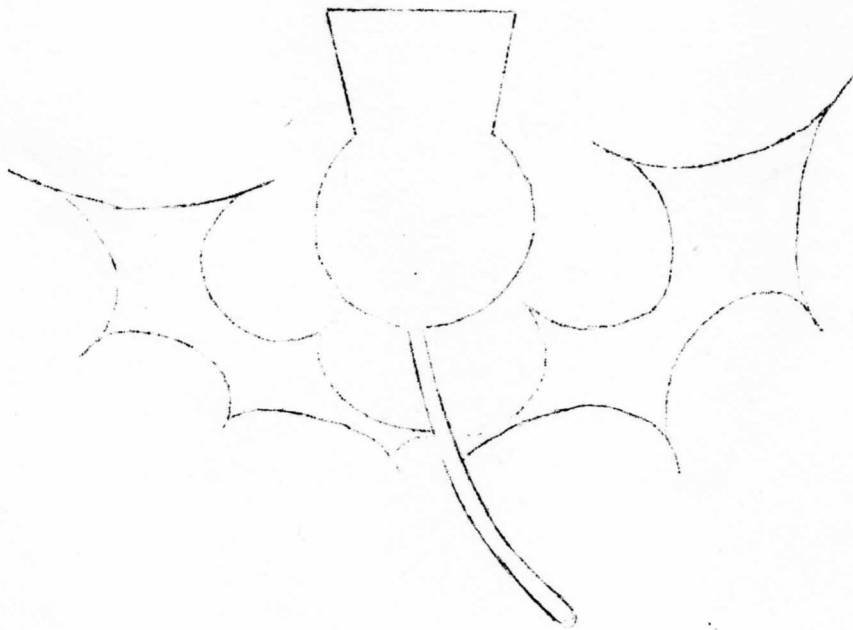


# THE THISTLE



Issued by the West Point Grey Scottish Country Dance Club of B.C.  
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## EDITORIAL.

The Scottish Country Dance Camp which was held on the Victoria Day weekend in May proved to be far and away the most successful gathering yet held. And we are very fortunate to have found an ideal location on the Campus of the University of British Columbia at which to establish this annual event on a permanent basis.

It is evident that with unlimited room for expansion and a growing interest far beyond the borders of B.C., the Camp will continue to flourish in future years. Its success is due not only to the efforts of the organising committee but even more to the enthusiasm of those who travel long distances to join local dancers for the weekend.

We are confident that the future of Scottish Country Dancing on the Pacific Coast is now assured. And we look forward to a bigger and even better gathering on the Victoria Day weekend next May.

## OUR DANCES, No. 20 : Barley riggs.

- Bars 1 - 8 The first couple dances a figure-of-eight round the second couple.
- 9 - 16 The first two couples dance a figure-of-eight together. That is to say, the first couple repeats the movements of bars 1 - 8; meanwhile the second man, starting by casting up one place, follows the first man two bars behind, and the second woman similarly follows the first. The details are as follows.
- 9 - 10 The first couple cross down one place : the first man to the second man's place, the first woman to the second woman's, the woman, of course, passing in front of the man. Meanwhile the second couple cast up one place.
- 11 - 12 The first couple cast up one place. Meanwhile the second couple cross down one place.
- 13 - 14 The first couple cross down one place. Meanwhile the second couple cast up one place.
- 15 - 16 The first couple cast up one place. Meanwhile the second couple cross down one place. At this point, all four dancers are in their original places.
- 17 - 24 The first couple dance down the middle and up.
- 25 - 32 The first two couples poussette.

As we pointed out in number 19, there were many dances in the last century in which the last half consisted of down-the-middle-and-up-and-poussette. "Scottish reform", which we described as one of these, has one advantage that some of the others do not : it has plenty of movement for the second couple. All too often - think of "Corn riggs", "Petronella", "Flowers of Edinburgh", "Bottom of the punch bowl" - the second couple does nothing but join in the poussette. "Barley riggs" is a dance, frankly inspired by "Corn riggs", which is intended to have all the advantages of this general type of dance, and at the same time to be fun for the second couple.

The characteristic figure of the dance - the double figure-of-eight in bars 9 - 16 - was devised by Hugh Foss. It is one of those figures which is very simple and obvious after it has been described. It has all the movement of a reel of four, but flows much more easily and naturally. I am sure that we shall see a lot more of this figure in future dances by various composers.

This dance goes well to the tune "Corn riggs" and as no group is likely to have both "Barley riggs" and "Corn riggs" in its repertoire, no harm will be done by using this tune. Other tunes of the same character are "Lass of Patie's Mill" and "Callum Beg".

CORRESPONDENCE. From Bob Campbell, Oakville.

I thought your article on Hints for Better Dancing in Issue 17 very good. One practical result of teaching figures and using a standard, succinct name for each one is that it speeds things greatly at dances. Although no instructions of any sort are given (or need to be given) at our main balls this is not the case at monthly dances of which there are about two dozen during a season. At these affairs the M.C. or his aide "briefs" each dance. All but a few talk each figure through in a laborious way often dampening the spirit that has built up. Where one of our better teachers happens to be M.C. the briefing is from memory and not from the book and standard terms are used. Result - the evening goes with a real swing.

PERSONAL.

Readers will be sorry to hear that one of the editors - Douglas Duncan - is in hospital. The other members of the Editorial board wish him as pleasant a stay as is possible and a speedy recovery.

NORTHERN JUNKET.

The square-dance magazine that is different. \$2.50 for 12 issues, from Ralph Page, 117 Washington St., Keene, N.H., U.S.A.

Each issue brings you interesting articles on all phases of dancing : squares, contras, folk-dance, folk-song, folk-lore. Traditional recipes, too, for hungry dancers.

## HINTS ON BETTER DANCING.

Choosing the dances for a ball.

A "ball" usually means a large dance in which formal dress is worn. We are not here interested so much in the dress as in the type of gathering. We have in mind a dance in which dancers from many different groups - perhaps all the groups in a district - gather, whether to celebrate Hogmanay or Burns' night, or simply because it is an annual custom (like the annual Scottish country-dance Ball in Vancouver). The big Saturday night dance at the Vancouver "camp" week-end would count as a ball for present purposes.

The general balance in a good ball programme is not the same as in a year's classes. The ideal ball programme is one in which all the dancers can do all (or nearly all) the dances, whereas if the whole repertoire for a year's classes were chosen to this end, the classes would be unchallenging and therefore probably dull.

The difference lies only partly in the fact that at a class there is, naturally, some instruction and at a ball there is none. It is also a question of atmosphere. A dancer at a ball is in the mood to enjoy and to call an "old favourite" many a dance that in a class he would describe as "hackneyed" - possibly for no better reason than that he learnt it as a child in school. It is because of the special atmosphere at a ball, too, that an unfamiliar dance which only a small proportion of those present can enjoy is out of place, particularly if the dance is a showy one, and the real motive for putting it into the programme is for those who can dance it to be admired. These considerations do not entirely prevent ball programmes from containing difficult dances. The foursome reel and reel of Tulloch is usually considered to be a difficult dance, and yet until quite recently it was very common (and rightly so) on ball programmes. If it is not so suitable today, this is not because it is difficult but because it is unfamiliar - few of today's country dancers seem willing to tackle it.

In British Columbia, "McLaine's hogmanay" or "McLaine of Lochbuie" from Mrs. MacNab's collection is familiar (being in the repertoire of several groups as well as being a favourite with demonstration teams) and would, although complicated, be a good choice for a Ball programme in this area. In other areas it might be a bad choice, though these areas might have their own familiar complicated dances. Indeed, we know of one region where "Schiehallion" is regularly on the Ball programme and everyone dances it; and another where "Bonny Anne" plays this rôle. These, however, are special cases: most of the dances in a good Ball programme will be generally familiar and not too difficult.

As we write, the annual Vancouver Ball is imminent, and we find the programme, without Petronella, Scottish Reform or even The Duke of Perth, rather dull. The best Ball that has been held in Vancouver was at last year's "camp" and though the main reason was the excellence of the band,

the choice of dances played its part. It did our heart good to find that the dance which was such a success that it just had to be encored - even though a full programme had been arranged and no time for encores allowed - was that old favourite Scottish Reform. It always does our heart good, too, to see a decent standard of dancing; and as a general rule the easier a dance is the better it is performed.

[Since we wrote this the Vancouver Ball has been held. Extra time allowed the Duke of Perth to be not only danced but encored, and allowed McLaine's hogmanay to be included].

#### LOCAL NEWS.

The annual ball has come and gone and was much enjoyed by everyone. This year, the band was the 'Teuchters' from Powell River - the band that was such a success at last years "camp" week-end. If their impact was not quite as strong as at camp, this was not due to any falling off in their playing but partly to the fact that many of us were hearing them for the second time, and partly to the atrocious artificial tone of the electronic amplification. The band showed us last year that they can fill a hall with the direct unaided sound of their instruments, and the sound is then far superior. This did not, however, prevent close on 100 dancers from having a delightful evening of excellent dancing, admiring the while the ingenious and attractive decorations.

#### HAMILTON HOUSE. (Roundel)

You and I, we love to wander.  
Any love we love to try.  
Careless, any love we squander,  
You and I.

'Times you say - I don't know why  
When I see you laughing yonder -  
That without me you would die.

But, when you've had time to ponder  
On what larks before you lie,  
You won't risk us getting fonder,  
You and I.

Hugh R. Foss.

#### INTERESTING FACTS.

The chief of the Creek Indians of Oklahoma is Chief W.F. McIntosh, a descendent of Brigadier William McIntosh of Borlum who died in 1743. He visited the chief of clan Mackintosh at Moy Hall this summer.