

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING.

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Deadline for News Sheet - the fourth day of each month.

EDITORIAL

I have been re-reading a letter from one of our members now in Vancouver (parts of the letter to be found in an earlier News Sheet), in which it is suggested that the News Sheet bears an 'Overseas Column'. This is an excellent idea, not only because it is of great interest to we stay-at-homes to hear how the other parts of the world live, but also because the people who could write to us telling of the folk dancing abroad, will be, with a very few exceptions, old or associate members of the S. I. F. D. Their letters can give us a new side-light on folk dancing, and also, by this contact, strengthen the chain by which we, as a Society, are linked together.

Unfortunately I have very few addresses of folks abroad, and I must rely upon members to make contacts for the News Sheet in this matter. Your co-operation is therefore asked once again. If you know of any ex-member now residing abroad, will you please write them a note asking for their news, and their dancing activities.

A similar scheme has been started with our out-of-town or associate groups. News of groups and of their activities are of immense interest to all members, and the News Sheet heartily welcomes their letters.

In addition, should any member be anticipating a move away from London, a note to the News Sheet may provide them with contacts when they arrive at their new home. Do not underestimate the capacity of the Society. Drop a line to us, and you will probably find that the S. I. F. D. is a mighty octopus indeed, and its tentacles stretch to many corners of the globe.

THE FRENCH-CANADIAN.

The French were great travellers, and they were the first settlers in Canada. Today they are a minority population, although they number three and a half million.

Quebec is predominately French, and many of its inhabitants have heard no other language but French during the whole of their lives. Of course the French which is spoken in Canada differs greatly from that which is spoken in France today, and the European would probably find difficulty in understanding and being understood were he to air his French in Quebec or Montreal.

The French-Canadians are a very independent people, and they have always wished for a Canadian flag, and for 'O Canada' as their national anthem.

They are all devout Catholics, and it has almost always been the policy of those British in authority to humour the clergy, for in that manner they could be sure of peaceful co-operation from the people. It is considered that there are more papal observances, banners, pictures and religious festivals in French Canada than in Rome itself.

The largest annual parade held in Canada is that of St. John (June 24). It is a French-Canadian national holiday, and visitors pack into the cities from all parts of the country. The festivities, which start with Mass in the morning, continue throughout the day with processions, and finish at night with bonfires and fireworks.

November 1 is All Saints' Day, a religious holiday when no-one works. November 2, All Souls' Day, is set aside for church-going, and in visiting the cemeteries. The graves, which are always carefully attended, are lavishly decorated, and priests conduct services throughout the afternoon.

Christmas is mainly a religious holiday, and may continue from Christmas Eve Mass until Epiphany, or even until the end of January. Generally there are few Christmas gifts, these being reserved for New Year's Day.

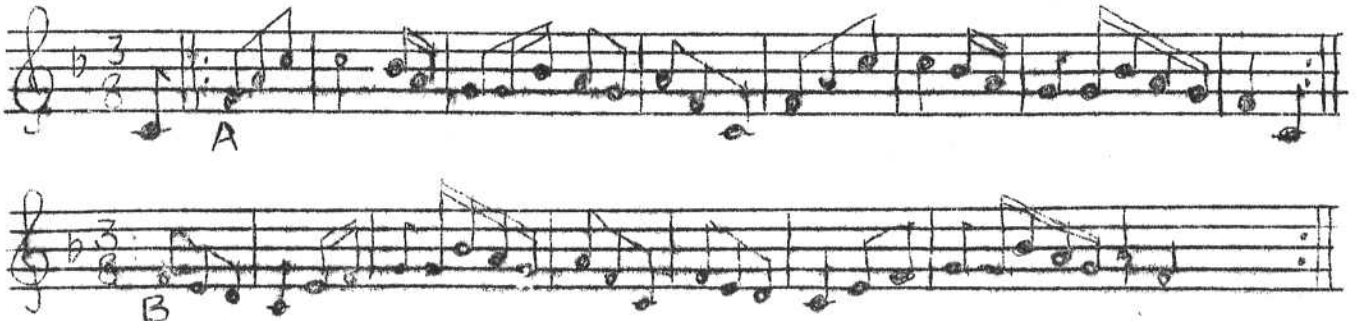
The Winter Carnival, the day before Ash Wednesday, is a great event among French Canadians. Ice and snow figures and castles are built and there are winter games and competitions. At night the processions are led by men on skis, holding torches. The carnival ends with a dance. The following morning the people will attend Mass, and will continue to do so each day until Easter.

BOUREE CROISEE

A dance for two couples found in many versions in central France.

Music and instructions by Simon Guest.

BOUREE CROISEE SIMPLE



Bouree Step

Version du Berri.

In 3/4 or 3/8

Progression: When used for progression the step is a simple -

123	123	123	123	123	etc.
L. R. L.	L. R. L.	L. R. L.	L. R. L.	L. R. L.	etc.

The first step of each bar is slightly longer than the other two. The progression is fast but smooth. The smoothness is obtained by not using the heels; the toe or whole foot is placed on the floor, never the heel alone. The knees must be slightly relaxed and the body weight kept forward to achieve the right effect.

Forward and Back. In many dances the bouree step is used for a sequence consisting of two bars forward and two bars back. In this case the step takes a more complicated form.

Bar 1. Normal bouree step forward starting with L foot, starting to turn shoulders towards left.

Bar 2. Step R foot normally on first beat still turning shoulder and body towards left.

On the second beat the body is facing left and the L foot takes a step to the side, i.e. away from the original direction of progression.

Close R foot to L foot on the third beat of the bar.

Bar 3. Normal bouree step backwards, L.R.L., turning body back to face front and starting to turn towards right.

Bar 4. Still turning, step R foot on the first beat. On the second beat the body is facing right, and the L foot steps to the side, i.e. forward in the original direction of progression.

Close R foot to L foot on the third beat of the bar.

Repeat the whole sequence except that Bar 1 must now be used to recover forward face for the body.

BOUREE CROISEE

Basic Version.

The dancers stand at the four corners of a small square all facing the centre. Men have their partners on the right hand.

A music. The men dance the forward and back bouree step described above (16 bars), almost meeting in the centre of the set when they move forward.

B music. The men cross over passing left shoulders and turning right-about at each end (16 bars).

The girls dance exactly as the men but two bars behind throughout.

BOUREE CROISEE D'CULCHES.

In this version the dancers hold hands during the A music and although executing the same steps as in the basic version they keep their bodies facing front. When the men (or girls) meet in the centre they have arms outstretched sideways and right shoulders almost touching.

The crossover figure (B music) is the same as the basic version.

BOUREE CROISEE D'AUBIGNY

Here the dancers turn completely round left-about during the second 2 bars of the forward and back bouree step (A music). In addition the men do a marked astride step and jerk their thumbs over their shoulders when they meet in the centre.

The crossover figure (B music) is the same as the basic version.

COSTUMES OF A BRITTANY BRIDE AND GROOM.

The bride wears a small white cap built up at the front to about an inch and a half, with a band of stiff two inch white lace draped across the front and looped at each side. Long white ribbons tie at the back and hang down below the waist.

The blouse is white, with long sleeves loose at the wrist, and a round neck. The edges of the sleeve cuffs and the neck are embroidered in white with lace frills; the collar does not meet at the centre front of the neck, but finishes leaving about four inches of the neck of the blouse collar-less. This collar is at least eight inches wide

and is starched very stiffly so that it stands away from the neck and over the shoulders rather like a ruffle. It may be entirely of lace or only edged with lace.

The bodice is usually dark in colour and covered with floral embroidery. It has a concealed opening at either the side or the back. It has long sleeves, which are of plain material, but the embroidery on the bodice is continued around the cuffs. The lace cuff of the blouse is pulled out to show under the bodice cuffs.

The skirt is of the same colour, i.e. dark blue, dark green, maroon, or black, as the bodice and of the same material. It has a wide band of black velvet ribbon at the hem. The skirt is ankle, or near ankle, length.

The apron is full and hangs below the knee. It is of a richly floral patterned material and is edged with a frill of lace.

Black shoes and white or black stockings complete the outfit.

The bridegroom wears a black hat shaped rather like a flat bowler with a wider brim. It is decorated with a wide band of black velvet ribbon draped over the crown and hanging down the back.

He has a white shirt with a fairly high collar, rather like a very deep shirt band. The sleeves are tight with a narrow cuff.

A light coloured jacket (often blue) with long sleeves and reaching just below the waist, covers the shirt. The sleeves of the jacket are comfortably fitting, and have a band of coloured braid or embroidery at the cuffs and around the upper-arm on a level with the arm pit. It may also have similar embroidery across the chest in a solid band about four inches deep. The front is double-breasted and is fastened with large silver buttons on each side. There are no revers or collar; the neck is cut round about half an inch lower than the neck of the shirt.

Over this jacket is worn a sleeveless coat, of the same length as the other jacket. This is cut quite plain, rather like a bolero with a straight front. It has three rows of small silver buttons decorating each side of the front opening and continuing round the neck. It does not meet in the front, but it is cut so that the buttons of the underneath jacket are revealed.

The trousers are dark, orthodox type, slightly widening toward the ankles.

Shoes are rather heavy, and of black leather.

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

What a pity your December issue did not contain the only INTERNATIONAL Christmas Greeting - in Esperanto.

Will Green.

Thank you Will, I shall certainly use your greeting next Christmas, and it is not too late for me to wish all members a Happy New Year in your words - 'Felican Novjaron'.

NOTICES

At the Committee Meeting on Sunday, January 24, the resignation of Dr. Cyriax from the Society was accepted. Dr. Cyriax has been a member for many years, and has done a great deal of work for the S. I. F. D both as teacher of Swedish dances and as Wardrobe Mistress. On the behalf of all members I wish to thank Dr. Cyriax for her work, and to express our regret that she feels no longer able to work with us.

The Committee do not intend to let the Swedish classes lapse, and those listed on the programme will continue. In the time between now and the first Swedish evening efforts will be made to secure another instructor in this field of dance.

RUSSO-UKRAINE CLASS

This class has been running since the beginning of the new term, and already a fresh light is beginning to dawn on Hopak. Unfortunately the class is very small, and whilst this means even more dancing for those present, yet it also means that there is a very real danger of the class being forced to close according to the L. J. C. rules. This would be a great loss to the Society. Russo-Ukraine dancing has always been a weak spot in our programme, not through lack of keenness and ability, but through lack of a qualified expert to teach us.

In George Orloff we have a teacher well able and very keen to teach not only dancing but theory of origin, character, and history of the dance as well.

Lack of time is the biggest drawback to prospective members, and one cannot say, 'Drop one class and join a new one instead'; but I am convinced that if members would sacrifice that 'one free evening' and visit the class just once, they would find it well worth their while and would very probably make it a regular Tuesday commitment.

INTERNATIONAL FOLK MUSIC COUNCIL

Twelfth Annual Conference

The twelfth annual conference of the I.F.M.C. will be held this year from August 12-17, at Sinaia, Rumania.

Full information may be obtained upon application to:- Miss Maud Karpeles, Secretary, I.F.M.C., 35 Princess Court, Queensway, London, W. 2.

MIDWEEK DANCES

It was proposed at the last General Meeting that midweek social dances be held as opposed to classes. It was suggested that these be arranged on the same basis as some time previously, i.e. one night per month. It has been further suggested that the Wednesday class might finish with a social dance. The Committee, however, is loath to act upon either of these suggestions until it has been established that the members really desire this change.

Your comments, and promise of support - or otherwise - are therefore solicited. Please write on a postcard whether you would like some midweek dancing or not, and whether you would regularly support such a venture were it to be arranged. Post or hand these comments to any Committee member as soon as possible.

HONOURS LIST

Congratulations to Ruth Sharp upon her being made an Honorary Member of Harrow Green Folk Dancing Group. Ruth has worked hard and well for the folk dancing world, and thoroughly deserves this distinction.

HARROW GREEN AND WALTHAMSTOW FOLK DANCE GROUP.

The above Groups are presenting an evening of Folk Dancing on Friday, February 27, at Leyton Super Baths, Leyton. The programme to be presented covers many nationalities, and the Guest Artistes are the Rodney Morris Dance Group, and the Czechoslovakia Ensemble. Doors open at 7 p.m. for a 7.30 p.m. start. Tickets may be obtained from Roly Minton, 3 Lightfoot Road, N.8., or from the Baths.

THE ENGLISH FOLK DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY

The Spring programme for the E.F.D.S.S. is now in circulation, and the courses cover a variety of interests both in dance and music. Details may be obtained from the Secretary, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, N.W.1.

An Easter House Party is to be held at The Training College, Bognor Regis, on Saturday, March 28 to Saturday, April 4, directed by Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy. The House Party is open to everyone wishing to learn, present and perform English Folk Dances, Songs and Music while at the same time enjoying a holiday by the sea. For details apply The House Secretary (address as above).

In conjunction with the West Wight Hotelier's Association, the E.F.D.S.S. are holding a Whitsun Folk Festival at West Wight on Friday evening, May 15, until Monday evening, May 18. The dancing will be held out of doors as much as weather permits, and there will be a coach tour of the Island arranged for one evening. A special late ferry will be run on Friday evening, and transport will be arranged to take people to their accommodation, which will be Hotels or Guest Houses. For details write to the secretary (address as above), and mark the envelope, 'E.F.D.S.S., Whitsun Festival'.

MY QUERY OF THE MONTH.

How authentic should one be? From America comes the following extract - 'We had a little demonstration in true Goral spirit' (the Gorals are noted for their fierce and quick temper), 'the dancing was good and it ended with a fight, but it was authentic'.

