*Tarlton's Jests*

# *Tarlton's Court Witty Jests*

Riley Bazaar

### *Tarlton Played the Drunkard Before the Queen*

The Queen was not content: Tarlton saw this and took it upon himself to make her smile. To do so, he acted like a drunk and asked for beer to be brought to him immediately: The Queen acknowledged and embraced his silly act and commanded him to not have any more to drink, or else he would truly be a mess! Tarlton responded to her and told her to not fear, due to the fact that her beers are small and not impactful to him. To this, the Queen knew he was joking and laughed, commanding that he should definitely not have any more!

### *How Tarlton Deceived teh Watch in Fleet Street*

Tarlton was late to Court and when he approached Fleetstreet he saw the police. He did not know how to pass them and he attempted to go by them very fast, thinking that he would go unexamined. However, the police took this action as an act of him completely disregarding their presence and commanded him (in the Queen's name) to stop. Tarlton acted as if he could not stand, he fell to the ground as if he was drunk and so they let him pass because he was intoxicated.

### *How Tarlton Flouted a Lady in the Court*

One time, Tarlton was at a banquet at Greenwitch. The Queen was there and had her ladies there too. One of them had a full face of pimples and she also refused to drink wine with the other Ladies. Tarlton saw this (and he knew he was there to entertain), and so he began to make fun of her appearance. The rest of the ladies laughed, however she was embarrassed and left the banquet.

### *Tarlton's Opinion of Oysters*

Certain Noblemen and Ladies were eating Oysters. One of them saw Tarlton and called for him, asking if he liked Oysters. Tarlton replied, stating no because they are an ungodly, uncharitable, and unprofitable meat. In response they asked Tarlton why he thought that, and Tarlton responded by saying that they are eaten without grace, they are uncharitable because they are inside of a shell, and they are unprofitable because they must swim in wine.

### *Tarlton's Resolution of a Question*

A Gentleman asked Tarlton what time he thought the Devil to be most active? Tarlton's response was, “When the Pope dies, why?”. The Gentlemen replied by saying that then all of the Devils are active to plague him, because he has done many people wrong who want him to be plagued by the Devil.

Haley Beardsley

### *How a Parsonage Fell into Tarlton's Hands*

The Queen was dining in the Strand at the Lord Treasurers house. The lords were very eager for her to stay all night, but nothing would convince her. Tarlton was in his clown costume, being at the dinner, and hearing the sorrow of the noblemen that she would not stay, he asked the nobles what they would give him to convince her to stay. The lords promised him anything to perform it. He said, 'procure me the Shard parsonage. They arranged for the patent to be drawn up; he put on a parson's gown and a corner cap, and standing upon the stairs where the Queen would descend, he repeated these words: 'A parson or no parson? A parson or no parson?' But after she knew what he meant, she not only stayed all night, but the next day will that he should have possession of a benefice. A madder parson there never was, for he threatened to turn the bell metal into lining for his purse - which he did, the parsonage and all, into ready money

Haley Beardsley

### *How Tarlton Proved Two Gentlewomen Dishonest by Their Own Words*

Tarlton seeing in Greenwich two gentlewomen in the garden together, to make myrth, comes to them and enquires thus: 'Gentlemwomen, which of you two is the more honest?' 'I', says the one, 'I hope without exceptions.' 'And I', quoth the other, 'since we must speak of ourselves.' 'So then,' says Tarlton, 'one of you by your own words is dishonest, one being more honest than the other, else you would answer othersie. But as I found you, so I leave you.'

Haley Beardsley

### *How Tarlton Answered a Wanton Gentlewoman*

A Gentlewoman merrily disposed, being crossed by Tarlton and half angry, said 'Sirra, a little thing would make me requite you with a cuff.' 'With a cuff, lady,' says Tarlton. 'So would you spell my sorrow forward, but spell my sorrow backward, then cuff me and spare not?' When the gentlemen who were near considered the word, their laughing made the simple-meaning gentlewoman to blush for shame

Haley Beardsley

### *How Tarlton Dared a Lady*

At the dinner in the great chamber where Tarlton jested, the ladies were daring one another. Quoth one, 'I have always done things that is honest and honorable.' 'A French crown of that,' says Tarlton. 'Ten pounds of that,' says the lady. 'Done,' says one. 'Done,' says another. Tarlton put a two-pence between his lips, and dared her to take it away with her lips. 'Fie,' says she, 'That is immodesty.' 'What, to kiss?' says Tarlton. 'Then immodesty bears a great hand over all. But once in your life say you have been beaten at your own weapon.' 'Well, sir,' says she. 'You may say anything.' 'Then says Tarlton, 'remember I say you dare not, and so my wager is good.'

Aden Brooks

### *HowTarlton landed at Cuckolds Haven*

One Sunday, Tarlton spent the day at court. With the help of a pair of oars, he left during the night. Tarlton was drinking alcohol and the Watermen were also drunk, for the most part. Finally, they left Greenwich at low tide. The Watermen became afraid of the cables by the Lime-house. It was very dark and late, and Tarlton arrived at Cuckold’s-haven. The Watermen told him they would tell him why they were there the following day. Tarlton wanted to walk to Redriffe. He walked through the dirty bank of water which was up to his knees. When he came back home, he had one of his boys help him take off his boots. His socks were stained a different color because of the dirty water he walked through. One of the men asked him about this the next day. "Tarlton, please tell me as I would like to know, did you go to Cuckold’s-haven?” Tarlton answered: “Yes sir, and I was respectful.”

Aden Brooks

### *The Fight Between Tarlton and Black Davie*

Not long ago, lived a boaster named Black Davie who would fence with any gentleman for money. He was hired to draw upon Tarlton, for breaking a jest upon Kate, a “punk” men called her. One evening Tarlton arrived at the court gate at Whitehall. He walked toward the Tilt-yard and Davie immediately drew upon Tarlton, who although he was amazed, fought back. Tarlton couragiously took him in his arms and threw him into the Tilt-yard. Davie fell on his nose, and broke it. Davie spent all night laying in the Tilt-yard, waiting for the doors to open . The Barber surgeons told him what happened, since Tarlton was at a tavern with Cockatrice huffing Kate. Tarlton asked for wine, but she told him that he would burn without it so she would not drink it. He then answered, “how shall I be burned, as you cannot burn without fire?” She then replied, “Marry me, take the cup in your hand and I will tell you.” He filled thecup in her hand and said it was burned sufficiently in a fiery place. She perceived herself in such a way that she hired me to win the fight against herself.

Julia Calderone

### *How Tarlton Answered the Watchmen Coming from the Court*

Tarlton having played before the Queen, until one o’clock, coming home, one of them spotted him as asked “sir, who is there?”. Tarlton answered by saying “a woman” was there and the Watchmen called him out his lie by reasoning that women do not have beards. Tarlton replies, explaining that if he had said he said a man, which the watchmen know to be true, they would have reasoned otherwise. Therefore, I said woman, and so I am all woman, having pleased the Queen by being a woman. Another watchmen responds by saying “I present the Queen”. Then I am a women indeed, Tarlton says, as well as you, for you also have a beard and truly Mistris Annis, my buske is not done yet, when will yours be done? Leave the lying fellow, said the Watch. The Queen’s order is that whoever is taken without doors after ten o’clock, shall be committed, and now it is past one. Commit all, says Tarlton, for it be past one o’clock, it will not ten this eight hours. One of the watchmen lifts up his lantern, and looks him in the face, and knew him. Indeed Mr. Tarlton you have more wit then we all do, for it is true that ten was before one, but now one is before ten. It is true, said Tarlton, Watchmen don’t have more wit, but for want of sleep they are turned into fools. So, Tarlton stole from them and the watchmen that seemed wise went home to bed.

Julia Calderone

#### *Tarlton's Answer to a Courtier*

After being at the Court all night, Tarlton met a great Courtier coming from his Chamber in the morning. The Courtier said “Good morning Master Didimus and Tridimus”. Tarlton being somewhat abashed, not knowing the meaning of his remark, said “Sir, I do not understand you, expound I pray you”. The Courtuer said Didimus and Tridimus is a fool and a knave. You overload me Tarlton replyed, for my back cannot bear both. Therefore you take one, and I will take the other. You take the knave, and I will carry the fool with me.

Julia Calderone

#### *Tarlton's Quip for a Young Courtier*

There was a young Gentlemen in the Court, that has first laid with the Mother, and after with the daughter, and having done so, asked Tarlton what is resembled. He said if you should first have eaten the Hen, and after the Chicken.

Luke Derr

#### *Tarlton's Answer to a Nobleman's Question*

There was a nobleman that asked Tarlton what he thought of soldiers in time of peace? He says, they are like chimneys in summer.

Luke Derr

#### *Tarlton's Jest to an Unthrifty Courtier*

There was a deadbeat Gallant belonging to the Court that had borrowed five pounds from Tarlton, but having lost it at Dice, he sent his man to Tarlton to borrow five pounds more, already owing him five pounds: tell your master, says Tarlton, that if he will send me the token, I will send him the money: someone who deceives me once, god forgive him: If twice, god forgive him: but three times, god forgive him, but not me, because I could not beware.

Luke Derr

#### *Tarlton Flouted Two Gallants*

Tarlton being in a bad mood, as he walked in the great hall in Greenwich, he met my old Lord Chamberlain, going between two fantastic gallants, and cryed aloud onto him, my lord, my lord, you go in great danger: amazed, he asked where: if not for those two blades under each of your arms.

# *Tarlton's Sound City Jests*

Luke Derr

### *Tarlton's Jest of a Red Face*

To an ordinary in the White Friers, where gentlemen used, by reason of extraordinaire diet, to this Tarlton often frequented, as well to continue acquaintance, as to please his appetite: it chanced so upon a time (especially) being set amongst the gentlemen and gallants, they asked him why sadness overtook his happiness, to which he said little, but squinting, he looked for a jest to make them happy; at last he found one on his left side, which had a very red face, he being a very great gentleman he presently in great confidence called his host: who I serve as my host? Tarlton said, the Queen’s Majesty, replied the good man of the house: how is that Tarlton says, to her Majesties disgrace, you dare make me a companion with servingmen, clapping my Lord Shandoyes upon my sleeve, looking at the gentleman with the red face, he says, it sits like the Sarazens head without Newgate: the Getlemans Salamanders face burnt like Aetna for anger, the rest laughed: in the end all enraged, the gentleman swore to fight him at the next meeting.

Andrew Hasfal

### *A Sudden and Dangerous Fray Between a Gentleman and Tarlton, Which He Put Off with a Jest*

As Tarlton and others passed along Fleet Street, he saw a dapper young man with long dark hair hanging down over his ears, and an Italian-style cut beard, wearing white satin, very quaintly cut, and the suit so stiffly starched that he could barely bend over. Tarlton is amazed by this man and passed along the wall-side (which is where the upper-classes walk, away from the street), knowing that one so proud-looking would expect that measure of respect. The gallant, insulted that an actor would upstage him like this, drew his sword. Tarlton drew as well. The gentleman started to fight, but Tarlton held his own. and began to mock the man by opening his mouth, causing passersby to laugh. The gallant enquired why he did this. 'O, sir,' says Tarlton, 'in hopes to swallow you, for by my troth you look like a prune in soup.' At this point the crowd broke up the fight, and the gentleman, noting Tarlton's sense of humor, went away because he did not know how to respond.

Andrew Hasfal

### *Tarltons Jest of a Pippin*

At the Bull in Bishopsgate Street, where the Queen’s Players often played, when Tarlton was coming on stage, someone from the gallerie threw a pippin at him. Tarlton took up the pippin and looked at it and came up with this jest:

'Pip in or nose in, choose one. Put yours in, or else I put in the other. Pippin you have put in, but for my grace would I put your nose in the other place.

Andrew Hasfal

### *A Jest of an Apple Hitting Tarlton on the Face*

Tarlton having taunted the gentlemen for the apple he threw, the man wanted to get back at him. In the play Tarlton was supposed to kneel down for his father's blessing. The audience member threw the apple at Tarlton and it hit him on the cheek. Tarlton kneeled down and asked god for a blessong for the man who thre the apple at his cheek. Tarlton grabs the apple and made this jest:

Gentlemen, this fellow with his face of mapple.

Instead of a pippin hath throwne me an apple:

But as for an apple he hath cast a crab,

So instead of an honest woman God hath sent him a drab.

The people laughed heartily, because he had a whore for a wife.

Rebecca Heintzelman

### *How Tarlton and One in the Gallery Fell Out.*

It happened in the middle of a play, when the audience was waiting expectantly for Tarlton to appear, he finally came forth. When he entered, one in the gallery pointed his finger at him and, turning to a friend who had never seen Tarlton, explained who it was. Tarlton, who was eager to make a joke at any opportunity, saw the man point with one finger, and he in turn held up two fingers. The captious man, who was married and jealous of his wife, took offense to Tarlton’s action, especially because he was a prominent player. He asked Tarlton why he made horns at him, and Tarlton replied, “No, they are fingers, for there is no man who will show me a finger without me returning the gesture.” “No, no,” says the man, “you gave me the horns.” “True,” says Tarlton, “for my fingers are tipped with nails, which are like horns, and I must make a show of you.” The matter grew so that the more the man meddled, the more he was disgraced. The other bystanders told him to give up and leave before his cause grew more desperate, so the man pulled his hat over his eyes and left.

Rebecca Heintzelman

### *How Fiddlers Fiddled Away Tarlton’s Apparel.*

It happened that one Fancy and Nancy, a group of musicians in London, would come with their friends to visit Tarlton, who was one of their oldest friends and benefactors. At this time, Tarlton lived at a tavern on Gracious Street called the Saba, and the musicians came by one summer morning to play a song and wake up Tarlton. In recognition of their efforts, Tarlton opened his bedroom door and gave them muscadine. A thief watched this and noticed that Tarlton had left his room in his shirt and nightgown to drink with his friends. The thief stepped into Tarlton’s room and took his clothes, thinking that if he were caught, he would make his actions into a jest, but no one saw him and he went on his way. Shortly afterwards, Tarlton returned to his room and looked for his clothes, but he could not find them. The next day, news of this story was spreading, and someone in the crowd mocked Tarlton while he was performing at the Curtain, saying,

Tarlton I will tell you a jest,

Which after turned to earnest:

One there was as I heard say,

Who in his shirt heard music play,

While all his clothes were stolen away.

Tarlton smiled and replied by saying,

That's certain, Sir, it is no lie,

That same one in truth was I:

When that the thief shall pine and lack,

Then shall I have clothes to my back:

And I together with my fellows,

May see him ride to Tiburne Gallows.

Jackson Kizilbash

### *Of Tarlton and a Beggar.*

There was a poor beggar, a conceited fellow, who seeing Tarlton at his door asked him to give him some money. Tarlton, putting his hand in his pocket, gave him two pence instead of a penny. Tarlton then made this rhyme:

Of all other Beggers most happy thou art,

For to thee my hand is better then my heart.

Answered the Begger.

True it is Master, as it chanceth now,

The better for me, and the worse for you.

Jackson Kizilbash

### *How Tarlton Deceived a Doctor of Physick*

Tarlton, to amuse certain gentlemen who were aquaintances of his, went to a simple doctor of physick that lived not far from Islington. He took a large urinal and filled it half full of good wine, and took it to this doctor, saying that it was a sick man's urine. The doctor, shook the urinal as though he had great knowledge. He said, 'the patient this piss is bad, and the patient needs to be purged of blood, and make sure it's ten ounces of blood.' 'No, you dunce,' replied Tarlton, 'it is good piss,' and with that drank it all, and threw the urinal over his head.

Jackson Kizilbash

### *How Tarlton Frightened a Country Fellow*

Tarlton passing through London, by chance heard a simple country fellow in an ale house calling for a Kingstone pot of ale. Tarlton stepped into him and threatened to accuse him of treason, saying 'Sirra, I have seen and tasted a penny pot of ale, and have found the price to be good. But a Kingstone coin I never heard, therefore it must be some counterfeit, and I must know how you came by it.' Hereupon the country fellow was driven into such anxiety that he ran out of doors and took to his heels as though he was being followed by wildfire.

Jackson Kizilbash

### *How Tarlton was Deceived by His Wife in London*

Tarlton being merrily disposed, as he and his wife sat together he said to her, 'Kate, answer me one question without lying, and take this crown of gold,' which she took on condition that if she lost she would give it back to him. Tarlton asked, 'Am I a cuckold or not, Kate?' Whereupon she said nothing, but stood silent, regardless that he urged her to answer many times. Tarlton, seeing that she would not speak, asked for his gold back again. 'Why,' asked she, 'Have I said a lie?' 'No', says Tarlton. 'Why then, goodman fool, I have won the wager!' Tarlton, mad with anger, made this rhyme:

As women in speech can revile a man,

So can they in silence beguile a man.

Megan Kreslinski

### *One Asked Tarlton Which Countryman the Devil Was*

In Carter Lane there lived a merry cobbler, who being in company with Tarlton asked him chich country the devil was from. Tarlton said, 'A Spaniard, for Spaniards, like the devil, trouble the whole world.'

Megan Kreslinski

### *A Cheesemonger's Question to Tarlton*

In the time of scarcity, a simple cheesemonger, hearing Tarlton commended for his quick wit, came unto him and asked why he thought cheese and butter were so expensive. Tarlton answered, 'because wood and coals are so expensive for butter and cheese a man may eat without a fire.

Megan Kreslinski

### *Tarlton's Answer to a Rich Londoner*

Tarlton meeting a rich Londoner fell into talking about the Bishop of Peterborough, highly praising his generosity to his servants, his liberality to strangers, his great hospitality and charity to the poor. 'He should,' says the rich man,' for what he has is his but during his life.' 'Why,' said Tarlton, 'how many lives have you for your goods?'

Megan Kreslinski

### *How Tarlton Gave Away His Dinner*

As Tarlton and his wife sat at dinner, his wife being displeased with him and thinking to cross him, she gave away half of his meet to a poor beggar, saying, 'Take this for my other husband's sake.' Whereupon Tarlton took all that was left, and likewise bade the poor fellow to pray for his other wife's soul.

Megan Kreslinski

### *Tarlton's Answer to a Boy in Rhyme*

There was a crack rope boy, who meeting Tarlton in a London street sung this rhyme to him:

Woe worth thee Tarlton,

That ever thou wast borne:

Thy wife hath made thee cuckold,

And thou must wear the horn.

Tarlton presently answered him in extemporary verse.

What and if I be (Boy)

I am ne'er the worse:

She keepes me like a gentleman,

With money in my purse.

Viveka Kurup

### *How Tarlton Invited Himself to Dinner at the Lord Mayor's House*

A jest came in Tarlton's head where to dine, and he thought, 'in all that a man does, let him aim at the best, for sure if I bid myself anywhere this day, it shall be to go to my Lord Mayor's house.' Upon this he went to the Compter and entered his action against the Lord Mayor, who was presently told of it, and sent for him. Tarlton waits until dinner time, and then comes, who was admitted presently. 'Master Tarlton,' says the Lord Mayor, have you entered an action against me in the Poultry Compter?' 'My lord,' says Tarlton, 'have you enterred an action against me in Wood Street Compter?' 'Not I, in truth,' says the Mayor. 'No,' says Tarlton, 'he was a villain that told me so then. But if it be not so, forgive me this fault, my lord, and I will never offend again.' But in the end he begins to swear how he will be revenged on him that mocked him, and flings out in a rage. But the mayor said, 'stay, Master Tarlton, dine with me and no doubt but after dinner you will be better minded.' 'I will try that, my Lord,' says Tarlton, 'and if it alter mine anger, both mine enemy and I will thank you together for this courtesy.'

Viveka Kurup

### *Tarlton's Jest of a Box on the Ear*

One that fell out with his friend meets him in the street, and calling him into a corner gave him a box on the ear, and knocked him down, and never told him why he do so. Tarlton watching this raised up the fellow and asked him the reason of their sudden falling out. 'Can you tell sir,' said the fellow, 'for I have no idea why this happened.' 'Well,' said Tarlton, 'the more fool you, for had I such feeling of the cause my wit would remember the injury, but many men are goslings; the more they feel the less they conceive.'

Viveka Kurup

### *Tarlton's Jest to Two Tailors*

Tarlton meeting two tailors (friends of his) in the evening, in mirth cries, 'Who goes there?' 'A man,' answered a tailor. 'How many is there? One?' said Tarlton 'Two,' said the other tailor.' 'Then you say true,' says Tarlton, 'for two tailors goes to a man.' But before they parted, they foxed Tarlaton at the Castle in Paternoster Row, that Tarlton confessed them two tailors to be honest men. So what they spent in the purse they got in the person. Coming but one by Tarlton's account, they returned two. But Tarlton coming one, returned less by his wit, for that was shrunk in the whetting.

Wera Kyaw Kyaw

### *How Tarlton joke around with his wife?*

Tarlton and his wife keeping an ordinary in Paternoster Row, was bidden out to Supper, and because he was a man noted , she would not go with him in the street, but intreats him to keep one side and she another, which he consented to: but as he went he would cry out to her and say, turn that way wife, and anon on this side wife: so the people flock the more to laugh at them, but his wife more then mad angry , goes back again, and almost forswore his company.

Wera Kyaw Kyaw

### *How Tarlton send to a raker’s (specialized street cleaners) horse to cell [in a prison]).*

When Tarlton dwelt in Gracious stréet, at a Tavern at the sign of the Saba, he was chosen Scavenger: and often the Ward complained of his slacknes in kéeping the stréets cleaner: so on a time when the Cart came, he asked the Raker, why he did his businesse so slackly . Sir said he, my for came, he asked the Raker, why he did his business so slackly . Sir said he, my fore-horse was in the fault , who being let blood and drencht yesterday, I durst not labor him: sir said Tarlton, your horse shall smart (suffer, feel pain) for it, and so leads him to the Counter (to act in opposition to), which the Raker laugh at, and without his horse did his work with the rest, thinking Tarlton honor was to jest, and would return him his horse again anon: but when that anon came, he was faine to pay all his fées of the prison, as directly as if he himself had béene there: for if Tarlton had committed the master, the business had not gone forward, therefore the horse was in prison for the Master.

Wera Kyaw Kyaw

### *How TArlton made Armin his adopted sonne to succeed him.*

Tarlton kéeping a Tauerne in Gracious stréet, hee let it to another, who was indebted to Armin's Master, a a Gold smith in Lumbard stréet: yet he himself had a Chamber in the same house. And this Armin being then a wag came often thither to demand his Masters money, which hee sometimes had, and sometimes had not: in the end the man growing poore, told the boy he had no money for his Master, and he must bear with him. The man's name being Charles, Armin made this verse, writing it with chalk on a waine-scot: O world how wilt thou lie, is this Charles the great? that I denie: Indeed Charles the great before, But now Charles the lessee, being poor. Tarlton comming into the roome reading it, and partly acquainted with the boyes humor , coming often thither for his M. money, tooke a piece of chalk, & writ this rime by it. A wag thou art, none can prevent thee, And thy desert shall content thee: Let me be divine, as I am, so in time thou'lt be the same. My adopted sonne therefore be, To enjoy my Clowns suite after me. And sée how it fell out: the Boy reading this, so loud Tarlton after, that regarding him with more respect, vsed to his players, and fell in a league with his humour , and private practise brought him to present playing, and at this hour performs the same, where at the Globe on the Back-side men may sée him.

Tsugu Miyake

### *Tarlton greeting with Bankes's horse.*

There was a man named Bankes (in the time of Tarlton ) who served the Earl of Essex and had a horse of strange qualities. Being at the Crosse-keyes in Gracious street, Bankes earned money with him (as he was mightily resorted to) Tarlton then (with his fellows) playing at the Bell came into the Crosse-keyes amongst many people to see fashions. Bankes perceiving (to make the people laugh ) says "Signior (to his Horse) go fetch me the greatest fool in this group of people". The Jade comes immediatly, and with his mouth drawes Tarlton forth: Tarlton with merry words said nothing, but " God a mercy Horse". In the end, Tarlton sees the people laugh , and was angry inwardly, said, "Sir, if I have the power to use your horse, I would do more then that." Bankes (to please him) said "I will charge him to do it". Then Tarlton says, "charge him to bring me the most whore-master in this group of people". The horse says something to Bankes. "Signior saies he will bring Mr. Tarlton here the greatest Whoremaster in this group". Instead, Horse leads his master to him. Then, "God a mercy Horse indeed, says Tarlton". The people tried hard to keep peace , but Bankes and Tarlton had like to quarrel about where the horse targets at. Ever after it became a story through London, the God-like mercy horse, to this day.

Tsugu Miyake

### *An excellent Jest of Tarleton suddenly spoken.*

At the Bull at Bishops-gate, there was a play of Henry the
fifth , where the Judge was to take a box on the ear. Because the Judge that should take the blow was absent , Tarlton himself (ever forward to please) took upon him to to play the same Judge, besides his own part of the Clown. Knell, who plays Henry the Fifth, punched Tarlton with a great sound, which made the people laugh because it was Tarlton who plays the Judge. Immediately after the Judge disappears, (in his Clown clothes) comes out, and asks the Actors "What news? O says one, have you been here, you should have seen Price Henry hit the Judge with a terrible punch on the ear. "What man", said Tarlton, "strike a Judge?". "It is true with faith", said the other. "No one is like that ", said Judge, " and it must be terrible to the Judge because the report terrifies me, making me think that the blow remains still on my cheek and it burns again." The people laughed at this enormously, and to this day I have heard this story being praised for the uniqueness. However, it was not rare for Tarlton as he had many similar story of these. I would like to see our Clowns in these days to do the similar things like this, and I bet they cannot do better than Tarlton, even though these clowns think they can do a good job .

Nick Mueller

### *Tarlton's Jest with a Boy in the Street*

A wag-halter boy met Tarlton in the street and said, 'Master Tarlton, who lives longest?' 'Marry, boy,' says Tarlton, 'he that dies last.' 'And why die men so fast,' said the boy? 'Becausae they want breath,' said Tarlton. 'No rather,' said the boy, 'because their time is come.' 'Then your time has come,' said Tarlton. 'See who comes yonder.' 'Who,' said the boy? 'Marry,' said Tarlton, 'Bull the hangman, or one that would willingly be your hangman.' 'Nay,' said Tarlton, 'then you will be hanged by your own confession.' And so they parted.

Nick Mueller

### *A Jest of Tarlton Proving Mustard Has Wit*

Tarlton, keeping a pub in Paternoster Row, and sitting with gentlemen to make them merry and standing before them, would approve mustard to have wit. 'How so,' says one? 'It is like a witty scold meeting another scold, knowing that scold will scold begins to scold first.' 'So,' says he, 'the mustard being licked up and knowing that you will bite it, begins to bite you first.' 'I'll try that,' says a dupe standing nearby. And the mustard so tickled him that his eyes watered. 'How now,' says Tarlton, 'does my jest savor?' 'Aye', says the dupe, 'and bit, too.' 'If you had better wit', says Tarlton, 'you would have bit first.' 'So then conclude with me, that dumb unfeeling mustard has more wit than a talking unfeeling fool as you are.' Some were pleased and some were not, but all Tarlton's care was taken before he talked any jest, because that was always his first objective.

Nick Mueller

### *How Tarlton Took Tobacco When it First Arrived in England*

Tarlton (as other gentlemen used) at the first coming up of tobacco, did take it more for fashion's sake than otherwise. Being in a room, sitting between two men overcome with wine, and they never seeing anything like it, wondered at it, and seeing the vapor come out of Tarlton's nose, cried out, 'Fire, fire!' and threw a cup of wine in Tarlton's face. 'Make no stir,' said Tarlton, 'The fire is quenched. If the sheriffs come it will be a fine, as the custom is.' And drinking that again. 'Fie,' says the other, 'what what a stink it makes. I am almost poisoned.' 'If it offend,' says Tarlton, 'let's everyone take a little of the smell, and so the savor will quickly go.' But tobacco whifs made them leave him to pay all.

# *Tarlton's Pretty Country Jests*

James Murray

### *Tarlton's Wit Between a Bird and a Woodcock*

In the city of Gloucester, Master Bid of the chapel met with Tarlton, who joyful to re-greet the other, went to visit his friends. Among the rest, Master Bird of the Queen's Chapel visited Master Woodcock of the college, where meeting, many friendly speeches past, amongst which Mastr Woodcock challenged Master Bird of kin, who mused that he was of his affinity and he never knew it. 'Yes,' says Master Woodcock, 'Every woodcock is a bird, therefore it must needs be so.' 'Lord, sir,' says Tarlton, 'you are wide, for though every woodcock is a bird, yet every bird is not a woodcock.' So Master Woodcock like a woodcock bit his lip, and Master Bird was silent.

James Murray

### *Tarlton's Jest of a Gridiron*

While the Queen's Players were in Worcester city to get oney, it was his custom often to sing extemporaneously of theams give him. Amongst which they were appointed to play the next day. Now one fellow of the city amongst the rest, that seemed quaint of conceit, to lead other youths with his fine wit, gave out that the next day he would give a theam himself, to prove he was the best. Divers of his friends aquainted with him expected some rare conceit. Well, the next day came, and the young man gave his theam in two lines, which were this:

Methinks it is a thing Unfit.

To see a gridiron turn the spit.

The people laughed at this, thinking his wit knew no answer thereunto, which angered Tarlton exceedingly, and soon with a smile looked about. When they expected wonders he put it off thus:

Methinks it is a thing nnfit,

To see an ass have any wit.

The people hooted for joy to see the theam-giver dashed, who like a dog with his tail between his legs left the place. But such commendations Tarlton got that he supped with teh bailiff that night, where the theamer dare not come, although he was sent for, so much he was vexed at that unlooked for answer.

Quinton Nsamba Yiga

### *Tarlton's Answer in Defence of his Flat Nose*

I remember I was once at a play in the country, whereTarlon was, the play being done, every one so pleased to throwe his theme: amongst all the rest, one was read to this same effect, word by word. Tarlton, I am one of your friends, and not your enemy, please tell me how your nose became flat Had I been present at that time on those banks, I would have laid my short sword over his long shanks.(leg) Tarlton mad at this questions, as it was his property sonner to take such a matter ill then well, very suddently he answered him. Friend or enemy, if you need to know, marke me well With parting dogs and beares, then by the ears, this chance fel: But what of that? Though my nose be flat, my credit to saue, Yet very well, I can by the smell, scent an honest state> man from a knaue.

Quinton Nsamba Yiga

### *Tarlton's Jest of a Bristolman*

When the Quéenes Players were restrained in Summer, they traualied down to S.lames in his Faire, at Bristowe, where they were worthily entertained both of Londoners, and those Citizens; it happened that a wealthy Citizen, called M.Subanke, one morning secretly married his maid, but not so secret, but it was blown abroad: that morning, Tarlton and others, walking in the Fair to visit his familiar friendsofLondon , and being in company of Bristol men, they did see Sunbancke coming, who had this propertie with his neck, not to stiree it any way, but to turn body and all: it chanced at the Fair end, he stood to piss against a wall: would have looked back to thank him, he suddenly turns his body around and all, in the view of many, and showed all, which embarrased him, that ashamed he took into a Tauerene, protesting that he had rather have spent ten pound: Sure said the vinter, the fault is in your neck, who will no turn without the bodies assistnace, and not in M. Tarlton: call you him M. Tarlton, says M. Sunbancke? I Sir, says the Vinter, he is the Quéens lester: he may be whose lester he will be, but this lest agree not with me at this time.

Morgan Oldfield

### *A Jest Broken of Tarlton by a Country Gentleman*

In the country where the Queen's Players were welcomed to a gentleman's house, the wagon was being unloaded of the costumes. The wagon driver comes to Tarlton and asks him to speak to the steward about his horses. 'I will,' says he, and coming to the steward, 'Sir,' says Tarlton, 'where shall our horses spend the time?' The man looking at Tarlton asking that question suddenly answered, 'if it please you, or them, let them walk a turn or two. Over there is a fair garden. Let them play a game or two at bowls in the alley.' And the steward then departs to go about his other business. Tarlton commending the sudden wit of the steward, said little. But the steward was not quiet, and told the gentleman above how he had gotten the upper hand of Tarlton with his jest. They then laughed heartily. However a servingman, loving Tarlton, came and told him as much. Tarlton, to add fuel to the fire, and loath to leave it alone, went off and got two of the horses and took them to the garden, and turned them into the bowling alley (which was the gentleman's only pasttime), who with their hooves made havoc. The ladies looking down from a window, seeing horses in the garden alley, called the knight who cried out to Tarlton, 'Fellow - what do you mean by this?' 'Nothing, sir,' says Taralton. 'But two of my horses are at seven up, for a peck of provender, a foolish match I made. Now they are playing at bowls. Run, run, your steward may come after and cry rub, rub!' At which, though they smiled, yet the steward had no thanks for his labor, to set the horses to such an exercise. And they could not blame Tarlton, who did but as he was bidden. But by this jest oats and hay, stable-room and all, was plenty.

Lucas Papaleo

### *How Tarlton Made One of His Company Utterly Swore off Drunkenness*

At Salisbury Tarlton and his fellows were to play before the mayor and his brothers. But one of Tarlton's company, a young man, was so drunk that he could not perform. Tarlton was just as angry as he was drunk. He clapped the man's legs a huge pair of bolts; the fellow dead asleep felt nothing. When all was done, they conveyed him to the jail on a man's back, and entreated the jailor to do God good service and let him lie there till he woke up. While they were about their sport the fellow awoke, and finding himself arrested, and the jail hung around with bolts and shackles, he began to bless himself and thought for sure in his drunkeness he had done some wischief. He called out but none came to him. Then he thought truly that his was a capital crime and that he was a prisoner. By and by comes the keeper, and regretted that one so young should come to such a shameful death through hanging. Anon, another comes and another, all saying the same, which further put the young man in a puzzle. But at last come Tarlton and the others, entreating the keeper that if it wasn't too late could they see their friend before they left. The keeper hesitated, but at length the poor drunken man called out for them. In they came. 'Oh, Tom,' says Tarlton, 'hard was thy behavior in drunkeness to murder this honst man, and our hard luck too, to have it reported that one of our company is to be hanged for it.' 'Oh God, oh God,' says the fellow, 'is my fault so great? Then commend me to all my friends.' Well, to make a long story short, the fellow swore off drunkeness if he could escape; they convinced him that they were cunning enough to help him to escape and they got him out of prison and sent him to London ahead of them. He was not a little glad he was gone. But see how this jest played out; by little and little the fellow left his excessive drinking, and in time altered his desire of being drunk.

Lucas Papaleo

### *Tarlton Saved His Head From Being Cut Off*

Tarlton was one time staying in the country and lodging in a comfortable inn. During that time there was a gentleman dwelling in the same town, somewhat frantic and distraught of his wits. This mad man suddenly rushed into Tarlton's bed chamber with his sword drawn, and finding him there in bed would have slain him, saying, 'Villain, were it not valiantly done to strike off your head at one blow?' Tarlton answered, 'tut sir, that's nothing with your worship to do, you can as easily strike off two heads at one blow as one. Wherefore, if you please, I'll go down and call up another, and so you may strike off both our heads at once.' The mad man believed him, and so let him slip away.

Livy Puri

### *How Tarlton Escaped Imprisonment*

While heading home, Tarlton had been domineering very late one night with two of his friends along Cheapside when the men were stopped by Master Constable. Master Constable asked, “who goes there? “Three merry men,” responded Tarlton. “That is not sufficient, what are you?” said master constable. “Why,” says Tarlton,“one of us is an eye maker, and the other a light maker.” “What are you saying? Are you mocking me? The one is an eye maker, the other a light maker, which two properties belong onto god only, commit these blasphemers,” says constable. “No, I ask you Mr Constable be good in your office, I will prove what I have said to be true,” replies Tarlton. “If you can’t,” says the constable, “you shall pass, otherwise you three will all be punished.” “Why?” asks Tarlton, “this fellow is an eye-maker, because he is an eyeglasses maker, and this other a maker of light, because he is a candlemaker, that makes your darkest night as light as your lantern.” Constable, seeing the three men so pleasant , was satisfied . The other Watchmen laughed and Tarlton, with his two companions, went home quietly .

Livy Puri

### *How Tarlton Deceived a Country Wench*

The Queen’s men were traveling into the West country to perform, and were staying in a small village nearly ten miles from Bristol. In the village was a pretty brown haired girl, who Tarlton decided to propose to, claiming that he had come all the way from London just to marry her. The simple maid was proud to be beloved by one of the Queen’s men and quickly agreed to marriage. While at the Church, with M.Parson ready to perform his duty as officiator began to say, “I Richard take thée Ioane,” but was interrupted by Tarlton who interjected saying,“ I will go and call my fellowes, and come back to you again.” He hastily left the church, and with his horse ,who was ready and saddled, rode towards Bristol to tell his friends of his success with his wench.

Livy Puri

### *How Tarlton Went to Kill Crows*

As Tarlton was going into the fields with his rifle to kill crows, he spotted a Daw sitting in a tree which he intended to shoot when he was approached by a stranger. Tarlton said, “Sir, I see a Daw there, which I will shoot at if she sits.” To which the stranger responded, “If she sits then she is indeed a Daw.” “But,” said Tarlton, “if she doesn’t sit, what is she then?” “Marry,” said the stranger, “also a Daw,” upon which the Daw flew away immediately. Tarlton, then merrily spoke a rime, saying: Whether a Daw sit, or whether a Daw fly, Whether a Daw stand, or whether a Daw lie, Whether a a daw creeke, or whether a daw cry, In what case soeuer a Daw perseuer. A Daw is a Daw, and a Daw shall be yours.

Jason Pyon

### *How a poore Beggerman ouer-reached Tarlton by his wit.*

AS Tarlton vpon a day sate at his owne doore, to whom came a poore old man, & begged a penny for the Lords sake, wherupon Tarlton hauing no single money about him, askt the begger what money he had, no more money master but one single penny. Tarlton being merrily disposed, called for this penny, and hauing receiued it, gaue it to his boy to fetch a pot of Ale, whereat▪ the Begger grew blancke, and began to gather vp his wits how to get it againe: the pot of Ale for the Beggers penny being brought, he proferred to drinke to the begger: nay stay awhile Master, quoth the begger, the vse is where I was borne, that he that paies for the drinke, must drinke first: thou saist well quoth Tarlton, goe to, Drinke to me then: Whereupon the Begger tooke the Pot, saying, here Master I drinke to you, (and therewithall dranke off euery droppe) now Maister, if you will pledge me, send for it as I haue done: Tarlton séeing himselfe so ouer-reacht, greatly commended the Beggers wit, and withall in recompence thereof, gaue him a Teastor: with that the Begger said, that he would most truely pray to God for him: no answered Tarlton, I pray thée pray for thy selfe, for I take no vsury for Almes déeds.

### *TITLE-MODERNIZED*

Jason Pyon

### *Of Tarlton's Pleasant Answer to a Gallant, by the Side of the Highway*

It was Tarlton's occasion another time to ride into Suffolk, being furnished with a very lean large horse, and by the way a lusty gallant met him, and mockingly asked him what a yard of his horse was worth? 'Marry, sir,' said Tarlton, 'I pray you alight and lift up my horse's tail, and they in that shop will tell you the price of a yard.'

Jason Pyon

### *How Tarlton Would Have Drowned His Wife*

Once upon a time, Tarlton and his wife were passengers on a ship and came sailing from Southhampton towards London. A mighty storm arose, and endangered the ship, whereupon the captain thereof charged every man to throw into the sea the heaviest thing he could best spare to lighten the weight of the ship. Tarlton, that had his wife there, offered to throw her overboard, but the company rescued her, and being asked why he meant to do this, Tarlton answered 'she is the heaviest thing I have, and I can best spare her.'

Jason Pyon

### *How Tarlton Made His Will and Testament*

Of late there was a gentleman living in England, that wheresoever he dined, would of every dish take a bit into his gown sleeve. This gentleman being once at dinner at a gentleman's house in the country, there he used his aforesaid quality, in the company of Master Tarlton, who perceiving it said this to the company: 'My masters, I am now determined before you all, to make my last will and testament; and first, I bequeath my soul to God my creator, and my body to be buried in the sleeve of yonder gentleman's gown.' And with that he stepped to him, and turned up the gown's sleeve, whereout dropped a bird, and there a bird, with choice of much other good cheer. Tarlton continued shaking it, saying 'I meant this sleeve, gentleman - this sleeve I meant.'

Jack Roberto

### *How Tarlton called out a Scoundrel*

Tarlton and the scoundrel of a man were passing through a field together when they saw a crow called out from a tree. "Do you see the crow?" The scoundrel asked Tarlton, "it's calling you a scoundrel". Tarlton answered, "No, he invites your worship as the better man".

Jack Roberto

### *Tarton's Joke of a Rural Woman*

Tarlton was going to Hogsdon. He was going to a market and ran into a woman from the country falling over and over again on her horse. She claimed that God sent her and referencing God, asked Tarlton if he had ever seen the likes of her before. Talrlton responded "Not in good truth, but once before in London".

Jack Roberto

### *How Tarlton Tricked a Hotel Owner at Sandwich*

Once upon a time when the players were quieted , Tarlton and his friend journeyed in the Country for so long that they used all their money. They were very far from London, and didn't know what to do. Tarlton gathered his thoughts and and came up with a plan to trick someone into getting him to London with no money. They went to a Hotel in Sandwich and were charged a lot of money for two days, even though they couldn't pay it. On the third morning, he told his friend to go down and to tell the Hotelowners that he serves a Seminary Priest and a Jesuit. The boy kept mumbling on and on about the situation he was in with Tarlton. The hotel owners were sent to the room that Tarlton was staying in. Tarlton set the room up to go along with the story that his friend had told the Hotel workers. The workers looked through the peep-hole in the door and saw the scene that Tarlton had made as a Seminary Preist. They barged into the room and arrested Tarlton for being a Seminary Priest. They brought Tarlton and his friend up to London in hope that they would get rich rewards for turning in the criminals. They presented him to M. Fleetwood, who was a judge in London. When the Judge saw Tarlton, he knew him right away. Tarlton courteously entertaiend the judge which enraged and hotel owners as they had no idea what was going on. They walked away in shame and in anger for the troubles they were put through. Tarlton tuanted and laughed at them as they walked away as he had outwitted them.

Katie Schaefer

### *Of Tarlton's Wrongful Accusation*

Once upon a time, Tarlton was wrongfully accused of getting a gentleman's maid with child, and for that reason was brought before a justice in Kent. That justice said as follows, 'It is a marvel, Master Tarlton, that you - being a gentleman of good quality, and one of her Majesty's servants, would venture thus to get a maid with child.' 'Nay, rather,' said Tarlton, 'it would be a marvel if a maid had gotten me with child.'

Katie Schaefer

### *Tarlton Deceived by a Country Wench*

Tarlton traveling to play abroad, was in a town where, in the inn, was a pretty maid whose favor was placed in a corner of Tarlton's affection. And talking with her, she appointed to meet with him at the bottom of a pair of stairs. The night and the hour arrived, and the maid subtly sent down her mistress, whom Tarlton caught in his arm. 'Art come, wench,' says he? 'Out, alas,' says the mistress, not knowing who it was. Tarlton, hearing it was the mistress, started aside and the maid came down with a candle, and she caught a glimpse of Tarlton in the dark, who stepped into another room. 'How now, mistress,' said the maid. 'Something,' said she, 'frightened me. Some man, for sure I heard him speak.' 'No, no, mistress,' said the maid, 'it is no man. It was a bull calf that I shut into a room till John, our pounder, came to have pounded him for a stray.' 'Had I thought that,' said she, 'I would have hit him such a knock on his forehead that his home should never have graced his forelock.' And so she departs again, afraid. But how did Tarlton took this jest, think you?

Katie Schaefer

### *How Tarlton Could Not Abide a Cat, and Deceived Himself*

In the country, Tarlton told his hostess that he was a conjurer. 'Oh sir,' says she, 'I had pewter stolen off my shelf the other day. Help me to find it, and I won't charge you for all the pots of ale you owe me - which is sixteen dozen.' Tarlton says, 'Tomorrow morning the devil shall help you to find it, or I will trounce him.' Morning came, and the hostess and Tarlton met in a room by themselves. Tarlton, to pass the time with exercising his wit, pretended to conjure the devil, when truthfully he had no more skill than a dog. But see the just, how contrarily it came to pass: as he was calling out 'Mons, pons, simul, and sons' and such like, a cat unexpectedly leapt from the gutter window. The sight so amazed Tarlton that he skipped out and threw his mistress to the ground. He departed with his fellows, and left her hip out of joint. But being in a doctor's care, she dared not tell how it happened.

Caleb Schmidt

### *How Tarlton and the Hostess of Waltham met*

Tarlton rode along with friends, and citizens to make merry to Waltham. On the way he met his hostess while riding toward London, to which some of his old acquaintances were saluted. The Hostess where Tarlton was going. Tarlton told her to come to Waltham, and requested company Christopher Marlowe’s house. Tarlton do not go and spend your money, not unless we go back to the hound. She lost their customs, and was sent back to London by her man who was sent to go back with them. She was an exceeding and very honest woman, and would do anything, which Tarlton heard as wise as she was, thinking of her mind. He was deceived, yet he asked her if the biggest bed in her house was able to fit them. Meaning himself and her, yes she says and tumble up down at pleasure. Yea one under another says Tarlton, under she says. She agreed to everything like a subtil hostess, and it fell out so that Tarlton, having her in a room in her house, asked her which of those two beds were big enough for them two. This being said she therefore went to be, sweetheart come to thee. Masse says Tarlton my boots were off, I would indeed. I will help you sir , if you please. Yeah, thought Tarlton is the wind in that door? Come on, then. And she very diligently began to pull, til one boot was half off. Now says she, this being hard to be done, let me try cunning on the other and so get both off. But, having both off his legs she left him at the shoemakers. She then went to london where Tarlton was three hours way, and he had no help. But being eased off his pain, he made this rhyme for a theme. Singing it all the way to London. Women are wanton, and hold it no sinne, By tricks and devices to pull a man in.

Tarlton rode with a group of friends, and citizens to go to Waltham, courtesy of his Hostess while riding toward London.

Sullivan Sims

### *Tarlton's Meeting With His Country Acquaintance at Ilford*

On Sunday, Tarlton rode to Ilford where his father kept; and dining with them at his sisters, there came in diverse country men to see him, amongst who was one plain country farmer, who said he was Tarlton’s relative who called himself his cousin. But Tarlton demanded the truth from his father if it was true. But he knew no such matter. Whereupon Tarlton says whether he is my relative or not we will be cousins until we part, if we drink in Ilford to do so. So they freely made their way into line so that in briefe they were soundly. Night came and Tarlton would not let his cousin go. But they lied together that night meaning to drink their departure the next morning. Tarlton would by wit leave him in the lash, since power would not. But see the jest. That night, plaine fellow and tarlton in his bed, he had been thinking about the church wall, For we were crying for a fresh shirt. So when he was better they must drink at parting. Indeed to seal the kinfried soundly the fellow had his loade; for, hearing that his cousin Tarlton was gone to london. Angry, he would follow, no one would hold him back. He would go to london, but his aim was so good he went to Rumford to sell his hogs.

Sullivan Sims

### *Tarlton's Answer to a Question*

Someone asked Tarlton why Monday was called Sunday's friend! Because he is a friend, Tarlton says, to compare with that of the holy day. But it may be that Monday thinks of himself as Sunday's friend, because he follows Sunday, and is the next day after:But he comes a day after the fare for that. Never, says the fellow, but if two Sundays fall together, Monday then may be the first, and it would shew well too. Yes, says Tarlton, But if my nose stood under my mouth it would be better and more profitable. Hoe for my gaim said the fellow? Matty said Tarlton never is cold in the winter, being too close to every dog's tail. The fellow seeing a foolish question had a foolish answer, laid his legges on his neck, and got him gone

Harrison Sotir

### *Tarlton's Desire of Enough for Money*

Tarlton was coming into the market town and bought oats for his horse and what the biggest amount with the money he had. The man said you can sir and gave him 8 dry quarts. Tartlon thought his horse should eat well that night and comes to him with the food. Jack Nag was speaking on the behalf of someone and said he was healthy and he faces danger . I have enough money and said you should have it. However when Jack Nag smelt them they were off and said he did not want any. Thank you master : which seeing this Tarlton runs into the market and slashed and cut . But then the next day the man was not able to be found and Tarlton must have escaped.

Harrison Sotir

### *How Tarlton's Dog Licked up Six-Pence*

Tarlton in travels had a dog with really good qualities amongst the good things that he does he always would carry money at the end of his tongue which he would often brag about and tell people. Never was like that. Yes said a lady mine is more strange for he will have the french crown in this mouth. No says Tarlton i think not. Lend me a French crowne says the lady and you shall see me. Truly, madame, I don’t have it, but your dog will carry a cracked >English crowne, here it is. But the lady perceived not the jest but was desirous to see the dogs tricks of 6 pence. Tarlton threw down a teaster and said ‘Bring Sirra’ and luckily the dog took up a counter and let the money lie. A woman after seeing that asked him how long he would hold it! ‘ An hour ,’ said Tarlton. ‘That is pretty,’ said the woman, ‘let’s see that.’ In the meantime she picked up the sixe-pence and willed him to let them see money again; when he did see money it was a counter and he made this time. Alas, alas how come all this to pass! The world's worse than it was; for silver turns to brass . I say the lady and the dog has mad his master an ass. But Tarlton would never trust his dogs to do more tricks.

Lily Ward

### *Tarton's Jest of a Horse and a Man*

In the city of Norwich, Tarlton was invited to hunt. There was a godly gentlewoman, that bravely mounted on a black horse, rode exceedingly well, to the wonder of all the people; and no one stood in her way. But, Pegasus, her horse, was swift and flew over all. Everyone went home and at dinner everyone comended his pester and his wild disposition and she above all her horse. And, she said, I love no creature so much, at this moment, my gallant horse. Yes, lady, a man better, says Tarlton. Indeed no, she said, not now, since my last husband died I hate them the most, unless you can give me medicines to make me love them. Tarlton made this jest instant. Why, a horse goes that way, madam, a man mimics amber. A horse is for your way madam, but a man for your chamber. Lord have mercy, Tarlton, said the men: which gentlewoman is noting, seeing they took exceptions at her words, to make all well, answered this: That a horse is my opinion now, I deny not, And when a man does more good in my chamber I do not defy him. But until then give me room to love something. Then I will please you, said Tarlton. I am glad of that, therefore I pray God send you a good thing or none at all.

Lily Ward

### *Tarlton's Talk with a Pretty Woman*

Gentlewoman, said Tarlton, and the rest as you sit, I can tell you strange things: how many people at dinner noted one woman who was being little and pretty . But her prettiness had a wide mouth, which she tried to hide. She would pinch her speech, and speak small, but had a desire to hear news. Tarlton told that his travelling from London to Norwich, was a proclamation that was made that every man should have two wives. Now Jesus questioned her, is it possible? Gentelwoman and otherwise able to or contrarily woman have a large superrority, for every woman must have three husbands. Now Jesus, said the gentlewoman and with wonder skews the full wideness of her mouth, which all the table smiled at, which she realized would answer no more. Now miss, said Tarlton, your mouth is less than it ever was, for now you are able to say nothing. Now arent you a dishonest man, she said. Miss and that is something, yet, said Tarlton, your mouth shall be as wide as it ever was for that jest.

Tim Zelikovsky

### *A Jest of Tarlton to a Great Man*

There was a great fat man, three yards around in the waist, at St Edmondsbury in Suffolk, that died recently. His name was M. Blague, and a good, kind justice, too, and caring for the poor. This justice met with Tarlton in Norwich. 'Tarlton,' said he, 'give me your hand.' 'But you, sir, being richer, may give me a greater gift - give me your body.' And embracing him, Tarlton could not wrap his arms around his waist. Being merry in talk, the justice said, Tarlton, tell me one thing. What is the difference between a flea and a lous?' 'Marry, sir,' said Tarlton, 'as much and like difference as between you and me. I, like a flea, see else, can skip nimbly, but you, like a fat louse, creep slowly, and you can go no faster, though butchers are ready to catch you and hit you on the head.' 'You are a knave,' said the justice. 'Aye, sire, I knew that, before I came here, otherwise I would not be here now, for if one is a knave, one seeks out another.' The justice, understanding him, laughed heartily.

Tim Zelikovsky

### *Tarlton's Jest to a Maid in the Dark*

Tarlton, walking in the dark was groping his way around. He heard the tread of some one approaching him. 'Who goes there?' says he, 'a mon or a monster?' Said the maid, 'a monster.' Said Tarlton, 'Give me a candle', to see who it was. 'Indeed,' said he, 'a monster I'll be sworn, for your teeth are longer than your beard.' 'Oh sir,' said the maid, 'speak only of what you see, for women cannot be recognized these days.'

Tim Zelikovsky

### *Tarlton's Jest to a Dog*

Tarlton and his friends were drinking in the Bishop of Worcester's wine cellar. Having drunk too much, Tarlton got up and went for a walk through the streets. A dog, sleeping on a dunghill, saw Tarlton stagger toward him, and barked. 'How now, dog,' says Tarlton, 'are you in your humors?' And for a long while afterwards, the phrase for a man being drunk was that he was in his humors.