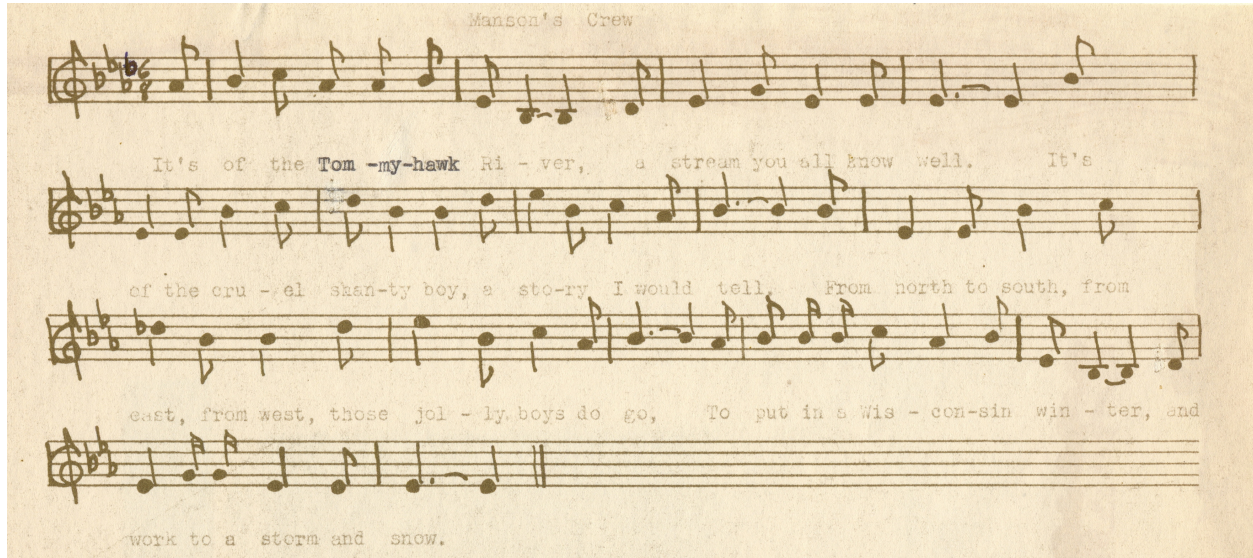


# Manson's Crew

As sung by  
Bert Taplin  
1941 Wautoma, WI



## Verse 1.

It's of the Tommyhawk River  
A stream you all know well,  
It's of the cruel shanty boys,  
A story I would tell.  
From north, from south, from east, from west,  
Those jolly boys do go,  
To put in a Wisconsin winter,  
And work through its frost and snow.

## Verse 2.

Our company's name 'twas Manson.  
For honesty they're renowned  
They are two honest lumbermen  
Who live in Wausau town.  
Though George is nothing toney,  
Sure he gets there just as hard.  
In the summer he runs a sawmill,  
And tends to the lumber yard.

## Verse 3.

Old Arpy is the old man.  
He greets you with a smile.  
He's a fatherly way about him  
And, in fact, I like his style.  
He never has went back on the boys,  
As I've been often told,  
For in his prime he used to work,  
Out in the frost and cold.

## Verse 4.

Our foreman's name was Furnas,  
A fellow you all know well.  
He is a jolly good fellow,  
The truth to you I'll tell.  
He is as good a logger  
As up Tommyhawk can be found.  
Here's luck to Billy Furnas,  
Now let this toast go round.

Verse 5.

There was Kennedy, the bull puncher,  
He was driving the little white bulls,  
And it would make you smile, my boys,  
To see him take from them some pulls.  
He is a natural woodsman,  
And they say that in his prime,  
'Twas his delight from morn to night  
To tumble down the pine.

Verse 6.

There was Billy Dour, his partner,  
A fellow I'm sure you know,  
For he's worked in old Wisconsin  
Through many of her winters' snow.  
He's a quiet boy in the shanty,  
And for skidding he can't be beat,  
And when the social glass goes 'round,  
He always stands his treat.

Verse 7.

There was Banks and there was Murphy;  
They were driving the other two teams  
They are two quiet fellows,  
Fair ox teamsters, too, it seems.  
Between these four bull punchers  
And the white Norway pine,  
They kept the sleighs all loaded  
The full of the winter time.

Verse 8.

We've got a boy in the shanty,  
Who is boss upon this brook  
He is the kind of pot wrestlers;  
He is a dandy cook.  
For keeping things up tidy,  
Neddy Wall, he can't be beat,  
For he is the jolliest boy, my lads,  
As you'll meet on Wausau street.

Verse 9.

As to our choppers and sawyers,  
They are the best of men.  
And for handling logs with canthooks,  
You can't beat Oscar and Ben.  
They're Manson's dandy loaders,  
And they topload all the team.  
And for beat them handling sawlogs,  
You'd have to do it by steam.

Verse 10.

As to our jolly horse teamsters,  
There's thirteen in this mob.  
There ain't a sneak amongst them,  
Not a son-of-a-gun, a snob.  
They never kick on sawlogs,  
For thousands we have hauled.  
But for making miles on logging roads,  
We'd sooner have them small.

Verse 11.

Here's luck unto George Manson;  
Here's luck to the old man, too.  
Here's luck to Bill Furnas;  
Here's luck to this whole crew.  
Here's luck unto the drivers,  
Who drive the sawlogs down,  
And when the month of June sets in,  
May they all reach Wausau town.

*Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.*

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**Critical Commentary**

Transcriptions by Peters, p. 89, and HST



**HST notes:**

In the Professional Papers series:

*Sung by Bert Taplin, age 87, Wautoma, 1941.*

*This song was composed by Bert Taplin when he was about forty, in 1894. It tells of the members of the crew of the Manson Lumber Company of Wausau, which cut timber along the Tomahawk River. Mr. Taplin began working in the lumber camps at the age of fourteen as a swamper and left the woods as a foreman at the age of 50. Although he composed several lumberjack ballads, it was over thirty years since he had sung them.*

**Sources:**

Peters, Harry B., ed. *Folk Songs out of Wisconsin: An Illustrated Compendium of Words and Music*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977.

K.G.