ROIX Music Journal



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COVER ILLUSTRATION

Mary Neal

Photograph kindly provided by Antony MacIlwaine

Folk Music Journal

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standard of production, both of which make sound economic sense. The unit cost to the Society of the 7250 copies of the 1988 Journal was just £1.14. Because much of the cost is incurred in the origination, a significant reduction in the print run would cause a substantial increase in unit cost. For example, a run of 1000 copies would have resulted in a unit cost approaching £5.00. At the other end of the scale, a reduction of the run by a few hundred copies would only produce marginal savings of about 60p per copy. If members were enabled to opt out of the Journal, this figure of 60p represents the order of the saving that would be made, and this would need to be offset against the administrative complication that would be created. The Journal is unquestionably good value to the Society - less than 8 per cent of a £15.00 subscription - and good value to its members - the British Academy have insisted that we raise our retail price, and similar journals in the

USA are sold for subscriptions of \$15 to \$25 (£10-£16.50 approx.).

While the Society is in poor shape and gravely scarred, the Journal is in peak condition, ready to go forward into the 1990s. Whereas the Society needs the Journal, the converse is not necessarily true. Should the Society fail, an independent journal could result. Moreover, the demise of the Society might signal the creation of a charitable trust to administer the Library and promote the Journal. That the Journal has a future is not in question; what concerns the Editorial Board is that during the protracted crisis we should be forced to make unreasonable cuts, to dilute the quality, reduce the substance, or undermine the circulation. The metaphor of a drowning man, who in desperation indiscriminately pulls under everything around him, springs to mind. I trust our readers will understand the difficult possition in which we are placed and provide much needed moral support. In fact, the publication of the current Journal was only achieved after the overwhelming weight of argument reversed a previous order from the administration to halt production.

Our gratitude is due to The British Academy, who once again has demonstrated its faith in the Journal by an award of £600 to fund a marketing exercise in North America. On behalf of the Editorial Board, I would like to thank all our authors and reviewers for their admirable contributions. Potential contributors need have no qualms about submitting material for consideration; we intend to stay in business for at least another ninety years. They will, however, need to conform to the recommendations of the MHRA Stylebook (available from W.S. Maney and Son Ltd, Hudson Road, Leeds LS9 7DL); an additional sheet is available from the Editor. Already there are a few excellent pieces accepted for Volume 6 and several

others have been promised, but there is always room for more.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Roy Judge for his first-rate editorial assistance during the last two years and the Board for their indispensable support. If you would like to make your thoughts known on Volume 5 or make suggestions for Volume 6, we will be pleased to hear from you. IAN RUSSELL

Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris* ROYJUDGE

It is not a simple matter to arrive at a proper assessment of Mary Neal's role in the folk revival. After the First World War Cecil Sharp's complete success and Mary Neal's withdrawal from the scene seemed to be justified by the apparent virtues of the former and the assumed errors of the latter. Many would have thought it sensible to let the name of Mary Neal and the bitter antagonisms of the early years become distant memories, best forgotten.

But it was difficult to ignore certain historical facts and their implications. Fox Strangway's biography of Sharp in 1933 gave abundant evidence of Neal's importance in the revival, and also of the stern and uncompromising treatment which she had received at Sharp's hands.1 Later accounts have done nothing to dispel the suggestion of injustice which this gave, and more recently Sharp's own achievements and character have been subject to attempted reassessment, with a natural tendency to discount the conclusions of previous hagiography.2 Also significant is the fact that Neal's approach to the morris tradition has a considerable appeal for the contemporary dancer, with her view of it as 'simple, dignified, vigorous and joyful', combined with her regret for 'the necessity of books of instruction'.3

All this could lead now to exaggerated expectations of Mary Neal, and to a distorted view of those early controversies between 'Form and

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^{*} Versions of this article have been given as lectures to a conference of the Folklore Society, 19 March 1988, and at the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, 21 October 1988. I am especially grateful to Malcolm Taylor of the latter institution, who prompted the idea of the article and has given invaluable help and encouragement. I would also like to thank Margaret Dean-Smith for her generous and enthusiastic sharing of her own researches, Roy Dommett for preparing much of the foundations, and Mike Heaney for his helpful suggestions.

Content', 'Technique and Spirit'. This article seeks to put these matters into perspective by giving Neal her full historical due, while still remaining just to Sharp. This kind of balance can never in fact be achieved, but perhaps, that having been recognized, the attempt may be considered worthwhile.

Family Background and Social Work 1860-1905

Clara Sophia Neal (the name Mary came later) was born on 5 June 1860 at 21 Noel Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham — six months earlier than Sharp — the only daughter, with two younger brothers, of David Neal, 1834—1918, a button manufacturer. In 1940, four years before her death at the age of 84, she published an account of her childhood. The family was materially well-off; she recalls their progress from a phaeton to a one-horse brougham and a barouche with coachman and livery. But she also remembered Birmingham life as 'a pageant of snobbery', and described her own family as 'typical of the Victorian age: everything must be correct on the surface, no matter what the reality':

I was not devoted to my parents and as I grew older it became quite a burden to be alone with my Mother. I was in revolt against the hypocrisy of the facade of a devoted family life when the reality was selfishness and misunderstanding.

Some of her happiest moments were escapades with her brothers:

One of our favourite pranks was to take off our shoes and stockings and play street Arabs. My younger brother used to play a tin whistle and stand under a streetlamp to beg coppers from passers by. We sometimes reaped quite a good harvest.

Then again:

One Sunday afternoon I blacked my younger brother's face (he was about six and I was about ten years old), put him on one blue and one scarlet stocking, turned his coat inside out to show a stripy lining, gave him his fiddle on which he could just scrape out a tiny bit of tune and took him out to beg from a very kind old lady, a friend of my Mother's.

The young Miss Neal evidently possessed an instinct for basic show business and also the knack of finding a receptive audience.

She concludes this account of her childhood with a reference to another continuing element in her life, her sense of mysticism:

One such experience remains very vivid. I was alone, crossing a meadow in the misty evening light. The whole world became luminous from a hidden source of light, unreality vanished into reality and an incredible happiness filled my

consciousness. This belief in a reality deeper than consciousness has never left me; and perhaps the most vivid remembrance of my childhood, beneath all sense of unreality or instability, was this very real consciousness of a deeper life.

The final words of her 'Autobiography' revert to this theme with an expression of her spiritual goal:

to experience a growing consciousness of union with every living thing, with all beauty, with all truth as it is slowly revealed to our inner consciousness.⁶

In the 1880s Clara Sophia shared in the general anxiety about social distress. She specifically recalled reading *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*, published in 1883, and being deeply moved by the terrible conditions that it described. Religious and social concern was then being expressed by the formation of settlements and missions working in the worst areas, and in 1887 the Wesleyan Methodists established the West London Mission in Soho, Fitzrovia, and Marylebone. Its first leader was Hugh Price Hughes, and his wife Dorothy established what became known as the 'Sisters of the People', a group of what she called 'devout and educated women'. In February 1888, Clara Sophia joined the Mission as Sister Mary. She had found her first vocation, and also the name by which she was to be known.8

Each Sister had her particular duties. Sister Mary's included a Registry for servants and women needing work of all kinds. In addition, she was apparently the Sister best able to cope with the problems and stresses of running a 'Club for Working Girls'.9 This took place on two or three evenings a week, at Cleveland Hall in Cleveland Street, and Mary regarded it as extremely important:

No words can express the passionate longing which I have to bring some of the beautiful things of life within easy reach of the girls who earn their living by the sweat of their brow . . . If these Clubs are up to the ideal which we have in view, they will be living schools for working women, who will be instrumental in the near future, in altering the conditions of the class they represent. 10

She also regularly produced articles and notes for the Mission Magazine, showing an evident flair for this kind of occasional journalism. In November 1893, for example, 'A Living Wage' gave a vivid account of how she looked after forty or fifty Yorkshire miners' wives, brought up to London to collect money for women and children starving during a lockout. 11 Mary was strongly committed to the Labour Movement, which she called 'that silent, leavening, mighty, oncoming force'. 12

In 1891 Emmeline Pethick joined the Sisterhood and helped Mary in running the Girls' Club, thus beginning a close friendship which was to last the rest of Mary's life. 13 Emmeline's autobiography, My Part in a Changing World, includes a detached yet sympathetic account both of Mary's work and of her personality.

[She] was a challenging person, who provoked others to violent reactions of like and dislike. She had a strong sense of humour and a profound aversion from unreality: she had also a sharp tongue. She cared nothing for popularity, and was cautious about admitting any person into her very small circle of intimate friendship. She was tall and extremely emaciated. Her eyes were a vivid blue, so blue and so alive that they seemed to determine the colour of her personality. Her hair was light brown, with a vigorous natural curliness. Daily life was more interesting when she was present. She brought into the atmosphere the sparkle of a clear, frosty, winter day. Meals were not dull if she was at the table; she made unexpected remarks and criticisms. If there was a fantastic side to any subject, however serious, she saw it and delighted in it; and if a spice of malice in her speech gave offence to some people there was no malice in her actions. She was incapable of doing her worst enemy, if she had one, a bad turn. ¹⁴

Under Mary and Emmeline, the Girls' Club went from strength to strength. In October 1894, the Mission Magazine noted the innovation of encouraging older girls who were past members to attend a 'Social Reunion', reporting that: 'The Club has now been in existence for five years and furnishes one of the most real and permanent successes of the Mission'. The Christmas party of that year drew the anonymous comment in the Magazine, probably written by Mary: 'The charm of these parties lies always in the atmosphere of social equality which fills the place and to which everyone instinctively responds'. This attitude was typical of Mary, being another of the great underlying themes of her life, particularly emphasized in her 'Autobiography': 'the complete unconsciousness of class distinction which has influenced my politics and given me intimate friends in every station of life'. 17

In the autumn of 1895, Mary and Emmeline broke away from the West London Mission to set up their own Espérance Girls' Club. They wanted to be free to experiment with drama and dancing, and also to live outside the institutional framework of the Mission. They had limited financial resources, but an immense fund of goodwill to draw on, and a fair number of useful helpers and contacts. In 1897, seeking to do something positive about the terrible working conditions and the lack of decent employment in the area, they began a tailoring establishment called the 'Maison Espérance'. This was to be a strictly business undertaking, but was also

advertised as having an eight-hour working day, a living wage, a good well-ventilated workroom, and so on.¹⁹

All this represented a considerable personal commitment by Mary and Emmeline. They were deeply involved as conscientious social workers, and were inspired by a high idealism, particularly derived from a contemporary interest in St Francis. Emmeline speaks for them both when, in the context of a May Day Festival, she says:

Our desire and endeavour [is] to restore to the people amongst whom we live their inheritance of the earth, to awaken in their life of trial the fresh spring of natural joys, and to quicken the heart with simple human emotions.²⁰

One means for the fulfilment of all of this was the Club's annual country or seaside holiday. This was very dear to Mary's heart, and in 1901 she was chiefly instrumental in establishing the Green Lady Hostel at Little-hampton as a base for it.²¹

Then on 2 October 1901 Emmeline married Fred Lawrence at the Mansfield House Settlement in Canning Town. The Espérance Girls attended in full force, organized by Mary:

A dozen girls, dressed in the costume of Ancient Greece, performed a series of cymbal dances . . . The beautiful sight presented by the graceful attitudes and evolutions of the dancers caused great pleasure. 22

Fred was a brilliant young lawyer, wealthy and philanthropic, so that although Mary had lost her fellow-helper, she had gained an immensely powerful resource in the social and political influence of the united Pethick-Lawrences.

At this point in 1901 Herbert MacIlwaine, a novelist and himself living in the Passmore Edwards Settlement, replaced Emmeline as musical director of the Espérance Club. Neal called him 'an Irishman "with music in his bones"; his own words for himself were: 'an amateur of the rankest description, with just an ear for time and rhythm, and a certain gift for imparting tunes to others'. On Saturday 29 July 1905, MacIlwaine read in his Morning Post of an interview with Cecil Sharp on the subject of English folk song. Later, at the end of the Club's summer holiday, he suggested to Mary that this might be possible material for the Club's Christmas party that year. 24

The Folk Revival 1905-1908

Within the next few days Mary Neal met Cecil Sharp at the Hampstead Conservatoire where Sharp had resigned as Principal in July, after a series of bitter disputes with its proprietor. She must have caught him in the last throes of removal, after collecting songs in Somerset from 4 August until 18 September.25 This was their first meeting, and Mary wrote in her 'Autobiography':

He was not allowed to use any rooms except his study, and he was very upset and miserable. Later, when we became friends and the success of the revival of folk song and dance first became apparent, he told me that my visit was a turning point

in his life and that ill-luck fled and the future became hopeful.26

Sharp was delighted to help, prophesying that 'by a spiritual sixth sense' these working girls would reclaim their lost inheritance.27 The songs were so successful that Mary Neal met Sharp again, probably in October, and asked him whether there were any dances that would be 'in harmony' with them. Sharp told her of his meeting with the Headington Quarry Morris Dancers, and gave her William Kimber's name. She promptly took a train to Oxford and a hansom cab to Headington Quarry, where she found Kimber and arranged for him and his cousin to come to London to teach the dances to the girls.28

At the Christmas party of 1905, held in the hall of the Passmore Edwards Settlement, the songs and dances were greeted with immense enthusiasm by an audience which MacIlwaine described as representing 'literally every element in contemporary society'.29 Mary Neal specifically referred to Keir Hardie and Laurence Housman as being present, and later she particularly recalled that the latter had told her that she and her girls 'must show the country what they had discovered and prophesied a great revival'.30 In response to all this a public performance was given at the small Queen's Hall on 3 April 1906, taking the form of 'An English Pastoral', created by MacIlwaine:

Peter the Fiddler, recalling the days of his youth, has taught the young folks of the village the songs and dances of long ago. They are now singing and dancing at a

village revel.31

To begin with, there was an introductory lecture by Sharp, who was then at one of the many moments of conflict and decision in his embattled career. On the one hand, he was already a nationally acclaimed expert in the field of collecting folk songs, with two years experience at it, and having already published his own collections; and he was also a noted musical educationist, music tutor to the children of the Prince of Wales, no less.32 On the other hand, there was the matter of his recent resignation from the Hampstead Conservatoire; nothing had yet taken its place. And he was also deeply involved in the controversy as to whether national songs could possibly be regarded as comparable for teaching purposes to folk songs. The Espérance Club occasion was for him primarily a good chance to fire off ammunition in his current battle, and he concluded his lecture with the plea:

Let [the Board of Education] introduce the genuine traditional song into the schools and I prophesy that within the year the slums of London and other large cities will be flooded with beautiful melodies, before which the raucous, unlovely and vulgarising music hall song will flee as flees the night mist before the rays of the morning sun.33

Here was a clear note of visionary idealism, and also that determined sense of purpose which would fire Sharp's zeal during the difficult years to come.

The contemporary climate of opinion was very ready to respond to this kind of appeal. The concept of an English folk heritage had been developing steadily during the previous twenty years, with folk song, children's games, and morris dancing all becoming accepted as significant parts of it.34 The material which was being used was by no means unknown, but the distinguishing features about the Espérance performance in April 1906 were that the songs and dances came so much more directly from their original sources, and also that they were being presented positively as the direct and transforming restoration of a lost heritage. The visions of Sharp, the musical educationist, especially conscious of the origins of the material, coincided with those of Mary Neal, the devoted club worker, particularly aware of what all this seemed to promise for her girls. Both of them wanted to use these songs and dances, not simply as a nostalgic entertainment, but as an instrument for good. Another important factor was that Mary Neal also possessed all the powers of a born organizer and publicist; at this moment of opportunity, she had the experience and the skill to take full advantage of it.

Very soon Neal was being asked to send her Espérance girls out to give instruction in the dances wherever any village clergyman or local patron was interested. For example, one such request came from a friend of Sharp, the Revd Francis Etherington, who was the Vicar at Minehead, and who wanted to put on a show for a visit by the Somerset Archaeological Society. Sharp wrote to him in May 1906:

Miss Neal can supply you with her second pair of girls — the best pair are dressmakers in the height of their work - but she is nervous about letting them go so far by themselves. She would I think be quite willing to come with them if you could manage to put her up. She is very nice and you would I am sure like to know her.35

By November 1906 the girls had been teaching in Somerset, Devon, Derbyshire, Monmouth, Norfolk, and Surrey, and also in six London Clubs.36 During 1907 enthusiasm continued to increase. In January, the Ling Association, itself concerned primarily with Swedish physical education, included a special demonstration by the Espérance Club in its annual holiday course.37 Between 22 and 25 April the Club performed three times, for the Shakespeare League at the Mansion House, for the St George's Society's Festival, and in a public show at the small Queen's Hall.38 Also during the spring of 1907, when the Shakespeare Club of Stratford-upon-Avon decided to patronize morris dancing, they turned to Mary Neal for a teacher.39

This performance in turn caught the attention of a particularly significant visitor to Stratford, Edward Burrows, who happened to be the H.M.I. for Portsmouth and West Sussex.40 He contacted Mary Neal, and from 10 to 12 June she, together with Herbert MacIlwaine, stayed with him at his home, laying plans for the further development of the movement. 41 On 20 July there was an enthusiastic meeting at Chichester, attended by 'many hundreds of teachers', and Burrows proposed that a local Folk Music Association be formed immediately.42

During the late summer of 1907, probably in September, Neal issued a pamphlet, Set to Music, summarizing the events of the previous two years. She reported Burrows's confidence that West Sussex was 'simply "ablaze" with this beautiful revival of music'. And she declared:

It has seemed to us this year that we have made a great discovery of a hidden treasure, and that having discovered it we have become a medium through which others may also enjoy it.43

During these two years Sharp had remained a faithful supporter of the movement, recommending persons as diverse as the Chief Inspector of the London School Board and the Surgeon General of the Army to 'place themselves in communication with Miss Mary Neal'.44 He continued to help by giving introductory lectures to public performances and he was also necessarily involved in the activities of the Espérance Club because of the need to produce books of music and instruction which would help to satisfy the demand for tuition.45 His role, however, was principally that of musician and historical scholar; it was his co-author, MacIlwaine, who was responsible for the notation of the dance movements, taking them down from Florrie Warren, the best dancer amongst the girls.46

When the first edition of The Morris Book appeared in April 1907, it was dedicated 'to our friends and pupils, the members of the Espérance Girls' Club', and tribute was paid to Miss Mary Neal:

[She] not only made the venture possible in the beginning, but with her powers of help and organisation gave it a reach and strength that neither of us could have given.47

Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris

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Perhaps these sentiments derived more from MacIlwaine than from Sharp, but there is no reason to doubt the goodwill that existed at this stage. Kimber's early letters to Sharp indicate the presence of an active spirit of friendship between the protagonists.48 Mary Neal herself dedicated Set to Music to 'C#'. This was the stage of 'perfect harmony', 'the happiest years of my life', as Mary Neal later wrote.49 The secret of this peaceful co-operation was that Sharp himself had no sense of responsibility in the matter, his chief concern still being the folksong movement.

Later on, Mary Neal dated the beginning of tension from a specific occasion. On 13 November 1907 Punch included a cartoon by Bernard Partridge called 'Merrie England Once More', showing three ladies and three men as a morris set, led by Mr Punch as musician (see Figure 1).50 Its purpose was to congratulate the Espérance Club in their past successes, and to wish well to a conference organized by Mary Neal at the Goupil Gallery. This was to be held the next day to discuss the future of the movement, and in particular the possible inauguration of a new society. Neal recalled: 'I took [Punch] to Sharp and as he looked at it I saw a sort of blind come down over his face'.51 This moment she later saw as being a kind of watershed in their relationship.

She may well have been correct as far as the emotional atmosphere of that particular occasion was concerned. There were two issues which that cartoon would have raised in Sharp's mind, especially in the context of the crucially important meeting about to be held. One was the Merrie England approach to the revival which it seemed to advocate, and the whole problem of appropriate presentation of the revived songs and dances. The other issue was the linked matter of the control of any future society; how could any acceptable standard of presentation be enforced? At that very moment it should be remembered that Sharp was going through agonies with regard to the controversy concerning the teaching of national songs, simply because he could not tolerate what the Folk Song Society was doing and yet he was powerless to stop it.52

Nevertheless it does seem that Sharp was willing, in principle, to give the newly proposed society a fair trial. On 22 November 1907, he was writing about it to Etherington in cautious but proprietorial terms:

We have started the formation of our Society. Great difficulty in finding a suitable title. Cannot think of anything better than 'Society for the revival of English



MERRIE ENGLAND ONCE MORE!

[In consequence of the great success of the Espérance Girls' Club in promoting the revival of English Folksongs and Morris Dances in country villages, a Conference is to be held, on November 14, at the Goupil Gallery for the purpose of furthering this admirable scheme. (See article on page 347.)]

Figure 1

'Merrie England Once More', by Bernard Partridge, *Punch*, 13 November 1907, p. 345, with acknowledgements to *Punch*; the original was presented to Mary Neal at an Espérance concert on 28 November 1907.

Folk-Music'. Don't much like the word 'revival'. Popularisation better expresses our meaning but is a clumsy word. Can you help? I think the Society will go and may do a lot of good but it wants careful engineering. Many of the supporters are too medieval (and therefore in my opinion anti-folk) for my taste, and they will want humouring.⁵³

Support for the folk revival continued to grow, and the new society, known as the Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music, went on from strength to strength during the next year. This was especially true of West Sussex, where Edward Burrows was already busy inspiring teachers to attend courses taken by Florrie Warren.⁵⁴ But enthusiastic demonstrations were soon being given throughout the country, for example at Oxford, Stratford-upon-Avon, Ilkley, Leamington Spa, and St Fagans.⁵⁵ Mary Neal was also appealing widely and successfully for funds to support what was rapidly becoming a national movement with a wide popular appeal.⁵⁶ There was a strong fashionable element in this. In January 1908, the *Dance Journal* recommended private dance teachers 'to give instruction in Morris Dancing on a lawn during the summer months', confidently predicting 'a boom . . . of this kind of work'.⁵⁷

Tensions and Manoeuvres 1908-1910

With this kind of proliferation the questions of authority and of the control of artistic standards were bound to arise for Sharp. Early in 1908 he had expressed misgivings to Neville Lytton, the Chairman of the Goupil Gallery Conference, apparently chiefly concerned with the treatment of folk song, and received a sympathetic but realistic reply:

I fully appreciate your feelings towards the esperance people and the disgust you must have at any sort of 'kindergarten' attitude towards the Folk songs ... [But] if you want to popularise folk music (and you do don't you?) you will find heaps of people who will take up the movement beside whom MacIlwaine is a purist of the deepest dye.⁵⁸

As far as the morris is concerned it is interesting to note how limited Sharp's knowledge still was at this time. However, he was unanimously thought of as the authority on all folk music. In a public statement in April 1908, Mary Neal was at some pains to make it clear that she was not proposing 'to do the work of collecting which . . . is being done so admirably by experts such as Cecil Sharp'. ⁵⁹ During 1908, it is evident that Sharp was increasing his own personal acquaintance with the morris. In June, at Winster, he had done his first major piece of collecting without MacIlwaine; then in July he had met George Simpson and collected the

first of the Sherborne dances from him. 60 Already Sharp was confident in his mastery of the material and fully prepared to lay down the law about it. In August, he was writing to MacIlwaine about the latter's proposed introduction to the forthcoming *Morris Book*, Part Two: 'it is too flamboyant and decorative!'. Sharp himself wanted something 'much more dignified and reticent'. 61

In the autumn of 1908, his misgivings seem to have been coming to a head. On 10 November, he wrote to Lucy Broadwood disassociating himself from Neal's Association, commenting that he 'deprecated very strongly the impertinent assumption of the Espérance Society that they originated the whole Folk-song movement'. Let would have been about this time that he remarked to William Kimber, as the latter recalled it, 'she isn't satisfied with having a ride in the conveyance, she wants the reins'. Let a question of authority was at the heart of the matter.

On 14 January 1909 Sharp opened his copy of the Morning Post to find in it an article about Mary Neal headed 'Dancing and Social Reform: What London Working Girls are Doing'. Filled with anger at what he read, Sharp wrote to Neville Lytton: 'It literally bristles with gross and quite unpardonable inaccuracies'. Sharp was, of course, exaggerating. Mary Neal was saying no more in this interview than she had said from the beginning, by presenting the story of the revival in heightened and romantic guise. But Sharp was becoming very conscious that his own roles as an expert and as the original collector were in some danger. Neal was also affirming her independence by beginning to invite other traditional dancers to London to teach her girls, in this instance Thomas Cadd of Yardley Gobion, someone whom Sharp was not to meet until 14 January 1910.65

In public, Sharp preserved all the decencies of polite behaviour, and, in private, he was still avoiding any actual confrontation, hoping that Lytton could restrain Neal. 66 But the emotional tension was continually increasing. Later, in January 1909, Sharp refused pointblank to speak at a concert in Cambridge when he learned that it had been advertised as being presented by the Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music. Only after much cajolery did he agree to appear, and this proved to be his last public involvement with an Espérance performance. 67

On the 7 March 1909 the first actual personal breach came, though still in private, with a complaining and reproachful letter from Sharp to Neal:

If you choose to annex stories about folk-singers that I have told in public and apply them for the purpose of your own or your club's glorification — that is your

own affair... So that it comes to this; if you wish to pose as an expert and authority you must not ask me to support you.⁶⁸

Matters had reached a point where it would have been difficult to appease Sharp's feeling of hurt personal pride, especially as Neal felt that she had reasonable grounds for thinking that she had done all she could to co-operate.

The problem was compounded by Sharp's insistence on putting the whole matter on a high moral plane: 'My great desire is that at the outset these songs and dances should be introduced to the present generation in the purest form possible'. 69 It was now impossible to resolve these tensions and to bring back a peaceful state of co-operation. During the next five years the disagreements developed into an intense rivalry which was to have deep effects on the character of the folk revival both for good and ill. The continual interaction of Neal on Sharp and of Sharp on Neal produced a waste of time and emotions in certain directions, but also a positive striving after achievement in others.

At this stage, in the spring of 1909, Sharp was still insistent that he was not seeking to replace Mary Neal as an organizer, but simply wishing to set limits to her claims to be 'an expert and authority'. At the same time, however, he was not only in practice distancing himself from Espérance activities but also making moves which would establish his independent position as an authentic source of instruction.70 He was already an experienced and successful lecturer on folk song, using the singing of Mattie Kay as illustration, but now he was deliberately entering on a wider sphere. On three Thursdays beginning on 25 February 1909 he gave a series of lectures, in turn taking the subjects children's games, morris dance, and folk song.71 His children's games were supplied by a friendly Guild of Play, but for his examples of morris he could only use jigs by William Kimber or tunes played by a violinist. In every way the programmes were intentionally more restrained than those of the Espérance, but he must have been aware that he needed to have a good set of adult morris dancers to complement Kimber's jigs.72

It would have been with this in mind that, at some point early in March, Sharp was already instructing a morris class for teachers at the Chelsea College of Physical Education, part of the South Western Polytechnic. 73 With hopes for his plans beginning to grow Sharp was also considering the idea of giving up his teaching at Ludgrove School. 74 On 10 June 1909, Sharp's moves towards independence had a significant public success when he gave a demonstration at the Chelsea Hospital

first of the Sherborne dances from him. 60 Already Sharp was confident in his mastery of the material and fully prepared to lay down the law about it. In August, he was writing to MacIlwaine about the latter's proposed introduction to the forthcoming *Morris Book*, Part Two: 'it is too flamboyant and decorative!'. Sharp himself wanted something 'much more dignified and reticent'. 61

In the autumn of 1908, his misgivings seem to have been coming to a head. On 10 November, he wrote to Lucy Broadwood disassociating himself from Neal's Association, commenting that he 'deprecated very strongly the impertinent assumption of the Espérance Society that they originated the whole Folk-song movement'. Let would have been about this time that he remarked to William Kimber, as the latter recalled it, 'she isn't satisfied with having a ride in the conveyance, she wants the reins'. Let a question of authority was at the heart of the matter.

On 14 January 1909 Sharp opened his copy of the Morning Post to find in it an article about Mary Neal headed 'Dancing and Social Reform: What London Working Girls are Doing'. Filled with anger at what he read, Sharp wrote to Neville Lytton: 'It literally bristles with gross and quite unpardonable inaccuracies'. Sharp was, of course, exaggerating. Mary Neal was saying no more in this interview than she had said from the beginning, by presenting the story of the revival in heightened and romantic guise. But Sharp was becoming very conscious that his own roles as an expert and as the original collector were in some danger. Neal was also affirming her independence by beginning to invite other traditional dancers to London to teach her girls, in this instance Thomas Cadd of Yardley Gobion, someone whom Sharp was not to meet until 14 January 1910.65

In public, Sharp preserved all the decencies of polite behaviour, and, in private, he was still avoiding any actual confrontation, hoping that Lytton could restrain Neal. 66 But the emotional tension was continually increasing. Later, in January 1909, Sharp refused pointblank to speak at a concert in Cambridge when he learned that it had been advertised as being presented by the Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music. Only after much cajolery did he agree to appear, and this proved to be his last public involvement with an Espérance performance. 67

On the 7 March 1909 the first actual personal breach came, though still in private, with a complaining and reproachful letter from Sharp to Neal:

If you choose to annex stories about folk-singers that I have told in public and apply them for the purpose of your own or your club's glorification — that is your

own affair... So that it comes to this; if you wish to pose as an expert and authority you must not ask me to support you.⁶⁸

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before Edward VII, using his Chelsea girls, the first of many such occasions, and Kimber.⁷⁵

Mary Neal's response to Sharp's accusations was only to be expected. At first she sought some kind of *modus vivendi* only to repeat her errors of romantic mythologization and then receive another accusatory letter from Sharp. To this second attack she responded, 'I not only think your letter unnecessary, but, if you will forgive my plain speaking, quite unwarrantable'.⁷⁶

Another important factor to be noted at this time was Neal's involvement with women's suffrage. She had been at the inaugural committee meeting of the Women's Suffrage and Political Union in 1906, actually taking the minutes on that occasion, and she remained nominally on the committee, writing occasional articles for Votes for Women. The does not seem to have taken an active part in agitation, but the Espérance Club was sometimes involved in public events, for example, dancing at the Women's Exhibition at Knightsbridge, 9–25 May 1909. In November 1908, MacIlwaine had resigned as musical director, partly because of ill-health, but also, as Mary Neal told Sharp, 'because he would no longer be associated with me and my friends on account of our political opinions'.79

None of this at all hindered the continued prosperity and expansion of the new Association. It was, quite simply, the obvious national body to which any interested person would turn. In December 1908, MacIlwaine, despite his resignation, was still recommending enquirers about folk music to apply to the Association. In the summer of 1909, when D'Arcy de Ferrars wanted to report his own early experiences of morris dancing, he visited the Association's headquarters in Kingsway. He was quite under the impression that he had thereby contacted Sharp. In the summer of 1909, when D'Arcy de Visited the Association's headquarters in Kingsway. He was quite under the impression that he had thereby contacted Sharp. In the summer of 1909, when D'Arcy de Visited the Association's headquarters in Kingsway. He was quite under the impression that he had thereby contacted Sharp.

At this time there was still a public appearance of co-operation. At the Stratford Festival of Folk Song and Dance on 5 May 1909 Sharp, Neal, MacIlwaine, and Burrows all acted as judges.⁸² The next day Mary Neal wrote to Sharp:

I am writing just on an impulse after yesterday because while you were talking to those children I was very vividly reminded of the early days of our friendship when I felt we had so much in common that we were sure to be able to work together. I want you to come and have a talk because letter writing is so very unsatisfactory and because I am very grieved at the various misunderstandings that have entered into our work. I came away yesterday inspired both by the successes and the shortcomings, and full of ideas for future development and improvement. After all we have helped one another to make England a more beautiful place for the young folks, the work must go on and it is a thousand pities not to do it together. 83

During May and June a cautious neutrality still continued. At Neal's Oxford show on 19 June, Kimber danced once more with the Espérance girls, having first got permission from Sharp, and on 22 June the Chelsea students performed in one of Nellie Chaplin's fashionable concerts of 'Ancient Music'.84

During July 1909, the situation changed dramatically. With the appearance of *The Morris Book*, Part Two, Sharp set out his own revised view of the morris, and established his own standards of character and performance. An influential statement in the original *Morris Book*, almost certainly in the words of Herbert MacIlwaine, had been that, 'The Morris Dance is essentially a manifestation of vigour rather than of grace'. 85 Now Sharp commented that this had been given 'a somewhat too liberal interpretation': 'Here and there we have noticed in the would-be Morrisdancer a tendency to be over-strenuous, to adopt, upon occasion, even a hoydenish manner of execution'. 86 All mention of Florrie and of the Espérance Club had disappeared.

Mary Neal responded to the apparent slight on Florrie with great indignation and an angry correspondence ensued with her writing bitterly:

I have done with the farce of expecting fair play. In the future I shall consider myself absolved from all obligations to further the interests of anything or anybody but those of the movement at large and my Club in particular.⁸⁷

Sharp was stung by this into an explicit avowal of his position. He quoted her words back to her, and continued:

That has been the trouble from the beginning of the chapter. You have striven from the first to identify the movement with your club and to limit your staff of teachers to the members of your club, to present to the public no higher artistic standard of performance than that of which you and your club were capable. In the administration of your society you deliberately isolated yourself from and refused to associate yourself with those who were better acquainted with the subject than yourself and animated by higher artistic ideals than your own. Seeing the danger I very naturally took steps to avert it with the result that I have now a staff of teachers at my command [who] in my opinion are far better qualified to spread the Morris than are the members of your Club. I am very sorry for Florrie and her fellow workers. I do not blame them. I blame you and I blame you very bitterly for refusing to allow them to be properly directed and controlled.

Already the opinion is getting about that the Morris dance is a graceless, undignified and uncouth dance quite unfitted for educational uses ... I am not going to stand idly by any longer and allow you to make or mar the fortunes of the movement.88

On 22 August 1909, soon after this correspondence had taken place, the Board of Education published its new Syllabus of Physical Exercises for public elementary schools. This made the disagreement between Sharp and Neal considerably more important by giving official blessing and encouragement for the teaching of morris dances in school, declaring that they were 'easily learned and very enjoyable'. 89 Neal immediately responded publicly to the Board of Education with letters to the Morning Post and the Westminster Gazette, also, one may feel, thereby giving a defiant personal rebuttal to Sharp. She stated that teachers from her Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music were already teaching from one end of England to the other. And she continued:

Lately we invited our original instructors again so as to be sure that not only the step, but also the form and spirit of the dances were being kept true to tradition . . . All particulars as to instructors, the obtaining of the music and other help will be gladly given at our office or by post. 90

Sharp meanwhile was not idle. It seems that Burrows, the H.M.I. for West Sussex, was now sympathetically inclined towards him rather than Neal and on 11 June he arranged a profitable meeting for Sharp with the Chief Inspector for Elementary Schools, E. G. A. Holmes. ⁹¹ Furthermore, his connection with the Chelsea Physical Training College was being turned to good account with the setting up of an actual School of Morris Dancing to open in September 1909, with Sharp as its Director.

[The new Syllabus of P.E.] has made imperative the establishment of a Training School for Teachers of Morris and other forms of Folk-Dancing, the absence of which must inevitably lead to the dances being practised in ways not sanctioned by tradition . . . The purpose of this school . . . is primarily to conserve the Morris Dance in all its traditional purity. 92

On 18 October, Burrows was writing to Sharp: 'We shall want teachers of Morris and Country Dances at once. Do get some of your lot ready'.93

Most important of all for posterity, Sharp was refining his techniques for collecting the morris, and beginning to seek out new sources of information. The needs of his new School and of the new P.E. Syllabus were doubtless urging him on, together with his sense of the role which he was creating for himself. In retrospect, the late summer of 1909 and his encounters with Wells and Benfield may be seen as the commencement of his most fruitful period of morris collecting. What is more, he was not only collecting dances, but also gathering impressions of the whole character of the morris. Arising out of this came, for example, in October 1909, his suggestion that:

It was a professional dance, the men who took part forming a sort of closed corporation... The dancers were very serious, and the dance was never permitted

to develop into a romp. It was full of grace and expressive of great strength under complete control . . . As one dancer put it, 'There must be plenty of brisk, but no excitement'. 95

This romantic vision was to mould the future, crystallized and clarified the more in contrast with the supposed Espérance inadequacies.

People like Neville Lytton continued to hope for reconciliation, commenting as he did to Sharp in Sepember 1909, 'What would serve the cause best would be for you to enter again into partnership with Miss Neal', and in December 1909, 'It is a pity not to make full use of Miss Neal's propagandist powers'. 96 But the two protagonists were becoming set in their opposition to each other. Neal necessarily was still using *The Morris Books*, distributing and selling them through her teachers and classes. In the autumn of 1909, however, she objected to the fact that Novello were now inserting a circular in each volume advertising Sharp's new School of Morris Dancing. Sharp's letter to Mr Littleton of Novello's on the matter shows the way in which relationships were now becoming unbearably painful for him.

I have been very patient with Miss Neal for the past few years and have sincerely tried to keep her on proper lines ... Amongst other things she is quite incurably inaccurate. She deluges the papers with statements that are only partly true about her club and its share in the revival and has in this way won for herself an authority for which she has no claim whatever ... If it were possible to compromise in this matter I would most gladly do so.⁹⁷

But there was now no chance of compromise. The two protagonists had established images of each other which made distrust inevitable. Neal was cut very deeply by Sharp's letters and his attitude of cold suspicion. As far as she was concerned it was now war. Sharp's solicitor commented to him: 'Miss Neal does not word her letters with a view to an amicable settlement but seems to want to carry her case at the point of the bayonet'.98

Sharp's accusations meant that Neal was now zealously careful to give specific attribution for the morris dances which were performed. What is more she had now herself positively become an expert and a collector, having followed up Sam Bennett and the Ilmington dances after the Stratford-upon-Avon festival of May 1909, and having also discovered the Abingdon tradition for herself later that year. 99 In a programme for 5 January 1910, she laid emphasis on the authenticity of her material:

In all the Espérance Morris dancers have had instruction from ten different traditional dancers from different parts of England . . . The danger of relying too much on one form of the tradition is that it becomes fixed and therefore lifeless. 100

Forced on by the circumstances, she was now indeed setting herself up as an authority, and being reported as such in educational periodicals:

It appears from Miss Neal's investigations that there are no set steps to any morris, for the same performers introduced several variations, apparently without knowing it, into the most common dances. But there is a general rhythm and characteristic action which marks off one morris from another, the steps in each becoming more simple or more complicated according to the state of the weather and the state of their feelings. 101

On this same occasion, on 5 January 1910, Neal for the first time introduced a team of young men, friends and relatives of the girls, and referred to in this account as being 'hearty and robust'. On 10 February, Sharp, still dependent on his girls, was writing to Alice Gomme, 'I am very anxious to have a men's side at my command . . . Would any of your sons care to cooperate?'. On 20 February, after he had been lecturing in Huddersfield and Halifax, he was again writing to Alice Gomme, putting a brave face on the situation: 'I am quite ready to leave them to choose between us'. 103

The dispute was still not fully in the open, but battle lines were being drawn up and to begin with the initiative was certainly with Neal. Eight of her girls were being kept busy giving instructions in the dances, and every county in England except two had been visited by them. ¹⁰⁴ With this great increase in activity, she took two important steps. In March 1910, she established a new Espérance Guild of Morris Dancers, 'to which all men and women of good will who wish to see a fairer and happier life for the people of England shall belong'. ¹⁰⁵ And at the same time, she issued another implicit challenge to Sharp by publishing her own book of instruction, *The Espérance Morris Book*, with a tremendous flurry of publicity. ¹⁰⁶

Sharp's reaction to the new Espérance Guild appeared in a letter to the Morning Post on 1 April 1910:

It is to be hoped that the promoters will see that the guild is founded upon broad and comprehensive lines, and that they will allow their enthusiasm to be guided by those who possess the requisite experience and knowledge. 107

Sharp was, of course, referring to himself, and there is no doubt that in terms of actually collecting he was now beginning to be justified in his claims to authority. During the previous month of March, for example, he had been with George Simpson on four separate days gathering the rich harvest of the Sherborne dances. 108

Neal's response was forthright. In Vanity Fair, on 14 April, she wrote:

It behoves those of us to whom has been entrusted the guidance and helping of this movement for the renewal of beauty in life to tread reverently, and to see to it that the blighting touch of the pedant and the expert is not laid upon it. 109

This was a phrase which she frequently used about Sharp, and she continued to emphasize her own close contact with the traditional dancers. In particular, she announced a special anniversary performance for 5 May 1910, when the events of the evening would be 'made as significant as possible'. An elaborate 'Keepsake' programme was adorned with illustrations and quotations, and the show included William and James Hemmings with the Abingdon Horns and regalia, Sam Bennett with his hobby-horse, and Charles Hawtin of Kirtlington duly carrying a lamb. 111

Open Conflict 1910-1914

In private Sharp expressed his distress in a letter to Alice Gomme:

These men [the Ilmington men specifically] are very uncouth as well as untraditional dancers and it will be most mischievous for them to be presented to the public as typical of the genuine dancers ... Something must be done or the whole movement will fizzle out ... The whole thing is very unsettling and I am very low and despondent.¹¹²

In public, he expressed his fears lest 'the movement should get on the wrong lines' in an interview with his old ally, Lennox Gilmour, in the Morning Post on 3 May 1910. 113 At this point, the quarrel thus entered into its next stage and the disagreement was brought thoroughly into the open. Two days later, to coincide with the Espérance performance on 5 May, the Morning Post published a further interview giving Mary Neal an opportunity to reply. 114 She offered a further challenge to Sharp:

I recognise no expert in Morris dancing, but the traditional dancer himself, and I recognise no expert teachers of Morris dancing but those who have been directly taught by the traditional dancer . . . To me it seems as unreasonable to talk about an expert in making people happy.

To begin with Neal's approach attracted a sympathetic response in influential places. *The Times*, for example, in reviewing the Espérance concert, referred to Sam Bennett and Charles Hawtin as 'both of them experts in the best sense of the term'. And the *Morning Post* itself in its review of *The Espérance Morris Book* approved Neal's desire 'to keep the expert in his proper place'.

Public controversy continued during the whole of May and into June, especially in the correspondence columns of the Morning Post and the Daily Mail. 117 Sharp's Folk Dance Club, which had grown out of his work at Chelsea, gave a show on 31 May, which may be compared with the different approach of the Espérance performance of 5 May. In contrast, Sharp's programme was simple and restrained, still essentially a lecture with illustrations; these were now drawn, however, from a wide variety of traditions, Bampton, Winster, Eynsham, Sherborne, Brackley, Bledington, many of them to be found in the recently published Morris Book, Part Three. 118

As far as the standard of dancing was concerned Sharp was not necessarily seen as more correct. Francis Toye, though not an impartial witness, suggested that there was no real difference in the actual step used, but that the Espérance Club danced with more of the proper spirit than the Chelsea girls.

I can see no reason why Mr Sharp should arrogate himself the position of Pope in these matters. And in his letters to the Press that is just what he has done. He has excommunicated Miss Neal and the Espérance Club asserting that their steps are incorrect and their movements untraditional.¹¹⁹

Extremely important at the time was the fact that Neal still seemed secure in her hold on Stratford-upon-Avon as a base from which to instruct teachers. 120 At the Festival of 1910, postponed from 9 May to 10 August because of the death of Edward VII, Archibald Flower, the most important Stratford magnate, was optimistic enough to ask Cecil Sharp to second the vote to thanks to the organizers:

He hoped Mr Sharp in a few words would dissipate some of the impressions which had got abroad. Mr Sharp, Mr Kidson and Miss Neal were all companions trying to organise and revive Morris dancing and folk-singing, and they had one great object at heart, to bring more joy into the life of the people. He trusted they would try and work together, if they could, in that respect (Applause).

Sharp responded with a somewhat hollow-sounding jest:

Mr Sharp said he was in a difficult position, for he had been told that he belonged to the unhappy class of people known by the expression 'expert' and it seemed to him that word was rapidly becoming the most objectionable name they could possibly call a man. 121

Neal did not lack for influential support. The Directors of the restored Crosby Hall were persuaded to let her use it once a month for her Guild meetings, beginning on 3 November 1910, and there she continued to develop her theme of joyful participation:

Country dancers and musicians will be invited and will join the members of the Guild in the dancing, which will take place on the floor of the Hall. It is to be hoped that there will be no spectators, but that all will join. 122

For the first such meeting, Joseph Trafford and Mark Cox came from Headington Quarry (see Figure 2). 123 Their presence was an implicit witness to the powerful attack which Neal was mounting on Sharp's reputation as an academic expert through her gathering of their evidence, which seemed to throw doubt on Kimber's value as an original source. On 25 October, she had written to Archibald Flower:

Yesterday I spent the whole day in Headington . . . I took Mr Carey, Mr Francis Toye, and a shorthand writer. We have indubitably proved that the whole basis of Mr Sharp's contentions as an expert are entirely unfounded . . . It is all extremely funny from one point of view, after the fuss he has made about expert knowledge. 124

Neal may have been overstating her case, but it was most distressing for Sharp because it had seemed that he was making headway in his attempts to win favour at Stratford-upon-Avon with Archibald Flower. Neal's trump card had always been her 'organising power' which was noted as excellent by everyone, Sharp included. In an interview with



Figure 2
Joe Trafford instructs the Espérance girls at Crosby Hall, Chelsea,
3 November 1910, with Mark Cox, fiddler; with acknowledgements to
Bob Grant and Oxfordshire County Council Library Services

Flower on 19 October 1910, Sharp had felt obliged to confess that he had not got an organization. On 23 October, he wrote to Mrs Stanton on the matter:

That was not my line. I had neither the time, inclination nor ability to advertise as she does. If I were not handicapped in this way I think he would be prepared to chuck her. 125

But he must have had a prompt change of mind on these matters. On 26 October, three days later, Sharp was writing to Flower: 'I told you I had no organisation ... But I have a teaching organisation — the only one I believe'. ¹²⁶ Soon after this, Sharp received word of Neal's revelations, and he wrote to Kimber in deep concern on 7 November:

Miss N. is on the warpath . . . this is a very serious business and it may do you and me a very great deal of harm. Will you put me in possession of all the facts as quickly as you can? 127

Kimber immediately responded in reassuring terms:

I have been round home last night and saw my father and also read your letter to him. It fairly surprised him. I am to assure you from him that the tunes all of them taken down by you from me are right, and the way I have taught you also is right.¹²⁸

So Sharp felt entitled to be boldly dismissive of Neal's suggestions in writing to Flower at the end of November: 'She has discovered a mare's nest this time and no mistake'. 129

Meanwhile Flower was receiving much positive but contradictory advice. There were letters of support for Neal from F. R. Benson of the Stratford Theatre: 'Miss Neal in spite of her mistakes and shortcomings . . . is worth 20 Sharps'; and for Sharp from Lee Matthews: 'He is a man you must have in connection with Stratford'. ¹³⁰ In response to all this, Flower postponed any final decision, writing to Mary Neal thanking her for her work with the Festival: 'They are glad to feel that you wish to continue to direct your energies and capacity for organisation to helping in this work'. He noted the existence of 'differences of opinion', and proposed to hold a Conference in 1911 to discuss the matter, and then to establish a Festival Council which would be 'the Central Authority on Folk Art'. ¹³¹

Neal accepted these suggestions in good faith, and proceded to treat the Headington matter as *sub judice*. ¹³² She also went to the United States for three months from the middle of December 1910, partly as an emissary for the Stratford Theatre and partly to take the Espérance message. The trip was not a great success, in some measure, she felt, because of pro-Sharp intrigue against her, although it had its better moments, and

Florrie made her usual good impression, eventually marrying an American. But Neal's prospecting on behalf of Benson did not lead anywhere, and her absence also to some extent took the pressure off Sharp. 133

Coincident with the Headington crisis, Sharp was also having to come to terms with the fact that the Bidford tradition, constituting half of the first Morris Book, might well be considered to be 'faked' or 'revived', two of his own accusations against the Espérance dancing. In June, he had met for the first time D'Arcy de Ferrars, creator of the revived Bidford in 1886. Their correspondence suggests that Sharp was cautiously sounding out his own true position; perhaps he was fortunate that he was not pressed on this particular matter. 134

He was then doubly fortunate that de Ferrars gave him his first direct introduction to the sword dances of northern England. Having been told about Kirby Malzeard in early June 1910, by 13 December it was being shown, and it immediately made a tremendous impression on audiences. Having the his point, it becomes apparent that Sharp was drawing markedly ahead of Neal in the range of his available repertoire. On 24 January 1911, before the Worshipful Company of Musicians, his programme included Mattie Kay and Fred Hudson singing eight folk songs, twelve assorted morris dances, one country dance, four Playford dances, the Kirby Malzeard longsword dance, and three morris jigs by William Kimber, the last being reported as 'a Greek statue...his grace and movements are absolutely classic'. The final revival item was also about to emerge, in the presentation of the rapper by a side of men at Oxford on 16 February 1911. With this, the comprehensive character of Sharp's repertoire was established.

During the spring of 1911, Sharp was making a determined attempt to win over Archibald Flower: 'Having collected the dances and introduced them to the public, I cannot rid myself of the responsibility of seeing that they are accurately passed on'. ¹³⁹ He rallied his various supporters to use their influence, until finally in May he could write to Paul Oppé:

I have got Stratford. They decided to put the technical direction in my hands and asked if I had any objection to Miss Neal remaining as hon. sec. and doing the organising. Of course I said No, but she wouldn't cooperate on any terms, rejecting every kind of olive branch offered. This is perhaps as well for I am left with a free hand. 140

The Times commented that 'no worthier appointment could be made', and, on I July, Sharp's official recognition was sealed with the gift of a civil list pension.¹⁴¹

It would be a mistake, however, to consider that the battle was now over. Neal's Guild continued to grow and to flourish. 142 The situation was rather that both sides were being forced to consider their every move with great care. In the autumn of 1911, Mary Neal was in Yorkshire, where she collected songs with Clive Carey (see Figure 3), and also investigated the Flamborough Sword Dancers. She invited their leaders to Crosby Hall and opened another campaign of handbills and newspaper articles, declaring,

ROY JUDGE

[They] will teach a set who have never before seen the dance. It is hoped that this object lesson in the ease with which these dances can be learned will settle once and for all the discussion as to whether it is necessary to interpose between the folk who know the dances and those who wish to learn them, a professional teacher, and prove once and for all that no such professional training is necessary for the best interpretation of the English peasant dance. 143

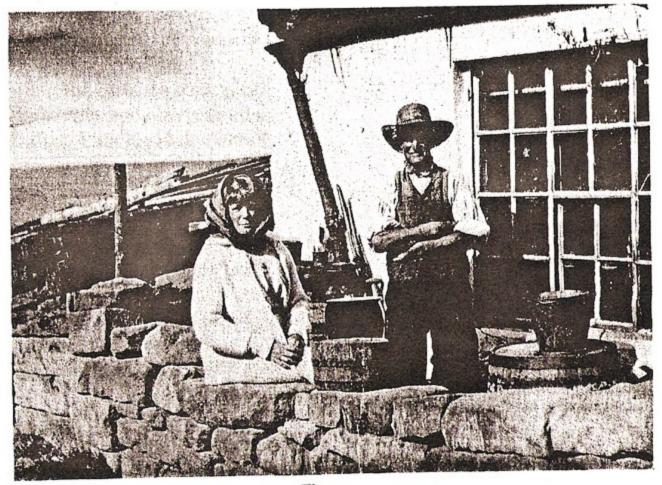


Figure 3 Mary Neal with Robert Beadle at Stoup Brow, Fyling Hall, on the North Yorkshire Moors; taken by Clive Carey on 22 September 1911, the occasion on which he collected 'One Midsummer's Morn; or, Lemady', Folk Song Journal, Number 19 (1915), 175-76; the photograph is in Mary Neal's typescript autobiography at p. 150. See also Neal to Carey, 9 September 1911, Carey Collection, VWML.

She proved the matter to her own satisfaction; Sharp, on the other hand, dismissed the entire matter as 'egregious', emphasizing to Flower that Neal 'certainly has the art — if it be one — of manipulating the half truth'. 144

On 1 December 1911, Mary Neal attended a performance by Sharp's Folk Dance Club at Kensington Town Hall. Sharp, writing to Flower afterwards, commented: '[She] never smiled, sat for the most part with her eyes closed, but occasionally opened them to write energetically on a piece of paper'.145 These notes appeared next Sunday in the Observer, and they embody Neal's most explicit account of the difference between the two approaches. She admired the beauty and grace of the Folk Dance Club, but commented:

The atmosphere, the movements, the general style of the dancing is not that inspired by the peasant mind, the uncultured, unlettered artist of the field; it is rather the adaptation of this by the cultured musician.

She contrasted this occasion with her memories of Bampton in the same year:

The men danced in a sort of trance, in a mood inarticulate, unselfconscious; each man had his own way with the steps, no two dancing precisely alike, and yet the same mood was so heavy upon all that the general effect was harmonious and curiously impressive.146

Neal certainly had considerable confidence in her own cause. Writing to Flower on 1 January 1912, she expressed her feelings about her replacement by Sharp in the Stratford appointment:

Since you ask me, I do not feel that you played the game as I expected you would. You led me to think that there would be a public Conference to discuss and decide points of difference between Mr Sharp and myself; and I resigned to have a free hand at that Conference and in a few days you appointed Mr Sharp as Director of the Folk Dance and held no public Conference.

You will find it difficult to justify this to anyone but to Mr Sharp. But it is all past history now and my work has not suffered. After six years drudging away I am now satisfied with the progress we are making. We had 550 pupils in November, mostly in the North. The new Folk Dance Society deceives no-one ... Stratford is merely making a corner in Folk Dances for a select few while the really national movement grows apace outside. 147

During 1912 Sharp, although still perfectly confident in the righteousness of his cause, was often inclined to doubts and fears. On 29 January: 'The enemy is very active ... [and] greatly improved'. On 18 February: 'Just back from Sunderland, a hot bed of Nealism'. On 3 July: 'Miss N. is rampant. We are being attacked on all sides. It seems impossible to catch up the lies that are being circulated'. He felt himself threatened, writing to Flower on 6 July:

If the teachers round you are incensed with me it is not from anything that I have said to them but because their minds have been poisoned against me by my enemies. 148

Flower's much postponed conference to discuss the differences was finally held on 13 August 1912.149 It began with Flower reading a reconciliatory letter from Reginald Buckley: 'Misguided partisans have decried the one method as pedantic and the other as indifferent to technique'.150 But it continued with a repetition of the familiar arguments. Lady Isabel Margesson commented that 'before children acquired accuracy they needed power'. (It must have been at this period that Ralph Vaughan Williams went to a fancy-dress party dressed as Mary Neal, with the placard, 'Power before Accuracy'. 151) Flower summed up in favour of the need for accuracy in teaching, but both parties retired with their views unchanged. The School Music Review, a Novello periodical, commented, 'the aim must be to achieve faultless accuracy', and 'Mr Sharp's firm attitude was accepted as the only rational one'. J. Kenneth Curwen in the Musical Herald, on the other hand, expressed himself as reassured that educationists had agreed that children should regard education as 'a pleasure and not a labour', and that 'while such broad views are held there need be no fear of over-insistence on the correct traditional ritual'.152 Novello and Curwen, publishers respectively of Sharp and Neal, could be relied upon to follow the appropriate party line. Meanwhile, The Times described the situation admirably:

The spirit of joy which has been the chief characteristic of the one and the spirit of accuracy which has marked the other are now to be found in the classes of both teachers. To the onlooker their aims and methods seem to have become practically identical. 153

Sharp continued to gain ground organizationally. On 6 December 1911, the English Folk Dance Society (EFDS) had been constituted and the following Stratford School of Folk Dancing was highly successful. 154 Furthermore, local branches of the new society were being set up during 1912 in places like Oxford, Cirencester, and Liverpool, where people who had previously supported Mary Neal were now changing their allegiance. 155 Two years earlier, in October 1910, Janet McCrindell of Liverpool had expressed an understandable foreboding that the disagreements would be harmful to the movement:

it almost seems as if the movement might be wrecked — degenerating on the one hand into a debased form of dance, and merely used for providing entertainments; and on the other becoming so formal and pedantic as only to be of interest to the expert in folk-lore¹⁵⁶

In practice, these specific fears had not been realized, but each side cherished its caricature of the other's faults so that any co-operation was unthinkable. Loyalties were being established which frequently had a personal or party flavour, as for example when Neal wrote to Clive Carey: 'The Whalls turned out to be cousins to Nellie Chaplin, so anti-Sharp and very friendly'. 157

During 1912, Sharp further consolidated his predominance in the matter of supplying teachers and also books of instruction for them to use. While Neal was publishing her second part to The Espérance Morris Book, Sharp had produced The Sword Dance Book, Parts One and Two, The Country Dance Book, Parts Two and Three, and The Morris Book, Part Four, not to mention his English Folk Carols. In 1912, he also issued the revised version of The Morris Book, Part One. This grasped the nettle of the Bidford dances by politely discarding them, and included various comments which can only be properly understood in the light of the contemporary situation.

The Morris is not an easy dance. Indeed, a great deal of the bad dancing which has disfigured the present revival must be attributed to the failure, on the part of teacher and student alike, to realise this elementary fact. Somehow or other the idea seems to have got abroad that anyone could teach and anyone could learn the dance. 159

All mention of the early role of the Espérance had disappeared, except, of course, for these unpleasant innuendoes. Mary Neal commented to Clive Carey, 'That is the limit'. 160

But Sharp continued to feel threatened by the public activities of the Espérance Guild. Neal had her own successes during 1912: 'Shakespeare's England' at Earl's Court, and the commissioning of a book by her and Frank Kidson on England's Songs and Dances. 161 This was only published in 1915, but it should be seen as showing her position at the end of 1912; she was then still a recognized authority on the subject. A contemporary standard book on dancing could suitably write of her as 'the directing spirit of the movement'. 162

When Harley Granville-Barker needed folk dancing for a production of *The Winter's Tale* in September, it was quite reasonable for him to approach Neal. Sharp, however, wrote to him in deep distress, condemning 'the hoydenish gambols' of the Espérance dancers, and again fearing that 'the movement which I initiated and have spent so many years in promoting will receive its death blow'. ¹⁶³ In October, he reacted with similar agitation after his visit to Blackpool for its musical festival. He wrote to Flower about the standard of the teams presenting morris:

[Most] were simply execrable — the worst type of Chaplin cum Espérance dancing. I never could have imagined that folk dancing could become so debased and present so gruesome a spectacle. There can be no truck between us. They are rank philistines and enemies of the movement and must be so regarded. Unless we let it [be known] that we have nothing to do with them we shall be caught in the slump which must eventually overtake them. 164

On 2 December 1912, Sharp put his own ideals into practice at the Savoy Theatre — still clarifying and developing them against the background accompaniment of Espérance activity. His programme again expressed an attitude of restrained dignity, and included a direct reference to the size of the repertory, sixty-seven morris dances, eighty-three country dances, and seven sword dances. Afterwards, he commented to Flower:

The notices in the papers have been excellent. A few have carped a little but this I take to be a good sign. It means that we are for the first time [to] be reckoned with seriously. I noted too with pleasure the entire absence of the 'Merrie England' business and the purely sentimental view. The press as a whole have really taken us seriously. 166

Neal was herself still characteristically confident about the future. After her own concert on 11 December 1912, she commented: 'The Hall was full and never since quite early days have we had such enthusiasm or have the boys and girls done so well'. In a letter to Clive Carey on Christmas Eve 1912, she wrote:

Taking it all round the last year has been the best I have ever had in spite of everything. Even if I gave up an official Guild, I should still have my 4,000 addresses and other assets with which to play about and help a general movement.

But she also remarked:

Thank goodness I am not in any way dependent on the folk-music, except as my contribution to what I think the world wants. If it does not want my work anymore on the same lines, there is plenty else to do. But even the troubles have brought me some very staunch friends and some very dear people into my life, that is worth a lot, so we won't worry about it any more, but go ahead the best way we can. 168

Even at this stage, attempts were made to bring her and Sharp together. 169 Flower, also on Christmas Eve 1912, was writing to her to make 'one more effort' at reconciliation. She responded positively to his overtures by offering to put her teachers in for the EFDS certificate, and suggesting a representative committee with Sharp as Director and herself as Secretary. But this came to nothing. 170

During 1913 and 1914 it is possible to see with hindsight that the victory was tending to go to Sharp. The Sword Dance Book, Part Three,

and *The Morris Book*, Part Five, were published, the latter with the significant help of George Butterworth. ¹⁷¹ At the Stratford School in August 1913, four hundred and fifty students attended, and Sharp was presented with an original *Punch* cartoon on the morris, just as Mary Neal had been similarly presented with Bernard Partridge's cartoon in 1907. ¹⁷² In May 1914, the first issue of the Society's journal was published and nineteen branches were recorded as being in existence, with some two to three hundred centres of activity. ¹⁷³

There appears to have been a corresponding diminution of public activity by Neal, although there were many plans afoot, and her influential supporters continued to be active on her behalf. The Musical Herald for April 1913 includes a forward-looking interview with her, which speaks of continued growth, and lists various new activities. This was also the period of Clive Carey's greatest activity as a collector of the morris. And the May Day Revels at the Globe Theatre in 1913 embodied her beliefs quite splendidly with their introduction of the full Bampton side.

They were to dance exactly as they did on Whit-Monday, so that when they were followed by the Espérance dancers this would show 'both the difference and the similitude between the traditional dancers and those whom they have taught'. 177 Neal was intending on this occasion to draw out the contrast with the social milieu from which Sharp's EFDS dancers were drawn; what she saw as the inability of 'the average young lady or gentleman to get near to the spirit of the dance', and on the other hand the ease with which her own company, 'working lads and lasses, from town and country', could do this. The press responded appropriately. Votes for Women, for example, described the dancing of her young men as 'especially worthy of praise in its vigour and zest, combined with gracefulness'. And the Westminster Gazette commented:

With the Espérance dancers it is more than a dance; it is the expression and embodiment of a very real gaiety, a vivid exhilaration. 178

But by June 1914 the balance of power seems to have changed. References in the press to Espérance activity have almost disappeared. One last isolated instance occurs in the Central Somerset Gazette on 12 June, recording an interview with Mary Neal at the Bristol International Exhibition. 179 It is remarkable how the account preserves so many of the themes and anecdotes which she had used on countless previous occasions; enjoyment, enthusiasm, and the ordinary life of the working classes remain her keynotes. But it seems that the interview took place chiefly because the newspaper was interested in her as being concerned in the

approaching Glastonbury Arthurian Festival. She was no longer of sufficient importance for the national newspapers. Sharp and the EFDS, on the other hand, continued to gain in stature. On the next day, 13 June 1914, the Morning Post was reporting: '[It] has patiently done much preparatory work in laying the foundation for a national movement, and is now beginning to reap its reward'. 180

The War and Afterwards 1914-1944

The coming of the war in August 1914 created an entirely new situation. Espérance activity ceased, and Mary Neal turned her energies to other fields. For a while, during 1916 and 1917, she lived in Poplar, working on pension administration, and enduring air raids and the Silvertown munitions factory explosion. But she evidently continued to plan and organize for what might happen after the war. Much of her planning was concerned with the theatre, and she shared some of it with Clive Carey, telling him about a scheme for Poplar:

I have worked out the whole scheme for discharged soldiers to do the building as a memorial to those fallen in the war, with you as manager, and he [Harold Child] is writing it up and appealing for £50,000 to carry it out. Nothing like doing a thing big when you start. He said, 'I suppose you want to be entire boss of the whole scheme?' Sez I, 'Why certainly', and I could hear you saying, 'Disgraceful woman'. 182

In 1919, when John MacDermott was developing the plans which evolved into the Everyman Theatre at Hampstead, Mary Neal became involved in the preliminary discussions, especially over 'the place of Folk Song and Dance'. ¹⁸³ In the same year the *Globe* reported an interview with her: '[She is] as enthusiastic as ever on the subject of Folk Art, and very hopeful of reviving the work which suffered a temporary setback by the war'. ¹⁸⁴

But in fact the old days of the Espérance had gone; its strength had perhaps been rooted too much in the girls of the original club who had achieved so much as instructors and demonstrators. Now the folk-dance world belonged to Sharp and the EFDS, a more stable, middle-class affair with a professional educational basis. In her 'Autobiography', Neal simply comments: 'In 1918 it was impossible to begin again. The world had changed'.¹85 From 1918 to 1922 she lived at Amberley in West Sussex, then moving to 'Green Bushes', Littlehampton, where her life from 1925 to 1937 centred chiefly round work as a magistrate in West Sussex, particularly concerned with children's cases.¹86 Another big commitment was her adoption of Herbert MacIlwaine's son Antony at the end of the

war. MacIlwaine had died on 1 October 1916, and Neal had been deeply moved by her reconciliation with him during his final illness.¹⁸⁷

At the heart of Mary Neal's life before the war had been her confidence in the powers of folk song and dance, writing, for example, in 1913:

I am now more than ever sure that this folk music has got some wonderful life-giving force in it for the 'healing of the nations', and the one thing that will stop it is selfishness, jealousy and self-seeking. 188

After the war, deprived of the opportunity to express this practically, she came into contact with Rolf Gardiner at the time when he was seeking to use folk dance in exactly this way, but felt himself frustrated by Cecil Sharp's caution. She encouraged him in his assertion of independence, and was herself influenced by his ideas of 'a strong unworded religion'. ¹⁸⁹ In 1924, she wrote to Carey:

Rolf Gardiner stayed with me for a day or two. We had some wonderful talks. He has got the real spirit of the morris as a priest's dance of ritual and discipline. He propounded ideas to me of what a man's life should be under the influence of such a ritual which is what I have always held as a wild dream and ideal, but which, had I propounded it to the average man or woman would have been voted a silly old maid's nonsense! It was rather exciting to have it all poured out by a very virile and beautiful youth. 190

In the late 1930s, writing of her own spiritual development, Neal refers to a 'devastating' moment of insight concerning the character of the morris. By implication this would seem to have taken place before the First World War, but the encounters with Rolf Gardiner were possibly a final crystallizing influence:

Then I realised, in a devastating moment, that these dances were the remains of a purely masculine ceremonial, and that they represented a ritual of discipline for war and sex expression. I realised that gesture and ritual can be creative and can bring about mental and spiritual experience, and I knew then, for the first time, that by putting women on to this masculine rhythm I had quite innocently and ignorantly broken a law of cosmic ritual and stirred up disharmony which became active as time went on . . . I believe now that this misuse of the Morris Dance was the reason for the bitter estrangement between my colleagues and myself, the cause of which was as unknown to them as it was to me. 191

This develops logically enough from Neal's earlier enthusiasm for fertility ritual, but it does not appear in precisely this form in her earlier writings. 192 It seems unlikely that this 'insight' had been a major factor in leading to Neal's lessening of public activity before the war, although it may possibly have been a contributory influence. Perhaps this account of it

included an element of rationalization which enabled her high idealism to accept the failure of her work as a practical organizer.

Before and after Sharp's death in 1924, Neal's relations with the English Folk Dance Society remained cold and distant. ¹⁹³ In 1928, Lady Beauchamp, one of her early supporters, was interested in putting on a pageant at Madresfield Court. She wanted to include folk song and dance, but, reported Mary Neal with glee, 'She won't touch the Folk Dance Society people with the end of a barge pole!'. ¹⁹⁴

Also in 1928 she attended a meeting about the starting of a branch of the EFDS in Sussex. No one spoke to her, and she was horrified at the account which Douglas Kennedy gave of the early days of the revival: 'The whole story was so garbled that I wonder the earth did not swallow him up'. ¹⁹⁵ In 1930, however, she actually met him, and he clearly went out of his way to be tactful and appreciative. She was charmed by him and ended up by giving five pounds to the Cecil Sharp House Fund. ¹⁹⁶ Kennedy responded: 'I can't tell you how deeply we appreciate the gesture you have made and your readiness to let bygones be bygones'. ¹⁹⁷

In 1933 Fox Strangways sent her a copy of his newly published biography of Sharp and she replied with an approving letter, complimenting him on his interpretation with a touch of wry humour: 'Really it seems to me a wonderful biography, and I wish I had never seen the other side of "our Punch". 198

The Espérance Guild had disappeared, but Neal was still privately appreciated by those whom she had worked with and inspired. In 1925, a presentation was made to her by a group of some eighty friends and admirers, asserting: '[You] have woven your ideals and your creative work into the fabric of the national community'. The group contained an impressive collection of differing people. There were many names which might be expected, such as Neville Lytton, John Graham, Frank Kidson, Lucy Broadwood, and so on, but there was also a wider circle of less immediately likely people, including Conrad Noel, Waldron Smithers, Edward Carpenter, and E. V. Lucas. 199

Public recognition came when in the Coronation Honours for 1937 she was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire 'for services in connexion with the revival of folk songs and dances'. ²⁰⁰ To mark the occasion her brother, Theodore Neal, gave a lunch for her at Claridge's, with speeches by significant personalities from her past, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, Lawrence Housman, Neville Lytton, Clive Carey, and Rolf Gardiner. ²⁰¹ In the same year Florrie Warren was back in

England celebrating her silver wedding. There was a grand reunion of the Espérance men and women; songs were sung, and 'Jockey to the Fair' was danced by Florrie and Vic Ghirardi, one of the first Espérance men's side.²⁰²

During 1938, she briefly entered the world of morris dancing again, although very much as a spectator. During February and March, she exchanged letters with Francis Fryer who was deeply involved with the Abingdon Morris and was concerned to obtain any information he could from her.²⁰³ On 12 March 1938, Abingdon attended the Morris Ring meeting at Cecil Sharp House, and Fryer spoke of their gratitude to Mary Neal.²⁰⁴ At his invitation, she visited Stow-on-the-Wold during the Ring meeting which was held there from 16 to 18 September. The Abingdon side came on the Sunday and performed all their dances, which gave her great pleasure; she is reported to have met old dancers whom she had known, and to have 'showed her medal'.²⁰⁵

In 1940, with the effect of the war on Littlehampton, she went to stay with the Pethick-Lawrences at Gomshall in Surrey, remaining there until she died on 25 June 1944. She remained active to the end, writing to Carey, for example, in 1942:

Lately I have started doing a little work for the Gallup survey — the British Institute of Public Opinion. It is useful, I think, and I can do it with one hand tied behind me! I like chatting with all sorts of people, especially labourers and roadmen, etc. I have had no rebuffs, only jolly talks.²⁰⁶

Less than two years later, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence ended her obituary of Mary Neal:

To the last day of her life she lost none of her worship of rhythm and beauty, nor did she lose her ardent desire to make them the common heritage of the people. Sensitive to every injustice and to every tragedy she kept a gay and gallant front to life to the very end.²⁰⁷

Conclusion

Mary Neal and Cecil Sharp stood for two opposing approaches to the folk revival; Power or Accuracy, Content or Form, Philanthropist or Pedant, the terms may be varied, but the tension between them is clear, and it continues to exist today. Potentially it can produce a fruitful interaction, with both elements present in a proper balance, and in their best work both Sharp and Neal did successfully come to encourage that unity.

It was thus a tragic waste of energies that the bitter controversies of 1910 to 1914 ever took place, and it is also a pity that the two protagonists

have tended to become identified with a caricature of their attitudes. Neal particularly suffered from this, simply because the English Folk Dance Society survived while the Espérance Guild did not. For example, Maud Karpeles wrote a perceptive and generous obituary for Mary Neal in English Dance and Song, but she felt obliged to insist that the latter had been 'mistaken', and had 'missed the real significance of the revival'. The same words could also be used about Sharp and his approach to the revival, and they would be equally unfair.

Sharp's vision focused upon accuracy: 'the more closely we could get to the dances as they were originally danced, the more artistic, characteristic, and generally pleasing they were likely to be'. 209 But, however scientific this approach might seem to be, it was nevertheless inspired by the romantic purpose of presenting the dances as 'true to their origins in the religious rites of a remote antiquity'. 210 However much Sharp deprecated 'meretricious embellishments' and a 'Merrie England' approach, he could still write: 'If only the people will take to their folk songs and dances again, we may see the nobler joy of life revive in the land'. 211 In his fundamental aims, Sharp was just as romantic as Neal with her similar conviction that: 'I am more sure than ever that this folk music has got some wonderful life-giving force in it for the "healing of the nations"'. 212

Of course, the difference lay in the methods proposed to bring about this visionary goal. As far as this was concerned, Sharp, the professional educationist, was naturally preoccupied with getting things right and with transmission by properly trained persons. With a mixture of intuition and good fortune to begin with, followed by an equally characteristic combination of practical commonsense and inspired idealism, he founded his approach to the morris on William Kimber. Faced with a variety of traditions, Sharp used Kimber as his touchstone of what the morris should be, dismissing as decadent, revived, or invented, anything which did not conform. By using Kimber as his prime pattern and example, Sharp created a new 'EFDS', or 'Morris Book' tradition of dancing. His own incomparable collection of morris material with its rich variety of traditions vividly demonstrates his mistake. One must be grateful to Sharp, not only for his original error, which must have played a large part in the practical effectiveness of the early EFDS but also for his scholarly thoroughness which has enabled that mistake to be corrected.

Mary Neal was equally concerned to get things right, but her approach was directly concerned with the actual dancer. She believed in the power of the material to transmit itself, and did not consider that the rigid

production of set patterns was essential; hence the large number of dancers and musicians whom she brought up to London to teach the Guild;²¹³ hence too her encouragement of Rolf Gardiner in his return of the morris to the Cotswolds, and also Douglas Kennedy's appreciation for her approach. The amalgamated English Folk Dance and Song Society came to be inspired by an attitude which owed a considerable amount to her, and Kennedy was always pleased to avow this.

In 1984 he went so far as to say: 'I always felt that if there had been no Miss Neal we should have had to invent her'. He was specifically implying by this her role as the spur which urged Sharp on to collect, notate, and publish, and this is certainly important. But beyond this, Mary Neal deserves to be remembered in her own right. Clive Carey's valuable work in collecting was done directly at her instigation and, through the midwifery of Roy Dommett, it has resulted in the recovery of much worthwhile material. Her own personal involvement in collecting was of a different character, coloured as it was by her preference that dances should remain 'in the memories of dancers', and by her taste for the picturesque which sometimes led her up unprofitable side-alleys like Sam Bennett's 'Flail Dance'. But her encouragement and concern for the Ilmington, Abingdon, and other traditional dancers was a positive force for good, especially by comparison with Sharp's disapproval of anything that fell below his ideal standard.

Most of all, Mary Neal stands out as a practical enthusiast who inspired others with a sense of joyful purpose. Cecil Sharp's comment about the fatal combination of philosophy and enthusiasm has often been unfairly quoted against her, just as her words about Sharp as a pedant have been similarly used. Constance Lytton's description in 1908 gives a more appropriate impression of her with which to conclude:

One feels she does it all for her own fun, not for the good of her soul, and to join in and really appreciate the lives of those she befriends rather than to 'save' them. She is in all ways an absolutely sound, honest, un-posing creature with an abundant sense of humour of the right sort.²¹⁶

Notes

¹ A. H. Fox Strangways, Cecil Sharp (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1935), pp. 68–93; in her revision Maud Karpeles did not alter these impressions, Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), pp. 68–90.

² Derek Schofield, "Revival of the Folk Dance: An Artistic Movement": The Background to the Founding of the English Folk Dance Society in 1911', Folk Music Journal, 5 (1986), 215-19. For Mary Neal, see Carol Minchin and Diane Moody, 'Why New Espérance', 1983, typescript deposited in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (hereafter VWML), and also published in Morris Matters, 7, no. 1 (1984), pp. 4-7; see also Roy Dommett, 'How Did You Think It Was?', Morris Matters, 3, no. 3 (Summer 1980), 4-9. For a recent reassessment of Sharp's work in folk song, see Dave Harker, Fakesong: The Manufacture of British Folksong 1700 to the Present Day (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1985), pp. 172-97. A detailed account of his work in folk dance has yet to appear; the best preliminary survey is by Dave Townsend, 'Cecil James Sharp as Collector and Editor of Traditional Dance', Traditional Dance, vols 5 and 6, edited by Theresa Buckland (Alsager: Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, 1988), pp. 53-76; see also John Forrest, Morris and Matachin: A Study in Comparative Choreography (London and Sheffield: English Folk Dance and Song Society and Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, 1984), pp. 5-10; and Roy Dommett, 'The Cotswold Morris in the Twentieth Century', Traditional Dance, vol. 1 (1982), pp. 59-92.

³ Frank Kidson and Mary Neal, English Folk-Song and Dance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), p. 172; for an indication of Neal's contemporary appeal, see Russell Wortley, 'The Cotswold Morris: Hey-Day, Decline and Revival', Ethnic, vol. 1, no. 2 (Spring 1959), 4–11 (p. 9), reissued in Russell Wortley (Cambridge: Cambridge Morris Men, 1980),

pp. 7-18 (p. 16).

⁴ Information from her birth certificate, the wills of her father and grandfather at Somerset House, and census material. I am also grateful to the staff of Birmingham and Bournemouth Reference Libraries for their help in supplying information about the family background.

Mary Neal, 'A Victorian Childhood', Adelphi, 16 (April 1940), 278–86. This forms an early section of her autobiography, "As A Tale That Is Told": The Autobiography of a Victorian Woman'. One other contribution to Adelphi is derived from the autobiography, see 'The Broken Law', Adelphi, 16 (January 1940), 147–50. Apart from these, the autobiography remains unpublished. I am especially grateful to the present holder of the typescript for her hospitality and her encouragement in the writing of this article. It is hoped that the typescript will be deposited eventually in the Bodleian Library. Annotated extracts from Chapter Four, 'The Revival of Folk Dance and Song', were made by Margaret Dean-Smith in 1957, and these are deposited in VWML, with pagination from Alex Helm's files.

6 'As A Tale That Is Told', p. 264.

7 [Andrew Mearns], The Bitter Cry of Outcast London (London: J. Clarke, 1883).

8 An excellent recent account of the West London Mission is available, see Philip Bagwell, Outcast London: A Christian Response: The West London Mission of the Methodist Church 1887–1989 (London: Epworth Press, 1987), especially Chapter Four, 'The Sisters of the People'. See also Sister Emmeline [Pethick], 'The Life of a Sister of the People', Young Woman, 2 (January 1894), 129–31. For an appreciative contemporary viewpoint, see Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People of London, Third Series, Volume VIII, Summary of Religious Influences (London: Macmillan, 1902), 354–59. I am grateful to the Revd Dr Leslie J. Griffiths, the present Superintendent Minister, for allowing me to use copies of the Annual Reports of the Mission which give a full record of its activities. Advance! The Monthly Magazine of the West London Mission also gives valuable information. Unfortunately the British Library holding is incomplete and a small number of relevant issues have not yet been located. The British Library of Political and Economic Science holds two volumes in its special collection, covering the period November 1893–October 1895.

⁹ Third Annual Report of the West London Mission, 1890, pp. 70-73. There is no book specifically on the complicated history of Victorian and Edwardian Girls' Clubs, but a concise summary is to be found in W. McG. Eagar, Making Men: The History of Boys' Clubs and Related Movements in Great Britain (London: University of London Press, 1953),

pp. 345-50. See also Maude Stanley, Clubs for Working Girls (London: Macmillan, 1890); A. M. Wakefield, 'Music Among the Working Girls of London', Girls' Own Paper, 11 (9 August 1890), 715-16; Flora L. Freeman, Religious and Social Work Amongst Girls (London: Skeffington, 1901); Flora L. Freeman, Our Working Girls and How to Help Them (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1908). For a list of the five hundred or so Girls' Clubs in London in 1913, see Girls' Clubs Directory, third edition (London: National Association of Girls' Clubs, 1913), pp. 1-16.

¹⁰ Fourth Annual Report, 1891, pp. 47-51. Each year an account was given of the work of the Girls' Clubs. See also, for example, Third Annual Report, 1890, pp. 67-70, and Eighth

Annual Report, 1895, pp. 102-05.

11 'A Living Wage', Advance!, 5 (November 1893), 162-64.

12 'Notes on the Open Road', Advance!, 7 (January 1895), 3-4; see also her review of The Agitator, by Clementina Black (London: Bliss and Sands, 1894), in Advance!, 6 (December 1894), 181.

13 Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, My Part in a Changing World (London: Victor Gollancz,

1938), pp. 71-73.

14 E. Pethick-Lawrence, pp. 74-75.

15 Advance!, 6 (October 1894), 150. Mary was already an expert on the subject; see the report of a meeting on 'The Future of Girls' Clubs', Queen, 97 (25 May 1895), 940.

¹⁶ Advance!, 7 (January 1985), 26. ¹⁷ 'As A Tale That Is Told', p. 24.

18 E. Pethick-Lawrence, pp. 96-97 and 113.

¹⁹ Emmeline Pethick, 'Working Girls' Clubs', in *University and Social Settlements*, edited by Will Reason (London: Methuen, 1898), pp. 101–14, especially p. 108. For the context of their work see Arthur Sherwell, *Life in West London: A Study and a Contrast* (London: Methuen, 1897); Sherwell's first edition was dedicated 'To My Comrades', meaning by this Mary and Emmeline. For the advertisement see Mary Neal, *Dear Mother Earth* (for the author [1901]), p. 12; VWML has a photocopy.

²⁰ Advance!, 7 (1895), 93. For the connection with St Francis see E. Pethick-Lawrence, p. 145; a new biography was especially influential, Paul Sabatier, Life of St Francis of Assisi,

translated by L. S. Houghton (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1894).

The first two holidays of the Girls' Clubs at the West London Mission were at Bisley, Gloucestershire, in June 1892 and September 1893. Mary wrote enthusiastically about the first in the Fifth Annual Report, 1892, pp. 40–43, and Emmeline reported in equally glowing terms on the second in Advance!, 6 (November 1893), 169–70. For the subsequent history of the holidays, see Dear Mother Earth, which was issued in 1900–1901 as part of an appeal for funds with which to set up the hostel at Littlehampton. For further details of the appeal, see Queen, 109 (29 June 1901), 1051; and 111 (12 April 1902), 607. For other references to its extension and its use, see Queen, 115 (9 April 1904), 634; 117 (3 June 1905), 869; 118 (26 August 1905), 364; and 124 (17 October 1908), 677; E. Pethick-Lawrence, pp. 120–21, 131–32. For annual reports on a comparable charity started in 1888, the Factory Girls' Country Holiday Fund, see Queen, 103 (5 March 1898), 414; and 124 (8 August 1908), 257.

²² Mansfield House Magazine: The Organ of the University and Women's Settlements in Canning Town, East London, 8 (November 1901), 206-07. For the courtship and wedding, see also F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, Fate Has Been Kind (London: Hutchinson, 1943), pp. 51-

59, and E. Pethick-Lawrence, pp. 123-25.

²³ 'As A Tale That Is Told', p. 137; Dean-Smith MSS, p. 47, VWML, MacIlwaine's own description comes from his contribution to the Goupil Gallery Conference, 'English Folk-Music in Dance and Song', Report of the Conference held at the Goupil Gallery, 14 November 1907, p. 3; a copy of this is in the Dean-Smith MSS, VWML, having been made by Roy Dommett from an original amongst Rolf Gardiner's papers, sent him by Mary Neal. A useful summary of MacIlwaine's life is to be found in Karpeles, Cecil Sharp, p. 69.

24 Morning Post, 29 July 1905, p. 9. Mary Neal tells this story frequently; see, for example, The Espérance Morris Book: A Manual of Morris Dances, Folk Songs and Singing Games

25 The resignation was announced in the Morning Post, 21 July, 1905, p. 7. For Sharp's collecting see Cecil J. Sharp MSS, 'Folk Tunes', 518-674, VWML, microfilm copy and transcription of original which is in Clare College, Cambridge. This sequence of events depends on accepting Maud Karpeles's suggestion, Cecil Sharp, p. 68, that the meeting happened in September. The club holiday could well have taken place during early

26 'As A Tale That Is Told', p. 137; M. Dean-Smith MSS, p. 47, VWML.

27 Mary Neal, Set to Music (for the author [September 1907]), p. 4. Sharp's picturesque phrase was much used; see, for example, Morning Post, 15 November 1907, p. 6.

28 Set to Music, p. 5; Daily News, 23 March 1906, p. 5. The date, October, is given by J. E. Crawford Flitch, Modern Dancing and Dancers (London: Grant Richards, 1912),

²⁹ Cecil J. Sharp and Herbert C. MacIlwaine, The Morris Book: A History of Morris Dancing with a Description of Eleven Dances as Performed by the Morris-Men of England (London: Novello, 1907), p. 9; the authorship is given as joint, but this section was certainly written by MacIlwaine. He writes of the event as taking place in February 1906; if it was not the same 'Christmas' party referred to by Neal, it must have been a repetition which shared its characteristics. William Kimber, writing to Sharp, implies that the party had been on 15 December 1905, Kimber to Sharp, 15 December 1906, Box 2, VWML. MacIlwaine's residence in the Passmore Edwards Settlement would have obtained the use by the Club of its fine Hall, now part of the Mary Ward Institute. I am grateful to Margaret Hogan for her help

30 'As A Tale That Is Told', pp. 145-46; Frank Kidson and Mary Neal, English Folk-Song

and Dance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), p. 163.

31 Programme for 3 April 1906, Cecil Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML; there is a good range of references to the occasion in Cuttings Book 3, unpaginated, VWML; for two photographs of the girls at this time, see Morning Leader, 3 April 1906, p. 7. It should be noted that where reference is made to an entry in a Cuttings Book, the source has not been 32 Karpeles, pp. 50 and 56-57.

33 Typescript for Lecture at Small Queen's Hall, 3 April 1906, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML. For the controversy, see Karpeles, pp. 58-64.

34 Margaret Dean-Smith, 'The Pre-Disposition to Folkery', Folklore, 79 (1968), 161-75; Vic Gammon, 'Folk Song Collecting in Sussex and Surrey, 1843-1914', History Workshop, 10 (1980), 61-89; Alun Howkins, 'The Discovery of Rural England', in Englishness: Politics and Culture, 1880-1920, edited by R. Colls and P. Dodd (London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp. 62-88; Martin J. Wiener, English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). For a brief report on work in progress concerning the particular matter of the morris, see Roy Judge, 'Theatrical Morris', Traditional Dance, vols 5 and 6 (1988), pp. 202-06.

35 Cecil Sharp to F. M. Etherington, 25 May 1906, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML; for the performance, see West Somerset Free Press, 30 June 1906, p. 7. For the general context of activity in that area, see a letter from Sharp to Miss K. Sorby of Enmore, typed copy with date given as 28 March 1906, probably in error for 28 April, Sharp Correspondence,

36 Cecil Sharp, Notes for Lecture, 15 November 1906, Cecil Sharp Miscellaneous MSS, Box 2, Envelope 2, VWML. For a general summary of the situation at that time, see Morning Post, 10 October 1906, p. 9. For a performance at Haslemere on 3 November 1906, see Farnham

37 The Monthly Leaflet of the Ling Association, 3 (December 1906), 55; 4 (January 1907), 1; and 4 (February 1907), 10. For the context of this, see Sheila Fletcher, Women First: The Female Tradition in English Physical Education 1880-1980 (London: Athlone Press, 1984); see also the reference below to the Chelsea College of Physical Education, in note 73.

38 For the first time, see Sphere, 27 April 1907, p. 77; for the third, see the programme for the occasion, AS 11, VWML.

39 Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 26 April 1907, p. 2.

40 For obituary notices of Burrows, 9 August 1852 - 29 March 1910, see Chichester Observer, 6 April 1910, p. 3, and West Sussex Gazette, 7 April 1910, p 4.

42 West Sussex Gazette, 25 July 1907, pp. 2 and 11.

43 Mary Neal, Set To Music, pp. 10-12.

44 Sharp to C. W. Kimmins, 10 November 1906, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML; Sharp to G.J.W. Evatt, 25 October 1906, Sharp Correspondence, Box 7. Folder D,

45 For typescripts of the notes for 3 and 15 November 1906, see Sharp Miscellaneous MSS, Box 2, Envelope 2, VWML.

46 MacIlwaine to Sharp, 14 March 1906, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML; for further consideration of this matter, see Townsend, 'Cecil James Sharp as Collector and 47 Morris Book, Dedication, p. 3, and p. 10.

48 Kimber to Sharp, 27 November and 15 December 1907, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2,

⁴⁹ Neal to Sharp, 8 November 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML.

50 Punch, 13 November 1907, p. 345; see also the article 'Come Lasses and Lads' on p. 347. For the presentation of the cartoon to Neal, see the Clarion, 6 December 1907, p. 3.

51 'As A Tale That Is Told', p. 157; Dean-Smith MSS, p. 49, VWML. For the Report of the Goupil Gallery Conference see note 23. See also a circular letter from Mary Neal about the Conference, dated October 1907, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML.

52 Sharp to Etherington, 13 December 1907, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.

53 Sharp to Etherington, 22 November 1907, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.

54 West Sussex Gazette, 12 December 1907, p. 4; West Sussex County Times, 14 December 1907, p. 3; and Sussex Daily News, 9 December 1907, p. 5. One particular school in West Sussex, at Sompting, became a focus for educational pilgrimage, partly because of the teacher's use of folk materials: West Sussex Gazette, 19 December 1907, p. 3; E. G. A. Holmes, What Is and What Might Be (London: Constable, 1911).

55 For Oxford on 10 October 1908, see Oxford Chronicle, 16 October 1908, p. 7; Oxford Times, 17 October 1908, p. 10. For Stratford-upon-Avon on 12 October 1908, see Stratfordupon-Avon Herald, 16 October 1908, p. 3. For Ilkley on 31 October 1908, see Yorkshire Daily Observer, 2 November 1908, p. 10; Harrogate Times, 7 November, pp. 10-11; Ilkley Gazette, 7 November 1908, p. 11. For Leamington Spa on 20 November 1908, see Leamington Spa Courier, 27 November 1908, p. 4. For St Fagans on 12 November 1908, see Western Mail, 14 December 1908, Cuttings Book 5, p. 18, VWML.

56 Punch, 8 April 1980, Supplement; Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML;

Sunday Times, 6 December 1908, Cuttings Book 5, p. 16, VWML.

57 The Dance Journal: Official Organ of 'The Imperial Society of Dance Teachers', 2 (January 1908), 8. See also the reply given to 'Dolores' in Girls' Realm, 10 (May 1908), xvii. 58 Neville Lytton to Sharp, 7 January 1908, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML. For Lytton's later view of Sharp, appreciative of his role as collector, but less complimentary about the EFDS, see his The English Country Gentleman (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1925), p. 177. For Masefield's praise of Lytton's own dancing, see The Times,

59 Saturday Review, 11 April 1908, p. 467; for the preceding correspondence, see 28 March, p. 403, and 4 April, p. 437; see also Elizabeth Burchenal to Sharp, 1 September 1908, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.

60 Sharp, 'Folk Tunes', 1694-1715, 25-26 June 1908; and 1724-29, 25 July 1908. Both of these are set apart by being underlined, quite exceptionally, in Sharp's own tune chronology,

Sharp Miscellaneous, Box 5, VWML. 61 Sharp to MacIlwaine, 6 August 1908, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML.

62 Sharp to Lucy Broadwood, 10 November 1908, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML.

63 Personal communication from Bob Grant.

64 Morning Post, 14 January 1909, p. 5; Sharp to Neville Lytton, 14 January 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5. Folder F.

65 For Thomas Cadd, see Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, 7 (1955),

216-17; and 8 (1956), 44-45. 66 See, for example, Sharp's polite references to Neal in Morning Post, 20 January 1909,

67 Sydney Cockerell to Sharp, 21 and 22 January 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML. A copy of the offending poster is preserved in Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML. For an account of the occasion see Granta, 6 February 1909, pp. 186-87.

68 Sharp to Neal, 7 March 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A. 69 Sharp to Neal, 14 March 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A.

70 For Sharp in the role of expert on the morris, see Sharp to E. A. Barnard, 15 June 1909,

GRQ 15, VWML. 71 Programmes for 25 February, 4 and 11 March 1909, AS 11, VWML.

72 For Sharp's first provincial lecture, given at Oxford and illustrated by local girls trained by Kimber, see Oxford Chronicle, 19 March 1909, p. 7; and Jackson's Oxford Journal, 20 March 1909, p. 10. A photograph, which probably shows this group of girls, is in the

Oxford City Library, 80/15309; my thanks to Bob Grant for help with this.

73 For an early reference to Sharp's friendly contact with the Principal of the College, Dorette Wilke (from 1914, Wilkie), see Morning Post, 20 January 1909, p. 4. For evidence that Espérance teaching by Florrie Warren preceded Sharp there, in October or November 1907, see the Report of the Goupil Gallery Conference, 14 November 1907, p. 5, Dean-Smith MSS, VWML; and Chelsea College of Physical Education Magazine, no. 11 (December 1929), 12; for the memories of a student concerning the two kinds of teaching, 1907-09, see Helen Kennedy North, 'A Jubilee Symposium: Prelude', Folk Music Journal, 2 (1971), 79-80. For Miss Wilkie, see Ruth Clark, 'A Delicate Girl from Bavaria', in Nine Pioneers in Physical Education (London: Physical Education Association, 1964), pp. 15-18; and Queen, 116 (9 July 1904), 73. For the character of the College at the time, see Ida M. Webb, 'The History of the Chelsea College of Physical Education with Special Reference to Curriculum Development 1898-1973' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Leicester, 1977), pp. 41-68. Chelsea College material is available at the Welkin College, Brighton Polytechnic, Eastbourne.

⁷⁴ Sharp to Christie, 14 May 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML. 75 Daily Telegraph, 11 June 1909, Cuttings Book 5, p. 48 (amended by Sharp to give himself proper credit), VWML. Webb usefully gathers together references to sixteen such occasions during the next two years, 'Chelsea College', Appendix 31, pp. lvi-lvii.

76 For Sharp's attack, following another circular by Neal, see Sharp to Neal, 3 April 1909;

for her reply, see Neal to Sharp, 7 April 1909, Box 5, Folder A, VWML.

77 E. Pethick-Lawrence, pp. 148 and 300-02; 'As A Tale That Is Told', pp. 119-32, especially p. 121. For some of Mary Neal's articles in Votes for Women, see 'Here's A Prisoner We Have Got', 1 (17 September 1908), 456; 'The Wisdom of the Folk', 2 (20 August 1909), 1084; 'Red Campion', 3 (15 October 1909), 39; 'Beauty for Ashes', 3 (29 April 1910), 496; 'An Old Christmas Carol: "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day"', 6 (27 December 1912), 195 (copy in Carey Collection, VWML); 'The Plow Stots', 7 (26 December 1913), 189. For a consideration of Neal in the Suffragette context, see Roy Dommett, 'How Did You Think It Was?', pp. 4-9. I would like to thank the staff of the Fawcett Library in the Polytechnic of Central London for their help on this aspect of the subject.

78 Antonia Raeburn, The Militant Suffragettes (London: Michael Joseph, 1973), pp. 94-

79 Espérance Morris Book, p. 60; Neal to Sharp, 7 April 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML; MacIlwaine to Macdonald, 3 March 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box

80 Herbert C. MacIlwaine, 'English Folk-Music in Literature and Life', in Readers' Review:

A Monthly Guide to Books and Reading, 10 December 1908, pp. 165-66.

81 D'Arcy de Ferrars to Sharp, 4 June [1910], Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.

82 Festival Programme in Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML; account in Queen, 125 (15 May 1909), 843.

83 Neal to Sharp, 6 May 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML.

84 Oxford Chronicle, 25 June 1909, p. 7; Oxford Times, 26 June 1909, p. 10; Kimber to Sharp, 11 May 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML. For Nellie Chaplin, see Queen, 121 (30 March 1907), 596, and Gladys Beattie Crozier, 'The Revival of the Old-World Court and Country Dances for Girls', Girls' Realm, 11 (June 1909), 636-43. For her use of the Chelsea girls, never to be repeated, see Chaplin to Sharp, 9 June 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML, and Queen, 126 (3 July 1909), 33.

85 Morris Book, p. 31; for one occasion when this sentiment was attributed to Sharp, see

Dance Journal, 2 (July 1908), 6-7.

86 Cecil J. Sharp and Herbert C. MacIlwaine, The Morris Book, Part Two (London: Novello, 1909), p. 6.

87 Neal to Sharp, 22 July 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML. 88 Sharp to Neal, 26 July 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML.

89 Board of Education, Syllabus of Physical Education for Public Elementary Schools (London: HMSO, 1909), p. 153; The Times, 23 August 1909, p. 6; see also 'The Teaching of Dancing Steps and Exercise to Scholars in Public Elementary Schools', Memo to Inspectors, E. no. 39, 24 July 1909, PRO, ED 22/9, f. 63.

90 Westminster Gazette, 25 August 1909, p. 3; Morning Post, 28 August 1909, p. 10. 91 H. Firth to A. H. Fox Strangways, 15 October 1931, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1; and E. Burrows to Sharp, 18 October 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML.

92 School of Morris Dancing Brochure, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G,

93 Burrows to Sharp, 18 October 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML. 94 For Wells, see 'Folk Tunes', 2255-67 and 2339-57, and for Benfield, see 2336-38, 2358-64, and 2394-400.

95 Retford Times, 29 October 1909, Cuttings Book 5, p. 61, VWML.

96 Lytton to Sharp, 28 September 1909 and 30 December 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML.

97 Sharp to Mr Littleton (of Novello), 10 October 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML.

98 Hickson, Moir, and Jeakes to Sharp, 2 November 1909; and Neal to Hickson, Moir, and Jeakes, 29 October 1909, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML.

99 Daily News, 26 April 1910, p. 4; Newbury Weekly News, 16 December 1909, p. 3. For Neal's contacts with Abingdon, see Jonathan Leach, Morris Dancing in Abingdon to 1914 (Eynsham: Chandler Publications, 1987), pp. 21-26.

100 Espérance programme, 5 January 1909, Carey Collection, VWML.

101 Practical Teacher, 30 (March 1910), 548.

102 Sharp to Alice B. Gomme, 10 February 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.

103 Sharp to Gomme, 20 February 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.

104 Kensington News, 15 October 1909, p. 3; Observer, 1 May 1910, reprinted in The Espérance Morris Book, second end page.

105 Brochure for 'The Espérance Guild of Morris Dancers', undated, but probably March-

April 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML.

¹⁰⁶ A selection of contemporary press releases, criticisms and publicity may be found in the end pages of later editions of The Espérance Morris Book; for a further favourable review see Journal of Scientific Physical Training, 2 (Summer 1910), 26.

107 Morning Post, 1 April 1910, p. 5.

- 108 'Folk Tunes', 2445-62; and Sharp to Mrs Stanton, 25 March 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML.
- 109 Mary Neal, 'The Revival of English Folk-Music', in Vanity Fair, 14 April 1910, p. 462.

110 Espérance 'Keepsake' programme, 5 May 1910, Carey Collection, VWML.

- 111 Westminster Gazette, 30 April 1910, p. 10; Daily News, 5 May 1910, p. 9. I am grateful to Doc Rowe for showing me a letter from Neal making arrangements for the Hemmings brothers to come; copy in VWML.
- 112 Sharp to Gomme, 28 April 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, and Box 5, Folder F, VWML.
- 113 Morning Post, 3 May 1910, p. 5. For Gilmour's role as friend and publicist, see his letters from Sharp, and Fox Strangway's notes on an interview with him, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.
- 114 Morning Post, 5 May 1910, p. 3.
- 115 The Times, 7 May 1910, p. 7.

116 Morning Post, 5 May 1910, p. 3.

117 Morning Post, 3 May-4 June 1910, and Daily Mail, 5 May-2 June 1910, Cuttings Book 5, pp. 76-80 and 85-86, VWML.

118 Programme in AS 11, VWML; for an independent and approving account of Sharp's lecture, see Dance Journal, 3 (July 1910), 3-4; Cecil J. Sharp and Herbert C. MacIlwaine, The Morris Book, Part Three (London: Novello, 1910). For the Folk Dance Club, see

Karpeles, Cecil Sharp, pp. 76-77.

- 119 Francis Toye, 'Much Ado About Nothing', in Vanity Fair, 8 June 1910, pp. 711-12; see also Francis Toye, 'A Thought on Morris-Dances', Bystander, 25 December 1912, p. 710, Carey Collection, VWML; and Francis Toye, For What We Have Received: An Autobiography (London: Heinemann, 1950), pp. 97-98. This view of Sharp as self-appointed 'Pope' seems to originate with Toye, but Sharp evidently referred to it himself, presumably in jest; Dorothy Marshall to Clive Carey, 11 December 1912, Carey Collection, VWML; and Arthur Somervell, undated notes by Fox Strangways, Sharp Correspondence, Box 4, Folder I, VWML.
- 120 Frank Kidson and Mary Neal, English Folk-Song and Dance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), pp. 166-67.

121 Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 12 August 1910, p. 8.

122 Brochure for 'Espérance Guild of Morris Dancers', second version, Carey Collection, VWML; Westminster Gazette, 12 October 1910, Cuttings Book 5, p. 104, VWML; The Times, 22 October 1910, p. 27, Sharp Correpondence, Box 5, Folder G, VWML. See also Dancing Times, I (October 1910) 8; and Musical Herald, I December 1910, p. 373.

123 Westminster Gazette, 4 November 1910, p. 7; TP's Weekly, 11 November 1910, p. 636,

Carey Collection, VWML.

124 Neal to Archibald Flower, 25 October 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML; for the visit to Headington, see also letters from Mark Cox to Mary Neal, November 1910, and from Neal to Carey, 3 and 21 October 1910, Carey Collection, VWML; and also 'Notes re Morris Dances from Headington Oxon. Nov, 1910', Carey Collection, VWML.

- 125 Sharp to Mrs Stanton, 23 October 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML.
- 126 Sharp to Flower, 26 October 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML.
- 127 Sharp to Kimber, 7 November 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder A, VWML.

128 Kimber to Sharp, 10 November 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML.

129 Sharp to Flower, 30 November 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML. 130 F. R. Benson to Flower, 8 November 1910, and Lee Matthews to Flower, 7 November 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder E, VWML.

131 Flower to Neal, November 1910, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder C, VWML.

132 Neal to Carey, 25 November 1910, Carey Collection, VWML.

133 New York Times, 22 January 1911, VWML; Neal to Carey, 12 December 1910 and 24 February 1911, Carey Collection, VWML; 'As A Tale That Is Told', pp. 60-61; Burchenal to Sharp, 15 November 1911, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML; Dancing Times, 1 (January 1911), 90. Notice of Florrie's wedding to Arthur Brown, to be held in February 1912, was given inside the Espérance Christmas card for 1911, together with an appeal for subscriptions to a present. The National Union Catalogue contains a reference to a book by Florrie Warren, see Florence Brown and Neva L. Boyd, Old English and American Games for School and Playground (Chicago: Saul Brothers, 1915).

134 'Folk Dance Notes', 1, 256. For the context of this matter, see Roy Judge, 'D'Arcy Ferris

and the Bidford Morris', Folk Music Journal, 4 (1984), 443-80.

135 Cecil J. Sharp, The Sword Dances of Northern England (London: Novello, 1911),

136 Daily Telegraph, 17 December 1910, p. 16; Dance Journal, 6 (November 1912),

137 Programme for 24 January 1911, AS 11, VWML; Musical Times, March 1911, Cuttings Book 6, p. CD, VWML.

138 Oxford Chronicle, 17 February 1911, p. 7; and Oxford Times, 18 and 25 February 1911, Cuttings Book 5, p. 112, VWML.

139 Sharp to Flower, 4 May 1911, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML.

140 Sharp to Paul Oppé, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML; the date given is 3 May 1911, but this is too early, since it must come after Sharp to Flower, 15 May, Box 5, Folder B, and also after Francis Hodgson, to Flower, 22 May, Box 5, Folder E. For letters of support, see Gomme to Flower, 3 May 1911, Box 5, Folder E; Golding to Flower, 3 May 1911, Box 5, Folder E, and Sharp to Hercy Denman, 9 May 1911, Box 1, Sharp Correspondence, VWML. 141 The Times, 22 July 1911, p. 11; for the civil list pension, see Prime Minister's Secretary to Sharp, I July 1911, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, under 'Pension', and Cuttings Book 6, pp. 56-57, VWML.

142 For the example of Thaxted, see Conrad Noel's parish magazine, The Country Town during 1911 and 1912; I am grateful to Harry de Caux and Mike Goatcher of the Thaxted Morris Men for enabling me to use this source. For programmes of displays on 5 July in the Royal Botanic Gardens and on 8 July at Kings College, Cambridge, see Carey Collection, VWML; see also Westminster Gazette, 13 July 1911, p. 5; and Cambridge Daily News,

10 July 1911, p. 3.

143 Two copies exist of Neal's handbill advertising the event for 5 October, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder G, and Carey Collection, VWML. See also Morning Post, 6 October 1911, TP's Weekly, 13 October, 1911, p. 452, and the first of a series of articles by Mary Neal in the Observer, 1 October 1911, all three in the Carey Collection, VWML.

144 Sharp to Flower, 30 September and 7 October 1911, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5,

Folder B, VWML.

145 Sharp to Flower, 2 December 1911, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML; programme in AS 11, VWML; newspaper accounts in Cuttings Book 6, p. 4, VWML.

146 Mary Neal, 'National Revival of the Folk Dance', Part Three, 'Present Day Interpretations of the Folk Dance', Observer, 3 December 1911, Carey Collection, VWML.

147 Neal to Flower, 1 January 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder C, VWML; for a contemporary opinion which supports this, see Ethel L. H. Urlin, Dancing, Ancient and Modern (London: Herbert and Daniel, 1911), p. 129. See also the Espérance entry in Organised Play at Home and Abroad, edited by P. E. Roper (London: National League for Physical Education and Improvement, 1911), pp. 45-48.

148 Sharp to Flower, 29 January, 18 February, 3 July, and 6 July 1911, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML; on 3 July he refers to an interview with Neal in the Daily

News, 28 June 1912, p. 5.

149 For a good range of coverage in the newspapers, see Cuttings Book 10, July 1912-September 1913, VWML; a full account in Leamington Spa Courier, 16 August 1912, p. 7. 150 For Buckley, see his obituary by Rutland Boughton in the Central Somerset Gazette, 28 March 1919, p. 3; and R. R. Buckley, The Shakespeare Revival and the Stratford-upon-Avon Movement (London: G. Allen, 1911).

151 Ursula Vaughan Williams, RVW: A Biography of Ralph Vaughan Williams (London:

Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 150.

152 School Music Review and Musical Herald, September 1912, Cuttings Book 6, p. 66,

153 The Times, 15 August 1912, Cuttings Book 6, p. 65, VWML.

154 Morning Post, 7 December 1911, p. 11; for the Stratford Vacation School, see Morning Post, 30 December 1911-8 January 1912, Cuttings Book 6, pp. 20-23, VWML, and

Country Home, January 1912, Cuttings Book 6, pp. 27-30, VWML.

155 For the Espérance in Oxford see Charlotte Sidgwick to Mlle Roland, 13 August 1908, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML; Oxford Chronicle, 16 October 1908, p. 7; Oxford Times, 17 October 1908, pp. 8 and 10; a circular with a programme for the Oxford Society for the Revival of the Folk-Dance is in VWML; and Thyra Macdonald to Clive Carey, 12 October 1911, Carey Collection, VWML. For a clear statement on Mrs Sidgwick's conversion, see Sidgwick to Roland, 21 July 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML; for the EFDS Branch, see Roy Judge, 'A Branch of May', Folk Music Journal, 2 (1971), 91-95. For the Espérance in Cirencester, see The Times, 15 October 1910, p. 13; for the conversion of Mrs Bruce Swanwick, see Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard, 13 October 1928, quoted in English Dance and Song, 2, no. 19 (1928), 168. For Florrie Warren's teaching in Liverpool, see the Tenth Annual Report of the Victoria Settlement, 3 February 1908, p. 14, AS 5, VWML; for contrasted programmes, showing Espérance and Sharp influence, see 14 March 1910 and 27 May 1911, AS 11, VWML: for a pro-Neal viewpoint, see a copy of a letter from an unidentified Liverpudlian, 16 October 1910, Carey Collection, VWML; see also autobiographical notes by Janet Edith McCrindell, founder of the Liverpool Branch, Lib. Coll. AL, VWML. For a vivid expression of the tensions underlying one conversion, see the letters from Lucille Clerk to Carey, 10 August, 3 and 16 September 1913, Carey Collection, VWML.

156 Progress, October 1910, Cuttings Book 5, p. 105, VWML.

157 Neal to Carey, 28 October 1911, Carey Collection, VWML. For a comment on this sectarianism, as it appears in Dorothy Marshall's correspondence in the Carey Collection, see Frank Howes, 'Letters to Clive Carey', English Dance and Song, 33, no. 2 (Summer 1971),

158 For an article by Sharp on the subject of teaching folk dance as a career, see Pall Mall 65-66.

Gazette, 27 December 1912, p. 9.

159 The Morris Book, Part One, second edition (London: Novello, 1912), p. 42.

160 Neal to Carey, undated postcard, Carey Collection, VWML.

161 For a general survey of her plans in 1912, see 'Folk-Music and Folk-Dances: An Easter School', Daily Telegraph, 23 March 1912, p. 14. For Shakespeare's England, see an apparently unpublished galley from Observer, February 1912, Carey Collection, VWML; Observer, 28 April 1912, p. 15; Bystander, 22 May 1912, p. 387, Carey Collection, VWML; Queen, 131 (22 June 1912), 1041; Daily News, 28 June 1912, p. 9; for Clive Carey's search for appropriate Shakespearean music, see letters to him from Annie Gilchrist, 22 March 1912, from Lucy Broadwood, 6 and 12 April 1912, from Frank Kidson, 30 March 1912, and from John Graham, 26 March 1912, Carey Collection, VWML. For an account of the delay in publication of English Folk-Song and Dance until 1915 see Musical Times, 1 December

162 Flitch, Modern Dancing and Dancers, p. 208.

163 Sharp to Harley Granville-Barker, 29 September 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML; see also Sharp to Flower, 3 September 1912 (wrongly dated, possibly for 3 October 1912), Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML. For a favourable report of the performance, see The Times, 23 September 1912, p. 7. For a subsequent private display for

Granville-Barker, see Cuttings Book 6, p. 68, VWML. 164 Sharp to Flower, 14 October 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML. For an unidentified newspaper account of the dancing at Blackpool, see Cuttings Book 6, p. 68, VWML. For later developments in this particular controversy, see Neal to Flower, 30 October 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder C; also a letter from Lilian Jordan, the teacher actually criticized by Sharp, to Neal, 20 October 1912, Carey Collection, VWML. For its conclusion, see a summary sent by L. H. Franceys to Sharp, 14 December 1912; also Franceys to Sharp, 28 November 1912, and Sharp to Franceys, 4 December 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 1, VWML.

165 Programme for performance at Savoy Theatre, 2 December 1912, AS 11, VWML. 166 Sharp to Flower, 5 December 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder B, VWML.

For the whole range of press comments, see Cuttings Book 6, pp. 75-82, VWML.

167 Neal to Carey, 13 December 1912, Carey Collection, VWML. 168 Neal to Carey, 24 December 1912, Carey Collection, VWML.

169 Buckley to Sharp, 10 December 1912, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder F, VWML. 170 Neal to Flower, 31 December 1912, with MS original of suggested letter to the press on

the subject, Sharp Correspondence, Box 5, Folder C, VWML.

171 Cecil J. Sharp, The Sword Dances of Northern England, Part Three (London: Novello, 1913); Cecil J. Sharp and George Butterworth, The Morris Book, Part Five (London:

172 Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 4 September 1913, Cuttings Book 10, p. 6, VWML; the

cartoon had appeared in Punch, 11 December 1912, p. 6. 173 The English Folk-Dance Society's Journal, 1, no. 1 (May 1914), 28-32; see also Morning Post, 13 June 1914, p. 5.

174 Lytton to Neal, 15 May 1913, Carey Collection, VWML.

175 Musical Herald, April 1913, Cuttings Book 10, p. 4, VWML; see also Teachers' World,

2 July 1913, p. 1127.

176 Bampton Morris Dances 1912-1913: The Clive Carey Notations, edited and annotated by Philip Heath-Coleman (Eynsham: Chandler Publications, 1985); tunes and notes, June 1912-May 1913, Carey Collection, VWML.

177 Observer, 27 April 1913, p. 10.

178 Votes for Women, 5 (20 December 1912), 183; Westminster Gazette, 2 May 1913, p. 11; for an earlier article on the matter by Philip Macer-Wright, probably the same author, see 'May Day Visitors', Purple Hours (London: Gay and Hancock, 1924), pp. 57-64. See also Neal to Carey, 23 April, 2 May, and 3 May 1913, Carey Collection, VWML. For other favourable newspaper comments, see Morning Post, 2 May 1913, p. 7, and Daily Telegraph, 2 May 1913, p. 9.

179 Central Somerset Gazette, 12 June 1914, p. 6.

180 Morning Post, 13 June 1914, p. 5.

181 'As A Tale That Is Told', pp. 171-84; Neal to Carey, 5 July 1916, and 27 January 1917, Carey Collection, VWML.

182 Neal to Carey, 23 June [1917], Carey Collection, VWML; for details of the scheme, see 'War Memorials: A Novel Plan', from a Correspondent, The Times, 21 August 1917,

183 Neal to Carey, 24 February 1919, Carey Collection, VWML.

184 Globe, 22 April 1919, p. 3. See also the fifth edition of the Espérance Morris Book, published by Curwen after the war; this gives Neal's address as 'Amberley, Sussex', and states that she 'is always glad to help in any way by sending teachers, advising about or organising Folk Dance' (p. vi). I am grateful to Bob Lobley for bringing this edition to my notice.

185 'As A Tale That Is Told', p. 170.

186 'As A Tale That Is Told', pp. 199-261.

187 Neal to Carey, 20 September [1916], Carey Collection, VWML.

188 Neal to Carey, 3 May 1913, Carey Collection, VWML.

189 Rolf Gardiner, 'The English Folk Dance Society', The Challenge, 6 July 1923, Carey Collection, VWML; Rolf Gardiner to Margaret Dean-Smith, 21 August 1962, Dean-Smith MSS, VWML. For other examples of Rolf Gardiner's thinking at this time, see his The English Folk Dance Tradition (London: Rolf Gardiner, 1923), especially pp. 5-9 and 28-29; and 'The English Folk Dance: Some Constructive Considerations', Youth, 2 (October 1923), 52-54; and 2 (Summer 1924), 194-97. I am grateful to Peter Hood, Director of the Springhead Trust, for enabling me to see copies of letters from Mary Neal to Rolf Gardiner at this time.

190 Neal to Carey, 9 August 1924, Carey Collection, VWML; Gardiner signed Neal's visitors' book at Green Bushes, 27-30 July 1924, as 'Rolf the Ranger, KK', Judge Collection. 191 The passage quoted is taken from Mary Neal, 'The Broken Law', Adelphi, 16 (January

1940), 147-50 (pp. 149-50); it appears in similar, though less emphatic form in 'As A Tale

That Is Told', pp. 166-67.

192 In general terms, see, for example, Kidson and Neal, English Folk-Song and Dance, pp. 101-07, and Espérance Morris Book, pp. 3-4. For an article specifically on 'cosmic forces' and 'the rhythmic harmony of the universe', see 'An Old Christmas Carol: "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day", Votes for Women, 5 (27 December 1912), 195.

193 Sharp to Neal, 12 June 1921, and Neal to Sharp, 23 June 1921, Sharp Correspondence,

Box 5, Folder A, VWML.

194 Neal to Carey, 12 November 1928, Carey Collection, VWML. 195 Neal to Carey, 20 October 1928, Carey Collection, VWML.

196 Neal to Carey, 10 August 1930, Carey Collection, VWML.

197 Kennedy to Neal, 11 August 1930, Carey Collection, VWML.

198 Neal to Fox Strangways, 31 December 1933, Sharp Correspondence, Box 6, Folder E, VWML. Neal is referring to p. 7 in the biography.

199 Private information.

²⁰⁰ The Times, 11 May 1937, p. 19.

201 E. Pethick-Lawrence, p. 139.

²⁰² Ibid., and private information. 203 Francis Fryer to Mary Neal, 15 February, 1 and 2 and 20 March 1938, and Neal to Carey, 24 March 1938, Carey Collection, VWML.

204 Roy Dommett to Margaret Dean-Smith, 6 September 1961, derived from copies of

Francis Fryer's correspondence, Dean-Smith MSS, VWML.

205 Ibid.; further details are given by E. J. Nicol in a personal communication to Margaret Dean-Smith. The visit was evidently unobtrusive, because it was not referred to in the official record of the meeting; I am grateful to Walter Abson and Ivor Allsop for their help in this matter.

206 Neal to Carey, 12 October 1942, Carey Collection, VWML.

207 The Times, 28 June 1944, p. 7.

208 English Dance and Song, 8, no. 6 (July/August 1944), 39.

209 Dance Journal, 3 (July 1910), 2-3.

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210 Daily News, 7 October 1912, Cuttings Book 6, p. 68, VWML.

211 Ibid., and Sharp to Ernest Rhys, 5 June [1913], Sharp Correspondence, Box 2, VWML.

212 Neal to Carey, 3 May 1913, Carey Collection, VWML.

213 Kidson and Neal, pp. 164 and 170-73.

214 English Dance and Song, 50, no. 1 (April/May 1988), 5.

215 Vanity Fair, 29 June 1910, p. 831.

216 Constance Lytton, Letters, selected and arranged by Betty Balfour (London: Heinemann, 1925), p. 136.