

## Jowl, Jowl and Listen – Traditional

**Chorus:** [C] Jowl, jowl and listen, lad,  
And [G7] hear that coal face [C] workin'.  
There's many a marrer missin', lad,  
Be [G7] caas he wadn't [C] listen, lad.

**Verse 1:** Me feyther aalwes [F] used te [Dm] say,  
[G7] Pit wark's mair than [C] hewin',  
Ye've got te coax the [F] coal alang  
And [G7] not be rivin' and [C] tewin'.

**Chorus:** [C] Jowl, jowl and listen, lad,  
And [G7] hear that coal face [C] workin'.  
There's many a marrer missin', lad,  
Be [G7] caas he wadn't [C] listen, lad.

**Verse 2:** Noo the depitty craals frae [F] flat te flat,  
While the [G7] putter rams the [C] tyum 'uns,  
But the man at the face hes te [F] knaa his place  
Like a [G7] mother knaas hor [C] young 'uns.

**Chorus:** [C] Jowl, jowl and listen, lad,  
And [G7] hear that coal face [C] workin'.  
There's many a marrer missin', lad,  
Be [G7] caas he wadn't [C] listen, lad.

### Version from Beamish Museum:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1177790315904746>

This video has a full explanation of the song (I suspect for children) but is interesting. If you just want to hear the tune uninterrupted go to 2minutes 20 seconds in. This song is mostly sung unaccompanied but if played to a moderate calypso rhythm I find it a lovely tune.

### Background

This is a song from the Durham coalfields and is advice to miners about understanding and respecting the mine. To jowl is to knock the roof of the mine and listen to the sound. An experienced miner can tell by the sound whether the roof can be trusted.

The cautionary tale is that many a marrow (close friend – as close as the marrow of your bones) is missing because he didn't listen – and presumably died when the roof fell in.

### Other mining terms in this song

- Hewing – cutting with a pickaxe
- Riving – splitting or tearing apart violently
- Tewing – beating
- Flat – district of the mine or a work area
- Putter – a carrier who took empty coal tubs to the coalface and removed full tubs. A putter would often be helped by a pit pony.
- Chummin – an empty coal tub