

The Killiecrankie Leap

A 32 bar reel for three couples in a longwise set.

During one of the Jacobite uprisings a single combatant from one company of soldiers, who were overwhelmed by larger opposing forces, managed to escape fatal pursuit with an astonishing 5 metre leap across a gorge above the river Garry at Killiecrankie, just north of Pitlochry. The pursuers turned away from making the same mad jump and failed to find a safer crossing upstream or downstream.

The figures in the dance loosely try to represent aspects of this encounter with an initial chase, short engagement (teapots), running away (snake pass), various leaps with the opponents turning away (hello-goodbye), running up and down the banks of the river with the escapee safely on the other side (half reels) and finally getting home free to repeat the whole unpleasant adventure from 2nd place.

The four left footed leaps in eight bars of hello-goodbye setting by the average dancer probably add up to less distance than that of the single leap of the escaping soldier!

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st couple, giving right hands, turn once, then cast off one place as 2nd couple step up. 2nd man faces down and 3rd woman faces up.
- 5-8 1st couple, giving right hands, turn one and a quarter times to end on the centre line with 1st man above 1st woman.
Meanwhile 2nd and 3rd couples chase anticlockwise half way round the set.
- 9-12 1st man with 3rd couple at the top, and 1st woman with 2nd couple at the bottom, each dance left hands across. 1st couple end facing each other on the centre line.
- 13-16 1st man followed by 3rd couple and 1st woman followed by 2nd couple dance the Snake Pass, passing the other dancers by the right shoulder. 1st couple pass right shoulder on bar 16 to end back to back on the diagonal facing their 3rd corner position.
- 17-20 1st couple dance four bars of Hello-Goodbye setting, leaping back into the centre on bar 20 to face their 4th corner position.
Meanwhile the 3rd corners do not set back, but immediately cast, pulling left shoulder back, to dance around the outside of the set anticlockwise to the opposite corner on their own side and face in.
- 21-24 1st couple repeat bars 17-20 with their 4th corners to end facing their 1st corner position.
- 25-28 1st couple each dance half a reel of three on the opposite side starting right shoulder to their 1st corner position. 1st couple end left shoulder to each other in the centre in 2nd place with 1st man facing up and 1st woman facing down.
- 29-32 1st couple pass each other left shoulder and dance left shoulder around their 3rd corner to end in 2nd place on their own side. The final order is 2,1,3.

Music

- Suggested tune: Da Sixty Fathom Reel (Alex Couper).
- Suitable recording: Robbie Over the Waves (Colin Dewar and his SDB : Special Requests Vol 6).