

Always Ask An Expert

Sam Sherry was in his seventies when the new recordings on this album were made in 1989 and he had performed most of his life. His father Dan Conroy was a well-known Music Hall artist in the 1890's and all of Sam's brothers followed in their father's footsteps, becoming known as the '5 Sherry Brothers' and performing at Variety theatres throughout the country. In their time they topped the bill from Glasgow to Blackpool and from Great Yarmouth to most of the London theatres. The '5 Sherry Brothers' played musical numbers on three violins, piano and slide guitar, performed comic songs and step and acrobatic dancing (their speciality). They finished in the mid 1940's and Sam and one of his brothers Peter carried on until they retired from show business in 1956.

While on the road Sam had lived in a caravan, and during their rest periods he would park it in a boatyard at Galgate near Lancaster. When he returned there for the final time he was actually able to buy the yard from British Waterways and he started a new career repairing and fitting out narrowboats.

Sam of course could not stop performing and he started visiting the local folk club in Lancaster. There he played guitar and sang the songs he had known for years. A chance conversation revealed that the club organisers were looking for a traditional clog dancer to do a spot at a ceilidh. Sam knew they needed to look no further as he had been taught, as a youngster, the Lancashire dog steps by his father.

Sam Sherry soon became well-known as one of the finest exponents of Lancashire clog dancing and he appeared at folk clubs and festivals all over the country as well as making numerous appearances on television including 'Coronation Street'. He finally retired from dancing after making his final professional performance at the Old Vic, alongside Albert Finney and Max Miller, a couple of years before this album was produced. He is still singing regularly though and it seems surprising that his songs have never been recorded before. So here we have recently-made recordings of the songs that Sam has carried with him over the years, including several he learned from his father, as well as some rare tracks from two 78 records which have come to light. The first was made by the '5 Sherry Brothers' in the 1930 and the second is a live recording of Sam and Peter singing at Yarmouth's Windmill theatre in the 1950's, Truly 60 years of entertainment.

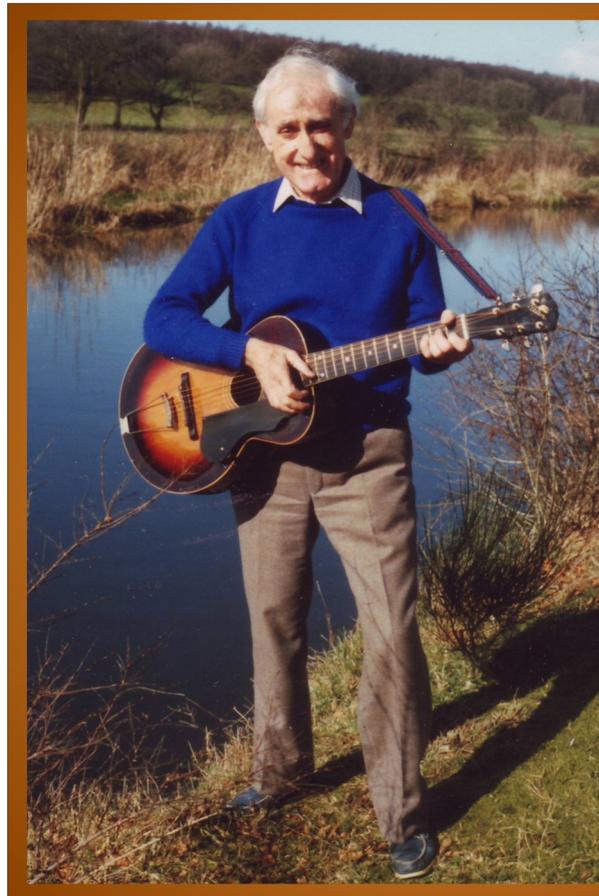
The Recordings

New recordings made by John Howson (1989) at the National Folk Music Festival, Sutton Bonnington and at Galgate, Lancashire.

Tracks 1 & 9 are from a direct-cut 78 record of Peter & Sam Sherry recorded live at the Windmill Theatre, Great Yarmouth in 1950.

Tracks 5 & 12 are from a 'Broadcast' label 78 (No. 813) of the 5 Sherry Brothers made in 1930. (courtesy of Peter Clifton)

The 78's were mastered for this cassette by Noel Sidebottom of the National Sound Archive.



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Sixty years of
Lancashire
Entertainment

Sam
Sherry