

Travelling Down the Castlereagh

Collected by Banjo Paterson and published in his collection of Old Bush Songs published in 1905.
The origin of the tune given is contentious; this version as popularised by Dave de Hugar.

capo 2

G A Em F#m C D G A

I'm trav - el - ling down the Cast - le - reagh, and I'm a sta - tion - hand,

G A D7 E7

I'm hand - y with the rop - ing pole, I'm hand - y with the brand,

G A Em F#m C D G A

And I can ride a rowd - y colt, or swing an axe all day,

G A D7 E7 G A

But there's no de - mand for sta - tion - hands a - long the Cast - le - reagh.

G A Em F#m C D G A

So it's shift, boys, shift! There is - n't the slight - est doubt

G A D7 E7

We've got to make a shift for the sta - tions furth - er out.

G A Em F#m C D G A

With the pack - horse run - ning aft - er, for he fol - lows like a dog,

G A D7 E7 G A

We must strike a - cross the coun - try at the old jig - jog

This old black hose I'm riding – you'll notice what's his brand
 He wears the crooked R. There's none better in the land.
 He takes a lot of beating but they other day they tried
 As a bit of a joke with a racing bloke at twenty pounds a-side
 And it was shift, boys, shift There wasn't the slightest doubt
 I had to make him shift for my money was running out.
 But he cantered home a winner with the other one at the flog.
 He's a red hot sort to pick up with his old jig-jog

I asked a cove for shearing once along the Marthaguy:
'We shear non-union here,' says he. 'I call it scab,' says I.
I looked along the shearing floor before I turned to go –
There were eight or ten non-union men a-shearing in a row!
It was shift, boys, shift! There wasn't the slightest doubt
It was time to make a shift with the leprosy about.
So I saddled up my horses and I whistled to my dog,
And we left his scabby station at the old jig-jog.

I went to Illawarra where my brother's got a farm;
He has to ask the landlord's leave before he lifts his arm:
The landlord owns the countryside, man, woman, dog and cat,
They haven't the cheek to dare to speak without they touch their hat.
It was shift, boys, shift! There wasn't the slightest doubt
The little landlord-god and I would soon have fallen out.
Was I to touch my hat to him, was I his blooming dog?
So I makes for up the country at the old jig-jog.

It's time that I was moving, I've a mighty way to go
Till I drink artesian water from a thousand feet below;
Till I meet the overlanders with the cattle coming down –
I'll work a while and make a pile, then have a spree in town.
So it's shift, boys, shift! There isn't the slightest doubt
We've got to make a shift for the stations further out.
With the packhorse running after, for he follows like a dog,
We can cross a lot of country at the old jig-jog.