

12. 4. 53

PETER MACKAY, KILAULAY, ISLE OF S. UIST.

(Aged 8)

Mr Mackay knew two of Ewen MacLachlan's pupils, namely Archie MacPherson and John MacMillan, both of whom taught dancing in Eochair. He himself was a pupil of John MacMillan. He had seen them both dance the Hebridean dances, namely *Ober the Water to Craibe*, *Tarsachan*, *Highland Ladder*, *The First of August*, *Blue Bonnets*, *Green the Hills and Far Away*, *Muir Forbes*, *Tacky Tar*, and *Bonnie Anne*. He thought the last was a country dance. He had never seen "set dances".

He remembers some of the "Highland Fling" steps taught by John MacMillan when he learnt about 1890.

- (1) First step of the Fling, normal style with full extension to side.
 - (2) Beats 1. Hop on L, place R heel down in intermediate position though w leg not fully extended.
 2. Hop on L, and place R toe down in the same place.
 3. As 1.
 4. Hop on L, and place R in 5th normal nasal (front).
 - 5-8. \sim of 1-4
 - 9-12. As 1-4.
 - 13-16. Double shuffles.
 - 17-32. \sim of 1-16.
- (3) Beats 1-4. As in first step of the Fling.
 - 5-8. As 1-4 of (2)
 - 9-32. \sim , repeat, and \sim of 1-8.
- (4) Beats 1. Spring to land with feet apart, weight equally on both feet.
 2. Spring to land with R in 5th (front).
 3. As 1.
 4. \sim of 2.
 - 5-8. As 1-4 of (2).
 - 9-32. \sim , repeat, and \sim of 1-8.

When he was young, the young girls danced the same steps as the men in the *Sosten Reels*, but John MacMillan also taught some quieter steps for the old women. He demonstrated these whistling "Green grows the rashes o'". They were as follows.

- (1) Beat 1. Place R in 5th rear posⁿ
 - 2. Small step to 2nd posⁿ on L
 - 3. Close R to 5th rear posⁿ
 - + Hop on R. No particular posⁿ for left.
- This is, of course, the "Single Cenn-coisiche" of Peacock.
- (2) Beat 1. Step forward on R
 - 2. Hop on R and bring L to 5th rear normal aerial
 - 3. Step back on L.
 - + Close R to L in 1st
- (3) Beat 1. Step forward on R
 - 2. Hop on R and bring L to 5th rear normal aerial
 - 3. Step back on L
 - 4. Hop on L and bring R to 5th (front) normal aerial
 - 5. Step on R to left, crossing R leg over L leg.
 - 6. Step on L to 2nd posⁿ
 - 7. Close R to 5th front posⁿ
 - 8. As 2.
- (4) Beat 1. Place R in 5th front posⁿ
 - 2. Step on L to 2nd
 - 3. As 1.
 - + Hop on R and bring L to low 3rd front aerial.

Mr Mackay was sent a copy of Anderson's book about the year 1900 by a friend working in Capri, and taught some of the dances from it to the islanders, in particular "Patecat a Bam Dance" (?), and "The Royal Visit". He remained quite cleverly, and gave us the names without hesitation.

The Royal Visit. longways country dance formation. Tune: Bonnie Dundee.

Top couple set	+ bar
Turn partner	+ bar
Set with opposite partner (M ₁ with L ₂ , M ₂ with L ₁)	+ bar
Half sashes chain	+ bar
Turn partner.	+ bar
Top couple down centre	+ bar
Top couple pousette	+ bar & bar

The dancing couple walked down the centre. For the pousette they used sashes held, the step being a chasse with a hop up in front.

His setting step - in Strathpey time - was as follows.

- 1. Step to 2nd on L
- 2. Close R to L
- 3. As 1.
- 4. Kick R across L to 2nd.

They also danced Glasgow Highlanders - probably also taken from Anderson's book

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(Aged c.

RONALD MACDONALD, ARBNAMONIE, ISLE OF S. UIST.

He was another pupil of Archie MacPherson's. He cannot remember any of the dances now, but knew their names; at least he knew the five still known by John MacLeod, and also knew Miss Forbes, Jacey Tar, and Gillean an eilidh.

He thought Ewen MacEachain came from Greenock.

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DONALD MACPHEE, NUNTON FARM, ISLE OF BENBECULA.

An expert Highland dancer in his youth, but knows nothing else. His father was a pupil of Ewen MacEachain's. He said that his father told him that the Hebridean dances were French and that his father got this from Ewen MacEachain himself. But D.C. MacEwen's theory of their French origin is now so well known in the island that I hesitate to accept this information.