

# The Morris Dancer

Being an occasional publication of the  
Morris Ring

Volume 5, Number 2 March 2014



# THE MORRIS DANCER

Edited, on behalf of the Morris Ring, by

Mac McCoig

8 Redhills, Eccleshall, Stafford, ST21 6JW

01785 851052

[Mac.mccoig@btinternet.com](mailto:Mac.mccoig@btinternet.com)

Volume 5, No. 2 March 2014

## Contents:

The Immortal Memory of Cecil Sharp	Rod Stradling	Page 32
The Bradmore Morris Dancers of 1618	Andy Padmore and Bob Hine	Page 34
Morris in the Media – Two cuttings	Mac McCoig	Page 46
Book Reviews:		Page 50

Wassailing: Reawakening an Ancient Folk Custom. By Colin Cater and Karen Cater.

Robin Hood: Myth, history and culture. Nick Rennison.

History of the miners' sword dance in North-East England. Phil Heaton

*At the 2014 Jigs Instructional, the three Editors agreed to remind readers what sort of material would be accepted for each Ring publication. In the case of The Morris Dancer, it is any article, paper or study which expands our knowledge of the Morris in all its forms. It is better that the text is referenced, so that other researchers may follow up if they wish to do so, but non-referenced writing will be considered.*

*Text and pictures should be forwarded to: Mac McCoig, [mac.mccoig@btinternet.com](mailto:mac.mccoig@btinternet.com) 01785 851052*

***The next issue of The Morris Dancer is planned for November 2014***

## **The Immortal Memory of Cecil Sharp**

### **Rod Stradling**

An introduction to the toast made by Rod Stradling on the occasion of the Green Mans Morris and Sword Club feast on 23 November 2013. This was the first feast to which a woman's side, Three Spires Morris, had been invited.

Every year we rise in silence to honour the memory of Cecil Sharp. The accepted story is that Sharp, a sickly but relatively well-off man, was visiting friends in Oxfordshire on Christmas 1899 and, by chance, Headington Quarry Morris Men, who were stone masons in need of money, turned up and danced. Sharp collected the dances and this led to the revival of the morris and the rest is history.

But I thought that you might like a bit more colour to the story - and a slightly surprising story it is with a perhaps unexpected female connection.

He was sickly and regularly suffered bouts of fever - perhaps it was malaria from his time in Australia from where he returned in January 1892.

He got a job as music teacher at Ludgrove Preparatory School in 1893 and also married Constance Birch, a childhood friend from Somerset. Financially, Sharp earned £350 to £400 whilst Constance received about £100 a year.

Dora Birch, Sharp's widowed Mother in Law, moved from Somerset to Oxfordshire in 1897 and, two years later, she moved to Sandfield Cottage (actually a Victorian Gothic style 6-bedroom villa) on the edge of the Quarry. Knowles & Son, an Oxford building firm, did some alterations and the employee sent was one William Kimber.

Dora knew a bit about traditional folk song from her time in Somerset and asked Kimber what activities took place in the area. He mentioned his morris side, Headington Quarry and on their next Whitsuntide tour they danced at Sandfield Cottage. She enjoyed the show and asked to be included on the itinerary next time they were out which was Boxing Day of that year; 1899.

Cecil Sharp was there that Christmas and noted that the first dance was Laudnum Bunches although William Kimber said that the show started with Bean Setting. Obviously, Sharp was taken by the music and asked Kimber to return on the following day so that he could make a written record which Sharp scored for strings, bassoon and horn.

But here's the interesting part - what should have been Sharp's Morris 'Eureka' moment took rather a long time to arrive. 1900 came and went as did 1901 and on January 10th 1902 his mother-in-law died and his reason for visiting Headington disappeared.

September 1903 was his folk song 'Eureka' moment when he was visiting his friend the Reverend Charles Marson at Hambridge Vicarage and heard John England singing the "Seeds of Love" while gardening. This was Sharp's first collected folk song.

In collaboration with Marson, Sharp collected in Somerset and published three volumes of Folk-Songs. He later fell out with Marson.

From 1904 to 1907 Sharp tutored the royal children at Marlborough House, including The Prince of Wales, Prince Albert and Princess Mary. This gave him a Civil List pension.

Some 6 years after Boxing Day 1899, Cecil Sharp was approached by a Mary Neal to teach folk songs to the girls of the Esperance Club, a co-operative for dressmakers. Mary also asked him if he knew of any dances that could accompany the songs. Sharp told her about William Kimber so Mary went to Oxford, found Kimber and invited him to London to teach the dances.

Subsequently, Kimber met Sharp but did not recognise him until Sharp, remembering that at their first meeting he had been wearing an eye shade, put a hand across one eye. Kimber recognised him then and they began to work together on writing down the Headington tradition.

Sharp was, by then, renowned as a folk song collector. In the four years since he first collected the Seeds of Love he collected 1,500 songs. Having been appointed Principal of the Hampstead Conservatoire in 1896, he was interested in replacing Germanic music in the school curriculum with national and folk songs. Unfortunately, he quarrelled with the Conservatoire owner and resigned.

Meanwhile Mary Neal and the Esperance Club girls were going from strength to strength with their morris dancing and soon, Mary was asked to provide a teacher for the Shakespeare Club of Stratford-upon-Avon where she met the Bidford Morris dancers.

This led to the publication of *The Morris Book* (1st Edition) by Cecil J. Sharp and Herbert C. MacIlwaine in 1907. Presumably, MacIlwaine provided the dance notation which Sharp later refined. Seven of the dances were from Headington and four from Bidford. Sharp and MacIlwaine later fell out.

*The Morris Book Part II* was published in 1909 and included six dances from Headington. *The Morris Book Part III* appeared in 1910. Sharp - a collector of folk songs and tunes - began to see the opportunities of collecting dances. Mary, on the other hand, saw herself as a collector of Morris dances. This, along with Sharp thinking that the Esperance Morris was not pure, resulted in Sharp and Mary Neal falling out.

Sharp continued collecting Morris dances and folk songs and then he added country dances and sword dances. But he had some strong opinions; He did not collect any of the Border Morris because he thought it was degenerate. He thought North-west Morris was just a street processional dance performed by children and he felt that the sword dance from the Shetland island of Papa Stour was outside his province because it was in Scotland.

So, whilst we owe Sharp so much, it took him rather a long time to use what he saw on Boxing Day 1899 and I will leave you to ponder whether the revival would have happened if Mary Neal had not taken the initiative to find William Kimber.

With that, it is time to rise and toast in silence the immortal memory of Cecil Sharp.

Acknowledgements;

This introduction to the toast was compiled using the following two sources;

"The Immortal Memory", Ivor Allsop, *The Morris Dancer*, Vol. V, No. 1, July 2012.

"Cecil Sharp, His Life and Work", Maud Karpeles, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967.

## **The Bradmore Morris Dancers of 1618**

## **Andy Padmore and Bob Hine (Dolphin Morrismen)**



### **Part I. The story of the Bradmore Plaque, Andy Padmore**

Saturday June 8<sup>th</sup> 1985 was the date set for the unveiling of the Bradmore Plaque to commemorate the Bradmore Morris dancers of 1618. This is the story of how it came to be.

Bob Hine had been a Dolphin Morris Man almost but not quite since the formation of the team in January 1968. He had lodged with Ian Stewart and when the side was short Bob was persuaded to 'fill in' until a full side was mustered. This eventually led to Bob joining as a permanent arrangement. He continued as a member, always supportive and always there at the big occasions but working quietly and diligently in the background. It was in 1979 that Bob took over as Bagman of Dolphin Morris Men and it was also at that time that his profile within the side began to gain momentum.

Bob an academic decided that he would research Morris Dancing within Nottinghamshire and see what evidence he could find about our local dancing ancestors. What he found was to set the wheels

in motion for several projects that would eventually come to fruition and for which Bob (and Dolphin Morris) can be justly proud.

The first concrete result of his labours was the production, in 1980, of his booklet, 'The Dolphin Guide to Local Villages & Dances'. The second result was the discovery of information about a Southwell Procession dating back to 1109 and which would eventually lead to the re-creation of the Gate to Southwell in 1981. The procession continued to be an annual event until June 2014 when the 34<sup>th</sup> 'Gate' sets off from Nottingham Council House.

The third result was the production of a plaque commemorating the Morris Dancers who in 1618 had been fined for Morris Dancing on the Sabbath. This offence occurred at Bradmore, a small village in south Nottinghamshire, and the names of the six dancers and two musicians were still there in the records of the church court. Records about Morris Dancing in those early times are in themselves rare but to have the names of what looked like a complete and extant team was nothing short of remarkable.

The 1980 booklet carried a single sentence about the men of Bradmore, *'The church courts cracked down on morris dancing on Sundays, and a number of Nottinghamshire men were fined for this offence in 1618, including men from Wollaton, Lenton, Ruddington, Bradmore and Wysall'*.

In June 1983 Bob wrote a letter to Mrs Hooley of Bradmore Parish council. In his letter he indicates that the Dolphin Morris Men, *'are hoping to visit Bradmore again this year'*, and he goes on, *'Our visit is in fact quite imminent, since we plan to come next Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> June, at 8 p.m.'* Bob asked if she could assist with some publicity for the planned visit.

The letter then goes on to say, *'Since last year, I have done a little research into the Bradmore Morris team of 1618, mentioned in the church records. The parish registers go back 50 or so years earlier, and it was possible to trace the births, deaths, and marriages of the dance team and their families. My records are not complete, but they do give a reasonably clear picture, showing the ages, place of birth and in some cases occupations of the dancers....I think this information is of considerable interest to people involved in the history of folk dance in this country and may also be of some interest to people in the village'*.

Bob goes on further, *'...and it occurred to me that it might be appropriate to have some commemoration of the team of dancers. It is very rare for any record to survive which names people who took part in folk dancing before the nineteenth century. I wonder if your Parish council would consider the possibility of erecting a commemorative plaque in honour of the morris dancers of 1618'*.

Dolphin archives revealed that the team had given performances in Bradmore on May 21<sup>st</sup> 1981 and again on May 6<sup>th</sup> 1982, a village that sadly lacked a pub. This lack was however well compensated by the kindness of the villagers in supplying beer for the dancers. The visits were obviously linked to the discovery of information about the Bradmore dancers and were some of the preliminary steps to the eventual erection of a permanent plaque in the village.

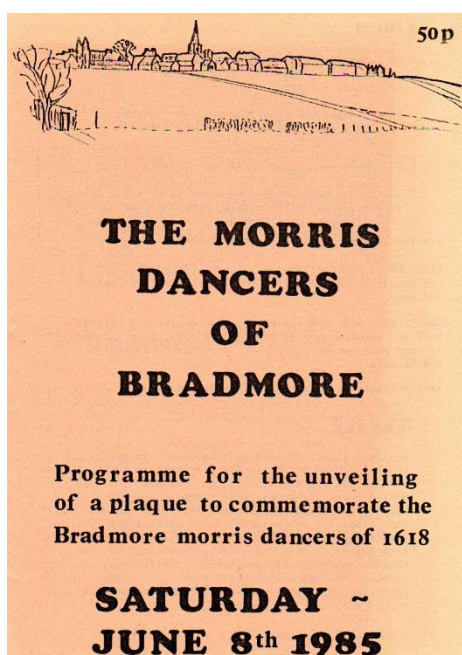


A letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> September 1983 from Mrs Hooley of Bradmore Parish Council suggested that there was some interest in Bob's idea for a commemorative plaque. They would need to know, the form it would take, the cost, and where it might be erected etc. It was suggested that Bob attend the next meeting of the Parish Council to discuss his proposals

Handwritten notes show that Bob obtained some prices ranging from £50 in Formica to £85 in anodised aluminium to £150 for stainless steel/bronze/ceramic. This would include 100 words and two figures. In the meantime, a Mr John Daniell of Bradmore, owner of a small engineering company, had come forward and was willing to make and donate the plaque. A few design features were to be sorted out and by November 1984 all seemed to be going smoothly. Mr Daniell, pictured opposite, would make the plaque, and the date for the official unveiling was set for June 8<sup>th</sup> 1985. Mrs Daniell was to officially unveil the plaque on the day.



Bob prepared a programme seen below and filled it with illustrations that he drew himself.



## **Part 2. How we came to know about the Bradmore Morris Dancers. Bob Hine**

We know about the Bradmore dancers through church records, though it was absolutely not their intention to preserve and celebrate this aspect of village life in the 1600's, as will become clear! Firstly though, where is Bradmore? Bradmore and its neighbour Bunny, are small redbrick villages in the bit of Nottinghamshire that lies just to the south of the River Trent – about 5 miles south of Trent Bridge, for cricketing fans. To the east and the south of the villages rises the gentle escarpment of the Leicestershire Wolds and to the west is a wetland drained only in the last century and probably a watery wilderness in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. On the other side of the wetland is the village of Gotham, celebrated for its canny residents who successfully performed bizarre acts to persuade the visiting

taxman that they were too crazy to pay any levies. The nearby villages - as they then were - of Ruddington, Wysall and Clifton were also involved in the story of the dancers.

Local records suggest that morris dancing was an integral part of the social life of south Nottinghamshire in the 1500's. Morris dancers took part in annual Whitsuntide procession known as The Gate to Southwell in 1530, as documented in the Nottingham council accounts, for example. Gradually however some public authorities began to take a harder line. By the 1600's there was increased pressure by puritan magistrates and church officials to reform the Sabbath and growing harassment by them of the sports of the ordinary people. In May 1618 James I had issued his Book of Sports in which were allowed "...May games, Whitsun-ales, and Morris dances, and the setting up of Maypoles and other sports therewith used; so as the same to be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or neglect of divine service." In Nottinghamshire the church courts certainly show signs of a growing crack-down in the years preceding 1618, but although there are cases in later years, thereafter they seem to peter out. (This is an impression rather than a quantitative judgement, cases against working on the Sabbath still occur). Not just Morris dancers, but football players and games players of all sorts were 'presented', that is, told to account for their behaviour before a church court and to amend their ways on pain of ex-communication. This is what the records have to say about the Bradmore men.

"I the churchwarden of Bradmore doe psent Hugh Longley, Gervis Goldinge, John Butler, Hugh Ffoster for morris dauncers and Harold Maples, Richard Roberts and Antonie Truman of Ruddington and Ralph Lees of Wisall for ppaning the Sabaoth daye beinge and since Whitsundaye laste paste."

Thomas Bond, his marke.

*Item dated 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1618, in the 'Archdeaconry MSS. Presentment Bill. 295.'*

Here's how the court dealt with them over the next couple of months:

**Hugh Longley** of Bradmore 'for prophanyng the Sabaoth by morris dauncinge.' Pen. Reserved.

**Gervase Goldinge** of the same 'for the like'. His father Richard Gervase pleaded guilty for him.

**John Butler** of the same 'for the like'.

Pleaded guilty. Dismissed.

**Harold Maples** of Bradmore 'for prophaning the Sabaoth'. v. et m.

**Richard Roberdes** of the same 'for the same'.

Pleaded guilty. Dismissed with a warning.

**Anthony Trewman** of Ruddington 'for pyping at the same'. Excommunicated

**Ralph Lees** of Wisaw 'for the same'.

To be cited afresh for that day fortnight.

*Register 27. f. 140d. 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1618.*

**Ralph Lees** of Wisawe. Excommunicated.

f. 152d. 25<sup>th</sup> December, 1618. (P.S. no Christmas spirit here!).



**Hugh Foster** did not appear in the courts. Perhaps pressure had been brought to have his name excluded, just as Richard Goulding intervened on his son's behalf. Although Hugh seems to have escaped prosecution, three more dancers were added to the original list.

**Henry Oldershawe** of Bradmore 'a morrise dauncer'. v. et m.

*Register 28. f.146d. 21<sup>st</sup> November, 1618.*

**Edward Creswell** of Bradmore 'for a morris dauncer'.

'His wife is with child before marriage'. v. et m.

f.148d. 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1618.

Here's how they were dealt with

**Henry Oldershawe** of Bradmore 'a morrise dauncer or a looker on'.

Excommunicated.

**Edward Creswell** of the same 'for the same'. Excommunicated.

**Humphrey Garner** of Bradmore, John Wighteman of Ruddington and Robert Windley of Lenton 'morrice dauncers'.

f.151d. 5<sup>th</sup> December, 1618.

The actual presentment by the Bradmore churchwarden does not say that the dancing took place during divine service, but it must surely have done so, otherwise there would have been no case to answer. In that case, why were the dancers being so deliberately provocative? Another interesting point is that the churchwarden concerned, Thomas Bond, had been cited for an unknown offence immediately preceding this. It may be that he was being presented for neglecting his duty in not citing the dancers – there is no proof of this, it is just a possibility. The offence took place at Whitsun, several months before the court case which would have given him plenty of time to gather his facts. This reluctance would fit with what is known about Thomas Bond who was frequently at loggerheads with authority in the church courts and the Quarter Sessions.

At this time a couple of other actions against morris dancers were taken, according to The Act Books from Hodgkinson's transcription.

**William Hartley** "lay cooper" of Wolloughton.

Admitted "that upon a Sabaoth daye since the feaste of Pentecost laste paste he went to Trowell in companie of morris dauncers in tyme of divine service."

**Richard Mee** of Wolloughton.

Admitted "that he was absent from divine service upon a Sabaoth day and in companie with morris dauncers since Whitsun daye laste paste."

*f.125d. 2<sup>th</sup> October 1618.*

### **Part 3 Who Were the Bradmore Morris Dancers? Bob Hine**

Were the Bradmore morris dancers of 1618 a proper village team, performing the morris at Whitsuntide in the traditional way, or were they a bunch of young tearaways getting into trouble with their elders? It's very difficult to know whether the Bradmore case was just one of bad timing by the dancers, with

the very recent publication of *The Book of Sports*, or something of a grudge involving a particularly puritanical minded local cleric or someone else of influence. But the outcome for us is fortunate in that it lifts the veil a little on morris dancing 400 years ago, though of course it tells us little about the dance or the music. The number of men listed is consistent with a team of six or eight and the musicians are described as pipers, so consistent with pipe and tabor. However, another record, from the next door parish to the north, specifically refers to a pair of bagpipes.

**Gervase Whitehead** of Ruddington 'for cominge to Clifton and alluring the people to prophane God's service by playenge upon a paire of bagpipes'.

Dismissed with a warning.

**Archdeaconry MSS. Presentment Bills. 295.** Register 19, f.84d. 14<sup>th</sup> May 1613.

Another piece of good fortune is that the parish records for Bradmore and Bunny have survived from the mid 1500's so there is the possibility to find out more about the lives of the dancers, though without training the handwriting in the ancient ledgers is at times difficult to decipher. This was not a problem for marriage details as these had already been transcribed and published by Phillimore. I should add that the research for this piece was done 30 years ago. Today, many of the old records are available on line.

By good fortune too some manorial court records for Bradmore and Bunny have survived back to the time of the dancers. So the many infringements of the local rules are duly recorded. One could suggest that only those who got into trouble have achieved immortality, contrary to the puritans' intentions! Actually being able to read these manorial records is a challenge beyond me and I am immensely grateful for the help I received from a local historian. How lucky to come across someone working on these particular village records for an entirely different purpose and who was prepared to help! What follows is her summary and the details of the individuals are set out at the end

We have very little information about the musicians, **Ralph Lees** and **Anthony Trewman**, who came from other villages whose records for this period have not survived. Among the dancers, **Humphrey Garner** was cited separately and seems to have only a tenuous connection with the village. **Henry Oldershaw** is probably an outsider too. He had an earlier church court appearance in 1616 when he is said to be from Wollaton, a village on the other side of the Trent.

(Henry Oldershaw of Wolloughton 'for ringing hoggs on the Sabaoth daye' Pleaded not guilty. To purge himself. Register 22, f.35. 18<sup>th</sup> May 1616.)

Excluding Garner and Oldershaw and the musicians, that leaves seven. **Richard Roberts** is the oldest of these, born in 1579 and dying within a year of the court case. He doesn't appear in the marriage register and doesn't appear to have had children, although it is difficult to disentangle the Roberts clan. One could speculate that, as the oldest member of the group, he was the teacher, passing on the details of the dancing technique to the next generation and/ or the Fool.

The remaining six are quite similar in family circumstance though Hugh Foster was the senior by a decade. So, in what follows I focus on the '**Bradmore Six**': **Hugh Foster, John Butler, Gervase Goulding, Harold Mapples, Hugh Longley** and **Edward Cresswell**.

**Ages.** Although the birth details are not complete, the ages of the dancers at the time of the court case was roughly early twenties to mid-thirties. The average age was about 26, so these were not just a bunch of young tearaways. They were family men and mostly born and bred in the village. Even with the sparse records extant, four out of the six families can be linked with the village in 1599 or earlier. In my view, this points to an established team.

**Fertility.** The court case in 1618 seems to have been good for fertility, each of the six fathered a child in the year 1620, except for Harold who was one step ahead in 1619. They mostly went on to sire further children during the 1620s. With reproduction at full tilt, it is perhaps not surprising that there is no mention of women dancers or even musicians.

As regards **status**, Hugh Longley was at least connected with a family which held land (one of them being a freeholder) and which must have had a reasonable status in the parish, though no one belonging to it claimed to be more than a husbandman. The Longleys and Hugh Foster appear as tenants and members of the manorial jury at Bradmore. Generally speaking the jury was chosen from the more substantial tenants, but if there was a shortage of numbers present others would have to be chosen. The Longley's appear on the jury quite frequently, Hugh Foster just once – but the manorial records are by no means complete.

The Cresswells started as braziers and later claimed yeoman status. They may have held land elsewhere as they do not appear in the surviving records of the manorial courts at either Boney/Bunny or Bradmore. The fact that Creswell's wife was pregnant before her marriage need not be taken too seriously – it was quite common at this period.

Harold Maples and Gervase Goulding appear in the manorial courts for exceeding their stint on the common pastures. They could have been cottagers without holding any land.

**Longevity.** Did the Bradmore Six manage to stay together as a team and pass the dance on to their children? Richard Roberts, as mentioned, died shortly after the court case, as did Harold Maples in 1623 and Gervase Goulding in 1627, both leaving young families. As to the others, further research is needed to establish what happened to them. Their deaths are not reported in the village register. Only two of the Six were still in the village twenty or so years after the case, according to the Protestation returns in 1642. They were John Butler and Edward Cresswell. But Hugh Foster and Harold Maples each had sons who were in the village then. So one could argue that there was enough stability in the group for the dance tradition to have been continued.

In the longer term, there is a continual flux in the village population, one suspects because of accidents and illnesses and terribly high child mortality. No doubt people helped family and friends out but most were living on the breadline. So even a small accident could spell disaster. Any idea of a stable village life stretching back through father and son into the mists of antiquity seems very wide of the mark for the last half millennium. In Bradmore, between 1550 and 1810 there were about 600 different surnames in the village marriage records. Each appeared on average just 2.5 times. So it's not a great surprise to find that by the end of the 1600's, from the Bradmore Six only the Butler family name remained in the village and eventually that disappeared too.

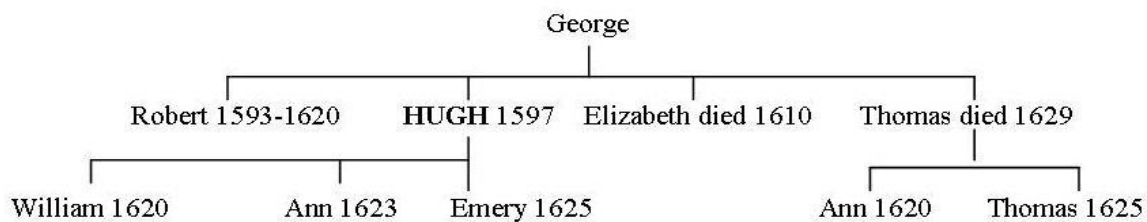
After the fortuitous flicker of light on the Morris in 1618 in Bradmore, the door closes and there is no further mention of morris dancing in the village, nor indeed as far as I am aware in Nottinghamshire as a whole, until modern times. The traditional morris dance seems to have disappeared largely unrecorded in this part of the country.

## **Part 4 The Bradmore Morris Dancers and their families**

This final part provides more detailed findings on the dancers, using the parish registers of births, deaths and marriages; the records of the manorial court; and the Protestation and Hearth Tax returns.

### **Hugh Longley**

**Hugh Longley** was born in 1597. Little is known of him but he was obviously connected with a family which possessed some land, and some of it at least freehold. Hugh's marriage is not recorded but in 1620 he had a son, William, and then two other children. At the time of the court case he would have been about 21 years old and probably still unmarried.



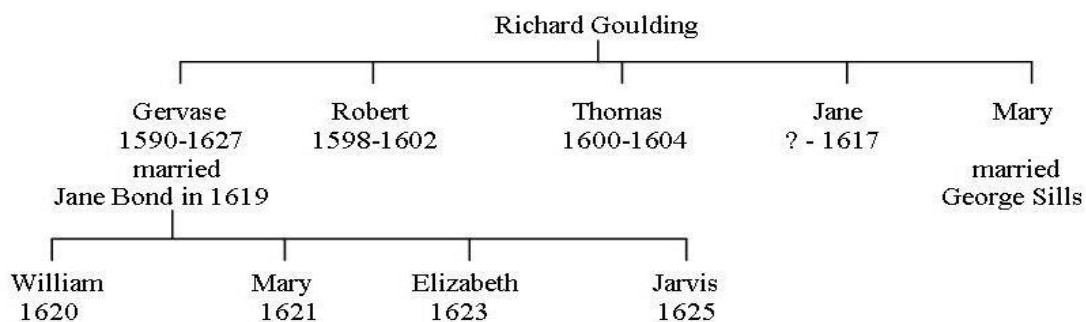
The Longley family is very difficult to sort out because there were so many of them in both Bunney and Bradmore. It looks as though there were three brothers; Thomas who left a will and died in 1591, Richard of Wymeswold who left nine children and George who may have been Hugh's father. There may have been a fourth brother Robert Longley of Bunney, husbandman who had property in Long Eaton and Keyworth. Thomas was a weaver who left everything to his wife's relative (perhaps a nephew, who may have been his apprentice) – in the event of his death to Robert and his heirs and then to George and his heirs. The family, therefore, seem to have been reasonably well off but it looks as though Thomas may have been a younger brother and as so often happened became a craftsman.

**Hugh's father, George**, married Ann Elliott in 1575 and often appears in the manorial court at Bradmore – in 1586 he was presented "That he put certain rushes called willows on the land of the Lord of this manor to the damage of the water course there, that he will remove those rushes before the feast of All Saints under pain of forfeiting to the Lord 3s. 4d." In 1600 there was an unresolved dispute as to whether his well stood within the high way or "within ye compasse of ye closes". In 1617 he is a juror at the manorial court. In 1619 there was a dispute about an unrepaired fence between Thomas Lovatt and Thomas Longley (perhaps Hugh's brother) and about a "cmon yssue between George Longley and the said Thomas Lovatts close". In 1620 George appears as a freeholder and Thomas a juror and field reeve.

The Longley family first appear in the register in 1562 and their name may be in the 1545 Subsidy returns, so they are a long-established family in the village at the time of the case in 1618. Hugh has children in the next few years to 1625 and a Frances Longley is married in 1635, but then the surname disappears from the village records. It doesn't appear in the 1642 Protestation Returns nor the 1676 Hearth Tax.

### Gervase Goulding

Gervase Goulding was born in 1590. He was unmarried at the time of the court case but married in 1619 to Jane Bond. He died in 1627 leaving four children. He would have been about 28 years old in 1618.



His father Richard of Bradmore was a weaver, one of the six known weavers in Bunny/Bradmore in the early 1600's. Another weaver, Robert Lee, left him 10s in his will in 1611. He had a few brushes with the law: in 1606, he appeared at the Quarter Sessions and was charged 10 pounds as recognisance to be of good behaviour. He appears twice in the manorial court of Bradmore; in October 1617 he was presented for two beasts being tethered within the common pasture and amerced (fined) 8d and in October 1618 for tethering three beasts against orders he was amerced 5s. As a Cottager Richard would have had some rights to common pasture but he may have exceeded his stint (allowance). He did not necessarily have any rights to land. (*A bad autumn for the family, with the court case against son Gervase also in process, Bob*). He appeared once in the Act books when he acted as compurgator (character witness) for Robert Abbotte of Bradmore who was charged with incontinence with Anne Dickinson in October 1612. Richard was a churchwarden in 1614.

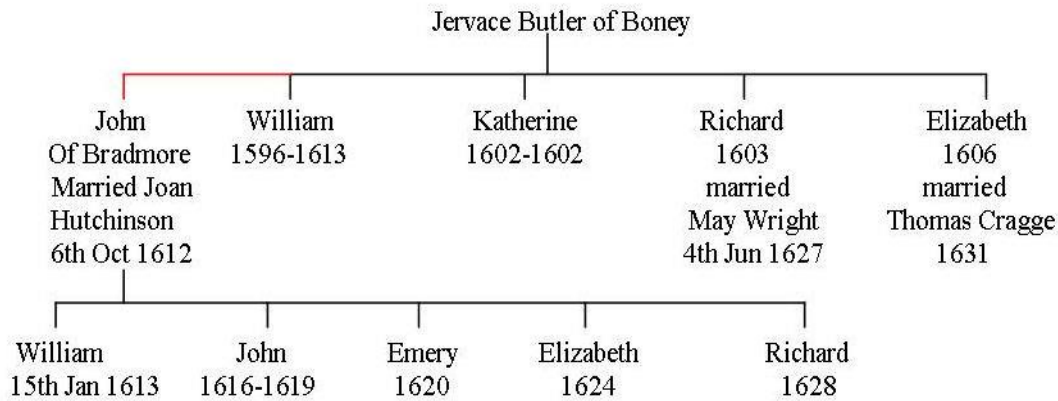
Richard died in January 1628 leaving a will he had made the previous November. He was reasonably well off leaving cash bequests amounting to nine pounds three shillings. He may have been a money lender in a small way as three people owed him money – William Sareson and Thomas Lovett of Bradmore 53s. 9d. between them, and William Bond 19s “for half a carte due next Christmas”. Overall, Gervase's father Richard appears then to have been quite a well known member of the community if not particularly affluent. He did not long survive the death of his son.

We know less about Gervase who died before. He was unmarried at the time of the court case and was probably about 28 years old. A year later he married Jane Bond almost certainly related to the churchwarden who presented them. Gervase was married for eight years until his death in 1627. He left four children to whom his father bequested 20s. each “to be put forth for increase until legal age”, with 5s. each when they reached that age.

The Goulding family first appears in the village registers in 1581 so again this is a well-established village family in 1618. After Gervase died in 1627, nothing further appears in the parish registers concerning his young children. But there were other Gouldings in nearby villages at least two described as yeomen so perhaps they moved elsewhere. Thomas Goulding of Bradmore had ten children between 1666 and 1683. He appears in the 1676 Hearth Tax Returns with two hearths. But again after his death in 1684, no further Gouldings appear in the village registers.

### **John Butler**

**John Butler** was the son of Jervace Butler of Boney [Bunny]. Jervace enters the records in 1591 when he was required by the church courts to do penance for fornication with Joan Parre, but he did not certify that he had done so. The Butlers appear to have moved to the parish at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and four children are recorded as being christened in Bunny. John may have been born before the move to the parish. John married Joan Hutchinson in 1612 and would have had two children at the time of the court case, with a further three born subsequently. He was probably in his late 20's at the time of the court case. Nothing is known of his family's status.



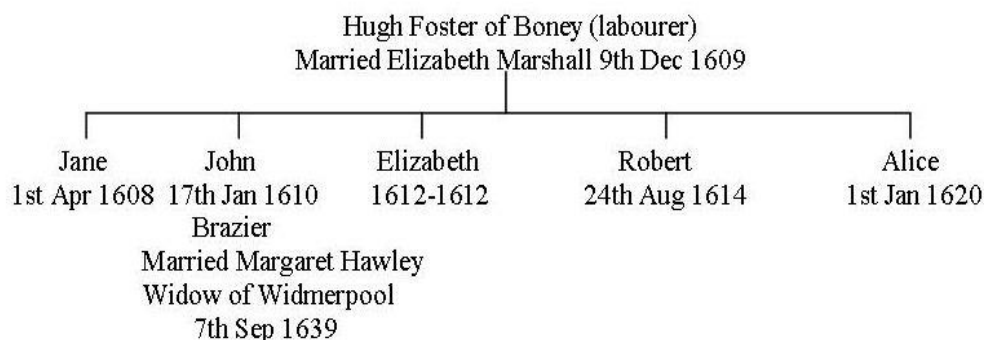
Although John's children don't appear again in the parish records, the descendants of John's brother Richard, born in 1603, continued in the village until the 1800s. So, in the 1642 Protestation Returns there are four Butler's – Emery, John, Richard and William and the Butler name appears in 1676 in the Hearth Tax returns when Gervase of Bunny has one hearth. From this it appears that at least one dancer and his son survived more than 20 years after the court case in the village.

### Hugh Foster

**Hugh Foster** took out a marriage licence on December 8<sup>th</sup> 1604 and married Elizabeth Marshall the next day. At that time he came from Boney but in 1617 and 1620 a Hugh Foster was the manorial 'neatherd' (in charge of the cows) for Bradmore. If this is the right Hugh, he would have had four children by the time of the court case and would have been in his 30's, probably late 30's. In 1620 he was noted as a tenant and member of the manorial jury at Bradmore.

In 1634 a Hugh Foster was presented at the manorial court of Boney as 'a common fisherman' and 'he caught fish in the water called Boney Brook against the rule and made dams and prevented the course of the water' he along with two others, was amerced 3s. 4d.

There is a Robert Forster in the 1642 Protestation Returns. This may be Hugh's son, who by then would have been 28. No Fosters are found in the Hearth Tax Returns of 1676 for the parish. Several generations later, however, Robert Foster of Bradmore and Mary Bell were married at nearby Keyworth in 1802.



### Harrold Maples

**Harrold Maples** married Mary Warde of Bradmore in November 1615. The first record of a Maples in the manorial records was in October 1618 when Herod Maples was presented to



Harrold/Harold died before his second child was born (the child dying soon after its birth) and his wife probably remarried in 1625, to George Sills.

Neither Harold's wife's family (Warde) nor the one she later married into appear to have been of any consequence in the parish, although George Sills of Bradmore was churchwarden in 1642.

Harold Maples

William 1617-80      Robert b1619      Bridget 1621      Gervis 1624-4

M Anne d1682      m Jean Chambers 1656

Anne 1655      William da      Richard      Anne      Robert

Mary 1655      1659-80      b1663      b1665      1668-82      b1672

**Richard Roberts** was born in Bradmore in 1579 and died soon after the court case in 1619, aged about 40. He had three brothers born in Bradmore but only one, George, may have survived into adulthood. George was born in 1576 and died in 1632, aged about 56. No births with the Roberts surname were recorded in Bradmore after Richard's. An Anne Roberts died in Bradmore in 1609. Richard Robert's life is rather obscure. He could have been an apprentice, domestic servant or living-in labourer. There were others with the same surname in neighbouring Bunny, including a Richard Roberts whose daughter Isabel was born in 1606, and in Costock. No Roberts appear in the 1641 Protestation returns.

## 44

surname is relatively uncommon in the region, but in Bunny in the period around the court case the registers record the deaths of Robert Lees (married 1566, died 1611), Agnes (?) Lees died 1613, Richard Lees married 1576 and died 1616, and his wife Alice who died in 1617. Also a Thomas Lees is recorded in the 1641 survey in Bunny/ Bradmore. So Ralph may well have had relatives in the village.

### **Anthony Trewman/ Antonie Truman**

Anthony Trewman was also a musician, again from a neighbouring village. The Registers for Ruddington go back only to 1653 so are of little help. The surname does not occur in Bradmore at this time, though there appears to be a Henry Thurman married in Bunny in 1575.

### **Edward Cresswell**

Edward Cresswell appears to have been very similar in age and family circumstances to Hugh Longley, Hugh Foster, Gervase Goulding, John Butler and Harold Maples, all of whom had young children born just before or in the 1620s immediately following the case. Edward Cresswell married Joyce Dickinson on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1618. Their daughter Elizabeth was born in Bradmore in 1620. In the Protestation Returns for Bunny/ Bradmore in 1641, Edward Cresswell and John Cresswell are named. Alice Cresswell was married there in 1599, so Edward may be from an established local family.

### **Humphrey Garner**

Humphrey Garner was cited separately from the other Bradmore dancers. His connection with Bradmore seems sparse. An Ann Garner of Bradmore married Richard Sarson in 1631 and could possibly be a descendant.



## Morris in the Media – Two cuttings

### Mac McCoig

Some cuttings have come into my possession which I think bear reproducing in The Morris Dancer. It is hoped that this will make interesting reading.

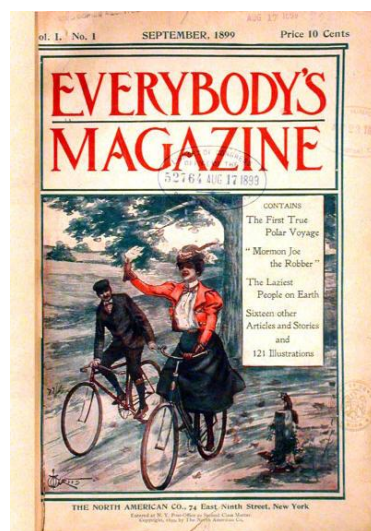
My first cutting is taken from 'Ye May-daye Festeval' [sic] by Philip Hemery, with photographs by Henry Taunt, published in The Royal Magazine (1899), pages 93 – 94.

Philip Hemery was a writer of short stories in popular magazines of the time, including The Royal Magazine, Everybody's Magazine (US) and Pearson's Magazine (US).

Henry Taunt (1842 – 1922) was one of England's most prolific Victorian photographers. Working mainly in Oxford and the surrounding area his pictures are a fantastic documentary record of the life and times of a bygone era. However, his favourite subject was the River Thames and this is reflected in his many incredibly beautiful images. At the same time, Taunt was making detailed maps of the Thames, as well as meeting local people, the boathouse owners, innkeepers and fishermen so that he could include them all in his guides. (Information: <http://henrytaunt.co.uk/home.htm>)



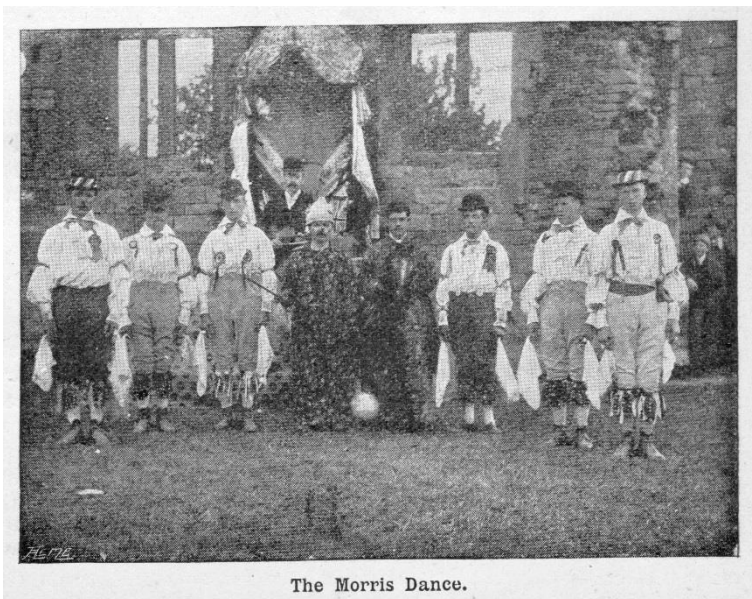
Henry Taunt and lady



*'The Morrice, or Morris dance, which Robin Hood and his merry men were wont to perform, is supposed to be the nearest our English speech could get to Moorish, for from the Moors the dance comes.'*

*Although the gentlemen in "billy-cocks" in the photograph may not present the appearance of being such, neither do they very likely know it themselves, they are, nevertheless, supposed to be counterfeit presentments of Robin Hood and his archers; Robin Hood having become to be considered inaugurator of the May-day revels, perhaps on account of his sylvan arts and prowess as a bowman.*

*The Morris dancers of Campden are not so much remarkable for grace of movement as for their indefatigability. The man in the peaked cap drives the "horse" beside him, to an accompaniment of many lusty blows from the bladder he carries in his left hand. The six stalwart yokels go through the somewhat rudimentary dances, the pads of bells at their knees playing a jingly accompaniment as they gyrate.*



*The fandango, from which the dance comes, the original of the Morris dance, is one of the very oldest dances in existence. It comes originally from Spain, from the words meaning to dance to the accompaniment of guitar or castanets, though it is to be feared that the Morris dancers of Campden are not aware of the origin of their gambols. In mediaeval times the Morris dance must have been of quaint and graceful beauty, imbued more or less with the warmth and spontaneous "abandon" of its sunny southern exponents. Now it is to be feared they are conspicuous more by reason of a sturdy, uncompromisingly English love of horse-play.'*

It is worth noting in this context that the Victorians were adept at creating the theatre of 'olde England' and dressing up their inventions as traditional antiquities, and this is no exception. Writing with Victorian confidence, the apparent 'expert' words of Hemery do not bear close scrutiny then or now.

It is interesting to compare the above picture of the 'Morris Dancers of Campden' with the well-known 1896 photo of the Campden Morris Men, which shows a completely different set of dancers, with slightly different kit. Are the men shown in the 1899 article appearing at a Campden May-day festival a different side altogether and not the Campden men? A visit to the Shakespeare Morris Men's web site quickly reveals the answer. The Bidford Shakespearian Morris Men appeared at a 'Grand Floral Parade and Fete' in Chipping Campden on Whit Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May 1896.

The Campden Morris Men's web site adds further detail: *'During the mid-1890s there was a conscious effort to attract tourists to Campden. One manner by which this was achieved was to organise spectacular fetes, with parade and processions, and all manner of 'Olde English' sports and pastimes. In 1896 the organisers hired the Shakespearian Bidford Morris Dancers to come over and perform at the Whit Monday Grand Floral Fete. Photographs taken that day show that there was also a Campden side present, dressed in morris dancing kit,*



The Campden Morris Men 1896. H Taunt

*with a musician, a fool and a spare man. The musician was Denis Hathaway, the fool was his father-in-law William Taylor, and one of the dancers was his brother-in-law, another William Taylor. I would like to suggest that this was probably the first appearance of a 'new' Campden side. If they had already been in existence why did the organisers import the Bidford dancers? Denis Hathaway was not a native of Campden: he was born at Condicote about 1867 and had only recently moved there. He had no recorded prior connection with morris dancing, beyond the fact that he remembered seeing the Longborough dancers at Stow and elsewhere when he was younger. It was details of the dances performed by these men, plus those remembered by his grandfather-in-*

law Thomas Veale, that he amalgamated to create what was essentially a completely new dance form.'



The Bidford Morris taken by H Taunt 1896 and reproduced on the Shakespeare Morris Web Site and clearly a sister photo to the one used by Hemery. The men are pictured next to the remains of old Campden House, known locally as 'The Ruins'. The names of the men are all documented, though the important one for the current Campden dancers is the musician Denis Hathaway, who had shared some of the Campden tunes and a version of the dances (demonstrated by a boys side) with Cecil Sharpe on his visits to Campden. His son Bert and his grandson Alf kept the music alive for the Campden men until recently when Alf passed away. *(Information kindly supplied to me by Andy Doran of the Campden Morris Men)*

My second cutting is from the Wolverhampton Chronicle 22 June 1910:

#### *'THE MORRIS DANCE*

#### *TO BE REVIVED IN WOLVERHAMPTON TODAY*

*At the present time in various parts of the country, the Morris dance, originally performed on the village green, is very much to the fore, thanks in a great measure to Mr Cecil Sharp and Mr Herbert McIlwaine, who have spent many years collecting the fifteen or more varieties, with their tunes, in remote country places. There is to be a revival of the dance by some young men associated with Christ Church, Wolverhampton, at a garden fete to be held to-day (Wednesday) at Merridale Grove. They have been under the able tuition of Miss Flewker, and we understand that they will be present.*

#### *THE REAL MORRIS,*

*and not the childish fakes which are not infrequently described as the genuine article. The dance, which was a great favourite in England as far back as the sixteenth century, is not particularly easy to learn by those who have never seen it, but is a merry movement, though at times exhausting, and if the rhythm is properly kept the intricate figures are graceful and reveal unexpected dignity. It has been argued that the Morris dance is an English national dance; but it was probably introduced into this country by dancers from Spain or France, for in the earlier allusions to it in English it is sometimes called the Morisco and sometimes the Morrice or Morisk. Later on we learn that the*

#### *TWO PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS*

*in the dance represent Robin Hood and Maid Marian, and apparently they were decked out very gaily indeed. There were also a friar, a minstrel, and a fool. In course of time the hobby-horse was introduced. It was a light frame of wickerwork made up to represent the head and body of a small horse, and the fun began when the hidden performer began to caper and cavort about, and*



*burlesque the antics of a restive nag. The hobby-horse, however, except at Abbot's Bromley, seems to have died out. In the Kingston accounts of the 29<sup>th</sup> of Henry VIII, the wardrobe of the Morrice dancers then in the custody of the churchwardens is thus enumerated: "A fryer's cote of russet, and tyrtyle weltyd with rod cloth, a Mowren's (Moor's) cote of white fustian, spangled, and two gryne saten cotes, and disarddes cote of cotton, and six payre of garters with belles." It may be mentioned that the costumes to be worn on Wednesday have been made after*

### THE FASHION OF THE DANCERS

*formerly preserved in the window of an ancient mansion at Betley, in this county. Each figure was in a separate panel or compartment. Maid Marian was dressed in a rich costume of Henry VIII period, and was supposed to represent the goddess Flora of the Roman festival; Robin Hood appeared as her lover. An ecclesiastic, supposed to be Friar Tuck, was included among the characters, his habit denoting him to be of the Grey Friars. The fool with his cock's comb and bauble, the tabourer with his tabor and pipe, and the hobby horse are also illustrated. The Morris dance was very popular in the reign of James I, and as showing the English love for those performances, it may be remembered that in Henry V, the Dauphin of France, when urged to make preparations against the English says:-*

*And let us do it with no show of fear,  
No! with no more than if we heard that England  
Were busied with a Whitsun Morris Dance.'*

I have not come across any other reference to Morris dancers performing in costumes taken from the Betley window. I can only wonder what Sharp thought about that. I suspect he would not have been impressed.

Frustratingly, Sharp kept no diary at this time and McIlwaine's papers, if any, are unavailable. At that time (1910), there was just one family of Flewkers in Wolverhampton and I am therefore assuming that the Miss Flewker referred to was either Edith (b 1871), Ethel (b 1872) or Gertrude (b 1875), daughters to William and Elizabeth Flewker. William was a prominent and successful lawyer in Wolverhampton at that time. I can find no reference to Miss Flewker being associated with any local club or association in Wolverhampton. Therefore, with no first name for Miss Flewker, no supporting information and no other lines of enquiry to follow, the trail runs out. If anyone has more information, do contact me.





**Book Review: Wassailing: Reawakening an Ancient Folk Custom. By Colin Cater and Karen Cater. Ipswich: The Five Castles Press, Hedingham Fair, 2013. 246 pp (pbk) ISBN: 978-0-9556475-5-0**

Colin and Karen Cater are clearly devoted to their subject and this comes across in both the enthusiasm of the text and the lavish artwork.

The book is divided into two parts and a series of appendices. Part one covers the history of the tradition. It opens with a chapter which sets the rest of the book in the context of the authors' approach to the study and performance of Wassailing. This scene-setting is useful in understanding the authors' philosophical standpoint and how they apply this to their task: 'We also wanted a recognisable basis in social theory that would reflect our world view.' It is also useful in that if one disagrees with this approach, one can choose not to read the rest of the book; an honest, if risky strategy.

Mythology can become a chief distracting ingredient of any folk history and Wassailing has not been immune from the work of the romantic embellisher's pen. 'Pagan origins' is an easy stamp to place on traditions with ancient roots but wisely, the Caters are not tempted by the populist's need to take a stance on this, although they are clear on the spiritual element of the Wassail ceremony.

The second and third chapters cover a brief history of this fascinating tradition. For me, the nine pages in chapter two including pictures, served only to whet my appetite for more about the ancient origins. I suspect that this subject would benefit from the full scrutiny of a PhD study of primary sources (I cannot find any book-length texts that concentrate solely on the history of Wassailing – but correct me if I'm wrong!). The few scattered sources re-quoted by the authors give a frustratingly brief view of the origins of the Wassail and its aspects: the toast (both varieties!), the apple, the bowl, the drink, the tree and the visiting, etc. In a paper presented at the Oxford Food Symposium in July 2011: 'A History of the Wassail Bowl – from Pagan Brew to Christian Custard', Joanna Crosby tackles the topic from a culinary tangent and sheds a little more light on the role of the apple (as food and symbol) in the custom. This example demonstrates that there remains much more to be learned about the history of Wassailing and its many aspects.

The historical sources quoted by the authors are treated with equal weight and veracity, however a word of caution may have been appropriate. The earliest such, for example, is quoted from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* (c1140). A contemporary of Geoffrey's, a fellow monk, William of Newburgh, accused Geoffrey of 'the most ridiculous fictions' which he 'impertinently and impudently falsifies in every respect'. The *History* is, in fact, a mixture of bona fide material, legends, folk stories and invention, but despite this remains a source for writers to this day.

The third chapter covers the Wassail tradition history in its geographical setting and is very comprehensive and informative, mostly covering the last 200 years.

Part two studies all aspects of the revival of the tradition. Chapter four makes a compelling argument for the need to 'reawaken' the Wassail as a community tradition, whether pagan, Christian or just for fun. Chapter five establishes the role of Morris sides in the revival and looks at orchard Wassails and pub Wassails, with details on where to find them. Chapter six studies the more commercial aspects of the tradition: cider makers exploiting the tradition as a visitor attraction? Why not?

Chapter seven explores 'whether places still contribute to the nature and spirit of Wassails' and looks at the significance of location. I was convinced that 'place' holds a great significance for the Wassail ceremony, but less persuaded, as the authors are, that 'the Wassail also shapes the community and the Place'. Certainly, the Wassail will bring parts of a community together, but there will be those in any community where such traditions take place who find the whole thing

tedious and irrelevant. For example, the greater part of the crowd watching the Horns arrive in the centre of Abbots Bromley at the end of their day's tour are not from the village. I wish it were not so and hope that this book will serve to stir further interest in this wonderful tradition.

Chapter eight looks at Wassailing into the future and gives examples and pointers to potential organisers. Chapter nine, a postscript, in which the authors found that the movement was growing (recording 226 ceremonies in 2013) and concluding that the revival was driven largely by Morris sides and community orchards but there are exceptions to this which have wider community support.

The Appendices are a collection of Wassailing songs and recipes. This is followed by a list of Wassail ceremonies and where to find them, with contact details, where these are available.

All in all, the authors have produced a remarkably comprehensive journey round the Wassail tradition, from early origins to current performances. This book is not only the story of what, when and where but also a handbook for anyone who wants to revive or create their own local event. The authors have produced a book which will stand as a singular reference on the subject for many years to come.

Mac McCoig

**Book Review: Robin Hood. Myth, history and culture. Nick Rennison. Pocket Essentials. ISBN: 978-1-84243-247-1 160pp (pbk) £7.99**

The challenge for Morris is maintaining the chain that links the English folk revival back to its roots. How do we do this when the origins of folk dance and song are obscured by the mist of ages?

In a neat little book which covers every possible aspect of Robin Hood, from the ballads to Kevin Costner, there is one chapter, Robin in the May Games, which is particularly useful. With an incredible eye for detail, Rennison gives us some lovely little snippets of information which provide a real window on life in Tudor England and beyond.

We can go back to 1427, a time before professional theatre, when the city of Exeter gave a grant of 20d to players 'playing the game of Robin Hood'. There are several references like this from around the country and even Edinburgh. Perhaps we could try convincing our local councils that it is traditional for towns and cities to support May Day mummer's plays!

It's a wonderful tradition. Players processed through towns and villages with Maid Marion inevitably played by a man in drag, performing and collecting money as they went.

There is evidence that Henry VIII himself together with a band of earls and nobleman, dressed as Robin Hood for May Day.

As Protestant views took hold the Church tried, unsuccessfully, to ban the playing of Robin Hood. There is even a mention of rural folk indulging in a little mumming only three years after the execution of Charles I, much to the confusion of overseas visitors. Well, some aspects of English folk traditions stand the test of time.

If you feel inspired to add a Robin Hood play to your repertoire of May Day revels, then this could be a good place to start.

Fiona Dowson

**Book Review: Rapper: History of the miners' sword dance in North-East England. Phil Heaton Published by the English Folk Dance and Song Society. ISBN-13: 978-0-854182-12-1**

Price: £12 for the book or £23 including the DVDs, plus P&P

This is the first major work devoted to rapper sword dancing. Phil Heaton has put together a book covering the history of the dance (so far as it is known), and the people and teams who have performed it in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. It is accompanied by a DVD which includes some archive film and recent performances by some of this country's leading teams. There is also a DVD ROM which includes profiles of all known rapper teams, past and present, including teams from abroad. These profiles are often accompanied by photos and sometimes by a video of the team dancing. The DVDs were compiled by Chris Metherell of Garland Films.

Phil Heaton has been a member of several teams including the Dolphin Morris Men, Sallyport Sword, High Spen Blue Diamonds, Redcar Sword, Black Cap and latterly Stone Monkey. He was the organiser of the series of events held in Derby in the 1980s known as "Dancing England", which featured all of our traditional dances. Dancing England is no more but it led to the establishment of the "Dancing England Rapper Tournament" which is held every year and draws teams from all over the UK and abroad. "Dert", as it is known, has been a major factor in raising the standard of rapper sword dancing and increasing its popularity especially among younger dancers. Phil was awarded the gold badge of the English Folk Dance and Song Society for his work in promoting rapper and improving the standard of dance. He conceived the idea of the "Sword Dance Union", an organisation which promotes both rapper and longsword dancing. Chris Metherell is a step dancer and former member of the High Spen Blue Diamonds, a traditional rapper team from Durham. He is also the Chairman of the Morris Ring's Archive Group.

The book covers what is known of the history of sword dancing in North East England and the teams which are known to have existed in Northumberland and Durham. A chapter is devoted to the story of the Newcastle Kingsmen and the key role they played in the survival and development of rapper after the Second World War. This chapter was written by John Asher, a member of the team. There is also a chapter on the development of rapper in the USA written by Rhett Krause, an American dancer. There are appendices covering: music, steps, dance notations and the history of sword making.

The chapter on sword dancing after the Second World War will be of particular interest to members of the Morris Ring. During the 1950s and 1960s there were a number of Morris Ring meetings held in Northumberland and Durham at which rapper dancing figured prominently. A major influence at this time was Alan Brown who was Squire of the Morris Ring in the period 1966-1968. He was one of the '49ers who formed the King's College Morris Men which became the Newcastle Kingsmen. In 1955 he went on to form the Monkseaton Morris Men. In 1968 he convened an instructional at Cecil Sharp House aimed at encouraging Morris Ring teams which danced rapper to "do it right". He was concerned that teams not from the North East would make a poor show of the pitman's dance.

The book is well written, the material is well organised and it is a pleasure to read. It is printed on glossy paper to give the best reproduction of the many black and white photos from the archives. The book and the accompanying DVD's will be of enormous interest to anyone with an interest in rapper as they bring together just about everything which is known about the dance.

Brian Tasker

