

# PIONEERS by A.B. "Banjo" Paterson

*They came of bold and roving stock that would not fixed abide;  
They were the sons of field and flock since e'er they learnt to ride,  
We may not hope to see such men in these degenerate years  
As those explorers of the bush - - the brave old pioneers.*

*'Twas they who rode the trackless bush in heat and storm and drought;  
'Twas they who heard the master-word that called them farther out;  
'Twas they who followed up the trail the mountain cattle made,  
And pressed across the mighty range where now their bones are laid.*

*But now the times are dull and slow, the brave old days are dead  
When hardy bushmen started out, and forced their way ahead  
By tangled scrub and forests grim towards the unknown west,  
And spied the far-off promised land from off the range's crest.*

*Oh! ye that sleep in lonely graves by far-off ridge and plain,  
We drink to you in silence now as Christmas comes again,  
To you who fought the wilderness through rough unsettled years - -  
The founders of our nation's life, the brave old pioneers.*

The *Town and Country Journal*, 19 December  
1896.