

MORRIS, THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

MORRIS COSTUME

and the gender issue

given by Roy Dommett at

Cecil Sharp House, London, Saturday 16th April 1994

TRADITIONAL?

We can all recognise morris dancers

Appearance is a function of era

**Content of the morris depends on
its history**



WEEKENDERS

Weekends and public holidays

HOLIDAYMAKERS AND FAMILIES

Monthly and Seasonal Returns
Family and Monthly
Family Returns

STUDENTS

Railcards

BUSINESS TRAVELLERS

Season tickets
Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly and Annual

DAY TRIPPERS

Awaydays and other local
off-peak fares

SENIOR CITIZENS

Railcards

REGULAR TRAVELLERS

Season tickets -
Weekly, Monthly,
Quarterly and Annual

TYPES INSTANTLY RECOGNISABLE

Septima ymago.



John Foxton's Liber Cosmographiae 1408.
The short pleated houpelande hardly covers
what Chaucer describes as 'the shameful privee
membres', which are tightly covered by close-fitting
hose

BEFORE HANDKERCHIEFS



A landsknecht and a woman 1516.

ELABORATE MALE COSTUME



Unknown man c. 1588.



The countryman of the early nineteenth century. The drover, in white coat, yellow waistcoat, red and white spotted handkerchief, blue and white striped stockings, and badge on left arm.

MEN'S COSTUME

SHIRT

HAND MADE - PLEATED

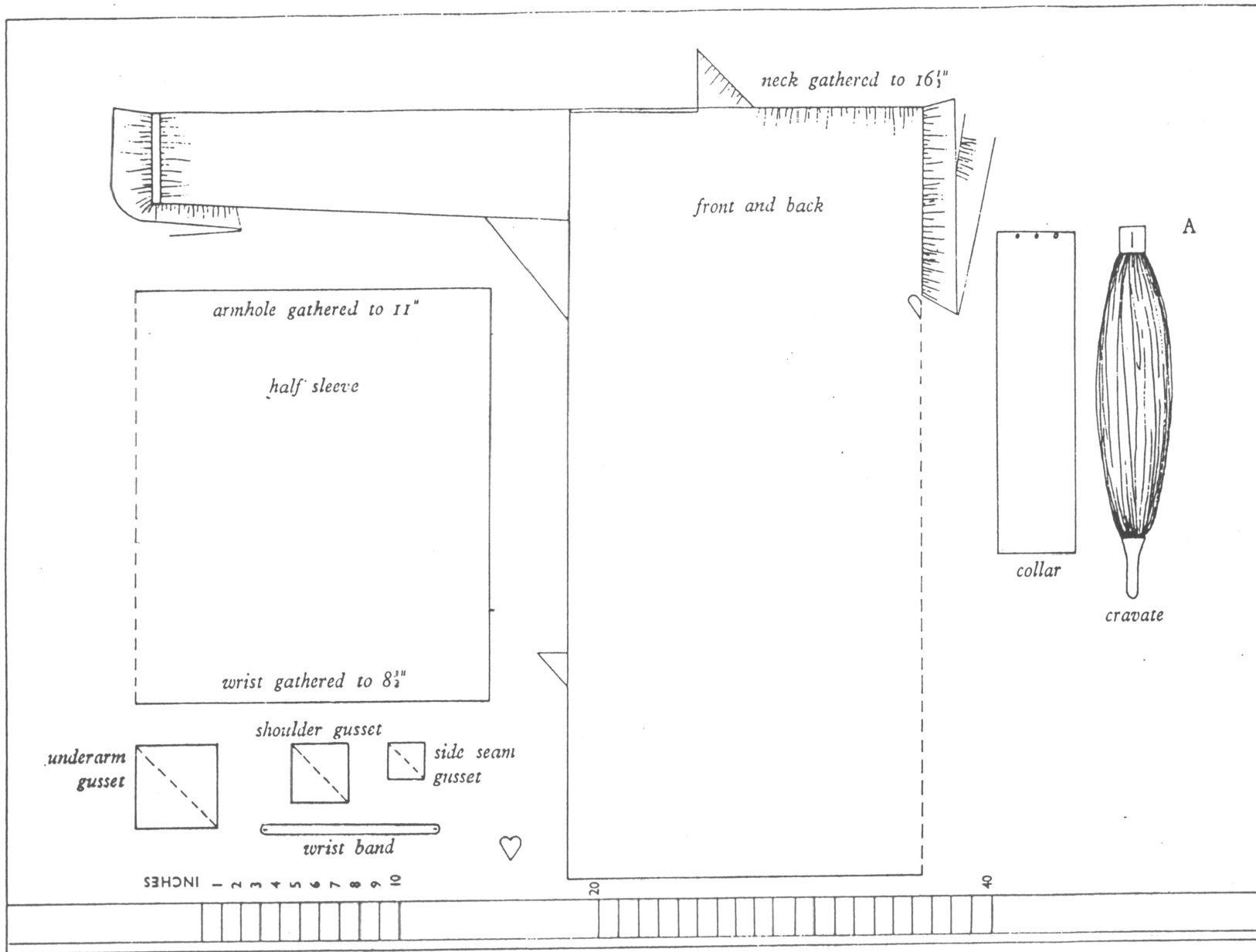
PASS THROUGH A WEDDING RING

WEAR TWO - TO MOP UP SWEAT

BREECHES or TROUSERS

WHITE BY WASH OUT DYE

DEPENDS ON PERIOD



SHIRT 1700-1810.

TROUSERS

before 1555 LONGHOSE (tights)

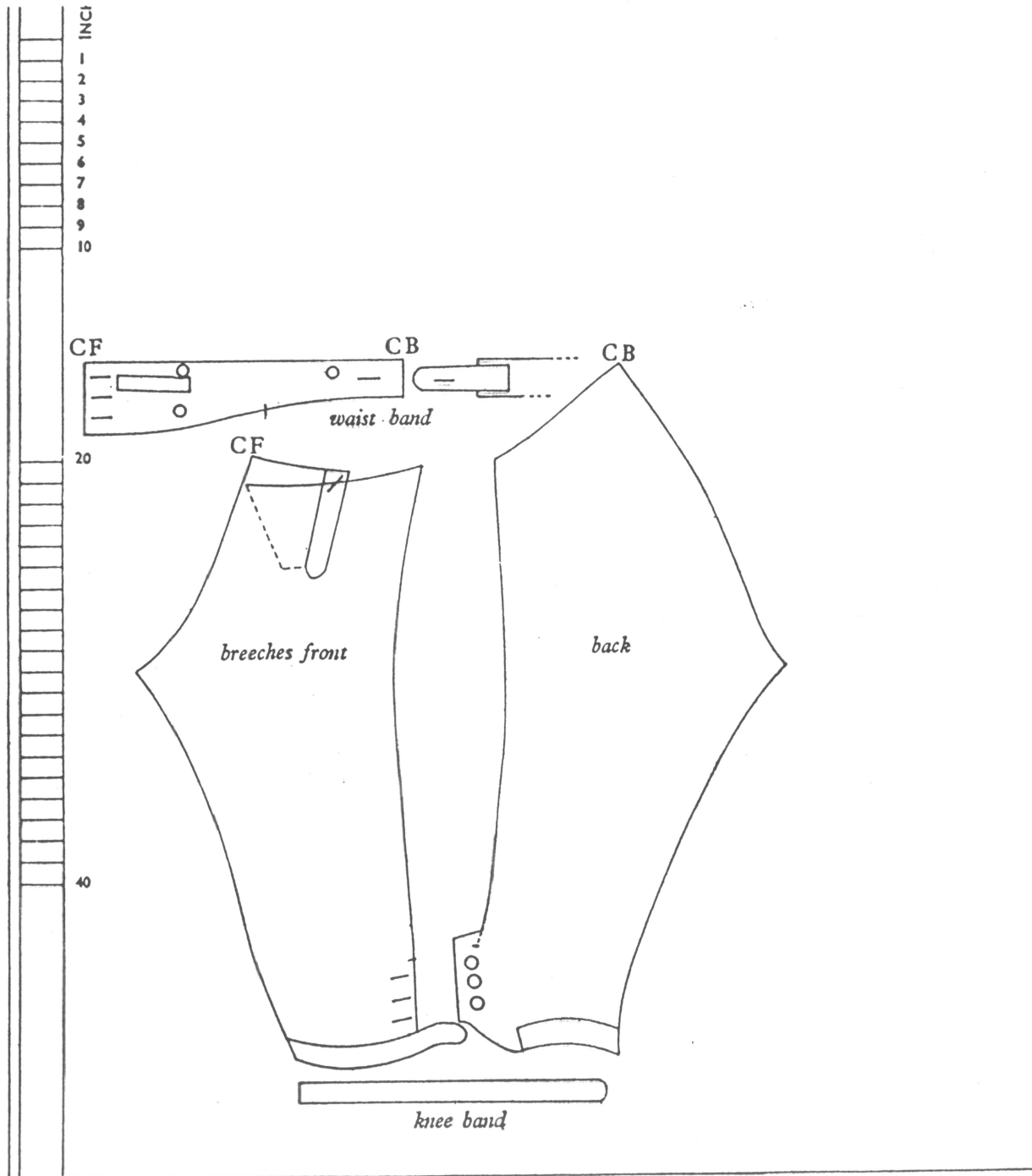
1550-1670 TRUNKHOSE

1570 on BREECHES for ordinary wear

1800 TROUSERS first in Army

1810 TROUSERS in popular use

1900 BREECHES still worn for riding,
ceremonial and to set aside from
workers



BREECHES c. 1775

TAILORING

MEN'S COSTUME

SHOES OR BOOTS

COULD WEAR THROUGH IN OUTING

BALDRICK, ROSETTES & RIBBONS

NO COMMON FORMAT

NOT LIKE LIVERY OR TRADE COSTUMES

NAPKIN NOT POCKET SIZED



Musketeer, The Queen's Regiment, 1685



Grenadier, Fox's Marines, 1709



Private, 41st Foot, 1742



Grenadier, 46th Foot, 1751



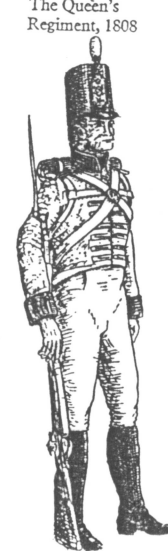
Light Company, 46th Foot, 1778



Private, 56th Foot, 1792



Private, 5th Battalion, 60th or Royal American Regiment, 1800



Private, 2nd or The Queen's Regiment, 1808



Gunner, Royal Artillery, 1815



Private, 85th or Bucks Volunteers (Light Infantry), 1815



Private, 14th King's Light Dragoons, 1833



Sergeant, 11th or North Devonshire Regiment, 1836



Bandsman, 46th or South Devonshire Regiment, 1856



Private, 46th or South Devonshire Regiment, 1873



Private, 14th Foot, 1881



Private, 43rd Light Infantry, 1894



Private, The Black Watch, 1899



Colour-sergeant, Devonshire Regiment, 1914



Gunner, Royal Garrison Artillery, 1914

No INFLUENCE from Army

OTHER ITEMS

FOOTWEAR - heels from 1600 - affects dance.

WIGS - common at all levels 1660 - 1799 till

W Pitt taxed them. Powdered from 1710.

COCKADES - introduced by the Hanoverians.

SMOCKS - mid 18th to end 19th century

"smocking", in linen + straw hat, for best.

SHAWLS - late 18th till early 20th century

TRIMMINGS & ACCESSORIES - from pedlars

travelling salemen, fairs and markets.

MEN'S COSTUME

20th CENTURY

PRESERVATION IN THE VILLAGES

SPORTS CLOTHING IN THE REVIVAL

DESIRABILITY OF OLD FASHIONED

SERVICABILITY & CHEAPNESS

INFERIOR BELLS, SMALL HANDKES

"UNIVERSAL" KIT - NOT REGALIA

WAISTCOATS, RAG JACKETS, BADGES

DIFFERENCES IN THE MEN'S MORRIS

WHERE :

PLACES, OCCASIONS, AUDIENCE

WHAT :

MOTIVATION

SHOW CONTENT, PACE, STYLISED

DETAIL :

MUSIC INSTRUMENTS, SPEED & IDIOM

DANCE SOURCES, CLOTHING

WOMEN PERFORMING THE MORRIS

- 1 COST
- 2 OPPORTUNITY
- 3 ACCEPTABILITY

WOMEN'S STATUS

- 1851** Mrs Bloomer
- 1857** Matrimonial Causes Act (one sided divorce)
- 1870's** Shorter skirts for sport
- 1882** Rational Dress Association
- 1884** Reform Act, Married Women's Property Act
- 1885** Criminal Law Amendment Act (age of consent 12)
- 1886** Repeal of Contagious Diseases Act
- 1890's** Trousers for cycling
- 1913** Outcry against V necklines
- 1918** Representation of the People Bill (over 30's)
- 1919** Removal of Sex Disqualification Act
- 1925** Allowed into Civil Service Examinations
- 1928** Full suffrage
- 1969** Divorce Reform Act
- 1973** Women barred from Morris workshops at Sidmouth
- 1976** Sex Discrimination Act
- 1976** Womens Morris Federation
- 1984** Equal pay for equal work judgement
- 1994** Anglian Priests

VIVE LA DIFFERENCE

MEN & WOMEN SUPRISINGLY SIMILAR

SPREAD IN DETAILS SEEMS LARGE

PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES

HEIGHT, BUILD, HIPS, BREASTS, HAIR

CULTURAL EFFECT ON MOVEMENT

EXPECTATIONS ON APPEARANCE

CANNOT DIVORCE FROM SOCIAL

HISTORY

THE COMPLAINTS

- 1 CENTURIES OF COMPLAINT ABOUT REVEALING WOMEN'S CLOTHING IN SOCIALISING SITUATIONS (not work).**
- 2 VICTORIAN VALUES & UNACCEPTABLE DISPLAY SHOWING THIGHS, UNDERCLOTHES etc.**
- 3 CONCERN AT WEARING MALE STYLES**
- 4 UNISEX AND FREEDOM OF DRESSING**

FASHION

FEW WORE IT

PROVIDES BULK OF HISTORICAL DATA

BEFORE MACHINE PRODUCTION

- VERY EXPENSIVE, ALL BY HAND

ORDINARY CLOTHES

BEST > WORKING > REUSE

LIMITED QUANTITY

LOTS OF APRONS



1743



1772



1796



1800



1816



1827



1829



1830



1835



1856



1874



1878



1890



1894



1899



1900

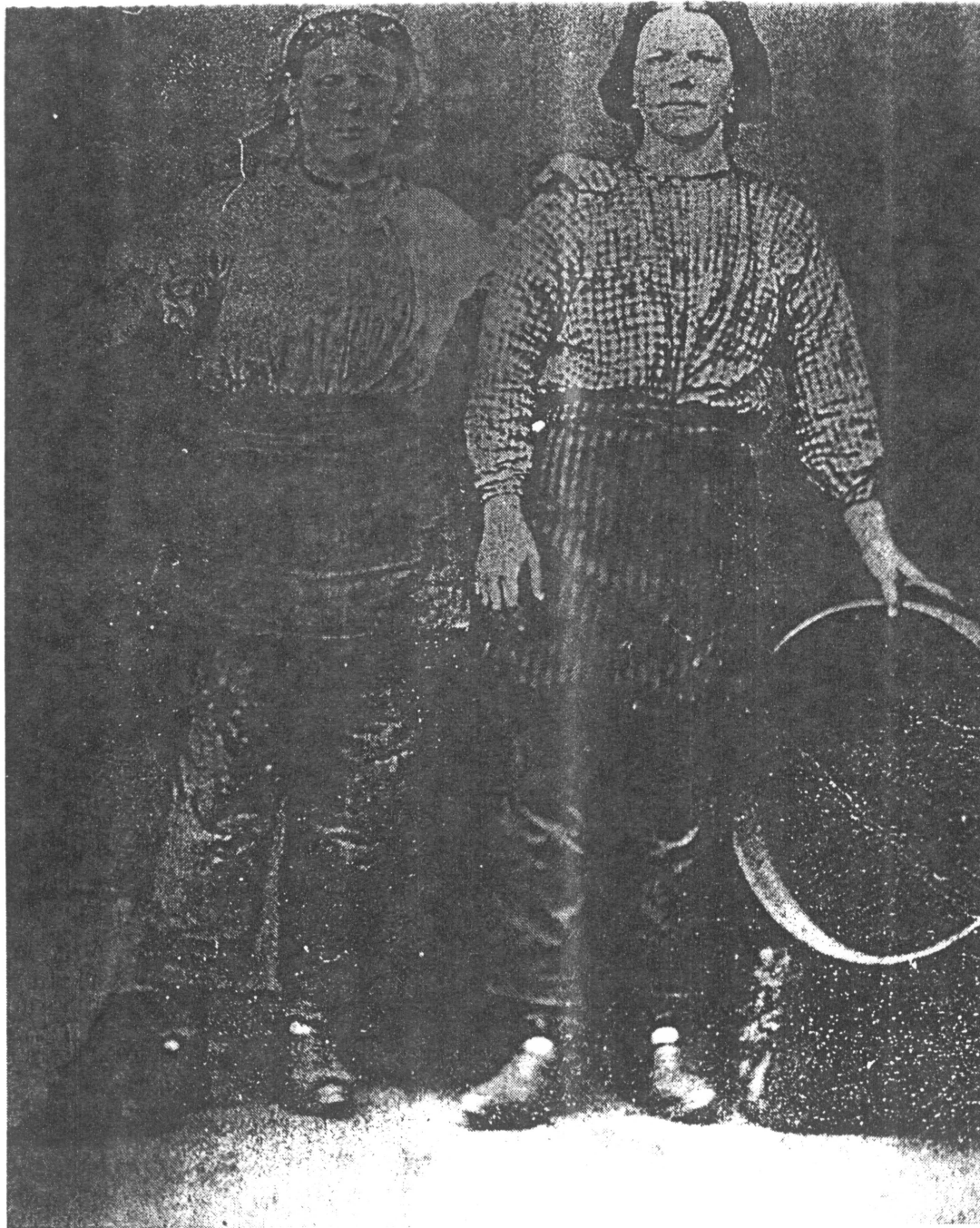


HOUSEMAIDS
UNIFORMS



Full skirts were general by the early 1850s.

IMPRACTICAL woman's COSTUME



Wigan Pit Brow Girls c. 1860.

MANUFACTURE

TAILORS

skilled in shaping outer garments

SEMPSTRESS

17th century

MANTUA MAKERS into 19th century

mid 18th century - ordinary women

SOWING MACHINES - by 1870's

FACTORY PRODUCTION - by 1900

COTTON

APPEARED LATE 18th CENTURY

FIRST FASHIONABLE MATERIAL THAT

COULD BE EASILY WASHED

NEEDED EXTRA LAYERS IN THE COLD

DRESS FABRICS CHEAP BY START OF

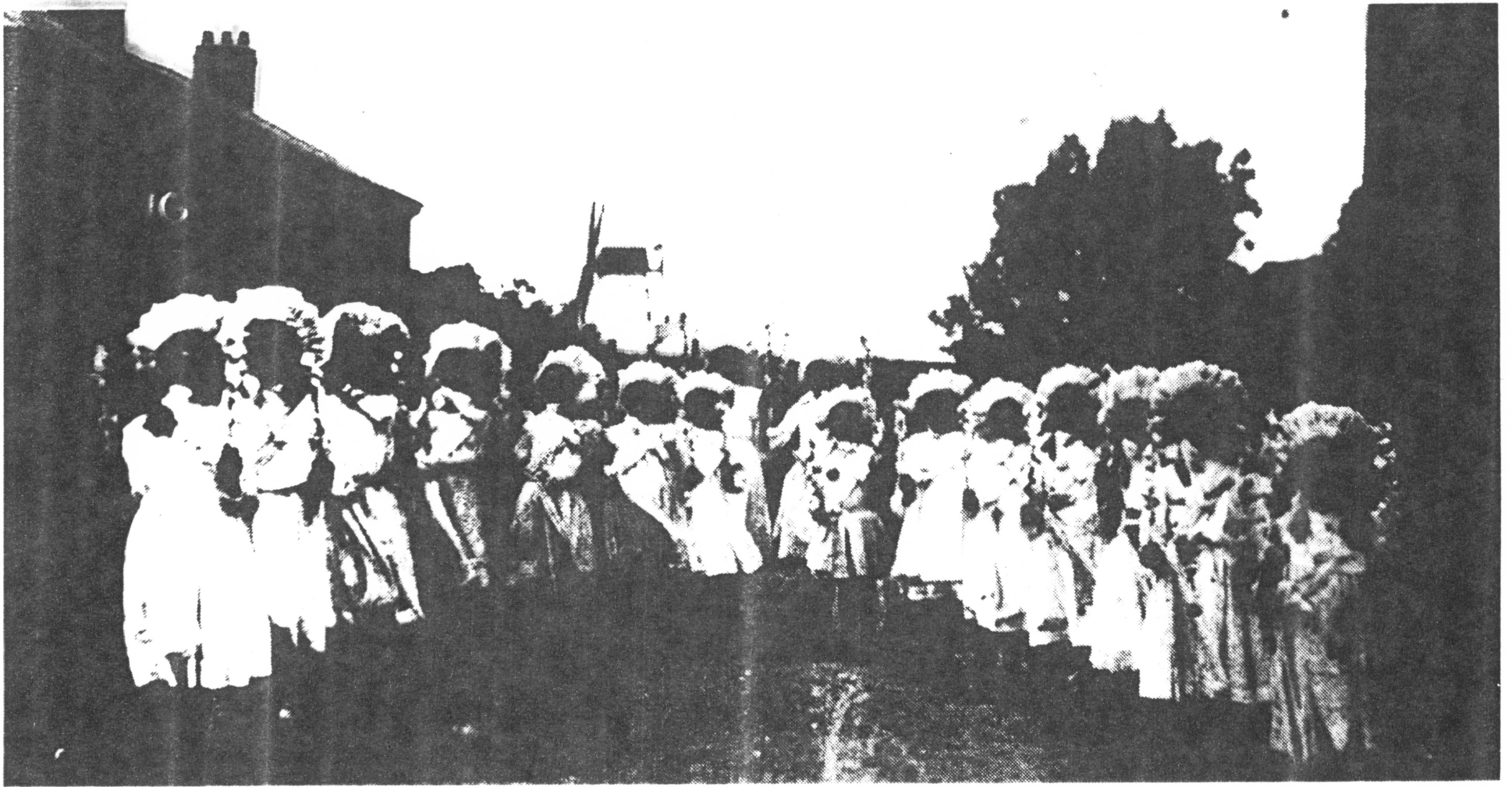
19th CENTURY

Picture: PHILIP HOLLIS

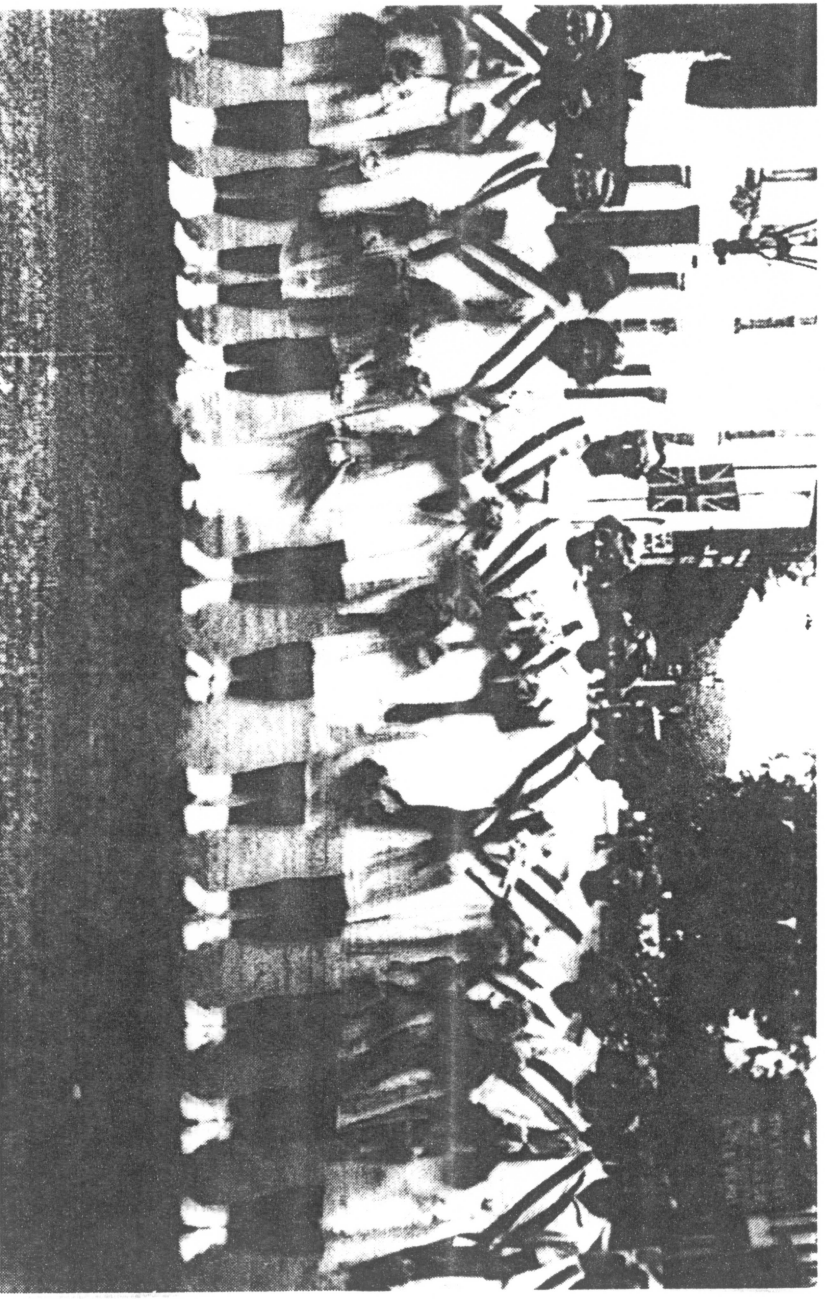


PICNIC TIME: Perth City Ballet dancers in costume yesterday for the British tour of Picnic at Hanging Rock, about the disappearance of three girls in 1901

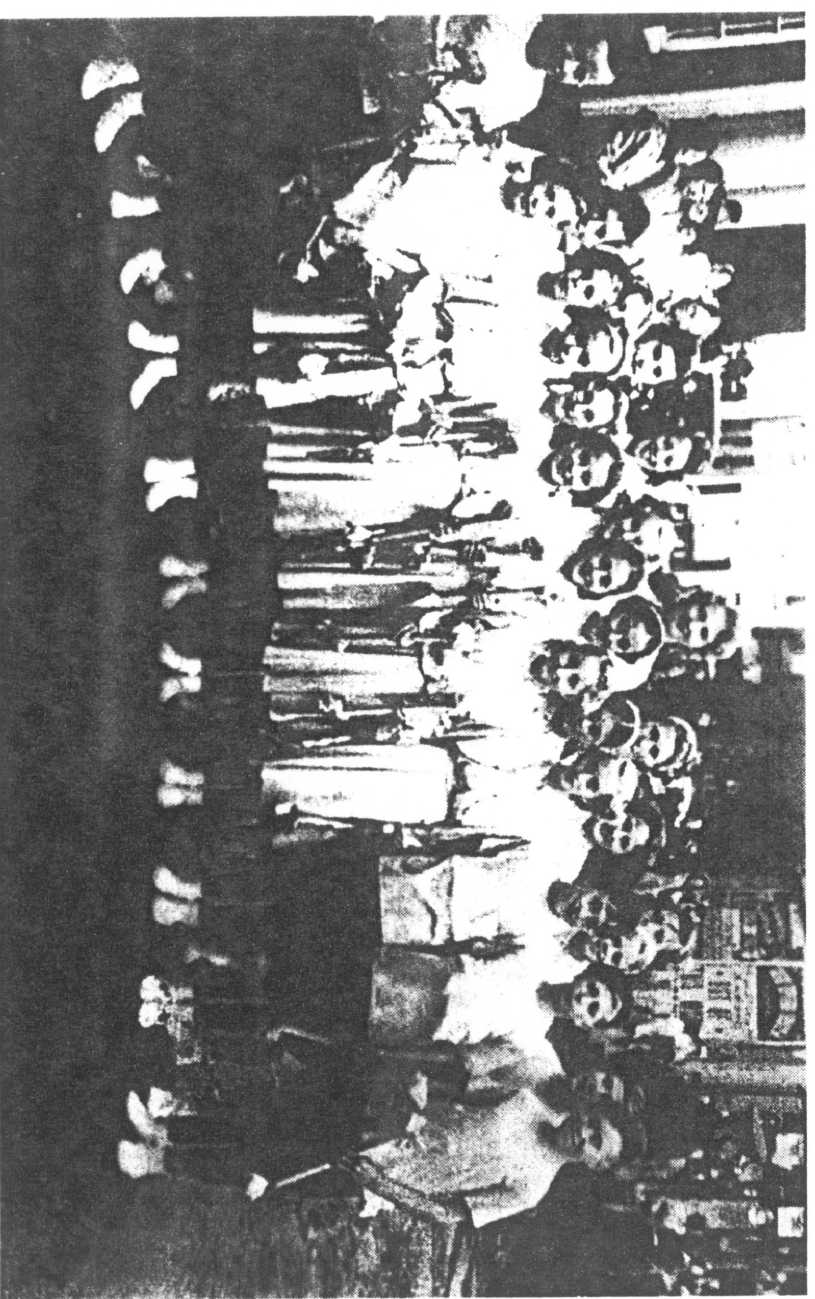
GIRLS COSTUMES NOW PRACTICAL



The morris dancers of Staining, *c.* 1900. The dancers are assembled in Mill Lane, with Joseph Crampton's windmill in the background, and represent an earlier stage of the dance. Centuries-old morris featured frilled bonnets, black stockings, white dresses and flower garlands symbolizing May.



Carlton Morris Dancers in their uniforms of white dresses and green sashes. Practice was in the Memorial Hall, which commemorated soldiers who died in the First World War. The maypole dancers were trained by Miss Perkins, the maypole having been made at a joiners shop on Blackpool Road that later became a butchers premises.



Morris dancers and their trainer in Sheaf Street, now Hardhorn Road. The photograph shows a happy occasion in the 1920s: Union Jacks and bunting in the background suggest a royal occasion or a Poulton Festival celebration.

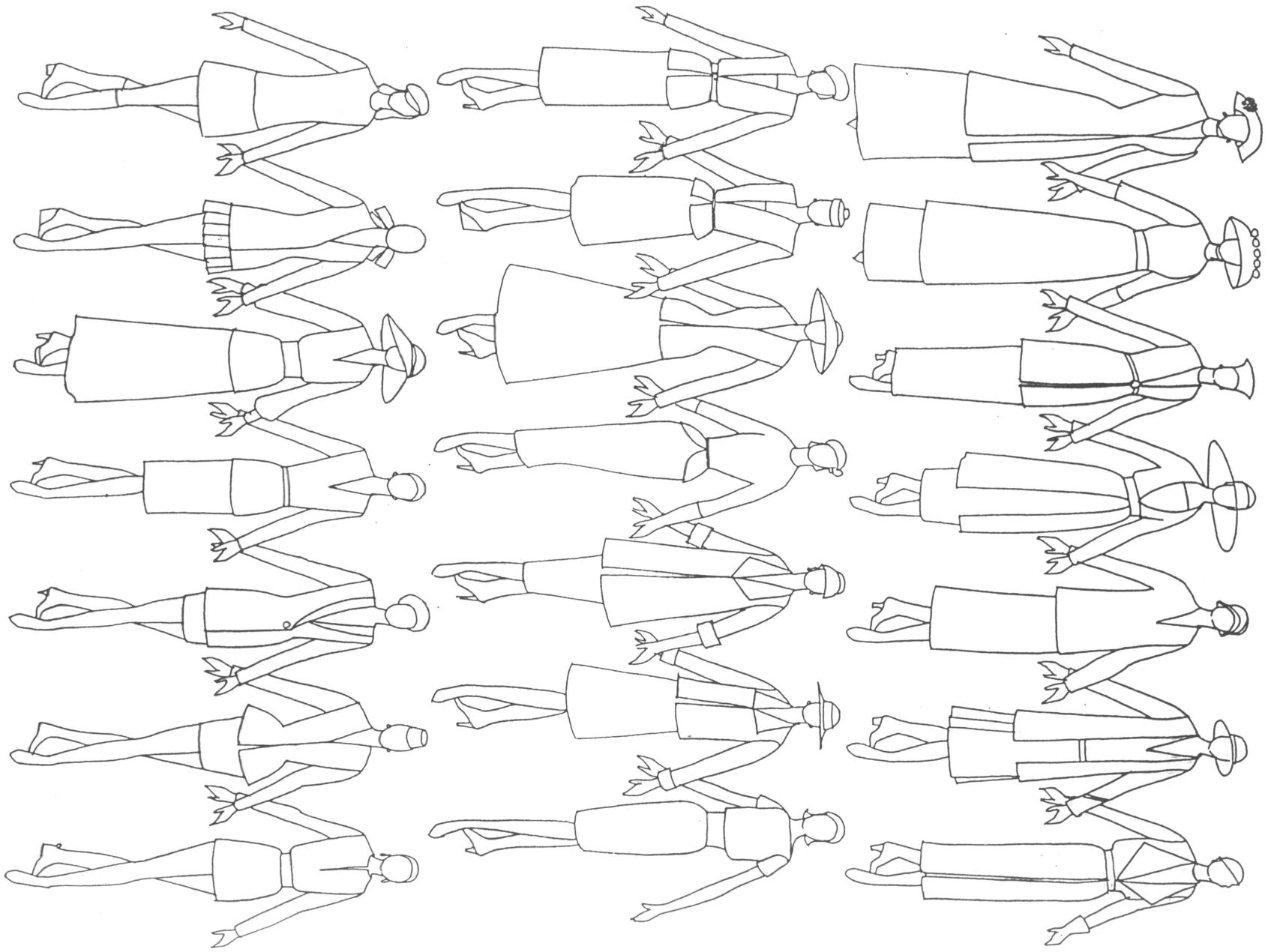


MILL WORKERS PREPARE FOR THE CARNIVAL. The building is believed to be the Newland Mill warehouse.



13. *The May Day Procession of Queen Eva*. Anna Richards. 1902. By courtesy of Whitelands College, London. This depicts a May festival, instituted in 1881, at the suggestion of John Ruskin, which is still annually performed. Ruskin was attempting to create an image of innocence and beauty reminiscent of 'Merry England'.

MAY QUEENS AND PLAITED MAYPOLE



20TH CENTURY FASHION - NBT WORKS
ILLUSTRATED

PRINCIPLES

- 1 ACTION IS VIGOROUS & VERTICAL**
- 2 WOMEN'S CLOTHES NORMALLY
FOR SWIRLING NOT PUMPING**
- 3 LINE MEANS PETTICOATS
WEIGHT MEANS WARMTH**
- 4 LEARN A STYLE OF MOVEMENT**
- 5 WOBBLY BITS NEED CONTROL**

The woman shall not wear that which
pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man
put on a woman's garment; for all that do
so are abomination unto the Lord thy GOD

Deut XXII, 5

THE VICTORIAN DILEMMA

CROSS DRESSING

LONG HISTORY OF MEN DRESSING AS
WOMEN IN ARTIFICIAL SITUATIONS.

CHEAP & EASY IN FOLK SITUATIONS.

OFTEN EXAGGERATED & UNREALISTIC

AS IT LEAVES SOME PEOPLE UNEASY.

NO SERIOUS MENS TEAM CROSS DRESS.

WOMEN IN "BREECHES" PARTS - PANTOS

WORLD WARS SHOWED WAY TO DRESS

APPROPRIATELY FOR THE ACTIVITY.



Women's
Soccer



Women's
Rugby
Football

NOSTALGIA

FOLK COSTUMES IN EUROPE GREW IN
THE MID 18th CENT ROMANTIC PERIOD.
HEIRLOOM TYPE REQUIRES AFFLUENCE.
LINKED REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEEDS
eg Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Cornish.
CULMINATED BY 20th CENTURY.
NW SWITCH TO CLOGS AND BREECHES
IMAGE SOUGHT TODAY IS PSEUDO OLD