

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 listen, a story I would tell,

Am **Dm** **E7**

Before they take me out and hang me high,

Am **Dm** **Am**

My name is Jack Lefroy, and my life I would enjoy,

Dm **E7** **Am**

But the old judge has sentenced me to die.

Dm **Am**

My mother she was Irish and she taught me at her knee,

Am **Dm** **E7**

But to steady work I never did incline,

Am **Dm** **Am**

As a youngster I could ride any horse was wrapped in hide,

Dm **E7** **Am**

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

Chorus

D **D** **A**

So all young lads take warning and don't be led astray,

A **D** **E7**

For the past you never, never can recall;

A **D** **A**

While young your gifts employ, take a lesson from Lefroy.

A **E7** **A** **E7**

My fate should be a warning 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.