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They Can't Put it Back

Billy Edd Wheeler

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THEY CAN'T PUT IT BACK

Billy Edd Wheeler

Down in the valley 'bout a mile from me
Where the crows no longer cry
There's a great big earth-moving monster machine
Stands ten stories high
The ground he can eat is a sight
Takes a hundred tons at a bite
He can dig up the grass
It's a fact
But he can't put it back

They come and tell me I got to move
Make way for that big machine
But I ain't movin' unless they kill me
Like they killed the fish in my stream
But look at that big machine go
Took that shady grove a long time to grow
He can rip it out with
One whack
But he can't put it back

I never was one to carry signs
Picket with placards
Walk in lines
Maybe I'm behind the times!

You can bet your sweet life they're gonna hear from me
I ain't gonna take it layin' down
Cause I'm gettin' tired seein' rocks that bleed
On the bare guts of the ground
I ain't gonna sell my soul
So they can strip out another little tiny vein of coal
I ain't a-movin' out of my tracks
Cause they can't put it back
THEY CAN'T PUT IT BACK!

Recorded by Billy Edd Wheeler and released on his album *Paper Birds*, distributed by Kapp Records in 1967.