

Old and Not So Old Bush Songs

Cuttin' A Monkey

written by Don Henderson in 1961. The title means killing a sheep for tucker when 'on the track'.

The musical notation is in 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music. Above the staves are chord symbols: C, F, C, G7, C, F, C, G7, C, F, C, G7, C. The melody is written in treble clef with eighth and quarter notes, including some rests and slurs.

If any of you lads should think to roam
Far from the comfort of your home
And go out on the wallaby, pray listen to me rhyme.
For I am one who's humped his drum
If you want some advice I'll give you some
On the hazards that a swagman has to face from time to time.

Chorus

Oh boys I'm trampin down the track
With a billy and a tucker bag, with a bluey on me back
Oh boys I've come a weary mile
So I'll sit and tell a story while I rest me pins awhile.

I've nearly starved a time or two
On outback tracks while travellin through
When my due right to tucker there the squatter has denied.
When asked for ten, ten, two, a half
Of meat, flour, sugar, tea he laughed,
Not carin that for lack of food a swagman might have died.

I've had close shaves make no mistake
With killer crocs and taipan snakes
And many's been the bunyip I've seen with me own eyes.
Though I will face the rogue dingo
Wild bull and boar and buffalo
Sometimes danger lurks about in quite a different guise.

So if you want to hit the track
Let me give you advice on what to pack
For upon the contents of your swag might well depend your life.
Now were a man whilst fast asleep
Perchance attacked by a savage sheep
Who'd blame him if for self defence he had a long-blade knife?

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Final chorus

Oh boys I'm trampin down the track

With a billy and a tucker bag, with a bluey on me back.

Oh boys I've come a weary mile

And I sat and told a story while I rested me pins awhile.