

‘Fresh and sweet like wildflowers’: Lucy Broadwood, Percy Grainger, and the Collecting of Folksong

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Percy Grainger’s years in England, from 1901 to 1914, form one of the most colourful and personally significant periods of his life. These were exciting years for Grainger, as an emerging virtuoso concert pianist, a composer and a fledgling folksong collector. Indeed they are colourful enough years to have formed the basis of a recent Australian-made film on his life, *Passion*. John Bird’s biography of the composer, which to some extent inspired the film, provides some information on these years, though the coverage is not extensive.¹ The most illuminating insight of the period comes from Grainger himself, as expressed in his letters.²

Both Grainger’s character and the period are a film director’s dream, for here are the country rustics, the ancient Edison Bell phonograph, the rollicking in pubs to a rambustious version of *Shepherd’s Hey*. What is less evident, in the film and in the literature, is exactly where Grainger derived his enthusiasm for collecting and arranging folksong from: who—or what—fired his imagination?

Folksong Influences

Grainger’s interest in folksong had begun before he arrived in England, fostered in part by Karl Klimsch, his unofficial composition teacher during his student years in Frankfurt. Another influence was his Danish cellist and composer friend, Herman Sandby—who incidentally does make it into the film—who introduced him to Danish folksong. After his arrival in England he made the acquaintance of Adela H. Wodehouse, who had written about folksong for the first edition of Grove’s *Dictionary*; Grainger wrote about her to Sandby, expressing his admiration for her and mentioning the assistance he was giving her with translation.³ But most of Grainger’s early experience of folksong was through printed collections, not through active, live fieldwork.⁴

¹ John Bird, *Percy Grainger* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999).

² Kay Dreyfus, ed., *The Farthest North of Humanness: Letters of Percy Grainger, 1901–14* (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1985).

³ See Dreyfus, *The Farthest North of Humanness*, 41.

⁴ See D. Tall, ‘Grainger and Folksong,’ *The Percy Grainger Companion*, ed. L. Foreman (London: Thames, 1981) 55–56.

Grainger arrived in London in May 1901, launching his career as a concert pianist the following month. A busy career ensued, with a full schedule of public and private concerts, and various ambitious tours which took him as far afield as Australia and New Zealand. The ultimate accolade came on 7 March 1905 when Grainger and Sandby played before Queen Alexandra at Buckingham Palace. Grainger had truly arrived as a performer.

Not surprisingly, Grainger's entry into London society, his dalliances with society ladies, and the concert in the presence of royalty are elements appealing to any biographer, and they feature prominently in the film. But what neither the film nor most biographies record is the far more important event of 14 March 1905, when Grainger visited the Broadwood rooms in Conduit Street to hear a paper given by Lucy Broadwood for the Royal Musical Association, in which she advocated active fieldwork in the collection of folksong and presented material of her own collecting. The full significance of this event would not be evident until years later. Grainger knew of Broadwood through her folksong scholarship, but this was probably the first time he had come into direct contact with her work.⁵

Although closely related to the piano manufacturing firm of John Broadwood and Sons as the daughter of Henry Fowler Broadwood, Lucy Broadwood was speaking in her capacity as Honorary Secretary of the Folk-Song Society, a group that had been formed in 1899 to encourage the collection and publication of folksong, and of which she was a founding member. The fact that the paper was given for the Royal Musical Association reflected the already existing links between the world of folksong scholarship and the musical establishment; indeed the Folk-Song Society had at its inception Stainer, Stanford, Mackenzie and Parry as its four vice presidents. The original committee of twelve comprised folklorists, collectors and music critics.⁶ The initial membership of 110 comprised a similar mixture, but also some professional performers; significantly, only two were actual folksingers, drawn to the Society by the first Honorary Secretary, Kate Lee. About a third of the membership were women.

Lucy Broadwood

Lucy Broadwood was an established collector and scholar, who had grown up with folksong in her home on the Surrey-Sussex border. Some twenty-four years older than Grainger, she had already published books and articles on folksong, and was a dominant figure in the folksong world. Her family connections gave her an entrée into the art music world, where she formed friendships with composers, critics and other musicians; indeed she collaborated with the critic John Alexander Fuller Maitland (to whom she was related by marriage) on a collection of songs, *English County Songs*, published in 1893. She was also a singer, and had performed in various charity concerts and in Arnold Dolmetsch's early music soirées.⁷ During the last two decades of the nineteenth century Broadwood composed regularly, and sought

⁵ Dreyfus, *The Farthest North of Humanness*, 62, gives this date, but no source. Grainger is unmentioned in the Broadwood diaries until March 1905.

⁶ For more on the formation of the Folk-Song Society, see C. J. Bearman, 'Kate Lee and the Foundation of the Folk-Song Society,' *Folk Music Journal* 7 (1999): 627–43.

⁷ Much of the biographical information on Lucy Broadwood has been extracted from her diaries, now held in the Surrey History Centre, Woking, UK. Most of the sources relating to the relationship between Grainger and Broadwood are also held in the Surrey History Centre, Woking. These include letters from Grainger to Broadwood, and Broadwood's diaries dating from 1882 to her death in 1929. For more on Broadwood's life and folksong collecting activity, see the author's 'The Transformed Village: Lucy Broadwood and Folksong,' in *British Music and Culture, 1785–1914*, ed. C. Bashford and L. Langley (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000) 341–66.

advice from composers such as Arthur Somervell and Liza Lehmann. Her arrangements and those of J.A. Fuller Maitland in *English County Songs* (1893), show evidence of art song influence.⁸

By the time Broadwood gave her paper in 1905, the Folk-Song Society had gone through a difficult period and was in some disarray, partly owing to the recent arrival of Cecil Sharp. Broadwood had written of 'a scheme for reviving its dying embers' enlisting the support of Ralph Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp, not anticipating that the latter's strong nationalist views on English folksong and its dissemination in schools would meet with a decidedly mixed reception within the Society.⁹ Shortly afterwards she was elected Honorary Secretary, replacing the ailing Kate Lee. The Folk-Song Society was no stranger to controversy: even at its inception there had been some disagreement as to its aims, with the new, younger faction determined to collect from the field rather than rely on printed sources. Broadwood's paper, entitled 'On the Collecting of English Folk-Song,' was a testament to the aims of the Folk-Song Society, which were announced in the first issue of the *Journal* as being 'the collection and preservation of Folk-songs, Ballads and Tunes, and the publication of such of these as may be deemed advisable.' Broadwood published in both popular and scholarly formats, with arrangements to appeal to a middle-class public, and melodic (unaccompanied) versions with scholarly annotations for the benefit of the Folk-Song Society membership. In 1904 she and Sharp drafted 'hints for collectors,' which provided guidelines for those conducting fieldwork.¹⁰

But for the young Grainger, the essence of Broadwood's lecture lay in her musical illustrations. An experienced and competent singer, she sang ten of the twenty-one musical examples herself, with the remainder sung by the baritone James Campbell McInnes, accompanied by the composer Charles Lidgley. Grainger was clearly inspired, writing to congratulate her the next day, and visiting a few weeks later 'to dine and talk and play folksongs,' as Lucy recorded in her diary.

Broadwood, Grainger and Brigg

Shortly after the lecture and visit with Broadwood, Grainger set off for Brigg, Lincolnshire, where he was to conduct his choral piece, *March of the Men of Harlech*. However, of far more importance was the music festival in Brigg, where a new competitive class for folksingers had been introduced. The folksong scholar Frank Kidson, a colleague of Broadwood's, was the adjudicator. Such competitions, or festivals, were a relatively new phenomenon at this time, and had been pioneered by Mary Wakefield, who had started the movement in the 1880s in her home county of Westmoreland. Wakefield wrote to Grainger in March 1905, recommending that he join forces with Broadwood in this sort of activity:

I have recommended Miss Broadwood as judge at Frome, & the enclosed shows she has accepted. Now will you be associated with the judging with her if I suggest it? It would be experience! She knows the ropes & it is interesting work.¹¹

⁸ See 'The Transformed Village' 347.

⁹ Diaries, 2 June 1904. For more on Sharp's views, see G. Boyes, *The Imagined Village* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993) 44–46.

¹⁰ 'Hints to Collectors' was published in the *Musical Times* 45 (1904): 640.

¹¹ Mary Wakefield, letter to Percy Grainger, 17 March [n.y.], Grainger Museum, University of Melbourne, Australia [hereafter GM]. I have been able to supply a year for this letter from a corroborating statement in Broadwood's diaries—she adjudicated a festival in Frome in May 1905. Wakefield had met Broadwood as early as 1887, and from 1896 the latter was active as an adjudicator. Grainger joined Broadwood as an adjudicator in the Brigg festival in 1906.

Grainger did become an adjudicator at the Brigg festival, but not until the following year. Inspired by the singers he heard on his first visit in 1905, Grainger wrote enthusiastically to his hostess at Brigg, Lady Winefride Cary-Elwes, about what he had heard and of his plans to return:

The results are so rousing (Folksongs) that I'm going to see I get a week off some time in the summer (maybe August) to do a sort of byke tour thro' Lincolnsh, gathering tunes ... As follows; before I come get someone to take down the words of all the songs Dean Robinson (3rd prize) remembers. He said he knew lots more. That wld speed things some.¹²

He duly returned in the early autumn to collect a number of songs which he later arranged in various settings. Two notebooks containing texts and tunes respectively survive, and are held in the Grainger Museum.¹³ These books combine the material collected at Brigg in April and also between 2 and 9 September 1905, as well as additional tunes collected during August in Wimbledon, Scotland (at Dunrobin Castle), and Kirkby Lonsdale, Westmoreland (October). He went unarmed with a phonograph; in fact, he collected on this visit much as his mentor Lucy Broadwood had done. The two notebooks chart Grainger's development as a collector, both of tunes and texts. Following the 'hints to collectors,' he duly recorded the title, name of the singer and where the performance took place; occasionally there is a note as to where the singer learned the song. There is scant descriptive information in the notebooks on the singers themselves as space was at a premium, though usually Grainger noted their place of origin and occasionally their age or date of birth. Singers' profiles were later fleshed out in an article he eventually published in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*.

Grainger's notebooks show not only the diligence of his collecting over several short periods, but also his development as a collector. It was perhaps the intensity of labour associated with notating texts in dialect plus verse variants in the songs that persuaded him to adopt the phonograph as a device which would increase the accuracy of his transcriptions, and obviate the need for help from others in taking down material. However, the songs collected on the first visit show the wide range of singers from whom Grainger collected, and a diversity of material; the article for the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* shows more selectivity of songs, and fewer singers as sources. Cecil Sharp, already noting the young newcomer, wrote to Grainger in November 1905, remarking on their Australian connection (Sharp had spent a number of years in Australia) and an acquaintance with a Grainger relative, as well as commending him for his interest in folksong, and offering help:

I know so much about you; we have so many mutual friends & moreover you come from Australia ... I knew your uncle, Allerdale Grainger ... It delights me beyond measure to think that some, at any rate, of our younger musicians are taking up Folk Song. You may always rely on me to help you to the utmost of my power ...¹⁴

¹² See letter of 13 April 1905 in Dreyfus, *The Farthest North of Humanness*, 45. There is also more information about the Brigg competition.

¹³ For more information on Grainger's English folksong collecting, see Jane O'Brien's seminal book *The Grainger English Folk Song Collection* (Nedlands, WA: Department of Music, University of Western Australia, 1985).

¹⁴ Cecil Sharp, letter to Percy Grainger, 11 November 1905, GM.

Although Sharp later expressed reservations about Grainger's collecting with the phonograph, the two remained in friendly contact for many years.

Grainger duly visited Broadwood with his findings in December 1905, and in the following March Grainger and his mother joined Broadwood for dinner and an evening of singing. And, complying with Mary Wakefield's suggestion, he joined Broadwood as an adjudicator for the folksong competition in Brigg in 1906, and also, according to Lucy, 'noted folksongs from 8 or 10 old men.' Grainger's settings were performed in concert, evidently with great success. Broadwood commented on the 'good fresh clear Lincolnshire voices not unlike Yorkshire in quality' and of 'much heartiness and geniality.'¹⁵ Grainger returned to Brigg in July, cycling round to hear folksingers, his enthusiasm and energy tumbling out in a breathless letter to Broadwood:

I'm simply scooping in good tunes as fast as pen and phonograph can swallow. I find the phonograph a priceless way of working. I've filled 36 blanks (blank wax cylinders for recording) and I have wired for 48 more. Balfour Gardiner ... was so taken by the records that he is going to get to work with a phonograph at once ... Got a gorgeous tune to 'The Rainbow' & a lovely version (called 'Lord Melbourne') of your untouchable 'Duke of Marlboro' one ... I'm taking down all words, dialect & all & will hektograph both words & tunes & send them to you for the FSS ... All the words you write of are here and you shall have them alright, as soon as I leave here. I've got 'Free & easy' & shall get 'Jolly Ploughboy.' A gold mine is a new man, George Wray of Barton-on Humber.¹⁶

Wray was indeed a new find, and was in fact the singer of 'Lord Melbourne,' but Grainger also collected from singers he had met the previous year, notably Joseph Taylor and George Gouldthorpe, though the latter is better represented in the notebook of the previous year. 'The Rainbow' was collected from a new singer, George R. Orton. The phonograph made a dramatic difference to Grainger's collecting, the results of which are recorded in his article published in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*.¹⁷ Meanwhile, Cecil Sharp was still keeping an eye on his young colleague. In a letter of October 1906 he expressed interest in Grainger's use of the phonograph, and encouraged him to publish some of the songs in a series he was editing, an offer which Grainger apparently turned down.¹⁸ By 1908, Sharp's attitude towards the phonograph had hardened to the point where he found its use both limited and also possibly misleading. 'I think there is another view of the matter from yours!' His disapproval was mingled with admiration for Grainger's work, though not without a certain bewilderment. His closing remark presages Grainger's later perspective on Broadwood: 'I am awfully glad you have specialized in it and I am amazed at your industry & ingenuity especially from one who *feels* the beauty etc of the songs as truly as you do.'¹⁹ Broadwood, who was editor of the journal, apparently disagreed with Sharp's dogmatic views and would not publish Sharp's critique of Grainger's methods.²⁰ Though they were colleagues, the relationship between the

¹⁵ Broadwood Diaries, 7 May 1906.

¹⁶ Percy Grainger, letter to Lucy Broadwood, 28 July 1906, Broadwood Collection, Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/1/87a.

¹⁷ Grainger, 'Collecting with the Phonograph,' *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* 3.12 (1908-9): 147-242.

¹⁸ Cecil Sharp, letters to Percy Grainger, 25 October and 3 November 1906, GM.

¹⁹ Cecil Sharp, letter to Percy Grainger, 24 May 1908, GM.

²⁰ Broadwood continued to sideline Sharp in this article, writing to Grainger that he should leave out one of Sharp's folksong contributions. Undated note, GM.

two scholars was at a low ebb by this time, and in any case Broadwood had already adopted the new technology and presumably had little sympathy for Sharp's views.

Grainger and Edison Bell

Correspondence between the Edison Bell Phonograph Company and Grainger reveals an interesting sequence of events. Grainger had not purchased his recording equipment, but had hired it from the company in July 1906 at a cost of £1 1s plus the cost of the blanks at 6s per dozen. The equipment was cumbersome, including a '12" Herald Trumpet, one 26" Japped horn and rubber connection, tripod floor stand, one speaking tube and an extra recorder and 36 small blanks.²¹ Letters and invoices from the company show that Grainger seems to have misunderstood the arrangement and had apparently neglected to pay the hire charge on the misguided understanding that there was no hire fee; in the end the company charged him a smaller amount of 10/6.²² A letter of December 1906 hints at a developing relationship between the company and the Folk-Song Society, but there appeared to be a distinct waning of enthusiasm in 1907. Folksong recordings were not seen to be a lucrative business prospect. A letter discussing the distribution of the song recordings was 'of high interest from a theoretical point of view' but 'not much benefit to ours and similar businesses.' The letter continues in similar discouraging vein:

The art of recording also has fallen so much into disuse that phonographs are not now universally supplied with shaving attachments, that is, to prepare cylinders for recording, as was formerly the case, nor are they supplied unless at an extra price, with the recording apparatus itself, so much has amateur recording fallen into disuse.²³

Whether this was true, or partly a reaction to Grainger's previous inauspicious dealings with the company, is open to conjecture. By 1909 the relationship seems to have improved; some records had evidently been made and there was a promise to 'make another 15 records if desired.'²⁴

Recording with the Phonograph

Meanwhile Broadwood had been busy enough herself, having travelled to collect in Scotland in June and then in Ireland in August. Grainger visited her in October to play his recordings of the Lincolnshire folksongs, and even presented them at a Folk-Song Society meeting in December. Unfortunately this particular meeting was the scene of a major row within the society, with Cecil Sharp at its centre.²⁵ Grainger's presentation must have been an anti-climax in such a heated and disgruntled atmosphere. According to a report in the *Musical Herald*, the phonograph did not work well, though Grainger's own renditions of the songs in dialect were well received.²⁶ It may be conjectured that Lucy's invitation to Percy and Rose to have

²¹ Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co., letter to Percy Grainger, 20 July 1906, GM.

²² See Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co., letter to Percy Grainger, 1 August 1906, GM.

²³ J.E. Hough (Edison Bell Phonograph Co.), letter to Percy Grainger, 10 July 1907, GM.

²⁴ Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co., letter to Percy Grainger, 27 September 1909, GM; another letter dated 18 September records the delivery of 15 records, 3 each from 5 masters.

²⁵ Broadwood Diaries, 6 Dec 1906. The row centred on Sharp's views about English folksong in schools; see de Val, 'The Transformed Village.'

²⁶ Cited in Dreyfus, *The Farthest North of Humanness* 86.

Christmas lunch with her might well have been an attempt to compensate for the rudeness of her colleagues. The luncheon was evidently a convivial occasion, with both Lucy and Percy playing and singing folksongs. Broadwood's approbation was confirmed when Grainger was invited to participate in one of her lavish musical parties, where he joined McInnes and Lidgley in performing folksongs. In fact, this was no ordinary musical party: the programme was entirely devoted to folksong, which was not Broadwood's usual practice, and fifty-six guests attended. Nor did it feature just English folksong (perhaps in response to Sharp's desire to privilege English folksong above all else), but French, Irish, Breton and Burgundian song sung by Eduard Garceau.²⁷

Grainger's use of the phonograph to record songs intrigued Broadwood, and she used one when she went to collect Gaelic songs in 1907. In March of 1908 she noted in her diary that she had actually bought one for herself. Meanwhile she published the results of her Irish journey in the *Journal* for 1907 ('Songs from Co. Waterford'). Grainger in the midst of a busy concert season found time to write in June:

Journal 10 is a joy out & out. You do get hold of a certain rare loveliness in almost all the tunes you collect. I really do think your notings down in this journal are models of exactness and trueness-of-impression.²⁸

This was certainly true: the transcriptions of the Irish songs are extremely detailed, with attention to the language, and with many variants noted.

Grainger set out his ideas about folksong collection and transcription in his ground-breaking article published in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* in 1908. Though collecting with a phonograph was nothing new outside England, the conservatism exhibited by Sharp was not unusual. Frank Kidson expressed reservations about singers' inhibitions about singing into 'that strange funnel above a moving cylinder.'²⁹ The two had met at the first Brigg festival, and had been in contact during the following year, when Kidson wrote from Leeds, offering to meet with Grainger who was performing there.³⁰ Evidently Kidson's reservations had no influence on Grainger's determination to use the phonograph; he found no reticence in his North Lincolnshire singers, declaring in his article that he was

surprised to find how very readily the old singers took to singing into the machine. Many of them were familiar with gramophones and phonographs in public houses and elsewhere, and all were agog to have their singing recorded, while their delight at hearing their own voices, and their distress at detecting their errors reproduced in the machine was quite touching.³¹

In the same year Broadwood published her third book of folksongs, *English Traditional Songs and Carols*,³² her first without a collaborator. Grainger received his copy in Australia, writing to thank her:

²⁷ See Diaries, entry for 15 May 1907.

²⁸ Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/1/8.

²⁹ Kidson, *English Folk-Song and Dance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1915) 67.

³⁰ Frank Kidson, letter to Percy Grainger, 16 October 1906, GM.

³¹ Grainger, 'Collecting with the Phonograph' 147.

³² London & New York: Boosey, 1908.

What I had looked at I liked hugely and thought it so honestly & unmisleadingly presented generally. I felt such delight that perhaps the thoroughest yet folksong arrangement publication should be by a woman!³³

The book represented Broadwood's work in a domain outside the *Journal*. Grainger's comments may seem somewhat patronizing today, but were probably meant to be positive and encouraging, given his obvious respect for her work. They might also be seen to suggest a male domination in the field of folksong, though Broadwood was by no means the only female collector of folksong. However, her efforts and those of Anne Geddes Gilchrist and Frances Tolmie were somewhat overshadowed by Cecil Sharp who, like Broadwood, also arranged folksongs.

It is interesting that Grainger does not comment on Broadwood's arrangement of 'Died of Love' which he had so recently published in his *Journal* article as 'Died for Love,' as sung by Joseph Taylor to them both on 7 May 1906 in Brigg. Broadwood, conscious of her middle-class audience (a much larger and more general one than that of the Folk-Song Society), had bowdlerized the text, omitting a first verse that she thought 'too painfully tragic for general use,' and substituting another. The tune, however, is substantially the same as Grainger's version (though Grainger's includes more metric variation, dynamics and accents), and the accompaniment is typical of Broadwood's work in its subtle enhancement of the text. Grainger simply presented the melodic line in his article, only later harmonizing the tune in a style vastly different to Broadwood's.³⁴

Communication between Grainger and Broadwood lapsed in the late 1910s. The two appear to have revived their relationship in the 1920s after a break of several years. This was shortly after Rose Grainger's death, Percy and Rose having emigrated to America at the beginning of the war. Grainger wrote a warm letter to Broadwood in November 1925 while on concert tour in the United States, recalling their experiences together two decades previously:

It was that lecture of yours (around 1904 or 1905) at the FSS [*sic*] that determined me to take up collecting actively. Through the beautiful spirit of that lecture I was led into paths that have meant so much to me & my life's work, & the popularizing of English folksong I have been able to do in the US & the European Continent, etc. all had its roots in that lecture of yours, and the fragrance of country melody that it radiated.³⁵

Grainger's letters of the 1920s to Broadwood reveal her profound influence on him. His incredulity at the achievement of a woman in this field was still evident, even though by this time it was clear that Grainger's activities as an arranger were quite different from Broadwood's approach. Grainger's accompaniments are far more orchestral in conception, and full of complex, rich, and often unexpected harmonies. Grainger's letters are far from patronizing, however, and reveal a real warmth for his previous mentor and friend, recalling the approbation of his mother, which was highest praise in Grainger's terms:

³³ Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/139.

³⁴ A reproduction and analysis of both Broadwood's and Grainger's settings of this song is given in de Val, 'The Transformed Village,' 359–65.

³⁵ Percy Grainger, letter to Lucy Broadwood, [November 1925], Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/1/208.

My mother's memories of you were always of the sweetest. We both deeply valued the kind friendliness you showed towards us. Apart from that you always came into our thoughts when discussing noble and disinterested high achievements in art & the finest efforts by women artists in the realm of music. I would be grateful if you would tell me of any publications of works by you since we last met, as I should like to get them. I will also send you mine from time to time ... Our beloved Anglosaxon music is at a vigorous stage of its career, where it is beginning to be prized, desired & exploited in all lands.³⁶

The last sentence is paradoxical in the light of Broadwood's breadth of approach which encouraged the collection of folksong in countries other than the British Isles, though not surprisingly Grainger's chief memories were of her explorations in English, Scottish and Irish song, and of course in her lecture, where she had made short work of the belief that there was no folksong to be found in the British Isles.

Perhaps Grainger himself did not become aware of the extent of Broadwood's influence on him until this later period. Certainly the letters he writes to her in the 1920s reveal her impact both as a collector and arranger as expressed in the following letter written at a time when he was preparing his own settings of songs collected between 1905 and 1907 in England, as well as Danish songs collected in the 1920s:

I want to say how *very deeply* I personally feel gratitude to you for your wonderful work in editing the FSS journals so long and so perfectly. Your work for folksong was always a source of the keenest delight to both my darling mother and myself. I don't know any woman my mother admired more than you. There is a flavour about the tunes you have collected, about the way you have treated them that is positively fragrant to me—fresh and sweet like wildflowers. If I were home at this moment I could name you several of your tunes & settings that seem to me the very quintessence of English folksong at its loveliest & best. ... Let me offer up a note of thanks to you for all the wonderful work you have done for so long—and for which my mother and I were always fervently (if silently) grateful.³⁷

Grainger's own views of culture and identity were unorthodox and have been explored elsewhere. His continuing affection for all things 'Anglosaxon' was perhaps due to his experience in England generally, and his meeting with Broadwood in particular. A letter of February 1925 mentions the recordings of Joseph Taylor, 'the fine old Lincolnshire Folksinger' made by the London Gramophone Society, which Grainger wished to donate to the Folk-Song Society. 'I feel a great responsibility as the guardian of these records of dear old Taylor's singing & know that you can help me as few can.'³⁸

Broadwood was probably one of the few who shared Grainger's real passion for folksong. She was a mentor to Grainger and to others in the example she set as a collector, scholar and arranger. Grainger, like any good and resourceful pupil, explored folksong in many original

³⁶ Percy Grainger, letter to Lucy Broadwood, 20 June 1923, Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/1/204.

³⁷ Percy Grainger, letter to Lucy Broadwood, November 1925, Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/1/208.

³⁸ Percy Grainger, letter to Lucy Broadwood, February 1925, Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/1/207.

and diverse ways, bringing to bear his own musicality on the material as Broadwood had done in her own distinctive way.

Grainger's last letter to Broadwood, dated 18 August 1929, was sent from Sussex, in which he expressed a wish to introduce her to his wife Ella before they left for America. 'Will you not have a meal with us? I want Ella ... to hear you sing and play some of your settings of Sussex and other tunes.'³⁹ Sadly this was not to happen. Lucy Broadwood died while visiting a music festival in Canterbury just days later, and probably never saw the letter. The passion shared by both Broadwood and Grainger was precious but not valued to the same extent by most of their contemporaries. The fruits of their scholarship and musicianship were indeed 'fresh and sweet like wildflowers' and a valuable contribution to musical and cultural life alike.

³⁹ Percy Grainger, letter to Lucy Broadwood, 18 August 1929, Surrey History Centre, 2185/LEB/1/587.