

John Henry was a Steel Drivin' Man

Steve Earle

John Henry was a steel drivin' man
John Henry was a steel drivin' man
He died in West Virginia
With his hammer in his hand
They sing about him all across the land
John Henry was a steel drivin' man

He beat the steam drill down and then he died
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And it didn't change nothin'
But heaven knows he tried
He was buried with his hammer by his side
He beat the steam drill down and then he died

There's coal beneath the mountain down below
There's coal beneath the mountain down below
And the company come to take it
But the work was hard and slow
Said, "When there ain't no money in it, we'll just go"
Right now there's coal beneath the mountain down below

And the union come and tried to make a stand
The union come and tried to make a stand
West Virginia miners voted union to a man
You'd never know it now but that was then
When the union come and tried to make a stand

But the company brought in all the big machines
The company brought in all the big machines
Cut more coal in an hour
Than a shift could in a week
John Henry could've told 'em what that means
When the company brought in all the big machines, hey

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