

Robert Wilkins

"Alabama Blues"

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I'll tell you, girl, I'm gonna tell you now
If you don't want me, please don't dog me around
If you don't want me, don't dog me around

My home ain't here, it's in most any old town
My home ain't here, it's in most any old town
My home ain't here, it's most any old town

I'm goin' up on a mountain and look down on the sea
Saw a bullyin'¹ alligator, she was doin' that shivaree²
Saw a bullyin' alligator doin' the shivaree

Tell me, friend, ever since that bullyin' Stack³ been
made
Kansas City, Missouri, has been her regular trade
Kansas City, Missouri, been her regular trade

The Kate's⁴ in the bend, the Stack is turnin' around and
'round
The stern wheel knockin', friend, I'm Alabama bound⁵
The stern wheel knockin', I'm Alabama bound

My mama told me, an' old papa told me, too
Said, "Brownskin women, son, gonna be the death of
you"
Said, "Brownskin women, gonna be the death of you"

I told mama last night, friends, and papa the night
before
"If brownskin women kill me, mama, let me go"
"If brownskin women kill me, mama, let me go"

Note 1: bullyin', a once fashionable superlative;

Note 2: shivaree, a noisy mock serenade to a newly
married couple;

Note 3: Stack, probably a Mississippi riverboat;

Note 4: Kate, the Kate Adams, a fabled Mississippi
riverboat. The last of three boats bearing this name (all
of which were operated by the James Rees Gusquesne
Engine Works and all of which were destroyed by fire)

perished mysteriously in 1926, possibly at the hands of
a bigot who resented its appearance in the movie
"Uncle Tom's Cabin";
Note 5: Alabama bound, blues slang or Southward
bound

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