

# GOLD SEEKERS.

## THE RUSH TO SALAMOA.

### BIG PARTY ON THE MELUSIA.

Salamoa Bay and the Edie Creek goldfield are the destinations of a great number of the passengers aboard the Burns, Philp steamer Melusia, which cleared at Townsville early on Tuesday morning for Rabual, and then Salamoia Bay, the jumping off place for the now famous goldfield.

The gold fever is taking all of these hardy Australians off, and there will soon be 40 or more new gold seekers approaching the Administrator at Rabaul for permission to land in the Mandated Territory. Over 20 of them joined the ship in Sydney and Brisbane, eight more secured passages at Townsville, and the vessel calls at Samarai (Papua) on Thursday to pick up still more. The miners going to the rush appear a quiet, good type of men, such as those associated with the development of the Queensland diggings of the past, and one could not help but wish them "Good luck".

#### The Townsville Party.

Piled in a heap on the wharf awaiting the Melusia's arrival at Townsville, it was apparent the baggage of the intending passengers was not that of a tourist party. Swags included the whole of the owner's personal belongings, and there were shovels, picks, axes and the inevitable prospectors' dishes, dishes which hopeful miners are looking to to wash them their fortune. An axe is as essential a part of the alluvial miner's equipment as a shovel, for sluice boxes are to be made, and there are only forest trees available for the purpose.

Those who joined the vessel at Townsville comprised: Thomas Mellor (Innisfail), John Logan (Lucinda Point), Adolf Mashek (Innisfail), James H. Plumb (Silkwood), N. R. Neilson (Collinsville), K. Kozachuk (Collinsville), M. J. Leahy, J. Synott (Townsville).

#### An Experiment With Mules.

There were four mules taken away from Townsville. These will be the first taken to Salamoia, and their adaptability or otherwise to conditions there, will be watched with interest. Three of the mules belong to Mr. Mellor, and the fourth to Mr. Mashek. Mr. Mellor has had considerable mining ex-

lor, and the fourth to Mr. Mashek. Mr. Mellor has had considerable mining experience in the north west of Western Australia, and also in the MacDonnell Ranges, in Central Australia, and the successful use of mules in the rough and broken country there has prompted him to give them a trial for transport purposes in from Salamoa. He secured these in the Ingham district, where the mule train for the Kangaroo Hills tin-field caused a demand for good mules and it was supplied. The hardy animals brought heavy loads of tin into Ingham and were packed on the return to the mines with stores. Mr. Mellor said he did not know the nature of the country yet, and the mules may not be suitable, but, generally, he was convinced that where a man could go so could a mule. If the experiment was successful then he would not require nearly so much native labor. Mr. Mellor's gear includes a specially strong breeching while to act as a kind of brake on the mules when going down hill, he has taken gripper shoes. Unlike the grippers for which racecourse stewards always keep an eye, which have a spike on the front of the fore

shoes, these shoes have a spike on the both sides of the hind shoes.

#### Financial Backing.

It is understood that persons going to the field have to show they are possessed of £500 after the purchase of their ticket, while a further £50 has to be deposited with the Administrator at Rabaul. This appears to be a precaution taken by the Administration in case of a miner not meeting with the success he hopes for, the £50 will return him to Australia.

#### Mr. Levien Returning.

Mr. C. J. Levien is returning to Salamoa after a visit to the southern states. He has disposed of his interests in the field to an Adelaide concern. Mr. Levien, who has spent a couple of years on Eadie Creek, declared he was against any man going to the field without having £700. One could not go in with less than 15 boys, and boys would cost £20 a piece. A boy's load to the field was about 50 lbs. excluding his kiki (which amounted to 10 lbs.) The lowest one could get a load through with his own boys was £1 per load—it had been costing up to 36/- and it would cost more as they got out.

#### Eadie Creek Field.

Discussing the field itself, Mr. Levien said there was a big area of gold bearing ground, but there was no concentration. The area of payable ground

was very small, and there were more men on the field than it would employ. Newcomers could have to find new ground. The Bulolo River was a dredging or sluicing concern, and there was only prospecting going on there. Following Eadie Creek up from the Bulolo it ran through three or four gorges, very steep and rapid, and then lifted up 2000 feet in half a mile, and ran on through a high plateau. This was the real field. It was very high—7400 feet—and very cold. For ordinary boxing there was plenty of water. The original finder of the field, Park, named it Eadie.

Questioned regarding the feasibility of working mules, Mr. Levien was somewhat doubtful. It would require

a lot of work, he said, to the track. The trouble was that the present track followed a razorback all the way, and they could not get off it much to the side. Certainly if they were able to use mules it would be very helpful.

#### Aeroplane Service Possible.

It was learned aboard the Melusia that an aeroplane service from Salamoa Bay to Eadie Creek is a possibility. Those interested have been securing all the required information and data, and it is a question of the cost. There is a level piece of ground suitable for aviation purposes a little to the south east of the Salamoa landing, and another good landing place is available within measurable distance of the field. The air line would be about 35 miles.

#### Southern Syndicates Interested.

The field is attracting the attention of southern syndicates. One at Adelaide had already an interest in the field, a Sydney syndicate has a party on the way to the field, and another is being formed and there is a possibility of their expedition going up by the next boat.

#### At Salamoa.

An officer of the steamer stated on their last visit to Salamoa Bay there were a couple of shacks and a native built store on the beach. The passengers and stores were landed in special surf boats.

#### Cost of an Expedition.

The prospectus of a Sydney syndicate the proposed capital of which is £11,000, sets out the cost of equipping an expedition for six months, as follows:—

Equipment, tools, etc £200; fares, including return £250, salary for three members of the expedition, 26 weeks at £7, £546; wages for 80 natives, 26 weeks

f7, £546; wages for 20 natives, 26 weeks at 10/-, £390; signing on and recruiting fees at £10 each, £300; stores and incidentals £250; total £1936.

#### A Stowaway.

Probably influenced by the New Guinea gold stories a lad stowed away on the Melusia, and he was found on the vessel after leaving Brisbane. A bright little fellow of probably 16 or 17, his case attracted the sympathy of the passengers. Some there were who would have held themselves responsible for him, but restrictions are restrictions, especially in New Guinea, and so the lad's voyage ended at Townsville. But he did not go ashore with an empty pocket. A hat went round among the passengers, who, admiring his adventurous spirit, subscribed between £5 and £6 and handed it to him.

The Melusia is due at Samarai on Thursday and at Rabaul on Saturday.

#### A Prospector's Views.

Amongst the passengers were several men who professed to knowing the district well, and they were unanimous in their waivering as to the hardships and difficulties to be overcome in reaching the field. Mr J. Coldham, who had, he said, recommended the Bulolo River two years ago to a syndicate, said there was no possibility of a man simply humping his bluey and walking to the field. Native boys were necessary, and they were extremely difficult to obtain; as a matter of fact, a man without knowledge of the natives, had no possible chance of recruiting boys now. From

Salamoia Beach, it was about 20 miles, as the crow flies, to Bulolo River, but 50 miles by road and about 60 miles to Eadie Creek. And once there, it would be necessary for new comers to break fresh ground, for all the known ground was taken up, and they would have to go into country probably never previously trodden by white man. Personally he thought there was more gold to be found, but they would strike natives, and if not handled properly, there would be fight. In his opinion, 20 boys were needed to every man.

#### Mules Will Be Impracticable.

The opinion was generally expressed that mules would prove of little value. Mr Coldham thought they might possibly get half way to Bulolo, but other opinions were expressed that the mules would get little further than 15 miles from Salamoia beach. After that a new road would be required.

road would be required.

#### Obtaining Boys.

An official on board who has had considerable experience in recruiting, explained the Territory was divided into three districts—Morobe (near the Papuan border), Madang (in the centre), and Aitape (in the far north adjoining the Dutch boundary). Morobe, in which Bulolo and Eadie Creek are situated, and Madang, had been combed through and through for boys, and all possible recruits obtained, and it was only in Aitape that boys were obtainable now without difficulty. His advice to miners going to the field now, was to make for Aitape first, and secure their boys there. It was a little out of the way, but he considered in the end the field would be reached sooner than by hanging around Salamoia and endeavoring to pick boys up there.

#### Mr W. G. Royal Reticent.

Mr W. G. Royal, accompanied by his wife, was a passenger for New Guinea. Mr Royal, who was one of the discoverers of Eadie Creek, when approached by a pressman, refused to be interviewed. His only words were, "Keep your men away."

