

REEL OF THE ROYAL SCOTS  
Scotland

The Royal Scots, the first Regiment of Foot, is the oldest regular regiment in the British Army, having been first established in 1633 when Charles I granted a charter to Sir John Hepburn to raise 1200 men in Scotland to serve Louis XIII of France. Since then, the Regiment which still draws its men chiefly from Edinburgh and southeast Scotland, has taken part in almost every campaign fought by the British Army, having honors from "Tangier 1680" down to the 2nd World War. Since then, this Regiment has been active service in Palestine, Korea, Egypt, Cyprus, Aden, and Northern Ireland. The regimental motto, "Nemo Me Impune Lacessit," roughly translates "he who messes with me gets scratched." This alludes to the thistle brought into Scottish heraldry from a French order of knighthood. The Order of the Thistle is the highest order in Scotland.

This regiment, headquartered in Edinburgh Castle, is allied to the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's), the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and is also affiliated to the 10th (Princess Mary's Own) Gurkha Rifles.

To celebrate this regiment's 350th Anniversary, in 1983, the Society was asked to provide a commemorative dance. They held a competition for a new dance which was to be called the "Reel of the Royal Scots" for which it's pipe major would compose a suitable tune. Many members of the Society submitted dances, each of which has an alternate title so that if they did not win, the dances might still be later published. The winning dance was devised by Roy Goldring and was published in a leaflet by the Society along with its new tune.

Of particular significance is the regimental badge (and related cap badge) which provided Mr. Goldring with his inspiration for the figures of the dance. It consists of the Royal Cipher within the Collar of the the Order of the Thistle appending the Badge of St. Andrews above which is a royal crown.

"The Reel of the Royal Scots" had its most spectacular performance during the Edinburgh Tattoo in the summer of 1983 when soldiers from the regiment danced with members of the Edinburgh Branch of the Society.

It is within the living tradition for dances, tunes, and songs, to be composed to honor special people, organizations or events. One need only look at either a list of Scottish dances or tunes. In the Boston index of 900 dances, can be found 56 dances starting with "Miss," "Mrs," or "Mr." This does not include all of the dances dedicated to people by title, military rank or simply by name. Most historic military units have their tunes and dances. Mr. Roy Goldring, has himself, added a significant number of popular dances along this same direction.

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**MUSIC:** Ready ... And!, TACO 003 (TACSound); Reel (8x32 bars); RSCDS Music for Eight Scottish Country Dances: The Ron Gonnella Quartet & The Pipers and Drummers from the Royal Scots, RSCDS 13i (N.B. the correct music here is on a small insert within the record jacket as the version on side 2, band 4 is miscounted).

**FORMATION:** Long ways set for 4 cpls (with 3 cpls dancing each repeat). Each 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 or slip step (q.v.) are indicated. Hop on L as R extends fwd; step R fwd; close L to R heel; step R fwd. Repeat with opp ftwk. 1 skip change of step per bar (meas). All patterns beg R.

Pas de basque (Setting Step) 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 to L. All patterns beg R.

Cast to run the long way in one direction to going the other, e.g. turn 270 degrees instead of 90 degrees.

Slip step: Step to the L with L; close R, repeat with opp ftwk. There are 2 slip steps per bar.

Corners are calculated with 1st cpl being in 2nd cpl's place. One's 1st corners are across the set to one's R (1st M with 3rd W and 1st W with 2nd M) while 1's 2nd cnr are to 1's L (1st M with 2nd W and 1st W with 3rd M).

Double Triangles is a position where 1st cpl joins a nearer hand to each cnr; in this dance the hands are extended to dancers on the correct side of the dance both times. In a double triangle figure the 1st cpl begins facing own side and then changes to face opp sides.

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

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**METER:** 2/4

**PATTERN**

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Meas.

**INTRODUCTION:** There is a 4 bar (meas) chord to begin with, during which all 4 cpls bow or curtsey to their ptr across the set.

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FIG. I:

- 1-2 1st cpl moving inside 2nd cpl gives nearer hand (W 1&2 give LH; M 1&2 give RH) to them to make a half turn and join their free hand to 3 cpl.
- 3-4 All set in a double triangles pos.
- 5-6 1st cpl half turns 3rd cpl (W 1&2 give RH; M 1&2 give LH) who join 2nd cpl giving them their free hand.
- 7-8 All set in double triangles pos.

FIG. II:

- 1-2 1st cpl, followed by 3rd cpl, dance up between 2nd cpl (cpls joining nearer hand whenever possible. (bars 8-10)
- 3-4 Cast off one place to meet 2nd cpl below. (bars 11-12)
- 5-6 Lead down 1 place. (bars 13-14)
- 7-8 Cast back into 2nd cpls's place, as...  
3rd cpl casts into their orig place. (bars 15-16)

FIG. III:

- 1-4 1st cpl turn 1st cnr with R hands, pass each other by R shldr. (bars 17-20)
- 5-8 1st cpl turn 2nd cnrs R hands 1st cross into 2nd place on their own sides (pass R shldr). (bars 21-24)

FIG. IV:

- 1-8 1st, 2nd, and 3rd cpls circle 6 hands round and back with slip step. (bars 25-32)

Cues:

1-2 turn half in (join 3s), set; 1-3 repeat  
1-3 lead up 2, cast, lead down, cast up  
1 cnr 1 turn, 1 pass R; rpt with cnr 2 end home; circle 6

This dance was presented by Elinor Mackenzie Vandergrift at the 1986 Idyllwild Workshop

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