

Volume 1

1. The Exile of Erin, on the Plains of Emu

Printed in the Sydney Gazette 26th May 1829. Words: Reverend John McGarvie. Music: Traditional.

Oh farewell my country, my kindred, my lover ;
Each morning and evening is sacred to you,
While I toil the long day without shelter or cover,
And fell the tall gums the black-butted and blue.
Full often I think of and talk of thee, Erin
Thy heath-covered mountains are fresh in my view,
Thy glens, lakes and rivers, Loch-Con and Kilkerran,
While chained to the soil on the Plains of Emu.

The iron-bark, wattle and gum-trees extending
Their shades under which rests the shy kangaroo,
May be felled by the bless'd who have hope o'er them bending,
To cheer their rude toil tho' far exiled from you.
But, alas! without hope, peace, or honour to grace me,
Each feeling was crushed in the bud as it grew,
Whilst "never" is stamped on the chains that embrace me,
And endless my thrall on the Plains of Emu.

Hard, hard was my fate far from thee to be driven,
Unstained, unconvicted, as sure was my due;
I loved to dispense of the freedom of Heaven,
But force gained the day and I suffer for you.
For this hand never broke what by promise was plighted,
Deep treason this tongue to my country ne'er knew,
No base-earned coin in my coffer e'er lighted,
Yet enchained I remain on the Plains of Emu.

Dear mother thy love from my bosom shall never,
Depart, but shall flourish untainted and true ;
Nor grieve that the base in their malice should ever
Upbraid thee, and none to give malice her due.
Oh spare her the tear and no charge lay upon her,
And weep not my Norah her griefs to renew,
But cherish her age till night closes on her,
And think of the swain who still thinks but of you.

For your names shall live through like writing in water ;
When confined to the tones of the tame cockatoo,
Each wattle scrub echo repeats to the other
Your names and each breeze hears me sighing anew.
For dumb be my tongue, may my heart cease her motion,
If the Isle I forget where my first breath I drew!
Each affection is warmed with sincerest devotion,
For the tie is unbroken on the Plains of Emu.

2. Australian Made

John Dengate

Tune: Harry Axford's Schottische

My father worked in a factory
 And the sheet-steel came from B.H.P.,
 From a rolling mill near the Hunter's mouth
 Or a Kembla furnace further south.
 The steel was all of the finest grade –
 And every inch was Australian made.

Copper and bronze he shaped and wrought.
 The skills he possessed could not be bought.
 To his trade and his union he was true...
 That was the life my father knew.
 When his faults, in Heaven, the angels weighed,
 They found they were all Australian made.
 Oh, the old stone G.P.O. still stands
 Displaying the craft of my father's hands.
 I gaze with pride and my heart responds
 When I see those fittings shaped in bronze:
 My father's work, to the world displayed –
 And every ounce was Australian made.

Though depression and war, he remained
 unbowed;
 He was kind but, oh, he was fiercely proud.
 Cant and privilege he despised...
 He was not a man to be patronised!
 He was not religious ... he never prayed ...

His ethics were all Australian made!
 His speech had the twang of the 'gum tree vowel'.
 He watched T.V. with a brooding scowl.
 When the name of a town was mispronounced,
 He expressed disdain ... like a lion he pounced.
 His indignation was so keen,
 He threw his shoe at the T.V. screen.

If we beat the Poms in a cricket test,
 Joy would reign and our home was blessed.
 But if we lost, at the wall he'd stare
 And we all felt touched by his dark despair –
 In his youth, he had wielded the willow blade
 And the runs he scored were Australian made.
 The only time my father cried
 Was the night when old Ben Chifley died.
 When they buried Ben and the dead march played,
 My father's grief was Australian made.

My father's dead ... as are his mates,
 With their hopes and fears, their loves and hates,
 Different values now prevail –
 What was sacrosanct now is up for sale,
 For the 'global market' requires 'free trade'...
 But not me, mate, I'm Australian made!

3. Song of the Sheet-Metal Worker

Words: John Dengate

Tune: Valley of Knockanure (Traditional)

Oh when I was a boy in Carlingford all sixty years ago,
 The eucalypts grew straight and tall and the creeks did sweetly flow,
 But times were hard when the old man died and the orchard would not pay
 So I left the land for the factory bench and I'm working there still today.

I have earned my bread in the metal shops for forty years and more
 My hands are hard and acid-scarred as the boards on the workshop floor.
 My soul is sheathed in Kembla steel and my eyelids have turned to brass
 And the orchard's gone, and the apple trees where the wind whispered through the grass.

The workshop is my altar where I come to take the host.
 Copper, brass and fine sheet steel-father son and holy ghost.
 The sacramental wine of work grows sour upon my tongue;
 Oh the fruit was sweet on the apple trees when my brothers and I were young.

4. The Roar of the Crowd

Words: Denis Kevans. Music: C & J Roweth.

I heard the roar of the wind, boys, in the mighty, green-shirt pines.
As if the trees were blazing, like a gas-fire in the mines,
The wind's voice kept on mounting against the midnight's face,
I felt that roar well up in me, that roar has left its trace.

I heard the roar at the school-gates, when the holidays began,
When the kids raced out like brumbies, grown men turned and ran,
They raced down through the playground, and they roared out -
"We are free!" Ah, the hungry roar of those school kids, still lives inside of me.

I heard the roar at a football match, as it rose in the crowded stands,
When a winger leaped and took a pass, with magic, outstretched hands,
And the double roar, as he came inside, and flashed across the line,
Ah, that was a roar that stirred my soul, a roar that was a sign.

I heard the roar on the race-course, when the favourite lunged ahead,
And he grabbed the lead, at the leger, and the rest of the field seemed dead,
And the roar for horse and jockey, with the numbers in the frame,
And that was a roar that spurred my blood, and victory was its name.

And I heard the roar of soldiers when they first went to the front,
When war was only a sporting match, and they begged to go on a "stunt",
And they roared: "Come on Australia!" "Wagga!" and "Henty!" and "Hay!"
Ah, that was the roar of the slaughterhouse, and there's nothin' more to say.

And I heard the roar at the Town Hall, when the delegate rose to speak,
A roar to shake the merciless, a roar to raise the weak,
To raise the weak and wandering, to give eyes to the blind,
That was the roar of a tidal wave that was making up its mind.

5. Poor Ned Kelly

Smilin' Billy Blinkhorn

When Ned was a lad sixteen years old
He received a horse that another man stole.
The coppers just to give him time to think,
Gave him three yers hard in the local clink.

Poor Ned Kelly - it's easier to do today!
Poor Ned Kelly – you don't even have to run away.

Well, Ned got out, he went straight for w ile,
He worked real hard, but he couldn't make a pile.
The Coppers used to bully his poor old Mum,
So he stole their horses and away he run.

Now Ned and the gang they ran fast and free,
They held up the town of Jerilderie.
They took all the troopers and locked them away,
And then they entertained the people for the rest
of the day.

It was at Glenrowan that they took old Ned.
He wore a suit of armour so they couldn't shoot
him dead.
They took him down to Melbourne, wouldn't go
him bail,
They hung him from the rafters of the Russel Street
gaol.

6. The Kelly Gang

Traditional

Includes Jerilderie Letter fragment.

Come all you sons of liberty the news is going round,
That on the bold Ned Kelly's head they've set a thousand pound.
For Steve Hart and Dan Kelly five hundred they will give,
But if the sum was doubled I'm sure the Kelly boys would live.

It was in November Seventy Eight the Kelly boys came down.
After shooting sergeant Kennedy they rode into Euroa town.
To rob the bank of all its gold was their idea that day -
Blood horses they was mounted on to make their getaway

Ned Kelly walked into the bank a pistol in his hand,
“Hand over all the money now ten thousand pound on demand.
Likewise the ammunition,” the bold Ned Kelly said,
“And get on the go and don’t be slow or I’ll shoot youse through the head.”

An Afghan hawkker they captured next as everybody knows.
He come in handy to the gang by fitting them out with clothes.
And of their worn out rags me boys they made a few bonfires,
And then destroyed the telegraph by cutting down the wires.

They raced into Jerilderie town about twelve o'clock at night.
They caught the troopers in their beds and gave them a hell of a fright;
They held them up at pistol point and I'm ashamed to tell,
They marched them along in their nightshirts and they locked them in a cell.

Next morning dressed in troopers clothes still owners of the ground,
They took their horses to the forge and had them shod free all round.
They led them back and mounted and their plans worked out so well,
They strolled along the main street and stuck up the Royal Hotel.

Their robbing over the mounted then and made a quick retreat,
They swept away with all their loot along down Morgan's old beat.
And where they are now well I don’t know, if I did I wouldn't tell -
So now until I hear from them I bid youse all farewell!

7. “Useless As...”

Tune: Ernie Wells’ The Old Set

Johnny Go Milk the Bull

Johnny go milk the bull, there’s only one tit to pull,
And that’s in the middle – so mind he don’t piddle – oh, Johnny go milk the bull!

Mademoiselle She Bought a Cow (Traditional from Carrie Milliner)

Mademoiselle she bought a cow, parlez-vous
 Mademoiselle she bought a cow, parlez-vous
 Mademoiselle she bought a cow, but how to milk it she didn't know how,
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous
 She pulled its tail instead of its tits, parlez-vous
 She pulled its tail instead of its tits, parlez-vous
 She pulled its tail instead of its tits, and all she got was a bucket of
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous

8. Mademoiselle From Armienteres

The original song is of disputed origin. Earliest published version 1929, by "Riverina". Passed on to John Meredith by Frank Lett in Mudgee (1987) introduced to John Angliss and Roger Montgomery by Keith McKenry - which is where we heard it.

Mademoiselle from Armienteres, parlez-vous
 Sang the diggers between their beers, parlez-vous
 And the ballad roared by the diggers gay went through that old estaminet
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous

There was a digger long and lean, parlez-vous
 From Darling Downs or the Riverine, parlez-vous
 Who set her heart in a rapturous whirl, when he vowed she was a dinkum girl
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous

They lived and loved in that old French town, parlez-vous
 And her heart looked out from her eyes of brown, parlez-vous
 But time stood by and there came a day when he and his cobbles marched away
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous

Maybe on some field of France he fell, parlez-vous
 No word came back to the Mademoiselle, parlez-vous
 That pretty French girl with eyes of brown, she prayed for him still in that war-stripped town
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous

Now quiet is that estaminet, parlez-vous
 No more diggers come that way, parlez-vous
 Her heart grew light with the passing years, that Mademoiselle from Armienteres
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous

The boys from Wagga and Gundagai, parlez-vous
 From Perth, the Tower and Boggabri, parlez-vous
 From Sydney City and Dandenong, they think of you as they battle on
 Inky-pinky-parlez-vous

9. The Sandy Hollow Line

Duke Tritton

Traditional Tune: Joe Yates' Sofala Cuckoo

The sun was blazing in the sky and waves of shimmering heat
Glared down on the railway cutting, we were half dead on our feet,
And the ganger stood on the bank of the cut and he snarled at the men below,
"You'd better keep them shovels full or all you cows'll go.
I never saw such a useless mob, you'd make a feller sick,
As shovel men you're hopeless, and you're no good with the pick."
There were men in the gang who could belt him with a hand tied at the back
But he had power behind him and we dare not risk the sack.
So we took it all in silence, for this was the period when
We lived in the great depression and nothing was cheaper than men.

And we drove the shovels and swung the picks and cursed the choking dust;
We'd wives and hungry kids to feed so toil in the heat we must.
But still the ganger drove us on, we couldn't take much more;
We prayed for the day we'd get the chance to even up the score.
A man collapsed in the heat and dust, he was carried away to the side.
It didn't seem to matter if the poor chap lived or died.
But one of the government horses fell and died there in the dray,
They hitched two horses to him and they dragged the corpse away.

The ganger was a worried man and he said with a heavy sigh:
"It is a bloody terrible thing to see a good horse die.
There much too valuable to lose, they cost us quite a lot
And I think it is a wicked shame to work them while it's hot.
So we will take them to the creek and spell them in the shade,
You men must all knock off at once. Of course you won't be paid."

And so we plodded to our camps and it seemed to our weary brains,
We were no better than convicts, though we didn't wear the chains,
And in those drear depression days, we were unwanted men,
But we knew that when a war broke out, we'd all be heroes then.
And we'd be handed a rifle and forced to fight for the swine,
Who tortured us and starved us, on the Sandy Hollow Line.

10. Weevils in the Flour

Words: Dorothy Hewett

Tune: Mike Leyden

On an island in a river
 How that bitter river ran
 I grew on scraps of charity
 In the best way that you can
 On an island in a river
 Where I grew to be a man.

*For dole bread is bitter bread
 Bitter bread and sour
 There's grief in the taste of it
 There's weevils in the flour
 There's weevils in the flour*

And just across the river
 Stood the mighty B.H.P.,
 Poured pollution on the waters,
 Poured the lead of misery
 And its smoke was black as Hades
 Rolling hungry to the sea.

In those humpies by the river
 Where we lived on dole and stew,
 While just across the river
 Those greedy smokestacks grew,
 And the hunger of the many
 Filled the bellies of the few.

On an island in a river
 How that bitter river ran
 It broke the banks of charity
 And it baked the bread of man
 On an island in a river
 Where I grew to be a man.

Last chorus:

*For dole bread is bitter bread
 There's weevils in the flour
 But men grow strong as iron upon
 Black bread and sour,
 Their black bread and sour.*

11. Bullocky-Oh / Bogan Billy

Song: Traditional. Poem: Will Carter.

Traditional Tunes: Charlie Kyle's March, Joe Yates' Wallaby Rocks, Frank Collins' The Bowral Jig.

I draw for Speckle's Mill, bullocky-oh, bullocky-oh.
 There's many a log I drew, bullocky-oh.
 I draw cedar, beech and pine, and I never get on the wine,
 I'm the king of the bullock drivers, don't you know, bullocky-oh,
 I'm the king of the bullock drivers, don't you know.

There's Guinea and Anderson too, bullocky-o, bullocky-o.
 And there's many a log they drew, bullocky-o
 I can give them a thousand feet,
 Axe 'em square and never cheat.
 I'm the king of bullock drivers, don't you know, bullocky-o
 I'm the king of bullock drivers, don't you know.

There's Wapples too, he brags, bullocky-o, bullocky-o,
 With his forty raw-boned stags, bullocky-o
 I can tell you it's no slander, when I say I raise their dander,
 When they hear the crack of my whip, bullocky-o, bullocky-o,
 When they hear the crack of my whip, bullocky-o.

*Bogan Billy drove bullocks between Bourke and Bathurst
 He hailed from wild Eucumbeen.
 Every tug in his team was a town,
 And I vow I can hear old Geography driving them now!*

*He was gaunt, he was burnt with the sun,
 And tough as a side of sole leather – and hairy enough for a monkey!
 His language was so lurid and free, no paper would print his vocabulary.*

*Oh I can hear him when bogged in the winter,
 I see his hairy arm swinging his whip
 And to me the picture's as plain as a pub on the track, [which pub?]
 Any pub, anywhere when you're driving out back.*

*Up and down! Up and down at the side of his team.
 His cursing a flow like a hot lava stream
 "Up Mudgee! Up Molong! Gee Dubbo, you swine!
 Pull Nyngan you loafer! Gee back Narromine! Over Parks, where the blazes – Up Forbes! - are you now?
 Up Warren! Up Gulgong! Gee Cobar – you cow!"*

I draw for Speckle's Mill, bullocky-oh, bullocky-oh.
 There's many a log I drew, bullocky-oh.
 I draw cedar, beech and pine, and I never get on the wine,
 I'm the king of the bullock drivers, don't you know, bullocky-oh,
 I'm the king of the bullock drivers, don't you know.

12. Marrowbones

Traditional

Well there was a man named Georgie Sands who courted Betsy Haig,
And although she brought him land and wealth she was an awful plague.

*With my fa-the-rel-li de-laddity she was not fond of me
She liked another one twice as well, she was not fond of me.*

She went down to the doctor's some medicine for to find
- "Doctor, dear doctor, it's to make my old man blind."

"Give to him three marrow bones and make him suck them all,
By the time he's got the last one sucked he won't see you at all."

So she gave to him three marrow bones and made him suck them all,
By the time he got the last one sucked he couldn't see her at all.

"Oh, I'm so tired of living that I'd no longer stay,
I'd only go and drown myself – but I cannot find the way!"

She took him to the water, she led him to the brim,
Says Georgie, "Now I won't drown myself without you shove me in."

She took a run and then a skip to shove her Georgie in,
But sly enough for Georgie, 'twas he that pushed her in.

She took a run and then a jump to shove her Georgie in,
But Georgie popped to one side and flop she tumbled in.

She sank down to the bottom, she floated to the brim,
And Georgie with a long stick, he poked her further in!

13. The Dirt of the Mallee

John Caldwell

The dirt of the Mallee is blood red and raw
It blows on the wind to some far foreign shore.
We've sat and we've waited, and waited some more,
But most have forgotten what we're waiting for.

Rise like the mist, fall like the rain, the dirt of the mallee is moving again.

The crops are all in, we wait for the rain,
But the sun is so fierce that the heat sears your brain.
The Banker is coming to visit again,
And Dad's poor old ticker is causing him pain.

The land up and moves, you just can't keep it down;
It's gone on vacation to old Melbourne town.
In days long gone by there was lot's to go 'round,
But now there is scarcely a scrap to be found.

They've shuttered the shops, they've closed down the rail,
Now we have to walk weary miles for the mail.
Old Harry went bad now he's locked up in gaol,
And it seems as though all of our pipe dreams must fail.

The men down the road are not planting this season,
Some say it's the markets, some mutter of treason.
And many's the missus has given up teasing,
She wakes in the morning to find she's not pleasing.

14. Hey Banjo

Denis Kevans

Traditional Tunes: The Dawson Family's Burke's Dream, Bert Jamieson's Alberts Tune, Under the Willow, The Wedding of Lachan McGraw

Hey, Banjo, have you heard, mate, what has happened to the run,
Where you rode with old Pat Kiley, 'neath the hot, Monaro sun?
Where you stirred your pipe and choked it, thumbed a wad of weed and stoked it,
Lit the flames, that lit the pictures, in the minds of everyone?

Fresh from 'chambers', Banjo, shyly, you would yarn with old Pat Kiley,
As he talked of 'the old fulla', and his plans for Kiley's Run.
'The old fulla', Bill, a Kiley from oul' Ireland, tough and wiley,
Ticket-of-leave man, sent from Sydney with a dray, an axe and gun.

And Banjo, you'll remember, each blooming, sweet September,
How you bid the streets of Sydney an eager, fond farewell
And where honey-suckle chalices clustered sweet on Kiley's trellises,
You woke up, murmuring poetry, to the sound of the kitchen bell.

See you push through lushest grasses, as the cloud's flotilla passes,
See you listen to the stories of the Snowy River men,
Troy, Dunne and MacNamara, Cummins, Guy and Mick O'Mara,
Yarned and threw away their memories, till your rhyming kicked again.

There, where warm embers beckoned, old riders yarned and reckoned
That the man from Snowy River was a feller called Fitzroy,
Or was it another Kiley or that Irish bloke, Jack Riley,
And throw in another candidate, the stockman Jackie Troy.

There, for the Australian Nation, you wrote 'A Mountain Station',
While savage critics slammed you as, "A versifying cub,"
'On Kiley's Run', you wrote it, no need now for me to quote it
And one of your favourite poems, 'The Geebung Polo Club'.

It was there you met Old Clancy, his name was Thomas Francie
McNamara, the trees were silent witnesses of everything was said,
And your eager mind it relished all the yarns, with wine embellished,
And 'The Man From Snowy River' started galloping through your head.

With the cut-out for the shearing, all the sulkies would be steering
To the big dance there at Kiley's, all around the polished hall.
And the ball it was a boomer for the hospital in Cooma,
And Kiley trailed the native flowers all around the rough-hewn wall.

There were Geebung-style schottisches and a tub or two of Resch's.
The cut-out balls at Kiley's would give 'em all a thrill.
With the waltz and the mazurka, the odd bog-eye gone berserk
And barn-dances and set lancers and a broлга-like quadrille.

Kiley showed you all his ledgers, braid was fraying on the edges,
Where he wrote, in looping long hand, all the records of the run.
Those ledgers, bound and leathered, with the shoulders worn and weathered,
Were kept in careful cupboards, they weren't shown to everyone.

And to you he demonstrated the concept he'd created,
'Cause you saw the ditto commas running down the columns blue,
Where he paid, in equal wages, all his workers, at all stages,
Whether black, or white, or brindle, whether male or female, too.

Yes, there on Kiley's station, it was a united nation,
With no discrimination and the words I say are true.
Hard to think if there'll be ever, now or then or maybe never,
Such another mountain station or another Kiley, too.

Kiley spoke the wild Wiradjuri and the dialects of Jackadgerie.
He talked to elder Kooris, took him to a secret part
Where the gentle dawn came beaming on the places of their dreaming
And Kiley kept their sacred secrets, forever safe, inside his heart.

Well, Banjo, do you know, mate, what has happened to the show, mate?
To the run the Kileys planted in the hills of sun and snow?
To that place called Adjungbilly, you must think that I am silly,
It was sold for radiata just a few short years ago!

"Sold it?" "Yeah, for radiata, you know that green stigmata
That porcupines the mountains and sucks the country dry?
That bogs the creeks and fills in, all the little streams, with quills
And dams of little, steely needles, and I think I'm gonna cry."

Banjo's eyes turned to me, wary, was I dolt or dromedary,
To gouge an old man's feelings, who was out of touch with all.
But he took my hand to test it and he pressed it and he blessed it.
And he believed me, yes, believed me and I saw his tear-drops fall.

Where his muse used to waken to whispering pines forsaken,
Where he hung his reins and bridle, there is nothing there at all.
And we found the ledgers tasselled and by snails' feet, razzle-dazzled,
In a heap of rotting rubbish, just beside a broken wall.

So, Banjo, we'll walk grieving for the things that Time is thieving,
But we'll take a banshee with us and I'll hug her silken waist,
So her wild song never ceases on the last of the snow leases,
For the sleet of dispossession is a bitter sleet to taste.

Kiley's Run, or Adjungbilly? I must be 'Uncle Willie',
Banjo's shrine of shrines, to snatch it and plant the pine thereon?
A place we should have cherished, but in us, now, has perished,
But inside your heart, Banjo, mate, and mine, the flame goes burning on!

Volume 2

BEN HALL MEDLEY: The Ballad of Ben Hall's Gang / The Swagless Swaggie

1. The Ballad of Ben Hall's Gang

Traditional

Come all ye wild colonials and listen to my tale;
A story of bushrangers' deeds I will to you unveil.
'Tis of those gallant heroes, game fighters one and all;
And we'll sit and sing, "Long Live the King, Dunn, Gilbert, and Ben Hall."

Frank Gardiner was a bushranger of terrible renown,
He robbed the Forbes Gold Escort and eloped with Kitty Brown,
But in the end they lagged him, two and thirty years in all –
"We must avenge the Darkie!" says Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall.

Ben Hall he was a squatter bloke who owned a thousand head;
A peaceful man he was until arrested by Sir Fred.
His home burned down, his wife cleared out, his cattle perished all;
"I've all my sentence yet to earn", says valiant Ben Hall.

John Gilbert was a flash cove, And John O'Meally too;
With Ben and Bourke and Johnny Vane they all were comrades true.
They rode into Canowindra and held a public ball.
'Roll up, roll up, and have a spree,' says Gilbert and Ben Hall.

They took possession of the town, Including the public-houses,
And treated all the cockatoos and shouted for their spouses.
They danced with all the pretty girls and held a carnival.
'We don't hurt them who don't hurt us,' says Gilbert and Ben Hall.

They made a raid on Bathurst, the pace was getting hot;
But Johnny Vane surrendered after Micky Burke was shot,
O'Meally at Goimbla did like a hero fall;
'The game is getting lively,' says John Gilbert and Ben Hall.

"Hand over all your watches and the bank notes in your purses
All travelers must pay toll to us; we don't care for your curses.
We are the rulers of the road we've seen the troopers fall
And we want your gold and money!" says Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall.

"Next week we'll visit Goulburn and clean the banks out there;
So if you see the peelers, better tell them to beware;
Some day to Sydney city we mean to pay a call,
And we'll take the whole damn country," says Dunn, Gilbert, and Ben Hall.

2. The Swagless Swaggie

Edward Harrington

Traditional Dance Tunes: Charlie Kyle's Pretty Jig, Charlie Kyle's Schottische, Morrison's Jig, Simon McDonald's Shoemaker's Fancy, Norm McConnell's Set Tune, Charlie Kyle's Polka.

This happened many years ago
Before the bush was cleared,
When every man was six foot high
And wore a flowing beard.

One very hot and windy day,
Along the old coach road,
Towards Joe Murphy's halfway house
A bearded bushman strode.

He was a huge and heavy man,
Well over six foot high,
An old slouch hat was on his head,
And murder in his eye.

No billy can was in his hand,
No heavy swag he bore,
But deep and awful were the oaths
That swagless swaggie swore.

At last he reached the shanty door,
Into the bar he burst,
He dumped his hat upon the floor,
And cursed and cursed and cursed.

A neighboring shed had just cut out;
The bar was nearly full
Of shearers and of bullockies
Who'd come to cart the wool.

They were a rough and ready lot,
The bushmen gathered there,
But every man was stricken dumb,
To hear the stranger swear.

He cursed the bush, he cursed mankind,
The whole wide universe.
It froze their very blood to hear
That swagless swaggie curse.

Joe Murphy seized an empty pot
And filled it brimming full.
The stranger raised it to his lips
And took a mighty pull.

This seemed to cool him down a bit;
He finished off the ale,
And to the crowd around the bar
He told his awful tale.

"I met the Ben Hall gang," he said,
"The blankards stuck me up!
They pinched me billy, pinched me swag,
And pinched me flamin' pup!

They turned me pockets inside out,
And took me only quid!
I never thought they'd pinch me pipe,
But swelp me gawd they did!

I spoke to 'em as man to man,
I said I'd fight 'em all;
I would have broke O'Mealleys neck,
And tanned the hide of Hall.

They only laughed, and said good-bye,
And rode away to brag
Of how they stuck a swaggie up
And robbed him of his swag.

"I never done 'em any harm,
I thought 'em decent chaps.
But now I wouldn't raise a hand
To save 'em from the traps.

I'm finished with the bush for good,
I'm off to Wagga town
Where they won't stick a swaggie up
Or take a swaggie down.

The bushmen were a decent lot,
As bushmen mostly are.
They filled the stranger up with beer;
The hat went round the bar.

The shearers threw some blankets in
To make another swag,
The rousers gave a billy can
And brand new tucker bag.

Joe Murphy gave a meerschaum pipe
He hadn't smoked for years.
The stranger was too full of words,
His eyes were dim with tears.

The ringer shouted drinks all round
And then, to top it up,
The babbling brook, the shearers cook,
Gave him a kelpie pup.

Next day, an hour before the dawn,
The stranger took the track
Complete with pup and billy can,
His swag upon his back.

Along the most forsaken roads,
Intent on dodging graft,
He headed for the Great North West,
And laughed, and laughed and laughed.

JIM JONES MEDLEY: Excerpt from Frank Clune's *The Wild Colonial Boys* / *Jim Jones at Botany Bay* / *For the Company Underground* / *Bury My Bones in the Hallowed Ground*

3. Excerpt from Frank Clune's *The Wild Colonial Boys*.

Music: C. & J. Roweth

The Wild Colonial Boys—and girls—of the Weddin Mountains grew up without fear of God, devil or man, without knowledge of reading and writing, or of the big world beyond the plain's edge, in contempt of the law, and in hatred of policemen.

Their sagas and songs were of old-time criminals and bushrangers, the doings of Bold Jack Donahoo and Jack the Native, the lore of Scotchy and Witton, the harshness and cruelty of the System—tales told by old lags, whose backs were wealed with stripes of the cat, whose souls were as hardened as their skins.

In all these stories the villain was a policeman aided and abetted by that lowest of things that crawl, an informer.

The hero was the man who beat the law, by dodging his squatting tax, by duffing stock or by breaking from prison bonds.

These were the tales, some boastful, some only too true, which the native-born children of the Weddin Mountains heard from their earliest infancy, and this was their education, a legacy of hate from the older generation handed down to the children of a clean new land, pungent with the perfume of pines and wattle.

4. Jim Jones at Botany Bay

Traditional

Come listen for a moment lads, and hear me tell my tale,
How across the sea from England's shores I was compelled to sail.
The jury said, "He's guilty, Sir", and says the judge, says he,
"For life, Jim Jones, I'm sending you across that stormy sea.

But take a tip before you ship to join the iron gang,
Don't get too gay in Botany Bay, or else you'll surely hang.
Or else you'll surely hang", says he, "and after that, Jim Jones,
High up upon the gallows tree, the crows will pick your bones.

You'll have no time for mischief there, remember what I say
They'll flog the poaching out of you down there in Botany Bay."
Yes the waves were high upon the seas, and the wind blew down in gales
I'd rather drowned in misery than gone to New South Wales.

The waves were high upon the seas when pirate ship came along,
But the soldiers on our convict ship were good five hundred strong;
They opened fire and somehow drove that pirate ship away
But I'd rather have joined those buccaneers than gone to Botany Bay.

Now it's night and day the irons clang and like poor galley slaves
We toil and toil and, when we die, must fill dishonored graves
But by and by I'll break m' chains and to the bush I'll go
And I'll join the bold bushrangers there, Jack Donahue and Co.

And some dark night when everything is quiet in Sydney town,
I'll kill the tyrants one and all, I'll shoot those bastards down.
I'll give the law a little shock, remember what I say
They'll yet regret they sent Jim Jones in chains to Botany Bay.

5. For the Company Underground

Words: Frank the Poet (Francis McNamara)

Music: C. & J. Roweth

When Christ from Heaven comes down
straightway,
All His Father's laws to expound,
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

When the man in the moon
to Moreton Bay,
Is sent in shackles bound
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

For the Company underground.

When the Australian Co's heaviest dray
Is drawn 80 miles by a hound,
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

When a frog, a caterpillar and a flea
Shall travel the globe all round,
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

When turkeycocks on Jews harps play
And mountains dance at the sound,
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

When the Cape of Good Hope
to Twofold Bay
Comes for the change of a pound.
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

When cows in lieu of milk yield tea,
And all lost treasures are found,
MacNamara shall work that day

When Christmas falls on the 1st of May
And O'Connell's King of England crown'd,
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

When thieves ever robbing on the highway
For their sanctity are renowned,
MacNamara shall work that day
For the Company underground.

When the quick and the dead
shall stand in array
Cited at the trumpet's sound,
Even then, damn me if I'd work a day
For the Company underground.

Nor overground.

6. Bury my Bones in the Hallowed Ground

John Dengate

Tune: Santy Anna (Traditonal)

I am a convict named Jim Gray
 And I'm dead, and I'm buried.
 Seven score years have I lain in the clay,
 In the clay eight miles from Sydney Cove.

I watched them build their House of God
 On the hill, on the highest hill.
 Bury me there in the churchyard sod
 Of St Anne's eight miles from Sydney Cove.

Timeworn headstones all around
 On the hill, by the river.
 Bury me there in the hallowed ground
 Of St Anne's eight miles from Sydney Cove.

I grew sick, and my strength did fail,
 Marsden called it malingering.
 Three hundred lashes at Parramatta Gaol,
 Oh bury my bones in the hallowed ground.

The Flogging Parson, damn his soul,
 Has a tomb, faced with marble.
 They dumped my corpse in an unmarked hole
 Oh bury my bones in the hallowed ground.

Seven score years have I been dead
 But my ghost wont rest easy.
 Give me a gravestone over my head,
 And bury my bones in the hallowed ground.

Timeworn headstones all around,
 On the hill, by the river.
 Bury me there in the hallowed ground,
 Of St Anne's eight miles from Sydney Cove.

7. Sacred Sites

Denis Kevans

Tune: Frank Collins' Reel (Trad)

Ah, white man, I am searching for the sites, sacred to you, where you walk, in silent worship, and you whisper poems, too, where you tread, like me, in wonder, and your eyes are filled with tears, and you see the tracks you've travelled down your fifty thousand years.

I am searching round Australia, I am searching, night and day, for a site, to you so sacred that you won't give it away for a bit of coloured paper, say a Church you're knocking down, or the Rocks, your nation's birthplace, by the bridge, in Sydney town.

Your cathedrals I have entered, I have seen the empty aisles where a few knelt down in sorrow, where were all the children's smiles?

Big cathedrals, full of beauty, opal glass, and gleaming gold, and an old man, in an overcoat, who had crept in from the cold.

Your schools, I drifted through them, heard the sound of swishing canes, heard the yell of angry teachers crushing flowers in their brains, heard the bark up on the rostrum where the powers had their say, wouldn't children's hearts be sacred, though they're made, like mine, of clay?

Where's your wonder? Where's your worship? Where's your sense of holy awe?

When I see those little children torn apart by fear of war, what is sacred to you, white man, what is sacred to your clan?

Are your totems rainbow-feathered? Is there dreaming in you, man?

Sacred ... sacred ... sacred ... gee you chuck that word about, and when echoes answer sacred ... sacred louder still you shout, and the echoes come in patterns, and then, louder, every one till they meet, like waves together, and go bang! just like a gun.

Sacred ... hesitating ... now, a film is reeling through my brain, and through my memory, of our sacred rendez-vous, of our meeting, of our parting, of my tears, as sweet as ice, of my numb incomprehension of a shattered paradise.

Sacred, oh so sacred, was our sacred rendez-vous, and your ferocious anger when you found we weren't like you, but if I should make an act of faith, in a voice, both firm and clear, that there's something sacred to me, you starting drowning in your beer.

What is sacred to you, white man, what is sacred to your heart?

Is Australia just a quarry for the bauxite bells to start?

Where the forests are forgotten, and the tinkling of the bell of the bell-bird in the mountains, is just something more to sell?

Ah, brother, I am searching for the sites, sacred to you, but the rivers, clear as crystal, smell like sewerfulls of spew from the pipe and pump polluters, and the nukes that fleck the foam, Would you let a man, with dirty boots, go walking through your home?

Sacred means that ... sacred ... it's a place where spirits rise, with the rainbow wings of sunset, on the edge of paradise, Sacred ... that's my father, that's my mother, that's my son, Sacred .. where the dreaming whispers hope for everyone.

In the silence of the grottoes of Australia's mighty land, stand together with the kooris, stand together, hand in hand, open eyes to endless beauty, and to spirits, far and near, for Australia is my country, it is sacred to me here.

Ah, white man, I am searching for the sites, sacred to you, where you walk, in silent worship, and you whisper poems, too, where you tread, like me, in wonder, and your eyes are filled with tears, and you see the tracks you've travelled down your fifty thousand years.

8. My Home in the Valley

Clivie Kelly

My home is set in the valley, in this valley of New South Wales,
 At the foot of Sugerlo' mountain by the Nulla Creek's flowing stream
 That winds its way through the farmland
 Where it joins up with the Macleay,
 35 mile from Kempsey is this great green valley I call home.

I've travelled a fair bit of NSW down the south coast to Nowra I've came
 But my heart was always in that valley,
 In that valley that I call my home;
 Where the sun rises over the mountains
 Along the ridge where the sweet wattles grow,
 Where the cattle moved back from that lowland
 When the flood came down in July.

The scent of the bush all around us
 Out there where the wallabies bound,
 At our flat its always covered with clover
 By the Nulla Creeks flowing stream,
 That winds its way through the farmland
 Where it joins up with the Macleay,
 Just 35 mile from Kempsey is this great green valley I call home.

9. Well, The Tale of a Hole

Roger Montgomery. Traditional Tune: Bert Jamieson's Lancers.

Well, Bluey and Me, we'd propped in Kalgoorlie,
 A change of scene ne'er worried us unduly.
 "In fact it's good for the soul." (says Blue)
 We were armed with metal detectors, deep in the mulga,
 Flaming hot, fraught with flies, inspiring language quite vulgar
 When all of a sudden we espies a very . . interesting . . hole.

You know it's strange, quite 'strordinary
 How a hole in the ground can attract a quite ordinary bloke's attention,
 For reasons too many, and sometimes a little too weird to mention,
 Especially if said hole is a biggun !
 Well . . we sort of fluttered around, uttering excited guttural sounds,
 Casting round eyes, assessing and calibrating the size
 Of stones to throw in this totally humongous digging.

Well, Bluey goes first and he hauls to his shoulder
 Quite a big rock ("Bullshit! it was more like as boulder")
 Quite a big rock . . and heaved it down this here hole.
 Then we rushed to the edge, hanging out for the splash..

. . Not a sound . . not a skerrick . . not even a clash
Of stone on the side. says I “How amazing”. Says Bluey, “How droll”.

And now it's my turn to take a turn.
Well, I wrestled a lintel stone over the ground and in,
You could hear it whistling faintly as it tumbled on down . .
. . Into . . nothing.
“Strewth” says Blue “this bloody hole was dug by some bloody miner,
The bugger's near dug his bloody way near clear to bloody China.”

Well, Bluey and Me never were designed to resign
From a challenge such as this.
“Hey, here's a bloody great concrete railway sleeper, it surely won't be missed..
But can we lift it?” . . “Blood oath we can.” Bluey grimly hissed.

Well, we shuffled with it to the lip of this seemingly bottomless pit
And we toss-ed that sleeper down
And listened . . not a flaming peeper . . we listened again . .
Not a single, solitary sound

Just the a noise behind us
Hearts leapt into throat for coming through the bush, flat chat
Comes this enormous billy-goat! (bloody huge, it was)
Head down, horns gently curved and as long a puntsman's pole.
To both sides of the pit we shriekingly swerved,
But the billygoat, he goes straight on and down
Into the murky depths of that hole !

Well, as we stood there a-marveling at this pretty wild occurrence
'Round a comer of the bush, this cove makes a sudden appearance.
Says he, “Good day Blue . .”
(‘Jeeze’ thinks Bluey, it’s always the bloody same, where ever you travel
In this wide brown land, every bugger knows your name ')

“G’day Blue, I’ve lost me prize billy-goat, he cost five thousand dollars
The mongrel's always sloping off and it's Billy Muggins here who follers,
I've been tracking him for twenty klicks so far,
And I'm starting to lose me rag.
One of these days I'll take out the old 303, and he'll come home in me tucker bag.”

The Stranger mopped his brow with a rueful smile
(He'd have been better off using his hanky)
“What am I me manky-blanky billygoat’s flaming keeper?
Any roads, he won’t get too far, tied as he is to a bloody great concrete railway sleeper”

“Ah, well . . er . . strewth . . is that the time, come on Blue,
Better get our assays into gear and down to the refiner.”
“Er yes . . Good luck looking for your billygoat, dig, but I suggest you might start looking in China.”

10. Blue Murder

Alistair Hulett

The said it's easy money, a full page ad in the local rag
 Always nice and sunny, come on lad and pack your bag
 Off to west Australia, leave the old home town behind
 Be a winner not a failure; there's money to be made in the Wittenoom mine.

*Day in, day out, every day they drive us harder,
 Day in, day out, they're getting away with blue murder.*

They took me to my quarters – a stinkin' bed in an old tin shed.
 I got my workin' orders with a lamp and a tin hat on my head.

My girl she's a cook and cleaner, she works all day in the canteen hall,
 Six days since I seen her; some don't have no girl at all.

She sweeps the fine blue dust up, she tips it into an old wool pack,
 Never had a check-up, if she did she'd get the sack.

I feel my health is failing; I work all day in the killer dust.
 The kids play in the tailings; the boss says work and work I must.

11. He Fades Away

Alistair Hulett

There's a man in my bed I used to love him
 His kisses used to take my breath away
 There's a man in my bed I hardly know him
 I wipe his face and hold his hand
 And watch him as he slowly fades away

*And he fades away
 Not like leaves that fall in autumn
 Turning gold against the grey
 He fades away
 Like the bloodstains on the pillow case
 That I wash every day
 He fades away*

There's a man in my bed, he's on a pension
 Although he's only fifty years of age
 The lawyer says we might get compensation
 In the course of due procedure
 But he couldn't say for certain at this stage

And he's not the only one
 Who made that trip so many years ago
 To work the Wittenoom mines
 So many young men old before their time
 And dying slow
 He fades away
 A wheezing bag of bones his
 Lungs half clogged and full of clay
 He fades away

There's a man in my bed they never told him
 The cost of bringing home his weekly pay
 And when the courts decide how much
 they owe him
 How will he spend his money
 When he lies in bed and coughs his life away?

12. It's a long way to Cunnamulla

John Dengate

Traditional Tune: It's a Long Way to Tipperary

*It's a long way to Cunnamulla, it's a long way to go,
It's a long way to Cunnamulla on the River Warrego.
I know there's been a gerrymander and I know it isn't fair,
But I have to rely on Cunnamulla; they vote for me there.*

Mr. Bjelke Petersen is a genius, it's true.
Mr. Bjelke Petersen makes five votes equal two.
He divides up the whole electorate, subtracts Aunt Edna's twins,
And he multiplies the rural fraction and that's how he wins.

Chorus

Here is your ticket to the Senate, Flo, That's guile, guile, guile.
Pack up your pumpkin scones and portmanteau; goose-step round the pile.
Tell the mob in Canberra, I waltzed you down the aisle,
So here is your nepotistic ticket, Flo, seig Heil! Heil! Heil!

Chorus

Old Caligula the Roman, so the history text books say,
Put his horse into the Senate where it always voted "neigh".
But a horse is still considered useful on the River Warrego,
So! The ancient Romans got an old grey mare and Queensland got Flo.

Chorus

Why not go to sunny Queensland, why not venture forth?
Why not join the Country Party in that lovely land up north?
Ignore the electorate in Brisbane; to hell with Moreton Bay;
As long as you win in Cunnamulla, you'll be O.K.

13. Farewell to Sir Joh

John Dengate

Traditional Tunes: Brisbane Ladies

Farewell and adieu to the Premier of Queensland,
Farewell and adieu and good-bye to Sir Joh.
You useless old bastard too long you have lasted,
Now your mates have decided that you have to go.

*You ranted and roared at the reds and the greenies,
You ranted and roared at the black and the white,
You postured and strutted just like Mussolini...
Now your mates have betrayed you and that serves you right.*

You pineapple vandal, they've snuffed out your candle,
Get back to your peanuts, you senile old sod;
Take Flo and her pumpkins, you great pair of bumpkins,
You can start playing lawn bowls and stop playing God.

You Lutheran pastor-cum-paw-paw-disaster;
You Darling Downs despot, you kingaroy clown...
Get back to your tractor, you seventh-rate actor,
You pious, hypocritical, adjective noun.

Stick that up your jumper. You old Bible-thumper,
You second-hand Hitler, you goose stepping goose;
The poisonous old cane toad's in gone-down-the-drain-mode,
Like a dribble of Bundaberg sugar cane juice.

14. Victor Podham and his Rusty Hut

Dougie Young

Yarn: If you had what I got (Anon - old as the hills)

The Wilcannia boys are all down this year,
Picking grapes by the hundred so have no fear,
Gonna be some trouble brewing at the weekend.
Yes we gamble all night, we drink and fight,
Next day we're all good friends!

*Yes we have great times with the gallons of wine,
We have no trouble with the law.
The boys all shout, "when the grog runs out,
hey - ring a taxi and we'll get some more - that's for sure!".
Come down to Victor Podham and his rusty hut,
When he gets drunk he loses his nut,
Talk about the fun that fella really has!
He's a real cool cat and he digs this kind of jazz.*

Every Friday night when they get their pay,
They get the bus to Mildura on a Saturday,
In the Winterson Pub they drink their share of beer.
As they sink one down, they look around,
with a grin from ear to ear!

*Yes we have great times with the gallons of wine,
We have no trouble with the law.
The boys all shout, "when the grog runs out,
hey - ring a taxi and we'll get some more - that's for sure!".
Come down to Victor Podham and his rusty hut,
Full of empty gallons and cigarette butts,
You'll meet the boys; they're on the razamataz,
Yes they're all cool cats and they dig this kind of jazz!*

In Mildura at the weekend Walter Clarke,
Got drunk as a monkey, sleeping in the park,
Until detective Barratt came along.
He said "You dog gone pest, I place you under arrest,
So don't try to bung it on!"

Chorus

So come down to Scobie's, if you want to learn,
He's got a brand new drink called the "Three Sharp Turns"
Talk about the fun that fella really has!
He's a real cool cat and he digs this crazy jazz.

Chorus

15. Moreton Bay

Words: Frank the Poet (Francis McNamara)

Music: Traditional, as sung by Simon McDonald.

I am a native of the land of Erin
I was early banished from my native shore
On the ship Columbus went circular sailing
And I left behind me the girl I adore
Over the bounding billows which were loudly raging
Like a bold sea mariner my course did steer
We were bound for Sydney our destination
And every day must irons wear

When I arrived 'twas in Port Jackson
And I thought my days would happy be
But I found out I was greatly mistaken
I was taken a prisoner to Moreton Bay

*Moreton Bay you'll find no equal
Norfolk Island and Emu Plains
At Castle Hill and cursed Toongabie
And all time places in New South Wales*

Now every morning as the day was dawning
As we rose from heaven fell the morning dew
And we were roused without a moments warning
Our daily labour to renew
For three long years I was beastly treated
And heavy irons on my legs I wore
My back from flogging was lacerated
And oft-times painted with crimson gore

Like the Egyptians and ancient Hebrews
We were oppressed under Logan's yoke
But a native black there lay in ambush
Did give this tyrant a mortal stroke
Now fellow prisoners be exhilarated
That all such monsters such death may find
And when from bondage we are liberated
From our former sufferings we'll bear in mind

*Oh Moreton Bay you'll find no equal
Norfolk Island or Emu Plains
At Castle Hills and cursed Toongabie
And all time places in New South Wales*