

## Tommy Trevorrow and the Knockers in the Mine

### A Story retold by Rosanne Hawke

There was once a miner called Tom Trevorrow. One day he heard noises in the shaft. He didn't believe in the knockers' power so he threw some stones in the direction of the noises and said, 'Oh shut up and go away.'

A shower of stones came back his way, but he continued working. Soon he sat down to eat his cake. The knockers called out, 'Tommy Trevorrow, Tommy Trevorrow, leave us some cake, or you'll have bad luck tomorrow.'

But Tom was hungry and took no notice and he ate it all up and didn't leave them a crumb. Then they sang, 'Tommy Trevorrow, you're so mean to eat all your cake and leave us none, there's bad luck for you tomorrow.'

Still, he took no notice and sat down to have a doze. When he woke up he saw them and gasped. All the knockers were resting on their picks watching him. They were only three feet tall; their arms were longer than their legs. They looked dried up and wrinkled like old apples. They had ugly heads with grey or red hair; their eyes squinted, they had hooked noses and mouths that stretched from ear to ear. They made horrible faces at Tommy Trevorrow and he wondered what would happen. He couldn't just sit there – what if they attacked him?



What could he do? Suddenly he thought of his candle. He lit it and finally the knockers melted away, changing shapes like curling smoke.

The next day he arrived for work with his son. This time he was working in a dangerous place in the mine. Again, he could hear the knockers on the other side of the wall, and all of a sudden the ground began to move under his feet.

His son managed to lift him up to the surface by a rope and he was pulled to safety just in time. But all the tin he had dug out, and all his tools, were lost. He had no money to buy more tools.

In the end he had to leave the mine and work on a farm.

Miners eating pasties in a mine.  
This cartoon is from Oswald Pryor's book, *Cornish Pasty*.