Dot Murphie.

The Hornpipe Steps.

P.Smith

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Notes.

- 1. It will be apppreciated that this step involves ankle rocks. These are notoriously difficult to notate and the fine detail of the performance often relies on the degree of elevation of the toes and the degree of flexion of the legs.
- 2. On the ankle rocks held held her hands at just below waist level, arms fairly straight, fingers interlaced, palms down.

<u>Step 14</u>

Step is A part from Step 7. 6 times through off alternate feet and finish

<u>Finish</u>

а	tap) lazy		RB	:	
1	step)		А	:	
2		step		:	А
&		heel drop		:	A
а	step=		А	:	
3	heel drop		А	:	
4		flat step		:	C*
5				:	
а	click side, heel		RXBÎ	:	
6	spring		RXB*	:	C/D î
7		touch		:	C
8				:	

Notes.

- 1. This was always the last step of Dot's routine and accordingly has a flamboyant finish having speeded up "to the death"!
- 2. In the event that the dancers wished to perform the step for 16 bars, (ie repeat off opposite feet), a further finish would be required, however no finish was recovered from Dot for this purpose.

Dot Murphie was born Dorothea Wilkie in 1918 and lived at Edge Lane, Liverpool, an only child. Her parents had a grocers shop and coal delivery business. At 11 years old she had dancing lessons which were a bit of everything for 6d and private tap lessons, which was all the rage, at one shilling. When she was about 12 her father asked a customer, Jack Callaghan, to give Dot and a friend clog dancing lessons. Jack had an older friend who sat in on the lessons and had been one of 'The Twelve Lancashire Lads' (the juvenile act that Stan Laurel started with). The teaching was strict, feet straight and shuffles rounded inwards. When this was mastered they progressed to shuffle tap shuffle hop and then full steps. They had their legs flicked with a little cane if they let their heels drop. The steps were hornpipes and a few waltzes. She won a gold medal at the All England Championship for a Dutch character dance in Lancashire clogs, which she now realises were Lancs waltzes. The Championship was held at the 'Blue Coat School' (for orphan children) off Church Street in Liverpool.

When she was 14 a friend, Hilda Beard, saw an advert in 'The Stage' and persuaded Dot to audition for the 'De Vere Babes' juvenile tap dance troupe. Off they went to the Hammersmith Palais de Dance, London, with Dot's Mum. They were then looked after by chaperones. There were age and height restrictions (under 16 and less than 4'8"), and any sign of 'boobs' were squashed with wide elastic! Dot stayed with the show for nearly two years, but then had to come home to look after the shop following her mother's hysterectomy.

At 17 she joined Frank O'Donovan's 'Dash of Dublin' which toured Ireland for nearly two years. Frank's wife, Kitty MacMahon who had been a dancer, taught her daughter, Dot and Dot's friend Clare, an Irish Hornpipe which the three of them performed with a fast finish, letting down their bibs to make the Irish flag. The show then came to England and on the first night in St Helens Dot noticed a Dorothy O'Neill on the billing. She asked Frank who that was and he said 'you!' (up 'til then she'd been called 'Little Dorothy'). The Irish audiences also called her 'Angeline' because of one of the songs to which she danced, and was much requested. While the show was at the City Variety Theatre, Leeds, Clare (who had returned from Ireland homesick) came to see her and begged her to form a double act, to which Dot agreed. They rehearsed, an agent got them auditions and they joined a Scottish Concert Party for a summer season. Dot was 20 and Clare 18. Clare took the part of a man and would begin 'Phil the Fluter's Ball' with Dot joining in the chorus, and then performing her Irish Hornpipe while Clare clapped. Using tap and clog, they did a jig to 'The Irish Washerwoman' finishing with a hornpipe duet. They were billed as 'Dorothy and Clare, the peppy, snappy steppers, Dancing Distinctly Different'.

Clare became ill with nephritis and sadly died. Their next booking at the 'Argyll', Birkenhead, with Tommy Handley of ITMA fame at the top of the bill, Dot performed solo and continued touring alone until the outbreak of war. Anyone over 21 had to register for war work, so at 22 she was assigned to the Automatic Telephone Co. Liverpool, who made autopilots for aeroplanes. A week later she realised from a radio announcement that as a performer she could have joined Entertainments National

Services Association (ENSA) to entertain the troops. She did, however, join in the work's lunchtime entertainments. In 1943 when she was 24, her boss Eddie became her husband and a year later Jean was born.

With family commitments Dot's dancing days were over until, in 1982 she met Penny Smith via her Morris dancing son-in-law. Penny had recently formed the Dukes Dandy Clog team and was thrilled to meet Dot and hear of her experiences. After a while, as a lively 64 yr old she joined the team and knocked spots off them all. She danced with the team for six years and then decided to retire gracefully because she couldn't perform to her own satisfaction.

On stage with Clare they were able to take turns to go off and change but on her own Dot cleverly contrived costumes to change on stage. One routine began with a jacket which was replaced with cape and hat for a military dance, the cape then came off and a bib apron let down to show stripes for the ending. She made her costumes herself. She also needed to provide music for the house orchestra at each venue and took a long roll-up slatted dancing board.

As a performer Dot's main aim was to entertain and dancing with Dukes Dandy she was always using the phrase 'eyes and teeth.' She doesn't label her clog steps as specifically Lancashire, they're a mixture of what she originally learnt, some embellished, and her own made up steps. She didn't have names for the steps except 'rocks', and 'boxes' where two dancers moved around each other. She always danced fast so that any watching dancers couldn't steal them! The shows were usually in one place for a week and the programme needed to vary. The clog steps were useful to add variety but were mostly done in tap shoes. She even had one routine in ballet point shoes with taps on.

A newspaper review of 'Dash of Dublin' reported:

'The show is an exceptionally lively one with plenty of popular song and dance items. The troupe includes a girl tap dancer who can twirl her feet in rhythmic tapping at great speed. She was repeatedly encored.'

The notations were written by Chris Metherell in 2007 and 2008. At this time Dot was unable to dance, however she was able to comment on the steps which she had taught me in the 1980's and add some extra material which she had remembered.

The steps are all notated off the left foot. Dot did not repeat steps in performance, and so the steps were danced off one foot only.

A DVD of Dot talking about her dancing days, on which I demonstrate the steps has been made by Garland Films – *Dot Murphie. Lancashire Clog Dancer*, Newcastle: Garland Films (2008).

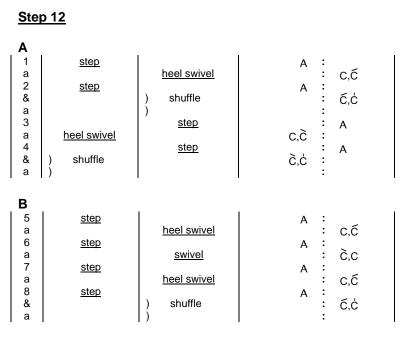
Step 13

1.4	l	1	ı .	
1	<u>step</u>) shuffle	A	:
а 2)		: Ć,Ċ
a) step		: XÉ,É
3	step	<u>5100</u>	А	· <u>\</u> ,
4	hop	ŕ	Â	E/H1î
а		catch in		E/F1,E,RXC1
5		flat step		RXE/F
6	flat drop	side R touch	А	: RXE/F
7		flat drop		: RXE/F
8		<u>hop</u>		: RXE/F*
а	catch in		E/F 1 ,E,RXĈ1	:
1	flat step	flat data	RXE/F	•
2 3	side L touch	flat drop	RXE/F	: A
3	<u>flat drop</u> hop		RXE/F	
a	nop	catch in	RXE/F*	∶ E/F 1 ,E,RXĆ↑
5		flat step		RXE/F
6	flat drop	side R touch	А	RXE/F
7	not arop	flat drop	~	RXE/F*
8				:
1	flat step		C*	:
2				:
3		flatstep		: B/C*
4	ŕ	<u>hop</u>		:
а	catch in		E/F 1 ,E,RXÌ1	:
5	flat step	<i>a</i>	RXE/F	:
6	side L touch	flat drop	RXE/F	: А
7	flat drop		RXE/F	
8	hop	catch in	RXE/F*	:
a 1		flat step		E/F1,E,RXC1
2	flat drop	side R touch	•	RXE/F
	nat urop		A	: RXE/F
3		flat drop		
3		<u>flat drop</u>		RXE/F*
3 a 4		<u>flat drop</u>	čć	RXE/F*
а) shuffle	<u>flat drop</u>	č,ċ	RXE/F*
a 4		flat drop hop	č,ċ	:
a 4 a 5 6) shuffle		Č,Ċ RC	: RXE/F* : : : : A
a 4 a 5) shuffle)			:

Step is as above

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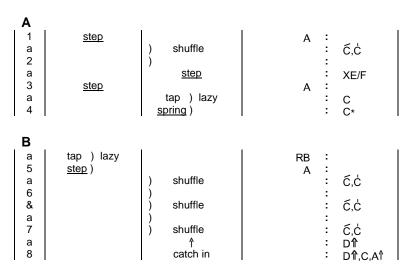
Step is $\underline{AB} \underline{AB} \underline{AB} B B$ and finish $| \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad |$ $L \quad R \quad L R \quad L$

<u>Finish</u>

A part of step followed by:-

5 &	step	click heel, heel	А	:	AŶ
а 6	<u>heel drop</u>	step	А	:	
&	click heel, heel		AŤ	•	A
а 7	step=	<u>heel drop</u>	А	:	А
8		unt=	A,B	:	A,B

Step 1





<u>Finish</u>

а	tap) lazy		RB	:	
1	<u>step</u>)		A	:	
а		tap) lazy		:	RB
2		<u>step</u>)		:	А
а	tap) lazy		RB	:	
3	<u>step</u>)		А	:	
а) shuffle		:	ć,ċ
4)		:	
а	hop		А	:	
5		step		:	RC
а	tap) lazy		RB		
6	<u>step</u>)		А	:	
а		tap) lazy		:	А
7		<u>step</u>)		:	B*

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Newcastle Series

& Step A : a heel drop : A 8 heel drop A :

Notes.

- 1. When the B parts are danced on their own the initial tap is omitted. Dot was certain of this detail.
- 2. Note the <u>spring</u> on beat 4, again confirmed by Dot in 2007. She said she liked to be flamboyant!

<u>Step 2</u>

$\mathbf{A} = \mathbf{A}$ part from Step 1.

В				
а	tap) lazy		RB	:
5	<u>step</u>)		А	:
&) shuffle		: ć,ċ
а)		:
6	hop		А	:
&		step		: XÉ/F : XÉ/F
а		heel drop		: XÉ/É
7	step		А	:
&		step		: с
а		heel drop		: с
8	step		A	:



		1
L	RLR	L

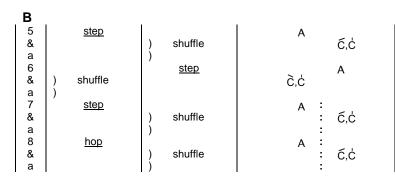
Finish = Finish from Step 1.

Notes.

1. When the B parts are danced on their own the initial tap is omitted, as in Step 1

<u>Step 11</u>

$\mathbf{A} = \mathbf{A}$ part from Step 9.





<u>Finish</u>

1 & a	step) shuffle	A	
2 &	hop) shuffle	A	Ξ Å
a 3 &) shuffle	, <u>step</u>	: č,ċ :	A
a 4 &)) shuffle	hop	: č,ć	<i>/</i> (
a 5 6 7 8) <u>step</u>	catch out touch	A	RXÈ∱,A,Cîî

Newcastle Series

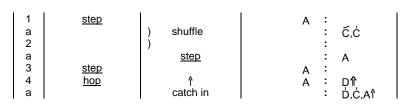
<u>Finish</u>

а	stop	1		
	step		A	:
1	heel drop		A	:
а		step		: А
2		heel drop		: А
а	step		А	:
3	heel drop		А	:
а		tap) flop		: д
4	Ŷ	step)	Atup	: А
&	drop		A	:
а	heel drop		A	:
5		step		: д
а	step		А	:
6	heel drop		A	:
а		tap) flop		: Aex
7	Ŷ	step)	Atup	: д
&	drop		A	:
а	heel drop		A	:
8		flat step [f]		: в

Notes.

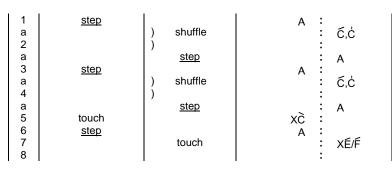
- 1. Dot normally performed this step without music.
- 2. Note the interesting "rocking" movement on, for example 4&a.
- 3. Note also the use of flops rather than lazy shuffles.

Step 3



Step is six times off alternate feet and Finish

<u>Finish</u>



Notes.

1. Dot was very particular that the catch was performed very straight.

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Step 4

1	step	1		А	:
а)	shuffle		: ć,ċ
2)			:
а			step		: XÉ/É
3	step			А	:
4	hop			А	:
&)	shuffle		: ć,ċ
а)			:

Step is six times off alternate feet and Finish

Finish = Finish from Step 3.

Notes.

1. Dot was unsure whether she had originally learned this with or without the feet crossed on 2a, or whether she had added this herself.

<u>Step 10</u>

а	step		A	
1	heel drop		A	
а		step		Α
2		heel drop	:	
а	<u>step</u>		A	
3	heel drop		A	
а		tap) flop	:	Α
4	Ŷ	<u>step</u>)	Atup	Aex
&	drop		A	
а	heel drop		A	
5		<u>step</u>	:	А
а	step		A	
6	heel drop		A	
а		tap) flop	:	А
7	Ŷ	<u>step</u>)	Atup	Aex
&	drop		A	
а	heel drop		A	
8		touch	:	А

В					
а	step		А	:	
5	heel drop		А	:	
а		tap) flop		: A	4
6	Ŷ	<u>step</u>)	Atup	: A	Aex
а	drop		A	:	
7	heel drop		А	:	
&		step		: A	4
а	step		А	:	
8	heel drop		А		

Step is A A B B and finish

L	R	L	R	L	

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<u>Finish</u>

1	step		A	
&) shuffle	:	ć,ċ
а)	:	
2 &	<u>hop</u>		A :	
) shuffle	:	Ć,Ċ
а 3)		
3 &) shuffle	step	č,ċ	A
a			C,C -	
4	,	hop		А
&) shuffle		č,ċ :	A
)		:	
а 5	step		A :	
&		heel tap	:	С
а		heel step	:	С
6	<u>step</u>	\ .	A :	
&) shuffle		C,C
а 7	hop)		
&	пор	tip tap	A	DC
a	hop	up tap	А	RC
8		heel touch		С

Notes.

 Note the use of :C,C as the shuffle position, giving a straighter appearance to the movement.

<u>Ste</u>	<u>o 5</u>			
Α				
1 2 3 4 & a	<u>step</u> <u>step</u> hop) shuffle) <u>step</u>) shuffle)	A : 	
в				
1	step		A	
а 2	step	step	А	XÉ/É
3 a	step	step	: XÈ/È	А
a 2 3 a 4 5 a 6 7		step	:	А
э а	<u>step</u>	step	A	XÉ/É
6	<u>step</u>		A	
а	step	<u>step</u>	xÈ/È	A
8		step	:	l

Step is A A B A A and Finish | | | | | | | L R L L R L

Finish = Finish from Step 3.

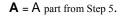
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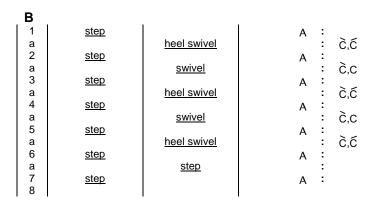
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1. On the B part of the step, the dancer may circle c.cl when performing the unit off the L and cl. when performing the unit off the R. The finish should be performed facing front.

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<u>Step 6</u>





Step is A A B A A and Finish | | | | | | |L R L R L R

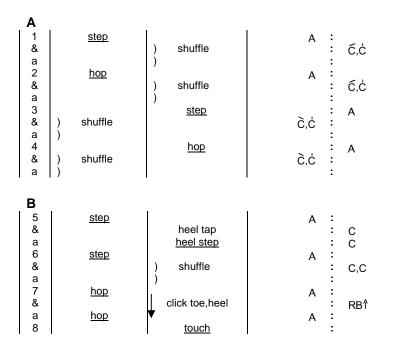
Finish = Finish from Step 3.

Notes.

- 1. Contrast the expansive heel swivels with the more reduced swivels.
- 2. The step pattern means that the finish comes "off the wrong foot". Of course this has no effect as no repeats are danced, the following step simply coming off the same foot Step 6.
- 3. Dot was unsure whether the end of the B part was in fact correct. She thought it may have been:

8	hop			А	:	
&)	shuffle		:	ć,ċ
а)			:	

Step 9

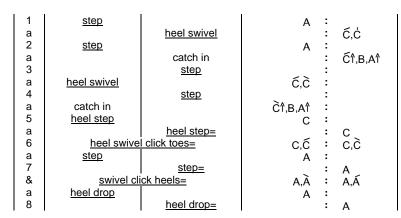


Step is $\underline{AB} \underline{AB} \underline{B} B B$ and finish

L	RLR	L
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Newcastle Series

<u>Finish</u>

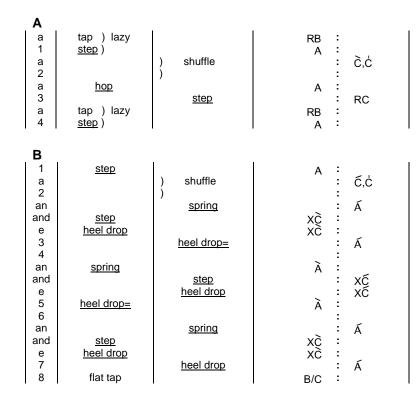


Notes.

- 1. When first spoken to, Dot was certain that the repeated C parts were danced off the same foot. However, in late 2007 she suggested that alternate feet were possible also.
- 2. It is possible that the <u>heel drops</u> on a8 of the finished may be reversed.

<u>Step 7</u>

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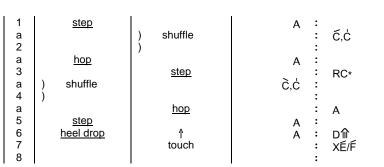


Step is A A B A A and Finish

L	R	L	L	R	L

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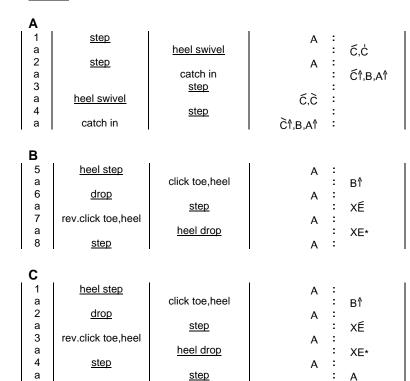
<u>Finish</u>



Notes.

1. Although the toe/heel movements have been noted in $\lambda:\chi \xi$. Dot was apparently, when younger, able to turn her feet out to quite an extravagant degree in this step, almost into "a classical ballet position".

Step 8



Step is <u>AB</u> <u>AB</u> C C and finish

L	R L L	L