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We're Square Dancing Tonight

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all out for . . .*



SQUARE

by Elizabeth Fox

UP IN the air and never come down, swing your partner 'round and 'round." Your gay gingham skirt swings wide as you start off with a "promenade two and promenade four, and keep that calico off the floor." From Maine to California, young folks like you are clapping hands and tapping feet to that infectious square dance music.

Square dancing may be something new to you, but it was danced 'way before your time. Although some people say that it is an off-shoot of French and English quadrilles, they'll admit that it is really an all-American dance. It certainly has outlasted the Charleston, the Cakewalk, the Black Bottom and the Big Apple. Most of the younger set enjoy square dancing more than old-fashioned jitter-bugging. It's a dance that everyone can enjoy, not just one couple.

When you're on the dance floor, the caller, next to the fiddler, of course, is the most important personage. He's the one who tells the gents to "take nice dainty little steps," and the gals to "join a circle with their pretty sides out." Most of his calls are ones he knows by heart and he can call off the steps to the Texas Star or Bird in a Cage as easily as you can recite the alphabet. A caller doesn't always give the dance call line for line, sometimes he adds a verse of his own making. Standing at the front of the hall, he can see if a couple down in the far corner is cutting-up, and he's liable to tell the whole dance hall about it in the very next rhyme.

Rhymes Give Advice

Just to keep the old-timers on their toes while the other sets catch up, he may add a bit of advice to rhyme with "left alemande and right hand grand," such as, "Plant your 'taters in sandy land." He's a humorist, a minstrel and a poet all at once.

Calls may be chanted or sung, depending on the preference of the caller, and they frequently give you some history of the era when the call originated. From Cape Cod we hear about clams that are all slap-happy at high water in "Dig for the oyster, delve for the clam, take 'em all home in an old tin can." When the Shawnee Indians still lurked in the cane brakes along the Ohio river, square dancers heard, "Squaw in the cane brake, papoose on her back, when you meet your partner, take a back track." But the West has given us most of our calls. Dances such as the Wagon Wheel or the Double

DANCING



Star tell you about times when they roped cows and branded calves.

If you really want to learn how to square dance, it's best to know some of the terms you'll need to know when you're on the dance floor. After you've mastered the "alemande left and alemande right," the "balance and swing," and other steps, you can take your place on the dance floor and let the caller tell you how to fit them into a dance.

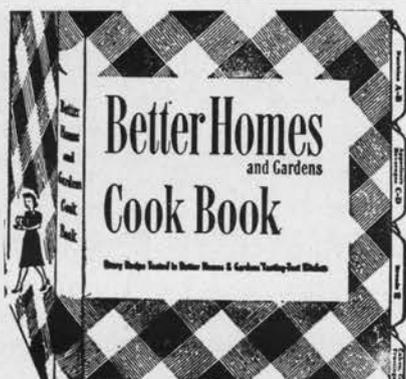
Promenaders on Campus

You can square dance just about anywhere—on the tennis courts, a large grassy area, or an old barn. Here on campus you can join the square dance group known as the Promenaders. They meet every other

Friday night in the archery room of the Women's Gymnasium. Ten or twelve sets, of four couples each, can dance at once in the room. When a new dance is introduced, veteran Promenaders will present a gay demonstration. Already the girls' full skirts and the fellows' western boots are a familiar sight at demonstrations for church groups and during the first all-college mixer. In between those fast-moving square dances, you'll polka, schottische or maybe try a Rye Waltz.

Music for square dances may be furnished by a fiddle or an accordion. The Promenaders have several record albums of recently recorded square dance music. They are perfect for square dance groups.

So the next time you hear that square dance music and a caller begins to sing out, hurry-quick. You don't want to miss even the first square dance.



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