

MORRIS MATTERS

Folio Caravelle 13.1 mm.

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EDITORIAL

In this issue we print an article by Jim Brickweede in which he examines the stylistic variations between teams here in England and in the US. While we can think of many teams who don't fit neatly into any of his four categories, we do feel his article is helpful in that it gives a different view of some of the various possibilities in performing the morris; it has always been our view that informed choices about a team's development lead to better teaching and hence better dancing and performance.

Some of his views are of course controversial and readers may well like to take up some of his points here in print - for example on the attitudes of English women to dancing the morris.

Obviously, on both sides of the Atlantic the morris is still evolving and any analysis of styles can only refer to a particular period. It will be interesting to look at Jim's four categories in five years time. Meanwhile what do you think about it all?

This issue of Morris Matters was written and compiled by Jill Griffiths, Jenny Joyce, Beth Neill and Alan Whear for Windsor Morris, 24 Alexandra Road, Windsor Berks. SL4 1HN.

For subscription rates, see page 15

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Morris Dancing at Bucknell

An Historical Outline

Keith Chandler

As regards dance style and form the morris at Bucknell is one of the most well documented of traditions, with the notations made by both Sharp and Butterworth on separate occasions having been published; while Russell Wortley utilised much of his orally-collected material in several articles (1). Despite this coverage, an overall chronology of the performances of the Bucknell morris side has not previously been attempted and it is my intention here to rectify that situation.

In discussing the importance of the Rolfe family in the maintenance of the dancing tradition, Wortley wrote, quoting family memory,

Bob's father (i.e. Alfred Rolfe) had five brothers and all six were Morris dancers...Grandfather Samuel

and his brothers were Morris dancers too! (2)

Samuel Rolfe, born about 1798, had three brothers who survived beyond their first birthday (three others did not) : William (1786), Thomas (1791) and Joseph (1794), and these are the earliest names we possess of men who were dancers in the village. If we accept the general evidence that a man did not become an active dancer until he was aged around twenty, and assuming that at least three of these four brothers were in the set, we may suggest that there was probably an extant morris side at Bucknell between 1810 and 1820. Despite the lack of surviving evidence, it is likely that the set of dancers to which the Rolfe brothers belonged was but the current manifestation of a tradition of dancing which had been established in the village for some time. Speaking of Bicester, Dunkin wrote in 1816,

Whitsun Ale - A barn, the scene of the festivities, is called a hall; two of the principal male and female characters are dubbed lord and lady, and others bear the name of my lord's waiting-man and my lady's waiting-maid. A treasurer, who carries a tin box before him, a set of Morris dancers, a Merry Andrew to clear the ring for dancing in, form the remainder of the group.....(3)

Given the proximity of the two communities - about three miles - it seems entirely possible that the Bucknell side would have been one that attended the ale, perhaps in order to compete against other sets.

Samuel Rolfe would have been at his dancing peak during the following decade and we may assume that the dancing tradition was maintained. A report in a local newspaper of a case heard at the petty sessions in Oxford during May, 1826, suggests that this was so.

Monday last William Rolph was committed to our city gaol, by Thomas Ensworth, Esq; Mayor, charged with stealing, in the shop of Mr. Breakspear, 12 yards of ribbond, on the evening of Saturday last. (4)

The date at which this offence occurred, 13 May, was two days

before Whit Monday. In his defence Rolfe claimed to have been "tipsy," (5) but it seems unlikely that he would have risked a gaol sentence by attempting to steal such a relatively useless commodity as ribbon for any reason other than to deck-out the Bucknell set of morris dancers, in order for them to be able to perform during Whit week. The eighteen-twenties were years of dearth, following the aftermath of the lengthy war with France, and money was in short supply. In particular, there would have been none to spare for non-essential items like ribbon, the cost of which was ten shillings for twelve yards. Assuming that the Bucknell side did perform in 1826 (with or without ribbons), William Rolfe would not have been in the side, having been incarcerated at the time. Given his age of forty years he may already, in any case, have retired from active participation.

Evidence for the continuation of the dancing tradition in the village during the following three decades is absent, but extensive collecting of oral material just prior to the first World War revealed no memory of a lapse before about 1863. Henry Coles, born in 1819, would have been active as a dancer during the eighteen-forties. In 1903, Prior spoke of him as the oldest dancer then living and he is likely to have been Prior's informant for the information,

The morris dancers were attended by a "Squire," dressed in Motley, and carrying a wand with a calf's tail at one end and a bladder at the other. The Squire had to keep a clear space for the dancers, and also acted as jester, improvising doggerel lines suitable to the occasion, and in honour of the more prominent persons who patronised the dancers. The Bucknell morris dancers, besides performing in their own parish, made the round of the neighbourhood, going as far as Middleton Cneyney. (6)

An annual visit to the Lamb Ale at Kirtlington was one of the choicest memories of Eli Rolfe, born 1841, and connections with the Kirtlington dancers appear to have been strong.

The Bucknell men usually attended the Kirtlington Morris Festival, or Lamb Ale, which took place in the week following Whitsun week, when they often danced with the Kirtlington men, the dances of the two villages being more or less alike. (7)

The Lamb Ale, held annually at Kirtlington for at least several centuries at this date, became

around 1860 a victim of the increasing negativism on the part of the gentry towards extended celebrations of the labouring classes. In its hey-day it lasted a whole week, but during the eighteen-fifties it was whittled away until it was finally transformed into the feast day of the village benefit society. The final reference to morris being performed at the ale occurs in 1859, when,

KIRTLINGTON LAMB ALE, which took place last week was carried on with more spirit than it has been for some years past. This year the lord and lady with their morris dancers and attendants went round the village as in olden times...(8)

It is apparent from the tone of the report that the celebration was in decline; and when, a few years later, the ale finally succumbed to the assault, a major venue for the competitions between morris sides was removed (9). It is perhaps significant that a number of local dance sides were said to have disbanded in or around 1863. One Hawtin last danced with the Kirtlington side on the wedding day of the Prince of Wales in 1863 and this was probably their final appearance during this decade. In 1913 the team at Launton was said to have "stopped about 50 years back" (10). And most significantly

in this context, Samuel Charles French Rolfe claimed to have danced with the Bucknell men for two years as "a member of a side which lapsed about 1863" (11). The social and economic conditions of the decade are complex, but it does not seem too fanciful to suggest that the major reason why the morris was abandoned in a number of local communities was the termination of the Lamb Ale at Kirtlington. Prior to this date,

L(aunton) and Bucknell were the best sides of the district, and there was great competition between them, which sometimes ended in blows if the rival sides happened to foregather at the same place. (12)

Undoubtedly many names of men who were dancers at Bucknell have been lost and this means we cannot say for sure who would have danced before the cessation of the side about 1863. Of those whom we know we may suggest that the following were perhaps dancing, at least towards the end of its existence: James Wakelin (born 1838), Charles Coles (1841) and Eli Rolfe (1841).

According to Butterworth, about nine years later "the dances were revived, presumably without any appreciable break in tradition"

(13). The circumstances surrounding this revival are unclear, although we may suggest several that might have been relevant. Samuel Rolfe had six sons who would have been of suitable dancing age around this date, and he may have stimulated the revival. In addition, the Whitsuntide festivities appear to have survived in some force at Bucknell. The incumbent wrote, shortly after 1900,

The observance of Whitsun Ales was kept up until recent years. The scene of the festivities was the Rectory Barn, and in later years the Parish Pound, where a tent was made with rick cloths. There was dancing on the ground in front of the barn, as many as fifty couples dancing at a time. There were also morris-dancers...accompanied by a musician who carried a pipe and small drum...(14)

This suggests that there was approval and patronage from the church, in which the morris musician Joseph Powell played for the services (15), and, coupled with similar sentiments from the occupier of the Manor House, this obviously encouraged the morris to continue for some time.

The famous photograph of the Bucknell side was taken around the end of this decade and Wortley's informant Robert Rolfe identified the participants on it. Eli Rolfe, Alfred Rolfe (born 1849), Charles Coles, Joe Coles (1850), James Wakelin and Joe Bandy (16) as dancers, Joseph Powell (1845) as piper and Richard Thomas Wakelin (1842) as collector. Other men known to have danced during this phase are : John Coles (1843), William Rolfe (1844), Thomas Rolfe (1846) and the musician Joseph Powell. Taken together, this would have provided an ample number of potential dancers. Robert Rolfe explained that some of the Rolfe brothers had "drifted away on different jobs so only Eli and Alfred are in the picture." (17) This is, however, not very satisfactory as an explanation. Thomas Rolfe was a domestic servant in Bucknell in 1871 and it is easy to envisage that his job may have taken him further afield than the others. Certainly Samuel was an agricultural carter at this date, but then so was Eli, and possibly they worked together. Samuel was living in Bicester between 1862 and 1865 at least, but this is very near to Bucknell and besides which this fell in the period when the morris was in abeyance. Eli also lived there in 1870 but was home by the following year. If the morris was reformed in 1871 then all five

of the Rolfe brothers were in the village and were presumably available to dance. Indeed, they may, with the known exception of Samuel, have formed the nucleus of the revived side. Charles Coles claimed to have been a dancer for twelve years and so would have been involved during most, if not all, years of this incarnation (18).

It is this period about which we know the most details of performance. According to Wortley,

...they always danced at Whitsun, Whit Monday being spent in Bucknell. They fixed a Union Jack on the big elm tree at the crossroads and set up a barrel of beer in the Pound nearby. On the Tuesday morning they paraded at the Manor for "inspection" by Colonel Hibbert who always told them that if they came back as clean as they were then, there would be a gold sovereign for them at the end of the week. They then set off to dance in surrounding parts, sometimes staying away overnight. They always finished up at Buckingham on the Friday and that night got their white trousers and shirts washed so that they could claim their sovereign on getting home next day. (19)

Joseph Powell, who learned to play the pipe and tabor because their previous musician, Nelson of Steeple Aston, used to get so drunk that sometimes he could not play at all, would have been piper during most of this period. He said of the dancers,

...they Mostly Confined themselves to the Bicester side of the County of Course. His side was about as good as any and as A Rule about as Sober and although they Returned Home Verry Tired they were up with the Lark in the Morning Ready for another Days Dancing. They started Clean and Bright Each Day as there Sweethearts were Verry Particular they would appere to Advantage. Sometimes they returned home very wet Both inside and out. (20)

This incarnation of the morris side was disbanded again around 1883 and although the reasons were, no doubt, complex, it is probable that the ages of some of the regular dancers, now over forty, was one contributing factor. It is also possible that Samuel Rolfe, father of dancers in this phase, was the chief motivating force behind the morris, and his death in 1884 may also have contributed to the demise of the side.

When D'Arcy Ferris revived the morris side at Bidford-on-Avon as a commercial display team late in 1885, Joseph Powell was one of the many contacts he made with traditional dancers and musicians in his quest for a playable pipe and tabor and to gain knowledge of the dance forms and steps. Although Powell declined to sell Ferris his instruments, and despite the general failure of the Bidford side as a viable proposition, the interest generated towards the morris in general, and at Bucknell in particular, was undoubtedly a stimulus to the reappearance of the Bucknell set in the following year. Certainly Powell was prompted to practise again, possibly following a lapse, for he wrote to Ferris,

Dear Sir I received your note. You ask me to send you the price of the taber and pipe Sir i can not send you any price as i do not wish to part with it i was glad you did not send for it i have played it since you were up here and now i cant part with it...(21)

This revival of interest conjoined with the scheduled celebrations to commemorate Victoria's Golden Jubilee and resulted in the morris once more being performed. Reporting on the festivities at Bucknell in June, 1887, the Bicester Advertiser noted,

After the sports, dancing was indulged in to the strains of the Bicester Band, whilst the well-known Morris-dancers, who have not been seen for some years, gave an interesting and amusing performance. (22)

Robert Rolfe, born 1882, remembered this occasion as one at which the dancers did not dress in kit; and this seems to have been the situation at all subsequent performances. They danced again at the second Jubilee in 1897, and,

...that was a special effort to show us young 'uns how it should be done. They were all old then and did not dress up. (23)

Further occasions at which the morris was performed were the coronations of Edward VII in 1902 and George V in 1911. One

informant, daughter-in-law of Eli Rolfe, recalled that the morris was performed a number of times between 1896 and 1913, and that the young men would have to fetch several old dancers to teach them (24). A final performance, by old dancers and younger men, occurred at the Silver Jubilee of George V, in 1935, when at Bucknell Manor,

...some Morris Dancers of the past, who were then living at Middleton Stoney, performed some of these old dances...(25)

The same author had noted in 1933 that Alfred Rolfe and Joseph Powell, in Bucknell, and Charles Coles, in Middleton Stoney, were the sole survivors of the Bucknell set. (26) It was presumably these old men who danced in 1935, and with their passing a few years later, the long history of the Bucknell Morris Dancers finally came to an end.

Notes.

1. Cecil J Sharp and George Butterworth, The Morris Book, Part V (London : 1913) ; George Butterworth, MSS, Volume 10, Diary of Morris Dance Hunting (published in Folk Music Journal, 3, iii, 1977, 193 - 207); Russell Wortley, The Bucknell Morris, English Dance and Song, Autumn 1975, 105 ; Russell Wortley, Bucknell (2): The Morris is a Sweat, English Dance and Song Summer 1976, 53.

2. Wortley, 1975, op.cit. 2: 3. John Dunkin The History and Antiquities of Bicester (London : 1816); quoted in English Dance and Song Summer 1977, 76
4. Jackson's Oxford Journal, 20.5.1826, p.3.
5. ibid, 19.8.26, p.3.
6. C E Prior, Dedications of Churches, Oxon Archaeological Society Report, 1903, 34.
7. Sharp and Butterworth, 1913, op.cit. , 77.
8. Bicester Advertiser , 2.7.1859, p.1.
9. See the letter from William Kimber of Headington Quarry to Cecil Sharp, dated 1 June, 1907, in Cecil J.Sharp, Folk Dance Notes (unpublished MSS in Vaughan Williams Memorial Library), I, 35. Kimber notes,
 ...for years and years in my father's and his father's time there was what was called the Kirtland (sic) Lamb Ale where all the Morris dancers used to dance for a cheese and the ribbon and the Headington Team always won. As many as 20 sides used to compete...
10. Butterworth MSS, op.cit. , 3.
11. ibid , 20.
12. ibid , 3.
13. ibid, 19/21.
14. Prior, 1903, op.cit
15. Bodleian Library, MS. Top. Oxon. c515, 29 - 30.
16. No man of this name has been traced in the Bucknell Parish Registers or the five available decadal censuses (1841 - 1881). It is, however, a local surname.
17. Wortley, 1975, op.cit.
18. Butterworth MSS, op.cit 13.
19. Wortley, 1975, op.cit.
20. Percy Manning MSS. Bodleian Library MS.Top.Oxon, d200, 80 - 81.
21. D'Arcy Ferris MSS (Vaughan Williams Memorial Library)
22. Bicester Advertiser and Mid-Oxon Chronicle, 24.6.1887, p.5.
23. Wortley, 1975, op.cit.
24. Interview with Mrs. A.V.Rolfe, Mixbury, 13 April, 1983.
25. L.N.Letch, Bucknell, Top Oxon 26. MS. Top. Oxon, c515, op.cit.

Morris Matters

Interviews

Great Western Morris

Great Western Morris from Exeter are a welcome and familiar sight at each Sidmouth festival. This year Beth Neill met up with them at the back of the beer tent at the arena and, surrounded by twenty dancers, she attempted an interview.

The following transcript is a compilation of many replies - apologies to anyone who didn't shout loud enough! At the end we include the comments from two of the dancers who felt some points needed to be stressed.

Morris Matters: How did Great Western start?

Great Western: It arose first as a side called Courage Morris (hoping for sponsorship!) about 1969 but the name changed fairly soon after that. Most members lived too far away to get to Exeter Morris practices, being impecunious students.

MM: How did the choice of traditions arise?

GW: At first only one member, Terry Sloan, knew much about Morris. He had been with Hereford and so to some extent he brought what he knew.

We danced a bit of everything until an encounter with Tubby Reynolds et al. led us to narrow down the range of traditions, settling on Fieldtown and Bampton. We think the Bampton was Terry Sloan's interpretation on how they looked on a 1930's film, (but that only applies to the hand movements).

MM: What is the aim of the side?

GW: To entertain ourselves while entertaining others - to some extent the standards we achieve arise from this, i.e. the better you feel you are dancing, the more you enjoy it. It's a very social side: it has always had a large number of singers and musicians and wives and girlfriends are an integral part. We hope everyone enjoys the performances we give - there is a certain amount of planning before a big show but no excessive post mortems. We never cancel a booking.

MM: Do you change officers (squire, foreman etc.) every year or can they stay as long as they wish to in office?

GW: There are elections every year (secret vote). Hopefully there are no fights for positions! It's probably fairly well established before the A.G.M. who is likely to do what. We tend to spread and share the responsibility. We have not really had any serious arguments since we could afford free beer at the A.G.M.

MM: How do you maintain the same "relaxed" style with constant changes of foreman?

GW: That's not true really. It's often said you can tell when someone joined the side by the way they dance. Not many people have danced with another side so they haven't got to unlearn things. The style evolved with some of the major influences being Roy Dommett, Steve Buss and Barry Honeysett within the side, and Old Spot and Hammersmith seen on tour. Several new "able" dancers arrived at the same time, which helped the bouncy side evolve ... it's still changing though.

Also on the point of style, we've been helped by having a succession of good melodeon players to lead the music, starting back at Graham Matthews. Good music is essential for good dancing and G.W.'s lucky to have a number of musicians. We tend towards as many musicians as possible, it's difficult to control but more social and relaxed. Women musicians also allow a better balanced social group.

The relaxed style you mention doesn't mean we're not putting everything we've got into a dancel! It has slowed down and got more height since the very early days.

MM: Who decides when people dance out in public?

GW: It's when someone gets his kit together i.e. his own decision ... people are encouraged to dance out as soon as possible, usually on Monday nights, when we busk throughout the summer. Festival performances tend to be special but everyone still gets to dance. We try to be as inclusive as possible.

MM: You restrict practices to the Winter, is this right?

GW: Yes, for the past few years we've practised until Easter and then during summer we dance out every week: it's socially good to dance out a lot, and most of the side are used to dancing out through the summer months.

The foreman plans what he'll do till Easter and that's it - but it is still his job to keep the side dancing together during the summer. If we're working out new dances it usually takes a couple of years for the side to be happy with the dance - although it is still danced out. The foreman must ensure beginners get to dance the more difficult dances during the summer.

MM: How do you fit beginners into this scheme?

GW: We prefer them to start in October. There is a tankard awarded every year to the most enthusiastic new member.

People are integrated into sets during practices as soon as they start, not isolated from the main group. We have two practice rooms so that there is a chance to do some individual work or try things out, but the foreman stays in the main group.

MM: You always have a large number in the side - is there a limit?

GW: No, and if former members return, they can dance out. We try to avoid dancing with less than six.

MM: Is there an age limit?

GW: Only in that we prefer people to be old enough to go to pubs; that avoids problems. And for, say, stick dances, it looks a bit odd with a little lad opposite a tall man - but it all adds to the fun!

MM: Have you joined the Ring?

GW: It comes up for discussion every year but for a variety of reasons we always decide not to.

MM: What about the horse and the fool - their roles?

GW: The horse dates back to Barry Lister days - we just thought an animal would be good - adds to the show.

We've had three fools: Terry Sloan, Alistair McKenzie and now Mike Boston. If it seems appropriate they'll dance in normal kit. Otherwise, again, they add to the show - as a role in linking the dancers to the audience.

MM: What about the non-Cotswold dances?

GW: Some of us went to a rapper instructional and liked it - it's good in clubs and unusual in Devon. This winter we did a spot of Border Morris, as a mixed set ... we were all blacked up!

Comments from the team

You don't seem to have got over the idea that you were interviewing a "Morris Hydra" - many opinions, philosophies and dance styles are amalgamated into Great Western - when it comes to the crunch most strive to keep entertainment a goal. There was far more diversity of view within those present than is apparent here. We would not want anyone to think that G.W. arrived at a consensus!!

Mike B.

Don't seem to have the idea of G.W. as a social group. Dancers, musicians, wives, girlfriends, boyfriends, children etc. There is a general policy that it's all one. If we are booked at a Ceilidh, we try to get everybody in free. People expect to be included and are as much as possible. We often seem to have a minority of dancers and musicians at a function.

John.



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Characters and the Morris

Roy Dommett

The role and value of the characters associated with the Morris is often not understood. Part of the confusion is in the lack of a clear separation of the tasks they fulfil. In the best traditions of entertainment these tasks can be combined but any one character can only carry one role at a time although they can switch from one to another during a performance. The first point to make is that a character is part of a show and not part of the dance.

There are four roles to be filled in a show besides that of leading the dance.

A. Communication with the Audience

The Master of Ceremonies, Ring Master, Announcer is the Producer or Director and is seen to be in charge, even if only a front man. They tell everyone what it is what is happening. It can be often is the task of one of the troupe, a dancer or musician, and is done between dances. The activity is sited in the dancers territory and is outward to the audience.

The task can be done by someone who is specially dressed and not otherwise part of the dancing. For example wearing evening dress or as a town crier and thereby meeting another role mentioned later. Control of a show really requires observation of the crowd and its response during the dancing and not just in between dances so that judgements can be made on when

stop the show, whether to speed it up or change the programme. The character must be responsive not scripted - in many ways it is equivalent to a stand up comic in speaking to the audience at large and dealing with overall impressions rather than individuals in the crowd.

There are two subsidiary tasks.

B. Someone Accessible to by the Audience

There is a task to answer questions, to chat in a one-to-one basis and keep the inquisitive and troublesome out of the way of the organiser. It is best done by someone identifiably not a dancer. It continues all the time from arrival at a spot to departure. The activity is sited in the audience and is outward to the audience.

It can be combined with distributing lucky morris cake or handouts and collecting money unobtrusively. Traditionally this is a steady task that does not draw attention to itself. In giving out cake the bearer has a cake tin and a small knife and gives very small pieces and these are given not sold.

The tradition combined or eliminated tasks to minimise the number participating in the final share outs. This is no longer a consideration. It is difficult to combine this task with ragman.

C. Someone to Look At - a The fool is not part of the dance "beautiful" as the Basques put it. troupe and unease should exist when he is around. Remember the clown

The role is to be noticed and does not represent the dancers in admired. It is an inactive role dealing with the crowd. Although as with no part in the dancing part of the show they have many unless especially choreographed. subsidiary roles such as covering, Traditional roles are King, Queen, ie stepping in, for accidents, Lord, Lady, Witch, Soldier, Tourney directing traffic around the Hobby Horse and other animals. They dance spot, collecting money in are usually too cumbersome, ornate difficult conditions, off buses or inexperienced/old to be allowed etc, distracting if something goes in the dance area during the dance. awry.

The activity is walking or sitting The clown can not actually be between the dance area and the foolish or thoughtless or reckless. audience and is outward to the Also if the clown is active it is audience. unfair for the dancers to call on the clown for activity between their dances to give them a rest without prior arrangement.

The character is basically serious not clowning. They may be approachable and therefore able to meet role B but this would be uneasy for the character if the dress is grand. It is a role for the inexperienced and is often what the inexperienced morris fool is reduced to.

The technique of a good clown is not to seek to amuse generally, ie as a stand up comic, but to be as a traditional circus clown and work on the audience one by one during a show so that all feel a personal contact.

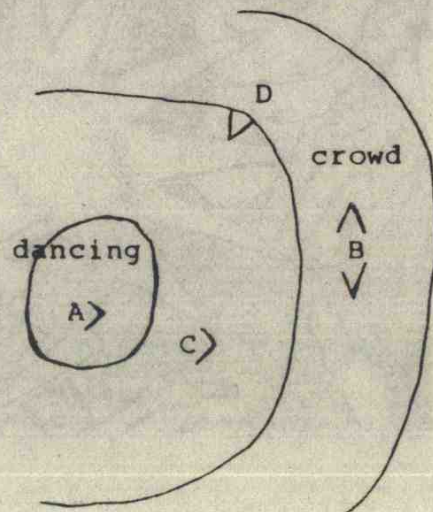
D. The Clown.

This can be the key role, and often the only one manned. The character represents the audience in dealing with the dancers. Its territory is everywhere but from the audience inward to the dancing. It is a continuous activity including recognising when not to be visible. When the clown is asked to be announcer, jig dancer or money collector the role changes and so must the behaviour. Mixing in these other tasks dilutes the impact of the clown in their true activity.

There is an invisible role, that of the ragman who looks after the baggage and the inactives during a dance. Someone has to decide where to put things, whether near the music for safety or elsewhere. They should also control where the spare dancers stand, which should not be in the line of sight of the audience.

The stick hobby animal that gyrates or eats money etc. is a variety of clown bound by the same rules.

The costume can be almost anything from the old fashioned country smock, which could make him "beautiful" or imply a country "bumpkin", mock dress such as academic with student cap and gown, mock medieval, fantastic or idiotic or circus like. The circus has established many types of clown and clown behaviour which are part of our cultural heritage/experience and now acceptable to an audience.



DUTCHELM MORRIS ON TOUR





A View from the Esplanade

Tim Radford

One of the problems when watching Morris dancing is whether one should view it with the eye of a knowledgeable dancer, or as a casual observer. Sidmouth 83 has provided me with the opportunity to attempt to blend these two, and I therefore offer a review of the dancing, through the eyes of a casual observer who also dances. I must state from the outset that I did not seek out Morris at the festival, and I did not therefore see all that occurred. I would like to believe I saw what any visiting holiday maker in Devon would have seen.

A problem with a festival of this size is where you draw the line on Morris - i.e. what is or is not? The EFDSS seem to have overcome this by calling it "Ritual Dancing". I'm not sure whether this is correct or not, but that is a separate article!

The invited teams covered a wide spectrum of "Ritual" dancing, and they provided a very good balance. Cotswold Morris was represented by Mr. Hemmings from Abingdon and Great Western of Exeter, and both, in their own way, were a credit to their chosen tradition. Great Western continue to entertain and thrill. They are inventive, exciting and energetic. Their ability to hold together, over a period of years, a team of dancers with no reduction in standards, is unbelievable. If I had any criticism of their dancing at all,

it is only that I find some of their dances a little too complex. They are able to carry off these complexities, but I'm not sure that any other team has the same ability. In complete contrast to Great Western we had Mr. Hemmings and their beautifully simple and relaxed dancing style. In my opinion the best Morris was danced by Mr. Hemmings - uncluttered, unhurried and elegant to watch. There was something contained within their dancing that is sadly missing in many teams. When one considers how limited their repertoire is, their performances were even more miraculous.

Northern Clog Morris was also very ably represented by Manley from Cheshire, and Whitethorn, the ladies team from Harrow. Now this is a form of dancing I can review as a casual observer - my knowledge being almost nil. I can't pretend that I've ever attempted to extend my knowledge in this direction. However, Manley awakened in me a feeling that never existed before, and I actually found myself trying to understand the figures. The overall impression created by them, and also by Whitethorn, cannot fail to elicit some gut reaction and excitement. Unfortunately the feeling, for me, is not sustained for long. This was not however the fault of either team who were excellent in their execution. I believe it is more a fault of the type of dance; it should only be seen on the move, and not captured in one spot.

I also have to admit, I know little of Molly Dancing; but using the old cliché, "I know what I like" - this is certainly true of the Seven Champions. With their black faces, hobnail boots, eccentric behaviour; they were the most "entertaining" of all the "ritual" teams. Their act, that even contains a dog, is not however, only entertaining. The dancing standard is high, they have obviously done a great amount of research and hard work, and their use of an unaccompanied singing voice as music, to my knowledge, is unique.

Of the invited "ritual" teams, I have left Monkseaton to last on purpose. The team is centred on Tyne and Wear and perform a variety of different dances - Rapper, Longsword, Costwold Morris and, with their ladies, Country Dancing. The men were winners, on Sunday, of the inaugural Sidmouth Ritual Dance Competition, in which they performed Cotswold Morris and Rapper. I am not in a position to comment on the Competition or Monkseaton's performance, as I personally was unable to see all the participants and particularly Monkseaton. The fact that they did win, made me more determined to see them. When I did I was, quite frankly, disappointed. Their Rapper was superb - full of life and enjoyment; and their Longsword was also very good. However their Cotswold Morris was woeful and soulless. It was like stepping back ten or more years and seeing a standard Ring side. I saw them perform three well worn dances, in the old well worn, clipped and adequate style, but it was totally lifeless. It seemed that pressure had been put on them to include Cotswold in their performances, and it showed. In the main they looked a little disinterested. Any future pressure should be brought to bear to ensure they only ever dance Rapper and Longsword, which was worth watching.

Before I move from the invited sides, to the "Fringe", I must mention Green Ginger Clog. This ladies team from Hull have turned

clog dancing into a display art, using formation movements to enhance the clog steps. If you get the opportunity to watch them, take it.

The "Fringe" morris at Sidmouth is a very important part of the festival. In the past, clubs who came to busk on the Esplanade could be invited in subsequent years; Seven Champions being a typical case. Of those I did see from this year's crop, only two stand out in my mind as real potential candidates. As always Windsor were immaculate, but sadly they only danced one stand on Sunday. Their years of supporting the festival should now be rewarded with an invitation to guest; but I fear they are now caught in a political trap that will disqualify them for ever. In my view, this is a great pity.

The other team who caught my eye this year (and last), was Frome Valley. Their upright and energetic style of dancing does them great credit and the whole show is enhanced by their simple costume. My only plea to them is to reduce the number of traditions they dance; I believe this would further improve their dancing. Other teams noted were White Boar and Stroud. White Boar had obviously put great thought into their dancing and I particularly liked the way they did not attempt to tell the crowd where their dances came from. Stroud kept trying, but their posture is not right, much too hunched shouldered and hollow chested; the Ladies team is excluded from this latter remark!

I cannot resist making a comment on two teams I did see in the Ritual Competition, Broughton Monchelsea with Loose Women and Ringeye Morris. I'm afraid I could not take either side seriously. I am not being critical of their dancing, but I am reminded of an old theatre story. The play director, who does not think the show is very good, will always go to the cast on the first night and say "Go out there and enjoy yourselves".

contd. page 35

The Morris in Britain and North America

James C. Brickwedde

Jim Brickwedde, an American foreman and dancer, recently spent a year in England where he spent much of his time watching as many morris sides as possible. In this article, the last in a series of four published in the American Morris Newsletter (of which he is co-editor), he takes a look at English dancing and compares it with that found in North America.

Douglas Kennedy in 1939 wrote that, in regard to dancing styles between England and America:

"This (a distinctive America style - JCB) does not apply to Morris and Sword dances. These traditions were evidently never carried over by immigrants. In America, the men's dances are danced as in England. In time, no doubt, a distinctive transatlantic style will arise in the morris and sword dancing, too."

Kennedy, Douglas; "To The Dancers - English and American Dancing", English Dance & Song Vol III no 6 July-August 1939, p 101.

Have time and events begun to foster a growth of a distinctive 'transatlantic' style(s)? After having spent a year living and dancing in England, my answer to that question is yes. I had the opportunity of observing over 150 morris sides in England including Cotswold, Northwest, Border, Molly and the singular Abbots Bromley dance; these included men's sides, women's sides, and mixed sides. Seven of those sides were "traditional" Cotswold village sides: three from Bampton, two from Abingdon, Headington Quarry, and Ducklington (revival). I danced in kit with the London based

Hammersmith Morris Men (Longborough and Fieldtown primarily).

Once beyond the initial impact of culture shock, I soon realised that I was witnessing Cotswold morris dancing with a different range of subtle technical qualities than I had seen in my travels and dancing in America. As the year progressed, I was able to discern more clearly a few of these subtle variations. The purpose of this article is to talk about the emerging differences in technical style and the philosophical attitudes on the two sides of the ocean.

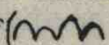
From this point onward, I will be referring to Cotswold Morris only, unless otherwise noted, as few American sides dance anything else. In addition, I will not be talking about the 'quality' of the dancing per se. Both England and North America have their fair percentage of bad dancers. Also eliminated from this discussion will be comparisons of individual village styling and, for that matter, I will not dwell much on the individual "traditional" sides of Bampton, Headington, Abingdon, etc. Rather, I wish to stress the footwork, posture, musical accents,

musical tempos, etc. that a side uses as a basis of constructing a dance tradition. Decisions of aesthetics are an individual side's prerogative and not for discussion here.

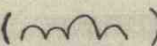
To begin with, there is not any one dominant style in England. I began to discern at least four distinctive styles. As much could be said about American sides as well. However, I will venture to say that there is only one basic style of morris being taught in America. A great deal of variation certainly exists within that style; none-the-less, the teaching influence in morris dancing in North America can be reduced to a handful of people who are, by and large, teaching the same basic technique. Again, I stress not the teaching of individual village traditions but rather the footwork, posture, and music, etc. that a side uses as a foundation of performing these traditions.

Of the four English styles, they are categorised by their performance of the double step, their height off the ground, body posture, and the corresponding

* see chart

musical phrasing and tempo. The more common usage of a double step (lift, 1,2,3, hop) with the musical syncopation of (slow, quick, slow, quick) and the consequential lift of the body of  is the basis of three of the English styles and of the North American style. Further distinction can be made by analyzing the musical tempo, how much lift off the ground is desired and the use of the upper body.

The choice of the musical tempo has become, in England, a definite stylistic decision. The choices are simply: fast (95-100+ beats per minute); medium (80-95 beats per minute), and, slow (60-80 beats per minute). In the Spring 1983 issue of Morris Matters (Vol 5, no 4 pp. 26-27) both John Swift of Kesteven Morris and Jill Griffiths of Windsor/ Morris Matters staff talk about the changes in the use of tempo among English sides. Two things were evident: many sides have slowed down over the last two decades, and the choice of musical tempo will affect the entire use of the body in terms of height and energy level. As an example, Jill Griffiths notes the following variations in the use of tempos among sides:

[1 The symbol  being used here is borrowed from Roy Dommett's unpublished manuscripts. Each hump represents a beat of music, the height of which indicates the comparative height of the dancer off the ground.]



<u>Range (beats/min.)</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Primary tradition (my addition)</u>
60-70	Old Spot	* Longborough
70-80	Windsor	* Windsor/Brackley & Badby
	Adderbury	* Adderbury
80-90	Bampton	* Bampton
90-100	Broadwood	* Horsham & others
+100	Albion	* Many traditions

Contrast this metronome measurement of Bampton with the original tempo markings listed in Bacon's A Handbook of Morris Dances. The measurements are in the recommended range of 88 beats per minute for 'Sheperd's Hey' to 132 beats per minute for 'Bacca Pipes', with most being recommended to be danced in the 96-100 beats per minute range. This reflects the ever changing nature of morris dancing, particularly with the infamous Bampton sides.

Ron Smedley noted to me in a personal letter following his recent trip to the U.S. that "Americans dance, at the moment, too slow." It would be interesting to do a metronome survey of North American sides. My intuitive guess is that most sides dance in the middle range of 80-90 beats per minute. I have yet to see an

American side dance with the deliberateness of Old Spot or even of Windsor. Neither have I seen the cut time tempo style of morris evident in a Broadwood, Dartington (Devon) or Albion.

By choosing a particular tempo, a side affects its posture and level of height off the ground. Those sides going at a faster pace (English Style A - see chart) are not as concerned with great height off the ground as are those who choose the slower pace. Faster sides are after the quick and sharp response and horizontal or lateral surging capabilities. The newer interpretations of Longborough, Kirklington, Ducklington, and Oddington stress a slow musical tempo and enormous vertical height with all double steps and jumps (English Style C - see chart). In fact, the whole double step is re-emphasized so that the greatest

lift is on count one () instead of the more common lift on count three (). Such an alteration affects the syncopation of the step from the more common (slow, quick, slow, quick) to the newer (slow, quick, quick, quick). This style of morris is highly athletic. Different demands on the body's muscular structure, are made by switching between either the fast or slow structure, thus affecting posture, musical phrasing, etc. Old Spot, Hammersmith and Windsor are very much a part of this newer interpretation. They are, however, a minority of sides within England. The introduction of such styling in America is very recent and it is not clear what overall effect it will have on styling or if it will simply affect the particular village traditions of Longborough, Oddington, etc.

To return to the more common treatment of the double step, with the greatest lift coming on count three of the musical bar phrase, the most singular distinction among the styles is the height off the ground and, added to this, the use of the upper body. Here I will concentrate on styles B and D and the North American style listed on the chart.

Style B (Beaux of London City and Westminster as examples) barely leave the ground while dancing. This softer treatment of the morris is further extended by the use of a very 'balletic' carriage of the upper body and in the use of the handkerchiefs. It is highly graceful and a sharp contrast to the athleticism of the slower tempo sides. If performed well, this styling can still bring to the morris the necessary ambience of power and ceremony.

Americans, with a few counterparts in England (Style D - see chart) place more emphasis on height, athletic vigour, and clarity of footwork, yet retaining a smoothness and gracefulness of movement. This is the legacy of the Country Dance Society of America's teaching staff over the decades. Americans take the technique of morris dancing very seriously, spending more time "perfecting" the steps in practice than do, from my experience, the English. Americans also spend more time dancing in both rehearsal and in performance than do the English. This highlights a whole range of cultural attitudes between, certainly the USA and England, and, I suspect, even between the Canadians and the English, although the latter to a lesser degree.

CHART I

	musical emphasis & body lift	syncopation of double step	degree of emphasis on bell shake	musical tempo	energy level	stylistic effect
English Style A	beat 3	slow, quick slow, quick	moderately emphasised	fast	high	sharp & crisp
English Style B	beat 3	slow, quick slow, quick	little emphasis	moderate	low	balletic
English Style C	beat 1	slow, quick quick, quick	very little emphasis	slow	high	highly athletic
North American	beat 3	slow, quick slow, quick	highly emphasised	moderate	high	athletic yet graceful

basically the same as the North American style, yet only a few sides I saw actually fit the description

Thus Americans hold the middle ground between the English extremes of Style B & C (low height - great height) and dance far slower than the fast pace tempo of Style A. Americans, by and large, grapple with the "dancing" more than with creating a range of stylistic and technical options. In England, because there is such a plethora of sides (well over 500 sides in an area equivalent to the six New England States) groups consider differences of style and technique as a means of distinguishing themselves from the otherwise crowded field of participants. This encourages more creativity and tolerance for differences among English sides. Sides are usually quite clear about their way of dancing a tradition. Other sides are free to embellish (or not) as they see fit. Americans quote Bacon as if he were the final word. What is in print must be true. Americans could do well to re-read Sir Lionel's Forward to A Handbook of Morris Dances to understand the reason for that book's creation. Little did I hear in England the classic American argument of what is right or wrong. The English are far more creative in their approach to the morris.

Another strong difference between the two cultures has to do with the reason for dancing the morris. The average American dancer comes to

morris first out of a recreational sense, meaning that, if he/she were not morris dancing, they would be out dancing with the Hungarians or with the local bowling league. To the English, it is much more of a social event, a night's outing, and, in some villages, a tradition. Americans dance more; the English drink more. The English clubs sing after a day's outing; Americans folk dance due largely to the fact that more American morris events have sides of both sexes present therefore making social dancing possible. This is impossible at Morris Ring or Women's Morris Federation events when the opposite sex is banned. Open Morris is closer in behaviour to American sides than to their English counterparts.

The differences between the English and American women dancing the morris is quite significant. I am strongly biased with the view that if a woman is going to dance morris she must give to the dance the vitality and strength that is required. It is what morris is all about. It has nothing to do with biology nor even with skirts or trousers, or beer or tea for that matter. It has to do with the attitude one brings to the dance. I heard too many English women's

groups talk of the need to dance Cotswold or Northwest Morris in a "feminine" manner. The result was, unfortunately, wimpish dancing, devoid of any energy at all. "Aping the men" was the accusation levelled at those women's sides who added the necessary power to their movements. It is an accusation I don't understand. Morris dancing is about the power of ceremonial expression of the dancer to him/her self as well as an expression of power between the dancer and his or her's audience. A wimp is a wimp is a wimp whether or not the wimp is a male dancer or a female dancer!

This is the greatest cultural gulf separating the two sides of the ocean. The topic of sex is not an issue in America. How well the dance is danced is. I think all dancers could do well to view the photograph of Maud Karpeles dancing the jig 'Princess Royal' at the first American summer folk dance camp held in Eliot, Maine in 1915. Look at how high she was off the ground! There is no question about that Englishman's capabilities of dancing the morris.

It is simply a question of the attitudes of a dancer towards him or her self and of the dance as a whole. The fear that "what the women dance, the men won't dance" does not apply to this side of the ocean. The 'tradition' in America since morris dancing was first effectively introduced beginning at least as early at 1909 has been the mutual exceptance of men's sides and women's sides.

English dancing versus American dancing is not a question of better or worse, right or wrong. It is a question of growing stylistic and technical differences emerging over time as the three cultures (English, Canadian, and US Americans) become more distinct from one another. Even our language now causes problems in understanding one another. Just have an unwary American ask an English morris dancer why they chose to wear 'knickers' instead of 'pants'. If you can understand the difference in the cultural origins of those two simple words, you can begin to understand the emerging differences which affect the dancing.

(c) James C Brickwedde
October 1983

MORRIS DANCING IN THE SOUTH MIDLANDS

The publication is announced of the first two volumes in an intended series of monographs under this general title. The series will present historical and bibliographical research into the form of morris dancing prevalent in the counties of Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire, and Northamptonshire.

The first volume in the series, available November 1983, will be entitled

An Interim Checklist of References to Morris Dancing in Local Newspapers

Part I : 1733 to 1914

This volume is intended to classify and draw attention to this valuable yet little - known body of source material. The checklist identifies three hundred and twenty newspaper references which give details of the performance of morris dancing in a traditional context. Each reference contains full details of the newspaper in which it may be found, identifies the individual morris side or locality in which the performance occurred, and (by means of a coded legend) describes the nature, quality and character of the information it contains. In addition there is a chronology of the one hundred and seventy-eight occasions when morris dancing was performed, as extracted from the references, and this gives date and location of performance with the identity of the morris side, and is also cross-referenced to the checklist. The volume also contains a lengthy introduction on the nature of the source material and the development of recent scholarship in this field, several appendices and a fold - out map showing the location of all seventy - six communities mentioned in the text.

Volume two in the series, available concurrently with volume one, is entitled

Morris Dancing at Bampton Until 1914

This is the first monograph to examine the historical development of an individual dance side and concentrates on the morris team at Bampton, Oxfordshire, during the century prior to 1914, for which accurate historical sources exist, and assesses the evidence of the oral traditions which imply an extant dance set in the town since the seventeenth century. Among the facets which are examined in depth are the rapid turnover of dancers; music and musicians; the transformation of internal and external perceptions and motivations with regard to the dance tradition; the role and changing character of patronage; and the positive effects of the enthusiasm of William "Jingy" Wells. The sources which are drawn upon are far - ranging and include material from the early collections of, for example, Sharp and Manning; extensive references from the local newspapers; and the copious writings of "Jingy" Wells himself. Also included is a family tree showing inter - relationships between the main dancing families, and an appendix listing the dancers in the Bampton side between 1840 and 1914.

These volumes should prove of interest to anyone with a general interest in the history of morris dancing, social historians researching leisure, custom or tradition, and archivists, librarians and local historians in the counties covered by the research.

Volume I : 48 A5 pages and one map. £1.50, plus 25 pence p & p.

Volume II : 36 A5 pages. £1.25, plus 25 pence p & p. (25 pence p & p only if both volumes ordered together)

Orders are now being accepted by Keith Chandler, The Bungalow, Hill Grove Farm, Minster Lovell, Oxon, OX8 5NA. (Cheques payable to K. Chandler)

(An s. a. e. will bring you news of future volumes in the series.)

THE KEITH HOLLAND MANUSCRIPTS

George E. Frampton

Keith Holland of Ealing has been collecting items of interest to folklorists for over 30 years, and has deposited his archive in the Vaughan Williams memorial library at Cecil Sharp House. The work comprises some 15 or so notebooks and a number of tape reels and cassettes.

I have collated, edited, indexed and typed the archive he submitted in Autumn 1982, by arrangement with Mr. Holland and Malcolm Taylor (the librarian) and the collection is now available for reference.

Keith Holland's topics cover references from books in public libraries to personal interviews with people largely in the London area, and range from Jacks in the Green to maypoles, May garlands and songs to folk songs and children's rhymes, and ceremonial dance to ritual drama.

So far as readers of this magazine are concerned, quite a few novel aspects to the morris are uncovered, plus many obscure customs associated with the art.

The references to dancing sweeps and the Jack in the Green mention sightings at the turn of the century which Roy Judge had no knowledge of when writing his 'meisterwerk'. These additions to 'Jack in the Green' (1979, Brewer) resulted from conversations with Londoners at local history society meetings and the like. The remainder were derived from passages in library books and newspaper archives. The full story

of the Brentham May revels with its Jack in the Green, with which Mr. Holland alerted 'English Dance & Song' (36.1, 33 (1974)) is revealed, utilising both personal contacts and reports in the Middlesex County Times in the 1920's. A more obscure note which caught my eye, informed that Great Wishford once had a Jack in the Green as part of its Oak Apple day celebrations (County Life magazine, 29 Apr 1954, p. 1303).

My index includes a section on 'Ceremonial dance and its associated customs' (my title, not Mr. Holland's). Regarding customs, it was fascinating to note that rush-bearing - the custom coupled with the North-west morris - was celebrated in places as far afield as Ambleside in Cumbria, to Bristol and South Cerney in the Cotswolds, without similar pageantry. The molly dance-associated custom of Plough Monday was originally celebrated in a broader locus than those parts of Cambridgeshire. Milton Malsor and Nassington in Northamptonshire and Tilsworth in Bedfordshire, both had the taking round of the plough.

Mention is made of two southern morris customs which died out at the start of the century. One at Salisbury, where Wiltshire Notes & Queries and one of Mr. Holland's informants refer to the pageant which took place upon days of national thanksgiving in the city, when the 12 feet high Salisbury Giant led his retinue of morris dancers. The Guy Fawkes night custom at Kensington is also mentioned, when two dancers dressed as clowns would perform with other characters, one of whom was adorned as a man-woman. (Folklore, 15, 106 (1904) and 23, 411 (1912)).

Another point of interest is the millers' procession at Hinckley in Leicestershire, when millers from various parts of the country once walked in procession dressed in ribbons with what they called the 'King of the Millers' at their head. (Leics. & Rutland Notes & Queries, 1, 33 (1899-91)). A second was held in Northamptonshire, which had a 'dance for eight men, dressed in best clothes and carried striped poles, like barbers' poles'. (By context, Northants Notes & Queries, although my search for the original proved negative).

I am personally analysing various items of Mr. Holland's work for my own research. One thing I have learned is to avoid rigid interdisciplinary barriers. The divide between mummers and morris appears to have dissolved at Southall in 1912, as one informant says, "There were a group of ten called 'the Muffins' ... who each said a piece and did a dance ... with bells on their legs. One performer said, 'In comes I, Billy the sweep, all the money I get I keep'". This is interesting, if only because less than ten miles away at Pinner, Billy the sweep and co. of this West London mummers play were less energetic as actors!

To the musicologist, a 1790 list of country dances refers to a tune called 'Mrs. Casey' (Hughes-Hughes, A., 'A Pianoforte Solo catalogue of manuscript music in the British Museum', 3, 132 (1965)).

There are references to indigenous broom dances from Wigenhall St. Mary Magdalen in Norfolk and Thaxted in Essex, and a hobby horse from Kings Lynn in Norfolk, all inviting further analysis.

George E. Frampton
Tuesday 23rd. August, 1983

ACTON, London

The Jack was seen in 1895-99 in Acton by Mr. C. Hocking, aged 80; and was made of canvas or calico ("he is not sure which").

- personal collection 28 Jan 1965

Fred Russell of Northolt also informed of the Jack at Acton.

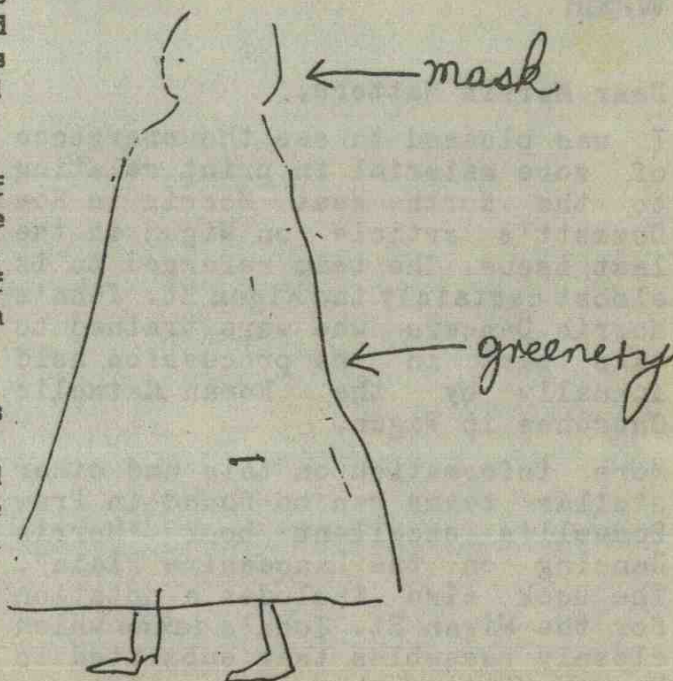
- personal collection March? 1959.



LEWISHAM, London

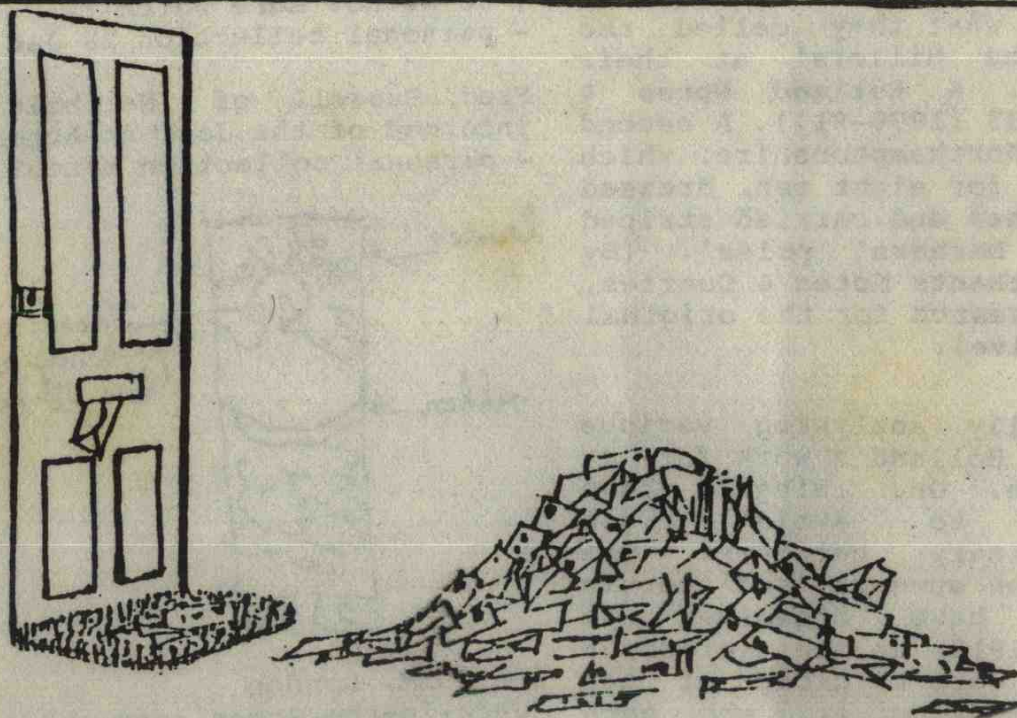
"Jack-in-the Green seen about 1900 in Lewisham, by an old lady who attended a lecture in Fulham"

- see adjacent figure
personal information,
November 20 1970



(Line drawings photocopied from Keith Holland's notebooks.)

MAILBAG



Wigan

Dear Morris Matters,

I was pleased to see the emergence of more material in print relating to the North West Morris in Roy Dommett's article on Wigan in the last issue. The team referred to is almost certainly the Wigan St. John's Morris Dancers who were trained to take part in the procession held annually by the Roman Catholic Churches in Wigan.

More information on this and other similar teams can be found in Pruw Boswell's excellent book "Morris Dancing on the Lancashire Plain". The book also includes a notation for the Wigan St. John's dance which closely resembles that submitted to Morris Matters, but also exhibits a couple of marked differences.

Yours sincerely,
Chas Marshall.

Over the Sticks

Dear Morris Matters,

...Here's a bit of feedback that might be of interest. In MM Vol.3 No.5 there was an article about the Sussex dance called 'Over the Sticks'. It stated that the dance was originally done over corn-flails as in the Esperance Book.

I managed to do some research and produced a pair of old corn flails to an old pattern. My 'side' are now dancing 'Over the Sticks' to the tune of 'Oyster Girl' using the flails and, have really created an interest down here.

Many thanks for a very informative magazine. One thing you may be able to help me with - where can I obtain a copy of the 'Esperance Book'? Just the address of the publisher will do.

All the best,
Alan Head,
Squire, Long MenMM
Eastbourne.

MAILBAG

Norwich News

Dear MM,

I continue to get great pleasure from the varied articles in Morris Matters and enclose my subscription.

Dance is looking up locally and in Norwich there are now five Morris Clubs:- Kemp's Men, Golden Star, Earham Ladies, Yare Valley and Biffin Morris, while just outside in Swardston another club, Humbleyard Hey, dance Cotswold Morris and their wives dance Border, Garland and Clog. Also in Norwich there are two ladies Clog teams.

Last week Kemp's Men and Humbleyard visited a newly formed 'club' at Hoxne (near Eye in Suffolk). They get through, in one evening, Morris Garland and country dancing. We had a thoroughly enjoyable evening, each club doing their own thing and joining in. Humbleyard Ladies have just acquired a fiddler and a very young

recorder player. Hoxne have been using tapes, but are encouraging a melodeon player (at present a singer). It is very encouraging to hear of these new dancers - all of whom are exceedingly enthusiastic.

Yours sincerely,
Norris Winstone.

Dancers Wanted

Dear MM,

.....Is there anyone in the Newbury (Berks) area interested in dancing? We are thinking of re-starting Downs Morris (men and women).

Please contact

Roly Brown,
Ailsa Craig,
Hampstead Norreys
Road,
Little Hungerford
Hermitage, Berks.

REVIEW: continued from page 21

Sidmouth would not be Sidmouth without the Odds and Sods Morris; but they continue to frustrate me. A motley crew of dancers, who, from my past experience, should be displaying their wares at the Morris workshops not to the public, but they seldom ever go. Some of these men would be great assets to many sides, but individually their attitude to Morris seems all wrong. I will however say one thing in their defence. They danced often on the Esplanade for the public, which seemed to enjoy it. Not many of the invited teams did this, which is again a great pity.

However, to conclude. My overriding

memory of Morris at Sidmouth 83, dispelled all previous notions of Morris engulfed by a crowd, i.e. that only Hats and Hankies can be seen. The experience of watching Darrell Glover (of Windsor) and his younger brother, dancing a jig, from a distance exceeding 100 yards, I would wish for again. Although surrounded by a throng of adoring Morris ladies and holiday makers, at least four or five deep, Darrell could clearly be seen, from the waist up, above the heads of the crowd. Eat your hearts out all you Morris dancers - I don't see many aspiring to such heights.

HELP!

For the last five years Morris Matters has been copied at well below commercial rates by a contact of one of the morris team. Unfortunately, our contact with the copying department has now left, and we urgently need to find someone else who will do the printing cheaply.

Can you help? If you have any suggestions please phone Windsor 53724, or write to Morris Matters at the address on page 3.