

MUSIC

Cape Breton's Diversity in Unity

New Waterford's Fatal Day

Words and music by Angus Timmons
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1. Come all you good people, draw near, pay attention,
And listen to these few lines I'm now going to pen.
'Tis of an explosion, a terrible disaster
Which brought on the death of so many brave men.
2. It was in sixteen for my bread I did labour
That day the dreadful news went around.
But little I thought that so many lay lifeless,
All torn and mangled down under the ground.
3. I quickly quit work, as may well be imagined.
All in sixteen likewise did the same.
From fourteen and fifteen in hundreds we hurried
On to the rescue, our comrades to save.
4. When those sixty-five men at their work they had started
In number twelve pit on that day in July.
Oh, little they knew that grim death would o'ertake them
And before nine o'clock they'd be called on to die.
5. When the first of the victims to the surface was carried
The sorrow and grief I shall never forget
Of mothers and wives, sisters and sweethearts
When they saw their beloved ones lying out there in death.
6. As we gaze on those men as they lie dead before us,
Our thought how they soared to our home in the sky.
We ask our dear Lord to have mercy upon them,
For none of us know how or when we must die.

7. Oh! Pity the friends of those poor Newfoundlanders
As their corpses were brought home on the steamship, the Kyle
Nineteen in number, 'twas homeward she bore them
To be laid there to rest 'neath their own native soil.

8. We have heard of our boys who have fallen in battle
Being shell-shocked and gassed by our foes far away.
But all those things were completely forgotten
When we saw what had happened in our town that day.

9. When the time had arrived for those men to be buried,
When their bodies were ready to be lead 'neath the sod,
With tears in our eyes and our hearts full of sorrow
We commended their souls to the mercy of God.

10. Those men are now gone, in their graves they are sleeping.
No doubt they'll be mourned for many a long day.
Of one of the number I make special mention,
For we all lost a friend in the late John McKay.

11. Many thanks now are due to all those outsiders
Who came to our aid in that day of great woe.
May they get their rewards in the great hereafter
And be crowned with success while they stay here below.

12. There are still many more I would like to mention;
To leave those unthanked, indeed, would be wrong.
The clergy, the doctors, the nuns and the nurses -
May they all be rewarded in the great world beyond.

13. Now I'll conclude and my song I will finish.
A few words to the mourners I yet wish to say:
Although they have parted from those they love dearly,
They'll all be united on the great judgment day.

Recording:

[New Waterford's Fatal Day](#), 1978. Amby Thomas. T-1066. Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University.