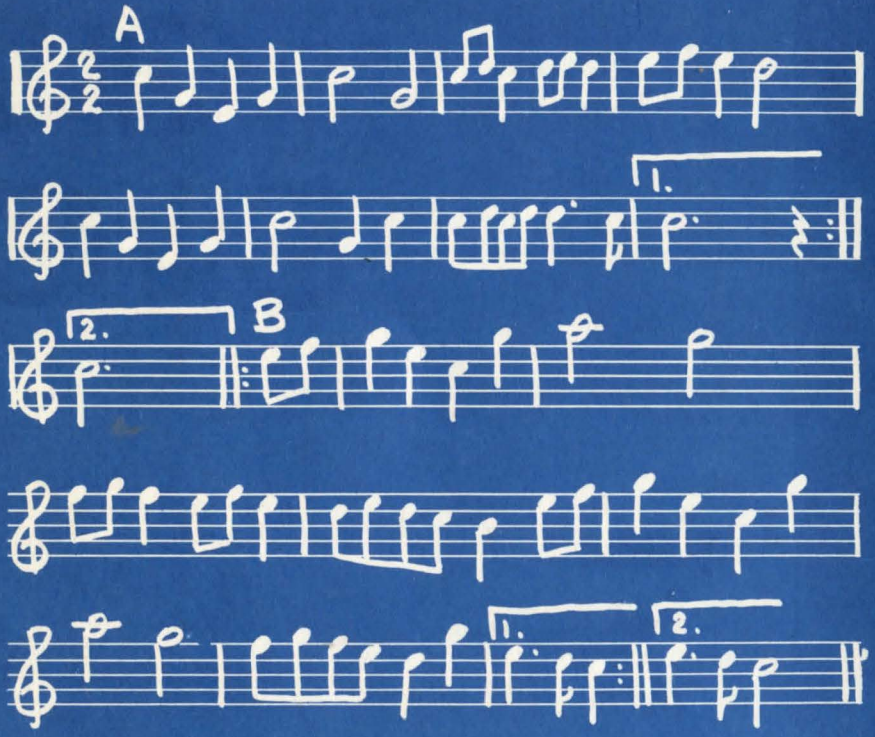
THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY



COUNTRY DANCE AND SONG

COUNTRY DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY
1915

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1970

CONTENTS

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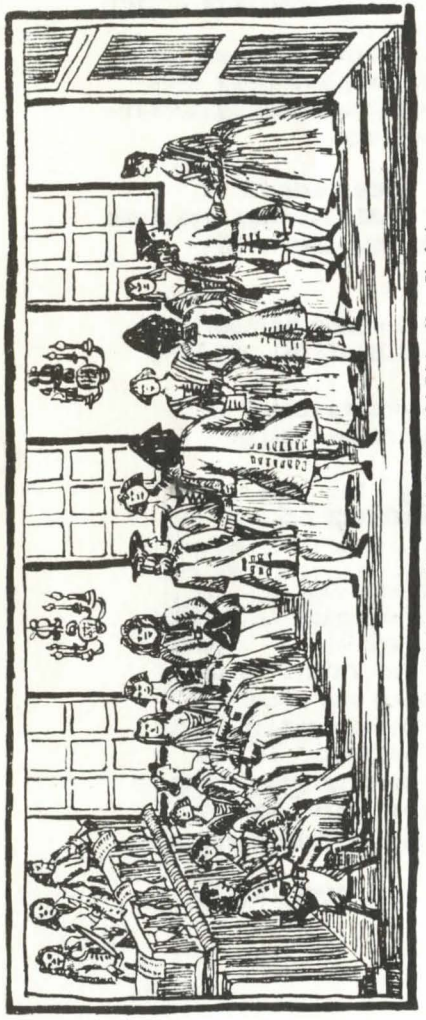
Country Dance and Song 3

continues our policy of publishing articles and accounts of activities that are of enduring interest to our members. We solicit your responses -- especially in the form of contributions for future issues. General articles on traditional dance and song are particularly welcome. It is your participation that will determine the quality of the journal. If you feel that subjects are neglected, send us your ideas; if you are pleased with what you read here, submit material that will give pleasure to our future readers,

JOHN DUNN, Editor

THE ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE



Frontispiece from The Dancing Master, Vol. the First, 18th Edition, Henry Playford

The following account of the history and development of the English Country Dance is a digest of a conversation that was published in three consecutive numbers of English Dance and Song, the quarterly magazine of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. The questions were put by Hugh Rippon and the answers were supplied by Pat Shaw. We are most grateful for permission to print this condensed version.

Can you give a brief outline of the development of the English Country Dance from the time of John Playford onwards?

That is a terrific question. First of all we want to remind ourselves that the dances in the Playford collection are of various kinds. Many of the earliest from the first edition (1650), which were obviously in existence for probably a hundred years before, are of a very simple peasant type, and they became fashionable in higher circles, providing a great deal of relaxation after the rather stiff and starchy court dances of the period..... Then as the editions of Playford went on, you get the creations of the dancing masters of the period, and these are very varied. Some of them are very simple and sociable, full of fun and sometimes with odd bits of play-acting and a game element. On the other hand, you get others where the attention is much more focussed on patterns and intricacies.

By about 1730 the repertoire consisted of longways duple and triple minors..... But there was a considerable originality in many of these earlier longways dances..... on the whole, until about 1750, each dance was a very individual entity. After that there was a great change. The dances started losing their individuality; they became mere sequences of well-known figures put together in more or less any order, and there was less definite connection between the pattern of the dance and its tune. This tendency went on right into the 1800's. The last great dancing master to publish much was Thomas Wilson, early in the 19th century, and even though some of his dances attain a much higher level of interest than usual for the period, there doesn't seem to be a great connection between a dance and its tune, and the figures seem fairly arbitrary.

After that the longways gradually gave way to cotillions and quadrilles. The waltz came in, but even the waltz was used in a longways formation at times. I suppose people got a bit tired of the longways formation and turned to the squares that had come in from France. The two forms of dance went on through the earlier part of the 19th century side by side. Then other forms - such as the polka, came in. Towards the end of the 19th century, emphasis was very much on couple dances. From longways sets, to square sets, to couples; and of course in the last few years the tendency has been more towards dancing on one's own, primitive fashion, so we seem to have gone right back to square one

Who else published collections of dances besides Playford?

I think the first in the field after John Playford was Walsh. I believe there were no serious laws of copy-right at that time, and publishers used to pinch each other's mater-

ROWLANDSON. A Longways Dance (1790).

ial, left, right and center. In the various Walsh collections you get many of the same dances (as in Playford) described word for word in the same way. The descriptions were probably not by Playford at all, but by whatever dancing master he got them from. From 1730 onwards the publishers got thicker and thicker on the ground - Wright's collection 1730-40, Rutherford, Johnson, Thompson - all starting about 1750. We do quite a lot of Thompson's dances these days although people may not realize it. All the dances in the Apted book are from Thompson's collections for various years. It's called the Apted book because it was found in the possession of a Mrs. Apted. Then you get Preston, Skillern and Cahusac and hosts of others towards the end of the century.

What about these so-called French longways dances, some of which you have published?

You're thinking of Feuillet and John Essex. The thing is, that the longways country dance, even if it did not completely originate in England, is in the main an English development. It was introduced into polite Society in France by Madame La Dauphine and it became rather the rage there by all accounts. From France it spread out into a great many parts of Europe, going right up into Denmark, and you can find in old Danish collections dances that are quite obviously English in their tunes and in their figures. When the dances became popular in France, naturally the dancing masters had to keep abreast of the times and teach what was the fashion. One of them, Feuillet, wrote a thesis on the English country dance and published quite a number of the dances, which were, he says, the most popular and the most beautiful to be found in England, and added one or two of his own and of other French dancing masters of the period. This was published in 1706. It proved so popular that a man called John Essex did what really amounts to a translation of all the text, and the descriptions of the steps, hand-holds, etc., but giving a rather different selection of dances. This was published in 1710.

Is it true that by the 1800s there were about 10,000 English country dances in print?

Yes, this is probably true, but you must remember that if you examine them you will find duplication of actual dance patterns; exactly the same series of figures occurring many times to different tunes.

Why were they called country dances?

The usual explanation is that they weren't country dances in that they came from the country and had a rural origin, but simply that they were contrary dances. The French use the name 'contre dance' and the Americans to this day call them 'contras'. Because you formed up your set with men in one line, the ladies in another, you were opposite or contre to your partner.

What connection was there between country dances, presumably done in fashionable circles, and those done by the villagers at their own local hops and Festivals?

There has always been a certain amount of two-way traffic in social dancing up and down the social scale. I think most people would agree that a great many of the earliest known country dances of the Sellengers Round, Gathering Peascods type, were certainly peasant dances, possibly of ritual significance. They were very basic and probably somewhat rustic, but then they suddenly became fashionable among the upper crust and that is why they were published by John Playford. The reason they became fashionable was because of their "gay simplicity". They were a pleasant relaxation after the formality of the court dances. Then more and more country dances were invented by the dancing masters. Some of these undoubtedly slid down the social scale and were danced by the middle classes. They don't seem to have gone further than that. As Hardy points out somewhere, in his time there was a distinction in the villages between the dancing of the farm labourers (mostly reels and step dances) and the dances done by the squire and his family and so forth (mostly country dances). Probably the only time when the two met was at the community celebration of the Harvest Home.

Do we know really what the villagers were dancing before, say 1800? What were the real folk dances?

It depends what you mean by villagers -- in any village there's an upper crust and a lower crust. Presumably you mean the farm labourers. I think they were probably dancing reels and step dances, and possibly they also danced some of the country dances of the period that were out of fashion. There was a sort of time lag between the town and the country.

When Country Dancing ceased to be fashionable where did it carry

on and who was doing it?

The decline came somewhere about the middle of the 19th century and it was quite a gradual process. But by and large people's main interest went on to other forms of dancing and the country dances, usually the later dances of the country dance period, survived only in the villages, in various parts of the country. The towns had meanwhile turned to quadrilles and lancers and things like that.

This brings us to another question: how "folk" are the dances we do now?

It's awfully easy to think of dances as being simply collections of figures. If you compare the dance we know as the "Devon Bonny Breast Knot" with some of the figures round about the 1790's, you will find more or less exactly the same figures. But the style of dancing that survived among the Devonshire villages, where the dance was formed and remembered, was probably somewhat different to the style of the Assembly Rooms of Jane Austin's time, which was probably when that particular dance first came in. I think the actual patterns are probably not very "folk", except that a lot of the figures used throughout the history of the country dance were very much older than the Country Dance itself and are very basic folk patterns. The style of dancing was probably based originally on what the dancing master taught ..... I think however, the style was moulded by the village people to some extent, and in this way the style of dancing might be said to be genuine folk. There was this two way influence, so that by and large the actual dances that we now consider as folk are not as folk as all that. It really depends on what you mean by "folk."

How did the shape of the longways dance evolve, and how did many of the shapes that we now do evolve?

This is very much a question of speculation and theory. I think probably the chain that you get, either as a closed chain as in the Faroes ballad dances and some of the kolos of Yugoslavia, or as the open chain that you get in other kolos in Yugoslavia, the farradole and various other dances of that sort, were certainly some of the oldest forms. Cecil Sharp, I know, felt the big round, the Rounds for as Many as Will in the earlier Playford collections were of extreme antiquity, and where those rounds were progressive, one couple leading out to the next and

gradually working round the rings ,that type of progressive dance may have developed into a longways. As for the other shapes, I suppose there is a limit to the number of shapes you can have. How they evolved, how they originated, I just wouldn't know. I should think somebody, sometime, just had bright ideas. The square for four, the square for eight, the longways for six, the longways for eight: I believe that these shapes were known in Italy before they came to England, but I'm not sure on that point.

How old are these figures that we do now: hands across, (or star), ladies chain, basket, ballroom hold swing, the grand chain?

The ballroom hold came into this country with the waltz at the end of the 18th century. Hands across is a very basic figure and I should say its been in use since time immemorial. Ladies Chain was originally a quadrille figure and was known as la Chaine Anglaise in France. Basket I would say is late quadrille period. The various Figures-of-Eights, Rings, Grand-Chains were all pretty basic figures. Right and Left Through, after all, originated as being simply a grand-chain for four people and was done like that until about 1760.... The Turns Two and One-Hand are pretty basic and have been in existence for a good time.

Could we say something about steps, for instance the Rant Step. How did that develop?

Let me remind you of what I said earlier, that Hardy said that the dances of the farm labourers were not so much the pattern dances, the country dances, but were the reels, where you have a basic figure, walking a serpentine figure of eight, alternating with stepping. Clog dancing is a form of step dancing where clogs are worn. But you get step dancing in ordinary hard shoes in places like Dartmoor, Cumberland and Westmorland.... and in the areas where they had a step dance tradition, they would introduce the clog steps into the social and country dances..... to have a reasonable ability to step was considered as one of the signs of being a good dancer. You very often find the term 'foot it to your partner' which must have been a "free and easy"; you put in whatever step you felt like doing, and it was your chance to show off your dexterity to your partner momentarily. It's pretty clear that the steps of the English were never really formalized and that there was a good deal of liberty to choose whatever fitted in. The Rant step I personally believe to be a particular regional development of the basic double-step but the

hop has become so delayed that it coincides with the first step; .... it has grown up out of the double step in that particular region of England (the North).

The rhythms we dance to nowadays, the jog, the reel, the hornpipe, etc., have been pretty fundamental all along?

Some of them, a jog for instance, are very basic rhythms, although they may not be called jigs, necessarily; you get jig tunes in the early Playford books. Even-time rhythm, as opposed to broken-time rhythm, is again very basic, and although you don't call them reels, what you do to them is more or less the same. The waltz came in from the Continent, but after the waltz, don't forget, we had the minuet, which was a court dance in triple time, although I don't think there were many dances before about 1670 in triple time. We get the triple-time horn-pipe, tunes like Mr. Isaac's Maggot and Mr. Beveridge's Maggot, which are a slowish three. I don't quite know where this came from (Purcell wrote horn-pipes). It's probably a development out of one of the court dances, like the Galliard. Exactly how the horn-pipe ceased being a triple time dance and became a slowed down sort of jerky reel that is known now as the broken time horn-pipe (the sailor's horn-pipe type) I don't quite know. Nor do I know when this came about.

How old are some of our traditional dances? Cumberland Square, Wiltshire 6 Hand Reel, etc.?

Cumberland Square and Yorkshire Square are 19th century quadrille figures. Tom Flett traced La Russe back to 1840. Morpeth Rant and other North Country longways dances; early 19th century, possibly late 18th. Wiltshire 6 Hand Reel: reel dances are very basic indeed and are very ancient, with this idea of walking a certain time figure, or dancing a certain time figure, and then having some kind of stepping alternating with it. But these things have never been completely static; there has been a continual process of growth.

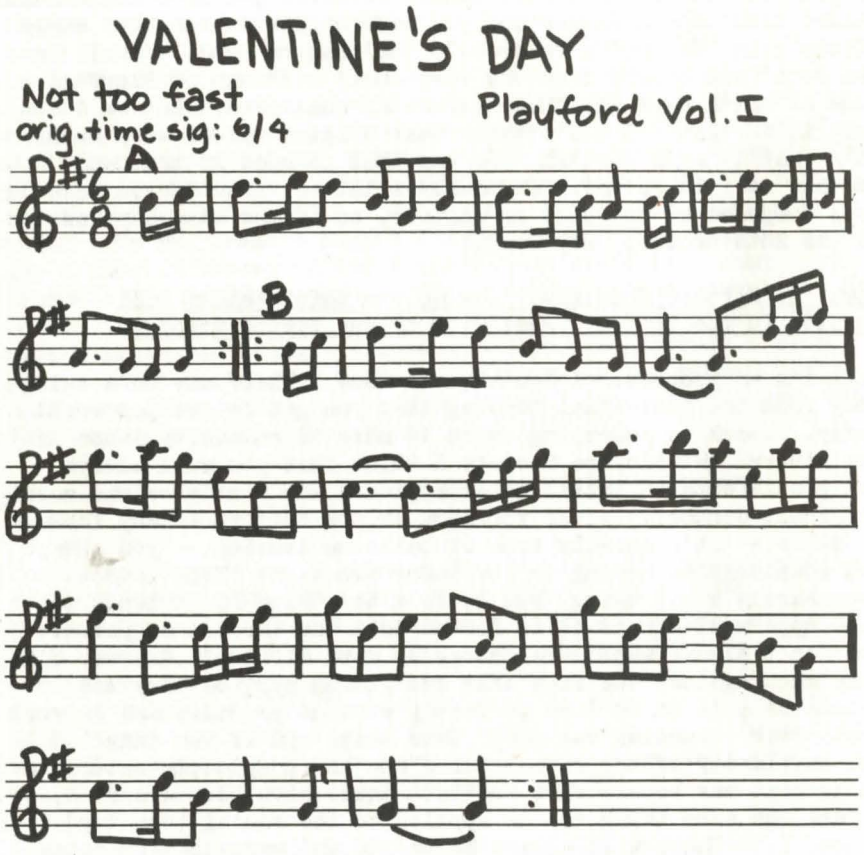
Some people seem worried because some of our dances don't seem to be as 'old' as they should be. But wouldn't it be true to say that even if our material is often of recent origin, nevertheless it is part of a continued process and is in nearly every case derived from something else.., and that in our material today we have something that is up to date and fits modern man, his physique and his temperament,

and yet still has the essential characteristics of folk dancing, that is, natural grace, spontaneity, human contact, and something indefinable which I would call "elemental"?

Yes, I think that is perfectly true. If you're being terribly purist about it, most of what we dance today is, in origin, not "folk", and let's not pretend otherwise. Does that really matter? If you want to do the oldest dances we have, you drop all the so-called traditional dances and you concentrate on the very early things like "Gathering Peascods", "Sellengers Round", "Maid in the Moon" and others from the very early editions of Playford, some of which have all these elemental qualities. But we don't want to do that. I don't think that origins matter very much. It's what is made of them, the use that is made of them and whether it fits or not. Obviously a lot of these dances have been composed at one time or another, so if the time happens to be the 20th century, why worry?

Just one further question. How do you think things will develop in the future? What will be our future trends?

Well I'm no prophet. I don't quite know. There may be a swing away from the individual dancing that you get in the pop world today....back to something which is more of community dance in its nature. Within the Society I think that you will always get people with an intellectual approach who want more and more difficult dances..... If you look at the history of any form of dance -- it's equally true of ballroom dancing -- you always get complexities coming in for their own sake. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it is a bad thing if it tends to rank uppermost and if it is forced down the throats of people who don't always want more dances or more difficult dances. I'm very much against the fact that everything must be easy and should be able to be done perfectly with no practice and no work whatsoever. Dancing was never like this, and if you think of the complexity of the ritual dance and how completely natural a thing that has become when the techniques have been absorbed, I feel the same thing can be applied to the social (country) dance..... There will always be people who want to dance simply as a social pastime, and there will always be other people who want to take dancing seriously for its own sake, really study it, get to grips with it, and learn. Both these attitudes are necessary for the vitality of a Society like ours, and because you get a group of people who are taking a thing seriously, maybe slightly intellectually, it does not exclude the social side of it.



VALENTINE'S DAY

Longways set - duple minor. Allow more space than usual between each group of two couples.

A1. 1st couples lead up (inside hands) change hands and lead down, while 2nd couples lead down (towards neighboring 1st couples) change hands and lead up.

A2. Men lead out to their wall, change hands and lead back; while women do the same.

B1. 1st Man and 2nd Woman cross (2 bars); the other corners do the same (2 bars); all taking inside hands with neighbor fall back a double to the walls (2 bars); then all cross over right shoulder with partners and turn right to face partners (4 bars i.e. quite a leisurely cross over). (Progressive).

B2 1st Man and 2nd Woman meet and turning to their Right stand with their backs to each other (2 bars); 2nd Man and 1st Woman exactly the same (2 bars); all clap on the first beat and turn single (really a kind of cast back to place)(2 bars) straight into a ring of 4 which circles Left once round.

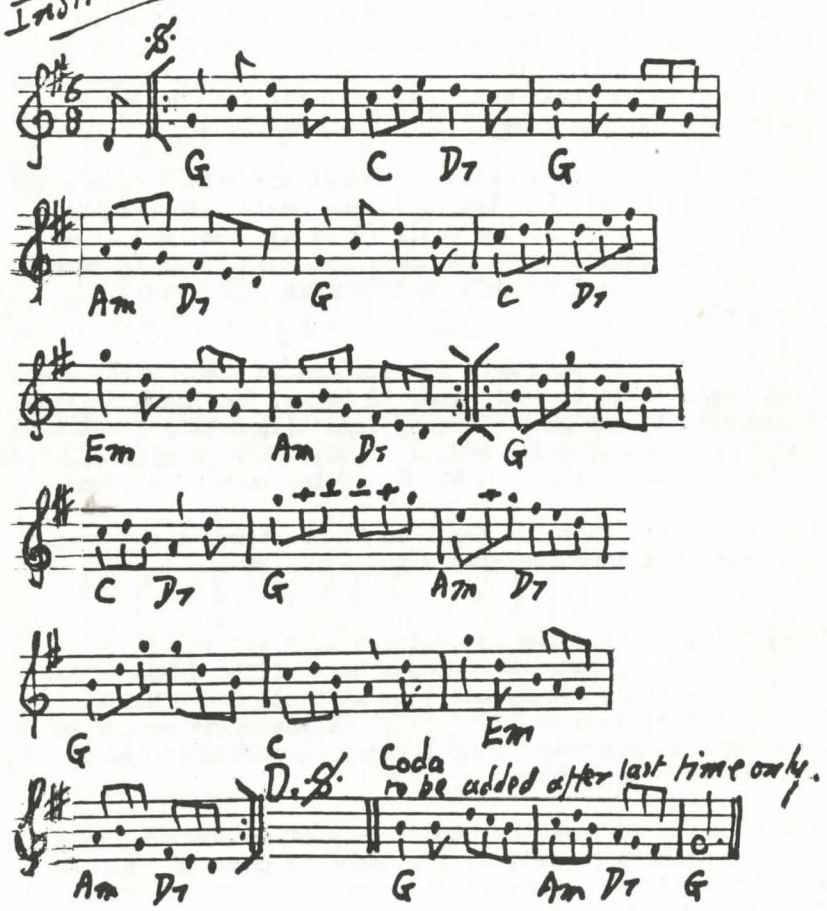
(You will note that the leads in A1 are towards the couple you have just done the ring with.)

VALENTINE'S DAY is from the 1st edition of Playford, 1650. It was sent to us by Patrick Shuldham Shaw of the EFDSS in England. Mr. Shaw holds weekly meetings at Cecil Sharp House, entitled " Another look at Playford". At these gatherings he introduces his interpretation of country dances published in the 17th and 18th centuries.

We are very happy to have the opportunity of introducing this dance to our members as well as the dance on page 16; and we are most grateful for permission to reprint Mr. Shaw's views on THE ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE beginning on page 4.

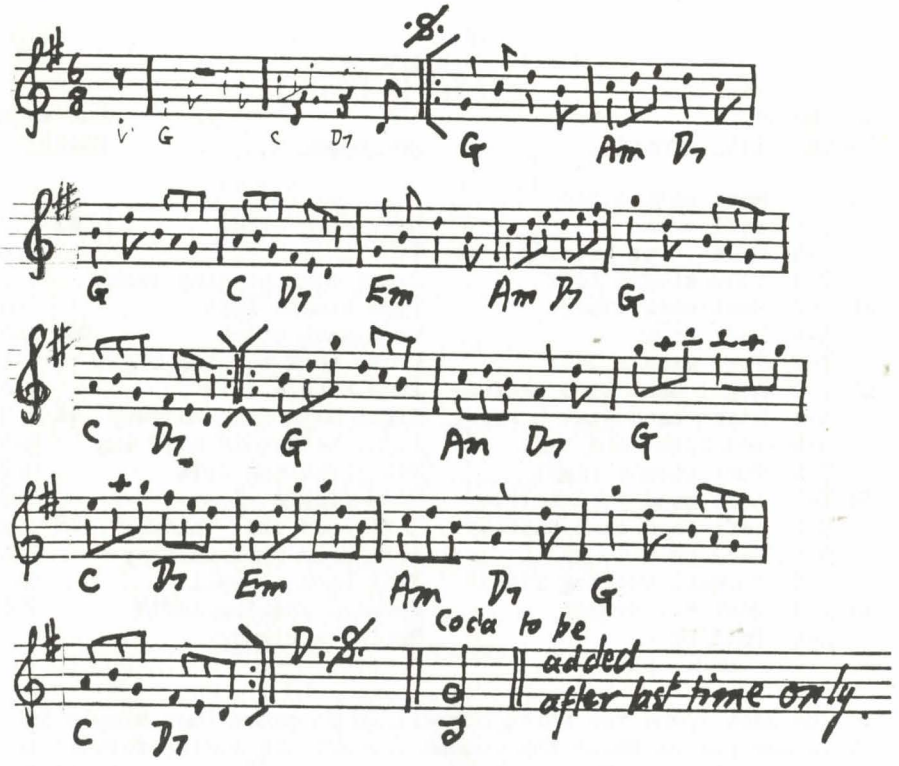
John Tallis's Canon

1st Instrument



John Tallis's Canon.

2nd Instrument



Instructions for this ingenious Country Dance, to be danced in canon by 1st and 2nd couples of a longways set, will be found on the next page. Patrick Shaw composed both the music and the dance for a Manchester friend, John Tallis.

JOHN TALLIS'S CANON

A duple minor longways Country Dance in Canon

composed for

J O H N T A L L I S, (Manchester E.F.D.S.S.) SS

by
P a t S h a w

1st voice Music	1st corners	2nd corners	2nd voice Music
A1 1-2	Meet each other	-----	
3-4	Fall back	Meet each other	A1 1-2
5-6	Cross over passing right	Fall back	3-4
7-8	Turn single left	Cross over passing right	5-6
A2 1-2	Meet each other	Turn single left	7-8
3-4	Fall back	Meet each other	A2 1-2
7-8	Turn single left	Cross back passing right	5-6
B1 1-2	Right hand turn halfway	Turn single left	7-8
3-4	Right hand star halfway	Right hand star halfway	B1 1-2
5-6	Set right and left	Right hand turn half way	3-4
7-8	Turn single right	Set right and left	5-6
B2 1-2	Left hand turn halfway	Turn single right	7-8
3-4	Left hand star halfway	Left hand star halfway	B2 1-2
5-6	Fall back to wall	Left hand turn halfway	3-4
7-8	Forward veering right*	Fall back to wall	5-6
A1 1-2	Meet new corner	Forward veering left*	7-8
3-4	Fall back	Meet new corner	
	etc., etc.	etc., etc.	

On the last round the first corners do an extra turn single in their new places while the second corners are moving forward to their new places. There are two extra bars of music allowed for this ending with a chord for honours. Note that this is only for the last round of the dance to provide a satisfactory finish,

* i.e. move forward veering right or left as the case may be into progressed places.

It will be realized from the above that the first corners dance

to the first voice (e.g. Accordion and the second corners to the second voice (e.g. Violin).

I have found it essential to impress on people not to hurry - each movement given above must take its 4 beats neither more nor less, but this must not be allowed to interrupt the general flow of the dance. I have found the second corners have a tendency to hurry the end in an attempt to catch up the 1st corners. As this destroys the "canon", one has to fight it.

Cairn Uhtan

Each in turn about the stone
Sunwise breathe the rose
Beat the earth with shins of bells
Smell the crush of cloves

Shake the riddles in the holly
One One One
Dust the heavy roots of clay
Stand them in the sun

Fade the petals' edge of roses
Five Five Five
Chant across the incense curl
Fire in the hive

Strew the nuts and husks about
Casting manifold
Trace a track about each seed
Dance till it grow old

"I am in the making, glad
Curl and smoke of rose
I am one and one and five"
Hear the cow, he lows

Ellen Roe Anthony

* Cairn - pile of stones sometimes used as an altar.
Uhtan - in the early morning, before dawn.

THE BOAR'S HEAD AND YULE LOG FESTIVAL

"The Boar's Head Carol

Under the Greenwood tree, and down the path and through the park and 'round the gym ... but Morris dancing in a church? Long sword and Mummer's play, the ancient rituals from unknown times, brought into the house of God?

"Caput apri defero, Redens laudens Domino."

"The Boar's Head I bring, giving praises to God."

"Deck the Hall"

Thus, in old Greenwich, in a great stone church, a solemn joyful procession began a ceremony which brought the worldly elements of festivity traditional to England, as gifts welcoming the new-born King.

"Willie, bring your pipe and drum" ... "Tomorrow shall be my dancing day" ... "One did whistle and one did sing, and one did play the violin on Christmas Day in the morning" ... Even carols unsung echoed in the memory.

"The Wassail Song"

The Wassail Bowl, the pies The Dame got up to bake, a massive Yule log, Trumpets and Trombones, Recorders and Bells, strings and percussion, singers and dancers, all joining in celebration. Men and women, young and old, clad in purple

cowls, which changed separate people into a troop of worshippers with suddenly medieval faces.

Tumblers and bagpipes, capers and galleys, long sword lock and sacrifice, Clown and Doctor, St. George and The Dragon, Old Father Christmas, "Greensleeves" sung to a babe in arms.

"What Child Is This,

English folk song, English dance ... What hand had we in these festivities? Carol dancers and six lads in The Sword Dance trained by May Gadd; their concertina music played by Gene Murrow, following his ingenious many-traditions Morris, danced to The Furry Day Carol sung by the choir; the band of recorders led by Tina Bergfeld; a trio of Barrons as part of the string players; with great credit to Richard Vogt, Director of Music, for his hand in all aspects of this Festival of England, of Christmas, of church and home, of song and of dance.

"I Saw Three Ships"

Marshall Barron

Note: We give our best thanks to Mr. Richard Vogt for the opportunity of having a small part in this wonderful Festival. It would be marvellous if such Festivals could be a part of all community Christmas celebrations.

Picture credit: The sketches illustrating the carols that were sung are reproduced from the Festival Program.

The English Tradition In Performance

The Cambridge Mummers, a "new group devoted to the presentation of the English folk tradition in dance, song, and drama," gave their first performance at the Boston CDS Christmas Festival last December 13. The 40 minute interlude included two figures from the North Skelton long sword dance, a Morris set dance,and the first half of the Revesby mummers play.

The Revesby play, from Lincolnshire, is believed to be one of the oldest of the winter mummers plays-- the written text dates back to 1779. In it, the Fool battles the Hobby Horse, he is executed by the sword dancers (who are also his sons), and finally rises again, symbolizing the renewal of life to come in the Spring.

Two other performances of this program were given in the Boston area: at the Christmas festival of a group in Cambridge called "Dance Free," and at one of the monthly meetings of the Boston American Recorder Society. A new program, consisting wholly of dance, was developed and given in conjunction with the Quadrivium Consort on Saturday, February 28. The whole production was billed as "A Winter's Evening Entertainment," and drew a standing-room-only crowd of over 300.

The Cambridge Mummers was organized early in the Fall and is directed by Gene Murrow. The Revesby Play was directed by Ellen Anthony; the part of the Fool was played by Shag Graetz, and Howard Lasnik led the Sword dance which included Jonathan Morse, Gene Murrow, Sam Rubin, Doug Smith, and Duncan Smith. The elegant publicity brochure was designed by Elna Rapp. Two new members, Steve Leiner and Lisle Kulbach, participated as dancer and musician respectively in our latest program with the Quadrivium which included Glorishears (Bampton), Laudnum Bunches (Headington), Balance the Straw (Fieldtown), and I'll Go and Enlist (jig, Sherborne).

Not only are we bringing the English tradition to new audiences, but we are strenthening our own skill and familiarity with the folk material. For example, Jonathan Morse was a beginner when he began rehearsing with us, and within a month developed into a first-rate Morris dancer. Also, the new material is taught and directed by various members in the group. The standards are high for even the more experienced members, and we see this as

necessary to a performing group. Our plans for the future include a gala Springtime performance, hopefully on a Sunday afternoon in the Cambridge Common, featuring lots of outdoors Morris, a rapper sword dance, and some country dancing. Hope to see you there!

--Gene Murrow

The Philadelphia Mummers

On New Year's Day some 15,000 Mummers from a total of 31 clubs marched down Broad Street in Philadelphia, competing for prizes which exceeded $75,000. But the prize money was scarely the motivating force, for it is estimated that the clubs spend ten times the amount of the awards on costuming and materials. It is an expression of man's enduring need to express his sense of humor in splendid pagentry and broad farce. In Philadelphia, the men who are barbers, bartenders, and bricklayers during most of the year are Mummers on New Year's Day.

Tossie Aaron, who has observed the parade since 1932, tells us that the first recorded play took place in 1792; the festival was outlawed by the city in 1808, but as a way of keeping the high-spirited marchers from getting out of hand, the city gradually recognized the Mummers Parade. It was a part of the centennial observance of 1876, and in 1901 the City Council officially recognized the parade and established prizes.

Its humor has always been broad and unsophisticated. Here is one of the early rhymes:

Here we stand before your door
As we did the year before
Give us whiskey, give us gin
Open the door and let us in.

The parade is still a strictly masculine affair and developed in three sections: the comic clubs, the "fancy" clubs, and the string bands. The first group often include clowns and men dressed as women usually in exaggerated "Mae West" types. Their comedy is usually broad slapstick and they do stop and go capering all the way.

The "Fancies" used the most elaborate costumes and traditionally marched first in line, led by the "King." His "cape", made of satin and velvet set off with glittering sequins, often extends 50 feet and weighs 200 lbs. Since no wheels are allowed, twenty men are often required to carry it. Their headdresses are almost always six sided (double threes). The fancy class are diminishing and generally do not make their own music.

The string bands often include family groups and are the most popular and easiest to join. The bass fiddle is usually carried on wheels; the bands now usually include wood winds and brass but exclude electric instruments. The wives make the costumes. Their theme for each given parade is kept a careful secret.

In addition to the above information, Miss Aaron also sent an account from the Bulletin, which explains why the Philadelphia Mummers were often called "New Year's Shooters":

"The origin of the name dates back to more than 100 years ago in the South Philadelphia section known as the 'Neck.'

"The 'Shooters' were gay marching groups which shot out the old year and welcomed in the new. Ancient Swedish, English and German holiday customs of mummery and shooting all contributed to the origin of the 'Shooters' in their fancy costumes.

"The custom of mumming was brought to Philadelphia by early settlers, and around 1840 the celebration was transferred to New Year's Day by citizens of the 'Neck.'

"Gaily dressed in striped shirt or colored cape, and armed with sword and pistol, the boys would take their best girls and, arm in arm, waltz down through the 'Neck,' chanting songs, demanding food and drink, and shooting guns."

J. D.

55th ANNIVERSARY

The month of March 1970 brought us the 55th birthday of the Country Dance and Song Society. Founded in March 1915 it was then called "The United States Branch of the English Folk Dance Society" with Centers in Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh and New York. All four still have active dance groups connected with CDSS, now a national Society.

JEAN RITCHIE: A Clear Voice

In her autobiography, Singing Family of the Cumberlands, Jean Ritchie recalls that her "very first memory is of our house -- filled with crowds and noise and laughing and singing and crying." The details are revealing, for her art and personality are still redolent of an older, communal world in which singing was as natural and as habitual as laughing and crying. Her character was molded in an environment that was virtually untouched by the depersonalizing forces of commercialism and industrialization. The remote community of Viper, Kentucky was rural, agrarian, and deeply rooted in tradition. There were no radios, phonographs, or television sets to provide entertainment: members of the community amused themselves through song and story-telling, and the Ritchie family was unusually gifted and creative in both.

It is this background that has provided her with a deep reservoir for her art. Now she says that people "back home" watch television a lot but when it breaks down it's harder to get it fixed. "Then people start singing again, so you're right back where you started from," she comments with obvious pleasure. Fortunately, she feels that the people of the Appalachians have not forgotten their heritage. There is considerable interest among the young to keep the traditional ways alive.

Although she has lived in New York for nearly twenty years, she maintains a deep affinity for the region that shaped her. As noted above "back home" is a phrase that crops up often when she discusses her career; her speech still has a distinct Southern accent and idiom. When I asked her if she thought about returning to Kentucky to live, she laughed and said that her dream would be to build a log cabin on the top of a mountain and stay there.

Her original intention was to make a career in social work, and that plan first brought her to New York. After graduating from the University of Kentucky, she came North to work at the Henry Street Settlement House to gain experience, for there were very few opportunities in her home state. Perhaps it is character-

istic of her warm personality that made her find New York not so different from her home. She made many friends among her neighbors on the Lower East Side; she found the area more like an autonomous community with an old-world simplicity rather than merely a fragment of a vast impersonal city. Later, she worked in Rockefeller Center and that area did seem a bit overwhelming.

She became active in the Country Dance and Song Society, though this was not her first acquaintance with the organization. Before she was born, Cecil Sharp had visited her family when he was collecting songs in the Appalachian area in 1916. As a child she participated in many activities sponsored by CDSS at the Berea Christmas School, and the John C. Campbell Folk School, and she had met May Gadd on these occasions. Our Society has the distinction of having sponsored one of her first public concerts, held at Greenwich Mews. The group was smaller in those days, she recalls, but it was enthusiastic. She has continued to be an active member over the years and regularly serves as a staff member during Folk Music Week at Pinewoods.

She made her first record with Electra, which was also that company's first folk music album. Its success was what kept them going for about the first three years, she recalls with a smile. She accompanies herself with the guitar and the mountain dulcimer, singing a rich variety of traditional songs, mostly versions learned from members of her family. Edward Tatnall Canby remarked on the distinctive quality of her songs: "It is music that has constantly grown and changed, acquiring strength and maturity over the years in the Darwinian way, by natural selection; music that has divided and subdivided into countless variants, dying out in one, springing forward in another, to live anew in each singer's own best version, perhaps different by a note or two, a word, a mannerism from the song in the next clearing or across the country. These songs did not come from books."

A number of other notable recordings followed. "The Ritchie Family of Kentucky" was recorded with the intention of providing listeners with authentic sounds that provide the background for Jean Ritchie's music. These are tapes, some old some new, of the members of her family singing and talking. She commented that "these old recordings were made 'for fun,' with nobody taking notice of background noises, and this accounts for the many

inconsistencies in quality throughout the record." Actually the traces of"the crying babies, rattling dishes, barking dogs, and the old 'muly cow' bawling to be milked" contribute to the atmosphere. Here are lullabies, ballads, spirituals, playparty songs, and "haunt tales" placed in their genuine cultural atmosphere. And we are given a sense of the ongoing nature of the tradition: "Here's our little son Peter, three years old, and of course in this day and age he hears a great many folk songs on records...and still, the songs he really learns best are the ones we sing with him. And the ones we sing with him are more than likely the ones I learned from my mother or father. And so it goes...."

After she and her husband spent a year in the British Isles, she issued a recording, "Field Trip" which is now very scarce. Traveling on a Fulbright grant, she found a number of traditional singers in Ireland, Scotland, and England still singing many of the songs that her forebears had brought with them to the Cumberland Mountains in the eighteenth century. It is fascinating to hear how the different versions have evolved in the process of oral transmission. In the case of "Barbara Allen," she noted that "we mountaineers have changed 'Allen' to 'Ellen,' thus giving the heroine a middle name but depriving her of a surname. Many parents in the just-gone days, enamoured of the song, have named their daughters after this ill-fated lass, so that it is not uncommon to find young ladies in the southern Appalachians named, 'Barbry-Ellen Hatfield,' or 'Barbry-Ellen Jones.' " Many of the singers that she recorded -- Seamus Ennis, Sarah Makem, Ewan McColl, to name but a few -- have since become much more widely known in this country.

One of the interesting events of that trip was going to a wedding in straw. They disguised themselves in straw suits, an Irish custom that goes back to pagan times. "People who weren't invited to the wedding used to come and steal the whiskey and take it up to the mountains and drink it," she explains. "But now its gotten to be a kind of good-luck thing." Being strangers the Ritchies were able to conceal their identity to the delight and amusement of the company.

She keeps numbers of activities going; recently she has been performing before groups in small colleges in Tennessee and Kentucky. The latter state has an active Arts Council that underwrites the major cost of bringing distinguished artists to rural college audiences. She finds this work very satisfying,

Jean Ritchie

Traditional Folk Singer and Collector

being in on the opening of appreciation for the traditional song; and she likes the open responsiveness of such audiences who have not yet learned to be politely restrained. She also has a new collection of songs for publication, as well as a new recording, "Clear Waters Remembered," issued by Sire/London. The feature song, "Black Waters," is a lament for the pollution that is taking place in her region, and she hopes to rouse public support for stricter control.

Clarity, simplicity, naturalness, honesty--these are the distinctive qualities of the artistry and personality of Jean Ritchie. Her numerous recordings, books, and concert appearances constitute an important contribution to American culture.

John J. Dunn

The Queen's Birthday

Longways Country Dance - duple-minor

A1 1-4 1st corners turn first by the right, then by the left

A2 1-4 2nd corners do the same

B1 1-8 First couple dances half a figure 8 through the second couple; all turn once and a half with neighbor.

B2 1-8 Second couple dances half a figure 8 through the first couple (who are now below them); all turn once and a half with partner.

This dance is described in The Country Dance Book, Part 6, from the 12th edition of Playford, 1703. It is a good tune but the B music movement is difficult to time. The above adaptation is offered by Paul Skrobela. It makes a simple dance that is fun to do. The tune is on the back outside cover.

There are other Playford dances that need some slight adaptation in order to be workable. If you find one share it with us.

EGOTISM AND INTERDEPENDENCE

Some Uses Of Country Dance In Eighteenth Century Fiction

Editor's Note: The following essay has been shortened because of the limitation of space. The original contained a wider variety of illustrations, especially from the novels of Jane Austen.

"I consider a country dance as an emblem of marriage. Fidelity and complaisance are the principal duties of both."[1] In a passage reminiscent of some lines in Spectator 334, though tinged with her own irony, Jane Austen sketched one of the social functions of dance which were still thought desirable at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Also, of course, she was helping sketch a character. A century and a quarter before, William Congreve had shown the delight of country-dance in a more esthetic and dramatic vein:

> They danced several times together, and no less to the satisfaction of the whole company, than of themselves; for at the end of each dance, some public note of applause or other was given to the graceful couple..... Our friend Aurelian had by this time danced himself into a net which he neither could, nor which is worse, desired to untangle....His soul was charm'd to the movement of her body: an air so graceful, so sweet, so easie and so great, he had never seen....The grandeur of her mein was not stiff, but unstudied and unforced, mixed with a simplicity, free, yet not loose nor affected. If the former seem'd to condescend, the latter seem'd to aspire; and both to unite in the centre of perfection. Every turn she gave in dancing snatcht Aurelian into a rapture.[3]

Such references have at best a vague meaning to modern readers, for whom social dance is a predominately ad-lib, single-couple activity. For those who know or who have watched the English Country-dance, the references--though seldom detailed--add to early fiction an extra dimension of reality which helps offset the "distancing" of formal prose and dialogue and the sometimes-oppressive didacticism.

Aside from the familiar presence of the dances in eighteenth-

century life, their use by writers had distinct dramatic and moral purpose. Often it was a measure of good breeding. While dancing masters and their affectations came in for heavy satire, especially in farce and ballad-opera, there was occasional serious discussion (in The Spectator 334, for instance) of the function of dance in society.

> A man who has not had the regard of his gesture in any part of his education, will find himself unable to act with freedom before new company, as a child that is but now learning, would be to read without hesitation. It is for the advancement of the pleasure we receive in being agreeable to each other in ordinary life, that one would wish dancing were generally understood as conducive, as it really is, to a proper deportment in matters that appear the most remote from it.

Country-dance, really contre-danse (still contra-dance in the American tradition), did really begin in the country, in village dances and remnants of ancient ritual. Though the steps are simple, the patterns are almost infinitely variable and often rather complex. When John Playford's first collection of dances was published, the year after the execution of Charles I, they had already been invited into the parlor. Tamed and polished by the Elizabethan court, amplified by the usages of the Jacobean masque, they were urbanized amid the turmoils of the Parliamentary period. Successive Playford editions through three-quarters of a century (the last by Thomas D'Urfey in 1728--the year of The Beggar's Opera) grew and changed as dancing-masters added new dances to the traditional ones, using the same basic materials. Dancing was for the Puritans an acceptable recreation and a needful social grace.

The English longways dances (which were collected by French dancing masters as fashionable novelties as early as 1688) are a combination of couple-dance and choral dance. They require constant awareness, on the part of each dancer, of both the partner and the group in its shifting design. One must be in the right place on the right measure, or that design is spoiled for the others. Said Mr. Spectator (in No. 66): "The true art is to make the mind and body improve together; and if possible to make gesture follow thought, and not thought be employed upon gesture." This was the requirement which Jane Austen's pompous Mr. Collins could not meet when he made Elizabeth Bennet's first two dances at the Netherfield ball into "dances of mortification."[3] Austen's audience needed little further detail to feel the caricature most keenly.

Social status as well as personal accomplishment was judged by one's dancing. While etiquette required that a dance with a fixed "set" (four, six, or eight people) be made up of social equals, the "longways for as many as will" was more democratic: all couples danced progressively the length of the room and back. While the country dance became the general entertainment, the Minuet (which had been the chief dance contribution of the reign of Louis XIV) remained as the formal opening-dance at balls and assemblies. Often the elders and the eleganti danced this part, and when the country-dances began, went off to cards or refreshments, or sat to watch, comment, and gossip.

The social dances of any culture inevitably reflect its attitudes. The minuet is a couple dance--a courting dance--of display and formalized egotism; it has a minimum of movement and a maximum of elegance. The country-dance, on the other hand, is a dance of movement, of gaiety, of civilized relationships. Its basis is a stable form to which, with all the variations of place-changing, chain-weaving, circling, or shuttling, it constantly returns. Its music is varied and remarkably beautiful, including some of the oldest traditional tunes of England as well as many written in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Participation in a formal figure-dance demands not only individual skill, but a momentary abdication of independence for an interpendence not much less demanding, except possibly to the ego. I do not think it is idle to see analogies between this dominant dance form and the eighteenth century's dominant Shaftesburian philosophical concepts of a universe ruled by Benevolence, Plenitude, Order, and Interdependence. In a sense, each dance-set is a briefly assembled microcosm, with its own rules of order to which the individuals bring their varied adjustments. And in the novels, as well as in the Spectator comments, this interpersonal, psychological aspect of dance, as well as the class-definition aspect, is evidently recognized.

Steele sketches a ridiculous "Mr. Trot", who, being a very bad dancer, distracts his colleagues with grimaces and capers. Being once assured by Mr. Spectator that if he is able to keep time, "he has a right to dance, laugh who will," he grows presumptuous and, according to a complaint from a lady of his clique, "has the assurance to set up for a minuet dancer." Mr. Spectator

gravely admonishes, "I never meant any other than that Mr. Trot should confine himself to country dances" (Spectator 296 and 308).

In Fielding's Joseph Andrews (1742) the inserted narrative of Mr. Wilson seems to place him at about the Spectator period. Describing his youthful misadventure in the haut monde, he says he went into debt for clothes as soon as he arrived in London. "The next qualifications, namely dancing, fencing, riding the great horse, and music, came into my head: but as they required expense and time, I comforted myself, with regard to dancing, that I had learned a little in my youth, and could walk a minuet genteelly enough."[4]

Smollett's indestructible Roderick Random (1748), though deprived of privilege in his upbringing, seems somehow to have acquired the social graces along his embattled way. He dances in the innyard, to the fiddling of a bawdy curate, on his trip from Newcastle to London.[5] He is praised for his bonne grâce by French camp followers, in a grotesquely fantastic epidode which parodies a pastoral revel. Later he achieves a Hampstead ball to "walk a minuet" with his coquettish Melinda, fend off a threatening rival, and continue with the country-dances in good form. Finally at Bath (and now with the faithful Narcissa), "My triumph rejected all bounds, when, after we had danced together, a certain nobleman, remarkable for his figure and influence in the beau monde, came up, and in the hearing of all present, honoured us with a very particular compliment upon our accomplishments and appearance"(Chap. 57). That this compliment also proves to be the flattery of a would-be rival does not, ultimately, lessen Random's triumph

At one point, late in the course of Evelina (1778), the disciplined formalities of the minuet are turned to grotesque mockery. Mme. Duval (who should have been at cards) insists on dancing a minuet at a Hampstead assembly--much to the mortification of her granddaughter. "She danced in a style so uncommon; her age, her showy dress, and an unusual quantity of rouge, drew upon her the eyes, and I fear the derision, of the whole company" (Letter 50). Elizabeth Bennet could not have suffered more from her mother's gaucheries a generation later; and one must assume that Jane Austen, enthusiastic dancer that she was, was articulating the same sort of judgment throughout her novels--not only in the dance scenes but in the entire drama of orderly social behavior. By Fanny Burney's time, the minuet was quite out of fashion in France; certainly in England it had never been as rigidly flam-

boyant a ritual as in its homeland. That Mme. Duval should dance in the fashion of her youth was expected: that she should be so persistently ostentatious--after having been "put down" so often-- is the crowning touch in a cruel caricature. Perhaps Burney was a far harsher critic than she seems to later generations.

Evelina's first appearance in society and in a ballroom is mercifully restricted to country-dances: she and the Mirvans had arrived late and the minuets were over. Having refused to dance with an affected fop, she is approached by another stranger whose gracious demeanor and sartorial restraint indentify him (for the reader at least) as a nobleman and the hero-to-be of Evelina's adventures. She is terrified: "I did not choose to tell him it was owing to my never before dancing but with a school girl" (Letter 10). While the set is assembling, she flees to the sidelines upon hearing a comment that this is a difficult dance; but she attempts--with reasonable success the next one: "Though I both expected and deserved to find him very much mortified and displeased at his ill-fortune in the choice he had made; yet, to my very great relief, he appeared to be even contented, and very much assisted and encouraged me. These people in high life have too much presence of mind, I believe, to seem disconcerted, or out of humour, however they may feel: for had I been the person of the most consequence in the room, I could not have met with more attention and respect." Here is a demonstration of the Spectator argument of sixty years before--and a preparatory contrast to the attitudes and behavior of Captain Mirvan, Sir Clement Willoughby, and Mme. Duval and the Branghtons.

Evilina dances again, with more confidence, after learning in the interval that she has unwittingly violated one of the rules of etiquette: one does not refuse one partner and then accept another--one dances or one does not dance. And one does not laugh unintentionally. A week later, when she attempts to obey Mrs. Mirvan's admonition against dancing with strangers, Evelina, remembering her earlier error, claims a prior engagement; when her "partner" does not materialize, Sir Clement--who knows perfectly well who she is--subjects her to rather cruel teasing even in Orville's presence. "Thus was my deviation from truth punished.... " And Evelina, this time reduced to tears, thoroughly dashed and confused by high society, is ready to retire to the country for good. But her suitors--the good and the bad--have been appropriately introduced.

In The Vicar of Wakefield (1766), class distinctions on the basis of dance skills are elaborated on in an episode stolen from village pastorals; a blend of satire and sentimentality, it is also visually striking. The moon shines bright. Calculating young Squire Thornhill has concocted a portable fete champetre with "two fiddles, and a pipe and tabor" to win the heart of Olivia Primrose. Farmer Flamborough's daughters, sent for to make up a full set, prove themselves true provincials: though they were reckoned the very best dancers in the parish, and understood the jig and roundabout to perfection, yet they were totally unacquainted with country dances....however, after a little shoving and dragging, they at last went merrily on."[6] Olivia is flawless (her mother claims credit as her teacher): "Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo." The Squire's false "ladies" from town (who will turn out to be a parody of Lovelace's false "relatives" in Clarissa), characterize themselves by dance affectations--"they swam, sprawled, languished and frisked," and by vulgar language; Dr. Primrose wryly observes "their finery, however, threw a veil over any grossness in their conversation."

Later on, at the Arnold estate, Thornhill inquires "with the utmost candour" after the lost Olivia (whom he himself has just seduced and abandoned, and for whom Dr. Primrose has been searching unsuccessfully), admonishes the poor father not to mention the misfortune to the company just yet, and calmly goes in to join the dance in which he is now courting Arabella Wilmot and her money. The cheerful associations of the previous dancing are effectively twisted into irony.

Smollett reminds us forcibly of Squire Thornhill's tarts "all of a muck of sweat," and of the realities of eighteenth-century life in a scene in Humphry Clinker (1771). Matthew Bramble describes the assembly at Bath: the minuets are "a tiresome repetition of the same languid, frivolous scene, performed by actors that seemed to sleep in all their motions." When the elegant assemblage rises to begin the country-dances, he faints from the bad air and the smells-- "a high exalted essence of mingled odours, arising from putrid gums, imposthumated lungs, sour flatulences, rank armpits, sweating feet, running sores and issues, plasters, ointments, and embrocations, hungary-water, spirit of lavendar, assafoetida drops, musk, hartshorn, and sal volatile; besides a thousand frowzy steams, which I could not analyze."[7]

To Lydia Melford, the Bath season is fun and excitement, but she

feels the bad air: "The place was so hot, and the smell so different from what we are used to in the country, that I was quite feverish when we came away (from the assembly). Aunt (Tabitha) says it is the effect of a vulgar constitution, reared among woods and mountains; and that as I become accustomed to genteel company, it will wear off" (pp. 39-40). Jeremy Melford sees Bath as an interesting social potpourri: "I was extremely diverted, last ball-night, to see the Master of the ceremonies leading, with great solemnity, to the upper end of the room, an antiquated Abigail, dressed in her lady's cast-clothes; whom he (I suppose) mistook for some countess just arrived at the Bath. The ball was opened by a Scotch lord, with a mulatto heiress from St. Christopher's; and the gay colonel Tinsel danced all the evening with the daughter of an eminent tinman from the borough of Southwark" (p.46).

In Edinburgh, Jeremy observes that his sister is fully a match for the elegant Scottish belles at the Hunters ball, where he adjudges the country-dancing very superior. "She is become a toast at Edinburgh, by the name of the Fair Cambrian, and has already been the occasion of much wine-shed (pp. 202-203). Aunt Tabitha, "the most ridiculous figure and the worst-dressed of the whole asembly" despite days of preparation, can get partners only for two Minuets and makes no conquests, which reduces her to great peevishness. One is again reminded of Mme. Duval; but Smollett is more benevolent and allows her to take up with the New Licht church, which keeps her occupied until she is reunited with, and happily betrothed to, the equally eccentric Lismahago.

Back in England, with Lydia finally betrothed to her lover (now revealed as the son of Bramble's old Oxford friend and entirely acceptable), Jeremy reflects: "These expectants seem to be so happy that if Mr. Dennison had an agreeable daughter, I believe I should be for making up the third couple in this country dance" (p. 301). However it is Humphry Clinker (identified as Bramble's bastard son) and Winifred Jenkins--triumphant in her Malapropism, who make up the set. It is as strangely-assorted one as ever danced a wedding dance; and its finale is a solo, the morning after, by Lismahago, who proves his undiminished vigor and delights his bride with a buoyant Highland sword dance.

Jane Austen's frequent use of country-dance was, I think, influenced partly by the milieu of her novels and her own experience, and partly by the notion of deportment and order previously

discussed. Rather more deliberately than her predecessors, she makes this major arena of social combat, like the other details of everyday life, into an organic part of her plotting. Dancing--or refusing to dance--is often emblematic of a character's attitude, which in her works is often more important than action.

She herself was a lively, sociable person, a good musician, and extremely fond of dancing. One of her early letters records a ball at which she danced all twenty dances of the evening without feeling tired. When she moved with her mother and sister to Chawton cottage in 1809, she paid 30 guineas for a new piano; she practiced country-dances to entertain her nephews and nieces, and though by this time an "old maid" she continued to dance herself at every opportunity.

In Pride and Prejudice (1813) Austen created one pair of lovers equally matched in intelligence and complexity of character. It seems to me that she uses the country-dance episodes, which are all in the early part of the book, not only as moments of psychological combat but as a series of prefigurations of the course of Elizabeth and Darcy's relationship. At the Meryton assembly, while Bingley is dancing every dance and being delighted by Jane Bennet, Darcy declines all introductions, dances only with his friends, pointedly rejects Bingley's urging; "There is not another woman in the room whom it would not be a punishment to me to stand up with"(Chap. 3). That Elizabeth has enough sense of humor to repeat this overheard slight merely as a demonstration of Darcy's conceit, indicates her independence of the class-anxiety which dominates the rest of her relatives (with the exception of course of her father). The irony is doubled when she assures her mother that she will never dance with Darcy. At the Lucas party she has the pleasure of refusing him, and of being rather impertinent besides--a novelty which increases his unwilling admiration. At Netherfield, during Jane's illness, their verbal fencing sets Elizabeth and Darcy on a clearly higher intellectual plane than anyone around them. But when he in evident seriousness suggests she might like to dance (probably because no outsiders are present) while Miss Bingley is playing, she sweetly turns the compliment into a challenge. "You wanted me, I know, to say 'Yes,' that you might have the pleasure of despising my taste; but I always delight in overthrowing those kinds of schemes, and cheating a person of their premeditated contempt. I have, therefore, made up my mind to tell you that I do not want to dance a reel at all; and now despise me if you dare" (Chap. 10). For Darcy (and for the reader) it is almost

as if she had overheard his retort to Sir William Lucas' praise of dancing as highly civilised entertainment, that "every savage can dance." Elizabeth had not heard that conversation; but Darcy's grave "Indeed I dare not" is clearly serious: his admiration of her perceptiveness increases even though he is rebuked.

By the time of the Netherfield ball, Miss Bingley's jealous disparagements and Elizabeth's ready wit have worked Darcy into a distinct though still unwilling interest in Elizabeth; but Wickham's false tales have added to her antagonism, and when Darcy actually does take her out to dance (which causes considerable comment), she does her best to provoke him. Despite themselves, almost, they dance superbly together--and in good tradition are highly praised by Sir William Lucas. The subsequent workings-out of the plot are set in a more serious vein, but the design has been established.

Thus at the end of a century of outward order, but really of profound change, Jane Austen shrewdly utilised the dramatic significance of a non-verbal "social" activity which was an emotional part of herself as well as of her world. She was a well-read person and an observant one. Perhaps with a touch of nostalgia she used the country-dances in her fiction with far more subtlety than her predecessors, as a symbol of the sane, gracious, and still essential relationships in human society.

NOTES

1. Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey, ed. Austin Dobson, (New York. Macmillan. 1897), Chap. X.

2. William Congreve, Incognita, ed. Philip Henderson, in Shorter Novels, Jacobean and Restoration (New York: Dutton, 1930), pp. 254-261.

3. Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice (1813), ed. Austin Dobson, (New York: Macmillan, 1893), Chap. XVIII.

4. Henry Fielding, Joseph Andrews (1742), ed Martin C. Battestin, (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), Bk. III, Chap. III.

5. Tobias Smollett, The Adventures of Roderick Random (1748), (New York: New Amer. Lib., 1964), Chap. 9.

6. Oliver Goldsmith, The Vicar of Wakefield (1766), in Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith (London: Newnes, n.d.), Chap. IX.

7. Tobias Smollett, The Expedition of Humphry Clinker (1771), ed. André Parreaux (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1968), pp. 60-61.

By Leslie Latham

Tapes Anyone?

As announced in the C.D.S.S. newsletter the Society is in the process of acquiring a library of dance music tapes. The library will consist of a selection of dance tunes, both morris and country, not available on commercial recordings, including some of the less familiar dances. A beginning was made at Pinewoods in the summer of '68 and continued in New York City in the winter and at camp in '69.

The musicians who have generously donated their time and talents are:

Marshall Barron - violin
John Davidson - piano
Phil Merrill - piano, accordion, concertina
Gene Murrow - pipe and tabor, accordion, concertina
Margarite Wood - concertina
Chuck Ward - accordion

A dance-tape committee, formed last summer, consists of the players themselves and Luis Torres who used his own recording equipment and engineered the taping sessions. He has accepted the committee appointment as "squire of dance tapes" and has kindly offered to furnish copies for the society music library, and others, under the following conditions.

The general policy decided upon by the committee was that the tapes be made available to members in three ways.

First - for listening and reference within the confines of the C.D.S.S. office.

Secondly - to dance leaders who need the material for use in their teaching, in which case arrangements may be made for obtaining a copy of the tape (courtesy Luis Torres). Expenses of tape, postage, etc., to be borne by the receiver, plus a reasonable donation to the society.

Thirdly - for those who use record players, arrangements may be made through the office for transference of tapes to discs for all expenses and the donation to the society.

Any use of a tape outside of the office must be contingent upon clearance by the musicians themselves through Phil Merrill and Marshall Barron.

The matter of "a suitable donation to the society" is being discussed. Outright purchase of the tapes or records is being considered.

It would be helpful if those interested would check their preferences from the following list and send it in to the office along with any suggestions.

COUNTRY DANCE TAPES

Prince William	M.B.v, J.D.p
Orleans Baffled	" P.M.c, C.W.p
Nonesuch	" "
Up With Aily	" P.M.p
Spring Gardens	M.B.v, P.M.p
Mad Robin	" "
Saint Martins	" "
Round O	" "
The Beggar Boy	P.M.c, C.W.p
Seige of Limerick	M.B.v, P.M.p
The Health	" "
Indian Queen	" "

Country Dance Tapes (Continued)

The Phoenix	M.B.v,	P.M.p
Chelsea Reach	"	"
Dick's Maggot	"	"
Hambleton's Round O	"	"

Lull Me Beyond Thee	M.B.v,	P.M.p
Juice of Barley	"	"
Miss Sayers Allemande	"	"
Colliers Daughter	"	"

Oaken Leaves	M.B.v	J.D.p
Margaret's Waltz	M.B.v	P.M.p
Scotch Cap	"	"
The Quaker's Wife	"	"

MORRIS DANCE TAPES

HEADINGTON TRADITION
- Blue-eyed Stranger
- Laudnum Bunches
- Old Mother Oxford (Jig)
- Old Woman Tossed Up in a Blanket
- Twenty-Ninth of May (Jig)

BAMPTON TRADITION
- Glorishears
- Lumps of Plum Pudding (Jig)
- Princess Royal (Jig)

FIELDTOWN TRADITION
- Balance the Straw
- Banks of the Dee
- Nutting Girl (Jig)
- Step Back

ADDERBURY TRADITION
- Lads a Bunchum

BLEDINGTON TRADITION
- Leap Frog
- Lumps of Plum Pudding (Jig)

LONGBOROUGH TRADITION
- The Cuckoo's Nest

SHERBORNE TRADITION
- The Cuckoo's Nest

EYNSHAM TRADITION
- Brighton Camp

LANCASHIRE TRADITION
- Royton

THE LASCIVIOUSNESS OF COUNTRY DANCING

An Eighteenth Century Account

Some of our members from time to time express their moral concern for the younger generation because of the suggestive movements of popular dances. It may be a little surprising to read an eighteenth-century reaction to what most of us regard as an innocent, wholesome activity. The excerpt is from Sheridan's The Rivals. Bob Acres, a country bumpkin, is describing the activities of Julia to her suitor, Faulkland, who is extremely jealous and something of a prig.

ACRES: Oh I dare insure her for that--but what I was going to speak of was her country dancing. Odds swimmings! She has such an air with her!

FAULKLAND: Now disappointment on her! Defend this, Absolute, why don't you defend this? Country-dances! jigs, and reels! Am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven--I should not have minded that--I say I should not have regarded a minuet--but country dances! Zounds! Had she made one in a cotillion--I believe I could have forgiven even that--but to be a monkey-led for a night! to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous palming puppies! to show paces like a managed filly! Oh Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country-dance; and even then the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts.... If there be but one vicious mind in the Set, 'twill spread like a contagion--The action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig--their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the very air--the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain! I must leave you--I own I am somewhat flurried.

Country dancers of America beware!

J. D.

The Headington Morris Men

The Horn Dancers of Abbots Bromley

THE PHOTOGRAPHS on the opposite page were taken in England and are of traditional teams belonging to villages where the dances have been handed down from generation to generation. The Spring is the season to see the Headington Morris dancers, whose former musician and leader was William Kimber; and if you can be in Staffordshire on a Monday in early September you can see the Horn Dancers of Abbots Bromley carrying on their annual dance day.

BOOK REVIEWS

A Literary History of the Popular Ballad, by David C. Fowler, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1968. $10.75

Books about the ballad continue to flow from the presses, and for this one we can be grateful. Prof. Fowler's Literary History of the Popular Ballad makes a significant contribution to the subject. His approach is fundamentally historical, focusing on the evolution of the ballad from the fifteenth century through the eighteenth century. The work reflects meticulous scholarship, critical acumen, and subtle thought. The many detailed readings of individual ballads are often perceptive and illuminating.

Fowler's purpose is to place the ballad in the context of the sweep of English literature; he seeks to counter the enigmatic arrangement of Child which he feels has encouraged "the study of ballads without respect to time and place. Not only are they considered ageless, but their characteristics are statically conceived; a ballad either has certain stylistic features or it lacks them."

The study is rather slow getting underway, and it has a digressive quality. An examination of early forms related is appropriate enough, but in treating the songs of romance and comedy, the riddle songs, and the religious songs, Prof. Fowler often fails to subordinate his discussion to the central subject of the book. He often pursues material that has little bearing on the ballad. At one point, for instance, he gets into a discussion of the antecedents of the antecedents:

> When we turn to the later group of religious songs it is interesting to note that although a piece like "Dives and Lazarus" (56) is based strictly on the

> canonical Gospel (Luke 16: 19-31), several important texts contain stories derived ultimately from the Apocryphal "Infancy" Gospels of the Middle Ages. Since the time of the Reformation, of course, the distinction between canonical and apocryphal materials has been made more sharply than was true before the sixteenth century, and it is therefore difficult to imagine conditions appropriate for the creation of songs based on the Apocrapha in a post-medieval setting.

And the discussion goes on. In a later section Prof. Fowler devotes nearly as much space to the romances, histories, and songs in the Percy folio manuscript as he does to the ballads.

Another difficulty which is apparent in the early sections of the study is Fowler's failure to answer the question, what is a ballad? As B. J. Whiting once remarked, jesting Pilate after posing a more profound question would not stay for an answer, but a critic examining the nature of the genre cannot be quite so cavalier, especially when criticism is leveled at Child for classifying material as ballads by an "unspoken definition." We are told in an early section that "the mere possession of a narrative element should not lead us to call a carol a ballad," but we are never given a working definition of the form. It would have been extremely helpful if Prof. Fowler had given some distinctive and defining characteristics of the form in each of its major stages of evolution.

Once the study moves into an examination of the texts, we are given a wealth of information about sources, analogues, and distinctive techniques resulting in a vast number of poems--some obscure, some familiar. It is in making subtle discriminations about style and content that Prof. Fowler excels. He corrects many misleading statements about specific ballads and adds fresh interpretations. He also makes an important contribution to the critical vocabulary of ballad scholarship.

The ballad is still regarded by most people as essentially a medieval form, an assumption that is reflected in nearly all anthologies of English literature. Prof. Fowler's study is the most extensive challenge to this view, for his assumption is that a given ballad takes its shape at about the time that it was written down unless there is specific evidence to the contrary. From this point of view, the great age of the ballad is the eighteenth century. "Sir Patrick Spens," for instance,

was unknown before 1765, and it is regarded as one of the superb examples of an eighteenth-century composer fashioning his work in the manner of a mosiac to achieve one of the masterpieces of the form.

Because this is a pioneer study, Prof. Fowler may be justified to sticking largely to very particular statements about individual ballads. What is lacking, to use a phrase from Dr. Johnson, is the "grandeur of generality" in characterizing the various stages of the literary history of the ballad.

The Enduring Navaho, by Laura Gilpin. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968. $17.50

The Waring Papers, ed. Stephen Williams. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press. $13.50

Both of the authors of these books spent a large portion of their lives studying the culture of the American Indian, and the extensiveness of their knowledge is evident. Laura Gilpin's study is the fruit of years of observing the Navahoes as they still live in the Southwest. Antonio Waring's essays are the work of an archaeologist who participated in many of the most productive "digs" in the Southeast.

The Enduring Navaho is divided into four major sections. The first, "The Navaho World," describes the mythology of the people and includes a fascinating account of their creation story. "The Way of the Navaho" is the title of the second section, and it depicts their mode of living and their traditional crafts. In the third section, "The Coming Way," Miss Gilpin traces the transition between the old ways and the new. The final section, "The Enduring Way," outlines the nature of the key ceremonials, which continue to bind the culture together.

Miss Gilpin's style is clear and engagingly informal. Her frequent use of personal reminicences and anecdotes keeps the narrative lively and interesting. The reader is always aware that he is seeing a culture through the eyes of a keen and sympathetic observer--an awareness that is re-inforced by the hundreds of superb photographs.

The detailed descriptions of the processes that are used by the craftsmen, especially the weavers and silversmiths, are very informative, and they demonstrate how patient and dedicated

their artists are. Of particular interest to CDSS readers, are the accounts of the dances and songs that constitute an integral part of the ceremonials. Here, as elsewhere, the brilliant illustrative photographs not only make the text more clear but they deepen our understanding as well.

The Waring Papers is a posthumous collection of the work of Antonio J. Waring, a physician whose avocations included a deep interest in Southeastern history, anthropology, and archaeology. Prof. Stephen Williams of Harvard has performed an admirable service in bringing together Waring's diverse writings and placing them in an historical and scholarly perspective. A number of the essays were written for professional audiences with the result that many general readers will find parts of them difficult to follow; but what is evident throughout is the profound dedication of a first-rate mind seeking to reconstruct the nature of a vanished culture whose cultural artifacts were and are rapidly vanishing. In recalling one of his first ventures into the field at the age of fourteen, he observed,

> It is a cold consolation to all of us who are seriously interested in archaeology that almost every one of us--in the bad old days when our enthusiasms were well ahead of our knowledge--wrecked one or another of the dwindling, important Indian sites which alone can give us all that we will ever know of a vanished people.... It is all very well to say, "If Clarence B. Moore had dug the mound, there would have been even less information left" (which is true), or "If we hadn't dug it, it would have been carted away" (which is also true). The mound was one-fifth gone when we started. There is nothing left of it now.

The reference is to the Indian King's Tomb, which had been marked on a German map in 1740.

This volume is also handsomely illustrated with many detailed drawings of Indian artifacts. One cannot help but feel the accuracy of Williams' observation that Tono Waring "was a man of many and varied talents, who crowded at least two careers into too short a span. That archaeology received something of great value from his devoted interests cannot be denied. One can only wish that he'd had more time for it."

J.D.

RECORD REVIEWS

THREE FOLK ALBUMS. While the record charts continue to reflect the latest fads on the popular music scene (and the taste of its consumers), folk music survives for those of us who want it. Granted, one must search a bit these days to find it, but it's there for all of us to enjoy.

Sandy & Caroline Paton and Lee Hagerty head-up a small, independent record company whose latest release is the Frank Proffitt Memorial Album (Folk-Legacy, FSA-35). Frank Proffitt, for those of you who never heard him, was a traditional singer from North Carolina. He built and played the fretless banjo and dulcimer, and he had a wonderful repertoire of ballads and folk songs. This, his third album (his first was on Folkways, FA-2360, and his second on Folk-Legacy, FSA-1)is a little different from the first two, and I find it the most interesting. It contains a lot more of his dulcimer work, a few of his own compositions, and two Afro-American hymns. In other words, this is not typical of his repertoire; some of these pieces are the oddities that existed side by side with Frank's family songs.

Frank had a hard, but fulfilling life and this is expressed in his music. I never had the opportunity to meet the man so I will not dwell on his life; I do not know very much about him. But Sandy Paton did, and his excellent notes convey some of the beauty that was characteristic of Frank Proffitt. If you are unaware of his music you shouldn't be, as he was one of the greatest traditional singers this country ever had. This album will serve as an excellent introduction to the uninitiated. Give it a listen. You won't regret it.

Jean Ritchie is one of the warmest and most thoughtful people that I've ever had the pleasure of meeting and knowing (she is truly one of the "beautiful people"). She has a new album out and it is both lovely and exciting. The album, "Clear Waters Remembered" (Sire/London, SES-97014), is one of her best. It contains not only the beautiful traditional songs that she has re-worked to some degree, but it reflects a sizable piece of her conscience regarding the conditions in Kentucky due to the mines. Featured is her composition, "Black Waters", a poignant statement about stripmining. She plays her dulcimer with the usual expertise and sublety, and receives excellent accompaniment from Peter Pickow, Dick Weissman, Happy Traum, Eric Weissberg and Russ Savakus. The recording quality is very good, and the

album sports a beautiful autumn-like photograph by George Pickow. I recommend this album highly and feel that it is second only to her Folkways recordings of "Child Ballads in the Southern Appalachians" (FA-2301/2). Buy this album and find out about the conditions in Kentucky, and enjoy listening to one of the other great traditional singers of our time.

From England comes an exciting album by Shirley and Dolly Collins. It consists of lovely English and Scottish Ballads sung by Shirley and accompanied by a consort of pre-classical musical instruments under the direction of Dolly, the great organist who has played with just about every mentionable English folk singer. The musical settings are lovely, the songs are beautiful, and the singer is one of the very best traditional interpreters. In short, the album is great. It's title is "Anthems in Eden" (Harvest/Capital, SKAO-370).

Anyway, here are three excellent new folk albums. They contain great music for listening, and if you are so inclined, great songs for singing. Buy them for yourselves and for friends.

--Stan Leventhal

DANCE MUSIC OF THE RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE. A Musical Heritage Society Recording produced under the direction of Denis Stevens, with recording notes by Mr. Stevens. Stereo. Orpheus Records: OR 352/353/354.

This is a disappointing album of records. A potpourri, one might even say hodgepodge, of dances from many countries and many eras (including, despite the title, several medieval dances); it promises the listener a delightful "entertainment" and gives him, instead, what turns out to be mostly a bore. It is quite evident that the groups represented on this album made their recordings at different times, the tapes were then patched together and Denis Stevens was asked to write erudite program notes for the patchwork. It is hard to believe that Mr. Stevens even listened to all the tapes (and one can hardly blame him) because his notes sometimes have little to do with the music.

English country dancers will recognize the Staines Morris that opens the recording as actually a country dance, although Stevens quotes Thoinot Arbeau's description of morris dancing in the

album notes. The coranto is described as a duple-time dance, but one of the two corantos on the recording is in triple-time. There are other errors, but the most objectionable thing about the recording is the playing of the dances. Tempos are erratic; some of the groups have obviously no idea of what the original dances were like, and hit the right mood only by accident. Ornamentation is (apparently) haphazard and often incorrect; repeats are monotonous and unvaried. Most enjoyable to listen to are the Accademia Monteverdiana String Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Stevens, and the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. It is pleasant to hear early dance music played in tune and with some kind of dance feeling, even if done "unauthentically" on modern instruments. The Accademia Trio (violin, cello and harpsichord) plays well also. They perform the music of one composer only, Martino Pesenti, a minor composer, and if somehow all the pieces come out sounding like Monteverdi that is probably to the Trio's (and Pesenti's) credit.

The kindest word that can be applied to the playing of the Jaye Consort and the Canzona Ensemble is amateurish. They undoubtedly loved what they were doing, but there is no hint of professionalism in the out-of-tune, unbalanced, offensively harsh sound of the recorders or the labored efforts of the viols. There is a bagpipe solo that is unbelievable. The use of percussion smothers rather than heightens the dance feeling. The harpsichord solos are ponderous.

Many other criticisms could be offered by a reviewer annoyed and outraged at having to listen to six sides of marvellous music poorly presented by the performers. But there must be something good about this recording. There is: the listener will get at least some idea of the wealth of early European dance music available and the possibilities for performance. Country dancers will be delighted with A la mode de France and Nonesuch performed on a hurdy-gurdy. There is a Holborne galliard performed on the lute that is lovely, and an orchestral performance of a Purcell Slow Air (what kind of dance is it?) that is also very beautiful. By skipping about on the three records the determined listener may be able to find a few more choice morsels in this unsavory stew. But it takes effort, and in the meantime the field remains open for a more knowledgeable and enjoyable recording of the dance music of this period.

Martha Bixler

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