

World War II The Lost Color Archives

It's eerie how the simple addition of color can utterly transform our notions of the past. The restoration of color to World War II takes it from a remote, starkly defined monument into an immediate, vibrant, contemporary experience. It's at once more shocking and more beautiful. Enough experimental color footage (digitally restored) was filmed by US, German, and Japanese photographers to provide this amazing three-hour account of the war from all sides. This is how the participants of Europe and the Pacific saw it. Their words and letters form the narration for this British product. The color picture is so memorable that much of the footage was deemed too "realistic" to be shown at that time. Some of it has never been shown before. Disturbing though it is, this is the version that one wants to remember of the last world war.

(To confuse matters, there is a similarly named video/DVD called World War II in Color, which is also good, but it has less footage (two hours), no letters in narration, and a more US-biased view.)
—KK

**World War II
The Lost
Color Archives**
VHS, \$29.95
DVD, \$44.95
1999, 165 minutes
From, for example, Amazon

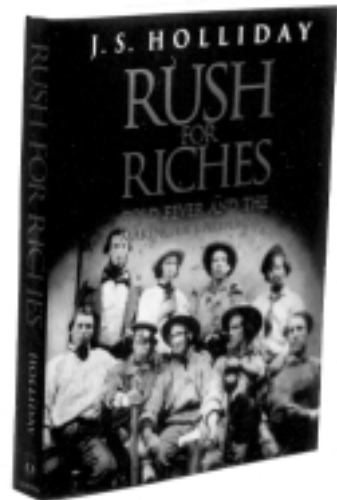


Rush to Riches Gold Fever and the Making of California

The world has never seen a boom time like this current one in California since...well...since the last one in California. By all measures the Gold Rush 150 years ago exceeded any superlatives the dot-coms can come up with today. While this witty and visual book was written without the slightest reference to the current digital boom, every page is stuffed with easily transferred insights. Technology running ahead of the law? Middle-class anarchy? Successful businesses created overnight? Deliberate and rampant hype? Profitable existing companies overturned? The original Gold Rush had them all.

The last two chapters, "Astounding Enterprises" and "Victims of Success," just about sum up the economic lessons of the era, but like panning in the hills, almost any random dig into this book will reward the digger.

—KK



Rush to Riches
Gold Fever and the Making of California
J.S. Holliday
1999, 355 pages
\$30
University of California Press

The intricacies, the precision, the expense evident in this aqueduct of the Miocene Mining Company (near Oroville) suggests profits for sawmills and wages for carpenters—and decimation for nearby forests.

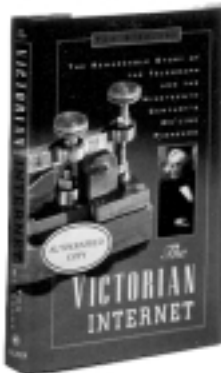
The Victorian Internet

A quick read that draws the parallels between the early world of telegraphs and the Internet a century later. There are some wickedly perfect fits: hackers, lovers, outlaws, and spies were the first users of the telegraph as they were on the Internet. The first frontiers to be bent, then as now, were language, law, and business practices. And almost every contemporary fear of the Internet is a recapitulation of the fears back then—that gambling, romance, and crime would overwhelm the medium. The telegraph was full of hype—much of which came true. And no one had any idea of what they were doing. These lessons should be oil on water, calming down the excessive worry and enthusiasm for today's telegraph.

—KK

The Victorian Internet

Tom Standage
1998, 227 pages
\$12
Berkeley
Publishing
Group



The telegraph was increasingly hailed as nothing less than the instrument of world peace. "It brings the world together. It joins the sundered hemispheres. It unites distant nations, making them feel that they are members of one great family," wrote Cyrus Field's brother Henry. "An ocean cable is not an iron chain, lying cold and dead in the icy depths of the Atlantic. It is a living, fleshy bond between severed portions of the human family, along which pulses of love and tenderness will run backward and forward forever."

Another banquet was held for Morse at Delmonico's in New York in December 1868, where he was toasted for having "annihilated both space and time in the transmission of intelligence. The breadth of the Atlantic, with all its waves, is as nothing."

Running two and later three round-trips each week and carrying her capacity of 300 passengers each way and 200 tons of freight upriver, the *Senator* probably grossed \$40,000 weekly and over \$2 million that year. To convert to 1998 dollars, multiply by 19.23: over \$38 million—for one steamboat!

A miner might pay \$300 for a horse worth only \$6 the month before, ride it to the next camp, and turn it loose because he could more easily scrape up enough gold to buy a new horse than take care of the first one.

Statistics from the district attorney for San Francisco affirm the gracious amenability of sheriffs and judges to timely bribes: for 1,200 murders committed in the city between 1850 and 1853, the official legal system managed to sentence and convict only one defendant.

By 1870, 39 percent of California's population was foreign born.

Owners and speculators in times of bonanza often made millions, concentrating wealth and power to a degree unknown in the 1850s, when California's placer mining had spread the rewards of labor and luck so widely that it seemed almost everyone was well off, or felt confident he would be next week. But in the sixties, and more painfully in the seventies, that confidence faded. Making a living became more urgent than making a fortune. The promise of wealth, of striking it rich, was slipping away from the man with a shovel in his hand. Kid gloves rather than calluses were the new mark of risk taking and fortune hunting.

