

BOOK REVIEW

Eureka Stockade - The Unfinished Revolution
By Peter Fitzsimons. William Heinemann \$49.95

Peter FitzSimons is a journalist with The Sydney Morning Herald and Sun-Herald.

He is also a regular TV commentator, a former radio presenter (and a former national representative rugby union player).



In 1854, Victorian miners fought a deadly battle under the flag of the Southern Cross at the Eureka Stockade. Though brief and doomed to fail, the battle is legend in both our history and in the Australian mind. Henry Lawson wrote poems about it, its symbolic flag is still raised, and even the nineteenth-century visitor Mark Twain called it: “a strike for liberty”.

Was this rebellion a fledgling nation's first attempt to assert its independence under colonial rule? Or was it merely rabble-rousing by unruly miners determined not to pay their taxes.

In his inimitable style, Peter FitzSimons gets into the hearts and minds of those on the battlefield, and those behind the scenes, bringing to life Australian legends on both sides of the rebellion.

Publicist - Perri Wilson/Random House

Note:

It is interesting to read Dr. Anne Beggs-Sunter's review in the Life Style section of the Age 5/1/2013. She states that in spite of his tendency to play fast and loose with the historical record, Peter Fitzsimons' *Eureka: The Unfinished Revolution* provides a “ripping good yarn” overview of the Eureka Rebellion in 1854 and has played a useful role in bringing the Eureka Stockade and its meaning to the attention of readers far from Ballarat.

Whilst Fitzsimons pay tribute to the judgments of other writers/commentators such as John Molony, Anne Beggs-Sunter goes further and states that in Moloney's “*Eureka*” he was able, in half the number of Fitzsimons' 700 pages, to bring the story of Eureka to vivid life in readable and accessible history.

Here is the link to that review: <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/evolution-of-the-revolution-20130103-2c62p.html#ixzz2HAUwTmUK>

Why the subtitle –The Unfinished Revolution?

Fitzsimons rightfully noted that there was a strong republican thread of ideas circulating at the Eureka Stockade particularly among the Irish and Yankee diggers. He believes in a Republic for Australia (the job that still has to be done) and quotes Peter Lalor who enunciated as his goal on the eve of the Eureka Battle “Independence – has still not occurred”.