

## MORRIS REELS

# OTHER MORRIS

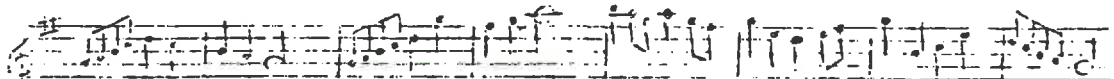
One must not judge all morris by the yardstick of the Cotswold dances which after all is only one flower on the folk tree. Any custom is only as elaborate as necessary to fill the need which occasions it in its community. The emphasis may be different. Simplicity of step may be compensated by variety of figure from dance to dance, or by elaboration of costume even to the point of fancy dress, or by increase in the impressiveness of the noise either through using a band or percussion instruments such as tambourines and bones. This compensation should be borne in mind in presenting other morris to the morris world or to the public.

The intrusion of country dance elements into the morris outside the Cotswolds is largely a myth. Molly dancing includes triple minor longways done as whole sets and two of the Winsters dances are recognisably community dances but in general the morris lacks the physical contact, the partner response and the figure movements (particularly the progression) of the social dance. It is the experience of most collectors that ordinary people equate morris and country dance music and movements - this and an ignorance of the existing traditions - probably led to the idea.

## MORRIS REELS

STEEPLE CLAYDEN - Buckinghamshire

"OLD MOTHER OXFORD"



Only tune played by Inwood - "Old Mother Oxford".

Clapping Dance - start in line facing in pairs 1-2, 3-4, 5-6.

Dance a straight hey, called a "double" ending up as at start.

Normal morris step - Inwood danced with great vitality & spring for a man of 77, throwing his legs further & therefore higher than morris man are used to do & keeping them very nearly straight though hip joints wonderfully loose & flexible.

Then they clapped, in the usual manner as in Shepherd's Hey or None So Pretty. After second "double" ended 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6. 1 & 6 being neutral. Dance continues ad lib.

Stick Dance - sometimes used sticks instead of clapping. Sharp remarked that it was apparently very like the morris at Ludlow & White Ladies Aston.

HEADINGTON QUARRY - Oxfordshire

Kimber's tune for the Morris Reel he called "Bold Huzzar". He also used a version of "Soldier's Joy". No handkerchiefs used.

Travelling step - a quiet morris step based on 3 running steps & a hop. Ordinary hand movements, without handkerchiefs, rather milder than usual for Headington.

Reel step - it is similar to the stationary "polka" step of Morpeth Rant & other country dances. On the first beat of a bar the ball (or heel) of the free foot is tapped on the ground in front of the other foot. Schofield remarked that the toe was well turned out as it is tapped. Sharp noted that the legs were well crossed & the toe of the front foot well pointed. In the reel part the arms are "a Kimbo" (not Swedish fashion) hands on hips, fingers to the front. "For you see you dance with your waist, not anything else".

Other Morris 2.

Reel for Six:- stand all 6 facing up - no once to self. Continuous reel twice through, started progressively by tops casting out & going behind 2nd cu. & between 3rd. (16 bars) Partners face & step (8 bars) Partners change places passing by the right using the same reel step. Hey as before twice through on other side (16 bars) Partners face & reel step with toes again (8 bars) Partners change back as before using reel step with toes (8 bars) Repeat all - using heel in the reel stepping. End with a final hey done once & all-up

Reel for Four:- Stand in line facing up. When music starts Nos. 1 & 3 cast to their left and start the hey-for-four by passing 2 & 4 by the left. Two complete heys to get back to place - end 1 facing 2, 3 facing 4. (16 bars) Reel with toes (8 bars) in the 8th bar 2 & 3 change places by casting to the right. Next 8 bars 1 facing 3 etc. Next hey started by 1 & 3, 2 & 4 passing by the right. In next reel with toes 2 & 3 again cast to right in bar 8 to places. Then repeat heys & reel with heels. End with single hey & jump all facing up.

Reel for Three:- Hey for three - No. 1 casts to the left & passes 2 by the left. No. 1 faces down & 3 faces up throughout the reel stepping while No. 1 first faces No. 1 & in bar 8 turns to face No. 3. Second hey starts by 2 passing 3 by the right. In the next reel stepping 2 faces 3 first & then No. 1 & next hey starts 1 & 2 pass by right. Dance ends with single hey & all face up.

UPTON STODSEBURY - Worcs.

A three handed reel with heys & stick tapping. Did some kind of stepping throughout the dance. Stick tapping - middle man tapped alternately with the men on either side of him.

MITCHELDEAN/BROMSBORROW HEATH

tunes - at Mitcheldean - Cock O' the North, Flowers of Edinburgh  
- at Bromsborrow - 3 handed reel (E.D. & S. Sept. 1959 p 94)

MRS. B. HILL. 1950



sticks - about 30" long & stout.

Stick Dance - start 1-2, 3-4, 5-6. facing in one line in pairs. Shoulder sticks & walk or "march" a complete reel to first part of tune played twice (16 bars) End facing in pairs as at start - then caper vigorously on alternate feet on the spot - clashing sticks at the top, alternately forehand & backhand, on each caver for the second part of the tune played once only (8 bars). This done ad lib to go getting faster. The leader called "off" for the reel & "set" for the clashing.

Stepping Dance - as stick dance in the hey. At Mitcheldean stepping just replaced sticks. At Bromsborrow stepping done facing partner for 8 bars & then repeated with partners with backs to each other (8 bars)