

**THE BALLAD OF JACOB HARRIS
SOLD AND SUNG AT HIS EXECUTION.**

“Good people all I pray now lend an ear
Unto these lines which I shall now declare:
In seventeen hundred and thirty four in May
As is well known the six and twentieth day
A dreadful murder done at eventide
At Ditchling just by the common side.
Near this common now of late did dwell
One Richard Miles, a man was known full well.
He had a wife who on her bed did lie
{She was so sick ‘twas through that she would die}
And in her illnesses she did keep a maid
To wait on her and do her work ‘tis said.
This Richard Miles an alehouse kept also
being near the road many people there did go
To drink of lodge in this house indeed
Which was the cause poor *soild* they all did bleed
This rogue the man Jacob by name
He oftentimes for lodging thither came
At last he proved their fatal enemy
the maid she with her dame had gone to bed
And all the neighbours from the house had fled
the landlord he into the stable went
To feed this rogues horse was his intent
This ruffian straightway after him did steer
And cut hid throat across from ear to ear
And threw his body up against a wall
And then indoors he ran to murder all..
the maid ‘twas thought she heard her master cry
And she ran down the stair immediately
this ruffian met her there his spleen to show’t
he stabbed her twice and cut her throat

Leaving this poor girl all for dead
He went upstairs and then from off the bed
He threw her dame and cut her throat also
Then down again the murdering rogue did go
In the meantime the poor distressed maid
Was got away as the neighbours said
He missing her into the stable ran
And looked *aboit* but could not find the man
He thought there was no time to delay
But took his horse with spleen and made away
the woman both that night this world forsook
But Miles did live until the rogue was took
Which was about two or three days space
they brought him before poor Miles’ face
Who straightway said he was the very man
That did the deed and therefore out of hand
They had him to the Justice with all speed
Who committed him *straightwat* to Gaol indeed.
Then till the next Assizes he did lie
And then condemned this rogue he was to die.
At Horsham Gallows he was hanged there
The thirty first of August that same year
And where he did the crime they took the pains
To bring him back and hang him up in chairs
That there he might be seen by all that passed by
I wish all people who will case an eye
It is a dismal sight for all to behold
Enough to make a heart of stone run cold
So to conclude I hope you will take care
And of all wilful sin I pray beware
Let’s serve the Lord with all our might
And he will guard us day and night.

(spellings irregular; possible typos italicised)