

The Old Bark Hut

This version is largely that from AB Paterson's Old Bush Songs. Research has shown it to have been popular in the 1850's.

Verse)

Oh my name is Bob the Swag-man and be-fore you all I stand.
I've had man-y ups and downs while travel-ling through the land.
I once was well-to-do me boys but now I'm so hard up
That I'm forced to go on rat-ions in the Old Bark Hut.

Chorus)

In the Old Bark Hut, in the Old Bark Hut,
(Then echo the last line of the verse)

The musical notation is in 4/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (F major). The first verse consists of four lines of music. The chorus consists of two lines of music. The lyrics are written below the notes.

2. Ten pounds of flour, ten pounds of beef, some sugar and some tea
Is all they give a hungry man until the seventh day.
So you must be mighty sparing or you'll go with a hungry gut
Which is one of the great misfortunes of the old bark hut.
3. The bucket I wash me feet in has to cook me tea and stew.
They'd say "You're being mighty flash" if you should ask for two.
I've a pint pot and a billy and a broken handled cup
And they all adorn the table in the old bark hut.
4. Faith, the table is not made of wood, like many you have seen-
For if I had one half so good, I'd think myself serene;
'Tis only an old sheet of bark - God knows when it was cut -
It was blown from off the rafters of the old bark hut.
5. Of furniture there's no such thing. 'Twas never in the place
Except the stool I sit upon and that's an old gin case.
I use it for a safe as well but you must keep it shut
Or the flies will make it canter round the old bark hut.
6. If you should leave it open and the flies should get your meat,
They'd scarcely leave a single bit that's fit for man to eat.
But you must not curse nor grumble what won't fatten will fill up
And what's out of sight is out of mind in the old bark hut.
7. To live in the hut in the summer-time the weather is nice and cool.
You can feel the gentle breezes blowing in through every hole.
You can leave the old door open or you can leave it shut
There's no fear of suffocation in the old bark hut.

8. But to live in the hut in the winter–time it really is a treat
Especially when it's raining hard and blowing wind and sleet.
The rain comes down the chimney and your meat is black with soot
It's a substitute for pepper in the old bark hut.
9. I've seen the rain come in this hut just like a perfect flood,
Especially through that great big hole where once the table stood.
There's not a blessed spot, me boys, where you could lay your nut,
But the rain is sure to find you in the old bark hut.
10. So by me fire I make me bed and there I lay me down
And think myself as happy as a king that wears a crown
But just as I go off to sleep a flea will wake me up
Which makes me curse the vermin in the old bark hut.
11. Faith such flocks of fleas you never saw they are so plump and fat
And if you make a grab at one he'll spit just like a cat.
Last night they had me pack of cards and were fighting for their cut
And I thought the devil had me in the old bark hut.
12. So now me friends I've sung me song and sung it as well as I could.
I hope the ladies present did not find me language rude.
And all you boys and girls in the days when you grow up
Remember Bob the Swagman in the old bark hut.