

# Sixteen Tons

## **Merle Travis Key**

Merle Travis

**Medium [Tennessee Ernie Ford 1955] (♩ = 140)**  
**[Intro]**

Intro

N.C.

Some

Verse

VERBO

EMI

E<sub>M</sub><sup>7</sup>/D

people say a man is made out of mud. A poor man's made out of

8 **E<sub>MI</sub>**<sup>6</sup>/**C<sub>#</sub>** B **E<sub>MI</sub>** **E<sub>MI</sub>**<sup>7</sup>/**D** **A<sub>MI</sub>**/**C** **A<sub>MI</sub>**

muscle and blood.\_ Muscle and blood\_ and skin and bones,\_ a

11 EMI N.C.

mind that's weak and a back that's strong. You load

The musical score consists of a single staff with a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The notes are eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics "mind that's weak and a back that's strong. You load" are written below the staff. The first note of each word is aligned with the start of a note or a rest. The word "load" has two notes: a sixteenth note followed by an eighth note.

## Chorus

EMI

EMI<sup>7</sup>/D

E<sub>MI</sub><sup>6</sup>/C<sub>#</sub>

B

EMI

EMI<sup>7</sup>/D

six - teen tons, what do you get? An - oth - er day old - er and

*To Coda Last Time* ♩

16      **EMI**<sup>6</sup>/**C♯**    **B**    **EMI**                **EMI**<sup>7</sup>/**D**    **AMI/C**    **AMI**    **EMI**    **N.C.**

deeper in debt. Saint Peter, don't you call me 'cause I can't go.\_ I owe my soul to the

Musical score for "I Was a Little" on page 20. The score consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts with a quarter note followed by a eighth note, then a half note, then a eighth note, then a eighth note. The second staff starts with a eighth note, then a eighth note, then a eighth note, then a eighth note, then a eighth note. The lyrics "compa-ny store." are written below the first staff, and "I was" are written below the second staff. The music includes several rests and dynamic markings like "N.C." (Non-Chorus) and "C.H." (Chorus). The tempo is indicated as 120 BPM.

# Sixteen Tons

## ∅ Coda

25      **E<sub>MI</sub>**      rit.      **A<sub>MI</sub>**      **N.C.** *freely*      3  
Peter, don't you call me 'cause I can't go...      I owe my soul

The musical score shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The vocal line consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics "Peter, don't you call me 'cause I can't go..." are followed by a melodic line that ends with "I owe my soul" on a descending scale. Measure numbers 25, 30, and 35 are indicated above the staff.

30      *a tempo* **N.C.**      **B<sup>7</sup>**      **E<sub>MI</sub>**  
to the company store.

The musical score continues with a treble clef, one sharp key signature, and common time. The vocal line starts with "to the company store." The lyrics are followed by a melodic line ending with a cadence on the E<sub>MI</sub> chord.

**Verse 1** Some people say a man is made out of mud  
A poor man's made out of muscle and blood  
Muscle and blood and skin and bones  
A mind that's weak and a back that's strong

**Chorus** You load sixteen tons, what do you get?  
Another day older and deeper in debt  
Saint Peter, don't you call me, 'cause I can't go  
I owe my soul to the company store

**Verse 2** I was born one mornin' when the sun didn't shine  
I picked up my shovel and I walked to the mine  
I loaded sixteen tons of number 9 coal  
And the straw boss said, Well a-bless my soul!

**Chorus**

**Verse 3** I was born one mornin', it was drizzlin' rain  
Fightin' and trouble are my middle name  
I was raised in the canebrake by an old mama lion  
Can't no high-toned woman make me walk the line

**Chorus**

**Verse 4** If you see me comin' better step aside  
A lot of men didn't, a lot of men died  
One fist of iron, the other of steel  
If the right one don't getcha, then the left one will

**Chorus** You load sixteen tons, what do you get?  
Another day older and deeper in debt  
Saint Peter, don't you call me, 'cause I can't go  
I owe my soul to the company store