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AMERICAN SQUARES

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CHRIST CHURCH

Second above Market, Philadelphia

Very much to my family's annoyance, I didn't go home St. Valentine's day, but went instead to investigate the dance in the Parish House of Christ Church in Philadelphia. The group is new and they are hoping to hold dances every other Thursday.

Our first effort was a very simple little figure to Little Brown Jug. Couples in column formation, walk forward four steps, walk back four steps, slide sideways (you can only go to one side) two steps, chassez back, right elbow swing for four measures, left elbow swing for four measures, repeat until the record runs out. This set the pattern for the evening: very simple, very slow and, to me, very uninteresting.

We did the Old Southern Schottische which many of the local dancers have inquired about; so here it is:

Circle, ladies in center facing out and gents, of course, on the outside facing in. Join both hands. Gent's right foot, ladies left, tap heel to side for first measure, toe close to other foot for second measure, repeat, and glide four measures to gentleman's right. Note that you consume a whole measure for each tap. It makes the dance very slow. Now repeat the sequence with gent's left and lady's right and glide to that direction back to your starting place. Repeat the whole figure from beginning to date. Then an open waltz step counterclockwise, with the lady on the gent's left!

When we had accomplished that he set us a schottische pattern in place of the open waltz using a kick, or pause, in the place of the usual hop.

Something else new to me was Pop Goes the Weasel in this way: Longwise set: head couples chassez down the outside and back up center, circle three with the 2nd lady and pop her back to place, circle three with the 2nd gent and pop him back to place, so working down the set and the other couples following up as soon as there are dancers available to pop. The partners have to be much further apart than in a normal contra set.

I did not have a good time.

Maybe I had better explain that with three criticisms which may be of value to somebody.

1. The leader complained to me that the dancers were not enthusiastic. That is his fault. It's his job to interest the dancers and give them a good time.

He has as tools, dances which have interested and amused people down thru the ages. The tools are fine--it is up to him to use them properly. He must himself be enthusiastic and communicate his enthusiasm to his dancers rather than complain that they aren't interested.

2. I think his choice of beginners' dances is wrong. He has a lot of different ones, all easy, some foreign, some domestic but all with different patterns and different figures to remember. I prefer to teach squares first. Give them the framework of the allemande left, grand right and left, promenade and swing, and on that you can hang any of the many square dances. For each dance you teach a new figure, but you come back to the familiar pattern for the chorus. They get the framework and know how to square dance and feel that they know how to square dance. You are not met at each dance with the objection, "I don't know how to do that dance." You don't have to assure them each time, "Oh, come on. It's easy."

Then throw the round and couple dances in between sets, if you want to.

3. The few fast dances we did merely wore us out because the general tempo of the affair was slow.

Finally, our instructor did the darndest grand right and left I ever saw. If I wanted our dancers to do it, I'd call, "Allemande right, grand left and right!" We dislike the unfamiliar and I didn't like his figure. But let's get our dancing standard. His way or my way, I'm not particular, but let's all do the same all over the country. Then when I go visiting a strange dance, I'll be able to do the figures the others do, and his dancers coming to one of my dances will get along all right.

THE PAPER

If you were surprized to find two page 3s and two page 5s last issue, what do you think I was! I thought at first it was the mimeographers fault--and did I lay into him. I appologize--to him and to you.

Remember our standing offer to send a complimentary copy to anyone whose name and address reaches our office as an interested square dancer. Send in your friends' names. You'll be doing them and us a favor.

Next issue a note on writing your own calls.

THE CALLERS' CORNER

By C. D. Foster Author of 'Learn to Dance and Call Square Dances the Foster Way

I have talked about your duties, the don'ts and the do's and last month I talked about the music. This month I want to talk about the changes or figures themselves. According to the folklorists, they want to bring back the old time dance just as it was many years ago. The inclination of the younger set is to streamline and modernize the changes or calls to fit the jazz-jive age.

Personally, I think it is perfectly right and proper to change and suit your community or club, but what I am going to talk about is the real OLD TIME way.

Before me as I write, is a dance book printed in 1889. On the title page we find this: "A FULL AND COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF ALL MODERN DANCES". Under quadrille figures we find listed: The Basket Figure, The Star Figure, The March Figure, the Jig Figure, The Minuet Figure, The Cheat Figure and the Nine Pine Figure.

Under contra figures or dances we find: The Virginia Reel, Pop Goes the Weasel, Spanish Dance, The Scilian Circle. Then follows the round dances.

Now here is a partial list of what I have called for many years:

- |                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Across the Hall           | Divide the world                   |
| Arkansaw                  | Figure 8-2 coup. 4 Coup.           |
| Around that couple, swing | Forward 3 forward 6                |
| Around that couple, peek  | Girl I left behind me              |
| Bow and Swing             | Grapevine twist                    |
| Bunch the sage hens       | Lady around lady, Gent so-lo       |
| Birdie in the center      | Lady around lady, Gent around gent |
| Basket                    | Ladies to center back to the bar   |
| Cast off six              | Pop goes the weasel                |
| Chase the snake           | Running quadrille                  |
| Chase the squirrel        | Two little sisters                 |
| Circle three around       | Circle Twostep                     |
| Cheat or swing            | Right and left thru                |
| Captain Jinks             | Swing and take her along           |
| Dive for the oyster       | Virginia Reel                      |
| Do-Si the corner          | Waltz Promenade                    |

Back in 1899 when I returned from the Spanish American war, father gave a community dance in the CORN CRIB. I played a part of the time and called a part of the time. Every call we used then is in the above list. There are many others of course. We had two round dances, and then a square dance, all evening long.

As to the merits of the new changes, or the demerits, that will be left to our editor and he is competent to judge. I am talking about the REAL OLD TIME DANCE as it "used to was".

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| POSTPAID in this Column  |   |
| COWBOY DANCES, Lloyd Shaw. The best on the market, 76 dances complete with pictures diagrams and instructions \$ 4.00  | <u>For Sale</u> Add 10¢ wrapping & mailing for these HEEL AND TOE OR A DO-SI-DO, Grace H. Johnson. 10 mixers, 7 rounds, 5 contras, 7 square and 4 foreign. Rather elementary \$ .75   |
| DANCES OF OUR PIONEERS, Grace L. Ryan. Second choice, some 61 figures plus 12 contras, 4 circle and 8 couple dances; and the price is reasonable \$2.00  | THE AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE, Margot Mayo 111 pages of figures, calls dances and instructions. Our worst number--don't ask me why. \$ .50  |
| FOLK DANCING IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE Grace I. Fox. A good collection if it does mention institutions of learning, 7 squares and 17 foreign dances well explained and illustrated \$2.50         | WESTERN SQUARE DANCES, Ralph McNair. Reviewed this issue. \$1.00  |
| THE SINGING CALLER, Ann Hastings Chase. Fifteen dances too well explained and charted. \$1.50  | SWING YOUR LADIES, Edith M. Gates. How to start and run a square dance course and to overcome incidental problems. No dances described. \$ .35  |
| LEARN TO DANCE AND CALL SQUARE DANCES THE FOSTER WAY, C. D. Foster. Our fastest selling number of 25 dances each on a separate card for ease in handling, also varsouvienne and schottische \$1.00 | If you purchase any of those listed in this column at the same time as those listed in the other column, you need not add the 10¢ packing and mailing charge as the other book will prepay it. We shall be glad to answer any inquiries or obtain any book for you. |

This month we add a new money-making service. Have you needed a cut for your square dance posters and been unable to find one? That was my trouble. So Jean Wright drew a picture of a couple square-dancing. We had a cut made and mats made from the cut. These mats are for sale at 60¢ each. The cut is approximately 6"x4" and suitable for posters from 9"x12" to 14"x22". In case you don't want to buy a pig in a polk, drop us a card and we'll mail you a print from the cut so you can see what you're getting.

For Those Interested in Square Dancing C. D. Foster's LEARN TO DANCE AND CALL SQUARE DANCES \$1.00	For Those Interested in the Ozarks Otto Rayburn's OZARK GUIDE \$1.00 per year	Lonsdale, Ark.
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## ADVENTURES IN MY SEARCH FOR THE SWINGYEST DANCE

by Ye Editor

Charlie Valentine wrote me that a friend of his knew a dance in which each person swung 96 times. Since there are four couples this would result in a total of 384 swings. I replied that the swingyest dance of my collection was The Indian Circle:

First couple bow, first couple swing

Lead to the right, to the right of the ring

Circle four in an indian way (just an ordinary way)

Hold your holds and rechassez (circle right)

(Promenade single file, lady in the lead, indian style (still to right)

\*(Turn right back and swing her a while (gents swing the gal behind)

\* Repeat

Now two, and four, and six hands play

Hold your holds and rechassez

\* Repeat this call for three times in all

Now two, four, six and eight hands play

Hold your holds and rechassez

\* Now this call four times

Allemande left, grand right and left. Then the other couples.

Now there is one swing when the couple starts out, there are four in the four handed circle, nine in the six-handed and sixteen in the eight handed. That makes a total of thirty. If four couples do it, that would make 120. If we throw in a swing in the introduction that makes 124 and if, for variety, we have a swing her when you meet her in each chorus, that would be 16 more or a total of 140. Sorry, Charley, we're still shy 244. This dance is from Lloyd Shaw's "Cowboy Dances".

On his next letter, r. Valentine explained that the name of the dance was Sally Goodwin. The swingyest Sally Goodwin in my notebook is from the Arkansas Woodchopper:

First couple balance and swing

First gent to the right and swing Sallie Goodwin

Right back home and swing your taw (your own)

Now the corner from Arkansaw

Where the bullfrog married his mother-in-law

Right back home and swing your taw

Now swing grandmaw across the hall

You ain't swung her since way last fall

Back home now and swing your taw

Docey your partners all; Docey your left

Swing your own with another whirl

All promenade with the left-hand girl. Now two couples balance and swing

That's own 1, right, 2, own 3, corner 4, own 5, opposite 6, own 7, all swing corners 11. Second couple would be 18; three couples 25, four 32, total 86.

I put the problem to Doug Durant, our reviewer, and he suggested Swing Your Opposite All Alone:

First couple bow, first couple swing

Lead right out to the right of the ring

Swing your opposite all alone

Now the one that you call your own

Now your opposite, don't be afraid

Now your own and half promenade. On to the next. Then other couples.

This is eight for each visit, three visits and a balance and swing intro equals 25. Four couples makes an even 100. Upon totaling them up, Doug was surprized at the low figure and stated that Lynette Russell of Long Lake sometimes called it three times, swing your opposite, your own, your opposite, your own, your opposite (where am I, oh, yes,) your own and half promenade. That makes 12 each visit, 37 each couple, total without trimmings 148. We're getting there, Charlie. My version also from Shaw.

Then Joe Wieger, a Philadelphia draftsman, called Step Right Back in what was a new way to me:

All four gents to the right and swing

Step right back and watch her smile

Step right up and swing her awhile

Step right back and watch her grin

Step right up and swing her agin

Now back home and swing your own

Step right back and hear her laugh

Step right up, swing her once and a half

Step right back and hear her roar

Step right up and swing her some more

Swing your corner lady and promenade your corner. Four times.

When I finished that one I was ready to guarantee it was the swingyest dance invented. However, upon calculation it appeared that the impression stemmed from the fact that I had had no rest. Counting each step up separately so that you swing the same gal three times in succession, we have 12 for right hand gal, 12 for own, 4 for the corner, equals 28, times four equals 112.

Do you know any swingy dances? We're still short of Charlie's 384--if such a

number is possible.

P.S. I think we've found the one Charlie was talking about. Jack Powelson, fellowship student at Harvard, called it on his most recent visit to U. of P. It's called Forty-Eight Swings. Without the patter, which I can't remember, it ran like this: First gent to the right and swing; Back home and swing; To the right again and swing; Now swing your opposite; Now your right hand lady; Now your own; Swing your right hand lady; Now the dame across the hall; Now your corner; Now your opposite; Now the gal on the right; Now your own. After the chorus, two gents lead to the right. There are 12 swings the first time round, 24 the second, 36 the third and with all the gents making the rounds there are 48. The first gent swings 48 times. Total number of swings without introductions and choruses, 120. Where have I heard that number before?

P.P.S. Joe Raben, U. of P. student, called Ring Ring the other night, for which I refer you to Western Square Dances, reviewed this issue, which gives the same number of swings with the same order as the Indian Circle, except that one circles instead of promenading and swings one's corner instead of the gal behind you. (Correction: McNair in Western Square Dances has a turn instead of the swing Joe called but otherwise the dance is the same.)

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RECORDS

Rod LaFarge in the last issue of ROSIN THE BOW, recommended several records, and armed with his list I visited eleven stores in Philadelphia and located two out of a total of about fifty. However, I learned one thing from his list: a slow polka will make a good record for square dancing.

All the records I review, I have purchased recently. That might mean that they are available. Some aren't. I have learned that the proper way to go after these out-of-print records, particularly the blue seal Deccas, of which there are many fine recordings, is to visit small out-of-the-way shops; the kind that have ads pasted all over the windows and records stacked all over the floor. In two such shops in Camden, I found four more recommended by Rod and two I had been looking for.

BLUEBIRD B-7691 New Steel Guitar Rag. I suspect this wasn't recorded for square dancing, but it is adequate if the guitar does sound Hawaiian. Bill Boyd and his Cowboy Ramblers. Jig. Starts off with an undancable violin solo. Too fast  
 DECCA 3096 Le Secret. A fast schottische. Phehal Brothers, harmonica duet, guitar and bass. The arrangement is swell. Oh Dem Golden Slippers and Down Home Rag. Phehal Brothers. Fine. It would have been the answer to my prayer if it had contained only the first song.

4161 Our Mike. Taking a leaf from Rod LaFarge, I can recommend this polka for square dancing. We did Step Right Up to it last night with great success. The only objection is advantage of a string orchestra over a band for square dancing as pointed out by C. D. Foster last month. "Whoopce" John Wilfahrt and his band. Lingenberry Schottische. Good.

3820 Cherry Picker's Polka. Rod recommends this for square dancing, but it is too fast for my money. Phehal Brothers. Jenny Lind Polka. Good.

FORD 112 Black Cat Quadrille Part I. Spoiled by the spoken announcement before it starts. Ford's usual recording: good but slow. Black Cat Quadrille Part II. Ditto. A little faster.

118 Firemen's Dance. A fine recording of the traditional music without calls. Aside from the fire bells, this might be used for squares. Money Musk Ditto. The music is fast and without much emphasis on the beat.

GENNETT 7011 I am informed that the same record is sometimes put out with a BELTONA or JOE DAVIS label, but always with the same number. Hog Trough Reel. Rod lists this as without calls. The record says it has calls. Actually the calls are so low you can't understand them. The first time I heard the record I thought some one was talking to me from outside the booth. The music itself is good. Clayton Leditchen and His Georgia Wildcats. Arkansaw Traveller. These calls are audible but they are all bunched together like the chorus of a song. Some whoops and shouts interspersed thru the music. It's a shame to ruin good fiddlin' that way. In print.

PIED PIPER These are only six inch records and will last for but one change, and it's tiresome to keep continually setting back the arm. However I have used them to call the squares together.

8 Turkey in the Straw. Swell. Accordeon well handled. It's a shame it's so small. Arkansaw Traveller. Too slow

9 Conin' thru the Rye and Old Folks at Home carries tap dancing thruout.

12 Camptown Races. Goes into Oh Susanna. Good. The Minuet. Don't know anything about minuetting.

I can't close this section on records without mentioning that there is something wrong with the turntable of my recorder so that it turns slower when it is cutting than it should. I have been rerecording the slow arrangements in my collection. I am wonderfully pleased with my speeding up of Victor 20638, Quadrille, Figure I.

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 The National Folk Festival will be held Gene Gowing's FOLKWAYS will be on Columbia Broadcasting's Vox Pop some Mondays. More news later. Watch your papers.

ORIGINAL DANCE CONTEST

Atchison, Topeka and the Sante Fe  
by Charles Thomas, Woodbury, N.J.

Entries in this contest should be on 8 1/2"x11" white paper without the name of the author, enclosed covering letter. The prize is your choice of a year's subscription or Foster's "Calling Cards". Editors reserve the right to enter their own dances. The contesting dances were chosen this month by Joe Summerill, of Woodbury, aided by his secretary, Sally Fagan of Collingswood, N. J. The winner was voted better by Denim & Calico, 24 to 24 and at the Camden Y by 19 to 13.

ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE TO THE LEFT  
\* \* \* (Quiet for four measures) \* \* \* \*  
AND THE OTHER WAY BACK YOU'RE GOING WRONG  
THE OTHER WAY BACK WHILE I SING THIS SONG  
THE LADIES LEAD TO THE CENTER OF THE RING  
AND CIRCLE THERE WITH A FOUR HAND SWING

*a good figure  
but poor music*

Four ladies circle in the center once around  
THE GENTS WEAIVE ROUND, DON'T BE PERPLEXED  
Each gent goes behind his own girl, in front of the right hand lady, behind his opposite and in front of the corner. This brings him back of his own girl again and he goes behind to

PASS THAT GIRL AND YOU SWING THE NEXT  
SWING THAT GIRL, WOOO-O-O-O WOOO-O-O WOOO-O-O-O  
SWING HER OUT AND SWING HER IN

This is the "step right back and watch her smile" figure  
SWING THAT GIRL, WOOO-O-O-O WOOO-O-O WOOO-O-O-O  
AND YOU SWING HER OUT AND SWING HER AGIN

Same as before  
THEN YOU ALLEMANDE LEFT ON THE CORNERS ALL  
AND PROMENADE ALL AROUND THE HALL  
PROMENADE ALL AROUND THE TOWN  
WITH THE RIGHT FOOT UP AND THE LEFT FOOT DOWN

Repeat the whole, including circle left, until they have their own partners back again. Since the music is copywrited, we don't include it--purchase it at a music store. But you'll have to take out two measures interlude between the phases of music, you'll find them when you play it over. And the music must be slower than when played for jitterbugging because the square dancer must take a whole step where the jitterbug takes only a half step.

WHERE TO DANCE

The following have been received since the last issue.

CORRECTION!  
Princeton, N. J. Tuesday, not Thursday,  
Elementary School, Nassau St.

Washington, D.C. Folkways, Howard University  
Odd Mondays, Gene Gowing  
Universalest Church, 16th & S St., Odd  
Tuesdays, Gene Gowing  
Baltimore, Md. First Unitarian Church,  
Odd Wednesdays, Gene Gowing  
Montclair, N. J., Unity Church, Even Wed-  
nesdays, Gene Gowing  
Short Hills, N. J. Raquette Club, Even  
Saturdays (May be odd, the list isn't  
clear) Gene Gowing.

NEW  
Horseheads, N. Y., Red Barn. Saturday  
nights. Woodhull's Old Time Masters.  
N.Y.C. Internat'l Center, Y.W.C.A., 341  
E. 17th St., Mondays, 7 to 9, as follows:  
Mar. 4 & 11, South American dances  
Mar. 18 & 25, Caucasian; April 1, 8,  
Mexican; April 15 & 22, Philippino.  
N.Y.C. Folkways, 49 E. 25th St. Fridays,  
Gene Gowing.

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The following to the tune of Hot Time in  
the Old Town Tonight from Corcb Echols  
of Chicago, Ill.

CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN

Ray Bruyn, R. F. D. #1, Middleton, N. Y.  
would like some letters from square dan-  
cers and promises to answer them. If you  
would like your name and address published  
in this column, drop us a line.

Left Allemande on the corner you will go  
Grand right and left around the outside row  
Meet your partner and promenade her home  
There'll be a hot time in the old town to-nite.  
All four ladies to the center of the ring  
All four gents promeande the outside ring  
Pass your partner and on the next one swing  
There'll be a hot tire in the old town to-nite.

\*\*\*\*\*  
V. J. Tiger of Bernardsville, N. J.  
writes that unfortunately he cannot be  
content with the string band suggested by  
C. D. Foster in his last month's column.  
His band has to play for squares and  
rounds too. He uses piano, drums, alto  
sax and violin. He finds this combina-  
tion the best for the combined uses, but  
would like to know if any one else has  
found a different or better combination  
for a band playing for both squares and  
rounds. Let us know.

Repeat three more times, then have the men  
in the center of the ring and the ladies  
promenade outside. Four times and home.  
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We want to thank the Reflector and the  
Tennessee Folk Lore Society Bulletin for  
mentioning us to their readers.

And in response to a request of mine, Rod  
LaFarge sent me Beaux of Albany, a contra.  
All couples (active and inactive) down  
the center and back. Actives cast off  
around the inactives and with the same  
couple a right hand star, left hand back,  
right and left across and right and  
left back again.

This is it--the best book of square dances that I have seen so far. One hundred and twenty pages of dances, illustrations and information. There are thirty dances written in the sequence of their ease in mastering. Not only are the dances set down but there are instructions and suggestions for their performance. Pardon me if I seem to get over-enthusiastic, but after last month's work this book is beyond all compare. Here is an idea of some of the offerings: "Old Arkansas," "Four Gents Out," "Swap and Swing," "Little Old Log Cabin" and "Box the Gnat." The book is profusely illustrated and diagrammed by Jack Fitz-Hugh. One clever idea that the author uses to aid in the instruction is to give each couple regular names. He calls them Andy and Amy, Bill and Bess, Cal and Cora and Dan and Dot, instead of referring to them as first gent and third lady or B gent and C lady. Note to ladies: Please don't resent my mentioning the gent first, remember that most of the calls are directed to the gents first! Besides the dances he gives tips on and about the calls, the caller, the music, the hall and even the dress. After talking about what to wear he adds:

"Lady don your cotton print,  
"Gent take off your collar,  
"You're goin' to a square dance,  
"Where good clothes cannot foller."

He gives one very welcome tip to those of us who have to dance on slippery floors. "The dancers can either put paraffin (candle wax) shavings on the floor in small amounts, or the soles of the shoes can be rubbed with paraffin." I'm sure that this will prevent many a headache! This is one book that I heartily endorse and recommend, in fact, I liked it so much that I bought a copy myself.

Doug Durant, Jr.

AMERICAN SQUARES, I, 7  
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