

THE BALLAD OF THE THREE SCIENTISTS AT WALLABADAR

The Whittens to were gathering from near and far
spend the week-end at Wallabadah
The place where their forebears story began
but later has spread to a far scattered clan.

From far distant Maine came American Maurice
accompanying him was long suffering Doris.
She's met new in-laws in groups and in pairs
but is she convinced it was worth all those fares?

Blackbearded Max from C S I R O
had travelled from Canberra with fair headed Jo
We've not known them long, because don't you see,
his gallant grandpa has married an R C

Beth and Wes Came from Hobart, he's W K
who researched lab mice in Maine, but came home to stay.
They admired the stock and the long contour ditches
and stockyards constructed with strong Queensland twitches.

One of the females from the Class '35
is now hoary-headed, but still much alive
Fred Jones and wife Beryl, whose golf hat was snappy,
both did their best to keep the group happy.

The man on the spot, who hadn't much choice, was our cousin Royce
Two sisters appeared by train from the coast
to deal with a chicken and tender lamb roast.

They made sandwiches in sandwiches in plentiful store
scones, pikelets fruit cake and cookies galore
While Joan had the brainwave to bring Irish tea
Beryl's dad's ancient thermos was something to see

Engraved on one side was the date 1 9 one two
as a gift from young Alf when their marriage was new.
We laughed and we chatted and read letters again, --
from Albert to Fred in the thirties from Maine

A group disappeared to find Henry's old shack
but ploughing the field had distributed the stack
of stones from the fireplace built long ago;

Some patches of flag lilies continue to show
where Henry had sheltered rom wind and from storm
before moving to Gowrie his family to form.

The Wilsons, though busy as busy could be,
left open their house for the Whittens to see
the home where their forebears with struggle and toil
had wrested a living from hard stoney soil
The back-breaking labour with plough and with axe
which gave little chance to rest or relax.

The young lads were shepherds before fences were made,
When hawks and wild foxes were apt to invade.
The daughters were and much overworked
but cooking , scrubbing and laundry couldn't be shirked.

Charlotte, our grandma from strong Irish stock
rode to church side-saddle never late by the clock
On another occasion, when concerned about Harry
she rode thirty five miles leaving no time to tarry.

The tall trees were felled and the logs split and sawn,
to build a rough house as their children were born.
Later a school house for the lessons in store
to read, reckon and write, and at least know the law.

Doris married an orphan but lo and behold
the relations have swelled about one hundred fold;
but their friendships were warm and their welcome sincere:
COME BACK to Australia, some other year.

By a ROUGH RHYMER