

THE DOMMETT FILM ARCHIVE

It was started on Saturday 4 August 1962 and is now over 11 miles long and would take 74 hrs 40 min to watch. Advancing technology has led to 2 miles of Regular 8mm (1962-75) and 9 miles of Super 8mm (1976-84) and to being on the 5th camera and 2nd projector.

There is 30h30m of Cotswold morris, about half is of Cotswold sides, Bampton (4h), other traditional sides (2h35m), and Village revivals (7hrs). Material exists for 23 traditions plus Winster and Lichfield. The attempt was made to record good or interesting interpretations of each tradition. However the sides seen were a personal selection and many good sides have been missed. Not all traditions have been covered in depth and there are noticeable holes in Bledington, Fieldtown and Sharp's version of Ilmington. Shots exist of 100 men's sides including USA and one South African visiting sides. 36 team's repertoires have been examined in depth. 11 per cent of the Cotswold material is danced by women's sides. There are 30 sides seen of which 10 have been filmed in detail including a visiting USA side and the traditional Great Wishford group.

There is 19hr of North West and Garland dancing. This covers 27 men's sides, 11 in detail and 32 women's sides, 20 in detail. 60 per cent is of women's sides or mixed teams. dances have been recorded including 20 garland dances, some dances several times by different teams. Individual sides interpret these dances much more freely than their Cotswold counterparts and it is difficult to distinguish between collected dances, interpretations or inventions. The popular dances appear to be Knutsford (8 records), Runcorn, Hepple, Hindley and Ashton (6 records of each) but the variation in performance is very large. The collection includes the originals of some of the continental garland dances seen at English Festivals. Some inventive Cotswold material has been recorded for example the traditions by Chelmsford, Chingford, Headcorn and Llaregyb (Cardiff) and many individual dances from other teams. Sides have also invented within old traditions as has been found in taking an in depth look at how Ascott is danced by different teams. Most variation appears within the Border Morris #12:5m covering 22 sides, 5 of them women's, with 9 repertoires covered in detail.

The 8 hours of Miscellaneous film cover topics like Sword, foreign teams at Festivals, for example the Albert Hall and Sidmouth, silent step dancing, horses, dragons, mummers, local school May Days, Stave dances, Molly Dances and a young girl who for two years was the champion baccapipes dancer at the Portsmouth Arts Festival.

The future is hoped to include copying to video for easy access by others, the contacting of other collections, no matter how small and getting others to record dances. Foreign dances are so seldom seen that we need records of dances similar to the UK traditions. I would like to cover non-traditional Bampton, Welsh morris and more Cheshire. What about someone working on the Carnival Morris?