The Coal in the Stone

(Kay Cothran)

In Robbin, Tennessee, they'll tell you a story
Of five men who went down to dig in the coal,
How the gas exploded, the ceiling come falling
The reason is buried way down in that hole.

cho: Lie there, my laddie, lie easy, lie easy
The thoughts you were thinking will never be known
Under three thousand feet of the Cumberland Plateau
Where it's blacker than thunder and the coal in the stone.

On May twenty-fourth, they went down diggin'
May twenty-fifth, one body was found
And the rescue team labored, through the night and the danger
Seekin' for others trapped under the ground.

The rescue team labored through the dust and the gases,
The bad air was sickenin'(?) and ready to blow
And the people above are sittin' and thinkin'
Waitin' on the answers they don't want to know.

"It's no more use tryin'," says a long-time coal miner,
"They're dead and they're lyin' forever alone,
No man can survive through forty-eight hours
Buried down under that Cumberland stone."

On May twenty-sixth there was sad lamentation,
Next day, the papers were silent as the tomb(?)
You can't ask the living to stop when there's dying
Five men are dead and the world's movin' on.

So it's blast, ye bright furnaces, go on, ye factories,
Burn the black jewels, let industry roll;
Just remember, good neighbors, remember this winter
The price that's been paid for the heat of your homes.

From the singing of Helen Schneyer. The incident reportedly happened in 1963.