

Songs and Verses of Australia

“Those Hills All Clad With Gold”

By

David Harford

Adelaide, July 1919

CONTENTS

	Page
A Fragment	15
A Muse: The Shepherd and the Grass Seed	15
A Muse: The Squatter and Kangaroo	6
Camped on the Murray in 1879	19
Despise Not	21
Farewell to the Town of Clare	31
Fishes of the Shore	31
Life Upon the Darling	13
Little Jim	29
Ode to the Dying Gum	28
Drink or Fallen Man	18
Rambles Through the Areas	22
The Australian's Farewell	3
The Bullock Driver	25
The Clay Pan	18
The Darling Back Blocks	4
The Foul Air and Pure	10
The Gum Tree Canoe	5
The Moth	3
The Murray	23
The Old Man Kangaroo	12
The Retreat of the Kangaroo	20
The Rufus Massacre	9
The Shepherd and the Dog Bonnie	16
The Swagman	7
The Torrens Lake	25
Wait a Little While	8

THE AUSTRALIAN'S FAREWELL

(Written in 1882 at the time of the author's proposed visit to South Africa)

Adieu, to thee, my native land,
Leave thee far, far behind.
See now upon the deck I stand,
And her yards float in the winds.

Soon on some distant soil I'll roam,
And tread some unknown shore,
But I'll never forget my Austral home,
And the land that first me bore.

Farewell! The mountain passes
Where bounds the euro wild,
And too thou rocky masses,
Where I climbed when but a child.

Farewell each fertile valley,
Where grows the red gum tree,
And to thou scrubs of Mallee,
Where sports the wallaby.

Farewell then to each wattle glade,
How lovely to behold;
From memory it will never fade,
Those hills all clad with gold.

Then adieu to thee my native land,
Adieu to thee once more,
Adieu, Adieu, Austral land,
Yon dim line marks thy shore.



THE MOTH

(Written at Barranup Karridale Timber Mills in 1888)

As I sat down to write
For to wile away the time,
My eye it rested on a moth
The subject of this rhyme.

It rested on the paper
And annoyed me like a scamp
And many is the caper
He played around the lamp.

At last it quietly settled
And became so very still
Though me he had nettled
Yet it I could not kill.

It had a pretty purple line
Which both its wings did span
Which was inlaid so very fine
As to excel the art of man.

It seemed conscious of its beauty
While it I did admire
And to write it was my duty
Though it had roused my ire.

Once again its on the wing
Ah! Yes, it's flown away
Perhaps its mate it may bring
At the decline of another day.



THE DARLING BACK BLOCKS (1879)

Alone in the bush of the Darling backblocks
Pulling sheep from the dams, that watered the flocks
Which belonged to Morarah and the mud was so deep
And pulling them out it me busy did keep.

Many were so weak from the ground could not rise
And the crows here in flocks tried to peck out their eyes;
Kangaroos may be seen bounding leisurely past
In the stillness of night when her shadows are cast.

One night in the distance I heard a faint howl
Which Barney on the chain answered with a growl.
Then as if by magic, there rang out quite clear,
From a full dozen throats – “The dingoes are near!”

Little Barney (though a pup) was barking aloud
And hard did he try for to get to the crowd.
Then I ran to the dam that was but a few chains away
Where a ewe with a lamb kept a dingo at bay.

There on a bank stood a huge dingo brute
That dread of the squatter, the Australian coyoot.
Well, I beat them all off, and with the coming of light
I saw plenty of tracks --- but not a dingo in sight.

The sheep were all safe not one was there slain
But I thought that the night would see trouble again;
But ever from then I had no cause for fear
For never again did the dingoes appear.

Here often at leisure to shorten the time
 I would find it a pleasure to dabble in rhyme
 With a board for my paper from a piece of tea chest
 And charcoal for pencil you may think this a jest.

I left after this and was soon far away
 For not from the first was I anxious to stay;
 You may believe (sic) what I say, for it really is true
 So friends to you now I will say adieu.



THE GUM TREE CANOE (1879)

You may talk of your pleasure,
 But give unto me,
 Afloat on the Murray,
 In the bark of a tree.

You may boast of your pleasures
 And trips to the zoo,
 But Australia for me
 In her gum tree canoe.

Where mighty backwaters
 Down the Murray do flow,
 'Tis come from the mountains
 That are laden with snow.

Here it flows into lakes.
 Where there's not a few;
 My course there I will take
 In my gum tree canoe.

Where back waters shaded,
 As far as the eye can see,
 Around it, margin braided,
 There stands the gum tree.

The gumtree as a friend
 He has ever proved true;
 I my life could depend
 On my gum tree canoe.

In the hot summer days,
 'Neath a spreading gum tree,
 From the sun's scorching rays,
 There, sheltered you'll be.

In all his splendour
 Here reigns the cockatoo,
 It's there I love for to wander
 In my gum tree canoe

As we journey through strife,
In this world that we see,
We glide through this life
Like the bark of a tree.

So farewell for a time,
I must now say adieu,
So thus ends the rhyme
Of my gum tree canoe.



A MUSE: THE SQUATTER AND KANGAROO (1879)

As a squatter took a ride
One day across his run
Some kangaroos espied
Lay basking in the sun.

As in the tall grass their
Contented—like they lay
The squatter took a ride across
And unto them did say:-

“Begone from here you kangaroos
And hurry now with speed.
If a warning I will make to you
For destroying all this feed.

“And when again I come this way
I will bring my dogs and gun
Then for it you will dearly pay
If I find you on this run.”

Then up there sprang a kangaroo
Who to the squatter came,
His colour was a redish hue
With a gigantic frame.

He bounded through the greenwood
Whilst comrades looked on
Then before the squatter stood
This noble Champion.

It was unto the squatter thus
This kangaroo did say:-
“You say that you will slaughter us
When next you come this way.

“And for us to destroy
You will bring yours dogs and gun,
But your threats I defy,
I will not leave this run.

"Here I was born and bred
And here to I will die,
When some messenger of lead
May give me my death cry.

"Both the dogs and the squatter
Are cowards to the base
Our weaker ones to slaughter
They are gallant in the chase.

"Three of your greyhounds
Already I have slain
And yonder near that sandy mound
They are bleaching on the plain.

"Here alone myself I stand
Get down from your mare
And battle with me hand to hand
Approach, me if you dare!"

"No, No," dld the squatter say
"That I will never do,
For you have proved this day
A noble kangaroo.

"You and your mates may roam at will
And never more know strife
For a kangaroo I will never kill
You're safe from dogs or rife.

The old Kangaroo is living still
He is seen often in the bends*
Where with his mates he roams at will
Amongst his wooly friends.

With nothing for to grieve them
I will close this muse
So in peace we leave them
And give them our adieus.

*Bends of River Darling



THE SWAGMAN (1880)

Who is that man there walking so slow--
'Tis only a swagman that to the station does go
With no one to care for, no friend can he find
Except that poor dog that is trudging behind.

As onwards he walks to the station draws near,
 Ah! yonder he talks to the head overseer.
 See he has turned him away from the door
 While the poor swagman doth humbly implore.

“Pray, Sir, have mercy, prove once a friend
 To a poor swagman whose day soon will end;
 Do me this kindness and on thee blessings will shower,
 Yes, only this once, just a pannican of flour.”

The squatter has pushed him, he falls to the ground,
 ‘Tis then to the rescue the dog makes a bound;
 Soon on the earth he the squatter did lay
 Who now cried for mercy: “Do call him away!”

Leave off! Brave Rover!” the swagman did say.
 “Come now give over, let us be off and away.”
 “Hey!” cried the squatter, “a friend I will be,
 Both you and rover can stay here with me.”

“Here on this station you may be content,
 To stay here with me till your last days are spent.”
 The squatter was humbled as he rose from the dust
 And no one will deny but his downfall was just.

The squatter he takes him now by the hand
 As snarling nearby brave Rover does stand.
 To swagman and squatter we say now farewell
 Since they are happy together and with Rover doth dwell.



WAIT A LITTLE WHILE

(Written on the depression of 1884-1885)

Even our own beloved Australia has felt the avenging hand
 Bad seasons and hard times has scarred it like a brand.
 Failure after failure in the south where waves the golden grain,
 Where the fierce, hot winds are blowing, and seldom falls the rain.

Chorus:- Then let us our trust in Providence, and
 try and wear a smile,
 Have courage, for help is nigh, just wait
 a little while.

Many is the deserted home, where all was bright and gay
 Farm after farm abandoned, that became the squatters prey;
 Many a happy home is shattered for the wolf was at the door
 Yes, and many a family scattered and seas between them roar.

And even through our fare city the avenging tyrant sped,
Hunger in manly faces, and children wanting bread.
But Adelaide, she has noble hearts, that leaped at mercy's call
That soon grappled with the monster, and drove him to the wall.

With respect for Mr Kither, and revered by his name,
And to Sir Edwin Smith, that man of noble fame,
Who stood in the arena with naught but mercy's shield,
And vanquished the destroyer and drove him from the field.

May it be sung by voices, in music's sweetest key,
And be written in the pages of Australia's history;
And may Australian children to such mortal deeds aspire
That will build a noble nation, then evil must retire.

And for those gentle ladies, a word for them we'll say,
That waited on the needy upon that Christmas day;
Who spoke many a cheering word as they passed to and fro,
And thus fired the last volley at the fast retreating foe.



THE RUFUS MASSACRE

*Being an incident on the River Murray of a battle with the blacks in the year 1848.
The 40th Regiment having been sent from Adelaide on account of the hostility
of the natives. The battle took place at the mouth of the River Rufus,
Lake Victoria, New South Wales.*

There is an outlet of the Murray
Notorious for its fame
And which feeds that lake Victoria--
The River Rufus known by name

It was in eighteen-forty-eight
Very many years ago
Here the black man did lie in wait
For the white man—then their foe.

From an ambush among the reeds
Their treacherous spear would slay
And cruel and cunning were the deeds
That will never see the day.

A story is told of Doctor Brown
Who, when going overland
His party with sheep was murdered in sleep
By the cruel blackfellow's hand.

In Adelaide was a regiment
And the Fortieth by name
So to the Rufus it was sent
The hostile black to tame.

Well they engaged those blacks in battle
 Then the music did begin
 And at the sound of the muskets rattle
 Their ranks began to thin.

They slew along the Rufus' banks
 Two thousand blacks or more
 While many 'neath its waters sank
 That was crimson with their gore.

All day lasted the slaughter
 Till night it had set in
 The word was: "Give no quarter:
 No not to a sable skin!"

Three soldiers I believe (sic) was all
 At least I have hear said
 But three white men did fall
 And two of them not dead.

Next day they gathered up the dead
 When ended was the battle
 And fished from the water red
 And threw them in pits like cattle.

And ever from that fatal fight
 The whites need never fear
 When fell many a dusky knight
 Never more to hurl a spear.

Crushed never to rise again
 Never to murder or to plunder
 Never to forget that leaden rain
 When many of them went under.

When at night the wild wind raves
 In fancy they hear the wailing
 Of some wounded sinking brave
 As If his strength is failing

And to their braves they will relate
 On the eve of every corroboree
 How their fathers met their fate
 In that deadly Rufus massacre.



THE FOUL AIR AND PURE (1887)

Foul air he had polluted the earth
 With his impure, poisonous breath
 And he chuckled to himself with mirth
 Saying, now soon follow must death.

And holidays I can take a few
 Yes a cruise in the free, pure air
 And further extend our dominions
 And spread the pestilence there.

As he was sent by the evil fiend
 To oppose with all his might
 With brutal force make righteous bend
 And ever put down the right.

So up he went and was feeling proud
 Of his trip in the atmosphere
 When there came from a cloud a voice deep and loud
 That made foul quake with fear.

How dare you come, you infernal one,
 Through our pure, untainted air;
 But thy doom's now sealed, soon you'll be gone
 For injustice I can never spare.

Already great evil you have done
 On the earth, from whence you came;
 The most appalling death to you is fun
 For thou art devoid of shame.

Then came a clap and a blinding flash
 Long and loud did the thunder boom
 Followed by a terrific crash---
 'Twas foul air meeting his doom.

Foul air uttered one vengeful curse
 As his polluted life gave way
 To the last still bent to do his worst
 As he struck some mowers of hay.

Then ceased lightning flash and thunder's roar
 As pure air took command
 And peace and quiet reigned once more
 And joy throughout the land.

Thus the good and the bad can never agree
 'Tis the same wherever you go
 The bad must succumb, as here you can see
 And surrender at last to his foe.



THE OLD MAN KANGAROO

This is written from an incident that happened on the Wallaroo road in the latter sixties, about twenty odd miles from Kadina. Written when a lad. (D. H. writer).

There lies near the road to Wallaroo
Not far from Ninene's Plain
The remains of an old man kangaroo
Who left this here world without stain.

One morning when for cover bound
He and his faithful doe
They were startled by a huge stag hound
Where the stately pine trees grow

He turned upon his new found foe
And fought with might and main
And aided by his faithful doe
This kangaroo foe was slain

Then some hunters came upon the scene
With dogs a quarter score
And where beneath a pine tree green
He bled from many a pore.

His doe had fallen in the fray
With her yes all was o'er,
He still fought on, and would not yield
Though streaked with crimson gore

Three dogs had fallen in the fray
His strength was sinking fast
Though still he kept his foes at bay
This battle was his last

The stirrup iron a crushing blow
Which struck him on the head
He fell beside his faithful doe
The brave old man was dead

Where beneath an ancient tree
Some bones may still be found
Which marks the fight for liberty
Lies scattered o'er the ground

So to the brave old kangaroo
We will take our last farewell
That lies near the road to Wallaroo
Where the faithful pair had fell

The stirrup iron' a crushing blow
Which struck him on the head,
He fell beside his faithful doe,
The brave old man was dead.

Where beneath an ancient tree
Some bones may still be found
Which marks the fight for liberty
Lies scattered o'er the ground.

So to the brave old kangaroo
We will take our last farewell
That lies near the road to Wallaroo
Where the faithful pair had fell.



LIFE UPON THE DARLING (1879)

It was in the year of seventy nine
In summer, when the days were fine
It came into this head of mine
For to go and see the Darling

A hundred miles or thereabout
From Wentworth up the Darling route
When carrying, the drum an' me fell out
When I got work on the Darling

I have seen a little of Darling life
And tasted of its cares and strife
And found it not a pleasant life
Was life upon the Darling.

For trudging on the Darling track
You will meet too Harry, Bill an Jack
And each one carrying his knapsack
Going up or down the Darling.

Many who has come from Burke
Say they cannot find work
And say it is a perfect Turk
Any farther up the Darling.

Saying, where you see here three or four
Further up there by the score
And from the Lachlan they do pour
All making for the Darling.

Som of them will toss up a penny,
Of which of course they have not many
And toss to see if luck there's any
To go up or down the Darling

Some who are wedded to the grog
Along the river they do jog
Leading the life of the meanest dog
And wailing on the darling

Journeying on destruction's brink
 They of their Maker seldom think
 But blackguarding and the drink
 Do some upon the Darling

Some they journey onward slow
 Not caring if they find work no
 And say it is no use to go
 Either up or down the Darling.

Some they keep a steady pace
 Struggling hard to win the race
 And after work are giving chase
 Both up and down the Darling

No work for them does prevail
 Alas! too true is this sad tale
 And many do the time bewail
 When first they saw the Darling

They go at day's declining hour
 To the station for tea, sugar, and flour
 And often meet a look so sour
 From the squatter on the Darling

As into dough their flour they knead
 And it is rather too bad indeed---
 Weavils thick as carroway seed
 In the flour upon the Darling

So to you all I will bid Adieu
 Mr.Barrat and Richardson too
 And I hope that should I again meet you
 It won't be on the Darling

So to the Darling now farewell
 Where I will stop I cannot tell
 For I cannot call it a spell
 That I have had upon the Darling



A FRAGMENT (1888)

Conscience, our mediator!
 Who has not felt its power?
 That gift of the Creator,
 That sweetest bosom flower

That takes its root in childhood,
 In the young and tender heart,
 And will nestle there in manhood
 And of times make it smart.

Who still has got this treasure,
 Let them cherish it with care,
 That in the heart it may find pleasure
 For still to linger there.

And like some mystic, sacred balm
 Doth soothe the weary heart,
 And glows inward a serene calm
 That earth can ne'er impart.



A MUSE: THE SHEPHERD AND THE GRASS SEED (1866)

As a shepherd strolled around his flock
 On a large extensive plain
 He made for cover to a rock
 In shelter from the rain

As against the rock he sat
 Heavy rain began to fall
 His dog too crouched like a cat
 In shelter from the squall

The shepherd near a grass seed 'spied
 Like a corkscrew turning round
 As unseen strength it plied
 Was boring in the ground

However can you bore the soil,
 Aided by an unseen power.
 The grass seed answered the while--
 My helpmate is in the shower

To bore like this the shepherd cried
 There cannot be no need
 There is, the grass-seed replied
 It is to give you feed

When first the rain begins to fall
 Like things of life we creep
 Then we are busy one and all
 To give food for the sheep

My task is done, as you can see
 So now I can tell you more
 See my comrades near yon tree
 Are boring by the score

Farewell, and when you come again
 You will see a change has been
 Bestowed by that shower of rain--
 A cloak of brightest green

The shepherd as he rose to go
 A now much a wiser man
 And marvelled not a little
 At wondrous nature's plan.

To think how a common grass-seed
 Such a lesson it could teach
 Yes, even the most common weed
 A sermon it can preach



THE SHEPHERD AND HIS DOG BONNIE (1878)

I came across Shepherd Stradford
 In the north of old South Aus.;
 He was a native I think of Bradford,
 And was knocking down the dross.

He had been freely drinking,
 And he was stretched upon the floor,
 Of his wife he was always thinking,
 And he would never see her more.

When he told me his wife was dead
 His blue eyes were moist and wet,
 And since a drinking life he led,
 No, her, he never could forget.

A noble sheep dog lay nearby,
 One of the collie breed,
 Long he watched with steadfast eye
 And piteously would plead,

And gave vent to howl and whine
 In heart-breaking accents deep,
 And tried every canine sign
 To wake the drunkard in his sleep.

Long he watched his faithful dog,
 This canine skin and bone,
 While his master lay like a log,
 Or like something turned to stone.

Wake up! Wake up!! You drunken man,
 Look at your noble friend,
 Bid farewell to that bad career,
 Let it be at an end.

Be kind to your faithful dog
 Wherever your path may lead,
 Think well before you use the rod,
 He was your friend indeed.

I met Stradford in the morning,
 He was sober as a judge,
 With Bonnie toddling on behind,
 From whence he would not budge.

He said pounds he had spent by the score,
 But he was going to make a try
 From once again to drink no more,
 And he meant it by his eye.

He had been around among the shops.
 Where he had bought some meat
 And was about to cook some chops
 That Bonnie, his dog, may eat

Bonnie, no, he would never sell,
 When I spoke about his price.
 His look I will remember well,
 And I did not ask him twice.

With that we took each others hand
 And bid each a warm good-bye;
 Said I: - "Never drink, do make a stand."
 Said he: - "My boy, I will, I'll try!"



DRINK OR FALLEN MAN (1881)

Oh drink! Thou curse to human kind
 Which destroys man's body, soul and mind,
 Which makes man become like the swine,
 So loathsome to his fellow-kind.

How oft you will see at some hotel
 Some nearing fast the verge of hell
 Drink is doing his work to well
 See, there he lays, just as he fell.

See how they cluster round the bar
 On many a face you will see a scar
 While curses echoe near and far
 Others come with jug or jar.

At home some has left their bosom friend
 Whom they have pledged for to defend
 And promised often to amend
 Alas! how changed---he is now a fiend.

Adieu! Let us leave this horrid place
 Where lingers some of Adam's race
 Here many pour out his woeful case
 While tears doth trickle down his face.

Let us draw the curtain round this scene
 And trust unto a Higher Being---
 His Grace to make their hearts serene
 And enter like a arrow keen



THE CLAY PAN (Sevenhill 1880)

As I was one day roving
 Where the mallee and the pine
 Do in their wild like splendor
 Around each other twine.

Where the kangaroo and emu
 Do unmolested roam
 And at leisure prowls the dingo
 In its native jungle home.

It was there I had gone astray
 I had taken a wrong track
 Which led me out of my way
 And return I could not back.

I journeyed on, though footsore
 Through scrub and over sand
 Saying: I'll walk another mile or more
 Help may be at hand.

My water bag long had been dry
 Whatever shall I do---
 Am I to lay down and die
 Like our native kangaroo.

When I heard a gentle voice
 Saying: Arise again once more!
 Cheer up do not despair
 There are better days in store.

Some crows there were upon the ground,
 A chain or so away,
 Where they formed a circle round
 A hollow formed of clay.

Yes, crows around a clay pan
 While some on high did soar
 How oft too has many a swagman
 By them been saved before.

Soon? I did gain its brink
 To quench my burning thirst.
 Of those sable birds I often think
 By man so often cursed.

How I was saved by Power Divine
 I will remember wherever I go
 to some may seem absurd
 How saved was this life of mine
 Yes, by a carron crow.



CAMPED ON THE MURRAY IN 1879

It was a lovely calm, clear night
 When the moon it shone on high
 And reflected on the waters bright
 As they quickly glided by.

It was down by the Murray side
 Where I that night did camp
 In calm and peaceful harmony
 After a long day's tramp

While that river it ran fast
 And overflowed its banks
 Fish swiftly glided past
 And played their many pranks.

And from a distant stately tree
 A mopoke sang his dirge
 In a hoarse and shrill-like key
 Close by the river's verge

By the fire I listened there
 As I sat upon a log
 His notes I could but compare
 To the barking of a dog

And overhead the gum tree boughs
 Are spread fan-like overhead
 Upon whose leaves the possum browse
 Or along its branches sped.

From bough to bough the possum sprung
 And on me played his lark
 And on me was often flung
 Some piece of stick or bark

The lovely night, so cool and calm
 And the odour of the trees
 Added unto nature's charm
 Sweet fragrance to the breeze.

The morning star it has arose
 And beams its brightest ray
 And the warning caw of crows
 Denotes the coming of the day.

The mopoke can be no longer heard
 At last he has given oe'r
 And the scream of the night bird
 Can now he heard no more.



THE RETREAT OF THE KANGAROO (Streaky Bay 1865)

Some kangaroos that were feeding near
 Their old chieftain that brought up the rear
 When the sound of a rifle smote on their ear
 It was the crack of the rife of the scalper.

Like lightning they sped to a nook that they knew
 The old chieftain then said to his little crew
 Said he: Which course shall we now pursue
 To escape from the rife of the scalper

With last night fell poor little Joe
 And but an hour ago my faithful doe
 So comrades, now, where shall we go
 To escape from the knife of the scalper.

Powerless to aid her I saw my doe fall
 Pierced through the heart by a rifle ball.
 Alas! too late came my warning call
 For her to escape from the rifle of the scalper.

No more need she fear the rifle or hound
 Nor stride by my side with lightning bound
 Now she's at rest on the last feasting round
 Far, far from the reach of the scalper

Our comrades strew both scrub and plain
 No ball from a rifle can reach them again
 At last they are at rest--- free, free from the pain
 Caused by the ball and the knife of the scalper.

No more can we rest in our own native land
 Every one that we see has a rifle in hand
 To pause it is death, if we one moment stand
 By a ball from the rife of the scalper.

Though great is the wrong, we would freely forgive
 If they would but spare our lives an thus let us live
 But no, we are bored through with holes like a sieve
 Well we know it came from the scalper.

We have hid from the morn till day's decline
 Then fed on the plains and on porcupine
 Let's away to the scrub of mallee and pine
 There to escape from the rife of the scalper.

Let us away to the scrub, where dark as the night
 Where the rays of the sun seldom there gives it light
 There we may rest and be hid from the sight
 And escape from the rife of the scalper

Hark! Quick! Let us off! Enough we have said.
 Too well known is that sound that we so much dread
 It is the footfall of the moccasin tread
 And there crack goes the gun of the scalper



DESPISE NOT
 (Streaky Bay 1886)

Despise not a stranger because he is unknown,
 Or his character in danger, it may be better than your own.
 Do not condemn a man or say that he is vile,
 But assist him if you can by giving him a trial.

Then let us treat each other as we would be treated too,
 By acting as a brother, as you would them do to you,
 By reaching forth a helping hand it may help him o'er the style,
 And on fortune's side may safely land, if you give him but a trial.

For if we know not what's before us as through this world we go,
 To tell what is in store for us it is beyond human power to know;
 Him that you may now befriend by giving him a trial
 May perhaps in the end assist you with a smile.

RAMBLES THROUGH THE AREAS (1878)
(In Seventy-Eight)

Upon a ramble I have been,
And a little hardship I have seen
I have seen Koolunga and Redhill,
Which then had come to a standstill.

I have seen Wandearah in its prime,
Where the mosquito hums its dismal chime,
They prowl like wolves at night
To find some victim for to bite.

Farewell, to friends I love so dear
I can remain no longer here.
Clare village I do see once more,
Thou art the spot that I adore.

Farewell, I must bid thee adieu,
My rambling course for to pursue;
Ah! here is Port Pirie too,
But I have not any love for you.

Our cutter sails in a little while –
A cutter known as the Normanville -
To Port Augusta now we steer,
Across you waters bright and clear

Port Augusta at last we reach
I am strolling now upon its beach.
But here I would not wish to tarry
While I have a shilling for to carry.

Port Augusta is left behind,
Pass Stirling saltire like the wind;
On we journey through the pass.
Shrill blows the wind and the rain falls fast.

At last we reach the town of Quorn,
Which I left again at early morn
To Ragless' my course I steer,
Which in the distance looks so drear.

On hurdles hangs the grim sheepskin,
And scorching past goes the hot wind,
As under a tree I took my seat,
There to take shelter from the heat.

Birds beneath the bushes creep,
The whirlwind passes with a sweep,
Here I could not stop at all,
Of all the places this caps all.

Dust clouds as far as eye can see,
 And this is far enough north for me,
 And leave this place soon I must,
 For I am almost choking with the dust.

To Port Augusta I steer once more,
 But only again to leave its shore,
 I left it by the evening mail,
 That is by coach and not by sail

The port is soon lost to sight,
 We reached the valley late that night,
 And there I did not make a stay
 As I left it on the following day.

Now I cross the Pinda Plain
 Where the locusts shower like rain,
 Here they have taken their abode
 As they lay inches deep upon the road.

I came at last to Morchard town
 Where once there was a boiling down;
 I was weary too when I came there
 And could have rested anywhere.

Mr Dowdy there, who drink did sell,
 Kept the Morchard Town hotel,
 Men were drinking at the bar,
 Some who smoked their mild cigar.

As I intended to stay here for a time
 To a close I will bring this rhyme,
 With your leave I'll seek repose
 We will draw this rhyme to a close.



THE MURRAY

(Lake Victoria 1882)

My delight is by the River Murray
 In the dark and silent night,
 Where in the distance you may see
 The steamer's brilliant light.

Soon she's hidden from all view
 As she round the curving bend,
 And her onward course does pursue
 To reach her journey's end.

I love to see the possums
 When the moon is shining bright,
 High up among the blossoms,
 Perched at a giddy height.

By Australia's great waterway,
 The proud monarch of them all,
 'Tis here I do love to stray
 When evening shadows fall

Here many mounds may here be seen
 That points to centuries back,
 The ovens they once have been
 Of the River Murray black.

The waters of the Darling
 To the Murray wend their way,
 The Murrumbidgee and the Edwards
 To her their homage pay.

'Tis here the Derwent jackass
 Doth sing its melodeous lay,
 And greets the traveller who may pass,
 Should he wander by that way.

'Tis here the weary swagman
 May in some peaceful bend,
 Where he may fill his bag or can
 And a day of rest may spend.

Here he may with line or rod
 On fishes make a raid,
 And fish for perch, bream, or cod,
 Beneath some gum tree shade.

Here myriads of wild fowl,
 Ducks, pelican, and swan,
 Proudly they glide with arched neck
 And mingle with the throng.

My rhyme is now near ended,
 And I hope both great and small
 That I have not offended
 But that I have 'mused you all.

So now I wish you all adieu,
 And that tonight you'll dream
 Of floating in a bark canoe
 Upon the Murray stream.



THE TORRENS LAKE

There was a Governor of Adelaide,
Of honor, dignity, and fame,
By whom the Torrens Lake was made,
Sir William Jervios was his name.

Here upon the Torrens Lake
Hearts are lost and won,
As mirth and peals of laughter break
O'er work that he has done.

How lovely on the Torrens Lake
At noon or evening-tide
To watch those graceful boats
That o'er its peaceful surface glide.

Here they may with pleasure,
With vigor ply their oar,
And others stroll at leisure
Along the Torrens shore.

Here you may see the gentle sex
Parading the Torrens side,
While in beauty's charms are detected
In all their youth and pride.

Long will he be remembered
Upon this our sunny shore
When Sir William Jervois
In this world will be no more.



THE BULLOCK DRIVER

(In the Year '75)

It was on April the eighth
I engaged upon Mount Arden
Where farewell I bid my mate
Then I had to help them yarding.

Smith gave me a job of course
And not caring to see me idle
Says he:--"Go catch my horse
In the stable you'll find his bridle.

Yes, It is now some years ago
Since I got that situation
Where I was hired to drive

Bullocks on that station.

Twelve miles away fresh water well
Mount Ardan's out-station lay
On a bridle path by nook or dell
I could but slowly make my way.

From rock to rock high overhead
The wallaby made his daring leap
Through here this mountain path had led
O'er rugged rocks and ranges steep.

I reached fresh water well at last
That stood out boldly upon a plain
The sky became too overcast
With every sign of coming rain.

I was upon a track next day
Loaded with some fencing wire
Across the gulf my route it lay
And the bullocks soon began to tire.

Darkness had now long set in
And the going too was very bad;
Yes, I swore at times, it was a sin
But those bullocks they would drive you mad.

When all at once to my surprise
The team came to a standstill
When lo! In front there was a rise.
And it proved to be a sandhill.

With shout and whip I often cursed
But no, those bullocks would not stir;
One bullock rattler was the worst
Though fat and strong he was a cur.

With whip-tail gone and handle broke
Any bullocky will know my plight
They know too well it is no joke
For to be anchored in the night.

Yes, we are stuck hard and fast
And I had to unload the wire;
When we got out at last
Only soon to be struck in the mire.

For in olden times an old sea bed
O'er which once the ocean flowed
Here Neptune chariot horses sped
And proudly the wild billows rode.

Down to the knave in a bog
And for shout or oath they would not go
Without a whip I could not flog

And they would not even press the bow.

So I unyoked and let them rip
And hobbled Dolly, my saddle nag
Then patched and doctored up my whip
For a cracker I had a piece of rag.

I dreamt that night of bogs galore
And of hills of eternal sand
Even in my sleep, I think, I swore
And out of bed would often land.

I found those bullocks the next day
And bullock-rattler had the lead
I got them fifteen miles away
And were camped quietly on good feed.

I fetched them back to the dray
And had to run down each pair
For they always tried to break away
As through the myall they would tear.

But at last all were yoked
And soon again were on the road
Even a saint would have been provoked
Such trouble had I with this load.

I arrived at Watson's camp at dark
They were fencing in the run
And were ever ready for a lark
Yes, my driving troubles gave them fun.

Carting stakes and posts of myall
A few odd posts there were of pine
Such was my work upon this station---
Laying posts and wire along the line.

The bullocks they had acted splendid
And for a week of two all went well
I thought my troubles they were ended
And the constant work had begun to tell.

But one morn they were missing
Not a bullock could be found
And here were tracks of other cattle
To be seen upon this sandy ground.

Everywhere was sand and mulgar
With a little myall here and there
But not a trace of those bullocks
Could be found anywhere.

One morning, riding, I heard a rattle
Whose familiar sound I knew too well.
Yes, here they were, with Whiting's cattle

And the sound it was my bullock bell.

Back to camp again we brought them
And poor Dolly she was fairly beat
For three days we had sought them
Grass did not grow beneath her feet.

Soon after this they sent a blackboy
To see those bullocks did not stray
Who at night o'er them kept sentinel
And brought them in at break of day.

Such was our daily occupation
And when our day's work was done
Some spinning yarns about some station
Or be up to some other kind of fan.

The time was getting close to shearing
Being just within a week or so
When I drove unto the station clearing
Where I unyoked and let them go.

Thus ended my bullock driving
And I really wanted now a change
So I went east to Mount Arben
Unto that shed across the range.



ODE TO THE DYING GUM (1914)

As a hermit he stands a lone fellow,
All by himself there on a rise,
With age each leaf has now turned yellow,
As slowly and surely also he dies.

His only comrade has fallen
And lies near his base,
As he stands there defiant,
And the last of his race.

We may guess his dumb history
And of the centuries long passed,
Though wrapped in wild mystery,
As he sways in the blast.

How wild beasts sought cover
And camped in thy shade,
Here too savage wild men
'Neath thy branches have laid.

Where old nests in its brambles
May still there be seen,

Here the 'possum too did gambol,
When this old tree was green.

And the native wild magpie
Did sing and warble with glee
As o'er her young she kept sentil
From a branch of the tree.

Soon like your old comrade
Your life's long battle will be o'er,
And rest on the bosom
Of your mother once more.

Thus I close my short story
To my friend silent and dumb,
So I will close here this ode
Of the old dying gum.



LITTLE JIM (1910)

I had a little collie dog whom I gave the name Jim,
He was very fond of me and I was kind to him,
His cunning little canine ways I could not help admire,
And how he would cuddle near to me when sleeping by the fire.

Chorus:-

But he will never breast a current any more,
He will never swim a river any more.
Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,
But he will never breast a current any more.

'Twas in southern Queensland, not far from Nanango,
When I first saw Jim where the forest giants grow.
Here it was that little Jim had first seen the day,
Where with his sisters and brothers, with whom he romped at play.

Chorus: -

But he will never breast a current any more,
He will never swim a river any more.
Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,
But he will never breast a current any more.

And Jim been one too many he was given unto me,
So I carried him in front across the saddle tree,
But after first day or two he would toddle behind,
And a better little dog it would be hard to find.

Chorus: -

But he will never breast a current any more,
He will never swim a river any more.
Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,

But he will never breast a current any more.
 But at times little Jim he would play the fool,
 And had a weakness for little children that he would meet at school,
 Or who he met upon the way, wherever it would be,
 How he would run and lick their little feet
 As they would dodge behind a tree.

Chorus: -

But he will never breast a current any more,
 He will never swim a river any more.
 Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,
 But he will never breast a current any more.

He would run after the ladies, of whom he was very fond,
 And often made me wild enough to dip him in a pond;
 And passing often through a town he would pop into a store,
 Until my long-tried patience could not stand it any more.

Chorus:

But he will never breast a current any more,
 He will never swim a river any more.
 Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,
 But he will never breast a current any more.

So I lashed him to the stirrup so he could not roam,
 And it kept him out of mischief, and he seemed at home;
 But after a day or so he appeared to understand
 And he gave me no more trouble, I had him well in hand.

Chorus: -

But he will never breast a current any more,
 He will never swim a river any more.
 Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,
 But he will never breast a current any more.

We were nearing the town of Bogan, not far from the Drummond range,
 And little Jim was running loose, as I thought he would like a change.
 I had just unsaddled Neddy as it was getting late,
 And looking round at little Jim I saw he had a bait.

Chorus: -

But he will never breast a current any more,
 He will never swim a river any more.
 Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,
 But he will never breast a current any more.

Jim had picked up a bone some little way behind
 That he had picked up a bait it never crossed my mind
 As I gazed upon my little friend my eyes were moist and dim,
 One shudder and a plaintive whine was the last of little Jim.

Chorus: -

But he will never breast a current any more,
 He will never swim a river any more.
 Baffle Creek and the Kevlan, those torrents which he swam,

But he will never breast a current any more.

FISHES OF THE SHORE (1887)

We are as fishes of the shore, on its billows we are bore
Like them we flow with ebb and tide
Dashed against the rugged shore where treacherous breakers roar
While monsters await on every tide.

Like them we fall a prey to tyrants every day
Many is the victim every hour
Oft caught with enticing bait by those ever in the wait
Who smile when we they have us in their power

Thus mammon holds the sway but coming is the day
When people will revolt against misrule
Though treated now with scorn, see the halo of the morn
When labor will no longer be a tool.



FAREWELL TO THE TOWN OF CLARE (1914)

Though I have travelled far from Clare and Armagh,
None to me is there that can compare.
As I gaze on the scene, what a change there has been
In that gem of the hill, called Clare.

Long years I have strayed wherein childhood I played
When I first saw those slopes and hills,
Where cosy gardens now abound on slope, vale, or mound
Everywhere around the old town of Clare.

Old faces are missed and rubbed off the list,
Oh! What memories are recalled of the thrills.
Glad days and sad, when I was but a lad,
Come crowding back from the old days of Clare.

As you would pass down the street, rosy maidens you'd meet,
While there mirth and merry laughter filled the air,
They would pass with a nod and a smile, for they knew not guile,
In the long ago days of Clare.

As in some foreign land a stranger I stand,
Though when I first saw the light it was there;
I leave thee with a sigh, I must say now good-bye,
So farewell to the town of Clare.