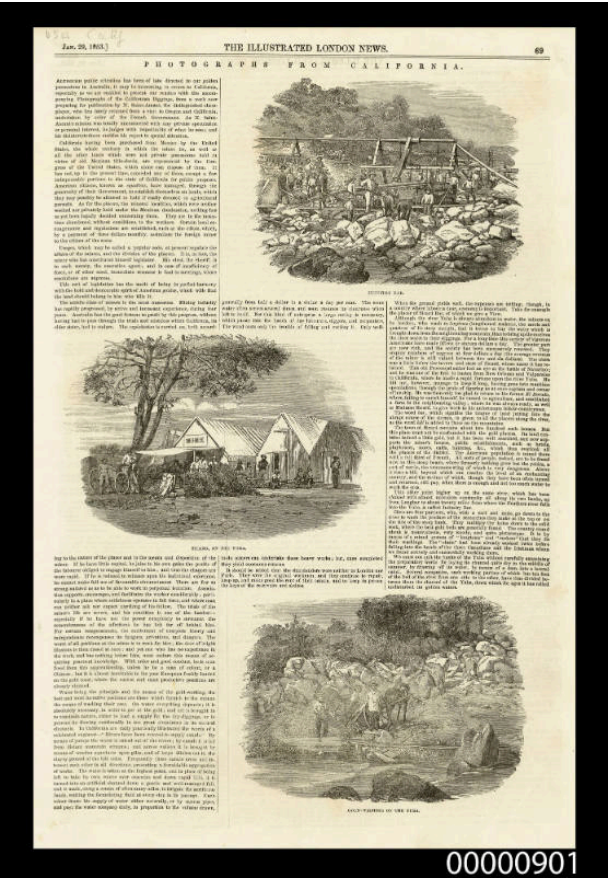


Basic Detail Report



00000901

Title
California gold diggings

Date
1853

Primary Maker
Illustrated London News

Medium
Ink on paper

Dimensions
Overall: 407 x 278 mm

Name
Print

History
Illustrated weekly magazines became increasingly popular in Europe and America during the mid 19th century. They

used large eye catching illustrations to accompany articles on politics, war, travel, exploration, fine arts, science and literature. The coverage of the Gold rush was a popular story in America, Australia and England as many people were keen to discover their fortune on the gold fields too. The Illustrated London News was a leading weekly pictorial in England and the wider world during the 19th century. It was established in 1842 to cover news and current affairs of national and international interest. The discovery of gold In America and Australia during the 1850s and 1860s was a popular topic in the London Illustrated News. People wanted to hear about the opportunities, adventure and conditions on the gold fields. Tens of thousands of miners criss-crossed the Pacific Ocean between Australia and America. A \$20 one-way ticket bought the traveller a bunk and space for one trunk, the trip between Sydney and San Francisco taking about six weeks. Living and working on the gold diggings was a harsh and dirty existence. The landscape was stripped of trees that were used for firewood, huts and building mine shafts. The extremes in weather conditions were a problem and sanitation was an issue for the large numbers of people living and working together. Washing for gold added to the pollution of the streams and rivers. Holes in the ground held both sewage and refuse. Infections and diseases spread readily under these conditions, including influenza and pneumonia which were common causes of death for miners of all ages and genders. Many children suffered from scarlet fever and diphtheria. If they did not die from the disease, they were often killed by the 'cures' - many of which were poisons. Only a small number of miners made a real fortune in the Californian Gold Rush. It was easier and more common to gain wealth by establishing businesses and trade

related to the diggings. Many unsuccessful miners turning to raising cattle, fruit plots or stores selling over-priced goods, supplies and services.