

The Plough Play in Lincolnshire¹

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1. Introduction

Plough Monday, the first Monday after Twelfth Night, is an ancient festival; one that has been celebrated in Lincolnshire and neighbouring counties for over 400 years. Churchwardens' accounts from the early sixteenth century record payments made for the maintenance of the plough light, a votive candle, in such places as Beltoft, Fosdyke, Wainfleet and Whaplode.² The groups responsible for making these payments were the plough guilds, the rural equivalent of the urban trade guilds, such as the grocers', the shearmen's, and the tailors', which also had strong connections with the church. These links were broken during the Reformation years of Henry VIII's reign, but the celebration of Plough Monday, when funds were probably collected for the guild, still continued. Instead of maintaining plough lights, the money collected by the "plow maisters" at Waddington, south of Lincoln, was used by the church for incidental expenses.³ However, such payments appear to have eventually died out, and the ploughmen's collections were used simply to assist in the annual celebration.

There is very little evidence of links between plough guilds, their lights and the examples of folk drama, found in Lincolnshire and neighbouring counties, which have become generally known as "plough plays". The Lincolnshire Archives Office has a document from Donington,⁴ dating between the years 1563-1565, which appears to list a number of actors and their respective parts, including a Sawdone, Duke, steward, knights, heralds, and messengers, together with a character called Holofernes. Maurice Barley, who, like Mrs Ethel Rudkin, deserves much credit for work on the plough play, did at one time suggest that this might be an early example, but later accepted that it was more probably a mystery play, in the manner of those performed at Chester, Wakefield and Townely.⁵ The presence of the character Holofernes certainly supports this hypothesis, since he is found in the apocryphal biblical book of Judith.⁶ He is described as the commander of Nebuchadnezzar's Assyrian army besieging the Israelite city of Bethulia. He meets a violent end when his head is chopped off by Judith after she has spent a night feasting with him. What the Donington reference does tell us is that it is very probable that dramatic performances by local people did exist at that early date.

It is only in the eighteenth century that more substantial evidence for the existence of the plough play is found. Household accounts from the period record visits by groups of ploughmen to important local landowners' houses, for example the Monson family of Burton by Lincoln. In January 1783 and 1784, groups came from Saxilby, South Carlton, Burton, and Nettleham and were each rewarded with two shillings and sixpence.⁷ During this period payments were also recorded to groups using the title "plough bullocks", who visited the south Yorkshire home of Lord Rockingham at Wentworth Woodhouse, near Rotherham. There the local village group received the princely sum of one guinea on December 31st, 1771.⁸

Certainly the most famous visit in Lincolnshire amongst folklorists took place in this period, when John, Richard and Henry Johnson, together with John Tomlinson, Chas Hodgson, Thos. Harness and John Fisher, “the Morrice Dancers or Plow boys, acted their merry dancing” at Revesby Abbey on October 20th, 1779.⁹ This was the home of Sir Joseph Banks, the naturalist, who sailed with Captain James Cook to Australia, and October 20th was the date of the annual fair. Whoever decided to write down the text of the performance left us with a puzzle that has fascinated and frustrated folklorists for many years.

Whilst the play obviously includes elements that can be recognised in plough plays of the subsequent century, as well as a sword dance complete with its “lock”, it is still unlike any other recorded folk play. C. R. Baskervill was one of the first to note the presence in the Revesby text, of “borrowings” from the professional theatre, for example from an early sixteenth century play called “the Enterlude of Youth”.¹⁰ There are several references to Christmas in the play which suggest that the October performance was a “one-off” for the Revesby event, but how far this group’s performance reflects the contemporary folk tradition is very much open to question.

It is also debatable whether the other recorded visits by plough bullocks, ploughboys or ploughjags included the performance of any play at all. During the fieldwork for my thesis on seasonal house-visiting customs in south Yorkshire, I found several examples of visits by plough-bullocks, which involved only the dragging round of a plough, together with a request for financial and other rewards, and the threat of retribution to any who turned them away empty-handed.¹¹ One could argue that this simple form of the plough custom could be its original form, to which some groups added a play in order to enhance their visit. This type of plough custom has been recorded in Denmark,¹² a country which has close links with this part of England, as well as in Germany.¹³ The paucity of references to plough plays, or indeed any mummers’ play before the nineteenth century is often explained by a lack of scholarly attention to popular culture at that time. I would argue that it is also possible that such plays were not as widely performed before then.

This, however, is not the popular view amongst English folklorists who have studied the play. Rather than take note of the Danish or German evidence, or examine the play in terms of its contemporary relevance to the society that supported it, some have turned instead to performances in Greece and Romania.¹⁴ These were discovered to include combats, revivals by comic doctors, a woman with a baby etc., and provided an opportunity for drawing parallels with plough plays. However, there are important differences as well, that lead me to believe that our Lincolnshire play is not a vestigial fragment of a half-forgotten fertility ceremony, but a fine example of folk drama as entertainment. One major difference lies in the organisation of the two traditions. The Balkan ceremony does not include house-visiting in the way that the Lincolnshire plays do. It takes place in various phases during the day, rather than repeating a set performance. It also includes the miming of copulation between two characters, something that would be unthinkable to a group of Lincolnshire farm workers in a neighbouring farmer’s kitchen. My research, which has included many hours interviewing people involved in seasonal house-visiting in south Yorkshire, together with my limited but significant collecting work in Lincolnshire, has strengthened my conviction that

plough plays and related customs are not, and probably never were, magico-religious rites as has often been claimed. They had perfectly valid contemporary reasons for existing that had nothing to do with fertility, death and resurrection, and the like.

W.R. Bascom defined the four functions of folklore as follows:

1. AMUSEMENT (escapism, fantasy, catharsis etc)
2. VALIDATING CULTURE (justification, affirmation)
3. EDUCATION (cultural transmission)
4. MAINTAINING CONFORMITY (anti-deviation, social deprivation)¹⁵

I believe that it is from amongst these that we shall find the true meaning and purpose behind the plough play. By examining firstly the organisation of the teams, the various characteristics of the performance, and finally the attitudes and opinions of the performers and their audiences, I hope to offer a different view of the plough play – aspects that I feel merit much more attention than they have received in the past.

2. Preparation and organisation

In my study of seasonal house-visiting customs in south Yorkshire, I adapted the classification of mumming activities published by Herbert Halpert in *Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland*,¹⁶ a work which set new standards in its approach to the study of traditional customs. I classified visits as either “simple” or “complex”, depending on the level of organisation required, the preparation and rehearsal, the costume and props, the number of performances per outing, and so on. Thus a single child offering to let Christmas or New Year into your house would be a simple visit, and the arrival of a mummers’ play, or the morris dancers (as many play-teams were known) would be a complex visit. The plough play obviously fits into this latter category. It is unfortunate that more details were not collected in the past about the background to the performances, but such as there are provide a clear picture of how the performances were organised.

a. Recruitment

We know from the title of one of the texts presented by Baskervill – the Bassingham Children’s Play,¹⁷ that children’s performances existed as long ago as 1823, but no details are available as to how young the children were. Later evidence suggests that, in Lincolnshire, such performances were unusual, although the writer of the Wellingore entry in the *South Cliff Magazine* for January 1893 had experience of them:

“If any of us take an interest in cherishing even the last traces of this historic mumming, they should refuse to countenance the ignorant pretensions of small boys, who, even before Christmas take upon themselves to act the ploughmen’s part. Whereas, a visit by young or old, who on or about the right date come prepared to amuse with an honest attempt at the traditional performance, would certainly deserve a favourable reception.”¹⁸

Mabel Peacock, author of several works on Lincolnshire folklore,¹⁹ also came across some junior performers, who had problems with the adult costumes:

“When a portion of the play was acted by very young lads a few years ago, the ‘Doctor’, who then found his patient’s pulse in his shin, wore a top hat that was much too large. This imposing headgear lent him an appearance that was all that could be desired when it was held up by his ears, but at certain disastrous moments these supports would fail, and sudden eclipse would overtake the actor.”²⁰

However, the plough play was more normally the prerogative of the ploughmen, or boys who had started work. Mrs Rudkin refers to “ploughmen” at Bassingham; Fred Jacklin, from whom the Barleys collected the Branston text, joined the team at the age of about nineteen,²¹ Walter Brackenbury, from whom I recorded details about the Kirmington play,²² joined at about the age of thirteen, in the year after he had left school.²³

The age of the performers is interesting in that, as an adolescent or young adult, performance in the plough play can be viewed as a “rite of passage” – not a ceremony as such, but part of the transition process in the community from child to adult; the change from being the child in fear of the hobby horse to being its operator.

b. Rehearsal

We know, from Branston again, that the plough play was rehearsed there, in the stables at Jubilee House, from early December.²⁴ From Walter Brackenbury I learnt that the team he joined rehearsed at the Fool’s house. Frank Vessey, who took that part, was described as being relatively “well-off”, so apart from organising the team, he was able to provide the space needed for rehearsal.²⁵ Hero-combat play performers whom I recorded in south Yorkshire rehearsed in such salubrious surroundings as a pigsty and a chicken shed.²⁶ It is very probable that farm-servants living-in on Lincolnshire farms found space in barns and lofts for their rehearsals. It is a significant feature of the play, for its development, decline or survival, that the performance would require rehearsal.

c. Territory

It was a feature of the large, most complex visits that I recorded in south Yorkshire, that the distance travelled would not normally be limited to a single community. Some teams performing the “Old Tup” and the “Old Horse” travelled for many miles on foot to reach houses that would provide a suitable venue, and adequate rewards for their efforts. The same pattern of behaviour seems to be evident in the Lincolnshire plough play. Walter Brackenbury’s team covered the villages of Kirmington and Croxton, together with the farms in the surrounding area, up to about two miles away. They also included the more distant Little Limber Grange: “... because they were what we called Kirmington people. They was Kirmington Church people.”²⁷ The team from Willoughton, near Gainsborough, had an even more extensive territory: “They went as far afield as eight miles, and spent the whole night on the job, never ceasing until time for work in the morning.”²⁸ This could have taken them as

far as Scotter, Kirton Lindsey or Gainsborough, for example. One point to note here is that the teams themselves would be unlikely to associate themselves with any particular village or farm, partly in order to preserve some level of anonymity in case of trouble. It is only folklorists and modern revivalists who have tended to link different versions with particular villages.

d. Costumes and props

According to Margaret Dean-Smith and the many others who have supported survivalist ideas (believing that today's customs and beliefs are best viewed as vestigial remnants of a former culture), "Dressing in character for the play is regarded by the folklorist as degenerate."²⁹ The original performers of plough plays, in this view, would have worn disguises that did not denote their roles. However, there is no evidence that I have discovered that indicates that plough jags and their equivalents in the area wore anything except costume "in character".

Full costume details are not available for many of our Lincolnshire versions. Notable exceptions include the one from North and South Kelsey, printed in *The Village* magazine,³⁰ and the Kirmington details given to me by Walter Brackenbury. Photographic evidence, such as it is, confirms the pattern. My personal opinion is that performers in plough plays have always been dressed in character, with the Lady, the Fool, the Doctor, and the Recruiting Sergeant dressed for their parts. This seems only commonsense and it takes us yet further away from ceremonial and ritual origins.

Similarly, the props and equipment carried would be appropriate to the character: the Recruiting Sergeant with a sword, the Doctor with a stick, a bag and a bottle of cold tea and so on, according to what was available. Teams did not always drag a plough with them. Those from Willoughton, Kelsey, and Bassingham did so and the team from Branston did so at some time prior to 1895. The plough, when it was taken round, was without wheels, in order to be ready for use in retribution if the team were turned away. It seems to have been a logical development to abandon the plough, since it must have been a considerable encumbrance to a team trying to get round their territory.

e) Time of visits

Despite the strong association with Plough Monday, it is evident that many of the teams, having learnt and rehearsed their performance, did not restrict themselves to a single night's house-visiting. Performances at Branston started a fortnight before Christmas and went on until Plough Monday. The Bassingham team, whose play was written down by Dr. O. Johnson in 1934, performed on Plough Monday in their own village and in others on subsequent nights.³¹ The Kirmington group started a week or ten days before Christmas, and did not perform at all on Plough Monday. Most of the available evidence suggests that the visits were limited to the night-time, but the existence of team photographs, apparently taken in daylight, and newspaper reports of daytime revelries in various towns on Plough Monday suggest some daytime activity as well. Night-time would obviously be more suitable for house-visiting, since the householder and his family would then have the time available to watch the performance.

Complex visit teams in south Yorkshire would often make special visits, on request, to more important houses. The same is true in Lincolnshire. The Branston team had special nights for large houses. Several teams from the area north of Scunthorpe were invited to Normanby Hall each year, where the owner, Sir Robert Sheffield, staged tug-of-war contests over a bonfire followed by a free supper.³² In the same way, Earl Fitzwilliam at Wentworth Woodhouse near Rotherham received and rewarded the Old Horse and the Hero-Combat Mummers' play.³³ Such special visits were sometimes made at different times of year, if requested. This provides a parallel for the "morrice dancers'" October visit at Revesby Abbey.

Summary

I hope to have shown that the plough play required a great deal of preparation and organisation. This made it perhaps more vulnerable to changes within the community than more simple visits, as was also the case in south Yorkshire.

3. Performance

There is no one example of the Lincolnshire plough play that can be regarded as typical. There is a wide degree of variation in dialogue, characters and action. I have attempted to analyse nearly thirty examples where either the complete text or a full list of characters has been noted down. About thirty different characters can be identified, including such diverse figures as Devil Doubt, Bold Black, Music Jack, Hopper Joe and various assorted Ribboners, not to mention Pickle Herring and Blue Breeches. Only five characters are found in nearly all versions: the Fool, Recruiting Sergeant, Lady, Doctor, and Dame Jane. Two further characters turn up under a variety of titles. Firstly, the character who decides to enlist when the lady refuses him; he is the Farmer's Man, Ribboner or, in some cases, the Soldier. Secondly, the other character who often appears is the second combatant, who fights the Recruiting Sergeant (or Dame Jane, who is more of a victim than a combatant). He is most commonly Beelzebub, but sometimes the Indian King, Hopper Joe, or Eezum Squeezum. These seven basic character types provide the structure of most plays. The interaction between them usually involves: the rejection of a wooer, the Farmer's Man; the acceptance of another, the Fool; a combat or death involving the Recruiting Sergeant or Dame Jane and Beelzebub, followed by a cure or revival by the Doctor.

It is not my intention to make a more detailed analysis of all the textual elements of the play, which is not the focus of this study. There are, however, a number of further points to make about the performance of the play and its function in the community.

a. Performance area

It has been suggested by at least one folklorist, that an essential feature of a mumming play which distinguishes it from other customs, is performance with the characters standing in a ring. One of the Balkan ceremonies is performed in this way and this is held to be of magical significance.³⁴ The Kirmington team did not perform in this way. They stayed outside the room until called in, when they stood in a line, moving only when the Indian King is killed,

and then again when he is revived. Unfortunately, there is no further evidence as to how the characters were deployed in Lincolnshire.

b. Dramatic action/text

Another view of mummers' plays, including the plough play, which has gained scholarly recognition, is that the actual text is of much less significance than the actions of the performers. It is regarded as: "... immaterial, a mere local clothing of a prescribed action, as a liturgy clothes an act of worship."³⁵ In other words, according to this hypothesis, it is only the action that really matters. Yet in the plough play, the action is far from consistent between versions. It is true that the Fool nearly always gets the girl (not at Branston, for example), but the combat or death shows no consistency, as already noted. Here again the plough play does not fit the ceremonial mould into which some scholars have tried to put it.

c. Song-drama

It is unfortunate that so few examples of the tunes used in the plays have been recorded. Maurice Barley includes three tunes in his 1953 article in the *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*.³⁶ According to Walter Brackenbury, the Kirmington play had five sung sections.³⁷ Photographs of other teams show melodeon players and drummers amongst them. The overall impression is that of a lively and musical performance.

d. Transmission

I have found very little evidence as to how and from where the teams learnt their words. Many mummers' plays performed outside the East Midlands were derived from chapbooks that were published by local printers in such places as Leeds, Manchester, and Otley.³⁸ No chapbook of the plough play text has, to my knowledge, been discovered, which suggests that it was passed on through oral tradition, or by handwritten manuscripts. Some of the plough play speeches are reminiscent of the chapbook texts, notably the vaunting, pre-combat speeches, but most of the plough play words are not found elsewhere. It is worth pointing out that some very good nonsense language appears in the Doctor's speech and the Fool's wedding invitation, reflecting a rich vein of folk humour.

4. Attitudes

It is not often that most of us are asked to explain or justify our activities. We do not spend a lot of time trying to rationalise the world we live in. Most people are fully occupied with the day-to-day business of life, and if this is true today, how much more so must it have been in the days when the work hours were longer, the technology much simpler and families much larger. I do not believe that ploughmen said to themselves, "We musn't forget the fertility rite this year." They had far more mundane matters to occupy them. Why then did they perform the plough play, and just as important, why did the community give its support?

a. Performers

Walter Brackenbury was quite clear in his own mind why he went plough-jagging:

“Fun more than anything, entertainment. I don’t think for one minute that the money you got was the compelling factor for going round, even though we was all poor.”³⁹

He was one of nine children and his father died when Walter was only three years old, leaving his mother to bring up the family alone. “Naturally,” Walter added, “we was pleased to get a shilling or two.”

Money was obviously a strong motivational factor, especially for the farm servant or single labourer, who often received only an annual payment for his efforts, apart from board and lodgings. The first team to reach Sir Robert Sheffield’s home at Normanby Hall received ten shillings;⁴⁰ the Branston team collected up to seven pounds in an evening.⁴¹

Further extrinsic motivation was the food and drink offered to the performers; mince pies, home-made wine, plum bread and cheese, beer and pork pies were likely to be very welcome to men and boys who generally survived on plainer fare. The Branston team relied on the abstainers in their number to see the team safely home on some nights.⁴²

Less obvious are the elements that went together to form what Walter called “fun”. There was intrinsic pleasure in dressing up in costume, in concealing identities and in presenting a performance – acting, dancing and singing. There was also pleasure in the temporary suspension of the normal rules of behaviour. The ploughmen could threaten to plough up people’s lawns and doorsteps if they did not welcome them. They sometimes carried staves to defend themselves, and generally behaved in ways not normally expected of or accepted from them. This “licensed misbehaviour” provided a welcome change which many took advantage of. Not that their activities were universally welcomed, as extracts from local newspapers confirm:

“A party of ploughmen, decorated with a profusion of ribbons made an incursion into Lincoln on Monday last (Plough Monday) and attempted to levy contributions on the citizens in return for the exhibition of their antics. It is time this remnant of old English customs was abolished altogether, as the money begged by the ‘ploughboys’ is spent on drunkenness.”⁴³

“Monday being Plough Monday the usual gangs of ‘Plough Jacks’ went through their uncouth performances in the streets, which are now of such a nature as to hardly gratify the most rigid stickler for adherence to old customs.” (Barton)⁴⁴

Similar comments were made about Plough Monday visitors in Stamford, Louth, Spilsby, Grantham, and Sleaford.

b. Audience

The role of the audience is crucial to the successful existence of a complex house-visiting team. Without the positive support of the community in general, and the “big houses” in particular, teams would find it hard to survive. Why then were the plough jags welcomed? Perhaps, as Walter Brackenbury said: “They took it for granted, see. Christmas was Christmas and Christmas was ploughjags.”⁴⁵

If the visit was an accepted feature of the annual celebrations, then it would be welcomed as such. It would also be a popular entertainment in the days before the mass media started to attract the attention of large sections of the population at Christmas. Another, less obvious, factor was the pleasure of giving hospitality and dispensing rewards. This acted as an affirmation of status, what George Foster, the American anthropologist, calls a “dyadic contract”⁴⁶ – when one person bestows a favour upon another person and the offer is accepted. A link between the participants is then created, or, if it already exists, it is reaffirmed. The owner of the “big house” reaffirmed, through his generosity, his position of superiority, whilst the performers, in accepting, accepted their place in the social structure. It would be most unlikely in this situation that the ploughjags would exercise their “licence” to misbehave, although being welcomed into the “big house” was itself a reversal of normal behaviour.

5. Conclusion: The Rise and Fall of the Plough Play

I hope to have explained my ideas about the reasons for the existence of the plough play. There are other factors which may well have influenced the vitality of the tradition. The Enclosure Acts, for example, put the land into the hands of a few wealthy landowners who could at least afford to be generous to their workforce at Christmas, if not for the rest of the year. The hiring-fair system of employment often resulted in groups of young men living together at their place of work – ideally situated as a peer group to learn and practise a performance. The arable farming, with its dependence on horse-power, was relatively labour intensive, in comparison with the Marsh and Fen areas where the play was rarely recorded. There were more waggons and ploughmen to be performers in the arable areas. The shortage of farm cottages discouraged farmworkers from early marriage, after which few men continued to be ploughjags. I believe that the plough play reached its heyday in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The evidence for performance is scanty prior to 1860, but much more plentiful in the years that followed.

Why then did the play not survive? A few performances were recorded in the 1920s and 1930s, but the majority of teams did not survive the First World War. Many individuals were killed who would have been potential performers. The War also had a profound and lasting effect on social and economic life in general. The trend toward mechanisation with the arrival of the tractor and other technology meant that labour need not be replaced, and the agricultural workforce dwindled. In addition, the first half of the twentieth century saw the break-up of many traditional estates, to be replaced by large corporate enterprises that saw no need to foster links within communities. The role of the “big house” in the village went into decline and with it the ploughjags’ most significant support. Other influences which

adversely affected the plough play tradition, in my opinion, included the increase in popular education and the hostility of the police and magistrates. The increasing availability of other forms of entertainment – first the gramophone, then radio and television, provided alternatives with which the plough play and other forms of traditional entertainment could not compete.

The performance of the plough play was a fine tradition, which gave ordinary people a means to express themselves in a way that not only entertained and gave pleasure, but also formed an integral part of community life in rural Lincolnshire. Although the tradition effectively died out before the Second World War, there are still opportunities to see performances of the play. Long-forgotten in most village communities, some versions of the plays have been revived through the efforts of folk enthusiasts from such groups as Grimsby Morris Men and Coleby Plough Jags,⁴⁷ and can still be witnessed and enjoyed across the county on Plough Monday and throughout the Christmas season.

Notes

1. Adapted from the text of a talk given at Celebration of the Plough Play event at Riseholme Agricultural College, January 7th, 1988. Revised June, 2013.
2. M. W. Barley, “Plough Plays in the East Midlands”, *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, Vol. VII, No. 2 (1953), 70.
3. *Ibid.*, 72.
4. Lincolnshire Archives, UP3027A.
5. Barley, 70-71.
6. *The Apocrypha*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1926, p. 147.
7. Monson Papers 10, 1/A/6, Lincolnshire Archives.
8. Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments A22, Household Account Books, Sheffield City Library.
9. Sir Edmund Chambers, *The English Folk Play*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1933, pp. 114-120.
10. Charles Read Baskervill, “Mummers’ Wooing Plays in England”, *Modern Philology*, Vol. XXI, No. 3 (February, 1924), 232-234.
11. R. Greig, Seasonal House-Visiting in South Yorkshire, unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Sheffield, May, 1988, pp. 50-54. <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/580/>.
12. Barley, 70.
13. Mabel Peacock, “Plough Monday Mummers”, *Notes and Queries*, 9th Series, Vol. VII (May 11th, 1901), 365.
14. See, for example, E. C. Cawte, A. Helm, and N. Peacock, *English Ritual Drama*, London, Folklore Society, 1967, Chap. 5, pp. 23-30.
15. W. R. Bascom, “Four Functions of Folklore”, in A. Dundes, *The Study of Folklore*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1965, pp. 277-278.
16. H. Halpert, “A Typology of Mumming”, in H. Halpert, and G. M. Story, *Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1969, pp. 34-61.
17. Baskervill, 246-250.
18. *South Cliff Parish Magazine* (January, 1893), Lincoln, printed by James Williamson.
19. Mabel Peacock, *Tales and Rhymes in the Lindsey Folk Speech*, Brigg and London, George Jackson and Son, 1886; Mabel Peacock, *Tales fra Linkisheere*, Brigg and London, George Bell and Sons, 1889; Mrs Gutch, and Mabel Peacock, *Examples of Printed Folklore concerning Lincolnshire, County Folklore Vol. V*, London, Folklore Society, 1908.

20. Peacock, 364.
21. L. B. Barley, and M. W. Barley, "Plough Monday Play from Branston near Lincoln", *Lincolnshire Historian*, Vol. II, No. 4 (1957), 36.
22. Full details of Walter Brackenbury's reminiscences are given in: R. Greig, "The Kirmington Plough-Jags Play", *Folk Music Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (1977), 233-241.
23. National Centre for English Cultural Tradition (NATCECT), University of Sheffield, tape recording, A96-70, September 4th, 1970, Kirmington, Lincolnshire.
24. Barleys, 1957.
25. NATCECT tape A96-70.
26. Greig, 1988, p. 105.
27. NATCECT tape A96-70.
28. E. H. Rudkin, "The Plough Jack's Play", *Folklore*, Vol. L (1939), 291.
29. Margaret Dean-Smith, "An Un-Romantic View of the Mummers' Play", *Theatre Research*, Vol. VIII, Part 2 (1966), 89.
30. "A Plough Jags' Play from North Kelsey", *The Village*, No. 20 (January, 1937), [1-4].
31. E. H. Rudkin, "A Plough Jagg's Play, Bassingham Version", *The Lincolnshire Poacher*, Vol.1, No.1 (Winter, 1952), 25-30.
32. Ethel H. Rudkin, *Lincolnshire Folklore*, Gainsborough, Beltons, 1936, p. 43.
33. Greig, 1988, p. 161.
34. Cawte, Helm, and Peacock, p. 24.
35. Margaret Dean-Smith, "The Life-Cycle or Folk Play: Some Conclusions Following the Examination of the Ordish Papers and Other Sources", *Folklore*, Vol. LXIX (1958), 244.
36. Barley, 78.
37. Greig, 1977, 236-239.
38. See, for example, Alex Helm, *The Chapbook Mummers' Plays*, Ibstock, Guizer Press, 1969.
39. NATCECT tape A96-70.
40. Barleys, 35.
41. Barleys, 36.
42. Ibid.
43. *Lincolnshire and Stamford Mercury* (January 17th, 1840), p. 3, col. 4.
44. *Lincolnshire and Stamford Mercury* (January 13th, 1865), p. 5, col. 4.
45. NATCECT tape A96-70.
46. George M. Foster, "The Dyadic Contract: A Model for the Social Structure of a Mexican Village", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. LXVIII (1969), 1173-1192.
47. See <http://www.colebyploughjag.com/> and <http://www.grimsbymorrismen.org.uk/>.