

TYROLESE DANCE

Circa 1828, from J. S. Pollock's *Companion to La Terpsichore Moderne*, c.1830

Reconstruction by Richard Powers

Background

This dance accompanied a popular fashion in London for Tyrolean music and dance, following the highly successful concerts by The Rainer Family, a family of five Alpine singers, beginning in 1827.



Formation

"The Party to be placed as in the Spanish Dance." In 1828, this could be either a duple or triple minor set, for the many permutations of Spanish Dance at the time, before it settled into the standard duple minor set by mid-century.

The Tyrolese Dance functions well in either formation, but the difference in the overall effect is extreme. In duple minor formation, it becomes a continual clockwork motion, with all dancers orbiting around each other in different ways when they're not setting.

Since this dance is Tyrolean, I believe that the clockwork version is the more probable choice. If you prefer a triple minor interpretation, that's also a valid possibility.

The top couple exchanges places and faces down the set.

It begins:

X O O O O O
O X X X X X

But after it gets going, it becomes:

X O X O X O
O X O X O X

The music is specified as Waltz. The setting could be a waltz-time balancé of any kind, perhaps a Pas de Basque. The traveling steps were probably traveling forward with a waltz step. Thomas Wilson's Pas de Bourée in his Slow Waltz (1816) traveled forward in 4th Position for each step, entirely in relevé (forward-forward-forward; rise-rise-rise). His German Waltzing stepped flat-rise-rise. John Payne's 1818 description of the waltz seemed to have a down-up-down motion, flat-rise-flat. Another traveling waltz step from this period was 4th position, 3rd, 4th, like a chassé step.

A) 8 bars

"First gent. set to second lady and swing quite round with right hand—then retaining the lady's hand, join the left hand to the third lady's left hand; at the same time first lady set to second gent and swing quite round with the left hand—then still keeping hold, join the **left** hand to the third gent's **left** hand."

Notes: There is clearly a typo with the first lady's hands, **red** type above, since her left hand is not free at the end of the swing. The next continuing part makes it clear that it should read, "then still keeping hold, join the **right** hand to the third gent's **right** hand."

My numbers of bars setting vs. traveling are simply based on how long the traveling takes. It's possible that a different number of bars setting/traveling can also work.

Reconstruction:

- Head couple sets to vis-a-vis for 2 bars, then swings by their inside hand (head gent's R and head lady's L) once-and-a-half, to progress on to the next vis-a-vis, 6 bars, giving other hand to their next vis-a-vis (the third lady and gent) at the end.

B) 8 bars

"In this position set, the first gent. swing the lady on his right with right hand, while the first lady swings the third gent. who is on her right with the right hand."

- Taking hands along the long lines, set for 4 bars (double balance), balancing to the new person, then the former one. Then everyone swings the person in their right hand a full turn for 4 bars, ending by keeping this hand, as the head couple offers each other L hands in the center (see below).

C) 8 bars

"first lady and gent. still keeping hold, join their left hands, which brings them into La Poule figure—the four then set, and each gent. swings the lady on his right with right hand."

- Set for 4 bars in this diagonal line-of-four, then everyone swings the person in their right hand a full turn for 4 bars.

D) 8 bars

"Pousette."

- The progression has already been achieved, in Part A, so the pousette should return to this current place. By 1828, the waltz and pousette had been interchangeable for a while, so either interpretation is possible. However after the right hand turn, the dancers are lined up for the older pousette, so I am inclined to believe this was the version done. Offer partner open two hands, and travel in a CCW path around the couple with whom you did La Poule, without rotating. End facing the same couple who you did La Poule and the pousette with, facing and down the line.

21 COMPANION to LA TERPSICHORE

TYROLESE DANCE.

—00—

The Party to be placed as in the Spanish Dance.

—00—

First gent. set to second lady and swing quite round with right hand—then retaining the lady's hand, join the left hand to the third lady's left hand; at the same time first lady set to second gent. and swing quite round with left hand—then still keeping hold, join the left hand to the third gent's. left hand. In this position set, and first gent. swing the lady on his right with right hand, while the first lady swings the third gent. who is on her right with right hand—first lady and gent. still keeping hold, join their left hands, which brings them into the La Poule figure—the four then set, and each gent. swings the lady on his right with right hand. Pousette.

This dance requires a four-part Waltz.

—00—

Thanks to Paul Cooper and my students in Kirov for contributing feedback to this reconstruction.