

3 September 1955.
Dounby + Mainland Orkney.

Dounby + District, Mainland of Orkney. (19)

Sept. 13th - 16th.

Mr. Tom Harvey, Banks, ~~the~~ Dounby, Mainland, Orkney, aged 78:
Also his wife, aged 69.

Mr Harvey learnt some of his dancing from some girls who had been to dances near ~~the~~ his home. But teachers were very rare - Mr Harvey had never heard of any outside Kirkwall.

The dances in common use were

Scotch Reel (Strathegy + Reel; not Tulloch; no O figure - always 8)

Polka, La Va, Waltz

Highland Schottische

? Tacky Tar Schottische

Petrelle, Flowers of Edinburgh, Strip the Willow, Roy O'More, Triumph,

Kingmakers, Cumberland Reel, Queen Victoria

Lancers & Quadrilles (in country districts these were rather new things & the older folk sometimes did not know them).

The most popular dance

? Hand acorn (a sixsome reel)

? ~~Hand~~ Sixsome Reel

Reel of Tulloch

Bobbity Bowtie.

At a wedding, it was started by the bride. She walks round, while the fiddler plays a march, then throws the handkerchief to the groom's friend, who kisses her, ~~&~~ they while the fiddler makes squeaking noise on the fiddle, & then they walk round the room hand in hand. The groom then throws the handkerchief to the best maid, who joins him, is kissed, & then all three go hand in hand round the room.

throws it to the best man, and so on until all are on the floor. The dancers just walk, & do not use the chassé step. When all are on the floor, in one long line, the dance just breaks up, & it was the convention that each girl was taken ~~home~~ by all to her home by the man she selected.

It was also done at a dance.

We arranged a "dance" in the Community Centre for some of the older folks of Downby. Mr & Mrs Harvey had said that they thought they would remember the dances once they saw people trying them, so we gave them the opportunity. Mr John Tait of Downby (ca 65) made the arrangements for me & brought Mr & Mrs Harvey along. The music was supplied by Mr James Garrison of Downby (ca 60), & the other people present were Mrs Garrison (ca 60), Mr & Mrs John Findlater (~~Findlater~~) of Breckan, Downby (ca 60), Mr John Harvey of Waterhall, Downby (67), Mr Tom Harvey of Downby (ca 45), & Mr & Mrs Archie Spence of Downby (a mere 30) [excluding myself, average age 58].

We tried first the Sixsome Reel, performing it as suggested by Mr Gray & Mr Isbister. After several attempts, we performed it to music, & Mr & Mrs Harvey (the latter took part) agreed that our version was correct. They both thought that it was performed only in Strathspey time, but could not be quite certain.

The Sixsome Reel was last performed ca 50 years ago. Mr & Mrs Harvey of Banks, Mr Harvey of Waterhall, & Mr Garrison were the only ones who had performed it. The others had never seen it.

Sixsome Reel. The starting positions are as shown, facing partners & about 4' from them (Fig 1)



Fig 1.



Way

1-8. The dancers "run the figure 8". 1st lady turns to her left, 3rd lady to her right, & 2nd lady comes forward a little & then turns to her left. The men simply follow their partners (Fig 2). The direction of the reel is

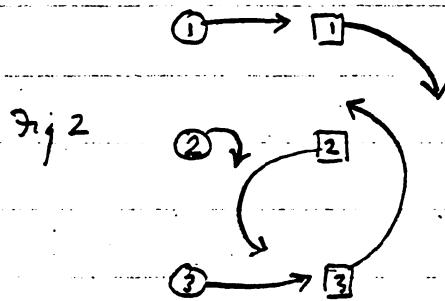


Fig 2

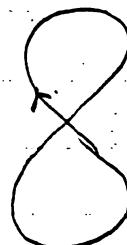


Fig 3

that shown in Fig 3, & all return to their original places. We danced it in Strathepy time, & the step was the usual step, close, step & hop, the foot just swinging through, close to the ground, on the hop.

9-16 "Dance", i.e. set to your partners, using Fig as Highland Schottische steps.

Repeat these 16 bars as often as you please.

I rather prompted here from what Mr Gray "Mr Kinnier said he was at all that this is correct."

Hands Across. ~~The~~ The only people who had seen or done this dance were the Harveys of Banks, John of Waterhall, & the Fiddisters. It seems (lately, anyway) to have been peculiar to Downby, & was performed at the hall there as late as 1923. It was popular in Tom Harvey's young days, but seems to have been revived by Maggie Stanger of Purleigh(?), a lady who died some 30 years ago, aged ca 80.

The starting positions are as shown, facing partner, & about 4' from them ① ②

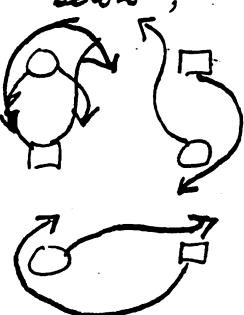
③ ④

Bars 1-8

1-8 6 hands across & back

9-16 6 hands round & back

17-24 Chari: 1st man & 2nd lady, 1st lady & 2nd man, & 3rd couple face each other, link ^{right} arms & pass each other as shown below, & then proceed, linking ^{right} ~~left~~



& left arms alternately, until all are back in place

25-32 "Dance", i.e. set to partner, using appropriate Reel

Repeat these ^{steps} 32 bars as often as you please.

We could not get agreement on the tempo. ~~Mr & Mrs Harvey~~^I did not ask Mr & Mrs Harvey about this on the 13th, but on the 14th both thought that it was in reel tempo. On the night of the dance they seemed to prefer strathspey tempo, but I saw Mrs Harvey alone on the 16th, & she then thought that it was in reel tempo (played slowly by modern standards), & that the pas de Basque setting step was used.

For the travelling parts (including the 6 hands round) a ^(dot & carry one) ~~chassé~~ type of step was used.

I noticed that in the 6 hands round they ~~were~~ turned on bar 4 & performed part of this moving slightly backwards, ready to return on bar 5.

The Finlators were not sure of the tempo.

Queen Victoria Jig Time Longways Country Dance

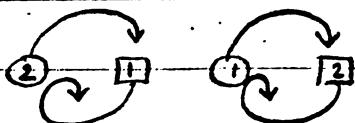
Bars 1-4. First couple turn with the right hand, the hands being held high, with the upper part of the arm almost horizontal. They ~~begin to~~ bring up the left hands on bar 4 and

5-8 turn with the left hand, ending between 2nd couple, with the lady facing down & the man up, with hands joined (& held high as before).

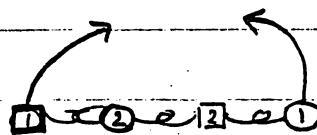


9-12 Balance in line with pas de Basque

13-16 The 1st man & 2nd lady, 2nd man & 1st lady ~~turn~~
half turn, & then ~~1st~~^{1st & 2nd} ladies turns to right (so
that all are facing down) & link arms.



17-24 Down the centre, ~~then~~ break at the bottom & turn
inwards about, link again, & ~~return~~^{come back to} the top. As
they reach the top, the 1st couple come in to the



centre to meet each other, & all take ballroom
hold with partners

25-32 Poussette, with the lazy polka step.

In this, as in all the Country Dances, the English dance
walk was used, except where noted.

Rory O'More

Bars 1-4 Advance 4 steps & retire 4 steps, ($M_1 \leftarrow M_2, L_1 \leftarrow L_2$)
with R hands joined.

5-8 Cross over to opposite side, the ladies passing beneath
the men's hands, & all turning under their own arms if they
wish (but this was not always done). 1st couple now

~~21~~ in 2nd place.

9-16 Repeat this back to places.

17-20 $M_1 \& M_2, L_1 \& L_2$ advance & retire, hands not joined

21-34 Take ballroom hold with partner, & swing with pivot step

25-32 Bourette with lazy polka step

Circassian (C) Final Time

1-8 Rights & lefts, all starting simultaneously, & without giving hands (as in Danish Double Quadrille)

9-16 Swing partner, with ballroom hold

17-18 Ladies chain to the opposite partner

19-24 Swing with them, with ballroom hold

25-26 Ladies chain back to their own partner, &

27-32 Polka on to next couple.

Cumberland Reel Final time (The Stenness War Dance)

1-8 L_1 turn with R hand, then with left (as in Queen Victoria)

9-16 C_1 walk down the centre, with R hands joined, Take ballroom hold at the bottom, & gallop back to top

17-24 C_1 polka (lazy step) round at the top

25-32 Cast off on own side, all following $M_1 \& L_1$, & C_1 forms an arch at bottom, others pass through, Take ballroom hold, & gallop up to the top

Jackie Tar Schottische. This from Mr. & Mrs. Finlaster. Men's step
Bar 1,2. Step (1) Short step to L, (2) Close R to L, (3)-(6)

Repeat (1) & (2) twice more. (7) Step to L, & bring R up
to L in air.

Bars 3,4. \sim of bars 1,2.

Bar 5 (1), (2) & (7) of bars 1,2.

Bar 6 \sim of bar 5.

Bars 7,8 Hop round as in Highland Schottische.

Venue Polka

Not at all clear. But done in couples, each of A,A', being

(A) (A')

(B) (B')

a couple. Bars 1-4, A + B' pass by R to each other's places, with
ballroom hold + polka (vigorous) step

Bars 5-8 A' + B repeat this

Bars 9-16 Back to original places in above order.

Bars 17-22 vague. But I think A+A', B+B' etc go
round each other's places, then A+B, A'
& B', & somehow A+A' progress to B +
B's place.

Kissing time was here called "Monte". At the end of a dance (generally after a Reel), the fiddle scraped on its fiddle above the bridge. This was a signal for the men to kiss their partners. If the partner were rather coy, they would rush from the floor, the men chasing them. The kiss was very much a bear-hug & a free-for-all - usually there was a scramble.

"Monte" - the payment in kind given to a miller for grinding oats.

Mr John Webster, Apple House, Harray Mainland of Orkney, aged 87

Also Mrs Webster, aged 77

Difficult interview since Mr Webster is deaf & his wife talks too loud & too much. Neither remembers the dances at all.

The dances done in their young days were the Cumberland Reel, Reellette, Flowers of Edinburgh, Roy O'More, Highland Schottische, Haymakers, Triumph, Scotch Reel, Reel of Tulloch, Caucasian O, Sesame Reel. [Impossible to say how much refers only to Mr & how much to both]

Mr Webster went to lessons from Mr Chalmers in Stromness. Mr Chalmers was a fiddler, who played while demonstrating. At the beginning of his classes, he took the men & the girls on separate nights, & only after 8 or 10 lessons [Surely an exaggeration?] did he mix them.

Mr Chalmers also taught the Highland Fling & Sword Dance.

Mrs James Garrison, Dounby, aged ca 60:

Mrs Garrison was brought up at Ness, on the Germiston Road, Stromness. Her father, who died in 1947 aged 90, was a very fine fiddler, & he often made his family dance by the fireside while he played for them. In particular, he taught them the old Sesame & 8-some Reels. Mrs Garrison agreed that our version of the Sesame was substantially correct. The 8-some was very similar in style to the 6-some, & she did not think it was the same as the N. Ronaldsay one. She had never seen "Hands Airon" before our dance.

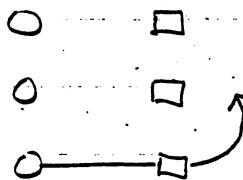
Mr James Gray, Boardhouse, Harry, aged 81. Also Mr Gray
aged ca 70.

In Mr. Gray's young days, the dances were Scotch Reel (the most popular), the Sixsome Reel, & Polka. There were "Mourts" many times during an evening, but generally after a Scotch Reel. Bobbity Bowties were also done [as described by Mr & Mrs Harry]. At dances, the fiddlers might start it, but at weddings it was begun by the bride, & each girl was taken home by the man whom she selects.

Quadrilles & dances come in while he was still young.

In those days, dances were rather rare, the principal ones being "innames" [knots], New Year, & the Volunteer's Ball. Occasionally there were dances at farmhouses.

6-some Reel. 3 men on one side, their partner facing them on the other. Think that start was as shown below, & that it

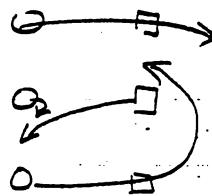


was in slow time only, but not sure of either. Definitely all returned to same places.

Malcolm Abister, Backgroy, Stromness, aged 72.

Only asked about 6-some. Definitely the men on one side ladies on the other, & always return to places. About 4' between partners.

Thought after trial start was as shown, but I may have prompted



It was in both slow & quick time [but doubtful about latter]. It was going out in his time.

Miss Rosa Laird, Haway, aged 73.

She was taught by James Anderson of Suerbigging, Stenness [she was brought up in Stenness], to dance the 6-some Reel. She thought it began in Shetland.



Reel recently, & I think there is some confusion.

She thought it was done in Strathspey time only, at a good brisk pace. The men used Highland Fling steps, the ladies the Highland Schottische step, & the travelling step had just a swing through on the top as in the Borders. It was not as popular as the 4-some Reel.

She did the Vienna Polka ca. 40 years ago.

Mrs. Conigall, Downby, aged 94.

Mr. Conigall was born in Oban, but was brought to Kirkcudbright at the age of 2, & there brought up by her grandmother. When she first went to dances, when she was about 16 or 17 (for in those days they were thought of as "little" girls until they were 18) the only dances in use were the 4-some, the 6-some, the 8-some, & Bobbitie Bowster, the last being performed only at the end of

+ Mr. Anderson had dancing lessons from someone. His brother, Willy Anderson, is still alive, at Tormiston, Stenness.

the evening. A few years later, the Volunteer Balls started, & with them came polka, schottisches, Czecinian & Petonella.

She remembers that when she was 20 a young man who worked in Kirkwall told her he could do Petonella, Mazurka, Lancer, Quadrilles, & others, but these were then unknown in country districts. She thought him an awful braggart at the time (& when ~~she~~ she told me of him seemed very pleased that he is now dead, "with all his bragging", yet she is still alive).

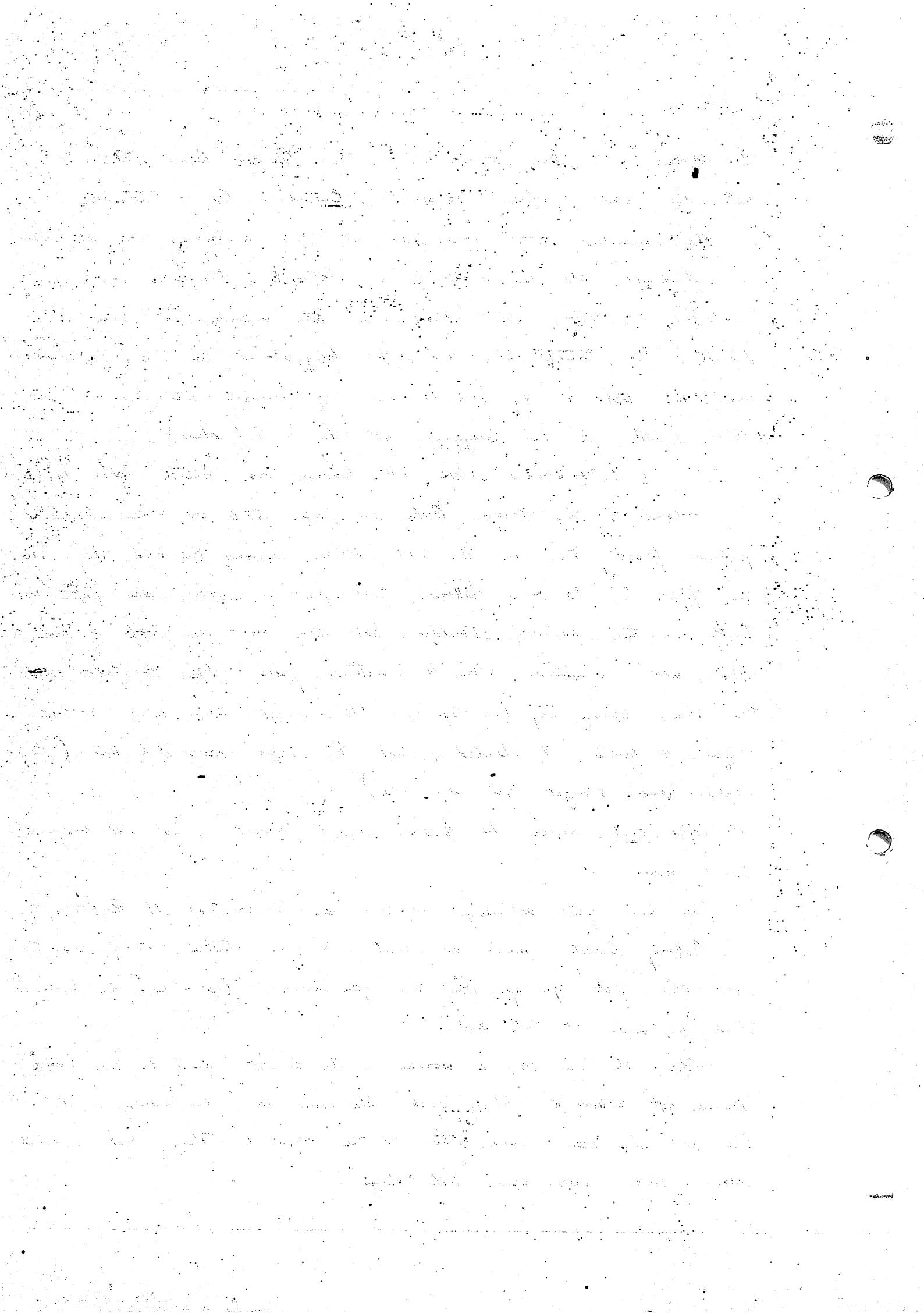
The 4, 6, & 8-some were all known as Scotch Reels. In both the 6-some & the 8-some Reels, the men stood on one side, their partners faced them on the other. When running the reel, they "cut the figure 8", the men following their partners. Some men put their hands on their partner's shoulder, but there was very little of this. Both were sometimes slow & sometimes quick. Men & ladies used the same setting step (a step?). Men raised their arms, cracked fingers & thumb, & shouted, but the ladies never did this ("They would have thought this was rude").

After each dance the fiddlers played "motes", but not everyone would kiss.

She had quite definitely not seen an 8-some of N. Ronaldsay type Bobby Bowes much, as usual. A man started, & it was the man who took you up - who took you home. There was no kissing! And no reel at the end.

When she was 10, a woman in the district could do the Sword Dance, but called it "Black Jock". She never saw the woman do it.

She had also seen Jacky Tar & the Highland Fling, but no other solos. Had never seen "little plays".



Mr. Scott

a Mr.

Highland Fling, learnt from his father, who had it from McRae.
(in N. Robertson)
ca 1882

{ Opposite hand to foot - O .

{ Always both hands up for turns

Step 1. Standard one

Step 2. (1) Side, up behind; side, up on front; (2) ~; (3) Repeat (1); (4) Turn
(5)-(8) ~

Step 3. (1) Side, up behind, side, up on front; (2) (3) Drop on R foot in 5th
bringing L up behind (4) Hop on R; (5) Bring L forward to front leg
position & step on it 5th, bringing R up behind. (6) hop on L;
(7) ~ of (1); (8) Turn with R foot. (5)-(8) ~ of whole.

Step 4. (1). As 1st step; (2) Backstep; (3) ~ of (1); (4) Turn with R. (5)-(8) ~
(both hands)

Step 5

Step 6. (1). (a) Rondé R out to 2nd, & place it crooked over L. Then
ankle-rock onto flat of R foot or side of L foot.

2 for (1)-(2)



(b) ankle-rock onto flat of L foot

→ 4th pos'

(c) _____ R

(d) hop on R & rondé L out to 2nd.

(e) ~ of (1); (3) as (1); (4) Turn with L.

Step 7. (1) Side, up behind, heel in ~~5th~~, ^{near 4th,} toes in ~~5th~~ flat 5th pos".

^{where heel had been}

but the only goes down; (2) ~; (3) Repeat (1);

(4) Turn with R L

Step 8

Step 9 (1) (a) Side (b) up behind (c) bring R to front leg, position & kick
(aim 18" from other toe)
downward & slightly away from leg, returning to front leg.
(d) Repeat the kick.; (2) ~; (3) As (1); (4) turn with L

Step 10 —

- Step 11. (1)-(4)(a) Point R in 2nd pos, 6" from (1.) L foot
(b) R up behind
(c), (d) Repeat (a), (d)

8 Keep repeating (not as) for whole 8 bars, turning to R.
Then reverse 4 bars.

- Step 12 Step side, then up behind up in front, up behind,
up a foot ... turning ^{twice} to L. Then reverse for
(5)-(8).

Both hands up for ~~these~~ Steps 11-12.

N. Ronaldsay Double backstep used in the Scottie Reel as a
setting step

Mr Scott, Kendall Schoolhouse, aged 50

N. Kendall, Achtsun

8 bars. Dance.

8 bars Run the figure 8, as shown.

Strathspey time. // The standard vigorous time. & As many times
as the fiddler can. The dance as someone in the audience
called "Run it fast," & the fiddler quickened the time progressively
until it was up to reel tempo or thereabouts, & the dancers
keep performing the figure, without setting at all, ~~&~~ probably
about 14 complete circuits.

At a wedding, last dance. Ladies first, bride & groom
back to back arms locked. At end of "run it out" the fiddle
~~on the floor~~ ~~but~~ stopped the music, & there was a
race to turn the groom before he could unlock & turn & kiss
the bride. Then go.

Step H.S. only. Traveling "swing through."

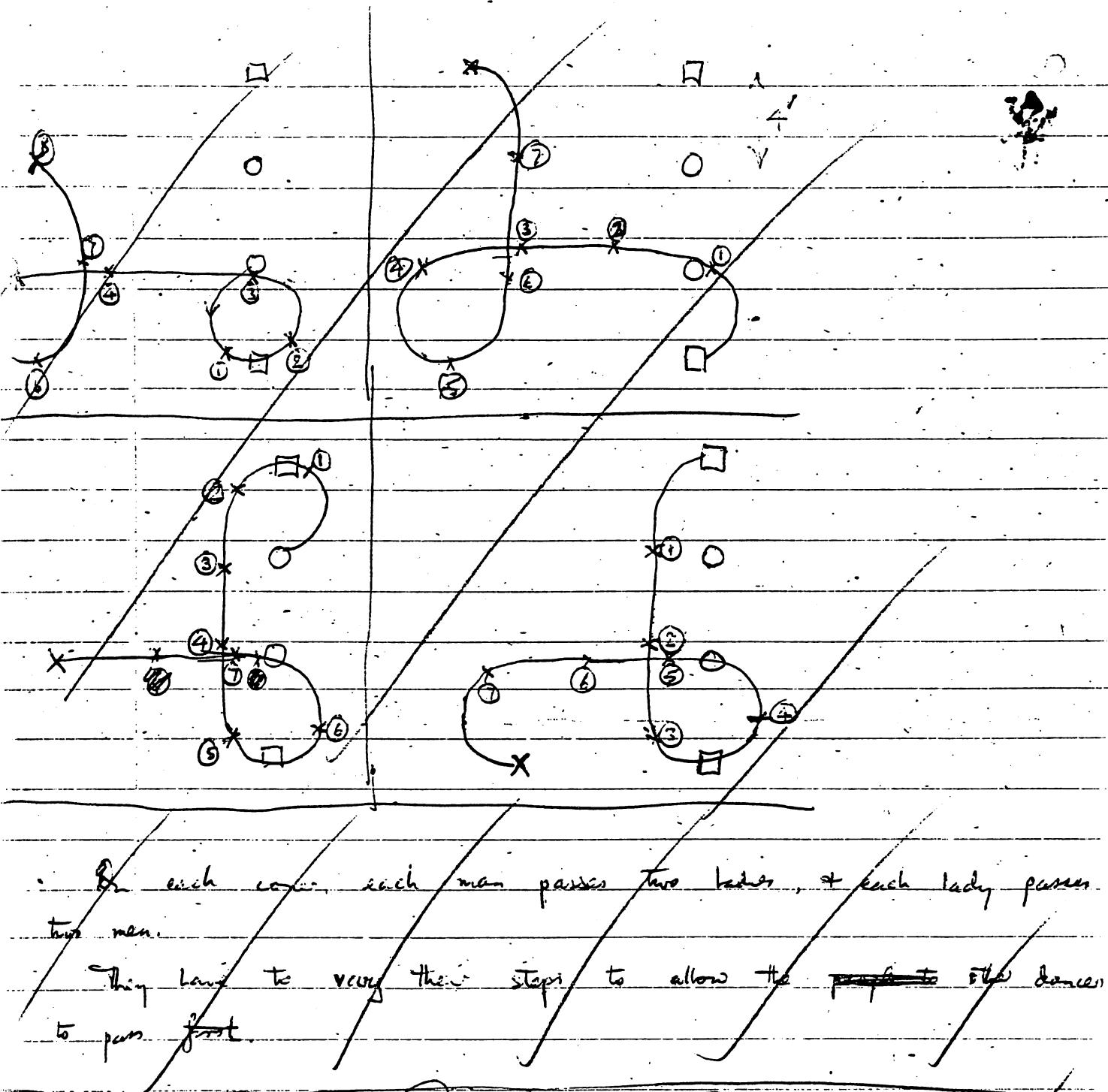
H.F. step used. after MacKenzie.

Hands ~~little~~ used. ladies held their skirts.

Men usually danced with hands on hips - ^{sunday} - afterwards way

Ordinary shoes, or boots.

No special dress.



Mrs. F. Royce Scott,
Schoolhouse,
Rendall

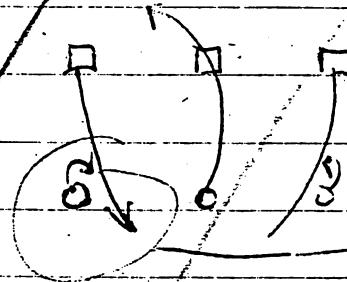
Let them know if we do it at
Langollen.

N. Ronaldsay

Bridie's Reel : Scotch Reel, Set & reel only

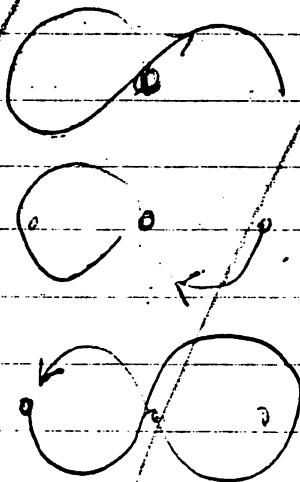
Usually run it out - But no hard &
fast rule

Pixsome Reel



This is quite certain

Fast time only? R.d/B using step, begin with set.



This is fast time

A change after each figure 8.

Jan 22 1920

~~Cot / 2-step / R.M / Cuckoo Reel / Rantree Reel / Mandolin / Laster /
H.A / St. W / 8-some only at wedding, because only old folk
did it / Most 8-some came in ca 1915 / French minuet /
Military two-step / Heel + toe polka / Resitation Waltz / Scotch Reel /
Reel of Tuttish / Polka Seven step polka /~~

Venue Polka Mrs. Peat

A

B

1-4 AD change.

B

D

5-8 BC change

9-12 AD "change back

13-16 BC change

17-24 AC, BD

25-32 AB, CD



Mr. John Buttie

Notlands

Eagle St

Glasgow

Dealt w/
H

Daleworth

Sissons Reel

All Strathspey

(Only 5th year in)

Start

8

Run the reel

9-16

Dance

17-24

25.

All return to original
places

Hands across

Strathspey

Reel

temp

19 19 19 23

end count

from "Maggie May"
of Parton

but danced at wedding

by old folk 60 years ago

or so

1-8 6 hands across & back

9-16 6 hands round & back

17-24 Chain, with arms. ① 4 ②, ① 9, ②, ③ 9 ③

25-32 "Dance"

Queen Victoria.

- 8 Turn with R hand, L hand back.
 12 lady face ^{down}, man ^{up}. All sit 3 times
 16 Turn outer alt. into centre, & all face down arm
 in arm, &
 24 Go down centre, turn inwards about
 32  a pasette round

Ron O'More

- 1-4 Advance & retire R hands joined
 5-8 Padzi pan under [+ twiddle sometimes]
 9-16 Repeat back to places
 7-20 Advance & retire
 21-24 Swing ball-room hold
 25-32 Passe

Cucassian (1)

- 8 R & L (As DDQ)
 16 Swing ballroom hold
 18 lady chen to opposite
 24 Swing
 26 ladies chen back to partners
 -32 Polka to next

Teche Tar Schottische

Mr. & Mrs. Franklin

1 Step L, Close R, Repeat twice, Step L & bring R up to L in air.

2 Step or of this

3 Step L, Close R, Step L & bring R up to L in air.

4 Step or of this

5 Hop round as in Highland Schottische.

Venez Polka

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

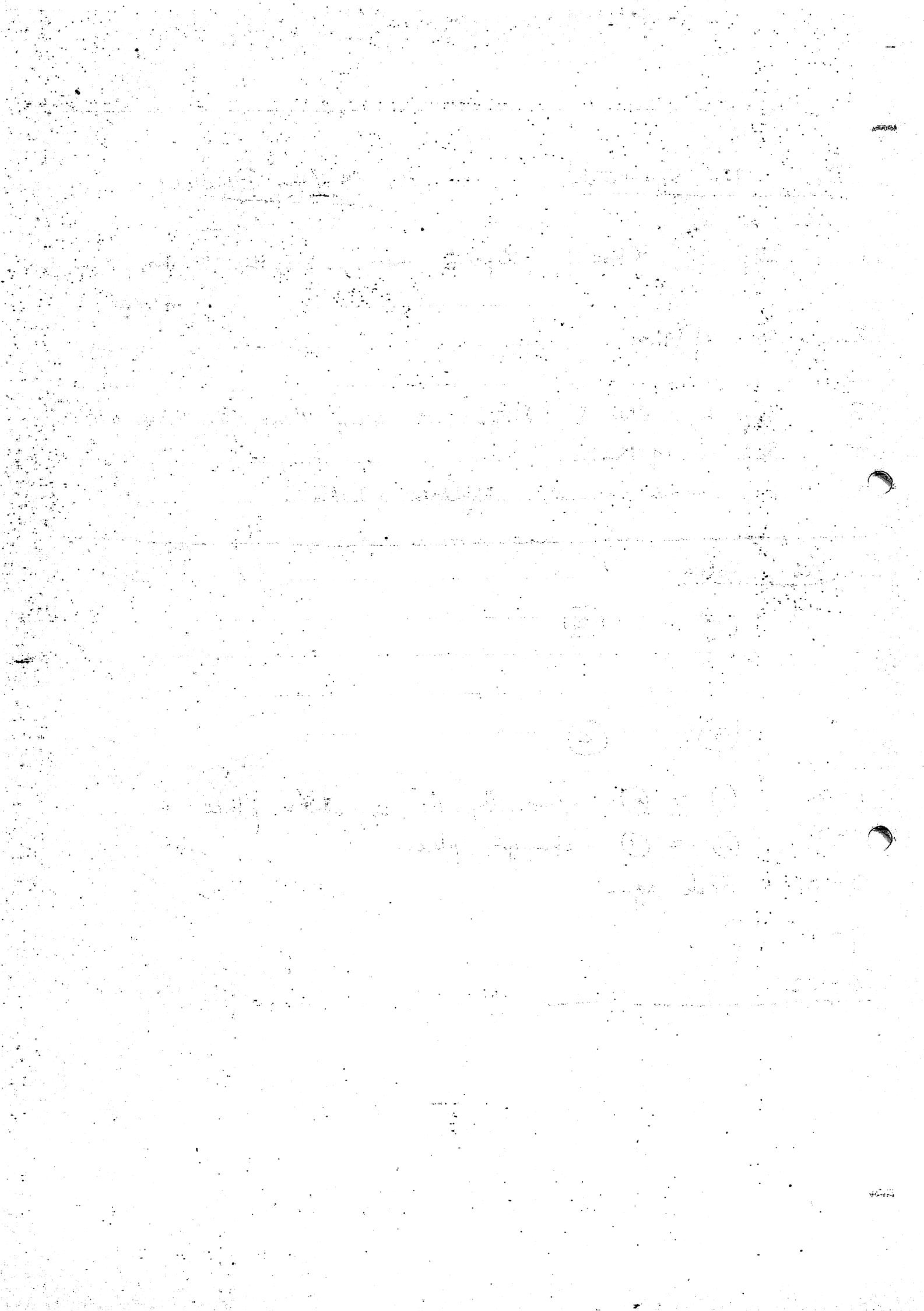
1-4 (1) & (4) pass by R to other's place.

5-8 (2) & (3) change places

9-16 Back again

17-24 ?

25-32



3 September 1955
Plotta.

Flotta, Sept 17th - 20th, 1955

Mr. William Sutherland, Aval, aged 63 [two visits]

(32)

A keen dancer in his younger days. Has performed the Sixsome Reel quite recently. The men usually placed their hands on their partners' waists. As the Bride's Reel, it was performed by the bride & groom, best man & bridesmaid, & the honest folk, these being as married couple closely related to the bride. Mr. Sutherland has hazy recollections of all three men dancing with the bride! The use of the Sixsome Reel had been discontinued by 1910-14.

The Swine's Reel is the usual kissing dance. I did not ask for details, but it ended with a Scotch Reel!

Mr. Sutherland gave me a dance programme of ca 1920, of which he was in C. It began about 9 p.m., & finished at 5 or 6 in the morning, & they would probably have included other items besides those on the programme.

The Threesome (Hankie) Reel was in fashion when he began dancing, ca 1910.

Mr John Simpson, The Bui, aged 78

When Mr. Simpson first started dancing, the most popular dance was the Sixsome Reel. There were three men on one side, their partners opposite them. When "running the reel", the men followed

* Brother in law of Mr. Ingell.

the ladies, sometimes placing hands on their partners' waists. Three tunes were played, & it was in both strathspey time and reel time. They changed places each time, returning at the end to their own places. The ^(Hobden) Schottische step was used for the strathspey part. There was "mutter" after every dance.

Swirl's Reel. A man starts, takes up the lady with a handkerchief, & she comes to him, is kissed by him to the accompaniment of a squeak from the fiddle, & the two walk round arm in arm. She takes up a man in the same manner, he falling in behind them, and so on. When all are on the floor, the dance just breaks up. All this is done to the tune "The White Cockade".

Ca 1895, a teacher called Smith came to the island, & taught Lancers and Quadrilles, & various Country Dances. Ca 1905, a Mr Clayton came & brought with him the Reel of Eight. Otherwise he taught much the same dances as Mr Smith.

Selkie's Dance is the kibby dance, done to the tune "Merrily Dance the Quaker's Wife".

I did not like to question Mr Simpson too closely, since his daughter in Edinburgh is closely associated with the R.S.C.D.S.

(24)

Mrs Margaret Mowat, Boisacot, aged 80 [two visits]

When she first began dancing, the Dixome Reel was the only dance performed on the island. It was in both strathspey & reel time, & there were "three-springs" [in each time?]. She cannot remember how the reel was run. The setting step in strathspey time was the Highland Schottische step [side, up behind, side, up front, step to side, close, step to side, & hop]. She remembers an old aunt doing this same step, holding out her big wide skirt as she went from side to side. The setting step in reel tempo was the pas de Basque.

The men hooched a little, but not much [unless far]. Both sexes raised their arms & cracked finger & thumb, but the ladies did not hooch — that would have been thought rude.

At first the men wore their Sunday shoes, & later patent leather pumps. The ladies' shoes had heels of medium height. The more well-to-do ladies wore white starched muslin frocks, otherwise best Sunday frocks.

As the Brides Reel, it was performed by the ~~Bride~~ Bride
& Groom, ^(at the top) Best Man & Bridesmaid, & the Honest folk.

* I shall denote these by B+G, BM + M, HF, respectively.

[Mrs. Mowat told me that at one wedding held in her home there were about 20 couples. They danced in a room about 12' x 15', six at a time, the fiddler sitting in one corner. The only dance was the Sixteen Reel, & when all had had their turn, the first set began all over again.

last were the married couple who were the closest relations of the bride [but not her father & mother]. This usage dropped 50 years ago. Mrs. Monat is not sure about a change of place & partners.

The Foursome Reel came in a few years after she started dancing.

The Threesome Reel, Eva Three-Step, Maxine & the like came in during the first war.

Mr. David Sutherland, The Smiddy; aged 81

Mr. Sutherland went to Chicago in 1893 & returned in 1901. He returned to Chicago for a second period from 1903 to 1909. These dates have enabled him to fix the other dates given below with complete accuracy.

In his young days, the only ~~old~~ dance performed on the island was the Sixsome Reel. The men stood in one line, their partners opposite to them in another. The fiddlers played strathspey time, & they all danced on the spot. There were no proper steps - they just jumped around & kicked their legs about. They then "ran the figure 8". Mr. Sutherland could

not remember how this was performed. This was repeated 3 times. The music changed to a reel, & the whole was repeated another 3 times. Then the men changed partners, ~~the~~ the ladies remaining in their places, & the whole sequence was repeated. Then the whole sequence was repeated again with fresh partners. [On second visit, said they ran the reel before setting.]

In the Bride's Reel, it was performed by B & G, BM & M, & some near relatives of the bride, possibly her father & mother. Cannot remember the positions of these people in the Reel.

Some men from Flotta went to Holm [Mainland of Orkney], & there learnt the steps of the Highland Fling.

In 1890 or 1891 a Teacher called Smith came to the island. There was no hall then, but the house at Windbreak was completed save for the internal dividing walls, & he obtained the use of that. Part of the floor was stone, & part was wood, but this was a minor detail. He stayed only two weeks, but taught every evening except Sunday. He taught the Polka, Highland Schottische, Waltz, Dutch Polka, Grand March, 1st Set of Quadrilles, Lancers, Petronelle, Rory O'More, Flower of Edinburgh, Triumph, Haymaker [there were 4 couples to a set]

in the Country Dances]. Ninepin Reel, "Foursome Reel & Reel of Turlock. This was the first time that the Foursome Reel had been done on the island so far as Mr Sutherland knew.

Mr Smith sold some little books on the island, & after he left the boys & girls learnt dances from these books. They used to meet on the grass down by The Bay, & practice. There was such a craze for dancing that the lads would even practice the step for "running the reel" when following the plough. Until the advent of Mr Smith, dances had been leisurely affairs, with plenty of time between dances [there was a good deal of time spent passing the bottle], & the fiddler was not overworked. At the New Year's Dance after Mr Smith came, ^(as this was changed, etc) the fiddler, Danny Rosie, confided later to Mr Sutherland that it was the hardest night's work he ever did, & that he had worn the skin off the fingers of his left hand fingering the strings - Mr Sutherland saw them, & they were quite red & raw.

He had not heard of an 8-some from old people, nor of the Swine's Reel or Bobbity Bowstes.

The Selkie's Dance was sometimes called the Fisherman's Dance.

Mr. Sutherland explained the meaning of "mutter" as "malture" [or should it be "malture"] when farmers put their oats to the mill to be ground, the malture is the amount of the meal kept back by the miller as payment.

Mr. Robert Mowat, ca. 50

The Brides Reel was performed by the B & G, B & G M, & the "Honest Pair", these [he thought] being the last couple to be married before the wedding. They stood up at the wedding, & if the wedding was held in a church, they walked in front of the bridal couple on the way to the place where the reception was held. They did not need to be related.

The 6-coue was scored some years ago just as a social dance, but not many could do it.

He had seen the Threesome Reel ca 1920, & most people could do it then, so it had probably been in for some time.

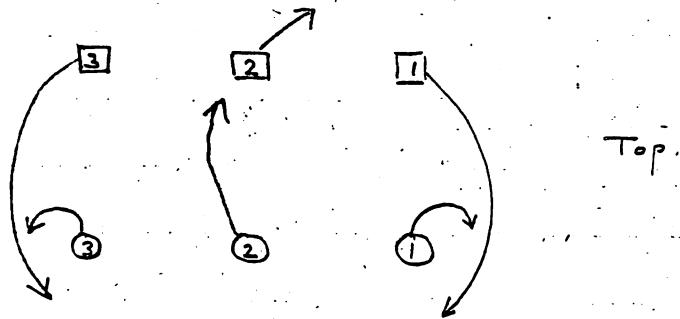
Mr. Roland Barnett, The Cottage, aged ca 50

Threesome Reel done over 20 years ago, with banjos. Slow time only.

Mr Robert Rosie. Sacquoy, aged 74. Also Mrs Rosie, aged 69

Mr. Rosie is the son of Danny Rosie, the fiddler, mentioned by Mr. David Sutherland. He plays the fiddle still, though not very well now, & he does not seem to remember many tunes. He played Strathspeys at 42-43 bars per minute, & reels at 53-54 bars per minute.

They remember the Sixsome Reel fairly clearly. They were not



sure how they stood, but Mr. Rosie had a feeling that "Top" was as shown above. Mrs. Rosie was quite definite about the path of the 1st couple, & felt fairly certain about the path of the 3rd couple. Neither were sure of the path of the 2nd couple, but Mr. Rosie felt that it was as shown above. They were positive that the ~~2nd~~ 2nd couple were the last to get into their places.

The dancers "run the reel" to begin, in Strathspey time (8 bars) & then "dance" on the spot, using Highland Fling steps (8 bars). They repeat this twice more, then do the same 3 times in reel tempo, using the pas de Basque for setting. Then 1st & 2nd men [or women; they weren't sure which] change places, & the whole is repeated, then 1st & 3rd change places, & the whole is repeated again. There was no definite method of carrying out this change, & they were rather hazy about this.

We tried the figure 8 as shown above, & they felt ~~quite~~ reasonably certain that we had it correctly for dancing the figure 8 in reel tempo. They used a chassé step or traveling pas de Basque, but not step-change-of-step. The dancers were about 4' apart.

When the Sixone Reel was used as the Brides Reel, it was performed by the B & G, AM & M, & HF. The last were the married couple nearest related to the bride or groom. [They were not sure which]. They had no duties at the wedding, but stood up behind the bridal couple at the actual marriage ceremony, & went with them to the church.

(42)

with her in turn. I was told later by Mr David Sutherland & members of his family that Mrs Ross also thought that the men moved, but that she did not want to tell me in case she was wrong —she confided this to them in the shop.

They could not remember how to run the figure 8. The setting step in Strathspey time was the ~~R to L~~, Highland Schottische step, while that in reel time was the Pas de Basque. The travelling step in reel time was a chassé; & Mrs Ross remembered how the old folk would swing their shoulders, R shoulder forward for R foot. But she had never danced it, having only seen the old folk do it. There was not much shouting or raising of arms except when fun.

They were both taught to dance by Mr Clayton. He taught them how to ask their partner for a dance, & to escort her to her chair. And they had to be as quiet as mice while he was teaching. He played the fiddle, often while demonstrating steps.

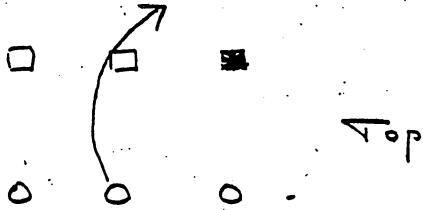
One of the steps which he taught was "Shuffle over the

"buckle", this being the double (or even treble)[†] shuffle. He told them to practice it whilst holding on to the back of a chair.

Mr. Archie Barnett, Hemigar, aged 72. Also Mrs Barnett,
aged 64

Mr. Barnett is a sister of Bob Rose.

Rather hazy recollections of the Sixsome Reel, Mr. Barnett having danced it only 4 or 5 times. It went out ca 40 years ago.



Mrs Barnett thought that the middle lady turned away & went towards the music. They both remembered that the middle couple "started" & were the last to return to their places. Mr. Barnett thought they always returned to the same place & partner. It was in both strathspey & reel tempo.

[†] And definitely not the single shuffle

As the Bride Reel, the 3rd couple were the Honest Folk, an elderly married couple related to the Bride. Mr Barnett had seen it thus used more often than Mrs Barnett, & he thought that the bride was the lady marked ~~E~~ in the figure overleaf.

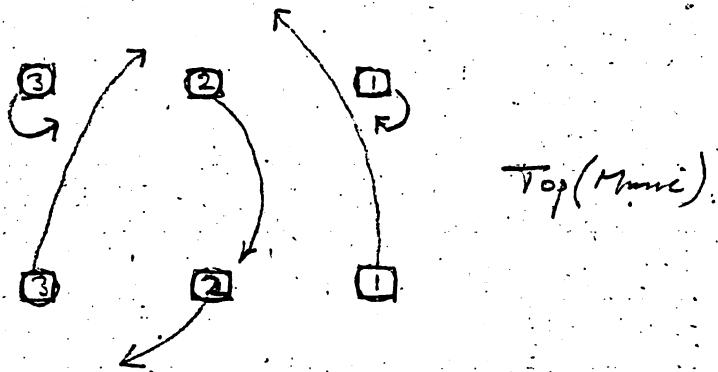
Mrs Barnett remembered seeing the Threesome Reel danced when she was still at school, at age of 12. There was only one tempo, the tune being "Pop goes the Weasel".

Mr Barnett possessed a copy of the People's Ballroom Guide which he has lent to me.

Mr David Flett, The Dam, aged 67, also Mrs Flett aged 67

Mrs Flett was very positive as to how the threesome Reel was performed - she demonstrated it on the table without any hesitation, using ~~the~~ teaspoons for the ladies, & knives for the men.

The figure was as shown below:



The dancers first "run the reel", then "dance" on the spot in Strathspey time.* This is repeated twice more, then repeated 3 times in reel time. The music then stopped & was slowed down to enable the ladies to change partners. In Strathspey time, the travelling step was step, close, step, hop, just swinging the foot through on the hop. The setting step was the Highland Schottische step. In quick time, they used skip-change of step for travelling, & pas de Basque for setting. There was some suggestion that they swang partners with ballroom hold instead of setting, but I think this should be discounted.

The men & ladies bowed, the men held up their arms & snapped fingers & thumbs, while the ladies held their skirts out to the side.

The change of partner was effected by the lady moving down one. The whole was then repeated, & then repeated.
* Mr. Flett taught that they "danced" before running the reel.

- again after a further change of partners.

When the dance was used as the Bride's Reel, the last couple [numbered as shown] were the B + G, 2nd couple the BM + M, & 3rd couple the H.F. These last were the married couple nearest related to the bride [if such existed; if not, they were related to the groom]. They stood up with the other 4 at the actual wedding ceremony, & went with the other 4 when the bridal couple were "kirked". There was no "mutter" when the dance was used as the Bride's Reel. It was last done as the Bride's Reel ca 43 years ago.

The Threesome Reel was first done on the island at least 40 years ago.

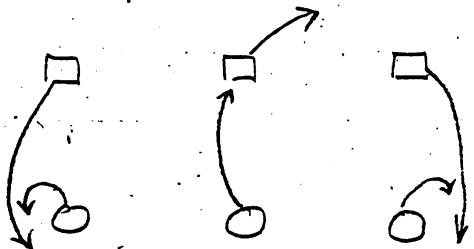
The Swine's Reel was done when Mr. Heit was young. It was the herring dance, but I did not press for details.

* Some discussion between Mr. & Mrs F about this, but they agreed finally.

Mr. Frederick Sutherland, Windbreak, aged ca. 60.

Mr. Sutherland's mother used to tell him that the only dance in the old days was the Sixsome Reel, but he had an impression that the Foursome Reel & the Polka came to the island before Mr. Smith arrived.

The Sixsome Reel was revived ca 1920 by the younger people on the island, they having learnt it from Mrs Barnett of Hangerthorpe & several older people [but not from Mrs Flett or Mrs Rosic]. It stayed in fashion only for a year or two. The positions were as shown, & they started to



turn the reel as shown. Mr. S has definite recollections of the men at the end turning away from the centre man. He was not certain of the path of the middle folk, but thought they moved as shown.

The dance was performed as follows. First on the reel,

(45)

then "dance" opposite partners. Repeat this twice more, toll to Strathpey time, & then repeat three times, in reel time. The fiddler then stopped for a moment, & the men changed places, the right-hand man going to the other end, & the other two men moving over one place. He was quite certain that the men moved, because they had to dance all those "paths" each time they performed the dance.

When they revived the dance, the men put their hands on their partner's shoulders, but this was merely to help them, & it was not correct according to the older way.

William Mowat, a Flotta man, taught ca 1920 "Reel of Tulloch in a 'cycle'", this being "Huttonian round the house". He had learnt it on the mainland of Orkney. The Threesome Reel was in favour when Mr S. first went to dances in 1919.

Mr S. plays the fiddle, though somewhat out of practice. He played for some years with Danny Rose for the dances on the island. His tempo for Strathpeys was 43 bars per minute. The Highland Schottische was played

more slowly, at 40 bars per minute. Reels were played at 59 bars per minute.

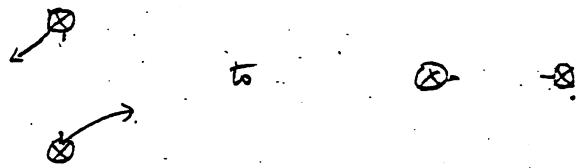
He ~~told~~^{told} two stories which are worth recording. When he first began playing with Danny Rose, he once stumbled over a difficult part of a tune, & lost time. Afterwards Danny Rose commented on this, & told him never to lose time by trying to get in ~~in~~ a note - the dancers wouldn't notice if you left it out. There are only three things which are important when playing for dancing, "Time, sound, and dind".

Danny Rose held his fiddle resting against the upper part of his chest, & not under his chin in the modern manner. He taught a fiddler in Hoy, a large man with a fine beard, & this man held his fiddle in the same manner. On one occasion when Mr Sutherland was ~~was~~ at a dance in Hoy where this man was playing, Mr Sutherland suggested to him that he might find the modern method of holding the fiddle under his chin an easier one. The bearded one ~~try~~ tried the suggestion, tucked his fiddle under his chin, &

away went the music. But at one point in the music the fiddler swept his bow across his string, & catching part of his beard between bow & string, twisted the beard very firmly round his string. With a roar of "yay-o" — new-fangled ways, he jerked the beard away — but a good deal of it was left behind!

Mr. Sutherland had seen the Settler's dance done by two people. ~~It~~ It should be done by a lady & a gentleman, but the lady's part was usually taken by another man.

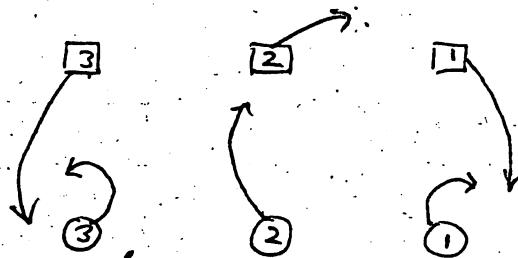
Start face to face, advance to meet each other, then retire. Then the man retires & the lady advances, then the man advances & the lady retires, then they turn from



& repeat the whole thing. Repeat this until back in original places. Time "Merrily Dance the Quakers" (I asked him if he thought this was it, & he said yes), & taking step to the front throughout.

Mrs Mowat, Seaview, aged ca 55

Mrs Mowat is Mr Fred Sutherland's sister. She remembers the Sixsome Reel as it was revived ca 1920.



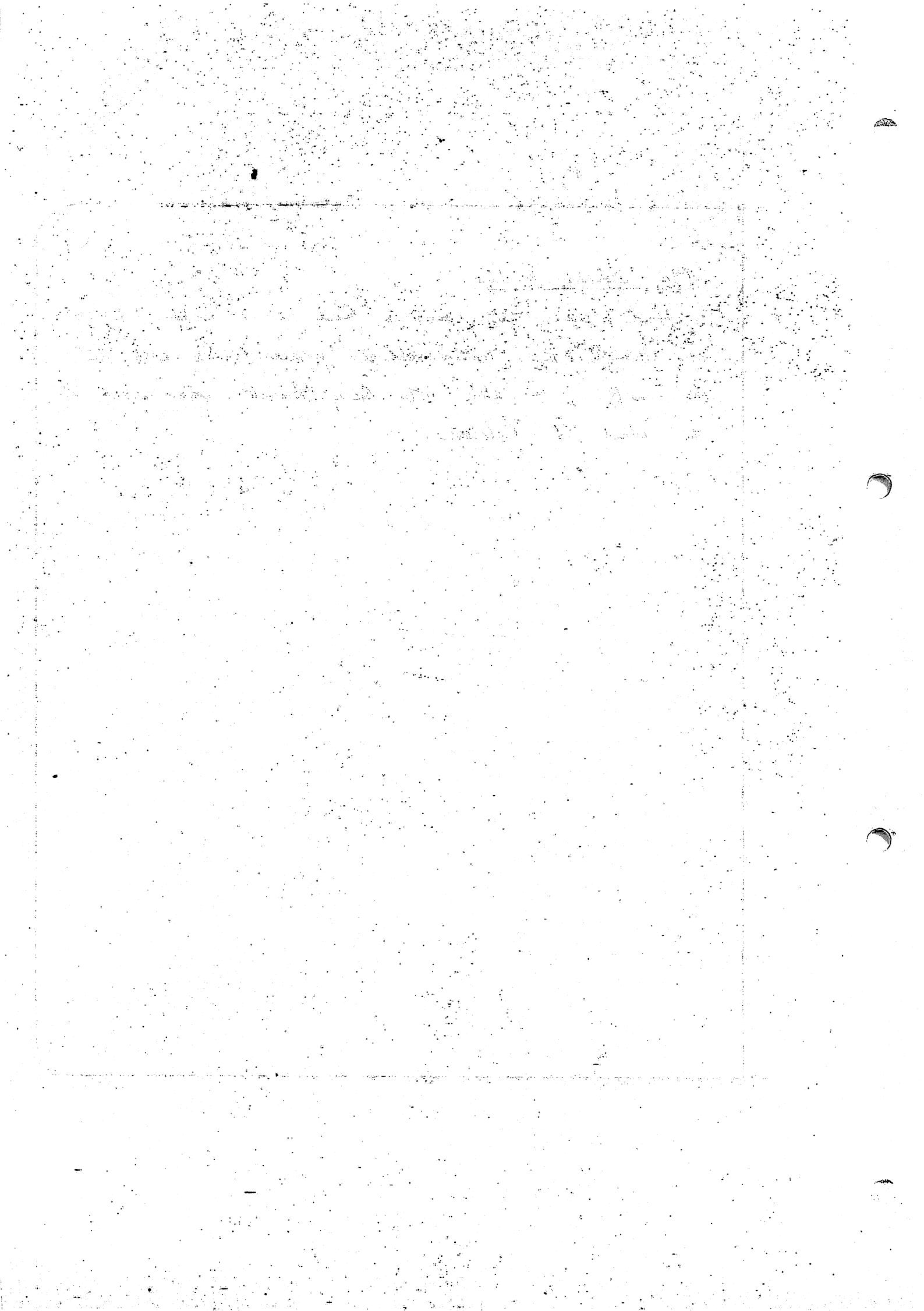
She was quite definite that the middle couple started as shown, & that they were the last to regain their places. She was also quite definite that the 1st & 3rd men began by stepping inwards towards the centre lady, & thought that the 1st & 3rd ladies moved as shown.

They ran the reel & danced 3 times in 3-beat time, & 3 in reel time [a bit doubtful of this], & then the music stopped, when the men changed partners. She was not sure how the men changed.

Mrs Rose & Mrs Flett were not present at the dance.

Mr Donald Sinclair

Had seen the Lissone Reel at a wedding in 1919.
He thought the ladies changed places. So also did
his wife, & also Mr George Barrett who moved off
the island to Colchester.



A September 1955
N. Ronaldsay, S. Ronaldsay etc.

Tuesday, Sept 20th. (53)

Mr + Mrs Roy Scott, Schoolhouse, Rendall, Mainland of Orkney

~~Mr~~ Mr Scott[†] belonged to N. Ronaldsay, though he had lived on the mainland for the last 9 years. His father was very knowledgeable concerning old customs, & had a fine memory. He was very keen to see some of these old ways preserved, & had passed his knowledge on to his son.

Mr Scott was very familiar with the N. Ronaldsay "Axum" Reel. He had taught it to Mrs Scott, and she had taught it on N. Ronaldsay, effectively reviving it. It is still performed there, though probably once again in danger of disappearing. Mr Scott's son wrote the dance down, and they sent it to Miss Milligan in 1950. They received a most gracious reply - the dance was to be taught at St. Andrews, & ~~they~~ would be published in a forthcoming collection of traditional dances. Since then, they have heard nothing further. They have given me permission to publish the dance, and Mr Scott has agreed not to give anyone else that right for the next twelve months.

The dance is of the standard reel structure, that is to say, it begins with 8 bars setting ("dancing"), then 8 bars "running the reel". Then 8 bars setting, & so on. The pattern of the reel is, however, most complicated. It also departs from the usual reel structure in the quick time.

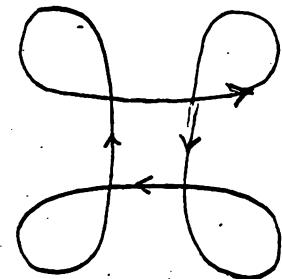
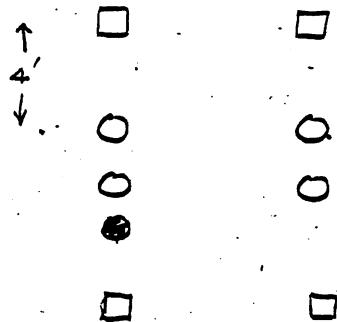
The dancers stand as shown in Fig 1, * & the pattern of the

* Aged 50

† The ladies are at the corners of a square

[Mr John D. MacKay, The Central Schoolhouse, Sanday, was teaching on N. Ronaldsay for 4 years, & remembers the Scots' re-teaching the dance there, & has done it himself at weddings there - this by telephone].

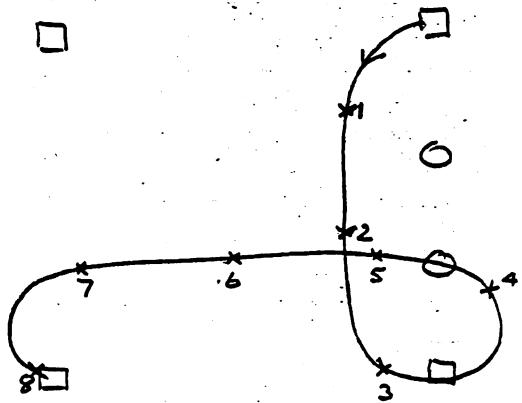
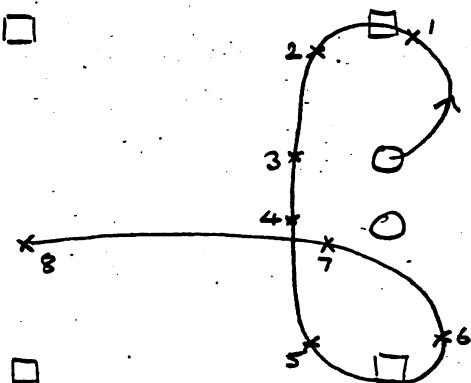
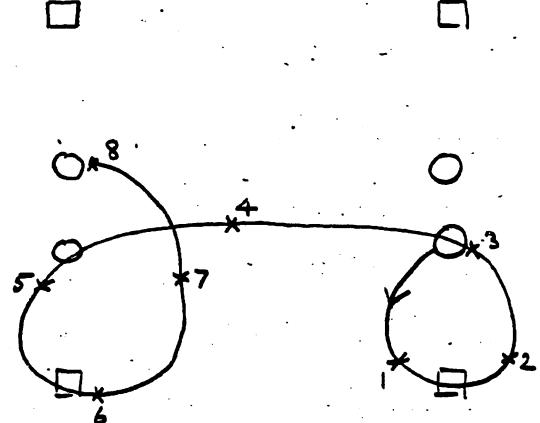
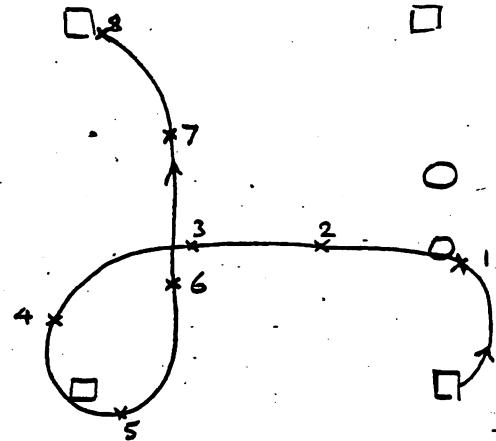
reel is that shown in Fig. 2. When going round the loops, each



dancer passes two others of the opposite sex. They have to vary the length of their steps to enable the other dancers to pass in front of them.

The four dancers in each row perform the same figures, the positions of the two sets of four being interchanged after each running of the reel. I give below the paths traced out by the four in the right-hand row, the ~~comes~~ numbered crosses denoting their position at the end of ~~the~~ succeeding bars

[This is → the result of thought & experiment on paper. It is intended only to give the pattern, & variation either way is possible. The version printed in the Orkney Herald has a better description of the phoenix. The Scot's have do the latter version, & told it was "just like a North Ronaldshay Wedding".]



The dance begins in strathspey time, the tempo being the normal 42-43 bars per minute. They ~~dance~~ set to partners for 8 bars, then run the reel (8 bars), & then repeat this sequence of 16 bars as often as the fiddlers like. The dancers, or someone in the audience often calls "run it out", when the fiddlers ~~gradually~~ gradually speeds up the music, ~~until~~ until it is at reel tempo or thereabouts, but still using the same strathspey time. During this part the dancers just keep moving round the figure, without any pause, making something like 4

complete circuits.

The setting step used in the first part was originally the Highland Schottische Step, but, after Mackenzie taught dancing on the island, the Highland Fling steps were used. When setting, however it was very rare to see hands raised - the men normally placed their hands on their hips (fishwives' way, not with backs of hands against body), while the ladies held their skirts out. The travelling step was just step, close, step, hop, with a "swing-through" on the hop [not up in front of the leg].

Mrs Scott said that the older dancers used to make the figure curved - they kept very close to each other while passing, & they made the whole figure flow - they didn't seem to hop much.

Any strathspey time could be used, but Calder Faw was a favourite [Doctor Doctor?]

At a wedding, this was the last dance. It was performed first by 8 ladies. The bride & groom stood in the centre, back to back with their arms linked, while the 8 girls performed the dance. At some point during the "running it out", the fiddler suddenly stopped, when the bride & groom had to try to unlink their arms, turn & kiss each other, ~~but~~ whilst the 8 girls had to try to kiss the groom before they could do so. The dance was then repeated by 8 men, who had to try to kiss the bride.

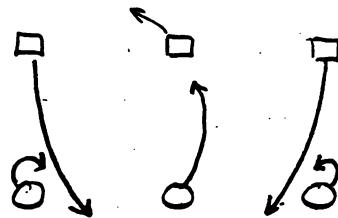
(5)

in the same manner.

There was no special dress characteristic of the island, & ordinary clothes were worn, including Sunday shoes or boots.

On N. Ronaldsay, the Bridie Reel was the Scotch Reel. It sometimes ended with "running it out" rather than alternate setting & reeling, but there was no hard & fast rule.

The Sixome Reel was also performed on N. Ronaldsay, though it has not been performed for some years now. Ca 1925 some of the young people revived it from the memories of old people. The pattern of running the reel was as shown :-



The dancer changes ^(positions) after each reel, ~~then~~ the paths of the three couples during the first reel being as shown [there is perhaps a



little doubt about this]. The dance is in fast time only [?], & it begins with setting [8 pas de Basque], then running the reel.

[8 bars], & so on.

Dances in use in N. Ronaldsay ca 1920 were Petronella, Flowers of Edinburgh, Roy O'Mair, Cumberland Reel, Step the Willows Quadrille, Lancer, Highland Schottische, French minuet, Military two-step, Heel & toe polka, Hesitation waltz, Polka, 7-step Polka, Scotch Reel, Reel of Tulloch, Threesome (handie) reel. The Axum was done only at weddings, because at that time only old people knew it. The modern 8-tone came in ca 1915

Mrs. Scott knew the Venus Polka from her young days in the Sandwich district of the mainland of Orkney. Stand with couples in two lines (A consists of a couple). All movements done with ballroom hold + (proper)

(A) (B) ~~one~~ polka step.

Bars

(3)	(4)	1-4	A + B' change places
(5)	(6)	5-8	B + A'
(7)	(8)	9-12	A + B' return to original places.
		13-16	B + A'
		17-24	A + A', B + B' go round each other in an anti-clockwise direction returning to original places
		25-32	A + B, A' + B' go $\frac{1}{2}$ turn round each other in an anti-clockwise direction ending in each other's places

Couples A & A' now repeat the dance with C & C'.

2nd Visit. Saturday, Sept 24th

The following Highland fling was taught to Mr Scott by his father, who learnt it from a Mr Mackenzie in N. Ronaldsay ca 1882.

Bars 5-8 of each step are the mirror image of bars 1-4.

Step 1. As usual, save that both arms are raised for the turns.

Step 2. Bar 1. (1) Spring on L, R in 2nd, (2) Hop on L, R in rear leg position,
(3) Hop on L, R in 2nd, (4) Hop on L, R in front leg position.

Bar 2. ~ of bar 1.

Bar 3. Repeat bar 1.

Bar 4 Turn with L as in 1st step ~~as in 1st~~

Opposite hand to foot on bars 1-3, & both raised on bar 4.

Step 3. Bar 1. As Step 2.

Bar 2. (1) Drop on R foot in 5th position, at same time bringing L to rear leg position (2) Hop on R, retaining L in rear leg position
(3) Bring L through front leg position, a drop on it in 5th position at same time bringing R to rear leg position, (4) Hop on L retaining R in rear leg position.

Bar 3. ~ of bar 1

Bar 4 Turn with R? as in 1st step.

Opposite hand to foot on bars 1-3, & both raised on bar 4

- Step 4. Bar 1. As 1st step
 Bar 2 4 backsteps.
 Bar 3 ~ of bar 1.
 Bar 4. Turn with R! as in 1st step.
 Hands as in Steps 2,3.

Steps 5,8,10 Missing [Mr Scott's father had forgotten it]

- Step 6 Bar 1. (1) Ronde R out through 2nd & place it crossed over L as shown  Then "ankle-rock", placing weight on R, & going over on the edge of the L, (2) the weight on L & on edge of R, (3) then weight on R & on edge of L, (4) Hop on R, & ronde L to 2nd low aerial pos".

Bars 2,3. as a repeat of bar 1.

- Bar 4. Turn with L as in 1st step.

L hand up on bar 1, R on bar 2, L on bar 3, & both on bar 4

- Step 7. Bar 1. (1) Spring on L, R in 2nd. (2) Hop on L, R in rear leg position
 (3) Hop on L, R heel in a close 4th pos. , (4) Hop on L, R toe in the same place.

Bars 2,3. as a repeat of bar 1

- Bar 4. Turn with L as in 1st step

Hands as in Steps 2,3.

- Step 8. Bar 1. (1) Spring on L, R in 2nd, (2) Hop on L, R in rear leg position
 (3) Hop on L, bring R through front leg position, & kick ~~back~~ forwards & downwards, aiming at a point about 15° in front of L toe, (4) ~~Repeat the~~ (4) Repeat the kick of (3)

Bar 2,3. ~ & repeat of bar 1.

Bar 4 Turn with L arm in — 1st step

Opposite hand to foot on bars 1-3, both raised on bar 4.

Step 11. Bars 1-4. (1) Spring on L & point R toe in close 2nd position (c. 6" from L heel), (2) Hop on L, R in rear leg position, (3) Hop on L, R in close 2nd pos', (4) Hop on L, R in rear leg position.

Bars 2-4. Repeat (3) & (4) of bar 1 6 times. On bars 1-4, two complete turns are made to the left. Both arms raised throughout

Step 12 Bar 1 As 1st step

Bars 2-4 Repeat (3) & (4) of bar 1 6 times, On bars 1-4 two complete turns are made to the left. Both hands raised throughout.

The Double backstep, + pas de Basque + balance were used as setting steps in the Scotch Reel in N. Ronaldsay.

In the absence of a fiddle, the women declaimed — "nothing" was the local word. Mr Scott knew this as a word for a baby with no definite words.

(6-)
Wednesday, Sept 21st.

Mr Yorster, Kirkwall, aged 75

A native of Rousay, which he left 10 years ago. He had heard old people there speak of an 8-some or 8-couple reel. There was no 3-some reel, & no threesome (hanky) reel. He had heard of Babbity Bowster, but not seen it. There had not been a dancing teacher there so far as he knew. When fiddlers were scarce, the women decided for the dancing. The Bridal reel was the 4-some.

Mr James Louttit, St Margaret's Hope, S. Ronaldsay, aged 72.

Not a very keen dancer, but remembers something of his young day when he was 9 or 10, he thought that ^{almost} the only dance was the 6-some Reel. In this the men sometimes put their hands on their partners' shoulders in order to guide them.

Another dance was the Hang Reel. This was Babbity Bowster. At a wedding, the bride started it, & the convention was that each lady was taken home by the man whom she took up. The dance just broke up when all were on the floor. Just a walking step.

The first teacher on the island whom Mr L can remember was McDougal. He also taught the fiddle. He made several visits to the island. Clayton also came once.

McDougall taught the Highland Fling, Sword-dance, & Sailor's Hornpipe these last two being taught privately.

Miss Louttit, Sr Margaret Hope, S. Ronaldsay, aged 80.

Some relative of the preceding. She thinks that polka & schottisches were ~~done~~ done as well as the Sixsome Reel in her young days. She attended McDougall's classes, & he taught Polka, Polka Mazowka, Flower of Edinburgh, Retonelle, Roly O'More, Queen Victoria C.D., Glasgow Highlanders, Scotch-Reel, 8-some Reel.

In her young days the Bride's Reel was the 6-some, the 6 being D & G, BM + M, & HF. Both Mr Louttit & Miss Louttit thought that in the 6-some the dancers returned to their original places after each reel, but Miss L had a hazy recollection that there was also some change as in Flotta in the Bride's Reel.

Thursday Sept 22nd:

Mrs David Wyke, The Cabin, Burry, aged 76.

A very keen dancer in her young days, but not much of a memory. A schoolmaster, Mr Summers, had taught dancing on the island just as a hobby, but most of the islanders learnt from each other.

In her young days the Sixsome Reel was going out, & she only danced it a few times. Not at all clear about its use as the Bride Reel. But older folk always cried out for the 6-some Reel. ~~The~~

The dances popular in her young days were ~~Six~~ Scotch Reel

(the most popular), Polka, Petronella, Flower of Edinburgh, Royal O'More, Triumph, Cumberland Reel (a "horse dance"), Strip the Willow, Reel of Tulloch Cassian, Pinie (The Pin Reel). She had not done either Queen Victoria or Glasgow Highlander (though had heard of the latter), nor had she done the 8-some Reel. She knew Bobbity Bowster by that name complete with the hankie & kissing.

5 September 1955
Bunay, S. Ronaldsay, Ronsay.

(65)
Wednesday, Sept 21st

Mr Eric Sutherland, Lowerhouse, Buray, aged 79.

When Mr Sutherland was a youngster, there was an old man, Chalmers, who taught dancing in St Margaret's Hope, Buray, Holm, Kitterland & Stromness. He was both fiddler & teacher. Mr S. attended one of his set of classes. There was no other teacher on Buray so far as Mr S. knew, but the islanders possessed one or more of the little "ballroom guides", & they taught themselves dancing from these.

The dances taught by Mr Chalmers were Spanish Crispin, Highland Schottische, & some (the modern one), Lancers, Quadrilles, Petronella, Flowers of Edinburgh, Cumberland Reel, Triumph, Roy O'More, Hayrakes, Glasgow Highlanders, Circassian O., Jackie Tar Schottische, Scotch Reel. He did not teach the Queen Victoria C.D. He who taught the Highland Fling, Sword Dance, & Jackie Tar. [+ Mr. S. learnt these]. The sword dance was of modern anti-clockwise type.

In addition to these, there was also the Sixsome Reel, & Bobbitie Bowster. In his young days, the Sixsome Reel was going out of use, & he cannot remember it. The Bride's Reel in Buray was the Foursome (Scotch) Reel.

- The first step of Mr Chalmers Highland Fling was :-
- Bar 1. As usual first step
 - " 2. Three jumps [as in the four jumps of the Sword Dance]
 - 3,4,5,6 ~ & repeat bars 1,2.
 - 7 As bar 1.
 - 8 Turn as usual.

Some doubt is to bars 3-8. 1+2 quite definite.

Mr Sutherland recalled interesting details of the herring industry. He himself skippered a trawler with a crew of six at the age of 20. At that time they fished largely from the Shetland ports, Scalloway, Walls (?), Whalfoot (or Yell?), Ronaldsway (?) ~~many of the girls~~, ~~the girls~~ & Lerwick. In all of these places, there were girls employed to gut the herring. They lived in wooden huts, tanned on the outside, & known as "tarry temples". They came from all down the east coast, & even parts of the Highlands.

Most of the boats carried at least one member of the crew who could play the fiddle or the concertina, and when the boats were becalmed or held up by rough weather, it was the recognised custom for the crew to go into one of these "tarry temples", & start a dance, even if they had never seen the girls before. If they fished from a particular port for a few weeks, they "would get acquainted in a certain hut". They kept the Sabbath strictly, & on a Saturday evening, these impromptu dances ended at 12^o. On other nights they often went on until early morning. This mostly ended with the 1914-18 war.

Many Burry folk went deep-sea fishing, & so got more practice in dancing than most ~~other~~ Orkney people. Combined with Mr Chalmers' tuition, this gave them a reputation in Orkney as fine dancers. They also built themselves a hall 60 years ago, the first in Orkney, & held dances there throughout the winter.

(67)
Rousay, Sept 22nd - 24th

Mr — Craigie, Breck, Sourni, aged 88. Also Mrs Craigie aged 85.

Two most confusing visits, with a good deal of vague information. Mr Craigie is, or was, a fiddler, & played for many of the dances on the island.

They have a most confusing terminology shared by other people on the island, in that they call the 4-some the "4-couple reel", the sixsome the "6-couple reel", & the 8-some the "8-couple reel".

On my first visit, Mr Craigie remembered having danced & played for an 8-couple reel, whereas Mrs Craigie^t could only remember a 6-couple reel. The latter was the usual sixsome, 3 men facing 3 ladies, returning ~~always~~ to their after running the reel to their own places & partners. Begun by running the reel. Mrs Craigie remembers very vividly her mother dancing it.

On my second visit, Mrs Craigie claimed to remember an 8-couple reel very similar to the 6-some, with the men on one side, & the ladies on the other. ~~He said the reel was~~ But Mr Craigie now said that the 8-couple reel was simply two 4-some reels performed side by side. Shortly after, he changed his mind, & agreed with Mrs Craigie that the men were on one side, the ladies on the other.

Both agreed that in the sixsome the men did not place their hands on their partners' waists or shoulders.

^t Both belonged to Sourni & had lived there all their lives.

The Brides Reel was always the 4-some so far as they knew. In the old days the men often took their jackets off - they had white starched shirts on. They used "mouter", though not often, queaking between bridge + tail, but did not have any particular name for it.

Mr Tom Gibson, Brodland, down, aged 75

Mr Gibson has vague memories of the old 8-some Reel. It was last done 40-50 years ago, & for some years before that was very rarely done.

The dancers definitely stood in 2 lines, but equally definitely they did not stand the men on one side & the ladies on the other. He thought that it might have been as in N. Ronaldsay. [†] It consisted of alternately moving the reel & dancing, & was in reel tempo only. The reel was a confining one for comes to opposite corner (?), but he was not certain of the figure. He knows for certain that they "mixed & crossed".

He had no recollection of the 6-some reel.

The Brides Reel was always the 4-some reel.

He had not heard of "mouter" [though I didn't describe it fully], nor Bobbitby Bowties [this I did describe]

There had never been a dancing teacher on the island so far as he knew. The dances in common use in his young days were

^t But could he have been thinking of two 4-some reels side by side the couples beginning beside their partners?

Dandies, Lancers, Petronella, Flowers of Edinburgh, Ray O'More, Triumph, Haymakers, Queen Victoria, Glasgow Highlander (introduced to the island by some Burry men), Polka, Highland Schottische, Tacky Tar Schottische, Cucanian O, Cumberland Reel [the Rousay war dance!], Comings [a couple dance, something like the 7 Step Polka], Venus Polka [introduced ca 30 years ago]

He had never seen the 3-some reel.

Miss Jessie Logie, Hutton, aged 94.

Vague memories of an 8-wme, but no real information other than that it was done in two lines.

Mr Mainland, Froloft, aged ca 80

Same as preceding.

Mrs Clouston, P.O Wasbister, aged 83.

In her young days the 4-some or "witch Reel" was called the 4-couple reel, and the starting position was as shown below. Late



They began with the two men back to back, facing their partners.



The Sixsome or 6-couple reel was also done. Three men on one side, three ladies facing them, alternately set + "in" the reel. Always return to own places, & no change of partners. Strathspey + reel temps. Last done ca 50 years ago.

She remembers old people talking of an 8-some Reel. Never seen it. They kissed after some of the dances, accompanied by squeaks on the fiddle, but had never heard it called by any special name such as "muster". She had neither seen nor heard of Bobbie Bowser.

The Brides Reel was always a 4-some.

In her young days Petronella, Flower of Edinburgh, Roy O'More, Strip the Willow, Highland Schottische, Polka, Waltz, were done. The Quadrille + Lancers came in after she had started to go to dance. & the modern 8-some came in later still.

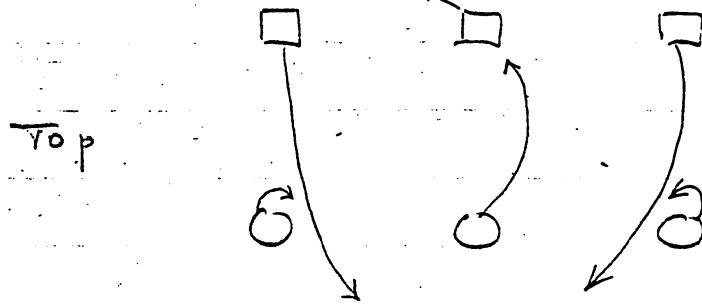
Sept. 25th.

Mr John Budge, Gammons, South Ronaldsay, aged 79, also

Mrs Budge, aged 80.

Mr Budge is still a very fine fiddler. He played for dances in S. Ronaldsay for many years.

The Sixsome Reel was common in their young days, & Mrs Budge says that it is still done at weddings by some of the older folk - just for fun. The dancers stand in two lines - an usual - & the men follow their partners in "running the reel". They begin as follows. [This quite definite, from Mrs Budge.] All return to



their original places. Both Strathspey & Reel. Begin by "dancing", then run. As the Bridal Reel, it is performed by the B & G (at top), BM & M, & HF, these last being the groom's sister & her husband [if he has a married sister]. The HF stood up behind the bridal pair at the actual wedding ceremony, but did not go to be "kirked" on the following Sunday.

In the Bridal Reel, they danced first, then ran the reel. The music then changed from a Strathspey to a Reel, & they danced & ran the reel again. The fiddlers then stopped for a very short

*This was Mr Budge
talking, so that top man moves*

pause, the Right-hand man moved round the back of the other two men to the opposite end, & the other two moved one place to the right. They repeated the sequence in this position, then changed again, & repeated once more.

The 'Bride' Reel was always the Sixsome Reel -

Mr. Budge played his Strathspeys at a good brisk pace.

They had never seen 'Hands even', or the 8-some Reel done in two lines - it was always the modern version in a

①

McDongall taught there 63 years ago, & included 'Glasgow Highlanders'. But Mr. Budge said that this was already done when he began to dance. The first part was played in strathspey tempo (Mr. Budge played it for me).

They knew Bobbity Bowties by that name, but it was better known on S. Ronaldsay as "The Lang Reel". It was performed to the tune "The White Cockade".

They possessed a copy of the New Edition of Allan's Ballroom Guide, bought at least 60, & less than 70 years ago. It has the same contents as the edition seen in the E.F.D.S.S. library.