SINGABOUT

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TROVE - NATIONAL TREASURE

Trove is the National Library's digitized online resources of books, images, historic newspapers, maps, music, archives and more. It is a resource that is enabling researchers find historical information more easily with the aid of online search tools.

Trove is currently under threat from funding cuts to the National Library. It would be a tragedy if this collection is effectively frozen and no new material added to it.

The following items give some indication of how Trove can be used to further research.

Heather Clarke has been using Trove in her research into early colonial dance. She writes:

> Trove is a key resource in my research of historical dance in Australia. Nothing else comes close to the rich diversity of materials that Trove offers: it connects to all significant library and museums catalogues, and online sources throughout the country.

> The scope of data includes books, images, historic newspapers, maps, music, and archives – many which can be scrutinised in detail online. All these resources contribute to a portray an incredibly vivid and expansive image of colonial dance culture.

> I believe Trove to be unique in the world, with a truly innovative approach to cultural heritage. Long may it prosper!

Heather has been publishing some of her findings on her Australian Colonial Dance website: http://www.colonialdance.com.au/

Mark Gregory has been searching Trove for several years and has found at least 150 new items, either new songs/poems or variations of familiar items.

The new finds are posted in Mark's rapidly growing Australian Folksongs website (http://folkstream.com/songs.html), which currently contains 487 entries.

from Mark:

In May 2010 I began to use Trove and became captive of its charms ... the first project I set myself was to discover if there were any newspaper articles that mentioned William Cuffay the 62 year black London Tailor and leader of the London Chartists who was transported to Vandiemen's Land arriving in Hobart in 1849. I was amazed to find so much about him including his obituary, which was reported in five newspapers in three states in Australia, and was later republished in a number of British newspapers. The Cuffay research ultimately resulted in a a feature length radio documentary for Hindsight on the ABC, a program that was shortlisted for the NSW Premier's History Award. This research is available online at http://cuffay.blogspot.com/

My next project was to see how many newspapers reported on the mysterious Irish convict known as Frank the Poet, this research gave me a chapter for my PhD and also input into another Hindsite documentary, a radio program that took the poet home to Ireland as it was rebroadcast on the Irish public radio RTE. This research is available online at http://frankthepoet.blogspot.com/

Trove discoveries also added to Brian Dunnett's important collection of Railway Songs and Poems (see http://railwaysongs.blogspot.com/) where there are now more that 250 songs and poems archived and ready for a long proposed book on the subject.

Trove also led me to research Australian colonial and bush songs published in the newspapers, the digitisation of which was growing fast with more titles becoming searchable every week. In 1994 I was in a position to trial a website called Australian Folk Songs and had added little to the original 110 songs. The site was originally piggy backed on the Macquarie University Graduate School of Management website, till it embarrassed the university management to demand its removal. I had been hunting for a website name and finally came up with http://folkstream.com/ where the original content still resides.

Largely because of Trove discoveries the number of songs and poems has more than tripled to more than 350. By far my most important discovery has been the 1891 version of the iconic **Click Go the Shears**. Late one night I decided to search on Trove using a phrase common to all the known versions of the song "Tar here Jack". Up popped an 11 verse song titled **The Bare Belled Ewe** published in a Victorian newspaper I'd never heard of, the Bacchus Marsh Express. This discovery helped explain a lot of confusion about the song. Firstly the tune given was that of the very popular American Civil War song Ring the Bell Watchman, a tune well known to many bush dance musicians. The sheet music was published in Australia shortly

after its composition by the famous Paling company. The tune was used for many different home grown parodies over many years. Strangely enough the title Click Go the Shears was not used until Percy Jones gave his version of the song to the America troubadour Burl Ives on his visit to Australia in 1952. In 1939 two newspapers, the Sydney newspaper the World's News, and another NSW newspaper the Wellington Times published the song under the title **The Shearer's Song**. Both these versions had more similarity to the 1891 version that they had to the version that Jones published in an article titled "Australia's Folk-Songs" in 1946.

The 1891 version also raise the question of the song's links to 1891 shearers' strike, when the shearers were much in the public mind. It also blew out of the water any notion that song was a 20th century composition, or that it could legally be a vehicle to any sort of copyright except for arrangement and performance. Finally the credit is restored to the memories of all the old bush singers who knew some of the verses of the song and almost unanimously suggested a 19th rather than 20th century origin to the song collectors. For me the old song led to an ABC television role in a national Landline broadcast of the Bare Belled Ewe! It also underlines what Dr Hugh Anderson argued back in the early days of the folk song revival, the important part that publication has played in what we still call Australian Folk Song.

The discovery of the Bare Belled Ewe in June 2013 led to more searches for bush ballad titles and some 50 or so more shearing songs and early variants. In August I found the precursor of **One of the has Beens** under the title One of the Have Beens published in the Manaro* Mercury in 1875. Such finds reinforce the probability that our bush songs move in and out of publication and oral transmission, with all the variation and changes that popular vernacular song and poetry often shows.

#*- Manaro was an alternative spelling for Monaro in the 19th Century

Details of some of Mark's research was previously published in Singabout No 219, October 2013.

http://trove.nla.gov.au

The chief executive of the Australian Library and Information Association, Sue McKarracher, was reported by the ABC as saying:

"Trove isn't just a nice thing to have, it's not just about digital access to museum pieces or library documents, this is a fundamental piece of our national research infrastructure."

Here is a description of **the Quadrille**, published in the Macleay Chronicle, 24 Sep 1941, as displayed in Trove:

To freshen the memory of oldtimers who nigh forget the figures of the Quadrille we publish the following instructions: —

First Figure — La Pantalon: The top and bottom couples cross to each other's place in eight steps (four bars), returning immediately to places, completing the movement in eight bars. This is called the Chaine Anglaise (i.e.: opposite couples right and left), and in performing it the gentlemen should bear in mind always to keep to the right of the vis-a-vis lady in crossing. Top and bottom couples set to partners, taking four steps to the right, then four to the left, in a straight line (this occupying four bars of music), the gentleman then turning the lady round, taking her right hand in his, in four bars more. Here follows ladies chain (eight bars more). Each gentleman takes his partner by the hand and crosses to opposite couple's place (four bars); this is called by the dancing masters "half-promenade." Couples then recross right and left to their places without giving hands (another four bars), which completes the figure. The latter eight bars of this figure are sometimes danced with the galop step. The side couples repeat as above. When there are more than two couples, either at the top or side, it is customary to alternate the arrangement in order to give variety to the dance. Thus the lady who is at the top of the quadrille in her own set finds her vis-a-vis in the top gentleman in the adjoining set.

Second Figure — L'Ete. This figure is always danced in the manner known as Double l'Ete. Top and bottom couples advance and retire (four bars), then change places with their vis-a-vis (making eight bars), but omitting to cross over as in the Chaine Anglaise. Again advance and retire (four bars) back to places, and set to partners. This completes the figure. The side couples repeat.

Third Figure — La Poule. Top lady and vis-a-vis gentleman change places; return immediately, giving the left hand (eightbars) and retaining it in that position. Each one then gives the right hand to partner's right, the couples thus forming a line, each with their faces different ways. In this manner all four balancez quatre enligne (set four in a line), half promenade with partner to opposite place; top lady and vis-a-vis gentleman advance and retire four steps, repeat the movement, bowing slightly to one another the second time that they advance. Both couples advance together and retire, then cross right and left to places (third eight bars). Second lady and vis-a-vis gentleman go through the figure. Side couples repeat.

Fourth Figure— La Pastorale. Top gentleman takes his partner by left hand; they advance and retreat; he advances again, leaving the lady with vis-a-vis gentleman and retiring to his own place. Vis-a-vis gentleman now advances four paces and retreats the same, holding each lady by the left hand; again advancing he leaves the two ladies with the top gentleman, who once more advances. They then all join hands in a circle, half promenade to opposite places, returning right and left to their own. Second couples and sides repeat.

Fifth Figure— La Finale. This figure commences with the grande ronde. All join hands and advance and retreat four steps. Each gentleman then takes his lady as if for a galop, advances and retreats four steps, then cross to opposite places. Advance and retreat as before, and return to own places; ladies' chain, concluding with the grande ronde. Side couples repeat.