

Notes for Deep Dive #14

David Smukler, March 7, 2021

The Mulberry Garden

The Dancing Master, 1670

Duple minor longways

As reconstructed by Cecil Sharp, 1922

- A1** 1-8 Partners lead up a double and back, twice
- B1** 1-4 Facing across, fall back and come forward
5-8 Partners 2-hand turn and ease out to line
- A2** 1-4 Partners back-to-back
5-8 Neighbors back-to-back
- B2** 1-2 Circle left halfway (*slipping*)
3-4 All cross the set and face up
5-8 Ones lead up and cast down *while* twos cast down and lead up

In Sharp, the first AB is called “First Part,” and the dance starting with the back to back is called “Second Part (duple minor set).” So, like *Never Love Thee More*,” the up a double business is an introductory section—a way to honor the “presence” before proceeding with the progressive part of the dance. We no longer do it that way. We include the introduction every time, in effect folding it into the dance. And the dance is far better for this change because the transition from the cast and lead into up a double is glorious.

In B1, there is a timing issue that I believe benefits from attention. In my experience, dancers often come back to place ready for the 2-hand turn just a bit early, and so miss an opportunity for good connection with the music. Sharp’s wording (1922) for this part is:

- 1-4 Partners face. All fall back a double and move forward a double to places.
5-8 Partners turn.

Falling back *and* moving forward “a double” suggests that the time is filled with appropriate footwork. But, I think Sharp’s interpretation is, in fact, a departure from the original wording:

Fall all back, meet, fall back again, then every man turn his own wo.

Fall back again? Aha! So, a closer interpretation (counting 2 steps to each bar) would be: Fall back (think “balance back” since it is so short) (1 bar), come forward (1), fall back a double (2); partners come together and 2-hand turn (4).

It looks like Sharp chose to simplify that a little. Since his interpretation is widely accepted, I do not feel a need to include an additional fall back. But, here is what I have come to prefer for B1:

- 1-4 Partners fall back a double, *acknowledge your neighbor*, then come forward
5-8 Partners 2-hand turn

Taking that moment to nod to your neighbor:

- Prevents you from arriving early. Holding back just a bit means coming forward right into the 2-hand turn, hopefully arriving just as the phrase begins.
- Provides a useful preview of each new neighbor before the back-to-back in the second half of A2. It makes everyone more likely to turn toward the correct person.

Counting to Ten

David Smukler 2020

Duple minor longways

Tune: The Noon Moose of Maine, by Andrea Beaton, 4 steps to the bar (mostly...)

- A1** 1-2 Ones cross and cast down *while* twos lead up and turn out
3-4 Mirror hand turns, ones between the twos to begin
5-6 Ones back-to back
7-8 Ones 2-hand turn
- A2** 1-2 Twos cross and cast down *while* ones lead up and turn out
3-4 Mirror hand turns, twos between the ones to begin
5-6 Twos back-to back
7-8 Twos 2-hand turn (*end with ones above twos, all improper; ones step between twos to form a line-of-4 facing down*)
- B** 1-2 Down the hall four steps, turning toward neighbor at the end of bar 1 to face up; fall back four steps to keep moving down the hall
3-4 Up the hall four steps, turning again at the end of bar 3 to face down; fall back four steps moving up the hall, bending the line to face across as you do
5 All cross the set passing partner by the right, and re-form the line facing up with ones still in the center
6-7 Line-of-4 dance up the hall (4 counts), honor the presence (2), and fall back (4)
8 Neighbors gate, ones going forward (*end progressed and proper*)

Bar 6 of the B-part has an extra 2 counts, which are used for a small bow or courtesy to acknowledge the “presence” (musicians and dance leaders we appreciate so much). Note that there is not enough time to “*step and honor*”; it is simply a brief honor.

Bars 6-7 are also an opportunity to “count to ten” (4+2+4 counts), although the title was not intended to be quite that literal.

When I wrote to Andrea Beaton to ask permission to use her tune, I asked if there was a story behind the title. Here is her reply:

Yes, there is a story for the tune. I was driving through Maine (I don't even know where I was, but it was somewhere remote). It was a beautiful, sunny day and all of a sudden, a few things happened at once. I noticed the clock switch to noon, this melody came to my head and there was a baby moose on the side of the road, sort of off to the side, near the woods. I pulled over and tried to take a picture but my phone was a ten dollar burner that did no justice and the moose wandered off. But the melody kept coming, so I wrote it down, called it the noon moose of maine, and continued on my way.

Costumer's Delight

Philippe Callens, 2018

Three-couple longways

Tune: One Charming Night, by Henry Purcell (1692)

- A1** 1-2 Top 4 set forward to partner
3-4 Ones cast down to middle place *while* twos lead up and turn single away
5-8 Ones lead down through threes and cast back
- A2** 1-2 Bottom 4 set forward to partner
3-4 Threes cast up to middle place *while* ones lead down and turn single away
5-8 Threes lead up through twos and cast back (*now in 2-3-1 order*)
- B1** 1-2 Ends right-hand turn halfway
3-4 Those with someone on the left diagonal: left-hand turn halfway
5-8 Middles right-hand turn 1½
9-12 Same middles orbit clockwise halfway *while* long first corners change passing right (9-10), and long second corners change passing left (11-12)
- B2** 1-2 Ends left-hand turn halfway
3-4 Those with someone on the right diagonal: right-hand turn halfway
5-8 Middles left-hand turn 1½
9-12 Same middles orbit counterclockwise halfway *while* long second corners change passing left (9-10), and long first corners change passing right (11-12)

Ends in 2-3-1 order. Repeat twice more to place.

This is the last dance we have from Philippe Callens, and it is an exquisite example of the well-crafted and interlocking choreography that he is known for. The tune is a song by Henry Purcell from his semi-opera *The Fairy Queen*, based on Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*: "One charming night gives more delight than a hundred lucky days." The song is all about pleasure, but when played as a tune at dance tempo, I think it takes on a very poignant quality.

The sequence of figures in the A-music rearranges the couples into 2-3-1 order. The B parts will then scramble the dancers, but eventually return them to the same spot.

Here is how the B-parts work: At the top of B1, the ends begin a series of rights and lefts. First they change with each other, and then each left diagonal changes with a middle (so no one is across from partner). For the third change, the middles turn 1½ times. So, now all are crossed over from their original side. As the middles orbit halfway back to their own side, the other dancers each change places, first on one corner and then on the other. The choreography is constructed such that the people orbiting pass each corner just as those dancers begin to cross.

Now everyone is on their own side again, but no one is with their partner. The same sequence repeats with opposite hands. *These* ends begin changing with a *left* hand, the *right* diagonals change, middles turn 1½, and everyone is magically across from partner again. Middles then orbit as the corners change, and everyone is back to 2-3-1 order where the B-parts began.

This dance is by no means easy. Visualizing all the parts when you are dancing alone or with one other person will be a challenge. But, it is a marvelous dance, and I hope you will agree that it really rewards the effort.

Leather Lake House

Henry Bishop, 1788

Triple minor longways

As reconstructed by Fried de Metz Herman, 1986

- A1** 1-2 Top two couples set right and left
3-4 Two quick changes of rights and lefts
5-8 All that again (*all are home*)
- A2** 1-4 Ones cross, cast, 2-hand turn halfway, and face down (twos meet and lead up on first 2 bars)
5-8 Ones lead down through the threes and cast back to progressed place
- B1** 1-4 “Look right and circle left”: Actives individually face the couple on their right, with that couple circle left 3 hands, ease out to line
5-8 Partners right-hand turn
- B2** 1-4 “Look left and circle right”: Similarly, actives face the couple on their left and circle right 3 hands, ease out to line
5-8 Partners left-hand turn

The cross-and-cast for ones (at the top of A2) feels like two very quick changes of a circular hey (2 steps each), leaving 4 steps for a comfortable 2-hand turn halfway. The twos can help clear a path for the ones by moving up quickly as soon as the ones are crossed. It should feel like clockwork: in the first bar ones cross and twos meet; in the second ones cast and twos lead up. If you are at all late (and people often are), you will need to make up the difference with a 2-hand turn that feels a bit like the very fast turn single we did last week in Hambleton’s Round O. But, if you anticipate the path and move through it with determination, you get the pay off of a clean 2-hand turn and the ability to lead through the threes right at the top of the phrase.

One delightful thing that Fried de Metz Herman did when she added this dance to her 1986 collection *The Naked Truth* was to suggest the tune Pease Straw, by the great Scottish fiddler Neil Gow, as a “change tune.” It is now very commonly used for this purpose. It works beautifully with this dance, and builds the energy up a step from the original tune.

As an aside, I find that this is an easy dance for me as a caller to keep track of rights and lefts, because those words strictly alternate during the B-parts:

Look *right*; circle *left*; *right*-hand turn

Look *left*; circle *right*; *left*-hand turn