The Whetherly Book of Scottish Country Dances

Number 16

By John W. Mitchell

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New formations are described in the appendix of this book:

- Corners chain and chase (The Cooper's Wife)
- Half a poussette, Reel time (Cookie Shine, Dunse Dings A')
- Half a poussette, Jig time (Duncan The Gauger)
- Twisted Triangle (A Faery Lullaby)

Original Introduction

A further selection of dances devised whilst overseas, primarily to infuriate those who say that there are too many dances. An opinion which as a teacher I tend to agree with. Unfortunately most of the best dances are ones which have been devised, tried and found acceptable by the dancing masses. There is only one way to sort them out, that is to devise them, distribute them, let the dancers try them and reject those that are of no further interest. With this point of view I do not insist that you restrict yourselves to my humble offerings, but rather I hope that you will peruse them, along with those from other sources, and try some of them. You will be surprised at the complete and utter chaos that can be created by an apparently innocent combination of basic figures. You may be equally surprised at how easily some dancers master the most complicated combinations of figures which appear in some of these dances.

A few variations of figures, both old and new, appear in some of the dances included in this collection. These are clearly explained in the text of the dances. New figures which occur include:

Corners chain and chase (The Cooper's Wife)
Counter Splat (Fife And Forfar, Four Leaf Clover)
Counter Splunge (Dagg's Of Craighouse)
Half a poussette, Reel time (Cookie Shine, Dunse Dings A')
Half a poussette, Jig time (Duncan The Gauger)
Ruptured Triangle (Dr Finlay)
Twisted Triangle (A Faery Lullaby)

It was not strictly necessary to devise these new figures as such. They could easily have been treated as simple movements within a dance; but as there is a current fashion for inventing new figures I decided to join the club. I have tried to avoid a trap which some devisors have fallen into: as far as I am aware I have not invented a new name for any existing figure. The names have been carefully chosen to give maximum meaningful impact, they are intended to be remembered.

John W. Mitchell (1986)

Introduction to the new edition

Surely the counter splat, counter splunge, ruptured triangle and twisted triangle are sufficiently memorable names. As far as I'm aware, they still do not coincide with other named figures, although the combinations concerned may have since occurred elsewhere.
Nevertheless, I am similarly hopeful that some of you readers and dancers will select a few to attempt, try out, and retain those that tickle your fancy. This may be none of them, but it is still preferable to these dances lying forgotten in some dusty corner or other.
As to the chaos that can ensue from an apparently innocuous combination of basic figures, I will merely comment that these days: I am no longer surprised.

Alison M. W. Mitchell (2026)

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.

The Cobbler's Awl

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

1-8 First, second and third couples dance a grand chain.
9-10 First couple cross down below second couple giving right hand.
11-12 First couple cast up into first place on opposite sides.
13-14 First couple lead down between second and third couples, second couple step up.
15-16 First couple cast up into second place, still on opposite sides.
17-18 First couple cross down below third couple giving left hand.
19-20 First couple cast up into second place on own side.
21-22 First couple lead up between second couple.
23-24 First couple cast off into second place.
25-32 Reels of three across the set, first man with third couple and first lady with second couple, first couple pass their first corners by the left to commence and finish in second place on own sides.
33-40 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
41-44 First man dances right hands across in a wheel with third couple, whilst first lady does the same with second couple; they finish in second place on own sides.
45-48 First man dances left hands across in a wheel with second couple, whilst first lady dances left hands across in a wheel with third couple; first couple pass by the right shoulder to commence.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Dan The Cobbler

Cookie Shine

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

1-2 First and second couples join hands on the sides and set.
3-4 First and second couples turn with the right hand to finish facing partner with both hands joined.
5-8 First and second couples dance half a poussette*:
- 5 away from the centre;
- 6 quarter turn;
- 7 travel up or down;
- 8 release inside hands and open out to face across the set; first couple on the men's side and second couple on the ladies' side, the men in first position.

9-16 First and second couples dance rights and lefts; finish facing partners with both hands joined.
17-20 First and second couples dance half a poussette*:
- 17 travel up or down;
- 18 quarter turn;
- 19 into the centre;
- 20 release inside hands and open out to face up and down the set; on opposite sides with nearer hands joined.

21-24 Four hands round to the left in a circle.
25-28 First and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel.
29-32 First and second couples turn one and a half times with the left hand to own sides of the set.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Cookie Shine

* Half a poussette is described in the appendix of this book.

The Cooper's Wife

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

1-8 First couple dance a figure of eight round second couple, they cast off to commence.
9-10 First couple cast off and cross to finish facing first corners, second couple step up.
11-20 First corners chain and chase*:
- 11-12 first couple turn first corners half way with the right hand;
- 13-16 first man crosses below third man and casts up to first place, first lady crosses above second lady and casts off to third place, second man and third lady turn one and a half times with the left hand;
- 17-18 first man and third lady change places giving right hand, first lady and second man do the same;
- 19-20 first couple turn three quarters with the left hand to face second corners.

21-30 Second corners chain and chase*:
- 21-22 first couple turn second corners half way with the right hand;
- 23-26 first man casts off behind second man (in third lady's place) and crosses to own side, first lady casts up behind third lady (in first man's place) and crosses to own side, second lady and third man turn one and a half times with the left hand;
- 27-28 first man and second lady change places giving right hand, first lady and third man do the same;
- 29-30 first couple turn three quarters with the left hand to face their first corner person (on opposite sides).

31-34 First couple dance half a reel of four with their first corners, finish passing by their left to face second corner person (on opposite sides).
35-38 First couple dance half a reel of four with their second corners finish about to pass by the left shoulder.
39-40 First couple turn with the left hand to own sides of the set, finish facing out ready to repeat.

Repeat from second place. At the end of that repeat, dancing couple cast to the foot as the next top couple commence.
Recommended tune: The Wee Cooper Of Fife

* The Corners chain and chase is described in the appendix of this book.

Craigieburn Wood

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

1-2 First and third couples set.
3-4 First and third couples turn three quarters with the right hand, first man and third lady pass by the left shoulder to finish back to back, first man facing second man and third lady facing second lady; first lady is at the top facing down and third man is at the foot facing up, both in the centre of the set.
5-8 First man and third lady dance half a reel of four with second couple, finish passing by the left so that first man faces third man and third lady faces first lady.
9-12 First and third couples dance half a reel of four, first man and third lady finish passing by the left so that first man faces second man and third lady faces second lady.
13-16 First man and third lady dance half a reel of four with second couple, finish passing by the left so that first man faces third man and third lady faces first lady.
17-20 First and third men turn with the right hand, first and third ladies do the same.
21-22 First man and third lady turn half way with the left hand.
23-24 First and third couples turn three quarters with the right hand to own side of the set; third couple face out in first place.
25-30 First and third couples dance three quarters of a double figure of eight round second couple, to commence third couple cast off whilst first couple cross up, first couple finish facing out.
31-32 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up and third couple cross giving right hand.

Repeat from second place. To finish, third couple cross to second place as first couple cast to the foot.
Recommended tune: Craigieburn Wood

Craigmillar Castle

A twenty-four bar Strathspey for three couples in a longwise set.

1-8 First, second and third couples dance six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
9-10 First and second couples join hands on the side and set.
11-12 First and second couples cross giving right hands.
13-14 First couple face down, second couple face up and set.
15-16 First and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel half way.
17-24 First, second and third couples dance reels of three on the sides of the set, to commence first and third couples pass by the right shoulder.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Craigmillar Castle

Cuil An Duin

A thirty-two bar Strathspey, thirty two bar Reel Medley for demonstration by four couples in a longwise set.
On the second chord third and fourth couples cross to opposite sides.

Strathspey

1-2 First and fourth couples set.
3-4 First and fourth couples turn three quarters with the right hand.
5-8 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel, at the end of the wheel first couple slip in back to back facing second couple (first man facing second lady and first lady facing second man); fourth couple do the same to finish facing third couple. Note: this is facilitated if each of first and fourth ladies and men retains the right hand of the dancer behind him/her in the wheel, so as to turn into position.
9-16 Reels of four across the set, first couple with second couple and third couple with fourth couple; all finish in lines across the set facing down with nearer hands joined.
17-24 All dance down the middle.
25-32 Reels of four across the set, first couple with second couple and third couple with fourth couple; on bar 32 all clap twice.

Reel

1-2 All set.
3-4 First man and second lady turn three quarters with the right hand, fourth man and third lady do the same. Meanwhile first lady and second man turn three quarters with the left hand and third lady and fourth man do the same.
5-8 First couple dance half a figure of eight round second couple crossing up to commence, whilst fourth couple dance half a figure of eight round third couple crossing down to commence.
9-12 First and fourth couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
13-16 First and fourth couples dance half rights and lefts; the men do not complete the polite turn.
17-24 Reels of four on the sides of the set.
25-32 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right, on bar 32 all clap twice as they dance out to the sidelines.
Finish in the order 2,4,1,3 with first and third couples on the opposite side ready to start again.

Repeat with new top couple, but in the Strathspey at bar 16 all finish facing up and on bars 17-24 all dance up the middle.
Recommended tunes: Strathspey: Cuil An Duin; Reel: Willie Davie

Note
If by any chance this should mistakenly appear on a ballroom programme a permissible variation is to dance down the middle and back on bars 17-24 of the Strathspey each time through.

Cupar Barn Dance

A forty bar Strathspey for four couples in a longwise set.
On the second chord third and fourth couples cross to opposite sides.

1-2 Second and third couples join hands on the sides and set.
3-4 Second and third couples cross giving right hand.
5-6 Second and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way.
7-8 Second and third ladies change places giving right hand, whilst: third man casts off on the ladies' side to meet third lady in third ladies position; second man casts up on the men's side to meet second lady in second man's position; second and third couples take a promenade hold at the end of bar 8.
9-16 Promenade reels of three across the set: second couple with first couple, passing first lady by the right shoulder to commence; third couple with fourth couple passing fourth lady by the right to commence; second couple finish on the men's side of the set and third couple on the lady's side.
17-20 First couple dance right hands across in a wheel with second man and third lady, whilst fourth couple do the same with second lady and third man; on bar 20 second and third men leave the wheels to turn quickly three quarters with the left hand (retaining the hold). Meanwhile the other dancers complete the wheels (third couple are now in second place on own side and second couple in third place on opposite side).
21-24 Second and third couples dance left hands across in a wheel, to commence the ladies dance in behind their partners and join left hands. Meanwhile first lady followed by her partner casts off to fourth place on the ladies' side and crosses to the men's side and fourth lady followed by her partner casts up to first place on the men's side and crosses to the ladies' side.
25-32 Reels of four on the sides of the set.
33-36 First lady followed by her partner casts up on the men's side and crosses to third place on the ladies' side; fourth lady followed by her partner casts off on the ladies' side and crosses to second place on the men's side.
37-40 First lady and fourth man turn one and a half times with the left hand to change places, first man and fourth lady do the same. Finish in the order 3, 1, 4, 2**.**

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: Cupar Barn Dance

Daggs Of Craighouse

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

1-2 First couple set.
3-6 First couple turn one and a half times with the right hand, to finish facing down; at the end of bar 6 second couple face up.
7-8 First and second couples set.
9-10 First man and second lady turn half way with the left hand to change places, first lady and second man do the same.
11-16 First and second couples dance half a ladies' chain into a Counter Splunge:
- 11-12 the ladies change places giving right hand as first man dances up on the ladies' side and second man dances down on the men's side;
- 13-14 first and second couples turn half way with the left hand; the ladies turning under the raised left arms to finish facing out on the sides (first couple on the ladies' side and second couple on the men's side, ladies on their partner's left).
- 15-16 all pulling their left shoulders back they dance left hands across in a wheel half way.

17-20 First lady and third man turn with the right hand, second man and third lady do the same.
21-24 First and second couples turn with the left hand.
25-26 First and second ladies change places giving right hand.
27-28 Second couple cast up into first place.
29-32 Second couple turn one and a half times with the right hand.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Dagg's Of Craighouse

Dancing Feet

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

1-2 First and second couples cross giving right hand.
3-4 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way.
5-8 First and second couples dance half rights and lefts.
9-10 First and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel half way.
11-12 First and second couples cross giving left hand, first couple face up and second couple face down.
13-16 First and second couples dance half rights and lefts, giving right hand on the side to commence; they finish in original places, first man and second lady face out.
17-18 First man casts off behind second man and second lady casts up behind first lady.
19-20 First man and second lady turn three quarters with the left hand to original places.
21-22 First lady and second man turn three quarters with the left hand.
23-24 First lady casts up behind second lady and second man casts down behind first man to original places.
25-28 First and second couples turn one and a half times with the right hand.
29-30 First and second couples dance four hands round to the left in a circle half way.
31-32 First and second couples retain nearer hands on the sides and set.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Dancing Feet

Derry Boat

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

1-4 First couple dance half a figure of eight round second couple crossing down to commence.
5-6 First couple cross giving right hand.
7-8 First couple cast off into second place on own side, second couple step up.
9-10 Second, first and third couples join hands on the sides and set.
11-12 Second, first and third couples cross giving right hand.
13-16 Second, first and third couples dance six hands three quarters round to the left in a circle; finish with men facing down and ladies facing up.
17-18 All three couples retain hands in lines across and set.
19-20 All three couples change places with partners giving right hand.
21-24 Half reels of three across the set, to commence first and third ladies pass by the right shoulder, first and second men do likewise; the men finish facing up and the ladies facing down.
25-26 All three couples join hands in lines across and set.
27-28 All three couples change places with partners giving right hand.
29-32 All three couples dance six hands three quarters round to the left in a circle to finish on own sides.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Derry Boat

Deserts Of Tulloch

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

1-2 First and third couples set.
3-4 First and third couples cross giving right hand.
5-6 All join hands on the sides and set.
7-8 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way; third and fourth couples do the same.
9-12 All turn one and a half times with the right hand.
13-16 First and second couples dance four hands round to the left in a circle; third and fourth couples do the same.
17-24 First and second couples dance a ladies' chain; third and fourth couples do the same.
25-26 First and fourth couples join hands on the side and set.
27-28 First and fourth couples dance left hands across in a wheel half way.
29-32 First and fourth couples turn one and a half times with the left hand.
33-36 First and fourth couples dance four hands round to the right in a circle.
37-38 First and third couples set.
39-40 First and third couples cross to own side giving right hand. Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: Deserts Of Tulloch

The Devil In Dublin

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

1-2 First couple turn half way with the right hand and face down.
3-6 First man and second lady turn one and a half times with the left hand, first lady and second man do the same.
7-8 First man and third lady turn three quarters with the right hand, first lady and third man do the same; first and third men are now back to back in the centre of the set.
9-16 First and third couples dance a reel of four across the set; finish with first couple facing up and third couple facing down.
17-18 First and third couples balance in line.
19-22 Commencing with a quarter turn right hand to return third couple to original places, first man followed by his partner casts up behind second lady and crosses to own side, on bars 21 & 22 second couple step down and face up.
23-24 First and second ladies change places giving left hand, first and second men do the same.
25-28 First and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel.
29-32 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Devil In Dublin

Diana's Delight

A twenty-eight bar Reel for four couples in a longwise set.
On the second chord third and fourth couples cross to opposite sides.

1-2 First and fourth couples cross giving right hands.
3-4 First couple cast off and fourth couple cast up; second couple step up and third couple step down.
5-8 First and fourth couples dance left hands across in a wheel to finish facing their corners (the person whom they cast round).
9-12 Half a double reel of four, first and fourth couples pass corners by the right to commence and all give left hands across in a wheel half way as they pass in the centre.
13-14 First and fourth couples change places with corners giving right hand.
15-16 All set.
17-24 Second man and third lady dance out to the ladies' side, whilst second lady and third man dance out to the men's side, then: second couple cast off below first couple to the foot, dance up the middle to the top making an arch, cast off behind fourth couple into second place on opposite side; at the same time third couple cast up above fourth couple to the top, dance down the middle under the arch to the foot, cast up behind first couple into third place on own side.
25-28 First and third couples dance half rights and lefts, second and fourth couples do the same. Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: The Princess Royal

Editor's note to the 2026 edition
Originally this dance was listed as a Jig, however the recommended music is in Reel time. As John usually wrote dances to match specific tunes, we assume that this was an error in publication and have adapted the description to Reel.

Dr Finlay

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

1-2 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up.
3-6 First couple dance half a figure of eight round second couple, crossing up to commence.
7-8 First couple turn with the right hand to face second corners.
9-12 First man dances half a reel of three with second couple, whilst first lady does the same with third couple, first couple pass their second corners by the left shoulder to commence; first couple finish facing first corner positions.
13-16 First couple dance half a reel of four with third man and second lady; first couple finish back to back facing own side of the set.
17-24 "Ruptured Triangle":
- 17-18 all join hands in triangle formation and set;
- 19-22 first man casts up to the top behind third man and dances down the middle, whilst first lady casts off behind second lady and dances up the middle, they pass by the left shoulder to finish back to back, first lady facing the top; second and third couples dance half rights and lefts, the ladies finish at the top facing down and the men in third place facing up;
- 23-24 all join hands in triangle formation and set.

25-28 First couple dance half a reel of four with second man and third lady (in second corner positions); first couple pass by the left shoulder to face first corner positions.
29-32 First man dances half a reel of three with third couple passing third man by the left shoulder to commence, whilst first lady dances half a reel of three with second couple passing second lady by the left shoulder to commence; first couple finish by crossing to own side giving left hand and face out ready to repeat.

Repeat from second place. At the end of the repeat first couple cast to the foot as the next top couple starts.
Recommended tune: Dr Finlay

The Doodler's

A forty bar Reel for two couples in a circle round the room, first couple facing clockwise and second couple facing anticlockwise.

1-2 First and second couples join nearer hand with partner and set.
3-4 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way.
5-8 First man and second lady turn one and a half times with the right hand, first lady and second man do the same.
9-16 Four hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.
17-18 First and second couples join nearer hand with partner and set.
19-20 First and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel half way.
21-24 First and second couples turn one and a half times with the left hand.
25-32 First and second couples dance a ladies' chain.
33-36 First and second couples dance half rights and lefts.
37-38 First and second couples join nearer hand with partner and set.
39-40 First man and second lady pass giving right hand, to finish back to back facing the next couple round the room; second man and first lady do the same.

Repeat with new opposite couple.
Recommended tune: The Doodler's

The Door In The Wall

A sixty-four bar Strathspey, sixty-four bar Reel Medley for four couples in a square set.

Strathspey

1-4 Half a grand chain for four couples, giving right hand to own partner to commence (one step to each hand).
5-8 All turn partner with the right hand.
9-12 First man followed by his partner casts clockwise behind second couple and dances into the middle to face second man, first lady dancing between second couple to face second lady; third couple dance similarly to finish with third lady facing fourth lady and third man facing fourth man.
13-16 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel, third and fourth couples do the same.
17-24 Reels of four across the set: first and second ladies with third and fourth men; first and second men with third and fourth ladies.
25-26 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way, third and fourth couples do the same.
27-28 First lady followed by her partner chase clockwise into first man's place, second couple follow to finish in fourth place; third lady followed by her partner chase clockwise into third man's place, fourth couple following into second place.
29-32 Eight hands round to the left in a circle half way.
33-36 Second man followed by his partner casts behind first couple and dances into the middle to face first lady, second lady dancing between first couple to face first man; fourth couple dance similarly to finish with fourth lady facing third man and fourth man facing third lady.
37-40 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel, third and fourth couples do the same.
41-48 Reels of four up and down the set: third lady with fourth man, second lady and first man; first lady with second man, fourth lady and third man.
49-50 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way, third and fourth couples do the same.
51-52 Second lady followed by her partner chase clockwise into fourth man's place, first couple follow to finish in third place: fourth lady followed by her partner chases clockwise into second man's place, third couple following into first place.
53-56 All turn partner one and a half times with the right hand to change places.
The order is now 3, 4, 1, 2.
57-64 Double men's chain:
- 57-58 the men dance left hands across in a wheel half way, whilst the ladies dance into their partner's places;
- 59-60 the men turn the opposite ladies with the right hand half way;
- 61-62 the men dance left hands across in a wheel half way, whilst the ladies dance into their partner's places;
- 63-64 all turn with the right hand half way.

Reel

1-52 Repeat bars 1-52 of the Strathspey as above.
53-54 All face partner and set.
55-56 All turn three quarters with the right hand, at the end of bar 56 the ladies turn under the raised right arms into an allemande hold all facing anticlockwise.
57-62 All allemande anticlockwise round the set.
63-64 All turn the ladies into the centre of the set back to back for the final bow and curtsey.

Recommended tunes: Strathspey: Jock O'Hazeldean; Reel: The Doodler's

Note
If used as the final dance in a demonstration the dancers can allemande off led by first couple during bars 57-64.

Editor's note to the 2026 edition

During bars 53-56 of the Reel, all couples must turn to face anticlockwise, which is only a three quarter turn. The original text suggested to turn one and a quarter times, which would lead to a chase clockwise. We have therefore modified the instructions to "set and turn partner three quarters". The original description is reproduced here:

53-56 All turn one and a quarter times with the right hand, at the end of bar 56 the ladies turn under the raised right arms into an allemande hold all facing anticlockwise.

The Dougal Craiter

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

1-2 First and fourth couples turn half way with the right hand, first man and fourth lady finish facing out.
3-6 First man followed by first lady casts off behind second lady and crosses to own side, whilst fourth lady followed by fourth man casts up behind third man and crosses to own side; on bars 5 & 6 second couple step up and third couple step down.
7-8 First and second couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way, third and fourth couples do the same.
9-16 Reels of four on the sides of the set.
17-20 First man followed by his partner casts off behind second man and crosses to own side in third place, whilst fourth lady followed by her partner casts up behind third lady and crosses to own side in second place; on bars 19 & 20 second couple step up and third couple step down.
21-22 First and fourth couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way.
23-24 All four couples turn with right hand half way, second couple finish in first place on own side; the other three couples retain the right hand hold.
25-32 First, fourth and third couples dance a knot:
- 25-26 first, fourth and third couples continue to turn with right hand, to finish facing down in an allemande hold (effectively they dance a four bar turn on bars 23-26);
- 27-29 third couple followed by fourth and first couples cast up on the ladies' side of the set;
- 30-32 releasing right hands, the men swing the ladies across in front of them and turn with the left hands to own side of the set.

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: The Dougal Craiter

Dumfries House

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

1-2 First and third couples set.
3-4 First and third couples cross giving right hand.
5-6 First and third couples set.
7-8 First and third couples cross giving right hand to finish facing down and out.
9-16 Reels of four on the sides, the men giving left shoulder and ladies giving right shoulder to commence; first and third couples finish facing down and out.
17-24 First and second couples dance a double figure of eight, third and fourth couples do the same; to commence first and third couples cast off as second and fourth couples cross up; first and third couples finish facing down and out.
25-26 First and third couples cast off one place, second and fourth couples step up and face down.
27-28 First and third couples cross giving right hand.
29-30 First man and second lady change places on the side giving left hand, first lady and second man do the same, as do third man and fourth lady and third lady and fourth man.
31-32 First and third couples turn half way giving right hand, third couple finish on own side of the set (first couple retain right hand hold).
33-34 First couple continue to turn with the right hand to opposite side below second couple.
35-36 First couple cast off behind third couple.
37-38 First couple cross to own side giving right hand.
39-40 First couple cast off into fourth place, second, third and fourth couples join hands on the sides and step up.
41-48 Eight hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: Dumfries House

Duncan Davidson

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

1-4 First man followed by his partner casts off to the foot of the set and dances up between fourth couple; first lady passes between third and fourth men to dance up between third couple.
5-8 First couple dance right hands across in a wheel with third and fourth ladies; first lady finishes by dancing out towards the ladies' side between second and third ladies.
9-12 First and second couples dance left hands across in a wheel, first lady finishes by dancing down between third couple; second couple finish in first place.
13-16 First couple dance right hands across in a wheel with third and fourth men; first lady dancing out to finish in second place on the ladies' side as first man finishes in second place on own side.
17-22 Second, first and third couples dance reels of three on own sides of the set; to commence first and third couples pass by the right shoulder.
23-24 First and third ladies change places on the side of the set giving right hand, first and third men do the same.
25-30 Third, first and fourth couples dance reels of three on own sides of the set; to commence first and fourth couples pass by the left shoulder.
31-32 First and fourth ladies change places on the side of the set giving left hand, first and fourth men do the same.

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: Duncan Davidson

Duncan The Gauger

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

1-2 First couple cross giving right hand.
3-4 First couple cast off into second place on opposite sides, second couple step up.
5-8 First and second couples dance half rights and lefts.
9-12 First and second couples dance half a ladies' chain, finish facing partners on the sides with both hand joined.
13-16 First and second couples dance half a poussette*:
- 13 first couple travel down on the men's side and second couple travel up on the ladies' side;
- 14 quarter turn;
- 15 into the centre;
- 16 second couple fall back to own side of the set, meanwhile first couple release their lower hands (man's left and lady's right) to open out and finish back to back, man facing the ladies' side and lady facing the men's side.

17-24 Double triangles; on the last two bars first couple dance out to second place on own sides, turning to their right with two pas de basque steps.
25-32 Six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Duncan The Gauger

* Half a poussette is described in the appendix of this book.

Dunkeld Steeple

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

1-8 First and second couples dance four hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right; they finish facing partner with both hands joined.
9-16 First and second couples poussette; on the last two bars instead of falling back to the sides they set turning to face the top with both hands joined in a promenade hold, third couple step in below first couple and also take a promenade hold.
17-24 Second, first and third couples dance an allemande, the men lifting their partners' right arms over their heads on bar 17 as they commence; on the last two bars second and third couples cross to opposite sides giving right hand whilst first couple turn with the left hand to face first corner positions.
25-28 Half a reel of four with first corners, first couple pass by the left shoulder to face second corner positions.
29-32 Half a reel of four with second corners, first couple pass by the right shoulder to cross to second place on own side.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Dunkeld Steeple

Dunse Dings A'

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

1-2 First couple cross giving right hand.
3-4 First couple cast off into second place; second couple step up.
5-8 First and second couples dance half right and lefts; they finish with first man facing second lady and first lady facing second man on the sides with both hands joined.
9-12 First and second couples dance half a poussette*:
- 9 first man and second lady travel down on the men's side and first lady and second man travel up on the ladies' side;
- 10 quarter turn;
- 11 into the centre;
- 12 open out to face own partner.

13-16 First and second couples dance half right and lefts, giving right hand to partner to commence; they finish with first man facing second lady and first lady facing second man with both hands joined.
17-20 First and second couples dance half a poussette*:
- 17 out to the sides;
- 18 quarter turn;
- 19 first man and second lady travel down on the men's side, second man and first lady travel up on the ladies' side;
- 20 both couples open out on the sides of the set to face own partner.

21-22 First and second couples retain nearer hands and set.
23-24 First and second couples cross giving right hand, first couple finish facing out.
25-26 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up.
27-30 First couple turn one and a half times with the right hand to own sides.
31-32 First couple set.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Dunse Dings A'

* Half a poussette is described in the appendix of this book.

Earl Of Morton's Jig

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

1-2	First man and third lady change places giving right hand, first lady and third man do the same.
3-4	First and fourth men change places giving left hand, second and third men do the same.
5-6	First man and second lady change places giving right hand, third man and fourth lady do the same.
7-8	First couple change places giving left hand, third couple do the same.
9-10	All the men set advancing.
11-12	First and second men turn with two hands, opening out to face the second and third ladies, third and fourth men do the same to face first and fourth ladies; the men finish back to back in the centre of the set, second and fourth men facing their own partners.
13-14	All set.
15-16	All turn the person they are facing with the right hand.
17-20	The men dance left hands across in a wheel.
21-28	Reels of four across the set: second couple with third man and first lady; fourth couple with first man and third lady.
29-32	Right hands across in wheels: second couple with first man and third lady; fourth couple with first lady and third man.
33-36	The men dance left hands across in a wheel to finish, with second and third men dancing out to the top and first and fourth men dancing out to the foot.
37-44	First and second ladies dance a figure of eight round the second and third men, dancing in front of them to commence; whilst third and fourth ladies dance a similar figure of eight round first and fourth men, also dancing in front of them to commence.
45-46	First and second men change places giving right hand, third and fourth men do the same.
47-48	First man and fourth lady change places giving left hand, second lady and third man do the same. Fourth couple are now in top place.

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: Earl Of Morton's Jig

Edith Raitt's Jig

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

1-2 First and fourth couples cross giving right hand; first man and fourth lady finish facing out.
3-6 First man followed by his partner casts off behind second lady and crosses to second place on own side, whilst fourth lady followed by her partner casts up behind third man and crosses to third place on own side; on bars 5 & 6 second couple step up and third couple step down.
7-8 First and fourth couples dance left hands across in a wheel half way; first man and fourth lady finish facing out.
9-12 First man followed by his partner casts off behind third lady and crosses to own side, whilst fourth lady followed by her partner casts up behind second man and crosses to own side; on bars 11 & 12 second couple step down and third couple step up.
13-16 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel, second and fourth couples do the same.
17-24 Reels of four on the sides of the set.
25-26 First and third couples change places on the sides giving right hand, as do second and fourth couples.
27-32 Eight hands round to the left in a circle. Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 3.

Repeat with new top couple.
Recommended tune: Edith Raitt's Jig

Edith's Tattie Cairt

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

1-4 First and second couples dance half a double figure of eight, to start first couple cross down and second couple cast up.
5-8 Half reels of three on the sides, to commence first couple dance down crossing to own side below second couple.
9-12 First and second couples dance half a double figure of eight, to start second couple cast down and first couple cross up.
13-16 Half reels of three on the sides, to commence first couple dance up crossing to own side above second couple.
17-24 First couple lead down the middle and back, to finish at the top with a promenade hold, second couple step in behind them and take a similar hold.
25-32 First and second couples dance an allemande.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: Edith's Tattie Cairt

Eevy Atha

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

1-4 First and third couples dance half rights and lefts.
5-6 First and third ladies turn three quarters with the right hand to finish back to back, first lady facing second couple and third lady facing fourth couple.
7-8 First and third ladies join hands with second and fourth couples in triangle formation and all set.
9-16 First and third ladies pass half round:
- 9-12 first lady dances out between second couple and casts clockwise behind second and first men and dances into the middle of the set; third lady dances out between fourth couple and casts clockwise behind fourth and third men and dances into the middle of the set to meet first lady; at the same time second and fourth men turn one and a half times with the right hand to change places;
- 13-16 first lady turns to her right and dances out passing first man by the right shoulder and casts clockwise behind first man and fourth lady's position, then dances into the middle to join left hands with third man and right hands with third lady; third lady turns to her right and dances out passing third man by the right shoulder and casts clockwise behind third man and second lady's position, then dances into the middle to join left hands with first man and right hands with first lady; at the same time second and fourth ladies turn one and a half times with the right hand to change places.

17-18 First and third couples balance in line.
19-20 First and third ladies turn half way with the right hand and join left hands with partner.
21-22 First and third couples balance in line.
23-24 First and third couples turn three quarters with the left hand; to finish with first couple in third place and third couple in first place.
25-26 First and third couples join nearer hands and set.
27-28 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel half way.
29-30 First and third men set.
31-32 First and third men turn three quarters with the left hand to finish with first man facing fourth man and third man facing second man.
33-36 The men dance half a reel of four; first man finishes facing second lady and third man finishes facing fourth lady.
37-40 First and third men dance half a reel of four with second and fourth ladies; first and third men join left hands on bar 40, first man and third lady join right hands, as do third man and first lady.
41-42 First and third couples balance in line.
43-44 First and third men turn half way with the left hand and join right hands with partner.
45-46 First and third couples balance in line.
47-48 First and third couples turn three quarters with the right hand; all finish in original places.

Repeat the whole dance with second and fourth couples leading.
Recommended tune: Eevy Atha

A Faery Lullaby

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

1-4 First and third couples dance half rights and lefts; they finish in the centre of the set, first couple facing up and third couple facing down with nearer hands joined.
5-8 First, second and third couples dance six hands round to the left in a "Faery" circle half way.
9-10 Second couple turn with the right hand.
11-16 Reels of three on the sides, to commence second man passes third lady by the right and second lady passes first man by the right; second couple finish facing first corners.
17-24 Turn corner, partner, corner, partner:
- 17-18 second couple turn first corners by the right hand;
- 19-20 second couple turn by the left hand;
- 21-22 second couple turn second corners by the right hand;
- 23-24 second couple turn by the left hand to finish back to back, second man facing the ladies' side of the set and second lady facing the men's side of the set.

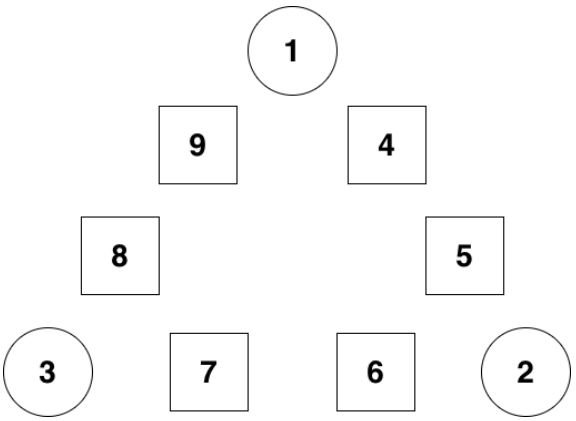
25-32 Twisted Triangle*:
- 25-26 all join hands in triangle formation and set;
- 27-28 first lady and second man turn with the left hand half way to change places; first man and second lady turn with the right hand half way to change places; third couple cross to opposite side giving right hand;
- 29-30 all join hands in triangle formation and set;
- 31-32 first couple dance a petronella turn to second place own side; second and third couples cross giving right hand.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: A Faery Lullaby

* The Twisted Triangle is described in the appendix of this book.

Farewell To Balmerino

A thirty-two bar demonstration Strathspey for three men and six ladies in a triangular set as shown in figure 1. The men are numbered from 1 to 3 and the ladies from 4 to 9.



(figure 1)

1-8 Interlocking reels of four on the sides of the triangle: first man with fourth and fifth ladies, passing fourth lady by the right to commence; second man with sixth and seventh ladies, passing sixth lady by the right to commence; third man with the eighth and ninth ladies, passing eighth lady by the right to commence; at the corners of the triangles borrow a dancer from the interlocking reel on the adjoining side to dance round.

9-16 Right hands across in a wheel and back with the left hand: first man with fourth and ninth ladies; second man with fifth and sixth ladies; third man with seventh and eighth ladies.

17-24 Interlocking circle and wheel:

- 17-18 the men cast anticlockwise into the next man's place whilst the ladies dance six hands round to the left one third in a circle; at the end of bar 18 the ladies dance out and the men dance in: first man passes between fifth and sixth ladies; second man passes between seventh and eighth ladies; third man passes between ninth and fourth ladies.
- 19-20 Men dance left hands across in a wheel once round as the ladies cast clockwise one third round; at the end of bar 20 the ladies dance in and the men dance out: first man passes between seventh and eighth ladies; second man passes between ninth and fourth ladies; third man passes between fifth and sixth ladies.
- 21-22 Repeat bars 17-18; at the end of bar 22 the ladies dance out and the men dance in: first man passes between ninth and fourth ladies; second man passes between fifth and sixth ladies; third man passes between seventh and eighth ladies.
- 23-24 Repeat bars 19-20; at the end of bar 24 the men finish in the centre facing their original places: first man facing seventh and eighth ladies; second man facing ninth and fourth ladies; third man facing fifth and sixth ladies.

25-26 Right hand turns: first man turns eighth lady; second man turns fourth lady; third man turns sixth lady.

27-30 The men dance left hands across in a wheel.

31-32 Right hand three quarter turns: first man turns seventh lady; second man turns ninth lady; third man turns fifth lady; the men finish in their original places, the ladies finish two places clockwise round the set.

Repeat twice from new positions to return the ladies to their original places.
Recommended tune: Alex Maxwell's Farewell To Balmerino

Fife And Forfar

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

1-2 First couple cross giving right hand.
3-4 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up.
5-8 First and second couples Counter Splat:
  5-6 second and first couples turn with the left hand half way, the ladies turning under the raised left arms to finish with second couple (facing up) back-to-back with second first (facing down);
  7-8 pulling their left shoulders back they dance left hands across in a wheel half way.
9-16 Reels of three on the sides of the set, to commence first man and second lady pass by the left shoulder, first lady and second man do the same.
17-20 First lady followed by her partner casts off behind second man and crosses to own side, on bars 19 & 20 second couple step up.
21-24 First and third couples dance right hands across in a wheel.
25-32 Second, first and third couples dance six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: The Fife And Forfar Hunt's Favourite

Four Leaf Clover

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

1-2 First couple turn with the left hand half way.
3-8 First and second couples dance half a ladies' chain up and down the set into a Counter Splat:
- 3-4 first and second ladies change places giving right hand. Meanwhile first and second men cross to opposite side;
- 5-6 first man and second lady turn with the left hand half way, first lady and second man do the same, the ladies turning under the raised left arms to finish back to back with own partner;
- 7-8 pulling their left shoulders back they dance left hands across in a wheel half way; first couple finish on the men's side and second couple on the ladies' side.

9-12 First and second couples dance half a men's chain up and down the set:
- 9-10 the men change places giving left hand, whilst the ladies dance straight across the set;
- 11-12 turn partner with the right hand to finish with first couple in first place on opposite sides of the set facing out.

13-16 First couple dance half a figure of eight round second couple, casting off to commence and finishing in original places facing out.
17-22 Reels of three on the sides of the set, first couple dance out and down whilst second couple dance in and up to commence.
23-24 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up.
25-32 Second, first and third couples dance six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: The Four Leaf Clover

The Fox Chase

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

1-2 First and second couples cross giving right hand.
3-4 First and second couples join hands on the sides and set.
5-8 First and second couples dance half rights and lefts.
9-16 First couple lead down the middle and back, to finish in second place on own side facing out and up.
17-24 Reels of three on the sides of the set, first couple dancing out and up to commence.
25-32 Second, first and third couples dance six hands round to the left in a circle and back to the right.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: The Fox Chase

The Frasers of Oban

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

1-4 First, second and third couples dance half reels of three on the sides; to commence first couple dance down crossing below second couple.
5-8 First and second couples dance half a double figure of eight; to start second couple cast down and first couple cross up.
9-12 First, second and third couples dance half reels of three on the sides; to commence first couple dance up crossing above second couple.
13-16 First and second couples dance half a double figure of eight; to start first couple cross down and second couple cast up.
17-18 First couple cross giving right hand.
19-20 First couple cast off into second place, second couple step up.
21-24 First couple turn with the left hand to finish facing their first corners.
25-32 Turn corner, partner, corner, partner:
- 25-26 first couple turn their first corners with the right hand;
- 27-28 first couple turn with the left hand;
- 29-30 first couple turn their second corners with the right hand;
- 31-32 first couple cross to own side giving left hand.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: The Frasers of Oban

The Freemason

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

1-8 First couple dance down the middle and back to finish in original places facing out.
9-12 Half reels of three on the sides; to commence first couple dance out and down, second couple dance in and up.
13-14 First couple cast up into second place on own side, second couple step down.
15-16 First couple cross giving left hand to finish facing first corner positions.
17-24 Turn corner, partner, corner, partner:
- 17-18 first man turns second lady with the right hand whilst first lady turns third man with the right hand;
- 19-20 first couple turn with the left hand;
- 21-22 first man turns third lady with the right hand whilst first lady turns second man with the right hand;
- 23-24 first couple cross to own side giving left hand.

25-26 First, second and third couples join hands on the sides and set.
27-28 First, second and third couples cross giving right hand.
29-32 First, second and third couples dance six hands round to the left in a circle half way.

Repeat from second place.
Recommended tune: The Freemason

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.

Half a poussette (quick time)

Two couple formation. “Half a poussette” is basically identical in all versions for bars 1-3. Bar 4 is different and used to reposition the dancers as to where they are needed. The Whetherly Books show “standard” setups as well as versions up and down the set, with own or other partners.

1 Away from the centre.
2 Quarter turn.
3 Travel up or down to bring both couples to the same height.
4 Various endings, mostly opening up the couples in some form.

Or as the second half of a poussette, starting on the sideline, partners facing each other:

1 Travel up or down.
2 Quarter turn.
3 Into the centre.
4 Various endings, mostly opening up the couples in some form.

Corners chain and chase

Three couple formation, based on a 10 bar phrase. It starts with first couple facing first corners, second and third couple being in original places. The pattern might be repeated with second corners, keeping all basic directions as in bars 1-10.

1-2 First couple turn first corners half way with the right hand.
3-6 First man crosses below third man and casts up to first place, first lady crosses above second lady and casts off to third place, second man and third lady turn one and a half times with the left hand.
7-8 First man and third lady change places giving right hand, first lady and second man do the same.
9-10 First couple turn three quarters with the left hand to face second corners.

Twisted Triangles

Three couple formation. First and third couples are in original places, whilst second couple is in the centre of the set, back-to-back, the man facing the ladies’ side, the lady facing the men’s side.

1-2 All join hands in triangle formation and set.
3-4 First lady and second man turn with the left hand half way to change places; first man and second lady turn with the right hand half way to change places; third couple cross to the opposite side giving right hand.
5-6 All join hands in triangle formation and set.
7-8 First couple dance a petronella turn to second place own side; second and third couples cross giving right hand.

Version History

1.00 / 2026-04-08	First re-published version.
1.01 / 2026-04-08	Corrected incorrect bar counts in “Craigieburn Wood” and “Derry Boat”.