

LATE 18th CENTURY COUNTRY DANCES WITH SOUTHERN REFERENCES

The second half of the 18th century saw the opening of many of the "Assembly Rooms" in the south. The dances of the period were longways for as many as will, in triple minor, proper form. It is such dances that Thomas Hardy remembered displacing the jigging and reels of the ordinary folk in the first half of the 19th century. The dances can be danced as triples in 3 couple sets, or in 4/5 couple sets as the Scottish now do dances from this period. With slight modification eg making dances duple active couple improper etc the dances are usable today.

Dances continually reappeared with slight alterations - one set:

1767 THE BATHING MACHINE

- A1 1st cu cast off, down into 2nd cu place and hands four round and back with the 3rd (or next) cu.
- A2 1st cu cast off, up to place and hands four round and back with the 2nd cu.
- B1 1st cu only gallop down middle and back to place, casting off into 2nd place.
- B2 "rights & lefts" at the top (ie, at this time, 1st corners cross 2 bars, 2nd corners cross 2 bars, 1st corners back, 2nd back) by 1st and 2nd couple.

1771 DORCHESTER ASSEMBLY

- A1 A2 as above
- B1 1st cu cast off, down 2 cus & all foot it facing partner.
- B2 1st cu lead up to top under arches made by other cus, & cast off one place. (in 3 cu set carry on through 3rd cu to bottom)

1774 LASSES OF PORTSMOUTH

- A1 A2 as above but turn partner once round by right hand before casting & hands round one way only.
- B1 1st cu lead down middle through 3rd couple & cast up one, lead through 2nd couple to place & cast off one to 2nd place.
- B2 rights and lefts at top as above.

1786 PLEASURES OF SALISBURY

- A1 A2 as above
- B1 1st cu lead down middle 2 cus & up middle again to place, cast off one place & lead through 3rd cu & cast up one place to end in 2nd place.
- B2 rights and lefts as above.

Another set adapted to duple minor & active cus improper.

1765 MERRY GIRLS OF BRISTOL

- A1 Right hands across and back in fours.
- A2 1st cu cross over go down outside of set past 2 cus, lead up the middle to place and cast off into 2nd place.
- B1 Hands four round and back with cu below.
- B2 Rights and lefts with cu above.

1774 PORTSMOUTH REVIEW

- A1 Lines go forward and back, Half right & left through with opposite
- A2 Repeat to place
- B1 B2 as above

1795 BRIDGEWATER CAMP

- A1 1st man & 2nd girl foot it (2 bar) & change places (2 bar) 1st girl & 2nd man ditto.
- A2 1st cu lead down middle & back & cast into 2nd place.
- B1 B2 as above.

1780 PORTSMOUTH ASSEMBLY

- A1 A2 as Portsmouth Review
- B1 as Bridgewater Camp A2
- B2 Hands four round and back.

- 1776 CHRISTCHURCH ELECTION - duple, improper
 A1 1st cu cast off down outside & lead up middle to place.
 A2 1st cu cross over & down outside of opposite side & lead up middle to place then cast off into 2nd place.
 B1 Dosido right hand person, dosido partner
 B2 Dosido left hand person dosido partner.
- 1771 SALISBURY ASSEMBLY
 A1 1st cu cast out & go down outside of set & back on same path to place.
 A2 Hands four round and back
 B1 1st cu down middle & back & cast into 2nd cu place
 B2 Right hands across & back with the left
- 1771 SOUTHAMPTON ASSEMBLY
 A1 Hands four round and back
 A2 1st cu lead down middle & cast out up the outside to 2nd place
 B Right hands across & back with left
- 1791 EXETER ASSEMBLY
 A 1st cu cast off & go down outside lead up middle to place & cast into 2nd place.
 B1 Rights and lefts with cu above
 B2 Rights and lefts with cu below
- 1796 PORTSDOWN TELEGRAPH
 A1 1st man set to 2nd girl (backstep) & turn once around to place
 A2 2nd man 1st girl ditto
 B1 1st cu cross over giving right hands into opposite place, cast out down into 2nd place; turn partner till back to proper side in 2nd place.
 B2 Rights and lefts with cu above.
- 1802 TRIP TO PORTLAND
 A1, A2 as Portsdown Telegraph
 B1 1st cu lead down middle & back & cast into 2nd place
 B2 Hands four round and back
- 1802 LUL'ORTH COVE
 A1 1st cu set and swing partner round once with right hand and cast off down one place.
 A2 2nd cu ditto to place
 B1 All go down middle & back 2nd cu making arch in return & 1st cu ducking back under it into 2nd place.
 B2 Hands four round and back.
- 1802 WEYMOUTH FETE - improper
 A1 Set to partner & half right and left through.
 A2 Repeat to place
 B1 1st cu down middle & back & cast into 2nd place
 B2 Pousette or dance round once.
- 1802 SPITHEAD FLEET - 3 cu set
 A1 1st cu cast off into 2nd place, cross over to opposite side, cast down into 3rd place, and turn partner to proper side.
 A2 1st cu return to place on same path
 B1 1st cu lead down middle & cast off round 3rd cu into 2nd place lead through 2nd cu to top & cast off into 2nd place
 A3 "Foot contrary corners & turn" ie balance & swing - 1st man with 3rd girl, 1st girl with 2nd man
 A4 ditto with other corner
 B2 lines face out & lead out to side, turn, lead back & turn (or swing partner)
- TRIP TO WEYMOUTH
 A1 Right and left through & back
 A2 1st cu cross over go down outside & lead up middle to place, then cast off down one.
 B1 Set contrary corner & turn, as A3 for Spithead Fleet
 B2 as A4 Spithead Fleet
 C1 Hands four round at bottom and back
 C2 Rights and lefts at the top (and 1st cu cast to bottom)