



Exploring coal mining with folk song

A Collier Lad

Written by Bryony Griffith

In partnership with

***the National Coalmining Museum for England
and Wakefield Music Hub***





The Full English Extra

The Full English Extra was an initiative to preserve and promote the folk arts, building on the success of EFDSS' flagship project The Full English, which created the world's largest digital archive of folk songs, dances, tunes and customs, and a nationwide learning programme that reached more than 16,000 people. The project was led by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Full English Extra saw the collections of Mary Neal, suffragette, radical arts practitioner and founder of the Esperance Girls Club, and folk dance educator Daisy Caroline Daking added to the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library online archive (www.vwml.org), alongside its collection of 19th century broadside ballads and songsters.

The Full English learning programme worked with three national museums – the Museum of English Rural Life at the University of Reading, the National Coal Mining Museum for England near Wakefield in Yorkshire and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, London – combining folk arts and museum education to provide powerful new learning experiences for schools and music hubs.

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Additional Resources: Audio recordings of all the tunes and exercises in this pack are available for free download from www.efdss.org/resourcebank.

A Collier Lad Lyrics

A short jingle of a song found in a book called 'Doon the Wagon Way – Mining songs from the North of England', edited by Micheal Dawney. The song was collected in 1966 from a miner called Peter Wright of Methley, Castleford.

The song was popular in the West Riding of Yorkshire and is unique with its accelerated, almost chant-like end. It is related to the North-East song *The Bonny Pit Laddie*, which you can find in our previous resource 'Coal Mining with Folk Arts and Poetry' – available for free download from the EFDSS Resource Bank.

A Collier Lad can be sung unison or with one or two harmony parts added.

A collier lad, a collier lad, a collier lad for me.

'e works in 'is oil, as black as the coil, an' gives all 'is money to me.

'e says sithee mi lass, a'll gi'thee mi brass, a'll not come 'ome late anymoor.

Mi shoes ah gonna be mended, mi stockins ah gonna dye green,

An' a'll be ready for Sunday, an' a'll be fit for a Queen.

'Ow d'ye like mi collar mi cuff, 'ow do ye like mi tie?

'Ow d'ye like mi walkin' stick, mi glass upom mi eye?

'Ow de ye like mi tailer, who med me such a toff?

'E's doin' is reg'lar business down the old pop shop.

A Collier Lad

Traditional/Arr. Bryony Griffith

Melody

Advanced Harmony

Easy Harmony

A col-li-er-lad, a col-li-er lad, a col-li-er lad for me, 'e works in 'is 'oil, as black as the coil, and

7 gives all 'is mo-ney to me, 'e says si-thee mi lass, a'll gi-thee my brass, a'll not come 'ome late an-y-moor. Mi

13 shoes ah gon^{na} be men ded, mi sto-ckings ah gon^{na} dye green, and a'll be rea⁻dy for Sun di and a'll be fit for a

20 Queen. 'ow d'you like mi col-lar mi cuff? 'ow d'you like mi tie? 'ow d'you like mi wal-king stick, mi

27 glass up-on mi eye? 'ow d'y you like mi tai-lor who med me such a

32 toff? 'e's do-ing 'is reg-u-lar busi-ness down the old pop shop.

A Collier Lad Activity Suggestions

- a. Can you figure out what the dialect words mean?

Glossary:

Collier = a coal miner

'oil = hole

coil = coal

sithe = literally 'see you', used to get someone's attention, i.e. 'come here' or 'listen'

a'll = I'll

gi'thee = give you

brass = money

anymoor = anymore

ah = are

'ow = how

toff = a posh person

- b. Discuss what this short fragment of song is about.

The collier lad is telling his girlfriend /fiancee/wife that he is going to sort himself out, smarten himself up and not stay out late spending all the money.

c. Write some new lines

In groups, or as a whole class, come up with 2 rhyming phrases connected to mining activities to replace *'e works in 'is oil, as black as the coil'* in line 2

Five syllables will be needed in each phrase.

A word grid can be used to visualise the 5 syllables.

e.g.

1	2	3	4	5
'e	works	in	'is	'oil
as	black	as	the	coil
He	works	all	day	long
while	sing-	ing	a	song
He	mines	in	the	dust
while	hack-	ing	the	crust
He	blows	up	the	wall
and	makes	the	coal	fall

The National Coal Mining Museum for England

The National Coal Mining Museum for England is the museum of the English coalfields and is based near Wakefield in West Yorkshire. Set in a reclaimed coal mining landscape including two historic pits, Caphouse Colliery and Hope Pit, the Museum brings to life the history of one of the country's oldest industries.

Visitors can access original colliery buildings to find out how life at a pit worked and explore interactive galleries, which tell the story of the thousands of people who laboured in the industry and the communities that grew around them. The Museum's nature trail and mine water treatment plant with reed beds show how, even today, coal mining leaves its mark on the landscape.



*National Coal Mining Museum for England:
Bird hides and Caphouse © NCMME*

The highlight of a visit to the Museum, however, is a trip underground. With a former miner as their personal guide, visitors ride the cage 140 metres underground in a shaft dating back to 1791, to discover first-hand what life was like at the coal-face.

The Museum runs a vibrant learning programme for school groups, welcoming over 16,000 pupils every year. The combination of historic buildings, galleries and natural landscape provide a unique creative learning space where pupils can investigate the past, solve a scientific problem, dress-up, touch the real thing, sketch, observe and be amazed. The Education team offer a series of workshops and trails, which support learning across the curriculum and provide a stimulus for lots of creative projects.

For more information about learning opportunities at the Museum, please visit the website www.ncm.org.uk/learning

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Wakefield Music Services

Lead Organisation for the Wakefield Music Education Hub



Wakefield Music Services is the Lead Organisation for Wakefield Music Education Hub. They are proud to teach over 7,000 young musicians every week and run over 70 progressive ensembles and groups. They also organise and run a wealth of concerts, projects and events throughout the year. Their belief that practical music making is for everyone through an inclusive approach not only ensures that each individual makes musical progress but that they also develop a wider range of educational, social and life skills.

The music service also offer a broad range of support and CPD for schools in a drive to continue to raise national curriculum standards and broaden musical opportunities. This includes the delivery of highly acclaimed training across the country and publishing a variety of original resources that are used in schools.

Musical opportunities have continued to grow and enrich over the last few years as they have developed new, exciting and innovative projects with other arts and cultural organisations.



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Outstanding Music for All

www.wakefieldmusicservices.org

Biography: Bryony Griffith



Bryony Griffith is a musician and singer with over 20 years of experience researching folk material, and devising innovative ways of presenting it for use in performance and education work with children, young people and adults. Bryony's skills and enthusiasm encompass solo performance, duo and band work, and also extensive experience of playing for folk dancing. Her solo album, *Nightshade*, was released in 2014.

Bryony is an experienced folk educator in school settings, including education work linked with the National Coal Mining Museum. Bryony is in much demand by festival organisers to lead music and singing workshops, including the Folkworks Summer Schools, Shepley and Whitby folk festivals.

As a performer, Bryony works as a solo artist, and also in a duo with melodeon player and dancer Will Hampson. Over the last 15 years, they have both been key members of the award-winning Demon Barbers. Their partnership started in the acclaimed ceilidh band Bedlam in their early teens which took them all over the UK festivals and gave rise to the formation of the young Cotswold side, Dogrose. They later joined the celebrated Newcastle Kingsmen. Bryony was also a member of the *a cappella* group The Witches of Elswick.

www.bryonygriffith.com



Explore The Full English digital archive

www.vwml.org/thefullenglishproject

Discover more learning resources

www.efdss.org/resourcebank