

Classic Poetry Series

**William Thomas Goodge**  
**- poems -**

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## William Thomas Goodge(1862 - 1909)

William Thomas Goodge was born in London in 1862, the son of a Law Courts clerk. and arrived in Sydney in 1882 after working his passage aboard the ship 'The Cathay' as a steward. His first job on his arrival in Sydney was with one of Cobb & Co's properties - Windagee Station in Western New South Wales.

He roamed around outback New South Wales for twelve years before settling into life as a began to contribute verses to the Dubbo Express and later was offered a full-time job as a reporter and writer of verse for the Lithgow Mercury. For a time he was Editor of the Orange Leader while contributing to the now famous Bulletin. For the nine years prior to his death he wrote a weekly piece for the Sydney Truth concerning the actions of an imaginary drinking group, the Gimcrack Club. During his lifetime he published only one collection of poems: Hits! Skits! and Jingles! in 1899. Norman Lindsay considered him one of Australia's best writers of light verse.

A prolific and highly respected writer, W.T. Goodge died suddenly in Sydney in 1909 aged forty seven.

# A Bad Break

The preacher quoted, and the cranks  
Among his congregation smiled,  
"How sharper than a serpent's thanks  
It is to have a toothless child."

He saw he erred, his eye grew wild,  
He frowned upon the mirthful ranks:  
"How toothless than a serpent's child  
It is to have a sharper's thanks!"

William Thomas Goodge

# A Matter Of Knack

Jock M'Pherson was a person who was boastful in conversin',  
But respectable and ponderous and dignified withal!  
Con M'Carty was a party who was something of a smarty,  
And beside the big M'Pherson looked particularly small;  
But Cornelius M'Carty, he was artful, after all!

When Cornelius M'Carty thought M'Pherson was his dart, he  
Made a wager he could carry him a mile along the track;  
Which, considering M'Pherson was a very weighty person,  
Was a risky undertaking for M'Carty's little back.  
But Cornelius protested it depended on the knack!

"Take yer coat off!" called M'Carty, and M'Pherson gave a start, he  
Hadn't bargained for proceedings the reverse of dignified!  
But he felt he had the best of the arrangement. "Take yer vest off!"  
Said M'Carty; and M'Pherson very graciously complied.  
It was in the private parlor, and the crowd was all outside.

"Take yer boots off!" said M'Carty in a cheerful tone and hearty,  
But M'Pherson he objected that the crowd would see his toes.  
Said M'Carty, "See, M'Pherson, there ain't any sense in cursin',  
Take yer boots off, I don't reckon to be handicapped with those!  
I am not the sort of juggins you apparently suppose!"

This M'Pherson's wrath arouses. "But," said he, "I'll keep me trousers!"  
"Not a trouser!" said M'Carty, "or to me the wager goes.  
The conditions you're reversin'; I will carry you, M'Pherson,  
But the wager doesn't say a blessed word about yer clothes!"  
That was how the small M'Carty had M'Pherson by the nose!

William Thomas Goodge

# A Snake Yarn

"You talk of snakes," said Jack the Rat,  
"But blow me, one hot summer,  
I seen a thing that knocked me flat -  
Fourteen foot long or more than that,  
It was a reg'lar hummer!  
Lay right along a sort of bog,  
Just like a log!

"The ugly thing was lyin' there  
And not a sign o' movin',  
Give any man a nasty scare;  
Seen nothin' like it anywhere  
Since I first started drovin'.  
And yet it didn't scare my dog.  
Looked like a log!

"I had to cross that bog, yer see,  
And bluey I was humpin';  
But wonderin' what that thing could be  
A-lyin' there in front o' me  
I didn't feel like jumpin'.  
Yet, though I shivered like a frog,  
It seemed a log!

"I takes a leap and lands right on  
The back of that there whopper!"  
He stopped. We waited. Then Big Mac  
Remarked: "Well, then, what happened, Jack?"  
"Not much," said Jack, and drained his grog.  
"It was a log!"

William Thomas Goodge

# Australia's Pride

Now Pat Ahearne, of Ingleburn  
Upon the Castlereagh,  
Was flush of cash and very "flash"  
As shearer-persons say.  
At Yankee grab his luck was cool,  
At loo he'd lately scooped the pool;  
He'd simply smashed the two-up school -  
[Assisted by a "grey!"]

And Pat grew then like other men,  
His head began to swell;  
As he was fly he thought he'd try  
The Sydney folks as well.  
"Their chances would be mighty slim  
Of working any points on him,  
When Euchre Bill and Ginger Jim  
Had found he was a sell!"

But bushmen's games are not the games  
That Sydney spielers play;  
A country smarty's "just their dart,"  
The city sharpers say.  
And Patrick he was taken down  
For all he had, but half-a-crown,  
Before he'd been in Sydney town  
For more than half a day!

'Twas well for Pat, the shearer, that  
He'd had the sense to pay  
His fare's return to Ingleburn  
Before he went away.  
It's not what you could call a joke  
To find yourself completely "broke";  
But Patrick had a splendid stroke  
In store for Castlereagh!

He found a shop - an oyster-shop -  
Where lobster, crab and cray  
Were all alive, and seemed to thrive;

And purchased straight-away  
Some crayfish and some lobsters, too  
(Such things are cheap in Woolloomooloo),  
And caught the Western mail that flew  
Towards the Castlereagh.

The train was crowded; which allowed  
No sleeping on the trip.  
Pat had a flask, and thought to ask  
The men to take a nip.  
Just then a lobster chanced to find  
The bag unclosed, and, feeling kind,  
It gave a man a nip; but mind,  
It was not on the trip!

And then some crayfish got away,  
With lobsters, two or three;  
And sundry grips and divers nips  
Made things extremely free.  
Profane expressions filled the air  
(Disgraceful how some people swear!);  
A livelier time than Pat had there  
You would not wish to see!

A great hooray! the ladies, they  
Declared it was a plot,  
Beyond a doubt, to drive them out.  
But leave? No, they would not;  
They swore that they would clear the coast,  
Or else the guard should lose his post;  
But women always are a most  
Unreasonable lot!

On Pat's return to Ingleburn  
The shell-fish were in tow,  
And things were gay on Castlereagh  
Preparing for the Show.  
For every township in the scrub  
That owns two churches and a pub  
Must run a Show and draw a sub.  
From Goldsbrough, Mort and Co.!

Now shell-fish are extremely rare  
Upon the Castlereagh,  
And Ingleburn galoots don't yearn  
For lobster or for cray.  
Lobsters indeed they'd never seen,  
And never might, had it not been  
For Pat Ahearne, and he was mean  
Enough to make them pay!

On lucre bent he hired a tent  
And made a rise with ease.  
'Twas at the Show, of course, you know  
Where side-shows always please.  
The shell-fish they were placed inside,  
And Pat stood by the door and cried:  
"Walk in and see Australia's Pride -  
The monster Sydney fleas!"

William Thomas Goodge



# Daley's Dorg 'Wattle'

"You can talk about yer sheep dorgs," said the man from Allan's Creek,  
"But I know a dorg that simply knocked 'em bandy! -  
Do whatever you would show him, and you'd hardly need to speak;  
Owned by Daley, drover cove in Jackandandy.

"We was talkin' in the parlour, me and Daley, quiet like,  
When a blow-fly starts a-buzzin' round the ceilin',  
Up gets Daley, and he says to me, 'You wait a minute, Mike,  
And I'll show you what a dorg he is at heelin'.'

"And an empty pickle-bottle was a-standin' on the shelf,  
Daley takes it down and puts it on the table,  
And he bets me drinks that blinded dorg would do it by himself -  
And I didn't think as how as he was able!

"Well, he shows the dorg the bottle, and he points up to the fly,  
And he shuts the door, and says to him - 'Now Wattle!'  
And in less than fifteen seconds, spare me days, it ain't a lie,  
That there dorg had got that insect in the bottle."

William Thomas Goodge

# How We Drove The Trotter

Oh, he was a handsome trotter, and he couldn't be completer,  
He had such a splendid action and he trotted to this metre,  
Such a pace and such a courage, such a record-killing power,  
That he did his mile in two-fifteen, his twenty in the hour.  
When he trotted on the Bathurst road the pace it was a panter,  
But he broke the poet's rhythm when he broke out in a canter -

As we were remarking the pace was a panter,  
But just as we liked it he broke in a canter,  
And rattled along with a motion terrific,  
And scattered the sparks with a freedom prolific;  
He tugged at the bit and he jerked at the bridle,  
We pulled like a demon, the effort was idle,  
The bit in his teeth and the rein in the crupper,  
We didn't much care to get home to our supper.

Then we went  
Like the wind,  
And our hands  
They were skinned,  
And we thought  
With a dread  
To go over his head,  
And we tugged  
And we strove,  
Couldn't say  
That we drove  
Till we found  
It had stopped  
And the gallop was dropped!

Then he dropped into a trot again as steady as a pacer,  
And we thought we had a dandy that was sure to make a racer  
That would rival all the Yankees and was bound to beat the British,  
Not a bit of vice about him though he was a trifle skittish;  
Past the buggies and the sulkies on the road we went a-flying,  
For the pace it was a clinker, and they had no chance of trying,  
But for fear he'd start a canter we were going to stop his caper  
When he bolted like a bullet at a flying piece of paper -

Helter skelter,  
What a pelter!  
Such a pace to win a welter!  
    Rush,  
    Race,  
    Tear!  
    Flying through the air!  
Wind a-humming,  
Fears benumbing,  
Here's another trap a-coming!  
    Shouts!  
    Bash!  
    Crash!  
Moses, what a smash!

William Thomas Goodge

# King Whiskey

King Whiskey's father down in Hell,  
He rubbed his hands with glee,  
'My son on earth is doing well,  
Extremely well,' said he;  
'Pile up the logs upon the blaze  
And let the furnace roar,  
Another batch of Whiskey's slaves  
Is hammering at the door.'

The flames shot up a brilliant red,  
The grid was white with heat,  
A basting pot of boiling lead  
Was placed on every seat.  
'Ha, ha,' said Satan, 'this is neat;  
We have no cause to fear  
That they'll complain they did not meet  
A warm reception here.'

King Whiskey sat upon his throne,  
His courtiers standing round,  
All meek, subservient in tone,  
They bowed them to the ground.  
In tribute then they handed up  
Their stores of golden wealth,  
And from the reeking poison cup  
They drank King Whiskey's health!

And out beyond the palace gates  
The wives and mothers stand,  
And, breadless, loudly curse the fates  
That whiskey rules the land.  
The courtiers dimly hear the cry,  
But Whiskey dulls their ears,  
'Fill up, let revelry run high,  
We'll drown these childish fears!'

And men there are in Whiskey's land  
Complaining times are bad  
And money getting scarcer and

But little to be had;  
And yet however bad is trade  
And things however flat,  
King Whiskey's tribute must be paid,  
They can't go short of that!

King Whiskey's courtiers soon grow old,  
And tribute's falling short,  
The strength is gone, the blood is cold  
The once clear mind distraught!  
And demons, imps, and grinning apes.  
And glaring reptiles yell,  
And loathsome forms and fearsome shapes  
All point the road to Hell!

But Whiskey's court is bright and gay.  
Nor do the ranks grow thin,  
For as the old are borne away  
The younger ones come in.  
King Whiskey's father down in Hell,  
He rubs his hands with glee,  
'My son on earth is doing well,  
Extremely well,' says he.

William Thomas Goodge

# Mulligan's Shanty

Things is just the same as ever  
On the outer Never-Never,  
And you look to find the stock of liquor scanty,  
But we found things worse than ordin'ry,  
And in fact a bit extraordin'ry  
When myself and Bill the Pinker struck the shanty.  
'Shanty,' says you. 'What shanty?'  
Why, Mulligan's shanty.

I says 'Whisky'; Bill says 'Brandy';  
But there wasn't either handy,  
For the boss was out of liquor in that line.  
'Well, I'll try a rum,' says Billy.  
'Got no rum,' he answers, chilly,  
'But I'll recommend a decent drop o' tine.'  
'Tine?' says Bill; 'what tine?'  
'Why, turpentine!'

'Blow me blue!' says Bill the Pinker,  
'Can't yer give us a deep-sinker?  
Ain't you got a cask o' beer behind the screen?'  
Bill was getting pretty cranky,  
But there wasn't any swanky.  
Says the landlord, 'Why not have a drop o' sene?'  
'Sene?' says Bill; 'what sene?'  
'Why, kerosene!'

Well, we wouldn't spend a tanner,  
But the boss's pleasant manner  
All our cursing couldn't easily demolish.  
Says he, 'Strike me perpendic'lar  
But you beggars are partic'lar,  
Why, the squatter in the parlor's drinking polish!'  
'Polish?' says Bill, 'what polish?'  
'Why, furniture-polish!'

William Thomas Goodge

## No Choice

'When I was a kiddy and away out-back,'  
Said the man with the salt-bush lingo.  
'My dogs, two cattle-dogs, grey and black,  
They gets fair on to the blinded track  
Of a walloping great big dingo!  
The savagest beast in all the pack -  
Oh, he was the real old stingo!'

'They rounded him up till he climbs a tree  
And of course he was mighty glad to.'  
'Hold on,' says I, 'for I never did see  
A dingo yet as could climb a tree  
And I've seen 'em run real bad, too!'  
'You can say that beast can't climb a tree?  
By the holy smoke he had to!'

William Thomas Goodge

# Ough"A Phonetic Fantasy

The baker-man was kneading dough  
And whistling softly, sweet and lough.

Yet ever and anon he'd cough  
As though his head were coming ough!

"My word!" said he," but this is rough:  
This flour is simply awful stough!"

He punched and thumped it through and through,  
As all good bakers dough!

" I'd sooner drive," said he " a plough  
Than be a baker anyhough!"

Thus spake the baker kneading dough;  
But don't let on I told you sough!

William Thomas Goodge



# The Australian Slanguage

"Tis the everyday Australian  
Has a language of his own,  
Has a language, or a slanguage,  
Which can simply stand alone.  
And a "dickon pitch to kid us"  
Is a synonym for "lie",  
And to "nark it" means to stop it,  
And to "nit it" means to fly.

And a bosom friend's a "cobber,"  
And a horse a "prad" or "moke,"  
While a casual acquaintance  
Is a "joker" or a "bloke."  
And his lady-love's his "donah"  
or his "clinah" or his "tart"  
Or his "little bit o' muslin,"  
As it used to be his "bart."

And his naming of the coinage  
Is a mystery to some,  
With his "quid" and "half-a-caser"  
And his "deener" and his "scrum".  
And a "tin-back" is a party  
Who's remarkable for luck,  
And his food is called his "tucker"  
Or his "panem" or his "chuck".

A policeman is a "johnny"  
Or a "copman" or a "trap",  
And a thing obtained on credit  
Is invariably "strap".  
A conviction's known as "trouble",  
And a gaol is called a "jug",  
And a sharper is a "spieler"  
And a simpleton's a "tug".

If he hits a man in fighting  
That is what he calls a "plug",  
If he borrows money from you

He will say he "bit your lug."  
And to "shake it" is to steal it,  
And to "strike it" is to beg;  
And a jest is "poking borac",  
And a jester "pulls your leg".

Things are "cronk" when they go wrongly  
In the language of the "push",  
But when things go as he wants 'em  
He declares it is "all cush".  
When he's bright he's got a "napper",  
And he's "ratty" when he's daft,  
And when looking for employment  
He is "out o' blooming graft".

And his clothes he calls his "clobber"  
Or his "togs", but what of that  
When a "castor" or a "kady"  
Is the name he gives his hat!  
And our undiluted English  
Is a fad to which we cling,  
But the great Australian slanguage  
Is a truly awful thing!

William Thomas Goodge

# The Great Australian Adjective

The sunburnt ---- stockman stood  
And, in a dismal ---- mood,  
Apostrophized his ---- cuddy;  
"The ---- nag's no ---- good,  
He couldn't earn his ---- food -  
A regular ---- brumby,  
      ----!"

He jumped across the ---- horse  
And cantered off, of ---- course!  
The roads were bad and ---- muddy;  
Said he, "Well, spare me ---- days  
The ---- Government's ---- ways  
Are screamin' ---- funny,  
      ----!"

He rode up hill, down ---- dale,  
The wind it blew a ---- gale,  
The creek was high and ---- floody.  
Said he, "The ---- horse must swim,  
The same for ---- me and him,  
Is something ---- sickenin',  
      ----!"

He plunged into the ---- creek,  
The ---- horse was ---- weak,  
The stockman's face a ---- study!  
And though the ---- horse was drowned  
The ---- rider reached the ground  
Ejaculating, "----!"  
      "----!"

This poem was originally published under the title "----!" (The Great Australian Adjective).

C.J. Dennis borrowed the style for his poem 'The Australaise.'



# The Guile Of Dad M'Ginnis

When M,Ginnis struck the mining camp at Jamberoora Creek  
His behaviour was appreciated highly;  
For, although he was a quiet man, in manner mild and meek,  
Not like ordinary swagmen with a monumental cheek,  
He became the admiration of the camp along the creek  
'Cause he showed a point to Kangarooobie Riley!

Both the pubs at Jamberoora had some grog that stood the test  
(Not to speak of what was manufactured slyly!)  
And the hostel of O'Gorman, which was called The Diggers' Rest,  
Was, O'Gorman said, the finest house of any in the west;  
But it was a burning question if it really was the best,  
Or the "Miners" - kept by Kangarooobie Riley.

Dad M'Ginnis called at Riley's. Said he "felt a trifle queer",  
And with something like a wan and weary smile, he  
Said he "thought he'd try a whisky". Pushed it back and said, "I fear  
I had better take a brandy." Passed that back and said: "Look here,  
Take the brandy; after all, I think I'll have a pint of beer!"  
And he drank the health of Kangarooobie Riley!

"Where's the money?" asked the publican; "you'll have to pay, begad!"  
"Gave the brandy for the beer!" said Dad the wily,  
"And I handed you the whisky when I took the brandy, lad!"  
"But you paid not for the whisky!" answered Riley. "No," said Dad,  
"And you don't expect a man to pay for what he never had!"  
- 'Twas the logic flattened Kangarooobie Riley!

"See," said Kangarooobie Riley, "you have had me, that is clear!  
But I never mind a joke," he added, dryly.  
"Just you work it on O'Gorman, and I'll shout another beer."  
"I'd be happy to oblige yer," said McGinnis with a leer,  
"But the fact about the matter is - O'Gorman sent me here! -  
So, good morning, Mr Kangarooobie Riley!"

William Thomas Goodge

# The M'Camley Mixture

Jack M'Camley,  
Lank and long,  
Ox-persuader,  
Billabong.  
Bluff and hearty  
Sort o' party,  
Got the "blanky" habit strong!

Says the parson,  
Bright old bird,  
"Why'd you use that  
Horrid word? -  
(Jack looked grinfule) -  
Not say sinful,  
But most vulgar and absurd!"

"It's the blanky  
Church, betwixt  
You and me, that  
Got me fixed!"  
Says M'Camley,  
"In our fam'ly  
Things is all so blanky mixed!"

"There's me father -  
Whoa back, Dick! -  
Church o' Blanky  
England, stric'!  
There's me mother  
And one brother,  
Roman-Blanky-Catholic!

"But me sister -  
Way, you Stan!  
Don't them bullocks  
Rile a man?  
Kilts enticed her,  
Went and spliced a  
Presby-Blanky-terian!"

William Thomas Godge

# The Melodius Bullocky

'Tis of the Wild Colonial Boy [Come out of that saplin', Rat!]  
Brought up by honest parents [Now, Strawberry, what are yer at!]  
He robbed them lordly squatters and [Whoa Diamond! Dam yer hump!]  
And a terror to Horsetralia [Now then, Nugget, you mind that stump!]

'Twas at the age of seventeen [Gee back there, Dimple! Gee!]  
He never [Way there Baldy, [sich a cow I never did see!]  
He was his father's only son [Gee back there now, Rob Roy!]  
And fondly did his parents love the Wild Colonial Boy!

William Thomas Goodge



# The Shearer's Cook

Now, shearers' cooks, as shearers know,  
Are very seldom wont to blow;  
But when I took to dabbing tar  
And "picking-up" on Blaringar,  
The cook, when "barbers" came at morn  
To get a snack, would say, with scorn:  
"Tea on the left,  
Coffee on the right,  
Brownie on the bunk, and blast yez!"

The "bunk" or slab was in the hut,  
And on it "brownie" ready cut;  
Two buckets o'er the fire would be -  
One filled with coffee, one with tea;  
And when the chaps came filing in  
The cook would say, with mirthless grin:  
"Tea on the left,  
Coffee on the right,  
Brownie on the bunk, and blast yez!"

Peculiar man, this shearers' cook,  
And had a very ugly look.  
To me - a new-chum rouseabout,  
Said he, one day when all were out:  
"There's nothing in this world, my lad,  
That's worth your worry, good or bad;  
Grief on the left,  
Sorrow on the right,  
Trouble on the bunk, but blast it!"

William Thomas Goodge

# Two Men And A Maid

Two little dudes from the George-street block,  
Up for a brief vacation!  
One little girl in a neat print frock,  
Maid of the Mulga Station!  
Two little dudes with walking-sticks,  
Two little heads that the collars fix!  
Two little hats at nine-and-six,  
Two little dudes on a station.

One little maid with a bashful smile,  
Given for a salutation;  
Two little dudes of the nan-nan style,  
Bent on a captivation.  
One little maid with a smile so true,  
Curly hair of a nut-brown hue;  
Eyes of a liquid violet blue,  
One little maid on a station.

"Didn't she fear her walks to take  
Over the grassy clearing?"  
"Didn't she fear some nasty snake  
His ugly head a-rearing?"  
"Sirs," she said, with an arching brow,  
And a smile that was hardly a smile somehow,  
"There are so many jackasses 'round here now,  
That the snakes are disappearing!"

William Thomas Goodge