I Only Know I Loved Her - song lyrics

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I ONLY KNOW I LOVED HER.
Copyright, 1895, by F. J. Tierney.
Written by W. A. Archbold. Composed by Felix McGlennon.

I never shall forget the time I first knew Nancy Hall,
When in the summer twilight we would roam,
And as the nights grew longer, then I oft would make a cull.
To find a hearty welcome at her home;
I often see the picture as we'd gather 'round the fire,
And hear her laugh of happiness and glee;
'Tis true her old dad told me once his very heart's desire
Was that his little girl should marry me.

Chorus.
I only knew I loved her, Nancy Hall;
Her bonny face I ever can recall;.
Through bright or stormy weather, we swore we'd cleave together,
And she was my first sweetheart, Nancy Hall.

How pleasant was my lot just then, for truly It did seem
That I had found a gem without alloy;
My sweetheart fixed the wedding day, then all passed as a dream -
'Twas but a dream of happiness and joy.
One night her poor, old father came to me with ashen face-
He waved a missive wildly in his hand:
"This letter is for you," he cried-her writing I did trace;
I broke the seal, although I scarce could stand.

Chorus.
I only know I loved her, Nancy Hall;
I read that she was lost beyond recall;
I felt my hand was shaking, and I knew my heart was breaking
As I cried: "Ah! she has left us-Nancy Hall.

I could have slain the villain then who'd ruined both our lives-
Thank heaven that we never, never met;
For years I tried to fancy her the happiest of wives;
She'd scorn'd my love, but I could not forget;
And when the goal of fame I'd reached, ah, then how my heart bled,
I hungered just to see my love once more;
One day I heard a sweet, sad voice beseech aloud for bread;
I found 'twas she, And starving at my door.

Chorus.
I only know I loved her, Nancy Hall;
'Twas heaven's gift I never could recall:
"I cried: "You shall not perish, your future I will cherish ";
And her cold lips pressed my haul, poor Nancy Hall.