

THE SAINT JOHN RIVER

(Canada)

This Scottish dance was composed in Canada by Prudence Edwards of Fredericton, NB. It was the winning dance in the competition to select a Scottish country dance to commemorate Canada's Centennial in 1967. C. Stewart Smith introduced it at the Folk Dance Federation of California, Inc. Statewide Institute, Oakland, California, May 31, 1968.

MUSIC: Records: Calclan CC-1-45, Side 1 "The Bonnie Lass o' Bon Accord"
Fontana TFE17187, Side 2, Band 2, "The Bonnie Lass o' Bon Accord"
(This last record must be played through twice.)

FORMATION: 4 cpls in longways formation, a line of M facing a line of W with ptrs facing, ML shoulder twd music or head of line. Cpls are numbered from 1 to 4 with cpl 1 at head of line. Free hands at sides.

STEPS AND STYLING: Strathspey Step: Keeping ft close to floor, step fwd on ball of R (ct 1); closing step L behind R, L instep close to R heel (ct 2); keeping ft close to floor, step fwd R bending R knee slightly (ct 3); hop R bringing L fwd passing through close to R, toe pointing down and close to floor, knee turned out (ct 4). Begin next step L.

Use Strathspey Steps throughout the dance, and always start R.

MUSIC 4/4

PATTERN

Measures

Chord INTRODUCTION: M bow, W curtsy.

I. THE CHASE

A 1-8 W1 cast off one place (turn 3/4 CW to go behind W2), go between W2 and W3, cross through the middle of the set, go between M2 and M3, around behind M3 and between M3 and M4, cross through the middle of the set, go between W3 and W4, around behind W4, and then cross the set to finish below M4 on M side of the dance. Meanwhile M1 follows his ptr to finish below W4 on W side of the dance. Look at ptr throughout. On last meas cpls 2 and 4 form 2-hand arches with ptr straight across, as cpl 3 separate further by stepping back to widen the set slightly.

II. THE BRIDGES AND POOLS

A 1-2 Cpl 1 with nearer hands (ML, WR) joined dance up under arch formed by cpl 4.
rpt
3-6 Cpl 1 join both hands and turn 1-1/2 CW, then on last meas release ML, WR hands to
rpt face up the set.
7-8 Cpl 1 dance up under arch formed by cpl 2, release hands and finish in first place on
rpt own side of the dance. On last meas cpls 2,3 and 4 face up the set.

III. THE REVERSING FALLS

Through this figure whenever cpls change direction, release hands, turn twd ptr and join nearer hands unless otherwise stated.

B 1-8 Cpl 1 with nearer hands joined dance down the middle of the set (4 meas), turn to face up the set and dance up to finish in original place (4 meas).
Cpl 2 dance up to first place (2 meas), turn to face down the set and follow cpl 1 down (2 meas), face up the set and dance back to first place (2 meas), release hands, turn away from ptr to face down the set and dance down to finish in original place (2 meas).
Cpl 3 dance up to first place (3 meas), turn to face down the set and follow cpl 2 down (1 meas), face up the set and dance back to first place (1 meas), release hands, turn away from ptr to face down the set and dance down to finish in original place (3 meas).
Cpl 4 dance up to first place coming together to meet in ctr but do not join hands (4 meas), then turn away from ptr to face down the set and dance back down to finish in original place (4 meas).

IV. THE RIVER MEETS THE SEA

B 1-4 All cpls dance a dos-a-dos, staying close to ptr during the back-to-back movement.
rpt
5-8 Cpl 1 face down the set and wend their way down own sides of the set (Grand R and L),
rpt changing places with cpl 2 with R hands, cpl 3 with L hands and cpl 4 with R hands to finish in 4th place. On last meas ML and W4 turn 3/4 more CW to finish facing ptr across the set.
Repeat the dance with cpls 2, 3 and 4 active in turn until all cpls finish in original

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places.

Chord M bow, W curtsy.

Note: Explanation of the figures:

- I. THE CHASE describes the meandering course of the River.
- II. THE BRIDGES AND POOLS is explained by its title.
- III. THE REVERSING FALLS describes the reversing falls at Saint John; when the tide is ebbing, the River runs downstream over a shallow waterfall, and when the tide comes in, it forces the River to flow upstream up the fall.
- IV. THE RIVER MEETS THE SEA is described in the wave-like back-to-back movement of all four cpls, and the first cpl wending their way down to 4th place describes the River disappearing into the sea.

