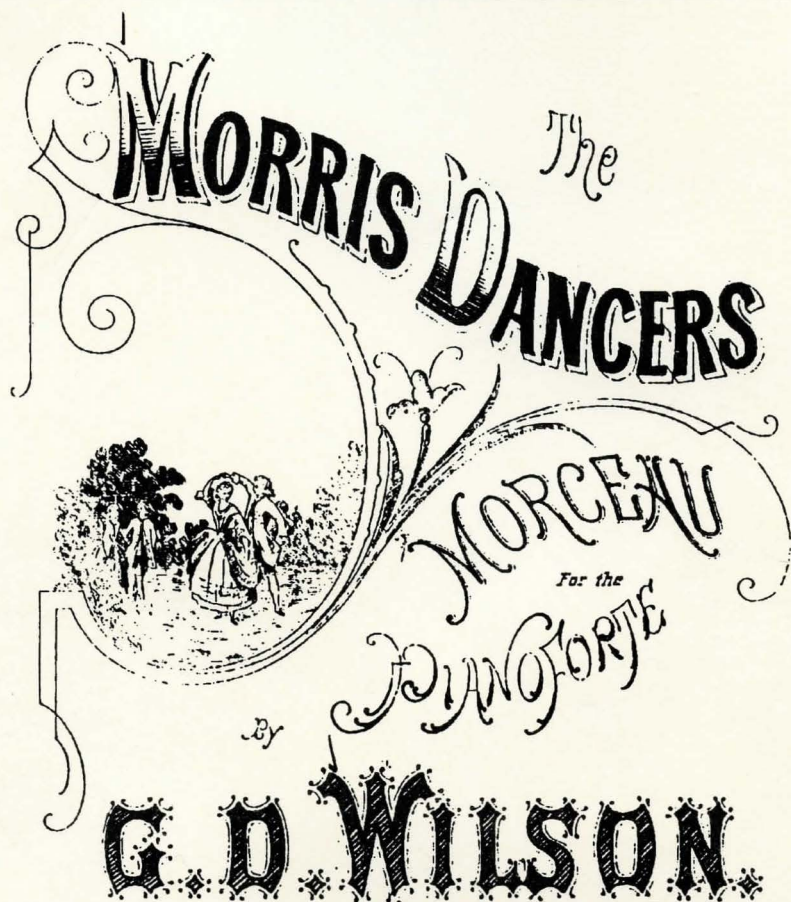


COUNTRY DANCE AND SONG

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Cover: Figure 1 for "Morris Dancing and America": frontispiece for 1878 sheet music, reprinted courtesy of the Library of Congress.

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Figure 2. "Morris Dancers at the Gates Of Blenheim Park" by William Nicholson (1909). (Courtesy of the Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington, Connecticut).

Morris Dance and America Prior to 1913

by Rhett Krause*

This article consists of American accounts of morris dancing. It is limited to the years before the arrival of Claude Wright, one of Cecil Sharp's morris instructors, in 1913. The stories of Wright, Sharp, and the founding of the American branch of the English Folk Dance Society (later CDS) are left for the future.

The Cotswold Morris in England Prior to 1913

Morris was a common event in England at the time of the exploration of America. The "Cotswold" morris survived and flourished in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, and Northamptonshire through the 18th and early 19th centuries, but was in decline by the latter part of the 19th century.¹ Early revivals of defunct teams included Bidford in 1886 and Headington in 1897.² Yet Cotswold morris was a rare event in the first years of this century, with dancing limited to Bampton, Chipping Campden, Abingdon, Headington, Eynsham, and Bidford.³

The revival boomed in popularity beginning in 1905, initially through the efforts of Mary Neal and her Esperance Club for working girls. Learning of the existence of the Headington men from Cecil Sharp, Neal began to collect and teach morris throughout England. She was soon joined by Sharp, and the two initially worked together in harmony. Sharp and Herbert MacIlwaine, the musical director of the Esperance Club, co-authored *The Morris Book* in 1907, dedicating it "to our friends and pupils, the members of the Esperance Girls Club."⁴

The collaboration of Neal and Sharp gradually deteriorated into bitter rivalry. Neal had a populist, romantic view of the revival, believing she was returning to the English people a therapeutic part of their national heritage, leading to "a reawakening of that part of our national conscience which makes for wholeness, saneness, and healthy merriment."⁵ She feared Sharp's more academic approach would stifle the movement. The difference between Sharp's views and her own were "the difference between...the pedant and those in touch with life itself."⁶ Sharp was appalled at perceived inaccuracies and lack of standards of the Esperance dancers, and feared this would trivialize and eventually kill the revival. He wrote to Neal that he was "better acquainted with the subject than yourself and animated by higher artistic ideals than your own."

*Rhett Krause is Radiology Resident at Lahey Clinic, Burlington, MA, and has danced with Greenwich Guard rapper team, Marlboro Morris Men, Kirtlington England Morris team and as "Betty" for the Longwood Rapper. He would like to express his thanks for the assistance and encouragement provided by Ed Wilfert, Roy Judge, Tony Barrand, Roy Dommett, Michael Heaney, Jan Elliott, and Malcolm Taylor.

Esperance-taught dancers were "rank philistines and enemies of the movement and must be so regarded."⁷

The two arch-rivals continued their teaching and collecting, each with some success. Neal would soon publish *The Esperance Morris Book* (Part 1), and in 1910 her Esperance Guild of Morris Dancers was given the prestigious position of conducting the first annual summer school at Stratford-on-Avon. Meanwhile, Sharp would publish *The Morris Book, Part Two*, and was asked to head a School of Morris Dancing to train schoolteachers. These early efforts of Sharp and Neal have been described elsewhere in detail.⁸ This was the state of the morris revival in England in 1910, when Mary Neal was invited to bring the Morris to America.

Morris Dancing in Newfoundland in 1589?

The first morris dancing in America may have occurred in Newfoundland during the ill-fated second voyage of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the half brother of Sir Walter Raleigh. Gilbert set sail in June 1583 in five ships (the *Delight*, *Raleigh*, *Golden Hinde*, *Swallow*, and *Sparrow*) in an attempt to establish the first permanent English colony in the New World. Edward Haies, captain of the *Golden Hinde*, records: "Besides for solace of our people, and allurement of the Savages, we were provided of Musike in good variety not omitting the least toyes, as Morris dancers, Hobby horses, and Maylike conceits to delight the Savage people, whom we intended to winne by all faire means possible."⁹ Unfortunately, there is no mention of the dances actually having been performed. Indeed, the would-be morris dancers may never have left sight of Great Britain, as the *Raleigh*, by far the largest ship, sailed back after only two days, the crew claiming illness.

Gilbert arrived in St. John's, Newfoundland, then a colony of fishermen, in August. The historian Samuel Eliot Morison writes "Ashore the morris dancers, hobby horses, and jack o' the greens cavorted, to the delight of the fishermen, many of whom joined in." This has been cited as an account of the first American morris.¹⁰ However, it seems to be merely Morison's conjecture of what might have taken place. Haies makes no mention of dancing at St. John's, nor is dancing mentioned in two surviving letters written at St. John's. The morris was certainly not performed for the "Savages," as no Native Americans were at St. John's. While there may have been morris dancing in Newfoundland that year, it remains speculation. In any event, this may have proved the last tour for many of the dancers as the *Delight* and the *Sparrow* were soon lost with great loss of life, including Gilbert.¹¹

American Influence on the 19th-Century English Morris

Long before the "traditional" English morris dances had been recorded, they had been influenced to some extent by popular American culture. At least three English morris tunes have American origins. The Bampton tune "Bobbing Around" was written

in 1856 by William Jermyn Florence (1831-1891), an American composer of popular song. The Catalogue of the British Library lists a copy of this, already printed in London by 1856, over 50 years before it was collected by Sharp. Next is the Headington tune "Getting Upstairs." The original version ("Such a Getting Upstairs") was written and composed sometime in the early 1830's by Joe Blackburn for blackface performers. The song travelled to England with American minstrel shows, and versions were soon published in London. Five decades later, Percy Manning would record a variant of the chorus as one of the songs of the Headington men:

Such a getting upstairs and playing on the fiddle,
Such a getting upstairs I never did see.

Years later the music and dance "Getting Upstairs" were collected by Sharp. Finally, there is "Buffalo Girls," another American minstrel show tune. Joe Trafford, the Headington squire, had heard it played by a military band and taught it to the team musician, with "Buffalo Gals" becoming one of the Headington men's tunes.¹²

Minstrel shows were extremely popular in England from 1843 until the first years of this century, and their effects on British folk culture are not limited to the few morris tunes listed above. Tess Buckland has recently demonstrated the connection between minstrel shows and 19th century English coconut dance teams, including the on-going Bacup Britannia Coconut Dancers (founded 1857). Possible influences of American minstrel shows are also seen in border morris. In contrast to their Cotswold morris contemporaries, the great majority of border morris dancers blacked up. This often included blacking of the hands, which would seem unnecessary if disguise were the exclusive intent. At Brimfield, some dancers had patches of white paint about the eyes, likely in imitation of G.H. Chirgwin, "the white-eyed kaffir," a popular British minstrel show performer. Musical instruments frequently included the tambourine and bones, the traditional instruments of the minstrel show "endmen." Buckland believes that in the border morris, "the melodies, words, and musical instruments of [blackface] minstrels were combined with an already existing tradition of annual street dancing."¹³

It is most commonly thought that the origin and function of black-face in morris dancing lies in primitive disguise rather than an imitation of black men. However, this is not definitely the case. Accounts of the morris of Shakespeare's time make no mention of blackface, while the border teams contemporary with minstrel shows typically blacked up. American minstrel shows, if not the actual origin of black face among morris dancers, at least contributed to its popularity.

Morris Dancing on Broadway: 1861

A New York City poster advertises a morris dance as part of a minstrel show given at the American Concert Hall at 444 Broadway. I have been able to date this as February or March 1861. The American arranger of the dance, Harry Leslie (1837-1876),

had been previously associated with minstrel shows as musician, dancer, and manager, and had run a New York City dance academy in 1856. The nine female dancers were American professional dancers and actresses whose names frequently appear in *Annals of the New York Stage*. Mary Blake seems to have been particularly popular. In addition, through her marriages to Billy Quinn (1837-1863) and Bobby Newcomb (1847-1888) she was wife of two of the most prominent professional American clog dancers of the time.¹⁴

Contemporary with this Broadway performance, some form of "morris dancing" by professional performers was regularly seen on the English stage. Few details are known of the choreography. Roy Judge has recently named this phenomenon "theatrical morris" and has discovered 50 references to it between 1821 and 1870.¹⁵ Leslie's dance may have been inspired by these English performances, but this is mere speculation.

Morris Music in America

In the years prior to 1913, four pieces of sheet music involving morris dancing were published in the U.S. The earliest of these is "The Morris Dancers" by an American named Glenville Dean Wilson (1833-1897), printed in Boston in 1878 (Figure 1: Cover). Next is "Morris Dance" by Sir Alexander MacKenzie (1847-1935) printed in New York and London in 1899. The third work is "Morris Dance" by Harry Ernest Warner, printed in Philadelphia in 1904. Finally, "Mock Morris" by Percy Grainger (1882-1961) was printed in 1911 in New York, Boston, and London. None of the four pieces resembles any morris tune familiar to me, and they are most likely original works of professional composers. Indeed, Grainger makes it clear that his is an original work: "The rhythmic cast of 'Mock Morris' somewhat resembles traditional English morris tunes...though no actual tunes were made use of. The piece was prompted by the motto: 'Always merry and bright.'" Four additional pieces of "morris dance" sheet music were printed in the U.S. later in this century.¹⁶

A Painting of the Eynsham Morris Men

For many years, a 1903 painting of the Eynsham morris men has been in Farmington Connecticut. It was collected by Alfred Pope (1842-1913) whose private home and art collection are now the Hill-Stead Museum. The artist is Sir William Nicholson (1872-1949), a prominent English painter of his time. Nicholson spent part of his childhood in Woodstock, the location of the Duke of Marlborough's massive residence at Blenheim Palace where the Eynsham men danced each year. Nicholson lived in Woodstock from 1897 to 1903, and during this time did a series of paintings of the Eynsham men. His son Tony (b. 1897) became a part of the team: "And in another two years time, Tony was up on his sturdy legs, big enough to wear the little smock made for him by Mabel (Nicholson), to have a red and white spotted bandana knitted around his neck and to ride the ass with garlanded neck and beribboned tail which accompanied the morris dancers. It was Tony, with his round, smiling face, who took round the hat for

their collections, and who, at some moment in the dance, high in the air, up above their heads."¹⁷ The Hill-Stead's painting, "Morris Dancers at the Gates of Blenheim Park (Figure 2) shows figures dwarfed by the massive Blenheim gate; the young boy carrying the inflated pig's bladder is presumably Tony Nicholson.

American References to the Traditional Cotswold Morris in England

Two American magazine articles describe the morris of the traditional Cotswold village teams, by Max Beerbohm and O. L. Hatcher, respectively. Sir Max Beerbohm (1872-1956), famous English essayist and a lifelong friend of William Nicholson, described his impressions of the Eynsham men dancing at Woodstock in *Harper's Magazine* in 1907 and illustrated his article with four of Nicholson's paintings. This was reprinted in England in 1923 as part of *Yet Again*, a collection of his essays. In his essay, "A Morris for Mayday", Beerbohm describes the dancing, including an incident in which a honking automobile drives through a set of dancers, demoralizing them (possibly the first instance of an event well known to current sides). In his *Harper's* essay, Beerbohm believes that much of the beauty of the morris lies in the village tradition, and that it would be better off vanished than revived by outsiders: "I hope it will be held sacred to those in whom it will be a tradition--a familiar thing handed down from father to son. None but they would be worthy of it. Others would ruin it." His position is stated most strongly in his last paragraph: "I would make no effort to conserve them.... If this dance cannot live without desecration, let it die". In *Yet Again*, Beerbohm alters his essay significantly by rewriting the final paragraph. "Long may the morris linger," he writes, "even at the expense of being danced by aesthetic ladies and gentlemen." This softening of views is likely related to the popularity of the morris revival.¹⁸

The second American reference to morris is by O. L. Hatcher and appears in *The Nation*. The informant is a Warwickshire man who had danced the morris as a boy near Stratford around 1870. A brief description of the dancing is given, including the presence of a hobby horse carrying an inflated pig's bladder, and a fiddler for a musician. Their kit included, "smocks, top hats, knee britches with bells at their knees, and ribbons crossed on their legs and arms." The informant describes nine morris men dancing in a circle. To my knowledge, this is the sole reference to a nine-man Cotswold morris dance. The use of nine men is supported by two of the morris songs recorded by the author:

Nine men in a circle doth stand,
Each one ready to clasp in hand...

and

We nine men, bold and sound
We'll amuse you, round your town.

A total of 77 lines of verse were taken from the informant. These include a short song apparently associated with the custom of requesting a token of appreciation from the audience in exchange for the dancing:

A stick or a stake
 For King George's sake.
 I pray thee old dame
 Give us a faggot or two,
 And if not, we'll take two
 As us used to do.¹⁹

The First American Morris Book-1910

In 1910, *The Morris Dance: Descriptions of Eleven Dances as Performed by the Morris Men of England* by Josephine Brower was published in New York by the H. W. Gray Company. This book is very similar to Sharp and MacIlwaine's *The Morris Book, Part One* of 1907, containing the same eight Headington and three Bidford dances. The author notes that the dance descriptions were taken with the permission of Sharp and MacIlwaine. The New York publisher is noted to be an agent for Novello and Co., Ltd., of London, publisher of the *Morris Book*.

This book is an all-but-forgotten curiosity and a bit of a mystery. It is not clear to me why this book was published. Why did the authors and publishers of the *Morris Book* allow essentially the same information to be published under another title, rather than distributing the original work? Also, for what audience was this book intended? While there was an active folk dance movement at that time in America, the first morris dancers would not arrive until the end of 1910.

How the Morris Came to America

America had been primed for the introduction of morris dancing in 1910 by a recent interest in folk dance. This was encouraged by the Playground Association of America, founded in 1907 with President Roosevelt as honorary president. In a 1908 essay, Dr. Luther Henry Gulick, president of the association, described this revival and its rationale. Folk dancing for children was seen as filling a social and developmental void caused by the rapid pace of the modern world. In 1907, folk dance was introduced to the New York school system as part of Physical Education (two years before morris dancing was accepted in English schools). In this city of many immigrants, folk dance was felt to have the additional effect of maintaining children's pride in their national heritage, while breaking down racism between immigrant groups. The revival grew to include competitions between schools and huge outdoor displays.

Folk dance was also perceived as beneficial to adults. Helen Storrow (later director of EFDS Boston Center and provider of the land for Pinewoods camp)

saw a particular benefit to stressed urban working women. In a 1911 address, she even anticipated "industrial league" morris competitions: "I look forward to the day when the ribbon counter of the Jordan Marsh Company will dance the ribbon counter of Filene's, and the floorwalkers of Macy's will compete at 'Shepherd's Hey' with the floorwalkers of Altman's for a trophy offered by those famous houses".²⁰

To understand the introduction of morris to America, we must introduce four other women: a Danish-born ballerina--Adeline Genée, a New York City writer--Emily Burbank, and a London cockney--Mary Neal--and her colleague Florence Warren. Adeline Genée (1878-1970) was an extraordinarily popular ballerina in both Europe and America. From 1897 to 1907 at one London theatre alone, she was the leading ballerina in 20 different ballets. Emily M. Burbank (born c. 1869) was a professional writer and an acquaintance of Genée's. Among her works was a series of three articles on woman artists for *Putnam's Magazine*, including a 1908 article on Genée which described her as "the greatest dancer the world has seen for half a century." In 1909 Burbank had been travelling throughout eastern Europe studying folk music and dance and in July was in London to lecture on her findings. There she met Genée, who invited Burbank to a fund-raising exhibition by the Esperance dancers. This was Burbank's first exposure to morris dancing, and she would soon invite Mary Neal to come to America to introduce the morris there. Neal agreed to a three-month trip and chose Florence Warren to accompany her as dance instructor.²¹

Florrie Warren (b. 1886) for years had been the leading dancer of the Esperance Guild. MacIlwaine noted the steps for *The Morris Book, Part One* from her dancing, and she was to write the dance descriptions for both of the Esperance morris books. By all accounts, Warren was a gifted dancer and teacher with a charming personality. Maud Karpeles found her "exuberant and vital." *The Times* of London described her dancing "as wonderful in its way as anything accomplished by the world famous artists of the ballet. In her trim blue dress, simple white apron, and blue sunbonnet she personifies the grace-in-beauty of English girlhood." Warren was the obvious choice for Neal. She had spent the past five years travelling throughout England, instructing diverse groups such as the urban poor, school teachers, and the children of wealthy Lords and Ladies. She had met several of the traditional dancers and had been the chief instructor at Stratford-on-Avon in 1910. Neal and Warren set sail from Liverpool aboard the SS *Arabic* on December 3, 1910, and arrived in New York eight days later. Immigration records show that they were to stay at Emily Burbank's home at 137 East 73rd Street.²²

Four days after arriving in this country, Neal and Warren were featured in an article in *The New York Tribune*. The next month, a larger illustrated article appeared in *The New York Times*. Brief histories of the morris dance and of the Esperance Club are recounted. The theories of the origins of the morris current in 1910 were dominated by the perception of morris as a survival of a pre-Christian ritual. Neal describes the Kirtlington Lamb Ale to both newspapers, with the Lady of that event originally the subject of a human sacrifice, and later coming to represent the Virgin Mary in a miracle play. A later American magazine article notes "Women dance the morris without

prejudice now, tho in the earliest times their presence was permitted only as a Druid sacrifice."²³

Neal's populist views of the morris dance are evident in these articles, as is a very thinly disguised attack on Cecil Sharp, printed in *The New York Times* article: "(the dances) are not an entertainment given by a few highly trained exhibitors while the rest stand around and stare. The point is that the whole people join in. It is an eminently democratic thing and can live only as long as it preserves this spirit. The introduction of pedantry, of sophisticated art, would utterly kill the movement." At this time Neal also felt that Sharp had been in contact with Americans concerning morris dancing and she is clearly bitter, writing back to England: "Cecil Sharp has done his best to poison people's minds over here. But we are here and he is not!... I do not think he will ever come now."²⁴

One intriguing comment in the *Tribune* article suggests that some Americans were already morris dancing by 1910: "Miss Neal says that she does not see how the English peasant dances hitherto taught in America can be genuine, for she is sure that she was the first to dig them out from the byways of the mother country." The nature and source of these "English peasant dances" are not known to me.

Upon arriving in New York, Warren was given the responsibility of training three sides of morris dancers for a major display in nine days: the annual Christmas Festival of the MacDowell Club, to be held 20 December 1910 at the ballroom of the Hotel Plaza, "one of the season's brilliant events." Accounts of the event briefly mention the "merry troop of morris dancers." Neal was quite pleased with the show, writing back to the Esperance Guild's music director Clive Carey about Warren's "wonderful debut" where she danced "with distinguished artists of all sorts, won everyone's hearts, and had a glorious time at the ball after." Writing from New York in February 1911, Neal mentions that the dancers in the first show were members of the MacDowell Club. Warren probably gave several other New York City performances that winter, although I can only find specific references to two of them.²⁵

Neal and Warren next began to teach morris to school teachers, with one goal being to have a side available to illustrate lectures. Three photos from these early days in New York City are preserved in the New York Public Library. They were used to illustrate a magazine article on the morris dance in America published March 1911 in New York City (Figures 3 and 4).²⁶

Mary Neal travelled to Boston that winter and gave a lecture on morris dancing to the Twentieth Century Club. Several sources suggest that Warren taught morris in the Boston area sometime between February and April of 1911, although no details are available. Certainly by April 26, Helen Storrow and the Women's Athletic Association were able to sponsor an exhibition of international folk dance that included the morris dances "Rigs O' Marlow," "Bean Setting," and "Shepherd's Hey."²⁷

At about this time, Adeline Genée arrived in New York to perform in a duet, "The Dryad," limited to single performances at Carnegie Hall on 4 May 4 1911, and at Boston's Colonial Theatre the following day, as she was due back in London for the



Figures 3,4 Florrie Warren and her New York morris dancers; taken between 12/11/10 and 3/4/11. The woman with long braids who appears in both of these photos is Warren. (Courtesy of the New York Public Library Performing Arts Research Center, Lincoln Center).



festivities surrounding the coronation of George V. Genee invited Warren and her dancers to share the stage and billing with her, an incredibly generous offer by this international star, especially since the morris dancers had, at most, five months' experience (Figure 5). The reviews of these performances naturally concentrate on the efforts of Genee, with very brief mention of Warren's troupe. The *Boston Globe* was favorably impressed by the "jocund and blithesome...four pairs of morris dancers." The *Boston Herald* critic was less kind, sniffing, "these dancers, so called, hopped and skipped about and were applauded. A little of this sort of thing goes a long way." Back in London, *The Times* noted "the kind courtesy of Adeline Genee (whom we all adore...), who refused to take precedence over Florence Warden (sic), the mistress of the Esperance Club dancers, when they met on a New York stage, and the one helped the other to extend the revival of English folk dancing to America." This same article predicts that "We may yet hear of a "side" of American Morris-men, multi-millionaires every one, dancing the Processional Morris down Wall Street."²⁸

Warren next travelled to Hartford, Connecticut with several of her New York dancers. Over ten days, they instructed approximately 40 Hartford residents. Their efforts culminated in a May 20 exhibition at 21 woodland Street, home of Archibald Welch, a prominent insurance executive and future President of Phoenix Mutual. Warren gave solo demonstrations of the Somerset step dance and the jig "Jockie to the Fair." The remainder of the program included six morris dances, two social dances, five children's games, and three folksongs.²⁹

From Hartford, Warren travelled to Albany, New York for one of her greatest successes. Mary Neal had lectured in Albany that February. Neal's lecture and word of Warren's success in New York and Boston led to her being hired for two weeks. The *Knickerbocker Press* ran a formal portrait of Warren and a description of her first classes. The number of willing school children and teachers was so large that they were divided into three separate sections, each of a more "manageable" 48 dancers. Warren's teaching was so well received that on June 1, she was hired for another four weeks with up to 200 additional students expected. The goal of these classes was a massive display of morris dancing as part of the Fourth of July celebrations in Albany. At that time, there was a national campaign to promote a "safe and sane" holiday, and the morris was considered a safe alternative to the large firecrackers and firing of guns that led to an appalling death rate each year. During these four weeks, the students were almost exclusively public school girls. The (*Albany*) *Times Union* notes, "The unbounded enthusiasm which these pretty dances have aroused in the young people who will take part has surprised even...the chairman of the committee. Miss Warren has so imbued them with terpsichorean spirit that several families have been obliged to remain in town over the Fourth in contravention of summer home plans, that the youngsters may take part." A dress rehearsal was held July 1, with 200 girls representing eight different schools. On the Fourth itself, despite 104-degree heat, "the feature of the day's events was easily the morris....Arrangements were excellent and an immense crowd was able to see the pretty dances. Everywhere was heard expressions of approval." At the conclusion of the display,

it was hoped that morris dancing would become an annual part of Albany's Fourth of July festivities. Morris did indeed appear in the 1912 celebrations. The *Times Union* lists the names of 68 girls and 16 boys who danced "How Do You Do, Sir?" and 17 girls who danced "Princess Royal." Whether or not the tradition continued in other years is not known to me.³⁰

I have yet to find accounts of Warren's dancing activities after Albany. She is believed to have taught in Chicago sometime before 1915, according to Brown and Boyd in *Old English and American Games*, but details are not available. On Valentine's Day, 1912, Warren married Arthur H. Brown, an American, at the New York City home of Emily Burbank. On the same page as her *New York Times* wedding announcement is an article describing morris dancing at the Waldorf Astoria ballroom, indicating her success in bringing the morris to this country. In 1915, Florence Warren Brown co-authored a book on children's games. Otherwise, all that is currently known about her later life is that she and her husband were alive and well in 1937, when, celebrating their 25th anniversary, they sailed to England. Events there included a reunion of the Esperance dancers with Mary Neal, where Warren and others danced "Jockie to the Fair" for old times sake.³¹

While Warren was finding success in America, Mary Neal was back in England, witnessing a steady shift of fortune away from her and toward her arch rival, Cecil Sharp. In June 1911, control of morris dancing at Stratford-on-Avon was taken from her and given to Sharp. Her dancing activities ceased in 1914 with the onset of war, and she was not directly involved in morris again up to her death in 1944. Mary Neal does appear one more time in American newspapers. This was in 1913, at a time when society was scandalized by dance innovations such as the turkey trot and the tango. Helen Storrow, among others, thought the turkey trot should be banned. New dances were invented and old dances revived as substitutes for these unacceptable innovations. The *New York Times* quotes one instructor who sought to replace the tango with the highland fling: "Men of character are glad to quit the tango for a substitute that gives them the enjoyment of music and muscular exercise. The tango leads to reversion to type and savagery. It is the human race returning to the barbaric revels of our half wild ancestors. It is the law of evolution turned back upon itself." Against this backdrop, Mary Neal offered her advice to the *New York Times*. First she states that she had never seen the turkey trot "danced so disgustingly" as at a recent English ball, where the dance had to be stopped to restore decency. Then she offers more acceptable alternatives. While the morris would not be a good substitute for the tango, "I have heard it said that the sword dance would make a charming figure in a cotillion." Neal then goes on to push strongly Playford dances as tango substitutes. Not only are they graceful, social, and flirtatious, but "There is no hugging in them.... In some there is kissing, which can, of course, be easily omitted."³²

Conclusion

Prior to the 1905 revival of morris dancing in England, some Americans had at least a rudimentary understanding that morris dancing existed, most likely from old literary references.³³ Professional dancers created their version of a "morris dance" on Broadway in 1861. A few Americans composed fanciful morris music. However, there is no definite reference to true morris in 18th- or 19th-century America.

Between 1905 and 1910, American familiarity with morris increased with reports of the revival in England. During this time, the first illustrated article on morris was published in a widely read journal, and the first American morris instructional book was published. At least two Americans attended the first morris classes at Stratford-on-Avon in 1910, according to a note in *The (London) Times* on 12 August 1910, and others would follow in later years. Of more importance, America was sensitized to the upcoming introduction of morris dancing by our own growing folk dance movement.

When Sharp arrived in America in December 1914, he did not encounter a country completely ignorant of morris dancing. Indeed, his arrival was just days after the fourth anniversary of Florrie Warren's first New York performance. Since then, several hundred Americans in several east coast cities had been taught directly by Warren. Warren and her dancers had performed at high society functions, at massive outdoor displays, and at prestigious theatres, and this had all been duly reported by the press. Influential members of the folk dance community such as Helen Storrow of Boston and Elizabeth Burchenal of the New York Public School Athletic League had seen Warren's dancing. In 1912 alone, an estimated 25,000 New York City school children were said to have been taught folk dance, including morris.³⁴ Also, in 1913 Claude Wright would arrive from England and further contribute to American morris dancing.

Neal and Warren's work remains under-appreciated in England and all but unknown in this country. This is largely due to the passage of 75 years since the Esperance dancers faded from the scene, leaving Sharp and the EFDSS dominant on both sides of the Atlantic. However, a more sinister "deliberate suppression" of information about the past has been suspected by some.³⁵

By no means is this article meant to belittle Sharp. His contributions in this country and those of the people he worked with such as Helen Storrow, May Gadd, and Lily Conant are extensive, valuable, and of lasting effect. It would be an unfortunate error, however, to continue to ignore the work of Florrie Warren and Mary Neal, for it was they, with the help of Emily Burbank, who first brought the morris to America.

CARNEGIE HALL
 Thursday Afternoon - - May 4, 1911
 At 3 o'clock

MME. ADELINE GENÉE
ASSISTED BY
THE MORRIS DANCERS
AND
**THE NAHAN FRANKO
 ORCHESTRA**

PROGRAM
PART I.

1. OVERTURE, Le Cheval de Bronze . Auber
2. THE MORRIS DANCERS
3. TWO DANCES, Nell Gwyn . . . German

Program continued on second page following

J.B. Gilling & Co.
 WOMEN'S HIGH-CLASS OUTER APPAREL
 Fifth Avenue, 46th and 47th Streets New York

Figure 5. Carnegie Hall Program of May 4, 1911. (Courtesy of Carnegie Hall).

NOTES

1. Contemporary articles treated the morris as a curiosity of a past age, rather than as an ongoing tradition; see, for example, "Morris Dancing and May Day Games," *Walford's Antiquarian*, 9 (1886), 195-204.
2. Frank Kidson and Mary Neal, *English Folk Dance and Song* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), pp. 158-159, refer to Bidford; Manning Manuscript, Bodleian Library, Oxford University and *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (18 March 1899) cite Headington.
3. Michael Heaney. Personal Communication.
4. Cecil J. Sharp and Herbert C. MacIlwaine, *The Morris Book: A History of Morris Dancing With a Description of Eleven Dances as Performed by the Morris Men of England* (London: Novello and Co., Ltd., 1907), p. 3.
5. Mary Neal, "Set to Music," in *The Esperance Morris Book* (London: J. Curwen and Sons, Ltd., 1910), p. 2.
6. Mary Neal, quoted in *The (London) Morning Post* (5 May 1910), p. 3.
7. Roy Judge, "Mary Neal and the Esperance Morris," *Folk Music Journal*, 5 (5 November 1989), 559, 572, in letters from Cecil Sharp to Mary Neal (26 July 1909) and Archibald Flower, respectively.
8. Maud Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); Judge "Mary Neal; Neal, *The Esperance Morris*; Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, *My Part in a Changing World* (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1939), pp. 134-139; Roy Dommett, "How Did You Think It Was?" *Morris Matters*, 3 (1980), 3:4-9; Kidson and Neal, *English Folk Dance and Song*.
9. Edward Haies, "Edward Haies' Narrative of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's Last Expedition," in David Beers Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonizing Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1940), 1:385-423.
10. Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages, AD 500-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 574; "The First Known Morris Tour of America," *American Morris Newsletter*, 11 (1987), No. 3.

11. The previously mentioned letters and virtually all primary material concerning Gilbert's second voyage may be found in Quinn, *The Voyages*.
12. *The Dictionary Catalogue of the Music Collection of the New York Public Library* lists a collection of songs by Florence: *Songs of the Florences: Comprising the Original Melodies of Those Distinguished Delineators of the Irish Boy and the Yankee Girl*, (New York: Dick and Fitzgerald, c. 1860). *Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library* (New York: K. G. Saur, 1987). T. Allston Brown, "The Origin of Minstrelsy," in Charles H. Day, *Fun in Black, or, Sketches of Minstrel Life* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1874), p. 6. Carl Wittke, *Tambo and Bones. A History of the American Minstrel Show* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 33. "Such a Getting Upstairs. Sung by Bob Farrel (The Original Zip Coon)," sheet music (Baltimore: G. Willig, Jr., c. 1830-1840?). *Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library* lists "Sich a Getting Upstairs," arr. William Henry West (London, c. 1845) in their collection. Manning Manuscript. Kidson and Neal, *English Folk Song and Dance*, p. 131.
13. For a history of the minstrel shows in England, see Harry Reynolds, *Minstrel Memories: The Story of Burnt Cork Minstrelsy in Great Britain from 1836-1927* (London: Alston Rivers, Ltd., 1928). Theresa Buckland, "Black Faces, Garlands, and Coconuts: Exotic Dances of Street and Stage," *Dance Research Journal*, forthcoming. While researching 19th-century American stage dancing, I have found several one-line references to coconut dancers, but always without information on choreography or origins. The only coconut dance in the Cotswold morris was found at North Leigh. Its origin and original choreography are unknown. In 1982 I saw the newly revived North Leigh men perform a recreation of this dance. For more details on Chirgwin, see Reynolds, *Minstrel Memories*. For details of the costume and music of the border morris, see David Jones, *The Roots of Welsh Border Morris* (np: David Jones, September 1988).
14. Part of the 1861 program has been previously reproduced, though with little background material, in *American Morris Newsletter*, 11:2. My dating is as follows: the American Concert Hall existed from 8/8/60 to 2/15/66. Billy Quinn (a dancer mentioned in the poster) died 9/5/63; the poster mentions an upcoming show on Wednesday March 20, and March 20 fell on a Wednesday in 1861. Harry Leslie was born in East Troy, New York; for more details of his career see T. Allston Brown, *A History of the American Stage from the First Performance in 1732 to 1901* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1903), 1:470-472. Leslie died immediately after a minstrel performance in Allygarth, India, on 7/3/1876, according to the *Boston Advertiser* (2 September 1876). George C. D. O'Dell, *Annals of the New York Stage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931).
15. Roy Judge, "Theatrical Morris," in Theresa Buckland, ed., *Traditional Dance* (Crewe, England: Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, 1988), 6:202-206.

16. G. D. Wilson, *The Morris Dancers*, sheet music (Boston: White, Smith, and Co., 1878); Wilson was born in Connecticut and lived most of his life in Nyack, New York, according to *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, 4th ed. (New York: G. Schirmer, 1940), p. 1192. Alexander MacKensie, *Morris Dance*, sheet music (New York: Novello, Ewer, and Co., 1899); Mackensie was a Scot who received his musical training in Germany according to Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: MacMillan, 1980), 11:441. H. E. Warner, *Morris Dance*, sheet music (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser, 1904); several other works by Arner were published in London, but no other information has been found. Percy Grainger, *Mock Morris*, sheet music (New York: G. Schirmer, 1911); Grainger lived in Australia, Germany, and England before settling in the U.S. in 1914 and becoming recognized as a collector of English folk song and composer. The four later pieces are Rosseter G. Cole, *Morris Dance*, from the opera *The Maypole Lovers, Act II* (Chicago and New York: Clayton F. Summy Co., 1948); Robert Crane, *Morris Dance* (Publisher unknown, 1954; copy in the Library of Congress); Hazel Cobb, *Morris Dance* (New York: Mills Music, 1962); and William Kraft, *Morris Dance*, percussion solo (Los Angeles: Western International Music, 1964).

17. Sharon Stutz, Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington, Connecticut, personal communication. The quotation is from Marguerite Steen, *William Nicholson* (London: Collins Clear Type Press, 1943), p. 16.

18. Also, an article in a 1906 Canadian magazine describes the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, mummer's plays, Haxey Hood game, and other folk traditions: Sarah A. Tooley, "Old Christmas Customs in England," *Canadian Magazine*, 28 (December 1906), 124-134. See the obituary of Beerbohm in the *New York Times* (20 May 1956), p. 86:1 and Lillian Browne, *William Nicholson* (Plymouth, England: Bowering Press, 1956), p. 17. Max Beerbohm, "A Morris for May Day," *Harper's Magazine* (October 1907), 787-794 and *Yet Again*, 3rd. ed. (Kingswood, Surrey: Windmill, 1951), pp. 165-181.

19. O. L. Hatcher, "Old Warwickshire Morris Dances and Songs," *The Nation*, 99 (15 October 1914), 465.

20. Luther Halsey Gulick, M.D., "Teaching American Children to Play: Significance of the Revival of Folk Dances, Games, and Festivals by the Playground Association," *Craftsman*, 15 (November 1908), 192-199. Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp*, p. 75. Helen Storrow, "Folk Dancing" (Address given at the fifth annual meeting of the Playground and Recreational Association of America), *Playground*, 5 (August 1911), 161.

21. Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyer, *Biographical Dictionary of the Dance* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1982), p. 358; Emily Burbank, "Mademoiselle Genee: The Danish Dancer Who Revives Memories of Taglioni," *Putnam's Magazine*, 5 (November 1908),

170-174; Florence Warren Brown and Neva L. Boyd, *Old English and American Games for School and Playground* (Chicago: Saul Brothers, 1915).

22. Judge, "Mary Neal," p. 552; Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp*, p. 73; *The Times* (London), 7 May 1910, p. 17c; Warren had personally instructed as many as 400 school teachers in a two-week period, according to Neal, *The Esperance Morris Book*, p. 1; a fragment of a letter from Florrie Warren while staying at Lady Paget's home, being waited on by servants, is reprinted in Pethick-Lawrence, *My Part in a Changing World*, p. 138; *The Times* (London), 11 August 1910, p. 96; immigration records for the port of New York City, the National Archives, Washington, D.C.

23. *New York Tribune*, 15 December 1910, p. 10d; *New York Times*, 22 January 1911, V:11:1; "Morris Dancing in America," *Literary Digest* (4 March 1911), pp. 406-407.

24. Mary Neal to Clive Carey, 30 December 1910, in the Carey Collection, Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, Cecil Sharp House, London.

25. *New York Times*, 20 December 1911, p. 13:3; *New York Times*, 21 December 1910, p. 2:3; Neal to Carey, 30 December 1910; a 29 December 1910 New York Performance is known only through a brief reference in one of Neal's letters: "our first millionaire show. It was detestable." Neal to Carey, 30 December 1910; on 26 January 1911, they performed at a fundraiser for the Bide-a-Wee Home for Animals, *New York Times*, 23 January 1911 (I:7:5) and 27 January 1911 (11:4).

26. Mary Neal, *The Esperance Morris Book, Part II* (London: J. Curwen and Sons, Ltd., 1912), p. xiii. The names of three of Warren's New York City dancers are known; Marcus Brook danced at the MacDowell Club show; Thomas Rector and Romer Richardson went to Albany later in 1911 to assist Warren. The three photos lie unlabelled in a folder of loose clippings and photos on "Morris Dancing" in the PERforming Arts Research Center at Lincoln Center. "Morris Dancing in America," pp. 406-407.

27. In February 1911, Neal collected sea shanties at the Sailor's Haven in Charlestown, Massachusetts, where sailors boarded while in the port of Boston, "a seaman's rest where every week the men sang the old shanties on a specially rigged-up mast and rigging on the platform," according to *The Esperance Morris Book, Part II*, p. xiii; see also Mary Neal to Clive Carey, 24 February 1911, in the Carey Collection, Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, Cecil Sharp House, London. *Boston Herald*, 26 April 1911, p. 10.

28. *Boston Herald*, 4 May 1911, p. 7; *Boston Globe*, 6 May 1911, p. 2; *Boston Herald*, 6 May 1911, p. 2; *The (London) Times*, 22 July 1911, p. 11c. In 1929, another morris dance performance was given at Carnegie Hall by a touring EFDSS company including Douglas Kennedy and Joan Sharp (Cecil's daughter); the lead singer was Clive Carey, the former

Esperance music director; see the *New York Times*, 3 November 1929, p. 16:2 and 10 November 1929, p. 24:3.

29. *Hartford Daily Courant*, 20 May 1911, p. 14; a program of this performance was published in the *American Morris Newsletter*, 11:3 (1987), although the identity of the dancers and other background information were not known at that time.

30. The (*Albany*) *Times Union* for 1911 printed items on May 10 (p. 1), June 2 (p. 2), June 24 (p. 5), and July 5 (p. 5); The *Knickerbocker Press* item appeared on 23 May 1911.

31. *New York Times*, 23 February 1912, p. 11; Brown and Boyd, *Old English and American Games*, Pethick-Lawrence, *My Part in a Changing World*, p. 139.

32. Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp*, p. 84. Despite her early enthusiasm for teaching morris to both sexes, Neal had a curious change of view, writing in the late 1930's: "I realized, in a devastating moment, that these dances were the remains of a purely masculine ceremonial,...that by putting women on to this masculine rhythm I had quite innocently and ignorantly broken a law of cosmic ritual and stirred up disharmony....I believe now that this misuse of the Morris Dance was the reason for the bitter estrangement between my colleagues and myself," quoted in Judge, "Mary Neal," p. 575. *Springfield (Massachusetts) Union*, 20 February 1914, p. 4. *New York Times*, 2 February 1914, p. 5:3. *New York Times*, 24 August 1913, V:1.

33. Jane Garry, "The Literary History of the Morris Dance," *Folklore*, 94:ii (1983), 219-228.

34. *New York Times*, 24 February 1912, p. 11.

35. Certainly this was the suspicion of Margaret Dean-Smith, former editor of the *EFDSS Journal*, who wrote, "The 'blank' of that period seems to be a moral or immoral one. By 1912 Mary Neal had, I think, more or less given up the struggle and subsequent EFDSS members either genuinely knew nothing of her work, or knew of it only as a minor stumbling-block by that time fortunately removed. Of Sharp's debt to Mary Neal (would he ever have started without her?) nothing was said. It looks so like deliberate suppression or a disagreeable 'para-politics' story, with all the past deliberately shoved behind an iron curtain." Margaret Dean-Smith to Clive Carey (12 September 1962), Carey Collection, Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, Cecil Sharp House, London.

Dancing on the Eve of Battle: Some Views about Social Dance During the American Civil War

by Allison Thompson¹

Contrary to some beliefs, the years of the American Civil War were not unrelievedly gloomy. Despite the privations and horrors of the War, people still gathered together to flirt, socialize and enjoy the favorite dances of the day: the Lancers, the Deux Temps or polka, the waltz and the old-fashioned quadrilles. As late in the war as January of 1865, twenty-five year old Eliza Frances Andrews of Georgia would write that:

The party was delightful. Albany is so full of charming refugees and Confederate officers and their families that there is always plenty of good company, whatever else may be lacking. I danced three sets with Joe Godfrey, but I don't like the square dances very much. The Prince Imperial is too slow and stately, and so complicated that the men never know what to do with themselves. Even the Lancers are tame in comparison with a waltz or a galop. I love the galop and the Deux Temps better than any. We kept it up till two o'clock in the morning, and then walked home. (Andrews, p. 76)

The dances that Eliza enjoyed so much fell into two categories: the newer, round dances, and the old-fashioned square dances of which the Lancers was the perennial favorite. The Lancers had premiered at the famous Almack's Ballroom in London in 1817 and won instant and enduring popularity. A dance with four couples in a square formation, it had five figures, each with its own distinctive music. Couples advanced and retired with stately precision, at first with balletic and athletic sissones, coupees, jetes, and chasses steps. As the century wore on, this difficult footwork disappeared and by the Civil War the Lancers seems to have been danced with walking or simple 1-2-3 hop steps. The Lancers was so popular that it was still danced in England at the time of the Second World War; and a version of the fifth and most distinctive figure is still danced in New England today under the name of the "Kitchen Lancers."

Modern contra and square dancers would feel at home with the figures of the quadrilles or set dances that formed such a large part of a ball program in the 1860's. Figures like the grand chain, four-hands-across, ladies chain and turn your partner have

¹Allison Thompson is a dancer and writer currently editing a book of quotations from literature about dance. She thanks James Boster and Stephen Corrsin for their helpful comments on this article.

changed very little since the nineteenth century, although quadrilles were danced then to a greater variety of steps and tempos than done today. There were quadrilles in march tempo, waltz and polka quadrilles, and others. The musicians would generally change the tune--popular airs of the day--to suit each figure of the quadrille. Young people could go to a dancing master to learn the various figures of the "Caledonian Quadrille," the "Quadrille Mazourka," or the "Prince Imperial Quadrille" which so bored Eliza Andrews. After the many complex figures of the dance, a quadrille would often end with a good, brisk galop all around the room.

While the older folks preferred these relatively sedate set dances, the young people were wild to dance "round dances"--so called because the dancers in couples whirled 'round the floor, but perhaps also because the gentleman's arm went quite 'round the lady's waist, in a public embrace which many older viewers found shocking. Despite the sermonizing, however, nothing could quench the popularity of the turning dances, especially the fast galops and the multitude of polka variations.

Eliza Andrews wrote more about her opinions of different dances in her diary entry about a party that she and her sister Metta gave later that year. Like many young people, Eliza preferred the electrifying sensation of whirling around the room in her partner's arms to the more sedate quadrilles, though this preference didn't seem to keep her from dancing every dance.

We had a charming evening, and everybody was in the best of spirits. In fact, I don't think I ever saw people enjoy themselves more. We had a few sets of the Lancers and one or two old-fashioned quadrilles for the benefit of those who did not dance the round dances, but the square dances seem very tame to me, in comparison with a good waltz or galop. Capt. Semmes is delightful to dance with. He supports his partner so well, with barely the palm of his hand touching the bottom of your waist.... It was two o'clock before our soiree broke up, and everybody seemed loath to go, even then. I had trotted around so much all day and danced so much at night, that my feet ached when I went to bed, as if I were a rheumatic old woman. (Andrews, pp. 297-300)

The galop was a simple dance whose main effect was to leave the dancers dizzy and breathless. "The only difficulty in the dance," remarked one dancing master in 1864, "is to keep on the feet." In the variation called the four-slide galop, the couple in ballroom hold with their joined hands pointing counter clockwise around the room, took four quick sliding steps or chasses in the line of direction without turning. After the fourth step the couple hopped, as in a polka, turning halfway round in the process. They then galoped with four more chasses and a hop and turn in the same line of direction, now looking over their elbows. There were many variations, such as the Esmeralda Galop, in which the couple would add two turning polka steps after each galop combination. A

galop, rather than a waltz, would often end the evening, leaving both musicians and dancers breathless and overheated.

The polka, introduced to America in the early 1840's, was another favorite dance with many variations: the Coquette, also known as the "Love Chase," in which the lady escaped and danced around the room, hiding her face provocatively from the gentleman who pursued her, arms akimbo; Les Patineurs, or the "Skaters," in which the lady and gentleman danced side by side, his arm around her waist, her left hand on his right shoulder; and a host of more elaborate polka-mazurka and polka-redowa step combinations.

Balls or less formal dances could be held any night of the week save Sunday (and Saturday, for those who strictly observed the Sabbath), and could be held either in the home or in a hired ball room. Eliza Andrews wrote of a party of young people (with no parents or maiden aunts around to spoil the fun) who stayed in a "large elegant house, with two beautiful front parlors and a wide hall that can be thrown together by means of sliding doors--a glorious place for dancing. It rained all the first afternoon, so there could be no riding, but we had no reason to regret that, with those nice rooms for dancing. We danced half the night and then went to our rooms and talked away the rest of it. We danced again before breakfast." (Andrews, pp. 369-370)

Despite the blockades which made fabric and sometimes even food difficult to get, Southern balls in the early part of the war were as fashionable and frivolous as those of London, Paris or New York. Emma Holmes, an elderly lady living in Baton Rouge, described a glittering event which her nieces attended in 1863:

Beauregard's staff last week gave a soiree--they called it--for they did not pretend to have a handsome supper--but otherwise it was a ball. A carload of ladies went down from Columbia--the fashionables there, as well as those who had taken refuge from Charleston. The dresses seem to have been very elegant--velvets, moiree, antiques, and other rich materials were common. The Baroness St. Andre, the French consul's wife, wore a stomacher of diamonds and had her hair dressed in the style of Louis XVI, with a japonica on top in the middle of her head. Rosa and Sallie went. Rosa says it was a ball of strangers, for the city is full of them, foreigners too, and, though she enjoyed it, it was not thoroughly [nice]--one partner was a Frenchman, whose English was indescribable--only three square dances all evening, and she staid till near three o'clock.... A number of persons who lost relatives during the Summer were there. (Holmes, pp.223-224)

As was standard at the time in both North and South, the traditional sumptuous supper was still offered at 11 or 12 o'clock after several hours of dancing. The supper was occasionally followed by the elaborate cotillion or "German". A master of ceremonies would direct the many figures which were games or "pretty effects" interspersed with

whatever round dances he chose. Germans of five or six hours long and up to 200 figures were not unknown. The figures might include games like Puss In The Corner, The Ladies' Windmill, The Convent Porter, or The Glass of Champagne, described as follows by Mr. Brookes, a fashionable cotillion leader of New York, in 1867:

Three chairs are placed in a line, the middle chair turned in the opposite direction to the other two. The first couple lead off. The gentleman seats his partner upon the centre chair, and hands her a glass of champagne; he then brings forward two gentlemen, whom he seats upon the two other chairs. The lady gives the glass of wine to one of the gentlemen seated (who drinks it), and dances [a waltz or polka or other round dance] with the other. (Brookes, p. 76)

Fancy gifts of silver boutonnieres, fans, flowerholders and other trinkets were the prizes for the couples taking part, and hostesses vied with each other for the most original and elaborate prizes and effects. Emma Holmes was curious to see such an entertainment, but found much in it to disapprove:

We staid to see the 'german' dance, said to have 200 figures, & as far as I could judge from the specimens seen, an imitation of the old time graceful Spanish dance, & the neapolitan Tarentella, as described in *Corinne*--but shorn of much of their grace & the girls almost all the time in the arms of the gentlemen. (Holmes, p. 474)

Sheet music for dancing was varied and comparatively cheap and easy to obtain. Dance music poured off the presses in the mid-nineteenth century, especially in the North. Tunes such as the "Maiden's Blush Waltz", written by Charles Kinkel of Cincinnati in 1866, vied with his "Pearls of Dew Valse Sentimentale", composed two years earlier. Lieutenant General Winfield Scott was honored by "The American Hero's March" dedicated to him, while the "Father's At Sea Polka Brillante" vied for room on the piano rack with the "Home Run Polka", composed by Mrs. Bodell of Washington in 1867 and respectfully dedicated to the National Baseball Club of that city.

In the South the music and the "calls" for the dances were often provided by military bands or slaves. The well-known diarist Mary Chestnut wrote of meeting a slave fiddler, famous in her circle for his dances, half-way through the war:

Met a distinguished gentleman that I knew when he was in more affluent circumstances.... William, Mrs. DeS's ci-devant coachman.... Then, night after night, we used to meet him as fiddler in chief at all our parties. He sat in solemn dignity, making faces over his bow and patting his foot with an emphasis that shook the floor. We gave him five

dollars a night--that was his price. His mistress never refused to let him play for any party How majestically he scraped his foot--as a sign that he was tuned up and ready to begin.... I wonder who owns him now. He looked forlorn. He had not bettered himself. (Chestnut, pp. 19-20)

Despite--or perhaps even because of--the horrors of war, the young people on both sides still found time to enjoy themselves. Eliza Frances Andrews loved to dance and often described dances (and her patched though still elaborate finery) in her diary, as in this entry from late in 1865:

My dress was a masterpiece though patched up, like everybody else's, out of old finery that would have been cast off years ago, but for the blockade. I wore a white barred organdy with a black lace flounce round the bottom that completely hid the rents made at dances in Montgomery last winter, and a wide black lace bow and ends in the back, to match the flounce. Handsome lace will make almost anything look respectable, and I thank my stars there was a good deal of it in the family before the Yankees shut us off by their horrid blockade.... My toilet was very much admired, and I had a great many compliments about it and everybody turned to look at it as I passed, which put me in good spirits. We danced eighteen sets, and I was on the floor every time, besides all the round dances, and between times there were always three or four around talking to me. Mett [her sister] says it counts a great deal more to have one very devoted at a time, but that keeps the others away, and I think it is much nicer to have a crowd around you all the time. (Andrews, pp. 95-96)

Other observers were not so light-hearted. Many diarists like Emma Holmes of Baton Rouge saw in the frequent balls of Richmond and Charleston only a terrible contrast with the realities of war. "I cannot understand such heartlessness & frivolity--but the storm of war, which has swept away hundreds of our brave soldiers from our homes, seems to have [made] many of those left callous," she wrote sadly in 1863. (Holmes, pp. 223-224)

This theme--that some were amusing themselves while others mourned or died--was one which impressed itself greatly upon observers. Mrs. Mary Chestnut, who accompanied her politician husband in Richmond during much of the war, frequently commented on this dreadful irony, as in this diary entry in 1864: "The deep waters closing over us. And we are--in this house--like the outsiders at the time of the Flood. We care for none of these things. We eat, drink, laugh, dance, in lightness of heart!!!" (Chestnut, p. 694)

Later, in July of 1865, Mrs. Chestnut noted another sad episode of life in death:

I went up to nurse Kate Withers. That lovely girl, barely 18--she is dead, died of typhoid fever.... Six young soldiers, her friends, were her pall bearers. As they marched out with that burden, sad were their faces. And yet, that night all save one danced at a ball given by Mrs. Courtney from Charleston! (Chestnut, p. 835)

Another Southern diarist, Sarah Dawson, who was twenty when Federal troops took over the city of Baton Rouge in the spring of 1862, wrote sadly of a party held the spring before:

All those dancing there that night have undergone trial and affliction since...every young man there has been in at least one battle since, and every woman has cried over her son, brother, or sweetheart, going away to the wars, or lying sick and wounded. And yet we danced that night, and never thought of bloodshed! (Dawson, p. 7)

In mid-nineteenth century America, dancing, and especially dancing in wartime, was frowned upon by conservative mothers or ministers. In his manual describing dances practiced in the ball room and at private parties, even Mr. Brookes of sophisticated New York felt it necessary to preface his work with a long rationale of why dancing was a healthy and innocent amusement. "Nothing can render the frame more graceful than dancing," he wrote. "It is extremely useful to women, whose constitutions require to be strengthened by frequent exercise." (Brookes, p. 4) Down in more conservative Albany, Georgia, vivacious Eliza Andrews wryly wished for a more liberal attitude towards dancing, as she mentions in her diary entry of Sunday, August 27, 1865:

The bolt has fallen. Mr. Adams, the Methodist minister, launched the thunders of the church against dancing, in his morning discourse.... I could not help being amused when Mr. Adams placed dancing in the same category with bribery, gambling, drunkenness, and murder. He fell hard upon wicked Achan, who caused Israel to sin, and I saw some of the good brethren on the 'amen' benches turn their eyes upon me. I was sitting near the pulpit, under full fire, and half-expected to hear him call me 'Jezabel,' but I suppose he is reserving his heavy ammunition for the grand attack he is going to make next Sunday. The country preachers have been attacking us, too.... I wish we had an Episcopal Church established here to serve as a refuge for the many worthy people who are not gamblers and murderers, but who like to indulge in a little dancing now and then. (Andrews, pp. 381-382)

The Civil War was a time of heightened emotions. Grief and sorrow for the slain warred with the natural desire of young people to embrace life even in the face of

terrible bloodshed. When Eliza Andrews edited her journal in 1908, she deplored the "frivolous" tendencies of the girl she had been, but suggested that the thoughtless gaiety among the young people during the dark days of the war was simply a case of "eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

Others agreed. "All wished to dance," reminisced Caroline Joachimson in her story "Dancing on the Eve of Battle" published in a Charleston newspaper in 1885. "All wished to dance, and to make love, and even flirt, never once being appalled by the fear of quick coming danger." (Joachimson, pp. 31-32)

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Homemade Entertainment Through The Generations

Songs and Ballads of the Atwood Family of West Dover, Vermont

Part II¹

By Margaret C. MacArthur*

The thread of my discussion reaches from the present back through the years 1964, 1961, 1948, 1919, and into previous centuries. For generations, song and rhyme were integral parts of life in rural New England, as folks remembered the past, preserved currant stories, and furnished, for themselves and others, untold hours of entertainment. Myron Eastman in the poem "Pudding Hill" wrote about early settlers in Lyndonville, Vermont:

Six days each week they filled their store
From the woods and from the sod
Each Sunday found them all in church
Sought they the grace of God
They had no movies for their fun
Autos or radio
They made their clothes, they milled their grain
They made their cheerio.²

Their cheerio included reciting, singing, and writing verses. They told stories of past events in their lives or in the lives of previous generations, and they remembered the old songs.

In 1948 I bought a book in the G. Schirmer Folk-Song Series which had been published years before, in 1919, at \$2.00. It was *Songs from the Hills of Vermont* by Edith Sturgis with Robert Hughes tune transcriptions and piano arrangements, containing versions of 13 songs or ballads from the British Isles. In her preface, Sturgis mentioned that "the poet and his wife, James and Mary Atwood...and their

*Margaret MacArthur of Marlboro, Vermont, is widely known as a singer, a player of the Appalachian dulcimer and harp-zither, and as a collector and performer of traditional music. She is trustee of the Helen Hartness Flanders papers, has served on the staff of Pinewoods Camp, and is author of a previous article on Vermont music in *CD&S*:11/12.

intimate friend, 'Aunt Jenny Knapp'...gave us all the songs in this little book." This was not only a collection from a single state, but essentially from a single family. I learned many of the songs, and often wished to find the rest of the fifty that Sturgis referred to in her interesting notes in which she describes the setting of her summer home and of the Atwood's residence:

In a pleasant sunlit valley lying close up to the Green Hills of Vermont is a tiny village so small that it's only connection with the outer world is by an old stage which rumbles in once a day from the railroad eight miles off.

Years later, in 1960, I discovered that the particular "Hills of Vermont" were the hills of Dover, hills I see from my kitchen window. Sturgis' descendants still summered in their vacation home on the Handle road. They generously gave me the contents of Edith's desk, 34 more old songs she had taken down from the singing of James K. Atwood of West Dover sometime before 1919 when the book was published. In the preface she quoted James:

I'm not what you'd call a regular singer, you know, for I never learned by book nor never saw nothin' writ down. But I've allus sung just 'cause I can't help it. My father was the same way and my grandfather too. Guess you'd call it the old style of singing.

Now I had more of his songs to study and learn. In the desk there were six scraps of paper containing Hughes tune transcriptions. Because I was frustrated by the lack of tunes for the many other songs, I set about trying to locate James Atwoods' descendants. This led to an important collecting venture of my own through meeting Fred Atwood, James's 80-year-old son. Songs and poems from these two men show the importance of homemade entertainment in rural New England and also demonstrate the passing of pieces from one generation to another, "father to son." They "made their cheerio." This has influenced my own music and that being written by my sons and daughters, which I look forward to discussing in a future article.

In 1964 I corresponded with Fred, who had moved years before to Mansfield Center, Connecticut. He told me that he knew some of the songs, and when I invited him to come to my house in Marlboro he replied:

July 10, 1964. Dear Mrs. MacArthur, received your letter. I do not have a phone as I am alone and do not have much need for it. I am planning a trip to Vermont to see my brother and hope to be in Brattleboro on Wednesday, July 15th, and will be pleased to come to your home and hope to go to Dover and Wardsboro. I will be at or near the drugstore on Main St. and High St. on Brooks Block. I will be wearing a light colored straw hat and will have a small suitcase and will have a letter in my hand and will try to be there

around 2 p.m. and hope that time will be at your convenience. I am quite tall and I guess you can find me allright. I'll be looking for you to meet me. Sincerely, Fred Atwood.

His brother came by bus from northern Vermont every year or so to meet him. They would visit and then take their respective buses back home. Both this kind of excursion and James's letter indicate a lifestyle of an earlier date: no phones, no autos, but meetings elaborately arranged by mail. This trip, in my auto, Fred would be able to visit Dover and the graves of his parents. And I would be able to hear him sing some of the songs he had learned from his father. He sat in an old high back rocking chair in the living room of my old farmhouse and sang the old songs for us, happy to share them, and to know that they would be preserved.

The very first song he sang had a most meaningful verse: "As the ages roll onward and I'm dead and gone, this tale will be told from father to son". This phrase could be taken to illustrate the meaning of these songs to the tradition bearers who sing them--remembering the past, preserving the story, passing it along from generation to generation, father to son, and entertaining in the process. Fred learned the ballad "Bonnie Black Bess"(which is reprinted with its tune as part of the Atwood collection discussed in *CD&S*: 11/12) from his father; it and songs referred to below can be located by reference to the accompanying endnote.³ It tells of the highway robber Dick Turpin who lived from 1706 to 1739. Although according to historical accounts he was a great scoundrel, in the ballad he robs only the rich, and shows great love for his horse.

The Atwoods in "Jim Fisk" sang of another scoundrel who robbed from the rich. Fisk, born in Vermont in 1834, started his life of commerce as a peddler. By the time of his 1872 murder by James Stokes over the affections of a woman, he had set the whole country in a state of financial disaster, but according to Billy Scanlon who wrote this song, and according to the folk of Vermont who gave him a hero's funeral and a beautiful monument in Brattleboro's South Main St. Cemetery, he was a true friend of the poor.

Both of these songs passed down in the Atwood family, and came, through my collecting, to the MacArthur family, and then to a general audience by way of the sound recording. On the field recording my daughter Megan can be heard as a child running around and babbling. On our 1982 Front Hall record *Make the Wildwood Ring*, the adult Megan sings "Jim Fisk" accompanied by her brothers Dan and Gary.

Fred had notebooks, or composition books as they used to be called, filled with songs he had copied down in pencil over 50 or 60 years time. And I had the typed copies of his father's songs that Edith Sturgis had made. Some songs he sang from memory, some from one or another of these manuscripts. He sang for me "Barbara Allen," probably old when it first appeared in print in 1666. When I asked him where it happened, he replied "Over in York State." His version contains the poignant lines: "Death is sprinkled in your face, and sorrow in your dwelling" as well as the geographical reference:

The fairest young man in all New York
 Died for John Allen's daughter
 The fairest maid in all our town
 She soon did follow after.

Death is an important reference point for many of the old songs, and Fred's were no exception. Another young woman wishes to die for sorrow in "The Sailor Boy":

'Twas in the spring when I was young
 The flowers they bloomed and the birds they sung
 But not one bird so happy as I
 When my love the sailor lad was nigh

Tra la la, tra la la la
 Tra la la, tra la la la
 Tra la la, tra la la la
 Tra la la, tra la la la

The eastern star was shining bright
 And the moon beams in the glistening night
 The sailor boy and his lovely bride
 Sat weeping by the ocean side

It's scarce three months since we were wed
 But oh how fast the time had fled
 Three months passed and the dawning of the day
 When a proud wind bore my true love away

Time goes by and he comes no more
 To greet his bride on the lonely shore
 The ship went down in the middle of the storm
 Sea engulfed his lifeless form

I wisht that I was sleeping too
 Beneath the waves of the ocean blue
 My soul to my God and my body in the sea
 With the dark blue waters rolling over me

Because Fred's brother Ernie didn't like the chorus, Fred sang it only once, after the first verse. Another storm at sea leads to a happier ending in "Willie at Sea," which Fred sings to a mournful tune.

My Willie's on the dark blue sea,
 he's gone far o'er the main
 And many weary days will pass
 ere he comes back again
 Then blow gentle winds o'er the dark blue sea,
 bid the storm king stay his hand
 And bring my Willie back to me,
 in his own dear native land

There are changes on the water now,
 I hear the blond bills cry
 There their voices echo far
 from out the dark blue sky
 I love my Willie best of all,
 he's ever dear to me
 And lonesome are the hours to me,
 since first he went to sea

I see the vivid lightning flash,
 and hear the thunder roar
 Oh Father save my Willie
 from the storm king's mighty power
 And as she spoke the lightning ceased
 hushed was the thunders roar
 And Willie clasped her in his arms
 to roam the sea no more

Then blow gentle winds o'er the dark blue sea
 no more I stay thy hand
 Since Willie's safe at home with me
 in his own dear native land

Hard times are often given as reasons for going west. Since the early 1800s the farming population of New England has declined rapidly. Fred sang about this in the song "Rolling Stone," which can be traced to a 1734 English Music Hall husband and wife duet. His uncle and his father both sang this song which they contributed to the book *History of Dover* (Vermont).

Since times were so hard I will tell you sweetheart
 I've a good mind to leave off my plow and my cart
 And away off to Kansas a journey to go
 There to double my fortune as other folks do
 For here I must labor each day in the field
 Where the winter consumes all the summer doth yield
 My horse and sheep cattle at random doth run
 And my new Sunday jacket comes every day on.

Oh husband remember your farm is but clear
 Which has cost you hard labor for many long year
 Your horse and sheep cattle and all things to buy
 You would hardly get settled before you must die
 Let us stick to the farm though we suffer the loss
 For the stone that keeps rollin' don't gather no moss

Oh wife let us go and no longer stand
 I will purchase a farm that is cheap to our hand
 Where horse and sheep cattle are not very dear
 And we'll feast on fat buffalo for half of the year
 For here I must labor each day in the field
 Where the winter consumes all the summer doth yield
 My horse and sheep cattle at random doth run
 And my new Sunday jacket comes every day on

Oh husband remember with a sorrowful heart
 You've long time neglected your plow and your cart
 You're each year getting older and I should not complain
 But you'll find it much harder to start in again
 Let us stick to the farm though we suffer the loss
 For the stone that keeps rollin' don't gather no moss

Oh wife let us go and no longer wait
 I long to be there and I long to be great
 and you some rich lady and who knows why
 And I some rich governor ere long should I die
 For here I must labor each day in the field
 Where the winter consumes all the summer doth yield

Oh husband remember your farm of delight
 Is surrounded by Indians who murder by night
 My house would be plundered, your barn burnt to the ground
 Your wife and your family lie murdered around
 Let us stick to the farm though we suffer the loss
 For the stone that keeps rollin' don't gather no moss

Oh wife you've convinced me, I'll argue no more
 For such dangers I never once thought of before
 My children I love them although they are small
 And my wife I do value more precious than all
 So I'll stick to the farm though we suffer the loss
 For the stone that keeps rollin' don't gather no moss.

In 1964 I thought the song to be quite repetitious, and without much of a story line. By now I enjoy the song and have in fact recorded it on *Almanac of New England Farm Songs*, changing the order of several lines, and I changed "don't gather no moss" to "shall gather no moss."

Hard times are treated in a different way in a song of that title. Included with verses from Fred are some from Edith Sturgis's copy of James's singing. Fred never sang for his father the verse he made up about the mason as James was an active stone mason and plasterer at the time. Fred says "I wouldn't sing that years ago when that was happenin' but if he was alive now and singin' it, when he got to it, I'd sing that verse to him." Here is their version of "Hard Times":

If you listen awhile and give ear to my song
 Concerning these hard times it won't take me long
 Now each man is tryin' his neighbor to bite
 And in cheating each other they think they do right

The baker will cheat in the bread that you eat
 And so will the butcher in the weight of his meat
 He'll tip up the stillyards and make them go down
 And swear it is weight when it lacks half a pound

The next is the tinker who'll mend all your ware
 For little or nothing, some ale or some beer
 Before he begins he gets half drunk or more
 And in stopping one hole he will punch twenty more

(Fred's original verse)

The next is the mason, James Atwood and son
 And if you call them good work can be done
 Until they were told to not spread any more
 For look at the mortar they spread on the floor

(Verses from the Sturgis manuscript of James's singing)

The next is the sheriff who thinks himself wise
 He will call at your house with a big pack of lies
 He will take all your goods that he thinks he can sell
 Get drunk on the money, he thinks he does well

The judge on his bench so honest and true
 He will stare at a man as if looking him through
 He will send him one year or six months to the jail
 And for five dollars more he will go on his bail

There are some young men we very well know
 To see pretty girls they are sure to go
 The old folks will giggle, they'll laugh and they'll grin
 Saying "Use him well Sal, or he wont come again".

The next is the ladies, the sweet little dears
 At the balls and the parties how nice they appear
 With whalebones and corsets themselves they will squeeze
 You'll have to unloose them before they can sneeze

In "The Bird Song," Fred sings two verses that are not included in Sturgis's book. He made the one about the old hen:

"Hi" said the old hawk to the crow
 "If you ain't black then I don't know
 Ever since old Adam was born
 you been accused of stealing corn"

"Hi" said the old hen to the hawk
 "I understand your great big talk
 You want to pounce and get the hen
 I hope the farmer shoot you then"

From his father's father comes the sacred song, "Lone Soul":

Oh low down in that beautiful valley
where love crowns the meek and the lowly
Where rude storms of envy and folly may roll
on the billows in vain

That low vail is far from contention
where no soul can dream of dissention
No dark word of evil intention can find out
this region of peace

Lo there, there the Lord will deliver
where souls drink of that beautiful river
That flows peace for ever and ever,
there love and joy shall ever increase

Lo, there, there surrounded with glory
we shout and sing and tell the glad story
Where Jesus shall gather our people together
and the kingdom give to the children of man

Thou lone soul in humble subjection
shall there find on takin' protection
When we have passed old Jordan streams over
we'll sing hallelulia to God and the lamb

A few sacred verses appear in a song from Fred's school days. During his stay at our house he told me something of his schooling. In general he went for 9 weeks in the spring and 9 weeks in the fall--to Podunk, or Wardsboro, the town just north of West Dover. All of that area of Dover is now part of the Mt.Snow complex, or is under siege by condominium developers, although Edith Sturgis's descendants still own their house on the Handle Road. On this field recording, Fred says:

I went to school--I lived so far back, and my sister taught me. I never went to school till I was 9 years old. I went down to what they call Podunk, what they call Wardsboro, went down there,...first year they carried us to school, paid somebody to take us to school. In 1908, instead of hiring somebody, they paid us 12 cents and a half to go school, twelve cents and a half a day, so I can have the honor of saying I got paid for going to school.

To the tune of "Shall We Gather at the River" Fred sings "Schoolroom":

Shall we gather every morning
 to that place we love so dear
 To that fount of knowledge coming,
 we will gladly hasten here
 Happy Schoolroom, happy schoolroom,
 here we meet with friends so true
 Here we walk in wisdom's footsteps,
 daily learning something new

But the schooldays now is fleeting,
 like the bygone days of yore
 Soon these happy words of greeting
 will be sung by us no more
 We remember, we remember those
 with whom we used to meet
 And we hope again to see them
 in the home of God complete

There we hope to stand with loved ones
 on that bright celestial shore
 There to sing sweet songs of worship
 and be parted never more
 Happy home, our home in heaven
 in that city bright and fair
 There we join the heavenly chorus
 with our loved ones over there.

Another song from his father is "Ranodine" which dates back to early 19th-century broadsides. When I asked him what that song meant he replied that he didn't know. I had learned the ballad from Sturgis's notes and from Hughes' tune transcription, using the chorus for each verse, so I was quite relieved when he finally sang the chorus on the last verses. With my family I recorded it in 1972, with my sons Dan and Gary and Patrick, daughter Megan and my husband John singing the chorus. I played the dulcimer and Dan the guitar. The result was quite a contrast to Fred's unaccompanied singing, but I am certain that he was happy to have his songs carried on, he even told me so in a poem.

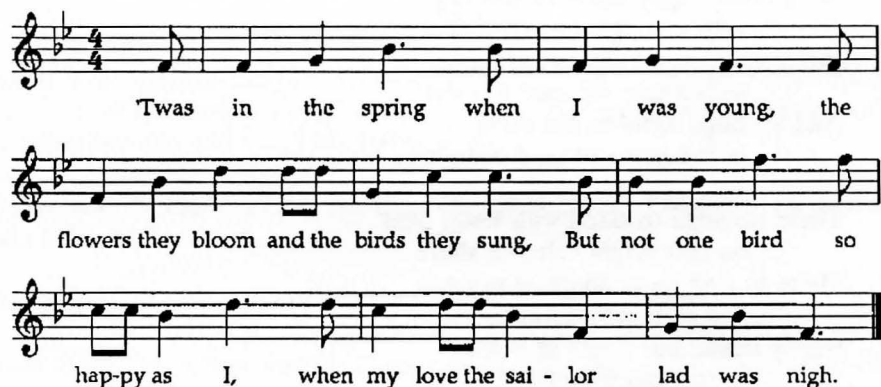
We have recorded Atwood Versions of "William Ismael" and "Raspberry Lane" in addition to "Barbara Allen," "Rolling Stone," "Jim Fisk" and "Bonnie Black Bess." Recently "Ranodine" has been recorded by Mick Maloney and Robbie O'Connell on *Greenfields of America*. Songs printed in *Songs from the Hills of Vermont* could have been the original sources for the recordings of "Bird Song"

(Leather Wing Bat) as sung by Burl Ives, "The Shining Dagger" (Drowsy Sleeper) and "Daily Growing" as sung by Joan Baez, and "The Half Hitch" as sung by Pete Seeger. Fred would have approved. As he said in a poem that he sent to us after his visit:

Some songs were sung of prestige old with words of long ago
To be set in notes of present days, so that their tune we know.

"As the ages roll onward" and the homemade entertainment, the "cheerio," continues to be shared and enjoyed and appreciated, we can be grateful to the Atwood family and to all of the tradition-bearers who preserved these songs as an integral part of their lives.

SAILOR BOY



Twas in the spring when I was young, the
flowers they bloom and the birds they sung, But not one bird so
hap-py as I, when my love the sai - lor lad was nigh.

WILLIE AT SEA

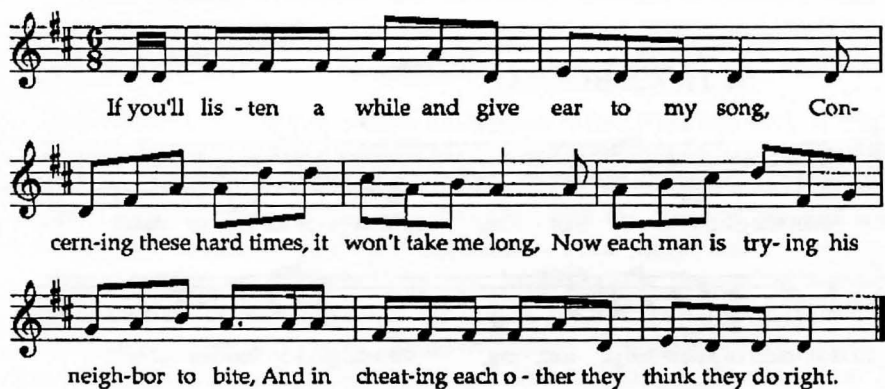


My Wil - lie's on the dark blue sea, He's
gone far o'er the main, And ma - ny wea - ry
days will pass, Ere he comes back a - gain.

ROLLING STONE



HARD TIMES



LONE SOUL

Oh low down in that beau-ti-ful val-ley where
love crowns the meek and the low-ly, where rude storms of
en-vy and fol-ly may roll on the bil-lows in vain.

SCHOOLROOM

Shall we ga-ther eve-ry mor-ning to that place we love so dear?
To that fount of know-ledge com-ing, we will glad-ly has-ten here.
Hap-py school-room, hap-py school-room, here we meet with friends so true,
Here we walk in wisdom's foot-steps, dai-ly learn-ing some-thing new.

NOTES

1. Part I of this article was "The Search for More Songs from the Hills of Vermont: Songs and Ballads of the Atwood Family," in *Country Dance and Song*, 11/12 (1981), 5-20. See also "Songs from the Hills of Vermont," edited by Anthony G. Barrand in the same issue, pp. 20-46 for a further related selection of Vermont songs and materials.

2. This verse can be heard in the song "Pudding Hill" on Margaret MacArthur, *Vermont Ballads and Broadsides* (Whetstone Records, Box 15 Marlboro, VT 05344).

3. "Bonnie Black Bess," "Jim Fisk," "Barbara Allen," "Ranodine," and "Birds Courting Song," and all the songs printed in *Songs from the Hills of Vermont* are reprinted in *CD&S*: 11/12. "Bonnie Black Bess" is performed by Margaret MacArthur on *Old Songs* (Philo/Rounder 1001); "Jim Fisk" is on the MacArthur Family's *Make the Wildwood Ring* (Front Hall Records 027), as is "Barbara Allen"; "Rolling Stone" can be heard on Margaret MacArthur's *Almanac of New England Folk Songs* (Green Linnet 1039); "Ranodine" is recorded on *On the Mountains High* (Living Folk Records 100, Aicazar re-release).

Every Day Scenes. Scene XXII.

"The Itinerant Musician."

from *Seymour's Humorous Sketches*¹
text by Alfred Crowquill

A wandering son of Apollo, with a shocking bad hat, encircled by a melancholy piece of rusty crepe, and arrayed in garments that had once shone with renovated splendour in that mart of second-habiliments 'ycleped Monmouth-street, was affrighting the echoes of a fashionable street by blowing upon an old clarionet, and doing the 'Follow, hark!' of Weber the most palpable injustice.

The red hand of the greasy cook tapped at the kitchen-window below, and she scolded inaudibly--but he still continued to amuse--himself, as regardless of the cook's scolding as of the area-railing against which he leaned, tuning his discordant lay.

His strain indeed appeared endless, and he still persevered in torturing the 'ambient air,' with, apparently, as little prospect of 'blowing himself out' as an asthmatic man would possibly have of extinguishing a smoky link with a 'wheeze'--or a hungry cadger without a penny!--

The master of the mansion was suffering under a 'touch' of the gout, accompanied by a gnawing tooth-ache!--The horrid noise without made his trembling nerves jangle like the loose strings of an untuned guitar.

A furious tug at the bell brought down the silken rope and brought up an orbicular footman.

"William"--

"Yes, sir."

"D-- that, &c.! and send him to, &c.!"

"Yes, sir."

And away glided the liveried rotundity.--

Appearing at the street-door, the musician took his instrument from his lips, and approaching the steps, touched his sorry beaver with the side of his left hand.

¹Graphic humorist Robert Seymour published the illustrations for these pieces in detached prints selling for 3d. each during the period 1834-1836 in London, prior to his premature death. The accompanying text was written by Alfred Crowquill (Alfred Henry Forrester) for a collected volume published in 1838. A following edition in 1842 was reprinted in 1872, and is our source for this and the following piece: *Seymour's Humorous Sketches, Comprising Eighty-six Caricature Etchings*, new edition; London: Henry G. Bohn, 1872; pp. 56-58 and pp. 144-146, respectively.

"There's three-pence for you," said the menial, "and master wishes you'd move on."

"Three-pence, indeed!" mumbled the man. "I never moves on under sixpence: d'ye think I doesn't know the walley o' peace and quietness?"

"Fellow!" cried the irate footman, with a pompous air--"Master desires as you'll go on."

"Werry well"--replied the other, touching his hat, while the domestic waddled back, and closed the door, pluming himself upon having 'settled' the musician; but he had no sooner vanished than the strain was taken up again more uproariously than ever.

Out he rushed again in a twinkling--

"Fellow! I say--man! vot *do* you mean?

Vy, now didn't you tell me to go on?"

"I mean go off."

"Then vy don't you speak plain hinglish," said the clarionist; "but, I say, lug out t'other browns, or I shall say vat the flute said ven his master said as how he'd *play* a tune on him."

"Vot vos that?"

"Vy, he'd be 'blow'd if he would!"

"You're a owdacious fellow."

"Tip!" was the laconic answer, accompanied by an expressive twiddling of the fingers.

"Vell, there then," answered the footman, reluctantly giving him the price of his silence.

"Thank'ye," said the musician, "and in time to come, old fellow, never do nothin' by halves--'cept it's a calf's head!"



Seymour's Sketches.

A Musical Festival.

Molly Scraggs and the Fiddler

MATTER-OF-FACT people read the history of Orpheus, and imagine his "charming rocks" and "soothing savage beasts," is a mere fabulous invention. No such thing: it is undoubtedly founded on fact. Nay, we could quote a thousand "modern instances" of the power of music quite as astonishing.

One most true and extraordinary occurrence will suffice to establish the truth of our proposition beyond a doubt. Molly Scraggs was a cook in a "first-rate" family in the most aristocratic quarter of the metropolis.

The master and mistress were abroad, and Molly had nothing to do but to indulge her thoughts; and, buried as she was in the pleasant gloom and quiet of an underground kitchen, nothing could possibly be more favourable to their development. She was moreover exceedingly plump, tender, and sentimental, and *had had* a lover, who had proved false to his vows.

In this eligible situation and temper for receiving soft impressions, she sat negligently rocking herself in her chair, and polishing the lid of a copper saucepan! when the sweet mellifluous strains of an itinerant band struck gently upon the drum of her ear. "Wapping Old Stairs" was distinctly recognized, and she mentally repeated the words so applicable to her bereaved situation:--"Your Molly has never proved false she declares," till the tears literally gushed from her 'blue, blue orbs,' and trickled down her plump and ruddy cheeks; but scarcely had she plunged into the very depths of the pathos induced by the moving air, which threatened to throw her into a gentle swoon, or kicking hysterics, when her spirit was roused by the sudden change of the melancholy ditty, to the rampant and lively tune with the popular burden of, "Turn about and wheel about, and jump Jim Crow!"

This certainly excited her feelings: but, strange to say, it made her leap from her chair--exasperated, as it were, by the sudden revulsion--and rush into the area.

"Don't, for goodness sake, play that horrid '*chune*,'" said Molly, emphatically addressing the minstrels.

The 'fiddle' immediately put his instrument under his arm, and touching the brim of his napless hat, 'scraped' a sort of bow, and smilingly asked the cook to name any other tune she preferred.

"Play us," said she, "'Oh! no, we never mention her,' or summat o' that sort; I hate jigs and dances mortally.

"Yes, marm," replied the 'fiddle,' obsequiously; and, whispering the 'harp' and 'bass,' they played the air to her heart's content.

In fact, if one might guess by the agility with which she ran into the kitchen, she was quite "melted;" and returning with the remnants of a gooseberry pie and the best part of a shoulder of mutton, she handed them to the musicians.

"Thanky'e marm, I'm sure," said the 'bass,' sticking his teeth into the pie-crust.

"The mutton's rather fat, but it's sweet, at any rate."

"Yes, marm," said the 'fiddle;' "it's too fat for your stomach, I'm sure, marm;" and consigned it to his green-baize fiddle-case.

"Now," said Molly, "play us, 'Drink to me only,' and I'll draw you a mug o' table ale."

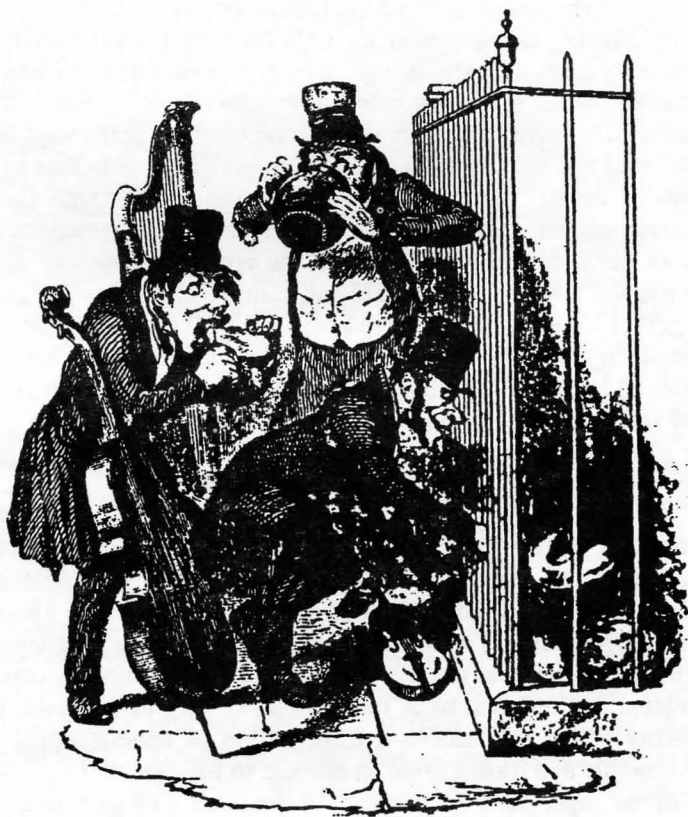
"You're vastly kind," said the 'fiddle;' "it's a pleasure to play anythink for you, marm, you've sich taste;" and then turning to his comrades, he added, with a smile, "By goles! if she ain't the woppingest cretur as ever I set eyes on."

The tune required was played, and the promised ale discussed.

The 'bass,' with a feeling of gratitude, voted that they should give a parting air unsolicited.

"Vot shall it be?" demanded the 'harp.'

"Vy, considering of her size," replied the 'fiddle,' "I thinks as nothink could be more appropriate than 'Farewell to the mountain!'" and, striking up, they played the proposed song, marching on well pleased with the unexpected appreciation of their musical talent by the kind and munificent Molly Scraggs!



Treasured Gifts, Joyous Times

Genny Shimer Remembered¹

by Christine Helwig

"The Celebration of the Life of Genny Shimer," held by the Country Dance and Song Society in November of 1990 brought several hundred of Genny's friends and admirers from all parts of the country together at our Headquarters in Northampton, Massachusetts. It was a wonderful reunion of people who had known her over the years and who brought with them reminiscences of the many ways in which Genny Shimer had enriched our lives. We sang and we spoke of the gifts that so many of us treasured; the joyous times, the funny incidents, the challenges, the opportunities and the encouragement that Genny had offered to dancers, teachers, singers and musicians and to all her wide circle of friends. In the evening, we danced many of her beloved dances; music was made by very special musicians, both for dancing and listening and we all sang together--unwilling to go or to break the spell of the day. What follows are very personal recollections--my special memories of an inspiring teacher, a generous mentor, and a beloved friend. Many other creative and dedicated people shared in these projects, and the omission of their names is not intended to diminish in any way their contributions or to slight the many friendships that have been part of the joy of working with Genny Shimer and the Country Dance and Song Society.

Ed [Helwig] and I knew Genny first as a teacher. When we were exposed to English Country Dance--this was in 1955--we were at once charmed by the music, enchanted by the unusual figures--and utterly intimidated by the intricacies that knowledgeable initiates handled with such grace and aplomb. We needed a lot of encouragement and it was Genny with her clarity, her patience, and her obvious love of the material she was teaching that unravelled the seeming complexity of Apley House or Argeers and revealed to us the beauties of various Maggots. This was her gift both as a teacher and a role model--a combination of understanding a dance and its music so thoroughly and transmitting its essence so lovingly that figures and music coalesced into a joyous experience for dancers on the floor. She gave us a sense that even "for those

¹Christine Helwig is widely known as a scholar and much loved teacher of English country dance, and is on the editorial board of *CD&S*. Her recollections here are presented as a tribute to one of the great contributors to the enjoyment of country dance in our time. They may also help modern readers understand the human emotional background of the factual information offered in the American morris dance history elsewhere in this issue. God Bless you Christine, God Bless you Genny, God Bless us all with such fine and loving teachers.

who knew" there were subtleties in the figures and music that could bring a new and pleasurable discovery in every performance. Of course, Genny's expertise was not limited to Playford or 18th and 19th century historical dances. She taught traditional and morris dance with equal authority and enjoyment. What a pleasure it was to watch her feet "shimmer" across the floor as she demonstrated the rant step. One of our earliest memories of Genny was her performance of "Bacca Pipes" that first summer at Pinewoods.

For years, English Country dancing was our cherished recreation--we were camp followers; encouraged by Gay [May Gadd], Genny and many others we became regulars at Pinewoods, at Boston weekends and Summer Camp; we travelled to Berea, to Brasstown and any place where country dance was offered. In short, we became a part of that family of enthusiasts, the Country Dance Society of America. It was inevitable that years of enjoyment would bring a sense of responsibility and an almost missionary zeal to recruit others into the pleasures offered by CDSS. So, when invited by Genny, now the National Director of the Society, to attend a "Staff and Leader's Conference" at Hudson Guild in the fall of 1974, we seized the opportunity and discovered new dimensions of Genny's talent for leadership. Genny was a very practical visionary. She believed in the importance of empowering leaders and members to use their interests and skills in furthering the goals of the Society. She believed that the primary function of Headquarters was to provide support, information and encouragement that would enable our growing national membership to organize programs and workshops, to use local resources and to respond effectively to the nationwide growth of interest in folk music and dance. This innovative conference was her idea--the first of many that brought active members from different areas to discuss the goals and activities as well as the needs and problems of the Society. The 36 members that attended came from groups in Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia and represented a variety of interests. Together we explored such questions as the role of the Country Dance and Song Society, especially in relation to its Centers and other affiliates, the changing traditions and new materials available, potential programs for the Bicentennial year and some proposals for new programs at Pinewoods Camp.

Perhaps the most immediate result of this conference was the agreement to sponsor a Family Week at Pinewoods after careful consideration of the factors that would create an ideal experience for children of various ages and their parents. Other recommendations included scheduling of annual leaders' conferences, a newsletter outlining services that the headquarters could provide, a listing of available teaching tools and recorded dance music, and a roster of leaders, musicians and members in each region to enable them to establish contacts, to pool resources or materials and to organize workshops.

Genny's wide acquaintance with members had given her a clear understanding of the different problems and needs that the Society must address. She was concerned about helping "small, enthusiastic groups" as well as serving the larger established Centers

of the Society. She felt strongly that one vital function of the national office was to sponsor leaders' workshops designed to impart knowledge of repertoire, styles of country dance, teaching methods and, above all, to develop teachers who would "conduct sessions of country dance that are enjoyable and satisfying both socially and aesthetically" ("Article on a Leaders' Workshop," *CDSS News*, #29 [March 1980]). No less important to her were workshops for musicians, often held in connection with the workshops for teachers, so that live music would be available to local groups; but she also wanted to publish quality records or tapes to serve the groups that did not have musicians.

As a member of the CDSS Executive Committee, it was a privilege to work with Genny on some of the projects recommended by that first Leaders' Conference. The conferences that followed were held in different parts of the country and gave those of us who attended and worked on the programs a stimulating opportunity to meet other leaders and to dance and sing with their groups. We were working on a "Kit for Leaders" under Genny's direction and compiling information about what was available, where the dance instructions and/or music could be found and whether a record or tape existed. Through questionnaires, personal contacts and a revitalized *CDSS Newsletter* members were alerted to the activities of other groups, to resources in their areas, and to services that the national office could provide. Though Genny was National Director for less than three years, she continued to work actively on these projects which her leadership and her vision of the future of our Society had set in motion and which we continue to pursue today.

In 1975, a new opportunity to serve the Society was thrust upon her. In 1974, Richard Conant had indicated that he and his family could no longer continue to operate Pinewoods Camp and would offer it for sale to a non-profit organization. A committee of officers, members of the Society and neighbors of the Camp was formed to explore the possibilities. After months of meetings and negotiations, this committee recommended that a non-profit organization be incorporated to purchase the property and operate the Camp. At the first meeting of this infant organization, Pinewoods Camp, Inc. in the fall of 1975, Genny Shimer became our President by unanimous consent. It was an enormous task and Genny set about organizing the Board with her usual insight, tact and vigor. She had her objectives firmly in mind; without imposing her views, Genny led us with wisdom and with respect for the contributions that each could make, and she challenged us all to surpass ourselves. Who but Genny could have persuaded a rank amateur to be Fund Chairman? But she read me well; this opportunity to work with dedicated members all over the country for a cause so dear to our hearts was electrifying. The job of collaborating with Genny to produce the *Pinewoods Post* was not just a great joy but a source of constant amazement at the skill with which she created an attractive and readable newsletter from the raw mixture of reports, budgets, notes and scribbled corrections that we brought to her desk. Once the initial problems were overcome and firm traditions established, Genny relinquished the reins of Pinewoods Camp. Just as she had devoted time and effort to the needs of the Society after she retired as National

Director, she continued to work on any project that needed her special knowledge or skills.

Genny never really retired--and how fortunate that was for the Country Dance and Song Society! Elected Vice President in 1981 and President in 1986, she continued to guide us in many important ways: she was a resource that never failed. As an officer, advisor and our preeminent teacher, she travelled widely, attending a growing number of festivals and weekends and conducting workshops and conferences. She wrote for the newsletter and for *Country Dance and Song*; she kept abreast of new books and research being done by scholars of dance history.

In 1981, Genny updated the account of the Country Dance and Song Society written in 1959 by May Gadd, for a new book about folk dance in America *International Folk Dancing, U.S.A.*, edited by Betty Casey.² She wrote:

During the first twenty-five years of its existence there was a growing recognition of the importance of the American aspect of the Society's program. The tremendous collection of Southern Appalachian songs and dances, made by Cecil Sharp between 1916 and 1918, led to further research which showed that a tradition of folk music and dance exists all over America, and that the English and American traditions are so closely interwoven that they cannot be separated without loss to both.

One of Genny's objectives was to enlarge our knowledge about local traditions of music and dance in America. In addition, as she notes:

A major CDSS project was born in 1974. In 1973 the National Endowment for the Humanities had awarded James Morrison a grant in support of a study of American social dance in the eighteenth century that was renewed in 1974.

This project, and the performances of authentic Revolutionary period dances by the American Country Dance Ensemble and at gala events held by many Centers during the U.S. Bicentennial celebrations, inspired much additional research into original sources of our American heritage.

²This book was published by Doubleday & Co., New York, in 1981. Genny's article gives credit to many of the people involved in the history of the Society since 1972, when Genny became the National Director, which had to be omitted here. The book also contains an article on May Gadd by Joan Carr and one about Pinewoods Camp by Christine Helwig; it was Genny's idea to break the potentially confusing article into three parts.

Leaders all over the country had expressed their need for resource materials to augment what was available from England or from American sources. The Society had "printed the two *English Country Dances of Today* books by May Gadd and the popular records (CDS #1-4) of English dances... under the direction of Phil Merrill." A first book of American dances with a companion record (*O'Kay, Let's Try a Contra* and CDS #5) was published in 1973. In 1975-76 two books of early American dances *American Country Dances of the Revolutionary Era* by Kate Van Winkle Keller and Ralph Sweet and *Twenty-four Early American Country Dances, Cotillions, and Reels for the Year 1976* by James E. Morrison were published.

The publications of the Society were a particular concern of Genny's. Our resources were limited but our membership had expressed the need for additional authoritative books, tapes and records. Genny believed that any published material that bore the imprint of the Society must be excellent in quality and must reflect a high standard of scholarship. As a member *ex officio* of our Publications Committee, she reviewed all proposals that we received. The expansion of the newsletter and a new format for our yearly magazine *Country Dance and Song* were high on her list of priorities; quality records and tapes were also on her list of essential additions and she envisioned the future development of video tapes as a useful teaching tool. How appropriate it is for the Society to establish the Genevieve Shimer Publications Fund in memory of her leadership in this aspect of our mission!

Genny served, *ex officio*, on every important committee that was concerned with the organization or activities of the Society. For two in particular, her understanding of the aspirations and growing requirements of the membership was essential. The Artistic Advisory Committee was concerned with the quality and authenticity of whatever the Society offered, whether it was the leadership of centers, programs at Pinewoods or workshops in other areas--indeed any activity that was held under CDSS auspices. Its principal artistic mission was seen as "aiding and abetting all the individuals and groups who are promoting activities within the Society's sphere of interest" (*CDSS Newsletter* #72, 1986). It was also responsible for advising the Executive Committee and the Director on issues that would affect the well being or effective functioning of the Society.

One such issue arose when the rent of the national office in New York City was increased by 90% in 1984. The Artistic Advisory Committee recommended the appointment of a Headquarters Planning Committee to consider alternative locations for the national office "in terms of how we can best carry out our mission of serving the broader membership." This was a difficult and challenging issue--but not a new one since relocation of our headquarters had been considered by the Executive Committee when Jim Morrison was our National Director. Genny felt very strongly that the time had come to relocate in an area that would offer a suitable ambience and would reduce the costs of space and of other expenses of the Headquarters and its staff. This would mean that more of the Society's resources would be available for its primary aim of service to the membership.

Those of us that served on this Committee, mindful of the vital role that volunteers had always played in our projects and activities, were chiefly concerned that the new National Office be in a location "from which the Society could draw on a sufficient number of qualified, dedicated and diverse people to serve on the Exec. (Board) and adequately represent the cross section of the Society's activities and constituencies." Though deep differences of opinion appeared in our deliberations, it was clear that every one on this Committee wanted what would be best for the future of the Society. In August, 1986, when the National Council voted to move our Headquarters to Massachusetts, their decision was the culmination of a long process that Genny had initiated in 1974. In her President's Greetings, September 1986, Genny thanked those who had devoted "hours and hours" of time to these studies, acknowledged the new challenge to "a Society that is becoming increasingly a truly national organization" and urged all members to "keep in touch with us at the national office and let us know your reactions, your needs, your hopes, your ideas. Communication among friends is essential if we are to achieve our mutual goals," she wrote. And many tasks that required her experience and her vision lay ahead.

Genny was our leading authority on the tradition that is the legacy of Cecil Sharp. She wrote many articles about his work and his interpretations of Playford. Genny understood however that no tradition remains static, and wrote:

We should be flexible yet discriminating, not accepting change for the sake of change but with awareness of what we are doing; finally, we should maintain our high standards of performance and knowledgeable leadership in the field of folk dance. ("Tradition, Change and the Society," *Country Dance and Song*, #7 [1975])

In a later article, "Cecil Sharp Dances Today," Genny pointed out certain changes that have crept into our present repertoire--perhaps from an effective arrangement for a performance or simply accepted from customary usage. Discussing changes based on research into original sources, Genny was open to some revisions of Sharp's interpretations as both logical and satisfying, and wrote:

Small changes such as the direction of a turn single seem relatively unimportant and can surely be left to the discretion of the teacher. (*CDSS News*, #29 [1982])

Genny believed that Sharp's interpretations--our principal source of information about Playford's dances and music for over 70 years--must not just be respected for his scholarly achievement but had become a living tradition. She felt very strongly that the dances and music, tested by time and beloved by generations of dancers, should be cherished and preserved for the enjoyment of the dancers and musicians yet to come.

This conviction of Genny's has given us a last splendid gift. *The Playford Ball* by Kate Van Winkle Keller and Genevieve Shimer, was published in July, 1990, by A Capella Books and the Country Dance and Song Society. In spite of other duties and many demands on her time as the President of our Society, she devoted countless hours to this project. It is a monumental achievement. *The Playford Ball* contains much information about Sharp and his followers that has not been easily available to members or the general public. In addition to 103 "classic" dances with music, there are fascinating facts, anecdotes and pictures. A "Glossary" that tells you everything you always wanted to know about modern technique, and the figures and formations in "Early English Country Dances" are invaluable and definitive.

My final and infinitely rewarding chance to work with Genny Shimer came when the Country Dancers of Westchester and Country Dance-New York envisioned a Festival to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Country Dance and Song Society. We wanted this to be a festival of the kind that Genny had produced for us so many times--a celebration that would bring together dancers, singers, musicians to enjoy the great variety of activities that our Society had sponsored and nourished in the Greater New York area since 1915. We knew we needed Genny's help, and we wanted her to be our Honorary Chair for this event. Though she had many other obligations that were part of being President in a landmark year, Genny threw herself into the planning in the hands-on way that we knew so well. The phone wires hummed and, in spite of illness and distance, she quickly became the chief architect of our festival, which we dubbed "Come, Let's Be Merry." It was a rewarding experience for everyone who worked on the program to consult with Genny and to have her wise and practical advice about all the problems we faced in organizing such a large event. To make the day complete, she came down from New Hampshire to participate in the day and to preside, in her inimitable way, as Mistress of Ceremonies at our evening party. Genny Shimer was greeted with an ovation from the large and delighted crowd, a rousing affirmation of her inspiring leadership, and the deep affection of her friends and admirers. Her presence on June 2, 1990, was a gift that none of us will ever forget!



Genny Shimer
1913 - 1990