

# Old Hazeltine

As sung by  
Bert Taplin  
7-21-41 Wautoma, WI

Handwritten musical score for the song "Old Hazeltine". The score is written on four staves of music. The lyrics are: "It's of the Eau Claire Ri-ver, a stream I'm sure you know. Its of a crew of shan-ty boys who worked through the snow, And as to old Ha-zel-tine, he's a lou - sy son-of-a -bitch. For it is from the poor man that he has grown rich." The score includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. There are some handwritten annotations, including "old Hazeltine" written above the first staff and a circled "3" above the word "lou" in the third staff.

It's of the Eau Claire River, a stream I'm sure you know.  
It's of a crew of shanty boys, who worked through the snow.  
And as to old Hazeltine, he's a lousy son-of-a-bitch.  
For it is from the poor man that he has grown rich.

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

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## Critical Commentary

Transcription by Peters, p. 91.

### HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

*It's of the Eau Clair river, a stream I'm sure you know*

*It's of a crew of shanty boys who've worked thro' many a snow*

*Our cruiser is Red Gillam, our foreman, Sam Meserve*

*Hired out by Meserve to sprinkle roads, and was*

*Then hired by Gillam's camp to drive a span of colts.*

*And as to Old Man Hazeltine, He's a lousy son-of-a-bitch*

*For it is from the poor man that he has grown rich*

*The cheating of his jobbers and the starving of his crew  
I think he's an old whelp, boys, now my Hearties, don't you?*

*Mr Taplin (working for Charley Gillem) (hired from Hazeltine's camp) was "likkered up" one night when he was dared to perform for Hazeltine, himself. Burt wasn't one to be scared so Hazeltine didn't say much.*

*Remark: "God I hated him" See typed notes. Remark: "I was in a saloon singing while I was drunk. And along came Hazeltine and I had to sing this song. The stood by the door, the boys, and wouldn't let him out. He had to listen to it. I was drunk that night ... oh, God!"*

**Editor's notes:**

On Peters' handwritten transcription (in the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection), he wrote "Not a great tune but the bitterness is from the heart."

**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.