

By Henry Lawson
As sung by Mike Kennedy, 10/27/12

The Cattle-Dog's Death

Am Em
The Plains were bare on the homeward route,
C G
And the march was heavy on man and brute;
Am Em
And the Spirit of Drought was all on the land,
Em C G Am
And the white heat danced on the glowing sand.
C G
The best of our cattle-dogs lagged at last,
Am C G Am
His strength gave out as the plains were passed;
C G
And our hearts grew sad as he crept and laid,
Am C G Am
His languid limbs in the nearby shade.

Am—Em—C—G—Am—Em—C—G—Am

He'd saved our lives in years gone by,
When no one dreamed of the dangers nigh;
When the treacherous blacks in the darkness crept,
On the silent camp where the drovers slept.
"The dog is dying" the stockman said,
As he knelt and lifted his shaggy head;
"It's a long day's march ere the run is near,
And he's dying fast; shall we leave him here?"

But the Super said, "There's an answer there!"
And he lifted a tuft of the dog's grey hair;
And, strangely vivid, each man decried
The old spear-mark on his shaggy hide.
We laid a "bluey" and coat across,
The camp pack of the lightest horse;
And though we parched in the heat that fags,
We gave him the last of our water-bags.

The Super's daughter we knew would chide
If we left him on the desert wide;
So we brought him home o'er the burning sand
For a parting stroke from her small white hand.
But long ere the station was seen ahead,
His pain was o'er, the dog was dead
And the folks all knew from our look of gloom
'Twas a comrade's corpse we carried home.