Bullockie's Song

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There's an old bullock driver lives in Bundaberg up west
His name is Jim and he's one of the best
He'd yoke up his team, go where any teamster could go
He'd snig out his logs and load up his load

He'd hook the bullocks to the wagon you see
Crack his whip, 'Get up' says he
All the bullocks would lean into the yokes and the bows
And the wagon would start moving very slow

He would drive his team along the road
Up hills and down hills they would go
Across sandy flats with their heads bending low
Doing their best to pull a big load

Then to the camp he would drive his team
Unyoke his bullocks, turn them out to the feed
Poke up the fire to cook him some tea
Salt junk and damper, oh that was his meal

He would sit by the fire and smoke his pipe
Then into his bunk to retire for the night
Up in the morning at the dawn of the day
Saddle his horse and jog on his way

His old black dog Nipper trotting behind
Off they would go, the bullocks to find
Muster the team, drive them back to the camp
Yoke up his bullocks and away he would tramp

Now Jimmy is old and wrinkled and gray
He knows that his time must soon pass away
He knows he must go where his cobbers have gone
Where there's no bullock teams to drive along

In his Big Book of Australian Folk Song Ron Edwards writes "A Bullockie's Song was collected by Bob Michell and Stan Arthur in 1966 at Bundaberg, Qld, from the singing of Albert Newitt (born c. 1879). According to the conversation on the tape this is one of the informant's own compositions. He had

worked as a bullock driver for many years in the Bundaberg area, and the song describes what must have been a typical day in his life". MG

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