

From
Our
Postbag



Wanted—a Folk Song Correspondent

L/CPL. J. TIFFEN, 23440302, H.Q. Troop, Comcan Sig. Sqn., B.F.P.O. 10,
writes :—

I have just heard a little about the English Folk Dance and Song Society on our radio and I thought that I would write to you to find out a little more about it. I would be very grateful if you could let me know a little more about your Society, also if you could put me in touch with someone who would be interested in corresponding with me on the subject of folk songs. I am at present completing the remainder of my National Service with the Royal Signals out in Nairobi, Kenya. As I have only another eight months to do I am wanting to get in touch with the folk circle again before I come home, for I have been collecting and studying folk songs for the past six years.

Clog Dancing

JULIAN PILLING, of Nelson, Lancs., *sends this further information* :—

The following account from a lady in Yorkshire may be of interest. There was an article on Mr. Robinson by Alice Frearson in *English Dance and Song*, Vol. XXI No. 6.

“ I was brought up in the old village of Hawkshead, Nr. Ambleside, where my ancestors had lived for several generations. Some 55 years ago I attended a dancing class which was taken by a Mr. Joss Robinson, who played a fiddle as music for us (and incidentally used it over the heads of some stupid boys). It was ordinary ballroom dancing and step dancing. At the Ball or Exhibition at the end of the season I remember doing a solo clog dance. For this my father had made for me a special pair of clogs, which I was very proud of and which I remember well. They were made of black leather with thick plain wooden soles. On the front was cut a heart shape with various markings all filled in with red colouring. The eyelet holes and laces were red and a tongue came over cut in the shape of a heart and edged round with small red eyelets. The usual tune was one I have occasionally heard for folk dancing, but not being really musical I cannot tell much of this. The main steps were : ‘ Shuffle off,’ ‘ Single-Shuffle,’ ‘ Double-Shuffle,’ ‘ Heel and toe ’ and ‘ Side-step.’ I think this is as far as my memory carries me.”

**Tom Armstrong—one time “ King ” in the Greatham
Sword Dance**

BILL CASSIE of Newcastle *writes* :—

When I was Squire of the Morris Ring I wrote to Mrs. Carter the daughter of Mr. J. T. Armstrong from whom Norman Peacock collected the Greatham Sword Dance (See *E.F.D.S.S. Journal*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, 1956), which is such a curious “ missing link ” between Rapper and Long Sword. I think that the Society