

PETER O'TAVY

Slow dance for four, collected by Mona Douglas.

This dance is different from most Manx dances as it is danced with slow, graceful movements, with the body rising and falling as the dance is performed. It was traditionally danced at Manx weddings by the bridegroom and bride, best man and first bridesmaid. It was performed after the 'breakfast' as part of the wedding entertainment, which was usually a very lengthy affair. The balancing movements in the dance were often a test of the participants' capabilities after their indulgence in 'jough'.

The following words accompany the tune, and today they are often sung for the last part of the dance.

'The man is not drunk, nor half drunk,
Nor quarter drunk, because he can dance.
The man is not drunk, nor half drunk
If he can dance Peter O'Tavy.'

◇ 1st couple ◇ 2nd couple
◇ ◇

$\text{♩} = 54$

	Music	Movements
A1 Bars	1-2	Partners facing each other and hands joined with opposites, all swing R foot forward, across in front of L foot, forward again, and down. While doing this the weight is on L foot, on which the dancer rocks gently up and down, lifting heel but keeping ball of foot on ground.
	3-4	Dancers change weight to R foot and swing L forward, across, forward and down as above, while rocking on R foot, but on last beat of Bar 4, as L foot comes down, all swivel round on R foot to face opposites. (Rocking cross-step.)
	5-8	As above, facing opposites and joined with partners, but no swivel round on last beat.
B1 Bars	1-8	Still facing opposites, all walk a circular hey in a very swaying step, giving R and L hands and taking four steps to each change. Partners honour slightly on last beat.
A2 Bars	1-8	As in A1.
B2 Bars	1-2	Men take partner's R hands in their R hands and dance four Manx side steps obliquely to R.
	3-4	Partners dance four Manx side steps to L, finishing back to back with opposites.
	5-6	Men take hands of opposite women, so that the set forms a circle with men facing outward and women inward. Men then release their own partners and turn opposite women with L hand.
	7-8	Men go on and turn their own partners with R hand, finishing with a slight honour. All are now in original places.
A3 Bars	1-8	As in A1.
B3 Bars	1-4	First couple go forward and pass between opposites who make an arch, woman crossing in front of a man to cast round second woman, while first man casts round second man.
	5-8	First woman turns second man while first man turns second woman, both finishing in original places with a slight honour to opposites whom they have just turned.
A4 Bars	1-8	As in A1.

- B4 Bars 1-8 As in B3, but second couple travelling.
- A5 Bars 1-8 As in A1.
- B5 Bars 1-2 Men give R hands high and turn each other half round, remaining close together with hands still clasped.
 Women turn outward and move four steps round to R. Dancers now form a line with first woman standing back to back with second man and second woman back to back with first man.
- 3-4 Women move round four more steps, still facing outward, while men release hands and fall back four steps. Women give R hands to their partners and L hands to opposites, which makes the set again a circle, but this time with men facing in and women out.
- 5-8 All move round clockwise four steps, which brings them into original places. On the last bar women release their L hands and turn to face inward, still holding their partners' R hands and partners honour slightly.
- A6 Bars 1-8 As in A1 except without hands joined.
- B6 Bars 1-8 Both couples take inside hands, go forward four steps to meet opposites and release hands.
- 3-4 First man takes inside hands with second woman and falls back four steps. Simultaneously, second man takes inside hands with first woman and falls back four steps.
- 5-6 In these positions, all move forward four steps, meet, and release hands.
- 7-8 Partners take R hands, turn each other, and honour low, without releasing hands.

- B3 Bars 1-16 As in B2, except that men dance reel step counter clockwise round women's line while the women form pairs and dance the high reel steps and turns. Men face up on 8th beat, turning by the right, and dance back along their own track clockwise.
- A4 Bars 1-16 As in A1, finishing in square formation.
- B4 Bars 1-4 Men give R hands across and dance once round clockwise in running step while women balance in place.
 5-8 Men arm left with their partners, swinging the women into the centre, in running step.
 9-12 Women give R hands across and dance once round in running step while men balance in place.
 13-16 Partners arm left, the men swinging the women round into proper positions for longways formation.
- A5 Bars 1-16 As in A1, finishing in square formation.
- B5 Bars 1-4 Men give left hands across and dance once around while women balance in place.
 5-8 Men arm right with their partners, swinging the women into the centre.
 9-12 Women give L hands across and dance once round while men balance in place.
 13-16 Partners arm right, finishing in longways formation.
- A6 Bars 1-16 As in A1, finishing in square formation.
- B6 Bars 1-4 Women dance two reel steps forward to centre while men dance two high reel steps on the spot.
 5-8 Men dance forward in reel step and form a ring round women, who step back against the men's joined hands and place their hands on the men's shoulders.
 9-16 All dance round faster and faster in pivot step, and on the last beat the men lift the women on to their joined hands and hold them up with a Hogh! while women wave their R hands.