

Eugenia Gold

Artemnesia township, thirty-five miles south of Owen Sound and five miles east of Flesherton, was first surveyed in 1849, but it was not until 1852 that Eugenia Falls on the Beaver River was “discovered” by a settler named Brownlee. At the bottom of the gorge, Brownlee found a shining yellow metal, glinting among the rocks. It was not long before a boom-town of rough cabins and shelters had been hastily thrown up in the aptly named “Cuckoo Valley”. At the height of the digging, over two hundred men scrambled over the banks

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 men flocked away. Well, they emptied the churches, the fields and beer halls To
 go to the diggin's at Eugenia Falls For the gold, gold, Eugenia gold.

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 Eighteen fifty-two when the men flocked away.
 Well, they emptied the churches, the fields and beer halls
 To go to the diggin's at Eugenia Falls
 For the gold, gold, Eugenia gold.

Now a man worked a stony old farm—
 To leave it for gold wouldn't do him no harm.
 So he traded his sickle for a hammer and pan
 And it's off to the diggin's to become a rich man
 At the gold, gold, Eugenia gold.

Well they panned and they hammered for three weeks or four
 Till their jute sacks of gold made a mighty rich store;
 Then they bagged up a sample and sent a man south
 To find out the value and count up the worth
 Of their gold, gold, Eugenia gold.

Well, news of the find didn't take long to spread:
 There were men on the banks toe to toe, head to head.
 On the ridge one man slipped and he over did go
 But he got a soft landing on diggers below
 At the gold, gold, Eugenia gold.

Then back from Toronto the rider did come
 With his horse looking sheepish and his face looking glum.
 Sayin', "Boys, you can pack up and throw down your tools—
 This gold isn't gold, and we're all bloody fools
 For the gold, gold, Eugenia gold."

If you're thinking of leaving your stony old farm,
 Remember these words and by them be warned—
 It's far lighter work to pick rocks from the ground
 Than to carry a jute sack of gold into town
 If it's gold, gold, Eugenia gold.

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 Tune traditional

to get at the precious metal. The complete story can be read in Andrew Armitage's excellent collection of local stories, *The Day the Governor-General Came to Town*.

The tune is traditionally British, and is most commonly associated with "The Coal Owner and the Pitman's Wife", a song from the county-wide Durham coalminers' strike of 1844.

Bob Bassett