APPALACHIAN MINING SONGS

for SATB Chorus, Soloists and Piano
with Optional Harmonica and String Bass

Arranged by
BRUCE TRINKLEY

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These songs originally appeared in *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*, George Korson, Editor, published by University of Pennsylvania Press in 1949.

They were sung by 19th and early 20th Century miners in the Appalachian Mountains of Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The choral arrangements were written in memory of my father, who began working in the coal mines of Pennsylvania when he was 9 years old.

The arranger expresses his appreciation to the Institute for the Arts and Humanistic Studies and to the College of Arts and Architecture of The Pennsylvania State University for fellowship grants that fostered the creation of these arrangements.

NOTES ON THE SONGS

The Broken Shovel, collected by George Korson from a saloonkeeper in Carbondale, PA in 1925, describes a fist fight that was supposed to have occurred in 1890 in Beaver Brook between Neddy Kearn and Barney Gallagher. The fight was broken up by the Pretta-Moor, a local peddler whose nickname derives from the Gaelic, meaning "big potatoes".

The jauntiness of *Down in a Coal Mine* comes from its origin as a stage song popular in the anthracite fields of the Appalachians. The solo is a typical declamation of the young men who went to work in the mines at an early age and seldom received much of a formal education.

The Shoofly was written during the economic turndown of the 1870s by a village schoolmaster, Felix O'Hare. In 1871 the mine at Valley Furnace in the Schuykill Valley was closed causing severe anxiety and despair. The miners might have been able to go over to the Shoofly, a nearby colliery, but a "bad seam" had been struck there, causing the company to close the mine.

Union Man was written and sung by Albert Morgan in the Newkirk Tunnel Mine near Tamaqua, PA in 1946. The song describes the hard life in the mines and the perils of rising prices and rising wages. The A.F.L. and C.I.O. refer to the two union organizations, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. John L. Lewis (1880-1969)was active in the AFL, founded the CIO and was the president of the United Mine Workers from 1920-1960.

After a grueling week of hard work in the mines, workers celebrated after payday on Saturday night. But the hangover on *Blue Monday* prompted a rarely-kept vow to join the White Ribbon, referring to the symbol of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, founded by Frances Willard in 1873.

THE BROKEN SHOVEL

(From the Archives of the American Folk Song, Library of Congress.
Sung by Daniel Brennan at McAdoo, Schuykill County, 1946)

Good Christians all, come and lend an ear,
Unto me ditty and the truth you'll hear.
It's of Barney Gallagher so bold and thrue,
Arrah that broke me shovel, Arrah that broke me shovel,
Arrah that broke me fine brand new shovel in two.

When the whistle blew and the shovel was broke,
Old Neddy Kearn was the first man spoke,
Saying "Barney Gallagher, come tell me thrue,
Phat for you broke me shovel, Phat for you broke me shovel,
Phat for you broke me fine brand new shovel in two."

"Oh", said Barney Gallagher in a stuttering way,
"I'll crack your jaw, if I hang this day,
To insult a man so bold and thrue,
About your bloody shovel, About your bloody shovel,
About your bloody shovel that was broke in two."

Barney and McGlynn, they both pitch in,
Like Corbett and Mitchell they form a ring.
The crowd around began to roar.
Then who the divil entered, Then who the divil entered,
Then who the divil entered but the Pretta Moor.

"Howlt on, howlt on, we must have fair play.
He's a Ross's man, we will win the day.
But if you touch him, then I'll touch you."
That was all about the shovel, That was all about the shovel,
That was all about the shovel that was broke in two.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE

(From the Archives of the American Folk Song, Library of Congress.
Sung by Morgan Jones at Wilkes-Barre, 1946)

1. I am a jovial collier lad as blithe as blithe can be,
And let the times be good or bad, they're all the same to me;
There's little of this world I know and care less for its ways,
And where the dog star never glows I wear away the days.

CHORUS: Down in a coal mine underneath the ground,
Where a gleam of sunshine never can be found.
Digging dusky diamonds all the year around,
A way down in a coal mine underneath the ground.

2. My hands are horny hard and black from working in the vein
And like the clothes upon my back, my speech is rough and plain.
And if I stumble with my tongue, I've one excuse to say
It's not the collier's heart that's bad, it's his head that goes astray.
CHORUS

THE SHOOFLY

**(From the Archives of the American Folk Song, Library of Congress.
Sung by Daniel Walsh at Centralia, Columbia County, 1946.)**

As I went a-walking one fine summer's morning,
It was down by the furnace I chanced for to stroll.
I espied an old lady, I'll swear she was eighty,
At the foot of the dirt banks a-rooting for coal.

And when I drew nigh her, she sat on her hunkers,
For to fill up her scuttle she just had begun.
And to herself she was singing a ditty
And these are the words the old lady did sing:

CHORUS: A-crying "Ochone! sure I'm nearly distracted,
For it's down by the Shoofly they cut a bad vein,
And since they condemned the old slope at the Furnace,
Sure all me fine neighbors must leave here again."

T'was only last evening that I asked McGinley
To tell me the reason the furnace gave o'er.
He told me the company had spent eighty thousand,
And finding no prospects, they would spend no more.

He said that the Diamond it was rather bony,
Besides too much dirt in the seven foot vein.
And as for the Mammoth, there's no length of gangway,
Unless they buy land from old Abel and Wayne.

CHORUS

"And as for Mike Rooney, I owe him some money.
Likewise Patrick Kearns, I owe him some more.
And as for old John Eagen, I ne'er see his wagon
But I think of the debt that I owe in the store.

I owe butcher and baker, likewise the shoemaker,
And for plowin' me garden I owe Pat McQuail;
Likewise his old mother, for one thing and another,
And to drive away bother, an odd quart of ale.

CHORUS

UNION MAN

(From the Archives of the American Folk Song, Library of Congress.
Sung by Albert Morgan in the Newkirk Tunnel Mine near Tamaqua, 1946.)

Verse 1. I think I sing that little song, hope I say it nothing wrong.
Hope my song it bring good cheer just like couple of shots of beer.

CHORUS: Union man! Union man! He must have full dinner can.
A. F. L., C. I. O., callin' strike out she go!

Verse 2. We all got contract, she expire. Mister Lewis mad like fire.
Miners strikin' too much time. Uncle Sam take over mines.
CHORUS
Verse 3. We signin' contract, we get raise, after strikin' twenty days.
Butcher comes and ringin' bell. He raises prices, what the hell!
CHORUS
Verse 4. I fire shot at ten o'clock, tumble bushes full of rock.
Timber breakin' o'er my head, jeepers cripes, I think I'm dead!
CHORUS
Verse 5. I'm drinkin' too much beer last night, to go to work, I don't feel right.
In my can some bread and meat. I'm too damn sick, I cannot eat.
CHORUS

BLUE MONDAY

(Sung by Michael F. Barry at New Kensington, Allegheny County, 1940)

I went uptown last Saturday night,
 Intending to get one drink.
The boys were all standing in front of the bar,
Telling what they could think.
Their entries they were driving,
Rooms and pillars too;
I never saw such a mess of coal
As around that barroom flew!

CHORUS: But it's always the same Blue Monday,
Blue Monday after pay;
Your shots are bad and your buddy is mad,
And the shaft will work all day.
Now I'll have no more Blue Mondays
To make my hair turn gray;
I'll join the White Ribbon and then I'll be givin'
Me wife the whole of me pay.

But if they would only stay at home,
Their dollars and dimes to save,
When a strike comes on they could sing this song:
"Operator your work we don't need!"

CHORUS