

Knights of King Ina

Beginner's Jig Workshop 17th November 2013

Fieldtown

References used

Lionel Bacon (LB), Bert Cleaver (BC), Cecil Sharp (C#), JEFDSS, Clive Carey (CC), R. Kenworthy Schofield (RKS) and Roy Dommett (RD)

Background

The dances of Fieldtown, along with Sherborne, was considered the “ballet of the Cotswolds” meaning that C# felt that they represented the highest pinnacle in the development of the Morris. This style is widely danced and interpreted in the Morris world. The contents here represent a “back to first principles” look at Fieldtown that may depart from some current practice in other teams.

Style

Graceful with poise (LB) and with control and vigorous (RKS) the dances tend to be taken slowly and emphasize the lift from the ground and not the travel across the ground, 6-7 feet of travel being considered enough in set dances (CC,BC).

There is an accent on the preparatory hop before the surge of the dance on the first beat (LB) of a section, this preparation on the anacrusis with the feint step or hop is a feature of the tradition. The slower pace and emphasis on height leads to bounce with the necessary control.

Formula Movements

- Right foot lead. The repeat is left foot lead.
- Where the steps in a bar are noted a / is used as the bar separator.
- Arms are described as “place and slow down” the travel from up to down takes 3 of the 4 beats in a bar, the 4th beat is when the arms are brought smartly back up with a flick of the wrist to make the hankies stand up. Control and vigour – the control is the smooth flow of the hands and the vigour is the height achieved.

Steps

- Steps are double (step right, step left, step right, hop right), free foot kicked in front, thigh at no more than 45 deg and avoiding knees up or heels up style, weight on the toes lower leg relaxed, knee slightly bent. The change in supporting foot is in the air, rising off the weight bearing foot before the free foot is placed on the floor. (ds)
- Hop Back Steps, step onto the right foot, placed behind the left, hop on the right. During this hop the left foot is turned heel inward so the heel comes well across in front of the weight bearing right foot. The toe of the twisted foot remains on the ground. (hbs)
- Plain caper – a leap from one foot to another as high as possible; arms down on the 1st PC and up on the second. (PC)
- Side steps can be open or closed; in either case the trailing foot is placed behind the lead foot on beat 2. Long and short sidestep sections are used. A long side step is step, behind, step, behind followed by a double step in feet terms this will be / r l r l / r l r hr /. A short side

step is step, behind, step, hop or / r l r hr /. (Long = / cs cs / css / and the lead foot indicated as l or r; and short = / css / and the lead foot again indicated)

- Feet together jump. (ftj)
- Galley – in this example a galley right is to – BEAT 1 - plant the right foot whilst lifting the left knee high enough to form a right angle at the hip. The lower leg should hang down making a right angle at the knee. The toe is not pointed. BEAT 2 – 2 quick hops on the right leg turning the body as far as the dance requires, the left foot (non weight bearing) is circled twice in quick circles to aid the turn of the body, typically followed by feet together jump where the movement required can be finished. BC says do not turn into the galley meaning the initial plant of the foot should not aid the rotation that is next needed. Other sources and modern practice do not emphasize this. But KOKI have been taught to galley this way in Fieldtown dances. (g)
- Hocklebacks – this is a back stepping movement with greater show than a hop back. Arms are out. Swing the foot in an arc from the hip (get the knees apart) to place the foot where the other one is – the free foot should knock the other one out of the way; hop on the weight bearing foot whilst the arc is made. This is done on the spot. (hkbs)

Arms

- Gather – the preparation for a jump or other high movement
- Show – one or both arms thrown up high e.g lead arm in side steps
- High Up – arms up hands above the head – used in a Jump
- Up – arms out in front at shoulder height, elbows slightly bent. Double stepping. Place and slow, with the flick on the hop of the double step.
- Out – arms out to the sides hands at shoulder height elbows bent. This is the end position for out and it takes about a half bar of music to reach there from the starting position at chest level. The movement is a deliberate push to the side to reach the out position. Used in hop back steps where the hands make a small fig 8 pattern.
- Waves – a circle in the vertical plane both hands at hip level.

Figures

- Once to yourself – a preparatory movement to start the dance. In bars 7 and 8 dance 2 hop backs and feet together jump.
- Foot Up – outside foot start; 2 double steps, galley and feet together Jump. Repeated. This will use 8 Bars of music and is danced up to the music the first time, galley out to face down and FTJ, repeated facing down galley out, to end facing partner on the final Jump.

“Slows”

The emphasis of these sequences is to make the biggest movement on the 3rd beat.

FC – Beetlecrushers.

e.g. right foot

Beat 1 - Make a low hop on the weight bearing foot (left) and tap free foot (right) down in front approx 18”; weight bearing is evenly split; arms out. (rtf; stands for right toe forward)

Beat 2 – feet together, draw back (a kind of scrape); gather hands

Beat 3 – plain caper left; up to down arms – some use waves

Beat 4 – plain caper right; down to up arms – some use waves

Some sources write the final 2 movements as Caper : Step as the beat 3 is more emphasized than the 4th beat.

UC – Upright Caper

e.g. right foot

Beat 1 – tap the toe of the right foot behind the weight bearing left foot (RXB); arms out

Beat 2 – feet together; gather hands

Beat 3 – jump; arms high up

Beat 4 – step onto the right foot; arms down.

Dance Sequence and finish

OY:FU:DF:FC:DF:UC:DF

The Dances

Ladies of Pleasure

The short aid memoir version;

According to RKS a good dancer would do this in a foot of ground.

OY – hop back and feet together jump at the end of the phrase.

FU - / ds / ds / hbs / ftj / repeat - right foot start, left foot repeat

DF - / cssr / cssl / HKBS / HKBS / ds / ds / g / ftj /

FC - / beetle R foot / beetle left foot / hbs / ftj / beetle left foot / beetle right foot / hbs / ftj /

DF

UC – Rxb / lxb / hbs / ftj / lxb / rxb / hbs / ftj /

DF -

Ends 2PC

Lumps of Plum Pudding

This dance can also be danced to Month of May and (Old) Molly Oxford

It incorporates a long sidestep section – see notes above

OY – hop back and feet together jump at the end of the phrase.

FU - / ds / ds / ds / ds / cssr / cssl / hbs / ftj /

DF - /cs csr / cssr / cs csl /cssl / cssr / cssl / g / ftj /

FC - / beetle R foot / beetle left foot / beetle right foot / beetle left foot / hbs / ftj /

DF -

UC – Rxb / lxb / rxb / lxb / css / css / hbs / ftj /

DF –

Ends 2 PC

Princess Royal

OY – hop back and feet together jump at the end of the phrase.

FU - / ds / ds / ds / ds / cssr / cssl / hbs / ftj /

DF - /cs csr / cssr / cs csl /cssl / cssr / cssl / x / x / cssr / cssl / g / ftj /

FC - / beetle R foot / beetle left foot / beetle right foot / beetle left foot / hbs / ftj /
DF -
UC – Rxb / lxb / rxb/ lxb / css / css / hbs / ftj /
DF –

Ends 2 PC

In the jig at x the following is danced

1st time – heel and toe step - / r toe, left heel, right toe, tap left heel launch from right toe to land on / left toe, right heel, left toe; tap right heel / (this leaves the right foot in the air to place for the coming sidestep. The weight on the toe is under the body and the weight transferred to the heel is in front of the body; it becomes a rocking movement.

2nd time – /clap front; clap under right knee; clap front / clap front; clap under left knee; clap front /

3rd time – / clap front; clap front; show / lap front; clap front; show /; the show is a high wave of the right hand 1st time and the left 2nd time.

Other consideration about Jigging

See also Barrant “Six Fools and a Dancer”

Jigs for multiple people

The jigs above are given for one dancer, however they can be danced for two or even more dancers, they could be danced in a set of six and six people doing a solo all at the same time.

Most commonly jigs are for one or two.

There are a number of ways of organising the dances for two, here are some suggestions

Combative jigs – each dancer trying to outdo the other

The most usual format is **turn and turn about** which extends the length of the dance somewhat, it is usual to add a further DF to the end of dances like this where both dancers dance together one final time. This further extends the dance. Danced for yourselves and to a knowledgeable audience this is fine but at a pub outing the audience could be bored by this as could a festival audience who are looking to be entertained.

If you choose to dance this way you might consider adding a degree of byplay from the non-dancing person – interact with the crowd, engage in some fooling; the solution that the Sherborne dancers use is that the non performing dancer dances round to the back, still performing but not detracting from the dancer in the spotlight. Remember if you start a dance you are performing until the dance ends – whether you are doing anything or not.

Another alternative, and one favoured by The Outside Capering Crew, is to **alter the format of the dance** in order to shorten it and to make sure each dancer gets their time in the limelight. They usually dance 2 person dances in this format

OY

1 foot up

2 foot up

1 jig

2FC
1FC
2Jig
Both UC
Both Jig

Making 8 sections rather than the turn and turn about which would have 13 sections.

Collaborative Jigs

Both dancers dance together and on occasion interact. The Fieldtown None So Pretty is a dance of this nature. There is scope to show how good two dancers are at being evenly matched and exactly in time with each other; they dance each the same way and in the same direction. To dance it as a mirror image gives a completely different feel to the dance. Try dancing it back to back, facing away from each other both straight and mirrored. Each form will look different from the audience viewpoint.

Music placement

Traditionally the musicians are UP. You end up dancing to the music (and to the music!) and not to the audience. So long as the musicians can see your feet they can time the music for you (doesn't work with hands – we tried it!) so they can be anywhere (except the bar) to play for the dance.

Performance and Expression

Jigs are necessarily selfish, they are yours to show what you can do, to show off. There is nowhere to hide unlike in a set of six where the form of the whole set is watched rather than individual dancers.

If you are not naturally a show off jig dancing will pose a challenge for you, perhaps you might think of wearing the kit and going out there is playing a role, a mask, you are someone else for a moment (i.e. don't make it too personal and owned).

As with speaking in public, you are performing to one person only, it's just there are multiple ones. Pick a person and dance to them for a while and then dance to another – the more you do this the easier it becomes and the more people you make eye contact with the more the audience will feel engaged.

Above all – if you make a mistake, ignore it, the audience doesn't know unless you tell them - what you did was in your jig even if it's never been in any other jig and NEVER, EVER Stop until the end; remember, the music will find you – keep going and end in style.