

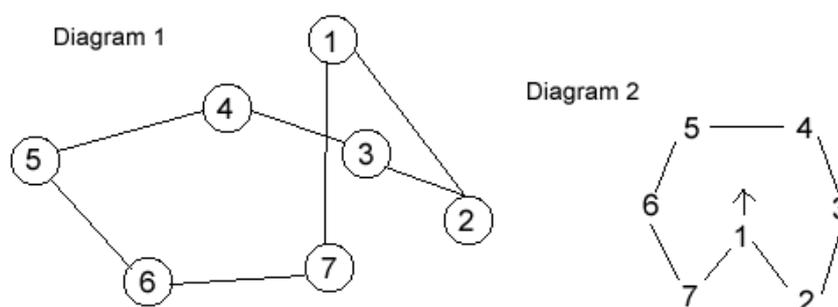
Papa Stour

Dance done by seven men each with a sword (3'7" x 1" x 1/16" metal bar) padded at both ends with insulating tape to help the lock and to avoid hurting people. The dance is done in a plain running step and in the version without words is done as below.

The music is given below.

The team runs on, led by the **leader** (who controls all the figures of the dance), swords held over right shoulder and end with the six-in-line holding swords in both hands horizontally at chest height, and with the **leader** facing the line. He taps the sword of each in turn (order 2-7). As he taps each sword, that person joins in with running step giving the point of his sword to the left hand of the person behind him in order (number **two** who is brought in first takes it from the **leader**). At the end when the sword of **seven** is struck he gives his sword point to **leader** and takes the sword point of **six** to close the circle, **HILT AND POINT**. They continue in the circle until the **leader** is ready for the next figure which is **Arches**. (Note the circle goes clockwise).

ARCHES. The **leader** starts this figure by raising his left arm and turning to the left. The sword behind the **leader** and **seven** is thus raised high and horizontal. The **leader** turns completely round so that he faces the same way as **seven**. While this is being done two runs under the arch made by **leader** and **seven**. As he does so, and as **leader** completes his turn, the **leader** also raises his right hand. **Two** passes under the arch and turns right to come behind **seven**, also raising his left hand. At this stage the swords look as in Diagram 1 with the leader's hands crossed at the wrist.



Three then continues under the arches now made by **one**, **seven**, and **two** and turns left behind the **leader**, raising his left hand high (and consequently **two** raises his right hand).

So it continues until **four**, **five** and **six** have passed under the arches in the same way turning alternately left and right. While this is being done, those who have already formed the arches and have both hands raised, crossed at the wrists are running forward to meet those still to go under the arches.

This continues until the **leader** decides to go to the next figure.

NOTE that as **seven** goes under the arch for the first time and for everyone else when they next go under the arches, it is helpful if they allow their own sword (i.e. that in the right hand) to trail over their right shoulder. The **leader** completes this figure by turning to the right as he goes through the arches and pulls everyone after him into the plain circle, **hilt and point**.

SINGLES. As they go round in the circle, when the **leader** is ready and all are balanced he warns the rest that "singles coming up". Then he gives, starting as his left foot comes down the call "singles ready now" (each word as a foot goes down). As his next right foot comes down he jumps across the sword between him and **seven**. The details of the jump are – as the right foot comes down the left foot is swung above and over the sword, he hops on the right foot again as he drops his left foot to the ground; he hops on his left foot as he raises his right foot over the sword, and hops again as he completes the jump. The circle is still going round as he does this (but the speed is reduced). He is followed in turn by **two**, **three** to **seven**.

The timing is as follows: before the start all are in step, then **two** starts his jump as his right foot comes down the time after the **leader** starts his jump. **Three** is one behind **two** and so on. Once all have jumped the sword we have a circle with the swords inside and hands behind backs.

The circle is given time to steady and get in step, the team is warned by the **leader** that "open coming up". When all ready **leader** gives "open ready now", starting on left foot. As right foot comes down after "now" **leader** puts right arm in air and turns under right arm, followed by **two**, **three** etc. (timing as in "**Singles**").

NOTE In **Singles**, the swords must be kept low and not brought up as the next man jumps.

OVER AND UNDER The **leader** advances towards the sword held between **five** and **four** pulling the circle after him - see diagram 2.

Four and **five** raise their swords and the **leader** passes under it. After he has passed under, all except **leader** go down on the right knee, taking the swords down with him. The **leader** must also bring his swords down by bending down. He then jumps backwards over the lowered sword between **four** and **five**. The swords are immediately raised again. This will trap both hands of the **leader**. He is released by **two** repeating his move (releases his left hand) and then **seven** (releases his right hand). They are followed by **three** and then **six**. **Five** and **four** turn under arms to get back to the circle.

This figure is done at quite a high speed. After this figure the dancers circle **hilt and point** until they are steady for the next figure which is **Doubles**.

DOUBLES is the same as **Singles**, except that all do the jump simultaneously. Timing and calls as before otherwise "Open ready now" as the call for all to get back to plain circle **hilt and point** by simultaneously turning under the right arm. Repeated as leader thinks fit.

The **leader** then drops the sword between him and **seven**. **Two** raises left hand and turns, raising right hand and pulling **three** through arch to go behind **leader** as in **arches**, but here the arches are done across the stage, when **seven** has gone through he is followed by the **leader** who turns to the side **six** is on, runs up the side of the arches pulling everyone out of the arches.

The team are now back in the circle **hilt and point**, at the call BREAK, everyone drops the sword in his left hand, then turns out left (i.e. Left shoulder back) with his own sword up; when all are facing outwards, the swords are banged into the left hand of the person on your right to give a circle **hilt and point** with backs to the centre of the circle. Then all turn, left shoulder back, bringing right hand over to form circle facing in with hands crossed Right over Left.

We are now ready to form **THE STAR**.

Move the sword in your right hand to the person on your right along the swords, take the sword from the person on your left in your left hand and pass it under the sword originally in your left hand. You now again all have a sword in each hand, right over left. The above procedure is repeated to complete the star.

When the star is made, run round in a tight circle with left hands on the shoulder of the person ahead; the right hand is holding one of the points of the star. The **leader** then takes the star and displays it.

The dance is completed by each person retrieving his own sword and dancing off.

NOTES: This dance was performed at the Eistedfodd in Llangollen by the Eaglais à Chnoc Scottish Dancers in 1967. Due to time restrictions the following cut-down version of the play was used.

Brave gentles all within this boor,
If ye delight in any sport,
Come see me dance upon this floor,
Which to you all shall yield comfort.
Then shall I dance in such a sort,
As possible I may or can;
You, brethren mine, play my court,
That I on this floor may prove a man.

DANCES

Since I have danced, I think it best
To call my brethren in your sight,
That I may have a little rest.

ENTER TEAM

And you shall dance with all your might;
With heart and hand as you are knights.

Away with this! - Let us come to sport.
St. George of England,
Stout James of Spain,
Champion Dennis a French knight,
David a Welshman born and Patrick also, an Irish knight,
Of Italy, brave Anthony the good,
And Andrew of Scotland - King.

EPILOGUE

Mars does rule, he bends his brows,
He makes us all agast;
After the few hours that we stay here,
Venus will rule at last.
Farewell, farewell, brave gentles all,
That herein do remain,
I wish you health and happiness
Till we return again.

The full play can be seen at: <http://www.folkplay.info/Texts/78hu16sw.htm>

VIDEOS of the dance:

North British Sword Dancers - <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=z10Ov4esNcE&feature=related>

Oakville Ale and Sword Dance Team - <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=BK-QZ33cPSc>

MUSIC

Score for the dance:

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a dance, consisting of five staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a time signature. The first staff is in 6/4 time and contains two measures of music, with a 'repeat' sign at the end. The second staff is also in 6/4 time and contains two measures of music, also ending with a 'repeat' sign. The third staff starts in 6/4 time for the first measure, then changes to 1/4 time for the second measure. The fourth staff is in 4/4 time and contains two measures of music. The fifth staff starts in 4/4 time for the first measure, then changes to 6/4 time for the second measure. The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs.