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AMERICAN SQUARES



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MERRY CHRISTMAS

THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK DANCING

VOL. VIII—No. 4

DECEMBER 1952

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AMERICAN SQUARES

THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK DANCING

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From Alaska to the Isthmus

TAKE IT EASY — YOU'LL LAST LONGER

Proper tempo for modern dancing varies from about 110 (for the early American dancers in the Detroit area) to about 165 (for the mountain dancers of the Appalachians). Just where within these extremes is the optimum tempo for you?

Each of the extremes is absolutely proper, but only for the area and style mentioned in the parentheses. For all other square set dancing I feel quite safe in recommending a tempo of somewhere between 120 and 130. Areas dancing faster than this right now will, I am confident, either gravitate toward 120-130 or quit dancing because the dancers have all been killed off.

In the last three or four years it has been my privilege to call for various groups in over half the states in this country, and also in Canada. In each case I have held to 120-130; it has never seemed necessary to go faster.

Two callers who have each been calling for over 15 years, one in southwestern New Hampshire, the other around Taylor Co., Texas, both swear they always use the exact same tempo (between 120 and 128). How strange! And these two areas are among the very best places to dance in the entire U. S. It would rightly seem that the tempo of good dancing is pretty much the same everywhere.

Californians would like to believe otherwise, saying, "Western Square Dancing, of course, is much faster than its Eastern cousin."¹ "Speed depends largely upon the ability of the dancers; it could not possibly be consistent. However, 140 to 146 may be set as a fair average."²

In the early days of the Southern California square dance boom a huge dance³ was held at the Pan-Pacific Auditorium, and the average tempo was admittedly 152. One dancer's comment was, "Having lived for many years on a cattle ranch in the middle west, and dancing square dances for a long time, this performance reminded me of a herd of five thousand head of cattle that I saw stampede once, when I was a child."⁴ Another dancer pointed out, "The difference between the slower . . . tempo . . . and the California rat-race tempo is the difference between pleasant recreation and hard work."⁵

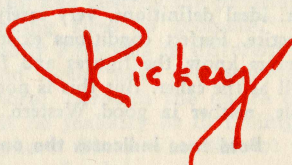
Defending the Pan-Pacific tempo, Carl Myles suggested that people didn't realize the true reason for it: because of the placement of the speaker horns, the callers were forced to pick up the beat to keep up with feedback.⁶

Admitting the humor of this gag, the fact remains that the dancers found the tempo too speedy for them. Why did the Pan-Pacific callers then, and why do so many callers now, insist on calling this way? The answer is not hard. "If we call fast," goes the thinking, "so they never get a chance to relax and think about things, nobody will ever notice how bad we are." Striking up a fast tempo is about the easiest way to cover up poor calling.

Many callers try to lay the blame on the music, either on the orchestra or the records. This excuse is so much hogwash. There is no orchestra anywhere that will not play at exactly the tempo the caller wishes. At least I have never met one, and I've called with a good many. It is true that most records are way too fast for comfortable dancing (notable exceptions are the Folk Dancer 12" contra series, most of the Folkraft 12" series and some of the new MacGregors). Furthermore, almost every record player used for square dancing has some speed control device (the Rek-O-Kut Rhythm-master is about the best of these, having continuous and accurate variation from 25 to 100 rpm).

How fast are you dancing? Check up and see. Proper tempo is one of the three great problems confronting the modern square dance movement.

Is there a simple answer? Sure! Slow it down!! Whoa!!!



1. Sets in Order v1n1 Nov48 p20.
2. Let's Dance v7n5 May50 p26.
3. A [] D 4th Roundup, 27 Feb. 1949.
4. Sets in Order v1n4 Apr49 p20-21.
5. *ibid.* v1n6 Jun49 p28.
6. *ibid.* v1n5 May49 p22.

SQUARE DANCE --



The mystery of phrasing is beginning to intrigue more and more callers, especially in the Western U. S. where phrasing is a very new idea. Not much has been written on the subject and the one book which does discuss it to any great extent (a book which, unfortunately, I wrote) has not explained anything completely. If it had there should probably be lots less confusion. October's editorial (p. 3) talked about why phrasing is important. The following article explains the mechanics of the final, and by far the hardest, step in proper phrasing.

The essential idea of phrasing is a very simple one: all dancing is allied inextricably with the music.

A very good Eastern caller friend of mine passed on this helpful advice, "Any damn fool can sing a call, but it takes a real caller to make it come out right with the music." This same friend, when asked by an eager Western lady how many counts he allowed for this or that figure, said, "Why, ma'am, we don't count it out in our part of the country, we just dance to the music." He said this as if there were no other way to dance.

It is technically incorrect and emotionally disturbing to dance out of time and out of phrase with the music. It is natural to dance with the music. You should not start any dance before the music tells you to, and the square dance caller should do everything in his power to help his dancers start when the music does.

Often I have used, as a sort of final examination question for callers' classes, the following: "Theoretically perfect phrasing involves having the dancers' movement, the caller's words and the music, all three (the square dance trinity) start at the same time on count 1 of a 1-2-3-4 sequence. On the other hand, theoretically perfect timing requires the command words to come about two beats ahead of the dancer's movement, in order to give them time to react to the call. How can you reconcile these two statements?"

The answer is that these are ultimate, perfect, ideal definitions, very rarely attained in practice. Perfect conditions exist only when dancers know the figures and fillers just as well as the caller. But this is not 100% possible, neither in good Western dancing nor

in good Eastern dancing, because the dancers must listen to the caller. Then the practical workable answer is that you do both: you call with the 1-2-3-4 when the music and dancers start, but you cue in the dancers a couple of beats ahead of the "1" so they have reaction time. You prompt for the cue command and repeat and reemphasize on the 1-2-3-4.

There is always a solid bond between music and dance. This bond must not be broken or disturbed. The caller listens to the music, then calls so that dancers respond in time and in phrase with the music. A good and successful caller must recognize this. A bad caller often disregards this, ignoring and thus destroying the sacred union between music and dance.

Dance music and dance movement are the most important two of the trinity. Many people who have just discovered phrasing seem content to think the most important bond is between the call words and the music, but this is not true. The words are not important at all in the basic problem of phrasing. Words are fitted in any possible way they can help the dancers dance. The command must be just enough ahead so the dancers will understand and be able to start with happy comfort on the proper count 1. Correct timing may find the essential command words $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 2, $2\frac{1}{2}$, 3 or even more beats ahead of the action. Furthermore it is possible and sometimes necessary to cue in the given movement a different number of beats ahead at different times.

The following eight fragmentary calls give illustrations of cues coming in everywhere from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 beats ahead of where the action is supposed to start.

Bold face indicates the on- or full beat; light face indicates the off- or half beat.

Cue:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	now
Action:	sa	shay	part	ner	half	way	round	_____
Cue:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	al	le
Action:	mande	your	left	on	your	left	hand	_____
Cue:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	hey!	head	two
Action:	one	and	three	go	up	and	back	_____

Cue:	_____	_____	_____	_____	go	to the	corner	and
Action:	alle	mande	left	with	your	left	hand	_____
Cue:	_____	_____	_____	then	join	your	hands	and
Action:	cir	cle	left	in a	great	big	ring	_____
Cue:	_____	_____	other	way	back	now	left	hand
Action:	star	by the	left	hand	round	you	go	_____
Cue:	_____	the	in	side	cou	ple	arch	and
Action:	dip	and	dive	and	don't	you	know	_____
Cue:	same	two	cou	ples	one	and	three	lead
Action:	out	to the	left	to the	left	you	cir	cle

It all depends on how well the caller knows his dancers, and you can't get away with many half-beat commands until the dancers know you pretty well. Actually a half-beat cue is little more than an attention getter. But look! What is any call but just such an attention getter?

It works out that the standard average cue time necessary everywhere is about 2 beats. Remember, however, that this is an *average*. The smarter the dancers the less

amount of cueing they need; the smarter the caller the more he knows just how much to give. The very smartest callers shut up awhile and let them dance to the purty sound of the music.

The basic construction of all square dance music is in groups of 64-beats, or, more simply, 16-beats, or, most simply, 4 beats. It is essential that dancers feel this musical construction if square dancing is to remain

(Continued on page 16)

Amarillo's National SD Contest

The Seventh Annual National Square Dance Contest was held in Amarillo, Texas, last month and was this year a memorial to H. Grady Wilson, guiding spirit of the contest since its inception and loved by square dancers through the entire southwest.

Winners in the Adult Square Division were: first, Columbine Set, Denver, Colorado, Roy Krosky, caller; second, Turnpike Ten Minus Two, Boulder, Colo., Pete McCabe, caller; third, Hawkeye Set, Fort Madison, Iowa, Frank Lyman, caller. Young Folks Division: first, Cornhusker Set, Fort Madison, Iowa, Frank Lyman, caller; second, Crawdad Jr. Set, Waco, Texas, Mabel Balch, caller; third, Carnation Set, Walsenberg, Colo., Rodney Harris, caller.

In the Calling Contest, winners of Ladies Patter were: first, Mrs. Mabel Balch, Waco, Texas (also last year's winner); second, Eva Lee Eubank, Childress, Tex.; third, Yvonne Mabry, Waco, Tex. Ladies Singing winners: first, Rosie Coon, Mountain View, Okla.; second, Beulah Williams, Childress, Tex.; third, Jana McGraw, Amarillo. Winners of Men's Patter: first, Jim Brower, Texarkana, U.S.A.; second, Ross Lingle, Altus, Okla.; third, Selmer Hovland, Wagon Mound, N. M. In Men's Singing Division: first, Leon Jones, Elk City, Okla.; second, LeRoy Neddeau, Shawnee, Okla.;

third, Ross Carney, Ft. Worth, Tex.

The subject of square dance contests has been hotly debated many times in many places. Herewith we present a report on the Amarillo Contest by Dia and Harry Trygg, formerly of Tucson and now residents of Amarillo. Because of space, we have had to edit their remarks somewhat. But we feel that they put their views well, and our readers are given an opportunity to consider them further.

THE TRYGGS LIKED IT

"For more years than we like to admit we've loved square dancing! In Illinois, Kansas, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, California, etc., we've always heard "NEVER have contests as they kill the true meaning and destroy the philosophy square dancing tries to promote." We attended many Festivals in different capacities and never have we enjoyed a Festival more! Through the entire contest we felt no jealousy or ill feeling in the atmosphere. Those who did not win felt they learned a lot.

"The three hurdles Amarillo must clear if this spectacular Contest and Festival is to continue are these. (1) The acoustic problem must be solved. (2) Since the competing callers are calling to dancers

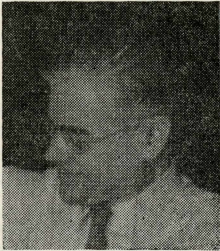
(Continued on page 19)

Pattern or Patterns in American Culture

by

Joseph E. Baker

Joseph E. Baker grew up in central Illinois, where square dancing had died out. He took a Ph. D. at Princeton, then taught at Northwestern, but left both areas before interest was reawakened in this old American, old English art. Now at the University of Iowa, he teaches courses in Victorian and world literature



He has published a number of books and articles in literary and cultural criticism, including a series on regional culture in the Middle West. He had never square danced until he and his wife joined a student-faculty club five years ago. Since attending the 1951 Chicago Int'l Festival. Dr. and Mrs. Baker have explored various varieties of dancing (square and round) from the Southwest to the tip of the Gaspe' in French Canada. His "Gaspe' Square Dance" was published in the Mid-Century Anthology of Prose and Poetry (Los Angeles, 1950). He is now investigating the style of square dancing, waltz, two step and other traditional dances in urban and rural regions in the Middle West.

AMERICAN SQUARES considers it a privilege to present Dr. Baker's scholarly discussion of the cultural trends and implications of our present square dance development.

"The widely accepted assumption that there is a 'General American' type of English proves to be," says Hans Kurath, "unfounded in fact; no Southerner or New Englander would ever have made such a generalization." We could make almost the same statement concerning other aspects of our civilization; for a striking example, the assumption that there is or ought to be a general American type of square dancing. Other things in our way of life, or *ways of life*, will occur to any shrewd observer, as items which are regionally varied, at least for "the common man." Indeed, there is no one common way of life for our common men. Let us be deeply grateful for that fact. Variety is the spice of national life, and I hope we shall long be able to talk about ourselves in the plural.

Academic culture in America is of course cosmopolitan, and sometimes ignores or scornfully turns up its nose at the variants which make our existence potentially rich. Only occasionally do we find the kind of study from which I have just quoted, Kurath's *A Word Geography of the Eastern United States*, published by the University of Michigan Press in 1949. And we might extend to subjects other than speech another of his observations:

It is rather strange that in our country with its ideals of democracy and its respect for the common man the scientific study of folk speech and of common speech should lag so far behind the work done in European countries. But it is a fact. Students and teachers of English have focused their attention almost exclusively on the literary language and on cultivated speech—often

without proper regard for the existing regional differences in the speech of the best educated. Folk speech has been dabbled in by scholars and by amateurs. But the speech of the large middle class has hardly been touched by trained linguists despite a lively popular interest in this subject. (And the "amazing popularity" of Mencken's *American Language* is noted.)

When we turn to such a popular art as the dance, especially the square dance, we are not surprised to find a conflict between two tendencies: regional variation and national standardization. The lines of the conflict are not sharply drawn; there are not two parties, regionalists and standardizers. Few are fully conscious of the issues. If square dancers were polled, I believe most of them would "vote regionalist," or dance regionalist, for that is more fun. But in some ways it is easier to let standardization increase. There is a certain tendency for cultural waters to run down hill, for the many different lively rivers to mix in one quiet lake. That can be fatal to any of the lively arts.

Here are some examples of what I mean: "Wisconsin's Own Square Dance Magazine" is the subtitle of *Fiddle and Squares*. There is the Arkansas *RoundUp* (spelled with two capitals, and sometimes with a hyphen) published monthly, and also *The Roundup* published by the Folk Dance Federation of Minnesota. These periodicals show some regional variations, but not as much as one might expect. The *Roundup* from Minnesota does show the influence of a living folk-dance tradition kept alive by peoples from

North Europe. But its Arkansas namesake gives little evidence of conscious pride in the cultivation of the Ozark style of square-dancing, colorful as that is, important as it has been in the *American* development of popular dances. Sometimes one gets the impression that the "common man" is timid about exploiting the rich variations that are so extreme and so ancient that they deserve the term "folk dancing." Or rather, one senses an almost unconscious conflict between the temptation to "cut loose" and do just that, and the temptation to be carefully "middle class."

To yield to the latter temptation is of course to violate the very spirit of the present square dance revival. Slick standardization would be even more damaging in this lively art than it has been in the lively art of movies. And there is reason to fear that the so-called "Hollywood" qualities of the latter are paralleled in some of the square dance activities in California, in their emphasis on cheap novelty instead of beauty, and on ingenuity instead of vitality. We may hope that these forces in the California influence will not dominate dancing as they have dominated the movies, simply for technological reasons: New England cannot compete with Hollywood as a climate from which to disseminate the products of cinematic machines; but there is no reason why the New England styles of dancing should not hold their own wherever they are enjoyed.

I do not mean that Californians should never dance New England dances, or *vice versa*, any more than I would argue that no one should ever speak French in London. French is no less French when it is spoken elsewhere. Scotch is no less Scotch when it is spoken, or drunk, elsewhere. It is the mark of a cultivated society to have several languages available; it is the mark of a cultivated art to have several styles available. That is something very different from trying to iron out the differences. We do not want to liquidate but to enjoy the peculiar qualities of Viennese cooking, Scottish accent, and New England contra dances.

Turning to *American Squares*, I find that the first copy I pick up illustrates these tendencies very well. (It is the issue for November, 1951.) There is an article, "How We Do It In Our Town," which turns out to be a report on the regional differences in the Dos-a-dos, or the Do-si-do. (Even the spelling is varied, more than for any other word in common use today; we are in the presence of an oral tradition and a "folk" speech.) But, on the other side, this issue prints a letter defending the use of Western attire consistently in square dance clubs out-

side the West. Should there be a standard costume for square dancing? Forces pull in both directions.

And there is, in this issue, an account of a trip from Palm Springs to Maine, back to Oregon and down to San Diego, "dancing around the country," appreciative of some of the delights of variety; e.g. "we were entranced with that Ozark rat a tat tat square dancing." Yet this is countered, in the same article, with an apparent approval of the fact that they "found that there is a great deal of uniformity . . . Of course there are areas where the dancing is radically different, but in general we have found that it is possible to dance and have a good time in practically every part of the country, provided you know ten or twelve basic fundamentals (and are willing to vary them to suit the locality.)"

I think this is a very characteristic statement, for it is neither clearly for or against uniformity, neither for or against radically different variation. Is this the attitude of the "common man" towards his regional culture? Probably. Yet it should be noticed also that there is already considerable interest—even in that last sentence—in the variations, though they are not being defended against uniformity.

In 1950 and again in 1951 an "International" Square Dance Festival was held in October at Chicago. I quote "International" because all the delegations were from places in the United States with the exception of one, each year, from Canada. No prizes were offered; it was not a contest. People came for the pleasure of dancing and of watching the spectacle—a fine spectacle indeed. From the West, the South, the East, from Chicago, from almost every Midwestern state, they came, either as spectators or as dancers. Here was an excellent opportunity to display the regional differences in square dancing, an opportunity not fully exploited. Neither Arkansas nor Missouri demonstrated the Ozark style; and none of the states bordering the Southern Appalachians demonstrated the wonderful dances which live on with such vigor in those mountains. The Kentucky delegation, for example, did not dance the Kentucky running set.

Nevertheless, there was a great deal in these two festivals to delight the heart of a regionalist. Demonstration squares from the Far West would have been recognized as Western without being labelled. Oklahoma's contributions were inimitable. The French Canadian square at the 1950 Festival was out of this English-speaking world. (Each demonstration supplied its own caller.) And from Georgia in 1950 came a group that used

the circle formation found in the Southern Appalachians plus the costuming of the women in pre-Civil-War hoop skirts with ruffles, and the men in black velvet trousers and silk shirts. Such elegance on a folk basis could only be the South. And Indiana, at that first Festival, fascinated the audience with one very Hoosier performance, full of rustic comedy.

At the second "International" Festival in 1951 there were, curiously enough, greater tendencies both to ignore, and to exploit the differences in regional styles. Demonstration squares from many cities showed an unfortunate similarity; a number of them could have interchanged their parts without loss of efficiency. There were even some pastiches or centos, wherein various passages from regular dances were glued together to make a more complicated figure without form or structure. One such was presented by the Iowa delegation, a dance made up for this specific occasion. It did not have a beginning, a middle, and an end; it could have begun or stopped at any point. The effect of such an artificially concocted dance can be gaudy. Yet in the Iowa dance, the most striking passage, the movement which brought the most spontaneous applause of any in the whole Festival, was itself a development of what was called *the hey* in the sixteenth century!

Tradition is really alive and bouncing on the dance floor today. And the more tradition the merrier. Even in its most artificial forms the square dance is a continuation, often ignorant of its own ancestry, of English dances popular at the courts of Queen Elizabeth I and of Charles II. I am reminded of a comment from a book, *Brookes on Modern Dancing* (1867) written when the blight of genteel affectation was threatening to obliterate such popular arts:

English Country Dances are now out of vogue in fashionable assemblies. They belong to a ruder age than the present, and a blither and merrier style of manner than that which prevails in the fashionable world at present, and therefore whatever merit they possess in the estimate of the cheerful, the gay, and the light-hearted, they hold a very inferior place in the programme of a modern festivity.

Brookes adds: "In many of the Northern and Eastern States the following are a portion of the country dances still in vogue," and cites, for example, Money Musk, Rustic Reel, Tempest, Pop goes the Weasel.

Now, the great-grandchildren of Brookes' patrons, if they were in Chicago late in

October of 1951, could witness the perennial vitality of this old art. The report of its death had been greatly exaggerated. For by general acclaim and public recognition one of the high points of the festival was the calling of New England "contra" or "country" dances by Al Brundage of Connecticut. He explained and called—the two processes are one, of course, for every great caller is a skilled teacher—such dances as Lady Walpole's Reel, so that many of us who had never seen a New England contra dance could participate in that regional art.

This was possible because of one of the finest innovations by which the Second "International" Square Dance Festival marked an advance upon its predecessor of 1950: This time, while the demonstrations were going on in the main arena, and even before the demonstrations, dancing open to the public was available in the side halls.*

Ed Gilmore's kind of "Western" was commonly spoken of as "California style." Rickey Holden's "Texas style" was much more lively and traditional. These regional variants found apt pupils among the hundreds of expert dancers assembled at Chicago. To quote one caller:

And for two Days and two Nights there was music and dancing and friendliness—surely a square dancer's Paradise. And they did have themselves a Time, and did learn many Things before they again departed unto their homes.

If only such a description could be applied to the meetings assembled in the name of other arts!

We Americans travel around a great deal in our own country, apparently in search of a change, so that we can enjoy something different. Then we frustrate ourselves by ironing out the differences. Automobile advertisements and state publicity aimed at the tourist trade often show a realistic appreciation of the hunger for diversity that is common among our people. There is a popular song, "That's What I Like About the South," a tribute to regional differences. The *New Yorker* does not focus its attention upon those aspects of New York that it has in common with the other American cities. Western movies do not stress those features which the Western laboring man, the cowboy, had in common with other hired hands on farms.

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*For complete program and time schedule of the 1951 Festival, see *American Squares* v7 n2 (Oct. 1951) p29.

The Roving Editor Visits

Pittsburgh—New York— And the Chicago Festival

PITTSBURGH. There is quite a bit of square dancing in the Pittsburgh area but as yet it has not found its way into the city recreation centers where its stiffest competition would be basket weaving. The impression I gained from discussing the problem with those familiar with it was that there are not sufficient competent callers to launch such a program. There is no lack of ability or interest in square dancing; rather the lack is in cooperation among the members of the Pittsburgh Area Callers Association. The "Ys" have a well developed program for their young people's organization that has produced many top level dancers, but, typical of all "Y" dances, it is exuberant and this excludes the more sedate.

Most of the dancing is confined to closed clubs in the outlying residential areas. I was privileged to visit one of these clubs as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Swann (Luke and Jimmy to their friends). The club, Mt. Lebanon Squares, meets in the Youth Center, Cedar Lodge in Mt. Lebanon Park. Gene Clason called. I wish space permitted naming all the nice friendly folks I meet at affairs such as this but it doesn't, so please accept my sincere thank you one and all for your gracious hospitality.

An interesting evening was spent with Eero Davidson during which we visited two dances, one with Bayliss Ward calling at Richland (Pa.) Youth Center, and one called by Bob King at East Liberty Y.M.C.A. When it comes to putting "zip" into the old time calls, there's a lot we "Johnny-come-latelys" could learn from callers like Bayliss. There are few of us who could call an open dance all evening without ever seeing the dancers, but Bayliss does it very well. Bob's dance was practically over when we arrived so our visit was limited. And Eero, I hope you will take time out from your busy life to write an article for AMERICAN SQUARES about the folksong and folkdance camps you spoke of.

NEW YORK CITY. My stay in New York City was limited so I have no true

(Continued on page 20)



Michael Herman,
Editor of Folk Dance
Magazine and one
of America's
foremost Teachers
of Folk Dancing

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#7419. Nobody's Business (134)//Sweet Georgia Brown (132)

A pair of interesting dances capably called by Bruce Johnson, a young man who is growing in stature with every new record. The background music is well played by the Sundowners. Nobody's Business is a singing modification of Four Gents Star. Sweet Georgia Brown, another simple dance which starts like Cut Off Six and gets a little more complicated, has three individual figures and has some rather clever word structure.

#7119. Nobody's Business (134)//Sweet Georgia Brown (132) Instrumental.

#7408. Hall's Hash (134)//Johnson's Jumble (134) With calls.

Hall's Hash, a real hash of pieces of many dances, is lots more fun to do if you tear up the instruction sheet that comes with the record and get thoroughly surprised. In Johnson's Jumble, may we congratulate Bruce Johnson on some beautiful rhythmic calling. The dance is an unholy mess—the complexity never gives the dancer a chance to relax and enjoy the call, for the stress is on developing an intricate mathematical maze. The calling, however, is a delight to hear.

#7420. Bill Bailey (136)//Ballin' the Jack (136) With calls.

Bill Bailey: a very catchy tune to which has been placed an old quadrille figure, lots of lady chaining plus half promenades, etc. Second side, Ballin' the Jack, is a singing call arrangement of an original dance by Doc Alumbaugh. It is quite a pleasant figure and one which you will not get tired of too soon. My one objection is the suggested note of violence in the last line of the call.

#7120. Bill Bailey (136)//Ballin' the Jack (136) Instrumental.

Folkraft records, 12-inch, plastic, 78 rpm.

Price, \$1.78

#1215. Camptown Races (132)//Old Joe Clark (138) Uncalled.

#1216. Marching Thru Georgia (126)// Rig A Jig (132) Uncalled.

#1217. Red River Valley (116)//Bell Bottom Trousers (126) Uncalled.

This month, for the first time, we feature a guest reviewer in our Record Review column. We quote from the New England Caller (Oct. 1952, p. 22), "Let's Look at the Records" with Dick Doyle:

"Latest records for callers on the Folkraft label are the twelve inch series F1212 through F1223 inclusive.

"In practical all around usage these records are indispensable to the average caller, especially to one who can sing a little. Only a few of the ten inch variety play enough music for a good figure without resetting. There is still too little variety on LP (33 1/3) except for hoedown and I find it easier to work with most of a given program at standard 78 turntable speed.

"Most of the music on these records is so good it just makes me happy . . . All of these tunes are played straight, without tags or arrangements and are all entirely suitable for square dance record work."

Capitol #H-4009, 10-inch, vinylite, 33 rpm without calls.

Price, \$2.95

Titles: Cripple Creek//Sally Good'in//Soldier's Joy//The Gal I Left Behind Me

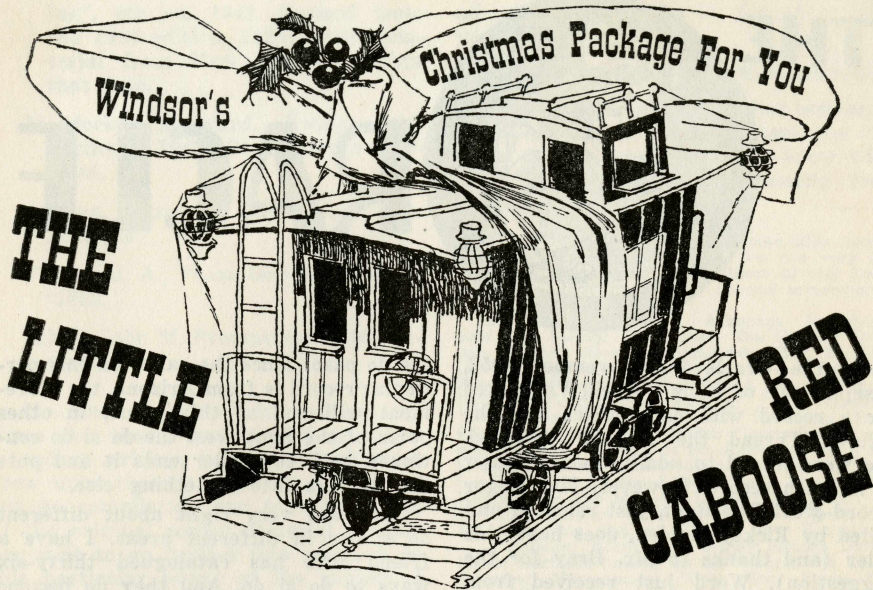
Bake Them Hoe Cakes Brown//Golden Slippers//Ragtime Annie

This is a 10" L.P., an exact duplicate of the standard Cliffie Stone album introduced to our market on 78 rpm and for many years a great favorite. When originally introduced on 78's, these records set a new standard for square dance recordings without calls. They are still available in the old album #BD-44 at \$4.35, but are a much better buy if you can use L.P.'s.

Coral #CRL 55041, 10-inch, vinylite, 33 rpm.

Price, \$3.00

This is an l.p. recording of Scottish Country Dances recorded in Europe, played by Jimmy Shand and his band. There are eight Scottish tunes, including such favorites as Gay Gordons, Waltz Country Dance, Roxburgh Castle. Four of these make excellent square dance music, particularly adaptable to patter calling. The music is very well played, highly melodic, and quite rhythmic. We like authentic folk music! AMERICAN SQUARES Book and Record Shop stocks all of the square dance records published by Coral.



It's a new and fun-filled singing square dance with Bruce Johnson calling, whistles blowing, bells ringing, steam hissing—and the throttle wide open! Climb aboard for the ride of your life.

'tother side . . . "Hometown Jubilee"

Another dance you'll enjoy because of the catchy figure and the delightful music of the SUNDOWNERS BAND. Bruce Johnson calls it.

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for you callers . . . Music by the Sundowners Band for the above dances; instrumental only No. 7121 (78 r.p.m.)

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THE



RACLE

In the Oracle for November 1952, Joseph Bray of Falls Church, Va., asked for a record with calls which had the figure "Thread the Needle" included. We were forced to admit that we knew of no such record. However, MacGregor record #675 The Rout, just released and called by Rickey Holden, does have this filler (and thanks to Mr. Bray for the suggestion). Word just received from Norma Tracy of Moline, Ill., further informs us that "Thread the Needle" appears on Windsor #1004, Practice Square Dance Intermediate No. 1, called by Doc Alumbaugh.

In your August issue you invite anyone that is in difficulties interpreting instructions for a dance to write to you for more complete instructions. Thank you—what a wonderful help that will be to many of us backward ones.

Here is my trouble: In "Indian Teepee" called by Dia Trygg of Tucson, the introduction calls for:

Stretch out wide and do-ci-do on all four sides

Four little squaws do-ci-do while chiefs walk 'round on heel and toe
Ho-di-hi and Ho-di-ho now that's enough of that do-ci-do.

Different dances use different figures for do-ci-dos and we can't quite figure out what is meant here. I think we will need a very detailed interpretation of this part.

Clarence I. Peaslee
Crestline, Ohio

The do-ci-do movement which puzzles you in the call for "Indian Teepee" on Western Jubilee record #560 is the do si do widely done in the Southwest and often called the Texas do si do. It is done partner left, corner right, partner left. Some areas refer to this movement as

the do paso. Since the caller on this particular record is from Arizona, the movement will end at this point; in other parts of the Southwest the do si do continues until the caller ends it and puts the dancers into something else.

You are very right about different do si dos in different areas. I have a friend who has catalogued thirty-six ways to do si do. And they do become confusing. If you will bear in mind that the do si do described above ("Texas do si do") can be done in a circle of eight people, whereas the do si do figure used in Colorado and most of the other big western states can only be done by four people, it may help you distinguish between them. And I will argue with you on your reference to the "backward" ones! Very few dancers indeed are able to dance the styles of all areas with equal ease—and why should they be expected to?

I wonder if you could tell me of a book on square dances as they were before this recent revival of square dancing. I learned to square dance in Boston and I think the dancing around here is the same as your Eastern style so I am very much interested in material giving the dances in their pure and original form.—June Somerville, Hamilton, Ont.

Among the original treatises on square dancing which should be in every student's library are certainly the following:

Dunlavy, Tressie M., and Boyd, Neva L. *Old square dances of America*, c1925. Native material from Taylor Co., Iowa.

Muller, Albert. *All-American square dances*. c1941. Native material from the Hudson Valley, New York State.

[Lovett, Benjamin B.] "Good Morning". 4th ed. 1943. Revised from the first edition, 1925; native material from New England before that date.

Maddocks, Durward. **Swing your partners.** 1941. Southeastern Vermont.

Jarman, Harry E. Cornhusker publications.

French, J. A., **Prompter's Hand Book.** c1893.

Schell, John M. **Prompting.** c1890. Revised 1948.

No one book includes everything. Since the above were published, many secondary writings have appeared which drew upon these and others like them; but no compilation can take the place of the original source material. Should you wish to go further into research on this particular phase of the subject, I have for several years been compiling a bibliography which now lists over 400 titles of monographs dealing in some way with square dancing and should be most happy to correspond further about this. Incidentally, AMERICAN

SQUARES Book and Record Shop stocks all of the above books for your convenience.

Several people have asked just how many magazines there are in the square and folk dance field, so we are publishing below a list of all 52 which we receive currently. Does anybody know of any others?

(The little asterisk in front of some titles means our files are incomplete and we are very interested in discussing the problem of any back issues you may have lying around somewhere.)

AMERICAN SQUARES; Arkansas Round-up; Bow and Swing; The Caller; The Country Dancer; *Dance News; *Danceland; *The Dancer; DeLuxe Square Dance News; Desert Squares; Fiddle and Squares; The Folk & Square Dance Bulletin; Folk Dance Bulletin; *Folk Dancer; *Folk News; Foot 'n' Fiddle; Footnotes; Hoof Prints; *The Hooleyann Whirl; *Journal of American Folklore; *Journal of the American Ass'n for Health, Physical Education and Recreation; *Just for Fun; The Kuntry Kaller; *Let's Dance; The Microphone; The Midwest Dancer; Montana . . . Bulletin; National Capital Area . . . News Letter; The New England Caller; New Hampshire . . . Bulletin; North Penn Valley Square Dance News; Northern Junket; On the Square; The Open Squares; *Promenade; *Recreation; Rosin the Bow; *The Roundup; Sets in Order; South Texas SDAss'n News Letter; Southern Callers' Bulletin; Southwestern Square Dancer; SDA Wisconsin News Letter; Square Dance News; Squares & Circles; Square Dancing (Houston); Square Dancing (Oklahoma); Southwestern SDAss'n News Letter; Swing 'er Paw; Swing your Partner; Teachers College Dance Newsletter; Viltis; Westerners SDAss'n News Letter.

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Breakaway
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#672—EDI Breakdown
Breakaway Hoedown

First releases by
Rickey Holden

#673—Texan Whirl—Lady Walk Around

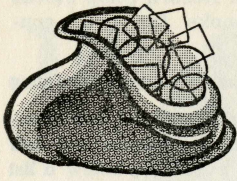
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JINGLE BELLS (BELLENDANS)

(Dutch)

Record: Folkraft #1080.

Formation: Double circle, facing counterclockwise; start in skaters' position, hands crossed (right over left) in front; right foot free.

FIGURE I

- 1 A. Four skipping steps forward starting with right foot.
- 2 Four skipping steps backward starting with right foot.
- 3- 4 Repeat 1-2.
- 5 B. Varsouvienne position. Four sliding steps to the right, starting with right foot.
- 6 Four sliding steps to the left, starting with left foot.
- 7- 8 Eight skipping steps, making two turns counterclockwise, gent pivoting backward, lady moving forward. Finish in double circle, partners facing, gent's back to center of circle.

FIGURE II (Chorus)

- 1 a. Clap own hands 3 times (cts. 1, 2, 3, hold ct. 4)
- 2 b. Clap partner's hands 3 times (cts. 1, 2, 3, hold ct. 4)
- 3 c. Clap own hands 4 times (cts. 1, 2, 3, 4)
- 4 d. Clap each other's right hand (ct. 1, hold cts. 2, 3, 4)
- 5- 8 Hook right elbows with partner, eight skipping steps circling twice clockwise.
- 9-11 Repeat 1-3 (a,b,c)
- 12 Clap each other's left hand (ct. 1, hold cts. 2, 3, 4)
- 13-16 Hook left elbows with partner, eight skipping steps circling twice counterclockwise.

. . . AS MIXER

- 1-12 Same as 1-12 in FIGURE II (Chorus) above.
- 13-14 Hook left elbows with partner, four skipping steps circling once counterclockwise.
- 15-16 Four skipping steps to new partner. Gent skips forward to lady ahead. Repeat entire dance with new partner.

Some years ago at a visit to Folkraft's studio, Vyts Beliajus expressed the hope that some day there would be a good Jingle Bells record because he knows a wonderful Christmas dance for which there is no recording. We have just heard from Vyts again and all of his friends will be delighted to know that he is continuing to make tremendous progress toward regaining good health. We think this would be a nice time to present a new recording for Vyt's Christmas dance, Jingle Bells.

Merry Christmas, Vyts.

—Frank and Olga.

BAY-OU SQUARE

Tune: Jambalaya (on the Bay-ou)

(Introduced 1952 by Al Hughes, Altoona, Pa.)

Swing Y-vonne the sweetest one me oh my oh

(Everybody swing)

Break then go to a do paso with macher-a-mi-o

(Partner left, corner right, partner left & promenade)

Promenade far pick guitar and be gay-o

Son of a gun we'll have big fun on the bay-ou

First gent swing your pretty little thing forward to and fro

Forward again pass right thru pole the pi-rogue

Separate we gotta go the place is buzzin'

Everybody come to swing Y-vonne by the dozen

—Bob Wray, Altoona, Pa.

LA RASPA* (Mexican Shuffle)

. . . as Circle Mixer

Whether it be in a French, German, Scandinavian, Mexican or other dance, there seems to be something about the shuffle step that has a strong popular appeal for adults as well as children. We are having more fun than ever with La Raspa by dancing it sometimes as a circle mixer and other times as a square, though never both ways on the same program, of course. This circle mixer is one of those dances that newcomers (in one-night dance parties as well as in clubs and classes) learn easily and quickly and which experienced dancers also enjoy immensely. La Raspa Square is for advanced dancers who memorize the pattern after practicing it to prompted calls.

Records: Peerless #2238; Columbia #38185.

Formation: Couples in double circle, partners facing with gent's back to center, hands joined (right above left), arms extended forward.

1. Shuffle step—Jumping slightly, slide left forward, swap with right forward, then swap with left forward, then pause; beginning with right, repeat action. Repeat all 3 times—then gents face CCW and ladies CW, partners facing.

2. Grand right and left thus: Gents progressing CCW as in regular grand right and left, ptrs hook right elbows, lift other arm above head and turn (8 steps for each elbow turn) revolving CW, face next, hook left elbows and revolve CCW to next; right elbow turn with next; then left elbow turn with next and take position for shuffle routine as above.

. . . as Square

Records: same as above

Formation: Standard square with four couples. There are 32 beats for each figure and each chorus.

(Intro) In 3 beats ladies step to center, stand back to back, face partners and join hands (r above l) with them. (Return to this position at the end of each figure to be ready for chorus.)

(Chorus) Mexican shuffle step, described above, with partners at beginning and after each figure—both begin by sliding left feet forward.

1. Partners right dos-a-dos and left elbow turn; Corners left dos-a-dos and left elbow turn (Chorus)

2. Grand right and left ballonet (this leaves all couples in opposite places until fig. 3). (Chorus)

3. Head couples right and left to place; side couples right and left to place; head couples ladies chain to the right; turn around and chain back home. (Chorus)

4. Double grand square (begin with head couples going to center as partners in side couples face and back away, etc.—then reverse with side couples going to center, etc.). (Chorus)

*The same patterns danced to La Raspa can also be used with Herr Schmidt.

—Mary and Fred Collette

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1st, 3rd & every odd couple cross over

- (1- 4) Circle four with the next below
 (5- 8) _____
 (9-12) Swing the left hand lady
 (13-16) _____
 (17-20) Leave her on your right and circle four
 (21-24) _____
 (25-28) Swing your partner in the center
 (29-32) _____
 (33-36) Down the center
 (37-40) _____
 (41-44) Same way back and cast off
 (45-48) _____
 (49-52) Ladies chain
 (53-56) _____
 (57-60) _____
 (61-64) _____

Al first called this one at the tenth anniversary IOCA (Intercollegiate Outing Club Ass'n) conference, Dartmouth Outing Club Ravine Camp, 18 April, 1952.

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Phrasing . . . from page 5

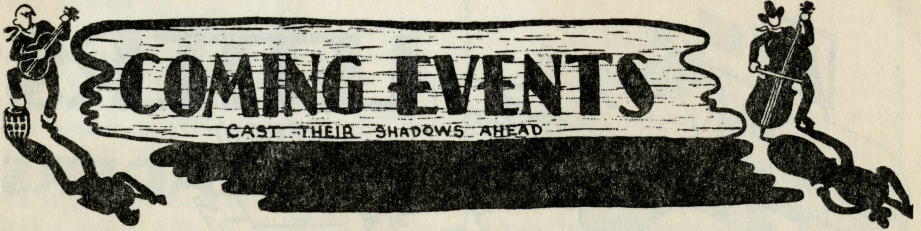
the great art it can be, and if dancers are going to dance. Now there are large areas, especially in the West, where the idea of dancing is to hurry-up-and-get-there-just-as-quickly-as-possible and then to rush right on to the next formation, where they do not dance to the music and where their timing allows 12 beats to complete a ladies chain instead of the proper 16. Can these areas phrase their dancing? Can the callers phrase their calling? How? Well,—they'll either have to slow down and dance to the music as they should or they'll have to work out some approximate solution which will never be close to perfection but which will do and is far better than ignoring the idea completely.

This brings up the comment, "Now look, we have been square dancing here for years and having a marvelous time. What you are

saying is that we have been dancing all wrong and are beyond hope unless we forget everything we have been doing and start fresh. We are just as much chauvinists as anybody and we love the way we do it now. Certainly you cannot claim properly that our present dancing is no fun because we know different."

Well, sure,—it's okay to go on allowing 12 beats for the ladies chain when it should take 16. Sure it's okay to continue ignoring the music except to consider it as somewhat squeaky sounds of bow against catgut. Those who have been doing this for years may continue so forever.

But callers who consider the music for a while, who begin to call with music in mind and begin to get the dancers to dance to it, —to them may unfold immeasurable vistas of ecstasy, for the possibilities are more magnificent than anything they have yet encountered.



COMING EVENTS

CAST THEIR SHADOWS AHEAD

Dec. 5-6. Dallas, Texas. 3rd Ann. Southwestern SD Festival, co-spon. by Dallas Morning News & Fed. Women's Clubs, Agric. Bldg., Texas State Fair Grounds. Bob Osgood, guest.

Dec. 6 Cheyenne, Okla. Southwest Okla. Dist. Festival, Amer. Leg. Hall, 8 p.m.

Dec. 7. Minneapolis, Minn. State Festival, Coffman Mem'l Union, U. of Minn., 2-6, live music!

Dec. 11. New York City. FD House, 108 W. 16th, 7 p.m. Ralph Page, caller.

Dec. 13. El Dorado, Ark. Youth center. Red Warrick, caller.

Dec. 13. Wichita, Kan. Southwest Kansas Fest., Christ The King Church Aud., 4501 W. Maple.

Dec. 22-23. El Paso, Texas. 64th Annual Meeting, Amer. Folklore Society.

Dec. 25. MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Dec. 27. Harrisburg, Pa. 3rd Annual SD & Xmas Party, Central YMCA, 9 p.m.

Dec. 31. Dillsburg, Pa. Callers' Roundup, Comm. Hall, 8:30.

Jan. 1. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jan. 3. Houston, Texas. SD Council Jamboree, Coliseum.

Jan. 8. New York City. FD House, 108 W. 16th, 7 p.m. Ralph Page, caller.

Jan. 18. Portland, Ore. Festival, spons. by O-N-O Dancers.

Jan. 23-24. Tucson, Ariz. 5th Ann. Southern Ariz. SD Festival, co-spons. by City & Co. Rec. Depts., & Comm. SD Council; Student Union, U. of Ariz., 8 p.m., Fri.; 9 a.m., Sat.; Fair Grds., 2 & 8 p.m.

Jan. 24. S. Dennis, Mass. 5th Ann. OCS & FDA Fest., Ezra Baker Audit. Al Brundage, caller.

Jan. 30. Chehalis, Wash. State Council Mtg.

Jan. 31. St. Paul, Minn. 4th Ann. SD Jamb. with St. Paul Winter Carnival.

Mun. Aud.

Jan. 31. Odessa, Texas. Permian Basin SDA Dance.

Jan. 31. Wenatchee, Wash. March of Dimes Dance, spons. by No. Cnt'l Council of Wash.

MARK THESE ON YOUR CALENDAR FOR 1953!

Mar. 13-14. Houston, Texas. 5th Annual Spring Festival, Coliseum, 2-5 & 8-12.

Mar. 20-29. Cleveland. SD Exhibition at 16th Annual Amer. & Can. Sportsmen's show.

Apr. 2-4. Kansas City. 2nd Ann. Nat'l SD Convention.

May 7-9. Washington, D.C. Folk Festival.

May 23. Little Rock, Ark. 2nd Ann. State Festival.

May 30-31. Virginia, Minn. 2nd Ann. State Convention.

Nov. 7. Chicago. 4th Ann. Int'l SD Festival.

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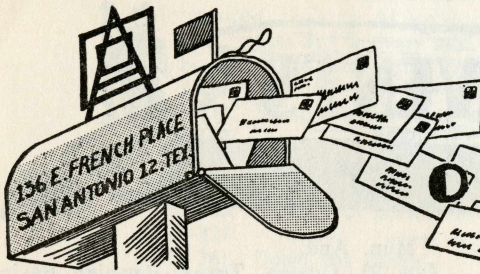
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LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Dear Rickey:

In your November issue there is a footnote to Mrs. G. B. Grinnell's comments regarding a "callers' exchange" . . . I would like to see a North American Callers' Association formed where all callers may exchange ideas, patterns, breaks, hashes, and how to overcome problems.

Ed. Gray

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

● **AMERICAN SQUARES** will be glad to set up a Callers' Clearing house if you readers think it is a good idea.—Editor.

Dear Rickey:

Re: The cart and the horse. When I received the October issue of **AMERICAN SQUARES** I was delighted to find what I supposed was an article on phrasing only to read that it was an announcement there would be such an article in the November issue. The November issue has arrived—but no article presenting the art of phrasing—but an article by Tom Mullen which you describe as "arguments against phrasing well worth further discussion". I refrain. Any worth-while discussion must of necessity be based on an understanding of the subject. Let us first have the subject fully presented—and then, if needs be, the discussion.

Pete Mount

New York, New York

● **The horse appears on page 4 of this issue. Further comments will be published.**—Editor.

Dear Book and Record Shop:

You folks are amazing. Didn't know anyone let an account run 60 days without at least a little down. Am sorry. Put the invoice in my suitcase when I hit the road and just tonight as I was trying to get some semblance of order in the bag, found it.

Thanks for your prompt help. All is well now. All clubs say they felt the personal contact resulting from "Boomp-sa-Daisey" helped to break all social bar-

riers and only resulted in two slapped faces and three bruised bones. The latter wouldn't have happened but two very slender ladies, not blessed with extra padding in the usual place, and one "boney" man, were in the same set when I called this dance.

Perhaps I should explain about the slapping incident too, since it is unusual in square dancing out here. One lady, quite solidly built, really got quite a sway going as she executed the "Boomp", so much so that her partner landed against his corner. Sooo, the next time around as she swayed, the coward stepped slightly forward. The momentum was too great and she wound up on the floor. She was so put out that, as they picked her up, she swung, with palm open of course (or fortunately), and not only got the unfortunate man but another standing just beside him. Again, thanks for your assistance!

Dal R. Alderman

Omaha, Nebr.

● **Our Book and Record Shop, as well as the editorial staff, is ready to help out in all kinds of difficulties. However, we assume no responsibility for results such as these!**—Editor

Hi—

Thought you might be interested to know that the dance described on page 14 of the October issue as a Progressive Barn Dance is a nice "oldy" presented at Shaw's by Harold Harton, Social Recreation Director for the Province of Ontario. It was dubbed there as the "Maple Leaf Mixer" to avoid confusion with the "Canadian Barn Dance". Harold said the most used version was done in LOD, gents inside facing partners, all the other directions the same. His choice of an American record was the Folkraft or MacGregor Ten Pretty Girls. The foxtrot turn was started by the gents left (forward). Shaw liked it, many of the others liked it, and it has been very popular here in our area.

Don Armstrong

New Port Rickey. Fla.

Dear Rickey:

We like AMERICAN SQUARES because it gives us more of the square dance picture around the Eastern half of the country. The calendar of events each month is quite complete, also we enjoy your chats and correspondence with other square dancers. We realize you might have more news from our particular area if some of us sent it to you more often. Thanks for the instructions for When the Work's All Done This Fall, in the October issue. This is different from the one we have and fits the record we have very well.

One other thing I want to mention is that I think your record service is fine. We have ordered records twice lately and they have been very prompt in sending them and also in trying to find some for me which were apparently not being made any more.

Mrs. D. S. Rhoney
Cleveland, Ohio

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Amarillo Contest . . . from page 5

(originally, we understand, they did not), he or she must also be judged on keeping the floor moving and happy as well as on rhythm, clarity, command and personality. (3) If dancers and callers come from further away judges must be chosen from a wider area or more judges added to the panel.

"This type of Festival automatically solves quite a few ever prevalent problems in arranging a Jamboree. (1) "We just must ask John to call—he's such a good guy and works so hard!" But any caller who feels he can compete with others HAS to be good, so the caller problem is well solved. (2) The bane of many Festivals is the EXPERT who wants to teach everyone HIS version of this and that, and so monopolize the

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floor and dancers with walk thrus. (3) The program moves fast, everyone is thrilled and excited over dancing to their favorites.

"We only regret that we came to Amarillo too late to meet and know Grady Wilson. This old world of ours sorely needs men who have the courage of their convictions and in spite of opposition and criticism promote their ideals. To you who scoff at the title "National Winner", we dare you to come and compete."

Pattern in Culture . . . from page 8

Texas does not boast of those ways in which it resembles the rest of the United States; and the same can be said for California, Florida, Virginia, Vermont, or Boston, Charleston, and New Orleans. Why, then, should a New England dance caller be "praised" by having it said he is developing a "general American" style of square dancing?

This is a good question to ask in many similar cases in other arts and customs. If we were somewhat more conscious of what it is we enjoy, we would be in less danger of losing our cultural resources. Exploit them, make them available, yes, and don't be afraid of having our diversities "commercialized" if commercial techniques are efficient in distributing good things to potential consumers. In matters of grace, artistic as

well as theological, the wind bloweth where it listeth; and sometimes it listeth to blow in what to our conventional minds may seem to be the oddest places!

In dealing with the "pattern" of our culture, the well known anthropologist Ruth Benedict has said, concerning "the American tendency at the present time," that "The fear of being different is the dominating motivation . . ." But she is too "tough-minded" to let herself be dominated by this motivation; she has the same courage and curiosity to break free and seek out other patterns which one finds in so many good square dancers. "The tough-minded," she says, "are content that differences should exist. They respect differences, their goal is a world made for differences." Fortunately there are still many patterns of American culture, some of them both popular and beautiful. Let us enjoy them.

Roving Editor . . . from page 9

impression of that area. I understand square dancing is extensive. I did visit a U.S.O. on Lexington near 51st where a square dance is held every Monday night for service men. Ed Jaffe was calling and graciously invited me to participate. Calling for service men is fun—they are so enthusiastic and appreciative. Those New Yorker Honeys who give time to the U.S.O. are doing a grand job dispelling loneliness for the service men. My advice to you gals with men in the service in and around New York is to keep your powder dry.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL SQUARE DANCE FESTIVAL: They came to dance and dance they did from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. almost without interruption except for meals and a brief clinic in the afternoon. Fifteen states, the District of Columbia and Canada were well represented. The farthest visitor was from Sweden, a girl in native costume. Gilmore, Greggerson and Brundage were superb and unsparing of themselves in their efforts to give the finest Festival yet had. I can't estimate the attendance—it must have been beyond the wildest expectations. For the East Dance I estimate there were around 2200 on the main floor and yet as I glanced around the seating spaces there were seemingly twice that many, either spectators or those waiting their turn on the floor. The general arrangement this year was exhibitions on the main

floor, experienced dancers in the North Hall and inexperienced dancers in the South Hall. All the exhibitions were good and kept the many spectators well entertained at the evening session. The group from St. Louis under the direction of Lucyan Ziemba were outstanding in their presentation of round dances and circle mixers. Although the "Big 3" carried the heaviest load it takes many callers to fill the in-between periods and keep the dancing continuous, so credit must be given to the many local and out-of-state callers who added their fine performances to the program. Special mention is due Ed Bossing for the excellent job he did as Master of Ceremonies in the absence of Dr. Lloyd Shaw.

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Book Reviews

Brundage, Al and Merchant, Reuben. **Contras Are Fun**. Stepney, Conn., The Authors, c1952, 36p. illus.

Written by two of the most popular callers in the Northeast, this little book contains 12 contras of various types, including one very clever original (Barry's Best) by Al, named for his son. For those who have never experienced the joy of contra dancing this is probably the best elementary text on the market. Each figure is explained very carefully as it appears in each dance, and also a summary glossary is at the end of the book.

An excellent aid to the problem of contra calling and teaching is the author's use of the phrases, "Turn by yourself and come back . . ." and "Turn as a couple and come back . . .", instead of the more standard "same way back" and "other way back", after the active people go down the center. The former sets of words should make it much easier for new contra dancers to step easily into the cast off.

Although well over 100 different contras are known to exist at the present time, only 4 or 5 of these vary from the standard pattern of 32 bars (64 beats) of music. With considerable surprise, then, we note that the authors have included two dances (Arkansas Traveler; St. Patrick's Day in the Morning) using 48 bars (96 beats); furthermore, one of these is marked as "excellent for phrase study"! The authors, quite properly, spend much time stressing that you must dance to the music; yet they ask you to examine the 48-bar dances for beginning phrase study. We think it is very confusing to start studying the exceptions.

There are other little folklore inconsistencies also. The traditional New England term for the back-to-back movement is plain old "do si do", not the dressy "dos a do" used; also the correct contra term is right and left, never right and left thru. And contras are not traditional to all of the New England states—only to the northern ones.

However this is admittedly an elementary treatise, with no pretense toward academic completeness. As such it serves the purpose admirably. With only a little study any reader should certainly be able to start dancing the dances, and very soon agree with the authors' thesis that: contras are fun!

AMERICAN SQUARES Book and Record Shop stocks this at . . . **\$1.50 ea., postpaid.**

Felts, Jimmy and Whatley, Tommy. **"Squarely Speaking"**. Big, Spring, Texas, the Authors, 1952. 38p. illus.

A handbook on square dancing as taught by the authors in their classes; some figures, mostly fillers and lengthy glossary.

Chicago Park District. Div. of Recreation. **Chicago Square Dance Schedule, 1952-1953**. Chicago, Chicago Park District, 1952. No cover, 8 numb. 1.

Lists 88 places to dance in the city, also 83 more places in the suburban area. This is a mighty impressive listing, one topped only by Wichita, Kansas, which has 62 groups meeting regularly (yet is only 1/20th the size of Chicago!)

Collette, Fred and Mary. **Advancing in Dancing, a syllabus**. Supplement of New England dances by Ralph Page. Atlanta, The Authors, 1952. x, 64p.

Syllabus of material for the 1952 Dixie Folk and Square Dance Institute. Contains pages and pages of material.

American Squares School Texts

Here are the official texts used at the American Squares Summer Schools during the past three years. Any one of them available at \$1.00 each.

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PHRASING: The Mechanics of Magnificence

by

Rickey Holden

The Chamber of Commerce sponsors two weekly square dances at the Beach Civic Center in Clearwater, Fla. Raymond R. Orcutt (better-known as "Railroad") is the caller; nights are every Monday and Thursday . . . Lloyd and Eudora Frazee are keeping square dancers around Charles City, Iowa, area posted as to what goes on by means of a monthly date sheet . . . A caller from Portland, Oregon, sent the following into *The Dancer Magazine*: "Question:—When can you truthfully start saying to yourself, 'I AM A CALLER?'" Answer:—That will be when you stop trying to show your dancers how much you know and start showing them how much you want to help them . . . Foot 'N' Fiddle Club of Luverne, Minn., with Mel Erickson as caller, seems to have a solution to one problem. Sets are formed promptly at 9 p.m., but from 8:30 to 9 beginners' instruction is available.

The Sunflower Squares of Kansas City warmed the new home of their caller, Frank Pecinivsky and wife Ur-

sula. In addition to two beautiful trays presented as gifts, each of the 175 club members plus the orchestra brought Frank and Ursula either an egg or a potato . . . Boston area dancers will be interested to know that Larry Collins recently called a couple of squares for the Gateway Swingers in Seward, Alaska. Dr. Wagner, who told us about it, added the further fascinating fact that Larry is now wearing a full beard . . . Chairman for the Square Dance Jamboree of the 1953 St. Paul Winter Carnival is John Wald . . . In Buffalo, New York, the Stylists Square Dance Club are off to a good start for the season with a beginners class of 12 sets and an intermediate advanced class of 8 sets. Herb and Lou Suedmeyer are teachers, and also announce a visit by Mac McKendrick of Kulpsville, Pa., on Jan 31.

The Promenaders of Southwest Missouri State College recently brought home \$200 first prize money from the Folk Festival in Eureka Springs, Ark. Caller and instructor is "Doc" Keller of Springfield . . . El Paso, Texas, will have an open dance every Saturday night at Carpenter Hall, with calling handled by Loren Davis, Kenneth Stice and Johnny Cook . . . New officers of the North Central Council of Washington are Mike Bolinger, Wenatchee, pres.; Ivan Hall, Ephrata, vice-pres.; Mary Grace Marchant, Wenatchee, sec-treas.; Hazel Jones, Wenatchee, asst. sec-treas.; Loren Parker, Wenatchee, publicity; Floyd Whitley, callers aid, Jack Barkley, Wenatchee, delegate to State Fed., and dance committee Gus Empie and Ivan Hall of Ephrata, Gladys Stull and Bucky Gans of Wenatchee, Katherine Eskil of Entiat.

If you're looking for a square dance in Miami, Fla., phone Ed Stewart at 78-3113. He can tell you what's going on . . . In Tucson, Arizona, the winter season is well under way, with the City Recreation Department starting its fourth year of instruction for beginners. Pima Country Recreation Department also offers beginners classes. Every Sunday afternoon you can square dance at Old Tucson (a rebuilt movie set) from 2 till 5, with George Waudby as emcee and various guest callers.

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AROUND THE WORLD

Among recent visitors to the AMERICAN SQUARES establishment was charming Mrs. Margaret Scott of Venezuela. From her we learned that in her part of the world round dances are called "interval dances", since they are done in the intervals between squares . . . A couple of years ago a group of folk dancers from the University of Seattle visited Sweden, and the interest they generated in American squares and rounds has resulted in the "Internationella folkdansklubben", whose 150 members meet once a week for squares and rounds. Gordon Tracy, one of the University boys who started it all, stayed in Sweden for a year or so studying folklore, and when he departed left a couple of good callers and teachers to carry on—Bertil Lundberg, who teaches rounds, and Karl-Ake Nordenfeldt and Rolf Thoren on the calling. Bertil says, "The people in our country do not know so very much of your folk dancing. When we speak of American dancing they always think of jazz. In our little way we are informing the public of the big American Folk Dance movement . . .". And to these pioneers, AMERICAN SQUARES sends a warm welcome to our family.

IN ENGLAND, ever since the Queen (then Princess) square danced on her visit to Canada, American square dances

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are being done by more and more dancers . . . Phyllis and Leslie Newman Bird have two square dance instruction nights a week in their dance studio, and say they always use as many mixers as possible to keep the fun going . . . Norman "Hayseed" Roberts, instructor and caller for the Lea Valley Square Dance Club, has an exhibition set called the "Lea Valley Texans" . . . Jim Pike in Kensington is caller and instructor for the Bar Q Square Dance Clubs . . . Miss Peggy Cross recently called for an open air square dance in Somerset which was attended by about 2,500 people.

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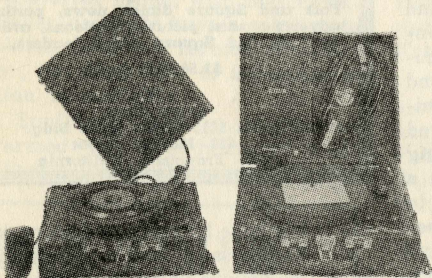
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In the September issue, we announced that American Squares' Book and Record Shop would stock Microphones. Since then, we have shipped twenty-eight Model 636 Microphones to readers. About half of them were sent on a trial basis. Not one has been returned. This must be a pretty good mike. Read the write-up about it on page 12, September, American Squares. If you would like one, we shall gladly send you one on trial

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