

Reuben Barrow's Doggerel

Come all you brave Americans give ear unto my song.
I hope the laws will be fulfilled before that it be long;
The Spanish law was easy, encouraged villainy;
This law is much severer; brings some to poverty.

2nd

A stealing was practiced since many years ago.
Not any will oppose it or strive to be its foe.
Money is so enticing and pleasing to the eye,
Some men who would oppose it would lay their conscience by.

3rd

Old Blue's kin is in favour both with women and with men,
And when his money fails him he borrows from his friend.
Although the case is clear that he is guilty of the crime,
With money he will (well?) ___ them for to prolong the time.

4th

He not only is guilty of stealing all he can,
But strives to be the ruin of an inoffensive man,
Has witnesses provided to vindicate his cause,
Who disregards the gospel or any other laws.

5th

_____ his purpose their evidence goes well,
Blue skin he does insure them they shall not go to hell.
He says there is no such a place where ever he has been;
From Georgia he has travelled and hell has never seen.

6th

He thinks himself acquainted with some part of the laws;
All villainy he hears of he pleads up for the cause.
He boasts of his good courage and his understanding too;
He thinks it will protect him in all that he can do.

7th

He struts like some young spark that wishing for a wife, (?)
Who wished not any longer for to lead a single life.
His hair he combs, his teeth he rubs and views well in the glass,
Thinks with the Captain's lady sure a man like him might pass.

7th (*sic*)

The next man to the Captain who took the Captain's place
Thinks Blue Skin to be worthy by the shine of his face.
To take a share in company with lords or knights,
Therefore he makes him welcome to his charming lady bright.

8th

Being a man of honour bright wished to keep up his name,
Some dollars worth he has bestowed upon this handsome dame.
He gave it all with pleasure some part in stolen meat.
No price too dear thought Blue Skin her kisses were so sweet.

9th

The lady and her lord they rode down to see old Blue,
He being well informed and of their visit knew.
He thought it was his duty a supper to provide,
Straight way into the woods he went a neighbors hog he tied.

10th

To his sad disappointment his neighbor passed by,
and on his hog in limbo he chanced to cast an eye.
And for the disappointment has been his disappointment (*sic*)
~~Has been his disposition~~ (*sic*)
From that unhappy hour to bear a strong ambition.

11th

The string the hog was tied with he took and kept by force,
Which plainly shows him guilty by his actions and discourse,
Depends upon his courage for to indicate his course,
With many daring speeches bids defiance to their laws.

12th

Then fearing his character by these means had got a shame,
He went unto his neighbor for to clear it up again.
His neighbors certified that they had never seen him steal,
But heard he was confined in Pensacola Jail (?).

13th

Good law and justice do ride together as I understand.
I hope to see them walking and holding hand in hand.
I think he will be sorry for the taking of the string,
He'll wish he ne'er had seen the hog or such a _____ thing.

14th

You gentle men of honour I do hope to be excused.
The case lay open to you all that I had been ill used.
When I looked out for justice a friend I could not find;
Therefore I thought no treason for disclosing of my mind.

15th

And now for to conclude by song and bring it to an end,
A man who rules by equity I hope I don't offend.
It may be thought a jest, but I do declare its true;
All you unjust _____ hearted men I bid you all adieu.

W.R.

B.Y.F.

R.B.

To the honorable George King, Judge of the Parish of Saint Landry. The Petition of John Lyons humbly herewith that from his youth upward and until the present time he has always maintained a good name and reputation, and has conducted himself with the strictest propriety and honesty towards the good citizens of this country, that Reuben Barrow of the Parish aforesaid well knowing the _____ but wishing to injure your petitioner and bring him into disrepute and disgrace did publish and declare in the hearing of many of the citizens aforesaid, that your petitioner was a hog stealer, and a rogue, meaning thereby, that your petitioner was guilty of the crime of larceny in stealing hogs. By which wicked malicious and scandalous _____s of the said reuben Barrow your petitioner feels him materially and unjustly injured, in the _____ of the good citizens of this country, and is also thereby made liable to a criminal prosecution and the pains of penalties of crime of larceny, of which your petitioner avers his innocence. And therefore humbly prays that the said Reuben may be compelled to appear before this court and pay your petitioner the sum of five hundred dollars as damages for the injury _____ with costs of suit. And he will ever pray so.

Nathan Moise (?) Atty.

Parish S^t Landry

John Lyon

vs

Reuben Barrow

N. Moise Atty (*sig*)

Let a summons issue as required and
due notification be given to the Defendant.

18 July 1807

Geo King P Judge (*sig*)

Served the 24th July 1807

Joseph R_____ (*sig*)

\$5.00

We of the Jury find the Deft guilty as stated in the petition.

12 Augst 1807

Henry N_____ (*sig*)

To the Judge of the parish of St. Landry your petitioner Reuben Barrow represents that John Lyon with force _____ just cause or _____ whatever on the ___ day of July _____ assaulted and _____ street your petitioner _____ angry and spiteful manner in the parish aforesaid and in addition then adding insult to injury the said John has for a long time past been in the constant practice of slandering and _____ the character and reputation of the wife of your petitioner at different times ~~for a long time past~~ until the present day and he states that he feels injured in consequence of the wrongs and injuries of the said John to the amount of one thousand dollars. He therefore prays that the said John Lyon may be compelled to pay this said sum with costs of suit and that he be cited to appear before your honor on the ___ Monday in August next (?) and that he file his answer hereto in 15 days after the service of a copy of the petition or that otherwise a judgement may _____ against him by default.

_____ Baldwin, atty. for the plaintiff