

Dorothea MacKellar - Australian Bush Poetry

My Country

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The love of field and coppice, of green and shaded lanes,
Of ordered woods and gardens is running in your veins.
Strong love of grey-blue distance, brown streams and soft, dim skies-
I know but cannot share it, my love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges, of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons, I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror- the wide brown land for me!

The stark white ring-barked forests, all tragic to the moon,
The sapphire-misted mountains, the hot gold hush of noon,
Green tangle of the brushes where lithe lianas coil,
And orchids deck the tree-tops, and ferns the warm dark soil.

Core of my heart, my country! Her pitiless blue sky,
When, sick at heart, around us we see the cattle die -
But then the grey clouds gather, and we can bless again
The drumming of an army, the steady soaking rain.

Core of my heart, my country! Land of the rainbow gold,
For flood and fire and famine she pays us back threefold.
Over the thirsty paddocks, watch, after many days,
The filmy veil of greenness that thickens as we gaze.

An opal-hearted country, a wilful, lavish land -
All you who have not loved her, you will not understand -
Though earth holds many splendours, wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country my homing thoughts will fly.

"My Country" is an [iconic](#) patriotic [poem](#) about [Australia](#), written by [Dorothea Mackellar](#) (1885-1968) at the age of 19 while homesick in [England](#). After travelling through Europe extensively with her father during her teenage years she started writing the poem in [London](#) in 1904^[1] and re-wrote it several times before her return to [Sydney](#). The poem was first published in the [London Spectator](#) in 1908 under the title "**Core of My Heart**". It was reprinted in many Australian newspapers, quickly becoming well known and establishing Mackellar as a poet.