

Recollections of Garland Day at Castleton



“Watts was a coachman to the late Dr Winterbottom (sic) of Castleton, and the coat he wore on Garland Day was an old livery coat of drab colour, reaching down to his heels, with a red lining. This coat was afterwards worn by the said Thomas Hall and every year they put fresh ribbons and rosettes or “May bunches” on it. The hat he formerly wore before the garland was put on was black with a broad brim.”

Also Ann Nall aged 69 in 1901 is quoted as saying:

“...the king’s old coat was scarlet with ribbons attached to it.”

Source Addy. S.O. 1901, Garland Day at Castleton. Folklore, Vol 12 issue 4 p394-430.

“....almost entirely hidden by a huge garland of wild flowers somewhat in the form of a beehive, which is placed over his head and shoulders. Very little of his body can be seen; for the garland descends almost to the saddle, **but the scarlet tails of his coat**, and his breeches and boots reveal the fact that the bearer of the huge garland is attired in the modern garb of a fox hunter.”

Source Derby Daily Telegraph 5th June 1880, describing the king’s appearance on Garland Day of that year:

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George Barber said the band plays the tune of “A feberry loaf (gooseberry pasty), &c.,” and get a drink at each public house. There were 7 of them then. The band was made up of Bradwell men because they could not get enough Castleton men at the time. Mr Middleton the music teacher from Bradwell said the tune was called “Rowty Tow”.

*“A feberry loaf and an oakum pie,
And what there is I Brada’,
An old cow’s yead and a piece o’ bread,
And a pudding baked in a lantern,
A bit for me and a bit for thee,
And a bit for t’ Morris dancers,
Ra di da, diddle diddle dum, rowty, towty, tow.”*

Source Addy. S.O. 1901, Garland Day at Castleton. Folklore, Vol 12 issue 4 p394-430.

