

The American Morris Newsletter

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U.S.A.

**a publication devoted solely to
English Morris & Sword Dancing**

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January 1981

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vol IV no 4

The Newsletter regrets to announce that production and mailing costs are forcing us after four years to raise the rates for individual subscriptions to \$3 per year within North America and \$2 per copy for team subscriptions of at least six copies mailed to the same address. Overseas readers should add \$3 for air mail service. The new rates will begin with the next issue (Vol. V No. 1) but renewals at current rates will be accepted provided they are postmarked before April 1, 1981. We are grateful for the generous support and encouragement we have received so far. We hope to be able to hold these rates solid for some time and to give you a more meaty Newsletter to boot in exchange for your hard earned booty.--S.P.

Yet once more this year AMN will publish a directory of North American Morris teams and a schedule of performances in the April issue. Please update your team's address and send along any schedule information you wish to share by the March 21st deadline. We are particularly interested in new clubs or clubs which have been out of sight. A postcard will do it, and you will realize the Directory's usefulness when you move or are travelling and suddenly hunger for the flash of hankies and a garrolous galley!--S.P.

Recent correspondence with Morris Sunderland reveals that the Bacon handbook is currently out of print and likely to remain that way for some time. He notes in his letter that, "On my visit to 23 clubs in the States I could see little use for the complete volume and I saw several photocopies. Most clubs use only one or two traditions; these I could supply if asked." If you wish to write for photocopies, the address is Morris Sunderland, 13 Park Lane, Henlow, Beds SG16 6AT.--S.P.

EDITORS COMMENT

With this issue of AMN, we are printing "American" Morris dances - those dances created by a US or Canadian side and considered part of that side's regular repertoire. There are more dances within this category that do not appear here. Some we haven't received descriptions for; some sides request that the dances remain unpublished. The latter is an understood and respected position. The former (the unknowns) we would still like to hear about.

It is also appropriate that this issue of AMN should contain an article addressing the origins of the morris "tradition". The issue of attempting to replicate a styling based on manuscripts is a difficult one. A Headington style "Constant Billy" will look different from one side to the next as one travels in America and there are plenty of arguments among individuals who have personally seen the Headington Morris in England on what exactly is the "correct" way.

With more sides developing across this continent, the lines of "correctness" become blurred. The dances take on a new styling all by themselves. In my opinion, that's okay, for if tradition is to pass onward into the future it will only do so if it is a living tradition. What is important, however, is to recognize the changes (whether accidental or deliberate) and to realize when to stop calling a dance a "Headington" dance, etc. Many of the dances published here are "in the tradition of..." Others reflect a totally new "styling". They are all apart of the morris. J.C.Brickwedde

MR. SOFTY

A Philadelphia Buffoon Dance in the Bledington Tradition

The dance was first created and performed at the 1979 Marlboro Morris Ale by the Kingessing Morris Men who have asked that it be published in Bacon Handbook style.

1/2 A · (AB) 4 · A



Sequence - OY; FU; DF; HG; DF; WG; DF; HR; DF; WH.

DF - Buffoon and half-hey; rep.

1st time: Soupy Sales Side Step (SSSS)*

2nd time: Fists (F) strike Hats (H): offer fist at waist level; after fist is struck swing in large circle out and up

EF - OF - OF - EF - EF - OF - OF - EF -

3rd time: Curley Shuffle (cf. Three Stooges)*

4th time: Pass Hats: close circle, leaning in, take hat from right neighbor and place on own head. Repeat twice (total three passes); on repeat of DF and 3 more hat passes, own hat is retrieved.

On WH (last A music) sing, "The creamiest, dreamiest soft ice cream, its name is Mr. Softy." (Repeat)

Dance ends with SSSS (facing up) during last 2 bars.

* For details write to Kingessing Morris Men, c/o Tom Senior, 118 Montrose Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19010, or ask the nearest 30+ year-old TV addict.

Editor's Note: The dance was created in the Bledington tradition because that is Kingessing's principal tradition. Your club could alter it to fit your tradition.

OH SUSANNAH
from the village of
New York City

Oh Susannah - created by Ring o'Bells - a stick dance in the style of Brackley.

Sequence - OY;FU;DF;SS;DF;BB;DF;SO

DF - Facing partner, step back right while dishing with butts, step back left while striking ground with tips, step forward right, caper left while striking ground with partner and passing by right shoulder; with 4 2-steps (twirling sticks) make a loop to right to end in partner's place facing across; half hey; repeat whole sequence to original places. In hey, top pair does 4 slipping steps, middles do 2 slips then 2 2-steps in place, bottoms do 2 2-steps in place and then 2 slips; all end with long rear-up. Twirl sticks on 2-steps and rear-ups.

We do our Brackley pretty much as described by Sharp, i.e., a combination of "pure" Brackley and Hinton. The figures we use in our stick dances are those Sharp noted for Shooting, but with a normal phrase length. Thus, FU is up-and-down, SS is into line with no twirling, BB is sidestepped and has twirling on the 2-steps. SO has a strike on the second 2-step, no break halfway, and ends facing up with a strike and a caper (no dishing as in Shooting).

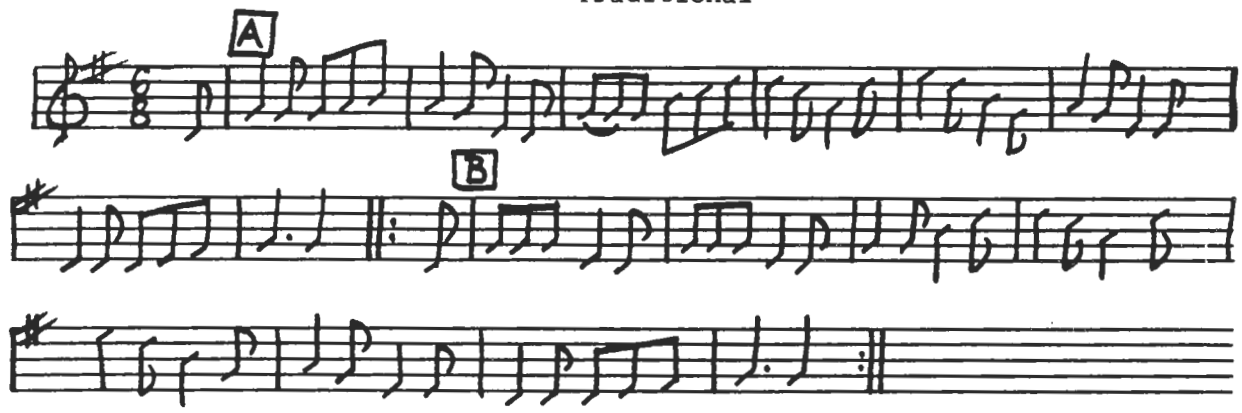
This chorus could be used with the figures given for Brackley in Bacon, as, in fact, the Windsor team does. (They were taught the dance by Roy Dommett, who collected it from Ring o' Bells; this is the first instance we have heard of an American morris dance being danced by an English side.)

(Further details concerning this dance may be obtained through Jody Evans, Foreman, Ring o'Bells, 55 Perry St., New York, NY 10014.)

SOLDIER O.
MORRIS PROCESSIONAL
as danced in the village of
Minneapolis-on-Mississippi

Soldier O. -- Morris Processional - created by Edward L. Stern, Minnesota
Traditional Morris.

"Oh, Soldier, Soldier will you marry me,
With your musket, fife and drum?"
'Oh, how can I marry such a pretty lass as ye,
When I've got no pants to put on?'
--Traditional



I choreographed the Soldier O. Processional (double file version) in 1969 for the Chicago Morris Dancers, a group which existed until 1971. It was originally known as "The Chicago Processional", and was danced to the tune "Bobbing Joe" from Bampton. The present tune (above) came into being during the summer of 1972, when many of the Chicago dancers had a reunion at the University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp (Stockton, CA.). I thought that an American tune, and decided to adapt the the song quoted above for the purpose.

The second version (single file) was devised in 1976. Presently, the Minnesota Traditional Morris dancers use the single file variant almost exclusively, except for the purpose of teaching the dance to newcomers: The dance is much more quickly understood in double files, then easily altered to single file.

Steps and Arm Movements

Double Morris Step(sometimes referred to as "4-step" or "4/3 step" or "6/3 step") is the basic 1-2-3-hop with a leg shake on the hop. Arm movement is a low "down-&-up" swing with a small, subdued wrist flick on the last count (do not allow hands to rise above nipple height).

Plain Capers are accompanied by horizontal circles slightly above and in front of the head. R hand clockwise, L hand counterclockwise. In the dance, one actually performs 3 circles (on the first three capers) and a "large circle" on the fourth caper, bringing arms down by sides preparatory to an up-beat flick (with hop) at end of last measure.

Side step is open. The foot closest your partner has its toe directed toward them, and you are looking at them, while your other foot is perpendicular to and placed behind the first. The side step consists of seven foot-falls and a final hop; it is not stationary, but moves along the line of travel so that the procession is continued, albeit more slowly. Arm Movement is four vertical counter-twists at waist height by the hand closest to your partner ("twist" implying more wrist than forearm action), with a forward swing of both arms on the final hop.

The Dance

Music: A(ABB)ⁿA

Once to yourself during the first A music: on the last beat of the phrase all hop (odds on R foot, evens on L foot) while swinging arms forward as described under Double Morris Step.

Continue with the Long and Short Processionals as described below. Always end with the Long Processional (leader yells out "CAPERS!" during measure A7 to indicate end of the dance). In the single file version is used, dance may end in a circle.

I. Double File (Original) Version

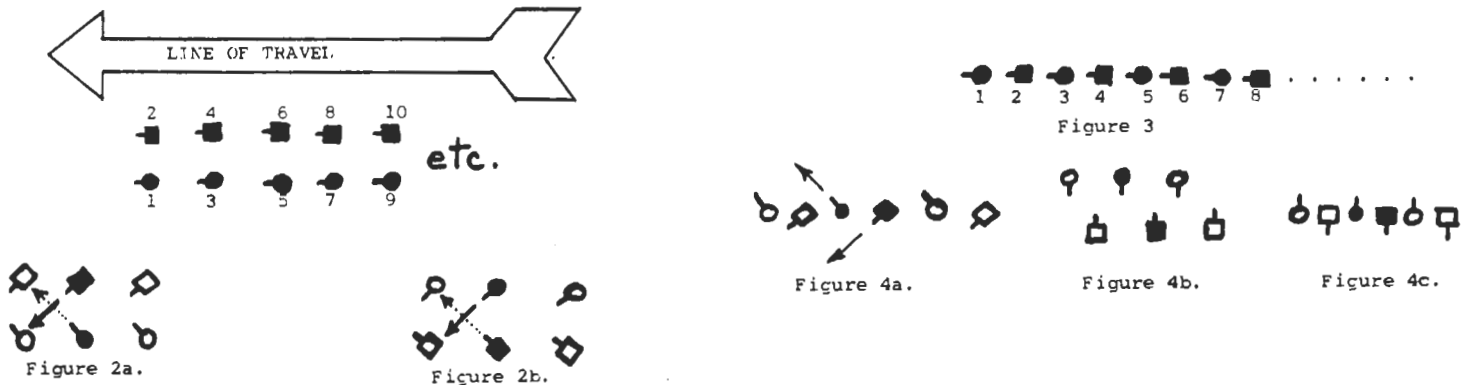
Pairs of dancers line up facing the top of the set (Fig.1).

<u>meas.</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
A.	-Long Processional
1-6	Dance forward 6 Double Morris Steps.
7-8	Four Plain Capers in place.
B.	-Short Processional
1-2	Cross to other side of dance using 2 Double Morris Steps, one position forward, with evens going in front of partners (Fig. 2a).
3-4	Side Step (visually relating to partner)
5-6	Repeat meas. B 1-2, odds crossing in front (Fig. 2b).
7-8	Side Step (relating to partner).
B.1-8	Repeat meas. B 1-8.
	Repeat dance from beginning.

II. Single File Version (Useful for fewer dancers)

Dancers line up as in Fig. 3.

<u>meas.</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
A.1-8	Same as meas. A 1-8 above
B.1-2	Odds move to R side diagonally forward, evens to L side using 2 Double Morris Step.(Fig. 4a).
3-4	Side Step (visually relating to audience beyond opposite line of dancers)(Fig. 4b).
5-6	Return to single line using 2 Double Morris Steps.
7-8	Side Step (relating to audience on the other side)(Fig. 4c.)
B.1-8	Repeat meas. B 1-8.
	Repeat dance from beginning.



A Single-File Version of the Winster Processional
by Ed Stern and the Minnesota Traditional Morris

Have you ever wanted to do the Winster Processional with five dancers? How unfortunate: it doesn't work.

For some bizarre reason which I can no longer recall, I was struck with such a passion during the summer of 1980. Once again Terpsichore spoke. She asked, "Why not do the same thing with the Winster that you did to Soldier O.?" I answered, "Indeed, why not?"

Line up as for the single file version of Soldier O; steps and arm movements as for the usual Winster Processional. On bar 1 the odds go diagonally forward to the right side as the evens go to the left; during bars 2-4 the two newly formed files dance forward along the line of travel; during bar 5 reform the single file, which moves forward along the line of travel for bars 6-8. Repeat ad nauseum, ending the dance as you normally would for the double-file Winster.

PRINCESS ROYAL

A Jig

from the village of
Minneapolis-on-Mississippi

Princess Royal - created by J.C.Brickwedde, Minnesota Trad. Morris - a hankerchief jig for one, or two simultaneous dancers.

Sequence - OY;FU;DF;DF; Fore';DF;DF

Music- same as Bampton Princess Royal Jig with the following change A(ABB)²

This dance is an accidental version of the Bampton jig of the same name and music. When compared, it is sufficiently different to be considered a variant all its own. The "styling" or flavor of the dance is in the tradition of Bampton.

4-step - the double step (4-step) in this dance is best likened to an open side step motion and rhythm except that the movement is straight forward. Bampton hankerchieves are used throughout.

Straddle caper - the caper is entered into while coming out of a fore' caper.

Feet end up wide apart (tight fitting pants are not recommended); arms are fully extended horizontally to the side. The cross step - from straddle position, feet and hankerchieves are crossed, one leg in front of the other leg, etc., quickly reversed then straddle again. (rhythm: cross,cross,straddle; cross,cross,straddle; or 1,2,3...,1,2,3...) The musician must adapt the tempo and accenting during this maneuver.

FU: 5 4-step, fore', tag back

DF: 8 oss moving diagonally rt. with rt. handkerchief accenting each step with a ccw twist above head; 8 oss diag. lf.; 4-step; fore'; straddle,c,c, staddle,c,c,straddle; two 2-step; fore'; tag back)

Fore': 8 fore' capers ccw round a large circle with great emphasis on height (musician must adapt tempo); 4-step; fore'; tag back.

(Editors' Note: Fred Breunig also wrote us to say that he had choreographed a dance entitled "Mr. Bartlett's Fancy" in the Litchfield tradition which a number of our readers will remember having seen at the 1980 Marlboro Morris Ale. He didn't send along details of the dance not only because what he choreographed and what was worked out by the Marlboro team were rather different, but also because he didn't feel it was appropriate for him to offer their club's dances for publication.--S.P.)

ABCD MORRIS? L,MNO MORRIS!

A Critique of Russell Wortley's, 'The XYZ of Morris'

Dr. Anthony G. Barrand
School for Traditional Dance and Song

October 1979

One cannot help but be intrigued about the motives underlying Dr. Russell Wortley's (1978) defense, in 'The XYZ of Morris', of the rather romantic idea that the English morris is a man's fertility rite. This is all very well as something to tell audiences to encourage them to part with their money for the morris "bag", but the evidence considered as a whole simply will not support the biased view given by Wortley that the morris is:

"...the duty of a small group of fraternity of males who...are the descendants...from a pre-Christian priesthood whose duty it was to carry out seasonal rituals on behalf of the whole community."

(Ibid, p. 3)

Is it possible that Dr. Wortley felt inspired to select from the available data to provide an intellectual rationale for the intensely emotional position of the Morris Ring that morris is a "men only" tradition? This attitude emerges most clearly in the suggestions (all of which I heard this summer in England) that morris is only "traditional" if done by men, that a group of women doing Cotswold dances may be "good but it's not morris," or that women's dancing be referred to with the perjorative description, "Ladies Ritual Dance." One cannot argue with people's gut reaction to this issue, but any credible arguments from "tradition" must consider all the pertinent facts and not just those which support one's views.

Wortley begins the "XYZ" with an appeal to the common usage of the term "morris" in the 19th and 20th century English countryside and he claims it was exclusively used to refer to a performance activity with the following characteristics:

1. It is seasonal, i.e., it occurs "properly" at one time of the year only;
2. The performers are looked upon as harbingers of good luck, thus serving the community;
3. They collect money or refreshment in return for services rendered;
4. They appear in small numbers;
5. They wear special disguise or costume, and;
6. They are exclusively male.

Wortley points out that the usage and criteria do include "Mummers" plays as well as dances and, further, that it is not what is presented but how it is presented which makes it "morris". This is a commendable conclusion, but how useful is it to attach these criteria to the term "morris"? Two issues may be raised with regard to the evidence concerning the use of the term.

First, as Wortley notes, there are seasonal customs which exhibit all of the six characteristic features and yet have

never been called "morris", e.g. the Abbotts Bromley Horn Dancers (since the 16th century), the Britannia Coconut Dancers (since 1860), the Hooden Horse of Kent, the Welsh Mari Lwyd, and many others. Added to this, one must also note that "morris" may not be the most widely used expression to refer to the seasonal performers. Cawte, Helm and Peacock (1967, p. 13) point out that other local names are Molly Dancers, Pace-Eggers, Tipteers, Plough Jags, Guisers, Mummings, Soulers and Sword Dancers. To this one could add others, such as Jolly Lads, Ploughstots and, simply, the Dancers.

Second, not only are other names commonly given to seasonal performances, but it is not the case that the six features "belong without exception to all performances characteristically called "morris" (Wortley, *ibid*, p. 1)." It seems, rather (R. Dommett, personal communication) that the term was used to refer to a general "dress-up" and festive situation. In some places it means social or country dancing and in others it seems to have become associated with what was, perhaps, the most colorful or significant "dress up" event in the community, specifically the sort of activity to which Wortley claims it was limited.

These facts can be summarized by noting that there are numerous examples of performances which satisfy the criteria listed by Wortley but which are called something other than "morris" and that the term was also used to refer to types of activity which do not exemplify all of the criteria listed by Wortley. The rejoinder, I suspect, would be that "XYZ" does not offer a definition of "morris" but simply represents an effort to articulate the special qualities of a genre of traditional dance which is found elsewhere in the world but which, for some inexplicable reason, flourished and flourishes in England. This is laudable, but the urge to protect the "men only" aspect, which in 20th century Western society is an unusual feature of public dance performances, should not blind one to the evidence that there were and are examples of public dance and drama ceremonies in which women take part and which satisfy the five other criteria.

Wortley discusses some of these in the "XYZ" but begs the question of their significance by calling them "intrusions". He wrote:

"Naturally there have been from time to time feminine intrusions, sometimes for entertainment, sometimes for fun. But the primary purpose of Morris...is neither fun nor entertainment."

(*Ibid*, p. 3)

He mentions, of course, the two famous Cotswold cases recorded by Sharp from Blackwell (Worcestershire, ca. 1850s?) and Spelsbury (Oxfordshire, ca. 1830s?). Sharp suffered, I believe, from the same over-eagerness as Wortley in trying to prove that the morris was the property of the men. He wrote:

"...in each case, be it noted, the experiment (AGB-my underlining) was short-lived and regarded as a joke rather than a precedent." (EFDS Journal, I (1), 1914, p. 8)

In saying this, however, Sharp went much further than the evidence in his own field notebooks or in the Spelsbury town history. The Percy Manning MSS quoted Sharp in the typed version of this notebooks described the Spelsbury group as an elaborately equipped team with a male "squire" or clown and a male musician which "used to dance on WhitMonday" (Sharp Field Notebooks D1, p. 123). Both the town records and the Manning MSS imply that the team danced for quite a period of time, even dancing on the church tower to celebrate the defeat of Napoleon! Having seen the small sloping top of the said tower and the small footprint there embedded, this latter event could not have been too aesthetic a performance, but it reveals a group of dancers performing in an elaborate, accepted fashion with no reference, in the community, to it being an "experiment". True, they apparently "all got married and that stopped it" (Mrs. Rachel Sturdy, Spelsbury, Sharp Field Notebooks, D1, p. 123), but that could mean anything.

I am sure, however, that Dr. Wortley also knows about the side of young women that Sam Bennett of Ilmington took down to Bampton one year, about the women's sides taught by Jack Hyde of Abingdon, and about the women who filled out a Bampton side during the war. Indeed, this summer in England, I heard of evidence of most of the Cotswold sides which survived in this century having had women's teams at one time or another. The Grenoside Sword Dancers also, it must be noted, had a side of wmoen during the war.

Only a desire to prejudge women dancing as an "intrusion" or an "experiment" could prompt someone, however, to omit mention of at least the following examples: the Salisbury "Faggot dances" (performed by four local women since at least the end of the last century although some appearance has been maintained to preserve wood cutting rights in the forest for hundreds of years); the rush-bearing at Lymm Wakes throughout most of the 19th century which had male and female morris dancers ("the cart goes round to the neighboring hamlets preceded by male and female morris dancers... Two troupes of morris dancers paraded the village each Rushbearing (sic) Saturday until a few years ago." (An Illustrated Guide to Lymm and District, C.F. Arden, ca. 1890)); The Altrincham (Dommett, 1979) and the Gisburn (Filling, 1968) Processional dances with a line of men and a line of women; the processional stave dances performed by women's (and men's) Friendly Societies on thier annual "Club Walks" (see illustrations in West Country Friendly Societies, Margaret Fuller, University of Reading, 1964, especially plates IV and V); the Helston Furry Dance; and the presence of women in the Padstow May Celebrations and the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance in the past few years.

Given the chronological spread of these occurrences, beginning in the early 19th century, it is hard to accept Wortley's cavalier assertion that:

"...by and large, the emasculation of English traditional morris is a phenomenon belonging essentially to the "folk dance revival." (Ibid., p. 4)

Now it is one thing to prefer to see various forms of the English ceremonial dance/drama being performed by men and to want to encourage men's dancing, but it is quite another for Dr. Wortley and others to imply or even assert that the measure of

whether a type of performance is "traditional" or not is the "men only" criterion. The evidence seems to indicate, on the contrary, that within the community to which the ceremony belongs there has always been more tolerance and flexibility with regard to that criterion than revivalists would like to see. In fact, it seems to have been most important that the seasonal aspect was maintained where the male one would not be. In other words, it was critical that the activity be performed regularly with whomever one could get. If this meant women substituting in what might generally be acknowledged as men's places, there seems to have been more generosity within the traditional community than there is among the members of the Morris Ring. This open-minded and open-handed attitude was known early in Sharp's revival because Kimber's position seems always to have been expressed on the EFDSS record, William Kimber (LP1001), for which Russell Wortley wrote the notes. Kimber said:

"There never was a woman's side, but several women could whack half the men at dancing a jig... I've always believed in playing fair. 50-50, that's me!"

There are, then, plenty of indications that while the ceremonial dance in England has been largely a male prerogative since the beginning of the 19th century, there were not only female ceremonies of a related kind (e.g. the faggot dances) but also instances of women dancing to maintain or add to a ceremony. In these cases, the traditional community apparently did not feel driven to say that the activity was not, then, morris. Further, the older references to the morris do not corroborate Wortley's statement that:

"Among the many references to morris dancers in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries one only indicates clearly a female (as well as a male) team." (Ibid, p. 3)

John Forrest (1977), in what is perhaps the only careful, critical study of the early pictorial and literary evidence, suggests that women often had roles in at least one of the dance forms commonly called morris by authors in the 16th and 17th centuries. Most importantly, however, Forrest demonstrates quite convincingly that the evidence will not support the notion that the Cotswold Morris, at least, is derived from any ancient fertility rites. Rather, he suggests, the origins of the Cotswold Morris lie in Court-sponsored dancing since all of the early references indicate the following:

- a. very elaborate and expensive costumes - "an expense that could only be met by the wealthier classes" (Forrest, *ibid*, p. 18);
- b. "The dancers themselves commanded quite high sums" (*ibid*, p. 18), i.e., they were fee paid performers rather than collectors of money;
- c. "The performances of the dances were not seasonal originally, but were arranged for holidays or important events at court..." (*ibid*, p. 27) and;
- d. "...the morris was almost exclusively connected with the royal court during the first part of the sixteenth century and was still popular with royalty until the end of the century." (*ibid*, p. 27).

Forrest does not try to make generalizations beyond the Cotswold Morris but the general conclusions are, it seems to me, supported by the modern evidence regarding the development of

the North-West processional or clog morris, the Molly Dances, the walks of the Friendly Societies and the Worcester/Hereford or Border Morris. Roy Dommett's research on these forms of the ceremonial dance in England leads one to believe that the dances developed as a form of entertainment to enhance an existing ceremony or occasion, such as a Rush-Cart parade, a Whitsun Ale, Christmas or Plough Monday. Thus, the holidays themselves may (or may not) have their roots in the old Solar Calendar and the ancient fertility religions but the dances or dramas probably do not. Wortley himself points out that "a morris dance can be a country dance" (ibid, p. 3) since the performers simply took an existing dance form and dressed up to perform it on the occasion which inspired the need for some sort of dance, i.e., basically, they used the currently popular social dances which, when performed once a year, were arrested in development while fashions of the recreational dance moved rapidly on. The evidence of Little Downham in the 1930s clearly relates to this; the Molly Dancers went out doing "couple" dances, such as the polka, since they had "lost" the "old" dances which, if the information from other East Anglian villages is pertinent, were 19th century-style country dances! Similarly, it must not be forgotten that, when the large fairs or Whitsun Ales in the Cotswolds were stopped in the middle 1850's or when the Rushcarts were no longer needed to bring a carpet of rushes for the church floor covering, the morris stopped. Evidently, the dance itself did not have enough intrinsic "fertility" value to merit continuing it in most villages without the celebration of the holiday which normally sustained it. Finally, it is very clear that many of the revivals which occurred in the Cotswold villages, at least, in the past 100 years were more clearly linked to holidays and special events, such as coronations and jubilees, starting with Victoria's 50th jubilee in 1887, than they were inspired by Christmeas, Whitsun, or other "fertility" oriented occasions. One might especially note the willingness with which people accepted the change from May 29th (Charles II birthday) to Whit Monday to Spring Bank Holiday!

If this is correct, and it seems to be, then we cannot accept the suggestion that today's morris men are relics of some priesthood which excluded women. We probably have to look to the more believable idea that women did not participate in the English morris very much because they had very little leisure time with children and households to maintain and because the morris was a boisterous form of begging and carousing in the street in which women would not partake. The men had a few leisure days on Plough Monday, Wakes Week, Christmas Day, etc., but even on these occasions the women still had to cook meals and mind children. There are numerous examples of men having time to dance because they were frozen out of work, e.g. Boxing Day in Headington Quarry, 1899. It is not surprising, therefore, that one finds examples of women dancing in situations where, presumably, the social climate permitted it, either because the women were single and had more free time or because the nature of the occasion was less boisterous, making it socially acceptable for women to participate, e.g., the Friendly Societies (mutual benefit organizations among working people), the faggot dances (performed at Salisbury Cathedral), the Gisburn Processional (wives dancing with their husbands), or the Milkmaid's Garland Dances performed on the occasion of the women being hired into service (Judge, 1979)

Social conditions change. The morris clearly was and remains

a vigorous response to the opportunity created by a holiday of some sort. Dr. Wortley is to be commended for his efforts to get teams to pay attention to the "specialness" that is attached to the morris when it appears infrequently or "seasonally", if you will. Even though there is no evidence to link most of the dances themselves with ancient rites, they were apparently used to enhance special occasions and, thereby, mark the passing of the year with their annual appearances. One must, therefore, concur with Wortley when he writes:

"It is good, surely, not just to take our varying seasons for granted but to celebrate them with their appropriate traditional rituals." (Ibid, p. 7)

The evidence, though, within the various traditions indicates a much broader concept of ceremonial dance and drama as traditional "rituals" in England than is captured by the term "morris". If we are genuine in our wish to incorporate these activities into our own lives and times, as opposed to performing them as antiquarian curiosities, we must reject the romantic notion that they have to be enacted as some sort of pre-christian fertility mass and see them as an opportunity to enhance an already felt celebration, whether it be a calendar event such as the completion of the harvest, or the coming of spring, or an annual town fair with no pre-christian origins. Seen in this light, we can understand the flexibility with regard to the sex of the performers found in tradition and should be appropriately flexible ourselves.

In the long run, though, it is important to recognize that one does not need to be over-protective of traditions; they protect themselves. If an innovation has a place, it will survive; if not, it will go the way of all fashions. Even Julian Pilling, that spokesman for the "Morris-is-for-men" movement, who regularly takes to the pages of English Dance and Song to plead his case, seems to have more confidence in the strength of traditions than does Dr. Wortley. In a recent letter to the editor, Pilling wrote:

"I do not think that so-called women's Morris will kill the tradition any more than Monteverdi or Edward German did." (EDandS, 41(2), 1979, 20)

Although I, for one, was not aware that two gentlemen mentioned were morris dancers, the point is clear. Much as one may despair of Pilling's anachronistic remarks in the same letter, letting one know exactly where he thinks the real place of women is, there is much good sense in the notion that the men should worry about their own dancing and let the women find out if they can develop dance forms which contribute to the existing traditions. It seems as if they always had that right in the communities which nurtured the traditions before the Morris Ring was a twinkle in anyone's eye.

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TEAM NEWS

A feature of the American Morris Newsletter dependent on your letters, postcards and telephone calls. Names of correspondents appear at the end of each club's news.

Ann Arbor Morris: Ann Arbor Morris has changed some officers. Yehudit Newman is now squire, John Cavanaugh and Carol Mohr are still our foremen and Peggy Gerber is now our bag. We've done some serious recruiting and will be putting a lot of energy into teaching. Some of our experienced dancers will be inactive for the winter season but we will all be getting together monthly to dance and party. We will again be doing a mummings play and sword dance this winter and hope to add a long sword play. We're still practicing on Sunday afternoon. Anyone wishing to join us should call Yehudit at (313) 971-6936.

Yehudit Newman, 2755 Canterbury, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Foggy Bottom Morris Men: Foggy Bottom's most successful season was typified by such highlights as the Ayatollah's Birthday Tour, a head-to-head confrontation with Army attack dogs (heel and toe confrontation?), and a mention in Newsweek (Nov. issue, Police vs. Morris). This winter the side has turned its awesome talents to the mysteries of Fieldtown . . . oh well. As I'm sure you all know there is a new administration in Washington, D.C. headed by Greg Fabian (squire), John Aggleton (bagman), and John Llewellen (asst. bagman). The polls predicted it would be a close fight, but they got in by a landslide. Now they intend to trim some fat from the Morris tradition!

John Aggleton, #102, 10404 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852

Forrest City Morris: The summer began with a bang when we travelled to the annual Marlboro Morris Ale in Vermont in late May. The people, area and dancing were all great. Our transport was another matter altogether. One of our two vans decided to drop its transmission 50 miles from Marlboro. Having barely recovered from that ordeal, we next appeared at an English pub night in St. Catherine's where we were warmly received. Then we held our own mini-ale at the beginning of June which was attended by two Toronto teams and one from Ann Arbor. Following the dancing there was the usual downpour and barbeque. At the end of June we headed for Killaloe, a laid back affair that was fun despite the bugs and rain. In July we were very much in evidence at Home County. When not actually dancing we were usually to be found with turned up hats trying to collect money for the festival. Home County was followed by the Toronto Ale and the Festival of Friends in Hamilton in early August. By this time holidays and the Pinewoods English Dance Week had deple-

ted our ranks so that those remaining had to do double duty. (That cut heavily into beer drinking time and put those already altering muscles to the test.) In true spirit, however, the hardy stalwarts redeemed themselves admirably according to their own modest report. There were also a dance-out in Bayfield, our usual appearance at the Western Fair, a wedding in Ohio and the second Henry VIII banquet.

Tom Siess, Bagman, Ron Duncan, Squire, 372 Cedar Av., London, Ont. N6G1E7

Greenwich Morris Men: After a short break from dancing in the city's summer heat we are now back on the street corners of Greenwich Village and visiting our favorite squares and pubs. On Oct. 4th the Ring O' Bells and GMM danced at the wedding of Beverly Francis (RO'B) and David Chandler (GMM) as we tied yet another knot between our teams. We would like thank Dave Arnold (squire) and Marty Stock for the years that they were able to share with GMM before their recent moves to Conn. and Mass. respectively. We will miss them both. Our new Bagman is Paul Friedman and new Squire is Dan Stenzler, 57-57 228th St. Bayside, NY 11364.

We have recently acquired five new members and are now rehearsing for the New York City Christmas revels to be held Dec. 12th and 13th. As in last year's performance we will be doing the Abbott's Bromley Horn Dance, "The Rose", Around the Boar's Head, and a long sword dance to accompany the mummings play.

Dan Stenzler, 57-57 228th St., Bayside, NY 11364

Ladies Pleasure: (Ed.--This is a new women's team.) After a workshop with Tony Barrand, we practiced hard all Fall to prepare for a mini-tour on Dec. 10. We danced at a violin-making school and at four different locations on the University of Chicago campus. We have been working on dances in the Headington and Hinton traditions. With the start of the new year we are planning for a larger tour on May Day, possibly sponsored by a city arts organization.

Erna-Lynne Bogue, 1451 E. 52nd St., Chicago, Ill. 60615

Londonderry-Windham Morris: (Ed.--Another new team!) The L-W Morris team started practice as a mixed team on Wed. Oct. 29 at the 200 year old farmhouse of the Newton family in Jamaica, VT. The class was attended by dancers from as far away as Chester, Landgrove and Stratton Mountain. We had enough people for two sides and at least four members could not attend that night. Tony Barrand taught us beginning figures, stick and handkerchief movements, and three dances in the Brackley tradition. Jill Newton of "Applejack" played fiddle for us until our own musicians learned the tunes.

Heidi Glover, P.O. Box 229, Londonderry, VT 05155

Mason-Dixon Border Morris: (Ed.--Yet once more, brand new.) We are seven men and one wife (our hammered dulcimer player) who are concentrating on the more obscure Herefordshire and border Morris traditions. Practices have been sporadic lately, but now that deer hunting season is over we hope that some of our members will become more serious about dancing. So far we've worked on the Bromsberrow Heath Three-Handed Reel and plan to tackle White Ladies Ashton next. Anyone with information and/or experience with these and the other border Morris traditions please drop a line. We plan to tour in the spring along the line named by King George's surveyors, Messrs. Mason and Dixon.

Larry Shute, Rt. 1, Box 63, Clearville, PA 15535

Minnesota Traditional Morris: Tony Barrand & John Roberts paid a visit to the Twin Cities during October, playing a number of concerts and doing several morris workshops as well. The MTM sponsored a Fieldtown workshop which was excellent and ran at a heavy pace for almost six hours. Bells of the North studied ribbon dances and the Madison Wisconsin team came for a workshop of their own. Unfortunately, most of our team was unavailable to dance out so we are counting on a chance to see Madison again in the Spring. The sword dance season was a quiet one since our major traditional engagement at Bulter Square in Minneapolis did not come through for the first time in six years. So we decided to do it anyway to the apparent delight of the Christmas shoppers and the denizens of the Saloon who were quite generous. While in our cups there after the dancing we were paid a visit by building security - to ask if we needed more chairs - so it appears that the tradition is secure. Other performances included the Mpls. Public Library and the Wandering Minstrel. We go into the New Year facing the issue of how big we can comfortably become. As morris dancing becomes more available, it attracts more and more interest and the transition from a close group of 7 to a three side team with nineteen members has not been without its share of long contentious meetings about numbers, repetoire, etc. One outcome of this process has been the temporary dropping the idea of claiming a primary tradition since we dance numerous traditions now. Theoretically, this is one step in the process of evolving something uniquely Minnesotan.

Stephen Parker, 434 N.E. 4th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55413

Ring o' Bells: Ring o' Bells and Greenwich Morris Men recently danced at the wedding of Beverly Francis (our fool) and David Chandler. The ceremony was conducted by minister-cum-square-dance-caller Debra Given, and the bride and groom left the church under an archway of morris sticks held by the two teams. Besides being the social event of the season, this celebration brought the number of R o'B/GMM married couples to three. We had maintained our independence for a long time, but John and June Rowlands seem to have started a trend in marital morris! Other recent events of note have been two performances in Bryant Park among winos and addicts (we were part of the program to "revitalize" the park) and a weekend visit from the Pokingbrook team. We are staggering slightly under an influx of (at last count) thirteen new dancers. We are pleased to have with us former members of New Haven Morris, Ha'Penny, Moose Mountain and Hearts of Oak.

Jody Evans, Foreman

Spruce Hill Morris: Contrary to the rumors which say we have folded, Spruce Hill is alive and well. We are ten women with great enthusiasm for dancing. Having no teacher, we teach ourselves, relying on workshops to learn dances and working out the details on our own. We're learning Fieldtown this year to add to our repetoire of Headington and Bampton.

E. A. Snowdon, 7525 Devon St. #201B, Philadelphia, PA 19119