MY LORD OF SHERBORNE'S JIG

The collectors found that this jig,although not a favourite,was widely known around Stow being remembered by dancers from Sherborne,Longborough and Lower Swell, Bledington,Oddington and Shipton.Fiddler Mason gave a version of Lumps of Plum Pudding for this title.Its fame was widespread enough for Jinky Wells' Flowers of Edinburgh jig to be taken for it,because of the kneeling element or perhaps the Ascott Flowers jig was the same? The tune was known as far away as Headington Quarry. Its age is impossible to guess - the peerage was created in the late 18th cent - but this may only account for one local title.It has steps in 6/4,the galliard rhythm,but so many galliard steps are known that it is suprising that similarities can be found.One can not generalise about survivals on the evidence of only one dance.The Cotswold source will remain unknown till some literary evidence appears.The jig is not structured as a galliard.It is usually sets of 3 or 4 "capers" in 6/4 time,each set different,and each set preceded by a Foot-up.This is similar only to the common form of Shepherd's Hey,which is believed,with no evidence,to be a very old dance.

Musically there are 6 beats to a "caper" instead of the usual Cotswold morris 4, but really this is only 5 steps when the actual time for the caper is allowed.Because a dancer can only stay off the ground so long in a caper,this suggests that the 6 beats occur at such a pace that the spring takes just as long as in a 4 beat sequence.Thus,

6/4   1 2 3 4 5 6
      . . . . Ω .   musically

4/4   x x x Ω x
      1 2 3 4

It can not quite match.

(Ω = spring as G#mB)

The only real indications of steps is at Sherborne(Bacon p 290).Even then the mss source is full of alternatives.Thus,

(a) / x x x / t kneel - /; (b) / l r l / R   l/; (c) /l rH l / R   l / or with the more normal change of foot / l rH r / L   r l/ or alternatively / l rH rH / R   l /.

The fact that the spring occupies two beats of the 6 means that it allows only one caper not two.At Longborough (Bacon p262) it is suggested that the first "caper" was / x x x / kneel - kneel / so by analogy the others are, / x x x / L   r/ and /rtb t r / L   r / although it does not take much to stretch the tune to make it two plain capers.The same arguement extends to Bledington and Oddington. It should be noted that the / x x x / L   r/ gets very close to the normal caper described by the Young Bledington side.There is reason to believe that in the 1890's there was only one side in the area, drawing on all the villages.

But what does one make of the dance at Headington? It was called by Trafford "Shepherd's Heel and Toe".The tune is given here along with that from Bledington and Shipton-on-Stour.

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