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## Broken-Down Squatter

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Come, Stumpy old man, we must shift while we can  
All your mates in the paddock are dead  
Let us wave our farewells to Glen Eva's sweet dells  
And the hills where your lordship was bred  
Together to roam from our drought-stricken home  
It's tough that such things have to be  
And it's hard on a horse to have nought for a boss  
But a broken-down squatter like me

cho: For the banks are all broken they say  
And the merchants are all up a tree  
When the big-wigs are brought  
To the Bankruptcy Court  
What hope for a squatter like me

No more shall we muster the river for fats  
Or spiel on the Fifteen Mile Plain  
Or rip through the scrub by the light of the moon  
Or see the old stockyard again  
Leave the slip-panels down, it won't matter much now  
There are none but the crows left to see  
Perching gaunt on yon pine, as though longing to dine  
On a broken-down squatter like me

When the country was cursed with the drought at its worst  
And the cattle were dying in scores  
Though down on my luck, I kept up my pluck  
Thinking justice might temper the laws  
But the farce has been played, and the Government aid  
Ain't extended to squatters, old son  
When my money was spent, they doubled the rent  
And resumed the best half of the run

'Twas done without reason, for (leaving the season)  
No squatter could stand such a rub  
For it's useless to squat when the rents are so hot  
That you can't save the price of your grub  
And there's not much to choose 'twixt the banks and the screws  
Once a fellow gets put up a tree  
No odds what I feel, there's no Court of Appeal  
For a broken-down squatter like me

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First published in the Queenslander in 1894

Written by Charles Augustus Flower. The brothers Horace and Charles Flower, Queensland station owners, were keen songwriters in the 1880's - 90's.

Charles Flower's manuscripts are in the Oxley Library, Brisbane.

In 1891 the squatters were at war with the shearers in the Shearers' Strike. In 1893 the banks crashed.

This tune is from Jack 'Hoopiron' Lee who was 77 and had been blind for a number of years when he was recorded by John Meredith in 1953.

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