

MORR

VOLUME  
&  
NUMBER

HERS

40P

# CONTENTS

## Music Workshop \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Another article on music and the morris by Alan Whear, including details of the next musicians' weekend to be held in Windsor in February, to which both musicians and foremen are invited.

## Morris Posters \_\_\_\_\_ 8

In answer to a letter in a previous issue alleging uninspiring publicity for morris sides, Steve Wass offers two examples of posters advertising Adderbury MM. (Reproduced here rather less than half size.)

## Throstles Nest Morris and a Cumbrian Dance Tradition \_\_\_\_\_ 10

"Later...I discovered that there was on my doorstep a living example of what has been known as 'Morris dancing' in Cumberland for at least 80 years." Sue Mycock describes her researches on the Cumbrian Morris.

## WMF News \_\_\_\_\_ 14

Barbara Butler reports on Notation Group 6, and gives notice of the next meeting of the newly-formed Research Group.

## Dutch Elm Morris \_\_\_\_\_ 16

## More New Morris \_\_\_\_\_ 18

Stick dances, this time, from a variety of sides and traditions, presented by Roy Dommett.

## Mailbag \_\_\_\_\_ 22

# EDITORIAL

First of all, we'd like to apologise for the late appearance of this issue. A combination of mechanical, electrical and personal mishap held us up considerably last month, but we hope to be back to a regular three-monthly appearance from now on!

In spite of the sub-zero temperatures, this is about the time of year when teams start to plan their summer programme. In previous issues we've suggested how useful it can be to see as much morris as possible - critically watching other sides can give you new ideas, clarify different interpretations - even inspire you at times! Having said that, it's not always easy to find out when and where other teams are dancing. Local papers can sometimes be useful, as can regional folk magazines, and the WMF

and Open Morris Newsletters usually include a diary page. In the next two issues of MM we'll provide space for anyone writing in with details of particular tours they'd like to advertise (& contact phone number where possible). Similarly we'll include details of morris tours or displays at festivals, if the organisers will let us know.

Unfortunately, rising printing and postage costs mean that we have to increase our subscription rates to £2 for 4 issues (U.K. rates - for overseas rates please write in). Advertising rates remain the same at

$\frac{1}{4}$  page £2  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  page £3.50  
1 page £6 ( $\frac{1}{2}$ A4 size)

Cheques payable to Morris Matters, sent to 24, Alexandra Rd., Windsor, Berks. SL4 1HN.

This issue of Morris Matters was written and compiled by Jill Griffiths, Jenny Joyce, Frankie Stringer and Alan Whear for Windsor Morris, 24, Alexandra Rd., Windsor, Berks.

## The 20th. century musician

It goes almost without saying that the early part of the 20th century was a great watershed in the history of the morris dance. Examine almost any aspect of the tradition and you will see that we stand on the opposite side of a divide separating us from the dancers of the mid-19th century. The modern costume of black knee-britches, white shirts and crossed baldricks is as far removed from the typical ribbon-covered whites of the 1800's as the latter is from the doublet and hose of the 16th century dancer. That sort of thing is relatively superficial, part of a tradition evolving along with the rest of society - it's no less morris dancing because the clothes have changed over the centuries.

Other recent changes I feel are more important - I'm thinking particularly of the modern morris dancer who will be performing 2 or 3 dances from 10 different traditions. In the last century there were some dancers who were connected with more than one team, but these were the exception rather than the rule.

In this article I want to look at some of the ways in which life is different for the 20th century morris musician.

Probably the most obvious difference is in the type of instrument used and I would guess that about 3/4 of musicians today play one of the free-reed instruments, accordian, melodeon or concertina. (Incidentally we're hoping to run an article

on the development of the melodeon in a later music workshop.) The invention of these came too late to be an important influence in the 19th cent. morris, but where the morris survived towards the end of the century we have the notable examples William Kimber (and his father Wm. Snr.) at Headington, William Hemmings at Abingdon and William Tyler at Whitfield near Brackley.

All this is having an enormous effect on how the tunes are played, and the sound of the music generally. Take, for example, the Princess Royal:- Sharp describes the version collected from William Hemmings in 1910 as "a very spirited major version of that favourite morris air". (Morris Book III). Hemmings presumably found it a lot easier to play a major version on his melodeon (don't we all!) - but because it is so much less bother to play in the major on this instrument, what was in 1910 an unusual version is now the most commonly heard one.

Thinking about some of those players of five or six generations ago it's notable how many were involved with the raising and training of teams. As well as William Kimber already mentioned there was Jinky Wells at Bampton, James Arthur at Ilmington, Billy Brown at North Leigh and many others. What seems to link all these is their rarity value - if there was a musician available then a team could be raised, if not the continuance of the tradition was at risk. Quite often it was musicians who took on raising a new team from a new generation of youngsters.

Today, it's different. For reasons that would make an interesting

sociology thesis on their own, the availability of musicians is not quite the limiting factor it used to be. Generally it is dancers who raise new teams expecting to be able to recruit a musician as they do so. What it amounts to is a different role from the musician/leader of the past.

Now, I'm not suggesting that foremen everywhere should resign and hand over to the musicians, but I am saying that when there is a division of labour as in the modern team, communication of dance ideas becomes a problem, and positive effort has to be spent on seeing that the foreman and musician understand each other. In practice, this may not be an easy thing to achieve. The foreman may not be able to explain in musical terms exactly what is wanted or perhaps the musician won't always have the skill to do what is asked.

This is such a big problem that I'm going to make it the main topic for the musicians' meeting at Windsor soon. The idea is that teams send their musician and the foreman as well, and they can use the meeting to solve some of their particular problems. One of the good things about these gatherings is that the chances are that somebody, somewhere, will have had the same problem as you, and may already have solved it. You never know until you ask.

Anyway, here are the details for those who want to come. Write soon because time is short - we'll certainly need to have heard from everybody by 19th February. If you find you can't drag the foreman along then you're still very welcome in your own capacity as musician.

MUSICIANS/FOREMENS' MEETING

SATURDAY 27TH. FEB.

at the

OLD COURT, ST. LEONARD'S RD.,  
WINDSOR

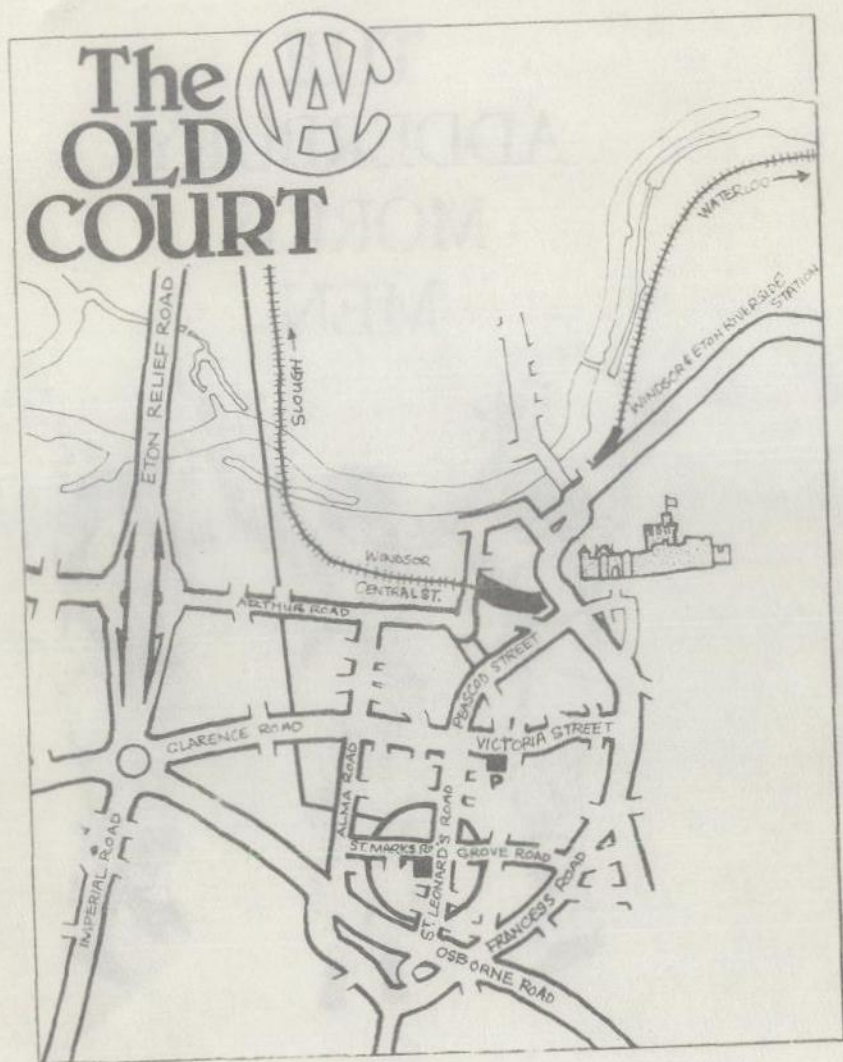
Meet : 10-00 am in the auditorium

Price : £5-00 per person to include Saturday  
lunch as well as tea/coffee etc. -

There will be a sing/play/dance around in  
the evening which has been advertised as an  
informal folk event.

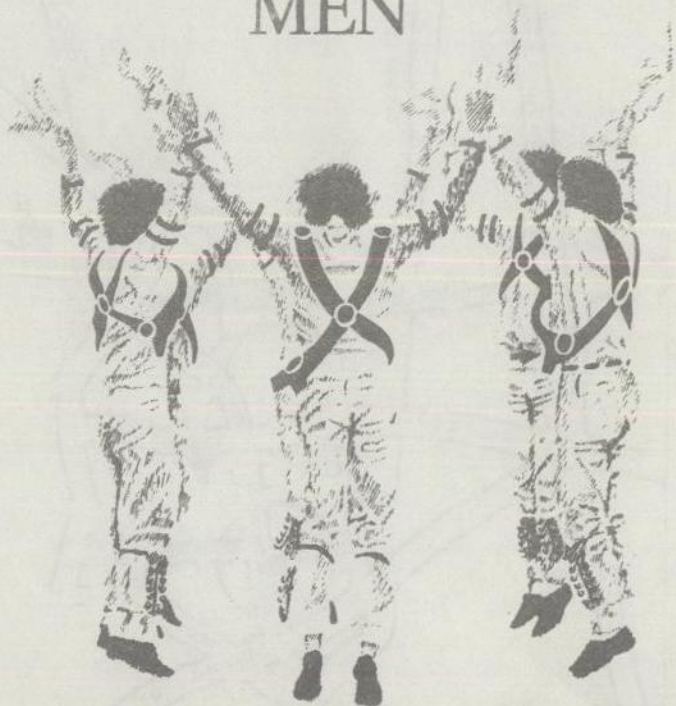
Write soon (address on P.3). No need to  
send any money - pay when you get there  
Look forward to seeing you !

Where to find us ...



Following Richard Ashe's plea for examples of morris posters (MM4No3) Steve Wass has sent us these two examples. They are reproduced here half size.

# THE ADDERBURY MORRIS MEN



Will Be Dancing Here

# THE ADDERBURY MORRIS MEN



Will Be Dancing Here

## and a Cumbrian dance tradition.

by Sue Mycock

When I first became involved with morris dancing - the Cotswold variety - about ten years ago, my mother and my grandmother both told me they'd done morris dancing in the local carnival when they were young. In my ignorance I dismissed the idea that this could be real morris, and there was certainly nothing in print which indicated that there was any form of morris indigenous to Cumberland. Later, when I was familiar with other forms of morris than Cotswold, I realised that there was on my doorstep a living example of what has been known as 'morris dancing' in Cumberland for at least 80 years. What was, and indeed still is, danced in local carnivals, is a processional, north-west type of morris. Further investigation revealed that other towns and villages as well as my home town of Wigton had had some form of morris dancing in their carnivals in the early years of this century. This gave the basis of a very promising repertoire for Throstles Nest Morris when we formed in 1977.

As far as I can ascertain, the original morris tradition in Cumbria was that of a linked sword dance. I have two 18th century references to this. One of these is from a local newspaper of around 1780 and mentions a team of Cumbrian sword dancers going down to London to perform (taking with them two interpreters!) The other reference is in a dialect poem of the same time which describes a sword dance being performed at a "merry meet" in a village near Carlisle, and mentions both the 'lock' or 'nut' and a mock beheading.

All the indications are that North-West style morris as performed by young girls in carnivals was introduced into the county at the turn of the century, at which time there was

a great upsurge of patriotic interest in things 'quaint' and 'rural' and very 'English'. This included morris dancing, carnivals with their carnival queens, May Day celebrations with May Queens and May Poles, Rose Queens, etc. Certainly the Ulverston dance was supposed to have been written by a local lady at the turn of the century, based on some dancing she'd seen in the Manchester area some years before. In the case of the Keswick dance, it is thought that a Lancashire gentleman, possibly from Leyland or Colne, taught the dance to schoolgirls in Keswick. The origins of some of the other local dances are less clear, however.

I had thought that the famous rush-bearing ceremonies in Grasmere and Ambleside might provide some sort of link with the Lancashire Rushcarts and their associated dances. But further research showed that they had only ever been walked processions, not danced, although there is a traditional tune associated with the Grasmere rushbearing.

Throstles Nest Morris (the name comes from the nickname for the town of Wigton - "The Throstle Nest") currently perform four local dances: the Keswick Road dance, Keswick Stage dance, Wigton Carnival dance and the Blennerhasset Garland dance. In addition we know of at least three other places which had their own North-West type processional dances or dances done on special occasions: Ulverston, Cockermouth and Temple Sowerby.

The Wigton dance is that performed by both my mother and grandmother and has been performed by teams of young girls in the annual carnival since at least 1909. The carnival

was revived in about 1970, after a lapse of about 20 years. The sister at the local convent school who revived the carnival managed to find the lady who had taught the dance last (in the 1940's) and now teams of girls perform the dance every year in the carnival. My mother and grandmother could only remember a few figures, but when the girls demonstrated the dance as they'd been taught it, I learned that there was far more to it. The moral of that being, if you're collecting dances always try to find the person who taught the dance, or led it, or played the music for it, because many dancers forget figures completely and will swear that there was no more to the dance than what they themselves remember!

The Blennerhasset dance, like the Wigton dance, was performed to the accompaniment of a brass band in the village carnival, but this time my sources could not go back further than about 1918. There were two dances performed: one a "morris" dance which used hankies (with a bell sewn on each corner) and the other a garland dance. The step was the same as in the Wigton dance - a country dance type of double step.

For the Keswick dances, the Stage Dance and the Road Dance, we used printed sources - the material kindly supplied by the Women's Morris Federation. Attempts to find local sources of information were completely unsuccessful, but apparently this is the same dance, originally, as one from Leyland and Mawdsley, in Lancashire. Ulverston's dance, as I've mentioned before, was probably based on dancing seen in Manchester, which leaves two other places that

we know of with distinctive dances of their own: Cockermouth and Temple Sowerby.

Cockermouth also had its annual carnival, and the brass band played '100 Pipers' for the local girls to perform their morris dance, but as yet we know very little more than this until more research is done on the dance. Temple Sowerby however had something quite different. The village is in the Eden valley, where many of the 'East Fellside' villages had, and some still have, quite elaborate Mayday ceremonies. It seems that there was some dancing, apart from Maypole dancing, done at these, certainly at Temple Sowerby in the early 1900's. While dancing at a fete there with Throstles Nest I came upon a collection of old photos on display showing life in the village in times past, and there were two pictures of particular interest: one showing a troupe of young girls who apparently did a "Hoop Dance", and the other the same troupe dressed for their "Tambourine Dance". I found the old lady who had donated the photos and she had been one of the dancers. Unfortunately she'd been one of the youngest, was the only surviving member of the team, and couldn't remember anything of the dances themselves at all, since she'd only been seven years old at the time. However, I did notice a similarity in the photos from Temple Sowerby and the photos and descriptions of both a Hoop dance and a Tambourine dance in Tom Flett's excellent book "Traditional step-dancing in Lakeland". These he describes as "fancy dances" taught to the children of Cumbrian villages by the travelling dancing masters,

who also taught step dances. These very probably had a music hall origin, and the children used to incorporate some of the steps they learned into these display dances.

In fact Throstles Nest also do some step dancing as well as 'Morris' and much of this is fairly local material: Westmorland style step dancing and some steps from Ulverston for example. Westmorland in particular lends itself to displays in figure and formations of up to five people or even more. This is a field in which there's a lot of scope for developing new dances. In fact, in general, we develop and interpret all the dances we do, whether they have come from written notation or been collected locally. No dance is sacrosanct in the form in which it is collected, and research shows that in the North West of England at least there was much adaptation and "pilfering" of dances from one place to another in the past too.

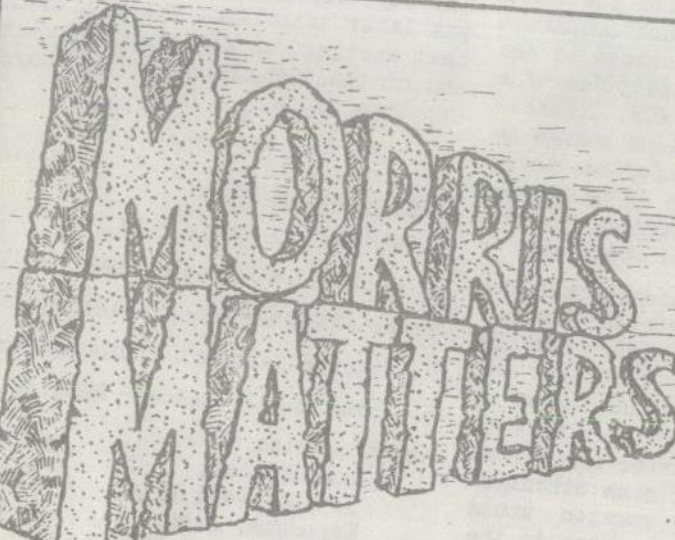
The Cumbrian dances, even if they were based originally on Lancashire ones, have a totally different 'feel' about them: they're more flexible and flowing and less regimented than many Lancashire or Cheshire dances perhaps because young girls did them not men. However, we're not trying to dance like little girls either - we're fairly big girls after all. Our kit likewise, although based very loosely on what the girls used to wear in Edwardian days (i.e. dark stockings, white dresses and traditional Cumbrian 'cloutie' bonnets) has been severely adapted to suit late 20th century women. Some things should remain unchanged, however for example the Cumbrian dances were performed in shoes - not clogs - an

we've found from experience that in fact shoes suit the stepping better than do clogs. It is rather unfortunate that so many sides today feel they must wear clogs if they perform dances from the North of England. It should be remembered that if clogs were worn on an everyday basis, many of the dancers would wish to wear their 'Sunday best' shoes for dancing on special occasions. This certainly happened in Cumbria.

Incidentally, for those interested in the continuing debate on women and the morris tradition, an interesting point about the use of the word 'morris' in relation to these traditions. I have heard some morris men say that what we do looks very nice but we shouldn't call it "morris dancing" as it isn't. But

until the early 1970's when men's Cotswold Morris became much more prevalent, and the media gave more coverage to it, then if you mentioned the term "morris dancing" to people around, for example, the Wigton area, then they naturally took it to mean the kind of dancing the girls did in the carnival... most had never heard of men doing morris dancing. By the best possible standard therefore - that of local usage - we are perfectly right to call what we do "morris dancing" !

Finally, things have now come full circle: some members of Throstles Nest Morris were invited to teach the 'traditional' children's team for this year's Wigton carnival, as there was noone else to do so any longer.



.... GEDDIT ??

.... hundreds do !!

The MORRIS MAGAZINE for the 1980's

Subscriptions £2 per year (4 Issues) Cheques etc payable to 'MORRIS MATTERS' at 24 Alexandra Rd. Windsor SL4 1HN

## Notation Group 6 ----- Barbara Butler

Due to illnesses and prior commitments, a one-day-only meeting was held on 22.8.1981 at Keynsham. Those attending were Paddy Davies, Val Parker and Barbara Butler. Apologies for absence were received from all other members of the group.

The morning was devoted to the Glossary and a final draft of issue 1 was agreed on. Val Parker produced a choice of four designs for the cover. The final design was not completed due to the potential change in the Federation's name and adoption of a logo at the September AGM. (Note:- at the AGM there was no change in name and no logo was adopted, therefore the cover design is being re-considered.) The diagrams for the Glossary were seen and approved.

The next topic discussed was the table of local and historical morris terminology. It was agreed that the master table was far too large and complex for easy reproduction and so a master copy would be placed in the archive and a shorter simplified table be produced for mass circulation. The smaller version would include the terms used in the Federation's Glossary, in C.J. Sharp's books, Mary Neal's books, and the commonly occurring terms used by Lionel Bacon in his "A handbook of Morris Dancing". These sources were

chosen since they were the notations most likely to be used by dancers.

The Bucknell Workshop notes were partly redrafted during the afternoon session. Using the workshop format it was agreed to teach the jig Bonnets So Blue first since this incorporates most of the elements of Bucknell.

A series of questions arising from the day were listed and Roy Dommett was later consulted. The date of the next meeting was fixed as the weekend of 9th/10th Jan. 1982 at Church Crookham Hants.

### Provisional Agenda:

1. Historical Table - PAD
2. Bucknell Workshop - PAD
3. Brackley Workshop - BAB, JJ, AV
4. Stanton Harcourt - Discussion.
5. Abram Circle Dance - BAB, CM.

Any enquiries to :

B.A. Butler,  
3, Stockwood Vale,  
Keynsham, Avon.

(Phone Keynsham, 5212)

Enquiries after Jan, 1982 to Sue Swift, WMF Technical Officer.

-----

## WMF Research Group

The first meeting of the Research Group was held on 18.10.1981. Proceedings of the meeting will be circulated by newsletter. Those wishing to obtain a copy please contact Barbara Butler at the above address.

The second meeting will be held on 28th March, 1982.

## CND Badges

### Morris Dancers against the Bomb

Badges from Leeds CND. Also: Cat Lovers, Real Ale drinkers, Teachers, Dog Lovers, Batman and Robin, Ageing Hippies and, of course, Special Branch. 20p each.

Enclose SAE to: J. Blakey,  
20, Kelso Road,  
Leeds 2.

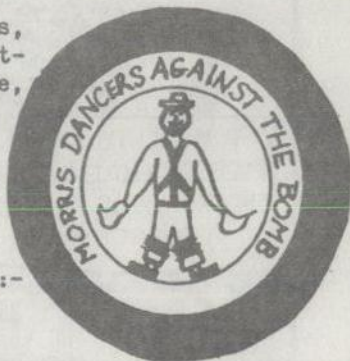
(Cheques to L.A.N.G.)

Bulk orders (over 10) 14p each + 10% p+p to:-

A. Beal,  
160 Harehills Ave.,  
Leeds 8.

(Cheques to A. Beal)

Orders over 50 - p+p free.



## BEDBURY

# MAN DIES

### Ban This Pork Scratching Menace Says M.P.

By ROBIN CATCHPOLE

NORMAN SPRAGGET, a lifetime member of the legendary lost side, the Beadbury Morris Men, was found dead today at his home, the smug bar of the Lame Badger pub. His body was discovered at closing time by landlady Eulogie Rugg. It is believed that death was caused by choking on a pork scratching. A tearful Mrs Rugg said later "As soon as I saw Norm, I knew something was up; it was not like him to lie in the grate. He was always the perfect gentleman, he never

statement issued from Cecil Sharp House "We are sick. This would happen just when we are planning to approach the Arts Council. It is typical of the attitude of these Beadbury Men."

Mr Spragget leaves fourteen sons and five daughters as well as three quarters of a pint of mild.

Obituary p.16  
Comms p.14

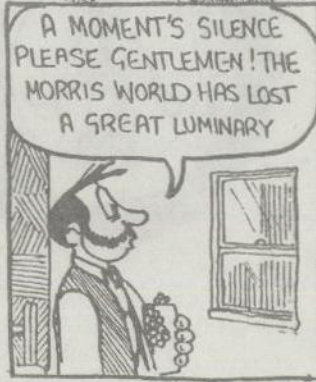


Mr Spragget Today

Peter Lord is Morris Man of the year

## Paraguayan Morris summit Deadlock

summit today  
Roy De



THAT'S RIGHT, AND NOR CAN ANY OF THE OTHERS! SO IF WE WERE TO START DANCING BEDBURY DANCES, WHO'S TO SAY HE DIDN'T TEACH THEM TO US BEFORE HE SNUFFED IT?



I CAN'T BELIEVE MY EARS. IS THIS A DUTCH ELM MAN TALKING?



BUT RON THINK OF IT

FAME

THE ENVY OF OTHER SIDES

A LECTURE TOUR OF THE STATES

A CENTRE-PAGE SPREAD IN MORRIS MATTERS

FREE DRINK FROM KEN LOVELESS



NO!



NO!!



ABSOLUTELY NOT



I HAVE SPOKEN!



IT'D BE ONE IN THE EYE FOR THOSE WEASLEIGH BUGGERS!



**THE WEASLEIGH DYNAMOS!!**  
A "NEW WAVE" MORRIS TEAM RECENTLY FORMED BY BILL CONSTANT. TO THE FURY AND CHAGRIN OF THE DUTCH ELM MEN, THEY REVILE THE DISCIPLINE OF THE RING, ABUSE THE TRADITIONS, REJECT THE DANCING EXPERIENCE OF GENERATIONS, OCCUPY THE BEST PUB AND GET ALL THE BOOKINGS.

WE'LL DO IT!



WILL THE LAOS SACRIFICE THEIR INTEGRITY TO WIN SPURIOUS FAME?

YOU BET!

# Stick Dances

Roy Dommett

Good invented dances are usually simple in concept. Such ideas are not so easy to come by, but occasionally a dance such as Balance the Straw (Fieldtown) occurs with nearly universal appeal. The old sides often got new dances via their musicians who would play for more than one team. The turnover of ideas is one significant part of the tradition. Here are some dances that have been seen which can be adapted into almost any traditional style.

## BEANSETTING

Tune - Brackley Beansetting

Source - Dorset Knbs and Knockers, Stalbridge, Dorset.

- Bars 1-2    Opposites cross over. Approach with three dibs and hit butts forward with opposite.
- Bars 3-4    Pass right shoulders to opposite's place and turn to right to face front with 3 more dibs. Then No.1 hits No.3's stick on mid beat of bar 4.
- Bars 5-6    3 hits 5, 5 hits 6, 6 hits 4, 4 hits 2 on successive main beats. Hitter hits down with a big swing, receiver holds stick out to be hit.
- Bars 7-8    Twirl stick through a figure 8 and hit opposite stick with tips as end of Beaux Badby chorus, feet still.

Repeat to place.

Tune - Princess Royal

Source - Sheffield MM

- Bar 1 Start to cross over with 1 double step, passing right shoulder and hitting tips left to right and then right to left on the main beats
- Bar 2 Continue with a step and jump landing feet together in opposite's place facing out.
- Bars 3-4 Galley right to face front, ending with step, feet together and hitting tips from right to left.
- Bar 5 Standing still hit tips - partner left to right, person diagonally to right, right to left.
- Bar 6 Hit partner right to left and person diagonally to left from right to left.
- Bars 7-8 Repeat bars 5 and 6
- Bars 9 - 12 Half hey
- Repeat to place.
- 

THE BULL

Tune - The Archers signature tune from the radio

Source - Great Western Morris

- Bar 1 Middles face down and hold sticks horizontally overhead. Tops hit middles' sticks with tips while bottoms clash sticks (tips) across the set.
- Bar 2 Middles face up and bottoms hit them while tops hit across.
- Bar 3 Bottoms face down and hold sticks horizontally over heads and middles hit them while tops hit across
- Bar 4 Tops face up and middles hit them while bottoms hit across.
- Bars 5-8 Half Hey
- Repeat mirror image of above to place.
-

## COUNTRY GARDENS

Tune - Country Gardens

Source - Windsor Morris

- Bar 1 Hit tips high from right to left, then low from left left to right.
- Bar 2 As bar 1
- Bar 3 Both hold sticks as for Headington dances. Odds hit evens stick which is held still. Odd tip hit evens tip, odds butt hit evens tip, odds tip hit evens butt, odds butt hit evens butt.
- Bar 4 Odds hold stick still and evens hit. Evens tip hit odds tip, evens butt hit odds butt and both clash tips together.

Repeat, or half hey and repeat all.

---

## GREENCOATS

Tune - Brighton Camp or Rose Tree

Source - Abercorn Stave Dancers, Hants.

Danced in units of 4. Hold sticks as Adderbury "doubles".

- Bar 1 Beat 1 Nos 1 & 4 hit middle of 2 & 3's sticks with tips (respectively) across set.  
Beat 3 Nos 2 & 3 ditto to 1 & 4
- Bar 2 Beat 1 Nos 1 & 4 hit middle of 3 & 2's sticks respectively along sides of set  
Beat 3 Nos 3 & 2 dosame to 1 & 4
- Bar 3 Beat 1 Nos 1 & 4 change places, both turning to their left, so they pass back to back, and hit Nos 2 & 3 respectively as they pass.  
Beat 3 Nos 2 & 3 who have not moved, hit Nos 4 & 1 respectively across the set.
- Bar 4 Beat 1 Nos 2 & 3 change places across the diagonal, turning to their left, so as to pass back to back, and are hit by 4 & 1  
Beat 3 Nos 2 & 3 hit nos 4 & 1 along the sides of the set.

Repeat to place. Could elaborate and progress around an 8-set like Lichfield hey pattern.

---

HAPPY MAN

Tune - Adderbury Happy man

Source - Bath City Morris

Figures - danced through without hops and a heavy step on the first beat of each bar.

l r l/r l r/l r l/r l r//l r l/r l r/l r l/r l r//l r l/tog. - -//

Forward....Back..... Forward....Back..... on spot

Chorus - following Bacon's notation,

o e e/o e e/o e o/e x -/e o o/e o o/e o e/x - -//

---

THREE MUSKETEERS

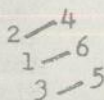
Tune - Brighton Camp or Young Collins

Source - Wheatsheaf Morris Men

This has spread to the USA as well as around the UK and several sides now claim to have invented it!

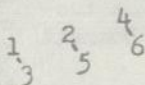
Normal formation is      2    4    6                      Danced rather aggressively,  
                                  1    3    5                      like a sword fight.

Bar 1      Leap into new formation



and hit tips high right to left and low left to right, 2 with 4, 1 with 6, and 3 with 5.

Bar 2      Leap into another formation



and hit tips high & low as bar 1.

Bars 3-4    Face across to usual opposite in normal formation and hit tips high right to left, low left to right, high right to left and high left to right.

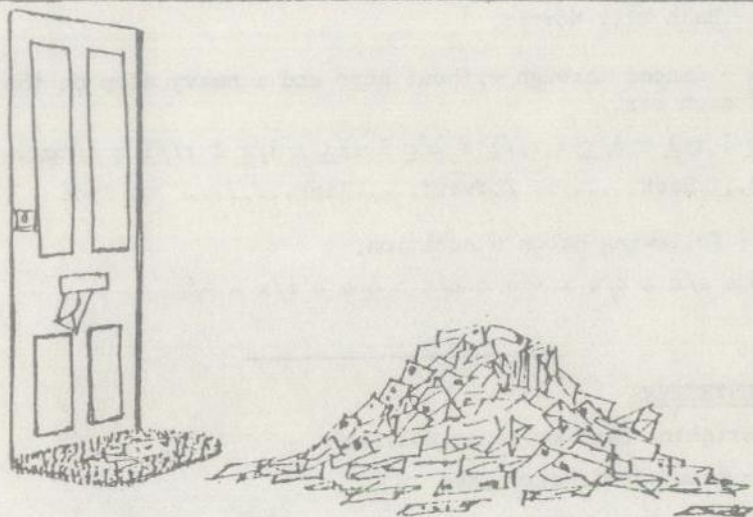
Half Hey and repeat to place.

It helps to impress the public to shout a bit and stamp the leading foot at the clashes.

---

Thanks are given to each side from whom a dance has been 'borrowed'.

# MAILBAG....



Keith Chandler

Dear Editorial Collective,  
Inevitably, anyone who publishes, especially on such a controversial subject as the morris, comes in for the occasional criticism. So, a two-fold letter in reply to Roy Dommett and Steve Wass.

Firstly, Roy's follow-up list to the Biographical Index. Let me say at the start that the Index was originally drawn up as a work-aid for my general research, in the absence of any comparable listing of dancers. The original contained the type of information that I needed and there was never any intention to publish it. That came about as the fulfilment of a promise to Jenny and Alan to

submit some material for the magazine. As it stands the Index is incomplete and anecdotal, with a total lack of schematic coordination. Since publication, I have done a considerable amount of work on the parish registers, the census enumeration books, local newspapers and other documents, and the revision of the index is progressing apace. When it finally appears, it will list dancers by team to enable a comparative study of occupation, age, place of birth, etc, with an overall alphabetical list for cross reference. Where there is more than one candidate for the dancer (Robert Wyatt at Adderbury, for example) all the possible alternatives will be given. Occupations will be listed from not only the four available censal years - 1841/51/61/71, as

well as 1881, which will be released, as per the one hundred year delay required by law, in January of next year, and should give biographical details on many of the post-1887 dancers - but trade descriptions from other sources such as the county directories (where the dancer is a small tradesman, such as Stephen Eeles at Leafield) and others, including reports of criminal cases in Local Petty Sessions to be found in the newspapers (e.g. "John Paxton, of Brackley, labourer, drunk on Whit Monday..." in the Banbury Guardian for 8.6.1911) and similar coroner's reports (at the inquest on the death of his seven week-old daughter in 1887, Bucknell dancer Alfred Rolfe said, "I am a gardener's labourer in the employment of Mr. Douglas-Pennant...").

In addition, marriages and births of offspring will be noted, since these two social acts tend to occur in times of economic stability; and a long gap between the birth of one child and the next may indicate a period of hardship (during the Crimean War, for example - see the statement of the Launton dancer William Cartwright to Butterworth in 1913 - "He told me he was nearly starved to death during the Crimean War - that scores of children were - bread was then a shilling a loaf.") Many of the techniques currently in use in other historical disciplines can be fruitfully applied to research on the social background of the morris; such as family reconstitution, attitudes towards bastardy, hierarchical structures of villages and the like.

But to return to the Index in its first incarnation. I stated in the introduction to the first part that it was intended to be a listing of dancers in what I designated traditional teams. That's where the confusion lies; in the definition (most always elusive) of the term "traditional". Although it was never clearly defined in print, I take it to mean a dance side with at least some historical continuity with what has gone before, even where the dance-forms have evolved or altered. In addition, a tradition thrives in a particular social milieu and when it no longer has any relevance to that milieu it either terminates, as happened to many teams in the south midlands following the watershed year of 1887, or it disappears from public view and goes underground, to be kept alive by interested parties like the Hemmings at Abingdon or the Rolfes at Bucknell, and is revived when there is sufficient impetus locally, which may take the form of external interest (as happened at Campden in 1929) or a sanctioning within the community (as at Abingdon in 1935 when the Hemmings carried a "Mayor of Ock Street" in the procession to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of George V.) Given these criteria, I would (and did) eliminate the pre- and post-WWI sides at Ascot-under-Wychwood, Leafield and Kirklington as having no continuity with previous dance-forms in these respective villages. Ilmington after WWI would probably qualify for inclusion if we had more information about it. Bidford (and Brackley and Eynsham) falls somewhere in the limbo between tradition and revival, since it has a certain

# MAILBAG ....

continuity with the previous, pre-WWI team. Since about 1870 (and in many cases, well before this date) sides have been dancing, lapsing, then getting together again, often with new blood. There are a number of well-defined watersheds: Jubilees, WWI, more Jubilees and Coronations, WWII, the deaths of local personalities (Wells, Kimber, Tom Hemmings), post-WWII economic recovery into which the morris didn't relate (witness the near dissolution of Bampton, Abingdon and Campden during the late 1950's), and the early days of the folk revival, which regained for the morris a certain respectability.

Having apparently dismissed these early village revival sides, let me say that as a historian I see clearly the need to document these incarnations as a cultural phenomenon; and by the same token agree with the ideas put forward by Trevor Stone in the latest issue. However, I've never concealed the fact that my main interest lies in the morris as danced prior to 1914, when I consider that there was a definite metamorphosis of attitude towards the dancing. This is a whole article in itself, but Roy Dommett's written contribution to the collection of papers given at the Traditional Dance Conference at Alsager in March, 1981, gives a good indication of the changing ideas within the tradition. (A second conference is planned for next year; details from Tess Buckland 10, Addison Close, Wistanton, Crewe Cheshire, CW2 8BY).

For the record, then, some material on the post-WWI side at Leafield, which danced Headington Quarry dances,

as did many local village teams around here at the same period (including Ascot and Kirtlington) :- Reg Prately, born in Leafield but now keeping the Jubilee at Bampton, gave me the following names of dancers in his home village, probably during the 1920's, (12.11.1978 Bampton), while Freda Palmer, a fine traditional singer also of that village, but currently resident in Witney, provided the biographical details (13.11.1978, Witney) :-

Maurice Franklin - builder  
Bill 'Stunner' Ferriman - barber  
Walter 'Hicksey' Shayler  
Bill Whistler - "done anything"  
Ernest Longshaw - farmer (died 24th Dec.1978)

Longtime Bampton dancer Albert 'Son' Townsend thinks he saw them dance on the Green in Leafield about this date.

On 14.12.1979 I interviewed Mabel Shayler, widow of 'Hicksey' Shayler, in the village. She contradicted what Reg Prately had said and denied that her husband had danced, at least not during the time she had known him. She did remember the following as dancers, however:

William Lock  
'Stunner' Ferriman  
'Champ' Ferriman - brother to Stunner  
Sid Ferriman - cousin to 'Champ' and 'Stunner'.  
Walter 'Buddy' Shayler (possibly, this is the man Reg Prately means.)  
Percy Townsend  
Jack Townsend - Percy's brother.  
"They were full of it".  
Willie (?) Dore  
Reg Franklin (?)  
Bert Franklin (?)

On 31.8.81 I talked to Reg Franklin who said he had not danced, nor was he related to the old dancing Franklins. On the same date I saw the widow of Bert Franklin, who was the grandson of Alec, and she thought that her husband had not been involved with the morris at all.

Ducklington : Roy's confusion over the informant's name doesn't help, but there are no men of the surname Jervis or Jarvis in the village according to either the parish registers to 1880 or the 1871 census returns, nor is there anyone of the name living in Ducklington today.

Joe (actually Jim) Buckingham, uncle to Arnold Woodley, dancer in both the Wells and Tanner sides during the late 1920's and early 1930's, and occasional musician to Arnold's boys during the 1950's (see the Index), had a tune from a man called Wiggins at Ducklington; the source of which information comes (according to a personal letter from Roy) from the Biggs manuscript (anyone have information on who Biggs was and where the manuscript is?). Now, one Thomas Wiggins (Baptised 25.2.1855 according to the parish registers, and who "passed away 4th and 7th July 1924," - whatever that means! - according to his headstone in Ducklington churchyard) went up to teach the Esperance Club with old Joseph Druce in 1913 (Carey mss.); and this could be where Buckingham had the tune. Confusingly, Druce claimed to have been the youngest of the Ducklington dancers when the side

disbanded (Sharp. Folk Dance Notes, II, fol.123). Perhaps there had been a later team which Sharp ignored in favour of the older tradition, as he did elsewhere (Eynsham, Ilmington, etc. Druce is also about the only representative of "the authentic voice of tradition" (as Steve Wass succinctly describes it) who spoke against women dancing the morris (Folk Dance Notes, II, 122.) The team of girls that he had seen in Ducklington "recently" (in 1912) was probably the side based on the local school. Bill Daniels, the most stylish dancer in the Shergold team at Bampton, has a poster-cum-certificate printed by "Hood, Printers, M'bro," which gives announcements of the "Ducklington festivities on the occasion of the Coronation of their majesties King George V and Queen Mary. June 22nd, 1911"-

...At 2.15, 4.15, and 6.15, Morris Dances were given by:-

Juniors M. Edgington, A. Fisher, A. Costar, E. Collis, F. Smith, E. Steele, E. Belcher, E. Edwards, H. Hathaway, Hbt. Fisher, Hector Fisher, F. Kearse.  
Seniors Lottie Wilsdon, M. Tremlin, M. Collis, A.C. Needham, H. Humphris, John Fisher, Jas. Fisher, Wm. Collis, W. Atkins.

Instructresses: Miss Westwell & Miss Burgess,

Accompanist: Miss Westwell.

Interesting to find so many Fishers in the school Morris: in the nineteenth century one whole side in Ducklington had been drawn from this family.

# MAILBAG....

Eynsham: We know exactly who danced during the 1930's and it is the 1920's where the confusion still lies, despite a good deal of collecting in the village by Dave Townsend and myself. The current state of research is this: Dave has interviewed Mrs. Ada Gardiner, the sister of several brothers named Harwood who were dancers, certainly before and possibly, in one or more case, afterwards. She remembered one George Davey as the leader of the team pre and post WWI. Ernest May, junior, one of the men who helped the current team with the dance-style, was also probably a 1920's dancer; as was Ned Harris, also still alive and living in Eynsham. It still is not certain if the Russells were involved following the war, although Roy Dommett claims that Sid Russell showed him a photo of a 1920's team wearing the old smocks, which presumably contained Sid as a dancer. Perhaps Roy would elaborate on his meetings with the Russells? Sharp didn't help matters by all but ignoring the younger men who were dancing before the first war and recording the older generation of dancers. There was a great deal of teaching of the morris at the school during the 1930's by Lottie Plum and later Sid Russell, and many of these boys are still alive. Keith Green, Squire of the present Eynsham team, has the names and some photos.

Headington Quarry: Bob Grant of the Quarry men has extensively interviewed most surviving relatives of the pre-1905 dancers and is making a

start on relatives of the pre-WWI dancers, of whom he has identified a great number from contemporary photographs. Although I have been privileged to see the results of his research, I don't feel I should put any of it into circulation. That will be done by Bob in due course.

Badby: A great dearth of information on the dance side, especially the names of dancers other than Ephraim Cox. Perhaps it is too late, but somebody in that area should hawk a copy of the photo around the village, and see if anyone can identify it, and try to find if Butterworth's tune informants were dancers.

Roy's original list also contained the query about names of dancers in Campden since the revival by the Guild of Handicrafts around 1902. I have recently interviewed a number of the Campden dancers, including Bert Hathaway, the son of Dennis Hathaway who fiddled for the men's side and trained the boys' team which was seen by Sharp in 1910. As a result I now have the names of four dancers in the pre-war boys' team; four of the 1919 dancers; and all dancers since the 1929 revival to date. As the work in Campden continues, and until I'm aware of the attitude of the present dancers towards the publication of any historical material, I won't even list the names here. The recording of the information is of prime importance and I'll do nothing to queer the potential of collecting

more. Let me just say this: the rather insular and off-handish image which the Campden men have gained in certain morris circles - due no doubt to a more localised dancing policy than the other traditional teams - is totally unjustified and I've found the present team to be some of the most genuine people around.

I hope I've justified my omission of certain teams (including Steeple Claydon, a "border" type tradition in the midst of a "Cotswold" type area, which makes it no less important - indeed, it would be instructive to know how the tradition became rooted in the village - merely outside the scope of the Index as laid down in the introduction to part one). I'd like also to make this caveat: in addition to a great deal of incompleteness, the index as published contains a number of inaccuracies. Although these will be corrected in the revised version, I'd like anybody who intends quoting it as authoritative (and I'm a firm believer in the dissemination of material to its fullest extent) to check first.

Finally, if anyone is still awake I'd like to comment on the letter from Steve Wass and say that I agree totally with his remarks on the

perversion of historical and hypothetical material by many of the "Old Guard" within the morris world. What I was trying to say in the article was that people should stop claiming the pre-Christian, and hence pre-recorded, origins theory as fact when we cannot even show what the link was between the "court" type of morris of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the rural incarnation of the past two hundred years, or even if it existed in the Cotswolds before the painting of the Dixton harvesters around 1720--30 (Incidentally, has anyone else noticed that the lead dancer in the line is on a different foot from the other five?). I can see where the lack of clarification on this point in the article has lead Steve to misinterpret the intended meaning, however, and I'll try to be more specific next time.

And definitely finally, Trevor Stone says a lot of very sensible things about dances within a traditional context and their mutability; but I think he overemphasises the extent to which this prevails in the revival. Or is it just that virtually the only morris to which I'm subjected around here is either traditional or village revivals, all of which without fail are constantly evolving? Also, as one of those people who "spend(s) a lot of time looking for historical precedents" I'd like to disagree that "we ignore what went on within the last decade or two."

# MAILBAG....

On the contrary, I would think that the state of research, both old and recent, traditional and revival, is in a better condition now than it has ever been. Apart from the traditional teams having gained an interest in the history of their tradition (Bob Grant in Quarry, Colin Corner and Jonathon Leach in the two Abingdon teams, Dave Rose and Arnold Woodley in two of the Bampton sides), a number of "outsiders" have collected extensively in the area; Roy Dommett, Mike Heaney, Dave Townsend, Mike Pickering, Paul Davenport, Chris Bartram, Frank Purslow, to name but a few.

Sincerely,  
Keith Chandler.

## Morris in the South

Dear Editors,

George Frampton, "May Day in Guildford", MM 4/3, slightly misquotes Ruth Dugmore's "Puttenham Under the Hog's Back", published Phillmore 1972, perhaps because of the fanciful reconstruction as an illustration on page 83, and this could mislead readers more used to the team dancing of the Cotswold Morris. The source for the book was the papers of the Rev. Charles Kerry, curate in Puttenham 1868-74, now in the Derby public library. The book says, "at the end of the 18th century this was a favourite pastime and Puttenham was famous locally for the skills of its dancers.

Furlanger, the carter, wore bells on his legs and ankles and was always loudly cheered as he danced down the street. On one occasion he and two of his friends took a load of carrots to London. At the house where they stayed the night there was a morris dancing competition and Cranham won the prize. Apparently Furlanger was the only dancer who wore the bells and when he died this picturesque custom was dropped." It is important to note there is no mention of a side.

Daryl Dawson of Derby Crown has been going through the Kerry papers, and there is a section "Morris Dancers" in a collection entitled "Fairies, Pharisees & night Hags, Spells & Divination." Pharisees are bad fairies. From Volume III, p.121 & 123, "Puttenham like most other places had its morris dancers in former times, but none of the present generation remember having seen the performers with bells as was the ancient practice. But Mr Hudson states that Thos. Furlanger his father's carter wore them in the dance - that he was the best dancer in the whole neighbourhood the bells on his legs & ankles keeping wonderful time with the music.

Master Strudwick was one of the most famous of the modern school though he danced without the bells. Cranham says that when he was young they went to London together with a cartload of carrots for the market having looked to their horse & made all things right for the night came to a house where they had agreed to sleep. Here they found a

cockney dancing to the strains of an old blind fiddler. After a while Cranham informed the company that there was a countryman present who although he had walked with him 35 miles that day he dare 'back' against the Londoner. The challenge was at once accepted & it was agreed that the fiddler (being blind) should be the judge (the parties of course not being made known to the musician). Accordingly Strudwick having taken off his shoes danced first, when he was succeeded by the townsman. When all was over the old fiddler declared that the first man had beaten the second "out & out" both in precision & delicacy of step. The countryman won the day - from Cranham 1869 then aged 79 years old."

The fuller version gives quite a different impression to the book. Where is being cheered down the street? Strudwick not Cranham won a challenge for a bet not a competition.

According to the Broadwood Morris handouts, apparently quoting from the publications of the Sussex Archaeological Society, most of the dancing Lucy Broadwood the folk song collector would have seen was of the social kind at harvest homes and the like. The only occasion she recalled a morris dancer was on May Day 1870 when, "I was lurching alone at Lyne when there appeared on the carriage drive at Lyne a man with blackened face. He had a white shirt and ribbon and fringes of paper on him. He danced in a circle, leaping high in

the curious "caper" which seems traditional in many countries, one leg tossed in the air with a sharply bent knee. As he bounded in this circular fashion he blew on a cow's horn. Later, I realised that I had seen my one and only Sussex morris-caperer". Miss Broadwood provided a drawing of this strange character.

It is tantalising. Dancing down a street, dancing without shoes, capering. It does not suggest what we would recognise as step-dancing. It reminds one of the most usual form of the morris in the 15th to 17th century which was described as highly exotic, acrobatic, savage and danced by a ring of men, each dancing alone for a prize from a lady. Perhaps the south did preserve the oldest form of the morris in England. The earliest illustrations show grotesque gestures and movements - perhaps references to morris in the South are being missed because attention is not being given to solo performances which include bells leaps and grotesque movements, or they are being confused with step dancing.

The more usual form of southern celebration is mentioned by William Marshall, the 18th cent. agricultural historian who wrote "The Rural Economy of the Southern Counties", 1798. To quote from "Historic Farnham" by Ashton Booth, "another time was Hop Sunday, when the celebrations led to various 'excesses' and the

# MAILBAG ....

parade of hop pickers ..... The finishing frolics exceed even those of Kent. The pole puller is given a shirt (ie linen cloth to make one) by the pickers. This he wears sashwise, ornamented with a ribbon. The women likewise decorate themselves with handkerchiefs, ribbons, finery and the companies then parade through the streets of Farnham - a fiddler at their head - singing and shouting in tones of true licentiousness. The evening is closed usually with dancing and always copious libations. Next morning those living at a distance are sent home in waggons, their various colours flying, forty or fifty in each with a fiddler in the midst and with altogether a sort of glee and merriment which in these decorous times (1791!) is rarely met with."

Has anyone more of these local titbits to build up the picture?

Roy Donnett

## Brittany

Dear Morris Matters,

We have just returned from a fabulous tour of Brittany. The inspirational sound of Bombardes, the magical atmosphere of Breton dancing, the open-air meals of mussels and pork for hundreds of people; all this with the marvellous appreciation and hospitality of the Bretons got us talking of another tour as soon as we got back. For other sides thinking of going, we urge them to do so as they will thoroughly enjoy it.

One word of advice, however, since the increased media coverage of the Northern Irish problem the strongly Celtic Bretons are not over keen on English nationalism. Our bagman got 'Brits Out' scratched on his car (it had a G.B. plate on it). So it's not the place to sing 'Rule Britannia' in the bars, or to wave large union jacks, but if common sense is used, Brittany must be the best place in the world for a morris tour.

Jeff Button,  
Leigham Vale Morris Men.

## New Zealand News

Dear Morris Matters,

News of New Zealand Morris -

The second annual morris meet at the Wellington Folk Festival in June attracted close to 100 morris dancers from six sides. A big attraction was Bob Collier of the Sydney Morris side and immediate past Squire of the Australasian Ring.

The magnificent gathering of N.Z. teams culminated in an afternoon tea demonstration before the Governor General, his wife and household, held in the ballroom. A very enjoyable finish to a great gathering.

The third annual morris meet next year takes place from 15th-18th Jan. 1982 at Lincoln College in conjunction with the national Dance School which will involve many forms of folk dancing from many countries, and will include morris.

This should be a great event as some 50-70 morris dancers are expected to attend the tour which will end at Lincoln College the day before the Dance School. Naturally any of your readers in this area of the world will be very welcome to join us for any part of the festivities.

R.A. Crowder,  
'Tussock Jumpers'  
Box 61,  
Lincoln College,  
Canterbury, N.Z.

## Kesteven

Dear Morris Matters,

There seems to be some misunderstanding (not to say criticism) of the viewpoint of the Kesteven Morris Men's team, and as we feel there is a danger of the issues being trivialised, we write to confirm our strongly-held beliefs. The present style which we have helped to shape is the culmination of five years' hard work carried out behind the scenes on such aspects as 'fooling' and 'theatrical merits' and the end-product is a performance which follows this pattern:-

1. A number of the team arrive at a venue in kit and attract an audience by talking earnestly about 'mythology' and 'paganism'. ('Audience' usually means between 'one' and 'twelve').

2. The team distributes copies of 'Kesteven Morris - the mysterious mythology of the morris' to all members of the audience.

3. John Swift delivers a lecture entitled 'The Morris Dance as a Magical Rite', illustrated by slides as appropriate. A collection is taken from the audience and they are asked to fill in the questionnaire on page 64 of the handout.

4. Ray Worman as 'The Morris Fool' does a five-minute stand-up comedy routine. A selection of his best one-liners is printed on page 128 of the leaflet.

5. The morris team collect £28 per person from the remaining audience with the promise of good luck and fertility and ensure that no one leaves without a pamphlet on the group's personalised stud service.

6. To the tune of 'Bonny Green Garters' and a selection of 'knock knock' jokes the teams disperse.

On their way home members revise pp. 72-84 of the leaflet (chapter called 'why most morris dancers are prats') and work hard on preparing a new chapter, 'How a club can possess leaflets, headed notepaper, teeshirts badges, stickers, bright posters, superb kit, a healthy bank balance, two lively teams, and still have integrity, humour, energy and downright fun.

Yours sincerely,

John Swift and Ray Worman  
on behalf of each other.

P.S. Ray Worman is magic anyway.  
Kesteven Women's Morris.

