



# THE RUMWORTH MORRIS OF BOLTON

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## The Morris Dance from Holme Chapel

*This notation is copyright by The Rumworth Morris of Bolton*

*This dance, as performed by Rumworth, was interpreted and adapted from the written notation of Fred Hamer who collected it in 1938. The notation was found in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library where it had been mistakenly filed under Holmes Chapel, which is in Cheshire. Holme Chapel is in fact near Burnley in the Pennines and the dance is typical of dances from that region.*

### The Set

Normally we refer to the position of dancers in the set using expressions like "Left hand file", "Right hand file", "First couple(s)" etc. or more usually just by the dancers' names. In fact, every dancer not only always dances in the same file (sashes are worn on inside shoulders!) but also usually dances in the same couple in each "four". Since we now do the dance in multiples of sets of four (usually 8 dancers but sometimes with 12 dancers), for the purposes of this notation the dancers are numbered as follows:

1	2
3	4

The movements for the other 4's in the set are identical to the top four

N.B. Rumworth always dance in "big" sets (at least 8 feet between dancers in each file and the 2 files should be at least 10 feet apart)

The dance is an "Outside Foot" dance. Steps and Hand movements are given for Odd Numbered Dancers. Even numbers should mirror the movements *except where otherwise noted*. Each dancer holds a stiff rope about 10 inches long (called a "mollie" or "tiddler") in each hand. They are held at one end, with a loop passing around the wrist and are spirally bound with coloured ribbons with ribbon streamers about 6 inches long at the free end.

### Steps

There are 3 basic steps used throughout the dance; the polka step, a walking step and a high spring caper.

**Polka Step:** this is the standard Lancashire Morris polka step

**Walking step:** exactly what it says!

**High Spring Caper** consists of a spring from one foot into the air landing on the opposite foot with the free leg held high on landing (we commonly refer to this movement as a f\*\*\*\*ing great jump!)

### Hand Movements

These are described within the description of the figures. However, there are two main movements involving circles made above the head, **twists** and **circles**. In both cases the movements are made with the hand coming towards the face from the front, and away from the head at the back

**Twists:** the movement is all done from the wrist

**Circles:** the movement is done from the elbow *and* wrist making the movement much bigger

## **Fall back**

The dance starts with Fall Back and Step and Turn which are danced as a chorus between all figures.

Facing up in two columns, starting on outside foot, 4 walking steps backwards (l r l r), then two walking steps forwards (l r) followed by a high spring caper (l ∩ r) finishing with left foot held as high as possible. Repeat movement, turning in to face across during the final caper (Bar 8).

Hands are as follows: Start with both hands above head, arms fairly straight. During the first 2 walking steps the outside (left) arm performs 2 counter-clockwise horizontal circles (i.e. the hand starts by coming towards the face from the front, and away from the head at the back -1 per step) while the inside (right) arm is swung out to the side in a wide sweep finishing with the hand held across the front of the body just below waist level. This is a slow flourish and the hand should only arrive in position at the end of the 2nd step. (In the circles the movement comes from both the elbow and wrist) On the next 2 steps the movements are repeated with the inside hand making the circles (clockwise) and the outside arm performing the flourish. The original movement is repeated for the 2 forward walking steps and then the hands are swung round in wide outside circles and up in front of the body to finish high above the head during the final caper with the molliés held upright. Repeat all for bars 5-8, turning in to face partners during the final spring caper

## **Step and Turn**

Facing partners all dance 2 polka steps, (left foot across first), and then make a complete 360° turn up (counter clockwise) with 3 walking steps (l r l) and finish feet together facing partner. Repeat the 2 polka steps and then make a complete 360° turn to the left with two walking steps (l r) followed by a high spring caper (l ∩ r) finishing with left foot held as high as possible.

Hands are as follows: During the first polka step the left hand is held above the head and makes 3 quick twists counter-clockwise (the movement is produced entirely from the wrist - the arms should not make circles) while the right hand is placed in the small of the back. Hand movements are reversed for the second polka step. During the three walking steps both hands are held above the head and make three circles above the head in a horizontal plane, right hand clockwise, left hand counter-clockwise (one circle per step) and are held out to the side at shoulder level during the feet together. Repeat during bars 5-8 but throw both hands up during the spring caper as in the Fall Back

N.B. Although even numbers mirror the steps and hand movements, the turns are made differently. The rule is "All turn UP" during bars 3-4 and "All turn LEFT" during bars 7-8.

Effectively this means that Odd Numbers turn to the LEFT both times whilst Even Numbers turn LEFT then RIGHT

## **Order of figures:**

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

#### **Figure 1 – Partners Cross**

Bars 1-4 Partners change places passing left shoulders and turn counter-clockwise to face.

Steps: 3 polka steps starting left foot across, followed by a high spring caper (r ∩ l)

Hands: alternate high twists as in Step and Turn, left hand first, with free hand in small of back during the polkas and throw both hands up during the spring caper as before.

Bars 5- 8 Cross over to place passing left shoulders once again and turn counter-clockwise (odd numbers 270°, even numbers 90°) to finish facing up

Steps: 3 polka steps starting right foot across, followed by a high spring caper (l ∩ r)

Hands: alternate high twists as in Step and Turn, right hand first, with free hand in small of back during the polkas and throw both hands up during the spring caper as before.

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

#### **Figure 2 – Corners Cross**

This is performed in exactly the same way as Partners Cross except that dancers change place with their corner i.e. No1 changes places with No4, whilst No2 changes places with No3, all 4 dancers passing left shoulders simultaneously

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

### **Figure 3 – Swing Partners**

Bars 1-4 Partners advance, grip right elbows and make a full turn clockwise, release grip and face each other

Bars 5-8 Partners grip left elbows, make a full turn counter-clockwise, release grip and fall back into place to face up.

Steps: Walking step throughout, starting on left foot, finishing with a change caper as in Fall Back

Hands: Circles above the head in a horizontal plane, as usual. Both hands during the advance and fall back, free hand continues circling while elbows are gripped

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

### **Figure 4 – Swing Corners**

This is a Right and Left hand star figure performed like Swing Partners, corners gripping their opposite corner's hand rather than elbow,

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

### **Figure 5 – Insides**

Bars 1-4: Nos 1 & 2 move forward and then turn in to face down and move down the set to the 2nd couple's place. Meanwhile Nos 3 & 4 move up the outside of the set and on reaching the 1st couple's place turn in to face down behind the 1st couple.

Bars 5- 8 Nos 1 & 2 cast out and move up the outside of the set to place whilst the 2nd couple move down the middle of the set and on reaching their original place turn out to finish facing up. All dancers are now in their original position

Steps: Walking step throughout starting on the left foot and finishing with a high spring caper as in Fall Back

Hands: Alternate circles with free hand "flourish" on the walking steps and circle and up for the spring caper as in Fall Back

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

### **Figure 6 – Repeat Partners Cross**

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

### **Figure 7 Repeat Corners Cross**

### **Fall Back & Step and Turn**

At the end of the Step and Turn instead of a spring caper finish feet together (as in bars 1-4), dancers moving towards partners bringing the two files closer together for the next figure

### **Figure 8 – Tickle Our Martha (Cross Morris) *N.B. the stepping is identical for all dancers***

Partners change places as follows:

Step forward on the Left foot, pivot on the ball of the foot to turn 180 counter-clockwise into partner's place, step back onto right foot and then take 2 steps on the spot (l r). Repeat to place.

Mark time on the spot for 4 steps (l r l r)

Hands: Figure 8 Waves – hands are held at waist level and are swung round in front of body in a Figure 8, first inward (i.e. Right Hand counter-clockwise and Left Hand clockwise) then outward (i.e. Right Hand clockwise and Left Hand counter-clockwise)

### **Step and Turn (*steps as usual but slightly faster than normal*)**

### **Figure 9 - Nancy Dawson (Corners)**

This is performed in exactly the same way as "Tickle Our Martha" but Corners change places thus: No1 changes places with No4, whilst No2 changes places with No3, all 4 dancers moving simultaneously. During the final 4 walking steps dancers move backwards to original places (and spacing)

### **Step and Turn (*steps as usual but slightly faster than normal*)**

At the end of this figure dancers finish the final turn facing up and remain motionless with free foot held high and both hands held high above head until signalled to lower them!

**The Music:**

We always dance Holme Chapel to the following tunes:  
Alderley Coconut, Rochdale Coconut and Cross Morris  
See the music notation for the sequence.

# The Rumworth Morris of Bolton Holme Chapel



## Alderley Coconut



## Rochdale Coconut



Alderley Coconut ABA ABA  
Rochdale Coconut ABA ABA ABA  
Alderley Coconut ABA ABA AB  
Cross Morris - see separate sheet

arrangement by The Rumworth Morris of Bolton



# Holme Chapel Cross Morris

