

ALDERLEY MORRIS: the story so far

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THE ORIGINAL DANCERS

Four photographs from before WW1



Alderley Morris Dancers, c.1901



Alderley Morris Dancers, c.1911/1912



Alderley Morris Dancers, c.1911/12



Alderley Morris Dancers, c.1911/12

ALDERLEY MORRIS

(MMM interpretation)

Sequence of development

Late 2015

During an informal conversation with the Squire, he and I came to the conclusion that the club would benefit from an increase in the number of NW dances in our repertoire. As I had been kindly supplied by Keith Ashman with a copy of the electronic version which he had prepared of the MMM archive, I (somewhat foolishly) offered to look through it to see what possibilities there might be.

This broad-brush review confirmed what I already suspected, that for many of the locations in the NW for which we have mention of morris dancing, our records do not give much if any detail on the figures and steps of the dance. For some we know that a group of dancers was based there, but have no indication of how the dance was performed; for others we know (eg: from press reports) only that morris dancing took place there on some occasion but it is not even clear whether these were locally based dancers or a visiting group. Of the relatively few places (other than those already in the MMM repertoire) for which we had some detail of steps and figures, the material listed from Alderley Edge appeared to me to offer the best prospect for MMM (and it had the added appeal to me personally of being the nearest to where I live!). I reported this to the Squire, and inevitably he prevailed upon me to attempt an interpretation for the club.

Closer examination of the material showed several significant features:

- dancing activity by the team based at Alderley Edge took place only during the early years of the 20th century, spurred by a desire to have morris dancers taking part in processions arranged as part of coronation celebrations: of Edward VII (1902) and of George V (1912)
- dancers in the initial group were trained and led by an experienced dancer and teacher who came to them from Crewe, but was originally from Bolton; the later group were trained and led by a former member of the previous group
- dancers in the group formed for the 1902 celebration were all men, but for 1912 there were two teams, one of men and one of ladies
- in each case the team continued to perform at local events, but only for a few years
- three principal sources of material usable for interpretation of the steps and figures were available -
 1. notes made in the early 1960's by Dan Howison and Bernard Bentley (MMM members) recording the memories of several members of the original teams
 2. notes made by Roy Dommett of an interpretation taught at Sidmouth and Bath in 1977 and 1978 by David Robinson
 3. notes, also by Roy Dommett, of a similar version danced (probably in the early 1980's) by a ladies' morris team from Middlesex.

Early 2016

The death of Roy Dommett in November 2015 had prevented any direct contact with him about his notes, and I found that the Flowers of May team whose performance of the dance he had noted, was no longer active. However, I was able to contact David Robinson, now living in Bristol. He confirmed that he had taught a reconstruction of the dance at several workshops from 1977 onwards, and that it became a popular addition to the repertoire of many teams. He said that he had “loosely reconstructed the dance from the Howison/Bentley notes kindly provided by MMM at the time”, and suggested that I should construct my own version from the MMM archives and see what I came up with, as his version “was very much reconstructed using normal Cheshire dance figures”. With the encouragement of the Squire, I began to do so.

Comparison of figures showed sufficient correspondence between all three sources to conclude that in six cases essentially the same figure is being described. In two instances of a figure which was described in only two of the three sources, other supporting evidence was available within the MMM archives to support their consideration. One figure which appears in only one of the sources was also taken into consideration because of the widespread occurrence in NW morris of very similar elements.

Since the MMM repertoire gives a strong emphasis to static performance, I used these nine figures as the basis for an interpretation of the dance suitable for a stationary show. However the evidence about the team in the years before WWI makes it clear that much, if not all, performance was processional. In consequence, most of the figures could easily be used or slightly adapted to move the set forward for processional purposes, and together with two or three further potential figures mentioned in the sources, could constitute the basis for interpretation of a second, processional, version. I have sketched such a version out, but to date it is only the static version which has been introduced.

In discussion with the Squire and several senior members, it was agreed to hold some trial sessions with a limited number of dancers before introducing the dance to the club at normal Thursday practice. The aim was to establish how practicable the proposed figures and step sequences were, amend them as necessary, and consider the question of suitable music. These sessions began in late November 2015 and continued throughout the early months of 2016. The input by the dancers and musician proved to be vital in preparing, via successive revisions, an interpretation which could be offered to the rest of the club after the summer’s season of dancing out.

Autumn 2016/Spring 2017

Eight figures of the static version of the Alderley dance were introduced at Thursday practices after the August break. Practice continued into early 2017, but was intermittent, partly because of variable attendance, but also because preparation for public performances took precedence on a number of occasions.

Autumn 2017/2018

As practice of the dance was resumed after the summer dancing-out season, further refinement of the interpretation took place. This was based on comments and questions of clarification by dancers, and observation of features in which some difficulty was experienced by them. Progress was still slow for the reasons

mentioned above, and was further hampered by physical problems suffered by some dancers. Further attention was given to the music during this period. Initial consideration had been limited to three tunes which had been mentioned in the notes of the recollections of former dancers. Two of these were preferred for this interpretation, the other being found not to give a comparable impetus to the steps. In keeping with MMM practice for other NW dances, and to give greater musical variety for the benefit of audiences, musicians, and dancers, some further tunes would be required.

I discussed this with the Bandmaster, Tony Battilana, and we decided that it would be appropriate to use tunes that were current during the period of activity of the dancers from Alderley: 1900/01-1911/12. A search for such tunes began, bearing in mind their rhythm, phrase length and number of repeats, and the need for them to be playable on the various instruments available to our musicians, as well as their general musical appeal. The publicity given in 2018 to the centenary of extending the franchise to women drew attention to the activities of the women's suffrage movement in the early years of the 20th century and in so doing highlighted the song "The March of the Women" by Ethel Smyth. As this tune was composed in 1910 (to words by Cicely Hamilton), it was added to "Hunt the Hare" and the "Bluebell Polka" which we knew to have been used by the original teams. Similarly, Scott Joplin's "The Entertainer", written in 1902, was also introduced, recognising its continuing popularity.

During the year we also considered the matter of costume and what dancers should carry in their hands. There was general agreement that our standard MMM kit would be generally appropriate, despite some differences from what was worn by the original teams. However as it was evident, from both the recollections of former Alderley dancers and photographs taken at the time, that they wore shoes rather than clogs, it was decided that for this dance MMM should do so too, though not the patent leather footwear that was the choice in the early 1900's. The photographs in the MMM archive showed dancers in 1902 using sticks with ribbons, while in 1911 dancers (both men and women) were using sticks terminated with pom-poms. It was concluded after some discussion that sticks with pom-poms would be preferable so as to emphasise the distinction between Alderley and the other dances in our repertoire, which all come from north or east of Manchester. There was however some concern about the nature of materials to be used for the pom-poms and their durability, particularly in street performance conditions. The Ragman, Nick Roberson, undertook an exhaustive programme of testing alternative materials and methods of construction for appearance and durability. Once a satisfactory prototype had been produced, he then had the unenviable task of manufacturing a sufficient number of the same pattern for use by the club. His hard work is much appreciated.

An early public performance of eight figures of the dance took place in December 2018, in poor weather in St Ann's Square, Manchester, during our pre-Christmas show. Although not as successful as we might have wished, this was useful experience, and enabled us to concentrate on key points for further improving our familiarity with the sequence and precision of the dance in practices during the early months of 2019.

Spring 2019

As practices continued, it became possible to introduce the ninth figure of the interpretation, a simultaneous progressive hey in each file, which had not previously been attempted. This required dancers to adapt to a slight change in the sequence of figures as well as learning a new pattern of movement. It also triggered the introduction of another tune, and further work by the musicians to learn it. The tune chosen was the "Pig Ankle Rag", which was published in 1905, and is still familiar to many folk musicians. Because of limited time available for specific practice of the Alderley dance this figure only became moderately well integrated towards the end of the practice season. As a result no further public performance of the Alderley dance took place during the summer season of dancing out.

Autumn 2019

Upon resumption of regular practices, it became possible to practice the full nine figures of the dance with greater frequency and intensity, so that dancers have become able to perform with greater confidence and precision. Although more work on precision of stepping and movements is desirable, there can be a firm expectation of adding the Alderley dance to our regular performance repertoire in 2020.

ALDERLEY MORRIS

Background

Morris dancing appears to have been introduced to the Alderley area in 1901 or 1902, at the instigation of a local councillor, Daniel Hulme. This was in preparation for the celebration of the coronation of King Edward VII in 1902. The organisers recruited a Mr Billington from Crewe, who had been a dancer all his life, and had trained several troupes in the Crewe area. According to one informant, he was an engineer from Bolton who had moved to Crewe to work.

Mr Billington trained a group of about 14 men from Alderley Edge, Nether and Over Alderley, including Cllr Hulme, and danced as their leader. Ages of the dancers ranged from the twenties to the forties. Their costume was: plum-coloured breeches, open at the knee; white shirt; pink stockings; light blue skull-cap; with a diagonal sash and waist sash, worn in opposite fashion by each file; and patent leather shoes. Colours of the shoulder and waist sashes were differently reported by informants. Music was provided by a local brass band.

After dancing during the 1902 coronation celebrations, the troupe were invited to dance at various gentlemen's residences in the neighbourhood. They also danced at Crewe carnival, probably in the same year. The troupe disbanded after a year or so.

In 1911, the local council asked a member of the earlier team, Mr Frank Wood, to revive the morris dancers for the coronation of King George V. On this occasion two teams were formed: one of men and one of women. They both performed the same dance. Mr Wood was the leader of the men's team, who wore the same costume as the earlier team. The dancers took part in a procession, and visited Hare Hill and Birtles Hall. The following year they danced in the grounds of Alderley Park at a gathering of tenants held to celebrate the wedding of Blanche Stanley. The dancers also took part, possibly more than once, in the Wilmslow carnival. Once again, this troupe's activity lasted only a year or two.

Evidence about the dance was gathered in the early 1960s by Bernard Bentley and Dan Howison of Manchester Morris Men, who were able to speak to surviving members of both the original and the revived teams, as well as obtaining copies of photographs and local newspaper reports. Details of a version of the dance as performed elsewhere in the late 1970s and early 1980s were recorded by Roy Dommatt. All these materials are available in the MMM archives. The following document offers an interpretation of the dance, intended for practical use by MMM.

Material for the interpretation

The Dance

<i>Formation</i>	Longways set, 8 dancers in double file
<i>Music</i>	'Old 95' (earlier sources), Hornpipes eg Bluebell Polka, Hunt the Hare (later) Originally performed by a local brass band (Great Warford)
<i>Sticks</i>	Short, with red, white, and blue ribbons and 3 bells at each end. Later photographs show short sticks, with pom-poms at each end, one end a dark shade, the other pale. Sticks were held by the middle.
<i>Steps</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><u>1. Single step</u>: free foot lifted almost straight up, not flicked forward. One early source suggests that knees should be raised "pretty high".<u>2. Kick-up</u>: a single step in which the free leg is kicked forward, the knee straight and the leg at about 45 degrees.<u>3. Walk</u>: a firm slow march.

Arm Movements

1. Up - sticks horizontal at ear level, pointing forwards
2. Flick - in up position, sticks shaken horizontally by twist of the wrist, moving through an arc of 10/20 degrees. One shake per sgl step.
3. Down - Arms straight down at sides, sticks horizontal

In hey figures, when passing another person, outside arm is up, inside down, with sticks held as continuation of arms. Sticks tapped with passing person on 3rd beat, change arms on 4th.

Potential figures

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Step sequence</u>	<u>No. of steps</u>
1. Step Up	4sgl/4k/4sgl/2sgl,2k	16
2. Cross over	4sgl/2sgl,2k/4sgl/2sgl,2k	16
3. Sidle	(4sgl/4k/4sgl/2sgl,2k)x2	32
4. Partners cross	4sgl/2sgl,2k/4sgl/2sgl,2k	16
5. Corners cross	4sgl/2sgl,2k/4sgl/2sgl,2k	16
6. Stars	(4sgl/4k/4sgl/2sgl,2k)x2	32
7. Insides & Outsides	(16sgl/4wlk/4sgl/2sgl/2k)x2	64
8. Change on the side	4sgl/2sgl,2k/4sgl/2sgl,2k	16
9. Cast to Fours(Can-Can?)	(4sgl/4k/4sgl/2sgl,2k)x2	32
10. Hey on the sides	4wlk/32sgl/4sgl/4sgl/2sgl,2k	48
11&12. Half-hey & All-up	4wlk/4k//32sgl/4k/4wlk/8sgl/4wlk/4k	64

Notes

In two of the main sources there is no evidence of a repeated "chorus" figure. In RD's 1977/78 notes the Cross Over figure is termed "chorus" but is indicated as "optional through dance".

Several of the figures are unlike any in the current MMM NW repertoire, especially 2,3,7,8,9 and the final sequence of 11 & 12. In addition, a number of the figures, (notably 1,2,4,5,7,8, and possibly 10) could easily be used or slightly adapted to move the set forward for processional purposes. The sources indicate that the dance was done in procession.

It is, of course, not essential to perform all of these figures in any one performance of the dance, although 11 & 12 form a single finale, as 12 flows directly from 11 without dancers returning to their original places until the very end. Also some figures (eg: 5 & 6; 8 & 9) would perhaps appear rather similar to an audience, so that one of each pair could well be omitted if a shorter performance is desired.

The stationary sequence as currently developed does not incorporate Figs 10 or 11/12, but uses Fig 7 as the conclusion of a rearranged order.

ALDERLEY MORRIS

MMM interpretation

(current Oct 2019)

Sequence:

Step Up
Lines Across
Corners Cross
Change (on the side)
Stars
Fours (in line)
Sidle
Hey on the Sides
Insides (& Outsides)

Notes:

1. It is important to **make the set wide**, and keep that width throughout the dance.
2. **Start L foot**
3. There are **ONLY** three figures which involve **four** kick-ups in succession by all dancers together: **Step-Up; Stars; and Fours (in line)**. In **Sidle** it is only the active pairs who perform four kick-ups as they turn each other.
4. **All** figures, *apart from the **first** (Step-Up) and **last two** (Hey on the Sides, and Insides & Outsides)* proceed in two halves, each half finishing with **two** kick-ups, but remember that figures are NOT all the same length (figs 1,2,3 & 4 take 16 steps; Figs 5,6 & 7 take 32; Fig 8 takes 48; Fig 9 takes 32 x 2).
5. **Except** in the **first** and the **last two** figures, the kick-ups at the end of the first half occur when the dancer has moved from his "home" position to another position in his four (his partner's, his corner's, or his neighbour's). These kick-ups are performed facing **UP** (other than in Lines Across, where partners face).
6. **Sticks/Shakers:** for the current interpretation, MMM have agreed that shakers should be held in such a manner that:
 - in the **R** hand, the end with the **white** pom-pom comes uppermost when the shaker is held vertically (as if forming a RH star)
 - in the **L** hand the position is the reverse

This applies to all dancers, and has the result that when all are facing up in the set, and single-stepping with shakers held horizontally, **white** pom-poms are **forward** on the **outsides** of the set, and **red** ones on the **inside**.

Figures	No. of steps
<u>1. Step Up</u> Up & Flicks for sgl steps Down for k.ups	Facing up, 4sgl forward, 4k.up on the spot; then 4sgl back to place, 2sgl, 2k.up in place 16
<u>2. Lines across</u> Up & Flicks for sgl steps Down for k.ups	Turning in on 1 st step, 4sgl to cross by the R to partner's place and turn R into place to face partner. 2sgl 2 k.ups in partner's place. Repeat to return. 2sgl 2 k.ups in own place, facing partner 16
<u>3. Corners cross</u> Up & Flicks for sgl steps Down for k.ups NB: <i>corners should aim to pass each other with minimum clearance!</i>	Moving towards centre of their four on 1 st step, all four corners move directly to opposite corner positions in 6sgl (=4+2), passing their corner by the R and turning R into place on 5 th & 6 th steps to face UP . <i>[To achieve this, each dancer must pass through the centre of their four just <u>behind</u> the person who starts on their left]</i> Then 2 k. ups in opposite place, facing up . (8) Repeat to place, also passing R and turning R, in 6 sgl, then 2k.ups in place, facing up . (8) <i>NB To begin their returns, Nos 3 & 7 should turn to their L (shortest way)</i>
<u>4. Change (on the side)</u> Up & Flicks for sgl steps Down for k.ups NB: <i>dancers should take care to remain level with their partners during this figure.</i>	In 4sgl, 2 nd & 4 th couples (3,4; 7,8) come up (on a curved track) outside 1 st & 3 rd couples (1,2: 5,6) who move straight back, so that the couples change places, all facing up throughout. 2sgl, 2k.ups in neighbours' places. (8) Repeat to places, with 1 st and 3 rd couples coming up outside 2 nd and 4 th , who move back. 2sgl, 2k.ups in original places. (8)
<u>5. Stars</u> Up & Flicks for sgl steps. For k.ups, both arms extended at shoulder level, R hand in centre of star, both sticks held vertically.	Turning in on 1 st step, 2sgl in place, then 2sgl to move in and turn slightly to L, forming RH star on final hop of 4 th sgl step, with arms fairly well extended. 3k.ups to move star round halfway, one to face in <i>and</i> drop back to opposite line. (8)
Up & Flicks for last 6sgl, then Down for k.ups	Turning to face UP on 1 st step, 6sgl(=4+2), 2k.ups. (8) Repeat to places, continuing with RH star. (16)

6. Fours (in line)

- Up & Flicks for sgl steps In 4 sgl, 1st & 3rd couples (1,2; 5,6) cast out in a small loop while the 2nd & 4th couples (3,4; 7,8) move up between them and slightly closer to each other, to form lines of four across the set, facing **up**, positioned halfway between their original positions. **32**
(4)
- NB:** *Take care to ensure equal spacing between dancers in the lines of four.*
- Down for k.ups In lines of four, facing **up**, 4 k.ups, with a little more emphasis than in the rest of the dance. (4)
- Up & Flicks for sgl steps Then, In 4 sgl, 1st & 3rd couples cast again into original 2nd & 4th couples' places while 2nd and 4th couples continue forwards into original 1st & 3rd couples' places. (4)
- Down for k.ups In these places, facing **up**, 2 sgl, 2 k.ups, (4)
- Repeat**, with 2nd and 4th couples casting down. (16)

7. Sidle

- Up & Flicks for sgl steps **First corners(1,4; 5,8)**, turning on 1st step to face **across** the set, approach on the diagonal in 4 sgl steps, to meet side by side in centre of their four, linking R arms on 4th step. Then 4 k.ups turning as a couple clockwise, starting to the R, a quarter turn with each k.up. Then 4 sgl back to place, still facing across the set. **32**
(12)
- In k.ups, outer arm extended, with stick held vertically.
- Up & Flicks for sgl steps **Meanwhile**, 2nd corners 2sgl to turn to face across the set; then 2sgl in place; then stand still, hands down, while the 1st corners complete their movement. (4)
- Down for k.ups **Then, all:** 2sgl, 2k.ups, turning to face **up** on 1st step. (4)
- Repeat**, but with 2nd corners sidling, linking L arms, turning as a couple anticlockwise, and sidling back to place, while first corners turn to face in 2sgl, then 2sgl in place, then stand still. (12)
(4)
- Then, all:** 2sgl, 2k.ups, turning to face **up** on 1st step. (4)

8. Hey on the sides

NB: *this figure comprises two simultaneous **progressive** heys, one in each file. Note that the heys are **parallel**, not mirror images. The track for each dancer needs to be a series of successive curves to R and L of the line of his file, with L loops at the ends. Maintaining **precise timing** and **exact distances** between dancers, both along the files and across the set, is **essential** to achieve the best effect.*

Up & Flicks for sgl steps
Tap sticks at waist level with each oncoming dancer, on 3rd step as you pass, R hand on R pass, L hand on L pass.

In the first four steps of 48 sgl, **top couple** start the hey. **48** by moving a short distance forward to their R and then looping L to return to position facing **down**. Then in the next 4 sgl, pass R with 2nd couple, on **3rd** step. Continue, passing a dancer on **3rd** step of each group of 4 steps, alternately passing L then R.

Up & Flicks for sgl steps,

Others step on spot, and join in as they are met by the top couple. At the top or bottom of the set, loop L in 4 sgl, then pass R again.

The hey continues for each of the top two couples until they are back in place **facing UP**, when they step in place until **4th** couple have completed the hey by making their final L loop. (44)
(Note that this requires 12 sgl in place for 1st cpl on their return, 8 sgl for 2nd cpl, and 4sgl for 3rd cpl)

Down for k.ups All facing up: 2 sgl, 2 k.ups in place (4)

9. Insides & Outsides

Up & Flicks for sgl steps Top couple turning in, lead a double cast in 16 sgl steps down inside of set and back up the outsides, making the set a little wider. **64** (16)

Up, no flicks, for walk All, turning in on 1st step, 4 *slow* (=half speed ❷) walk steps into single line, odds above evens. (4=8)

Down for k.ups **Turning up on 1st step**, 4sgl, then 2sgl, 2 k.ups. (8)

Up & Flicks for sgl steps Then, led by top couple, in 16 sgl steps cast out to own sides, move to the bottom of the set, and come up again in single file in the centre, odds above evens. (16)

Up, no flicks, for walk Odds turning R on 1st step, evens L, 4 *slow* walk steps **backwards** out to place. (4=8)

Up & Flicks for sgl steps **Turning up on 1st step**, 4sgl, then 2 sgl, 2k.ups.❸ (8)
Down for k.ups

❶ To achieve this neatly: on 4th sgl lower R arm, then crook elbow, and swing it up and forward to link with corner **on final hop before first k.up**.

❷ ie: each walk step taking the same time (4 beats) as two sgl or two k.ups

❸ When making this the concluding figure, replace final k.up by bringing R foot down smartly with a "snap", at the same time raising both hands.

ALDERLEY MORRIS

Comments on the first version of the Interpretation

The Dance

- Music:* Our musicians need to be consulted on this, of course, but there was no indication that tunes were specifically associated with individual figures. As very few tunes are mentioned in the sources, this gives the opportunity for us to make use of a variety of tunes of our own choice, and to decide for ourselves whether to keep a separate tune for each figure or not. The interpretation has assumed that even multiples of 8 bars for a figure are desirable.
- Sticks:* Pom-poms would make a nice contrast to our other NW sticks but may deteriorate rapidly from careless putting away and transporting, and may not be suitable for tapping, in the heys.
Could the very short sticks have been textile bobbins?
- Arms:* (Up) If too many men have physical problems with shoulders, maybe holding sticks at shoulder level would help. Sources are not consistent on this: I've kept to RD's notes.

(Flick) Again sources are inconsistent: I've followed RD's notes here too, but I'm not sure how "one shake" should be defined: what I feel is natural I would call two shakes!

(Down) I presume "straight" does *not* mean stiff, but reasonably relaxed.

(Heys) RD's notes use the term "Aeroplanes" for the arm movements here. I've seen several ladies teams use this style in heys, with the arms held straight and the sticks held as a continuation of them with sticks tapped at the bottom of the range of movement as dancers pass. RD's 1980s notes make no mention of the level at which the tap takes place; DH's notes say "Sticks were tapped at waist level on passing"; RD's 1977/78 notes agree with this, and give the best illustration of how it might be done. We'll need to decide how to do it: if dancers pass close it's easier at the bottom, but if we pass wide by adopting a curved track and/or bend the arms, waist level is feasible.
- Potential figures:* (a) Because there is no repeated "chorus" figure in this interpretation the total length of the dance (in bars) is not particularly great: in fact, Colne, Mossley, and Oldham are longer, Medlock is much the same, and only Godley Hill and New Mills shorter.

(b) It is clear from the early sources that there was no fixed order of figures (the sequence for each individual performance was decided by the leader, and the dancers wrote it down on their shirt cuffs!)

(c) One early source stated that the figures were known by numbers. Would we want to adopt this practice for this dance?

(d) Learning the step sequences and co-ordinating with them the arm movements for each of the 12 figures might prove a bit of a challenge! I think we would have to build it up quite gradually.

Interpretation

- Fig 1. Step Up There is no indication in the sources whether this was done on the spot or not. It could even be done moving forward, then back. If done moving forward it would enable processional performance, especially if a forward moving Step Up were to be performed not just as Fig 1, but inserted after every two or three figures. *(see Fig P1 of the suggested processional figures attached)*
- Fig 2. Cross Over Interpreted here (following RD's 1980s notes) as a stationary figure. However, DH's notes (from speaking to an early 1900s dancer) state: "cross with partner (facing up the street), kick up", while RD's 1977/78 notes specify "cross over, face straight across (4 bars), face up and step, ending with 2 k.ups (4 bars)". This suggests a figure very similar to that in the Tideswell dance, and would naturally be processional if the crossing is performed on a forward diagonal. In view of this, I propose dancers should face up throughout, even when performing it as a stationary figure.
- Fig 3. Sidle The main sources differ about how the kick-ups in the centre are done: we probably need to try it out with a four, but I think this way has some merits.
- Fig 4. & Fig. 5.
Corners Cross/
Partners Cross Again the main sources differ, about what could have been the same figure. This is because of ambiguity over whether the crossing is on the diagonal (corners) or across the set (partners), reinforced in one case by an indication of the direction of turns.
I have "resolved" this by giving both interpretations!
- Fig 4. may appear similar to Fig 2. when that is done as a stationary figure, but differs from it in the direction of turns. The difference would be even more noticeable if in Fig 2. dancers face up while crossing.
- In Fig 5 in this interpretation dancers follow a similar track to that in Corners Cross in Mossley.
- Fig 6. Stars This is common to both main sources.
- Fig 7. Insides &
Outsides This is described in RD's notes only. It appeals because
(a) there is some family resemblance to other Insides and Outsides figures in other dances in the MMM repertoire.
(b) it could easily be danced in such a way that the movements back up the set in both halves would make it processional.
- Fig 8. Change on
the Side Common to both main sources.
- Fig 9. Cast to 4s Unique to RD's notes, this should prove a very showy figure.
- The casting movement is very similar to that in a figure from the Glossop dance, called First Sets (or Inside/Outside/Back) – see D.Cleary's account, 1993
- When in lines of four, doing k.ups, should dancers put arms round each other's shoulders?

- Fig 10. Hey on the Sides Common to both main sources. Note that these are parallel heys. Could possibly be made processional, especially if all start moving at the same time, although the sources clearly indicate that this was *not* the case.
- Final Sequence Described only in RD's notes, but a striking and attractive ending **if** we can do it all with sufficient precision.
- Fig 11. Half-hey To achieve the best effect (and prevent confusion!) this would require careful attention to timing of the passes and maintaining the correct distance between dancers. Practice will be critically important.
- Fig 12. Sausage & All-up A dramatic closing figure. It would need careful development to establish the correct spacing apart of files (sides of the sausage) and direction of final turns into place.

General

(a) R or L foot start? No help from the sources!

(b) The number of figures which would lend themselves to processional performance offers the option of development of one or more processional versions. Alternatively (or additionally), a processional version or versions could be achieved using the Step Up as a repeated chorus figure (as indicated in RD's 1977/78 notes), between a selection of the above figures.

ALDERLEY MORRIS

Sources

This interpretation uses source material from MMM Archives, comprising:

1. notes by Dan Howison (1962/63) with information (incl. photographs) obtained from three members of the early 1900s team
2. note by Bernard Bentley (no date) with information supplied by a lady who had danced with the ladies' team at the time of George V's coronation in 1911 - "The men and women did the same dance but composed separate teams."
3. extracts from a local newspaper reporting events in which the Alderley morris dancers had taken part in 1911 (with photo) and 1912.
4. notes by Roy Dommett describing the Alderley dance:
 - (a) "as danced by the Flowers of May", probably in the early 1980s (there are conflicting dates given), giving a detailed account of the steps, arm movements, and figures danced;
 - (b) "taught by D Robinson at Sidmouth 1977, and at Bath, Feb 1978", with a similarly detailed, though slightly differing, description. On realising that "D. Robinson" was probably the Dave Robinson who had been Derek Froome's son-in-law, I was able to contact him in January 2016. He confirmed that he had taught this dance at several workshops from 1977 onwards, and that it was his belief that he was the only person to do so. He described his version as "loosely reconstructed from the Howison/Bentley notes kindly provided by MMM at the time", and encouraged me to make my own interpretation from the MMM archives, as his was "very much reconstructed using normal Cheshire dance figures".

The principal sources used for the interpretation of the figures were:

- DH's notes of details recollected by Mr Frank Wood, who was a member of the troupe which danced in celebrations of the coronation of Edward VII (1902) and later revived, taught and led the men's team which danced in celebrations for the coronation of George V (1911). Mr Wood suggested that they danced 12 figures in all, but could only recall details of 8.
- RD's notes of the much later Flowers of May version, which describe 12 figures, of which the final three form a continuous finale. No information was given about the Flowers of May, but I have subsequently discovered that they were a "ladies clog morris" team associated with the Herga Folk Club of Pinner, Middlesex. The dance team now (2015) appears to be defunct.
- RD's notes of the version taught at Sidmouth and Bath in 1977 and 1978, which describe 11 figures, of which 8 correspond with the Flowers of May account.

In the case of six figures there is sufficient correspondence between these three sources to conclude that essentially the same figure is described (see table below).

Step Up appears only in RD's 1980s notes, but because such a figure is virtually universal in NW morris, I have presumed it overwhelmingly likely to have formed part of the Alderley dance. Moreover, the Cross Over figure in RD's 1977/78 notes begins with stepping "on the spot" for 8 bars.

Insides & Outsides is based on the description given by RD (Flowers of May version), rather than the less detailed reference in DH's notes to the "usual 'outsides' figure", because it represents an interesting variation on this common theme. In RD's 1977/78 version, however, that name is given to Fig 8. of this interpretation, while Insides and Outsides are noted as two separate, essentially processional, figures.

Cast to Fours/Can-Can also appears only in RD's notes(both versions). However, it is included because there is evidence in MMM archives that a similar figure formed part of the Glossop dance, and it has a general resemblance to *One Half* in the Oldham dance (if that figure were inverted).

Half-hey and All-up in this interpretation condense into two the three final figures described in RD's notes. There is however nothing comparable in DH's notes, which suggests that they are "normal Cheshire dance figures" of Dave Robinson's reconstruction. For current purposes they have not therefore been included in the stationary sequence detailed above. They could nevertheless have considerable appeal as a finale and so have been shown for general consideration, although their inclusion would significantly extend the length of the sequence.

<u><i>This interpretation</i></u>	<u><i>DH notes</i></u> <u><i>(1962/63)</i></u>	<u><i>RD notes (1980s)</i></u>	<u><i>RD Notes</i></u> <u><i>(1977/78)</i></u>
Fig 1. Step Up	✗	✓	✗
Fig 2. Cross Over	✓	✓	✓
Fig 4/Fig 5. Partners Cross/Corners Cross	✓	✓	✓
Fig 8. Change on the Side	✓	✓	✓
Fig 6. Stars	✓	✓	✓
Fig 9. Cast to Fours (Can-Can)	✗	✓	✓
Fig 3. Sidle	✓	✓	✓
Fig 7. Insides & Outsides	✗	✓	✗
Fig 10. Hey on the Sides	✓	✓	✓
Fig 11/12. Half-hey & All-up	✗	✓	✓?

NB

The three figures (Outsides, Insides, and Walk) which appear in RD's 1977/78 notes but not in his 1980s notes are all processional movements. They are not included in this interpretation. In addition, the figure in RD's 1980s notes which equates to Fig 2. Cross Over in this interpretation is described as "processional figure". The details differ from those in the other sources, especially in indicating 8 bars of stepping before the first crossing movement.

These figures, together with Fig 1. Step Up, could be used as the basis for development of a processional version. Some suggestions are appended

ALDERLEY MORRIS - MUSIC

Tunes for Alderley Dance
25/4/2019

Sequence:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Hunt the Hare (AB=16 bars) | (A) Step Up (B) Lines across |
| Bluebell Polka:(AB=16 bars) | (A) Corners Cross (B) Change on the sides |
| The Entertainer:(AB=32 bars) | (A) Stars (B) Fours (in line) |
| The March of the Women:(AB=16 bars) | (A+B) Side |
| Pig Ankle Rag:(AB=24 bars): | (A+B) Hey on the Sides |
| The Entertainer:(AB=32 bars) | (A+B) Insides & Outsides |

Hunt the Hare

[A] 3 D Em A 3 D Em Em D

[B] 7 D D A A 3

12 D Em A 3 D Em D

Bluebell Polka

[A] 3 G G D C [B] D G 3 G

G D C G D D

13 C D D D D C C D

ALDERLEY MORRIS - MUSIC

The Entertainer

Scott Joplin

A.B

[A]

G G7 C G G D G G G7 C G
A D G G7 C G G D G
G G7 C Cm G D G

[B]

G G C Cm G D G
G D A D G G
C Cm G C G A7 D G

The March of the Women

Ethel Smyth 1910

A.B

[A]

D D G D D D

[B]

D D A G G D
D D G D D

ALDERLEY MORRIS - MUSIC

Pig Ankle Rag

A.B

Trad -after "Pig Ankles - A Grotesque Intermezzo" by M E Williams (1905)

[A]

6

10

14 [B]

18

22

A7 A7 D D

A7 A7 D D7

G D A7 D

A7 A7 D D

G D A7 D

ALDERLEY MORRIS

Processional figures suggested for MMM

Arms	Figure	No. of Steps
<u>Fig P1. Step Up & walk</u>		
Up & Flicks for sgl steps	Facing up and moving forward:	32
Down for k.ups	4sgl, 4k.up, 8walk	16
Up, no flicks, for walk	4sgl, 2sgl, 2k.up, 8walk	16
<u>Fig P2. Cross over</u>		
Up & Flicks for sgl steps	While facing up, 4sgl to cross on forward diagonal	32
Down for k.ups	to partner's place, odds in front of evens,	
Up, no flicks, for walk	2sgl, 2k.ups on opposite side.	8
	8walk forward	8
	Repeat 4sgl on forward diagonal to return to own	
	side(<i>evens in front of odds?</i>) 2sgl, 2k.ups in place.	8
	8walk forward	8
<u>Fig P3. Advance Inside</u>		
Up & Flicks	All 16 sgl: 1 st cpl cast out to face down, moving out	32
	a little, as the other dancers in their file pass up	
	between them, each pair in turn casting out above	
	the preceding pair. After casting out, step in new	
	place until the end of the phrase.	16
	<i>[The set is now in reverse order, facing down</i>	
	<i>street]</i>	
	Then in 16 sgl, 1 st cpl cast in to dance up between	
	the files, other dancers in turn casting up to follow	16
	the 1st cpl as they pass.	
	<i>[The set is now in order facing up street, 1 set</i>	
	<i>length (at least) in advance of its original position]</i>	
<u>Fig P4. Walk</u>		
Up, no flicks, for walk	4walk, on forward diagonal, to centre of set, odds	32
	in front of evens. 12walk in single file up street.	16
	4walk out on forward diagonal to reform double file	
	set. 12 walk in double file up street.	16
<u>Fig P5. Advance Outside</u>		
Up & Flicks for sgl steps	Similar to P3, all 16sgl, but 1 st cpl cast in to begin,	32
	and remaining dancers pass them on the outside,	
	each pair in turn casting in above the preceding	
	pair. After casting in, step in new place until the	
	end of the phrase.	16
	<i>[The set is now in reverse order, facing down</i>	
	<i>street, partners close together]</i>	
	Then in 16 sgl, 1 st cpl cast out to dance up outside	
	the files, other dancers in turn casting up to follow	
	the 1st cpl as they pass.	16
	<i>[The set is now in order facing up street, 1 set</i>	
	<i>length (at least) in advance of its original position]</i>	

