

LA BELLE CATHERINE

(French-Canadian)

La Belle Catherine (lah bell CAT-reehn) is a popular "contra danse" type found in eastern and north-eastern Quebec. It is danced by two couples and often includes some "gigue" (zheeg) steps (clogging). Based on research by Guy Thomas and presented by Yves Moreau at the University of the Pacific, Stockton, Ca., in 1977.

MUSIC: Record: Philo FI-2003, Side 1, Band 8. 2/4 meter.
 NOTE: Music must be slowed down.

FORMATION: Sets of 2 cpls, M side by side with R shldr twd music (top of set), W facing ptr. Cpl nearest top in each set is designated cpl #1.

STYLE: Although the word "heavy" is used to designate an accented step, the dance is done with very light steps and in a happy manner.

STEPS: Sideward Travelling Step (left): meas 1: step heavily onto L (ct 1); step on ball of R in front of L (ct &); step again to L on L (ct 2); step on ball of R near L heel (ct &). Meas 2-3: repeat action of meas 1 twice more (three times in all) but in meas 3, on last count (ct &), omit last step. Meas 4: stamp 3 times in place (R,L,R), no wt on last stamp (cts 1, &, 2).

music: 2/4

cts: 1 & 2 & | 1 & 2 & | 1 & 2 | 1 & 2

ft: L R L R | L R L R | L R L | R L R

position: side front side back | side front side back | side front side stamp stamp stamp

Clogging in place (left): step onto L (ct &); tap ball of R, sharply, slightly in front of L (no wt) (ct ah); small leap onto ball of R in same place as tap (ct 1). May also be done beg R.

music: 2/4

cts: & ah | 1

ft: L R | R

position: step tap leap

Travelling Step (left): beg with a preparatory hop (slight) on L (ct ah); step fwd on R (ct 1); close L to R (ct &); step fwd on R (ct 2). Step alternates.

music: 2/4

cts: ah | 1 & 2


ft: L | R L R

position: hop step close step


Men's "gigue" step (Fig VII): "pick-up" notes of preceding meas: light brush fwd with ball of R (ct &); light brush bkwd with ball of R (ct ah). Meas 1: heavy step onto R (ct 1); light brush fwd with ball of L (ct ah); light brush bkwd with ball of L (ct &); heavy step in place with L (ct ah); heavy step onto R (ct 2); raise L leg, knee bent and high, and clap both hands above raised L knee (ct ah); clap both hands under raised leg (ct &); with L leg still raised, clap both hands above L leg (ct ah).

meas 2: step onto L (ct 1); hold (ct 2).

NOTE: Gigue Step is not repeated.

music: 2/4	
cts:	& ah 1 ah & ah 2 ah & ah 1
ft:	R R R L L L R ah - ah - L
position:	brush brush STEP brush brush step STEP clap clap clap STEP

Women's "Spandy" step: This step is very popular in a type of dance known "Espandy" in eastern Quebec. Meas 1: hop on L and simultaneously brush ball of R fwd (ct 1); hop again on L and simultaneously brush ball of R bkwd (ct &); small jump onto both with ft tog (ct 2). Meas 2: small sharp jump onto both ft with L crossed in front of R (ct 1); small sharp jump onto both with R crossed in front (ct 2).

music: 2/4	
cts:	1 & 2 1 2
ft:	LR LR LR LXF RXF
position:	hop brush both both both

MUSIC 2/4

PATTERN

- Measures
1-4 INTRODUCTION no action
- I. SIDEWARD TRAVEL
- Ptrs face each other, R hands joined at about waist level, R in R, L in L.
- 1-4 Beg ML-WR, dance 1 Sideward Travel Step in LOD.
- 5-8 Beg MR-WL, dance 1 Sideward Travel Step in RLOD.
- II. CLOGGING IN PLACE
- Hands are held down at sides (ptrs separated).
- 1-4 Beg ML-WR, dance 7 Clog Steps. End with 2 small, sharp stamps in place (M-LR;W-RL)(cts &, 2 of meas 4). No wt on last stamp.
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig II) but with opp ftwk.
- III. STAR AND CIRCLE
- NOTE: In Fig III, always beg with hop L.
- 1-4 Both cpls form a R hand star, arms extended (long-arm turn) and turn once CW with 4 Travelling Steps.
- 5-8 Cpls form a L hand star and turn once CCW with 4 Travelling Steps.
- 9-12 Both cpls join hands to form small circle and circle once to L (CW) with 4 Travelling Steps.
- 13-16 Cpls circle R with 4 Travelling Steps. End in own places.
- IV. "CROCHETS" (ELBOWS)
- NOTE: Always beg with hop L.
- 1-4 Cpls hook R elbow with ptr and turn once CW with 4 Travelling Steps.
- 5-8 Cpls hook L elbow with ptr and turn once CCW with 4 Travelling Steps.

9-12 M1 & W2 repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig IV) while others watch.

13-16 M2 & W1 repeat action of meas 5-8 (Fig IV) while others watch.

V. DOS-A-DOS

1-4 With 4 Travelling Steps, both cpls dos-a-dos with ptr, beg with hop R and passing by R shldrs.

5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig V) but beg hop L and pass by L shldrs.

9-12 M1 & W2 repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig V) as others watch.

13-16 M2 & W1 repeat action of meas 5-8 (Fig V) as others watch.

GRAND BRAS P'TIT BRAS (LONG ARM, SHORT ARM TURN)

1-2 Both cpls give R hand to ptr and move into ptrs place with 2 Travelling Steps (ptrs move very close tog, elbows bent, on turn, then extend arms to reach ptrs place) (Long Arm Turn).

3-4 Retaining same hand hold, ptrs get very close tog, elbows bent, forearms tog, and turn once CW with 2 Travelling Steps (end in ptrs place) (Short Arm Turn).

NOTE: M may grasp W elbow with L hand, to facilitate turn.

5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig VI) but reversing direction and using L hand hold. End in own places.

9-12 M1 & W2 turn once CW with regular R hand hold (to own places) while others watch.

13-16 M2 & W1 turn once CCW with regular L hand hold (to own places) while others watch.

VII. "GIGUE" AND "SPANDY" STEP

1-2 M1 & W2 exchange places (no joined hands) with 2 Travelling Steps, passing by R shldrs. M2 & W1 watch.

3-4 M1 dances "Gigue" Step in place while W2 dances "Spandy" Step in place. Others watch.

5-8 M2 & W1 repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig VII) exactly.

9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8 (Fig VII) but passing by L shldrs to return to own places.

VIII. SIDEWARD TRAVELLING STEP

1-8 Repeat action of Fig I, meas 1-8.

IX. CLOGGING IN PLACE

1-8 Repeat action of Fig II, meas 1-8.

Dance is done once through in the above sequence.