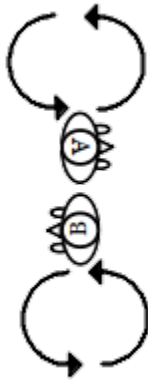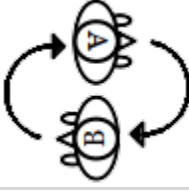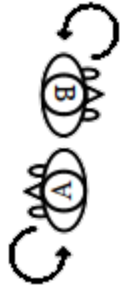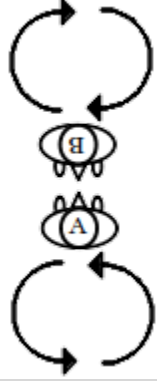# Prenes in Gre de Duobus (Gresley; choreography by Gaita)

Tim McDaniel, in the SCA Daniel de Lincoln, 25 March 2019

Phrase	My Calls	Steps	Beats	Picture	Source
A	Two doubles	Forward 2 doubles with inside hands.	8		Trace forthright 6 singlis;
A	Partner turn	Full turn by the right hand in 2 doubles. So B has to half-twirl in no time, do the turn, then half-twirl in no time to face forward again.	8		ather torne other aboute,
A	Two doubles	Forward 2 doubles with inside hands.	8		and forthright 6 singlis agen.
B	Rake left, rake right	1 diagonal step left forward. 1 diagonal step right forward.	4		After the end of the trace, rak both togeder
B	Turn away to face	3/4-turn single away to face each other.	4		and torne.
B	Side past	Side left (passing right shoulders) and pass, for 2 doubles.	8		Then face to face 6 singlis, ethir contrary oder,
B	Back singles, right shoulders	Back up 3 singles (step, close, step, close, step, close), ending right shoulder to right shoulder.	8		and 3 retrettes ayen.

C, pause, C, pause	Big circle left	Full-turn single to the left in 2 doubles: double, pause and acknowledge partner, double. As before, end right shoulder to right shoulder.	4 + 4		Then a flowrdelice of both at onys.
A	Exchange	Half-turn single to exchange places, again ending right shoulder to right shoulder.	4		Then change places
	Turn to face	3/4-turn single away to face each other.	4		and torne face to face.
B	Big cast to proper	Cast (lord's left, lady's right) in 2 doubles. Take inside hands, ending proper and rotated left 90 degrees.	8		Then a flowrdelice and come togeder.

Source

An introduction to the Gresley dances is in Emma Dansmeyla and Martin Bildner, "More Dances from the Gresley Manuscript", Known World Dance Symposium VII, http://rendance.gyges.org/content/seven_gresley_dances/KWDS_VIII_Notes.pdf. Their main page is at http://rendance.gyges.org/, for the Ontario Renaissance Dance Guild.

This dance is called both "Prenes in gre" and "Pernes on gre" in the Gresley manuscript. Both the steps and the music are given. Gaita has a page at http://www.gaita.co.uk/. It's

on their CD "Trobyll me the bordon: Dances from the 15th Century" by Gaïta. You should order both the CD and the booklet -- they are separate purchases.

As they play it, it's hard to tell when the dance starts. There is a shawm drone, with two ... pulses? ... of louder notes at about 3 and 4 seconds. The dance starts just after 5 seconds. The musicians vary the melody in the middle in various ways, but this doesn't signal the end. The rendition ends at 2:53, with 5 repeats of the dance.

The rendition is fast, so there's not much mercy if you fall behind, and you're doomed if you get totally lost and can't hear when it restarts. And five repetitions is a lot. I find it better to make a version that has only two repetitions and slows the tempo by some amount (-20%, I think). And I teach several walkthroughs.

Dance

This is not a dance for anyone who gets dizzy. There are six turns, four of them in sequence. In this redaction, both dancers do four out of six turns in the same direction: lords are RLLRLL; ladies are RRLRLR.

With a fast tune, it's hard to call it fast so that people can understand and react in time. I suggested possible calls in the table at the top, but call whatever works for you.

Gaita's instructor at Known World Dance Symposium in Germany called it "the 666 dance". That's because the source has it start with "6 singlis", a turn in the same time as "6 singlis", and "6 singlis agen". This first part, up through siding past and backing towards each other, tends to be easier to remember.

After that, the steps are a bit challenging because (1) it feels like sort of an arbitrary set of steps, (2) there's lots of turning without obvious quick-to-call common calls (unlike, for example, "set and turn" or "handed hey for four"), and (3) Gaita plays it pretty fast, as I discussed above.

I've changed my mind several times about the reconstruction, mostly to make the flow of turning work smoothly. This is already somewhat mutated from Gaita's version. The goals of the current version are (1) end with the set rotated one quarter so that you don't progress forward and hit the wall, and (2) don't have the ladies do four right turns in succession.

About that hitting the wall: I've contemplated having J-shaped moves when singling backwards, to cause the couple to be side by side facing the head (instead of rotated, as here), to make each time through go down the path of previous times through. That would make it more practical for a hall that's longer than it is wide. But it makes it a

little harder to do that backing up.

I've also contemplated having the final turn be in the other direction so that the set ends up *improper* (and rotated 90 degrees right instead of rotated 90 degrees left). I've seen suggestions that some Italian dances did every other verse "improper". In this way, each dancer would get an equal number of left turns and right turns over the whole dance. But then they've have to learn two versions of the same dance (A and B, as I notate them here), and it's hard enough to remember all the turning when you're consistently A or B.

If you can figure out a more practical set of turns, or a better interpretation, I would *love* to hear about it.

The URL for this page is http://www.panix.com/~tmcd/dance/gresley /prenes_in_gre.html. A ZIP file of all my Gresley instructions is at http://www.panix.com

/~tmcd/dance/gresley/gresley.zip. W3C HTML 3.2 ✔