

RATTLE UP My Boys

A quarterly publication for those with an interest in sword dancing

Issue 2, Series 11. Summer 2002

A NEW DANCE

When I lived in West Yorkshire, and even when I was moved to the Manchester area, I made regular contact with Claro Sword & Morris Men. The team were regular supporters of events organised by the now extinct West Yorkshire District Committee of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Indeed a long time member of the team, Ian Porter, was also an active E.F.D.S.S. events organiser. It was therefore interesting to me when I contacted Ian for details of dance outings over Christmas and the New Year to be told of a new venture for the team - a newly composed five man dance.

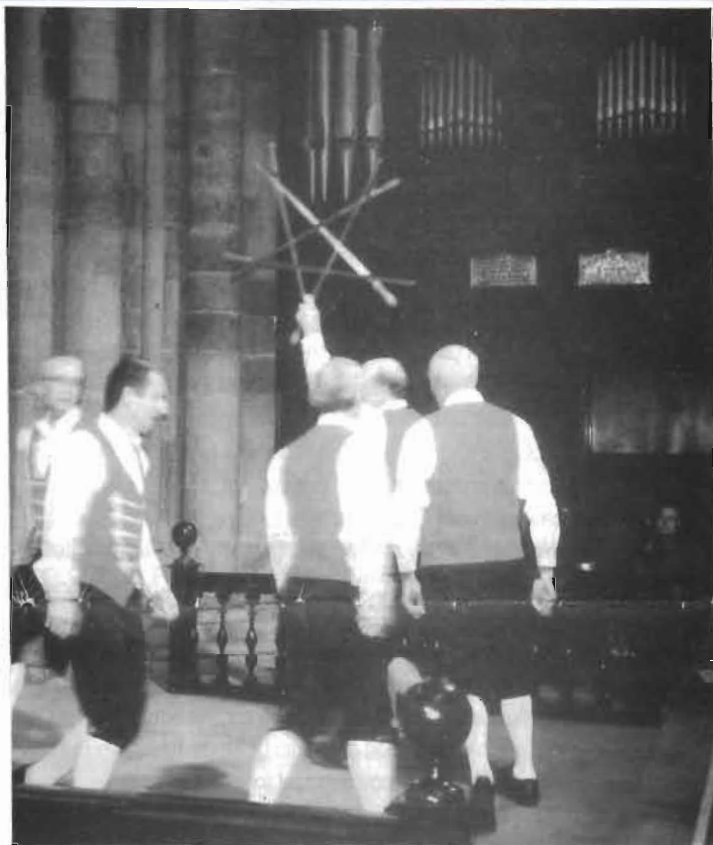
I was delighted when Ian supplied the following write up describing the background to their new dance:

A SWORD DANCE IN THE YORKSHIRE STYLE KNOWN AS "THE KNARESBOROUGH SWORD DANCE"

devised and developed by members of the Claro Sword and Morris Men. Report by Ian Porter.

The existence of a sword dance in Knaresborough was recorded by E. Hargrove, the Knaresborough historian. In *'The History of the Castle, Town and Forest of Knaresborough'* (6th edition, dated 1809), Hargrove writes: *'The Sword-Dance is still practiced here, during the Christmas holidays. It is a very ancient custom, and is performed in much the same manner as described by Olaus Magnus in his history of the northern nations'*. He then goes on to give a translation of a very unhelpful description furnished by Olaus Magnus, which tells of an unknown number of men dancing with swords; at first sheathed, then unsheathed, then taken in a hilt and point ring. Then by *changing their order (a figure?) they throw themselves into the figure of a hexagon which they call a rose*. So the description does not help very much.

It is possible that Hargrove was not speaking of something he had seen himself, but as he was from Knaresborough, it is likely that he had witnessed the sword dance. It is possible that he saw a visiting team, but as his description is given in a section entitled 'Customs', it seems likely that the dance was indigenous. In any case, the town was certainly large enough to supply both the men and the support necessary to continue a tradition. Although Hargrove does not tell us anything about the swords, a Longsword dance is most probable, as Knaresborough is situated in the middle of the Longsword territory.



The upper photo shows the first public performance of the Claro team's newly composed five man dance which was held on January 20th 2002 inside St. John's Church Knaresborough. The lower photo shows Ian Porter talking to the team's President Dr Arnold Kellett.

Photos by Trevor Stone



We have searched in vain for more information about this dance. In the 1832 edition of his history, Hargrove does not mention the dance at all. Had it died out between 1809 and 1832? It is not unlikely, as there is much evidence of other dance customs disappearing as the Industrial Revolution made itself felt up and down the country.

We were made aware of Hargrove's description by our President, Dr Arnold Kellett, a long-time Knaresborough resident, sometime Mayor of Knaresborough, local historian, raconteur and Yorkshire dialect expert. He has long hoped that we would rediscover the Knaresborough sword dance and revive it in the town. Sadly, this is very unlikely ever to happen, so, until it does, we offer this dance. It is unlike many other Longsword dances insofar as it requires only five men, but the evolutions of the dance follow the traditional pattern.

Because of Dr Arnold Kellett's continued interest, enthusiasm and encouragement, we respectfully dedicate this dance to him.

Ian Porter, December 2001

First time out for Claro's new dance

The team decided to give their new dance its first outing on their Plough Sunday outing on January 20th 2002 and I was delighted to be able to arrange to go to see it.

I arrived in Knaresborough in the midst of a downpour and, after finding my way to the church (not as simple as it sounds) I arrived shortly before the first of the dancers emerged from the church to gaze disconsolately at the pouring rain. The team usually dance outside the church but on account of the weather the vicar agreed to the dance taking place in the church.

The team's performance of their new dance was smooth and impressive. I spotted a number of moves taken from other dances but the sequence was varied enough to ensure a distinctively different dance. I had planned to describe the dance figures but Ian preferred to avoid that until the team felt fully at home with the new dance. Apparently "fine tuning" was taking place, hardly surprising when you see teams who, after years of practising, continue to fine tune their dances.

I was tempted to assume that a five man dance is adopted by a team because of a shortage of dancers but this seemed far from the truth as on this outing they fielded about a dozen dancers. Team members told me that the new dance was to introduce variety into their repertoire. Between church performances I had the pleasure of meeting, and having a short chat, with Dr Arnold Kellett who has given the Claro team support and encouragement for many years.

The dancers moved to Knaresborough Market Place (the weather had brightened by then) where, in addition to the "Knaresborough" dance, the team also performed two other six man Longsword dances - North Skelton (which was also performed in the church) and the Kirkby Malzeard dance. However I missed most of this dance spot as I was cornered by a lady who had a seemingly never ending list of questions.

Ian tells me that since then the team have, at one outing, performed North Skelton (figures 1, 2, 3 & 4), Kirkby Malzeard, Ampleforth, Bellerby and 'Knaresborough' sword dances.

Scrapbooks par excellence

After the Market Place stand the team invited me to join them at the home of their Bagman for a buffet meal and an opportunity to try the contents of a number of jugs of excellent real ale. However, in spite of the excellence of the food and drink I think the most memorable feature of this social meeting was to see the team's impressive collection of more than 20 sizeable scrapbooks which went back to the team's founding years. Prompted by the scrapbooks memories were recalled, tales were told (and no doubt retold). The good company rounded off an excellent days dancing. This very pleasant get-together reminded me of the item in a recent *Rattle Up My Boys* in which Jack Ledger of Barnsley Longsword asked for ideas on how to "bond" a team. It is hard to imagine a more successful way of doing so than Claro Sword have evolved.

THE FLAMBOROUGH LONGSWORD DANCE - Part 3

A list of press references, letters and books referring to
Flamborough researched by Gordon Ridgewell

In May, 2001 (and at subsequent dates) Gordon Ridgewell sent me photocopies of articles and references from various publications which he had found reports of the Flamborough Sword Dance and/or the village team. These included:

Bridlington and Quay Gazette, Saturday, January 3rd, 1891, unpaginated [p. 2.]

A report of Christmas outings at Flamborough in 1890 - see the full reference in *Rattle Up My Boys*, issue 4, series 10.

Colonel A. H. Armytage "Flamborough Folk-lore" in "Flamborough: Village and Headland" by various writers. Edited by Robert Fisher, Vicar of Sowerby, Hull, William Andrews & Co., The Hull Press, 1894. p. 145.

See *Rattle Up My Boys* issue 4, series 10 for further details of this reference.

Bridlington Chronicle and East Coast Advertiser, Friday, December 28th, 1906. unpaginated [p. 5]

CHRISTMAS AT FLAMBOROUGH

A report of Christmas activities in Flamborough. On Christmas Day in the afternoon the sword dancers and the band made their usual tour of the village.

Bridlington Free Press, Bridlington Quay News and East Riding General Advertiser, Friday, December 28th, 1906. p. 3.

A similar report to that above.

Bridlington Chronicle, and East Coast Advertiser, Friday, December 30th, 1910. p. 6.

*FLAMBOROUGH

.... The Christmas singers were out on Christmas Eve, as were also the local band and the sword dancers."

Bridlington Free Press, Bridlington Quay News and East Riding General Advertiser, Friday, December 30th, 1910. p. 8.

A similar report to that above:

Correspondence from Cecil Sharp, circa 1911, which refers to the Flamborough Sword Dance and Sharp's plan to visit the village.

Two letters from Cecil Sharp to Mrs Eden (Sharp's informant for the Grenoside sword dance). These two letters refer to a planned visit to Flamborough. Both letters are carried in full in *Rattle Up My Boys*, issue 4, series 9.

The Observer, Sunday, October 1st, 1911. p. 13.

THE NATIONAL REVIVAL OF FOLK DANCE - STORY OF THE MOVEMENT (by Mary Neal)

There were a number of articles in the press produced by the Esperance Guild during October 1911. This lengthy article is credited to a leading light of this organisation, Mary Neal. The article presents definitions of "folk" and "tradition" (quoting Cecil Sharp) and goes on to present an overview of the revival of interest in "peasant dances". The work of the Esperance Guild is described as are its history and objectives. It refers to a visit planned for "the first Thursday in the month" when a demonstration is held at Crosby Hall, Chelsea. The next event was to be a "side" of young men taught by "fishermen from Flamborough".

The Morning Post, Friday, October 6th, 1911. p. 9.

FOLK DANCE AND SONG - WORK OF THE ESPERANCE GUILD

A further report on the activities of the Esperance Guild.

The Morning Leader, London, Friday, October 6th, 1911. p. 5.

SWORD DANCES - EXHIBITION BY YORKSHIRE FISHERMEN

Description of a display organised by Mary Neal of the Esperance Guild - see full report in *Rattle Up My Boys*, issue 4, series 10.

T.P.'s Weekly, Vol. XVIII No 466, Friday, October 13th, 1911. p. 452.

THE SWORD DANCERS

This article reports on an event at Crosby Hall, Chelsea when two Flamborough fishermen taught their dance to a team from the Esperance Guild. The piece goes on to discuss teaching methods - "professional" teachers or "traditional" teachers and comes down on the latter - the method favoured by Mary Neal. "Instead of quarrelling with those who disagree with her, Miss Neal's differences are "danced out" graciously before an audiences which included teachers, dancers, lovers, one of the leading dramatists of the day, and the ubiquitous Press. We laughed at the mistakes of the dancers as the dancers tied themselves and their swords into knots....."

The article presents Sharp's definitions and refers to the need for "a book". The writer was "amazed that men who had never seen a sword dance before [the men from the Esperance Club] could get into it so quickly"

Bridlington Chronicle and East Coast Advertiser, Friday, December 29th, 1911. p. 8.

"FLAMBOROUGH - Xmas Sword Dancers

Three youthful bands of sword dancers have this week been very popular in Flamborough and the district, and on Boxing Day, Messrs R. Major and George Emmerson, two professional dancers, joined the company and gave a good entertainment in the village."

"The Esperance Morris Book" by Mary Neal. London, J. Curwen & Sons, 1912. pp. 2, 12 & 13.

This book contains details of a number of dances including the Flamborough sword dance. A chapter contains information and instructions for the Flamborough sword dance. Introductory information is credited to Mr Richard Major [of Flamborough] who claims that the performers were sailors and were known locally as "Plough Stots". He states that the dance should be performed between Christmas and Plough Monday. He is critical of the tunes used for the dance. Performance instructions are printed and accompanied by diagrams - considerable emphasis is placed on the timing and phrasing of moves.

"The Sword Dances of Northern England, Part II" by Cecil J. Sharp. London, Novello, 1912; 2nd edition revised by Maud Karpeles, 1951. pp. 28 - 38.

Also reprinted with parts 1 & 3, as one volume by EP Publishing, Wakefield, 1977, Gives performance instructions and background details for Flamborough and other Longsword dances. Regarded by many as "The Sword Dance Bible".

The Yorkshire Post, Leeds, Monday, May 6th, 1912. p. 7.

ENGLISH FOLK DANCES

This article reports on a presentation given by Cecil Sharp at Leeds Albert Hall for the Froebel Society. It reports Sharp's ideas of the importance of folk dancing referring to both Sword and Morris dances. He claims the Flamborough dance to be one of four different types of sword dance found in Yorkshire. It is not clear whether or not an E.F.D.S. team demonstrated the dance at this event.

The Stratford upon Avon Herald and South Warwickshire Advertiser, Friday, August 23rd, 1912. p. 2.

MR. CECIL SHARP ON THE "SWORD DANCES OF NORTHERN ENGLAND"

Report of a talk which was presented by Cecil Sharp on the previous Wednesday. Sharp referred specifically to the sword dances from Grenoside, Kirkby Malzeard, Sleights and Flamborough, the latter 3 dances were performed at this event by an E.F.D.S. team.

The Stratford upon Avon Herald and South Warwickshire Advertiser, Friday, August 23rd, 1912. p. 8.

FOLK DANCE DEMONSTRATION

Report of a demonstration at the Memorial Theatre, Stratford on Avon. The programme, produced by Cecil Sharp, included "a Flamborough sword dance, "Wooden Sword", was dextrously performed by a sextet of males, and these gentlemen, appropriately garbed, were seen to advantage in several Morris dances."

The Filey Post, and Weekly List of Visitors, Saturday, January 4th, 1913. unpaginated [p. 2.]

Report of a country dance held in the schoolroom at Bainton [a village near Driffield] - refers to ".... a new dance, under the name of 'The Flamboro' sword-dance, was tried, and was greatly appreciated by all."

Fergus County Democrat, [U.S.A.] Thursday, June 1st, 1916.

FINE GYM SHOW AT HIGH SCHOOL

Report of a show held on Friday, May 26th 1916 of gymnastics and folk dances at Fergus County High School (USA) including a performance of the "Flamborough Sword Dance". Press cutting supplied by Steve Corrsin.

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, July 28th, 1923. p. 3.

FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL - Pleasing Spectacle at Filey EXHIBITION BY TRADITIONAL SWORD DANCERS

Report of a Festival in Filey organised by the E.F.D.S. representative Miss G. A. Hall (of Scarborough) which featured a number of sword dance teams from the area. It reads: "The Goathland Plough Stots wore pink and blue smocks with white sashes, and the North Skelton team wore blue blouses with dark red stripes. They were accompanied by a concertina. The North Skelton team also gave an exhibition in the evening, and received a double encore. Some of the "Flamborough" sword dance boys, and "Earsdon" by men were nether-the-less warmly commended". Press cutting supplied by Trevor Stone.

Correspondence about an E.F.D.S. Folk Dance Festival at Deene Park near Corby, on Saturday, July 6th, 1929.

List of timings for the Flamborough sword dance in connection with this event. This was presumably for a massed display.

Bridlington Chronicle & East Coast Advertiser, Friday, July 25th, 1930. p. 6.

Report of a combined Brass Band and Folk Dance competition. The report details the programme and winners of classes. The Flamborough School team came third with 85 points in the Sword Dance (under 15's) class.

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, July 26th, 1930. p. 8.

A full report for the event detailed above.

Bridlington Free Press, Wednesday, July 22nd, 1931. p. 4.

Report of Bridlington's Second Annual Folk Dance Festival. This lengthy report lists results. The classes for Boys under 16, saw the Flamborough Junior Team in second place with 86 marks and a First Class Certificate. The men's Sword Dance Class and the Senior Cup were won by the Cloughton men's team (by coincidence details of this hitherto unknown sword dance team are reported by Dick Shillaker in the article "A regular writes" later in this issue).

Bridlington Chronicle & East Coast Advertiser, Friday, July 24th, 1931. p. 7.

Full report of above event.

"The English Folk-Play", Sir Edmund Kerchever Chambers. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1933. pp. 125, 127 & 130.

An extract from this important book details sword dances which are thought to have connections with folk plays. The writer suggests that the Flamborough dancers formerly blackened their faces. The report claims that the sword lock was put over the head of a stranger and the dancers demanded ransom.

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, July 29th, 1933. p. 4.

GIRL GUIDES TEAM

"A display of Flamborough sword dancing was witnessed and enjoyed by a large gathering at the gala in connection with the Parish Church held on the Cricket Field on Wednesday. The display was given by the local Girl Guides, under the direction of Miss Bessie Bayes, as some difficulty had arisen in arranging for a boys team to perform."

Bridlington Chronicle & East Coast Advertiser, Friday, July 20th, 1934. p. 5.

COLOURFUL PAGEANT AT FLAMBOROUGH

A display in the Vicarage garden included the "ever popular Flamborough Sword Dance" and "a display of the Kirby Malyeard [sic] sword dance" in order to raise funds for St. Oswald's Church.

Bridlington Chronicle & East Coast Advertiser, Friday, July 27th, 1934. p. 2.

GALA DAY AT FLAMBOROUGH

Event featured "..... a clever display of Flamborough sword dancing was given by the Flamborough Girl Guides"

LATER ADDITIONS

Amongst later references submitted by Gordon Ridgewell two refer to a 1934 Competitive Dance Festival and in issue 1, series 11 I quoted details of Flamborough School entering a team at a competition. I made the assumption that this was likely to be the Eskdale Festival. Assumptions are dangerous things, especially when Gordon Ridgewell is on the case. Gordon found press reports of the event - in Bridlington.

Bridlington Chronicle & East Coast Advertiser, Friday, July 27th, 1934. p. 3.

BRIDLINGTON FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL - A Great Success.

The sword dance (under 16 years) class was won by Flamborough School who gained a first class certificate. Same event as detailed below.

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, July 28th, 1934. p. 7.

FOLK DANCING. Local Successes.

A lengthy report of a competitive dance festival (referred to as "annual") and held at the Spa Theatre, Bridlington on Saturday 21st July 1934. The report deals with classes in Singing Games, Country Dances, Morris Dances and Sword Dances involving nine teams from Bridlington plus teams from Flamborough, Burton Agnes, Driffield, Elmswell, Eberston, Whitby, Lingdale and North Ormsby. The report includes an Adjudicator's Report given by Miss Gladys H. Needham of the Hull Branch of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Top marks for the day (94 out of a possible 100 marks) and the Senior Cup went to Lingdale Primrose Sword Team. The Junior Sword Dance class was won by Flamborough School with 85 marks.

New light on Flamborough women's teams



This photo from the Flamborough team's archives shows Girl Guide's, possibly the team who went to Leeds for a week long exhibition in 1934. The team was coached by Mr G. Emmerson and accompanied by the Vicar, the Rev. E. C. Peters M.A., and Mr J. Stevenson. The dancers were Misses Bessie Bayes, Sylvia Readhead, L. Everett, B. Langton, L. Gibbon, E. Mainprize, B. Kemp, K. Emmerson and M. Broadbent.

Gordon Ridgewell's most recent thorough search of the Newspaper Library has revealed important detail about women's teams who danced the Flamborough Sword Dance.

The first mention is of a Girl Guides team who appeared in July 1933 when they stood in because it was not possible to arrange for a boys team. Apparently this women's team continued for some time, culminating in a major, week long, event at Leeds Town Hall held in October 1934. It is obvious that a boy's team was in existence at the same time as this Girl Guide's team but it seems unlikely that they danced out together.

There are also reports of women's teams (who performed "North West Morris" style dances, not the sword dance). They appeared with the men at an event in August 1978 and on Boxing Day 1980, 1984, 1990, 1994 and 1997.

Bridlington Chronicle & East Coast Advertiser, Fri. October 19th, 1934. p. 8.
Photograph shown above depicting of 9 lasses and 2 male musicians. The caption reads: "The Flamborough Lassies who are to give a display of sword dancing at the Leeds Town Hall all next week".

The Yorkshire Post, Leeds, Tuesday, October 23rd, 1934. p. 6.
THIS WORLD OF OURS - Flamborough's Sword Dancers
The Flamborough Sword Dancers are now in Leeds; you can see them perform daily at the Sailors' Exhibition in Leeds Town Hall this week - eight Flamborough lasses in the white trousers and blue jerseys that tradition has decreed for the dance

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, October 27th, 1934. p. 13.
Second report on the Girl Guide's visit to a Missions to Seamen's exhibition. Report reads: "They have proved a novel feature of the exhibition and their dancing has been admired by big crowds each day, who rarely get the chance of witnessing such a unique display for which the girls are justly quite famous".

Bridlington Chronicle & East Coast Advertiser, Friday, November 2nd, 1934. p. 2.
A further report on the Girl Guide's visit to Leeds - team members are listed.

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, August 7th, 1937. p. 7.
A women's team survived to at least August 1937 when we read of a team called the "Flamborough Fisher Girls Dancing Troupe" who had earlier performed for the Duke of Kent in London.

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, July 9th, 1938. p.5.
Report of an evening of song and dance including a display by Flamborough School pupils in the Village Hall.

English Dance and Song, Souvenir Number, Christmas 1943. pp. 1 & 2.
An article detailing Longsword dance teams, including a brief reference and a photo of the Flamborough sword dance team. The article suggests that the moves of the Flamborough dance are named after, and correspond to, the weaving operations used in net or mat making.

"Flamborough: Folk-lore of ancient fishing village" by George H. Cooper. Scarborough, E. T. W. Dennis & Sons Ltd, 1944. p. 12.
A local guide book - refers to the dance "occasionally done by school boys a time, 60 years back, [circa 1880] when in totally different environments, young men of that district, attired in quaint costumes, gave outdoor performances every Christmas tide of "St. George and the Dragon".....".

"England's Dances: Folk-dancing To-day and Yesterday" by Douglas Kennedy. London, G. Bell & Sons Ltd., 1949. pp. 70, 71 pp. 81, 82 & 83.
In this book Douglas Kennedy, the Director of E.F.D.S.S., sets out his theory that the original implement used for the Flamborough sword dance has been

replaced by implements which came conveniently to hand according to the occupation of the dancers. He instances the Flamborough fishermen's wooden sword or slat which he claims is similar to a tool which is used for making rope mats. He also links the Flamborough dialect to the Danish language.

Bridlington Free Press, Saturday, December 31st, 1949. p. 2.
Report of Boxing Day outing by a boys team led by Mr T. T. Wall. Full report in *Rattle Up My Boys*, issue 1, series 11.

The Dalesman, Vol. 12, No 6, September 1950. pp. 218 - 19.
FLAMBOROUGH'S LINK WITH THE VIKINGS by George Hardwick
An article indicating the various features in the area, especially those which suggest a link with the Vikings. Contains a brief reference to the sword dance.

Programme for New Year Festival of Folk Dance, Royal Albert Hall, London, January 5th & 6th, 1951.
Extract from the programme for an E.F.D.S.S. event in London refers to a performance of "The Flamborough Sword Dance" and repeats the idea of a link between the dance movements and net making or basket making. It is uncertain if the dance was performed by a traditional team.

Bridlington Free Press, Friday, December 19th, 1952. p. 3.
"CORONATION COMMITTEE RECEIVES SUGGESTIONS
A meeting of the newly formed Coronation Committee was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday night Officials elected were chairman, Mr. T. T. Wall Suggestions received on how to raise the money included an offer from Mr Wall to tour the village on Boxing Day with his team of Flamborough sword dancers"

Bridlington Free Press, Friday, January 2nd, 1953. p. 2.
"Danced to aid Coronation Fund - the Flamborough sword dancers (scholars of Flamborough School) under the leadership of the headmaster of the school (Mr T. T. Wall) had a busy day on Boxing Day. They toured the village giving demonstrations of the traditional dance and collected money on behalf of the Coronation fund.

The boys succeeded in raising £7 towards the fund, but their efforts were made even more worth while. When they called at Mrs C. Longden's, shortly before they broke up for lunch, she rewarded all the boys with sweets. Later in the day, they called at Mr R. Hood's North Moor Farm, and before they came away, Mr Hood made sure each boy had had a share of mince pies, apples and oranges."

Bridlington Free Press, Friday, June 5th, 1953. p. 5.
A report on how Flamborough observed Coronation Day.
"HOW FLAMBOROUGH OBSERVED IT
Other Attractions then followed a delightful exhibition of Maypole dancing by a group of girls and boys, mostly dressed in white with trimmings of red, white and blue. An expert display of sword dancing was given by a troupe of boys all robed in white. The accompanist was Miss A. Chapman who was assisted by a charming choir of little girls during the Maypole dance..... Owing to the atrocious weather, most of the outdoor events had to be abandoned."

Bridlington Free Press, Friday, January 1st, 1954. p. 3.

"SWORD DANCERS"

Flamborough School sword dancers - a team of eight boys - toured the village on Boxing Day morning. They were in charge of the headmaster of the school, Mr T. T. Wall, who accompanied them on the concertina. [photographs exist of this event which show a melodeon] Mr W. Ralph heralded their performance with the school bell. The proceeds of collections taken were in aid of the school funds, £4/10/0 being raised."

Programme for New Year Festival of Folk Dance, Royal Albert Hall, London, January 8th & 9th, 1954.

Details from the programme of an E.F.D.S.S. event held in London. A write up about the Flamborough dance reveals that members of the Tooting and Balham Sea Cadet Corps (accompanied on the melodeon by Peter Kennedy) performed the dance at the first performance.

The Dancing Times, February, 1954.

FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL - A Folk Dance Ballet

A report of the performances to be seen at the Royal Albert Hall event organised by the E.F.D.S.S. which makes a fleeting reference to the Flamborough sword dance performed by the Tooting and Balham Sea Cadet Corps.

Bridlington Free Press and Bridlington Chronicle, Friday, December 31st, 1954. p. 3.

"SWORD DANCING DISPLAY"

Attired in their traditional white trousers and blue jerseys, members of the Flamborough School Sword Dancers team toured the village on Monday giving displays of sword dancing. Music for this annual event was provided by Mr T. T. Wall, who played a melodeon."

Souvenir programme, English Folk Dance & Song Society Festival, Royal Albert Hall, London, January 7th & 8th, 1955.

Photo of Tooting and Balham Sea Cadet Corps performing the Flamborough Sword Dance at the 1954 event.

The Dalesman, Vol. 17, No. 6, September 1955, pp. 283 - 85

TALES FROM YORKSHIRE'S "LITTLE DENMARK" by John Priestley

Details a number of superstitions observed by the people of Flamborough. Quotes [Mr and] Mrs Cross who gave details of the sword dance and claimed that it was kept alive "by the schoolmaster".

Bridlington Free Press and Bridlington Chronicle, week ending December 29th, 1956. p. 3.

"FLAMBOROUGH SCHOOL CONCERT"

The Flamborough School Christmas Concert was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday evening of last week. The programme consisted of songs, carols, recitations, plays and national dancing. The Flamborough sword dance was performed by the boys, under the direction of the headmaster Mr T. T. Wall."

Programme for New Year Festival of Folk Dance, Royal Albert Hall, London, January 11th & 12th, 1957.

Details from the programme for an E.F.D.S.S. event in London.

Caption to a photo: *Tooting and Balham Sea Cadets. Flamborough Sword Dance. Tooting and Balham Sea Cadets (H.M.S. Constant).*

The members of this Corps use dancing as an integral part of their training. The Sailor's Hornpipe and the Fisherman's (Flamborough) Sword Dance have been performed by the group at previous festivals. This year they have added their own version of the Rapper Sword Dance.

Oxford Mail, Monday, March 4th, 1957. p. 6.

Referring to the Flamborough sword dance the writer [W.A.C.] said that he/she thought that the dance was at its best when done by several teams.

The Oxford Times, Friday, March 8th, 1957. p. 9.

Report of a dance event in Oxford organised by the E.F.D.S.S. Refers to music by William Kimber and Rev. Kenneth Loveless and a number of "youth" teams.

The Dalesman, Vol. 21, No. 4, July, 1959, p. 250

The White Rose Morris Men, of Leeds, plan to perform the Flamborough Sword Dance. The full extract is to be found in *Rattle Up My Boys*, issue 1, series 11.

Programme for New Year Festival of Folk Dance, Royal Albert Hall, London, January 15th & 16th, 1960.

Details from the programme for an E.F.D.S.S. event in London. The Flamborough Sword Dance was performed by school children from Bushey Secondary Boys, Surrey; North Downs, Surrey; Glynn County, Surrey; Heston Boys, Middlesex; Monckton Wyld, Dorset; Reedham, Surrey and the Royal Ballet School, Richmond.

The Times Educational Supplement, Friday, January 29th, 1960. p. 161.

The Folk Tradition - An article written by Douglas Kennedy, Director of the English Folk Dance and Song Society dealing mainly with dancing for young

people. Illustrated with two photos of boys teams doing the Flamborough Sword Dance.

The Dalesman, Vol. 23, No. 4, July 1961, p. 288

CROSSED SWORDS

A short letter from Reginald Clarke of Bridlington who claims that the dance was done at times of extreme hardship in return for food.

The Dalesman, Vol. 23, No. 7, October 1961, p. 512

OFF WITH HIS HEAD

A letter, prompted by an earlier one by Reginald Clarke. Mr S F Roe-Thompson of Hereford suggests the "pagan origins" theory.

"Sword Dance and Drama" by Violet Alford. London, Merlin Press, 1962. p. 41.

For many years Sharp's book was the major publication on sword dance but in 1962 Violet Alford published an extensive follow up. In a chapter dealing with the "most important" dances Alford refers to:

..... and finally we note a fisherman's dance from Flamborough Head. These men used to wear red jackets and blacken their faces but now are sober in blue jerseys, white ducks and blue caps. Nobody is beheaded, but in past days an outsider was caught in the Lock and held until he paid for his release....."

"A History of Flamborough" by Frank Brearley. Driffield, Ridings Publishing Co., 1971. pp. 164 - 71.

This book has been out of print for some years. In it the author refers to the suggestion that the Flamborough team once wore elaborate costumes and were formerly based at an inland village. The chapter on the sword dance refers to an early reference to sword dance at Brunswick circa. 1443 and includes a drawing captioned "Sword Dancer 1860". The work also reprints Cecil Sharp's instructions for the Flamborough sword dance. An informant, Mr Leonard Stork, [who was in the team who danced for Sharp] told of performances in various towns including Beverley and Driffield and on one occasion in Hull when they brought the traffic to a standstill. Reference was made to the dancers costume - circa 1910 the dancers wore their usual blue jerseys and white ducks but as far back as 1800 their usual costume was a blue jersey with a waistcoat on top, knee breeches with brass buttons, blue stockings to the knee and a sealskin cap.

"A Year of Festivals: A Guide to British Calendar Customs" by Geoffrey Palmer and Noel Lloyd. London, Frederick Warne, 1972. part of plate 2

Photo of Flamborough boys team credited to Kathleen Mitchell - reproduced in *Rattle Up My Boys*, issue 1, series 11.

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, August 10th, 1978. p. 19.

"Viking - Saxon "war" starts festival for church organ.

Hordes of Vikings, in greater force than last year, "captured" Flamborough on Saturday as the third annual village carnival got underway.... It included Flamborough Longsword Dancers and Flaneburg Garland Clog Dancers."

Bridlington Free Press, Tuesday, December 23rd, 1980. p. 12.

NEWS BACKGROUND - by Andrew Newby

A detailed report of the background and history of the dance including reference to pagan origins and Viking ancestry. Quotes Mrs. Cross, who met Cecil Sharp when he came to Flamborough, as teaching the dance for many years (including teaching it outside the village). She also mentions a women's team called the Flamborough Lasses (no date given). Refers to the revival of 1977, the women's clog team of that year and mentions Richard Traves as the team's organiser.

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, January 15th, 1981. p. 19.

Report of dance tour on Boxing Day 1980 involving the adult male team and the women clog dancers. The collection was presented to the local Brownie and Guide company.

English Dance & Song, Vol. 44, No. 3, 1982. p. 36.

Advertisement for the show "Dancing England" held on Saturday January 15th, 1983 at the Assembly Rooms, Derby which featured the adult Flamborough Longsword team.

Bridlington Free Press and Chronicle, Thursday, January 10th, 1985. p. 14.

Report of a dance tour on Boxing Day 1984 involving sword dancers and women's clog dance team. Collection went towards a ramp for the Day Centre and help towards the Guides celebration to mark 75 years of Guiding.

Bridlington Free Press and Chronicle, Thursday, January 7th, 1988. p. 19.

"Calling their own tune"

The Flamborough sword dance team, who demonstrated the Flamborough Long Sword Dance - one which is strictly danced only in Flamborough. "It is something that is ours and ours alone, is unique to the village," says team organiser Mr. Richard Traves. "We are proud of it, guard it jealously, and seek to make sure that it continues." So much so that his son Jonathan (23) is part of the team and another son William (11), is being taught the dance.

The dance which dates back hundreds of years, was formalised before the turn of the century and then, sadly, it fell into disuse. It was revived a dozen years ago in its proper form, and is now regularly performed by the team. "But you have to come to Flamborough to see the team do it" said Mr Traves. During the holiday period they raised £200, £20 of which will go to the local play group and £180 to the Bridlington Ambulance men's Heartbeat appeal for equipment for ambulances."

[The team and representatives of the Ambulance Service are shown on an accompanying photo]

"Fairs, Feasts and Frolics" by Julia Smith. Otley, Smith Settle, 1989. pp. 167 - 68.

A section on the sword dance covers the subject generally. Reference to the Flamborough dance makes the claims: "The Flamborough Longsword Dance is in the repertoire of a number of sides, but when it is performed by the men of the village themselves it is quite an haphazard affair. Virtually everybody going through the village school learns the dance and not much credence is put on the idea of a team as such".

Folk Music Journal, 1989, Volume 5, Number 5, p. 568.

An article by Roy Judge "Mary Neal and the Esperance Morris" makes reference to both Sharp and Mary Neal taking an interest in the Flamborough Sword Dance and to Neal's conviction that "no [such] professional training is necessary for the best interpretation of the English peasant dance."

Bridlington Free Press and Chronicle, Thursday, May 3rd, 1990. p. 4.

Back to the past - LORDS OF THE DANCE

Two photos plus a general history and background to the Flamborough sword dance which claims that the dance was revived in the 1850's. Mentions that the team always perform outside Viking Lodge, the home of Mrs M. Cross who was once a pupil at the village school, returning as a teacher and passed on her knowledge of the dance to future team members.

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Photo and a report of the dance team's tour of the village on Boxing Day 1990. The tour was made by the adult sword team and a women's clog team (who were trained by Fiona Holt who taught them the Knutsford stick dance and a garland dance). Music was provided by Eric and Sue Storey. All dancers were named in the report and a list of venues was provided which included Mrs Cross's home and a spot at Bempton.

The Dalesman, Vol. 55, No 9, December, 1993. pp. 20 - 22.

Flamborough's Dazzling Day of Dance by Julia Smith

An article with two photographs, one depicts adult men (presumably at Boxing Day 1992) outside Dog and Duck. Other photo (no caption) circa 1912 outside "Willowdene" in the High Street at Flamborough. Magazine cutting supplied by Trevor Stone.

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, January 5th, 1995. p. 18.

Flamborough Diary

A report of village activities over the Christmas period. Specific detail and two photographs described the dancers - a women's clog dance team (names given) joined the adult men on a tour of the village.

Reference is made to the visit by Renaat Van Craenenbroeck and Trevor Stone. Press cutting supplied by Trevor Stone

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This book contains performance instructions and general background for all performable Longsword dances. This is the most recent publication to present background information and performance instructions. Much information is gleaned from Sharp's publications and his collecting notes.

On page 73 is a copy of Sharp's diagram of a Flamborough sword while on page 76 is the 1910 photo of the team which was published in *Rattle Up My Boys*, issue 4, series 10.

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, January 2nd, 1997. p. 22.

Short report of dance tour on Boxing Day 1996.

"Sword Dancing in Europe: A History" by Stephen D. Corrsin. Enfield Lock, Hisarlik Press, 1997. pp. 195, 200 - 201, 208, 261, 264.

Refers to the background and history of sword dancing at many locations throughout Europe. Makes particular comment about the Flamborough dance being the dance of choice in North America.

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"Boxing Day - Flamborough Sword Dancers and Morris Dancers entertained people around the village, visiting all the inns and restaurants"

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Short report and two photos of team who toured the village on Boxing Day 1998.

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Two photos, list of dancers and a short report of the team's Boxing Day outing. Refers to plans to visit Antwerp and collection of £205 for that visit.

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Photo and report of out of season outing and details of the team's plans to travel to Belgium. Caption to the photo reads "The Flamborough Sword Dancers practice for their trip to Belgium".

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, April 13th, 2000. p. 11.

Belgium trip - A letter of thanks from Richard Traves and the team for the support received from countless village organisations and individuals.

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, June 1st, 2000. p. 4.

Sword dance story set to go into print - Antwerp performance - Belgium trip Full page article on the sword dance history, revival of interest and the visit to Antwerp. Two photographs - 1900 boys team (with names) and the current team outside Antwerp Cathedral. Refers to the plans to produce a booklet on the history of the team. Press cutting supplied by Trevor Stone.

The Dalesman, Vol. 62, No. 10, January 2001, pp. 57 - 60.

MADE IN YORKSHIRE by Pamela Shaw Johnston.

An article primarily about hand knitted "ganseys" in which the author refers to the Flamborough Sword Dancers performing in their "Sunday best" which were (traditionally) grey rather than navy blue. More details on www.ganseys.co.uk

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, February 22nd, 2001. p. 22.

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Photo (of senior and junior team members) when the collection (£250) from Boxing Day was donated to the village's pre-school group.

"An introduction to the Longsword dance tradition of Yorkshire" by Diana Jewitt, London: E.F.D.S.S. 2001.

A guide for teachers wishing to teach Longsword dances. The book gives background and extensive details on how to teach the Flamborough dance (and the Kirkby Malzeard and Sleights dances).

Bridlington Free Press, Thursday, January 3rd 2002. p. 7.

Two photos, including the junior team and a short report of the Boxing Day outing. Refers to plans for Belgian team (Lange Wapper) to visit Flamborough and the days collection of £322.02 for that visit.

Lange Wapper's Half Lent event

Regular readers will be aware that most years I visit Antwerp for Lange Wapper's traditional event at Half Lent. This year the event was a little different - it missed the powerful presence of Renaat Van Craenenbroeck. In practical terms the team have recovered from the shock of his death last July but it is obvious that they have much to do to revamp their organisation because of his absence.



The Lastovo (Croatia) dancers at Antwerp. Photo by Trevor Stone

The guest team at the Antwerp Half Lent event this year was from a remote island off the Croatian coast called Lastovo. Initial plans for exchange visits were made the previous February when Renaat and I went to Lastovo to experience their carnival. In spite of the change of contact this years exchange went smoothly and both teams got on well. The Lastovo dance and carnival is described by Elsie Dunin in issue 3, series 8.

After the dance event in Antwerp Renaat's widow invited me to their home in Libin in the south of Belgium where I worked with Marek Van Orshoven (Lange Wapper's former jester who has left the team to concentrate on his computer work). Together we went through dozens of boxes full of a variety of folk related material. In two days hard work we managed to get most material into some basic order and to categorise and file some of the more important items in Renaat's massive collection. It is to be hoped that such a valuable collection can be properly indexed and cared for in a suitable archive and a number of people in Belgium are seeking a home for it. Renaat and I regularly swapped reports, videos etc. so I have copies of much of his research. In the meantime the material is housed in the superb room kitted-out to Renaat's instructions but Renaat's untimely death meant that it was hardly used before he died. The sheer volume of material, and the fact that it is in many languages, will make it difficult to access specific items until it is more fully indexed and sorted.

Thoughts on a memorial to Renaat

A number of people in the UK have suggested ways of memorialising Renaat's life and work. I think that now is the time to look into this as his team (and his family) are settling into a different lifestyle. Teams and individuals from Germany, France, Czech Republic and USA have been in touch with suggestions.

Renaat was very keen on the idea of marking a dancers involvement with his team by presenting a medal or similar. The Lange Wapper dancers have medals to commemorate 5, 10, 15 and 25 years of uninterrupted attendance at Half Lent - they present special things to mark 30 years and above. He was also an avid collector of swords from his visits to various teams - I wonder if there is a way to work these features into a memorial feature. He regularly talked about producing a book or CD based on our travels over the last 20 years - the list of ideas for a memorial could be a long one.

A visit by British teams

Some British individuals and teams decided to go to Antwerp last Easter to meet with members of Lange Wapper and to perform at Lange Wapper's usual venue. Arrangements for the trip were made by Andrew Kennedy and he told me that, in spite of the sadness of the occasion, the visitors did what Renaat would have wished - they danced for him.

Lord Conyers' - "Swords and Spectacles"

In 1989, Lord Conyers' were invited to the Passfest at Leuven in Belgium. We had been practising our new sword dance for most of the two previous winters, but had yet to perform it in front of a serious audience. On our first day out at Leuven we did a spot on the ring-road. Since we were only in the eyes of our guide from the host side, a cake-shop owner who'd just fed us delicious cake and a policeman who'd just booked a motorist for parking on our dance spot, we thought we'd risk the sword dance. It went reasonably well, we felt, and then we forgot all about it in the subsequent days, whilst carrying on with the Cotswold dances. The big event of the Passfest is a reception at the stunning mediaeval Town Hall (opposite an equally stunning Cathedral) followed by the traditional flinging of Easter eggs into the crowd from the Town Hall steps. Inevitably, with so many dance teams about, there was a dance spot afterwards in the prairie-sized cobbled square.

At the reception about an hour before we were due to dance, we were surprised to hear the Lord Mayor announced to all the world and his wife that he had seen us dance our sword dance and would like us to do it again, *in the square*.

Righto!!, we all cheerfully said, through more grit than teeth (Exit stage left for a quiet gibber).

We mustered at the Town Hall entrance, feeling pretty trembly about it. Feeling worst of all was our new fiddler, Andy, who was making his debut in front of a decent crowd numbering probably a thousand and at that moment about a thousand more than we really wanted as an audience. There was the usual panic checking of kit, zips, swords and the like, during which Andy held up his fiddle and bow and asked us in a dull voice if he needed to take anything else on with him "apart from a bucketful of Mogadon, that is". Thus we trooped on to the cobbles like kids dragging off to school on a wet November morning.

Once we started, it wasn't so bad. We were grimly thinking of the moves and equally grimly trying not to get distracted, then. . . . whaaat?? As my sword hilt went up for a "single under", I somehow got my little finger inside the arm of my specs, neatly sliding them off my face and leaving them dangling on the crook of the little finger of my right hand - which also held a sword hilt. "CONCENTRATE", I told myself furiously. The next two premonitions passing through my rapidly-clouding brain were of my specs hitting the cobbles and smashing, and the idea that if I could just keep hold of them until the next lock went up, I'd have two hands free to return the specs to the front of my face. Calm spread through my troubled mind, rapidly banished by Pete opposite who'd just noticed the predicament: "Ooer - whatcher gonna do, kid?" A hissed "Shurrup" was the best I could manage. For the next few moments I was in a calm part of the dance, so I was able to think again and promptly terrify myself because I now realised that to make the lock, my hands would need to cross, and my fevered brain now presented me with the image of my specs being sheared apart by the crossing swords and the bits hitting the cobbles. There was no time to panic further, however, because the next lock was on us. The swords crossed without problem - how I'll never know - leaving me with specs intact, hands free, and a tidal wave of relief sweeping over me. We finished the dance without further incident and with the adrenalin running, and so ended up with a better performance than we might otherwise have managed, and the Lord Mayor seemed not to regret his request. The rest of the side were well aware of the situation and all on tenterhooks throughout the dance, but unable to help without spoiling it.

Since then we've performed the dance many times, but never with such tension within the dancers. Occasionally at a practice, though, someone will point at the lock as it goes up and ask innocently "whose specs are those?!" At least Andy's off the Mogadon now.

Brett Naylor, Lord Conyers Morris Men, February 2002

A regular writes....

It is gratifying that so many readers send in reports without needing coaxing or bullying. One such reader is Dick Shillaker who is a regular dancer with Green Ginger Morris from Hull. For some time Dick has done his best to encourage the team to return to Longsword - once in the team's list of regulars. Dick could be forgiven the tone of triumph in the letter he sent in February 2002 which read:

Just to let you know that Green Ginger Morris and Sword have become active with sword again.

A couple of years ago, after dancing morris in Ampleforth when on a Morris tour, we were encouraged to practice the Ampleforth Sword Dance again. However we never managed a public appearance and all went quiet until our bagman Andy Farrall announced that he would like the team to dance Ampleforth at his forthcoming wedding reception. So we practiced regularly through January and then danced in early February at the Crown Hotel, Scarborough. Andy was part of the sword team and all went well on the night. The general feeling is that we should try to keep it in our regular repertoire."

Congratulations to Andy (for having such good taste in dancing) and to Dick (for having such perseverance).

Dick also sent me a note about a reference to a team he read of recently. He writes: "I spotted this in a book (*A Story of Cloughton* by Harold Whitfield and Marjory Parkinson, Cloughton Millenium Committee, 1999) when we stayed at a friends home at Cloughton which is near Scarborough. The book reads:

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