

# I am a Rabbit Trapper

Australian Folk  
Basil Cosgrove  
Dave de Hugard



Well my traps are all a jang - le and in an eas - y swing ing tang - le as I



set 'em in a circ - le a - round a fringe of trees. With



muck and gore I'm splat tered and my clothes are worn and tat tered but I'm



care - free like those bun nies till they fall for one of these. There's



no one giv - ing ord - ers and I'm not hemmed in by bord - ers I



love to head off out of town and set my traps for bun nies I



am a rab - bit trap - per and a can - ny bun - ny snap per and I



whist - le as I wand - er like a bird free in the trees.

# I am a Rabbit Trapper

1. Well, my traps are all a jangle and in an easy swinging tangle,  
As I set 'em in a circle, around a fringe of trees,  
With muck and gore I'm splattered and my clothes are worn and tattered  
But I'm carefree like those bunnies till they fall for one of these.

*Chorus* *There's no one giving orders and I'm not hemmed in by borders,  
I love to head off out of town and set my traps for bunnies.  
I am a rabbit trapper and a canny bunny snapper,  
And I whistle as I wander like a bird free in the trees.*

2. While some blokes are courting tabbies, I'm out among the rabbies,  
And I can hear em bucking, squealing, for many traps ahead.  
While some blokes at the pub are drinking, at the last trap I am thinking,  
About my mounting bag of bunnies, 'n keeping tally in my head.

*Chorus*

3. Hup Ginger me old cobber, let's put on some decent clobber,  
And we'll leave the bunnies hoppin' and playin' in the trees,  
We'll make the railway early, to see my shy and dinkum girlie,  
And I'll help her with the cream cans as she writes a cheque for me.

*Chorus*

I treasure the time I spent in the 1950s as a child on at Daniel's farm in the Loddon Valley at Salisbury West. Sometimes we helped with chores around the farm, milking, collecting the eggs, separating the cream. More often, we were allowed a carefree life, riding, rabbiting, fishing and exploring the neighbourhood. We ate the rabbits we caught and we were delighted when we were taken to a skin merchant where we got a few bob for our skins.

Back in town, a tray of rabbits was an everyday sight in a butcher shop window. As a child, I used to see young men, usually alone, dog behind, ride out in the morning and return in the evening, with dozens of pairs of rabbits strung all over their bikes. This is the song of such a man. On weekends, as his mates relaxed in town, spending their wages courting and drinking, the singer, wages banked, shed the hassles of the working week out in the bush. As a bonus, he courted his wife and earned more cash to finance his dream.

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Sources:

Wendy Lowenstein and Dave de Hugard collected this song from Basil Cosgrove in Armidale, NSW in 1970. It was published in *Tradition*, 31:17 (1973). Basil, a bush fiddler and singer, said: "we put a tune to" some verses he believed had been submitted by a woman to the *Women's Weekly* in the 1930s.

Dave de Hugard sings this song on his LP album, *The Magpie in the Wattle*. There were some uncertainties in Basil's lyrics that Dave has filled out. I've modified Dave's lyrics in line with my interpretation of this song's origins.

Dave's concertina playing reminds me of my Grandfather, John Patrick Gallagher.