

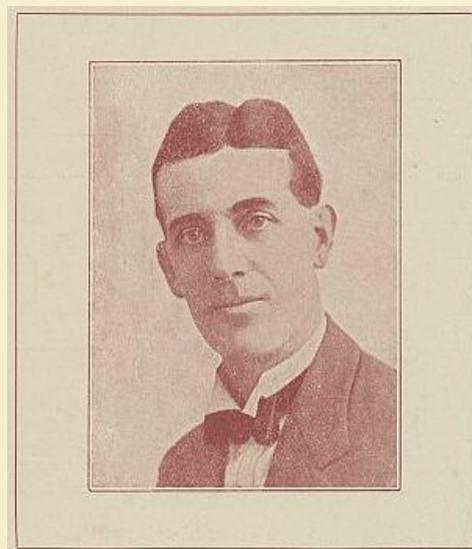
MARSH LITTLE

(1880-1958) Composer, singer, music arranger, actor. One of Australia's leading patriotic songwriters of the World War I era, Marsh Little was also a popular baritone. Many of his biggest hits were patriotic numbers, including "Boys of the Dardanelles," "His Photo," and "Women! You Have Nobly Done Your Share." He was also one of the major songwriters for the Fullers' 1916 *Bunyip* pantomime.

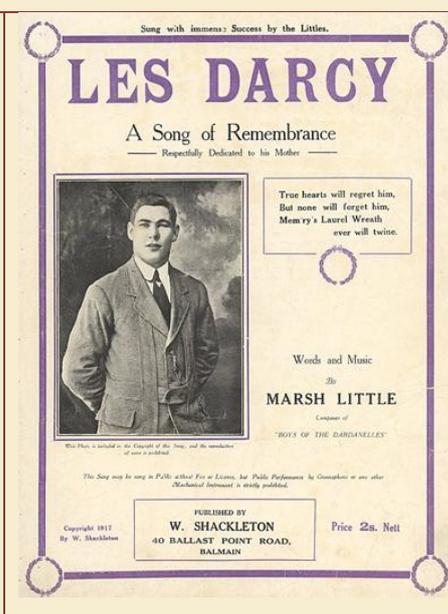
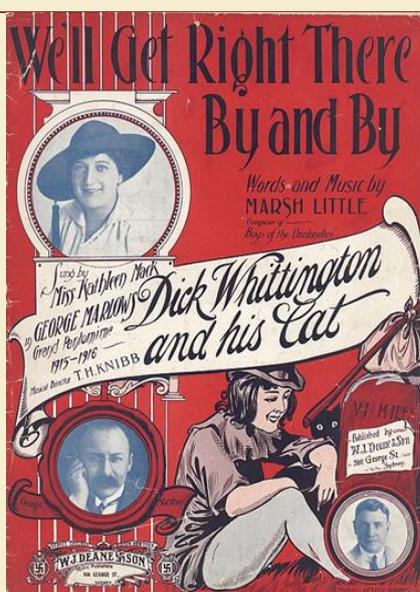
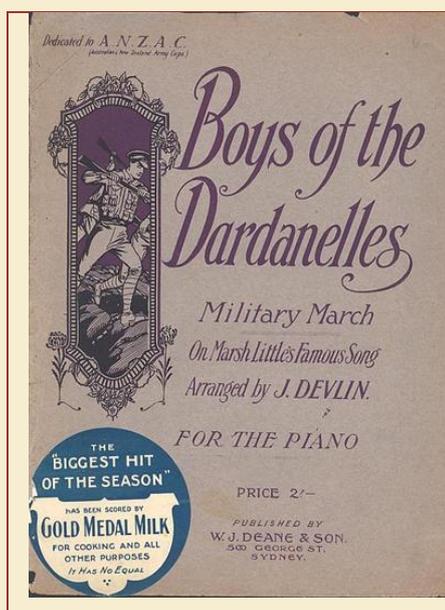
Best remembered for his patriotic song, "Boys of the Dardanelles, which commemorated the sacrifice made by Australians in the First World War, George Marsh Little was a baritone of some note and a prolific songwriter. Born in Mudgee (NSW), he appears to have started out his career as an actor, eventually establishing his reputation around 1905 in a number of Sydney productions, notably J. C. Williamson's *L'Aiglon* (Her Majesty's Theatre). During the early 1900s he also studied singing with Sydney composer and teacher August W. Juncker, making his solo debut at the Sydney Town Hall in 1903 at one of Arthur Mason's¹ recitals (SMH: 24 Sept. 1921, 8). He later sang at concerts in Sydney and Brisbane, and after affirming his Christianity at a mission meeting, he sang for the Hugh Paton Mission and toured for 18 months as a gospel singer with the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales (1909-10). On 14 February 1911, Little was accorded a complimentary concert prior to his departure for England where he had already lined up a series of engagements (SMH: 11 Feb. 1911, 13).

While in Great Britain Little began to seriously develop his craft as a songwriter, and also recorded a substantial body of material, including many popular religious songs. These were recorded for the firms Pathe and Edison-Bell. He was recalled to Australia in 1915 when his mother fell seriously ill, and quickly established his reputation as one of the country's leading patriotic songwriters. The *Sydney Morning Herald* records that Australian, as well as other countries recognised "Boys of the Dardanelles" (1915) as particularly significant in terms of its recruiting value (24 Sept. 1921, 8). At least five of his songs were incorporated into the Fullers' 1916 *Bunyip* pantomimes – these being "Down in Australia" (sung by Nellie Kolle), "Nulla Nulla" (Nat Phillips), "Joan (Caddie Franks), "Another Waratah" (Queenie Paul) and "For You" (Peter Brooks). His songs were also performed in George Marlow's *Dick Whittington and His Cat* (1915) and the Fullers' *Robinson Crusoe* (1917).

Although primarily working as a solo composer, Marsh did occasionally work with others during his career, notably Harley Cohen (of the Gallipoli Strollers' fame) and Warwick Armstrong. His collaboration with Cohen produced the World War I era hits "His Photo," and "Women! You Have Nobly Done Your Duty." During the 1920 and 1930s, Little appeared on ABC radio, performing as part of studio variety programmes and live community concerts. By 1937 had become a member of the ABC Sydney Wireless Choir.



Source: National Library of Australia



Source: National Library of Australia

¹ Journalist Arthur Mason also held the position of City Organist (SMH: 24 Sept. 1921, 8).

HISTORICAL NOTES AND CORRECTIONS



Florence and Marsh Little
Source: National Library of Australia

1. The National Library of Australia website records "On his return to Australia during the war, [Marsh] became a Gallipoli Stroller, touring NSW raising funds for the war effort." This claim is yet to be confirmed. To date no record of Marsh being a member of the Gallipoli Strollers (1) has yet been found, and indeed his inclusion in the line-up could only have been very briefly in late 1916 (and as late as the third week of January 1917), or after mid-1918 and up until around mid-1919. He is not named in the other Gallipoli Strollers (2) troupe that operated in Western Australian during the years 1917-1918.
2. One of Little's brothers, Jack A. Little, also composed a number of popular songs, including "Lost at Sea," "Three Songs of Old England," and "The Wreck."

FURTHER REFERENCE

Djubal. Clay. "[Little, March](#)." *AustLit* (2012).
["Little, Marsh \(1880-1958\)"](#) Music, Sound and Video Collection, National Library of Australia [sighted 8/08/2012]
 "Music and Drama." SMH: 24 Sep[t. (1921), 8.

TALKED WITH NED KELLY

**BEN HALL ALSO DROPPED IN
BRAIDWOOD PIONEER'S DEATH**

MRS ESTHER LITTLE, one of the pioneers of Braidwood and mother of Mr. Marsh Little, composer of "Boys of the Dardanelles," died on Friday at Glebe Point, aged 83.

BORN at Braidwood in 1846, Mrs. Little knew most of the famous bushrangers—Ben Hall, Johnny Gilbert and their associates making frequent visits to her father's hotel, where they often stayed overnight.

It was policy to allow them to remain; but many times police almost captured the daring gang at the hotel.

WHEN HE'D GONE.

Adventure came in other ways, too; for, when newly married, Mrs. Little accompanied her husband to the Lambing Flat gold rush, scene of the famous riots, when Chinese battled with the diggers.

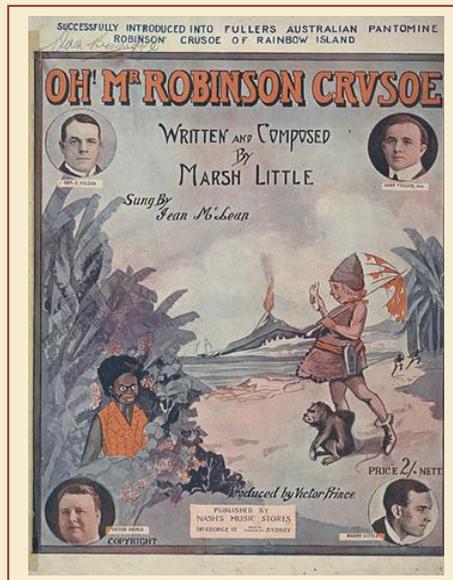
At Denillquin she chatted with a man—when he'd gone she found it was the notorious Ned Kelly!

Next trek was to the Gulgong rush. Since 1882 Mrs. Little lived at Glebe Point, where her husband died in 1919. Seven sons and two daughters survive.

Windsor and Richmond Gazette 12 July (1929), 8.



Source: National Library of Australia



Source: National Library of Australia

Mr. Marsh-Little

Who toured Europe as the baritone soloist of the Chapman-Alexander Mission Party and who is the Composer of the famous Military Song

"Boys of the Dardanelles"

declares that he owes a debt of gratitude to

CLEMENTS TONIC

For the benefit to be derived from its use

Mr. MARSH LITTLE in his letter says:—

CLEMENTS TONIC Ltd.

"I had to disappoint my audience when my Company appeared at Gulgong on one of my recent tours through having contracted a bad cold.

"I wished particularly to sing well in Mudgee because it was my birthplace and Clements Tonic so benefited me that when I reached there I sang as well as ever I did in my life.

"When travelling on tour at Cairns in the intense heat, this medicine was invaluable. If all singers and speakers would use it when the voice is impaired, I am certain they would have the same happy experience I had."

Anyone suffering from over-study or worry through arduous commercial work and who cannot sleep, rest, or eat well, should use this medicine. In cases of Wasting Illness, or the after-effects of Influenza, Typhoid, Low or Dengue Fever, or for the relief of Constipation, Indigestion, Nervous Breakdown or Biliousness, it is invaluable

SEND TO YOUR CHEMIST OR STORE FOR IT TO-DAY

GET IT AND GET WELL AT THE SAME TIME

Register (Adelaide) 25 July (1916), 7.

First published: 10/08/2012

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