

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Bright, Fine Gold

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Bright, fine gold. Bright, fine gold.
Wangapeka, Tuapeka, bright, red gold.

Spend a day in the winter, or die of the cold.
Wangapeka, Tuapeka, bright, fine gold.
I'm weary of Otago. I'm weary of the snow.
If I should strike it rich, away I shall go.

Bright, fine gold. Bright, fine gold.
Wangapeka, Tuapeka, bright, red gold.

It cannot light a lantern. It cannot cure a pain.
But still I'll go on searching, although its all in vain.
I came to make my fortune, far across the sea,
but the riches in the river were not for such as me.

Bright, fine gold. Bright, fine gold.
Wangapeka, Tuapeka, bright, red gold.

RECORDINGS:

Phil Garland / Songs of Old New Zealand / Kiwi-Pacific 191 (NZ, 1986)

Gerry Hallom / A Run a Minute / Fellside 36 (UK, 1983)

The Cat's Been Spayed (group) / Down the Hall... / Kiwi-Pacific 231 (NZ, 1993)

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NOTES AND TERMS: Excerpts from album notes by Phil Garland: "Gold was discovered in 1861 [in NZ] in the Wangapeka Valley... no sooner had this field settled down, than the rush to... the Tuapeka district of Otago was on.

A large migration south began, giving rise to the chorus 'Gold, gold, fine bright gold, Tuapeka, Wangapeka, bright red gold', the 'red' referring to the gold-bearing quartz at Wangapeka, which had a reddish tinge. A variant of this chorus has survived...[as] a children's skipping rhyme, sung to the tune of 'Hot Cross Buns' and used as the title theme for a book 'One-A-Pecker, Two -A-Pecker' by the Australian novelist, Ruth Park. The song, as it stands today, is the perfect example of the creative folk process still at work, Colquhoun and others..."

