

Osmo's Bells

by Jerry Schatz

Osmo of Borgge, court jester to Baron Tirphiph of Fhumfh, attached bells to the points of his jester's cap in 1356. This, so to speak, was the jingle heard 'round the world. Until that time mozzarella cheese balls universally decorated jesters' caps.

The notorious Rats of Fhumfh had gorged themselves on Osmo's cheese decorations. That had necessitated his replacing them almost daily. Osmo was not a wealthy foole -- the Baron was known as something of a pinchpfennig -- so the jester's invention of the belled cap was driven by his need to stay solvent.

Worldwide, sturdy bells quickly superseded decomposable, and edible, cheese balls as jesters' preferred cap ornaments.

Not everyone was happy with this development. Out of blind frustration, water buffalo-, goat-, and cattle-herders, having lost an important market for milk, took to beating their animals with sticks while shouting, "Osmo!" at them.

The cattle, in particular, were enraged by this degrading and painful behavior by their keepers. Cows and bulls crossed continents in a mass exodus to India.

There, it's said, they were treated much better.

