At last! Dick Nudds and Chris Sugden have been brought to book by the E.F.D.S.S., or the English Dance and Song Society, as it says in the introduction – a Freudian slip? In a fit of frivolity, for which the Society is justly not famous, it has published, in facsimile, pages from old Billy Kipper's song book, beer stains and all. Songs that have since been made famous throughout Trunch and beyond by his son and grandson, Henry and Sid. The 29 on offer here include several from their waxings Since Time Immoral and The Ever Decreasing Circle, two from The Crab Wars and ten as yet unavailable on gramophone record. Oh yes, there's a tune as well, Will Kipper's Waltz. A description of the dance, The Dashing White Privates has been included, and Kevin Elliott has transcribed all the music.

Speaking as one who has gained as much pleasure from reading the sleevenotes on the aforementioned albums as he has from the records inside, I was delighted to find that the book includes commentary from Sid and Henry themselves. If I may be allowed to quote from Henry's note on the newly remembered Dicky Riding; "This is all about a bloke who go riding round Norfolk on his dicky. Now in some parts of the country people don't know what this mean, 'cos what we call a dicky, they call a donkey. Consequently, what we call a dicky shirt, they call a donkey jacket". Other new 'old' songs include Arrest These Merry Gentlemen, Bring Us In Hot Tea and a music hall item from the repertoire of James 'Am I Boring You' Kipper, The Bloke Who Come Home Broke From Cromer Bingo.

If Bill, Kipper were alive today, or indeed ever, he would probably be as amazed as, no doubt. Cecil Sharp would be to find his collection of songs put out by so august a body. But, as Dick and Chris say in their foreword, it has been published "as a tribute to those countless generations of Kippers who, down the ages, have helped to forge our national heritage". My only disappointment was the non-inclusion of Spencer The Wild Rover. Whatever it was that stuck the pages of Billy's book together must have been too disgusting to reproduce here!

Lawrence Heath

(supplied to us by Chris Sugden)