

The Rabbiter

Words and music by Bush Music Club member Stan Wakefield and published as a Bushwhacker Broadside in 1954.

Verse

I read a-bout the for-tunes that the rab-bit-ers make out-back
The sport-ing life, and the lair-y tales of pric-es fetched at Syd-ney sales,
So I start-ed out a-cross New South Wales on the rov-ing rab-bit-ers' track.

Chorus

With a hool-em-up and a sool-em-up and a fool-em-up de-coys,
The men who scalp the rab-bit-ers are the Syd-ney Mar-ket boys.

A free and independent life,
A life of simple joys –
I camped beneath an old belar,
And me tucker was mostly fried galah,
And I trapped 'em near and I trapped 'em far
For the Sydney market boys.

I poisoned out at Hillston
And I trapped at Gundagai;
I followed 'em over creeks and bogs,
And chopped 'em out of hollow logs,
And tailed 'em up with yelping dogs
Way back of Boggabri.

Besides the bunnies that you catch
There's things that you despise –
A hawk, a snake, a crow, a rat,
A bandicoot, a tiger cat,
But when you're lucky a lamb that's fat
Is a welcome enough surprise.

I skinned and scalped and scalped and skinned
Till me back was nearly broke,
With blood and muck all stiff and brown
The stink of me clothes would knock you down,
And I slaved all day for half a crown
For the Sydney market bloke.

I thought I'd get a snifter cheque
For skins I sent from Bourke,
But the broker rogues at Sydney town
They weigh them short and they grade them down,
And they sent me back three lousy pound
For a month of slavin' work.

Some day we're going to set our traps
To catch the hungry crew
Who live on useful workers' sweat –
We'll stop their thievin' racket yet,
And to make them earn their tucker, you bet,
Is the job for me and you.

Last Chorus:

With a hool-em-up and a sool-em-up,
And there'll be no more decoys;
Then a-hunting, hunting we will go
For the Sydney market boys.