

Introduction

Lucy Broadwood's Legacy. Lucy Etheldred Broadwood (1858-1929) was a major figure in the folk song revival around the turn of the last century. In 1898 she was one of the 110 founder members of the Folk Song Society, of which she later became secretary, journal editor and, in the 1920's, president. In 1889 she published Sussex Songs, with accompaniments by her cousin Herbert R. Birch Reynardson. In 1893 there appeared English County Songs, an influential collection compiled by Lucy Broadwood and JA Fuller-Maitland, and arranged by the latter. In addition, in the words of one of Lucy Broadwood's obituarists, "scarcely a number of the Journal (of the Folk Song Society) has appeared without some valuable contribution from her hand, and many have been almost entirely her own from beginning to end."¹

Lucy Broadwood corresponded with many of the great figures of the first folk music revival, particularly with Frank Kidson, but also with Ralph Vaughan Williams, Percy Grainger and many others. Vaughan Williams was particularly impressed with "her brilliant talents as pianist, singer, composer and essayist."²

This present collection contains the 38 songs originally edited and arranged for piano by Lucy E. Broadwood in her English Traditional Songs and Carols, published in 1908 by Boosey and Co., London and New York. It is a companion volume to Sweet Sussex: Folk Songs From the Broadwood Collections, also available from Ferret Publications. Sweet Sussex, published in 1995, like this volume, is edited by Lewis Jones and has guitar chords and illustrations by Margaret Crosland. It contains the 25 songs and 1 dance tune to be found in Songs of the Peasantry of the Weald of Surrey and Sussex (arranged by GA Dusart and published privately and anonymously by John Broadwood in 1843) and in Lucy Broadwood's volume of Sussex Songs cited above.

The Source Singers and Their Counties. Lucy Broadwood names fourteen individuals and one family as the sources for 35 of these 38 songs. Two of the remaining three songs were sung by groups of mummers and one by an anonymous singer. From the brief biographical details which we are given of the singers who are named it is clear that most of them were counted among the poor and the marginal. Two of the songs, numbers 28 and 27, are listed as coming from the Goby family, described as "gypsies... well known in Sussex and Surrey."³ There are also ten other songs from Surrey. Eight of these were contributed by farm labourers. The names of the informants were Ede (number 21), Sparks (22), Bromham (18 and 23), Foster (29), Baker (24 and 26) and Lough (38). Number 25 was from an illiterate carter in Surrey called

Grantham, and number 19 from a farm labourer's wife, Mrs. Rugman.

Apart from Sussex and Surrey another five counties are represented by songs. Number 20 was sung by Mrs Jeffreys, "an old cottager in North Devon." Number 30 was obtained from Mummers at Kingsclere, Hampshire, and number 32 from the unnamed singer mentioned above near Hinswick in Bedfordshire. Cumberland is represented by number 35, sung in the 1860s by the domestic servant, Margaret Scott, later Mrs. Thorburn. Mrs. Hills contributed number 33. She was "an old family nurse" who lived in Stamford, Lincolnshire. From Saxby-All-Saints in the north of the same county came Joseph Taylor, the singer of number 34. He is described as an "estate bailiff", born at Binbrook, Lincolnshire, in 1833. It was from Joseph Taylor that Delius got the haunting theme tune for his orchestral piece, "Brigg Fair."⁴ If you are fond of Dorian melodies (see below) you will not find a much better one than number 34, Joseph Taylor's contribution to this collection.

Added to the 18 songs itemised above are another 20 songs from Sussex. One of these (number 31) is listed as "sung by Mummers from the neighbourhood of Horsham about 1878-1881." Another, number 15, was obtained from "a young quarryman", Walter Searle, "near Amberley." The other 18 songs were all collected from Henry Burstow, "a shoemaker, born in Horsham, 1826."

Burstow was one of the rural poor. He earned well under a pound a week, a very low wage even for those days. He and his wife led a wretched life, especially as they got older. Burstow was a bell-ringer at his local church, despite being a self-professed Darwinian atheist and a radical. Assisted by his friend William Albery, Burstow produced a book, Reminiscences of Horsham, published in 1911. According to his own listing, Burstow knew 420 songs.⁵ Of these, Lucy Broadwood tells us, "about fifty or sixty are of the traditional ballad type, and these have been noted and preserved."

Burstow tells us that he learned 84 of his 420 pieces from his father, who himself had a total repertoire of almost 200. Of these the first, "learnt at his knee", was "Travel the Country Round", number 36 in this collection. Burstow also cites his father as the source for numbers 1, 2, 3, 8, 12, 13 and 14. Like Burstow himself, his father sang some pieces that were not conventional English folk songs. These included "Auld Lang Syne" and "Ye Banks and Braes of Bonny Doon."⁶

Scales and Modes. On my count, of these 38 songs 22 are in a major key. The major scale, also known as the Ionian mode, is equivalent to c to c' on the white notes of a keyboard. It is

the most common of the various scales used in modern western music. You get it if you sing the familiar "doh, ray, me" octave in tonic sol-fa.

Of the 16 songs that are not clearly Ionian, numbers 1, 3, 4, 29, 33 and 34 are assigned by Lucy Broadwood to the Dorian mode, and number 2 is described as exhibiting "Dorian influence." The Dorian mode is the scale equivalent to d to d' on the white notes of a keyboard. You get it if you sing up an octave in tonic sol-fa beginning on ray.

Lucy Broadwood describes numbers 6, 7, 8 and 23 as tunes in the Mixolydian mode. This scale is equivalent to g to g' on the white notes of a keyboard, or what you get if you sing up an octave in tonic sol-fa beginning with soh. Number 35 is defined as Aeolian. This mode, the one nearest to the modern minor scales, is equivalent to a to a' on the white notes of a keyboard. To get it, sing up an octave in tonic sol-fa beginning on la.

Lucy Broadwood does not identify the 22 tunes which are clearly Ionian (that is, they are in a major key). Nor does she ascribe a mode to numbers 11, 18, 5 and 13. Number 11 looks to be Ionian, in the key of D major, but the last three of its five c's are unsharpened. If the first two c's had also been unsharpened the tune would be Mixolydian. As it is the melody modulates from Ionian to Mixolydian after the first two lines of each verse. Number 18 looks to be Mixolydian and number 5 Aeolian. Number 13 has Dorian connections, but there is no 6th note to the scale (that is, the 'te' of the tonic sol-fa octave singing up from 'ray' is missing), and in one place the note immediately above the octave (the 'me' in tonic sol-fa) is flattened.

The fact that a clear majority of these songs are in the major scale challenges the received wisdom. We are told, for example, that "when it came to publishing, Broadwood selected out tunes which were in the simple major scale, and privileged those which were in other scales quite disproportionately, especially those which were 'modal.'" ⁷ The research upon which this conclusion is based, however, analyses the "number of tunes published" but gives no indication of where they appeared. ⁸ When she was publishing songs in the Folk Song Journal Lucy Broadwood does seem to have favoured modal melodies. These were more unusual, and probably of greater interest to Folk Song Society members. But English Traditional Songs and Carols was aimed at a wider popular audience which might be expected to prefer a good number of tunes in the familiar major scale.

As to which modes Lucy Broadwood personally preferred, we have a number of hints in her notes to English Traditional Songs

and Carols. Number 7, for example, "The Ages of Man", which is in the Mixolydian mode, is described as having "a fine tune." Number 8, "The Duke of Marlborough", is also Mixolydian. We are told of the text that "the airs sung to it are usually very fine and most often modal." Number 29, "The Poor Murdered Woman", and number 34, "Died of Love", are both credited with a "fine Dorian tune." Clearly, Lucy Broadwood had a "love of English folk songs in minor modes."⁹ But did she dislike, or was she indifferent to, melodies in the familiar major scale? It would seem not. In this collection, for example, number 16, "Death and the Lady", in the familiar major mode, is described as "a fine version." Another major tune, the one to number 26, "The Valiant Lady", is commended as "far more vigorous" than a corresponding tune in Chappell's Popular Music. The truth seems to have been that Lucy Broadwood's had a catholic taste in folk songs, and was fond of good traditional tunes irrespective of their mode or scale. This conclusion is reinforced by her comments on number 33, "The Lost Lady Found." This Dorian song from Lincolnshire is described as "delightful" while, at the same time, a version collected in Sussex by her uncle "before 1840" is commended for its "good major tune."¹⁰

Texts. In her Preface to English Traditional Songs and Carols Lucy Broadwood writes that "the weakness of folk song is most often apparent in its verse." She realised that often this verse did not come direct from the mouths of the people, but that "the words ...are derived, directly or indirectly, from broadsides." This, she argues, was a two way process, so that, in turn, many broadside ballads were collected from country singers. Even so, the broadsides' content was often "feeble stuff."

However, despite the shortcomings of her texts, Lucy Broadwood always argued that they were recorded and (usually) published accurately, and as transcribed from traditional singers. Of the songs in this collection, for example, she claims that "the original words of the singers remain ...unaltered, save in trifling instances where a false rhyme, forgotten line, nonsensical corruption, or the like, has made it absolutely necessary to correct them." Even then, the correction was only for the purposes of commercial publication and "the unaltered words may in many cases be found in the Journal of the Folk Song Society." In the case of the songs from Henry Burstow we know that he "wrote out the texts and sent them on after the collecting session,"¹¹ a practice which was likely to prove more exact and comprehensive than relying entirely on words recalled by the singer on the spur of the moment. Certainly, Lucy Broadwood went to great pains to print alternative versions and minor textual quibbles. These have been inserted into the texts as published here, and readers may find some of them unnecessarily precise to the point of nit-picking.

However, some modern commentators have doubted that this is the whole story.¹² The debate is too long to be fully summarised here. An interesting instance, however, is the case of song number 5, "I Must Live All Alone," which in its original form was clearly too saucy for an Edwardian audience. In her notes Lucy Broadwood claimed that "verses 1, 2 and 3, here given, are essentially the same as the first three of the five stanzas sung." But in fact they are not. What Henry Burstow actually wrote down and sung as his first verse was this:

As I was a-walking one morning by chance
I heard a maid making her moan,
I asked what was the matter, she said in a flutter
"I am obliged to lie tumbling alone, alone,
I am obliged to lie tumbling alone."¹³

Final Comment. It has been claimed that the English are the only nation in the world that treat their traditional music and dance with contempt. For an English morris dancer ridicule is an unavoidable occupational hazard, and a folk song culture based upon a defunct rural peasantry is unknown to or contemptuously shunned by sophisticated, street wise urban youth. Meanwhile, our authoritative body, the English Folk Dance and Song Society, has an ageing membership of a few thousand enthusiasts.¹⁴

In 1651, the era of Cromwell's Commonwealth and of its dance-hating Puritans, John Playford published his English Dancing Master. In his Preface, Playford made an observation which also applies to this volume. "These times and the nature of (The English Dancing Master)" he wrote, "do not agree." Even so Playford's book went into many editions and to-day his dances are widely performed. Miss Broadwood's Delight makes available, at reasonable cost, an important collection of traditional music that for many years has been difficult to obtain. Perhaps some day these beautiful songs will be as popular as Playford's dances, and Lucy Broadwood and the other pioneer collectors of English folk music will be better known and honoured.

1. Walter Ford, "Obituary: Lucy Etheldred Broadwood," Journal of the Folk Song Society 33 (December 1929): 168-9.
2. Ralph Vaughan Williams, "Lucy Broadwood: An Appreciation," Journal of the Folk Song Society 8, no. 1 (1927): 44-5. The material in these first two paragraphs of the Introduction is taken from: Lewis W. Jones, "Lucy Etheldred Broadwood: Poet and Song Writer," English Dance and Song 57, no. 4

(Winter 1995): 2-3. Some of it is also replicated on page vi of Sweet Sussex, the companion volume to this one, of which details are given in the next paragraph of text below.

3. All quotations by Lucy E. Broadwood are taken from the Preface (pages ix-xii) and the Appendix (pages 113-125) of her English Traditional Songs and Carols, published in 1908 by Boosey and Co., London and New York.
4. A recording of Joseph Taylor singing "Brigg Fair" was made by Percy Grainger in 1908. The track, together with Taylor's rendition of "Lord Bateman", is available on the CD entitled Hidden English (Topic, TSCD600).
5. Vic Gammon, "Folk Song Collecting in Sussex and Surrey, 1843-1914," History Workshop 10 (Autumn 1980): 61-89. The information in this paragraph was taken from page 63.
6. William Albery (ed.), Reminiscences of Horsham: Being Recollections of Henry Burstow, Horsham, 1911. Republished with a Foreword by A.E. Green and Tony Wales by Norwood Editions, Pennsylvania, 1975. The information here was taken from the Burstow's section "Songs and Song Singing" on pages 107 to 119.
7. Dave Harker, Fakesong (Open University Press, 1985), 168.
8. Gammon, op. cit., pp. 70-1.
9. Lewis W. Jones, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 3.
10. Although this is evidence that, in principle, Lucy Broadwood liked major tunes, the specific assertion is, in fact, mistaken. Lucy Broadwood refers interested readers to Sussex Songs (1889). There, however, the only piece that fits the description is "Gypsy Song", which also appears as number 9 in Ferret Publication's Sweet Sussex. The tune to this song is certainly a "good" one. But it is not "major" but Mixolydian.
11. Gammon, op. cit., p. 68.
12. See, for example, Gammon, op. cit. and Harker, op. cit.
13. Gammon, op. cit., p. 71. In Lucy Broadwood's defence, it would clearly have been very embarrassing, not to say self-defeating, for a respectable middle class spinster to have given precise details of the words she had amended.

14. If you would like to swim against the cultural tide and sign up you can obtain details from: The Membership Secretary, EFDSS, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 7AY. Telephone 0171-485-2206. Members get free copies of the Folk Music Journal and English Dance and Song, the right to borrow books free from the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, and various other benefits.
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