

THE MORPETH RANT

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The tune is attributed to William Shield (1748- 1829) from Swalwell, Northumberland, northern England, but in the great tradition of folk music, he probably was not the composer as it is now believed that he appropriated his tunes.¹ Morpeth is a market town also in Northumberland, so we can safely assume the tune is from that general area. The Morpeth Rant is sometimes called the Morpeth Hornpipe, a hornpipe being in 4/4, played a little slower than a reel, with the last bar having a rhythm of 2 quarter notes then 1 half note (or 3 quarter notes and a pickup into the next phrase). The Morpeth Rant is also the name of a dance that uses the Morpeth Rant tune or a variant as accompaniment, one version being used as a Morris Dance tune.² A good source for details regarding The Morpeth Rant dance and rant step can be found on Andrew Carnie's folk music site, folkdancemusings.blogspot.com.³ The Morpeth Rant can be heard in Old Time Jams, Irish and Scottish Sessions, and Contradances.

—Kitty

¹[https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Morpeth_Rant_\(1\)](https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Morpeth_Rant_(1))

²*Loc. cit.*

³I quickly learned that there are many (passionately opposing) opinions regarding the rant step so I chose to sidestep the argument and direct you here: <https://folkdancemusings.blogspot.com/2020/01/morpeth-rant-england.html>