

OLD NICKS LUMBER ROOM
(Scotland)

not taught

SOURCE:

This dance was found by the RSCDS in The London Magazine (Oct. 1759). This dance was taught to Elinor Mackenzie in 1972 at the St. Andrews RSCDS Summer School by Dr. Milligan herself, who used to be the first to teach the dances from the Society's latest publication, Book 26 in this case.

The tune, the "Roxburgh Quick Step," is a jig of unspecified origin. Most general periodical publications, such as The London Magazine did not usually provide musical scores as the dances included were usually set to tunes currently popular. Unfortunately, no one seems to have found the original tune for this dance.

Old Nick, as a common reference to the devil is found in works by L'Estrange (1708), Collier (c.1746), Smollet (1762, and in Burns, "O thou! whatever title suit thee. Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie (1785)." Often demonic presences referred to as the devil were simply one of the ancient local deities who survived the coming of Christianity as forest sprites giving rise to the legends of Robin Hood, and Jack O' the Green in stories with plots similar to Faust's dealings with Mephistopheles where someone makes a magical deal and has problems making his payments.

A storage space for junk is commonly referred to as a lumber room. However, in this context, its slang use as a pawn shop is more likely as it is here that one must redeem himself from promises made to the devil.

MUSIC:

Ready ... And!, TAC003 (TACSound); Jig (8x32 bars). "The Danelaw Country Dance Band & David White & His Band" featuring tunes from the Newcastle Collection, NRSCDS 101 (Newcastle & District Branch, RSCDS); "Scottish Dance Music for Book 26" SCL (The Scotsmen).

FORMATION:

Longways set for 4 cpls (with 3 cpls dancing ea repeat). Ea cpl performs the dance 2X, ending at the bottom with a new top cpl (after a wait of 1 turn) starting every 2nd repetition.

STYLE:

Skip change of Step is used throughout unless a setting step (q.v.) is indicated. Hop on L as R extends fwd, step R fwd, close L to R heel, step R fwd (repeat L 1 skip change of step per bar).

Pas de basque is used when setting is indicated, in which case 2 steps are required (bars 3&4, 7&8, 11&12, 15&16). Step R with R, close L to R instep, step R in place as L is extended diag L fwd. (repeat L).

Cast: to turn the long way in 1 direction to go in the other, e.g. turn 270° instead of 90°.

Slip step: step to the L with L close R, rpt 2 per bar

Stepping Up takes 2 bars and 4 counts

- 1) the dancer steps diag into the set with 1 foot of the direction indicated (for "up" M L & W R)
- 2) the dancer crosses 1 foot over the other (M R & W L) in the same direction
- 3) the dancers step back into the line of the set (M L & W R)
- 4) close with feet together (M R & W L).

N.B. For stepping down, the same movements would be reversed using the opp ft. Although the steps are precisely indicated here, this movement

Continued.

OLD NICK'S LUMBER ROOM (cont'd)

is somewhat casual and should not be marched as this distracts from the role of 1st cpl.

FIGURES:

Reel of Three: This is a fig of 8 danced by 3 persons. The 1st rule is that the middle person is in charge of setting the direction of the 2 on the ends of the 8. The 2nd rule is that the 1st person passed by the middle person has the right of way through the middle. In this dance there are 2 sets of reels.

In the 1st reel, the axis of the fig of 8 is across the set and is danced by 1st cpl & their "crnr cpls" (1st W with 2nd cpl and 1st M with 3rd cpl). Since the 1st W dances up the room twd the W's side of the set, 2nd cpl dance down & twds ea other with 2nd W crossing the middle of the 8 before her ptrnr. Likewise as 1st M dances down the room twd the M's side of the set, 3rd cpl dance up & twds ea other with 3rd M crossing the middle of the 8 before his ptrnr.

In the 2nd reel, the axis of the fig of 8 is along the sides of the set and is danced by 1st cpl & their crnrs (1st M with 2nd W and 3rd W, and 1st W with 3rd M and 4M). Since 1st cpl dance in & to the R, the crnrs dance out & twds ea other with the 2nd crnr crossing the middle of the 8 before the 1st crnr.

Hands Round and Back: Join hands in a circle & dance 8 slip steps to the L (4 bars) & 8 back to the R (4 bars).

METER:

PATTERN

Meas.

Introduction: 1 bar chord to begin, during which all 4 cpls bow or curtsy to their ptrns.

FIGURE I.

- 1- 2 1st cpl turn once round by the R hand
 3- 4 1st cpl cast off into 2nd cpl's place as cpl 2 steps up into top place
 4- 6 1st cpl crosses down below 3rd cpl and ...
 7- 8 casts up behind them (ending on wrong sides)

FIGURE II. (Reels Across)

- 9-10 1st, 2nd, 3rd cpls set (hands joined on the sides)
 11-16 1st cpl dance (6 bar) reels of 3 across, 1W with 2nd cpl, 1M with 3rd cpl, to finish again in 2nd place on wrong side, 1W facing down, 1M facing up

FIGURE III. (Reels on the Side - a continuous movement from the "Reels Across")

- 17-22 1st cpl & their crnrs, dance (6 bar) reels of 3 on the sides beg with 1st cpl dancing in (1M give RS to 2W; 1W RS to 3M) as 2nd & 3rd cpls go out & twds ea other
 23-24 1st cpl crosses to their own sides & turns to face up with nearer hands joined

FIGURE IV. (Circles)

- 25-28 1st & 2nd cpls circle 4 hands round to the L (using 8 slip steps 1st cpl turning in to face down)

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OLD NICK'S LUMBER ROOM (cont'd)

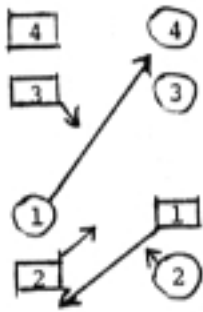
29-32

1st & rd cpls circle 4 hands round to the R (using 8 slip steps but finishing on the side)

N.B. 1st cpl, having moved 1 place down, repeats dance with 3rd & 4th cpl to end at the bottom before 2nd cpl begins at the top.

CUES: turn, cast; cross down, cast up
123 set, 1cnr cpl reel 3
1 cnrs reel 3, 1 cross
12 circle L, 13 circle R

Fig. 1
Bar 11



TOP

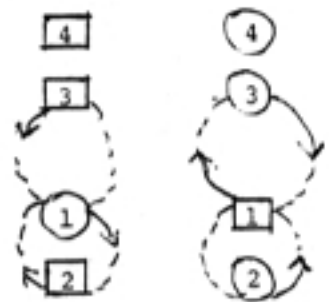


Fig.2
Bar 17-22

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