

**BOOK OF THE CONTREDANCE PRESENTED TO THE KING BY ANDRÉ LORIN, HIS  
MAJESTY'S PROFESSOR OF DANCING**

Translated by GILL PLANT.

Sire,

Andre Lorin, one of your Majesty's professors of dance, having travelled to England with M. le Maréchal d'Humières in order to learn the contredances he would see performed at Court there, has not only brought back the best ones, but has composed a quantity of new dances, in which he has put the most fitting steps and has written them down in such a way that they can be readily understood straight away. Because he only undertook this journey with the intention of showing something extraordinary to Your Majesty, to whom the dance has a strong attraction, and from whom this art form receives such great favours, he thought he could not have chosen a more favourable time to present these contredances than this occasion on which Your Majesty's health has happily been restored for which occurrence both his Court and all his subjects have been praying. They (Lorin & the Marshal) show real proof of their joy in the pure delight which this new creation has given to them. It is true that this work would have nothing which deserves to be presented to Your Majesty, were it not that among these various contredances there is one inspired by Him whose actions give glory in a most worthy way to His conquests, who has inspired the admiration of the whole world, and equally whose courage has given terror to His enemies.

He was chosen by the Holy Spirit  
To bring the faith to all regions -  
To add to the name of the most powerful of Princes  
That of the protection of Christ.

**EASY INSTRUCTIONS TO DANCE THE CONTREDANCES**

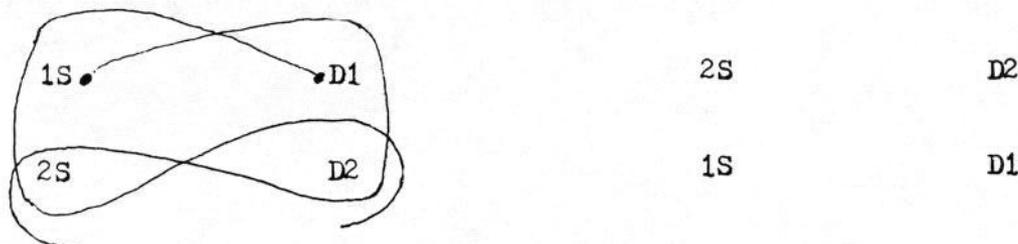
First of all, it must be pointed out that all the Contredances can only be danced in twos, or fours, or sixes, otherwise a proper formation cannot be achieved. So, if there are 100 couples to dance at the same time, it has to be arranged as stated above.

'S' stands for the gentleman (seigneur), 'D' for the lady (dame), and the numbers at the side of the letters show which couple, to avoid confusion, which could arise if this were not known. The marks at the beginning of the track show that one starts from that point. The track forms the pattern of the dance, and to do it one must work upwards. Example of a Contredance for two:



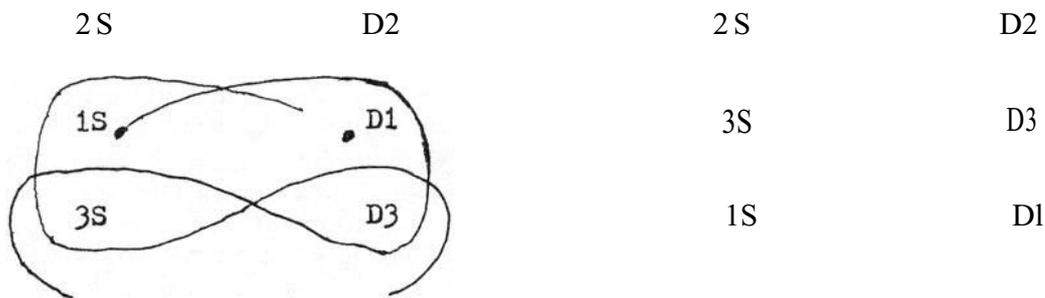
Whenever the Contredance is performed, it is begun by one couple dancing, as in 'Jeanne la Sauteusse', after which all the other couples dance; that is, one after the other, as set out in the following example: (Page Missing)

Contredance for four: the first couple begin and make the following track round the second. Example:



When all the steps and patterns have been completed with the second couple, the first couple will find themselves in the place of the second couple, and the second couple in the place of the first – as can be seen in the example above.

The first couple do the same with the third couple. Example:



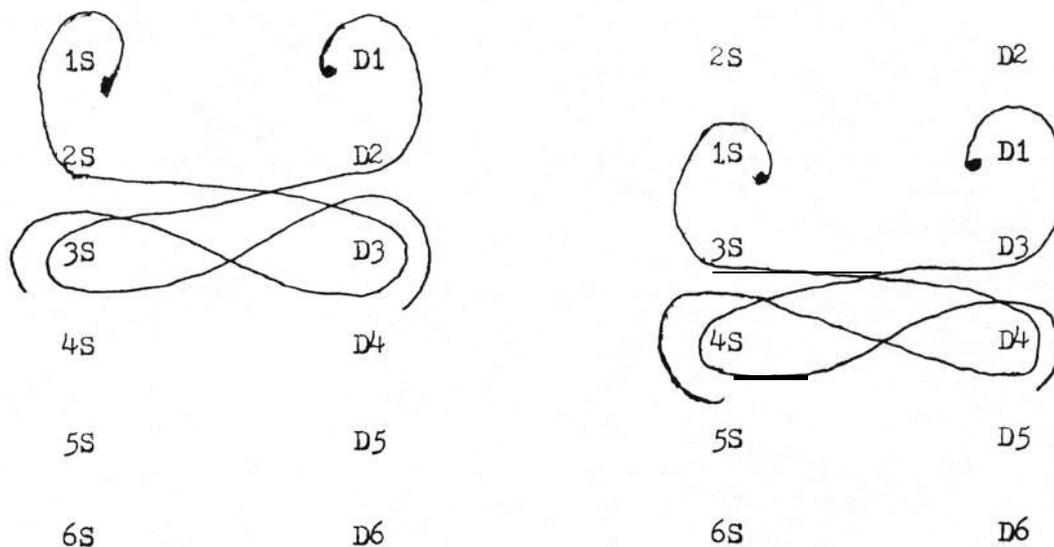
The first couple continues with all the other couples in the same order, up to the end of the line, after which they must go back to their place, at which point their part in the dance is finished. The second couple, who have been doing nothing while the first couple have danced with the third, begin to dance with the third couple, doing the same as the first couple. In this way the pattern doubles four by four. Example:



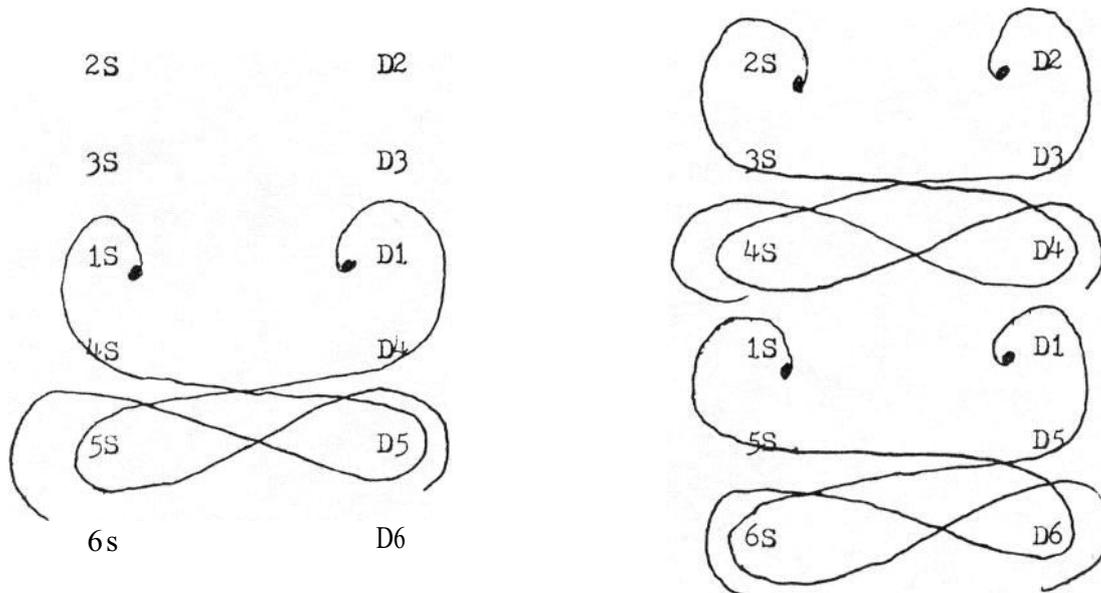
The second couple continue in this way to the end of the line, then they go back to their places as the first couple did. All the others follow suit.

It must be noted that when they go up from the end of the line, the second couple become the first couple. so they should know both what the first and what the second couple do in the dance.

**Contredance for six:** the first couple dance down the line as far as the 5th couple while the 2nd, 3rd and 4th couples do nothing. Example:

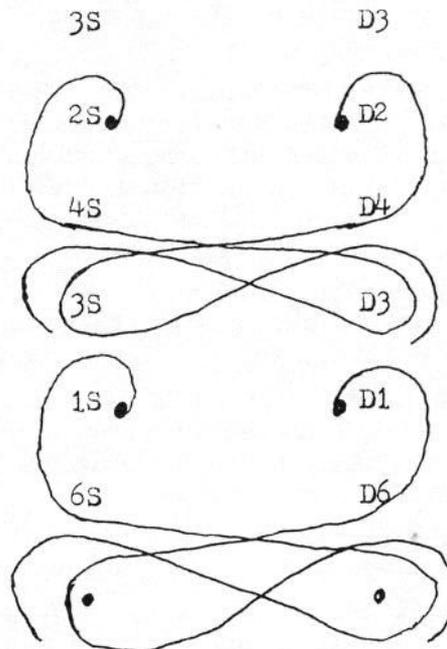


The first couple continue on. The second couple then start a new pattern. Example:

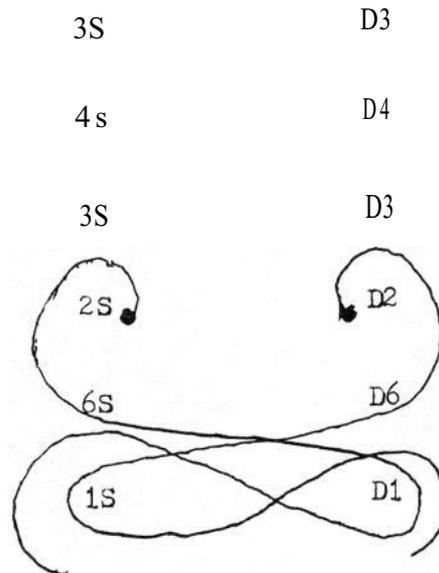


The second couple, now at the top, and who did nothing while the 1st couple danced round the 3rd and 4th couples, begin the same movement round the 3rd and 4th while the first couple continue round the 5th and 6th. In this way, if there are 100 couples, the dance would continue in the same manner down the line, to the end.

When there are no more couples to dance around, one must go round an imaginary couple at the end. Example:



The second couple go to the bottom and the first couple move up one. Example:



It must be noted that as they move up from the bottom of the dance, as shown in the example above, the first couple find themselves 3rd, then 2nd couple in turn; thus they should know the roles of 3rd, 2nd and first couples as set down in the plan of each Contredance.

All the other couples follow on in the same manner until all find themselves in their original places; at which point the dance ends.

The top couple is virtually the only one who actually dances, while the other couples merely move along and back again with the correct steps and appropriate style.

As they move up and down the line, the couples still form the patterns of the dance. However, this has not been put into the diagrams, to avoid confusion.

All the usual Contredances start and finish with the dancers in the order shown in these instructions; however, if one should want them less monotonous, the formations can be doubled (done by two couples at once; with each four people in the Contredances for four couples, and with each six people in the Contredances for six couples). However, the English custom is for the man at the head of the dance to decide which type of Contredance shall be done, and he shall then proceed to dance with his partner; the other couples following suit, one after the other.

It must be noted that each couple has a long wait before it is their turn to dance, which is often tedious for both the dancers and those watching. They would perhaps prefer the dance to be performed by two couples at a time, which could be done according to what is considered for the best.

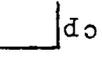
The formation Contredances are danced by 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 or 12 people at a time – these are fixed numbers. Thus if there are a lot of gentlemen and ladies present, these dances can only be performed by a certain number of them – so in these cases it might be best to perform other dances, so that everyone will be kept happy.

There is one dance for eight people, especially composed for M<sup>me</sup>. la Dauphine – this cannot be performed by any more than eight people because it would not work out properly.

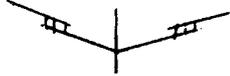
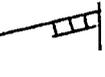
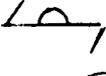
There is also another one for four people, also especially composed for Monseigneur, which is not set down here, because the one here dedicated to him in its place is much better – but this one cannot be danced by more than four people either.

## TABLE SHOWING THE SYMBOLS FOR STEPS

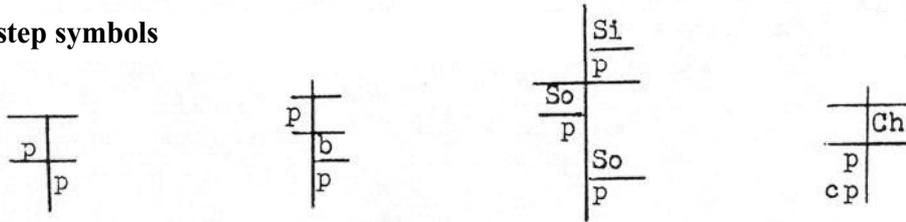
### Examples

Simple step 	Jeté step 	Assemblé step 
Sauté 	Sauté, one foot remaining in the air 	
Sauté assemblé 	Step backwards 	
Sauté assemblé to the Presence 		
Step forward 		
Step to the side 		
Quarter turn 	half turn 	
One complete turn 		
Balance step 	Minuet step 	
Pas de bourrée in two movements 	Fleuret 	
Sissoné step 	Chassé (glide) 	
Ordinary coupé 	Coupé in the air 	
Coupé backwards 	Cabriole to the side 	

## SIGNS FOR THE GIVING AND CLAPPING OF HANDS

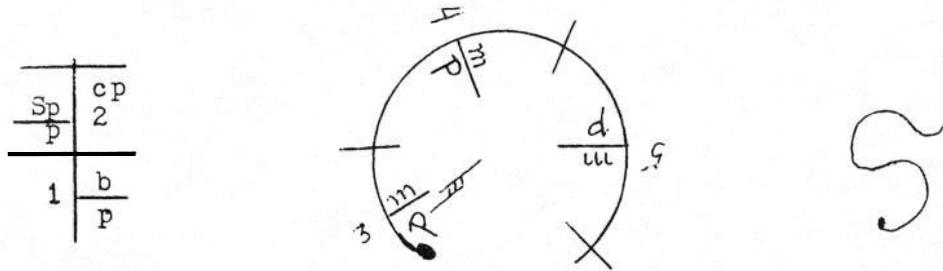
Right hand 	Left hand 
	
To take both hands	
To clap the right 	(one with the other)
To clap the left 	(one in the other)
To clap both hands together 	
Sign meaning to raise the hat 	
Sign meaning to make a reverence 	

**Example of step symbols**

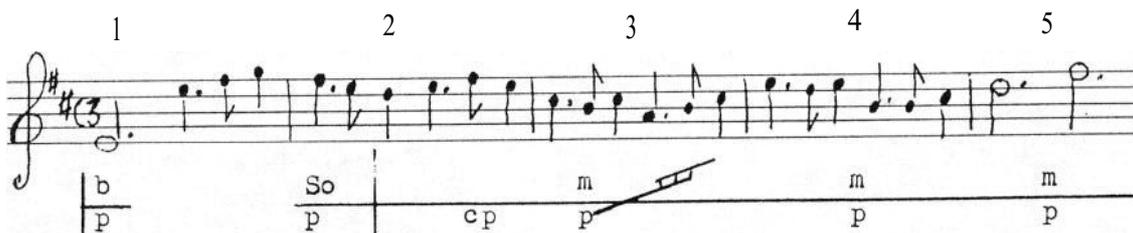


All the notation found from bar to bar at the side of the track are so that one knows at what point in the music one is, because the same signs are written on the music, with the step underneath the corresponding note. In this way it is difficult to make a mistake because notes and steps that correspond are shown clearly.

Example showing the steps and their symbols in their correct places on the track of the dance:



Example showing the steps and their symbols along with the music:



When there are places where the step is not written down, this is so that one can find out on which foot one starts.

Example to show when one must start with the right foot, and give or clap the right hand:



Example to show when one must start with the left foot, and give or clap the left hand:



It must be pointed out that one only gives the hand when actually dancing the measure, and that one only claps the hands when standing still.

$\bar{p}$  written upside-down, like  $\bar{a}$ , means step backwards. So whatever the step, if it goes backwards, it will always be written with the upside-down  $\bar{p}$ . Example:  $\bar{d}$ . Thus, Pas de bourée is written  $\frac{b}{\bar{a}}$ ; minuet step  $\frac{m}{\bar{a}}$ ; sissoné  $\frac{d}{\bar{a}}$ ; and all the other steps are written according to the same principle when they are done going backwards Coupe en arriere  $\frac{d}{\bar{a}}$ ; chassé en arriere  $\frac{cp}{\bar{a}}$ . The same rule applies to all the other steps en arriere.

The steps are written down under the music and under each step are numbers to show in which order they come.

There are also the symbols 2S to show the position of the man, and D2 to show the position of the lady. These show the point at which each begins because often the two do not start (at the same time). Sometimes the notation is written very close together to show the entire pattern of the step at once; thus my apologies if at times it appears rather cramped.

Since the most perfect works find their critics, I do not doubt that this work too will be subject to criticism from certain parties who only think well of works of which they are the authors; but without dwelling on the feeble objection they could make that I did not write the steps alongside the dance track, I would like to tell them that I intended to do this, and that I had actually started in this vein when several dancing experts came to visit me. These gentlemen admired the lucid way in which I had given the instructions; however, they thought it better that I should write the steps underneath the music, because that would be enough to convey how the dances should be performed; and that if I wrote the steps alongside the track, I would make it difficult for the reader, who would have the inconvenience of having to keep turning the sheet of paper around to read them in their correct positions; and I would also make it harder to see the full flow of the track. I found this so eminently sensible that I agreed to their suggestion and preferred to go to the trouble of writing the steps underneath the music to the ease I would have had in putting them by the track. The numbers written underneath the steps and the music give clear instructions about where exactly each step comes,

I also had the satisfaction of hearing them say how surprised they were by what they had seen, and that they could never have imagined that dance could be written down, but I assuaged their amazement by telling them that diligence was enough to bring this about, and that if in the past such a technique had not been mastered, it was only because up to now no-one had devoted themselves wholeheartedly to studying this art. Without going into a long account, I can say that I told them that I simply used the appropriate terminology in this work, and did not delve too deeply in so doing into the theory of dance. I also said that furthermore it must not seem strange to them to see the art of dance at the stage that it is, since we are ruled by a King who, by his enlightenment inspires his subjects to bring all the arts to perfection; and since in former times His Majesty was very attached to dancing, and it still has the privilege of contributing to his enjoyment, he has in our day accorded it the highest status to be found anywhere in Europe.

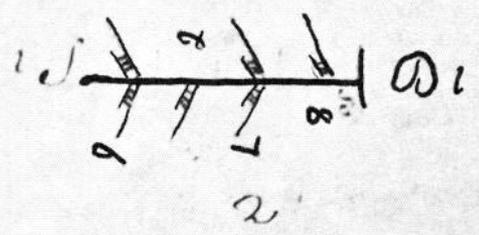
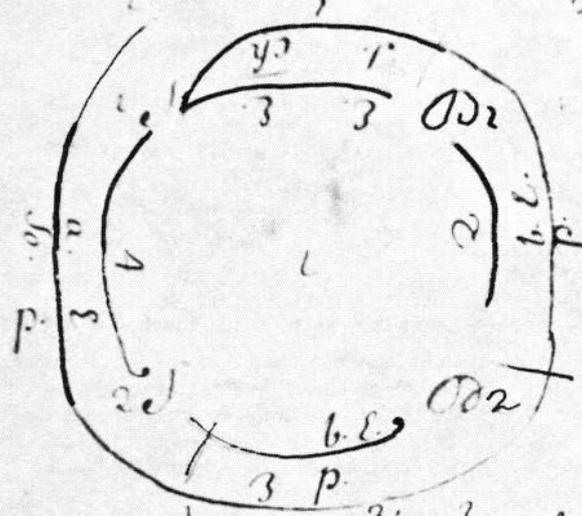
*Contre dance pour Sa Majeste*

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8

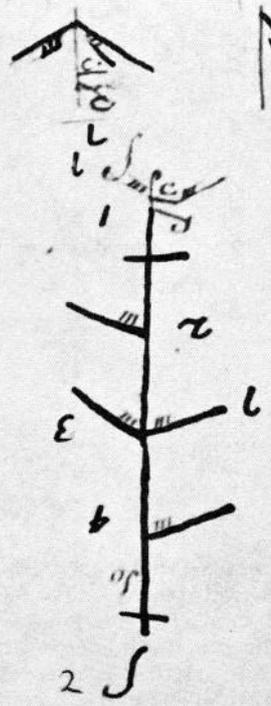
The score is divided into four quadrants by a vertical and a horizontal line. The top half contains musical notation on a staff with notes and rests, and a keyboard diagram below it. The bottom half contains a large, complex diagram with various symbols, numbers, and lines, possibly representing a dance floor or a specific dance movement. The diagram includes a large circle with internal lines, a smaller circle, and various annotations like '2', '3', '4', '5', '6', '7', '8', '9', '10', '11', '12', '13', '14', '15', '16', '17', '18', '19', '20', '21', '22', '23', '24', '25', '26', '27', '28', '29', '30', '31', '32', '33', '34', '35', '36', '37', '38', '39', '40', '41', '42', '43', '44', '45', '46', '47', '48', '49', '50', '51', '52', '53', '54', '55', '56', '57', '58', '59', '60', '61', '62', '63', '64', '65', '66', '67', '68', '69', '70', '71', '72', '73', '74', '75', '76', '77', '78', '79', '80', '81', '82', '83', '84', '85', '86', '87', '88', '89', '90', '91', '92', '93', '94', '95', '96', '97', '98', '99', '100'.

Christchurch bells; Les cloches de l'Eglise de Saint Christ

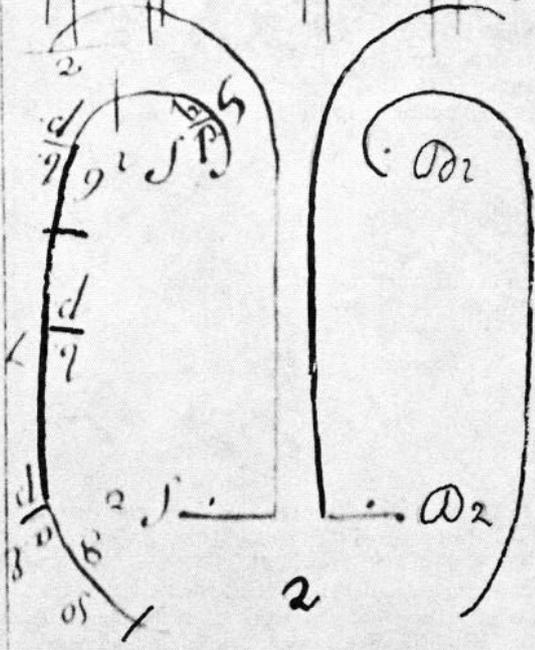
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



*D*<sub>2</sub>



*D*<sub>2</sub>

## Some notes on the Christchurch Bells dances by Lillian Pleydell

**Abbreviations:** **R.H.** Right hand **L.H.** Left hand 1's = 1st Couple 2% = 2nd couple.  
**Circle** Two couples take hands and circle once round, presumably to the left.  
**Clap tog: R:Clap tog: L.** = Clap own hands together, clap partner's right hand, clap own hands together, clap partner's left hand.  
**Clap R, Clap L,** = Clap partner's right hand then clap partner's left hand.  
**1st Corners** = 1st Man 2nd Lady.  
**2nd Corners** = 1st Lady 2nd Man.

### Playford 1686 Christchurch Bells

Honour the presence, honour your partner.  
Lead forward and back, that again.  
1st Corners turn by R.H.  
1st Couple turn by L.H.  
2nd Corners turn by L.H.  
2nd Couple turn by R.H.  
Circle. Then each couple clap hands R & L.  
1's cast, 2's lead up,

### Playford 1721 Vol.1 17th Edit:

Christchurch Bells *in Oxon.*

1st Man set to 2nd Woman, turn single  
turn her with both hands.  
2nd Corners repeat.  
Corners Cross. Go quite round  
clapping as they go. All four sett  
down, clap five or six times quickly  
all four jump up and R. & L. half  
way into second couple's place.

### Playford 1725 18th Edit:

Christ Church Bells *in Oxon.*

Honour the presence, then partner,  
Lead forward and back, that again.  
1st Corners turn R.H.  
1st Couple L.H.  
2nd Corners turn L.H.  
2nd Couple R.H.  
Circle. Each couple clap R. & L.  
hands, 1's cast, 2's lead up.

### Sharp 1916 Christchurch Bells

1st Corners turn R.H.  
1st Couple turn L.H.  
2nd Corners L.H. 2nd couple R.H.  
Circle,  
1's and 2's Clap tog: R. Clap tog: L.  
1's cast 2's lead up.

### Lorin 1686 (?) Les Cloches de l'Eglise de Jesu Christ

1st Corners turn by R.H.  
1st Couple turn by L.H.  
2nd Corners turn by R.H.  
1st Couple turn by L.H.  
1st couple Clap tog: R. Clap tog: L.  
Men repeat.  
1's cast, 2's move up.

### Lorin 1688/1721 Les Cloches ou le Carillon

Four couples shown honouring each other  
Approach closer presumably discuss which  
dance they are doing to do, in this case as above.  
1st couple honour other dances, honour each other.  
1st two couples retreat ready for dance.  
Music commences.  
1st Corners turn R.H.  
1st Couple turn L.H.  
2nd Corners turn R.H.  
1st Couple turn L.H.  
1's and 2's Clap tog: R. Clap tog: L.  
The 2 Men and the 2 Ladies repeat clapping.  
1's cast, 2's move up.

### Feuillet 1706 Le Carillon d'Oxford

1st Corners back to back  
1st Couple turn R.H.  
2nd Corners back to back  
1st couple turn L.H.  
Circle.  
Clap R, clap L. (1's only clap)  
1's cast, 2's move up.

**Lorin 1.** is much the same as Playford differing figurewise only in having the second corners turning by the *right* hand, and in bars 4-8 of the repeat of the first eight bar phrase the first couple turn by the left hand instead of the second couple by the right hand. The clapping differs slightly and it is not clear whether he intends the second couple to take part in the clapping and whether or not the ladies should clap when the men do. However, stepwise Lorin uses the Baroque bourée step finishing each phrase with pas assemble, saute, (step, close, jump). The last phrase, however, just before the circle commences, finishes pas assemble, saute, degagé à costé. The circle commences with a chassé, jeté, continues with two bourées then pas assemble, saute. (Whether the pas assemblé is merely a closing of the feet after the last bourée step or is intended as one step then close the feet is difficult to determine.)

**Lorin 2** Basically the same dance now refurbished and more stylised — he now includes the honours going “one better” than Playford and it is now clear from his figures that both couples clap and that the two men and two ladies clap. The stepping is further streamlined: the four bar travelling phrase being three bourées and a coupe assemble, which is, of course: step, step, close, and the circle – chassé balancé, two bourées, coupe assemble, and a pas degagé in readiness for the following chasse as in Lorin 1. At the end of bar four the first lady jumps ready to begin turning with her partner and at the end of bar eight the second man jumps ready to commence turning the first lady and so on. The casting movement is beautifully detailed stepwise and figurewise adding the final “touch” to this very stylish version.

**Feuillet 1706      Recueil de Contredances**

As will be seen Feuillet alters the dance yet a little more, the corners now dancing a back to back instead of a turn by one or other hand. He does, however, revert (?) to Playford’s clapping having, however, only the first couple clapping. Feuillet suggests at the beginning of his book that all the dances may be done with either demi-contretemps (skipping) or the bourée step: he suggests jump feet together at the end of suitable phrases. (The fact that Feuillet has only the first couple clapping does suggest the possibility that the Lorin 1 clapping was done by the first couple only.)

**Playford 1686      7th Edition**

Of the clapping Playford merely says: ‘then each couple clap hands right and left’ which one takes to be simply clapping one’s partner’s right hand and then left hand, without first clapping one’s own hands together.

**Playford 1721      Vol. 1, 17th Edition**

Appears an entirely different dance although there are several points in common, but this, of course, could be said about any number of country dances. One wonders if the printer placed the wrong dance under the music.

**Playford 1725      18th Edition**

As will be seen from the notation the dance is now back again as in 1686 but with a slightly extended title.

**Cecil Sharp 1916      Country Dance Book No. IV**

Basically Playford’s first version, but has added clap own hands together: presumably feeling that this fitted better musicwise, since he has 1’s and 2’s clapping at the same time. However, Playford says ‘then each couple clap hands right and left’ which could mean first the one couple and then the other, thus filling out the music likewise. It is interesting that Lorin and Sharp both chose to interpret this as-clap together, right clap together, left. In his book entitled “The Dance” Sharp does not mention Lorin although he gives a fairly good historical survey of dance. However, it is always possible that he saw Lorin’s version and decided to accept this version of the clapping. Sharp incidentally does omit the honours as did Lorin in his first version.