

On the Wallaby

The Tent Poles are Rotting

*Written by Henry Lawson in 1891 and published in Brisbane with a shorter version appearing in *The Boomerang* in the same year.
It was adapted, set to music and recorded by Dave de Hugard.*

Verse 1

C **G7** **F** **C**

The tent poles are rot - ting, and the camp - - fires dead

F **C** **G7**

And the pos - sums they ram - ble in the trees o - ver - head

C **G7** **F** **C**

I'm _____ out on the wall - a - by, I'm hump - - ing my drum

C **G7** **F** **C**

And I tramp down the road where the sun - - down - ers come.

Other Verses

F **C** **G7** **C**

And it's north west by west o - ver rang - - es and far

F **C** **G7**

To the plains where the catt - le and the sheep sta - tions are

C **G7** **F** **C**

With the sky for my roof and the earth for my bunk

F **C** **G7**

And a cal - i - - co bag for my dam - - per and my junk.

C **G7** **F** **C**

And _____ scarce - - ly a com - rade _____ my mem - - ,ry re - veals

F **C** **G7** **C**

But this spir - - it - less din - - go in tow at my heels.

Now my tent is all torn and my blankets are damp
 And the fast-rising waters still flow by the camp
 And the cold water rises in jets from the floor
 As I lie on my bed and I listen to it roar
 And I think of tomorrow how my foot-steps will lag
 As I tramp beneath the weight of a rain-sodden swag.

But the way of a swagman is mostly uphill
But there's joys to be found on the wallaby still
When your day has gone by with its tramp and its tail
And your campfire you build and your billy it can boil
Oh, there's comfort and peace in the bowl of your clay
Or the yarn of a mate who is tramping that way.

But beware of the city where it's poison for years
And there's always a danger in drinking long beers
For a bushman gets bushed in the streets of the town
And he loses his friends when his cheque's all knocked down
He's right 'til his pockets are empty and then ,
He must hump his old bluey up the country again.