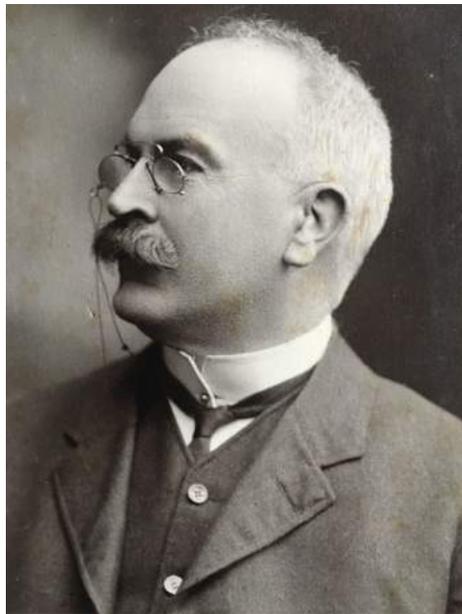


# **E. W. HUGHES'S POEMS**



*Gordon Hughes, 2016*

## Preface

This booklet is a collation of poems published by Edward Walter ("Walter") Hughes (1854 – 1922) in country newspapers and magazines between 1902 and 1916.

The poems appear in alphabetical order according to their titles. Not all are dated, although where the date is known, this has been included in a footnote.

No attempt is made to critique this verse. The point of reproducing it is simply to ensure that with time it is not lost to the family altogether.

Having said that, Walter's talents received some informed support. On 23 July 1906, Henry Hyde Champion of the *The Book Lover* wrote to him acknowledging receipt of a draft poem. In the letter, he said:

"I really think very highly of your verses, and see that you have a mastery of the elements of song. Is it the Welsh blood in you coming out as it usually does? If you would take the trouble to do it I have no doubt that you would soon be hailed as one of the great Australian chorus of singers."

Henry Hyde Champion was a figure of some significance. He founded *The Book Lover* in 1899 as a monthly penny journal of literary reviews, comments and news, and it was published for 22 years. It has been described as "something of a legend in the Melbourne book world", and it featured works by Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson, amongst others.

Then again, Champion's praise for Walter's work needs to be considered in context – Henry was married to Elsie Goldstein, a cousin of Walter's wife Jeanie Hawkins.

Walter was born on 11 July 1854 at Noarlunga, South Australia. His father, Samuel Hughes, had migrated with his parents and siblings to South Australia from Liverpool in 1849. Samuel had married Sally Plaisted in 1851 at Willunga, South Australia. When in 1852 Samuel's father Edward left for the goldfields in Victoria, Samuel had remained behind in charge of a flour mill at Willunga.

In 1855, Samuel and Sally, along with baby Edward (Walter), sailed to Melbourne, and made their way to Bendigo to join Samuel's father Edward at the Bendigo goldfields. Samuel established a timber business in Bendigo, and subsequently returned to Melbourne where he set up an importing and timber merchant business under the name Hughes Lord & Co.

Walter entered Scotch College, Melbourne, with his brother John, in 1867. However two years later the family moved back to Mt Gambier, South Australia, where Samuel again established a timber merchant business.

Walter commenced work at the National Bank of Australasia in South Australia and ended up in charge of the Naracoorte branch, resigning in 1873 when his father Samuel again relocated to Melbourne to establish Samuel Hughes & Co, Importers and Merchants. At this time, the family lived in Moonee Ponds.

Upon relocation to Melbourne, Walter joined the Bank of Victoria at the age of 19. He was posted for some time as relieving officer at the Bank at Dunolly, but had moved back to Melbourne by 1882.

At the age of 29, Walter married Jeanie Hawkins, aged 21, on 25 September 1883 at the Presbyterian Church at Dunolly, Victoria. Jeanie was born on 8 August 1862, at Melville Forrest station, near Coleraine, the youngest child of Samuel Proudfoot Hawkins, who had migrated to Australia in 1839, and Jeanie Hutcheson. Jeanie Hawkins had attended

Presbyterian Ladies College where she was a contemporary of Helen Mitchell, later Dame Nellie Melba.



*The Presbyterian church in Dunolly where Walter and Jeanie were married in 1883*

The wedding party contained some interesting personalities.

The ceremony was conducted by Jeanie's brother-in-law, Rev John W Lawson, the local Presbyterian minister. Rev Lawson was married to Jeanie's sister Penelope, and their son would become premier of Victoria in 1918.



*Jeanie's nephew Sir Harry Lawson, premier of Victoria 1918 - 1924 - his father conducted Walter and Jeanie's wedding ceremony*

The best man, who also gave away the bride, was the Hon James Bell MLC. Bell was a local Dunolly businessman who had previously served as mayor between 1862 and 1865. He had entered parliament in 1881 and would become a minister without portfolio in 1886 and Victorian Minister of Defence in 1889.



*Hon James Bell MLC, who became Victorian Minister for Defence in 1889, was best man at Walter and Jeanie's wedding*

Music was provided by Philip Plaisted, the organist at St Stephen's Church, Richmond. Philip was Walter's uncle, being the brother of his mother Sally Plaisted. He was an organist of the highest repute but also a manic depressive, and in 1889 he fatally stabbed his wife during a psychotic episode. He was tried for murder but found not guilty by way of insanity, and spent the next 31 years in incarceration until his death in 1920.



*Philip Plaisted, Walter's uncle, was organist at the wedding in 1883 – five years later he killed his wife (pictured)*

A newspaper report of the wedding described Walter and Jeanie as “very great favourites in the district”. They departed from the local railway station in the late afternoon for a honeymoon to the Gippsland lakes, and in an era of dubious political correctness, the same report mentioned that the showers of rice from well wishers were “sufficient in quantity to keep a Chinaman for twelve months”.

Whilst living back in Melbourne, Walter and Jeanie had two children, both born in Moonee Ponds – Beatrix (born 23 April 1884), and Reginald, our grandfather (born 7 January 1886).



*Walter and Jeanie's first two children –  
Beatrix (right) and Reginald*

Walter was then transferred to the bank of Victoria at Beaufort. At Beaufort, Walter and Jeanie had two more children - Vyvyan (born 12 June 1888); and Cedric (born 9 June 1893).



*The Bank of Victoria in Beaufort where Walter spent most of his  
career*

Walter received some publicity in April 1893 when there was a run on the bank at Beaufort and it ran out of bullion. *The Age* reported on 14 April 1893 that "the manager, hardly knowing what was going to happen, to be on the safe side, left for Ballarat to replenish his stock". The *Bendigo Advertiser* reported the following day that the run had been caused by "a bogus telegram by a publican at Beaufort...to the effect that the Bank of Victoria was shaky", thus creating a "great scare".

In the early 1900s Walter began composing and publishing verse and short stories. One story only, "Bradley's Folly", is reproduced in this booklet because it appears to be autobiographical.

There is no evidence of Walter composing or writing after 1916, following the death of his son Vyvyan on a troop ship in Colombo bound for the Middle East.

Walter retired from the Beaufort Branch of the Bank due to ill health in 1919, a newspaper item recording that he had been "one of the most active residents of Beaufort".

Walter died from diabetes and heart failure on the evening of Sunday 2 July 1922 at his home at 19 Oakwood Avenue, Brighton, at the age of 67. He was buried at Brighton Cemetery.

Jeanie lived for another 19 years. She died in 1941 at St Andrews Private Hospital, East Melbourne, having failed to regain her health after a fall some time earlier.

## AUSTRALIA 1915

The nation we aspire to be  
Is a whiteman's land in an Orient sea,  
Where flies the pennoa of liberty--  
Fair Australia.

As Eve in her Eden, young and fair,  
Whose passionate pulse in incensed air  
Quickened the bud to its blossom rare--  
So Australia.

Men who toil in a waterless waste  
Where gum and wattle inter laced,  
At the bugle call to the Standard raced--  
For Australia.

Our northern King in the twilight dim,  
His golden goblet fills to the brim.  
And breathes a toast from the carven rim--  
To Australia.



*Jeanie Hawkins with her elder children, Beatrix  
and Reginald, in 1888*

## AUSTRALIAN WATTLE SONG<sup>1</sup>

The rose is the Englishman's glory,  
Resplendent in red and white;  
We hear of its name  
And Historical Fame  
In the York and Lancaster story.  
The watchword of many a fight.

But sing ye the song of the wattle,  
Wherever the tree may grow;  
A bumper of wine  
From an Austral vine;  
Come, empty the bonnie black bottle  
To golden blossoms aglow.

Bright Erin, with brogue and with blarney,  
Worships her plant in the spring;  
Gossoon and colleen.  
When wearing the green  
That comes from the Lakes of Killarney,  
Songs of the shamrock will sing.  
But sing ye the song of the wattle etc.

And Scotland is proud of her thistle,  
Heather, and bonnie blue-bell;  
Their praises are told  
By minstrels of old  
When sword from the scabbard would whistle  
And pipes resound in the dell.  
But sing ye the song of the wattle etc.

O, sweet is Australian wattle ---  
Aye, sweet as a fairy rose ---  
And Australia's sons  
Will defend with their guns  
(When kettle-drums draw them to battle)  
The land where the wattle grows.  
Then sing ye the song of the wattle etc.

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<sup>1</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 29 May 1913

## CHILDREN<sup>2</sup>

Come, listen to the monastery bells,  
Announcing early morn from tower high;  
Of priceless youth this youth of day foretells,  
The pearl that crowns and sceptres cannot buy.  
O, happy children, choristers of light,  
Dark were the world without these sunbeams bright.

The golden days of happy, happy youth  
And like the honeyed buds of scented flow'rs  
Ah I that the young might recognise this truth  
And make the most of consecrated hours.  
Rough winds attack the roses in their Prime--  
The folded petals have the happier time.

Surpassing is the glory of the spring,  
Forcing many a masterpiece to light;  
And to perfection's rose the bud will bring,  
Maturing day by day and night by night.  
Symbolical of youth is spring's sweet day,  
Of age, the withered autumn of decay.

Spirit of Nature, I would thee invoke  
To still the enemy of youthful days;  
But that I know Time's unrelaxing yoke  
Is fettered to the moving dial, and stays.  
Vain orisons for the bright and vernal!  
Nature will not change her plans eternal.

May fairest breezes of Zephyrus blow,  
And safely waft your fairy fleets through life.  
May angels guard and keep you white as snow,  
Bestowing fortitude in storm and strife.  
In happiest calm, or on an angry sea,  
Be true to virtue, love, and purity.

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<sup>2</sup> A handwritten note by EWH dates this poem 13 May 1912

## CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

SANTA CLAUS (LOQUITUR).

Some like a little trumpet,  
Some like a little drum,  
Some like a painted humming-top  
With a tantalising hum.

But girls are not like boys,  
Disseminating noise;  
Nor all the gold of Ophir  
Is equal to a loll.  
Upon a little sofa  
With fascinating doll.

To all my little unknown friends I send  
Not greetings, like an ordinary friend,  
But something neither you nor I could miss  
From golden youth to silvered age – a kiss.



*Walter and Jeanie's four children – Reginald, Beatrix, Cedric  
and Vyvyan, in 1902*

### CUP DAY<sup>3</sup>

'Tis the Melbourne Carnival once again,  
and the heart of the sportsman is glad;  
Though a stranger would think at the  
Flemington show we'd all gone galloping mad.

In the grandstand the shimmer of silk is  
seen; on the flat the simmer of fun;  
And the "Books" on the Hill, with the  
pencil and quill, are laying the "odds" – bar none.

In the saddling paddock, before "The Cup" race,  
the "punters" are keen on their "tips",  
And wagers are laid in stentorian tones,  
and also by feminine lips.

Horses in line—they're off!—and the sheen  
of the colours passing the crowded stand  
Makes a race to remember—no matter who  
wins—the "Gem" of this Southern land.



*Jeanie Hughes at her home in Beaufort*

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<sup>3</sup> This verse appeared in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* with the following introduction: "Mr E.W. Hughes, of Beaufort, has followed up his recent successes, by winning the 'Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News' first prize of £1 1s for the best verse of eight lines descriptive of Cup Day. He also was placed third in the paper's competition for best anecdote of a Melbourne or Caulfield Cup day."

## GOLF<sup>4</sup>

### VERBENA COTTAGE V BEAUFORT

When the Cottage Verbena set out  
For a match, they left home with a shout  
For they wanted the gore  
Of the Club team galore  
Just to humble the lean and the stout.

In the Garden of Eden, they say,  
Old Adam could have his own way;  
But only half strung  
He caved in to Young  
On the golf links one cold winter's day.

A doctor, however, with luck  
Put a cottage one out for a duck;  
Summers' game was not hot  
So his play went to pot,  
Though his winter's game often shows pluck.

But Hetherington's good in all weather,  
In fact, he is used to the heather,  
And poor Tedo Schlicht  
Was terribly licked—  
Still, he's good when the ball's made of leather.

Then Carol be carolled with glee,  
For he soon had Fordyce up a tree.  
Now a foursome is nice,  
But a game with four dice  
Seems absurd, for you only want three.

Oh, young men and maidens beware,  
When in golf you start playing don't swear;  
Unless trained by C. Neville  
You'll go to the \_\_\_\_\_,  
Where "cliques" in a golf club are rare.

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<sup>4</sup> A handwritten note by EWH dates this poem 5 August 1911

## **HARMONY AND DISCORD**

O just list to music grand,  
Now a coming from the stand,  
'Tis the finest in the land,  
Says the T.B. Band.

Now, that is empty twaddle,  
You've feathers in your noddle.  
Ye ought to hear the Model,  
Says the B.M. Band.

You will classic music hear,  
Our clarion ring clear,  
We don't make the horses rear,  
Says the T.B. Band.

Town, your end is coming soon;  
For you cannot play in tune,  
And your classic sun's all moon,  
Says the B.M. Band.

Model, wait till Boxing Day,  
For 'tis then we'll lead the way,  
And just teach you how to play,  
Says the T.B. Band.

O for one harmonious band,  
Call it "Town Brass Model Grand",  
Two in discord, we can't stand,  
Says folks not in the band.

## HORSE SENSE<sup>5</sup>

No matter how simple the tale you may tell  
Talk sense  
Or if you with dadalian poesy swell,  
Talk sense  
Perspicuity study when writing your prose,  
To make subjects a matter of interest to those  
Who prefer a plain outfit to Sunday-best clothes,  
Talk sense

Through turnips may suffer from dactyloriza  
Talk sense  
Though you've travelled abroad from Melbourne to Piza,  
Talk sense  
Be ironical in a non-union wrangle,  
When hot polydipsia endeavour to strangle;  
But though you come home with your tongue in a tangle,  
Talk sense

If you ever somnambulate over the house  
Talk sense  
And in vacant soliloquy tread on a mouse  
Talk sense  
When busy with carpets upon the staircases  
You hit with the hammer in just the wrong places  
Don't use baboo-English or queer antiphrases  
Talk sense

When sweet honeymooning with ribbons and laces  
Talk sense.  
And when the grey mare has kicked over the traces  
Talk sense  
When backing wrong horses at Flemington races  
Exploding with anger on bursting your braces  
Or if in life's game you draw deuces, not aces  
Let smiles circumambulate over your faces  
And talk sense!

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<sup>5</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 29 May 1913

## MAN-AT-ARMS<sup>6</sup>

Rebellion had simmered for long,  
His standard asunder was torn,  
Woe, woe ! to the weak and the strong  
Now cottage and castle must mourn.

We battered the barbican tower,  
We wasted the hamlets and farms,  
Unsheathed was my sword ev'ry hour,  
For I was the King's Man-at-arms.

The great Earl lay dead in the moat,  
The gates of the castle were broached;  
With bloodthirst in ev'ry man's throat,  
All fled as our swordsman approached.

Hot haste through the banqueting hall  
The King in his fury sped on  
Through tower, through ballium and stall,  
Til treasure-trove sought for was won.

The keep and the garrison fall—  
Forsaken the Earl's daughter lay,  
No aid from the guards could she call,  
Too stricken to weep or to pray—

Lay pale as a pearl of the sea.  
The fairest might envy her charms.  
Her sad plight appealed unto me—  
But I was the King's Man-at-arms!

Ill boded the smile of the King,  
His sword points my path to the door  
Which closed; and the clattering ring  
Rang death-knells to her on the floor.

Whilst gazing on tapestried wall,  
Came shouts and the clashing of steel  
But woe-cries of one in her fall  
More tortures than sword-thrust can deal.

He passed me with haughty disdain,  
Nor hand on my sword-hilt alarms—  
Though myrmidon, I could have slain—  
But I was the King's Man-at-arms!

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<sup>6</sup> A handwritten note by EWH dates this poem 31 January 1912

## MY GUELDER ROSE<sup>7</sup>

My guelder-rose of the garden of Love  
Through the oaken gates from the hall above  
Is coming arrayed in her sandal bright,  
For I am to meet her to-night, to-night.

Jessamine scent and the scent of the rose  
Follow her withersoever she goes,  
Queen in my Eden of Love she will reign  
As I caress her again and again.

With love I will guard her till life shall cease  
As the dragon guarded the Golden Fleece;  
Her eyes and her bosom, her hair of gold  
Are more than high Heav'n in bliss could unfold.

Girl, was it wrong to have loved thee so well,  
And when concealed our secret to tell  
How madly this love-treasure thrilled my heart,  
How deadly the world if we part-we part?

If never again, sweet Heaven I'll see,  
To-night, when my rose surrenders to me  
Her love, her thoughts and her beauty divine,  
When love answers love "Behold, I am thine."

Why should a shadow on love ever lie?  
Why for kisses forbidden strive and sigh?  
When magic of love-light glows in the eye,  
What lover could whisper, "Good-bye, good-bye?"

I hear the faint click of the garden gate,  
And under the hawthorn I wait, I wait.  
Well know I the thread of her dainty feet.  
Ah! She is sweet, she is sweet, she is sweet.

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<sup>7</sup> The back of the original newspaper clipping reveals a partially obscured date in 1911

## ON THE LAND<sup>8</sup>

There is no such thing as failure  
To the man of iron will,  
But Nature's gifts are uneven  
As the mountain stern and rill;  
Though seemingly unproductive  
And tardy well work soil,  
Unless lost in dreams, there are ways and means  
To obtain reward for toil,

How oft the lover or speaker  
Has lost in the shadows dim  
His cause through a strong point missing

That never occurred to him  
Let the train be clear as crystal  
And muscles active and free  
Then no one would say, should plans go astray  
"it never occurred to me".

To all come seasons of worry and temples may throb at night  
But many a mist in the morning  
Disburses in golden light.  
In favoured or drouthy weather,  
What ever the task in hand  
Both in thought and deed sow the purest seed  
For harvesting on the land.



*With a view to increasing town morale during the War years, Walter was responsible for reinstating the Beaufort Tennis Club in 1915, and was elected president*

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<sup>8</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 3 August 1912

## PALM ISLAND

Nereides came over the sea  
On white foaming billows they rode;  
They came in my grotto to me  
To lift and to lighten my load.

"Why sit you so sad by the sea  
In grottos of coral?" said they.  
"The ocean is boundless and free,  
Come surge in the surf and the spray.

Where the albatross soar each day  
With keen eye for food in the deep  
We plunge with the porpoise play  
And trysts with each other we keep.

"Near isles of hibiscus and palm,  
Where mortals but seldom are seen,  
We slumber in tropical calm  
Afloat on the wavelets serene.

"Come, join in our joyance to-day,  
And leave mirthless sorrow alone;  
Laugh merrily-laugh and be gay,  
Let none but the sea-dragons moan."

Ah. Perjured the love that was mine--  
The love that seems constant and true  
She transferred with kisses divine  
From old love's caprice to the new.

I came to Palm Island to die,  
But dreamt in my grotto at night  
A nereid approached with a sigh  
And whispered, Love's troth will come right.

Enchanting the touch on my brow.  
Cool, casting a spell o'er mine eyes,  
A silver voice woos with me now  
Dispersing the shadows and sighs.

Thus I dreamed by the ambient sea,  
And lay on Palm Island alone,  
In an Eden of foliage free  
From sorrow and sadness and moan.

The morrow's tempestuous wind  
Displaced the soft temperate breeze  
From slumber I wakened to find  
A Typhon's typhoon on the seas.

The white-crested furious foam  
Swirled, spinning the sea spray on high,  
Submerging my coralline home,  
wild waves raced with weird, woeful cry.

The nymphs disappeared in the sea,  
And flotsam came floating ashore  
With weds intermixed I could see  
The half of a ship's cabin door.

And out near the reef on the bar  
A sea-nymph was fighting for life  
With wave and with tempest at war,  
Engulphed, she was ending the strife.

Then over each whirlpool and rock  
In haste to the rescue I went,  
Though mad foaming seas seems to mock  
When strength in the effort was spent.

On the shelly beach safely she lies,  
Wild wailing winds trouble no more;  
Exhausted am I, and her eyes  
Regard not the sea nor the shore.

When stern sable shadows of night  
Crept over crag, cranny, and wave.  
I strove hard with Death for the right  
To save a sweet nymph from the grave.

And In ! no fond nereid was here.  
Blue eyes of the past gazed on me--  
A fair face to memory dear  
Had come from the sad surging sea.

To shelter I carried my love.  
On pink and white shells made her bed,  
To soft silken leaves from the grove  
I lifted and pillowed her head.

When silver stars faded away  
And bright rays of Phoebus had come  
I know that the love once astray  
Had found on Palm Island its home.

## PRINCE CHARMING

Youthful maidenhood, happy in your bow'rs  
Of Magnolias, roses red, and bays  
Whilst trifling Eros with your heartstrings plays,  
Suggesting thoughts of love amid the flow'rs  
Rearing a standard of ideal days  
To come the days in which Prince Charming tow'rs  
Commanding and engrossing all your hours,  
As at your feet he wealth and honor lays

A maiden once with lustrous dreamy eyes  
A warrior met returning from the fight,  
Whose noble norm seemed goodly in her sight  
But something lacking in his converse lies,  
Nor deemed she all his murd'rous deeds were right  
Handsome he was, yet love within her cries;  
"No prince stands here to make thy Paradise  
Though much esteemed in way a valiant knight!"

Then with many a grace book in his keep,  
A scholar stayed, to see if beauty deigned  
To note the man whose eloquence had reign'd  
In universities, profound and deep.  
And though this comely man had wisdom gain'd  
Yet with the fair no laurels could he reap:  
His tones lacked passion, and conduced to sleep –  
Him she dismissed although to love she fein'd

A noble did then to her hand aspire,  
And of his ancestry made great display –  
"surely", though he, "she cannot shy me nay!"  
He urged his suit with confidence and fire  
But his repute, inconstant, barred the way.  
Although admired, the maid bid him retire  
(with covert glances at his rich attire),  
in kindly accents at the close of day.

Another tempter that the maid may know  
Appears upon the scene in motor new:  
A man possessed of wealth, who would renew  
His long-lost youth, with aid of Cupid's bow.  
With richest gifts the maid would he indue.  
But true love absent, she her worth did show.  
And sorrowfully cast her eyes below  
His eager glance, and from side withdraw.

He came – a shepherd from the hills above,  
Strong in happy youth her nerves a calming  
With vesper song – and his eyes disarming  
Her of fear, with embarrassment she strove.  
Carelessly her heart-throbs grew alarming  
Then, yielding-as to eagle doth the dove  
She found at last the chalice of pure love  
Thus the advent of the real Prince Charming.

## RED ROSES

Oh, maiden fair, some soft light in thine eyes  
Has drown my soul unconsciously to thee,  
To then alone my orisons arise  
Grant me sweet possession of them only.

Upon thy golden tresses lies the sheen  
In shifting sunlight bewild'ring to me,  
In summer dreams translated I have been,  
In love's resplendent heav'n have I clasped thee.

Thine eyes were like the hazel berry brown,  
Like guelder-rose thy bosom white as snow.  
What nights of ecstasy love's bliss might crown  
If thy sweet red-rose lips my lips would know.

The past held no pale angel of desire.  
No bitter-sweet to mingle in my dreams.  
The paradise of passion could not tire.  
Whilst in thine eyes the happy love-light gleams.

I send thee blushing roses crimson red  
(No fortune's yellow nephetes nor bride)  
Ah, place them in a bowl beside thy bed,  
And dream, oh love, that I am by thy side.



*Early April 1916 – (back) Jeanie, Olive Hughes (Chatfield), Vyvyan, Walter (seated) and Beatrix de Crespigny (Hughes); (front) Nancy and Geoffrey de Crespigny*

## **SPECIALISE**

If you want to succeed in the business of life  
You must specialise.

If amongst the young ladies you're seeking a wife,  
You must specialise.

Whether trading or quirting keep one prize in view;  
Banish fear of all obstacles, many or few;  
Falter not in your purpose, one object pursue--  
You must specialise.

Have you ever observed the routine of the bee?  
He can specialise.

In this bright chalice petals of flower or tree,  
He can specialise.

All-absorbed in his work to one end he will strive,  
From sunrise to sunset he will search and contrive,  
For his hub of the universe lies in his hive—  
He can specialise.

Now, Dame Fortune will help you to lay up a store  
If you specialise.

She might unexpectedly knock at your door  
If you specialise.

Ignore the dark clouds, and your path will be sunny,  
Like bees, the enthusiast, searching for honey,  
Make perfect your art and your art will make money  
If you specialise.

### St Marnock's<sup>9</sup>

O bare was the plain when St. Marnock's  
came over  
To establish his home in the wilds of  
the west;  
Storm-swept, till plantations wrought  
generous cover,  
Where his pastoral flocks could find  
shelter and rest.  
Now verdant the lawn, and the sweet  
scented flower  
There radiantly blooms in each earth  
crested bed.  
And festoons of the jasmine twine a  
scent-bower  
On the homestead verandah when  
winter hath fled.

Where kangaroos, foxes, and hares used  
to wander,  
And the harsh cockatoo would awaken  
the plane,  
Cootamundra's gold wattle blossoms now  
squander,  
And the paddock's rich soil yields  
abundance of grain.  
In earlier stages of colonisation,  
Over sheep-scattered areas would  
Corydon roam,  
A-dreaming, perhaps, of a civilisation,  
when the wild western plains would  
win many a home.

May seasons prove kindly to fruit-tree  
and flower,  
May a bountiful harvest to industry  
yield;  
May Boreas never deny the soft shower  
To renew the young growth in the  
garden and field.  
St. Marnock's we'll crown with a garland  
of roses,  
And a cup to his health his old com-  
rades will fill;  
May he learn what amaranth's secret  
discloses,  
And welcome the friend of the wand-  
erer still.

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<sup>9</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 3 August 1912

### THE BONNIE LITTLE LADY<sup>10</sup>

Where golden willows weave their bowers  
She tends the sweetest garden flowers  
By crystal spring in happy hours  
The bonnie little lady.

The swans glide o'er the still lagoon,  
The marsh-fowl flit and drive and croon,  
But watch in sanctuary at noon  
The bonny little lady.

The lowly bless her on life's way,  
Embroid'ring clouds with silv'ry ray,  
And many a luckless wight will say,  
"The bonnie little lady".

Aurora views the sunbeam fare  
At early morn with blossoms fair,  
And waits her blessing to her there—  
The bonnie little lady.



*Walter's eldest child, Trixie, later Lady Beatrix de Crespigny (1884 - 1943)*

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<sup>10</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 9 August 1912

## The Bush Fire<sup>11</sup>

The soft sheep are sleeping,  
Still unconscious of danger in woodland  
And plain;  
The hot winds are reaping  
Sable harvests from soil long untouched by  
The rain,

The she-oaks are sighing,  
As the furious fiend of the forest  
Sweeps on;  
Night ravens are flying  
Till the pastoral plain in the distance  
Is won.

The pale moon in gladness  
Hath arisen and peers o'er the brow of  
The hill;  
But midsummer madness,  
In the wind and the flame, her night vigil  
Doth fill.

The bright stars are twinkling,  
Though their glory is hid by the swirl of  
The smoke;  
The cow-bells were tinkling,  
When the slumbering herds to night danger  
Awoke.

The homestead is failing--  
Swift and fierce in the furnace the beaters  
Now face.  
From death throes appalling  
The night riders and stockmen together  
Must race.

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<sup>11</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem "1915"

## THE CANADIAN<sup>12</sup>

Canadian he was born and bred  
My mate at Woolparinga shed  
Out in the Riverina  
When we in wooden bunks would lie,  
The last smoke finished with a sigh,  
He oft would speak of days gone by  
And work in Life's arena.

Proving his little farm unkind,  
He came across the seas to find  
If life were still a failure,  
And, drifting, with the rest inland,  
He found a post as station hand,  
For muscles taut were in demand  
On sheep runs in Australia.

He told me of Canadian life,  
Of children and a winsome wife,  
Of blizzards in December,  
How mortgages uncanceled still  
His cup of care to brim would fill;  
How his good wife urged with a will  
To go and bairns remember.

At Woolparinga in the spring  
The shearing goes in clip and swing,  
With "ringer" and with "drummer;"  
And in the hit a motley throng  
At night would smoke or heave a song,  
Spin many a yarn in language strong,  
In atmosphere like summer.

One morning, in the usual way,  
We started work at break o'day;  
I the burrows to plunder.  
My mate strides off to yonder wood  
The shearing engine needed food.  
His shoulder bears his axes good  
To hew the trees asunder.

For wooded paddocks far away  
I take the poison cart to-day  
To keep the rabbits under;  
And oft across the arid plain  
My thoughts turned from the wished-for rain  
To my mate's bairns beyond the main;  
His ill-luck made me wonder.

The lengthened shadows on the ground  
Bestired me to be homeward bound  
And stall my horse, "The Drover"  
"The cut out" now was drawing near;  
Few woolly sheep were left to shear

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<sup>12</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 28 June 1912

Shearers and "rousies" soon would clear,  
And shearing time be over.  
At tea the Riverina talk  
And ghastly use of knife and fork  
Would make a lady shudder  
The synonym for "pass the bread"  
Is "hand me down the strike-me-dead-"  
And sauce is "cart and horse" instead--  
They sail without a rudder.

The squatter comes upon the scene  
"tarrable language. And obscene."  
We hear the old man mutter.  
"An accident, had happened, men,  
Where Yerong Creek runs through the glen.  
Quickly, finish your meal, and then  
Bring down with you a shutter."

I rise abruptly from my seat;  
My pulses ran to fever heat,  
For I missed Canadian Jim.  
With lantern in the starry night,  
We came upon a gruesome sight;  
Under a tree, by flickering light,  
I quickly recognised him,

Unnoticed in its headlong course,  
A branch had struck with deadly force--  
His axe lay in the clover.  
Poor broken head beneath the bough,  
For wife and bairns untroubled now  
But many a man there made a vow  
He would assist the rover.

And when, next day, the hat passed round  
The cook's "offsider" gave a pound  
Which shearers soon augmented,  
Bush hearts are rough, but for a mate  
That no man in his soul could hate  
Gave lovingly – and praised to late  
Canadian Jim lamented.

## THE FORESTER

At the break of day he's off and away  
To forest and woodland green,  
Where the wattles lie and the she-oaks sigh  
The forester rides serene.

In the rosy light of the morning bright  
His smoke clouds drift to the rear  
For his pipe and steed are his friends indeed  
By hillside or lowland mere.

Where the kangaroo and the black cockatoo  
And the lyre birds congregate  
He loosens his pack on the mountain track  
For a while to meditate.

And he gazes round and lists for the sound  
Of the smuggle woodsman's axe,  
Where the fern trees rise he will strain his eyes  
O'er gullies and forest tracks.

And plantations fair are under his care  
Wherever the wattle grows.  
He must supervise where young timber lies  
And capture the forest foes.

Though not free from strife, the forester's life  
At times is a golden dream;  
No cares can he trace on his sunburnt face  
When mirrored in tranquil stream.

In fancy he sees the sweet Dryadee  
With ferns and odourless flow'rs,  
And they weave a spell by the small blue-bell  
When he dreams in mia-mia bow'rs.

Through the storm he will fight his way home at night,  
When Stygian-darkness appals,  
When the thunders crash, and the vivid flash  
Lights ravines and waterfalls.

But in twilight hush of Australian bush,  
Through midsummer woods he'll speed  
On his homeward track, whilst the whip-bird's crack  
Oft startles his faithful steed.

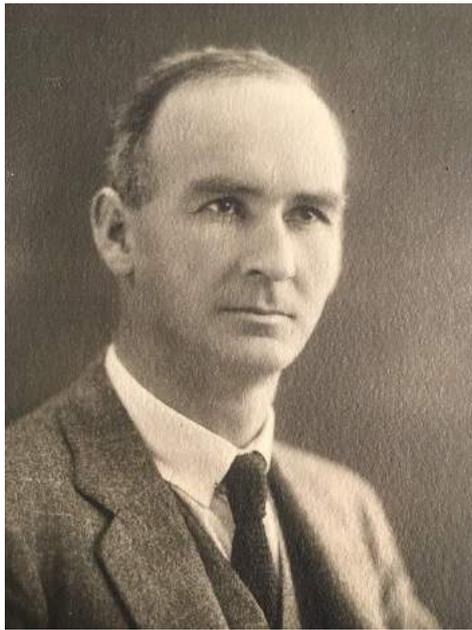
In sunshine or rain, on mount or champaign  
Where south winds cut like a knife,  
He sings to himself like some mountain elf,  
"Hurrah ! for the forester's life"

## THE KOOKABURRA

I heard him laugh in the tall gum tree,  
And I with my love a-love-making,  
Where shady leaves, shelters her and me  
Red lips that heralded ecstasy  
Love's kisses were tasting and talking.

"Jack" said she, "did you hear the  
jackass?  
He laughs at our billing and cooing."  
"Ha a a oo oo oo!" came through the mountain pass,  
As if to answer my sweetheart-lass.  
"We joy-birds aloft are a-wooing."

Many a bush-note is sweet to hear,  
And the carol of magpies in strife,  
But birds that deride us all the year  
Teach the whole world with a chuckling jeer  
To go laughing and singing through life.



*Walter's second child, Reginald Hawkins  
Hughes (1886 - 1971)*

### THE OLD SWING<sup>13</sup>

The ropes of the swing are old and worn,  
The posts are in decay;  
But the children who swung with laugh and song,  
And would ask for another the whole day long,  
Oh, where, oh, where are they?

Their footsteps track is covered with grass,  
And the swing hands silent and still;  
But the pleasure it plays in forgotten days,  
When into a winter's fire they gaze,  
Will come back with many a thrill.

Now the children have gone beyond the spring,  
And the world has woven each plan;  
But in wealth or in thralldom howe'er they sing,  
No happiness equals the song of the swing-  
"Be happy in youth while you can".



*Walter's third child, Vyvyan Westbury Hughes  
(1886 - 1916)*

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<sup>13</sup> A handwritten note by EWH dates this poem 28 May 1912

## THE ROSE OF SPRING<sup>14</sup>

The Spring is young and the Rose is queen,  
Colours of ruby and gold are seen  
Where the sunbeams shower a brilliant sheen  
On the beautiful rose of Spring.

In royal splendour the petals glow,  
Wafting their incense when zephyrs blow  
O'er imperial purple and globes of snow  
Like perfume of early morning.

O, sway, ye lilies so pearly white,  
Ye silver trumpet and tigers bright,  
And render your homage in soft sunlight  
To unconscious beauty dawning.

Long, long ago the Lord Basil caught  
A Christmas rose by its stem, and brought  
To the fairest lily of Elsincourt  
For her snowy breast's adorning.

The rose was worn by the lily fair,  
But vain and gay in the ball-room's glare  
Presented the rose to his rival there,  
Love's Queen of the Garden scorning

A twelve-month after the maid was wed,  
And Basil the Brave to war had fled;  
The rose lay withered, the lily lay dead—  
To her ancient race a warning.

Basil forgave, and never was wed,  
But in Spring when near the roses' bed,  
He would raise to his lips a blossom red  
Of the beautiful rose of Spring.

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<sup>14</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 13 July 1912

## THE TITANIC'S BAND

### IN MEMORIAM

The following verses have been forwarded to "The Miner" by the author, who writes—"*I desire to dedicate the verses to the Miners of Broken Hill, as they are the only people who have signified their intention of erecting a memorial to the heroic 'Titanic's band'.*" The verses might well be inscribed on the memorial rotunda that is to be erected, on the initiative of the A.M.A. Band.<sup>15</sup>

### THE SCROLL OF FAME

#### (In Memory of the Titanic's Bandsmen)

Where pinnacles of frosted ice  
And submerged crystal isles entice  
    To watery grave,  
The greyhounds of the sea pursue  
    The phantom Record for a few  
    Short hours to save!

The mammoth liner on the deep,  
    Predestined for untimely leap  
    To depths below,  
Embarked a true musicians' crew  
To cheer the ship when cold winds blew  
    From ice and snow.

Enveloped in a misty sea  
She ploughs the main right merrily,  
    And hurries on;  
Shadowy phantoms drifting slow,  
With rugged outlines capped with snow  
    Have come and gone.

One frosty eve the sun declined,  
    Leaving nebulous mists behind  
    O'er sobbing seas;  
Danger discarding, music bright  
Ushers in Death's darkening night  
    With melodies.

Swift and sudden came the shock  
    Of awful crunch on craggy rock  
    Or berg of ice;  
For some asleep and some on deck,  
It was not far from hopeless wreck  
    To Paradise!

Aboard the ship once full of joys  
Stern shouts are heard and ribald noise.  
    Life! Life! They ask.  
The British scutcheon sailors shield,  
Where strength to weakness will not yield.  
    Oh! Righteous task.

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<sup>15</sup> This poem was dated 22 May 1912. *The Titanic* sunk on the night of 14 – 15 April 1912.

"The woman first and helpless child",  
The captain shouts in accents wild  
To those below.  
The boats sheer off the vessel's side;  
Farewell to mother, sister, bride,  
For weal or woe.

Past midnight, and the wind is bleak.  
The lifebelts, boats, and rafts men seek,  
Not so the Band.  
For steadfastly they play their best,  
In harmony to cheer the rest,  
As if on land.

On Death's approach they firmly stay,  
And many a lively air they play;  
Their nerve still strong.  
Though upward icy waters creep,  
They still rewardless vigil keep  
A noble throng.

The master spake—his sight was dim—  
"Commence at once our favorite hymn,  
'Nearer to Thee'".  
And ere the final bar was played,  
To ivory gates their souls had strayed  
Nearer to Thee.

The night-bird pauses on the wing,  
As if in act of listening  
To some sweet note;  
But when the lights depart below,  
Affrighted flies with cries of woe  
O'er vanished boat.

'Twas on the broad Atlantic Sea,  
For discipline and bravery  
They made their stand.  
Inscribed upon the scroll of Fame  
In golden letters read the name,  
"Titanic's Band"

## THE WEALTH KING

My pen is struck dumb for the want of a theme,  
Then may Dives strike fire to my fingers,  
For kings now acknowledge that wealth is supreme,  
And blue blood is merely the crème de la crème,  
Where the love of antiquity lingers.

Sing high for the Wealth-King (and parasites all),  
Though he ever publicity gnashes.  
His vot'ries affirm you must come at his call,  
No matter how coarse and how long he may bawl,  
Or you'll grovel in death-wreaking ashes.

The pure and the food have no chances at all,  
Sure with Satan he's made an alliance;  
For who can withstand when he starts to enthral?  
The Corners and Combines all bow to his call,  
Faith, you cannot set wealth at defiance.

O bitter as gall is the scourge of the pen,  
Though with Wealth-King with important scorning  
In seeming security thinks that all men  
Have their price in the city, mountain, or glen--  
Whilst the grave for that Wealth-King is yawning.



*Walter's youngest child, Cedric (1893 - 1953)*

### THREE THOUGHTS<sup>16</sup>

Good is gift received in time of stress,  
Easing the sorrow of some stricken soul;  
Blissful the words relieving bitterness.  
Where all seems list and fate beyond control.

Better the man who betters thus his mind,  
For each good deed sweet mem'ry will repay;  
Vast happiness in simply being kind  
Is here, within his reach, from day to day.

Best is the nation free from envy's greed,  
Where all are working for one common good,  
Neither rich to steal from, nor poor to feed,  
Where man by man at last is understood.



*Jeanie Hughes in 1910, aged 48*

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<sup>16</sup> A note by Leslie Henderson dates this poem 25 September 1912

## TO THE BOYS IN KHAKI

Australia, rouse ye! Spread the map  
and consider the ways of defence.  
We must get beyond all nebulous plans,  
and look to many years hence.  
The guard and to strengthen our wide  
seaboard is not the work of a day;  
'Tis little by little, and that well done,  
at every cape and bay.

And the problem we have before us is  
defence of this long coast-line,  
From the far North Cape to the South-  
ern Isle – that problem is yours and mine.  
Loyalty to Britain – love of our land - is  
the bed rock from which we start.  
Patriots all, be true to this thought, and  
our Union no foe can part.

The knight of the Crescent fights, we  
know, in a blind fanatical way  
In the Holy Wars, with the fervent hope  
of reaching Heaven some day.  
Though he chooses for self the thorny  
half to attain his heart's desire  
He teaches the world that one great  
thought can defy both water and fire.

Protect our beloved Australia then – the  
land that so peacefully lies  
Under the Cross five-starred in the hea-  
vens, and under the bright blue skies  
And strive to assist with a nautical force  
the Power that rules the sea,  
Win glory for home and the British  
Isles, the land of our ancestry.

As we study the map again and again,  
the adage makes us think  
Of how the strength of a chain as a  
whole depends on its weakest link.  
Then, look north, where Orient powers  
Survey us with envious eyes;  
Our land is a permanent bait to these,  
and that's where the dangers lies.

How to defend the northern most shore is  
a problem for one and all;  
Impregnable forts and ships are re-  
quired if these foes should make a call.  
Though the British Lion can see afar  
with vigilant flashing eye.  
An outpost of Britain lie here and  
there from the Indies to Shanghai.

It has been said that pastoralists should  
be ever planting a tree,  
So should we ever be building a ship to  
protect our rights at sea.  
"Twere a Herculean task to save this  
land with a handful of men,  
Yet heroic bravery counts for much,

and one often equals ten.

Would Australians ever suffer to live un-  
der some servile yoke  
Would the taunt of Asiatics, nor revenge  
nor resistance evoke?  
Perish the thought? Yet, trouble comes  
unless shoulder to shoulder we stand  
To fight for our King and Australia  
our glorious Southern land.

Yes, watch the Northern nations with  
Zeal, for of late they've proved quick to learn.  
And ever the thirst for pow'r and spot  
in the hearts of their rulers burn  
The passive resister of some years back  
has found his manhood at last;  
The Occident finds that the Orient, now  
discards the sleepy past.

With dockyards and arsenals full of life  
and busy both day and night –  
The martial spirit has wakened at last,  
and the Pagan powers will fight.  
Aye I and in a valiant manner, too, with  
stratagems subtle we know.

As the Bear of the North found to his  
cost same very few years ago  
"Tis well for our Parliament here to  
watch this change in the East always,  
Or foes may knock at the Northern gate  
and announce they have come to stay.

Though the Pagan and Christian lands  
just now are allies, both staunch and true,  
Yet times there be when diplomacy fails  
and reasons for war will brew.  
On the Eastern shores of this continent,  
where the South Pacific plays,  
Lies the harbor of Sydney, soft and fair  
which even our does will praise.

Yes, praise, and desire with a covetous  
glean bright in their warlike eyes.  
Some day they'll reckon it worth the risk  
of making a bid for the prize.  
Be then prepares, and consider right  
well the part we're compelled to play,  
Encourage the young to be cadets in the regiments of the day.

Compulsory bind on ev'ry man through  
the length and breadth of the land  
To train for a terin, however short, with  
the forces we have at hand.  
Brave achievement we then may expect  
on the land and each harbor bar,  
and our love sad loyalty will blend in one bright morning guiding star,  
Part of an Empire whose battleships now  
cruise close to every shore –  
Fight ye, then, for our King and Coun-  
try as our warriors of yore.

### WHEN MY SHIP COMES IN

She'll sail across the harbor bar  
Her anchorage to win,  
And bring me gold from lands afar –  
When my ship comes in.

She's been where stormy petrels fly  
Amid the tempest's din;  
But it will be a summer sky –  
When my ship comes in.

Still when in peril near the rocks,  
My faith to her I'll pin  
And Jean shall have some bonnie frocks –  
When my ship comes in.

How oft at night I lie awake,  
When all is snug within,  
And dream of many a gift I'll make –  
When my ship comes in.

Whilst Hope is aye within my call,  
To doubt would be a sin,  
And I shall build a marble hall –  
When my ship comes in.



*Sketch of Walter by an unknown artist (possibly a self-portrait) on the "Hygeia". The "Hygeia" operated as the Queenscliff-Sorrento ferry between 1890 and 1931.*

## ZEPHYRS<sup>17</sup>

"O, pink heath, white heath,"  
The rose doth whisper low,  
"come into our garden fair,  
Survey the blossoms rich and rare,  
Where perfumed petals grow.

Summer zephyrs say,  
Crimson and saffron clouds.  
Blended in a sunset bright,  
Bringing the wild-heath pink to light,  
But left her mate in shrouds.

Forest flowers fade  
When shadowed by the trees,  
Uncultivated lying.  
For sweet admiration sighing--  
Thus saith the zephyr breeze."

"O, red rose, gold rose,  
And bridal rose of snow,  
Incense in your garden fair.  
Like some cathedral's stifling air,  
Would lay our flowers low.

Colours pink and white,  
Zephyrus did unfold,  
Basking in the sunlight haze,  
When the wanderer stoops to gaze  
His rapture is untold.

Hemmed in and fenced in,  
Ye please my lady fair.  
Golden praise we never lack  
From those who take the mountain track  
Australia's pride we share."

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<sup>17</sup> A handwritten note by EWH dates this poem 29 March 1912

## BRADLEY'S FOLLY<sup>18</sup>

I was a Bank accountant in those days. Bradley was an independent man, possessor of an aristocratic-looking gig and a handsome bay horse. Being honoured with his friendship, I was occasionally invited to accompany him on excursions, along the two-chain roads, or through bush tracks, to lonely homesteads, where we would enjoy a "pitch" with the farmers, and possibly a glass of fresh, pure milk before leaving.

One summer afternoon, on leaving the Bank, I was accosted by Bradley, who was enjoying the aroma of a Havana. He suggested, if I were not particularly busy that we might go for a drive. I consented, and we started off. When a mile or two along the road we agreed to take the side track for Benson's farm. Speeding along at a brisk pace, amid the scent of wattle bloom and gum trees, I was keenly enjoying the drive, when my companion remarked: "What a beautifully green open space that is, on the left! I think I'll turn in there, and give the horse a feed". Bradley always showed consideration for animals. Here was an allotment, unfenced and partly cleared, stumps of trees in all directions standing as evidence of the axeman's labour. Bradley tossed the reins to me, and jumped out. I afterwards regretted not having paid sufficient attention to his movements, for my mind was occupied with the beauty of the distant hills. Suddenly the horse sprang forward, knocking Bradley aside, and started off at a furious gallop. My self-possession deserted me. I hauled at the reins, but unavailingly, as the animal was altogether beyond control. As we swiftly raced amongst the stumps and fallen timber, I barely noted that the winkers were displaced and that the bit was out of his mouth; then – darkness!

How long I lay beside the stump I can only conjecture. When I recovered consciousness my vision was impaired by fantastic stars, which danced to and fro like will-o-the-wisps. The object that first arrested my attention was Bradley's horse. He had apparently made a complete circuit of the tree stumps, discarding the impedimenta of the gig at intervals, and was now coming at full gallop for the spot on which I lay. I seized the whip, which was lying near me, and lashed out at the brute. This had the effect of making him swerve and bolt into the bush.

Bradley stared in amazement at me as I staggered towards him. "Thank God, you're all right! He exclaimed. "It's a miracle how you escaped that stump when you shot out of the gig."

"What on earth did you do to the bridle?" I managed to gasp.

"When," he replied, relieved but crest-fallen, "I took the bit out because the grass looked inviting, and the winkers slipped down. Awfully stupid of me, I know."

Bradley's woe-begone expression softened me. He appeared to realise that his act had not only resulted in the loss of his gig, but had nearly cost the life of his friend.

"Come," said he, "we'll walk to Benson's farm – it isn't far – and get some brandy." Stiff, sore, and half dazed, I ultimately reached the farm, with Bradley's aid. We met Benson on the threshold. Matters were speedily explained to the old farmer, who was most anxious to render us assistance. Fortunately, I had no bones broken.

Bradley arranged with Benson to have the horse recovered and the debris of the gig brought into the township. We returned in the farmer's spring-cart, driven by Benson's son, whose facetious remarks fell unheeded.

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<sup>18</sup> This short story appeared in the *Red Funnel* on 1 September 1907. The *Red Funnel* was a magazine published monthly by the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand Ltd. Walter received a payment of one pound one shilling.

For some considerable time after this unpleasant adventure I was not keen on accompanying Bradley when he decided to take the air in a gig.

**End of story....**

Help somebody worse off than yourself, and you will find that you are better off than you fancied.

What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to the soul.

When people grow old they are prone to live in the past. Hence it behoves all persons to see to it that they have a pleasant and agreeable past in which to live.

Think naught a trifle, though it small appear;  
Small sands the mountain, moments made the year,  
And trifles life.