

Ballad of Spring Hill (Spring Hill Disaster)

by Peggy Seeger and Ewan MacColl (1960)

Dm C Dm C
In the town of Spring Hill, Nova Scotia,
Dm Dm G Dm
Down in the heart of the Cumberland Mine,
Dm G C Am
There's blood on the coal and the miners lie
Dm C Dm C
In the roads that never saw sun or sky
Dm C Dm C
Roads that never saw sun or sky.

repeat last line each time

In the town of Springhill, you don't sleep easy,
Often the earth will tremble and roll,
When the earth is restless, miners die,
Bone and blood is the price of coal.

In the town of Springhill, Nova Scotia,
Late in the year of fifty-eight,
Day still comes and the sun still shines,
But it's dark as the grave in the Cumberland Mine.

Down at the coal face, miners working,
Rattle of the belt, and the cutter's blade,
Rumble of rock and the walls close round
The living and the dead men two miles down.

Twelve men lay two miles from the pitshaft,
Twelve men lay in the dark and sang,
Long hot days in a miner's tomb,
It was three feet high and a hundred long.

Three days passed and the lamps gave out,
And Caleb Rushton, he up and said :
"There's no more water nor light nor bread,
So we'll live on songs and hope instead."

Listen for the shouts of the bareface miners,
Listen through the rubble for a rescue team,
Six hundred feet of coal and a slag,
Hope imprisoned in a three foot seam.

Eight days passed and some were rescued,
Leaving the dead to lie alone,
Through all their lives they dug a grave,
Two miles of earth for a marking stone