

Tom T. Hall, Ballad Of Bill Crump

Now I'd hear a lot of tall stories since my business is writin' songs
And every now and then if you listen real close a good true one comes along
And this is the story of old Bill Crump from the North Carolina Hills
Nat Winston of Nashville knew this man real well

He built the church and he built the pews
He built the cradles and the furniture for the schools
Folks in Avery County say that he was better than good
Probably one of the reasons the Lord made wood

Now men have faults and Bill's fault was he loved to sip that corn
He lived ninety some years that way don't guess it was hurtin' him none
You could take him a picture from a catalog he could build anything he'd see
He could make anything that you could make out of the tree
One day Bill said Mama I'm gettin' old I want you to measure me good
I'm goin' out to that wood pile and get myself some wood
And I'm gonna make me a coffin I want it to fit me fine
The way I figure it I've got about enough time
He built the church and he built the pews...

Now Bill worked on that coffin like he was gonna be there awhile
He'd show the folks and rub that wood and then stand back and smile
He used that body for ninety some years figured it had treated him good
And when he left it he put it away in some real fine wood
Oh right now old Bill's sleepin' in the hills of North Caroline
In his homemade coffin handrubbed walnut velvet lined
Now most folks use their heads and hands and just think of themselves
His body's there but his spirit's someplace else
Cause he built the church and he built the pews...