

years with little dancing anywhere, but, on his move to Buckinghamshire after the war, he met local men who wished to dance and with them he founded the Whitchurch Morris Men. His next move to Winchester also led to the formation of a morris club there. Wherever he went he will be remembered for his leadership, his skill and precision as a dancer, and his gifts as a teacher, singer and musician playing the violin. Although he met some of the old traditional dancers, mainly through the Travelling Morrice tours, he never claimed to be a collector of the morris, but the early cine films which he took in the 1930s are a valuable record of dancing as it was at that time. His work for the morris and his engaging personality led to his election in 1962 as Squire of the Morris Ring.

In the early 1970s, the only publications relating to the morris were Cecil Sharp's morris books,¹ supplemented by a few articles in the *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*/*Folk Music Journal*. It was increasingly evident that these were not meeting the need as many dances had been discovered since Sharp's early work; moreover, the Morris Books had attempted to describe how to dance but it had been realized that it was only by personal example and instruction that the morris could be taught. A simple revision of the Morris Books was not what was wanted. Lionel had put together over the years an *aide-mémoire* for his own use and, knowing this, the Advisory Council of the Morris Ring asked him if he would prepare a handbook on similar lines, setting out briefly the content of the dances in each tradition and their tunes. Lionel nobly took on this task which was very time-consuming and required much careful study and consultation, and in 1974 the Morris Ring published the result of his work, *A Handbook of Morris Dancing*, a hefty but nevertheless easily handled volume of some 350 pages.² In 1981, in recognition of what he had done for the morris dance, the EFDSS awarded Lionel its Gold Badge.

He remained an active dancer until late in his life when, after an incapacitating illness of about a year, he died on 22 July 1994, remembered with great affection and respect by all his friends, by all lovers of alpine flowers, and by all morris men.

WALTER ABSON

Notes

¹ C. J. Sharp, *The Morris Book*, 5 parts (London: Novello, 1907–24; repr. Wakefield: EP Publishing, 1974–75).

² Lionel Bacon, *A Handbook of Morris Dancing* ([n.p.]: Morris Ring, 1974); second edition published as *A Handbook of Morris Dances* ([n.p.]: Morris Ring, 1986).

Dick Hewitt 1921–1994

Dick Hewitt was the last representative of a long tradition of solo step dancing in the Norfolk style. He was *the* Norfolk Step Dancer. He learnt to step from an early age through his mother's family, mainly his mother and uncle. He developed into a prodigious performer. His dancing had a natural ease of movement rarely seen nowadays. He was never daunted by the size or make-up of the audience. His enthusiasm always came through in his dancing and left the onlooker with a sense of involvement. Dick used his performing skills well during his lifetime—in concert parties, for weddings and other celebrations. His favourite venue was the pub, especially if there were

other dancers and musicians. In his latter years, he bemoaned the breakdown of the dance and music tradition in his locality where it had once been so strong.



Dick Hewitt, location unknown, early 1950s.

Photograph from the collection of Dick Hewitt, courtesy of Peter Clifton

His father, Albert, was a fine musician who played a variety of instruments. Albert was recorded by Seamus Ennis in 1958 for the BBC radio series 'As I Roved Out'. It was this broadcast that brought Dick into contact with the English Folk Dance and Song Society through Russell Wortley. Dick made many appearances in the folk world including the Albert Hall, the National Gathering, festivals, and many television and radio appearances. Despite this, his dancing has not been taken up by either his family or dance enthusiasts. His dancing has been termed free-phrased and does not have the structure of many other step-dance traditions. It employed three basic movements which were fitted together into a range of sequences. The sequences would be determined by a range of factors including the music, space, audience and the mood of the dancer. It is probably this lack of structure which has caused the greatest barrier to the dancing being learned effectively by others. Additionally, Dick did not have any enthusiasm to break down any of his 'stock' sequences, preferring his students to 'have a go' and pick

it up for themselves. Dick was filmed on behalf of the EFDSS in 1979 for archival purposes. He dances to three rhythms—hornpipe, waltz and march—accompanied by Percy Brown, one of the 'old-time' players. It was filmed in the Green Man in Briston, the pub he used as his local for several years. He particularly enjoyed dancing to a slow waltz as he felt the slower pace and the rhythm enabled him to show his dancing to the full.

Dick was a gregarious man. He spent ten years as the publican of the Three Horeshoes in Briston. During this time a range of instruments were kept behind the bar. The pub was a favourite of the travellers. On many occasions, dancing, singing and playing would go on all night. Dick and his wife, Marion, were always very hospitable. Many a Saturday night was spent drinking and chatting in his local. Dick

had a great sense of humour and was an inveterate optimist. He had been deeply affected by his wartime experiences, having spent a considerable amount of time as a Japanese prisoner of war. He said that he only survived the experience because he came from 'sturdy Norfolk stock'. For me it was a privilege to know him and share an interest in the dance tradition. Although highly rated as a dancer, he never received the interest and attention he deserved. His basic steps are notated. Dancing sequences are yet to be unravelled. However, his legacy—the existence of film—make it possible to recreate this old tradition.

Dick will be missed by many of the local people but particularly his wife, Marion, and his family. His passing represents the end of an era in the dance tradition.

PETER CLIFTON

References

Peter Clifton and Ann-Marie Hulme, 'Solo Step Dancing within Living Memory in North Norfolk', in *Traditional Dance: Volume 1*, Proceedings of the Traditional Dance Conference held at Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, 28 March 1981, ed. by Theresa Buckland (Crewe: Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, 1982), pp. 29–58.

Peter Clifton, Ann-Marie Hulme and Barry Callaghan, *Dick Hewitt: The Norfolk Step Dancer* (16 mm colour film, Garland Films for the English Folk Dance and Song Society, London, 1979).

Kenneth Loveless 1911–1995

Father Kenneth, as he was affectionately known to his friends, was born on Lammas Day (1 August) 1911, at Harrow-on-the-Hill. I first became acquainted with Kenneth on a St Albans Morris Men's day of dance in 1971 when he was approached by a Barnsley Longsword man who called him an actor. His answer, which echoed round and round a shopping precinct, was unforgettable: 'Me! An ac-tor, boy!'. Over the next few years he visited Radio Sheffield on several occasions and I got to know him a little better until, in 1974, he paid the first of many visits to Barnsley.

Kenneth joined the Navy in 1939 as an Ordinary Seaman, having been in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, again as an Ordinary Seaman. He was torpedoed in the Atlantic off Ireland and he once told me that there was only room in the lifeboat for either him or his concertina, so he asked that the concertina be saved and he remained in the water for several more hours. During the war he was promoted, eventually attaining the rank of Lieutenant Commander. It was whilst he was Captain of his own ship that he was torpedoed for the second time, this time off the coast of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea as they were evacuating troops and taking them to Egypt. Kenneth and one other rating were the only survivors from this sinking and it was the horror of this experience that made him vow to become a priest should he survive the war.

During all this time, Kenneth was promoting the cause of folk, mainly through dance, and he had morris teams on board his ships. He had become interested in folk dance as a result of being asked by the son of the owner of Imhof's record store to present some records at a musical evening at the store. The records he was asked to present featured the National Folk Dance Orchestra playing some Playford dance tunes arranged by Arnold Foster. Kenneth was fascinated by these recordings and found that they had been made under the auspices of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. This was the beginning of his great commitment to the Society.