



# *21 Best-loved Aussie Poems, Ballads & Songs*

WRITTEN BY **RON SHAW**



THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS BOOK ADDRESS MANY OUTCOMES IN THE SYLLABUS

## **21 Best-loved Aussie Poems, Ballads & Songs**

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# *Teachers Notes*

This book was created to familiarize Australian students with our best-known works of literature and song lyrics.

Having children study these works will help our unique culture and history to live on into future generations.

Some works are not presented here in their entirety.

This is for two reasons: (1) the full piece may be very long (2) one or more verses may not be easily comprehended by children.

Offering excerpts or selected verses only, ensures greater degrees of familiarity and understanding.

The poems and songs that have come from people's experiences of living and surviving in the Australian bush were often written by ordinary, everyday people and are a record of the colourful language of bush life.

The convict songs of the early days of the Australian colonies became the foundation of Australia's bush music. Bush ballads recorded the harsh way of life and descriptions of contemporary events. They provide an accurate record of the lives and loves of bushrangers, swagmen, drovers, and shearers.

## **How to Treat the Selected Works**

- Photocopy the poem/song and distribute copies to students.
- Present some background information about the work and/or the author (see notes that follow).
- Students read through the piece by themselves. This to be followed by a teacher-class discussion, verse by verse, wherein the meanings of key words or phrases are explained. The requirements of some questions may also need to be clarified.
- In answering the questions students should be encouraged to use their own words (unless asked otherwise).

The notes that follow will provide teachers and their students with some background to each of the twenty-one works and their creators.



*see over*

## Waltzing Matilda p14

A.B (Banjo) Paterson

*Waltzing Matilda* was inspired by the death of a swagman-shearer during the shearers' strikes of the 1890s.

The song is supposed to have been based on an actual incident which happened during a depression during 1895 when work was scarce, and revolves around a swagman who is looking for work. The swagman is so-called because he carries his swag on his back.

A swagman sets up camp for the night near a billabong, under the shade of a coolibah tree and puts his billy on to boil water over a camp fire to make tea to drink. A jumbuck comes down to drink from the billabong, and the hungry swagman catches the sheep, intending to eat it for dinner. The swagman shoves the sheep into his tucker-bag to restrain it and stop it from running away. However the squatter has witnessed what has happened and brings three troopers with him to arrest the swagman. The troopers tell the swagman that they are there to arrest him for stealing the sheep, and that he has to 'come with them to the jail'. The swagman, who is well aware that the penalty for sheep stealing is execution by hanging, then dives into the billabong to swim away and escape arrest. However the swagman is not a strong swimmer and he drowns.

### Glossary

- \* *Waltzing Matilda*: to carry one's swag from camp to camp
- \* *swagman*: an itinerant farmhand, carrying his "swag" (his blankets) rolled into a cylinder
- \* *billabong*: a creek (normally with a pronounced "oxbow" bend)
- \* *coolibah tree*: a eucalypt (gum) tree
- \* *billy*: a tin can used to heat water over a campfire to make tea
- \* *jumbuck*: sheep
- \* *tucker-bag*: bag or box used to store food
- \* *squatter*: farmer/grazier who found good land and took possession; some became extremely rich
- \* *trooper*: policeman or soldier on horseback

## My Country p15

Dorothea Mackellar

Isobel Marion Dorothea Mackellar (1885-1968) was a poet and fiction writer. Her poetry is usually regarded as bush poetry, inspired as it is by her experience on her brothers' farms near Gunnedah, New South Wales. Her best-known poem is *My Country* written at age 19 while homesick in England, and first published in the London *Spectator* in 1908 under the title *Core of My Heart*.

Four volumes of her collected verse were published: *The Closed Door*, published in 1911, and containing the first appearance of *My Country* under its present name; *The Witchmaid* (1914); *Dreamharbour* (1923); and *Fancy Dress* (1926).

In 1984 Gunnedah resident Mikie Maas created the "Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards", which has grown into a nationwide poetry competition for Australian school students.

Dorothea Mackellar was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for her contribution to Australian literature in 1968, two weeks before her death. A memorial to Mackellar stands in ANZAC Park in Gunnedah. A federal electorate covering half of Sydney's Northern Beaches and a Canberra suburb are named in her honour.

## Along the Road to Gundagai *p16*

*Jack O'Hagan*

"Along the Road to Gundagai" is considered an Australian folk tune.  
The first line of the chorus is instantly recognisable, due to its use of rhyme and repetition.

Gundagai is a charming historic township on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River in New South Wales.  
The town is forever associated with the dog on the tuckerbox in Australian folklore.  
Perhaps more than any other Australian town Gundagai has proved an irresistible subject with writers of popular verse.  
This probably relates to the fact that Five Mile Creek, to the north of town, was a popular meeting place with teamsters, drovers, shearers and bush travellers.  
'Lazy Harry' and 'Flash Jack from Gundagai' are anonymous poems relating to the town.

Jack O'Hagan, who had never been to Gundagai, wrote "Along the Road to Gundagai", a nostalgic and highly sentimental song, in 1922. It became an international success and the signature tune for the popular radio show 'Dad and Dave'.  
O'Hagan later wrote "Where the Dog Sits on the Tucker-box" and "When a Boy from Alabama Meets a Girl from Gundagai". The hero of Henry Lawson's "Scots of the Riverina" has a farm 'by Gundagai' while C.J. Dennis mentions the town in "The Traveller".

The bush was a favourite subject of Australian songs, although it was often portrayed as a place people had left and longed to return to.

## The Drover's Wife *p17*

*Henry Lawson*

Henry Lawson is among the best-known Australian poets and fiction writers of the colonial period.  
Many believe he was the first poet to capture the Australian way of life and today Henry Lawson's work is an inspiration to many Australians.

Henry Lawson was born in 1867, on a goldfield in rural New South Wales.  
His father was mining there, and times were tough. The Lawsons were very poor.

Henry didn't get a good education but his mother gave him lots of books.  
Henry was a shy, sensitive child. He wasn't like most bush boys. Even his mother thought he was a bit strange.  
When he was nine years of age, Henry got an ear infection and went partly deaf. By the time he was fourteen years old he was totally deaf.  
The kids at school tormented Henry and he became more of a loner.

Writing was a way for Henry to express his feelings.  
Much of his inspiration came from the Australian bush and its people. Because he'd known the hardships of bush life Henry could understand its ways.

In those days reading poetry was a popular pastime. People looked up to writers...everyone had a favourite poet.  
In 1888 the Sydney Bulletin started to publish Henry's stories and poems. People could see he understood life in Australia, and he soon had loyal readers.

Although his own life was often unhappy, Henry Lawson was kind to others. He found time for those less fortunate than himself. He felt he had something in common with homeless people.

Henry Lawson may not have led the life he hoped for but he's now widely recognised as Australia's poet of the people.



## Kitty's Broom *p18*

*Breaker Morant*

Harry 'Breaker' Morant (1864– 1902) was a drover, horseman, poet, and soldier whose renowned skill with horses earned him the nickname 'The Breaker'. Articulate, intelligent, and well educated, he was also a published poet, with the bulk of his work appearing in *The Bulletin* magazine.

In the century-plus years since his death, Morant has become a folk hero in Australia. His story has been the subject of several books and a major Australian feature film.

Morant emigrated to Australia from England as a 19 year old and settled in outback Queensland. Over the next fifteen years, working in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia, this charismatic roustabout made a name for himself as a bush poet and gained renown as a fearless and expert horseman.

He worked for several years as an itinerant drover and horse-breaker, as well as writing his popular bush ballads, becoming known to and friendly with famed Australian poets Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson.

## Sun Arise *p19*

*Rolf Harris/ Harry Butler*

Rolf Harris (born in 1930) is an Australian musician, composer, painter, and television host.

He was born in Perth, Western Australia and was named after Rolf Boldrewood, an Australian writer whom his mother admired.

Rolf has spoken of his "great respect and love" for Aborigines.

'Sun Arise' echoes the sound of the didgeridoo (using four double basses) and also imitates the sounds associated with an aboriginal corroboree. The song was a big hit.

## True Blue *p20*

*John Williamson*

True Blue is an Australian folk song written in 1981 by singer-songwriter John Williamson.

The song uses Australian slang, with the title being an example of this, meaning *totally Australian*.

True Blue is often performed at sporting events and was performed by Williamson twice on acoustic guitar at Australia Zoo during Steve Irwin's public memorial service (it was Steve's favourite song); once shortly after the beginning ceremony, and again at the end as Irwin's truck was driven out of the Crocoseum for the final time.

The song had notable success, in particular in more rural areas of Australia. At the country music awards in 1982, True Blue took out Tamworth Music Festival's 'Golden Fiddle' for best song writer and composer.

The song has become the anthem for the Australian national cricket team.

### Glossary

\* *smoko*: to 'knock off for a smoko' is to have a break for a coffee, tea or cigarette

\* *true blue*: steadfast loyal Australian who displays the Aussie ideals of a fair go for all, mateship, having a go, and solving problems

\* *fair dinkum*: virtually the same as True Blue - honest, reliable, trustworthy, dinki-di; someone who has embraced the Aussie attitudes to everything, especially mateship. 'Are you fair dinkum?' means 'are you telling the truth?'



## **I Still Call Australia Home** *p21*

*Peter Allen*

Peter Allen (1944 – 1992) was an Australian songwriter and singer.

Born Peter Allen Woolnough in Tenterfield, New South Wales, Allen began his performing career as one of the Allen Brothers who were a popular cabaret and television act in the early 1960s.

Peter performed on Australian Television at many important occasions: in front of Queen Elizabeth II in 1980 at the Sydney Opera House, Prince Charles and Princess Diana (in Melbourne and Sydney) and at the 1980 Australian Football Grand Final in Melbourne.

A musical based on his life, titled *The Boy from Oz*, featuring Todd McKenney, and, later, Hugh Jackman, used his largely autobiographical songs to form the soundtrack.

After his death, *I Still Call Australia Home*, one of his older songs, came to be regarded as an unofficial Australian national anthem.

## **Home Among the Gum Trees** *p22*

*B. Brown and W. Johnson*

This was the theme song to the popular Australian television show *Burke's Backyard*. It contains much 'Australiana'.

The home described, with its clothesline out the back, verandah out the front, a sheep and a kangaroo, is a much-loved typical Australian rural home.

## **The Man from Ironbark** *p23*

*A.B (Banjo) Paterson*

Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Paterson (1864-1941) was a poet, ballad writer, journalist and horseman. His parents, Andrew Bogle and Rose Isabella Paterson were graziers on Illalong station in the Yass district of New South Wales.

Paterson's early education took place at home under a governess and then at a bush school in Binalong, the nearest township. From about the age of ten years he attended the Sydney Grammar School. He lived with his grandmother and spent the school holidays at Illalong station with his family.

After completing school the 16-year-old Paterson worked for a Sydney firm of solicitors and was admitted as a solicitor in 1886. In the ensuing years Paterson began publishing verse in the Bulletin and Sydney Mail under the pseudonyms 'B' and 'The Banjo'.

In 1890, Banjo wrote "The Man from Snowy River", a poem which caught the heart of the nation, and in 1895 he had a collection of his works published under that name. This book is the most sold collection of Australian Bush poetry and is still being reprinted today.

Paterson's poems mostly presented a highly romantic view of rural Australia. His famous poem "Waltzing Matilda" was set to music and became one of Australia's most famous songs. Another of his poems, "Clancy of the Overflow", is the tale of a Queensland drover...a drover is a cattle handler responsible for herding large mobs of cattle long distances to market.

Paterson authored two novels; "An Outback Marriage" (1906) and "The Shearer's Colt" (1936), as well as writing many short stories. He also wrote a book for children, "The Animals Noah Forgot" (1933).

Banjo Paterson's image appears on the Australian \$10 note, along with an illustration inspired by "The Man From Snowy River".

## **Andy's Gone with Cattle** *p24*

*Henry Lawson*

Andy's Gone with Cattle, Henry Lawson's famous song about droving, was first published in October 1888 in the Town and Country journal.

Droving is the Australian outback's term for the movement of stock to market, pasture or water.

And men like Andy - horseback drovers - have been driving the cattle or sheep through Australia's interior since the country's livestock industry got off the ground in the early 19th century.

Drovers endured remote, diverse locations. They began to make stock routes that crisscrossed the country (many are still in use and open today).

Henry Lawson had walked from Bourke to Hungerford and back, and it was during this time that he came to be very conscious of the hardships of bush life.

After the gold rush of the mid-to-late 19th century, drovers forged a unique frontier culture that bush poets, authors and songwriters have since immortalized. The outback was being settled and droving was the reason why.

In the pioneering days, "The length of a drive here was further than anywhere else in the world," says former drover Bruce Simpson. The survival of these epic expeditions depended upon planning, strong men and obedient horses - but above all upon the cook's competency. Drovers relished their campfire dinner of thick beef stew, unleavened damper bread and a strong cup of black billy tea.

## **Moreton Bay** *p25*

*Francis MacNamara*

Many convicts were unable to read or write very well (like a large percentage of the British population at the time). The use of songs was particularly important as it provided a means to record popular feelings as well as events and individuals' stories.

Convict songs like *Jim Jones*, *Van Diemen's Land* and *Moreton Bay* were often sad or critical. Convicts such as Francis MacNamara, known as 'Frankie the Poet', were flogged for composing original ballads with lines critical of their captors. Despite this, 'the convicts could not be stopped from singing' (Edgar Waters).

The lines from the song *Moreton Bay* (c. 1920s), attributed to Francis MacNamara, tell of the hardship a convict has experienced at different penal settlements around Australia.

## **The Melbourne Cup** *p26*

*Slim Dusty*

David Gordon "Slim Dusty" Kirkpatrick, AO, OBE (1927—2003) was an iconic Australian country music singer-songwriter. Slim was born in Kempsey, New South Wales, the son of a cattle farmer. He adopted the stage name "Slim Dusty" in 1938 at eleven years of age. Slim released his first record in 1945 at the age of nineteen.

His 1957 hit "A Pub With No Beer" was the biggest-selling record by an Australian to that time, and the first Australian single to go gold. Over the course of his career he collected more gold and platinum albums than any other Australian artist. Slim not only recorded songs written by himself and other fellow Australian performers, but also recorded classic Australian poems by Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson with new tunes, to call attention to the old 'Bush Ballads.' In all, he won a record 35 "Golden Guitars" over the years. Slim Dusty, with wife Joy McKean, were patrons of the National Truck Drivers' Memorial located at Tarcutta, New South Wales.

## Click go the Shears *p27*

*Percy Jones*

After the gold rushes, shearers and drovers composed ballads and songs which became part of the oral tradition of Australian bush music. *Click go the Shears* is perhaps the most widely sung shearers' song.

Blade shears were used in woolsheds everywhere until the 1880s, when they began to be replaced by machine shears. Blade shearing, or hand shearing as it was also called, did survive for awhile in Australia.

In 1892, the legendary shearer Jackie Howe (1861-1920) used blades to shear 321 sheep in seven hours and forty minutes at Alice Downs Station in Queensland, a feat which at the time seemed almost superhuman.

In fact, Howe's record of 321 sheep in a day was not broken even with machine shears until 1950.

By the early 1900s, however, blade shearing had all but died out in Australia. It did (and does) survive in New Zealand, mainly because in cold climates shearers like to leave some wool on the sheep, and it is easier to do this with blades than with machine shears.

Shearing blades were roughly like scissors, the main difference being that they were hinged at the gripping end, not in the middle, and there was a spring to force the blades apart each time they were pulled together.

The blades themselves, as used in 1861, were about eighteen centimeters long (actually seven inches) and had one long spring.

In the 1880s, blades became double-sprung. Blade shears were usually imported from Sheffield in England.

Apart from improvements in shears, wool presses and other equipment, the operation of a shearing shed has not changed a lot since 1861.

In the mid-1800s shearing was still often done by workers at the sheep station: shepherds, stationhands, and even the squatter himself.

Over the years it became more and more a specialist's job until by the 1880s it was largely done by professional shearers: skilled men who moved from station to station.

Shearing was a tough job. Shearers sometimes travelled between stations on horseback but usually they did it on foot, which meant they had to tramp huge distances carrying their swag. (By the early 1900s, many shearers were getting about on bikes.)

Their living conditions were primitive and the job was physically exhausting, but they did get paid relatively well: enough to be the envy of other station workers.

What hours did a shearer work in 1861?

Normally, he would have started shearing at 7am. There would have been a 15-minute smoko in the morning, probably at 9am, a half-hour break for lunch at midday, a second 15-minute smoko around at 2.30pm and a fourth and last one at 4.30pm. Shearing would go on until 6.30pm.

Shearers worked six full days a week, from Monday to Saturday, and had Sunday off.

The work schedule could be varied, of course. At a smaller, family-run property like Oxley Downs, the shearers might start hours earlier, at first light, but then have a three-hour break during the hottest part of the day.

In big sheds, the start and end of each working session were signalled by the ring of a bell. This would not have been necessary in smaller sheds, though. There, everyone could hear the boss of the boards when he called, 'Smoko!' or 'Back to work!'

## Our Don Bradman *p28*

*Jack O'Hagan*

This jaunty ditty was first performed in 1930 by Art Leonard (with novelty accompaniment).

Our Don Bradman got the patriotic juices flowing with the line: "Now I ask you is he any good?" to which one of the answers was the unforgettable lyric: "As a batsman he is certainly plum pud."

Many cricket lovers, the world over, are aware of Don Bradman's remarkable batting average of 99.94 runs in test cricket. This is almost double the average of other great players.

*Donald George Bradman was born at Cootamundra in New South Wales on the 27th August 1908. He spent his childhood years growing up in Bowral, where as a young school boy he tirelessly hit a golf ball with a cricket stump against a rainwater tank at the Bradman family home. By doing so he taught himself hand-eye co-ordination that he later demonstrated whilst becoming the greatest batter of all time.*

## Botany Bay *p29*

*unknown*

On the 29th April 1770 a British ship named the Endeavour, under the command of Captain James Cook, anchored in what was later named Botany Bay. The first fleet, consisting of eleven vessels, entered Botany Bay on January 19, 1788. They carried about 730 convicts and 250 free settlers. Today Botany Bay is surrounded by the suburbs of Sydney.

This poem was written about a time when even a small crime could get you shipped off to Australia for 7 years as a convict. The poem talks about this in the first verse and finishes in the last verse with a warning to boys and girls (Dookies and Duchesses) not to steal or they'll wind up in Botany Bay.

Glossary:

swell a person who is well dressed.

to cut a swell to make a good impression.

## Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport *p30*

*Rolf Harris*

"Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport", a song written by Rolf Harris in 1957, became a hit across the world in the 1960s. Inspired by Harry Belafonte's calypsos, and about an Australian stockman on his deathbed, the song is one of the best known and most successful Australian songs after *Waltzing Matilda*.

The recording of the song, with Rolf Harris, reached #3 on the US charts in 1963. Harris re-recorded it along with The Wiggles in 2005. It is still popular today as a children's song.

The stockman instructs his friend to take care of his affairs. The first of these is to watch his wallabies feed, then to tie his kangaroo down, since they jump around. "Sport" is a term of address, alluding to "good sport", which often, as in this case, praises someone for carrying out a small favour you are asking of them.

## Queensland Drover p31

*unknown*

Stockmen and drovers, known as 'overlanders', developed pride in the skills which required them to drive sheep and cattle over long distances. This is expressed in many of their ballads and songs such as *The Queensland Drover*, with its stirring chorus

*Pass the billy round boys!  
Don't let the pint-pot stand there!  
For tonight we'll drink to the health  
Of every overlander.*

The Queensland drover lived a life of loneliness, isolation and hardship. The resilience shown by the drover when faced with these hurdles is typical of our pioneer forebears and this pioneer resilience helped fuel the rapid development of Queensland as well as shape our national identity.

Amongst the drover's many worries was flood. Many cattle drovers found themselves trapped on some high ground for weeks on end, as the swirling waters flowed passed. Every log and branch that washed up on their island caused consternation for both man and beast. For each log or branch would be crawling with bull-dog ants, scorpions, centipedes or snakes, which had to be killed before they sent the cattle mad.

Sudden dry spells were just as common as flood, particularly when droving around the Gulf country. Finding food for the cattle was the greatest problem faced during these dry spells. When food was short the drovers would have to cut and crush short rushes from creek and river beds, enough to feed the whole mob.

The rivers of southern Queensland were notorious for sandflies, which drove the cattle, horses and humans mad with scratching, and when droving in the north a mosquito net was a necessity. In the north, every drover was on the lookout for crocodiles. Many slept in trees rather than risk a night on the ground. Wild animals could cause stampedes. When wild horses appeared the stallions would cause havoc among the droving horses, and dingoes would send the herds crazy with fear.

But it wasn't wild horses or dingoes that the drover feared the most. It was the camel. Because of the soft pads on their feet camels were as quiet as ghosts and were on top of the mob before the drover knew it. Not only did they send cattle wild but the horses were scared stiff of them and after a visit from camels the drovers would be forced to round up the scattered herd.

The drover's life was not an easy one.

## Where the Pelican Builds Her Nest p32

*Mary Hannay-Foott*

Mary Hannay Foott (1846 –1918) was an Australian poet.

Her husband died in 1884 from over-work and exposure during the drought of that year, and the losses of stock were so great that Mrs Foott was obliged to sell her interest in the property and move to Toowoomba, Queensland.

In July 1885 she went to Rocklea, near Brisbane, and opened a private school which supported her family. In the same year she published her first volume of poetry, *Where the Pelican Builds and Other Poems*.

Mrs Foott's published verse was small in quantity but of good quality. "Where the Pelican Builds Her Nest", written in 1881, is included in most Australian anthologies.

Mary Hannay-Foott said that according to the bushmen of Western Queensland the pelican's nest is seldom, if ever, found.

## **The Man from Snowy River** *p33*

*A.B (Banjo) Paterson*

The spirit of the Australian Outback, and the essences of the bushmen and women who pioneered it, is captured in the ballads and poetry of Banjo Paterson. The vast distances, the droughts, the floods, the flies, the heat, and the harsh and beautiful places of Outback Australia were brought to the city people of the late 1880's through Paterson's writings. A true folk poet, a recorder and publisher of Australian bush songs, Banjo brought the legendary magic of the Australian bush into the household, the schools and the government.

The Man from Snowy River, tells the story of a young mountain lad, mounted on a small mountain pony, who rides out with the experienced stockmen in pursuit of a runaway horse. Because of his size, and the size of his pony he is at first ridiculed but when the untamed bush horses take to the wild and rugged mountain tracts, he and his pony grow in stature.

## **The Wild Colonial Boy** *p34*

*unknown*

This classic bush ballad was first published in 1881. Historians, folklorists and others have wondered about this mysterious character ever since. The Wild Colonial Boy is generally believed to be either a wholly fictional character or very loosely based on Bold Jack Donahoe, a convict bushranger of the 1820s.

Jack Donahoe was born in Ireland. At the age of 18, in 1824, he was transported to Australia. By 1827 he was caught stealing with two others. Donahoe escaped, but the two others were hanged.

Donahoe teamed up with another gang which became so notorious that a special patrol was formed to hunt them. Again, though others were captured or killed, Donahoe escaped. He took up with yet another gang. They became known for their stylish dress, as they exchanged clothes with people in the coaches they held up. In 1830 Donahoe was finally ambushed by police near Sydney. He was killed in the ensuing battle. The ballad *Bold Jack Donahoe* appeared soon after his death. Authorities banned its singing in beer shops and taverns.



# Waltzing Matilda

A.B (Banjo) Paterson

Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong,  
Under the shade of a coolibah tree,  
And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy  
boiled,  
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"

**Chorus** Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,  
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"  
And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy  
boiled,  
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"

Down came a jumbuck to drink at the billabong:  
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee.  
And he sang as he shoved that jumbuck in his tucker-  
bag,  
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."

**Chorus** (3<sup>rd</sup> line is now.... And he sang as he shoved  
that jumbuck in his tucker-bag)

Up rode a squatter, mounted on his thoroughbred;  
Down came the troopers, one, two, three:  
"Who's that jolly jumbuck you've got in your tucker-bag?  
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"

**Chorus** (3<sup>rd</sup> line is now.... "Who's that jolly jumbuck  
you've got in your tucker-bag?)

Up jumped the swagman and sprang into the billabong;  
"You'll never catch me alive!" said he;  
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that  
billabong,  
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"

**Chorus** (3<sup>rd</sup> line is now.... And his ghost may be heard as  
you pass by that billabong)

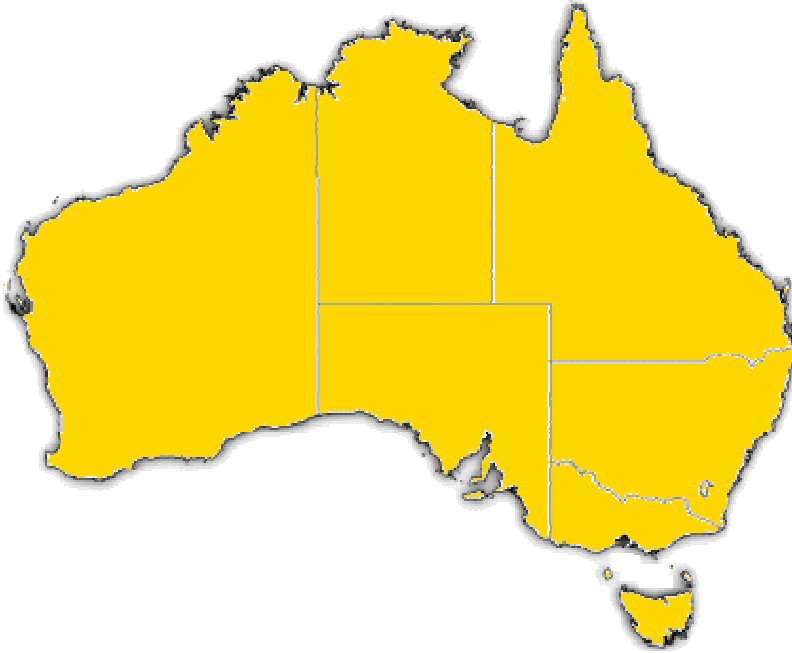


## Questions

1. What is a swagman?
2. Why is a billabong a good place to camp at?
3. How did swagmen boil their billy?
4. What does 'grabbed him with glee' mean?
5. What kinds of food do you think the swagman might have in his tucker bag?
6. How did the squatter arrive at the scene?
7. How do we know that the troopers arrived from a different direction than did the squatter.
8. What action of the swagman shows us that he was afraid of going to jail?
9. What do you think was the cause of the swagman's death?

# My Country

*Dorothea Mackellar*



I love a sunburnt country,  
A land of sweeping plains,  
Of ragged mountain ranges,  
Of droughts and flooding rains;  
I love her far horizons,  
I love her jewel-sea,  
Her beauty and her terror-  
The wide brown land for me!

Core of my heart, my country!  
Land of the Rainbow Gold,  
For flood and fire and famine  
She pays us back threefold,  
Over the thirsty paddocks,  
Watch after many days,  
The filmy veil of greenness  
That thickens as we gaze.

An opal-hearted country,  
A wilful lavish land-  
All you who have not loved her,  
You will not understand-  
Though earth holds many  
splendours  
Wherever I may die,  
I know to what brown country,  
My homing thoughts will fly.

## Questions

1. Why do you think Dorothea McKeller calls Australia a 'sunburnt country'?
2. Australia is a land of contrasts. Give two examples from the first verse.
3. What does the first verse tell about Australia?
4. To what might 'terror' refer? (line 7)
5. What is meant by 'core of my heart'?
6. What do you think 'pays us back threefold' means'?
7. What turns into a 'filmy veil of greenness'?
8. Dorothea McKeller is aware that Australia is not the only beautiful place in the world. Write the line in the last verse that tells us that.
9. What would you say 'homing thoughts' are?

# Along the Road to Gundagai

*Jack O'Hagan*

There's a track winding back  
To an old-fashioned shack,  
Along the road to Gundagai;

Where the blue gums are growing  
And the Murrumbidgee's flowing,  
Beneath that sunny sky;

Where my Daddy and Mummy are waiting for me  
And the pals of my childhood once more I will see;

Then no more will I roam  
When I'm heading straight for home,  
Along the road to Gundagai.



Using ideas from the song write an acrostic poem.

**G  
U  
N  
D  
A  
G  
A  
I**

# The Drover's Wife

Henry Lawson

*A short story*  
- Excerpt -



The two-roomed house is built of round timber, slabs, and stringy-bark, and floored with split slabs. A big bark kitchen standing at one end is larger than the house itself, veranda included. Bush all round—bush with no horizon, for the country is flat. No ranges in the distance.

The bush consists of stunted, rotten native apple-trees. No undergrowth. Nothing to relieve the eye save the darker green of a few she-oaks which are sighing above the narrow, almost waterless creek. Nineteen miles to the nearest sign of civilization—a shanty on the main road.

## Questions

1. The bedrooms in old Australian homes were very small. Write the sentence from the first paragraph that indicates this.
2. Why might the sheeks be sighing?
3. What is a shanty?
4. What might be the reason for the children looking 'dried up'?
5. The drover's wife is gaunt. What does this mean?
6. What is an urchin?
7. The boy says, "I'll have him." What does he mean by this?
8. What is a wretch?

The drover, an ex-squatter, is away with sheep. His wife and children are left here alone.

Four ragged, dried-up-looking children are playing about the house. Suddenly one of them yells: "Snake! Mother, here's a snake!"

The gaunt, sun-browened bushwoman dashes from the kitchen, snatches her baby from the ground, holds it on her left hip, and reaches for a stick.

"Where is it?"

"Here! gone into the wood-heap!" yells the eldest boy—a sharp-faced urchin of eleven.

"Stop there, mother! I'll have him. Stand back! I'll have the beggar."

"Tommy, come here, or you'll be bit. Come here at once when I tell you, you little wretch!"

The youngster comes reluctantly, carrying a stick bigger than himself.



# Kitty's Broom

*Breaker Morant*

When Kitty glides into the room -  
there I contrive to stay,  
And watch her while she, with her  
broom, sweeps all the dust away.

For bright-faced slender Kitty's such a  
comely sight to see,  
She grasps that broom with magic  
touch and waves it witchingly.

And with her white and shapely arms,  
where dimples love to play,  
She weilds that magic wand and  
charms dull care - and dust - away.

All life's care and sad concerns no  
longer darkly loom,  
All shadow into sunlight turns - when  
Kitty 'does' the room.  
Along life's thorny path of gloom I'd  
wend a cheerful way -  
Did heaven send Kitty, with her  
broom, to brush the briars away!



## Questions

1. With whom (or what) is Kitty compared in verse two?
2. What is meant by 'dimples love to play'?
3. Why do you think Morant refers to Kitty's broom as a magic wand?
4. Shadow turns to sunlight....what is meant by this?
5. What are briars?
6. The poet obviously admires Kitty. Give supporting evidence for this.

*Rolf Harris/Harry Butler*

## Sun Arise

'Sun Arise' looks at the early morning through an aborigine's eyes.

Imagine you are an aboriginal child living in the desert.

You've spent the day with your family helping to craft and decorate boomerangs.

Now, under a black sky and thousands of glittering stars it's time to sleep.

10 hours pass and you awaken, to a new day.

Using 'Sun Arise' as a guide, describe -in your own words- what you observe around you.



Sun arise, she bring in the morning.  
Sun arise, bring in the morning, fluttering  
her skirts all around.

Sun arise, she come with the dawning.  
Sun arise, come with the dawning,  
spreading all the light all around.

Sun arise, on the kangaroo paw.  
Sun arise, on the kangaroo paw, glistening  
the dew all around.

Sun arise, filling all the hollows,  
Sun arise, filling all the hollows, lighting up  
the hills all around.

Sun arise, come with the dawning,  
Sun arise, she come every day.  
Sun arise, bring in the morning,  
Sun arise, every, every, every, every, day.  
She drive away the darkness, every day,  
Drive away the darkness,  
Bringing back the warmth to the ground.

Sun arise, oh, oh,  
Sun arise, oh, oh,  
Spreading all the light all around.

Sun arise, bring in the morning.  
Sun arise, bring in the morning, spreading  
all the light all around.

# True Blue

*John Williamson*



## Questions

1. Why do you think 'True Blue' Australians are admired?
2. What do you think John Williamson means by 'just another dying race'?
3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> verse refers to a certain quality that is characteristic of a 'true blue' Australian. What is this quality?
4. What is meant by 'bare the load'?
5. John Williamson asks True Blue, "Is your heart still there?" What do you think Williamson is asking?
6. Do you know a True Blue Australian? Maybe it's a friend, an uncle or a neighbour. Say what makes this person a real True Blue.

Hey True Blue, don't say you've gone  
Say you've knocked off for a smoko  
And you'll be back later on  
Hey True Blue, Hey True Blue  
Give it to me straight  
Face to face  
Are you really disappearing?  
Just another dying race?  
Hey True Blue.

True Blue, is it me and you?  
Is it Mum and Dad, is it a cockatoo?  
Is it standing by your mate  
When he's in a fight?  
Or will she be right?  
True Blue, I'm asking you...

Hey True Blue, can you bear the load?  
Will you tie it up with wire,  
Just to keep the show on the road?  
Hey True Blue, Hey True Blue, now  
be Fair Dinkum  
Is your heart still there?  
If they sell us out like sponge cake  
Do you really care?  
Hey True Blue.

True Blue, is it me and you?  
Is it Mum and Dad, is it a cockatoo?  
Is it standing by your mate  
When she's in a fight?  
Or will she be right?  
True Blue, I'm asking you...

True Blue, is it me and you?  
Is it Mum and Dad, is it a cockatoo?  
Is it standing by your mate  
When he's in a fight?  
Or will she be right?  
True Blue ... True Blue.



# I Still Call Australia Home

*Peter Allen*

I've been to cities that never close down  
From New York to Rio and old London  
town  
But no matter how far  
Or how wide I roam  
I still call Australia home

I'm always travelin'  
I love bein' free  
And so I keep leavin' the sun and the sea  
But my heart lies waiting over the foam  
I still call Australia home

All the sons and daughters spinning  
'round the world  
Away from their families and friends  
Ah, but as the world gets older and colder  
It's good to know where your journey  
ends

And someday we'll all be together once  
more  
When all the ships come back to the  
shore  
Then I realize something I've always  
known  
I still call Australia home

No matter how far  
Or how wide I roam  
I still call Australia  
I still call Australia  
I still call Australia home



## Questions

1. There are three cities mentioned in verse one. In which countries are they?
2. What is meant by 'cities that never close down'?
3. What do you think 'over the foam' means?
4. In verse three who do you think is the mother of all the sons and daughters?
5. Where does the journey end (verse three)?
6. Peter Allen can be described as a true patriot. What is a patriot?
7. Are you proud to call Australia home? What are some things you like about our country?

# Home Among the Gum Trees

*B. Brown/ W. Johnson*



I've been around the world a  
couple of times or maybe more,  
I've seen the sights, I've had  
delights on every foreign shore,  
But when my friends all ask me  
the place that I adore,  
I tell them right away

## (Chorus)

Give me a home among the gum  
trees  
With lots of plum trees  
A sheep or two and a kangaroo  
A clothes-line out the back  
Verandah out the front  
And an old rocking chair

You can see me in the kitchen  
cookin' up a roast,  
Or vegemite on toast,  
Just you and me, a cup of tea  
Later on we'll settle down and  
mull upon the porch,  
And watch the possums play

## (Chorus)

Some people like their houses with  
fences all around,  
Others live in mansions and some  
beneath the ground,  
But me, I like the bush, you know  
with rabbits running 'round,  
And a pumpkin vine out the back

## (Chorus)

## Questions

1. Write explanations/meanings for  
each of the phrases below:

- a) *cookin' up a roast*
- b) *mull upon the porch*

2. a) The singer of this song says  
she's/he's been around the world and  
visited many foreign places.  
Yet it's Australia that she/he adores.  
**What things does the singer like to do  
in Australia?**

b) There are probably many things that  
you like to do here in your homeland;  
things that you can't do anywhere else.  
**How many such things can you list?**

# The Man from Ironbark

A.B Banjo Paterson

It was the man from Ironbark who struck the Sydney town,  
He wandered over street and park, he wandered up and down.  
He loitered here, he loitered there, till he was like to drop,  
Until at last in sheer despair he sought a barber's shop.  
'Ere! shave my beard and whiskers off, I'll be a man of mark,  
I'll go and do the Sydney toff up home in Ironbark.'

The barber man was small and flash, as barbers mostly are,  
He wore a strike-your-fancy sash, he smoked a huge cigar:  
He was a humorist of note and keen at repartee,  
He laid the odds and kept a 'tote', whatever that may be,  
And when he saw our friend arrive, he whispered 'Here's a lark!  
Just watch me catch him all alive, this man from Ironbark.'

There were some gilded youths that sat along the barber's wall,  
Their eyes were dull, their heads were flat, they had no brains at all;  
To them the barber passed the wink, his dexter eyelid shut,  
'I'll make this bloomin' yokel think his bloomin' throat is cut.'  
And as he soaped and rubbed it in he made a rude remark:  
'I s'pose the flats is pretty green up there in Ironbark.'

A grunt was all reply he got; he shaved the bushman's chin,  
Then made the water boiling hot and dipped the razor in.  
He raised his hand, his brow grew black, he paused awhile to gloat,  
Then slashed the red-hot razor-back across his victim's throat;  
Upon the newly shaven skin it made a livid mark --  
No doubt it fairly took him in -- the man from Ironbark.

He fetched a wild up-country yell might wake the dead to hear,  
And though his throat, he knew full well, was cut from ear to ear,  
He struggled gamely to his feet, and faced the murd'rous foe:  
'You've done for me! you dog, I'm beat! One hit before I go!  
I only wish I had a knife, you blessed murdering shark!  
But you'll remember all your life, the man from Ironbark.'  
He lifted up his hairy paw, with one tremendous clout  
He landed on the barber's jaw, and knocked the barber out.



## Questions

1. What would you say is meant by *struck the Sydney town*?
2. What does *loitered* mean?
3. "I'll be a man of mark". What do you think is meant by this?
4. The barber man was small and flash. Do you think you might know what 'flash' means here?
5. Do you think the barber intended to cut and injure the man from Ironbark? Explain.
6. What do you think is meant by 'it fairly took him in'?
7. Where did the man from Ironbark think he'd been cut?
8. What is *his hairy paw*?
9. Do you think the barber deserved what he got?
10. What kind of man do you think the barber was? Give reasons for your answer.

## Andy's Gone with Cattle

Henry Lawson



Our Andy's gone with cattle now—  
Our hearts are out of order—  
With drought he's gone to battle  
now  
Across the Queensland border.

He's left us in dejection now,  
Our thoughts with him are roving;  
It's dull on this selection now,  
Since Andy went a-droving.

Who now shall wear the cheerful  
face  
In times when things are slackest?  
And who shall whistle round the  
place  
When Fortune frowns her blackest?

Oh, who shall cheek the squatter  
now  
When he comes round us snarling?  
His tongue is growing hotter now  
Since Andy crossed the Darling.

Oh, may the showers in torrents  
fall,  
And all the tanks run over;  
And may the grass grow green and  
tall  
In pathways of the drover.

And may good angels send the rain  
On desert stretches sandy;  
And when the summer comes again  
God grant 'twill bring us Andy.

### Questions

1. What would you say is meant by 'our hearts are out of order'?
2. 'It's dull on this selection now'. What does that mean?
3. From reading the third verse what kind of person would you say Andy was?
4. Can you say what 'Fortune frowns her blackest' might mean?
5. The squatter's tongue is growing hotter. What does this tell you about the squatter's mood?
6. Why does the writer/speaker want the tanks to run over?
7. Andy would not have been able to contact his family if he had encountered problems while droving the cattle. What methods of modern day communication were not available to Andy?



# Moreton Bay

Francis MacNamara



## Questions

1. What do you think is meant by 'I chanced to stray'?
2. The convict was bewailing his fate. What does this mean?
3. What kind of place would you say Toongarby may have been?
4. At Moreton Bay there was *excessive tyranny* .....what is that?
5. Can you find a synonym of *lacerated*?
6. Write a few sentences (6- 10 lines) saying -in your own words- what this ballad is about.

One Sunday morning as I was walking  
By Brisbane waters I chanced to stray  
I heard a convict his fate bewailing  
As on the sunny river bank he lay  
I am a native from Erin island  
But banished now from my native shore  
They stole me from my independence  
And from the maiden whom I do adore

I've been a prisoner at Port MacQuarie  
At Norfolk Island and Emu Plains  
At Castle Yule and cursed Toongarby  
At all these settlements I've been in chains  
But of all places of condemnation  
And penal stations in New South Wales  
To Moreton Bay I have found no equal  
Excessive tyranny each day prevails

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 covered with my crimson  
gore  
And many a man from downright  
starvation  
Lies mouldering now beneath the clay  
And Captain Logan he had us mangled  
All at the triangles of Moreton Bay

# The Melbourne Cup

Slim Dusty



## Questions

1. In the first verse what would you say is meant by *we've put our money up*?
2. *There's a pause in all production.* What could this mean?
3. Which four words in the third verse signify the beginning of the race?
4. *There's a battler made a fortune, and a wealthy man hard-up.* Can you re-write this in your own words to show you know what it means?
5. Some people think that horse racing should be banned. What might be their reasons for having this view?  
Do you think that horse racing is a good thing or a bad thing?  
Give reasons (perhaps with an example or two) for your answer.

There's a bustle in the city, there's excitement in the scrubs  
There's a drone of rowdy voices in every Aussie pub  
For a year we've all been waiting and we've put our money up  
And we're out to back the winner of the famous Melbourne Cup

There's a pause in all production for our minds are on the race  
And it's time that all our worries are forgotten for a space  
And the women cease their talking, turn the radio well up  
And with whippin' spur their waiting for the starting of the Cup

And the T.A.B.'s are crowded and the punters rush and push  
They've held a sweep in every pub in city and in bush  
Then a mighty cheering follows as the barrier goes up  
And there's a thousand jockey's spurring every race their in the cup

The first Tuesday of November, every year it is the same  
Every Aussie heart is beating with excitement of the game  
For they bet on dream or fancy or the forms they've followed up  
From a dollar up to thousands on the famous Melbourne Cup

There are millions who have never even sat upon a horse  
Whether it be yarding cattle or racing on the course  
And it's doubtful if they'd even know the way to saddle up  
But they take a lot of beating when they're racing in the cup

Now the famous race is over for another hopeful year  
There's a lot of smiling faces and there's others shedding tears  
There's a battler made a fortune, and a wealthy man hard-up  
But win or lose they're waiting now for next year's Melbourne Cup  
Oh that's right

There's a bustle in the city, there's excitement in the scrubs  
There's a drone of rowdy voices in every Aussie pub  
And the battler makes a fortune, and a wealthy man hard-up  
But win or lose they're waiting now for next year's Melbourne Cup.

# Click go the Shears

Percy Jones

Out on the board the old shearer stands  
Grasping his shears in his long bony hands  
Fixed is his gaze on a bare-bellied "joe"  
Glory if he gets her, won't he make the ringer go.

## Chorus

Click go the shears boys, click, click, click  
Wide is his blow and his hands move quick  
The ringer looks around and is beaten by a blow  
And curses the old snagger with the blue-bellied "joe"

In the middle of the floor in his cane-bottomed chair  
Is the boss of the board, with eyes everywhere  
Notes well each fleece as it comes to the screen  
Paying strict attention if it's taken off clean

The tar-boy is there awaiting in demand  
With his blackened tar-pot and his tarry hand  
Sees one old sheep with a cut upon its back  
Here's what he's waiting for "Tar here Jack!"

You take off the belly-wool clean out the crutch  
Go up the neck for the rules they are such  
You clean round the horns first shoulder go down  
One blow up the back and you then turn around

Shearing is all over and we've all got our cheques  
Roll up your swag for we're off on the tracks  
The first pub we come to it's there we'll have a spree  
And everyone that comes along it's, "Come and drink with me!"

## Chorus



## Questions

1. What is meant by 'make the ringer go'?
2. Why do you think the boss would want each fleece to be taken off clean?
3. What does the tar-boy look for?
4. Which part of the sheep do the rules say should be shorn first, the belly or the shoulder?
5. What do you think "we're off on the track" means?
6. Shearers were paid according to how many sheep they could shear in a day. What kinds of feelings might this have created in the shearing shed?



# Our Don Bradman

Jack O'Hagan

Who is it that all Australia  
raves about?  
Who has won our very  
highest praise?  
Now is it Amy Johnson, or  
little Mickey Mouse?  
No, it's just a country lad  
who's bringing down the  
house!



And he's Our Don Bradman  
- and I ask you is he any  
good?  
Our Don Bradman - as a  
batsman he can sure lay on  
the wood.  
For when he goes in to bat  
He knocks ev'ry record flat,  
For there isn't any thing he  
cannot do,  
Our Don Bradman - ev'ry  
Aussie "dips his lid" to you.

## Questions

1. What might a cricketer do to "bring down the house" ?
2. What does *lay on the wood* mean?
3. Can you find out what is meant by "dips his lid"?
4. Can you think of any other sportsperson, from any country, who has had a song written about them? If not do some research and try to find one or two.
5. Do some research on Don Bradman and write a paragraph either about this remarkable Australian's early life or his cricketing achievements.

# Botany Bay

unknown



## Research

Some convicts were sent from Britain to Australia for offenses that we would think of as minor.

Stealing bread, or perhaps books, would be enough for a young man to be sent to Botany Bay in far-away Australia.

See if you can find out some of the 'lighter' offences committed by convicts that resulted in them being transported to the other side of the world.

Also try to find out about the Parkhurst apprentices.

Farewell to old England forever  
Farewell to my rum culls as well  
Farewell to the well known Old Bailey  
Where I used for to cut such a swell

## **Chorus**

Singing Tooral lioral liaddity  
Singing Tooral lioral liay  
Singing Tooral lioral liaddity  
And we're bound for Botany Bay

There's the captain as is our commander  
There's the bosun and all the ship's crew  
There's the first and the second class passengers  
Knows what we poor convicts go through

Taint leaving old England we cares about  
Taint cos we mis-spells what we knows  
But because all we light fingered gentry  
Hops around with a log on our toes

## **Chorus**

# Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport

Rolf Harris



There's an old Australian stockman, lying, dying,  
and he gets himself up on one elbow, and he  
turns to his mates, who are gathered 'round him  
and he says:

Watch me wallabies feed mate.

Watch me wallabies feed.

They're a dangerous breed mate.

So watch me wallabies feed.

Altogether now!

## **Chorus**

Tie me kangaroo down sport, tie me kangaroo  
down.

Tie me kangaroo down sport, tie me kangaroo  
down.

Keep me cockatoo cool, Curl,  
keep me cockatoo cool.

Don't go acting the fool, Curl,  
just keep me cockatoo cool.

Altogether now! **Chorus**

Take me koala back, Jack,  
take me koala back.

He lives somewhere out on the track, Mac,  
so take me koala back.

Altogether now! **Chorus**

Mind me platypus duck, Bill,  
mind me platypus duck.

Don't let him go running amok, Bill,  
mind me platypus duck.

Altogether now! **Chorus**

Play your didgeridoo, Blue,  
play your didgeridoo.

Keep playing 'til I shoot thru' Blue,  
play your didgeridoo.

Altogether now!

Tan me hide when I'm dead, Fred,  
tan me hide when I'm dead.

So we tanned his hide when he died Clyde,  
And that's it hanging on the shed.

Altogether now! **Chorus**

## **Research Questions**

1. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> last verse what does 'shoot thru' mean?
2. What do wallabies feed upon?
3. Can you name any cockatoo species that are native to Australia?
4. Try, in your own words, to describe a platypus.
5. In times past to which Australians was the nickname 'Blue' often given?
6. Rolf Harris could play the didgeridoo. He could also play the wobble board (which he invented) and it is featured in this song. What can you find out about this unusual instrument?

# Queensland Drover

unknown



## Questions

1. The Gulf, in verse one, refers to the large sea between the northern tip of Queensland and the Northern Territory. What is the full name of this gulf?
2. What is meant by 'drink the health'?
3. *Where the creeks run dry or ten foot high.*  
To what does this refer?
4. The Queensland drovers (overlanders) are a well-mixed pack. What does this mean?
5. The Queensland drovers earn *a spree in town*. What is this that they earn?
6. What does *live like pigs in clover* mean?
7. What do you think is meant by *the whole year's cheque*?

There's a trade you all know well,  
It's bringing cattle over  
On every track, to the Gulf and  
back  
Men know the Queensland drover.

## **Chorus**

So pass the billy round boys!  
Don't let the pint-pot stand there!  
For tonight we drink the health  
Of every overlander.

Oh I come from the Northern  
plains  
Where the girls and grass are  
scanty;  
Where the creeks run dry or ten  
foot high  
And it's either drought or plenty.

There are men from every land,  
From Spain and France and  
Flanders;  
They're a well-mixed pack, both  
white and black,  
The Queensland overlanders.

When we've earned a spree in  
town  
We live like pigs in clover;  
And the whole year's cheque pours  
down the neck  
Of many a Queensland drover.

Mary Hannay-Foott

## Where the Pelican Builds Her Nest

The horses were ready, the rails were down,  
But the riders lingered still  
One had a parting word to say,  
And one had his pipe to fill.

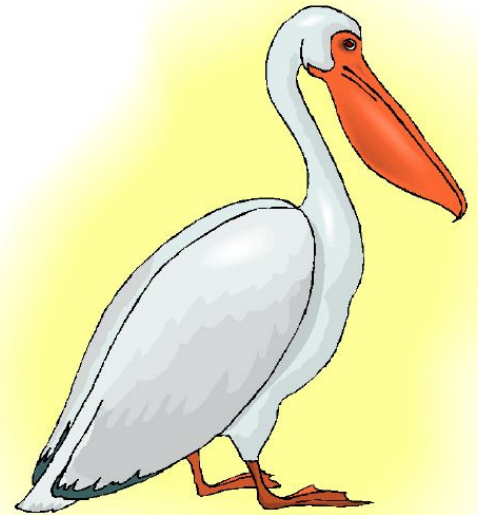
Then they mounted, one with a granted  
prayer,  
And one with a grief unguessed.  
"We are going," they said, as they rode away  
"Where the pelican builds her nest!"

They had told us of pastures wide and green,  
To be sought past the sunset's glow;  
Of rifts in the ranges by opal lit;  
And gold 'neath the river's flow.

And thirst and hunger were banished words  
When they spoke of that unknown West;  
No drought they dreaded, no flood they feared,  
Where the pelican builds her nest!

The creek at the ford was but fetlock deep  
When we watched them crossing there;  
The rains have replenished it thrice since then,  
And thrice has the rock lain bare.

But the waters of Hope have flowed and fled,  
And never from blue hill's breast  
Come back - by the sun and the sands  
devoured  
Where the pelican builds her nest!



### Questions

1. Why did the two riders linger?
2. Where did the riders expect to find opals?
3. Where did they expect to find gold?
4. Why do you think the riders didn't fear drought or floods?
5. Write the two lines that say there have been three floods and three droughts since the riders crossed the creek.
6. What does this poem tell us about people when they go seeking riches?



## The Man from Snowy River

A.B (Banjo) Paterson



A.B. Banjo Paterson

The poem tells the story of a valuable horse which escapes, and the princely sum offered by its owner for its safe return. All the riders in the area gather to pursue the wild bush horses and cut the valuable horse from the mob. But the country defeats them all - except for 'The Man from Snowy River'. His personal courage and skill has turned him into a legend.

See if you can find out -or guess- what the following phrases mean:

- *all the cracks had gathered to the fray*
- *the tried and noted riders*
- *snuffs the battle with delight*
- *made his pile*
- *his blood was fairly up*
- *while the saddle girths would stand*

There was movement at the station, for  
the word had passed around  
That the colt from old Regret had got  
away  
And had joined the wild bush horses - he  
was worth a thousand pound,  
So all the cracks had gathered to the  
fray.

All the tried and noted riders from the  
stations near and far  
Had mustered at the homestead  
overnight,  
For the bushmen love hard riding where  
the wild bush horses are,  
And the stock-horse snuffs the battle  
with delight.

There was Harrison, who made his pile  
when Pardon won the cup,  
The old man with his hair as white as  
snow;  
But few could ride beside him when his  
blood was fairly up  
He would go wherever horse and man  
could go.

And Clancy of the Overflow came down  
to lend a hand,  
No better horseman ever held the reins;  
For never horse could throw him while  
the saddle-girths would stand  
He learnt to ride while droving on the  
plains.

unknown

## The Wild Colonial Boy

There was a wild Colonial Boy, Jack  
Doolan was his name,  
Of poor but honest parents, he was born  
in Castlemaine.  
He was his father's only hope, his  
mother's pride and joy,  
And dearly did his parents love the Wild  
Colonial Boy

At the age of sixteen years he left his  
native home,  
And to Australia's sunny shores a  
bushranger did roam.  
They put him in the iron gang in the  
government employ,  
But never an iron on earth could hold  
the Wild Colonial Boy

In sixty-one this daring youth  
commenced his wild career,  
With a heart that knew no danger and  
no foreman did he fear.  
He stuck up the Beechworth mail coach  
and robbed Judge MacEvoy  
Who, trembling cold, gave up his gold to  
the Wild Colonial Boy

He bade the Judge good morning and he  
told him to beware,  
That he'd never rob a needy man or one  
who acted square,  
But a Judge who'd robbed a mother of  
her one and only joy  
Sure, he must be a worse outlaw than  
the Wild Colonial Boy.



### Questions

1. Bushrangers are often viewed as heroes by modern Australians. Do you think they were heroes? Say why or why not.
2. Do you think Jack Doolan was basically a good and decent person before he was sent to Australia? Give reasons for your answer.
3. What do you think 'sixty-one' is?
4. The Wild Colonial Boy may have received special satisfaction from robbing Judge MacEvoy. Write three or four sentences giving probable reasons for this.  
(see the third and fourth verses).