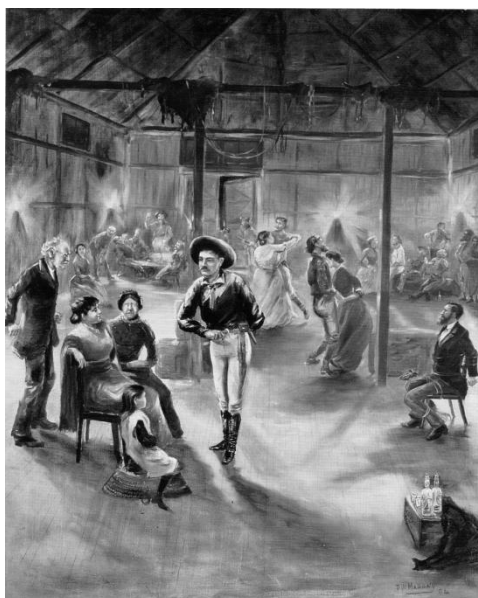


## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang



### CAST

Ben Hall	Bushranger Leader (27)	Duncan McAulay
Johnny Gilbert	Bushranger (29)	Graeme Clarke
Jack Dunn	Bushranger (18)	Matt Flaus
Henry Jeffrey	Owns the Inn	Garry Tooth
Rose Jeffrey	His wife	Miranda Lean
Jane Murray	Owns General Store	
Jim Murray (15)	Her son	Thom Jackson
Thomas Murray (12)	Her son	Thomas Gilies
David Murray (8)	Her son	David Gilies
Oscar Murray (7)	Her son	Oscar Dunn-Luck
Bob Carter	Bullocky	Richard Officer
Kiara	Inn servant	Kiara Martin
Ashley	Inn servant	Ashley Smith
Susie	Committee support	Susie Edwards
Kate	Committee support	Kate Colvin
Dave	Concertina player	Dave Johnson
Edward	Audience plant	
Paddy	fiddler	Bob McInnes
Lesley	reciter singer	Lesley Ferrier
Marianne	Piano Player	Marianne Powles

### Songs/Poems

Item		
Eumeralla Shore	Dave (C) with Paddy (F)	Bb
Murray's General Store	Jane, Thomas, David, Oscar	Bb
Morning of the Fray	Ben	Cm
Binda Ball	Bob	C
Swagless Swaggie	Lesley	
My Name is Ben Hall	Ben	Cm
When The Ship Comes In	Ashley	D oct down
Sir Frederick Pottinger	Johnny, Ben and Jack	C oct down
Ballad of Ben Hall Gang	Henry, Ben and cast	C
Streets of Forbes	Cast remaining after gang exits	Dm

## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

### SCENE

Hall is arranged in tables of 8 or 10 - round the edges of the room leaving space for dancing and for the action to take place. Set with cutlery, glasses, jugs of water, etc

Hall is decorated as an inn, circa 1865.

A 'bar' area with a till is set up at the front and Mr Jeffrey is standing behind the bar.

Hat stand with blue coat and troopers hat on Jeffrey's right. Piano, stool and chairs for fiddler and concertina player to his left.

Guests arrive and take their seats in the hall. Background playing of a concertina and fiddle.

Some couples dancing. Drinks from Jeffreys bar (mulled wine) served by Rose, Ashley and Kiara.

### ACT ONE

ROSE, ASHLEY, KIARA, SUSIE, and KATE: *(ad lib) (to male guest)* Come on in me darlin'. We've got the best mulled wine this side of Berrima. Just the thing on a cold night to warm the cockles of your heart. *(wink)* Don't be cheeky with me or I'll call my husband over. You sir have a swig of this. It'll put hairs on your chest. Welcome to Jeffrey's Inn. I'm Mrs Jeffrey. Can I show you to your seats. Would you like some mulled wine.

*(to female guest)* Good evening madam. Please try our hot mulled wine. Made with real Indian spices fresh from the Sydney Markets thanks to Jane Murray from our own Murrays General Store.

[MUSIC CUE for start – Irish Washerwoman]

*(The Ben Hall gang - Ben, Johnny, and Jack - enter the hall, brandishing pistols)*

JOHNNY: Bail up!

*(Jack Dunn fires a shot into the air.)*

LESLEY: Aaaaahhhh!! *(loud piercing scream)*

ASHLEY: Oh my goodness!

ROSE: Jesus, Mary and Joseph preserve us!

KIARA: Lord above!

*(Music screech then silent)*

JOHNNY: Hands where I can see them!!

BEN: Settle down and you lot standin there go and sit down. We don't hurt them that don't hurt us. Now where is the innkeeper, we're a bit thirsty after our ride from Marulan. *(sees Henry behind the bar, approaches menacingly)* The sign outside says Jeffrey's Inn so you must be Jeffrey. I think you'd better come out of there where I can see your hands. *(Henry hesitates then does as he's told)*

HENRY: I've not done you any harm so you've no reason to hurt any of us.

BEN: Well we'll see about that. Just sit yourself down here where I can keep an eye on you.

HENRY: *(defiantly)* I don't see why I should.

JOHNNY: *(brandishing his gun)* I have five good reasons here in my hand. So sit down like Ben Hall says.

HENRY: *(surprised)* Ben Hall! Then you must be the one they call..

JOHNNY: *(preening himself)* Flash Johnny Gilbert. *(and as an afterthought)* And this is Jack Dunn our newest recruit.

JACK: *(bowing sarcastically)* At your service, sir.

BEN: *(assuming command)* Jack, go round behind the bar and check for weapons and see how full the cash box is. This lot *(points at audience)* look like they've been here all day putting money in it. Oh and drinks for the gang while you're at it.

*(Dunn checks behind the bar and empties money from the till into a calico bag he takes from his shirt. Then pours 3 drinks)*

BEN: *(to Rose)* Go and round up the servants. Bring them back here. And tell them not to try heroics, your husband here has a gun pointed at him. *(Johnny obliges)*

*(Jack comes out from behind the bar, hands drinks to Ben and Johnny)*

JACK: There's not much here, Ben. I reckon they've not been generous enough to our host here. Can we lighten their load for them?

BEN: *(downs his drink)* You're learnin fast Jack. *(Walks towards Lesley's table)* I can see a pretty necklace over there that sparkles in the light. *(Goes to her and holds out his hand demanding it.)*

LESLEY: *(upset)* but my husband just gave it to me for my birthday.

*(Ben waves hand impatiently and glowers. She takes it off and reluctantly hands it over)*

## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

BEN: Thank you madam. A touching story. And very generous of your husband to buy it for you. But by the look of him he can buy you another one next week. Now all you here (*points to all tables on his side of the room and throws a calico bag on each*) can contribute to my overseas holiday fund. Don't be afraid to stretch the calico with your coins.

JACK: (*at another table on the other side of the room*) You sir. What's on the end of that watch chain - an open face or a hunter?

EDWARD: It's a hunter - a legacy from my father who died last year, rest his soul.

JACK: Yeah...yeah ... Just hand it over or you'll have us all in tears. (*takes watch and admires it and proudly shows it off before putting it in his own pocket. Hands out calico bags to the other tables on his side of the hall*) And the rest of you here can fill this for me with your coins. (*ad lib*) Thank you. Most appreciative. Don't hold back sir. It's all for a worthy cause.

BEN: (*to Kiara*) Hello hello. I noticed you haven't made any contribution to making Ben Hall as rich as he would have been if it weren't for Sir Fredrick Pottinger. (*makes rasperry salute*)

KIARA: I don't have anything Mr Hall, I'm just a poor working girl on the way back from the goldfields.

BEN: Hey Jack. (*calling across the room*) Do you remember that woman we held up who had nothing to hand over out at Crookwell? The one that was skitin' next day about having her cash hidden in her stays? Would you like to check this one for hidden treasures?

JACK: Sure Ben. (*starts to cross the room leering at Bridget*)

KIARA: All right here it is (*pulls purse from cleavage and drops it into Ben's hand*) just don't let him near me.

BEN: Ha Ha Ha. (*to Jack*) Looks like your services aren't needed this time Jack.

BEN: Please give generously ladies and gentlemen. All proceeds go to improving the community round here. (*laughs*)

JOHNNY: Yep if the Ben Hall gang can afford to retire then the community will be a safer place. Ha Ha.

(*Ben and Jack collect bags from the tables, Ben hands to Jack who takes them and puts them on the bar*)

(*Rose returns with the inn servants Kiara looking nervous and Ashley boldly looking over the gang, eyes settling on Jack*)

BEN: Ah here is Mrs Jeffrey and the folk who are going to see we all have a good feed tonight.

(*to Rose*) including the gang, of course.

ROSE: Jeffrey's Inn has a fine reputation for serving the best quality on the Great South Road as all our regular customers here would agree. (*pause expectantly demanding response from the guests, prompted by cast*)

LESLEY, EDWARD, HENRY, ASHLEY AND KIARA: (*ad lib*) Sure is. You bet. For sure. Best from Berrima to Marulan. Better than Goulburn.

ROSE: We cater to all types from the gentry (*sweeps to indicate guests*) to the lowest...

BEN: (*To Rose*) That's enough.... just see about getting the food. Johnny gets awfully temperamental if dinner is late.

(*Rose starts to object but is stared down by Hall and goes off with the servants to supper room*)

Now we had better round up the rest of the thriving metropolis of Murrumbah so no-one brings the traps down on us. Then we can all enjoy a cosy party here at the inn. Johnny, you stay and keep this lot under control. Come on Jack.

JACK: Right-oh. (*They leave.*)

(*Uncomfortable silence as Johnny walks around the hall fidgeting, obviously bored. Walks around Pottinger hat stand - pretends to shoot it. Then points to Henry*)

JOHNNY: Jeffrey, pour me a drink. (*Takes drink and downs it*) I hope Ben and Jack don't meet with a trooper like that fool at Collector. Thought he could take three of us on his own. Ha. Thanks to Jack's good aim now his wife is a widow. (*Reaction from REST of CAST.*) (*Johnny points at the fiddler, Paddy*) Hey you Give us a jig on your fiddle. It'll get me in the mood for a bit of dancing later.

PADDY: (*Irish accent*) To be sure. To be sure. This is a tune I learnt from my grandfather, the best fiddler in County Clare, sent out here for taking just one lousy hare from the damned English baron. (*spits defiantly*)

(*Plays tune moving around room, Johnny and guests applaud*)

Thank you, you're very kind. Now Mr Gilbert, if you like Dave can give you a song about his father. He got his ticket-of-leave, took his family and their bullock wagon up near the Eumeralla River. They took up a selection and proceeded to build up their stock by duffing cattle from their neighbours.

## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

JOHNNY: (*not overly impressed*) Yeah, sounds familiar, go on.

(*Fiddle intro*) Piano and concertina coming in.

DAVE:

### *Eumeralla Shore*

There's a long green gully by the Eumeralla shore  
Where I've lingered many happy hours away.  
All on my selection I have acres by the score  
Where I unyoke my bullocks from the dray.  
To my bullocks then I say. You can feed feed away;  
For you'll never be impounded anymore;  
For you're running, running, running on the duffer's piece of land.  
Free-selected by the Eumeralla shore.

When the moon has climbed the mountain and the stars are shining bright  
Our horses we will mount and ride away;  
And we'll duff the squatters' cattle in the darkness of the night  
And have the calves all branded by the day.  
O my pretty little calf, at the squatter you may laugh,  
For he'll never be your owner anymore  
While your running, running, running on the duffer's piece of land  
Free-selected by the Eumeralla shore.

If we find a mob of horses when the paddock rails are down,  
Though before they're never known to stray,  
Oh, quickly will we drive them to some distant inland town,  
And sell them into slav'ry far away.  
To Jack Robertson we'll say "You've been leading us astray,  
And we'll never go a-farming any more;  
For it's easier duffing cattle on this little piece of land  
Free selected by the Eumeralla shore."

JOHNNY: (*impressed*) You know Ben had a good mob of about 200 head and I reckon that was how he got em. There's not many fences up Murrurundi way. Reckon that's why the traps were after him, especially that pansy Pottinger.

(*Ben and Jack return ushering in Jane Murray and her boys, young ones in pyjamas, and Bob.*)

BEN: C'mon move in. Don't dawdle. (*to Johnny*) Fine pickings we have had Johnny. Please welcome Mrs Murray and her fine sons, and this bullocky and the rest of Murrimbah is here already. (*Johnny doffs hat to Jane*) We have loaded two of our pack horses with goods courtesy of Murray's General Store.

JOHNNY: Why thank you Mrs Murray!

JANE: You scoundrels have robbed me of all I have. How will I keep my family now? It's hard enough..

BEN: (*cutting her off*) That's not our problem. Maybe we could give your oldest boy a job, holding our horses while we're working.

JANE: (*protective of her boys*) No. You've made our lives hard enough without that. (*Jim starts to shape up to Ben*) Jim! I don't want you getting hurt. Life is hard enough with your poor demented father put away, just be calm. (*Jim twitches and clenches his fists*). Jim! (*He relaxes*)

BEN: That's right Jim. We don't hurt anyone without good cause. You bullocky (*indicates Bob*) sit down. And you Murrays (*to Murray kids*) come on over here and tell us about your store.  
(*Dave on concertina Bb- give start notes*)

### *Murrays General Store*

THOMAS: (*starts singing tentatively*)

Where can you get a cross cut saw?

## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

MURRAYS:

Murray's General Store.

JANE:

You can get a cross-cut saw and anything else you're looking for,  
It's been there since '54, it's Murray's General Store.

*(Murray boys dance routine 1)*

ASHLEY:

Where can I get a dozen eggs?

MURRAYS: *(Paddy joins in, followed by Marianne and Dave)*

Murray's General Store.

JANE:

You can get a dozen eggs, a washing line, some dolly pegs

You can get a cross-cut saw etc

*(Murray boys dance routine 2)*

JOHNNY:

Where can I get some 12 gauge shot?

MURRAYS: *(Turn out to audience and encourage to sing)*

Murray's General Store.

JANE:

You can get some 12 gauge shot, powder, wadding, you've taken the lot!!

*(JOHNNY pulls it out of bag and displays)*

You can get a dozen eggs etc

*(Murray boys dance routine 3)*

BOB:

Where can I get a carbide lamp?

MURRAYS + CAST:

Murray's General Store.

JANE:

You can get a carbide lamp a miner's pick or a ha'penny stamp.

You can get some 12 gauge shot etc

*(Murray boys dance routine 4)*

HENRY:

Where can I get a set of spurs?

MURRAYS + CAST:

Murray's General Store.

JANE:

You can find a set of spurs, flannel underwear, his or hers.

You can get a carbide lamp etc

ALL: *(echo)*

It's been there since 54 it's Murray's General Store

DAVID: *(a bit dazzled by the famous Ben Hall Gang)* Excuse me Mr Hall. How did you become a bushranger?

BEN: *(obviously flattered)* Well young fella, it was just a bit of cattle duffing. It was the only way to get ahead. But it was Darkie Gardner and robbing the Gold Escort at Eugowra Rocks that set me on the road. You all sit down and I'll tell you the story.

*(sings Paddy, Dave and Marianne accompanying as needed)*

# Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

## *Morning of the Fray*

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

*(Musicians echo last line)*

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

*(Musicians echo last line)*

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

*(Musicians echo last line)*

And so with loaded saddle packs we left that fatal place,  
We knew the traps from Bathurst town would soon be on the chase!  
The bold and reckless Gardiner shouted as we rode away  
"I think we've made our fortunes at Eugowra Rocks today!"

BEN: *(to David)* We would've cleared out and gone to America then but the traps chased us and got most of the gold back. There's nothin for it now, there's no turnin back. But I swear they'll never hang Ben Hall! *(touches guns)*  
*(Rose returns and curtseys to Ben sarcastically, Ashley and Kiara carry in food on platters for the bar table)*

ROSE: Dinner is ready, sir. Now I need two from each table to come and give us a hand with the serving? *(Henry, Ashley and Kiara with Susie and Kate assisting)*

*(Food is delivered to tables on large platters by volunteer staff. Music to cover served at the bar.)*

*(Gang sit at the bar with Henry, Rose, Ashley, Kiara and Musicians join them)*

JOHNNY: *(stands up and speaks out loudly)* I ain't eating this she might have poisoned it. *(points at Rose)*

ROSE: I've spent all this time in the kitchen sweating over a hot stove and you accuse me of poisoning you. I'd have to poison everyone to be sure to get you, Mr Gilbert. And besides I have my reputation to think of.

JOHNNY: *(hold up forkful of food to Rose)* So taste it. *(She does, staring daggers at him)* Thank you madam, now I can enjoy the rest. *(dismisses her with a wave)* Let's all tuck in, we'll need our strength for some dancing later.

## DINNER

### ACT TWO

*(Low level background music - then stop)*

*(Johnny belches loudly and rubs his stomach contentedly)*

JACK: *(smiling at Ashley)* Reckon its time for a bit of dancing, eh Ben? *(winks at Ashley, who smiles the come-on)*

BEN: Let's clear the decks first, Jack. *(to guests)* *(Rose, Henry, Kiara, Ashley, Susie and Kate encouraging them as necessary, then when done. Gang quietly clear bar)*

*(Paddy, Marianne and Dave play a polka and Jack and Ashley dance around the hall. Johnny and Kiara join in. Music stops.)*

BEN: Ladies and Gentlemen, the Haymakers Jig

PADDY: To be sure. To be sure. Now ladies and gentlemen, it's lines we'll be wantin'. Five couples to each set. *(to Dave)*

Just listen now to Dave here and you'll be tripping over your feet in no time.

DAVE:

*(gives instructions for dance, then Paddy and Marianne and Dave play for the dance)*

## *Haymakers Jig*

*(Guests and actors clear the dance floor)*

## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

*(As Bob goes to sit down....)*

JOHNNY: I recognise you. You were at Binda last Boxing Day at the Flag Hotel weren't you?

BOB: That's right, I was. I'm Bob Carter. That's me. Carter by name and carter by trade. My bullock team is strung out feedin' down along the river.

JOHNNY: That was quite a party, Bob. That girl I danced with, Ellen Monks? She was a wild one!

BOB: You say she was wild. Her parents were worse. Her father was a fearsomely cruel drunkard. Her mother has just been arrested for doing him in. She beat him to death with a poker and then burnt the body in the fire. Then after, she dumped the remains in, of all places, their water well. Anyway the traps caught up with her and they reckon she'll hang next week in Sydney.

*(Concertina C introduction)*

### **Binda Ball**

BOB: *(sings accompanied by Dave with Paddy and Marianne coming in)*

There was never a dance like that Boxing Day ball,  
For there, at the height of the fun,  
The Monks girls were dancing with Gilbert and Hall,  
And Christina Mackinnon with Dunn.

The bushranger's gold in the candlelight flowed,  
Binda joined in their generous caprice,  
But storekeeper Morris ran off down the road,  
To Bathurst to warn the Police.

"Bad scran to the blackguard!" cried Margaret Monks,  
"There's time for just one event more,  
It's a matter of teaching good manners to skunks,  
Come on, and we'll burn down his store!"

With the store well on fire they stood back to admire  
How their handiwork lit up the sky.  
Then they danced to the doomed buildings funeral pyre  
Til the bushrangers said their goodbye.

When the traps and the traitor rode up with the dawn,  
The store had been burnt to the ground,  
The dancing was over, the curtains were drawn,  
And the bushrangers couldn't be found.

They arrested Christina and Ellen and Peg,  
But we heard the girls pluckily call,  
"It was cheap at the price, to have shaken a leg,  
With John Gilbert, Jack Dunn and Ben Hall!"

*(Instrumental verse while Jack and Ashley start waltzing around the room)*

JACK: What was that dance they showed us, with the heel and toe bit?

BEN: That was the Brown Jug Polka. Just a polka or two lads.

*(then Paddy and Dave start to play for the dance, Jack and Ashley start, other cast join in, "snowball" if needed to get guests to join in)*

### **Heel and Toe Polka**

HENRY: Refreshments on your tables, ladies and gentlemen. Help yourselves.

## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

BOB: I met a bullocky last week down Gundagai way. He reckoned you blokes was stealing horses up near Tamworth...

BEN: All lies, we've never been that far north.

LESLEY: Well, my sister sent me a letter that with a yarn about another crime that I'm sure you didn't do. I think you'd find it amusing. I have it here.

BEN: Famous in songs *and* yarns.

LESLEY: (*takes letter out and reads*)

### *The Swagless Swaggie*

This happened many years ago before the bush was cleared,  
When every man was six foot high and wore a flowing beard.  
One very hot and windy day, along the old coach road,  
Towards Joe Murphy's halfway house, a bearded bushman strode.

He was a huge and heavy man, well over six foot high,  
An old slouch hat was on his head, (*pause while Ben hands her a suitable hat*) and murder in his eye.  
No billy can was in his hand, no heavy swag he bore,  
But deep and awful were the oaths that swagless swaggie swore.

At last he reached the shanty door, into the bar he burst,  
He dumped his hat upon the floor, and cursed and cursed and cursed.  
(*Thomas puts hands over David's ears, Oscar puts hands over Flynn's ears*)  
A neighbouring shed had just cut out; the bar was nearly full  
Of shearers and of bullockies who'd come to cart the wool.

They were a rough and ready lot, (*indicates guests*) the bushmen gathered there,  
But every man was stricken dumb, to hear the stranger swear.  
He cursed the bush, he cursed mankind, the whole wide universe.  
It froze their very blood to hear that swagless swaggie curse.

Joe Murphy seized an empty pot (*pretend to hold tankard*) and filled it brimming full.  
The stranger raised it to his lips and took a mighty pull.  
This seemed to cool him down a bit; he finished off the ale,  
And to the crowd around the bar he told his awful tale.

"I met the Ben Hall gang," he said, "The blankards stuck me up!  
They pinched me billy, pinched me swag, and pinched me flamin' pup!  
They turned me pockets inside out, And took me only quid!  
I never thought they'd pinch me pipe, But swelp me gawd they did!

I spoke to 'em as man to man, I said I'd fight 'em all;  
I would have broke young Gilbert's neck, and tanned the hide of Hall.  
They only laughed, and said good-bye, and rode away to brag  
Of how they stuck a swaggie up and robbed him of his swag.

I never done 'em any harm, I thought 'em decent chaps.



## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

But now I wouldn't raise a hand to save 'em from the traps.  
I'm finished with the bush for good, I'm off to Wagga town  
Where they won't stick a swaggie up or take a swaggie down.

The bushmen were a decent lot, as bushmen mostly are.  
They filled the stranger up with beer; the hat went round the bar.  
The shearers threw some blankets in to make another swag,  
The rousies gave a billy can and brand new tucker bag.

Joe Murphy gave a meerschaum pipe he hadn't smoked for years.  
The stranger was too full of words, his eyes were dim with tears.  
The ringer shouted drinks all round and then, to top it up,  
The babbling brook, the shearers cook, gave him a kelpie pup.

Next day, an hour before the dawn, the stranger took the track  
Complete with pup and billy can, his swag upon his back.  
Along the most forsaken roads, intent on dodging graft,  
He headed for the Great North West, and laughed, and laughed and laughed.

*(Rose, Kiara, Ashley leave to get dessert)*

BEN: That's a beauty. I reckon someone should write one about Johnny and the Faithfull brothers.

JOHNNY: *(groan)* Oh don't bring *that* up again, Ben.

BEN: C'mon Johnny it would make a great epic poem for future generations of wild colonials. A couple of weeks back we were down the other side of Goulburn on the Braidwood road. We bailed up a dray with some young fellas in it and they pulled out guns and it was on. There was hot lead flying everywhere.

JACK: Johnny charged up to them and was just going to drop one of them when his horse lifted his head and took the shot. Killed him instantly and there's Johnny on the ground with his leg pinned under his dead horse.

BEN: Jack and I chased them off and rescued him. Now, he hates to be reminded of it.

JOHNNY: Thanks, Ben, *mate!* And anyway I soon got a replacement after we heard about those thoroughbreds out at Bungonia. and now I can leave the troopers nags for dead. *(Rose enters)*

BEN: Anyway I hope that swagless swaggie got his just deserts!

ROSE: Speaking of just deserts. Dessert is ready to be served. Could two people from each table collect the desserts for their tables?

*(Dave, Marianne and Paddy play background music. Cast and musicians settle down to dessert.)*

### DESSERT

*(When guests have mostly finished. Rose and Henry and Ashley and Kiara and Susie and Kate help them to clear as before)*

*(When cleared musicians play a verse or two by way of introduction then Ben launches into)*

#### ***My Name Is Ben Hall***

My name is Ben Hall, from Murrurundi I came;  
The cause of my turn-out you all know the same.  
I was sent to the gaol, my cattle turned to the Crown,  
I was forced to the bush, my sorrows to drown.

*(Musicians echo last line)*

I am always well mounted; with a gun in my hand,  
And I speak people fair when I bid them to stand;  
And I act most gently towards all womankind

## Hold-up at Jeffrey's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

Tho' my false wife's behaviour is still on my mind.

*(Musicians echo last line)*

I once met a squatter, I knew he had cash,  
For the evening before he'd been cutting a dash;  
But he handed straight over when my pistols I showed,  
So I gave back five pounds he might spend on the road.

*(Musicians echo last line)*

Here's a health to Frank Gardiner that leader so fine  
And also Jack Vane who is serving his time!  
With my friends in the bush I'll distribute this wealth,  
And I always reserve my last shot for myself!  
*(unnaccompanied)*

ASHLEY: *(stepping forward)* It must have been hard on you Mr Hall when your wife left, especially taking your son with her. But for her maybe dreams of a better life weren't enough.

*(sings with Marianne accompanying)*

### ***When the Ship Comes In***

Everybody has a ship of dreams that's sailing on the sea,  
And one of them is your ship- and one of them's for me-.  
We dream we will be happy. We dream that we will win  
And we will go on dreaming till the ship comes in.

There'll be linen on the pillows and blankets on the bed,  
Roast beef in the oven and some fresh baked bread.  
There'll be roses on the sideboard and flour in the bin.  
There'll be new shoes every Christmas when the ship comes in.

There'll be champagne on the table and music in the air,  
A brand new concertina and some ribbons for your hair.  
There'll be gravy and potatoes and peaches from a tin.  
There'll be new shoes every Christmas when the ship comes in.

There'll be glass in all the windows and money in the bank  
A lovely shiny buggy and some water in the tank.  
There'll be Sundays by the seaside and silk next to the skin.  
There'll be new shoes every Christmas when the ship comes in.

BEN: When they left I was heartbroken and then the traps made life impossible. Especially that new lah de dah inspector, Pottinger.

*(Jack steps forward with hatstand with a blue coat on it and places a troopers hat on it and gives it the raspberry salute.) (Ashley retreats to bar area)*

*(Concertina intro)*

### ***Sir Frederick Pottinger***

JOHNNY: *(sings with Dave, Marianne and Paddy playing behind)*

Sir Frederick Pottinger came out in a sailing ship to Sydney Town.  
He joined the trooper service for to hunt bushrangers down.  
He was a trooper like the rest and always did his level best  
But somehow never laid his hand on a bushranger or outlaw band  
*(Musicians 2 bar echo)*

BEN:

One day his super called him in and said say Fred can this be true?

## Hold-up at Jeffery's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

This letter's addressed to a baronet, could it possibly be you?

The trooper blushed and bowed his head and said:

JACK:

Yeth ith twoo I am Sir Fwed

BEN:

The trooper said you'd better be an officer Sir Fred like me

BEN JOHNNY JACK:

Coronet sword and spur. Everybody called him "thir".

But no bushranger would ever let himself be caught by a bawonet.

*(Musicians echo last line while bushrangers do little dance around hatstand)*

JOHNNY:

They made Sir Fred and inspector and sent him after bold Ben Hall. And Ben Hall said

BEN:

If we ever met I'd shoot Sir Fred in the coronet.

JOHNNY:

Ben met Sir Fred in the bush one day and Fred said

JACK:

Now then thtand at bay

JOHNNY:

Ben drew his gun and said

BEN:

my gawd, I never thought I'd shoot a Lord

BEN JOHNNY JACK:

Coronet sword and spur. Everybody called him "thir".

But no bushranger would ever let himself be caught by a bawonet.

*(Musicians echo last line while bushrangers do little dance around hatstand)*

BEN JOHNNY JACK:

But no bushranger could shoot Sir Fred they say the reason he's not dead

Is because the sight of him is such the bushrangers all laugh too much

*(Music for 2nd half of verse: bushrangers laugh and dance around hatstand, singing and blowing raspberries)*

Coronet sword and spur. Everybody called him "thir".

But no bushranger would ever let himself be caught by a bawonet.

BEN: There's one thing to be said for him though lads. While he's in charge they haven't a chance of catching us. He once had Darkie Gardiner in his sights at a range of three yards. He said his gun misfired. *(laughs)*

JOHNNY: They nearly sacked him a while back for chucking that bloke out the window. Second storey too. Accused him of cheating in billiards .

JACK: *(vehemently)* Well, I hope I get to meet him face to face. I'll shoot him like the mangy dog he is.

BEN: In the meantime Jack, let's have some more dancing. How about the Stockyards?

*(Dave gives instructions for dance, then Paddy, Marianne and Dave play for the dance)*

### **Stockyards**

JOHNNY: *(before dancers leave the floor)* We've only got a few hours of moonlight left Ben. *( points out the window)* We'll have to make a shift soon.

BEN: You're right Johnny but let's give our guests another dance to remember us by. *(to Dave)* Strip the Willow?

DAVE: *(gives instructions for dance, then Paddy and Marianne and Dave play for the dance)*

# Hold-up at Jeffery's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

## *Strip the Willow*

JOHNNY: We've gotta go Ben.

BEN: Well before we hit the saddle let's have a round of drinks. And what's more I'm paying. (*General cheers from cast. Slaps money down on the bar. Henry proceeds to serve beer in tankards to bushrangers, selected hostages. ASHLEY serves.*)

JOHNNY: Ahh that hits the spot. Cheers and good health to the people of Murrumbah!

HENRY: Charge your glasses, ladies and gentlemen, for a toast to the Queen. (*Allow time*)

HENRY: Please be upstanding. (*pause*) God save Queen Victoria!

ALL: (*cast stand except the bushrangers*) God save The Queen!

BEN: (*loudly still sitting*) I don't know why you want to toady to a queen on the other side of the world.

(*threateningly*) Now you can all sit and we'll sing a toast to a real king. King of the Road. King of Bushrangers, Darkie Gardiner. (*all sit except Henry*)

BEN, JOHNNY, JACK: (*together*) Frank Gardiner ... King of the Road

HENRY: (*sings – encourages audience to join in on tag - Marianne gives introduction, Dave and Paddy join in*)

### ***The Ballad of Ben Hall's Gang***

Come all ye wild colonials and listen to my tale;

A story of bushrangin' days I will to you unveil.

'Tis of those gallant heroes, God bless them one and all (*walks with a chair to prominent position and sits*)

Let us sit and sing, God save the King; Dunn, Gilbert, and Ben Hall

ALL:

Let us sit and sing, God save the King; Dunn, Gilbert, and Ben Hall.

HENRY:

Ben Hall he was a squatter who owned 200 head;

A peaceful quiet man was he until he met Sir Fred.

His home burned down, his wife cleared out,

His cattle perished all;

BEN:

I've all me sentence yet to earn,

HENRY:

Was the word of Bold Ben Hall.

ALL:

I've all me sentence yet to earn was the word of Bold Ben Hall.

HENRY:

John Gilbert was a flash cove, and John O'Meally too;

With Ben and Bourke and Johnny Vane they were all comrades true.

They bailed the Carcoar mailcoach up and made the troopers crawl.

There's a thousand pound set of the heads of Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall.

ALL:

There's a thousand pound set of the heads of Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall

HENRY:

From Bathurst down to Goulburn town they made the coaches stand.

While far behind Sir Frederick's men went labouring through the land.

Then at Canowindra's best hotel they gave a public ball

BEN JOHNNY JACK:

We don't hurt them that don't hurt us

## Hold-up at Jeffery's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang

HENRY:

says Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall

ALL:

We don't hurt them that don't hurt us say Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall

HENRY:

They never robbed a needy man the records best do show (*Jane objects*)

But staunch and loyal to their mates, unflinching to the foe.

So we'll drink a toast tonight my lads their exploits to recall.

Let us sit and sing: God save the King; Dunn, Gilbert, and Ben Hall

ALL:

Let us sit and sing, God save the King; Dunn, Gilbert, and Ben Hall.

BEN: Ha Ha. God save the King; Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall. (*then seriously facing Johnny and Jack*) And devil take Pottinger and his bluecoat traps! Now, lads we'd best be off so we can relieve the load of the Hanging Rock toll-keeper tomorrow. Then on to take Berrima. You (*waves hand around the room*) had better stay still and very quiet for the next ten minutes. Or else... (*waves gun*)

(*Jack fires a parting shot to remind the guests to stay put. The bushrangers leave singing refrain x2 or x3 after.*)

(*Remaining cast stand and freeze. Cast move to centre facing out*)

(*Silence then solo concertina note leading to*)

### ***Streets of Forbes***

JANE:

Come all you Lachlan men, and a sorrowful tale I'll tell

Concerning of a hero bold who through misfortune fell

ALL WOMEN

His name it was Ben Hall, a man of good renown

Who was hunted from his station, and like a dog shot down.

MEN:

Three years he roamed the roads, and he showed the traps some fun

A thousand pounds was on his head, with Gilbert and John Dunn

Ben parted from his comrades, the outlaws did agree

To give away bushranging and to cross the briny sea.

WOMEN:

Ben went to Goobang Creek, and that was his downfall

For riddled like a sieve was valiant Ben Hall

MEN:

'Twas early in the morning upon the fifth of May

When seven police surrounded him as fast asleep he lay.

CAST:

Billy Dargin he was chosen to shoot the outlaw dead

The troopers then fired madly, and filled him full of lead

They rolled him in a blanket and strapped him to his prad

And led him through the streets of Forbes to show the prize they had.

JANE: (*unaccompanied*)

And led him through the streets of Forbes to show the prize they had.

(*Cast slowly files out backstage. Band starts lively dance music. Cast file in and take bows. Indicate musicians and other people who have been involved.*)

## **Hold-up at Jeffery's Inn: The Ben Hall Gang**

*(Band play lively polka. Cast and guests polka the hall.....)*