

# Devil's Dyke Morris Men - Sherborne style

## Introduction

Sherborne is a majestic Cotswold tradition, physically quite demanding, and, with its 'one hop 2, 3' stepping, a tradition which needs practice and a well-engaged brain. At one time DDMM had 7/8 Sherborne dances in its repertoire - all the common ones and several others. We revived several five years ago, but the tradition has since slipped out of the dance lists while we've concentrated on a smaller range. We intend to do some serious work on re-introducing Sherborne in the 2014-15 practice season.

## The Sherborne dances

Dance types are 'Corner' dances, 'Non-corner' dances, and Jigs. Here's a brief run through of the Sherborne dances. Ones DDMM used to do are indicated with \*.

### Corner dances

Corner dances follow the pattern: Once to Yourself (OY), Foot up (FU) with galleys, (corners, rounds) repeated, finish on whole hey and capers

\***The Orange in Bloom:** Probably the best known, and the one most often performed, especially at Ales. A lovely tune which helps get the stepping right. Dance includes salutes, galleys, stamp capers and upright capers.

\***Lads a-Bunchun:** Similar tune to the Adderbury, but quite a different thing. A tough dance, involving a wider range of movements (including long sidesteps), the final corners involve travelling on upright capers.

\***Monk's March:** An oddity, with its own heel and toe stepping. Although it features corners, it includes non-corner dance features such as 'Face to face'. Quite popular as an indoor pub dance.

\***How do ye Do?:** Corner dance using sidesteps to face partner in the middle then, salute, galley, caper etc. Rarely seen.

**Trunkles:** Long dance, with A,B,C,D music, each corner salutes, then each crosses using galleys, capers etc (a bit like Trunkles Bled in structure).

### Non-corner dances

Non-corner dances follow the pattern: OY, FU with shuffles, (Distinctive figure (DF), Common Figure (CF)) repeated, finish on capers. There are 3 main CFs: 'Set', 'Back to back', 'Face to face'.

\***Constant Billy:** The only stick dance, with two short sticks. DF is stick clashes with partner, half hey, repeat.

\***Cuckoo's nest:** DF: capers by pairs in column, galley, repeat.

\***The Old Woman Tossed Up in a Blanket:** DF is long sidestep, facing across, then half hey, repeat. The same dance can be done to the tunes Blue-eyed Stranger, Highland Mary.

**Young Collins:** DF is Face across, stamp Rt X3, clap 3X, stamp L 3X, clap 3X, half hey, repeat.

### Jigs

\***Go and Enlist for a Sailor:** often done as a double jig. Alternates long sidestep and caper sequences.

**My Lord of Sherborne's jig:** can be done as a set jig or double jig. Involves all the figures including kneeling capers.

**Jockey to the Fair:** similar to Go and Enlist, but sidestep sequence is long, including forrey capers, plain capers.

**Princess Royal:** similar to Go and Enlist, but sidesteps include a hand-clapping sequence.

## How to do the various bits of Sherborne dances

As with any tradition, each full dance is made up of various figures. Once you know the figures you can do the dances. The general style is springy, danced high. Instructions for hands assume handkerchief dance. Stick dance, sticks held loosely swinging at sides.

### Standard double stepping (DS)

Sherborne stepping is double stepping, but with the feet doing 1, hop, 2, 3 instead of the more usual 1,2,3 hop. Some tunes are better than others at reminding you, and good playing helps too. Figures may involve two lots of DS, one lot of DS, or (in jigs) up to 6 lots. You may need to start on either foot. What comes before DS and at the end of it depends on the dance. **There is no feint step (so not like Fieldtown).**

The hands in DS are down and up, starting up at about shoulder height (so coming down on the hop), coming back up again to over-head height by the end of the bar. **If there are 2 bars DS, the second bar is danced with hands high, with two inward twists before coming down again at the end of that second bar.** The twists are opposite direction to Bledington and the hands are higher and horizontal (so quite energetic). The twist is mainly / all from the wrists (not shoulder or elbow!). **This is different to the way most other sides do Sherborne hands - they just do two lots of down and up. The DDMM way is harder but looks a lot better!** Movement should not be snatched.

### Shuffles (Sh)

Shuffles are similar to Bledington ones. They occupy 2 bars of music. The sequence goes:

1. Start on toes, feet parallel, about 12" apart.
2. Jerk backwards a few inches, and bring left heel into instep of right foot.
3. Jerk backwards a few inches, bringing left foot straight again, and with right heel into instep of left foot.
4. Repeat 2 and 3.

Heels shouldn't touch the ground while you do this, and the first and third shuffles are accented. Keep weight evenly distributed throughout. OY is generally Sh, and figures may feature Sh halfway through and / or at the end. Hands held at normal balance position. After the Sh, finish the sequence with either step together (Stog) or feet together jump (Ftj). Hands are kept in balance position out at your sides, at belly height

### Sidesteps (SS)

Sidesteps go to the right (SSR), then to the left (SSL) for 2 bars of music, with a suitable hop in between. Sidestep is **open**. In SSR the right hand goes high, with usual two twists, SSL is same, with the left hand.

### Long sidestep sequence (LSS)

SSR as normal, moving forward at about 45 deg, then shuffle back to start, **keeping the right hand high and twisting (not easy - need your weight on your toes!)**. Followed by a normal SSL.

### Galleys and plain capers (G, PC)

As in other traditions. Hands in balance for G, down up for PC.

### Forrey capers (FC)

Same idea as in Bledington, but with different hand movements. Feet are: *right*, left, right, *left*, right, left. The rhythm is not even: first move (in italics) is long: 'drop onto that foot, pause there for a whole beat while gathering for a high spring onto the other foot'. Hands go down on first beat and come up on beat three. NB: FC are called half capers or fore capers in some of the printed guides.

### Stamp capers (SC)

I've called this sequence Stamp Capers because printed sources confusingly call them either half capers or fore capers. The sequence is :

1. Step onto your Right foot, while bringing your left foot up and backwards ready to
2. Bring your left heel down hard, next to your rt foot (the stamp).
3. Spring off your left onto your right
4. Repeat, this time using the other feet.

Hands (DDMM style). Balance for 1,2, lift high for 3. **NB other sides do this differently**, starting with hands at shoulder height and lowering them slowly.

### **Upright capers (UC)**

Aptly called 'splitters'. Sequence is:

1. Right foot behind
2. Left foot behind
3. Feet together
4. Leap evenly off both feet, kick rt leg forward, left back,
5. Bring legs back under to land on both feet
6. Repeat, other feet

Hands balance and up over head on 4. To make 4, 5 look impressive, focus on jump off both feet and only spread legs once airborne. Keep body upright - don't lean forward. Look straight ahead, don't duck your head. There's more time than you think!

### **Once to yourself (OY)**

Dances all start with Sh, followed by Ftj. Hands go high.

### **Foot up (FU)**

2 bars DS, starting outside foot. In corner dances, G to face out. In non-corner dances, Sh to face out. Then Stog, hands high to face down, repeat, outside foot, to end up facing across the set, finish on Ftj.

### **Set (Set)**

Sequence is:

1. Start facing across. 1 bar DS starting right foot to pass rt shoulders going (only) just beyond partner.
2. Stog, with hands high,
3. Sh back to place. Ftj
4. Repeat, starting left foot, passing left shoulders.

### **Back to back (BtoB)**

Sequence is:

1. Start facing across. 1 bar DS starting right foot to pass rt shoulders going just beyond partner.
2. Stog, leaping sideways off your left foot to pass behind your partner. Hands high
3. Sh back to place. Ftj.
4. Repeat, starting left foot, passing left shoulders.

### **Face to face (FtoF)**

Sequence is:

1. Start facing across. 1 bar DS starting right foot go clockwise round your partner (as per whole gyp).
2. Facing your partner Stog. Hands high. Use this Stog to turn anticlockwise to partner, going a little to his right.
3. Return backwards to place on 1 bar DS, ending Ftj.
4. Repeat, starting left foot, anticlockwise round partner, turn clockwise to come back.

**NB: The guides say come back on sh but in 2009 we decided this was too awkward to do smoothly. You may well find yourself doing single steps in 3 – don't worry about it**

### **Rounds (R)**

Only in the corner dances. As per other traditions. Move c 2 places clockwise round, using 2 bar DS, starting outside foot (ie Left). G out (ie Left). Return anticlockwise (start right foot, G rt into place, Stog). First and second corners' preliminary movement for rounds is: 1 bar DS, Stog. Third corners go straight in to the round.

### **Hey (H)**

Final figure in the corner dances, and part of the DF in most non-corner dances. Same track as Bledington, 2 bars DS, G out, Stog, repeat DS. If it's the end of the dance, finish on 4 PCs, if not the end, Ftj. Which foot to start on? Assuming you're facing across to begin with, start DS with the foot away from the direction you will be going in. That way you'll be able to G out at the end.

## The running order of some Sherborne dances

These are the ones we'll look at in detail.

**Constant Billy** non-corner dance with 2 short sticks. Pattern is OY (Sh), FU (with Sh), DF, Set, DF, BtoB, DF, FtoF, DF, all up on 4 capers at end of final half hey. In all figures, Stog half way through, Ftj at end, and clash sticks together both times. All clashes at eye height.

DF is: (Clashes: tog, rt across, tog, l across, tog, rt across, tog, clash both across (odds clash outwards, evens inwards, half hey)), repeat.

**Cuckoo's Nest** non-corner dance with handkerchiefs Pattern of dance is OY (Sh)), FU (with Sh), DF, Set, DF, BtoB, DF, FtoF, DF, all up on 4 capers at end of final half hey. In figures, Stog half way through, Ftj at end .

DF is done in columns, all facing **down** to start:

- 1st pair (ie nos 5,6) 4 PC starting outside foot. Hands go down, up, down, up. Finish, stay facing down, let hands drop.
- Then 2nd pair (nos 3,4) ditto
- Then 3rd pair (nos 1,2) 2 bars DS, starting outside foot.
- **Then all 6 men galley out (ie onto outside foot - = left for the odd men, right for the evens) and face up**
- Same pattern facing up (1&2 caper, then 3&4 caper, then 5&6 DS), **then all galley out to face across the set, ready for next figure (set / BtoB etc)**

**Orange in Bloom** .... corner dance with handkerchiefs. Pattern is OY, FU (with G, Stog), DF1, R, DF2, R, DF3, R, DF4, H, all up on 4 capers.

DF1: (SSR, SSL, Salute opposite corner (stay on your spot for this), 2 bars DS across, G right, caper caper. next corner comes in on 1 bar DS, Stog). DF2: as DF1 but instead of Salute, G Right, G Left). DF2 as DF1 but no SSR,SSL: just straight in to 4 X SC. DF4 as DF3, but with 4 X UC

**Monk's March** Bare hands dance, compact and used as in-the-pub dance sometimes.

Dance with the heel and toe stepping. Oy (= stamp r, l, r,), Fu, change on hitch-step To F down, end facing across, corners (= (salute, all lean across to oppo, half hey), repeat), Set, corners (single galley rt), BtoB, corners (2XSC), FtoF, corners (SC X2), hey with 4 capers to finish.

### Sources for the above

1. **The Black Book - Lionel Bacon**
2. **Sherborne dances and jigs - Bert Cleaver (1983)**
3. **Notes from original teaching by David Dolby, plus from 2009 revival**
4. **Youtube - but NB differences between sides!**