The Folk Interlude: Dramatic Aspects of Traditional Games, Gambols and Songs

Thomas Pettitt

(This is a prose version of the conference presentation, which was based on notes: it includes some material omitted on that occasion to comply with time constraints. There are also one or two adjustments in response to points raised in discussion. The "Appendix" referred to is identical with the circulated handout.)

This paper represents a shift in my work on traditional drama, or perhaps a return to an aspect glanced at many years ago and since neglected. A lot of my work - most of my presentations at these conferences; most of my publications in this field (cf. the bibliography at the beginning of the appendix) - has been on the mummers' plays: on the history, or indeed on the *origins* of the mummers' plays. I have now taken this line of thought as far as it can go on the basis of currently available historical evidence, and published my finding in their latest form in item 12 in the bibliography (in the journal *Medieval English Theatre*): the mummers' plays were born when a cluster of traditional, seasonal, perambulatory shows (it is convenient, but inaccurate, to call them "mummings") acquired a distinctly dramatic item - let's call it the "play" - probably sometime in the late-sixteenth or early seventeenth century. A mummers' play is a mumming with a play in it (except that it's not really a mumming and not really a play).

But I have not come here today to argue that thesis anew: Rather to move on to the history of traditional, dramatic performances occurring under customary auspices *other* than the seasonal perambulation/house-visit. In their time they were known as "games", "gambols", and even as "interludes"; some were also songs; and some were dances. Ultimately, and not necessarily today, I should like to prove four theses with regard to these performances:

1. These games, gambols and interludes represent a form of traditional drama distinct from, independent of, the mummers' plays, and with an equal significance in their own right;
2. They have a recorded history in which it is much easier than in the case of the mummers' plays to assert a continuity between late-medieval and recent tradition;
3. They also have a significance in relation to "regular", theatre history, not least in connection with the so-called "Tudor Interlude" of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, as well as the jigs and drolls of the seventeenth century stage (and - as in the case of the mummers' plays - this could involve influence in either direction);
4. All that said, these games, gambols and "folk" interludes were often performed under auspices which brought them into close contact with the mummers' plays and other perambulatory shows, and the two traditions have clearly interacted, exchanging dramatic and textual material in one direction or the other, or both.

In his authoritative work on *The Origins of Drama in Scandinavia* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1995), Terry Gunnell suggests (p. 160) for example that some of the figures more recently associated with independent games (in Iceland) "might have grown out of earlier house-visits by disguised figures" (elsewhere in Scandinavia), and this is extremely plausible given the circumstances, elaborated on in his conference paper, that mid-winter perambulations are virtually out of the question under Icelandic conditions: the "visit" there is from one room to another, rather than one homestead to another. I shall argue below that in England some wooing material started as independent games and was later absorbed into the mummers' plays.

But today, in this first encounter with the material, while providing sporadic and incomplete documentation for these four theses, I have set myself the more straightforward task of extending my ongoing "anatomy" of customary activities to these games: in other words of taking the first steps towards a systematic *typology* of dramatic games in terms of the fairly obvious criteria (which also provide the structuring principle of the paper): their context, content and form, in so doing making repeated reference (by item number) to the illustrative material in the Appendix.

Context

I turn first therefore to context: to the various customary, often festive, auspices under which dramatic games have been performed, both in the late-medieval and early-modern periods in which I am most interested and in more recent times from which we have more abundant evidence. It is after all mostly context which has provided the basis for non-academic terminology distinguishing different types of games, for example in the many early English references to "Christmas games" and the later Irish references to "Wake Games".

As some of you know, the typology I've been developing (cf. Bibliography, publications 6, 7, 8, 11) makes an issue of distinguishing between two major sets of auspices for customary performances:

- the ASSEMBLY of a single social group (a household; institution; guild; parish; youth-group; often augmented by invited guests)
- and the ENCOUNTER which involves a deliberate, structured meeting and interaction between two or more such groups.

In these terms, mummers plays are encounter-customs, the encounter achieved by the perambulation of the performers, often/usually supplemented by house-visits; whereas the "folk interludes" (games and gambols) discussed here are normally performed under the auspices of an assembly, usually of a household: a customary, usually "festive", assembly of a household and its guests (relatives, friends; associates: its "affiliation" whose character will depend on whether the household is operating in its institutional [e.g. manorial], economic [e.g. agricultural], or purely domestic function), and taking place in whatever room of the house was the social heart of the household concerned, be it the hall of a great house or the kitchen of a farmhouse.

It is worth pausing over these household assemblies, if only to remind ourselves that there were more of them (more types of them) and that dramatic or semi-dramatic games were performed at more of these, than we perhaps realize.

The incidence of such assemblies would be in accordance with the temporal rhythms we are familiar with in the study of customs in general. So some assemblies have what I call a *biographical* incidence, associated with the more significant transitions of the life

cycle. There was for example a "*birth-sequence*" of assemblies, comprising not merely the familiar Christening Feast but also the Gossips' Feast immediately after the birth (for the midwives and neighbours who assisted) and the (I think distinct) lying-in revels by which these gossips entertained the mother during her "groaning". Appendix item 16 is a precious 12th century Danish account, based on an oral report (it is probably a medieval contemporary legend), of how, when neighbouring wives visited a woman in travail and entertained her with "dancing and uninhibited songs", which included making "unseemly gestures" towards a straw doll, the devil entered the doll, spoke to them, and let out a yell which left them dead or traumatized.

Among the aristocracy at least household revels were also prompted by the *coming of age* of the heir to the estate (some will be aware of a significant instance involving a goodly number of familiar folk drama figures associated with the Stanley family of Derbyshire in the 19th century, whose association with the mummers' play is the topic of Duncan Broomhead's paper here).

Better documented is the *wedding cycle* with (in the late-medieval and early-modern periods at least) customary and festive household revels associated not merely with the wedding itself (the *wedding revels*) but with the engagement, the *handfasting*, which preceded it, and afterwards, again mainly in the case of the aristocracy and gentry, who tended to fetch their brides from a distance (and the wedding-revels proper taking place at her father's household) a kind of echo or repeat performance in the revels marking the *arrival of the bride* at her husband's home – a practice which may have implications for whatever it was that went on that October day in 1770- something at Revesby.

Finally there is of course the *death-sequence*, with a major assembly associated with the funeral itself (and a lot of customary behaviour by way of hospitality and doles), preceded by the wake - we should properly call it the *lyke-wake*, the vigil over the [Anglo-Saxon word for] body, to distinguish it from other, seasonal, wakes - on one or more nights between the death and the interment. In recent times Irish lyke-wakes have notoriously been associated with festivity, including games (wake games), many of them with distinctly dramatic elements. It would be extremely convenient to claim them for England too, and it is striking that many (most?) Irish wake games were conducted in English rather than Gaelic. Above all of course we have the valuable 17th testimony of John Aubrey (Appendix, item 1) to the effect that the "custom of watching and sitting up all night... by the corpse" in Yorkshire also involved the performance of what he calls "mimical plays and sports".

In later English tradition however it is *seasona*l incidence which looms larger, especially if we include festive assemblies of households considered from their economic rather than domestic aspect marking the completion of important agricultural tasks: under the pastoral regime there have been festive assemblies in connection with sheep-shearing; under the agricultural regime in connection with the hay harvest and corn harvest. And my guess is that certainly by the nineteenth century the harvest homes of provincial England have provided the most important auspices for the performance (and so the preservation) of dramatic games and interludes. By way of illustration I note in passing that item 2 in the Appendix, actually included for its content (a tooth-extraction routine) was recorded at a harvest supper. Much less familiar (but relevant in a specific case mentioned below) is the revelry marking the end of the "bark-harvest" of the tanning industry, and the completion of marling fields which, however, occurred with a less than annual incidence.

I have left until last - because historically and in other ways the most significant - the household revels which are seasonal in the strictly *calendrical* sense, that is associated with annual calendar festivals (be they of the fixed or movable but either way predictable sort). Some of us continue in vain to search for the English Shrovetide festivities which must have been there to match the carnival (in the strict pre-Bakhtinian sense) of continental Europe. In some areas (or at some social levels) there will also have been observances in connection with the autumn feasts of All Saints', All Souls', Clement, Catherine and Thomas (and Lucy), but the great explosion of household revels in late-medieval and early-modem England was emphatically in connection with Christmas, particularly in association with Holy Innocents', New Year and Twelfth Night: the *Winter Revels*.

Several items in the Appendix selected for other reasons were recorded under these auspices, for example item 5, the game “Skewer the Goose”; item 10, riding the wild mare; item 14, the Swedish dance-game of “King Valdemar”. The Icelandic “vikivaki” games discussed by Terry Gunnell - many of them close analogues of my, mainly English, traditions (I imagine vaki is analogous to “wake”) - likewise belong to Christmas revels in farmhouses.

In connection with Christmas revels and its games I should like to digress to explore a couple of the theses listed at the beginning of this paper. Firstly, the matter of the *distinction between*, coupled with the *interaction between*, these independent dramatic games and perambulatory, visiting shows like the mummers' plays. The Christmas games just noted and documented in the Appendix (and many others) were performed by participants in the revels (who may be guests, but who are there for the revels as a whole) not *customary visitors* who have come specifically to perform their perambulatory show - be it a sword dance, the display of a decorated plough, or a fully-fledged mummers' play. There is a decisive contextual difference in the presence or absence of that aspect of threshold crossing, of “entry”, the penetration of private space, fascinatingly explored in Neill Martin's paper.

But as as many will by now have been thinking, and as catalogued at the end of the Appendix, there are many striking similarities in figures and action between these games and the dramatic or semi-dramatic features of the mummers' shows. They share beasts and drunkards, wooings between unmarried couples and altercations between married ones; combats, slayings and cures (including tooth-extractions). There is very likely a connection; there is very likely to have occurred a transfer of material in the one direction or the other, particularly because in many eases, not least at the “great house” of a given community, the Christmas revels, at which such independent games would be performed, also attracted the incursion of the mummers (perambulatory performers) with their dramatic or semi-dramatic shows.

Such interaction was demonstrably feasible, or at least demonstrably conceivable, as early as the 14th century, witness the celebrated scene from the alliterative romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Appendix item 3). The auspices are the New Year revels of that greatest (in fiction) of great houses, the court of King Arthur at Camelot, at which a good deal of merriment is already in progress. In at the door comes a grotesque visitor, a fearsome fellow (*aghlich mayster*); half man half giant; green all over; with a holly-branch in the one hand and a huge Danish ax in the other. He looks like a mummer, and behaves like a mummer, in the sense of proposing to join in pastimes with the assembled company - as mummers at this time demonstrably did. But rather than the customary gambling with dice, he specifies explicitly a “Christmas game” - the usual term for the independent games we are speaking of here — and later King Arthur

refers back to it as an “interlude” - a near-synonym for “Christmas game”. That the game involves a beheading and an auto-revival fortuitously and vaguely analogous to the mummers' plays has attracted more attention than the real significance of this incident: the participation in a Christmas game/interlude - at a Christmas revel - not of two members of the household assembly but of one such member and an intruding visitor in an encounter whose timing and manner have a distinctly customary air about them.

The second thesis impinged on by the Christmas revels and their games is the one of *documented continuity*, say from the late-medieval/early modern period to the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the antiquarian and folkloristic records start to become available. The intervening period saw a massive discontinuity - as a result of puritan attacks and the withdrawal of official patronage followed by official proscription - in customary activities which were vulnerable to such change by virtue of being public (as in the “taming” of Whitsun) or which were performed under institutional auspices (like the parish perambulatory “gatherings”, distant forebears of the mummers' plays).

Household revels and the games they provided a habitat for were not thus vulnerable. Conducted mainly indoors, the Puritans had to try harder to spot them; conducted under private auspices, the authorities were more reluctant to intervene: witness the London order of 1418 regulating and prohibiting a number of traditional Christmas observances, including mumming, which nonetheless concludes with the proviso: “hit be leful to eche persone for to be honestly mery as he can, with in his owne house dwellyng” (E.K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, 2 vols. [London, 1903; repr. 1969], p. 394, n. 3). While this low profile may have ensured the survival of these games, by the same token it prompted less comment and so less extensive early documentation: there is a historical irony in the situation that the early customs we know most about are the ones the puritans most complained about, but because the puritans complained about them they have been most subject to discontinuity and change.

Of several instances where there nonetheless is evidence to display such continuity I select the game of “Shiver” or “Skewer” the goose. We meet it first (Appendix item 4) as a comic interlude in the Tudor Interlude *Fulgens and Lucres* from ca 1495. Until recently exactly what it entailed had to be ascertained from the dialogue (whose salient phrases I supply) and the name it is given: “fart prick in cule” (fart-prick-in-arse). In a study from 1984 (no. 4 in Bibliography) I suggested that such “toys” were traditional semi-dramatic gambols, folk interludes, inserted into the literary, “Tudor” interludes as part of the natural symbiosis between the two forms, and in 1986 Alan Fletcher duly discovered a strikingly informative account of it (Appendix item 5) as performed around 1600 at the Christmas revels of an English household in County Down. As the context, dialogue and directions of *Fulgens and Lucres* implied, it is a mock joust between two figures, suitably trussed and armed to hop about in a crouching fashion, the posterior of the one who is toppled at the mercy of the sharpened stick of the other (with farting his only defence?). It survived into the 19th century as what Lady Alice Bertha Gomme rather disdainfully calls “A boy's game”, “Shiver the Goose” (Appendix item 6), and indeed as E.C. Cawte reported in discussion, into the twentieth century, as a customary (now apparently decorous) pastime of choirboys.

Content

Returning to my main agenda, I would assert that ultimately *context* is an unsatisfactory basis for a typology, as there is not a universal and uniform correlation between game and context: the games are traditional rather than customary. Like the morris dance a game is not so much a custom as a traditional activity which could occur under various auspices. Over time at a given place, or over place at a given time, a given game might occur under the auspices of more than one type household assembly: thus (cf. Appendix, item 5) in recent tradition "Shiver the Goose" could be performed at Harvest and Halloween celebrations as well as at Christmas.

I turn therefore to the inevitable alternatives based on internal rather than external factors: the *content* of the games, and their form or structure To save space, I propose to glance in turn at the two aspects into which game content can most logically be divided, *characters* (or at least *figures*) and *plot* (or at least *action*), but in each case to suggest (with illustration) that each of these is inadequate as a means of categorization and might be replaced by an aspect of the form or structure.

Figures/Characters

The figures or characters appearing in games of course vary greatly, and include peasants, priests, peddlars, kings, doctors, etc., but there is I think only one type of figure who potentially is sufficiently striking or sufficiently dominating - *it its own right* - to define a type of game, and that of course is the *beast-figure*. Is it feasible, one wonders, to assert that "beast games" would constitute a significant category in a typology of games (and that this could be subdivided in terms of species)? Ultimately I think not, and I raise the issue in this forum largely as an excuse to draw attention to, and invite discussion of, some of the earlier records of beast figures in traditional drama (which further confirm the factor of chronological continuity just discussed).

We have just seen the antecedent of "Skewer the Goose" in the form of "Fart Prick in Cule" in *Fulgens and Lucres* from the early 16th century. Early English references to Christmas games which specify examples invariably mention the one variously known as "Shoeing" or "Riding" the "Mare" or the "Wild Mare" (I give some instances in Appendix item 10). Many years ago in the Newsletter *Roomer* I drew attention to the dramatic appearance of "a sheep's head on a staff (which "gaped and glowered") in the banns advertizing the 1552 performance of David Lyndesay's *Satire of the Three Estates* at Cupar. (I reproduce the reference as item 9 in the Appendix). Meanwhile on the preceding page (Appendix items 7 and 8) I reproduce two fascinating illustrations from manuscripts of the early 14th and late 13th centuries. In each case the beast is a stag, and accompanied by a minstrel - they are evidently offering or contributing to a display of some kind. And in both cases, although differently, it is very clear that the beast is achieved by a man wearing a costume. In the lower instance (in a manner which may be more familiar in Scandinavia) the head and antlers are on a pole which reaches above the head of the performer, who stands upright (and can just be seen peeping out of the tubular costume). In the upper instance (first associated with traditional drama by Richard Axton in his contribution to the medieval volume of the *Cambridge Cultural History of Britain*), a three-legged beast is achieved by the performer leaning forward and supporting himself by grasping the staff which is topped by the head and antlers, in direct anticipation of the "Mast beasts" (the Old Tup; the Old Horse) of modern tradition. (I am grateful to Peter Millington for acquiring a sharper reproduction of this illumination in which it is evident that here, too, the man inside looks out through a hole in the costume.) But mentioning the Old Tup and Horse is a reminder to add that of

course we have no way of telling whether the display of the musician and the beast illustrated in these instances is part of a perambulatory show or an independent game produced under the immediate auspices of an assembly.

Now in the presence of E.C. Cawte nothing, not even wild horses (or old horses) would make me question the significance of beast-figures - of “animal disguise” - in traditional drama. But as Dr. Cawte himself has shown, it is a wide and variegated group, requiring sub-categorization, and amenable to sub-categorization under several headings. Of these headings I imagine most would agree that the actual species of the beast (the precise animal being impersonated - animated) is the least significant: different beasts (e.g. horses and rams) can be achieved by a given means (like a pole with a skull on it and a bending man covered by a blanket); a given beast (like a stag) can be achieved by different means (as in the illustrations just discussed).

A more penetrating typology could therefore be based on the *means* by which the beast-figure is achieved, and the instances I have referred to cover several, highly disparate, means. In the figures just discussed there is fairly elaborate costuming, including physical extensions of the body, to achieve a beast-like effect, whereas in the case of “Skewer the goose” the bird-like effect is achieved by posture (if enhanced by binding) alone. In in shoeing the wild mare the figure seems to have been assigned beast-status solely through the way it was treated (in being ridden or shod), while in another well-documented and long-lived game (not included in the Appendix), “Killing the Calf,” the performance consists of sound only, the “calf” existing exclusively by virtue of its squeals produced by a performer hidden from the audience behind a door or a curtain.

More significantly, the “beast-games” cover almost the full spectrum of a typology of games based on more formal or structural features, what I would venture to call the *structural dramaturgy* of games. In accordance with the law of two-to-a-scene familiar from folk narrative, a large number of games achieve whatever “drama” they have by a confrontation of some kind between two participants (I can't say “encounter” because I've used that for something else). When there are more than two people involved, it is usually not because there are three or more participants, but because one of the participants is a collective unit: a group. Traditional games generally involve interactions between participants who can be individuals or groups. My arithmetic tells me that gives three (well actually four) permutations as a basis for a structural typology:

1. an individual versus an individual

2. a group versus a group

3. an individual versus a group

but this has two variants

3A. in which an individual takes the initiative in relation to a group

3B. in which a group takes the initiative against an individual.

This last class might be termed “mobbing”, and the classic instance among non-dramatic games would be “hot cockles”, a variant of blind-man's buff, mentioned by Aubrey (Appendix item 1) as an English wake-game. These categories may indeed be valid for all games, dramatic or otherwise, and whether or not they have beasts in them.

Thus type 1, an individual confronting an individual, is illustrated not merely by the “joust” between the two “geese” just discussed but also by the interaction between the

doctor and his patient in the tooth-extraction routine, the combat with sticks between the "Scotch Peddlars" of a harvest home game, or between the lady and her suitor in the wooing games like "The Wooing of Moll" and the "Lady on Yonder Hill", not to mention of course the "beheading game" between Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. Some games comprise only one such one-on-one confrontation; others might involve a series of them, like the children's game recorded by the Opies which dramatizes the ballad of "Baby Lon" or "The Three Sisters": the robber attacks (symbolically rapes) and kills two of his three sisters in turn (never speaking to them as a group) - before being told, in the usual way of Scottish ballads, by the third, that he is their long lost brother (whereupon he kills himself).

Type 2, in which a group confronts a group, is the one for which I cannot find any beast-games, but it would include more broadly the collective confrontations or melees between opposing groups in the two wake games "Building the Fort" and "Sir Sopin", and whatever it was that the "holly" and "ivy" groups did to and with each other in the interactions signalled by the medieval carols on this theme

Type 3A, an individual taking the initiative in relation to a group, would include both benign initiatives like selecting a "lover" or a "wife" from a group of children dancing around you in a ring and (inevitably) more aggressive initiatives: many of the beast-figures associated with traditional games (and seasonal quêtes) - the speckled stallion and white mare of wake games, the crane and the old sow of harvest homes - are individual figures given to attacking the other revellers as a group, - if prone to singling out girls.

Type 3B, a group taking the initiative against an individual, the mobbing, includes another beast game with the same gender bias but with the initiative reversed. To judge from its name and very occasional hints among the very frequent references, "Riding the Wild Mare" and "Shoeing the Wild Mare" involved a given girl being designated as the "Mare" then chased and subjected to more or less good natured harassment by the rest of the company mainly, one imagines, the men.

I digress to observe that as a theatre historian rather than a social historian I have resisted the temptation to explore the theme of sexual harassment in these games, which merits attention, amused or enraged, depending on one's mood (or gender). The motif of "upending" girls and women is a recurrent feature, possibly related to late-medieval and early-modern sartorial conventions, but sometimes - at least in Denmark - the girls explicitly, to coin a phrase, asked for it. Let me translate verbatim a couple of sentences from the late Iørn Piø's standard review of Danish Christmas customs, citing an account of 1825:

> Another favourite was the game of the young men and girls in which the young men danced around with the girls, who sang:
>
> > The girls are sitting on the sand
> > so gracefully [trøstelig]:
> > hold me tight;
> > I'll hit you!
> > hold me tight
> > so gracefully
> > — till my hat falls off.
>
> Then the youths and the girls pretend [!!] to fight over the hats, and when these have been removed, they start again with the dance and the song

> and another item of clothing. Sometimes they persisted until the girls had no clothes left on their bodies.

I'm not certain whether this qualifies in my typology as a group versus a group or a multiplicity of single confrontations: Clearly some more detailed fieldwork is required.

Plot/Action

Reverting to my quest for typological criteria, there are similar limitations, to cut a long story short, with plot or action. It has become conventional to discuss or even categorize the action of the mummers plays in terms of wooings, combats, slayings, and cures, and as indicated, the independent games include closely analogous types of action. But as I've suggested before these plots probably loom larger in recorded tradition because of their compatibility with ritual approaches, and from historical and European perspectives, the number of plots or sequences of action is virtually limitless. And as I suggested the last time I considered this material, wooing, combat, and cure sequences, along with many others, are probably better treated as dramatic formulas, analogous to narrative motifs, capable of almost infinite permutations.

And as with the figures, here too I suspect that surface differences are typologically less significant than deeper, dramaturgical structures, and as a final illustration I should like to glance more closely at games involving the motif of wooing, indicating both its significance as a game motif but also its limitations as a game category (and invoking some of this paper's other theses in passing).

Wooing is manifestly a significant motif in traditional drama: one whole category of mummers' play is conventionally designated the Wooing Plays, but in addition several local traditions of a quite different category, the Hero Combat Play, have one or more additional scenes involving wooing action - especially in the upper Thames counties. Some - perhaps all - of these wooing sequences in Hero Combat Plays can also be encountered outside the mummers' play framework as independent folksongs. This has been known for a long time, but out of curiosity to see how close the two traditions were I have juxtaposed in the Appendix folksong and mummers' play versions of two such wooing sequences: “The Wooing of Moll” (item 17) and “The Lady on Yonder Hill”, or as I prefer to call it, the “Coxcomb” exchange (item 18). They are very close: one tradition has clearly derived the material from the other, and my guess is that the independent form came first. It will take some sophisticated philology to prove it, and the first place I will start will not be “Moll” or the “Lady on Yonder Hill” but “The Shepherd and the Maiden” (mentioned on my last page but not illustrated in the Appendix). This brief wooing dialogue in which a Shepherd wins the heart of a lost Princess (by offering her a drink of water) began life demonstrably as a stage droll, “*Diphilo and Granida*”, published in 1672. It turns up, duly truncated and garbled, as an independent entertainment recorded by Alfred Williams at Cricklade in Wiltshire as performed at the celebration of the summer bark harvest, and also turns up, I would aver even more truncated and garbled, in the Hero Combat Play from Keynsham, as published by Baskervill.

But there are also many dramatic wooing games which did not make it into mummers' plays and which have suffered the indignity of being recorded and published as “folk-songs”. I would hazard the assertion that almost any English folksong in which both a wooer and the girl wooed are assigned direct speech was once performed *par personnages* - i.e. with the dialogue distributed between different performers - and their dialogue enhanced by movement, action, posture, gesture, facial expression and tone of voice, all of which effectively qualifies these “songs” as Traditional Drama, as dramatic

games. I am thinking of songs like “Dicky of Taunton Dene”, “Nicholas Wood”, “Oh No John”, “Ripest Apples”, “The Key to my Heart” (“My Man John”). Thus redefined they would join the many wooing games already acknowledged as such, like: “Jenny Jones” (and its Scottish analogue, “Janet Jo”), “Andrew Carr”, and “The Lady on the Mountain”.

As with the case of “The Shepherd and the Maiden”, some of these may be derivatives of sub-dramatic entertainments from the popular theatre: *Diphilo and Granida* was a droll; wooing songs accompanied by dancing (as sometimes reported) may rather qualify as, or be descended from, stage jigs. But in the case of wooing games there is evidence enough to demonstrate a tradition of games prior to, and independent of, the popular theatre. I have assembled in the Appendix the most striking evidence for this: a 1589 reference by George Puttenham (item 11) to an “Interlude” he wrote himself which involved a wooing which included a line: “I cannot come every day to woo” familiar from popular wooing songs (and echoed by Shakespeare in *The Taming of the Shrew*); an early fragment (item 12) of a John wooing Joan song, part of a substantial sequence of Joan and John songs with a good popular pedigree, some of which are documented (through quotation in other texts) to the mid or early sixteenth century; and courtesy of Terry Gunnell (item 13) a pretty convincing reference to this kind of thing from 13th century Iceland.

But if such is the strength of the historical tradition of games involving the wooing motif (and their value in discussing other items on my agenda), I am more interested in the way the wooing material crosses boundaries between different *structural* categories of games. In performance terms, for example:

- Some wooing games involve dialogue which is merely spoken some dialogue which is sung;
- Some wooing games have dialogue sung to the accompaniment of dancing some have mimetic dancing without dialogue and there are probably some which have mimetic action but no dancing or dialogue.

And if the same matter can be spread across several forms, so likewise, can a single form be used for the presentation of very diverse matters. I offer as a final illustration one of the most intriguing items (no. 15) in the Appendix, the Provençal *carole* of about 1200: “A 1'entrada del terns clar” (“At the beginning of the fine weather [i.e. spring]”). Medieval churchmen inveighed in vain for almost a millennium against women and girls performing lascivious dance-songs on holy days: this is probably the closest we will ever come to seeing the text of one. Evidently like most *caroles* it is designed to be performed by a foresanger, aided by a circle of dancers, who join in the refrain But this is a *carole* with what the *Romance of the Rose* calls a *balerie*: dramatic action (like the wooing action of “The Lady on Yonder Hill”). For the dialogue suggests that while within the circle (as still in children's ring-games), the Queen of Spring chooses her lover the jealous King seeks to break into the circle from outside.

I would assert that despite the striking difference in matter (and the geographical separation) in structural terms this is virtually identical with the preceding item (no. 14), the 17th-century dance-game of “King Valdemar”, reported from Gotland, Sweden, in the 17th century Here the circle of dancers represents instead the Swedish nation, and the figure outside trying to get in is derided not as a jealous husband but as the Danish King Valdemar, whose unsuccessful attempt at invasion is here sarcastically commemorated. (We may recall the familiar records of Scottish maidens deriding English defeats in ring-dances.)

Thus I anticipate an intriguing phase of research largely devoted to drawing diagrams. It's not so much a matter of wooing games versus beast games, as of:

- linear games versus circular games;
- then circular games in which things happen inside the circle versus those in which things happen outside the circle;
- games in which individuals seek to become part of the circle versus those in which members of the circle seek to become individuals;
- games in which people outside the circle try to get in versus games in which people inside the circle try to get out:

A kind of "empirical structuralism" of which Propp and Levi Strauss probably wouldn't approve - but I hope Axel Olrik would.

Appendix

Earlier Studies in this Sequence

1. "English Folk Drama in the Eighteenth Century: A Defense of the Revesby Sword Play". *Comparative Drama*. 15 (1981), 3-29.

2. "English Folk Drama and the Early German *Fastnachtspiele*". *Renaissance Drama*. NS. 13 (1982), 1-34.

3. "Early English Traditional Drama: Approaches and Perspectives". *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*. 25 (1983, for 1982), 1-30.

4. "Tudor Interludes and the Winter Revels". *Medieval English Theatre*. 6.1 (July, 1984), 16- 27.

5. "Ritual and Vaudeville: The Dramaturgy of the English Folk Plays". *Traditional Drama Studies*. 2 (1988), 45-68.

6. "Customary Drama: Towards a Contextual Typology". *Newsletter of the Traditional Drama Research Group*. 7.4 (1990), 49-56.

7. "Customary Drama: Social and Spatial Patterning in Traditional Encounters". *Folk Music Journal.* 7.1 (1995), 27-42.

8/9. "Folk Drama"; "Mumming". *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music and Art*. Ed. Thomas A. Green. 2 vols. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1997, I, 205-212; II, 566-67.

10. "Protesting Inversions: Charivary as Folk Pageantry and Folk-Law". *Medieval English Theatre.* 21 (2000, for 1999), 21-51.

11. "Local and 'Customary' Drama". *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Cultur*e. Ed. Michael Hattaway. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000, pp. 464-76.

12. "'This man is Pyramus': A Pre-History of the English Mummers' Plays". *Medieval English Theatre*. 22 (2001 for 2000), 70-99.

13. Ed. [with Leif Søndergaard] "Traditions of the people: customs and folk drama". *The Medieval European Stage, 500 - 1550*. Ed. William Tydeman Theatre in Europe: a documentary history. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 615-665.

14. "The Morphology of the Parade". *Proceedings* of 10th Colloquium of Societe Internationale pour 1'Etude du Theatre Medieval, Groningen, Netherlands, 2-7 July, 2001. *European Medieval Theatre*. 6 (2003 for 2002), 1-30

15. "'I am here, Syre Cristesmasse': Dramatic Aspects of Early Poetry and Song". Forthcoming in: *European Medieval Drama*. 7 (2003).

Illustrative Material

Game Auspices: Lyke-Wakes

1. Lyke-Wake Games in 17th Century Yorkshire

John Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme* (late 17th century); pr. *Three Prose Works*, ed. John Buchanan-Brown (Carbondale, 1972), p. 173

> At the funerals in Yorkshire, to this day, they continue the custom of **watching and sitting-up all night** till the body is interred. In the interim some kneel down and pray (by the corpse), some play at cards, some drink and take tobacco: they have also **mimical plays and sports**, e.g. they choose a simple young fellow to be a Judge, then the suppliants (having first blacked their hands by rubbing it under the bottom of the pot), beseech his Lordship: and smut all his face. They play likewise at Hot Cockles.

Game Auspices: Harvest Revels

2. Tooth-Extraction Routine at Suffolk Harvest Suppers

Suffolk, early 19th cent. Wm. & Hugh Raynbird, *On the Agriculture of Suffolk* (1849), cited in Alex Helm, *The English Mummers' Play* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1981), p. 29.

> A rustic drama is usually acted on these occasions ...; one of the revellers, habited as a female, feigns to be taken with violent toothache, and the 'doctor' is sent for. He soon appears mounted on the back of one of the other men (the 'horse' has a milking stool to bear his hands upon to keep his back level); the 'doctor' brings with him the tongs which he uses for the purpose of extracting the tooth; this is a piece of tobacco pipe placed in the mouth; a fainting takes place from the violence of the operation, and the bellows are employed as a means of restoring the pretended sufferer.

Game Auspices: Winter Revels (+ Visit)

3. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

(alliterative Arthurian romance, second half of 14th century) *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Ed. R.A. Waldron. York Medieval Texts. London: Arnold, 1970; repr. 1971.

37-40	This kyng lay at Camylot upon **Krystmasse** With mony luflych lorde, ledes of the best - Rekenly of the Rounde Table alle tho rich brether - With rych revel oryght and rechles merthes.
136-140	Ther **hales in at the halle dor an aghlich mayster**, On the most on the molde on mesure hyghe; From the swyre to the swange so sware and so thik, And his lyndes and his lymes so longe and so grete, **Half-etayn** in erde I hope that he were, ...
150	And over al enker **grene**. ...
206	Bot in his on honde he hade a **holyn bobbe** ...
208	And an **ax** in his other, a hoge and unmete, ...
283-4 [Green Knight:]	... I crave in this court a **Crystemas gomen**, For hit is Yol and Newe Yer, ...

471-3 [King Arthur:] **Wel bycommes such craft upon Cristmasse -**
Laykyng of enterludes, to laghe and to syng -
Among thise kynde caroles of knyghtes and ladyes.

Medieval to Modern Continuity

Skewer The Goose [“Farte Pricke in Cule”]

4. Henry Medwall. Fulgens & Lucres, ca 1495.

The Plays of Henry Medwall. Ed. Alan Nelson. Tudor Interludes. Cambridge: Brewer, 1980. [in course of sub-plot's competitive wooing between servants (A and B) for favour of maidservant (*Ancilla*)

B.	Well, I shall do more for your love! Evyn here I cast to hym my glove Or ever I hens goo, On the condycion that in the playne fylde I shall mete hym with spere and shelde.	1150
	... we shall nede no horse ne mule, But let us j[o]ust at **farte pryke in cule**.	1168
[to *Ancilla*]	Go to, **bynd me** fyrst, hardely. So, lo, now, geve me my **spere**, And put me a **staffe thorow here** - Than am I all redy.	1185
Ancilla [to A]	Come of now, **syt downe on the grounde** Evyn upon thy tayle.	1196

5. Josias Bodley. Descriptio itineris Capitanei Josiae Bodley in Leculiam apud Ultoniensis. Ann. 1602 [Journey to Lecale].

MS. quoted in anon, “Bodley's Visit to Lecale, County of Down, A.D. 1602-3”, *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 2 (1854), 73-99, cited and translated in Alan J. Fletcher, "“Farte Prycke in Cule': A Late-Elizabethan Analogue from Ireland”. *METh*, 8.2 (1986), 134-9, pp. 135-6.

Bodley's description is part of his account of **Christmas in the household of Sir Richard Moryson** at Downpatrick, co. Down.

> Now I will tell of another jest or gambol which, among many, the domestics of Master Moryson presented for us. Two servants **squatted on the ground** in the way women do ...when they defecate in open field, except that the servants' backsides pressed upon the ground. Their **hands were tied together so that they embraced their knees between them, and a stick was placed between the bend of their arms and legs so that they could not move their arms in any way. Between forefinger and thumb of each hand they held a certain small stick of about a foot in length and sharpened at the further end**. These two servants are placed in the following way: one faces the other at about an ell's distance. When these things have been arranged, the two start to approach each other, and tackling with his feet, each tries to topple his opponent; for once thrown over he can never recover himself, but he offers his backside to be prodded with the small stick previously mentioned.

The *UJA* article claims that this game persisted in Ulster into the nineteenth century as “Skiver [Skewer] the Goose”, performed at **Harvest, Halloween and Christmas revels**.

6. Shiver the Goose

Gomme, Lady Alice Bertha. *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland and Ireland*. 2 vols. London, 1894-8; repr. with Introduction by Dorothy Howard, New York: Dover, 1964, II, 192.

Citing Patterson's Antrim and Down Glossary:

> A boy's game. Two persons are **trussed somewhat like fowls**; they then **hop about** on their 'hunkers', each trying to upset the other.

Early Beast Figures: Pictorial Evidence

7. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. MS Bodley 264, f. 70r

Bruges, 1338-44; MS of Li romans d'Alixandre with illustrations by Jehan de Grise of Bruges (including the frequently reproduced depictions of lines of dancers wearing beast-masks).

> Stag with two human rear legs, at front a pole topped by stag-head with antlers, all covered in furry cloth; facing a minstrel (pipe and drum) standing on one leg.

Here from The Cambridge Cultural History of Britain. Ed. Boris Ford. Vol. n. Medieval Britain. Cambridge: CUP, 1992, col. pi.4

8. Paris. Bibliotheque Nationale. MS. fr. 95, fol. 261.

Picardy, late 13th century; MS of Robert de Boron's L'Histoire du Graal.

> Single upright figure encased in narrow tube of cloth (man's face peeping out of a slit), with antlered head on top; led by a walking minstrel (bagpipe).

Here from Randall, Lilian M.C. Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts. Berkeley: U of California P, 1966, PI. LXXXIII, No.446.

Early Beast Figures: Textual Evidence

9. Sir David Lyndesay. Ane Satyrs of the Thrie Estaits: "Cupar Banns", 1552.

The Works of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount 1490 - 1555. Ed. Douglas Hamer. Vol. II. *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*. Scottish Text Society. Edinburgh and London, 1931, "Proclamatiouns maid in cowpar of ffyffe".

[The calling of the banns for the upcoming performance of the Satire includes a farcical dramatic entertainment, in which an Old Man, a Courtier, a Merchant and a Fool take turns (cf. Lincolnshire wooing plays) to woo a young wife ("Bessy"), together with a sub-plot in which the Fool reveals the cowardice of the braggart soldier, Fynlaw of the Foot-band.

140-41	*Fool.*	I tak on hand or I steir of this steid his crakkand cairle to fie with ane **scheip heid.**
238-47SD	*Fynlaw.*	Now is nocht this ane grit dispyte, That nane with me will fecht nor flyte. War golias in to this steid I dowt nocht to stryk of his heid. This is the swerd that slew gray steill Nocht half ane myle be3ond kynneill. I was that nobill eampioun That slew schir bews of sowth hamtoun. Hector of troy; gawyne, or golias Had nevir half sa mekle hardiness.
	Heir *sail the fuile cum in with* ***ane scheip heid on ane staff*** *and fynlaw sall bef*leit.	
257		**He gaippis**, he gloweris, ...
265-9		Na, now he cumis evin for to sla me; For godis saik, schiris, now keip him fre me. I see not ellis bot tak and slae. Wow, mak me rowme and lat me gae.

10. Shoeing/Riding the Wild Mare

Robert Herrick. “A New-Yeares gift to Sir Simeon Steward”. *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*. Ed. J. Max Patrick. New York: Doubleday, 1963; repr. New York: New York University Press, 1963; repr. New York: Norton, 1968, H-319, 11. 15-16. [in list of “Christmas sports”:]

> the care/ That young men have to **shooe the Mare**:”

Beaumont, Francis. *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Ed. J. Doebler. Lincoln, Nebraska, 1967, I.i.435ff. [Citizen's Wife recommends servant Ralph as a stage-player:]

> — Sweetheart, i'faith, I'll have Rafe come and do some of his gambols.
> — He'll **ride the wild mare**, gentlemen, 'twould do your hearts good to see him.

John Taylor. *Complaint of Christmas* [1631], p. 23, cited in Mildred Campbell, *The English Yeoman under Elizabeth and the Early Stuarts* (London, 1960; repr. 1967, p. 299. [Description of Christmas evening revels in farmer's house; list of “gambols” performed by “jolly youths” includes:]

> some shod the wild mare

Early Wooing Games

11. George Puttenham. “The Wooer” (ca 1589)

An “Enterlude”, lost, but described and quoted from in George Puttenham. *The Arte of English Poesie* [1589]. Ed. G.D. Willcock & A. Walker. 1936; repr. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970), p. 203 (and cf. p. 226 for another extract - two couplets on the folly of stupid husbands).

> ... the countrey clowne came & woed a young maide of the Citie, and being agreeued to come so oft, and not to haue his answere, said to the old nurse very impatiently,
>
> > Iche pray you good mother tell our young dame,
> > Whence I am come and what is my name,
> > I cannot come a wooing every day.
>
> Qoth the nurse.
>
> > They be lubbers not louers that so vse to say.

12. “Joan qd John”

Late 16th century, single stanza on unattached vellum leaf of unknown provenance, Western Reserve University Library.

Here from John M. Ward. “Joan qd John and Other Fragments at Western Reserve University”. *Apects of Medieval and Renaissance Music*. Ed. Jan LaRue (New York: Norton, 1966), pp. 832- 55, at p. 833.

> Joan qd John when wyll this be
> tell me when wilt thou marrie me
> my cowe and eke my calf & rent
> my land and all my tenement
> saie Joan said John what wilt thow doe
> I cannot come every daie to wooe.

Early Dance-Games

13. Wooing Dance-Games in 13th century Iceland

Jóns saga helga (orig. composed in Latin at beg. of 13th cent.) Icelandic version cited and trans. Terry Gunnell, *The Origins of Drama in Scandinavia* (Woodbridge: brewer, 1995), p. 346.

> Before the holy Jon became bishop there used to be a popular game [*leikr*] in which, as part of a dance, a man would sing erotic and obscene verses to a woman, and a woman love-verses to a man; he had this game stopped and strongly prohibited.

14. The dance-game of King Valdemar, Gotland, 17th century

Hans Nielssen Strelow, *Guthilandiske Cronica* (Copenhagen, 1633), pp. 168-70, under the year 1361; repr. in *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, vol. IV, ed. Svend Grundtvig (1869-83; repr. Copenhagen, 1966), p. 480. Trans. Tom Pettitt & Leif Søndergaard. op. cit., No.J70, at p. 660.

> When the people of Gotland heard of King Valdemar [of Denmark's] arrival and expedition, they were by no means concerned, in view of the large forces they could deploy, but made great scorn and pastime of it (although none should scorn their enemies) in their assemblies, revels and feasts, in that they **made a game** of his military preparations which was to be played by groups at all their assemblies, particularly at Shrovetide, **as it is still played in our Christmas revels**: they take each other by the hands, make a circle or ring, and Valdemar is to go outside [it] and try to sneak in; the one he gets past must be punished.

15. "A I'entrada del terns clar". Provencal carole, ca 1200.

Joseph Bédier. "Les fêtes de mai". *Revue des deux mondes*. 4th ser. 135 (1896), 146-72, at pp. 158-59.	Peter Dronke. *The Medieval Lyric*. London: Hutchinson, 1968, pp. 196-97. [sts. 1-3 + refrain, adapted tp; sts. 4-5 to]
1. A I'entrada del tems elar, eya. Per joja recomençar, eya, E per jelos irritar, eya. Vol la regina mostrar Qu'el est si amoroza.	At the beginning of the fine weather To make joy begin again, And to annoy the cuckolds The Queen wants to show That she is in love
A la vi' a la via, jelos, *Laissaz nos, laissaz nos* *Bailor entre nos, entre nos.*	*Be gone, be gone, Cuckolds* *Leave us alone, leave us alone* ***To dance by ourselves**, by ourselves*
2. El' a fait per lot mandar, eya Non sia jusqu'a la mar, eya. Piucela ni bachalar, eya. Que tuit non venguan dançar En la dansa jojoza.	She has sent her command through the world From here to the ocean No girl and no young man Shall fail to **come and dance** In the joyous dance.
3. Lo reis i ven d'autra part, eya, Per la dansa destorbar, eya, Que el es en cremetar, eya, Que om no li voill emblar La regin'avrilloza.	The King comes on from the other side In order to disrupt the dance, For he is all aghast That someone wants to rob him Of the April Queen.
4. Mais per nient lo vol far, eya.	But by no means will she have him,

Qu'ela n'a sonh de viellart, eya.	She doesn't want an old man
Mais d'un leugier bachalar, eya.	But a light bachelor
Qui ben sapcha solacar	Who well knows how to please
La domna savoroza.	The sensuous lady.

16. Danish Dance-Game of "Bovi" (second half of thirteenth century)

Durham Cathedral Chapter Library MS. B.IV.19. [A collection of Latin exempla compiled by an anonymous English Franciscan, including material copied from contemporary published collections and original material from oral tradition (as evidently in this instance)].

Jorgen & Axel Olrik, "Kvindegilde i Middelalderen", *Danske Studier*. (1907), 175-76, at p. 175. Trans. Tom Pettitt & Leif Søndergaard. *The Medieval European Stage, 500 - 1550*. Ed. William Tydeman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 615-665, No.J68, at p. 659.

> ... [Brother Peder told us that] in his homeland, Denmark, it is the custom that when women are lying-in the neighbouring wives come and help them to keep cheerful with dancing and uninhibited songs. So it happened that one time when a group of women had assembled for a lying-in and were intent on making a row in accordance with the country's evil custom, they **assembled a bundle of straw and formed it into the likeness of a man, with arms of straw, put a belt and hat on him, and called him "Bovi".** Then they performed their **ring-dance, and two women jumped up and sang with him between them, and between the verses**, as the custom is, they **turned to him with unseemly gestures and said to him: "Sing with us, Bovi, sing with us; why are you silent?"** And at once the devil, who had these wretched women in his power, replied: "Oh yes, I shall sing!" and he (not the bundle itself of course, but the devil sitting in it) screamed out and gave such a powerful yell that some of them fell down dead, while others were struck with such horror and fear that they were ill for a long time afterwards and barely escaped with their lives.

17. Wooing of Moll

"Good Morning Moll" Alfred Williams, ed. *Folk-Songs of the Upper Thames*. London, 1923, pp. 95-7.	**Worcestershire: Broadway** Alex Helm, *English Mummers' Play* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1980), pp. 34-6, 11. 111-42
1	*St George*.
Good morning, Moll! Where art thou going	Sweet Moll, Sweet Moll, where art thou going,
All in the morning gay?	So early and so soon?
I have something to say to thee,	I have something to thee to say,
Sweet Moll, if thou wilt stay.	If yet that thou canst stay.
2	*Sweet Moll*.
What hast thou got to say to me?	What hast thou got to say?
Come, tell unto me now.	Pray tell it to me now,
For I do mean to spend my time	For I am spending my time
In a way I know not how.	In what I can't tell how.
3	*St George*.
Our friends and parents are well agreed	Sweet Moll, thy parents and mine had well

That married we shall be. So forth pull down thy lofty high looks, And swop thy love to me.	agreed That married we should be, So pull down they lofty looks, And fix thy love on me
4	*Sweet Moll*
Do you think I would wed with a clown? No! better I was bred. For I must have a handsome young man 'For ever I will wed.	Think I would wed with thee, thou clown And lose my maiden head, When I could get a handsome man To lie with me in bed?
5	*St George*
What! byent I handsome enough for thee. With my double leather breech. A gold-laced band about my neck? Look on me the other twitch.	Ain't I as handsome as you, Sweet Moll, With my dandy leather breeches, And a band all round my middle so small Pray give me a few more twitches?
6	
Now I must have some butcher's meat,	
7	
Won't some good fat bacon serve thy turn?	
8	*Sweet Moll*

Now I must have a silken gown,
And petticoats likewise,
My stockings of the finest silk,
And my shoes of the highest price
	//I must have a little tweeking page
	//That speaks a peevish tongue
	//And a pair of silver buckles
	//Which ladies oft have on.

9	*St George*

Won't one good garment serve thy turn,
And petticoats likewise;
Thy stockings of a good true blue,
And they shoes of the lowest price?
	//Sweet Moll, Sweet Moll, thou hast no need
	//To talk o' suchlike things,
	//As was never bred up in a palace
	//Among the lords and dukes and kings.

10	
I've been to a boarding school, And better was a bred, And I will have a handsome man 'For ever I will wed.	
11	
A little learning I have had, And that I've most forgot; But if thou wilt not marry me **There puts and end to that**.	The little thou hast learnt thereof, Thou hast almost forgot, And if thou wilt not marry me Then thou shalt go and rot.

18. "Coxcomb" Exchange

"Lady on Yonder Hill" Alice Bertha Gomme, *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1894-8; repr. New York, 1964), I, 323, II (from Suffolk).	**Worcestershire: Broadway** Helm, *loc.cit*., 11.
[*Gentleman*] There stands a lady on yonder hill,	 [Following St George slaying Soldier]

	Who she is I cannot tell;	
	I'll go court her for her beauty,	// *English Lady*
5.	Whether she answers me yes or no.	//Here am I, the English Lady
		St George.
	Madam, I bow vounce to thee.	Madam, to thee I humbly bend.
		English Lady.
		I think you not to be my friend.
10.	[*Lady*]	*St George*.
	Sir, have I ever done thee any harm?	For why, madam? Did I ever do you harm?
	[*Gentleman*]	*English Lady.*
	Coxconian!	Yes, you saucy coxcomb! Get you gone!
	[Lady]	*St George*.
15.	Coxconian is not my name;	Saucy coxcomb"!
	'tis Hers and Kers, and Willis and Cave.	Madam, that word deserves a stab.
	[*Gentleman*]	*English Lady*.
	Stab me, ha! ha! little I fear.	A Stab from thee the least I fear.
		Appoint a place: I'll meet thee there,
20.	Over the waters there are but nine,	I'll cross the river at the hour of five
	I'll meet you a man alive.	I'll meet you there if I'm alive.
		St George.
	Over the waters there are but ten,	I'll cross the water at the hour of ten
	I'll meet you there five thousand.	And meet you with a hundred men.
25.		*English Lady*
		Halt, halt, St George!
		Why not have me for a wife?
		See what a beautiful lady I am!
		St George
30.		That word from thee deserves a stab.
		I'll draw out my knife
		And end thy worthless life.
		Kills English Lady
		who falls in Father Christmas' arms
35.		*Doctor*
	Rise up, rise up, my pretty fair maid.	In comes I a doctor, a doctor sure and good,
	You're only in a trance;	With my sword I'll staunch the blood;
	Rise up, rise up, my pretty fair maid.	And I'll be bound by a fifty pound bond
	And we will have a dance.	If she doesn't arise and come to me
40.	[*Lifts her up*]	*She gets up*

... the children form a ring, a boy and girl being in the centre. The boy is called a gentleman and the girl as lady. The gentleman commences by singing first verse. Then they say alternately the questions and answers. When the gentleman says the lines commencing, "Stab me", he pretends to stab the lady, who falls on the ground. Then he walks round the lady and sings the last verse, "Rise up", and lifts up the lady.

Dramatic Games and the (Hero Combat) Mummers' Plays

Analogous Figures and Sequences

Dramatic Game	**Mummers' Play**
"***Shepherd and Maiden***"	
(*Diphilo and Granida*, 1672)	Som: Keynsham
Cricklade bark harvest & Christmas revels	Som: Castle Carey (prob.)
Tooth Extraction	[**applied to slain Hero**]
harvest home show, Suffolk	"extended cure" of Chilterns' plays
- leads to fainting and cure (bellows)	(Jack Finney)
	[**free-standing**]
	Gloucs: Higham [unslain Old Lady]
	Oxf: Islip [slain wife of drunkard]
	War: Ilmington [unslain Molly]
Riding/Shoeing the Wild Mare	
Early-modern Christmas gambol	Doctor's horse in extended-cure plays
	(+ cf. independent beast- quêtes,
	incl. shoeing of "[Poor] Old Horse")
Beasts	
[mischief-making]	"Hob"/"Dick" of Souling plays & quêtes
Old Sow (Lines, harvest homes)	(cf. "Ball" of Pace-egging quêtes)
Crane (Peterb. harvest homes)	
Speckled Stallion (Irish lyke-wakes)	
Drunkard Routine	
"Scotch Peddlars" (Northants harvest)	Yorks: Keighley
"Old Glenae"	Oxf: Islip [leads to slaying and cure]
(Sc. Lowland wedding feasts)	
Domestic Altercation	[Jan and Bet]
"Dusty Miller" (Northants harvest)	Wight: Bembridge
- leads to slaying & cure	Dorset: unloc.x2: leads to slaying and cure
"Black-Faced Woman" (Gaelic Scotland)	Dorset: Symondsbury: leads to slaying and cure
- leads to slaying & cure	
Wooing of Moll	
song: "Sweet Moll"; "Good Morning Moll"	
- with dance	Som: Keynsham
and dramatic elements	Worc: Broadway: leads to slaying and cure
	Wilts: Lydiard Millicent, Highworth
"Coxcomb" Exchange	
song/dialogue "Lady on Yonder Hill"	Chapbook ("Peace Egg"): free standing
(can lead to slaying & revival)	- + Northern derivatives
Kent independent play	Worc: Broadway: leads to slaying and cure
	Suss: Iping: free-standing (spoken by heroes)
	Som: Minehead: free standing (happy ending)
	Berks: West Woodhay: leads to slaying
	Glouc: Higham: leads to slaying & cure.
Hero Combat	*passim* - invariably leads to cure (by Doctor)
"The Building of the Fort" & "Sir Sopin"	
- both Irish lyke-wake games	
- both lead to cure (by Doctor)	