

## The Gresford Disaster

In 1934, there was an explosion down the Gresford pit in Denbighshire, North Wales; 266 miners were killed.

The ballad below was published soon afterwards; its author is unknown.

You've heard of the Gresford disaster,  
The terrible price that was paid,  
Two hundred and forty-two colliers were lost  
And three men of a rescue brigade.

It occurred in the month of September,  
At three in the morning, that pit  
Was racked by a violent explosion  
In the Dennis where gas lay so thick.

The gas in the Dennis deep section  
Was packed there like snow in a drift,  
And many a man had to leave the coalface  
Before he had worked out his shift.

A fortnight before the explosion,  
To the shot-firer Tomlinson cried  
"If you fire that shot we'll be all blown to hell!"  
And no one can say that he lied.

The fireman's reports they are missing,  
The records of forty-two days;  
The colliery manager had them destroyed  
To cover his criminal ways.

Down there in the dark they are lying,  
They died for nine shillings a day.  
They have worked out their shift and now they must lie  
In the darkness until Judgement Day.

The Lord Mayor of London's collecting,  
To help both our children and wives,  
The owners have sent some white lilies  
To pay for the poor colliers' lives.

Farewell, our dear wives and our children,  
Farewell, our old comrades as well.  
Don't send your sons down the dark dreary pit,  
They'll be damned like the sinners in hell.

You can find out more information about the disaster at:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/northeast/sites/wrexham/pages/gresford\\_disaster.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/northeast/sites/wrexham/pages/gresford_disaster.shtml)