

I WISH I WAS A MOLE IN THE GROUND

Old-Time, Song and Breakdown; **DATE:** Early 1900's (1924 was Lunsford's recording); **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Bascom Lamar Lunsford; Tommy Jarrell; Doc and Merle Watson; Hylo Brown; The Pine River Boys; **OTHER NAMES:** "Tempy;" "Mole in the Ground;" "Kimpy;" "My Doney, Where Have You Been So Long;" "Skipping Through the Frost and Snow;" "My Last Dollar;" "Girls, Quit Your Rowdy Ways;" "Alberta, Let Your Hair Hang (Stream) Down;" "Feeling Bad and Low;" "Sammie, Where (Have) You Been So Long;" "Kimble;" **RELATED TO:** "I Don't Like No Railroad Man" (floating lyrics); "My Last Gold Dollar" (floating lyrics); "New River Train" (tune, floating lyrics); "Black Dog Blues" (lyrics); "Hard Rocking Chair" (melody); **NOTES:** Bascom Lamar Lunsford reportedly learned one version in 1901, from Fred Moody of Haywood County, N.C.. How much Lunsford composed "Mole in the Ground" is unknown. The line "When I come back with a forty-dollar bill/ It's "Baby, where you been so long?" is found in "Black Dog Blues," "My Doney, Where Have You Been So Long;" and Dock Boggs's "Sammie, Where (Have) You Been So Long?" "Kimpy/Kimble" is simply a mishearing of "Tempy," a common name for "Mole in the Ground."

I wish I was a mole in the ground. Yes I wish I was a mole in the ground. If I's a
mole in the ground I'd root that moun-tain down, And I wish I was a mole in the ground.

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C G C G
I wish I was a mole in the ground. Yes, I wish I was a mole in the ground.
C Am
If I's a mole in the ground, I'd root that mountain down,
C G C
And I wish I was a mole in the ground.

Oh, Tempy wants a nine-dollar shawl. Yes, Tempy wants a nine-dollar shawl;
When I come o'er the hill with a twenty-dollar bill,
It's "Baby, where you been so long?"

Oh, where have you been so long, Oh, where have you been so long,
I've been in the Bend with the rough and rowdy men,
It's baby where you been so long?

I don't like a railroad man. No, I don't like a railroad man;
A railroad man will kill you when he can,
And drink up your blood like wine.

I wish I was a lizard in the spring. Yes, I wish I was a lizard in the spring;
If I's a lizard in the spring, I could hear my darlin' sing,
I wish I was a lizard in the spring.