

ACT I

Scene 1

The Hiring

Song 1: Song of the Hired Men

Full company Hear us coming, O running, O drumming up our strength
Hiking, exciting and fighting over the wages
None has a poorer lot than we
But they' ll never no never O be as free
No they' ll never no never be as fancy free
As a farmer's Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man

Hear us coming, O running, O drumming up our strength
Hiking, exciting and fighting over the wages
None has a poorer lot than we
But they' ll never no never O be as free
No they' ll never no never be as fancy free
As a farmer's Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man

We're not hurried or flurried or worried for ourselves
Grinning, heads spinning not giving in o'er the beggar's
Price on our labour though
There are others, our brothers, who shy away
From the meagre pay, other days we would agree
But today we're free Hired Men
O to be a Hired Man

Twice a year here we sell you ourselves
Cannot offer you anything else
'Tisn't dear, we sell cheaply for a cottage and
Eighteen shillings
We are worth your shillings - is it done?
Throw me a Luck penny will you, O
Show your intentions are that true, O
If it's done, yes it's done
Sure of it? Sure of it!
Sure? - then it's done!

Pennington Are you for hire?

John Ay, I'm for hire.

1st Farmer Are you for hire? I want an all-round fella: you'll have to work in with everything

1st Man But what horses do you have?

1st Farmer Clydesdales - and I want them looked after: the man who wastes them gets his marchin' orders

1st Man I've always liked working with horses best.

1st Farmer Maybe. How big's your family?

1st Man Six. There's a cottage goes with it, isn't there?

1st Farmer Don't rush, lad. I haven't made me mind up yet. There's a lot of good muscle about today.

2nd Farmer You'd have to do man's work.

Woman I've never done anything else.

2nd Farmer Ay, but I've hard land, fell land; bitter work, lass.

Woman I've never been frightened of hard work.

2nd Farmer I'll think on it. I've always hired a man, see.

Woman I'm a lot cheaper; and I've no family to feed.

2nd Farmer I'll look about.

3rd Farmer Where were you last?

2nd Man Parton of Dean

3rd Farmer Why did you leave?

2nd Man We had a difference.

3rd Farmer Oh ay.

2nd Man We fell out.

3rd Farmer What's your name?

2nd Man Joe Sharp.

3rd Farmer I want no troublemakers near me. On your way!

Full company (*singing*) We've been drinking we're stinking but living
Hear our thrilling and willing awakening - walked for miles but
O - wouldn't miss a hiring!
Blisters stinging, ears ringing, not suffering -
We're expecting a better life tomorrow
When we'll still be Hired Men!
O to be a Hired Man.

Throw me a Luck penny will you, O
Show your intentions are that true, O
Is it done? Yes it's done!
Sure of me? Sure of you!
Done? - to be sure!

4th Farmer What do you expect?
3rd Man Seventeen shillings a week.
4th Farmer Fifteen's my limit... Will your wife help out?
3rd Man That depends.
4th Farmer We'll give you your vegetables.
2nd Farmer Fifteen and sixpence and dead meat.
4th Man One shilling for luck and it's done.
5th Farmer Done.
6th Farmer All right, lass. Ten shillings.
Woman Twelve?
6th Farmer Ten. And all found.
Woman I suppose it's the best I'll get.
6th Farmer Done.
Pennington Sixteen shillings all you'll get from me, lad.
John Eighteen.
Pennington Your wife'll get her vegetables.
John I'll hang on.
Pennington You'll do no better here today. I guarantee that.
John I'm not working for that.
Pennington I'll throw in some dead meat. That's my limit!

John (*singing*) Two dozen others like me, or more
Two dozen want the same job I'm in for
Two dozen heroes recruiting for a war with the land,
New shillings in their hands,
A bargain for such a man.

Show me your Luck penny will you, O
Knowing I'll take any that's true, O
Look at me, bid for me,
Deal with me, hire me,
Call, and I'm yours!

I must be among the youngest
And rate among the strongest
I'm married with a good wife though
Soon she'll need a midwife I'm sure,
Yes it's done!

John goes across to the waiting Pennington, spits on his own hand, shakes on the deal and takes Pennington's coin - the "luck penny"

Full company Hear us coming O running O singing over the fields
We till, more the work of gods than men
But we'll never, no never regret the day
That we put ourselves willing in the hiring ring
O to be a Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man

Throw us your Luck pennies will you, O
Show your intentions are that true, O
Are you sure? Yes you're sure
Is it done? Yes it's done
O to be a Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man.

Isaac Is thou for hire, lad?

John (*embracing him*) Isaac!

Isaac What the hell, boy. I'm your brother not your mother. Keep yourself
fresh for your wife.

John Are you hired yet?

Isaac Me? I have schemes John. One of which is on four legs with our Seth.
First Commandment - don't give in until you're gaspin'! I'll only come to
these miserable beggars if my luck goes bad. You know me, John; only work
if you can't avoid it.

John I've taken Pennington's coin.

Isaac You can always give it back. Remember the Good Book - the lilies of the
field, they strive not - but just you *look* at them blow! Be a lily of the field,
John; like me: come and have a pie and a pint.

John Well, I think I'd better wait here...for Emily.

Isaac Come on, kidder - grab a bit of life!

Full company Throw us your Luck pennies will you, O
Show your intentions are that true, O
Are you sure? Yes you're sure!
Is it done? Yes it's done!
O to be a Hired Man!
O to be a Hired Man!

*John and Isaac move into the "pub" area; the landlady comes on with a jug of
beer; Seth enters with a whippet*

Seth John!

John Seth!

They shake hands

Isaac The Tallentire boys.

John The Three Musketeers.

All All for one!... (*Looking at the whippet*)... And one on all fours!

Isaac (*to the Landlady*) Right, missis. Three pints and six meat pies. I'm in training!

Seth How's married life?

John You should give it a try yourself.

Isaac He can't...the dog won't let him look at another woman.

Seth It was a bit sudden wasn't it?

John These things happen.

Isaac Not to me they don't.

Seth Best of luck to you...you must have walked twenty miles to get here.

What was wrong with home?

John Father.

Isaac Still behaving as if he owned the place, eh?

John Ay! And Emily wanted away. She got a lift in a pony and trap. She should be here any time now.

Seth Where'll you live?

John There's a cottage, he says, a bit run-down but I can have it.

Isaac You know what run down means don't you?

John No.

Isaac It means it used to have four walls.

Seth What did you get?

John Sixteen shillings.

Seth You'd get better wages down the pit with me.

John I want farm work.

Seth There's no future in it, John.

John Emily wouldn't suffer pit life.

Seth Needs must, John, when the devil drives.

John Emily's got a bit of devil in her, herself.

Seth We can use that.

John What for?

Seth We need to organize.

John Yes?

Seth If we're to keep going forward, John. It wasn't long ago we had women and children down those mines.

Isaac Come on, man, even the whippet's getting depressed!

Seth Give up this farm work. Come with me.

Isaac Leave him alone. He's a wife to look out for and a life of his own to lead. Let him be. John wants farm work. Beats me - but so did our father. So did our grandfather. It's a Tallentire family tradition!



Seth What happened to you, then?

Isaac I've got another tradition.

Seth Drink, dogs and wrestling.

Isaac Ay, it's a straight line down from our grandmother.

Seth Show some respect for the dead.

Isaac She's not dead, she's just having a rest before her next bout.

John Ay and you'd better get some of this down you before yours...

Song 2: Fill It to the Top

Isaac I propose a toast to life
To sport, good fun and ease
A life of risks, of dice and chance
I give you all of these.
Farm work means you're stuck in one place
Mining's worse underground at the coal face
Fill it to the top, man
Get it down
Pass another round
Then I'll drink to that!

Seth I will drink to a better life
For all our working men,
A living wage, a good old age
To that I'll say Amen!
Justice - we can fight for that John
Progress we've deserved for so long
Come and work the mines, lad
Leave the land
You'll soon understand
That's where happiness lies!

John Last: a toast to the best of all
The girl I did this for
Our life together, and soon a child
I couldn't ask for more.

Isaac and Chorus
Good health, here's to two
young lovers
A baby on the way and his
two fine brothers
Fill it to the top man

John
Good health, to two
young lovers
Baby and two fine
Fill it to the top

Seth
Good health, to two
young lovers
Baby and two fine
brothers. brothers
Fill it to the top

Get it down
Pass another round Pass another round Pass another round
Then we'll have some more, Then we'll toast Then we'll have some
Fill it to the top man Have some more more
Get it down Fill it to the top Fill it to the top
Pass another round. . Pass another round. . Pass another round. .

All That's what toasts are for!

Pause

Emily enters

John (*going to meet her*) There she is. Emily! Emily!
Emily John!

They embrace

We are going to stay a bit and look around, aren't we?
John Ay, there's a fair here. I've got myself hired. (*He puts her on top of the mine entrance*)
Emily I knew you would. Whereabout?
John Crossbridge. Eight miles. It's up in the hills.
Emily I could do with the walk after sitting on that blessed cart all morning.
John Isaac and Seth are here. I was quite pleased to tell you the truth. I know nobody else.
Emily That's what I like! Don't you see? Oh, John.

Song 3: Now For the First Time

(*Singing*) Now for the first time we're out on our own
Taking for once our decisions alone
We'll have a home and some wages to share
No-one will know us from Adam up there
People won't ask why we married so young
Won't disapprove of the things we have done

Say farewell to the idle suspicion
We don't need permission to
Say farewell to the shaking of heads
At the two newly-weds
For when I say "I do" then I do!
Yes and I say I do I love you.

Two unknown faces, we've only ourselves
Taking our chance somewhere high in the fells
I'm not ashamed we decided to leave
I'm not afraid of the reasons that we've got to
Emily and John Say farewell to our fathers and mothers
And all of those others who
Said farewell thinking "they'll soon return"
Saying "they'll have to learn
That to think for yourself is a crime",
Well that may be their view - it's not mine!
Say farewell to the whispers and winks
And a village that thinks that we'll
Ne'er do well but we'll prove that they're wrong
And it won't be too long before
They wish that they'd done it too!
They'll be sorry they didn't have you.

They kiss, John lifts Emily down. Isaac and Seth approach

John There's Seth and Isaac now. Come and say hello.

Emily How do I look?

John All right. This is the brother you didn't meet. Seth. This is Emily.

Seth Sorry I couldn't make the wedding, missis. The very best of luck.

Emily Thank you for the knives and forks.

They shake hands

I appreciated them. Hello Isaac.

Isaac Am I welcome, missis?

Emily My mother still hasn't forgiven you for setting up that cock fight half way through our wedding.

Isaac As the prophet says - "When you see a chance for a bit of sport, drop everything".

Emily He would be shown the door in our house - prophet or no prophet.

John (*of Seth's whippet*) Is that thing any good?

Isaac Oh yes. Oh indeed it is. It can fly, John. I've seen it. It's got my shirt on it today. That bitch'll have been well fed and exercised. It'll have been well looked after. I just hope that John treats you as well as Seth treats this bitch of his, missis.

Emily Thank you, Isaac.

Seth I'd better walk her round a bit. Can't let her stiffen up. (*To the whippet*)
Come on.

Seth exits with the dog

Isaac Right! Let's see if we can drum up some sport.

Emily Is it bear-baiting or just a fight to the death?

Isaac Wrestling.

Emily Well, I'll hold the bucket for the blood.

Isaac (*taking off his jacket*) You've married a joker there, John.

John Take no notice.

Isaac I never do, John. I'll watch you, young lady. Right then! Who'll take us on. One fall. Sudden Death. Cumberland and Westmorland style. Five shillings. Five shillings here in my hand!

Jackson Hold on to these, Father. (*He hands Pennington his jacket etc.*) I'll wrestle you!

Isaac Good man. There's my stake.

Jackson And mine!

Pennington More money than sense.

Isaac There always is, mister. Have we a judge? Dan?

Dan Right.

Isaac May the best man win.

Jackson Jackson Pennington.

Isaac Isaac Tallentire. You've a good grip on you.

The men get into the grip for Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling - arms over and under, hands locked over opponent's back, posture crabwise, aim to break the other's grip by throwing him. Shouts of "Come on, Isaac", "Come on Jackson" etc. After a strong tussle - strength (Isaac) against liveness and cleverness (Jackson) - Isaac wins. Jackson's father has thrown down his (Jackson's) clothes. Jackson goes to pick them up. John has gone to congratulate Isaac. Emily is on her own.

Emily You should have won.

Jackson He's like a bullock.

Emily But you were a lot faster. I think you should have won.

Jackson smiles; a moment

Isaac and Seth exit

John (*not seeing Emily with Jackson, calling anxiously*) Emily.

After the wrestling, music as everyone begins to move off, John and Emily to the cottage



Song 4: Hired Men (Reprise)

Chorus Hear us going, o'erflowing, not knowing where
 Though we're tired, we're hired, we've fire in our hearts
 Tied by a luck penny only
 Bargained for more money vainly
 O to be a Hired Man
 Give our whole lives to the land
 O to give our hired hands.

Hear us going, o'erflowing, not knowing where
Though we're tired, we're hired, we've fire in our hearts
Hear us going, o'erflowing, not knowing where
Though we're tired, we're hired, we've fire in our hearts
(Fading into the distance)

The chorus is repeated until the stage is clear, as all exit

In the cottage:

John Well, we've started out.

Black-out

Scene 2

Song 5: Work

Workers From dawn till dusk each hour
Each day each week
The whole year
No waking moment can we waste here

Farmers From head to toe each limb
Each bone each muscle
Straining
We'll not have idling or
Complaining.

Workers It's alright for you though
You have men in your employ
You're alright 'cos you know
Such good men in your employ

Pennington From cot to grave the land's
No slave it craves
Attention
The day of rest is man's
Invention.

Farmers Anchor'd in the hard earth
You'll survive through sweat and toil

Workers What would grow without us?
Who would tend this barren soil?
If we were you, though, we'd be the same

Farmers But you are not!

Workers When things went wrong we too
Would shift the blame!

All Though like our forefathers
We're poor men
We've still the strength of those that
Bore them
And pray our children are such proud men,
Proud men.
If you lived our lives you'd be the same
In your hearts too would burn such a flame.

In the cottage:

Sally You know I didn't have anyone to visit 'til you came here.

Emily I'm not surprised in a place like this.

Sally The minute I saw you and John at Cockermouth Hiring, I knew we'd be best friends. Is Crossbridge what you expected?

Emily It's too much like the place I came from for comfort. Same farm talk; same sleet; same blessed rain on washing day.

Sally People like thee. And you've made a marvellous job of this pigsty Pennington foisted off on thee.

Emily I nearly went mad when I first saw it. And John would have turned round and gone home if I'd let him.

Sally Everybody says what a good worker he is.

Emily Good? Hard, you mean. He does nothing else. He seems to lose himself in it. He has no time for anything but that blessed work.

Sally But you're married, and there's May; what more does you want?

Emily I thought we were starting out on something, not finishing up with something.

Sally Emily Tallentire, you do love him?

Emily Yes...of course...don't be silly.

John (*singing*) No snow too deep, no fell too steep will e'er

Defeat me

I'll never rest from work completely

All It's alright for us though

The open air's our second home

John No greater pleasure than work done well

Against all weather high on some fell

No finer sight than ploughed furrows deep

To eek out ripe land from hillsides steep.

Pennington Here's your dinner. Save you coming up to the house.

Jackson And keep our noses in it, eh, Father? Considering the age of that bloody plough, John has fair claim to be a miracle worker.

Pennington Language. Have you finished that bottom field, Jackson?

Jackson Half an hour since.

Pennington You work too fast. I'll go down and see what you've missed.

Jackson I'm off for a pint. John?

Pennington He can't afford to drink.

Jackson Not on the money you give him.

Pennington You'll go too far one of these days.

Jackson You can put money on that, Father. Have my tea, John.

Jackson exits I

Pennington Slow work.

John That field can't have been touched for a century.

Pennington I never had anybody I thought could handle it.

John I enjoyed doing it. I like seeing it all opened up like that. You'll need a new plough.

Pennington Chance'd be a fine thing. My father had five men working with him. I've you.

John And Jackson.

Pennington Work's the only thing that's cheap today. I've got no money for new ploughs. All we've got is toil, John.

All Come lend a hand, come give your all come spare
 Your whole life.
 Come take the strain, come use your
 Whole might

The Men turn to face the Farmers, and the Farmers turn to face the Men

Workers It's alright for you squire
 You have men who'll break their backs
 It's alright when you tire
 You've got us to take the slack

Counter Melody (Farmers) We work until we drop, work until we die.

Workers If we were you, though, we'd be the same
Farmers But you are not!
Workers When things went wrong we too would shift the blame
Farmers It's alright for you men
 Make the best of what you've got
 The fact of the matter is this, men
 We're in charge and you are not

Counter Melody (Workers) We work until we drop, work until we die.
 Work until we drop

All The fact of the matter is this, then
 You're/we're in charge and
 We/you are not!

Black-out

Scene 3

Crossbridge

In the cottage, Sally and Emily are folding sheets

Sally When I get married it'll be perfection or I'll go back home.

Emily Ah, we'll see.

Sally Except nobody'll ever ask me.

Emily You are a bit past it. What is it, seventeen?

Song 6: Who Will You Marry Then?

(Singing)

Who will you marry then, who will it be?
When they come courtin' you will you agree?
Who'll be your beau when you go to a dance,
Will you encourage or check his advance?
How about Josh with the short curly hair,
Didn't you once go with him to a fair?

Sally

Don't say him!
He's a nice enough lad but I'm scared of his dad and he's
Far too thin -
Nothing firm to hold onto if he were upon you
I won't say "I do" not to him!

Emily

Who will you marry then, who will you take?
Who will adore all the cakes that you bake?
Will it be Tom with the long hairless legs,
Whiter and brighter than newly-laid eggs?

Sally

Don't say him!
Don't say Joe from the pub who is shaped like a tub
And don't say Jim
Who breeds dogs for a hobby, he's worse than our Bobby
No I don't think I'd do just for Jim.
He will be simply the best I can find
He will be handsome and clever and kind

Emily

Someone with looks, lots of books and a heart?
Sally that isn't a promising start

Sally

I will have someone who's blue-eyed and tall
I will have *Jackson* the best of them all!
I'll have him -

Emily

He's a wonderful man, I'll wed him if I can
Marry him?

Sally such a good match is the hardest to catch
If he did say "I do" then he'd do!

Both If he did say "I do" then he'd do!

They finish folding the sheets and put them in the basket as they talk

Emily Have you proposed yet?

Sally It'll come to that.

Emily He likes you.

Sally That's the trouble. I could be his bloomin' sister for all he really cares.

I'll have to run back. Thanks for helping with the sheets. (*She takes the basket and sheets*)

Emily Tomorrow?

Sally Tomorrow. (*She leaves the cottage and meets:*)

Jackson as he enters

Pause

Jackson Hello Sally.

Sally Jackson. What are you doing down here?

Jackson A bit of peace and quiet.

Sally Oh. Well then. I have to go. See thee.

Jackson See thee.

Sally exits

Pause

Anybody home? There's a fine day out here - waiting to be used up.

Emily comes out

Emily Do you just take a day off whenever you have the mind?

Jackson Ay. More or less. I won't be round here much longer. (*He goes up on the rocks*)

Emily You fancy yourself, Jackson Pennington, don't you? (*She moves to the upper level*)

Jackson Just as well somebody does.

Emily Oh - Sally thinks you're the sun and the moon.

Jackson Sally's a very nice kid. Sally was the best thing around here until *you* turned up.

Emily Sally's got plans for you.

Jackson Has she now? Fancy one? *(He offers her a cigarette)*

Emily Well...can I try a puff?

Jackson Very good.

Emily I could get used to it... You've been all over the place, haven't you?

Jackson Here and there

Emily Where would you really like to go - if you could choose anywhere at all?

Jackson I've thought of Australia or Canada. I'm not sure I wouldn't get just as restless there. You take yourself with you wherever you go, don't you? I can't get it out of my mind that there has to be more to life than this - not just the work here or the same face, some of that has a pull, it's kept me at the end of its rope so far - I mean more to it than what I've done, I suppose, then what I've added up to. I keep thinking - that can't be all there is, it just can't be. But maybe I needn't go far now. Maybe what I want is home.

Emily I can't see anything to keep you here.

Jackson Thou can't or thou won't?

Emily Same thing.

Jackson Show us your left hand. *(He takes Emily's hand)* I can read palms, you know. I'll tell you what you'll do.

Emily Jackson.

Jackson I'll keep the bad bits to myself.

Emily I think I'd better go. *(She rises and takes her hand away)*

Jackson rises. They are very close

Jackson Are you afraid of what people would think?

Emily You can't be too careful in a place like this, can you, Jackson?

Jackson stays and watches as Emily goes into the house

Black-out

6a: Interlude: Time-passing

Scene 4

In the cottage:

Isaac enters with his bag

Isaac By crikey it's wet! Hello all. Too wet to knock. Sorry, missis. By God if it knows anything at all up here it knows how to rain!

Emily Sit down and get dry - let me take you jacket - you'll have something to eat - John!

John Come and have a chair.

Isaac Well. *(After a pause)* I should have let you know, missis; I know I should.

Emily You'er welcome any time. Sit down.

John I heard you were cutting granite down at Moota.

Isaac I was, then a butcher took us on and then I helped a fella sell a few horses and one way and another I've got money for a few weeks, do-as-I-feel-like.

Emily Dost thou like apple pie?

Isaac I do, Emily, I do. You've found a weakness there. But - I'd better say what I have to say first, missis, thank you all the same. Now then: This Melbreak pack is having a hell of a season, and my plan is to follow them for a month or two.

Emily I didn't know you had a horse, Isaac. Didst thou win it?

Isaac It's not your low country style hunting here missis, is it John? It's all on your own two feet in these hills: just us lads running after a fox with a few dogs, but what sport!

John I've seen them up on Blake sometimes.

Isaac Nothing finer ever invented. But what I need is what you might call a *basis* like. Not for every night. If fox takes off I'll stop where we drop. But what I want is somewhere to leave my things for a few weeks. I'll pay for my feed, of course: I'll insist. As the prophet said: "If you can't pay - don't stay". And I can sleep on that mat in front of the fire there - best bed in the house.

Emily Of course you can stay... And - why don't you take John with you? He's never given himself a single holiday. He used to have so much "go" in him, Isaac.

John That was before I had responsibilities.

Emily Only ones you make for yourself. We're stuck here. Sometimes I think my head'll blow off. We do nothing.

John We went to see your mother last Christmas.

Emily Oh John!

Isaac He's like our mother, missis, work-worms. She'll have a pinny on when

she meets St Peter and ask him if there's any scrubbing out to be done.
Emily Go on, John. Pennington owes you time off.
John It'll have to be thought about, Emily.
Isaac Now I didn't come here to split up a family.
Emily It would do him good, wouldn't it, Isaac?

Isaac wanders over to the table and takes the whole of the apple pie

Isaac Good? I don't know about good, missis. Good's a very tricky article. But - he'll have a hell of a time! He'll be with lads who know about sport and hounds that can sniff up a scent on a stone road - and we'll be after that fox, missis, the best little creature there is - the animal that can run rings around two dozen men and a pack of hounds and then have time to sit and tidy up his tail - he'll be *hunting*, missis, that's what he'll be doing, eh John? What do you say, kidder - have some sport!

During the song, Isaac and John move to the "pub" and are joined by the other men

Song 7: Get Up and Go, Lad

(Singing) You don't want to be locked up!
You don't want to be tied down!
You don't want to be left out
You need to look around and try your luck
No matter what they say to you
Don't be shy
For if you stop to ponder life will
Pass you by,
Left high and dry
No matter what the risk might be,
It's better to be fancy free,
Try oh try

Get up and go, lad
You're looking so sad
Soon you'll be so glad you came along,
Your blood'll run round
And make your lungs pound
And when the sun's down
We'll have a hair of the dog
And sing a hunting song!

Chorus

Ha!

Isaac Up there - an unknown fell
Chorus Ha!
Isaac Stone walls, and frozen ground
Chorus Ha!
Isaac See there a glimpse of fox
Chorus Ha!
Isaac And all around the sound of baying hounds
Tumble trip and gallop down a
Rolling scree
We leap another thirty fences
Blind to all the consequences -
Follow me!

Isaac goes to the upper level

All Get up and go, lad
It isn't so bad
To play nomad for just a while
You've not had fun yet
You've not made one bet
Come see a sunset
Where we will drink the blood o' the fox
And make you smile

Isaac (*speaking*) I give you a toast lads: to Mister Fox - God bless him! And the life of Riley - God bless that!

John I thought we'd lost him in Holme Wood - I thought we'd never get him out!

Isaac They're going into Lorton tomorrow. Fancy another day? We shall have to sleep here.

John (*singing*) If I should hunt an extra day
I fear what Emily might say
The bed half empty,
And she'll sleep lonely,
But what of my own desires?

Landlady Men who roam, your wives at home
Won't miss you while you're gone...

Back home in the cottage:

Emily (*singing*) Love why are you turning.
Love where are you leading us?

Now he seems a weaker man
I wish I could understand

I know that it's also me
That I want to see
A man he cannot be
Those nights when I lie awake
When I cry awake
He too is still awake...
Wide awake...

In the Pub:

John (*singing*) I've not spent nights away before
Or been off work a day or more...

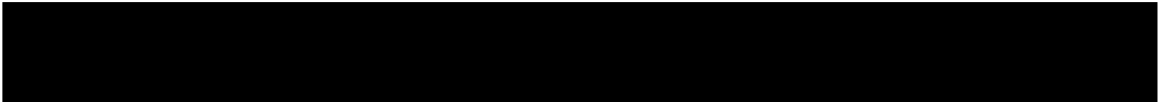
To hell with worries!
I'll take my chances,
I'll choose for myself this time -
Enjoying myself's no crime.

(*Speaking*) Yes! I'll send word to Emily with Joe Sharp. Yes. I won't do it again will I, not for a long time? One more day.

Women	Men who roam, you're far from home, Your wives are fast asleep...
Chorus	Ha!
Isaac	You don't want to be locked up!
Chorus	Ha!
Isaac	You don't want to be tied down
Chorus	Ha!
Isaac	You don't want to miss the sport
Chorus	Ha!

Isaac tours the group of men

Isaac You don't want to tow the line -
Do what you ought,
No matter what your wives mean to you
Stay oh stay
And even if you miss them, they won't
Go astray,
They're here always



I'll wager you'll be glad you stayed
I'll bet you're here for one more day
Cast care away!

Chorus 1 So stop your qualing
Chorus 2 So stop your qualing
Chorus 1 Join our wassailing
Chorus 2 Join our wassailing
Chorus 1 Let's get some ale in -
All And then you'll stay!

Chorus 1 You'll set a fast pace
Chorus 2 You'll set a fast pace
Chorus 1 With your newfound taste
Chorus 2 With your newfound taste
Chorus 1 And at the last race
All You'll find your life the final price
 You'll have to pay,
 You'll find your life the final price
 You have - to - pay! Ha!

Black-out

Scene 5

After the Hunt.

In the cottage, the table is laid for supper

Jackson It's a fine welcome that.

Emily I've asked you to keep away.

Jackson Yes, it's a fine spread.

Emily He's a fine man.

Jackson He must be.

Emily He'll be back soon. With Isaac.

Jackson No, no they won't... Joe Sharp brought word they're stopping over for another night.

Emily Oh...so that's why you've come down here.

Jackson I can't stop wanting you, Emily.

Song 8: I Wouldn't Be the First

Emily I wouldn't be the first
Nor would I be the last
You'd want me for a time
Until your passion passed

Jackson We've been through all this before
There are no others any more

Emily There's only you, there's only you
Suddenly, you're not the man that
Countless girls pursued
Suddenly, you change your ways to
Suit my fickle mood
I have ev'rything to lose
Only I am forced to choose
And pay the price, I pay the price.

Jackson Come away
There is nothing for us here
All that holds you back is fear
You must break free
Come away
I'd have long since gone by now
But for you I don't know how
I could have stayed

Emily Let me be
 You know I want to go
 You know I feel the same
 But still my answer's no
 Still I can't abandon John
 Still I feel our love is wrong
 I cannot go, I cannot go

Jackson Suddenly you think of him
 Despite all you have done
Emily Suddenly I think of him
 Because of what I've done

I could not leave
Though inside I want you so
Though with ev'ry hour I know
I want you more
I could not leave,
In his way John cares for me
In my heart I'd not be free
From what has been.

Jackson Say this won't last
 Our love has passed
 Say you don't love me.

Emily You must go
 Though all you say is true
 If I let you stay
 I'm scared of what I'll do

Emily
If I could I'd come away
If there wasn't John or May
It cannot change, it cannot change

Jackson
Tell me why you have to stay
Tell me love won't find a way
Tell me you don't love me

In the end
I can see myself reach back
And it isn't that I lack
The strength to move

I know you want me,
Come, let me hold you
Come give your love,
I know you want me

I cannot leave
Though inside I want you so

Come, let me hold you
Come give your love,

Though with ev'ry hour I know come give your love...
I want you more, I want you more
I want you...

They embrace. Jackson exits. The music climaxes and continues under:

John and Isaac are near the cottage

Isaac I'll hunt a few more days, John. Expect me when you see me.

John We'll do it again, won't we?

Isaac Won't we just. You're a dab hand at it, John. You were up and down
those fells like a rabbit in a lather.

John You're a lucky old devil.

Isaac Correct.

John When you see Seth, tell him to drop in again soon. Emily likes talking to
him.

Isaac He's a terrible serious man for talk. Still, that whippet has made me a
bob or two in its time.

John When will we see you again?

Isaac When my feet run out.

John So long then.

Isaac Regards to Emily and May and look after yourself, kidder. Away!

Isaac exits

John moves to the cottage

John Emily... Did you get the message?

Emily Yes, I did.

John It was such good sport.

Emily I didn't mind you going. You sounded like Isaac then. "Such good sport."

John Isaac was the lad! You should have seen him.

Emily What did he do?

John Oh...just about everything. He was the life and soul of it!

Emily Come on then, John; give us all the crack.

Pause

John How's May then?

Emily Fine. Grand. She's no trouble at all.

John Anybody drop in?

Emily No. Nobody at all.

John Except Joe Sharp?



Emily Joe Sharp?

John With word. That I was staying over.

Emily I didn't mind you staying over.

John I wanted to get back.

Emily You could have had another day or two. You've earned them.

John Maybe I will then. Next time.

Song 9: Fade Away

(Singing) Once she told me ev'rything
 Now she'll not say anything
 Once she was in love with me
 Now she seems uneasy

 Can't say what I want to say
 What I mean to say
 What I never say
 Don't know what she thinks of me
 What I'm meant to be
 Will I ever see?
 There behind those sad eyes
 There I know the answer lies...

Emily Cold, my touch unsettles him
 Cold wraps round our feelings
 Love which once had tenderness
 Now is dull and passionless

 Our love must it fade away, has it more to say,
 did it mean to stay?
 Our love, will it not awake,
 for our future's sake, or will it steal away,
 Steal away?...

Black-out

Scene 6

The Pub - The Fight

Jackson Right lads, drinks on me.

All cheer

Tom We wouldn't be here if they weren't.

They all laugh

No, no. I'm only joking. Last time you will be here with us like this. Once people been in the Army, they're never the same after. Look at my uncle Geoff, joined the Army, came back: completely changed.

Dan How?

Tom Dead.

1st man You make sure you don't get yourself killed.

Jackson I'll do my best.

Bob I wouldn't mind the getting killed, it's the discipline I couldn't stand.

Fifty lashes if you so much as break wind.

Dan Sounds just like home to me.

General mirth

Josh You'll miss home, though, won't you, Jackson?

Jackson What's there to miss?

Tom Well, the ale.

1st Man And the girls. Eh, Jackson?

Josh Now none of that. Arh, I remember when we were lads, I wasn't half soft on this girl, and when I asked her if she'd kiss me she said, no, she was saving herself for Jackson Pennington.

Jackson No.

Josh Ay, and you remember that day at school when they found that cow pat in your desk?

Jackson How could I forget.

Josh That was me!

Jackson It wasn't.

Josh Ay. It was. Revenge. Reckoned she'd not go kissing a man who kept cow pats in his desk. I didn't half have trouble sneaking it into school though. Had to put it in with my dinner things. Sandwiches that day, worst I ever had.

Dan Sounds just like home.

Great mirth. Dan is very pleased at the reaction

Tom Where do you think you'll go to, Jackson?

Jackson I think I'll apply for India, sun all day, elephants and Maharajas. All that fightin' and the North-west Frontier. And all those dancing girls.

Dan Sounds just like home.

Bob No, but it's no joke, is it? Couldn't bring myself to do the killing. "Thou shalt not kill." How do you feel about that, Jackson? Are you prepared to kill a man?

Jackson Wouldn't be going if I wasn't. What's a rifle for?

John and Isaac enter

Jackson John, Isaac, it's on me.

Isaac Very handsome of you, Jackson.

John Thanks.

Isaac What are we celebrating?

Jackson I'm off to the Army.

Isaac No.

John Bit sudden.

Jackson You know me, John. Do a thing first, think about it after.

John It's a big decision though, good luck.

Isaac Brings it back, this, doesn't it, Jack? Your twenty-first. You remember that?

Jackson Ay.

Isaac When all those gypsies came to town.

Jackson Ay.

Isaac You've never seen such a thing. The drinking, the dancing. The Vicar near died of shock: but they gave us a good time, didn't they?

Jackson Ay, they did.

Isaac Of course, when we woke up in the morning they'd gone and stolen everything.

Man The hens.

Josh The lambs.

Tom The women. Oh no, sorry about that, Bob.

Bob No, that's all right. Never you mind, that's fine.

Josh She was always a wild one.

Man You're better off without her.

Bob Ay.

Tom And now you've got your dog, haven't you?

Bob Ay.

Tom More reliable.

Bob Ay. You don't get a dog dancing and putting on ear-rings and spraying on lots of perfume and running off with the gippos.

Tom No.

Man It would be a bloody funny dog if you did.

Joe Sharp enters. He whispers to Jackson

Dan I've a mind to join the Army. Do they let you take your wife with you?

Jackson No.

Dan Even better.

Jackson Put another round in, missis, I'll be back in a minute. *(He goes outside)*

Isaac I tell you what we've just seen on the way up here. A pack of weasels. Has anybody seen them packing?

Man My father has.

Isaac Frightenin'. I've only seen it once before. I was sleepin' out - it was good dry weather - and down they came. And what a sound they make. It was like something out of the plagues of Egypt.

Cut to Jackson outside the pub, alone. Music. The Lights dim in the pub

Song 10: Hear Your Voice (i)

Jackson Hear your voice, calling me
 See your eyes, facing me
 Dream of you in my sleep

 But you're not there, Emily
 Life with you can never be
 Our two bodies never meet.

 A last goodbye,
 Then I'll take my leave and go
 Though tonight for once I know
 You would be mine,
 You would be mine...

Emily meets him

Emily So you weren't going to come and tell me at all.

Jackson I would've told you.

Emily No. You were going to get drunk tonight and slink off tomorrow without

even seeing me. You must have known I would hear about it. You're the talk of Crossbridge, Jackson, going for the Army. Biggest thing that's happened for months.

Jackson We had our chance.

Emily It's over for you, isn't it?

Jackson There's no point in this, Emily.

Emily Just a few months ago you would run over a fell just to spend five minutes together. Just a few weeks ago you would make sure you knew every move I made.

Jackson And what did you do? You told me about May, you told me about John - you held on and you held on. Look where it got us.

Emily Don't go.

Cut back to the Pub. The Lights increase

1st Man Where's Jackson got himself to?

2nd Man What was it you told him, Joe?

Joe Sharp Never you mind. Bring them in, missis.

Isaac Joe's a regular postman, aren't you, Joe?

John Owe you a drink for that.

Joe Sharp No trouble.

John No, no, now. You brought word back from Lorton to Emily. Fair's fair. It gave me another day's hunting.

1st Man Ay, but you passed it on to Jackson, didn't you, Joe? It was Jackson delivered the message to Emily, wasn't it?

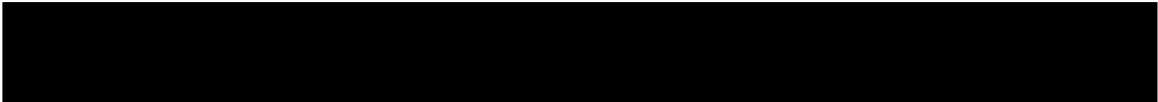
Joe Sharp Be quiet!

John Jackson!

Song 11: What a Fool I've Been

(Singing) The furtive looks and timid glances
Now I see what they were
And though I sensed that she was restless,
Still I trusted in her.
Her distance, her silence,
It all meant the same...

And not a soul would tell me plainly
Not a friend said a word
Their secret kept by all who knew me
Not a whisper I heard.



Their distance, their silence,
They all knew the truth...

During the song, John leaves the "pub" and goes to find Jackson & Emily

And what a fool I've been
Didn't recognise the signs
Didn't guess the countless times
They must have shared
They must have shared.
And what a fool I've been
Didn't read it in her eyes
Didn't hear the endless lies
That hid their love
That hid their love

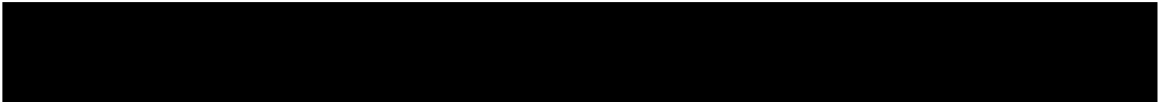
What did I do that made her hate me
Did I drive her away?
How long ago had she decided
She would leave me some day?
But I cared, in my way
I gave all I had...

And what a fool I've been
Didn't recognise the signs
Didn't guess the countless times
They must have shared
They must have shared

And what a fool I've been
Didn't read it in her eyes
Didn't hear the endless lies
That hid their love
That hid their love.

John Jackson!
Emily John. Leave us alone. Please.

The fight. Jackson is felled



Song 12: If I Could...

Emily

If I could
I'd catch them as they fall
Shield them from the pain
And heed them when they call
Both deserved much more than this
For them both I would have wished
Another love,
Another love.

Suddenly, before my eyes
My darkest fears come true
Suddenly, I know that there is
Nothing I can do.

What went wrong
That an anger so extreme
One that nothing could redeem
Was brought to life?

Now I know
I should have been aware
That you would make this move
That only you would dare
Though I knew it had to end
With your love I could pretend
You wouldn't go
You wouldn't go

But suddenly, you think of me as
Someone else's wife
Suddenly, I'm just another
Chapter in your life

Was I wrong
When I chose at first to stay
Though it broke my heart each day
I had no choice?

You saw my tears
You knew my fears
Why must you go now?

How they stare
Witness to my shame
And though I've done no wrong
A score of saints will claim
That she led the poor man on
That she's cruel and better gone
"She didn't care,
She didn't care"

So pass me by
And let me cry
Tears that would ask me:

Emily
Is it love
That has kept me here
alone
That has robb'd me of
my home
And told me lies?

Is it love
Or a pain I once endured?
One that nothing could
have cured?
And never dies
And never dies
And never dies


John
All we had
All the hopes we
Brought with us here
Are at an end.
Our dreams are gone
Wounds that life itself
Couldn't heal
Wounds that tear our
love
Apart
And never die.

Jackson
There's nothing here
now
Nothing to hold me
Without your love
And though I leave
here
I'll never forget love
Forever strong
A flame that burns
Forever bright.

Emily Love that nothing could have cured
And never dies...

Song 13: Hired Men (Reprise)

Farmworkers Hear us coming O running O
Drumming up our strength
Hiking, exciting and fighting O



Hear us coming O running O
Drumming up our strength
Hiking, exciting and fighting O
Hear us...etc

Miners Men of stone, your wives at home
Your future's in our hands.

All Step by step and pit by pit
We'll find the promised land

Curtain

ACT II

Scene 1

It is early summer 1914 in Crossbridge

The scene opens to the sound of birds, countryside. A shot is fired

May How can you run on a day like this?

Harry (*ignoring her*) He must be in that wood over there.

May If you go any nearer he'll shoot you...

Harry I want to see his gun.

May Then where will we be? Mam'd kill me: Getting you dead. Especially here.

May sits on a rock

Harry I'll just go over and see.

May Suit yourself. I'm sure I'm not moving from here until that sun stops being so bloomin' sweaty. (*She begins to take off one of her Edwardian garments*)

Harry May!

May Yes?

Harry What if folk see?

May See what?

Harry Well...you.

May I think I'm very nice: I don't mind showing myself off.

Harry They can be funny in a place like this.

May (*still undressing*) What do you know about a bloomin' place like this?

Harry Are you sure I was born here?

May Almost. I certainly was. I think I can remember it.

Harry Will it be all right if I leave you?

May It will be better than that. Go and get shot. (*She stretches back voluptuously*) I'm going to give myself up to pleasure -

Harry Oh May!

May - worship the sun!

Harry Shut up, will you? Somebody might be listening.

May Go away, little brother, and leave your big sister to the Forces of Nature.

Harry Sometimes, May, I think you should not be let out.

Harry exits r

Song 14: You Never See the Sun

May You never see the sun come out in our town
 You never see a gap between the clouds
 I'd be happy in a place like this
 Now I see what I have always missed.

 Here, the only things that move are the trees
 Here, the heather reaches up to my knees
 Here, I might meet a handsome country lad
 What if he's hiding in those trees?
 I shouldn't be so scantily clad

 I never want to see another town again
 I never want to wake up to the rain
 We could settle in that cottage down there
 Go to dances, and have straw in our hair.

 Oh, I wish that I had seen this before
 Oh, since nothing would have suited me more
 Here, I could stay and sun myself to sleep
 Yes now I see what summer's for
 (If only there were slightly less sheep)

She puts her hands in sheep's droppings

 Here, the village lads swim bare in the brook
 Oh, I wonder if they'd mind if I look?
 Here, lovers come and court amid the hay,
 I wonder what they really do
 If only they'd include me too!

Jackson enters. He has a gun and three dead rabbits

Jackson Somebody's cheerful.

May Oh...I'm sorry. (*She struggles into her clothes*)

Jackson Sorry?

May No, I mean, well...so it was you.

Jackson Was it?

May Shooting. My brother's looking for you.

Jackson Has he got a gun?

May No.

Jackson I'm relieved to hear it.

May But he loves guns. Just like a boy.
Jackson Oh, I see. Are you here for a day out?
May Yes, but I was born here.
Jackson Were you now.
May In that cottage over there, I think.
Jackson Oh yes.
May Nearly sixteen years ago.
Jackson (*after a pause*) Yes. You'll just be a couple of years ahead of the century. Well now. What's your name?
May May Tallentire.
Jackson That's right. Yes.
May Maybe you knew my father and mother?
Jackson I could well have done...
May He's down in the pit now. In Whitehaven. The seams go out under the sea there, you know.
Jackson I had heard.
May I wish he'd stop. I wish he'd come back somewhere like here.
Jackson And...your mother...your mother?
May Oh, she's all right. Do you live around here?
Jackson I used to. I come back now and then.
May Harry went over to that wood. He'll be mad because I talked to you and he didn't.
Jackson Would Harry like a go with the gun?
May Would you let him?
Jackson Yes.
May Would you really?
Jackson Yes, really.
May Cross your heart and hope to die?...no, don't do it, it's unlucky. Look. Stay here. Stay exactly where you are. Don't move and I'll bring him back. You won't move will you?
Jackson I won't move.
May It'll make his day you see. Because he didn't really want to come. He only did it, well, to please me in the end although don't you tell him that. He won't admit to that...

May exits

14a. Music interlude

Jackson sits. He smiles, takes out tobacco, rolls up a cigarette. The Lights slowly fade on him

Black-out

Scene 2

Whitehaven

John is on stage in an easy chair

Emily enters

John Hello.

Emily Hello luv, you're up.

John It's too bright to sleep.

Emily I got some pie; you eat so little... *(She moves to the table)* May should've been here to lay the table. She has a fancy man, you know. I'm sure of it.

John I'll have an hour or two at the allotment.

Emily There's that meeting.

John I pulled up a couple of lettuce when I come past this morning. They're out back.

Emily Oh. Thank you.

John I meant to tell you but you were in such a rush for your work.

Emily Mr Carrick gets very nasty if we're late.

John I fail to see why you want to work at all.

Emily I like it.

John Nobody likes work.

Emily Thou used to.

John I was younger and dafter then. Why do it when you don't have to?

Emily There's over two dozen women down at Bobbin Factory now.

John Single women.

Emily Three married.

John Not to me. May's working. Harry's going to start up this very week. It's not a family, it's a factory you've got here.

Emily Please don't start up, John. As long as I can cope, let me work. My money gets us nice trips out, doesn't it?

May enters

May Hello, everybody!

John Ah. Trouble.

May *(sitting with John)* Harry's on his way. Mrs Edwards says Wednesday; is that all right? She wouldn't say any more. A man from Maryport bought two coats in one go today, he said they were both for his wife but they were the same coat and he asked me to wrap them up separately - waste of paper I

said but he insisted - very suspicious we thought and why does he come all the way from Maryport in the first place...?

John Perhaps he thought he had a bargain at a cheap shop like yours.

May Cheap yourself! "Robson and Robson" is just the very smartest ladies outfitters in all West Cumberland. Suppliers to the Quality we are.

John That cuts us out.

May Dad. Don't start again.

Harry enters and sits at the table

Harry What's to eat? I'm famished!

Emily Harry!

John We could always kill a sheep.

Emily It's on the table.

Harry Is that all there is?

Emily There's a pie, lettuce, tomatoes, bread, butter, cheese and tea. Yes. Pretend it's a picnic.

Harry I like something hot.

May Go outside and fry yourself on the pavement.

John "I like something hot." You sound just like your grandfather. If he didn't have two hot meals a day he thought the world was caving in.

Emily He's still growing.

May I wish he'd stop: he's looking more like a garden rake every day.

Harry Better than having hair like string.

May Dad!

John Harry.

Harry Mam?

Emily Just eat up...

There is silence as they all eat

Mr Forrester says he can see you on Thursday. All being well you should get a start in a week or two.

May I started the Monday after I left school. The Monday after the Friday. He's had nearly two weeks' holiday already.

John It's not so easy to get work outside the pits.

May Why does our Harry have to be let off going down the pits?

John Because his mother doesn't want him to end up like me.

May I can understand that. But he needn't need he?

Emily Your father should never have left the land.

John There's no money in it. But Forrester pays well enough at those stables.

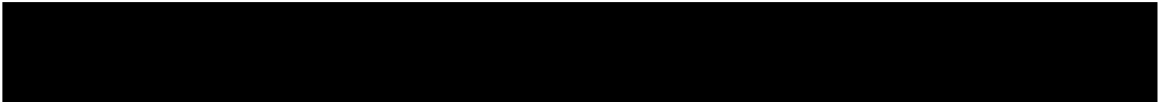
Emily He's always been good to you.

Harry I don't want to work with horses. I want down the pit.

Emily Just finish what's on your plate.
 May Wish I'd had a choice.
 John Your mother's decided.
 Harry But I was never asked, was I? I was told.
 May So was I.
 Harry All you want is clothes and lads so you keep out of it.
 May Dad!
 Emily Harry! You're not going down the pit. I don't know how ever you can think about it after the Wellington disaster. 500 men - just...burnt.
 John You mother's right. It's no life.
 Harry I'll feel soft if I don't.
 Emily I'm not having it. It's bad enough with your father. Every time that siren goes it turns me over.
 John It's filthy work altogether, Harry. You're on your back in a two-foot seam or up to your thighs in water. You're worrying about gas or props.
 Emily It's worse being under the sea.
 May I can never understand why it just doesn't fall in on top of you. I mean, there's a lot of sea, isn't there?
 Emily May!
 Harry The money's good. All my mates are down there. And there's you, Uncle Seth, Uncle Tom, most of us.
 Emily And most of them would give their eye-teeth to be out of it.
 Harry It's getting better, though, isn't it? After the Wellington, Uncle Seth's helping everybody to get better conditions.
 Emily Nothing'll stop it being dangerous work, Harry.
 John Believe me, Harry, it's far nicer to work on top of the ground.
 Harry I went to see Mr Stephens this afternoon. I'm starting on Monday.
 Emily Harry!
 John I thought as much.
 Emily Well your father'll see Mr Stephens and tell him you *won't* be starting on Monday.
 Harry You wouldn't do that, would you Dad?

Song 15: Blackrock (What Would You Say to Your Son?)

John What would you say to your son
 If you were me?
 Would you want him to go down there
 And try to agree?
 Would you tell the truth
 When he asked for proof
 Of the danger?



What would you want for your son
If you were me?
Would you put him down a mine shaft
Under the sea?
Would you fill his breath
With a dust like death
Would you take him
Under
Under?...

Would you cage him till you break him
And condemn him to the black rock?
Cage him till you break him
And condemn him to the black rock?
Would you say that to your own son
If you were me?
Would you allow him his own choice
Would he be free?
Would you shake your head
After all you'd said
Knowing he'd go
Under,
Under?...

Down there where there's no air
And you're locked up with the black rock
Down there where there's no air
And you're locked up with the black rock.

What would you say to your son
If you were me?

Black-out

Scene 3

The Union Meeting

Song 16: Union Song (Men of Stone)

Seth Ev'ry man here has a grievance
 Ev'ry man needs some allegiance
 Ev'ry man seeks to improve the miner's lot
 Ev'ry man speaks with defiance
 Ev'ry man longs for some guidance
 Ev'ry man must join the Union, like it or not!

 As each new member joins, our power grows
 With every new reform more lives are saved

 If anyone won't join the Union
 If anyone holds that opinion
 We'll tell 'em we won't have his labour in our pit

Seth and two others Men of stone, your pow'r has grown
 The future's in your hands
 Slaves to none, we march as one
 To build the promised land!

Blacklock Hey-up lads, the preacher's in his pulpit! Watch your language.

Chairman Order now please, Ted. Let's get it started. I've told you before...

Blacklock And I've told you an' all. We've come here to talk about the
 hewers. I haven't all night to waste on his daft Union patter. I want you lot
 off my back!

Seth So that you can work in with the owners and do the other lads down?

 That's no way, Blacklock.

Blacklock One more word. You've plagued me for long enough.

Chairman Order now. Order! Or you'll have to leave the meeting.

(pause)

I declare this meeting open.

Blacklock Right!

Chairman Sit down Ted. We have other business first. Sit down or I'll close it
down.

Blacklock reluctantly sits

Secretary and treasurer's report taken as read...all agreed?

Men Agreed.

Chairman Carried... Now, as you all know, we've had a number of complaints.

Seth Tallentire here's been asked to talk about the Union and show how useful it is. Complaints first...not yours Ted...we'll come to that in a minute.

Seth (*singing*) When we have full recognition
When we have one clear position
Then we'll transform the conditions underground

Seth and Supporters Men of stone, your pow'r has grown,
The future's in your hands
Slaves to none, we march as one
To build the promised land!

1st Miner The pumps in the fire pit haven't been working for over a fortnight.
We're up to our bellies in water some days. What's the Union doing about that?

2nd Miner We've heard about those inspections after explosions, and that's all that happened...hearing about it...what's the Union doing about that?

Seth We can answer all these complaints - and as many more - when we're strong enough. We have to be strong first.

Blacklock Not if I can help it!

3rd Miner They promised to give us more pit props but we still haven't enough.

Blacklock The more they spend on timber for props the less there is for us.

Seth Safety before profits!

(*singing*) With ev'ry new reform more lives are saved
We'll get you real compensation for widows some day
And we'll demand timber pit props whatever they say

Seth and Supporters	Anti-Union men
Men of stone, your pow'r has grown	Do you think that will fool us?
The future's in your hands	Ev'ryone knows it's nonsense
Slaves to none, we march as one	No-one here needs your endless rules and restrictions spoiling ev'rything
To build the promised land!	If we take your advice we'll find we're left behind
	And end up poorer still

Blacklock Cloud bloody cuckoo land, I've got kids talk more sense. You'll all end up like a lot of sheep - but not me. It's this eight-hour day I'm here for - it's no good for anybody. The hewers in Durham won't have it...neither are

we...what's the point of leaving a good seam when you're into money? I've come here to get it stopped and I'd like to see the man who'll argue against it.

Seth I'll argue against it.

Blacklock You've said more than enough already. Sit down and shut up.

Seth It's the owners have sent you, isn't it? They'll use you and then just throw you over when you've done their dirty work. Why are you taken in? Come along with us, man, and fight for your rights.

Blacklock I can do my own fighting without hiding behind any Union of his.

Seth You hide behind the bosses instead. Why else do you get the easiest seams all the time? Everybody knows. Because you suck up to them. You're too frightened of them Ted.

Blacklock Take that back.

Chairman Now lads, now then. Order.

Blacklock Take that back or I'll ram your teeth down your neck.

Chairman Order!

The fight

Seth and Supporters

Men of stone, your pow'r has grown
The future's in your hands
Slaves to none, we march as one
To build the promised land!

Blacklock and Supporters

Do you think that will fool us?
Ev'ryone knows it's nonsense!
No-one here needs your endless rules
and restrictions spoiling ev'rything.
If we take your advice we'll find
We're left behind
And end up poorer still.

Blacklock and his supporters exit

Seth

Ev'ry man sworn to the Union
Ev'ry boy born in the Union
Ev'ryone's needs we will one day satisfy
Ev'ry pit part of the Union
Ev'ry vote cast for the Union
Not a man toil in the mines that won't comply!

All remaining men and women Soon ev'ry man will hold a Union card
Soon ev'ry boss will fear the Union's power
Soon ev'ry town soon ev'ry city will be
Proud to say with all their heart:
We're Union men!

Black-out

Scene 4

Before the War

In the kitchen, May and Emily are packing John's things for his departure.

Emily Come on now May. You'll do no good carrying on like that.

May I can't help it. I'm useless about crying. I always have been.

Emily You must hold up. Think of your father.

May I do! But every time I think about him I want to cry, and I think about him all the bloomin' time.

Emily May! Now stop it, or you'll set me off, then where will we be. We can't let him down. Now then. Can we?

Pause

Good. Well done. Now then...have we got everything?

May I packed that new pair of socks for a surprise. Do you think he will like them?

Emily I'm sure he will. *(About to shut the suitcase)* We're ready.

May Just a minute. *(She looks around, goes to an old teapot or vase and takes out a bag)* Bullseyes!

Emily Won't they get very sticky?

May They're his favourites. He always takes them down the pit with him.

Emily *(picking up a piece of coarse brown paper)* Come on then. *(She wraps the bag in the paper)*

May They won't sell them in France you see.

Emily Likely not.

Harry bursts in

Harry You should see them! Come and see them. Dad and Uncle Isaac and Uncle Seth and everybody! Come on! Let me carry that. Come on! There's a band and everything.

He grabs the case and rushes out. May rushes after him. Emily follows

16a: Music Interlude - Gathering of troops

The Recruiting Officer and Men enter

Recruiting Officer Now then men. Because you are men. The King's Men. Fit to be. Proud of it. Men I say. Now then. You are here. I say that. Here you are. Today. Taken the King's shilling they used to say. Tradition. That's the Army. That's why we're here. All of you. What I say is. *Good*. You've volunteered. You could have stayed, some of you, in jobs. Down the mines. Good easy jobs. But you've volunteered. And that's why we'll beat the Hun. See. All of you. And because of that. Christmas...you'll be back. Here, with your families. The Army has a heart. Remember that. Now then. We leave in two minutes. Attention. Dismissed.

Song 17: Farewell Song

Emily What a handsome man you are in uniform
If the weather stays like this you'll be too warm
Take this heather to remember me by
Fight your battles but come home alive.

John Oh, Emily there's no need for tears
Oh, listen to their passionate cheers
Hush, I'll be back before the winter's out
You'll not spend Christmas on your own
I'll always think of you here at home.

Isaac There's no need to worry lass, we'll soon be home
Seth and I will take good care he's not alone

May Do us proud, Dad, we expect you to win
Send a postcard when you get to Berlin

Emily Oh, I'll miss you Seth look after him well
Oh I love to hear the tales that you'll tell

(*To John*) Say, when you're home we'll go back to the land
We'll start again just like before
And go back to the place we began

Farewells

John Oh, ev'ry precious letter I'll keep
Oh, at night your words will soothe me to sleep
Love, promise that you'll pray for me each day
And even though I'm far away
I'll always think of you here at home.



All

Oh, lovers shed your last precious tears
Stay, listen to their fearless young cheers
Hush, tiptoe past their final fond embrace
'Cos after all you never know
When you'll next be seeing that smile.

Oh, lovers shed your last precious tears
Stay, listen to their fearless young cheers
Hush, tiptoe past their final fond embrace
'Cos after all you never know
When you next will see that smile
When you next will see that smile.

The Lights fade to Black-out. Gunfire

Scene 5

The War

Song 18: War

Isaac My clothes are wet, the trenches stink
My boots are worn, I have to limp
When weather's bad the dug-outs flood
And No-Man's-Land's a pool of blood.

Soldier The mud here's worse than I've ever seen
We lost last Friday a boy of sixteen
We can't advance and we will not retreat
So we'll wait here until next year
When we'll more or less still be here.

All Men We sweat, we drink, we curse
We survive here
Don't stop to think who's next
To save a friend we'll risk our necks

 Out in No-Man's-Land
 Who will come for us then?
 Will they wait till dark
 Will they leave us for dead?

 And far away our sons asleep
 Dream glorious dreams
 To them we're brave
 To them we sing
 Magnificent themes

Isaac Last night our Tom from Maryport
Untimely had his life cut short
We found his corpse without a face
But his evening rum won't go to waste

Jackson The guns were pounding all through the night
I cannot sleep 'cos the rats will bite
Even the bravest men shake with fright
But we'll hold fast, we'll be steadfast
Till the war has passed us all by

All Men We swear, we sing, we kill
And we die here
Don't like to think ahead

Don't care to contemplate the dead

In the kitchen:

Emily (*singing*) Though I'm proud of you
John don't take any risks
Scared and trembling I read the casualty lists

In the trenches. Isaac is in no-man's-land, wounded

Jackson (*speaking*) Isaac? Isaac? It's me - Jackson.
Isaac My leg. They've look my leg.
Jackson Hold on.
Isaac Keep your head down.
Jackson I'll carry you.
Isaac I'll be too heavy for you.
Jackson Put your arm over my shoulder.
Isaac You'll never make it, lad. Leave us till dark. Get help then.
Jackson You won't last. Come on.

Soldier (*singing*) They gas us out and we have to run
We gas them back so they don't stay long
They lay some wire before an attack
We open fire so they can't get back

John You'll have heard about Isaac losing his leg
They say without Jackson's help he'd be dead
We can't shift the Hun and the Hun can't shift us
So we'll stand firm till the tide turns
And the final German is dead

Dear Emily
Remember me to both my children
Dear Emily
I hope there'll never be
Another time like this one.

In the kitchen:

Emily (*writing a letter*) What can I tell him, May?
May You can say our Harry's doing well down the pit.
Emily He is. He likes it there. Maybe it's worked out for the best. They won't
call him up - that's one worry less.

May Dad says he likes to hear about how we're all doing. Just ordinary things, he said, didn't he?

Emily That's true. But it all seems so petty when you know what he's doing.

May Maybe you could tell him about Aunt Sarah running off...

Emily That would make your father laugh.

May Do you think he ever gets those parcels we send?

Emily He'll tell you when he does get them, don't worry. Run along with those letters to your Aunt Peg. I must set Harry's supper out, and I want to finish this first.

All Men (*singing*) We crawl, we climb, we cry
We're expendable
Don't care to count the cost
Ten men or more last night were lost.

Out in No-Man's-Land
Who will come for us then?
Will they wait till dark
Will they leave us for dead?

So tell your children all one day
Of our sacrifice
Tell them we died young, our work undone
Tell them pride has its price.

In the kitchen:

Isaac enters

Emily Oh, Isaac!

Isaac Now then, now then...

Pause

Isaac I'm fine Emily, I'm fine. Calm yourself Emily, I'm fine. Wrestlin's out, I'm sorry to say. I tried it in the hospital in Kent but I stood on a fella's foot so hard I broke his big toe.

Emily Have some tea. Harry'll be home soon - he'll want to see you.

Isaac No...I've my own home to go to, but I promised a man I'd come and see you before I saw anybody. A man I couldn't break a promise to. It was Jackson Pennington, Emily, bravest man you could hope to meet.

Emily Oh.

Isaac Yes - he said he didn't want to write a letter...I suppose he thought

letters can lead to trouble, but, he wanted to be remembered to you. That was the word.

Emily I see...

Isaac I've since heard he's dead.

Emily Oh God. You know I made a fool of myself over him once. I don't think John's ever known how much I care for him ever since.

Isaac When I saw John last he was bearing up well.

Emily How is he? Does he look well? What's it really like there?

Isaac Like?...*Like*...nothing on earth, missis nothing.

All Men We crawl, we climb, we cry
 We're expendable
 Don't care to count the cost
 Ten men or more last night were lost.

 Out in No-Man's-Land
 Who will come for us then?
 Will they wait till dark
 Will they leave us for dead?

 So tell you children all one day
 Of our sacrifice
 Tell them we died young, our work undone
 Tell them pride has its price

In the kitchen:

Emily Oh no.

Harry I signed up.

Emily Oh no. You're too young, you're just seventeen.

Harry They took me for eighteen and a half.

Emily I could go and tell them your real age.

Harry You couldn't do that... You wouldn't do that, Mother.

Emily Oh, you shouldn't go.

Harry I can't not.

Emily Live while you can. Wait the extra year.

Harry It'll be over by then.

Emily So it's just the killing you want.

Harry No... But I can't not, that's all.

They embrace

Emily I'll miss you.
Harry I'll send all my wages straight back.

Emily (*singing*) What would you say to your son if you were me?
Would you allow him his own choice?
Would he be free?
Would you shake your head, after all you'd said,
Knowing he'd go over...over...

Out there, in the burnt air
Where they're cut down to the black rock.

Seth Some of the other men think it's all wrong
I've heard officers say it's gone on too long
There's talk that the Russians might pack it all in
Are we fighting a war that no-one can win?

Seth and One other And what will they do if it drags on for years
Filling the pockets of profiteers?
I can't see the sense when so many have died

Counter Melody (Soldiers) They said we'd win but now we see
The truth each day more men gone

Tutti We're not all right, they're not all wrong,
Both say God's on their side

Seth Some blind, some maimed, some mad
Few survive this
Young lads, their dreams all gone
One fate, one grave, one farewell song:

So you're proud of us...
And reward us with this
And our epitaph...
On the casualty lists

Counter Melody (Men) So you're proud of us...
And reward us with this
And our epitaph...
On the casualty lists

All So tell your children all one day
Of our sacrifice
Tell them we died young, our work undone



Tell them pride has its price

So tell your children all one day
Of our sacrifice
Tell them we died young, our work undone
Tell them pride has its price

The music ends

John (*at the front*) They told me that Harry was the most willing lad they ever had. The captain himself told me that when I went over. He'd been out after a sniper. It was a brave thing to do. Poor lad. At least, they said, it was quick. They gave me some letters from you he was carrying on him; I'll bring them back to you, now that it's all over.

Black-out

Music 18a: Trumpet Solo

Scene 6

Crossbridge Club Walk June 1920

Song 19: 'Day Follows Day'

Sung by all company women

Day follows day
Season's rhythm brings this
One special day
When from matins bell to midnight we walk tall
Trestles, buntings, tents appear
To toast with pies and bottled beer
Our shillings saved from year to year
We'll feast and play.

Day follows day
Weeks of bustle for this
One summer's day
Gath'ring smartly at the church we welcome all:
Hawkers, gypsies, stalls arrive
Ecstatic children duck and dive
And thanking God we're still alive
We'll sing and pray.

Shadows fall on our street
Voices call in the heat
Husbands, uncles, dads,
Sweethearts, brothers, lads. .
Bandsmen play, banners blow
Lovers sway, faces glow
Sawdust on the floor
Garlands at the door
Dawn till dark
Life's short spark.

[music continues under scene]

John: Glad we came up?
Emily: It was a good idea.

John: You needed something to take you out of yourself.

Emily: Lovely, isn't it?

Vicar: Welcome, welcome.

J & E: Thank you

Vicar: You're newcomers to Crossbridge I take it.

John: Well, no, not exactly.

Vicar: I do hope I can persuade you to take part in some of the events we've organised.

John: Yes, I've a mind to enter that ploughing contest - (*to Emily*)- what do you think?

Emily: You should. You were good at it.

Vicar: That's the idea.

John: Are you coming Emily?

Emily: No. You go...I'll walk about. I expect you to win!

[*Sally comes across to Emily*]

Sally: It *is* Emily, isn't it?

Emily: Sally Edmondson.

Sally: Sally Wrangham these past fifteen years.

Emily: How are you?

Sally: First rate. Mind, I've been stuck in Crossbridge all my life - I don't suppose I'll ever get away from it now.

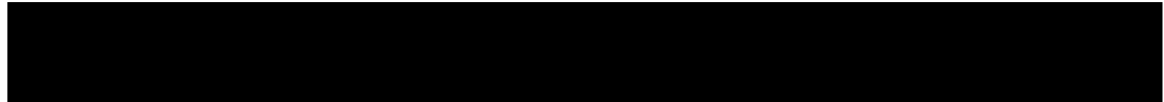
Emily: What's new?

Sally: Things have changed a lot since the war. Half the shops gone. And men gone. Seventeen. From a little place like this.

[*in canon*]

Day follows day
Season's rhythm brings this
One special day
When from matins bell to midnight we walk tall
Trestles, buntings, tents appear
To toast with pies and bottled beer
Our shillings saved from year to year
We'll feast and play.

Shadows fall on our street
Voices call in the heat
Widows, mothers know
Grief is deep and slow



Buses crawl up the fell
Wagons haul, tradesmen yell
Sawdust on the floor
Garlands at the door
Dawn till dark
Life's short spark.

[music continues under scene]

John: Why'd you give up betting, then?

Isaac: The wife, John, the better half. Now I've got this butchin' business she says I need a bit of respectability. She was frightened I'd bet my credit away. Well, how about a look at that scything contest...can't do much worse than you did with that plough.

John: I was rusty.

Isaac: I've seen straighter lines on a dog's back leg.

John: Is that Seth?

Isaac: Seth's an altered man since he went in for that Pacifist business. He just keeps his dogs as pets now. Pets!

Seth: John! Isaac! Not a bad day for it.

John: They were saying it's the last there'll be.

Seth: That's why I came. Sad you know. Even though we're replacing them with better. There was a good spirit about some of these Friendly Societies. There was something of a family about them.

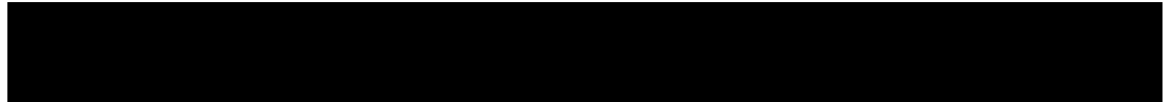
Isaac: The day you stop dreaming, Seth, pigs'll smoke cigars.

[May comes across to Emily]

May: So you've got here at last. I thought you were never going to make it. It must have been wonderful living here. Dad and his horses. He's always going on about that.

Emily: Well, he was a young man then.

Day follows day
And tomorrow we will
Talk of today
When we thought we saw the ghosts of our lost sons
Was that them on Lorton Vale,
Their bellies full of jokes and ale,
Returned at last from Passchendaele,
Come home to stay?



Shadows fall on our street
Voices call in the heat
Husbands, uncles, dads,
Sweethearts, brothers, lads.
Bandsmen play, banners blow
Lovers sway, faces glow
Sawdust on the floor
Garlands at the door
Dawn till dark
Life's short spark.

Shadows fall on our street
Voices call in the heat
Widows, mothers know
Grief is deep and slow
Smoke and tears for the old
Souvenirs bought and sold
Sawdust on the floor
Garlands at the door
Dawn till dark
Life's short spark.

[Song ends.]

May: *(to a young man)* Can you dance?
Bloke: I won second prize at Crossbridge last Christmas.
May: Come on, then, sweep me off my feet.

Song 19a: Crossbridge Dance

Isaac So join the whirling
 You should be swirling
 Your partners twirling across the floor
 Make mischief gaily
 Come join the ceilidh
 Oh waly waly!
 From head to toe tomorrow morning
 Will be sore!

Tutti Strike up the band, lads
 Wake up your granddads
 Put on your glad rags
 Get off your seat
 Don't stand there sneering

You should be cheering
Get volunteering
Believe you me, you'll find
Life's sweeter with a beat,
Believe you me, you'll find
Life's better on your feet!
HA!

The Dancers disperse, as Emily and John come away together. All applaud

Emily Oh...are we too old for this, John?

John Not a bit...we just need more practise, that's all.

Emily Why don't you go back to farm work, John?

John I was just thinking that! The very thought.

Emily Well?

John The money's still hopeless. I want nothing - except for you - you to be well. That would do me.

Emily Oh, John. I haven't done enough for you.

John You couldn't have been better. No. I wasn't anything like lively enough for you, was I...that was the trouble, wasn't it?

Song 20: No Choir of Angels

(Singing) I gave no strength, no life to you
When we were first in love
You wanted joy, I gave you none
My work seemed quite enough.

Emily You weren't to blame, John, I was wrong
I looked for love elsewhere
When you were hurt I turned away,
Was blind to your despair.

John But Emily we were so young
So innocent of what love means
Not ev'rything we did was wrong
What happened to those two young souls
Who started out with such high hopes
And found that life was hard and long?

Emily So we survived and here we are
Surrounded by the night
No choir of angels, no guiding star
Just our reflecting eyes

I'm so ashamed, John, of how I felt



When you came home from France
My streaming tears for Harry's death
And none rejoiced your life
But now I know the truth inside
Now I know our love survived
Now our love will never die

Both

And even now it's not too late
Our future we can still reshape
And cherish what was once denied

Emily

If I had my life once more
Of one thing I'd be twice as sure
It's you that I would share it with.

Black-out

Scene 7

In Emily's kitchen:

May You'll try to eat this now, won't you?

Emily Please don't do all that. It's me who should be looking after you.

May You should've gone into hospital when the doctor said.

Emily I'm having nothing to do with hospitals, May. Please don't go on. You'll be late for work.

May Is there anything else I can get you? An orange? I'll peel it for you.

Emily I'm fine. I can peel my own orange!

May Right... Now eat that up.

Emily See you later.

May See you then, mam.

The Pit; John & other miners make their way down to, or are already in, the pit shafts

John Are we still on Derwent Seam?

Joe Just.

John We'll miss it.

Alec We'll miss it. It comes out like butter.

Tom How's Emily?

John Not so good. Not so good.

In Emily's kitchen:

Emily goes to the sideboard where she gets out a photograph. She looks at the photograph

The Pit - a two-minute break

Was that your lad I saw you with yesterday?

Alec Where?

John In Wilson's.

Alec Yes.

John By God, he's shot up.

Alec Eats like ten.

John You never know till they're out in the world.

Alec I won't grieve much to see the back of mine. They've been more trouble than enough. Mind - I wouldn't admit that.

John I see that Archie's lad's in bother again. Drink?

Alec And he'll only be half-fed in that house. Just like his father.

John Right, let's have another go at her.

First murmurings of the rush

Listen.

Tom What is it? Sounds like the sea.

John Sssh.

A low, distant rumble

(*Calmly*) It's rushed. Now then, lads: edge back...very carefully...just edge back...

Black-out

The Pit Surface

The klaxon sounds for the accident

Man 1 It's rushed. Number Seven's cut off. They're out of Siddack.

Seth Number Seven. That's our John.

Man 2 There's three of them down there. It's blocked right back.

Seth We'll have to cut in through Moorbanks.

Man 2 It doesn't reach far enough. It could take two days.

Seth We'll make a new shaft. Somebody get word to their families. Come on.

In the kitchen:

Emily Go and see, will you, love?

May They'll come and tell us...*he*'ll hardly be down there yet, will he? I want to stay here.

Emily It'll just take you a minute, I can knock on the wall and Mrs Graham'll come round if I need anything.

May Can't I...

Emily Just for me. I'll want to know straight away, you see. Please.

In the Pit:

Tom (*scrambling along*) I'm going back. I'm digging through. The sea'll cave in on us.

Alec Steady on lad.

John Tom! You'll bring it all down. Get hold of yourself.

Alec John's right, lad.

Tom I can't stop thinking about the sea...up there...miles and miles and tons and tons of it..just up there.

John They'll try to dig in through Moorbanks.

Tom You've been got out before haven't you, John?

John That's right. You'll be all right with me lad. Just press your back against the wall and save your strength.

On the Surface:

Seth We'll take that last bit.

Alf Give yourself a rest, Seth.

Seth All of here has family down there, Alf. We should be allowed to get them out.

Alf You've been there a helluva time. Don't you reckon somebody fresh...

Seth We know the seam better than anybody. We should do it. Now come on!

In the kitchen:

Emily "sees" Jackson enter and sing

Song 20a: Hear Your Voice (ii)

Jackson Hear your voice calling me
 See your eyes facing me
 Dream of you in my sleep

 But you're not there, Emily
 Life with you can never be
 Our two bodies never meet...

She also "sees" Harry who says, over Jackson's singing:

Harry Come and see them. Dad and Uncle Isaac and Uncle Seth and everybody. Come on. There's a band and everything.

Finally she "sees" John and sings:

Emily If I could I would catch them as they fall
 Shield them from the pain,
 And heed their call.

The Seams:



Seth leads the last drive down. A narrow entrance is made. Tom is dragged out first. Alec follows. The sound of a rush

Alec Careful lad, it's coming down again.

Seth John? John.

John It's fallen. Give us a minute.

Seth Hold on to my ankles.

Man Come on lads. Get out.

Black-out

In Emily's kitchen; Emily is sitting in the chair, very still; May rushes in.

May They've got through! They're coming out! He's all right! Mam? Mam?!
Mam!

John enters and sees May and Emily. Black-out

Scene 8

The Re-hiring

Seth Terribly raw morning.

John Fresh air and exercise could make a man of you at last.

Seth Wouldn't you like one of those tots of rum they used to give you.

John Well, I'd best be on my way.

Seth We could get you a job on the top you know.

John I know that Seth.

Seth I'll fight for that compensation, never fear.

John I appreciate what you've done.

Seth Medieval in my opinion. Something from the Dark Ages.

John Maybe that's where I belong, Seth. You'll tell May I didn't call in because it was too early.

Seth I will. She's borne up very well, May.

John She's got her mother's spirit.

Seth I understand, you know. Or I think I do. Why you're doing this. I don't agree mind: But I think I understand.

John I should've gone back to farm work years ago, Seth. Maybe Emily would never have gone under if I'd have done that.

Seth You can't blame yourself, John.

John Well, I'd best be on my own now. Thanks for the company.

Seth I'll wait for you.

John I'd as soon be on my own.

Seth Good luck.

Music which has underscored this scene swells into the final chorus

Song 21: Re-hiring: Song of the Hired Men (Reprise)

Each group joins in until all five are being sung simultaneously

All (*in groups*) Hear us coming, O running, O singing
Over the fields we till
More the work of gods than men
But we'll never, no never, regret the day
That we put ourselves willing in the
Hiring Ring.
O to be a Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man...(cont.)



Seth and others Men of stone, your wives at home,
Your future's in our hands...(cont.)

Group 3 Throw us your luck pennies will you, O
Show your intentions are that true, O
Throw us your luck pennies will you, O
Knowing I'll take any that's true...(cont.)

Harry and others O, listen to our passionate cheers
O, listen to our fearless young cheers...(cont.)

John and Pennington If you lived our lives you'd be the same
In your hearts too would burn such a flame...

All If you lived our lives you'd be the same
In your hearts too would burn such a flame.

Chorus O to be a Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man
O to be a Hired Man!

Farmer Are you for hire?
John Yes, I'm for hire.

Curtain