

THE MORRIS DANCER

No.FIFTEEN*****MARCH 1983

Looking back over past Issues of this magazine (as well as this present Issue) the Editor finds himself as grateful as ever for opportunities to print the results of researchers' patient work; not only music and steps, but details of men and families concerned with the Morris.

Much of it is of the Cotswold Morris. Issues 11 and 12 had articles on the ancient Morris in Scotland; Issues 10 and 11 dealt with the Longsword of Papa Stour; Issue 13 had North-West historical matter; Issue 12 had an article on the Forest of Dean traditions.

Continuing contributions from those who have been so generous hitherto will be very welcome: so will be matter from the North-East of England.

Write to Ewart Russell,
50, Mile End Road,
Colchester,
C04 5BX

Issue No.13, August, 1982, had an article by Paul Davenport on the Morris at Lower Swell. Issue No.14, November, 1982, had comment upon that article by Roy Dommett and Philip Heath-Coleman. The following is further comment, by Keith Chandler of Minster Lovell:

The piece by Paul Davenport on the morris at Lower Swell which appeared in the thirteenth issue left me feeling a little uneasy. It purported to be an article issued with the approval of the Ring Archival Committee and its appearance in the pages of the official Ring magazine gave this claim some credence. Subsequent checking proved that this had not been the case. I felt sure that others would take up the gauntlet and happily, since the printed word is often accepted as the truth, this proved to be so. I seldom comment anyway on dance forms and tunes, leaving this to people who know what they are talking about. However, now that the discussion has edged, via Roy Dommett and Philip Heath-Coleman, towards the historical aspects I would like to offer a few thoughts.

The first and most salient point is that so far everybody involved has ignored the chief source for the morris side (or not) at Swell, that is, the Russell Wortley collection. This oversight is perhaps unforgiveable in Davenport's case, since the Ring Archive contains a photocopy of the whole collection. With the other protagonists it is more natural: the papers have only recently been deposited and are still being catalogued (at the Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, in Sheffield). Indeed, I have not yet seen it myself, but Mike Heaney has and has made some initial notes from it which (in keeping with most collectors now active) he has shared. Of prime importance in the debate over whether there was a side at Swell in addition to one at Longborough, or whether there was one set composed of men from both villages, is a statement contained in a letter from Ernest Makepeace, dated 16.5.1937, recording material gathered from local informants during a Ring Meeting in Stow-on-the-Wold. (Wortley MSS. A.V 30av). It simply says, "Steve Taylor an old dancer came from Longborough and taught Swell team..." This is, however, far more important than might at first appear, for Stephen Taylor was the father of Harry Taylor, from whom Sharp and other coll-

ectors had most of the information on the Longborough dances. That Harry Taylor had never told the collectors that his father had been a dancer (or at least such information does not seem to have been noted), reflects the concern prevalent amongst the majority of the pre-world two collectors to record the form and tunes of the dances at the expense of historical material. I, for one, would have been happier if the reverse had been the case.

The involvement of Stephen Taylor suggests a number of chronological points. He was baptised on December 9th, 1812, and given that an average age at which a man became a fully-fledged active member of a dance set was about twenty, this offers a date of the early 1830's as one when there would have been an extant team at Longborough. According to Roy Dommett, amongst the papers of Kenworthy Schofield which were not later deposited in Vaughan Williams Memorial Library was a draft of a proposed lecture which contained the information that, as a boy, Harry Taylor (baptised April 23rd, 1843) used to risk a thrashing by playing truant in order to watch the morris dancers. Schofield had interviewed Taylor and the anecdote obviously came from this source, and is given credence by the fact that his father (and perhaps other of his relatives) was dancing in the set. That Harry later became the leader and foreman of the Longborough side suggests that his father had held the position before him. It also explains why he should be allowed to lead the Swell set when he came over to dance there.

There was also another important family connection between men from both villages. The one name we possess of those who fooled for the Longborough set is George Hathaway from Swell. Born about 1824 (that is, aged thirty-five at the time of his marriage in 1859), his second wife was Jane Jeffries, a widow, the eldest child of Stephen Taylor. They were married on December 16th, 1860. Hathaway may have already been involved with the Longborough morris before this date, but it seems more likely that his choice of a second wife came through the Jeffries rather than the Taylor family. Hathaway had first married Malina Jeffries on May 15th, 1859, although she obviously died within the following eighteen months. His second wife was obviously a relative of the first, probably a sister-in-law. Having established a chronological point at which the

Taylor's from Longborough became related to the Hathaway's of Swell, it seems reasonable to suggest that Stephen Taylor (who would have been aged forty-eight in 1860 and thus could conceivably be described as an "old dancer") taught some men from this latter village to dance the morris around this date.

We may now examine the evidence for and against two distinct sides. Charles Benfield of Bould, musician for the team which **has** subsequently been denoted "Bledington" despite the fact that most of the dancers before 1887 lived in Idbury, Bould and Foscoote, told Sharp in 1909 that his team had "Once met Lower Swell dancers. Two fools vied with each other..." (Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, I:96). The following year Harry Taylor told him that the Longborough dances were "very much like Bledington Morris...They often danced together." (ibid. 1:139). If, as seems likely, William Hathaway from Swell, from whom Sharp collected in 1907, played for the Longborough set, it may be that Benfield was referring to the team by the village of residence of the musician. Other men played for Longborough morris: a man named Webb for one, probably John Mason from Stow and possibly James "Jim" Hathaway from whom Sharp also collected. There may be a further family tie with this latter man: the register of marriage banns for Longborough records a first reading between James Hathaway of Marylebone and Alice Taylor on May 11th, 1879. It is obvious from Sharp's field notebooks that there was much interchange of tunes between musicians in the area.

The Wortley collection gives a number of names of dancers from Swell, although not enough to have formed an independent set. The fool was Samuel "Nobby" Hathaway (born about 1824), and the dancers included Henry Hathaway (baptised September 18th, 1859, the son of Samuel), the father of Albert Taylor (this latter born about 1890) and possibly the father of Austin Clifford. An eighty-three year-old man interviewed in 1938 by Wortley remembered a team composed of natives of Stow who practised at Mangersbury Manor (this is to the east of Stow, whereas Longborough and Swell are to the west). These danced when he was aged twelve or fourteen years (i.e., about 1867 or 1869) and were middle-aged men. "One Hathaway was the Tom Fool with bladder and ox-tail at either end of stick, and another Hathaway played the fiddle, the latter being lame."

(Wortley MSS. G V 41h) Sharp described William Hathaway as lame and the informant is obviously recalling a set composed at least partially of men from Swell. Albert Taylor said that the Swell team "gave up owing to the fact that their fiddler left." (ibid A V 30a), and this may have been the time that William Hathaway went to Cheltenham, where Sharp met him in 1907.

On the other hand, there are sufficient names of men known to have danced at Longborough in the set led by Harry Taylor to suggest that it would have been (often at least) composed of men from that village. George Ackerman (baptised March 16th, 1849); Mark Taylor (October 13th, 1861 - not Harry's brother as generally believed, but obviously a close relation, perhaps a cousin); Thomas Tuffley (June 6th, 1843); Alfred Tuffley (married in 1895, so born perhaps around 1870 or earlier, in which case he would have been a teenager when he danced. Possibly a son of Thomas); Fred (or Frank) and Joseph Webb (sons of a fiddler who probably played for the side); John Collins (August 9th, 1849 at Mangersbury, but later lived in Longborough). In addition, Edwin "Ned" Hathaway (August 19th, 1852 at Stow. Son-in-law of George Hathaway the Longborough fool, having married his step daughter Elizabeth Jeffries on August 26th, 1875) and probably William Spragg and perhaps his brother, whom Sharp heard whistling morris tunes outside his home, are also known to have danced with Harry Taylor. (Again there is a probable family connection, with David Taylor marrying into the Spragg's).

When Fred Taylor, Harry's son, told Roy Dommett that "his father usually had a couple of the best dancers from Lower Swell in the side, mostly Hathaway's" ("The Longborough Morris", mentioned in issue fourteen, page eight), he was probably thinking of the latter period when Harry was foreman and the morris was in decline. With a birth date of 1843, it is unlikely that Taylor would have commanded sufficient authority to have been considered foreman much before about 1870, and possibly a little later than this. After this date it obviously became increasingly difficult to persuade sufficient numbers of men to continue dancing. In 1886, stimulated by the apparent success of the Ferris revival at Bidford and the subsequent tours by that side (Roy Judge will shortly be clarifying this phenomenon)

the Moreton Free Press for June 19th, 1886, page eight, announced, Morris Dancers. The Longborough and Lower Swell Morris dancers will give an entertainment in the Swan Assembly Room, this evening, at seven o'clock.

This was quite clearly a single team at this date, composed of men from both villages. With a birth date of 1859, we might expect Henry Hathaway to have been one of these men involved at the tag-end of the side's existence.

The evidence is inconclusive as to whether there was one side or two. Towards the end there was obviously only one composed of Longborough and Swell men, but perhaps earlier, say between 1860 and 1880, there may have been a separate Swell side, perhaps short-lived. Stephen Taylor's teaching at Swell negates Roy Dommett's suggestion that the tradition may have originally been a Lower Swell one, and also that of an area style based on Harry Taylor as mentor, when clearly any possible uniform style was established at least a generation earlier.

Finally, a comment or two on the morris at Chipping Campden since 1896 at least, when the earliest known evidence for a revival appears in the form of two photographs taken by Henry Taunt. Philip Heath-Coleman is correct in pointing out Davenport's error on page nine of issue thirteen: the W.D.Hathaway whom Sharp saw in 1909 and later was Dennis Hathaway. He told Sharp that "the Campden dances proper were discontinued 50 years ago (i.e., circa 1860.KC). The dances he had taught were those that he had seen the Longborough men dance at Stow and elsewhere when he was young (he was a native of Condicote) and those that he had learned from his grandfather-in-law who was an old Campden dancer (now dead)." (Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, 1:137). The Campden dancers still call one of their dances The Longborough Stick Dance. To confuse the question of influences even further, Bert Hathaway, son of Dennis and who still plays for the Campden morris along with his son Alf, told me in reply to a direct question about the Longborough influences in the revival centred around his father from the last decade of the nineteenth-century, "Constant Billy and Shepherd's Hey are the two Campden dances proper. The Country Dance, the Stick Dance and Longborough Morris are from Longborough." (oral interview, June 5th, 1982). This latter dance they also call Sally on the

Railway. Whether there is a direct link or if merely coincidence, Dennis Hathaway married the daughter of William Taylor. Further work on the parish registers needs to be done to establish whether or not Dennis was related to Harry Taylor.

KEITH CHANDLER 13th December, 1982

BUTTERWORTH DANCING

The Morris side that Cecil Sharp assembled as the Demonstration Team of the English Folk Dance Society before the First World War was good. It had to be, as it had to embody all that Sharp was fighting for in his dispute with Mary Neal and the Esperance Club. It had to be disciplined, athletic, to perform the steps correctly, and, of course, to be an adult men's team. It consisted of only six men, with one reserve.¹

Four of the members of the team were killed in the war, and two others did not remain active in folk dancing. Only Douglas Kennedy, the most junior member of the team, provided any continuity with the pre-war days.

The original Demonstration Team was filmed twice, according to a note in the first issue of the Society's journal.² In August 1912 the side was filmed dancing 'The Rose' in Stratford-upon-Avon High Street, the film being shown in Pathe's Animated Gazette. According to the Journal, 'The pictures of "The Rose" were unfortunately spoilt by the acceleration being too great'. Although the Pathe Film Library still exists, there is no trace of that particular film. On the second occasion, an attempt was made to film the side on a visit to Paris in June 1913; but the attempt 'was a failure.'

Although no film of the side as a whole survives, we do now have a film record of one member of the team dancing. George Butterworth, probably the best and most athletic member of the Team was the subject of an unusual form of home-movie made in 1912. The device in question was a type of 'what-the-butler saw' machine known by its brand name, the Kinora, in which photographs are rotated in front of a lens on a hand-cranked viewing machine. The idea was to bring a simple type of movie within the reach of ordinary members of the public.³

The film was made by Gilman and Company of Oxford in 1912.

Butterworth is depicted wearing the kit of the Demonstration Team, and we know that Maud Karpeles and Helen Kennedy were also present on the occasion. It seems to have been an important folk dance event in the Oxford area. The only date on which we know the Demonstration Team to have been present and dancing in the Oxford area in 1912 was 20th June, when a meeting was organised at Kelmscott.⁴ Butterworth did live in the Oxford area, however (teaching at Radley College), so another date cannot be excluded.

The film was kept by the E.F.D.S., but when Butterworth was killed in 1916 the family asked *if* the Society had any photographs of him. The film was among those sent, and it remained with the family until 1972, when it was given to the Bodleian Library.

The film consists of 640 tiny (one inch by three-quarter inch) black and white photographs arranged radially on a spool. As in a flick-book, each photograph is held back momentarily by a small ratchet before being replaced by the one behind it as the spool turns on a hand-cranked mechanism. Unfortunately the device is extremely delicate. Even using the correct apparatus to view the film, detailed study is impossible as the hand-cranked viewer cannot be operated smoothly enough, and the outside edges of the photographs soon become worn and frayed and will not be held by the ratchet. Attempting to view the sequence of photographs by flicking them by hand is extremely hazardous and can quickly lead to frames becoming detached. Once frames are detached the correct sequence of photographs is quickly lost, making the film useless.

Obviously the only safe way to study the film was to transfer it to cine-film. But the original film was hand-cranked, at an unknown speed. Fortunately, the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford has a Kinora viewing machine, and using this I was able to view the film several times over and note what Butterworth appeared to be dancing. (In the event, my notes turned out to be incorrect in many details, demonstrating the absolute necessity of transferring the Kinora photographs to cine-film for proper study.) It appeared that the film was apparently designed to last about one minute. One minute of film containing 640 photographs gives a film speed of $10^2/3$ frames per second (fps). Obviously, with a hand-cranked camera this would not have been a constant figure. If the film speed is taken as 12 fps, then the film lasts $53\frac{1}{3}$ seconds. Given that

we cannot know the speed at which Butterworth was dancing, 12 fps seemed a reasonable assumption.

If each photograph were simply rephotographed, then shown at 18 or 24 fps, the result would be an absurdly fast sequence. If shown at 12 fps, the flicker would be obvious and irritating. We therefore decided to photograph each picture twice and show the resulting film at 24 fps, giving a flicker-free picture at approximately the right speed. The Morris Ring decided to include the project in its archival filming programme. Filming was done at the Physics Photography Unit of Oxford University, and copies were made for The Ring, Vaughan Williams Library, National Film Archive and the Bodleian Library.

What is Butterworth doing on the film? He is dancing what appears to be a demonstration of the steps of the Sherborne tradition, face on to the camera. The sequence is as follows: (abbreviations as in Bacon's Handbook of Morris Dances):

Bar	Step	Bar	Step	
1 - 8	4FC	21 - 28	4UC	
9	s4	29	s4	
10	G(lt)	30	G(lt)	
11 - 12	4PC	31 - 32	4PC	
13	ss(rt)		Break	
14	sh	33	HC	CR
15	ss(lt)	34	HC	↓
16	sh, t	35	HC	
17 - 18	2S4	36	G(rt)	
19 - 20	4PC	37	HC	
		38	HC	
		39	HC	

The sequence is clearly adapted from "I'll go and enlist for a sailor", showing the Fore-Caper, Upright-Caper and Side-step sequences from that dance, together with the Capers Round. Butterworth is already halfway through the first Fore-Caper at the start of the film (i.e. Bar 1 is not on the film). He stops dancing after Bar 32; there is a break in continuity, then he begins a demonstration of the Capers Round. The film ends as he is taking the first step of Bar 39.

The Fore-Capers (kickcapers) are: 1 [R1 H] 1 r
2 L rH r 1 etc.

Arm movements are a relaxed down-and-up, starting forward at chest level, elbows slightly bent, hands together; swinging down in a short arc to hip level, maintaining the elbow bend. The free foot is swung back 90° - 100° at the start of each Fore-Caper.

On the Sherborne 4-step the arms move as in the Fore-Capers.

The galley is a magnificent galley-with-spring, as indicated in Sharp's manuscripts, with a complete turn. The spring is obtained in part by raising the knee as high as possible, to lower chest level. Hands together in front of the chest at the start of the galley, then out at waist level for balance as the galley progresses, moving forward and slightly upward at the end.

The capers are R L/R L, arms down and up. On the first caper the arms move downward from the level at which they ended the galley, then are raised high forward above head level, hands close together, on the second caper; down and up high again on the succeeding capers.

The Upright-Caper sequence is analogous to the Fore-Caper sequence. The capers are x x/t spl; weight equally distributed on both feet in x; left in front on first x, right on second; left foot forward in splits each time. Butterworth comes into each x with a conspicuous leap, rather balletic in effect. Arms are out at waist level for each x, then forward, up and out in a big circle on the caper.

The Sidestep sequence (Bars 9 - 12) is:

r 1 r 1/sh (right foot in front of left)
1 r 1 r/sh t (a single shuffle, left in front of right, with
just one twist of the foot before feet-together)

Arm movements are high twists by the leading arm, tilted at an angle of about 45° towards the audience. Twists maintained during shuffle, lowered for feet-together, rising ready for the following s4.

The Sherborne 4-step and capers are as already described. After the Upright-Caper sequence there is a break in continuity. After the break Butterworth is standing with his right

side to the camera in the centre left of screen, from where he commences the Caper Round. There is a feint step on the right before the sequence L r 1/ R 1 r/L r 1/ G(rt) (a complete turn inwards). Arms up and down, reaching well forward above the head to give lift on the caper. The camera was fixed, and Butterworth moves wholly out of the field of vision on Bar 34, only the upper half of his body is visible in Bar 35 as he crosses the field of vision; and only his galleying leg is visible in Bar 36. He completes a true circle in Bars 33-36, and has begun a second circuit when the film ends.

As the original film was hand cranked, and therefore variable in speed, we cannot draw any firm conclusions about the speed of dancing. A frame by frame analysis of the speed as the film is now shown at 12 fps has not been made, but some preliminary estimates have been completed. Bars 9-20 are twenty seconds in duration, implying a metronome speed (presuming $2/2$ time) of $d=108$. A subjective impression is that the dancing rhythm is maintained regularly throughout this period. Bars 29-32 were measured, in whole seconds, as seven seconds; if $d=108$ were maintained, the expected duration would be $6^{2/3}$ seconds, so the speed is probably maintained. All in all, the indications are that the speed of cranking was maintained at a reasonably steady rate for all of the film.

"I'll go and enlist" is given in Morris Dance Tunes as $d=96$. Interestingly enough, if Butterworth was originally dancing at that speed, then the original film speed can be estimated at $10^{2/3}$ fps, which is identical to the original estimate of the film speed.

The four Upright-Capers last approximately seventeen seconds, giving $d=94$. The figure one would expect if the speed given by Sharp were increased in proportion with the figure for the main sequence is $d=85$, so it does seem that this sequence was danced by Butterworth faster than we might expect from Morris Dance Tunes. Variation in cranking speed seems unlikely, as the original speed is resumed in Bars 29-32.

In one minute of film Butterworth chose to dance the most informative sequences from one of the most complicated dances collected by Sharp. The film was clearly intended as a demon-

stration for instructional purposes; now, seventy years on, it can at last be used.

M.HEANEY, Eynsham, 18.2.1982

NOTES

1. D.Kennedy, Folk dance revival, Folk music journal, vol.II, no.2, 80-90
2. Journal of the E.F.D.S., vol.1, no.1, 1914, 'Notes', 27
3. British Journal Almanac, 1912, 1191-1222 contains a long advertisement explaining the workings of the Kinora system, and there is an independent assessment on 683-685.
4. Witney Gazette, 29/VI/1912, p.5

George Sainton Kaye Butterworth, B.London, 1885, killed at Pozieres, Somme, 5.8.1916. See Morris Dancer No.3, p.14: No.4, p.17 (Douglas Kennedy, "...Butterworth was the man we all modelled ourselves on."): and No.12, p.6



The picture of George Butterworth is from Frame 99. It is reproduced by courtesy of the Bodleian Library, which has the copyright.

The Third Traditional Dance Conference will take place at Crewe And Alsager College of Higher Education (Alsager site) on Saturday, 12th March, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. The fee is £5, to include morning coffee, lunch and tea. Peter Cooke, 'The Brides Reel in Cullivoe, Shetland': Richard Goss, 'Computer Analysis of the Scottish Allemande and Pousette': Michael Heaney, 'Disentangling the Wychwood Morrises': Chris Metherell, 'Clog Dancing: an Analysis of Regional Differences'. Theresa Buckland, 10, Addison Close, Wistaston, Crewe, CW2 8BY. Tel.(0270) 663041, for full details.

"Rattle Up, My Boys" The Story of Longsword Dancing, a Yorkshire Tradition: 75p, or 90p by post: 'New Edition - extra photos, more information': Trevor Stone, 6, Priory Road, Sale, Cheshire, M33 2BR

The British Library's Newspaper Library, Colindale Avenue, London NW9 SHE, has in its Newsletter No.5, Autumn, 1982, an article on the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Newspaper Library as a self-contained unit; an article on the types of work done there; reviews, and other matter. The Newsletter is distributed twice yearly, free of charge.

This magazine ~~acknowledges the receipt of~~ 'Roomer', Vol.2, No.4 Autumn: "Roomer is designed to provide an informal forum for individuals interested in, and researching in, Traditional Drama. It has Notes and Queries, details of publications, out-of-the-way texts, and information on work in progress." Write to Steve Roud, 22, Adelaide Road, Andover, Hants. (0264-4397) or to Paul Smith, 2a, Westfield Road, Bramley, Rotherham, Yorks., (0709-548426)

Steve Roud also gives information about "Folk Song Research", a 'new quarterly publication designed to provide an informal forum for... individuals interested in research/collection/study of Traditional Song and Music'.

ACCOLADE The American Morris Newsletter, October, 1982, mentions a written description of 'an English-American Morris Dance Tradition' and says that 'The Dances are notated in a system used by Sir Lionel Bacon in A Handbook of Morris Dances.'

Cheshire
10th January, 1983

Dear Ewart,

I note with some amusement your article in Morris Dancer No.1 regarding "horse-droppings" from the Westminster 'unicorn'. I understand that this expression is not your own and was in fact a quote from one of the Westminster men. I therefore must assume it to be an indication as to the true identity of this particular little beast; i.e., an impostor, not a unicorn at all, just a horse with a horn on its head.

I will accept that the body of a unicorn may resemble that of a horse, but our tail is said to resemble that of a lion, our feet those of an antelope, and, for those of us lucky enough to have one, our beard that of a goat.

All these comparisons to other animals have of course been made by you humans, but as I am sure you will agree indicating that a unicorn is a separate and rather special beast, not just a common horse with a horn on its head, as the unfortunate expression used might suggest the Westminster beast to be. Does the now suspect pedigree or the little Westminster beast explain his curious attitude after he had the pleasure to meet me at Thaxted a few years ago?

Beware of imitations, insist on the real thing, ME.

On a more general note, I do sometimes wonder what the ever increasing menagerie of beasts both real and mythical are doing cluttering up the Morris, anyway, and where it will lead. Who will be the first side to have an E.T. (amongst their numbers) or turn out six beasts and a hooded human. Let's not lose track of the dance.

Yours sincerely,

EWAN UNICORN

C/o Adlington Morris Men

THE WYCHWOOD LINKED-HANDKERCHIEF DANCE

In Jesse Clifford's My Reminiscences of Charlbury (privately printed, 1892), he recalls the morris dancers who used to visit the villages

The morris dancers I have often seen on May 29th here, and very pretty they looked. Twelve young men of Finstock and Leafield dressed in knee-breeches and white stockings.... The reel, the change of places, the clattering of wands, the passing under the handkerchiefs, held archwise, all to the music, was pleasing. (p.17)

Sharp later noted virtually the same text from Clifford's granddaughter (Folk Dance Notes, IV:125). The reference to the "handkerchiefs, held archwise" suggests a linked-handkerchief dance, and Sharp adds "Maid of the Mill?" in parentheses.

Sharp also obtained a description of the linked handkerchief dance from North Leigh (4 1/2 miles from Leafield) from Fred Gardner at Whitney in 1912:

He said that the Old Woman was sometimes called Thread-needle and indicated a movement with handkerchiefs something like a ribbon dance in which partners joined their handkerchiefs together. This performed by the Morris men. (FDN, II: 126-127)

The fact that Sharp described the movement as "something like a ribbon dance" indicates that the dance was more like the country dance (see Country Dance Book, I (1909), 49) than the usual morris linked-handkerchief dance. The confirmatory note "This performed by the Morris men" shows that Sharp himself must have thought a country dance was being described, so asked Gardner specifically to confirm that the dance was done by the morris men.

Angelina Parker made some notes about North Leigh customs in 1923, writing:

The most popular dances in the booths were "'Ands across an' down the middle", "Step an' fetch 'er", and sometimes the "Angkitcher Dance" which was performed with handkerchiefs. (A.Parker, "Oxfordshire village folklore, II" Folklore, XXXIV (1923), 332)

It seems clear that in the North Leigh area at least, a linked-handkerchief dance was performed which closely followed a local country dance, the Handkerchief Dance.

The Handkerchief Dance, or Linked Dance, was also popular

in Ramsden, about halfway between Leafield and North Leigh. The North Leigh morris musician, John Lanksbury, came from Ramsden. The dance ceased to be performed at public entertainments in Ramsden before the First World War, but was continued at some family gatherings after the War. The Willoughby family of Ramsden, now represented by four brothers aged between 73 and 90, used to dance it under instruction from their father, while their mother, the daughter of a Leafield dancer, played the concertina.

The dance as performed by the Willoughby family was as follows. Six people stand facing up in Morris set position, those on the left holding a handkerchief. The dancers dance a foot up and down, turning in, to a morris step (1-2-3-hop), then face in, and those on the right grasp the free end of their partners' handkerchiefs. Then cast in pairs, one pair at a time, from the bottom, going up the sides and down the middle. The "evens" then release the handkerchiefs, and a "reel" follows. Cast in pairs and reel continue ad lib. The reel was described specifically as a "Morris" hey, turning out instead of in. (I have deliberately described the dance more in morris terms than in country dance terms - M.H.)

If the linked-handkerchief dance known to have been performed in the Wychwood area was similar to the local country dance, then it must have been similar to the dance described above. The tune used at North Leigh was The Old Woman Tossed Up. I am not certain of the tune used for the Handkerchief Dance, but Pop Goes The Weasel was mentioned by more than one of the Willoughbys.

M.HEANEY 13 November, 1982

THE VESSEL-CUPPERS OF HOLDERNESS

The following is a summary of information given by Mr.A. Foster (74) of Roos, E.Yorkshire. This account is collated from notes made a several interviews in the early part of 1981. The information itself dates from approximately 1913 to 1916 and stems from several visits of the dancers to the village during those years. They were farm labourers who came, in the main, from Sledmere and Garton on the Wolds. They had attended the Martinmas

hirings in Driffield and, not having found employment, had set off into Holderness via North Frodingham and Witherwick. On one occasion there were five of them but the usual number was four including a musician. When they arrived in the village they were permitted to sleep in the old horse boxes which lay in a field near the Hornsea road. From Roos they went each day, for about three days, to the neighbouring villages. They returned each night and spent the day's collection in the local pub. In the evenings, due to more lax licensing laws, the boys of the village, of whom Mr. Foster was one, would go into the pub and join in the merry-making. If the pub was full then the dancers would perform in the main street. If not, the dance would be done in the pub itself.

Before performing the 'Vessel-Cuppers', as they called themselves, would take corks and toast them on the toasting fork in order to blacken their faces. Mr. Foster reckoned that they never washed anyway, so this was superfluous. It appears that there was only one dance done in two different ways to different tunes, although on several occasions a sort of jig was performed over the fire-irons. This was when the dancing took place in the pub, and from what I can gather seems to have been a somewhat odd parody of the Scottish sword dance. The steps were improvised and could become astoundingly complex if sufficient ale had been consumed by the performer.

The dancers were dressed in tattered jackets and knee breeches. Around the knee they wore a 'leg-strap' on which were a number of bells. The lower half of the leg was somewhat obscured by feathers, stolen from local chickens, which were thrust (the feathers) into the tops of the dancers' boots. Feathers played a great part in the costume, being tied to the arms and thrust into headgear. Ordinary hats were worn, although there was a marked tendency to wear a tea cosy instead, giving a turban like appearance. Brooches and badges were also worn about the person and one dancer even wore a curb chain in place of a watch chain.

The Dances

The main performance seems to have consisted of a single dance done in two ways to two or more different tunes.

Figures.....Mr.Foster has never mentioned more than three possible figures, these being back to back, in-and-out-the-windows or Hey, and dance round. He does not always describe these in the same way. The following is a reconstruction based on the information available.

The common form of the dance is a line as shown below:

Mus. 1 2 3

Back to back is done by 2 and one other dancer, the remaining dancer dancing on the spot. Hey is done as a country dance. Dance round is a clockwise circle.

Steps..... The step is always a 2 step, brisk but relaxed as at Flamborough.

Hands..... The dances differ only in the hand movements and these depend on the implement being used at the time. In the case of the first dance, the dancers carried bones which they rattled in time with the music. In this case the hands are held at shoulder height, elbows bent at about a right angle and arms out. The rattle is achieved by shaking the hand with the wrist relaxed. This is used in the A music figures. In the B music figures the hands are swung up and down in time with the step, each arm being raised singly.

In the other dance the implements are small flags of the sort used in Jubilee celebrations. These are, I estimate, about ten inches by eight inches in size and on sticks about fourteen inches long. In the A figures the flags are waved above the head whilst in the B figures the wave is in and out across the chest.

Tunes no tunes available; the following are suggestions:

Dance 1. Tune Donkey Riding (Highland Laddie)

A1.....Dance on the spot (rattling)

B1.....Hey (singing)

A2.....1 & 2 Back to back 3, dance on the spot (rattling)

B2.....Hey (singing)

A3.....2 & 3 back to back (rattling) 1 dance on spot, ditto

B3.....Hey (singing)

A4.....Dance round (rattling)

B4.....Dance away (singing)

Singing.....Hey ho away we go

Donkey riding, donkey riding

Hey ho away we go Riding on a donkey

Dance 2. Tune The Girl I left behind me (Brighton Camp)

A1..... Dance on spot (High wave)

B1..... Hey (cross wave) singing

A2..... 1 & 2 back to back, 3 dance on spot, all wave high.

B2..... Hey (cross wave) singing

A3..... 2 & 3 back to back, 1 dance on spot, all wave high.

B3..... Hey (cross wave) singing

A4..... Dance round (high wave)

B4....Dance away (cross wave) singing

Singing..... No matter if the night be dark

The road be wet and grimy

Still I'll return to Sledmere Park

And the girl I left behind me.

As mentioned above there was also a jig, but details are vague, and since improvised anyway it seems superfluous to attempt a reconstruction here.

The only value in the researching of the East Riding traditions is that it points to a much wider and less varied Morris tradition. An informed dancer will have noted the similarities between the information above and the Morris of the Welsh Border and the East Anglian Molly dances. I cannot find any connecting reference, and must therefore assume that these traditions point to a universal form which has undergone much modification in areas like the Cotswolds and the North-West.

PAUL D. DAVENPORT

Morris Ring Archival Committee. 5.8.1981

In the Ring's Sixth Log Book, p.66 Instructional meeting at Cecil Sharp House, 13th March, 1971: lunchtime dancing at the Prince Albert; "An old man, on a bench by the wall, was so carried away by the sight that he tried to emulate it, and fell full length; men picked him up and set him on the bench again. An

Offley man collected £3.78½, the first decimal bag; two 50p, twenty 10p, five old sixpences and four old shillings, and the rest in new copper currency."

The Log for Stratford on Avon, 1 - 4 August, 1947, has the first mention of Ceremonial Jigs for a change of Squire:

Douglas Kennedy went out with The Fool's Jig

and

Arthur Peck came in with None So Pretty

Second Log Book, Cecil Sharp House, 25th March, 1950

"At last the time came when the lateness of the hour forced them to stop and to tear themselves reluctantly away from the still not emptied barrels of beer. This abundance of beer somewhat mystified the Bagman as he thought that he ordered no more than a reasonable sufficiency. This mystery was, however, solved on the following Tuesday. Whilst he was peering down his microscope the telephone rang, and at the other end of the line was the rather agitated barman of The York and Albany, who explained that, although four pins had been ordered and paid for, four firkins had, by an oversight, been delivered and practically emptied, and what about this extra ten guineas worth we had drunk?"

The KENNET MORRIS MEN'S finely printed Summer Programme for 1982 gives month, day and date, place and time, and OS Map Reference, for each site. That programme lists no fewer than 59 planned displays; including five tours with other Morris clubs, and dancing with their guests from Southern France - the La Respelido dancers. Are there busier clubs?
