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In Search of Song: The Life and Times of Lucy Broadwood, by Dorothy de Val (review)

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form of testimony . . . that participates in this process by further enabling an empathic response to the interpretation of historical truth” (p. 132). Although a more rigorous musical analysis would have been welcome, the author highlights music’s ability to relate to diverse contexts, particularly as it is recontextualized in film to bring awareness of human suffering to a widespread audience.

The final chapter, “Music, Mourning, and War,” is a meditation on Górecki’s Symphony no. 3 (1976). Here, Cizmic confronts issues regarding the ethics of representation, and contemplates why the piece became known as a universal symbol of grief and became adopted as a musical memorial for the Holocaust in the United Kingdom as well as the United States. She walks the reader through Górecki’s integration of Polish folk music and religious references set to unhurried rhythms and hushed, stagnant harmonies and focuses on how the music’s “predictable repetition . . . creates a safe space within which to grieve” (p. 25). The chapter displays some of Cizmic’s most poignant writing as she illustrates how the music encapsulates the ambivalent state of trauma, its contradictory tendency to forget and to remember: “it musically performs this silent-sounding tension, placing a listener in a space akin to grief, experiencing silence and also searching for sound” (p. 141). Here, the author engages in precisely the kind of memory work she seeks to define, asking the reader to contemplate how these narratives of suffering in all their gravity and emotional power are situated.

Although each case study presents its own specific set of concerns, what they hold in common becomes unmistakable by the end of the book: these works are not merely reminders of violence, pain, and death; they also function as vehicles for contemplating the realities of suffering in a way that reminds us of the miracle of human resilience and survival, an awareness that can play an important role in individual and collective processes of healing. Cizmic has opened important pathways in musicology for thinking about the broader uses of music to explore tragedy. Her explorations themselves serve as a testament to music’s expressive potential and the creativity of a group of composers whose works reflect some of the most complex aspects of human experience. This endeavor alone is a formidable achievement.

Alice Miller Cotter
Princeton University


This study of Lucy Broadwood (1858–1929) provides a striking panorama of English musical life in the last decades of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth centuries. Great-granddaughter of the founder of the famous piano manufacturing firm, Broadwood was an habitué of the London concert world, privy to trade secrets and “insider” information about some of Europe’s most famous pianists. Membership in genteel society brought regular access to the best musical salons of the capitol, where she witnessed the private performances of many of the foremost musicians of the day. A singer and pianist who also wrote songs, she received much recognition in these circles as a performer and arranger, though upper-class mores that insisted on music as a leisure pursuit ensured that her work in this area be kept to a minimum.

Broadwood was also one of the pioneers of the Folk Revival, the movement to collect and codify the artifacts of British traditional culture that had been gathering momentum since the mid-nineteenth century and that culminated in the establishment of the Folk-Lore (1878) and Folk-Song (1899) Societies. She was a founding member of the latter, serving as long-time board member and secretary, and eventually as president. She also edited many issues of the Society’s Journal, drawing on her expertise as co-editor, with J. A. Fuller Maitland, of the pathbreaking English County Songs (1893) as well as on her own collecting experiences in the field. Her wide reading in folklore and cultural anthropology brought an unusually keen and
sympathetic intelligence to the study of traditional music, while her historical interests extended beyond folk song to include early music. She explored historical methods of performance practice with Arnold Dolmetsch, and published a number of arrangements of early English and continental works in her anthology *Old World Songs* (1895, also co-edited with Fuller Maitland). At the behest of William Barclay-Squire, Keeper of the Music Collection at the British Museum, she edited songs by Henry Purcell. In the last decade of her life, she contributed to the British ballad opera revival of the 1920s.

In short, Broadwood was both witness to and an important player in the musical life of her times. Dorothy de Val has been given the difficult task of conveying the richness of her subject in a mere 164 pages, especially as she has undertaken to write a true biography rather than a more specialized musical monograph. Thus in addition to Broadwood’s many important and varied musical pursuits, we learn about her frequent European travels, indifferent health and primitive medical treatments, relationships with family members and the family firm, politics, charity work, and explorations in comparative religion and mysticism. We also encounter her many friends and colleagues, including the pianist Fanny Davies, the baritone James Campbell McInnes (a possible lover), and the civil servant Sir Richmond Ritchie, among others, all of whom receive space and appraisal in relation to Broadwood's life. If some figures and topics are somewhat slighted and the discussion occasionally seems to jump around—an impression not helped by a few chapter subheadings that seem mislabeled or misplaced—this is a perhaps inevitable consequence of Broadwood’s relatively low name recognition and the resulting need to keep the book short. Still, as the means by which we get to know her and place her work socially and emotionally, the diversity of topics emerges as a strength. The challenge of being an intelligent and curious single woman in an upper-class Victorian society where marriage was the norm is particularly well drawn, as we see Broadwood chafing under society's strictures, battling depression and struggling internally about missed career opportunities. The corresponding benefits of independence are eloquently noted too—the freedom to travel, the time for sustained contemplative work and intellectual exploration, the delight in female camaraderie and companionship.

As the title of the book suggests, however, it is Broadwood’s musical activities, specifically her work with folk song, that lie at the core of the narrative. Here, de Val is exceptionally informative, as she traces her subject’s early exposure to folk song, the steady evolution of her fieldwork from a kind of armchair reliance on outside correspondents to a more hands-on engagement with her own singers, and the overall shift of her collecting focus from England to Scotland and Ireland. De Val is also wonderfully thorough on the history of the Folk Revival, drawing expertly on manuscript materials and on the scholarship of C. J. Bearman, David Gregory, and others to deliver a compact overview of the many twists and turns involved. Broadwood’s association with other collectors—Kate Lee, Frank Kidson, Gavin Greig, and Frances Tolmie, among others—is particularly interesting, and the chapter devoted to her involvement with Cecil Sharp and Percy Grainger is the best in the book. Here, we get to the heart of the internecine politics of the Folk Revival, a fascinating topic to which the author gives her full attention unencumbered by the need to catch the reader up on the other strands of Broadwood’s life. The result is a marvelous piece of sustained writing.

De Val’s achievement is all the more impressive given the enormous amount of material she has consulted in writing the book. In addition to the (already quite ample) secondary literature mentioned above, she has sifted through a huge archive related to her subject—letters, music manuscripts and publications, family papers and balance sheets, photographs, newspaper clippings, and Broadwood’s own forty-seven years of detailed diaries. Handling these sources is a daunting task in itself, and while the job is very well done, a few queries might be raised. Footnote citations, though always clear, are occasionally inconsistent in the use of abbreviations and in the method of labeling letters. An appendix listing Broadwood’s scholarly publications is sorely missed, as is an itemized record of the contents of *English County Songs* and *Old World*.
Songs to match those provided for *English Traditional Songs and Carols* (1908), the one volume that Broadwood published entirely under her own name. The diaries pose problems of their own, not merely because the wealth of detail they contain complicates the author’s already difficult task of compressing the overall narrative, but also because their very reticence obscures our understanding of Broadwood’s personal life. De Val is persuasive about her subject’s deep feelings for McInnes, while admitting uncertainty about the precise nature of their relationship, but in other instances she seems a bit too quick to sense attraction, mutual or one-sided, between Broadwood and other men in her life. This may be due to an inability to share details about each case—another casualty of space. Even so, other subjects to which the diaries refer only obliquely, notably Broadwood’s frustrations about a woman’s circumscribed role, are convincingly presented throughout.

Only in the area of politics and social class does the book stumble, and that only partly. De Val is quite right to resist the Marxist folk song scholarship of the 1970s and 1980s that criticized the early collectors for their bourgeois attitudes and sometimes patronizing views of their singers. These were inevitable, a product of the times, and to harp on them would be to miss the signal advance in collecting methods and genuine democratic feeling that the revivalists made on the work of their predecessors. But class played a role in the internal history of the Revival as well, nowhere more so than in the muted hostility that Broadwood and others displayed towards the upstart Cecil Sharp when he burst on the scene in 1903. Sharp was pushy and self-aggrandizing, but his criticisms of the Society’s torpor and inactivity were accurate and, with Ralph Vaughan Williams, he embarked on a popularizing campaign that raised the profile of folk song in the country at large while also improving the prospects of the Society itself. De Val acknowledges all of this and yet remains too close to her subject to recognize in Broadwood’s hurt pride an entrenched class privilege. Sharp’s “fault” was that he needed to make a living, and in moving folk song out from the scholar’s study he stepped on the toes of the self-appointed “guardians” of the Revival, Broadwood and Fuller Maitland among them, who had decided that folk song, as a “thing apart” from the modern commercial world, should remain there. Sharp believed something like this himself, but in proposing to disseminate folk song as widely as possible he refused to view folk song solely as an object of aesthetic contemplation. Broadwood’s resentment is suggested by her otherwise inexplicable refusal to support Sharp in his losing battle in 1906 with the Board of Education over the repertory of songs to be sung in schools. Sharp’s complaint, that the Board’s list of songs included a greater proportion of composed “national” songs than true (anonymous) folk songs, was one that Broadwood, under normal circumstances, would surely have agreed with.

But then Broadwood’s social advantage was offset by Sharp’s gender advantage, and de Val may be right that it was Sharp who ultimately held the better cards. Certainly it was his vision for the Revival, not Broadwood’s, that prevailed in the end. Living in a world of strict gender roles, Broadwood had good reason to avoid self-promotion; in any event, society’s insistence on a woman’s subservience and self-sacrifice ensured it. Broadwood often neglected her own collecting and publishing activities in order to help other collectors and shepherd their work into print.

Dorothy de Val deserves extended praise for bringing Broadwood’s important story to light. With its rich examination of the period’s social and musical scene, as well as its revealing portrait of a complex individual, her book has something in it for everyone and should attract a wide readership.

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I hope it would not be too unfair to observe that the volumes hitherto published within the Edition MusikTexte series, of which the present volume now forms a part, are, without exception, wonderfully improbable. It is relatively difficult, at any