

George Turnbull, Oughtershaw, Langstrothdale, aged 79.

Born out of the dales, but brought up in Oughtershaw from an early age. He was Miss Letta Douglass's source for Turn-off-6.

In Mr Turnbull's young days, dancing was a natural part of their life - there was no other entertainment locally. He, in common with other young lads of the neighbourhood, - "bits of lads at school" - was taught to dance by an old farmer Bill Lambert, who lived in the cottage now owned by Mr Turnbull. These lessons were completely informal, and took place in the winter evenings whenever Mr Lambert or the boys desired, but there was definitely instruction in the figures of the dances.

I didn't obtain a complete list of the dances which Mr Turnbull had done in his youth, but this list included the following:

Irish Washerwoman	Bonnets so blue	Pop goes the weasel
6-Reel	3-Reel	4-Reel
Turn-off-6	Buttered Pears	Kendal Ghyll

The discrepancies between this list and that of Mr Beresford (see p.) is explained by the fact that Mr Beresford lived at Yockenthwaite in his youth, & so did not receive Mr Lambert's teaching.

In Mr Turnbull's younger days, there was a good deal of informal dancing in an old loft in Oughtershaw on the site of the present Institute.

Mr Turnbull has not danced much since the 1914-18 war, in which he was severely wounded. He is, however, a pianist, and has played for dancing in company with the Beresford brothers.

Mr Turnbull's memory for the figures of dances is now somewhat doubtful - and he himself was insistent that I should verify anything he told me from other sources.

With this warning, I give below the figures of the local dances as he remembers them from before 1914.

3-Reel. Three men in line, the two outer men facing inwards, centre man facing one of the others. They dance a reel of three, then centre man and the one he is facing step-dance. The centre man then step-dances with the other man, and then they again dance a reel of 3. During this reel, the centre man changes places with one of the others. The whole is then repeated, with the third man taking the centre in due course, then the sequence is repeated ad lib.

6-Reel. A bit vague. Longways set of 3 couples. All cast off, the men following 1st man, the ladies following 1st lady. Meet at the bottom & lead up to places. First couple then "waltz" to the bottom (polka?), and spin-up at the bottom, while the others "shuffle up" one place. Possibly it may have been forward & back, fall back, then meet & promenade round etc.

I think that this was the dance which Mr Beresford called 3-Reel.

Turn-off-6. Longways set of 3 couples. You stopped in your own 3 couples, even if there were 3 other sets on the floor.

All cast off, the men following first man, the ladies following 1st lady. They meet at the bottom, lead up the centre, and step-dance a little if they had time. Then they cast up, the men following 3rd man, the ladies following 3rd lady. They meet at the top & lead down, and step-dance if they have time. Then top couple go down the middle & back, then go to the bottom.

This was his first account of the dance, and differs from the version which he gave to Miss Douglas in the omission of the promenade round & promenade back. I prompted Mr Turnbull on this point, and he thought that "perhaps" there was a promenade, but he was not at all sure; in fact he was rather doubtful.

The step-dancing in it is not shuffling, but a step rather like a p.d.B.

Hoppie time

1. 1. Step heavily on RF in semi 4th position, feet parallel.
 2. Beat heavily with LF on the spot
 3. Step back on RF in 1st position, feet parallel.
 - [4 pause in this position]
2. ~ 1. etc.

4-Reel. Stand 0 "Waltz up & back & cross over (?) then "round"

round.

Square-8. Tune is Buffalo girls

Couples 1 and 2 waltz up to each

other, then retire to places, then change

places [Mr Turnbull referred to the 2nd couple as 1st couple's "cross corners"].

Then sides do the same, then top & bottom cross back, then sides cross back.

Finally circle-8 and back.

For the waltz up etc, the partners take ballroom hold with each other, & use two chassé steps to advance, two to retire, then use a waltz-type step, spinning round clockwise to change places, passing the opposite couple by the left.

Kendal Ghyll Longways set for 3 Couple. Archer first, the top couple passing over the 2nd couple to begin. Then circle-6 & back. He could not remember any progressive "down the middle" figure, nor could he remember any reels of 3.

Buttered Peas. Done by two couples as shown

① []
② []

Circle - 4, and back.

All put RH into middle, with R Thumbs up, & walk round twice this (as if in a RH star, without hands joined). Then put LH in middle with L thumbs up, & return to places in the opposite direction.

Shake R hands with partner, clap 3 times, shake L hands with partner, clap 3 times, then "spin round" with partner.

(*) The two men, and also the two ladies, step shake R hands, clap 3 times, shake L hands, clap 3 times. Then spin round.

There is no progression.

Often, the two men at (*) would shake their fists at each other, or imitate 3 blows in rapid succession with alternate fists — this instead of clapping.

Bonnets so Blue } No memory of figures
Irish Washerwoman

Buy a broom. Mr Turnbull thought this was the broom dance. The broom dance [whether "Buy a Broom" or not] was just a main bit of a shuffle". You stood with the handle of the broom in your hand, its head on the floor, and rocked the head backwards & forwards to get the head to rattle. Then passed the broom handle alternately over & under your legs.

Single step dancing. There was apparently a good deal of this at Hawes. Of Peter Beresford, he said that "Pete was a regular public ^(house) step-dancer. In pubs people used to get up agen each other".

Mr Turnbull himself did not step-dance.

Incidentally, he was wearing clogs.

Mr. Peter Beresford (cont.).

After seeing Mr. Turnbull, I slipped back in to see Mr. Beresford for a minute. I asked him about Bonnets to Blue & Irish Waterwoman; he had heard of these, but had never done them. I asked him also whether Buy a brown and the brush dance were the same; he was completely certain that they were not. He confirmed the step described on p. 125, and said this was used for Buy a brown.