

Mr & Mrs Cookson, New Houses, Dolphinholme, aged 82, also Miss Cookson, aged 50

Interviewed by F.R. & T.F.

Both Mr & Mrs Cookson were brought up in Pilling in the Fylde, and left there at the age of about 24 to come to Wyresdale.

There was no dancing-teacher at Pilling within their recollection, and the only two of the older dances done there (apart from the usual Quadrilles, etc) were Cottagers & Six Roges. Cottagers consisted simply of Rtt & Ltt steps, "spin-up", and pass on to the next couple.

There was some step-dancing at Pilling, the dances being known as "Tigs". Mr Cookson's mother used to do it. One man used to step-dance with two brass candlesticks in his hands, which he clashed together in order to emphasize some of his beats.

When Mr & Mrs Cookson came to Wyresdale, Swinging-Six and "Three in a reel" were done there (these were unknown at Pilling). Another common dance was the Highland Fling (presumably the couple dance). Also Greenleaves was done at parties & weddings.

About 1920, a Mr Robinson came out from Morecambe & gave dancing classes in Dolphinholme, once a week for ten weeks. These were very poorly attended, the class consisting of 9 girls & 1 boy. Miss Cookson & her brother attended (her brother, Joseph Cookson, has the farm on the left from Gardner's shop in Dolphinholme).

The social dances taught at these classes included lancers & the Waltz, & probably Cottagers, but not Quadrilles. He taught step-dancing & heel & toe dancing (we couldn't discover what the difference was) & Miss Cookson's brother learnt the step-dancing. By demonstrating steps we ascertained that the step-dancing included the Westmorland treble shuffle, but not a crunch. Miss Cookson cannot remember if they had names for the steps.

At the end of the ten lessons, Mr Robinson held a ball, attended by the parents

(though very few came). Miss Cookson's brother was made the King of the ball, & a little girl was the Queen, & they did the step-dancing (Miss Cookson has a photo of the class in their Ball costumes).

At this time Mr Robinson was aged c. 35. He was only a part-time teacher, & during the day he drove a cab on Marecambe Front (presumably this was young Jos). When he came to Dolphinholme to begin his classes, he called at all the parents of children & asked them to send their children to his classes.

No - It was A.P.