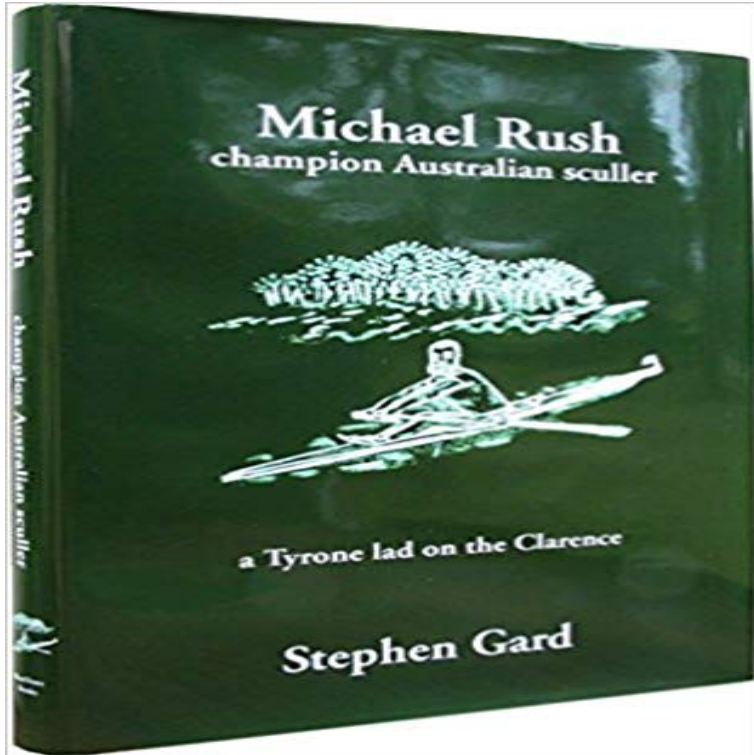


## Michael Rush : Champion Australian Sculler: A Tyrone Lad on the Clarence



Michael Rush (1844-1922) was an Irish immigrant. In 1863, he settled on the Clarence River in northern New South Wales. Rush soon became Champion Sculler of the district, and then Champion of Australia. Rush never achieved the World Title, though he competed for it in 1877, drawing to Sydneys foreshores the largest crowd of spectators Australia had ever seen. The opportunities of colonial Australia overwhelmed immigrants like Michael Rush, Irishmen of impoverished background. Rush devoted his energy to the getting of wealth and glory, but was incapable of keeping it. Money ran between his fingers like water and he fell on hard times, not through dissipation, but from his hearty, live-for-the-day gaiety. His unshakeable honesty and unfailing geniality won Michael Rush a trove of friendships that outlasted his sporting days, and fathered a rich legend that his family keeps alive. Other Australian champion scullers have monuments in stone and steel, but not Michael Rush. He came to prominence just too late to join the move towards sport as a profession, though he and others showed the way for Australians to earn a living from athletics. This biography explores the life and career of Michael Rush: his endeavours in athletics and in commerce; the men against whom he competed and those who backed and benefited from his sculling races; his business colleagues and his large and happy family. We see Sydney in its wild, colonial exuberance, see struggling Clarence River selectors and their proud and growing towns, see Sydney in its sober post-Federation days, when wowsers browbeat governments into joyless reforms. We see a heroic Michael Rush in action at the oars, and a humbled Michael Rush facing bankruptcy court. Michael Rush is remembered for his unfailing courage, humour, warmth, and true sportsmanship, and he has earned a place in

Australia's history. Michael Rush was an immigrant who strove and triumphed and became a credit to his adopted nation. Everyone loves a winner. Michael Rush will win your heart.

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