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Cutting Down the Pines

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Friends, if you will listen, I'll sing to you a song,
All about the pine woods and how they get along.
A jovial lot of fellows as ever you will find
Spent the winter pleasantly cutting down the pines.

Some will leave their own dear homes and friends they love so dear
To the lonesome pine woods the boys will have to steer.
The sawyers and the choppers, the quiet mechanics too.
Learn all sorts of trades as part of the lumber crew.

The sawyers and the choppers, they lay the timber low:
The skidders and the swampers, they haul it to and fro;
On come the teamsters before the break of day:
They load up their log-teams, to the river haste away

"Noontime is coming!" loud the foreman screams,
"Lay down your saws and axes and haste to pork and beans
Time for your dinner!" you hear the foreman cry:
You ought to see them bound around, for they hate to lose their pie.

"Hurry up there, Tom, Dick or Joe,
You'll have to take the water pail and for some water go
Arriving in the shanty is when the fun begins,
Bringing out the water pails and rattling of the tins.

After dinner's over, 'tis amongst the crew,
We'll load up our pipes and smoke till all is blue
"Time for the wood, boys," you'll hear the foreman say;
We'll gather up our hats and caps, to the woods we'll haste away.

So merrily ring their axes until the sun goes down
"Hurrah! Now, my boys, your day's work is done."
Arriving at the shanty with cold and wet feet
All hands pull off our hats and caps, for supper we must eat

Our boots and our shoes are all thrown to one side;
Our mittens and our socks are all hung up and dried
"Time for your supper!" You all get up and go;
'Tain't the style for one of those boys to miss his hash, y'know!

Nine o'clock and thereabout, into our bunks we'll climb

To dream away the dreary hours while cutting down the pine
Four o'clock and thereabout, you'll hear the foreman shout,
"Hurrah, there, you teamsters, it's time that you were out!"

The teamsters, they'll get up all in a frightened way:
One cries, "I've lost my socks; my mittens've gone astray!"
Another one cries, "I've lost my cap, I don't know what to do
While another one says, "I've lost my hat, and I'm ruined too."

The choppers, they'll get up: their mittens they cannot find;
They lay it to the teamsters, and curse' em almost blind.
If any of you from this way should happen there,
You'd kill yourself a-laughing at the boys in despair.

Springtime is coming, merry be the day;
Lay down your saws and axes, and haste to clear the way
The floating ice now is gone, and business is to a ram:
Three hundred able-bodied men are wanted on the jam.

If any of you disbelieve in this song, or think these lines aren't true,
Just go to Bravy's shanty, ask one of Bravy's crew.
It was in Jack Bravy's shanty this song was sung with glee,
"This is the end of The Lumber Woods," says L. D. E.

From Folk Songs of the Catskills, Cazden Haufrecht and Studer
Collected from George Edwards
note: Tune is slight variation of the Bigler