

# THE JESSIE POLKA

Traditional Couple Dance

G G C D G

5 G C C G D G G

10 G G D D G

14 G C D G

The Jessie Polka is an "old-time" couple dance once popular at Ontario square dances. It became part of the repertoire in the 1940s and has an interesting history.

"Jesusita en Chihuahua" began its life as a Mexican polka, written by Quirino Mendoza y Cortés. He was a military bandleader in Mexico in the early 20th century at the time of the Mexican Revolution. The tune was an instant hit and Pancho Villa supposedly had his regimental bands play it during battles.

In the southwestern United States "Jesusita en Chihuahua" came to be known as the "J.C. Polka" for short and this eventually evolved into The Jessie Polka. The western swing band *Cliff Bruner and the Texas Wanderers* recorded the piece in the late 1930s under the "Jessie Polka". These records are likely how the piece came to be known in Ontario.

I copied this from a lead sheet that may have come from (caller) Jack Hayes. It was written there in E♭. It may have been transposed for a band with reeds or horns, or just pitched to some caller's vocal range. I have also heard it played in A. Since it's a singing call the key is somewhat up to the caller.