

For over 150 years songwriters, poets musicians and writers have observed and recorded many aspects of Australian working Life.

As well as that I have discovered 1103 Songs and Poems from Australian Newspapers using the National Library of Australia Trove Project.

**National Advocate Saturday 6 February 1909 p. 2.**

I sat in a suburban train,  
There was no seat to spare,  
Hermetical seemed each pain,  
And rank the foggy air.

A dear old man with kindly face,  
With gentle voice and meek,  
Moved over from his corner place  
And thus began to speak.

' My friends, I trust that none,' he said,  
' My hardihood will chide,  
If I to save an aching head,  
This window open wide.'

His gentle manner seemed to plead,  
All granted what he asked,  
And soon in the refreshing breeze,  
That dear old person basked.

' Fresh air,' he said, ' is life to man,  
The heritage of each,'  
And this conviction he began  
With friendliness to. preach.

' The need for purer air,' he moved,  
'Is no eccentric whim ;'  
Wide open windows he approved,  
They meant so much to him.

' Sound health,' he said, ' will be your crown,  
Your babes be strong and bright,  
If you will only let your windows down,  
Especially at night.

Till each alighting said they meant  
To follow his advice,  
And turned to thank him as they went,  
He seemed so kind and nice.

I was the last to rise to go,  
And wishing him good-day,  
Remarked ' One thing I'd like to know  
Are you a doctor, pray ?'

At that he shook the frosty rime  
That crowned his honoured head,  
And bowing courteously  
' I am a burglar, sir,' he said.

—Jessie Pope.

**Hilton Spectator and Lachlan River Advertiser Saturday 30 August 1903, p. 13.**

When the spring-time sun is gettin' hot, and you're shiftin' gravelly muck.  
If you're workin' for the Council, people think you are in luck.  
When you perspire till the dye runs from your shirt and stains your moles,  
What a happy time a navvy has a-diggin' blanky holes.

Those folks who think seven-bob a-day a workman's paradise  
Had better join our gang themselves I'm sure they'd find it nice,  
If you come just leave your Sunday togs and silver studs at home,  
Cos there s nothing wanted here just now but muscle strength and bone.

Of course we get a quarter twice a day to have a drink,  
But, strike me, when we're working', why we haven't time to wink.  
A-swinging pick and shovel, spreading sand and diggin' drains,  
Don't want, a lot of science, and it don't want any brains.

But watch the ganger walkin' up, and then a-walkin' down,  
And then a walkin' back again, then walkin' roun' an' roun'.  
If yon stop and straighten up a bit, to talk to Bill or Jack,  
You'll hear him shout, don't knock off work or else you'll get the sack.

They may talk about Australia as a paradise for men,  
'Cos we swing the pick and shovel, for eight hours instead of ten ;  
But there's blokes in gov'ment billets who are drawing heavy screw,  
And they play ping-pong and tennis when there's nothing else to do.

But hurrah for honest toil, my lads, and conscience good and clear ;  
While you've health and strength in body there is nothing else to fear ;  
Though your labour's pretty solid, and your profit very small,  
You're better as a navvy, than a cockie after all.

**—WANDERER.**

Tune Rolling Home

I love an outing, a jolly, jolly outing;  
I love an outing as I love my life.  
I only happy am, when upon the tram;  
With pipe and friend, I quickly send  
Away all care and strife.  
O, we are so bright and free,  
And many funny sights we see  
When joining in a glee,  
As we go out to roam.

Chorus:

To the North or the South we'll go, boys,  
And we'll sing all the way as go, boys,  
Happy as the light of days, boys,  
When we go out to roam.

Th' Salvation Army passes  
With their Hallelujah Lassies;  
And although it all a farce is, it amuses me.  
I wish them in the moon,  
They sing so out of tune,  
And, with "Blood and Fire" I never could agree.

I think a girl is better at a mangle,  
Than marching to the cymbals and triangle,  
And running after every new fangle,  
Or out at night to roam.

Chorus

Foot-ballers on the car, a merry crew they are,  
And in the cause of charity are ever kind.  
When we take the poll, may they all make a goal.  
Th' Dei'l take the last who makes a behind.  
Although very rough in play,  
None kindlier than they ;  
But there'll be the Dei'l to pay  
If we're late in rolling home.

Chorus

### **From The Colonial Songster (3) 35 1884.**

Old chap, cried Thomson to Payne,  
As the day's remarkably fine,  
Let's put ourselves into the train,  
For a trip on the Gawler Line.

Now off, grind, grind, we go,  
Jiggle and joggle we jump ;  
Ten carriages all in a row,  
Hooked on to each others rump.

Huzza! for the Gawler train,  
Where nothing its speed can rebut,  
As it whirls us might and main,  
Through gates whether open or shut.

A whistle, a yell, and a snort  
As we reach North Adelaide Station,  
But we're presently pulled up short,  
For truck's in conflagration.

Here, water ! water ! roared Payne,  
With a most tremendous shout ;  
The engineer's here in the train,  
Run, Thompson, and rouse him out.

For water it's useless to bawl,  
And the gatekeeper grinned in his face,  
For it's very well known to us all  
That there is'nt a drop in the place.

So on, whiz, whiz, we passed,  
While the sparks continued to spout,  
Till we reached the next station at last,  
And got the fire put out.

Huzza ! for the Gawler line,  
Shouting, screaming, and bawling ;  
The management's superfine,  
With a burning truck and tarpaulin.

Now again grind, grind, we go,  
Jiggle and joggle mid jump,  
Ten carriages all in a row,  
Hooked on to each others rump !

A whistle, a shriek, and a roar !  
And how the stoker cursed ;  
While somebody screamed from before,  
" By golly ! the boiler's burst."

Payne's head reached the carriage top,  
With a sudden thundering rap,  
While Thompson pitched with a flop  
In an opposite lady's lap.

Poor Payne was assisted out,  
They bandaged his head with towels,  
While the lady walked groaning about  
She was taken so bad in her bowels.

A weary hour goes by—  
Again whiz, rattle, and grunt,  
And off goes the Gawler fly  
With another machine in front.

Success to this northern line,  
And its regular weekly fix ;  
If you leave the Station at nine,  
You may get to Gawler by six.

### **A Union Man**

I joined the union years ago  
I've no cause to regret it  
The only friend of the working man  
Don't you ever forget it.

I always paid my subs on time  
I attended every meeting  
I helped in every way I could  
If only a friendly greeting.

I served on committees when asked  
I did all within my reach  
And sometimes when the meeting lagged  
I came up with a little speech.

I did honest work for my pay  
And am happy now to tell  
I joined the union years ago  
It has served me long and well.

And when alas the race is run  
In which I also ran  
Carve this line upon my tomb  
I was a Union man.

### **The Bagman's Farewell**

**Tune: A Stalwart Young Lancer**

A strapping young bagman lay dying,  
His bluey supporting his head,  
Around him his mates were all crying,  
For a handout of corn beef and bread.

This bagman had jumped many a rattler,  
He'd bitten handouts by the score,  
Been in the front ranks of the battlers,  
But alas he would battle no more.

Wrap me up in my nosebag and blankets,  
And bury me deep down below,  
Where the demons and wallopers won't worry me,  
'Cause I'm going where good bagmen go.

He'd ridden the rods through Australia,  
Been kicked off every freight too,  
He'd learned all the lurks when a "whaler"  
He jumped his first freight from Pinaroo.

Now there was young Diver the kid from Brunswick,  
And Time Table Scotty as well,  
Box Car Bertie, Philadelphia and Lucky,  
To bid that hobo a bagman's farewell.

He hears the A2 pull out for Geraldton,  
Or maybe some far northern track,  
Be it Tallarook, Cairns or Babinda,  
He knows he will never go back.

Now the Demons await him at Rockhampton,  
Those coppers await at Yorall,  
Those bludgers will wait there for ever  
'Cause he's copping the fast freight for Hell.

## Notes

**From Ron Edwards AUSTRALIAN FOLK SONG Index p. 642.  
Central Queensland Herald, 14 November 1935**

There may be crimed men hiding, like tamed hawks perched in a church,  
Where camp mates don't inquire about the past,  
And pimps, too, sweet with demons, who left crime mates in the lurch,  
And rolled a knot and travelled far and fast ;  
Though some tents harbor gunmen, who are lucky to be there,  
Who sought their better selves while out on tramp,  
All rise to urges greater for a space short, grand, and rare,  
When news floats round a parson's in the camp !

Where navvies lay new railroads, or lift one's spreading bed,  
Where straight and willing lefts can frame a law ;  
And nasty, sack-mad gangers find them selves on tramp instead ;  
Where oozing sweat keeps men's skins thin and raw ;  
Though the only education is the " hazard school " and " kip " ;  
Where greed set, lamp lit faces, shining damp  
Reflect a fascination all defiant in its grip.  
There's a let up when a parson's in the camp !

Then razor strops are busy, broken combs come into play,  
Mean men will lend and give with eagerness ;

Low crooks will borrow shillings that they'll actually repay ;  
They'll hum through hymns and improvise and guess,  
And men who'll stop at nothing when the coppers front them bold,  
Who know their mates are of a different stamp,  
Will help hold up that halo—as if they had been told —  
That's shared when there's a parson in the camp !

Where white tents dot the scrub fringe, like freak mushrooms in the shade,  
Where the menu's boiled corned beef and corned beef stew,  
And motor hawkers camouflage a sly grog (pay week) trade,  
And horrors victims toil and " sweat it through " ;  
Where life-starved men are eager to cross swords in cold debate  
In words, the boldest parson's style to cramp,  
And wave a good intention, with warm welcome as its mate  
Floats round with news—a parson in the camp.

**Southern Times [Bunbury WA] 30 September, 1915.**

Why not enlist today boys ?  
Why not a hero be ?  
Hark to your comrades calling  
From far Gallipoli.

Come over lads and help us ;  
We need you now—today,  
Must we bear all the battles,  
While you stay at home and play ?  
Are not your homes in peril,  
Your King and Country, too ?  
Come over, lads and help us,  
We will gladly welcome you.

Oh ! won't you heed their pleading  
Your pals from the Dardanelles ?  
Won't you go and join them  
Among the shot and shells ?  
Prove worthy of your manhood,  
Don't let them bear all the fray,  
Your King and comrades need you—  
Go and enlist today.

'Tis grand to think they are helping  
In their country's hour of need,  
To know that they are worthy sons  
Of the Empire's Bulldog breed ;  
"Up lads, and let us at "em ;"  
Hear their Imshi Yalla ring,  
As up Galipoli's rocky slope,  
Our lads in khaki swing.

Their faces all turned upwards,  
They never once look back,  
As on they struggle bravely,  
Up that deadly fire-swept track ;  
Their comrades fall around them,  
Riddled with shot and shell,  
Still on they press to avenge them,  
Our lads of the Dardanelles.

**Won't you enlist today, boys,**

And the gaps at Gallipoli fill,  
And loyally do your duty  
To crush out Kaiser Bill ?  
Do you want Prussian rule here  
'Neath our sunny skies of blue ?  
Go, lad, fight for your country,  
Your comrades call for you.

Why not enlist today boys,  
When you know your country's need ?  
When mother and child cry "Avenge us !"  
Will you excuses plead ?  
Shame on you, shirkers of duty,  
To let them cry in vain  
For vengeance on our enemy  
For all their noble slain.

Does not their pleading touch you ?  
Does it not reach your heart ?  
Or our daily Roll of Honor  
Inspire you to your part  
In saving our Fair Australia  
From deadly Prussian sway ?  
Go and enlist today.

Now lads, your comrades need you—  
Many a noble deed has been done  
By hands now folded in death ;  
Many a tender farewell unheard  
Has been breathed by a dying breath  
Hundreds of V.C. heroes  
Lie in unknown graves,  
For they, unseen, have given their lives,  
A comrade's life to save.

Go and avenge our heroes,  
Who for Truth and Justice fall,  
Our heroes of Fair Australia,  
Our lads of the Dardanelles ;  
Think how for you they suffered  
On that awful April day ;

Go lad it is your duty—  
Go and enlist today.  
All honor to them and glory,  
Our lads of the Dardanelles ;  
May our son's sons tell the story  
Of how they fought and fell.

## **Notes**

**J. F. WILLIAMS. "N.S.W. Railway and Tramway Budget."  
The Advertiser Wednesday 3 May 1922**

### **THE NORTH-SOUTH RAILWAY.**

**A Little Song.  
Dedicated to Federal Legislators.**

A contract was once quite a sacred affair,

We scrupled to alter its breadth by a hair.  
And sealed our assent by a nod.  
Though pen upon parchment the scope might define.  
The understood fact left no room to opine,  
No need for our swearing by God.

Has German example set up a new style?  
Are compacts and bargains now covers for guile?  
Our treaties but scraps of old paper?  
Has national honor indeed grown so sick  
That an Act is now part of the confidence trick?  
If not, why this railway-route caper?

The Old Bush Workers  
A Poem by 'Ironbark' Russ Singleton

They sang their songs of outback teams  
Of bullocks and all that,  
Of Diggers in their search for gold  
Down on the "Dingo Flat".

They humped their blueys far and wide  
On many a distant run,  
They hungered and they thirsted too  
Beneath the burning sun.

They navvied on the railway lines  
And laboured on the bridges,  
They cleared the timber from the plains  
And tamed the rugged ridges.

And starving stock they trailed behind  
Through dust or seas of mud,  
They battled through depression times,  
Fought fire, drought and flood.

They cut their share of Queensland cane  
And shore their share of sheep,  
They've ridden boundaries by the mile  
For thirty bob and keep.

They've sawn the logs in timber mills  
And shot wild dingoes too.  
In fact they've had a crack at all  
The things that bushmen do.

But they have grown too old to toil  
And lacking of the spoil,  
They sit around ten thousand camps,  
And watch the billies boil.

The Argus Friday 28 August 1857 p. 8.  
A Poem by George Wright©George Wright 1853

Not long ago, and down the Barwon's stream,  
The sable swan led forth his graceful fleet.  
Not long ago, our hills and valleys green,  
Were all untrodden save by savage feet.  
No ploughman's song the dawning's stillness broke;  
No fowler's gun the woodland echoes woke;



Nor forest monarch bowed beneath the bushman's stroke.

Not long ago, the tawny Native stood  
In naked majesty on yonder hill;  
All—all was his: the mountain, plain and wood—  
The fair green solitude, so calm and still.  
No anvil's clang was heard at break of day;  
No white wing'd vessels floated on the Bay;  
But fresh from God's own hand our lovely country lay.

We came—the pioneers. Fence after fence  
Narrow'd the limits of the black man's home.  
He saw all vain would be his best defence;  
And, scowling, watch'd the living tide roll on.  
The Anglo-Saxon wave that drove him back  
Mile after mile, till on the foeman's track  
He found—a grave— ('tis all we left the black.)

### Notes

**From Marjorie Pizer's 1953 anthology "Freedom on the Wallaby" p. 41. Pizer writes:  
"Suggested by the commencement of the Geelong and Melbourne Railway, Sept. 20, 1853"**

### A song by Tex Moreton

I was riding one time on the Gundagai line  
On a dirty and noisy old freight,  
With my bed on the floor and a pillow of straw.  
When somebody slammed on the brake.

At the rear of the train, in the sleet and the rain,  
In the light of the red lantern's glow,  
I spied a young hobo, he lay there in pain.  
It was plain he was fast sinking low.

As I knelt by his side he opened his eyes,  
And bravely he smiled up at me,  
He said, "Now it's time I must ride my last line,  
So do me a favour now please."

He drew forth in pain a locket and chain;  
"My mother will know this." he said.  
And we slowly stood back, as we took off our hats,  
We could all see the hobo was dead.

By some trick of fate I arrived home too late,  
For the old white haired lady was gone;  
So I dropped in the grave the locket he gave  
To show that he too had passed on.

Old Ninety Seven ...  
... or Better Get There By Rail

There were ninety-seven airplanes warming up on the apron,  
Far as the eye could see,  
Now the first ninety-six were of recent construction,  
But the last was a 51-D.

Then a second lieutenant wandered into operations,  
Asked for a ship to fly,

They said "Young man, we are very short of airplanes,  
But we'll get you a something by and by."

Now the first forty-six were reserved for the majors,  
The captains have the next forty-nine,  
There's only one other ship on the end of the apron,  
Said the shavetail, "Then that one is mine."

So he flew over Taejon and the Taegu airstrip,  
When the ceiling began to fall,  
The clouds closed down on the tops of the mountains,  
He couldn't see the ground at all.

He flew through the rain, he flew through the snowstorm,  
When the light began to fail,  
Then he spied a railroad going in his direction,  
And he said "Better get there by rail."

He flew down the valley and he dodged through the canyon,  
Keeping that train in his sight,  
Till the rails disappeared in a hole in the mountains,  
The was the end of his flight.

It was old ninety-seven with her nose in the mountain,  
Her wheels set akimbo on the track,  
Yes her throttle was bent in the forward direction,  
But her engine was facing straight back.

Oh ladies, ladies, take fair warming,  
From this time now on,  
Never speak harsh words to your high-flying pilot,  
He may leave you and never return.

## Notes

### From Ron Edward's Australian Folk Song Index

South Australian Weekly Chronicle Sat 16 Feb 1889, p. 17.

[The incident recorded in the following lines happened on the railway line between Glasgow and Paisley.]

Only a navvy ! only a hero—nay, two—  
Men that stood ready, as men should, to dare and to do ;  
Laurels in plenty there are for the crest and the plume,  
Stroke of the sword, and the plunge in the thick battle gloom,  
Red line of steel, and the rampart men make with the square,  
Holding their own till the onset falls off in despair—  
Smiles of fair women, and vivas of men, and delight,  
Banners afloat in the city when men march from fight.  
Tears and a glad happy memory kept at the heart  
Long for the dead, who, in dying, accomplish their part.  
Honor for these whom I tell of, then, shall there be none?  
None for the act that could save—And the death duty done ?  
Only two heroes who worked "on the line" in the north,  
There where the fetters of iron bind Clyde into Forth,  
For you see it fell on a day, so God willed, as they wrought  
Hard by the rails, with a viaduct stretching below,  
That a train came in sight, the express, and must go  
Over the bridge which, you see, spanned the chasm below,  
When—just as the navvies fell back for the thunder to pass—  
One of them saw that a sleeper had started, alas !

Never a hope for the train, but a horrible doom,  
 All whom she carries must fall—with a rush to their tomb !  
 All whom she carries, light-hearted perchance in their mirth,  
 Full of the pleasures of life, of the projects of earth.  
 Nay, there was one saw the peril, and beckoned his mate—  
 Nephew it was—to the rescue, for speaking too late.  
 So fall in the forefront of death that was coming they ran,  
 And they stooped to their merciful work, man by man,  
 Righted the wrong in a moment, for short was the span,  
 Down came the train in a whirlwind of dust and of speed,  
 Clattered and past, on its way, o'er the chasm indeed.  
 Ay, but the men ; but the men who had saved, true slid good ?  
 Caught up—smitten down—crushed to death, with their blood  
 Red in a pool on the rails, where a moment they stood ;  
 Saved the express, yes, and martyr-like, perished to save,  
 Crowned with the crown of their manhood they lie in one grave.

#### Notes

Australian newspapers often carried songs and poetry from England, Ireland Scotland and Wales. The same happened with songs and tunes from the United States of America. This lyrical exchange rarely seems to have travelled the other way. Railway disaster reports from many countries were also re-published in Australia.

#### **Our Track!**

**Author not known**

#### **With Apologies to the Timboon Crews,**

Have you ever heard the story  
 Of the little place out back?  
 It's the Engine-drivers' glory,  
 And is well known as "Our Track."  
 There's Jimmy Y. and Norman K.,  
 And Charley R and Billy A.;  
 They run the train down every day  
     On our Track.

What is it makes the cockies stare  
 And wonder what is in the air  
 When up the bank the train does tear?  
     Why, our Track.

What is it makes the boilers prime  
 And the poor old driver can't keep time?  
 Where is it that you get the lime?  
     'Tis our Track

Where is it that we chaps all know  
 That other drivers could not go  
 'Cause if they did they'd make a show?  
     Why, our Track.

Where is it drivers stay for years,  
 For other Jobs they have no fears,  
 And when they leave the place shed tears?  
     Why, our Track.

Where is it that the firemen roar  
 About the way the drivers bore?  
 They'll drop their plug some day for sure  
     On our Track.

What is it makes them burn the coal  
 That twenty-eight won't fill the hole,

Yet half the way they have to roll?  
Why, our Track.  
Where is it drivers try to fly,  
And the fireman says he'll do or die,  
While on the steam he keeps his eye?  
It's our Track.  
What is it that will always stay,  
Though crews may come and go away?  
It's there for ever and a day--  
Why, our Track.

## Notes

**From The Footplate 29 July 1921.**

### **The People's Asset**

"The 'Goods,' the 'Mixed,' the 'Passenger,' the 'Paper,' and 'Express';  
The men upon the engine - 'Baldwin' or 'Black Bess',  
The brave Australian drivers - the stalwarts of the land -  
The firemen, guards, and porters, and the noisy Tramway band;  
May their runs be merry, through Traffic's storm or shine,  
Their 'attitude' be jolly, though on or off the line:  
And may Australia's railways as the winds of progress blow  
Remain the People's Asset, and grow stronger as they grow."

## Notes

From "Old Pioneering" Days. p. 307. A short piece, perhaps a toast, seemingly by Charles MacAlister himself, describing the railways in the 1880s. The first line lists the different classes of train services at the time.

The Poison Train  
A Song by Michael O'Rourke

This old town has had its day, all the people moved away,  
And the houses standing empty in the dry and dusty day.  
No-one cares for this old town, now the money's not around  
And the railway lines are rusty and the station's falling down.

Chorus:  
There's a light down the line.  
Let it shine, shine, let it shine.  
There's a camp down the way.  
All the fettlers will be coming home today.

When the railway opened here, all the gutters flowed with beer  
And the people stood beside the line to watch and wave and cheer.  
All the speeches that were made, when the bosses smiled and said  
The good times are just beginning, follow us and you'll go ahead.

Well they built the street so wide, it would be a thing of pride  
To walk across it drunk or throw a stone to the other side.  
And the building grew so tall, you would tremble at their fall,  
But they just dried out and you'd never know there was any one there at all.

I can hear the tall man say to the children at their play  
You'd better go home early and you'd better stay away.  
Stay away from the line, can't you hear the railway humming,  
The grass has grown too tall and the poison train is coming.

You feel sorry for the grass, all it did was grow too fast  
All the weapons raised against it, it was never made to last  
And the man and his offsider are all dressed in black  
As the poison train goes through the town and blisters all the track.

Well it never lasted long, half the town was packed and gone,  
And everybody was afraid to be left there alone.  
All the people stayed away, and there was no celebration,  
And nobody made a speech the day they closed down the railway.

### **The Railway Buffet Sandwich**

I dwell in haunts of hurried men  
And have for many age-,  
Before the railways were, and when  
The public rode in stages.

I can't remember whence I came,  
And e'en the oldest liar  
Cannot a date so distant name  
But I can name one prior.

While time shall last I'll still be so,  
Nought can destroy me, never,  
For trains may come and trains may go,  
But I'll stay here forever.

O, many scores of men I've seen  
Come smilingly to greet me,  
And mutter something low and mean  
Because they couldn't eat me.

They tried to cut me with a dirk,  
In coffee sought to drown me :  
But all their schemes have failed to work,  
I'm still just as they found me.

And when they're gone I'll yet be so,  
They can destroy me never.  
For hungry men may come and go,  
But I'll stay here forever.

Sometimes it makes me sad to see  
The aged men and toothless  
Put up their hard-earned cash for me,  
Because I know I'm useless.

But when smart mashers happen by  
It really does delight me  
To do my level best and try  
To have the goslings bite me.

For well I know they stand no show,  
They can affect me never,  
For young and old may come and go,  
But I'll stay here forever.

And so I while the time away,  
The King of money makers,

And gather shekels day by day,  
The prince of all the fakirs.

And yet my job is not so nice,  
I really do abhor it ;  
But I command most any price—  
The dentist pays me for it.

Thus do I labour on and so  
I'll keep it up forever,  
For sound teeth come and false teeth go,  
But I'll stay here forever.

—Texas Siftings.

## Notes

**Kilmore Free Press Thursday 11 September 1890 p.4**

Railways 1846  
The Cornwall Chronicle Wednesday 5 July 1865 p.2

'No poetry in Railway!' foolish thought  
Of a dull brain, to no fine music wrought.  
By mammon dazzled, though the people prize  
The gold alone, yet shall we not despise  
The triumphs of our time, or fail to see  
Of pregnant mind and fruitful progeny  
Ushering the daylight of the world's new morn.  
Look up, ye doubters, be no more forlorn!—  
Smooth your rough brows, ye little wise: rejoice,  
Ye who despond: and with exulting voice  
Salute, ye earnest spirits of our time,  
The young Improvement ripening to her prime,  
Who, in the fulness of her genial youth,  
Prepares the way for Liberty and Truth,  
And breaks the barriers that, since the earth began,  
Have made mankind the enemy of man.

Lay down your rails, ye nations, near and far—  
Yoke your full trains to Steam's triumphal car;  
Link town to town; and in these iron bands  
Unite the strange and oft-embattled lands

Peace and improvement round each train shall soar,  
And knowledge light the ignorance of yore;—  
Men joined in amity, shall wonder long  
That state had power to lead their fathers wrong ;  
Or that false glory lured their hearts astray,  
And made it virtuous and sublime to slay.

Blessings on Science, and her handmaid Steam!  
They make Utopia only half a dream:  
And show the fervent, of capacious souls,  
Who watch the ball of Progress as it rolls,  
That all as yet completed, or begun,  
Is but the dawning that precedes the sun.

## Notes

**Only a part of this poem was quoted in the Tasmanian newspaper the Cornwall Chronicle. It was written by Charles Mackay, son of a navy who became a successful journalist in England**

When was a young 'un, his cheeks necked with down,  
He drew his first pay cheque to head into town.  
Then up spoke his father, 'Son, heed my words well—  
Keep clear of the girls at the Railway Hotel'

'Those harpies will fleece you of all that you own  
They're wicked and wanton-with hearts as hard as stone  
Believe me young fella, the road straight to Hell  
Begins at the door of the Railway Hotel'

'They'll ply you with whisky, with beer, rum and gin  
Then when you're half sozzled they'll lead you to sin.  
They're skilled at seduction at this they excel  
Those, girls who tempt at the Railway Hotel'

'Gee whiz!' cried our hero with awe on his face  
'So that's what goes on in that old wooden place  
Our parson has warned me of; women who dwell  
In dens of ill fame like the Railway Hotel'

'It seems I can still hear that old preacher's words  
On drinking and gambling, bad language and birds  
But where did he gain such vast knowledge, pray tell,  
Of girls like the ones at the Railway Hotel?'

Joe caught a fast pony and girthed it up tight,  
Then bidding his father a hasty goodnight  
He sprang in the saddle and galloped pell-mell  
For his destination – the Railway Hotel.

## **Notes**

**W.G. Howcroft**

**The Week Saturday 23 March 1878, p. 11.**

In the shake and rush of the engine,  
In the full, deep breath of his chest,  
In the swift, clear clank of the gleaming crank,  
In his soul that is never at rest,  
In the spring and ring of the bending rail.  
As he thunders and hurries along,  
A strong world's melody fashions itself.  
And this smoke demon calls it his song.

" Hurrah ! for my path I devour in my wrath  
As I rush to the cities of men  
With a load I lay down like a slave at their feet,  
Then turn and come backward again.  
Hurrah for the rush of the yielding air  
That gives way to my wild fierce springs  
As I keep to the rail, while my heart seems to burst  
In a wild mad craving for wings.

I tear through caverns of sudden dark,

Like that in which first I lay,  
Ere the canning of man had alit on a plan  
To drag me up to the day.  
I rush with a shriek, which is all I can speak,  
A wild protest against fear ;  
But I come to the light with a snort of delight,  
And my black breath far in the rear.

I crash along bridges that span the hills,  
And catch at a glimpse below  
The roof-thatch'd cot and the low white wall  
Lying white in the sun's last glow.  
Or it maybe the gleam of some dull, broad stream.  
Creeping slowly onward beneath,  
While within its breast for a moment I catch  
The shadow and film of my breath.

I rush by village, and cottage, and farm,  
I thunder sadden and quick  
Upon handfuls of men who leap out of my way.  
And lean on their shovel and pick.  
There is one brown fellow among them who sings  
The terrible sweep of my limb ;  
The fool ! dare he mimic this music of mine,  
And such pitiful music in him ?

I flare through the night when the stars are bright.  
With the lights of the city for mark ;  
With bound upon bound I shake the ground.  
As I feel for the rail in the dark ;  
And I know that the stars whisper each to each,  
As downward they flicker and peer,  
'What is this that these fellows have hit on below.  
That seems like a meteor from here ?'

For my great eye glistens and gleams in the front,  
As if to give light to my tread.  
While behind, like the fires of a Vulcan flung out,  
Three others gleam thirsty and red.  
And the flame licking round the fierce life in my heart  
Let loose for a moment upsprings.  
And darts through the whirls of my breath overhead.  
Till it makes me a demon with wings."

**Launceston Examiner Thursday 24 September 1863 p.2**

### **SONG OF THE RAILWAY LEAGUE.**

Hurrah for the Railway ! the Railway for ever !  
Let this be the burden and tone of our song,  
Let us join heart and hand, and each vow we will never  
Desist from the strife till we forcibly sever  
The bonds of injustice, oppression, and wrong.

Hark ! tis the trumpet " to arms" loudly sounding ;  
Our emblem the bright Northern Star shall be ;  
Sons of the North, with hearts nobly bounding,  
Rise at the call, and banner surrounding,  
Strike for the rail and prosperity.



Come, flock to our standard, the right's on our side,  
And right, joined with might, must in time pre-vale ;  
We'll stand by each other, and fight side by side,  
Nor cease till at last we triumphantly ride  
Behind the steam horse on the iron rail.

With hand joined in hand, not with shoulder to shoulder,  
Press onward, determined to conquer or die,  
Press earnestly on, at each step growing border,  
And let not our hearts for one moment grow colder,  
'Till triumph as proud standard floats gaily on high

'Tis for justice we strive, come then let us render  
Our aid to uphold her right manfully !  
With strong arms and bold hearts we unite to defend her,  
Let this be our motto then, " no surrender,"  
And let our watchword be victory.

### **A. N. Westbury**

Railway Rhymes

#### **The Cornwall Chronicle, Wednesday 17 May 1865**

In spite of each smooth-spoken knave,  
Post-office Saving Banks we'll have,  
And open out the country round,  
By well made roads and bridges sound;  
And further, townsmen, be it known,  
We'll have a railway of our own,  
Our western interests to connect,  
Cheap, independent, and direct.  
And not like supple slaves be sold,  
By crafty knaves for British gold—  
Whose name is gammon, motto, self—  
Their only object power and pelf.  
A Carrying Company, indeed !  
The project never can succeed ;  
Whoever made the proposition  
Needs a strait-jacket or physician.  
Some snivelling leaguer all aghast,  
In wrath exclaims—don't ride so fast ;  
And know'st thou not who wields the pen,  
Becomes a prophet now and then ;  
On borrowed capital who stands,  
And mortgages his house and lands :  
All past experiences declare—  
He cheats himself and robs his heir.

### **YOUNG HUDSON.**

#### **The Dying Sleeper Cutter**

An old sleeper cutter lay dying,  
His broad-axe supporting his head.  
All around him the others were standing,  
When he raised on his pillow and said

Chorus:

Wrap me up with my cant hook and wedges,

And bury me deep down below,  
Down where the tall clogs can't haunt me,  
Where the five cut wavy grains grow.

There's no teeth on the buckled old cross saw,  
No stern in the splintered old bore,  
And I bet my hobb-nails there isn't  
No rum in the billy at all.

It's goodbye to the cutting, young Dennis,  
Goodbye to Sunday Flat too,  
Groomdams I cut out and finished,  
And I'm saying sad farewell to you.

## Notes

**From Meredith, John (collection) (1968) Folk Songs of Australia Ure Smith**

**The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser Saturday 25 April 1891  
By a Railway Workman.**

Through the dewy Spring dawn, rich in odour and colour,  
I glide on my dragon steed proudly away ;  
While of glory the amber-flecked sky flashes fuller,  
And nimbus gleams dart round the Repent of Day.  
Human hearts in my train that Life's hopes' are beguiling,  
Heaped wealth in my train that Life's cares have been

In countless sweet voices  
Fresh Nature rejoices,

While echoes awake from the mountain sides grey ;  
As we rush on our course, with a proud, dashing force,  
A tempest-like Might that no arm dare resist ;  
Streams over, hills under—with sound as of thunder,  
And long streaming banner of white fleecy mist.

Bronz'd by hot Summer noons, beneath Wintry skies frozen  
In Autumn e'er chilled by winds gusty and raw,  
Calm I pilot my train o'er the path for us chosen,  
Through storm-blasts or sunshine, through snow—drift or thaw.  
With a shriek that is heard 'mid the storm's pealing clangour,  
With lights that outglare the forked flash in its anger,

My fiery steed rushes,  
And then, panting, hushes

Its fierce, snorting fury—the journey is o'er.  
We have ended our course of proud, dashing force,  
A tempest-like Might that no arm dare resist :  
Streams over, hills under —with sound as of thunder.  
And long streaming banner of white fleecy mist.

So may Truth's mighty engine—the hope of each nation—  
Roll round the vast globe in the ages to be.  
Till cruel War be displaced by blest arbitration,  
And earth be a hive of the Happy and Free.  
May the wheels of stern Science crush hydra-necked Error !  
May Pride, Greed, and Hate slink to Hades in terror !

May no slothful slumber  
Man's energies cumber !

May Pain, Care, and Sorrow from Love's presence flee,  
As it rolls on its course, with a proud, dashing force,  
A love-nurtur'd Might that no Wrong dare resist;  
Lands over, skies under—e'er bursting asunder  
Pale Envy's grim bondage, and Passion's dark mist.

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Let this be the burden and tone of our song,  
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We'll stand by each other, and fight side by side,  
Nor cease till at last we triumphantly ride  
Behind the steam horse on the iron rail.

With hand joined in hand, not with shoulder to shoulder,  
Press onward, determined to conquer or die,  
Press earnestly on, at each step growing bolder,  
And let not our hearts for one moment grow colder,  
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And my black breath far in the rear.

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And catch at a glimpse below  
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Lying white in the sun's last glow.  
Or it maybe the gleam of some dull, broad stream.  
Creeping slowly onward beneath,  
While within its breast for a moment I catch  
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Three others gleam thirsty and red.  
And the flame licking round the fierce life in my heart  
Let loose for a moment upsprings.  
And darts through the whirls of my breath overhead.  
Till it makes me a demon with wings."

## **HELL AND AFTER**

**Les Murray, Mary Gilmore, Lesbia Harford, Francis McNamara, John Shaw Neilson, Les Murray Paperback July 1, 2005**

The first metropolis to be depicted in Australian literature was Hell: before cities existed in Australia, Francis McNamara, the convict poet, described the infernal one populated by those who tormented him and his fellow prisoners. Sentenced in 1832 to seven years' transportation to Australia for stealing a plaid, he survived the brutality of the penal system: his witty, rebellious poems laid the foundations for a new Australian poetry. Les Murray's anthology of poets from the early

years of European settlement in Australia reaches back in time from his fivefathers, which collected significant voices from the early twentieth century (Kenneth Slessor, Roland Robinson, David Campbell, James McAuley, Francis Webb). "Hell and After" contains extended selections from the work of four writers. Francis McNamara (1811-1880) is the only poet whose work has survived from the convict era. Mary Gilmore (1865-1962) was born to a pioneering life in the bush; she became a social reformer and renowned figure in the Australian Labor Party, and her poems are much loved by Australians for their vivid evocations of colonial life. John Shaw Neilson (1872-1942), who spent most of his life as a manual labourer, wrote poems of great lyricism and humour under conditions of poverty and ill-health. Lesbia Harford (1891-1927), a radical activist who was one of the first women to graduate with a law degree from the University of Melbourne, worked as a factory machinist and domestic servant. Her poems give voice to a woman's experience of working life and private desire. Reading these poets is to experience a culture in the process of creating itself.

### **Collected Poems: Lesbia Harford**

**Edited and introduced by Oliver Dennis. University of Western Australia Press**

Lesbia Harford (1891-1927) is an intriguing figure in Australian poetry and one who has been much resurrected of late, having been substantially forgotten since Nettie Palmer's small collection of her work, *The Poems of Lesbia Harford*, in 1941. Her novel, *The Invaluable Mystery*, was published in 1987 to considerable (and deserved) acclaim. As a poet, Harford's work has been championed by, among others, Les Murray - who has written a short Foreword to his new collection edited by Oliver Dennis.

The real problem with Harford is not her interesting life (the bisexuality, the Melbourne University law degree in the same class as Robert Menzies, her membership of the "Wobblies" during World War I, her affair with Marxist Guido Barrachi and so on) but the gap between her best and worst poetry.

Partly due to its sexual unorthodoxy, not much of Harford's work was published in her lifetime. Her poems were confided, like diary entries, to a number of notebooks, now in the Mitchell Library. It is these, as well Harford's previously published poems, that Oliver Dennis has for his "Collected" - which, as he admits, contains "just over half" of the nearly "four hundred poems in manuscript".

### **Old Botany Bay by Dame Mary Gilmore**

"I'm old  
Botany Bay;  
stiff in the joints,  
little to say.

I am he  
who paved the way,  
that you might walk  
at your ease to-day;

I was the conscript  
sent to hell  
to make in the desert  
the living well;

I bore the heat,  
I blazed the track-  
furrowed and bloody  
upon my back.

I split the rock;

I felled the tree:  
The nation was-  
Because of me!

### **About Mary Gilmore**

Born in 1865 in New South Wales, Dame Mary Gilmore was a socialist first and then a poet, and is one of the few Australians to have featured on their monetary system. The oldest born to a Scottish farmer and an Australian mother with roots in Ireland, she attended public school before the family moved to Downside. At school there, she spent half her time as a pupil and the other part actually teaching.

After passing the teaching examination, she worked in various locations including Silverton where she began to develop strong socialist ideals and experimented with writing poetry. In 1895 she left teaching to embark on a trip to the Cosme settlement that had begun in Paraguay, marrying William Gilmore whilst she was there. A few years later they left the colony and traveled first to Patagonia and then England before returning to Australia.

Whilst she lived in Victoria with her family, she corresponded with Alfred Stephens who worked on The Bulletin, one of the premier literary papers of Australia, and some of her early work was featured in the Red Pages. In 1908 she began to write the Women's Page of socialist paper the Australian Worker and would continue to do so for the next 23 years.

Her first collection of poetry was published in 1910. Marri'd and other Verses had been written partly during her time at the Cosme colony in Paraguay and when she had returned to Australia. It began her career as one the county's most influential and widely read poets as she appealed to everyday people with her verses about the vagaries of normal life.

Whilst they never lost their love for each other, Mary Gilmore and her husband went their separate ways in 1912, she moving to Sydney with their only son, and he going to work on a farm in Queensland with his brother. Now Gilmore could devote more time to her literary activities and it produced a period of prolific activity that would last for many years.

### **Mary Gilmore's cookbook**

The book was compiled from 'recipes and hints ... sent in by women from all parts of the Commonwealth and New Zealand'. At the time, Australian cookbooks were becoming increasingly popular, with books such as 'The Commonsense Cookbook' being a staple in many kitchens. The recipes and techniques being used provide an insight into women's access to new technologies, such as gas and electricity, and are a reminder that in the 1920s many were still cooking over an open stove, making 'one-pot' meals in a camp oven.

Apart from being a significant literary figure for her books of poetry and prose, Mary Gilmore made an important contribution as a feminist, patriot and social crusader for many causes and reforms which we now accept as part of Australian life. She was also an early and significant campaigner on behalf of Aboriginal Australians.

Her view on the horror of the World War was explored in her second collection of poetry, The Passionate Heart, in 1918, particularly the debacle that was Gallipoli. In 1922 she published her first work of prose in a series of essays under the title Hound of the Road and a third poetry book called The Tilted Cart a few years later. Now approaching her sixties, though, Gilmore began to suffer from poor health which forced her to resign from the Australian Worker.

One of her most important works was published in 1931, The Wild Swan, which drilled into the unfair way aborigines were treated by the white population, particularly in how their old lore was being systematically destroyed. She continued to campaign for rights for all, particularly for aboriginal equality and the poor lot of returning servicemen who had fought in the First World War.

Gilmore was a highly vocal and much loved voice in Australia, and her birthdays were often celebrated, not just by the literary community but normal, everyday folk who liked what she said. She

died in 1962 at the grand old age of 97 and was given one of the first state funerals for a writer since 1922.

### **Old Botany Bay**

"I'm old  
Botany Bay;  
stiff in the joints,  
little to say.

I am he  
who paved the way,  
that you might walk  
at your ease to-day;

I was the conscript  
sent to hell  
to make in the desert  
the living well;

I bore the heat,  
I blazed the track-  
furrowed and bloody  
upon my back.

I split the rock;  
I felled the tree:  
The nation was-  
Because of me!

Old Botany Bay  
Taking the sun  
from day to day...  
shame on the mouth  
that would deny  
the knotted hands  
that set us high!

### **Mary Gilmore (1865 – 1962)**

Les Murray Explains

This poem clearly celebrates the convicts that made Australia through their hard work. And if it had not been for convicts there would not have been a developed Australia in the first place; at least not by the British.

The key words in this poem are 'knotted hands' – their hands made to work but hands that were not free. A day to remember the convict heritage that began the journey in the development of Australia.

### **Mary Gilmore Eve-Song**

I span and Eve span  
A thread to bind the heart of man;  
But the heart of man was a wandering thing  
That came and went with little to bring:  
Nothing he minded what we made

As here he loitered, and there he stayed.

I span and Eve span  
A thread to bind the heart of man;  
But the more we span the more we found  
It wasn't his heart but ours we bound!  
For children gathered about our knees:  
The thread was a chain that stole our ease.  
And one of us learned in our children's eyes  
That more than man was love and prize.  
But deep in the heart of one of us lay  
A root of loss and hidden dismay.

He said he was strong. He had no strength  
But that which comes of breadth and length.  
He said he was fond. But his fondness proved  
The flame of an hour when he was moved.  
He said he was true. His truth was but  
A door that winds could open and shut.  
And yet, as he came back,  
Wandering in from the outward track  
We held our arms, and gave him our brest  
As a pillowing place for his head to rest.  
I span and Eve span,  
A thread to bind the heart of man!

Late one night I decided to search Australian Newspapers for the oldest version of the song known as Click Go The shears and was amazed to find the song below in a newspaper

### **The Bacchus Marsh Express The Bare Belled Ewe**

Eynesbury, Nov. 20, 1891.  
C. C.

Oh, down at the catching pen an old shearer stands,  
Grasping his shears in his long bony hands ;  
Fixed is his gaze on a bare belled ewe,  
Saying " If I can only get her, won't I make the ringer go."

Click goes his shears; click, click, click.  
Wide are the blows, and his hand is moving quick,  
The ringer looks round, for he lost it by a blow,  
And he curses that old shearer with the bare belled ewe.

At the end of the board, in a cane bottomed chair,  
The boss remains seated with his eyes everywhere ;  
He marks well each fleece as it comes to the screen,  
And he watches where it comes from if not taken off clean.

The "colonial experience" is there of course.  
With his silver buckled leggings, he's just off his horse ;  
With the air of a connoisseur he walks up the floor ;  
And he whistles that sweet melody, "I am a perfect cure."

"So master new chum, you may now begin,  
Muster number seven paddock, bring the sheep all in ;  
Leave none behind you, whatever you do,  
And then we'll say you'r fit to be a Jackeroo."

The tar boy is there, awaiting all demands,  
With his black tarry stick, in his black tarry hands.



He sees an old ewe, with a cut upon the back,  
He hears what he supposes is--" Tar here, Jack."

"Tar on the back, Jack; Tar, boy, tar."  
Tar from the middle to both ends of the board.  
Jack jumps around, for he has no time to sleep,  
And tars the shearer's backs as well as the sheep.

So now the shearing's over, each man has got his cheque,  
The hut is as dull as the dullest old wreck ;  
Where was many a noise and bustle only a few hours before,  
Now you can hear it plainly if a pin fall on the floor.

The shearers now are scattered many miles and far ;  
Some in other sheds perhaps, singing out for "tar."  
Down at the bar, there the old shearer stands,  
Grasping his glass in his long bony hands.

Saying "Come on, landlord, come on, come !  
I'm shouting for all hands, what's yours--mine's a rum ;"  
He chucks down his cheque, which is collared in a crack,  
And the landlord with a pen writes no mercy on the back !

His eyes they were fixed on a green painted keg,  
Saying " I will lower your contents, before I move a peg."  
His eyes are on the keg, and are now lowering fast ;  
He works hard, he dies hard, and goes to heaven at last.

**C. C.**  
**Eynesbury, Nov. 20, 1891.**

Les Murray who was the poetry editor of Quadrant made sure that this discovery was published in the magazine

Importantly this discovery reached the Australian Broadcaster Land Line and gained national attention.

This discovery also put to bed the widely held belief that Click Go The Shears was probably a much more recent song.

**From the NSW Newspaper the Inverell Times Sat 30 Sep 1905 p. 7.**

Oh have you seen them passing?--nearly twenty million strong !  
Hark! their battle drum a-beating, and the cadence of their song !  
Hear them tramping down the bye-ways where the lonely scouts have gone ;  
'Tis the tramping of our army--Labour's army marching on !

O their tools of trade are glist'ning, and their flags are all unfurled ;  
Yea, and brain and heart have sought them from the walks of all the world !  
And the slaves who groped in blindness through the darkness of the past  
Have seen the light with open eyes, and join our ranks at last.

From the grandest halls of knowledge, from the palace and the slum--  
The prince beside the pauper--oh ! it's splendid how they come !  
From the peaceful home of plenty, and from hovels raised in dearth,  
Come the army of the workers, and the best of all, the earth !

And the hope that lights the future, and the dearest dreams that were--  
They'll waken in the bosom of our faintest comrades there.  
See the vanguard still advancing, and the banner waving high--

Hark the drums, the song, the tramping ! It is Labour marching by !

Ah, that song shall not be silenced, nor that ceaseless tramping stayed,  
Till the birthrights of the People at that army's feet are laid ;  
And those drums shall not be deadened, nor those waving banners furled,  
Till their owners march in triumph through the highways of the world.

### **The amazing works of Marjorie Pizer**

Marjorie Pizer was born in Melbourne on April 3, 1920, the eldest of three children to Solomon Pizer, a well-to-do tailor, and his wife Ruth (nee Blashki). Her Blashki grandparents, both born in Melbourne, lived close by, but both sides of the family had come originally from Poland. Solomon brought all his family to Australia after he arrived in Geelong in 1913 escaping military service in the Russian army.

Marjorie went to Merton Hall, a Church of England girls' grammar school, and started writing poetry as a teenager following Solomon's death. Then her Blashki grandparents died over the next year and she increasingly took refuge in her writing.

To the literary researcher Hazel de Berg Pizer described herself as a shy, withdrawn bookworm who could be stubborn. Her relationship with her mother was poor, something she regretted in later life. In newspaper interviews she said she was rebellious and shocked her family by marrying out of the faith as the Pizers were practising Jews.

At Melbourne University, which she fought her mother to be able to attend, Pizer worked on the student newspaper Farrago and was appointed co-editor with Niall Brennan to work on MUM, the literary annual. She joined the Labor Club and the Communist Party and became an activist. She met other students like Zelman Cowen, Sam Cohen, Jean Blackburn and their friends like Arthur Boyd.

She left university and joined the Department of War Organisation, where she worked for Tom Critchley and met Muir Holburn, a young University of Sydney graduate and poet. She said they were cheeky; they published a scandal sheet called 'The Worker', a sort of unofficial gossip sheet within the department, and began their collaboration on writing about Australian poetry. Together they were Communists, then adherents of the 1950s cult of Scientology, after which she and Muir left that for the practice of psychology.

In 1945, they moved to Sydney so they could work in the Mitchell Library on their first major books. They bought a house in Kirribilli and joined the Fellowship of Australian Writers, where they met Miles Franklin and Katharine Susannah Prichard.

The two young poets were regular visitors to Franklin's house in Carlton and she would stay with them on the Australia Day weekend. They would pick her up and drive her across the Harbour Bridge to their house and take her home again afterwards.

Then Muir died suddenly of a heart attack at 40, leaving Marjorie with two young children. His death stirred her into writing poetry after years of writing about other Australian poets. She wrote about Muir and his death and for years she wrote of her love for him.

The importance of songs that applaud the shorter working week leaves us with no doubt about the growing demands of well organised trade union demands that reached the interest of the news papers of the time.

And to many interviewers she explained that she used her writing to overcome her grief and transform her life into optimism and writing poetry.

In her essay about poetry which she published in 1977 in her book, Full Summer, she wrote, "The task of the poet is to come to terms with the world in which he or she lives".

Her lifelong love of reading sustained her and underpinned her own psychotherapy practice, which began at this stage of her life. Her humanist psychotherapy was about helping people, mainly the women who were the majority of her clients, to become more assertive, to learn to communicate better and find new dreams to live for.

She volunteered for many years at Tranby College in Glebe, and at the Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre in Flood Street as a psychotherapist. She swam daily at Balmoral beach and wrote a lot there; later in life she studied with her friend the artist Judy Lane.

Her friends described Pizer as very down to earth with a strong drive for simplicity in her writing and also in her daily life. She made her own clothes; she knitted, and cooked, gardened and did carpentry. She loved to make marmalade using the huge citrus crop she grew in her large back garden. A friend who trained as a therapist with Marjorie and her partner Anne Spencer Parry – a fantasy writer for children and publisher for Pinchgut – said that Pizer was wonderful with her hands.

Pizer did leatherwork and made a small pouch to attach to her belt; there she carried her notepad and pen so that if a poem came suddenly to her she could immediately write it down. She worked and reworked her poems and when she was satisfied she would write them in longhand in a large hardback notebook with a fountain pen given to her by her brother. The poem was ready when she signed and dated it.

Pizer left more than 30 such manuscript books of her poems, and her collected papers, deposited in the National Library and at the State Library of NSW, include many unpublished poems as well as correspondence with her old friends Dame Mary Gilmore and Miles Franklin and other well-known writers. She edited, published and wrote 20 books of and about poetry and writing.

### **Pinchgut Press News:**

**Marjorie Pizer died on the 4th of January 2016. She is sadly missed.**

A memory  
When my son comes home late,  
He sits on my bed  
And tells me about his day.  
Someday he will remember this  
When I will be no more,  
When I have had my say  
And gone before.  
Then I will not exist  
As I am now.  
This me will be a memory  
Of his when I,  
Who now am here alone,  
Have gone into oblivion.

### Remembrance

When I die  
Will you be sad that I have gone,  
Sad that our friendship has ended,  
That our talking is over,  
That we have parted?  
Remember me.

When I die  
Will you be glad that I lived,  
Glad that we met,  
Glad that we enjoyed so much?  
Remember me.

When I die  
I leave you love and the sea,  
Friendship and all the loveliness of the world.  
I bequeath to you, the living,  
All joy and all sorrow.  
Have courage always,  
And sometimes, sometimes,  
Remember me.

### **Books by Marjorie Pizer:**

Creeve Roe, Poems of Victor Daley; co-editor with Muir Holburn, 1947  
Freedom on the Wallaby, Poems of the Australian People; editor, 1953  
The Men Who Made Australia, Stories and Poems by Henry Lawson; editor, 1957  
Come Listen, Poetry for Schools; co-editor with Joan Reed, 1966  
Thou and I, Poems, 1967  
To Life, Poems, 1969  
Tides Flow, Poems, 1972  
Seasons of Love, Poems, 1975  
Full Summer, Poems, 1977  
Gifts and Remembrances, Poems, 1979  
To You the Living, Poems of Bereavement and Loss, 1981, 1991, 1992, 2010  
The Sixtieth Spring, Poems, 1982  
Below the Surface, Reflections on Life and Living; co-author with Anne Spencer Parry, 1982, 1990, 1994  
Selected Poems, 1963-1983, 1984  
Poems of Lesbia Harford; co-editor with Drusilla Modjeska, 1985  
Equinox, Poems, 1987  
Fire in the Heart, Poems, 1990  
Journeys, Poems, 1992  
Winds of Change, Poems, 1995  
Await the Spring, Poems, 1998  
A Fortunate Star, Poems, 2001  
A Poet's Life, Poems, 2006, 2010  
Poems, 2014

### **Colleen Z Burke**

#### **Cockroach heaven**

In cooking classes we made everything  
from scratch, including custard—  
it all had to be perfect: measurements,  
mixing, decorative icing gently squeezed  
through stainless steel nozzles,  
challenging and not my forte.  
Sister Joseph, nurturing a  
huntsman spider on the window,  
gently admonished us if we made mistakes.

I loathed home science and domestic subjects  
but have made desserts  
from these ancient exercise books—  
the only things kept from school days—  
rice puddings, scones, lemon butter,  
Anzac biscuits with malt  
not golden syrup, handfuls of sultanas.  
Scrolling through pages,  
a way of life long since gone,

I salivate over names reading like a litany of excess.

When my kids were small I made  
toffee apples and chocolate crackles  
from books disintegrating not just with age but from providing  
nourishment for baby cockroaches  
enthusiastically chewing through paper  
redolent with strawberry cream biscuits,  
jam rolls and steamed date puddings—  
their version of heaven.

### **Four Poems from the Aran Islands**

Currahgs,  
small black beetles,  
hang  
upside down  
on the ocean,  
as it slides  
gently  
off the world,  
into the setting sun.

2  
The Curragh  
sliding  
off the sea,  
rises easy  
then lies  
still &  
black  
caught  
in the grey  
silence of sand.

3  
Curraghs  
burrow  
into the sand  
to sleep,  
arse up  
hunched  
against  
the long  
black winds  
of night.

4  
And they dream  
the dark  
dream  
of whales  
before  
uncurling  
onto  
the newly  
swept  
sands  
of day.

\*Curragh - small coracle used off the west coast of Ireland  
manned by two or three men.

### **Frozen mangoes**

At world's edge  
luminous light  
is luscious  
as stewed fruit  
cold as  
frozen mangoes

Anything is possible in Ireland

Anything is possible in Ireland

Meshed with  
soft gold  
shimmers  
of dusky  
half light  
tremble  
tantalised  
by the aroma  
    stench  
        of visions

Poet and author Colleen Z Burke's memoir takes us into the post-World War 11 decades of the 20th century and a working class, Irish Catholic background. set against Bondi. the sea. At the time strict societal, religious and family prohibitions were particularly onerous for women. To escape a problematic childhood, Colleen immersed herself in books and stories of lives and worlds remote from her own. Leaving school at 15. Colleen worked as a shorthand typist in the public service but, wanting something different, questioned everything as she pursued education. informal and formal. Colleen's engrossing memoir explores the stimulating yet confronting era of the 1960s. During this period she became intrigued by a broader political sphere. poetry. literature and folk music which expressed the frustration of the young against injustice, racism. easy popular sentiment, commercialised American music and. of course, the Vietnam War. Feminism leavened with socialism made sense of her contradictory world. In Sydney. during these turbulent, heady times, Colleen met and formed a relationship with her future husband, folk singer and musician, Declan Affley. They lived in Melbourne for several years before travelling through Ireland. England and Wales. Author of eleven much loved hooks of poetry, Colleen has woven into her memoir a selection of her poems that highlight challenging and quirky aspects of her life as she developed her distinctive poetic voice. Importantly, *The Waves Turn* pays tribute to all those who have gone before and the many people who contributed to, or shared a part of Colleen's thought-provoking, sometimes difficult, but always intriguing journey.

### **I wish - a female fantasy**

The female emu  
lays her eggs in  
a spinifex clearing  
then casually  
walks away.  
The male hatches  
the eggs.  
Nurtures the young.  
"I wish I was an emu,"  
She said.

### **Does Australia Have Flowers?**

Incarcerated  
in a detention centre  
in the middle of the  
South Australian desert  
a Pakistani child  
asked a visitor  
whether Australia  
had any flowers,  
shrubs or trees  
as he hadn't seen  
any growing  
since confinement  
in this desolate place.

Between the lines  
for Len Fox

I was moved  
by many of your poems -  
impressed by the way  
they looked  
the world straight  
in the eye - yet when I thought  
I had them sussed - they bent  
twisted or even  
smiled between  
the lines. I admired  
their simple  
complex politics -  
the way they liked  
respected people  
trees even slugs.  
The firm belief  
contained within that  
one day wars would  
cease and humankind  
would live in peace.  
Yet basically  
it's the lack of bullshit  
I like the most about  
your poems

### **The Zig Zag Railway** **A song by Ron Russell©Ron Russell 1986**

In the nineteenth century, a way was needed from the sea  
A mountain range stood manifest, barring passage to the west  
So to carry wheat and ore, to Australia's eastern shore  
The Great Divide they did survey, to build the western railway.  
An engineer named John Whitton, a forceful man of great vision  
Used his talents and his skills, to tame and conquer those great hills  
Mountain pass, and mountain grade, to carry goods for foreign trade  
To replace the coach and dray, he built the Zig Zag railway.

Chorus:

October Eighteen Sixty Nine, it opened on the western line,  
A modern marvel in its day, called the Zig Zag Railway.

My great grandfather made his way, with his faithful horse and dray

From Sydney Town to Emu Ford, across the mountain ranges broad  
With his family and his wife, went to find a better life  
Look for work to earn some pay, on the Zig Zag Railway.  
In Lithgow Town they settled there and the life was far from fair  
Some in huts and some in tents, braving the harsh elements  
But steady work is what you need, when you've got six mouths to feed  
So 'Navy'then the long hard day, on the Zig Zag Railway.

The work was hard and it was tough, and conditions very rough

Aching backs and aching bones, moving tons of rock and stones  
Hammers, chisels, shovels, picks, breaking down those mighty cliffs  
All manual labour in those days, on the Zig Zag Railway.  
With curses, blood, and sweat and tears, they laboured on for many years  
Cutting tunnel, viaduct, a million cubic yards of rock.  
Gouged out of the Great Divide, on its rugged western side  
Built the mighty Permanent Way, of the Zig Zag Railway.

Near forty years did operate, carried goods and carried freight  
Then a deviation made, a faster way down through the glade  
Ten tunnels through the mountainside, vict'ry o'er the Great Divide  
Ten tunnels were to end the day, of the Zig Zag Railway.  
And now on lonely winter nights, some claim they see the flash of lights  
Phantom trains with phantom loads, working up the empty roads  
Rattling the phantom points, and clacking over phantom joints.

## Notes

**The innovative Zig Zag Railway construction was finished in 1869.**

**From Ron Russell and Ray King, Chullora Junction, 1986**

Ron Russell and Ray King worked for many years at the Chullora Railway work shops in Sydney.

## The Railway Phantom

**A Poem by J. A. Andrews (1888)**

Down the gloomy mountain line,  
Shrieking like a ghost in pain,  
Thundering o'er its iron way,  
Comes the rapid railway train—  
Rushing, panting, struggling on,  
Down to where the forest black,  
Void, and desolate, and grim,  
Swallows up the gleaming track.

Dark and dismal is the place,  
Sunk in deep and misty gloom;  
Sunlight never pierces through;  
All is sombre as the tomb.  
Not another sound is heard  
Save the mighty engine's breath;  
All around is weirdly still,  
Like a wilderness of death.

Sudden from the bracken close  
Rises up a spectral shade,  
While the dank and marshy air  
Chilling moans and shrieks pervade !  
Anguish !—But the horrors fade ;  
Like a flash the sights are gone ;



Silence settles o'er the glade,  
And the train goes rolling on.

Many—many years ago,  
Through these woods I strayed forlorn ;  
Stormy winds pursued me fast ;  
Strivings all my strength had shorn ;  
Many miles my steps had ranged ;  
Hopeless seemed my fate to shun ;  
Over hill and bush and creek  
Other life or help was none.

I had loved a trusting girl,  
Dearer than my life to me ;  
And that night from home I went  
Forth to meet my Emily.  
On the railway station bright,  
Far from my sequestered cot,  
Whither I should guide her back,  
Evermore to cheer my lot.

But the Storm Wind prowled without,  
And assailed me by the way—  
Drove me through the wood-paths grim,  
Where the giant branches sway—  
Where the gaunt limbs groan and sway,  
On whose bark the scorpion sits,  
And the fungus-light is seen  
Like a fiend that flits and flits

—Drove me wildly on and on,  
Marsh and brake and fenland through,  
Helpless or to turn or stay—  
While the boughs around me flew.  
Faint and weak my struggles grew—  
Helpless, hopeless, battered sore,  
Soon I wavered—stumbled—fell—  
Fell, and sank, and knew no more.

Knew no more—until I woke  
At a piercing, shrilly sound,  
And a rumbling mumur leapt  
Iron-borne, along the ground !  
I was all too weak to rise,  
And a train's onrushing force  
Soon must rock in heedless rage  
O'er my bursting, crushing corse !

Ay ! and she ! whose life was mine—  
She—oh I God ! it choked my breath !—  
Might, unwitting o'er me hurled,  
Help to crush me down to death !  
—Horror shook the very earth,  
Quivering 'neath my trembling form,  
And the wild rocks throbbed with pain  
Like the aspen in a storm.

Then the skies my vision fled,  
And gaunt darkness rose in air,  
But a strange voice downward sped—

"Surely God will answer prayer !"  
And, in anguish of despair,  
From my maddened heart I prayed—  
Were't but hell the means could bear—  
That yon threatening train be stayed !

And, ere yet the words were given,  
Darkness gleamed towards the sky  
From a fearful chasm that glowed  
Deepening to infinity !  
Free upon the brink my body—  
But my soul was downwards reft  
As the flying engine hurtled  
Far into the awful cleft !

And its living freight—their brows  
Lit with ghastly pallor o'er,  
Glanced a thousand torture darts—  
All this rankling bosom tore !  
Oh ! the pure girl whom I loved,  
Now, while hell-fire through her streamed,  
Mocked me with a demon's lust  
Hotter than the hate she gleamed !

Then I reeled, with shuddering smit,  
While the thunder crashed around,  
And above its utmost roar  
Howled the closing of the ground.  
Then, as darkness sank again,  
So I sank—but inward strife  
Twixt my pangs, for fierceness' crown,  
Lashed me back to woful life.

Thus it is that every year  
Rise these phantoms in the glade,  
And the horror-tainted air  
Taunts and moans and shrieks pervade.  
As they rise, for you they fade,  
But, within my cancered breast,  
They will rack, till time be stayed,  
And Damnation brings me rest !

### **Notes**

**From "Temple Mystic and Other Poems" by J. A. Andrews 1888.  
The Cornwall Chronicle Wednesday 5 July 1865 p.2**

'No poetry in Railway!' foolish thought  
Of a dull brain, to no fine music wrought.  
By mammon dazzled, though the people prize  
The gold alone, yet shall we not despise  
The triumphs of our time, or fail to see  
Of pregnant mind and fruitful progeny  
Ushering the daylight of the world's new morn.  
Look up, ye doubters, be no more forlorn!—  
Smooth your rough brows, ye little wise: rejoice,  
Ye who despond: and with exulting voice  
Salute, ye earnest spirits of our time,  
The young Improvement ripening to her prime,  
Who, in the fulness of her genial youth,  
Prepares the way for Liberty and Truth,

And breaks the barriers that, since the earth began,  
Have made mankind the enemy of man.

Lay down your rails, ye nations, near and far—  
Yoke your full trains to Steam's triumphal car;  
Link town to town; and in these iron bands  
Unite the strange and oft-embattled lands

Peace and improvement round each train shall soar,  
And knowledge light the ignorance of yore;—  
Men joined in amity, shall wonder long  
That state had power to lead their fathers wrong ;  
Or that false glory lured their hearts astray,  
And made it virtuous and sublime to slay.

Blessings on Science, and her handmaid Steam!  
They make Utopia only half a dream:  
And show the fervent, of capacious souls,  
Who watch the ball of Progress as it rolls,  
That all as yet completed, or begun,  
Is but the dawning that precedes the sun.

## Notes

**Only a part of this poem was quoted in the Tasmanian newspaper the Cornwall Chronicle. It was written by Charles Mackay, son of a navy who became a successful journalist in England.**

Well the railway's fin'ly comin' through,  
There'll be no more inns on the road,  
Yes the railway's fin'ly comin' through  
The bullocky will lose his whole load

Locomotive Number 3203  
It's a-rollin' down the track,  
It'll take you into town, to the mountains and the sea,  
It'll take you all the way, it'll get you back.

Rooty Hill, Mount Druitt, Blacktown and Penrith too,  
They've all grown up with the rail,  
Out on the Richmond line the train's a-steammin' through,  
Bringin' passengers, goods 'n' mail.

Ironbark forests are feeding these tracks  
Saw mills workin' furiously  
Local fruit pickers got sweat on their backs  
Their boss has now new found prosperity

Well the railway's fin'ly comin' through,  
There'll be no more inns on the road,  
Yes the railway's fin'ly comin' through  
The bullocky will lose his whole load.

**A Song by John Hospodaryk Sydney School Teacher**

## The Scab Train

I'll tell to you a story, put it crudely into rhyme  
Of the longest strongest scab train to ever grace the line.

It was early in the New Year and a bastard of a time,  
She was loaded up with Jackies she pulled out from number nine.  
Stopping short of Strathfield like a tiger in her tracks,  
And there took in 100 of those gutter-persia Jacks  
(‘They’re Victorians of course’).

By Gympie and Rockhampton she puffed and steamed and curled,  
The longest strongest scab train throughout the world.  
You must have some excuse for scabbing,  
And they are only the tools, and the bloody fools  
Of Jim Yates and the big fat Queensland squatters.

Now you have finished all your shearing and gone back to New South Wales  
And muster up your relatives and relate to them your tales,  
Of how you scabbed in Queensland you dirty rotten whore  
May they kick you out into the street and speak to you no more.

For you’ve disgraced your parents, your children and your wife  
And by your dirty scabbing action you are branded black for life  
They will hear of you where ere they go and hang their heads in shame  
They will disown you as a father and regret to bear your name,  
And friends you won’t have any, and everyone will shun the off spring-  
Of a bastard who scabbed in '31.

And when you die of cancer I’ll act the dirty knave,  
I’ll stroll across the border and shit upon your grave.

‘That’s the way you want to do it! ... that come from Moree.  
I learnt it off a bloke called Urial J. Jurd. .. Jack Jurd, they  
used. to have racehorses, show ponies, cattle and sheep. Jurdy had  
a pub, I didn’t know him down there, I knew him down the coast.  
The Scab Trains’ not all there either, there’s a little bit in the guts somewhere.’

## **Notes**

**Collected and recorded by folklorist Chris Sullivan, from Cyril Duncan in Brisbane.**

### **Train to Lidcombe**

**A Song by John Dengate©John Dengate**

**Tune: Garden where the praties grow.**

Chorus:

You can talk of Matthew Flinders, you can talk of Captain Sturt,  
You can rave about explorers till your throat begins to hurt.  
Yes, I know they crossed the oceans and they travelled tough terrain  
But there’s none of them could face a trip to Lidcombe on the train.

’Twas a blazing day in January, Nineteen Eighty-two,  
They were praying for a Southerly from Lithgow to the ’Loo;  
I cooked from Glebe to Central like a lobster or a crab;  
Paid the sweating taxi driver and alighted from the cab.

Platform Eighteen? Platform Nineteen? There’s an element of doubt  
But you’ve always got the indicator there to help you out.  
And a fellow with a microphone dispensing wisdom free,  
But his information and the indicators don’t agree.

Well the train crawls out of Central to a soft ironic cheer,  
I’d sell my mother’s wedding ring for half a glass of beer.

I'm hot and in the horrors and my thirst is looming large  
And I fear that every pub we pass is only a mirage.

Faces to the westward, we are sizzling on the grill  
We have to wait for half an hour at Summer bloody Hill,  
We stop and start like Murphy's cart - my temper's turning sour -  
And near Flemington we have to wait another half an hour.

I stagger out at Lidcombe contemplating suicide;  
My compass it has melted and my camels they have died.  
My fevered brain surrounds the train with breweries and stills,  
And bleaching on the platform are the bones of Burke and Wills.

## **Notes**

### **John Dengate was School Teacher and stalwart of The Sydney Bush Music Club**

The Sleeper Cutters Camp  
I can hear the axes ringing,  
And the gum trees falling down,  
I can see the broad axe swinging,  
To hew the billets down.  
I can hear the hammers striking  
On the wedges in the groove,  
And the Kookaburras laughing,  
In the tree tops up above.

We work all day at sleepers,  
Till the sun is going west,  
We drop our tools and head for camp,  
The place that we like best.  
We get the billies boiling,  
The meat all right to eat,  
We sit and have our humble meal,  
Of butter, bread and meat.

At daylight in the morning,  
When the birds begin to sing,  
You can hear the camp a-moving,  
All our thoughts are on one thing.  
To get out to our axes,  
And put a tally up,  
For soon we'll have a holiday,  
And see the Melbourne Cup.

And when we've spent our money,  
Back to the bush we'll roam,  
And take the track that winds us back,  
To the camp our home, sweet home,  
We called at every pub  
On the journey going down,  
But we called at every waterhole,  
Coming back from town.

### **Bullocky Bill and His Old Red Team A poem by Edward Dyson**

From a river siding, the railway town,  
Or the dull new port there three days down,  
Forward and back on the up-hill track,

With a creak of the jinker, a ringing crack,  
Slow as a funeral, sure as steam,  
Bullocky Bill and his old red team.

Ploughing around by the ti-tree scrub,  
Four wheels down to the creeping hub,  
Swaying they go, with their heads all low,  
Bally, and Splodger, and Spot, and Jo.  
Men in the ranges much esteem  
Bullocky Bill and his old red team.

Worming about where the tall trees spring,  
Surging ahead when the clay bogs cling;  
A rattle of lash and of language rash  
On the narrow edge of immortal smash.  
He'd thread a bead or walk a beam,  
Bullocky Bill with his old red team.

Climbing a ridge where the red stars ride;  
Straddling down on the other side,  
With a whistle and grind, and a scramble blind,  
And a thundering gum-tree slung behind.  
But they always get there, hill or stream,  
Bullocky Bill and his old red team.

Engines or stamps for the mines about,  
Tools for the men who are leading out;  
Tucker, and boose, and the latest news  
Back where the bunyip stirs the ooze.  
Pioneers with the best we deem  
Bullocky Bill and his old red team.

## **Notes**

**First published in The Bulletin, 28 December 1895.**

An Old Bush Song (1860s)  
Murrumbidgee Shearing Sheds of Late Sixties and the Seventies.

A squatter he stood at his station gate,  
The sun was down, for 'twas getting late;  
On a board near the fence was written clear  
"Travellers all are welcome here."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Then he called to his super Bandy Joe  
Said he, "That horrible board down throw;  
Bold Morgan made me stick it up there,  
But now he is shot, not a rap I care."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Just then his limbs to the gate did drag,  
A traveller painfully humping his swag;  
Says he "To your station I straight did steer,  
For swagmen, I'm told, are welcome here."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

"Be off!" cried the squatter, "you scoundrel, go !

Morgan, the wretch, in the grave lies low;  
Though he once made me dance on the table,  
He's dead; to defy all tramps I'm able."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Then the traveller pulled from his blankets red,  
A box of matches, and thus he said  
"Though poor Dan Morgan lies shot in his track,  
He's left two mates, called Bell and Black!"

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

"You may see their brand at night, in the sky  
As the red flame flies when the wind, is high;  
And on as it travels their work you read  
A squatter lamenting his burnt-up feed."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

The squatter cried out "in a terrible fright  
"Go up to the kitchen, my friend, to-night,  
And ask for your, supper; although I spoke  
So savage, you know it was only a joke!"

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Now, all you squatters, attention pay,  
And don't send swagmen hungry away;  
Or else you may find, to your bitter grief,  
Grass scarcer in summer than mutton or beef!

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Composer Unknown.

**Notes From the New South Wales Newspaper The Windsor and Richmond Gazette 14 Nov 1930 Page 8.**

### **Bagman's Ballad (1931)**

Of all the woods that I have used  
When on the wallaby,  
The one I think that's most abused  
Is flamin' scrub ti-tree.  
The blasted stuff won't keep alight,  
I don't care what they say--  
It nearly drives a swaggie mad.  
To use it every day.  
You hear some crack up brigal'ow,  
Belah and wattle green,  
But good old dinkum Iron Bark  
Is the finest I have seen.  
To boil the quart in record time  
When weary for a sup  
You can't beat staunch old Iron Bark :  
To warm the billy up--  
So here's your health, my trusty friend,  
I'll drink in steaming tea--  
A bagman's proved and honest pal.

Old Iron Bark you'll do me !

"Curro."

### **Notes**

**From the Sydney Newspaper Smith's Weekly 12 Dec 1931 p. 18.**

### **Aboriginals on Strike (1892)**

At Mr. T. Ingham's Eucalyptus Works at Wallaroo, a man called "Dido," whose proper name is James Norton, up till recently supplied a certain amount of eucalyptus leaves to Mr. Ingham daily, while "Dido" in turn engaged a number of aboriginals to collect the leaves. The other, week (say the Rockhampton Bulletin) Mr. Ingham "wished to reduce the price of the leaves from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 2d. per cwt. "Dido " would not agree to this, and withdrew from the contract. The aboriginals hearing of "Dido's" withdrawal would not work with Mr. Ingham, and accordingly struck. A mass meeting of aboriginals was held, at which there were about 50 natives present, one named Jupiter being "chairman." Paddy Smith Macalister, King of Wallaroo, proposed "that the blacks should leave off picking leaves for 'Uncle' (as they called Mr. Ingham) and give white men a chance of earning a living at it." Paddy stated that some people had said that the blacks were doing the white men out of a job, and it would only be fair to give the whites a trial and see how they shaped. An aboriginal named Borneo seconded the the motion, which was carried unanimously, the natives receiving the announcement with cheers.

### **Notes**

**From the Queensland Newspaper The Telegraph 4 Aug 1892 p. 5.**

### **A Ballad of the Road (1931)**

It knows the never sleeping lanes  
Where sunless creatures dwell;  
The iron-welded doors of wealth  
The old road knoweth well.

It hears the sun-browned sailors speak  
The tongues of many climes  
And hour by hour its stones give back  
The note of city chimes.

It knows the commerce-crowded quay,  
The traffic of the mart ;  
It threads a lean and crabbed course  
Across! the city's heart.

And where are lawns and bowered trees,  
And villas row by row,  
It wound through Virgin wilderness  
A hundred years ago.

Where league by league to west it lies,  
In smoke and evening haze,  
I love to people it with ghosts  
Of old Colonial days.

Lo ! here among the mighty boles  
The firelight flickered red,  
And wreathing low behind the boughs  
The evening camp smoke spread.

And here, where sun and shadows knit  
Their spell by dip and stream,



With crackling whip and haze of dust  
Crept on the lumbering team.

Where meeting o'er the narrow track  
The giant trees encroach,  
Bold Donohoe and comrades twain  
Held up the Sydney coach.

I hear the tramp of Shackled feet  
With shuffling tread and slow.  
The clank of merry cavalcades  
A hundred years ago.

And here, where broad and timbered parks  
Still shelter massive walls,  
Were twinkling casements all aglow,  
And gaily lighted halls ;  
And sound of music and of dance,  
With festival and glow,  
And coaches bore their silken freights  
A hundred years ago.

I hear. across the evening air  
The traffic's constant hum,  
The murmur of the busy wheels,  
The feet that go and come.

And where the many churches raise  
Their spiry needles high,  
I see the glare of Sydney's lights  
Along the eastern sky.

And through the rustling garden palms,  
That never more are still,  
I see the golden lights align  
The paths of Taverner's Hill.

By wood and waste, in sun and shine,  
The grey road wanders down.  
=And finds its goal among the hills A little old, grey town.

**--Ella McFadyen.**

### **A Blacksmith's Song)**

Bellows, you must roar, and anvil you must ring ;  
Hammer, you and I must work, for ding, dong, ding !  
Must dress my Kate and baby, and bread for us must bring.  
So dong, ding, dong, ding !  
Anvil to my hammer make music while I sing--  
Clang, ding. clang, cling !

Dear to Kate's ear, my old hammer, is your song ;  
For while my anvil rings and clings she knows there's nothing wrong ;  
She knows we're busy earning what will be hers ere long.  
So ding, dong, ding, dong !  
She loves me more and more as she hears my anvil's song  
Ding, dong, ding, dong !

Oh, well I love my smithy when the birds in spring time sing,

And the pleasant sun comes streaming in, the sun that loves to bring  
Its gladness to me, working, and to hear my anvil  
Dong, ding, dong ding !  
And to see my iron glowing, and the sparks in showers spring  
Clang, ding, dong, cling !

Bellows, you must work till the furnace is aglow,  
Snug is my old smithy when without comes down the snow,  
When sooty wall and rafter in the blaze are all aglow.  
Blow, blow, blow, blow !  
What care I if the storm, without, be high or low ?  
Blow, blow, blow, blow!

Merrily the hours fly that hear my anvil ring ;  
And quick my evening chair and my pipe and glass they bring;  
Then, while Kate works beside me, I'm happy as a king  
Clang, cling, clang, cling !  
God give me always health and strength to make my anvil ring.  
Clang, cling, clang, cling !

### **Notes**

**From the Sydney Newspaper The Evening News 23 Oct 1878 p. 8.**

The Coal Owners' Song (1875)  
Hurrah ! let us laugh and the ruby wine quaff,  
While we join in our favourite toast  
"With plenty of gold and our sway uncontrolled,  
Coal owners shall rule o'er the roast."

As the nation we gull, with our own coffers full,  
Who shall dare to dispute our dominion ?  
'Mid enjoyment and ease we shall act as we please,  
And with scorn treat all public opinion.

There are Lords in our band we can grasp by the hand,  
For we're closely united by Mammon ;  
Plenty Commoners too in the House to subdue  
Every motion that's hostile with "gammon."

In the Coal Committees we have trusty M.P.'s  
Who the "nodles" beside them will cram  
With their wonderful lies of demand and supplies  
O ! the whole is a beautiful sham.

The miners may strike, or may play if they like,  
Till we add a few pence to each "score;"  
It is well understood it is all for our good  
We can then squeeze consumers the more.

Let the paupers endure--they were born to be poor,  
Shall we make a reduction to please them ?  
Away with such stuff ! If they can't get enough,  
Why, then, let the cold weather freeze them.

If there's dulness of trade--well, our fortunes are made,  
And we don't care a rush who goes under,  
When we feel the desire, we can always retire  
To estates which we've got with our plunder.

We are all moral men--we repeat that again--

For we're always at church on the Sunday,  
Impressed with the notion that outward devotion  
Will cloak all our misdeeds in one day.

In our well-cushioned pews we can placidly muse,  
And confess that "we're fortunate sinners ;"  
Then, the short service o'er, we drive home as before,  
To bless heaven for luxurious dinners.

Then, hurrah ! let us laugh and the ruby wine quaff  
While we join in our favourite toast  
"With plenty of gold and our sway uncontrolled,  
Coal owners shall rule o'er the roast."

**Richmond, Surrey. J. D.**

### **Notes**

This song is undoubtedly of English origin with its mention of Lords and Trusty MPs.  
From the NSW Australian Newspaper The Miners' Advocate and Northumberland Recorder 20  
Jan 1875 Page 4.

### **A Song of Rebels (1918)**

They have tied the world in a tether,  
They have bought over God with a fee;  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

We have done with the kisses that sting,  
The thief's mouth red from the feast,  
The blood on the hands of the king,  
And the lie at the lips of the priest.

Will they tie the wind in a tether  
Put a bit in the jaws of the sea ?  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

Let our flag run out straight in the wind  
The old red shall be floated again,  
When, the ranks that are thin shall be thinned,  
When the names that are twenty are ten.

While, the shepherd set wolves on his sheep,  
And the Emperor, halts his kine.  
While Shame is a watchman asleep,  
And faith is a keeper of swine.

Let the winds shake our flag like a feather,  
Like the plumes of the foam of the sea!  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

**SWINBURNE.**

### **Notes**

**From the Sydney Newspaper The International Socialist 26 Jan 1918 Page 4.**

## **The Down And Out (1942)**

"We're goin' to hit the track again.  
Those tracks that have no end,  
We'll travel 'long the dusty strips  
And roads that ever bend.  
Across the distant mountains blue.  
Where earth end skyline meet,  
We'll wander on, my doggie mine.  
My little cobber, Pete."

Pete sidled near, he wagged his tail.  
He licked his master's hand,  
His faithful eyes looked into Bill's  
He seemed to understand.  
Bill's eyes grew misty, deep in thought.  
His mind flew o'er the years,  
To times when life had smiled on him,  
Before 'twas filled with tears.

Again he saw the moving herd--  
The cattle on the track,  
He heard the shouts and merry gibes  
Of mates he'd known outback.  
Again he listened to the yarns  
That bushmen love to tell.  
When fathered round the campfire bright,  
While deepening shadows fall.

He leaned against the shanty door,  
His thoughts now far away,  
Then suddenly there came a shout.  
And ribald laughter gay,  
From Davy Catchem's wayside pub  
Bill started forward--frowned.  
He looked down at his ragged clothes.  
Then sank upon the ground.

In indecision long he stared  
Across the dusty street,  
Pete whimpered low and laid his head  
Upon his master's feet.  
Bill heaved a sigh then questioned low,  
'Pete doggie, shall we stay  
To be the Joke of blokes like that  
Or shall we break away?'

Again Pete thumped his stumpy tail  
As though he'd have his say.  
His pleading eyes looked up at Bill,  
And then along the way  
To where long trails awindng led.  
Far over mount and plain,  
As though he too saw days of old,  
And longed for them again.

Bill staggered to his bootless feet,  
He swore and swore again.  
To think I've e'er been such a fool,  
Not known the chaff from grain

What though that legacy but brought  
False friends instead of true,  
The friends that toadied round and cared  
Until the gold was through.

'To let such small things blight my life,  
And hang around the town,  
A starvin' joke in rags and dirt,  
Because Life let me down.  
It's not the dinkum Aussie way,  
No, Pete, well let them see  
That old Bill still can hold his own.  
They'll laugh no more at me.'

Bill straightened up, his eyes ablaze  
With resolutions new,  
And once again his hopes soared high.  
He saw a sky of blue,  
And running streams and stars that shine,  
And campfires burning bright,  
He heard again a dingo's howl  
From out a lonely night.

With little barks of pure delight  
Pete watched Bill roll his swag.  
And tried in his own canine way  
To say that he was glad.  
Maybe he sensed those times ahead  
When journeys would be o'er.  
When Bill would meet those pals so true  
He'd known long years before.

Quite likely, too, he glimpsed again  
The cattle o'er the hill.  
And heard once more the drover's song  
Just as of old with Bill.  
They'd trail a herd into the west,  
O'er mountain pass and plain,  
Where life is peaceful, pure and free,  
And friendships not in vain.

**" Kimalo." via Mareeba. E. PIKE**

### **Notes**

**From the Queensland newspaper the Townsville Daily Bulletin Friday 3 July 1942, p. 5.**

### **The Dear Native Girl**

#### **Air.-"Gum-tree Canoe."**

Australia, dear land of my childhood, and birth,  
I think of you still amidst beauty and mirth;  
Your forests, your mountains their charms have for me,  
And the dear native girl who will share it with me.

#### **Chorus:**

Then give me a hut in my own native land.  
Or a tent in the bush with the mountains so grand ;  
With the scenes of my childhood contented I'll be,  
And the dear native girl who will share it with me.

I love far to roam where the emu does stray,  
Where the wild native dog cries aloud for his prey,  
Where the kangaroo, wallaroo and wombat so rare  
Are found with the scrub turkey and native bear.

How pleasant to rise at the dawn of the day,  
And chase the wild horse o'er the hills far away,  
Where he'll prance and he'll snort all alone in his  
Until he's run down by hearts bold and free.

When winter winds whistle and blast the sweet flowers,  
How happy and cheerful we'll then pass the hours  
With the friends of our youth in song or in glee,  
And the dear native girl who will share it with me.

### **Notes**

**This song was first published in the Queenslander 8 September 1894, with the note: (From versions supplied by "Colonial Boy," St. Lawrence, and R.C.H., Cloncurry.)  
This version is from the Victorian newspaper the Oakleigh Leader 29 September 1894 p. 7.**

### **Bicycle Song (1896)**

Light upon the pedal,  
Firm upon the seat.  
Fortune's wheel in fetters  
Fast beneath our feet,  
Leave the clouds behind us,  
Split the wind we meet,  
Swift, oh, swift and silent,  
Roiling down the street !

When the dark comes, twinkling  
Like fire flies in the wheat,  
Bells before us tinkling  
Fairly and feat,  
By the gate of gardens,  
Where the dusk is sweet,  
Slide like apparitions  
Through the startled street !

Spearmen in the desert  
Maybe fly as fleet,  
Northern lights in heaven,  
Sparkle on the sleet !  
Swift, oh, swift and silent,  
Just before we greet  
The outer edge of nothing  
Turn rolling up the street !

**--Harriet Prescott Spofford, in August "St Nicholas."**

### **Notes**

**From the Victorian Newspaper The Geelong Advertiser 17 Oct 1896 p. 1.**

An Old Bush Song (1860s)  
Murrumbidgee Shearing Sheds of Late Sixties and the Seventies.

A squatter he stood at his station gate,  
The sun was down, for 'twas getting late;  
On a board near the fence was written clear  
"Travellers all are welcome here."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Then he called to his super Bandy Joe  
Said he, "That horrible board down throw;  
Bold Morgan made me stick it up there,  
But now he is shot, not a rap I care."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Just then his limbs to the gate did drag,  
A traveller painfully humping his swag;  
Says he "To your station I straight did steer,  
For swagmen, I'm told, are welcome here."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

"Be off!" cried the squatter, "you scoundrel, go !  
Morgan, the wretch, in the grave lies low;  
Though he once made me dance on the table,  
He's dead; to defy all tramps I'm able."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Then the traveller pulled from his blankets red,  
A box of matches, and thus he said  
"Though poor Dan Morgan lies shot in his track,  
He's left two mates, called Bell and Black!"

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

"You may see their brand at night, in the sky  
As the red flame flies when the wind, is high;  
And on as it travels their work you read  
A squatter lamenting his burnt-up feed."

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

The squatter cried out "in a terrible fright  
"Go up to the kitchen, my friend, to-night,  
And ask for your, supper; although I spoke  
So savage, you know it was only a joke!"

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

Now, all you squatters, attention pay,  
And don't send swagmen hungry away;  
Or else you may find, to your bitter grief,  
Grass scarcer in summer than mutton or beef!

Ri tooral, I ooral, I additty.

**Notes From the New South Wales Newspaper The Windsor and Richmond Gazette 14 Nov 1930 Page 8.**

**The Basic Wage Dream (1964)**

**Words - Don Henderson**  
**Music - Traditional Irish Tune**

A most interesting contribution to the current basic wage struggle by the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations is their use of folk song. LAST year ACSPA issued the popular disc, "Oh Pay Me", to help in the margins fight.

They have followed up this year "Basic Wage Dream".

The title song by Sydney writer Don Henderson tells the story of a strange dream in which a judge, not only granted the union's claim for 52 bob but made it retrospective to 1907. When the dreamer wakes up, like the man who dreams race winners, he can't remember the judge's name.

A couple of verses gives an idea of its gently satirical humour:

"On the first pay day after the trial I couldn't believe my luck,  
"The paymaster brought my wages out on a fork lift truck,  
"I dreamed we got paid on a Friday and on that lovely night,  
"Mayne Nickless sent an armoured car to get me home all right.

"On the way we stopped at the RSL and as I walked inside,  
"A poker machine took a look at my pay and committed suicide,  
"I turned around when I heard a man behind me softly speak,  
"It was Dr. Coombs trying to borrow a quid to see him through the week."

Other songs on the record include "Talking Basic Wage", "Asteroid Light", an anti-nuclear testing song, and "Brisbane Ladies" "The Overlanders", famous Australian folk songs  
Copies can be obtained from ACSPA, 53 Hardware Street, Melbourne for 11/- posted.

**Notes**

**From the Sydney Newspaper The Tribune 12 Feb 1964 p. 4.**

**The Boundary Rider's Wife (1898)**

I'm the wife of a boundary rider,  
And we live on the Barcoo Creek.  
Our wage is the station ration,  
And twenty bob a week.

We are fairly well contented.  
But I hope not all my life  
Will be spent on a dreary station,  
As a boundary rider's wife.

They say I should never be lonely  
With six healthy girls and boys,  
They say that my life's complete with  
So many domestic joys.

Do they reckon the cost, I wonder,  
For the keep of six lusty weans;  
For you cannot indulge in fancies  
On an out-back station's means.

There's never a school for the children,  
And we never a sermon hear.  
But we toil front the week's beginning  
right up to its ending drear,



With seldom a break in the routine  
Of this desolate daily life-  
The life on a out-back station  
Of a boundary rider's wife.

There are missions to save the heathen,  
There are millions spent in strife,  
There are armies who preach salvation,  
And sing of a better life.

But the road is dark and dreary.  
And the way with trials rife ;  
So they leave to God the saving  
Of the boundary rider's wife.

Melbourne "Argus."

### **Notes**

**From the Queensland Newspaper Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs General Advertiser 10 Dec 1898 p. 6.**

### **Ballad of Norman Brown (1957)**

There was a man called Norman Brown,  
The murderin' coppers shot him down,  
They shot him down in Rothbury town.  
A working man called Norman Brown.

"An honest man," the Parson said,  
And dropped the clods upon his head.  
"But honest man or not, he's dead,"  
And that's the end of Norman Brown.

Coal bosses wiped their hands and sighed  
"It is a pity that he died.  
It will inflame the countryside,  
And all because of Norman Brown."

Norman Brown, Norman Brown,  
The murderin' coppers shot him down.  
They shot him down in Rothbury town,  
A working man called Norman Brown.

He was a very simple man,  
Honest and quiet, yet he became,  
The mate of every working man  
And every miner knows his name.

At pit top meetings and on strike,  
In every little mining town,  
When miners march for bread and right  
There marches honest Norman Brown.

He thunders at the pit top strike,  
His voice is in the women's tears.  
With banner carried shoulder high  
He's singing down the struggling years.

He cannot sleep, he cannot rest  
Until the dawn has given him,

And every worker by his side  
A new world for mankind to win.

And though they drop big stones on him  
And though they bury him deep down,  
He mutely calls from earth and mine.  
You cannot silence Norman Brown.

When miners labour for a land  
That is their own in field and town,  
With joy shining in his face  
There works a man called Norman Brown.

A miner's pick is in his hand.  
His song is shouted through the land,  
A land that's free and broad and brown,  
That land that bred us Norman Brown.

There was a man called Norman Brown,  
The murderin' coppers shot him down,  
They shot him down in Rothbury Town,  
A working man called Norman Brown.

"An honest man;" the Parson said,  
And dropped the clods upon his head.  
"But honest man; or not, he's dead,  
And that's the end of Norman Brown."

Coal bosses wiped their hands and sighed.  
"It is a pity that he died.  
It will inflame the countryside,  
And all because of Norman Brown."

Norman Brown, Norman Brown,  
The murderin' coppers shot you down.  
They shot you down in Rothbury Town.  
To live forever .... Norman Brown.

**--DOROTHY HEWETT.**

**From the NSW Newspaper The Tribune 2 Jan 1957 p. 3.**

### **The Black Billy (1938)**

Old sundowner's billy, battered and black,  
What tales you could tell of the far outback,  
Where the sun beats down on the black soil plains,  
In the "land of heat" where it seldom rains !

And when it does, the grass grows green,  
And the trees are dressed in emerald sheen ;  
While the golden wheat by the breeze is stirred,  
And the bleat of the sheep on the plains is heard.

You would tell us of days upon the road  
If we could but read your secret code !  
You would tell us of night beneath the stars,  
Where the river winds by to its ocean bars.

Oh, yes billy battered, old and black,

Amongst the rest of your owners pack.  
You stand out clear, like the stars at  
As a symbol storm, of stress and of light.

A symbol of hope, and of labor and tears.  
With stories now softened by passing of years,  
A symbol of valleys, of bushland and flowers-  
A symbol of this brown land of ours !

**--Arthur Sargent**

### **Notes**

**From the NSW Newspaper The Henty Observer and Culcairn Shire Register 29 Apr 1938 p. 5.**

### **The Eight Hours Song Or "Valentine" (1883)**

Come all ye wearied ones.  
Lift up your voice, on high ;  
Ye who have won this eight hours boon,  
To you the weary cry :  
We are the weak and lowly,  
You have the power to say :  
We will not cause our sisters pain.  
Nor our brothers to waste away.

But we all will sing,  
And this shall our chorus be.

Eight for father.  
Eight for mother,  
Eight for sister.  
Eight for brother,  
Eight for lad,  
Eight for lass  
Every working day.

Every woman,  
Every man.  
Every lad and lass  
Within this town of fair Brisbane,  
Shall strive to bring to pass.

Eight for father,  
Eight for mother,  
Eight for sister.  
Eight for brother.  
Eight for lad.  
Eight for lass  
Every working day.

**--PADDY GREEN.**

### **Notes**

**From the Queensland newspaper the Telegraph Thursday 15 February 1883, p. 3.**

Eight Shillings a Week (1830s)  
Come all you bold Britons wherever you be,

I pray give attention, and listen to me,

There once were good times, but they're gone by complete,  
For a poor man lives now on eight shillings a week.

Such times in Old England there never was seen,  
As the present one now-but much better have been,  
A poor man's condemn'd and look on like a thief,  
And compelled to work for eight shillings a week.

Our venerable father remembers the year,  
When a man could earn three shillings a day and his beer,  
He then could live well, keep his family neat,  
But now he must work for eight shillings a week.

The nobs of Old England of shameful renown,  
Are striving to crush a poor man to the ground,  
They'll beat down the wages and starve them complete,  
And compel them to work for eight shillings a week.

A poor man to labour, believe me 'tis so,  
To maintain his family is willing to go  
Fither edging or ditching, to plough and to reap,  
But how does he live on eight shillings a week ?

In the reign of Old George, as you understand,  
There was contentment throughout the whole land,  
Each poor man could live, and get plenty to eat,  
But now he must pine on eight shillings a week.

So now to conclude, and finish my song,  
May the times be much better before it is long,  
May every poor labourer be able to keep  
His children and wife on Twelve shillings a week.

## Notes

### **The Age 25 Feb 1939 Page 12.**

A remarkable number of Broadside Ballads from Britain, Scotland and Ireland found their way into Australian newspapers. The above ballad sold on the streets in the 1830s offers a clear example of a ballad with a strong condemnation of hard times and starvation wages visited on working men and women and their families as the British Empire was being built.

### **Rebel Song (1913)**

The refrain of this song was the motto of Wat Tyler's rebels, who marched upon London in 1381.

"When Adam delved and Eve span,  
Who was then the gentleman?"

Wretched is the infant's lot,  
Born within the straw-roof'd cot;  
Be he generous, wise, or brave,  
He must only be a slave.  
Long, long labor, little rest,  
Still to toil, to be oppressed;  
Drain'd by taxes of his store,  
Punish'd next for being poor;  
This is the poor wretch's lot,

Born within the straw-roof'd cot.

While the peasant works--to sleep,  
What the peasant sows--to reap,  
Oft the couch of ease to lie,  
Rioting in revelry;  
Be he villain, be he fool,  
Still to hold despotic rule,  
Trampling on his slaves with scorn!  
This is to be nobly born.  
"When Adam delved arid Eve span,  
Who was then the gentleman?"

--**Robert Southey.**

## **Notes**

**From the Sydney Newspaper the Australian Worker Thursday 9 March 1916 p. 9.**

This song was included in Southey's 1794 radical play *Wat Tyler*. The couplet "When Adam delved arid Eve span/ Who was then the gentleman?" was a favourite expression of the rebel priest John Ball, who like Wat Tyler was a leader of the Peasants' Revolt against the feudal system and the poll tax it tried to impose.

Erin's Isle (1861)

Yes I'm weary 'mid the revel  
In the stranger's land to-day  
Not one dear voice of those I lov'd  
All hushe -all pass'd away.

The aching breath of sadness wakes  
With its deep yearning spell  
The hour I breathed to Erin's isle  
The whisper of farewell.

I strive to teach the longing heart  
To rest in scenes I've met,  
To press its weary throbbings down  
And learn the word forget.

But softly some familiar air  
Steals with it's soothing strain  
I turn to dream of Erin's Isle  
Of boyhood's days again.

Thou'rt distant now but still I cling  
To thee my place of birth,  
I've sought but ah-I've never found  
A second home on earth.

The hopes which gave to life its worth  
And brought the soul-lit smile  
Now calmly sleep beneath the turf  
Of Erin's sunny Isle. A.D.S.

## **Notes**

**From the Tasmanian Newspaper the Cornwall Chronicle 19 Jan 1861 p. 2.**

**A Football Ode (1905)**

**From the Mc Ivor Times And Rodney Advertiser  
Heathcote, Victoria Thursday June 22 1905**

A football enthusiast has asked us to publish the following lines. They are evidently intended to rally up his club in their fight for the premiership :--

Come all you football warriors  
Of nineteen hundred and four,  
And jump into your colors,  
And take the field once more.  
Come, line up near the goal post,  
And number off from one,  
And let us see who's missing  
Since the football match was "lost."

Now Clelland and Pat Finnigan  
Were standing out they say,  
And Bryant too, was missing,  
And is long since he has played.  
Brown, the "bonser" rover,  
The biggest loss of all,  
Is going back to West Australia,  
Where he'll still be on the ball.

These four our team will weaken,  
And we'll miss them by and bye  
When we've something tough to tackle,  
And the ball is soaring high.  
But let us look around and see  
What sort of team is here ;  
And if we'll stand a chance to win  
The premiership this year.

There's O'Brien and Dalton,  
Both eager for the fray ;  
The Bradleys, too, are with us,  
And are sturdy chaps they say.  
And then we've Theo. Hellwege,  
Tom Tice and Bert Young,  
And another one or two besides  
Whose names are in the "Times."  
Sam Clelland will be with us,  
With Jack Finnigan and Wood so good,

And little Hugh M'Nicol  
Should be in the team this year.  
And don't forget Jack O'Brien, back,  
Who ought to be some strength,  
And Devanny at the goal posts,  
Should be useful for his length.  
Phillips and M'Donald  
Are coming on I hear

Also two more lads  
The colts from Major's Line.  
So with this combination  
We should stand a decent show,  
And we'll get a heap of courage

From the barrackers I know.  
With Jack Lally as our captain,  
He will keep us all alive,

So now, my boys get ready  
For nineteen hundred and five.  
And if we are not premiers,  
We'll give Heathcote a run,  
So we'll set the ball a-rolling  
If we only play for fun.

### **CAPTAIN FAT.**

#### **Notes**

**From the NSW Newspaper The Mclvor Times and Rodney Advertiser 22 Jun 1905 p. 3.**

#### **A Poem by Dorothy Hewett ©1962 Dorothy Hewett**

In Midland still the trains go by,  
The black smoke thunders on the sky,  
Still in the grass the lovers lie,  
And cheek on cheek and sigh on sigh  
They dream and weep as you and I,  
In Midland where the trains go by.

Across the bridge, across the town,  
The workers hurry up and down.  
The pub still stands, the publican  
Is still a gross, corrupted man.  
And bottles clinking in the park  
Make symphonies of summer dark.

Across the bridge the stars go down,  
Our two ghosts meet across the town.  
Who dared so much must surely creep  
Between young lovers' lips, asleep,  
Who dared so much must surely live  
In train-smoke off the Midland bridge.

In Midland in the railway yards,  
They shuffle time like packs of cards  
And kings and queens and jacks go down,  
But we come up in Midland town.  
O factory girls in cotton slips  
And men with grease across your lips,  
Let kings and queens and jacks go down  
But we'll still kiss in Midland town.

An oath, a whisper and a laugh,  
Will make our better epitaph.  
We'll share a noggin in the park  
And whistle songs against the dark.  
There is no death that we can die  
In Midland where the trains go by.

Flag of the Southern Cross by Henry Lawson

Sons of Australia, be loyal and true to her -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Sing a loud song to be joyous and new to her -

Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Stain'd with the blood of the diggers who died by it,  
Fling out the flag to the front, and abide by it -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!

See how the toadies of Austral throw dust o'er her -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
We who are holding her honour in trust for her -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
See how the yellow-men next to her lust for her,  
Sooner or later to battle we must for her -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross.

Beg not of England the right to preserve ourselves,  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross,  
We are the servants best able to serve ourselves,  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross.  
What are our hearts for, and what are our hands for?  
What are we nourished in these southern lands for?  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross.

Shall we in fear of the Dragon or Bruin now  
Keep back the flag of the Southern Cross?  
Better to die on a field of red ruin now,  
Under the flag of the Southern Cross.  
Let us stand out like the gallant Eureka men -  
Give not our country the sorrow to seek her men -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!

See how the loyal are storing up shame for us  
Under the light of the Southern Cross.  
Never! Oh! never be coward a name for us -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
England's red flag will bring hatred and worse to it,  
Murder and rapine hath brought a black curse to it;  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!

Have we not breasts for the bullets of thunderers?  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Have we not steel for the bosoms of plunderers?  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Prove ourselves worthy the land we inherit now,  
Feed till it blazes the National spirit now!  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!

Let us be bold, be it daylight or night for us -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Let us be firm - with our God and our right for us,  
Under the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Austral is fair, and the idlers in strife for her  
Plunder her, sneer at her, suck the young life from her!  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!

Fling out the flag to the front, and abide by it -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Stand by the blood of the diggers who died by it -  
Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross!  
Fling out the flag to the front, and be brave for it.  
Liberty! Light! or a battle-field grave for it!  
Bonny bright flag of the Southern Cross!



## **Reveille by Marie E.J.Pitt**

Up! comrades, up! the night has flown,  
The dawn breaks dim and grey!  
The bugle-call of strife has blown!  
Arm! Arm you for the fray!  
O'er hills which man's injustice smote,  
The People's hymn we'll raise,  
Shout, every throat a major note,  
Australia's Marseillaise!

They call our creed a rebel creed,  
Our flag a rebel flag,  
Who scrawl the autograph of greed  
On every wave-worn crag;  
Who sow in furrows of their greed  
A heritage of scorn,  
And binds the bonds of bitter need  
Our peoples yet unborn;

Who ruthless weave the fateful coil  
That binds the bonds of hate  
Lean harlotry of hopeless toil,  
Fat harlotry of State,  
Who sow in furrows of their hate  
Twin thorns that never fail,  
The gilded thieves in Church and State,  
The squalid thieves in gaol.

They call our flag a rebel flag,  
Our creed a rebel creed,  
Who scrawl on every wave-worn crag  
The autograph of greed.  
O'er hills which man's injustice smote,  
The People's hymn we'll raise:  
Shout! every throat a major note,  
Australia's Marseillaise!

## **The Australian Flag by Francis Adams 1909**

Pure blue Flag of Heaven  
With your Silver Stars,  
Not beside those Crosses'  
Blood-stained torture-bars:

Not beside the token  
The foul sea-harlot gave,  
Pure blue Flag of Heaven,  
Must you ever wave!

No, but young exultant,  
Free from care and crime,  
The soulless selfish England  
Of this later time:

No, but, faithful, noble  
Rising from her grave,  
Flag of light and liberty,  
For ever must you wave!

## Notes

**This poem was published in the 1910 Francis Adams collection Songs of the Army of the Night**

### **The Men of Eureka Mary Gilmore**

They have gone out, the men of Eureka,  
One by one they have passed. Now there is none  
Of them left to sit by the fire and talk;  
For them, life's journey is over and done.  
Digger by digger they marched,  
Each man in his order;  
As digger by digger they went,  
Over the border.

I was a child while still we talked of them,  
And, when there came one walking lame, I ran  
To my father, and my hand in his, cried,  
Eager for stories, "Here comes a Eureka man!"  
Digger by digger they marched,  
All named in their order,  
And digger by digger they went,  
Over the border.

And the men who had been at Eureka  
Made me a flag of stars, and gave me  
A name, and the name they gave was Eureka;  
"For the child," they said, "is one of our kin."  
Digger by digger they marched,  
Each numbered in order,  
Who digger by digger are gone,  
Over the border.

And many a time, with a wooden sword,  
I stood, my father's kinsman, Ross, and laced  
Upon the air with glancing strokes, while cried  
They there, "Well placed! Well struck, Eureka!"  
Digger by digger they marched,  
Each man in his order,  
Who, digger by digger, are gone,  
Over the border.

Now shall I weep them, even as the tribes  
Wept those they deemed illustrious, who passed  
From them forever, or, far-journeying,  
Moved outward from their ken, the seen no more.

## Notes

**This poem was published in 'Mary Gilmore: a Tribute' published by Australasian Book Society in 1965. Dymphna Cusack, T.Inglis Moore and Barrie Ovenden and bibliography by Walter Stone.**

**Australian Working-Class March Jock Graham  
Tune: "Men Of Harlech."**

Sing Australia's greatest glory:

Battles in her epic story,  
Labor in defence and foray  
For her liberty  
Brave Eureka shall provide us  
Courage still, whate'er betide us,  
And the Southern Cross still guide us  
Safe in freedom's way.

Build the stockade higher,  
Quench reaction's fire  
Let every man and woman plan  
Their freedom to acquire.

Chorus:  
Sound the call throughout the nation:  
Join in Labor's liberation:  
Working-class emancipation  
On to victory.

Gains in unity we'll measure;  
Every step we'll hold and treasure;  
Organise with pride and pleasure:  
Solidarity.  
Pledge our martyrs dead and dying:  
We shall fight, our foes defying,  
Till the "People's Flag" is flying  
O'er Australia free.

Organise our forces,  
Endless are our sources;  
Our strength shall be our unity,  
And liberty our course is.

Chorus:  
Sound the call throughout the nation:  
Join in Labor's liberation:  
Working-class emancipation  
On to victory.

Sing of convict days and cattle,  
Sing of wild bush land and wattle,  
Sing of gain and loss in battle,  
Labor's history.  
And while thoughts are backward winging,  
Memories of heroes bringing,  
Let the burden of our singing,  
Freedom always be.

Men of Labor's morning,  
Death and prison scorning,  
Still lead us true the dark night through,  
With lights of knowledge burning.

Chorus:  
Sound the call throughout the nation:  
Join in Labor's liberation:  
Working-class emancipation  
On to victory.

## Notes

**Awarded First Prize for words to a well-known tune in Australian Communist Party Competition, 1945, this poem appeared in the 1945 collection of John (Jock) Graham's poems "Blood on the Coal"**

### **The Oath Of Eureka Bartlett Adamson**

The workers of Kembla, those leaders of men,  
Those leaders in deed as in thought,  
They challenged the might of the pound and the yen,  
And there at the "Dalfram" they fought  
The cause of the Chinese distraught,  
And still marching onward,  
With gaze lifted sunward,  
The call of Eureka is caught.  
Democracy thrills to that message of yore.  
The vow of Eureka has echoed once more.

The workers awaken. They rally and rise.  
The workers have taken the lead.  
With light of Eureka aflame in their eyes,  
United in word and in deed,  
They fight the conscriptionist creed.  
No despot shall darken  
Our wide land, for hearken!  
These men of the Southern Cross breed,  
They raise the bright flag that all true men adore. -  
They march in the light of Eureka once more.

Eureka the Flag! By that symbol they swear  
Unswerving to stand to the fight.  
And sworn to the faith of Eureka, they dare  
To march in their militant might,  
To battle for freedom and right,  
To vanquish each traitor,  
Each Fascist dictator,  
Each monster of death and of night.  
The workers now march like those freemen of yore.  
They take the firm oath of Eureka once more.

The workers have trampled the counsels of gloom,  
Of cowardly leaders that quake.  
This register card is a ticket of doom.  
Then spurn it and burn it and break  
Each move that the tyrannies make.  
The workers have risen,  
And heedless of prison,  
And bidding democracy wake,  
They march man to man with those great men of yore.  
They swear the great vow of Eureka once more.

### **Notes**

**From the 1945 collection of Bartlett Adamson poems "Comrades All" with the note:**

**"Written in July, 1939, when the Menzies Government tried to introduce a National Register in Australia and when Chamberlain was still in power in Britain. Workers throughout the Commonwealth, knowing well that Menzies, like Chamberlain, aimed primarily at repression of the workers, rightly opposed the Register.**

At Port Kembla, where wharf-laborers shortly before had gone on strike rather than load the "Dalfram" with scrap-iron for Japan, the workers publicly burned their Register Cards and took the Oath of Eureka: "We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties." The Register was a fiasco."

In his biography of wharfies leader, Ted Roach - "From Pig Iron Hero to Long Bay Gaol" Denis Kevans describes how Ted Roach consciously used the Eureka Oath at marches and rallies, before and during the famous "Dalfram" Pig Iron dispute, in November, 1938, in Port Kembla, NSW.

Ted Roach, who was the Secretary of Kembla Branch, and later, Federal Assistant General Secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation, told Denis Kevans:

"I got hold of the Eureka Oath from a Lloyd Ross pamphlet. The wharfies, en masse, took the oath, and through the Trades and Labour Council, and at as many mass meetings as possible, we had the oath recited and sworn."

### **Golden Days Of Ballarat by Nathan F. Spielvogel**

In Fifty-one a tale was told  
In many a town of Europe old,  
Of a new-found pasture sown with gold.  
(Ho, Ho, have ye heard of Ballarat?)

Come, bid farewell and sail away,  
Sail and sail for a hundred day,  
Across the sea to Hobson's Bay,  
Away and away to Ballarat.

From Devon downs and Swansea mines,  
From Ireland green and Scotia's pines,  
From Prussian plains and France's vines,  
(Away and away to Ballarat.)

From Swiss snow hills and Russian duns,  
American lads and fair, fierce Huns,  
The world sent out her hardiest sons  
To the golden fields of Ballarat.

Then quirk to work with pick and spade,  
Ye must be men in this bold brigade,  
Ye must be men if ye wish to raid  
The flowers that bloom on Ballarat.

Ten thousand bees on the honeycomb ground,  
Seeking the honey in shaft and mound,  
Richest of honey that ever was found!  
Ho! Ho! for the honey of Ballarat.

Puddle and wash till fit to drop,  
On Bakery Hill and Jeweller's Shop,  
Cradle and pan! no stay! no stop!  
Ye must toil to win on Ballarat.

It's gold, red-gold for an emp'ror's crown,  
While the sweet, clear Leigh is tainted brown,  
As it winds along through Canvastown,  
In the golden days of Ballarat,

Then rest at night by camp fire's gleam,

'Neath spreading gums lie low and dream.  
The blackbird sings, the seagulls scream,  
Far, far away in Ballarat.

Back to his homeland far away,  
Back to his mother old and grey,  
Back to a lass he will wed some day,  
(Ah! Golden dreams of Ballarat!)

Go! seek the men who found the gold,  
Find them tottering, weak and old,  
Some of them! Some! The rest lie cold,  
Cold and still ill ballaa-rat.\*

Beautiful city of Ballarat I  
From Wendouree to Canadian flat,  
THESE are the men who built all that;  
Peace to you, fathers of Ballarat!

**\*NOTE.--Ballaa-rat in aboriginal language means "resting place." Here used to mean "graves."**

### **Notes**

**This poem is in 'The Eureka Affair' by Nathan F. Spielvogel, published in Ballarat in 1928 by J.Frazer & Son.**

### **Strike For Indonesian Freedom Bartlett Adamson**

Yet once more, my fellow-workers! Yet once more you lead the van,  
Armed with all unselfish motives, fighting for your fellowman.  
Never was a worthier struggle than this Indonesian cause.  
Never gentler people suffered under more degrading laws.

Just as diggers at Eureka fought an iron tyranny,  
So these Indonesian patriots fight for freedom yet to be.  
So you, workers of Australia! born of that Eureka breed,  
Truly stand by these, your brothers, fight their fight in word and deed.

Workers of the wharves and hatches! Men who front the waterways!  
Once you fought for Chinese fighting in the famous "Dalfram" days!  
As you challenged then the might of money, Menzies, and Japan,  
Now you fight these Dutch dictators who would crush their fellowman.

Yours a deed of noblest motive. Yours a full self-sacrifice.  
Yet your actions get distorted in a gust of printed lies.  
Lies decreed by windy barons governing the daily Press.  
But-those hungering Indonesians bless you for your selflessness.

And, as Indonesian millions bless you through their doubts and fears,  
As they'll greet you, brothers ever, through their songs and through the years,  
So will men the whole world over speak of you in times to be:  
These were leaders when the people still were struggling to be free.

Fighters in the front of freedom! Wardens of the waterside!  
Fellow-workers! How you thrill and fill my heart with hope and pride!

### **Notes**

**Written in 1945 this poem appeared in the 1954 collection of Bartlett Adamson poems "For Peace and Friendship"**

### **Australia for the People Jock Graham A Call for Labor Unity**

Working people of Australia, we have won our way at last  
To the shining gates of freedom from the chain-gangs of the past;  
In our hands the arms of Labor, on our lips a Labor song,  
In our minds the Labor knowledge which determines right from wrong.

We have come, "convicted criminals," to open up the land,  
When our only "crime" was courage for a work-and-bread demand -  
Here we blazed the paths of progress and our first trade union made,  
And we pledged Australia liberty and built our first stockade.

Miners, shearers, watersiders - all our fighting pioneers,  
Steeled in struggle thro' the nineties - all the lean and toiling years,  
For a higher living standard, for the corn of life we sow,  
For democracy and freedom, and the better world we know.

We salute these gallant comrades for our forums in our parks,  
For our chance to study Lenin and the classic works of Marx;  
They have helped to make our "Tribune" with the "Fighting Boomerang,"  
Form the lines of Francis Adams, and the verses Lawson sang.

Yet we still have old man Capital and hovels for his slaves  
Where disease, congestion, hunger, fill our children's early graves;  
And we sing of well-won glory to the tramp of weary feet,  
Where our poortith-driven daughters are delilahs of the street.

And the parasites still plunder - sap the heart of humankind,  
Still destroy the fruits of science, warp the young and growing mind;  
But their breeding ground is lessening and shrinking are their powers -  
So take courage in the present for the future will be ours.

When Reaction, in a "liberal" or "democratic" name,  
With oppression tries to break us and the Labor spirit tame,  
We shall rise in serried numbers as our native wattle grows,  
We shall rise as we have risen o'er our flood and fire foes.

We shall fight to free our country ANY Fascist would despoil  
As the dust-bowls where erosion now is ravaging her soil;  
We shall fight for her immunity from pain and misery,  
And we'll draw our inspiration from her storied history.

Our Australian Labor annals - epic pages of the past -  
Tell of bastions of freedom in immortal valour cast;  
How our unions and our councils round the industries were formed;  
Of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and the Fascist forts they've stormed.

Hail our independent manhood by the blood of martyrs bought;  
Praise our pioneering fathers for the heritage they sought-  
For the good of our great country and her people-more and more  
Let us work with common purpose as we never worked before.

Close the ranks of Labor's army, there is need for courage still;  
Workers, soldiers, all together in one unity of will;  
'Tis Eureka's bugle rolling, ringing down the southern sky;  
Fall in, fall in for freedom, or with freedom we must die.

## Notes

This poem appeared in the 1945 collection of John (Jock) Graham's poems "Blood on the Coal"

### The Song Of The Rollicking Rouseabout

Shearing season fast approaches,  
Squatters giving smaller pay :  
Fifteen bob a week and tucker --  
Half-a-caser every day !  
Half-a-caser when they're shearing,  
When it's raining they get nix ;  
That's the wages on the stations--  
Hours of labor, six to six.

Still they say the working classes  
They are blessed in this bright land  
(Where they get their slaving asses  
I could never understand).  
Men, they call them--that's an error,  
'Tis a libel, to be sure :  
He who stands the half-a-caser  
Should be called a squatter's--

**From the Wagga NSW newspaper the Worker Saturday 9 September 1893 p. 3.**

### Springtime Brings on the Shearing

Oh the springtime it brings on the shearing  
And it's then you will see them in droves  
To the west country stations all steering  
A seeking a job off the coves

### Chorus

With a ragged old swag on my shoulder  
And a billy quart pot in my hand  
I tell you we'll astonish the new chums  
To see how we travel the land

You may talk of your mighty exploring  
Of Landsborough McKinley and King  
But I feel I should only be boring  
On such frivolous subjects to sing

For discovering mountains and rivers  
There's one for a gallon I'd back  
Who'd beat all your Stuart's to shivers  
It's the men on the Wallaby Track

From Billabone Murray and Loddon  
To the far Tartiara and back  
The hills and the plains are well trodden  
By the men on the Wallaby Track

And after the shearing is over  
And the wool season's all at an end  
It is then that you will see those flash shearers  
Making johnny cakes round in the bend



## Notes

**Printed in Stewart and Keesing Old Bush Songs . This song seems to have been derived from a poem called 'The Wallaby Track', by E. J. Overbury, which was first published in 1865 in a collection of Overbury's verses called Bush Songs .**

### **The Song of the Jackaroo (1884)**

Who would not be a bushman, and live a life so free,  
And live on half-stavred mutton, cooked by sleek Ah Mee,  
To ride about all day-a life fit for the Gods,  
And come home late at night to feast on damper sods.

Away, ye city duffers, what know ye of the joy  
And heavenly bliss which fills the heart of that bold boy,  
Who canters o'er the downs with rein held low and slack,  
Upon a steed with ghastly sore red raw upon his back.

Away ye city scoffers, we do not want ye here :  
Go back unto your pavements, go back unto your beer ;  
That man is happier for who works the plough or scoop.  
And drinks from out the creek the water like pea soup.

What matters it the heat ! when there's a Barcoo breeze;  
What trouble is the sun ! there's lots of shady trees ;  
Just lie down under one, beside your dog who pants,  
And find true comfort here, reposing with the ants.

Go to, ye city scoffers, go back unto your shops,  
You ne'er can realise the beauty of fried chops--  
The beauties of a camp with ne'er a sign of feed--  
The beauties of the scorpion the lively centipede.

And you, my noble nag, you've never yet been stalled,  
What though your back be blistered, and belly rather galled.  
You cannot speak your joys, nor use a great big D.,  
Though I can swear at you, you cannot swear at me.

Then let us off together; I'll mount upon your back,  
And soon the sheep we'll drive along the dusty track ;  
A canter first, then walk-eight hours before we rest,  
No matter what folk say, a bushman's life the best.

## **SNOOKS**

### **Notes**

**From the Queensland Newspaper The Western Champion 4 Jul 1884 Page 2.**

### **A Case Of On The Dole (1933)**

Come listen to my song, and I won't detain you long;  
To explain the present poverty I'll try.  
Even if you don't agree, you'll have better sight to see,  
If I help to wipe the cobwebs from your eye.

Soon we're coming to the end, when we'll have no cash to spend,  
Now the Banks have put the country up the pole.

But don't make a mistake, to their system you'll awake,  
With the landlord and the tenants on the dole.

Chorus:-

Soon we'll all be on the dole,  
Yes, we'll all be on the dole,  
Now the Banks have put the country up the pole.

So we can lie in bed all day  
Because we'll have no rent to pay  
With the landlord and the tenants' on the dole.

Now it's one of Nature's laws to eradicate the cause,  
And time alone will then effect a cure,  
So we human beings must try, and that remedy apply  
To the social ills the people now endure.

The real gist of this song is that our distribution's wrong,  
Because, we allow the Banks to hold the sway;  
Helped by Plutocratic law, which really is the cause  
Of the poverty we're suffering today.

Soon we'll all be on the dole,  
Yes, we'll all be on the dole,  
If the usurious Banks we can't control,  
We have to change the laws  
Which we all know are the cause  
Why the people, of to-day are on the dole.

With each country's goods o'erflowing  
yet each nation now is owing  
More interest than it's possible to pay;  
Yet those Banking Thieves how cry we'll be wealthy by-and-by

If we only work an extra hour each day.  
He'll deserve the nation's thanks who  
Takes the power from the Banks:  
Then the help of the machines can be enjoyed.

With the hours cut down to four the depression will be o'er  
And ne'er again will we have unemployed.  
Then we'll all get off the dole.

Yes, we'll all get off the dole,  
With the people all united as a whole.  
Preach and practice what is right  
And put the Profiteers to flight  
And ne'er again will we go on the dole.

--"Mulga Mick," Glenorchy.

### Notes

**Like many songs and poems of the Great Depression this example has uncanny resonance today, Profiteers, Userous Banks, Banking Thieves, Plutocratic Law, Governments which caved in to corporate greed in the expectation more funds will come their way at election time -- all leading to increased poverty and leading to demands for an urgent change in direction.**

**The Female Rambling Sailor Catherine Peaty**

Come all ye maidens far and near  
And listen to my ditty  
It was near Gravesend there lived a maid  
She was both young and pretty

Her true love he was pressed away  
And drowned in a foreign sea  
Which caused this fair maid for to say  
I'll be a female sailor

With jacket blue and trousers white  
Just like a sailor neat and tight  
Sure the sea it was the heart's delight  
Of the female rambling sailor

When in storm upon the raging sea  
She was ready at her station  
And her mind was as calm as calm could be  
She loved her occupation

When in the calm this damsel young  
She charmed the sailors with her tongue  
She walked the deck and swiftly sang  
The female rambling sailor  
This maiden gay a wager lay  
She would go aloft with any  
From stem to stern she freely went  
Where times she had been many

From stem to stern she freely goes  
She braves all dangers fears no foes  
And soon you'll hear of the overthrow  
Of the female rambling sailor

From stem to stern she freely went  
Where times she had been many  
Her hold it slipped and down she fell  
And calmly bid this world farewell

When a snowy white breast in sight it came  
It appeared to be a female frame  
And Rebecca Young it was the name  
Of the female rambling sailor

O come all ye maidens far and near  
Come listen to my story  
Her body's anchored in the ground  
Let's hope her soul's in glory

May the willows wave around her grave  
And around the laurels planted  
May the roses sweet grow at the feet  
Of the one that was undaunted

May the roses sweet grow at the feet  
Of the one that was undaunted  
As fair a maid as the sun shone on  
Was the female rambling sailor

On the river Fame she was known well

Few sailors there could her excel  
One tear let fall for the last fairwell  
Of a female rambling sailor

### Notes

**Collected by Bob Michell and Norm O'Connor from Catherine Peatey, who sings it on: Traditional Singers and Musicians in Victoria , Wattle Records 1963. In his notes on the record Edgar Waters writes "The story of a girl dressing as a man and serving as a sailor in the navy is certainly not an uncommon one in English broadside ballads of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."**

### A Carpenters Lament (1890)

My mate and myself are two,  
Including the dogs we are four,  
We live in a place called Cabbage Tree Hut,  
A frame and a sack for a door.  
We work in the wood line ourselves,  
The dogs do the best that they can,  
Usually nothing, or sleeping about--  
What a vantage they have over man.

Our hours are from daylight to dark,  
To do all that can be done ;  
Short time for cooking or anything else,  
' Smoko ' or spells we have none :  
From morning to night it is saw,  
And hammer, and gauge, and plane,  
Cut tenons, and mortice, and all sorts of things--  
Is not carpent'ring a weary game?

What a lonesome place our ' Bush ' is,  
We can't go to the ' Royal ' or ' Vic.,'  
Three miles from a ' pub ' what a glorious rub !  
Worse luck if we fellows got sick.  
'Twouldn't be so bad, I'm quite sure,  
If a bottle or two we had here,  
But we haven't, and there is the mischief  
Not even a drop of good beer.

Our bed is just six feet by six,  
Our table just four feet by three,  
Two pannikins; plates, two knives and two forks,  
A frying pan, and two billies for tea,  
A package of candles: one bar of soap,  
Two tins for the salt and the pepper,  
A bass full of tools, two pencils and rules,  
Completes our stock to the letter.

Our shanty is not too well built,  
And the wind blows so keenly at night,  
The fire is all out I'm afraid,  
And the candle will scarce keep alight,  
The deuce take the bush work, I say  
Now ain't it a jolly fine treat--  
The billy capsized, no baker, today,  
And the dog has run off with the meat.

### Notes

**From the NSW newspaper the Illustrated Sydney News Thursday 1 May 1890, p. 16.**

### **Another Trawler Song (1916)**

The very best ship that ever I knew,  
Ah-way O ! to me O,  
Was a big black trawler with a deep sea crew-  
Sing, my bullies, let the bullgine run.  
There was one old devil with a broken nose,  
Ah-way O, to me O,  
He was four score years, as I suppose-  
But sing, my bullies, let the bullgine run.  
He was wrecked last March in a Polar storm,  
Ah-way O, to me O,  
And we asked the old cripple if his feet was warm-  
Sing, my bullies, let the bullgine run.  
And the old, old devil (he was, ninety at the most),  
Ah-way O, to me O,  
Roars, "Ay, warm as a lickel piece of toast"-  
So sing, my bullies, let the bullgine run.  
"For I soaked my sea-boots and my dungarees,  
Ah-way O, to me O,  
In the good salt water that the Lord don't freeze"-  
Oh, sing, ay bullies, let the bullgine run.

**-Alfred Noyes.**

### **Notes**

**From the Adelaide Newspaper The register  
15 Dec 1916 p. 9.**

### **A Toast to Erin (1913)**

There's a little green isle in the midst of the ocean,  
The fame of her beauty is known far and near ;  
By her children she's loved with the deepest devotion.  
For her sorrows and wrongs they've shed many a tear ;  
And though her oppressors doomed many to exile,  
Her struggles for freedom they watch from afar,  
And greet with delight each successful endeavour,  
For the song of their hearts is still "Erin go Bragh."

Then here's a toast to Erin-  
"May every breeze that blows  
Waft blessings to the dear old land  
Where the little shamrock grows-  
The land of saints and heroes.  
Of knights and warriors bold,  
Whose sons still fight for God and right  
As their fathers fought of old."

Blue are the skies o'er this dear little island,  
The sun seems to shine here more bright than elsewhere,  
Nor slavery's chains nor the sword of the tyrant  
Can break her proud spirit or make her less fair.  
Though war's cruel blight waste her green smiling valleys  
Till she sinks 'neath her burden of sorrow and pain,  
'Tis but for a time, soon her fainting heart rallies,  
And, defiant and lovely, she rises again.

Then here's a toast, etc.

Oh ! well might her children have wept for old Erin  
Through her dark night of sorrow so drearily long,  
Well might her exiled sons lovingly yearn  
For the dear land they left in the years that are gone ;  
But no more need they weep, for the day is now dawning  
When Freedom at last o'er their country shall reign,  
And her heart will rejoice at her children returning,  
And she'll take her proud place as  
"A NATION AGAIN."

Then here's a toast, etc.

## Notes

**From the Victorian Newspaper The Advocate 25 Oct 1913 p. 15.**

**It is interesting that this song was published in Australia a couple of years before the 1916 Easter Rebellion.**

**That day I will be free (1835)**

### **ON FREEDOM. TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUNYIP.**

Sir.- In the year 1835 an individual, whose name I will not mention, but who was designated as "Frank, the Poet," appeared at the Police Court in Sydney ; and being a most incorrigible offender-having, by various sentences, accumulated enough punishment. to last the lives of three men-he was thus addressed by the presiding magistrate :-

MAGISTRATE-When do you think you will obtain your freedom ? You are constantly appearing here and receiving additional sentences.

FRANK-That I can easily answer, your Worship.

MAGISTRATE-I rather think it will be a most difficult matter for you to do, as it is almost beyond calculation. FRANK-Not so, your Worship; for if you will allow me I will tell you.

MAGISTRATE-Well, when ?

Frank's statement was as follows, and only now sees the light for the first time :-

When Sydney town, of high renown.

Goes to the Windsor races ;

When the Surrey hills, and Barker's mills,  
Do visibly change places.

When New South Wales is blessed by God-

Which I think will never be-

And branches new grace Aaron's rod,  
That day I will be free.

When Rossi-Bowman, and such men,  
Show to poor convicts justice ;

And when the world is taxed again  
By Caesar, famed Augustus ;  
When David's bear and Balaam's ass  
Dine with King Solomon's bee ;

And when Lord Farnham goes to mass-

That day I will be free.

When horses all wear Hessian boots,  
And mountains are brought low ;  
When bullocks play on German flutes,  
And lilies cease to blow.

When geese like Presbyterians preach,  
And truth is proved a libel ;  
When heaven is within our reach,  
And Deists love the Bible.

When Britain's isle goes to the Nile,  
Or visits Londonderry ;  
And the Hill of Howth goes to the South,

Or to the County Kerry ;  
When Dublin town, of good renown,  
Pays a visit to the Dee ;

And when millstones on the ocean float-  
That day will see me free.  
Magistrate-That is about the time.

Take him away for another twelve months.  
C. L.

Notes

**John Meredith and Rex Whalan write about MacNamara's many punishments in 1835 including one 12 month sentence For Assaulting a constable on April 16th, the young Irishman was awarded 12 months work in irons, but this did little to quell his spirit, for exactly a month later he was flogged again. On this occasion it was 36 lashes for "refusing to work and insolence".  
[Frank the Poet p. 6.]**

**If this poem was written in 1835 it predates a very similar petition/poem in the Trimmingham manuscript, "For the Company Underground", by four years. The closeness of the two compositions is remarkable and the fact that this "only now sees the light for the first time", thirty years after it was composed on the spot and four years after MacNamara's death suggests that his verse quickly spread orally rather than in print.**

It could have been titled On Freedom like letter to the editor, but I have chosen to echo the poem by titling it "The Day I Will Be Free". It has not been cited before and has lain hidden in the Bunyip for 148 years, freed it seems by the electronic revolution.

**From the South Australian Newspaper The Bunyip 12 dec 19 p 18**

### **A Cane-Cutter's Song (1911)**

Light, light light !  
From the East is glowing.  
Beautiful and bright ;  
Time "all hands" were going.

Tramp, tramp, tramp !  
To the fields are marching  
Men from tented camp,  
'Neath the trees o'er-arching. ? ' ~

See, see, see !

All the boys are coming  
From each house and humpy,  
Lads who're late are running,  
Chop, chop, chop !

Hear the cane knives ringing !  
Harvesting the crop ;  
No time for singing.  
Swish, swish, swish !

Hear the cane leaves rustling ;  
Only thing we wish  
Is more time for hustling.  
Load, load, load !

Every creaky waggon.  
Send 'em on the road  
With their sides "a-saggin."  
Stop, stop, stop !

All may smoke a minute !  
Give your face a neaded mop ;  
Yes, "'all -hands" are in it.  
Hop, hop, hop !

Up again and at 'em ;  
See how lively you can hop  
Round the sticks and 'flat 'em.'  
Pile, pile, pile !

Every dray and truck ;  
Break, their axels on the road,  
If we've any luck.

Time, time, time !  
Come along to dinner,  
First wash off the red-soil grime,  
Every lab'ring sinner.

Night, night, night !  
O'er the fields is falling ;  
Whilst there's any light  
None forsakes his callinng.

Sing, sing sing !  
When the "season's" o'er,  
Then is heard the echoes ring  
All among the clover.

Pay, pay, pay ! Bob and Mick and Sid,  
Makings for each working day  
Average a "quid."

Help, boys help ! Mates are in the wards  
Church and charities need 'help'  
From your fair rewards.

**CHAS. A. PERRY.**



## Notes

From the Queensland newspaper the Tuesday 18 April 1911, p. 3.

### The Bluejacket's Lament (1893) [By Hugh Kalyptus.]

Well, shiver my timbers !  
If this ain't a go,  
Laid up like a sheer hulk,  
Now money is low  
In the Government locker.  
And such a craft, too !  
Our gunboat Protector,  
Looking neat as if new.

Her decks holystoned,  
And her rigging all taut,  
Her spars of the trimmest,  
Her ropes the best sort,  
Ear hull so well painted,  
Her guns just as clean  
As the best man--o'--war  
In the pay of the Queen.

Well, shiver my tops'ls !  
And such a fine craft  
To be hauled on one side  
like a lumberman's raft;  
To lie like a hulk  
In that row they call Rotten,  
And her fine well--served ropes  
To get flimsy as cotton.

For the shoregoing lubbers  
To point at and jeer.  
As fast, to a stream buoy  
She'll heave, swing, and sheer  
With the tide, leaving barnacles  
Clogging her keel,  
From her stem to her starnpost,  
From forefoot to heel.

The ship-shape Protector,  
The craft we're so proud of--  
The gunboat the people  
In praises spoke load of.  
I love all the brasswork  
I've polished so clearly--  
I love all the halliards  
I've pulled at so cheer'ly.

I love every timber  
I've payed with old oakum.  
And the men whose emotions  
Will pretty nigh choke 'em.  
We have stuck to the vessel  
In rough and fine weather,  
And fought her until  
Not a plank held together.

And now she's to lie  
like a log in the water,  
Because them dashed Rooshens  
Ain't anxious for slaughter.  
And now all the shore going lubbers  
Will mock her--  
I wish they was all  
In Dave Jones's sea locker.

### **Notes**

**From the Adelaide Newspaper The evening Journal Jul 1893 p. 5.**

### **Cantering Song (1946)**

Let me sing you a song  
As I cantor along,  
Heigh, hi ho ;  
Down the roads which entwine  
Through the coolabahs fine.  
Heigh, hi ho.  
I will singas I ride.  
Of the people who dwell  
Far away from the tide  
Which the fact'ry hands swell  
As they shuffle and slide  
Past the bundy clock's bell.  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
I will sing of the rains  
That give drink to the plains.  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
And I'll think as I croon  
Of a Warrego moon,  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
I will voice, if I feel  
Of the pastures and sheep--  
Of the parents who kneel  
For their children who weep ;  
Or the dingoes that steal  
While the station hands sleep.  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
While my gelding keeps time  
With my cantering rhyme.  
Heigh, hi, ho,  
I will sing of the place  
Where the kangaroos chase,  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
There, the plain turkeys rise  
From the Mitchell grass tall,  
With an air of surprise,  
Should a preying hawk fall  
Like a stone from the skies  
On a singing lark small.  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
Where the brolgas parade  
In their gay masquerade,  
Heigh, hi, ho,  
Is the land of the horse,  
And of stockmen, of course,  
Heigh, hi, ho.

It's a land where a friend  
Will remain to the last ;  
Where the toughest men bend  
If the bibbing is fast.  
And a coward will end  
Like a kite in a blast.  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
Yes, I'll sing of the land  
Where they earmark and brand,  
Heigh, hi, ho,  
And the musterers ride  
Through the scrub paddocks wide.  
Heigh, hi, ho.  
I will sing of the streams  
Where the cattle herds graze.  
And a sunlight that beams  
During most of the days--  
it's a sweet land of dreams  
Where my mem'ry oft strays.  
Heigh, ho, heigh.

**-"Ballarat Jim."**  
**Brisbane, 9/12/46.**

#### **Notes**

**From the Queensland Newspaper The Worker 16 Dec 1946 p. 4.**

#### **A Great Aboriginal Work (1915)**

Brewarrina

**(By J.M., in the "Sydney Morning Herald.")**

To those who may not be already aware of the fact--Brewarrina is 518 miles from Sydney, and is one of the terminuses of the Western Line Bourke, being the other. Above Brewarrina, the river on which it is situated is known as the Barwon; whilst below the town, or in reality, "The Fisheries," it is known as the Darling. "The Fisheries" at Brewarrina is one of the great, if not the greatest, aboriginal works in our island continent. At the town, a great, natural bar, or weir, of solid rock stretches across the river in an almost straight line from side to side. From the top of this rocky bar, down and across the river for a distance of over 300 yards, "The Fisheries", extends, "The Fisheries" is comprised in a number of small yards, or compounds, having openings in their lower or down stream sides. These yards, the walls of which have for their foundation the rocky bed of the river, are built of loose stones, which are piled one on the other--no cement or binding being used. They occupy the whole of the river beds in which they occur. At summer level the river at "The Fisheries" (running for the most part through a number of channels,) varies from 100 to slightly over 200 yards. From the stream above this great, natural weir to the termination, or lower end, of "The Fisheries," there is a fall of 12 feet This fall occurring in such a short distance causes the water to rush with a mighty roar over the rocks, and through these rocky compounds, with the result that "miniature rapids are formed. In the night, when all is still, the sound of the rushing waters is audible for a considerable distance. The aboriginals, at some remote period, discovering that it was the habit of the fish to swim up-stream when the river began to rise, built "The Fisheries." The fish (owing principally to the formation of their gills) when they feel the first "fresh" start up-stream. As the water rises, they swim from the lower to the higher enclosures. They then continue to swim in the vicinity till the river rises high enough to enable them to clear the great, natural weir, or till they are captured which is the fate of those which do not succeed in gaining the river above. When the river eventually falls below the lowest tier of rocky yards, the aboriginals wade into the water, and, with nets, secure their finny captives. Great hauls are thus made. The most prized fish is the cod, which in these waters grows to a great size, some turning the scale at over 100lb.

From the Queensland Newspaper The Northern Miner 28 Jun 1913 Page 4.

### **Eugowra Rocks**

It's all about bold Frank Gardiner with the devil in his eye  
He said "We've work before us lads we've got to do or die  
So blacken up your faces before the dead of night  
And its over by Eugowra Rocks we'll either fall or fight"

Chorus

You can sing of Johnny Gilbert Dan Morgan and Ben Hall  
But the bold and reckless Gardiner he's the boy to beat them all

We'll stop the Orange escort with powder and with ball  
We'll shoot the coach to pieces and we'll down the peelers all  
We'll lift the diggers' money we'll collar all their gold  
So mind your guns are killers now my comrades true and bold

So now off go the rifles the battle has begun  
The escort started running boys all in the setting sun  
The robbers seized their plunder so saucy and so bold  
And they're riding from Eugowra Rocks encumbered with their gold

And as with savage laughter they left that fatal place  
They cried "We've struck bonanza boys we've won the steeplechase!"  
And Gardiner their leader he shouted a loud "Hooray  
I think we've made our fortunes at Eugowra Rocks today"

### **Notes**

**From the Sydney Gasette Tuesday 26 May 1829, p. 4.  
Composed by "M" (Rev. John McGarvie)**

**Emu Plains--a NSW agricultural penal colony for convicts, 35 miles west of Sydney.**

### **The Boundary Rider (1945)**

No kingly robes ere mine to wear,  
No foes have I to fear.  
No carping tongue nor searching care  
Can ever reach me here.  
No ribbon'd stars or velvet bands,  
No crown of gleaming gold.  
No humble footman humbly stands  
My stirrup bare to hold.

Beside me stands my trusty Bay  
With bridle trading free,  
And fences stretching far away  
Are calling now to me :  
Keep all your leagues of trackless sea,  
Your foreign lands afar,  
The world is wide enough for me  
Where boundary fences are.

Let music of the sweetest strains  
The halls of cities fill,

The sound of bells and hobble chains  
To me is sweeter still.  
When daylight fades and shadows hide  
The ranges faint and low,  
All lonely thoughts I cast aside  
And set my pipe aglow.

Oh ! give me acres wide and green,  
And freedom of the West-  
a little hut kept neat and clean,  
And you can keep the rest.  
Where cloud-fields change and sunsets hue,  
And plains are wide and free,  
Where stars are bright and skies are blue  
Tis good enough for me.

**Hughenden. BERT DUNNE.**

#### **Notes**

**From the Queensland Newspaper 28 Nov 1945 p. 6.**

#### **The Waradgery Mary Gilmore**

Harried we were, and spent,  
broken and falling,  
ere as the cranes we went,  
crying and calling.

Summer shall see the bird  
backward returning;  
never shall there be heard  
those, who went yearning.

Emptied of us the land;  
ghostly our going;  
fallen like spears the hand  
dropped in the throwing.

We are the lost who went,  
like the cranes, crying;  
hunted, lonely and spent  
broken and dying.

#### **Strike by Chinese Shearers (1894)**

At Warrah station, in the Moree district, New South Wales, the Chinese shearers recently struck because two non-unionist white men were put on, and the latter had to be discharged before work could be resumed.

#### **Notes**

**From the Queensland Newspaper The Warwick Examiner and Times 19 Dec 1894 p. 3.**

#### **China Speaks (1938) By "Den" C.J. Denis**

In his recent Reichstag speech Herr Hitler is reported to have said that China was not strong enough mentally to exist in a modern world.

I WAS here when the world was young, as men count young.

Watched nation after nation rise in pride,  
Seen pearl on pearl of patting centuries strung  
Upon Time's abacus and pushed aside,  
Heard thro' the ages many a conqueror  
Thunder in arrogance upon my door,  
Marked his pride pass as lotus petals fold.  
I should be here still when the world grows old.  
CALMLY I slept, awakened, slept again,  
Counting the aeons as the day and night,  
Seen Egypt, Babylon, Greece, Rome and Spain,  
The Western peoples rise up in their might.  
Dreaming, I marked the clamour, heard their boasts;  
Tartar and Manchu, Genghis Khan's vast hosts  
Have clouded for an hour this placid brow,  
Raging against me; yet where are they now?  
GONE with the yellowed leaves of yesteryear.  
I, who have watched a world work out its fate,  
Heard all the tales of triumph, hate, and fear,  
Have learned the gift of patience; I can wait.  
Wait as I waited to see young lands plot  
To rediscover arts I'd long forgot;  
These who bowed down before barbarian kings  
When my art, literature, were ancient things.  
STORMED by an Eastern upstart whose queer pride  
Seeks to subdue and bend me to his will,  
Mocked by a Western tyrant who'd deride  
My ancient wisdom; so I dream on still.  
Gadflies, exulting for one summer's day  
Disturb my dreams; but these shall drift away  
With olden echoes sounding down the past.  
China, unconquered, lives on, ageless, vast.

### Notes

**From the Brisbane Newspaper the Queenslander 9 Mar 1938 p. 3.**

This poem was published the same year that the wharfies of Port Kembla in Wollongong refused to load BHP pig iron on to the British owned Dalfram bound for Japan.

**The Dalfram dispute was part of a growing movement in Australia against the Japanese brutal invasion of China. Hence the line "an Eastern upstart whose queer pride" in the final verse.**

### Cockies of Bungaree

Now all you blokes take my advice and do your daily toil  
But dont go out to Bungaree to work in the chocolate soil  
For the days they are so long me boys, they'd break your heart in two  
And if ever you work for Cocky Bourke, you very soon will know

### Chorus

Oh we used to go to bed you know a little bit after dark  
The room we used to sleep in it was just like Noah's Ark  
There were dogs and cats and mice and cats and pigs and poulteree  
But I'll never forget the time we had while down in Bungaree

Oh the first thing Monday morning sure to work we had to go

My noble cocky says to me "Get up you're rather slow"  
The moon was shining gloriously and the stars were out you see

And I thought before the sun would rise I'd die in Bungaree

Oh he called me to my supper at half-past eight or nine  
He called me to my breakfast before the sun did shine  
And after tea was over all with a merry laugh  
The old cocky says to me "We'll cut a bit of chaff"

Now when you are chaff cutting boys isn't it a spell  
Yes by jove it is says I and it's me that knows it well  
For many of those spells with me they disagree  
For I hate the jolly night work that they do in Bungaree

**This version collected by Norm O'Connor from Simon McDonald of Creswick, Victoria**

### **The Colliers' Strike Song (1885)**

**A Song by Melinda Kendall**

Come all ye jolly colliers, and colliers' wives as well,  
And listen to my ditty, for the truth I mean to tell;  
It's of a colliers' wage dispute, is the burden of my song;  
I mean to cheer you up, if it won't detain you long.  
For masters they are grumbling, in country and in town,  
They want to starve poor miners, by cutting wages down;

But if you stick together, and every one be true,  
You are sure to be triumphant singing cock-a-doodle-doo.

#### **Chorus:**

For masters they are grumbling, in country and in town,  
They want to starve poor miners, by cutting wages down;  
But if you stick together, and every one be true,  
You are sure to be triumphant singing cock-a-doodle-doo.

The miners of Mount Kembla, oh! loudly how they shout  
Against this drop of ten per cent., they're right without a doubt;  
In this happy, glorious country, man is treated like a Turk,  
Where the masters get the profit, and the miners get the work.  
We only want fair wages, we only want fair play,  
We know we ought to have a good dinner every day;  
But what are we to do when the butcher he comes round,  
If we let our masters drop two shillings in the pound.

Just ask a blessed woman what she is going to do,  
From the present price of wages we cannot save a screw  
With a lot of little children, with pieces, hungry teeth;  
If they drop our wages, they must also drop the price of beef.  
For every woman knows the task she has to meet,  
With a lot of little mouths, and nothing much to eat;  
But it can't be very different, it's very plain to tell,  
Where the masters get the oyster, and the miners get the shell.

I would have you stick together, and have a good go in,  
Be true to one another, and I'm sure you're bound to win;  
Though money is so valuable - and so is labour, too  
The working man is worth whatever he may do.  
And I hope that every woman will tell her husband too;  
She will do her very best to help him to keep true;  
They will be sure to raise the wine, and make the masters say  
"The devil's in the women, for they never will give way."

**M. K. Melinda Kendal**  
**Notes**

**From the Wollongong Newspaper the Illawarra Mercury Saturday 3 October 1885 p.**

**Convict Maid**

Ye London maids attend to me  
While I relate my misery  
Through London streets I oft have strayed  
But now I am a Convict Maid

In innocence I once did live  
In all the joy that peace could give  
But sin my youthful heart betrayed  
And now I am a Convict Maid

To wed my lover I did try  
To take my master's property  
So all my guilt was soon displayed  
And I became a Convict Maid

Then I was soon to prison sent  
To wait in fear my punishment  
When at the bar I stood dismayed  
Since doomed to be a Convict Maid

At length the Judge did me address  
Which filled with pain my aching breast  
To Botany Bay you will be conveyed  
For seven years a Convict Maid

For seven long years oh how I sighed  
While my poor mother loudly cried  
My lover wept and thus he said  
May God be with my Convict Maid

To you that here my mournful tale  
I cannot half my grief reveal  
No sorrow yet has been portrayed  
Like that of the poor Convict Maid

Far from my friends and home so dear  
My punishment is most severe  
My woe is great and I'm afraid  
That I shall die a Convict Maid

I toil each day in grief and pain  
And sleepless through the night remain  
My constant toils are unrepaid  
And wretched is the Convict Maid

Oh could I but once more be free  
I'd never again a captive be  
But I would seek some honest trade  
And never become a Convict Maid

**The Cornish Miner (1871)**

The following stanzas are taken from



Rhymes from Cornwall, by the author of  
The Yal of Lanherne, recently published in London :--

'Tis his to find the glittering ore,  
For ages hid in earth's dark womb ;  
To creep and climb, and dig and bore,  
And build himself a living tomb,  
Some six feet high, some four feet wide,  
And reached o'er depths that few would stride.

If England's Church is for the poor,  
The miner scarcely knows the way ;  
His chapel seen on every moor  
From Hingston Down to far Cairn Brea ;  
Built by his own and comrades' hands,  
The plain and lowly temple stands.

What's more, he both can pray and preach ;  
It was Saint Wesley told him how ;  
His voice is strong, and plain his speech,  
His style not graceful, I allow ;  
Much like the manner it may be  
Of the poor folk at Galilee.

He takes his text from the same book  
As the great lawn sleeved doctors read ;  
A shepherd, but without the crook,  
His sheep are sometimes wild indeed ;  
The outcast often of the poor,  
Too shabby for a Gothic door.

When his work's ended, and he dies.  
Much short of three score years and ten,  
Hundreds, with honest tears and sighs,  
Will gather-- maidens, mothers, men ;  
And as his toil-worn limbs they bring,  
They sing the hymns he loved to sing.

But I've not done with him as yet ;  
He or his seed is in all lands ;  
His hand the Chilian ores must get ;  
On Chimborano's range he stands ;  
Tells where a Cornishman takes hold.  
His arm is strong, though spare his form.

His eye is clear, though pale his cheek ;  
If cold his hand, his heart is warm--  
To find like his you far must seek ;  
Should he get rich in other zones,  
To Cornwall he brings back his bones.

## Notes

**From the NSW Newspaper The Newcastle Chronicle 29 Jun 1871 p. 4.**

### **The Death of Ned Kelly**

Ned Kelly fought the rich men in country and in town,  
Ned Kelly fought the troopers until they ran him down;  
He thought that he had fooled them, for he was hard to find,

But he rode into Glenrowan with the troopers close behind.

"Come out of that, Ned Kelly," the head zarucker calls,  
"Come out and leave your shelter, or we'll shoot it full of holes."  
"If you'd take me," says Kelly, "that's not the speech to use;  
I've lived to spite your order, I'll die the way I choose!"

"Come out of that, Ned Kelly, you done a lawless thing;  
You robbed and fought the squatters, Ned Kelly, you must swing."  
"If those who rob," says Kelly, "are all condemned to die,  
You had better hang the squatters, for they've stolen more than I."

"You'd best come out, Ned Kelly, you done the government wrong,  
For you held up the coaches that bring the gold along."  
"Go tell your boss," says Kelly, "who lets the rich go free,  
That your bloody rich man's government will never govern me."

They burned the roof above him, they fired the wails about,  
And head to foot in armour, Ned Kelly stumbled out;  
Although his guns were empty he made them turn and flee,  
But one came in behind him and shot him in the; knee.

And so they took Ned Kelly and hanged him in the jail,  
For he fought singlehanded although in iron mail.  
And no man singlehanded can hope to break the bars;  
It's a thousand like Ned Kelly who will hoist the flag of stars.

## Notes

**Written by poet and folklorist John Manifold. In the folk revival this song was often published as a traditional song. Bill Berry tells me Manifold wrote this song when he was 14.**

## Droving (1902)

I want to tell a droving tale,  
But what is there in droving ?  
You know the subject's getting stale  
Like aircraft or shoving.

I took a job with Broadman, and  
We had to start from Flinders ;  
Track ran through the basalt land  
Where all the grass was cinders.

The brumbies threw me every day,  
I never was good looking,  
But being broken in the fray  
They put one on to cooking.

Now cooks must drive the ration cart,  
I drove two days in tandem ;  
They struck a boulder at the start,  
I couldn't hold or hand 'em.

The shafts "went snap, the axle broke,  
The reins got round my shoulders,  
And like a rainbow every spoke  
Splintered against the boulders.

And then it rained a tropic rain.

The dough I set was spewing,  
I cursed the luck for I was vain  
Of yeast, all my own brewing.

One arm was broke, my legs were numb.  
The dough plastered all o'er me,  
It filled my mouth so I was dumb  
As on a dray they bore me.

As I prostrate beneath the heat  
Felt all my soul a-driftng,  
My heart beat high with vain conceit  
To know the dough was lifting.

And when I saw the doctor bloke  
In Richmond town, he swore,  
Says he, "He's right there's nothing broke,  
Just dip him in the bore.

**Duchess. C. Newton.**

### **Notes**

**From the Queensland Newspaper The Northern Miner 21 Jan 1931 p. 3.**

### **A New Irish Melody (1845)**

**(Air--"Brian O'Lin.")**

Daniel O'Connell had no mischief to brew,  
So he started Repeal just for something to do,  
And the watch-word like mad through Hibernia ran ;  
"Och ! the rint is a mighty fine income," says Dan.

Daniel O'Connell found nothing would do  
But to keep up a regular hullabaloo,  
Till he found himself frying like fat in a pan ;  
"Faith I'm thinking I'd like to be out," says Dan.

Daniel O'Connell said rather too much,  
About blackguards, and tyrants, and Sassenachs and such,

Till the government shut up the turbulent man ;  
"Arrah ! here's a gintale situation," says Dan.  
Daniel O'Connell had friends to his back,  
So he goes out of prison again in a crack ;  
And he now is exactly just where he began,  
"Arrah ! What in the world will do now ?" says Dan.

### **Notes**

**From the NSW Newspaper The Sentinel 2 Apr 1845 p. 4.**

### **The Italian Labour Song (1894)**

For some time past, says the Westminster Budget, a song called the "Inno dei Lavorttori," has been freely sold and sung in the streets of Italy. It is a sort of "Marseillaise" of the Italian workmen, and well expresses the discontent from which they are all suffering owing to oppressive taxation and grinding military oppression.

Within the last few weeks the singing of this song has been prohibited, and also its sale; but both still proceed  
freely notwithstanding the frequent arrests  
(From the Italian of TURATI. Adaption in English by ZANOBI STEFANI.)

Brothers, sisters, wives and friends,  
Muster strong, your force display !  
On our Freedom's flag resplends  
Bright the sun of coming day !  
Through dire suffering and scorn  
We have pledged a sacred vow ;  
See, there dawns the welcome morn !  
Who shall prove a traitor now ?

Chorus.

We of labour the true worth  
Must ensure as sterling right !  
Through it live on this our earth.  
Or die for it in the fight !

On the rice field, in the mine,  
They have kept us, starved us bare !  
As from herds of sheep and swine  
Have they squeezed from us their fare.  
Yes, these lords for whom we fought  
Of our bread have robbed us ever ;  
They made promises, but nought  
Came of their fine words--no, never !

Curse the "capital" that finding  
Ever some contrivance new  
Gave them power for better grinding  
Us, of whom they thus need few.  
With the proper rule of Labour,  
For which now we're doomed to fight,  
Civil feuds will cease, and ever  
Right will triumph over might.

We're but rabbles when asunder,  
But united fierce can strike ;  
Ours shall be the burst of thunder,  
Brave in heart and soul alike.  
All is sweat that streaked our brow.  
We can smite and all renew.  
Let our watchword be "On now"--  
Far too harsh our tortures grew.

Curse the man who dares to grovel  
In the midst of festive scenes.  
Whilst we poor within our hovels  
Friendless pine, bereft of means !  
Curse the man whose eyes are dry  
When he views his brothers' throes !  
Curse them, too, who raise the cry  
Of a truce with heartless foes ?

Let us cleave each impious bar  
O'er the double hemisphere.  
Foreign foes are not so far

See ye not they all are here ?  
War to war's relentless rale !  
Death to ruthless reign of death !  
Let us smash oppression's tool  
In the smell of Freedom's breath.

All ye daughter, sisters, wives,  
Who our martyrdom did share,  
Forced to gladden once the lives  
Of our tyrants, yet so fair,  
Never now smile on the throne  
Of the servile recreant throng !  
Smile on us, to Freedom prove--  
With your love we're doubly strong.

If Equality's no yoke,  
Nor Fraternity a snare ;  
If to fight and rend our yoke  
Be a glorious deed to dare  
Then let us cry, strong and loud,  
"Serfs though we poor people all,  
Yet 'gainst idle lords so proud  
We will fight, whate'er befall"

**Notes From the Queensland Newspaper The Worker 17 Nov 1894 p. 2.**

### **The Hungry Mile (1928)**

They tramp there in their legions on the mornings dark and cold.  
To beg the right to slave for bread from Sydney's lords of gold :  
They toil and sweat in slavery, 'twould make the Devil smile,  
To see the Sydney wharfies tramping the hungry mile.

On ships from all the seas they toil, that others of their kind.  
May never know the pinch of want nor feel the misery blind :  
That makes the lives of men a hell in those conditions vile :  
That are the hopeless lot of those who tramp the hungry mile.

The slaves of men who know no thought of anything but gain.  
Who wring their brutal profits from the blood and sweat and pain ;  
Of all the disinherited that slave and starve the while  
Upon the ships beside the wharves, along the hungry mile.

But every stroke or that grim lash, that sears the soul of men.  
With interest due from years gone by shall be paid back again :  
To those who drive these wretched slaves to build the golden pile.  
And blood shall blot the memory out--of Sydney's hungry mile.

The day will come, aye, come it must, when these same slaves shall rise,  
And through the revolution's smoke, ascending to the skies,  
The master's fare shell show the fear he hides behind his smile.  
Of these, his slaves, who on that day shall storm the hungry mile.

And when world grows wiser and all men at last are free.  
When none shall feel the hunger nor tramp in misery.  
To the right to slave for bread, the children then may smile,  
At those strange tales they tell of what was once the hungry mile.

**NO. 2701 W. W. F. of A.  
Paddington.**

## Notes

**W. W. F. of A. is the Waterside Workers of Australia and this famous poem was the work of the restless waterside worker Ernest Antony who published his slim poetry book under the title "The Hungry Mile." The Hungry Mile is commemorated in the Rocks area of Sydney with a road sign.**

**From the NSW Newspaper The Labor Daily 14 Dec 1912 p. 1.**

### **FROM THE FRONT. – SOLDIER'S NO-CONSCRIPTION SONG.**

The following lines are sent to us for publication by Private A. J. Hewitt, Anzac Mounted Division, Egypt, and are interesting as showing the feeling of many of our soldiers at the front on the Conscription issue:—

We don't want Conscription out here, Mr. Hughes.  
This war, O Hughesie, we are not going to lose.  
This talk about Conscription gets right on our nerves, While the volunteer fights for the country he serves.

If a conscript were here, he would get a crook spin:  
If he just said boo-hoo, he'd be bashed on the chin;  
For we're all willing fighters, and don't want chaps here Who would rather be in Australia drinking their beer.

Oh, no, Mr. Hughes, you're on the wrong track ;  
The chaps around the pubs, you should give them a pack, And send them to work in the wheat-fields of grain,  
To ease the poor cockies from troubles and pain.

For we've men enough here to carry things  
So don't pander to Fat, showing the worker your scorn.  
You want, workers to go, Fat's darlings to save ;  
When you talk of Conscription it makes a man rave.  
Australia's best manhood is now over here.

On Anzac they suffered, and fought without beer.  
Your blanky Conscription is rather too late.  
You've just now woke up, when we're at the Huns' gate.  
Why don't you get busy, and collar some spies?

It's through a fat German that Kitchener lies  
In the deep briny ocean. I think it's a shame  
To let Germans roam; but who is to blame?  
Then six o'clock closing of pubs is a joke.

Why not let the beer-soakers have a good soak,  
Then send them to the country, some scrub land to clear, For the brave volunteers who are now over here?  
I think, Mr. Hughes, this is all I will say,

Don't waste money on Conscription, but just raise our pay. For a man that is married, a shilling a day  
Is not much to draw, so, Hughesie, hooray!

**[A. J. Hewitt, 458. Anzac Mounted Division, 2nd L.H.F. Amb., Egypt.]**

**Editor Fined £50.**

Tom Barker, editor of the weekly paper connected with the Industrial Workers of the World organisation, was the defendant in cases' heard at the Central Police Court, Sydney, last Week. He was charged with a breach of the War Precautions Act in printing and publishing a poster contravening section 28 of the Act.

The Crown alleged that on or about July 22 last defendant printed and circulated a poster bearing the following words :—

**Tom Barker Anti Conscription poster**

To Arm's.  
Capitalists, Parsons,  
Politicians, Landlords,  
Newspaper Editors,  
And other Stay-at-home Politicians  
Your Country Needs You in The Trenches.  
Workers, follow your Masters

Evidence for the Crown was that the poster had been displayed in the city and was torn down by order of the Government.

Defendant was fined £50, in default six months in prison and ordered to enter into a recognisance in £100, with sureties in a same amount, to observe regulation No. 28 of the War Precautions Act during the currency of the war in which Great Britain is engaged. Fourteen days were allowed for payment.

A Notice of appeal was given.

A second, information against defendant in the summons jurisdiction was that he had committed a breach of the Printing Act in issuing a poster which did not bear the name of the printer or publisher.

In this case the magistrate, Mr. Macfarlane, imposed a fine of £20, with 6s costs, in default three months imprisonment.