





THE HORSES STAY BEHIND

In days to come we'll wander west and cross the range again;
 We'll hear the bush birds singing in the green trees after rain;
 We'll canter through the Mitchell grass and breast the bracing wind;
 But we'll have other horses. Our chargers stay behind.

Around the fire at night we'll yarn about old Sinai;
 We'll fight our battles o'er again; and as the days go by
 There'll be old mates to greet us. The bush girls will be kind;
 Still our thoughts will often wander to the horses
 left behind.



I don't think I could stand the thought of my old fancy hack
 Just crawling round old Cairo with a Gyppo on his back.
 Perhaps some English tourist out in Palestine
 may find
 My broken-hearted waler with a wooden
 plough behind.

No; I think I'd better shoot him and tell a little lie:--
 "He floundered in a wombat hole and then lay down to die."
 Maybe I'll get court-martialled; but I'm damned if I'm inclined
 To go back to Australia and leave my horse behind.

Trooper Bluegum.



Image from "Australia in Palestine" edited by H.S Gullett and Chas. Barrett. Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1919.

Trooper Bluegum was Major Oliver Hogue of the 6th Light Horse Regiment. Major Hogue survived the war but died of influenza in 1919. This poem was later set to music by Terry Bennetts.