

The Ballad of Jack Lefroy

The song was collected in Queensland by Vance Palmer and Stan Arthur who could not identify any bushranger of that name. Their tune was adapted by members of the Melbourne band, Paradiddle, making the verse minor to contrast with the major chorus.

Am Dm Am

Come all you lads and list en, a stor - y I would tell,

4 Am Dm E7

Be - fore they take me out and hang me high,

8 Am Dm Am

My name is Jack Le - froy, and my life I would en - joy,

12 Dm E7 Am

But the old judge has sen - tenced me to die.

16 Dm Am

My moth - er she was Ir - ish and she taught me at her knee,

20 Am Dm E7

But to stead - y work I ne - ver did in - cline,

24 Am Dm Am

As a young - ster I could ride an - y horse was wrapped in hide,

28 Dm E7 Am

And when I saw a good un' he was mine.

Chorus

32 D D A

So all young lads take warn ing and don't be led a - - stray,

36 A D E7

For the past you ne - - ver, ne - - ver can re - - call;

40 A D A

While young your gifts em - ploy, take a less - on from Le - froy.

44 A E7 A E7

My fate should be a warn - ing to you all.

"Go straight young man", they told me when my first long stretch was done,
"If you're jugg'd again you'll have yourself to thank",
But I swore I'd not be found hunting nuggets in the ground,
When the biggest could be picked up in the bank.
Well I've stuck up mail coaches, and I've ridden with Ben Hall,
And they never got me cornered once until
A pimp was in their pay – Gave my dingo hole away,
And they run me to earth at Riley's Hill.

"Come out, Lefroy!" they called me: "Come out, we're five to one",
But I took my pistols out and stood my ground,
For an hour I pumped out lead till they got me in the head,
And when I awoke they had me bound.
It's a pleasant day to live, boys, a gloomy one to die,
A-dangling with your neck inside a string,
How I'd like to ride again down the hills to Lachlan Plain!
But when the sun rises I must swing.