

ALL THE LADS HAVE GOT THE SACK

The Rhondda Valley in South Wales has been synonymous with coal mining since the mid-nineteenth century, and the fortunes of the region and its people have always paralleled those of the coal industry. Pete Seeger's song "The Bells of Rhymney" based on the poem by Welsh poet Idris Davies mentions "the black bells of Rhondda" – black from the coal dust. This song was written by Frank Hennessey during a miners' strike. The reference to "Roben's axe" refers to Alfred Robens, who was Chairman of the National Coal Board from 1961 to 1971. You can hear this song performed by ***The New Barleycorn*** at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkXudCDgr8I>. If all the Welsh names in the last verse don't roll easily off your tongue, it would probably not violate the folk process to substitute Anglicized Welsh names like Morgan, Davis, Edwards.

FAREWELL TO THE RHONDDA

CHORUS:

A

Farewell ye colliery workers, the muffler and the cap

D

A

Farewell ye Rhondda valley girls, we never will come back

A

D

E

The mines they are a-closin', the valleys they're all doomed

A

D

E

A

There's no work in the Rhondda boys, we'll be in London soon

A

D

My father was a miner, and his father was before him,

E

A

He always had been proud to work the coal

A

Since they fell 'neath Roben's axe,

D

All the lads have got the sack

E

A

So away to work in England we must go!

CHORUS

No more the chapel singin', that long ago has left us

In the public house no more the miner's songs

For the pit wheels they are stoppin',

And the populations' droppin'

And I can't afford to stay here very long

CHORUS

Treherbert and Treorchy, Tonypandy and Tynewydd

Ystrad Rhondda and Ton Pentre, all adieu

For I can no longer wait

While Parliament debates

So a fond farewell I bid to all of you!

CHORUS