

Billy of Tea

from the Native Companion Songster 3 1889, reprinted in 'Old Bush Songs' edited by Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing.
The setting is a simplified version of part of the tune 'Bonnee Dundee'.

You can talk of your whisk - y or talk of your beer,
There is some - thing far bet - ter a - - wait - ing me here;
It ___ stands on the fire ___ be - neath the gum tree;
There is noth - ing much bet - ter than a bil - ly of tea.
So fill up your tumb - ler as high as you can,
You'll nev - er per - - suade me it's not the best plan,
To ___ let all the beer and yhe spir - its go free
And stick to my dar - ling old bil - ly of tea.

I wake in the morning as soon as it's light,
And go to the nosebag to see it's all right,
That the ants on the sugar no mortgage have got,
And straight away sling my old black billy pot,
And while it is boiling the horses I seek,
And follow them down perhaps as far as the creek;
I take off the hobbles and let them go free,
And haste to tuck into my billy of tea.

And at night when I camp, if the day has been warm
I give each of the horses their tucker of corn,
From the two in the pole to the one in the lead,
A billy for each holds a comfortable feed;
Then the fire I start and the water I get,
And the corned beef and damper in order I set,
But I don't touch the grub, though so hungry I be
I wait till it's ready - my billy of tea.