

Way Down in the Toad Mines

It was way back in '14 when first I went west
Hopped an old empty boxcar and the rails did the rest
Spat me out in Wyoming, Bighorn Mountain range
It was then that my life took a turn for the strange
Heard tell of a job out by Chugwater way
They needed some hands, they were willing to pay
And me, I was tired of life on the road
So I went out prospecting for Wyoming toad

*Way down in the toad mines
I guess that's where my sin began
Way down in the toad mines
Digging for them damn amphibians*

Now the bull-goose prospector was Warty Joe Flynn
And he knew of the state the toad business was in
A dollar a day we was paid for our time
In hopes we could find a good spot for the mine
They came off the skids, off the rails and the roads
And soon came the cry: Warty Joe had struck toad
We dug the first toad shaft the very next day
And the miners came next: where there's toads, there'll be pay

*Way down in the toad mines
Where the time is always evenin'
Way down in the toad mines
Digging through them toad secretions*

Well, we found us some hoptoads and found us some leapers
And damn near caved in once in a seam of spring peepers
But in April of that year we struck mother lode
A big, croaking vein of pure Wyoming toad
We worked day and night to that ribbiting sound
Every day we hauled six tons of toad out the ground
Chugwater sprung up, and was much talked about
No one could have guessed that the toad might run out

*Way down in the toad mines
For the gods of wealth are jolly gods
Way down in the toad mines
With your pockets full of polywogs*

Well, the mine it dried up, and the town dried up too
There ain't no place to go, there ain't nothing to do
We went out prospecting to find a new vein
But the good days of toad mining won't come again
I went back on the bum and I hopped a freight train
I cut timber for a while, but it weren't quite the same
There never was more than one business for me
And boys, the toad business ain't what it used to be

*Way down in the toad mines
That's where I spent my youth
Way down in the toad mines
Think I might go back east and try panning for newts*

Composed by: Alex Sturbaum
Appears on *River Run Wide*
Every word of this is true.