

Stringybark Creek

The words were published without source in Stewart and Keesing's *Australian Bush Ballads*. The setting is by The Bushwackers.

A serg - eant and three con - stab - les rode out from Mans - field Town
Near the end of last Oct - o - ber for to hunt the Kel - lys down;
They head - ed for the Wom - bat Hills and thought it quite a lark
To be camped a - long the bor - ders of a creek called String - y - - bark.

When Scanlon and the sergeant rode away to search the scrub
Leaving MacIntyre and Lonigan in camp to cook the grub,
Ned Kelly and his comrades came to take a nearer look,
For being short of flour they wished to interview the cook.

Both troopers in the camp alone they were well pleased to be
Watching as the billy boiled to make their pints of tea;
They joked and chatted gaily, never thinking of alarm
Till they heard the dreaded cry behind, 'Bail up, throw down your arms!'

The traps they started wildly and Mac then firmly stood
While Lonigan made tracks to gain the cover of the wood,
Ned Kelly muttered sadly as he loaded up his gun,
'Oh, what a flamin' pity that the bastard tried to run.'

'Twas later in the afternoon the sergeant and his mate
Came riding blithely through the bush to meet a cruel fate.
'The Kellys have the drop on you!' cried MacIntyre aloud,
But the troopers took it as a joke and sat their horses proud.

Then trooper Scanlon made a move his rifle to unsling,
But to his heart a bullet sped and death was in its sting;
Then Kennedy leapt from his mount and ran for cover near,
And fought, a game man to the last, for all that life held dear.

The sergeant's horse raced round the camp alike from friend and foe,
And MacIntyre, his life at stake, sprang to the saddle-bow
And galloped far into the night, a haunted, harassed soul,
Then like a hunted bandicoot hid in a wombat hole.

At dawn of day he hastened forth and made for Mansfield town
To break the news that made men vow to shoot the Kellys down.
So from that hour the Kelly gang was hunted far and wide,
Like outlaw dingoes in the wild until the day they died.