

Shearing at Castlereagh

Banjo Paterson

The bell is set a-ringing, and the engine gives a toot,
There's five and thirty shearers here are shearing for the loot,
So stir yourselves, you penners-up, and shove the sheep along,
The musterers are fetching them a hundred thousand strong,
And make your collie dogs speak up — what would the buyers say
In London if the wool was late this year from Castlereagh?

The man that 'rung' the Tubbo shed is not the ringer here,
That stripling from the Cooma side can teach him how to shear.
They trim away the ragged locks, and rip the cutter goes,
And leaves a track of snowy fleece from brisket to the nose;
It's lovely how they peel it off with never stop nor stay,
They're racing for the ringer's place this year at Castlereagh.

The man that keeps the cutters sharp is growling in his cage,
He's always in a hurry and he's always in a rage —
'You clumsy-fisted mutton-heads, you'd turn a fellow sick,
'You pass yourselves as shearers, you were born to swing a pick.
Another broken cutter here, that's two you've broke to-day,

It's awful how such crawlers come to shear at Castlereagh.'

The youngsters picking up the fleece enjoy the merry din,
They throw the classer up the fleece, he throws it to the bin;
The pressers standing by the rack are waiting for the wool,
There's room for just a couple more, the press is nearly full;
Now jump upon the lever, lads, and heave and heave away,
Another bale of golden fleece is branded 'Castlereagh'.

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