

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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CIO Song 2

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I had a job; was well content
And pleased in every way.
I worked with a smile and a song on my lips
And was happy from day to day.

My heart was filled with peace and joy,
My family was happy too;
And days were spent in sweet content,
And troubles they were few.

The Ashland Tannery was where I worked,
The men, like me, I know
Were satisfied with their own jobs,
Then came the C.I.O.

They spread ill feeling around the men,
The bosses and laborers alike.
Then came the day the men were forced
To organize and strike.

The pickets were placed in front and back
And men kept out by force.
Instead of settling in a peaceful way,
They took the roughest course.

The men got mad and started fights
And then were hailed in court.
They were fighting against the very thing
That brought them their support.

They began to quarrel among themselves.
Even the best of friends;
It got so bad that it looked as though
The troubles would never end.

Bricks were hurled and names were yelled,
And they used their clubs and sticks.
The men grew weary but wouldn't stop
Until the cause was licked.

The scrap yard, like the Tannery
Were having their troubles too;

All those strikes and the C.I.O.
To Ashland were something new.

But finally through efforts of Mr. Shaut,
Who stood by us like a man,
We resumed our daily duties
Under our friend, Mr. Houlahan.

Those days are finally gone and past.
I was pleased to see them go,
And I hope I never hear again
Those words--the CIO.

Labor trouble at the mines on Jack's Creek in Floyd
County didn't stop with mere hurling of words and stones,
but resulted in the death of Sam Adams. Sam,
so the story goes, was sent to guard the mines and was
killed and buried on the banks of the Big Sandy.
"The Lord sent a master tide," says Grover Frazier,
author of the ballad, "and washed up Sam's body,
and so the mur" Frazier tells of Sam's untimely end,
but der was out! little of the circumstances surrounding
the tragedy. In the eleventh stanza of his Death of
Samuel ildams, Grover Frazier himself might well be
accused of "wrong doin'," for his lines--
there to remain a while In the hands of law and justice,
They all must stand their trial." JT

From Ballad Makin', Thomas
Collected from and written by Billie Menshouse,
RG
apr97