Ard Tack

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1. I'm a shearer, yes I am, and I've shorn 'em sheep and lamb
    From the Wimmera to the Darling Downs and back,
    And I've rung a shed or two where the fleece was tough as glue
    But I'll tell you where I struck the 'ardest tac.

2. I was down round Yenda way, killing time from day to day
    Till the big sheds started moving further out
    When I struck a bloke by chance that I summed up in a glance
    As a cocky from a vineyard round about.

3. Now it seems he picked me too; well, it wasn't hard to do
    'Cause I had some tongs a-hangin' at the hip,
    "I got a mob,"he said, "A mob about two hundred head
    And I'll give a ten pun note to have the clip."

4. I says, "Right, I'll take the stand" - it meant gettin' in me hand
    And by nine o'clock we'd rounded up the mob
    In a shed sunk in the ground - yeah, with wine casks all around
    And that was where I started on me job.

5. I goes easy for a bit while me hand was gettin' fit
    And by dinner-time I'd done some half a score
    With the cocky pickin' up and handing me a cup
    Of pinky after every sheep I shore.

6. The cocky had to go away about the seventh day
    After showing me the kind of cask to use
    Then I'd do the picking up and manipulate the cup
    Strolling round them wine casks, just to pick and choose.

7. Then I'd stagger to the pen, grab a sheep and start again
    With a noise between a hiccup and a sob
    And sometimes I'd fall asleep with me arms around the sheep
    Worn and weary from me over-arduous job.

8. And so six weeks went by, until one day with a sigh
    I pushed the dear old cobbler through the door
    Gathered in the cocky's pay then staggered on me way

From the hardest bloody shed I ever shore.

"Recorded at the home of Mr. Jack Davies, a pioneer soldier-settler
   of the Leeton District, on the Murrumbidgee, N.S.W. Mr.
   Davies says he didn't write "Ard Tac", but adds, "I distinctly
   remember being sober the day it was written." (Lahey). Tune heard
   from Mike Eves, Sydney FC, 1971.

JB