

The Music Tells You - The Origins of Cotswold Morris Music

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Editorial Note

Following the untimely death of Gwilym Davies in the Summer of 2022, the draft materials of the thesis were collated and examined with the degree of MPhil awarded posthumously in May 2023. The draft was subsequently placed within the format of Newcastle University's guidelines for submission of theses, with the addition of a title page, list of contents, lists of tables, figures and musical examples. Final comments from Davies' supervisors – Prof. Kirsten Gibson and Prof. Simon McKerrell – were removed. Figures, tables and musical examples missing titles were labelled, and minimal editorial alterations were made to the main text to make appropriate references to these. Spelling and grammar were checked and amended where necessary, and paragraphs were indented. Page numbers were added. Footnote references were formatted for consistency. A Select Bibliography has been provided, but a full list of references can be found via the footnotes. Davies' original font, font size and overall style of the thesis was retained. The completion and binding of this thesis has been possible thanks to the support of the Isobel Preece Fund.

Dr Stephanie Carter
May 2023

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Abbreviations

| | |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| BLSA | British Library Sound Archive |
| CC | Clive Carey |
| CSJ | Cecil James Sharp |
| FDN | Folk Dance Notes |
| GB | George Butterworth |
| HHA | Harry Hurlbutt Albino |
| JB | Janet Blunt |
| JMC | James Madison Carpenter |
| MDT | Morris Dance Tunes |
| PG | Percy Grainger |
| PK | Peter Kennedy |
| PM | Percy Manning |
| TM | Travelling Morrice |
| VWML | Vaughan Williams Memorial Library |

Glossary

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| A Music | The music to which the first part of the dance, the figures (q.v.) are danced. Typically 4 or 8-bar phrases repeated. |
| B Music | The music to which the chorus is performed. |
| Caper | A leaping step in which the dancer can show off his agility. |
| Chorus | Morris dances typically divide into alternating 'figures' and 'chorus'. The figures are usually foot up (i.e. dance forward and back), side by side, back-to-back, rounds (i.e. dance around in a circle) and hey in which dancers follow a figure-of-eight track, interweaving as they go. |
| Corner dance | A dance for 6 in which 2 people dance at a time in the chorus figure. |
| Figure | The parts of the dance performed to the A music. |
| Galley (or Gallery) | A step in which the dancer describes a circle in the air with one foot while hopping on the other foot. |
| Galoubet | French 3-holed pipe, as played in Provence. |
| Jig | A solo dance, a double jig being a dance for 2 people. |
| Pipe | In this thesis, always referring to the 3-holed pipe. |
| Set | A group of 6 performing a dance. |
| Side | A Morris dance group. |
| Slows | A passage of music slowed down to half speed to allow the dancer to perform capers (q.v.). |
| Tabor | Small drum suspended from musician's wrist or thumb, to accompany the pipe. |
| Taborer | A player of the pipe and tabor. |
| Whit(tle) and Dub | Dialect for pipe and tabor. |

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 “The Music Tells You”

Some years ago, when I joined a Cotswold Morris dance side, there was one particular member who was struggling with the steps and figures. It was not that he could not do them, but simply that he could not remember which foot he was on, which way to turn and so on. He spoke to our foreman (instructor) who gave him four wise words: “The music tells you”. Ah, so that was the secret – it implied that hidden in the notes of the tune there was some embedded code which instructed you which way to turn and which foot to step on. Problem solved, or was it? The foreman’s answer was obviously tongue-in-cheek, but the grain of truth is that once you have learnt a dance, then brain cells and muscle memory kick in when you hear that tune again and then, yes, the music guides one’s dancing. But when you are first learning a dance, does the music tell you anything about it? This thesis seeks to explore the music of Morris and how the factors of the dance form, outside musical influences and instrumentation have affected that repertoire and to what extent the canon is a cohesive whole. It therefore answers the question: is there a canon of Morris music? And if so, are there coherent musical patterns or characteristics that relate to Morris dancing? Although a certain amount has been written in recent years about Morris by Chandler, Forrest and others, there has been no detailed and comprehensive study of its music.¹ I will also address the question of why ‘Cotswold Morris’ is so significant, as opposed to other genres of Morris. This introduction begins by examining perceptions of Morris throughout the ages and by defining Cotswolds and Cotswold Morris and goes on to explore writings on Morris and how the canon of tunes under examination came to be, as well the motivations of the collectors. Finally, the introduction explains in detail the methodology used to write the thesis.

I embarked on this thesis in the knowledge that there had been no comprehensive study of the provenance of the collected repertoire. I must also declare at this stage my own involvement in Cotswold Morris, over many years, as a dancer, musician (pipe and tabor, melodeon), instructor, bagman (secretary), squire (leader) and fool, and therefore I come to

¹ John Forrest, *Morris Music: Some Questions* (Eynsham: Keith Chandler Publications, 1985); John Cutting, *History and the Morris Dance: A Look at Morris Dancing from Its Earliest Days until 1850* (Alton: Dance Books, 2005); Keith Chandler, *Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles: A Social History of Morris Dancing in the English South Midlands, 1660-1900* (Enfield Lock: Hisarlik Press, 1993); Roy Dommert, *The Morris Dancer: A collection of essays by Dommert for the Morris Dancer magazine*, ed. Beth Neil (2017). See also shorter pieces by other researchers of Morris, namely Michael Heaney, Roy Judge and Elaine Bradtke listed in the Select Bibliography.

this thesis with a good deal of insider knowledge and understanding, but am now stepping outside the knowledge to provide a more academic and scholarly perspective of the subject.

1.2 Perceptions of Morris

Morris dancing has existed in England since the mid-fifteenth century, as far as we know, and may be older.² It has undergone changes in geographical spread, style, context, social status and repertoire. Thanks to entries in court, church and civic records, literature and iconography, we have information on the geographical spread of the dance, its performance context, its costume and its social status, but until the late-nineteenth century we only have fleeting glimpses of the form of the dance and in particular of the music to which it was danced. This thesis aims to shed light on the latter by examining the repertoire collected from the nineteenth century to c.1930 in the West Midlands.

Although many references can be found to Morris from various sources from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, it is not until the nineteenth century that commentators started to question the origins of the dance, spurred on by the antiquarian movement and romantic nationalism.³ The writer and antiquarian Joseph Strutt stated confidently in 1802:

The Morris dance, which afterwards became exceedingly popular in this country, originated from the fool's [i.e. court jester's] dance ... Antiquarians are agreed that the word is derived from *Morisco* which in the Spanish language signifies a Moor. The dance was brought into England from Spain about the beginning of the sixteenth century.⁴

Another influential antiquarian, Francis Douce, echoed the theory of a European origin to Morris, writing in 1807 that Morris was a 'degenerate' form of the 'real and uncorrupted Moorish dance' from Spain and that we would have to look to France or possibly 'the Flemings' for a route to England.⁵ Such theories informed the narrative on the origins of Morris for much of the nineteenth century, but were added to later in the century by the theory that Morris dancing, along with many other traditional activities, harked back to primitive pre-Christian

² The first known reference to Morris, by that name, occurs in reference to a payment to 'moryssh dauseres' in the records of the Goldsmith's Company [London] in 1448. Michael Heaney, 'The Earliest Reference to the Morris Dance?', *Folk Music Journal* 8, no. 4 (2004), 513-15.

³ Almost 800 references to Morris before 1750 have been noted by Michael Heaney and John Forrest in *Annals of Early Morris* (Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1991).

⁴ Joseph Strutt and J. Charles Cox, *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* ([S.l.]: Methuen, 1801), 290.

⁵ Francis Douce, et al. *Illustrations of Shakespeare, and of Ancient Manners: With Dissertations on the Clowns and Fools of Shakespeare; on the Collection of Popular Tales Entitled Gesta Romanorum; and on the English Morris Dance*, 2 vols (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1807), 437.

rituals. Chief among components of this theory was James Frazer in his book *The Golden Bough* (1894), in which he concluded that the Morris bells 'were either to dispel the demons who might hinder the growth of the corn, or to waken the spirits of vegetation from their long winter sleep'.⁶

A different route to arousal of interest in Morris was the nineteenth-century rise in nationalism, which highly valued a country's indigenous customs and traditions as a hallmark and expression of the identity of that country and embodying national spirit:

As a form of culture, the nation of the nationalists is one whose members are conscious of their cultural unity and national history, and are devoted to cultivating their national individuality in vernacular languages, customs, arts and landscapes through national education and institutions.⁷

These romantic and antiquarian notions gave rise towards the end of the nineteenth century to a desire to recreate 'Merrie England' and to try to recreate the 'authentic' old English Morris, as recounted by Roy Judge.⁸ Judge demonstrates that there was a disconnect between the public perception of Morris as quaint, ancient and extinct but jolly, from what had actually been danced in the villages. Such theories had a profound impact on the way Morris was viewed at the turn of the twentieth century and the early pioneer of Morris, Mary Neal, in 1915 considered that Morris derived from 'primitive beliefs and magical ceremonial' and saw reflections of sun worship in the Morris figures.⁹ A serious attempt to apply data to Morris research was the publication of *Annals of Early Morris*, a joint project between John Forrest and Mike Heaney to record every mention of Morris from 1458 to 1750.¹⁰ This publication underpinned Forrest's 1999 publication *The History of Morris Dancing 1458-1750* which took a more scholarly approach to the history of Morris, relying on empirical data rather than speculation.¹¹ Since *The History of Morris Dancing*, there has only been one substantial study on the history of Morris, John Cutting's *History and the Morris Dance* (2005), which details early references to Morris, expanding on the entries in *The Annals of Early Morris*.¹²

⁶ James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1894).

⁷ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 2nd ed (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), 34.

⁸ This phenomenon has been described in detail in Roy Judge, 'Merrie England and the Morris 1881-1910', *Folklore* 104, no. 1/2 (1993), 124-43.

⁹ Frank Kidson, and Mary Neal, *English Folk-Song and Dance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 98.

¹⁰ Michael Heaney and John Forrest, *Annals of Early Morris* (Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1991).

¹¹ John Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing, 1458-1750* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

¹² Cutting, *History and the Morris Dance*.

1.3 Definitions – Cotswolds and Cotswold Morris

This thesis is concerned specifically with what is termed ‘Cotswold Morris’. The Cotswolds themselves are a range of hills in the English Southern Midlands rising gradually from Oxford westwards and dropping sharply to an escarpment in mid-Gloucestershire, running down to Bath. Geologically, it is on a base of oolitic limestone, which over centuries has been quarried as a building material and which gives rise to the distinctive cream-coloured architecture of the Cotswold towns and villages. The area was particularly suited for the production of wool and in the medieval and early modern eras much of the wealth of the Cotswolds came through sheep farming, allowing the construction of several impressive ‘wool churches’ in major towns including Cirencester, Stow-on-the-Wold and Northleach. However, the economic fortunes of the Cotswolds ebbed and flowed and, when in the nineteenth century the industrial revolution brought the invention of mechanised spinning techniques, the demand for Cotswold wool plummeted and the area declined. However, one should not conclude that the area was a social and cultural backwater. It is a crisscross of small and large villages, with no fewer than 10 miles separating each; the area has the large urban populations of Cheltenham and Oxford, plus many smaller towns: Stow-on-the-Wold, Cirencester, Bicester, Stroud and Broadway. Major roads run through the area, including the main road from London into Wales. In other words, although the area was relatively rural in the nineteenth century, it was not culturally cut off from the rest of England.

Morris dancing was, at one time, ubiquitous throughout England, but studies by Chandler, Heaney and Forrest demonstrate that its performance gradually dwindled until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when the main concentration of sides was to be found in the South Midlands, Morris having dwindled elsewhere.¹³ Furthermore, different areas had by then developed distinctive styles and repertoires. The earliest reference of a regional variation is an anonymous description dated 1609:

The Courts of Kings for stately measures; the city for light heeles and nimble footing; the country for shuffling dances; Western men for gambouls; Middlesex men for tricks above ground; Essex-men for the hey; Lancashire for hornpypes: Worcestershire for bagpypes: but Herefordshire for a Morris-dance puts downe, not onely all Kent but verie neare (if one had line enough to measure it) three quarters of Christendome.¹⁴

¹³ Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing*; Chandler, *Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles*.

¹⁴ ‘Old Meg of Herefordshire for a Mayd-Marian, and Hereford-Towne for a Morris Daunce’, from *Miscellanea Antiqua Anglicana*, 6, quoted in Joan Sharp, ‘Herefordshire for a Morris Dance’, *Journal of the English Folk Dance Society* 4 (1931), 37-40.

This colourful description does not shed any light on styles of Morris in the nineteenth century but does indicate that regional styles of dance were identifiable in the early seventeenth century. By the start of the nineteenth century, there were many sides in a small geographic area, roughly equating to the geological Cotswolds. The music of these sides is the main thrust of this thesis, which does not consider other nearby locations where Morris dances have been collected, such as Worcestershire and the Welsh-English border counties, as these dances are different in style, detail and music to Cotswold Morris.¹⁵ Nor does the study include the dances of the Forest of Dean in west Gloucestershire, as, although there is some overlap in style and repertoire, it is divergent enough to be considered a separate genre. Additionally, documented knowledge of west Gloucestershire Morris is too fragmentary for consideration in this study, nor does it consider the various tunes that have been coined for Cotswold Morris from its twentieth-century revival onwards: this could be fruit for a separate study.

Thus, the area covered by this study includes much of the historic counties of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire but also parts of Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Wiltshire and Berkshire. Chandler described Cotswold Morris more precisely as 'Morris in the English South Midlands',¹⁶ but for the purposes of this study, the term 'Cotswold Morris' will be used as it is a term widely used and understood to apply to a particular style of Morris and not just a geographical location. Figure 1.1 shows the distribution of Morris sides in the area.

In an area roughly 50 miles square, bounded by Cheltenham to the west, Northampton to the north, Aylesbury to the east and northern Berkshire to the south, there existed from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries a concentrated microcosm of a folk genre. Within that small patch of England, Chandler has identified the astonishing number of over 150 separate Morris locations, and doubtless there were more. Within that area, it was as usual for a village to have a Morris side as it would be for a village today to have a football or a cricket

¹⁵ For details of Morris in the Welsh-English border area, see E.C. Cawte, 'The Morris Dance in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire', *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* 9, no. 4 (1963), 197-212; Dave Jones, *The Roots of Welsh Border Morris* (Putley: Annie Jones, 1988).

¹⁶ Chandler, *Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles*.

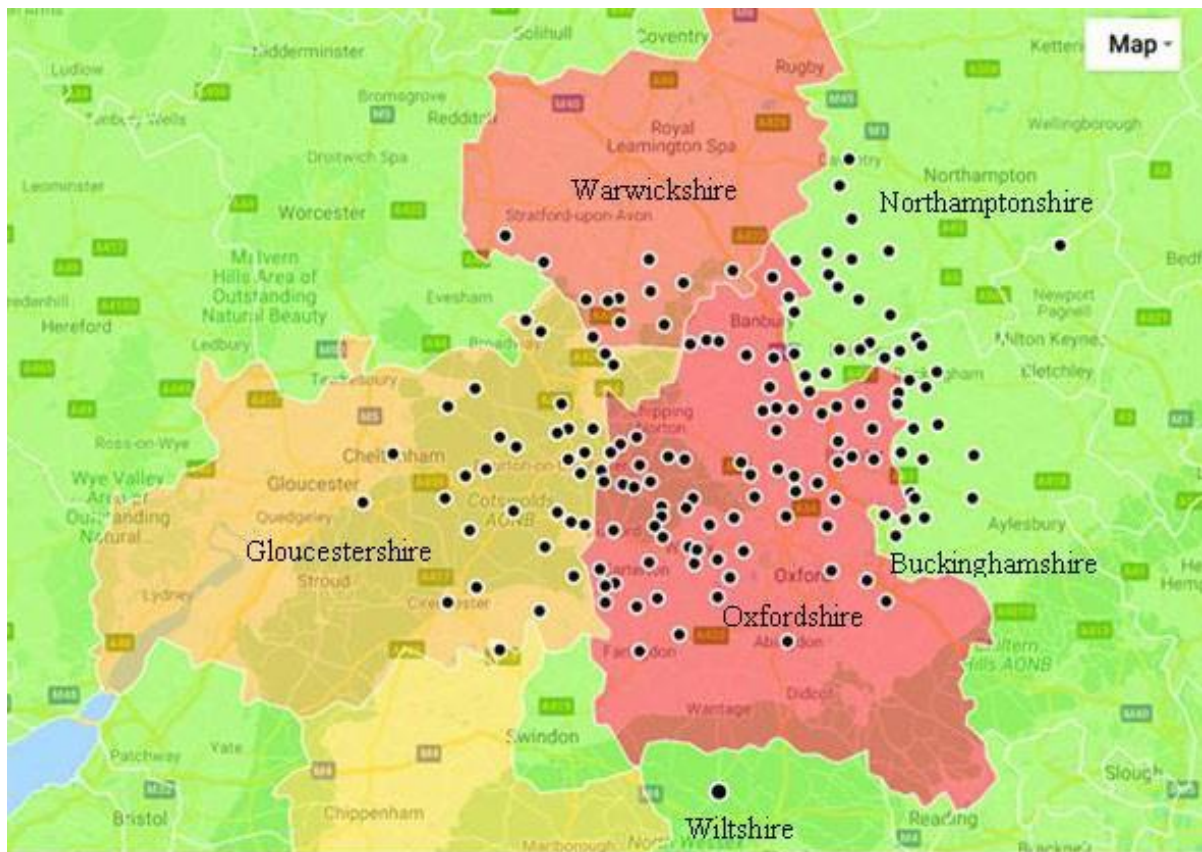


Figure 1.1 Map showing the Cotswolds and the distribution of Morris sides in the nineteenth century, showing all locations known to have had a Morris side.¹⁷

team. The proximity of the sides to each other led to much exchange of dances and tunes, as well to a competitive attitude born from local pride.

Cotswold Morris in the nineteenth century can be defined, apart from geography, by several unifying and distinguishing features:

- A performance dance performed by a set of six dancers or by a solo dancer, usually men, and characterised by elaborate stepping. Dances are either with handkerchiefs, sticks or handclapping, plus one specialized solo dance performed over crossed clay pipes.
- A similarity of costume from one locality to another, especially the use of bells on pads fixed below the knee, white shirts (often pleated) adorned with ribbons and rosettes, breeches, and tall hats.
- The presence of an extra character usually termed the fool, dressed differently from the dancers and carrying an inflated bladder on a stick, to amuse and animate the audience.

¹⁷ Information from Ibid., p. x.

- A core body of tunes and dances, with variations from village to village, and distinct from other genres of Morris.
- Music generally provided, to the mid-nineteenth century at least, by a solo pipe and tabor player and later by a fiddler (see Glossary for definitions).
- Linkage of the custom to Whitsun week.
- A strong sense of village pride and inter-village rivalry.
- Different from country dances in that the latter were social dances for everyone to join in, whereas Morris dances are display dances performed by a defined practised group and meant for audience viewing.

Until the twentieth century, Morris was referred to simply as Morris with no distinction of regional differences. Historic records simply refer to Morris, and early promoters of Morris, including Percy Manning, Mary Neal and Cecil Sharp, referred to ‘Morris’ and clearly felt no need to be more specific.¹⁸ So far as can be ascertained, the term was first coined in 1936 by Needham, who distinguished between Cotswold Morris, Derbyshire Morris, North-Western Morris and East Anglian Morris (Molly).¹⁹ One consequence for today’s Morris dancers is the need to specify what style of dances they perform as the word ‘Morris’ itself is not sufficient.

1.4 Writings on Morris and the growth of the collection

Apart from theorising, there was nothing written before the 1880s giving details of the actual form of the dance and the music to which it was performed. It was not until later in the nineteenth century that any attempt was made to notate tunes. The process of tune compilation began in the 1880s with the antiquarian D’Arcy Ferrers and was continued by Percy Manning. The proverbial floodgates to recovering Morris tunes began early in the twentieth century, given a nudge by Neal and spearheaded by Sharp and others. Sharp was one of the first to recognise the varied provenance of the tune repertoire in 1907 when he wrote brief notes on eight tunes (two of which were subsequently found to be later imports into the canon) but apart from that the subject was left without comment at the time.²⁰ However, he added that there ‘is not much information about Morris tunes to be gathered from books’ and

¹⁸ Mary Neal, *The Espérance Morris Book: A Manual of Morris Dances, Folk-Songs and Singing Games*, 2 vols. 2nd ed. (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1910).

¹⁹ Joseph Needham, ‘The Geographical Distribution of English Ceremonial Dance Traditions’, *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* 3, no. 1 (1936), 1-45.

²⁰ Cecil J. Sharp and Herbert C. Macllwaine, *The Morris Book Part 1: With a Description of Dances as Performed by the Morris Men of England*, 5 vols. 2nd ed. (London: Novello, 1907).

mentions Chappell's *Popular Music of the Older Times* (1855-59), Edward Naylor's *Shakespeare and Music* (1896) and Grove's *Dictionary of Music* (first published 1879), but none of these shed light on Morris music.²¹ In fact, there is no empirical evidence on tunes used for Cotswold Morris until the nineteenth century apart from one solitary mention, concerning the Milton-under-Wychwood side dancing in 1780: 'each dancer having a white pocket handkerchief in each hand with one corner tied round one finger dancing to the tune *The Maid of the Mill*'.²²

The record on tunes used for Morris is then silent for 100 years, until the Rev'd Hilderic Friend, a member of the Folklore Society, wrote a series of articles in 1884 describing the Brackley Morris men, with their taborer, and more significantly, naming all 22 tunes in their repertoire: *Maid at the Mill*, *Lads a bunsham*, *Queen's Delight*, *Bobbin and Joan*, *Mad Miller* (or *Mad Parson*), *Country Garden*, *Constant Billy*, *Twenty-Ninth of May*, *Room for the Cuckoo*, *Balance the Straw*, *Saturday Night*, *Bonny Green Gaiters*, *Broad Cupid*, *Trunk Hole* (? hose), *Old Woman tossed up in a blanket*, *Black Joke*, *Cuckoo's Nest*, *Jockey to the Fair*, *Princes* (or *Princess*?) *Royal*, *Lumps of Pudding*, *Old Oxford* and *Shepherd's Hay*.²³ This is an important list as it is the first documentary evidence of the complete repertoire of a Morris side. The tunes were not noted at the time but most were subsequently collected, although the tunes for two of the dances – *Mad Miller* and *Broad Cupid* – were never collected. The list provides a good example of the typical repertoire of a nineteenth-century Morris side.²⁴ A mere two years later, D'Arcy Ferrers revived the defunct side at Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire, with a mixture of locally sourced tunes and dances plus some from a Gloucestershire dancer who had moved to Bidford, along with some imaginative use of historic tunes. Although there are no contemporary transcriptions of the tunes, the titles are given in posters advertising the events. The dances listed are: *Town Morris* (also known as *Green Garter*), *Shepherd's Hey*, *Billy & Nancy* (to the tune of 'Brighton Camp'), *Princess Royal* (also known as *Cross Capers*), *Heel & Toe*, *Merry-go-Round* (to the tune of *Arbeau's Morisco*), *In Wooden Shoon*, *Bluff King Hal* (to the tune of 'Staines Morris'), *Young Colin*, *Devil among the Tailors*, *Morning Star*, *Valentine*, *Old Trunko*, *Saturday Night*, *Constant Billy*, *The Old Woman tossed up in a Blanket*, *Black Joke*,

²¹ W. Chappell and G.A. Macfarren, *Popular Music of the Olden Time: A Collection of Ancient Songs, Ballads, and Dance Tunes*, 2 vols. (London: Cramer & Beale, 1859); Edward W. Naylor, *Shakespeare and Music* ([S.l.]: Dent, 1896); Sir George Grove and H.C. Colles, *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 4th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1945).

²² MSS of Mr Horne, Chipping Campden (FDN CJS2/11/1/43).

²³ *Banbury Guardian*, 3 July 1884.

²⁴ Roy Judge and Keith Chandler, *Shakespearean Bidford Morris Dancers, 1886: A Source Book*; Chandler, *Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles*.

Molly Oxford and *We Won't Go Home till Morning*.²⁵ The tunes for the Bidford Morris were not written down until several years later: Sharp noted eight of the tunes in 1906; in 1907 John Graham published six of the dances with their tunes.²⁶ Sometime between 1929 and 1935, the American collector James Madison Carpenter recorded Bidford's fiddler, John Robbins, on phonograph cylinders playing nine tunes, six from the 1880s repertoire plus *Jogging to the Fair* and *Lumps of Plum Pudding*.²⁷



Example 1.1 'Abraham Brown' as played by the Bidford Morris and noted by John Graham.

However, no Morris tune was committed to paper before the 1890s. Percy Manning, an Oxford University graduate with a background in archaeology and antiques, started collecting artefacts concerning local customs around Oxfordshire, including Morris instruments and costume, with the help of Thomas Carter. On 16 March 1897, Manning published an article in *Folklore* which included the notation of six Morris tunes: *Green Garters*, *Constant Billy*, *The Willow Tree*, *The Maid of the Mill*, *Bob and Joan* and *Greensleeves/Bacca Pipes Jig*.²⁸ Sharp's notes reveal that these six tunes were only a portion of what Manning had collected and that there were 20 unpublished tunes, which Sharp prefaced in his archive notes with 'copied from M.S [manuscript] notes made by Mr Percy Manning (c.1895-1899) and lent me March 1912'.²⁹

Therefore, by the beginning of the twentieth century, only a handful of Morris tunes had been notated. An event which is often heralded by the Morris world as the start of the real effort to collect the tunes and dances took place on 26 December 1899, when Sharp witnessed the Headington Morris side and noted five tunes from their musician, concertina

²⁵ Elaine Bradke, 'John Robbins and the Shakespearean Bidford Morris Tune Repertoire', *Routes and Roots* 4 (2012).

²⁶ John Graham, *Shakespearean Bidford Morris Dances* (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1907).

²⁷ Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, James Madison Carpenter collection, cylinder 111, JMC/1/10/113, JMC/1/11/253, 254 and 255.

²⁸ Percy Manning, 'Some Oxfordshire Seasonal Festivals: With Notes on Morris-Dancing in Oxfordshire', *Folklore* (1897), 307-24. See also Michael Heaney, ed., *Percy Manning: The Man Who Collected Oxfordshire* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2017), 241-8.

²⁹ FDN CJS2/10/2755A, 2756A, 2756C, 2757A, 2757B.

player William Kimber.³⁰ This meeting has been portrayed in Morris mythology as a happy chance and a spur to Sharp's researching Morris but this view needs some qualification as Sharp did not follow up the encounter for many years. In the words of Fox Strangeways, 'he [Sharp] made no immediate use of his discovery; beyond harmonising and orchestrating the tunes he did not see what to do with them'.³¹ Despite this initial exposure to Morris and his interest in Manning's article, Sharp did not return to the subject of Morris for six years and was reawakened by two particular incidents: in June 1906 he encountered the Bidford Morris in Redditch, noting eight tunes; and then, three days after seeing the Bidford dances and now back in his home in London, there occurred an event of arguably greater significance to the Morris world than the 1899 Boxing Day meeting. Sharp happened to hear some workmen in London whistling Morris tunes, a simple event which led him the following year to travel to Gloucestershire and track down Morris musicians and dancers.³² From that moment on and into the 1920s, Sharp collected over 200 Morris tunes (see Appendix A).³³ His body of work was the largest contribution to recovering Morris dances and tunes. Significant though smaller collections were made by George Butterworth and Clive Carey, following very much in Sharp's footsteps and often visiting the same musicians; Carey noted about 40 tunes and Butterworth 26.³⁴ In 1908, the first audio recordings were made, on wax cylinders, of the Ilmington fiddler Sam Bennett.³⁵ The tunes recorded were *Bumpus o'Stretton*, *Constant Billy*, *Cuckoo's Nest*, *Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket*, *Greensleeves*, *Shepherd's Hey* and *Flowers of Edinburgh*. The recordings are attributed to Grainger, but it is likely that the recordings were made by Eliza Wedgwood, acting on Grainger's guidance. These recordings were virtually unknown until after Grainger's death in 1961, when the cylinders were donated to the Library of Congress and thence to the English Folk Dance and Song Society.

³⁰ An account of this encounter is given in Maud Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 24-5. See also A.H. Fox Strangeways and Maud Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), 24-5.

³¹ Fox Strangeways and Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work*.

³² Paul Burgess, 'The Mystery of the Whistling Sewermen: How Cecil Sharp Discovered Gloucestershire Morris Dancing', *Folk Music Journal* 8, no. 2 (2002), 178-94.

³³ Sharp's early collecting of Morris is described by Roy Judge, 'Cecil Sharp and Morris 1906-1909', *Folk Music Journal* 8, no. 2 (2002), 195-228.

³⁴ The Carey and Butterworth manuscripts can be found in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library and also online at <https://www.vwml.org/>. See also, R. Wortley and D. Dawney, 'George Butterworth's Diary of Morris Dance Hunting', *Folk Music Journal* 3, no. 3 (1977), 193-207.

³⁵ Gwilym Davies, 'Percy Grainger's Folk Music Collecting in Gloucestershire 1907-1909', *Folk Music Journal* 6, no. 3 (1992), 339-58. The recordings can be heard online via the British Library Sounds website: <https://sounds.bl.uk/>

Parallel with Sharp's efforts but from a different viewpoint was the work of MacIlwaine and Neal. Neal had established the Espérance Girls' Club in London to occupy the spare time of working-class girls and was enthused with the idea of teaching folk songs to the girls in the club.³⁶ In 1905 she contacted Sharp to find out more about Morris. Following the meeting, she invited traditional Morris dancers from Oxfordshire and Berkshire to London to teach Morris, in the course of which she collected a number of tunes and dances (See Appendix A). In 1907, Sharp and MacIlwaine published *The Morris Book Part 1*, drawing on the tunes and dances collected by the Espérance Club.³⁷ Following ideological and personality differences between Sharp and Neal, Sharp went on to publish further Morris books and Neal published her own book of dances, songs and singing games, including the tunes and instructions for 24 Morris dances.³⁸ The work of recovering Morris dances and tunes did not stop with the First World War: Janet Blunt carried out extensive research into the folklore of Adderbury, including the Morris, and further collecting was carried out by the Travelling Morrice, a side formed from Cambridge and Oxford students who toured the Cotswolds in the 1920s and 1930s.³⁹ The philosophy and methodology of the Travelling Morrice was more attuned to Neal's approach of learning Morris from the actual people who had performed it and 'to return the Morris dances to the places where they were purported to belong' rather than simply relying on Sharp's vision of the genre.⁴⁰ Their agenda was partly to have a good time, spending holidays camping in jovial company, but more importantly to seek out the last remaining links to Morris and to discover more about the dances and the tunes. They wanted to learn from the existing old performers first-hand, rather than relying on the information collected by Sharp and his contemporaries. As such they were able to pick up snippets of Morris knowledge as well as more tunes, often variants of known tunes.⁴¹ Foremost amongst their researchers were Arthur

³⁶ Roy Judge, 'Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris', *Folk Music Journal* 5, no. 5 (1989), 545-91.

³⁷ Sharp went on to publish a series of five Morris books: Cecil J. Sharp and Herbert C. MacIlwaine, *The Morris Book Parts 1-5* (London: Novello, 1907-13).

³⁸ Judge, 'Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris', 545-91. After the publication of *The Morris Book Part 1*, Sharp went on to publish six more books describing Cotswold Morris dances. See Mary Neal, *The Espérance Morris Book: A Manual of Morris Dances, Folk-Songs and Singing Games, Parts 1 & 2*, 2nd ed. (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1910).

³⁹ M. Pickering, 'Janet Blunt: Folk Song Collector and Lady of the Manor', *Folk Music Journal* 2 (1976), 114-49. The tune archives of the travelling Morris have never been published as such but some of the tunes were included in Lionel Bacon, *A Handbook of Morris Dances* (Winchester: Morris Ring, 1974), and an account of some of the activities of the Travelling Morrice are given in John Jenner, 'Traditional Dancers Met by the Travelling Morrice and by the Cambridge Morris Men', *The Morris Dancer* (2020).

⁴⁰ Matthew Simons, 'Morris Men: Dancing Englishness, c.1905-1951', PhD thesis, De Monfort University, 2019, 97.

⁴¹ Apart from those tunes published in Bacon, *A Handbook of Morris Dances*, the tunes collected by the Travelling Morrice are mainly unpublished.

Peck, Robert Kenworthy Schofield and Russell Wortley, who noted a good deal of data on dances and tunes, and even persuaded England's last traditional taborer, Joe Powell of Bucknell, to come and play for a few dances for them. The log of the Travelling Morrice recounts:

Wednesday June 22nd [1927] Bucknell ... Mr Powell with his pipe and tabor ... played for us to dance and played *Black Joe, Constant Billee, Cuckoo's Nest, Blue-eyed Stanger, Jockie, Shepherds Hey, Maid of the Mill*, etc. Arthur Peck noted down only the last two.⁴²

With hindsight, it is a pity that Peck did not note the other tunes, especially *Cuckoo's Nest* and *Jockie [to the Fair]* as these were not noted elsewhere as part of the Bucknell repertoire.

The efforts of successive collectors took the total number of known Morris tunes from almost zero in 1880 to over 130 by 1930 (see Appendix A). These are defined as Morris tunes because: (a) the collectors went out specifically asking for Morris tunes; (b) because the informants stated that they were, and (c) in many cases informants were able to provide the associated dance steps and figures. Many have appeared in publications: a few of the tunes appeared in *The Morris Book* collection but the bulk of the tunes that Sharp collected were published in Sharp and MacIlwaine's series of ten books *Morris Dance Tunes*, which contain 82 Cotswold Morris tunes in piano arrangements, as well as four tunes from Derbyshire and one from Lancashire.⁴³ The only other major publication of Cotswold Morris tunes would have to wait until 1974 for Lionel Bacon's *A Handbook of Morris Dancing*, which although containing several hundred tunes and variants, is really an aide-memoire for Morris instructors and musicians rather than a research document. The handbook concentrates on dances from the Cotswolds but also includes dances from the Welsh border area. Bacon does include some attribution of sources for the tunes, but this information is sketchy and often second-hand. Although this book is useful as a quick reference, it is unreliable for academic purposes. Sharp's *Morris Dance Tunes* and Bacon's book cover most of the collected repertoire, the only unpublished tunes being variants. The only publication of Cotswold Morris tunes since then has been David Mallison's *Mally's Cotswold Morris Book, Vols 1 & 2* (1998), designed to help melodeon players but not containing any additional tunes.

⁴² Jenner, 'Traditional Dancers Met by the Travelling Morrice and by the Cambridge Morris Men', 8.

⁴³ Cecil J. Sharp, Herbert C. MacIlwaine and George Butterworth, *Morris Dance Tunes Collected from Traditional Sources and Arranged with Pianoforte Accompaniment by C. J. Sharp and H. C. Macilwaine*, 10 vols. (London: Novello & Co, 1909-13).

Table 1.1 Principal collectors of Morris with the dates of their activity.

| Name of Collector | Period of Collecting |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| D'Arcy Ferrers | 1885 |
| Percy Manning/Thomas Carter | 1890s |
| Mary Neal | 1905-14 |
| Cecil Sharp | 1899-1922 |
| Clive Carey | 1910-22 |
| George Butterworth | 1912-13 |
| Janet Blunt | 1916-18 |
| Travelling Morrice | 1920s onwards |

In summary, the principal collectors of Morris with dates of their collecting activities, are given in Table 1.1. Of all the collectors, Sharp was by far the most prolific, noting over 200 tunes, compared with others who gathered a mere handful. This disproportion is shown in Table 1.2. There was no single great rush in the collection of Morris tunes. Rather, it was a result of several efforts and the build-up was gradual. Noting of Morris tunes since the 1930s has been reiterative, with no new source material discovered.

Table 1.2 Volume of Morris tunes by collectors.

| Name | Percentage of total collected |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cecil Sharp | 50% |
| Travelling Morrice | 7% |
| Clive Carey | 6% |
| George Butterworth | 4% |
| Janet Blunt | 4% |
| Others | 19% |

1.5 Motivations of the collectors

The collectors of Morris tunes approached the task with different intentions, motivations and perceptions. As recounted above, the earlier observers of Morris were not interested in the actual details of the music or the dances but were intent on putting forward their theories of its origins, giving rise to varying explanations: it was pagan and pre-Christian, based on sun worship and therefore a primitive ritual survival; it derived from ancient Greek dances; it was imported from the Continent; it came back with the Crusaders. Manning's work (see above) was positioned primarily from the point of view of preserving the tunes or the dances but

started with an antiquarian interest in obtaining rustic artefacts. His descriptions of Morris are straightforward and factual, not given to hypothesising.⁴⁴ Neal's approach was educational and social rather than academic and, although she was a pioneer in reintroducing Morris, her contribution was eclipsed by the more persuasive Sharp.

Sharp's motives in promoting Morris have been examined in great detail by Boyes but, in summary, he saw English folk music as epitomising national character, as opposed to the popular music of his day.⁴⁵ He set out his views clearly in *The Morris Book*: Morris was 'wholesome', 'beautiful' and masculine. He begrudgingly stated that women could dance Morris but was very prescriptive in what they should wear, and so was already claiming 'ownership' of Morris.⁴⁶ He was also of the opinion that Morris should be taught, not by the practitioners themselves, but by 'experts' like himself. In the words of Boyes, 'his [Sharp's] approach offered ensured acceptability of Sharp's version of the [folk] movement as a coherent and independent authority over which he reigned supreme'.⁴⁷ One cannot but be indebted to Sharp for the enormous contribution he made to English folk music, but in light of twenty-first century thinking, one can see that his chauvinistic attitude towards Neal and his possessive attitude towards the whole of the Morris tradition overshadowed her contribution, and his undoubted charisma and single-mindedness, coupled with some naivety, informed thinking on English traditional music for decades afterwards.

Of the other collectors, Carey, Butterworth and Blunt followed in Sharp's collecting footsteps. Carey then pursued a career in classical music, while Butterworth's death in the First World War the age of 31 put an end to his musical and literary career. Blunt's singular work was to recover the tunes and dances of the Adderbury Morris and, as a spinster and 'lady of the manor', was aware of her privileged position to have time to spend in benevolent acts in the village, putting her in close contact with the village tradition bearers. Her love of music and singing, inherited from childhood, led her to seek out the local songs and traditions and to document them, but apparently with no further agenda than to enjoy them and preserve them for posterity.

⁴⁴ Manning, 'Some Oxfordshire Seasonal Festivals: With Notes on Morris-Dancing in Oxfordshire'.

⁴⁵ Georgina Boyes, *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

⁴⁶ Sharp and MacIlwaine, *The Morris Book Part 1*, 42 and 33.

⁴⁷ Boyes, *The Imagined Village*, 96.

1.6 Methodology

In order to progress the thesis, it was first necessary to define and identify the canon. This was greatly facilitated firstly by the collectors who were specifically seeking Morris tunes, and secondly by the informants themselves who were clear in their minds which tunes were used for Morris. Having identified the canon, I worked through the available archives, chiefly the online 'Digital Tradition' of the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, and created a database of appropriate tunes, listing mode, key signature, name of informant, location, name of collector, date of collection and notes. As the thesis mainly concerns musicians active in the nineteenth century, it was no longer possible to contact living performers. The informants for this study left no tune books and few recordings. Audio recordings of only four Morris musicians who were active in the nineteenth century exist: William Kimber (concertina) from Headington, William 'Jinky' Wells (fiddle) from Bampton-in-the-Bush, both from Oxfordshire, John Robbins (fiddle) from Bidford and Sam Bennett (fiddle) from Ilmington, Warwickshire.⁴⁸ Their repertoires will be considered in the following chapters. The data included in the database, therefore, has been culled from the notes of collectors and other observers of Morris. Aside from the Digital Archive material, there are two major published collections of Cotswold Morris tunes: the set of ten books of *Morris Dance Tunes* (1910), compiled by Sharp and MacIlwaine, and Bacon's *A Handbook of Morris Dancing* (1974). However, I have not relied on either of these publications for my research but have gone back to the original collectors' notes. The first publication gives 82 Cotswold Morris tunes in piano arrangements, as well as 4 tunes from, Derbyshire and one from Lancashire but gives no details of dates or sources of collection, while Bacon's handbook, although containing several hundred tunes and variants, is really an aide-memoire for Morris instructors and musicians rather than a research document. It does concentrate on dances from the Cotswolds but also includes a number of dances from the Welsh border area. Bacon does include more attribution of sources than Morris dance tunes, but information on sources is sketchy and often second-hand. A number of the tunes printed have no attribution at all, and so although the book is useful as a quick reference, it is unreliable for academic purposes. Therefore, in this particular study, I have gone back to as close to primary sources as possible, which is why I have concentrated on the tunes in the unpublished notes of the collectors. Thankfully, the bulk of these tunes are in archives

⁴⁸ Peter Kennedy recorded Kimber in 1951 and 1956, BLSA. Tracks of William Wells playing Morris tunes can be found on 'The Voice of the People' series of CDs: Topic records TSCG 651-670 (1998). Bennet was recorded by Percy Grainger in 1908, BLSA, and by Carpenter in 1929-35 (Vaughan Williams Memorial Library). The recordings of Robbins are referenced above.

which have been put online but others remain in temporarily inaccessible manuscripts. I have also examined the few references to Morris tunes in older literature as described in Chapter 3 and tested the reliability and validity of these references.

Having ascertained the content of the canon, I constructed a database listing occurrence of tunes and titles. Apart from the notated tunes, I have also included entries where a tune title has been mentioned to a collector but no actual tune has been noted. For example, Manning was given the dance instructions for a dance named *Clock* but noted no tune, nor has one been subsequently traced: I have included this and similar examples in the database. On the other hand, I have excluded some of the tunes published in Bacon if I have not been able to find a reliable source – *Valentine* from Ascot-under-Wychwood is one example as no tune was collected for the dance but one was added in the Morris revival. I have sought to avoid duplication by not including instances where the same tune was collected from the same musician by different collectors or the same tune was collected at different times by the same collector. The next step was to add an arbitrary one-up ‘Davies number’ to each set of tunes, analogous to the Roud number used to catalogue different versions of folk songs. For example, all collected versions of *Constant Billy* have the same Davies number (13), as does *None so Pretty*, which is essentially the same tune. This has been especially helpful when a tune appears under various titles, and so have been allocated the same Davies number. This has meant a certain amount of unpicking of tunes that have multiple titles and of the same title being used for different tunes, but the task was facilitated by the fact that Cotswold Morris usage has meant that a Morris tune and the dance to which it is done are synonymous, but at the same time clouded by the sometimes loose use of tune titles and aging memories by the performers themselves. It must be emphasised that the database can be updated in the light of further research.

Having constructed the database, I compared this canon with surviving music sources from the sixteenth century onward and made judgements on the provenance of certain Morris tunes, based on tune title and profile, for which latter purpose I have made use of profile graphics and reductive profiles where it added value to the argument. To facilitate comparison between tunes, I have transcribed into keys in which they would have been played on the tabor pipe – G or D Ionian or mixolydian, E Dorian or E Aeolian, regardless of whatever key they were noted in. I have ignored repeat signs, ‘slows’ passages (explained below) and in case of some of the earlier tunes, I have altered the key signature from 6/4 to 6/8, in line with more modern usage. This has enabled the comparison of tunes on a common basis. I have thus been able to

demonstrate musical links between tunes and make some judgments on aural transmission and changing musical style and taste.

I also compared the canon of Morris tunes with other sources, including ballad operas, popular and traditional songs and blackfaced minstrelsy, looking for songs being used as Morris tunes. This process has been greatly aided by the many online reference sources available and also by my knowledge and experience of collecting and singing traditional songs over many years. Another avenue I pursued was that of comparing Morris and country dance tunes. This was a problematic process as the country dance repertoire is very diverse and constantly changing but, as with songs, I was able to draw on my experience of playing for country dances over many years and to draw comparisons with Morris tunes.

Morris dance tunes do not exist in a vacuum but are entirely linked to the dances for which they are used, and therefore, to appreciate fully the canon of music, it was necessary to examine the structure of the dance, particularly the phrase length of the various figures and to ascertain what features the tunes themselves would need to possess to be accepted for the dance. Much of the Cotswold Morris dance repertoire is formulaic in its pattern and so it was possible to identify general patterns which suit both dance and tune.

I have also taken into consideration the implications of the instrumentation and commented accordingly as to what extent the limited melodic capabilities of the pipe and tabor, the main instrument for Morris over many centuries, have influenced the tunes. I have also based these observations on the experience over five decades of performing Morris both as a dancer and as a musician, including pipe and tabor, and making the assumption that at one time all the tunes in the canon were played on or were capable of being played on the pipe and tabor.

Another aspect that I have considered in general terms is the more intangible effect of aural transmission of these tunes, which has enabled me to make some general observations on how the tunes have changed over the years and the extent to which changing and evolving musical developments have had an impact upon the repertoire. Lastly, it has not been feasible, given the times and space constraints of study to consider every single tune in the canon and, therefore, I have chosen to examine those of special interest because of their age, frequency in the Morris canon or their particular route into that canon. The findings are therefore illustrative rather than necessarily comprehensive.

1.7 Summary of Chapter contents

Chapter 2: In this chapter I characterise the features of Morris dance music, firstly by analysing the form of the dance and then the tunes, from the point of view of modality, key, tempo, soundscape, dissemination and context.

Chapter 3: This chapter deals with the provenance of the canon from the earliest traceable roots in the sixteenth century up to 1728, which was the last date of publication of *The Dancing Master*. It shows how those early tunes translated into the canon of nineteenth-century Morris tunes and traces the changes wrought by aural tradition.

Chapter 4: Further details of the provenance of the Morris canon from the eighteenth century onwards, tracing imports from songs, ballad operas and blackfaced minstrelsy, plus the crossover with folksong and country dance. It also comments on the longevity of some of the repertoire.

Chapter 5: This chapter concerns the instrumentation used for Morris from the earliest records to the end of the nineteenth century, i.e. mainly pipe and tabor, but also fiddle, bagpipe and other instruments. It discusses the pros and cons of the instruments and how they might have influenced the canon of tunes.

Chapter 6: The chapter takes the repertoire of the Gloucestershire village of Sherborne as a case study, discussing the social status the village and how its distinctive canon of tunes came to be.

Chapter 7: This chapter draws conclusions from the preceding chapters on the extent to which the canon of tunes is a distinctive and coherent repertoire.

Chapter 2. Characteristics of Cotswold Morris tunes

Scholars have long been fascinated by the tunes of traditional music in the English-speaking world, but this interest has mainly concentrated on song rather than dance music; and several books have analysed the musicality of the Anglo-American song canon.⁴⁹ By contrast, writing about English traditional dance tunes has been scarce and only John Forrest and John Ward have written any analysis of Morris music.⁵⁰ Neither of these works considers the canon as a whole. Forrest concentrates on one particular wide-spread tune, *Constant Billy*, and demonstrates through mathematical analysis that the rise and fall of the tune are particularly suitable for the dance and concludes that *Constant Billy* is a 'good dance tune'.⁵¹ Ward bases his research on historical mentions of tunes which include the word 'Morris', particularly one entitled *The Morris Tune* found in several collections from 1608 onwards (see Example 2.1), a tune which gave rise to the Cornish Furry Dance but which does not appear in the later Cotswold Morris.

Example 2.1 '*The Morris Tune*': '*Since Robin Hood*' from *Ayeres or Phantasticke Spirites for three voices*.⁵²



The disparity of interest between song and dance music in studies of European vernacular music is likely due to several factors, a major one of which is historical attitudes to music considered to be of the rural or poorer classes. Van der Merwe underlines these elitist attitudes:

The neglect of the beat in European theory comes partly from the hostile attitude to the dance. The latter, varying from furious condemnation to a mere snobbish disdain,

⁴⁹ Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions* ([S.l.]: Novello and Co Ltd, Simpkin and Co Ltd, 1907); Bertrand Harris Bronson, *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads, with Their Texts, According to the Extant Records of Great Britain and America*, vol. 1: *Ballads 1-53* (Princeton: U.P., 1959); A.L. Lloyd, *Folk Song in England* (London: Panther, 1969); Maud Karpeles, *An Introduction to English Folk Song* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); Stephen Roud and Julia C. Bishop, *Folk Song in England* (London: Faber & Faber, 2017).

⁵⁰ Forrest, *Morris Music: Some Questions*; John Ward, 'The Morris Tune', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 39, no. 2 (1986), 294-331.

⁵¹ Forrest, *Morris Music*, 19.

⁵² Thomas Welkes, *Ayeres or Phantasticke Spirites for three voices* (London 1608).

has gradually ensured that the less music was connected with motion, the greater was its prestige.⁵³

Another reason for this disparity may be that folk song tunes, recently discovered, even sounded 'wrong' in the nineteenth century to ears used to European classical music. Even those closely involved with researching Morris music sometimes took a dismissive attitude towards the tunes. Neal, writing of Morris music, wrote: 'The tunes are, of course, of much later date than the Morris or Sword dances, and probably contemporary with the original country dances.' She added: 'The musicians took any tune that was popular at the time and adapted it to the dances, so that the tunes are not by any means all traditional.' This attitude was indicative of researchers at the turn of the twentieth century, who made a distinction in their minds between what was 'traditional' and what was not, a distinction which has subsequently become blurred by further research.⁵⁴ Sharp himself devoted a few brief notes to the provenance of some of the tunes, commenting that there 'is not much information about Morris tunes to be gathered from books' but wrote nothing of the characteristics of the canon.⁵⁵

2.1 The Evolution and Structure of the Morris dances

Cotswold Morris dance and tunes are synonymous; for example, *Lumps of Plum Pudding* is both a tune and a dance. It is therefore logical to study the characteristics of the tunes in conjunction with the dances for which they were used. We know from the collectors about the structure of the dances in the nineteenth century, but before that time historical records are not kind to the researcher as no actual dances, as opposed to tunes, were published until the twentieth century.⁵⁶ The first person to make use of the steps and figures of dances was Mary Neal, who taught the dances to the girls of the Espérance club in London from 1905 onwards, inviting traditional dancers to London to teach the dances to the girls.⁵⁷ However, although Neal collected the dances and taught them to the girls of the Espérance Club, she did not publish any of the dance notations until 1910, three years after Sharp had published the first

⁵³ Peter van der Merwe, *Origins of the Popular Style: The Antecedents of Twentieth-Century Popular Music* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), 111.

⁵⁴ Kidson and Neal, *English Folk-Song and Dance*, 130.

⁵⁵ Sharp and Maclwaine, *The Morris Book Part 1*.

⁵⁶ Percy Manning and his associate Thomas Carter in the 1890s wrote brief notes on some of the Stanton Harcourt dances, but these remained in manuscript and unpublished until they surfaced in Sharp's notes. The dances are *Black Joke*, *Princess Royal*, *The Nightingale*, *Bean Planting*, *Greensleeves*, *Clock* and *Brighton Camp*, also mentioning *Constant Billy* ('a clap dance'), *A-Nutting we will go* and *Jockey to the Fair*. FDN CJS2/11/2/85.

⁵⁷ Judge, 'Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris'.

of his Morris books, giving descriptions of the dances.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, from 1906 onwards, Sharp was pushing on with his collecting of Morris tunes and dances. Both Carey and Butterworth also visited many Cotswold performers both current and former, and noted dances but the only dances that were published were in *The Morris Book* series under Sharp's auspices. No further efforts were made to publish Cotswold dances until Bacon's *Handbook of Morris Dances* in 1974, which drew on published and unpublished sources as well as what had become common practice with Morris sides, including some more recently coined dances such as *Constant Billy (Bledington)*.⁵⁹

In order to grasp the structure of Morris dances before that date, we have to rely on hints and references in documents and iconography. According to the latter, medieval dance was often done in a line, or else as a solo or couple dance but we have signs of change from the fifteenth century onwards. An early representation of what may be regarded as proto-Morris appears in c.1490 with the engravings by the German print-maker, Israhel van Meckenem (1445-1503), showing a very stylised set of dancers in exaggerated poses, dancing around a female figure, with a taborer in an equally exaggerated pose. The image is not Morris as we understand it now, nor is it labelled as such. The dancers are not dancing as a coordinated team but rather are performing their own improvisations to the music. This image gave rise to derivative images with the performers in similar poses: a sixteenth-century panel from Lancaster Castle was clearly influenced by the Meckenem engravings, as was the famous Betley window, from Betley Hall in Staffordshire and now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, possibly dating from the sixteenth century.⁶⁰ The latter provides a very English context to the images by including Friar Tuck, a hobby horse and a maypole with the inscription, 'A Merry May', and thereby moving the context much closer to what we think of as Morris.

⁵⁸ Neal, *The Espérance Morris Book*; Sharp Macllwaine, *The Morris Book Part 1*.

⁵⁹ Bacon, *A Handbook of Morris Dancing*.

⁶⁰ The nearest dates that can be ascertained are between 1509 and 1536. E.J. Nicol, 'Some Notes on the History of the Betley Window.', *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* 7, no. 2 (1953), 59-67.



Figure 2.1 Medieval dancing in a line by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, 1338-1340.

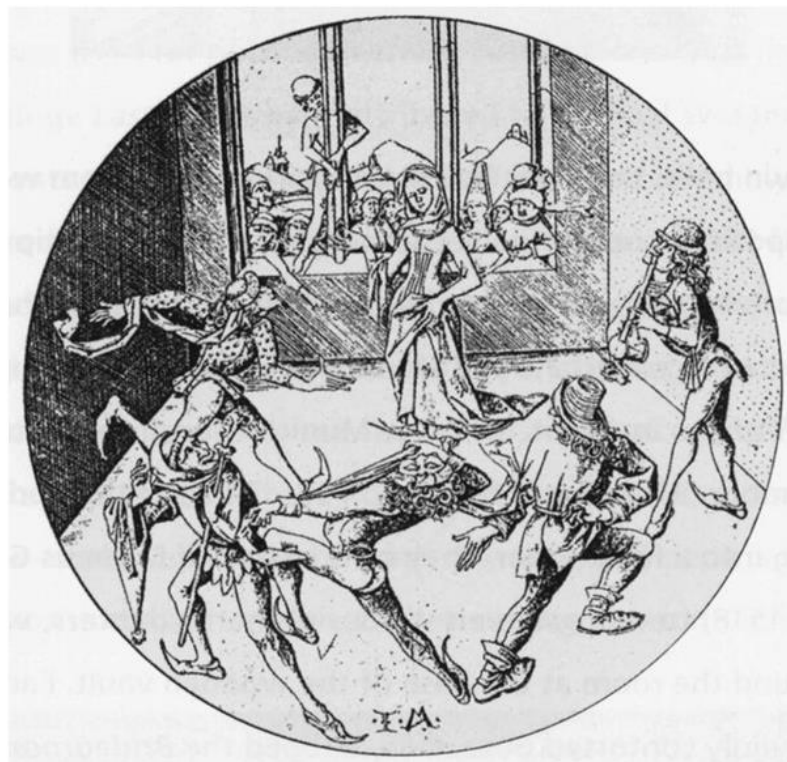


Figure 2.2 'Querfüllung mit dem Tanz der Verliebten' ('Panel with the Dance of the Lovers'), engraving by Israhel von Meckenem, c.1490.



Figure 2.3 Sixteenth-century panel from Lancaster Castle depicting dancers with taborer, fool and money collector.



Figure 2.4 The Betley Window.

Another glimpse of what may be a distant forerunner of today's Morris is given in *Orchésographie*, a dance manual written in 1589 by the Frenchman Thoinot Arbeau (1520-1595). He describes a solo dance entitled *Dance des Morisques* which Arbeau had seen in his youth (possibly in the 1530s) danced by a young man, who was 'blackened' ('noircy') and had bells on his legs. He danced up and down the room, executing various movements with intricate heel taps as he went. The description includes a tune, *Aire des Morisques*, which is discussed in Chapter 3. It is clearly a stretch from early sixteenth-century central France to

more recent Morris, but the etymological link from 'Morisques' to 'Morris' is clear and a solo dance with bells on the legs and intricate stepping does start to sound like a Morris jig.

Another notable solo dance, and this time definitely labelled as Morris, is that performed by the Shakespearean actor Will Kemp in the course of his promotional event of dancing all the way from London to Norwich in 1600, termed the *Nine Daies Wonder*.⁶¹ In the pamphlet which Kemp wrote, he gives little detail of the dancing except that twice on the way he was accompanied in the dancing by village girls. It is unlikely that the girls knew any precise figures but were probably improvising around a certain style, showing that the concept of Morris dance was generally recognised by the public, even when performed solo. Various tunes subsequently appeared with the title *Kemp's Jig* but there is no empirical evidence to link these tunes specifically to Kemp's exploits or to later Morris music.

The above examples up to the year 1600 depict either solo dances or dances in which the performers are acting as individuals and not as a team. An early indication of Morris dancers performing as a coordinated side is found in an anonymous painting of c.1620, *The Thames at Richmond*. The dancers are not labelled Morris as such and they are not the focal point of the painting, but the externals (bells on their legs, hobby horse, fool, solo musician) all indicate that this was a Morris performance. The dance, however, is not the longways set of six seen in later Morris but a single line of four. The dance is more reminiscent of a country 'reel' in which pairs step to each other before performing a reel or hey of four, so the dancers here may be adapting a village dance to a Morris performance.⁶²

⁶¹ William Kemp, *Kemps Nine Daies Wonder: Performed in a Daunce from London to Norwich* (London: Alexander Dyce, 1600).

⁶² Examples of the three-handed or four-handed reel as a dance, as opposed to a tune, can be found in numerous publications. An example is the Dorset Four Hand Reel as danced by 'Freaks in the Peaks' on [youtube.com/watch?v=YKguu4sAp-0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKguu4sAp-0) (accessed 24 January 2022).



Figure 2.5 Detail from anonymous painting of 'The Thames at Richmond', c.1620

Styles of dance in England continued to evolve and Morris dance was not immune to these changes in fashion. From the late sixteenth century onwards, 'country dance' was coming into fashion amongst the elite, propelled in the seventeenth century by the publications of the Playford family and their successors. From 1651 to 1728, the Playfords published successive editions of *The Dancing Master*, originally *The English Dancing Master*, dedicated to 'the Gentlemen of the Inns of Court', with tunes and notation for over 500 dances.⁶³ It has been speculated by Christopher Marsh that Playford collected dances from street musicians to include in the publications,⁶⁴ but this is refuted by Celia Pendlebury:

there is no evidence that Playford undertook any 'collecting' activities outside London and his country dances were no more than elements of the fashionable balls attended by the upwardly mobile bourgeois society of London, a society which was unlikely to have been remotely interested in the culture of rural villages.⁶⁵

The Playford books from 1651 onwards indicate that the dances performed by elite society were moving away from the older circle dance formations to longways sets, a trend which, according to Forrest, filtered through from the elite classes to rural dance. He wrote that 'it is a fair assumption that rural morrises around the late seventeenth century were adapting the

⁶³ John Playford, *The English Dancing Master* (London: Playford, 1651).

⁶⁴ Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 384.

⁶⁵ Celia Pendlebury, 'Jigs, Reels and Hornpipes: A History of "Traditional" Dance Tunes of Britain and Ireland' (MPhil thesis, University of Sheffield, 2015), 189.

general style of the longways for 6 or 8 that was so popular in Playford's first edition'.⁶⁶ The move towards a longways set for the Cotswold Morris dance is clearly shown in the dances collected in the twentieth century which, apart from the jigs, are almost all longways sets for six dancers.

This change may have brought about a new way of presenting the tunes. Solo, couple or line dances do not necessarily need a regular phrase-length, whereas longways set dances do, or else the dance performance loses cohesion. This 'new' style of dance as exemplified by *The Dancing Master* is clearly shown in the resemblance between the structure of many of Playford's longways dances and later Morris, with the figures 'up a double' ('foot up' in Morris), forward and back, back-to-back (often termed 'gypsy' or 'gyp' in Morris) and a hey (figure-of-eight) being common to both genres. In Cotswold Morris, these figures were danced to the first phrase of music, usually termed the A music, and typically consisting of four bars repeated. Although each side developed its own style of stepping and handkerchief movements, there is a basic homogeneity from side to side concerning the figures and chorus structure. A side typically used the same figures for all their dances but the chorus, danced to the B music, is what makes each dance distinctive and can consist of a diverse number of movements and steps, nearly always in 4 or 8-bar phrases. Thus, a typical form for many of the dances is:

| | |
|---|------------------|
| 4 bars – figure | A music |
| 4 bars – repeat figure (with variation) | A music repeated |
| 8 bars – chorus | B music |
| 8 bars – repeat chorus with variation | B music repeated |

This variation in the chorus can be something as simple as: (i) forward and back in line; (ii) back-to-back passing right shoulders; or (iii) passing back-to-back passing left shoulders. In the case of stick dances there is usually no variation, but the sticking figure is repeated at each iteration of the music. The majority of Cotswold Morris dances fall into a 24-bar pattern, which is then repeated with variations. Corner dances extend this pattern by repeating the B three times instead of twice, allowing each couple to dance in turn. This is often done to 'slows', where a portion of the tune is played at half-speed, thus allowing the dancer(s) to execute special steps, known as 'capers', of which more below. Then the tune has to fit the typical Morris steps. One very common pattern is as follows:

⁶⁶ Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing*, 318.

RLRR | LRL | RRL | FTJ (then LRL etc)

Alternatives were possible. For example, the Sherborne dancers danced to:

RRLR | LLRL | RRL | FTJ

Other variations included:

RLRR | LRL | G | FTJ

RLRR | FTJ L | CC | FTJ L

(R = hop on Right Foot, L = hop on Left Foot, FTJ = Feet together-Jump, L = Land with both feet together, C = Caper, G = Galley (explained below))

The rhythm for Morris gives heavy emphasis on the first beat of every bar, a lighter emphasis on the third beat and a strong emphasis on the FTJ. The FTJ is very distinctive of Cotswold Morris and is found in almost all the dances. The only exceptions to this stepping are *Greensleeves*, which is done to a combination of single step (RRL) and special cross steps, and (General) *Monk's March*, also known as *Belle Isle's March* or *Heel and Toe*. The latter title gives a clue to the stepping required which throughout is a heel-and-toe step. In this dance, the figures are the same as the generality of Morris – it is just the stepping which is different.



Example 2.2 *Monk's March*, played by Charles Benfield (fiddle), 2 September 1909.⁶⁷

Some of the steps need further explanation: capers are flamboyant leaping steps to show off the dancer's skill, consisting sometimes of leaping on one foot and then the other, but there

⁶⁷ FDN CJS2/10/2337.

are variations, and each side had its own style of caper. Galleys (also termed galleries or hook-legs) are steps in which one leg is extended and the foot describes a circle in the air and was a step which the Fieldtown dancers in particular prided themselves on executing well. George Steptoe of the Fieldtown told Sharp: 'I was that lissome when I were young though I looked so heavy; and when I had danced the last step I could jump up on the table!' Henry Franklin, another Fieldtown dancer, stated that at 'Fieldtown they capered as high off the ground as that table, always as high as they could'.⁶⁸ The etymology of the word 'galley' is unknown and it is tempting to link it to the word 'galliard', a sixteenth-century dance involving similar leaps and jumps but to quite a different rhythm. Caper steps are nearly always performed to 'slows', a feature not always reflected in the collectors' notation but which would have been known and understood by all the Morris sides. Capers and slows are not present in all the dances: stick dances do not include slows but they do appear in roughly 20% of the handkerchief dances and invariably in jigs (solo dances), the exception being *Greensleeves*, also termed *Bacca Pipes*, which was a solo or duo dance over crossed clay pipes, with no capers or galleys.⁶⁹

Morris stepping, which includes many jumps, indicates that Morris is danced with a heavy on-beat, preferably in 4/4 or 6/8 time, almost military in character, and devoid of any syncopation or notes bridging bars. Some of the dances could be performed to alternative tunes, at the whim or request of the dancers and the musician, so long as the tune fulfilled the requirement of the right phrase length. For example, one of the dances from Bledington could be danced to *Idbury Hill* (4/4) or *The Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket* (6/8), with no detriment to the performance. Indeed, the dancers possibly considered the two versions as separate dances, with the different tunes giving a distinctive 'feel' to the performances. 9/8 timing may seem alien to Morris and yet there is one dance – *Beaux of London City/Shooting* – danced to a 9/8 rhythm whilst another – *Bean Setting* – toggles between 4/4 and 9/8. These dances require a simpler one-hop, two-hop step throughout. Equally anomalous to the main canon are two dances from Adderbury, *Sweet Jenny Jones* and *The Happy Man*, both coined from songs and both in 3/4 time. These dances require a different adaptation of the Morris step to fit the rhythm. There are no other 3/4 dances in the remainder of the Morris canon and so this remains a feature particular to Adderbury.

⁶⁸ FDN CJS/2/11/2/84 and CJS/2/11/2/128.

⁶⁹ Slows and Capers are illustrated in the following online video (no date) danced by Matt Cowan, youtube.com/watch?v=rNA_PqXMcZs (accessed 25 January 2022). A video of Bampton Morris dancing *Greensleeves* can be seen at youtube.com/watch?v=Bl_DVyMOWm8 (accessed 25 January 2022).

2.2 The tunes themselves

As can be seen in Appendix A, there have been over 500 instances of either a Cotswold Morris tune being collected or noted. This figure includes many tunes being noted or collected multiple times: if these duplicates are removed, that leaves a total of 131 separate tunes. Of these, we have the musical notation for c.110 and titles only for the remainder. There are some features which are found only in Morris, notably the habit of playing eight bars of music before the dance starts, commonly known as ‘once to yourself’, a useful ploy to remind the dancers of the tunes, and the feature of ‘slows’, as described above. The counting of totals of Morris tunes is problematic as often the same tune or a close variant of it was noted from different musicians or villages, and we have instances of the same tune being collected from the same musician by different collectors or even twice by the same collector on different visits. Even noting the same tune from the same musician is problematic: when Sharp noted *Greensleeves* from John Mason in Stow-on-the-Wold, he noted it in the key of D. When Carey subsequently visited the same fiddler, he noted the same tune but in A.⁷⁰ It is possible, but unlikely, that Mason played the tune in different keys on those two occasions, but that is musically counter-intuitive. Furthermore, there are ambiguities over tune names and variants. Removing duplicates from the list still leaves us with a body of 130 distinct titles, identified by their ‘Davies number’ (see introduction).

From this list we can identify the most frequent tunes in order of popularity and with their alternative titles as follows:

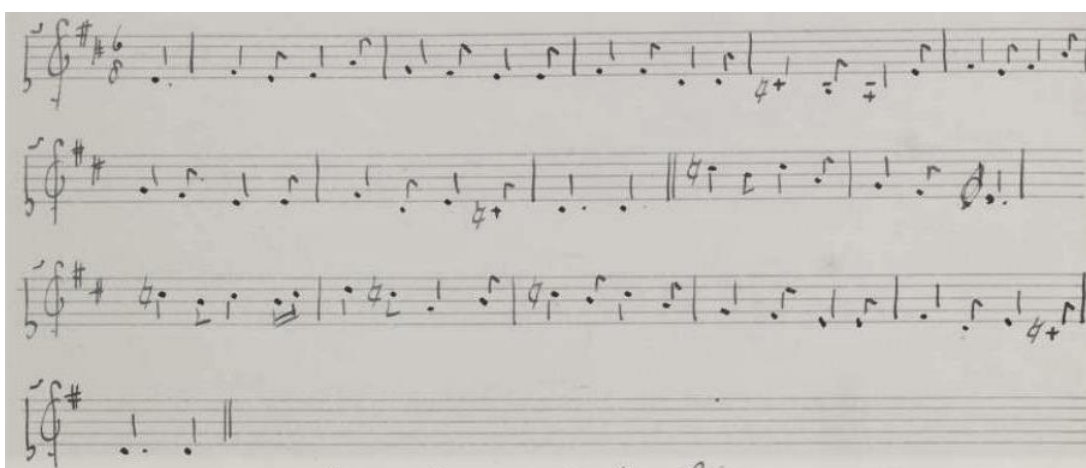


Figure 2.6 *Greensleeves* played by John Mason (fiddle), collected by Sharp on 28 March 1907.

⁷⁰ FDN CJS2/10/1255 and Carey CC/1/532.

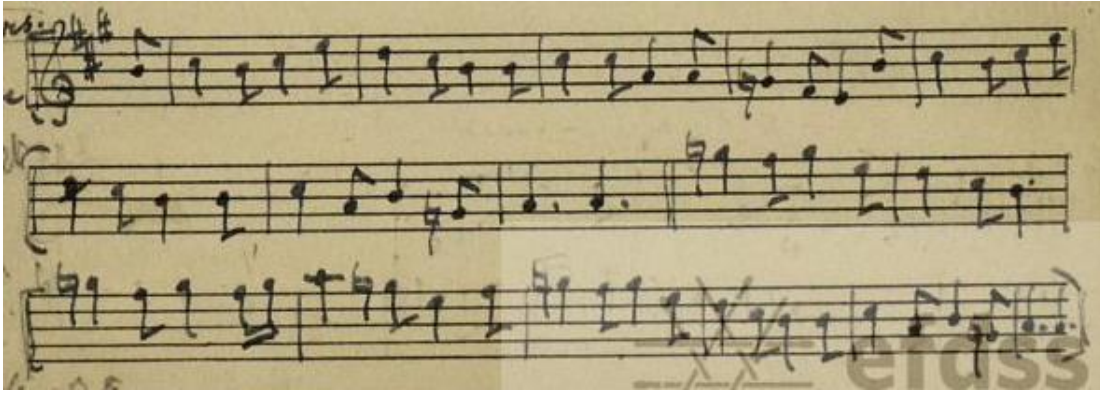


Figure 2.7 *Greensleeves* played by John Mason (fiddle), collected by Carey on 21 June 1912.

1. *Constant Billy/None so Pretty*
2. *Princess Royal*
3. *Shepherds Hey*
4. *Jockey to the Fair*
5. *Greensleeves/Bacca Pipes*
6. *The Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket*
7. *Trunkles (Trunko, Old Trunkles, Trunk Hose)*
8. *Maid of the Mill*
9. *Molly Oxford ((Old) Mother Oxford, Old Tom of Oxford)*
10. *Country Gardens and Highland Mary*
11. *Lumps of Plum Pudding*
12. *Cuckoo's Nest*
13. *(Bonny) Green Garters*
14. *Balance the Straw/Twenty-ninth of May*
15. *Nutting Girl*
16. *Black Joke*
17. *Brighton Camp*
18. *Young Collins*
19. *Saturday Night*
20. *Monks March and London Pride*

The top eleven of these account for almost 40% of the totality of the collected tunes and, if we include all the tunes listed above, that accounts for over two-thirds of the total tunes noted or collected. The remaining 100 or so account for only a third of the canon, whilst 65% of the

tunes noted as Morris tunes listed occur only once. A complete list of titles of Morris tunes and their frequency is given in Appendix A. The fact that so many tunes have been noted once only indicates that the Morris canon consists of a central core of around 20-25 tunes, with many sides coining dances to certain tunes as a 'one-off'. We must also bear in mind that the canon under consideration is a snapshot in time, and similar studies in earlier centuries would have given different results, as the Morris repertoire was and continues to be very fluid with tunes continually being dropped or brought in.

From this body of tunes, and setting aside musical anomalies and outliers, we can draw some broad conclusions as to the characteristics of the canon: the typical tune is in either 4/4 or 6/8 time with the music being in 4-bar (or 8-bar) phrases. The tunes are musically simple, revolving around a harmonic base of I-IV-V or occasionally I-II-IV-V, and are mainly in the Ionian mode.⁷¹ Many of the tunes start with a rising cadence and end with a falling cadence to the tonic. Runs of notes close together on the scale are preferred to large melodic jumps. Modulation, syncopation and chromaticism are not found. Tunes are typically in two parts, in the form AABB or AABA. These general features are not confined to Morris but to much of English vernacular dance music. The overall character of Southern English folk music was summed up by van der Merwe: 'In general, Southern England favours straightforward compact, heptatonic tunes with the minimum of ornamentation'.⁷²

Given this background, we can correlate the collected canon of tunes with collections further back in time, of which the most significant is *The Dancing Master* series. Firstly, the two genres share a number of characteristics: much of the above description of the Morris canon as basically simple tunes 'revolving around a harmonic base of I-IV-V' and 'start[ing] with a rising cadence and ending with a falling cadence to the tonic' apply equally to *The Dancing Master* tunes. As will be shown in Chapter 3, there are direct melodic links from Playford to nineteenth-century Cotswold Morris, with some Morris tunes being Playford's seventeenth- and eighteenth-century country dance tunes transformed through years of aural tradition. There are rhythmic correlations: in the 1651 edition of *The Dancing Master*, 60% of the tunes are in 6/4, which we now interpret as 6/8, and 32% in 4/4, the others are either in 3/4 tempo or a mixture of time signatures. This compares with Morris in which 45% are in 6/8, 50% in 4/4 and the remainder in 9/8, 3/4 or mixed time signatures. In other words, both

⁷¹ In this thesis, I will be referring to the classical or church modes of Ionian, Mixolydian, Dorian and Aeolian, or else to 'modal' (i.e. Mixolydian, Dorian, Aeolian) or 'non-modal' i.e. Ionian. More on the modality of Morris music will be found later in this chapter.

⁷² van der Merwe, *Origins of the Popular Style*, 111.

Playford and Morris favoured 4/4 and 6/8 tunes which comprised 90-95% of their respective repertoires. Both genres include a few tunes which change tempo in the middle, for example Playford's *Jenny Pluck Pears* and Morris' *Bean Setting* and *How d'you do, sir (Headington)*.



Example 2.3 *Jenny Pluck Pears*, Playford's *The English Dancing Master*, 1651.



Example 2.4 *Bean Setting*, played by Mark Cox (fiddle), Headington, 7/8 October 1910.⁷³

One particular dance with a change of rhythm in the middle is *The Sherborne Jig*. There is some evidence to suggest that this dance, but not the tune, is a survival of the *Tourdion* dance, dating from the fifteenth century. The Morris dance, sometimes called *My Lord of Sherborne's Jig*, was considered by the Sherborne men as their 'special and unique dance'.⁷⁴ The rhythm toggles between an A music in 6/8 and a B music in 3/4, with the standard Sherborne Morris figures being performed to the A music, with special caper steps, including kneeling, being performed to the B music. Andy Richards, a contemporary Morris dancer and musician, has drawn a parallel between the *Sherborne Jig* and the sixteenth-century *Tourdion* or *Galliard Cinque Pace* ['5 steps'] stating that there is 'a remarkable correspondence of steps between the Morris *My Lord of Sherborne's Jig* performed in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century and since, and *Galliard* or *Tourdion* cinque pace steps as described by Arbeau in 1588'; a relationship which deserves further analysis.⁷⁵ Moreover, the rhythmic

⁷³ Carey MSS CC/1/465.

⁷⁴ FDN CJS2/11/1/101a.

⁷⁵ The *Tourdion* is described in Susato, *Orchésographie*, 51-2. Other sources and descriptions from 1581 to 1600 are given in 'Cinque pas' and 'Tourdion', both *Grove Music Online* (accessed 16 January 2022). See also, A. Richards, 'Taboring the Cinque Pace and My Lord of Sherborne's Jig', jigalots.wordpress.com/interesting-instruments-great-to-dance-to/ (accessed 16 January 2022). A member of the revival Sherborne Morris Men can be seen dancing the Sherborne Jig at [youtube.com/watch?v=xI9ePS5jRWo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xI9ePS5jRWo) (accessed 16 January 2022).

shape of the dance echoes *Jenny Pluck Pears* (but this may be just coincidental). If it is indeed an old survival, it is a remarkable one.



Example 2.5 *The Sherborne Jig*, communicated by George Simpson, 25 July 1908 and 17 March 1909.⁷⁶

Aside from the jigs, the normal formation for a Cotswold Morris dance is a side of six dancers in a longways set, but as with any generalisation, there are anomalies: Fieldtown's dance *The Rose* is danced throughout in a circle and is the only dance in the Morris canon to do so. In contrast, coming-on and going-off dances, such as *(Bonny) Green Garters*, *Morris On* and *Morris Off*, are typically danced as a procession in a single file, but these dances only account for a small percentage of the total number. There are a few dances that break the pattern of 4 and 8-bar phrases: *Jockey/Jockie to the Fair* and *Black Joke*, both tunes from songs, have atypical phrase lengths. *Jockey to the Fair* is based on a 20-bar song, with an 8-bar A music and a 12-bar B music, but musicians, including those playing for Morris, often shortened or extended the B music.



Example 2.6 *Jockey to the Fair* with 12-bar B music.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ FDT CJS2/10/1725 and CJS2/10/2453.

⁷⁷ Leeds Central Library/Huddersfield Library, James Biggins MSS, 1779.



Example 2.7 *Jockey to the Fair* with 14-bar B music, communicated by William Walton, Adderbury.⁷⁸

Black Joke is an eighteenth-century bawdy song, with a 6-bar A music and a 10-bar B music, meaning that it only fits that one dance of the same name. The dance varied from side to side but versions of the tune are remarkably consistent.



Example 2.8 *Black Joke*, communicated by William Walton, Adderbury, 15 June 1916.⁷⁹

The tune *Princess Royal*, also known as *Nelson's Praise*, usually danced as a jig, is one of the most-collected Morris dances/tunes. It has a 12-bar B music and also has the distinction of appearing in the Morris canon in three different modes from different locations (see section 2.3). The original is a 1725 composition by the blind Irish harpist, Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738), as *Miss MacDermott* or *The Princess Royal*, his version being in the Aeolian mode. These three tunes, *Jockey to the Fair*, *Black Joke* and *Princess Royal*, along with *Trunkles* which has a six-bar C music, are the only outsiders in the Morris canon in having non-standard phrase lengths, meaning that they are not interchangeable with other dances, unlike most of the canon, where the choice of tune is rather more flexible.

⁷⁸ Blunt MSS, JHB/17A/6.

⁷⁹ Blunt MSS, JHB/16/15.



Example 2.9 *Princess Royal or Miss MacDermott* by Thurlough O'Carolan.⁸⁰

2.3 Modality

All European vernacular music is in modes. Ionian is a mode, although we normally think of it as the major key. Ever since folk song, including English folk song, was 'discovered' by collectors, there was an awareness of and a fascination with the modes in which they were sung. The Rev'd John Broadwood (1798-1864) in Sussex was one of the first English folk song collectors to point out the modal features of English folk song, which did not accord to 'classical' usage. His niece Lucy Broadwood, when addressing the Royal Musical Association in 1904, quoted her uncle who had berated the local organist who was trying to harmonise the tunes:

[The organist] raised lamentable cries at the flat sevenths and other monstrous intervals which Mr. Broadwood sang, or blew persistently on his flute. "*Musically*", said my uncle "they may be quite wrong, but the tunes shall be printed as they were sung to me, and as I sing them".⁸¹

Modes was one of the first subjects raised at an inaugural meeting of the Folk Song Society in 1899.⁸² The early twentieth century English folk song collectors, especially Ralph Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp, soon noticed in their collecting that, unlike the prevailing musical fashion to compose in either the major or the minor key, many song tunes did not conform to this pattern; collectors came to the conclusion that the character of English folk music was very much determined by its modal qualities.⁸³ Of the songs that Vaughan Williams collected,

⁸⁰ Donal O'Sullivan, *Carolan: The Life Times and Music of an Irish Harper* (London: Ossian Publications Ltd, 2005).

⁸¹ Lucy E. Broadwood, 'On the Collecting of English Folk-Song', *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 31 (1904), 97.

⁸² E.F. Jacques, 'Old Modal Survivals in Folk Song', *Folk Music Journal* 1, no. 1 (1899), 4-6.

⁸³ The use of the word 'modal' here conveys any tune that does not fit into the recognised major (Ionian) or classical minor key. It is convenient to analyse them in respect the so-called 'church modes' as this terminology most conveniently describes this particular canon of music and much previous literature on vernacular music

roughly 60% were in the Ionian mode and the remainder in other modes, but when he came to publish songs, two-thirds of the songs he selected have modal melodies, indicating a degree of collation on his part. Sharp's collecting and publication came to the same conclusions, demonstrating a clear bias by these collectors for modal tunes. The informants themselves mainly sang Ionian melodies, but Sharp and Vaughan Williams were looking for what they saw as the 'nuggets' of the singers' repertoires as exemplified by modal tunes. This 'discovery' by Sharp came as a revelation to him and he took this feature to be a quintessential token of the 'Englishness' of the music and heralded this feature as a major discovery of his collecting.⁸⁴

Considerations of curation and selection, however, applied to a much lesser extent with regard to the publication of Morris dance tunes and the criteria for publishing or not publishing resided more in Sharp's perceptions of what was 'authentic' or 'pure' Morris. The 'Englishness' that Sharp saw in Morris resided in the dances rather than the tunes. One can see by comparing the published Morris tunes with the tunes in the collectors' notebooks that the tunes were published mainly as collected. That is not to say that Sharp did not do some 'curating' of the published Morris dances: he rejected the Bidford-on Avon dances and the later Ilmington dances as unauthentic.⁸⁵

The two genres of English folk song and English folk dance music coexisted in time and space, while exhibiting different musical and modal characteristics. Statistically, we find that the majority of the Morris tunes collected are in the Ionian mode as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Percentage of modes in collected Morris tunes.

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Ionian | 84% |
| Dorian | 8% |
| Aeolian | 2% |
| Aeolian/Dorian | 2% |
| Mixolydian | 4% |

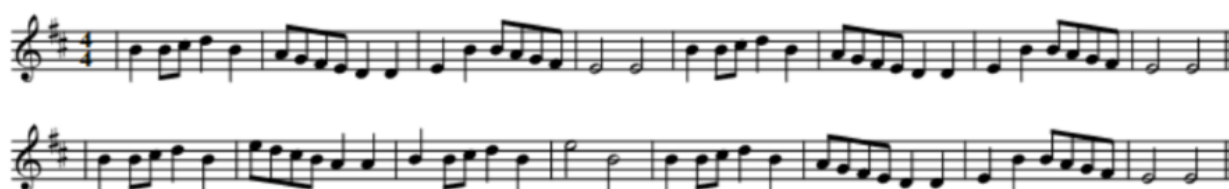
These bare statistics, however, require some unpicking. Many of the tunes were collected in more than one mode, from different musicians. Nearly all the Aeolian tunes are versions of

refers to these modes. See Julian Onderdonk, 'Vaughan Williams and the Modes', *Folk Music Journal* 7, no. 5 (1999), 609-26.

⁸⁴ Boyes, *The Imagined Village*, 96.

⁸⁵ Sharp, having published 5 Ilmington dances in *The Morris Book Part 1* (1907), subsequently dropped these dances from later editions, mainly because he mistrusted the information given by the informant. This relationship is examined in detail by Elaine Bradtke, 'One Musician, Two Collectors, Different Results: Sam Bennett as collected by Cecil Sharp and James Madison Carpenter', originally presented at the American Folklore Society's Annual Meeting, Québec, Canada, October 17 2002 and available at abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/documents/Two_Collectors.pdf

just one tune, *Princess Royal*, whilst all the mixolydian tunes are versions of tunes found in other modes. In other words, there are few tunes in the canon that are modal per se. There are many examples of this fluidity of mode in the Morris repertoire. One such is the tune *Idbury Hill*, also collected under the names *London Pride*, *Stourton Wake*, *Blackwell Morris* and *Old Heddon of Fawley*. The first four named are basically similar, in the Dorian mode, whereas the last named takes us into the Mixolydian mode.



Example 2.10 *Stourton Wake* (in Dorian mode), communicated by Fred Webb, Bloxham, and collected by Blunt, February 1914.⁸⁶



Example 2.11 *Old Heddon of Fawley* (in Mixolydian mode), played by John Mason (fiddle) at Stow-on-the-Wold, March 1907.⁸⁷

The tune *Princess Royal* has already been mentioned above in connection with its atypical phrase length. It is also noteworthy when discussing modes as, of the 22 Morris versions for which we have the tune, six are in the Aeolian mode, nine in the Ionian, four in the Dorian, two in an indeterminate Aeolian/Dorian mode and one which is in the Aeolian until the very last note which ends the tune on a major cadence.

⁸⁶ Blunt MSS, JHB/17A/11A.

⁸⁷ FDN CJS/2/10/1254.



Example 2.12 *Princess Royal* (in Aeolian mode, minus the slows), played by William Wells (fiddle), Bampton, 24 August 1906.⁸⁸



Example 2.13 *Princess Royal* (in Dorian mode), played by William Hathaway (fiddle) for the Lower Swell Morris and collected in Cheltenham, 31 March 1907.⁸⁹



Example 2.14 *Princess Royal* (in Ionian mode), played by William Hemmings (melodeon), Abingdon.⁹⁰

The shift from modal to non-modal is not a change that is confined to Morris tunes. Looking back at the Playford tunes of the mid-seventeenth century, we find that 60% are in what we would call the Ionian mode and most of the remainder in Dorian or Aeolian, compared with 84% Ionian in the Morris canon. While it may be tempting to ascribe this trend in Morris to the limited musicality of the pipe, this is not so: although the pipe is diatonic, it can play easily

⁸⁸ FDN CJS2/10/2348.

⁸⁹ FDN CJS2/10/1270

⁹⁰ FDN CJS2/10/2465; Sharp and Macilwaine, *Espérance Morris Book Part 1*, 25.

in both Dorian and Aeolian modes. Besides, the other main instrument to accompany Morris, the fiddle, which is fully chromatic, would have no difficulty with playing in any mode. This shift is not confined to Morris or even English vernacular or dance music: it is a general trend away from a modal style of tune so prevalent in medieval times towards the more modern non-modal major and minor keys. What we do not find in Morris music is any use of the more harmonic or melodic minor scales, with a raised seventh note of the scale – in Morris music, whenever a seventh is played in a modal tune, it is a flattened seventh, more in keeping with vernacular rather than classical musical traditions.

Some tunes which were played in, for instance, the Dorian mode, for many years became Ionian in the hands of Morris musicians by the nineteenth century. The move from modal to non-modal can be seen in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Tunes that have moved from modal to non-modal mode.

| 17 th or 18 th -century tune in | Morris tune as collected in | Comments |
|---|--|--|
| <i>The Dancing Master</i> | the late 19 th and early 20 th centuries | |
| <i>Bobbing Joe</i> | <i>Bobbing Joe/Bobby and Joan</i> | nearly always in Ionian mode in Morris |
| <i>Greensleeves</i> | <i>Greensleeves/Bacca Pipe</i> | mainly Dorian but one Mixolydian version |
| <i>Lady Catherine Ogle</i> | <i>Highland Mary</i> | Dorian to Ionian |
| <i>Lumps of Pudding</i> | <i>Lumps of Plum Pudding</i> | Dorian to Ionian |
| <i>Old Oxford/Peace and Plenty</i> | <i>(Old) Mother/Molly/Tom of Oxford</i> | Aeolian to Ionian |

One example from this list is *Lumps of Pudding*, published in seven successive versions of *The Dancing Master* in the Dorian mode and used as a song tune in *The Beggars Opera*, *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, as a setting for a Burns poem and in various tune collections, always as a Dorian tune, and yet when it came to be played for Cotswold Morris as *Lumps of Plum Pudding*, it had become Ionian.



Example 2.15 *Lumps of Pudding*, from *The Dancing Master* 1701, omitting middle section.



Example 2.16 *Lumps of Plum Pudding*, communicated by Ted Smith, Bledington.⁹¹

Other examples spring out of the Morris canon: *Greensleeves* is a notable case, as it is nearly always played in the Dorian mode, except for one fiddle version from Stow-on-the-Wold in the Mixolydian; *The Cuckoo's Nest* appears in Ionian, Mixolydian and Dorian versions, whilst *London Pride*, also collected as *Idbury Hill*, *Old Heddon of Fawley* and *Blackwell Morris*, appears as both Dorian and Mixolydian. The tune *Go and Enlist for a Sailor* has only been collected once, and that in the Dorian mode. Various Mixolydian versions of tunes otherwise in the Ionian mode are also found, some of which may be later embellishments by fiddle players as the Mixolydian mode does not fall easily to the pipe. Apart from these few exceptions, the canon is solidly in the Ionian mode.

2.4 Pitch, Keys and Range

This thesis is written with the assumption that all the collected tunes had been played on or were capable of being played on a D pipe that could also be played in G Ionian, or E modal (Dorian or Aeolian) and this assumption has aided the task of tune comparison. For the collectors, the actual pitch of what they were hearing was irrelevant. After all, if an informant is humming or whistling a tune to you, it could come out in any key, or even different keys on different occasions. When collecting from fiddle players, there is no guarantee that the fiddler played the tune in the same key as the musician he learnt it from or even that the fiddle is tuned to a particular pitch. Morris musicians were not bound to theories on Pythagorean or Just Temperament scales, especially as they were playing solo for the Morris and so to them pitch was arbitrary, not absolute. To add to the confusion, different collectors preferred notating in different keys, as we see in the above example of Mason's *Greensleeves*. Sharp ironically notated many of the tunes in the sharp keys of D or G, while Carey had a liking for flat keys.

Furthermore, we must bear in mind that when Sharp was collecting tunes, at the back of his mind was the thought that he could arrange and publish them for piano. The ten books

⁹¹ G. Butterworth MSS collection, GB/2/11.

of Morris dance tunes referred to above are all piano arrangements, as that was the accepted way of promulgating music at that time. Perhaps if Sharp had been publishing for a later audience, say the 1960s or 1970s, he would have printed single-line melodies with guitar chords. Having said that modulation does not exist in Morris tunes, like all generalisations there is an exception, but one that joined the Morris canon at a later date. The Bampton tune, *The Quaker*, if started in G for the A music, then modulates to D for the B music and then back to G for the A music. Although the tune is of unknown provenance, it came late into the Bampton repertoire, introduced by William Wells, probably in the twentieth century.



Example 2.17 *The Quaker*, as played for Bampton Morris.⁹²

Cotswold Morris music was basically monophonic, the majority of the music being performed on a solo pipe and tabor or fiddle. Polyphony and harmony are not unknown in European vernacular dance music (for example, Galician bagpipe playing, and Provençal or Basque pipe and tabor music), but this practice did not extend to English rural music-making. Moreover, from what we know of Morris pipes, the pitch was not standardised and it would have been problematic for two pipes to play together in tune.⁹³ By analogy, some years ago I was present when c.50 Castilian three-holed pipes in the Fundación Joaquín Díaz were tested for pitch and it was found that there was no standardisation at all in their tuning, as most of the pipes were home-made. I was also told that recent commercial manufacture of such pipes had greatly assisted the task of Castilian taborers playing together and teaching tunes. What we know of fiddle playing for Morris from the few recordings available indicate use of double stopping to emphasise the rhythm, but not to add harmonic depth to a tune. That is not to say that Morris music was completely aharmonic as tunes can imply latent harmony. As we will see in Chapter 3, *Shepherds Hey* is based on the passamezzo antico harmonic structure of I-IV-I-V-I-IV-V-I and echoes of the same can be seen in other Morris tunes, for example the A music of *Constant Billy*, *Balance the Straw (Fieldtown)* and *Young Collins*: all have the pattern I-I-IV-

⁹² Bacon, *A Handbook of Morris Dancing*, 34; William Wells, 'William Wells 1868-1953: Morris Dancer, Fiddler and Fool', *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* 8, no. 1 (1956), 7.

⁹³ Richard Sermon, 'Joan Sharp (1898-1968) and the Revival of the English Pipe and Tabor', *Folk Music Journal* 12, no. 1 (2021), 6-31.

V-I-IV-V-I. However, such examples are too sparse to be considered a tune family running throughout the Morris canon. In fact, the cadence ending motif of I-IV-V-I is so common throughout Western popular music that its appearance in Morris music is not a distinguishing feature.

Although keys as such are an irrelevancy when studying Morris tunes, tune ranges are not, and are an issue for the pipe, at least that used for Morris, which had a range of D to A'. Indeed, most of the known Morris tunes fall within that range, one exception being *The Rose Tree*, a tune often found as a fiddle tune for country dancing but only once as a Cotswold Morris tune, again played by William Wells for Bampton Morris and probably introduced to the side by Wells.



Figure 2.8 *The Rose Tree*, as played by William Wells (fiddle).⁹⁴

This tune, when played in G as shown in Figure 2.8, goes too low for the pipe and, if transposed to D, would go too high, hence it is clearly a later introduction to the canon. Similarly, Hathaway's version of *Princess Royal* (Figure 2.13) is beyond the range of the pipe and is certainly a fiddle version.

The Morris tunes in the Ionian mode in general keep to the notes of the diatonic major scale, the only exceptions being that some tunes have a cadence in the middle which ends on the dominant of the scale, when a sharpened fourth is brought to facilitate that modulation. For example, many versions of *Jockey to the Fair* have the motif in bar 7 as shown in Example 2.18 while versions of *Trunkles* show the same feature (see Example 2.19).

⁹⁴ Wells, 'William Wells 1868-1953: Morris Dancer, Fiddler and Fool', 1-15.



Example 2.18 *Jockey to the Fair*, b. 7, Adderbury.⁹⁵



Example 2.19 *Trunkles*, b. 7, played by Charles Benfield (fiddle), Bledington, 1912.⁹⁶

With regard to the pipe and tabor, the note of C# is easily fingered in the key of G, whereas the note of G# in the key of D is not possible. This means that any tune having this feature must perforce be played in the key of G.

2.5 Style, Tempo and the Morris 'sound'

Mention should also be made at this point of the style and speed at which the Morris tunes were played, an issue more important in defining the Morris 'sound' than the actual notes played – the unhurried emphatic pulse of the music with heavy emphasis on the on-beat are features that distinguish Morris from related genres, much more than the actual tune being played. Empirical evidence of the speed at which Morris was danced in the nineteenth century is non-existent, but there are several references to the pipe and tabor playing the music more slowly than the later fiddle. The first audio recordings of traditional Cotswold Morris musicians, all fiddlers, were made on wax cylinders of unreliable speed, firstly in 1908 by Percy Grainger, (or more likely by Eliza Wedgwood on Grainger's behalf), of the Ilmington fiddler, Sam Bennett, and then by the American collector, James Madison Carpenter, c.1930 of various Cotswold Morris fiddlers including Bennett.⁶ These recordings indicate a straightforward, direct style with few decorations and a concentration on a strong rhythm, echoing the music of the pipe and tabor. There are no recordings of traditional pipe and tabor players and the earliest recordings we have of any English pipe and tabor playing are those made by Columbia Records (1930) and HMV (1947) of Joan Sharp, Cecil Sharp's daughter, playing Morris tunes.⁹⁷ Joan Sharp probably met and heard England's last traditional taborer, Joe Powell of Bucknell. Again, we hear in these recordings the same straightforward rhythmic treatment as in the fiddle playing. We must bear in mind that in playing for Morris, the musician is subservient to the

⁹⁵ Blunt MSS, JHB/17/6.

⁹⁶ Butterworth MSS, GB/2/9.

⁹⁷ Sermon, 'Joan Sharp (1898-1968) and the Revival of the English Pipe and Tabor'.

dancer. The musician is there to make the dancing look good, not vice versa, and so elaborate musicianship is not called for and possibly not welcome. When Sharp hummed the tune *Maid of the Mill* to the Ilmington dancer Michael Johnson, the latter commented that it was similar to the old Ilmington tune but ‘had too many notes in it’.⁹⁸ Similarly, Daniel Lock of Minster Lovell, when communicating tunes to Sharp, said that he would give the tunes just as they used to be played ‘without any fly-notes’, by which one can suppose that he meant decorations.⁹⁹ The stepping of the Morris dictates the speed at which the tune is played so if the music is too fast or too slow, then the dancers are not able to perform the steps accurately. When Sharp published the set of ten books of Morris dance tunes, he provided metronome reading for most of the dances and, with few exceptions, the average was 101 with a range of 80-120. I have omitted two figures from this calculation, namely *Bean Setting* for which he gives a reading of 160, and *Greensleeves (Bacca Pipes jig)* for which he gives a reading of 132, both of which seem improbably high. Personal experience, combined with checking these speeds against Cotswold Morris performances posted on YouTube, suggest that Sharp’s readings are high, and that an average of between 80 and 90 is normal for today’s Morris.

⁹⁸ FDN CJS2/11/2/135.

⁹⁹ FDN CJS2/11/2/4.

Chapter 3. Provenance of the repertoire: Early tunes and Playford's *The Dancing Master*

Chapter 3 and 4 deal with the possible provenance of the canon of the Cotswold Morris tunes collected from the late nineteenth century onwards, looking at ancestors of those tunes from the sixteenth century onwards. Firstly, for convenience this chapter will take the research up to 1728, the final year of publication of *The Dancing Master*. It is clear that the Morris canon was informed over the years by many influences but the largest influence by far in the sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries was that of country dances, which can be seen in both the tune repertoire and the dancing style. However, the route from tunes existing in the sixteenth century to those collected in the twentieth century is beset with uncertainties and red herrings. Some of the evolution is quite clear, for example, the road from Playford's *Lady of Pleasure* to Morris' *Ladies Pleasure*, but others are not so clear cut. Can we make such a clear link from *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* to Morris' *Saturday Night*, or from *Lady Catherine Ogle* to *Highland Mary*? The links are circumstantial and are examined in detail in the following paragraphs.

There are also those tunes which have been described as early Morris tunes, but for which empirical proof is lacking, namely *Morisco* and *Staines Morris*. To add confusion to this picture, there are those tunes that sound from their titles as though they ought to be Morris, such as *The Hobby Horse Dance* or *Maids/Scotch/French/Fidlers Morris* but again the trail to collected canon lies cold. Another category is tunes mentioned in early plays that were allegedly used for Morris, and in some cases there is evidence that they did persist in the canon for centuries, but these references should be treated with caution, taking care not to jump to conclusions on the basis of slender evidence.

Sharp himself noted that some of the Morris tunes were of some age, and in *Morris Book Part 1*, he devoted five pages to describing the origins of several tunes: *Rigs o'Marlow*, *Country Gardens*, *Constant Billy*, *Blue-eyed Stranger*, *Shepherds Hey*, *Maid of the Mill*, *The Old Woman Tossed up*, *Cuckoo's Nest* and *Black Joke*, as well as one Derbyshire tune, *The Tideswell Processional Dance*.¹⁰⁰ Most of Sharp's observations are pertinent except for his comparing *Shepherds Hey* to a Breton tune *Ann Aliké*, although he himself expresses scepticism at the

¹⁰⁰ Sharp and MacIlwaine, *The Morris Book Part 1*.

comparison. Further research on the provenance of the music is then silent until several brief essays by Heaney in the 1990s.

3.1 Tunes mentioned in early plays

The search for alleged Morris tunes referred to in early plays yields sparse results, namely two tunes only: *Trip and Go* and *Flowers of May*. One reference appears in the 1658 play, 'The Witch of Edmonton'.¹⁰¹ When the Morris dancers enter, their fiddler states, "I'll lay mine Ear to my Instrument, that my poor Fiddle is bewitch'd. I play'd *The Flowers in May*, e'en now, as sweet as a Violet; now 'twill not go against the hair".¹⁰² The later Morris credentials of this tune, or at least the title, are that the Ilmington dancer Michael Johnson told Sharp that the side once had a processional dance *Flowers of May*, but Sharp was unable to get the tune, neither have subsequent searches been able to discover it.¹⁰³ If the two references are to the same tune, we must assume that it disappeared from sight for 200 years, only to be lost again.

The tune *Trip and Go* is equally problematic. William Chappell asserted in 1859 that 'this was one of the favourite Morris-dances of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and is frequently alluded to by writers of those times'.¹⁰⁴ He then quotes the source of the tune as Playford's *Musick's Delight on the Cithren* (1666).

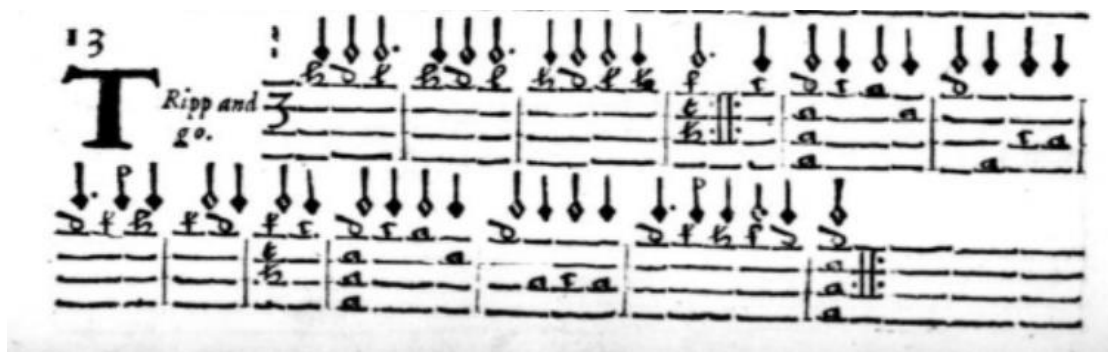


Figure 3.1 *Tripp and go* in Playford's *Musick's Delight on the Cithren* (1666).

¹⁰¹ Thomas Dekker (1572-1632), John Ford (1586-c.1640) and William Rowley (1585?-1642?), *The Witch of Edmonton* (London).

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, Act 3, scene 1.

¹⁰³ FDN CJS2/11/2/135.

¹⁰⁴ Chappell and Macfarren, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*.



Example 3.1 Transcription of *Tripp and go* from Playford's *Musick's Delight on the Cithren* (1666).



Figure 3.2 *Trip and Go* in Chappell and Macfarren's *Popular Music of the Olden Time* (1859), 131.

It will be seen that there are discrepancies between the tune that Chappell claims to be from the Playford publication and the transcription of the Playford lute arrangement, for which I cannot account. Chappell's argument that it was a Morris tune based on two pieces of evidence. Firstly, Chappell quotes the poet and playwright Thomas Nashe, writing in 1591, as

[I] cannot daunce Trip and Goe so lively, with Oh, my love, ah my love, all my love gone, as other shepherds have beene Fooles in the morris, time out of mind.

What Chappell has missed is the punctuation of Nashe's writing, which actually reads 'cannot daunce, trip, and goe so liuely'.¹⁰⁵ The punctuation makes it clear that Nashe is not referring to the name of the dance but using the word 'trip' simply to mean 'dance'. Chappell goes on to quote Nashe again, referring to his play *Summers Last Will and Testament*, performed in 1600, which features a group of Morris dancers accompanied by a hobby-horse, who enter and dance about, after which three clowns and three maids come in singing the song *Trip and Go*.¹⁰⁶ The assumption is that they were singing the song to the above tune, as printed in Chappell, but this cannot be verified. The stage instruction 'dance about' can also be read as meaning to dance in general rather than specifically to dance Morris. Nashe's texts are therefore circumstantial, not positive proof. Further evidence to support Chappell's statement that the tune was 'one of the favourite Morris-dances of the sixteenth and seventeenth century' is elusive. Certainly, the phrase 'trip and go' occurs in several writings including Shakespeare, as Chappell explains, and appears to mean 'Go away' in a polite sense. Another issue is the tune, which is only known from a single source, namely Playford's cittern book of 1666. The tune as printed does not sit easily as a Morris tune: the range is too large for either the bagpipe or the tabor pipe and the opening phrase starting many of the bars does not accord well with Morris steps.

Despite Chappell's dubious claims, there is one piece of evidence that the tune was in fact used as a Morris tune into the nineteenth century. The Rev'd Hilderic Friend, describing Brackley Morris in 1884, wrote:

When a new dance was about to commence the 'Fool' would call out, Go on! Go on! whereupon the troupe would begin again, reminding us that formerly one of the dances was called 'Trip and go'.¹⁰⁷

Unless Friend was echoing what he had read in Chappell, which must remain a possibility, this mention lends some credence to the notion that the tune was used for Morris up until the nineteenth century and almost survived until the arrival of the collectors.

¹⁰⁵ George Gregory Smith, *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904).

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Nashe, *A Pleasant Comedie, Called Summers Last Will and Testament* (London: Simon Stafford, 1600), 239-40.

¹⁰⁷ *Banbury Guardian*, 3 July 1884.

One further tune which may have a long ancestry, although the evidence is flimsy, is *Trunkles*. The dance, with its associated tune, was danced in about a dozen Cotswold villages that we know of and appears in several collector's notes from 1884 onwards, with only small variations of both tune and dance, but with variations in the name from *Trunkles* to *(Old) Trunko*, *Old Taylor* and *Trunk Hose*.



Example 3.2 *Trunkles*, played by Charles Benfield for Lower Swell Morris, collected by Butterworth, 1912.¹⁰⁸

It is unusual (but not unique) in the Morris repertoire in that it has three sections, as opposed to the usual two as in most Cotswold Morris dances. There are no traces of the tune outside the Morris repertoire and yet many Cotswold sides had a version of it in their repertoire. Heaney put forward the theory that the tune derived from *Trincalo's Reel*, which appears in a seventeenth-century play 'Albumazar', and points out some similarities between *Trunkles* and *Trincalo's Reel*.¹⁰⁹ However, I would like to put forward a counter theory, concentrating on the title *Trunk Hose*. The garment 'trunk hose' was a short pair of breeches, in vogue in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whereafter the fashion disappeared from usage. However, we have a clue that a tune of this name was extant in the sixteenth century. At that time, a comic actor named Richard Tarlton was well-known on the London stage, both as a comedian and a musician as he played the pipe and tabor. Various tunes were linked to Tarlton, including *Tarlton's Jig*. Intriguingly, a list of tunes dated c.1590 from Lleweni Hall, near Denbeigh, Wales, includes the title *Tarlton Trunke Hose*, but without providing a tune.¹¹⁰ The title reappears in the anonymous seventeenth-century play, 'The Partiall Law':

¹⁰⁸ Butterworth collection, GB 2/9.

¹⁰⁹ Michael Heaney, 'Trunkles', *The Morris Dancer* 2, no. 9 (1990), 136-9.

¹¹⁰ Sally Harper, 'An Elizabethan Tune List from Lleweni Hall, North Wales', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, 38 (2005), 45-98.

1. *Man*. Why then, you must play your selfe pretty one, for to my knowledge who have beene a souldier, their delight lyes most in such as you are.

2. *Wom*. Nay, that's as old as the beginning of the world, or *Tarlton's Trunk-hose*. Let's have Rose is red, and rose is white, and rose is wonderous bonny.

(Anon., 1615-30, Act 2, scene iv)

Unfortunately, the tune *Tarlton's Trunke Hose* has not survived but the above dialogue implies firstly that the tune was well-known enough in the early seventeenth century for the audience to recognise the reference, and secondly that it was considered an old tune, at least as old as *The Beginning of the World*, i.e. *Sellinger's Round*, a popular country dance tune of the time which can be traced back to the sixteenth century. *Trunk Hose* may have been one of the tunes that Tarlton played on stage. If so, it would have been familiar to his audiences. Further weight to the possible longevity of the tune is provided by Forrest who commented that:

there is a clear relationship between the dance and the tune *Trunkles*. Similarly there is a clear relationship between the dance and the tune *Shepherds Hey*. The simplest explanation for such a phenomenon is that these are old dance/tune combinations.¹¹¹

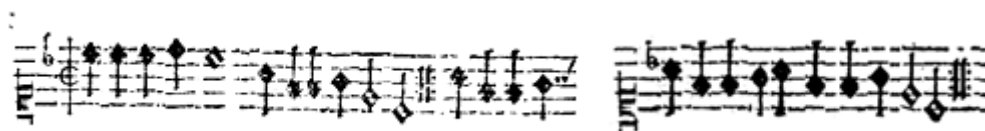
We therefore have a possible link from the late sixteenth century to the late nineteenth century, assuming that the Lleweni entry is an ancestor of the Morris tune, even though we cannot make a musical link. Rural people in the Cotswolds in the nineteenth century would not have known what 'Trunk Hose' meant as a garment, but the folk memory for tune titles is long. All of this leads to the possibility, albeit a very tenuous one, that the sixteenth century *Tarlton Trunk Hose* is the same tune as the late nineteenth century *Trunkles* and that it remained undetected in the Morris repertoire for 300 years, just as we have seen with *Shepherds Hey*.

3.2 Morris or not Morris?

The tunes *Morisco* and *Staines Morris* have both come to the attention of researchers, although neither features convincingly in the canon of tunes noted from the nineteenth century onwards. As has already been described, both were brought into service in the 1880s for the Bidford Shakesperean Morris. Early references throughout Europe mention a dance variously named *Morisco*, *Moresque*, *Moruske* and sundry other spellings. It has been surmised by researchers that the word *Morisco* gave rise to the word *Morris* and that the

¹¹¹ Forrest, *Morris Music: Some Questions*, 21.

Morisco dance is a forerunner of what we think of as Morris today, as described in Chapters 1 and 2, and thus it has been natural to consider *Morisco* as an early Morris tune. It is the earliest of the tunes that we will consider in this thesis, being first printed in Susato's *Danserye* in c.1551 as *La Mouresque* and later in Arbeau's *Orchésographie* (1589) as *Aire des Morisques*. The tune may be even older than the 1550s as Bernard Thomas in his introduction to the *Danserye* says that many of the pieces are based on chansons of the 1530s but gives no source for this information.¹¹² Moreover, Curt Sachs claims that Arbeau's tune was printed as early as 1550 in England, but again gives no source.¹¹³ After these sixteenth-century references, the tune is not found in any collection and disappears from view. Playford published a tune called *A Morisco* in 1657 and 1665, but it is unlike the sixteenth century tune.



Example 3.3 *Aire de Morisques*, from Arbeau's *Orchésographie* (1589), 94-5.

After the tune's appearances in the sixteenth century, it is forgotten and does not appear in any collection. After Ferrers revived the tunes, as he did with *Staines Morris*, for the Bidford Morris, he taught it to John Robbins, the Bidford fiddler, as *Morris Off*. When Sharp noted tunes from the Bidford Morris, he was very intrigued by the tune and took it to be a genuine survival from the sixteenth century, saying in 1907:

Just a few weeks earlier we had taken down, at Redditch, from the fiddler of the Bidford Morris-men, the same tune, note for note, as Tabourot [Arbeau] gives it. Here in truth is a signal instance of that persistence and continuity which is always cropping up, to the lasting amazement and delight of the student of Folk-music—to the delight more especially of the student who, like ourselves, holds that in our Folk-music is a treasury not to be hoarded for the delectation of the scholar, but to be expended with both hands for the revivifying of a national spirit.¹¹⁴

By the time Sharp came to publish *The Morris Book Part 2* in 1909, he had realised the error and dropped *Morisco* and other Bidford dances from the list of 'genuine' Morris dances. However, the tune took on its own life in the Morris and has since been adapted by the

¹¹² Bernard Thomas, *Danserye; Zeer Lustich Ende Bequaem Om Spelen Op Alle Musicale Instrumenten (1551)* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1936).

¹¹³ Curt Sachs, *World History of the Dance* (London: The Norton Library, 1963), 352.

¹¹⁴ Sharp and MacIlwaine, *The Morris Book Part 1*, 14-15.

Headington Morris as *Morris On*. As a postscript to the story of the Bidford repertoire, Robbins was still active in c.1930 when he was able to play most of the tunes accurately to the American collector Carpenter, along with others he had learnt in the meantime.¹¹⁵

Staines Morris (Stanes/Staynes) deserves some special attention. Both Forrest and Ward wrote about the tunes in a Morris context and it is one of the tunes that Ferrers ‘revived’. There is evidence of Morris being performed at Kingston-upon-Thames in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (although this may be due to the survival of Kingston’s civic records which were lost in other locations), a mere 11 miles from Staines, so a tune used by a Morris side from Staines or a Morris side performing in Staines might naturally be given that title.¹¹⁶

The first known appearance of the tune is in two sixteenth-century lute books (Trumbull and Ballet). It is then found in the Playford collection, being published in four successive volumes of *The Dancing Master* between 1651 to 1665, with substantially the same tune as in the lute books, but with different harmonisation.



Example 3.4 *Stanes Morris*, from Ballet’s lute book, c.1595-1600.



Example 3.5 *Staines Morris*, from Playford’s *The English Dancing Master*, 1651.

¹¹⁵ Carpenter collection, cylinder recordings: Cylinder 111, JMC/1/10/113; Disc Side 247, JMC/1/11/253; Disc Side 248, JMC/1/11/254; Disc Side 249, JMC/1/11/255.

¹¹⁶ Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing*, 161-7.

The tune then reappears in a significantly different form in a 1713 publication by Daniel Wright.¹¹⁷ Wright had printed two versions of *Staines Morris*, both different from the earlier versions but derived from them. This is noteworthy in that it suggests that the tune had gone through several iterations of aural transmission before Wright included them in his collection, lending evidence to the notion that it had led a healthy existence as a folk tune for over a hundred years. Wright's comment that his tunes were 'Never Before Published' adds to its possible credentials as a tune collected from aural tradition, not copied from some other collection. Moreover, Wright's second version, shown in Example 3.7, would be suitable for playing on the pipe once transposed to D, whereas the earlier versions and Wright's first version would be problematic on the pipe, given the accidentals in the tune.



Example 3.6 *Staines Morris*, Wright's first version in *An Extraordinary Collection* (1713).



Example 3.7 *Staines Morris*, Wright's second version in *An Extraordinary Collection* (1713).

Example 3.7 would be very playable on the pipe in D, and it is interesting to speculate that Wright heard this version from a Morris performance. This is not conclusive proof of its having been used as a Morris tune but strongly suggests that it could have been.

The tune does not reappear in collections thereafter until it was revived by Ferrers. In Ferrers' manuscript against the tune he noted 'arranged not genuine'.¹¹⁸ He named the tune *Bluff King Hal* and taught the tune to Robbins, the Bidford fiddler. Robbins' version, as collected by Sharp, cast the tune in the major mode as opposed to the Dorian mode of the older version, but it is not known whether this was an adaptation by Ferrers or Robbins.¹¹⁹ Sharp was at the time so convinced that the tune was a genuine revival from many years beforehand that he

¹¹⁷ William Wright, *An Extraordinary Collection of Pleasant & Merry Humours, Never before Published* (London, 1713).

¹¹⁸ Bradke, 'John Robbins and the Shakespearean Bidford Morris Tune Repertoire', 40.

¹¹⁹ FDN CJS2/10/948.

published it in *Morris Book Part 1*, but later revised his view on the authenticity of the Bidford Morris and dropped all reference to it in subsequent Morris books.

Curiously, George Butterworth, in his c.1912 visit to Longborough, Gloucestershire, to collect Morris dances, noted a dance *Staines Morris*, but did not take down any tune. One can speculate that it came into the Longborough repertoire via association with the Bidford Morris.

These tunes fall into several categories:

- Collected tunes with a traceable or probably ancestry.
- Tunes mentioned in order documents as possible Morris tunes, but which did not survive to the collectors.
- Tunes which were collected but which were revived from older manuscripts rather than surviving in circulation.

In order to write Chapters 3 and 4, I have drawn extensively on the Cotswold Morris tunes in collections in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library collections and various other smaller collections and archives, and have compared these tunes with older collections and publications, especially *The Dancing Master*.

Much of Chapter 3 will deal with the collection *The Dancing Master*, the most important collection of tunes of that era which was published regularly from 1651 to 1728. John Playford (1623-86/7) was a music publisher who not only published country dances complete with tunes and instructions for the dances in the *Dancing Master* series, but also published many books to encourage the playing of instruments. On his death, his son Henry (1657-c.1707) continued to publish the *Dancing Master* until his death, whereupon John Young (c.1672-c.1732) continued its publication up to 1728. It is hard to overstate the importance of this collection, spanning nearly 80 years and containing over 500 tunes, several of which, as explained below, are ancestors of Cotswold Morris tunes.

3.3 Early tunes (pre-1650)

3.3.1 Greensleeves

The oldest traceable melody in the canon of Cotswold Morris is the tune *Greensleeves*, still recognisably the same tune from 1584 to present day Morris dances. The longevity of this tune is remarkable, from the sixteenth century to the modern-day ice cream vans, ringtones and

doorbell chimes. The first instance of *Greensleeves* appears in 1584 as a song in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*.

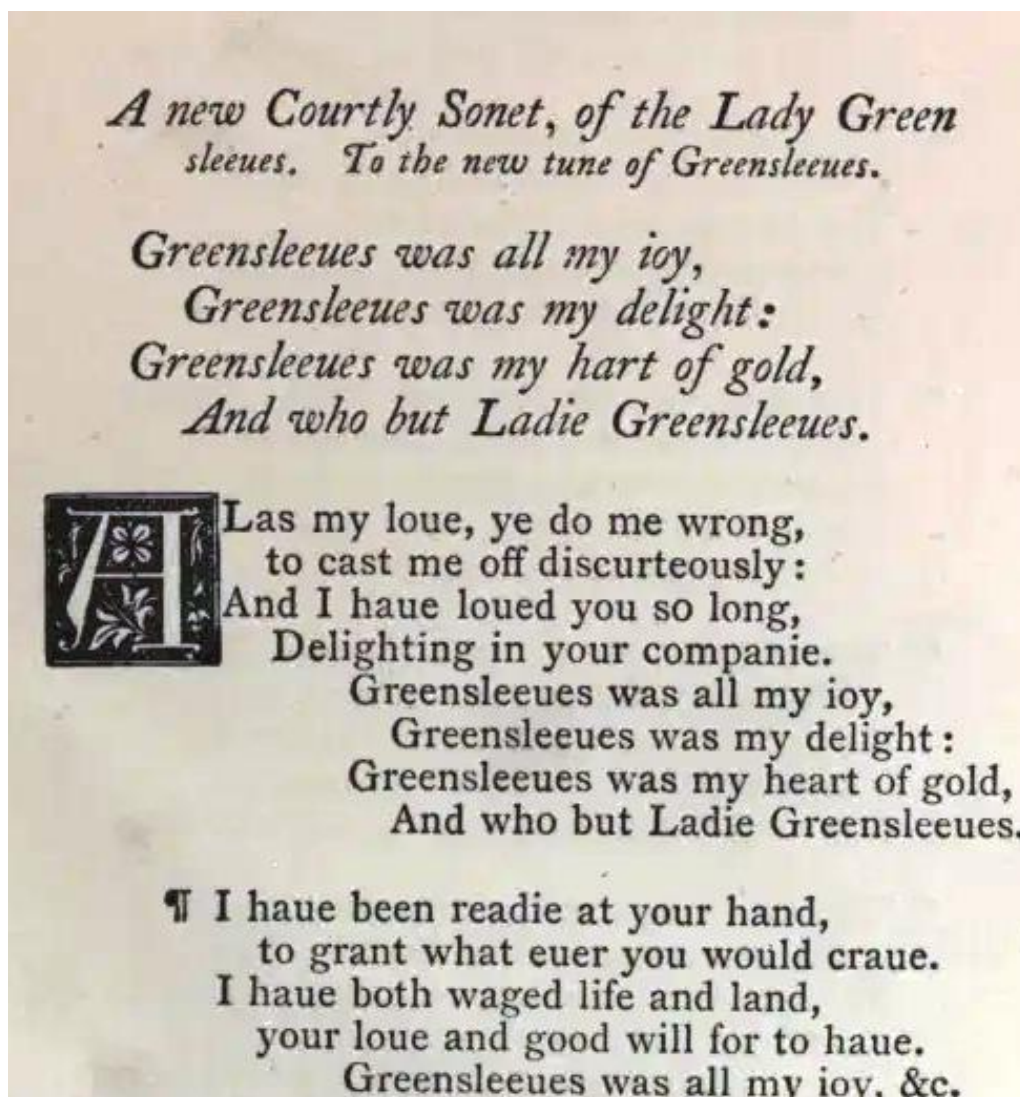


Figure 3.3 *Greensleeves*, in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*, 1584.¹²⁰

The 'new tune' is not given in this particular document but, at about the same time, we have the tune appearing in lute tablature in an anonymous lute book dated 1590-1600 as *green sleeves*.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Clement Robinson, *A Handful of Pleasant Delights: Containing Sundry New Sonnets and Delectable Histories in Divers Kinds of Metre* (1584), 17.

¹²¹ Dublin, Trinity College, MS D.1.21/1.F.91.



Figure 3.4 *Greene Sleeves*, from the William Ballet Lute Book, Trinity College MS. 408/2.



Example 3.8 Transcription of *Greene Sleeves*, from the William Ballet Lute Book.

At about the same time, although one cannot be sure about dates, the tune appeared in other manuscripts, namely the Matthew Holmes Lute Book, Francis Cutting manuscript and others.¹²² These manuscripts attest to the popularity of the tune in the late sixteenth century. Although the song may have been new in 1584, the text and the melody have older roots. The theme of the text of unrequited love, despite the man showering lavish gifts of clothing to the lady, harkening back to medieval chivalry. The melody itself is built on a ground base popular during the sixteenth century consisting of the pattern I-VII-I-V followed by II-VII-(I V)-I. This

¹²² Cambridge, University Library, Dd.3.18, Mathew Holmes lute book; British Library, Add. MS 31392, Francis Cutting lute book.

sequence is found in many sixteenth-century works and echoes of it are found in English folk songs such as *Dives and Lazarus* or even more modern compositions such as Jacques Brel's *Amsterdam*.

The popularity of the tune is attested by the fact that from the seventeenth century onwards, it was published in tune books and also many broadside political ballads, directed to be sung to the tune, with such titles as

A most excellent Godly new Ballad: [shew]ing the manifold abuses of this wicked world, the intolerable pride of people, the wantonnesse [of] women, the dissimulation of flatterers, the subtilty of deceivers, the beastlines of drunkards, the filthinesse of Whoredome, the unthriftines of Gamesters, the cruelty of Landlords, with a number of other inconveniences. To the tune of Greene-sleeves.¹²³

or

A warning to all false Traitors by example of 14. Wherof vi. were executed in divers places neere about London, and 2. neere Braintford the 28. day of August, 1588. Also at Tyborne were executed the 30. day vj. namely 5. Men and one Woman. To the tune of Greensleeves.¹²⁴

The tune therefore was adaptable enough to have been used in several ways – as a song, as an instrumental solo or duet, and, as we shall see, as a country dance tune. It was published as a country dance in Playford's *Dancing Master* continuously between 1695 and 1728, firstly as *Greensleeves and Pudding Pyes* (1695-1716) and then as *Greensleeves and Yellow Lace* (1721-8), no doubt adding to the tune's popularity. Later publications, such as Walsh's *Compleat Country Dancing Master* (1740), continued to print *Greensleeves*. From Playford's 1695 version onwards, there is a slight variation in the tune in that bars 3-4 of the B music change, as shown in Example 3.9.



Example 3.9 *Greensleeves*, bars 3-4, variations between pre-1695 and post-1695.

This slight change to the melody may have been occasioned by the inability of some instruments with a limited diatonic range, for example the pipe and tabor or bagpipe, to reach the lower notes of the tune, and is reflected in the versions collected for Morris. On the pipe

¹²³ Manchester Central Library, Blackletter Ballads, BR f 821.04 B49.

¹²⁴ National Library of Scotland, Crawford C1582-1627.

and tabor, the tune would be played in E (Dorian). An extremely adroit taborer might be able to manage the tune in A, but it would mean a good deal of ‘pinching’ of notes and falls very awkwardly under the fingers. It is much easier to play in E and to rephrase bar 4 where the tunes falls below the tonic to the dominant, simply dropping a tone instead. There are variations within the Morris canon but a standard version is exemplified by the version collected in Winchcombe, Gloucestershire (Example 3.10).



Example 3.10 *Greensleeves*, collected from William Davies, Winchcombe, 1909.¹²⁵

The vast majority of the Morris versions of *Greensleeves* from the 1880s onwards are slight variations of this form, and even retained these characteristics when the Morris repertoire moved from the pipe and tabor to the fiddle or free reed instruments. Versions of the tune as performed by fiddle players are characterised by use of notes below D which are not available to the pipe (for example, the version in Example 3.11).



Example 3.11 *Greensleeves*, from Richard Bond, Idbury, Oxfordshire, collected by Sharp 1923.¹²⁶

The extent to which the tune was developed in aural tradition is shown by a version collected from the Stow-on-the-Wold fiddle player John Mason by Cecil Sharp in 1909 In which the third note of the scale has changed from a minor to a major, thereby putting the tune into the mixolydian mode. This particular version is a variation brought in by the fiddle as the only way

¹²⁵ FDN CJS2/10/2144.

¹²⁶ Sharp, *Folk tunes*, vol.23, p. 4968.

to play it on a D tabor pipe would be in A mixolydian, a key which would be very unfamiliar to Morris taborers and therefore unlikely to be played thus.



Example 3.12 *Greensleeves*, played by John Mason, Stow-on-the-Wold, and collected by Sharp, 28 March 1907.¹²⁷

The use of the tune in the Morris context is very specialised. Its main function is to accompany the ‘bacca’ [‘tobacco’] pipe dance, invariably accompanied by *Greensleeves*. The dance itself is atypical of the Cotswold repertoire in that it is a solo dance over crossed clay ‘churchwarden’ pipes, similar to the Scottish sword dance or the many variations of the broom dance. The skill is that the dancer has to step over the pipes in a set pattern without breaking them, which would probably bring about the penalty of having to stand a drink for the rest of the side. The tune did not stop at Morris. In some Gloucestershire locations, the tune lingered on in their local mummers plays, even after the Morris tradition had stopped there. William Bunting of Sherborne, whose grandfather had danced with the Morris, recited the local mummers play to the collector James Madison Carpenter in c.1930, which ended with the speech:

*OLD MAN: Strike up music and merrily play
So the lord and lady can have content before they go away
Greensleeves and yellow leaves
Now me boys, dance apace.*

Similar versions were noted from the mummers plays of nearby villages of Chedworth and Bibury. Carpenter did not note either the tune or the dance, but we have a small clue from the Bibury play which ends:

*Me yud’s [‘head’] so big an me wit’s so small
I’ll play ye a tune to plze [sic] ye all
Greensleeves and yellow lace
My four boys dance apace
(4 boys dance. Old woman with tin whistle plays)*

¹²⁷ FDN CJS2/10/1255.

The 'old woman' in question is one of the comic characters of the mummers play and the dance could have been a four-handed reel, but that is pure speculation.

3.3.2 *Shepherds Hey*

While the tune *Greensleeves* was ubiquitous in the early modern period, another tune first noted in the sixteenth century, namely *Shepherds Hey*, led a sheltered existence, unnoticed by compilers of tune collections and researchers but apparently leading a long underground career before appearing in the nineteenth century Morris repertoire. When the tune first appeared, it was not as *Shepherds Hay* but as an untitled tune in a late sixteenth-century book of lute arrangements, recognisably a version of *Shepherds Hey*. From then until the 1680s, it appeared in several guises, only one having the name *Sheaphards Hay* [sic]. The shape of the tune is *passamezzo moderno*, a musical form widely used in the sixteenth century and recognisable by the ground bass of I IV I V I IV I-V I. This form can be readily discerned in pieces such as Arbeau's *Les Bouffons* and in later folk tunes such as *The Keel Row*, *There's nae good luck about the house*, versions of *The Dorset Four-Hand Reel* and in the USA as an old-timey tune *Old Molly Hare*. The first instance, as referred to above, is in William Ballet's *Lute Book* (c.1595), illustrated in Example 3.14. Playford knew the tune and published it three times under various names, not in his *Dancing Master* collection but in a series of tutor books to learn to play the lyra viol: *May Time*; *Maying Time*; and *Fain I would* (1682).

Playford did not call it a Morris tune, but the title of *May(ing) Time* gives us a strong clue as May was and still is the month when Morris dancing is most active. No composer is given by Playford for the tune so perhaps he heard it being used for Morris, remembered it and then published it. The title of *Fain I would* in 1682 is curious as a completely different tune of that name appears elsewhere in Playford, and one suspects some mis-labelling or mis-editing on Playford's part.

After the seventeenth century, there is no trace of the tune until 1885 when it is listed as one of the dances performed by D'Arcy Ferrers' Bidford Morris and research over the next 30 years or so revealed that it was one of the best-known Cotswold Morris tunes. In other words, the tune went unnoticed by compilers of tune books for over 200 years but arguably led a healthy life as a Morris tune for all that time, hardly unchanged since 1600.



Example 3.13 *Shepherds Hey*, Morris version played by Henry Taylor (fiddle), Longborough, and collected by Sharp, 13 May 1910.¹²⁸

From Example 3.13 it is clear how the tune has developed from the early versions. The William Ballet version's opening bars (Example 3.14) at first glance do not resemble the later versions but the motif of note-higher note-note-lower note is evident. The second half of the Ballet tune is close to the first half of the Taylor tune, and the rhythmic motif of ♪♪♪♪ is evident in both, as is the octave jump in the last bar. Other early instances of the tune are given in Examples 3.15-20.



Example 3.14 Untitled, in William Ballet's lute book, c.1595.



Example 3.15 Untitled, in Kassel 108.3 (Germany), c.1600.

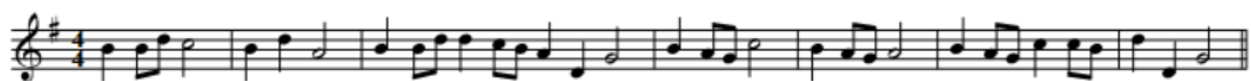


Example 3.16 *May Time*, in Playford's *Musicks Recreation on the Lyra-Viol*, 1652



Example 3.17 *Shepherds Hay*, in Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS 808, Sutherland lyra viol and keyboard manuscript

¹²⁸ FDT CJS2/10/2490.



Example 3.18 *Whom Scorne Yea*, Southern Lyra Viol



Example 3.19 *Maying Time*, in Playford's *Musicks Recreation on the Lyra-Viol*, 1669



Example 3.20 *Fain I would*, in Playford's *Musicks Recreation on the Lyra-Viol*, 1682

The communality of these versions, apart from Ballet and one note in the Playford 1682 version, is the reduced pattern BCBA BCD.

3.4 *The Dancing Master* and Morris

It is therefore worth spending some time comparing the tunes published in the *Dancing Masters* series with later Morris tunes as in many cases, the first known instance of the existence of a tune is in the former. *The Dancing Master* drew in tunes that were already in circulation: we know that *Greensleeves*, *Shepherds Hey* and *Staines Morris* predated their appearance in Playford and the same may apply to other tunes listed in the early publications. Some of the tunes in *The Dancing Master* may have been old when Playford published them for the first time. For example, instructions for a dance *Bobbing Jone* are found in a handwritten manuscript dated between 1621 and 1647.¹²⁹

Morris researchers have concentrated mainly on the music published in the *Dancing Master* series, which is the easiest to access, but one should not overlook the Playford series of books dedicated to encouraging people, especially younger people, to learn the 'cithren' [cittern], gittern, lyra viol, theorbo and flageolet. These tutors were written for the literate gentry, not for the unlettered poorer classes so no such tutors were written for lower-status instruments such as the bagpipe or the tabor pipe. These tutors are aimed at the beginner or the near-beginner, as suggested by the opening rubric of the 1652 cittern book:

¹²⁹ Harvard University, Houghton Library, Lovelace MS Eng. 1356.

containing many New and Excellent Tunes, both Easie and Delightfull to the Practitioner. With plain and easie Instructions

At the introduction to the lyra viol tutor, Playford writes:

I thought good to make an addition of some new lessons, more easie and delightful for young Practioners

The music is not technically demanding – it offers just enough challenge to be a diversion, not a frustration, to the amateur.

In other words, the tunes chosen for these tutors are perceived by Playford to be easier to learn and play. The tutors were published in various editions between 1651 and 1682 and, like *The Dancing Master*, contain tunes that are clearly ancestors of Morris tunes and others that may have been. Unfortunately, some books of the series have not survived but from what does survive, we can pick out the following clear relatives of Morris tunes in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Relatives of Morris tunes.

| Playford tune | Publication | Morris tune |
|---------------------|---|---|
| <i>Bobbing Joe</i> | <i>Musicks Delight on the cithern</i> , 1652 and 1666 | <i>Bobbing Joe</i> <i>Bobbing-a-Joe</i> <i>Bobby and Joan</i> <i>Bobbing Joe</i> (Bampton 1897)* |
| <i>Greensleeves</i> | <i>Musicks Delight on the cithern</i> , 1652 | <i>Greensleeves/Bacca Pipes Jig</i> |
| <i>May(ing)</i> | <i>Musicks Delight on the cithern</i> , 1652 and | <i>Shepherds Hey</i> |
| <i>Time/</i> | 1666; <i>Musicks recreation on the viol, lyra-</i> | |
| <i>Fain I Would</i> | <i>way</i> , 1655 and 1682 | |
| <i>Trip and Go</i> | <i>Musicks Delight on the cithern</i> , 1666 | <i>Trip and Go</i> |

* not later Bampton version *Bobbing Joe*, which is a different tune.

Shepherds Hey, *Greensleeves* and *Trip and Go* have already been discussed above. Of the other tunes, only two were reproduced in *The Dancing Master*, namely *Bobbing Joe* and *Greensleeves*.

The *Dancing Master* publications themselves shed much more light on Morris repertoire and a number of tunes can clearly be seen as ancestors of the Morris canon, while others can be seen as leading to Morris with varying degrees of certainty. Thus, the tunes from *The Dancing Master* listed in Table 3.2 can be shown to relate directly to Morris.

Table 3.2 Morris relations with the *Dancing Master*.

| Playford tune | Publication date | Morris tune |
|--|------------------|--|
| <i>Bobbing Joe</i> | 1651-1728 | <i>Bobbing Joe</i> (see Table 3.1) |
| <i>Constant Billie</i> | 1728 | <i>Constant Billy</i> |
| <i>Greensleeves and Pudding Pyes</i> | 1695-1716 | <i>Greensleeves/Bacca Pipes Jig</i> |
| <i>Greensleeves and Yellow Lace</i> | 1721-28 | |
| <i>Happy Clown/The Wallpoole</i> | 1718-28 | <i>Lads-a-Buncham</i> (Sherborne) <i>Dearest Dicky</i> |
| <i>Lady Catherine Ogle</i> | 1686 | <i>Highland Mary</i> |
| <i>Lady of Pleasure</i> | 1690-1728 | <i>Ladies (of) Pleasure</i> |
| <i>Lumps of Pudding</i> | 1701-28 | <i>Lumps of Plum Pudding</i> |
| <i>Old Oxford/Peace and Plenty</i> | 1728 | <i>(Old) Mother/Molly Oxford</i> <i>Old Tom of Oxford</i> |
| <i>The Rummer</i> | 1728 | <i>Swaggering Boney</i> <i>Old Frog Dance</i> <i>How do you do</i> (Sherborne) |
| <i>Saturday Night and Sunday Morning</i> | 1651-1728 | <i>Monday and Tuesday (Saturday Night)</i> . <i>Possibly also Saturday Night</i> (Bucknell and Longborough) |

3.4.1 *Bobbing Joe*

The fact that Playford published *Bobbing Joe* in every edition of *The Dancing Master* for nearly 80 years is testament to its popularity, and as seen above, the tune was already in circulation before appearing in *The Dancing Master*. According to Chappell, it appears in Patrick Carey's *Ballades* (1651) for the song, *I ne'er yet saw such a lovely creature*, and thereafter in various ballad operas, namely *The Bay's Opera* (1730), *The Mad House* (1737) and *A Cure for Scold* (1738). The tune also appears in Walsh's *Compleat Dancing Master* (1740) and in the tune book of John Malchair (1760-1812) (Malchair VWML).

The evidence then, is that it was a well-known tune and easily assimilated into the Morris repertoire. It was noted by Manning in his 1897 article with a tune hardly altered over 250 years from the Playford version, and also appears in a similar tune in the Badby Morris repertoire, reportedly from an unpublished manuscript by Butterworth. Whereas the early tunes and the aforementioned versions are all in the Dorian mode, later musicians either kept to this mode or moulded the tune to the Ionian, but with the same tune contour and with the name rendered to *Bobby and Joan* or *Bobbing-a-Joe*.



Example 3.21 *Bobbing Joe*, in Playford's *Dancing Master*, 1651-1728.



Example 3.22 *Bob and Joan*, noted by Manning from Headington Morris, 1897.

Other Morris musicians played the tune in the Ionian mode, keeping the same tune structure but shifting the notes. This is a good example of how different musicians 'hear' a tune. Modality does not seem important, nor the actual note intervals, but what really matters is the overall shape of the tune.



Example 3.23 '*Bobby and Joan*', communicated by Henry Franklin, Fieldtown, 17 December 1910.¹³⁰

3.4.2 *Constant Billy*

The tune *Constant Billy* is the most collected tune and dance in the Cotswold Morris canon, having been noted at least 27 times from separate informants, usually as *Constant Billy* or *Billy Boy* and once as *None so Pretty*. So, what makes this tune so popular amongst Morris performers? Forrest has carried out a forensic analysis of the tune where he concludes that it is 'a good tune to dance to, not only because it has a suitable rhythm, but also, and more importantly, because the melodic shape emphasizes key dance movement'.¹³¹ Certainly, Morris dancers were in agreement with Forrest, judging by the number of times the tune appears in their repertoires. Both Forrest and Sharp state that the earliest publication of the tune is in Walsh's *Compleat Dancing Master* (1718), a version which therefore predates the *Dancing Master* version (1726) by 8 years. Moreover, there is evidence that the tune is older than the eighteenth century; Kidson claimed that the air was:

¹³⁰ FDN CJS2/10/2556.

¹³¹ Forrest, *Morris Music: Some Questions*, 18-19.

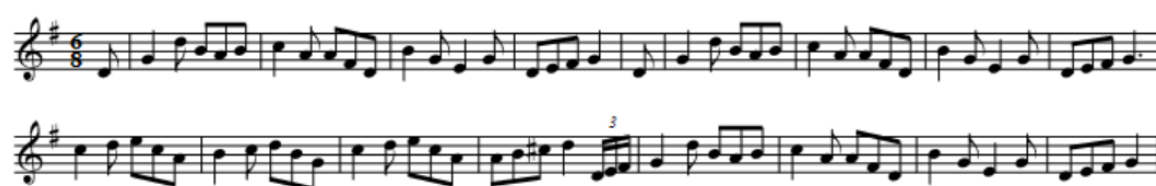
a late seventeenth century air found on half-sheet music with the song 'Constant Billy' known in old books as 'Over hills and lofty mountains' or 'Lofty mountains'.¹³²

John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728) has a song *Cease your Funning*, the first part of which matches the Morris tune but in a different rhythm, and this version is also used for the Welsh tune *The Ash Grove* (Welsh: *Llwyn Onn*), but this latter tune does not appear until the nineteenth century. These sources are examined in great detail by Chappell;¹³³ suffice to say here that when Playford published *Constant Billey* in 1726, the tune had apparently been in circulation for some years.



Example 3.24 *Constant Billey*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1726 (transposed down from Bb).

The Morris versions have the same basic structure in the A music but a different B music. The jump from G to F# is awkward on the tabor pipe, which may have prompted musicians to rethink and rephrase the first four bars of the B music. Moreover, the rhythmic motif at the start of several bars ♪ ♪ would not be suitable for Morris steps which require a steady strong on beat. The Morris versions only show slight variation from location to location.



Example 3.25 *Constant Billy*, played by John Robbins, Bidford Morris, and collected by Sharp, 2 June 1906.¹³⁴

3.4.3 *The Happy Clown/Lads a-Buncham/Dearest Dicky*

Few tunes have survived unscathed from the time of Playford to late nineteenth-century Cotswold Morris, but one exception is the tune *The Happy Clown*, also known as *The*

¹³² Frank Kidson, *The Beggar's Opera: Its Predecessors and Successors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 74.

¹³³ Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 665.

¹³⁴ FDN CJS2/10/952.

Wallpoole. It appears in the *Dancing Master* in 1718 and 1728, where it has changed little from the Morris tune *Lads a-Buncham*, collected in Sherborne, Gloucestershire, almost 200 years after the Playford publication (Examples 3.26-27).



Example 3.26 *The Happy Clown*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1718 and 1728.



Example 3.27 *Lads a-Buncham*, communicated by George Simpson of Sherborne to Sharp, 25 July 1908.¹³⁵

Another tune derived from *The Happy Clown* is *Dearest Dicky*, collected from Henry Franklin of Fieldtown in 1910, probably the same tune as *Dear is my Dicky*, noted without transcription in 1911 as a tune used by the Ascot-under-Wychwood Morris. The villages of Sherborne in Gloucestershire and Fieldtown in Oxfordshire, properly called Leafield, are close neighbours and were familiar with each other's dances, so the fact that the Sherborne tune is closer to the Playford version than Fieldtown's suggests that Sherborne learnt it first and Fieldtown learned it from them.



Example 3.28 *Dearest Dicky*, communicated by Henry Franklin, Fieldtown, to Sharp, 31 December 1910.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ FDN CJS2/10/1724.

¹³⁶ FDN CJS2/10/2560.

Shortly after the tune was published in Playford, it appeared in two important ballad operas: Ramsay's *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725), hailed as Scotland's first opera, and Gaye's popular *Beggar's Opera* (1728) for the song *I'm like a skiff in the ocean toss'd*. It therefore would have been a well-known tune familiar to rural audiences. Reductive versions of the tunes shows clearly how the tune has varied over the three known versions:

Playford: GBDG FDCG GBDD GEBG DDDC CCCB GGGG DAGG

Simpson: GBBB DEBG GBBB GDBG DCDC CCDC EEGG EBBG

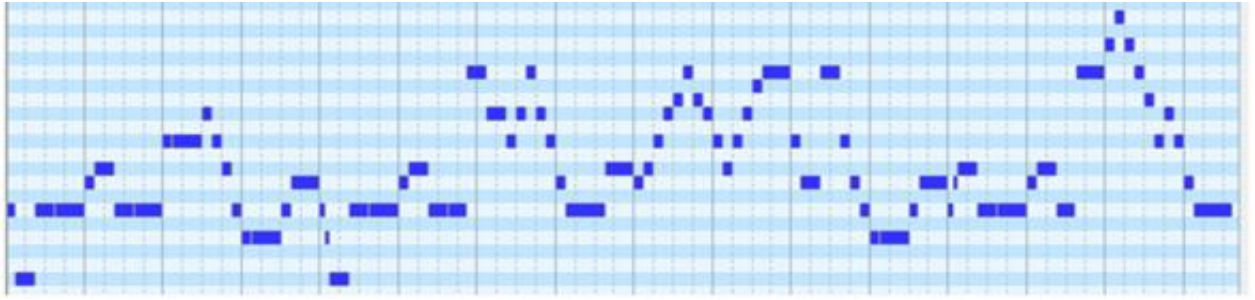
Franklin: GBCD GEBF GBCD GEBG DCCC DCCC EEGG DAGG

3.4.4 *Lady Catherine Ogle/Highland Mary*

Some resemblances between tunes in *The Dancing Master* and Cotswold Morris are evident and others take some depth of analysis to reveal the resemblance. One such tune is *Highland Mary*, a tune collected five times in the Cotswolds and mentioned several other times. The predecessor of this tune can be found in the 1686 edition of *The Dancing Master as Lady Catherine Ogle*. However, the tune is older than the Playford publication and one unconfirmed source attributes it to the Irish harper, Rory dall O'Cahan, who spent the early seventeenth century in Scotland. This raises the possibility that the tune was written in honour of Catherine Ogle (c.1586-1629), the eighth Baroness of Ogle, a village in Northumberland, and was composed either during her lifetime or shortly after her death. The tune took on a vigorous life in aural tradition under various titles namely *Catherine Logie*, *Ketrin Ogie* and *Bonny Katherine Oggy*. As such, it was printed many times in the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, nearly always in Scottish collections. The connection at this point with Cotswold Morris is still tenuous, except for two pieces of evidence. The first of these is the tune profile. Even though *Lady Catherine Ogle* is consistently in the Aeolian mode and all the Cotswold versions are in the Ionian, the profiles show enough resemblance in the rise and fall of the tune to indicate a common origin.



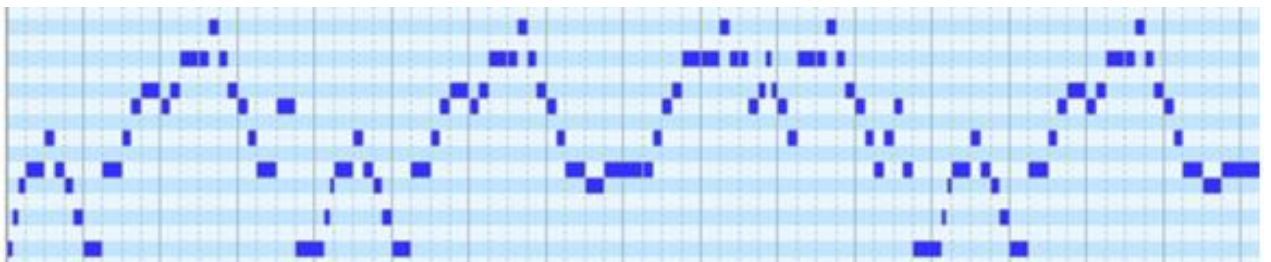
Example 3.29 *Lady Catherine Ogle*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1686.



Example 3.30 Profile of *Lady Cathering Ogle*.



Example 3.31 *Highland Mary*, played by William Wells (fiddle), and collected by Sharp, 11 August 1909.¹³⁷



Example 3.32 Profile of *Highland Mary*, as played by William Wells.

The transition of a tune so well entrenched in the Scottish repertoire in a minor mode to a tune in the major key in the English Midlands with a different title might seem to stretch credibility were it not for one more piece of evidence, for which we turn to the poet Robert Burns. Burns used the tune as a vehicle for his poem, ‘Highland Mary’ (1792), thus providing the title for the Cotswold tune. So, it is still an enigma how the tune could have evolved from the seventeenth-century versions to the nineteenth-century versions found in the Cotswolds. One could speculate that the tune was, like others, undetected in the Morris repertoire for many years, quietly evolving and eventually picking up the ‘Highland Mary’ title in the late eighteenth century. However, this is speculative and, unless we find an ‘intermediate’ copy, we will never know.

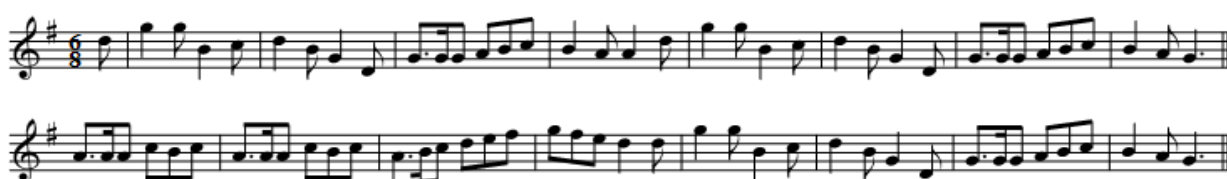
¹³⁷ FDN CJS2/10/2257.

3.4.5 *Lady of Pleasure*

While the derivation of some Morris tunes is easy to observe, others pose more problems. The Morris *Ladies (of) Pleasure* clearly has an ancestor in Playford's *Lady of Pleasure*, but the musical lines are blurred. *Lady of Pleasure* first appears in the *Dancing Master* in 1690 and was repeated thereafter in every subsequent edition up until 1728. One might assume from this that the tune was in common circulation, but it does not appear in other tune collections until collected as *Ladies of Pleasure* from the Morris fiddler, Charles Benfield, in 1912 and later as *Ladies Pleasure* by the Travelling Morrice in Fieldtown, these being the only two occasions when it was noted. It is instructive to compare the versions as the Playford tune was not taken note by note into the Morris canon but had gone through several iterations of aural tradition.

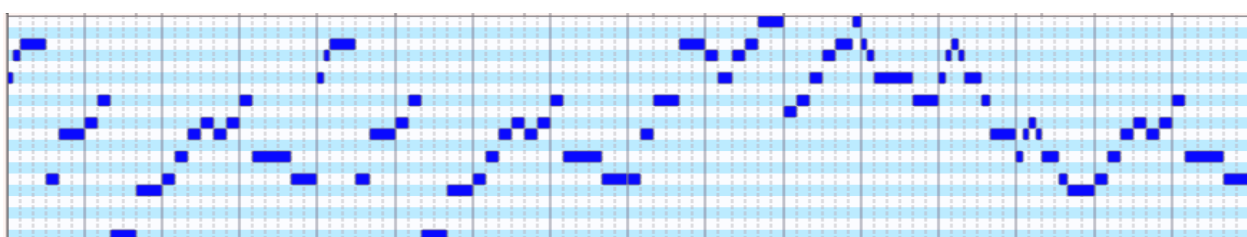


Example 3.33 *Lady of Pleasure*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1690-1728.

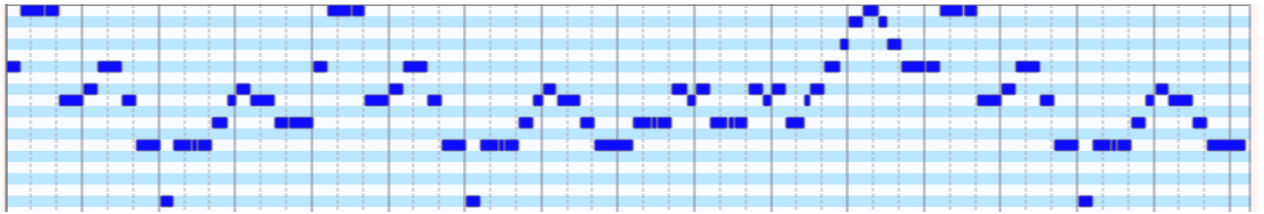


Example 3.34 *Ladies of Pleasure*, played by George Benfield (fiddle) and collected by Butterworth, 1912.

Several motifs occur in these two versions, enough to show that the Benfield tune is a descendant of the Playford tune. The leap to G'' in bars 1, 5 and 20 is distinctive, as well as the rising and falling motif in bars 7-8. The resemblance between the two versions becomes more apparent when we look at the contours of the tunes in Examples 3.35-36.



Example 3.35 Profile tune contour of Playford's *Lady of Pleasure*.



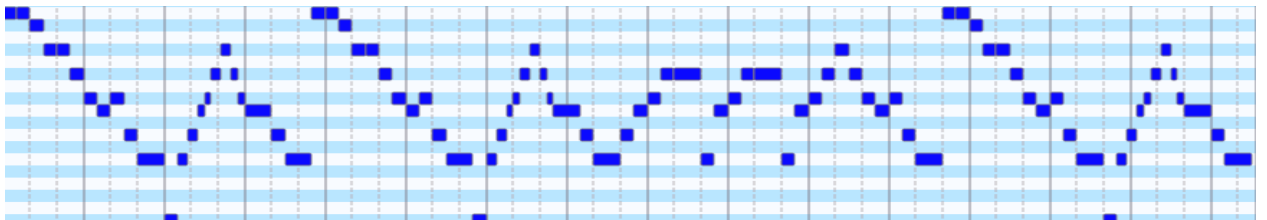
Example 3.36 Profile tune contour of Benfield's *Ladies of Pleasure*.

The resemblance is less apparent when we look at the tune *Ladies Pleasure* from Fieldtown, collected in the 1920s (Example 3.37).



Example 3.37 *Ladies Pleasure*, Fieldtown Morris, collected by Travelling Morrice, 1920s.

At first glance, the tune has moved on considerably since Playford but the jump to G'' in bars 1, 5 and 20, as well as traces of the rising and falling motif in the final bars, are still apparent.



Example 3.38 Profile tune contour of Fieldtown's *Ladies Pleasure*.

We might say that, whereas the Benfield version may derive from Playford, the Fieldtown version may derive from Benfield but has been elaborated by another iteration of Morris musicians. This is speculation but does demonstrate how aural tradition can shape a tune to a considerable extent.

The fact that musicians should retain in their memories the shape of a tune through several generations is not surprising. According to Sirvart Poldian:

melodic contour or outline seems to be one of the most basic characteristics of tunes. It appears to leave a lasting impression upon the human mind, surviving the uncertainties of oral transmission, the whims of editors, of periods and of styles.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ S. Poldian, 'Melodic Contour in Traditional Music', *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, 3 (1951), 30-5.

3.4.6 Lumps of (Plum) Pudding

One of the more popular and long-lived tunes in the eighteenth century was *Lumps of Pudding*, which was published in every edition of the *Dancing Master* series between 1701 and 1728. This version of the tune is in three sections, with the second section being an elaboration with divisions of the first. Thereafter, the tune appears in a number of different contexts: in *The Beggar's Opera* as *Thus I stand like the Turk with his doxies around* and as a comic, slightly bawdy song *When I was in the Low Country* in Thomas D'Urfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy*. The term 'lumps of pudding' in Morris parlance came to mean a euphemism for bruises but this colloquialism is not found elsewhere. Sam Bennet from Ilmington sang:

Lumps o' plum pudding an' pieces o' pie
Me mammy gi'en me for tellin' a lie¹³⁹

The tune appeared in Scotland where Robert Burns used it for the song *Content wi' Little* (1794) and in a collection of Welsh collection of dances from Langadfan in a version that had obviously gone through a process of change by aural tradition.¹⁴⁰ It seems therefore that the tune was well-known and would easily have reached the ears of rural Morris musicians.

When the tune was used for Morris repertoire, it was used consistently as a solo jig, and the form of the tune had changed, along with its title. It was now *Lumps of Plum Pudding* with the tune changed from the Dorian mode to the Ionian. The contour of the tune and phrasing is still apparent, except that the Morris version has lost the middle section of the *Dancing Master* version. The tune was collected several times in Cotswold Morris, always to accompany a solo jig, and all the Morris versions are in the Ionian mode, even though *the Dancing Master* version would be perfectly playable on the pipe. The Morris versions are all similar and all clearly show the derivation from Playford's time, but demonstrate the Morris musician's tendency to move tunes from the Dorian to the Ionian mode, a feature will be shown to appear in several Morris tunes.



Example 3.39 *Lumps of Pudding*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1701-28 (missing middle section).

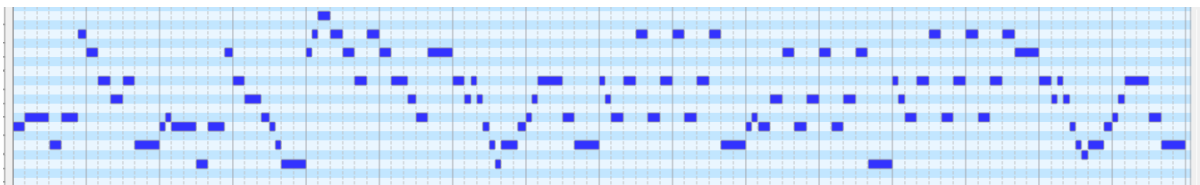
¹³⁹ Carpenter Collection, JMC/1/1/1/H, 00775.

¹⁴⁰ National Library of Wales, William Jones, *Llangadfan Dances*, 1785.

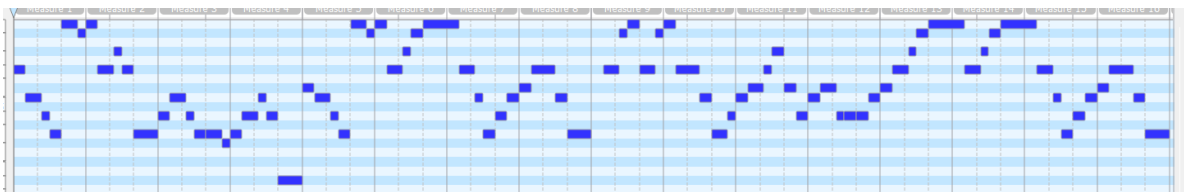


Example 3.40 *Lumps of Plum Pudding*, communicated by Ted Smith, Bledington.¹⁴¹

The similarities are shown more clearly when one views the profile of the two tunes, where the rises and falls occur at the same places and both versions have the distinctive ending, albeit in a different mode and another example of how a tune has weathered 200 years of transmission.



Example 3.41 Profile line contour of the *Dancing Master* version of *Lumps of Pudding*.



Example 3.42 Profile line contour of Smith's *Lumps of Plum Pudding*.

3.4.7 *Old Oxford/Old Mother (Molly, Old Tom) of Oxford*

The tune *Old Oxford* appears late in *The Dancing Master*, only being found in the 1728 edition, with the alternative title *Peace and Plenty*. The origin of the tune has not been discovered to date, but Walsh published it in 1713 in a version very similar to that in the *Dancing Master*. There is no doubt that the tune gave rise to the various Morris versions collected under different names, namely: *Molly Oxford* (Ilmington, John Mason (Stow-on-the-Wold)), *Old Molly Oxford* (Bampton) and *Mother Oxford* (Steeple Claydon, Bampton (where it was also known as *Old Tom of Oxford*)). Fieldtown Morris had a different tune called *Molly Oxford*, which is not related.

¹⁴¹ Butterworth MSS collection, GB/2/11.

The Morris versions all have a similar structure to the early published versions but have changed modality from the Aeolian to the Ionian, as with other transitions from Playford into Morris.



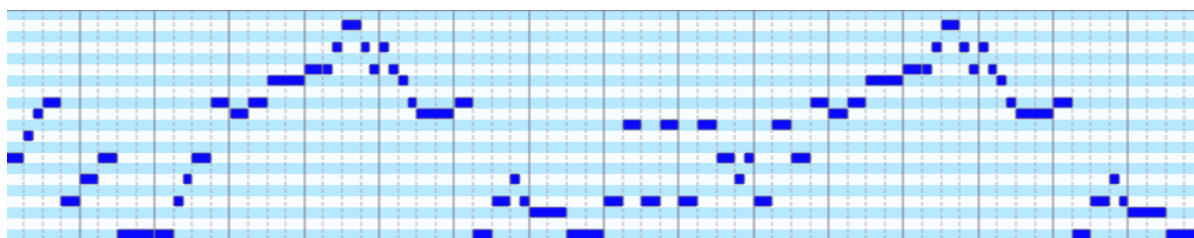
Example 3.43 *Old Oxford*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1728.

This version of the tune would not be suitable for playing on the pipe, given the wide range and the awkward note of D#, which are good reasons for it not reaching nineteenth-century Morris in that form. However, as with other Playford to Morris transitions, the tune has lost its mode but kept its shape:



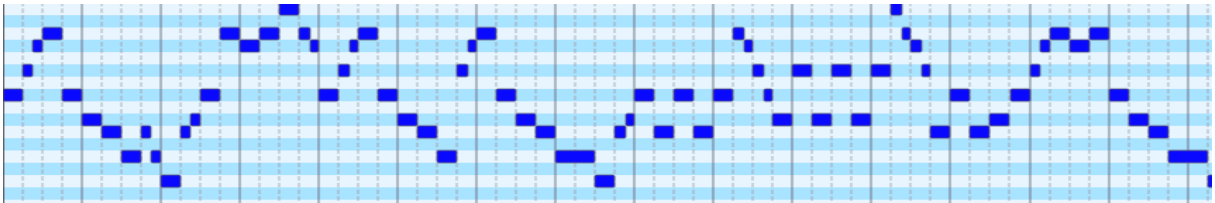
Example 3.44 *Old Molly Oxford*, played by William Wells (fiddle), Bampton, 11 August 1909.¹⁴²

Some of the motifs of the old tune are clearly discernible in the Morris versions, such as the run-up to the tonic in the first bar, the leading note-tonic-supertonic run in bar 4 and the repeated notes in bars 9 and 11 (Examples 3.45-46).



Example 3.45 Profile line contour of *Old Oxford* in *The Dancing Master*.

¹⁴² FDN CJS2/10/2265.



Example 3.46 Profile line contour of Bampton's *Old Molly Oxford*.

3.4.8 *The Rummer/Swaggering Boney/How d'you do*

The Morris musicians' predilection for confusing the names of tunes is well-illustrated by the next tune, collected in three Gloucestershire villages under three different names, although virtually the same tune. The Longborough side called it *Swaggering Boney*, the Sherborne dancers called it *How d'you do* (not to be confused with a Headington tune of the same name), and in Oddington the tune was also known as *The Old Frog Dance* because it included a leapfrog figure. None of these villages used the name given in the *Dancing Master*, namely *The Rummer*, probably named after a drinking vessel of the same name. *The Rummer* makes its debut in Playford in 1686 and reappears in every edition thereafter. The origin of the tune is unknown but it gained a certain amount of circulation; it is found in a 1694 Northumbrian collection as possibly *Sweetnor's Jigg*, although the handwriting is far from clear.¹⁴³

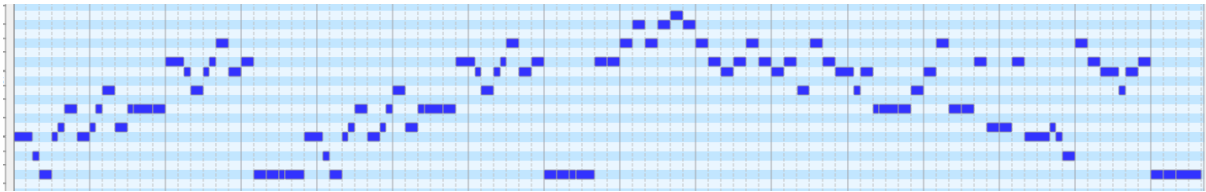


Example 3.47 *The Rummer*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1686-1728.

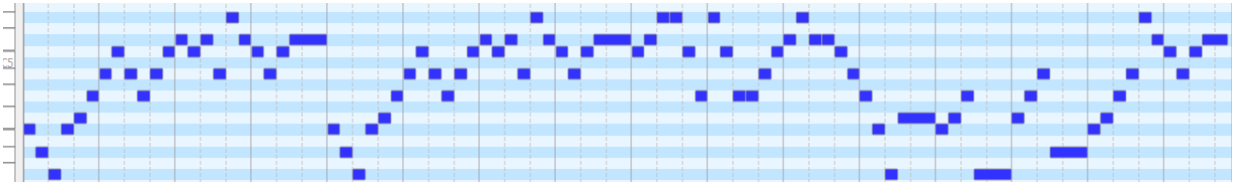


Example 3.48 *How d'you do*, communicated by George Simpson to Sharp, March 1910.

¹⁴³ Northumberland Record Office, Henry Atkinson MSS, p. 9.



Example 3.49 Profile line contour of *The Rummer*, in *The Dancing Master*.



Example 3.50 Profile line contour of Simpson's *How d'you do*.

In this case, the similarities between the two tunes are evident, with only minor changes from the 1680s to the 1900s. Although the notes have shifted over the years, some features remain. The distinctive run down to the tonic in bar 1 and the rise to the upper tonic is seen in both versions, as are the up and down runs in bar 10. This is yet another example of how aural tradition can mould a tune but keep salient features in, even after two centuries of transmission.

3.4.9 *Saturday Night/Monday and Tuesday*

One particular tune which needs unpicking as to its links to Morris is *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, which is found in every edition of *The Dancing Master* between 1651 and 1728, but despite its longevity, it does not seem to have gone into general circulation. No versions can be found in other music books of the time before being discovered by Morris collectors. At this point the story gets rather complicated. There are 5 identifiable versions in the Morris canon: *Monday and Tuesday* (Headington); *Saturday Night* (Bucknell, Longborough and Bledington); and *The Marriage Vow* (Mason of Stow-on-the-Wold). These tunes have enough features to identify them as relatives of the *Dancing Master* version (shown in Example 3.51) but some have moved farther away than others. The nearest that the Morris canon comes to this is the tune called, ironically, *Monday and Tuesday*, used formerly by Headington Morris (as shown in Example 3.52). Other versions diverge from Playford but still retain features in common as can be seen in Examples 3.53-54.



Example 3.51 *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, in *The Dancing Master*, 1651-1728.



Example 3.52 *Monday and Tuesday*, communicated by Joseph Trafford (Headington) to Manning, c.1895-99.¹⁴⁴



Example 3.53 *Saturday Night*, played Charles Benfield (fiddle), collected by Travelling Morrice, 1924.



Example 3.54 *Saturday Night*, communicated by Will Rolf, Bucknell, and collected by Butterworth, 1912.¹⁴⁵

Although superficially these appear to be separate tunes, examination reveals some motifs in common. The jump to A'' in bar 1 is found in the *Dancing Master* version as well as the Benfield and Bucknell versions, as is the similar jump in bar 6 in both the *Dancing Master* and Bucknell. The rhythmic motif of ♪♪♪♪ on a repeated note can be observed in bars 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 of the *Dancing Master* tune; bars 2, 4, 6 and 8 of the Headington tune; and bars 2 and 6 of the Bledington tune. That small rhythmic detail must have stuck in the minds of Morris

¹⁴⁴ FDN CJS2/10/2755B.

¹⁴⁵ Butterworth MS, GB/2/15.

musicians through the centuries even when the actual notes changed. There is also a descending motif at the start of the Headington and Bucknell versions, as there is in the *Dancing Master* tune. These small features all contribute to giving the tunes the same ‘feel’ from the dancers’ point of view and point to a common origin, albeit obscured by the passing of time and aural transmission. On instrumentation, both the Benfield and Rolf versions fit comfortably in the range of the tabor pipe once transposed down to G. John Mason’s tune *The Marriage Vow* is almost identical to Benfield’s version except that Mason played it with a C \sharp , thereby converting the mode to mixolydian and rendering it difficult to play on the pipe, so this is clearly an embellishment brought in by a fiddler.

3.5 Playford: Morris or not Morris?

There are many tunes in the *Dancing Master* series that sound by their titles as though they ought to be Morris but for which no correlation can be found within the nineteenth-century repertoire. It is tempting to see *Kemp’s Jig*, *Maids/Scotch/French/Fidler’s Morris*, *Mock Hobby Horse* and *The Hobby Horse Dance* as former Morris tunes that have dropped out of the repertoire, and that may be the case but there is no way of proving that one way or another. After all, we are looking at a canon of tunes that has been constantly changing over several centuries and, even allowing for the customary conservatism of traditional performers, it is certain that a set list for a sixteenth- or seventeenth-century Morris performance would have been substantially different from that of the nineteenth century. So, perhaps William Kemp really did dance to Thomas Slye’s pipe and tabor playing *Kemp’s Jig* and perhaps the hobby horse painted besides the Thames in c.1620 really did prance about to *The Hobby Horse Dance*. When one peruses the full list of tunes in Playford, who are we to say that other tunes of suitable format such as *Nonesuch* or *Sellinger’s Round* were not at one time used by Morris dancers?

What are we to make of those tunes whose titles have persisted through to the Morris canon but whose music bears no resemblance to their synonyms? *Queen’s Delight*, *(Lord) Monk’s march*, *Marlborough* and *The Twenty-ninth of May* are all titles that are familiar to Cotswold Morris dancers and yet, apart from the name, the Playford tunes have no correlation with the tunes they know. *La Princess Royal* in Playford’s book of tunes for the treble violin and his flageolet tutor is quite different to the Morris tune. We may faintly hear the Morris *Bonny Green Garters* in Playford’s *Green Stockings* (not so much in Playford’s *Green Garters*), but the echoes are so faint as to be barely audible. Yet other mysteries remain. Could *In Wooden*

Shoon, listed in the Bidford Morris repertoire in 1886, be descended from the *Dancing Master's Wooden Shoes* appearing in all publications from 1701 onwards? These are puzzles that even time and analysis cannot solve.

Chapter 4. Provenance of repertoire: c.1700 onwards

The Morris repertoire continued to evolve through the 1700s and 1800s: the continued rise of music publishing opened up new avenues, as did the rise of the ballad opera, bringing new tunes and songs to the public ear. As the 19th century progressed, England was starting to feel new influences in popular music. Scotland and Ireland were no longer the sole outside pressures; people were now hearing a new kind of music from the United States in the form of blackface minstrel groups which toured the country, performing a mixture of Americana including spirituals, vaudeville songs and folk songs. Rural communities in remote villages were not immune to these influences and all these factors had an influence on Cotswold Morris music. At the same time, the Morris dancers and musicians clung onto their old favourites, and so the repertoire as later discovered and collected showed surprising conservatism in its choice of tunes.

4.1 Tunes from various sources

4.1.1 *Cuckoo's Nest*

One of the harder tunes from the Morris canon to pin down is the *Cuckoo's Nest*, found in at least eight Cotswold Morris sides' repertoires. As a folk tune, it is ubiquitous in the English-speaking world, being found in the USA as an old-timey and bluegrass fiddle and banjo tune, and in Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales (*Nyth y Gwch*) as a folk-dance tune and with a variety of names including *Come Ashore Jolly Tar with your trousers on*. It is also found as a song: an eighteenth-century ballad indicates that the *Cuckoo's Nest* is a sexual metaphor, a meaning not lost on today's Morris men. Notwithstanding, the evidence is that the *Cuckoo's Nest* was a tune before it was a song. The tune starts to appear in various late eighteenth-century collections usually in a major key version; the poet John Clare (1893-64) had a version of it and a Scottish bagpipe version is found in the eighteenth-century John Sutherland manuscript collection, "Music for the Bagpipe". Most of the Irish, Scottish or American versions are either in the Ionian or mixolydian mode. It is difficult to point to an 'original' tune but it is possible to point to a typical version, namely that printed in O'Neill's *Dance Music of Ireland*. As shown in Example 4.1, the tune is basically in the Ionian but the F♯ in bar 19 gives it a distinctive mixolydian character.



Example 4.1 *Cuckoo's Nest*, transcribed from O'Neill's *Dance Music of Ireland*.

The tune in the Morris repertoire is recognisably a relative of the above tune and this is seen most clearly in the version noted from the Longborough fiddler William Hathaway, especially in the first eight bars, as shown in Example 4.2.



Example 4.2 *Cuckoo's Nest*, as performed by William Hathaway and collected by Sharp.¹⁴⁶

Hathaway's tune is not in the mixolydian mode but there is a faint hint of it in the motif at the end of bar 10 and start of bar 11, which echoes bars 18-19 of the O'Neill version. The mixolydian theme is brought out, however, by the version used for the Blackwell Morris, of which the A music closely follows the Longborough version but the B music moves the Longborough B music up a fourth, thereby showing its mixolydian feature (see Example 4.3).



Example 4.3 *Cuckoo's Nest*, communicated by Michael Handy to Sharp, April 1912.¹⁴⁷

Two Morris versions of the *Cuckoo's Nest* were noted in the Dorian mode, from two Gloucestershire villages in close proximity, namely Sherborne and Bledington. The tune that

¹⁴⁶ FDN CJS2/10/1304.

¹⁴⁷ FDN CJS2/10/2771.

George Simpson, a former Morris dancer from Sherborne, gave to Sharp is shown in Example 4.4.



Example 4.4 *Cuckoo's Nest*, communicated by George Simpson to Sharp, March 1910.¹⁴⁸

The tune profile of Example 4.4 closely resembles that used for the Blackwell Morris (Example 4.3), but the mode has changed. The Sherborne side danced throughout the nineteenth century to the pipe and tabor and as a tabor pipe tune, the note of D# is slightly awkward, not being a note usually played on the pipe, but quite within the ability of a competent taborer. The version played by Charles Benfield for the Longborough Morris is very close to Simpson's tune, but without the D#. This tune is a good example of how different musicians play the same tune but all hear and interpret it differently.

4.1.2 Princess Royal

A dance that was communicated over and over again to collectors was *Princess Royal*, also known as *Nelson's Praise*, and second only to *Constant Billy* in popularity. The tune (Example 4.5) allegedly was composed by the Irish harper, Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738), in 1725 as *Miss MacDermott* or *The Princess Royal* and was quickly taken up by music publishers in England, Scotland and Ireland. Cotswold Morris dancers and musicians obviously took a liking to the tune, but there are some issues that had to be overcome. The tune with 8-bar and 12-bar phrases is not suitable for the standard Morris dance format of 8-bar phrases throughout. Not only that, but the range of the tune in Example 4.5 goes down to a low B whereas the lowest note on the pipe is D. The first of these issues was overcome by composing a new dance, a solo jig, with stepping to fit the 12-bar B music. The issue of the range of the tune was solved in two ways: firstly by playing the tune in a major key or alternatively by simply not playing the notes below D (as shown in Example 4.6).

¹⁴⁸ FDN CJS2/10/2447.



Example 4.5 *Princess Royal or Miss MacDermott* by Turlough O'Carolan.



Example 4.6 *Princess Royal*, communicated by George Simpson to Sharp, June 1908.¹⁴⁹

The tune is also noteworthy in that it is the only tune in the Morris canon that appears occasionally in the Aeolian mode. The tune was noted 21 times by collectors and mentioned, without a tune being collected, another six times. The number of times the tune was collected in the various modes were: Ionian mode – 9; Aeolian mode – 6; Dorian – 3; and Aeolian/Dorian 3.

4.2 Tunes from across the Atlantic

4.2.1 *Getting Upstairs*

At least two, possibly three, melodies from the United States found their way into Cotswold Morris. The first to consider is the Morris tune *Getting Upstairs*, composed in the 1830s by Joe Blackburn as *Such a Getting Upstairs I never did See* for the blackface minstrel shows and still in circulation in the USA as an old-timey tune. In England, it found its way into the Headington repertoire and was also used by the Brackley Morris.¹⁵⁰ At the time of collection, it had not been long part of the Morris canon.

¹⁴⁹ FDN CJS2/10/1729.

¹⁵⁰ F.B. Hamer, 'The Hinton and Brackley Morris', *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* 7, no. 4 (1955), 205-16.



Example 4.7 *Such a Getting Up Stairs*, transcribed from original sheet music.¹⁵¹



Example 4.8 *Getting Upstairs*, played by Joe Stafford (fiddle), Headington, and collected by Manning and Carter, c.1895.¹⁵²

4.2.2 Bobbing Around

The second American tune under consideration is *Bobbing Around*, which is partly based on the comic song *When we Went Bobbing Around* composed by William Florence (1831-91) in New York and published in 1855 (Example 4.9). I say partly because the resemblance lies in the second part of Florence's tune, which the Morris musicians have taken as the opening of the Morris tune. The A part of John Mason's tune is almost identical to Florence's tune, while the B part appears to be imported from a different tune (see Example 4.10). Mason (1834-1912) is a crucial figure in the study of Cotswold Morris tunes because, although he is not associated with any particular Morris side, he knew tunes and dances from several. Furthermore, Mason played the tune in 4/4 time as in the Florence version, whereas others converted it to 6/8. It seems that the Mason version predates the others.



Example 4.9 *When we went Bobbing Around*, by William Florence.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Azizi Powell, "Such A Getting Upstairs" (History of the Song in the United States & England)", 29 October 2013, pancocojams.blogspot.com/2013/10/such-getting-upstairs-history-of-song.html (accessed 18 March 2021).

¹⁵² FDN CJS2/10/2756C.

¹⁵³ *Home Melodist: A Collection of Songs and Ballads* (Boston: Oliver Ditson and Co, 1859), 16.



Example 4.10 *Bobbing Around*, played by John Mason (fiddle), Stow-on-the-Wold, and collected by Sharp, 18 August 1909.¹⁵⁴



Example 4.11 *Bobbing Around*, played by William Wells (fiddle), Bampton, and collected by Sharp, 11 August 1909.¹⁵⁵

Adding to the confusion is the fact that the Bampton Morris currently call the tune and the dance *Bobbing Joe*, confusing the title with the Bampton tune *Bob and Joan*, noted by Manning but no longer part of the Bampton repertoire (see section 3.4.1).

4.2.3 *London Pride/Idbury Hill/Stourton Wake*

In the case of some Morris tunes, the origin is not a mystery, but their route into the Morris canon is up for speculation. One such tune is *Idbury Hill*, also collected as *Stourton Wake* and *The Blackwell Morris* tune, as well as in a mixolydian version as *Old Heddon of Fawley*. The tune is clearly a version of the Irish *Boyne Water*, known throughout Scotland and Northern Ireland and with connections to Protestantism. The tune also appears with the name *Boyne Water* in George Bowie's fiddle manuscript of 1706 but may be older. Despite its popularity in Scotland and Northern Ireland, however, the tune is hardly ever noted in English tune collections. How then, did it enter the Cotswold Morris repertoire? It could, of course, have been picked up by someone hearing and remembering it, but an interesting counter theory is that it came to England via America. At some point the tune crossed the Atlantic and appears as part of a play, *The Battle of Lake Champlain* as *Backside Albany*, as an 1837 song by Hill, Browner and Hawkins with imitation of black speech. William Mahar has carried out extensive

¹⁵⁴ FDN CJS2/10/2293.

¹⁵⁵ FDN CJS2/10/2256.

research into the song, indicating that it was published in several American song books in the nineteenth century.¹⁵⁶ The tune also took root in the American old-timey repertoire, both as *Backside (of) Albany* and *Boyne Water*. I am therefore advancing the theory that it came into the Morris canon not through Scottish or Irish routes but rather by the nineteenth-century blackface minstrel route. At that time, many American minstrel groups toured England and their performances must have left traces in the English vernacular repertoire. This evidence is circumstantial but worth considering, especially in view of the resemblance between the 1837 tune and that played for Cotswold Morris.



Example 4.12 *Backside Albany*, words by Michael Hawkins, 1837.¹⁵⁷



Example 4.13 *Stourton Wake*, communicated by Fred Webb, Bloxham, and collected by Blunt, February 1914.¹⁵⁸

An unexplained mystery of the Morris canon is the inclusion of the title *Lillie Dale* as a Headington Morris tune in the Manning collection.¹⁵⁹ I believe this to be a misunderstanding as the only trace of a piece of music of that name is a slow, sentimental, nineteenth-century American song in a style totally unsuited to Morris. I therefore suggest that this might have been a song sung by one of the Headington side rather than a dance. Again, this is conjecture. Transatlantic influence on the repertoire did not stop there. John Mason of Stow-on-the-Wold played a version of Stephen Foster's *[Oh] Susannah*, claiming it to be a Morris dance, but there is no evidence for this assertion.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ William J. Mahar, "Backside Albany" and Early Blackface Minstrelsy: A Contextual Study of America's First Blackface Song', *American Music* 6, no. 1 (1988), 1-27.

¹⁵⁷ Lester S. Levy, *Collection of Sheet Music* (New York: Thomas Birch, 1837), no. 1.

¹⁵⁸ Blunt MSS, JHB/17A/11A.

¹⁵⁹ FDN CJS2/11/2/101b.

¹⁶⁰ FDN CJS2/10/1380.

4.3 The Crossover between Morris and Singing

It has always been natural for people who are interested in music and dance to take an interest also in song and to integrate these various skills. The inhabitants of the rural Cotswolds were no different, and collectors Cecil Sharp, Clive Carey, George Butterworth and later the American James Madison Carpenter found a host of songs not only remembered but still being sung in the area, as well as finding many short ditties which preceded or were interspersed with the dances. Those who danced and played for Morris would have done so against a background of music performed in the villages. The songs heard and performed in the villages would have been a mixture of traditional songs, generally known 'community songs' and the latest ditties arriving from other sources. Surprisingly, few Morris dance tunes are taken from the body of what we call 'folk' song, a term that was not coined until 1846. This may seem strange as, at one time, folk songs could be heard in all English villages, and the Morris dancers and musicians would have been familiar with a range of songs. Certainly, the fiddler Sam Bennett from Ilmington knew scores of songs, as did Charles Benfield who played fiddle for the Longborough Morris. Sharp noted that the village of Bampton-in-the-Bush had a very strong song tradition. One important reason for the lack of traditional songs in the Morris canon may be that English folk song is habitually sung *tempo rubato*, a style which would not suit the dance. Only those folk songs with a regular rhythm would be suitable to be pressed into service as a Morris tune. Those songs which were adopted as Morris tunes had the same basic criteria: namely, a strong on beat. Another aspect to consider is the question of ditties, or snatches of song, being used as part of the Morris performance, usually as a prelude to starting the dance, or perhaps as a humorous ditty sung by the Fool to amuse the audience. This thesis will examine these two aspects of song used in Morris in turn, starting with those complete songs adopted as Morris tunes.

4.3.1 Jockey to the Fair

Jockey (or Jockie) to the Fair was one of the most danced and most collected pieces in the Morris canon, with only *Constant Billy*, *Princess Royal* and *Shepherds Hey* eclipsing it in popularity. The origins of the tune are lost somewhere in the eighteenth century, but there are indications that it started life as a song rather than a dance tune. At first glance it is not an obvious choice as a Morris tune, given the atypical bar length: although the A music is a regular 8 bars, the B music varies and can be as much as 14 bars, which suggests that it was not originally composed as a regular dance tune. The set of words usually associated with the tune

are typically eighteenth-century pastoral with phrases such as “sweet flowery garlands round him hung, which shepherds used to wear”, a set of words that fits the twice 8 plus 14 pattern of the tune. However, it seems that the long B music was problematic for some compilers of tunes. James Biggins’ manuscript (1779) gives the 8 plus 14 version, terming the tune ‘a favourit [sic] song’; Skillern’s *Twenty-Four Country Dances for the Year* (1780) prints a version in which the B music is 8 bars. There is no evidence of the tune’s existence before that date and it seems likely therefore that it came into being in the 1770s and went immediately into popular circulation, where it was well enough known that an electioneering song could be printed as a broadside with the instruction “*Tune - Jockey to the Fair*”.¹⁶¹ It is likely, therefore, that it was taken up by Morris teams shortly after that date and soon spread from side to side. However, there is a slight dilemma in that the tune with its 14-bar B music could not be adapted to the usual Morris format of 8-bar phrases, and so new dances had to be composed, in most cases a solo jig. This format holds true for the majority of the collected Cotswold versions but the Brackley dancers, who used the tune as a set dance, favoured a shorter B music. Sharp printed a Brackley version with an 8-bar B music, while the song collector Fred Hamer noted a version in 1955 with a 12-bar B music, a version which is often danced by today’s dancers.¹⁶²

The popularity of the tune and dance meant that taborers had to learn it to play for the Morris, which represented a slight challenge in that most versions of the tune rise to A”, a note which is not comfortable on the pipe given the extra pressure involved to play it. This would not have been a problem for fiddlers. However, given the tune’s popularity, the evidence is that the nineteenth-century taborers did manage successfully to play the tune for the dance. As can be seen in Examples 4.14-15, the tune did not alter much when it transitioned into Morris.



Example 4.14 *Jockey to the Fair*, transcribed from the James Biggin MSS (1779).

¹⁶¹ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodleian Ballad Collection, *The honest blues glory. A new song* (1784).

¹⁶² Sharp and Macilwaine, *Morris Dance Tunes*; Hamer, ‘The Hinton and Brackley Morris’, 210.



Example 4.15 *Jockey to the Fair*, played by William Kimber (concertina) and collected by Sharp, January 1900.¹⁶³

4.3.2 *Black Joke*

Another very popular dance derived from a song was *Black Joke*, garbled to *Old Black Joe* in Bucknell, probably in confusion with the Stephen Foster song of that name. As a song it can be traced back to 1730 as a bawdy song, with the 'black joke' (or 'joak') being a euphemism for the female genitalia.¹⁶⁴ Thereafter, the tune became very popular both as a song, appearing in many ballad operas with new, non-bawdy words, and as a country dance tune, being printed in various anthologies including John Gay's *Achilles* (1733) and Henry Fielding's *The Author's Farce* (1730). At the same time, it rapidly gained currency as a dance tune, appearing in Walsh's *Lancashire Jigs, Hornpipes, Joaks, etc* (c.1730), Wright's *Compleat Collection of celebrated Country Dances* (1740), and Oswald and Walsh's *Complete Country Dancing-Master* (1740). The tune was therefore widespread and would have been familiar to rural musicians as a country dance. However, as with *Jockey to the Fair*, the issue in using it for a Morris dance is the phrase length, in that the A music has 6 bars and the B music 10, therefore necessitating the composing of a new dance. This, however, did not affect its popularity as a Morris tune and, unlike *Jockey to the Fair*, it was not used as a jig but as a set dance, either with sticks or handkerchiefs, to a tune that had remained almost unchanged since the 1730s.

¹⁶³ FDN CJS2/10/46B.

¹⁶⁴ Edgar V. Roberts, 'An Unrecorded Meaning of "Joke" (or "Joak") in England', *American Speech* 37, no. 2 (1962), 137-40.



Example 4.16 *Black Joke*, communicated by William Walton, Adderbury, to Janet Blunt, June 1916.¹⁶⁵

4.3.3 *Young Collins*

One particular dance, found in Gloucestershire only, is *Young Collins*, collected from a small group of villages around Stow-on-the-Wold. The origin of the tune is simple to trace: in 1778, the song *Young Colin Stole my Heart away* was published in *The Songsters Companion* and was reprinted several times thereafter from the 1780s onwards. The title derives from the closing lines of the first verse:

In spite of all my friends could say,
Young Colin stole my heart away.

Michael Heaney has examined the history of the song in detail.¹⁶⁶ Apart from Gloucestershire, the dance *Young Collins* was noted as having been danced but it was never noted, nor was it among the tunes that Robbins, the Bidford fiddler, played to Carpenter in the 1930s. The fact that the tune did not appear until 1778 means that it was assimilated into the Morris canon soon after publication and, despite the fact that it was printed numerous times in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century song books, the song itself did not pass into oral tradition, whereas the tune did. The Morris tunes follow the tune of the published song quite closely in the A music but there is some variation in the B music.

¹⁶⁵ Blunt MSS, JHB/16/15.

¹⁶⁶ Michael Heaney, 'Young Collins', *The Morris Dancer* 2, no. 3 (1986), 41-3.



Figure 4.1 *He Stole my Tender Heart away*, Scots Musical Museum Inglis collection, 1787.¹⁶⁷



Example 4.17 *Young Collins*, played by William Hathaway (fiddle) and collected by Sharp, 30 March 1907.¹⁶⁸

4.3.4 *Go and Enlist*

One dance, based on a folk song tune, which only occurs once in the Morris repertoire, is *I'll go and 'list for a Sailor*, usually shortened to *Go and Enlist*. The tune was noted by Sharp from George Simpson, who used to dance Morris in Sherborne, and was also noted by H.H. Albino from Thomas Pitts who was also a Sherborne dancer. The form of the tune is unique in the Morris repertoire, consisting of one 8-bar phrase.

¹⁶⁷ National Library of Scotland.

¹⁶⁸ FDN CJS2/10/1274.



Example 4.18 *Go and Enlist*, communicated by George Simpson to Sharp, March 1910.¹⁶⁹

The tune derives from a rare folk song usually termed *The Unfortunate Tailor* (Roud 1614), a story of unrequited love. Both Simpson and Pitts quoted a line from the song, “Why did my Sarah serve me so”, which showed their familiarity with the song. Only two versions of the song have been collected as folk songs: the one that most approximates the Sherborne tune was that collected in Hampshire (shown in Example 4.19).



Example 4.19 *Oh list, oh list to my Sorrowful Lay*, sung by George Lovett, Hampshire, and collected by George Gardiner, August 1906.¹⁷⁰

The resemblances are superficial but enough to identify that the tunes are related. Both are 8-bar tunes in the Dorian mode and the opening of Simpson’s tune is echoed in bars 5-6 of the Hampshire tune.

4.4 Other songs

Evidence of other folk songs having been pressed into service as Morris tunes is very thin. Several sides used the tune *Nutting Girl* (Roud 509) for a Morris dance and Sharp noted that Brailes Morris had a dance to *The Jolly Waggoner* (Roud 1088). This latter tune is almost certainly from the song of the same name, which Sharp found all over England. Apart from *The Jolly Waggoner*, songs that we might class as folk songs were not used as Morris dance tunes. However, Morris dancers did dance to a number of well-known community songs, such as *Brighton Camp*, *Come Landlord fill the Flowing Bowl*, *The Bluebells of Scotland*, *The British Grenadiers* and *The Roast Beef of Old England*, and other songs such as *The Gallant Hussar* and *Sweet Jenny Jones*. The Morris dancers from Adderbury were particularly noted for adapting contemporary song tunes for their dances.

¹⁶⁹ FDN CJS2/10/2448.

¹⁷⁰ Gardiner MSS, GG/1/7/407.

4.4.1 Ditties and snatches

The other aspect of using singing for Morris is that of introducing a dance with a short ditty before starting stepping. This has the advantage of: (a) alerting the audience that a dance is about to start; and (b) reminding the dancers of what they were about to dance. All the collectors noted these rhymes and doubtless there were many more that were never collected. It is not known whether every dance started with a rhyme, but many of the most common ones did. *Shepherds Hey*, for example, attracted a variety of rhymes:

Shepherds Hey, Clover too
Rye Grass seeds and Turnips too.
(Adderbury)¹⁷¹

I can whistle and I can play
I can dance The Shepherd's Hey.
(Ducklington)¹⁷²

On a summer's evening, there you may be seen,
With your bells and ribbons, dancin' on the green
This way up, that way back,
In and out and turn about and Pitchpole Jack.¹⁷³

Various other examples of rhymes to *Shepherd's Hey* were noted by collectors. It is not known why this particular tune attracted so many lyrics, but perhaps it is to do with its simplicity and memorability.

Another tune to which a number of lyrics were put is *Greensleeves*. We have already seen how it came to be used in Cotswold mummer's plays, and the tune also attracted a large number of ditties in the Morris world (see section 3.3.1). John Mason of Stow-on-the-Wold had these words:

Greensleeves and yellow lace
Boys and girls they work apace
They save some money to buy some lace
To lace the ladies' Greensleeves

Mason added: 'The 'Squire' of the Morris, that's the Tom Fool, used to run round and sing it'.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Janet Blunt collection, JHB/17A/4.

¹⁷² FDN CJS2/11/1/144.

¹⁷³ James Madison Carpenter Collection, JMC/1/1/1/H, p. 00813.

¹⁷⁴ FDN CJS2/10/1255.

So many sides prefaced the *Greensleeves* dance with a version of the rhyme, 'Some say the devil's dead', that in some cases this became the name of the dance rather than *Greensleeves*:

Some say the devil's dead
The devil's dead, the devil's dead.
Some say the devil's dead
And buried in Cold Harbour

Some says he's rose again
Some says he's rose again
Some say he's rose again
And 'prenticed to a barber.
(Winchcombe)¹⁷⁵

On the other hand, Sam Bennett of Ilmington treated the tune with rather less reverence:

We two boys were very good boys
As ever had a mother
Toby was the name of one
And kiss me bum the other

Toby was the name of one,
Toby was the name of one
Toby was the name of one
And kiss me bum the other.

When the christening it begun
The parson says 'Now name the one'
I said 'Toby is the name of one
And kiss me bum the other.'¹⁷⁶

In similar fashion, rhymes were collected for *Constant Billy*, *The Willow Tree*, *Maid of the Mill* and many others.

At times, the dancers would pause the dance in the middle in order to sing. Manning reported in 1897, that 'in some places, as at Bampton, they sang while dancing various songs suited to the air which was being played. Other songs were sung in the intervals between the dancing'.¹⁷⁷ Sharp noted:

¹⁷⁵ FDN CJS2/10/2144.

¹⁷⁶ James Madison Carpenter Collection, JMC/1/1/1/F, p. 00548.

¹⁷⁷ Percy Manning, 'Some Oxfordshire Seasonal Festivals: With Notes on Morris-Dancing in Oxfordshire', *Folklore* (1897), 318.

Between the dances the [Adderbury] side would often sing songs e.g. *The Happy Man*, *Postman's Knock*, and other popular town-songs of the day, often executing some of their stick-movements while they sang the chorus. This they did to keep the crowd quiet while they were resting themselves.¹⁷⁸

Describing the North Leigh Morris, Sharp reported: 'Often they would suddenly stand still in a dance and sing the tune with its words, then do half-rounds, whole hey and kipper out and finish off.'¹⁷⁹

The Morris fools also had their own particular songs, not related to the Morris tunes, but meant simply to amuse the audience. The Fieldtown fool would run about and sing:

I wish my love was a field of 'taters
And I myself a long-nosed pig
Then I'd rout from night to morn
The devil of a bit I'd have to dig.¹⁸⁰

Singing was, therefore, very much part of the Morris experience. Apart from appropriating songs tunes for their dances, song served other purposes. In general, it was used as a lead-in to the dance itself, and sometimes to form a break in the middle of a dance. However, complete songs were never part of the performance. These ditties, typically 4 lines of verse, appear for the most part to be locally composed comic or nonsense verses, designed to amuse the audience and grasp their attention.

4.5 The Crossover between Morris Dance and Country Dance Tunes

A casual observer of Morris might be forgiven for characterizing it as country dancing in costume. There is a shred of truth in this characterization, but the situation is of course more complex. During the period that Morris dances and tunes were being collected, a good deal of social folk dancing was taking place. Many a pub floor or Gypsy camp site would have sounded to the rap-a-tap-tap of solo step dancing, usually done to brisk hornpipes, and on occasions someone would perform a broom dance. Dancing would be taking place, with waltzes, gavottes and lancers, along with a sprinkling of country dances, in halls and dancing booths up and down the country. Morris was just one aspect of a complex choreographic landscape, albeit a specialised one, the main difference being that Morris was a seasonal performance event with special costumes, nearly always danced solely by men and meant to be watched

¹⁷⁸ FDN CJS2/11/4/57.

¹⁷⁹ FDN CJS2/11/2/126.

¹⁸⁰ FDN CJS2/11/1/258.

and admired but not for the public to join in. Furthermore, the execution of Morris as opposed to country dance, was distinct. Although the two forms shared many of the same figures and tunes, Morris was very formulaic and at their best were danced with something approaching military precision. The men danced as a team, and so all the arms, legs and footfalls had to be in synchronisation or else the effect would be lost. There is no room for individualism in the Morris set dances – that was left for the solo jigs, whereas in social country dancing, no-one worried about being on the wrong foot or whether their lines were straight. On the other hand, the country dance was not seasonal, required no special costume and was danced by both men and women as a social dance.

The Morris musicians of a community were the ones who were central to the artistic heritage of that community. They were more likely to be the ones who sang the songs, played the handbells and went carolling at Christmas, sang in the church choir, and acted in the mummers plays. They were also the ones who played music for village festivities, weddings and birthdays, or for people to dance to, be it on the green, in the village hall or in the pub on a Saturday night. The same fiddle, pipe and tabor that played for the Morris also played for the musical life of the community and therefore the musicians knew a repertoire of country dance tunes beside their Morris repertoire. It is therefore logical that many tunes used for country dancing should have found their way into Morris. Many of the Morris tunes can be labelled dual purpose. We can identify the country dance elements of the Morris canon in four different ways:

1. Identifying the Morris tunes derived from *The Dancing Master* (see Chapter 3).
2. Identifying tunes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century dance tune books that we also find in Morris.
3. Identifying those tunes described as 'country dance' by the informants themselves but which have analogues in the Morris canon.
4. By calling on my own knowledge of several decades of playing for 'barn' dances.

Addressing the second point, we find documentary evidence of country dance tunes from tune books and manuscripts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, some commercially printed works and some the personal tune books of local musicians. From a study of these documents, we can gain an idea of what tunes were in circulation apart from Morris at the time. The crossover with Morris is clear as many of the tunes in these collections also occur in Morris and, thus we find *The Rose*, *Prince Royal*, *Greensleeves*, *Maid of the Mill*, *British*

Grenadiers, Johnny's so Long at the Fair, and Belleisles March (Monk's March), all of which appear in the Morris canon.

When questioned by researchers, the musicians themselves were clear in their minds and were able to say with some certainty which tunes they considered Morris and which country dances; and the collectors duly noted this in their notebooks. This feature can be observed in the repertoires of some of the most important Morris musicians. The prolific fiddler John Mason was able to state that the following of his tunes were country dances: *The Rose Tree, Bonnets so Blue, Haste to the Wedding, The Roast Beef of Old England, Gallop Hey, The Slave (or Sloe?), Highland Quick Step, The Sweet Briar, Persian Dance (Galopede)* and *The New Rigged Ship*, even though the first 4 titles in this list were used elsewhere in the Cotswolds for Morris. Thus, Mason's repertoire demonstrates the thin dividing line between the Morris and country dance repertoires. Similarly, Sam Bennett of Ilmington knew many country dance tunes which he played to Carpenter and, when in 1951 and in 1956 the collector Peter Kennedy asked William Kimber about tunes for country dances as opposed to Morris, he was able to give Kennedy the tunes for about 16 dances, some with descriptions of the dances.¹⁸¹ As Kimber was known to researchers from 1899 to 1961, it seems remiss on their part not to have asked him about other aspects of his art, say songs, stories or tunes apart from Morris. Similarly, when William Wells was interviewed about his music, he described how he used to play country dances for dancing booths and went on to describe a handkerchief dip and dive dance.¹⁸² Again, is it fair to say that collectors were amiss in concentrating on the Morris and neglecting other aspects of an informant's knowledge? However, it is unwise to judge by twenty-first-century standards the methods of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century collectors who were without today's mobility, communications, internet and computer power.

That is not to say that no country dances were collected in the Cotswolds in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as presumably many had been danced within living memory or were still being danced, but Sharp only noted those dances which he found particularly distinctive or interesting. He noted two country dances from fiddler, [Thomas] Swallow (1873-1945) of Guiting Power. One was a longways dance, *The Swedish*, for which Sharp noted, 'This is danced all over this district ... even nowadays', indicating that he had

¹⁸¹ William Kimber. Sound recordings by Peter Kennedy, 4 December 1951 and 14 November 1956, sounds.bl.uk/World-and-traditional-music/Peter-Kennedy-Collection/025M-C0604X0202XX-0001V0 and sounds.bl.uk/World-and-traditional-music/Peter-Kennedy-Collection/025M-C0604X0203XX-0001V0

¹⁸² Interview with William Nathan Wells, [youtube.com/watch?v=jns32EVFjdY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jns32EVFjdY) (n.d.).

come across the dance several times in the course of his enquiries.¹⁸³ More intriguing is the other dance, *The Butterfly*, and the possible crossover of this dance with Morris. The Guiting Power Morris probably disbanded in the 1860s;¹⁸⁴ none of the dances were ever recovered, but Sharp has written an intriguing footnote to his notation of *The Butterfly*. The dance as described is a longways set dip and dive dance with couples holding a ribbon between them, and Sharp has written:

Same as Morris ribbon dance, except that
a) handks instead of ribbons
b) the passing under is not a progressive figure
c) A progressive figure (swing and cast one) is added.¹⁸⁵

This ambiguous note raises two possibilities. On the one hand, as the Guiting Power Morris lapsed before Swallow was born, he could have been talking from family or village anecdotal history. On the other hand, Sharp could have been comparing the dance with the Morris dance *Maid of the Mill* from Ilmington, which Sharp had come across earlier that year and which has a similar linked handkerchiefs and dip and dive figure. The riddle is further compounded by the Winchcombe historian, Eleanor Adlard (1909-44), who wrote:

This gay picture of old Winchcombe shall end the chapter, the dancers jingling their kneed bells, and competing on the Abbey Terrace with the other villages, notably Guiting Power with their famous handkerchief dance ... Old Mr Davies, the much-beloved sexton, would be there to play his fiddle.¹⁸⁶

Adlard would have been too young to have seen the Guiting Power Morris, and only 8 years old when Davies died, so perhaps she was just recounting anecdotes told to her by members of Winchcombe Morris, at least one of whom was alive in the 1930s. Furthermore, when Sharp met Davies in 1909, the latter played him *The Butterfly* in a version very similar to Swallow's and without a counterpart in the Morris canon. The conclusion therefore is that Guiting Power's 'famous handkerchief dance' was not Morris but a country dance. This again demonstrates the close relationship between Morris and country dance.

From my years of playing for and attending barn dances, I can state that the following tunes turn up regularly as country dance tunes, and all have their counterparts in the Morris repertoire:

¹⁸³ FDN CJS2/10/2440.

¹⁸⁴ Chandler, *Ribbons, bells, and squeaking fiddles*, 77.

¹⁸⁵ FDN CJS2/10/2241.

¹⁸⁶ Eleanor Adlard, *Winchcombe Cavalcade* (London: Burrow & Son, 1939), 17-18.

- Bonnets so Blue
- Brighton Camp
- Cock of the North
- Flowers of Edinburgh
- Haste the Wedding
- The Nutting Girl
- The Rose Tree

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that both song and dance tunes formed a rich and major part of the Morris repertoire. This will be explored further in the following chapter.

Chapter 5. Instrumentation and the ‘Sound’ of Morris

This chapter will examine the instrumentation used for Morris and how it changed over the centuries. It also explores the musical and social factors that drove these changes alongside the extent to which Morris music is part of an overall sound picture of which instrumentation is one element. The most comprehensive survey of Morris, performance locations and instrumentation is given in Forrest and Heaney’s *Annals of Early Morris*, which lists almost 800 mentions of Morris from 1458 to 1750.¹⁸⁷ The majority of the entries give no indication of instrumentation but the 122 which do indicate the following ratios of usage:

| | | |
|----------------|----|-------|
| Pipe and Tabor | 69 | (54%) |
| Drum | 15 | (12%) |
| Bagpipe | 14 | (11%) |
| Fiddle | 16 | (12%) |
| Other | 14 | (11%) |

These figures give a rough indication of the instrumentation but need qualifying as the historical records are full of ambiguities of nomenclature. The ‘other’ instruments have occasionally included a viol or harp, or sometimes the record might be unspecific, saying that the Morris was accompanied by ‘minstrels’, as shown by this entry in Plymouth in 1605:

Item paid to the Morrice dauncers & Musitians on Maye day vij s iij d.¹⁸⁸

The wording itself can be ambiguous in other ways. Heaney has shown, for instance, that the word ‘fiddler’ cannot be taken at face value as it can sometimes mean a taborer.¹⁸⁹ Heaney gives several examples of this ambiguity of wording, one of which will serve to make the point:

at Kelvedon Easterford John Ayly, an alehouse-keeper, was presented in the archdeacon’s court in 1613 `for suffering of a fiddler to play with taber and pipe in his house upon the 9 of May, being the sabbath day, in time of divine service.¹⁹⁰

Similarly, the word ‘piper’ may mean a bagpipe player or a taborer. ‘Drum’ is likewise ambiguous in this context as it could indicate a pipe and tabor player – it is unlikely that the dancers would have performed to a solo drum. Sixteenth-century court records refer to taborette, tabret or taborer, while the musicians can be referred to as ‘mynstrelles’, taborers

¹⁸⁷ Heaney and Forrest, *Annals of Early Morris*.

¹⁸⁸ *Records of Early English Drama: Devon* (Toronto: University of Toronto University Press, 1987).

¹⁸⁹ Michael Heaney, ‘Must Every Fiddler Play a Fiddle?’, *Records of Early English Drama*, 11, no. 1 (1986), 10-11.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, quoting J.S. Cockburn (ed.), *Crime in England 1550-1800* (London: Methuen & Co, 1977), 102.

or pipers.¹⁹¹ Despite these ambiguities, the above figures do give an overall indication of the relative popularity of those instruments.

The dominance of the pipe and tabor, also known in the Cotswolds as ‘whittle and dub’, lasted until the nineteenth century, when the situation gradually tipped in favour of the fiddle. Forrest has found that from 1730 to 1840 the only instrument mentioned in connection with Morris is the pipe and tabor. At the start of the nineteenth century all Cotswold Morris music was played on the pipe and tabor but none by the end of the century. As the nineteenth century progressed, we see increasing references to the fiddle and fewer to the pipe and tabor. This can be illustrated by looking at the data provided by Chandler on birth dates of named Morris musicians.¹⁹² If we assume that the musicians were mainly active from the ages of 20 to 35, we can move these dates on and see that in the period 1820-50, about 70% of the music for Cotswold Morris was played on the pipe and tabor, whereas by the end of the nineteenth century, there was none.

Table 5.1 Birth dates of named Cotswold musicians and instruments played throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

| Birth Decade of musician | Number of named taborers | Number of named fiddlers | Players of other instruments |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1730 | 1 | | |
| 1740-1760 | 1 | | |
| 1770 | 4 | | |
| 1780 | 2 | 1 | |
| 1790 | 5 | 2 | |
| 1800 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| 1810 | 8 | 2 | |
| 1820 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| 1830 | 2 | 7 | |
| 1840 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 1850 | 1 | 3 | |
| 1860 | | 6 | |

¹⁹¹ Bill Tuck, ‘Taborers at the Tudor Court’, unpublished paper, International Pipe & Tabor Symposium (York, 2006).

¹⁹² Chandler, *Morris Dancing in the English South Midlands 1660-1900*.

Table 5.1 only shows those musicians identified by name but in Sharp's note there are many references to sides using solely pipe and tabor, even when it has not been possible to name the taborer. For example, Sharp noted that the following locations had a taborer but was unable to provide a name: Guiting Power, Spelsbury, Brize Norton, Cheltenham and Charlbury.¹⁹³

The probable causes for the demise have already been examined in detail by Sharp, Chandler and Forrest. One main factor was fashion; the pipe and tabor began to be viewed as rustic and old-fashioned as opposed to the more musically flexible and socially acceptable fiddle. The old taborers were dying off and younger people did not want to learn the instrument. However, the older dancers that Sharp interviewed demonstrated fondness and nostalgia for the pipe and tabor. Sharp was told by Edward Mitchell (79), a native of Spelsbury which ran a men's and women's side, that although they had both a taborer and a fiddler, they preferred the former but when the two sides danced together 'they had to be content with the fiddler'.¹⁹⁴ Sharp also noted that 'the Leafield, Oxfordshire, musician, John Williams, played both fiddle and pipe and tabor but the dancers preferred to dance to [the] latter'.¹⁹⁵

Many old Morris men have told us that they gave up dancing when the pipe and tabor were superseded by the fiddle, because they found it impossible to dance to the latter instrument.¹⁹⁶

Sharp added:

The whittle and dub, after they fell into disuse – apparently because the younger men would not, or could not, learn them – were superseded by the fiddle, concertina or melodeon . . . Probably [the dancers] missed the rhythmical support of the drum-notes: but the sound of the pipe and tabor is so distinctive that those who had never heard any other instrument might find it difficult to become reconciled to anything else.¹⁹⁷

5.1 Bagpipe

According to *Annals of Early Morris*, the references to bagpipe being used for Morris last for less than a century, from 1594 to 1686, after which they are seen no more in a Morris context. After that date, the bagpipe died out in southern England but continued in Scotland and

¹⁹³ FDN; VWML.

¹⁹⁴ FDN CJS2/11/2/47.

¹⁹⁵ FDN CJS2/11/1/78.

¹⁹⁶ Sharp and MacIlwaine, *The Morris Book Part 1*.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

Ireland, as well as many other countries throughout the world. The more elaborate Northumbrian pipe is a later development, and there is no evidence that it was ever used for Morris.

The sonic qualities of the bagpipe were suitable for Morris – the instrument has ample volume and the player can produce the necessary attack to emphasise the strong on-beats and, as noted above, is used in many countries as an accompaniment to vernacular dance. However, the limited diatonic nature of the English bagpipe would have prevented it from playing tunes with a more extended range. According to Cannon, ‘the oldest forms of [English] bagpipe had only nine notes, and none had any chromatic semi-tones, except for the most recent Irish and Northumbrian pipes ... Before 1800 the scale had never more than the nine note compass, and the seventh was always major’.¹⁹⁸ The English bagpipe could have managed some of the simpler early Morris tunes, such as *Bobbing Joe* or *Greensleeves*, but later tunes such as *The Rummer* would be out of their range.

In general, the bagpipe in England was considered to be an instrument only fit to be played by the rustic classes. Despite that, Henry VIII’s inventory, compiled in 1547 after his death, included ‘Bagpipes; one of purple velvet with ivory pipes’.¹⁹⁹ These were clearly high status instruments: the general populace was not in a position to afford velvet and ivory pipes and perhaps these were a gift to Henry from a visiting dignitary.

5.2 The Fiddle

The history of stringed instruments being played with a bow goes back to antiquity and took diverse forms in many countries of the world. Instruments called fiddles were played in medieval times but what we think of as the modern violin came from Italy in the sixteenth century. The terms ‘violin’ and ‘fiddle’ became synonymous, with the latter term preferred by musicians playing popular and vernacular music. Violins were popular in early modern England and, being fully chromatic, they were adaptable to many kinds of music. They are first noted in a Morris context in 1589 in a lawsuit in Kent.²⁰⁰ Thereafter they are noted regularly, but not frequently, up to the end of the eighteenth century when they start to increase in popularity for Morris dancing. By the end of the nineteenth century, they were virtually the only

¹⁹⁸ R.D. Cannon, ‘English Bagpipe Music’, *Folk Music Journal* 2, no. 3 (1972), 176-219.

¹⁹⁹ British Library, Harley MS 1419.

²⁰⁰ Canterbury Cathedral Library, JQ 1590, *Interrogation of N Saynt and other morris dancers*. Quoted in Forrest and Heaney, *Annals of Early Morris*, lines 221-7.

instrument being used for Morris, although free reed instruments were also starting to be seen.

From the mid-seventeenth century, fiddles/violins were seen in the upper echelons of society. When Playford first published *The Dancing Master* in 1651, he specified that the tunes were written for the 'treble violin', and this specification was repeated in the 1652, 1665, 1686, 1701 and 1703 editions. Many other editions of *The Dancing Master* are not specific about instrumentation, but the 1695 edition mentions 'violin and flute'. The 1713 edition mentions 'violin or haut-boy [oboe]' while the 1718, 1719 and 1726 publications return to the 'treble violin'. Despite being embraced by English higher and middle society, the fiddle had a varied and ambivalent status. For some it was the instrument for country dancing amongst the elite, but at the same time, it was the instrument of itinerant ballad singers and tavern musicians. This ambivalence is highlighted by Christopher Marsh, who gives two contrasting views on the status of the fiddle:

one a top-down or court-to-country process of dissemination in which the Italian violin, an acoustic revolution, arrived first at the court of Henry VIII in 1540, then spread into the homes of aristocrats by the 1560s, before finally reaching town waits, theatre musicians and humbler instrumentalists by 1600. By that date, it had largely replaced traditional box fiddles of that sort that were discovered in the wreck of the Mary Rose. A second narrative is rather different, and was proposed by two celebrated musical commentators of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. According to Roger North, writing in 1728, the violin was 'scarce known' in aristocratic circles before 1640, though it had a place in the hands of humble country musicians. Anthony Wood agreed: before 1660, English gentlemen 'esteemed a violin to be an instrument only belonging to a common fiddler.'²⁰¹

The 'common fiddler(s)' included those who played for Morris.

5.3 The Pipe and Tabor

Even though the pipe and tabor are two instruments, they are counted as one in the context of dance music; the pipe being a three-holed duct flute played with one hand, a small drum (tabor) then being suspended from the musician's wrist or thumb, which is played with the other hand. It is therefore a type of one-man band, providing both tune and rhythm. The combination of pipe and tabor has been in existence for 800 years. Most musical instruments have a history of evolution and change leading up to the instruments we know today. Galpin claimed that it 'seems to have been introduced into England from France, where it was in

²⁰¹ Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 165.

general use during the twelfth century, and soon took its place with the bagpipe and rebec for country dancing'.²⁰² This date may be a little early, however, and the first firm evidence of its appearance was noted in the thirteenth century. Historically, it first appears more or less simultaneously in England and Spain. A misericord in Exeter Cathedral dating from that time shows a kneeling taborer (Figure 5.1), while an illustration of about the same date from the Spanish collection *Cantigas de Santa Maria* depicts two seated taborers (Figure 5.2).



Figure 5.1 Misericord from Exeter Cathedral depicting a taborer, 13th century.

From that point onwards, iconography of pipe and tabor playing spread very rapidly and was found all over the medieval European world, not only in the hands of musicians playing for dancers, from royal to rural, but also angels, devils, animals and even skeletons.²⁰³ Duct flute instruments had been known for millennia, and bone flutes date back thousands of years, as do drums, but to our knowledge the two instruments had not been put into the hands of one musician as a one-man band before these thirteenth-century examples. After its initial appearance, the pipe and tabor was found throughout Europe and subsequently Central and South America, giving rise to regional variations in size and tuning. Its main role was to accompany events such as rural dancing, seasonal events and, particularly in the Iberian Peninsula and Central and South America, for the religious calendar.²⁰⁴ Like the bagpipe, the pipe and tabor was generally held to be an instrument of the lower classes. However, it was not always held in such a lowly position: the courts of Henry VII and Henry VIII included well-

²⁰² Francis W. Galpin, *Old English Instruments of Music; Their History and Character* (London, 1910), 240.

²⁰³ A large collection of pipe and tabor iconography online can be found at pipeandtaborcompendium.co.uk/

²⁰⁴ A world survey of pipe and tabor traditions worldwide is given by Camilo Hernandez Di Giorgio, 'A Banda De Um Homem Só:Estudo Organológico Da Flauta E Tambor' ['The One-Man Band: Organological Study of the Pipe and Tabor' - in Portuguese], thesis, Campinas University, Brazil, 2010.

paid taborers; there is some evidence that they were French.²⁰⁵ Henry VIII's 1547 inventory contains 'Pipes, 4 inventory entries, a case of pipes at Westminster'. The pipe and tabor was still in royal favour in the latter years of Henry's reign as several pipes were found to be among the items recovered from his flagship *The Mary Rose*.²⁰⁶ However, these incursions into royalty are anomalous.



Figure 5.2 Seated taborers from Cantigas de Santa Maria, Spain, 13th century.

²⁰⁵ Tuck, 'Taborers in the Royal Court' (2006).

²⁰⁶ Graham Lyndon-Jones, 'The Big Ones', *The Fellowship of Makers and Researchers of Historical Instruments Quarterly* 96 (1999), 47-50.



Figure 5.3 Pipe and tabor depicted in a Latin psalter showing four musicians, by Johannes Mallardus for King Henry VIII, c.1540-1.

From the sixteenth century, we start to see the pipe and tabor mentioned specifically in a Morris context. Thereafter, pipe and tabor is frequently mentioned as the instrument to accompany Morris, indicating that it was the instrument of choice for Morris. This is emphasised not only in official documents but also in literature. The 1601 play *lacke Drums Entertainment* by John Marston (1576-1634) has the following interlude:

*The Taber and Pipe strike vp a Morrice.
 A shoute within. A Lord, a Lord, a Lord, who!
 Ed. Oh a Morice is come, obserue our country sport,
 Tis Whitson-tyde, and we must frolick it.
 Enter the Morrice.²⁰⁷*

Similarly, the anonymous seventeenth-century poem *The Puisnes Walks About London* recounts a chance meeting with a Morris side in London:

²⁰⁷ John Marston, *lacke Drums Entertainment* (1601), sig. A2v-A3.

In Fleet strete then I heard a showte:
 I putte of my hatt, and I made no staye, And when I came unto the rowte,
 Good Lord! I heard a tabor playe,
 For so, God save me! A morrys-daunce
 (Anon. c.1620).

The pipe and tabor comes in many forms in different locations and at different times. In modern times, the main distinguishing feature between the versions of pipe in the various countries and regions is the tuning, depending on the positioning and size of the holes. On the 'English' pipe, the first three intervals playable on the scale are typically tone-tone-semitone, giving the start of a major scale and thus being referred to in the Morris world as the TTS tuning. Versions of the pipe in other countries differ: the French Provençal *galoubet* has tone-tone-tone as its first three intervals; the Basque *xistu* and *txirula* have tone-semitone-tone. To complete the set, the Castilian and Portuguese *frita*, *flauta* or *gaita* has semitone-tone-tone. These tunings are referred to in pipe and tabor circles as TTS, TTT, TST and STT, respectively. South American three-holed pipes have a multiplicity of names and tunings, beyond the scope of this study.²⁰⁸ However, these distinctions are not absolute, particularly as many pipes were home-made and varied in tuning by fractions of a semitone.

Figure 5.4 shows a fingering chart for the pipe, published in Paris as early as 1636 in Marin Mersenne's *Harmonie Universelle*, but the fingering does not relate to English fingering.²⁰⁹



Figure 5.4 Fingering chart for tabor pipe, Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 1636.

²⁰⁸ Di Giorgio, 'A Banda De Um Homem Só'.

²⁰⁹ Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle* (Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy, 1636), Part II (8), 231.

The 'English' tuning has received little attention. The Englishman William Tans'ur, who described the pipe and tabor in 1766 as 'mostly used at Wakes and dancings by country people and at their dancings and diversions, and often with Morris dancers', gave the fingering as shown in Figure 5.5.²¹⁰ Sir Francis Darwin, writing in 1917, described how a tabor pipe had come into his possession and reproduced a fingering chart which he had obtained from Percy Manning, as shown in Figure 5.6.²¹¹

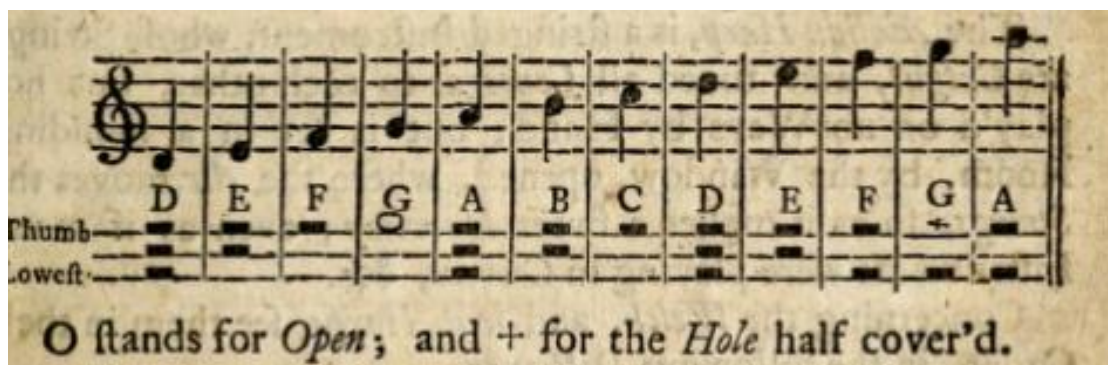


Figure 5.5 Fingering chart for the tabor pipe by William Tans'ur, 1736

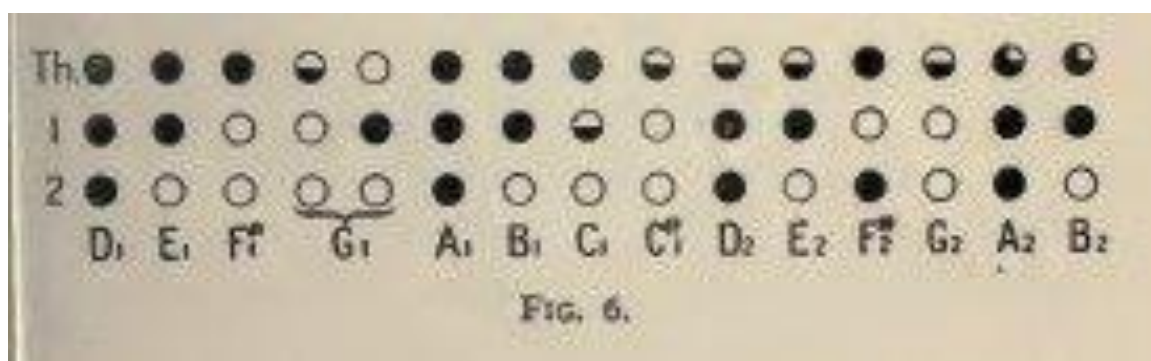


Figure 5.6 Fingering chart for tabor pipe by Manning, c.1917.

Manning's chart suggests that, by the eighteenth century, the pipe tuned in D had become the standard for English dance. It may not always have been so: the evidence is inconclusive, and iconography suggests that pipe itself changed over the centuries and varied in size and pitch, but iconography is unreliable as a method of ascertaining an instrument's size or pitch. Montague argues that the English pipe did not have a standard form until the nineteenth century.²¹² For example, of the three tabor pipes recovered from the wreck of Henry VIII's flagship the *Mary Rose* which sank in 1545, the smallest one appears to be in TTS tuning in the

²¹⁰ William Tans'ur, *The Elements of Musick Display'd* (London: S. Crowther, 1766), 103.

²¹¹ Francis Darwin, *Rustic Sounds* (London: John Murray, 1917), 97-114.

²¹² Jeremy Montagu, 'Was the Tabor Pipe Always as We Know It?', *The Galpin Society Journal* 50 (1997), 16-30.

key of G while the largest one is in TTT tuning. The third pipe is too damaged to calculate the tuning.²¹³

It is therefore possible to produce a diatonic scale in D major consisting of an octave and three notes. The top B in Figure 5.6 is very shrill and difficult to produce and is never used. Moreover, with each overtone, the sound becomes more shrill and harder to play as more mouth pressure is needed. Therefore, the tunes that are most comfortable for the taborer are those in the lower range. That said, the archival evidence shows that some tunes such as *Jockey to the Fair* used the whole possible range of the pipe from D to A''. With this tuning, tunes in D major or E Dorian are possible. By a fingering known as half-holing or pinching, that is by half covering a hole with the finger, extra notes can be added. For example, half-holing can produce a C♯. This immediately brings into the equation the ability to play in G major or E Aeolian. In theory, A Dorian is also possible but pushes the melody into higher notes and was probably not used. Other notes are possible with half-holing, for instance D♯, F♯ and A♯, but there is no evidence that they were used to any extent in Morris and it is difficult to hit these notes accurately at dance speed. The note of G♯ is not normally possible, although some current-day taborers manage this note by half-stopping the end aperture of the pipe with the little finger of the playing hand, a technique borrowed from Basque taborers, but there is no evidence that this technique was ever used in Morris music.

By the nineteenth century, the evidence from surviving historic pipes used for Morris is that the pipe used for Morris had become standardised to a small pipe in D major. We are fortunate in that eight such pipes used in the nineteenth century have survived and been studied in detail by Richard Sermon who found that, of the eight instruments, seven correspond roughly to TTS, enough to suggest that this was the favoured tuning.²¹⁴ The outlier is the pipe used by Joseph Powell (1845-1937) of Bucknell which is closer to TTT.²¹⁵ The fact that traditionally Morris dancing was accompanied by a solo musician meant that he is his own boss and can play his own tunes in his own way without having to practice with other musicians or worry about being in tune with them.

Of the body of musical instruments, the pipe is one of the simplest to make and in theory any competent village carpenter with a pattern to work from could make them inexpensively. I recall an occasion in a small village in Castilla y León, Spain, when a local

²¹³ Lyndon-Jones, 'The Big Ones'.

²¹⁴ Sermon, 'Joan Sharp (1898-1968) and the Revival of the English Pipe and Tabor'.

²¹⁵ Graham Lyndon-Jones, 'French Fingerings - in the Cotswolds?', *The Fellowship of Makers and Researchers of Historical Instruments Quarterly* 96 (1999), 35-40.

carpenter showed me a car boot full of tabor pipes that he had made for sale, costing between 30 and 50 euros (in 2010). Likewise in Portugal I met a village taborer who made pipes for other local musicians and even sold some in the local tourist information shop. On this analogy, it is conceivable that there was a cottage industry in England of making and distributing tabor pipes in the villages.

The ability to hit the higher notes accurately is dependent on the skill of the performer and also on the quality of the pipe. Some pipers were known to be better than others and these musicians were in high demand by multiple Morris sides. Sharp was told of the taborer Thomas Heddin of Asthal that ‘could almost make it speak’,²¹⁶ and the same was said of John Potter of Stanton Harcourt.²¹⁷ What may be considered a disadvantage to the size is that the top notes are often described as shrill or piercing, which is not to everybody’s taste or musical sensibilities. Tans’ur described the sound as ‘very shrill’ but conceded that when played with the tabor ‘both of which being well manag’d, make pretty Harmony’.

Every advantage has its downside. In the case of the pipe and tabor, it is simply the shrill note that it produces which is not to everyone’s taste. Morris researcher Roy Dommett (1933-2015) was clearly opposed to the use of the high D pipe for today’s Morris dancers, saying: ‘It is difficult to extract the tune from a pipe and tabor sound’,²¹⁸ and

You can’t have sides dancing to the old pipe & tabor. The G pipe is too highly pitched to have the volume to cope with modern noise. That’s why [taborer] Tubby Reynolds played a C pipe. Outside you need a lower pitch – while inside a hall you’re struggling with the echo and you need a high pitch.²¹⁹

In fact, there is a slight misunderstanding on Dommett’s part here as what he refers to as a G pipe is probably a D pipe played in G. Reynolds actually played a G pipe, allowing him to play in C, but not a C pipe. Furthermore, Dommett was describing contemporary twentieth-century Morris, competing against twentieth-century background noise.

However, unlike Dommett, nineteenth-century Morris dancers had no problem discerning the tunes as evidenced by the accuracy with which they communicated them to the collectors, and the ease that fiddle players had in learning the tunes from the taborers. Just as one cannot consider Morris music without reference to the dance, so one cannot refer to the pipe without mentioning the tabor. Since its appearance the tabor has undergone many

²¹⁶ FDN CJS2/11/2/87.

²¹⁷ FDN CJS2/11/2/85.

²¹⁸ Dommett, *The Morris Dancer*, 11.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 201.

changes of shape and size, as described by Jeremy Montagu and evidenced by iconography, with many variations across Europe and Central and South America from very small to the size of a bass drum.²²⁰ What is known of the 'English' tabor is gleaned from iconography, which is hardly a reliable source as to dimension and construction. The only pre-nineteenth-century tabor to have survived is a very partial one recovered from the wreck of the Mary Rose. Eight nineteenth-century tabors have survived.²²¹ The tabor has to be light enough to be suspended from the taborer's wrist or thumb, small enough to be easily portable and capable of giving a clear crisp sound. The existing Morris tabors indicate a shallow wooden instrument of 9-10" diameter, with tensioning ropes and a snare of string. Some tabors were made by local craftsmen, such as the Guiting Power tabor and the Bucknell tabor made by Powell from a cheese box with an old parchment document for the skin.²²² Copies of the Bucknell tabor were made for members of the English Folk Dance Society and one contemporary drum maker is continuing to make 'Bucknell tabors'. Other tabors were sourced elsewhere:

the English Morris dancer's tabor of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, for those that I have seen, look as though they were originally children's toy drums of the period, usually shallower than their diameter; we may, I think, assume that these were the easiest, and cheapest, drums for a rural morriser to obtain.²²³

We have already seen above that many of the old dancers missed the sound of the pipe and tabor when the fiddle took over and what they missed was the steady tabor beat rather than the notes of the pipe. The dancer who said that the Asthall piper 'could almost make it speak' was probably thinking as much of the rhythm of the tabor as the notes of the pipe.

The principal role of the tabor has always been to keep the dancers on the beat, which is especially important in Morris with its strict pattern of steps and figures. From my personal experience, I can say that the most vital job of the tabor is to keep a steady time and to strike the tabor to coincide with the footfall of the dancers, especially the first beat of a phrase and the foot-together-jump-land at end of the phrase. Taboring styles must have varied from person to person, some putting in more beats and some less, but the basic principles of keeping time and striking on the footfalls would have been adhered to. There are no archive recordings of taborers and the nearest we can come to appreciating the sound of the Cotswold

²²⁰ Jeremy Montagu, 'The Tabor, Its Origin and Use', *The Galpin Society Journal* 63 (2010), 209-16.

²²¹ Sermon, 'Joan Sharp (1898-1968) and the Revival of the English Pipe and Tabor'.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Montagu, 'The Tabor, Its Origin and Use', 211.

Morris pipe and tabor is in the recordings of Cecil Sharp's daughter, Joan, who maintained a simple but steady rhythm.²²⁴

5.4 Free Reed Instruments

The latter end of the nineteenth century saw the introduction of a newly invented class of instrument: free reed instruments. The term is applied to a portable instrument with internal metal reeds that can be sounded by the action of bellows or of blowing, and includes the concertina, melodeon, accordion and harmonica. They were quickly found to be suitable instruments for Morris and have since become the main accompaniment for Morris dance in the twentieth century. Sharp's first real encounter with a Morris musician was not with a fiddler, but with Headington's concertina player, William Kimber. Kimber's father had also been a concertina player and taught his son how to play. Similarly, the musician that played for Abingdon Morris and whom Neal invited to London to teach the *Espérance* club dancers was a melodeon player, William Hemmings, whose photograph appears in the *Espérance Morris* book (Figure 5.7).

Concertinas proved a versatile instrument for Morris. The Anglo-German concertina which Kimber played, come in two keys, normally G and C, and has a range of notes capable of playing all the nineteenth-century Morris canon. The early melodeons only played in one diatonic key, which limited the musicality of the instrument, and only provided two bass chords, namely the tonic and the dominant, thus limiting the harmonic possibilities of the instrument and making the playing of modal tunes problematic. What the early melodeons lacked in musicality, they made up for in the requisite energy to play for Morris.

²²⁴ Recordings of Joan Sharp playing the pipe and tabor can be found at themorrisring.org/pipe-and-tabor/joan-sharp-playing-pipe-and-tabor (accessed 12 February 2022).



Figure 5.7 William Hemmings, musician for Abingdon Morris Esperance Morris dancers, c.1910.

5.5 The 'Sound' of Morris

When considering the suitability of the various instruments for Morris, there are various factors to be taken into consideration; the first being that Morris is nearly always an outdoors performance, and so the sound has to carry. Given this condition, it is clear that some of the instruments favoured by the upper echelons of society would not have been suitable for Morris. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for instance, the lute and cittern did not have the volume to accompany an outside dance. We must also bear in mind that Morris music is not a stand-alone art form but must always be considered in the context of the dance. To witness a Morris performance is to watch an audio-visual spectacle, of which the tune is merely one element:

Audio: the notes of the pipe or fiddle, (the tabor), bells, clashing of the sticks, the sound of the footfalls, the ditties and quips of the fool

Visual: the costumes, the steps and movements of the dancers, the exaggerated costume of the fool

One might add to this the general context and atmosphere of any particular performance, and it can be seen that the tune is a part of a whole.

Morris tunes are therefore meant to form part of a whole performance, not as a single item. They are not meant to be played as such as a concert performance and, when they have been performed outside the Morris context, for example in Percy Grainger's arrangements of *Shepherds Hey* and *Country Gardens*, they are as virtuoso piano arrangements, not to accompany any dance. In a sense, Morris tunes only exist as an adjunct to the dance, linked artistically together in a way that one does not exist without the other.

In the case of the pipe and tabor, the higher pitch has greater carrying power. In the days when villages lacked the noise of traffic and the main sounds to be heard would be those of nature and human voices, any musical sound would have raised interest. As Morris sides travelled from village to village on foot, they would often dance in procession into a village, perform their dance display, collect money and dance out. Many of the Morris sides had a processional dance in their repertoire. For example, the Ilmington dancers processed from place to place to the tune *Flowers of May*.²²⁵ As Marsh stated, in 'early modern England, trumpet calls ranked as one of the loudest sounds that humans produced, and it was said that even the music of a simple pipe could carry for a mile'.²²⁶

²²⁵ FDN CJS2/11/2/135.

²²⁶ Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 31.

Chapter 6. Case Study: The Morris Tunes of Sherborne, Gloucestershire

There are several reasons for my choosing Sherborne Morris tunes as a special study: geography, demographics, a stable core of musicians, and the fact that the repertoire is mainly from a single apparently reliable source, recommended by his fellow dancers.

Firstly, geography: the village of Sherborne in Gloucestershire is small, even by village standards, and today has a population of just over 300. The village is set back from the main Cheltenham to London Road and gets no through traffic. Before the days of asphalted roads and easy transport, it really would deserve the term 'isolated'. The village is strung out along a central road, and falls into two halves, with a stretch of open countryside in the middle. It is dominated by the Sherborne house and estate, built for the Dutton family in 1551 and now owned by the National Trust and converted into flats. Up until the twentieth century, Sherborne House was a major employer of labour for the village, along with a number of farms around the perimeter of the village. The grandeur of Sherborne house and estate is in sharp contrast to the humble Cotswold stone houses of the population. Most of the working villagers were employed in rural crafts and would have to go to nearby Northleach for professional services. The medieval church of St Mary Magdalen served their spiritual needs for baptisms, weddings and funerals. The economic life of the villagers can be deduced by noting that in nineteenth-century censuses, many of the older inhabitants were listed as paupers. Several families had lived in the village for generations and intermarried, so it was a very tight-knit community. Schools were not established in the village until 1824, so we can assume a low literacy rate until that time.

From the evidence of census returns, we see that several families had lived in the village for many generations and the surnames Pitts, Hooper, Bunting and Simpson can be traced back many generations in the village, thus indicating a stable population over many years. This stability of population means that family ties were very strong and that there was a continuity of village culture and cohesion. This stability is also reflected in the fact that a large proportion of the population relied on Sherborne House as their employer, and thus many of the villagers not only lived in close proximity but also worked together and then socialised together.

This stability is reflected in the fact that for most of the nineteenth century, only two main musicians were used for the Morris. We have no visibility of the situation before that time. The first musician we know of was James MacDonald, nicknamed 'Jim the Laddie',

presumably because of his Scottish upbringing. MacDonald was born in 1811 in Edinburgh and by 1841 was living in Sherborne with his mother and had taken the surname of Simpson. Presumably, James took up the pipe and tabor on his move to Sherborne as it is not an instrument associated at that time with Scotland – perhaps James already played an instrument when he and his mother moved. James was in demand as a musician and played not only for the Sherborne Morris by also for nearby Northleach. When James died in 1856, it seems likely that the main musician role was taken on by William Hooper (1836-c.1891) on pipe and tabor, who would have learnt his tunes from James. Therefore, whereas some Morris constantly relied on bringing in musicians from outside the village area, Sherborne had its own core of musicians. There may have been other musicians from time to time: Chandler has tentatively recorded James Hopkins (1820-c.1861) as a Sherborne taborer as well as Thomas Pitts (1855-1940). The latter was certainly a musician, but it is not clear whether he was a regular taborer for the Sherborne side.

Another reason for choosing Sherborne for this case study is that the tunes were largely collected from a single source, not a pipe and tabor player but one who had grown up seeing and hearing the Morris since birth and then had been a keen dancer who acquired a detailed and accurate memory for the steps, figures and tunes. The single source was George Simpson (1850-1913), apparently no relation to James MacDonald/Simpson. George was born into a long-established Sherborne family and he and his younger brother John probably joined the Morris in the 1870s and danced with the side until they both moved away. The loss of two keen dancers may have hastened the break-up of the side in c.1883. Simpson moved to Didcot, Oxfordshire, where he was working as a farm bailiff, and Sharp was recommended to visit him as ‘all agreed that Simpson was the best and could whistle the tunes’.²²⁷ Sharp’s enquiries led him in July 1908 to visit George Simpson in Upton, Didcot, who had danced with the Morris in Sherborne until its demise. Sharp was told that Simpson was ‘the best and could whistle the tunes’.²²⁸ Simpson proved to be an excellent informant, so enthusiastic for his Morris knowledge that he was teaching it to children in Didcot.²²⁹ Given Simpson’s attention to detail, we can assume that the tunes he whistled are an accurate representation of those played on the pipe and tabor until the side lapsed.

²²⁷ FDN CJS/11/3/139.

²²⁸ FDN CJS2/11/3/139.

²²⁹ Dommett, *The Morris Dancer*, 219.

Another important factor for choosing Sherborne for the case study is that the side was held in high regard by other Morris sides and also by Sharp,²³⁰ making it a prime candidate for a detailed study. When Sharp was discovering Gloucestershire Morris, he was told by one informant, William Hathaway in Cheltenham, that Sherborne was a 'desperate Morris place',²³¹ presumably referring to the enthusiasm and prestige of the Sherborne side, and Sharp formed the opinion that Sherborne must have been one of the more highly-regarded sides of the area. He noted that the Sherborne dancers 'especially prided themselves on the "galley"' that the '*Sherborne Jig* was their special and unique (so they claimed) dance'.²³²

Until 1852, the 'renowned' Sherborne side would compete with other sides at the Dover's Games, Chipping Campden.²³³ Once the Sherborne men held a competition with the side from Icomb, 10 miles from Sherborne, but 'the Sherborne men started on the left foot, and so lost'.²³⁴ This pride and competitiveness led to fighting on one occasion that we know of. There is recorded rivalry between the Morris sides of Sherborne and Leafield (also known as Fieldtown), 10 miles from Sherborne, which were regarded within the Morris fraternity as top sides.²³⁵ However, alongside rivalry, there was cooperation. The Sherborne taborer James Simpson/MacDonald also played for the Northleach Morris and in its latter days, the Sherborne side was supplemented by dancers from the nearby villages of Rissington and Windrush.

My methodology in this chapter is to look closely at the body of tunes collected from George Simpson and to judge its provenance, both historical and local, and to take into consideration the tunes subsequently collected from Sherborne dancer, Thomas Pitts. I will also explore the extent to which dances and tunes were learnt from other sides, or indeed how Sherborne's dances spread to other sides. Moreover, I will examine how these tunes translate to the pipe and tabor.

6.1 Sherborne Morris: Context

The Sherborne Morris was active for most of the nineteenth century until it finally ceased in c.1883.²³⁶ Chandler has found credible evidence that Sherborne did not have a Morris side in

²³⁰ Chandler, *Ribbons, bells, and squeaking fiddles*, 92.

²³¹ FDN CJS2/11/1/40.

²³² FDN CJS2/11/1/101a.

²³³ *The Times*, 30 May 1961.

²³⁴ Travelling Morrice log, 27 June 1927.

²³⁵ FDN CJS2/11/3/1390.

²³⁶ Chandler, *Morris Dancing in the English South Midlands, 1660-1900*, 92-5.

the eighteenth century; in which case, if the side was formed in the early nineteenth century, their musicians would have had to constitute a repertoire by borrowing dances and tunes from other sides. Sherborne is within 10 miles of other sides that existed in the eighteenth century, namely Little Barrington/Windrush, Aldsworth, Northleach, Rissington, Wyck Rissington, Eastleach and Burford. Within easy reach was the village of Leafield in Oxfordshire (commonly referred to as 'Fieldtown'). With such a density of Morris sides, it would not have been difficult for a new side in Sherborne to find material.

6.2 The Sherborne dances and tunes

In all, Sharp noted 14 dances with their tunes from Simpson, sometimes noting the same dance on different occasions. Table 6.1 shows when the collections were made.

Table 6.1 The collecting of Sherborne dances and tunes.

| Tune/dance | 25 July 1908 | 5 March 1910 | 17 March 1910 | 24 March 1910 | 31 March 1910 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Blue-eyed Stranger | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Lads a-Buncham | ✓ | | ✓ | | |
| Prncess Royal | ✓ | | | | |
| Sherborne Jig | ✓ | | ✓ | | |
| Trunkles | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Young Collins | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Constant Billy | ✓ | | | | |
| Cuckoo's Nest | ✓ | | ✓ | | |
| Go and 'List for a Sailor | ✓ | | | | |
| Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket | ✓ | | | | |
| How d'ye do | | ✓ | | | |
| Monk's March | | | | ✓ | |
| Orange in Bloom | | | | ✓ | |
| Jockie to the Fair | | | | | ✓ |

Sharp also mentioned the following dances although no notation of them exists:

Greensleeves (“a set dance”)

Bonny Green Garters

Carey visited Simpson in July 1913 and noted the following titles with no tunes:

Orange in Bloom

Double Stick Dance (presumably *Constant Billy*)

Lumps of Plum Pudding

Simpson died a few months later of cancer.

Apart from the tunes collected from Simpson, there are tantalising glimpses of other Sherborne tunes. Although the tune for *Greensleeves* was not collected as a Sherborne Morris dance, it did make an appearance in Sherborne’s mummers play, collected in 1933 by James Madison Carpenter from several of the Sherborne mummers including the brothers Thomas and William Bunting, whose grandfather, James, had danced with the Morris in the mid-nineteenth century. The informants all stated that the play had been performed in the 1880s and had been performed in the village for many years. The dialogue included these words:

OLD MAN: Strike up music and merrily play

So the lord and lady can have content

Before they go away

Greensleeves and yellow leaves

Now me boys, dance apace.

Thomas Bunting also sang *The Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket*, but, intriguingly, his version was in 6/8 time whereas Simpson’s was in 4/4.²³⁷ The collector Harry Albino visited another Sherborne taborer, Thomas Pitts, who apparently played him a couple of tunes on a whistle while playing a drum. The tunes were *Old Woman Tossed up* (in 6/8 as opposed to Simpson’s 4/4) and *Why did Sarah treat me so*, in other words *Go and Enlist* (Roud 1614 *The Unfortunate Tailor*). Pitts also sang a few bars of *Highland Mary*, thus raising the possibility that this was also in the Sherborne repertoire, especially as a relative of the tune was used in the Sherborne Mummers play. The song in the play is in two sections, the second section having the tune shown in Example 6.1.

²³⁷ Carpenter collection, cylinder recording VWML SN 26148.

Good ma-ster and mis-tress, both sit by the fire, put your hand in your po-cket we pray and de-sire. Put your hand in your po-cket and pull out your purse, for a li-ttle of some-thing will do us no hurt. Sing fa the ro ra-ddie, sing fa the ro ra-ddie, sing fa the ro ra-ddie ay - oh.

Example 6.1 *Sherborne Mummers Song*.

This tune profile compares closely with the first 8 bars versions of the Morris tune *Highland Mary*, shown in Example 6.2.

Example 6.2 *Highland Mary*, collected from Charles Taylor, Oddington.

This could simply be a musical coincidence but on the other hand it could imply that the tune *Highland Mary* was once part of the Sherborne Morris repertoire.

Other glimpses of the repertoire can be found. In 1907, the fiddler John Mason of Stow-on-the-Wold, who may have played for several Morris sides, judging by his extensive repertoire of tunes, played Sharp a tune he called *Sherborne Jig* which was actually a version of *Lumps of Plum Pudding*. Mason may have unwittingly supplied Sharp with the tune for the missing *Lumps of Plum Pudding* mentioned by Carey.²³⁸

A total of 16 dances for a well-established Morris side is a modest number and one suspects that others were forgotten by Simpson. It would have been surprising for a Morris side not to have danced *Shepherds Hey*, for example, and one could have expected to see *Maid of the Mill* or *Old Molly Oxford* on the list. Eight of the tunes, namely *Constant Billy*, *Young Collins*, *The Old Woman Tossed up*, *Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Monk's March*, *Trunkles*, *Princess Royal* and *Jockey to the Fair* would be considered standard Cotswold Morris repertoire with standard names. Others have misleading names: *Blue-eyed Stranger* is *Country Gardens* in a mixolydian mode, and Simpson's title and tune are confirmed as accurate as Sharp collected it from him twice, once in 1908 and once in 1910. *How do you do* is almost the same tune as Oddington's

²³⁸ FDN CJS2/10/1378.

Old Frog or Longborough's *Swaggering Boney*, while *Lads a-Buncham* is very similar to Leafield's *Dearest Dicky*.

In general, the Sherborne Morris repertoire can be considered typical of most nineteenth-century Morris sides. Most of the Sherborne tunes can be found in the repertoire of other Cotswold Morris sides but there are three that are particular or even unique to Sherborne. *The Sherborne Jig* was also danced by the Longborough side, and the tune was known to other Cotswold fiddlers. Two of the tunes have not been noted elsewhere in the corpus of Cotswold Morris tunes: *I'll go and Enlist* and *Orange in Bloom*; the latter cannot be traced in the Morris canon or elsewhere. However, Sherborne is not the only Morris side to have unique tunes.

6.3 Sharp's transcriptions and how the tunes relate to the pipe and tabor

Sharp's transcriptions of Simpson's tunes are in a variety of keys, but as Simpson whistled the tunes rather than played them on an instrument, the key is no indication of what key they were played on the tabor pipe, and a tune whistled in one key on one day might well be whistled in a different key the next. There is no indication in any of Sharp's collecting that he had perfect pitch or used a tuning fork, and so Sharp's choice of keys is arbitrary and not related to how they would have been performed. Simpson's tunes must have all been remembered from the pipe and tabor playing of William Hooper. We therefore are left to surmise how Simpson's tunes would have been played. This task is facilitated by knowing the range of the pipe, assuming that Hooper's pipe on a pipe in D whose range is D to A'. The findings are shown in Table 6.2.

It is noteworthy that, although the pipe is nominally in the key of D, those tunes whose range falls below the tonic have perforce to be played in G. This can lead to some very shrill notes, for example, in *Jockey to the Fair*, but judging by the number of times this was collected in the Morris canon, the taborers had no qualms about playing such tunes.

Table 6.2 Details of the Sherborne Morris tunes from George Simpson, transcribed by Sharp.

| Tune | Key and mode noted by Sharp | Range in Sharp's notation | Range as it would have been played | Notes |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Young Collins | G | D to D' | D to D' | Can only be played in G |
| 2. Blue-eyed Stanger | D mixolydian | D to D' | D to D' | Probably played in D, as playing in G would require the note of F \sharp , possible but not easy on the pipe. |
| 3. Monk's March | G | D to G' | D to G' | Can only be played in G |
| 4. Princess Royal | F | C to F' | D to G' | Can only be played in G |
| 5. Jockey to the Fair | D | A to D' | D to A' | Can only be played in G |
| 6. Trunkles | G | G to G' | D to D' or G to G' | Could have been played in D or G |
| 7. Sherborne Jig | D (1908), G (1910) | C \sharp to D', F \sharp to G' | F \sharp to G' | Can only be played in G |
| 8. Orange in Bloom | G | D to E' | D to E' | Can only be played in G |
| 9. Constant Billy | A | | (D to E') | Can only be played in G. (Sharp noted only the B music) |
| 10. Lads a-Buncham | D | A to D' | D to G' | Can only be played in G |
| 11. Cuckoo's Nest | D Dorian | D to E' | D to E' | Simpson's tune has a D \sharp in the B music, which would have been half-holed. This compares with a similar version from Bledington which does not have the D \sharp |
| 12. The Old Woman tossed up in a blanket | G | G to E' | G to E' or D to B | Can be played in either key |
| 13. How do you do | D | D to E' | D to E' or G to A' | D is more likely as the lower pitch is more comfortable to play on the pipe. |
| 14. Go and Enlist | D Dorian | D to D' | D to D' | Can only be played in E Dorian |

No repertoire of tunes and dances spring out of thin air, and naturally many of the Sherborne tunes can be related to those in other villages. As noted above, Sherborne was in an area where Morris sides were plentiful. Unfortunately, few of the dances from villages in the immediate vicinity to Sherborne were ever collected. Several of the tunes can be regarded as standard Cotswold Morris fare but even so, there are distinguishing features in some of

their dances. *Young Collins* tune and dance were known to several Gloucestershire Morris sides but, whereas the other versions are stick dances, Sherborne was a hand-clapping dance. In fact, the only stick dance in their repertoire was *Constant Billy*, and this with two short sticks rather than the usual one long one. The only other double stick dance in the Morris repertoire is another *Constant Billy*, but there is no telling who learnt from whom. *Cuckoo's Nest* was danced by several Morris sides but the dance and tune from Bledington is quite close to the Sherborne one. Again, we do not know who learnt it from whom. Of special interest is the dance and tune *Lads a-Buncham*, for which there is a version from Fieldtown as *Dearest Dicky*. Both tunes derive from *The Happy Clown* but Sherborne's tune is much closer to the Playford's tune, therefore indicating that the Sherborne version predates the Fieldtown one.

The dances *Go and Enlist* and *Orange in Bloom* are unique to the Sherborne repertoire and the derivation of the latter has not been traced. Furthermore, Simpson's version of *The Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket* is uniquely in 4/4 time whereas all other collected versions are in 6/8. Curiously, when Carpenter collected songs from William Bunting, Bunting sang *The Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket* 6/8 time, as did another old dancer, Thomas Pitts, when visited by the collector Harry Albino in 1934. Incidentally, Pitts also remembered the tune for *Go and Enlist*, to the same tune as Simpson's. Morris men are very prone to mixing up tune titles, and this was the case with Simpson. The tune he gave to Sharp as *The Blue-eyed Stranger* is a version of a tune known elsewhere as *Country Gardens*, while *Lads a-Buncham* was used as a title in Cotswold Morris for a variety of tunes.

The tune *Orange in Bloom* is unique to Sherborne and indeed unique in the Morris world. Moreover, the origin of the tune is unknown. It is worth noting that because Cotswold Morris dances followed regular formats, several tunes can be used for the same or similar dances, and so the dances *Orange in Bloom*, *How d'ye do* and *Lads a-Buncham* are virtually the same dance apart from a few steps. Just as the tune *Orange in Bloom* is unique, so is the dance *The Sherborne Jig*, which was considered special to the Sherborne side.

6.4 Possible linkage to folk songs

As in all rural communities of the nineteenth century, Sherborne would have had songs as part of their cultural life, but no song collector visited the village until Carpenter in the 1930s. Apart from noting the mummers play from several individuals, he also noted a number of songs from Thomas Bunting; namely, *Seventeen Come Sunday*, *Barbara Allen*, *A Donkey Ride for me*, *The Green Mossy Banks of the Lee*, *The Pretty Ploughboy*, *Johnny's so Long at the Fair* and *The Old*

Woman Tossed up. Of these tunes, *Johnny's so Long at the Fair* occasionally appears in the canon of Morris tunes while *The Old Woman Tossed up (in a Blanket)* was one of the most frequently performed Morris dances/tunes. Thomas' father James danced for Sherborn Morris, and Thomas himself, even if he did not dance the Morris, certainly grew up hearing the tunes until his 20s. There exists an anomaly in that Simpson's version of *The Old Woman* is in 4/4 time whereas Bunting's is in the usual 6/8, as is the version of Thomas Pitts.

6.5 Conclusions

The repertoire of tunes used by the Sherborne Morris is typical of many used by Cotswold Morris sides at that time and, apart from the two unique tunes, there are no musical features that stand out from the general canon of Cotswold Morris music. It was a repertoire played almost exclusively by taborers and the fact that only two main musicians were noted throughout most of the nineteenth century shows remarkable stability. Of the two tunes unique to Sherborne, one derives from folk song which presumably was sung in the village at one time and the other is of unknown provenance.

Chapter 7. Conclusions

While studying the music used for Morris dancing, the only sample of substance that we have is that written down by collectors and folklorists from the late nineteenth century onwards, so that, while examining this canon in detail, we must realise that it is just the tip of a 400-year-old iceberg and that what remains below the surface is subject to a good deal of speculation and conjecture based on the meagre hints that history throws at us. We also struggle with the fact that we are dealing with a canon of music and associated instrumentation that was so low down the social order that it went mainly unrecorded. Furthermore, it is also essentially an orally transmitted canon, constantly subject to modification so that it is hard to extrapolate what a seventeenth-century Morris musician would have played as opposed to a nineteenth-century one. Morris musicians left no tune books and no previous collections were ever made of Morris music. Furthermore, Morris dancing was practised throughout England, so regional variations and styles would have prevailed. However, by the time we reach the nineteenth century, the situation had polarised as Morris dancing had ceased or at least became infrequent over much of the country, except for a microcosm of sides in a small geographical area in the West Midlands. Within this small snapshot of time and space, we find a cohesive body of dance with associated tunes and protocols.

It is not the body of music as such that binds this canon together, but other, stronger, factors. Pride in one's side was a strong driver, which mainly resided in the ability and agility of the dancers, as was appearance as the Morris sides went to considerable lengths in their costume. Along with pride comes rivalry with other local sides, sometimes friendly and cooperative (for example, sharing dancers and musicians) and sometimes ending in fisticuffs. One can assume that these feelings of pride and rivalry extended to whole communities, not just the performers themselves. Morris competitions were held, but the sides were judged on their dancing rather than other factors. The musician was a catalyst in this process but not central.

The musical canon itself has always been an ever-changing and developing phenomenon, gathering new tunes and dances on the way, mainly learnt from other sides, and dropping old ones. The dance tunes of the sixteenth and seventeenth century were supplemented later by song tunes or tunes from ballad operas and, as the nineteenth century dawned, it brought in new musical styles and influences such as popular and traditional songs, blackface minstrel tunes and music hall. By the time the collectors took an interest in Morris,

the canon of tunes was eclectic, drawing on all the above-mentioned sources, with the proviso that they had to fit the by-then standardised figures and steps of the dance. Tunes with regular rhythms and convenient 4- or 8-bar phrases and easily learnt tunes were ideal. Again, the distinctiveness of Morris music does not lie in the notes played but rather in the way they were played: the strong steady unhurried rhythm and the distinctive 'slows', unique to Cotswold Morris. Another criterion was that the tune must be capable of being played on the limited diatonicism and range of the tabor pipe, although this became less important as the nineteenth century progressed and fiddles became dominant.

This thesis has shown that Morris repertoire is eclectic and ever-changing. There are two-way drivers on the canon, one being the conservationist and traditionalist nature of Morris performers to cling onto their old familiar tunes, and the other being a pull in the other direction to accept new tunes (and dances) but only when they have achieved communal acceptance. Many of the nineteenth-century Morris tunes clearly have antecedents in Playford and early sixteenth-century books but have been shaped by over two centuries of oral transmission and generations of musicians. As the Morris tradition was and still is an oral one rather than learnt from books, the musicians had no need to refer back to manuscripts to check the accuracy of their tunes. The result of this long period of being out in the field meant that some parts of tunes were dropped and substituted by fresh parts, as in *Constant Billy*.

Examination of the tunes also shows that keys and modes were not a factor in their take-up and transmission by Morris musicians, but what did matter to them was the shape and rhythm of the tune and its suitability for the dance. On modes, we see a tendency away from the minor modes (Dorian, Aeolian) of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries towards the Ionian by the end of the nineteenth century. This is not a change that was occasioned by the limitations of the pipe as most of the older tunes would have been playable on the pipe, but it may be part of a musical cultural shift away from these 'old' modes to much more 'modern' sounding Ionian. Perhaps the later musicians were becoming less used to the Dorian mode and so did not 'hear' them in the same way. *Bobbing Joe* in the Dorian mode nearly made it into the twentieth century, but then gave way to the Ionian. Apart from *Greensleeves* not one of the Dorian or Aeolian tunes of Playford's day made it through to the late nineteenth century in their original modes. Even *Greensleeves* did not escape entirely as it was played by one Morris musician in the mixolydian mode rather than the Dorian. It is as though with the passing of time, the minor modes resonated less with musicians as musical habits changed, and mode uniformity took over.

Having said that the Morris canon is a mixed bag, constantly drawing in new elements, it is not in general an innovative tradition and can be surprisingly conservative. The dancers and musicians interviewed by the collectors were clear in their minds which were Morris tunes and which were not, and certainly were aware within their own sides that they had at their fingertips a discrete body of tunes of dances. They were also conservative in that the evidence is that they clung onto certain tunes and dances over centuries. This thesis is the first to hold the canon of Morris tunes under the microscope to this extent and it is hoped that future scholars will be able to build on this knowledge and create a clearer picture of Cotswold Morris and its music.

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Appendix A.

Cotswold Morris tunes collected or mentioned by name, in frequency order (most frequent first).

| <i>Title</i> | <i>Collected or mentioned by</i> | <i>Possible earliest provenance</i> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Constant Billy | CC, CJS, JB, PM, TM | |
| Princess Royal/Nelson's Praise | CC, GB, JB, PM, TM | |
| Shepherds Hey | CJS, HHA, JB, JMC, TM | 1590s – Anon tune, Ballet lute book |
| Jockie to the Fair | CC, CJS, HHA, JB, JMC, PM, TM | |
| Greensleeves | CC, CJS, HHA, PM | 1590s – Lute book |
| Trunkles/Trunk Hose/Trunko | CC, CJS, GB | Possibly 'Tarlton's Trunke Hose' c1600 |
| Old Woman Tossed up in Blanket | CC, GB, HHA, TM | |
| Maid of the Mill | CJS, TM | |
| Molly Oxford/(Old) Mother Oxford | CJS | Poss Playford 'Old Oxford/Peace and Plenty' (1728) |
| Cuckoo's Nest | CJS, GB | |
| Black Joke/Old Black Joe | CJS, GB, JB, PM | C1730 Bawdy song tune |
| Brighton Camp | CC, CJS, JB, PM | |
| Country Garden(s) | CC, CJS, TM | |
| Nutting Girl/A-Nutting we will go | CC, PM, TM | Folk song tune – early 1800s |
| (Bonny) Green Garters | CJS, GB | |
| Balance the Straw | CC, CJS | |
| Bobby and Joan | CJS | |
| Highland Mary | CC, CJS, TM | |
| Lumps of Plum Pudding | GB, JMC | 1701 Playford 'Lumps of Pudding' |
| Monk's/Bell Isle's March | CJS | |
| Young Collins | CC | |
| Saturday Night | GB, TM | Poss Playford 'Saturday Night and Sunday morn' 1651 |
| Blue-eyed Stranger | CJS, TM | |
| Hey Diddle Dis | | |

| | | |
|--|-------------|---|
| London Pride/Idbury Hill/Old Heddon of Fawley/Blackwell Morris | CJS, TM | Poss from C17 Irish 'Boyne Water' into C19 blackface minstrel 'Backside Albany' |
| Banks of the Dee | CC, CJS, TM | |
| Dearest Dicky/Lads a-Buncham (Sherborne) | CJS | |
| Sherborne Jig | | |
| Swaggering Boney/Old Frog (Oddington) | CC | |
| Gallant Hussar | CJS, GB | Song printed on C19 broadside |
| Glorishears | CC, CJS | |
| Malborough | | |
| Room for the Cuckoo/Cuckolds | GB | Not the same as Playford RFTC |
| Shooting | | |
| Willow Tree | | |
| Bean Planting/Setting | CJS, PM | |
| Bonnets so Blue | CJS, GB | |
| British Grenadiers | | C17 – origin obscure |
| Buffoon | JB | |
| Bumpus o'Stretton | | |
| Flowers of Edinburgh | CJS | |
| Getting Upstairs | CC | C1830 Blackface Minstrel song |
| Johnny's so long at the Fair | | C1770 Nursery rhyme |
| Ladies (of) Pleasure | GB, TM | 1690 Playford 'Lady of Pleasure' |
| Moll of the Whad | | |
| Morning Star | | |
| Mrs Casey | TM | |
| Queen's Delight | | |
| Rigs o'Marlow | | |
| Step and Fetch Her | | |
| Twenty-ninth of May | CC, CJS | |
| Valentine | | |
| We won't go Home Till Morning | | |
| Balancy Straw (Ascot-under-Wychwood) | CJS | |
| Banbury Bill | | |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|---|
| Beaux of London City | JB, CJS | |
| Blue Bells of Scotland | JB | |
| Boys of the Bunch | | |
| Cock of the North | | First printed 1816. Probably the country dance tune |
| Cuckoo | | |
| Curly Headed Ploughboy | | |
| Dargason | | |
| Double Set Back | | |
| Down in the Meadows | | Unknown |
| Duke of Malborough | | |
| Fieldtown Processional | | |
| Flowers in May | | C17 Unknown |
| Flowing Bowl | JB | College song 1904 |
| Fools Dance | | |
| Go and Enlist | CJS | |
| Happy Man | JB | |
| Haste to the Wedding 1 | | |
| Haste to the Wedding (Adderbury) | JB | |
| Hay Morris | | |
| How d'ye do, Sir (Headington) | CC | Not the same as Sherborne tune |
| Hunt(ing) the Squirrel | CC | |
| Jolly Waggoners | | Unknown – probably the folk song of this name |
| Laudnum Bunches | | |
| Leap Frog dance | | |
| Leapfrog (Headington) | CC | |
| Lillie (?) Dale | | Unknown |
| Lively Jig | CC | |
| Lollipop Man | CC | Unknown |
| March past | | |
| Monday and Tuesday | PM | |
| Month of May | | |
| Morris Reel | | |

| | | |
|------------------------------|----|--|
| Nightingale | PM | Unknown. Tune in Bacon may be song tune |
| Old Black Joe | | |
| Old Black Joe2 | | |
| Old Myrtle Tree | | |
| Old Rose | | Possibly the same as Rose |
| Orange in Bloom | | Unknown |
| Over the Water to Charlie | | |
| Polly put the Kettle on | | Unknown – possibly nursery rhyme tune |
| Postman's knock | JB | |
| Quaker | | |
| Quaker | | |
| Queen's Delight | GB | Not the same as Playford QD |
| Roast Beef of Old England | JB | Song in Fielding play 'The Grub Street Opera' 1731 |
| Rodney | | |
| Rose | | |
| Rose Tree | | |
| Shepherds Hey (Badby) | GB | Different from other SH |
| Staines Morris | GB | 1590s Lute book, but GB noted no tune, only the dance. |
| Step and Fetch Her | | |
| Step Back | | |
| Sweet Jenny Jones | | JB |
| Trip and Go | | 1600 lute book |
| Trunkles (Wheatley) | | Unknown. |
| Unidentified Morris tune | | |
| Walk of the Twopenny Postman | TM | |
| Washing Day | JB | |
| Webley Jig | | |
| Wheatley Processional | | |
| White Jock | | |
| William and Nancy | GB | |

Appendix B.

Cotswold Morris tunes for which we have the title only.

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Noted by</i> |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Broad Cupid | |
| Clock | PM |
| Cockey Brown | |
| Down in the Meadows | |
| Flowers of May | |
| Jug by the Ear | |
| Mad Miller | |