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AMERICAN SQUARES



THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK DANCING
VOL. VIII—No. 10 JUNE 1953 TWENTY CENTS

AMERICAN SQUARES

THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK DANCING

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Song of the HIGH-LEVEL Dancer

The more that I travel the more I can see
Many excellent people of our good country
All seem dubiously wondering, "How good are we?"
Can we ever be HIGH-LEVEL dancers?

Let me tell you the tale of a West Coast beginner
Who struggled through class after class and grew thinner
From exercise (also from missing his dinner)
Aspiring to HIGH-LEVEL dancing!

Eight long nights a week he square danced with a passion,
His wish for new figures completely unrationed;
Why—all but the latest was strictly old-fashioned
To this would-be HIGH-LEVEL dancer!

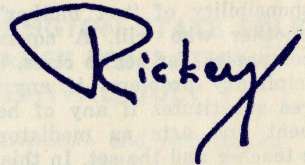
He developed his styling and added some twirls,
Then he had some small trouble in locating girls
Who could follow the wonderful gyrating whirls
So preferred by all HIGH-LEVEL dancers.

He learned every figure as soon as 'twas printed,
Knew more allemande breaks than coins have been minted,
Was highly self-satisfied—then someone hinted
He was not a HIGH-LEVEL dancer.

Next day he obtained a galactic sensation
And practiced all night on this latest creation
Ignoring all else in grim determination
To really do HIGH-LEVEL dancing.

Well—he worked and he worked (it is true that he tried)
But by dawn the next morning it ended: he died.
When his Club Members heard they regretfully sighed,
"He was almost a HIGH-LEVEL dancer."

In the small hours of darkness while humans are resting
The dance hall is filled with unearthly protesting:
Our friend has found out there's no end to the test in
The Limbo of HIGH-LEVEL dancers.



OUR COVER this month shows what happens to the family which was en route last month, once they get to Camp. Virginia Wallace shows that not all the vacation is just dancing.

The Kalico Kids of Kansas

More and more teachers and recreation workers today are recognizing the value of square dancing for children. The town of Hutchinson, Kansas, counted 33,575 people in the 1950 census, yet Rosalie and Frank Bowker had 82 squares of youngsters dancing regularly every Saturday at the time we first heard about the Kansas Kalico Kids. The Bowkers' own three children were the inspiration for the program. Diana, 10, is a member of the first square formed, the Bo-Peeps and Boy Blues, who are still dancing with their original eight members. Jacquelyn, 7, is a member of the Polka-tots and Bruce, 4, belongs to the 4 and 5 year class. As this goes to press, the number of squares of Kansas Kalico Kids has probably increased.

AMERICAN SQUARES feels that the program presented below offers highly sensible and valuable suggestions for children's square dancing, and is extremely proud to present the Bowkers' description of their system.

By Frank and Rosalie Bowker

On Saturday mornings, every half hour five or six sets of children approximately the same age and with the same amount of dancing experience gather for their class at the community building at the State Fair Grounds. Each child pays ten cents for his half hour of dancing and one member of the set collects the eighty cents and deposits it in a box.

Unlike most adult squares, children like the security they find in having their own set of eight and a regular position to take each time they dance. Also they enjoy dancing again and again their old favorites and are content to learn new dances only occasionally. Fundamentals are stressed for the first few weeks, but they are taught through the dances themselves rather than presented as separate problems. Some attention is placed on style and precision, but not enough to detract from the fun.

Forming A Class

When the mother of an interested child calls to find out how her youngster may join a class, she is asked to find seven other children approximately the same age and size, and to accept the responsibility of "set mother", or find a mother who will. A square mother accompanies her set to class, helps with disciplinary problems if any arise, secures substitutes if any of her set are absent and acts as mediator between the teacher and the set. In this way each youngster is assured of a full half hour of dancing time without worrying about a partner or a set to dance in.

When four to six sets close in age are formed they are assigned a class time. This is done in late summer just before school begins, and once a class has begun new squares cannot join it.

A new square must wait until enough other squares their age are formed to begin a new class. Last fall there were 12 sets of Junior High dancers, 27 sets of Fifth and Sixth graders, 23 sets of Third and Fourth graders, 15 sets of First and Second graders, and 5 sets of four and five year olds. The latter group was a new experiment but well worth while. Repetition is the keynote for them, and their attentiveness is remarkable.

In addition to squares, there are two round dance classes for the older groups, and the kids enjoy learning polkas, two-steps and waltzes just as much as the adults do. For the additional half hour sessions another ten cents charge is made.



Costumes Help

After a square has been dancing together two or three months they choose a name for their set and the mothers collaborate in designing and making costumes. Often the costumes blend with the name, such as the Checkerettes. Butterfly Whirlers, Polkadots etc.

In the spring all squares perform at least twice during the big Junior Jamboree held at Convention Hall. Some

squares are chosen to do special numbers and a chart is kept of weekly attendance, attentiveness and payments made by each square so that these may be selected fairly. The chart also helps to decide what squares may be picked to perform at the many school, lodge and other public functions for which dancers are always in demand. Their enthusiasm and colorful costumes more than make up for any lack in precision and styling.

Substitute List

There are always extra children standing around hoping to substitute in another square after their own session is over, but special credit is given to squares who secure any needed substitutes prior to class time. To this end, a list is compiled of all students, giving their age, phone and regular class time. If they are willing to substitute in other squares beside their own, their names are starred on the list, and the last list had over 200 such starred names.

Adults Follow

It is interesting to note that last fall fifty-five couples joined adult beginner square dance classes because their children were having such a good time.

Perhaps such a program would not be as successful in a community having an organized physical education program including rhythms and dancing. Hutchinson schools, however, offer very little if any dancing. We are proving that there is a real desire on the part of the youngsters to enjoy this most wholesome of all recreations, in which both boys and girls can participate. We would like to see more of the older youngsters joining in the program, but the time to begin is in the lower grades and continue throughout the system.

We Read It In . . .

SWING YOUR PARTNER (Westchester, N.Y.). "For biblical evidence that there were 120,000 square dancers in the ancient city of Ninevah, look in your Bible (Jonah 4:11)."

FOLK DANCE BULLETIN (New York City). "You will note that the last two dances in each issue from now on will be Recreational Dances which are simple and popular for use in schools, camps and recreation groups."

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On the Contra Trail

By Ralph Page

Contra dances and northern New England are fast becoming synonymous terms in American dance terminology. Far from being quaint "reliques" rescued for the tourist trade from a limbo of forgotten Americana, they are today as vigorously alive and as much loved among us as were their ancestors — the English "longways for as many as will"; the Irish "cross-road" dances; and the vibrant Scottish "reels" — at the time of the settling of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. So much so that it is, to say the least, disconcerting to some self-appointed leaders elsewhere in the country who would foist upon us, willy-nilly, the "great American square dance". And equally baffling to those eager beavers afflicted with "round dancitis", is our preference for Money Musk and Petronella — to name but two — pretty much as they were danced 250 years ago, to the newest creation, "Hotsy Totsky in a Bosky Dell" or the "Prissy Pretzel Polka".

Special Appeal

Contras are said to appeal to a special type of dancer, and that could be true. At least one has to be able to count to eight and to dance in time with the music. To live more or less unchanged for three hundred or so years, they must have something. Perhaps it is a combination of English resentment to change, Irish bull-headedness, and Scottish stubbornness, for in the beginning at least 90 percent of our early settlers came from those three named portions of the British Isles.

Let's pause for reflection here and see what we can find about their past. Literally a contra dance is a dance of opposition; a dance performed by many couples face to face, line facing line. It is a very old dance form and by no means an innovation of recent centuries. It embodies the principal of sexual attraction, approach, separation, multiplied into communal participation. As such it is allied to ancient rites of fertility and religious dance forms. You can work up quite an argument that it has its origin in the war dance and battletime. It may well be, too, that it had its origin away back in the old processions of early Egyptian or Greek vintage. Does it

really mater except to learned scholars? For the present it's enough to remember that contra dances came to this country from the British Isles; that every one of the thirteen colonies knew them; that they were danced by people from all walks of life and especially by the country people.

In Olde England

Contras, or longways, were the rage of England in the 17th century. The peasantry and bourgeois society of the country developed the contredanse to its highest point in complexity. For example, the number of corresponding country dances of England in 1728 numbered some 900 dances in all, and explored every form of cross-over and inter-weaving, with numbers of participants varying from four to an indefinite number. Sometimes each couple in succession led through the figures, sometimes alternate couples, and sometimes the whole group "for as many as will" performed simultaneously.

Is it any wonder then, that during the 16th and 17th centuries the English were known as the "dancing English"? Country dances were the ordinary, every day dance of the country folk, performed not merely on festal days, but whenever opportunity offered. The steps and figures, while many in number, were simple and easily learned, so that anyone of ordinary intelligence could qualify as a competent dancer. Truly they were dances of the people.

Royal Favour

The Tudor royal family were passionately fond of dancing and introduced many Court Masques embodying many of the country dances of the day and period. In the reign of James I it was said that it was easier to don fine clothes than to learn the French dances, and that therefore "none but Country Dances must be used at Court".

There is a legend that Queen Elizabeth bestowed the office of Lord Chancellor on Sir Christopher Hatton, not for any surpassing knowledge of the law, but because he wore green bows on his shoes and danced the pavane to perfection. No wonder her Court produced so many fine dancers!

Playford Collection

And no doubt it was some royal personage who commissioned John Playford to collect and set down all

the country dances of the nation. This he did, and since he was a bookseller and a musician of considerable ability, he found no difficulty in publishing a series of books: *The English Dancing Master—Plaine and Easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances, with the Tunes to Each Dance.*

The first of these volumes was brought out in 1650 and the last in 1728. Obviously the books had great popularity and were continued by John Playford's successors. While the majority of the dances in the Playford collection are not pure folk dances they certainly had a folk basis. The Country dance ordinarily consisted of a series of figures arbitrarily chosen to fit a given tune; only in certain instances did a particular combination of figures prove so enjoyable as to achieve universal acceptance. The country people never lost their love of these old dances and they still survive, from Cornwall to the Border Counties.

This then, was the status of country dancing at the time of the first settlements in New England. No one will ever make me believe that the English colonials did not bring with them their love of dancing. Not all of the Puritans were pickle-faced joy-killers.

So much for England. Let us turn northward and see what was happening in Scotland during this same period.

Background from Scotland

From time immemorial the Scots have followed all facets of Country and Highland dancing with delight and enthusiasm. Their fondness for it amounts almost to a passion. All efforts of the Kirk to put down "promiscuous dancing" have been failures. The Scot dances naturally and with intuition, which seems logical enough when we remember their great love of music. However, descriptions of the early country dances of Scotland are very meagre, though we know the names of many from the old ballad "Colkelkie Sow", wherein twenty dances are mentioned.

The reason for this poverty of description is that the Scots, while practicing the musical arts, had not reached the point of penning treatises on any of them; and then came the times of John Knox, when dancing was looked on as a sin and only spoken of to be inveighed against. We must remember that dancing or sports of all kinds had very much obscured the original significance of religious ceremonies and the Puritans

were but endeavoring to return to the simplicity of ancient times when they sought to curtail somewhat the amusement of the people.

By 1723 however, a weekly dancing assembly was established in Edinburgh and was largely patronized, and in 1728, the Town Council of Glasgow appointed a dancing master with a salary of 20 pounds "to familiarize the inhabitants with the art". And by 1768 we read that the "Rev. John Mill includes dancing — and Church music among the many things necessary for a Gentleman's education".

Dancing at weddings was a common custom among the Scottish people. In the 18th century dancing took place on the green when weather permitted, and the first reel was danced by the newly-married couple; next in line were the bridesmaids and their escorts. The first reel was called "shemit", from the supposed bashfulness of the young couple.

From wedding to the death-bed is a sad journey, but extremes meet. On the night after a death in Scotland, dancing was kept up until the next morning, just as it was at a wedding. If the dead person was a man, his widow — if he left one — led the first dance; if the deceased was a woman, the widower began the measure.

Scottish Reels

When one thinks of country dancing in Scotland one thinks of the "reel". The Scots dance their reels for the reel's sake. The dance is not with them an excuse for a social gathering, or means of carrying on a flirtation. The Scot arrives on the dance floor as he would on the drill square and he dances until he is tired out. When performed by two couples it is called a "foursome reel"; when danced by three couples it is called a "sixsome reel" etc., the difference being in the music with a corresponding difference in steps. It might also be noticed that the Scot did not depend always on the playing of some instrument to accompany his dances, but often "reeled" to his own music.

How the ballet step known as "Pas de Basque" found its way into the Scottish reels is a most intriguing question, as well as controversial. The logical answer seems to be: from French dancing masters. But perhaps this is too logical an answer. What was the reel step before the introduction of the Pas de Basque?

Cont. on page 26

Florida Follows The Trend

by Harold Emery

The modern revival of square dancing has been a little slow in reaching Florida, but it seems to be on the upswing now.

Visitors to Florida five or six years ago found it almost impossible to uncover any square dancing. Jimmy Closs-in made several attempts to find or create an interest in square dancing before finally coming here and settling in Orlando. I know personally how long Bill Embury, Ty Persson, and I worked here in the West Palm Beach—Lake Worth area to develop a nucleus of regular square dancers.

But the picture has changed now. Tourists can find good square dancing at a dozen or more points from Jacksonville to Miami along U.S. 1, through Central Florida in the Orlando and Lakeland areas, and along the Gulf coast in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Bradenton, and Sarasota.

From every section of the state comes the same report—most of this activity has developed since 1950 or 1951. Before then the Great Circle type of square dancing was prevalent, but usually limited to rather rough night spots, with calling from the floor so that it could hardly be heard, and limited to two or three figures.

Oldest Club

St. Petersburg boasts the oldest square dance club in the state, the St. Petersburg Square Dance Club, organized in 1941. The St. Petersburg-Tampa area now has between twenty and thirty callers, and probably has more square dancers than all the rest of the state together. The City of Tampa Recreation Department has been very active in promoting square dancing in that area, sponsoring several classes for dancers and others for training new callers. Don Armstrong has been very active in conducting these classes and carrying on other activities to promote square dancing.

On the other side of the state, the little community of Hobe Sound, about 30 miles north of West Palm Beach, can safely boast the highest percentage of square dancers in the state, I believe. With only one hundred year round residents, about half take part regularly in

their weekly square dance, and as many as 70 or 75 on special occasions.

Few Open Dances

In Central Florida most of the square dancing is in organized clubs. There are still a relatively small number of regular open dances in Florida, but they can be found—at least during the winter tourist season—in Jacksonville, Daytona, Hobe Sound, West Palm Beach, and Miami on the East Coast, and in Bradenton, Sarasota, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, and New Port Richey on the Gulf Coast, and a few others that haven't been reported on recently.

Besides a growing number of callers who make Florida their home, we have a number of others here for part of the winter tourist season. Our callers vary from those like Bill Embury, who grew up with square dancing in areas where it has never died out, to new callers developed to meet the demand for callers. Likewise square dancing varies from the strictly western calling prevalent in Orlando and some other areas, to the Eastern singing and other calls, with plenty of swinging.

Leaders' Association

The Florida Square and Folk Dance Callers and Teachers Association is now a year old, and has over 60 members. Southeast Florida had a very successful Festival last July at Lake Worth, and Orlando has been the scene of two Central Florida Roundups in November and in March.

Summer recreation courses under the schools and city recreation departments have helped in promoting square dancing, and a few city recreation departments have been very active. A lot of individuals have done a lot of good spade-work.

Our first Florida State Festival last April in Tampa was the high spot in our square dance activities so far and indicates that square dancing has come to Florida to stay.

We Read It In . . .

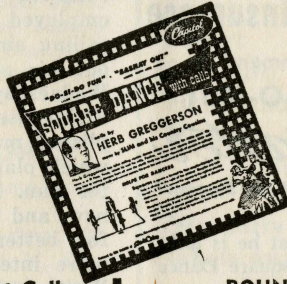
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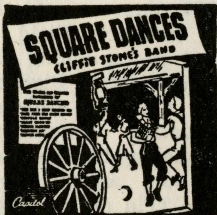


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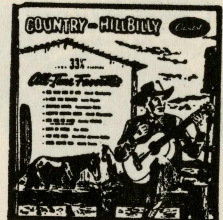
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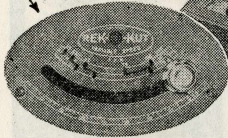
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Chicago Area Callers: One of the busiest and most popular callers in the Chicago Area is Walter Meier of Des Plaines, Ill. Walter has seven regularly scheduled dances or classes each week, edits the Midwest Dancer and besides is employed full time. Whew! He has been calling since 1944 and is just rounding out his seventh season of calling the Wednesday night dance at Rand Park Fieldhouse in Des Plaines. An accomplished musician, many of the problems which plague other callers did not exist for him. He calls dances both old and new, and many of them he has changed for better choreography or to create more interest. One of the big reasons Walter can accomplish as much as he does is due to the able assistance of his law, Vera. Walter and Vera are in a large measure responsible for the founding of the Chicago Area Callers Association and have worked hard towards its success.

Dynamic John Dolce, Supervisor of Recreation for the Chicago Park District at Sayre Park and caller on the W.L.S. National Barn Dance Program on Saturday nights is probably the most widely known caller in the Chicago Area. Since he became interested in square dancing in 1935, John has been a tremendous influence in promoting the activity. He had a hand in the research and compilation of material that went into "The Square Dance", the Chicago Park District's Square Dance Manual with which many of you are familiar. Other promotional credits are: the first annual Chicagoland Festival in 1939 at Sayre Park; interesting the Chicago Sun in sponsoring the mass square dancing demonstration of 3000 dancers at the Harvest Festival in Soldier's Field in Chicago; instrumental in combining the efforts of the Chicago Park District, Radio Station WLS and the Chicago Sun-Times in conducting competitive exhibition square dancing in the recreation centers in and around Chicago. The finals were held on the Congress St. Plaza on the lakefront of Chicago and drew a tremendous crowd. He has also conducted many square dance institutes throughout the midwest and

Cont. on page 11

Roving Editor . . . from page 10 has been featured in leading clubs and hotels all over the country. When Guy Colby retired as caller for the National Barn Dance Program John was invited to fill the vacancy. Listening to the Barn Dance on Saturday nights when John is calling you get that "makes-you-want-to-dance" feeling. A firm believer in the simple traditional calls that everybody can dance, John says, "The present trend is killing square dancing. People dance for the fun of it and do not get any enjoyment out of the varied and complicated figures."

MORE SUMMER CAMPS

Aug. 9-30. CDS Pinewoods Camp, near Plymouth, Mass.

Write Country Dance Society, 31 Union Sq. W., New York 3, N. Y.

Sept. 4-7. Michigan SD Leaders' Ass'n Workshop, Interlochen, Michigan.

Write Eldred Dunlap, 2606 Bennett Ave., Flint, Mich.

Sept. 4-7. Kansas SD Callers Ass'n Refresher course, Mission, Kan.

Write Frank Pecinovsky, 9206 Manor Rd., Kansas City 13, Mo.

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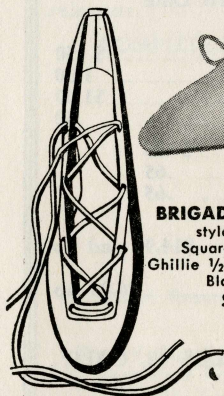


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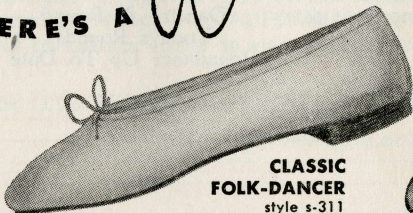
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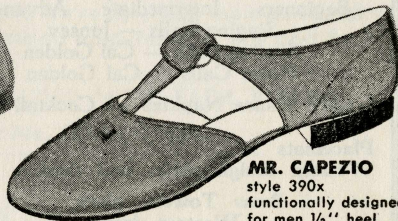
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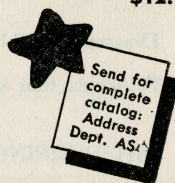


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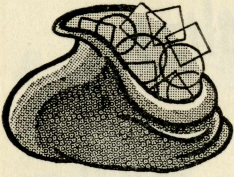
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In the March and April issues of AMERICAN SQUARES we mentioned the value and usefulness of the American Gavotte. Here is the third in this group of favorite dances.

—Frank and Olga

SUSAN'S GAVOTTE

(Introduced 1948 by Susan Gentry, Oklahoma City, Okla.)

Record: Folkraft #1096.

Formation: Circle of couples, facing counterclockwise.

Starting Position: Inside hands joined; outside foot free.

FIGURE I

Measures

- 1-2 FOUR WALKING STEPS FORWARD, starting with outside foot. Then partners face and join both hands.
- 3-4 FOUR SLIDING STEPS, starting with outside foot, progressing to Man's left. Finish with weight on Man's Left and Woman's Right foot. Then couples face clockwise.
- 5-8 REPEAT Measures 1-4 CLOCKWISE.

FIGURE II

- 1-2 FOUR STEP-SWINGS, starting with outside foot. STEP-SWING: Step and swing free foot across in front of other foot (ct. 1). Then couples face counterclockwise, inside hands joined.
- 3-4 THREE WALKING STEP FORWARD, starting with outside foot, then pivot on outside foot turning toward partner. Finish facing clockwise, inside hands joined; Man's Right and Woman's Left foot free.
- 5-8 REPEAT Measures 1-4 PROGRESSING CLOCKWISE. Finish facing counterclockwise.

FIGURE III

- 1-4 *FOUR TWO-STEPS FORWARD, starting with outside foot.
 - 5-8 FOUR TWO-STEPS turning away from partner with one outward turn, each describing a circle. Finish in original starting position with partner on last Two-Step.
- *The following optional alternates are suggested for FIGURE III: Leaders may find them helpful for Two-step practice or for added variety.

Measures

- 1-8 EIGHT TWO-STEPS FORWARD, starting with outside foot.
- 1-4 FOUR TWO-STEPS FORWARD, starting with outside foot.
- 5-8 FOUR TWO-STEPS turning away from partner with one outward turn.
- 1-8 EIGHT TWO-STEPS rotating clockwise with partner, progressing counterclockwise.
- 1-4 FOUR TWO-STEPS FORWARD, starting with outside foot.
- 5-8 FOUR TWO-STEPS ROTATING clockwise with partner, progressing counterclockwise.

— AS MIXER —

Measures

- 1-8 SAME AS ABOVE.
- 1-8 SAME AS ABOVE.
- 1-4 FOUR TWO-STEPS FORWARD, starting with outside foot.
- 5-8 FOUR TWO-STEPS turning away from partner with one outward turn, Woman progresses forward to new partner, Man moves back to new partner. Repeat entire dance with new partner.

New Old Timer Releases for June

- 8075—SIDE BY SIDE—Round Dance
 ME AND MY SHADOW—Round Dance
 Jay Martin at the Hammond Organ
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 DOWN YONDER —Singing Square WITHOUT calls.
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 Johnny Melton, Caller: Clay Ramsey, Music.

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PEACHTREE PRANCE

(Introduced 1953 by Mary and Fred Collette,
 Atlanta, Ga.)

Record: Columbia # 38853 "Peachtree
 Street"—or any good polka, march or fox
 trot.

Formation: Two or more people (partners
 not needed, though it can be done as a
 couple dance) in a line side by side, facing
 in LOD with arms linked as for a stroll.

Introduction

Beats

- 1- 2 All begin on R and balance side-
 ward to R (ct 1), arch L to R (ct 2)
- 3- 4 Balance sideward to L, arch R to L
- 5-32 REPEAT action of 1-4 above 7
 more times (making 16 balance
 steps in all)

Figure 1

- 1- 2 All step R forward (ct 1), arch L
 (ct 2)
- 3-16 Repeat action of 1-2 seven more
 times, alternating L, R, etc.

Figure 2

- 1- 4 Grapevine to R (R sideward, L
 cross in back, R sideward, arch L)
- 5- 8 Repeat grapevine to L
- 9-12 Trot forward R, L, R, arch L
- 13-16 Trot backward L, R, L, arch R

IRISH WASHERWOMAN ARCH

Tune: Irish Washerwoman

First couple step into the middle
Shake your feet, keep time to the fiddle
 (This means any balance step!)

The lady remain the gent step out
Form an arch and circle about
 (Active lady and gent raise arms to
 make arch and the other three couples
 circle six under this arch.)

The lady step out the gent step in
Form the arch and circle again
 (After the six have circled once around,
 active couple change places and keep
 the arch so the six may circle once
 around again.)

Lady step in and give partner a swing
Six go round in a great big ring
 —June Somerville, Hamilton, Ont.

PUT YOUR LITTLE FOOT—verses

(Mostly composed by Dr. J. J. Hayes,
 Oklahoma City)

Point your left foot, point your left foot
 Point your left foot right side
 Point your right foot, point your right foot
 Point your right foot left side
 Point your left foot right side
 Point your right foot left side
 Point your left foot right side
 Point your right foot left side

Have you seen my, have you seen my
 Have you seen my new gown
 With the lace up, with the lace up
 With the lace up and down . . . etc.

Have you seen my new shoes
 With the bows on the toes
 (Note: This one is traditional)

Have you seen my new gloves
 They're a gift of my love's

Have you seen my new tie
 It's as bright as the sky

Have you seen my new ring
 With the diamond sparkling

Point your little foot right side
 Point your big foot left side

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NORTHERN LIGHTS

(Introduced 1951 by Floyd Parker, now of Harrogate, Tenn.)

Tune: Blackberry Quadrille

- First old couple go into the ring**
And give your Eskimo girl a swing
Lead to the right with the sweet little thing
And look at the northern lights
 (Both couples look upward at an imaginary display in the heavens.)
Go into the igloo by the door
 (Active couple duck under joined raised hands of couple 2.)
You clap your hands and clap all four
Clap clap clap clap
 (Self, partner, self, opposite)
Clap clap clap clap-clap
 (Self, partner, self, self-self)
Go out of the igloo stomp your feet
Then swing your honey to generate heat
 (Active couple duck under joined hands of couple 2, move to center of set, stomp snow off feet, swing.)
Mush your huskies through the sleet
And look at the northern lights
 (Lead to couple 3 and both couples look up.)

- Go into the igloo . . . etc.**
Go out of the igloo stomp in the snow
Swing your honey it's 40 below
You swing her around then out on you go
And look at the northern lights
Go into the igloo . . . etc.
Out of the igloo don't you fall
Allemande left your corners all
Grand right and left around the hall
Under the northern lights
And when you get about halfway round
The first old couple goes underground
And everybody is homeward bound
Under the northern lights

(Upon meeting partners, couples 2, 3 and 4 promenade home with inside hands joined and held high. Couple 1 join hands and proceed home in clockwise direction passing under joined hands of other couples.)

CONSTITUTION HORNPIPE—contra

1-4-7 etc. active, CROSS OVER.

Forward six and back

Six hands circle halfway round

Ladies chain with the couple above
 (couple 2)

Half promenade across

Half right and left to place

Forward six and back again

Everybody right hand turn to place
Second couple up outside to the head

SUNFLOWER SQUARE

(Introduced 1952 by Marvin Shilling, Trinidad, Colo.)

- First and third you bow and swing**
Up to the center and back to the ring
Forward make a right hand star
Go once around from where you are
Turn your corner for an allemande thar
Back up in a right hand star
 (Head couples form right hand star and back up, holding on to corners; side couples are on outside, moving forward.)
Turn the outside in and the inside out
 (Side couples move in to form right hand star and back up; head couples are on outside.)
Keep that star turning round about
Break in the middle with a full turn round
Corner lady with the right hand round
Now your partner left
Promenade that corner girl
 (Short promenade to gent's home position; you now have your original opposite.)

She's a sunflower from the sunflower state



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SOMETHING ELSE FOR YOU TO DO

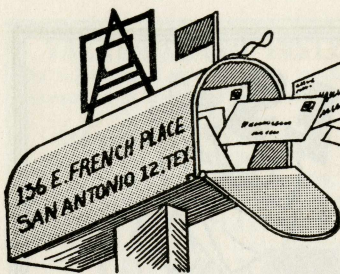
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LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

From Your Town?

Dear Rickey:

Here follows my observation on the "trouble" with square dancing in this area. I hope you will treat it as **CONFIDENTIAL**:

Each organized club has its own instructor, some have callers also, and each club executive sets the policy of the club. Some of the clubs are "snooty", they are so-called, "HI-LEVEL" and specialize in [a number of the "newer" rounds], whereas most clubs are doing [the old favorites]. There is no wonder that some people feel superior—not because they have a large repertoire—but because they know a few HI-LEVEL dances. Some of the members at large reflect a superiority attitude, tolerant, condescending.

We have [an organization], and there is some discord here too, a jockeying around. Many of the critics of the executives would be unable to do as good a job as the present executives. Everyone votes to have this or that done but will not co-operate to have it done—will not accept responsibility.

Some of the lack of unity can be attributed to this: There were just a few pioneers of the new square dance popularity movement and the many followers and adherents were very enthusiastic and cooperative. Now, as they learned and gathered cliques of friends, new potential leaders came up, drifted

to start other clubs, and then couldn't find any kind words for their old mother club or the teacher. I think it is a manifestation of inferiority or jealousy that causes the few new "leaders" to take a negative attitude toward the original leaders and to the organization. The percentage is small, but it creates some discord.

Generally speaking, the majority of square dancers are very nice people. We have had a lot of fun and good fellowship in interclub socials and dance jamborees and it is gratifying to see so many "following" their callers around to the various events. The response is spontaneous and the atmosphere in the dance hall is one of abandon and care-free participation. We keep our programs at an intermediate dance level and we all have fun—even the callers.

—Name withheld

New Dances

Dear Rickey,

I enjoy reading your magazine and trying to dope out the dances. Some don't make sense to me so I forget them and take the ones I like. In my estimation there are too many new dances coming out. I find the people who go to dances like the old timers or ones they know, so give the public what they want is my motto.—William Fox, Angola, N.Y.

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Gentlemen:

I am of the opinion that the ever increasing complexity of the calls used by some callers have a bad effect on the size of crowds at square dances, and as a direct result, could cause square dancing to go out of style. Although I like to dance the new dances myself, I fear that they will scare away the beginners. And, without beginners or newcomers, there could be no replacements of the old timers who drop out because of age, lack of time, lack of interest etc.

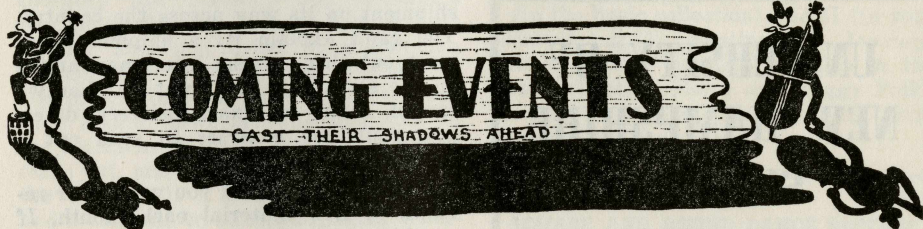
I might add that the applause after a call does not give a true picture because the majority of the crowd are experienced dancers who like the call and the poor beginner who was unlucky enough to get caught doesn't boo—he just doesn't return. The point of all this is that we've got to keep the simple changes going, especially the ones that allow the new couple to take fourth

place and thus learn the dances from the others. Then why not steal an idea from the roller skating rinks and call a couple of dances each night especially for the "advanced couples" and announce them as such before we fill up the floor?—Leonard Harris, Garret, Ind.

What Was the Name?

Dear Rickey:

May I please sound off about the club identification badges that are so prevalent? The name of the club takes up half or more of the badge while the person's name is typed so small that it is impossible to see it without actual scrutiny, and after having looked, how long is it remembered? After all, most people know the name of the club with whom they are dancing. They are more interested in getting to know the names of the people with whom they are dancing.—Gertrude Lange, Chicago, Ill.



June 13. Altoona, Pa. SD Round-up, Bland Pk., Route 220. 2-11.

June 14. Indianapolis. SD, Westlake Pavilion, Ray Smith, caller.

June 20. Falmouth, Mass. Strawberry Fest. SD.

June 20. Philadelphia. 5th Ann. SD Cruise, Chestnut St. Wharf, 5 p.m.

July 4. Arlington, Texas. Arlington Day SD.

July 4. Kerrville, Texas. Summer Jamb., Schreiner Airport.

July 10-11. Spokane. FD Fed. of Wash. State Festival. Rickey Holden and the Sydney Thompsons, leaders.

July 16. Clarksville, Ark. Peach Festival SD Jamb., City Park, 8 p.m.

July 17. Barnstable, Mass. S&FD Fest., Hi School Fld.

July 18-19. Sol Duc Hot Springs, Wash. N. Olympic S&FD Family picnic.

July 20. Taylorville, Ill. Christian Co. Fair SD Fest. & Exhib. Joe Lewis, caller.

July 26. Milwaukee. SD Exhib. at Temple of Music, Wash. Pk.

NOTE THESE DATES!

May 29-31. Fresno, Calif. State Festival.

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

Oct. 24. Chicago. 4th Ann. Int'l Festival.

Oct. 31. Oklahoma City. 7th Ann. State Festival.

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RACLE

Record-of-the-Month?

I am wondering if you have a service which works similar to the Book-of-the-Month deal,—where you send the outstanding records of the best-known artists and record companies as they are released. I would be interested in such a plan. Please advise.—Mrs. C. H. Smith, McPherson, Kansas.

● This is a very interesting and thought-provoking suggestion. However it was tried by one of the West Coast outfits a couple of years ago and since dropped. The subject can get quite involved, but let us point out at least

two reasons why it's impractical:

1. Square dancing is not the same in every part of our country. There are so many variations in style, tempo of dancing, figures, fillers, vocabulary, etc. Needs of callers and dancers vary accordingly; no one record ever pleases them all.

2. AMERICAN SQUARES does not publish records. We buy them from many publishers and try to stock everything of value in the field. But very often deliveries to us are slow. We frequently have a standing order with a distributor for a given record and something happens to delay the distributor's shipment on its way across the country. You can't explain it: a shipment that went out three weeks later may arrive on the same day. The point is, when we cannot count on exact delivery dates, how could we contract to send out a regular monthly service?

Instead, we suggest you watch our reviews of new material each month. If anything looks interesting, order it and we'll be glad to send it along. Remember that, as a subscriber, you need not send any money with your order: we will ship on open account.

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(a) I have never requested any certain music from an orchestra. Would it be well always to use the same piece?

(b) While there are loads of tunes it seems that if staying with just one, I should select one which is universally known, like Ragtime Annie. It does not have too much melody and would probably have fewer aliases than some others. What do you think?—Hal Biggers, Houston, Texas.

● (a) Which tune to use for which dance figure is very much an individual matter. If you call regularly for the same group of dancers you may help them relax, enjoy your call, and know pretty well what's coming up by attaching the same figure regularly to the same tune. Also, there are some tunes to which you'll be able to call better. If you develop a musical appreciation of nice tunes and sensible figures, instinct should guide you from there.

(b) DO NOT stay with just one tune! If you do you miss so much of the wonderful potentialities of square dance music. Furthermore, be careful about which tunes you pick to be "universally" known among square dance fiddlers. Tunes most likely to be in this difficult category are Soldier's Joy, Durang's Hornpipe, Devil's Dream, Girl I Left Behind Me, and Irish Washerwoman (except that most Western fiddlers insist on playing the latter in 2/4). Ragtime Annie, however, was unknown in the Northeast until Cliffie Stone's album came out, and is definitely not native to the area. It is a good tune, of course, and a fair one to select; but Sally Goodin is better if you want one with little melody.

Can you get the steps to Corrido? I can't seem to find them in any book.—Ed Walker, Pueblo, Colo.

● You will find it very adequately described on pages 88-89 of "Dance Awhile" by Harris, Pittman & Swenson. We stock this at \$2.50. You can probably borrow it from a friend or from the local library, however, as it is considered an excellent text for Phys. Educ. teachers.

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Do you have copies of the issues which contained descriptions of Irish Waltz, Horse and Buggy Polka and Sentimental Journey?—Nina Daniels, Clarksville, Ark.

● Irish Waltz was published in v6n2 (Oct. 1950); unfortunately this issue is out of print. The other two have not been published in AMERICAN SQUARES.

We suggest that you get Roger Knapp's "Collection of Couple Dances" (see adv. this page) which is the most complete collection of such things on the market. There you will find Irish Waltz I (in the basic collection) and II (in supplement #4); Sentimental Journey, usually known as Altai, is also in the basic collection. Horse and Buggy Polka is one we cannot identify,—can anyone else?

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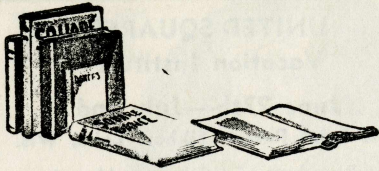
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Book Reviews

In the past several years, we have reviewed or referred to over 400 books on Dance, ranging from the great collections of Playford and Thomas Wilson to the simple collections of current recreational material. Believe us, the increasing quantity of recent publications has led the search for wisdom through a forest of boredom. Imagine our delight, this morning, in receiving a package containing nine old friends, "The Complete Burchenal Collection"!

AMERICAN SQUARES Book and Record Shop considers these books by far the best ever written on American and European folk dancing. Written in the period between 50 and 25 years ago, they immediately became and still are definitive texts. Americans can feel proud that these books have become international classics. They are unique in that they are complete with music, excellent diagrams, and are full of interesting pictures, all printed on 9x12 pages. The descriptions are clear and all terminology is standard. These books are even fresher today than they were 25 years ago and in view of the tons of mediocrity in recent collections, should be required references for all aspiring dance authors.

Incidentally, Miss Burchenal is still a very active dance leader and lecturer. Just three months ago, we had the pleasure of dancing Hull's Victory to her prompting.

The following is the list of Titles, Contents and Price of each:

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FOLK DANCES OF DENMARK Paper, \$2.00; Cloth, \$3.00

Authorized by official Danish Society. Seventy-three dances.

FOLK DANCES OF GERMANY \$2.50

Twenty-nine dances and singing games.

Hobbs, Robert L. and Foster, Archie W., **How to Square Dance.** Decatur, Ill., Colonial Press, c1952. 67p., illus. **\$2.00.**

In the correspondence on this book, the publisher (and co-author) wrote us, "If you are not a square dancer yourself and are not aware of the surge in square dance interest over the country, why don't you have the book examined by a competent square dancer or caller . . . If you are not already familiar with your local square dance activities you will probably be surprised at what you find."

Well—we read the book and we certainly were surprised. We can only suggest that the gentleman should have followed his own advice regarding the examination. Had he done so we feel sure he would understand our reaction: it strikes us the same way the publisher would be struck at seeing printing done like this:

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Canadian News Notes

Compiled by Harold Harton, Toronto

Gordon and Helen MacDonald dropped in the other day. They do a grand job with a group of teen-agers at the YMCA down east in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Their "Spud Islanders" team was a big hit at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto last Fall. We talked about all the fun they had bringing the kids from the Atlantic coast to the Fair. Did a little dancing too while they were here.

"Royal" Members

Helen is on the Square Dance Committee for the "Royal" this year. She's in pretty good company—coast to coast. In case any of our Canadian readers,—and American too, of course,—would like to know who are Square Dance enthusiasts across the country here are the rest of the members:

Hugh Noble is Director of Physical Fitness Division for the Provincial Government in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Cecile Grenier of Montreal represents the French Canadians and the Province of Quebec. This year we are hoping to have some French dances on the program.

Lillian Cornish of the YWCA in Regina, Saskatchewan is another of the "lady-members" of whom we are so proud.

Prof. Arthur W. Erickson is representing the Province of Alberta. He is with the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

Hilda M. Keatley of Vancouver represents the Province of British Columbia.

She is Provincial Supervisor for Women, Physical Education & Recreation Branch.

Herb Suedmeyer of Buffalo, New York is the only member from across the border. We hope to have others soon.

In Ontario there are four members—the local committee. Les Clarke of Toronto and June Somerville of Hamilton are President and Secretary respectively of the Toronto and District Square Dance Association. Tommy Thompson of Willowdale who called last year and your editor who acts as Chairman, complete the list.

If you are holidaying near any of these folks this summer why not give them a call? Mention AMERICAN SQUARES and that should be your "open Sesame" to Square Dance news and friends.

More Festivals

Since our report of last month at least two more clubs have held their closing Festivals. Forest Hill under the leadership of Jack Hancock invited friends from other groups and made their visit worth while with a bang-up program.

Weston Group held their annual Square Dance Hoedown in RSCC illustrious. Alex Dobson was "on the bridge" to see that all had an evening of real fun.

We Read It In . . .

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SQUARE DANCE --



SPOKANE, as host to the Folk Dance Federation of Washington's 1953 Festival, adds a special attraction of four Institute days—two devoted to squares and two to rounds. Latter session is being led by Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Thompson of LONDON, and your Editor is looking forward to the entire week with great enthusiasm.

Those who attended the NEW ENGLAND FOLK FESTIVAL last April are still chuckling over the plight of a burly and determined Armenian dancer who lost his yellow sash during a spirited dagger dance. Said sash served a very useful as well as decorative purpose, and the unhappy dancer, unable to retrieve this functional part of his costume, never missed a beat of the wild dance as he clutched madly at his plunging trousers . . . Newly elected officers of that same Festival are Al Smith, president; Ralph Page, vice-president, Betty Jennings, secretary; directors, Jeannie Carmichael, Bernard Priest, Howard Hogue and Dick Best; nominating committee, Arthur Tufts Jr. . . . A somewhat unusual feature of the First Kentucky Square Dance Festival held last month in FRANKFORT was a discussion period on the subject "Values of Square Dancing to Community Life," moderator of which was Rev. H. Glenn Stephens, Pastor of South Frankfort Presbyterian Church . . . Robby Robertson of SEATTLE, who, with his wife Vera, originated the round dances "Slowpoke" and "A Mighty Pretty Waltz" is the latest artist to be added to the callers on Windsor records . . . Paul and Mary Ratajczyk have started their fifth year of calling and instructing at the Log Cabin near MILWAUKEE, and invite traveling square dancers to stop in any Tuesday night during the summer.

Square Dance Callers' Association of NORTHERN CALIFORNIA has elected as new officers Ken Samuels of San Anselmo, president; Paul Rice of Carmel, vice-president; Eileen Cullum of Hollister, secretary; Ken Clark of San Jose, treasurer and Karl Mallard of Alameda, membership . . . Members of the N. E. NEBRASKA Council of Square Dance Clubs will miss the calling of Johnny

Van Brocklin, now serving with the Armed Forces. . . . At least two major universities—University of Texas and Wayne University in Detroit—have started inviting high school students and prospective university members to attend their college square dance functions. Going a step further, both institutions have put on special square dances for the high school groups, with the aid of university dancers.

Charlie Webster, former square-dancer-at-large while in the Air Force, has settled down to studies and dances at home in WHITINSVILLE, Mass. Does most of his dancing now to the calling of Ted Webster (no relation) of WORCESTER. . . . Stanley Sinfield of YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND, writes us that a special square dance has been composed for the Coronation, and on Coronation night square dancing is being encouraged in London's open spaces such as Trafalgar Square. Special square dance music will be relayed to the crowds by the British Broadcasting System, and it is understood that the square dancing idea originated with the Duke of Edinburgh . . . Newly-elected officers of the HOUSTON Square Dance Council are Lonnie Rogers, president; Austin Reed, vice-president; Mac Jantzen, treasurer; Blanche Marrero, secretary, and directors Bill Lamons, Arthur Brockelman, Al Trepke, Johnny Coffee, Cliff Hyde, Emmette Wallace, Paul Wadkins, Shiro Hoke and Earl Eberling.

We Read It In . . .

NAT'L. CAPITOL SD NEWS LETTER (Washington, D.C.). "Pat Paterick passed along the following gem at the last meeting: 'The five stages of a square dancer: 1. Beginner. 2. Square Dancer. 3. Too good to dance with beginners. 4. Too good to dance with anybody. 5. Back to dance with beginners to have fun.'"

MICROPHONE (Houston). An interesting list published concerning what square dancers do when not square dancing included philately, wall-papering, lonely heartsing, working in the Internal Revenue Dept. and fighting fires.

The longways dance was equally as popular in Scotland as in nearby England, and was danced and enjoyed in the Lowlands and Highlands alike. In fact they have never ceased to be danced in the smaller communities.

The Irish Influence

The Irish possess a natural flair for both music and dancing, and the Irish Jig has a most wonderful influence over an Irish Heart. You can get into all kinds of trouble and arguments over the origin of the word — jig —. What ever may be its origin, in Ireland it has long stood for a dance, popular with young and old in all classes.

Let's not lose ourselves in the maze of Irish jigs for the Irish have some lovely contra dances. Waves of Tory; Siege of Ennis, Walls of Limerick, The Kerry Dance, Gates of Derry, to name but a few. Even the names are attractive enough to make you want to dance.

Few meetings for any purpose took place in Ireland without a dance being called for. It was not unusual for young men, inspired by their sweethearts to dance away the night to the music of the pipes. For the bagpipe is not a monopoly of Scotland. Every village had its piper who, on fine evenings after working hours would gather all the people of the town about him and play for their dancing. Before the gathering broke up, the piper would dig a small hole in the ground before him and at the end of the next dance all present were expected to toss coins into this hole to "pay the piper his due". One very old tune of this character was called "Gather Up the Money". Another tune often used was the one now known as "Blackberry Blossom".

Harp Tunes

But the harp is really the national instrument of Ireland, and Irish harpers were unsurpassed in skill. Many of the tunes to which we now dance contras were once songs written for the harp. A harp-tune written in 6/8 time was known as a "planxty", and we still dance to one of the earliest known planxties — "Tatter the Road" "Top of Cork Road", and "Father O'Flynn" are other names for the same tune.

An Irish wake meant dancing; not in delight because of the passing, but

rather in his or her honor, and as a mark of the esteem in which the deceased was held. If no musician was present at the time then they danced anyway to their own music that was called "lilting" a tune. Some of these liltz have found their way into the dance music of Ireland.

It is difficult today to realize the extent to which Irish dance and music permeated English life in the 16th and 17th centuries. In the previously mentioned "Playford's Dancing Master", there are many Irish dance tunes given with a key to the dance which was performed to each tune. Some fourteen in all, in the earlier editions.

It is in the realm of music that the Irish have contributed most to New England contras. Who does not know and love such tunes as "The White Cockade", "Irish Washerwoman", "The Girl I Left Behind Me", "Turkey in the Straw", and numberless more of similar nature? Some of these very tunes were brought over to New England by immigrants in the first wave of colonization.

(To Be Continued)

Who's taking care of the children while you're at camp?

Regular YMCA staff members will run a regular camping program for children six and over at the American Squares School at Camp Ihduhapi, Loretto, Minn., August 23rd to 30th.

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