties' were established by syndicates down south. Many of these men were totally unacquainted with prospecting and some never proceeded further than Darwin. Others advanced just 40 miles into the interior or never lost sight of the telegraph posts while others planted themselves on the banks of a creek and quietly received their pay. When their grog and provisions

ran out they simply struck camp
and pronounced the Territory a
'duffer'.

EXT. ROCKY OUTCROP 2 - (KALGOORLIE) - DAY

At a rugged rocky outcrop DON continues the story.



DON

One of the most spectacular discoveries in Australia's history was made beyond these hills. It was a discovery of such magnitude that even today the company is still one of the largest companies in Australia. Three hills rose above the barren landscape and under them astonishing riches. Riches that would exceed those of Ballarat and Bendigo. In 1883 an unassuming man by the name of Charles Rasp discovered mineralised rocks there. Assay results showed silver and lead, but in uneconomical quantities. Undeterred he formed a syndicate with six other men and a shaft was dug. A public float was announced selling quietly to the public. Eighteen months later the rich silver loads were discovered and in some places they were over five hundred feet wide. The original investors became some of the wealthiest people in Australia. Within ten years thirty five thousand people were living in Broken Hill.

INT. PAINTING OF BROKEN HILL



DON V.O.)

And BHP became the largest company
in Australia and held that crown
for over one hundred years.

MUSIC up.

Large slabs

Of glowing steel

Roll out of

The mill.

EXT. KIMBERLIES - DAY

It is spectacular country around sunset.



DON V.O.)

The Kimberly region at its best is
the most spectacular country on
the Australia continent. At its
worst, during the heat of the summer
wet season, it can be hell on earth.
As the initial booms in the other
states began to wane, the last,
and without a doubt the greatest,
frontier was about to be conquered.

EXT. KIMBERLIES - (NORTH KALGOORLIE) - DAY

At a scenic rocky outcrop DON appears.

DON

Western Australia had seen a few
prospecting parties before, but it
wasn't until Charles Hall, a frugal
and canny bushman, along with John
Slattery began to search for gold
in the north of the state that

Western Australia's incredible richness began to be disclosed. On their first trip they found ten ounces. On their second they found over eighty ounces, including a nineteen ounce nugget. Within months Halls creek became the magnet to the longest overland gold trail Australia had seen.

INT. PAINTINGS



WENDY V.O.)

Men and women from all over the world trekked to the Halls Creek find in 1886. They walked or rode from Queensland, across the Northern Territory or followed the telegraph line up from Adelaide. Many disembarked at Derby and walked the three hundred miles to the most remote goldfield in Australia.

EXT. COAST - DAY

A desolate isolated beach. The WIND blows ominously.



WENDY

Others were simply put ashore at Wyndham, where not even a jetty stood. Alone they set off for the Halls Creek gold. Those who made it found the flies, mosquitoes and heat were plentiful. Gold and water was scarce. Many died of scurvy and dysentery. Within five years the surface gold had played out and the reefs could only be worked by larger companies with heavy crushing machinery. But by this time the prospectors had discovered gold further south and

had moved on.

INT. OLD PROSPECTOR'S CAMP (TOURIST MINE) - DAY

DON walks around the rugged interior of a prospector's camp.

DON

Several legends were born during this period. The ragged thirteen, a lawless band of misfits terrorised their way across the north. Russian Jack hauled more than his own swag to the fields and carried many a burnt out digger on to the next water hole. A group of Afghans and a 'mountain maid' made a lot of money out of fields and it wasn't from selling gold.

INT. PAINTINGS/PHOTOGRAPHS

The paintings and photographs depict early workings.

WENDY V.O.)

Fields down South were opening up quickly and Western Australia was becoming the colossus of gold mining. In July of 1890, J.F. Connelly discovered a reef three hundred miles from Geraldton and the die was well and truly cast. The Yilgarn was about to become the gateway to the richest goldfields Australia has ever known.

EXT. SOUTHERN CROSS - DAY

From a dust covered run down building in Southern Cross DON appears.



DON

By 1892 Southern Cross already had several small gold mines operating, but in August things were at a particularly low ebb. Ore treatment problems, the lack of water and trouble with mining machinery had increased production costs on the

three main mines here. Wages were cut and the miners went on strike. Then Arthur Bayley rode in from the East with 554 ounces of gold. The slump in Southern Cross was over and the town became the gateway to the world famous Coolgardie goldfields.

EXT. BUSH (KALGOORLIE) - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK images of Bayley and Ford riding through the bush.



DON V.O.)

Earlier, Bayley and Ford had ridden out into a particular hard area of country East of Southern Cross to prospect for gold.

EXT. BUSH - EVENING

OLD FILM LOOK of a darkening sky and our silhouetted horsemen setting up camp.

BAYLEY V.O.)

We reached what is now know as Coolgardie at 5pm. Water was becoming scarce so we camped near a small rock pool.

EXT. BUSH - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK of Bayley leading his horse through the bush.



BAYLEY V.O.)

In the morning we went for the horses. I was leading my horse back over what was later called Fly Flat when I picked up a piece of gold, about half an ounce. I think we were more excited about

that little piece of gold than any we found later. In the next hour we picked up nearly a hundred ounces.

EXT. MAIN STREET OF COOLGARDIE - DAY

Return to COLOUR and a very high shot of the main street with DON walking across the road.

DON V.O.)

Fly flat later became the main street of Coolgardie. It was a triumphant discovery for Bayley and Ford, but already the new field had been touched by tragedy. The area had already been pegged by a man named Ansdan.

EXT. BUSH - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK reveals a skeleton.



DON V.O.)

But he never registered his claim as his skeleton was found nearby.

EXT. MAIN STREET OF COOLGARDIE - DAY

Return to COLOUR and DON.

DON

When Bayley returned to Southern Cross to register his claim he was followed back here by most of the population of town.

EXT. LARGE OUTCROP OF SMALL QUARTZ ROCKS - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK tracking shot of glittering specks of gold in quartz.

YOUNG TIMER V.O.)

We found gold galore. We could see it glittering in the sunlight for at least twenty yards in front of us. On top of the ridge was the cap of the reef, studded with gold.

EXT. OLD COOLGARDIE PAINTINGS/PHOTOGRAPHS

WENDY V.O.)

Thousands followed from around the world and Coolgardie fast became a town. Overnight the price of horses rose from five pounds to fifty and in no time 26 hotels lined the main street.

EXT. MAIN STREET OF COOLGARDIE - DAY

DON walks down the footpath.



DON

Three Newspapers were established and even A Zoo had even being laid out. It was a mecca to over twenty thousand people. Hundreds would be seen wondering off into the bush at the slightest mention of gold. On one occasion Billy Martin turned up in town with forty ounces.

DON holds forty ounces of gold.

DON

Siberia, about seventy miles east from here was meet with the standard rush. The trail lead some to gold, and, as in many cases in the desert, a painful death from lack of water.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - LATE AFTERNOON

DON sits by a campfire in the middle of the bush.



DON

Perhaps the richest patch of gold came out of a small hole not far from here. In a hole just 4 foot by 5, 10,000 ounces of gold was dollied and Coolgardie was spell bound. The hypnotic spell that the Londonderry lease cast was more on what was thought to lie deeper. Investors pursued the young John Mills to sell and the new owners floated the 'Londonderry Gold Mining Company' in impressive style. Word of these finds spread like wildfire across the world. Prospectors came from the ends of the earth seeking their fortunes. And just over twenty miles East of here the greatest goldfield Australia had ever known still lay waiting.

EXT. OLD WORKINGS - DAY

WENDY climbs out of an old working.



WENDY

Paddy Hannon at nearing fifty was no youngster to prospecting. For thirty years he had searched the fields across Australia and New Zealand. Moving from one rumor to the next, always hoping to strike it rich. When he and his mate Tom Flannagan heard the news of 'Bayley's Find', like all optimistic prospectors they joined the rush.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

DON is still by the campfire in the middle of the bush.

DON

They were among the first arrivals at Coolgardie after Bayley and Ford had announced their discovery. For nine months they scratched around the gullies and flats making a meager living. 1893 was a year of finds and rumors, and in May there was talk of gold near Mt Youle, 50 miles east of here. Nobody knew who started the rumor and nobody knew quite where to go, and the find was never located, but there was a rush to the Mt Youle area anyway.

EXT. BUSH - DAY

In typical Kalgoorlie scrub land DON continues.



DON

Hannon and Flanagan moved out a few days after the main groups. Three days later they camped about 25 miles out from Coolgardie, held up by a horse who had thrown a shoe. They were still only half way towards the Mt Yule. Specking about Hannon found several nuggets and a couple of days later they had collected over 100 ounces. It was a momentous time in Australian history. For if some have described other Australian finds as the El Dorado, this would certainly become the mother of them all.

EXT. PAINTINGS/PHOTOGRAPHS

DON V.O.)

In the first week fifteen hundred prospectors converged on 'Hannon's Find', soon to be known as Kalgoorlie, and pegged leases. The winter rains started to fall

and the early ones found hundreds of ounces of gold gleaming in the wet soil.

EXT. BUSH - EVENING

OLD FILM LOOK images of the rain soaked ground as a digger thrusts in his hand pick.



DON V.O.)
Some worked on their hands and knees in a frenzy, their knives thrusting into the red mud.

EXT. OLD PROSPECTOR'S CAMP - NIGHT

Around a camp fire illuminating an old prospector's camp, DON continues;

DON
But Kalgoorlie didn't boom over night. 'Hannons' was seen as one of the many finds that year. It didn't have the glamor of Coolgardie where gold had been chopped from reefs with tomahawks. The early prospectors were after the alluvial or surface gold and it wasn't until 4 years later that Kalgoorlie's great wealth began to be understood.

EXT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS



DON V.O.)
Two men, Brookman and Pearce, were sent up from Adelaide by a group of financiers. 15 days later, they camped with thousands of other prospectors at 'Hannon's Find.' They found that all the rich alluvial areas had been pegged.

The only areas left were the
Ironstone hills, over 3 miles away.

EXT. OLD PROSPECTOR'S CAMP - NIGHT

DON

Hannon and other prospectors had looked over these hills before and had decided they were not gold bearing. Brookman and Pearce spent a fortune pegging hundreds of acres of these hills and it became known as 'Brookman's Sheep Run.' Named by the prospectors in scorn of their ludicrous pegging. But in poetic justice, Brookman's Sheep Run was to contain the golden fleece that Western Australia and indeed Australia has ridden on for over one hundred years. It contained gold in mysterious lode formations and became Kalgoorlie's golden mile. The richest square mile of gold bearing ground in the world. And it is still being worked today.

EXT. MINES OF KALGOORLIE - DAY/NIGHT

MUSIC up.

Dramatic shots of mining activity.

Both above and below ground.



INT. NEW TO OLD PHOTOGRAPH

A recognisable scene around Kalgoorlie MORPHS back to an original SEPIA PHOTOGRAPH.

MUSIC down.

WENDY V.O.)

As the centenary drew to an end,
the original goldfields of Bathurst
had long declined.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Old SEPIA sketches depict underground mining in Victoria.

WENDY V.O.)

Victoria and Queensland had already financed their own transition from alluvial to deep underground mining with little help from overseas finance. But this pattern of development didn't occur in Western Australia.

INT. NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Old headlines and articles depict massive financial input.

WENDY V.O.)

British capital flooded in and the new goldfields boomed. London was the financial capital of the world and there were millions of pounds waiting development.

INT. SHAFT BAR (KALGOORLIE) - DAY

DON sits in an old dark wood lined bar.



DON

The mines of Coolgardie were floated with impressive style. Holes in the ground were converted to rich gold mines with a stroke of a pen, all hopelessly overcapitalised. In the last 3 months of 1894, 77 new companies were registered in London. Then the ore failed at depth. The rich Londonderry float, which so impressed the British investors, crashed. Bayleys Reward and others also failed to live up to expectations. It appeared that the gold ran out when the underlying bed rock was reached.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Old photographs of Perth.



WENDY V.O.)

Each week ships were still unloading hundreds more eager gold seekers. They camped on the outskirts of Perth with teamsters to load their drays and carts for the long journey to the goldfields. Typhoid became a problem with poor sanitation.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Old photographs of Kalgoorlie.

WENDY V.O.)

Hannon's Find, which was officially proclaimed the town of Kalgoorlie, didn't escape disease either. With 3000 prospectors still working the alluvial fields it had its typhoid problem too.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Old photographs of the hospital.



WENDY V.O.)

The early hessian Kalgoorlie hospital had to struggle with this as well as the dust and the flies. Only two pints of water was the daily ration for a nurse.

NURSE V.O.)

Night duty was particularly trying. It was almost impossible to sleep during the heat of the day in summer. Sometimes the temperature was over 116 degrees.

EXT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS/SKETCHES

Old photographs and sketches of the old times walking to coolgardie.

OLD FILM LOOK shot of the sun.

VOICE OVER

Damn Coolgardie, damn the track.
Damn Coolgardie there and back.
Damn the heat and damn the weather.
Damn Coolgardie altogether.

EXT. BUSH CAMP - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK of a prospector dryblowing.



WENDY V.O.)

Because water was such a precious commodity in the arid regions of Western Australia, dryblowing was the method used for extracting gold.

OLD TIMER 4

No form of labour is more exasperating than dryblowing and in no way amusing. Dust is thick in your eyes and clogs your nose and your throat becomes as dry as lime. And the gold eludes your grasp and you're laboured for ten hours a day without a speck your spirits begin to flag.

INT. INT. SHAFT BAR (KALGOORLIE) - DAY

DON continues at the bar.

DON

But just when the goldfields were being discredited as surface wildcats, Kalgoorlie broke through the bedrock and struck a load that went 10 ounces to the ton. One of the richest lode systems ever discovered.

EXT. ROCKY OUTCROP 4 - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK image of a suited BUSINESSMAN. He is in contrast to the manual WORKER who is driving a peg into the ground.



DON V.O.)

The boom accelerated again and another 342 companies were floated in 1895. The boom raged through 96 and promoters bought up 100's of outcrops and leases. Fortunes were made on the speculative profits of the stockmarket.

INT. OLD BAR COOLGARDIE - DAY

COLOUR and DON continues.

DON

However crazy it was the wholesale purchase of underdeveloped outcrops over 100's of square miles bought about a rapid rate of prospecting, and discovery. There were 10 quick years of development. More British capital flooded in as more rich ore bodies were discovered in the area.

INT. RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK vision of the railway being built.



WENDY V.O.)

The railway pushed through to Kalgoorlie late in 1896 connecting Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie to Perth. Power generators were tracked up and the town had light.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Old SEPIA photographs of Kalgoorlie depicts the town at

the turn of the century.



WENDY V.O.)

Government offices, law courts and the post office with its bold four sided clock were built and trams ran down the main street.

INT. WATER PIPELINE - DAY

OLD FILM LOOK of the pipeline being constructed.



WENDY V.O.)

An engineering wonder was constructed, with the 300 mile pipeline from Perth to bring water to the goldfields. The town boomed with over 30,000 people working in the area.

INT. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

MUSIC break.

Old photos depicting prospecting and daily life around the Goldfields.

INT. PALACE HOTEL - DAY

An old photograph match dissolves to WENDY, who glides down the sweeping staircase.

WENDY

Kalgoorlie probably felt it really had come of age when this magnificent two story Hotel was built. The Palace Hotel, with its bars handsomely fitted and stocked.

A real oasis in the dry Australian desert. She reclines in the lobby lounge chairs.



WENDY

It also provided one comfort long neglected, lounge chairs, to soothe the jaded magnate. In XXXX a young man by the name of Herbert Hoover, who later became the XXth President of America, was sent here by the British firm of mining engineers, Bewick Moreing & Co. As a field agent Hoover was involved in the acquisition and managing of mining properties. A lot was said about Hoover and he acquired a great many enemies, not the least for introducing prohibition during the Al Capone years. While in Australia he gained a reputation for ruthlessness and was called a womanising rogue whose unscrupulous behaviour was hardly desirable presidential material. Years later after leaving Kalgoorlie he penned these enduring words to a local barmaid.

INT/EXT. POEM & VISION

A montage sequence of shots of bougainvillaeas, stars, flowers and sunsets over a slow pan of Hoover's poem.

Mournful MUSIC.



HOOVER V.O.)

Do you ever dream my sweetheart,
of a twilight long ago, of a park
in old Kalgoorlie, where the
bougainvillaeas grow. And a tide
of bliss swept surging through the
currents of our blood. Years have
flown since then, fleet as orchard
blooms in may, but the hour that
fills my dreaming, was it only
yesterday? Where you kissed me in

the twilight, of a summer long ago. I have fought my fight and triumphed, on the map I've writ my name. But I prize one hour of loving, more than fifty years of fame.

INT. PALACE HOTEL - DAY

WENDY continues the story.



WENDY

But one thing was sure, he was a romantic poet.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - SUNSET

DON sits by a campfire in the middle of the bush.

DON

By now most of the surface deposits were exhausted and the mines went deep. Capital and the big mining companies moved in with plant and machinery and the prospectors had moved on. The alluvial heydays were over. Around Australia the trend continued. Queensland and Victoria all experienced huge downturns. In 1900, 75,000 workers were working the goldfields and by World War 1 only 6000 were left in the industry. The world was changing, and in 1914 the prospector was about to make his name on another front.

EXT. WORLD WAR 1 FOOTAGE.

Dramatic shots Of WW 1



DON V.O.)

The men of the Australian goldfields
joined the men at Gallipoli. The trenches
they dug weren't for gold, but the glory
of the British Empire.

Written and Directed by

Graeme Beck

Produced by

Ron Lange

Stephen Ibbotson

Doug Wilkinson

Presented by

Don Millar

and

Katrina Campbell

Cast

Edward Hargraves - Ron Lange

James Nash - Nial Roan

Arthur Baily - Bruce Denny

William Ford - Mick Rodgers

The Judge - Steve Ibbotson

Lister - Nathan Walton

Tom - Dan Healy

Margaret Kennerdy - Wyndie Mason

Mrs Farrell - Jodie Williams

Sovereign Hill

Stagecoach Drivers - Mick Daly & Kevin Gayle

Police - Anthony McKnight & Simon Vendy

Goldfinder - John Menzies

Photographer Tony Lang

Baker - Stewart Henderson

Blacksmith - David Sharp

Digger - Andrew Sharpe

Steam Engine Driver - John Michelle & Mathew Dowler

Gold panner - Eddie Kolene

Gold digger - Martin Scuffins

Washing lady - Theilie Wilson

Cradle operator - Wayne Baker

Trooper - Jarrod Page

Shop Assistants - Lisa Richards, Shae McDonald & Tamara Pipkorn

Kalgoorlie

Businessman - Mark Kont

Pegger - Hugh McGinty

Frenzy diggers - Nathan Walton & Travis Hooper

Dry Blower - Michael Bell

Scobie - Jason Cook

Camel Prospector - Chris O'Hora

Wheelbarrow digger - Reg Brian-Davis

Character Voices

Maurie Ogden - Sally Sander - Maurie Ogden - Peter Capp

Ramsay McLean - Rodger Montgomery - Rainer Ender

Bill McCluskey - Ross McDonald - John Clema

Doug Wilkinson - James Lynn - Carina Toubeau.

Crew

Camera & Sound - Graeme Beck

Production Manager - Sanchia Robinson

Online by Fran Strono

Camera Assistant - Nathan Walton

Nathan Brown - Kalgoorlie 2nd Assistant

Casting consultant - Vivian Poulton

Telecine transfer - Production Facilities (WA)

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Cathy Sutherland - Vicky Papchuck - Nathalie Collins
Rip Hayhow - Wendy Carter - Tonya Bataun - Stan & Norma Latchford
Linda Groom - Sylvia Carr - Claire Baddeley - Clare Gervasoni
Graeme McGregor - Bruce Davidson - Beverley Skinner - Susan Yaxley
Don Montefiere - Tom Byfield - Norm Buivids
Christine Downer - Ewa Narkiewics - Mary Lewis - David Harris
Anne Cobham - Helen Smith - Alex Anderson - Bronwyn Peel
Barry Logan - Russell Brown - Derek Longhurst - Brian Beaton - Amy Taylor

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