

An Independent Bloke

Slim Dusty

Yeah, he was a real dried up old gravel voiced bushie this feller
Wonder where he is now?

I was standin' in line all the mornin'
To answer an ad that I saw
Regarding the job on the council
There was me and quite a few more
A dried up ole bushie before me
Pulled a battered old tin from his coat
And from fine cut and Tally Ho papers
Proceeded to roll up a smoke

A hairy young man in the office
Rapped on the desk and said next
The old feller stepped up before him
And gave him his name and address
And the hairy one asked of the old bloke
If he had any reference to show
If he'd ever done manual labour
Or had experience out on the road

The old feller reared up and snorted
And the cigarette hung from his lip
His hat was pushed back on his forehead
His hands they were firm on his hips
He looked the young feller all over
Took in the mode of his dress
The peaches and creamy complexion
And I felt that he wasn't impressed

Then he pushed a big hairy paw under
The young feller's lily white nose
Slowly he spread out his fingers, hey
Said take a gander at those
These are my reference for working
I was at it before you were born
And I'll bet you a quid even money
I'll be at it long after you're gone, you mug

I've played the mad pick and the banjo
Done many a season in cane
I've worn out a dozen good kellys
While fencing out there on the plain
I've worked for my board and my lodgings
In conditions you'd not understand
And by hell I've brought in some good money
With these very same battered old hands

Experience out on the roadway
Is something I learned all about
When the banker foreclosed on the mortgage
Just after the '65 drought
I rolled up my swag and departed
A sorry but much wiser man
With only my memories to show for
The years that I'd spent on the land

So I tramped and I travelled the highways
And in bitterness cursed every mile
But in time I got over my troubles
And learned once again how to smile
It's the likes of you pen pushing gentry
To bring out the laughter in me
You little tin gods of the office ha ha
You're too pumped with power to see

Then with a good old Australian expression
We were left in no doubt what he meant
He turned on his heel and he left us
And God only knows where he went