

## THE CHIPPING CAMPDEN MORRIS

### CHIPPING CAMPDEN

"The Gloucester Morris is at Campden, they kept it going fairly, or did a year or two ago." H.W. Taunt, May 1908.

The Chipping Campden Morris was discontinued about the end of Dover's Games in the middle of the 19th. Century (1852). There was a revival after 1902 when the Guild of Handicrafts, which had been formed in London in 1888 by C.R. Ashbee a disciple of Ruskin and William Morris, moved to the Old Silk Mill, Sheep St., Campden in 1902. The fiddler for this revival was Dennis Hathaway from Condicote, nr. Longborough, whose grand-father-in-law had been a Chipping Campden dancer, but there was a conscious attempt to capture some of the stylistic features of the Longborough Morris - the deliberate jump, the both hands held up, both hands shaking at wrist (long since changed)

Cecil Sharp went to Campden in 1909 but did not get on there - despite his successes, Sharp did have a notable list of failures - some say he borrowed some bells and never returned them - most say he would not buy the team any beer. Dennis Hathaway got a team of boys together and taught them the dances after a fashion - the older dancers did not seem to care about this. The present dances have been stable since 1919 at least and differ in some ways from what Sharp was shown - probably Hathaway taught the boys "improvements", which would not be unusual. Cecil Sharp saw the boys in 1910 and paid for the privilege. Don Ellis for many years leader of the side and till very recently the organiser danced in this boys side when aged 7. In WW I some were killed and others had died naturally so when they got going in 1919-20 the side consisted of 2 old dancers and 4 of the "boys" - including Dennis' son Bert. In 1919 Campden had a "Jazz" band - a sort of skiffle group with concertina, tin whistle etc. - which the morris associated with and the dancers packed up when the band stopped.

In 1929 Miss Mayne of Worcester got the morris interested again and they went to the Balvern Festival where they met George Bernard Shaw. (Miss Mayne was the woman Len Bardwell bought his little English concertina from in 1938). Denis Hathaway had died and his son Bert played. Bert did not dance again until 1960 at Chipping Campden. Bert's second son, Alf, an accordionist, has played with his father since 1964 at least and since 1966 by himself.

Chipping Campden and their fool, Orman Plastid, were "discovered" in 1932 by the Travelling Morrice. Plastid was an ex-circus clown (in the USA) & marvellous but tended to distract the crowds attention from the dancing. A proposed overseas tour of the TM had fallen through and John Coales hurriedly arranged a tour of the northern Cotswolds only to find a side extant, if not very active, at Campden. A joint show was held. Campden were invited to the NFDS New Years Eve Festival at the Albert Hall at the end of that year.

The Travelling Morrice met the Campden side again in 1933, 37 & 1945. The Campden Morris was an important feature of the town's Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1935. Since the war the side has danced in the afternoon at Scuttlebrook Wake. The Wake, held since 1887 was a club day feast which came to replace Dover's Games, and was held on the Saturday at the end of Whitweek - until the government fiddled around with the Bank Holiday date.

The old team was replaced by younger men starting about 1949. In Coronation Year, 1953, the 21st anniversary of the first stand with the T.M. was celebrated with a joint show. Since then the TM has visited Campden effectively every other year, and this through the 50's was a major stimulus to keep the side going - eg in 1959 with no TM tour, they did not dance at all. Since 1960 they have visited Barton most Bank Holidays - although they have not repeated the fantastic impression they made in 1960. Since then they have frequently been seen at morris gatherings and at the Albert Hall in 1964 - a notable high-spot was a joint Abingdon-Barton-Campden tour (the "ABC" of morris) on 19th. May 1962. The 3 sides met again at Mayor's Day Abingdon 1967. There is now a boys team again, drawn from sons of present dancers.

Clearly a traditional team so one must view with suspicion the story of their origin recorded by Sharp - it would not be the first place that Sharp was misled at deliberately.

Camden 2.

Costume -- no hats, red patterned neckerchief, white shirts with rosettes on each breast & shoulder blade, white trousers with bell pads, boots (shoes on grass)

Stance & Style - stance, up right; when dancing well, upper body rather stiff. Dances are rather energetic but the style is relaxed thus it can appear very scrappy. Those who saw them in 1960 remember them as the most exciting team in the country - the result of plenty of practice, a vigorous step, internal excitement & boots.

Set - up to 20 ft. square depending on space available - in an open arena some movements will cover twice this space - have also seen them dance on 5 ft wide pavement.

Rest Position - feet together, hands up at sides at level of top of head ("up" position) arms well bent at elbows, palms forward, hands hanging down back of forearm.

Step - a singlestep (step-hop). Foot lifted, higher than at Bampton & elsewhere, then kicked forward and a little down on the hop.

Rhythm very broken - 4/4 almost 6/8 - the hop is delayed - this allows kick to be vigorous and quick yet comfortable. The step is thus to ring bells once - "chink" - without rebound is not "chink-cha".

The playing of the tune is very important - the step can not be done unless it is played slow enough & broken enough. The speed is about the slowest of existing traditional sides.

When stepping on the spot the supporting foot moves back a few inches on the hop - producing a characteristic scuffing noise when wearing boots. One is conscious of the dancing on the toes. The step is used continuously throughout the dances even by the "inactives" in corner movements.

Starting Foot - always the left, with left hand up.

Hands - opposite hand to feet. Hand raised vertically from down at side so that hand goes straight up to full extent with final flick of wrist. No jerkiness but brisk - not much swinging in front of body.

Phrase Ending - called "jump" hereafter.

step hop together -- / jump  $\Omega$  "down" together -- //

points:-on middle beat of 1st bar feet brought together deliberately. Younger Ellis swings leg out to side and back - as in old fashioned elaborate soldiers salute. Understand this is the proper way, that Ellis exaggerates it but rest under play it. The jump is done with feet together throughout. The hands at the jump remain "up" from the "together" but in practice they do fall & raise due to the body movement of the jump. The "down" is after the beat & gentle.

Turns - usually clockwise (to right) in last (2nd or 4th) bar of movement.

Passing - pass left shoulders first.

Ending - at end face partner either for last movement or on the jump then bowing from waist a little to partner as arms come down. No shout.

Arms - properly nearly fully extended upwards but often only till upper arm horizontal and forearm not far from vertical.

Idiosyncracies - a genius who could move his arms at half the speed of everyone else. Another who will go round outside of musician in rounds. One who is bandy-legged. All had a fondness for cider.

There are no traditional names for movements - each dance is a separate entity.

**THE CAMDEN MEN CLAIM COPYRIGHT FOR THEIR DANCES - PLEASE RESPECT**

It may be this that is responsible for there not being any MSS descriptions of the Camden dances that I have come across except Sharp's.

Phrase ending used where ever "jump" used in notations to follow. If stationary before jump - ie in Once to self - then only the last bar.

Hobby Horse - recently dressed in top hat, tails, white shirt & trousers. Horse has white drape with large black spots, head rather small, body a flat plank. Worn recently by Frankie Daniels, the Bampton dancer who is a son-in-law of Don Ellis. At one time dressed as a jockey.

CONSTANT WILLIAM (BILLY)

Carpenden 3.

Music - A, B, 4 bars each - play A then (BAA)<sub>6</sub>

Once to Self - (A) - facing partner in rest position.

Jump to face odds up, evens down.

Whole Rounds Clockwise - "circle" - (EA) 8 bars round in large circle ending by approaching (more like spiralling in) to within reach of partner in column formation, facing partner, then 4 bars (A) stepping on spot ending with a jump. 12 bars in all.

Clap - (B) - face partner & clap thus with partner, standing feet tog.

---R+R--/---l+l--/b--b behind--/b--<sup>r+l</sup><sub>l+r</sub>--//

large arm movements starting with swing out to side.

Cross and Turn - (AA) - cross to partner's side, passing partner by left shoulders, following slightly curved path, curving to left & turning right to face and then approach, to within reach of partner. Usually go as far as music and space allow, turning in bar 4 & approaching so that in 7th bar ready for jump. Sometimes they cross in 2 bars, turn in 3rd, approach in 4th & stop it out facing. Always end with a jump.

Clap, cross & turn ad lib. Usually 2 complete circuits. At end, on last cross over only approach halfway so that lines are about as far apart as they were at the start of the dance. At the jump then odds face up & evens down as in Once to self.

Whole Rounds Clockwise - (BA) - 8 bars clockwise ending as started still well apart - 4 bars step on spot facing (A) and stop on the jump.

For Sharp they inserted a whole rounds after each complete cycle of crossing. (In clapping with partner, always hit upwards)

(LONGBOURGH) STICK DANCE

Music - A, B, 4 bars each - play A then A<sub>3</sub>(BAA)<sub>5</sub> - version "Young Collins"

Stick - spirally wound red, yellow, green ribbons to 9" from top. Stick held at bottom in right hand. Right hand wrapped round right knuckle "to absorb the blow". When not in use the stick is sloped over & resting on the right shoulder - even in the jump Left hand knotted to middle finger of free hand so that it hangs loose down back of hand - free hand is held up, as in rest position, throughout dance, even in stick tapping.

Once to Self - in two lines facing up - close enough for inside hands to be touching - jump in last bar, still facing up.

Cast - "Two half circles" - move up a few feet then single cast - 2 lines casting outwards down to bottom, turn in & come up middle in pairs touching inside hands and not falling away (8 bars) then step on the spot (4 bars) facing up till jump, turning to face partner - 12 bars in all (AAA)

Sticks - hit ground well in front and to right of dancer, nearly beside partner's feet 3 times with tip; high clash 3 times at head level; repeat; 4 bars in all (B).

Cross and Turn - as Constant Billy. Complete cycle twice over. On last cross and turn only half approach to be as far apart as starting position in other dances - end with jump to face up.

Cast - from this position cast as at start, coming up middle touching 8 bars (BA) and step on spot facing up 4 bars (A) ending with jump to face partner.

For Sharp they did a stationary foot-up to start and in middle of dance included a figure in which all danced facing front on the spot while 1st cu went back-to-back (8 bars) then 2nd cu back-to-back (8 bars) then 3rd cu went back-to-back (8 bars) - a little like the corner movement of the Country Dance.

At end of dance musician runs tune up to the higher D.

JIGS - In 1962 the Hobby-Horse Rider said he knew a fools jig (which?) and that there was jiggling at Carpenden but none of present side do it. On occasion two men have danced suitable parts of set dances, including the stick dance, as a double jig.

Camden 4.

THE COUNTRY DANCE

Music - A, B, 8 bars each - play A then (AB)<sup>7</sup> - version of Irish Washerwoman which modulates key.

Considered a very tiring dance. Everyone steps throughout.

Each movement does not end with a jump but is followed by 8 bars (L) step in position facing partner which does end with a jump.

Once to Self - usual distance apart, facing, jump to face up.

Figures - to A music

1. Cast round as in Stick Dance - come up middle in pairs, initially inside hands holding, outside hands up, then drift sideways and back to position (3 bars) Step & jump (8 bars)
2. 2nd or 1st corners (depending on who it is) back-to-back, passing left shoulder going and right coming back, going right over to other corner's place & retiring backwards. (8 bars) Step & jump (8 bars)
3. Next corner ditto.
4. Middles ditto. Do not pass line of other side. In movements 2-5 there is a fair bit of drift to left before returning - especially in 4.
5. All back-to-back with partners (8 bars) Step & jump (8 bars).
6. Forward and back - 2 bars forward to meet face to face, shouting and throwing up arms in bar 2 (but not jumping) retire to place (2b) and step in position (4 bars) Step & jump (8 bars) turning on jump to face up.
7. Cast - cast round as at start falling back to place & stepping it out facing partner - end facing partner. Men tend to go in a little in moving up before casting out.

For Sharp the corners turned each other with right hand, instead of going back-to-back.

SALLY ON THE RAILWAY

Music - A, B, 4 bars each - play A then (A<sub>2</sub>BA<sub>3</sub>B)<sub>2</sub>A<sub>1</sub><sup>1</sup> - version of Shepherd's Hey.

"Sally on the railway, picking up stones,  
Along came the engine and broke her bones.  
Oh! cries Sally, that aint fair.  
Oh! cried the engine driver I dont care."

"Done really like Sally on the Railway, all forward and back and nothing else!"

Once to Self - stand facing partner at usual distance, jump.

Figure 1, 3 - Retire backwards 2 bars, advance to be just in front of partner 2 bars, step on spot in front of partner ending with a jump, 4 bars - 8 bars in all.

Figure 2, 4 - Retire backwards 2 bars, advance passing partner by left shoulder to partner's place 2 bars, retire on same track passing partner by left again to be as far back as end of bar 2 in 2 bars, advance to be just in front of partner 2 bars, step on spot facing partner and end with jump 4 bars. 12 bars in all. Sometimes the long advance and retire take 3 bars with subsequent reduction in bars stepping on spot.

Clapping - between each of the above figures clapping facing partner no stepping - once through only - 4 bars (B).

b. -. under l leg. -./b.-.under r leg.-./b.-.b behind.-./b.-.r+l  
l+r.-.//

No repeat. Arms out horizontally at side before claps under legs.

Ending - in figure 4 do not advance again at end but stay lines far apart & step it out on the spot, 6 bars, ending with jump to face up. Cast round as in Country Dance (8 bars) and end step facing in and jump (4 bars)

For Sharp they did the second figure only, ended with whole rounds and had the handclapping of the next dance.

SHSHERD'S HEY

Camden 5.

Music - A, 8 bars - play A then (A)<sub>14</sub> - A music of Princess Royal.

Story is that this dance was forgotten & retaught by an ex-dancer revisiting Camden - consequently half tune lost. However tune was played to Sharp as only 8 bars, although he did not note the dance.

Once to Self - face up, hands up, lines fairly close, jump.

Figures -

1. Move up 2 bars, back 2 bars, a step facing up on spot 4 bars and jump to face front (sometimes take up to 4 bars forward & back)  
Clap - face partner and clap thus

---slap--/--slap--/b. --b behind--/b. --. r+l  
l+r. --//

then step on spot facing partner for 4 bars ending with a jump. Always touch to left side first. Slap side of ankle on this, not bending body but lifting leg. Left hand to left ankle etc. Jump at end of stepping, to face down.

2. As figure 1 but going down. Jump to face front.  
Clap - as above but touching side of knee with a sweeping brush of the hand. Step on spot facing and then turn right on the jump to face out. (clockwise)

3. Dance away from partner 2 bars and turn right to face, dance back to face partner 2 bars, a step on spot (4 bars) ending with jump.  
Clap - as above but touching sides of thighs, almost bottoms, with good healthy slap. Step facing and end by jumping a foot or so to right, still facing front, to allow passing partner for next figure.

4. Pass partner by left shoulders and cross going as far as possible in 2 bars and turning right to face partner; dance back passing partner right shoulders (ie. still on same side) 2 bars and continuing as far as possible and turning right to face partner again, now on proper side 2 bars, approach to just in front of partner 2 bars; (no jump here) then step on spot for 8 bars ending with a jump. When have a lot of space they make the travelling last 12 bars by making each bit 3 bars long. (the teamwork in this respect is good)  
Clap - as above but with a wide sweeping gesture slap front of opposite shoulder ie. hit one's right shoulder with left hand. Step but jump at end going straight on into next figure.

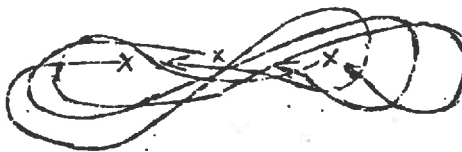
5. Step on the spot 8 bars ending with jump.  
Clap - as above but slapping side of head above ears. Step on spot but no jump at end going straight on into next figure.

6. Step on spot 8 bars ending with jump to face up.  
Progressive Hey - mirror hey - Top 4 move off up, 2nd couple holding back a little in first bar, bottom couple stepping on spot till 1st couple reach them. 1st couple casts out, having moved up a bit, and then cuts in between the 3rd couple so that 1st couple almost touching when going through, then 1st couple cast out at bottom in a slightly smaller loop and coming up to place in 8 bars. 2nd couple dance a similar path but displaced back a little. 3rd couple do not move off till 1st couple have passed in front of them, they do a small loop at top and a bigger one at the bottom but get back to place somewhat after the 8 bars. All step out the remainder of 8 bars facing up in same position as started dance, ending with jump to face.

A rough indication of paths.

Note 2nd couple moves a little at start and passes outside of 3rd couple. 3rd couple moves out a little as 1st's go through & then swing in between

2nd's coming down. Loops all displaced in the way shown.



PROCESSIONAL ON

Not seen in recent years but like Longborough "Hey Diddle Dis" in principle - dance in line of 6 and make turns on spot in alternate directions at whim of leader.

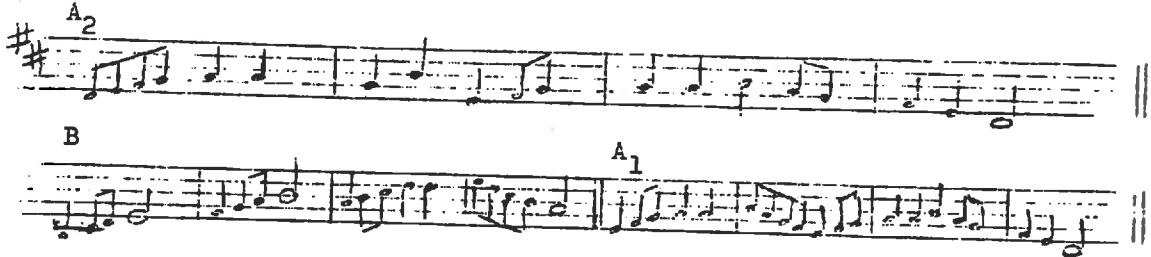
Campden 6.

Tunes collected by Sharp, Schofield, Rollo Woods & Donnett. Each has tunes that they did collect very similar.

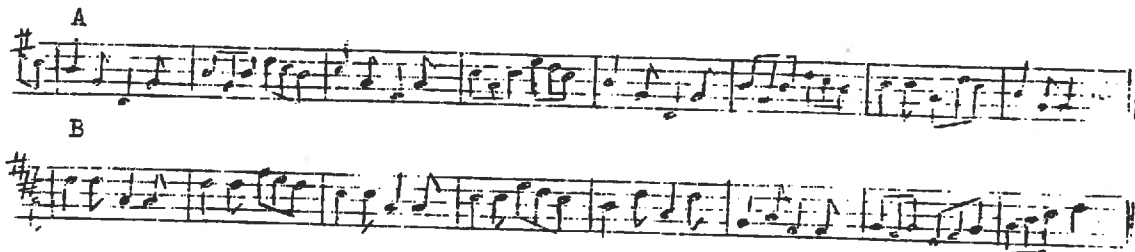
CONSTANT WILLIAM



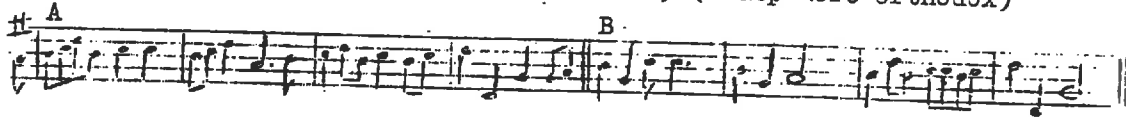
STICK DANCE



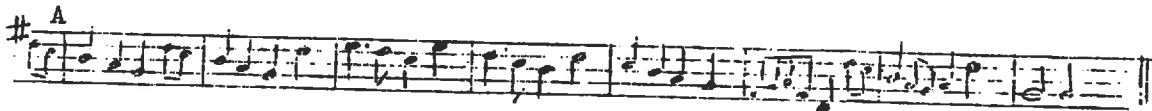
THE COUNTRY DANCE



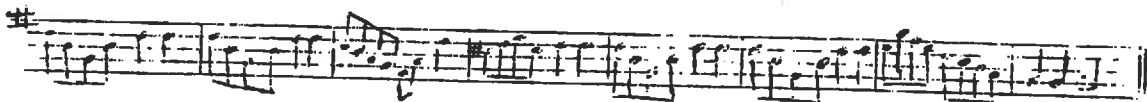
SALLY ON THE RAILWAY - Rollo Woods 28.6.52 (Sharp more orthodox)



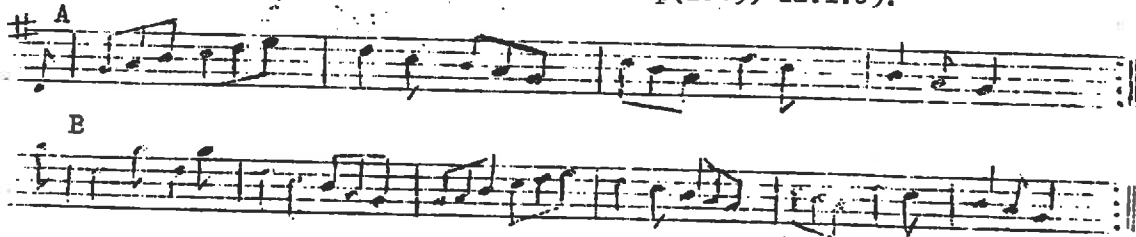
SHEPHERD'S HEY



PROCESSIONAL ON - Rollo Woods 28.6.52



OLD WOMAN TOSSED UP IN A BLANKET - Sharp (2049) 12.1.09.



Speed from 96 to 104 per minute.