

Two items from "**Winchcombe Cavalcade**" by **Eleanor Adlard**, 1939

The Winchcombe Mummers Play

Originally noted by **Emma Dent** in the **Winchcombe and Sudeley Record** of 1892 from Richard Bolton and Mrs. Hall of Jacobean House.

5 characters; Father Christmas, Slasher, King of France, Doctor Hero, Beelzebub/Lord Crump;
in costume: black faces with masks, tall pasteboard hats with coloured rags.

Enter Father Christmas with broom sweeping the floor

Here comes I, old Father Christmas,
Christmas or not,
I hope old Father Christmas
Will never be forgot.
A room, make room here gallant boys,
And give us room to rhyme,
We've come to show activity
Upon a Christmas time.
Acting youth or acting age,
The like was never acted on this stage;
If you don't believe what I now say,
Enter the King of France, and clear the way!

Enter King waving a sword

Here come I, the King of France,
With naked sword and spear in hand,
What man or mortal will dare to stand
Before me with my sword in hand?
I'll slay him and cut him as small as flies,
And send him to Jamaica to make mince pies!

Enter Slasher waving sword

Bold Slasher is my name,
A name so bold well known to fame,
I'll fight the King with courage bold
And if his blood's hot will make it cold!

They fight and Slasher is killed

Enter Doctor Hero with pill box and swagger

I am a doctor firm and good,
And with my hand I let the blood;
I cured an old man seven years dead
And seven years laid in his churchyard bed.
I am not a shim-sham quack
But the real thing with the jolly knack
To neither kill or cure.
There was old John Juggins' wife,
With rheumatics in her side;
I brought her back to life,
And after that she died.

Doctor Hero gives the dead Slasher a pill

I've a little bottle in my pocket,
Called hokum, shokum, alicampagne;
I'll touch his eyes, nose, mouth and chin,
And say rise, dead man, and fight again!

Slasher rises up, fights, is killed again and restored with a further pill

Enter Beelzebub/Lord Crump, black face, long beard, carrying a bell, tun-dish and a box

Here come I, Beelzebub,
Under my arm I carry a club,
Under my chin I carry a pan,
Don't I look a nice young man?

Dancing, general flourish; Father Christmas again

Ladies and gentlemen, our story is ended,
Our money box is recommended;
Five or six shillings will not do us harm,
Silver or copper- or gold if you can!

An Account of the Winchcombe Morris

Moving from High Street past The Cross by the 'George Hotel' (and the turning for North Street), we arrive in Hayles (or Hailes) Street.

Curving under Hayles Street, still by the little Isbourne river- once contemptuously described by a London Justice as a '*glorified ditch*'- lies **Silk Mill Lane**, named after the short-lived Silk Mill of the 19th century. It is a low-lying locality, with poor damp houses. A jingle describing its reputation speaks for itself:

*'Brandy House, and Lousey Row,
Cheese Press House, and Cart House Below'*

It was in '*Cart House Below*' that the Morris dancers used to practice to the strains of a melodeon played by **James Major, George Andrews** on the drum and **John Randall** on the triangle. **Albert Edward Andrews**, one of the dancers, describes his costume as a *faggoting coat* (i.e., a coat with skirts well cut back to allow scope for cutting wood faggots), a scarlet waistcoat, a silk hat, one white stocking and one blue, tied with red and yellow ribbons and bells below the knees, and a final touch of a horse's curb as a watch chain. The other dancers were, besides the **Andrews brothers, Havelock Wood, old Ted Mason** - so called to distinguish him from his son '**Middle Ted**' and grandson '**Young Ted**'- also **Henry Philips, Ted Randall** and **Ted Shillum**. Apparently their dancing was such that when Dr. Cox drove up in his gig he said it was well worth five shillings to see! This gay picture of old Winchcombe ends the chapter, the dancers jingling their knee bells, and competing on the Abbey Terrace with the other villages, notably Guiting doing their famous handkerchief dance, all very active on the Whitsun holiday. Old **Mr. Davies**, the much loved sexton, would be there to play his fiddle, and the admiring onlookers would play their part in 'treating' the dancers, who naturally became thirstier and thirstier as the day wore on.

I can also refer those interested to the excellent programme on **Winchcombe Morris** by **Gwilym Davies** and **Peter Teague**, first broadcast on **Radio Winchcombe** in 2006; www.radiowinchcombe.co.uk

Eleanor Adlard was a member of the notable Winchcombe family who owned Postlip Paper Mills for several generations. Her descendant Bob, a friend of mine who was a formidable hockey player (GB Olympics 1948) and cricketer in his youth and founder of Winchcombe Day Centre, died in late 2008, aged 92.

Bill Pullen.

Folklife Conferences, Workshops, & Schools

Sat 12 September, 9am-6pm

University of Worcester: Transatlantic routes of American roots music

Examining the impact and significance of American folk music in Britain, organised by The Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts at the University of Worcester, in association with the University of Gloucestershire. Exploring both historical and contemporary settings, this conference will interrogate American roots music as performance, in textual representations, and as received by British audiences.

Keynote Speakers include:

- **Professor Paul Oliver** (*Blues Fell This Morning; Conversations with the Blues; Blues off the Record*)
- **Tony Russell** (*Country Music Originals the Legends and the Lost; Country Music Records Discography 1921-1942*)
- **Professor Brian Ward** (*Just My Soul Responding; Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness and Race Relations; Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South*)

Other papers deal with topics such as:

- **Folk and roots revivals:** protest; sacred and secular; rural and urban; Transatlantic sessions
- **Authenticity:** Song catchers (Child, Lomax, Sharp); reverse diasporas; relationships between producers, promoters and consumers
- **Blues:** process and effects of the export of African American music to Britain; censorship of black origins; public memory
- **Country Music:** 'American's truest music' (Malone) and its transatlantic connections

The conference will be followed by Dinner and Musical Performances at the Fold, Bransford, with Will Kaufman (Univ. of Central Lancashire); Duck Baker; Michael Roach; Open Mike Jam Session.

Please direct any queries to: Prof Neil Wynn, Tel: 01242 714697, email: nwynn@glos.ac.uk

For full information about the conference, please see the University website www.worc.ac.uk, **events page**.