

A Drover's Life

The author of this poem has proved to be resistant to research and so is attributed to Anon. It is set here to the tune 'Dear Old Donegal'.

A Drover's Life

1 A Dia - man - tin - - a drov - er led a cold and lone - ly life,
2 And he thought one day he'd like to try and get him - self a wife.
4 He told his horse a - bout it as they travel - led south one day,
6 And asked him what he reck - oned, but the horse said, "Neigh!"
8 "A drov - er's life is lone - ly, but a drov - er's life is free,
11 No - thing to eat but dam - per and chops and noth - ing to drink but tea,
12 And wheth - er the nights are fine and warm, or wheth - er the rain comes down,
14 You drop your blue - y and roll it out and sleep on the ston - y ground."

Well, he left the mob at Quilpie and while he rested there,
He saw a lovely sheila with lots of golden hair.
He whispered to his cattle dog, "Now she'd be good enough
To be me new offsider." But the dog said, "Ruff!"
"A drover's life is lonely, but a drover's life is free,
What would you do with a beautiful girl to bounce upon your knee?
She'd only grumble about the heat and whinge about the flies,
And sit and complain for half the night about the bindi-eyes,"

But he took a job on her father's place, just cleanin' out the drains,
Ridin' round the fences and burnin' sheep's remains.
Now and then he'd see her, and he'd worship her from afar,
"That's her!" he said to a ram one day, but the ram said, "Baa!"
"A drover's life is lonely but a drover's life is free,
What would you do with a beautiful girl to bounce upon your knee?
A single man can sleep all night curled up in a hollow log,
You stick to your bachelor ways, me boy, with your horse and your faithful dog."

But the drover wouldn't listen – before he'd been there a week,
She married another squatter before he had a chance to speak,
So he snatched his time and rolled his swag and rode away in the dark.
"I think I'll die," he said to some crows, but the crows said, "Caark!"
"Us crows know what we're talking about. Just you listen to us!
Stay single, boy, on the old stock route, and don't go making a fuss,
You're better off as a single man than spending all your quids
Just to get a house and a sheila and a team of billy lids."

So now he's riding north again on the track to Camooweal,
With his old brown horse, and a mob of crows and skinny blue dog at heel,
Whenever he thinks of Goldilocks, a tear comes into his eye,
But the horse and the dog and crows and the ram all join together to cry:
"We told you so! We told you so! You're better off on your own.
As long as you follow the overland you're better off alone.
And whether the nights are warm and dry, or whether the rain comes down,
You can drop your swag and roll it out and sleep on the stony ground."