

The Cockies of Bungaree I

Collected from Simon McDonald by members of the Folklore Society of Victoria. Some of Simon's songs and tunes were released on Australian Traditional Singers and Musicians in Victoria (1963) and his life story was related in 'Time Out of Mind' by Hugh Anderson.

Now all you blokes take my ad-vice and do your dai - ly toil,
But don't go down to Bun - gar - ee to work in the choc' - late soil,
For the days they are so long, my boys, they'll break your heart in two,
And if e-ver you work for Cock - y Burke, you ver - y soon will know.

Chorus

Oh, we used to go to bed, you know, a little bit after dark,
The room we used to sleep in, it was just like Noah's Ark:
There were dogs and cats and mice and rats and pigs and poult-er-y;
Oh, I'll never forget the time we had, while down in Bungaree!

The first thing Monday morning, sure, to work I had to go,
My noble cocky says to me, "Get up, you're rather slow."
The moon was shining gloriously, and the stars were bright, you see,
I thought before the sun would rise I'd die in Bungaree.

He called me to my breakfast before the sun did shine,
He called me to my supper at half past eight or nine,
And after tea was over, all with a merry laugh,
The old cocky says to me, "We'll cut a bit of chaff."

Now when you are chaff-cutting, boys, isn't it a spell?
Yes, by jove, says I, it is, and it's me that knows it well,
But too many of these working spells, with me they disagree,
For I hate the jolly night-work that they do in Bungaree.

Now, when my first week's work was up, I reckoned I'd had enough,
I went up to that cocky and I asked him for my stuff,
I came down into Ballarat, and it didn't take me long,
I went straight into Sayers' Hotel and blued my one-pound-one.