

## THE EVOLUTION OF THE SKATER'S SCHOTTISCHE

Richard Powers



### THE SKATERS (M. B. Gilbert, Round Dancing, 1890)

Take Skater's Position, lady on the right, facing LOD.

A) Both begin right foot. Glide right diagonally forward, close left to right, glide right diagonally forward, raise left foot forward with a small hop.

B) 4 step-hops traveling forward, possibly raising the free foot forward on the hops.

### THE GAIETY DANCE (Bournique's School of Dancing, Chicago, 1909)

This is identical to The Skaters except the hands may be crossed in front.

Variation: Dancers keep hands and change sides on the step-hops, swinging the lady across in front.

### THE OSTENDE (by Jacob Mahler, 1910)

Position: side-by-side with hands crossed in front.

A) Both begin right foot. Glide right diagonally forward, close left to right, glide right diagonally forward. No hop. Repeat opposite, left foot traveling diagonally forward.

B) Glide 4 steps forward, R, L, R, L (no hops).

C) Dropping hands and facing partner, step side right, close left to right, side right, close. At this point, the man is facing out of the circle and the woman is facing into the circle. Repeat opposite, back to place.

D) Turn partner by the right hand, walking forward 4 steps, turning a full turn in place "a la minuet."

Note: This is an *interpretation* of the written description. The description actually says to turn only "half round" on the final four walking steps, which may make the Ostende more like the Castle Schottische (next page).

## **THE CASTLE SCHOTTISCHE 1915**

Originally called **Schottische, as taught at the Castle School of Dancing.**

From Victor Records For Dancing, with dance descriptions by Vernon and Irene Castle, 1915.

Renamed **Castle Schottische** in Dancing Without A Master, Royal Publishing Company, c.1915.

Take Skater's Position, lady on the right, facing LOD.

Parts A) B) and C) are identical to the Ostende.

D) Turn partner by the right hand, walking forward only 3 steps to cross over into your partner's side, R-L-R. Touch L foot to floor without weight as the man turns halfway to his right to face LOD, taking Reverse Skater's Position, with the woman on the left side.

Repeat the dance with opposite footwork and in opposite diagonals, both beginning L foot.

Note: Beginning on the opposite foot is an *interpretation* of the written description. Once you have exchanged places with your partner, repeating a sequence dance on the opposite foot, in mirror-image to the first time through, is a common motif of sequence dances at this time. St. George's Waltz is a good example.

## **THE SALTY DOG RAG 1956**

When this popular song by Red Foley hit in 1954, American round dance groups and square dancers adapted the Ostende or the Castle Schottische to this tune.

The first version was simply the Ostende, but doing the first part twice, then the second part twice.

Then a second version added an inside spin to part C, giving a tug with the left hand to pivot to the left (CCW) during the left chassé, as your partner passed you by your right side. Then clap on the quick count 4 after the chassé, before turning round by the right hand.

Later, a variation substituted a heel-and-toe pattern danced in place, instead of the zig-zags of part A. This heel-and-toe pattern is danced alternately between the original version.