BRASS MONKEY
Sound & Rumour

TSDL501
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photograph by Tom Howard

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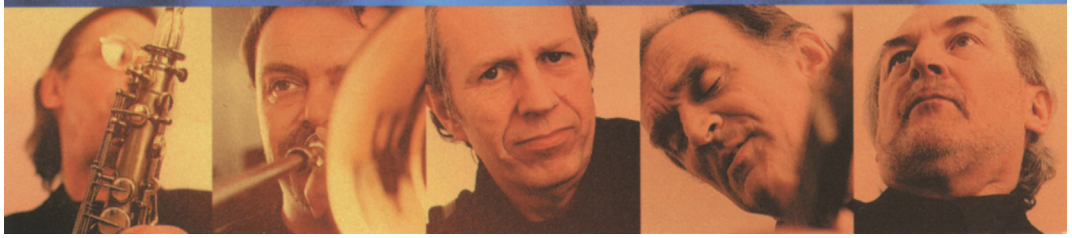
The Ned Fielding who shows up in **THE FLASH LAD** is the same man who, as Henry Fielding, was, and is, loved for his novels. But, as much as he was loved by readers, so was he hated by those who came in contact with what became known as his Gang, who were organised by him as an early police force in London - and a brutal bunch they were. The songs and tunes on this CD come, mostly, from printed sources and two of them from recordings. They are **THE ROVING JOURNEYMAN**, which John learned from the Topic recording of the gypsy family, The Willetts, and **SOLDIER, SOLDIER**, which I learned from the Columbia World Series recording of the great sean nos singer from Connemara, Colm Keane. Of the two sea songs, **OLD HORSE** (with extra verses from the totally unrelated *Poor Old Horse*), comes from the collection trawled from dozens of whalermen's personal logs by Gale Huntingdon and called *Songs The Whalermen Sang*, while **THE OLD VIRGINIA LOWLANDS** is from one of Stan Hugill's books. It's a version of *The Golden Vanity* from Stan's family, and must be one of the few versions which is not just a historical curiosity, but a real live, feet-on-the ground story of real betrayal



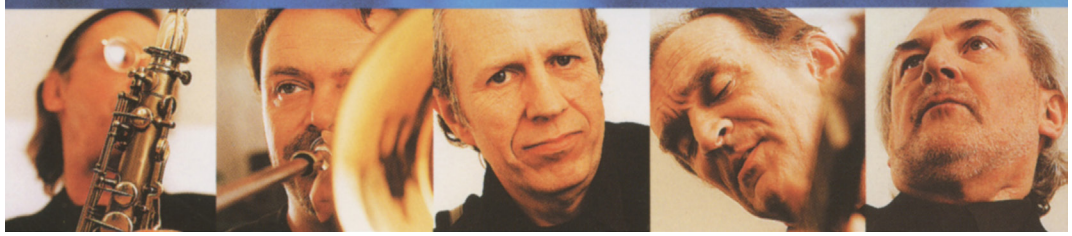
of real people. **ACRE OF LAND** has the sort of archaic tune, and **RAMBLING COMBER** the sort of loping 5/4 tune that was by no means uncommon among country singers at the turn of the century - but not so common now (except with people like us).

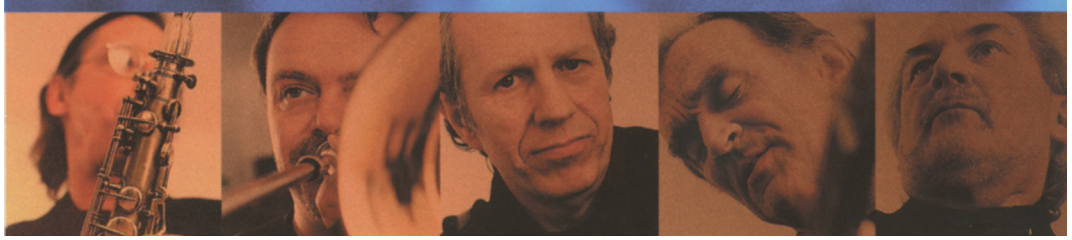
The Morris tunes run the gamut, as Morris tunes deceptively do, from the elegance of **THE ROSE** from Fieldtown, to the stomp of Headington and Bampton with **RODNEY**, **THE QUAKER** and **THE FLOWERS OF EDINBURGH**, to the set of **TRUNKLES** from Wheatley, whose apparent nod to Chu Chin Chow is entirely in your mind. **BETTY FITCHETT'S WEDDING** comes from the Camborne melodeon player, Bob Rundle, and **THE GERMAN SCHOTTISCHE** from the bottomless pit that is John's repertoire, which also includes some corkers from the 18th century like **CHARMING MAID** and the medley which includes **AURETTI'S DUTCH SKIPPER**.

THE HEROES OF ST VALERY is a retreat march commemorating events which took place in 1940. During the invasion of northern France, by the Allied Expeditionary Force, the 51st Highland Division were at St Valery-en-Caux, near Dieppe, where, taken completely by surprise by the speed of the Nazi advance, as was the entire AEF, they were captured intact, marched to the east, and spent the war in POW camps. In one of these, Pipe Major Donald Maclean of the Seaforth Highlanders wrote this tune. I continue to be amazed and moved by the breadth and depth of music which continues to flow from an instrument which has a range of just nine notes - the highland bagpipes.

I think that the whole band felt that, when we stopped playing in 1987, we still had plenty of life left in us and that, when we played the Sidmouth Festival eight years later, it felt as though we'd never been away, or, at worst, we'd been in a state of suspended animation. Or cryogenitally frozen.

Martin Carthy, August 1998





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BRASS MONKEY
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1	The Flash Lad	2.52
2	Morris Tune / The Rose / Trunkles	5.44
3	An Acre Of Land	3.45
4	Old Horse	4.08
5	The Heroes Of St Valery	4.20
6	The Charming Maid	3.02
7	The Roving Journeymen	4.37
8	Rodney / When I Was Young / The Quaker	4.05
9	The Old Virginia	6.53
10	Auretti's Dutch Skipper / An Adventure At Margate / The Spirit Of The Dance	5.17
11	Soldier, Soldier / The Flowers Of Edinburgh	3.50
12	The Rambling Comber	4.31
13	Betty Fitchett's Wedding / The German Schottische	4.00

What is this sound and rumour? What is this that all men hear,
like the wind in hollow valleys when the storm is drawing near?
Like the rolling on of ocean in the eventide of fear? – tis the people marching on.
From THE MARCH OF THE WORKERS William Morris

Martin Brinsford - percussion, mouth-organ
Martin Carthy - guitar, mandolin, vocal
Howard Evans - trumpet
John Kirkpatrick - button accordion, anglo concertinas, single-row melodeon, vocal
Richard Cheetham - trombone

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