Abstract 150 years ago, the carefully-planned Presbyterian settlement of Dunedin was torn apart by the discovery that nearly every stream in Otago was laden with gold. The population exploded, adding the accents of Greece, Tipperary, Victoria, California, Guangdong and the King Country to the Scots burr which had been predominant. Almost immediately a myth of identity emerged, typified by goldfields balladeer Charles Thatcher's 'Old Identity and New Iniquity' and boosted by the histrionics of a press enamoured of the romanticised machinations of the Otago goldfields 'digger'. This popular mythology conflates the imagery of California, Victoria and early Gabriel's Gully to perpetuate stories of desperate, gold-mad miners swarming across the province fighting, drinking and whoring away sparse winnings in a vast and lawless land, where bodies float down the Clutha, diggers battle corrupt police and vast fortunes are won and lost. This thesis seeks to construct a de-mythologised account of the rush for Central Otago gold, examining the engineering processes, social dynamics and communal relationships implicit in the development of claims, the construction of goldfields structures, the growth of towns and the emergence of financial networks. This explains and reveals the social, technological and economic developments of the gold rush that wrought a profound change on the Otago landscape and to New Zealand's history. Focussing on the New Zealand Department of Conservation's historic reserve at Bendigo as an exemplary site, this thesis focuses on the people of the goldfields who left traces of themselves in archives, letters, newspapers, court records and in the heritage landscape to explain their mining, commercial and family lives, and concludes by exploring the remnants of their existence in the relic-strewn ghost-town. By elucidating the depth and breadth of relationships, processes and lives of the residents, miners and merchants, I refute the pervasive myth of innocent simplicity around the era to replace it with a surprisingly complex reality. This complexity is revealed in the new conclusions I draw around the myriad processes behind identity formation, rush events, water race construction, quartz mine development and labour relations, merchant finances and heritage remnants.
The lure of gold is strong. The first nuggets of the Klondike Stampede were brought into the town of Forty Mile on August 20, 1898. Two days later, the town was deserted, claims were being staked out all around the original site, and the Gold Rush was on! Despite the distance and the difficult conditions, thousands of Americans traveled to the Yukon willing to test their mettle in hopes of striking it rich. Use Jack London's vivid narrative prose as a model to develop varied sentence structure and length in their own stories. Subjects & Topic: Class Periods: 4-5. Next, student groups will research specific aspects of the Gold Rush and share the information with the class. Two optional activities follow. A Gold Rush is a new discovery of gold—sometimes accompanied by other precious metals and rare earth minerals—that brings an onrush of miners seeking their fortune. Major gold rushes took place in the 19th century in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Canada, South Africa and the United States, while smaller gold rushes took place elsewhere. The wealth that resulted was distributed widely because of reduced migration costs and low barriers to entry. While gold mining itself was unprofitable for most. This conference will cast new light on the Central Otago Gold Rush by taking a fresh look at the events, people, culture and places of Central Otago from when gold was discovered there in 1862. Organized by: University of Canterbury Deadline for abstracts/proposals: 17th February 2012. Check the event website for more details. Share on Facebook.