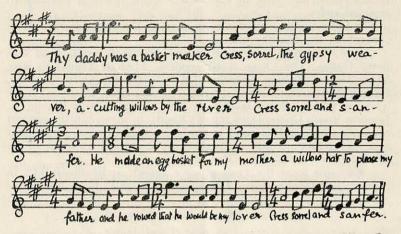
HUNTINGDON LULLABY or The Green Cradle

Original song by Sheila Chesters, sung at the Second English Folk Music Festival, October, 1958.



Thy daddy was a basketmaker Cress, sorrel, the gypsy weaver A-cutting willows by the river Cress, sorrel, and sanfer He made an egg basket for my mother A willow hat to please my father And he vowed that he would be my lover Cress, sorrel, and sanfer.

He made for me a love token Cress, sorrel, the gypsy weaver A crown of willow ne'er to be broken Cress, sorrel and sanfer He wove a white square to be my pillow A fine green cradle of the green willow But Cromwell sent him o'er the billow Cress, sorrel, and sanfer.

Then ba la loo and do not sorrow Cress, sorrel, the gypsy weaver He'll come to-day—or else to-morrow Cress, sorrel and sanfer. He vowed that he would never leave me And all his heart was just to please me Oh whispering willows do not tease me Cress, sorrel, and sanfer.

Note-Sanfer - succulent of the Fens, a great delicacy.

This was one of the three highly commended original songs submitted at the Festival. Of the other two, "When Sixty Solid Sailors went a-cheering of the Queen" by Cyril Tawney is under consideration for publication by a leading music publisher, and "The Arbroath Disaster" by Fred Dallas has already been published on a broadsheet.

Notes on Lancashire Clog Dancing by Julian Pilling

"BUCK and Wing" and "Buck Dancing" are local terms in the area from Blackburn to Colne in Lancashire for step dancing in clogs. Everybody in Lancashire has heard of clog dancing, but the number of people who have seen it is small nowadays, and unless there is a revival, is becoming smaller.

The etymology of "Buck" and "Wing" is not clear. Maybe they are descriptive by comparison with the movements of a horse. "wing" meaning to kick out sideways,1 also "buck" knees are inclined inwards. Note also "winge" (with a soft "g") meaning to shrink or draw in, applied to a "horse . . . when about to strike."2 "Wang" on the other hand, according to Tum o' Dick o' Bob's Lankisher Dickshonary (n.d. but after 1873), is equivalent to "bang" which brings us to "buckthwang, buckwang, buckfang" given in Taylor's Folkspeech of South Lancashire (1901), "a form of punishment inflicted by schoolboys who hold their victim by the hands and feet and swing him against a wall." "Whang" can also mean a shoe-lace, being derived from the Anglo-Saxon "pwang = a thong." Clogs were originally brought to Lancashire by Flemish weavers, and the following Dutch terms are perhaps of interest: "boken maken," to cut capers, and "bok stavast." leap frog.

Clogs were usually specially made on the pattern of miners' clogs, but with flatter soles. They were bought for dancing one size smaller than normal to ensure a close fit, for working clogs are worn loose to the foot. A pair of shoes that had been clogged would also do; this appears to have been accepted by stage dancers but scorned by local enthusiasts who took great pride in their equipment. At a pinch miners' clogs with the irons taken off could be used, for irons are never worn on dancing clogs. In making clogs the clogger would display his craftsmanship by tooling on the leather, making square toes or long pointed toes, putting in eyelets of contrasting colour or extra ones purely for ornament. In Colne they called these "dandy clogs"; at one time it was a fashion to wear them, and visitors can still buy them to take home as Lancashire souvenirs. Compare also the highly ornamented clogs of the Bacup Coconutters. The floral designs tooled on the leather belong to the same type of popular art as the painting on canal barges, and have even been compared to "rose painting," a traditional peasant art of Norway.

It was a common practice to hollow out the heels, put in a couple of pennies and to screw on aluminium³ plates to serve as

^{1.} Horseman's cant, according to Webster's New International Dictionary (1909).

^{2.} A. E. Pease, Dialect of the North Riding of Yorkshire (1928).

Aluminium was first separated from its ore in 1828 and became a commercial proposition about 1900.

jingles. This suggested aluminium to protect the ash soles. From here was but a short step to putting similar soles on shoes, and one dancer showed a pair of tap shoes with a three-quarter sole of aluminium.

"You must always wear black when dancing," said one dancer, and this appears to have been general. An old photo shows a clog dancer in a tunic of the ubiquitous black satin type material of the nineteenth century, and tights. Beside him stands a stool, two-feet square with a slate top and Queen Anne legs and festooned with black satin. This is a luxury. A mat, usually called a board was more usual. It was made of laths about $1\frac{1}{2}'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$, fastened together with strips of leather, and it could be rolled up and carried from pub to club.

John Graham in Lancashire and Cheshire Morris Dances mentions "Auld Lang Syne," "The British Grenadiers" and "Men of Harlech" as tunes for clog dancing. Other tunes were "Under the Double Eagle," "The Stone outside Dan Murphy's Door" and "The Chicken Reel" (a banjo breakdown type of tune). Many dancers went on the Halls, as did Dan Leno and Harry Leon, and the popular tunes of the day were used. Harry Leon is greatly revered. The only certain difference elicited between stage and traditional dancing is that the latter is done on the spot while stage dancers used steps that promenade.

Rivalry was very great and still lingers. "He does t'roll and t'lad's finished!" Judges at championships often sat where they could only hear and not see the dancers. Carriage could be assessed from the beats. "A bow-legged chap from Salford once won a championship by half a point. There were a bit of a do over that."

Many dancers added extra difficulties. Mr. Parkinson of Accrington could dance on an 18-inch square of plate glass while the grandfather of one of the Bacup Coconut men could dance with a jug of water balanced on his head! Harry Leon could beat any metronome going with his beats and Upton Hobson of Colne danced in fancy clogs with long pointed toes on sand sprinkled on the floor which gave a peculiar grating sound to the beats.

We have heard of N.W. Morris teams being accompanied by a clog dancer and in Accrington, about sixty years ago, some lads who were "pace-agging" had a clog dancer performing in the middle of their ring.

When two dancers from Harle Syke, near Burnley, were talking of bygone days one of them demonstrated a step and the other said, "That's a Lancashire step—flat footed, but I always danced on my toes." But he could not elaborate on this. Upton Hobson dances in a flat-footed style using the heel and the toe and no shuffles. Some dancers do the shuffles with a backward and forward motion of the foot while others bring the foot round from a little to the side, describing almost a circle while tapping. It is an interesting problem for it suggests that there may be two different styles of step dancing present in what we call clog dancing.

It is forty years since clog dancing could be seen on the Music Hall. There it seems to have finished with the 1914 war. But elsewhere it lingered on and a clog dancer would do a turn in the club or pub on a Saturday night up till about ten years ago. Mrs. Hobson said of her husband, "He always does better when he's had a gill, and if t'other folks hadn't had one as well, they wouldn't stop and watch him."

THREE SIMPLE STEPS BASED ON THE SINGLE SHUFFLE

(From Mrs. Veronics Ryan of Accrington, pupil of Mr. Parkinson of Accrington).

Basic Step: R123, L123, R tap, L123, R123, L tap.

Break: L hop, R123, L123, R12, L hop, R123, L123, R tap.

Repeat Basic Step beginning on Left. Repeat Break beginning on R hop.

Second Step: L hop, R123, L123, R tap.

Break

Repeat Second Step beginning R hop.

Break

RHYTHM

All dancers I have met are agreed on the form of the dance; i.e.: a step is begun on the right foot and finished with the right break, then repeated on left foot finishing with the same break beginning on the left. The same break is used throughout the dance, and on this framework dancers can improvise.

(As Mrs. Ryan appeared to be confused about the number of times the steps were repeated, which, of course varies with the number of bars in the tune, I have omitted the repeats.)

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