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AMERICAN SQUARES

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FRANKLIN GRANGE, Wyckoff, N. J.

My greatest worry about our trip to Wyckoff to dance in Ed LaFarge's square dance contest, was the North Jersey allemande left. This is done by giving left elbow to your corner for an elbow swing. According to Rod, "Nothing can stop them short of six or seven revolutions." This is an exaggeration. I found most content with two, and if you had as a corner someone who thought you knew more about square dancing than she did, you could get off with a regular allemande left. I might add that the North Jersey variation is fun. Try it sometime, I use it once in a while, but, at my request, call it a "left elbow swing with your corner" instead of an "allemande left."

My half of our contest square arrived about an hour early and we put it in to Woodhull and Durlocher via records, and you know, they were the same as we'd done in South Jersey!

We did Ladies to the Center, Back to Back to the tune of Turkey in the Straw for the contest dance. There were no judges, but each contestant received a card on which he marked which of the other squares he believed finished first, second and third. Rod said that this method was adopted because so many complained about prejudiced judged, and it had solved the problem. However, I heard my square busily rating down what they believed to be our strongest competition and consequently the square which I had placed third wound up with the cup.

There were eight contesting squares. I'm not going to tell you where we wound up. Suffice to say, it was not far enough up to be proud and not far enough back to be ashamed.

Rod called for all the contest squares. He seemed to like it. He bounced up and down in time with the music and he had loosened the slide on the microphone stand so that he could run that up and down too--like a trombone. It amused us, but, as I say, he seemed to like it.

After the contest we did Lubity-Lou. (If I had the inventor handy, I'd hang, draw and quarter him.)

Then we did the Jackson White version of the Chimes of Dunkirk. One of our square had just taught the real thing and stalked off the floor in indignation at the corruption. However, the pineys are Americans too, so we present this Americanized Chimes. One big circle, cents inside facing out, ladies vice-versa. In time, clap, clap, clap, stamp, stamp, stamp, dos-a-dos your partner, bow, and swing,

then on to the next on the left. (I wish somebody would teach those North Jersey women the buzz-step swing. It's no fun swinging them off the floor, tho that's what happens when they use that run-around sing.)

We did a couple of interesting dances which you'll find in Rod's new book, reviewed in this issue. (All copyrighted and used by special permission of the copyright owner.)

One to the Old Apple Tree, you know the tune, it reminds me of my pappy, he was handsome, young and happy, but they hung him from it. "Oh, the first couple out and you circle; circle four round the old apple tree. Form a star with your right hand and back with your left hand and you swing by the old apple tree." We used to have a swing by our apple tree too.

The one I enjoyed most was Roll the Barrel. Rod states the tune as Lucy Darling. I don't know. The last time I heard it was at Fort Dix with words not repeatable in mixed company. At any rate I append the music too (page 2). "First couple out and circle four, you circle four hands round. Roll that barrel under, roll it on the ground. Now roll it back the way you came, pull that couple thru; sashay-circle to the left and I'll tell you what to do. Swing your little Lucy, Swing her good and strong, what-a-yuh-gonna-do for your swingin' when Lucy's dead and gone." To roll the barrel, you do a double dishrag. Keep hold of hands for the whole figure, visiting couple ducks under the arms of the host couple then turns back, gent counter-clockwise and lady clockwise, and pull the host couple under their arms.

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THE PAPER

It seems a long time since I've mentioned the principal on which AMERICAN SQUARES was founded. It's your paper. Suggestions and criticisms are now only welcome but requested. Also, if you have a dance you'd like to share with others, please send it in.

And remember we have a standing offer to send a complimentary copy to any one whose name reaches us as being interested in square dancing. Drop us a line including your friends' (and enemys') names and addresses. If they don't like it, we will.

Gene Gowing has promised us an article on Longways dances. We hope to have it in time for the next issue.

Our Editor has asked me to give you an explanation of the call Two Little Sisters. This is one of the best liked figures here in the West. Let us see what you think of it. Remember, always, that I give you *MY WAY*. That does not necessarily mean that it is the best, or the original way, so you have the liberty to make any changes you want to if you use it so therefore there can be no argument.

Here we go. Any good old square dance tune--Turkey in the Straw, Old Zip Coon, Soldiers Joy, Buffalo Gals, Mississippi Sawyer, etc.

Preliminary or get-acquainted beginning:  
Suit yourself.

- First couple balance and swing
- Two little sisters form a ring
- Now you balance, now you swing
- And two little sisters form a ring
- Now you balance and now you swing
- And three little sisters form a ring
- Now you balance and now your swing
- And four little sisters form a ring
- Now you balance and now you swing
- And four little boys form a ring
- Now you balance and now you swing
- And allemande left around the ring.
- Promenade.

Now the second, then the third and then the fourth couples

All right--the explanation:

Two little sisters form a ring: First and second lady join both hands and circle clockwise, that is to the left, until they get in front of their partner. They balance and swing their partners.

Three little sisters form a ring: First, second and third lady form a circle and circle to the left until they come to their partner, face the partner, balance and swing.

Four little sisters form a ring: All four ladies circle as before, and balance and swing partners always keeping their home position.

Four little boys form a ring: This is the same as four little girls or sisters form, the gents stop in front of their partners and balance and swing and then the allemande left, grand right and left and promenade.

Next month, unless yet Editor asks for something different, I will give you another one we have to call every time we have a dance. We call it Divide the World and a Corner Swing and Promenade the Corner.

LUCY LONG the tune for ROLL THE BARREL



After resisting the temptation to name this new department "Interrogations and Responses", I decided that since I was setting myself up as one I should call it

### The Oracle

I'm a singing caller and interested also in what you have to offer in literature namely singing calls and songs that accompany them. Joseph Bart, Schenectady

THE SINGING CALLER by Ann Hastings Chase is the only book of which I know that has words and music. It is rather elementary. SWINGO by Rod LaFarge reviewed in this issue is advanced but has no music. We can sell you these. SQUARE DANCE CALLS by Arkansas Woodchopper, ... Cole Publishing Co. and ALL-AMERICAN SQUARE DANCES by Al Muller, Paull-Pioneer Music Corp. can be ordered thru your music dealer.

I would like to know if there is any place where I can get old time dance phonograph records outside of Ford, Victor, Decca, Columbia or Scandinavian companies? Edward Best, Spokane, Wash.

The Gonnert Record Division of The Star Piano Co., Inc., Richmond, Ind. puts out Gonnert and Joe Davis records, some of which we have reviewed. Also there are four International Record disks which are good. And don't forget the Ashe album by

Asch Records of New York. Where can I get the music for the Varsouviennne that goes "Put your little NYfoot, etc."? Several readers.

This is the Hungarian Varsouviennne. You can find it in Henry Ford's GOOD MORNING which we do not sell but can be obtained for 50¢ from Henry Ford, Department R, Box 100, Dearborn, Mich. It also appears on Ford record No. 103-A.

What books would you recommend on foreign dances? Peter Patrick, Phila. Pa. That is an embarrassing question to ask the editor of AMERICAN SQUARES. The only one we handle is FOLK DANCING IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE by Grace I Fox, and you don't get many dances for your money. Try Elizabeth Burchenal's series. It is in many libraries and book stores.

Designing a dance is a form of art to which not enough attention has been paid. As an art, it requires an artist's touch, which we have to varying degrees. Only principles can be taught. Perhaps those I have evolved will help someone.

According to my classification, there are three types of calling: prompting, calling and singing. There are three types of dances related to the different types of calling, and, consequently, three ways of constructing a dance.

For a called dance, I start with a figure. I may borrow a figure from a foreign dance as I did for my waltz quadrille. I may even borrow the whole dance as when I adapted the Danish Little Man in a Fix for a square.

I may borrow a figure from an already successful square. Do people like Life on the Ocean Wave? What portion of it do they like best? I decided it was the balance four in line--two steps forward, two back and forward, around and build up the line again. Using a circle of eight instead of a line of four I designed Balance In and Balance Out, one of my more successful dances, see October, 1945 issue. Again, the Mill Wheel was a concentric dance with all four gents wheeling in the center until I took the wheel formation for a visiting figure and built my version on it.

Or I may run over the different formations and decide that there are not enough of a particular type. I decided that there were so few dances using the three in line formation (Duck and Dive) that there must be plenty of room for more. I wrestled with it for two days and came up with a new figure from that formation which I used for a dance.

Having the figure in mind, the next problem is the simple one of following it in my mind's eye. Asking myself, "What should they do next?" results in embellishing the original figure into a recognizable dance. I garnish to taste with doseydoes and allemande lefts until it is long enough. And there I am!

Go over the thing carefully in your mind several times. Which hand are the dancers using? Which way are they turning? Which side of the gent will the lady end up on? Are there any quirks which are simple enough when planning the dance which must be explained before dancers can do it? (The Mill Wheel was full of them.)

Keep it simple! My first creations took hours to work out in my head after I had the original figure and were so complicated that our exhibition group could not dance them. There are still plenty of simple figures which haven't been used yet. The figure in Foster's column this month is simple, but I had neither heard of it nor invented it before I cut the stencil.

For a called dance, do not worry about the timing. Many a dance has given much enjoyment without having been fitted to the exact beat of music. If it is any good, you can fit it to music later, or

let someone else do it.

For a sung dance, my method is first to find a tune that is catchy and danceable. Then I just start singing to it almost any figures that come into my head and throwing in a lot of swings. Most sung calls are simple figures. Soon I build up a dance. The necessity for keeping the timing right ~~sides~~ is in staying simple. Thus was born this month's winner, Where Do We Go from Here. Last month's Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe came the same way, except that I had the good luck to have a new figure sing itself into my brain thus combining the better features of both types of creations.

For a called dance, your main problem is a new figure to build the dance around. For a sung dance, the main problem is timing. When you have worked with timing long enough, you will learn how long various simple figures take. Most of them, turns, dos-a-doses, etc. will take four measures, one line of poetry. A balance used to take two and a swing two and they fitted together. The newer practice is to swing as long as you want or until the dancers get tired. Note Red Wing and Parley-Vous from Durlacher's Decca set of records. An allemande left, grand right and left, promenade combination takes sixteen measures. I believe the theory for a promenade all around is sixteen, four to each quarter of the square. However, it can be hurried to eight and I usually calculate on twelve.

If you decide to construct a prompted dance, my sympathies are with you. You are a glutton for punishment, or perhaps you are a perfectionist. You first invent your figure. You then time it--very difficult to do in one's head. You must shorten or lengthen it until it comes to fit the chosen music. My hat is off to the people who undertake this type. The only problem they do not run into is rhyming the calls.

Writing the calls explaining what the dancers are doing is next. You may have to invent new terms. Rhyming is another angle. Constructing calls is a complete problem in itself. The article this month was supposed to be on that, but the essay I had planned to include was much too long. Here I only say, "Stay lucid."

The last problem with any new dance is to get people to try it. I always feel a bit diffident about trying my own creations; it seems egotistical; perhaps they won't like it. However, I have solved this problem for you. Just send it in to our original dance contest. The result will let you know whether it's any good or not. (This whole article was not a plug for the contest.)

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Answering V. J. Tiger's question of one month ago about what combination is best for both square and modern music, Calvin Moore of Fort Worth, Texas, suggests piano (chords on squares and alternates on melody in rounds) standard guitar, electric steel guitar (melody for rounds) fiddle, bass fiddle and banjo.

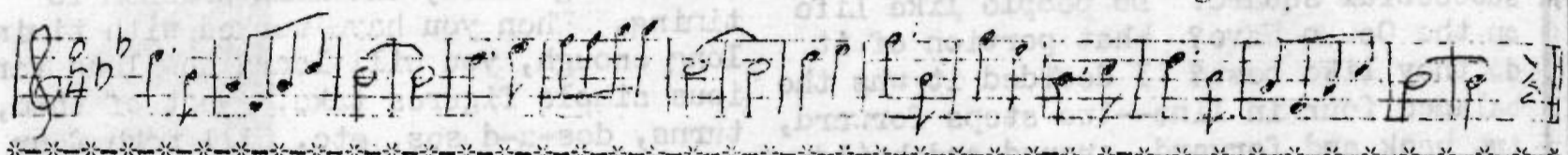
TRUE AND CARELESS LOVE

Coreb Echols of Chicago, Ill. sent this one in. You can tell that I didn't write the music because it has two flats.

Left hand to your corners all  
Grant chain half way round the hall  
Meet your partner and promenade home  
And swing your true and careless love.

First gent lead out to the right  
Swing that girl with all your might  
Then go home and swing your own  
Oh, swing your true and careless love.  
Then you lead across the floor  
Swing that girl we all adore  
Then go home and swing your own  
Oh, swing your true and careless love.  
Then you lead out to the left  
Swing that girl we love the best  
Now go home and swing your own.  
Oh, swing your true and careless love.

Repeat the introduction for the chorus and then lead the other gents out.



DO DA DEY

Russell W. Colvin of North Bennington, Vt. sent this one in and kindly explained it when I proved a bit dense. The music is Foster's Caintown Races.

Eight hands around we go, way way around we go,  
The other way, you started wrong, the other way you want to go.  
First lady up with the right hand around, right hand around,  
right hand around  
Back to your partner with the left hand around  
Swing 'em in the center with the six hands around  
Right and left your corners all, corners all, corners all<sup>1</sup>  
Right and left the other way, do da, do da dey<sup>2</sup>  
Balance to your opposite, sides too the same.  
Swing your partner once and a half and all promenade.  
(Second lady repeats, then:)  
Do so do your corners all, corners all, partners all,  
Allerande left your corners all  
Right hand to your partners all  
Grand right and left the hall, way, way round we go,  
When you meet the other way, the other way you want to go.  
(Play one phrase of music without the call)  
Swing your partners everyone, swing her high, swing her low  
Swing her all around the hall  
Promenade her once around, once way around to go  
Way, way around we go.

(Third and fourth ladies do the figure and follow with the chorus.)

1. Here's where I got stuck. First and second couple right and left and third and fourth right and left. 2. First and fourth couples right and left and second and third do the same.

Concerning my account for my search for the swingyest dance in the last issue, Rod LaFarge writes that "Pistol Packin' Mama has 128 swings, but it's hard to find a set to last them out." Unfortunately, while I have done Pistol Packin' Mama, I don't remember how it goes. Perhaps some one will send it in.

In the meantime Charlie Valentine has discovered the dance with 384 swings which started the whole business anyhow:

First gent out to the right  
and swing that girl with all your might  
Right back home and swing your own  
You swing your Sally Goodwin  
Same gent out to the lady cross the hall  
Spin her around in a great big whirl  
Right back home to your own little girl  
and swing your Sally Goodwin.  
Lead right on to the lady on your left  
and swing that girl round and round  
Right back home and swing your own  
Swing your Sally Goodwin

All four gents to the left of the ring  
and give that left-hand girl a swing  
Swing that little girl around  
and promenade her round the town  
When you get home you swing your own.  
Now two gents lead to the right, then  
three, then four. Then allerande left,  
grand right and left all the way round  
and swing when you get home. That is one  
quarter of the dance. Now start the  
gents with the second gent. The whole  
dance, Charley says, takes 17 minutes.

On 17 April, Dave Hahn is holding a Folk Costume Night at Arlington Hall, 19 St. Marks Pl, Manhattan, a four hour session from 7:30 to 11:30. Three hours of folk dancing from many lands plus demonstrations.

11 May 1946 Lauretta Cannan is holding a dance contest at the Woodbury Country Club. Entries to her at 122 No. Broad St., Woodbury, N. J.

ORIGINAL DANCE CONTEST

Where Do We Go From Here?  
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. Enclose covering letter. The prize is your choice of a year's subscription or Foster's "Callin' Cards". Editors reserve the right to enter their own dances. The contesting dances were chosen this month by Rod LaFarge, of Haledon, N. J., aided by his groups: the Ramapo Rangers, Wyckoff Grangers and his YICA group. The winner was voted better by Denim & Calico, 21 to 21 and at the Camden Y by 20 to 15.

All join hands and circle to the left around the square  
The other way back, you're going wrong, until you all get there  
And now you swing that corner girl you swing her far and near  
And now go home and swing your own, and WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE<sup>1</sup>?

First couple<sup>2</sup> lead to the right and turn with the right hand round<sup>3</sup>  
Now turn your partner with the left, just yank her off the ground  
And now you swing that opposite miss, you swing that little dear  
And now go home and swing your own, and WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?  
(Repeat for each couple)

Now allemande left on the corners and grand right and left around  
Give your hands and pass 'em by, till every one you've found  
And when you meet that little miss, you promenade your dear  
Promenade her round to home, and WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?  
(or)

Allemande left on the corners and then you promenade  
Promenade around the hall and try to make the grade  
And when you get her home again you swing that little dear  
And it's oh, by, oh, joy, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?  
(When they get home, you may say)

The other way back, you're going wrong, the other way round the ring  
Promenade then clockwise all, just as you hear me sing  
And when you get them back again, you swing that little dear  
And it's oh, boy, oh, joy, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?  
(Now the other couples lead out.)

1. Dancers sing the words in capital letters.
2. Having been asked, the caller now tells them where to go. He may call the first couple out first, or it might be the second or any of the other couples. In the same way, he might call the first out to the third or fourth first, instead of to the second. However, having called one couple out he must send that couple to each of the others before he calls out another couple.
3. Turn the opposite with the right hand.

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RECORD

- A First couple separate and on around with you  
Split the opposite couple and pass right thru  
Swing in the center, six hands around those two  
And all swing your partner, that is what you do.
- B Allemande left while you sailor's out to sea  
Allemande right just as pretty as can be  
All swing your partner, coats of navy blue  
Swingin' in the riggin' like your daddy used to do
- C Allemande left, grand right and left, promenade  
(spoken)
- D Allemande right, go on around your own
- E Honor your partners, and that's all.

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ADDITIONAL PLACES TO DANCE

- Washington, D. C. Mondays, Thomson Center, So. Shaftsbury, Vt. Grange Hall, Fridays.  
12th & L Sts. NW. Ralph Case. Pownal, Vermont Fridays
- Tuesdays, St. John's Parish Hall, 819 16th St, N. W., Ralph Case. (All of these are subject to change and error, we cannot guarantee them.)
- Wednesdays, Alternate, Pierce Hall, 16th & Harvard Sts. NW. Cynthia & Lyman Moore, and West Potomac Park Recreation Hall Michael Herman.
- Thursdays, Thomson Center, 12th & L, N.W.
- Saturdays, Friendship House, 619 D St. S.E., Ralph Case.
- Dartown, N. J. Alternate Thursdays, school, Lauretta Cannan.
- Cherry Plain, Rensselaer County, N. Y.
- The Bridgeway, Saturdays.
- Hoig's Corners, Rensselaer Co., N. Y.
- Saturdays
- Cropseyville, R. C. N. Y., at the Lodge
- Fridays.

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AMERICAN SQUARES wants representatives all over the country. If you are interested in square dancing and diffusing the information over the country, why not pitch in and help us out. There is a slight remuneration connected with it. If you will drop Ye Editor a line, he will write you a chatty letter explaining the situation and the set-up and boring you with the details of his last square dance exploit. And you get your name in the paper. (Is that any way to ask for help?)

SWINGO. by Rod LaFarge

\$1.00

This little offering is an accumulation of twenty North Jersey singing calls. As you are warned by the author in the introduction, "this booklet is not intended to instruct beginners in the fundamentals of square dancing; it is a collection of 'singing calls' for the use of callers, group leaders etc." As for the calls themselves; some are old ones, some are original with Rod LaFarge, while others are revisions and variations of popular North Jersey calls. At times they become a bit confusing, especially if you're not used to their style. For instance; the "alle-mande left" is interpreted as meaning a furious left elbow reel. There is very little in the way of explanation accompanying the dances and in some cases none at all. This just tends to add to the confusion. Some of the dances are easily recognized the "Red River Girl," "Forward Heads, Sides Divide," "Marching Through Georgia," etc.

This booklet isn't anything to shout about, but I prefer the real Western dances or maybe the backwoods mountain dances anyway. (New Jerseyites, put down those clubs, everyone is entitled to his opinion, you know!). I wouldn't recommend it to anyone who isn't fairly familiar with square dancing in general though.

Doug Durant, Jr.

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FOR SALE (Postpaid)

FOR SALE (Add 10¢ wrapping & mailing)

COWBOY DANCES, Lloyd Shaw. The best on the market, 76 dances. \$4.00

SWINGO, Rod LaFarge. 20 singing calls you won't find elsewhere. \$1.00

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

SWING YOUR PARTNERS, Durward Haddock's Fifty-one New England dances \$1.50

FOLK DANCING IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE Grace I Fox. A good collection if it does mention schools, 7 squares and 17 foreign dances well explained \$2.50

HEEL AND TOE OR A-DO-SI-DO, Grace H. Johnson, 10 mixers, 7 rounds, 5 contras, 7 square and 4 foreign, rather elementary \$1.50

THE SINGING CALLER, Ann Hasting Chase. Fifteen dances too well explained and charted \$1.50

THE AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE, Marget Mayo. 111 pages of figures, calls, dances and instructions. 50¢

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 varsovienne and schottische \$1.00

WESTERN SQUARE DANCES, Ralph McNair. Doug spoke highly of this last month and we've sold a lot. \$1.00

SWING YOUR LADIES, Edit . Gates. How to start and run a square dance course and overcome incidental problems. No dances described. 35¢

WE CAN OBTAIN FOR YOU ANY BOOK IN PRINT.

Do you need a cut for a poster? Joan Wright has drawn us a picture of a couple swinging. We've had a cut made from it and mats from the cut. The cut is approximately 6"x4" and suitable for posters. Mats made from the cut, from which your printer can cast a cut for your poster, are for sale at 60¢ each, postpaid.

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C. D. FOSTER'S

Learn to Dance and Call Square Dances the Foster Way Twenty-five dances and instructions printed on cards for ease in handling \$1.00

RYLBURN'S OZARK GUIDE

Box 111-X, Eureka Springs, Arkansas is a 100-page magazine of the Ozarks, for sportsmen, homeseekers, folklorists, \$1.00 a year or \$2.00 for three years. Single copy 35¢, Classified advertising 5¢ a word display \$2.00 per inch.

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