

The Ancient Men
THE OUMM AND ITS BACKGROUND
Edited by Roy Judge
in 1970 and 1973
Revised and produced in chronological form
by Ian Hall and Gerard Robinson in 1993

A NOTE OF EXPLANATION WRITTEN IN 1993

This history was produced in three parts during the years 1969 to 1973 by Roy Judge. It was designedly a compilation, and the lack of a single chronological sequence made it difficult to use. The original material has now been put in one sequence and produced in a format appropriate for 1993 by Ian Hall and Gerard Robinson. The relevant sections of the three original Prefaces are given below. Apart from rearrangement of order nothing else has been altered.

A. The Morris in Oxford: An Interim Report. Sent out in the spring of 1970

In the Spring of 1969, after some years of rather vague discussion about the ignorance of the present OUMM concerning their predecessors in Oxford, I wrote a few tentative letters to see whether it would be possible to find out more about our history. Much to our pleasure and somewhat to our surprise my enquiries were welcomed and I received a wealth of information and a unanimously enthusiastic encouragement. Now my first duty is to thank all those who have given so much time in looking out old diaries and gathering their memories together. I would also thank those who have lent or given pictorial evidence, and those who have given me hospitality in my researches.

B. The OUMM and its background: Part One 1899–1914. Sent out in October 1970

The Interim Report of February 1970 produced a good deal of further information and several very happy incidental results. Among them were the gifts to the men by Kay Barmby of the original OUMM Morris Music Book and by Charles Bardswell of his original OUMM Morris bells. Geoffrey Fiennes gave the men his copies of the early *EFDS Journal* and *News* and also offered a camping site at East Worldham for the tour of the Ancient Men in 1971.

The OUMM archives, in fact, are flourishing; very many thanks to everyone for their help.

This instalment is self-explanatory. Again it is really a chronicle, produced by ‘scissors and paste’, rather than a history. Again I must apologise for my typing.¹ Again I would be very grateful for corrections and additional information.

The next instalment will include the additional material on the period from 1919–1939, and I hope to send it out some time next Spring.

C. The OUMM and its Background: Third Instalment. Sent out in May 1973

I sent out my initial Interim Report in the Spring of 1970. Page two concerned the period before 1914 and this was quickly expanded into my second offering, ‘The OUMM and its Background: Part One 1899–1914’, which I distributed in the autumn of 1970. I had intended the next instalment to contain additional material for the inter-war period and to be sent out in the Spring of 1971. But in 1971 archival activity was diverted into other very worthwhile directions. First there was the Hampshire Tour based on Geoffrey Fiennes’ home at East Worldham. This was a highly archival event in itself. Geoffrey’s quiet presence during the week and then especially his speech at the Feast and his playing for the final Blue-Eyed Stranger created a remarkable sense of unity with the early OUMM.

Secondly Russell Wortley kindly included an account of the early days of the Oxford Branch as part of the Jubilee Symposium in the *Folk Music Journal* for 1971. This kept my attention fixed on the period before 1914. A third distracting factor was a growing interest in May Day (especially in the Jack in the Green) in general, and in Oxford in particular, so that time tended to go into that. While all this was going on, Francis Tabor, bless him, was continually producing for me the most fascinating pieces of information about the OUMM of the late twenties, culminating in what amounted to a full log of the Cornwall Tour of 1929.

During 1972 my own working life tended to be busy and I did not get the chance to stand back and consider how to handle the gathered material. Having done just that certain things now seem reasonably clear.

1. I have made contact with a very good proportion of the people involved. I would thank everyone for their kindness, interest and help.
2. I have a fair outline of events from 1899–1914, and I can produce one for 1915 on.
3. I am not going to feel satisfied with anything that I produce as being either complete or adequate to its subject.
4. I should however ignore this reluctance and produce this instalment as a final summary to be read with the other material.
5. The final Club Log Book would include all this material together with all possible illustrations and any additional information that emerges.

¹Any infelicities in typing are now our fault, not Roy’s. *GCR and IWH*

6. The hunt for Jack in the Green and May Morning information would continue.

As a celebratory final gesture I had intended to begin typing this on May Day 1973, the Fiftieth Birthday of one particular May Morning, and the Sixty-first Anniversary of that first Branch of May. On looking the 11th May up in Hone, I find that unbeknownst I am typing it on Old May Day. On further consideration this must actually be Old May Eve, which still seems somehow subtly appropriate.

THE OUMM AND ITS BACKGROUND

THE EARLY STAGES 1899–1910

It is difficult to know how much of the London and national background to supply. Its complexities could be misleading when presented in this summarised form, so I would refer the interested to Maud Karpeles' clear and full account in the *Life of Cecil Sharp* and the very interested to the Cuttings Books in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library.

The twentieth century revival in Oxford has, of course, always had a special character given to it by the fact of the original historic meeting between Cecil Sharp and William Kimber at Sandfield Cottage on Boxing Day 1899, and by the continued presence, activity and influence of Kimber during the next sixty years.

In 1905 Mary Neal first brought Kimber to London to teach the Headington dances to her Working-Girls' Club in Cumberland Market. The first edition of the *Morris Book* in July 1907 was dedicated to "our friends and pupils of the Espérance Girls' Club" and its notation was based partly on the dancing of the girls and particularly that of Miss Florence Warren the chief instructress.

In November 1907 Mary Neal called an informal conference "to talk over plans for putting at the service of all who wish for it, this great possession of English folk-music in which it has been our good fortune to be the means of reviving interest." But already Sharp was doubtful of the wisdom of further collaboration. "There was a fundamental difference of attitude towards the dances between him and Mary Neal. He was fretted by her lack of artistic discipline and she no doubt considered him to be unduly repressive." (Karpeles)

In April 1908 Mary Neal began the "Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music".

The first extant piece of Oxford documentary evidence follows on from this, being a leaflet issued by the "Oxford Society for the Revival of Folk-Dance". It says

An attempt is about to be made to revive the old Morris and Folk-Dances in Oxford City and County, as has already been done with singular success in other places. With this object a small Committee has been formed and a teacher engaged to come down from London for a week, to instruct all who wish to learn in the method of dancing. Classes being formed to suit different ages and needs. . . Miss Mary Neal, Secretary of the London Association, has kindly offered to give an address on the subject, to be accompanied, if possible, by a demonstration. This will take place under the auspices of the Teachers' Guild on Saturday, October 10, at 8.15 p.m. Entrance free.

The *Oxford Times* (17 October 1908) gives a full account of this occasion, under the heading "Revival of English Folk-Music".

An enthusiastic meeting, composed mostly of ladies, gathered at the Girls' High School on Saturday afternoon to hear a lecture on 'Folk-Songs' and to witness an exhibition of Morris-dancing. Mr E. F. Davidson (HM Inspector of Schools) took the chair and briefly introduced the lecturer, Miss Mary Neal, hon. secretary to the Espérance Working-Girls' Club in London.

The latter reviewed the history of the movement, which had crystallised into a course of dancing and singing lessons which that meeting would inaugurate in Oxford. A demonstration was given by boys and girls from Iffley Church School instructed by Miss Rosina Mallet a member of the Espérance Club. Mr William Kimber and Miss Mallet gave some exhibitions of other dances such as 'Jock at the Fair'.

At the conclusion of the performances which were enthusiastically applauded by the audience, Mr Scott thanked Miss Neal for the treat which they had enjoyed and remarked that while on a recent tour in Norway he had noticed these dances in that country and was agreeably surprised to find them revived in England on his return.

The *Oxford Chronicle* picked out another point from Mr Scott's thanks.

For his part he was a Somersetshire man who had lived in that county for most of his life, and yet he had never had the least idea of the existence there of these beautiful enjoyable Morris dances.

It also gives a story that Miss Neal was to tell many times.

There was nothing in the least objectionable about these folk dances; none of the unhealthy influences and emotions were aroused. An old Somersetshire sailor had seen her club dancing and exclaimed 'That's the dancing of my heart; I wouldn't have missed it for two big apples.' (Loud laughter). Then he added significantly 'It's what I call clean dancing.' (Applause).

(Incidentally, as reported in the *Central Somerset Gazette* for 13 June 1914, he also added 'There's no hugging in it.')

The Oxford Society for the Revival of the Folk-Dance published a "Programme for Selection" (copy in VWML).

Any of the following Dances, with appropriate Actions and Singing intervals, are taught by the Lady Teacher. The Songs are all in print already, and it is highly desirable to become familiar with these in advance by the use of Mr Cecil Sharp's and Mr McIlwaine's published Collection, to be had of Mr Taphouse, 3 Magdalen Street, Oxford, and others.

The local organisers were Charlotte S. Sidgwick of 64 Woodstock Road and Constance M. Leicester of 17 Staverton Road. M.S. (probably Marjorie Sidgwick)

wick, daughter of Charlotte) had a delightfully allusive article in the *EFDS News* No.22 January 1930. Presumably referring to Rosina Mallet she writes

The first Oxford teacher was an east London club girl, looking about fourteen, almost a slum girl, probably a gypsy, a brown-eyed goblin with feet trained by London barrel organs, taking a class of forty middle-aged school mistresses with great calm.

The Notes on the "Programme for Selection" say

The Dances are also genuine Folk Music, for the most part they were collected from two peasants in Oxfordshire in whose family they had been handed down from father to son for five generations. These men were brought to London, and taught the members of the *Espérance Club* to dance with such success, that they are in their turn to-day teaching the dances from one end of England to the other. Everywhere the same interest has been aroused. That there is life and joy in the movement is proved beyond doubt by the daily growing demand for their services. It does not seem too much to hope that the Merrie England of our tradition and of our dream may be before long the Merrie England of the present.

So far only two further references to the activities of the Society in Oxford have been discovered.

On 26 June 1909 the *Espérance Club* gave a concert in the garden of Black Hall by kind permission of Mrs R. Morrell. Kimber danced Jockey to the Fair and Bacca Pipes. Theo Chaundy's account of Kimber refers to the latter's memory of dancing at Black Hall for Lady Ottoline Morell: presumably this was the same occasion.

The other reference is indirect, deriving from an article by Mary Neal in the *Observer* of 5 November 1911, in which she mentions that boys and girls of the *Espérance Guild of Morris Dancers* had been invited to join a revival Headington side in a display in Oxford "last year".

The *Oxford Journal* for 20 March 1909 refers to a lecture given by Sharp on "English Folk Music" at the Municipal Assembly Rooms during which Kimber danced. The meeting was full to overflowing.

Meanwhile in London and elsewhere the revival continued apace. The *Morning Post* for 14 January 1909 reported on Mary Neal's activities under the heading "Dancing and Social Reform: What London Working Girls Are Doing".

Two bricklayers... willingly allowed their melodies to be harmonised and their dances which were given on the 'High' every Whit Monday, to be taught to the girls.

From Redditch, near Stratford-on-Avon came the idea of using tall hats as part of the costume for the dances, and the Head Master of Eton was good enough to provide several of these articles of headgear for the purpose.

On 4 March Sharp gave a lecture at Steinway Hall on The Morris Dance, and Kimber and R. Doddridge performed. This was the occasion on which Kimber broke his concertina. An appeal for a subscription raised £7 and he was later presented by Sharp with a

concertina inscribed "From all the audience at Steinway Hall March 4 1909."

On 11 June Sharp and Kimber performed at a Fete in the grounds of Chelsea Hospital before King Edward and Queen Alexandra. "When the performance was over their Majesties graciously intimated the pleasure they had received from it". Also appearing at the Fete were "Young ladies from Chelsea Physical Training College". Sharp had been instructing at Chelsea since 1908. It was during the summer of 1909 that the Board of Education agreed to recognise the dances as part of its course of physical exercise.

On 27 September a School of Morris dancing was established in connection with the Physical Training Department of the S.W. Polytechnic Institute, Chelsea, with Cecil Sharp as the Director. Its purpose was "primarily to conserve the Morris dance in all its traditional purity; and secondly to teach it as accurately as possible to those who desire to become teachers themselves or professed teachers of it."

In March 1910 Mary Neal established the *Espérance Guild of Morris Dancers* in place of the Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music.

At this point the differences of opinion between Sharp and Neal came clearly into the open. Sharp wrote to the *Morning Post* (1 April) to disassociate himself from *Espérance Activities*. "It is however obvious that if our folk dances are to be revived among the lettered classes it is of supreme importance that they should be taught by accredited instructors, and that only those dances should be disseminated which are the survivals of a genuine and unbroken tradition."

On 23 April in a further letter, "the new society to be effective should include in its executive the expert as well as the philanthropist."

Maud Karpeles, in Mary Neal's obituary (*EDS* VIII 6 Jul/Aug 1944) discusses the reasons for this breach, seeing it as the "clash of two dominant personalities". On one hand Mary Neal saw it as "the age-long controversy, the difference between the form and the life, the pedant and those in touch with life itself". On the other, Sharp saw "the danger of enthusiasm that is uninformed". "Philanthropy and art have nothing in common, and to unite them spells disaster."

Mary Neal was essentially a philanthropist. She had a burning desire to bring happiness into the lives of others, and particularly those whose lot had fallen in drab and impoverished surroundings. Cecil Sharp was also a lover of his fellow-men for all his diatribes against philanthropy. His desire was to bring into their lives the forms of artistic expression which were their birthright. What Mary Neal mistook in him for pedantry was his reverence for tradition. Mary Neal believed that to acquire a technique was to take away from the enjoyment of the dances. Cecil Sharp believed that technique and artistry are body and soul, matter and spirit and that nearly all the troubles in

the world come from the attempt to divorce the one from the other.

The future in Oxford as elsewhere lay with Sharp, but the work of Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris should by no means be forgotten. [See the *Folk Music Journal* (1989) 5, 545–91, for an article by Roy Judge, ‘Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris’.]

1911

In February Sharp visited Oxford to give a lecture on “English Sword Dances”. The *Sword Dance Book*, vol. I, was to be published later that year.

The lecture was illustrated with dances by the students of the Chelsea Physical Training College. The *Oxford Times* remarks “This dance was danced for the first time in public at Oxford, but unless Mr Sharp had told us so, and apologised beforehand for any possible mistakes, one would never have suspected it.”

The *Oxford Journal* comments “Of the extraordinary character of those dances it is hard to give an idea. They are barbaric, wild and yet restrained, exultant and religious as the dancing dervishes are. . . There is an old book of descriptions of dances dating back to 1350 in which information is so precise that with the information Mr Sharp has already acquired he can follow them correctly.”

Sharp also talked about the Morris. “It is a point of honour with Morris dancers never to take up too much room, and they have been known to practice steps in the narrow dimensions of a sheep-trough in order to acquire the coveted steadiness and rigidity.” He showed the pipe and tabor “found beside the old player when he died in a barn at Temple Guiting. The pipe is made of plumwood.”

The next two pieces of evidence cannot be precisely dated, but they seem from internal references to belong to 1911.

The first is a leaflet headed “Classes in Folk-Dancing (English)” (copy in VVML).

It has been arranged to hold, early in October, classes for instruction in Country Dancing in the Music Room, 3 Magdalen Street. A lady, highly trained at the Physical Training College, Chelsea, will conduct the classes. The Dances have been collected in country villages by Mr Cecil Sharp, who is the Director of the “School of Morris Dancing” in connection with that college.

The Traditional Dances of England now discovered number about sixty. Eighteen of these are “Country Dances” used only for social enjoyment and within the reach of all. The “Morris” is in origin a religious or ceremonial dance, confined to the initiated who pass it on with strict insistence upon correctness and, if possible, uniformity. And this has set a high standard in all countries where Step-Dances are practised.

To dance well therefore, steps must be learnt in the Morris School, they can be used for Figures. A Country Dance consists of a series of Figures.

Any of the following can be taught: the “Morris” as follows:

Bobbing Joe
Shepherd’s Hey (second version)
Brighton Camp
Green Garters
Glorishears
Jigs Princess Royal
Lumps of Plum-Pudding

and the Derbyshire Morris-Reel (which requires 16 dancers)...

Private lessons or classes in private houses, may also be had by special arrangement, and all who desire it are requested to notify their wishes to Mr Taphouse during August.

This, from the number of dances referred to, and from the absence of any reference to the EFDS, seems to date from the summer of 1911.

The second piece of evidence comes from the article by “M.S.” already quoted, and is more difficult to date with any certainty. However it must relate to a period before the arrival of Miss Daking, which was no later than March 1912.

After mentioning “the first Oxford teacher”, M.S. continues

That was the pioneer stage, and but for the backing of the elementary schools of Oxford, and their broadminded and lightfooted teachers, there Oxford might have stayed. A great man in the University took up dancing; a lady from Somerville became Secretary. Oxford demanded a new teacher, and added in its usual pleasant style that she must be a diplomatist, a heaven-sent organiser and a first class musician. The result of that application was Mrs Kettlewell. The Women’s Institutes perhaps regard Mrs Kettlewell as a committee lady, a serious craftswoman, one of the noble order of Presidents, but to her original pupils she was the one and only jig-dancer and, above all, jig-player. They still know the sound of her piano at a thousand yards. This was the unofficial stage. Friends lent houses, the University began mildly capering, Somerville skipped and approved. Kelmscott held a wonderful party where country teams danced for cups, with hay waggons which had brought them drawn up round the field. (O shades of Blenheim with your motor parks reflect on that.) Mrs Hobbs in a yellow handkerchief presided; old Mrs William Morris, beautiful and tragic looked on. (An old resident of Oxford said casually the other day that this was the prettiest party she had ever attended.)

This allusiveness is delightful and highly evocative, but somewhat confusing factually. The “great man” could presumably have been Tiddy. The “lady from Somerville” seems to be Miss M. V. Taylor. In the Autumn of 1913 she was actually Treasurer, while Charlotte Sidgwick was Secretary. Theo Chaundy thanked her thus. . . “Not only was Miss Taylor largely responsible for the early spade-work, which gave the branch its great success in the pre-war days. . .” The Kelmscott party actually seems to have been the next year: 20 June 1912.

On 6 December 1911 the EFDS was founded, based on the Folk Dance Club which had developed out of the Chelsea class. Mrs Kettlewell (then Miss Walsh) became the first Secretary.

1912

A pleasant piece of evidence for the kind of situation described above by M.S. comes from the *Evening News* for 4 February 1912.

The Morris Dancers

Morris dancing has been taken up at Oxford, a number of the younger fellows and tutors being among its devotees.

No more for me the turkey trot,
The bunny-hug, the grizzly-bear!
They say that such are but a blot
Upon a pastime sweet and fair;
But, though I have relinquished these,
I yet can skip and slap my knees,
Can point my toe and shuffle—so!
And caper in the air.

The dons who dwell on Isis banks
May eye the rag-time “rag” askance,
But you should see their giddy pranks
As merrily they leap and prance.
For those who blush and turn aside
On witnessing the latest glide
Are not appalled if it be called
An English morris dance.

And some few cycles later on,
The newest steps by then designed
Will doubtless shock the gentle don
But “trots” and “hugs” he will not mind,
For dances, when they first intrude,
Are always rough and wild and rude,
But, once grown old, they are, I’m told,
Artistic and refined.

Touchstone.

22 February 1912. The HQ men’s team gave its first public performance of Morris at the Suffolk Street Galleries. It consisted of George Butterworth, Percival Lucas, George Wilkinson, James Paterson, A. C. (Claud) Wright and Douglas Kennedy. Sharp played the piano and Elsie Avril the violin.

15 March 1912. The inaugural meeting of the Oxford Branch of the EFDS was held in the Corn Exchange. William Hamilton Fyfe of Merton occupied the Chair, and Mr Sharp gave a short lecture. “He said this was a red-letter day in his life, as on it he welcomed the first child in the provinces born to the London parent society, and a fine large child it was. He considered it highly creditable that it had already turned out a Morris of men that could dance a jig that was very good Morris.”

“Blue-eyed Stranger and Shepherds Hey were danced by Mr Wright (London), Mr Tiddy (Trinity Coll.) and other undergraduates.” Tiddy and Wright

also danced Jockey to the Fair. “Miss Daking would attend on Saturdays for the purpose of instruction. She danced Princess Royal very gracefully.”

Miss D. C. (Caroline) Daking is mentioned by M.S. in the article already quoted from *EFDS News*, January 1930:

The third teacher was in essence like the first; London born, deadly efficient, three-feet high, with classes so huge she had to mount a high chair to conduct them. Professors and biologists vied for her instruction; rowing blues sat on her doorstep enquiring whether their left foot back shuffle was really coming on. The folk-dancers became a club, and gave moonlight picnics up the Cherwell. That was the halcyon stage, and ended, like all good things, in August 1914.

Mr R. B. Beckett, who was up at Lincoln from 1908–13, and now lives at Northmoor, vividly recalls her as an “india-rubber ball”, handling a class with something like twenty men in it, in a hall with mirrors all the way round it, which showed up their mistakes most unkindly.

The *Oxford Journal* for 12 June 1912 gives pictorial evidence of Miss Daking’s work, with photographs of “An exhibition of Old English and Morris dancing given by the Oxford Branch of that Society in the Thame Tennis Court on Thursday before an appreciative audience.” One picture shows Miss Daking “who ably managed the display”. Another shows six men in a handkerchief dance, with baldricks and bells, apparently intended to be in the air at the end of a figure. This must be one of the first photos of men’s revival Morris (if not the first, outside of the HQ side), and, like so many later ones, it is somewhat unkind.

On 19 November 1912 Sharp lectured at the New Masonic Hall. The President of Magdalen (Dr Warren) was in the Chair.

“A number of dances were then performed by a troop of dancers from the headquarters of the EFDS assisted by some ladies from the Oxford branch.”

OXFORD DANCERS BEFORE 1914

This list is still very much a working document and is full of loose ends and gaps. It seems better to include it in this state, however, rather than delay sending out the whole section. Corrections and additional information would be much appreciated.

Reginald Tiddy, Fellow of Trinity from 1905

David Pye’s Memoir of Tiddy, attached to the posthumous publication *The Mummies’ Play*, gives an admirable account:

The first Chairman and the moving spirit of the Oxford Branch of the EFDS. By 1914 the dances were a familiar sight there, and Oxford society had got over its first surprise at the spectacle of University Dons in bells and baldric dancing these vigorous dances to the music of the pipe and tabor or their modern equivalent.

It was at a garden party in the grounds of his own College that one of our first public appearances took place. In those early days it took some courage to appear in the light of day before an Oxford gathering, and speaking for myself, I was glad to feel a comparative stranger, under the raised eyebrows of a surprised, if tolerant company.

To Tiddy, I think, any self-consciousness was quite unknown; such demonstrations of course were not the setting in which to enjoy the dances properly—that one did in their native villages—but while regarding the demonstrations as propaganda, he so enjoyed the actual performance of the dances, and was so convinced of their essential dignity, that he was never conscious of the sneers of the unbeliever. His wit, too, always good humoured, was ever ready to disarm the critic; he brought to the dancing, as to all he did, a lightness of touch and a delicacy of playful humour which was quite unassailable.

T. F. Higham of Trinity kindly wrote recalling his acquaintance with Tiddy at the beginning of the war. During night operations on Port Meadow, when we were both in the Officers' Training Corps, he was more captivated—and so was I—by the heavenly bodies and the sounds of running water than by the military work in hand and introduced me to what he called 'The higher pantheism'. I always wished we could have pursued this study. Never was there a gentler or more amiable companion.

More should be said about his work at Ascott-under-Wychwood, and at Bledington, and on the Mummers' Play generally. His death on the Somme in 1916 was a tragic loss. The *EFDS Journal* Vol 1, No 2, April 1915, gives a list of men serving in the Forces who had been members or attenders of classes. The following are noted as Oxford University:

R. A. Boddington	(Trinity from 1911)
C. L. Godson	(Trinity)
F. A. Hampton	(New from 1908?)
C. R. Hollway	(Balliol)
W. A. H. King	(Balliol from 1912)
C. C. A. Monro	(Trinity)
T. C. Outram	
E. G. R. Romanes	(Magdalen)
N. H. Romanes	(Christ Church)
A. N. H. Scott	(Balliol)
W. G. P. Thorold	(New)
L. A. Vidal	
J. N. Wilson	(Balliol)

The following were also involved to a greater or lesser extent in the EFDS during this period. About most of them there is much more that should be said.

A. D. Lindsay	Fellow of Balliol from 1906
William Hamilton Fyfe	Fellow of Merton from 1904
David Pye	Fellow of New from 1909
Bill Croft	Trinity 1912–1915
R. V. Lennard	Fellow of Wadham from 1909
George Butterworth	Trinity 1904–1908
Herbert Thomas	Magdalen 1901–1904
Roland Heath	Merton 1909–1912

Theo Chaundy	Balliol 1906–1909 and then Christ Church
Ronald Beckett	Lincoln 1909–1913
F. R. Salter	Magdalen

Bill Croft was later Editor of the *Journal* 2nd Series. In the first issue, 1927, he wrote an article entitled 'Fifteen Years Progress'. In the following extract he is clearly thinking particularly of Tiddy.

Both these branches (Kelmscott and Cirencester) and that of Oxford among others played a distinguished part in the early history of the Society...

Oxford strengthened the intellectual side of the movement and supplied a useful reserve of trained men dancers. For more than two and a half years the only men whom the headquarters of the Society had at their disposal were the six who formed the original team which first appeared at the beginning of 1912. The record of that team is one of remarkable devotion, but when on rare occasions one of them was unable to turn out, his place was filled, and could only have been filled, from Oxford.

1913

The OUDS produced Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday* at the New Theatre on Wed–Sat, 29 Jan–1 Feb, and on 3 Feb.

The preliminary notice in the *Oxford Journal* of 29 January 1913 said "The Morris dancers, besides the undergraduates in the play, include several Dons belonging to the local Folk Dance Society, so they are sure to make a great success."

This they did. The *Evening Standard* of 30 January 1913 said "The Morris dancers introduced into the scene at Old Ford and performed by members of the Oxford University Folk Dance Society brought down the house."

The *Oxford Journal* of 5 February 1913, in a page devoted to Fashion, Social News and Domestic Hints, commented

The Morris dancers call for a paragraph to themselves. Surely never in real life and never before on the stage were there such glorified Morris dancers. Their long golden boots were a joy in themselves; their harmoniously shaded ribbons streaming everywhere as they danced, their black hats with black and white brims, their little bells and everything about them was of the finest, and the way those Morris dancers leapt into the air and played leap-frog, some of them of sober years and solid proportions, was wonderful to see. I do not think our original Headington Morris dancers were anything like so agile. Of course they were encored and had to do it all over again, so what they were like at the end of the run it is difficult to imagine. It must have been very reducing.

David Pye's Memoir of Tiddy says

I well remember the early misgivings when we were invited to help the OUDS as the Morris Men in Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday* which they were then rehearsing. Tiddy jumped at the invitation. It would be a fine opportunity for gaining new recruits. And so the last enormity was perpetrated, and the Senior Proctor of the day appeared

as a dancer on the boards of the Oxford theatre. The affair proved indeed a triumphant success, and our 'side' was doubly encored at each performance of that boisterous week.

It would seem very likely that this was the occasion of that elusive phrase "The Dancing Dons". Kay Barnby writes "I seem to remember someone telling me that a poster of the performance was displayed announcing in big letters 'The Dancing Dons'."

One interesting implication lies behind the reference to a University Society. It is that on this occasion it existed in its own right separate from the Oxford Branch. Later in the year the *Oxford Chronicle* clearly sees this as being the situation. On 11 April 1913, in referring to a display by the Oxford Branch of the EFDS, it goes on to mention the University EFDS "whose members showed their prowess on the production of the Shoemaker's Holiday by the OUDS". This separation seems to have been an isolated occurrence, presumably arising out of the particular circumstances.

The Annual Meeting of the Oxford Branch took place on 13 February. The *Oxford Chronicle*, commenting on this, said "If it is true that there was in Chaucer's time a 'scole of Oxenforde' in this line, it behoves the University to treat the Morris as seriously as it now seems ready to do".

In twenty manere coude he trippe and
daunce

After the scole of Oxenforde tho,
And with his legges casten to and fro,
And playen songes on a small rubible;
Therto he song somtyme a loud quible;
And as well coude he playe on his giterne.
In al the toun, nas brewhous ne taverne
That he ne visited with his solas,
Ther any gaylord tapperere was.

Miller's Tale 142-150

The *Oxford Times* for the same date rather curiously speaks of the Oxford Branch as "inaugurated on May Day last year". It is not yet clear what lies behind this apparently inaccurate reference.

During the remainder of the year the main source of information has been the "Secretary's annual Report for Local Branch 1913" (Copy in VWML). This is invaluable and will be reproduced in its entirety, with any supplementary material inserted in brackets. The Secretary, all thanks to her for her admirable work, was Charlotte Sidgwick.

The Annual Meeting of 1912 was held in 1913 on Feb 13. Classes worked on through Lent Term but no displays were given.

In April, like the cuckoo, we began to testify. All Souls Library entertained the International Historical Congress, on the evening of Wednesday the 9th, with Old-English Dances danced on a stone floor. A choice and exemplary programme was offered, both Morris and Country dances:

'Dargason' and 'Dearest Dicky', and the Derbyshire Processional. Ascott dancers helped."

(The *Oxford Chronicle* for 11 April 1913 says that this was arranged by Miss Daking and Mr Tiddy, and gives more details of the dances; Jockey (Headington), Rigs of Marlow, Laudnum Bunches, Leap-Frog (Bledington), and Step-Back.)

Close upon this University duty, our Teacher was able to attend to a call from Dorchester Missionary Training College, and to give the students there a week's training in the Morris, which they wished to use in order to give a show in aid of their cricket club. They learned very well, and have since come to Miss Daking's aid in a vacation display in time of need.

At the same time, a reviving touch was given to the Elementary (Foundation) Girls' School of Dorchester, where two young teachers had been steadily practising on the children a few early Morris dances, gained by them from Miss Walsh so long ago as the autumn of 1911 'Playford' was welcomed as an entire novelty in the School.

On Whitmonday Mrs Furniss lent Ruskin College her grounds, and our teams were engaged to dance in a garden-tent for the guests invited. It was wet weather and hard on the grass, but proved so pleasant that Playford Class was invited to dance upon the same ground (in the open) all through the month of May. The Branch wishes to make acknowledgement to Mr and Mrs Furniss, and to express regret for any damage done in this manner to their garden. These classes will be remembered with joy.

On May 24, Somerville College was 'At Home' to the workmen employed on the New Buildings, and asked for a performance of dances on the lawn in front of Maitland Hall. The Mayor and Mayoress were present. A set of Mr Gillman's photographs on postcards 2d. each, commemorate this occasion."

(The *Oxford Journal* for 4 June 1913 has a fine set of Photographs for this occasion, under the caption 'Garden Party at Somerville College'. Underneath it says, 'The Principal and Students of Somerville College recently entertained the employees of Messrs. Hutchins and Co., who have been entrusted with the extensions now being carried out at the college. The guests were shown over the various parts of the college, after which tea was served under the trees in the garden, at the conclusion of which a pretty and pleasing exhibition of Old English and Morris dancing was given by the Oxford branch of the Old Folk and Morris Dancing Society.'

One picture shows three women going counter clockwise round three men, (Jenny Pluck Pears?). The two men visible are dressed in whites without baldricks.

There are two pictures of the Morris, both somewhat more flattering than the picture of 1912 at Thame. Again the sets are composed of men, complete with bells and baldricks. The dancing looks to be of a very reasonable standard of unanimity and liveliness. One picture could be of the hop-backs in

Dearest Dickie, and the other shows all men doing an open side-step.

Miss Frances Griffiths, who was a student at Somerville at the time, has kindly provided another photograph. This shows three couples standing in a round formation, apparently waiting for the beginning of a dance, possibly that shown in the *Oxford Journal* picture. On the back are four names. Three are Somerville students of the time: Eleanor Fisher, apparently speaking to the audience, E. Moorhouse, and P. Dixon. The other is A. D. Lindsay, wearing a baldrick, looking very cheerful, and, Miss Griffiths confirms, then Philosophy tutor at Balliol and later to be Lord Lindsay. The two unnamed men are without baldricks. Miss Griffiths says that one of them was Mr Tiddy.)

On May 27 a performance was given at St Hilda's Hall, of Old Singing-Games and Dances, by Teachers, and children from Holy Trinity and St Frideswide's. A new dance (discovered in the Bodleian and edited with permission from headquarters) was in the programme—viz. 'Church-bells' (Playford ed. 1720 circa). A thunderstorm broke up the dancing, and the proceedings came to an untimely end.

An extant dance has been found and recorded by Miss Phyllis Marshall in Somerset. It has received Mr Sharp's sanction, as genuine tradition. 'The Breast Knot' is its title, and the tune is now also recorded and sent in to the Director.

The Term wound up with a general dance Saturday Night, June 14, on the High School Games' Club Ground, by kind permission of the authorities. It lasted from 6 to 9 p.m. About 70 persons were present, chiefly Miss Daking's class-pupils. Violin and piccolo were planted in the centre of the ground, and lighted when it became necessary by a Japanese lantern held over the players. The University Morris team did the Flamborough Sword-Dance midway. The Irish Trot expanded (owing to roominess) into new patterns. In The Butterfly in the dark, everyone present joined, and so went home.

(Here is another reference to the "University Morris team". Presumably, as in the case of *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, it means those members of the Branch who happened to belong to the University, and who happened to be performing a dance together.)

The only College Garden to invite us this year (among the older colleges that is) has been Corpus Christi. Six very delicate Playford Dances were performed on the Fellows sacred lawn, without leaving a trace behind. Professor and Mrs Stewart were our kind hosts. This was almost the last event of Term.

Of other private parties, and of a Cherwell water-picnic I will not speak. The dew fell upon the latter coming home.

On August 7, the Branch, undeterred by the absence of University assistance, gave a Demonstration at Lady Margaret Hall for the Extension Summer School Students. Mr William Kimber was called in, and the Dorchester Missionary College students came bravely to Miss Daking's aid with Morris. Rain came on (as usual!) with great

violence and audience and dancers were kindly received into the Hall, where the programme continued as it could. Mr Kimber played his concertina. Afterwards, the sun returning, the circle reformed itself on the (wet) lawn, and finished with impunity. We had the authentic Headington 'Bacca-Pipes, and Princess Royal'. School children again did very well indeed and 'Saved the Show'. It must not be omitted that the University also saved its character in the person of Mr Havelock of Merton College who acted as spokesman and 'trumpeter', and gave at the outset of the proceedings a luminous and masterly short explanation of our movement. The Branch owes him many thanks.

There followed the Stratford Summer School at which many of our Branch were seen: Miss Daking camped out in a caravan.

(See the account of 1914 for a further reference to Miss Daking and her caravan.)

The present Term found us bereft, we hope temporarily, of Miss M. V. Taylor, our treasurer. Mrs Fyfe has nobly stepped into the breach. We are now established, for most of the classes, in the New Masonic Rooms in High Street. Miss Margaret-James has come to help Miss Daking, in the village work specially, in which she is experienced, Kidlington, Sibford and Leafield were already waiting for her attention when Term began. Mr Sharp wrote to requisition her help for Coventry and Birmingham. Coventry was temporarily provided for, but Miss James has been weekly to Birmingham and Miss Daking to Bristol (neither of them Oxfordshire villages).

However the villages have had due attention. Kidlington has affiliated, and under Lady Baines' management is a vigorous mission centre in itself. Miss Underhill and Miss Meadows are teaching there and Miss Daking will inspect the work on the 8th and 9th inst.

Sibford Ferris Boys' School, and Sibford Gower Elementary School were worked together by Miss James for 5 days, Oct. 20-25. The Sibfords fall just within our county limits, so we would like to score them to Oxford Centre, but are bound to divide the honours with Cirencester.

Leafield occupies the latter at the present time, and is too new to be recorded—except that 24 men are learning Morris, night by night.

Application was made by the Vicar and Vicaress of Albury near Tiddington (S. Oxon.) for a show in their school, to encourage Folk-Dancing among their parishioners. We sent a gallant party, on Saturday last (Nov. 2) at night, which being hospitably entertained by Mrs Carew Hunt rushed affoot through wet lanes and danced all sorts of our dances to mutual satisfaction before a small audience in Tiddington School: folk songs were added by Mr L. W. Hunter and Miss M. M. James, very beautifully.

The number of Miss Dakings pupils (exclusive of Clubs) is 97, Miss Underhill's 15, Miss Meadow's 34.

Two classes for infants are held; an experiment by Miss James at Mrs Gillett's wish, on infants under three, to see whether or not they care for music. It should interest Psychological Students.

Miss Daking continues her class for those over three, and teaches Singing Games on Tuesday mornings at the Masonic Rooms. The patron saint of both these classes is thought to be 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin'.

At Kelmscott Competition, in June 1913, the Branch sent two women's teams over, and won 1st Prize for Women's Morris and 2nd Prize for Playford (Old Country Dances).

Prizes are offered by our Committee for the best morris-dancing next April, if the local Bands of Hope introduce dancing into their annual Physical Training Competition; and Miss Daking offers a sixpenny class to teachers and trainers to this end.

(The *Oxford Journal* for April 1914 showed no trace of this taking place.)

The Branch sent a teacher from Little Farringdon for a week to Stratford in August.

This Report ends on Wednesday, Nov. 26, on which day a new centre, Waltham St Lawrence, near Twyford, is taken in hand by Miss Dakin, at the request of Mr Leopold McKemna of Honeys.

On 4 December 1913 a meeting took place in the Hall of Trinity to consider the amalgamation of the Oxford Folk-Music Society and the local EFDS. An undated reference appeared in one of the local papers under the heading

English Folk Dance Society
Catholicity and Christmas Dancing

It is signed C.S.S. i.e. Sidgwick, and concerns Christmas 1913.

The Oxford branch no longer fears a revel. At first careful 'demonstration' with expert help from the Central Society, was necessary, in order to do justice to our extraordinarily choice and distinguished discoveries—these Playford dances—still more to set forth 'traditional Morris'. But in the second year of work our instructor has felt able to rely entirely on local material and to dance herself with unchecked mirth.

1914

Without the assistance of an Annual Report, the list of known activities in 1914 is much briefer than must actually have been the case.

On Saturday 20 June 1914, "Henry Franklin of Crown Street, who recently celebrated his 84th birthday, gave an exhibition of Morris Dancing at Corpus Christi College." (*Oxford Journal* 24 June 1914).

On Thursday 25 June 1914, "The Radley Vicarage garden was gaily bedecked with flags and stalls, when a rustic fete was held in aid of the Kennington Church Extension Fund. Morris and Old English dancing was given by members of the English Folk Dancing Society." (*Oxford Journal* 1 July 1914) The accompanying picture is of 'hands six' in a three couple dance. Two at least of the three men are wearing baldricks.

At about this time Kay Barmby remembers the Branch visiting Radley College, where her father was a housemaster. One of the dances they did was certainly Leap-Frog, with a men's set. Radley had strong

connections with the EFDS and with the Morris. Butterworth had taught there in 1909, and Lance Vidal and others were pupils there. William Hamilton Fyfe taught there 1901–3.

Miss Daking again went to Stratford and camped in her caravan. This time she kept a full diary of her journey there, under the title, "The Log of the Fine Companions". It is preserved in VWML and is very well worth reading.

The first page or so are concerned with her preparations for the journey while still in Oxford, and most of it is taken up with just one anecdote. This is under the date 23 July 1914, and was told her by Lance Vidal.

Kimber told him that Old Kimber knows a lot more dances and tunes, but won't tell them to people. The old Headington side used to be frightfully debauched and go off at Whitsuntide for weeks and weeks and never come home to their wives. They would be drunk the whole time and turn up at the end of the trip with no money at all. Then Old Kimber got converted and turned Methodist, so set his face against the Morris. But he had taught all his sons and daughters and they loved it, though he did all he could to discourage it. Young Kimber has taught the Side all he knows, but means to get more out of his father if he can. The old man refuses to speak. Not long ago Old Kimber and Henry Franklin arranged to meet in a pub in Oxford and dance jigs. Young Kimber heard of this, and came down meaning quietly to watch from behind something and see what his father did do, but the old man saw him and never said a word, but went straight back to Headington without dancing a step. Mr Vidal says that Young Kimber was a little drunk when he told him this; it must have been pricelessly impressive."

The next day, July 24, "Morris class at 5 o'clock in St Giles for Miss Taylor, as she had no dancing in Rome and was pining for a little before going to Stratford.

Then comes the very fine diary of this idyllic journey in her horse-drawn caravan to Stratford. On the way there is a delightful account of her visit to Janet Blunt at Adderbury. And all the time amidst the peace and ordinariness of the journey, the reader is aware of its fragility and of the impending, unmentioned War. One of her two companions is Alec, and after describing Stratford comes the tragic conclusion. Alec was killed in the Ypres sector early in 1915.

I had a little note written in pencil on a leaf from a notebook. He said 'We are just going into action. It is all so beastly that it must be for some good purpose.' He was killed that night.

Also preserved in VWML is a copy of "The Caper: A Journal Devoted (Though you might not think so) to the Summer School of the EFDS." No 1 (and only). August 1914.) It is a very good piece of occasional journalism in its own right, still quotable and entertaining. Like Miss Daking's "Log", it also recaptures the feel of this very exciting and lively period.

Advertisement: Wanted Immediately, by single gentleman, small furnished country cottage, within 5 minutes

reliable public-house, and (if possible) NOT within 15 miles any branch of EFDS.”

Queries answered: “G.B. Now you mention it we do not think that any of the great Folk Dancers wore their hair long.”

“C.J.S. Yes, we think you would have a good chance of getting the new certificate in Country Dances and Singing Games Only.”

“T.C.O. No, it is None So Pretty, not None So Tiddy. You are probably thinking of the Sailors’ Shanty, Tiddy Io Io. See Folk Song Society Journal XVIII p. 36.”

(Just one annotation; T.C.O. is T. C. Outram, from the Oxford Branch.)

So, with Stratford, the “halcyon stage”, as M.S. called it, was over.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO PART ONE: 1899–1914

The date of the foundation of the early Oxford Branch still has shades of ambiguity about it. This caused problems when producing the article for the Jubilee Symposium in the *Folk Music Journal* of 1971. Cecil Sharp’s words were clearly enough reported in the *Oxford Journal* 20 March 1912: “the first child in the provinces born to the London parent society.” But two other Branches, Cirencester and Liverpool, were formed in March and they were officially regarded as coming into existence earlier than Oxford.

All this gives the title which Russell Wortley suggested for the article, “The Branch of May”, a kind of delightful subtlety. Certainly the First of May 1912 was considered to be highly significant. Charlotte Sidgwick’s notes in the first issue of the *Journal*, May 1914, seem quite definite:

This Branch was founded on 1st May 1912 amalgamated with it being the Oxford Folk Music Society, which was founded late in 1910, but had been formed by Dr Hadow, (now of Newcastle-on-Tyne) with great care during the previous months, to embrace both the current revivals, song and dance. To be brief the Societies have swallowed one-another, like the mystic (but quite probable) serpents of antiquity, and the resultant coil is in the shape of a true lovers’ knot—symmetrical at least.

Some further clarification of this should be possible, but certainly we can now be grateful to the wisdom of those who made May Day our official birthday.

At that point in May 1914 Charlotte Sidgwick noted the total membership to be 124, and that “the chief classes now meets in the New Masonic Buildings, High St. nearly opposite the Schools.” She also described a remarkable occasion, which draws together neatly a kind of folk pattern.

Mr Percy Manning of ‘Folk Lore’ repute, introduced for the benefit of the Branch Sir Francis Darwin, who studies Pipes and Tabors. The consequence was a delightful evening (on 12th Feb) in the Examination Schools which were freed from Ink-stains for the occasion. The grand

oak-boards rang responsively to the rhythmical beat of our best ‘Morris’ illustrative of the Evolution of Man and Music. Mr R. R. Marett as President of the Anthropological Society was in the Chair, and Professor Darwin explained, showing both by his own instrumental performance and by lantern pictures, how reed-music grew.

It was a rare occasion. The newly-gathered native tunes, which he had by ear, must have inspired our University Team, for it danced notably even for itself. Mr Kimber was there with his concertina and danced also.

The *Oxford Magazine* has some interesting references. The copy dated 14 November 1912 mentions an expected visit by Cecil Sharp to lecture at the Masonic Rooms on Friday 22nd, under the presidency of Dr Warren.

Among the many anthropological interests of modern Oxford the most decent and agreeable are the Folk Song and the Folk Dance. Societies have recently been formed to spread and cultivate this interest, and already rustic ditties of age-old date are beginning to oust the songs of the Music Hall from whistlers’ lips while the growing taste for the dangerous and exacting sport of Morris Dancing threatens the Golf Club with bankruptcy.

Earlier in 1912 the *Oxford Magazine* makes another reference which indicates the importance of Somerville in the early Branch. It concerns the occasion of the 18th International Congress of Americanists on 3rd June and tells how

Finally Somerville College regaled *orbem et urbem* with tea, and not only with tea but likewise with a mummings play and morris dances executed in the genuine old style.

More detail has been found concerning the Dancing Dons in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*. The *Oxford Review* for 30 January 1913 gives a list of the dances performed.

The Morris dance by members of the University English Folk-dance Society, was a very fine performance and aroused quite enthusiastic applause. Six Morris dances are to be given during the run of the play: The Derbyshire, Princess Royal and Leapfrog on Monday and Tuesday evenings and Saturday afternoon; Tideswell Processional Morris, The Old Woman tossed up and The Black Joke on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening and Monday afternoon. If they are all as good as those given last night they will be worth seeing.

One senses there the young reporter filling out his copy, happily for us. The *Oxford Magazine* for 6th Feb is much lushier:

Each night as the curtain rose on the broad striped hangings of the Lord Mayor’s dining-room, and showed the agreeably coloured groups of diners, servants and musicians, the audience emitted an audible purr of aesthetic satisfaction. This rose to clamour when the Morris dancers roistered in with a veritable glare of sunlight. It was not until their golden bravery was eclipsed by the curtain that one could pause to identify in retrospect the several Heads of Colleges (a pleasant exaggeration!).

(Strictly in parenthesis, I can’t resist adding from 13 February *Oxford Magazine*: Mr H. Macmillan

(Balliol) defended the Bill on its merits not on its popularity. He should go far.)

Reg Tiddy: I had a very kind and helpful letter from R. A. Boddington, who was up at Trinity from 1911–1914.

My tutor was Reg Tiddy and it was he who persuaded me to take up Morris dancing. Tiddy was of course a tremendous enthusiast, and those who danced with him could not fail to absorb some of his enthusiasm.

In the *Oxford Magazine* for 11 May 1911 I found a good example of Tiddy's interest in People. It was a letter headed "Early Closing of Booksellers' Shops."

Dear Sir, You were good enough to publish last Term (2nd Feb) a letter of mine which referred to a movement for securing the earlier closing, of Booksellers's shops in Oxford during Term. May I again trespass on your space to point out that as a result of the 'vote' taken last Term, the majority of booksellers have decided to close their shops at 7pm during the middle six weeks of Term? Some, greatly daring, have decided to follow the example set by Cambridge and close on Thursday afternoons at 2 o'clock during the same period. It is hoped that these arrangements will benefit the assistants with the minimum of inconvenience to customers and that in time they may be generally adopted.

Yours faithfully R. J. E. Tiddy, Trinity College 8th May 1911

The *Oxford Journal Illustrated* for 10th May 1911 gives Tiddy's name on a list concerned with an appeal for Ruskin College (along with among others Fyfe, Lindsay, G. Murray, E. Barker, Fisher, R. R. Marett).

Kenneth Constable has pointed out that not only is the village hall at Ascott-under-Wychwood named after him but somewhere in the hall there is either a plaque or a framed extract of the conditions of gift which states inter alia 'This Hall shall at all times be lent free of charge for any purpose connected with Morris dancing.

I have no record of an Oxford side availing themselves of this, but I have heard (and cannot recall the details) of how an early TM tour did, rather to their surprise.¹

From *The Isis* 4 May 1912:

May-Martyrs

A Plea For More English

Down by the river, James, along the High Street,

There stands a Tow'r now girded round with rails,

Where I am bent on giving you a nice treat

¹Sadly the above plaque is no longer evident in 'Tiddy Hall', indeed if it ever existed. In 1991, the caretaker (Ros Harbour), was approached about this matter and since she is one of the trustees she made a search of the documents but could not confirm this, although she was willing to 'honour' this apparent agreement. It is also to be noted that in the same year a fund was set up to pay for a replacement building, on the same site, although initial plans have been rejected by the Local Authority, West Oxon. To which end OUMM/AM appeared at a Ceilidh; viz log of 'Simon Says' Tour, 29 June 1991. *GCR*

On May-day morning when the cold moon pales;

It is to-morrow, James, and mile on mile
The folk will flock to greet the Spring in style,
And pass remarks about yon antique pile
(As recommended to the Prince of Wales),
We shall be there, my friend, with all the
City,

With Mayor and Aldermen incognito;
And when there sounds some frightful Latin ditty,

We shall oblige them with a song they know—
No played-out ballad from the Roman boards,
But some dear strain that wakes domestic chords

And stirs the Briton in the list'ning hordes,

Until they clamour for another go.

And then in fury at a fytt so foreign
To all the glory which belongs to Rome,
Provosts and Principals and Dr Warren
Will storm the citadel which erst we clomb,
And give us freely what are known as beans;
Spruce dons will speak to us and well-dressed
Deans,

(Though in all haste we rose, with unshorn miens,

And had no time to use our morning comb);
Yes, thee will speak. But we shall not be listening;

We shall sing on unmoved. And then I pray
That Zeus will send his thunder, grand and glistening,

And sweep the temple and ourselves away;
So may we perish with our fame yet young,
Our music finish'd and our names far-flung,
As men who gloried in their English tongue
And died for England on the First of May.

Tuesday, April 30, 1912

A.P.H.

Finally a sample of Jack in the Green material, from the *Oxford Journal* for 4 May 1907, in Notes by an Oxford Lady.

About noon in St Giles—a sweep's brush arose above the Jack-in-the-Green and the faces of his companions confirmed the conjecture that these were sweeps making holiday which they did very gaily, dancing and prancing around to the music of an instrument on wheels. One of the revellers had unblushingly donned the cap and gown of a B.A. and when he pranced he waved his sleeves in a fashion which was exceedingly droll. Another wore a riding suit with a green velvet coat, a third was dressed to represent a woman in a white skirt and pink bodice and the fourth was of a nondescript sex in a kind of Japanese kimono. The B.A. carried the collecting box and it seemed to receive many contributions. The sweeps' piano was covered with a white flag bearing a red cross like the coat in which King Richard appears from the Crusades in Robin Hood.

1915–1919

There is a snatch of entertaining correspondence from the *New Statesman* of early 1915.

13 March 1915. “There is nothing in all England more depressing than the gloomy revival that has set dons step-dancing in braces and bowler-hats on village greens.”

27 March 1915. Tiddy replied, writing from Northampton, with a correction to ‘bells and baldrics’... “an art, whether it be dancing or the writing of an epigram, is not necessarily academic because it is practised by members of a university.”

Then on the Somme 1916 came the deaths of Tiddy, Butterworth, Lucas and Wilkinson. In Oxford M.S. describes the period thus:

The Society hobbled through the war somehow. But for its Somerville Secretary it would have died several times over. Classes were of women and small boys, and now and then an officer, his back shuffle somewhat impaired by trench boots. The teacher was in France, dancing for the Y.M.C.A., and being thanked solemnly by a lieutenant-colonel on behalf of thirteen hundred army cooks. (*EFDS News* Jan 1930)

The Somerville Secretary was Miss Taylor, and the teacher was Miss Daking.

1919–1922

Here I am immeasurably indebted to Kenneth Constable who has produced a magnificent account of this period. I can do no more than reproduce this most gratefully and hope that it will inspire further reminiscence.

No account of this period is properly explicable without an understanding of the general picture of the EFDS and its organisation at this time.

To begin with what there was NOT:

A Any planned regional or area partition of England for Folk Dance purposes, with a corresponding semi-autonomy or independence such as Districts have now.

B Any Morris Ring.

A: The Society at this time was a monarchy ruled over by Cecil Sharp himself, but in the provinces of music and dance, with an executive cabinet consisting of Douglas and Helen Kennedy and Maud Karpeles. Control was centred exclusively in London and where there were teachers in other places such as Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, Newcastle, in status they were no more than branches under London HQ, from whom they took their instructions both in dance policy and in organisation. There was no distinction between Oxford City, County and University; Oxford ‘Branch’ covered the lot.

B: Then, as now, general emphasis was laid on Country (i.e. Playford in those days) rather than Morris or Sword, looked upon as more specialist activities. Parties were few except at Christmas and special occasions and

communication was mainly by practices or classes, well enough attended by both sexes as regards Country, but apt to peter out in Morris because of the lack of opportunity to broaden one’s outlook or increase one’s proficiency in the total absence of anything like Ring Meetings. In order to advance, one simply had to attend the Society’s Vacation Schools, which were of the utmost importance, always being presided over by Sharp himself, and where there was always a nucleus of good or promising Morris Dancers from whom one could learn, frequently in special voluntary practices in the afternoons.

As a corollary of ‘A’, HQ exercised a paramount influence not only on the style but also on the progress of Morris. In style for instance anything like a bent supporting knee in the Morris step or a quickdown arm movement (except in Bucknell) would damn you outright and something like a progress ‘bar’ operated until one was adjudged to have thoroughly mastered the galley. Sharp in fact very much disliked any man taking part in a Morris with galleys or advanced capers, unless he had already obtained his Advanced Folk Dance Certificate, or at any rate was a serious aspirant. In his favourite tradition, Fieldtown, I have known him personally to veto show performances of The Rose (‘Losing your circular formation capering in the turn out’), Step Back (‘Turn the body and bring the hand well into the opposite hip, DON’T STAMP, that’s not the point of the movement.’) and Shepherd’s Hey (‘Slow and smooth, but don’t let it sag or bend.’)

Curiously enough, along with the rigorous interpretation of Morris, dancing of it by women and even display was not only tolerated but to a certain extent encouraged and it was well for Oxford that Marjorie Barnett was not only a first-class teacher but performer as well, especially in a Bampton gig. Practices were on Tuesday afternoons (mixed) and Saturday evening (Men’s Morris), the latter held in a top room above Taphouse the music seller and latterly in a room in the High. We thought ourselves lucky if we mustered a full side and the repertoire was severely limited owing to the lack of proficiency and the progress ‘bar’.

Headington was the staple diet. Rigs o’ Marlow and Blue-eyed Stranger till you danced them in your sleep, followed by the other Headington stick dances like Rodney, Country Gardens with hand-clapping, Old Mother Oxford jig, leading at last to Trunkles and Laudnum Bunches. Ilmington was also done, especially the stick dances, and an occasional Bampton like Bobbing Joe and Bacca-Pipes jig, but the Bampton tradition was largely the perquisite of the ladies and as a man I never remember doing ‘Shepherds Hey altogether two at a time’ till well on in life, and men seldom danced Princess Royal or Lumps of Plum Pudding jig. Oxford men also did the professionals like Helston and Winster together with the Derbyshire Reel. It must be borne in mind that some traditions were not yet unearthed, (Adderbury only latterly, not Brackley except for Shooting, Abingdon, Wheatley), and Badby also was a ladies’ preserve, though occasionally we men did Beaux of London City.

For the remaining traditions the ‘bar’ largely operated but in any case until my final summer in 1922 we couldn’t have raised a side expert enough to dance anything too elaborate. Arthur Heffer, who subsequently married Marjorie Barnett, was far and away our No. 1 dancer, having emigrated from his native Cambridge to Queen’s, Oxford,

Charles Brackenbury (New College) came next, Ralph Honeybone (Ruskin) was probably the nearest pure folk-dancer who ever fitted in to a non-traditional side, and by 1922 I was beginning to find my own feet. Other Oxford dancers at or around that time were Colin Dunlop, the late Dean of Lincoln Cathedral, Christopher Scaife (St John's), J. G. Bergel (Baillol), still a chronic dancer when killed flying in the Second War and the invariable choice for the Doctor in the Ampleforth Play, Herbert J. Thomas (Uncle Herbert), a beautiful exponent of Ladies Pleasure, C. L. Gage-Brown (Ch. Ch.). At one time or another various Dons took part, notably Theodore Chaundy of the House, Michael Holroyd (BNC), and future Dons in the persons of John Christie (Principal of Jesus) and Sir Arthur Norrington of Trinity. The latter on one occasion (not at Oxford) told me he was involved in an argument with Sharp himself on the meaning of the notation of Headington Shepherd's Hey jig, in which Sharp was hard put to it to defend his interpretation.

Mixed shows round the countryside in Summer were pretty common, comprising Country and Sword as well as Morris, the Country repertoire being much more extensive than the Morris, while Sword was limited to Flamborough and Kirby, at any rate I don't recall a rapper. Dress was white flannels with baldrick and bells and the women wore blue. Music both at classes and shows was nearly always piano, sometimes accompanied by a violin and like the dancing often of a rather moderate standard. In those days squeeze boxes, fiddles, and pipe and tabor were rarities and few dancers were also players. I think most credit for the doubling must be given to the late Kenworthy Schofield, who although by no means a born musician mastered both the accordion and the pipe and tabor. Shows that stick in my memory were given at Reading Abbey, Culham College and Broughton Castle, Banbury. When I revisited the last-named some thirty years later, the Dagenham Girl Pipers were in occupation of the greensward! At this period the Morris had no part in the May-day morning festivities at Magdalen and in the High.

But the crowning glory of the Oxford Folk Dance year was always the Summer Term Show in New College garden. The late and celebrated Sir Hugh Allen, at that time Heather Professor of Music and a Fellow of New College, was fortunately interested in Folk music and dance, and in fact I should say the existence of Folk dancing in Oxford depended upon the joint enthusiasm of Allen and of Marjorie Barnett. At the New College Show she ran the dancing, Allen the music and this was both exciting and anxious, as on the morning of the day, never before, Allen would appear in the garden for rehearsal with a select chamber orchestra of various instruments, none of them, including Allen, having seen the music before and in the course of a couple of hours with his incredibly quick grasp of musical possibilities and gift for improvisation, he would sort it all out among the band, shouting "Solo bassoon tune"... "That tune was born for the horn" (i.e. Nonsuch)... "I want a flute descant on top of the tune"... "Now all the lot of you, all together"... and so on, and in the afternoon show, at any rate as far as the music was concerned there was never a hitch, even when on one occasion we danced Flamborough to the bagpipes. In this particular show the local side was heavily reinforced from HQ for spectacular dance purposes, bringing down

dancers like the late Willie Thorold and Roland Heath and of course Douglas Kennedy himself, while Ruby Avril would appear with her fiddle for awkward caper music, which might have floored even Allen's wizards. Kimber would descend from Headington and perform Jockey and on one occasion Cecil Sharp himself showed up (at that time he was patiently coaxing the remnants of the Wheatley tradition out of a reluctant source).

Kimber would also turn up at occasional practices and give us lessons, especially in capering of which he was a magnificent exponent. This for me was the beginning of a friendship that lasted till his death and I learnt enormously from him. Indeed without imbibing something of his strict discipline of weight control through the arms and balance control through absolutely vertical take off and landing similarly in high capers, I should never have got half as far as I did as a dancer. Much though everybody may have enjoyed Kimber's playing of the concertina in his later years, the memory of his musicianship was not to be compared with the sheer revelation of the power of his dancing in his prime. I would place him in the highest rank of traditional dancers.

Needless to say, as many as could always attended Bampton on Whitmonday, where Wells was still in command of the old side, but on only one occasion did they come to Oxford, when we entertained them at lunch in between dancing in the streets. I sat next to Wells but on this, as on other occasions, like so many folk dancers and players it was almost impossible to draw him on dances and tunes. Being a gardener by profession, it was all peas and beans, gooseberry bushes and cottage roses. I did however elicit that first, none of the Bampton men, including himself, was well enough off to afford a watch, and second, that in his, Wells', view, the decay and gradual dying out of traditional Morris was due more to excessive alcohol than to anything else, and it was for this reason he introduced the four and six handed jigs, so that he wouldn't lose half the side in the nearest local if only two were dancing (a six handed Bampton Nutting Girl, with the dancers performing the last side-step together, makes a fine showing). On this occasion too I first heard from Wells the now famous story of how the old fiddler broke his fiddle in a fit of drunken fury after colliding with a rain-pipe coming round a corner, and that was how Wells became fiddler. I do not know of any Oxford dancer having danced in the Bampton side, but strangely enough a Cambridge man has this distinction, George Cooke of Caius who was shoved in 'nearside hindmost' by the Cakeman presumably when old Wells wasn't looking or too blind to see. His natural style would fit Bampton very well.

I wound up my Oxford dancing in a blaze of glory by being elected along with Arthur Heffer and Ralph Honeybone to be a member of the Mens' side at the Society's annual display week for 1922 at the old King's Theatre, Hammersmith. This was the Society's nearest approach in those days to today's Albert Hall performances, the difference being largely one of outlook as the King's performances were designed as showpieces to educate and attract a largely ignorant public, whereas Albert Hall emphasis is on review and participation of current dancing throughout the country, for a 'with-it' audience.

Rolf Gardiner writes:

I shall never forget the New College Garden festival in June (or May) 1922, when Cecil Sharp, Sir Hugh Allen and Elsie Avril conducted the music. The poet laureate to be, John Masefield, was among the spectators, and described Barney's dancing as 'flameliike'. (There was an article by another poet, W. J. Turner, music critic of the New Statesman, describing her dancing Ladies Pleasure at Stratford, I think the previous year, a glowing account.) The side at New College was led by Scaife and Constable. I think Heath and Arthur Norrington and Chaundy were also members of the team.

Additional note: 1919

Kenneth Constable's piece in the Interim Report stands as the classic account of the immediate post-war period. All I can do is add snippets of information to be read in that context.

Miss Taylor gave her report for 1919:

The main fact to report is the existence of the branch. Before the General Meeting membership was negligible, but at the close of the year the danger of an early death was negligible. Classes have been held in Oxford, Banbury, Adderbury, Deddington and Wheatley. A guarantee fund has been raised and a branch teacher whom we share with Reading has been appointed (i.e. Miss Barnett). The Branch has suffered a great loss in the departure of our vice-chairman, Mr W. H. Fyfe who now presides over Christ's Hospital, and of Mr D. R. Pye who was elected in his place but had immediately to return to Cambridge.

The AGM was held on Saturday 24 May at the Corn Exchange, with Theo Chaundy in the Chair. Cecil Sharp was to come.

Additional note: 1920

Oxford Chronicle 14 May, under the heading 'English Folk Dancing':

On Monday at the Headington Orthopaedic Hospital a very pretty display was given by William Kimber and members of the Oxford FDS led by Miss M. Barnett. Naturally the Morris dances shown were from the Headington tradition. (Flamborough was also done.) Mr Kimber's jig Shepherd's Hey was encored. It is to be hoped that this display will assist Mr Kimber to revive once more the Headington side which had just begun to dance again before war broke out.

3 June 1920 – *Pageant in New College*.

Oxford Times 5 November gives an account of the AGM at 115 High Street on 23 October.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded for her great services to the retiring Secretary, Miss M. V. Taylor. Not only was Miss Taylor largely responsible for the early spadework which gave the branch its great success in prewar days, but it is owing in a great measure to her energy and enthusiasm that the even more arduous task of restarting after the war has been accomplished.

During Michaelmas Term Miss Sinclair kindly took Miss Barnett's place owing to the latter's illness.

Additional note: 1921

16 June - *New College Pageant*. There were 64 performers. Dances included How do You do Sir, Lads a Bunchum, Leapfrog, Tideswell, Derbyshire, Flamborough. It was an "unqualified success"; "to Miss Barnett is due the careful and efficient preparation and training, for the dance" (*Oxford Chronicle* 17 June).

The *EFDS News* for August remarked that if this sort of thing spreads "I can see Lord Curzon enquiring '*placetne vobis domini doctores?*' at a stately sidestep, and the doctors and masters replying '*placet*' with one united galley."

M.S. continues from the section quoted above:

The post-war teacher reaped their harvest. She was quite another type, tall and sinuous; taught like a drill sergeant and moved like Atalanta. Miss Barnett now has several thousand pupils in America. I wonder if she still does Princess Royal in a blue tunic. Bind on thy sandals, oh thou most fleet, Over the splendour and speed of thy feet. This must have been meant for Miss Barnett doing Princess Royal. This was the period of the great New College garden shows, with horned men and hobby-horses on the sacred grass, and the Director of the Royal College of Music conducting under the tulip tree with a wreath of flowers round his top hat. *EFDS News*, January 1930

Christopher Scaife, who had come up the previous October, writes:

An Oxford side came into being, I suppose, when Barney began to organize festivals. . . A tremendous affair involving a large number of people, with fine swirling entries round the mound. . . I think this was when we first wore top hats. The whole thing was a great success. I would say that the side consisted of Constable, CHOS; Finch, Dunlop; Norrington, Chaundy. But I'm very uncertain. I am sure that this side did dance together, and for a performance, for I remember in one practice Constable, with a banshee scream, bringing his Adderbury stick smartly down on Finch's head as he was about to make a wrong turn in the hey.

13 May – *The Festival*. 'Their greatest effort yet.' The *EFDS News* of November included a four page article entitled 'A Test of Folk Song' signed CHOS.

There lurks, often, in the breast of even the most ardent devotee of folk-music the fear that it is, after all, only the echo of a past age, and that the feeling of which it was the expression is either dead or irrevocably turned into other channels. Urged by this fear two enthusiasts determined either to confirm it or to lay it to rest this summer by testing folk-songs in their original homes. In July they took a punt, camping utensils and a Dulcitone (a small tuning-fork piano), and set off up the Oxford-Coventry Canal. Their plan was to appear in the villages along its banks just as they were wandering minstrels singing, and hoping for a liberal contribution to the hat when they had sung.

Christopher Scaife's description of this tour is thoroughly fascinating; it clearly was a remarkable success. It is difficult to select from it. But the nicest story is the one which he added in a letter to me when I enquired who the other chap was.

The other chap was W. T. Guthrie; no dancer but a singer. . . . My spirit was broken at Banbury on Sunday evening when, unembarrassed by the accursed dulcitone, we were having great success with folk songs on the curb not far from the church whence people were coming after evensong. Shillings and sixpences were rattling into the hat, the expression of pleasure in our performances, as we thought. Until a man put half-a-crown in and as he did so whispered with deprecatory sympathy in my ear—'Weren't you at Mill Hill old chap?' And one realized that this was a product of charity! Guthrie, being Scottish on his father's side, recovered after only one drink, and like Falstaff was glad we'd got the money. But I couldn't be persuaded to perform again with a collecting-hat (and it wasn't such fun without).

1923

The *Oxford Times* of 4 May reported:

An appreciated innovation was made by the local branch of the EFDS 'as a free gift to the city, in gratitude for the long and lovely survival here of the May-Day celebration.' Directly after the ceremony six members of the branch, Messrs Bergel (Ball.), Scaife (St J.), Terry (St J.), Rink (Univ.), Holroyd (BNC) and Chaundy (Ch. Ch.) gave a number of Morris dances at several points in the city.

We have a cutting in poor condition from the *Oxford Journal Illustrated* of Wednesday 2 May showing two pictures, one being apparently 'How Do You Do Sir' at the Plain (very appropriate), and the other at Carfax at 6.55.

Philip Terry writes:

I think I can identify an important date for you, and that is 1 May 1923, which was the first occasion on which we danced Morris in the streets following the Mayday Carols at Magdalen. (I can vouch for this as it was my 21st birthday!)

So far as I remember the team were: Christopher Scaife (St. John's, and then President of the Union), Theo Chaundy (a Fellow of Ch. Ch.), Michael Holroyd (a fellow of BNC), Jack Bergel, George Rink (now a Chancery Q.C.), and myself. We may have been joined by Ralph Honeybone, who was not at the University and was of an elder generation. (There is mention of him in the Fox Strangways/Karpeles Life of Cecil Sharp.)

On the Mayday in question I think we danced at five stations: The Plain, opposite the steps of Queen's in the High, Carfax (imagine the traffic being stopped there today), opposite the gate of Trinity College in the Broad, and the Martyrs' Memorial. We were most of us hardly more than beginners and our repertory was confined to Headington and a little Bampton. (Arthur Heffer and Ken Constable had gone down by then.)

This was before the foundation of the Morris Ring so the Morris men had no separate entity. Our inspiration was Miss Barnett (Mrs Heffer) who was the Oxford teacher

at that time and one of the few women really capable of teaching Morris. Other Oxford dancers who used to visit us from time to time were Willy Thorold and Roland Heath. H. J. Thomas, an older man living locally was also a great support for any Morris dance occasions.

George Rink writes:

In case nobody else has already mentioned it to you, you may be interested to know that our performance down the High on May morning 1923 had at least one long-term result. Some policemen were on duty to see that we did not unduly interfere with the traffic or vice versa. They were so much attracted by the Morris dancing that they asked us to put them in touch with someone from whom they could have lessons. As a result the Oxford police took up Morris dancing enthusiastically and for many years sent a team to Folk Dance Festivals at the Albert Hall.

Christopher Scaife writes:

Of course I remember our forming-up under Magdalen tower while the people were coming down after the singing on May day, for the first May day progress up the High Street, ending I think in St Giles. Those top-hats were rather a nuisance and it must have rained, though only on and off; I don't have any grudging association with rain on that occasion; only that it was damp and chilly until one got warmed up. I was too much of an exhibitionist to feel a fool in a top-hat; and I certainly approached the whole thing with a certain piety.

I think we ended up with a traditional breakfast in someone's lodgings, perhaps Philip Terry's (though I associate visitors from Cambridge with that meal). Though by temperament sentimentally conservative I remember feeling that kidneys, chops, marmalade and beer at 9 o'clock of a May morning, however chilly, was a custom best in desuetude.

Additional note: 1923–1925

George Rink has been very helpful for 1923–4. His list of dancers for 1924 is himself, Christopher Scaife, Bill Reitzel (an American at New College) and probably all or some of the following: J. D. K. Lloyd (Trinity), W. D. Robson-Scott (Univ), W. S. Curtis (Univ), John Bryson (a Balliol Don), Theo Chaundy, Charles Stirling (Corpus), and Robert Birley (Balliol). Some of these may have taken part in 1923 in addition to those already listed. He feels sure that Kimber did not play on the first May morning. "It so happened that I was the man whom the interested policemen asked whether they could have lessons, and before answering them I asked Miss Barnett, and we came to the conclusion that Kimber might be willing to give them lessons. If he had been there himself, I feel sure that the police would have approached him rather than me."

The *Oxford Journal Illustrated* for 5 August 1925 has a fine picture of the police side dancing at Kirtlington with Kimber.

Theo Chaundy told the story of how "they had much success until at a performance a fourteen stone

officer went through the platform. This discouraged them.”

June 2 1923 – New College Festival. Kimber was presented with a gold badge by Sir Hugh Allen. “Afterwards Mr Kimber danced a Morris to the delight of everyone.” “A fascinating Morris dance, entitled ‘Leapfrog’ caused some amusement, as did a dance carried out by youths who wore false beards and danced as if they were old men.” (*Oxford Journal Illustrated* 6 June 1923)

1924

The *Oxford Times* for 2 May gives an account of May Morning:

After the ceremony members of the Oxford branch of the EFDS gave some Morris dances and it seemed indeed as if Shakespeare’s words, “a Morris for May-day” had inspired the dancers for good purpose. Mr Kimber, who danced some jigs, played his concertina for the Headington tunes, and a fiddle was used for the other dances. Mr T. W. Chaundy, who has been described as the “heart and soul” of the party, thanks the police for keeping a ring for the dances. Some of the police who took such a sympathetic interest in the proceedings are, we are told, pupils of Mr Kimber. Miss Barnett organised the dances.

Apart from this we have no direct information on this May Morning. The other dancers would have been Christopher Scaife, probably Arthur Filsell, Dick Stoddart, Christie Cookson and ? We have no picture of this year either. (1924 and 1927 are the only gaps in the sequence from 1923–1931).

Later in the year Rolf Gardiner recalls:

In 1924 the first Travelling Morrice set out for Burford and the Cotswolds from Oxford. Christopher Scaife, then squire of the Oxford side, breakfasted with us at the Golden Cross and saw us off on push bikes, passing dung-spattering cattle in Beaumont Street.

This was on Wednesday 18 June.

At this point I would note with interest that the Morris at Cambridge and at Oxford have each evolved in a highly individual and characteristic fashion and yet that there have always been intricate cross-currents between the two. In the interchange the OUMM have, it would seem, gained somewhat disproportionately, as this history will indicate. It is certainly appropriate in this document to acknowledge our debts with due gratitude.

On 24 October the inaugural meeting of the CMM took place, ‘founded by Kenworthy Schofield primarily to keep Cambridge Morris Men who had gone down in touch with those still in residence.’

In Michaelmas 1924 Geoffrey Fiennes and Francis Tabor came up. Geoffrey Fiennes writes:

My interest in Folk-dancing in general and Morris and Sword in particular was first aroused towards the end of my time at Winchester when Cecil Sharp came to give a lecture demonstration supported by dancers from Oxford and Cambridge. I suspect Kenneth Constable may have

been one of the party. This was the first time I had seen anything of the sort and I was thrilled.

When I went up to Oxford in 1924 I immediately joined the local branch of EFDS. Classes were held in the Quaker’s Meeting Place which you approached down a narrow passage off the High. I found myself in a room filled with dancing women and one disconsolate male (Francis Tabor). Before I could make my escape Georgie Taylor, the lovely secretary of the Branch had spotted me and pushed me into her place in the current dance where I had to sink or swim, and under the enthusiastic tutelage of Barney (Miss Barnett later Mrs Heffer) I remained in medias res for the rest of my time at Oxford.

This year there was a fearful shortage of men and it was almost impossible to scrape together a Men’s Morris set, though there were no end of enthusiastic women. I think Francis Tabor was the only regular undergraduate dancer beside myself. But there was Herbert Thomas, known by all as ‘Uncle Herbert’, an old Magdalen man who lived in connubial bliss at Cumnor. (F. T.: Probably not much over 40, he looked older, because his hair was white. He was the Squire, not in the Morris sense, of Cumnor, and eventually became Chairman of the Berks C. C.) He was a very fine dancer and greatly loved by us all. Under his aegis we later gave demonstrations at a number of Women’s Institutes all over the County to which he drove us in a huge Morris Oxford.

Then there was Theo Chaundy who was a don at the House. He was very helpful and generous by allowing us to use his house and garden for practices. (At this time he was, or was about to be, a proctor, which limited his Morris activities.) Frank Brabant was another graduate dancer, later to be the Bampton lecturer of 1936 (on the subject Time and Eternity in Christian Thought).

Francis Tabor writes about the background of Morris at this time:

Owing partly to the carnage of 1914–18, male Morris dancers in the years 1920–25 were scarce. In very few places could a man hope to be instructed in Morris by a man and among these few places even fewer had anything in the nature of a Morris club. The nearest to independence were, I believe, Letchworth, Thaxted and eventually Cambridge. Everywhere else the Morris had to be learned through EFDS teachers, who were normally women. (There was indeed more women’s Morris then than today, and, while all men agreed that what they danced was not the real Morris, the more observant and honest men admitted that on points of a pure technique practised women had an annoying habit of doing better than men.)

The EFDS women teachers were selected by Sharp and his senior staff after they had passed examinations based on their dancing ability. Any fully qualified teacher could teach reasonably well. The best of them were very good indeed. From the man’s point of view this situation had advantages and disadvantages.

The disadvantages were:

1. He would be quite possibly the only man in a class of women.
2. The teaching would be largely geared to the examination syllabus. Thus at the elementary stage he

would be confined to the traditions for the elementary examination (Headington, Adderbury, Ilmington and Bampton), and if he was unlucky might have a teacher who largely confined herself to the dances set for the examination.

3. He would in theory not be allowed to touch advanced dances until he had taken the elementary examination, though in practice he would sooner or later get round it.

The advantages of the method were:

1. The teaching was thorough and ensured that he got the fundamental movements of the Morris right.
2. As all teachers taught the same, he would find identical interpretations wherever he went in the EFDS.
3. Because men were rare, teachers lavished special attention on them.

This background is, I think, of interest in itself. It is also relevant to the problems which faced men who wished to form a Morris club.

In October 1924, Francis Tabor recalls attending as a spectator a demonstration in Balliol Hall to attract freshmen (which “so far as I know it did not”).

1925

May Morning. The *Oxford Journal Illustrated* for 6 May gives a fine picture of the men at Carfax. The time was 6.40. The musician was William Kimber. (I have a note, origin uncertain, that he had “breakfast at Ch. Ch. Train to London and danced to King Teddy in Hyde Park.”) The dancers were Francis Tabor, Geoffrey Fiennes, Arthur Filsell, Dick Stoddart, Percy Mills, Blakely, Theo Chaundy.

A scratch set called the Isis Strollers danced at a Reading Festival. Geoffrey Fiennes gives them as: Thomas (Uncle H.), Fiennes, Cookson, Mills, Stoddart, Tabor; accompanied on Pipe and Tabor by Mrs Taylor (Georgie), Secretary of the Oxford Branch. “H. J. Thomas gave a delightful and really finished performance of Princess Royal.” (This and Ladies’ Pleasure were his favourite jigs often danced at demonstrations, and he danced them magnificently.)

Geoffrey Fiennes did his first jig in public on this occasion: Jockey to the Fair, with Francis Tabor.

In Michaelmas 1925 Reggie Batchelor (who later changed his name to Wylam) and Gordon Etherington came up. Cecil Sharp had stayed in their respective homes while collecting in Yarmouth and in Minehead.

Francis Tabor’s diary for this term shows the way in which Morris enthusiasm and activity increased steadily.

13 October – Special Practice for Balliol demonstration..

16 October – Balliol demonstration. No details of the dancing, in which I participated, though it was probably

country only, apart from a jig by Uncle Herbert. It appears to have been a bit gloomy.

19 October – Village demonstration at Waterstock. Three couples only, and country only.

30 October – Dem. at Thame Town Hall. Four couples, including a local woman teacher who replaced a man. Again clearly country, though “I wore Mr Chaundy’s baldrick”. (Probably we had taken to wearing baldricks in country dems.)

6 November. Received from home my father’s baldrick and bells.

10 November. We are to send a team to London, for country at least.

11 November. The greatest news is that we shall do Morris in town, Lads a Bunchum and Rodney.

18 November. Special rehearsal for Culham, Banbury and London in the morning “I came in ordinary clothes, with a loose crepe sole, and with books for a lecture at 11.00, but as we continued until 11:50 and I was concerned in all three rehearsals, I had no chance of the lecture and wished very much that I had changed, for although it was very cold outside we were soon boiling. Fiennes is recovering from a poisoned hand and is stiff with bandages. I myself, besides my cough, am troubled by my right foot again.”

(During the next week the sore throat turned into tonsillitis, and the foot became worse... “probably through Flowers of Edinburgh done badly”. Despite this...)

20 November – Culham Dem. including Morris. Such an enthusiastic audience I have never met. Team: Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Etherington, Cookson and myself. Mrs Taylor danced as a man in the Morris. Tideswell, Beaux of London City, Maid of the Mill (Bampton), Rodney, Lads a Bunchum. Mr Thomas did a solo jig. Fiennes and I, Jockey.

26 November – Banbury Dem. Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Mr Chaundy, Filsell, Etherington and myself. We did the usual, with the addition of Flamborough; also we finished with Green Garters.

2 December. Our last Morris practice.

All these shows were organised by the Oxford EFDS branch, and were mainly country, although clearly the Morris was coming to take a bigger part in them.

1926 – THE HATCHING OF OUMM

“We really got ourselves consolidated by means of a private mixed ‘school’ at Winchester held during the Easter Vac. 1926.”

In Geoffrey Fiennes’ photograph album he labelled his picture of those present at it as “The Genesis of OUMM”. They were G. E. E. Webster, H. O. Clarke, F. J. Tabor, T. Simey, G. Fiennes, H. Hodson, G. Darlow, F. G. M. Etherington, A. R. Batchelor. And the women: M. Cunninghame, C. Newhouse, Barney, M. Coombs, M. Thomas, J. Shearman.

Geoffrey Fiennes has given this very fine account of these events.

Although we looked back to the Winchester School as the genesis of OUMM I don't think that we had at that time any clear-cut idea of a club for Morris Men. The purpose of the school, which was attended by ten Oxford women as well as ten men, was to produce an all purpose demonstration party capable of putting on a comprehensive programme of country-dances, Running Set and Morris and Sword-dances.

Miss Barnett generously gave her teaching services free and we men, all pretty raw beginners, depended entirely upon her for instruction, and we owed her a tremendous debt for her enthusiasm and technical expertise.

We became a very closely-knit community, and it required a period of six months before it became possible for the men to hive off without too much heart burning. I can trace the following stages:

27 May (*ten days after we had returned from General Strike emergency jobs*). Tabor and I dined with Uncle Herbert at the Clarendon. After dinner they came to my rooms at Trinity for what Uncle H. called a SERIOUS TALK. He then propounded for the first time the formation of a Morris Club independent of the Branch with its own rehearsal arrangements. (I wonder how relevant is the fact that Uncle H. was a guest at the 2nd Annual CMM Feast in the Spring of 1926. R. E. J.)

16 June. I discussed the proposal with Mrs Taylor (Branch Sec.) who received it with modified rapture but agreed that there were pros as well as cons.

17 June. Tabor and I put something on paper, but I have no record of what we put.

18 June. Discussion with Batchelor on same subject. Meanwhile I fancy Miss Barnett had got wind of what was in the air, and she and Uncle H. had a pretty blistering row which had to be patched up somehow.

7 August. During the Long Vac. Tabor and I went to the Cambridge School where we joined a house-party organised by Miss Barnett.

Three Important Events.

1. Tabor and I joined advanced Morris Classes coached by Douglas Kennedy and discovered how much we had to learn.
2. We made the acquaintance of Kenworthy Schofield who propounded his ideas about a federation of Morris Clubs.
3. Barney had a talk with us and most handsomely withdrew her opposition to the formation of OUMM.

Thus we were able to inaugurate the Club next October without offending our friends in the Oxford Branch. There was no rift.

Reggie Wylam has given the date: "Sunday 17 October in the afternoon saw OUMM inaugurated." Charles Bardswell recalls dining together in baldricks and dinner-jackets.

The pattern that now evolved was that the OUMM (the Oxford University Men's Morris) were responsible for their own practices and for May Morning. Almost all other public dancing was as part of the Oxford EFDS Branch demonstration team. Reggie Wylam describes it thus:

Most of our dancing was combined with country and sword, whether at parties or demonstrations, and on average we danced publicly in term time twice a week, with

the women, at W.I.s or house-parties from Woodstock to Wantage. There was usually a sandwich of Morris in the middle of the programme, and often, to tabor, concertina or accordeon.

Other events of 1926, from notes by Geoffrey Fiennes

May Morning. A picture from the *Oxford Journal Illustrated* of 5 May shows Gordon Etherington, Humphrey Clarke, Reggie Wylam, George Darlow, Geoffrey Fiennes, Francis Tabor and William Kimber.

Geoffrey Fiennes gives the programme of dances, accompanied by William Kimber: Rigs, Bean Setting, How d'you do Sir, Country Gardens, Headington Morris Reel, Trunkles, Laudnum Bunches, Blue Eyed Stranger, Lads a Bunchum (Adderbury steps and figures to Kimber's Headington variant).

8 May – *The Heather Festival.* This took place on the 5th day of the General Strike and it was very difficult to keep the Morris Men together while so many of their friends had gone off to do emergency jobs. We only stuck it because the Heather Festival was a big show with dancers coming down from London and elsewhere and it just had to go on. Gordon Etherington appeared in the Minehead Horse, for whose revival his father had been responsible. Next morning which was a Sunday, there were only 15 men in Hall at Trinity. Batchelor (Oriel) and I met later that morning on a bus going up to Hull. We left at 11 a.m. and reached Hull at 3 a.m. next morning, and became involved in running the trams for the next week. Etherington went bus-conducting in London.

17 May. Reunion at Oxford, swapping strike experiences.

28 May – *Demonstration at Rotherfield.* Tideswell, Country Gardens, Flowers of Edinburgh, Lads a B., Leap Frog. Gordon Etherington had to climb into Balliol off the top of a bus because he was gated.

26 May – *Demonstration at Borstall.* Same evening danced at Long Crendon.

15 June – *Demo at Broughton Castle.*

17 June – *Dem. at Great Milton.* Uncle H.'s old home. Wheatley Processional, Country Gardens, Step Back, Abingdon Princess Royal, Leap Frog, Green Garters, Earsdon.

19 June. Demo at Lady Whitehead's in afternoon (attended by the President of Trinity and my Tutor!). Went down the same evening.

During the Long Vac. – The Reading Festival. It was a bit of a washout as far as Morris was concerned. Fiennes and Tabor danced Lumps of Plum pudding; perfectly accompanied by Elsie Avril. Batchelor and Fiennes entered the instrumental Section, Batch on Concertina and Fiennes on Pipe and Tabor. We couldn't raise a Morris Set but partnered the ladies in country dances.

Additional notes for 1926 from Francis Tabor's diary

Unless otherwise indicated the material has been provided by Francis Tabor. I am deeply grateful for his labour in going through his diaries to produce the basis for these notes. I have done a certain amount of

editing, but I hope that I have left it as recognizable 'Francis', and that I have not dimmed the splendour of those magnificent days.

2nd January – The First All England Festival. The Oxford men danced Rodney and Maid of the Mill (Bampton). Maud Karpeles comments (*EFDS News* 11) were 'Good step and team work. In Rodney beginning and end of movements not strictly in time. Maid of the Mill was danced with great spirit. Arm movements rather too fussy.'

15 January. Called on G. F. and found him more enthusiastic than ever.

26 January. I at last was brought to realize how difficult Princess Royal (Bampton jig) was.

29 January. Dem. at Thame.

1 March. First Festival rehearsal in the Wychwood School ground.

2 March. Sword and Men's Class... taken by G.F. and F.T. in absence of senior persons. Somehow or other it was not at all a fiasco.

24 April. I met with G. and Ethers to discuss May Morning. G. now entirely for it. We then tackled Theo Chaundy, now Junior Proctor, and having obtained advice from him went to enquire of the Chief Constable about the arrangements. We composed a letter to the Vice-Chancellor and another to the various editors of Oxford papers.

25 April. I went with Geoffrey after lunch and got on Kimber's track at once. We found Kimber in and sober and very friendly. We arranged for him to play and to come to a practice and to bring the Fool's dress. Also he will teach us the Morris Off.

27 April. Advanced Morris in evening with lots of men in the class. We started Earsdon again, which we are intending to polish up. We think we shall go to Ardeley.

28 April. We probably shall not go to Ardeley.

29 April. Ethers showed me the Minehead Hobby Horse.

30 April. Rehearsals. Kimber taught us the Morris Off. G. made a fool's hat with streamer on the top, out of white paper and old tape from the Winchester decorations and decorated it with chalk circles. We left after 10.00 and after that he made a stick with a tail and bladder. The police had lost Kimber's hat and a fool's stick. An awful discovery we are going to Ardeley and I told him we weren't.¹

1 May. It rained tentatively until Carfax. Then gave over; but started again at the Broad and was just beginning to pelt when we stopped. Our worst effort was the Morris Reel. The police were pleased at this—it was on their repertoire. Breakfast with the Chaundys.

G. F. wrote up an account for the *EFDS News* Vol No 12.

May Morning was everything that May Morning ought not to be; it was cold and wet and rainy and altogether loathsome. The choir on Magdalen tower having sung a

¹'Him' is probably Uncle Herbert. In fact the men did not go to Ardeley, the first of the gatherings for Men's Morris. Looking back Francis now says "It seems a pity we missed Ardeley but the invitation would have arrived in the vacation so that for the undergraduate it would be short notice. And this was at a time when we were preparing for May Morning and Heather Festival. And we had only just begun to have a real team and not just six men."

hymn which, owing to the jostling of the elements, was inaudible to those below, the Oxford Morris Men fell to greeting bashful Phoebus in their own way. We danced to the incomparable strains of Kimber's concertina outside Queen's, in Carfax, in the Broad and by the Martyrs' Memorial, until our shirts were wet through. Although restricted to the Headington tradition, and in spite of the elements, we had a more persistent following than last year. The Fool, arrayed in Kimber's Granddad's best Sunday smock and an ornamental pointed hat constructed by the writer out of stiff paper the previous evening, provided an amusing incident while we were dancing at Carfax. The hat suddenly succumbed to the action of the rain, and flopped over on one side, dangling down drunkenly with its ribbons like an old-fashioned night-cap. Perhaps the pleasantest part of a wet May morning is the large breakfast provided by Mr and Mrs Chaundy, when Kimber tells us tales of Morris feats in days gone by.

8 May – The Heather Festival. There is a short account in the *EFDS News* Vol 1 No 12: "Unfortunately this paragraph is compiled by the Editor who is obliged to economise drastically and so cannot print in full the detailed account, much as he would like to show his gratitude when some news actually does come in from a Branch." F. T. remarks later "Cameron has summarised in six lines the account that Geoffrey and I so elaborately composed of the Festival." A pity. "Unfortunately rather a cold afternoon, but nevertheless a good audience. The demonstration was on a large scale: one need only mention that there were seven teams of men doing the Flamborough Sword dance simultaneously! Mr Kimber was there as usual and danced a jig." F. T.'s diary noted Top Hats in the Morris and Professor Turner as the King in the Derbyshire Morris Reel, wearing Doctor's robes. "The Festival was a glorious success." G. F. later commented on the Minehead Horse, "I can see from Crockford that E's father was Vicar of Minehead 1899–1914. I don't know whether it was then or later when the family were living at Wroughton that he interested himself in reviving the beast. But for sure he had a copy made which Gordon stabled in his Balliol Rooms. It was a pretty large and heavy structure of wood with a Hessian skirt decorated with red white and blue concentric circles."

26 May – The Borstal Institution for girls. Looked very grim. Bars everywhere. The staff carried enormous keys and have to keep every door locked. At the start of the dem. the girls yelled and roared with laughter for no good reason. However they quieted down. Their singing was rather a surprise; their dancing rather a surprise. On the way to Long Crendon the silencer of Uncle Herbert's car dropped off and relays of men crawled under the car to hold it up while it was nudded back on.

20 May – Rotherfield Greys. For the first time in a village dem. we brought a full men's morris side. It was Uncle Herbert, Geoffrey, Ethers, Humphrey Clarke, Batch and F.T.

During the summer Marjorie Barnett left to go to the States. Her place was taken by Clare Newhouse, already a friend and acquaintance of many of the group. She had

been one of the members of the Winchester School that Easter.

15 October – Return to Oxford. A note from Geoffrey saying that the Vice-Chancellor had refused to sanction the Club (i.e. OUMM). Fortunately when I called on him after dinner, things were not so bad as they sounded. In his zeal Geoffrey wrote, before he had an answer from Chaundy, a very nice letter indeed to the V.C., and happened upon not Wells, but Pember newly elect, who thinks folk-dancing rot. On receipt of the refusal, Geoffrey interviewed Chaundy, who said that he need not have written to the V.C. himself, but that Chaundy would manage it; only we must not call ourselves a Club, as they were trying to reduce the number of Clubs. (The letter from the V.C. to Geoffrey started ‘Dear Mr Morris...’ and ended with a postscript in the V.C.’s handwriting apologizing for his secretary’s mistake.)

17 October. The inaugural meeting was held in the afternoon in my rooms. For tea were present only Geoffrey, Batchelor and Darlow. Later came Uncle Herbert and Hodson. Having decided to call ourselves the Oxford University Men’s Morris, we appointed Uncle Herbert Squire and Geoffrey Treasurer. Morris and Sword practices to be taken by Uncle Herbert; for rooms we can always have Chaundy’s new house. (Initially there looked like being problems over raising a side.) Hodson is practically giving up, being a player of rugger, a runner; an editor of an international magazine and secretary of several political clubs.

19 October. Practice in Chaundy’s new house, Compas, in Iffley Road: Earsdon and some Morris for an hour. We were able to do morris thanks to George Webster. From Carfax on a bus built for 32 and holding 40. At one stage I find myself on the steps clutching a rail with one hand and holding my shoes with the other. Dem. at Eynsham. Side: Uncle Herbert, Geoffrey, Batch, Darlow, Webster, F.T.

21 October. A great acquisition by the name of Bardswell of Lincoln who says is very keen... For sword we did Kirby and are setting up a man’s side which includes young Constable, whom we seem to have ensnared.

22 October – Balliol. We really gave a good show. We came on with Wheatley and did Lads a B., Step Back, Princess Royal (Abingdon) and Flowers. We also did Earsdon which went down very well. Great hopes: a Running Secretary is greatly taken and wants us to give a dem. to his friends to persuade them to do morris as training for running. (Nothing came of this.)

29 October. Mr Chaundy at the morris class, with a man from Magdalen who plays a violin and likes folk-dance tunes who played for us. Further discussion on OUMM baldrick on which we are practically agreed. Dark blue with a green stripe.

Practices during the term covered dances such as Leap Frog and Trunkles (Bled), Shepherd’s Hey (Field), Swaggering Boney, Maid of the Mill (Bamp), Getting Upstairs, Step Back, Trunkles (Head), Blue-eyed Stranger, I’ll Go and Enlist, William and Nancy, Bobby and Joan, Double Set-Back.

25 November. A really good practice; no less than seven there. Tea with Batch... a sudden explosion made me look up. Geoffrey had picked up a little pistol and in protest against the ‘dismal noise’ that I was making on the concertina fired it. Unfortunately it contained a blank which

hit Batch in the behind; he behaved with remarkable moderation.

26 November – Dem. at Wythams. Mr Chaundy, Geoffrey, Batch, Darlow and F.T. plus Mrs S. and Sybil L. Blue-Eyed Stranger (encored), Flowers, Glorishears, Step Back, and Green Garters. Very enjoyable with good audience. For the return journey eleven (exclusive of chauffeur) people crammed into the Ffennells’ Daimler.

27 November. Went back to recover my hat, was hospitably entertained by the Ffennells, shown the sights and sent back in the Daimler by myself!

8 December. Emergency practice of Earsdon at Geoffrey’s followed by Morris Meeting. Elected Geoffrey Squire and myself Scribe for next term. Dem. at unspecified place outside Oxford... After restoring the music and the ladies to their various abodes, all the men assembled in Geoffrey’s rooms and drank some excellent beer and ate some excellent eggs and enjoyed themselves until a late hour.

31 December – The All-England Festival at the London Scottish Drill Hall. The Oxford contingent was better pleased with their Playford than with their Morris, but it was the latter which was selected for the Albert Hall Performance next day. Step Back with Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Batchelor, Darlow, Mr Chaundy and Tabor. It looked as if we had been selected for a morris dance simply because there were still few men’s morris sides available.

Charles Bardswell came up in Michaelmas 1926, having had previous contacts with East Surrey, and has given many dates, names and photographs for the next few years.

At the end of the year, Reggie Wylam recalls... “the high light of the year—and still one of the moving events in my life—was Step Back at the Albert Hall, R.V-W. conducting the band and all eyes on OUMM alone, that December.”

1927

Easter – The Cheltenham School. Geoffrey Fiennes has pictures of the expeditions to the Cotswold villages arranged by Kenworthy Schofield. Fieldtown and Franklin; Bledington and Benfield and Joe Hitchman; Longborough and Harry Taylor. Dancers from OUMM were Francis Tabor, Roland Heath, Uncle H., Reggie Wylam, Geoffrey Fiennes.

May Morning. No picture as yet. During the summer there danced Uncle H., Theo Chaundy, Francis Tabor, George Darlow, Geoffrey Fiennes, Gordon Etherington, Reggie Wylam, Charles Bardswell.

June. There is a picture of the Wheatley Processional with Sallies at Yalebury, just before Schools. Uncle H., Batch., George, Charles, Francis.

July – Dem. at Bosham, Sussex. Uncle Herbert, Francis Tabor, George Darlow, Geoffrey Fiennes, Gordon Etherington, Reggie Wylam, Charles Bardswell.

October. Geoffrey Fiennes went to Cuddesdon where he was later joined by Reggie Wylam, and also Aubrey Pike, one of the original members of the CMM.

Henry Trefusis and Andy Constable came up. Reggie Wylam tells how “At Kennington one day I heard a fellow sailor whistle the (Badby) Black Joke:

‘What’s your name, and where did you learn that?’

‘Henry Trefusis and from my mother.’

‘Why aren’t you dancing?’

‘Is there any Morris in Oxford?’ ”

Additional notes for 1927, from Francis Tabor’s diary

1 January. It was the second dance after the initial massed dancing and it was the first Morris of the show. According to my recollection we entered the arena not by coming up through the stairs on the side, but by marching down on to the arena, like visiting teams today. We were announced as ‘Oxford’ and walked to the centre of the arena amid a storm of clapping, much of it deriving simply from partisan support of Oxford. It was such an exhilarating reception that we danced like men possessed and I felt as if on each step I went at least six feet high. Someone was unwell (Thomas or Chaundy). As a substitute two men had been approached, Heath and Philip Terry. They tossed for it and Terry won.

26 January – Abingdon Dem. We danced quite well with some notable exceptions, e.g. Step Back. We at last did Earsdon really well, except that I had a great job to prevent myself from doing the proper steps (practised the previous day). Geoffrey sang the Captain’s song, and well, too. Quite a recognizable imitation of Kennedy I thought. Yet he has never seen Kennedy doing it, but only Mrs Shuldham Shaw imitating him, Geoffrey and I thought it a very enjoyable show, and so, if he would admit it, did Uncle H. Team: Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Batchelor, Darlow, the Junior Proctor, Simey, Tabor.

8 February – Dem., somewhere to the North. Team: Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Batchelor, Simey, Bardswell, Tabor.

15 February – Dem. for City of Oxford School. Not well attended (about sixty) as it had not been well advertised in the school. They did not get really “gripped” until about ten minutes before the end, when we did Swaggering Boney. This with William and Nancy and I’ll Go and Enlist was the chief departure from the usual. Batch sang two songs. Uncle Herbert spoke a little too long. It was consoling to be asked to give another dem. before the whole school and in school hours.

16 February. Practice well-attended, but nearly a quarrel between Geoffrey and myself when we started on Bampton. After a long discussion, we have decided not to attempt to teach it to anyone who is not familiar with it.

Francis comments on this now [1972]:

This was a remarkable occasion and the only one when I had any serious difference with Geoffrey. The discussion took place later in his rooms with Batch, half convulsed with laughter and half dismayed, trying to act as peacemaker. And what was the weighty matter which caused this clash? You will not credit it; but it concerned a single point of technique, the correct manner of executing the Bampton back-step, with special reference to the use of the arm on the opposite side to that of the back foot! In the present permissive days there is no such movement.

The limited scope of the dispute, the irreconcilability of our views and the drastic solution all show that beneath our enjoyment and fun we took our Morris very seriously.

26 February – EFDS Festival at the Town Hall. Earsdon... rather well. I’ll Go and Enlist... better than we have ever done it before.

Practices during the term included London Pride, Old Woman

Tossed Up (Sher), Young Collins, Trunkles (Bled), Leap Frog (Field), Step Back.

17 March. Morris meeting in Bardswell’s rooms. I am elected Squire; Batch Treasurer.

During the term there had been hopes of organizing an OUMM vacation school. This did not materialise and in its place Geoffrey, Batch and Francis attended an EFDS vacation school at Cheltenham: an exhilarating experience.

18 April. Lots of Morris. We learnt a number of new dances some of which we intend to do in the morris villages tomorrow.

19 April. We were picked up by Uncle H. The rendezvous was Stow on the Wold. To find Longborough was comparatively easy; but where were the Schofields? Before we knew it, our car, which was leading, was committed to a lane leading to a steep slope. Having waved the others back, we found a gate into a field with a sharp bank leading to it. Having run up on it we ran back with sufficient force to knock off our rear number plate against the opposite bank. Even when we re-entered Longborough, we took a wrong turn and held a completely misunderstood conversation with a native woman. Having turned once more we were found by scouts from the main party. They conducted us to the road where Mr Harry Taylor was standing. To him we did Young Collins, Swaggering Boney, We Won’t Go Home Till Morning (heel and toe) and Country Gardens (London Pride). Instead of the expected searching comments, all that we were told was that we were good, but that we must stick to it. We had to leave soon to Stow for tea (nineteen of us and a few who had made other arrangements). Thence to Bledington. We danced Trunkles on the road before Joe Hitchman, who wanted us to do Gallant Hussar; but we dared not oblige and had to hurry up to Charles Benfield’s cottage. In front of this, at risk of being run down by cars coming round the corner, we did Glorisher (Leap Frog) and William and Nancy. He played on Miss Avril’s fiddle, but the tunes were recognizable only by their rhythm, and on his own; the strings of this were at wider intervals and the tunes were more intelligible; excellent rhythm. On through the dust to Leafield where we danced to Alec, the younger Franklin. We danced Bobby and Joan and Leap Frog; but most of the time was taken in trying to jog his memory in regard to Shepherd’s Hey (ordinary tune and handclapping), Mrs Casey, and Old Woman Tossed Up in a Blanket, (William and Mary variant tune) with incomplete success. Then we bade farewell amid the cheers of a rather large audience.

21 April – Cheltenham Town Hall Dem. The floor was very slippery at first; but more Vim helped matters, though it made a lot of dust. The morris was Flowers, Step Back, Lads a B., Trunkles (Bled) and Green Garters.

For Earsdon we had the Oxford team, with Schofield in Darlow's place, and did it quite well.

1 May. No dancing, it being a Sunday. Meeting of OUMM for tea in my rooms. Batch, Geoffrey, Ethers, Bardswell, George, Constable. Spent most of the time building castles in the air about a summer morris tour of the Cotswold villages. (This did not materialise).

19 May – City of Oxford School. This time it was during school hours and far more boys were induced to come. We put on Earsdon fourth, as this was what pleased them last time, and sure enough they at once began to be interested, and by half time they were enthusiastic. Ethers sang the Captain's song for Earsdon, while he and Batch each sang a song to let us recover our breath. Otherwise all Morris, with Uncle H. to make two short speeches. Old Woman Tossed Up (Sher), Leap Frog (Bled), Young Collins, The Buffoon, Trunkles (Bled), etc.

25 May – Dem. at Cunnor Place on behalf of Cunnor Village Hall. We danced rather badly, and the audience was not much help, but it was great fun. Lads B., almost the last thing we did aroused the audience at last, and we received an encore for which we did the Buffoon. Other morris included Laudnum Bunches, Leap Frog, Shepherd's Hey (Bamp), Young Collins and Gallant Hussar. Uncle H., Fiennes, Batch, Darlow, Etherington, Tabor.

28 May – North Leigh at the Teddy Hall concert. Wheatley (with sticks), Lads a B., Leap Frog, Young Collins.

2 June. Morris practice. We deciphered Monk's March.

6 June. Whit Monday. At Bampton we found the old team dancing already. Batch did his best to start a fight, by telling a friend in a loud voice that this was the wrong lot. We found Billy Wells' team down another street. They were obviously immature, but they danced wonderfully together for a very new team. Several unfamiliar dances, the most striking being Banbury Bill. Dem. at Youlbury: Wheatley, Lads a B., Trunkles (Bled), Blue-Eyed Stranger, Shepherd's Hey (Bamp), Leap Frog (Field). Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Batchelor, Darlow, Bardswell, Tabor.

14 June – Private Dem. at Wokingham for a friend of Barney's. First show, marred by rain, included Earsdon. The second show, on a lawn was before Girl Guides; we did Kirby badly—and the Guides knew it. Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Batchelor, Etherington, Bardswell, Tabor.

15 June – Dem. at Barton Abbey. Geoffrey was in charge and did all the talking. Fiennes, Batchelor, Darlow, Etherington, Bardswell, Tabor. Charles did the Buffoon never having done it before.

25 June – OUMM business meeting. For next term Uncle H. Squire and Bardswell Treasurer.

Summer 1927. Batchelor, Fiennes, Bardswell and Tabor went first at the end of July for a holiday at Norwich during which they took part in some demonstrations. On 30 July they went on to Buxton for an EFDS school.

Learnt Lads a Bunchum (Sherborne) from Schofield. We discussed the OUMM (with Kennedy) and decided that we should try to establish some formal relations with the branch.

1928

Men who danced during this year were: Charles Bardswell, Francis Tabor, Theo Chaundy, Geoffrey Fiennes, Reggie Wylam, Henry Trefusis, Andy Constable, Aubrey Pike, Herbert Thomas, Gordon Etherington, George Darlow.

January. Thame.

February. Winchester.

March. Witney, Warmington.

May Morning. Pictures show Tom Simey as Fool and William Kimber as musician.

2 May. Keble College.

May. Kirtlington, Cuddesdon.

June. Kimble, Blenheim Festival (Abbots Bromley Horn Dance).

Norfolk Tour and Broads Cruise, Trimmingham, with Geoffrey Fiennes, Francis Tabor, Aubrey Pike, Charles Bardswell, Reggie Wylam, Gordon Etherington.

July. Reading Festival. Laycock Abbey.

October. Balliol.

November. Wheatley.

Additional notes for 1928 from Francis Tabor's diary

25 February. Practice: The Rose and Sherborne Jig.

11 March – OUMM meeting. After electing Charles as Squire and Gordon as Treasurer we discussed May Morning.

7–14 April – EFDS vacation school at Bath. Batchelor, Bardswell, Tabor and Aubrey Pike were present.

Aubrey Pike recalls: "Some time earlier this year I heard Kimber play Getting Upstairs in the version I enclose a score of. . . During the school Ralph Vaughan Williams came to judge a competition for instrumentalists. I played Kimber's titivated version of Getting Upstairs on the English concertina and won first prize. Charles Bardswell was second.

28 April. Morris rehearsal with Kimber.

1 May. The crowds were greater than ever for not only did we have to struggle violently to get inside the arena at Carfax but even at the Martyrs' Memorial we had to push our way through. As we had Aubrey and Reggie on concertinas and once Geoff on the accordion, we were able to go beyond Headington and did also William and Nancy, Highland Mary, Lads a Bunchum (Sher), The Buffoon, Bobby and Joan, Fieldtown Leap Frog, Young Collins and Green Garters. An innovation of a different kind was Winlaton which we did rather well. We went off to Green Garters from Broad Street, and rounding the corner ran into a motor-cycle. Legend says that Charles capered over its front wheel; It certainly went between him and the rest of us. Kimber did his jig twice. Tom Simey made an excellent fool. Unfortunately the Cuddesdon men had to go back before breakfast at the Chaundy's which was great fun. Fiennes, Batchelor, Darlow, Etherington, Constable, Trefusis, Pike, Chaundy, Tabor.

10 May. Dem. at Kirtlington of Flamborough, to encourage the local team for the Blenheim festival. We stopped on the way and walked it through in a field, quite well. But the actual dem. was less good; in fact the Kirtlington men who did theirs afterwards were very little worse. Mr Thomas, Etherington, Bardswell, Trefusis, Randall, Finch, Morley, Tabor.

Practices during the term: dances learnt included Sherborne Princess Royal (from the Journal), Brackley Lads a Bunchum, Month of May, Heel and Toe.

26 May – *Cuddesdon*. Hard work on soft lawn. About half way through the bowdlerized version of the Ampleforth Play (we had to omit the burial service) it came on to rain, so we cut most of the rest of the programme. The play was very good with a clown who has been on the stage. Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Batchelor, Pike, Bardswell, Trefusis, Tabor and various Cuddesdon men.

28 May – *Whit Monday*. Kenneth Constable has a full account of the two sides in *EFDS News* Vol 2 113–5.

2 June – *Demonstration in Keble Garden*. Mr Thomas, Mr Chaundy, Fiennes, Batchelor, Etherington, Bardswell, Constable, Pike, Trefusis, Finch, Morley, Tabor. Kay Barmby has kindly given a fine group photo of this occasion with everyone named. The ladies were Sybil Lightfoot, Margaret Grant, Rosalie Colegrove, Sybil Smith, Betty Hughes, Mrs Soddy, Mary Bateman, Clare Newhouse, Mrs Turner, Kay Barmby.

16 June – *Blenheim Festival*. Dancing the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance.

21 June – *Dem. at Priory Park Malvern*. Mr Thomas, Fiennes, Batchelor, Etherington, Bardswell, Tabor.

23–30 June – *The Broads Holiday, organized by Batch*. It included a dem. at Trimmingham House. Fiennes, Etherington, Batchelor, Bardswell, Pike and Tabor. The programme included The Gallant Hussar.

5 July – *Dem. at Bosham*. Batch, Gordon, Charles, Aubrey, J. Bell (EFDS), Tabor.

7 July – *Lacock Abbey*. Mr Thomas, Batchelor, Etherington, Bardswell, Tabor. A reconstructed programme, due to (a) the absence of a sixth man, and (b) Francis' foot having encountered the near rear solid wheel of Charles' Trojan.

The Reading Festival. Julian Pilling reports a childhood memory. "There was a team of men there—they were big men and banged sticks in a ferocious sort of way that frightened me, it was certainly serious stuff. Perhaps that is why I took up Morris later—facing up to childhood fears... so the link with the OUMM may go back further than I really care to think (and it's their fault)." (Unfortunately it is not clear yet whether there was in fact a full OUMM side at Reading in 1928.)

1929

8 January – *Albert Hall Festival*.

February. Wantage, Steeple Aston.

May Morning. Theo Chaundy, Geoffrey Fiennes, Andy Constable, Francis Tabor, Gordon Etherington, Charles Bardswell, Henry Trefusis.

July. The Cornwall Tour, organised by Henry Trefusis and based on Trefusis, Falmouth. Henry, Trefusis,

Charles Bardswell, Herbert Thomas, Gordon Etherington, Reggie Wylam, Francis Tabor, Bill Picton.

Places danced at were Penzance, St Ives, Falmouth, Torquay, St Austell, Launceston.

It was organised as a farewell, almost 'posthumous', occasion, as most of the side had gone down, and also as publicity for the local Cornish EFDS. It seems to have been thoroughly enjoyable and successful—though 'it had no effect on the Cornish EFDS'.

Additional notes for 1929 from Francis Tabor's diary

8 January – *Albert Hall Festival*. Laudnum Bunches by Oxford. Men included Batch, Charles, Henry, Francis, and Randall.

28 April – *OUMM meeting*. Lots of business done, chiefly arrangements for May morning. The Cornish tour is definitely to come off.

29 April – *OUMM rehearsal*. A lot of work done. Then we went to the Oxford Mail offices and viewed the chief reporter and a young lady. We have decided to experiment with the Plain and the Radcliffe as our first tour stations, to oblige the police.

1 May. Gordon had brilliantly manufactured a poster overnight giving a list of the places where we were to dance and wore it round his neck before we began. Despite this many people went to the old places. It was a glorious morning; the sun rose as a red ball, the singing was clear and we were not too cold. We gave the Headington men one out of five dances at each place. Our new places were Cowley Place (The Plain) and between the Radcliffe and All Souls. The people who went to the old places congregated in the Broad and waited there three quarters of an hour for us. There, we had our best audiences and did our only new features: The Gallant Hussar and Geoff's Nutting Girl. Fiennes, Batchelor (now Wylam), Etherington, Bardswell, A. Constable, Trefusis, Finch, Picton, Morley, Tabor, Chaundy. Batch, having an injured knee, played more than he danced. Breakfast at Chaundy's. The *Oxford Mail* wrote mostly about the Headington men.

Reggie Wylam adds: "I think this must have been the year when another Cuddesdonian Walter Meyjes, ex-Cambridge Festival Theatre, fooled to such effect that our dancing just collapsed more than once."

16 May – *Dem. at East Hanney*. A lovely evening and a most enjoyable dem., which took place in a c.d.p. in the village hall. Mr Thomas, Etherington, Trefusis, Finch, Picton, Tabor.

18 May. Francis notes going to a dem. in Kent at which was Kenneth Constable... with whom I danced I'll Go and Enlist very vigorously.

20 May – *Whit Monday, Bampton*. Really hot. A lot of people there. Johnny's Late Home was new to me... but Maud Karpeles says it is not a new one.

22 May – *Teddy Hall concert*. Mr Thomas, Etherington, Bardswell, Mr Chaundy, Picton, Tabor.

8 June – *Misbury near Brackley*. A fête in a lovely garden, very well kept and large. Mr Thomas, Bardswell, Picton, Finch, J. Morley, Tabor.

15 June. The Festival of the Oxford and County Branch at Blenheim Palace, with 1500 dancers and 3–4000 spectators. The *EFDS News* notes that “the Bampton men complete with fiddlers, fools and flowers round their bowler hats gave a solo display” and that “fellows of colleges ambled about in cocked hats and ribbons”... while “one of them (who was probably the Senior Proctor) had a large scaly dragon.”

Additional notes: The Cornwall Tour 1929, from Francis Tabor’s diary

3 July. Met Picton on Truro platform. When we got to Trefusis the rest were already there.

4 July. By motor to Marazion, where a motor-boat took us to The Mount. Miss St Aubyn presided over lunch, lent us two cars and accompanied us to St Ives and Trevethoe. The first dem. was in a school at St Ives; on a steep slope, but fun and good dancing though disturbed by low-flying aircraft. The second was on the Island, a piece of tufty grass not so pleasant, but a large audience, and collection £1.5.4½. Tea at the Tregenna Castle Hotel. Next on the Malakoff; good show, abruptly curtailed by heavy shower; collection £1.13.0. We then filled up time by a drive round Trea Crom; and so to a c.d.p. at Trevethoe, where we gave three shows. Good but exhausting. Supper and bed at the Mount.

5 July. The really energetic day. St Erbyn’s preparatory school, Penzance County School and a girls’ school before lunch, which we had at the Queen’s Hotel on the front. Then we drove to Newlyn, Mousehole and Paul and searched Penzance for St Clare’s school where the Elizabethan fete was on. In this we gave two shows (one including unrehearsed country with Penzance women) and had tea; we also watched some maypole dancing. By now we were distinctly tired and tempers were wearing a little. So we went and paddled at Marazion to ease our feet. Then we walked up to the Rookery and rehearsed Winlaton. The fifth and last dem. was on the sea-front. There was a large and appreciative audience; Uncle was in great form, and we caught the infection from him. With this and the sea air we gave, contrary to our expectations, far the best show of the day. It was in four portions, with country by Penzance people in between, and included all four of our Bledington dances. We were interrupted by a shower, while the Mayor made a happy speech to which Uncle replied even more happily. Back to the Mount and supper c. 10.30. Estimated 40 dances.

6 July. Before leaving the Mount, Bill Picton and I explored the dungeon and topmost tower. Then we scrambled round the sides and over the gates into the flower-gardens. Meanwhile our bags had been packed, leaving out my baldrick. After a few dances on the battlements, partly for rehearsal and partly for the staff, we said goodbye to Miss St Aubyn and had a pleasant drive back to Truro. A short dem. in the afternoon, for which I wore a red baldrick of Henry’s. We had to wait while three bands went through Labours of Love, one after the other. Then we did four morris for which Miss Keene played and two country for which the Truro band played. Tea at Trefusis where we ate Henry’s birthday cake. The other dem. was in Falmouth. We dismounted in The Moor and started dancing Wheatley through the streets. After a

while we crowded into the car and proceeded to the gardens with Henry hanging on with one hand and advertising us through a megaphone in the other. The actual show, which came in the two intervals during a c.d.p. was rather sad.

7 July. Sunday.

8 July. The morning off. So, while Uncle and Charles played deck quoits, the rest of us went down to the harbour. Gordon and I were landed at Falmouth and went shopping, frequently losing each other. Dancing at Newquay. A lovely drive, as it was a beautiful day. The show before tea was in the boys’ school and was very well received. We rode into the town and back before tea. The other show was in the grounds of a girls’ school, in intervals of a c.d.p. The orchestra, which was unaccustomed, was simply terrible, and we had to ask then to stop and to take Miss Coife and her violin only. The ground sloped, and the sun shone in our eyes. Still the crowd was quite appreciative. After dinner at Falmouth, while the Colonel and Uncle and Picton and I, supported by Charles, did cross-word puzzles. The others went for a moon light sail. About 11.30 we went down the quay, with a lamp, through the haunted wood, to look for them. All we saw was a lovely night and the harbour lights reflected in long streaks on the water. The sailors eventually returned at about 3.00.

9 July. The morning passed in deck quoits and clock golf. Dems at St Austell. The first at the County School where we arrived late owing to a misunderstanding. The ground sloped and the audience was not very much moved. At least there was a fine view. Tea with Mrs Treffry, on whose tennis-courts we danced afterwards. A good show. On the way back we passed cars going from Land’s End to John O’Groats. In the evening we started a ping pong tournament.

10 July. Private dem. in the morning to the Trefusis household. Then off to Launceston. We lunched on the road between Brighton and St Colomb, Reggie and Gordon arriving 20 minutes late for it. Then a lovely drive to Bodmin and over the moor. We arrived hot and tired and not anxious to dance; but on reaching the Square for the show we found ourselves encircled by a large crowd, and gave a snappy and enjoyable performance. We then dispersed to our various hosts. In the evening a c.d.p. in the Town Hall. We gave 3 small dems in the course of it, including Step Back, in hard shoes on a slippery floor, and Winlaton. There was a very efficient and spirited band (piano, clarinet, cornet, drums and cymbals) for the c.d.p. and we danced a great deal in the party.

11 July. We assembled on the Tamar bridge and bade farewell. I came back in Uncle’s car with Charles.

Our team has been: Mr Thomas Batchelor, Etherington, Bardswell, Trefusis, Picton and self. Miss Keene played until Saturday and was very good. Miss Coife has played (violin) ever since and after a shaky start is getting quite good.

There was a brief reference to the Tour in the *EFDS News* September 1929, over the initials ARBW. “. . . a strenuous but wholly delightful week in a tour to arouse enthusiasm for Morris dancing. . . The possibilities of an OUMM tour have been discussed for three years at least, but I doubt if any of us guessed how delightful this would prove thanks, not least, to

the weather.”

October 1929. Charles Bardswell, Henry Trefusis and Reggie Wylam went on an EFDS tour of America. (*EFDS News* Jan 1930)

1930–1932

1930 and 1931

In 1930 Charles Bardswell refers to a show at the Albert Hall on 4th January. Apart from this the only references to the Morris in these two years are to May Morning. This had been becoming a moment of reunion for those who had gone down and by this time it very clearly had that character.

In 1930 Charles Bardswell gives the list for May Morning as: Reggie Wylam, Gordon Etherington, Aubrey Pike, Geoffrey Fiennes, Francis Tabor, Charles Bardswell, Andy Constable, George Darlow, Henry Trefusis, Theo Chaundy, Tom Simey (Fool). Kimber played. Francis Tabor adds the name Finch.

In 1931 Charles Bardswell's list is Reggie Wylam, Charles Bardswell, Henry Trefusis, Geoffrey Fiennes, Francis Tabor, Andy Constable, Bill Picton. Kimber played. Francis Tabor adds the name Allen.

During the summer there was another Broads Cruise.

Additional note: 1930

In some curious (and unexplained) way there survived into the current OUMM archives a fragment from 1930. It is a 6 by 4 piece of paper perforated down one side that says:

English Folk Dance Society (Oxford) The Oxford Musical Festival of 1930 under the direction of Sir Hugh Allen will take place early in May and this Society has been invited by the committee to provide an afternoon entertainment of Folk Dance in New College garden on Saturday, May 10th. A programme has been composed, and about 80 dancers will be required to carry it out. It is hoped that you will be able to take part in this performance, and you are requested to fill up the accompanying form and return it before December 4th at latest to: Mrs Taylor, 11 St Michael's Street.

On the back in pencil is the following: 1) D.N.K. Heffer 2) Batch Gordon 3) Headington Headington 4) Henry Mills 5) Charles Finch 6) Headington Chaundy 7) Morley Picton 8) H.J.T. Constable.

7 June – *Whit Saturday, The Opening of Cecil Sharp House*. After the opening speeches there was a short programme of dances, in which the only teams were Headquarters, Oxford and Cambridge. Cambridge did Fieldtown Step Back and Oxford did Bledington Leap Frog. The team was a scratch one composed of Roland Heath, Philip Terry, Uncle Herbert, Henry Trefusis, Charles Bardswell and Geoffrey Fiennes. Geoffrey has kindly given the archives a copy of the programme for this event.

During the summer Clare Newhouse left as Branch Teacher after four years work in Oxford. Kathleen Church Bliss succeeded her from 1930–1934.

Additional note: 1931

The EFDS Branch Minute Book is still extant for the years 1930–1936 and was kindly made available by Peter Lund. References to Morris are few and centre round May Morning.

25 February. The committee meeting discussed the arrangements for the coming May Morning. Clearly deep feelings were involved and in fact at one stage the secretary writes “The argument at this point tended to degenerate into an unseemly wrangle, but order was restored by the Chairman (Mr Chaundy) and the matter was temporarily shelved.” The issue was whether the OUMM should regard themselves as responsible for the May Morning Morris or whether the dancing should be arranged through the Committee. The Secretary added a note: “The discussion was continued in private and an agreement reached whereby Mr Picton should write round to past and present members of the OUMM not mentioning any particular body, and invite them to dance on May Morning, but this was not to be taken as establishing a monopoly or in any way prejudicing further consideration on the subject.”

6 June – *The Blenheim Festival*. The *EFDS Magazine* noted that “Headington turned out a very smart brisk team. Both Bampton teams danced with their customary nonchalance and matter of factness.” I am grateful to Walter Abson for the following letter about this event.

My dear Roy, You may like to have this short record of what was, to me, a notable participation in the Oxford Folk Dance activities of long ago. On 6th June 1931 I was a member of the team sent by the Cambridge Branch to the Oxford F.D. Festival at Blenheim Palace. After an agonizing journey, the details of which fortunately do not concern your purpose, we performed some simple Morris including Tideswell (mono- or bi-sexual? I can't remember) under the normal conditions of cold and damp which prevail on these occasions. Most of the activity was Country, and I don't think that an Oxford Morris side took part—but I may be wrong about that. The day's events came to a fitting conclusion immediately after I sank into bed back in Cambridge, when at 1.30 a.m. on the Sunday morning there was a sizeable earthquake. The wall of Jesus College (the Cambridge one) was partly shaken to the ground, and as far away as at Madame Tussaud's the head of Crippen the murderer was split in twain. Yours ever, Walter.

1932

In this year 1st May fell on a Sunday and there was no May Morning activity.

I have no other information at all about 1932 and it seems to form a divide from the years which follow.

1933–1938

For this period I have had very helpful correspondence with Terence Barkworth, Rupert Bruce-Mitford, John Davison and John Stainer.

John Davison says (c. 1933) “We were not able to put a university team in the street at that time and were glad to have the help of some city stalwarts.” (One of these was Percy Mills.)

Terence Barkworth (1934–7): “There was no University Morris as such as far as I know, but Morris was danced, and members of the university took part.”

John Stainer (1934–8): “I don’t remember us ever being organised as Morris Men on our own; it was always as part of the Folk Dance Society, which was drawn from both Town and Gown.” He recalls: “One of my first memories is of going with the Oxford team to the Inter-county Festival at the Albert Hall on the Friday and Saturday of New Year’s Eve 1934. We had old Kimber playing his concertina for us. We danced one country dance and one Headington Morris dance, but which one I can’t remember for certain. It must have been an easy one or I wouldn’t have been in it.”

Instruction for the Morris was by Miss Sinclair and Miss Barmby at 110 High Street.

The main Morris event of the year, and perhaps in some years the only public one, was May Morning. From his time John Davison mentions “our remarkable clown, Harry Beard. It was a break away from ‘period’ comedy to something that could hold its own on TV today, a novelty in the Thirties and a contribution to the tradition. Harry kept the crowd moving with us in large numbers.”

Dancing took place at four localities: The Plain; then at Radcliffe Square; then in the Broad; and finally at the Martyrs’ Memorial. John Stainer says: “I wish I could remember the name of the character, who led us round the corner from the Memorial one time in a final processional dance, unexpectedly met a motor-cycle and flew over him in a spectacular caper!”¹ Afterwards we retired, according to our usual practice to have breakfast at a restaurant, I cannot remember its name, which was right alongside Vincent’s Club.”

In 1937 Terence Barkworth recalls dancing Lads a Bunchum and How do you do Sir at the Town Hall as part of a broadcast on Midland-Regional. This was one of a series during which Billy Wells broadcast on the Whit-Monday. He also remembers displays at the Girls High School at the top of Headington Hill, at a Hall in Cheltenham, a school in Loughton, and possibly at Capt. Kettlewell’s place at Burford.

John Stainer says: “One man who was keen on the dancing was Fisher, the historian, and it was through him that we often got the Warden’s Gardens at New

College for Folk Dance parties and festivals. I think it was there that I remember taking part in a massed demonstration of Bacca-pipes Jig; and also How do you do Sir. These festivals, were not for Morris only; we also did a lot of country and sword dancing.”

He goes on: “I do have memories of bicycling out with Terence Barkworth and Bill Barrett and others to watch the traditional Morris at Bampton on Whit-Monday. They used to dance from pub to pub during the morning—I was told there were sixteen, which I find hard to believe—taking suitable refreshments between dances, and getting more and more inspired as the morning ‘rolled’ on. Then, they would stop for lunch; and in the afternoon start again on the lawns of one of the bigger homes. There I remember a remarkable jig, danced by a former member of the team, who was then in his late eighties, one of the finest performances I have ever seen.

Additional note: 1933

The May Morning compromise of 1931 would seem to have been satisfactory. At the meeting of 26 January 1933 Mr Allen was asked to be responsible with Mr Ball (these two being the current undergraduate members of the Branch committee).

The Committee meeting of 16 March 1933 has an interesting, and puzzling, reference. “It was decided to ask the British Workman Morris dancers to cooperate with the OUMM on May Morning as Mr Mills reported that he had been approached on the subject by Mr Bone, the leader of the British Workmen. It was also decided that a collection should be taken, the proceeds to be divided between the EFDS Oxford and the British Workmen.”

I suspect that the British Workmen may be no puzzle to some readers, and I would welcome enlightenment. In passing I found in the *Headington Parish Magazine* for 1885 (p. 192) a reference to the fourth anniversary of the British Workman. . . “an institution which supplies the parish with wholesome literature, amusement and refreshment.” (City Library)

The *Oxford Mail* 1 May 1933. This year two teams of Morris dancers took the dancing in turns, to the music of a fiddle and an accordion. In Radcliffe Square they were attended by a film camera which took photographs over the heads of the large crowd. With jingling bells and tapping sticks many of the traditional tunes were danced to, some of them having originated from Oxfordshire and district. A fool complete with red nose, yellow breeches and pointed cap attended them, belabouring the dancers with a bladder, joking with the crowd and two tolerant policemen and wandering about with knitting in hand. What was probably an unrehearsed effect took place in Radcliffe Square, when he opened a beer bottle to refresh himself and the teams. The beer had caught the May Morning feeling, or perhaps he had danced with it too long, and it gave a good imitation, of a fountain. When the crowds permitted them the Morris dancers danced through the streets to the music of an accordion and after

¹Francis Tabor’s account under ‘Additional notes for 1928’ suggests this happened to Charles Bardswell some years earlier!
IWH

dancing at Broad Street and the Martyrs' Memorial must have felt that May Morning was an energetic, affair.

At the Branch Committee meeting of 12 June 1933 the Secretary "reported that no collection had been taken on May Morning". Allen and Bell both went down in 1933, and R. I. Davison took their place on the Branch Committee "to represent the undergraduates".

Additional notes: 1934

25 January – Branch Committee minutes. "Mr Davison undertook to make arrangements for the May Morning Morris dancing." This now seems quite customary and accepted. The newspaper reports reflect the situation. The *Oxford Mail* for 1 May has a picture, described as being of the "Oxford University Morris Section of the Oxford Branch of the English Folk Dance Society". The *Oxford Times* for 4 May refers to "The University Morris side of the Oxford Branch of the English Folk Dance and Song Society danced the Morris to the strains of a fiddle in Cowley Place, by the Radcliffe Camera, outside Balliol and at the Martyrs' Memorial. Blue eyed Stranger and Constant Billy (an Adderbury dance) were among the Morris measures. Others were Flowers of Edinburgh and Lads a Bunchum."

Bill Barrett, who was up from 1933–7, writes of this: "The OUMM certainly did not exist in Oxford at that time—there were not enough of us—but it did reconstitute itself informally in preparation for May Morning, when we would meet a number of times in one of Taphouse's music practice rooms. I don't think there was any close link with the past but we did invite members who had left Oxford to return for the occasion, which they tended to dominate." (I must include this also from Bill Barrett: "A personal recollection not relevant to your records. Though I danced the Morris at Cecil Sharp House before I went to Oxford, I first played the pipe and tabor on a pipe of composite construction—bamboo and bicycle pump—made by Kathleen Barmby.")

Founder-member of the Ring

One fascinating point about this period is that it was then that the OUMM, became a founder-member of the Ring.

The way in which, this happened is a trifle obscure since, after *c.* 1932, although the Morris and May Morning continued and University men took part, yet the consciousness of the OUMM as a corporate entity in its own right faded into some subliminal region. Presumably one may take it as a just tribute to the reputation of Oxford Morris that in Cambridge the OUMM was still considered to be functioning as a Club.

After a meeting of the CMM on 2 November 1933 Joseph Needham wrote, to the Clubs at Letchworth,

Oxford and Thaxted, sounding their opinion concerning the proposal that an informal federation of Morris' clubs should be, formed to be known as the Morris Ring. The Minute-book of the Ring records that these clubs "replied expressing their keenness for the idea".

At the 10th Annual Feast of CMM on 14th April 1934 Joseph Needham declared the Ring instituted, the six foundation Clubs being Cambridge, Oxford, Letchworth, Thaxted, East Surrey, and Greensleeves.

On 2 June 1934 in the front room of Mrs. King's in New Biggin Street Thaxted, representatives of Cambridge, Letchworth, Thaxted, East Surrey and Greensleeves approved a draft constitution.

On 20 October 1934 at Cecil Sharp House the inaugural meeting of the Ring was held. It was attended by 60–70 men, and Oxford was represented; it is not known by whom.

Ewart Russell was most helpful in hunting out the relevant letters from this time in the Ring records. These extracts should be read in the context of the events outlined in the previous passage.

6 January. R. I. Davison replying to Joseph Needham's initial letter sounding out opinion on an informal federation. "May I add that I am in entire agreement with everything you said in your letter and hope it will do much to revive what is in Oxford at least a waning cause."

End of April. Reply by R. I. D. to Needham. "I agree with everything you say, though I doubt whether we can be represented at Thaxted for drafting the constitution. As for the inaugural meeting, I hope it will be arranged before the beginning of term. I would favour a Saturday late in September. I cannot consult other O.M.M. before term begins, but myself concur fully in the appointment of Hunter and Abson. I will answer the question of representation on the drafting committee after our own gathering on May morning. If any C.M.M. would care to come over on Monday night for our celebration on Tuesday (May 1st) they are welcome."

27 May. R. I. D. to Walter Abson. "Unfortunately no one from Oxford will be at Thaxted on June 2nd, but all are agreed on the suggested constitution, so please count the Oxford vote in favour of it."

John Davison (i.e. R. I. D.) is much to be appreciated and thanked by all OUMM for his levelheadedness in this rather odd situation.

Additional note: 1935

4 March. Branch Committee meeting; (no undergraduates present). It was asked if any arrangements had been made for dancing on May Morning. "It was decided to authorise the OUMM to dance, and to ask them to collect for the International Festival Fund." Francis Tabor's diary noted Davison as the organiser on the day, and also mentioned as present: Barrett,

Mitford, Mills, Holroyd, Stainer, Barkworth, Cardew. The EFDSS Secretary's report for the year later said "The May Morning Morris dancing took place amidst the usual crowds and this year a collection was made for the International Folk Dance Festival."

Additional note: 1936

26 March. Branch Committee meeting. "It was suggested that a collection might be made on May Morning for branch funds but when discussion showed that some members had some very strong feelings against it the matter was dropped."

1938–1947

A letter from Len Bardwell to Theo Chaundy of 27 February 1952 gives a clear summary. He writes:

I've got the history of the May Morning dancing pretty clear in my mind now:

1. University groups kept it going from 1923 to 1937. A University group was a founder member of the Ring (1934) but by 1937 University dancing seems to have foundered and there was no May Morning dancing in 1938.
2. The Oxford Morris Men were formed in 1938 and accepted by the Ring in 1939. They seem to have been entirely responsible for the May Morning dancing from 1939 until 1948 when the Cecil Sharp Club dancers came in although it wasn't till 1951 that their Ring Club was formally "revived". I can't find any evidence of Oxford University Morris between 1938 and 1948. The Oxford Morris Men had the help of some war-time immigrants for several years (Arthur Peck and Frank Hollins).

John White has lent me a letter from Arthur Peck which gives some detail about this. I especially like this: "One feat I am proud of. You can find out what year it was from the perpetual calendar: it was the year when May 1st fell on a Saturday, 1943, 44 or 45. In the early morning I danced with the Oxford men, and later in the day with the Cambridge men. It so happened that our annual feast was held a week later than usual that year, and this made it possible."

In 1946 the Oxford Morris Men were reorganised: the first Feast was held in April 1947, and Percy Stuart Mills, who had kept the group together over a long and difficult period was elected Squire.

Additional note: 1938

Len Bardwell's summary which is given above is admirable. One extra fact is necessary; i.e. the absence of May Morning dancing in 1938 was presumably at least partly due to the fact that it was a Sunday, and precedent (from 1932) indicated no dancing. The break, like that of 1932, seems to form a divide. The idea of OUMM or undergraduate organisation seems

to have gone. Coincidentally the Oxford Morris, with their roots in the Branch (!) were active.

18 January 1939. A letter from Douglas Kennedy to Walter Abson: "I have just come back from a very successful men's weekend in Birmingham. The Oxford club was present and I am glad to say that they have determined to seek admission to the Ring at the meeting in March."

Additional note: 1941

(From *EFDS Magazine*) May Morning... "The bells of the Morris dancers coming from the direction of the Plain, where to the accompaniment of concertina, recorder, accordion and drum, the men are entertaining the crowd with Laudnum Bunches, Blue-eyed Stranger, Constant Billy and the like. Kimber is there too so the party is complete... Off to the next place, Radcliffe Square... awful cobbles to dance on, but never mind... Then the Broad. There is an air raid shelter on the usual pitch, not to mention a water tank; it means dancing on more cobbles but no one is in the least dismayed. And so on to St Giles, where after the last dance has been done farewells are said the dancers and musicians speed off to their breakfasts and their work. K.B."

Additional note: 1942

"As 5 am by the sun is now 7 am it was necessary to cut it short to allow dancers to get to work. Only two pitches, the Plain and Radcliffe Square, were used instead of the usual four. Miss Avril came to play and this was much appreciated."

Additional note: 1943

"The May Morning Morris dancing accompanied by Miss Avril took place as usual on a lovely sunny day among large crowds."

Additional note: 1945

Len Bardwell retired and moved to Abbey Timbers. He wrote to Douglas Kennedy (3 February 1946) about his renewal of acquaintance with Ron Ludman (in Oxford since 1937) and about the situation in Oxford: "I gathered that the Oxford men have in fact kept together as a group within the City Club. They have kept up the May Day dancing. They haven't apparently had much support from University people though they now expect to get a couple of undergraduate beginners."

1947–1951

Tony Edwards did all the hard work on this section. He was in fact responsible for the creation of the

OUMM log and himself researched for and/or wrote up the whole period from 1947–1960.

1947

13 January 1947. Len Bardwell reported that membership of O.M.M. was seventeen including seven undergraduates.

University Morris restarted after the war when the Cecil Sharp (C♯) Club was resurrected by Tom Fletcher.

Michaelmas Term. Meetings of the C♯ Club were held on Saturday afternoons in St Michael's Hall. The first three-quarters of an hour of these was used for Morris instruction by William Kimber.

1948

Hilary Term. Practices continued on Tuesday evenings, 5.30–7 p.m. at St Andrew's School, Headington, arranged by Miss Stace and taken by William Kimber—Sergeant Major methods!

27 February. C♯ Open Meeting in the Arlosh Hall, Manchester College. Demonstration by the Oxford Morris Men: How d'you do Sir!, Trunkles (Bled) and Constant Billy.

12 March. C♯ End of Term Fancy Dress Ball in the Arlosh Hall. Two Morris sides from the Club danced in the interval: Bean Setting, Shepherd's Hey (jig) and Rigs of Marlow.

19 April. Oxford Morris Men's Feast in the Forum at 7.30 p.m. The C♯ Club was represented by Dr Chaundy, David and Chris Chaundy, Dick Wilson and Geoffrey Wilson, Michael Baatz and Tom Fletcher. Arthur Peck, the Squire of the Ring was present and remembered visiting the O.U. Folk Dance Club with the Cambridge "Round" in 1939.

May Morning. Morris dancing in Cowley Place and Radcliffe Square, linked by the Helston Furry Dance danced by members of the C♯ Club led by the Headington Silver Prize Band. Two sides from the C♯ Club took part, including Peter Hedger, David Welti, G. A. Freeman, Ken Gibbons, Tom Fletcher and Eric Morgan. The last two named were part of "the St Cath's side". The men wore blue and green baldricks that had been made by Miss Stace. The men danced Bean Setting and Rigs of Marlow. John Jackson was termed "our Odd job man or 'Bagman' ". Peter Lund was the hobby horse.

Whit Monday – Trip to Bampton. In the evening a visit was made to the Cumnor Country Dance, where the Club danced Bean Setting and Charlie Jones (H.Q.M.M.) danced some jigs.

Michaelmas Term. Morris and Sword practices were held on Tuesday evenings at 8.15 p.m. in Bedford House, Somerville. These proved a comparative failure and the President of the C♯ Club himself invited selected dancers to practices on Thursdays, 5–6 p.m.

3 December. Christmas meeting of the C♯ Club. Demonstration by the Oxford Morris Men. Five of the Club performed rapper and David Chaundy, David Welti and Dick Wilson, accompanied by Elizabeth Wilson performed Greensleeves.

1949

Hilary Term. During the term David Welti consulted with the O.M.M. with a view to making arrangements for May Morning.

February. Dick Wilson and Peter Lund appeared as fools in the Opera Club's production of "Much Ado About Nothing" at the Town Hall.

May Morning. The following dances were done by the Club: Constant Billy, Twenty-ninth of May, Bean-Setting and Rigs o' Marlow.

Michaelmas Term. The next stage in the development of the University Morris was the attainment by the Morris Men of independence from the C♯ Club in general. The first move was made by David Welti who proposed in committee that the Club should be split into self-supporting groups for the various separate activities, including Morris dancing. This was effected towards the end of the term.

26 November. The Headington Quarry M.M. held a Jubilee Commemoration Meeting at the Quarry to mark the meeting between Cecil Sharp and William Kimber on Boxing Day 1899. Dancing took place all day, the celebrations starting at Sandfield Cottage, London Road, where Sharp had stayed. Many Morris clubs were represented and visitors included the Squire and Bagman of the Ring. The University men attended for the afternoon only.

1950

Hilary Term. Mr. Mills of the O.M.M. offered to take Morris practices for the University. Regular meetings, including elementary classes took place.

Trinity Term. The elementary practices were held on Tuesdays, 5.0 p.m.

May Morning. Procession to Radcliffe Square, where the Club's Morris Men danced with the O.M.M.

Michaelmas Term. David Welti assumed responsibility for Morris dancing and practices were held both for advanced dancers and beginners. This became the normal arrangement for University Morris.

1951

Hilary Term. The final step in the attainment of independence by the Morris Men occurred when David Welti asked the C♯ Club committee to grant the Men the responsibility for their own affairs. Peter Lund proposed, Gerry McCrum seconded and the committee passed 'nem con' the proposal "This committee approves of the Morris group's wish to appoint

a Squire and Bagman; the President shall have the power to co-op the Squire onto the committee if he thinks necessary.”

Trinity Term. The status of the Morris Men was included in the Clubs constitution when Colin Whitehead proposed, Gerry McCrum seconded and the committee passed ‘nem con’ the proposal “There shall be a sub-section of the Club known as the Oxford University Morris Men. Its members need not be full members of the Cecil Sharp Club.”

1951–1970

In 1951 the OUMM achieved independence as a separate entity, and it may be noted here, that when, as one of their first actions, the OUMM applied for membership of the Ring, they discovered somewhat to their surprise that as “spiritual heirs” of the pre-war side, they were in fact “founder members”.

At this point the first logbook begins. This, characteristically enough, is not complete yet (writing in Feb 1970), lacking as it does an account of one of the first tours. It has been a moot point for many years as to whether this gap might be preserved for posterity as one area that should remain for ever completely legendary. However apart from this the first logbook is complete, or potentially so, up to 1956. This, the completed part that is, is the work of Tony Edwards, as is the Second Logbook of the OUMM which runs from 1956–1960. After 1960 a curious situation developed in which the one certainty is that there is no actual extant logbook although there are a considerable number of logkeepers with greater or lesser heaps of material and with a greater or lesser commitment to writing up their particular bits. There is some hope that with the seventies a new logbook may be started, and that eventually the gap that is now the sixties may be filled by directed reminiscence.

From 1955 the Tours of the Ancient Men (i.e. the OUMM on tour), have been recorded in separate logbooks. Four of these logs are missing, but the rest are safely extant.

It is impossible to sum up the mass of material that is contained in these actual or potential logbooks, but it would seem worthwhile to give as a kind of semi-factual Appendix to this work lists of the Officers of the Club and of the Tours that have taken place. I emphasise “semi-factual” because the mists of time have crept over some of the details.

Appendix A

OFFICERS OF THE OUMM FROM 1971

Year	Squire	Bagman	Logkeeper	Sword bearer
1951	David Welti	John Nourse		
Oct				
1951	John Nourse	John Hawkins		
1952		Peter Lund		
1953	Colin Whitehead			
1954		Ian Stewart		
1955	Alec Hamilton	David Rendell		
1956	Tony Edwards			
1957		Keith Denerley		
1958	Fred Pargeter	Mike Page	Tony Edwards	
1959				
Jan				
1960	Peter Kite			
Easter	Peter Kite	Frank Jeal	John Pelham	Laurie Moseley
Oct	Frank Jeal	John Compton		
1961	Ken Tickle	Phil Heycock	Frank Jeal	Peter Wright
1962				
Feb				
1963	John Price	Dick Morris	Ken Tickle	Dick Morris
Nov	John Mason	David Wright	Ian Bowles	
1964	John Mason	Trevor Catlow	Bruce Tofield	Johnny Walker
1965	Bruce Tofield	Alan Rogers	John Watmough	Peter Cockburn
1966	Johnny Walker	Andrew Leleux	Bill Marsterson	Dave Crosbie
1967	Jeff Creek	Paul Barker	Dave Warner	Mike York
1968	Andrew Leleux	Roger Bryant	Keith Froom	Dave Spiers
1969	Paul Barker	Charles Bennett	John Bennell	John Dawson

After 1969 there appears to be no formal selection of Sword bearer and Logkeeper.

Year	Squire	Bagman
1970	John Watmough	
1971	Dave Spiers	Chris Allen
1972	John Dawson	John Stott
1973	John Forrest	John Stott
1974	Keith Kirby	John Stott
1975	John Harding	John Stott
1976	Dave Rogers	
1977	John Corlett	
1978	Barry Potter	Steve Roser
1979	Steve Roser	
1980	Neville	Oscar
1981	Rob Peveler	Andy Adams
1982	Dave Spiers	
	John Dawson	
1983	Martin Stokes	
1984	Mike Hitchiner	
1985	Peter Lund	
1986	Ian Hall	Simon Bonsor
1987	Simon Bonsor	Ian Hall
1988	Richard Bevan	Ian Hall
1989 –May	Greg Waite*	Ian Hall
1989 May+	Neil McKay**	Ian Hall
1990	Neil McKay	Gerard Robinson
1991	Charlie Menteith	Gerard Robinson
1992	Ralph Lovegrove	Gerard Robinson
1993	Tony Brennan	Gerard Robinson

* Greg Waite returned to N.Z. in May 1989, visiting Fellow of St Cross.

** from Railway Tour

Appendix B

TOURS OF THE ANCIENT MEN

Year	Tour	Old Man/ Organiser	Bagman	Logkeeper
1952	Fairford	John Dibdin (TM)/ John Nourse	John Boston (TM)/ Colin Whitehead	
1953	Upton-on-Severn	John Nourse	Peter Lund	John Nourse
1954	Ludlow Ross-on-Wye	Colin Whitehead/ Dick Wilson	Peter Lund	David Rendell
1955	Cherington	Tony Edwards	Ian Stewart	Derek Portman/ Tony Edwards
1957	Bryants Puddle	Tony Edwards	David Rendell	Joe Trenaman/ Alan Fleming
1958	Grand Union Canal	Tony Edwards/ John Hawkins (skipper)	David Rendell	John Nourse/ John Walmsley
1958	Hawkhurst	Tony Edwards	Peter Lund	Mike Morton
1959	Langport	Fred Pargeter	Mike Page	Tony Edwards
1959	Lavenham	Fred Pargeter	John Black	Alex Hamilton/ Fred Pargeter
1960	Leics/ Rutland (Easter Tour)	Mike Page	John Black	Frank Jeal
1960	West Sussex	Fred Pargeter/ Mike Page	Frank Jeal	Ed Cooper/ Mike Page/ Ian Stewart
1960	Evesham	Tony Edwards	John Nourse	John Nourse/ John Hawkins
1961	Cholesbury (Bucks)	Alec Hamilton/ Frank Jeal	Alec Hamilton	Peter Wright
1961	Caynham (Shrops)	Frank Jeal/ John Compton	John Compton	Mike Morton

Year	Tour	Old Man/ Organiser	Bagman	Logkeeper
1962	Bryants Puddle	Ken Tickle/ Laurie Wilson	Phil Heycock	Charlie Menteith
1962	Lake District	Ken Tickle/ John Nourse	Phil Heycock	Fred Pargeter
1963	N. Shropshire	Alec Hamilton/ John Price	Dick Morris	
1963	Wessex	John Hawkins	Dick Morris	
1964	Sedlescombe	John Mason/ Roy Judge	David Wright	Keith Denerley
1964	Durham	Ken Tickle/ Laurie Moseley/ John Walmsley	John Compton	Charlie Menteith
1965	Somerset	Pat Patterson	Alan Rogers	John Watmough
1965	Leics/ Rutland	Phil Heycock	Roger Jenkins	Roy Judge
1966	Derbyshire	Johnny Walker/ Julian Pilling	John Watmough	Frank Jeal
1966	Downs	Bruce Tofield	Roger Jenkins	William Marsterson
1967	Glamorgan	Jeff Creek/ Tony Edwards	William Marsterson	Roger Bryant
1967	Suffolk	Fred Pargeter	Paul Barker	Phil Heycock
1968	Lake District	Andrew Leleux/ Dick Morris	John Watmough	William Marsterson

Year	Tour	Old Man/ Organiser	Bagman	Logkeeper
1968	Minehead	Jeff Creek	Martin Sykes	Andrew Potts
1968	Northants	Jeff Creek	Andrew Leleux	Roy Judge
1969	Selby	Johnny Walker/ Martin Sykes	John Watmough	John Watmough
1969	Dorset	Mike Morton	Charles Whitlock	Keith Froom
1970	Lincs	John Watmough/ Nigel Panting	Dave Spiers	John Dawson
1970	Cornwall	Andrew Potts		John Nourse
1971	Hants	John Hawkins/ Roy Judge	Alan Rogers	Bruce Tofield
1971	Bootle	John Dawson	Charlie Menteith	Mac
1972	Six Counties	Dave Spiers	Mac	Keith Kirby
1972	Bucks	John Forrest	Jeff Creek	John Dawson
1973	Evesham	Charlie Menteith		Jonathan Holmes
1973	Cheshire	Fred Pargeter	Roy Judge	Dave Spiers
1974	Leics	Paul Barker		Mac
1974	Wilts	John Watmough/ Roger Bryant		Julian Pilling/ William Marsterson
1975	Fens	Chris Halsall	John Watmough	Alex Chablo

Year	Tour	Old Man/ Organiser	Bagman	Logkeeper
1975	Dales	William Marsterson		John Harding
1976	Black Country	Ed Cooper/ Dave Spiers	Roy Judge	John Watmough
1976	Solway Firth	Stan Guthrie	John Dawson	Cat
1977	Notts	Paul Barker	Roy Judge	Dave Spiers
1977	Isle of Man	Cat	Martin Sykes	Chris Halsall
1978	Forest of Dean	Andrew Leleux	Roy Judge	Dave Wilmshurst
1978	Black Forest	John Stott		Nick McGuinn
1979	Cornwall	Dave Wilmshurst/ Nigel Westall	John Watmough	Tony Davis
1979	Somerset	Chris Allen	Roger Bryant	Roy Judge
1980	Powys	Tony Davis		John Dawson
1980	Tweed	Stan Guthrie		Nigel Westall
1981	Five Worlds	Nick McGuinn		Chris Sheffield
1982	Essex	Richard Morris		Big John
1982	Cumbria	Mike Breese	Chris Sheffield	Greg Finch
1983	Czechoslovakia	Andy Adams		Andy Millard

Year	Tour	Old Man/ Organiser	Bagman	Logkeeper
1983	Kent	Rob Dale	Stan Guthrie	Julian Pilling
1983	Hants	Mike Hitchiner	Richard Bevan	Peter Dawson
1984	Herefs	Martin Stokes	Greg Finch	Biffo
1984	Wilts	Rob Peveler	Wally	Greg Finch
1985	Devon	Greg Finch	Nigel Westall/ Chris Sheffield	Bob Gibbons
1985	Czechoslovakia	Andy Adams		Peter Dawson
1986	Cumbria	Bob Gibbons	Mac	Ian Hall
1986	Czechoslovakia	Andy Adams		Bob Gibbons
1987	Hardy	Simon Bonsor	Mac	Cat
1988	Leics	Barry Potter		Mike Hitchiner
1989	Suffolk	Mac	Ian Hall	John Forrest
1990	Cotswold	Biffo	Gerard Robinson	Ian Hall
1990	Ireland	John Dawson	Chris Sheffield	Greg Finch
1991	Peaks	Paul Silcocks	Tony Brennan	Charlie Menteith
1991	Cuddebackville	John Forrest	Mac	John Dawson
1992	Staffs	Biffo/ Greg Finch	Rob Peveler	Roy Judge

This is obviously vague in some places; for example, I cannot identify certain logkeeper's handwriting. It is certainly inaccurate in some places. In particular I found it difficult to remember who actually organised certain tours. Corrections will be welcome.