

## ILMINGTON BUFFOON

**Source** : Sharp saw Sam Bennett's side dance a comic Buffoon dance and commented on it with reference to the Wyresdale dance in the Sword Books. Bennett gave it to Kenworthy Schofield as a dance in a line of six and here it is combined with the village revival's interpretation of the dance which they do in a normal morris set.

**Music** : Ilmington version of the tune.

**Steps** : single or double steps for the reel, depending on which period of Ilmington morris is being simulated.

**Set** : in a line of six, 1> <2 3> <4 5> <6, to start.

A1/2 Reel of Six for 16 bars, ending in two rings of three, one at each end of the set, 1, 2 & 3; 4, 5 & 6.

B1 bar 1 on each beat, one person in each circle claps both hands together, slaps their right knee with their right hand, strikes their right hand on their right hand neighbour's shoulder, ie going round anticlockwise, pause.

bar 2 on the first beat, knee the same neighbour up their backside.

bar 3/4 the receiver does it to their right hand neighbour.

bar 5/6 the last does it to the first.

bar 7/8 all get back to their place in the line, perhaps turning round.

*(use hop backsteps and a step and jump)*

A3/4 Reel of Six.

B2 as before but instead of kneeling, make a feint with the fist.

This sequence was repeated ad lib.

The village side has the order of 'business' as kick backside, punch the face, stamp on the left foot, and pull the nose. They end the dance by going into whole rounds and all-in from the reel.

## CORNISH THREE HAND REELS

Source : "Troyl II", Seven Cornish Dances by Gans Merv and Alison Davey, published by Cam Kernewek, 1982. The following is a transcript.

Steps : setting and travelling steps.

This is a name for a type of Cornish step dancing performed by a limited number of people, not necessarily three. All three hand reels have some things in common: they are all danced in heavy shoes to lively reel tunes, the step is quit complex but the pattern of the dance itself fairly simple.

These dances were most commonly done in a farm kitchen or similar situation where on a stone flagged floor the scoots (or as they are called in West Cornwall - Qs and Toe plates) must have made a terrific noise especially when, as was traditional, the dancers marked the end of the musical phrases with a heavy stamp step.

In his idealised tales of Celtic Cornwall Bottrel writes in 1870 of a reunion where they "...sang old men's songs over and over, they dancd hornpipes and three hand reels, Margaret showing off many of the steps for which she was famous in her younger days".

As to the music, the tunes were often more important than the words which were frequently nonsense or simply a form of mouth music. At the time of writing the tunes would all appear to have been in reel time which is less common than polka or hornpipe rhythm in Cornish traditional dancing. The tune shown has become known as 'the three hand reel' and is in fact a variant of a popular Scottish reel.

One elderly gentle man we talked to went from farmhouse to farmhouse with his friends during the festive seasons and danced these reels in exchange for access to the cider barrel. This would seem to have been common practice within the moorland farming communities up until the Second WW

Nineteenth century written evidence coorborates remarkably with information gathered from oral sources as far apart as Penzance, Boscastle, and Looe. Although more detailed accounts have been given to us from individuals living in the North of Cornwall this form of dance would seem to have been widespread throughout the Duchy at one time.

This is a dance for three people standing in a line. The step is as follows: Step forward onto the right foot, hop on this foot and at the same time bring the left leg forward with the knee straight so that the heel of this left foot strikes the ground level with the toe of the right foot. Repeat, stepping forward with the left foot this time.

Calling the three dancers A, B and C, the dance begins with A and B facing each other, C facing B's back. A and B passing each other right shoulders commence a reel of 3 which continues for 16 bars to finish with A in the centre facing C. A turns to face B and they set to each other for 4 bars. A then turns around to face C and they set to each other for 4 bars. The reel begins again from this position, A and C passing each other right shoulders, this time C will finish in the centre. This pattern is repeated 6 times in all, thus every dancer has done the dance from every position twice.

## KEYNSHAM CHRISTMAS DANCE

**From** : collected from William Neal of 58, Temple Street, Keynsham, Somerset by James Maddison Carpenter about 1930. He had learned the play from his older brother 50 years previously, who in turn had learned it from older boys.

**Steps** : walk, skip-change step, plain capers.

**Stick** : each dancer has a long morris stick, equivalent to a mummer's "sword", usually carried resting on the right shoulder.

**Set** : four in a line, facing the centre, 2 > 1 > < 1 < 2, with a wider gap in the middle at the start.

**Source Material,**

## Handwritten Text.

*"(4 reel around twice - 2 dance by themselves)*

*2 1 1 2*

*Two 'ones' walk past each other on the right (first tune) tapping swords from right to left and second mans sword from left to right, passing behind No.2's, always turning towards stationary men. Position 1 2 2 1. Then two's go through the same figure, chaning position back to 2 1 1 2.*

*(second tune) Then 'ones' dance through same figure, clashing swords as before, as they reel. Position 1 2 2 1. Then twos repeat dance, bringing position back to 2 1 1 2. Then 2's face about and dance and so the dance ends with two couples facing each other."*

## Typed Text.

*"Dance - reeling in fours.*

*Men lined in groups of twos, one behind the other. Two first men advance, clash swords, pass each other on the right, clash swords backhandedly with other men as they pass. At the back, turn left, line is reversed, and the two last men, becoming first, go forward as before. Do this step twice. Then inside men turn round and face men behind, other two standing waiting. The four advance and tap swords, (reeling), then pass on and tap backhandedly with others, as before.*

*(Only four dancing)."*

Why there are two texts is unknown. The handwritten one is untypical of the rest of the collector's mss. It may be derived from a Mr Crease.

In some known dances it is obvious that the dancers did the repeats with increasing elaboration without it being reflected in the collected notation. As a principle this feature will be assumed for these dances that would otherwise be very simple. Performers are free to dance them how they wish!

A1/2: Walk and Clash : The first decision is on when to clash. It could be on the first step, which does not let the dance flow too well, or the last step, which makes the change into the following movement rushed, or the third step, which here is recommended as a good compromise.

On 4 walking steps the 1's approach and pass right shoulders, hitting stick tips from right to left (forehand) on the 3rd step. They then

approach and pass the 2's by the left shoulders in 4 walking steps, hitting stick tips from left to right (backhander) on the 3rd step, and turn to their left to face back ending in the 2's position. The 2's stand still during the 1st clash and then step forward into the 2nd clash only on the last step. While the original 1's stand still, the 2's now do what the 1's did, until the line is reversed. Repeat all this to place, then the 1's turn on the spot on the last step to face their own 2's.

- B1: Stick with the one facing, 1 with a 2, plain capering on the spot and hitting tips alternately from right to left and from left to right.
- B2: Reel of Four with a skip change step, with no handing or sticking. End in the same positions as at the start.
- A3/4: As A1/2.
- B3/4: Reel of Four - for each change, hit the one facing twice, right to left, and left to right, on plain capers on the spot, and move onto the next using two ordinary walking steps.
- A5+: Reel of Four with skip-change step, clashing tips on the first beat of each bar as they pass each dancer, the direction of hit as being appropriate to the passing. Suggest repeat while speeding up.

## MUCH WENLOCK

**Source** : Dave Jones book "The Roots of Welsh Border Morris".  
**Steps** : Jogging run.  
**Stick** : 12 inch long, held by four dancers only.  
**Music** : "Yankee Doodle" and "Tipperary" played very quickly.  
**Set** : 10 people, 4 with sticks, others are music, eg. an accordion, 2 with bones, a triangle or mouthorgan and 2 with tambourines. (Suggest that a side without so many musicians should have people equipped with two short sticks which they hit together rapidly, right on left downwards and upwards)

m x m x m

m x m x m

**Sticking** : / x x x x / x - x - / ad lib, danced by the stickmen, either, (a) standing on spot (b) going round opposite (like whole gyp, possibly more than once). (Suggest use choruses alternately)

### Figures :

1. Cross over passing left shoulder and turn to the right to face back, cross back and arm with left once round as pass to end in starting place.
2. One stand still while others dance a circle around them. (Suggest that this one of each pair of stickmen and the other four at their end dance a circle round them and back)
3. Hey for 3. (Suggest done by 2 stickmen + one other, like "three-tops" either/or/or both with the middle pair 'going to their right' or an end going to their left)
4. Cast. (Suggest from the top, down outside and up centre)
5. Zig-zag processional figure. (Suggest ignore in set dance)

## NUTS IN MAY - LICHFIELD

- Source** : derived from the Lichfield mss, Ring Instructionals and filming of Green Man Morris. One view of the origin of the Lichfield dances is that a number of dancers from different West Midland places were brought together and their dances rationalised when the last Lichfield team was formed. They were reputed to be mostly coal merchants. The oddest dance is "Nuts in May" which looks like a Four Handed dance cobbled together with figures to be consistent with the rest. This is a suggestion of how it might be done for four.
- Music** : a jig like "Nuts In May".
- Steps** : Lichfield Caper - described as "caper-caper-swing-&-change". The steps are R L hL R, the first being two springs or low capers, falling-back or drawing-back a little, then the right leg is bent back vigorously, while there is a deemphasised hop or body rise and fall which can not be avoided, then there is a high caper moving forward to change feet. The body should be upright and not leaning forward for the leg swing-back of the third movement. The hands start from out at side and swing up and out a little on step one, in and down in a large movement on step two, up and out on step three and throw out on four.
- : Scissors Step - not described in mss but interpreted as cross legs left in front, legs apart, cross legs right in front and land feet together, side by side. When carrying a stick it is held up above head level. Afterwards the arms can be crossed and swung apart in time with the legs.
- Set** : the four dancers start in a single line, 1) 2) <3 <4.

### FIGURES

1. Step on the spot, carrying a stick, in both hands, sloping across chest. Two double steps and scissors stepping holding stick up, repeated.
2. Complete Reel of Four. Start with 2&3 passing in centre and 1&4 joining in on the next passing.
3. Complete Reel of Four as (2).
4. Step on the spot, as (1), but without the stick.

### CHORUSES

#### A. PUSH AWAY STICKS

The centres, 2&3, face and dance two double steps, do the scissors, and two Lichfield capers, leading off of the right then the left foot. They then advance with sticks held high, cross them and push each other away, turning to dance back to the end places. The other two, 1&4, repeat, starting as the first pair advance to push away. As they push away they turn into the following figure and throw their stick to the side. The difficulty in performing the movement comes from the repetition of the Lichfield caper. I recommend that the second is missed and the push away done in its place.

#### B. PUSH AWAY HANDS

As A, but advance and fall onto each other's hands and push away.

#### C. PUSH AWAY FEET

As B, but advance and spring into a crouching position, putting the soles of right feet together and push away. Each is caught by the man behind.

## PEOPLETON

**Source** : Maud Karpeles mss, loose letter from one of White Ladies Aston sources, seen at her flat in 1960 when transcribing dances.

**Music** : "Pop Goes the Weasel".

**Sticks** : short.

**Step** : double step with knee raised high, shin vertical.

**Set** : 8 dancers in two lines.

### STICK DANCE

#### CHORUS

Bars 1-2 : Opposites hit tips, high r to l, low r to l, repeated.

Bars 3-4 : With neighbours along the sides ditto.

Bars 5-6 : as bars 1-2.

Bars 7-8 : Opposites hit tips in front of face as they cross over, on the "Pop" in the words, passing right shoulders, turning to the right to face back across the set.

Do not repeat immediately to place, but repeat figure from the wrong side.

#### FIGURES

Each figure is done twice, first from place and then from opposite.

1. 8 bars on the spot facing across the set to opposite.
2. Back-to-back across the set, both ways.
3. Circles in fours, both ways.
4. Hands across (star) in fours, both ways.
5. Reel of four along the sides.
6. Back-to-back along the sides of the set, both ways, Nos 1&2 with Nos 5&6, Nos 3&4 with Nos 7&8

### HANDKERCHIEF DANCE

**Music** : "Cock O'The North"

**Handks** : two large coloured handkerchiefs.

#### CHORUS

Bars 1-4 : Step on spot facing opposite, hands at sides, with backstep.

Bars 5-6 : 4 plain capers on spot, with high waves of hands.

Bars 7-8 : Cross-Over to opposite place, passing right shoulders, with hopsteps, and turn right to face back.

## PERSHORE "NOT FOR JOES"

There were several dances, to different tunes, with a stick, sometimes a stick and a handkerchief, and very occasionally two handkerchiefs. Neither the form of sticking or the choice of figures was fixed.

**Source** : Dave Jones book "The Roots of Welsh Border Morris".  
**Steps** : Hop step with free foot swung across to be in front of other.  
**Stick** : 18 inch long by 1½ inch diameter.  
**Music** : For BLACK BOY used "Not For Joe", for MONKEY COCKED HIS TAIL UP used "Keel Row" also used "John Peel" and two others.  
**Set** : 8 dancers in two rows of 4. Dances start with sticking.

### STICKING

**Strike Sticks** : first one line then the other hits, one handed, right to left and left to right (two or four bars each turn).

**Double Batting** : hit tips right to left and butts left to right one handed.

**Clapping** : one side hits while other side hold stick still in both hands.

Always dance and sing at the same time as sticking.

### FIGURES

1. "Circles" : half rounds either way, sticking at half way and at end.
2. Set rotates as a whole while sticking.
3. One side dance across set and circle partner 3 times and retire to place.
4. "Longing Shank" : No 7 goes up outside his side of set, turns in at the top and goes down the centre to No 5's original place. The rest have moved into the centre to meet (Suggest half gip - right shoulders) and retire backwards to be one place round clockwise (Suggest Nos 1&8 do a 180° turn when in line). (Suggest repeat four times to reverse set)
5. "Hands Round" : in 2's or 3's (Suggest add ninth person such as musician at top to make 3 stars of 3).
6. "Cross Diagonals" : 8 goes to be in front of 1, 2 in front of 7, 6 in front of 3, 4 in front of 5. Path is in front of the others, in that order. It is not a hey. Repeat or other side do it. (Suggest the latter to get set back to starting place after fig 4)
7. "Long Cross Over".
8. "Bicycle Chain" : progressive reel from top.
9. "Dance Across" : shunt like movement 1 to 4, 4 to 5, 5 to 3, 3 to 7 etc
10. "Whole rounds" : at the end of the dance.

Other figures remembered. (but not recommended).

A. In fours, diagonals change and back in turn.

B. "Back to Back".

There were other figures not remembered, but they all appear to be simple.



## SKOBO

- Source** : developed from "European Folk Dance" by Joan Lawson, revised 1955. The Swedish have lost all their male dances except for the comic dances, such as Oxdansen and Skobo, which originated among the undergraduates of men's colleges during the 19th century and which often degenerate into horse-play. But the men of Dinkelsbühl in Germany perform Guild dances of a Morris-like character brought over by the Swedes in 1632.
- Music** : it has its own tune in 3/4.
- Set** : for two or four men, with very slow movements.

- A1 1-8 Four men in a circle, facing in, touching their neighbour's hands palm to palm, walk 3 steps slowly to the right for one bar, appearing to be pushing, commencing with the left foot, that is, the first step is crossed. Stop with an "Appel" or form of stamp with the whole body going down into the movement of the stamping foot, which is placed in front of the supporting leg, on the first beat of bar 2. Look around as if doubtful of continuing, or as if someone has made wind! Repeat four times in all.
- A2 1-8 Repeat the whole movement, but circling to the left, and making the Appel very determined!
- B1 1 Let go of hands and make a complete small circle to the right on one's own, with three steps, starting with the left foot.
- 2 Two opposite dancers quickly kneel on the right while their neighbours stamp their right foot heavily on the ground and swing their left foot over the kneeling men's heads.
- 3-4 Repeat with the others kneeling and the first dancers swinging their right leg over the heads.
- 5-6 All walk round to their right in a small circle and then bend forward so that their foreheads, or the tops of their heads, touch in the centre.
- 7-8 All take three steps to make a half turn to their right, bending backwards to keep their heads in contact. Straighten up.
- B2 1-7 Repeat B1 1-7.
- 8 Straighten up violently so that backsides hit and they vigorously push each other apart. The one who gets it in first spreads the others about!

Repeat ad lib.