



This is a repository copy of *Manning's Mummer's Plays*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:  
<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/113619/>

Version: Accepted Version

---

**Book Section:**

Millington, P. [orcid.org/0000-0002-5958-3357](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5958-3357) (2017) Manning's Mummer's Plays. In: Heaney, M., (ed.) Percy Manning: The Man Who Collected Oxfordshire. Archaeological Lives . Archaeopress Publishing , Oxford , pp. 173-219. ISBN 978-1-78491-528-5

---

**Reuse**

Unless indicated otherwise, fulltext items are protected by copyright with all rights reserved. The copyright exception in section 29 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 allows the making of a single copy solely for the purpose of non-commercial research or private study within the limits of fair dealing. The publisher or other rights-holder may allow further reproduction and re-use of this version - refer to the White Rose Research Online record for this item. Where records identify the publisher as the copyright holder, users can verify any specific terms of use on the publisher's website.

**Takedown**

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing [eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk) including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



[eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk)  
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>

# Manning's Mummers' Plays

---

Peter Millington

Chapter in: *Percy Manning: The Man Who Collected Oxfordshire*, for publication 2017.

## INTRODUCTION

Percy Manning's manuscripts contain a number of folk plays. These are short verse dramas with traditional texts averaging about ten minutes that were taken around houses in villages at particular seasons. In Oxfordshire, this was Christmas, and the groups of men and boys were called 'Mummers', hence the term Mummers' or mumming play. It may help people unfamiliar with mumming plays to start with a short text from Manning's collection, written down for him by a lad of St Aldate's, Oxford in March 1903: <sup>1</sup>

*Arthur Jacobs piece*

In Seps I old father Christmas -  
Welcome now and Welcome not  
I hope old father Christmas  
will never be forgot  
For In this room there shall be shown  
The Greatest bairle ever known  
If you dont believe what I say  
Step In King George and clear the way

*In steps King George loud - charlies piece*

In Steps I King George man of courage bold  
Who with my sword and shield  
won £10.000 in gold  
I will fight Turkish Night.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 331-332. The informant's autographic version, is mostly laid out in verse, but with some rhymes written prose-style. This text, as with other quotations in this chapter, is reproduced *literatim*, including obvious errors, but has been reformatted in verse where appropriate. There is a transcript in: University College, London, Folklore Society Archive, Thomas Fairman Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, no. 24 (hereafter cited as Ordish Papers). Significant differences are footnoted separately.

- *J. Burlys piece*

In steps I Turkish night  
From Turkish land I came to fight  
I will fight King George man of courage bold  
who won £10000 in gold  
I will fight king George

Ha. Ha my little man your Talk his brave and bold  
like all them young Turks I often have been Told  
but if your blood his hot I quickly draw it cold.  
Mince pies hot Mince pies cold  
mince pies cold<sup>2</sup> mince pies in the cook shoop nine days old

---

*Fencin*

---

*King George fall down*

---

*Bill Clays piece*

---

In steps I Doctor Brown  
best little doctor in the Town  
I can cure the hip. the pip. the palse the gout  
pains within and pains without  
I carry a bottle by my sid  
Called alachun pain<sup>3</sup>  
and give him one sip to rise again

---

In steps I litile Umply<sup>4</sup> Jack  
with with wife and family on my back

---

<sup>2</sup> Ordish does not repeat 'mince pies cold'.

<sup>3</sup> Elecampane, *Inula helenium* - a medicinal herb.

<sup>4</sup> Ordish gives 'little umpty Jack' – the usual form elsewhere.

all though there large and I am small  
a little money will help us all

Although we call them plays, their plots are rudimentary and often little more than processions of characters. The above play, as with all Oxfordshire versions, is of a type called 'Hero-combat plays'. After an introductory prologue, there is a dispute and fight between two antagonists one of whom is killed or wounded. A quack doctor is then called in to revive the loser. The plays conclude with the entry of one or more supernumerary characters whose main purpose is to ask for a reward. Performances often conclude with singing, music or dancing.

Some Oxfordshire and the Cotswolds plays add another character, Jack Finney, who insists his name is Mr. Finney. He sometimes replaces the Doctor, but is usually his disobedient assistant, especially in a scene where a large tooth is extracted, either as part of the cure of the vanquished warrior or in a separate scene involving another patient.

These plays are often said to dramatize the legend of Saint George and the Dragon, but Dragons are in fact very rare. Saint George is often King George or Prince George or a completely different potentate, and his opponent may be a Turkish Knight or a soldier – Slasher – or any of a number of characters. And when it comes to the fight, the hero is as likely to be killed as his opponent. In fact the variety of antagonists is so great that the only certain purpose of the dispute is to provide a body for the Doctor, who is the one constant character in the hundreds of versions that have been collected nationwide.<sup>5</sup>

The texts have a very liberal approach to poetic metre. One defining textual feature is that the characters normally introduce themselves with formulae such as: 'In comes I [so and so]', or 'Here comes I...' or, as above, 'In step I...'

The actors often also wore distinctive costumes that bore little or no relation to the character being portrayed, as in the Mummings from Headington Quarry in Figure 1.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> P. Millington, 'Textual Analysis of English Quack Doctor Plays: Some New Discoveries', in: E. Cass & P. Millington (eds.) *Folk Drama Studies Today: The International Traditional Drama Conference 2002*. (Sheffield, 2003, ISBN 0-9508152-3-3), pp. 97-132. <http://www.folkplay.info/Confs/Millington2002.pdf>. All web pages accessed 29 September 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fol. 360.



Figure 1 - Headington Quarry Mummers, December 1901. King George dead. Turkish Knight on the left.

Rather than being realistic, the costumes are liberally covered in ribbons or streamers, and faces are blackened or coloured for disguise (as opposed to theatrical make-up). The props are usually the main distinguishing features.

## **MANNING'S COLLECTION OF MUMMING PLAYS**

Manning's wrote the following self-assessment of his mumming material in a letter to the folk play researcher Thomas Fairman Ordish in 1903:

'Some one must have been giving you a very exaggerated idea of the little I have done in collecting Oxfordshire mumming plays. All I have done has been to write out three or four versions from oral sources, & bag two or three more from print. My friend Mr Binney is the man who really does know something about mummers.'<sup>7</sup>

As far as Manning's own material is concerned, this is accurate. It is a very modest amount of material. Annotations throughout his manuscripts indicate that his collecting methods were fairly hands off. He witnessed at least two performances, and got the performers to write down the texts for him, or in one case, give him their original printed text. Otherwise,

---

<sup>7</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.25, 7 March 1903.

he collected material through his intermediary, the retired brick maker Thomas James Carter. What makes Manning's collection special is that it holds additional mumming material besides his own, and contains correspondence with the folk play scholars E.H.Binney and T.F.Ordish. While the full collection remains modest in size, some items are not available in other archives. Appendix A lists all the mumming related Manning manuscripts.

There are copies of most of Manning's mumming manuscripts and of those he acquired from Binney plus some other relevant items in the T.F.Ordish Manuscript Collection held in the Folklore Society (FLS) Archive.<sup>8</sup> This is available online in '*The Full English Digital Archive*', hosted by the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library.<sup>9</sup> As far as we know, Binney's collection was not deposited in any archive, so all we have are the copies he gave to Manning and Ordish. A concordance of the Manning and Ordish collections is given in Appendix B. Folk play scholars have often worked with the copies in Ordish rather than Manning's originals. However, researchers need to beware that there are sometimes important differences between them that could impact on their conclusions. References in this chapter normally cite the Manning originals, but any significant differences in the Ordish copies are also noted.

## PREVIOUS WORK

The collection has previously been studied by Alex Helm and his team, who included Manning material in their seminal 'English Ritual Drama: A Geographical Index', although they mostly worked with the copies in Ordish.<sup>10</sup> This index is hereafter cited as 'ERD'. Helm

---

<sup>8</sup> University College, London, Folklore Society Archive, Ordish Papers, Ref. FLS/2/ORDISH.

<sup>9</sup> Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, *The Full English Digital Archive*, <http://vwml.org/vwml-projects/vwml-the-full-english>.

<sup>10</sup> E.C.Cawte, A.Helm & N.Peacock, *English Ritual Drama: A Geographical Index* (London, 1967). Subsequently updated in: E.C.Cawte 'Amendments to 'English Ritual Drama', *Roomer*, 1, No.5 (1981), pp. 23-26; E.C.Cawte 'Amendments to English Ritual Drama - Part 2', *Roomer*, 2, No.2 (1982), pp. 9-16; and E.C.Cawte 'Amendments to 'English Ritual Drama': Part 3', *Roomer*, 5, No.2 (1985), pp. 9-22. These are combined in: E.C.Cawte *et al.*, *Electronic ERD: An Index to English Folk Drama*, Master Mumpers (2007) <http://www.mastermumpers.org/erd/index.htm>.

also studied the collection for his book on chapbook mummers' plays, reproducing the text of Manning's copy of *'The Seven Champions of Christendom'*.<sup>11</sup>

Steve Roud examined the original Manning manuscripts more thoroughly, although only those in MS Top.Oxon., d.199. He published detailed descriptions of the items in guides to the mumming plays of Oxfordshire<sup>12</sup> and, with Malcolm Bee, to Berkshire.<sup>13</sup> He added occasional comments, and reproduced smaller items in full. These guides are cited in this chapter as 'Roud'.

More specific studies have been undertaken by Michael J. Preston and Paul S. Smith. Both included items from the collection in their publications on folk play chapbooks which continued Helm's work.<sup>14</sup> Preston studied and reproduced the 1780 Islip text that had been sent to Manning by Binney.<sup>15</sup> Smith delved deeply into the manuscripts for his article on T.F.Ordish, which among other things investigated his exchanges with Manning and Binney.<sup>16</sup>

## CHRONOLOGY

This section describes Manning's and Binney's collecting and publishing activities in chronological order, along with their correspondence with Ordish, and other pertinent items. Figure 2 shows the distribution of places in Oxfordshire and Berkshire (pre-1974) where they and third parties in the manuscripts ('Other Manning') collected.

---

<sup>11</sup> A.Helm, *The Chapbook Mummers' Plays: A Study of the Printed Versions of the North-West of England* (Ibstock, 1969).

<sup>12</sup> S.Roud, *Mumming Plays in Oxfordshire: An Interim Checklist* (Sheffield, 1984).

<sup>13</sup> S.Roud & M.Bee, *Berkshire Mumming Plays: A Geographical Index and Guide to Sources* (London, 1991), ISBN 0-871903-25-4, updating: S.Roud, *Mumming Plays in Berkshire* (Andover, 1980).

<sup>14</sup> M.J.Preston, M.G.Smith & P.S.Smith, *An Interim Checklist of Chapbooks Containing Traditional Play Texts* (Newcastle, 1976), and M.J.Preston, M.G.Smith & P.S.Smith, 'Chapbooks and Traditional Drama: An Examination of Chapbooks containing Traditional Play Texts: Part I: Alexander and the King of Egypt Chapbooks', *CECTAL Bibliographical and Special Series* (1977), no.2.

<sup>15</sup> M.J.Preston, 'The Oldest British Folk Play', *Folklore Forum*, 6, no.3 (1973), pp. 168-174.

<sup>16</sup> P.Smith, 'Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924): A Lasting Legacy', *Lore and Language*, 15, nos.1-2, 1997, pp. 84-116. Available: <http://www.folkplay.info/Ordish/Introduction.htm>.



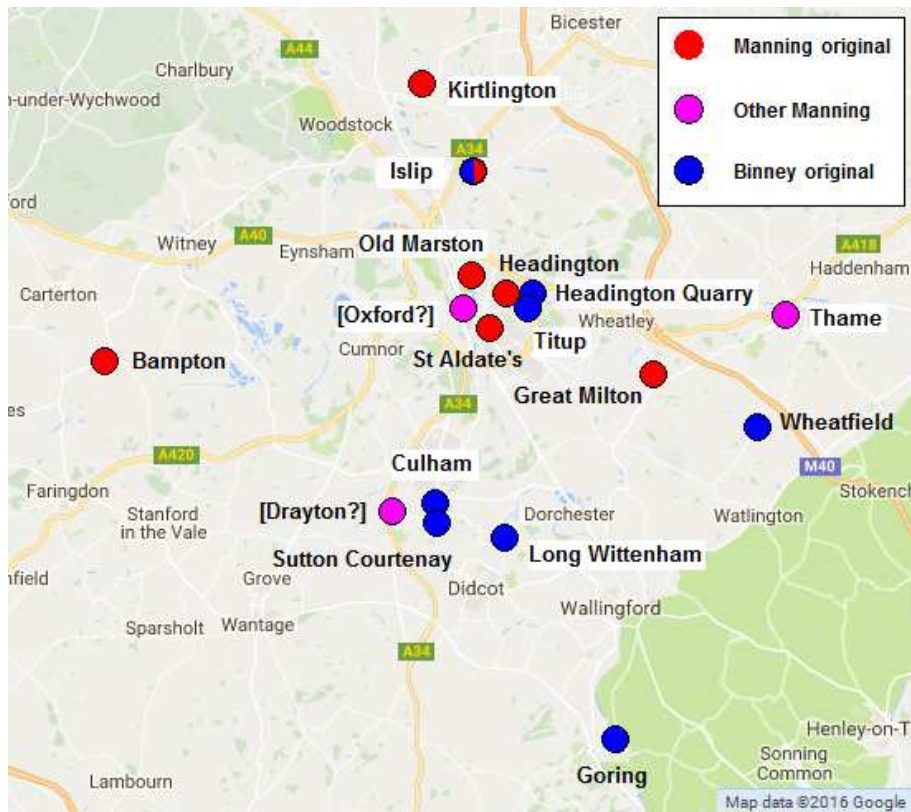


Figure 2 - Locations in Oxfordshire and Berkshire where Manning, Binney and relevant third parties collected.

Most of Manning’s manuscripts are dated, giving the name of the collector, and sometimes the informant. Any omissions are often rectified by annotations in the Ordish copies or elsewhere.

### *Kirtlington and Bampton Plays*

The oldest folk play items in the collection are a text and costume notes from Kirtlington, and a single speech from Bampton. Neither is dated in Manning, but the copy of the Bampton fragment in Ordish is marked by Manning ‘From. C. Tanner of Bampton through T. Carter, July 1894’. The Kirtlington costume notes are written on the verso of the original Bampton page, and the Bampton fragment refers to Kirtlington, so we can be sure their dates are the same.

Carter’s original Kirtlington manuscript starts with a cast list: ‘Molly With her 6 Children’:  
 1. Duke of Thumberland, 2. King George, 3. Doctor Good, 4. Dr’s Horse, 5. Mr Finney, and  
 6. Behelzibub. It is then annotated by Manning: ‘Kirtlington, Oxon. Play as performed about



1858. MS by T. J. Carter, collected in Kirtlington'. The text *per se* then starts on a new page,<sup>17</sup> with the cast in order of appearance: Molly; Duke of Thumberland; King George; Doctor Good; Jack Spinney/Mr. Finney, Behelzebub; Next Son (who han't been hit), and Doctor's horse.

A separate page in Carter's hand has two supplementary questions and answers about the Kirtlington Mummers Play.<sup>18</sup> Firstly: 'Is it still kept up – yes – but not as formerly'. Secondly: 'What are the dresses &c of the characters'. This is answered with costume details for each character, except for the Doctor's Horse. Manning combined Carter's two manuscripts with some editing for publication.<sup>19</sup> This appeared in the *Oxford Times* in 1898,<sup>20</sup> in response to an article printed the week before by 'Zwh' [Zoe]. This was Manning's only article on Mummers. There is a typed transcript of the article in Ordish.<sup>21</sup>

Carter's Bampton fragment is brief:<sup>22</sup>

#### Costumes the Same

Bampton ~~Morris~~ Mummers Same as Kirtlington Except

Last Part

#### Nameley

After Belzebub – Saying Don't you Think im a  
Jolly old Man)- He Says – Last xmas Eve I turned  
the spit. And Burnt my Fingas I find it yet  
a spark Flew over the Table The Skimmer Run  
arter the Ladel – oh – oh – Said the Gridiron if  
you cant agree Im the Justice Bring them to me  
as I was going up a Broad – Narrow – Straight.  
Crooked Lane I met a Pigsty Tied to a Elder-

---

<sup>17</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fols. 120-123.

<sup>18</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fol. 86v.

<sup>19</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 341-345.

<sup>20</sup> P.Manning, The Mummers' *Oxford Times* (24 December 1898), p. 9. Clipping in: Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fol. 346.

<sup>21</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.19.

<sup>22</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fol. 86r. The copy in Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.44 is significantly different in prepending the Bampton fragment with Behelzebub's four lines from Kirtlington, and changing the spelling of the name..

-Bush. I knocked at the Maid and out walked  
the Door She asked me to eat a Pint of Beer  
& Drink a Piece of Bread & Chees

I said no Thank you

if you Please

Finnis

C Tanner

Tanner was Carter and Manning's main informant regarding morris dancing in Bampton.

There is no full text for Bampton in the Manning manuscripts, but a text was published by P.H.Ditchfield in 1896.<sup>23</sup> The provenance of Ditchfield's text is not given, but neither is that of a play from Islip, nor several pages of information about Bampton morris dances, both of which match material in the Manning manuscripts. Manning is, however, acknowledged in Ditchfield's preface, and it seems likely, therefore, that Ditchfield obtained the Bampton text from or through Manning.

Ditchfield's Bampton text is unusual in that it had two parts, both of which are self-contained plays. Part i has the characters: Father Christmas, King George who fights the Turkish Knight, Doctor, Jack Finney, and Tom the Tinker, while Part ii has Father Christmas, Royal Prussia King, Soldier Bold/Bold Slaughterer, who fights King George, Doctor, Robin Hood, and Little John. Both parts also include certain lines drawn from an earlier Bampton text published by J.A.Giles in 1848.<sup>24</sup> We can say this because Giles admitted writing most of the play himself, along with the few authentically traditional lines from his home county of Somerset. Another Bampton text collected by Alfred Williams in the 1910s has Father Christmas, Valiant Soldier Bold/Slasher who fights the Royal Russian King, Doctor and Jack Finney.<sup>25</sup>

Beelzebub does not appear in Ditchfield's Bampton text (or Williams's), but the lines of the tangle talk of the Manning fragment do appear, divided between Tom the Tinker and Little John.

---

<sup>23</sup> P.H.Ditchfield, *Old English Customs Extant at the Present Time* (London, 1896), pp. 320-326.

<sup>24</sup> J.A.Giles, *A History of the Parish and Town of Bampton*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1848), pp. 55-60, 176-178.

<sup>25</sup> J.Blair, *Bampton Folklore* (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 17-19, ISBN 1-989937-50-8.

### *Earlier Published Texts*

It seems likely that the Kirtlington and Bampton items were collected serendipitously by Carter as he was looking for material on the Lamb Ales and morris dancing. Manning could already have been aware of Oxfordshire mummers from an article published by G.A.Rowell in *Folk-Lore Journal* in 1886,<sup>26</sup> as there is manuscript copy of Rowell's play text in the collection,<sup>27</sup> although with no indication of when it was copied. It may well have been after 1897, because Manning does not mention Rowell in the paper he read to the FLS that year,<sup>28</sup> despite Rowell covering the Oxfordshire morris dancing and Lamb Ales that were the main focus of Manning's article. Manning may simply have been unaware of it at that time.

The only other earlier text that we know Manning saw was a text from Thame, published in 1874,<sup>29</sup> a transcript of which he sent to Ordish no earlier than 1903.<sup>30</sup> All other publications held or cited in Manning's manuscripts and correspondence date from the 1900s *sensu stricto*.

### *Manning's Islip and Headington Texts*

The next text Manning collected was from Islip, written out for him by 'young \_\_\_\_ Miles,<sup>31</sup> one of the performers; Xmas 1894'.<sup>32</sup> A separate manuscript from Miles gives two verses of a song 'The Pretty Ploughing Boy' (Roud no. 186) sung on that occasion in Manning's presence.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> G.A.Rowell, 'Notes on Some Old-Fashioned English Customs: The Mummers; The Morris - Dancers; Whitsun-Ales; Lamb-Ales' *Folk-Lore Journal*, 4, no.2 (1886), pp. 97-109.

<sup>27</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 315-325 – Manning gives *Folk-Lore Record* in error.

<sup>28</sup> P.Manning, 'Oxfordshire Seasonal Festivals: With Notes on Morris-Dancing in Oxfordshire', *Folk-Lore*, 8, no.4 (Dec. 1897), pp. 307-324

<sup>29</sup> F.G.Lee, 'Oxfordshire Christmas Miracle Play', *Notes and Queries, Series 5*, 2 (11 December 1874), pp. 503-505.

<sup>30</sup> Cited in: T.F.Ordish, 'Report on Mumming Plays and other Vestiges of Folk Drama' 18 January 1911. Ordish Papers, section D, no. 4. Ordish and Manning first corresponded in 1903.

<sup>31</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 307-309.

<sup>32</sup> The 1891 Census lists four Islip men surnamed Miles. The youngest were William F. Miles (born 1862), and Henry Miles (Christened 4 January 1857). There was another older William Miles (born 1841), so William F. could have been known as "young William Miles". He was a carrier and gardener, and married with a young family, whereas Henry was a single general labourer. Either could have been Manning's informant. [https://familysearch.org/search/record/results?count=20&query=%2Bsurname%3Amiles%20%2Bresidence\\_place%3Aislip&collection\\_id=1865747](https://familysearch.org/search/record/results?count=20&query=%2Bsurname%3Amiles%20%2Bresidence_place%3Aislip&collection_id=1865747).

<sup>33</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fols. 210-211. This song normally has four verses. It is annotated by Manning 'Sung by him at the Mumming Play, Dec. 1894, in my presence. P.M.', as is the play in: Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.15.

This text was published by P.H.Ditchfield in 1986 with a list of *dramatis personae* and their costumes, presumably added by Manning from his own observations.<sup>34</sup> Ditchfield's reproduction has been copy-edited. The only significant inaccuracy is that Doctor's fee is negotiated in shillings rather than pounds. This is probably due to a misreading superscripted 'Ls' or '£s' in the manuscript.

There are three transcripts of the 1894 Islip text in the Ordish Oxfordshire file no. 17 is closest to young Miles' original in terms of orthography and prose-style layout, and is in Manning's handwriting.<sup>35</sup> no. 16, also in Manning's hand, is an edited fair copy of the text, laid out in rhyme, with speech designations and stage directions, and beginning with a list of *Dramatis Personae* and costumes.<sup>36</sup> This is very close to the text as published by Ditchfield, including footnote. no. 15 is the same as no. 16, but typed.<sup>37</sup> One of these may have been the fair copy that Ditchfield used.

The cast comprises Molly/Sushannah; Duke of Northcumberland [*sic*]; who fights and kills King George; Doctor; Jack Spinney/Mr. Spinney; Belzebug; and Fat Jack.

Carter collected a text for Manning from a farm labourer, C.J.Reeves, aged 70, of Headington on 28 April 1898, although it is headed 'Old Oxford Mumming Performances in Six Acts'.<sup>38</sup> Its characters are: [Unnamed Presenter]; King George; who fights and first defeats but later falls to Turkey Snipe; Dr Brown; Almond Nick; and Jolley Jack.

On Christmas Eve 1898, as mentioned earlier, Manning published his Kirtlington text in the *Oxford Times*, in response to a text published the week before by 'Ζωή' [Zoe].<sup>39</sup> Ζωή's play was collected from local visiting mummers, but not explicitly located. It could have been Oxford, but as Ζωή's identity is unknown, this cannot be confirmed. This play features: Molly, called 'Mother'; Bold Slasher; King George; who vanquishes the Turkish Champion; the Doctor; Beelzebug; and Big Head.

---

<sup>34</sup> P.H.Ditchfield, *Old English Customs Extant at the Present Time* (London, 1896), pp. 316-320.

<sup>35</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.17.

<sup>36</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.16.

<sup>37</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.15.

<sup>38</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.192, fol. 119. This original does not mention Carter, but the copy Manning sent to Ordish does. Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.25.

<sup>39</sup> "Ζωή" [Zoë], 'More about the Mummers', *Oxford Times*, 17 December 1898, p. 8a. Clipping and typed transcript in Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, Nos.26 & 27.

About 1899, Carter collected a text from an Old Marston villager, name forgotten, although he did not pass it to Manning until 1902.<sup>40</sup> A note added to the manuscript by Carter reads 'Black Jack: Marston'. A second Old Marston manuscript seems to be a copy by Carter of the first, this time bearing the legend 'Black Jack Haynes Forman'.<sup>41</sup> It is unclear whether Haynes was Carter's informant, or just named as foreman of the team. The cast of this play was: [Unnamed presenter], King George/St George, who fights and beats but later falls to Turkey Snipe, Doctor Brown, Almond Nick, and Jony Jack (Jolley Jack in Carter's copy). This cast, and indeed the lines of the text, are identical to Reeves' Headington text, something that will be discussed later.

### *Enter Edward Hibbert Binney*

E.H.Binney was an active researcher of mumming plays in the 1900s and 1910s and a friend of Manning. Copies of much of his material are present in Manning, the earliest dated 1901. There are also copies in Ordish, but these are often second generation copies.

Edward Hibbert Binney (1872-1930) was born at Clifton Hampden, on 26 October 1872. His family lived at Culham from 1875,<sup>42</sup> where his father, D.B.Binney was vicar, then moved to Limington, Somerset, in 1886.<sup>43</sup> From 1886, E.H.Binney was educated at Charterhouse School, Surrey.<sup>44</sup> He matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, as a Classics exhibitioner in October 1891, took his BA in 1895,<sup>45</sup> and was in due course promoted to MA. He then became a schoolmaster at the City of Oxford High School for Boys until his death in 1930.

The earliest dated item collected by Binney is another Headington text obtained from F.Lee at Titup, Headington Quarry on 2 July 1901.<sup>46</sup> This has a radically different cast to the Headington text collected by Carter for Manning: Belsy Bob/George the Prussian King, Duke of Cumberland/King George, who fights and is beaten by no. 3, Doctor, and Jack Finny/John Finny/Mr Finny. This play is discussed later.

---

<sup>40</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 313-314.

<sup>41</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 311-312.

<sup>42</sup> 'Preferments and Appointments', *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 13 March 1875.

<sup>43</sup> *Grave information for Douglas Belcher Binney M.A., located in the Limington (Saint Mary) Churchyard, Limington England*, <https://billiongraves.com/grave/DOUGLAS-BELCHER-BINNEY-MA/13076657#>.

<sup>44</sup> F.H.W.Girdlestone, E.T.Hardman & A.H.Tod, 'Charterhouse register, 1872-1900' (Godalming, 1904), p. 265.

<sup>45</sup> Keeper of the Archives, Exeter College Archives, University of Oxford (personal communication).

<sup>46</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 329-330. Frank Lee, aged 17, who lived on Old Road, Headington, was an apprentice bricklayer – 'England and Wales Census, 1901', database, FamilySearch <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X9YK-GQ4> (29 August 2015).

## *Culham and its Environs*

Binney collected three items in 1901 in and around Culham – his childhood home. The first reads:<sup>47</sup>

Capper Clutterbuck has seen no mummers at Culham, but says at Wittenham it used to be King William, not King George, & the doctor was called “Jack Pinny?”, or Penny, and used to object to the name (as in the Goring version) & say he wasn’t Jack Pinny but Doctor Pinny & a person of great importance.<sup>48</sup>

The Revd Francis Capper Clutterbuck took over the living of Culham from Binney’s father in 1886, and moved to Sutton Courtenay, Berks., in 1901. He was raised at Long Wittenham, Berks., where his father J.C.Clutterbuck was vicar. These villages are close to each other, and the two families were probably friends.

This note is the only known mention of a play at Goring, and implies that Binney possessed more information.

Also at this time, Binney collected a note and fragment from Tom Partridge,<sup>49</sup> saying there was no longer a Culham team, but that mummers from Sutton [Courtenay] still visited the village.<sup>50</sup> Partridge was formerly a mummer in Culham.<sup>51</sup> He gave Binney a quatrain for Old Grumpy Beelzebub, and promised him the full text, which is the third item.<sup>52</sup> It has the characters: 1st Man; 2nd Man/King George; who fights 3rd Man/Bow Slash; Noble Doctor; Jack Finney/Mr Finney; and The Last. It also notes that ‘Grumpy Belzy Bub’ comes in as usual, although no lines are given. It is not stated who wins the initial combat, or who is involved in a second fight after the cure.

---

<sup>47</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 328r.

<sup>48</sup> The copy in Ordish, Oxfordshire, No.8, and Roud *Oxfordshire List...*, p. 25, incorrectly give ‘Copper’ not ‘Capper’.

<sup>49</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 328v.

<sup>50</sup> Both Roud and ERD identify this as Sutton (SP4106) near Stanton Harcourt, but it is more likely Sutton Courtenay, Berkshire (SU5093), a mile south of Culham.

<sup>51</sup> The 1901 Census lists Thomas Partridge, aged 59, born and living in Culham. ‘England and Wales Census, 1901,’ database, FamilySearch <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XS3G-KH5> (28 August 2015).

<sup>52</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 326-327. This is a copy by Binney of Partridge’s original manuscript. He added missing speech designations and stage directions in brackets with question marks.

Binney's set of four photographs in Manning, labelled 'Culham (Dec. 1901)' seem odd, given that Clutterbuck and Partridge said that there was no longer a Culham team.<sup>53</sup> However, folio 354 adds '(from Sutton)', which ties in with Partridge mentioning that a team from Sutton Courtenay visited Culham in 1900. The pictures show the cast: Father Christmas; King George; who was defeated by Bold French Officer; Doctor; Jack Finney; and Beelzebub (as a woman). This cast is similar to that of Partridge's text, given that some plays name the French Officer Bold Slasher or Beau Slash.<sup>54</sup> Conversely, Partridge did not mention Father Christmas, and Beelzebub dressed as a woman conflicts with Partridge's description of the costume: 'tall hat, black coat, humpback & knobbed stick over shoulder'. The photographs are discussed later.

A text collected from Harry Treadwell, Sutton Courtenay, in the 1930s has the cast: Old Father Christmas; Foreman; Royal o Proosia King; who fights as loses to the Bold French Officer; Doctor's Man/Jack Vinney; Doctor; and Old Beelzebub.<sup>55</sup> Another Sutton play, from George E. Harris has: Father Christmas; Beelzbub; Bull-Slasher; who fights and beats the Royal Persian King; Doctor; and Broken Knead Pony.<sup>56</sup> Both casts are roughly similar to the photographs, except for having King George rather than the Royal o Proosia King/Royal Persian King.

### *Concluding 1901*

Binney received a letter from George Le Pan Newstead, dated 19 December 1901, containing Pace Egging rhymes and a description of a play from Aughton, Lancashire. This is not in Manning, but an Ordish copy (No.14) is marked 'Mr. Manning's collection'.<sup>57</sup> The rhymes were copied from a book by Newstead's father,<sup>58</sup> but the description of the play was his own. The cast is quite different to Oxfordshire: Lord Nelson; British Tar; Lady so Gay; Tossport/Doctor; Beelzebub; and Sir George, who is the only named combatant.

---

<sup>53</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 353-356.

<sup>54</sup> E.g. the Berkshire play in: P.H.Ditchfied, *Old English Customs Extant at the Present Time*, pp. 310-314.

<sup>55</sup> James Madison Carpenter Collection, Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, AFC 1972/001, MS pp. 02849-02851.

<sup>56</sup> W,Bradbrooke, 'Versions of the Mummings' Play', *Oxfordshire Archaeological Society Report of 1936* (1936) pp. 133-139. See pp. 133-135.

<sup>57</sup> Ordish Papers, Lancashire, No.13, 17 December 1901, and Ordish Papers, Lancashire, No.14, copy dated 27 September 1907 of letter dated 17 December 1901.

<sup>58</sup> G. Coulthard Newstead, *Gleanings towards the Annals of Aughton, near Ormskirk* (Liverpool, 1893) pp. 39-40.



Newstead wrote from Sunderland, but Censuses show him living around Liverpool. He was a bank employee, and it is not obvious how he came to contact Binney.

To complete 1901, we return to the photographs. There are three sets of photographs, 'Mummers' [sic] from Headington Quarry (4 images),<sup>59</sup> Islip mummers (5 images),<sup>60</sup> and the Sutton mummers taken at Culham (4 images).<sup>61</sup> They were all taken by or for Binney and dated December 1901, and taken during that year's Christmas performances. The photographs are discussed later.

### *1902 – A Landmark Year for Binney*

1902 is again dominated by Binney's material, but we find the first evidence of contacts between him and Manning, as well as Ordish.

It starts with a letter Binney received from George Thomas of Aberdare, Glamorganshire, dated 1 January 1902, containing the text of a Christmas Mummers' play. This is not in Manning, but a copy in Ordish (No.21) is marked 'Mr. Manning's collection'.<sup>62</sup> The cast is: Master of Ceremonies; King George; who fights Jack Ding-a-Ling; Doctor; and Beelzebub. Either of the combatants might be wounded. Again, there is no obvious indication how Thomas came to be in contact with Binney. Perhaps Binney made an as yet untraced appeal for information in a national periodical to which Thomas and Newstead responded.

By now, Binney had gathered enough information to lecture the University Antiquarian Society (UAS) on 'Old English Mumming Plays' on the 20 February 1902. This was reported at length in the Oxford newspapers.<sup>63</sup> He projected lantern slides of performers at Culham, Islip and Headington Quarry – evidently the photographs mentioned earlier – and gave examples of Oxfordshire plays. He compared them with plays from other parts of the British Isles, along with a distribution map. He outlined the core action of the hero-combat and the cure by the Doctor, and described the individual characters. He considered and dismissed various options regarding their origins, concluding that they might be sought in 'heathen

---

<sup>59</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 357-360.

<sup>60</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 361-365.

<sup>61</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 353-356.

<sup>62</sup> Ordish Papers, Wales, No.21, copy dated 27 September 1907 of letter dated 1 January 1902, and Ordish Papers, Wales, No.22, 1 January 1902.

<sup>63</sup> 'Oxfordshire Mummers', *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 1 March 1902, No.7772, p. 8c, and 'University Antiquarian Society: Oxfordshire Mummers', *Oxford Times*, 1 March 1902, No.2150, p. 3g.

rites'. Lastly, he noted similarities with the Ancient Greek *Alcestis* of Euripedes. This latter topic was the subject of paper he read to another unspecified University society, published later in the *Classical Review*.<sup>64</sup>

We do not know when Manning and Binney first met, but it is likely to have been no later than Binney's first lecture. Manning was Vice-President the UAS,<sup>65</sup> and given his interest in folklore, he would have attended. Secondly, Binney received new information from people who had read the newspaper reports of the lecture, and he wrote the following to Manning on the 5 March 1902:

One A.J. Spencer of Wheatfield, near Tetsworth, seeing the report of my paper, writes sending an account of a play, and adds that there a is carter there who is said to be a great dancer. I thought possibly you might like to mark him down in case he is anything in your line. The Architectural meeting is on the 12<sup>th</sup>, isn't it? I forget where you say they meet.<sup>66</sup>

The current whereabouts of the Wheatfield account are not known.

Lastly, Manning holds three copies of an undated mechanically reproduced sheet in Binney's hand that summarizes and appeals for information on mummers.<sup>67</sup> I suggest that Manning probably obtained these at the lecture.

The other information we know Binney received following his lecture is a letter dated 4 March 1902 and signed 'Old Nunkey', who had been a mummer at Islip c.1852.<sup>68</sup> This gives a play text from Islip purporting to date from 1780. This would make it one of the oldest known mumming plays, a claim that has been investigated by Preston.<sup>69</sup> The cast is: Anna Domino; Royal Duke of Blunderland; who fights Earl Percy/King Percy; Herald; Doctor Quack/Doctor Spinney; Nag; Salt Peter; Fat Jack, Pedlar Chap; and Father Christmas. The loser of the fight was decided at the time of performance.

---

<sup>64</sup> E.H.Binney, 'The Alcestis as a Folk-Drama' *Classical Review*, 19, no.2 (1905), pp. 98-99.

<sup>65</sup> M.Heaney 'Percy Manning – a Life', Chapter 1 in this book.

<sup>66</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.192, fol. 10. Anthony John Spencer was the son of Lord Charles Vere Spencer of the manor house, Wheatfield.

<sup>67</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 281-283.

<sup>68</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 301-306.

<sup>69</sup> M.J.Preston, 'The Oldest British Folk Play', *Folklore Forum*, 6, No.3 (1973), pp. 168-174.

There are a couple of places where the text gives description instead of lines, which suggests that it is a retrospective record rather than a script for learning speeches. Although Binney copied this play for Manning, he did not send it him until 1911.<sup>70</sup> Chandler has solved the mystery of 'Old Nunkey' from census records using his 1852 and 1902 addresses.<sup>71</sup> He was Martin Henry Timberlake, 1837-1907, and he would have performed the play in his mid teens.

### *Thomas Fairman Ordish and Projected Books*

The press reports mention that R.R.Marett of Exeter College attended Binney's lecture. Marett was on the FLS Council, and wrote on Binney's behalf to its secretary, F.A.Milne, asking questions concerning mummers. Milne asked Marett to put Binney in touch with T.F.Ordish, who had been researching folk drama for some time. We learn this from the letter that Binney duly wrote to Ordish on 5 March 1902, in which he introduced himself and requested help in finding further references and sources.<sup>72</sup> We do not have Ordish's reply, but he evidently mentioned the articles he had published on folk drama in *Folk-Lore* in the 1890s,<sup>73</sup> because Binney then asked for the references.<sup>74</sup> He had been unaware of Ordish's work, and probably Marett likewise, as Marett only joined the FLS in November 1900,<sup>75</sup> and its Council in January 1901.<sup>76</sup>

Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924) was a London based civil servant and antiquarian, who started researching folk plays in the 1880s, and read papers to the FLS in the 1890s. He then started a project to gather all available folk play material for a book. This was never published, but his manuscripts were deposited in the FLS library. Ordish's folk play activities and the story of the book, in which Binney played a catalytic role, have been researched in depth by Paul Smith.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 299-300. What prompted Binney to send this to Manning in 1911 is unknown.

<sup>71</sup> K.Chandler, 'An astonishing Mumming revelation', *Folk Music Journal*, 10, no.2 (2012), pp. 238-241

<sup>72</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no.19 (5 March 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/1>.

<sup>73</sup> T.F.Ordish 'Folk-drama', *Folk-Lore*, 2, no.3 (1891), pp. 314-335 and T.F.Ordish 'English Folk-drama II', *Folk-Lore*, 4, no.2 (1893), pp. 149-175.

<sup>74</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no.19 (10 March 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/2>.

<sup>75</sup> 'Wednesday, November 28th, 1900', *Folk-Lore*, 12, no.1 (1901), pp. 1-2.

<sup>76</sup> 'Wednesday, January 16th, 1901. The 23rd Annual General Meeting', *Folk-Lore*, 12, no.1 (1901), pp. 3-5.

<sup>77</sup> P.Smith, 'Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924): A Lasting Legacy', *Lore and Language*, 15, Nos.1-2 (1997), pp. 84-116. Available: <http://www.folkplay.info/Ordish/Introduction.htm>.

Binney wrote in his letter of the 10 March that J.G.Frazer, L.R.Farnell, and others had recommended that he write a book on mumming plays, unaware the Ordish was doing likewise. Binney also mentioned his collection of 80 to 90 variants, many of which (to judge from a reply of his in *Notes and Queries*) probably came from published sources.<sup>78</sup> His collection may well have been as big as Ordish's at that juncture, but he assumed that Ordish's collection was 'more complete'. Binney also mentioned the papers that he had read at Oxford.

Manning was due to read a paper to the FLS entitled 'Stray Notes on Oxfordshire Folklore' at their meeting on the 26 March 1902,<sup>79</sup> and Ordish must have suggested that he and Binney meet there, because Binney wrote to say he could not get away from Oxford to attend, suggesting a meeting later in April instead.<sup>80</sup> Ordish must have mentioned his concerns over a competing book project, because in the same letter, Binney volunteered to cooperate and share material, and suggested he talk with Manning, who was familiar with his work, at the FLS meeting.

Binney wrote again to Ordish suggesting meeting on 9th April, or a fortnight later, as he passed through London.<sup>81</sup> Whether or not they met, Binney's correspondence prompted Ordish to obtain official support from the FLS for his own book. The venture was adopted at a Council meeting (of which Ordish was a member) held on the day of Manning's talk, although it is highly unlikely that Manning played any part.<sup>82</sup> The idea of a joint publication seems not to have been considered.

The project was formally announced in *Folk-Lore* in September 1902.<sup>83</sup> Whether or not Binney learned of the decision earlier, he wrote to Ordish on the 30 April 1902 effectively dropping his own book project.<sup>84</sup> He again offered his material to Ordish, and went on to comment on Ordish's *Folk-Lore* articles, particularly as regards origins. He offered to send

---

<sup>78</sup> E.H.Binney, 'Mummers', *Notes and Queries*, Series 9, 9 (1902) No.221, p. 237.

<sup>79</sup> 'Wednesday, March 26th, 1902', *Folk-Lore*, 8, No.2 (1902), pp. 114-115. Manning's paper later appeared as a series of articles in *Folk-Lore*. None mention mumming.

<sup>80</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no.19 (17 March 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/3>.

<sup>81</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no.19 (6 April 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/4>.

<sup>82</sup> *Folk-Lore Society Council Minutes* (26 March 1902). Source not seen – quoted in P.Smith 'Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924)', pp. 90-91.

<sup>83</sup> T.F.Ordish, 'Correspondence: The Mumming-Play and other Vestiges of Folk-Drama in the British Isles' *Folk-Lore*, 12, no.3 (1902), pp. 296-297

<sup>84</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no.19 (30 April 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/5>.

his own paper on the subject. There is no full text of Binney's paper in Ordish, but there is a clipping of the *Oxford Times* report.<sup>85</sup>

There followed a series of letters from Binney in which he passed everything over to Ordish, starting with 'five typical Oxfordshire versions of the mummers play ... including the ancient and modern Islip versions...', and plays from Aberdare, South Wales and Aughton, Lancashire for copying, a distribution map, and retention copies of his Oxfordshire photographs.<sup>86</sup> He later sent list of references to printed accounts of mumming,<sup>87</sup> a list of bad sources that he had investigated, copies of slips for the word 'Mummer' from Murray's *Oxford Dictionary* project for Ordish to copy,<sup>88</sup> and lastly, copies of his papers on mumming, and the *Alcestis*,<sup>89</sup>. Except for the texts, these are all missing from Ordish.

The role of Marett in this is curious and possibly duplicitous. Having originally put Binney in touch with Ordish, he must at least have been aware of the decision of the FLS Council to sponsor Ordish's book to the detriment of Binney. Furthermore, Marett wrote to Ordish on 4 December 1902 recommending that he incorporate Binney's facts into the planned book, but not his theories, whose validity he doubted.<sup>90</sup> Conversely, as a classicist, Marett liked Binney's notion of the '*Alcestis*' of Euripides being a sort of Greek Mummers' play. Marett reappears later.

Binney wrote to Ordish on the 5 January to say he could keep his manuscripts for a month or two.<sup>91</sup> That is all that we hear of him until 1907, except for the appearance of his '*Alcestis*' paper in print in 1905. One reason why things went quiet may have been the publication of 'The Mediaeval Stage' by E.K.Chambers in 1903, which included extensive chapters on folk drama.<sup>92</sup> Its unexpected appearance may have taken the wind out of Binney's sails, and was probably a factor in the non-appearance of Ordish's book. Smith reports a serious breakdown in the relationship between Chambers and Ordish, who had

---

<sup>85</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.29.

<sup>86</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no. 19 (28 May 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/6>.

<sup>87</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no. 19 (28 August 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/7>.

<sup>88</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no. 19 (10 December 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/8>.

<sup>89</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no. 19 (16 December 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/9>.

<sup>90</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no. 16 (4 December 1902), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/1/20>.

<sup>91</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no. 19 (5 January 1903), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/10>.

<sup>92</sup> E.K.Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (London, 1903), vol.1.

served together on FLS committees.<sup>93</sup> Interestingly, Chambers gave a list of just 29 published versions, which, with a few more in the text, was less than either Binney's or Ordish's collections.

### *Manning and Ordish*

Meanwhile, Ordish turned his attention to Manning. He wrote on 5 March 1903 to ask for contributions to his book, having noted that Manning had not responded to his open letter in *Folk-Lore*.<sup>94</sup> Manning replied on 7 March with the modest account of his collection quoted earlier, and noting his friend Binney's expertise.<sup>95</sup> He did, however, include manuscripts for Ordish to copy and return, and asked Ordish to send him any references for printed Oxfordshire folklore he might encounter. Reeves' Headington text goes with this letter in Ordish, although this is written in Manning's hand, which is curious, however Ordish was notorious for not returning contributors' papers. On 10 March, Ordish gratefully acknowledged receipt of the papers, also mentioning the manuscripts that Binney had sent.<sup>96</sup>

Manning acquired a new text in March 1903, written out for him by 'a lad of St Aldates' Oxford – the street where Manning lived. This text, reproduced at the beginning of this chapter, features: Father Christmas; King George; who fights and loses to the Turkish Night; Doctor Brown; and Umply Jack.

The manuscript is signed 'Your Murmors' and a list of names: 'W Bawden, C Bawde, A. Jacobs, B. Jones, J. Burly'. Four actors are named in the text: 'Arthur Jacobs', 'Charlie' (presumably C.Bawde), 'J.Burly' and 'Bill Clays' (or 'Bill Clay'). According to the 1901 Census, Walter Bawden (11) and Charles Philip Bawden (14) lived on Bridport Street, Oxford.<sup>97</sup> Charles worked in a printing office. Joseph Burley (14) lived in Church Street, Oxford and was an underclothing cutter.<sup>98</sup> Ages are given for 1901. Both streets were adjacent to St

---

<sup>93</sup> P.Smith, 'Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924)', pp.97-98.

<sup>94</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 286-287.

<sup>95</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.25.

<sup>96</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fol. 288

<sup>97</sup> 'England and Wales Census, 1901', database, FamilySearch <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X9YL-NY2> (29 August 2015).

<sup>98</sup> 'England and Wales Census, 1901', database, FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X9YL-D2M> (29 August 2015).

Aldates, and we can be confident that these three boys took part in the play.<sup>99</sup> Except for Bill Clays, who I have not found, boys with the other names lived further away in Oxford, and I am therefore less confident about them. The nearest match for B.Jones is Bernard Jones (12), St Margaret's Road in north Oxford.<sup>100</sup> An Arthur Jacobs (17) lived in Windmill Road, Headington, and was a plasterer.<sup>101</sup>

Manning sent the St Aldates text to Ordish for copying and return on the 22 March 1903, but again the copy in Ordish is in Manning's hand.<sup>102</sup>

Manning collected an attenuated text from Thomas Walker of Great Milton on 31 May 1904, of which the collection has three copies.<sup>103</sup> The cast is: [Molly]; Duke of Cumberland; Doctor; and Jack Winney. The text is somewhat confused, and it is not clear if Molly is the correct name for the introducer, nor who fights whom, although the Duke is a combatant. Manning did not send this to Ordish.

Also in 1904, Manning filed a clipping from *The Times* containing the description of a mumming play from North Berkshire, with the characters: Father Christmas; Room; St George/Sir George; who is wounded by the Knight from Furrin Parts; Doctor; a foreign quack; and Maid Merrian.<sup>104</sup> The play is not located, but Malcolm Bee suggests it came from Drayton, Berks.<sup>105</sup> An extract in Ordish is annotated 'Manning M.S.S', so Manning must have passed it to him.

### *Acquiring Chapbooks*

Moving on to Christmas Eve 1905, Manning witnessed the performance of a play while visiting his sister at Adel, near Leeds, Yorkshire. The actors used a printed chapbook text entitled '*The Seven Champions of Christendom*'. Manning managed to obtain from them an

---

<sup>99</sup> These streets were overbuilt by the Westgate Shopping Centre and Oxpens Road in the late 20th century. A remnant of Church Street was renamed Pennyfarthing Place.

<sup>100</sup> 'England and Wales Census, 1901', database, FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X9Y2-2ZV> (29 August 2015).

<sup>101</sup> 'England and Wales Census, 1901', database, FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X9YK-L18> (29 August 2015).

<sup>102</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, Nos.23 & 24.

<sup>103</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fols. 251-252, 265-267, and MS Top.Oxon. d.191a, fols. 155-157.

<sup>104</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fols. 289-292. 'Mummers in North Berks', *The Times* (24 December 1904), p. 6.

<sup>105</sup> M.Bee, 'The Drayton Mummers' Play', *Downs Miscellany* (1987), Vo1.4, No.2, pp. 8-16.



original copy,<sup>106</sup> and sent a transcript to Ordish.<sup>107</sup> This is a highly atypical mumming play, notably lacking a Doctor. The characters are: Hans Lighthouse, Guillaume/King of Germany, Rosalind, St Patrick, St James, St Denis, St Thulis, St Wanski, St Pietro, and St George, and there is a complex series of combats.

On the 10 February 1906, Ordish wrote to Manning acknowledging receipt of a '*Peace Egg*' chapbook published in Preston, and apologising profusely for the delay in preparing his book.<sup>108</sup> Unfortunately this chapbook is absent from both collections, but it must have been one of the six editions published by John Harkness from some time before 1848 to no later than 1886.<sup>109</sup> This title was by far the most popular text used in northern England, and has two acts. The cast in Act 1 is: Fool, Saint George, who wounds Slasher, and Doctor. In Act 2, the cast is: Saint George, who slays the Black Prince of Paradine, King of Egypt, Hector (who is wounded by Saint George), Fool/Bold Ben, Beelzebub, and Devil Doubt.

Manning also acquired a third chapbook, although it is not known when or where from. This was a carbon copy typed transcript of another popular title, '*Alexander and the King of Egypt: A Mock Play*', published by T. Wilson of Whitehaven, Cumberland, c.1810-1847.<sup>110</sup> This is more important than might be expected, because no original of this edition has been located. Preston *et al.* note, however, that the typist apparently replicated the chapbook very faithfully<sup>111</sup> and happily used it in their detailed comparison of the eight known editions. Again, Manning sent a copy to Ordish. The cast is: Alexander; King of Egypt; Prince George/Slasher (who is wounded by Alexander); Sambo; and Doctor. Alexander slays the King in a second fight after the cure. Later editions, but not this one, add a long final speech by Beelzebub.

---

<sup>106</sup> William Walker & Sons, *Walker's Series of Juvenile Plays for Christmas and Easter Tide: The Seven Champions of Christendom* (London & Otley, [1860s or 1870s]). Held in: Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fols. 333 & 334-339.

<sup>107</sup> Ordish Papers, section F, no. 20.

<sup>108</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 295-296.

<sup>109</sup> E. Cass, 'The Printing History of the Peace Egg Chapbooks', in J. Hinks & C. Armstrong (eds.) *Book Trade Connections from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Centuries*. (New Castle, Delaware & London, 2008, ISBN 978-1-58456-229-0), pp. 161-179.

<sup>110</sup> T. Wilson, *Alexander and the King of Egypt: A Mock Play, as it is Acted by the Mummers every Christmas* (Whitehaven, [c.1810-1847]). Held in Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 192, fols. 347-352.

<sup>111</sup> M.J. Preston *et al.*, '*Chapbooks and Traditional Drama*', p. 3

## *Concluding Binney's and Ordish's Work*

After 1905, Manning and Binney collected no new material that we know of, although there was still some correspondence and exchange of information, and developments involving Ordish. In 1906, for instance, Manning alerted Ordish to a new query about Cornish plays in *Notes and Queries*.<sup>112</sup>

Something was afoot regarding Binney and Ordish in 1907. Firstly, in April, F.A.Milne, wrote tersely to Ordish: 'Have you perchance a paper of Mr. Binney's on "Mummers" in your possession? if so, please return it to him at once?'<sup>113</sup> Manning, however, was still sending material to Ordish, since extra copies of the Aughton and Aberdare texts in Ordish are annotated 'Mr. Manning's collection' and 'Typed from [M.S./copy] in possession of Mr. E.H.Binney, Sept 27 07'.<sup>114</sup> Another note in Ordish, possibly from this time, signed 'A.A.G.' (A. Allan Gomme), cites Binney on elecampane in the Doctor's cures, and adds 'vide "Marston" play', suggesting Gomme may have seen Ordish's collection.<sup>115</sup> The Gomme family was active in the FLS, and were lifelong friends of Ordish.<sup>116</sup>

If Binney had lost patience with Ordish, he was not alone. Contributors were starting to ask for progress reports or the return of their manuscripts.<sup>117</sup> Things eventually came to a head, and Ordish was asked to write a project report, which was read in his absence at the FLS Annual Meeting on the 18 January 1911.<sup>118</sup> There is a copy in Ordish.<sup>119</sup> It lists the following as having been received from Manning and Binney:

### Mr. Percy Manning.

- (a) Versions of the Mumming Play collected in Oxfordshire.
  - (1) Islip (1894)
  - (2) Kirthington. [sic]

---

<sup>112</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no.15 (12 February 1906), citing: 'Ygrec' [Thurston Peter], 'Jenkyn, Little John, &c.', *Notes and Queries, Series 10*, 5, (10 February 1906), p. 109.

<sup>113</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, no.6 (22 April 1907), <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/1/18>.

<sup>114</sup> Ordish Papers, Lancashire, No.14, and Wales, No.21.

<sup>115</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, No.1 - <http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/1> - written on a letterhead advertising a 1907 stage season.

<sup>116</sup> P.Smith 'Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924)', p. 87.

<sup>117</sup> P.Smith 'Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924)', pp. 93-94.

<sup>118</sup> 'The Thirty-third Annual Meeting. Wednesday, January 18th, 1911', *Folk-Lore*, 22, no.1 (1911), pp. 4-6.

<sup>119</sup> T.F.Ordish, 'Report on Mumming Plays and other Vestiges of Folk Drama', Ordish Papers, Section D, no.4 (11 January 1911).

- (3) Bampton.
- (4) Marston.
- (b) Copies of two versions (Headington and Culham) communicated by Mr. E.H. Binney.
- (c) an [sic] Oxfordshire version taken down from mummers by "Zoe" and printed in the Oxford Times.
- (d) Transcripts from "Notes and Quiries" [sic] on the Thame version.

Mr . E.H . Binney.

- (a) Versions collected
  - (1) Aberdare, S. Wales.
  - (2) Pace-Egging Rhyme from West Lancashire.
  - (3) Islip, Oxfordshire. Copy from MS. dated 1780, communicated anonymously.
- (b) List of references to printed accounts and versions.

There was still no visible progress, until Binney wrote in December 1913 to Marett, now FLS President, to ask ‘...what chance there was of his doing anything with his materials on mummers, as Mr. Ordish seems to have dropped the subject.’<sup>120</sup> Marett found Ordish unwilling to give way, and despite reporting that ‘Mr. Binney would be quite prepared to take up the work and would undertake to complete it in 3 years' time’, the matter remained unresolved.<sup>121</sup>

The last item we have from Binney is a letter he wrote to the Sussex folklorist Richard J.Sharp on 15 August 1914, responding to a long letter about the plays.<sup>122</sup> Among other things, he said he felt ‘certain that the play is a very primitive Saxon custom’.

For whatever reason, Binney resigned from the FLS in December 1914.<sup>123</sup> The Great War intervened, changing everyone’s lives forever. Manning died on army duty in 1917, and

---

<sup>120</sup> Folk-Lore Society Archive, Finance and Publications Minutes, 8 December 1913. Source not seen. Quoted in: P.Smith, ‘Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924)’, p. 96.

<sup>121</sup> Folk-Lore Society Archive, Council Minutes, 21 January 1914. Source not seen. Quoted in: P.Smith, ‘Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924)’, p. 96.

<sup>122</sup> Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, ‘Richard J.Sharp of Sussex: Manuscript Records of Folk Customs’, fol. 14.

<sup>123</sup> ‘Evening Meeting. Wednesday, December 16th, 1914’, *Folk-Lore*, 25, No.4 (1914), p. 410.

Ordish retired early due to ill health. The project was abandoned, and Ordish's papers passed to the FLS sometime after he died in 1924.<sup>124</sup>

Binney continued as a schoolmaster in Oxford until he was killed by a train near the Black Bridge, Port Meadow on 24 April 1930. It is a curious postscript to note that Marett, by then Rector of Exeter College, was foreman of the jury at the inquest held by the University Coroner. The verdict was accidental death.<sup>125</sup>

This concludes the chronology. I will now focus on some highlights from the collection.

### **'THE SEVEN CHAMPIONS OF CHRISTENDOM' CHAPBOOK**

Chapbooks were printed for mummers in many northern English cities and towns from the late 18th to mid 20th centuries. These were typically eight page booklets, often with woodcuts, and sometimes with an additional cover..<sup>126</sup>

The Manning collection includes one original folk play chapbook – *'The Seven Champions of Christendom'*, published by William Walker & Sons of Otley, Yorkshire.<sup>127</sup> There are two known printings of this chapbook, published in Otley in the 1860s or 70s. Manning's is the only known copy of its printing, and only two copies are known of the other.<sup>128</sup> It has an overblown literary script and recommends rather elaborate costumes, which may explain its rarity and apparent lack of popularity. Nonetheless, we know that it was actually performed.

Manning says his copy was 'Given me by one of the performers at Adel 4 miles N. of Leeds, Yorks. Xmas Day c.1905.'<sup>129</sup> This would have been while visiting his sister Jessie Butler, who lived at Adel Tower, Adel,<sup>130</sup> quite close to Manning's birthplace - Weetwood Mount, Far Headingley. Additionally, Thomas MacAll Fallow published an illustrated account of its

---

<sup>124</sup> P.Smith, 'Thomas Fairman Ordish (1855-1924)', p. 99.

<sup>125</sup> 'Tragic Death of Mr. E. H. Binney: Killed on Railway Line', *Oxford Times* (2 May 1930), p8.

<sup>126</sup> M.J.Preston, M.G.Smith & P.S.Smith, *An Interim Checklist of Chapbooks Containing Traditional Play Texts* (Newcastle, 1976).

A.Helm, *The Chapbook Mummers' Plays* (Ibstock, 1969).

<sup>127</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 334-339. William Walker & Sons, *Walker's Series of Juvenile Plays for Christmas and Easter Tide: The Seven Champions of Christendom* (London & Otley, [1860s or 1870s])

<sup>128</sup> E.Cass, M.J.Preston & P.Smith, Personal communication.

<sup>129</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fol. 333.

<sup>130</sup> 1901 Census RG 13/4060 p5, and 1911 census RG 14/491/12 25982.

performance by 'sword-actors' c.1880 'in the neighbourhood of Leeds'.<sup>131</sup> The 1881 census shows Fallow living in the north Leeds suburb of Chapel Allerton, and it seems likely that this is where he witnessed the play. The actors in the nine photographs accompanying his account all wear well-made costumes, with the saints wearing false beards and carrying shields bearing their relevant national emblems.

The map in Figure 3 shows the proximity of the various places mentioned regarding the *'Seven Champions'* chapbook.



Figure 3 - Locations relevant to Manning's *'Seven Champions'* chapbook.

Headingley, Adel and Chapel Allerton were all affluent middle class suburbs to the north of Leeds. The chapbook was printed at Otley, further out in Wharfedale. I suggest that William Walker & Sons may have printed it expressly for this clientele. The literary text seems more likely to have appealed to this audience than to the working classes, and it seems more likely that youths from middle class families would have had the resources to produce the calibre of costumes shown in Fallow's photographs.

<sup>131</sup> T. M. Fallow, 'Yorkshire Sword-Actors', *The Antiquary*, 32 (May 1895), pp. 138-142.

## PHOTOGRAPHS, COSTUMES AND ACTORS

The photographs in the collection are all faded, some exceptionally so.<sup>132</sup> Also, they were taken indoors, which was unusual at that time, because an explosive powder camera flash would have been required. It was more normal to pose mummers specially outdoors in daylight. Consequently, even after digital restoration, the quality of the images is generally poor, and some figures in the pictures are blurred due to movement. The better quality images below have been selected to illustrate all the costumes.

The photographs are on 6in x 4in paper (152mm x 102mm), and are captioned on the reverse with location, date, and usually information on the subject matter. They are all dated December 1901, but the photographer is not named. However, we know they were taken by or for Binney rather than for Manning, and are captioned in Binney's hand. Binney displayed them in his talk to the UAS in 1902 as lantern slides.<sup>133</sup> Furthermore, he sent copies of the photographs to Ordish to keep, and offered to lend him the lantern slides.<sup>134</sup> Whether or not Ordish took up the offer, neither the photographs nor the slides are now present in his collection, and as the whereabouts of Binney's papers are unknown, Manning's prints are all we have.

### *'Culham' Photographs*

The four photographs of the Sutton Courtenay mummers taken at Culham are the most faded in the collection.<sup>135</sup> They have 'Culham (Dec. 1901)' written on the back, followed by specific captions:

- Fol. 353 – 'King George & Bold French Officer'.
- Fol. 354 – '(From Sutton)' and 'General group', showing left to right: 'Father Christmas, King George, Doctor, "Bold French Officer", Jack Finney, Beelzebub (as a woman).' – see Figure 5.
- Fol. 355 – 'Doctor reviving King George by drawing a tooth'. – see Figure 11 (detail).
- Fol. 356 – 'Father Christmas & Doctor'. – see Figure 4 (detail).

---

<sup>132</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 353-365.

<sup>133</sup> 'University Antiquarian Society: Oxfordshire Mummers', *Oxford Times*, 1 March 1902, p. 3g

<sup>134</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, No.19 (28 May 1902).

<sup>135</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 353-356.





Figure 4 - 'Culham' Father Christmas (fol. 356 detail).



Figure 5 - 'Culham' group. Left to right: Father Christmas, King George, Doctor, Bold French Officer, Jack Finney & Beelzebub (fol. 354).

These mummers wear a mixture of realistic and non-realistic costumes. The realistic costumes belong to King George and the Bold French Officer, who both wear decorated slouch hats and British Army patrol jackets of the Second Boer War period. Given the caption, it is likely that Beelzebub is wearing a dress, but this is not obvious in the picture. 'She' is, however, wearing a dark veil around her hat. Otherwise, there is no facial disguise. Father Christmas, the Doctor and Jack Finney wear ordinary clothes and hats covered in bunches of wide paper streamers. Most seem to be carrying walking canes.

The Sutton actors appear to be of late teen age. Father Christmas is perhaps the oldest in the group, and may therefore have been the leader. The presence of a sewing machine in two pictures indicates they are in a private house.

### *Headington Quarry Photographs*

The four pictures taken at Headington Quarry are all group photographs showing five costumed actors, with, in two cases, an audience member or helper in ordinary clothes.<sup>136</sup> They have the following minimal captions (in Binney's hand, except for fol. 357):

<sup>136</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 357-360.



- Fol. 357 – ‘Headington Mumers [sic] 1902’.
- Fol. 358 – ‘General Group (1)’. – see Figure 6.
- Fol. 359 – ‘General Group (2)’.
- Fol. 360 – ‘King George dead. Turkish Knight on the left’. – see Figure 1.



Figure 6 - Headington Quarry Mummers, December 1901 (fol. 358).

Figure 6 shows, left to right: King George, a female character, an unnamed character, Turkish Knight, and another unnamed character. The latter character is doubled due to movement, and is shown more clearly in Figure 1. According to Grant & Heaney, the tablet on the wall in the background identifies the room as the meeting place of Court Napoleon 6829 of the Order of Foresters, which in 1901 was in the 'Chequers Inn', Headington Quarry.<sup>137</sup> They also noted, these protagonists are different to those of the Headington Quarry text collected by Binney from Lee, for reasons that are discussed shortly.

The costumes are comparable with ‘Culham’. Four of the actors are dressed in trousers decorated with bunches of long streamers, and jackets decorated likewise, but to a lesser degree. Two wear tall hats, probably made from paper or card, and the other two wear ordinary hats. All the hats are decorated with short ribbons or streamers. Their faces are

<sup>137</sup> B. Grant & M. Heaney, ‘In Steps I’, *English Dance & Song*, 43, no.4 (Christmas 1981), pp. 18-20.

blackened, except around their mouths and on their cheeks. The Turkish Knight, is wearing a jacket of the Royal Horse Artillery, and carries a stick. Another character is also wearing a dark military jacket – this time with corporal’s stripes. He does not appear to be carrying anything. King George is carrying a stick. The fifth actor is a man dressed in an Edwardian lady’s plain long sleeved blouse and a dark floor length skirt. ‘She’ wears a wide brimmed hat swathed in a black veil, and carries a stick or cudgel. All the actors appear to be young men.

### *Islip Photographs*

There are five Islip photographs, with the following captions:<sup>138</sup>

- Fol. 361 – ‘D. of Cumberland’ ‘King George’. – see Figure 7.
- Fol. 362 – ‘Pulling out the tooth from Molly’. – see Figure 12.
- Fol. 363 – ‘General group’. – see Figure 8.
- Fol. 364 – ‘Beelzebub (with club & pan)’ ‘Johnny Jack (with hump back)’.
- Fol. 365 – ‘Doctor (alias Jack Finney) & Molly’.

The cast is similar to that recorded by Manning in 1894, and according to Binney used the same words.<sup>139</sup>

---

<sup>138</sup> Bodl., MS Top.Oxon., d.199, fols. 357-360.

<sup>139</sup> Ordish Papers, section E, part I, No.19 (28 May 1902).



Figure 7 - Islip Duke of Cumberland and King George (fol. 361).



Figure 8 - Islip Left to right (back): Doctor/Jack Finney, Duke of Cumberland, King George and Molly. (Front): Johnny Jack and Beelzebub (fol. 363).

The most obvious thing about these photographs is that all the actors are wearing masks. The Duke of Cumberland's mask goes just below his eyes, but everyone else's are full face masks extending over the neck, with holes for eyes, nose and mouth, and eyebrows and facial hair painted or stuck on. It is difficult to tell whether they are made of paper or fabric, but I am inclined to think paper. The brief 1894 Islip costume descriptions published by Ditchfield make no mention of masks or facial disguise, but otherwise match the photographs.<sup>140</sup> A brief account of the Islip mummers in 1842 by James Orchard Halliwell, quoted by Chandler, first says that 'The little boys black their face all over', but later says 'Some of the mummers wear masks, others who cannot get masks black their faces, and dress themselves up with hay bands tied round their arms and bodies.'<sup>141</sup>

Molly wears a dark wide floor length dress, and a sun bonnet. She leans on a long handled broom, although the head is not visible. Her long face mask is tucked into the neck of her dress. King George appears to be wearing a dark army jacket and forage cap, of an unidentifiable regiment, and carries a wooden sabre. The Duke of Cumberland is wearing a Hussars' stable jacket and forage cap, and carries a straight sword. The Doctor is wearing a dark jacket with two rows of four buttons, and lighter coloured trousers. In Ditchfield, the jacket is described as blue, and the buttons brass. He wears a top hat, leans on a cane, and

<sup>140</sup> P.H.Ditchfield, 'Old English Customs', pp. 316-320.

<sup>141</sup> Chandler, 'An Astonishing Mummung Revelation', p. 239.

has gloves. His mask extends beard-like down below his neck, and has a prominent handlebar moustache. Beelzebub wears a top hat with feathers stuck in the band. He also carries a long cudgel with a large head over his shoulder, and a round metal dish or bowl in his hand. The images of Johnny Jack are blurred. His hump back is not especially obvious. He wears a bowler hat. Beelzebub and Johnny Jack are wearing coats sparsely covered with knots of streamers. The differing heights of the actors suggest they are young, but the masks make this difficult to verify.

### *Comparing Costumes*

It is interesting to see the team at Islip wearing full face masks, because masks are uncommon or limited to one character. Face blackening was more common. Figure 9 shows a comparable photograph from Holton, near Wheatley.<sup>142</sup>



Figure 9 - Mummers at Cherry Orchard, Holton, c.1893 – King William of Prussia squaring up to the Duke of Cumberland. Other characters, left to right: Jack Finny, old woman, and old man (© Holton Park Archive)

Here, the darker masks are cloth, intended only for disguise. The rightmost character's mask is similar to Islip and may be paper. Most characters, as with all of Binney's teams wear bunches of streamers. The costumes in the photograph in Figure 10 from Dorchester on

---

<sup>142</sup> 'The Holton Park Archive', <http://www.holtonparkarchive.com/index.php/tyndale-biscoe/people/>. See also line drawn copies in: *Daily Graphic* (4 January 1894), and 'Oxfordshire Mummers', *Folk-Lore*, 5, no.1 (1894), pp. 88-89.



Thames, 1898, are similar to the 'Culham' and Headington Quarry costumes. They have darkened their faces with burnt cork or soot.<sup>143</sup>



Figure 10 - Mummers at Dorchester, 1898, drawing a tooth on the end of a shoelace.

### *Pulling a Tooth*

Two of Binney's photographs show the scene where the Doctor draws a tooth (usually a horse's tooth) from King George ('Culham') and Molly (Islip).



Figure 11 - The 'Culham' Doctor pulls a tooth from King George (fol. 355 detail).



Figure 12 - The Islip Doctor pulls a tooth from Molly, assisted by the rest of the team (fol. 362).

Figures 11 and 12 show different therapeutic techniques. The 'Culham' Doctor operates on his own using a pair of pinchers, whereas the Islip Doctor enlists the help of the rest of the

<sup>143</sup> R.H.Cocks, "'Mumming': A Primitive Christmas Customs", *The Sketch* (21 December 1898) p. 342, and: "'Mumming." A Quaint Old Custom', *New Penny Magazine*, no.63 (6 January 1900), pp. 632-634.

team, who form a chain pulling on each other's waists. A third technique at Dorchester involves tying a shoelace around the tooth and pulling.

## COMPARING THE ISLIP TEXTS

In sending the 1780 Islip text to Manning, Binney said 'At first I thought the modern one was distinct, but if you compare them carefully you will see that it is essentially the same; but the incidents have got jumbled out of order a bit'.<sup>144</sup> Similarly, Preston said that the 1894 text 'is nearly identical with all but the "prologue" of Anna Domino, the later speech of Fat Jack and that of Pedlar Chap, and the songs'.<sup>145</sup> Preston's remark only concerns the parts that are in the 1780 text and not in the 1894 text. Conversely, the 1894 text has additional speeches for Molly (whose role equates to Anna Domino), King George, the Doctor, and Bezelbub.

It is difficult to measure the similarity of the texts accurately in terms of numbers of lines, because of the places where the 1780 text lapses into description, and because it gives the lines of the 'Virgin Unspotted' carol, whereas the 1894 text merely says 'songs'.

Figure 13 compares the line sequences of the two texts (excluding the carol). Points in the body of the chart represent lines that are common to both texts, whereas points on the *x* and *y* axes represent lines that are in only one text. Shared lines that occur in the same sequence appear as diagonal lines of points, which may be disjointed where speeches have been transposed.

---

<sup>144</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 299-300.

<sup>145</sup> M.J.Preston, 'The Oldest British Folk Play', pp. 168-169.

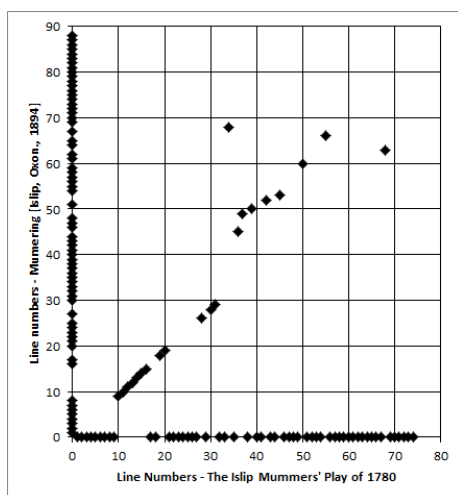


Figure 13 - Islip texts compared by line.

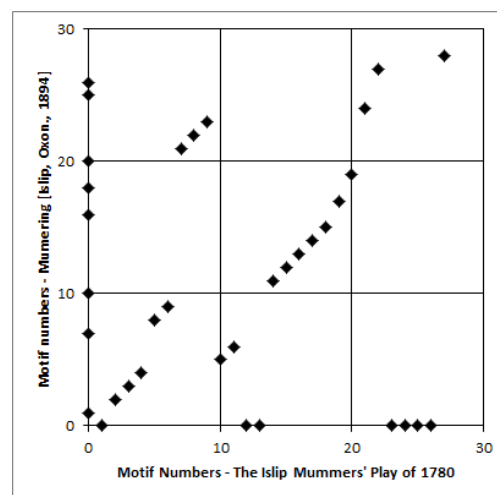


Figure 14 - Islip texts compared by motif.

The texts have 21 lines in common - c.31% of the 1780 lines (excluding the carol), and c.24% of the 1894 lines. This is fairly low level of overlap, although the shared lines do by and large follow the same sequence.

Figure 14 considers the motifs that occur in the text rather than specific lines – e.g. the fight, the tooth drawing, etc – although this is admittedly somewhat subjective. My analysis finds the texts feature 27 and 28 motifs respectively, of which 20 are shared, amounting to c.73% of each text. This is a fairly high level of overlap. This chart again shows that motifs by and large follow the same sequence, but that as Binney says, ‘the incidents have got jumbled out of order a bit’. The results from these analyses are consistent with the 1894 text having derived from the 1780 text, but having evolved during the 104 year interval.

## THE HEADINGTON AND OLD MARSTON PLAYS

Manning’s collection contains two play texts from Headington, the photographs from Headington Quarry, and two related texts from the adjacent village of Old Marston. These have already been closely studied by Bob Grant and Mike Heaney, along with material from other collections.<sup>146</sup> They concluded that the Headington (including Headington Quarry) and Old Marston mumming traditions should be treated together for two reasons. Firstly, the person named as foreman of the Old Marston play - Black Jack Haynes – was also the Squire

<sup>146</sup> B.Grant & M.Heaney, “In Steps I”, *English Dance & Song*, 43, no.4 (Christmas 1981), pp. 18-20.





Like Some of those Young Turks I've oft Times been Told  
Let any man Offend Me I'll ack him Small as dust  
I'll send Him to Cook to be made into Pie Crust  
Mince Pies Hot Mince Pies Cold  
Mince Pies in the Pot Nine Days Old  
Now pull out thy Purse and Pay,  
Pull out thy Sword And Fight.  
For I'll have Satisfaction  
before I Leave this Room to night

(They Fight)

Satisfaction why there is no Satisfaction  
For my Head is Made of Iron  
My Body Lined with Steel  
Therefore King George I'll Battle thee  
to see Which on the Ground will rool

Fencing in Which Turkey Snipe Falls

Dr. Brown is Call in

Act 4 Step in Dr. Brown =-  
I'm Doctor Brown  
the Cleverest Doctor in The Town,  
I carry a Bottle by my Side  
Containing (Alpine) pain  
one Tip of this on this mans Tongue  
and he Will Rise and Fight again

(Fight Continued, in which King George Falls)

Step in again Dr. Brown.  
The Cleverest Doctor in the Town  
What Canst Thou Cure.  
the Itch the Stich the Palsey & the Gout-  
and if the Devil's in Him I'm bound to Fetch him out.  
I Carry a Bottle by my Side of Alpine More  
one Tip on this mans Tongue

He'l Rise and Fight no more

Step in Almond Nick

Act 5 I am almond Nick  
With My Great Head & Little wit  
My Head his Large my Wit is Small  
and a Little Money will Please us all

Step in Jolley Jack

Act 6 Here Comes I Old Jolley Jack  
My Wife & Family at my Back.  
My Family's Large and I am Small  
So I'll Sing you A Song to Please you all  
Big Boots Lellow Laces<sup>148</sup>  
Ladies & Gentleman Take your Places

Songs Finis

From C.J.Reeves aged 70, farm labourer, of Headington 30/4/98.

The two other texts in the collection that are similar to Reeves' version are: the text headed 'Old Marston Mummers 1832: Black Jack Haynes Forman',<sup>149</sup> and the text headed 'Mumering Performances' [sic] and annotated 'Written by a Marston villager, c.1899. name forgotten. Through T.J.C. 1902', and again in a different hand 'Black Jack: Marston'<sup>150</sup>.

I have compared the plays using parallel texts, and ignoring simple spelling and punctuation differences, they are essentially identical. There is the occasional omitted line and a few differences of phraseology, notably the Marston texts using 'In steps I' instead of Reeves' 'I'm', but otherwise there is only one totally different line: Reeves' 'and if the Devil's in Him I'm bound to Fetch him out' being replaced by 'a raiging pain which runs in and out'. This degree of similarity is remarkable, and the level of variation is what might be expected in transcriptions, plays re-collected from the same informant or members of the same team, or from teams using the same written script. Also, they all have 'Almond Nick', who is unknown elsewhere, and lack Father Christmas, who normally appears alongside the Turkish

---

<sup>148</sup> 'Lellow' evidently an error for 'yellow'.

<sup>149</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 311-312.

<sup>150</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 313-314.

Knight, as in later plays collected at Headington.<sup>151</sup> I therefore not only concur with Grant and Heaney that the texts are identical, but think they actually all came from the same informant.

### *The Prussian King and the Duke of Cumberland text*

Here is the other Headington version.<sup>152</sup> A typed transcript in Ordish is annotated 'From E.H.Binney's MS.'<sup>153</sup>

#### Mummers

#### Headington Version

(Verbatim Copy from autograph account of F. Lee, Crown & Thistle, "Titup"(?))<sup>154</sup>

[July 2nd.1901]

- (1.) In comes I old Belsy Bob  
And on my shoulder I carry my club,  
And in my hand a dripping pan,  
Don't you think I am a jolly old man,  
"O yes",  
I've travel England, Ireland, Scotland & France  
I brought all thee you human upon this Earth  
but neither valley from life or death  
for I am the real George the Prussian king  
so let my eldest son step in.
- (2.) In come I the Duke of Cumberland  
With the broad sword in me hand  
Who that man that dare to bid me stand  
I'll knock him up, I'll knock him down as small as human flies  
And send him to the book(?) ✓<sup>155</sup> shop next Xmas time to make mince  
pies  
Who that man that dare to bid me stand.

---

<sup>151</sup> J.M.Carpenter Collection, pp. 02535-02538, 02577-02778, & 03071-03072.

<sup>152</sup> Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d. 199, fols. 329-330.

<sup>153</sup> Ordish Papers, Oxfordshire, no. 12.

<sup>154</sup> The Ordish transcript misreads 'Titup' as 'Fiteys'.

<sup>155</sup> The manuscript has a question mark in brackets above the word 'book', but this has been crossed out and a tick placed against it. The Ordish transcript gives the more usual 'cook'.

(3.)<sup>156</sup> I am that man that dare to bid thee stand  
Although you said you would knock me up & knock me down  
as small as human flies  
And send me to the cook shop next Xmas time to make mince pies,  
So a battle, a battle betwixt you & me  
To see which on the ground first shall lie  
So guard the head and guard thee toes  
And mind I don't hit thee on the Nose.

---

[Here they two fight and the second lose the day and fall down. Same man say this:-]

no.3 Doctor, doctor, where bidst the,  
King George is wounded on the knee  
And likewise through the heart.  
Here comes that noble doctor.  
What canst though cure doctor?

no.4 (Doctor)

All sorts of diseases,  
Just what my Physic pleases,  
The twitch the stitch, the pulsy & the gout,  
The pain within & the pain without,  
Give me an old women 7 years dead 7 years laid in her grave,  
one tooth in her head,  
one hair on her head,  
if one of my best sunday pills don't cure.  
Don't never believe me any more.  
Where the pain

no.3. In the back.

no.4. Take one of my best pills  
& rise up and fight again.  
"Let Jack Finney"

---

<sup>156</sup> This designation has been physically lost from the manuscript, except for the right hand bracket.

No.5. My name is not Jack nor John Finny but  
Mr. Finny my name  
A man of great fame  
Do as much as you or any man again  
As I was going up a narrow straight crucked road  
I saw a pigstye tied to a Eldern Bush,  
I knocked at the Maid & out come the door:  
she asked me if I could drink a crust of bread & cheese  
and eat half a pint of ale.  
I said no thank you yes you please  
Jack gone to Ireland, Jim gone to France  
We'll all rise up & have a merry dance.

---

End.

[N.B. misspellings & corruptions as in the original]

## DISCUSSION

Manning's mumming manuscripts represent a microcosm of Oxfordshire folk drama, illustrating the variety of most Oxfordshire versions, as well as their commonalities. The Headington texts illustrate two different versions that paraphrase each other. This is a sensible strategy in places fielding two or more teams, since it increases the willingness of audiences to view multiple performances, and reduces the likelihood of conflict between teams. The Headington texts have only three lines in common, all relating to the Doctor's cures. While versions may be this distinct at a given instant, they can and do hybridize during transmission over time.

Most characters introduce themselves and/or are named in the dialogue. The first actor, however, is often not named in dialogue and may be recorded with no speech designation or with a generic name such as 'First Man', which may be collector's name rather than what the team called them. 'Molly' is the introducer several times in Manning, but she is only named in dialogue at Islip (1894).

'Father Christmas' is the main alternative presenter in this collection; named in dialogue. Nationally, he normally co-occurs with the 'Turkish Knight' in an area restricted to southern England. The Turk's opponent is 'King George' in this collection, although he is additionally called 'Saint George' at Headington/Marston. In an around Oxford the Turk's plays have 'Doctor Brown', which is interesting, because he is usually found in Scotland and Northern England. Oxford therefore seems to be a melting pot where different traditions came together.

Outside of Oxford, 'King George' fights a 'Duke' of uncertain title – 'Cumberland', 'Northcumberland', 'Thumberland' or 'Blunderland' – variation that suggests evolution over a long period. It is debateable if he can be identified with a historical personage. The Doctor's assistant has a similarly variable name – 'Jack Finney', 'Spinney', 'Pinny' or 'Penny' (or elsewhere 'Vinney'). He is restricted to the Cotswolds and surrounding area.

Of the concluding characters, 'Johnny Jack' is also known as 'Jolley Jack', 'Fat Jack', 'Little Jack', or 'Umply Jack' ('Humpty Jack' elsewhere). He occurs in southern England. Conversely, 'Beelzebub', variously spelled, is normally northern British. It may seem odd that Beelzebub is played as a woman in some Manning plays, but there are other instances. She is sometimes 'Betsy Beelzebub' in the north Midlands. One last final character with 'great head and little wit' is called 'Big Head' by scholars. He is usually not named in dialogue, but is uniquely called 'Almond Nick' at Headington/Marston.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

We probably have all the mumming material Manning collected. It would be good, however, to confirm whether or not the Bampton text published by Ditchfield came from Manning. It would be advantageous to locate Binney's papers, if they still exist. There are avenues that could be explored; for instance, there may be material at Oxford High School. They are not in the Archives of Exeter College or the Bodleian Libraries, and he did not leave instructions for them in his will.<sup>157</sup> Perhaps the photographs and slides Binney sent to Ordish may yet be found. They could have become displaced within the Folklore Society archives, some of which are held at the Museum of Cambridge.

---

<sup>157</sup> Will of Edward Herbert Binney, 1930.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to thank Mike Heaney for inviting me to contribute to this volume and for his help and encouragement. My thanks also go to the staffs of the Bodleian Libraries and Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, and to the Keeper of Archives, Exeter College who were ever helpful in fielding my queries. Andy Wagstaff and Simon Garbutt provided valuable advice on copying and digitally restoring the photographs.

## APPENDIX A – INVENTORY OF MANNING’S MUMMING MANUSCRIPTS

This appendix lists all the manuscripts in the ‘Mumming’ section of MS Top.Oxon., d.199, and mumming related items from MS Top.Oxon., d.191a and MS Top.Oxon., d.192.

**Folios**    **Description** **Acquisition Date**

### *MS Top. Oxon. d.191a – Oxfordshire folklore III*

155-157 Typescript of Manning’s fair copy of Mummers’ play from T.Walker, Great Milton. 31 May 1902

### *MS Top. Oxon. d.192 – Folk-lore Miscellanea*

10	Original letter from Binney to Manning mentioning a play at Wheatfield.	5 March 1902
86r	Carter’s original text fragment of Mummers’ play from C.Tanner, Bampton.	July 1894
86v	Carter’s original costume notes on Mummers’ play from Kirtlington.	July 1894
119	Carter’s original text of Mumming play from C.J.Reeves, Headington.	28 April 1898
120-123	Carter’s original text of Mummers’ play from Kirtlington	July 1894
210-211	Miles’ original song from Mumming [sic] play from Islip	Christmas 1894
251-252	Manning's original text of Mummers’ play from T.Walker, Great Milton.	31 May 1902
265-267	Manning's fair copy of text of Mummers’ play from T.Walker, Great Milton.	31 May 1902

### *MS Top. Oxon. d.199 – Folk-lore (Seasons)*

279	‘Mumming’ section divider	-
280	‘Shakespeare and Shakespeariana’ page from James Tregaskis book catalogue.	Unknown
281-283	Three copies of a mechanically duplicated handout on Mummers by Binney.	Undated
284-285	Original letter from Oscar Montelius to Manning re lack of Swedish mummers' plays.	12 March 1902
286-287	Original letter from Ordish to Manning asking for contributions.	5 March 1903
288	Original letter from Ordish to Manning acknowledging receipt of material.	10 March 1903
289-292	Clipping from 'The Times' of Mummers’/Mumming play from North Berkshire.	24 December 1904
293	Clipping from the 'Standard' on Lincolnshire 'Mumping' day [unrelated to mumming].	22 December 1906
294	Manning's notes and clipping from Dunkin's 'History of Bicester', 1816, pp. 270-271, on Mumping [unrelated to mumming].	Unknown



295-296	Original letter from Ordish to Manning acknowledging receipt of Preston 'Peace Egg' chapbook.	10 February 1906
297-298	Manning extract and notes from Harleian Manuscript no. 1197, fol. 203b, not before c.1600.	Unknown
299-300	Original covering letter for 1780 Islip play from Binney to Manning.	7 December 1911
301-306	Binney's copy of 'Old Nunkey' [M.H.Timberlake's] letter to Binney and copy of text of Mummings' play from Islip, 1780, owned by T.Johnson.	4 March 1902
307-309	Miles' original text of Mumering [sic] play from Islip.	Christmas 1894
310	[Omitted from foliation]	-
311-312	Carter's copy of informant's original text of Mummings' play from Old Marston, 1832.	1902
313-314	Informant's original text of Mumering [sic] performances from Marston.	c.1899
315-325	Copy of 'Mummings' section extracted from G.A.Rowell's 'Notes on Some Old-Fashioned English Customs...', 1886.	Unknown
326-327	Binney's copy of T.Partridge's original text of a Mummings play from Culham.	1901
328r	Binney's original notes of plays from C.Clutterbuck, [Long] Wittenham, Berkshire and Goring.	1901
328v	Binney's original notes of Mumming plays from Sutton [Courtenay] and text fragment from Tom Partridge, Culham.	1901
329-330	Binney's copy of text of Mummings' play from F.Lee, Headington.	2 July 1901
331-332	Informant's original text of Murmors [sic] play from St Aldate's, Oxford.	March 1903
333	Manning's provenance for the chapbook: 'The Seven Champions of Christendom'.	24 December 1905
334-339	Original chapbook: 'The Seven Champions of Christendom' from Otley, Yorkshire.	Undated
340	[Blank page]	-
341-345	Manning's fair copy of Carter's text of Mummings' play from Kirtlington.	July 1894
346	Clipping from the 'Oxford Times' of Mummings' play from Kirtlington.	July 1894
347-352	Typed carbon copy of the chapbook: 'Alexander and the King of Egypt' from Whitehaven, Cumberland.	Undated
353-356	Four photographs taken by or for Binney of play at Culham.	December 1901
357-360	Four photographs taken by or for Binney of Mummings [sic] play at Headington Quarry.	December 1901
361-365	Five photographs taken by or for Binney of Islip play.	December 1901

## APPENDIX B –CONCORDANCE OF MANNING’S MUMMING RECORDS

This appendix lists the mumming related material in the Manning manuscripts and items elsewhere that mention him. Different versions of the same record – e.g. field notes, fair copies, copies in Ordish, etc. – are brought together within each entry, giving the relevant reference, an indication of who wrote the manuscript, and its distinguishing features.

All Manning sources cite the relevant volume of MS Top.Oxon., in the Bodleian Libraries. Ordish items use the identifiers assigned by Smith at <http://www.folkplay.info/Ordish.htm>, plus corresponding URL’s for the *Full English Archive* (<http://vwml.org/search/search-full-english>). All web pages accessed 29 September 2016.

Entries are listed in order of date of initial collection, acquisition or publication, whichever is the earliest. There are cross references for items that were subsequently communicated or published significantly later than the original date.

The ‘cast’ sections list characters in order of appearance, unless otherwise stated. Combatants are indicated by ‘[c]’ and ‘[v]’, with ‘[v]’ denoting the vanquished fighter.

### 1894

#### B.1. Mummers’ play from Kirtlington. Text collected by T.J.Carter in July 1894.

*Cast:* Molly, Duke of Thumberland [c], King George [v], Doctor Good, Dr’s Horse, Jack Spinney/Mr. Finney, Behelzibub.

*Sources:*

- a Manning, d.192, fols. 120-123 – Carter’s original text.
- b. Manning, d.199, fol. 86v - Carter’s original costume notes.
- c. Manning, d.199, fols. 341-345 – Manning fair copy.
- d. P.Manning ‘The Mummers’, *Oxford Times* (24 December 1898) p. 9.
- e. Manning, d.199, fol. 346 – Clipping of newspaper article.
- f. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 19 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/19>)  
– Typed transcript of newspaper article.

*Remarks:* The text is undated, but the costume notes are on the *verso* of no. B.2 (a), and assumed to be of the same date. Manning’s annotation on Carter’s original reads ‘Play as performed about 1858’, whereas

Carter's own note says 'This was generally performed from 70 years ago' (i.e. c.1824).

**B.2. Mummers' play from Bampton.** Text fragment of collected by T.J.Carter from C.Tanner in July 1894

*Cast:* Belzebub.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.192, fol. 86r – Carter's original.  
b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 44 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/44>)  
– Manning's manuscript copy.

*Remarks:* Carter's original is not dated, but the date is given on Manning's copy. Manning added four lines for Behelzebub from Kirtlington to the beginning of the Bampton fragment in Ordish.

**B.3. Mumbering [sic] play from Islip.** Text and song written out for P.Manning by young Miles, Christmas 1894.

*Cast:* Molly/Sushannah, Duke of Northcumberland, King George, Doctor, Jack Spinney/Mr. Spinney, Belzebub, Fat Jack.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 307-309 – Miles' original text.  
b. Manning, d.192, fols. 210-211 – Miles' original song.  
c. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 17 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/17>)  
– Ordish copy of Miles' original text.  
d. P.H.Ditchfield, *Old English Customs Extant at the Present Time*, (London, 1896), pp. 316-320 – published text only plus *Dramatis Personae*.  
e. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 16 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/16>)  
– Manning fair copy, same as Ditchfield's text.  
f. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 15 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/15>)  
– Typed transcript of Manning's fair copy.  
g. A.Helm, *The English Mummers' Play*, Woodbridge, 1981, pp. 71-85  
– Stated to be a reproduction of Miles' original text, but also includes content that is only in Manning's fair copy and Ditchfield's book.

*Remarks:* Performed in Manning's presence, including the song, which comprises two verses of 'The Pretty Ploughing Boy' (Roud no. 186).

## 1896

- **Islip 1894 play published by P.H.Ditchfield, 1896.** *q.v.:* no. B.2 (d), 1894.

## 1898

**B.4. Mumming play from Headington.** Text collected by T.J.Carter from C.J.Reeves, 28 April 1898.

*Cast:* [Unnamed presenter], King George/St George, Turkey Snipe, Doctor Brown, Almond Nick, Jolley Jack.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.192, fol. 119 – Carter's original text.  
b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 25 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/25>) – Manning copy, including covering letter from Manning to Ordish (*q.v. no. B.22*).

*Remarks:* These texts are headed 'Oxford', but Reeves' address is Headington.

**B.5. Mummers' play text from Oxfordshire.** Article published 17 December 1898.

*Cast:* Molly/Mother, Bold Slasher, King George, Turkish Champion, Doctor, Beelzebub, Big Head.

*Sources:* a. "Ζωή" [Zoë], 'More about the Mummers', *Oxford Times*, (17 December 1898) p. 8a.  
b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 26 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/26>) – Clipping of newspaper article.  
c. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 27 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/27>) – Typed transcript of newspaper article.

*Remarks:* Manning cites this in his article on the Kirtlington play (*q.v. no. B.1 (d)*). Ordish's report to the FLS, 1911, says Manning sent him this article (*q.v. no. B.31*).

- **Kirtlington play published by P.Manning, 24 December 1898.** *q.v.:* no. B.1 (d), 1894.

## 1899

**B.6. Mumering [sic]/Mummers play from Old Marston.** Text collected by T.J.Carter from forgotten informant, c.1899.

*Cast:* [Unnamed presenter], King George/St George [c], Turkey Snipe [v], Doctor Brown, Almond Nick, Jony Jack/Jolley Jack.

- Sources:*
- Manning, d.199, fols. 313-314 – Informant's original text. Headed 'Mumering Performances'. Annotated by Manning 'Written by a Marston villager, c.1899. name forgotten. Through T.J.C. 1902'. Fol. 314v also annotated by Carter 'Black Jack / Marston'.
  - Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 22 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/22>) – Manning copy of informant's original text. Headed and annotated as source (a), plus 'Manning M.S.S'.
  - Manning, d.199, fols. 311-312 – Carter copy of informant's original. Headed 'Old Marston Mummers 1832 / Black Jack Haynes Forman'.

*Remarks:* The last character in versions (a) and (b) is named 'Jony Jack'; in version (c) 'Jolley Jack'. Haynes cannot have been the informant, because he died in 1884.

## 1901

**B.7. Mumming plays from Sutton [Courtenay] and Culham.** Notes and text fragment collected by E.H.Binney from Tom Partridge, 1901.

*Cast:* Old Grumpy Belzebub.

- Sources:*
- Manning, d.199, fol. 328v – Binney original notes.
  - Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 7 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/7>) – Manning copy of Binney original notes. Annotated 'Manning M.S.S'. Also includes: *Nos.B.8* and *B.9*.
  - Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 8 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/8>) – Typed copy of Binney original notes. Annotated by hand 'From E.H.Binney's MS.'. Also includes: *Nos.B.8* and *B.9*.

*Remarks:* Says that there was no longer a Culham team, but one from 'Sutton' visited the village. The fragment is for Old Grumpy Belzebub from Culham. Partridge promises to write down the full text – *q.v. no. B.8*.

**B.8. Mummers play from Culham.** Text written out for E.H.Binney by Tom Partridge, 1901.

*Cast:* 1st Man, 2nd Man/King George, 3rd Man/Bow Slash, Doctor, Jack Finney/John Finney/Mr. Finney, The Last, [Grumpy Belzy Bub].

*Sources:*

- a. Manning, d.199, fols. 326-327 – Binney copy of Partridge’s original text.
- b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 7 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/7>) – Manning copy of Binney copy of Partridge’s original text. Annotated ‘Manning M.S.S’. Also includes: *Nos.B.7* and *B.9*.
- c. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 8 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/8>) – Typed copy of Binney copy of Partridge’s original text. Annotated by hand ‘From E.H.Binney’s MS.’. Also includes: *Nos.7* and *B.9*.

*Remarks:* Grumpy Belzy Bub does not appear in this text, but is mentioned in an annotation citing no. B.7.

**B.9. Plays from [Long] Wittenham, Berkshire and Goring.** Notes collected by E.H.Binney from [Francis] Capper Clutterbuck, 1901.

*Cast:* King William, Jack Pinny/Doctor Pinny.

*Sources:*

- a. Manning, d.199, fol. 328r – Binney original notes.
- b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 7 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/7>) – Manning copy of Binney notes. Annotated ‘Manning M.S.S’. Also includes: *Nos.B.7* and *B.8*.
- c. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 8 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/8>) – Typed copy of Binney notes. Annotated by hand ‘From E.H.Binney’s MS.’. Also includes: *Nso.B.7* and *B.8*.

*Remarks:* The Ordish typescript and Roud give Clutterbuck’s forename as ‘Copper’.

**B.10. Mummers’ play from Headington.** Text written out for E.H.Binney by F.Lee, 2 July 1901.

*Cast:* Belsy Bob/George the Prussian King, Duke of Cumberland/King George [v], No. 3 [c], Doctor, Jack Finny/John Finny/Mr. Finny.

- Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 329-330 – Binney copy of Lee’s original text.  
b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 12 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/12>) – Typed copy of manuscript from Binney.
- Remarks:* Both copies give Lee’s address ‘Crown and Thistle, “Fitey’s”(?). Fitey’s is a misreading of Titup, a district within Headington Quarry.

**B.11. Pace Egging rhyme and play from Aughton, Lancashire.** Rhyme copied and covering letter to E.H.Binney from G.Le Pan Newstead, 19 December 1901.

*Cast:* Lord Nelson, British Tar, Lady so Gay, Tossport/Doctor, Beelzebub, Sir George [c].

- Sources:* a. Ordish, Lancashire, no. 13 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/14/13>) – Typed copy of the rhyme with manuscript insertion, and Ordish manuscript copy of the covering letter.  
b. Ordish, Lancashire, no. 14 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/14/14>) – Typed copy of the rhyme, and manuscript copy in unidentified hand of the covering letter. Annotated ‘Mr. Manning’s Collection’ and in another hand ‘Typed from M.S. in possession of Mr. E.H.Binney. Sept 27, 07’

*Remarks:* The play is described only in the covering letter. The rhyme was copied from: G. Coulthard Newstead *Gleanings towards the Annals of Aughton, near Ormskirk* (Liverpool, 1893) pp. 39-40.

**B.12. Play from Sutton Courtenay visiting Culham.** Photographs taken by or for E.H.Binney, December 1901.

*Cast:* Father Christmas, King George [v], Doctor, Bold French Officer [c], Jack Finney, Beelzebub.

- Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 353-356 – Four photographs with Binney captions on the reverse.

*Remarks:* The order of appearance of the cast is not given.

**B.13. Mumers [sic] Play from Headington Quarry.** Photographs taken by or for E.H.Binney, December 1901.

*Cast:* King George [v], Turkish Knight.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 357-360 – Four photographs with Binney captions on the reverse.

*Remarks:* Only two of the five characters are named in the captions. Fol. 357 is captioned 'Headington Mumers 1902' in an unidentified hand. The others say 'Headington Quarry (Dec.1901)...' in Binney's hand. They all appear to have been taken at the same time.

**B.14. Play from Islip.** Photographs taken by or for E.H.Binney, December 1901.

*Cast:* D. of Cumberland, King George, Molly, Beelzebub, Johnny Jack, Doctor/Jack Finney.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 361-365 – Five photographs with Binney captions on the reverse.

*Remarks:* The order of appearance of the cast is not given.

## 1902

- **Mumering [sic]/Mummers play from Old Marston acquired by P.Manning from T.J.Carter, 1902.** *q.v.: no. B.6, 1899.*

**B.15. Play from Aberdare, Glamorganshire.** Text and letter to E.H.Binney from George Thomas, dated 1 January 1902.

*Cast:* Master of Ceremonies, King George [c], Jack Ding-a-Ling [c], Doctor, Beelzebub.

*Sources:* a. Ordish, Wales, no. 21 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/33/21>) – Typed copy of Manning copy of Thomas original, and Ordish manuscript extract from Thomas's letter. Annotated 'Mr. Manning's Collection' and 'Typed from a copy in possession of Mr. E.H.Binney – Sept 27 07'.  
b. Ordish, Wales, no. 22 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/33/22>) – Ordish copy of Binney's Thomas original.



**B.16. Report of lecture by E.H.Binney to the University Antiquarian Society.** Lecture presented 20 February 1902.

- Sources:*
- a. 'Oxford University Antiquarian Society', *Oxford Magazine* 20.14 (26 February 1902): 246-247 – brief report.
  - b. 'University Antiquarian Society: Oxfordshire Mummers', *Oxford Times* (1 March 1902) no. 2150, p. 3g.
  - c. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 29 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/29>) – Clipping of *Oxford Times* article.
  - d. 'Oxfordshire Mummers', *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (1 March 1902) no. 7772, p. 8c.

*Remarks:* The two articles b & d are identical, except for the headlines. The lecture was illustrated by lantern-slides of performers at Culham, Headington Quarry, and Islip.

**B.17. Mummers' play from Islip, 1780.** Text and letter to E.H.Binney from 'Old Nunkey' [Martin Henry Timberlake], dated 4 March 1902.

*Cast:* Anna Domino, Royal Duke of Blunderland [c], Earl Percy/King Percy [c], Herald, Doctor Quack/Doctor Spinney, Nag, Salt Peter, Fat Jack, Pedlar Chap, Father Christmas.

- Sources:*
- a. Manning, d.199, fols. 301-306 – Binney copy of Timberlake's copy of manuscript owned by Thomas Johnson.
  - b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 14 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/14>) – Typed copy of Timberlake copy of Johnson original text, and Ordish manuscript extract from Timberlake's letter.

*Remarks:* The text was copied by Timberlake from a manuscript dated 1780 by Thomas Johnson of Islip. Timberlake was a mummer about 1852. Covering letters show that Binney sent this play to Ordish on 28 May 1902 (*q.v. no. B.27*), and to Manning on 7 December 1911 (*q.v. no. B.32*).

**B.18. Play at Wheatfield.** Letter from E.H.Binney to P.Manning, dated 5 March 1902.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.192, fol. 10 – Binney original letter.

*Remarks:* 'One A.J. Spencer of Wheatfield, near Tetsworth, seeing the report of my paper, writes sending an account of a play...' The whereabouts of this account and its details are not known.

**B.19. Letter from Oscar Montelius to P.Manning dated 12 March 1902.**

*Sources:* a. Manning, MS Top.Oxon.,d.199, fols. 284-285 – Montelius original letter.

*Remarks:* Letter responding to a number of antiquarian queries from Manning, and saying that he knew of no Christmas mummers' plays in Sweden.

**B.20. Letter from E.H.Binney to T.F.Ordish dated 28 May 1902.**

*Sources:* a. Ordish, section E, Part I, no. 19, 1902-05-28  
(<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/3/6>) – Binney original letter.

*Remarks:* Letter enclosing seven texts, a distribution map, and photographs, and offering to send a list of published references. The map and photographs are missing.

## 1903

**B.21. Letter from T.F.Ordish to P.Manning dated 5 March 1903.**

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 286-287 – Ordish original letter.

*Remarks:* Letter asking Manning to contribute to the FLS book on British folk drama.

**B.22. Letter from P.Manning to T.F.Ordish dated 7 March 1903.**

*Sources:* a. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 25 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/25>)  
– Manning original letter.

*Remarks:* Letter in which Manning is modest about his collection of Oxfordshire mumming plays and recommends E.H.Binney. Encloses a manuscript for copying and return. In Ordish, this letter goes with the Reeves Headington text (*q.v. no. B.4*).

**B.23. Letter from T.F.Ordish to P.Manning dated 10 March 1903.**

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fol. 288 – Ordish original letter.

*Remarks:* Acknowledging receipt of material sent by Manning, and mentioning other manuscripts sent by Binney.

**B.24. Murmors [sic] play from St Aldate's, Oxford.** Text written out for P.Manning by unnamed informant, March 1903.

*Cast:* Father Christmas, King George [v], Turkish Night [c], Doctor Brown, Umpty Jack.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 331-332 – Informant's original text.  
b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 24 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/24>) – Manning copy of informant's original text. For covering letter, *q.v. no. B.25.*

*Remarks:* The copy in Ordish names the last character 'Umpty Jack'. An unrelated note and a list of the actors' names is appended to the informant's original, but are omitted from the Ordish copy.

**B.25. Letter from P.Manning to T.F.Ordish dated 21 March 1903.**

*Sources:* a. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 23 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/21/24>) – Manning original letter.

*Remarks:* Covering letter for the St Aldate's, Oxford text (*q.v. no. B.24*).

**1904**

**B.26. Mummers' play from Great Milton.** Text collected by P.Manning from Thomas Walker on 31 May 1904.

*Cast:* [Molly], Duke of Cumberland [c], Doctor, Jack Winney.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.192, fols. 251-252 – Manning's original field notes of text.  
b. Manning, d.192, fols. 265-267 – Manning's fair copy of text.  
c. Manning, d.191a, fols. 155-157 – Typescript of Manning's fair copy of text.

*Remarks:* The introducer is not named in Manning's original field notes, but named Molly in the fair copies.

**B.27. Mummers'/Mumming play from North Berkshire.** Article published in *The Times*, 24 December 1904.

**Cast:** Father Christmas, Room, St George/Sir George [v], Knight from Furrin Parts [c], Doctor, [foreign quack], Maid Merrian.

**Sources:** a. 'The Mummers in North Berks', *The Times* (24 December 1904), p. 6.  
b. Manning, d.199, fols. 289-292 – Clipping of newspaper article.  
c. Ordish, Berkshire, no. 11 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/1/11>) – Manning extracts. Annotated 'Manning M.S.S'.

**Remarks:** The article includes a description the performance of a play. The extracts in Ordish omit a long preamble, information about rewards and oral transmission, and a discourse on origins.

## 1905

**B.28. Chapbook: 'The Seven Champions of Christendom'.** Acquired by P.Manning 24 December 1905

**Cast:** Hans Lighthouse, Guillaume/King of Germany, Rosalind, St Patrick, St James, St Denis, St Thulis, St Wanski, St Pifetro, St George.

**Sources:** a. William Walker & Sons, *Walker's Series of Juvenile Plays for Christmas and Easter Tide: The Seven Champions of Christendom* (London & Otley, [1860s or 1870s])  
b. Manning, d.199, fols. 334-339 – Original chapbook with blue paper cover.  
c. Manning, d.199, fol. 333 – Manning's provenance for the chapbook.  
d. Ordish, section F, no. 20 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/2/6/20>) – Manning copy. Annotated 'Manning M.S.S'.

*Remarks:* The chapbook is undated, but E.Cass, M.J.Preston & P.Smith (Personal communication) have placed it in the 1860s or 1870s. This copy was given to Manning by a performer at Adel, Leeds, Christmas Day, c.1905.

## 1906

### B.29. Letter from T.F.Ordish to P.Manning, dated 10 February 1906.

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 295-296 – Ordish original letter.

*Remarks:* Acknowledging receipt of a Preston *Peace Egg* chapbook, and apologising for the delay in preparing his book on folk drama.

### B.30. Postcard from P.Manning to T.F.Ordish, dated 12 February 1906.

*Sources:* a. Ordish, section E, Part 1, no. 15, 1906-02-12  
(<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/3/1/32>) – Manning original postcard.

*Remarks:* Thanking Ordish for his letter, and giving a reference to a query about a Cornish Christmas play: Ygrec [Thurston Peter] 'Jenkyn, Little John, &c.' *Notes and Queries, Series 10*, 5 (10 February 1906), p. 109.

## 1907

- Pace Egging rhyme and play from Aughton, Lancashire. Manning copy typed from copy in possession of E.H.Binney 27 September 1907. *q.v.*: no. B.11 (b), 1901.
- Play from Aberdare, Glamorganshire. Manning copy typed from copy in possession of E.H.Binney 27 September 1907. *q.v.*: no. B.15 (a), 1902.

## 1911

### B.31. Progress report from T.F.Ordish to the Folk-Lore Society Council, dated 18 January 1911.

*Sources:* a. Ordish, section D, no. 4 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/2/4/40>) – Original unpublished typed report: T.Fairman Ordish 'Report on Mumming Plays and other Vestiges of Folk Drama', dated 18 January 1911.

*Remarks:* The report lists material received for his planned book by contributor, including Manning and Binney.

**B.32. Covering letter for 1780 Islip play from E.H.Binney to P.Manning, dated 7 December 1911.**

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 299-300 – Binney original letter.

*Remarks:* Covering letter for 1780 Islip play text (*q.v. no. B.17*), and commenting on its similarity with the Manning's 1894 version.

***Undated***

**B.33. Handout on Mummers written by E.H.Binney, undated.**

*Cast:* St George/King George, Turkish Knight, Doctor, Father Christmas, Beelzebub, [Man dressed as a woman].

*Sources:* a. Manning, d.199, fols. 281-283 – 3 copies of Binney's mechanically duplicated handout.

*Remarks:* This handout is a request for information. The author is not identified, but is written in Binney's hand. the 'cast' lists example characters in the order they are mentioned in the handout.

***Unknown Acquisition Date***

**B.34. Challenge and response speeches from Harleian Manuscript, not earlier than c.1600. Date of acquisition by P.Manning unknown.**

*Cast:* Knighte [c], [Opponent] [c].

*Sources:* a. [Untitled], BL, Harleian MS, no. 1197, fol. 203b.  
b. Manning, d.199, fols. 297-298 – Manning copy with notes.  
c. Ordish, section F, no. 12 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/2/6/12>) – Manning copy. Annotated 'Manning M.S.S'.

*Remarks:* Gives a pair of challenge and response couplets that do not appear in modern mummers' plays, except for the phrase 'here I stand with sword in hand'.

**B.35. Chapbook: 'Alexander and the King of Egypt' from Whitehaven, Cumberland.** Date of acquisition by P.Manning unknown.

*Cast:* Alexander [c], King of Egypt [v2], Prince George/Slasher [v1], Sambo, Doctor.

*Sources:* a. T.Wilson, *Alexander and the King of Egypt: A Mock Play, as it is Acted by the Mummers every Christmas* (Whitehaven, [c.1810-1847])  
b. Manning, d.199, fols. 347-352 – Typed blue carbon copy transcript of the chapbook on flimsy paper.  
c. Ordish, Cumberland, no. 4 (<http://vwml.org/record/TFO/1/5/4>) – Manning copy. Annotated 'Manning M.S.S'.

*Remarks:* The chapbook is undated, but has been placed as c.1810-1847 in: M.J.Preston, M.G.Smith & P.S.Smith 'Chapbooks and Traditional Drama: An Examination of Chapbooks containing Traditional Play Texts: Part I: Alexander and the King of Egypt Chapbooks', *CECTAL Bibliographical and Special Series*, 1977, no. 2.

**B.36. Mummers' play text from Thame, 1853.** Date of acquisition by P.Manning unknown.

*Cast:* King Alfred, King Alfred's Queen, King William, Old King Cole, Giant Blunderbore, Little Jack, St George, Dragon, Doctor Ball, Father Christmas.

*Sources:* a. F.G.Lee, 'Oxfordshire Christmas Miracle Play', *Notes and Queries, Series 5*, 2 (1874), pp. 503-505.  
b. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 40 – Copy of the article.  
c. Ordish, Oxfordshire, no. 41 – Copy of the article.

*Remarks:* Ordish's report to the FLS, 1911, states that Manning sent him a transcript of this article (*q.v. no. B.31*).

**B.37. 'Mummers' extract from G.A.Rowell's 'Notes on Some Old-Fashioned English Customs...', 1886.** Date of acquisition by P.Manning unknown.

*Cast:* Father Christmas, King George, Turkish Knight, Doctor Brown, Jack Finny/Mr. Finny, Tom the Tinker, [I, who hant-bin-it], Beelzebub.

- Sources:*
- a. G.A.Rowell, 'Notes on Some Old-Fashioned English Customs: The Mummers; The Morris - Dancers;Whitsun-Ales; Lamb-Ales', *Folk-Lore Journal*, 4, no. 2 (1886), pp. 97-109.
  - b. Manning, d.199, fols. 315-325 – Copy of the section 1- 'Mummers'.
- Remarks:* Rowell does not say where this play came from, although all the customs are from Oxfordshire. Roud, and Cawte and colleagues in *English Ritual Drama* both list it as Unlocated, Oxfordshire. Keith Chandler thinks it may be from Oxford (<http://www.folkplay.info/Texts/81sp51rg.htm>).