

Cuttin' A Monkey

Written by Sydney singer/songwriter Don Henderson in 1961. The title means killing a sheep for tucker when 'on the track'. Though not a gifted singer Henderson's words and tunes resonated and were performed by many of his contemporaries.

Verse

Chords: C, F, C, G7, C, F, C, G7, C

If any of you lads should think to roam Far from the com - fort of your home
And go out on the wal - la - by, pray list - en to me rhyme.
For I am one who's humped his drum If you want some ad - vice I'll give you some
On the haz - ards that a swag - man has to face from time to time.

Chorus

Chords: C, F, C, G7, C, F, C, G7, C

Oh _____ boys I'm tramp - in down the track
With a bill - y and a tuck - er bag, with a blue - y on me back.
Oh _____ boys I've come a wear - y mile
So I'll sit and tell a stor - y while I rest me pins a - while.

I've nearly starved a time or two
On outback tracks while travellin through
When my due right to tucker there the squatter has denied.
When asked for ten, ten, two, a half
Of meat, flour, sugar, tea he laughed,
Not carin that for lack of food a swagman might have died.

I've had close shaves make no mistake
With killer crocs and taipan snakes
And many's been the bunyip I've seen with me own eyes.
Though I will face the rogue dingo
Wild bull and boar and buffalo
Sometimes danger lurks about in quite a different guise.

So if you want to hit the track
Let me give you advice on what to pack
For upon the contents of your swag might well depend your life.
Now were a man whilst fast asleep
Perchance attacked by a savage sheep
Who'd blame him if for self defence he had a long-blade knife?

Final chorus

Oh boys I'm trampin down the track
With a billy and a tucker bag, with a bluey on me back.
Oh boys I've come a weary mile
And I sat and told a story while I rested me pins awhile.