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# AMERICAN SQUARES

*A Magazine Dedicated to American Folk Dancing*



May, 1950

Ten Cents





# The Square Dancer's Bill Of Rights



Trusting souls, these square dancers. As a square dancer do you know your rights?

1. We have always had two schools of thought and we shall undoubtedly continue to have them; so lets permit the other fellow to go his way and have fun the way he sees fit.

On one hand we have the callers, instructors and dancers who believe in wrestling to music. They run, leap, yank and hippety hop. If you haven't participated in one of these deals you have missed a lot of fun. Make no mistake they have a whale of a good time.

The other school believes in "dancing" the dances. They try to dance smoothly. These people also have a whale of a good time.

The following applies wholly to the latter group.

2. The caller calls the dances, you dance them. Let him sit up nights studying each and every foot and hand movement. You learn your basic movements, learn to listen to the call, and step to the music and enjoy yourself. One caller and eight dancers makes a good combination, don't change it to nine callers.

3. In "Western style" you are supposed to take one step to each beat of the music. The caller will then weave a geometrical pattern so that each person will be reasonably close to his proper position at the end of each figure. If his calls do not permit you to "dance" to that position he is wrong. He must accept the responsibility for an inadequate call. Example. "Promenade the outside ring." Dance it, do not run. Make your caller call it so you can dance it.

4. A caller has the right to brighten up the picture by making changes, but he certainly should notify you of any changes in standard movements, explaining which are his personal ideas and which are standard. (Standard means of wide usage).

5. Round dances are waltzes, two-steps, schottisches, etc. Does your instructor teach you the basic waltz, two-step, etc., or does he go right into these dances regardless of whether his dancers know the basic steps?

6. Dances fall into categories as regards age groups. We have play-party games, children's dances, adult dances etc. Your leader should know which is

(Continued on Page 16)



## AMERICAN SQUARES

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# Presenting the Square Dance in a Ballroom Dance Class

By Ann M. Davis

In my work here as dance teacher at the High School's Adult Evening School Classes, I have incorporated square dancing, as well as some of the old time rounds, into my ballroom classes. Originally, I used these as mixers during a class, to add fun and change to the practicing of fox trot, waltz, rumba, samba, tango, and such work. Now, however, I am devoting a portion of each lesson to square dance instruction. There are places around here where square dances are held quite often, and the trend is growing.

It would be rare, in a school class, to have an evenly divided group of men and women; rarer still, to have just the right number of couples to form a given number of square sets. I have them pair off (using a mixer of some kind, if necessary, to get the shy ones out); no one is allowed to remain on the sidelines, unless illness or injury of some sort demands it. The extra ladies or gents, as the case may be, must pair off also, because after all they came here to learn to dance. In the case of these extras, we repeat each dance twice, allowing them to cut in on the couples in the sets to obtain partners; those retiring then pairing off together for the next dance. In this way every man and woman gets a chance to dance in a perfect square.

If there is one extra person, I act as his or her partner myself. If one set has only three couples, we go through the dance with an imagined fourth couple (this gives them practice in stretching their imaginations also). If only two couples or less are extra, they watch the first time and cut into the sets for the second dance.

To begin we form a large single circle of couples, ladies standing at partners' right sides. In this formation we learn the buzz or swing step, impressing partners to hold a nice right side position and use right feet as pivots, while propelling themselves around with the left feet. Some have trouble accomplishing this; they will skip, run, or hippety-hop, in various forms of locomotion. So we strive to perfect this whirling pivot in a smooth manner first of all. When this step is fairly well mastered, we learn the allemande left, then the grand right and left, still in the large circle formation.

Our next step is to progress to the promenade. Here I show them all the different ways to go into the promenade position that I know of. We try them all, then select the one that pleases the majority, for use in our class. Next we get together on our promenade step. I prefer a modified polka step without the hop. Some of my pupils strut in a bouncy sort of way that looks neat. Then, too, I have found children who want to skip through the measures. If they can keep within the track of their own little square set, I let them practice this way. However, the speed and vigor of skipping around is liable to carry the couples way out into too large a circumference and thus spoil the attractiveness of the dance.





After this we practice ending the promenade with a little curtsey or bow, the partners retaining hold of each other's right hands during this maneuver.

When these basic figures have been practiced a little in the circle formation, we are ready to start our first square dance. I ask four couples to volunteer to be samples or guinea pigs. They usually do this eagerly, but if not, I pick some out. They come to the center of the circle of people, are shown where to stand, how far apart and with ladies on partners' right sides. They are told that these are to be known as their home positions; that four couples constitute a set; that couples are numbered from one to four, counterclockwise around the set, with couple number one, whose backs are toward the music, being designated as head couple.

I then explain that there are many, many square dances and figures, and many variations of these as well, and that the important thing from here on is to listen closely to their caller where ever they happen to be dancing, as no two callers are likely to call a square dance just alike. I also explain that some dances vary in different parts of the country, and that some callers designate the head couple as being the ones facing the music, instead of those with backs to music. I stress the importance of learning a lot of different figures, and then of dancing these figures in the pattern laid out for them by the caller in charge.

From here, the sample set is walked through a standard square dance while the others observe. Then all couples form themselves into sets like the sample set, checking all the little details necessary to good form, and we then all go through the opener and first figure for practice. Following this the music is started (I call some and use records with calls for others) and we dance through the square twice. Often by this time they will clamor to do it again because it is such a lot of fun.

Adding square dancing to a regular ballroom dance class like this adds interesting variety and gives many people a chance to become acquainted with it who might otherwise not. Since the time allotted is limited, however, I try to present a sample of each of several types of square dances so that students will have a clear idea of what to expect when they go square dancing for the first time. We learn at least one dance each of the following types: Visiting individual style (example, Spanish Cavaliero); one of the progressing couple type (example, Bird in the Cage); one general figure style (example Texas Star); and one line number (example, Right Hand Up, Left Lady Under).

With a basis like this, most people would be able to attend a square dance session and start participating with a reasonable amount of assurance. Most honest-to-goodness square dancers are happy to help a new couple through the paces occasionally. The main thing is to get more people square dancing. This is the tonic that is needed to reduce tension and relax the strained nerves and muscles of our present day worry-worn citizens.



Things I never knew till now: Jimmy Clossin's Virginia Reel Imperial 1067, Album 19, (from \$3.93) disguises a satisfactory recording of **Just Because**.



We have had so many requests for the tune **Ragtime Annie** that we have stocked **Arkansas Woodchopper's Square Dance Calls** published by M. M. Cole Publishing Co. which contains it. Send \$50.



# The Texas Two-Step and the Abilene Lift

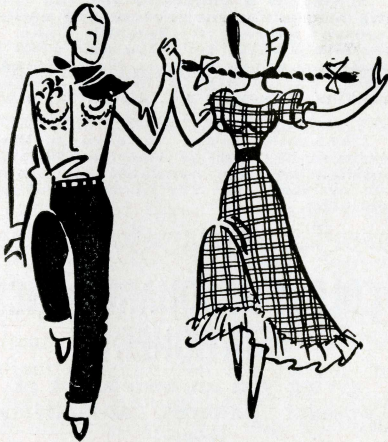
by RICKEY HOLDEN\*

Of all the regional differences extant in modern square dancing, one of the most fascinating to this writer is the step used by the dancers. Some saunter, some lope, some shuffle, some glide—each according to his preference, experience, imagination, and the influence around him. Almost all Texas square dancers use a two-step throughout the dance, from beginning of the evening till the end. All of Texas, that is, but Dallas. Dallas is the exception; they do not two-step. This is probably because the tempo of Dallas dancing is faster than most of the rest of the state, and a smooth rapid one-step seems essential in order to keep the pace.

The basic two-step in Texas is a left-right-left, right-left-right, etc. Usually it involves a forward motion with each step, so the word description becomes (forward) left-(forward) right-(forward) left, instead of left-close-left.

A Texas square dancer can normally be spotted by his two-step, with his particular variation indicating the section he comes from. Old timers in El Paso use a shuffling ground-covering slightly-rolling "leap" two-step, perhaps because there is plenty of room out there in the desert country. Fort Worth enjoys a deep "dip"—the deeper the better in the opinion of some Fort Worthians I have met. The Abilene-Sweetwater area of West Texas reverses this and uses a subtle "lift" step.

In Houston, Dr. Carl Journell's exhibition set has developed a cyclic up-and-down "sine wave" pattern which is very lovely to watch although tiring for long use on the common dance floor. Austin, like El Paso, covers ground rather rapidly though a little less smoothly in a sort of "dog trot" step. San Antonio also has its distinguishing feature—the San Antonio "limp". This last is a jerky movement which results through failure to bring the back foot completely forward on beat 2; this lagging foot makes for a decidedly crippled appearance. We work to correct this local lag.



The most difficult of these variations to dance, as far as this writer is concerned, is the Abilene - Sweetwater "lift". This step was first developed in Abilene by Bob Sumrall's exhibition set in 1941 (?). The lift was used by Jack Fomby's Sweetwater set to win the professional division in the Amarillo "National Square Dance Contest" in 1946 and by Chuck Rogers' set (also of Sweetwater) to win the same division in 1948. The set from Loraine (Texas) won the amateur division in 1949 using the lift. The record indicates it to be a winner.

There is no trade secret to the step, except the extreme difficulty of conveying it properly on paper. It is a two-step with a very subtle lift on the third beat—so you might say left-right-(lift) left-pause, right-left-(lift) right-pause. It is not a bounce, not a hop, but an almost imper-



\*Rickey Holden is making a calling and teaching trip through the East. His itinerary can be spotted from Coming Events.



ceptible lift, really little more than a straightening of the proper knee. The head should not move vertically, nor should the shoulders hunch. Because the other foot has a tendency to swing slightly forward during the pause of beat 4, and then to slap gently down in beginning beat 1, the lift has been described as a slap-slide-lift-kick—but all with the utmost casual restraint.

When the lift is done correctly you may hear an almost hypnotic shush-shush-shush of feet on the floor; if everyone is in step (as sometimes happens in West Texas) the entire room carries the rhythm. This overtone is just as exhilarating to me as a good spring floor resounding to a full New Hampshire Patenella clogging. Despite the difficulty of learning it, I consider the Abilene-Sweetwater lift the most satisfactory dance step I know.

The Texas two-step cannot validly be overlooked in a discussion of tempo of square dancing. Areas with a fast one-step consider that we are slow and dull; to them I suggest that a two-step at 128 requires more energy than a one-step at 140, and is considerably more difficult to maintain. Before judging Texas with finality then, try our two-step. How fast can you manage, and dance it all night? And listen to your feet: do you go shush-shush-shush?

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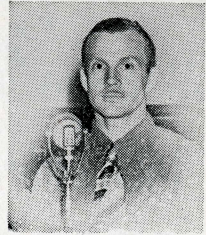
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# Westchester's Famous Square Dance Expert

By HELEN MANSFIELD



Elisha Keeler, known throughout the East as "Westchester's Famous Square Dance Expert", has been calling for square dances for nearly twenty years, having learned the art from his father, Thad Keeler, a well-known caller and fiddler in this vicinity for many years. One of Elisha's earliest memories is of the neighborhood square dances held in his father's sawmill on Saturday nights, affairs which were attended by everyone from grandparents to babes in arms. A pick-up band furnished the music, and was paid by passing the hat. Sweet cider was served in tin cups, and the iron lung power of Thad Keeler, without benefit of microphone, made the rafters ring.

Elisha Keeler has specialized in preserving and popularizing the dances which originated in this area, and has done much to make people realize that Westchester has its own folk dance tradition, quite independent of any influence from the West or the South. He has transformed square dancing at swank country clubs and hotels from a quaint novelty to a form of social activity worthy of serious consideration.

During the past two or three years, in addition to his work as a professional caller, he has done an increasing amount of instruction work, especially with children and young people. Having two children of his own, he has been concerned with the growing need of constructive social activity for children, to offset the increasing trend toward passive recreation, as represented by radio, television, movies and spectator sports. His theory is that square dancing offers a perfect medium for teaching even very young children physical co-ordination and social co-operation, while they are having such fun that the educational aspect is entirely eliminated as far as they are concerned. This theory has been amply born out by the enthusiastic response from teachers and parents, as well as the children themselves, to his classes in public and private schools.

Movie audiences throughout the country are now seeing Elisha Keeler as caller, and three groups of dancers whom he trained, in the R.K.O.-Pathe Screenliner feature, "Square Dance To-night" which was filmed in Pound Ridge, N. Y. last September. Mr. Keeler was chosen for the star role upon recommendation of radio and motion picture executives who were familiar with his work. Reports from all over the country indicate that the choice was justified. A second Screenliner on the same subject is scheduled for release later this Spring.

Keeler's Annual Caller's Jamboree has attracted widespread attention, and last year's affair was the subject of an article in the swank New Yorker Magazine for Dec. 3, 1949. Mr. Keeler has made guest appearances on the national N.B.C. network, and has had his own local programs on stations in Peekskill New York, and Stamford, Conn.

He is a member of the Westchester Square Dance Committee, an organization for the promotion of square dancing in Westchester County, sponsored by the County Recreation Commission.



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# RECORDS

by CHARLEY THOMAS

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TR 80 Recommended  
TR 100 Perfect

## RECORD REVIEWS

**FOLKRAFT**, Harold Goodfellow and his Good Fellows. Like the others of this series, these are noted for selection rather than the playing which is only fair, recording fair, balance poor. **1069 Camptown Races**. Arranged for Right Hand Up and Left Hand Under. Metronome 134. TR 76. **Listen to the Mocking Bird**. Metronome 134. TR 77. **1070 Captain Jinks**. Metronome 126. TR 77. **Polly Wolly Doodle**. Metronome 134. TR 77. We stock these records at 89c each.

**FOLKRAFT**, Bob, Phil and George. The fiddle is coarse, playing is poor; often the tune is not recognizable. Recording poor. **1085 Soldiers Joy**. Metronome 120. TR 60. **The Jig**. Metronome 134. TR 60. **1086 Golden Slippers**. Metronome 123. TR 60. **Cincinnati Hornpipe**. Metronome 120. TR 58. **1087 The Girl I Left Behind Me**. Metronome 131. TR 68. **Peter Street**. Metronome 116. TR 68. **1088 Ragtime Annie**. Metronome 128. TR 66. **The Crooked Stovepipe**. Metronome 126. TR 64.

**IMPERIAL FD35 Square Dances With Calls**. Chris Sanderson. Four 10" vinylite. Instructions. I feel incapable of reviewing these impartially. Chris is such a wonderful guy that when I hear his loved voice and the nostalgic strains of the Pocopson Valley Boys, I am thrown off balance. Chris' tart calls should satisfy those who want no patter. The dances are simple. Playing and calling good, balance good, recording excellent. But on the one we tried, the timing was poor. **1172 Power Mill Grand**. Metronome 118. TR 85. **Ladies Chain**. Metronome 119. TR 84. **1173 Take a Little Peek**. Metronome 121. TR 86. **Indian Quadrille**. Metronome 125. TR 85. **1174 Waltz Quadrille**. Metronome 44. TR 85. **Chase the Fox**. Metronome 122. TR 84. **1175 Balance All**. Metronome 126. TR 83. **Dive for the Oyster**. Metronome 120. TR 86.

**IMPERIAL FD #36 Square Dances**. Called by Raymond Smith. Four 10" vinylite records. Instructions. While Chris Sanderson sounds just like himself. Ray sounds coarser than I remember him. Calling excellent, playing fair, balance good, recording good. **1176 Catch All Eight**. Metronome 131. TR 87. **Star to the Right**. Metronome 128. TR 87. **1177 Arkansaw Traveller**. Metronome 128. TR 89. **Double Star**. Metronome 130. TR 85. **1178 Dip and Dive**. Metronome 124. TR 85. **Promenade the Outside Ring**. Metronome 13. TR 90. **1179 Denver Wagon Wheel**. Metronome 128. TR 87. **Sing Adam, Swing Eve**. Metronome 130, TR 90.

**MacGregor 606**. 10" vinylite. Stan James and the Valley Boys. No Calls. Instructions. **San Antonio Rose**. Hawaiian guitar. Syncopated but good playing and recording. Metronome 124. TR 82. **You Call Everybody Darling**. Metronome 127. TR 82.

**MacGregor 609**. Erv Arluch at the Organ. No Calls. Instructions. **Dos-a-dos & Down Center**. Captain Jinks comes at Metronome 126. The Waltz Quadrille, the promenade of which gives only eight measures. Metronome 56. TR 77. **The Flower Girl Waltz**. Metronome 56. TR 85. We stock this record at \$1.00.

**MacGregor 612**. Stan James and the Valley Boys. Jonesy calling. 10" vinylite. Instructions. **Listen to the Mocking Bird**. Metronome 132. TR 95. **Levis, Plaid Shirt and Spurs**. Metronome 122. TR 85.

**MacGregor 613**. Stan James and the Valley Boys. No calls. 10" vinylite. Instructions. **El Rancho Grande**. Metronome 120. TR 82. **Oh, Susanna**. Metronome 130. TR 81.

**MacGregor 612**. Stan James. No calls. Instructions. **Wabash Cannon Ball**. Arranged. Starts with an imitation of a train. Fades in places. Metronome 133. TR 73. **Solomon Levi**. Metronome 137. TR 85. We stock this Record at \$1.00.

**MacGREGOR Album 6. Square Dances** by Jack Hoheisal. Two 10" vinylite Instructions. Curley Williams and the Prairie Pals. Playing good, but thin. Calling good, voice a bit harsh. Balance fair, recording good. **Cats M'awow**. Oh, My! Minus the feline background, it wouldn't be bad. Metronome 142. TR 78. **Around and Thru**. Metronome 142. TR 83. **Set 'em Down**. Metronome 140. TR 81. **Around Just One**. Metronome 140 TR 84. We stock this album at \$2.75.



Mac GREGOR Album 7. Jonsey Square Dance. Stan James and the Valley Boys. Four 10" vinylite. Instructions. McGregor has put out what we have been needing for some time: an album of fairly easy calls by a competent, modern caller. Darling Nellie Gray Metronome 144. TR 97. El Rancho Grande. Forget the accent and the yelps, Jonesy. Metronome 126. TR 76. Jingle Bells Metronome 128. TR 95. Wabash Cannon Ball. Metronome 133. TR 93. Spanish Cavalier. Metronome 132. TR 94. Oh, Johnny. Metronome 134. TR 96. Solomon Levi. Metronome 134. TR 94. Oh Susannah. Metronome 133 TR 96. We stock this album at \$4.75

UNITED. Early American Dances. Dick Moore calling with the Keynote Orchestra. Four 10" vinylite. Instructions. Partly prompted and partly sung. The orchestra has a trumpet. Playing good, calling good, balance good, recording fine. 722 Keynote Schottische Metronome 116. TR 66. Uptown-Downtown. Metronome 118. TR 79. 723 Schottische Medley Metronome 130. TR 75. Hook and a Whirl. Metronome 177. TR 78. 724 Prairie Queen. Metronome 114. TR 82. Yankee Doodle Metronome 109. TR 82. 725 Gunnings Quadrille Metronome 118. TR 84. Nellie Blye. Metronome 106. TR 84.

WINDSOR 12" vinylite. Doc Alumbaugh and the Sundowners' Band, except where noted. Instructions. Calling good, playing good, music is thin. 101 Practice Square Dance for Beginners #1. Your reviewer is a firm believer that the dancers should not know what the caller is about to call. If they do, there is no point in having a caller to tell them. Therefore, we hail these, not as practice records but as hash. Incidentally, my dancers remark that they have accomplished beginners in California. Metronome 130 and 126. TR 85. 201 Practice Square Dance for Intermediates Metronome 128. TR 85. 501 Alabama Jubilee. Metronome 124. TR 83. MacNamara's Band. Called by Walt Byrne. Metronome 138. TR 81. 103 Alabama Jubilee. Without calls. This and the following tune are arranged for the dances given on Record #501. Metronome 140. TR 83. MacNamara's Band. Metronome 140. TR 78. We stock these records at \$1.75 each.

## Square Dance Summer School

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# Letters

## Square Dance Costume

**Editor's Note:** We received several letters from Texas and elsewhere supporting the Houston viewpoint (Which, after all, was what we wanted.) We think this one from New Jersey sets it forth very well, but there is one point Joe (and I) missed: having the square dancers in costume is a good way to distinguish between dancers and spectators.

*"An editorial that does not stir up any controversy is no great shakes as an editorial."*  
*—Let's have your opinion.*

Dear Charley:

We feel that the choice of the word "costume" is an unfortunate one. It seems to us that a certain style of dress which is suitable and appropriate for the occasion ought not to come under the heading of "costume," any more than should the wearing of evening dresses and tuxedos to formal dances.

We believe that the style of attire developed recently in the West represents the ultimate in suitability, comfort, and ease of movement. The long skirts and puffed sleeves make the ladies look ultra-feminine and graceful, and the men ought to be delighted to wear colorful shirts designed to make them look like honest-to-goodness he-men, especially after wearing drab, conservative business suits all week!

As for expense, calico is quite reasonable, and most of the ladies we know make their own dresses at old-fashioned sewing circles. Western shirts are no more expensive than good sports shirts (and can be worn as such, if need be), ties are about half the cost of ordinary neckties, and nobody needs to be fancy or elegant!

As for not admitting casually dressed dancers, we feel that when an invitation is issued, the sponsors have in mind a certain type of atmosphere, and each person not complying with their request detracts considerably from this atmosphere, like wearing tennis shorts out to dinner! Therefore, if people don't wear characteristic square dance attire, suitable to a square dance atmosphere, then they're depriving themselves and others present of a certain psychological "lift." Clothes have a decided psychological effect, you know.

Joe and Anne Rechter, Summit, N. J.



Imperial Album #32

Dear Sir:

Just finished reading April issue of American Squares and find your review on the Imperial Album with calls by Jonesy.

Let me tell you a little about this album that I believe you should know and also any one who may buy it. To begin with, we first recorded the album for Black and White Recording Co. here in Hollywood Sept. 16, 1946 without dancers and being the first I have ever recorded in the square dance field you can see that we made recordings that can not begin to compare with work recorded since that time. When the Black and White Co. went broke, Imperial Records bought the masters and came out with a brand new cover and introduced the album as the new Jonesy square dance album. We are still recording square dances for MacGregor, and as in the past, I am sure they will still receive the fine rating you have always given them.

Sincerely,

Jonesy, Glendale, Calif.

**Editor's Note:** Gale Preitauer also called our attention to this. Your reviewer came a cropper. Just too many records to remember them all.



Square Dance Philosophy

Dear Charley:

I like your attitude toward the differences in calls and steps. "Let's do it my way when you're visiting here, and I'll do it your way when I visit you there."

It's not so terribly important whether a dance is done as they did it 100 years ago. What's most important is "Have Fun!!" And for us middle aged people whose life span is growing shorter, having fun is what we need in this atomic age. Too many fears—

Joe Cada, Elmhurst, Ill.



## New Junk

Dear Charley:

Ralph Piper and myself have been in this "fun" for a long time. We have seen a lot of changes, mostly for the good. Some of the "junk" coming thru lately is just what is needed to put our fun on the skids and we can slide back very fast.

Sincerely,  
John Wald, St. Paul, Minn.



### Promenades

Dear Sir:

In regard to the article entitled "Promenade" of the "How We Do It In Our Town" Series, I was somewhat surprised to find no mention made of the form of promenade so widely used in this part of the country. It is as follows: lady on gent's right, left hands joined in front of, and at the height of, the lady's left shoulder, lady's right hand on her hip, gent's right arm behind her, his right hand covering hers. This is used for all promenades save one, i. e., when meeting partner half way round in a grand right and left and promenading back, where the "varsouvienne" position is used essentially as described by Harrington.

At the end of every promenade we do an "honor" as follows: gent stands in his original position facing counter-clockwise. The lady pivots backward to her right onto her original position facing the gent. At the same time, the couple let go left hands, the gent taking, quickly, the lady's left in his right, and at full arms' length with joined hands, the gent bows and the lady curtsseys.

Sincerely,  
Gordon P. DeWolf, Jr., Chelmsford, Mass.



### Modern Orchestras

Dear Charley:

Gus Empire and I were just listening to a radio program by By Day's Orchestra and Mel Day calling. We thought it was pretty fair only, like most present day band the fiddle was playing a nice 6/8 number while the drum and piano were both beating out a modern swing time rhythm. Poor Mel. I feel sorry for these good callers and hope their square dance bands will soon come out with real square dance music, not two-steps, polkas and what have you.

Regards,  
Bill Lipka, Boise, Idaho.



The Program of the Northeast Oklahoma Square Dance Association Festival held 25 March 1950 combines permanent value with a listing of the program by including instructions in all the dances called and a short glossary of terms. Thus it is a square dance book in addition to a program. They have also worked twenty callers in a four-hour program by limiting them to two changes and twelve minutes. I wonder if they ran on schedule.

Thanks, Gretchen Hill, for sending us this fine program.

## ANNOUNCING The 3rd Annual Rocky Mountain Folk Dance Camp

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, GOLDEN, COLO.

**2 dates: July 2-15 — July 16-29**

3 DANCE SESSIONS DAILY FEATURING:

Western Squares and Round Dances  
Texas Squares

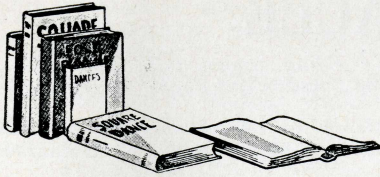
English and Danish Folk Dances  
American Country and Other Folk Dances

Folk singing, calling, visits to Denver's famed dance centers, steak fries, mountain trips, discussions, materials' display also featured.

Fee: \$75 for 2 weeks - \$40 for one week. (This includes everything.)

Write Paul J. Kermiet at above address for further particulars.





# Book Reviews

We do not stock reviewed books unless specifically stated

**DANCIN' a ROUND**, by Ginger Osgood, Virginia Anderson and Grace Hoheisal. Vol I, Los Angeles, Calif. \$1.00. Sets In Order. pp. 24.

For a long time we have needed an inexpensive book covering the easier round dances. Here is an excellent one complete with record references and instructions for the use of the records. Somebody went to a lot of trouble to give you just what you need to learn these dances.

All in all there are twenty-three dances with sometimes as many as four versions of each.

We stock this book at \$1.00 each.

Charley Thomas.

**BING CROSBY'S COUNTRY STYLE SQUARE DANCES**, by Grace Whitehead. New York. \$.60. Edwin H. Morris & Co., Inc. pp. 36.

The constable in the next office was telling me about the square dance in **Make Mine Country Style**. I'd heard the sound track on records and affirmed that nobody could dance a square dance to that calling. "But," said the constable, "they did." Then I saw the movie and was able to report that they may have done a square dance, but not what was being called. I now suggest that the best use of this book is to do dances not included.

As a sample of the things I don't like: Swap and Swing and Take Her Along to Sioux City Sue, a prompted quadrille to Wearing of the Green, Waltz Quadrille to The Rose of Tralee, Waltz Quadrille to Somewhere In Old Wyoming, the Heel and Toe Polka to a medley of The Old Grey Mare, William Tell and Bend Down Sister. Well, I don't know why we shouldn't do those dances (which, incidentally, are a block of five just lifted out) but I can't recommend them.

Somebody please teach Bing Crosby how to Square dance. He can learn to call later. P. S., I am jealous of him. What I couldn't do if I had his voice!

Charley Thomas.

**BARN DANCE**: Arling Shaeffer. M. M. Cole Publishing Co., Chicago. 66 pp. \$.75.

In spite of the calls interlined with the music and the page instruction on **Formation of the Quadrille**, this is essentially a book of music. And in spite of its blurb as "The Worlds greatest collection of quadrilles, jigs, reels and hornpipes" it doesn't include Rakes of Mallow, Devil's Dream, Ragtime Annie and other favorites.

**ONE THOUSAND FIDDLE TUNES**. M. M. Cole Publishing Co. Chicago, pp. 128. \$.75.

I didn't count them and there may be a thousand, but it doesn't include Ragtime Annie.



## BEST SELLERS FOR MARCH, 1950

1. Thomas: **Singing Calis** \$1.00
2. Lyman: **One Hundred and One Singing Calls** \$2.00
3. Burgin: **America Square Dances** \$1.50
4. Greggerson: **Herb's Blue Bonnet Calls** \$1.50
5. McNair: **Western Square Dances** \$1.00
6. Shaw: **Cowboy Dances** \$5.00
7. Thomas: **Twelve Homemade Square Dances** \$.50
7. Foster: **Learn to Dance and Call Square Dances, Part II.** \$1.00
7. Owens: **American Square Dances of the West and Southwest** \$3.50
10. Curtis: **Is Your Publicity Showing?** \$2.00 (Since this is not necessarily a square dance book, we add)
11. Shaw: **The Round Dance Book** \$5.00.

We shall be glad to supply you with any of these.



# THE ORACLE

*The sudden influx of questions which Ye Editor cannot fully answer individually has lead to the revival of the old question and answer column.*

- Q.** How do I know whether I am a beginner or an advanced student in inrolling in one of the American Squares Summer Schools? Numerous correspondents.
- A.** We let the students classify themselves. The beginners class was intended for those who know nothing about square dancing **and for those who teach beginners**. If you have danced for about a year and do not wish to learn how we teach beginners, you may classify yourself as advanced. If you find you made a mistake, you can always change during the course.
- Q.** I am interested in doing some simple dances with a group of Grade II children. Please advise me the best materials to purchase for this age group. Mrs. Karlene Currier, Hartford, Conn.
- A.** I should recommend **Partners All! Places All!** by Kirkell and Schaffnit (\$3.95) and **Honor Your Partners** by Ed Durlocher (\$7.50). Both these books start with very easy dances and give the music for all dances. **Partners All! Places All!** includes references to phonograph records. Lloyd Shaw's **Cowboy Dances** is a standard work but a bit difficult. We could supply you with any of these. If you want to give them play party games for their enjoyment rather than square dances for exhibition, I can recommend **The Play Party Book** by Ed Durlocher Devin-Adair and **Hullabaloo** by Richard Chase, Houghton Mifflin.
- Q.** I would appreciate it if you would let me know just what tempo is the best or average, that is used for square dancing . . . Will you teach calling at the Summer Schools? Don Dennis, Highland, Park, Ill.
- A.** The tempo depends on the location, experience, age and feeling of your group. California habitually dances at 140 beats per minute or better. Texas was fast but has slowed to about 126. Some New England dances are as slow as 110. (Note the metronome figures on a record review). Experienced dancers will dance faster than beginners. They need the faster tempo to keep them interested. Young dancers will dance faster than the old ones. And the same group in fine fettle and up on their toes will want to dance faster than when they're tired and played out. You have to sense this. All in all, 128 to 130 is about average for what I use myself. We shall teach calling at the camps.
- Q.** Where can I get the music for Ragtime Annie or Raggedy Ann? Mrs. Alma Garrapy, Chester Depot, Vermont.
- A.** We have just stocked **Arkansas Woodchopper's Square Dance Calls** at 50¢ just so we can sell this tune. It is listed under the name of **Raggin On**. It is also known as **Galloway Piper**.
- Q.** I received an album of Capitol records and the calls are not the ones in the booklet. Can I get the proper instructions for these records? Mrs. J. Howard Brown, Smithland, Ky.
- A.** Our review advised that the booklet did not explain the calls on the records in this album. Frankly, we think Capitol was amiss in not including instructions as the calls are fairly complicated. We can only suggest that you (and the rest of our readers) write Capitol Records at Hollywood, Calif. and tell them your troubles.
- Q.** Is the dance composed to fit the music or is the music selected to fit the dance? Gibbs J. Winslow, Fall Church, Va.
- A.** It depends on the author of the dance, of course. Generally speaking, I should say that for singing calls, the dance was made to fit the music. For patter calls and prompted calls, the dance was probably constructed first and tried to a number of tunes until some caller, and not necessarily the author found one he liked it to. Then some of these dances fitted songs so well they were made into singing calls. Connecticut does **Duck for the Oyster to Hinky Dinky Parley Vous**. Julia Dwyer used to use **Wait for the Wagon**. The "Duck for the oyster" fitted the strains of music: "the third line of **Hinky Dinky** and "Wait for the Wagon" in the latter. Cut Off 6, 4, and 2 was probably originally called, and I still call it when I use



it, which is seldom. Most callers like **Little Brown Jug** and sing the dance to it. Locally, we use the chorus of **Bully of the Town** and it makes a fine dance.

- Q.** May I attend one of the American Square Summer Schools without a partner? Ed Mezner, Rockford, Ill.
- A.** You certainly may! We have male callers who come alone and female school teachers who come alone. They use each other for partners and a good time is had by all.
- Q.** I have been unable to find old time music on the long playing records 33 1/3, with one piece on a side. I can find them with four on a side. Bert Murphy, Springfield, Colo.
- A.** That's the trouble with the set-up and one reason why we do not carry long playing records in stock. If an LP had one tune to a side so it would run thru a whole dance, there would be some point to having LP records. But instead, the companies simply put what they already have on 78 records on LPs compressing it into a smaller space. This saves only storage room and this doubtful advantage (three sized records for your carrying cases) is much offset by the ease with which the needle jumps the groove when the dancers "make those big feet jar the ground." I never recommend LPs for square dance records.



## COMING EVENTS

Send notices for June and thereafter before May 7th.

- Sat. May 6th.** Kenosha, Wisc. Mary D. Bradford High School Gym. "Doc" Newland, Dale Wagner, Chet Wangerin and Jim VanPierterson, calling.
- Sat. May 6th.** Camden, N. J. Y.M.C.A. Guest caller, Rickey Holden of San Antonio Texas.
- Sat. and Sun. May 6th & 7th.** Boston, Mass. Y.W.C.A. Sixth Annual New England Folk Festival. Two sessions each day. Ralph Page, master of ceremonies.
- Sun. May 7th.** Elizabeth, N. J. National Guard Armory. Spring Square Dance Festival. Rickey Holden, the Texas Whirlwind guest caller. 3 p. m. to 10 p. m. Al Brundages' The Pioneers playing.
- Wed. May 10th.** Torrington, Conn. Armory. "Pop" Smith's Annual Festival. Guest callers: Ralph Page, Lawrence V. Loy, Al Brundage and Charley Thomas (This was listed erroneously in last month's magazine)
- Fri. & Sat. May 12th and 13th.** Cambridge, Mass. Rindge Tech, Gym Square Dance institute conducted by Rickey Holden. Contact Ted Sannella, 16 Pleasant St., Revere, Mass.
- Sat. May 13th.** New York City. Barnard College. 24th Annual Spring Festival of the Country Dance Society of America.
- Sun. May 14th.** Stepney, Conn. Second Calico Ball at Al Brundage's Barn. Rickey Holden of San Antonio, Texas, guest caller. 8:30 to 11:30.
- Sun. May 14th.** White Plains, N. Y. Westchester County Center. Jamboree 7:30 to 11:30. Callers: Elisha Keeler, Ev DeRevere, Fran Williams, Slim Sterling, Phil Merrill and Dick Kraus.
- Tues. May 16th.** Los Angeles. Plumber Park. Callers: Arnie Kronenberg, Jim York and Dale Garrett.
- Fri. & Sat. May 19th & 20th.** Gilford, N. Hampshire. Mt. Belknap Recreation Area, Fifth New Hampshire Folk Festival.
- Sat. May 20th** Wenatchee, Wash. Festival of the Folk Dance Federation of Washington.
- May 20th Boise, Idaho.** The Boise Valley Square Dance Association will hold its fourth annual Spring Dance Round-Up, at Public School Field. This will be tied-in with Boise Music Week (now a national institution originating in Boise) and therefore will be the Second Annual Music Week Square Dance Festival.
- Fri. & Sat. May 26 and 27th** Camden, N. J., Y. M. C. A. 614 Federal St. Square Dance Institute Paul Hunt and Charley Thomas, (See advertisement.)
- Tues. May 30th** Bridgeport, Conn. Ritz Ballroom. Callers' Night and Jamboree. Music by Irv Hintz and his Farmers Boys. Tom Gamby, host caller.
- Sun. June 4th.** Allentown, Pa., Castle Garden, Dorney Park, Route 222. Happy Square Dance Club, Exhibition and Jamboree. Starting 12 m. Free.
- Sun., June 4th.** Superior, Wisc. State College Gymnasium. Wisconsin Federation Square Dance Festival. 2 p. m. to 6 p. m.
- June 5th to 10.** Natchitoches, Louisiana. Square Dance Teachers Course, Jimmy Clossin, Instructor. Northwestern State Teachers College.



## BILL OF RIGHTS

(Continued from Page Two)

which and should not inflict juvenile dances upon you. Some of our most enjoyable dances have very simple steps, a dance does not have to be complicated to be an adult dance.

7. "Four hands up and around you go, do si do etc." Are you in the habit of barely touching hands and going into the do si do, finishing with a couple between you and your next position? This is a fault of callers and dancers alike. Why not fix it?

8. Speed. What precedent is your caller following? Have you ever asked him? You might be surprised.

Should the same speed be maintained for every dance? Ask your caller.

Trusting souls, square dancers.

Nothing is more beautiful than the sight of proficient dancers doing a square dance at very high speed. Nothing could be quite as gruesome as a group of hopefuls attempting the same thing. High speed is for experts only. Make no mistake. What is happening to your group?

9. Patter and rhyming are encroaching upon the clarity of calls. You are entitled to a reasonably clear meaning in the call. The caller is supposed to give a "walk-thru" where any doubts exist. No sharp dividing line can be made.

10. Clowning. Lets not be too serious in our dancing, we need the clown dances, but lets call them clown dances and dance them that way. Lets not be caught doing a clown dance seriously.

11. Back to categories. Many callers are rushing to be first with the newest. Many new dances are coming out with little except their newness to recommend them. We are breaking out with a rash of dances that all look alike. How about a balanced program?

12. This is a "pattern for feudin'." How is the feud between the "folk" and the "Square" dancers going in your vicinity. We are quite well apart in our region, thank you. Now a true hater should go all the way. A folk dancer should never dance a square. A square dancer should never dance a folk dance; least of all should he dance European folk dances. Be sure to have your leader tell you which is which. My object here is to get the pot to call the kettle black, hoping that both sides will realize the utter absurdity of the whole thing. We have temporary custody of these old dances which are part of our culture. Lets be decent enough to enjoy them while we have them. They will go on after we are out of the picture.

13. This is probably the most important of all. Do I need to remind you that old-time dancing took a nose-dive and didn't come up for air for some considerable time. Each person has his reason, just as each person can explain why we fight a war. One of the primary causes of the demise of dancing of any sort at any time is (believe it or not) the expert, the instructor, the choreographer. Lets look at him. His learning days are over, he is an expert now. He forgets the days when he stumbled and became befuddled. He views with alarm the simple little dance that you the dancer enjoy. For example take the Oklahoma Mixer. The expert greatly fears that is too simple. To him it just that. To you, the dancer, it is a source of great pleasure. You worked hard to learn it and now you dance it repeatedly and enjoy it. But not so to your choreographer, he must brighten it up. So the Oklahoma Mixer acquires some new flourishes. The boss and his chosen few (the star dancers of your group, of course) demonstrate this new technique. But that hardly suffices, he dreams up more and more. Fancy frills are still added. Now, you, the dancer, can hardly keep up. You strive manfully to master the new things. The boss is well on his way now, but a rival choreo has added another frill and your man is not to be outdone, so here comes still another. At this point, you, the dancer, rebel. The boss-man, however, knows that you are at heart a weakling. He has his experts demonstrate the newest movement. But like all things, the Oklahoma Mixer is no more. It is gone. The boss now tackles another dance, a frill here and a frill there until the only ones who can dance now are the chosen few stars. You the dancer, are ticketed as unfeeling people with no soul for art. All you ever wanted, was to do some dancing and have some fun. Your expert forgot that. All experts are like that. Most of them do not know it, but underneath each has that urge to make everything fancier and fancier until they themselves kill their own vehicle. Fortunately, most of



# American Squares Summer Schools

*Camp Ihduhapi, Loretta, Minn.*

*August 27th to September 3rd, September 1st to 4th*

Camp Ihduhapi is the finest and most complete grounds on which a camp will be held this summer. On high maple grove hills overlooking Lake Independence, 24 miles northwest of Minneapolis, Camp Ihduhapi offers 14 cabins, recreation lodge, dining hall, tennis courts, play fields, volleyball courts, boats, pier and diving tower.

Our school at Ihduhapi will be taught by Jimmy Clossin, Ralph Piper and Charley Thomas—last year's staff. No finer, representative faculty can be collected, representing as they do Texas (the Southwest) Minnesota (Middle-west) and New Jersey (East) in square dancing. Some of each type of dancing and dances will be taught.

In addition, the Ihduhapi school is drawing registration from some of the leading square dance lights: Frank Lyman, author of *One Hundred and One Singing Calls* and Mark Dannis, well-known beginners' instructor, have indicated their intention of attending.

This school will extend over the Labor Day weekend and students may register for the week, the weekend or both. Just send the registration fee of \$5.00 to American Squares, 121 Delaware Street, Woodbury, N. J. It is refundable up to two weeks before the camp or it is transferable.

Write for our bulletin on our Camps. We'll be glad to send it to you and your friends.

Other Camps:

July 2nd to 8th

Park College, Parkville (near Kansas City), Missouri

August 6th to 12th

Camp Farley, Mashpee (Cape Cod), Massachusetts



them are held in check by wiser people. Some hold themselves in check.

The great mass are average dancers, not experts. See if you can get your leader to make this a basic factor in your group.

14. Vaudeville died. Many of our callers are attempting to be extremely funny. Devastating wit, scintillating humor, are being widely offered in square dance calls. Bob Hope and Bing Crosby will soon be standing in the lines of the unemployed. Do you think we can bring vaudeville back? Some callers do not realize that they are riding on the crest of a wave of popularity of a lot of old-time dances which are pleasing to a lot of people. Mistakenly, these men think that their devastating wit and humor etc, are causing this upsurge. If they are really funny and have real talent, someone will come and get them. They are just wasting their time square dancing. Lets leave vaudeville where it is, and lets permit Bob and Bing to hold their jobs just a bit longer.

Guy R. Merrill



The latest addition to square dance schools is the one to be held at Al Brundage's Barn in Stepney, Conn. (See advertisement). With a faculty including Olga Kublitsky, Rickey Holden, and Frank Kaltman, in addition to Al Brundage, this should be one of the better schools.



"Here I should like to quote a passage from the description by Prince Bernhard of Saxony-Weimar of his travels in 1825 in the United States, and the dance music at a ball in Columbia, South Carolina.

"The music consisted," so the Prince writes, "of two violins and a tambourine. This tambourine was struck with a terrible energy. The two others scraped the violin in the truest sense of the word. One of them cried out the figures, imitating with his body all the motions of the dance . . ." from *The Story of Dance Music* by Paul Nettl. Originally published at \$4.75, it can be obtained from us at \$2.25.



# Try These

## ARKANSAW TRAVELER

Music: Arkansaw Traveller. Record: Capitol 145.

Introduction:

First and third couples go forward and back  
Forward again with a right to your opposite for a right hand round  
Partners left and a left all around  
Corners right with a right hand round (all four couples)  
Partners left and a left all around  
And promenade your corner when you come down  
Repeat three more time for the first and third couples  
Ladies will now be back in their original places  
Repeat four times for the side couples.

Rae Hope, Colorado Springs, Colo.



### Calls for "ALABAMA JUBILEE"

(You have the number in the record review)

Record: Windsor

OPENER:

Now you honor your partner, the girl on your right (right hand lady)  
Swing with your corner, 'til she tells you good night  
Swing your partner, then push her away  
Now you yank her back and you swing and sway  
Allemand left and a right and left grand  
When you meet your honey, just take her by the hand  
Then we'll promenade home, just you and me  
To the Alabama Jubilee . . . Yeah Man!  
Promenade to the promised land.

FIGURE:

Four ladies promenade the inside ring (with left hand star, if desired)  
Back to that boy and you give him a swing  
Now Docey 'round with the corner girl  
Bow to your partner and give her a whirl  
Four gents will promenade inside the hall (with left hand star, if desired)  
Back to your partner and Do Sa Do all  
Now your corner girl will swing with you  
Promenade like an old Choo-Choo . . . Whoo-ee (fast promenade, gents in close)  
to the Alabama jubilee.

BREAK (and closer):

It's a left to your corner and turn her around  
A right to your partner and a full turn around  
Right hand lady with the left hand round  
Swing your honey 'til her feet leave the ground  
Allemand left and a right and left grand  
When you meet your honey, just take her by the hand  
Then we'll promenade home just you and me  
To the Alabama Jubilee . . . Yeah man!

(Repeat figure and break three more times to complete dance)

Windsor Co.



### THREE HAND STAR

Music: Any fiddle tune. Record: Old timer 8011 (Jumpin' Cactus)

1st couple balance and swing; And turn back to back  
Both run around the outside track (lady right, gent left)  
All the way around just you two (pass right shoulder on opposite sides)  
Meet your partner (home position) and pass on thru (pass right shoulders,  
lady goes to couple No. 2, gent goes to No. 4)  
Make two three-hand stars: One like Venus and one like Mars (right hand)  
Now back to the left like you used to do (3 hand stars with the left)  
And form a right hand star with the lonesome two (couple No. 1 and 3) (1  
revolution)  
Now on to the corners with your left hand (original corners)  
And dance right into a right and left grand

Rae Hope, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Order from American Squares



## SPLIT THE RING AND AROUND JUST ONE

Head two couples balance and swing,  
Up to the center and back to the ring.  
Now right and left through with your pretty little taw,  
And around just one with a gee and a haw.

(Both couples execute a right and left through; ladies turn right, gents left, and go around JUST ONE, meeting your opposite between the side couples.  
Now a right and left through with new little mate,  
And around just one and head for the gate.

(Both couples execute a right and left through; ladies turn right, gents left, and go around JUST ONE, meeting your own partner opposite the gent's home position.

Now a right and left through across the ring,  
And now you're home and everybody swing.

(Both couples execute a right and left through, returning home and do a waist swing.

Allemand left with your left wing  
Pass your partner, pretty little thing,  
Turn the next with a left hand swing.

(All execute an allemand left, touch right hands with your partner, pass her by, swing the next lady all the way around with a left hand swing.

**NOTE**—This dance is a gents progression, and by executing the last three lines the men have progressed one quarter around the square to their right, ready to dance the next change with their new partners.

Repeat three times; put in a filler; then call with sides leading.



## ROAD TO THE ISLES (Scotch Schottische)

Record: Imperial 1005

**Left**—left foot touched forward, **left** step on left back, back of right, **right**—step, right foot to side, **left**—step left over right, **right**—touch right foot forward. Now reverse going to your left. **Right, left, right, left**, this leaves your left foot forward so touch the left foot to the rear and **schottische** forward **left, right, left, hop (left) right, left right hop and turn** (on right foot), **left, right, left, hop and turn, stamp 2—3, repeat.**



## HOT PRETZELS

Record: Victor 25-1009

All start with the left foot. Step is the same as **Road to the Isles** with the exception that the extended foot is held for one count while the change in between are quickened. **Left**—left, **right, left**—right. **Right, left right**—left. **Left, right walk**, walk forward left 1, right 2, left 3, right 4, stamp left 5; kick right forward, step back of left with right foot, step to the left with the left foot, step over the left with right foot, place the left foot forward—repeat. Lean back each time foot goes forward.

John Wald, St. Paul, Minn.



Mail to Jack Hartley, 5512 Second Ave., N. E., Seattle, Wash. has been returned. Will he please send us a new address?

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## SQUARE DANCE INSTITUTE

Camden Y.M.C.A. Friday & Saturday, May 26th & 27th  
INSTRUCTORS PAUL HUNT and CHARLEY THOMAS

Friday evening: } Advanced Square Dancing  
Saturday morning: } Caller's course and folk and exhibition  
                          } dancing. Two separate classes with the  
Saturday afternoon: } instructors alternating  
Saturday evening: } Instruction in square dancing and  
                          } practice calling

Tuition: \$3.00 for the course  
          \$1.00 per class except Saturday evening: \$1.25

Visiting men can find over-night lodging at the Camden Y. No registration is necessary unless you desire lodging. Then write Camden Y.M.C.A., 614 Federal St., Camden, N. J.

Mimeographed instructions—wire recorder used, hear yourself call.

## A DANCING VACATION

— Have fun while learning and practicing —

— July 16 to 23, 1950 —

An intensive course in square dancing, calling and folk dancing for dance enthusiasts, recreation leaders and those interested in physical education. Under the direction of Mary and Fred Collette, nationally recognized for their ability to dance as well as teach. Using the fine facilities of Georgia Military Academy, 7 miles from Atlanta. Cost is \$50. for the week, including tuition, meals, room and linen. For further information write

### Dixie Folk and Square Dance Institute

1268 University Dr. N. E.

Atlanta 6, Ga.

## AMERICAN SQUARES ANNOUNCES

Two New Books Available May 15th

### *Square and Circle*

By VIRGINIA ANDERSON

The dances contained in the second year of American Squares edited and annotated by your associate editor, with introduction, basic figures and record suggestions.

### *Square Your Sets*

By GEORGE and MARION WARDLY

We rated this book so high as a sectional (Arizona) book and the first edition disappeared so rapidly we were delighted to obtain permission to publish this second edition. A fine collection of dances.

\$1.00 Each (Usual Discount to Dealers)

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