



S.T. Gill, *The Australian Sketchbook*, 1864.
Source: Sovereign Hill Gold Museum

Artists on the Goldfields

Student Activity Booklet

New Diggers, Welcome!

Welcome to the eGold website, an electronic Encyclopedia dedicated to telling the story of gold in Australia. The exercises available on eGold will take you through some of the features of the website and show you how to access the site's facts, images, stories and multimedia for your research.



S T GILL, F.W.Niven and Co.
Deep sinking, Bakery Hill, Ballarat-1853
Source: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery.

Artists on the Goldfields

In this lesson we will be looking at the way artists depicted life on the Australian goldfields. Many famous artists such as S.T. Gill actually went to the diggings to hunt for gold rather than to paint or sketch. While many goldfields artists were more interested in creating their fortunes than their artworks, the images they have left behind are like windows which allow us to look into the past.

Part A

Using the eGold search engine and the navigation tabs on the left of screen, locate the following information relating to Artists on the Goldfields.

1. Where was S.T. Gill born?

2. What were two factors which encouraged S.T. Gill to leave his business in Adelaide and head east to the diggings?

i) _____

ii)

3. Name two of S.T. Gill's paintings which show Ballarat during the gold rushes.

i) _____

ii) _____

4. List some similarities and some differences between the two paintings.

4. Locate an entry on the eGold website for another artist who worked on the goldfields. Using this entry, find the following information.

i) **The artist's name.**

ii) **Places the artist visited during their lifetime.**

iii) **Some of the things this artist illustrated.**

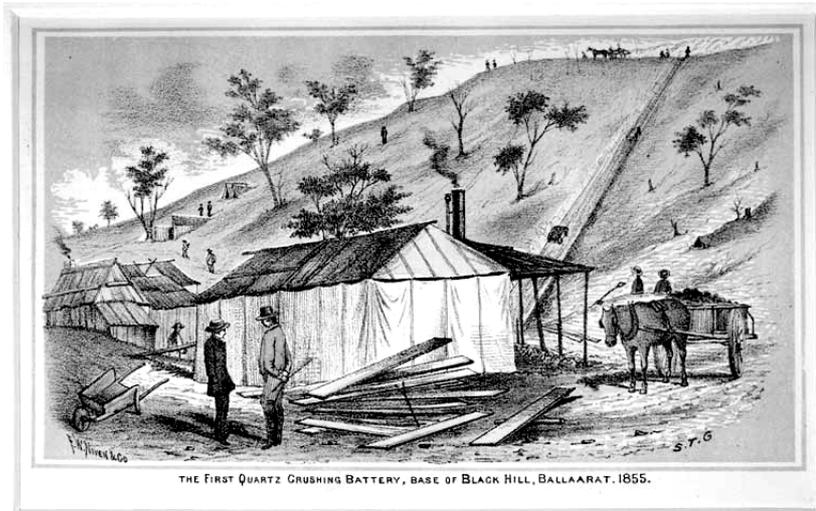
iv) **Any similarities and any differences you can find between the artist you have selected and S.T. Gill.**

Similarities _____

Differences _____

Part B

We often learn about history by examining information that has been written down in the past in documents such as letters, diaries and newspapers. For historians, using images to learn about the past offers a number of advantages but it can also present some difficulties.



THE FIRST QUARTZ CRUSHING BATTERY, BASE OF BLACK HILL, BALLAARAT. 1855.

S T GILL, F.W.Niven and Co.
The First Quartz Crushing Battery, Base of Black Hill, 1855.
Source: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery

- 1. Working with the person next to you, make a list of all the advantages and all the problems you might encounter when using pictures to learn about history?**

Advantages	Problems

- 1. Using your answers above, why do you think historians use paintings and drawings by artists like S.T. Gill when they investigate life on the Australian goldfields? Do you think there are any problems with doing this? Why? Why not?**

- 2. When instructed by your teacher, share your answer with the class. Add any problems and advantages that other members of the class bring up to your list above.**

Part C

In the same way that diggers on the goldfields used a number of different methods to extract gold, historians go about uncovering the past in a number of different ways. For the rest of the lesson, spend some time using eGold's navigation tools to explore the history of the goldfields.



Henry Winkles, Untitled [tools], 1850s
Source: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery

Locate S.T. Gill's *Australian Views* on the eGold Message Tree. While you are looking through the folio choose your three favourite images and answer the following questions.

1. Sketch 1

Title: _____

i) Who is in this picture?

ii) Briefly describe what the major action in this sketch is:

iii) **What can this sketch tell us about life on the goldfields?**

2. Sketch 2

Title: _____

i) **Who is in this picture?**

ii) **Briefly describe what the major action in this sketch is:**

iii) **What do you think the title of the sketch is referring to?**

3. Sketch 3

Title: _____

i) Who is in this picture?

ii) Briefly describe what the major action in this sketch is:

iii) What do you think the title of the sketch is referring to?

Part D

Choose one of the sketches above and imagine that you are one of the characters featured. Think about what your life is like: where do you live? What do you do for work? What have you done up until this sketch was drawn?

1. On an A3 piece of paper, draw a sketch illustrating what your character was doing two hours after they were painted by S.T. Gill. You can be as creative with your drawing as you like. Two hours after your character was painted they might be asleep, in gaol or complaining to Gill about his work. They might be very excited to have been painted, very angry or very embarrassed.
2. Once you have completed your illustration, write a caption for your picture that explains what is taking place.
3. Explain your illustration to the class and hand it in to your teacher for inclusion in your class' new Goldfields Sketchbook.