

## The Outside Track

Words by Henry Lawson (1896), and the setting by Gerry Hallom (1982). The outside track refers to the literary and artistic set in Australia who seemed to need recognition in Britain to sanction their work. Lawson himself spent a difficult time in London.

The port-lights glowed in the morn-ing mist that rolled from the wat-ers green;  
And o - ver the rail-ing we grasped his fist as the dark tide came be - tween.  
We cheered the cap-tain and cheered the crew, and our mate, times out of mind;  
We cheered the land he was go - ing to and the land he had left be - hind.

Chorus

For they mar-ry and go as the world rolls back they mar-ry and van-ish and die  
But their spir-it shall live on the out-side track, as long as the years go \_ by.

There were ten of us there on the moonlit quay and one on the for'ard hatch;  
No straighter man to his mates than he had ever said: "Len's a match!"  
'Twill be long, old man, ere our glasses clink, 'twill be long ere we grasp your hand!  
And we dragged him ashore for a final drink, till the whole wide world seemed grand.

We roared Lang Syne as a last farewell but my heart seemed out of joint;  
I well remember the hush that fell when the steamer passed the point.  
We drifted home through the public bars, we were ten times less by one  
Who had sailed out under the morning stars, and under the rising sun.

And one by one, and two by two, they have sailed from the wharf since then  
I have said good-bye to the last I knew, the last of the careless men,  
And I can't but think that the times we had were the best times after all,  
As I turn aside with a lonely glass and drink to the barroom wall.

Final Chorus  
But I'll try my luck for a cheque Out Back,  
Then a last good-bye to the bush;  
For my heart's away on the Outside Track,  
On the track of the steerage push.