

## The Recruited Collier

Anne Briggs

Oh, what's the matter with you, my lass, and where's your dashing Jimmy?

The soldier boys have picked him up and sent him far, far from me.

Last pay day he went off to town and them red-coated fellows enticed him in and made him drunk—and he'd be better gone to the gallows.

The very sight of his cockade, it sets us all a-crying, And me! I nearly fainted twice, I thought that I was dying. My father would have paid the smart and he'd run for the golden guinea.

But the sergeant swore he'd kissed the book, so now they've got young Jimmy.

When Jimmy talks about the wars it's worse than death to hear him.

I must go out and hide my tears because I cannot bear him. A brigadeer or grenadier he says they're sure to make him, But aye, he gibes and cracks his jokes and begs me not forsake him.

As I walked o'er the stubble field below it runs the seam, I thought o' Jimmy hewing there but it was all a dream. He hewed the very coals we burn and, when the fire I's leeting. To think the lumps was in his hands, it sets my heart a-beating.

So break my heart and then it's o'er, so break my heart, my dearie.

For I'll lie in the cold green ground for of single life I'm weary.