

DORSET DANCES

DORSET DANCES : HARDY MSS

Royal Manor Morris asked about Thomas Hardy dances and their public use.

Thomas Hardy wrote to English Dance and Song many years ago describing how the longways country dancing appeared in the villages for the first time when he was a youth. Hardy played the fiddle and made tunebooks from which selections have been published in recent years. There are few notes of the dances themselves although such are mentioned in his books. In the Library at Cecil Sharp House there was a mss of Schofield and Leather describing dances from the T Hardy book in the Dorchester Museum as danced at Millstock about 1840

HASTE TO THE WEDDING

Top Lady & Gentleman go down the figure, the lady inside the couples, the gentleman outside & up again (1st part of tune). They go down a 2nd time, the gentleman inside, the lady outside & up again (1st part of tune repeated). They then join hands with 2nd lady, forming a circle of 3 & dance round & back. The 2nd lady popping under the arms of the other 2 at the 2 dotted notes: & back to her place which is now at the top (2nd part of tune). They do the same with the 2nd gentleman (2nd part repeated). The top couple are not the 2nd couple and they proceed down and up as before, taking the 3rd couple and popping them under severally as with the original 2nd couple. Thus they proceed to the bottom - when the original top couple have reached the 4th place the new top couple starts the figure as at 1st, working their way to the bottom behind the original 1st couple: these when they get to the 4th place being followed in like manner by the next top couple.

THE TRIUMPH

1st lady sets to 2nd gentleman & turn (1st part of tune)
1st gentleman sets to 2nd lady & turn (1st part repeated)
1st lady takes 2nd gentleman by the right hand & leads him down the middle (2nd part)
1st gentleman casts off & follows his partner, all 3 leading back to the top together, the 2nd gentleman joining hands over the lady's head (2nd part repeated)
The two couples dance down the middle (3rd part of tune)
They dance up again & cast off (3rd part repeated)

COLLEGE HORNPIPE

Hands 6 round - that is, the 3 top ladies & 3 top gentlemen join hands and move completely round to places. The same 6 promenade, that is each of the 3 couples join hands crosswise, partner and partner and pass completely round to places. The 3 couples lead down the middle and up again. The 3 couples pousette, that is, each couple joins hands & dance round each other and the other couples to places, the top couple casting off the 2nd couple - Tune begins again and couples 1, 3 & 4 do the same, the top couple works down to the bottom of the dance (See Wilson's Country Dances)

DORSET DANCES

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

Source: dance notations from the Hardy mss in Dorchester Museum transcribed by Leather and Scholfield. Suggested title from book which mentions country dancing most.

Basis : this suggestion takes the notations of Colledge Hornpipe, Haste to the Wedding, The Triumph and the Dorchester Hornpipe which are country dances and arranges them as one sequence as a Morris for display. The departures from the mss are either to ensure an easy flow from one movement to the next or to make it more morrisy. Considerable thought has gone into the transitions but they still need careful realisation.

Set : usual 6 person morris set in two columns. Probably with handkerchiefs.

Step : usual morris double step or a stomping Dorset polka step.

Music : from the published Hardy tunes.

Once to Yourself: face partner in two columns - to show relationship to country dancing rather than facing up as in Cotswold Morris.

1. WHOLE ROUNDS - clockwise for 8 bars, end facing up towards music. Turn easy way into rounds, no pause or turn half way. Centres step out to form circle at start and step in at end to face up in column.

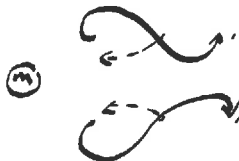
2. OUSIDES - single cast and up middle, taking 8 bars in all. Top pair cast out No.1 to left, No. 2 to right, and, followed by rest of their columns, dance down outside of the set, turn in at the bottom place at the bottom of the set, not immediately the bottom pair have passed going up the centre, and dance back to place up the set, passing over the starting places of the other dancers in their columns. About 4 bars to go down and 4 bars to come up - this for the top pair - the rest dance up to the top before casting and also going right to the bottom before turning in. Do not let it become a circular movement on the sides. End facing up towards the music and then all turn in to face down.

(This movement is suggested instead of linking hands and doing a double cast in pairs around to the left)

3. DOWN AND BACK - all dance down, away from music for 4 bars, side by side with partner, turn in towards partner to face towards the music and back to place ending all facing up towards the music in 8 bars in all.

4. PROGRESSIVE HEY - start a progressive hey from the top by the top pair casting out, passing the 2nd pair by the outside and the bottom inside. Each pair waits till the top pair reach them (ie progressive start to the hey)

(This movement is suggested instead of the country dance pousette in which partners join hands and dance round the other pairs.)



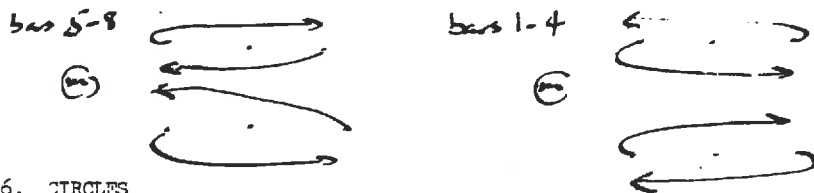
5. PROCESSIONALS

To let the movement flow it is suggested that it starts as indicated as the top pair have time to turn and go the other way while the bottom pair ending move 4 later can flow straight into it without a turn.

Bars 1-4 : top pair go down the centre to the bottom (2 bars) and retire backwards to place while the bottom pair go up the outside and back.

Bars 5-8 : top pair goes down the outside and back while the bottom goes up the middle. In each half the middles stand still.

This produces a movement like the Adderbury processional up and down figures as established by the other end of the set going at the same time.



6. CIRCLES

The 3 on each side form circles holding hands or handkerchiefs and circle round about 2 and a bit times, 1,3&5 clockwise and the other counter clockwise as this should flow best from the previous movement. Nos 1 & 2 end up on the inside of the set, back to back in the centre, facing out. They duck under the link between the other two dancers, while hands are still held and then the other two let go their link so that all can be in a line of three facing out from the set ready for the next movement.

Start

1, 3, 5 so 3 step back for (1, 3, 5) circle

then (1, 3, 5) duck through (2, 4) and end 3-1-5

7. THE TRIUMPH

lines of 3 dance out from set, 4 bars, turn on spot so that all face in, Nos 1&2 have hands crossed, other two join hands over the head of the middle one to form an arch or "Triumph" and all dance back to centre, 4 bars, ending letting go with Nos 1&2 facing in the centre of the set.

8. TURN CORNERS

1&2 turn by right and pass, 1&6, 2&3 turn by left, 1&2 turn by right in centre again, 1&4, 2&5 turn by left - 2 bars each turn, giving hands to turn. End by 1&2 passing by right shoulders to regain own side, still in centre of set.



THREE QUARTER REEL

Under the Greenwood Tree 3.

3. THREE QUARTER REEL

The pair 1&2 by moving out start a 3/4 hey, ^{going up} 3&4 start by going in down the centre so that they end with 1&2 at the bottom, 3&4 at the top & 5&6 at the middle.



10 - etc - this sequence could be repeated one or two times so that dancers end where they started.