

The Whetherly Book of Scottish Country Dances

Number 12

By John W. Mitchell

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Original Introduction

A bumper Issue for 1983, many simpler, others not so.

John W. Mitchell (1983)

Introduction to the new edition

Why these dances? A more adequate answer, to quote the March Hare from Alice in Wonderland, is perhaps simply “Why not?”

Alison M. W. Mitchell (2023)

John Wallace Mitchell - A Brief Biography

(31/05/1931 – 25/11/2012)

John Wallace Mitchell was born and raised in Brighton & Hove, Sussex. Following his school education, which took place against a background of war, he completed military service from 1949-1951 with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) army division. He then started work in accountancy, joining the Sperry Rand corporation in 1957 as a computer and business systems analyst. In 1958 he became a member of the British Computer Society, only a few months after its foundation. In the early 1960's, the focus of his career moved towards management consultancy, and he completed many assignments for several companies, often helping to set up their first computer systems, with work taking him to many locations both within the UK and western Europe, as well as to Saudi Arabia. Eventually he set up a private practice in 1972.

He was a keen cyclist, active in several clubs and competing at a local level from 1946 – 1956. When in the army, he would often cycle back to Brighton on free weekends, which could be up to 140 miles each way.

Although he first encountered Scottish Country Dancing in Dollar, Scotland in 1947, it wasn't until 1964 that he began to take it seriously, when he joined the Leeds clubs and RSCDS Branch. After moving back to the Brighton area, he became a member of the London branch in 1966 and in 1967 was the founder chairman of the Sussex Association of Scottish Societies, which was formed to ensure the future of the local Annual Scottish Charity Ball by connecting many clubs in the region. This led to the first day schools and teachers' training courses in the region. In 1972 he obtained a full RSCDS teacher's certificate and in 1975 became the founder chairman of the Hangleton Scottish Country Dance Club. From approximately 1968 to 1992 he devised some 828 dances, which were published in this series of Whetherly Books and Sheets. Whetherly is the maiden name of his paternal grandmother, after which the house in which he grew up was also named ("Whetherly House"). In 2010 he received the London Branch award for services to Scottish Dancing.

John passed away in 2012 after a two year battle with cancer.



Aspen Bank

A thirty-two bar Strathspey for four couples in a longwise set. On the second chord first and third couples cross to the opposite side.

- 1-4 First couple cast into fourth place, the other three couples step up on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-8 First and fourth couples dance half rights and lefts.
- 9-12 First and third couples dance half rights and lefts.
- 13-16 Half reels of four on the sides of the set.
- 17-20 Fourth and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel, first and second couples do the same.
- 21-24 Third and first couples dance left hands across in a wheel.
- 25-32 Fourth and third couples dance a ladies' chain, first and second couples do the same.
Finish in the order 4, 3, 1, 2.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: Aspen Bank

The Auld Toon of Ayr

A thirty-two bar Strathspey for four couples in a longwise set. On the second chord second and fourth couples cross to the opposite side.

- 1-4 Half reels of four on the sides of the set.
- 5-8 Fourth and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel, second and first couples do the same.
- 9-12 Third and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel. Meanwhile first man, followed by his partner, casts up to the top and crosses to the opposite side and fourth man followed by his partner casts off to the foot and crosses to the opposite side.
- 13-16 Half reels of four on the sides of the set.
- 17-20 Fourth and second couples dance half rights and lefts, giving right hands on the sides to commence; third and first couples do the same.
- 21-24 All join hands on the sides and set twice.
- 25-28 Eight hands round to the left in a circle.
- 29-30 Each man turns the lady on his left once round with two hands.
- 31-32 All continue the circle to the left. Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: The Auld Toon of Ayr

Bobby Dunlop's Jig

A forty-eight bar Jig for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First and second couples dance rights and lefts, first man finishes facing out.
- 9-12 First man followed by his partner casts off and crosses to the opposite side, second couple step up on bars 11 & 12.
- 13-16 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
- 17-24 First and second couples dance a ladies' chain, first man finishes facing out.
- 25-28 First man followed by his partner casts off and crosses to own side, third couple step up on bars 27 & 28.
- 29-32 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
- 33-40 Reels of three on own side, to commence first and third couples pass by the right shoulder.
- 41-48 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: Bobby Dunlop's Jig

Bobby Watson

A forty bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First and second couples set and cross giving right hand.
- 5-8 First and second couples set and turn with the left hand half way to finish ready for an allemande.
- 9-16 First and second couples dance an allemande, on bars 15 & 16 first couple turn with the left hand to finish facing out on the men's side with a promenade hold.
- 17-24 First couple in promenade hold dance a reel of three with their first corners, passing second man by the right to commence.
- 25-32 First couple dance a reel of three with their second corners, passing third man by the left to commence.
- 33-36 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
- 37-40 First and third couples dance left hands across in a wheel.

Repeat from second position.

Recommended tune: Bobby Watson

The Bridal Jig

A forty bar Jig for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple dance half reels of three on the opposite side of the set, crossing between second and third couples to commence.
- 5-8 First couple lead up to the top and cast off into second place, still on opposite sides; second couple cast off into third place and lead up to first place on own side to finish facing out; third couple cross to the opposite side and cast into third place.
- 9-12 First and second couples dance a double figure of eight half way.
- 13-16 First couple turn once with the left hand to finish facing third corner position.
- 17-20 Half a reel of four, first couple pass left shoulders to face fourth corner position.
- 21-24 Half a reel of four, all finish on own side, first couple in second place.
- 25-32 Third, first and second couples dance a knot.
- 33-36 First lady dances right hands across in a wheel with second couple, whilst first man does the same with third couple.
- 37-40 First man dances left hands across in a wheel with second couple, whilst first lady does the same with third couple.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: The Bridal Jig

Carm Oliver's Jig

A thirty-two bar Jig for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple cross giving right hand and cast off into second place, second couple step up on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-8 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple.
- 9-16 Reels of three on own side of the set; first and third ladies pass left shoulder to commence, whilst first and third men pass right shoulder.
- 17-20 All set and cross giving right hand.
- 21-24 All set and cross back giving right hand.
- 25-32 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Carm Oliver's Jig

The Lord High Admiral

Alternative name: Cobham Hall Hornpipe

A thirty-two bar Hornpipe for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 The Anchor:
1-2 first couple set advancing;
3-4 first couple turn half way with two hands to finish facing down;
5-6 first couple lead below third couple, second couple step up;
7-8 first couple cast up into second place.
- 9-16 The Crown:
9-10 first couple set advancing to finish back to back, man facing up and lady facing down;
11-16 crown triangles.
- 17-24 The Hall:
first couple dance a figure of eight on own side of the set, passing second lady and third man by the right shoulder to start and finishing in second place; at the same time second and third couples dance rights and lefts, giving right hands on the sides to commence.
- 25-32 The Garter:
six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Note

Cobham Hall is the ancestral home of Earl Darnley, the hereditary Lord High Admiral of Scotland.

Additional note by John Mitchell

For many years the “Cairngorm Dancers” organised a number of events including an annual Hogmanay Party at Cobham Hall in Kent. One year they decided to hold a competition for a new dance. Teachers were invited to submit dances in draft. At the next gathering the dances were given to different teachers to teach immediately from the draft. This was the winning dance. The Cairngorms subsequently published a book of dances containing the best of the submissions.

Cobham Hall was originally the country home of Earl Darnley, the Hereditary Lord High Admiral of Scotland. (It is now a girls’ boarding school). The current Earl Darnley still lives in Cobham and his state coach is housed in one wing of the Hall. Charles II created the hereditary Irish Peerage of Darnley. “La Belle Stuart” (the original model for Britannia on our coinage) was a member of the Darnley family and a great favourite of Charles II until she eloped with and married the Duke of Richmond and Gordon.

(The Meopham Scottish Country Dance Club organises occasional summer dances in the grounds of the Hall.)

The Great Hall in the heart of the building displays the achievement of the Lord High Admiral in plaster work on the ceiling. The achievement comprises an Anchor, surmounted by an Earl’s coronet, on which are displayed a shield bearing the family arms, with mantling, surrounded by a Garter.

Editor’s note to the 2023 edition

No tune suggested for this dance in the original edition.

Cock up your Beaver

A thirty-two bar Jig for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First lady and second man change places giving right hand, first lady casts up into her partner's place whilst second man casts off into his partner's place. Meanwhile first man and second lady set and turn three quarters with the right hand.
- 5-8 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel once round.
- 9-12 First man and second lady change places giving right hand, first man casts into second position on the ladies side, whilst second lady casts into first position on the men's side. Meanwhile first lady and second man set and turn three quarters with the right hand.
- 13-16 Second and first couples join hands on the side and set, then cross giving right hands, first couple finishing back to back in the centre facing own side.
- 17-24 Double triangles.
- 25-32 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Cock Up Your Beaver

Farmer's Jamboree

A thirty-two bar Jig for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First lady and second man change places giving right hand and cast into their partner's places, whilst first man and second lady set and turn with the left hand three quarters to finish in their partner's places.
- 5-8 First and second couples dance half rights and lefts, first lady and second man finish facing out.
- 9-16 Reels of three on own side of the set, first and third couples passing by the right shoulder to commence.
- 17-20 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
- 21-24 Second and first couples dance left hands across in a wheel.
- 25-32 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Farmer's Jamboree

The Flower of Auchattie

A thirty-two bar Jig for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 Crossing reels of four: right shoulder reel of four on the men's side and left shoulder reel of four on the ladies' side. Each couple in turn crosses down from third place on own side to fourth place on opposite side: third couple on bar 1, first couple on bar 3, second couple on bar 5 and fourth couple on bar 7.
- 9-16 First couple dance down the middle and back.
- 17-24 Crossing reels of four: right shoulder for the men on the ladies' side and left shoulder for the ladies on the men's side (first couple face out at end of bar 16). Each couple crosses up from second place to first place on own side: second couple on bar 17, fourth couple on bar 19, third couple on bar 21 and first couple on bar 23.
- 25-28 First couple cast into fourth place on own side, the other three couples join nearer hands and step up on bars 27 & 28.
- 29-32 All turn with the right hand once round.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: The Flower of Auchattie

The Four Counts

A forty-eight bar Hornpipe for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First man turns second lady with the right hand, second man turns third lady and third man turns fourth lady.
- 5-8 First lady turns second man with the left hand, second lady turns third man and third lady turns fourth man, all finish in the middle.
- 9-16 First and second couples dance a poussette, third and fourth do the same.
- 17-32 Grand chain, two steps to each hand.
- 33-40 First and fourth couples dance a half rondel: first couple dance down under an arch made by fourth couple, both cross to opposite side; set and cross to own side giving right hand in passing.
- 41-48 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: The Four Counts

Geordie Affleck

A thirty-two bar Reel for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First lady casts off into fourth place and crosses to the opposite side; first man turns second lady with the right hand, second man turns third lady, third man turns fourth lady and fourth man casts to the top and crosses.
- 5-8 Eight hands round to the left half way.
- 9-12 First man casts up to the top and crosses to own side, first lady turns third lady with the left hand, second lady turns third man, second man turns fourth man and fourth lady casts to the foot and crosses to own side.
- 13-16 Eight hands round to the right half way.
- 17-18 Fourth couple cast into second place, second couple step up, whilst first couple cast into third place, third couple step down.
- 19-20 Fourth and first couples dance left hands across in a wheel half way.
- 21-24 Half reels of four on the side.
- 25-28 Third and fourth couples dance right hands across in a wheel, first and second couples do the same.
- 29-32 Half reels of four on the sides, first and fourth couples do not pass left shoulders to complete the reel, instead they join nearer hands and set to partners on bars 31 & 32. Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: Geordie Affleck

George Wark

A thirty-two bar Reel for two couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First and second couples set, dance back to back with their partners and set.
- 9-12 First man and second lady change places giving right hand and then cast into their own original places, whilst first lady and second man set and change places giving left hands.
- 13-14 First and second men cross giving right hand, first and second ladies do the same.
- 15-16 First couple change places giving left hand, second couple do the same.
- 17-20 First lady and second man change places giving right hand and set. Meanwhile first man casts up and second lady casts down, then first man and second lady turn left hand to finish in each other's original place.
- 21-24 Second and first couples set and cross giving right.
- 25-32 Four hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: George Wark

Hoist the Flag

A forty-eight bar Jig for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First lady casts off into fourth place and crosses to the men's side, fourth man casts into first place and crosses to the ladies' side; first man and second lady set and cross right hand, second man and third lady set and cross and third man and fourth lady set and cross.
- 5-8 Eight hands round to the left half way.
- 9-12 Second lady casts to the top and crosses, third man casts to the foot and crosses; first lady and second man set and cross left hand, fourth lady and first man set and cross and third lady and fourth man set and cross.
- 13-16 Eight hands round to the right half way.
- 17-24 Third and fourth couples dance rights and lefts, first and second couples the same.
- 25-28 Third and fourth couples dance right hands across in a wheel, first and second couples do the same.
- 29-32 Fourth and first couples dance left hands across in a wheel.
- 33-40 Reels of four on the sides of the set.
- 41-48 Fourth and first couples dance a knot. Finish in the order 3, 1, 4, 2.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: Hoist The Flag

Editor's note to the 2023 edition

Bars 25-28 were originally left hands across and have been changed here to right hands across.

Hops of Kent

A thirty-two bar Reel for two couples in a longwise set.

- 1 First couple hop on the left foot extending the right foot into fourth aerial position, then hop again extending the right foot to fourth rear aerial position.
- 2 First couple dance down the middle for one skip change of step leading with nearer hand.
- 3 First couple hop on the right foot, extending the left foot to fourth aerial position and then hop again on the right foot extending the left foot to fourth rear aerial position.
- 4 First couple dance down the middle with one skip change of step with the left foot, turning to face up at the end of the bar.
- 5-8 Repeat bars 1-4 dancing up the middle to finish in original places.
- 9-12 First and second couples set and cross over giving right hand in passing.
- 13-16 First and second couples set and turn with the left hand to finish facing the top, still on the opposite sides, ready for a left handed allemande.
- 17-24 First and second couples dance a left handed allemande; on bars 23 & 24 they cross to own side giving right hand in passing.
- 25-32 Four hands round to the left in a circle, and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: The Victoria Reel

The Hurdle Race

A thirty-two bar Reel for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 Crossing reels of four: right shoulder reel on the ladies' side and left shoulder reel on the men's side; all cross up from second place to finish on opposite side, second couple on bar 1, fourth couple on bar 3, third couple on bar 5 and first couple on bar 7. First couple finish facing out.
- 9-10 First couple cast off, second couple stand still.
- 11-12 First couple turn with the right hand to face second couple.
- 13-24 The spurtle:
- 13-14 first man casts off behind second man on the ladies' side whilst first lady casts up behind second lady on the men's side; at the same time second couple cross passing by the left;
- 15-16 first couple turn with the right hand to face third couple, whilst second couple cast up into first place on own side;
- 17-20 repeat with third couple who finish in second place;
- 21-24 repeat with fourth couple who finish in third place, whilst first couple cross into fourth place on own side instead of turning.
- 25-32 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: The Hurdle Race

Note

The above method of dancing the spurtle is a slightly different description to that normally given, but gives the phrasing required for this dance.

Ian Duncan

A thirty-two bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First and second couples dance a petronella turn to face up and down and set.
- 5-8 First and second couples dance half a reel of four.
- 9-10 First and second couples set.
- 11-14 First and second couples dance a petronella turn to own side of the set and set.
- 15-16 First couple cross left hand to face first corners.
- 17-24 First couple turn first corners with the right hand, partner with the left hand, second corner with the right hand and partner with the left hand to finish facing first corners.
- 25-32 Reels of three with corners, passing left shoulder to start and cross back to own side giving right hand.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Ian Duncan

I Daurna Say No

A forty-eight bar Jig for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 Crossing reels of four: left shoulder reel of four on the men's side and right shoulder on the ladies' side. All cross from second place up to first place on opposite side, second couple on bar 1, fourth couple on bar 3, third couple on bar 5 and first couple on bar 7.
- 9-16 Repeat, crossing back to own side. First couple finish facing out.
- 17-18 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up.
- 19-22 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple.
- 23-24 First couple turn with the left hand to face their first corners.
- 25-32 First couple turn first corners with the right hand, partner left hand, second corners with the right hand and cross back to own side giving left hand, to finish facing out.
- 33-34 First couple cast off, third couple step up.
- 35-36 First couple cross giving right hand.
- 37-38 First couple cast off, fourth couple step up.
- 39-40 First couple cross to own side giving left hand.
- 41-48 Eight hands round in a circle to the left and back to the right.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: I Daurna Say No

Jack's Delight

A thirty-two bar Reel for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First and second couples dance rights and lefts, third and fourth couples do the same.
- 9-16 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
- 17-18 All join hands on the side and set advancing.
- 19-24 First and second couples dance the first six bars of poussette, third and fourth couples do the same.
- 25-32 On bars 25 & 26 second couple fall back into first place and third couple into fourth place. First and fourth couples dance a reversed poussette. The men start with the left foot as usual:
 - 25 first couple out to the ladies' side and fourth couple to the men's side;
 - 26 both couples make a quarter turn to the right;
 - 27 first couple down the ladies' side and fourth couple up the men's side;
 - 28 both couples make a quarter turn to the right;
 - 29 into the centre;
 - 30 turn half way;
 - 31-32 fall back to own side of the set.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: Jack's Delight

Jeannie Blue E'en

A thirty-two bar Jig for two couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple cross giving right hand and cast off into second place, second couple step up on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-8 First and second couples dance back to back with own partner.
- 9-16 First and second couples dance rights and lefts.
- 17-24 First and second couples dance a ladies' chain.
- 25-28 First and second couples advance and retire.
- 29-32 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple to own side.

Repeat from second position.

Recommended tune: Jeannie Blue E'en

Jim Anderson's Delight

A forty-eight bar Jig for four couples in a longwise set. On the second chord third and fourth couples cross to the opposite side.

- 1-2 First and fourth couples set.
- 3-4 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up, whilst fourth couple cast up into third place and third couple step down.
- 5-8 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple and fourth couple dance a half figure of eight round third couple.
- 9-16 Grand chain, one step to each hand, second and third couples cross to start.
- 17-24 First and fourth couples dance right hands across in a wheel and back with the left hand to finish facing corners.
- 25-32 Double diagonal reels of four: second man, first lady, fourth lady and third man on one diagonal and the others on the other diagonal, giving left hands across in the middle in passing.
- 33-34 Turn corners once round with the right hand.
- 35-36 First and fourth couples dance left hands across in a wheel half way.
- 37-40 First and fourth couples set and cross giving right hand in passing.
- 41-48 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: Jim Anderson's Delight

King of the Fairies

A forty bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First couple set, cross giving right hand, cast off into second place and turn with the left hand to finish facing first corner, second couple step up on bars 5 & 6.
- 9-12 Turn first corners with the right hand, then turn partner with the left hand to finish facing first corners.
- 13-16 Set to first corners, then set to partner across the set to finish facing second corners.
- 17-20 Turn second corners with the right hand and partner with the left hand to finish facing second corners.
- 21-24 Set to second corners, then set to partner, finishing back to back facing second corners.
- 25-30 Reels of three with corners, passing second corners by the right to commence.
- 31-32 Cross to own side giving right hand in passing.
- 33-40 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: King Of The Fairies

Lady Dannel Grant

A thirty-two bar Strathspey for two couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple.
- 5-8 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel to finish with the ladies on the sides of the set and the men facing up and down.
- 9-16 First and second couples dance a reel of four across the set, to commence the men pass left shoulder to give right shoulder to own partner. Finish with the men again passing left shoulder to face up and down.
- 17-24 All dance petronella figure to change places. First lady is now on own side and second lady on men's side.
- 25-26 Four hands round to the left half way.
- 27-28 The men turn the lady on their left once round with two hands.
- 29-30 Four hands round to bring second couple to the top and first to second place, slightly over half way.
- 31-32 First couple turn once with two hands to own side, whilst second couple turn with two hands half way to own side.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Lady Dannel Grant

Last May a Braw Wooer

A forty bar Jig in ten bar phrases for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First couple dance down the middle and back.
- 9-10 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up.
- 11-18 First and third couples dance a double figure eight, first couple crossing down to start.
- 19-20 First couple cross giving right hand.
- 21-28 First and second couples dance a double figure of eight, first couple cast up to start.
- 29-30 First couple cast into first place, second couple lead down to second place facing out.
- 31-36 Reels of three on the side of the set, second and third ladies pass right shoulder to commence and second and third men pass left shoulder to commence.
- 37-38 First couple cross back to own side giving right hand in passing, and face out.
- 39-40 First and second men change places left hand whilst first and second ladies change places right hand.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Last May A Braw Wooer

The March To The Battlefield

A forty-eight bar Reel for four couples in a longwise set.

On the second chord the third and fourth couples cross to the opposite side of the set.

- 1-4 First lady casts off below fourth man and starts to dance up, whilst fourth lady casts up above first man and starts to dance down.
- 5-8 First lady dances right hands across with third and fourth men whilst fourth lady dances right hands across with the first and second men.
- 9-12 The four ladies dance left hands across to finish on the side lines, first lady in fourth man's place and fourth lady in first lady's place.
- 13-16 All four ladies turn the man they are facing by the right hand once round.
- 17-20 First man casts off below his partner and starts to dance up, whilst fourth man casts up above his partner and starts to dance down.
- 21-24 First man dances left hands across in a wheel with the first and third ladies, whilst fourth man dances left hands across with fourth and second ladies.
- 25-28 The four men dance right hands across in a wheel to finish with first man in fourth ladies place and fourth man in first man's place.
- 29-52 All four men turn their partner's with the left hand.
- 33-40 Fourth and second couples dance a granny knot*, third and first couples do the same. (Turn left hand half way into a left handed allemande hold, top two couples facing down and bottom two facing up; Second couple followed by the fourth cast up on the men's side whilst the third followed by the first casts down on the ladies' side. Releasing left hand all turn right hand to finish on the side lines, second and fourth on own sides and first and third on opposite sides).
- 41-48 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: The March to the Battlefield

* The granny knot for two couples is described in the appendix of this book.

The Merry Blacksmith

A thirty-two bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 Reels of three on own side, right shoulder on the men's side and left on the ladies' side.
- 9-12 First and second couples dance half a double figure of eight, first couple cross down to commence.
- 13-16 First and second couples set and cross over.
- 17-20 Four hands round to the left in a circle.
- 21-24 Right hands across in a wheel.
- 25-32 First and second couples dance an allemande.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: The Merry Blacksmith

The Mill Burn

A thirty-two bar Reel for two couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First lady crosses down between second couple and casts up behind second man, dancing into the centre of the set to face second lady. Meanwhile first man crosses over and casts off behind second lady, dancing into the centre of the set to face second man. First and second couples are in a diamond formation, with first couple in the centre of the set.
- 5-8 Half diagonal rights and lefts, the two ladies change places right hand, the two men likewise; then first man and second lady change places left hand as do their partners. Finish second couple on the sidelines, first couple in the middle of the set facing up and down.
- 9-16 Right hands across in a wheel and back with the left hand.
- 17-24 All dance half a petronella to finish with second couple back on own side, first couple still in the centre, lady at the top facing down and man facing up.
- 25-32 Reel of four, first couple pass left shoulder to start, then first man and second lady pass right as do their partners. At the end of the reel, first man and second lady are in first place, second man and first lady in second place.
Second man steps up on the first two bars of the repeat.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended time: The Mill Burn

The Two Misses

A sixteen bar Strathspey, sixteen bar Reel Medley for three couples in a longwise set.

Strathspey

- 1-8 Reels of three on own side, the men passing right shoulder and the ladies left shoulder to start.
9-16 Grand chain for three couples.

Reel

- 1-8 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
9-16 First and second couples dance a poussette.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tunes: Strathspey: Miss Jane Steward Strathspey; Reel: Miss Forbes Farewell to Banff Reel

The Muir O' Loggie

A thirty-two bar Strathspey for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 Crossing reels of four, right shoulder reels on the men's side and left shoulder on the ladies' side; all cross down to the opposite side from third place, third couple on bar 1, first couple on bar 3, second couple on bar 5 and fourth couple on bar 7.
- 9-16 Repeat crossing reels to return to own side.
- 17-24 First couple dance down the middle and back to finish all on the sidelines.
- 25-28 First and second couples dance half a Strathspey poussette, third and fourth couples do the same.
- 29-32 Whilst second and third couples fall back to the sides on bar 29, first and fourth couples dance half a Strathspey poussette.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: The Muir O' Loggie

New Brig Of Ayr

A thirty-two bar Reel for four couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 Grand chain for four couples one step to each hand.
- 9-10 First and fourth couples cross giving right hand.
- 11-12 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up; fourth couple cast up into third place, third couple step down.
- 13-16 First and fourth couples dance left hands across in a wheel. Meanwhile second and third couples dance chase half way round to the diagonally opposite corner position. First and fourth couples finish facing corners.
- 17-22 Double diagonal reels of four half way:
First and fourth couples dance out for 2 bars, in for 2 bars then left hands across for 2 bars.
Second and third couples dance in for 2 bars, left hands across for 2 bars, then out for 2 bars.
- 23-24 Turn corners with the right hand to finish on own side of the set in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.
- 25-32 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: New Brig of Ayr

Old Bog Hole

A forty bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple cross giving right hand and cast off, second couple step up on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-8 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple to finish facing their first corners.
- 9-12 Half a Hello-Goodbye setting: first couple set to first corners, then set to partner, finish facing second corners.
- 13-16 Turn second corners with the right hand and partner with the left hand to face first corners.
- 17-24 Half reel of four with first corners, and pass left shoulder to face second corners.
- 25-32 Half reel of four with second corners and pass left shoulders to face first corners (third corner position).
- 33-36 Turn first corners with the right hand, then turn partner with the left hand to finish facing second corners (fourth corner position).
- 37-40 Set to second corners, then set to partner to finish back to back facing second corners.
- 41-48 First couple dance a figure of eight on own sides passing their second corners by the right to start and finishing in second place. Meanwhile second and third couples set, dance half rights and lefts and again set.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Old Bog Hole

Polly Stewart

A thirty-two bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First couple set, turn with the right hand, cast off into second place and turn with the left hand, second couple step up on bars 5 & 6.
- 9-12 First, second and third men dance right hands across in a wheel, first second and third ladies do the same; at the end of bar 12 first couple pass by the right.
- 13-16 First man dances left hands across with second and third ladies, whilst first lady dances left hands across with second and third men. First couple finish facing their first corners.
- 17-20 Half a reel of four with first corners, passing left shoulder to commence, on bars 19 & 20 first couple turn with the left hand to face their second corners (instead of passing by the right shoulder).
- 21-24 Half a reel of four with second corners, again passing by the left shoulder to start, on bars 23 & 24 first couple again turn with the left hand to finish in second place on opposite sides facing out.
- 25-26 The three men join nearer hands on the ladies' side and the three ladies do the same on the men's side, all balance in line.
- 27-28 Second and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way whilst first man casts down to finish between third couple facing up and first lady casts up to finish between second couple facing down.
- 29-30 First couple turn with the right hand.
- 31-32 First man casts round third man into second place on own side and first lady casts behind second lady into second place on own side.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Polly Stewart

Polwart On The Green

A thirty-two bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First and second couples set and dance right hands across in a wheel half way, then set and dance back giving left hands across in a wheel.
- 9-12 First, second and third couples set and cross giving right hand.
- 13-14 First couple cast into second place, second couple step up.
- 15-16 First couple turn left hand to face first corner position.
- 17-20 Half a diagonal reel of four with second lady and third man, pass left shoulder to face second corner positions.
- 21-24 Half a diagonal reel of four with second man and third lady, passing left shoulder to finish in second place on own side.
- 25-26 All join hands on the side and set.
- 27-30 Six hands round to the left in a circle half way.
- 31-32 All cross to own side giving right hand to partner in passing.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Polwart on the Green

Pretty Peggy

A thirty-two bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple cross giving right hand in passing and cast off into second place; second couple step up on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-6 First couple dance a petronella turn to finish first man between second couple and first lady between third couple.
- 7-8 All join hands and set.
- 9-16 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
- 17-20 First couple dance a petronella turn to second place on own side, all join hands on the sides and set.
- 21-24 All three couples advance and retire.
- 25-32 First and second couples dance rights and lefts.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Pretty Peggy

The Road To Muchty

A thirty-two bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple dance a petronella turn to face up and down and set. Second couple step up half a place on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-8 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
- 9-12 First and second couples dance left hands across back.
- 13-16 First couple dance a petronella turn to finish in second place on opposite side and set.
Second couple step up half a place on bars 13 & 14.
- 17-22 Reels of three on the sides, giving right shoulder to second corner to commence.
- 23-24 First couple cross back to own side with right hand.
- 25-32 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: The Road to Muchty

Ronnie Douglas

A forty-eight bar Jig for two couples in a longwise set. On the second chord first couple cross to the opposite side.

- 1-4 First and second couples face up and down, they dance mirror back to back: first couple, joining nearer hands, lead down between second couple, they then separate as second couple join nearer hands to dance backwards down between them.
- 5-8 First man turns second lady with the left hand whilst first lady turns second man with the right hand.
- 9-10 First couple join both hands and slip down the middle, at the same time second couple slip up on the side lines into top place, and advance to join both hands.
- 11-12 First and second couples turn half way with two hands.
- 13-16 Repeat bars 9-12, second couple slipping down between first couple.
- 17-18 First couple join nearer hands and advance between second couple.
- 19-20 First man retires on bars 19 & 20 whilst first lady casts up behind second lady.
- 21-24 First lady dances half a figure of eight round second couple to her original place.
- 25-32 Four hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
- 33-34 First couple advance between second couple with nearer hands joined.
- 35-36 First lady retires whilst first man casts up behind second man.
- 37-40 First man dances a half figure of eight round second couple to finish in original place.
- 41-44 Half rights and lefts.
- 44-48 Second and first couples turn one and a half times with the right hand.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Ronnie Douglas

Sidlaw Hills

A thirty-two bar Strathspey for four couples in a longwise set. On the second chord second and fourth couples cross to the opposite side of the set.

- 1-2 First and fourth couples cross giving right hand.
- 3-4 First couple cast off, second couple step up, fourth couple cast up and third couple step down.
- 5-8 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple whilst fourth couple do the same round third couple.
- 9-16 Snowball chain, one step to each hand, first and fourth couples commence by giving right hands on the sides on bar 9, second and third couples joining in giving left hands on bar 10. It will help if they use bar 9 to make a small step to face up and down ready to commence with the left foot on bar 10.
- 17-20 First and fourth couples dance right hands across in a wheel to finish facing their nearest corners. First man with second man, first lady with second lady, fourth man with third man and fourth lady with third lady.
- 21-24 Hello-Goodbye setting: set to corners turning on the second step so that first and fourth men face across the set and their partners face up and down; set again to finish facing next corner. First lady with second man, fourth man with second lady, fourth lady with third man and first man with third lady.
- 25-28 Turn corners, first and fourth ladies turn second and third men with the left hand, whilst the first and fourth men turn third and second ladies with the right hand (out at the ends and in at the sides).
- 29-32 First and fourth couples dance half a ladies' chain, as the ladies cross right hand the men dance across the set to the opposite side to meet their partners and turn them with the left hand half way. Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.

Repeat with new top couple.

Recommended tune: Sidlaw Hills

Sir Archibald Dunbar

A thirty-two bar Strathspey for two couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First lady casts off and crosses to second man's place, whilst second man casts up and crosses to first lady's place. Meanwhile first man turns second lady one and a half times with the right hand.
- 5-8 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
- 9-12 First and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel.
- 13-16 First and second couples set and cross giving right hand in passing.
- 17-24 First and second couples dance four hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
- 25-32 First and second couples dance a promenade.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Sir Archibald Dunbar

Sir Reginald MacDonald

A thirty-two bar Reel for two couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple set and cross giving right hand.
- 5-8 First couple join two hands and dance down the middle with eight slip steps.
- 9-12 First couple dance up the middle with eight slip steps.
- 13-16 First couple set and cross giving left hand, first man finishes facing out.
- 17-20 First man, followed by his partner, casts behind second man and crosses to opposite side.
Second couple step up on bars 19 & 20.
- 21-28 First and second couples dance a ladies' chain.
- 29-32 First couple dance a half figure of eight round second couple, crossing up to commence.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Sir Reginald Macdonald

The Sly Old Fox

A forty-eight bar Jig for five couples in a longwise set.

- 1-8 First and third couples set and cross giving right hands, then cast off one place and turn left hand to face first corners, second and fourth couples step up on bars 5 & 6.
- 9-10 Dancers in the centre change places with first corner positions giving right hands.
- 11-12 New dancers in the centre turn three quarters with the left hand to face second corner positions.
- 13-16 Change places with corners right hand, then new dancers in the centre turn three quarters with the left hand to face first corner positions.
- 17-24 Repeat bars 9-16 from new positions.
- 25-32 Repeat bars 9-16 from new positions.
- 33-40 Repeat bars 9-16 from new positions.
Fifth couple are now in first place on opposite sides, third couple are in second place facing third corner positions, fourth couple are in third place on own side, first couple are in fourth place facing third corner positions and second couple are in fifth place on opposite sides.
- 41-44 Third man dances half a reel of three with fifth couple, passing fifth lady giving right shoulder to start and finishing between fifth couple facing down. First lady dances half a reel of three across the set with second couple to finish between second couple facing up, passing second man giving right shoulder to start. First man and third lady dance half a reel of four across the set with fourth couple, giving right shoulder to start. First man and third lady finish back to back facing their own partners.
- 45-46 First and third couples turn three quarters with the right hand to own side of the set, whilst fourth couple cross to own side giving right hand in passing.
- 47-48 All join hands on the sides and set. Finish in the order 5, 3, 4, 1, 2.

Repeat with new leading couples.

Recommended tune: The Sly Old Fox

The Tullamore Piper

A thirty-two bar Reel for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple cross giving right hand and cast off into second place, second couple step up on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-8 First couple dance half figures of eight, the man through second couple and the lady through third couple.
- 9-16 Reels of three on own side, first and second ladies pass by the right, first and third men likewise, to commence.
- 17-32 First couple dance a petronella. Meanwhile second and third couples dance interrupted rights and lefts: they change places right hand on the sides and set, then cross left hand and set, and repeat back to place. On each setting all three couples join hands.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tunes The Tullamore Piper

Editor's note to the 2023 edition

Bars 17-32 originally had rights and lefts starting across the dance - this was altered to avoid a collision with the first couple during the petronella figure. The original instructions were: they cross right hand and set, change places left on the sides and set, and repeat back to place. On each setting all three couples join hands, so that second and third couples are facing the way that they are going.

Walking The Floor

A thirty-two bar Jig for three couples in a longwise set.

- 1-4 First couple cross giving right hand and cast into second place, slightly behind the sidelines, second couple step up on bars 3 & 4.
- 5-8 The three men change places with a petronella turn, moving one place anticlockwise and set. The three ladies set, and then change places with a petronella turn also moving one place anticlockwise.
- 9-12 Repeat bars 5-8.
- 13-16 Repeat bars 5-8.
- 17-24 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right, finishing in a longwise formation on bar 24.
- 25-32 First couple chase half way round the set in a clockwise direction.

Repeat from second place.

Recommended tune: Walking the Floor

The Work of the Weaver

A one hundred and ninety-two bar Reel for four couples in a square set.

First Figure

- 1-4 First couple advance to face third couple, both couples set.
- 5-8 First couple retire to place and set.
- 9-16 Repeat bars 1-8, third couple advancing and retiring.
- 17-20 First man and third lady dance back to back, first lady and third man do the same.
- 21-24 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
- 25-32 First and third couples set, advance and retire and set. Meanwhile second and fourth couples advance and retire on bars 25-28, then advance and retire again on bars 29-32.

Chorus

- 33-34 All turn right hand with partner, keep right hand and then give left hand to corner.
- 35-36 All set, then release right hand.
- 37-38 All turn corner left hand.
- 39-40 All turn partner right hand.
- 41-48 Eight hands round in a circle to the left and back to the right.

Second Figure

- 1-2 The men dance right hands across in a wheel half way.
- 3-4 The men turn opposite lady three quarters with the left hand to face own corners.
- 5-8 The men turn their corners one and a half times with the right hand to place.
- 9-16 The ladies dance in front of their partners, cast behind the next man (first lady behind second man etc.); dance round in front of that man and cast behind their partners to their original place.
- 17-18 The ladies dance left hands across half way.
- 19-20 The ladies turn opposite man three quarters with the right hand to face own corners.
- 21-24 The ladies turn their corners one and a half times with the left hand to place.
- 25-32 The men dance in front of their partners, behind the next lady (first man behind fourth lady etc.); dance round in front of that lady and cast behind partner to their original place.
- 33-48 Repeat Chorus.

Third figure

- 1-4 First man and third lady dance a half figure of eight crossing through fourth couple whilst first lady and third man dance a half figure of eight through second couple, first and thirds finish in each others places.
- 5-8 Repeat, first man and third lady through second couple and first lady and third man through fourth couple.
- 9-10 First and third couples turn partner with right hand.
- 11-14 First and third couples dance round their corners passing by the left (men in front of their corners and casting back whilst the ladies cast and dance in front to come back).
- 15-16 First and third couples turn partner with right hand.
- 17-32 Second and fourth couples repeat bars 1-16 round standing first and third couples.
- 33-48 Repeat Chorus.

Fourth Figure

Second and fourth couples repeat the first figure, as previously described.

- 1-8 Second couple advance, set, retire and set.
- 9-16 Fourth couple repeat.
- 17-24 Back to back and right hand wheel.
- 25-32 Set, advance, retire and set, whilst first and third couples advance and retire twice.
- 33-48 Repeat Chorus.

Recommended tune: The Work of the Weaver

Appendix to the new edition: Description of Formations

For ease of reference, all formation descriptions which originally appeared spread throughout the book have been collected here.

Granny knot for two couples

The granny knot is a left handed version of a standard knot.

- 1-2 Both couples turn half way with the left hand to finish facing the top, ladies on their partner's left, the men lifting the ladies' left arms over their heads into an allemande hold.
- 3-4 Both couples allemande down the ladies' side of the set.
- 5-8 Releasing the left hand they turn with the right hand to own sides of the set.

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