

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Goodbye to Saint Lawrence

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(Sam Richards)

Goodbye to St. Lawrence, farewell, Newf'n'land

I'm bound for the mainland tomorrow

There's nothing for me in the place I was born

Nothing but hardship and sorrow

Nothing but hardship and sorrow

My old man was strong, he was like a bulldog

Was raised up as tough as old leather

From the day he could walk he'd be out every day

Fishing in all kinds of weather

Fishing in all kinds of weather

Winter and summer in the boats he'd be gone

Working hard, scraping a living

Somehow found time to marry my mother

And settled down, tried to start saving

And settled down, tried to start saving

I've heard old folk tell of the year '29

When the tidal waves set the place reeling

Stirred up the breeding grounds, scattered the fish

Leaving our people half starving

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They lived on relief for three years and more

Trying to keep themselves living

Till the Company came with their drills and their gear

Said there was money in mining

Said there was money in mining

The people 'round this place, they dug those damn mines

With hearts and with hands that were willing

Then ten hours a day they would sweat in that hole

Mucking and tramming and drilling

Mucking and tramming and drilling

My old man went down with his picks like the rest

Down in the dust and the danger

Drilling and blasting, he choked in the smoke

Down in that lousy gas chamber

Down in that lousy gas chamber

I've watched them go, seen them die of the dust
Every miner 'round here, his lungs failed him
Only one feller died harder than that
And high on a hillside they nailed him
And high on a hillside they nailed him

When my old feller had breathed his last breath
Like the others who suffered 'longside him
The Company flooded the mines and pulled out
Too few dollars in St. Lawrence mining
Too few dollars in St. Lawrence mining

For forty-five years a fortune was made
From a hellhole so murky and dusty
But what's left behind, now they've closed the mines down
A company town with no company
A company town with no company

So goodbye, St. Lawrence, farewell, Newf'n'land
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From the New City Songster, November '82. JN

JN

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