

**Henry Lawson**



*My Army, O,  
My Army! and  
Other Songs*

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# **My Army, O, My Army! and Other Songs**



Published by Good Press, 2022

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EAN 4066338083272

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THE END

My army, O, my army! The time I dreamed of comes!  
I want to see your colours; I want to hear your drums!  
I heard them in my boyhood when all men's hearts seemed  
cold;

I heard them as a Young Man—and I am growing old!  
My army, O, my army! The signs are manifold!

My army, O, my army! My army and my Queen!  
I used to sing your battle-songs when I was seventeen!  
They came to me from ages, they came from far and near;  
They came to me from Paris, they came to me from Here!—  
They came when I was marching with the Army of the Rear.

My Queen's dark eyes were flashing (oh, she was  
younger then!);

My Queen's Red Cap was redder than the reddest blood of  
men!

My Queen marched like an Amazon, with anger manifest—  
Her dark hair darkly matted from a knifegash in her breast  
(For blood will flow where milk will not—her sisters knew the  
rest).

My legions ne'er were listed, they had no need to be;  
My army ne'er was trained in arms—'twas trained in misery!  
It took long years to mould it, but war could never drown  
The shuffling of my army's feet in the hunger-haunted town  
—

*A little child was murdered, and so Tyranny went down.*

My army kept no order, my army kept no time;  
My army dug no trenches, yet died in dust and slime;  
Its troops were fiercely ignorant, as to the manner born;  
Its clothes were rags and tatters, or patches worn and torn—  
Ah, me! It wore a uniform that I have often worn!

The faces of my army were ghastly as the dead;  
My army's cause was Hunger, my army's cry was "Bread!"  
It called on God and Mary and Christ of Nazareth;  
It cried to kings and courtesans that fainted at its breath—  
Its women beat their poor, flat breasts where babes had  
starved to death.

.....

My army! My army—I hear the sound of drums  
Above the roar of battles—and, lo! my army comes!  
Nor creed of man may stay it—nor war, nor nation's law—  
The pikes go through the firing-lines as pitchforks go  
through straw—  
Like pitchforks through the litter, while empires stand in  
awe.

# Song of the Dardanelles

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The wireless tells and the cable tells  
How our boys behaved by the Dardanelles.  
Some thought in their hearts "Will our boys make good?"  
We knew them of old and we knew they would!  
Knew they would—  
Knew they would;  
We were mates of old and we knew they would.

They laughed and they larked and they loved likewise,  
For blood is warm under Southern skies;  
They knew not Pharoah ('tis understood),  
And they got into scrapes, as we knew they would.  
Knew they would—  
Knew they would;  
And they got into scrapes, as we knew they would.

They chafed in the dust of an old dead land  
At the long months' drill in the scorching sand;  
But they knew in their hearts it was for their good,  
And they saw it through as we knew they would.  
Knew they would—  
Knew they would;  
And they saw it through as we knew they would.

The Coo-ee called through the Mena Camp,  
And an army roared like the Ocean's tramp  
On a gale-swept beach in her wildest mood,  
Till the Pyramids shook as we knew they would.  
Knew they would—

Knew they would.

(And the Sphinx woke up as we knew she would.)

They were shipped like sheep when the dawn was grey;

(But their officers knew that no lambs were they).

They squatted and perched where'er they could,

And they "blanky-ed" for joy as we knew they would.

Knew they would—

Knew they would;

They "blanky-ed" for joy as we knew they would.

The sea was hell and the shore was hell,

With mine, entanglement, shrapnel and shell,

But they stormed the heights as Australians should,

And they fought and they died as we knew they would.

Knew they would—

Knew they would;

They fought and they died as we knew they would.

From the southern hills and the city lanes,

From the sandwaste lone and the Blacksoil Plains;

The youngest and strongest of England's brood!—

They'll win for the South as we knew they would.

Knew they would—

Knew they would;

They'll win for the South as we knew they would.