Ye Ballade

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Contributed by H.W. Smith, Belvedere, Kent.

1. Did ye never hear tell of one Richard's short history,
   Because if ye didn't I'll it ye now,
   All over our part it warn't much of a mystery,
   He was a young man as followed the plough.
   Of leading a single life, much he got tired, he did;
   Fell in love with a maid at the Sign of the Crown
   Fell in love with this maid for the want of wife, he did,
   As is very well known to the folks of the town.
   Chorus:
   Tol-de-rol, lol-de-rol, tol-de-rol, tiddy dol,
   Tol-de-rol, tiddy-dol, tol-de-rol, lay—
   Tol-de-rol, 101-de-rol, tol-de-rol, tiddy dol,
   Tol-de-rol, tiddy-dol, tol-de-rol, lay.

2. Now fair Mistress Nelly was dressy and dapper,
   And though Master Dick was good-looking lad,
   She huffed him and scuffed him for she was a snapper,
   And told him quite plain she was not to be had.
   For she loved a man more handsome and bigger,
   And coming from Lunnon he warn't such a clown,
   His name was Jack Bell, and he was a grave digger,
   Though he wasn't much known to the folks of our town.

3. Now he took this to heart so, did poor Master Richard,
   A-having of Nelly, he hadn't a hope,
   And to end all the matter his life he was tired of,
   He'd hang himself up if he had but a rope.

So he hunted about while his heart it did falter,
But never a rope could he find up or down.
So he twisted a hay-band and made him a halter,
As is very well-known to the folks of our town.

4. So he hung himself up to a tree in the meadow,
He felt so all over he couldn't tell how,
His neck it was stretching, he the ground couldn't tread on,
When their chanced to come by Father Giles' old cow.
She sniffed at the hay, then took hold of the band fast,
And plucked out a mouthful which brought Dicky down,
He jumped on his legs and away he did run fast,
And was never more seen by the folks of our town.