

A MAYPOLE DANCE

English Folk Dance

LS E-9

Music: Maypole Dance

Musicians: Volksdanscentrale voor Vlanderen

Meter: 4/4

Formation: Single circle facing pole, with dancers numbered around the circle from one to four (1,2,3,4; 1,2, 3, 4; and so on); ones and twos are partners, threes and fours are partners; ones and threes stand on left side of partner. All hands are joined.

Introduction: 8 counts

TEACHING THE DANCE

Counts

16 Sixteen skips, circling to the left;

16 Sixteen skips, circling to the right;

8 Each set of four, with their hands joined, circle to the left with eight skips;

8 Circle to the right with eight skips. Finish with each couple facing partner, both hands joined.

16 With sixteen skips turn twice around with partner; finish facing partner, ones and threes with their backs to the pole.

8 With a walking step, back away eight steps from partner;

8 Skip eight steps back to partner and join both hands;

16 With sixteen skips turn twice around partner. Finish in a single circle, facing pole.

8 All walk forward four steps and back four steps;

8 All skip eight steps toward the pole;

8 Pick up ribbons and hold high in RIGHT hands;

Eight skips back to place, and face partner.

8 Use full eight counts to bow to partner;

8 Bring ribbons to position for winding, both hands on ribbon about twelve inches apart, palms down. Those facing line of dance (LOD) hold ribbon high and step to outside; those facing reverse line of dance (RLOD) hold ribbon low and step to inside. Keep ribbon taut while winding.

Weave the pole to the desired distance. Those facing line of dance go over first, then under, etc. Those facing RLOD go under first, then over, etc. All weave in and out as in a grand right and left. After the teacher calls "next" or some other appropriate signal, the children stop the next time they meet their partners. On a signal, they face the pole holding ribbons high in their right hands. On a second signal, they let them flutter to the ground, then join hands with their partners and skip off.

NOTE: If the children do not skip spontaneously, without concentration on footwork, let them walk the first two or three times through the dance. Counts are given for the actions, rather than measures, to permit the teacher to use music of his/her choice for this dance, in addition to that recommended here. The dance and the music will not necessarily come out even, because of the flexibility of time used for the "weaving."

The Maypole, which is supposed to be dedicated to the Goddess of Flowers, stands at least twelve feet from the ground. Its top is dressed with flowers and from it hang long streamers (one for each of the dancers) of various light spring colors.