



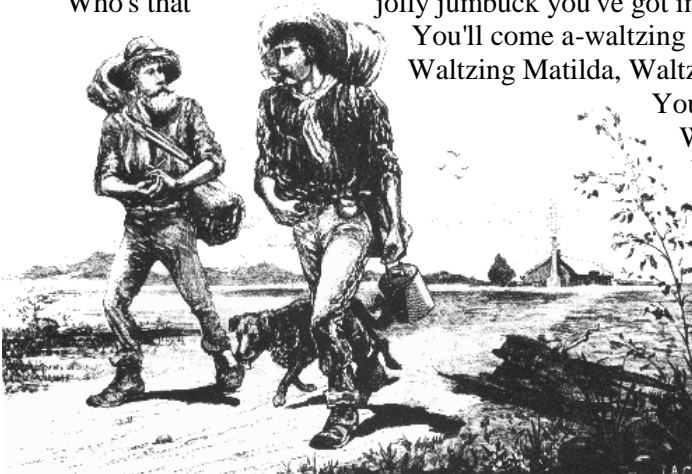
The Unofficial Australian National Anthem: "Waltzing Matilda"¹

A. B. "Banjo" Paterson

Once a jolly swagman² camped by a billabong³,
Under the shade of a coolibah-tree⁴,
And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy⁵ boiled,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?
Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"
And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy boiled,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"

Down came a jumbuck⁶ to drink at the billabong;
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee⁷.
And he sang as he shoved that jumbuck in his tucker-bag⁸,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me.
Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."
And he sang as he shoved that jumbuck in his tucker-bag,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."

Up rode a squatter, mounted on his thoroughbred;
Down came the troopers, one, two, three:
"Who's that jolly jumbuck you've got in your tucker-bag?
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!
Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,



You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me.
Who's that jolly jumbuck you've got in your tucker-bag?
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"

Up jumped the swagman and sprang into the billabong;
"You'll never catch me alive!" said he;
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!
Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"



¹ **waltzing matilda** - Matilda was a mock-romantic word for a swag, and to waltz matilda was to hit the road with a swag on your back. Very few non-Australians seem to understand this, and hence regard the song as gibberish or cute, something like 'Jabberwocky' set to music. "'Twas brillig and the slithy toves ..." indeed.

The term is thought to come from a German expression. *Auf die Walz gehen* means to take to the road, and *Mathilde* is a girl's name, applied to one's bed-roll.

² **swagman** - A gentleman of the road, an itinerant roaming country roads, a drifter, a tramp, a hobo. Carried his few belongings slung in a cloth, which was called by a wide variety of names, including 'swag', 'shiralee' and 'bluey'. Given the large number of names for them, they must have been a pretty common sight.

³ **billabong** - An originally aboriginal word for a section of still water adjacent to a river, cut off by a change in the watercourse, cf. an oxbow lake. In the Australian outback, a billabong generally retains water longer than the watercourse itself, so it may be the only water for miles around.

⁴ **coolibah tree** (also coolabah) A particular kind of eucalyptus that grows beside billabongs.

⁵ **billy** - A tin can, maybe two litres (four pints) in capacity, usually with a wire handle attached to the top rim, in which 'swaggies' (and contemporary Australian campers) boil water to make tea (and to kill the beasties in the water they've taken out of the billabong).

⁶ **jumbuck** - A sheep. The Macquarie Dictionary suggests that the term is an Aboriginal corruption of 'jump up'. A correspondent, Leslie (Lee) Harvey advises me that the term derives from 'jombok'. "Jomboks are those big, white, fluffy clouds that typically drift across the inland Australian skies in late summer and Autumn. When the aboriginals first saw sheep they were reminded of jomboks and they just changed one letter to avoid confusion in their spoken language. I also think the first European translators misspelled the word jumbuck".

⁷ **glee** - Fröhlichkeit

⁸ **tucker-bag** - Provianttasche