NORMAN FOLK DANCE

Translated by

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The purpose of this project is to provide music and explanations for folk dances so that students, specifically French students, could learn some Norman dances and songs and the cultural importance of dance in Normandy in the past. Unfortunately, I was unable to see the dances preformed, thus, the dance instructions are entirely from the translations of Monsieur Colin's book.

The information contained in this paper is translated from a book entitled Twenty-five Norman Dances, published in 1958 by René-Paul Colas, in Bayeux, Calvados, Normandy. The dances were collected by Jeanne Messager and presented by Édouard Colin. The introductory material about Norman dance was written by Édouard Colin. Music for the first five dances was taken from the record Dances de Normandie, a Unidisc record. Music for the last five dances was recorded with the help of two Ball State University music students, Lisa Funston, flutist, and Michele Smith, vocalist. Dr. Georgina Hicks and Dr. Cecile Gilbert advised on this project. Dr. Hicks was consulted concerning translations and Dr. Gilbert was consulted concerning the clarity of the dance explanations.
In Normandy, documents which can furnish, with precision, the information necessary for the revival of folk songs and dances, are rare. People always sang and danced a great deal in the past, but they did not write down what they sang or how to do their dances. The songs and dances which were passed down orally were lost with the last singers, and it is the exception when one can find information about the songs and dances from old people in the province.

Norman dances are for the most part sung-rounds--round or circle dances done to songs, not just instrumental accompaniment. According to J. Bujeaud, who has researched songs popular in the west of France, the round dance was done because of its simplicity and because it works well with the songs. (Melodies and Songs Popular in the Western Provinces, Vol. I, p. 30)

If one relies on the indications furnished by J. Mangeant, a printer in Caen who, in 1615, published three songbooks with words and music, the Branle is the type of dance which characterizes the type of passtime popular in Normandy in the 17th century.

Campan, in his Dictionary of dance, edited in 1787, speaks of the branle in these terms: "The branle is a dance in which several people dance in a circle, while holding hands and following the tunes which one plays." Jean-Jacques Rousseau defined it as follows: "type of dance very gay, which is danced in a circle to a short tune...with a refrain at the end of each couplet."

The Branle was danced for a long time in Normandy and did not disappear until the end of the 19th century. In Low Normandy the Branle of the Village was done during the last century. The inhabitants of the country danced it gaily to the sound of a hurdy gurdy or an old Norman bag-pipe. The fiddler was often a shepherd or a blind person who went out into the country like a troubador, playing his
hoarse instrument to earn his living or lodging. He was always welcome at weddings and celebrations of the village.

There were at one time many types of branles. They were named either according to the way they were danced (simple branle, double branle, or light double branle) or after the region from which they came (branle de Bretagne).

The other dances found in Normandy, such as the "Courante," the "Pastorelle," the "Jealousy," or the "Promenade," all come from the branle.

The songs which accompany the dances are the most well known Norman varieties which have been published. Of course, the themes for these songs are the same as for those found in other provinces, so it is difficult to determine the origins of a song for dancing. As Champfleury said in the introduction to Melodies and Songs Popular in the Western Provinces,

"Nothing is more difficult than to verify the region in which a popular song was born; I often found the same song with a few variations in ten different provinces; sailors, peddlers, soldiers, journeymen, all took the songs with them in their memories, trying to ease homesickness by repeating the couplets of their villages. Those who found the songs graceful and pleasant kept them, accommodated them to the dialect of the region, sometimes added a couplet, changed another or modified a line, and that is why it is difficult to precisely establish the region which gave birth to such common poetry."

The Norman today does not like to sing much. Normandy has become a serious region where popular celebrations are less elaborate and less frequent. The celebration, the night ball, is now given its rhythm by the chords of an orchestra from a neighboring town, which makes the good villagers dance "exotic" dances.

As Eduard Colin said, "We are far from the rejoicing of our fathers, who did
not need an orchestra and who danced to the rhythm of their songs. They jumped, they turned, sustained by the fervor of a praise worthy violinist, who made the ribbons on his viola shake to the cadence of his bow." (p. 9)

In the past, dance was much more popular. "Everything is a pretext for dance... it is in dancing that the country folk manifest their joy." (Leroy: Norman Country Folk of the XVIIIth Century) According to Leroy, dance was the most popular pleasurable activity. Even the clumsiest people found agility and self-assurance. People also considered it healthy to spend hours dancing in the open air, and one could see the good effects of such an activity, as it gave participants rosy cheeks, a smile on the lips, and a gay sparkle in the eyes.

People did not always wait for a special occasion to dance. "After vespers on a nice day, the shepherd of the hamlet alone gave a ball and a comedy act at the same time. The boys of the village, the young and lively peasant women, who ever wanted to gathered together, and they vied with one another in dancing the lively round dances for a long time." (Abbé Gautier: Essay on Customs of the Grove)

No gathering ended without dancing. "Each season of the year, each important religious celebration gave reason for rejoicing. One celebrated New Year's Day, Epiphany, Easter, May day, St. John's day, the harvest, and above all else, Christmas." (Leroy)

La fête des rois--Epiphany--is the true Norman celebration. It was always celebrated with genuine pomp. In certain parishes, bonfires were lit, "buglées," and people danced rounds by the light of the fire. (Bujeaud, p. 185)

For the fête de Moi--May day--when faggots gathered from door to door by the children of the village were at last assembled around the flowered May-pole, the youngest or the oldest person in the community, or the parish priest, threw a flaming torch on the wood and a whirling round dance began around it.

For the day of St. John, girls and boys made a circlet from leaves and flowers
and hung this primitive crown over the street. When evening arrived, dances were organized under "St. John's crown." These dances were most often true round dances, which is to say dances accompanied by singing but not by instruments; the rhythm was particularly obvious and guided the young men and women in forming the circle, for swinging their arms in front or in behind, for advancing toward the center, backing out toward the circumference, or turning with more or less rapidity. Generally, one singer started the verses and all the others sang the choruses of these picturesque songs. When they had danced for a good while, they threw branches, twigs, or bunches of furze under the crown and made a bonfire called a caudiot, around which they continued dancing until time to go to bed. (Lecoqur: Sketch of the Norman Woodlands)

The celebration at harvest time brought dance back to the village. Once the last ear of corn was placed on the corn stack, "the violinist got up on a pile of sheaves, took his fiddle, rosinèd his bow, and began a contre dance, nodding his head to indicate the beat and crying out the figures. Then the sign was given for the embraces. There was, between dancers, an energetic rivalry as to who jumped the highest and who marked the best most vigorously with his heels." (Dieudonné Dergny: Manners and Customs)

Then came St. Catherine's day, November 25. After mass and the meal, the queen of St. Catherine's day started the violinist and invited the young to dance. It was she who started the dancing and the young man she chose as a partner had to accept this honor, and the invitation to have supper. (Leroy: Marriages in Normandy One Hundred Years Ago)

But it was marriages which best created an atmosphere of rejoicing and a pretext for dancing.

People danced before the wedding day when the bride's trousseau was taken to the bridegroom's house. Everyone was happy; at each stop, before getting back into the wagon, they danced a round on the path, at the sound of the violin. Once
the trousseau was placed in the closet, they danced again. *(Ibid.)*

The day of the marriage, when leaving the church, they danced a round or a contre dance before returning to the bride's home to eat. The bride had to accept the man who most promptly offered his hand as her partner. This contre dance was a prelude to the rejoicing of the evening which followed the lavish meals that kept guests at the table for hours.

After the noon meal and a short pause, around five o'clock, people sat down at the table and ate and drank again. Then came the dance time for which the fiddler signalled by playing some flourishes on his fiddle.

The bride danced the first contre dance with the cook and the second one with her husband: she then had to dance with the young men who contended for the honor. Young and old stopped only to gulp down rapidly a draught of cider or perry.

Often, particularly in the Manche area, an old lady gave the signal for the dance to begin. The young vied with each other if not in grace, at least in vigor and lightness; their grand parents and the older people made up the gallery of spectators. Those people did not always remain spectators, because "reasonable people of serious bearing, prudent conversation, and mature age, quickly losing their usual seriousness, began jumping high. One went forward, another went back, walking in cadence; one took the hand of another and turned her around him two or three times, at the risk of making her dizzy--doing a dance called the waltz.

Soon the violinist, making his bow vibrate, cried "forward two others," and in this fashion, dancers were replaced. This activity lasted until midnight. People complained about their legs for several days after the wedding." *(Picturesque France, article by Abel Hugo; Henners and Custome of Low Normandy, Leonor Blouin)*
Explanation of Steps

**Step hop:** This step may be done with either foot, in any direction. The two actions are done in even time. Step on one foot, then hop on the same foot, lifting the other foot into the air. The step hop which follows starts on the other foot. Counts would be 1 2, step--hop or 1 and 2 and, step--hop--step--hop.

**Pas croisés or cross hops:** Similar to the step hop. The free foot crosses in front of the foot on which one hops, toe pointed, almost touching the ground.

**Pas de branle:** Similar to the step hop. The free leg crosses behind the supporting leg, at the height of the calf.

**Pas Balancés:** Leaning the body forward, step and hop on the right foot, extending and raising the left leg behind the body. Next step and hop on the left foot, raising and extending the right leg forward.

**Pas corus doubles:** This step is similar to the grape vine step done in many other dances, eg. the "Kayim" only it is done in a stiffer fashion. Moving to the right, step right on the right foot. Cross the left foot over the right and step on the left foot. Step right on the right foot. Cross the left foot behind the right and step on the left foot. Moving to the left, step left on the left foot. Cross the right foot in front of the left and step on the right foot. Step left on the left foot. Cross the right foot behind the left and step on the right foot.

The count for this step would be 1 and 2 and, step--cross front--step--cross behind.

**Two step:** Beginning on the right foot, step right, close the left foot to the right, step right and pause. The next step begins on the left foot, step left, close right, step left, pause. The count for this step would be 1 and 2 and, step--close--step--pause.
La Courante

This dance was still done around 1900 in the department of Orne, where Alençon is located and in the department of Manche where Cherbourg is located. Couples form a single circle, facing the center, ladies to the right of the men. The music is in 6/8 and 9/8 time and there are 4 measures of introduction.

6 counts Dancers join hands, take six walking steps toward the center of the circle, progressively raising the arms.

6 counts Dancers take 6 walking steps back out from the center of the circle, lowering the arms.

6 counts Each man takes the lady to his right and swings her around to face him. Partners grasp each other's forearms. Moving in a counterclockwise direction, dancers make one complete turn, moving around partners in 6 step hops which are like fast skips.

2 counts The man holds the lady's right arm with his left hand and does 2 step hops in place. The lady continues in a counterclockwise direction and makes a half turn in 2 step hops. The lady who was to the right of each man is now to his left.

6 counts All join hands in the circle, and dancers take 6 walking steps in a counterclockwise direction, starting on the right foot.

Begin the dance again immediately as the second couplet begins, with no pause at the end of the first couplet.
La Courante

Tous les oiseaux du genre humain (twice)  
Ont fait leur nid dans not' courtin

Refrain

Je ne veux plus bouère  
Ah! rendez-moi mes dix écus  
Je ne bouerai plus.

Ont fait leurs nids dans not' courtin (twice)  
Faut vaie s'ils chantent soir et matin.

Faut vaie s'ils chantent soir et matin (twice)  
La caille a dit dans son latin.

La caille a dit dans son latin (twice)  girls and boys  
Que les hommes ne valent rien.  girls only

Que les hommes ne valent rien (twice)  girls only  
Et les femmes encore bien moins. boys only

Et les femmes encore bien moins (twice) boys only  
Pour les garçons il n'en dit rien. girls only

Pour les garçons il n'en dit rien (twice) girls only  
Mais pour les filles il les soutient. boys only

The first three verses are sung by girls and boys together.
Mon Père Avait un Petit Bois

There are many versions of the love song used for this dance, particularly in Upper Normandy. This version comes from the region of Honfleur. The couplets are sung by the girls and the refrains, lines beginning "D'ou venez-vous bell," are sung by the boys. There can be any number of dancers and they need not be in couples. Dancers begin by forming a circle, facing the center of the circle, holding hands. The music is in 2/4 time and there are 2 measures of introduction.

4 counts Beginning on the right foot, take four walking steps in a counterclockwise direction.

4 counts Beginning on the right foot, do 4 pas balancés.

4 counts Beginning on the right foot, take four walking steps in a counterclockwise direction.

4 counts Beginning on the right foot, do 4 pas balancés.

8 counts Beginning on the right foot, do 8 pas de branle.

Begin again at the beginning. After each phrase of the dance, the right foot is held in the air, ready to begin the next phrase.
Mon Père Avait Un Petit Bois

Mon pèr' avait un petit bois
D'où venez-vous belle promener avec moi
Il y croissait bien cinq cents noix
D'où venez-vous belle, d'où venez-vous donc
D'où venez-vous promener vous promener la belle
D'où venez-vous belle promener avec moi.

Il y croissait bien cinq cents noix
D'où venez-vous belle'...
Sur les cinq cents j'en mangis trois
D'où venez-vous belle'...

Sur les cinq cents j'en mangis trois
D'où venez-vous belle'...
J'en fus malade au lit des mois
D'où venez-vous belle'...

J'en fus malade au lit des mois
D'où venez-vous belle'...
Tous mes parents m'y venaient voir
D'où venez-vous belle'...

Tous mes parents m'y venaient voir
D'où venez-vous belle'...
Mais mon ami n'y venait pas
D'où venez-vous belle'...

Mais mon ami n'y venait pas
D'où venez-vous belle'...
On m'a mandé on'il y viendrait
D'où venez-vous belle'...

The verses are sung by the girls and the refrains (D'où venez-vous belle) by the boys.
Branle de Village

Dancers face each other in couples; couples are side by side so that two long lines are formed. Men and ladies should be alternated in the long lines so that when couples begin the first movement, half of the group will move in one direction and the other half will move in the opposite direction, then the two groups will come back together. The music is in 2/4 time and has 4 measures of introduction. Dancers salute each other at the end of the introduction.

8 counts The man advances 8 step hops, swining his extended arms in cadence. The lady, at the same time, does 8 pas croisés moving backwards and holding her skirt with her hands.

8 counts On the first 2 counts, dancers jump 3 times and, with arms extended overhead, clap hands 3 times. Pause ½ count. Letting their arms fall back to their sides, they do 6 pas de branle, turning around each other by first passing right shoulders, then back to back, then left shoulders. After the 6th pas de branle, they should be facing each other ready to begin this action again. When they pass beside each other, the man takes off his hat and the lady salutes by raising her right arm.

8 counts Repeat this action 1 more time.

Begin again at the beginning. At the end, the last 2 measures will be much slower and the dance finishes with a salute.

People from different villages might execute variations of the pas de branle.
Ce Sont les Gars de Senneville

Couples form a single circle, facing the center, with the ladies to the right of the men. Music is in 2/4 time and there are 4 measures of introduction.

4 counts Men do 4 step hops moving toward the center, beginning with the right foot.

4 counts Men do 4 step hops moving back to their original positions.

During these eight counts, ladies sing and keep time, clapping hands.

4 counts Ladies do 4 pas croisés, moving toward the center of the circle, beginning on the right foot.

4 counts Ladies do 4 pas croisés, moving back to their original positions.

During these eight counts, men sing and keep time, clapping hands.

4 counts All join hands and do 4 pas de branle, beginning with the right foot and moving around the circle in a counterclockwise direction.

4 counts Drop hands. Each man hooks elbows with the lady to his right, right elbows to right elbows. Beginning on the right foot, both go around partner once in a clockwise direction, doing 4 step hops.

4 counts All join hands again and do 4 pas de branle.

4 counts Drop hands. Each man hooks elbows with the lady to his left, left elbows to left elbows. Beginning on the right foot, both go around partner once in a counterclockwise direction, doing 4 step hops.

Return to the circle formation and prepare to start again.
Ce Sont Les Gars de Senneville

Ah! Ce sont de bons enfants
Ils ont fait faire un navire
J'aime la belle endormie
Pour aller au hareng blanc
J'aime la belle en dormant.

Le beau Navire était d'ivoire
Et le mat était d'argent
Y avait dans ce navire
J'aime la belle Palmyre
Uni! Jean! Fille qui dormait tant
J'aime la belle en dormant.

Le capitaine du navire
Mît la main sur ses bas blancs
Tout beau, tout beau capitaine
J'aime la belle Marjolaine
Vous n'irez pas plus avant
J'aime la belle en dormant.

Vous avez eu mon cœur en gage
Mais j'ai pas eu votre argent
L'galant fouill'a en sa boursette
J'aime la belle Marjolaine
Lui tir! contéous comptent
J'aime la belle en dormant.

Tenez, tenez, ma mignonnette
V'la pour la mère et l'enfant
V'la pour l'enverrez aux écoles
J'aime la belle Nicole
Aux écoles de Rouen
J'aime la belle en dormant.

Vot're enfant ira aux écoles
Aux écoles de Rouen
Il priera Dieu pour son père
J'aime la belle Sèvère
Et pour sa mer! pareillement
J'aime la belle en dormant.
Branle Bacchanale

The music for this branle was printed in a book by Jacques Mangeant, edited in Caen in 1615. Any number of dancers can do this dance and there are no partners. Dancers form a single circle, all facing a counterclockwise direction. Men put their hands on their hips, women hold their skirts with both hands. The music is in 2/4 time with 2 measures of introduction.

8 counts Starting on the right foot, dancers do 8 pas croisés, advancing around the circle in a counterclockwise direction.

4 counts Dancers do 3 pas croisés and take one walking step, each making a 3/4 turn around himself in a clockwise direction. Dancers will be facing the center of the circle.

2 counts Dancers join hands and do one pas de branle to the right and one pas de branle to the left.

8 counts Dancers do 4 pas courus doubles in a counterclockwise direction, beginning on the right foot. (Do only 7 1/2 counts of the grapevine)

2 counts Dancers do one pas de branle to the left and one pas de branle to the right.

8 counts Dancers do 4 pas courus doubles in a clockwise direction, beginning on the left foot. (Do only 7 1/2 counts of the grapevine)

Dancers drop hands, turn to face the counterclockwise direction and begin the dance again.
Durant Les Guerres d'Outremer

The music for this dance was also printed in the songbook of Jacques Kangerant, edited in Caen in 1615. The words used are those written by Oliver Basselin. The dance is done by individual couples. The music is in 2/4 time and there are 2 measures of introduction.

1. 4 counts: The man gives his right arm to the lady and puts his left hand on his hip. The lady gives her right arm to the man and they hold onto each others' forearms. She holds her skirt with her left hand. Beginning on the right foot for the man and the left foot for the lady, the couple makes one turn in a clockwise direction doing 4 step hops.

2. 4 counts: Dancers release arms and face each other. They do 4 pas de branle. The man starts on the right foot and puts his hands on his hips; the lady starts on the left foot and holds her skirt with both hands.

3. 4 counts: Same as the first four counts only dancers hold left arms and turn in a counterclockwise direction.

4. 4 counts: Same as the second four counts.

5. 16 counts: Continuing to face each other, dancers do 2 step hops moving back away from each other, 5 short little walking steps toward each other and 2 step hops toward each other. This entire movement is done 2 times. The dance begins again at the beginning and continues as long as the music continues, at the will of the singers or musicians. The music accelerates during the last repetition and slows down during the last two measures to end with a salute.
Un compagnon s'est débauché
J'ai icy oui une voix chanter
Chez son voisin s'en est allé
J'ai j'ai j'ai icy oui une voix souveraine
J'ai icy oui une voix chanter
J'ai j'ai j'ai icy oui une voix souveraine
J'ai icy oui une voix chanter.

Durant Les Guerres D'Outremer

Durant les guerres d'outre mer une jeun' épousée
Par les soldats du Dieu d'aimer se trouve enlevée
La bell' est retrouvée mes amis
La bell' est retrouvée
La bell' est retrouvée mes amis
La bell' est retrouvée.
La Sautière

For the celebration of St. Jean, which is the 26th of June, the shortest day of the year, a fire was lighted and everyone danced around the fire. To get to the fire, everyone followed behind a leader who carried a torch to light the fire; they danced "La Sautière" on the way to the fire. This dance was danced exclusively by young people.

Dancers form couples and line up in one long double line; the ladies are on the right of the men. Each man places the left hand on his hip and with his right hand, takes the lady's left hand. The lady holds her skirt with her right hand.

4 counts Beginning on the right foot, dancers take four walking steps, swinging the arms.

4 counts Dancers do four jump hops in place.

4 counts Dancers take four walking steps, swinging the arms.

2 counts Jump once on both feet, making a 1/4 turn to the right for the men and to the left for the ladies. Partners are facing each other. Pause.

8 counts Men hop to the right on the right foot, without rebounding, then hop to the left on the left foot, again without rebounding. At the same time, ladies hop left on the left foot then right on the right foot without rebounding. This is repeated three more times so that eight hops are done in all. On the eighth time, dancers bring their feet back together and jump making a 1/4 turn so they are again in position to start the dance again.

Begin the dance again.
Mon père m'a donné un mari
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
La première nuit qu'avec lui j'couchis

Refrain
Ah! Ah! Onze et douze et treize quatorze
et deux font soi-soi-soi.

La première nuit qu'avec lui j'couchis
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
Romue la paille et s'endormit.

Romue la paille et s'endormit
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
J'prins une épingle et je l'épquis.

J'prins une épingle et je l'épquis
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
Mît sa culotte et s'ensauvit.

Mît sa culotte et s'ensauvit
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
J'prins mon jupon j'cours après lui.

J'prins mon jupon j'cours après lui
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
A la barrière je l'attrapais.

A la barrière je l'attrapais
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
J'y flanquis l'nez dans les orties.

J'y flanquis l'nez dans les orties
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
Lorsqu'un petit monsieur passit.

Lorsqu'un petit monsieur passit
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
Que fais-tu belle à ton mari.

Que fais-tu belle à ton mari
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
Je veux qu'il retourne dans mon lit.

Je veux qu'il retourne dans mon lit
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
S'il ne veut pas j'irai pour lui.

S'il ne veut pas j'irai pour lui
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
Mon bon monsieur j'-vous en remercie.

Mon bon monsieur j'vous en remercie
Quatorze et pis quatorze font dix-huit
Mais j'préfère encore mon mari.
This dance is a child's circle dance done in the region of Alençon at the end of the 19th century. Couples form a single circle, ladies facing out and men facing the center of the circle, ladies to the right of the men. The music is in 2/4 time with a 2 measure introduction.

**4 counts** All join hands, take 4 walking steps in a counterclockwise direction, beginning on the right foot.

**4 counts** Each couple, holding onto right hands, dropping left hands, takes four walking steps in a clockwise direction, partners turning around each other so that ladies face in and men face out.

**4 counts** All dancers join hands and take four walking steps in a counterclockwise direction.

**4 counts** Again dropping left hands, each couple makes a half turn in a clockwise direction in 4 walking steps.

**4 counts** Holding both hands, arms crossed, facing each other, partners take 4 walking steps in a clockwise direction, so that men are in the center of the circle and the ladies are outside, facing the men.

**4 counts** Still holding hands, dancers do 4 *pas de branle* in place, men starting with the right foot and ladies starting with the left.

**4 counts** Each couple takes 4 walking steps, turning in a clockwise direction so that ladies are in the interior and the men are in the exterior of the circle, still facing each other and holding hands, arms crossed.

**4 counts** Finish with 4 *pas de branle* in place, men starting with the right foot, ladies starting with the left.

Begin again, reforming the circle during the first beat of the first measure.
Quand Mon Père M'A Mariée

Quand mon père n'a mariée,
Par un beau jour
Quand mon père n'a mariée
Par un beau jour
Un' brebis il m'a donnée

Refrain

Belle demoiselle demoura d'jouga
A rastragou aradjouga
Ristigoura d'jougalari gadou.

Un' brebis toute dépiaudée
Par un beau jour
Un' brebis toute dépiaudée
Par un beau jour
Au pâtis je l'ai menée.

Au pâtis je l'ai menée
Par un beau jour
Au pâtis je l'ai menée
Par un beau jour
Mais le loup me l'a mangée.

Mais le loup me l'a mangée
Par un beau jour
Mais le loup me l'a mangée
Par un beau jour
Et la queue il m'a laissée.

Et la queue il m'a laissée
Par un beau jour
Et la queue il m'a laissée
Par un beau jour
Dans un pot je l'ai salée.

Dans un pot je l'ai salée
Par un beau jour
Dans un pot je l'ai salée
Par un beau jour
J'en eus pour tout' mon annéc.
La Lurette

The beginning of this dance is found in many dances in the French provinces and in certain English dances, and seems less specific to Normandy than the second and third parts of the dance. Couples form a single circle, ladies to the right of the men. Partners face each other and hold right hands.

16 counts Dancers give their right hands to the dancers facing them. They pull by that person, passing right shoulders to right shoulders, and extend their left hands to the dancers facing them. They continue around the circle for 16 counts, extending free hands and pulling past the dancers facing them. The step used for this movement is the two step; one two step is done each time dancers pull by each other which is one every two counts. Stop on the eighth two step.

8 counts Partners face each other and take hold of both hands, keeping right arms straight and left arms bent, right shoulders touching. The hands are held at the height of the shoulders. Take 4 walking steps in a clockwise direction. Extend the left arms and bend the right arms, left shoulders touching. Take 4 walking steps in a counterclockwise direction. At the end of the steps, tap the right foot 2 times.

8 counts Holding onto forearms, advance toward the center of the circle, with head and shoulders turned toward the center, doing 1 two step. Return to the outside of the circle doing 1 two step. Repeat this movement 1 time then tap the right foot 2 times.

Begin again at the beginning, taking hold of hands at the end of each verse.
La Lurette

La haut desus ces côtes
J'entends rir' et chanter
Et par dessus les autres
J'entends ma mie pleurer
Ah! qu'avez-vous la belle
Qu'avez-vous à pleurer

Refrain

Et marchons durant la lurett'
Et marchons durant la lure.

Ah! Répondit la fille
Y a bien de quoi pleurer
Mon anneau d'or qui brille
Dans la mer est tombé
Que donn'ez-vous la belle
Si je vais le chercher?

J'vous donn' mon cœur en gage
Si vous le rapportez
A la première nage
L'anneau fallut chercher
A la deuxième nage
L'anneau il vit briller

A la troisième nage
L'anneau a rapporté
N'pleurez pas davantage
L'anneau j'ai retrouvé
Et dessus votre joue
Je vais prendre un baiser.
L'Amant Curieux

This was one of the most well known dances in Normandy during the Second Empire. The music is in 2/4 time and there are 4 measures of introduction.

Couples form a single circle, holding hands, facing the center, ladies to the right of the men.

16 counts Dancers do 16 step hops, which are like skips, starting on the right foot and turning the circle in a counterclockwise direction.

16 counts Stop the circle. Do 4 walking steps toward the center of the circle, raising the arms, and 4 walking steps back out, lowering the arms. Repeat this movement. Drop hands.

4 counts Each lady holds her skirt with her hands and salutes the man to her right, then turns and salutes the man to her left. Men do the same only in the opposite directions.

4 counts Dancers finish the dance by turning themselves in circles in a clockwise direction with 4 walking steps.

Begin the dance again at the beginning.
L'Amant Curieux

Ta grand'mère m'a dit que t'étais bien faite
Voudrais-tu m'montrer tes beaux seins Nanette
Ah! mon ami Thomas ta demande est indiscrète!
Ah! mon ami Thomas non tu ne les verras pas.
Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Non tu n'les verras pas.

Montre-moi du moins ma belle brunette
Montre-moi du moins tes beaux bras Nanette
Ah! mon ami Thomas, s'il n'y a qu'ça qui t'incultes
Ah! mon ami Thomas, regard'les tant qu'tu voudras
Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Oui tant que tu voudras.

Ta grand'mère m'a dit que t'étais bien faite
Ma mie montrer-moi tes belles gambettes
Ah! mon ami Thomas, mon Dieu que tu es l'air bête
Ah! mon ami Thomas, cela ne se montre pas
Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Cela n'se montre pas.

Montre-moi du moins ma belle brunette
Montre-moi du moins tes beaux yeux Nanette
Ah! mon ami Thomas, mire mire mes mirettes
Ah! mon ami Thomas, mire-les tant qu'tu voudras
Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Mire-les tant qu'tu voudras.

Mais c'n'est pas tout ça ma belle brunette
Tu n'me contentes pas charmante Nanette
En bien épouse moi je ne serai plus coquette
Et tout c'que tu n'vois pas sera désormais pour toi
Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! S'ra désormais pour toi.

Ben j'y consentons ma belle brunette
Nous nous marierons pour la Sainte Amnète
Ah! que j'es'rons donc heureux dans not' petite chambrette
Et que j't'aimurons oui da ca-ar t'es un bon p'tit gos
Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Oui t'es un bon p'tit gos.

Sung by the men.

Sung by the ladies.

The first part of each verse is sung by the men. The ladies reply starting with "Ah! mon ami, etc." except for Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!" where the men express their satisfaction, their surprise or their disappointment. The last two verses are sung entirely by the men or ladies, as indicated.