

Poling Copper

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You work at the furnace, where the air's never clean,
The sulphur and the arsenic turn you seven shades of green,
You drink water by the bucket, but you're still parched and lean,
And you burn up your days poling copper,
You burn up your days poling copper.

You came to the furnace 'cause the wages are good,
You've ale for your pleasure and your family has food,
Though you spent your first months here just coughing up blood,
Now you're fit for a life poling copper,
You're fit for a life poling copper.

And your children have worked here since they were quite small,
The copper man's yard is their own special world,
Where to shift 20 tons is a job for a girl,
While a man spends his days poling copper,
A man spends his days poling copper.

The farm worker's children are ruddy and bright,
They get up with the dawn, go to bed at half-light,
But the copper man's children tend the furnace all night,
And dream of a life poling copper,
They dream of a life poling copper.

Oh the devil once came here, or so people tell,
Past the red roaring furnace and the green sulphur smell,
He said "I'm feeling homesick, this looks just like Hell,
I can see the damned souls poling copper,
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