

A PROVENCAL GARLAND DANCE FROM FRANCE

Source: performed at Sidmouth in 1976

Set ; initially it is 6 mixed couples who dance the introduction, then the women alone linked by 5 garlands perform the main part and then unite with their partners for the exit.

PART 1.

The couple stand together, facing the same way, the man on the left side of the woman. The woman holds the garland by the bottom of the handles and her partner holds them a little higher. Both have left hands etc on the same handle and the man stands just a little behind so that he has his right arm round her shoulders to hold the garland. The first part is danced to a low skip step.

ENTRY: form a column and come on circling anticlockwise. Having danced around a semi-circle, the column goes up the middle of the set (towards audience). At the top the couples cast alternately to right and left and the first 2 couples meet at the bottom after 8 bars. The two groups of 3 couples are now circling in opposite directions and they pass at the bottom by the left- the first passing being in bar 9. They pass again at the top by the right. When they meet at the bottom again they pass through each other, the first pair going in front of the 2nd etc. Repeat at the top. Each move from top to bottom or back takes 8 bars, 16 steps. When the dancers reach the bottom again they turn inwards and come up to the top in lines of 2 couples. It may be necessary for the following pairs to hesitate a while waiting to turn up. The top two rows rotate backwards so that they form a horse shoe. The men then pass the right hand handle of the garland they are holding to the right hand of the women on their left so that the women are linked by the garlands. The man at the extreme left hand end of the line takes the 6th garland and leads the men away from behind the women.

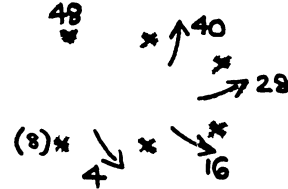
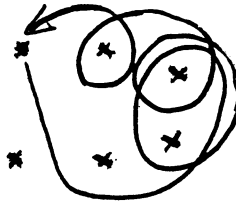
PART 2.

The women dance with a hopstep mostly, quite springy, foot lifted up not forward and all dancers well up on balls of feet. The horseshoe is almost a column with the bottom pair not too much out of line.

1.8 bars step on spot facing in. Start right foot.

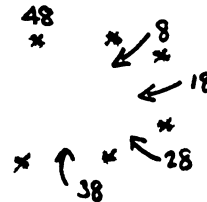
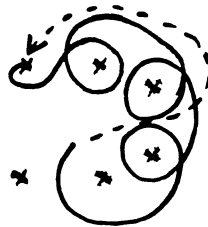


initial position



2.No.2 leads the line through each garland in turn along the path shown in the middle. No.2 passes between on the hopstep numbered on the right. The first is on the 4th and then each other is 12 hopsteps later, getting to own place at the end of 24 bars. No.1 does not move from the spot. All step until the dancer has been turned to face out away from the centre. These turns are anticlockwise. The turns take about 2/3 hopsteps. The exact timing is a little variable from performance to performance but match all those quoted to within  $\pm 4$  steps. The dancers have been turned out & stopped dancing as No.2 passes them in the next passing on what is then the dancers left. No.2 holds the side of her skirt in her right hand & No.1 in her left. When the dancers turn out they bring their knuckles together but do not cross the hands.

In this wound up Position No.2 has a little bit of stepping. Right foot forward & tap while hopping on the left and turn clockwise enough to pass under the garland, in one bar. Repeat with left foot and turn back anticlock.



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Provençal 2.

To unwind, no. 2 follows the path indicated going clockwise round each position. The size of the loops both winding and unwinding is dependent on the number of free dancers in the chain. Having passed between 1 & 3, 2 goes down the centre of the set and sweeps out back to place so that all the evens at least come in to place together.

3. Wind up 2 at a time. The top pair go down the centre and through the bottom garland between 5 & 6 and cast out following the path indicated to place. The other dancers turn out & face out and stop stepping as before. In the wound up position the ends, 1 & 2 step & turn each way as no. 2 did in the previous movement. The set unwinds in the inverse direction as indicated.



4. The dancers form a bower going round anticlockwise getting into place to raise the overlapping garlands on the 24th step.

No. 1 crosses set turning clock to face 3, who moves in a little, take 4 steps, & stop stepping after 6. No. 2 leads rest around



The dancers are in position on steps 1/3 - 4, 5 - 8, 6 - 14, 4 - 16, 2 - 20 and each stops dancing two steps later.

The men come forward and join hands to form a circle around the bower, 4 steps in, 16 hopsteps once around clockwise, and 4 steps out. At the end the women lower the bower.

No. 2 leads them out, turning the easy way. She faces in but the others are facing out, no. 2 having transferred her handle to her right hand in order to lead. It takes 36 steps to complete and each dancer turns out & follows as late as possible. No. 2 changes the garland handle back to the left on beat 36. No. 1 does not cross back but waits till turned and follows the others round. Nos 4, 6, 5 should start to turn at steps 4, 8, 12 but it takes much longer before 3 & 1 join in - at step 24 and after.

5. Form a Tunnel: The dancers line up in a column down the middle of the set.



6. EXIT: starting with no. 2 the dancers exit up under the arches, picking up other end of own garland as pass through. Each dancer goes up in turn separated by 2/3 hops. As each dancers emerges they are picked up by their male partner in the posture as at the start and dance off. The 6th man brings on the garland for the last woman.

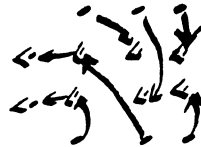
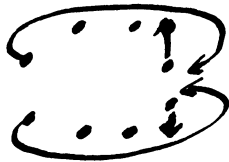
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## QUADRILLE GARLAND DANCES

Most "traditional" dances are firmly based on current or recent social dance of the time when they start. This is true of the 19th century NW morris, especially the garland dances, as at Bacup. One way of producing suitable dances "in the tradition" is to do what was done then and look for good ideas in contemporary material. As a suggestion the following is based on a traditional quadrille, known colloquially as the "Kitchen Lancers" and in particular the last figure known as the "Last of the Lancers".

Formation: Square, two dancers on each side. Step: lilted walk.

1. Grand Chain ; pairs face, pass around alternately right and left shoulders rocking garland to side as pass. Bow as in Once to Self when meet partner first time, then chain on to place and bow again.
2. First pair turn once round by right, knuckles touching, separate and round outside of set to other side. Opposite pair separate and stand at end of other pairs to let first pair come side by side up middle to place. End first pair facing out and other pairs falling in behind as indicated.



3. Step-up 4 steps forward and 4 back, twice, direction all facing.
4. All, still facing same way, slip step to side to change places with partner. One "step to side and close" to a bar. 4 slips across and 4 back, left hand file behind each time.
5. Single cast, left file to left etc and up middle a reasonable distance apart.
6. The two lines of four, turn to face, go forward and back then turn partner to original starting place.

Repeat from 1. with each pair in turn leading off 2. etc.

End dance with a final Grand Chain.

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"THE ROSE" - a Garland Dance for 12

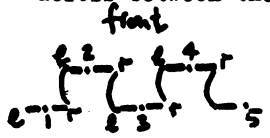
Dance seen at an Inter-College event in 1963 by a Northern team. Enquiry afterwards showed that it had been taught and led by two girls who had learnt it at college, aged 16-17, in Sunderland area a year or two earlier. They were not aware of the source of the dance and it had not been done for very long at the college. Member of staff involved had moved on. Girls were helpful on notation of what they did - they believed they had remembered it fairly accurately. Idea of garland dances thought to be new to the area.

Dance was performed by 12 but can be danced by 8, Numbered anticlockwise.  
 Music used was Scottish Marches - from records - such as Gay Gordons.  
 Garlands were rigid wooden horseshoe shapes bound with odd materials to give diameter and then spirally wound in red, white and blue.

**START** - girls came on in line with garlands between each dancer like longsword. Last dancer held own garland as well as one end of neighbour's. Went into a circle and stood still close together facing in during which time the last dancer linked properly with the first. Garlands overlap in the centre, each dancer crossing hands, right hand above left. Music started with a chord.

**"ROSE"** - For 8 beats (steps) circle to left, garlands kept in centre in tight bunch. Next 8 steps circling left, open out circle of dancers gradually, fanning out to a large circle, as big as possible as garland allow, letting garlands tilt outwards from centre a little beyond backs of bodies. 8 steps circling left like this and then 8 more closing the circle in and bringing garlands back to starting position. Repeat these 32 steps (16 bars) and movements to the right but end with the garlands vertical.  
 Circle left again to start position for next figure, then mark time while last dancer picks up all of garland again leaving a gap between first and last.

**"BRIDGE"** - No. 1 leads across the middle of the set and starts to build up the bridge. All dancers face same way but form two rows, odds behind evens, so that garlands go straight across between the rows. The garlands are not held with the arms out stretched but so that they form arches only shoulder width apart - bridge is rather short. This helps minimise the number lost under the bridge once they start to tunnel. All face towards the presence, and move sideways. When the bridge is fully formed, no. 1 goes down through the tunnel, pulling the others after her, odds will turn clockwise and evens anticlockwise to go under. At other end of the tunnel, the odds turn clockwise and evens anticlockwise to form bridge again. Under the bridge the dancers face away from the presence. The complete circuit was done twice : come out when no. 1 emerges at the top again from under the tunnel and all turn clockwise and lead off to form a circle again and circle once around to ready for next figure.



**"TUNNEL"** - No. 1 leads across the middle of the set, rest following in single file and no. 1 cast out, rest cast out alternate directions so that they are in two rows facing in with tail of line going underneath. One side has its hands crossed, the other not, but both sides keep their two hands close together so that garlands are seen to zig-zag over heads to form a tunnel. No. 1 leads up under the tunnel when she gets back to the bottom. Under the tunnel the dancers face the presence. The complete circuit was done twice : come out when no. 1 emerges at the end of the tunnel again and leads into a circle clockwise once around.

**"KNOT"** - The ends of the line, nos. 1 & 8 lead across the centre of the set, the rest following naturally and no longer circling, go under the opposite garland between 4 & 5, cast out opposite ways, no. 1 to right, no. 8 to left and lead around to starting place. The arch being gone under marches to the centre of the set and retires back to place during the movement. Repeat. Then start circling to left again.

**"FIRST TURNS"** - done as move round in a circle and starting with no. 1. Each dancer in turn takes 4 steps to turn round a circle clockwise, going under the right hand garland, picking up the left hand end of the garland when they are half way round. Now in circle each with an individual garland.

Form up into two lines of 4 facing, across the dance spot, parallel to bridge/tunnel line  
 1 & 8 at "top"

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"WHEELS" - lines of 4 go forward and back, going into line right shoulder to right shoulder with opposite, garlands in one line (4 bars) then half a right hand star half way round to opposite diagonal's place in the 4 (4 bars) Into line again from this other side, but left shoulder to left shoulder, and retire (4 bars) and left hand star back to place (4b)

"WINDOWS" - lines go forward so that opposites' garlands are together. The pair turn together clockwise for a  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn during which each dancer takes a good grip on the pair of garland handles in their right hand. The dancers then continue turning right going under the garlands and around the right hand ends - the garlands being kept in the same place in space - to end facing each other in two lines again but both garlands now across the set between them.

Take one of the ends in the right hand in the left hand and separate the two garlands rotating one so that it hangs down and the two garlands make a vertical circle between the dancers. For the convenience of the next movement it is probably wise to slope the circle so that the top is towards the top of the set and the bottom towards the bottom. While the rest mark time, moving slowly towards the bottom of the set, one place per cycle through, the bottom pair go up the middle through the hoops, 4 steps per hoop. Go through shoulder to shoulder with their garlands together and more or less horizontal in front of them. When at top reform a window while the new bottom pair is coming up. Repeat till back to starting position.

"ARCHES" - raise the lower garland till its top touches the top of the other, but keep the hands apart so that the two garlands make an inverted V. Top pair go down through the arches. They bring the garlands into a line up and down the set between them by moving the handles in the right hand to the right and reaching for the other end with their left hand. The Pair go through the arches sideways, and during this they recover their individual garland, at the bottom they cast out separately & move round to form a circle. Each pair in turn goes down under the remaining garlands ditto but the bottom pair just separate and retire into the ring. As the circle is formed the dancer face outwards and all start to circle to their left, clockwise.

"SECOND TURNS" - No. 8 turns half round clockwise and links with right hand of neighbour. Then no. 1 makes  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn clockwise to face in and links up with no. 2, leaving right hand handle with no. 8, who will for a while hold 3 ends, and taking the handle of no. 2's right hand and bringing the two hands together in front of the body. This turning, releasing and picking up goes in turn round the set till no. 7 picks up the handle in no. 8's left hand, and no. 8 transfers the other two handles to the front of her body. The dancers are now linked as at the start of the dance. During this the set continues to circle.

"BUSH" - let the "bush" in - someone who has a May Garland on a pole as the last person links up in the previous movement. All are now circling slowly around the bush with the garland handles together in front of each dancer. Slowly raise the garlands up around the bush, when high enough, all turn clockwise to face out bringing the garlands overhead and crossing arms. Lower garlands, and all facing out, back into middle into a tight bunch garlands in front of the dancers.

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