

# 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

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

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

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

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

Other Verses

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

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

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

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

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

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.