

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Steel a-Goin' Down

Steel a-Goin' Down
(Buell Kazee)

Steel a-goin' down under my old hammer
Forty-four long years I've carried along
Steel a-goin' down and my hammer's gettin' heavy
Forty-four long years I've sung 'em my song
In the evening burns a light soft and low
In that little shanty where I long to go

Steel a-goin' down and my hammer's gettin' heavy
I'm a-gettin' weary, I'm a-goin' home
Steel a-goin' down under my old hammer
I'm a-gettin' weary in-a-my bones
Steel a-goin' down and my hammer's gettin' heavy
I'm a-gettin' weary, workin' alone

Soon that lonesome whistle blow loud and long
And they'll look around for me but I'll be gone
Steel a-goin' down, gonna swing my hammer
I'm a-gettin' weary, I'm a-going home
Steel a-goin' down under my old hammer
I'm a-gettin' weary, workin' so long

Steel a-goin' down and my hammer's gettin' heavy
Soon be another singin' my song
Over there beyond the dark comes a call
So I'll lay my hammer down and leave it all
Steel a-goin' down, I'm a-layin' down my hammer
Hear the whistle blowin', I'm a-goin' home

Words and music by Buell Kazee
Source: Buell Kazee 'Same' June Appal LP JA 009

One of the few original compositions of the great old-timey banjo picker and ballad singer, Buell Kazee, from Kentucky. He composed it in the early 1920s. He had worked on the railroad when he was seventeen and was impressed by the black steel drivers and their songs. 'Steel driving', he wrote, was dying out. Machinery was taking its place. This was written as a memorial of that time and place'.

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