

## BRACKLEY

Material offered for Brackley workshop with Bourne Bumpers on 5 October 91.

### STEPS :

- Ordinary** : single step, hopping as high as comfortable, so not very fast.
- Sidestep** : a open sidestep, usually short (1 bar), done sideways when on spot and diagonally forward when moving.
- Capers** : "plain" or "quick" (L R) and "spring" (L r r). The modern habit of taking these faster than the ordinary stepping is not traditional.
- Start** : on outside foot or with left when not clear.
- Breaks** : it is important to stand on balls of feet with heels close and toes turned out (about 60° included angle) so that one foot can be rotated on the ball of one foot past the other foot.
- Short Break** : (takes 1 beat and 1 bar) bring the feet together instead of making the last hop in a bar of single step, then feet apart and feet together again in the last bar. The feet apart is done very quickly.
- "Rear-Up"** : eg. rotate the right foot till it points to the right side while the left is straightened to point forward. Turn left foot to point to left and straighten right. Jump to land feet apart and then jump again to land feet together. There is a rise and fall of the body but no twist of the body (dont wriggle the rearside!).

### HAND MOVEMENTS :

**Low Twists** with both hands, at side of body, one twist per single step, level from hip to breast level, with an emphasis on the "lift" on the strong beat, and nearly in the vertical plane and nearly facing forward. In the open sidestep only the leading hand is used and the twist is somewhat higher up. In the spring caper use a half of a twist in and up in front, but then down and out back along the same path.

**Waves** (large twists) are used for the plain capers.

On the breaks, a "balance" for the "rear-up", upper arm down at side and lower arm out, and "down-&up" for the apart-together, from the elbow not the shoulder.

### FIGURES :

#### Once-to-Yourself (O2Y)

Stand in place facing up and do 1 bar break, apart-together in last bar.

#### Foot-Up-&Down (FD&U) and Foot-Down-&Up (FD&U)

All face up (down) and dance on spot, turning out to face down (up) at half way on the jump, all face down (up) and dance on the spot and turning in to face across on the jump at the end.

**Short form** : only the first half is danced, it is 8 bars long and has a full 2 bar "rear-up" but to end facing across.

**Long form** : each half is 8 bars and has a full 2 bar "rear-up".

**Side-By-Side (SBS)**

All face across and dance into a single line, shoulder-to-shoulder with opposite dancer, along the centre line of the set, return to place and repeat to be other shoulder-to-shoulder, etc.

**Short form** : each half is 4 bars. Dancers move forward into line to be right shoulder to opposite (1 bar) and face alternate directions dancing on the spot (1 bar), retire to starting place (1 bar) and a short 1 bar break. Repeat going to be left shoulder to opposite.

**Long form** : each half is 8 bars. Dancers move forward into line to the left of their opposite and odds turn clockwise, towards opposite, so that all face to odds side (2 bars) and dance on spot (2 bars), return to place and face across (2 bars) and a full 2 bar "rear-up". Repeat, going to the right of opposite and evens turn anti-clockwise for all to face to evens side. In both halves the dancers could do the travelling in 1 bar so that there are 4 bars of dancing on the spot in line.

**Back-to-Back (B2B)**

All take a near half turn to their right to face down or up set and dance an open side step to the left across the set passing in front of opposite, move a little forward passing right shoulders and return to place with an open sidestep to the right (2 bars in all), facing across and dance on the spot. Repeat the other way. The dancers reverse direction on the hop of the first sidestep, giving themselves a good push back.

**Short form** : quick back-to-back followed by 1 bar dancing on the spot and the 1 bar break.

**Long form** : quick back-to-back followed by 4 bars dancing on the spot and a full 2 bar "rear-up".

**Whole-Hey (WH)**

All face across throughout. It is a "slipping" hey. The top pair move sideways to the bottom of the set in 2 bars, without moving forward or back to avoid collisions whilst travelling. The other pairs move up one place, the original middles going outside the tops by moving in a curved path in bar 1 and the original bottoms going inside the tops in a curved path in bar 2. They all dance on the spot till the end of the phrase. The hey is then danced to place in the same way, the new middles going outside and the new tops going inside the pair coming up from the bottom. The other two pairs move to complete a loop in the both halves and do not go back along the same path.

**Short form** : dance on the spot for 1 bar and 1 bar break.

**Long form** : dance on the spot for 4 bars and then a full 2 bar "rear-up".

**Ring-&-All-In (R&AI)**

Dances usually end with dance facing into centre along diagonals in a ring, possibly moving backwards a little first, and ending all into the centre with 4 plain capers at the all-in.

Don't get caught about directions when set is reversed or on opposite sides!

Also in particular dances,

#### Show-Out (known also as partners-circle or cross-over)

Only exists in a short form of 4 bars each half. All face across and dance across to opposite's place, passing by right shoulders, turning to right to face back and 1 bar break, repeating to place passing right shoulders again, ending with either 1 or 2 bar break.

#### Whole-Rounds

Only exists in a short form of 8 bars, danced clockwise without a break at half way. An alternative opening figure for a dance to foot-up and the common start for stick dances in the 1920's.

#### Half-Rounds

Can be clockwise or anti-clockwise, 4 bars either way. Usually incorporated into a chorus.

#### Half-Hey

Half a whole-hey, usually called "Hey-Down" or "Hey-Up" depending on where the leading pair starts.

#### ORDER OF FIGURES :

Dances were varied to suit the audience, both in order, structure and particularly in length according to the interest they evoked. There was a great deal of flexibility as there were the long and short versions of each figure and there was a practice of interpolating extra figures through the dances, usually FU&D, FD&U or WH, but any particular performance would be constructed to a pattern. (DF=chorus)

When the dances were shown to Cecil Sharp by the Howards they were danced at great length and the following orders were noted.

1. FU&D; DF; SBS both ways; DF; B2B both ways; DF; R&AI, or Hey-Down; Hey-Up; R&AI.
2. as (1) but all figures double length, either short or long FU&D and second figure often FD&U.
3. as (2) but the SBSs & B2Bs separated by DF.
4. as (1) to (3) but Hey-Downs and Hey-Ups interpolated. eg from (3), FU; DF; FU; SBS; Hey-Down or possibly FU; DF; SBS; DF; Hey-Up or FD; DF; B2B; DF; Hey-Down; DF; B2B; DF; Hey-Up; DF; R&AI. Sometimes there was only one SBS or B2B.
5. as (1) to (3) but FU&D or FD&U before each figure, eg from (3), FU&D; DF; FD&U; DF; FU&D; SBS; DF; FD&U; SBS; FU&S; B2B; DF; FD&U; B2B; DF; Hey-Down; Hey-Up; R&AI.

Or instead of last chorus in dances in which dancers are in "wrong" place or on the "wrong" side. end, Hey-Up; Hey-Down; Hey-Up; Cross-Over; R&AI.

In this example SBS and B2B can be doubled at both ends.

When the dances were collected by Kenworthy Schofield et al they were very short, just the minimum to indicate the dance but this may have been the normal practice in the 1920's. It is recommended that each dance picked has a different structure chosen for it to keep to the tradition!

## THE HANDKERCHIEF DANCES

The Handkerchiefs were large and held by two diametrically opposite corners.

In all corner movements the dancers substituted plain capers for sidesteps and single steps at will. Usually when they had a large audience and felt energetic. With the length of the dances it was also the custom for the musician to indicate when it was the last corner crossing by the middles so that it could be done to plain capers as a sign to the rest of the set of the end of the dance coming. The habit has grown up in recent years of substituting plain capers for the 3rd and 4th choruses of corner dances, but this would only be recommended if the team's capering is very good!

Collected dances :

### JOCKEY TO THE FAIR

Properly collected tune has 8 bar A and 12 bar B music.

Sharp suggested a short order of long figures FU&D; FD&U; SBS; B2B; & all-in on last chorus. The full version is given in the Morris Book 3. Hamer and others preferred and have taught inserting a WH. This is the one dance normally done with the long figures.

**Chorus** : Corners - 4 sidesteps to change across the diagonal and turn to face back (4 bars), 4 single steps to approach in the centre (2 bars), 4 vigorous plain capers (2 bars), 4 single steps to retire (2 bars) and a full "rear-up" in the opposite diagonal's place.

### BONNETS SO BLUE

Named tune or "Bonny Blue Handkerchief" as collected or as published song. Dance starts with Whole-Rounds.

**Chorus** : Corners - 4 sidesteps, 4 single steps & a full "rear-up".

### HASTE TO THE WEDDING

(1) corners - as Bonnets So Blue but 2 plain capers in bar 5.

(2) facing across, long open sidestep to left and right and half-hey, with 2 plain capers in bar 5 as starting hey, and then repeat all that to place.

### THE HOLLOW HILLS

As Haste to Wedding (2) but movements shortened to fit tune.

### LINKED HANDKERCHIEF DANCES

Tunes : "Old Woman Tossed Up" and "Shepherds Hey".

Linked handkerchiefs held in right hand (possibly one red and one blue).

**Chorus** : Show-Out and Whole-Hey.

The Hey is done with slip steps, without the breaks, and all pairs go all the way round. For the first tune it is one W-H and dance in position, and for the other tune it is W-H ad lib as fast as possible, like a sword dance roll. For the hey the pairs come in from either end passing under first. It is possible that for Shepherds Hey the later figures were missed out and the dancers try to get through even more rolls of the hey in each repeat, and the music can speed up.

**Composed Dances :****LADS A BUNCHUM**

Dance collected from an earlier (c.1870) Brackley dancer when living at Hinton-in-the-Hedges interpreted by Sharp in 1922 into the Brackley (c.1910).

**Chorus :** corners, half-hey, corners and half-hey back.

In the first half corners start right foot and dance 2 plain capers, a double step, 2 single steps, 2 plain capers and on the second do a special movement. The corners retire to their starting place while the next corner is beginning. After each corner has danced, all do a half hey, meaning that the repeat corners is done by different pairs of dancers (1&4, 3&2, 5&6). The repeat is done off the other foot, starting left.

The collected special movements for bar 4 are (1) kick feet (2) shake hands and (3) touch hat or touch forehead and wave. These are not characteristic movements for women and look wrong so (1) stamping with both hands in hips (2) slap one hand together (3) a curtsy, are suggested.

**FIRST MORRIS**

**Tune :** chose something like "Portsmouth".

**Chorus :** half-rounds clockwise in 4 bars to opposite corners, then first corner 4 capers back across the diagonal passing left shoulders, so that going easy way into the second half of the chorus, then the second corner capers across also passing left shoulders. This has to be a flowing movement so the first corner does not finish crossing on the 4 capers. The middles and inactive corners single step on the spot, and the middles do not caper across at all. Repeat to place doing half-rounds anticlockwise and caper across passing right shoulders and turning to face across.

**As a Processional On :** processional in 2 columns, chorus, show-out & face up.

**EURO DANCE (Swindon)**

**Tune :** chose something like the EEC Anthem.

**Chorus :** face across to start, all short open sidestep to left and turn in a loop to left on 2 single steps to face back, all short open sidestep to right and turn in a loop to right to face across. Cross set passing right shoulders and turn to right into half-rounds clockwise to reach own side but set reversed. Repeat sidesteps, turns and half-rounds or mirror-image half-round back the other way.

**OWL DANCE (Roy Dommett)**

**Tune :** special Roys's tune.

**Chorus :** there are 8 changes, each taking 2 bars, done with single steps. Dancers turn to face direction of travel at start of change. When not crossing, the two free dancers turn outwards on spot with a spring caper and 2 plain capers.

(1) 1&4, 3&6 (2) 2&6, 1&5 (3) 4&5, 2&3 (4) opposites 1&2, 3&4, 5&6.

Set is now reversed and on the other side to at the start. Repeat, with the same persons changing in the same order.

## SPEED THE PLOUGH (John Glaister)

## Chorus :

Everyone does a short open sidestep to left and right and then a spring caper and 2 plain capers. It is the path that varies.

Bar 1 : all face across, all except first corners do short open sidestep to their left along the set, while the first corner, quickly turning clockwise to right, crosses the diagonal with only one sidestep, leading with the left, passing face to face.

Bar 2 : all face across, all except second corner do short open sidestep to their right moving back to starting place, while second corner, quickly turning anticlockwise to the left, crosses the diagonal with only one sidestep, leading with the right, passing face to face.

Bar 3-4 the corners turn out on the spot with spring caper and 2 plain capers, while the middles cross the set to change sides passing right also with the spring caper and 2 plain capers turning. All end facing round set clockwise.

Bar 5-8 all half-rounds clockwise to starting place and end facing across.

## In the Repeat :

Bar 1-2 as above.

Bar 3-4 as above but middles pass left shoulders and all end facing round set anticlockwise.

Bar 5-8 all half rounds anticlockwise.

## SPANISH LADY - Catherine of Aragon (Jackstraws)

Chorus : In two parts

Part 1 : all face up.

Bar 1-2 :top pair short open sidestep to left and right, moving forward a little, while rest stand still or start to walk forward.

Bar 3-4 :middle pair short open sidestep to left and right moving forward while the top pair dance down the outside to the bottom on a spring caper and 2 plain capers. Bottom pair walk 4 steps forward.

Bar 5-6 :bottom pair short open sidestep to left and right moving forward while the middle pair dance down the outside to the bottom on a spring caper and 2 plain capers. Top pair walk 4 steps forward.

Bar 7-8 :bottom pair dance down outside to the bottom with a spring caper and 2 plain capers and rest dance up the middle to their starting place with a spring caper and 2 plain capers.

Part 2 : all face centre of set in a ring.

Bar 1-4 :dance into centre to form a tight ring, arms at sides, music quiet, join hands with neighbours but not obvious to audience.

Bar 5-6 :raise arms quickly, hands still joined, to form a crown, and start to dance backwards to place.

Bar 7-8 :let go hands, face across, and dance a spring caper and 2 plain capers.

Ends of dances will need sorting out as Ring & All In can be inappropriate.

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