

THE FILKINS MORRIS

Dear Editor,

The article "Morris Dancing at Filkins" (EDS Spring 82) includes some interesting comments. The Filkins galley could have always been on the left foot as at Oddington. Based on the tune list deposited in the Vaughan Williams library of 33 teams of which about 12 lists are very full, Cuckoo's Nest is also found at Badby, Blackwell, Brackley, Bucknell, Field Assarts and Headington which makes it one of the universal tunes. Hey Diddle Diddle includes some Bonny Green versions and is found at Bidford, Bucknell and Headington, possibly Blackwell and Brackley and perhaps Brailes ("Hey Away" of Bledington) and perhaps even Field Assarts ("The Hay Morris"). Bobby and Joan occurs at Badby and the title at Brackley and Headington and it is found in tunebooks so it also is probably a widespread tune. One must beware of evidence based on tune titles without examination of the tune. For example "Old Woman Tossed Up" at Fieldtown is a William and Nancy tune. Also there are three different forms for Maid of the Mill one of which is the Gallant Hussar family. The "feel" of tunes and "internal musical evidence" is entirely subjective, one has only to consider the variety of movements fitted to a particular tune or the variety of interpretation of one dance within the many revival clubs. Examination of the Filkins tunes shows many minims, are these to be taken as pauses or jumps, or just the singing style of the informant?

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PS. Harry Taylor of Longborough told Sharp, (Field Notes 1910 I)

"Hey Diddle Diddle, my backside you may kiss,
And away goes Longborough Morris"
but it became "face" in the written up ms!