

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Swan Necked Valve

Swan Necked Valve
(Alex Russell)

When Strathclyde was in Brigton [When I was in the factory] and my time was nearly oot

What happened in the monkey shed I'll tell ye a' about.

Chorus.

Rickie doo dum da, doo dum da,

Rickie, tickie doo dum day.

A sneezer o' a job came in and I was left to solve
The problem of the makin' o' the swan-necked valve.

I looked at it and wondered where the pairtin I should mak'
And syne I prayed the gaffer he would come and tak' it back.

But nothing came to save me and I had to mak' a delve
I worked wi' trepidation on the swan-necked valve.

I took a double pairtin' wi' a tap and drag as well,
And every snug was aff the box - ye've seen that kind yersel'.

My mates a' looked at me and said - "Ye never will evolve
A system for the makin' o' the swan-necked valve."

I got a clamp fu' six feet long and stuck it doon the side,
And in the absence o' a pin, that was my only guide.

And tho' my knees were shakin', sure I worked wi' grim resolve,
That clamp stood like a mast aboon the swan-necked valve.

They sent my brither Sammy in to help me close and cast,
And syne the first thing that he did was ca' awa' the mast.

So noo I didna ha'e a guide; my heid seemed tae revolve,
As pairt by pairt we closed by guess, the swan-necked valve.

From 'The Singing Island' by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger. The notes to the song say:

There are few iron-moulders in Britain who have not heard of Alex Russell of Dundee, the

author of this song, for Russell is the undisputed bard of the iron-founding industry. An admirer

and disciple of Robert Burns, Russell excercises his considerable gifts by recording in verse the day-to-day struggles of his fellow workers. The air is the one usually associated with The Keach in the Creel.

This was on an old ELEKTRA LP called "The Iron Muse"---industrial songs from Great Britain. I thought it was Lou Killen singing it, but maybe not...[AT]

BJ
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