

Australian Social Dances and Tunes of the Victorian Era part 3

“Trad & Fad”

ADELAIDE RACE DAY

Peter Ellis



In the June edition of Trad & Now (2010) I described the history and dance steps of the Galop and in the July edition some tunes for the Galopede Country Dance or La Galopede.

The galop itself was a very brisk but simple 'racy' dance and did not survive beyond the first decade of the twentieth century despite being a mainstay of the ballroom since its debut around 1829 or so. It required a large longways assembly or city ballroom to cater for its gaiety and rapid galloping steps and would not have been suited to the average rural woolshed, barn or shearing shed of turn of the nineteenth century Australia. However its smooth chasse steps had been incorporated in the change from the elegant 'set and

turn' of partners in the quadrilles of day to the more lively 'swinging of partners' as well as in any surviving country dances such as La Galopede.

Also emerging were some of the simpler couple dances in 2-4 and 6-8 certainly derived from the Galop via the (American) Washington Post and Two Step of the late 1890s. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century some simpler English two step style dances had either just appeared or where about to. These included the Military Two Step (1906), Boston Two Step (1908) and the Eva Three Step (1904). These barely had a chance for appearance in Australia as by 1911 through into the 20s the latest in jazz and the craze for the modern ballroom dances, the One Step, Foxtrot, Tango, Quickstep and Slow Waltz (Modern or Jazz) and Charleston pretty well eclipsed everything.

Opposition to the modern dances gained momentum by 1932 with a public demand for the simpler earlier sequence dances and 'Old Time Dancing' under that name had appeared for the first time only a decade earlier around 1922. By the 1950s a rather distorted version of the Eva Three Step was revived in Australia to the tune of Teddy Bears' Picnic. One professional teacher (Albert Boal of Melbourne) who was originally from Belfast and knew the original dance realised it was not right and to overcome the problem coined a new name for the Australian version, the 'Evening Three Step'.

But whether a revival of Old Time Dancing, Colonial Dancing or Bush Dancing one wonderful dance and more so its music has been completely overlooked. The Two Step and Three Step group of dances as bright and cheerful as they might be and Galopede Country Dance and Galop and Gallopede Quadrilles are all we seem to have as a vague link to one of the great dances of the nineteenth century, the Galop. Only the Quadrille, Waltz and Polka relegated it to fourth place on a programme.

Well there is one good dance that seems little known in the folk scene that was devised to incorporate the essence of spirit of the galop and that is the Adelaide Race Day. I have been unable to find who actually put it together, but it was certainly popularised by the late Nell Challingsworth with her heritage dance groups as well as Wongawilli Colonial Dancers who used it from time to time for some impressive displays.

I felt it was a pity some of the wonderful old galop tunes had not survived circulation and that they might suit this dance as well as the fact the 'set and turn or swing partners' that was a typical component of Colonial set dances (as the waltz is used to conclude the sequence of most couple dances) had not been included.

In contrast Germanic hand clapping certainly invoked a perceived tradition of Adelaide and with it Hahndorf and Tanunda, the Adelaide Hills and its Barossa Valley people. One of the Galop tunes I've revived, 'All At Home Galop', reminded me of the tune for the German clapping dance we learnt in the 1950s when at school. (Hands together right, hands together left, hands together right left, hand together both).

So I've taken the liberty of adding a swing to Adelaide Race Day which brings it up to a 40 bar sequence and selecting some great Galop tunes including All At Home and using 8 bars of their respective verses at the beginning of each 32 bar tune. Of course if you don't agree with my doing this, simple delete the swing and the opening 8 bar verse of each tune.

A collected tune, The Oldtimers' Two Step is also in galop style and a 40 bar arrangement, so would be very suitable for Adelaide Race Day.

ADELAIDE RACE DAY (Music on Merry Country Dance CD vol 1 track 1, by Emu Creek Bush Band and Bush Dance Dance & Music Club of Bendigo)

40 bar single reels, 2-4 set tunes or galops at 58-60 bars a minute.

Circle of 10 to 20 couples, lady on right of partner.



Dance

Bars

4 **All join hands** with partners **and skip 4 steps to centre**, then 4 skips **backwards** to place

4 **Ladies only skip 4 steps to centre**, half turn **and then skip forward to partner**

8 Holding partners' hands **slip step 8 counts to man's left around circle** then repeat **back to place**

4 Standing side onto the circle **clap own hands** on count 1, partner's hands on 2

Repeat clapping own hands count 3 and partner's count 4

Clap own hands on count 5, right hand clap to partner's right hand on count 6

Clap own hands on count 7, left hand clap to partner's left hand on count 8

4 With the *German hand hold, **slip step** sideways to **centre 4 counts then back to place**

8 ****Swing partners** in the German or short (Kamarooka) hold.

8 Give **right hands to partners and grand chain** around to the 7th person. All circle up again

Repeat as often as required

***This swing had been added to the original dance and therefore requires 40 bar tunes in place of 32 bars.* It is suggested an 8 bar tag be used at the beginning of each tune if 40 bar tunes are not at hand.

*German hand hold, facing partners, grasp each other by the forearms.



Shortarm swing - Kamarooka
Hold

This hold for swinging was frequently used in the quadrilles in crowded situations. I first learnt it from my dance teacher Les Rankin who was originally from the farming district of Kamarooka north of the Bendigo Whipstick. Dances were frequently held in barns in his youth and that was the hold used in the First Set and Lancers.

All At Home Galop

The Crow & Fox Galop

Daisy's 7th Album

Musical score for 'The Crow & Fox Galop' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff contains the melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are G, C, G, D7, G. The second staff is a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are G, D7, G, D7. The third staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment. Chords above are G, D7, G, D7, G. The fourth staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are G, C, G, D7, G, D7, G. The fifth staff continues the melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are C, G, D7, G, D7, G.

Skedaddle Galop (adapted from original sheet music)

Musical score for 'Skedaddle Galop' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff contains the melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are G, C7, D7, G. The second staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are G, C, D7, G, D7, G. The third staff continues the melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are G, C, D7, G, D7, G. The fourth staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are G, D7, G. The fifth staff continues the melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Chords above are D7, C, D7, G, D7, G.

Two Steps

The Oldtimers' Two Step

The musical score is written for guitar in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes. Chords are indicated above the staff: G, C, G, D7, G D7, G D7. The second staff starts at measure 9 and includes chords G, C, G, D7, and G. The third staff starts at measure 17 and includes chords D7, G, D7, and G. The fourth staff starts at measure 25 and includes chords D7, C, D7, and G. The fifth staff starts at measure 33 and includes chords D7 and G. The piece concludes with a double bar line.