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OU SE TROUVE CE JEU DE MUMMERS?

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In his books on English folk plays, E.K. Chambers (1903 & 1933) referred to a paper by Mrs. H.G.M. Murray-Aynsley (1889) in the *Revue des Traditions Populaires*. In it she gave the texts of two Plough Monday plays. Chambers gave no date for the publication in his references, and unfortunately the relevant issue is missing from the Folklore Society Library. On obtaining a copy on interlibrary loan from France, I was unable to confirm a date for the paper, but the gap in the Folklore Society stock would indicate the year 1889.

This paper in French is divided into four chapters. Chapter I reviews the history of drama, encompassing Indian and Roman drama, as well as Miracle and Morality plays. Chapter II describes the Salisbury Giant, St. Christopher, and the hobby horse Hob Nob.

Chapter III gives the full text (125 lines) of a Plough Monday play from Notts. The location is not given, but was identified by Chambers as Cropwell, Notts. The translation certainly tallies with Chaworth-Musters' (1890) English publication of the text. I find it amusing that the French translation should have been published before the English original.

Chapter IV gives the full text (103 lines) of an unlocated Lincolnshire Plough Monday play. Retranslating back from French, the characters are: Tom Fool (or Tom the Fool), Sergeant, Ribboner, Dame Jane, Lady Bright and Gay, Esem Esqueesem, and Doctor.

I reprint below the French version of this last text. Bearing in mind how difficult it can be to understand the words of these plays in their original English, it is interesting to see how the translation into French has been handled!

What village did this play come from? Clearly Chambers had not been able to find out, since he referred to it throughout only as the "Lincolnshire play". It is not listed in M.W. Barley's (1953) key work, and it does not appear in *English Ritual Drama* (E.C. Cawte et al., 1967) - although one can never be quite sure!

Can anyone help locate it? The key to solving this mystery is probably the character "Esem Esqueesem". This character's name is commonly found in a wide variety of spellings, but this spelling appears unique. I assume this is the spelling of the original, since it is so impossible to translate that it surely must have been left verbatim.

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CHAPITRE IV.

Plough Monday, ou le lundi de la Charrue, se célèbre en Lincolnshire de la manière suivante : Les hommes s'attellent à la charrue avec des cordes, chacun se met un sarreau propre ce jour-là.

Bien qu'il n'y ait que sept au lieu de dix acteurs, les danseurs sont illimités : en tête de la procession marche un homme travesti en vieille femme qu'on appelle Bessy, qui danse avec tout le monde. *Thomas le Hardi* devient Tom le Bouffon, et Esem Esquesem est le représentant du Belzébuth de du Nottinghamshire. Autrefois, Bessy portait une queue de vache sous sa robe, qu'elle tenait toujours à la main en dansant, mais depuis quelque temps cela ne se fait plus.

Si le propriétaire d'une maison ne leur donne pas d'argent, dans un clin d'œil on passe la charrue à travers le gazon ou le jardin devant sa demeure, et cette espace devient un champ arable.

PERSONNAGES DU DRAME.

1. *Tom le Bouffon.*
2. *Le sergent.*
3. *Le Ribbenor.*
4. *Madame Jeanne.*
5. *La dame.*
6. *Esem Esquesem (le diable).*
7. *Le médecin.*

Le spectacle commence avec l'entrée de :

Tom le Bouffon. Me voilà, moi, pour la première fois ; beaucoup d'acteurs sont à la porte, il y en a qui dansent, et il y en a qui chantent, avec votre permission ils entreront.

Le sergent. Me voici, moi, un brave sergent, je viens d'arriver ici il y a un instant ; j'ai reçu la commande de la Reine d'enrôler tout homme qui suit charette, cheval, ou charrue, drouineurs, tailleurs, colporteurs, cloutiers, je fais des avances à tout le monde, plus j'entends jouer le violon, mieux je danse.

Le Bouffon. Vous dansez ! vous !

Le sergent. Mais oui, Tom, je suis capable de danser, chanter et de réciter.

Le Bouffon. Vous dansez, chantez, et récitez ! — Je m'éloignerai au plus vite.

Le sergent. Venez, mes garçons, c'est maintenant qu'il faut vous enrôler. Enrôlez-vous, et n'ayez aucune crainte ; vous aurez toutes sortes de liqueurs et vous embrasserez aussi la jolie fillette.

Ribbenor. Me voici, moi, qui viens de perdre ma fiancée, des larmes coulent tout le long de mon visage, — aie pitié de mon état. Une demoiselle trompeuse m'a réduit au désespoir.

Le Bouffon. Ranime-toi, — mon vieux, tu n'en mourras pas, bientôt peut-être, la dame entrera.

La dame. Voici la dame, gaie et spirituelle des malheurs et des enchantements, depuis qu'on a enlevé mon bien-aimé des bras de son amante.

Le sergent. N'as-tu pas envie de t'enrôler, jeune homme? — Oui. — Sans souci et de bonne volonté? — Oui. — Prenez ce brillant schelling.

La dame. Puisque mon amant s'est enrôlé et s'est fait Vollentur (*sic*) je ne soupirerai plus. Je ne verserai pas une larme, à propos de lui. Je n'ai jamais eu l'intention de devenir sa femme, je le fais savoir, — j'en trouverai un autre amant, et j'irai avec lui.

Le Bouffon. M'aimes-tu, ma belle?

La dame. Mais oui, Tommy, hélas! je t'aime à mon grand regret. Quel sera notre jour de noce?

Le Bouffon. Demain, ma chère.

Tous les quatre répètent. « Tit-a rue a laddy O! tu te marieras demain, Tommy! »

Le Bouffon. Je suis venu vous inviter tous, *stick jacks* (bénêts, nigauds), à nos fiançailles demain, ce que vous préférez (en fait de provisions) apportez-le avec vous; je sais ce que nous préférons, moi et cette dame, — et nous l'aurons, — une cuisse d'alouette, un pou à rôtir, un pain de deux sous, et de quoi boire à la santé de tous, — retournez sur vos pas, — mes garçons, à demain les noces.

Madame Jeanne. Me voilà, moi. — Dame Jeanne, avec un cou aussi long que celui d'une grue, dib-dab, à travers la prairie. Autrefois je fus une florissante jeune fille, maintenant je suis une véritable vieille veuve. Allow (1)! Tommy, mon garçon, je t'ai cherché pendant longtemps, et maintenant je t'ai attrapé, comme tu as épuisé tous les plaisirs de la vie; Tommy, mon garçon, prends ton enfant.

Thomas le Bouffon. Il ne m'appartient pas.

Madame Jeanne. Regarde donc ses yeux, son nez, et son menton, il te ressemble comme un pois à l'autre.

Le Bouffon. Qui t'a dit de l'apporter ici?

Madame Jeanne. Le surveillant des pauvres m'a dit de donner cet enfant au plus grand imbécile de ma connaissance, et je pensais que tu l'étais.

Le Bouffon. Donnez-le à la pompe du village, vieille insolente.

Madame Jeanne. Il n'y a pas de quoi vous remercier, vieux déguenillé.

Esem Esquesem. Me voilà, moi, vieux Esem Esquesem: sur mon dos, je porte mon balai, dans la main une poêle à frire de cuir blanc; ne vous paraît-il pas que je suis un vieux drôle, il me semble. Mon métier est celui de faiseur de balais, si vous ne me croyez pas, regardez mon échantillon.

(1) Exclamation, — devrait être Hullo!

Ribbenor. Ma tête est de fer, mon corps d'acier, mes mains et mes os de la jambe sont des articulations, personne ne peut me faire souffrir (1).

Sergent. Personne ne peut te faire souffrir ?

Ribbenor. Je ferai volte-face plusieurs fois de suite et nous verrons si quelqu'un ose me regarder face à face.

Sergent. Je te couperai en petits morceaux, je t'écraserai, et j'enverrai ces morceaux à la Jammacia (2) pour faire du hachis (3).

Esem Esquesem. Je ferai le troisième.

Sergent. Cinq livres sterling pour un médecin.

Le Bouffon. Dix livres pour qu'il ne vienne pas.

Sergent. Quinze pour qu'il vienne et qu'il vienne vite.

Le médecin. Voici le médecin.

Le Bouffon. Vous ! le médecin !

Le médecin. Mais oui, moi, un médecin.

Le Bouffon. Comment est-il arrivé que vous soyez devenu médecin ?

Le médecin. J'ai voyagé dans ce but.

Le Bouffon. Où avez-vous voyagé ?

Le médecin. J'ai voyagé à côté du feu, du feu près du lit, du lit jusqu'à l'ancienne armoire dans un coin chez ma grand-mère ; d'où j'ai tiré plusieurs morceaux de pâté froid, c'est cela qui m'a rendu si beau garçon.

Le Bouffon. Quelles douleurs guérissez-vous, M. le médecin ?

Le médecin. Je guéris le hipsy, pipsy, polsy, et les grandes douleurs à l'extérieur et à l'intérieur, je puis aussi tirer une jambe, remboiter une dent, et presque ressusciter cet homme mort. — Oui, je tiens dans la poche de mon gilet des échasses pour les nains (4), des béquilles pour les sauterelles, des lunettes de bois pour les bourdons aveugles, et des anneaux pour les singes à queue rayée.

Le Bouffon. Vous êtes très habile, M. le médecin, vous ferez bien d'exercer votre talent ici.

Le médecin. Vous avez raison, Thomas, je le ferai.

Le Bouffon. Je tâterai le pouls à ce vicillard, — son pouls est-il dans cet endroit ?

Le médecin. Oui, je crois que c'est l'endroit le plus régulier que possède ce vicillard.

Le Bouffon. Je ne l'aurais pas cru, moi !

Le médecin. Tiens, je ne l'aurais pas cru d'un bouffon comme toi ; ce vicillard n'est pas mort, il est dans un état de catalepsie.

Le Bouffon. Qu'est-ce que c'est que cela ? — Il s'est nourri pendant trois semaines moins une quinzaine, de tiges de pommes de terre crues ; ce n'est pas tout, bouffon, il vient d'essayer à avaler le vieux brancard, et il ne peut pas en digérer les roues.

(1) Articulations, en anglais, — Knuckle bones (ainsi appelés par le bas peuple).

(2) La Jamaïque.

(3) Mince pies, ou pâtés de Noël..

(4) Dans l'original, — *shrimps* — *crevettes* — on appelle ainsi un enfant qui est très petit de son âge.

Le Bouffon. O ! le pauvre vieux imbécile !

Le médecin. Justement, c'est mon avis, mais on se moquait de moi, le vieux n'est pas mort, il est tombé en catalepsie, s'il peut danser, nous pouvons chanter, — allons, mon vieux — commençons.

CHANSON

« Bon maître et bonne maîtresse, quand vous vous asseyez près du feu, pensez tant soit peu à nous autres, pauvres valets de charrue, qui labourons par la boue et par la fange ; la fange est si profonde, l'eau coule si claire, nous vous remercions pour des étrennes et une cruche de votre plus forte bière.

« Bon maître et bonne maîtresse, vous voyez que notre bouffon vient de partir, c'est notre devoir de le suivre, nous vous remercions de votre amabilité et de ce que vous nous avez donné ici. Nous vous souhaitons un Noël plein d'allégresse et une heureuse année. »

Madame H. G. M. MURRAY-AYNSLEY.

NOMS, FORMES ET GESTES DES LUTINS

I

HAUTE-BRETAGNE (1)



J'AVAIS dressé, il y a plus d'un an, l'espèce de table ci-jointe pour être mise à la suite d'un article sur le mot lutin, qui nous avait été promis par notre collègue, M. Gaston Paris, et que la préparation de ses livres sur le Moyen-âge ne lui a pas encore permis de nous donner. Au lieu de servir de prologue à cet essai de classification, l'article attendu en sera vraisemblablement l'épilogue.

Nous prions nos collègues des différentes provinces de France de dresser, chacun en ce qui concerne son pays, une table analogue, avec l'indication des sources où l'on peut trouver les plus amples renseignements sur les détails des récits populaires sur les lutins.

(1) Abréviations : I.-V. (Ille-et-Vilaine); C.-N. (Côtes-du-Nord); M. (Morbihan); SÉBILLOT. *Trad. (Traditions et superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne)*; Contes (*Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*); BÉZIER. *Inv. (Inventaire des monuments mégalithiques de l'Ille-et-Vilaine)*; FOUQUET (*Légendes du Morbihan*) DE CERNY (*Saint Suliac et ses légendes*); GUILLOTIN DE CORSON : *Lég. (Légendes de la Haute-Bretagne)*.

[Continued from *Roomer* 7:2 (1989) p.17-21]

If the janneys do speak, it is in the "janney voice" previously described.

"They might ask you - again, a personal question, you know, trying - or say something sort of vaguely insulting to you. You know, eh, I mean if they know, for instance, that you're a school teacher, eh, then, you know, they're liable to say a few things about you not being very bright, or, you know, this kind of thing, you know. Because the general idea seems to be that they can get away with anything, you know? I mean - I think they really enjoy sitting there with the water dripping off their boots, you know. If you give them a piece of cake, chances are that they'll drop crumbs all over the floor and generally make a mess, you know? And, eh, if you give them a glass of water, which they always ask for, eh, they've got to spill some of it on the table or on the floor or drop the glass. I don't think they'd break the glass - I, I've seen that, you know, maybe the bigger kids they might, you know. But in general they've got to be messy, you know? And do as many things as they can to eh, eh, to sort of aggravate you. But of course, you know, I mean you, you absolutely don't, you know, you don't react.

Now, if you succeed, this I have seen, not in our house, but in other people's houses. That where you've succeeded in unmasking them, you know, saying "I know who you are, you are, you know, Boyd Lane" you know, and eh, I think - it seems to be sometimes if, if, if it's, you know, if you do recognise them, they'll either get up and run out, or else if they think there's a good party, or a chance of a good party, they'll probably unmask themselves and say, "Yes, that's who we are", you know, and then they'll probably sing for you or whatever else, you know, because I mean, once they've been unmasked they'll just relax and enjoy themselves. They'll have a drink and, eh..they'll even get a mop and mop up the mess they've made, you know, they, they just become the kids you know, you know, I mean..But I mean there's no, there's no, there's no apologising for anything they've said and you wouldn't dream of, eh, you know, asking them to, you know. I mean if they told you you were a fat old fool, fine, you know, I mean that was janneys that said that to you, and now you know that it was Boyd Lane that said it to you, it doesn't matter, you know. It's totally, eh, it's outside the, the normal experience, so, I mean, it just doesn't count, you know? I mean, if, if the kid came into your house one day and called you a fat fool, you'd say "Get out, you little bugger!", you'd chase him out, you know, you'd throw something at him. But because it's a janney, eh, you accept that, you know? You know, that's, that's janney's talk...

But once they're unmasked it seems to me that the whole tone changes, then they, eh, they do entertain...I think they feel then, once they're unmasked, that they do owe you some entertainment, specially if you've, well, I mean, you do, you get out pop, or give them a cup of tea, or whatever you've got".

It was obvious that for Joe the most important element of janneying was not being known. It is interesting that while discussing janneying, Joe vacillated between first and third person description. This was probably due to the conflicting tendencies of reminiscing and giving an 'objective' account, but it occurred to me in the interview that it may also have to do with the dissociation of the individual from the janney, as mentioned by

Ed. Joe remarked that while walking from house to house, the janneys would be unmasked (if there were no people around), adjusting their disguises whenever they thought they would come into view of the householders they intended to visit.

"You knock on the door and say 'Lettin' the janneys in the night?'. Big janneys usually do always get in, but they usually don't get out till late in the night, and some people are in bed. But little janneys, they let them in. It depends if there's a lot of them coming all night, you mightn't let them all in, because..some tend to get a bit much, get tired of them after a while. The big janneys always get in, that's, everyone sits down, tries to figure out who they are, like, you know? Did they recognise some of the clothing they had on, like, you know. They ask them where they come from, like, you know. They used to say "Upper Gully" if you asked where they came from...

The young people, like, you go in, and the first thing they try to figure out who you are, you know, and, eh, that's why you, eh, supposed to take a pillow on your back or something, like, you know, and change your shape, or something like, you know? And a lot of people who go out now wear, eh, hockey equipment, shoulder pads and stuff like that, you know. So you're really square, when you see them. No, no-one knows who you are, really...

Usually give them, like offer them cake or wine or something, and usually, eh, offer them, eh, probably have some home brewed beer, like, you know. And that's what they're usually after like, you know, some of those young fellows like...When we used, not me, but some people of my age used to be out, you would hope that you might win some, or somebody give you a glass of beer, or something, Christmastime, like, you know? You know, 'cause they could tell, well, you were pretty young, and you had your face covered, but you might get it, right, and you'd have a, you'd feel good, and have a good time yourself".

Joe mentioned ingressive speech as the means of disguising the voice, but commented that "usually janneys don't talk very much, for after a while they'd figure out who you were, even if you had your voice disguised". He said you always tried to avoid going round with a talkative person when janneying, for once the identity of one was guessed, it was fairly simple to work out who the others would be, as friends tended to go round together. When entering a house, "they'd start going for the inside room, or..making out like they didn't know"; once inside, "you'd probably get up and, and be more, eh..you'd probably get up and dance around, and strike stuff, or something, like, you know". I asked Joe what the procedure was when somebody was definitely recognised -

"You shouldn't say while they're there, 'cause you should make as you don't know them..It kind of takes the fun out if you say who they are. They're out to fool you".

I think it is reasonable to conclude that Joe speaks more from the point of view of the janney, this being the most familiar role.

"Ritual", Mary Douglas claims, "is pre-eminently a form of communication" (2). Accepting the premise that "the entire network of cultural communications has its rules of appropriateness" (3), janneying can be discussed in terms of 'ritual behaviour', which is merely convenient short-

hand for 'the rules of appropriateness' pertaining to situations which are, quite literally, extraordinary.

Van Gennep, in his influential work on 'rites of passage', proposed a theoretical scheme of "preliminal rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation)" (4). In janneying, separation takes place when the individual detaches him/herself from his/her normal social role by becoming a janney, and incorporation (in this case, reincorporation) occurs either as the result of unmasking, or afterwards by reverting to 'normal' behaviour. It is the liminal period between that is of greatest interest here. "Liminality", in the words of Victor Turner, is "an interstructural phase in social dynamics" (5). From the informants' description of janneying, it is obviously a period of licence. In terms of kinesics and proxemics, behaviour and appearance, it involves a "withdrawal from normal modes of social action" (6). What also comes out in their accounts, however, is the fact that there are very definitely rules for breaking the rules.

According to Turner, "Cognitively, nothing underlines regularity so well as absurdity or paradox. Emotionally, nothing satisfies as much as temporarily permitted illicit behaviour" (7). Thus, seemingly disruptive and anti-social rituals may have a positive, consolidating function; "they underline the reasonableness of everyday culturally predictable behaviour between the various estates of society" (8). Turner also points out the appropriateness of holding such rituals at fixed points of the year, just as janneying occurs only during the twelve days of Christmas. This is, moreover, interesting in view of Leach's assertion that one of the functions of festivals is "the ordering of time" (9).

Huizinga asserts that ritual is play, play involving its own discreet logic and conventions, and forming a temporary world of its own. Rules for play are freely accepted, but binding. The play element is obviously a factor in janneying, in the accepting of roles, the interaction between hosts and janneys, etc. Joe in particular kept stressing the fun aspect of it. However, as Barbara Babcock-Abrahams points out, "Play...is not as spontaneous and ingenious as we might assume and can only occur if the participants are capable of some degree of meta-communication, i.e. of exchanging signals which carry the message, 'this is play' (10).

It is obvious that one of the most important aspects of janneying in Tilting is anonymity. In any small community there is potential for cultural claustrophobia. One's circumstances, family, social role and status are known (or even determined) from the earliest stages. One's physical attributes, voice, clothes, idiosyncrasies are familiar. In my opinion, Firestone understates the case when he comments, "Perhaps temporary anonymity in so intimate a society is in itself rewarding" (11). It is common, nonetheless, that in ritual behaviour "the individual, instead of emphasising his social personality and his official status, seeks to disguise it" (12). Even something as important as sex distinctions can fall into abeyance, with janneys transvesting, or, by the use of assorted padding, attaining the effect of sexlessness.

To some extent, janneying can be seen as giving the householder the novelty (and possibly excitement) of dealing with an unknown quantity, as it were, but on his own terms. If there are a few of you in the house you can have fun by being confronted with strangers. Alone, the householder may feel threatened - as indeed he might when confronted with a real stranger. Joe mentioned that the previous Christmas some big janneys had come round

when his father was in alone, and they had not been admitted for fear that things might get out of hand; had a few of them been in, he reckoned it might have been 'fun'. Using Szwed's terminology, janneying can probably be seen as a 'ritual of social reaffirmation', the ritual giving rise to "a formal societal rejection of the sort of behaviour portrayed in mumming" (13).

Janneying presents some interesting points concerning performance. Hymes talks of performance "when one or more persons assumes responsibility for presentation" (14); he also refers to it as something "even transcendent of the ordinary course of events" (15). Both criteria apply, on the surface, to janneying. In disguising physically and vocally, and behaving in an extraordinary manner, the janneys would appear to be performing. The knock at the door, for example, could be seen as a 'marker' of the type separating performance from normal behaviour. There is, however, something of an enigma concerning the acceptance of responsibility. Do the janneys actually accept responsibility? They have undoubtedly set themselves apart, and the rules under which they operate are not those of everyday life. However, responsibility for anything said or done will be taken not by the individual directly but by the 'abstract' janney figure. Alternatively, responsibility may even be said to lie with the householder, since by letting in the janneys, s/he is accepting the liminal situation. Only when a janney, after unmasking, volunteers to entertain can s/he unequivocally be said to be assuming responsibility for presentation.

According to Mary Douglas, "the most important determinant of ritualism is the experience of closed social groups" (16). Janneying, it seems, is becoming more and more the preserve of children. When I asked Joe about this trend, he made some very telling comments -

"No, it's not as strong as it was, definitely not. I would say it's dying out, I don't know why. Too much trouble for people to get dressed up and go out like they used to. Don't often see the big janneys now...

I wouldn't be able to pinpoint why it's on the decline, just, oh, things are changing, it seems like. I don't know how it is. People seem to have more privacy now than they used to. People don't barge in on you as much as they used to".

People now have more contact with the outside world than previously, with telephone, radio, and television. Improved amenities may have lessened reliance upon one's neighbours and possibly weakened 'community spirit'. Communities may no longer be quite so closed, and the need for janneying no longer so great among the adults.

Janneying still has a useful role in society, however, for children, and this should not merely be dismissed as the degeneration of the tradition. For children, indeed, the liminal aspects of janneying are particularly marked. While adults may lose status and power by disguising, children can only gain; "the underling comes uppermost" (17). They are allowed out later than usual; they might get offered alcohol. Adults pretend to be afraid of them. Once inside a house they can be messy and act robustly without the normal censure. They might even be rude to their hosts. Ed commented on this aspect -

"Some, some will probably come in just, you know, because you're a teacher, to have a bit of fun, you know, sort of, and eh, because, you know, they can make fun of you, you know, they've got disguises on..".

The 'secrecy' of the event holds great appeal, as Joe pointed out -

"They really enjoy it, going round all day in a whisper an'all about going out on the janneys, thinks no-one else hears them, right? And when they come in, make out you don't know them, right? And you might even know all along".

The play element seems to be more marked for children than for adults, but this is simply a difference in degree, not in kind.

Janneying, then, is not simply a quaint custom or random revelry. It is a period of liminal activity which seemingly breaks society's rules, but ultimately bolsters them. In the folkloric event normal rules are suspended only to be replaced with 'rules for misrule'.

NOTES

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PUBLICATIONS NEWS

TRADITIONAL DRAMA STUDIES Vol.2 (1988)

- Peter Harrop: The Ripon Plough Stots
- Emily B. Lyle Some Recently Collected Reminiscences of Scottish Traditional Drama
- Peter Millington The Problems of Analysing Folk Play Cast Lists using Numerical Methods
- Thomas Pettitt Ritual and Vaudeville: The Dramaturgy of the English Folk Plays

Available from Centre for English Cultural Tradition & Language, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN. 68pp. £3.50

Frederick B. Jonassen, 'Elements from the Traditional Drama of England in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 17 (1986) pp.221-254

Georgina Boyes, 'Cultural Survivals Theory and Traditional Customs', *Folk Life* 26 (1987/88) pp.5-11

Peter Robson, *Calendar Customs in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Dorset: Form, Function and Patterns of Change* (MPhil dissertation, Dept. Of English Language, University of Sheffield, 1988) [A copy will be available to members of the Folklore Society from the Society's Library soon]

Lore and Language 6:2 (July 1987), special issue: 'Proceedings of the Contemporary Morris and Sword Dancing Conference, CECTAL, Sheffield, March 1988'.

Traditional Dance 5/6 (1988): Proceedings of the 5th & 6th Traditional Dance Conferences, Crewe, 1985 & 1986. Contents:

- Pruw Boswell Trends in Morris Dancing on the Lancashire Plain from 1890
- Rosemary O'Neill Irish Traditional Dance in the 20th Century
- A.D.Townsend Cecil James Sharp as Collector and Editor of Traditional Dance
- Problems in Fieldwork
- Theresea Buckland Documenting a Processional Dance from Past and Present Perspectives
- Ann-Marie Hulme Recording Step-Dancing
- Ian Russell A Discussion of Work in Progress at Winster in Derbyshire
- Craig Fees Maypole Dance in the 20th Century: Further Studies of a North Cotswold Town
- Gordon Ashman Custom in Conflict: The Morris Dance in the Shrewsbury and Ironbridge Area of Shropshire
- Catherine Foley Irish Traditional Step-Dance in Cork
- Work in Progress
- Keith Chandler Continuing Researches into the South

Cynthia Sughrue	Midland Morris: A Progress Report Some Thoughts on the 'Tradition' Versus 'Revival' Debate
Michael Heaney	Early Morris
Roy Judge	Theatrical Morris
George Frampton	Louis Parker and his Pageant Morris Dancers, 1905-1909

**ADDITION TO LIST OF STUDENT THESES, DISSERTATIONS & PAPERS IN THE INSTITUTE
OF DIALECT AND FOLK LIFE STUDIES ARCHIVE, UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS [Roomer 7:2]**

Ron Shuttleworth draws our attention to:

Colin Stanley Wharton	The Folklore of Warwickshire: A Field Collection with Comparative Annotations & Commentary (PhD 1974)
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TIDDY TO ORDISH

STEVE ROUD

When Alex Helm sorted out the Ordish papers for the Folklore Society in 1954, he adopted a geographical approach to the material - filing the bulk of the papers under county name in five boxes. Material which could not be assigned to a particular locality he grouped together in a miscellaneous section which comprised 'Box 6'. The material in Box 6 has never received the attention it deserves. It contains, for example, notes by Ordish himself, as well as a number of letters written to him by various folklorists of the time, including R.J.E. Tiddy, E.H. Binney, Charlotte Burne, and Mrs. Eden. It is to be hoped that some of this material will be published in the near future, and as a start we offer five letters from R.J.E. Tiddy (1913). Reproduced by kind permission of the Folklore Society.

All the letters are headed "Priory Cottage, Ascott Under Wychwood, Oxon."

24th September 1913

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your kind letter of the 20th which I found here on getting back from a short visit to Devonshire.

I am very glad to hear that you have not given up your intention of producing a volume on the Mummers' Plays; and I am most grateful to you for your kind offer of help to me in the preparation of my lecture. May we perhaps meet in Town or at Oxford some time and discuss the plays? Or if this is making too great a demand on your time, might I send you a rough sketch of my lecture and if you find, as you most probably will, that I have missed some essential matter perhaps you would be so good as to let me have your comments?

I have read most of the printed plays, but have only 'collected' myself quite a few - that is, in Oxon - Chadlington & Leafield. I am also waiting for the Eynsham & Headington plays;- in other counties, Weston Sub Edge, which is quite an entertaining one - Hunnington [1] (Warwick) and Overton in Hants. which I expect is the same as your Freefolk play [2] - and I am also waiting for one from Lancing [Sussex] and one from Burghclere [Hants.]; there are a few more quite unimportant ones too.

I need not say that I shall be delighted to send any of these to you.

Meanwhile I feel that the most useful thing one could do would be to organise a fairly systematic collection, such as you advocated years ago [3]. If that has not been done, could the F.L. Society take it seriously in hand? Of course they could not possibly be printed completely, but they could be given to the British Museum and the most interesting types could be printed with variants, as you suggest. This, however, is rather a digression!

I shall be passing through Town on Saturday and Monday, October 4th and 6th on my way to and from a weekend visit in Suffolk. I should not want to leave Liverpool Street before 3.20 on the Saturday. Could you perhaps lunch with me at my very humble club - the Authors', 2 Whitehall Court, on that day, the 4th? If so, would you let me know what time would suit you? I should be back on the 6th in Town probably by the 4.50 at Liverpool Street if that day would suit you better.

Yours very truly
R.J.E. Tiddy

28th September 1913

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your letter. The plan you suggest will be admirably convenient for me, and I will call for you at one o'clock on Saturday Oct. 4th at the Patent Office.

I have not joined the Folk Lore Society but I intended to join it anyhow this term, and I will do so.

Many thanks for all the trouble you are taking.

Yours very truly
R.J.E. Tiddy

2nd October 1913

Dear Sir,

I am very sorry to say that after all I shall not be able to join you on Saturday next. I hope you will excuse me when I tell you that Cecil Sharp has asked me to dance for him at Norwich where he is giving a lecture on Folk Dance, and I cannot get there in time unless I go across country and leave here at 7.45 a.m. on Saturday. I am very sorry indeed to change my plans, but it is after all in the service of a kind of folk-lore!

May we perhaps meet on Monday afternoon? I shall arrive at Liverpool St. at 3.30 and if you will be free at any time in the afternoon or evening of that day, after that time, I will call for you.

Would you mind sending me a line to

c/o G.E.W. Thomson Esq.
Shrubbery Farm
Westhorpe
Suffolk.

I shall go there after the lecture on Saturday and I shall be there till Monday morning. I should think it is unlikely that they have a Sunday post at Westhorpe so that I should be very grateful if you could write tomorrow.

As you probably know the morris dance cannot be done by less than six and Sharp cannot get together a 'side' without me very well just now.

With many apologies for the trouble I am causing you,

I am
Yours very truly
Reginald J.E. Tiddy

17th October 1913

Dear Mr. Ordish,

I enclose three plays which I have had copied from my cuttings from the Evesham Journal. The Icomb one as you will see is of considerable importance; the others are fairly normal.

I will send you others as I get them copied. I hope you will forgive me for keeping the printed plays so long. I have been very busy indeed for the last week or so: the beginning of term is a terrible rush. But I will let you have them back in a week or so.

I saw Marrett [4] the other day and goaded him. I think he would like you to move in the matter as soon as you are ready. I hope you will. I have also received the papers of the F.L.S. and am just now writing to the Secretary [5].

I can't do any more collecting now till the end of term. But in the mean time I have your material to digest, and I am reading likely plays with a view to finding parallels; but so far without much result.

I am most grateful to you for the kindly help you gave me for my lecture, and I shall bear in mind your kind promise to give me advice.

Yours very sincerely,
Reginald J.E. Tiddy

8th November 1913

Dear Mr. Ordish,

I send you back, with very many thanks, the printed Mummers Plays. I also enclose four of my own collection - Sunningwell, Chadlington & Weston Sub Edge and Overton. I wonder if you would mind having them copied & letting me some time have the originals. I value the latter for the sake of their donors - the Chadlington one especially was a shepherd of almost Biblical attractions!

I am in great haste, it is a frightfully busy time for me just now. I hope to do a few days collecting in the vacation before Christmas, but otherwise I don't expect to have any time till the long vac. I hope your newspaper scheme will be fruitful

Yours very sincerely
R.J.E. Tiddy.

* * * * *

Of the ten plays Tiddy mentions as collected by himself, only four (Leaffield, Weston sub Edge, Overton and Burghclere) appear as texts in his posthumous book *The Mummers Play* (6). Two more, however, (Lancing and Chadlington) are quoted in the chapter entitled 'The Vicissitudes of the Mummers Play'. Texts from Chadlington and Sunningwell survive in the Ordish papers both as manuscript and typed copies, and the latter have "Communicated by R.J.E. Tiddy 1913" written across the top of the first page (7). It seems likely that the manuscript versions were the ones sent by Tiddy and if Ordish neglected to return them their absence from the published work would be explained. However, the other manuscripts do not seem to be in the Ordish papers.

NOTES

1. This looks like 'Hunnington', but the nearest I can find for Warwickshire in a gazetteer is HUNNINGHAM (SP 3768).
2. Tiddy is almost certainly right here. All the numerous references to a play at Freefolk appear to be the gang from nearby Overton.
3. Tiddy is probably referring to Ordish's appeal in *Folk-Lore* 13 (1902) pp.296-297.
4. Dr. Robert Ranulph Marrett (1866-1943), the distinguished anthropologist, was President of the Folklore Society at the time. The mention of his wanting Ordish "to move in the matter" may be a reference to impatience with Ordish's slowness in preparing his book on Mummers (which was first mooted in 1902) which is evident in some of the other letters contained in the collection.
5. Tiddy was elected a member of the Society at the meeting on 19th November 1913.
6. R.J.E. Tiddy, *The Mummers' Play* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923).
7. The Chadlington text is reprinted in Stephen Roud, *Mumming Plays in Oxfordshire: An Interim Checklist* (Sheffield: Traditional Drama Research Group, 1984)

MORE PUBLICATIONS NEWS

[A miscellaneous selection of material which which has come to our attention over the years which readers may find of interest]

DIETRICH, Julia, 'The Folk Drama and the Liturgy of Sacrifice', **Kentucky Folklore Record** 25:1-2 (1979) pp.37-45

DAVIS, Susan G., 'Making Night Hideous: Christmas revelry and Public Order in 19th Century Philadelphia' **American Quarterly** 34 (1982) pp.185-199

POCIUS, Gerald L., 'The Mummers Song in Newfoundland: Intellectuals, Revivalists and Cultural Nativism', **Newfoundland Studies** 4:1 (1988) pp.57-85

LASKI, Vera, **Seeking Life** (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society Memoirs, 1958) [Concerned with 'The Raingod Ceremony of San Juan: A Ritual Drama']

WINEY, Faye McAfee, 'Belsnickling in Paxtonville', **Pennsylvania Folklife** 29:2 (1969-70) pp.10-13

COLE, M.R., **Los Pastores: A Mexican Play of the Nativity** (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, for the American Folklore Society, 1907)

RAEL, Juan B., **The Sources and Diffusion of the Mexican Shepherds' Plays** (Guadalajara: Libreria la Joyita, 1965)

PUCHNER, Walter, 'Die Thrakische Karnevalsszene und die Ursprungstheorien zum Altgriechischen Drama: Ein Beitrag zur Wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Rezeptionsforschung' **Balkan Studies** 24:1 (1983) pp.107-122

CLEGG, John Trafford, 'Bowd Slasher', in: **The Works of John Trafford Clegg: Stories, Sketches and Rhymes in the Rochdale Dialect** (Rochdale: James Clegg, 1895) pp.76-83

HANDELMAN, Don, 'Inside-Out, Outside-In: Concealment and Revelation in Newfoundland Christmas Mummung', in: **Text, Play and Story: The Construction and Reconstruction of Self and Society** (Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society (1984) pp.247-277

BYRNE, Cyril, 'Some Comments on the Social Circumstances of Mumming in Conception Bay and St. John's in the 19th Century', **Newfoundland Quarterly** 77:4 (1981-82) pp.3-6

CULIN, Stewart, 'Folk-Lore Scrap-Book: Italian Marionette Theatre in Brooklyn, N.Y.', **Journal of American Folklore** 3 (1890) pp.155-157

STARR, Frederick, 'Popular Celebrations in Mexico', **Journal of American Folklore** 9 (1896) pp.161-169

GATSCHET, Alb. S., 'Schlossar's Collection of Popular Plays' [Austria], **Journal of American Folklore** 4 (1891) pp.353-354

NIXON, M., 'Toss Pot's Great Day', **The Dalesman** (March 1985) pp.999-1000 [Midgley]

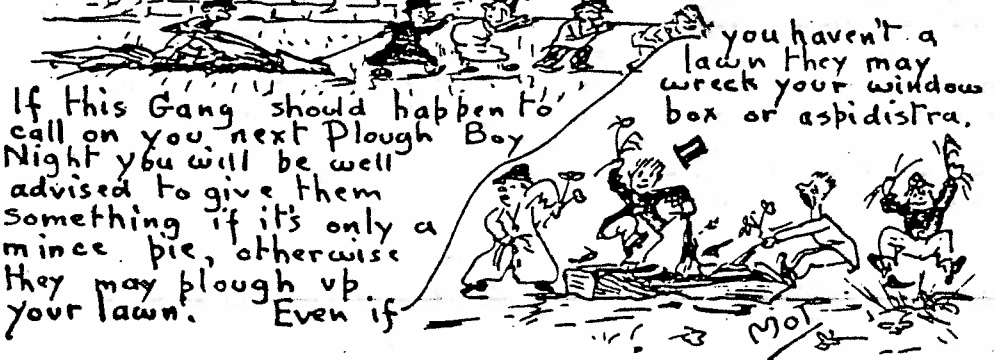
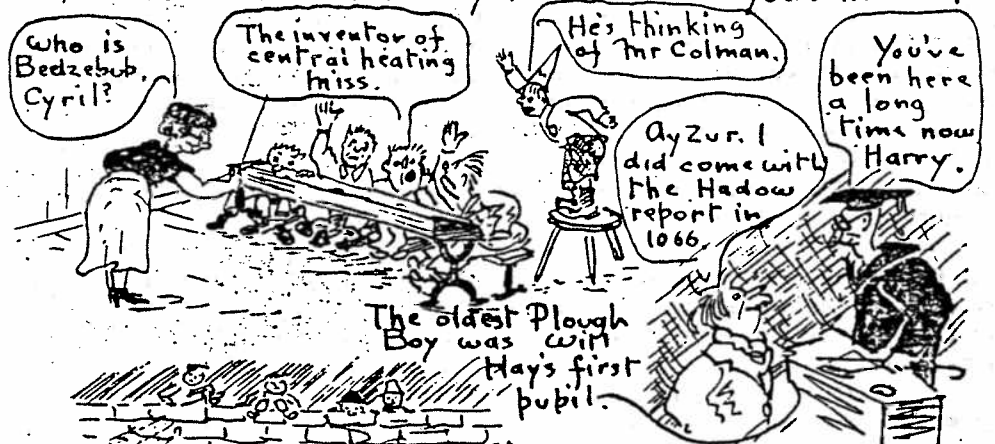
PALMER, William T., **Byways in Lakeland** (London: Hale, 1952) ['Pace-Egging Play' pp.77-79]

OUR SPECIAL CARTOONIST VISITS CROPWELL BISHOP.

George Black's Crazy Gang at the London Palladium can't compare with the Cropwell Bishop Plough Boys.— Perhaps you didn't know that Nervo and Knox, Flanagan and Allen, Naughton and Gold, Clapham and Dwyer and Geo. Robey were all trained at Cropwell Bishop.— There are twelve in the Gang— The Fiddler, The Doctor, Farmers Man, Threshing Blade, The Recruit, Recruiting Sergeant, Beelzebub, Hopper Joe, Dame Jane, The Lady, Tom Fool, and Eezum Squeezum



Some people think they have all been trained by kindness.— Don't you believe it!



Mol

REVIEW

THOMAS PETTITT

Craig Fees, *Christmas Mummung in a North Cotswold Town With Special Reference to Tourism, Urbanisation and Immigration-Related Social Change* (PhD dissertation, University of Leeds, 1988).

[The following review of Craig Fees' doctoral thesis on the Chipping Campden mummers' play has emerged from circumstances on which it would be proper to be explicit, the reviewer having in the first instance functioned as external examiner in connection with the (highly merited) award of a doctorate to the author, and the request for the review from the editor of *Roomer* having been received subsequent to the return of my copy of the thesis to the University. The review in consequence has been written without present access to the text, but on the basis of extensive notes made on that earlier occasion, and furthermore reflects the extremely illuminating exchange of views which occurred during the oral examination. As a result it becomes in effect a publication - a making public - of a university examination, and this being so the permission of Craig Fees has been sought and granted; for the publication of this review; not, of course, for its contents].

The production of this comprehensive study of the mumming tradition in Chipping Campden is clearly a major event in the study of English customary drama, and also in all likelihood a sad milestone. Probably the last dissertation resulting from a research-project which owed its inception to the late-lamented Institute of Dialect & Folk Life Studies at the University of Leeds. Since we owe to that institution the likes and the works of Peter Harrop, Theresa Buckland, Roy Judge and Ian Russell, it is not difficult to imagine by what factor the study of English traditional culture in general, and of customary drama in particular, would be better than it is had Leeds continued to provide encouragement and support for further research and teaching in this field.

Christmas Mummung in a North Cotswold Town offers a chronological review of the Chipping Campden tradition, its central chapters (II - V) covering respectively the periods 1860 - 1900, 1900 - 1914, the Interwar Years, and 1945 - 1986. Each of these is divided into sections comprising a review of the available sources on performances, the social and cultural context, and discussion of the one in relation to the other. The result is an extremely thorough and lucid 'anatomy' of a mumming tradition and its contexts through a century which here as elsewhere saw startling changes in the composition, economy and culture of the local community and hence inevitably in the status and function of the mumming tradition itself. On the latter specifically Craig Fees is able to offer documentation going measurably beyond what has hitherto been available, and his treatment of the host community is so comprehensive as to amount virtually to a social and cultural history of Chipping Campden over the period concerned.

For those of us interested in the earlier history of the mummers' plays, Chipping Campden is admittedly a disappointing local tradition; the earliest known record remains a rather vague reference by Cecil Sharp which suggests it was in place by the latter part of the 19th century, and at the opposite chronological extreme the researches of the *Records of Early English Drama* project have produced no records of dramatic or ceremonial activity of any kind for this community prior to 1642. Given his exclusively contextual concerns, Craig Fees has not pursued this historical

perspective systematically through such civic or parochial archives as may be available between the mid-17th and mid-19th centuries, and it is difficult to predict what the results might have been. Given my views on the likely manorial context of the early mumming tradition, I suspect that if any survive, the archives of the local gentry or aristocracy might reward investigation: the Earls of Gainsborough and other members of the Noel family seem to have loomed fairly large on the local scene (owning land, providing clergymen and the name of a pub), and a Noel household was visited by the mummers in 1927.

It is quite compatible with such antecedents that when the Campden mumming tradition emerges into the records Craig Fees discerns it as a "deferential performance for alms", and "part of a system of social and economic exchange between master and man", appropriate to a community which is still in intimate contact with its agricultural hinterland. Thereafter the nature and function of the mumming can be seen, in Craig Fees' sensitive and massively documented analysis, to shift from a matter of household relationships to an expression of relationships between different sections of the community, in response to those typical processes of recent times involving what might be termed the invasion of the little tradition of the local community by the great tradition of the elite and urban centres. In the case of Chipping Campden this takes the form of the settlement of substantial numbers of middle-class immigrants attracted by the town's location and celebrated Olde Englande architecture, and the concomitant marginalisation of the dwindling and increasingly plebian natives. In response the mumming tradition develops into a kind of manifestation of native Campden identity and culture, a manifestation which is partly (say in public houses) an inward celebration and confirmation, partly (say in immigrant households) an outward demonstration, although there is also a danger of the mummers conforming not so much to their image of themselves as to immigrant expectations of the quaint provincial.

Much of this is likely to apply to other communities as well, and the value of the thesis is increased correspondingly, but a peculiar factor in the Chipping Campden context is the arrival early this century of the Guild of Handicraft, self-consciously devoted to the preservation and cultivation of many aspects of English vernacular culture. Their problematic relationships with the local community are explored here in some detail, and as might be anticipated it is their real or potential interference in its culture which is the focus of most difficulties. The topic of central relevance, given the authoritative assertion of a local historian that the Guild of Handicraft "revived and reinvigorated" the mumming scene some time after a hiatus in performance prior to or during the First World War. In a masterful investigation based on both local and Guild sources, the thesis' major negative achievement, Craig Fees demonstrates firstly that there is no historical evidence for this development and secondly that given the personalities involved it is anyway inherently unlikely. Thus cleared of alleged interference, the continuing mumming tradition can rightfully reassume its local citizenship.

As will by now be apparent, Craig Fees takes an essentially contextual approach to the mumming-as-custom, rather than as an interpretative one to the mummers' play-as-performance. The emphasis on context is indeed so overwhelming as to prompt the suspicion - confirmed in somewhat contradictory statements here and there in the thesis on its aims and intentions - that Craig Fees has been somewhat torn between investigating the community of Campden as a means of understanding the mumming, and using the mumming as a 'lens' through which better to perceive the community. I suspect the

ambivalence in approach is not confined to Craig. Correspondingly the thesis is positively coy on text and performance, despite the author's manifest familiarity with all available texts and accounts of the tradition, and his having experienced a number of performances directly. This coyness is all the more remarkable given the currently fashionable analysis of mummers' plays as manifestations of 'community psychology' (cf. A.E. Green and Susan Pattison on Antrobus; Simon Lichman on Marshfield), an approach which is eminently compatible with Craig Fees' own, and to which the Campden tradition would be peculiarly susceptible. It is remarkable too in the light of Craig's own insistence elsewhere (for example in earlier issues of this Newsletter) that one of the major advantages of still-living traditions is their revelation of the processes of textual change which, when applied in reverse, might help us reconstruct the earlier forms of the mummers' plays. Yet the thesis contains little analysis of texts or accounts from the perspective of performance; no text; no list of existing texts. As anticipated, and as confirmed in discussion, the problem lies in the extraordinarily sensitive and problematic relationship between the folklorist and his/her sources. It is entirely in keeping with the current function of the mumming tradition as sketched above that the performers have an extremely proprietary attitude to text and performance: the former they will not have published, the latter they will not tolerate being recorded. From a mixture of idealism (he respects the mummers' view) and realism (he does not want to damage the possibilities further research) Craig Fees has deliberately eschewed publication or discussion of texts in his thesis, even of texts which have long been available (for example at Cecil Sharp House). This examiner/reviewer was both shocked and impressed by the honesty of the decision and the consistency with which it was applied; for let there be no doubt both the thesis, and our understanding of mumming tradition, are in consequence impaired. It must be a quandary facing many folklorists - when a tradition is dead we can never learn the whole truth about it; when it is living we may not tell the whole truth - but I have never seen so clear an instance of its impact on scholar and scholarship.

Thomas Pettitt
University of Odense

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