

SLEIGHTS SWORD DANCE

Collected and notated by Cecil Sharp  
Traditional morris dress for men - White shirts & trousers  
Baldrix\* - (crossed ribbons) & bells

Music: Record - Sword dance Suite - English Victor G-B 8808  
Piano - Sword dance of Northern England Bk. 2 - Novello Co.

Formation: - Six men in a line numbers 1 2 3 4 5 6.

Step - Light running step throughout the dance - begin R.

Figure 1: - All line up - swords in R hand against R. s. arms at the side.

No. 1 followed by other men move around to form a ring - points swords to to the center. - This is done before the music starts.

Chorus - The Clash - Moving around in a CW. circle - raise S points up - Clash swords with an upward wrist movement 8 times.  
(Never let the sword swing in back of the level of the arm.)

Shoulders & Elbows - Swords over R s. - take point of sword in front underneath with L hand 8 cts.  
Lift S over head to R s. " " "  
Lower S over L s to elbows 8 cts.  
All raise & pass S over heads - make a  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn cw. making rings as large as possible in hilt--point Pos. (handle is hilt) move around circle 8 cts.

Over your own sword. Each dancer with the help of the one on his L and R jumps over his own sword in 4 cts.

No. 1 brings L hand over his head with the help of dancer on L at the same time he lowers his sword " " " " " " R in 2 cts. with L ft. he jumps over lowers S. and returns to Pos.

Each dancer in turn does the same thing

Lock - All in hilt point formation moving around cw. cross R hand over L. Lock your hilt under the point at your L. hold lock between thumb and 3rd finger 2nd finger in center, moving around 8 cts. No. 1 raises the lock in his R hand high over head, 8 cts.

Rose - No. 1 lowers S to horizontal position - all take hilt of S on last measure lift swords to eye level and draw down out and over to point on floor in center.

At no time in this figure does one stop the CW. circle.

Figure 2.

Chorus - Clash, Shoulders, elbows, etc.

Double under - No. 1 & 6 raise swords between them--keep a flexed elbow.  
No. 3 & 4 opposite, place S in front of them at chest level and go under raised sword. No. 3 turns L. No. 4 turns R and lifts S over the heads of 1 & 6 as No. 2 & 5 follow -- 1 & 6 lower S in back of them following them back under the sword.  
(12 cts. phrase)

This movement is repeated by each sword in order CCW.

Nip-it-Lock - Raise both hands above heads - make a whole turn cw.  
Lower arms L over R. Close in, put hilt under point at the L.

Rose - As in Fig. 1

Figure 3.

NO MAN'S JIG

*part of slight sword*

Two Toms armed with Swords now join the dancers making 8 Dancers stand in two files as in a longways dance.  
Numbered as in a Morris dance 1357 - 2468.

Clash & Cast Off - Partners facing--wait 8 cts., clash 8 cts.  
Ends cast out followed by middles - 3 & 4 follow 1 & 2 circle to place, clash on last ct. 5 & 6 follow 7 & 8 circle to place.  
Middle - No. 3 & 4, 5 & 6 cast out followed by 1 & 2, 7 & 8 do same. Repeat Cast-off.

Roll - Partners face--take 4 ct. to take double swords.  
Take partners S point in L hand, link hands tog. L in R  
Have arms free to swing, taking 4 ct. for each turn  
Number in couples 1, 2, 3, & 4  
C. 2 raise S Roll over and up to 1st place  
C. 1 begin S between them, waist level Roll down under raised S of 2nd C. C. 1 rolls likewise with each C in order.  
As each C is out at the end of the set - Roll once away from set and come back in reverse order of roll--The roll continues until each C. is back in place. No one starts until No. 1 C. gets to them.

Take 4 ct. to get S in position and repeat Cast-off.

Use end of music to form a circle and all point S in center.

Figure 4.

Repeat Chorus - Over your Sword.

Back Lock - All in hilt point formation - all move fwd. and put S in back of person on R. With L hand take point of S on L, reaching over to get it. Bring arms over head and place hilt under point in front of him.

Rose - As in Fig. 1. As the 8 S lock is much heavier No. 1 man holds the lock high in both hands and circles CW once around then leads off. To break the lock he may throw the lock end over end back onto floor as last man leads off.

--presented by Elma McFarland