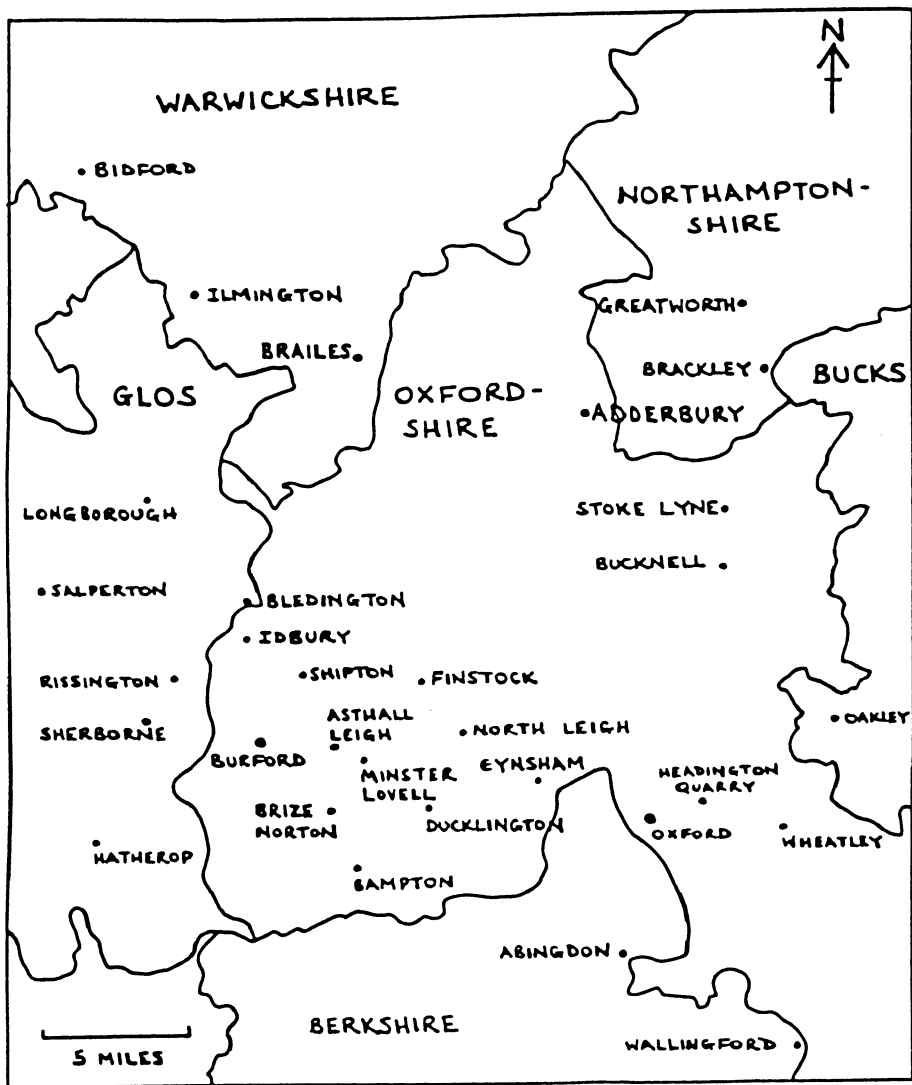


THE SOUTH MIDLANDS



County boundaries are pre-1974

MORRIS DANCING IN THE SOUTH MIDLANDS: THE SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND TO 1914

KEITH CHANDLER

The main aim of this paper will be to examine a number of the historical aspects of the morris form formerly dominant within an approximately thirty-five mile radius of Witney in Oxfordshire and to indicate some of the ways in which official sources may be applied to specifically collected folkloristic material in order to illuminate the social and cultural context in which it flourished and then declined in importance before the advent of war in 1914.

Until recently, historical material has been largely recorded and interpreted from above and this is reflected in the comparative dearth of sources concerned with grass-roots history, of which the rural morris during the nineteenth century is one cultural manifestation. Thankfully there are a number of oases in this desert; although most of the early collectors who were interested in the morris appear to have been very selective in the type of material they chose to record. Tom Carter for example, hired by Percy Manning to acquire old relics as well as historical information,¹ typically noted a list of names of the men involved in a given dance side, sometimes their occupations, a date at which the morris was said to have been extant and often an anecdote or two,² while the steps, tunes, form and style of the dances were outside his brief. Cecil Sharp's chief interests were diametrically opposite and frequently he omitted to even note the names of dancers in a tradition, especially on those occasions when he discovered a living exponent of the local dance style. Other

collectors had their own individual bias, although most - Mary Neal, Clive Carey, George Butterworth and the like - tended towards that approach favoured by Sharp. In practice this meant that the material was collected largely without reference to its contextual milieu.

The semi-systematic if somewhat haphazard collection of morris-related material was begun only during the last decade of the nineteenth century and this has undoubtedly distorted our knowledge of the distribution of dance sides in these south Midland counties by emphasising the period from around eighteen twenty onwards. The available evidence creates an impression of the middle years of the century being the heyday of performance but tells us little about the earlier period, during which the morris as a rural phenomenon may well have been more widespread.

There are currently around two dozen known recorded instances during the eighteenth century of what appear to have been sightings of authentic rural-based morris sides of the type designated by folklorists as "traditional". Geographically the area of performance³ is bounded on the four points by Wallingford, Hatherop, Greatworth and Richmond and encompasses much of the enclosed area; while the temporal span extends throughout the whole of the century, from the sighting of a visiting side in Hatherop, Gloucestershire, by Nicholas Blundell in 1703⁴ to the performance of a team from Burford at Sherborne Manor in 1799.⁵ This widespread evidence suggests that the morris was an important facet of entertainment in the annual cycle of at least certain communities. To what extent the performance of the dancing was continuous at any given location we cannot, for the want of sufficient source material, offer any concrete conclusions. It would seem logical, however, that the

morris did not merely appear full-blown at the beginning of the eighteenth century and we may therefore postulate the existence of a rural-based tradition extending backwards into the previous century at the very least.⁶ This pedigree encompasses radical and sometimes rapid technological development, both in industry and agriculture, in addition to an expanding population increasingly prone to migration and emigration and alternating periods of, on the one hand dearth and starvation and, on the other prosperity and plenty.⁷ Given these elements it becomes obvious that the social and economic factors which would have determined the continuation or abandonment (no doubt in some cases merely temporary) of performance were in a state of flux and it is therefore misleading to formulate inflexible generalisations.

Each performance of a morris team would have been (and still is) subject to a number of mitigating factors: the ability to raise a side of a suitable standard and more importantly a musician;⁸ the state of the weather; the degree of potential reward, determined by the number or status of the onlookers; the physical state of the dancers themselves⁹ and many others. This is not to suggest that the only factors in play were negative ones, but rather to observe the obvious yet seldom stated fact that every performance (indeed every dance) given by a morris side is a culmination of many variable circumstances, perceptions and motivations generated both from within the group of participants and from external social and cultural pressures.

Given these manifold temporal and geographical fluctuations it is obvious that in a paper of this length it will not be possible to present a comprehensive examination of those factors which appear, to me at least, to have most influenced the morris in performance.

202

Many of these social variables, both positive and negative, in general and more specific contexts I have analysed elsewhere¹⁰ and hope to elaborate at greater length at some future date. At present it is possible only to briefly outline some of the more overt factors. One point in favour of the heavier weighting of source material, concerning the second half of the nineteenth century, is that it enables us to trace in some detail the decline of the morris as it gradually became less of an integral facet of community life and, it is largely for this reason, that I have chosen to elaborate on certain aspects of performance during a time span of approximately one hundred years prior to the outbreak of the First World War.

By correlating the fortunes of the dance sides with what appear at least to have been disruptive and negative trends within the society of the region, it becomes possible to suggest factors which seem likely to have contributed to the virtual disappearance of the morris in a community context before respectability was regained for it by the educated urban folklorists during the first decade of this century.¹¹ These would have to include economic fluctuations in the agricultural base and hence the degree of largesses available to those members of a community from whom it was expected by the performers. Emigration to the colonies and other areas, which was increasingly available to craftsmen and agricultural workers at subsidised rates of passage from at least the eighteen-thirties and continuing, despite fluctuations in intensity, until the outbreak of war in 1914.¹² The establishment of the railway network by about eighteen-seventy provided increased opportunities both for trips away from the home area at holiday times and hence a reduction in potential patronage for morris sides performing in communities

where there was no great attraction to entice visitors,¹³ and also for migration to the larger centres of industry in search of employment, especially for the younger men to whom the onus of continuation of the dancing should have passed.¹⁴ The increasing tendency was towards a "taming" of the Whitsuntide holiday from one of extended license and unrestrained celebration to one of "rational recreation" and even teetotalism as the century progressed.¹⁵ The social fabric of community was disrupted by the agitation of the National Agricultural Labourers Union during the 1870s¹⁶ and there was an increase in the amount of alternative leisure pursuits available to the labouring classes.¹⁷

In order to establish the position of the men who were dancers in the social hierarchy of the communities in which they lived, worked and played it is necessary to know how they earned their daily bread. Having identified approximately 80% of the men known to have danced in the rural-based morris sides in the south Midlands prior to 1914 in at least one census year or in the parish registers at either the date of their marriage or the registration of the baptism of at least one child,¹⁸ it is obvious that the majority of dancers were employed on the land as labourers, carters, shepherds, woodmen and the like. There are of course regional variations: in the quarrying areas to the east of Oxford, the so-called Redlands of north Oxfordshire and in isolated pockets of stone throughout the rest of the region we find a number of dancers employed in stone-related jobs such as mason, mason's labourer or quarryman. Similarly, in the small manufacturing towns such as Brackley, Abingdon and Bidford there were dancers who were employed in shoe-making, fellmongering and the odd example of men working for the railway companies. Even where a man's chief occupation might be,

for example, carpenter or blacksmith he would probably have spent at least part of his working life on the farms, perhaps as a youngster¹⁹ but more especially at labour-intensive periods such as harvest time. Throughout our area community life was intimately bound to the cultivation of the soil for, with minor variations, the agricultural propensity of these south Midland counties was overwhelmingly arable.

Farms throughout the region tended on the whole to be fairly small in size and to keep very few men in full-time employment and hence a degree of geographical mobility was necessary. In the village of Kencot for example - which fielded a morris side probably during the 1830s or 1840s - there were only four farms in 1851. Out of a total population of two hundred and six souls three of these farmers between them gave work to twenty-five men, while the fourth employed none at all.²⁰ Albert Townsend, who kept the Elephant and Castle at Bampton for many years earlier this century, said of the local agricultural labourers, "some of 'em used to walk from 'ere to Kelmscot",²¹ a journey of six miles each morning and evening which reflects the lack of sufficient suitable work in their home parish. This situation often meant that alternative occupations had to be pursued and a man might change jobs frequently within a single community. Raphael Samuel's work on Headington Quarry has perhaps shown this most explicitly,²² with oral testimony indicating a variety which cannot be gleaned from primary official sources such as the decadal census enumeration books,²³ the Anglican parish registers and the reports of local and quarter sessions which may be found in most local newspapers during the nineteenth century. These sources, however flawed, nevertheless tend to note the contemporary occupation of at least the adult males where they

impinge upon the recorded flow of officialdom and thereby provide virtually the sum total of the extant evidence which may be used to illuminate the social structure of the communities with which we are concerned. Lamentably the sources are subject to the often idiosyncratic and indiscriminate use of occupational descriptions by the individual enumerator, registrar or reporter and may thus be deceptive and conceal innumerable periodic fluctuations. The terms agricultural labourer, field labourer, farm boy, wood labourer, woodman and sometimes simply labourer cannot begin to describe the type of work pursued, the seasonal variation of the work, the degree of geographical mobility or the frequency of unemployment. Other designations such as agricultural carter, cowman or shepherd offer an impression which is a little more concrete but again fail to consider periodic fluctuations.

Sometimes however it is broadly possible to pursue a man as his occupational bias undergoes (by and large minor) temporal transformations. The Finstock dancer Edward Oliver for example is recorded over the twenty-one years covered by the census between 1851 and 1871 as "dealer in fruit" then "woodman" and finally "hawker".²⁴ Richard Bond at Idbury went from woodman in 1851 to agricultural labourer ten years later and then back to woodman in 1871;²⁵ while his brother Benjamin (as far as we know not a dancer) would appear to have elevated his status from field labourer to carter between 1851 and 1861.²⁶ Another of the Finstock dancers, Charles Dore, pursuing the family trade of carpenter in 1851 and 1861 was enumerated as a sawyer ten years later which implies a reduction in occupational status.²⁷ William Bellinger, one of three brothers who danced in the morris side at Brize Norton - probably during the 1840s - told Carter that his brothers Henry and

Charles worked as quarrymen yet the 1871 census returns show that they both were agricultural labourers at this date. This handful of examples and the numerous others which could be cited merely confirms the necessity for occupational flexibility in order to exploit the fluctuating patterns of employment in operation in a given locality over a period of time.

I have stated that during the period under examination the known tradition bearers of the morris were overwhelmingly drawn from the pool of manual labourers and small craftsmen, yet there is a certain amount of evidence to suggest a degree of commingling within specific morris sides between men from several levels of the social hierarchy. It is impossible to accurately define the often minute gradations within a defunct societal structure from the limited amount of evidence currently available and to do so would require a knowledge of individual perceptions and expectations which is largely denied us. These factors are, however, sometimes implied in the sources and an example will later be found in the brief examination of marriage patterns, yet a qualitative statement is elusive. Nevertheless, in 1886 the antiquarian George Rowell recalled that at Kirtlington during the early part of the century it was sometimes the case that the sons of farmers - undoubtedly perceived by the community as socially superior to the labourers who formed the basis of the dance side - "did not decline joining the dancers, but rather prided themselves on being selected as one of them".²⁸ It may have been that the transformation of labour relations between farmer and employees engendered by enclosure and the accompanying intensification of agricultural production techniques²⁹ had not by that date yet created the social rift which is apparent during the latter half of the century. That there were

gradations within the generic group labelled "farmer" is evident from two examples of men involved with the morris around the middle years of the nineteenth century.³⁰ Masfen Hart, a dancer in the same Brize Norton team as the Bellinger brothers, was born the son of a farmer at Stonelands near Asthall Leigh in 1813.³¹ By 1833 he had married and moved to Brize Norton, where he is recorded in the parish registers at the baptism of a daughter as a labourer, implying a reduction in status.³² This trend was rectified by 1841 when he is enumerated as a carrier,³³ a trade with a far greater degree of security and remuneration than that of a labourer. By 1851, Hart was living in Little Minster Lovell where he farmed three acres and employed one man and the route by which this social elevation was achieved appears, at least partially, to have been the acquisition of land on the Chartist estate at Minster Lovell.³⁴ Assuming that the dancer and the Mr. Hart of Brize Norton who gave a meadow party during May 1848, at which nearly forty couples danced,³⁵ are one and the same, he would appear to have already gained a certain degree of social status locally by this date. By 1852, Hart was living in the schoolhouse at Charterville where he was responsible for the cultivation of empty allotments on the estate.³⁶ Thomas Langford, piper for teams at Finstock and Ascot-under-Wychwood, was described as a farmer of four acres in 1851 and as "landed proprietor" ten year later.³⁷ Certainly both of these men appear to have been smallholders, farming on a very small scale indeed; and the problems inherent in any attempt to define perceived status within a given community is illuminated by these examples. Obviously a farmer of two hundred acres who employed twenty-five men would have been accorded greater respect than those in a similar position to the two dancers cited above; yet the distinction between such smallholders and the day-rate labouring group, to which

the majority of dancers active during the nineteenth century belonged, is considerably blurred. The problem is further compounded by the example of Masfen Hart: born the son of a farmer yet by the age of twenty working as a labourer.

This predominant occupational mode was however conducive to the pursuance of the morris dancing, for Whitsun and the preparation of the morris for public performance was slotted into the lull in the annual agricultural cycle which fell between the spring sowing and the hay harvest in the early summer.³⁸ Similarly, in those communities where men were predominantly employed in wood-related trades the seasonal nature of the work meant that these men were likewise available to dance at Whitsun, for the important task of stripping the bark from the trees in order to obtain flaw to be used in tanning started in March and lasted for about six weeks. Samuel has noted that:

"[Flawing] was a major harvest, drawing extra hands from afar, as well as providing employment for woodlanders themselves ..."³⁹

Once again this distorts the evidence of the census which, other than in 1841,⁴⁰ was normally taken about the beginning of April.⁴¹ Small craftsmen and artisans, generally self-employed, were better able to regulate their free time and would also have been in a position to dance with the morris sides. Amongst those men in this latter category were William Jaycock, a journeyman blacksmith at Stoke Lyne; the Walton family at Adderbury, a long line of stonemasons; several of the Dore family at Finstock who were carpenters; and the weaver Edwin Clay at Brailes. Such men would normally have greater job security for, with a trade, it was possible to travel elsewhere during a localised depression in the knowledge that work might be easier to obtain than for an unskilled labourer.⁴²

In both the arable and the woodland areas the slack period which followed the spring sowing and flawing forced many men and women who had been thrown out of work to migrate in search of employment. Some of these journeyed eastwards to assist with the earlier-ripening hay or to work in the market gardens around London and the Home Counties and would then work their way homewards in time for the local hay harvest which, given normal weather conditions, occurred most often during June. In order to raise extra cash on these jaunts some of the dancers and musicians would busk in the streets and, from the frequency with which antiquarian writers record the sighting of whole teams of dancers from the rural areas in the vicinity of London during the early summer, it might be argued that from as early as the latter half of the eighteenth century the morris was viewed by the performers as a possession to be exploited.⁴³ By implication this commercialisation of the morris might be cited to argue against the theories of dancing for the sake of tradition and continuity with the past, fertility magic and luck-bringing so beloved of the early collectors and still rife today.

So, within the varied and variable occupational structure of any given community, the evidence points to periods of unemployment and inactivity for many of the labouring groups to which the dancers belonged. I have shown how the official sources may be deceptive when considering work patterns and, despite the limited recording of grass-roots history, the odd piece of oral evidence may shed some light. I interviewed Martha Druce, the grand-daughter of Ducklington dancer Joseph Druce, on 29 August 1981 and, when showing her the entries concerning her grandfather from the census, she smiled and commented:

"My grandfather didn't work much ... He might have put down that he was a farm labourer but he didn't do much ... I suppose he got by without ..."

The provision of sufficient food with which to feed himself and his family must have been a difficult task for the majority of the labouring classes during the nineteenth century. In 1884 the social commentator Richard Heath had this to say about the diet of the average agricultural labourer:

"... it is manifest that the wages which have been given to the Agricultural Labourer during the greater part of this century - 7s., 8s. or the utmost 9s. or 10s. have meant starvation during the lifetime of at least one generation and a portion of two others. For be it remembered that on these miserable sums not one person, but very frequently four or five have had to live. It was only done by reducing the quantity of bread, bacon and beer, and taking in their place gruel, potatoes, suet and rice puddings, with decoctions of washed-out tea leaves ..." 44

If a man was un- or underemployed for any length of time then other means of providing sustenance would have to be found. Of course, in a rural area there are many natural foods to be had free for the taking but, in addition, there is much which is illegal and this includes the majority of meat which would have been found in a labourer's diet. There is much evidence to suggest that poaching was not only common but, in many cases, absolutely necessary for survival. In a rare, though no doubt biased, description of one of our morris villages, the Reverend J. C. Young wrote of the parish of Ilmington in 1857 that it was one of the most disreputable in the county of Warwickshire:

"... Conviction in the graver offences against the law, such as burglary, sheep stealing and agrarian outrages have not been infrequent: while cases of poaching, brawling, drunkenness, adultery and fornication have been rather the rule than the exception ..." 45

George "Brewer" Pratley of Finstock, in an interview with Michael Heaney on 26 August 1981, told how:

"... Men would get gamekeepers drunk at the Waterloo Arms so they could go off and poach. This was necessary as they had no money to buy food ..." 46

This latter statement is confirmed by oral testimony recorded by Samuel at Headington Quarry; and many instances are in evidence amongst the reports of local petty sessions. Those unlucky enough to have been caught in the act of attempted poaching include the dancers Henry Smith of Shipton-under-Wychwood, charged in 1865 with "trespassing on certain lands in the occupation of Thomas Brookes, in search of game - Fined 9s 6d and costs"; Edward Heydon of Stoke Lyne in 1880 for "using a gun for killing hares" and fined £5 and costs 10s 9d or six weeks; and William Search of Rissington in 1882, again with "trespassing in search of game - fined 5s and costs 5s." 47 Obviously this is something which by its very illicit nature is impossible to quantify, yet despite often considerable penalties if convicted the evidence suggests that poaching in its many forms was rife.

The physical performance of the dancing is dependent upon certain basic human factors. To expend vast quantities of energy over sustained periods the body needs to be in reasonable health and well-nourished. Even allowing that much of the morris was performed under the influence of alcohol and, as William Kimber of Headington Quarry once remarked, "You were never a morris dancer unless you had plenty of beer, there was no time for food," 48 the body must be adequately fed beforehand. Most teams consisted of a bare minimum of six dancers, although there was sometimes a spare man who was able to step into the set to spell a dancer when he needed a rest, and again this implies a degree of economic determinism on the part of the organisers. What this meant

in practice was that a man would have been obliged to perform almost every dance, perhaps for twelve hours a day overall, sometimes for five or more days in succession, in addition to walking to the dancing venue when performing outside of their home parish. It is apparent that the physical condition of the dancers, especially when in their prime, must have been good. The Reverend James Fraser, one of the assistant Commissioners involved with the Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture, conducted in 1867, wrote of the typical cottage of the rural labourer:

"... It is impossible to exaggerate the ill effects of such a state of things in every aspect, physical, social, economical, moral, intellectual. Physically, a ruinous, ill-drained cottage, cribbed, cabin'd, confined, and overcrowded, generates any amount of disease, fevers of every type, catarrh, rheumatism, as well as intensifies to the utmost that tendency to scrofula and phthisis which, from their frequent intermarriages and their low diet, abound so largely among the poor ..." 49

Yet despite this and similar evidence I have suggested that the men who were dancers must have been relatively healthy. The nature of the work would of course have developed the physique during the formative years, although both occupational and social conditions appear to have often taken their toll on the body in later life.⁵⁰ It might be acceptable to suggest that a man would have been at peak physical condition between the ages of perhaps fifteen and thirty-five. Joseph Druce said that at Ducklington the men did not join the morris team until they were aged about twenty⁵¹ and given that the right to dance often passed from father to son, this would seem to be an age conducive to the supplanting of one generation by the next. It is however impossible to offer any generalisations, for there were obviously many variations on the mode of organisation within different dance teams. In addition to that of ongoing

generational continuity there are examples of a side composed of "Little Boys", seen at Sherborne Manor in 1785⁵² and others consisting of father and six sons, as at Salperton.⁵³ Given these latter variations it is difficult to reconcile the obvious economic advantages for the mentor of tractable young dancers with the often ascribed motivation of continuity for the sake of tradition. Here again, generalisations must be eschewed for there were undoubtedly a number of perhaps complex motivations involved and these are likely to have undergone transformation over time.

The fact that as a rule each community in which there was a history of dancing⁵⁴ possessed only one morris side at any given time suggests that there were factors in operation of a delimiting nature. From the parish registers it is possible to indicate a trend within many teams towards a close-knit kin structure and it is my contention that this was the single most important qualification for admission into the culturally-diverting and potentially-lucrative morris fraternity. In any examination of patterns of intermarriage there has to be an initial awareness of the basic chicken and egg question: did a man marry into one of the main dancing families and then get invited to participate in the tangible benefits associated with the morris, or was he already a dancer and by socialising with others in the side forge a liason with the daughter or sister of one of his fellow dancers? No doubt there were examples of both forms, although the limited evidence on extant dates of both dance sides and the specific involvement of individual dancers prevents any definitive statement. Within a socially delimited community such as a village or town segment like Ock Street in Abingdon there would have been a great familiarity with other local families and any number of potential marriage

partners within any given generation. These would include incoming migrants as well as long-settled groups; and many of the nineteenth century dancers were among this former section of society.⁵⁵ There is a suggestion of a trend towards the forging of marriages within the same social group and this would have presumably reinforced the hierarchical structure of community. In a sample of six marriages between 1864 and 1873 amongst families possessing surnames associated with the morris at Brackley for example, four were between the offspring of labourers, one involved the son of the Brackley morris leader Timothy Howard, a horsekeeper, and the daughter of a carpenter, and the sixth was between the son of a carpenter and the daughter of a tailor.⁵⁶ The implication is that here, and at Wheatley amongst other communities, there was even a clear distinction between the manual labourers and the artisans. This was not however an inviolable rule and evidence from elsewhere shows inter-marriage amongst these two social groups.

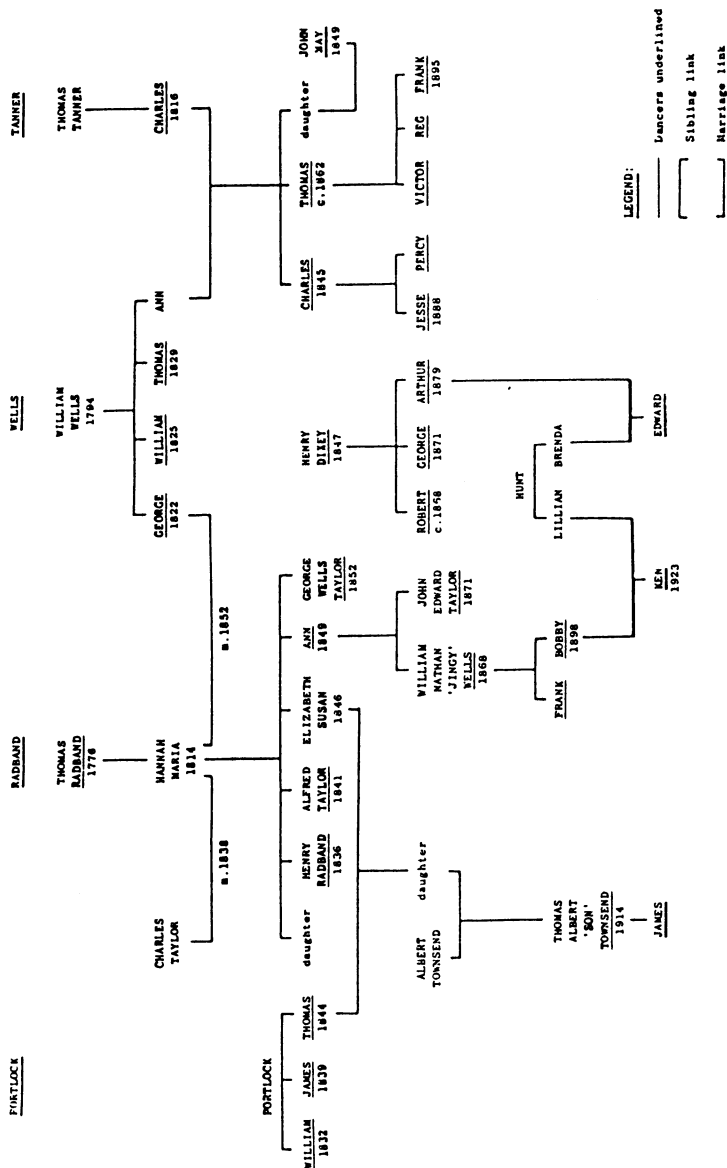
Unfortunately we possess far too few names of dancers involved with a given team over two or more generations to reach any definite conclusions about the original question. Where such material exists it is possible to suggest that certain families within a community were among the chief tradition bearers and to indicate familial ties between them and other dancers in the local morris. I have suggested in a forthcoming paper for example that the Bason family was central to the tradition at Ducklington.⁵⁷ In this village there were three distinct dance sides around the middle years of the nineteenth century. In one of these, members of two generations of the Bason family were involved, one as a sword-bearer at a stage when this role was often taken by an old dancer; while William Fisher and Joseph Druce senior, fathers of dancers in both other

teams, had married into the Bason family. That the three sides existed synchronously and in apparent harmony⁵⁸ implies at least an internal sanctioning of the situation. At Eynsham, where admittedly there is some confusion over the date at which the morris and mumming was merged and the same men performed both customs, it can be shown that Fred Harwood, dancer both pre and post World War One and father of two later Eynsham dancers, married the daughter of Fred Humphries, named as one of the old mummers to James Madison Carpenter.⁵⁹ Ned Harris, again spanning the war, married into the Harwood family; while Ern May, son of a dancer of the same name and himself a dancer during the 1920s, married the daughter of another dancer Thomas Watkins. Such examples are legion and include at least one marriage forged between families involved with two separate dance teams. Ann Rolfe, sister of four dancers at Bucknell, married William Ring of Wheatley and, although we cannot be sure that William was himself a dancer, their son James certainly was a member of this latter side.⁶⁰

Largely due to the foresight of William "Jingy" Wells, who in 1914 committed to paper many memories of the morris from both his older relatives and himself, we know the names of virtually all the dancers, musicians and fools at Bampton from around 1840 onwards and, for this reason, it would seem logical to use this community as a test case for patterns of intermarriage. It might be argued that because of its longevity the morris here is a special case, but traditions in other areas held on just as tenaciously, until around 1900 or so, at Brackley, Eynsham, Bledington and Abingdon for example, and only a little less so at Headington Quarry, Wheatley, Bucknell, Sherborne, Longborough and in many other places.

200

SIMPLIFIED SCHEME SHOWING INTER-MARRIAGE AND CONTINUITY OVER SIX GENERATIONS WITHIN THE MORRIS AT BAMPTON, OXFORDSHIRE



NOTE: 'Jingy' Wells' mother danced in kit dressed as a man one year, probably during the 1870s, according to a number of independent witnesses.

EC 26.8.82

If we possessed more names of dancers in these sides then it seems likely that a similar pattern to that at Bampton would emerge.

"Jingy" Wells was interviewed by Peter Kennedy in 1952 and he had this to say concerning the longevity of the morris at Bampton:

"One hundred years ago my grandfather was head of the morris ... a century ago. His grandfather Thomas Wells was head of the morris a hundred years before that ..." 61

His timing is a little confused but "Thomas Wells" would almost certainly have been active in the morris around 1800. Because of the illegitimacy which was prevalent within the family, it seems likely that the man to whom he refers as his grandfather's grandfather is actually his grandmother's father Thomas Radband, and that he is distorting the facts for the sake of decorum. Radband was born in 1776 and was the piper for the team about the turn of the eighteenth century.⁶² Assuming Wells' assertion to be correct - and this is confirmed by examples from elsewhere: George Arthur at Ilmington, Billy Brown at North Leigh and so on - he fulfilled the dual roles of musician (and hence the most indispensable member of a dance side) and leader or organiser. From the available evidence the Radband family appear to have been the central strand around which dancers from other families were drawn. The chief protagonist in this saga during the first half of the nineteenth century is Thomas' daughter Hannah Maria Radband, baptised in 1814. By the time of her first marriage she already had two illegitimate children; and it is apparent from the frequency of registration of base-born offspring that this was a frequent and even sanctioned facet of community experience. One of Hannah's children, Henry "Sarah" Radband, born in 1836, later became one of the dancers⁶³ and then took over as cake carrier from his step father, probably during the

1880s⁶⁴ and continued in this role until the outbreak of war in 1914. Hannah Maria married Charles Taylor in 1838 and they had one son, Alfred "Jarby" Taylor, of whom "Jingy" later said:

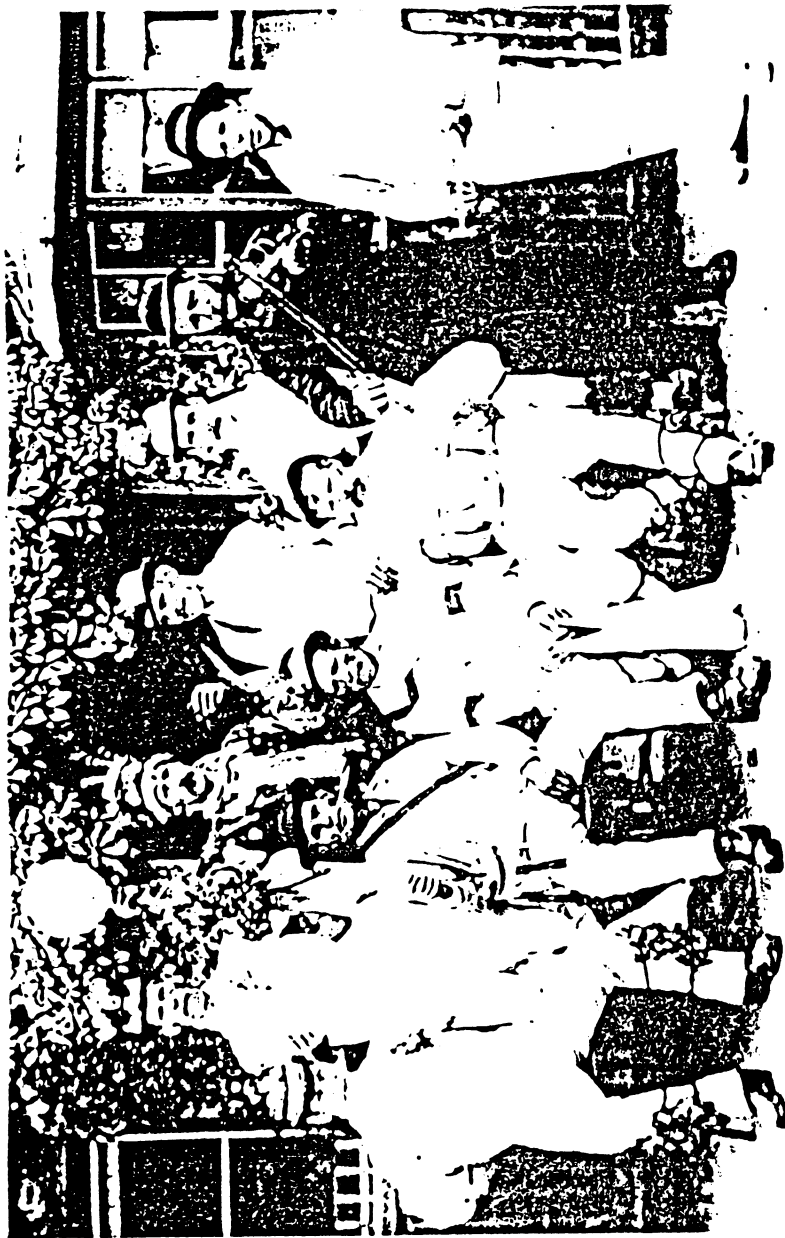
"Uncle Alf was supposed to be the best dancer as ever danced in the morris. Heel and toes, he was a good dancer ..."⁶⁵

Charles Taylor died in 1844 and Hannah Maria subsequently gave birth to three more illegitimate children: two daughters, Elizabeth Susan in 1846 and Ann in 1849, and a son in 1852. Significantly, this son was baptised George Wells Taylor, for the naming of an illegitimate child by the surname of its real or supposed father was a common practice during the last century. In Ducklington for example, it is probably significant that the foremanship of one morris team passed from John Hall to the base-born Robert Hall Jordan.⁶⁶ The father of Hannah's final child, also named George Wells, was a lodger with her at the date of the 1851 census and married her four months after the baptism of their son. This was the man referred to by "Jingy" as his grandfather who was head of the morris around the middle of the nineteenth century and here we have an example of the leadership passing from Thomas Radband⁶⁷ to the most suitable male successor, his son-in-law. Given the lack of sources, we cannot say for how long Hannah Maria and George Wells had cohabited (perhaps from the date of death of her former husband in 1844), but since he was already aged thirty when he married it seems likely that he was already a dancer prior to 1852. In this respect it is possible to indicate an earlier link between the Wells family and the carriers of the morris tradition in Bampton. Other than the Radbands, it is the Tanner family who figure largest in the history of the team. As early as 1837, Charles Tanner, born in 1816 and also claiming to have been "head morris dancer" in his

younger days,⁶⁸ married George Wells' sister Ann, after apparently fathering an illegitimate child on her in the previous year.⁶⁹ Two other of her brothers - William Wells, born 1825 and buried 1863, and Thomas Wells, born 1829 and buried 1857 - were also dancers and given their birthdates it looks as if this would have followed, and presumably have been influenced by, the marriage of their sister to Charles Tanner.

In the censal year 1861, we find a household consisting of George and Hannah Wells, his son George Taylor (still officially referred to by his surname at the time of baptism), and his two stepsons Henry Radband and Alfred Taylor: four men who feature prominently in the morris during the century. Also living with them was Elizabeth Taylor who around 1868 married Thomas Portlock, born 1844 and another of the dancers. Two of Portlock's brothers also danced: William, born 1832 and James, born 1839.⁷⁰ Hannah's daughter Ann was the mother of William Nathan "Jingy" Wells and John Edward Taylor,⁷¹ both of whom joined the morris side in 1887. "Jingy" of course later became the mentor and chief informant on the tradition and used his family connections and leverage as musician to successfully exploit the tangible benefits to be had from the early collectors.⁷² John danced this one year only and then left to live in London.⁷³ There was direct continuity via "Jingy" through two more generations: his sons Frank and Bobby danced after the First War,⁷⁴ while Bobby's son Ken danced from 1937 and into the Second War.

The Tanner family likewise provided generational continuity. One of Charles' sons was a dancer - also named Charles, born 1846 and involved first as a dancer then as ragman until the First War brought the morris to a halt;⁷⁵ while his cousin Thomas, born



Illus. 4. Bampton Morris Dancers, Whit Monday, 1897. Standing (left to right): George "Nipper" Dixey, William "Jingy" Wells (fool), Robert "Grank" Dixey, Joey Rouse, Dick Butler (fiddle), Charles "Cocky" Tanner (ragman, holding the bacca pipes). Seated (left to right): Philip Dewe, Henry "Sarah" Radband (cake carrier), George "Chackler" Wells Taylor, Thomas "Buscot" Tanner.

around 1850 continued to dance until 1914, well into his sixties. Sons of both men were subsequently involved in the tradition, although none had the staying power of their fathers: Charles' sons Jesse and Percy, and Thomas' sons John, Victor, Reg and Frank were dancers at various stages, and direct continuity only came to an end at the outbreak of the Second War. John May, born 1849, married another of Charles senior's daughters and was also a dancer.

Other potential family links may be only suggested: Wells married Rouse, Tanner married Dewe, Wells married Brooks and so on, with men of these latter surnames in the side at one stage or another during the nineteenth century; although again we must be aware of the chicken and egg question. More demonstrable is the continuity over several generations. The ongoing participation of the Radband, Wells and Tanner families has already been indicated, while in the Dixey family Henry, born 1847, was a dancer and was followed by his sons Robert, George and Arthur before the First War, then by Arthur's son Ted during the 1940s and presently by Arthur's grandson Martin Ferguson, who dances for the Shergolds.

Bampton and Weald was one of the larger communities in the south Midland counties and the close-knit kin structures in combination with other motivations - perhaps economic, cultural diversion and, almost certainly, a sense of pride which might be equated with the elusive sense of tradition for tradition's sake, reinforced by the stability of a regular musician since around 1880⁷⁶ - assured a continuance of the dancing on a regular basis. From the census returns it is possible to show that in a number of the smaller communities there was a trend towards a reduction in the number of households having surnames associated with the local morris. At Finstock for example, where in 1851 there were sixteen households where the head was

named Dore, Langford, Oliver, Turner and Stratford, twenty years later there were a mere seven. At Oakley in Buckinghamshire there was a similar trend, from fourteen households named Hawes, Ing and Shirley in 1851 to seven (with no one named Ing then in the village) in 1871. The same process is apparent elsewhere within our area and the implications for the transmission of the morris within the immediate family group are obvious and this dilution of community ties may well have hastened the disappearance of the morris in certain localities.

It is obvious that some men stepped in to dance having married into one of the organising families and left it at that, with their surname passing out of active involvement after one generation. Others may have had no specific kin ties at all and have been drawn from the circle of friends and associates within the immediate peer group. But just as obvious, at Bampton as indicated above, three generations of Arthurs at Ilmington, three or more of Rolfes at Bucknell and at least six of Hemmings at Abingdon, the morris was considered sufficiently important within certain families to warrant transmitting the tunes and keeping the dances in practice, even where there was no external encouragement. The reasons for this are unclear and are likely to have varied from one individual to the next. There is no doubt that at times during the nineteenth century the morris was often externally viewed with favour. Many of the local newspapers give a degree of coverage to the performance of the dancing, often in inverse proportion to the frequency of observation.⁷⁷ From 1858 onwards the team at Bampton are consistently reported in one or another of the Oxford and Witney papers and this heaping of accolades, however restrained at times, may well have contributed to the longevity of the morris in this community.

In this paper I have briefly outlined a number of important historical facets of the society in which the morris as a cultural phenomenon occurred. I have indicated the status and social standing of the majority of dancers within their communities: manual workers towards the bottom end of the social hierarchy, a little above the paupers and unemployed and even finding themselves in these situations at times.⁷⁸ The borderline between existence and near-starvation on which much of the labouring population appear to have lived meant that a high proportion of children died at an early age and of those males who did survive not all would have been suitable to become dancers. This would have been exacerbated during periods of economic dearth which affected the community as a whole and thereby produced a situation whereby the very period during which the morris could be exploited to provide extra sustenance coincided with a reduction of potential largesse for the performers.⁷⁹

At the beginning of his published works, Sharp noted that the right to dance the morris was passed on to a select group by invitation of the leader of the side⁸⁰ and the evidence of intermarriage both defines the 'select group' and suggests that this was indeed the norm. However, whereas Sharp saw this as a facet of dancing for the sake of tradition and custom, I have tried to argue that in view of the social milieu in which most of the rural morris was performed, the dancing was jealously guarded because of its potential as a means of extra income, other tangible benefits such as alcohol and food donated by entertained patrons and cultural diversion for the performers themselves in a society where, for men of such low social status, such opportunities were normally restricted.

There is a great danger inherent in specialisation: that is of isolating the favoured subject - in this instance the performers of a specific cultural phenomenon - from the numerous other factors in operation within the work/leisure pattern of the society under review. Intense physical labour, however intermittent, may be relieved by participation in one or another form of diversion. The choice is largely governed by individual inclination, talent and resources, but it is obvious that a man might wear many hats. He may be a singer, alehouse patron, cricketer, lover, fighter, mummer, darts player, dancer, horticulturalist, musician and probably a combination of some or all of these and many others. The application of official and popular written sources and the more vital oral interview makes it possible to restore a degree of humanity to the often anonymous and homogeneous sector of society commonly known as 'the folk'.

NOTES

1. The majority of morris-related material collected by Carter is contained in Manning MSS: Bodleian MS Top. Oxon d.200. See also Percy Manning, 'Some Oxfordshire Seasonal Festivals', Folk-Lore, VIII (1897), 307-324 and Percy Manning, 'Stray Notes on Oxfordshire Folklore', Folk-Lore, XIII (1902), 288-295
2. The anecdotes are generally historically rather worthless. For a typical example see Keith Chandler, 'The Morris at Twyford, Buckinghamshire', Morris Matters, 5, No.1 (1982), 4
3. The site of performance is not necessarily the indigenous location of the observed morris team.
4. The Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell of Little Crosby, Lancashire, edited by J. J. Bagley, transcribed and annotated by Frank Tyrer, 2 vols (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1968-70), I, 35
5. Gloucestershire C.R.O., ref. D/678/FAM/96D. For an analysis of the relevant account book see Keith Chandler, 'Morris dancing in the eighteenth-century: a newly discovered source', Lore and Language, forthcoming.

6. For a discussion of the dangers inherent in the idea of the "rural myth", however, see Michael Pickering, Village Song and Culture, (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1982), especially pages 19, 164 and 165
7. To what extent the benefits of prosperity filtered down to the community members at the bottom of the social scale we cannot say with certainty.
8. For examples of men lamenting the fact of fielding a team of inferior quality see Cecil Sharp, The Morris Book, Volume 5 (London: Novello, 1924), p.77, and Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, (unpublished MS, deposited in Clare College, Cambridge), volume 1, folio 141. For the problems of getting a musician at Bampton see the letter from William "Jingy" Wells to Douglas Kennedy, 3 February 1922, 'The Writings of "Jinky" Wells', Folk Music Journal 2, No.1, (1970), 4
9. For example if the dancers were given too much alcohol and could not continue dancing. See, for example, the letter from Curtis to D'Arcy Ferrers, 6 January 1886, in Ferrers MS (unpublished), deposited in Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, GRQ/35
10. See, for example, my unpublished B.A. dissertation, University of Lancaster, 1979, 'Morris Dancing in the South Midlands: A Social History'; and 'Morris Dancing at Brackley: A Study in Longevity', English Dance and Song, 43, No.1, (1981), 16-18
11. For a brief review of the process involved see Roy Dommett, 'The Cotswold Morris in the Twentieth Century', Traditional Dance Volume One: Proceedings of the Traditional Dance Conference held at Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, 28 March 1981, edited by Theresa Buckland (Alsager: Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, 1982)
12. For some general examples see Pamela Horn, 'Agricultural Trade Unionism and Emigration', The Historical Journal, XV, No.1, (1972); and Ross Duncan, 'Case Studies in Emigration: Cornwall, Gloucestershire and New South Wales, 1877-1886', The Economic History Review, second series, XVI, No.2, (1963). For specific negative effects on south Midland morris sides see Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, op.cit, volume IV, folio 92 for Twyford, and volume IV, folio 12b for Idbury.
13. Conversely, this would have given an incentive to those teams which were able to exploit the situation. William Walton said that the sides from Adderbury, Long Handborough and Wooton always danced at Banbury Fair during Whit week (Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, op. cit., volume IV, folio 58); while local newspapers describe the visitors to Bampton on Whit Monday as, for example, "many visitors were present in the town as on similar occasions" (Witney Express, 1 June 1882, p.8) and "a multitude of people" (ibid, 17 May 1883, p.5). A correspondent to the Bicester Advertiser and Brackley Observer wrote in 1882, "... I suppose the railway is the real aggressor in curtailing village feasts and festivals." (9 June 1882, p.4). For a succinct overview of the progress of railway development during the nineteenth century see, The Oxford Region, Trevor Rowley, editor (Oxford University Department for External Studies, 1980), pp.60-61
14. For example William "Jingy" Wells' brother John, who left Bampton to live in London in 1887 when aged sixteen.

15. This has been ably and convincingly documented for Oxfordshire by Alun Howkins in Whitsun in Nineteenth Century Oxfordshire (Oxford: History Workshop Pamphlet No.8, 1972) and 'The Taming of Whitsun: The Changing Face of a Nineteenth-Century Rural Holiday', in Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590 - 1914: Explorations in the History of Labour and Leisure, edited by Eileen and Stephen Yeo, (Brighton: Harvester, 1981) pp.187-208
16. See Pamela Horn, 'Agricultural Trade Unionism in Oxfordshire', in Rural Discontent in Nineteenth Century Britain, edited by J. P. D. Dunbabin, (London: Faber, 1974); J. P. D. Dunbabin, 'The Incidence and Organisation of Agricultural Trade Unionism in the 1870s', Agricultural History Review, XVI, (1968); and Pamela Horn, Agricultural Trade Unionism in Oxfordshire, (Oxfordshire Record Society, volume XLVIII, 1974)
17. For example cricket and flower shows. See Alun Howkins, op.cit.
18. For much of the nineteenth century the Anglican parish registers record the occupation of the fathers in the baptism register and often of both parties in the marriage register.
19. William "Merry" Kimber of Headington Quarry for example, who left school at the age of nine and worked as a bird scarer, (Anon. 'Notes on William Kimber', Vaughan Williams Library, Lib. Coll: AL/KIMBER.)
20. A. S. T. Fisher, The History of Kencot Oxfordshire (privately printed, no date), p.110. For the original census enumeration books see P.R.O. reference HO.107.1731
21. Constant Billy. Music and Memories of a Morris-man II. William Wells (fiddler). Folktracks tape FSA-90-084. (The Centre for Oral Traditions, Totnes)
22. Raphael Samuel, 'Quarry roughs: life and labour in Headington Quarry, 1860-1920. An essay in oral history', in Village Life and Labour, edited by Raphael Samuel (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), pp.139-263
23. Although available from 1801, it is only from 1841 onwards that the inhabitants of each community are named and details of age and occupation (head of the household only in 1841, each member of the household from 1851 onwards). The one hundred year delay in issue means that 1881 is the latest available.
24. P.R.O. reference HO.107.1732, schedule 90; RG.9.901, schedule 107; RG.10.1455, schedule 97
25. P.R.O. reference HO.107.1732, schedule 3; RG.9.910, schedule 10; RG.10.1455, schedule 13
26. P.R.O. reference HO.107.1732, schedule 3; RG.9.910, schedule 9
27. P.R.O. reference HO.107.1732, schedule 51; RG.9.901, schedule 65; RG.10.910, schedule 70
28. G. A. Rowell, 'Notes on Some Old-Fashioned English Customs: The Mummers; The Morris-Dancers; Whitsun-Ales; Lamb Ales', Folklore Journal, IV, (1886), 108
29. For a discussion of the process in one area of north Oxfordshire see Michael Pickering, op. cit., especially pages 12-13 and chapter 4
30. Although one of Carter's informants at Leafield remembered Frederick Shayler as a farmer (Bodleian MS. Top. Oxon. d 200, fol225), this is a red herring. In 1851, when aged twenty, Shayler worked as a wood labourer (P.R.O. reference HO.107.1732, Book II, schedule 5), while ten years later he was enumerated in Whichwood as a gamekeeper (P.R.O. reference RG.9.910, schedule 3), a position he appears to have held for more than twenty years (Witney Express, 17 May 1877). The first mention of Shayler as a farmer comes in 1893, when he is so designated in the Leafield Marriage Register at the marriage of his daughter Emma (17 January 1893). He was buried on 2 May 1908 in Leafield.
31. Asthall Baptism Register: Masfen Charles Hart, baptised 17 January 1813.
32. Brize Norton Baptism Register: Elizabeth, daughter of Misfen and Sarah Hart, labourer. Baptised 22 December 1833.
33. Brize Norton census enumeration book: P.R.O. reference HO.107.872, Book II, schedule 15.
34. Alice Hadfield, The Chartist Land Company (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1970) p.162
35. Ibid., p.162; quoting The Northern Star, 1 June 1848
36. Ibid., p.170
37. Finstock census enumeration book, P.R.O. reference HO.107.1732, schedule 57; RG.9.901, schedule 67.
38. Presumably in the obscured mists of antiquity when the morris originated this was by design rather than accident.
39. Raphael Samuel, 'Village Labour', in Village Life and Labour, edited by Raphael Samuel, p.7
40. In 1841 the night of 7 June was chosen for the census tally. This coincided with the Lamb Ale at Kirtlington and so distorted the population figures for that village, with 86 persons not normally resident there. The note by the enumerator is interesting:
 "There is a feast kept on Trinity Monday called a Lamb Ale which is supposed to have been held annually for upwards of 500 years which is always visited by Gipsys and People with Stalls."
 (P.R.O. reference HO.107.886)
41. 1851 (30 March), 1861 (7 April), 1871 (2 April) and 1881 (3 April)
42. An invaluable account of such a quest in search of employment by Henry Broadhurst (a mason from Littlemore, near Wheatley) to London, Buckingham, Banbury and East Anglia is printed in Useful Toil, edited by John Burnett (London: Allen Lane, 1974), pp.312-320
43. It is impossible to assess the effect which this absence of dancers had on the performance of the morris in their home communities. I hope to examine the phenomenon of the peripatetic rural morris in the near future.

201






44. Richard Heath, The English Peasant. Studies: Historical, Local and Biographic (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1893; reprinted by EP Publishing Limited, 1978), p.45
45. Letter from Revd. J. C. Young, 1857; quoted in E. M. H. Ibbotson, 'Ilmington in the Nineteenth Century', The Local Historian, 9, No.7, (1971), 339
46. The Waterloo Arms at Finstock (now a garage), known locally as The Flying Pisspot, was a public house of some disrepute. According to Michael Heaney, the impression given by the informant was that the landlord was in collusion with the poachers.
47. Oxford Chronicle, 6 May 1865, p.7; *ibid*, 29 May 1880, p.8; Jacksons Oxford Journal, 10 June 1882, p.8. It is interesting to note that the use of a firearm elicited a heavier fine.
48. T. W. Chaundy, 'William Kimber, a Portrait', Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, IX, No.1, (1960), p.209
49. Quoted in Richard Heath, *op. cit.*, p.60. The social problems noted in this source would presumably have meant that within any given generation there would have been a reduced number of males sufficiently fit to perform so strenuous an activity as the morris.
50. For some examples seen in Oxfordshire see *ibid*, pp.224-225
51. Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, volume II, folio 123.
52. See above, note 5.
53. Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, volume II, folio 46.
54. This may be either long-established or an import from elsewhere, as for example at Ilmington around 1805 (Stratford-on-Avon Herald, 23 August 1912. Letter from Sam Bennett) or at Blackwell, where the Cooper family were said to have brought the tradition from the Forest of Dean (Letter from Mrs. Stanton to Cecil Sharp. Folk Dance Notes, volume I, folio 107)
55. There are many examples of migrant males settling in a community, marrying a local girl and then dancing in the morris.
56. Brackley Marriage Register 1837-1877: Warwick C.R.O. reference 42 P/13. The occupations of the sons reflect those of the fathers, with four labourers, one carter and one carpenter
57. Keith Chandler, 'The Morris at Ducklington: A Chronological Analysis', English Dance and Song, forthcoming.
58. Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, volume I, folio 144. There is no indication of animosity between the three teams in the evidence of Joseph Druce.
59. Carpenter MSS: Library of Congress Mss. Music 3109. Copy in Vaughan Williams Library. Microfilm Reel 2, Box 1, Packet 3, Frame 512; Eynsham Marriage Register: 13/4/1889; A. D. Townsend Collection: Interview with Ada Gardner, daughter of Fred Harwood, 12 June 1981. The two customs were probably conjoined after 1901 (See the Witney Gazette, 5 January 1901, p.8)
60. Bucknell Marriage Register: 25 November 1829; Bodleian MS. Top. Oxon. d 200, folio 224
61. Folktracks tape FSA-90-084
62. Bampton Baptism Register: 2 June 1776; Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, volume II, folio 92. Any confusion arising from this section should be alleviated by frequent reference to the accompanying family tree. I gratefully acknowledge my debt to Michael Heaney, who drew up a first draft in 1979.
63. "Jingy" Wells said that his uncle had been involved with the morris for a total of fifty-two years in 1914, which would give a date of primary involvement of 1862 (Letter from Wells to Miss Taylor and Friends, 28 February 1922, printed in Folk Music Journal, 2, No.1, p.6)
64. In 1922 Wells wrote, "40 years ago three of my uncles were dancing out of the six and my Grand Father, George Wells was then carrying the Sword Box and Cake ..." (*ibid.*). Arnold Woodley has a copy of the earliest known photograph of the Bampton team, probably taken by Henry Taunt in 1886, which shows that Radband was already carrying the cake by this date.
65. Folktracks tape FSA-90-084. Taylor was involved first as a dancer then, when the old fool Joe Akers was found dead in a snowdrift in 1881, as fool for four or five years. (Letter from Wells to Miss Taylor and Friends, 28 February 1922)
66. In the Manning MSS (Bodleian MS Top. Oxon. d 200, folio 174) the note besides the name of John Hall reads "Foreman U.S.A." which might imply that Hall had emigrated. For Robert Hall Jordan as foreman see Cecil Sharp, Folk Dance Notes, volume II, folio 123.
67. Radband died between 1851 and 1861, when in the census enumeration books for Weald his wife Mary is listed as a widow (P.R.O. reference RG.9.905, schedule 138)
68. Percy Manning, 'Some Seasonal Oxfordshire Festivals', Folk-Lore, VIII (1897), p.309
69. Bampton Baptism Register: Jane Tanner, daughter of Ann Wells, baptised 4 September 1836
70. Incidentally, William Portlock's daughter Louise later married one of Charles Tanner senior's non-dancing sons; and also relevant (although outside the scope of this paper), Thomas Portlock's grandson Thomas Albert "Son" Townsend danced during the 1920s and 1930s, fooled for Arnold Woodley during the 1950s, then for the Shergolds during the 1960s and again for Arnold from 1971 to date.
71. The confusion over family relationships is further compounded by the entry in the 1871 census enumeration book for Weald, (P.R.O. reference RG.10.1451, schedule 153) where Ann Wells' illegitimate children are named Willie and John Taylor.
72. These included money payments and trips to London and elsewhere at the expense of the collectors.


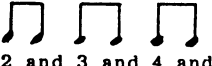


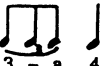
73. William "Jingy" Wells MSS (unpublished). I am indebted to Roy Dommett for a resume of this little-seen source. "Jingy's" brother John went with him and Arthur Dixey to dance at the Esperance Club on 28 August 1912 despite his lack of experience and this reflects Wells' nepotistic attitude. (Clive Carey MSS (unpublished): Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, Brown notebooks, number IV, folio 19).
74. Frank did little actual dancing, acting mainly as coat carrier; but Bobby danced often during the 1920s and 1930s then carried the cake regularly until the 1960s.
75. Tanner was also one of Alfred Williams' major song informants. See Alfred Williams, Folk Songs of the Upper Thames (1923: reprinted by EP Publishing Limited, 1970)
76. First Dick Butler from around 1880 to 1897; then William "Jingy" Wells until 1948. For a brief account of the inter-familial problems within the Bampton morris and the regular appearance of two distinct teams from 1927 on, see Roy Dommett in Traditional Dance: Volume One, pp.70-71; Oxford Times, 1 June 1928, p.9; and the letter from Wells to Schofield dated 2 June 1938, Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, Lib. Coll. GRQ/258.
77. A correspondent to the Oxford Times, 10 June 1876, p.8, notes that the custom of morris dancing, "like most of the ancient amusements in England, appears to be dying out and it is to the credit of Headington that every year that village sends forth a band of dancers ..."; a long account of the performance of the Brackley side on 3 June 1884 reported in the Banbury Guardian, 12 June 1884, p.3, observes that "in many places it is supposed that the old custom had entirely died out years ago ..."; while the Witney Express for 17 June 1886, p.3, wrote that "one rarely hears anything now of the 'Morris Dances' which were performed a few centuries ago ..."
78. For example, the Kencot dancer Thomas Sates, who in 1850 was receiving poor relief following the death of his wife in child-birth (A. S. T. Fisher, The History of Kencot Oxfordshire, p.129); or the Bampton dancer George Wells (baptised 1852), who in 1871 was an "agricultural labourer, out of employ" at the time of the census (Census enumeration books for Weald: P.R.O. reference RG.10.1451, schedule 153)
79. See the evidence of William Cartwright of Launton concerning the effects of dearth during the Crimean War, in George Butterworth MSS: Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, volume X, folio 5; printed in Folk Music Journal, 3, No.3 (1977), p.194.
80. Cecil Sharp, The Morris Book, I (London: Novello, 1912, second edition), p.43

CORRIGENDA TO VOLUME ONE

'Solo Step Dancing Within Living Memory in North Norfolk',
Traditional Dance, Volume One, p.43.

The second and third lines of music should read:


 1 and
 
 could be
 
 1 and a
 
 or
 
 1 an and a


 1 an and a
 
 2 and 3 and 4 and
 
 1 and a
 
 2 - a
 
 3 - a 4

Peter Clifton and Ann-Marie Hulme