

ROOMER

An occasional newsletter for researchers
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MUMMING PLAY FROM PRESTON CANDOVER, HANTS.

Steve Roud

We first heard of the Preston Candover Mummers in 1977 when Miss G. M. Coakes, long-time resident of the village, sent us a text as written down by her mother, probably at the dictation of one of the participants. Miss Coakes put us in touch with Bill Hopkins who was apparently the last surviving member of the gang and we visited him several times in the Old People's Home in Basingstoke where he was living at the time. Bill died in April (?) 1980. Further information regarding the play came to us from Mrs. K. Butcher (nee Nicholson), of Crawley, Hampshire, whose father and brothers used to be in the Mummers and who used to help her mother make the costumes. The material from all three sources is now lodged in the Roud/Marsh Collection.

The gang in which Bill Hopkins took part was formed from members of the Preston Candover Boy Scout troop, sometime between 1905 and 1910, at the instigation of General Hope of Preston Grange. The boys were taught by a Mr. Nicholson (father of Mrs. Butcher), who had been in the 'old' village gang. The Scout team included Bill, two of Mr. Nicholson's sons and one Dick Chivers (son of the local carrier), the youngest being ten years old. They apparently borrowed a donkey on which the youngest member used to ride when on their rounds. Being young, the gang did not visit local pubs, but confined their visits to the 'big houses' of the area. Among the places mentioned by Bill as being on the gang's regular circuit are:- Wootton, Worting School, Alresford, Steventon Manor, Preston House, Moundsmere and Herriard Park. Several of these were also visited regularly by the Mummers from North Waltham. Bill knew of the latter gang but said that the Preston Candover people preferred their own team because the North Waltham men had a reputation for being a rough, drunken lot. However, none of the North Waltham men that we have met have mentioned the Preston Candover gang at all.

Bill carried on with the gang after the Scout Troop itself became defunct, but sometime after the First World War the Mummers faded out:-

"We picked up a few from the different villages, but it didn't last long - they all got tired of it, I don't know why - well, they don't get together like they used to..." (BH)

General Hope was keen on reviving the play in later years, but could never muster sufficient enthusiasm in the village to raise a new gang. Bill, however, used to visit him occasionally at Christmas to recite parts of the play and sing the carols to him.

"You want somebody to be able to say the dialect - you know my meaning - 't isn't common words - not ordinary speaking what - well, what I mean - what causes the fun - it's the way it's spoken - you know my meaning.....It's an 'alf an hour - good 'alf an hour's play..." (BH)

With regard to the costumes, Mrs. Butcher commented that they were made basically of cambric (pronounced as in Cambridge) - tall cardboard hats - wallpaper strips - Father Christmas had a beard and Johnny Jack had dolls on his back. Miss Coakes wrote that "The characters were dressed in streamers, goodness knows why. They usually wore wide straw hats with coloured streamers, and also streamers attached to their clothes". Miss Coakes' mother pencilled the following note on the ms text: "King George dressed in sashes. Doctor in red. Shirts with ribbons over two or three waistcoats - braces on top. Stripes down the trousers".

Bill Hopkins described the costumes as follows: "...Father Christmas used to have an old coat covered with wallpaper, and streamers, and a wide-brimmed hat - any old straw hat...streamers hung down you see, down the sides...only Father Christmas had wallpaper (on his clothes) the other was sashes...one over each shoulder and pinned here (at each side of the waist, with the ends hanging loose, and a rosette at front and back where they crossed)...and the hats...stiff cardboard done round the shape of your head, see, but it went off flat at the top...went to a point like that.. (a tube which fitted over the head, squashed front-to-back at the top, so that it looked roughly rectangular from the front, but pointed from the side)...quite tall, see, and that was covered with different stranfers (sic) off of crackers...or you could get patterns off wallpaper and paste it all

on...". Bill also mentioned wooden swords which were made and painted by General Hope's estate carpenter, three dolls strapped to Johnny Jack's back in a sort of case and two little corked bottles which the Doctor carried in his breast pocket.

The text and carols which follow are reproduced as faithfully as possible from the manuscript provided by Miss Coakes, including spelling, 'stage directions' and length of lines.

Mumming Play used by men of Preston Candover, Basingstoke, Hampshire

FOOL	In comes I who have never been before With my merry actors at the door They can act and they can sing With your consent they shall come in Stir up the fire and make a light And see this noble act tonight If you don't believe the words I say Step in Bold Roomer and clear the way	5
BOLD ROOMER	In comes I, Bold Roomer Bold Roomer is my name. Give me room to rhyme I'm come to show you merry sports & pastime To pass away the winter Old activity, new activity, such activity As never was seen before, and perhaps Never will no more Walk in old man (To Father Xmas)	10 15
FATHER CHRISTMAS	In comes I Old Father Xmas. I've been in many a hard fought battle and never been knocked down (Bold Roomer pushes him and he falls)	
BOLD ROOMER	Thee bist now Father	20
FATHER CHRISTMAS	And so will thee bist, when thee gets as old and tough as I be. Seems pretty slippery and greasy about here as if zo there's been some pot liquor or strong beer throw'd about here. I'm open (or 'opin') to taste a drop on it afore we leaves here	25
BOLD ROOMER	Hope zo Father	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	What's thee know about it? (stops & turns to the people) In comes I, poor old Father Xmas Am I welcome, or am I not? I hope old Father Christmas will never be forgot Christmas comes but once a year Ay, and when it comes it brings good cheer Roast beef, plum pudden and Christmas pie Who likes that any better than I?	30 35
BOLD ROOMER	I do Father	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	I've travelled a great many miles both far & near And now I've travelled just here And I'm open to taste a cup of thy stray beer Aye, a cup of the best May God in heaven send thy soul to heaven to rest And if't should be a cup of the small Bad luck to it both cup and all. Theres rooms and rooms and gallons of rooms All in this room there shall be shown The dreadfulest battle that ever was known Betwixt St. Garge & my two sons Walk in here St. Garge	40 45
St. GEORGE	In steps I St. Garge (1) St. Garge it is my name With my right hand & glittering sword I won ten crowns of gold 'Twas I that fought the fiery dragon And brought him down by slaughter And by those means I won the prize The King of Egypt's daughter So grand and bold it doth appear With my bold tribes & Britons I come to close thy ear Old England's right, old England's wrong Old England's admiration If I draw out my English weapon	50 55 60

	Is there a man in all this room before me stands That I may not cut him down With my created hand	
BOLD ROOMER	Oh yes! Oh yes! There is a man Who in this room before thee stands That thou canst not cut him down With thy created hand	65
St. GEORGE	I'm a little fellow. Thee talks pretty bold (2) Like some more men as I've been told How cuts thy capers? Pull out thy rusty raper Likewise thy sword & fight And thy purse & pay (3) For some satisfaction I'll have this night Before I goes away	70 75
BOLD ROOMER	No satisfaction at all St. Garge For in less than three minutes, I take thy life away	
St. GEORGE	I'll hag thee, I'll jag thee And have thee for to know I be the King of England Before I lets thee go	80
BOLD ROOMER	Thee shain't neither hag me ner jag me Ner have me for to know Thee bist the King of England Before the lets me go Battle to battle to thee I call To see which on this ground shall fall	85
St. GEORGE	Battle to battle to thee I play To see which on this ground shall lay Mind thy hits and guard thy blows Likewise thy face and eyes also (They fight. G. pricks him & Bold R. goes down)	90
FATHER CHRISTMAS	There thou best adone one on 'im	
St. GEORGE	And I'll do thee directly Father	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Ah! I doan't know so much about that I'm too old and tough in the old gizzard for thee If thee thinks thee's such a goose as all that I'll bring another little fellow for thee yet And if he can't much about warm thee I'll much about warm thee Walk in Bold Slasher	95 100
BOLD SLASHER	In comes I Bold Slasher Bold Slasher is my name From those Indian Wars I came Me & myself & seven more Fought & killed eleven score	105
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Eleven score of what?	
BOLD SLASHER	Eleven score of brave fighting men Father	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Eleven score of ginger-beerbottles or black beetles	
BOLD SLASHER	My head is made with iron My body lined with steel Brass from my arms to my knuckle bones I'll fight thee St. George, all in this battle-field	110
St. GEORGE	I'm a little fellow, thee talks pretty bold (4) Like some more men as I've been told How cuts thy capers? Pull out thy rusty raper Likewise thy sword and fight I'll have some satisfaction of thee this night Afore I goes away Battle to battle to thee I call To see which on this ground shall fall	115 120
BOLD SLASHER	Battle to battle to thee I'll play To see which on this ground shall lay	
St. GEORGE	Mind thy hits & guard thy blows Likewise thy face & eyes also (They fight & Bold Slasher falls)	125

FATHER CHRISTMAS	Oh! thee good-for-nothingest villain Thee ben & ruined me & my two zons I never had but two in all my life And there lies fifteen on 'em I'll have some satisfaction on thee Before thee goes to zupper	130
	(Enter Doctor)	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Oh doctor! doctor! Is there a doctor to be found That can cure my two zons lies bleeding on the ground?	
DOCTOR	Oh yes there is a doctor to be found That can cure your two sons that lies bleeding on the ground	135
FATHER CHRISTMAS	What's thy fee Doctor?	
DOCTOR	Ten guineas is my fee, ten pound I'll take of thee Being a poor old friend of mine	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Thee calls I poor. Baint I as fat as thou bist? (5)	
DOCTOR	I can cure the itch, the stitch, the palsy, gout, the raging pains goes in and out Sides all these I can maintain If thee breaks thy neck I can set it again And charge thee nothing but the pain.	140
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Where's thee ben to learn all this Doctor?	145
DOCTOR	I've been to England, France, Scotland & Devon, Canterbury and all the wide world over. Bring me an old woman four-score years & ten (scarce ere a tooth in her head) I'll raise her up same as she'd never been dead	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Thee bist a main clever sort of an old quack doctor!	150
DOCTOR	An arm broke or a leg broke, all these things I can maintain If thee breaks thy nose I'll stick en up again I've got a little bottle in my waist-coat pocket called Nokum-Pokum, Elecampaine (6)	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Elephants brains! Thee'd best give me a smell of that stuff Doctor (Doctor lets him smell it & he is overcome) Pouf! That's some rum sort of stuff Doctor That's 'nough to knock anybody down, let alone raising of 'em up	155
DOCTOR	I've got another little bottle in my waistcoat pocket, what they calls Dragon's Blood (Father Christmas smells it & is again overcome)	160
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Thee'd better try thy skill Doctor	
DOCTOR	Drop on the skull bone, drop on the touch-bone Drop on the heart Rise up you bold champions And fight for your part	165
	(Both get up and return to former places)	
TURKISH KNIGHT	In comes I the Turkis (sic) Knight Against old England for to vight I'll fight thee St. Garge Like a man of courage bold Let thy blood run ever so hot I'll quickly fetch it cold	170
St. GEORGE	In comes I St. Garge From over the sea I came My name it is St. Garge, & I'll appear the same First I fought in France, then I fought in Spain Then I came on to this land to fight the Turks again I saw a Turk a standing by Swearing oft that I 'ud die But sooner ner never I wud be beat I'll tramp the enemy under my feet (stamps)	175 180
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Very well brave souls	
ALL SING	There's manys a man has lost their lives Left their children & their wives But still we'll have another try The English swears the Turks shall die (Fight & St. George wounds the Turkish Knight)	185

TURKISH KNIGHT	Down on my bended knee I pray Spare but my life, & I'll be the Turkis slave	
St. GEORGE	Arise, arise thou Turkish Knight And go home to thy land & fight Go home to thy land & tell That British men in England dwell Likewise the champion Garge	190
TURKISH KNIGHT	Now I'm just a gooin' home I've got my free discharge God bless the King of England Likewise the champion Garge	195
FATHER CHRISTMAS	Get off home wi' 'ee Come all the way from Turkey land Gibble-Gobblin' about What thee canst do, and what thee canst Thees worse 'an my old Grandmother Sarai She's forty year older and tougher in the gizzard an I be Down on thy knees beggin' & prayin' About what thee'st do & got done awready I thought the was a little more good than that Get off home wi' 'ee (Gives him a push) I've got a little fellow about here somewhere what they calls Twing Twang	200 205
JOHNNY JACK	In comes I Twing Twang Left hand, press gang Come to press you bold fellows & send you to zee I'll fight the French & the Spaniard Although my name is little Jackie John If there's ere a man wants to fight Let him come along I'll hag him, I'll jag him And after I've done I'll fight the best man under the Zun	210 215
FATHER CHRISTMAS	I'll have a cut or two at ee (They fight & Father X falls down)	220
JOHNNY JACK	Ladies & gentlemen see what I've done Knocked down poor old Father Christmas (?) Likewise the evening zun	
FATHER CHRISTMAS	A zun rises, zo do I	
JOHNNY JACK	In comes I little Johnny Jack Wife & family at my back My wife is large & my family small Now I thinks I'm the best man of them all Here I zits & takes my ease (8) Ladies & gentlemen give me what you please A cup of your stray beer Will make us merry & zing A sovereign in our pocket & God save the King We have sung our song, we must be gone (9) No longer can we stay here So God bless you all both great and small And God send you a Happy New Year	225 230 235
<u>CAROL I</u>	(10)	
Chorus	How many have adaunted The city so dear The people from all parts No lodgings were there O Joseph and Mary were thinking no harm All on the next morning Our Saviour was born So therefore be merry Set sorrow aside Our Saviour Christ Jesus Was born at this tide God sent down an angel From the heaven so high To protect those poor people Down in that village lie. Chorus	

Chorus

How many have a daunted
 The baby so sweet
 And in an ox-manger
 They laid him to sleep
 So Joseph & Mary, their substance so small
 All in that fine city
 No lodging at all
 So therefore be merry etc.

CAROL II

(11)

There are six good days all in a week
 All for the labouring man
 But the seventh is to serve)
 Our Lord Jesus Christ) Repeat
 Both father and the son)

The fields are so green, as green as can be
 As green as any leaf
 Our Lord our God he has watered them) Repeat
 With the heavenly dew so sweet)

In hell it is dark, in hell it is dim
 In hell it is full of noise
 And that is the place where all wicked ones must go
 When they part from Jesus Christ.

CAROL III

(12)

God bless the master of this house
 With great prosperity
 For whether his body wakes or sleeps
 God sends his soul to rest

God bless the mistress of this house
 With a gold chain round her neck
 For whether her body wakes or sleeps
 God sends her soul to rest

No mortal man can remember this
 When Jesus Christ was on this road
 'Twas through our sins and wickedness
 Christ shed his precious blood

No mortal man can remember this
 When Christ was crucified
 He was crucified betwixt two thieves
 And crowned with a crown of thorns

No mortal man can remember this
 When Christ was rolled in clay
 He was buried in some sepulchre
 Where never no man lay.

CAROL IV

(13)

O fair Jerusalem
 When shall I come to thee
 When shall my labours have an end
 Thy joy when shall I see?

On Sunday goes to church
 Down on our knees must fall
 And there we must pray to the Lord Jesus Christ
 He will bless and save us all

O God eternity
 With thine almighty hand
 Who maketh the Sun, the Moon & the Stars
 The water & dry land.

NOTES

1. Line 49 Bill Hopkins insisted that they used to say King Garge all the way through, and Miss Coakes also uses King in her letters. Bill also commented: "We always said 'In comes I' ".
2. Line 69 Bill consistently said this as: "Ah me little fellow.." (which agrees with many other North Hants. versions).
3. Line 74 Bill pronounced 'purse' as 'pus' (to rhyme with 'bus')
4. Line 114 As Note 2
5. Line 139 Bill added the line: "What canst thee cure?" to Father Christmas's speech here
6. Line 154 Bill said: "Okum pokum..."
7. Line 222 Bill said: "Father Abraham", instead of "Father Christmas" in this line, which again agrees with other local versions
8. Line 229 According to Bill, Johnny Jack sits on Father Christmas's knee at this point.
9. Lines 234-7 According to Bill, these lines were sung by all the performers
10. The Carols These carols would be sung at the end of the play although Bill commented that, depending on the venue, time available, and wishes of the hosts, all four carols were not necessarily sung at each performance.
 - Carol I I have not been able to trace any other version of this carol
11. Carols II - IV Attempting to trace variants of these three carols has lead me into a maze of versions of the common carol The Moon Shines Bright, with odd verses from the Preston Candover songs appearing time after time. It is not possible to give details of all these versions here, so the following notes refer only to versions collected from, or attributed to, Mummings.
 - Carol II The three verses used at Preston Candover are included in a much longer carol noted by Godfrey Arkwright in KINGSCLERE (Hants. SU 5258) and published as "Hampshire Mummings Christmas Carol" in the Journal of the Folk Song Society Vol. I No.4 (1902) pp. 178-9.
12. Carol III Miss Coakes writes: "As I remember it: Verse 4, line 4 "And crown-ed with the thorns" and Verse 5, line 3 "They buried him in some sour-pulcoir".
R.Vaughan-Williams noted a significantly different version from Daniel Wigg of Preston Candover in 1909. Published in Journal of the Folk Song Society Vol. III No.13 (1909) pp.261-2. Bill Hopkins knew Daniel Wigg but did not know whether the latter had ever been in the Mummings. Similar versions to that used at Preston Candover have been noted at the following places:
TWYFORD (Hants. SU 4824) : Journal of the Folk Song Society Vol. II No.7 (1905) pp. 130-1.
COMPTON (Sussex SU 3429) 1911/12 : (Clive Carey MSS, Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, London : Carey ref. Sx 327C)
Vicinity of HORSHAM (Sussex TQ 1730) published in English Traditional Songs and Carols by Lucy Broadwood (Boosey & Co., London, 1908) pp.882-3.
Another version in the Carey MSS (ref. Sx 3) is entitled "Mummings Christmas Carol" noted from William Lemming of TERWICK (Sussex SU 8223)
Another song noted from the same man (ref Sx 2) has the note "Learned from Tipteerers at Brandean". I have not been able to locate Brandean. Mummings at OVERTON (Hants. SU 5149), NORTH WALTHAM (Hants. SU 5646) and VERNHAM DEAN (Hants. SU 3456) all used the "God bless the master.." verses to open their play. Frank Bond of North Waltham can be heard singing the song on the L.P. record Songs & Southern Breezes (Topic 12T 317 1977). Mummings at LONGPARISH (Hants. SU 4344) also knew the song.
Mummings at CHITHURST (Sussex SU 8423) apparently used the "No mortal man.." verses (Clive Carey MSS ref. Sx 59).
13. Carol IV I have found no other version having these three verses as a separate song although, as mentioned above, they do turn up in variants of The Moon Shines Bright.

REPORT ON THE FOLK PLAY INDEXING WORKSHOP, 24th JANUARY, 1981

Peter Millington

The first "Folk Play Indexing Workshop" was held in Long Eaton, nr. Nottingham on 24th January, 1981 and was attended by Duncan Broomhead, Idwal Jones, Peter Millington (organiser), Steve Roud, Doc Rowe, Derek Schofield, Paul Smith and Peter Stevenson. The purpose of the workshop was to finalise the procedures and practices of the Co-operative Folk Play Indexing Scheme first presented at the "Traditional Drama 1979" conference and to set the scheme in motion.

The session on indexing practice clarified several ambiguous points and led to a number of changes. These included an improved design for the indexing worksheets and the simplification of one or two of the guidelines. The new worksheets have since been circulated to the participants.

In discussing administration, it was generally felt that some form of semi-formal organisation was required for the scheme. As a first step, it was decided that a corporate name should be adopted and, after discussion, the name "Traditional Drama Research Group" was chosen. Initially, the group will be responsible for the production of "Traditional Drama Abstracts" (the main purpose of the indexing scheme) and the maintenance of a central collection of source material covered by the abstracts.

When the various format options for "Traditional Drama Abstracts" were discussed, it soon became apparent that we do not have at present the resources to produce a printed version of the abstracts. In the short term, therefore, group members will be sent photocopies of the completed worksheets plus periodic indexes. This material may also prove useful ammunition when seeking a publication grant at a later date.

The discussion regarding the availability of "Traditional Drama Abstracts", and access to the central collection, was perhaps the most controversial of the day. The purpose of the scheme is to make information on folk plays readily available to anyone with a serious interest. Several participants, however, expressed reservations over unrestricted access, having previously had unfortunate experiences with unscrupulous or insufficiently skilled individuals. In the worst cases this had led to the alienation of informants, abuse of copyright, etc.

It was decided, therefore, that there would have to be a certain amount of control over access to the collection, not only to safeguard the rights and legitimate interests of the participants in the scheme, but also those of informants and non-participating contributors who add their material to the collection. This will probably be done by requiring users to sign a declaration, in which they agree to observe a code of good and reasonable practice regarding acknowledgement of sources and approaching of informants. Drafts of suggested policies will be discussed at the next meeting and all the participants were aware that these should be kept to a minimum, otherwise the work of the group might be overwhelmed by procedure.

NOTES AND QUERIESA Battle Amongst the Christmas Mummers (cont.)

The newspaper cutting quoted in ROOMER Vol. I No.1 (concerning the battle between the Melksham and Wraxhall Mummers) has now been identified. It comes from The Wiltshire Times, 23 Dec. 1965, p.8, and reprints the story which first appeared in the same newspaper on 23 Dec. 1865, p.3c.

Mumming Plays in the Isle of Wight

A preliminary checklist of references to Isle of Wight plays is available from Steve Roud, 22 Adelaide Road, Andover, Hants.



PLOUGH MONDAY. DANCE OF BESSY AND THE CLOWN.

From John Brand, Observations on Popular Antiquities..., with the additions of Sir Henry Ellis. An entirely new and revised edition with numerous illustrations. (London, Chatto and Windus: 1888)

PUBLICATIONS NEWS

Recent Publications

Handlist of Papers of Professor M. W. Barley, (Nottingham, Manuscripts Dept., University of Nottingham, N.D.). Pages 4 to 10 includes a list to Professor Barley's collection of materials relating to Plough Monday plays.

Roly Brown, 'Mumming in West Berkshire', Folk Review 7:11 (Sept. 1978), 9-13.

Roly Brown, 'The Chaddleworth Mumming Play', The Southern Rag 1:4 (1980), 27-28.

Julia Dietrich, 'The Folk Drama and the Liturgy of Sacrifice', Kentucky Folklore Record 25 (1979), 37-45.

Emily Lyle, 'The Goloshans', Tocher 32 (1979), 107-112.

Peter T. Millington, An Interim List of Nottinghamshire Folk Plays and Related Customs, (Nottingham: the author, 1980) 44 pages, £1.00 p&p.

Rob Watling, Two Stirlingshire Hero-Combat Plays, (Stirling: Privately printed, 1980)

Stephen Roud, Mumming Plays in Berkshire (Andover: the author, 1980) 16 pages.

PERIODICAL AND NEWSPAPER SEARCH

Newspaper Library Newsletter

Readers will be interested to know that the British Library Reference Division (Newspaper Library) has commenced publication of a newsletter. The first issue (No.1 Autumn 1980) contains many items of interest including details of local newspaper indexing projects and the revival of the Bibliography of British Newspapers Project. The newsletter is to be published twice a year and is available free of charge from the British Library Newspaper Library, Colindale Avenue, London. NW9 5HE

Journals Search

We would be grateful to hear from anyone who has checked all, or part, of the following journals for traditional drama and folklore material.

Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society,
(continued as Derbyshire Archaeological Journal).

Trans. of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society.

Devon and Cornwall Record Society.

Trans. of the Devonshire Association.

Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club.

Trans. of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.

Archaeologia Cantiana.

Northamptonshire Record Society.

Shropshire Archaeological Society.

Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society.

Somerset Record Society.

Sussex Archaeological Collections.

Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine.

The Observer

Phyllis Crawford in In England Still (Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1938), p.215 comments:

'.... when Mr. John P. Fletcher asked readers of The Observer to tell him where the Mummers' play had been given that year, answers came from Chipping Campden, Eyensham, Sunningwell, Lower Whitley, Applesham, Rocester, Boxgrove and Broadway'

The Alex Helm manuscripts give a date for Mr. Fletcher's article as 1936. He did not however, appear to have located the exact dates within that year. Before I search through back copies of the newspaper, has anyone come across this reference in The Observer?

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ROOMER: AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR RESEARCHERS IN TRADITIONAL DRAMA

Research in any field is, as often as not, hampered by the lack of communication between individual researchers, and Traditional Drama is no exception. We are acutely aware that there are many people doing valuable work who have little or no contact with others in this field and, consequently, no opportunity to compare notes or air their views.

ROOMER then is designed to fill this gap by providing an informal forum. It includes notes and queries, details of publications, out-of-the-way texts, information on work in progress, in fact anything that may be of interest to those working in the field of Traditional Drama. As such it relies heavily on participation by subscribers. Therefore, if you have any potential contributions we would be most grateful to receive them.

In addition, we plan to prepare a series of occasional publications dealing with various aspects of Traditional Drama research. Suggestions for suitable topics or items for inclusion in this series are most welcome.

We hope you find this issue of ROOMER useful. If you would like further details please contact the editors.

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