

Summaries

Under the Bram Bush

Children in Chelsea, recorded by Iona Opie, 1977, C898/25 Track 01

This clapping song is performed by children from Chelsea, London in June 1977. The children personalise the song, shouting 'Chelsea!' at the end of the game, when other children on the Opie recordings are often heard singing 'Sexy!' When shouting Chelsea, the interviewer explains that the children clap under their legs. When publishing *The Singing Game* in 1988, the Opies noted that this song already had a ninety year history and could begin in a number of ways. They recorded children singing 'Under the Bamboo', 'Under the Brambles', 'Under the Brown Bushes' as well as 'Under the Shade of the Blackberry Tree' (*The Singing Game*, 1988: 453).

Diana Dors

Children in Liss, recorded by Iona Opie, 1974, C898/22

This singing game is performed by children from Liss Junior School, Hampshire in October 1974. When sung, the children performed accompanying moves such as bumping their hips together and lifting their skirts. The interviewer notes that one of the children performing this song learnt it while attending a school in Fleet and then brought it with her to Liss. The Opies observed that different names could be substituted for 'Diana Dors'. For example, they suggest that when first sung, children would sing 'I'm Matt Monro, I'm a famous star' (*The Singing Game*, 1988:415). It has been recorded by the projects ethnographers that in Sheffield, 2009, a variation of this song is still sung and refers to Britney Spears rather than Diana Dors.

Both recordings from the British Library Sound Archive. Collection Reference C898 'Opie Collection of Children's Games and Songs'. See www.cadensa.bl.uk for further information.