

Brando Alta Regina a Balletto for 4 couples by Cesare Negri (1602) – RDB Version

This started from the interpretation taught by Anne Daye at the 2018 HDS summer school, but has had significant modifications by Robert Huggett and Anne Deller after debate within the group on the best way to present some of the less clear cut sections. Note that this interpretation does NOT work with the HDS recordings of the music. The only recording I have found that matches it is the 1987 recording by Bernard Thomas for the Renaissance Dance Book by Jane Gingell.

Start in a column of couples, not holding hands and facing front. Start slightly offset to the right as the dance drifts left by 1 double.

A1	1 - 4	The leaders of each column cast to form a crescent [as in the Entry Dance of the 6 Milanese Gentlemen] and the others follow with 2 Seguiti Spezzati and 1 Seguio Ordinario starting left.
	5 - 8	2 Seguiti Spezzati and 1 Seguio Ordinario starting right completing the cast.
A2	1 - 4	All do a riverenza grave to the front (it could be argued that just the lead couple Riv, but that seems unlikely).
	5 - 8	The lead couple take customary hands and go forwards to reform the original column with the others following. 2 Seguio Ordinarii starting on the left.
A3	1 - 4	Continue forwards with 2 Seguiti Spezzati and 1 Seguio Ordinario starting on the left.
	5 - 8	Then dropping hands with the usual courtesies turn left to face your partner with 2 Seguiti Spezzati and 1 Seguio Ordinario (ladies turn 1 and a quarter times) starting on the right.
B1	1 - 4	Giving right arms turn your partner once , returning to place with 1 Seguio Ordinario and 2 Seguiti Spezzati starting on the left. "Pigliano'l braccio destro della sua Ninfa, poi fanno un .S. col sinistro passando l'uno al luogo dell'altro, e due .SP. tornando al suo luogo, & uno .S. attorno alla sinistra"
	5 - 6	Turn single left with 1 Seguio Ordinario on the right [AND COME OUT FACING THE FRONT]
B2	1 - 2	Left Seguio Ordinario to your own left side (per fianco) . [We have chosen to turn and face to the left and then to make the Ordinario forwards.]
	3 - 6	Using the following steps move into a new formation . The new formation is a rectangle with a couple at each corner. The lead couple are front left, the second couple front right, the third couple back left and the 4 th couple back right. In this new formation each person faces their partner. The steps are: 2 Seguiti Spezzati (right & left) turning to the right . And a right Seguio Ordinario turning to the left . Basically the movement is an S shape. Couple 1 moves slightly backwards. Couple 2 to goes to the right and forwards. Couple 3 stays more or less on the spot and couple 4 goes forward and to the right. The set doesn't want to be too deep.*1
B3	1 - 6	Turn single left with a left Seguio Ordinario , 2 Seguiti Spezzati and one Seguio Ordinario . The original says "Poi faranno insieme il .S. e li .SP. e il .S. attorno alla sinistra, & altrettanto attorno alla destra fermandosi all'incontro."
B4	1 - 6	Turn single right with a left Seguio Ordinario , 2 Seguiti Spezzati and one Seguio Ordinario .
C1	1 - 8	Odd numbered couples: Do a square hay , each couple takes right hands to start. 2 Seguiti Spezzati per change, 8 in all. Starting with the left foot. Even numbered couples: Honours – A small right Passo Grave forwards in the first bar and then a left Riverenza in the next 3, followed by 2 Continenze (left & right), 2 bars each. "IL Pastore, che guida piglia la man destra della sua ninfa passando fuori. poi la sinistra all'altro, passando nel mezzo, e si faranno otto .SP. in una treccia, tornà do tutti al suo luogo. gli altri quattro in quel tempo fanno un .P. col destro, e la .R. grave col sinistro, e due .Cc. doppo anch'essi quattro fanno la treccia, che s'e fatta, & gli altri quattro fanno il .P. e la .R. e le .Cc. come sopra."
C1	9 - 16	Odd numbered couples: the Honours as above. Even numbered couples: Do the square hay as above.
D1	1 - 4	Saltarello. All: Meet and take right arms with your partner and turn one and a half times to end in your partner's place with 3 Seguiti Ordinarii (1 to meet, then two each making a three quarter turn). Then turn single left with a right Seguio Ordinario [opening out a little]. What Negri actually says is "Tutti insieme fanno un .S. innanzi. poi pigliano'l braccio destro e fanno due .S. attorno due volte alla destra, andando l'uno al luogo dell'altro; si lasciano e fanno un .S. attorno alla sinistra." Which is 1 ordinario to meet and then with two more go around each other twice changing places and then dropping hands turn single with a 4 th ordinario. Hmm, so that could be two and a half times round or it could be one and a half times round or you could go round twice and not change places or you could use the 2 ordinarii just to change places. What we have chosen above is in my opinion as good a solution as any. It fits the music, it works and it looks good.
D1	5 - 8	All: Meet and take left arms with your partner and turn one and a half times to end in your own place with 3 Seguiti Ordinarii . Then turn single right with a right Seguio Ordinario [separating out a fair bit to give room for E.]
E1	1 - 2	Moving to meet your partner: 1 Seguio Ordinario and 2 Seguiti Spezzati
	3	3 Trabuchetti starting right.
	4	Ripresa Left
E1	5 - 6	Retreating back to place with: 4 Seguiti Spezzati diagonally backwards (starting right)
	7	3 Trabuchetti
	8	Ripresa Right.
F1	1 - 4	Gagiarda. Odd numbered couples*2: Give right arms and turn your partner returning to place with 2 Cinque Passi I Due Pastori, che guidano le sue file, che sono à mano sinistra pigliano'l braccio destro della sua ninfa. Poi fanno due volte i cinque. P. attorno ad essa mano col piè sinistro tornando al suo luogo. si lasciano
	5 - 8	Even numbered couples: Men Riverenza to their partner. Odd numbered couples: Give left arms and turn your partner returning to place with 2 Cinque Passi . This can be interpreted as a turn single left returning to place, but having tried both we prefer just reversing the direction. , e fanno altre due volte i detti .P. attorno alla sinistra tornando al suo luogo.

		Even numbered couples: Ladies Riverenza to their partner.
F2	1 - 4	Lady 1 and Lady 3 turn to the man behind them (Men 2 & 4) and give right arms to them and turn them returning to place with 2 Cinque Passi . Man 1 & 3: Riverenza to lady 2 & 4
	5 - 8	Lady 1 and Lady 3 with man 2 & 4 turn single left returning to place with 2 Cinque Passi . Lady 2 & 4: Riverenza to man 1 & 3
G1	1 - 4	Even numbered couples: Give right arms and turn your partner returning to place with 2 Cinque Passi Odd numbered couples: Men Riverenza to their partner.
	5 - 8	Even numbered couples: turn single left returning to place with 2 Cinque Passi Odd numbered couples: Ladies Riverenza to their partner.
G2	1 - 8	All do the galliard variation at the foot of this description. [Use this to prepare for the next two hays – turn so that there are two lines of 4 facing each other up and down the length of the room.
A4	1	The men do a hay in 8 Seguiti Spezzati (no hands) Man 1 and man 4 begin this passing right shoulders with a left Spezzato. [You may find it helpful if man 2 & 3 also move at this time getting into place ready for the second change of the hay.]
	2	Man 1 passes left shoulders with Man 2, while 4 changes with 3. The four men should now be broadly in a line down the centre of the set.
	3	3 and 2 pass right shoulders while 1 & 4 turn single right .
	4	3 & 1 pass L shoulders and so do 4 & 2 – still in a line.
	5	1 & 4 pass R shoulders while 2 & 3 turn single right .
	6	4 & 3 pass L shoulders as do 1 & 2.
	7	2 & 3 pass R shoulders while 1 & 4 turn single right starting to turn back into their original places
	8	All 4 men return to their places, 2 & 3 turning left, 1 & 4 turning right – AND MAKE SURE YOU ARE BACK ON TIME.
A5	1 - 8	The ladies do as the men did. [Finish this figure with the two lines still facing each other, as you began it.]
B5	1 - 6	All: turn single left with 1 Seguito Ordinario , 2 Seguiti Spezzati and 1 Seguito Ordinario . Starting with the left
B6	1 - 6	All: turn single right with 1 Seguito Ordinario , 2 Seguiti Spezzati and 1 Seguito Ordinario . Starting with the left.
C1 2:43	1 - 12	Odd numbered couples: Take right hands with the dancer facing you (your partner) in the time of a spezzato, I suggest a step forward and mezza riverenza to accompany the taking of hands and then repeat that with the left hand by which time you are almost in line. Then start a hay in 4 Seguito Spezzato in Saltino (Spezzato with a preparatory hop) With the first move so that you are right shoulder to right shoulder with your contrary forming a line of 4 across the room (and a line of 8 with the other quartet). Then with a second Spezzato meet the other person of the same sex left to left forming a line up and down the room. With the third Spezzato the line is across the room, right to right and then finally go home with the last Spezzato. Even numbered couples do the same in their 4 at the same time. Note this is the same figure used in the Flower Fairy masque.
	13 - 16	All: individually turn right to finish facing the presence with 2 Ordinarii (L&R). Take usual hands a mezza riverenza in the last minim of the second Ordinario. Note that to get these to fit this music they are double speed compared with the Spezzati. At the end take customary hands with your partner. poi i due Pastori, che guidano'l ballo, pigliano la man destra della ninfa, che stà all'incontro.poi la sinistra, e fanno tutti insieme à quattro à quattro sei .SP. gravi in saltino in una treccia tornando tutti al suo luogo. poi fanno due .S. alla destra cioe; intorno, e; pigliano la sua ninfa per la mano ordinaria con una meza .Rx. <i>Alternatives (not chosen): Take the Spezzati at twice the speed 1 per bar, 2 bars for the hand holds and then 6 for the hey. That gives 8 bars for the Ordinarii, but then they are too slow compared with the Spezzati. Or assume that the .S. should have been .SP. and make the turn with 2 Spezzati. For what is written you really need 20 bars not 16. There is no ideal solution here without changing the music.</i>
D3 3:00	1 - 16	Saltarello. 6 Seguiti Ordinarii . Couple 1 lead. They take the first two forwards, drifting to the right, the other couples slide in behind them in order. Then the lead couple turns sharply to the right and leads back up centre line to end in your original position but with the set inverted (couple 1 at the head of the room). "Tutti insieme faranno sei .S. in passeggio, voltando alla sinistra, e fermandosi in fila al lungo della sala." Interestingly this does not say which way you end up facing – to the head or to the foot. By way of a change you could be across the room.
D4	1 - 8	Last 2 doubles of the above.
	9 - 16	All: drop hands and face your partner. Jump left & right then turn single left with Seguito Ordinario and finish with a Jump.
E3	1 - 8	Take customary hands with your partner and together make a full circle through each other's places and back home again with 2 Seguiti Ordinarii [the lady turns to follow the track of the man, which places you shoulder to shoulder]. HDS have you taking usual hands and each couple turns right, revolving twice with 2 Ordinarii, They pass under their raised arms. This is possible in some period clothes, but not in others and with some hats but not others. Pragmatically I'm inclined to go with the simpler option. Original text: "pigliando con la man destra la sinistra della sua ninfa, e fanno due .S. attorno due volte alla destra tornando al suo luogo."
	9 - 16	Drop hands and face each other. Fall back with 2 Passi Grave and meet with a Seguito Ordinario.
E4	1 - 16	As E3 but the man takes the ladies right with his left and they turn left (anticlockwise) and then fall back and meet as above.
F3 & 4		Gagiarda. Take usual hands and travel as a column anti-clockwise around the room to end with your backs to the presence and with the first couple leading. This is done with 16 Seguiti Ordinarii : 2 Ordinarii forwards then 2

and G 3 & 4 3:32		more in which the woman goes forwards and the man turning left and passing behind her goes to her other side and takes her right hand with his left [Editorial: man substitutes Cinque Passi for Ordinarii for the change of sides]. Together they do 2 more Ordinarii forwards and then the man and the woman go all the way around each other clockwise (to the left holding right hands) with 2 Seguiti Ordinarii. Repeat with the women doing as the men did but using Scorsi for the change of sides (Note this is an editorial decision, the original almost certainly has the men doing the turns both times). *4
H1	1 – 12	Couple 1 cast out each leading their own line to make a half moon facing the presence. 4 Seguiti Ordinarii then 4 Seguito Spezzato . Care ! Don't make the crescent too big. Leading forward with the 1 st 3 Ordinarii seems to work well.
H2	1 – 4	2 Continenze Men: left & right, Ladies right & left
	5 – 6	3 Trabuchetti . Men start left, ladies start right
	7 – 8	1 Ripresa , men left, ladies right
	9 – 12	Riverenza Grave .
I	1 – 8	Reform the original column as follows: With 4 Seguiti Ordinarii the lead couple meet each other, take the usual hands and move towards the head of the dance, turning as a couple with the last Ordinario to face the presence. At the same time man 2 leads the other men behind couple 1 (anti-clockwise) up to the head of the room and lady 2 leads the other ladies behind couple 1 (clockwise) – they pass left shoulders (men outside). This also takes 4 Ordinarii. [Editorial: For all but the 1 st couple we substitute Passi for the men and Scorsi for the ladies.]
	9 – 12	Lead by couple 1 the dancers move towards the presence , reforming their column and taking customary hands with 4 Seguiti Spezzati .
	13 – 16	The dancers make a Riverenza Grave to their partners
	17 – 18	The dancers make a Riverenza Grave to the presence.

Galliard

Bar	Beat	Step
1	1 & 2	Turning a quarter turn to the left kick the left foot
	3 & 4	Kick right
	5 & 6	Cadenza
2	1 & 2	Passo Fermi left (move the left foot back with the toe by the right heel and make a mini riverenza)
	3	Passo Fermi with the right
	4	Kick left
	5 & 6	Cadenza
3	1 – 6	Repeat Bar 1 on the right foot, turning to the right.
4	1 – 6	Repeat bar 2 on the right.

poi fanno insieme un saltino col pie; sinistro alto voltandosi il fianco destro, &; un saltino col destro alto, e la cadenza con esso piede, e poi due .P. fermi uno innanzi, e l'altro indietro ponendo'l detto piede in terra, &; con esso. un saltino col pied'alto, e la cadenza col destro; questa mutanza e di sette botte, &; due tempi di suono. poi si volta'l fianco sinistro, e si fa la medesima

mutanza col pie grave; destro.

Which I translate as: Then they make a jump together with the right foot; left high turning the right flank, &; a jump with the right high, and the cadence with that foot, And then Two. Passi Fermi one forwards, and the other back by placing the said foot on the ground, &; with it. a jump with the high foot, and the cadence with the right; this variation has 7 steps and 2 bars. Then you turn to the left flank, and you do the same Starting with the right foot.

Passo Firmato in Saltino Rule 7 p.106

The stopped steps are made as the first five steps of the gagliarda, that one does going forward the difference is that these are a little slower, you the left foot about a palm's width before and sideways from the right about 4 fingers breadths, gracefully bending and separating your knees slightly. Do the same thing with your right foot, as if in a cadenza, give each step a beat in the Gagliarda.

Rule VI On the First Cinque passi, that one does going forward

They are done this way. First, standing with the body straight and the legs well extended, with the left foot 4 fingers ahead of the right, somewhat in a straight line, with the toe of the foot a bit out, so that the legs and knees are straight, with the weight over the right foot, one will do a hop with the left foot, raising the right forward. Then lowering it, one raises the left, puts down the left [raising the right] and then the right raising the left, and with the left does the cadenza in Gagliarda giving it grace and bending the knees somewhat.

In Nobilta di Dame Caroso described Pssi Larghi Fermati as basically small reverences retreating.

As far as I can see if you make 1 Passo Firmato forwards and the other back then the second step is nothing as the feet are already in that position whichever description you use. So I propose 2 backwards as Negri uses that elsewhere in set Galliards.

S E C O N D A P A R T E .

PIgliano'l braccio destro della sua Ninfa, poi fanno vn .S. col sinistro passando l'vno al luogo dell'altro, e due .SP. tornando al suo luogo, & vno .S. attorno alla sinistra; quello che guida'l ballo con la sua ninfa, fa vn .S. per fianco è due .SP. attorno alla destra, & vn .S. attorno alla sinistra. il secōdo filo seguita'l medesimo, fermandosi à piè del ballo, e voltati à faccia à faccia tutti quattro in fila, nel medesimo tempo, il terzo e quarto filo faranno altrettanto fermandosi à capo del ballo all'incontro. Poi farano insieme il .S. e li .SP. e il .S. attorno alla sinistra, & altrettanto attorno alla destra fermandosi all'incōtro.

Change of the tune - Second Part

They take the right arm of their nymphs, then do a seguito ordinario with the left passing the one to the place of the other, and two fioretti spezzati returning to place, and one seguito ordinario around to the left. Then one that leads the dance with his nymph, does a seguito ordinario sideways and two fioretti spezzati around to the right, and a seguito ordinario around to the left. The second line follows the same, standing at the foot of the dance floor, and turned face to face all four in a line, in the same time, the third and fourth line will do the same standing at the head of the dance floor opposite. Then they will do together the seguito ordinario and the fioretti spezzati and the seguito ordinario around to the left, and the same around to the right standing opposite.

Some relevant vocabulary

- Fianco - the side, so per fianco sideways or to the side. NOT diagonally forwards. Shame that.
- Attorno - Around as in around to the left
- Ruota - circle/circling - not used here
- Voltati - turning as in turning to face or turn around
- Pirlotto or Zirlo - turn, twirl, whirl - notable by its absence from this choreography.
- Girando - turning/whirling a girandole is a pinwheel.

So where you are facing at the start of the formation change is unclear. You could be facing front, and that would make life easier. I see nothing that means we have to do extreme turns, just follow a curving path. Particularly as we only have 2 spezzati and an Ordinario to make the change.

I think we should start facing front, make the sideways Ordinario to the left then the front couple drifts backwards. The second couple goes out to the right, the 3rd couple stays pretty much where they are and the 4th couple goes diagonally forwards and to the right. The ladies will need to turn on the last step to be facing their partner - turn the short way because Lady 1 has an immediate hay.

*2 Translation: "The two shepherds, that lead their lines, that are on the left hand take the right arm of their nymphs."

This can go 2 ways. If after the saltarello section you turn to face the other line (as the reconstructions on YouTube do) you could interpret this as the left most man of each line starts. I'm pretty sure this is wrong but it does work and does give an interesting pattern (opposite corners working). However the left most man on the line at the head of the dance is not the leader of that line and is not at the end either. The interpretation I have used is that the man on the left that leads is the man on the left hand end of the line if you all face front, who is the leader of their line and who is the left most person. This interpretation gives a far better result in my opinion and I find it more plausible.

*4 The original here is hard to understand.

NONA PARTE.

TVtti pigliano la man della sua ninfa, e fanno sedici .S. in passeggio attorno alla sala volgendosi alla sinistra, fatti li due primi .S. innanzi, i Pastori girano attorno alla sinistra, e pigliano con la man sinistra quella della sua ninfa sempre passeggiando, e fanno altri due .S. poi pigliano la mano, e fanno altri due .S. innanzi, e due .S. girando vna volta attorno ad essa mano con le sue ninfe. questo si fà quattro volte, due girando attorno, li Pastori, & due fanno girare le ninfe. si fermano tutti in fila nel mezo del ballo, & il primo che guida si troua in capo del ballo con la sua ninfa.

My Translation is: All take the hands of their partners and do sixteen Seguiti Ordinarii promenading around the room turning to the left, do the first 2 seguiti Ordinarii forwards, the shepherds spin around to the left, and take with the left hand that of his nymph always promenading/progressing, with 2 seguiti Ordinarii, then take the hand, and do another 2 Seguiti Ordinarii forwards, and 2 seguiti Ordinarii spinning turning one time around to this hand with their nymphs. This they do 4 times, **2 with the shepherds turning around, and 2 turning the nymphs.**

This isn't particularly well expressed, but I think the intention is clear enough – the sequence described in detail has two parts and the whole sequence is done twice over. **Similarly, I think it is clear that it is not simply a case of the men doing something and the ladies copying. I think if that was the intent then either Negri would have said that it was repeated with the ladies doing as the men had done, or he would have used exactly the same form of words describing the movement for the ladies as he does for the men. He does neither of these.**

I would reconstruct this as: 2 Ordinarii forwards then 2 more in which the woman goes forwards and the man turning left and passing behind her goes to her other side and takes her right hand with his left (alternative he remains on his own side and takes her left with his – reaching across). Together they do 2 more Ordinarii forwards and then the man and the woman go all the way around each other clockwise (to the left) with 2 Seguiti Ordinarii. You could do this still with the man holding the woman's left hand in his left, or you could switch to a right-hand hold (preferred). Then repeat this, but you can't repeat it exactly because the man is already on the right of the woman. One option is for the men return to their correct sides and give right hands and turn to the right. The other is for the women to do as the men did the first time. This is very unlikely to be what is intended, but is more symmetrical. This meets the description with considerably less spinning round than the HDS interpretation. The HDS solution is: 2 travelling forward then 2 with the lady turning on the spot while the man goes around her one and a half times, changing hands as required. On the 2nd and 4th repeats the woman does as the man and vice versa .Other interpretations are possible.