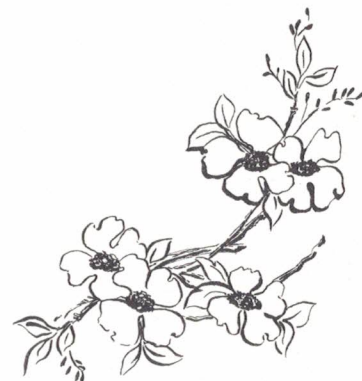


PERTH ASSEMBLY

AN ANCIENT SWORD DANCE FOR EIGHT DANCERS

Collected by
MARY ISDALE MACNAB
of
VANCOUVER, CANADA



MARY ISDALE MACNAB

SCOTLAND
1889

CANADA
1966

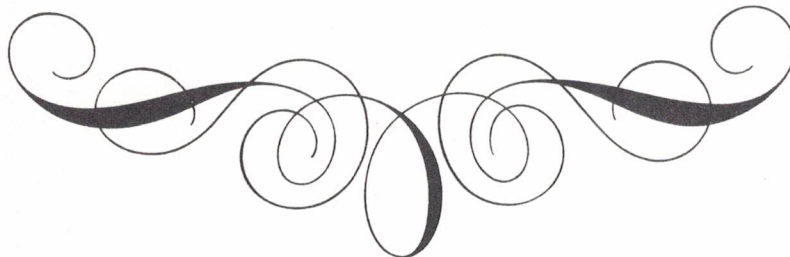
Mary Isdale MacNab, born in Glasgow, Scotland, came to Vancouver, B.C. Canada in 1907 with her family. She began teaching Highland dancing in 1910 and was still actively teaching within two months of her death in November, 1966. She trained hundreds of dancers during her career, among them many, many champions. She will be best remembered for her more recent accomplishments.

A number of dances from her collection of Ancient Highland Dances were presented by her group of dancers, the B.C. Highland Lassies of Vancouver, Canada, at the Edinburgh Tattoo at Edinburgh Castle in 1964. The girls then appeared as featured dancers with the Columbia Festival Royal Marines on their tour of the United States and Canada in 1966, and performed in Ottawa, Canada, in 1967 during the visit of H. M. Queen Elizabeth. These performances of the dances from this collection led to further acclaim and recognition for the dances, the collector and the Lassies.

Mrs. MacNab's dances were collected over fifty years of research. She explored historical records and challenged the memories of friends and acquaintances in Scotland. She continued her search as she probed into recollections of descendants of the Scottish Highlanders who had emigrated to the United States and Canada. In this way she was able to bring these dances back. Without her diligent search over the years, these dances would have been lost to us.

It had been only in this decade that Mrs. MacNab was persuaded to compile her notes for publication. We are indebted to Dr. Hugh Thurston, of the University of British Columbia, an authority on the dances of Scotland, for his help. His untiring efforts, as he worked directly with Mrs. MacNab and carried on after her death, have made the reproduction of these dances possible. We are grateful too, to Miss Joan Frazer, the present spokesman for the B.C. Highland Lassies, for her help and theirs in the preparation of these dances for print.

Mrs. MacNab left all records, rights and title to her collection of dances to her niece, Mrs. Elizabeth Sutorius, of San Diego, California, who intends to make the dances from this famed collection available to teachers of Highland dancing throughout the world, thus establishing a living memorial to this wonderful lady.



PERTH ASSEMBLY
An Ancient Sword dance for eight

This dance originated centuries ago when Perth was the capitol of Scotland. A gathering is said to have taken place when the Chiefs of various Clans assembled to swear allegiance to their King.

They placed their claymores on the ground, points facing in, and danced around them. They named the dance Perth Assembly. The date and place of the addition of this dance to Mrs. MacNab's collection is not known.

Music: Any 6/8 quick-step played at reel tempo

Introduction: The dancers form a circle, execute a sword-salute, and then place the swords on the ground as shown in diagram 1. Each dancer is standing at the hilt of his own sword, facing the centre.

Step 1

- 4 bars Dance four pas-de-basque, starting with the right foot. The first two are danced on the spot, the next two are danced moving to the right, passing the next sword-hilt and finishing at the one after that, spinning right about through three-quarters of a turn, so that the dancer finishes by facing the centre. (See diagram 2 for one dancer's track).
- 4 bars Pas-de-basque, assemble, and high cuts.
- 24 bars Dance the above movements three more times, finishing in original place.

Step 2

- 2 bars Dance two pas-de-basque (first right, then left) one over each side of the sword.
- 2 bars Dance high-cuts. The dancers should be far enough forward that their hands, which are in third position, should touch those of the dancers on either side (they can in fact hold hands lightly) to form a "tulip".
- 4 bars Turn to the right and dance four pas-de-basque in a small circle round the hilt, finishing at the left side of the sword facing right. (See diagram 3).
- 2 bars Dance two toe-heels with the right foot over the sword.
- 2 bars Dance two toe-heels with the left foot over the sword. (Thus bring the right foot, which is now the supporting foot, back to where the left foot was in the previous movement).
- 2 bars Spring over the sword with one pas-de-basque (right foot) travelling forward, and spring over the next sword with one pas-de-basque (left foot). Finish at the next sword.
- 2 bars Stamp four times with the right heel over this sword, keeping the left leg and the body still.
- 16 bars Dance the movements of the last 8 bars twice more.
- 8 bars Dance the toe-heels once more, dance pas-de-basque to original place, assemble and high-cuts.

Step 3

- 8 bars Alternate dancers turn right and left (see diagram 4). Dance back-step-and-travel twice.
- 8 bars Each pair of facing dancers swings as in the Reel of Tulloch but continuously with the right arms (no reverse).

Step 4

- 8 bars Turn to the right and dance anti-clockwise round the swords with the progressive reel movement.

Step 5

- 8 bars Face the audience and dance fourteen high-cuts, assemble and leap.

Arm positions First for pas-de-basque, second for toe-heels and stamps, third for high-cuts and progressive reel movement.

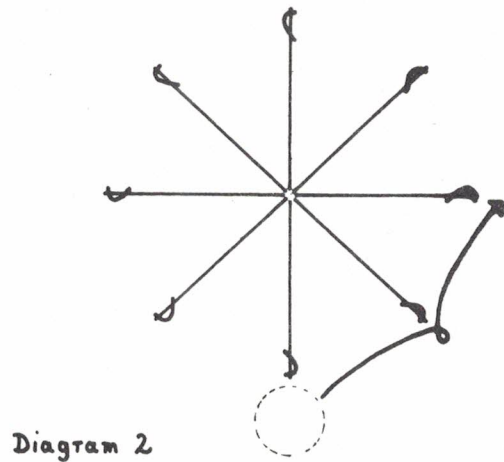
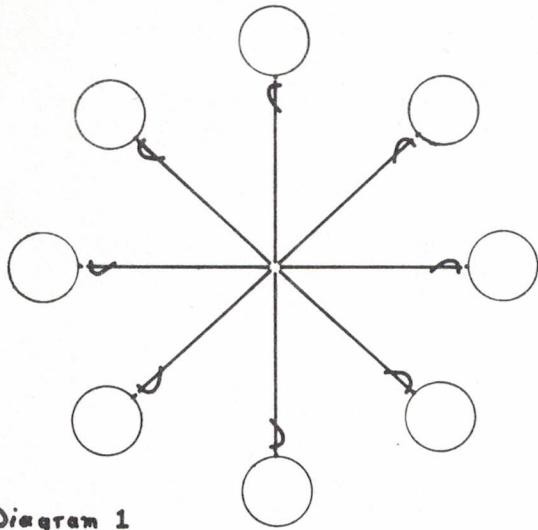


Diagram 1

Diagram 2

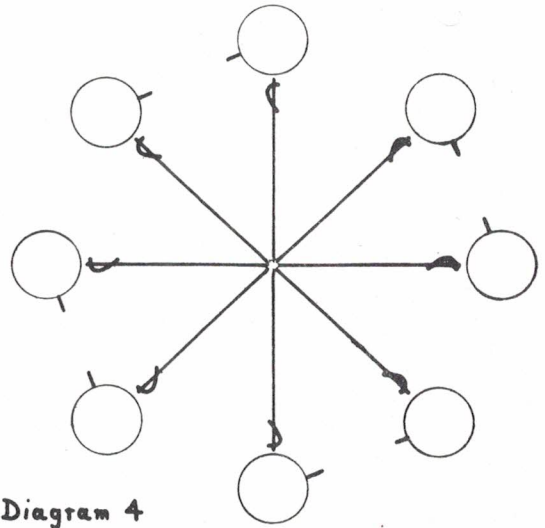


Diagram 3

Diagram 4

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