

Veronica Ryan.
The Buck and Wing Steps.
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All previous volumes in the Newcastle Series, with the exception of that devoted to Tiny Allsion, have set out to record, as accurately as possible, the steps of a dancer, or on occasions, dancers, the steps being collected directly from the individuals concerned. The steps were notated from the dancing and collecting of two researchers, Madelaine Smith and Theresa Hindle, supplemented by interviews with a number of Veronica's pupils and family members.

Veronica Ryan, (nee Darmody) was born in XXXX. She died in 1985. She had learned from Jim Parkinson (d1949), who was reputed to be able to dance on a piece of glass without breaking it. Jim Parkinson taught in the parlour of his house in Hollins Land, Accrington, using a small roll-up dancing mat for the purpose. Although initially only teaching clog dance, he latterly taught tap. Veronica stopped going to classes at the age of about 16.

In about 1940, Veronica began a dance class in Accrington, Lancashire, teaching clog, tap and stage dancing. She also organised concerts at which her pupils could show off what they had learned. On these occasions (or at least some of them) her group was known as "The Happy Steppers". It is of note that one of her troupe, Harrison Birtwhistle, went on to become a well-known classical composer. The class appears to have stopped in the early 1950s.

In addition to the "Buck and Wing" steps published here, Veronica Ryan also knew steps in waltz time (also known as The Dutch Dance) and a number of hornpipe steps.

It is, of course, difficult to be precise as to stylistic differences when collating material at second hand from a number of sources, and inevitably, the notations given are something of a compromise. This is particularly so as she was very elderly and effectively unable to demonstrate step when Madelaine Hollis and Theresa Hindle visited her in the early 1980s. However it seems reasonably certain that Veronica's shuffles were straight as a number of informants mentioned this. I have notated these as in :C,C in the notations which follow.

The initial notations were made over the weekend of 15th and 16th February 1986, when Theresa Hindle taught Steps 1-5 at a weekend of dance organised by the Lancashire Wallopers dance team in Leyland, Lancashire. I interviewed Theresa Hindle, in company with Ian Craigs and Alex Fisher in Accrington on 15th January 1994, when further steps and parts of steps were obtained. A further interview took place, on this occasion in company with Alex Fisher and Anne Crane, on 3rd January 1996, although little extra information was obtained concerning this routine.

Finally, I must mention an extra complication. Theresa Hindle originally learned from a teacher by the name of Jimmy McLoughlin, starting when she was about five in 1945 or 1946. She had lessons for about three or four years, until Jimmy died. However, in the 1980s, when she began a dancing class and obtained information from Veronica Ryan, she composed, for her class, a routine known as "Falkringen" (named after a folk dance group from Falkenberg, Sweden). The routine, as collected on 9th and 10th February 2002, contained the same Steps 1-5 (save in fine detail of foot

Unit E

a	catch out		RXE↑,E,E↑ :
1	step		E* :
&	heel drop		A :
a		tip tap	: RXE
2	heel drop		A :
a		catch out	: RXE↑,A,E↑
3		step	: E*
&		heel drop	: A
a		tip tap	RXE :
4		heel drop	: A

Notes.

1. The five units notated above were collected on the 15th January 1994.
2. Units A and B are clearly related, indeed Theresa said that Veronica had told her that B was a development of unit A replacing the heeled drops with hops. Similarly Unit E is a development of Unit D.
3. Units A, C and D were shown in sequence, although it would appear, in fact that they did not form an actual step. It would seem that these are best regarded as parts of steps, which could be introduced into the dance. Presumably at one time Veronica used them in her Buck and Wing steps but had not been able to recall the steps themselves.

Unit A

1	<u>step</u>	catch out	A :
a			: A↑,B,C/D↑
2	<u>heel drop</u>	catch in	A :
a			: C/D↑,XC,XC/Ē
3	<u>heel drop</u>	catch out	A :
a			: XC/Ē↑,C,C/D↑
4	<u>heel drop</u>	catch in	A :
a			: C/D↑,B,A↑

Unit B

1	<u>step</u>	catch out	A :
a			: A↑,B,C/D↑
2	<u>hop</u>	catch in	A :
a			: C/D↑,XC,XC/Ē
3	<u>hop</u>	catch out	A :
a			: XC/Ē↑,C,C/D↑
4	<u>hop</u>	catch in	A :
a			: C/D↑,B,A↑

Unit C

1	<u>step</u>		F :
a	<u>heel drop</u>		: F
2		<u>heel drop</u>	: A
3		<u>step</u>	: F
a		<u>heel drop</u>	: F
4	<u>heel drop</u>		A :

Unit D

a	catch out		RXE↑,E,E↑ :
1	<u>step</u>		E* :
a	<u>heel drop</u>		A :
2		tip tap	: RXE
a		catch out	: RXE↑,A,E↑
3		<u>step</u>	: E*
a		<u>heel drop</u>	: A
4	tip tap		RXE :

positions) as those published here. Theresa told me that the “Falkringen” routine was made up of steps she had learned from Jimmy McLoughlin. It is of course entirely possible that Jimmy learned his steps either from Jim Parkinson (who had taught Veronica) or from Veronica herself. Other explanations are clearly equally likely.

The original music is not known, however Theresa Hindle preferred triple time hornpipes, such as the High Level. It is quite possible that originally the steps were danced in reel time, which would, of course, change their character somewhat.

Step 1

A				
1	<u>step</u>	)	shuffle	A :
&		)		: C,C
a				: :
2			<u>step</u>	C/D↑ :
a	catch in			C/D↑,C,A↑ :
3	<u>spring</u>			A :
a			catch out	A↑,B,XC↑ :
4			<u>flat step</u> (f)	: XC
a	tap			A :
5	<u>spring</u>	↑		Ā** :
a			catch in	E↑ :
6			<u>spring</u>	C↑,B,A↑ :
a	catch in			: A
7	<u>spring</u>			C↑,B,A↑ :
a			catch out	Ā** :
8			<u>flat step</u> (f)	: RB↑,A,XC↑
				: XC

B				
a	tap) lazy			A :
1	<u>step</u>)			A :
a			catch out	: XC,Ā,Ā↑
2			<u>spring</u>	: Ā**
a			catch out	A,B,XC↑ :
3	<u>flat step</u> (f)			XC :
a			tap) lazy	: A
4			<u>step</u>)	: A
a	catch in			XC↑,B,A↑ :
5	<u>spring</u>			Ā** :
a			catch out	A↑,B,XC↑ :
6			<u>flat step</u> (f)	: XC
a	tap) lazy			A :
7	<u>step</u>)			A :
a			catch in	: XC↑,B/C,A↑
8			<u>step</u> =	: A

Step is A B A and finish

L	L	L	L

Notes.

1. It will be appreciated that this step involves ankle rocks. These are notoriously difficult to notate and the fine detail of the performance often relies on the degree of elevation of the toes and the degree of flexion of the legs.
2. The pattern of the step (and finish) has been notated as commencing with the hop on the L, which in fact comes on the upbeat. Conventionally, Newcastle Notation demands that the step pattern is given as commencing on the first strong beat of the first bar (ie beat 1). However on this occasion it was felt that to do so was unnecessarily opaque.

Step 5

A			
4	hop	) shuffle	A :
&		)	: C,C
a)	:
1	side L touch	flat step	A : XE,F
2	flat drop	side R touch	A : XE,F
3	side L touch	flat drop	A : XE,F
4		hop	: XE/F*
&	) shuffle		C,C :
a)		:
1	flat step	side R touch	XE,F : A
2	side L touch	flat drop	XE/F : A
3	flat drop	side R touch	XE/F* : A

B			
8	hop	) shuffle	A :
&		)	: C,C
a)	:
1		step=	: A
2		hop	: A
&	) shuffle		C,C :
a)		:
3	step=		A :
4	hop		A :
&	) shuffle		: C,C
a)		:
5		step	: A
a	) shuffle		C,C :
6)		:
a	step		A :
7		step=	: A

Step is A A B A A and Finish

| | | | | |
L R L R L R

Finish = Finish to Step 4.

Finish

1	step	) shuffle	A :
&		)	: C,C
a)	:
2	hop	) shuffle	A :
&		)	: C,C
a)	:
3		step	: A
&	) shuffle		C,C :
a)		:
4		hop	: A
&	) shuffle		C,C :
a)		:
5	step	) shuffle	A :
a		)	: C,C
6)	:
a		step	: A
7			A :
8	step=		:

Notes.

1. When

Step 2

A

1	<u>step</u>	side(R) catch out	A :
a		↑	: XC↑,C,E↑
2	<u>hop</u>		A :
3		<u>step</u>	: E↑
a	side(L) catch out		: A
4	↑	<u>hop</u>	XC↑,C,E↑ :
			E↑ : A

B

5	<u>step</u>	side(R) catch out	A :
a			: XC↑,C,E↑
6	<u>hop</u>		A :
a		<u>tip tap</u>	: RC*
7	↑	<u>spring</u>	C↑ : RC*
a	side(L) catch out		XC↑,C,E↑ :
8	↑	<u>shunt</u>	RC/E↑ : A,C

Step is AB AB B B and finish

L	L	L	L	L

a	<u>tap</u>	<u>heel swivel</u>	RC :
5	<u>step</u>		: E,É
a			:
6			:
a		catch in	: E↑,C,XC↑
7		<u>flat step</u>	: XC

Finish

8	<u>hop</u>	)	shuffle	A :	
&		)		:	C,C
a		)		:	A
1		)	<u>step=</u>	:	A
2		)	<u>hop</u>	:	A
&	)	)	shuffle	C,C :	
a))		:	
3	<u>step=</u>	)		A :	
4	<u>hop</u>	)	shuffle	A :	
&		)		:	C,C
a)		:	
5	<u>step</u>	)		:	A

Notes.

- Note that the step moves sideways on each A and B part.
- Note that the finish, which is notated above off the left foot, is performed "on the wrong foot". However as it ends with both feet equally weighted this does not affect the dancer's ability to repeat the step off the opposite foot.
- When visited on 15th January 1994, Theresa was certain that Veronica had danced two steps of this type. One as notated above, and a second version where the B part contained pauses, the pattern of the step remaining the same. Unfortunately the B part which was taught did not fit the music and thus the exact detail is unknown, however the following is a possible interpretation which captures the general picture of the unit, the pauses occurring on beats a3 and a6:

B

4	<u>hop</u>	)	shuffle	A :	
&		)		:	C,C
a		)	<u>flat step</u>	:	XĈ
1	<u>tap</u>	)		RC :	
a	<u>step=</u>	)	<u>heel swivel=</u>	RF* :	È,É
2)		:	
a)		:	
3		)	catch in	:	É↑,C,XC↑
a		)	<u>flat step</u>	:	XĈ
4)		:	

Finish

1	step			A :	
a		side(R) catch out		:	XC↑,C,E↑
2	<u>hop</u>			A :	
a		tip tap		:	RC
3		<u>spring</u>		:	RC*
a	side(L) catch out			XC↑,C,E↑ :	
4		<u>hop</u>		:	
a	tip tap			RC* :	
5	<u>step</u>			A :	
a		side(R) catch out		:	XC↑,C,E↑
6	<u>hop</u>			A :	
a		tip tap		:	RC*
7	↑	<u>spring</u>		C↑ :	RC*
a	side(L) catch out			XC↑,C,E↑ :	
8	↑	<u>shunt</u>		RC/E↑ :	A,C

Notes.

- When the B parts are danced on their own the initial tap is omitted, as in Step 1

Step 3

A					
1	<u>hop</u>	)	shuffle	A :	
&		)		:	C,C
a				:	
1				:	
2	<u>hop</u>		↑	A :	RC/E↑
a			catch out	:	RC/E↑,RB,C/D↑
3	<u>hop</u>			A :	
a			catch in	:	C/D↑,C/XB,XA↑
4	↑		<u>spring</u>	RCpt ↑ :	XA*
B					
a	catch out		<u>hop</u>	RC↑,A,C/D↑ :	
5				:	A
a	catch in		↑	C/D↑,C/XB,XA↑ :	
6	<u>spring</u>		catch out	XA* :	RCpt ↑
a				:	RC↑,A,C/D↑
7	<u>hop</u>			A :	
a			catch in	:	C/D↑,C/XB,XA↑
8			<u>spring</u>	:	XA*

Step is A A A B A A and Finish

| | | | | | |
L R L L R L L

Finish = Finish from Step 1.

Notes.

1. On the B part of the step.

Step 4

A					
4	<u>hop</u>	)	shuffle	A :	
&		)		:	C,C
a			<u>flat step</u>	:	
1				:	XĈ*
a	<u>tap</u>		<u>heel swivel=</u>	RC :	
2	<u>step=</u>		catch in	RF* :	Ě,Ě
a			<u>step</u>	:	Ě↑,A/E,A↑
3				:	A
B					
4	<u>hop</u>	)	shuffle	A :	
&		)		:	C,C
a			<u>flat step</u>	:	XĈ
1				RC :	
a	<u>tap</u>		<u>heel swivel=</u>	RF* :	Ě,Ě
2	<u>step=</u>		catch in	:	Ě↑,C,XC↑
a			<u>flat step</u>	:	XĈ
3				RC :	
a	<u>tap</u>		<u>heel swivel=</u>	RF* :	Ě,Ě
4	<u>step=</u>		catch in	:	Ě↑,C,XC↑
a			<u>flat step</u>	:	XĈ
5				RC :	
a	<u>tap</u>		<u>heel swivel=</u>	RF* :	Ě,Ě
6	<u>step=</u>		catch in	:	Ě↑,C,XC↑
a			<u>flat step</u>	:	XĈ
7				:	

Step is A A B A A and Finish

| | | | | | |
L R L R L R