

No Use for Him

No Use for Him

(Eric Bogle)

My father was a big strong man who worked hard all his life
He was always in the whisky jar and never out of strife
For he called no man his master, and very few his friend
A proud and stiff-necked man he was who would neither bow nor bend
But they broke him in the end, when they'd no use for him

For they took away his job when they'd no use for him any more
After nearly thirty years they kicked him out the door
But they let him keep his railway jacket, overcoat, and cap
And a pension of nine bob a week, he was lucky to get that
And they nearly broke his heart, when they'd no use for him

Now, I spent most of my childhood days up in the switching box
High in my father's castle, twenty feet above the tracks
And crash would go the signals as he flipped them with his hand
And the mighty cars of steam and steel would stop at his command
And, oh, but it was grand, when they'd a use for him

When you're fifty-five years old and you're looking for some work
Nobody wants to know your face, no-one gives you a start
So I watched him growing older and more bitter every day
As all his pride and self-respect, they slowly drained away
There was nothing I could say -- they had no use for him

For they took away his job when they'd no use for him any more
After nearly thirty years they kicked him out the door
But they let him keep his railway jacket, overcoat, and cap
And a pension of nine bob a week, he was lucky to get that
And they nearly broke his heart, when they'd no use for him
And I know they broke his heart, when they'd no use for him

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Bogle's father was nearly two years out of work after being
laid off after nearly 30 years at British Railways. JN

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