

Oliver Goldsmith (?1730-74)

1 *An Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog*

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song,
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man, 5
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes; 10
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound, 15
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man. 20

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wond'ring neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad 25
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That shew'd the rogues they lied, — 30
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

c. 1760-62

(From “The Vicar of Wakefield”, *The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith*. A New Edition. Vol. 1. London, 1821)