

The Bevin Boys

Words and Music: Nigel Harbron

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols (E, F#m, B, A, C#m) are placed above the notes to indicate the harmonic structure. The lyrics are: "When Bri - tain fin - ally went to war to stand up for our free - dom, We all signed up to do our bit, ex - pec - ting we'd be wel - come. But soon our num - bers were drawn out by some bow - ler hat - ted min - ion, And whe - ther that was fair to us is a mat - ter of op - in - ion. We were the Be - vin Boys, We worked to help the na - tion, But all we got when on the street, Was rank hu - mil - i - a - tion."

When Britain finally went to war to stand up for our freedom,
We all signed up to do our bit, expecting we'd be welcome.
But soon our numbers were drawn out by some bowler-hatted minion,
And whether that was fair to us is a matter of opinion.

*Ch: We were the Bevin Boys,
We worked to help the nation,
But all we got when on the street
Was rank humiliation.*

And very soon we left our homes in the clothes that we were wearing.
The training given was quite short and the rations they were sparing.
Then down the pits we all did go, our picks upon our shoulders,
To hew the coal from dawn till dusk, midst dust and falling boulders.

Though boots and helmets we were given, the rest we had to pay for.
Our hands and knees grew calluses and our backs were bleeding and sore.
We wore no khaki uniform or badges on our clothing,
And all we faced from day to day were physical threats and loathing.

And when the war came to an end, we carried on as ever,
Until at last we were allowed those loathsome ties to sever.
But still the hatred lingered on wherever we were living,
For Bevin Boys it seemed there couldn't ever be forgiving.

And then in nineteen ninety five the Queen of us made mention,
Although not all the Bevin Boys had lived to draw their pension.
But politicians would not yield, or consider a back-pedal
For thirteen years till some of us received a thank you medal.



Bizarre things happen during wars.