



TOPIC

SOUND OF THE CHEVIOTS
THE CHEVIOT RANTERS' COUNTRY DANCE BAND



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Bryce Anderson *Accordion*
Jack Thompson *Fiddle*
Denis Smailes *Drums*
Phil Sutherland *Double Bass*
George Mitchell *Piano*

- 1 Circassian Circle - Part I**
Tunes: Original, Rugley Ford, Hesleyside Reel 8 x 32 bars
- 2 Hornpipes**
Tunes: Redesdale, King of the Fairies, The Lads of Whickham 6 x 32 bars
- 3 Washington Quick Step**
Tunes: Bugle Horn, Farewell, Jackson's Morning Brush 8 x 32 bars
- 4 Northumbrian Waltz**
Tunes: Berwick Fair, Ma Bonnie Lad, Keech the Creel 5 x 32 bars
- 5 Morpeth Rant**
Tunes: Original, Rob Roy's Cave, Kirk's Hornpipe 8 x 32 bars
- 6 Cumberland Reel**
Tunes: Original, The Ouayside Shaver, Geordie's Jig 8 x 32 bars
- 7 Corn Rigs**
Tunes: Original, Dunstanburgh Castle, Goodnight and joy be wi' ye 7 x 32 bars
- 8 Waltz Country Dance**
Tunes: Bonnie Tyneside, Whittingham Green Lane, The Banks of Coquet 4 x 40 bars
- 9 Drops of Brandy**
Tunes: The Moorbridge Hornpipe, Goswick Kirn, The Old Drove Road 8 x 32 bars
- 10 Circassian Circle - Part II**
Tunes: The Three Sea Captains, Lannigans Ball, Ellingham Hall 8 x 32 bars

First issued by Topic 1972
Recorded in Alnwick by Dick Swettenham 1971
Sleeve notes by Nibs Matthews
Sleeve design by Humphrey Weightman

This, arguably the most distinguished and 'authentic' of English folk dance bands, grew out of the monthly meetings of the Northumbrian Pipers' Society. It was formed in 1955, and its first engagements were at local socials, barn dances and such, mostly in Northumberland and Durham. Within a year or so they had established themselves as a prominent barn dance band on radio and television. Bryce Anderson, *leader* and *accordionist*, is a printer by trade; Jack Thompson *fiddler* is a joiner, now retired; Denis Smailes *drummer* is a gardener; Phil Sutherland *bass-player* is a railwayman; George Mitchell *pianist* works in the Road Surveyor's Office of the Northumberland County Council. The band has an enormous repertory, not only of standard folk dance tunes but also of lesser-known melodies by composers local to the North-east; moreover, they play a number of their own compositions. Comprised as it is of folk musicians of enormous practical experience in the handling of traditional tunes for dancing, the group offers a reliable presentation of the style, form and tempo proper to the English community folk dance. This record presents ten popular dances supported by an interesting selection of old and more recent tunes, in the Cheviot Ranters' own arrangements.

Circassian Circle - Part I

From Northumberland.

Form: Progressive Sicilian Circle (couple facing couple).

- A1 Women cross over (left), men cross over (right), repeat to places.
- A2 Partners balance right and left. Partners swing.
- B1 Ladies chain.
- B2 Advance and retire and promenade on to the next couple.

Hornpipes

These tunes are suitable for *The Steam-Boat*, a dance collected in Stoke Fleming, Devon.

Steam-Boat Form: Progressive longways.

- A1 Four in line (abreast) go down and back (first couple between the second).
- A2 First couple down centre, second couple follow; second couple arch, first couple under and all dance back to places.
- B1 Right and left hands across.
- B2 Couples swing and change places.

Washington Quick Step

A contra dance from New England, U.S.A.

Form: Progressive Longways.

- A1 Right and left hands across.
- A2 First couple down centre; turn half way round; up the centre and cast a place.
The first couple are now improper.
- B1 Ladies chain.
- B2 Partners advance and retire, swing partners; men and women finishing on own sides

Northumbrian Waltz

A couple dance. but the music can be used for Spanish or Circle Waltz,

Spanish Waltz Form: Small or large circles, men with partners on their right.

- A All join hands, balance in and out; each man pass his left hand lady to his right- all this 4 times.
- B Waltz once around the set.
Circle Waltz Form : As in *Spanish Waltz*.
- A As in *Spanish Waltz*.
- B Keep the new partner. Take inside hands; sway in and out. Drop hands and spin inwards to face.
Repeat, swaying out and in etc. Ballroom hold; 2 chassays in, 2 out, waltz the circle.

Morpeth Rant

From Netherton, Northumberland.

Form: Progressive Longways. The rant step is used throughout.

- A1 First man turn second woman with the right hand, give left to second man and make arches.
Step, three in line, while first woman dances under both arches to place.
- A2 Right and left hands across.
- B1 First couple down the centre, second couple follow; second couple arch, first couple under and all dance back to places.
- B2 Polka swing round each other 1½ times; ballroom hold.

Cumberland Reel

Form: Longways set of five or six couples; man facing partner.

- A1 Two top couples right hands across and left hands across.
- A2 First couple gallop down centre and back.
- B1 First couple cast - others follow (men left, ladies right); make an arch, other couples through.
- B2 All promenade round to left and up the middle; including the original first couple.

Corn Rigs

From Netherwitton, Northumberland

Form: Longways progressive, The rant step is used throughout.

- A1 First woman turns to her right and dances round the second couple to her partner's place; at the same time the first man follows her round the second woman and up the centre to his partner's place.
- A2 Repeat the figure, first man leading.
- B1 First couple down the centre, second couple follow; second couple arch, first couple under and all dance back to places.
- B2 Polka swing round each other 1½ times ; ballroom hold.

Waltz Country Dance

The Guaracha or Spanish Dance described in "The Ballroom", 1827.

Form: Progressive Sicilian Circle (couple facing couple, hands four).

- A1&2 Face opposite. With the right hand balance forward and back and change places. Face partners and repeat. Repeat with opposite and partner.
- B1&2 Hands in a ring, Balance in and out, women cross. Repeat this movement (4 times in all).
- B3 Waltz on to the next couple.

Drops of Brandy

The North's own version of Strip the Willow.

Form: Long set of four or five couples. The step-hop is used throughout.

- ABB Single Reel - (Using the short arm grip throughout the dance). First couple swing once and a half with right arm. First woman goes down the set and swings with each man in turn (left arm) alternating with partner (right arm); first couple swings at the bottom. First man swings each lady in turn alternating with partner.
- Double Reel - First couple now swing down the lines simultaneously.

Circassian Circle ~ Part II. The Big Circle

Form: All join hands in a large circle, men with partners on their right.

This can also be danced by sticking to original partners

- A1 Forward and back twice.
- A2 Women to the centre and back Men to the centre, turn left and go to left hand lady.
- B1 Swing her.
- B2 Promenade new partner round the set.

GLOSSARY

BALANCE Usually preceding a swing (q.v.) or a courtesy movement, where the weight is put on to the right foot then the left.

CAST To turn away from the set (usually to lead down the outside) by turning up (q.v.) and round.

CHASSAY (or Chassee) Stepping sideways, usually with ballroom hold.

CONTRA Progressive longways (q.v.)

DOUBLE STEP Lift R L R, lift R L R, as opposed to walking or skipping step.

DOWN As opposed to the Top of the room, which is usually where the music is.

GALOP A sidestepping dance movement with partner facing.

HANDS FOUR Four dancers join hands in a ring.

IMPROPER Man in the woman's place, as opposed to Proper, which is the regular normal formation, in which the man has his partner on his right when facing the top of the room.

INSIDE HANDS Nearest hand to partner.

LONGWAYS A set made up of lines of men facing their partners.

POLKA STEP Similar to Double Step (q.v.).

PROGRESSIVE Any formation where couples or groups of couples move up, down or round the set to dance with different couples or groups for each repeat of the figure.

PROGRESSIVE LONGWAYS As Longways (q.v.), but alternate couples progress up or down the set one place in each turn of the dance.

PROMENADE Couples cross hands, R to R, L to L, and dance facing forwards.

RANT STEP Similar to Double Step (q.v.).

SWING Ballroom hold, weight mainly on right foot placed (out)side by (out)side, dropping on to this foot and pivoting with partner in clockwise direction, using left foot to transfer weight while moving right foot. There are many optional variations.

UP Towards the Top of the room, opposite to Down (q.v.).

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