

The Battle With The Roan

Slim Dusty

I come ridin' down the Barwon with my saddle and my swag
Strapped across the bony framework of a long backed chestnut nag
I was headin' for a station on the stockroute west of Bourke
To tangle with an outlaw horse well known in campfire talk

When I rode down to the stockyard where they said I'd find the boss
Standing just inside I saw the big roan outlaw horse
He was just the kind of horseflesh a ringer dreams about
Game eye and good strong shoulders and front legs well spaced out

I said now boss is that the horse the ringers rave about
I've heard of him at Camooweal and even further out
Yes he's been tried by desert men and riders from the gulf
He said I'd give my station to the man that calls his bluff

And as I strapped the bridle on that proud and shapely head
I pictured me as owner of his big merino spread
I threw my Snyder poley on and tightened up the girth
And as I stepped astride him the big horse left this earth

He left the ground in one tight ball as solid as a stone
And all that I could see around was one big blur of roan
I hit him with my goosenecks around the shoulder points
He twisted like a reptile that had a million joints

He dropped his shoulders way down low and chopped out to the right
He started striking at the bit each time the spurs did bite
I thought I felt him weaken so I voiced a victory yell
What happened then I only know for those who saw it tell

So I rode way from the station with my saddle and my swag
Strapped across the bony framework of the same old chestnut nag
And just as I was leaving he whinnied loud and shrill
And even after all these years I fancy I hear him still

They still tell yarns about him around the campfire blaze
Of the noted riders that he's thrown so many different

ways

And while I'm taking night watch on a cattle camp alone

I try to figure how I lost the battle with the roan.