

## Emma's Commencement

(England)

Emma's Commencement is done in longways sets with two couples working together (duple formation). It was devised by Alan Simpson-Vlach, and is published in CDSS News, no. 194 (Feb. 2007). Bruce Hamilton taught this dance at the 2015 Mendocino Folklore Camp. He kindly provided much help in preparing this description. The music is in waltz rhythm.

**Music:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter Murray's Passage by Debbie Jackson; found on Childgrove Early Instincts (2004); see also [www.cdss.org/store](http://www.cdss.org/store). "A" and "B" (below) refer to various 8 measure parts of the tune.

**Formation:** Longways set, duple formation, and with no. 1 couples crossed over (improper). When couples end up at the top or bottom of the set, they wait out one time through the dance. While waiting, they prepare to re-enter the dance in the opposite role by crossing over the set.

**Steps:** Waltz steps used throughout. Movements are smoothly flowing with a slight emphasis on ct 1 of each 3-ct measure.

**Open Ladies Chain:** This is a ladies chain without a courtesy turn. In this dance, each cpl instead turns CCW with joined arms extended, but not straight, or rigid.

**Styling:** English country dances are inherently flexible in some styling details. This allows for some dancer's choice in self-expression, response to music, available space, physical limitations, etc.

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Measures	$\frac{3}{4}$ meter	Pattern
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### INTRODUCTION. 1 note

#### I HALF FIGURE OF 8, SET, CPL TURN

A1 1-4 Cpl 1 dances a half figure of 8 down through Cpl 2 to end at the line of dance on the opp side of the set from starting position.

5-8 Cpl 1 sets twd each other (RLR and LRL) moving a little fwd and slightly to the R and then the same to the L (meas 5-6); taking two-hand hold, cpl 1 circles to the L (CW) returning to position at start of meas 5 (meas 7-8). Some flexibility is acceptable as to how much fwd movement is done in the setting steps and in whether some R and L movement is included.

A2 9-16 Cpl 2 repeat meas 1-8 dancing a half figure of 8 up through cpl 1. At end of meas 16, all take hands to form a circle of 4 dancers.

#### II PETRONELLA AND OPEN LADIES CHAIN

B1 1-4 All balance fwd (waltz step or step touch), and then the same back to place (meas 1-2); turn individually CW while moving to the position of the person to the R (meas 3-4).

5-8 Rejoin hand hold, and repeat meas 1-4.

B2 9-12 **Open Ladies Chain** is danced with W crossing on the diagonal, taking R hands as they pass each other, and then taking L hands with opp M; M begin by moving behind W to their R to reach out with L hand to join with ptr's L hand; they then turn gracefully CCW both moving forward and ending with M facing out and W facing in; joined arms are extended, but not straight or rigid.

13-16 Without stopping fwd movement, repeat meas 9-12 with opp sex neighbor. At the end, turn to face ptr.

Repeat dance from progressed positions.