

# *“Calling the Tune and Leading a Merry Dance” Part 7 - More on Spanish Dances and the Guaracha*

*Peter Ellis*



This early form of Spanish Dance was noted by the Sydney Gazette of 1824 as being danced in Sydney (part 6 July, 201? edition of Trad & Now). The description was selected by Shirley Andrews, quoted as from the anonymous ‘The Analysis of the London Ball-Room’ 1825. It is one of nearly a dozen various Spanish Waltz or Dance described from the 1830s. Ellis Rogers makes the following qualification about this:

*Wilson gives a version of the tune ‘La Guaracha or Carthaginian Fandango on page 175 of his 1816 ‘Companion to the Ball Room’ but no version of the dance. Neither, as far as I know, does a dance notation appear in any of his other books. I think Shirley’s ‘The Analysis of the Ballroom’ circa 1820 is actually ‘Analysis of The London Ball-Room’ 1825 and this was published anonymously. A few people have attributed this work to Wilson but*

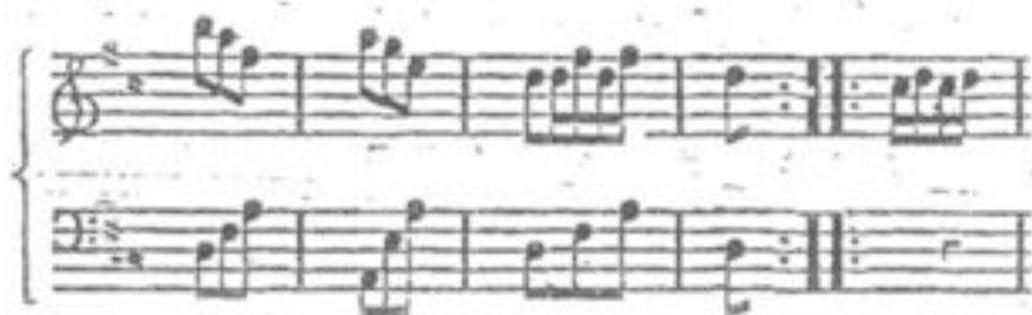
*I believe this to be wrong. Shirley’s version of the dance is in this book on page 153. The tune given is an abbreviated version of the one given in Wilson’s book.*

*Shirley simplified the dance to a longways for 3 couples, whether the original is intended to be danced as a triple or duple set it is difficult to be certain. Of the eight waltzes described in this book two are couple waltzes, one has the figure of the ‘waltz country dance’, two are triple minor and the other four may be triples but only involve two couples in the figure. The County Dances in this book that are not waltzes are all triple minor.*

*I think it would be best to give it as a longways triple minor with the added note that as the third couple has no action it could be danced as a duple minor. The first couple should NOT\* be improper as it is not a ‘Spanish Dance’ despite the tune used. It is not possible to say with certainty whether the first figure is a ‘chain anglaise’ or Wilson’s corner crossing version of ‘Rights and lefts’*

These Spanish Dances were also known as the Guaracha whereas by the 1860s the Spanish Waltz had altered to be more like the modern Waltz Country Dance, but in longways formation. (The Sicilian Circle formation now known as the Waltz Country Dance seems to have developed by the 1880s, possibly as an adaptation of the older Spanish Waltz longways figure into a variant of the Circassian Circle.)

# GUARACHA WALTZ.



## THE FIGURE.

Right and left Down middle and up Poussetts

Description of *La Guaracha* sourced by Shirley Andrews: (I have left the arrangement according to Shirley's interpretation, but please note Ellis Rogers' comments and feel free to adjust. \_ PE)

### Dance



Longways sets of three couples facing the band\*; i.e. up the hall. The ladies are in the right hand line facing top. Before the dance commences the top couple turn around to face the 2<sup>nd</sup> couple and swap to **improper place**, i.e. the 1<sup>st</sup> man on the left on the ladies' line, his partner on his right, men's line. **Note 1<sup>st</sup> couples in diag. are 'improper'**

The pas de valse (forward or back waltz step along line of dance) is the main travelling step.

\* This would have originally been triple or duple minor, longways for as many as will. It would commence with first couple dancing with second, then progress. Gradually it snowballs progressively so that eventually all couples are dancing. Technically the 1<sup>st</sup> couple should reach the bottom of the set and the dance continues till (now as 3<sup>rd</sup> couple) they have returned to the top.

Bars

8 **1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> couples waltz right & left** through & around to place, *presenting hands*.

16 **Top couple** holding inside hands (forward waltz steps) **lead down the centre & back** (swapping hands and finish (still in improper place) facing each other).

8 **1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> couples change places** with the \*pousette and **1<sup>st</sup> couple repeats** the dance with 3<sup>rd</sup> couple. Repeat 2<sup>nd</sup>, then 3<sup>rd</sup> in turn.

\* Pousette:- Bar 1- Couples 1 & 2 open hand hold, take a step away from the middle of the dance – 1<sup>st</sup> couple out from the lady's line, 2<sup>nd</sup> couple out from the men's line. Bar 2 – all make a quarter turn, pulling with the right hand to finish in line with the standing dancers, lady 1 and man 2 with their backs to the top of the set. Bar 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> couple move down the set one pas de valse step while the 2<sup>nd</sup> couple move up the set. Bar 4 – All make a quarter turn, again pulling with the right hand, lady 1 and man 2 now with their backs to the lady's line. Bars 5-8 Both couples take a step into the middle and are now side by side, but have changed places. With two hands holds turn each other for 4 bars with man 1 finishing on the lady's line facing 3<sup>rd</sup> lady and his partner on the men's line facing 3<sup>rd</sup> man, ready to recommence the dance. 2<sup>nd</sup> couple are in 1<sup>st</sup> place improper facing down the set waiting their turn to commence the dance with 3<sup>rd</sup> couple after 1<sup>st</sup> have finished.

### **OTHER SPANISH WALTZES post 1840** MCD CD 2 track 7.

32 bar waltzes, preferably Spanish at 48-50 bars a minute.

There are several forms of the Spanish waltz and one survived in figures 4 & 5 of the Australian version of the Alberts Quadrille. It can be variously danced in sets arranged in progressive Sicilian circle, (i.e. one large circle around the hall with couples facing couples and standing side onto the centre) or in a column of couple facing couple down the centre of the hall.

Another main form was arranged in quadrille squares of four couples or in slightly larger circles of 5 or more couples. The more modern Circle Waltz is an adaptation of the latter whilst the popular Waltz Country Dance is an adaptation of one of the forms of Spanish Waltz in progressive Sicilian circle or columnar formation.

**Version 1** (Melbourne c 1911, Robert's Manual)

In this dance the couples are arranged in a circle round the room, every two couples facing each other, same as in the Circassian Circle.

The Dance (Formation Progressive Sicilian Circle)



**All waltz right & left** to opposite place & back again using the solo waltz (pas de valse or forward waltz step). **8 bars.**

Form a circle of 4 and **Spanish waltz** (balance right & left and then the two ladies make one turn of the waltz to the right changing places with the opposite lady). Repeat 3 more times, ladies having passed twice round to finish with partner **16 bars**

Couples **waltz on** in the direction they are facing (or around each other first) until they meet the next couple in the opposite direction. **8 bars**

The dance is continued as long as desired, but usually 8-10 times and then at the direction of the caller can conclude with a waltz the hall. In situations where this might have been danced in small halls or country barns, it would be normal to progress all the way round till facing original couples and then waltz the hall.

**Version 2** (derived by Shirley Andrews from a cross between the Waltz Country Dance and an American version)

Progressive Sicilian Circle (as in above diagram), ie couples in a large circle around the room, every two couples facing each other and standing side on to the centre as if on the spokes of a wheel.

The Dance

**Opposites** take hands and **balance forward and back** 2 bars (as in the Pride of Erin). Men **change places** with the opposite ladies while turning that lady right hand to right hand under right arm. There is a brief bob bow or honour and the movement is repeated 3 more times, each moving around

in a square to place. **16 bars**

**Hands across & back again** (All four join right hands in a handshake hold, men to men with ladies hands on top and forward waltz to the left 4 bars. Reverse back to place to the right putting left hands across in the centre). **8 bars.**

**Waltz around** the opposite couple **then on** in the original direction to meet the next oncoming couple. **8 bars.**

The dance is repeated as often as required until the caller announces 'Waltz the Hall', whereby everybody Circular Waltzes around the line of dance.

*Version 3* Can be arranged in a quadrille formation of 4 couples, or 5 or more couples in circles.

The description given is for **five couples**, arranged in the style of the older figure 5 of the Alberts (but with 5 couples) which in turn is taken from the final figure of the First Set (Circassian figure) converted into waltz time.

The Dance (Formation Circular as in a Quadrille)



All couples **circle up** (join hands) & **Spanish waltz** by balancing forward and back, then '**ladies chain**' by the men passing them from their left by left hand, to right in a 2 handed hold. The ladies actually use four steps to pass in front of the men finishing on their right with a quick bob curtsy. **4 bars**

Repeat 3 more times, the ladies finishing with a new partner. (totalling **16 bars**)

**Waltz** this corner lady around **the set** to the man's place. **16 bars**

Repeat until back to original partners and then waltz the hall.

## Guaracha or Carthaginian Fandango

from the Analysis of the London Ball-Room (anonymous) 1825

# A Spanish Waltz

from James Goulding County Cork Ireland 1817

Musical score for 'A Spanish Waltz' in 3/8 time, G major. The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. Above the notes are the following chords: G, C, G, D7, G, C, G, D7, G. The second staff starts at measure 9 and contains the following chords: D7, G, D7, G, C, G, D7, G. The third staff starts at measure 17 and contains the following chords: D7, G, A7, D7, G, D7, G, A7, D7, G. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

# Spanish Waltz 1

from James Goulding County Cork Ireland 1817

Musical score for 'Spanish Waltz 1' in 3/8 time, C major. The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of no sharps or flats, and a 3/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. Above the notes are the following chords: C, G7, C, G7, C. The second staff starts at measure 9 and contains the following chords: C, G7, C, G7, C, F, G7, C, C. The third staff starts at measure 17 and contains the following chords: G7, C, G7, C, G7, C, G7, C. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

### Spanish Waltz



Musical score for "Spanish Waltz" in 3/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff (measures 1-8) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with chords C, G7, Am, G7, C, G7, and C. The second staff (measures 9-16) continues with chords C, Am, G7, and C. The third staff (measures 17-24) includes chords G7, C, F, C, G7, and C. The fourth staff (measures 25-32) features chords C, G7, F, C, F, C, G7, F, C, G7, and C. The fifth staff (measures 33-40) contains a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and chords C, G7, C, G7, C, G7, C, G7, C, G7, and C.

### La Gitana (The New Cachoucha (Cachucha))



Musical score for "La Gitana (The New Cachoucha (Cachucha))" in 3/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff (measures 1-4) has chords D7 and G. The second staff (measures 5-8) has chords D7, G, and G, with first and second endings. The third staff (measures 9-12) has chords D, A7, and G. The fourth staff (measures 13-16) has chords A7, D7, and D, with first and second endings.