

THE MORRIS DANCER

No. TEN AUGUST 1981

The Ring's first Autumn circular should carry the subscription rate for Issues No.11, No.12 and No.13 (for Nov.1981, and March and August 1982). The individual subscribers will be written. to by the Editor.

There is a good stock of Nos:8 and 9, at 17p each: some of Nos. 1 and 3, at 10p each; of Nos.4 and 5 at 1p each; and No.?, at 14p. Plus postage, of course. Nos. 2 and 6 are all gone; but good readable photo-copies can be made.

The Editor renews his appeal for more articles from which he can select to compile the magazine.

Write to Ewart Russell, 50, Mile End Road,
Colchester,
C04 55X

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From Bob Grant, Headington Quarry Morris Dancers. 8.4.81

I have read with deep interest P.H. Coleman's contribution 'Bonny Green Garters' in the No.9 edition of The Morris Dancer, and perhaps you would be good enough to allow me space to comment upon his observations.

First, some matters of fact. Joe Trafford was born in 1839 and although at eight years old he may have gone out with the team in 1847, William Kimber senior (born 1849) and John Horwood (born 1846) could hardly, in such tender years, constituted much of a side. The morris date of 1847 given by Manning is probably out by some 20 years. Robert Trafford, born 1843, was Joe Trafford's brother (not a cousin) - he is pictured along with Joe Trafford, Mark Cox and John Horwood in a photograph taken on October 24th, 1910, at Headington, and subsequently published by Mary Neal in her Esperance book Vol.2, February 1911. I have several other photographs of Bob Trafford and William Kimber, Junior, together organising the annual Quarry sheep roast in the early 1900's. With such obvious close liaison on this event, it is interesting to reflect that the two men may have co-operated in other matters too - such as morris dances and tunes!

Secondly, a supposition; Coleman's concluding inference that William Kimber, Jnr., learnt certain tunes from Manning is unlikely. There is no evidence that Manning knew William Kimber. William joined the Headington Morris some time after the 1899 revival concert (apart from a youthful appearance with his father, 1887) and Manning appears to have abandoned the side immediately after that sole March show. As Theo Chaundy in his article 'William Kimber, a portrait' (J.E.F.D.S.S.1959) puts it "the side was once again left to itself." Thus, a direct transmission from Manning, or even via Carter his assistant, cannot be assumed.

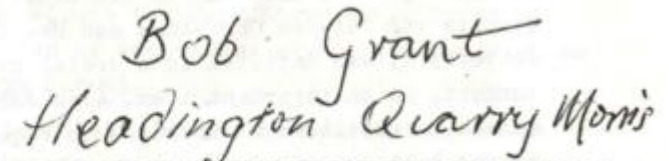
Writing on the 25th of April, about his researches, Bob has, The work is becoming somewhat urgent - of the people that I have interviewed so far, three have since died, and only last week Jimmy Young died. He, with Fred Kimber, was the last of the Quarry men who danced before the war left to record.

P.H. Coleman's work and that of others interests me, of course,

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but they are working from documentary sources and those will always be available. It is the oral tradition that I have got to capture first before it is gone for ever; so I am amassing what I can from interviews and conversations with as many local people as it is possible to meet, but concentrating on chasing up the surviving relatives (and only just with some of them) of the 1899 team and Bill's pre-W.W.1 team.

There is as yet little time for indexing, cataloguing or even plain organising of my notes - but it will all be there when I have finished this part of the work. There will be documentary sources to investigate and then dovetail in with the oral material - with the photographs that I have collected providing a 'who's who' of just about everybody who had anything to do with the Quarry dancing locally since 1870!



Bob Grant
Headington Quarry Morris

From Keith Chandler, 25.3.1981

THE PAPA STOUR SWORD DANCE: some notes on its recent history.

The 1978 issue of The Folk Music Journal carried an article by Ivor Allsop in which he assessed the majority of the available source material on the most northerly recorded sword dance, that from the island of Papa Stour in the Shetland Isles. Historically, Allsop's piece effectively ceases with the revival of the dance in 1926; and since there is a dearth of information on the history of the side during the present century, the following notes may prove to be of interest. (1) Despite a relocation of the focal point of the performance of the dance to Brae, on the mainland of Shetland - in much the same way that the pace-egging tradition of Midgely in Yorkshire is presently based in nearby Mytholmroyd - the Papa Stour Sword Dance is a living tradition and should be regarded as such. For the past twenty years, the chief and most active bearer of the tradition has been George Peter Scott Peterson, a native of Papa Stour, who first danced with the team in 1950 when aged seventeen. (2) In a letter to the Morris Ring dated September 2nd, 1977, George briefly

described the fortunes of the dance during the past fifty years:

...As the twentieth century came in and the First World War ran its course with its resultant changes and unsettling of the long cherished traditions, the Papa Stour Sword Dance, performed solely on that island', fell into abeyance, and for a period of over thirty years was never performed at all. It was in 1926 that a young man belonging to Papa Stour, Alec Johnson (who is still alive, aged 74 but no longer living there) revived the ancient Sword Dance, with the active assistance and demonstration of some of the older men on the island.

From then on, the Sword Dance was duly performed every second or third year, young men being brought in as the passage of years removed the older members. It was usually run between Christmas and New Year's Day, and latterly it was included in a social evening, such as a concert, as an important item. Also during the summer season it was shown to tourists on request, at which many of the island people would leave their evening work and gather to witness the old Sword Dance which was something they held in respect and veneration.

However, depopulation struck at the very culture of the island, and family after family moved away to seek a better and less demanding living till by 1963 forty or so souls were left, with more removals imminent...(3)

The final performance of a team composed of dancers native to, and living on the island, occurred in 1962. At that time the team was:

Alec Johnson (St. George) Leader of the team. Aged 58 in 1962. A merchant by trade.

George P.S. Peterson. (St. Dennis) Aged 29. A schoolmaster at Brae Junior High School since 1961. Present leader and musician for the side.

Alec Jamieson (St. James) Aged 31. Seaman.

Alistair Johnson (St. David) Aged 20. Second cousin to George Peterson.

William Drummond (St. Andrew) Aged 47. Seaman/crofter on Papa Stour.

Ian Fraser (St. Patrick) Aged 22. Now a teacher in Stirling-shire.

Alec Scott (St. Anthony) Aged 50. Seaman/crofter on Papa Stour.

Lawrence Fraser (Minstrel - fiddle) Aged 50. Crofter on Papa.

With the demise of the adult side, George Peterson,

...felt the very existence of this ancient and dignified Sword Dance was seriously threatened. For its full description has never been written down in a way to be easily followed.(4) It also has a tune peculiar only to the Sword Dance.

Having been a member of the Sword Dance by then for many years; having led it, and also knowing the tune; I endeavoured to perpetuate the Papa Stour Sword Dance by teaching it to a team of schoolboys of the 14-15 age group at Brae Junior High School...

This was accomplished with no perceivable interruption of the tradition: the men's side last danced during the autumn of 1962 and by June of the following year there was a boys' team in performance. Various incarnations of the side from Brae school continued to dance throughout this and the following decade. There were occasions after 1962 when the dance was performed on the island itself, but these teams contained non-resident dancers.(5) Around 1963 or 1964 two sides danced in Lerwick at the end of January as part of the Up Helly Aa celebrations, under the guise of The Westside Saints. (6)

In 1972 George was asked to take a side to Edinburgh to represent Shetland in the centenary celebrations of the Education (Scotland) Act. This was almost certainly the first time it had ever been performed outside the Shetland Isles."(7) A further visit to the Scottish capital occurred during the summer of 1977, at the invitation of the Lothians Morris Men. It was during this weekend that I first met George and his team of boys. Their execution of the dance was very precise and created an almost mesmeric effect. The text of the play was declaimed in a manner akin to that of the Paper Boys of

Marshfield In Gloucestershire - very directly in a rhythmic monotone. George is a skilful fiddle-player, very much in the mainstream of the Shetland style, whose repertoire contains a large number of reels and hornpipes, amongst others. For the dance he uses two distinctive techniques of playing. In The Trip, where each dancer briefly steps to the audience whilst holding his sword above his head with both hands, the music is crisp, graceful and very rhythmical. For the figures of the dance, however, the bow is drawn over the strings with more pressure and a considerable amount of double-stopping is utilised to maintain the measured steps of the dancers.

Perhaps it was the acclaim garnered on this visit which aroused sufficient interest during the late summer of 1977 to reform a team of adult dancers, all of whom had been taught to dance when still at school. Those present at the first meeting of this 'new' side were Charlie Tait, James Cooper, David 'Balfour, Charlie Laurenson, Robert Wood, Peter Robertson, Willie Douall and George Peterson. The seriousness of attitude which the performers have towards their tradition is reflected in the formalised aims of the side ratified at this meeting.

1. To keep alive the Papa Stour Sword Dance by meeting from time to time to practise words, dance and tunes.
2. To publically perform this ancient Sword Dance at social gatherings.
3. To encourage similar dances as a comparison.

It was further agreed to keep the Papa Stour Sword Dance a living Shetland tradition without being committed to paper, except perhaps as a manuscript to be lodged in the County Museum.

There is to be automatic promotion from the Boys' to the Men's Club when a boy leaves school. (8)

The senior team danced at Muckle Roe on December 17th, 1977 - the first public performance in twelve years for Willie Douall and Peter Robertson and for five years for the rest of the men. On February 2nd, 1978, there was a private performance of the sword dance given to the author and several companions at

Free by a mixed side of seniors and juniors. Dancers were Charlie Tait (St. George), Willie Douall (St. Patrick), and Peter Robertson (St. Anthony) of the Men's Team; and John Ratter (St. Andrew), Kenneth Johnson (St. David), Jimmie Johnson (St. Dennis) and Hughie Manson (St. James) from the Boys' team. This performance was tape-recorded and a series of twelve colour photographs taken. On the following day there was a further display by the junior team, at which time the dancers were Kenneth, Jimmie and Karl Johnson, Hughie and Martin Manson, David Anderson and an unidentified dancer. George Peterson was Minstrel for both performances.

Of late, the senior side has largely languished but the tradition is actively maintained by successive sets of boys from the school. George Peterson recently wrote,

I am still teaching schoolboys of the 14-16 age group both native lads and newcomers - in fact one of my best St. Georges lately has been from Northern Ireland! They perform with dignity I am pleased to say, and take it very seriously...(9)

For the full effect of this electrifying tradition it should be viewed in performance in situ. Failing that it would be a good idea for some body (The Morris Ring?) to set up a sponsorship to bring the team to England. That would be a rare treat.

Notes.

1. Due to the inaccessability of the location, a series of notes is all that this can claim to be. Of late, folklorists have largely ignored the tradition.
2. This article is prepared with the approval and encouragement of George Peterson. Unless stated otherwise, the material contained herein was orally collected from George at his home in Brae on February 1st-3rd, 1978.
3. The adaptation to different timers of appearance and venues indicates the viability of the tradition. This was aided no doubt by the unique position it held in the Shetlands.
4. A conclusion also reached by Ivor Allsop. Folk Music

Journal, Vol.3, no.4, 1978, page 334.

5. On one occasion the side included the local missionary. The adopted name is a pun: Papa Stour is one of the western islands, while Saints is self-explanatory. Despite the assertion of Terry Rees that "It (i.e. the Para Stour Sword Dance) is performed to this day at the annual Shetland festival of Norse origin, called Up-helly-aa," (The Morris Dancer, no.6, page 9) it has not been a regular feature of the Lerwick event in recorded history. The men involved in Up Helly Aa are organised into 'squads' which are dressed around a particular theme. When I was there in 1978 these included the Muppets, cavemen, cowboys, country and western groups and the like - themes close to the hearts of the 'folk' (whoever they are) but anathema to folklorists of the purer kind. The confusion over both of these Shetland traditions obviously lies in the remoteness of the islands and the fact that they have been seen by comparatively few outsiders.
6. Letter to The Morris Ring, 2.9.1977. George refers to performances of the traditional Papa side.
7. Extracted from the Minute Book of the Papa Stour Sword Team, seen at Brae, 2.2.1978.
8. Personal communication, 18.2.81. Brae has become somewhat cosmopolitan in character, with children of men working for the oil-related industries and the U.S. Coast-guard station, as well as local people, attending the High School. Such jobs are often transient and the effect on the composition of the sword team is obvious.

 ISSUE No.9 of the Morris Dancer had a note (p.7) that Keith Chandler had searched twenty-two Oxfordshire newspapers' runs, and asking that anyone contending to do similar work for that county should write to me first. Mike Heaney has sent a further list; it is printed here, following on Keith Chandler's articles in Nos, 8 and 9 of this magazine, as further illustration of what can be found in past newspapers.

Oxford Guardian 1890-91; Thame Gazette 1856-65. Checked week

before, three weeks after Whitsun; week after Christmas. Nothing found.

Bicester Advertiser and Mid-Oxon Chronicle (to March 1886: Bicester Advertiser and Brackley Observer). 10/1/1879 (No. 1) - 1/1/1915. Week before and three weeks after Whitsun: August Bank Holiday: week after Christmas: 1887 and 1897 Jubilees: 1902 and 1911 Coronations. Missing issues not checked: 5/VIII/1904; 1/VI - 13/VII/1906; XII/1906; 19/VI/1914. 28/V/1880, p.5

CLUB FESTIVALS. Kirtlington. It was John o' Gaunt who first established the celebrated institution of the Lamb Ale. It used to be a most romantic ceremony, in which few of the living inhabitants ever partook in its fullest splendour. The term, Lamb Ale, gives little clue to what the ceremony really was. In days of yore the club feasts were held on Easter Monday, and the anniversary of the Lamb Ale was held on the same day as the present club feasts are. Until twenty years ago, this was the order of these annual festivals, when the Lamb Ale was discontinued, and the club feasts were held on that day, and so it has remained ever since. On the anniversary of the Lamb Ale, a live lamb was taken round the village on Trinity Monday, adorned with various ribbons and decorations, and attended by twelve officers in their scarfs and sashes of many colours; amongst these were the lord and lady, who both carried maces, and who were attired in most grotesque costumes. On the village green the lamb was set up on its hind legs, and a dance known as the 'Morisk' or 'Morris' was performed around it. The holiday appears to have continued nearly the whole week, for about the fourth day the lamb was killed and made into lamb pies. The reference to the 'Ale' connected with the holiday seems to have been almost a national custom throughout the country at this time of year for ale to be sold without a licence for ten days, and at Kirtlington a large barrel was given away by the brewer who supplied the villagers with the remainder which was drunk during the ten days. There were also charters and privileges connected with the feast, and at some time there appears to have been a fund for keeping up the celebration; but all this has long since fallen into disuse, and the ancient Lamb Ale of ten days' carouse has given place to the more modern happy festival of

our day.

3/VI/1881, p.8.

THE BRACKLEY OBSERVER. The Whitsun feast is an institution of the past which has taken root in the present, and bears its fruit of joy and good fellowship today. While our Morris (Moorish) dancers dance the Morice first introduced by the swarthy followers of the false prophet, our foresters arrayed in their Lincoln green bring back memories of merry England in the time of the Lion-hearted King, of Robin Hood and his merry men.

9/VI/1882, p.4.

THE DISTRICT TATLER. I think the 'Lamb Ale' or rather Friendly Society festivities at Kirtlington gets weaker each year... Its decay began when the lamb ceased to be taken round in procession, but I suppose the railway is the real aggressor in curtailing village feasts and festivals.

6/VI/1884, p.8.

THE BRACKLEY OBSERVER. The respectable club member should not feel an alien in church on club day. What more does it want that it has not. Music, martial in character, lively, inspiring; the Morris in their quaint dresses, a revival of that old historic form of joy to which a consumption of old October was not unnecessary....

25/VI/1886, p.8.

THE BRACKLEY OBSERVER. Morris Dancers. After their usual festive Whitsuntide tour to the village clubs in the locality, the Brackley Morris Dancers are engaged in a competition at Bidford, Warwickshire. This antique appendage to rustic sport appears to have lost none of its popularity in its old age.

24/VI/1887, p.5.

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE. Bucknell. After the sports, dancing was indulged in to the strains of the Bicester Band, whilst the well-known Morris-dancers, who have not been seen for some years, gave an interesting and amusing performance.

30/XII/1904, p.5.

ISLIP. Christmas. The amusements of Islip included the performance of no less than three sets of mummers.

1/I/1909, p.5.

ISLIP. Christmas. There were the usual two bands of mummers, senior and junior, who performed the time-honoured play of 'St.George' without the dragon, and whose dresses this year were better than ever.

7/VI/1912, p.5.

KIRTLINGTON. Anniversary of the Loyal Major Dashwood Lodge of Oddfellows. Years ago the festival of Trinity Monday, known as 'Lamb Ale', was celebrated on a very elaborate scale, with the old time revels and Morris dances, but of late it has resolved itself into simply a club festival of the usual character, although, according to one of the speakers at the dinner on Monday, it is hoped, in the near future, to revive the Morris dances, which are always so pleasing to watch...Mr. Wildridge proposed the 'Chairman' [Rev. A.J. Maclean - M.H.] ... In reply the reverend gentleman said he regarded it as a great privilege to take the chair and preside over the feast for the first time...He hoped they would make more of this festival in future years, and institute some of the old customs, and so make it a day of enjoyment for the whole parish. He would do anything he could for a real festive day to be held on Trinity Monday and he hoped next year they would have some Morris dancing in the afternoon. They were one of the last parishes to give up Morris dancing and should be one of the first to take it on again.

[The report from Kirtlington for 1913 does not mention Morris dancing - M.H.]

M.Heaney, 1/III/1981

On the 29th of April, 1981, Mike Heaney sent a list of seven more Oxfordshire papers which he had searched. One extract is included here. The Editor has the list of Oxfordshire papers checked by Keith Chandler and Mike Heaney; that should be known to any other man searching that county's newspapers.

Cheltenham Examiner: Whitsuntide 7/VI/1843. According to custom the various Friendly and Benefit Societies of Cheltenham and neighbourhood met together to celebrate the festival...

The streets during the day were thronged with visitors from the neighbourhood, who appeared much gratified with the grotesque performance of two bands of Morris dancers, who, decorated in gaudy colours, performed that well-known dance of olden time, with much spirit and precision. It is gratifying to remark that amongst the numbers who partook of the festive celebration of the clubs, not one was brought before the magistrates the following day on a charge of intoxication.

TRANSMISSION A Newsletter for researchers in cultural traditions. Paul Smith, Cultural Tradition Research Press, 2a, Westfield Road, Bramley, Rotherham, Yorkshire.

The April issue has details of over thirty lectures and conferences. One item in that remarkable list is a Folklore Society's lecture in December next, "Cinderella is Alive and Working in Paddington Station."

The Newsletter is published four times a year; it is free from all folklore centres in the British Isles. Personal copies can be had for £1 in the U.K., or £2 overseas' annually.

ROOMER is a Newsletter for researchers in Traditional Drama. Address as above; or, Steve Roud, 22, Adelaide Road, Andover, Hants. There are six issues a year, for £2.50 (£3.50 overseas.)

APPEALS.

The Ellington Morris Men, dancing around Maidenhead, state themselves to be "a dedicated but very small band, trying to recruit new members"; any morris man moving into the area is invited to get in touch with John Culf, Forest Leaves, Mushroom Castle, Chavey Down Rd., Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 6PL.

Mike Heaney, of 5, Hanborough Close, Eynsham, Oxford, OX8 1NR, is compiling a detailed history of the Oxford M.M. The club ran the 100th Meeting of the Ring, in 1965; and Mike cannot get hold of more than five photographs of that great occasion.

If you have a photograph taken at that meeting, please write to Mike.

Ravensbourne's JIM BARTLETT danced 202.2 miles from Bromley, Kent, to Worcester, 18th - 24th April. The collections in Worcester, upon his arrival there, went to that city's branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society; the sponsorship money, coming in satisfactorily at the last report, is for the Bromley branch; a final figure will be given in a future issue.

From Roy Dommett, 17/3/1981, commenting on Issue No.9

EYNESHAM

The flyleaf of one of Sharp's Field Note Books shows that he went to Eynsham with Moulder's name as a contact. One of the 1909 note books gives a list of names, H. James, Queer. St.: Sam Hathaway, Abbey St. (gipsy): J. Barson, Mill St. (old age pensioner): G. James, on the way: H. Russell, Acre End St. (Bonny Light Horseman): Sam Moulder, Queen St.; Treadwell by bridge. This list has nothing in common with Carter's 1902 one. It was the dancing of this side seen 1908/9 that was probably the basis of Sharp's account in the Morris Book, but whether it is the old or young side is a matter for further work. Twenty years ago people spoke to me as if Moulder had not long gone. Sharp's next visit was 16/6/14 when accompanied by Douglas Kennedy and others. It was this occasion that Douglas remarked on how individual they all were and how like the 1937 revival they danced and this could equally have been the time when a special old side was got together for Sharp. The list of names in his Field Note Book this time was, Russell and Mr. Hodges (butcher), Buckingham, the New Inn (step dancer), Joe Evans, Hedges, Ed. Russell (Feathers), and William Evans, player, father and grandfather danced before him, Ayers, Aylward, Watkins, George James.

On 22.6.62, Miss Taylor, 45, Woodstock Road, Oxford, who started dancing in 112 and had for a while been the Oxford Branch secretary, told me that one of the men who had worked the Bablockhythe ferry had been an old Eynsham dancer. OUMM

told me that a man who had been at one time publican of the Vine at Cumnor knew tunes, but I found that he had died by 1960 and his wife had taken over a pub near the bus station in Oxford.

BONNY GREEN GARTERS AT HEADINGTON QUARRY.

Lionel Bacon had access to all the material in deciding what to put in the Handbook, but it could not include any discussion of the material, sources or choices.

I met Carey and copied much of his mss at his house, going through difficult points with him then or by letter afterwards. I formed the opinion that the 1910 version of the tune was from Cox. The exact quote from Trafford (?) was "walk round and round", a small difference, but it might produce a different performance of the dance. Kimber's words were,

"First for the stockings and then for the shoes,
And then for the bonny green garters,
A pair for me and a pair for you,
And a pair for they that comes 'arter."

The 28.1.08 letter continued, "and Broomstick and a few more as soon as I can get them to have another touch at dancing." An implication is that Kimber already had versions of the tunes but was trying to check them with the Quarry men (and presumably with his father). On 17.4.08 Sharp noted Willow Tree, Bonny Green, country dance tunes, reel tunes and wrote that Broomstick was danced to Keel Row.

Kimber played Willow Tree A2B2. The sort of pantomimic behaviour in the dance as it has come to us could have been the sort of behaviour that Sharp did not want to record. Schofield collected his version of the tune in July 1938 sometime after the September 1936 exercise with Ganiford when they thought they had got all Kimber's morris material. Ganiford said (26.1.61) he was told by one of the older Quarry dancers that he thought the Willow Tree dance, as done at present, (Journal Dec.1959) invented by Kimber to fit a tune he had at the revival. Against that some of the material introduced by Kimber from 1949 can be shown to have been around for some time. It should be checked if Willow Tree is the

Dibdin song.

Sharp was aware that Kimber got material from elsewhere. It is interesting that Sharp did not hesitate to use Kimber's Bonny Green as an alternative for the Bampton dance. I do not think that Manning would have been the direct source. It is recorded that Manning did nothing but supply money for costume etc and paid Jim Hedges to supervise practices. Bill Kimber was not involved. Manning also published a Constant Billy tune, but then Kimber already knew that.

Important points missed are that Sharp's Field Notes say of the Leapfrog dance, "A1 Shake up first, A2 begin with a ring, B2 Jump over leapfrog fashion..." which gives the way it is to fit the music. I have a note that Trafford gave Carey with the Leapfrog tune on 13.5.13 "usual figures - leapfrog round in a ring." Discussion with Carey at the time elucidated that interpretation of Carey mss should assume the state of published material at the time, i.e., Carey then knew the Fieldtown and Bledington versions and that the lack of detail could mean it was like those already published. Finally Kimber told Sharp in 1908 that the old Green Garters is really 29th May. Trafford gave Carey the Bonny Green Garters tune but called it 29th May. Also Kimber's 29th May tune was called by others Balance the Straw.

LIONEL BACON

The short film of George Hathaway is of him teaching Shepherd's Hey, double jig. The occasion was Wednesday June 23rd 1937, not 1933, at Mrs. Dickinson's, Mangersbury.

Powell's pipe was in the tuning common in the south of France; galoubets were imported in the 19th century with this tuning, and the pipe presented to him by Helen Kennedy, which was a copy made from a pipe in Wells' possession at Bampton, was to more normal major tuning of English made pines. The difference is that a pipe that plays C with thumbhole and two finger holes closed, will play D E F natural as these three holes are successively uncovered in the English tuning but F sharp in the French.

George Joynes got most of his tunes from Sharp as Sharp

used him to play while collecting the Longborough lances at one stage. Joynes got more tunes from books and the Bodleian and a few from Harry Taylor's son, who also played the fiddle.

The Bampton films were taken in 1934, confirmed by Bampton persons present, and on the particular special visit to Bampton by Schofield, Kennedy, Peck, Ganiford, I understood on August Bank Holiday 1937.

Schofield in photos is playing a melodeon and I know that Fryer did so.

Henry Hemmings seen on the Wargrave Ring Meeting tour was not a morris dancer, although most of his older brothers had been, but a step dancer, although he was chaired as the eldest Hemmings in the Silver Jubilee procession and was Mayor from 1937 till his death in October 1945. Schofield went to see Tom and James Hemmings soon after but while trying to set up further contact was surprised to find that nine dancers were turning out for the Coronation.

A letter from Jonathan Hooton, 33, St.Olaves Road, Norwich, NL3 4QB, 20.1.81, concerned

CROTALS

I wonder if any of your readers could supply further information about the old bells known as CROTALS? Knowing my interest in Morris Dancing, one of my colleagues at work one day produced a large brass bell, which had been in his family's possession for ages. They came originally from Cheshire. He also produced an article from the magazine 'Antique Collectors Club' entitled 'Small Bells' by R.W.M. Clouston. In this there was a photograph of a very similar bell which was described as a crotal from Adderbury, Oxfordshire. To quote from the article "Crotals are those peculiar spherical objects with slits and holes in the surface and a ball inside to rattle them; they were formerly found attached to the hems of garments."

Perhaps this crotal was attached to a fool's costume, in which case he must have been pretty tough skinned because of its size and weight. This bell had a diameter of $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and a weight of $7\frac{1}{4}$ ounces - and if these figures mean little,

it was as big as a Medium sized apple weighing nearly half a pound. It appeared to be made of bell-metal, with an iron ball inside, the size of a marble. It was a pretty hefty bell and had a wonderfully loud ring to it - but I cannot imagine many of that size being attached to the hem of a dancer's garment. Unfortunately, no size or means of estimating scale is given for the photograph of the Adderbury crotal, although both bells looked remarkably similar in shape and the pattern of the markings. The bell had a gilt appearance, with a pattern, in red, sunk into its surface. (See the three diagrams.)



I have no idea of the date of the bell, but in addition to the pattern, the capital letters R and W have been engraved and coloured red, either side of the slit. However, the article on 'Small Bells' gives a list of English Musical Handbell Founders, and we find that in Aldbourne, in Wiltshire, Robert Wells, senior and then junior, ran a bell foundry from 1760 to 1799, and their mark was the initials R W

Whether this was one of their bells, I am not qualified to say. I should be interested to hear from any reader who could shed some light on the matter of crotals; or, indeed

anything to do with the past costume of Morris Dancers.

JONATHAN HOOTON

Kemp's Men

(Write either to me or to Jonathan; there may be matter for another article. Ed.)

.....
The Editor wants to put on record Mike Heaney's 'Whitsun Dates'; and Harry De Caux's list of clubs that over the years have been to the unique Thaxted Meeting. The date list goes with the articles on newspaper information: the Thaxted list is a magnificent roll-call of the clubs.

WHIT SUNDAY 1800 - 1914: compiled from Cheney's Handbook of Dates by M. Heaney.

1800 June 1	1830 May 30	1860 May 2?	1890 May 25
1301 May 24	1831 May 22	1861 May 19	1891 May 17
18J2 June 6	1832 June 10	1862 June 8	1892 June 5
1803 May 29	1833 May 26	1863 May 24	1893 May 21
1804 May 20	1834 May 18	1864 May 15	1894 May 13
1805 June 2	1835 June 7	1865 June 4	1895 June 2
1806 May 25	1836 May 22	1866 May 20	1896 May 24
1807 May 17	1837 May 14	1867 June 9	1897 June 6
1808 June 5	1838 June 3	1868 May 31	1898 May 29
1809 May 21	1839 May 19	1869 May 16	1899 May 21
1810 June 10	1840 June 7	1870 June 5	1900 June 3
1811 June 2	1341 May 30	1871 May 28	1901 May 26
1812 May 17	1842 May 15	1872 May 19	1902 May 18
1813 June 6	1843 June 4	1873 June 1	1903 May 31
1814 May 29	1344 May 26	1874 May 24	1904 May 22
1815 May 14	1845 May 11	1875 May 16	1905 June 11
1816 June 2	1846 May 31	1876 June 4	1906 June 3
1317 May 25	1347 May 23	1377 May 2D	1)07 May 19
1813 May 10	1848 June 11	1878 June 9	1908 June 7
1819 May 30	1849 May 2?	1879 June 1	1909 May 30
1820 May 21	1850 May 19	1880 May 16	1910 May 15
1321 June 10	1851 June 8	1881 June 5	1911 June 4
1822 May 25	1852 May 30	1382 May 2S	1912 May 26
1823 May 13	1853 May 15	1883 May 13	1913 May 11

1824 June 5	1854 Jun 4	1884 June 1	1914 May 31
1825 May 22	1855 May 27	1385 May 24	
182G May 14	1856 May 11	1886 June 13	
1827 June 3	185? May 31	1887 May 29	
1828 May 25	1858 May 23	1888 May 20	
1829 June 7	1859 June 12	1389 June 9	

CLUBS A2 THE THAXTED RING MEETINGS, compiled by Harry De Crux,
of the Thaxted M.M.

Abingdon Boar's Head Black Cap Bath City Broadwood
Bourne River Bishops Stortford Bathampton Bristol Blackmore
Barnsley Longsword Bedford Balgowan Beaux of London City
Binghamton (U.S.) Burton on Trent Benfleet Hoymen
Blackhorse Boys Cambridge Chingford Chelmsford Clifton
Colchester Coventry Cardiff Chanctonbury Ring Coventry
Mummers Derwent Valley Derby Datchet Dolphin Earls of
Essex Earlsdon East Surrey Exeter East Kent East Suffolk
Escafeld Foresters Faithful City Furness Green Ginger
Green Oak Giffard Grimsby Greensleeves Greengates
Gloucestershire Green Man's Grenoside Guildford Garstang
Helmond (Holland) Hoddesdon Crownsmen Headington Quarry
Hartley Hammersmith Heston Boys Handsworth Longsword
Hereford High Melton Ipswich Jockey John o' Gaunt
King's College (Newcastle) Kennet Kendal Kemp's Men Letch-
worth Lincoln Lads of Southwark London Pride London Rodney
London University Leicester Lord Conyers Longstraw
Lassington Oak Lutterworth Leeds Morley College Midland
Manchester Monkseaton Moulton Northampton Newcastle North
Downs New Cambridge (U.S.) Oxford Oxford University
Orpington Offley Pinewoods (U.S.) Ravenshourne The Reel
Club Rugby Roding Valley Rumford Ronan Hill Rapper
Rutland Redcar St. Albans Suffolk Stansted Stockton
Standon S.W.Essex Stafford Sheffield Sussex University
Shakespeare South Shropshire Thames Valley Thameside
Towersey Thelwell Uttoxeter Wargrave West Yorkshire
Whitchurch Westminster West Sussex White Horse Winchester
Woodside White Rose Wilsthorpe W heatsheaf Wath on Dearn
Wessex Yateley

The first Thaxted Meeting of Morris clubs was in 1927; and the annual meetings became Ring Meetings with the founding of The Ring in 1934.

Some clubs have changed names; and are treated as separate clubs in the list. The Editor has been told that the Reel Club became The Beaux of London City; please write if you know of any other changes - even if the club has not been to Thaxted with its new name: and write, too, if you think that the list is incomplete (with year, if known.)

The April 'TRANSMISSION' (see P.12) has a note that the British Library (Reference Division) Newspaper Library, Colindale Avenue, London, NW9 5HE, is to produce a Newsletter twice a year - its "purpose is to encourage an exchange of information about all aspects of newspaper collections". It is to be distributed free of charge. The Editor has Nos.1 (Autumn 1980): and 2 (Spring 1981). He will send the Library a self-addressed envelope, 22cms by 11cms, 11 1/2p stamp, for No.3, "expected to be published in Sept./Oct.,1981."

Last Autumn Gordon Ridgewell sent in a cutting from The Daily Telegraph, 1.5.80

Hallelujah!

From a Wirral, Cheshire, newspaper: "On Wednesday... the William Morris Dancers will perform Handel's

'Messiah' ". PETERBOROUGH

From the 4th Log Book of The Ring: meeting at Chichester, 6th - 8th September, 1963.

The Martlets approached local authority for permission to put up posters under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1960. Ring Meetings not having been thought of by the Parliamentary draughtsmen, authority solved its problem by classing them under Occasional Fairs and Circuses.
