

Author: Lane, Samuel (1786-1853)

Text type: Verse

Date of composition: c 1824

Editions: 1872

Source text:

Lane, Samuel. "Dialogue between Giles Jolterhead and his darter Dinah on their visit to the Norwich Festival". John Glyde, Jun., ed. *The Norfolk Garland. A Collection of the Superstitious Beliefs and Practices, proverbs, curios customs, Ballads and Songs, of the People of Norfolk, as well as Anecdotes Illustrative of the Genius or peculiarities of Norfolk celebrities.* London: Jarrold and Sons: 343-346

e-text

Access and transcription: October 2013

Number of words: 1119

Dialect represented: Norfolk

Produced by María F. García-Bermejo Giner

Copyright © 2013– DING, The Salamanca Corpus, Universidad de Salamanca

[343]

SAMUEL LANE

Samuel Lane was born in the parish of St. Gregory, Norwich, in 1786, and was apprenticed to a tailor named Knights. He as sent to a boarding school at Brook, and proved himself an apt scholar, and in his reading showed an inclination for literature. When a boy, whilst visiting Norwich, he fell from the wall of St. Gregory's churchyard,

[344]

and received so much injury that he was lamed for life. After serving his time, he commenced business for himself, but he did not prosper. He got into debt and into jail. He was very fond of the cup, and consequently, debt and misfortune followed. But the muse stuck to him. His ballads sold prodigiously, and unfortunately, the more drink he imbibed, the more freely came his rhymes; and the result may be easily guessed. When want had driven him on one occasion to seek an asylum in the Workhouse, the poet wrote verses on the walls so insulting to the governor, that he was turned out of the building. At length he went to London, and lived, where he died, in an obscure locality

The Salamanca Corpus: "Dialogue between Giles Jolterhead..." (1872)
called Sheep's Head Court, Milton Square, the only furniture of his apartment being one chair and a bed of straw. His poetical effusions are confined to local circumstances, and many of his ballads sold in thousands. The one I republish was considered his best, but perhaps the most popular was one written on the decay of Guild-day at Norwich, and the removal of the old dragon Snap from the corporate processions.

**DIALOGUE BETWEEN GILES JOLTERHEAD AND HIS DARTER
DINAH ON THEIR VISIT TO THE NORWICH FESTIVAL.**

Giles Jolterhead! from Ashwellthorpe, a joskin raw was he,
To Norwich came on Tuesday last, our Festival to see;
"Consarne my carcase," now says Giles, "I'll take my eldest darter,
And to the Festival we'll go, and see what they are arter.

Come Dinah, mor, put on your duds, and make yourself look tidy,
Who knows amongst these lords and dukes what good luck may betide ye;
For dukes, and lords, and noblemen, in spite of all their bother,
Will sometimes fall in love, they say, with a red raw country mawther."

Then off to Norwich arm in arm, they smash'd along right well,
And when they got to town set up at the Barking Dicky Hotel,
On rolls and cheese, and decent swipes, so comfortably they baited,
Till Giles declared he felt himself more than halfway "coxelated."

Giles paid his reckoning like a man, and off they both did toddle,
But where to find the Festival, put both of them in a muddle;
They enquired of everybody they met "where the Festival was held?"
Some said on "Heigham Cawnser" and some in "Chapel Field."

[344]

Some said 'twas held on the Ditches at the Holkham Arms or Checquers,
Whilst others swore right hard and fast 'twas held at the Nut Crackers.

The Salamanca Corpus: "Dialogue between Giles Jolterhead..." (1872)

At last they saw some carriages a smashing might and main,
So Giles and Dinah ran behind till they got to St. Andrew's Plain.

"Consarne it, Dinah, mor," says Giles, " here's a bustle and confusion,
Do they call this the Festival? Why 'tis more like a Revolution.
Here's the horse soldiers with their broad swords drawn up in battle array,
If the people do not mind their work, they'll surely kill and slay.

" By gums," says Giles, "now Dinah, mor, the safest way I think,
As we are no Revolutioners, is to climb St. Andrew's Bank."
"No, no," says Dinah, "that won't do, to the Festival we are come,
And to see it I am determined before I do go home."

Then away they crush'd through thick and thin, in spite of war's alarms;
Giles flourished high his crab stick with Dinah under his arm;
The gentry pouring in the Hall, Giles thought he needs must follow,
Till a consequential door keeper cry'd "Stop! you country fellow."

"What for," quoth Giles, "you saucy scamp, I'll get the King to fine ye,
My name it is Giles Jolterhead, and this is my mawther Dinah;
We are all the way from Ashwellthorpe, this Festival to see,
Besides my mawther have a mind a lady for to be."

Then up there came a great stout man, with a rare large three-cocked squiver,
With a great red nose on his fat face, like a lump of bullock's liver.

[345]

"Lawk! who is he," says Dinah, "he look so full of wrath? "

"Why that," says Giles, "'tis my belief, is his Majesty William the Fourth."

And with that Giles made a reverend bow, and sung God save the King,
The constable catch'd him a box on the ear, which made his thick head ring.

The Salamanca Corpus: "Dialogue between Giles Jolterhead..." (1872)

"Come, dash my buttons though," says Giles, "if that is the way you treat me,
If ever I come to a Festival again, I'll give you leave to beat me."

Then next there comes the bellman, with his plate on his left breast,
Says Giles "that's the Duke of Sussex,* or else my mark I have missed;
If I could but speak to his Grace I wouldn't mind laying a penny,
That if his Highness be not engaged, he would marry my mawther Dinah."

But his Highness pass'd with a lofty air, and took no notice of Giles,
Nor did he deign to cast one look on Dinah's amorous smiles.
"Consarne these dukes and lords," quoth Giles, "what a set of chaps they are,
They certainly don't like Dinah, because she have got sandy hair."

And then came a lady all in white with rings on her fingers three,
Says Giles, "Look, Dinah, that's the Queen, God save her Majesty;
I have a good mind to step up to her Grace, and say that I waited upon her,
To ask if she can't give Dinah a place as one of her maids of honor."

- The only Festival at Norwich at which the Duke of Sussex attended was that held in 1824, and it is that event, therefore, that the ballad commemorates.

[346]

But the lady she frowned, as well she might, at Giles's red-raw fist,
She took his nose betwixt her fingers, and gave it a lime-burner's twist.
"Consarne it," says Giles, "leave go of my snout, or you'll spoil my constitution;
By George, if you treat your subjects so, no wonder at this revolution."

And now the fiddles began for to squeak, the trumpets, and the bassoons;
Says Giles, "The rebellion is broke out in the hall and these are the dying groans;
Run, Dinah ! run, mor!" now quoth Giles, "before their bayonets prick ye."
Then off they quickly ran away to their quarters at the Barking Dickey.