

Mrs H Thompson, Pickering Road, Thornton-le-Dale, Yorks, aged 74.

Interviewed by F & F.R; we were given her address by Mr & Mrs Huddlestane.

Mrs Thompson was born and brought up in Rosedale beyond the village of that name, and went to dances up to the age of 60.

She learnt her dancing in the school in Rosedale, where the schoolmaster and his wife - she was actually the Schoolmistress - held classes after school hours. The classes were held in the Lecture Hall, and the schoolmaster took the boys at one end of the hall while his wife took the girls at the other end - they would, of course, mix together for a round dance". These classes took place for several years, two evenings a week, right through the year except for school holidays, and the pupils paid a penny an evening for them. When she attended the classes, Mrs Thompson was aged 9 or 10.

The dances in use in the dale in her young days were

Quadrilles	Lancers	Circassian ♂
Waltz	Polka	Barn Dance
Schottische	La Varsoviana	[Polka?] Mazowka
Highland Fling	Galop.	

Not Caledonians, Alberis, or Waltz Cotillion, or Sir Roger de Coverly. She had no recollection of any reels or of a square-8.

Highland Fling. Probably something like the following. Partners face each other, then dance fling step (2nd, rear leg, front leg, rear leg) with RF, LF, then turn [?], then join both hands with partner, glissade (?) to side & back, then start again. It wasn't clear whether it was progressive or not.

The Galop longways set, "straight up, straight down, then through the arch". Rather "like the Grand Old Duke of York".

We asked her how often there were dances in the dale. "At that time, you know, there weren't dances like there is today, but just occasionally". In the dale there would usually be something like one dance a month during the winter, but a keen dancer who was prepared to travel some distance could dance as often as once a fortnight. She herself used to go to dances in Castleton (to the north), Cropton and Pickering; for these she & her friends would engage a pony & trap, complete with driver. She also went to dances in Farndale - they were held in the schoolroom. To reach these, she & other young people in Rosedale simply walked over the hill-tops.

The White Horse Inn in Rosedale had a big "club-room" [it wasn't clear what the "club" was] but this was only twice used in her memory for dances. Presumably the Lecture Hall made other dancing-places unnecessary.

There was no such thing as an old-fashioned farm 'kenn' in Rosedale. In Mr Thompson's days, the Harvest Home was a form of bring and buy sale combined with a supper or dance, held in connection with the church or chapel.

Sometimes people used to dance in the kitchens, with fiddle or concertina for music.