

# Far From Home

words by W.H.D., Emory's Bar, July, 1859

melody & arrangement by Philip J. Thomas © 1962

The Fraser River Gold Rush began in April of 1858, and was over by September of the same year. According to Lelah Jackson Edson in her excellent history of Whatcom County, The Fourth Corner (Whatcom Museum, Bellingham: 1978), between 75,000 and 100,000 people were estimated to have come into British Columbia and Washington in the summer of 1858. Edward Eldridge, an early Bellingham settler, wrote that at one time he saw seven ocean steamers and thirteen square rigged ships anchored in Bellingham Bay. Ten thousand stampeders descended on the Bay at one time - setting up tents on the beaches, as there was little cleared land even for tents. Most were disappointed at the digs, and some returned to the little villages of Sehome and Whatcom (later combined as Bellingham) and became permanent residents.

This song is from Phil Thomas' excellent collection of Songs of the Pacific Northwest published by Hancock House (Saanichton, B.C., and Seattle, WA.). The tune is Phil's - the words are by some unknown gold seeker with the initials W.H.D., Emory's Bar, July 1859.

Where might-y wa-ters foam and boil, and  
rush-ing tor-rents roar-, in Fra-ser Riv-er's  
nor-thern soil lies hid the gold-en ore. Far from  
home-, far from home- On Fra-ser Riv-er's

The musical score is written on four staves in 6/8 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The lyrics are written below the notes. Chords are indicated by letters above the notes: Bb, Eb, Bb, F7, Bb, Eb, Bb, F7, Bb, Eb, Bb. The word 'CHORUS' is written above the final measure of the third staff.

shore, We la-bour hard - so does our bard - , to  
dig the gold - en ore.

Far, far from home we miners roam, we feel its joys no more.  
These we have sold for yellow gold, on Fraser River's shore.

In cabins rude our daily food is quickly counted o'er.  
Beans, bread, salt meat, is all we eat -- and the cold earth is our floor.

Lonely our lives -- no mothers, wives, or sister's love runs o'er,  
When home we come at set of sun, to greet us at the door.

At night we smoke, then crack a joke, try cards till found a bore.  
Our goodnight said, we go to bed, to dream of home once more.

With luck at last, our hardships past, we'll start for home once more,  
And greet the sight with wild delight, of California's shore.

And when on shore, we never more, will roam through all our lives.  
A home we'll find just to our mind, and call our sweethearts wives.

