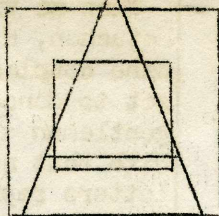


Square Dancing under the Stars
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Ralph Page--Gene Gowing
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Summer-School
Peterborough, N. H.
August 18 thru 30

Vol. II, No. 12

AMERICAN SQUARES

August, 1947

A Magazine Dedicated to American Folk Dancing

OTSEGO (N. Y.) SQUARES
by Ye Editor

FORT WORTH SQUARE DANCE FESTIVAL
by J. Cal. Moore

As enthusiastic square dancers we no sooner arrived in Cooperstown than we started looking for square dances. It took us from Sunday to Thursday to get a lead and then we were directed to three different places before we found a dance in action.

The road to Laurens was a one-track dirt trail over the hill--dark as pitch with trees close on either side. It was an airy trip. We finally arrived at a two-story rough-hewn house. The whole lower floor was open, a hamberger counter on the right and the rest set aside for dancing.

The Uprights (piano, fiddle, trumpet and drums) played from one corner. Curtis Upright, the drummer, called thru a small mike suspended in front of him. We arrived just in time to fill up a set and went into Upright's version of THE WORK'S ALL DONE THIS FALL.

First four forward, forward and cross over

Side four forward, forward and cross over Honor your corner lady, honor your partners all

Take your corner lady and promenade the hall.

The chorus was "Dosido your corner, swing your partner and promenade."

Our second dance was NELLIE GRAY

First couple balance to the couple on the right

Circle to the right and circle to the left

Right and left over and right and left back

And all swing your darling Nellie Grey.

The chorus followed immediately after the active couple had done the figure once.

Each couple visited only one other couple. I didn't get the music for the next dance:

You all fall in, you all fall in,
(Into the center and back)

Swing your corner lady and promenade the hall

You all fall in, you all fall in
Swing your corner lady and promenade the hall

Dosido your corner, dosido your own
Allemande left on your corner, allemande right on your partner

Allemande left on your corner and grand right and left.

During the intermission we talked to Curtis Upright. He explained that the dances were short because he plays at dime-a-dance halls and the shorter the

Continued on page 2

The morning session of the Fort Worth Square Dance Festival was devoted to what we chose to call a "Work Shop". During this session we had individual instruction by different leaders. The dancers were placed in a large circle and then several teams of experienced dancers were placed in the center. The instructor on the mike would describe the dance and then have it demonstrated by those in the center. Then the individuals would walk thru the instructions for a few minutes followed by actual dancing. This period covered such items as couple dances, mixers, grand marches and squares. Individuals were given sufficient time to even take down notes on the instruction if they so desired. A lot of stuff was covered in the two hour period but I believe that it was fairly successful.

The afternoon session was strictly a "Guest Caller and Exhibition Set" affair. Prior to any open dancing, I took a few minutes to demonstrate and describe the kind of holds and custom of execution of basic calls as done in this area. This helped the visiting dancers a great deal. Exhibitions were put on by teen-agers, high-schoolers, college groups, the adult "hams" (like me) and the Pioneers. We had dancers on the floor from 6 years to 75. Some of the group put on special routines that they had worked up for the affair while others merely took the floor and danced to whatever the caller put out.

A conference was held between the afternoon and night sessions at which time an open forum discussion was held. The principal topic of discussion was "Standardization of Basic Command Calls and Uniformity of Holds". The idea was to attempt to get somewhat of a standardization among the callers and instructors. This is not intended to remove any particular way of doing a figure but merely to have an understanding on fundamental stuff.

The group felt that it was well to have local individualities in order that square dancing should not get in the rut. It would leave an incentive for the experienced dancers to get something new. If the fundamentals were the same, it would take only a brief amount of instruction to pick up anybody's figure or style. However, the fundamentals should be the same. It was agreed that someone from each area would try to bring in some dope on the way they do things. All the dope would be put in a pot and boiled down in an effort to come up with something that all can use.

The night session was conducted as a regular dance.

AMERICAN SQUARES

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THE PAPER

When we visit H. H. Dunkel's house in Metuchen, N. J., he usually has eight or nine couples dancing and only room for one set to dance at a time. He gives each gentleman a letter and each lady a number. With that number, each lady gets a list of letters representing the gentlemen she is to dance with and each gent, a list of numbers representing the ladies. The dance is continuous, the dancers changing after each dance. In the end, each dancer has danced the same number of times and usually with different partners each time.

All this requires a master sheet from which to make out the individual slips, and this master diagram Heber has sent us and we shall publish it in the next issue. Actually there are two diagrams, one for eight couples and one for nine.

We want to give a free subscription to AMERICAN SQUARES to use as a door prize at your next big dance. Of course, we want a quid pro quo, but it is very little. This is what you do.

Write us when you dance is to be. We shall send you two posters advertising AMERICAN SQUARES. You will post one over the cashier's table and the other wherever you wish. You take and send to us whatever subscriptions may come in.

After the door prize is drawn, with appropriate ceremonies and announcements, you send us the name of the winner and also any subscriptions you may have taken with the money for them, if any, and we'll see that subscribers and door prize winners receive AMERICAN SQUARES. You get a door prize at the price only of doing a little publicity for us and taking subscriptions if anybody wants to buy them. No charge to you.

We discover that when Bobbie Robinson married she left California. This leaves us with a vacancy for California on our editorial staff. If any of you are interested in helping us out with California news, please let us know.

Earl Gulley of Canton, Ohio, visited our editorial offices, such as they are, when we was East, and we showed him some of our type square dancing. If any more of you are in the Philadelphia area, please drop in and we'll try to entertain you too.

With this issue of AMERICAN SQUARES, the second volume comes to an end. We shall prepare an index for our own use. If you would like a copy of the index to volume two, drop us a line--a post card will do. If enough requests are received to warrant it, we shall mimeograph the index and send it to those of you who have requested it.

NOTES

Lynn Woodward, who owns a farm on Highway 5, about 9 miles west of Minneapolis has a large barn which he converted to square dance use a few years ago. It has hard maple flooring and will hold six squares. It is equiped with a PA system, running water, etc.

Lynn, a son of an old time square dancer, started teaching some of his father's old dance figures to a group at his own church in the church hall. He made the mistake of inviting them out to his farm for a chicken dinner, cleaned up the old barn and had some dancing. This group had such a good time that they begged him to hold another such party. One party led to another until today he has twenty-three groups who meet regularly once a month. He and his good wife serve either a chicken dinner before the dancing or lunch after as the groups wish. His hobby is now his livelihood.

John Wold, St. Paul, Minn.

- - * * * - -

Otsego Squares from page 1
dances are the more money they make.

The second set of dances was more familiar. They did HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN without the dosido and swing in the chorus. They left out the circle three in the SPANISH CAVALIER, the lady went to the right and swung eight measures and then back and swung her partner for eight measures. The third set was the same dance we did as number three in the first set, this time set to TURKEY IN THE STRAW.

All join hands and into the middle
Make your feet keep time with the fiddle
Swing your corner and don't be afraid
Take your corner and all promenade.

One we heard often in the Cooperstown area was to the tune THE COWBOY'S SWEET-HEART--so they told me. But I can't remember how it goes.

The head two ladies cross over and swing the opposite gent
Now go home and swing your own, swing him round and round
Dosido on your corner lady
Dosido on your partner
Allemande left, grand right and left all the way around.

The side ladies then did the figure fol-

Continued on Page 3

ROSIN THE BOW
Folk Dance Magazine Extraordinary
Rod LaFarge, 115 Cliff St., Haledon, N.J.
10 issues per year \$1.50

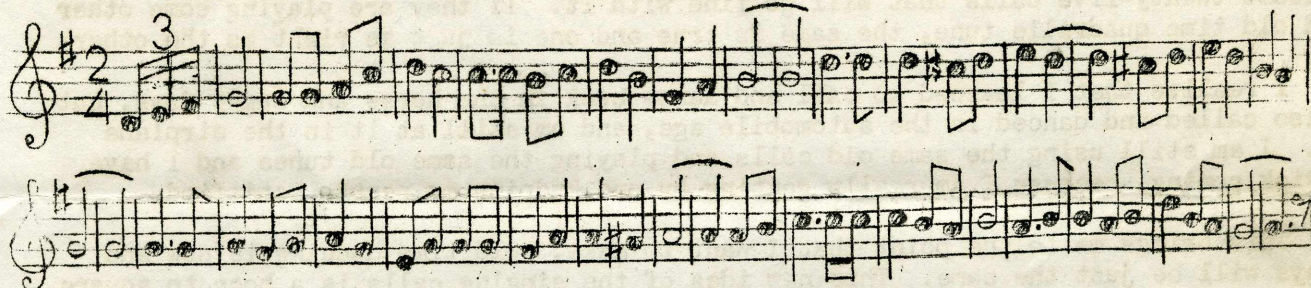
LEARN TO DANCE THE FOSTER WAY
by C. D. Foster
On card for ease in handling
Part I and Part II (specify which) \$1.00

OTSEGO SQUARES
AROUND THE CORNER



I can't help it if the music isn't long enough!

MY LITTLE GIRL



lowed by the head and side gents.

A variation of the standard LITTLE BROWN JUG interested me exceedingly. It was more prompted than sung and substituted a "forward and back" for the swing:

Into the center and back (first couple)
Forward again and cast off six--three
by three

Right hand over and left hand back (the
(active couple on returning to place
(change places giving the right hand
(and change back giving the left.)

Into the center and back
Forward again and cast off four--two by
two

Right hand over and left hand back
Into the center and back, &c.

Tho' it was nowhere near winter, JINGLE BELLS was in order:

All into the center and swing that opposite girl

Now promenade halfway round, halfway round the ring

Now the ladies star halfway, halfway back to place

Swing that girl, that pretty girl, the one all dressed in lace.

Swing on your own like swingin' on a gate

Hurry up or you'll be late

Go to the corner and give her a whirl
And all promenade the corner girl.

Saturday night we drove to Cherry Valley to the Central Hotel. The dance floor adjoined the barroom and there was no admission fee. I'm afraid they didn't make any money on us. On the other hand, they only played square dances about every hour and we became very tired waiting.

Ken Haith's orchestra played with piano, two saxes, trumpet and drums. G. H. Fonda pounded the ivories and called. We started out with Ed Durlocher's version of REDWING slightly doctored with a circle left, circle right and ladies chain done with the odd couple. And then came AROUND THE CORNER that has been running thru my head ever since. My idea of the music is set forth above.

The first couple lead out to the right and circle four
Pick up the next and circle six

Pick up the next ones and circle eight
Circle eight around and round, all around the floor

Around the corner, you dosido, around your partner, you dosido

Allemande left on your corner, allemande right on your own

Allemande left on your corner again and a grand right and left

All the way round and promenade eight till you get straight.

The first line is sung, "The first couple lead out to the right" to the first three measures and "and circle four" is on the last note which makes up the fourth measure.

I have marched around the outside by myself to BUFFALO GALS any number of times. It seems more sensible to start them off one after the other and have them all marching at once, and have them stop to swing one at a time. That is what we did to BETTY COED. I have used this dance to RAINBOW since I got home, but I prefer the original music:

The first gent promenade the outside

The second gent will follow up--go twice around

The third gent will follow right on after

And the fourth gent will promenade around

Now the first gent will stop and swing

his partner

The second gent will stop and swing his too

The third gent will swing his little lady

And all swing 'em round and round with you.

Dosido your corner everyone

Now go home and swing your own.

Allemande left your corner, allemande right your own

Allemande left your corner and dosido your own.

Allemande left on your corner and a grand right and left.

Meet your own and promenade home.

The COWBOY'S SWEETHEART was the same one we did the previous evening. But to TURKEY IN THE STRAW they did BIRDIE IN THE CAGE with the second couple following up the first and the chorus coming after the second couple had completed the figure. (The third and fourth couples acted similarly.)

Continued Page 4

THE CALLER'S CORNER

by C. D. FOSTER, author of
LEARN TO DANCE AND CALL SQUARE DANCES

Continued from Last Month

I am not objecting to the American Square Dance as taught by the club directors all over the country. On the other hand, I think they are fine and there is a lot of fun in them and you young folks of today have just as much right to dance the new singing calls, each made up just a little different from what the other fellow calls them, but after all, you are using the same calls that we used fifty years ago, your caller places the rhyming words, or not rhyming as the case may be, and then tell you that that is the way to dance to such and such a tune. It is true that some certain call may go better to some certain tune. If the orchestra is playing Wagoner, I know at least twenty-five calls that will go fine with it. If they are playing some other good old time quadrille tune, the same is true and one is just as right as the other.

I realize that I learned to call and dance back in the horse and buggy days, but I also called and danced in the automobile age, and am still at it in the airplane age. I am still using the same old calls and playing the same old tunes and I have no kick coming, because I am really getting by and kidding my people satisfied.

This brings me to the point that I want to make. Old time dancing is now and always will be just the same. This new idea of the singing calls is a boon to square dancing in this day of ajzz and jitterbugging and what have you. It is a lot of fun and a means of getting together for the betterment of the community and I am for it one hundred percent. I would not change it for anything nor would I try to put a crimp in it. But if you get a mexed crowd, or get two or three groups together that never danced together before, you better stick to the old way, which in my opinion is the happy medium of it all--the place where we can all meet on a common level and dance.

I visited one of the best clubs it has ever been my privilege to watch. They were having a get-together and there were three different groups present. When the caller from one group was giving his version of the square dance, most of the other groups were sitting on the side lines. They said they did not know the way to dance the calls he was giving. When the manager, or teacher, or conductor, or whatever his title is, called, all of his group got on the floor and danced and the two other groups had a sit-our session. And so it went.

The master of ceremonies asked me to call. I got to the mike and told them that I was just an old time caller and could not sing a baby to sleep so I would have to give them just an old fashioned square dance. They all made a rush for places and everybody in the hall danced. You never saw such dancing. They yelled and stomped and had an old fashioned time. I explained the call first, which in this instance was Two Little Sisters and they never made a bobble. I then asked the orchestra what they intended to play and they said "Soldiers Joy", so I called Divide the World. The same thing happened and the crowd roared. I had struck the happy medium.

I had the same experience in Camden, N. J., and also in New York City. I had no trouble with the dancers. They had many much better callers than I. I was a perfect stranger to everybody but as soon as we got together on the middle-of-the-road style, we got along and everybody danced.

To be continued

Otsego Squares from page 3 first set with, but then we went into

MACNAMARA'S BAND

On the following Tuesday, we followed an ad to "Eddie Rosenbloom's new barn" where Ernie Russ was playing and calling. Fonda had told us how good he was and we felt fortunate in finding him. He was good. Their usual caller was off for the evening and Ernie called. They assured me that the regular caller was better, but we couldn't see how. However, Ernie would start the orchestra off with his fiddle and then quit playing to call. That left a piano, two saxes and drums, which is still not my idea of a square dance orchestra.

Besides the orchestra, the "new barn" was an appropriate setting for a square dance. Dancers were from ten to sixty years old and square predominated on the program. Sometimes they would not even have a couple dance between the sets of three dances. We had a wonderful time.

There was nothing new in the set they were doing when we arrived, nor in the FIRST FOR FORWARD that they started our

First lady lead to the right and circle three around
Duck to the next and swing that gent, swing him round and round
On to the next and circle three, three hands round and round
Duck right home and swing your partner Dosido your corner, dosido your partner Allemande left on your corner, allemande right with your partner
Allemande left with your corner again and a grand ole right and left
All the way around, swing your partner and promenade.

WABASH CANNON BALL

First lady march around the outside of the ring (counterclockwise)
Gentleman go the other way, meet her there and swing.
Swing her in the center six hands round and round
Swing that girl that pretty girl the prettiest girl in town. Cont. pg 5

OTSEGO SQUARES

from page 4

Dosido your corner, dosido your own
Allemande left on your corner and alle-
mande right on your own.
Allemande left on your corner again and a
grand ole right and left
All the way around, swing your partner
and promenade.

BLUE EYES

First couple promenade down the center
Face out and the sides fall in (You are
now in column formation.)
Step right back and face your partner.
Pass right thru and face her again.
First couple promenade down the center
(Between the lines.)
Lady go right, gent go left, and swing
(Around the outside of the lines and
swing at home.)
All go home and swing your partner
Swing her round and round and round
Allemande left, grand right and left
and promenade.

OLD NUMBER NINE

First four forward and give right hands
across
Circle half way around
Back with your left and join the outside
four (Give free hands to corners.)
And balance right where you stand.
Now the inside four turn the outside
four (Right hand turn.)
And the inside four swing the outside
four (Swing corners)
And balance where you stand.
Allemande left, grand right and left.

LEVEN MORE MONTHS AND TEN MORE DAYS is
the same dance we did last year to Pop
Stout in Plainfield, but the music is dif-
ferent:

First couple lead to the right and cir-
cle four around
Polka round the lady and I'll tell you
what to do, (The lady leads the gent
(between the host couple and around
(the lady.)
The lady go round the lady and the gent
go round the gent
The gent go round the lady and the lady
go round the gent.

Back on Saturday night, Fonda had told
us that he had invented the following
dance. Russ called it to MY LITTLE GIRL
My idea of the music appears on Page 3.

The first couple lead to the right and
circle four hands round.
Lead on down to the next and circle
six hands round.
It's allemande left, grand right and
left six and the odd couple promenade
the set
(A line of music for the promenade.)
Swing your partners, allemande left,
grand right and left.

RED RIVER VALLEY was borrowed from
Ralph Page and then we repeated the COW-
BOY'S SWEETHEART which gave that dance a
batting average of 1.000.

DON'T SWEETHEART ME

Four gents go round the outside
Halfway round you swing that girl
Now go home and swing your partners
Swing them round and round.

Dosido your corner, dosido your own
Swing your corner and promenade.

Which brings us to the "You know where
and I don't care" and the remarks about
what we found in central New York.

The Woodhull influence is great there and
anyone familiar with his records would feel
at home. The directions are sung to the
music, but there is little apparent attempt
to put them into rhyme. The calls often
occur (as they should) just before the
strain of music to which they are to be
done. But this is not usual in singing
calls. The result is an interesting cross
between a prompt and a sung call as I know
it. We had a fine time so I shan't criti-
cize, but personally, I prefer the intel-
lectual exercise of finding rhymes for my
singing.

--*-*-*
The foregoing composition has crowded
out the promised description of the Tuxedo.
However, we hope to include both that and
the Oxford Minuet next month.

Our invitation to the Mineola (L.I.)
Fair has come. I shall join Dick Kraus,
Steve Hopkins and Al MacLeod to guest call
on the 12th of September. There will be
square dancing there also on the 9th and
10th. See you there.

--*-*-*
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KENTUCKY SQUARE DANCES, Ida Levin. 50¢

When I read this, it seemed like a fairly simple collection of square dances, and so I gave it to a novice to read and see what his reaction was. He called it a "basic manual or guide for the Kentucky dances." Well, I agree with him. The author lists about two dozen dances with calls and descriptions. The calls aren't singing ones, just instructions. This book, to me, turns out to be a collection of Kentucky square dances, but not much more. There is little said about the music except that, "Almost any jig makes a good accompaniment for the dances." It doesn't go into details about organization and such and only makes a brief comment about the prompters' duties. As I said before this isn't the usual book of square dance information, but rather, a good collection of Kentucky square dances.

Doug Durant, Jr.

BOOKS FOR SALE

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COWBOY DANCES, Lloyd Shaw. The best book by the authority. 77 dances and a fine history and general instructions for starting a square dance \$ 4.00

DANCES OF OUR PIONEERS, Grace L. Ryan. A complete and well-done book in mid-westerns style. 85 dances in three parts with couple and circle dances \$ 2.00

THE COUNTRY DANCE BOOK, Tolman and Page An A#1 book of 91 dances from New England with interesting comments. \$ 2.00

LEARN TO DANCE AND CALL SQUARE DANCES THE FOSTER WAY, C. D. Foster. Part I has instructions and 25 square dances. Part II has 6 round dances and 25 squares. All are on cards for ease in handling. Be sure you specify which you want. Foster writes The Caller's Corner. ea. \$1

SQUARE DANCES, Ed Durlacher. 12 dances by the East's leading caller with music and separate fiddle book \$1.00

PROMPTING, HOW TO DO IT. John M. Schell 131 contras besides quadrilles. Published in the last century it is the best collections of contras that I know about. \$1.00

10¢ per package for mailing

DANCING WITHOUT A MASTER. A collector's item from way back, pulppaper 25¢

PROMPTERS HAND BOOK, J. A. French. Still a steady seller after 50 years. 50¢

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HEEL AND TOE OR A DO-SI-DO, Johnson. 33 dances of all kinds for beginners. 75¢

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