

Reprinted from the *Tupper Lake Free Press & Herald*  
 Thursday, December 30, 1965

er at Your  
 iverside!



33  
 E!

in for All!

MERRY  
 EW YEAR  
 it of

DE

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

In these days when adenoidal tenors in sheepdog haircuts are belting out "folk songs" on every other TV program, it might interest our readers to know that the Adirondack old timers turned out a few such numbers in their day.

An excellent example has been turned over to us by Leslie Rist of Newcomb, whose interest in Adirondack history has made him something of an authority on the subject. His memories were stirred by reading "Lumberjack Sky Pilot" by Rev. Frank Reed, who he recalled visiting the CCC camp at Blue Mountain Lake in early 1939 to take movies of camp life and work, and returning later to show these pictures, and others taken of the Hudson River pulp drive.

A few old timers in the Tupper area may recognize the names of old friends among the many which were worked into the song, "The Cold River Line", which was written in March of 1912 by the late Albert F. "Alley" Tripp of Newcomb. Mr. Rist writes that he received information on the song from Mrs. Marjorie L. Porter of Keene Valley; John Curry, Saranac Lake; Byron Andrus of Gooley Club, Essex Chain Lakes; Mrs.

Leon E. Braley and Charles Thornton of Newcomb, and the North Creek News-Enterprise. Of the men mentioned in the song he writes "I have information on the full names of some, and will hazard a guess at some of the others. "Pidgeon" was Julius Pidgeon; "Clayton" was probably Clayton Cross, and "Dick", —Dick Dutcher; Colby was Frank Colby; "Stanley" may have been Jess Stanley, and "Trippie" was A. F. Tripp, the author of the song, who died in the fall of 1964. "Louie" was probably Louis White, and "Paddy", Paddy Hefferon. "Ed, the foreman", may have been Ed Wakely, but I'm not sure of this, as I understand Mr. Wakely had two camps at Cold River that winter of 1912. I remember "Big Mike", who's interred in the Minerva Baptist Cemetery... After his death, a collection was taken up among his many friends for the purchase of a headstone for his grave... I recall hearing the old timers tell of Paddy Hefferon, who is also mentioned in the song. I have been informed that Pete Boudreau is still living at Long Lake. There are probably those who know other verses of this song, and others who know the persons mentioned in it"...

At the time the poem was written Tupper Lake was very much involved in the Cold River country, where the Santa Clara Lumber Co. conducted extensive logging operations for years. If any of the names in the song ring a bell, we'd like to hear from them. "Alley" Tripp followed an old, old formula in writing "The Cold River Line", working in the names of every man on the job, —a sure-fire recipe for holding his audience when it was sung... Logging methods have changed "considerable" since 1912, back before the truck and tractor era, when horse-drawn sleds, piled high with logs, moved the timber out of the woods or hauled it to landings where it was decked to await the ice break-up and the spring river drive... Much of Tripp's song dealt with the teamsters, and the "whistle-punks" and "road monkeys" who kept the tote roads in shape through the winter hauling period... Stewart Holcomb, in "Yankee Logger", recalled their work in a brief passage: "All night long a lonely man sat on a sprinkler sled and drove over

(Continued on Page 7)

**JOIN THE CROWD**  
 — AT —  
**CONIFER INN'S Gala**  
**New Year's Eve Party!**

**ge — Regular Band Prices**

... HATS,  
 IED ...  
 Y  
**HREE"**  
 rth Country!  
 s at—  
**N**



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

(Continued from Page 3)

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 Ciscoes, 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 Moynahan, 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 Tripple 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.