

The Song of the Fetter

Words from the Australian Railway Union Magazine Railroad' by 'Johnson' 1929, tune by David Johnson 2004

Verse

Capo 2

Old sev - en - teen is whistl - ing as she rush - es through the night
With head and tail - lights gleam - ing and ev - ery car a - light
But as she takes the cut - ting and holds the shin - ing track
From lust - y throats come call - ing the song of the man: Out - back.

Chorus

Roll and throw your pap - er for the fett - lers on the track.
Roll and throw your pap - er for the men on the line: Out - back

On cold and lonely stretches on bridges, tall and long
You hear the cry of 'Paper' the fettlers' only song.
Then as you roll and fling them just watch the eager pack
That rush like boys to grab them for news is scarce – Outback

In scorching Sun and blinding dust in snow and sleet and hail
These men the track are keeping for the passing of the Mail.
Then after 'grub' it's Paper time and every tent and shack
Is going through the latest by the light of the lamp – Outback.

Where oil lamps cast their feeble light in tents with earthen floor
And canvas walls go swaying as the winds though gum trees roar,
Those papers, every single page, are read, from front to back.
Then passed along to cobbers. That's the way of the men – Outback.

But when the storm clouds gather and rain comes for a week
The Ganger roars at Midnight " Come on boys! Down the Creek".
Out then in gleaming oilskins they go along the Track
With jacks and picks and crowbar. There's a washaway on – Outback.

So now you know just what it's like to work on the line out there.
Where every man's a toiler where each man does his share.
Next time you hear them calling don't pass the waiting Pack.
Give out the news from Sydney. It's a lot to these men – Outback.