Dance Steps and Music in the Gresley Manuscript

Jennifer Nevile

Extant choreographic material from England before the end of the seventeenth century has always been sparse, and knowledge of the dance practice in England during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is not very detailed. Many aspects of the dance culture in England during these three centuries is unknown. For example, bibliographic details of dance teachers who worked at court, knowledge of dance practice or schools outside London, treatises which describe the basic step vocabulary and movement style used at a particular time, even collections of English choreographies are limited. In the century and a half from 1500 to 1651, the year in which Playford published his *English Dancing Master,* (London, Thomas Harper) a collection of country dances, there are only three different sources of information on English dance practice. None of these three surviving sources include instructions on how to perform any of the steps which are named in the choreographies. The first source comprises two works which are collections of French *basse danses;* that is, Robert Coplande's *The maner of dauncynge of bace daunces,* (1521)[1] and a single sheet of *basse danses* copied onto both sides of a flyleaf of a book printed in 1497 and held in the Library of Salisbury Cathedral.[2] The second source is a group of late sixteenth/early seventeenth-English manuscripts some of which are associated with the Inns of Court, and which contain choreographic instructions for the sequence of dances that may have comprised the revels' dances at the Inns of Court.[3] The third source, a collection of twenty-six dances, ninety-one dance titles and thirteen dance tunes, found in the Gresley family papers held in the Derbyshire Record Office,[4] is probably the earliest of the English dance records.

David Fallows has dated this third source as circa 1500 with a margin of error of twenty years either way.[5] He based his conclusion on the script of the manuscript, the fact that the treatises on chiromancy and physiognomy are in Latin, as are the collection of prayers, and the use of French dance titles in the dance manuscript.[6] Fallows also pointed out that "various items here are very much of the fifteenth century: *Une foys avant que morir* is based on a song first found in about 1420 and not otherwise know later than about 1470; similarly the dance *Roti boully* points to the fifteenth-century repertory".[7]

Two additional pieces of information (neither conclusive) also point towards a fifteenth-century date for the dance manuscript. First the list of dance titles contains names of English families, many of whom were actively involved in national/international affairs in the second half of the fifteenth century. On the assumption that as in later centuries, and in other countries, it was common at this time in England to name a dance after a noble family, it is possible that the dance title, *Kendall*, could refer to John Kendall, secretary to Richard III as well as holding other offices under him, and who was killed fighting for Richard on Bosworth field on 22 August 1485.[8] Other dances/dance titles which could also refer to noble families are, *Northumberland, Talbott, Mowbray* and *Arandell,* while the title *Malory* could refer to the author of *Le Morte Darthur.* The Earls of Northumberland were the influential Percy family, Talbot was the family name of the Earls of Shrewsbury, and Mowbray the family name of the Dukes of Norfolk.

The second piece of information comes from a watermark from the manuscript. The conservator at the Derbyshire Record Office, Marie Ware, has identified a watermark, in the form of a gothic 'y', which is identical to one in a manuscript dated from 5 June 1458 held in the Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 16517.[9] Both the watermark and the physical make-up of the notebook are very similar to the manuscript from the Bibliothèque Nationale.[10] The watermark found in the dance manuscript is one used in paper produced in north-eastern France, "with most of the known examples dating from the 1470s and the 1480s"[11]. The French origin of the paper was not unusual, as "practically all the white paper used by English printers up to 1670 came from foreign mills, and much of the greatest part of it from France".[12] Once sheets of paper were produced it was then possible for them to lie in storage for some years before being used. At this period watermarks were "pictures or letters fashioned in wire and sewn with knots of fine wire to the surface of the mould" which produced the paper.[13] Thus the same watermark would be used over a period of months, or years, until it disintegrated from use.[14]

The discovery of the choreographies in the Derbyshire Record Office assumes even greater importance given the lack of primary source material from England. Fallows has provided a transcription and discussion of this manuscript,[15] and a basic analysis of the choreographies and their relationship with the contemporary Italian and French practice is found in "Dance in early Tudor England: an Italian connection?"[16] This article however concentrates on the music in the Gresley papers, on what information is revealed concerning the performance of the dance tunes, and what is still unknown, and on the relationship between the choreographic step sequences and the music. The final part of this article provides a transcription of the eight dance tunes which also possess choreographic instructions, with the dance steps placed underneath each bar, and a floor plan of five of these eight choreographies.

Music of the English Dances

The music provided in the Gresley papers provides only a single line of music, a practice which is consistent with the way dance tunes were recorded in the fifteenth-century Italian and French dance treatises. The range of the thirteen tunes varies from a fifth (*Eglamour*) to an eleventh (*Talbott*), with three-quarters of the tunes having a range of an octave and above.[17] Ten of the thirteen tunes have C (an octave below middle c) as their lowest note, with the remaining three tunes descending to a third, a fourth and a seventh below middle c. The highest extent of these tunes is more varied, ranging from g (a fourth below middle c) to a' (a sixth above middle c).

The tunes are notated with lines through the staff dividing the music into sections, and above the staves some of the sections have numerals indicating how many times the section is to be repeated, a practice which replicates the manner in which the *ballo* tunes were recorded in the fifteenth-century Italian dance treatises. Often the musical phrase of one section is used as the basis for, or as a complete repetition in, another section. For example, *Northumberland's* seven musical sections have only five distinct phrases, and are repeated according to the scheme AAA B CCC B C DD E. On the other hand *Bayonn* and *Ly beus distonys* share the simple repeat scheme A B A, while all the musical sections of *Eglamour* are either the same as the first section or are based on parts of it; that is, AAA A(mod)A(mod)A(mod) A A(mod). In the thirteen English dance tunes there is no discernible pattern in their

repetition of the musical sections, either in the re-using of material from an earlier section in a later one, or in the number of times a musical section is repeated.

Just as there is no pattern in the repeat schemes used in these dance tunes, so too are there no regular patterns in the phrase lengths of the musical sections. Four bar phrases do exist, especially in the first sections of the tunes,[18] but they are not the only phrase length used. Within the thirteen tunes we find one-bar, two-bar, three-bar, five-bar, six-bar and eight-bar musical phrases. For example, *Talbott's* eight musical sections are comprised of a six-bar phrase, three one-bar phrases, a two-bar phrase, two five-bar phrases and finally a four-bar phrase. This irregular musical structure is a result of the close connection between the music and the choreography. Each dance is a unique combination of the steps and floor patterns, and the music of the dance reflects the individual nature of each choreography.

The one exception to this lack of patterning in the musical phrase lengths is the fact that the first section of all thirteen dance tunes are even in length.[19] Given that odd-numbered phrases do exist elsewhere in these dances, what is the significance of this consistent use of even numbers of bars (or breves) in the opening sections of the dances? It could merely be coincidence, and that given a larger sample of dance tunes odd-numbered bars would appear.[20] Or, more likely, given the individual nature of each dance and the close relationship between the dance steps and the music, does the presence of even-numbered phrase lengths for the first musical section relate to the "trace", which begins all except one choreography. In other words, "did a 'trace' always require an even number of bars?"[21] While it is not possible to reach a definite conclusion on this matter given the available evidence, I would argue that the appearance of even-numbered phrase lengths in the opening sections of each dance tune is not a chance occurrence, but related to some choreographic requirement of the "trace"; that is, there was something about the "trace" that required an even number of breves. The requirement for an even number of breves could have been an aesthetic requirement, a practical requirement, or both.

Unlike the fifteenth-century French *basse danse* tenors which are notated in even breves, the Gresley dance tunes are written in a rhythmically varied style with a mixture of semibreves and minims. Most of the tunes are written in major prolation (three minims to the semibreve) and imperfect tempus (two semibreves to the breve); that is, the time signature $\frac{6}{8}$ in modern notation. Not all of the tunes, however, are consistently in $\frac{6}{8}$ as are *Ly beus distonys* or *Eglamour*. In other tunes the different musical sections are in different mensurations. The first, second and fourth musical sections of *La duches,* for example, has a duple division of the semibreve and breve ($\frac{4}{4}$), but in the middle of the piece it changes to $\frac{6}{8}$ for three bars. *Talbott*, on the other hand, begins in $\frac{6}{8}$, but after the first musical section changes to $\frac{3}{4}$ for the remainder of the piece, except for the penultimate bar.

This change in the mensuration of some of the tunes brings us to the fundamental problem of how these dance tunes were to be performed? Were the different musical sections of the tunes to be played at the same speed, or did their tempo vary? Was the notation of different mensurations in the dance tunes a sign of the changing tempi within a dance? If sections in different mensuration were played at different tempi, what was the relationship between these different speeds? Did the musicians keep a constant pulse on one rhythmic level be-tween the different sections, or was there a more complicated relationship between the different musical sections such as the one which operated between sections of different *misura* in the fifteenth-century Italian *balli*?[22]

Unfortunately, there is no information from the material in the Gresley family papers which could help in the interpretation of the performance practice of these tunes. John Banys, the compiler and writer of the choreographic descriptions and list of dance titles, seemed to be concerned with recording choreographies he knew for his own use,[23] rather than producing a treatise which explained the mechanics of the style. Due to the paucity of the extant dance source material from fifteenth and early sixteenth-century England, there are no other English dance collections or treatises which could be used as a basis for decisions on these matters. Until additional source material is uncovered individuals wishing to perform these dances must make their own decisions based on contemporary fifteenth-century European practices, and suggested links between these practices and the surviving English records.

Relationship Between Steps and Music

If there is no information contained in the Gresley family papers concerning the tempo or tempi of the different sections of the dance tunes, is it possible to correlate the dance steps and the music, and is there any information on which to base one's assumptions? The amount of information is not great, but a little does exist.

In the margins of the pages containing the choreographic descriptions there are a series of numbers which appear to refer to the repeat indications above the music. Closer inspection, however, reveals that the relationship between the marginal numbers of the choreographies and the numeric repeat indications of the music is not straightforward. Two of the choreographies which also have music, *Temperans* and *Northumberland*, have no marginal numbers. Of the remaining six choreographic and musical pairs, the situation varies with each dance. For example even on a superficial analysis there are dances like *Esperans* where the two series of numbers are almost identical,[24] and dances like *Talbott* where the two sets of numbers do not appear to readily match up.[25]

In *Esperans* if one reconstructed the dance so that the step sequences bounded by the marginal numbers were aligned with the musical sections with the same number, then the choreographic description would fit with the music reasonably easily[26] until the last two musical sections, when the process breaks down. The penultimate musical section of *Esperans* would be left with too few steps to fill the music, and the last musical section would be bereft of steps altogether. However, in the reconstruction of *Esperans* which is presented here where editorial decisions and assumptions have been applied consistently throughout all the dances, the musical repeat scheme aligns itself with the marginal numbers in the manner illustrated in Table 1.

When the same process is undertaken with the dances *Talbott, Ly beus distonys, Prenes in gre,*[27] and *Prenes a gard,* similar problems arise, and to an even greater degree than in *Esperans* . It becomes almost impossible to co-ordinate the step sequences and the music using the marginal numbers in the choreographic descriptions without numerous editorial adjustments to the extent that the dances would almost have to be re-written. Tables 2 to 5 illustrate how the musical repeat schemes match the choreography of *Talbott, Ly beus distonys, Prenes in gre,* and *Prenes a gard.*

Table 1. Esperans (*section A needs to be played an extra time for the trace)

7 musical sections	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	*x4						
Musical repeat indications	x3	x3	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)
Choreography as bounded by marginal numbers	trace,3	3			1	1	1,1

Table 2. Talbott

8 musical sections	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Musical repeat indications	x3	x2	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)
Choreography as bounded by marginal numbers	doble trace	4			2		4	2

Table 3. Ly beus distonys

3 musical sections	A	B	C
Musical repeat indications	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)
Choreography as bounded by marginal numbers	no number	2	1

Table 4. Prenes in gre (*section B needs to be repeated)

5 musical sections	A	B	C	D	E
		*x2			
Musical repeat indications	x3	(x1)	x2	(x1)	(x1)
Choreography as bounded by marginal numbers	trace	no number	3	2	r

Table 5. Prenes a gard (*section A needs to be played an extra two times for the double trace)

5 Musical Sections	A	B	C	D	E	F
	*x5					
Musical Repeat Indications	x3	(x1)	x3	(x1)	(x1)	(x1)
Choreography as bounded by marginal numbers	doble trace,3	3		2	3	

Table 6. Eglamour (*sections C and D do need to be repeated 3 times not once)

5 Musical Sections	A	B	C	D
			*x3	*x3
Musical Repeat Indications	x3	x3	(x1)	(x1)
Choreography as bounded by marginal numbers	doble trace	no number	3	3

For example, in *Talbott*, the first musical section, which is played three times according to the musical notation, is used to accompany the double trace. The second musical section (which is played twice), the third and fourth musical sections (which are played once) and part of the fifth musical section are used to accompany all the choreography which is bounded by the marginal number '4'. Obviously the marginal number '4' does not or cannot refer to the number of times a musical section is repeated, as neither sections B, C, D or E are repeated four times. Neither does it refer to just the number of musical sections needed to accompany the choreography contained within it, as this solution is invalidated by the second marginal number '4' in *Talbott*, the choreography of which only needs less than two musical sections to accompany it; that is, part of F and all of G. Similarly, the choreography bounded by the final marginal number '2' only needs one musical section (H) played through once for its performance.

But just as one becomes convinced that the marginal numbers do not give the reconstructor much help in correlating the steps and the music, there appears the case of the dance, *Eglamour*. In this dance the last two musical sections have no repeat indications. The choreography, however, requires that musical sections C and D be repeated three times, as indicated by the marginal numbers in this dance. (See Table 6). Thus in this case, even though the first two musical sections do not have any marginal numbers, the marginal numbers which are present prove to be more accurate than the musical repeat indications.

In summary then, it is easier to state what the marginal numbers do **not** represent, than what they do. The marginal numbers are not repeat indications for the musical sections. Nor do they indicate the number of musical sections needed for a particular portion of the choreography. The exact significance and/or function of these numbers must, for the moment, remain a mystery.

A clear picture does not emerge either as regards the question of choreographic and musical repeats. In the eight music and choreographic pairs there are fifteen occasions where the choreography is repeated. In eleven of these fifteen occasions the choreographic repeats are performed to repetitions of a musical section, with only four occurrences of the repeat of a choreographic sequence being performed to a new musical phrase. There are also three dances, *Talbott, Prenes in gre,* and *Temperans,* which have musical repeats which are not matched by repetition in the step sequences. Therefore, while the music and choreography were interdependent and unique to each dance, it was not seen as a necessity for the choreography and the music to mirror each other exactly at every opportunity. While it was obviously considered desirable, or pleasing, to have choreographic and musical repeats match each other, so that the structure of one was reflected in the other, it was not considered an absolute requirement of the style. This flexibility on the part of the choreographers may have been a practical response to their use of pre-existing tunes for their newly devised dances.

Transcriptions and Floor Plans

The final part of this article contains the musical transcriptions of the eight dances which also possess choreographic instructions, with the steps of these eight dances aligned with the appropriate bar, or fraction of a bar, of music, and the floor plans for five out of these eight dances; that is, *Ly beus*

distonys, Esperans, Prenes a gard, Talbott and *Northumberland.* But, as mentioned above, the Gresley manuscript was not a treatise written for publication, or for presentation to a noble patron in hope of advancement, but a collection of choreographies for private use by someone who was well versed in the style represented by the dances. Therefore, there are no instructions as to the length of any step, let alone even brief, cryptic, descriptions of how to perform any step, as are found in the fifteenth-century Italian dance treatises. Also the choreographic descriptions themselves are condensed. They do not always give the exact steps, but only the general instructions indicating the path(s) of the dancer(s); for example, 'come together', 'change places', 'the middle man through … and the middle to his place again'. Consequently, there are many assumptions which have to be made if a reconstruction of these dances is attempted.

The reconstructions of the dances presented here are of necessity based on a number of assumptions concerning the material. These assumptions are arrived at, however, after a close study of all the twenty-six choreographies, and are applied consistently in the reconstructions of the entire corpus. One of the most important principles underlying the reconstructions of the English choreographies is the belief in the integrity of the original source material; that is, the belief that the scribe of the manuscript was conversant with the material he was recording, and consequently made a smaller rather than larger number of errors when recording the material. This principle results in the minimum of editorial changes to the music in order to correlate the steps and the music. If, for example, at the first attempt at reconstruction the steps and the music did not appear to match, then other interpretations were considered before the music was altered.

In the absence of any firm data, the riddle of the time length of each step has many solutions. For the reconstructions presented here, answers were sought from fifteenth-century continental dance practices. The length of each step used in the dances is given in Table 7.

Due to the brevity of the choreographic descriptions there are many passages in which the steps are not clearly spelt out. In these cases I have suggested step sequences to cover the general directional indicators. The suggested step sequences are based on the rules already observed in the step sequences which have been spelt out by John Banys. My suggestions for step sequences also depend on the relationship between the dancers, and their individual floor paths. I have also used the music to suggest step sequences, most notably by accompanying the $\frac{9}{8}$ bars with three singles.

Table 7. Time length of the steps used in the transcriptions

Name of Step	Length of Step
1 singlis	1 semibreve
1 doblis	1 breve
1 trett	1 breve
1 retrett	1 breve
retrett – in a general sense	2 breves
1 lepe	1 semibreve/1 breve
1 rakis/1 rake	1 semibreve
rak – in a general sense	1 breve/2 breves
brawle	1 breve
stop	1 semibreve/1 breve
obeysaunce	1 breve
flowerdelice	2 breves

Acknowledgements

Notes

1 Robert Coplande, trans. "The maner of dauncynge of bace daunces … " appended to *The introductory to wryte and to prounounce Frenche,* compiled by Alexander Barcley, London, Robert Coplande, 1521.

2 The dances are on the first paper flyleaf of the Salisbury Cathedral Library copy of Johannes Balbus de Janua, *Catholicon,* Venice, Johannes Hamann, 1497. For additional bibliographic information on both these two sources see, Frederick Crane, *Materials for the Study of the Fifteenth Century Basse Danse,* Institute of Medieval Music, New York, 1968, pp. 18, 24-25.

3 See D. R. Wilson, Dancing in the Inns of Court. *Historical Dance,* 1986/87, 2 (5), 3-16 for a discussion and transcription of these manuscripts. For a discussion of the association (or not) of these manuscripts with the Inns of Court, see John M. Ward, Apropos 'The olde Measures'. *REED Newsletter,* 1993, 18 (1), 2-21.

4 Derbyshire Record Office, D77 box 38, pp. 51-79, from the Gresley of Drakelow papers.

5 David Fallows, The Gresley dance collection, c.1500. *RMA Research Chronicle,* Vol. 29, 1996, 3.

6 Fallows; 1996, p. 2.

7 Fallows; 1996, p. 2.

8 "Kendal, John" in *The Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. X,* ed. by L. Stephen and S. Lee, Oxford University Press, reprinted 1949-50, p. 1295.

9 The French manuscript is described in the work by Monique Zerdoun Bat-Yehouda, *Les papiers filigranés médiévaux essai de méthodologie descriptive* Vol II. Brepols, Turnhout, 1989, pp. 233-245.

10 Margaret O'Sullivan, "Introduction" to *John Banys's Medieval Dance Notebook,* CD-ROM of the manuscript D77 box 38 pp. 1-90, (Derbyshire County Council and Document Control Services), 1999, p. 3. I would like to thank Margaret O'Sullivan for informing me of this discovery, and allowing me to mention it here.

11 O'Sullivan, 1999, p. 3.

12 Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography.* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972, p. 60. One reason why England had to import paper in this period was that there was not a ready supply in England of the raw material for paper (linen rags), as the English wore wool rather than linen. (Gaskell, 1972, p. 60).

13 Gaskell, 1972, p. 61.

14 Gaskell estimates that a watermark in continuous use (that is, used in 2,000 or more sheets of paper each day) would last only about six months (pp. 62-63).

15 Fallows, 1996, pp. 1-20.

16 Jennifer Nevile, Dance in early Tudor England: an Italian connection?. *Early Music,* Vol. 26 No. 2, May 1998, 26 (2), 230-244.

17 Five tunes have an octave range, three have the range of a ninth, and one an eleventh.

18 Out of the thirteen dance tunes, seven start with section 1 as a four bar phrase, three start with an eight bar phrase, two with a six bar phrase, and one with a two bar phrase.

19 I would like to thank Jennifer Thorp who drew my attention to this fact, and asked several pertinent questions as to the possible significance of this regularity.

20 In the fifteenth-century Italian *ballo* repertory, by comparison, the first musical sections include both even and odd numbered phrase lengths, although even-numbered phrase lengths predominate.

21 Thorp, private communication.

22 For a brief discussion of the tempo relationships between the sections in differing *misura* in the fifteenth-century Italian *balli* , and how this relationship was explained by the dance masters in their treatises, see Jennifer Nevile, The Performance of Fifteenth-Century Italian *Balli* : Evidence from the Pythagorean Ratios. *Performance Practice Review,* Fall 1993, 6 (2), 116-128. For a more detailed and lengthy treatment of this subject see The Four *Misure* in 15th-Century Italian Dance. *Proceedings of the International Early Dance Conference, April 2000, Ghent,* (forthcoming).

23 As Fallows has noted the small size of the book 12.5 X 9cm (4.75 X 3.75 inches) and the "informality of the script endorses the evidence of its size, that this is a book assembled for the writer's own use". (Fallows, 1996, p. 2).

24 In *Esperans* the numbers above the music are 3, 3, [1, 1, 1, 1, 1], while the marginal numbers are 3, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1.

25 In *Talbott* there are eight musical sections, and the repeat indications are 3, 2, [1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1]. The marginal numbers of the choreography are 4, 2, 4, 2.

26 The exception to this statement is that one would have to repeat the first two musical sections one extra time in order to allow time for the dancers to perform the 'trace' at the beginning of the dance and after the first section of the choreography.

27 This dance is spelt both as *Prenes in gre* in the list of dance titles and the music, and as *Pernes on gre* for the choreographic description
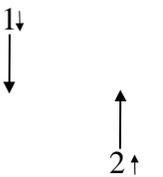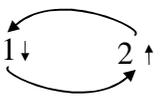
Ly beus distonys

1↑   2↑

1↑   2↑

After the end of the trace,

the first 3 forth and torne, whill the second retrett 3 bake.
[1 does 3 singlis LRL forward and then turns 180 degrees to R with a singlis R. 2 does 3 singlis LRL backwards, and ends with the R foot together with the L.]
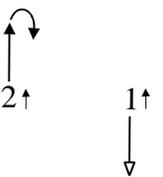
1↓

2↑

Then come togeder
[Both do a doblis L forward.]
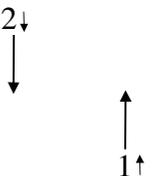
1↓   2↑

and ethir torne into oders plas.
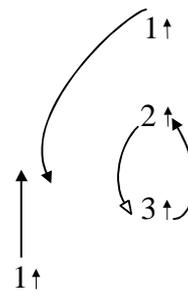[Both do a doblis R.]

2↑   1↑

Then last man 3 forth and torne, whill the first retrett.

[2 does 3 singlis LRL forward and turns 180 degrees to R with a singlis R, while 1 does 3 singlis LRL backwards and ends with the R foot together with the L.]

2↓

1↑

Then come togeder in such wys as they ded afore

[Both do a doblis L forwards.]

2↓   1↑

and ethir end in ther own place.
[Both do a doblis R into original places.]

1↑   2↑

Then trett and retrett

1↑   2↑

and torne.
[Both do a full turn to the L with 2 doblis LR.]

1↑   2↑   [finishing position]

Esperans

1↑

2↑

3↑

Trace

Al the 6 singlis with a trett.
[All do 6 singlis LRLRLR forward, and a doblis L forward.]

1↑

2↑

3↑

1↑

Then the fyrst man goo compas till he come behend, whil the medyll retrett thre, and the last 3 singlis,
[1 does 2 doblis RL while 2 and 3 do 3 singlis RLR. 3 does the steps forwards and 2 does them backwards, and both close with feet together at the end of the third singlis.]
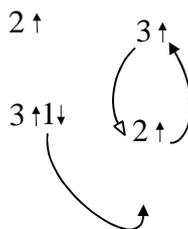
2↑   3↑

3↑1↓   2↑

and the medil 3 singlis, levyng the last on the left hand, and the last 3 retrettes.
[1 does 3 singlis RLR, while 2 and 3 do 3 singlis RLR. 2 does the steps forwards and 3 does them backwards.]
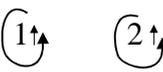
2↑

3↑

1↑

Thus the medill endyth before the last in the meddist and the ferst behynd.
[All three do a reverence in the time of a breve.]

Thus daunce 3 tymes, callyng every man as he standdith.
[6 singlis LRLRLR with a doblis L.]

2 ↑

3 ↑

1 ↑

[2 does 2 doblis RL while 1 and 3 do 3 singlis RLR. 1 does the steps forwards and 3 does them backwards, and both close with the feet together at the end of the third singlis.]

2 ↑
3 ↑
1 ↑

[2 does 3 singlis RLR, while 1 and 3 do 3 singlis RLR. 3 does the steps forwards and 1 does them backwards.]

1 ↑
2 ↓ 3 ↑

3 ↑   [All three do a reverence as before.]

1 ↑

2 ↑

[6 singlis LRLRLR with a doblis L.]

[3 does 2 doblis RL while 1 and 2 do 3 singlis RLR. 2 does the steps forwards and 1 does them backwards, and both close with feet together at the end of the third singlis.]
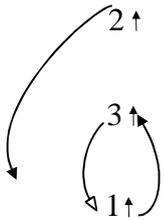
3 ↑
1 ↑
2 ↑

[3 does 3 singlis RLR, while 1 and 2 do 3 singlis RLR. 1 does the steps forwards and 2 does them backwards.]

2 ↑
3 ↓ 1 ↑

1 ↑   [All three do a reverence as before.]

2 ↑   [Trace]

3 ↑

1 ↑ **After the end of the trace, the ferst 3 furth outward turnyng ayen his face.**
[1 does 3 singlis LRL to LH side, and then a half turn to L with 2 doblis RL.]

2 ↑

3 ↑

1 ↓ **Then the last contur hym,**

[3 does 3 singlis LRL to RH side.]

2 ↑ 2 ↑
3 ↑ 3 ↑

1 ↓   3
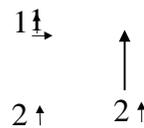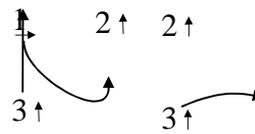
and the medill to the fyrst;
[2 does 3 singlis LRL forward, while 3 does a half turn to R with 2 doblis RL.]

2 ↑ 2 ↑

3

and then the first to the last mans place.
[1 does 2 doblis LR.]

2 ↑
1 ↑ **Then the last to the medyll and the medyll to the last mans place.**
[2 and 3 do 3 singlis LRL and a doblis R.]

3

3↓

The first and last chance place whil the medyll tornyth.
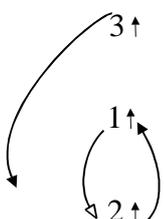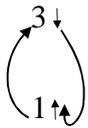[All three do 3 singlis LRL and a doblis R.]

1↑

2↑

1↑

Al at onys retrett 3 bake. Bak al at onys.
[All three do 3 singlis LRL backwards, then another 3 singlis RLR backwards.]

3↑

2↑

1↑

Then the first turne whill the last turne in his own place.
[1 and 3 do a doblis L for the full turn to the LH side.]

3↑

2↑

Then togeder thre furth.
[All three do 3 singlis RLR forwards.]

1↑

3↑

2↑

1↑ [finishing position]

3↑

2↑

Prenes a gard

1↑   2↑   3↑   **a doble trace**

After the end of the trace: the first man lepe, the second lepe, the thred torne.
[3 does 2 doblis LR for the full turn to the L.]

1↑   2↑   3↑

Then the last lepe, the second lepe, the first torne.
[1 does 2 doblis LR for the full turn to the L.]

1↑   2↑   3↑
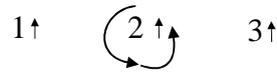
The first lepe, the last lepe, the medill torne.
[2 does 2 doblis LR for the full turn to the L.]

1↑   2↑   3↑

2↓
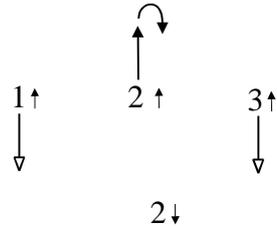
Then the medill forth 3 singlis with half a torne whill the first and last retrett.
[2 does 3 singlis LRL forward and a 180 degree turn to R. 1 and 3 do 3 singlis LRL backwards.]

1↑   3↑

2↓

Then the first torne, the last lepe.
[1 does 2 doblis RL for a 360 degree turn to L, while 3 leaps.]

1↑   3↑
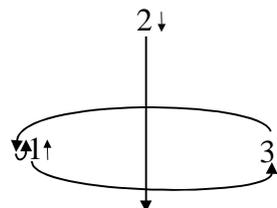
Then the medill man throth whill the first and last change places

[All three do 4 doblis RLRL.]

1↑3 2 2↓ 3↑1

2↓
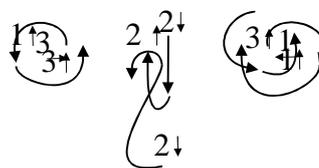
and the medill to his place agayne.
[2 does 3 singlis RLR and a half turn to L. At the end of the turn 2 brings the feet together so he can step out on the L foot for the next step.]

3↑   2↓   1↑
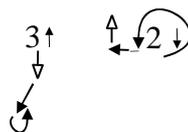
Then the first turne, retrett and rake, whill the 2nd turne, rake and retrett and the third retret, rak and torne.
[For all 3 the retrett is 3 singlis RLR and the full turn is a doblis L.]

2↓

3↑   1↑
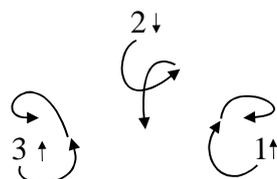
Then al at onys a flowrdilice
[All do 2 doblis.]

and com togedere.
[All do 2 doblis and 3 singlis.]

3↑   2↑   1↑

[finishing position]

Talbott

1↑   2↑   **doble trace**

After the hend of the trace: trett, retrett,

and depart the first furthright, the second contrary hyme, and turne face to face.
[1 does 3 singlis LRL and a doblis R forward and then a half turn to the L with a doblis L. 2 starts by turning 180 degrees to the L and doing 3 singlis LRL and a doblis R forward. Then a half turn to the L with a doblis L.]

Then brawle at onys

and then com togydder.
[Both do 2 doblis LR to meet. 1 turns to face the front during the second doblis.]

Then trett and retrett togeder

with 3 singlis forth
[Both do 3 singlis LRL forward, and at the end of the third singlis both do a pivot half turn, drawing the R foot back to end together with the L, and take inside hands again.]

and chance handes on the same wyes again.
[Both do 3 singlis LRL forward, and at the end of the third singlis both do a half turn to the R to face the front with a doblis R.]

Then togeder 2 doblis, 2 rakis, and a turne.
[Both do 2 doblis LR, then move to the L and then the R, and then both do a full 360 degree turn to the R with a doblis L.]

1↑   2↑   [finishing position]

Northumberland

1↑   2↑   3↑   **trace**

Togedder three singlis with a stop;
[All do 3 singlis LRL.]

trett and retrett.
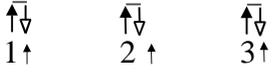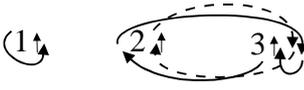
Then the first man torne in his own place whill the last torn the meddyll abowytt.
[1 does 2 doblis LR for his full turn to the L. 2 and 3 do 2 doblis LR taking R hands and returning to place.]

Togedder agayn with thre singlis and a stope;
[All do 3 singlis LRL.]

and trett and retrett.

Then half a torn and torn agayn and togedder.
[All do an 180 degree turn to L with a slow singlis L and bring the feet together at the end of the singlis. Then all do a 360 degree turn with 2 doblis LR.]
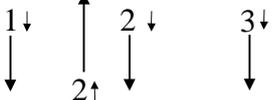
Then agayn with thre singlis and a stope;
[All do 3 singlis LRL.]

and trett and retrett.

Then the first torn the meddyll abowt while the last man torn in his own place.
[3 does 2 doblis LR for his full turn to the L. 1 and 2 do 2 doblis LR taking R hands and returning to place.]
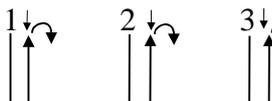
Then every man a mevyng.
[All do 2 doblis LR with a quick turn at the end of the 2nd doblis pivoting on the R foot. Then all do 3 singlis LRL and an 180 degree turn to the R.]

Then the first and the last torn owtward goyng forth 6 singlis; the second forthright.
[All do 6 singlis LRLRLR.]

Torn all face to face and the thred brayll.
[All do a half turn R to face, then brawle.]
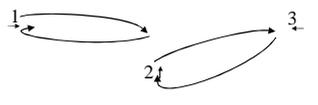
The tother tow cum to hym and goo to the place agayn.
[1 and 2 do 2 doblis LR and then turn R to face the direction in which they started.]

Then the 3d and the 2d brayll;

the meddyl cum to them and go to his awn place agayn.
[2 does 2 doblis LR and then a half turn R to face inwards.]

Then the first and the last lepe togedder; and the meddyl lepe alone.

Then the meddyll throw while the other tow [contrary] **hym turnyng all face to face.**
[All do 1 doblis L, 3 singlis RLR and a half turn to the L.]

All at onys a flourdelice.
[All do 3 singlis LRL and a doblis R to trace out the path of a *fleur de lys*.]
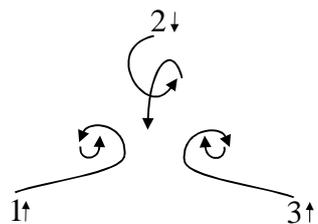
The first and the meddyl rak tell thay mett whill the last retrett.
[1 and 2 moving to RH side do a step R, a step L to join the feet together, twice. 3 does 3 singlis LRL backwards, and brings R foot back to close together with the L.]
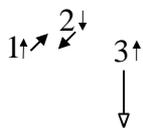
A flourdilice.
[All do 3 singlis LRL and a doblis R. 2 and 3 bring the L foot together with the R to end the doblis.]
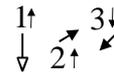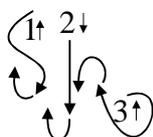
At onys the meddell and the last rake while thay meet while the first retrett.
[2 and 3 moving to the RH side, do a step R, a step L to join the feet together, twice. 1 does 3 singlis LRL backwards with no close.]
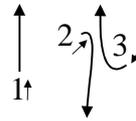
Than all cum togedder.
[All do 3 singlis RLR forwards. 2 and 3 turn to the R at the beginning of the first singlis.]
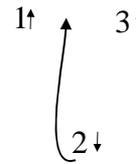
[2 does a doblis L back into the middle of 1 and 3, pivoting on the R foot and turning to the L.]
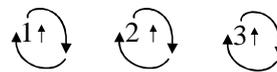
[All do 2 doblis RL for a 360 degree turn to the R.]

[finishing position]

Notes to Floor Plans

The dancers are indicated by the numbers 1, 2 and 3. They face the direction indicated by the small arrow which is beside the numbers. The path of each dancer and its direction is indicated by lines with arrowheads. Black arrowheads indicate a dancer is facing the way he or she is moving. White arrowheads indicate that a dancer is moving backwards while still facing forwards. R stands for right and L for left. The original choreographic instructions are given in bold. Instructions, steps etc which are not in bold and appear in square brackets beneath the original text are the author's additions where no steps are given in the original manuscript description.

Ly beus distonys

Section A

Trace

Section B

singlis   singlis   singlis   turn   come together
[singlis   doblis   doblis   ]

singlis   singlis   singlis   turn   come together
[singlis   doblis   doblis]

Section C

trett   retrett   turn
[doblis   ]   [doblis   ]

Eglamour

Section A   X3   Section B

1-3: Doble Trace   singlis   singlis

X3   Section A   X3   Section B   X3

singlis   1-3: outward and go behind   1-3: go out
[doblis   doblis   doblis   doblis]   [singlis singlis singlis]

Esperans

Section A

Trace _____

Section A

1-3: singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   trett _____

X3

Man 1   go compass_____   [obeysaunce]

[doblis_____   doblis_____] Men 2,3 singlis   singlis   singlis

Men 2,3 singlis   singlis   singlis

Section B

Trace _____

Section B

Man 1 singlis   singlis   singlis   half turn _____

[doblis _____   doblis _____]

Section B

Man 3 singlis   singlis   singlis   Man 2 singlis   singlis   singlis

Man 3 half turn _____

[doblis _____   doblis _____]

Section C   Section D

Man 1 return to place_____   Men 2,3   change places_____

[doblis _____   doblis _____ singlis   singlis ___   singlis   doblis _____]

Section E   Section F

change places | turn _____   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis

[singlis singlis   singlis   doblis ___]

Section G

Men 1,3 turn _____   Men 1,2,3 singlis ___   singlis ___   singlis

[doblis_____   ]

Prenes a gard

Section A   X2

Doble Trace _____

Section A   X3

1-3: lepe   lepe   turn _____

[doblis _____   doblis ____]

Section B

Man 2 singlis   singlis   singlis   half turn Man 1 turn _____

Man 1,3 retrett _____   [doblis_____   doblis_____]

Man 3 lepe

Section C   Section C   Section C

forward |: change places_____   Man 2 return to place _____

[doblis ___   doblis ___   doblis ___   doblis ___]   [singlis singlis   singlis half turn]

Section D   Section E

Man 1 turn ____   retrett _____   rake   flowerdelice_____

[doblis __   singlis singlis singlis _]   [doblis _____   doblis _____]

Man 2 turn ____   rake ____   retrett _____

Man 3 retrett _____   rake _____   turn

Section F

come together _____

[doblis _____   doblis _____   singlis _____   singlis __   singlis]

Talbott

Section A   X3

Doble Trace _____

Section B   Section B   Section C   Section D   Section E

trett _____   retrett _____   [singlis   singlis ___   singlis   doblis _____   ] turn
                                                                                                     [doblis]

Section F

brawle _____   come together _____   trett _____   retrett
[doblis _____   doblis _____   ]

Section G

singlis   singlis ___   singlis [turn]   singlis __   singlis ___   singlis   [turn - doblis]

Section H

doblis _____   doblis _____   2 rakis _____   turn
                                                                                             [doblis]

Northumberland (Page 1)

Section A

Trace _____

Section A

singlis ____ singlis ____ singlis ____ stop ____ trett ____ retrett ____

turn _____ singlis singlis ____ singlis ____ stop ____
[doblis _____ doblis _____]

Section A

trett _____ retrett _____ half turn _____
[slow singlis & bring feet together]

turn _____ singlis singlis ____ singlis ____ stop ____
[doblis _____ doblis _____]

Section A

trett _____ retrett _____ turn _____
[doblis ____ doblis ____]

every man a moving _____
[doblis _____ doblis ____ half turn singlis singlis ____ singlis ____ half turn]

Northumberland (Page 2)

Section B   Section C

singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   turn to face brawle——————   [doblis —]

Section C   Section C

[doblis—   ] turn to face brawle——————   [doblis .] [doblis—   ] turn to face lepe————————   lepe

Section B   Section C

all forward ——————————————————   half turn flowerdelice ——————————————

[doblis ————   singlis   singlis   singlis]   [singlis singlis — singlis —— doblis —]

Section D   X2   Section E

1-2: rak | retrett ————————   1:   flowerdelice ——————

     [singlis   singlis   singlis]   [singlis singlis singlis   doblis —]

                              2:   come together ————————————————————————

                              [singlis singlis singlis   doblis ———— doblis ————————   doblis]

Prenes in gre

Section A

Trace _____

Section A

singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   turn _____
                                                                                          [doblis _____]

Section A

singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis

Section B   X2

1: trace _____
2: rak _____   turn _____
                                                 [doblis _____   doblis _____]

Section C   Section C

singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   singlis   3 retretts _____
                                                                                          [singlis   singlis   singlis]

Section D

flowerdelice _____   change places and turn _____
[doblis _____   doblis _____   doblis _____   doblis _____]

Section E

flowerdelice _____   come together _____
[doblis _____   doblis _____   doblis _____   doblis _____]

Temperans

Section A

Trace _____

Section A

trett _____   retrett _____   singlis   singlis   singlis stop   retrett | go forth _____
[singlis   singlis   singlis]

Section A

go forth | retrett_____   doblis _____   doblis ___   half turn doblis _____
[singlis   singlis   singlis]

Section B

doblis half turn   trett _____   retrett _____   rake   rake   rake

Section A

flowerdelice _____   forward | change places _____
[doblis _____   doblis _____   doblis _____   doblis ___   singlis   singlis   singlis]

Section C   X3   Section D

1-2 singlis singlis singlis turn [doblis]   lepe   lepe   lepe   half turn_____   rest   half turn
3   singlis __   singlis __ singlis   [doblis_____   ]   [doblis]