

The Troop Train Leaves

Original words Jim Grahame (Jim Gordon), a life-long friend of Henry Lawson. The tune was written by musical duo Tony & Helen Romeo, both long term members of the Bush Music Club and performers with Southern Cross Bush Band.

The set - ting sun has decked the west with flam - ing locks of gold.
The breath of night is on the air, the earth seems damp and cold,
While shad - ows of the pop - lars stretch like ghost - ly fing - ers spread
That point the dark and sil - ent way to un - known roads a - head.

The engine spurting mists of steam with furnace fires aglow
Belching smoke in drifting spheres like rain clouds hanging low,
While milling crowds move back and forth, departure won't be long
For soldiers clad in battledress who mingle with the throng.

As "All Aboard!" is called aloud, "Make way please! Stand aside!"
Shy lovers whisper last good-byes beside a weeping bride,
And there are many friendless ones whose feelings are obscure
While metal pointers of the clock turn slow but deadly sure.

But there are two beyond the throng who are the last to part.
She helps him with his heavy gear - 'tis lighter than her heart
Yet there's a smile upon her lips, held high is her grey head.
There is no falter in her voice and not a tear is shed.

She jokes with him, and laughs with him, (he must not see her grieve).
She's worn the mask of gaiety, these last days of his leave
And as the train pulls slowly out, hands wave and wave and wave
Then stiff of lip she turns away - the bravest of the brave.

Those watching thought her unconcerned, some thought that she was hard
As firm of step and straight of form she leaves the station yard
But on her dark and lonely way, gone is the smile that lied
Her head is bowed, her cheek is wet, the mask is cast aside.