



RAMAPO RANGERS

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The Polish Folk Art and Dance Group continues to practice at the International Center, and on November 17th will hold an open house party there. They also continue to square dance over in Jersey! Bill Cairn's group (international folk dancing) meets downstairs on the same night and apparently is doing quite well. Bill has a new public address system.

The masquerade square dance at the Passaic YMCA went over very well, with nearly all the dancers in costume. Helen decorated the gym with black cat cutouts --- 10 feet high! Very startling against the white handball courts as one walked into the place. A group of the Paterson Y Outing Club came up with Ed Laurence, and the Guses and Van Sauns also brought a group of friends. An album of square dance records was awarded as a costume prize. Roll the Barrel and the Jackson White Reel were the two pet dances of the evening --- after the latter, Mr. Hendershott (the Y Program Secretary, who hails from the South) was heard to say something like "pixallated ridge-runners"! Lynn Nichols and the orchestra turned out some nice renditions, notably the Clover Blossom Quadrille and a breakdown version of the Sicilian Circle. The figures of this quadrille are of interest as they represent a transition stage between the quadrille proper and the modern square dance. There is but one part.

CLOVER BLOSSOM QUADRILLE (Tune: When Clover's in Bloom)

- Intro. Honor partners, honor corners, all join hands and circle left all the way around; swing partners.
- Figure: Heads forward and back; forward and four hands half around.
Sides the same.
Heads half promenade.
Sides the same.
Head ladies chain
Sides the same.
- Chorus. All swing your corner lady and promenade the ring. (Back to the ladies position)

We spent a busy Wednesday evening silk-screening the covers for a big batch of the dance directory. Kici (our black cat) had a most adventurous party -- trying to walk over the sticky paint and track it all over the house! After the job was done Helen swore she would never look at another cowboy!!

The English Country Dance Society is picking up members from week to week; we had the floor well filled Thursday. You should drop in on

some Thursday evening; Phillip Merrill can put that real lilt into the English dances. After the English session (they quit early) we took a peek at the group in the Broadway Tabernacle. Their crowd is also growing --- growing larger, and also more swing-wacky! In spite of all the hullabaloo about racial equality, non-discrimination, etc., this is the only place run by whites where I have ever seen negroes treated as social equals at a folk or square dance. There were a number of negroes there Thursday --- and all having a good time. Everybody calls there; they had a different one for every square while we watched!!

Paul Shea dropped in on my Friday night class at the Passaic YWCA just in time to be broken in to the Arkansas version of the much disputed Western dosey-doe. After the Y closed we dropped him at Sweisguths to finish off the evening and himself! He, by the way, has become a real contra dance bug since spending most of the summer up in Ralph Page's territory.

The Fairleigh Dickinson students have finally boiled down to those who like it and can take it --- and did they take it and like it at the college Saturday night! All fast Western squares left them not at all wilted, that murderous Jackson White Reel only made them pant for more, and they finished the evening by dancing Forward Heads, Sides Divide twice in a row -- by request! They even took the smooch dance in stride and with a half-dozen new variations. We stopped by on the way home at the Rosemont Firehouse and the IHC Ragamuffin Square Dance was still going strong with about three-quarters of the Ramapo Rangers there whooping it up for all they were worth.

Sunday night November 4th was callers night at Manchester Lance, Three Towers Ballroom (2 miles south of Somerville on Route 31). Nice crowd and quite swing-wacky; I think I made a bit of a mistake in calling Billy Boy for them -- they would have probably liked Swingo-Ringo better. They sure liked to swing! Pap Stout is the regular caller there, and Mrs. Stout plays the piano in the orchestra. Nice band -- they follow well. Pap Stout tells me he is starting up the Wednesday night squares again at Jefferson School in Plainfield N.J. Among the calls of the evening was a version of forward up six and back done as a singing call to the tune of 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home', and a variation of Honolulu Baby (or the Spanish Cavalliero) in which there was no circle three -- all swinging. The crowd also liked a 'butterfly whirl' melange done to a very fast orchestration of Golden Slippers. In some of the sets I noted that the men swung the ladies around at arms length, left hand around on 'ladies chain' instead of the usual left hands joined and right on her waist. John Villani had a real gripe -- they've put him on a night shift; he can't get off to call and his orchestra languishes on the vine. He was out at Ed Durlacher's Jamboree but missed the afternoon doings. And he craves the call for 'Ten Little Indians'. I'll have to sort through my old notes; I have a couple of versions, I hope one of them is what he is looking for. Mr. Tiger also has had a bit of bad luck; his pet violinist in his all*girl band must lay off indefinitely because of an arm affliction. He is also suffering from a bit of nostalgia for the 'good old days', quadrilles and line dances. It seems that the section down there was once the center of a large millionaire colony, the servants being mostly English and Scotch who added their own country dances to the local shindigs. I'll have to investigate a bit -- don't be too surprised if I come back with a cross between 'Gathering Peasecods' and 'Step Right Up and See Her Smile'.....???? Mr. Tiger says he is coming up and pay us a visit some night -- girl band and all. Perhaps we can beat him to it and pay him a visit at one of his spots with a set or two in costume some evening? Don Pierce has opened at Legion Hall in Morristown, I think it's Saturday nights. Hobart Marshall looked a bit weary; said he had been out every night of the preceding week (Halloween). 'Uncle George' Vigor was running all over the place with an unattached mike in his hand -- in all the uproar I didn't get whether he had just come from a job or was just going out on one.

They have their own version of the Varsoviennes down there, (what place hasn't, I wonder?) this is about 35 variations I've met. They make two separate dances of it; first they did the pointing with the waltz interspersed. Then after a few rounds of this they pause a few moments, then when the orchestra strikes up again they do the mazurka, also with a waltz break. They invited the Ramapo Rangers down some Sunday evening; I hope we can catch up to our invitations someday -- and Mr. Thomas has invited us down to dance with his Denim and Calico Club.

I made arrangements (?) with the Manchester Dance people to mail me a list of the callers present, as I missed a few in arriving late, but since they haven't shown up yet, I'll have to run this issue without them. If they show up I'll put them in next month.

The Ramapo Rangers met at the Guses on Monday evening Nov. 5 and decided among other things that future practices will be held at the Passaic YMCA where larger quarters are available, as it has become obvious that we cannot squeeze three or four practice sets into the present room. Most of the practice time of the evening went to English Country Dances, Western squares and a kreuz konig session for our newer members. Present at this meeting: Estelle and Erwin Guse, Catherine and Ed Laurence, Frieda and Jack Van Saun, Rena and Bill Kamena, Barbara and Frank Schwab, Helen and Rod La Farge, Dot and Gay Adler, Eileen and Joe Rourke, Mary Arristibia and Marie Larkin.

The American Square Dance Group is resuming its regular open house parties on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month at 40 East 40th St. N.Y.C. Margot Mayo, recently returned from the WACs, is again leading the group.

Michael Herman's 'Folk Dancer' for October includes music and Directions for a version of the Sicilian Tarantella -- the version that fits Victor Record V12567. I also note that Michael will teach El Pericon on Dec. 14. This is that figure dance from Uruguay with the calls in Spanish. (Bost record #50009B) At the end of the dance the participants form their national emblem with their kerchiefs.

Henry Joseph has been forced to give up his Thursday night group at Irving Plaza -- the dancing feet disturbed the various meetings going on in the building. At the moment the group is homeless.

The International Center YMCA, 341 East 17th St. NYC has published a series of mimeographed sheets giving the music and directions for 156 folk dances. These sheets are on sale individually at from 5 to 15¢ per dance, depending upon the number of sheets involved.

My Wednesday evening series of lessons at the Paterson YMCA has been completed -- I now have Wednesdays free again; the Passaic YMCA series is moving to Monday nights (9:30 to 12, following the Rangers 8:00 to 9:30 practice session), so I'll have Tuesdays open also. The regular monthly YMCA square dances with orchestra will however be on either Tuesday or Wednesday evenings in the future. The next one will be Tuesday Nov. 20, 9:30 to 12 P.M. Also add to the one-time events; I'm calling at Sparkill N.Y. on Saturday Nov. 10 and in the firehouse at Franklin Lakes N.J. on Wednesday evening Nov. 21; both dates with the Sagebrush Troubadours Orchestra, -- and don't forget the Passaic YMCA dance on Nov. 16, I'm calling there with the Wright Rubes band.

The Ramapo Rangers gave an exhibition at the Victory Bond Rally in Wayne Jr. High School on Thursday evening Nov. 8 with the Wright Rubes furnishing the music for the affair. We did the usual Rangers Routine, Billy Boy and Lady Walpole's Reel -- to the tune of 'The Wearing of the Green'**** the orchestra didn't know any of the regular reels. It went very well at that! (Helen threatens to shoot me if I start concocting singing calls to her pet contra dances; she's had that 'is-nothing-sacred' look ever since I borrowed some Polish tunes for square dance calls). Rangers at the rally: Jack and Frieda Van Saun, Erwin and Estelle Guse, Ed and Catherine Laurence, Gay and Dot Adler, Rod and Helen La Farge. As usual, the Red Cross furnished the transportation -- and Jack and Frieda spent most of the trip in an attempt to convert the drivers to square dancing!