

Adirondacks Had Its Own Folk Songs; "Cold River Line" Recalls Loggers Who Kept Timber Moving a Half-Century Ago

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the road, spraying water to freeze the moment it hit the sled track. . . Come daylight and here was a sheer highway, as smooth as glass, and glittering, over which a team could move a mountain of pine or spruce. . . On the hills the road was kept bare, and on it was thrown hay or dirt, to act as a brake on the runners. On steep hills a snubber, one version of which was called a "Barringer brake, was used" . . . Occasionally a load got away and spilled logs all over the landscape, tying up operations for awhile, —an incident referred to in some of Tripp's verses. The song follows:

THE COLD RIVER LINE

Come sit yourself down, come listen for a time. . . We'll review our "vacation" on the Cold River Line. We'll talk of our skidways, of spruce and of pine. . . We'll talk over old times, on the Cold River Line.

There is Charlie Strickland, who keeps all our time. . . A mighty fine fellow when in his right mind. He's worked hard all winter, and now he'll decline To work any longer on the Cold River Line.

And there is our blacksmith, his name is Pidgeon. . . He pounds around all day like an old steam engine. He pounds out the horseshoes, and all sorts of things. . . When he goes out to Newcomb, they'll pluck out his wings!

Now if you are hungry and cold you won't stay. . . Here is a man we'll introduce, and we'll call him Clint Paye. He's a man you know well, and a man you'll esteem. . . He drove the old Ciscos, that lazy, old team.

There is Pete Boudreau, he's a man you all know. . . Not afraid of cold weather nor a foot of new snow. He's happy go lucky and gets along fine, All along the Cold River Line.

There is another; from Dogtown he came. . . If you will listen for a moment, I will tell you his name. He's a teamster by trade, and drives a bay team. . . The boys all call him the bold Hyland Steves.

There is young Clayton, he looks very cross. . . Gets up in the morning, you'd think he was lost. Goes over the mountain as slick as you please. . . And he travels just ahead of young Hyland Steves.

There is another; he feels like a pick. . . He's always behind, and thinks himself slick. He broke over a hill, and laid on the switch. . . He wound up his bobbin in a fourteen-foot ditch.

There's a lot more men, and some I don't know. . . Dick says he'll draw logs; if they give him some snow. He drives a grey team, and he'll make them climb. . . They'll have to draw logs on the Cold River Line.

Another good teamster was young Johnny Carrol. . . In descending a hill, where the road was quite narrow. . . He landed his logs all there in jig time. . . And blocked all the teams on the Cold River Line.

Now Teddy's the boy, that has got them all stopped. . .

He's up in the morning by the alarm of the clock. Goes into the woods, and rolls on eight-tier. . . Throw us over the wire, and I'll get out of here.

He started for the landing, and was getting on fine. . . Until he met a road monkey, half froze and half blind. He says to Teddy, "the hill it is fine" . . . But soon Teddy's logs, by the roadside reclined.

Says Teddy to himself, "now don't that beat Hell!" As he looked by the roadside, where the logs they had fell. He thought it all over, and he looked at the time, And wished he had never seen the Cold River Line.

Another good teamster is young Harry Flynn. . . He's a little afraid, he won't get his logs in. And when he is finished, he wants all his time, For the work he has done on the Cold River Line.

There is Ed Moynehan, who draws some big loads. . . And also Dan Callahan, who slicks up the roads. There's "Crazy" Wells, he's afraid of a thaw. . . And another good teamster by the name of Watsaw.

There is Colby and Gokey and young Jay McGinn. . . There's Elmer and Leo and bold Harry Flynn. There's Stanley and Rollins and Jimmie McGinn. . . And also Charley Rogers will work his time in.

Now here's to our road gang, they are a great crew. . . There's Aubrey and Trippie and Sid Merrithew. There's "Turkey" and Foley and old man Lafaye. . . They all guarded hills, and guarded them with hay.

There's Hankie and Louie and big Tommy Hughes. . . There's Ernest and Riley to help make a crew. There's Frenchmen and Polacks and men from the mine. . .

They all worked for Wakely on the Cold River Line.

There is an old sailor, he's worked on the barge. . . He's helping Tom Hughes, his hills for to guard. Now Paddy's a worker and works all the time. He'd like a good stake from the Cold River Line.

Now here's to our foreman, the boys call him Ed. . . If a man is disabled, he's sick in the head. . . He says "Some of the boys are sick all the time. . . And I'm crippled for men on the Cold River Line.

Now it's farewell to our foreman, farewell for a time. . . Farewell to the tall spruce all along that long line. Farewell to the hemlock, farewell to the pine. . . But we did not fare well on the Cold River Line.

Then farewell to our cooks, we'll not leave them behind. . . For God truly knows they've served well their time. I hope they will never, no never, in time, Have to go cooking again on the Cold River Line!

Now to finish my story, to finish my song. . . I am going out to Newcomb. . . I won't stay there long. . . I'll go to Glens Falls, and have a good time. . . And spend all my money from the Cold River Line.