

THE BALLAD OF RAVENSCRAIG

This poem has been written by ROBERT MORTON, who was traffic manager at Dalzell in the early 'thirties and is now within a few weeks of his 90th birthday. Mr. Morton retired about 23 years ago.

Tubal-Cain lived when the
earth was young,
He wrought in brass and
he wrought in iron;
So he built his furnace at Ravens-
craig,
To melt his brass and to melt his
iron.

Little he dreamt that beneath his
feet,
There were blackened diamonds
and Mushet ore
Which Wisdom had planted for use
of man
In ages to come, an abundant
store.

So he cut down wood from the
forest trees
And dug out ore from the Raven's
Cragg,
Layer on layer he set them down;
Wood from the trees, and ore
from the Cragg.

With hammer, anvil and primal
plant,
Pursuing his craft with no relax:
Forging plough shares for the
crofter fields
And heads for the sturdy wood-
man's axe.

Tubal-Cain laboured many long
years
Till his form was bent and his
eyesight dim:
So he hied him away from the
Ravenscraig
Wearied in body and wearied in
limb.

Then the Nelsons, Siemens and
Merrys came,
The Wilsons, Dunlops and Stew-
arts came,
The Holdsworths, the Bairds and
Dixons too
At different places staking a
claim.

Then the Colvilles, the Craigs, the
McCances came,
At the Ravenscraig they staked
their claim;
And in almost less time than it takes
to tell,
The farm lands didn't just look
the same.

For they brought an army of
workers there,
Some men of brain and some men
of brawn,
They levelled up, and they burrowed
down,
From dawn to dusk and from
dusk to dawn.

And they built high towers and
rolling mills,
Huge furnace fires that were fed
with ores,
And before the clock got very far
round
Lo! a river of molten iron out-
pours.

And then with a touch of Alchemy's
wand,
In a process that makes the
senses reel,
The rough and the molten iron was
turned
Into bars and plates of the finest
steel.

Men built steel giants to run on
steel,
Steel ships to sail on the Seven
Seas;
Transporting ore from the far away
lands
In winter gale and in summer
breeze.

And Ravenscraig products may yet
be used
To build a roadway over the
Forth,
If the City of Jute cries loud enough,
One over the silvery Tay up
North.

All over the globe where bridges
are built,
High structures and railways in
every land,
Discerning men will order the steel,
That has stamped upon it the
Ravenscraig Brand.

* * *

Thus ends the Ballad of Ravens-
craig;
And where Ford's cattle once
browsed in peace,
Let the fires burn bright and the
rolls roll on,
Let the output of Ravenscraig
steel increase.

ROBERT MORTON