

Unknown Artist, After The Strike

AFTER THE STRIKE

(Joseph A. Hemer)

Air-“After the Ball”

Once a pretty maiden climbed an old man's knee

Asked for a story-“Papa tell me,

Why are you lonely, why are you sad,

Why do your shopmates call you a scab?”

I had friends, pet, long, long ye-ars ago,

How I lost them you soon shall know;

I'll tell it all, pet, tell all my shame;

I was a scab, pet, I was to blame.”

cho: After the strike is over,

After the men have won,

After the shops have opened,

After the notice is down;

Many the heart is aching,

Though the hope seems bright

That many a scab will vanish

After the strike.

Brave men were fighting, standing side by side,

Fighting for justice, fighting with pride,

I then was with them---with them heart and soul,

But when the test came, I left them in the cold,

I thought it best, pet, best to turn a scab;

Best to return, pet, to the job I had,

That's why I'm lonely, that's why I'm sad,

That's why my shopmates call me a scab.

cho:

Many years have passed, pet, since I won that name,

And in song and story they have told my shame,

I have tried to tell them, tried to explain,

But they will not listen, pleading is in vain;

Everywhere I wander, everywhere I roam,

The story of my shame is sure to find my home,

I'd give my life, pet, I'd give my all,

If I had not turned traitor, or scabbed at all.

cho:

From American Labor Songs of the Nineteenth Century, Foner

Note: published in the United Mine Workers' Journal, May 24, 1894

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