

# THE MORRIS DANCER

No. TWENTY\*\*\*\*\*NOVEMBER 1984

This issue contains much about happenings of long years ago, yet still within living memory. If older readers find that between-wars recollections arise, please will they write to the Editor.

Indeed, the plea is renewed for more contributions to the magazine, so that there is adequate and varied material from which each issue may be compiled.

The Editor's warm Christmas greetings go to all particularly to those who are out on Boxing Day. (Why not write and tell him about it?)

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Write to Ewart Russell, 50, Mile End Road,  
Colchester,  
CO4 5BX

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The Editor asked Walter Abson, the first Bagman of The Morris Ring, to write about the cancellation of the Thaxted Meeting for 1940. Walter sent a draft article to Douglas Kennedy, and asked for that Past Squire's comments. Printed here are articles by the Past Officers, and Douglas Kennedy's letter to Walter.

WALTER ABSON

The Morris Ring in 1939 -1940

From time to time I am asked about the impact of the war on the Morris Ring; to treat this properly would be a major study, but in the meantime it may be of some interest to give a brief account of what happened in the Ring around the outbreak of war, when Douglas Kennedy was Squire and I was Bagman.

In March 1939 there was a one-day meeting at Cecil Sharp House, when we had the pleasure of entertaining William Kimber as our guest, and Oxford City were admitted to the Ring. This was followed in May by a weekend at Longridge near Preston, and then in June came the usual Thaxted weekend. This was the largest Ring Meeting so far held, with an attendance of 110 men representing 17 clubs; in those days many clubs were much smaller than is customary today, and could not muster a full side at a Ring Meeting. It was a noteworthy meeting in two ways, first for the admission to the Ring of the first overseas club, De Meihof Morris Mannen from Holland, and secondly for the presence of nine young Basque dancers whose performance raised a lot of interest. During the weekend there was discussion about possible future meetings and two were suggested, one to be held at Stroud on the weekend of 23rd September, the other a one-day meeting at Cecil Sharp House on 9th March 1940. But as the summer proceeded the international tension increased, and any thoughts of Stroud were soon abandoned as it became clear that the likelihood of being able to hold such a meeting was remote. In the event, war was declared on the 3rd September.

I should explain, for the benefit of those who are fortunate enough not to remember those days, that the first six months of the war did not greatly affect some aspects of civilian life. During this period the heaviest burden of the war was carried by the Navy; air attacks on this country were on a very limited scale, and land fighting on the continent was light. There was, of course, the upheaval caused by the evacuation of

children from the larger towns, the inconvenience of the blackout, and many trials and frustrations: but in spite of these a lot of civilian activities were able to continue without serious interference. At that time there were about 35 active clubs in the Ring, and in those early months of the war many of them managed to keep at least some practices going, to the extent that after taking soundings it was decided to have a meeting at Cecil Sharp House in March 1940. It was very well attended, considering the circumstances, with about 70 men present, not many less than the number who had usually come to this London meeting. It was a shorter meeting than usual, and was held on Sunday 10th March, as Saturdays were becoming increasingly days of work for most of us. There was dancing in the afternoon followed by a high tea, and men dispersed early in the evening in view of the travelling difficulties.

At this meeting plans were made, although not with much confidence, for a weekend at Thaxted, and the planning got as far as the issue of a notice to clubs giving details of a meeting to be held on the weekend of 8th June. There was to be a tour to Little and Great Bardfield on the Saturday afternoon, on which the distances involved would be short enough for men to cycle, as petrol was rationed. Any collections were to be given to King George's Fund for Sailors. It was hoped that William Wells would be able to come; he had recently hurt his hand and had been unable to play his violin, but there was a good chance that he would be playing again by June. The notice contained the nostalgic touch of a list of train times from London to Thaxted, journey time about one hour and forty minutes, steam trains all the way. The one mile walk into Thaxted from the station, situated just off the Bishops Stortford road, across the fields by the windmill, used to make a pleasant introduction to a morris weekend.

But all this was too optimistic. The German invasion of Norway began in early April, with heavy fighting at sea which brought a particular tragedy to the Morris Ring: John Kennedy, Douglas' elder son, was lost when his ship went down in battle off the Norwegian coast. By the end of April nearly all Norway was in the hands of the Germans. The assault on Holland and Belgium started in early May, and this led to the evacuation of our troops from Dunkirk between 26th May and 4th June, by which time the German army was well into northern France. From the

outset of .these disasters Douglas and I were in close touch with Alec Hunter, the first Squire of The Ring, who lived in Thaxted, and who was making the local arrangements for the meeting. As the days passed all three of us felt increasingly that a dance week-end would not be appropriate at a time of such calamity; a letter to **me** from Douglas includes the words "the temper of the situation has changed so much and is still hardening that I think our assembly might easily be misunderstood as callously absorbed in selfish enjoyment". We all agreed that it would be wrong to go ahead with the planned meeting, and it was cancelled.

There was little further Ring activity until after the end of the war. Douglas and I were soon in the Forces, Douglas fortunately with an Air Ministry job for most of the time, which allowed him to keep an eye on the few Ring matters which arose, helped by his office in Cecil Sharp House. The Ring's resurgence after the war is another story, one which **I** hope will be told some day.

Walter Abson, October, 1984

DOUGLAS KENNEDY to WALTER ABSON.

Deck House,  
Waldringfield.  
29/9/84

Dear Walter,

Thank you for your note and the draft you enclosed of your response to Ewart Russell's request for a war-time picture of the Morris Ring. I didn't get into the R.A.F. until the summer of 1940 so I started to cudgel the aging memory, and scribbled another draft to you to pre-edit before Ewart Russell works on it.

I needn't tell you both that I don't mind how much or how little you use. Mine is inevitably too personal but you may be prompted into asking about aspects I have overlooked.

I was very sorry to miss the great gathering and especially the chance to see and hear Joseph.

Yours ever,  
Douglas.

(The "great gathering" of a 1000 men in Birmingham, 12/5/84. ED.)

DOUGLAS KENNEDY

1939 - 40 Morris Ring

Walter Abson's account of the effect of the impending outbreak of war on our plans for the Ring gives a very true picture of our uncertainty and hesitations.

With my office and support staff at Cecil Sharp House I was in a good position to keep an eye on the Society's affairs as well as the Ring's, but the advent of war had an unsettling effect on my children who both wanted to cut their education and join up. Because of our sailing interests John, who was training to become an architect, was already speaking of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and had made a friend of a Captain in the Admiralty, whom he had met skiing in Austria. Peter was still at school and could be kept quiet, but his headmaster assured me that the boys would be involved in war work. But their restlessness combined to make my own feet go itching. I had served in the first war with the founder of the National Council for Social Service, and he invited me to come and work part-time at the Council, and soon I was immersed in "Citizen's Advice Bureaux", then a war-time experiment. One day I took the plunge, and John and I set off to join the Navy at the RNVR recruiting office on the Thames embankment. The result of that was that John was enlisted in the RNVR(Y) as an amateur yachtsman, and I was sent about my business as a Keeper of the Home Fires Burning. This was during the Phoney War, which Walter outlines as a sort of pause before the Germans struck with the invasion of Norway in April 1940.

By that time John, with other RNVR(Y) boys, was a sub-lieutenant in the Destroyer Glowworm. Early in April Glowworm was with a Task Force covering mine-laying down the Norwegian coast. The job had been done when Glowworm lost a man overboard and the Captain asked leave to return to try to pick him up. While looking for the rating, Glowworm ran into the German Naval cover for their Norwegian invasion. She found herself face to face with the heavy cruiser Hipper, a 10,000 ton goliath against the 1500 ton Glowworm. But the destroyer's Captain at once attacked, putting up smoke screens and firing torpedoes. She was however soon crippled by gunfire, so the Captain decided to try to ram the Hipper, which indeed **he** did. For that he was awarded

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the first Victoria Cross of the war. Out of the 170 ships-company only one officer and 30 other ranks were picked up and made prisoner. The Captain and our John were not among them.

This had a shattering effect on John's parents, and a good friend found a task to pre-occupy us, by including us in the staff of an internment camp in the Isle of Man. There, later, Peter was able to join us, released by an understanding headmaster. These camps on the Island were quickly filled by the unfortunates of German nationality swept up in the U.K. and by the refugees from Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and France who fled from Hitler's Germany. After a hectic month on the Island I received a commission in the Royal Air Force to take an administrative job, so we three returned to a London still shaken by Dunkirk and expecting invasion. My job in the RAF was recruiting and selecting types for the wide variety of work in that Service, and as Walter says this job, eventually in Air Ministry, left me on the spot in London and able to keep an eye on Cecil Sharp House and the Ring.

During the winter of 1939/40 the activities at Cecil Sharp House had been affected by a steady drain on staff wanted for, or volunteering to do, other duties. The Women's Land Army of the first world war was re-established and the Society's Secretary and Assistant Secretary (Mrs. Jenkins and Miss Bower) were whisked off to fill top administrative posts at the central office. But the EFDSS still had other staff to push the business on at Cecil Sharp House. Here the Saturday night Barn Dances provided a real war-time outlet for soldiers, sailors and airmen and women to meet and dance with relish. Whilst John was in training he brought other RNVR lads along, and I was urged to keep the Saturday night dances going throughout the war as a tonic. But I couldn't stop the Luftwaffe dropping an HE bomb on the ten year old building in September 1940. This destroyed the staircase, my office and the absent Secretary's, and wrecked the basement and one wall of the Hall. This was patched up enough to use for meetings and Saturday night dances, but you had to keep your umbrella up in the entrance on wet days. It was astonishing how much could go on. Although London was so much bombed throughout the war the House was never hit again. My own little house in Hampstead suffered regular blasts and I had a

permanent arrangement with a local builder to put back the doors which regularly blew out.

Walter mentions Sunday as a good day for war-time meetings. The war didn't stop but, curiously, the great administration of civil servants including those dressed up in martial uniforms maintained a kind of civilized week. The better the day the better the deed.

Douglas Kennedy, September, 1984

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The 1969 notes on Morris News Gleaned By The Bagman Of The Ring has a piece which the Editor thinks is worth reprinting: it is

How Colne Royal Got Its Big Drum

JULIAN PILLING wrote to the Ring, in 1969:-

Allen Holden, one of our accordianists, is a civil engineer working on the motorway construction and so tends to travel around quite a bit and was passing through Settle and saw there a big bass drum for sale for 50/- and so when he came home he rang up John Hartley our Bagman and told him. Well, the following morning I caught the bus to Skipton and from there the bus to Settle. I had no idea which shop had the drum so I did a quick tour of all the antique shops I could find fully aware that 50/- was not the antique price for a big bass drum in a place like Settle. I drew a blank everywhere and was about to find a place where I might have a sandwich and a glass of beer before I went home when I saw a shop that sold the sort of second hand heavy junk like shocking coils and ships' chronometers and things and there in the middle of the window was a postcard that said "Big bass drum for sale enquire within". I enquired within and there was the drum and it was 50/-. I quickly wrote out a cheque hoping that my forty-six years disguised the fact that I was a student and that my holiday allowance had probably run out. Having gained possession of the drum I carried it out into the street and looking at my watch saw it was just on the time for the bus to leave for Skipton. I ran to the bus stop, no easy matter carrying a big bass drum, this seemed to attract some comment from passers-by in the street, particularly parties of school-children who were being taken by their teachers to see the mid-Craven Fault or something. I did my best to look as nonchalant as is possible running for a bus and carrying a big bass drum.

Fortunately I arrived just before the bus set off. The problem of getting on the bus was one that had not occurred to me but after several attempts I solved this by getting on backwards and hauling the drum after me, then I carried it over the heads of the old ladies who were going to Skipton to do their afternoon shopping. I was not charged for the drum on the bus, the driver said it was O.K. because I had carried it on myself. Had it been on its own he would have charged it full fare, he said. I sat on the back seat and stood the drum in the alley. This was alright until the bus went down a hill and the drum rolled to the front of the bus and rather alarmed one or two of the old ladies. The driver then gave me a severe warning and said that if I did not keep the drum under control I would have to pay a fare for it. So I had to keep it on a short leash for the rest of the journey.

The bus from Skipton to Nelson was one of the large Ribble White lady buses with a large space for luggage at the front which appeared to have been designed with the possibility of carrying a big bass drum in mind because it just fitted nicely into the space. As it happened I was nice and early for this bus and there were no other passengers aboard so I was able to hide myself at the back as far away from the drum as possible. Soon the old ladies of Skipton got on the bus as they were all going to Nelson to do their afternoon shopping. I think if it was not for these old ladies who go to another town to do their shopping because it is cheaper the off-peak buses would soon be discontinued. Unfortunately there was a conductrix (I looked this word up in the dictionary and it is right) I knew collecting the fares so I combed my hair sharpish like so that she would not recognise me. She asked all the old ladies if the drum belonged to them so when she came to me I stuck my head into my copy of War and Peace which I was reading for the third time that week and handed my return ticket to her without looking up. When I got off at Nelson she saw me and realising who I was said "It's your drum isn't it? I might have known." I took it to the practice on the Friday night and hid it behind my back. "Guess what Colne Royal Morris Men have now that they didn't have before?" I said. With one voice they all said "A big bass drum." It tends to be difficult to keep it a secret. One thing, though, our younger members nearly fall out over carrying it around, they don't fall out over carrying sticks - they can get left

behind.

Julian Pilling, 1969

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A Puritan View of Morris Dancers.

In the mid-seventeenth century writings of the Rev. Ralph Farmer is to be found the following passages

'A while ago there came to the city of Bristol certain Morice-dancers (sic) from the north, by two and two, two and two, with an intent here to exercise some spiritual cheats or (as well may be suspected) to carry on some levelling design.'

(references Elfrida Vipont 'George Fox and the Valiant Sixty' 1975)

He was not, in fact, referring to Morris Dancers but to Quakers: Quakerism had started in the North-West of England in 1652 and missionaries were sent, often in pairs, to other parts of the Kingdom in 1654. The reference to Morris Dancers could indicate that at that time morris dancing was popularly considered to be a typical northern trait or it could have been brought to mind by the way the missionaries worked in pairs like the dancers. However, it seems more likely that the tag 'Morice Dancers' was being used as a term of abuse towards the Quakers. Thus if we see what the Rev. Farmer thought about Quakers we may gain some insight into his view of morris dancers.

The first pair of Quakers sent to Bristol were John Camm, a husbandman, and John Audland, a linen draper and farmer, both of Preston Patrick. So far as I am aware neither was recorded specifically as being a morris dancer. They met with popular success and gathered large crowds to hear them speak. As a zealous Presbyterian Ralph Farmer was horrified and stirred up the local apprentices to mob these two preachers. This was a typical mix of reactions during the Commonwealth period: acceptance by the populace and persecution from the Puritan establishment who misunderstood and feared the new teachings. Thus, if the simile holds true in all aspects, this Bristol clergyman thought both Quakers and morris dancers to be:

1. Suspiciously popular, therefore dangerous.
2. Misguided in their beliefs and conduct, i.e., foolish.
3. Carriers of doctrines and ideas contrary to those accepted by the establishment, i.e., a threat to public order.

This, of course, is quite in keeping with the general attitude of the puritans to most forms of public entertainment throughout the commonwealth era. Despite the persecution both Quakers and Morris dancers flourish to this day!

Carl Willetts, 9th September, 1984

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From the E.F.D.S.S., 2, Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 7AY:  
THE VAUGHAN WILLIAMS LIBRARY: Mike Heaney, a frequent contributor to this magazine, will talk on BEDLAM MORRIS on Friday 25th January, 1985, at Cecil Sharp House, at 7.30 p.m.

THE SALES SHOP: The Society has "just released a new production L.P., 'Flowers and Frolics'. Retail price £5.50 plus postage."

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Issue No.19, August 1984, p10, had notice of POLKA ROUND, Feast Dances of Cambridgeshire, and the Comberton Broom Dance, £1.20 (£1.40 by post) from Cyril Papworth, 25, Ferry Path, Cambridge. The tape to match the book is now available, price £2.50, or £2.80 by post. Accordion, concertina and fiddle are used.

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Peter Copley, 44, Wedgewood Road, Cheadle, Stoke on Trent, Staffs., ST10 1LD, still has copies of the illustrated booklet which was produced for the STAFFORD MORRIS MEN'S Silver Jubilee; there is information on the present and earlier Stafford teams, and the club's association with the Lichfield tradition: £1.25, incl.postage. (See Morris Dancer, August 1983, p9)

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At the Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, Endcliffe Exhibition Hall, 605, Eccleshall Road, Sheffield, 10, on Saturday 24th November, 1984, from 10 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., Barry Callaghan, Principal Lecturer in Communication Arts at Sheffield Polytechnic, will lead a day of "...practical help and basic technical advice on field recording with sound, film, video and still photography." The cost is £5. Contact the Centre, or Dr. Ian Russell, Bridge House, Unstone, Sheffield, S18 5AF

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East Suffolk Morris Men's Summer Tour, 1984

Eleven men from the East Suffolk Morris Men's Club left England on the 16th of June, 1984, flying from Gatwick to New England: they returned on Wednesday the 27th of June. During that time they danced at Needham, Wrentham, Norton, Ipswich, Boxford, Haverhill, Groton, Sudbury, Holbrook and Acton. A map of Suffolk will show all those names, familiar enough to the E.S.M.M. The club took greetings from the civic body of each English community to that of the namesake in New England.

The first thought of such a unique morris tour was followed by much research into the families which left Suffolk something like three centuries ago to live in a new England, taking with them the names of the places from which they came. Desmond Herring wrote in March, 1984, "As you know, I am interested in local history, and two years ago I did a postal survey of towns and villages in the U.S.A. which had a common name with any Suffolk village or town. I have noted that emigrants often hold on to their tradition more firmly than the home town or village. The result of my survey was not a great success, but I did receive many very interesting letters and as a result became even more interested in the 1630-1640 emigration from Suffolk. The only traditional material was that in the early 20th century (1900 - 1910) a kind of May basket tradition existed in Groton, Mass., and Sudbury, Mass. The letter from Sudbury was a challenge: it read as follows:-

'I am afraid that if any group in this town started dancing around the pub yards it would cause great agruw, and the Selectmen would be carked that those seeking adlubsence were breebates who were not just creating some fadoodle or committing reaks, but were really baw-dreaming or, God forbid, they might attract bronstrops to the kidliwink, which would dretch the Selectmen of this dingle, turning law and order kew-kaw in which case the police would frast and purple the local jail with such hackly peaks. It is not a good idea to swerk the public.'

East Suffolk are always looking for new ideas, and I calculated that with the funds in the bag and £200 per man we could manage a ten day trip to Massachusetts to dance in the namesake towns. I put the idea to the men and the response was

'Go ahead.'

I listed all our Suffolk villages with namesake towns in Massachusetts within about fifty miles of Boston; fifteen in all. I then wrote to the Suffolk villages/towns telling them of our project, saying that we intended dancing at both ends of the link during the next twelve months, and that we would like to act as couriers and take greetings between the towns. During the winter we danced at Groton, Ipswich, Sudbury, Boxford, Wrentham, Acton: each village has its own story to tell; Groton, the Winthrops; Ipswich, the port and all the excitement of the emigration; Sudbury, the decay of the woollen trade etc."

"At two of the places we have formed a new link with the past. At Wrentham as a result of my own researches I found that John Thurston (and two sons, John aged four and Thomas aged two) left Wrentham and sailed on the Mary Ann in 1637 to New England. The township of Wrentham, U.S.A., was formed in 1673 with four families from Dedham, Mass. One was John Thurston and another was Thomas Thurston. This was the first direct link that had been established between the two." "The Black Jokers and Pinewoods are both being most helpful in setting up the tour."

An information sheet was prepared, for the Press, and for the inhabitants of the English places which were danced in before the tour; that sheet aroused much interest - "I don't think my telephone has stopped ringing."

He wrote again on the 8th of October, sending a tour Log compiled by Dick Thornborrow, one of the musicians, and a page from Powell Duffryn Travel's house magazine; which showed the E.S.M.M., in kit, lined up by their 'plane; dancing in front of it; and seated within it. "We forged formal links between the namesake villages and towns; we may manage to maintain some of these." In Boston, at the start of the tour, "Richard passed round tea bags for a ceremonious throwing in of tea, declaring independence and freedom for the East Suffolk Morris Men."

Dick's Postscript was "We were all astounded and gratified at the warmth and enthusiasm with which we were greeted and entertained. That an awfully high percentage seemed to be non-drinking Baptists got to some. Perhaps this was through the Historical Society connection - links with the Puritan past and all that." "Every day was different, a new adventure, a new

bed to sleep on. We were a unique concept in entertainment in those sleepy Suffolk towns of Massachusetts. It had never occurred to them to have entertainment on the village green or strawberry fete. We were an enigma bringing true mystery *if* only in what we were doing."

The club has a scrapbook of many cuttings from the U.S.A.'s local newspapers, which reported the visitors' dancing very fully, with photographs.

The E.S.M.M. also danced at Framingham; in Suffolk, Old England, it is Framlingham; evidently the East Anglian of two or three centuries ago was quite as ready to dispense with the letter "l" as those who live today in that part of England:

The E.S.M.M. add to their lengthy list of foreign trips yet another one that is unique: see *The Morris Dancer*, No.13, August, 1982, p19.

(Compiled from communications from the Suffolk club. ED.)  
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WALTER ABSON writes:-

In celebrating this year the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Morris Ring, there is another anniversary which has passed relatively unnoticed. Cecil Sharp died on 23 June 1924, sixty years ago, and in reminding ourselves of this and of the debt which morris men owe to him, we can do no better than to have before us the poem which was written by Arthur Peck, the fourth Squire of the Ring, to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of Sharp's death. It was published at the time in the Ring brochure "50 Years of Morris Dancing, 1899 - 1949", and again in Arthur's obituary notice in the 1974 "Folk Music Journal", but it may not be known to some of our younger dancers.

For C. J. S.  
23 June 1924  
23 June 1949

You found our songs and dances all but spent,  
Lingering in ancient memories, voices frail,  
Limbs weak with years, and with long labours bent.  
Had you not been, that age-old beauty's tale

Of movement and sweet music, perfected  
Through countless generations, father, son,  
And grandson, all that richness must have sped  
Forgotten, lost, inanimate, unknown.

You seized that treasure from Time's thieving hand,  
You played for youth the part age cannot play,

Summed in yourself tradition's faltering power  
And from the dying past made every hour  
Of future time with living music gay.  
While England dances, proud your name shall stand.

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In April, 1984, CHRIS BRADY, of Shoreham-by-Sea, sent a photocopy of a programme leaflet he had bought (for 50p, it appears) in a Charing Cross Road bookshop. He wrote on the front "predates Sharp." The front cover, and the right hand inside page, are reproduced here. The back cover gave "The Chaplin Trio" as Nellie Chapman, Harpsichord: Kate Chaplin, Viola d'Amore and Violin: Mabel Chaplin, Viola da Gamba and Violoncello. The dancers were seven ladies; the Court dancers were taught by "the late Signor Carlo Coppi and Mme.Cormani, of La Scala, Milan"; and the English Dances from Playford were taught by Mrs.Woolnoth. The performance was at the Royal Victoria Hall (The Old Vic).

Douglas Kennedy, presented with Chris Brady's question

"...who was Nellie Chapman and her friends, did they really pre-date Sharp with their revival of Playford dances.."

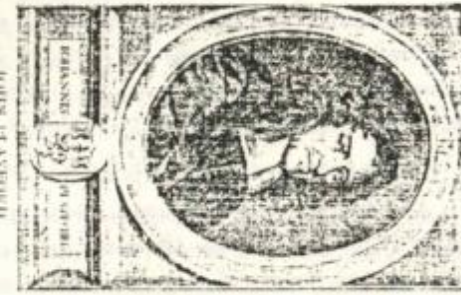
wrote, 7th April, 1984:-

Nellie Chapman

Yes, of course I remember this performance at the Old Vic 1920 because I coached, Hon. Neville Lytton in his Solo Morris Jig I'll Go And Enlist For A Sailor.

I was back at Imperial College (demobbed from T.F. 1919) a half-fledged undergraduate newly appointed as Demonstrator to Botany Department and very much involved with the EFDS as (Sharp's) survivor of early male disciples ready and willing to help his cause especially so since I had married Helen Karpeles in 1914 and she with Maud were original members of the Executive Committee. Lytton approached me to coach him for his solo

NELLIE CHAPLIN'S  
*Revived Ancient Dances & Music*  
APRIL, 20th, 1920, at 2.00 and 8 o'clock.



JOHN PLAYFORD

JOHN PLAYFORD was born in 1673, and died in 1743 or 1744. He was a "business" man in addition to the music. He was a member of the Royal Society and the greater part of the music published in his time was arranged by him. He was the author of the " Dancing Master" from the single seventeenth century. The first one was published in 1651.

Old English Folk Dances.

Collected and Published in the Seventeenth Century by JOHN PLAYFORD.

They were first revised in 1926 by NELLIE CHAPLIN. \*  
These beautiful old country dances are for men and women and need not be confined with the Morris dances, which are for men only. In the English dances the tunes, titles, and figures are clearly indicated, the steps in it the judgment of the teacher, and depends on the character of the time.

The examples chosen are from a collection of over 300 dances. They are characteristic instances of the types, and of the general movements of country side in England, and as such, are of great historical importance. They are specimens of the country dances which, although it often means some thing similar to country dance, is not the origin of that term. "Country dance" means a set dance in which the dances are in separate lines.

PRICE  
SIXPENCE

*Precedes Sharp*

SOLO VIOLIN The Admiral's Galliard (Old English Dance) *Alfred Noyes*

THE FORLANA (Old Italian) Scored by Kate Chaplin  
The Forlana (It. Fontaine (Fr.)) is a lively peasant dance of Italy. It is a little like the Tarantelle, but not so elaborate. Sometimes the dancers imitate the movements of the gnomes. It was frequently introduced into the French ballroom of the 18th century.

MADRIGAL "I love, alas"  
GLEE "When for the world's repose"  
THE MAYFAIR SINGERS *Morley*

THE RICAUDON (with Song)  
Harmonised by Dr. F. Crossman  
Music by Vassini (1790).

This is a typical example of a peasant dance of a lively character, which was modified for popular use by the old dancing masters. It was a favorite French dance of the Court and the middle classes at the time of Louis XIII, and came to England at the close of the seventeenth century.

The Singer: Mr. HARRY WOODWARD  
TAMBOURIN (France) *Ramirez (1651) 1761*  
A lively dance of Provence, which became fashionable towards the end of the 18th century.

BOURREE *Morley (1742)*  
The Bourree belongs to the waltzes, and has been danced at Court ever since its introduction under Catherine de Medici in 1595.

INTERVAL.

OLD ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCES  
From Playford's Dancing Master.

OSWESTRY WAKE Harmonised and Scored by R. L. Cox  
A dance named after the Welsh border town in Shropshire.  
THE MERRY CONCEIT  
An amusing dance for four.

SOLO MORRIS JIG "I'll go and enlist for a sailor"  
THE HON. NEVILLE LYTTON.

KETTLEDRUM  
This, like "All in a Garden Green" and Shanty Morris, is a traditional dance.  
STANES MORRIS (with Song)



jig and invited me to his house in Chelsea. He nearly wrecked the sitting room floor before we repaired to the basement. It was Neville's kick-jumping. He landed heavily.

It is true the note on the programme says (Playford) "first revived by Nellie Chaplin 1906" but her revival was of the conventional idea of the 'Courtly Dance'. All bows and scrapes and self-conscious posturing. Sharp's interpretations were founded in the Country Dances he had 'collected' in the country, and published in his CD Vol. 1.

When Sharp fell out with Mary Neal he decided to establish a teacher training course, and on advice chose the Teacher Training (PT) at Chelsea (Polytechnic), Principal Dorette Wilke. Here my sister Helen was training and she fell for Sharp and his 'country style'. But there were other students who preferred the Airs and Graces and the College could 'present' country dancing based on Playford in both styles. But by 1920 Sharp and the EFDS had been accepted by the College (and most of the Board of Ed. officials) as the true picture of the "English Country Dance" although Mary Neal told me (in the early 1930's) that she was sure the EFDS country dance style was our invention.

But back to the Chaplin sisters. Until Sharp appeared on the scene with his Morris Dances and subsequently Sword and Country the Chaplins had a clear field. Basically they were a nice trio but conventional dancing mistresses steeped in the conventions of the "Assembly Rooms" and Mrs. Woolnoth was an expert in that genre. Sharp's ultimate success over the Chaplins and Neals was due to his patent sincerity over the 'Essence of Folk' - unselfconscious absorption in the act of dance - he abhorred "playing to the gallery" and of course he concentrated on the music and rhythm and bodily involvement with 'partner' or the 'side' - the team - out of this world - out of the ground back into the ground - ashes to ashes - back into 'life' etc., etc., etc.,

- Pause for breath -

Yes, our boat is 'blinking' and stirring the paint. Its mast and dinghy are up here in garage and garden looking for varnish and sunnier weather. Our three mowers have been out and made a first cut, while the daffs and tulips are still regretting their early appearance - luckily most of them have

been more sensible and still wait in the wings. I am older than last year and inclined to say 'no' to anything that takes me away from my 'Lares and Penates'.

Douglas 7/4/84

(if any reader desires a complete copy of the programme - two photocopied sheets - it can be supplied for 30 pence, to include the postage. The Editor gives his thanks to Chris Brady for writing about the programme, so that this historical note was made possible. Douglas Kennedy is in his ninety-second year.)

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William Palmer, of the Cambridge Morris Men, died on the 6th of August, 1984. As told in No.14 of The Morris Dancer, November, 1982, pp17-18, William had a morris dancing career of over seventy years. The Cambridge Bagman wrote, "Men will miss our fine, active companion."

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CYRIL SMITH, of the Thames Valley Morris Men, wrote, 29.4.1984,

We heard, with much interest, from several senior morris men, at the Ring A.R.M., of the circumstances surrounding and the personalities involved in the formation of The Morris Ring in 1934. It may be of some further interest to note what was happening at that time in the area of the Thames Valley Morris Men.

John Glaister, who is still leading, instructing and playing for the T.V.M.M., started his morris in 1932, when 16 years of age, with the Curfew Morris Club in Chertsey. "The leading figure in that group was John's kinsman, James Sowerby. Jim Brooks, who started his morris in 1929 in Chertsey, was also a member of Curfew. He, too, still instructs and is very active with T.V.M.M. A third member of Curfew was Ted Perry. He danced for years with Thames Valley, but a back injury stopped his dancing and he dropped out of the club. Jim and Ted both attended the Meeting in Cecil Sharp House when the Morris Ring was formally set up. Curfew was admitted to the Ring in 1938, at the Stow on the Wald meeting in that year.

At the beginning of the war a Surbiton builder, Charles McCarthy, took a specially recruited building unit into the Royal Engineers. Jim and Ted were members of the unit. Quite soon they got their comrades to join them in the morris in their spare

time. Captain McCarthy gave them much encouragement.

For most of the war these men danced the morris - during training, during their spell of duty in Iceland (where they got together a morris side) right up to their arrival on the Normandy beaches just after D-day. From then there was little time for morris until they reached Berlin. The unit, called 688 Artisans Company, R.E., built bridges, camps and so on as well as clearing minefields through northern Europe till it reached the German capital. The stay in Berlin lasted a few months and allowed time for more morris. Ted and Jim were demobilised late in 1945.

After the war folk dancers came together again, clubs were reformed and new ones started. John Glaister was dancing with local friends when the idea was born of starting up the Thames Valley M.M. He was a member of a side which showed the morris at Claygate Flower Show in July, 1952. A meeting was called to inaugurate T.V.M.M.: Jim Brooks and Ted Perry were among those who attended it.

(Space does not allow the printing of all of an accompanying long account of the adventures of Jim and Ted during the war; but, in Jim's own words):-

"I was at this time (1929) finishing my apprenticeship as carpenter and joiner. My lifelong friend, Ted Perry, also a carpenter, worked in his father's building business. During the 30's Ted and I attended the evening classes in the Storrow Room at Cecil Sharp House. We paid 2/6 a year for the use of a locker in which to keep our kit. Douglas Kennedy taught the Headington tradition: part of his system was to have us watch ourselves in a mirror. William Ganiford taught Fieldtown, a Mr. Thorn taught Sherborne, and Richard Callender dealt with other traditions. Sam Mason, the blind pianist, supplied the music." "In 1939 the club (Curfew) was at the Thaxted meeting. I recall that three Guildford men joined us - Cyril Hicks, Ernie Lemming and a Mr. Woods." "In 1939 Ted and I, like our fathers before us, joined the forces for war service in the Royal Engineers. We had seen a poster on building sites inviting workmen to join a unit where they could serve with their pals. Major Valslor and Captain Mc-Carthy, members of building firms who had been soldiers in the 1914 war, were given command of a company of artisans to be known

as the Surrey Builders, Royal Engineers. So, after a riotous Christmas at home, Ted and I enlisted in January 1940. We produced our employers' certificates showing we were tradesmen, and were 'embodied' at Mandora Barracks, Chatham, on 1st February, 1940." "After being kitted out at Margate we were moved to Barnet. A concert party was formed of which Ted and I became members. We usually contributed morris jigs to gramophone music; our company fellows were delighted to see us all dressed up in whitest waving handkerchiefs about and having bells on our legs."

The unit sailed in the Franconia for Iceland reaching Reykjavik on 17th May, 1940. "Captain McCarthy had helped to carry our records, gramophone, a set of rapper swords and concert gear. We kept our Curfews costume and white trousers and shirts in our kit bags right through the war. We took part in the first concert in Iceland in June 1940. Ted and I danced Jockey and the Fool's Jig. It was not long before Ted and I started to teach the fellows who had shown interest in the morris. This went on throughout our stay in Iceland. It was difficult to have a regular side because of postings for work all over the island. We never managed any rapper. Captain Mac always made sure morris was included in our many concerts." "Early in our stay in Iceland the unit's name was changed to 688 Artisans Works Co., R.E. Captain McCarthy was made a major. " "On 1st May at 6.30 a.m. I was out in Volunder Yard at our camp to dance Lumps of Plum Pudding and the Fool's Jig. Some men of 807 R.E. were staying with us. One of them, Fred Dellar, a Thaxted dancer, saw me. In the evening we gave a morris show in the yard. We had no kit or music: it was locked in the quartermaster's stores. I never saw Dellar again." "688 left Iceland and arrived in Langholme, Dumfries, in November, 1941. At Christmas we gave a concert for the local people. Our concert party stores had not arrived and never did: it was lost. I had a record - we borrowed a gramophone. We danced the Fool's Jig and Go and Enlist for a Sailor, Sherborne." After being near Edinburgh and in Hull, dancing in concerts, "The next move was to Gainford, Co. Durham. The unit gave a dance for the locals and I danced the Fool's Jig and Nutting Girl. I had no music but danced to the clapping and stamping of my mates. This I often did and the men never wanted me to stop. After a stay in Rotherham, working, training and dancing the morris with my mates, we moved in May, 1944 to a sealed camp at Brentwood, Essex. Having little to do we

put in some dancing." "688 went aboard the minesweeper Cameronian on 4th June 1944, and sailed for the Normandy beaches. We arrived on the 6th, but the Cameronian had to sheer off for minesweeping duties. This happened again on the 7th, but on the 8th we landed at Arromanches."

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Cyril Smith again:-

After many conversations with Jim Brooks on his activities in Europe, he wrote, "The actual landing on the beaches at Arromanches was dangerous, uncomfortable, and amusing. Jim, 5ft.5ins. in height, jumped into 7feet of water, carrying a rifle, fifty rounds of ammunition and a shovel. He clung to a hawser held by sailors." "688 passed through the mines and trip wires, dried out, and returned to remove those lethal devices. Thereafter, building bridges and camps but for the most part lifting mines, 688 moved through France and Belgium and Holland on to its final stop, Berlin. Jim and Ted had no time for morris dancing." The unit helped with repair work to the wrecked city. "In their spare time Jim and Ted and their mates were able to do some morris." "Ted was demobilised in August, 1945. Jim had to wait till November. At his 'demob' party at the Southend Club in Berlin he danced Lumps of Plum Pudding, Bledington, for the last time to the clapping and stamping of his comrades."

Jim Brooks and Ted Perry were among the founder members of the Thames Valley Morris Men in 1952. Ted dropped out of the club some years later because his back injury (sustained in a fall from scaffolding during the war) prevented him from dancing.

"Jim has been a leader of the T.V.M.M. for the last 32 years - dancing, instructing, studying. He has become the acknowledged authority on the Oddington tradition. Many young men have visited his home on Wednesday evenings - and still do. Here they become steeped in morris tradition as well as having their dancing improved. Jim is a close and valued friend of all his clubmates."

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