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### HENRY FORD'S EARLY AMERICAN DANCE by Clayton Perry

### MINEOLA (N. Y.) FAIR

In 1924, Mr. Henry Ford created the Henry Ford Old Fashioned Dance Orchestra, with Mr. Benjamin B. Lovett as dancing master, the purpose of which was to revive and teach "Early American Dancing" to his friends and associates and their families.

In 1925, with the addition of Clayton A. Perry as violinist and musical director, the Old Fashioned Orchestra entered upon a program of teaching and research which was to function for twenty years and is still carrying on.

Classes were quickly formed, and while Mr. Lovett was concentrating on the fundamentals and proper procedure of teaching and conducting the "Early American Dances" the orchestra was also equally busy tracing back and compiling the correct music for the early dances, both of which had undergone many changes and evolutions, particularly following the turn of the present century. This was due to the fact that modern music and dancing were compelling the teachers of dancing and the musicians to drop many early forms to enable them to teach more modern patterns.

In the first few months, Mr. Ford, always a man of vision, realized that "Early American Dancing" was an incomparable medium through which to teach the much neglected subject of courtesy. A dry subject at best, as commonly presented, it immediately became a pleasure and quickly mastered when applied to the "Early American Dance"—especially the quadrille or square dance, and in all the dances using two couples or more and executing calls by direction.

In 1926, the first edition of "Good Morning" was published, which became the most authentic and complete manual of "Early American Dancing" on the market, containing, besides a concise description of the dances, a large chart showing positions, and with each dance a suggested piece of music, many with metronome requirements. This book, almost entirely the work of Mr. Lovett, is now in its fourth edition, and has been considerably revised and reduced in contents, intended to furnish complete dancing programs with many singing calls and other entertaining features.

In 1926 also, the Old Fashioned Orchestra furnished the music for the "First Commercial Program" broadcast from coast to coast over WEAJ and its many affiliated stations.

Followed many busy seasons sparkling  
(Continued page 2)

Calling for the fair was a great experience.

Verona Hunt invited us guest callers, Rod LaFarge, Alex MacLeod and myself with our ladies to dinner before hand. As you can imagine, it was a wonderful square dance gabfest.

The LaFarges told us of a figure used exclusively in Boonton, N. J., called Four Hands Around the Grapevine. The figure is called after two couples have been swinging with their partners. At the call, you break the grip of gent's right and lady's left hands but maintain the hold of the gent's left and lady's right. Reach across the joined hands with your free hand and grasp the free hand of your opposite forming a sort of four-leaf clover effect. You then circle four in that position. I suppose it would go well with a swing your opposite dance.

Alex MacLeod was interested in the couple dances I learned out with Lloyd Shaw particularly the Marsouvienné Mixer and the Volota. I promised him I'd get descriptions of some of them in soon. Trouble is, couple dances are difficult to describe.

There were about sixteen sets on the Mineola floor with a few hundreds watching. It was fun to call for them and to dance with them. They are the type of dancers I am used to working with and that helped a lot. The only criticism I have of the other callers is that most of the calls were sung. As I suggested last time, I believe that there is a place for the singing call (when the caller can sing) but we should not entirely exclude calling. I saw that they didn't at Mineola.

Paul Hunt called one of his own. Come to think of it, I believe he sang it, but the best I could get down was this: First couple out to the right; Right and Left; Right hand to your opposite (simply change places); Left hand turn your partner; Swing your opposite; and Take her to the next.

My notes aren't as complete as I'd like (Did you ever try to dance and write at the same time—not to mention taking subscriptions with the other hand?) but I think it was Al MacLeod who sang to Put on Your Old Grey Bennet:

The head couples cross over  
Thru the fields of clover  
And the side two couples do the same.  
Do-si-do your corner (Allemande left or  
what ever figure you want)  
Do-si-do your partner (Keep changing the  
figure)

(Continued page 3)

Stop and think about it now. He is the one who calls the changes you are used to dancing.

I was down in Oklahoma recently, spent several days in Arkansas, stopped over in several of the larger cities in Missouri and in each community or city, I found out that they each had the best square dance caller you ever danced to. How did I know this? Well, I asked the dancers and that is what they told me. I had the dancers' word for it and they really and truly believed it. Why? Because they knew his calls and they never stopped to think that there might be other calls besides the ones he knew and called. They would not have known these other calls if he had used them. And if another caller had slipped in one of the new ones, they would not have liked it and they would not have liked the caller either.

Quite often I have found that a bunch of dancers do not want to bother learning new changes. I found one place where they told me straight out that they danced only two changes when they had a dance. One was form a star with the right hand across and back by the left, etc. The other was eight hands across and ladies bow and gents bow under. Now this was in a little community near Tishomingo, Oklahoma and as far as they were concerned, "There jist wan't no other calls to larn." They said a fellow came in there and showed them how to cast off six and they liked it fairly well.

I asked them what kind of music they liked and they said Old Zip Coon, Hop High Ladies, Soap Suds Over the Fence and Slidin' Down the Kitchen Floor. They played them for me and I found that Old Zip Coon was very much like Turkey in the Straw. Hop High Ladies was almost, but not quite Mrs. McLeod's Reel. I never could figure out Soap Suds Over the Fance or Slidin' Down the Kitchen Floor but they both resembled a poor imitation of a poor second to some tune. It might have been anything, as it was a conglomeration of most everything.

At one place in Tennessee, we had about sixteen sets on the floor. The music was ready to go. The caller walked up to the mike and raised and lowered it four or five times, blew in it, snapped his fingers a half dozen times and then asked "Can you hear me?" Some said "Yes"; some said, "No," but most of them said "Let's Go." He fooled around for a good five minutes but never told them what the call was to be and we could not hear a word he said after he got started. You can guess the rest. When I asked them how they liked the caller, there was almost a riot.

Down in Arkansas, a lean, lanky fellow walked out, without the benefit of a mike. You could have heard him if you had been standing out in the old town square, and he never wasted a word. "Now swing your partner.--- Now cast off four.---Circle four. Now do-si-do. Now Promenade." And when the change was finished, "That's all." They all swore by him, he was the best caller in fourteen states, to hear them tell it.

Who is a good caller?

HENRY FORD Cont. from page 1.  
with the formal parties held in the Engineering Laboratory ballroom, really a corner of the building enclosed and used for Mr. and Mrs. Ford's many pleasant affairs.

In 1937, the Recreation Building in Greenfield Village was formally dedicated and in this building, which houses the gymnasium and pool for the students of The Edison Institute, is also the beautiful Lovett Ballroom--probably the finest example of Early American architecture in a ballroom in America. This was formally opened for inspection at 8:00 PM and dance at 9:00 PM on October 26, 1937.

Following were many brilliant formal parties by Mr. and Mrs. Ford and, by this time, a highly developed program of children's classes of all ages which was started in 1926 and now included a staff of carefully trained teachers, each with a pianist, co-operating with the public schools. Just previous to the late war, classes accommodated over twenty thousand students weekly. Following the declara-

tion of war, in line with Ford Motor Company's policy to go "all out" in the war effort all activities were indefinitely postponed for the duration, except within Mr. Ford's own schools in the village.

In January of 1944, Mr. and Mrs. Ford presented the orchestra and caller, Mr. Lovett, on a coast-to-coast hookup, namely, the then Blue Network, each Saturday at 8:00 PM for one half hour. The program was known as the "Early American Dance" program. A very high standard of music and calling was maintained throughout the entire run which was eighteen months, ending last July 7 until further notice. In June 1944, Mr. and Mrs. Lovett retired to their native New England following twenty years of outstanding service and accomplishment for a much needed and well earned rest. Following Mr. Lovett's retirement, Clayton A. Perry, violinist, assumed some of the responsibilities, and Mr. Francis X. Brancheau, long an outstanding student of Mr. Lovett and Early American Dancing, took over the calling duties and continued to  
Cont. page 3.

# The Oracle

## THE PAPER

I have been criticised because AMERICAN SQUARES is too much Charles Thomas. And Charles Thomas is too egotistical. Actually, while Charles Thomas is egotistical he sometimes puts it on to be funny--or try to be. I don't want ever to say that my way is the only way or even better than yours.

And I want AMERICAN SQUARES to be your magazine. That way it can cease to be I and become you. If you will send in new dances, notes on square dancing, reports of dances visited and articles of general interest, the magazine will become you and cease to be me. And while you're at it, send us the names and addresses of some of your friends who might like to subscribe.

You may have noticed the poor mimeographing on the last issue. It may be present in this issue too. The mimeographers raised the price on us. Being opposed to increases in prices on general principals and badly hit by the summer slump, we declined to pay the higher price but employed the girl next door to run the papers off on my machine. The machine is an elderly one and this was the first time she had run it. We hope in time to improve--if we don't, we'll just have to pay the higher price and hope to get it back from you in subscriptions. In the meantime, please bear with us.

Doug Durant is missing. He studies at the University of Pennsylvania and vacations at Long Lake, N. Y. Somewhere between the two he has a home where I presume he is now, but I don't have the address. The Registrars Office of U. of P. informed me it was a secret. So we could not get the book to him for review. Bobby Thomas did the review, and we'll be back to Doug next month.

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MINIOLA FAIR Cont. from page 1.

And you swing that corner dame.  
Promenade.

And a gentleman whose name I did not get did something like this to McNamara's Band.  
Right elbow reel your partner  
And you reel her up and down  
Now swing the right hand lady  
And really go to town  
Now allemande left the one you left  
And swing the one you swang  
Swing her high and swing her low  
And let the rest go hang.  
Swing for four more measures and promenade.

I hope these credits are right and I fear they are wrong. If someone will enlighten me, we'll try to see that things are straightened out.

Q Do you know any records that can be bought singly? Mary E. Border, Manhattan, Kansas.

A The first point I want to make, that Miss Border did not understand is that Victor's Blackberry Quadrille and Soldiers Joy, as well as any other of their album records can be bought singly. I have bought several replacements for broken records and I have two waiting for me at Presser's now. Next, I was going to list my choice records, but when it came down to it, that was too much of a job. I shall sometime give a list of the 120 records that I carry in three cases when I go travelling, 50 square dance, 50 couple dance and 20 12". In the meantime, I refer you to the back issues of AMERICAN SQUARES. I have reviewed most of the records in my collection at one time or another. I'll be glad to call you back issues.

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HENRY FORD Cont. from page 2.

maintain the high standard that had always been associated with Mr. Lovett and the orchestra. Many letters of appreciation were received from listeners of all ages, particularly since ending of the broadcast. Letters asking when we are to return are daily arriving at the Engineering Laboratory.

The original orchestra for many years consisted of Clayton A. Perry, violinist and musical director; Edwin F. Baxter, small dulcimer; William Hallup, Cymbalom (large dulcimer or Hungarian piano); and Maurice Castel, tuba and bass viol, who, until five years ago, retired due to illness. James Caporali took over the duties on bass viol and has continued in that capacity up to the present time. The latter period of the broadcasts saw Mr. Roy Austin, guitarist, making the fourth member in place of Mr. Baxter who is ill. The earlier programs used accordion by Don Van de Ven, one of Detroit's most capable performers; and on special occasions requiring it, the Hammond organ was played by Mr. Fritz Marks.

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Does anybody want a buckskin shirt? In exuberance I purchased one for a 16 1/2 neck and 35" sleeve and then decided that as I was not dedicated to cowboy dances I should not affect cowboy costume. And unfortunately I don't go on horseback rides or long outdoors tramps. So it is unused and for \$35, which is cost, I shall be glad to dispose of it. It is guaranteed leather and you can dance in it or the other things I suggested.

<p>FOSTER'S CALLING CARDS One dance on each card. Hold them in your hand while calling. 25 Dances \$1.00</p>	<p>DOES YOUR CLUB NEED MONEY? Sell subscriptions to AMERICAN SQUARES Write for terms</p>
<p>Square and Folk Dances, News, Music Calls, Pictures in ROBIN THE BOW 12 Issues for \$1.50 Rod LaForge, 115 Cliff St., Haledon, N. J.</p>	<p>RAYBURN'S OZARK GUIDE Box 11-X, Eureka Springs, Arkansas is a 100-page magazine of the Ozarks for sportsmen, homeseekers, folklorists, etc. No dances \$1.00 a year, \$2.00 3 years, 35¢ copy</p>

Decca has reissued Ed Durlacher's and they gave it a new number. I lost interest as soon as I learned This is the best album of square don't have it now, rush out and buy three or four albums so that you will always have them on hand even tho there is another war and you can't get replacements. DECCA 205. IRISH JIGS AND REELS. Michael Coleman, violin. I have had this album for some time waiting a chance to review it. It is an old issue, but there are quite a few floating around Philly. When I criticize it, remember I do it from a square dance standpoint.

RECORDS

square dance album. It was #226 don't know what it is because I that it was the old one reissued. dances on the market and if you

12036A STACK OF BARLEY. A fiddle and guitar do not make a full square dance combination tho they do in a pinch. The music sounds rather thin. However, this is pretty good, considering.

12036B TAR BOTTOM, LONGFORD COLLECTOR, THE SAILOR'S BONNET. Medley of reels. A little faster than the last, which is an improvement.

12085A MISS MCCLLOUD'S REEL, PHILIP O'BEIRNE'S DELIGHT (Here I spelled McCloud's wrong on the third page.). Piano and violin, and the piano is better than the guitar in understudying an orchestra. This might be a little less than fair square dancing.

12085B TELL HER I AM, RICHARD BRENNAN'S FAVORITE. Jigs with piano. I should educate myself on jigs, but I can tell you this is punk square dancing.

12067A THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY, THE LADY ON THE ISLAND. Listed as reels but the beat is not emphasized enough to make even fair square dancing.

12067B THE KID ON THE MOUNTAIN. Jig. Piano. Nuff sed.

\*\*\* DIAMOND #2008 (one record) Craven Edwards and his Lazy K Ranch Boys, Al Brundage caller. This is a swell record, good playing, good beat and good calling. Only will somebody please tell me why he waits 36 (count 'em, 36) measures after the music starts before even saying "Honor your partners."? The music is a little faster than on most records, which will recommend it to many people. Al uses his nose in calling, but he can be understood.

2008A TEXAS HOEDOWN. Swing and divide the ring. A little too much swinging.

2008B UP JUMPS THE DEVIL. This is just the first figure of the Standard Club Quadrille simplified a bit. We do the Balance Four when he calls Sashay Four and I think that's what he means.

There are no instructions for the calls on this record so your guess is as good as mine. I recommend that everybody buy this record. The Diamond Record Corporation gives its address as New York 19, N. Y. Perhaps if we buy enough, that will encourage Diamond to put out some more.

HOME RECORDINGS

Accordeon, fiddle and guitar  
Virginia Reel (Family style, six couples)  
Fiddle, guitar and piano  
Rakes of Mallow  
Devil's Dream  
Fisher's Hornpipe  
Rickett's Hornpipe  
Marching thru Georgia  
Walkin' U<sub>2</sub> Town  
Mississippi Sawyer

Order thru AMERICAN SQUARES

Fiddle, guitar and string bass  
Miss McLeod's Reel  
Pigtown Fling  
The Girl I Left Behind Me  
Foxes Reel  
Golden Slippers  
Buffalo Gals  
Life on the Ocean Wave  
Turkey in the Straw  
My Love is But a Lassie O  
Raggedy Ann  
Chicken Reel

Records will be cut to order with any two of the above selections on one record for \$1.50. Add 25¢ to each order (regardless of the number of records in the order) to cover cost of packing and nailing. Records will be cut on high quality unbreakable acetate discs (Audiodiscs). If played with transcription needles, they will last as long as ordinary commercial records. All records are 12 inch. Allow about a month before you complain about your order not getting thru.

Did you ever try this little dance? Simple, but lots of fun and good for beginners. Use the tune Buffalo Gals.

First gent goes out to the gal on the right  
With the right hand in and the left hand out<sup>1</sup>  
Take her in your arms and swing her all about  
Swing by the light of the moon.

On to the next, etc.

The same for the second, third and fourth gents. And then all four gents do it at the same time.

1. First gent out to the number two lady and with a right hand swing changes places with her. Then with a left hand he changes back again. A regular swing with the lady and then on to number three.  
Paul Hunt.

ORIGINAL DANCE CONTEST

Well, after two months vacation, the original dance contest is back. We run this to encourage the invention of new (and sometimes better) square dances. Entries are submitted by anyone on 8 1/2 "x11" white paper. Someone, this time it was Dr. Frank Lyman, chooses two from the entries. These are danced and voted on by one or more dance groups, this time it was Centenary Tabernacle in Camden, and the winner wins. This time in hectic voting in which 18 people took part, Scotty voting for both contestants because he said he liked them equally, this one by Merle Jordan of Denver, Colo., won by 10 to 6. The prize is your choice of a year's subscription to AMERICAN SQUARES or a pack of Foster's Calling Cards.

BALANCE RIGHT AND LEFT

Any introduction.

Call First couple balance and swing  
 Lead to the right to the right of the ring  
 Four hands up, you're going fine (1)  
 Drop your hands and form that line (2)  
 Balance forward, now rebound (3)  
 Break in the center and swing around (4)  
 Balance forward, now rebound  
 Break in the center and swing around  
 Balance forward, back, and then  
 Right and left right on again (5)  
 Turn around, you're doing fine  
 Forward four and form the line (6)  
 Balance forward, now rebound (3)  
 Break in the center and swing around (4)  
 Balance forward, now rebound  
 Break in the center and swing around  
 Forward, back and don't be vexed  
 Pass on thru and on to the next

1. Circle four
2. Couples advance as the they were going to do a right and left thru, but instead of passing thru, they take hands in a line so they are facing alternately along the line.
3. Two steps forward and two back without dropping hands.
4. The ladies break between them, both sides turn halfway around and the gents join hands so that there is the line again.
5. When all start forward, everybody drops hands and takes steps in the directions they are facing. They are now divided in couples again and the gents turn the ladies around as they do in a right and left and start back.
6. Starting back they form the line in the same way.

Repeat the dance for the other two couples, add the chorus and then have the other couples do the figure. Music: Arkansas Traveler

EDITOR'S NOTE: This calls for six forward and back or turn figures, three each way; it is a much better dance if you cut it to two each way or a total of four. The dance is too long as it is.

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CHAMBERS' QUADRILLE

Formation: Square. Music: Any combination of old-time reels. Metronome 112.

Calls:	Measures
Honor partners and corners, circle left and right	16
Head couples, half right and left, sides swing	4
Head couples ladies chain, sides stand still	8
Head couples, half promenade, sides swing	4
Balance corners (4), Swing partners (4)	8
Side couples repeat first three figures	16
CHORUS: Allemande left, grand right and left, promenade	16
Interlude, no interruption of music, stand still for	8
Head couples lead to right, right and left hand star	8
Four ladies grand chain	8
Side couples lead to right, right and left hand star	8
Four gentlemen grand chain	8
CHORUS: Allemande left, grand right and left, around your own and back	16
Interlude, no interruption of music, stand still for	8
Head lady balance to her right, head gent to his left	4
Circle three hands around	4
Both on to next, balance four and circle four	8
Pass on to next, balance three and circle three, go home	8
All balance corners and swing partners	8
Repeat for Numbers 2, 3 and 4 in turn	96
CHORUS: Grand Allemande and swing away home	Ad lib.

Don Chambers, N. J.

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THE PARTY WALK

This is not a square dance, it is a party walk. It is danced to the tune of "The Party Walk" by John L. Westbrook.

FOLK DANCING, by Grace I. Fox and Kathleen Gruppe Merrill. A. S. Barnes and Co. New York. 1944. Price \$2.50 Order from us.

This collection of folk dances is particularly useful and enjoyable because the authors have placed emphasis on the 'dancibility' of the dances they selected. Once the dancers have learned to enjoy dancing, the steps become only a means to an end. To quote, "Folk dances should be taught as something vital and alive and should be danced for the sheer joy of dancing."

With this approach, the authors present 24 dances, both simple and difficult, American and foreign. For real dancing pleasure, I should have preferred a larger number on American, for they have included only seven. However, perhaps in more advanced dance groups, both in high school and college, these more difficult foreign dances can be mastered and enjoyed.

The presentation of the book is excellent. There is an introductory section covering special steps, and each dance is carefully explained. The illustrations by Charlotte St. John are especially interesting because they not only give costumes for each dance, but are done so as to give the feeling of the dance they illustrate. The music for each dance is included, and in the front of the book, a list of recordings which can be used for each dance is given. The index is helpful, listing the dances in order of difficulty as well as according to nationality.

Bernice R. Thomas.

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BOOKS FOR SALE

<p>Postpaid</p> <p>COWBOY DANCES, Lloyd Shaw. The best on the market. 76 squares \$ 4.00</p> <p>DANCES OF OUR PIONEERS, Grace L. Ryan. Best for the money. Mid-western style. 61 figures, contras, circle &amp; couple \$2.00</p> <p>THE SINGING CALLER, Ann Hastings Chase 15 dances, explained, charted and set to music. A careful production. \$ 1.50</p> <p>FOLK DANCING IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE Grace I. Fox. See review \$ 2.50</p> <p>LEARN TO DANCE AND CALL SQUARE DANCES THE FOSTER WAY, C. D. Foster. Our fastest selling number. 25 dances on handy cards that can be consulted while calling. And we have some autographed. \$1.00</p> <p>FOLKWAYS COLLECTION, Gene Gowing. 2 circles, 5 contras and 12 squares by the director of National Folkways 75¢</p> <p>SQUARE DANCES, Ed Durlacher. 12 dances covering a wide range of American folk dancing with piano, guitar and fiddle \$1.00</p> <p>CUT: When your square dance starts up again you'll want posters. We have a mat of a couple swinging from which your printer can cast a cut suitable for your poster. The picture is by Jean Wright and approximately 6 1/2" x 11". 60¢</p> <p>BACK NUMBERS: We have slightly used copies (returned in the mails) of all of the back issues of AMERICAN SQUARES except Vol. 1, No. 1. As is. 10¢ ea.</p>	<p>10¢ per package for handling</p> <p>SWINGO, Rod LaFarge. 20 singing calls for advanced dancers. Now in second edition within a year. \$ 1.00</p> <p>SWING YOUR PARTNERS, Durward Maddocks. 51 New England dances which Doug gave a great review. \$ 1.50</p> <p>HEEL AND TOE OR A SI-DO, Grace H. Johnson. 10 mixers, 7 rounds, 5 contras, 7 squares and 4 foreign. 75¢</p> <p>THE COUNTRY DANCE BOOK, Tolman and Page. A No. 1 book of New England dances running strongly to contras. 91 dances of all kinds. \$ 1.75</p> <p>WESTERN SQUARE DANCES, Ralph McNair. This is Doug's favorite and he keeps begging for "another one like McNair" to review. "I could really go to town." \$ 1.00</p> <p>SWING YOUR LADIES, Edith Gates. How to start and run a square dance course and overcome incidental problems. No dances described. 35¢</p>
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If you want your dance noticed in the AMERICAN SQUARES directory which comes out next month, let us know immediately. Put us on your mailing list and be sure of a listing.

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