

OBITUARY

ANNE GEDDES GILCHRIST

(December 8th, 1863–July 24th, 1954)

The deliberate collection of folk song in England, viewed historically, can be seen as falling into two parts, the 75 years prior to the foundation of the Folk-Song Society, when the animated interest in the life of our forefathers was sporadically combined with an interest in the music of the past, and the period overlapping it, of concern with “the folk” and with folk music as an art *sui generis*. In the overlapping years, the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the two interests can be seen combined in the numbers of collectors who were serious without being professional, objective rather than romantic, and who sought to unite rather than to divorce the library and the field.

Of these none excelled Anne Gilchrist, who, born of a family whose distinguished talents inclined to music and painting, of Lancashire up-bringing and Scottish descent, turned her sound musical education towards the study of melody for its own sake, so that in the course of a very long life she acquired an encyclopaedic knowledge of tunes, their variant forms, their occasions and associations, and the whereabouts of their record in field-notes, manuscript and print. In this she was undoubtedly furthered by the similar interests of Frank Kidson with whom, and with the niece who survived him, she maintained a friendship, a correspondence, and an exchange of material mutually annotated until 1948. And it was probably at his instance that she entered the Folk-Song Society in 1905 and began her renowned association with its *Journal*.

Her comparative study of tunes was not, however, confined to England and the Scottish Lowlands. With Miss Broadwood she edited and annotated Miss Tolmie’s collection of tunes and Gaelic songs from the Western Islands,* and the Manx collections of Dr. John Clague,† and she assisted in the editing of the Bunting collections for the *Journal* of the Irish Folk Song Society. Her acquaintance with sacred and secular *contrafacta* and her generosity to all correspondents of like interests gained for her many friends in the Continent of America.

How wide was her circle of correspondents, how manifold her interests (she was an active member of numerous national and local archaeological societies) may not be revealed until the bequest of her books and papers to the English Folk Dance and Song Society has been examined. But her many correspondents and, above all, those who were privileged to have some personal acquaintance cannot but recall with gratitude and affection the light wearing of her learning, the unfailing interest and vitality, the integrity and humanity and the humorous gratification with which she regarded her public honours—admission as Fellow to the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1935 and appointment to the Order of the British Empire “for services to folk music and folk song” in 1948.

MARGARET DEAN-SMITH.

OLIVE DAME CAMPBELL

(1882–1954)

In America there has been no greater force in restoring the love, knowledge and practice of folk song in a healthy and natural atmosphere than the John C. Campbell Folk School at Brasstown, North Carolina, founded in 1925 by Olive Dame Campbell. For over a quarter of a century the school has included in its diversified programme, designed, in the phrase of the Danish Bishop Grundtvig, for “the enlightening and enlivening” of country life, the collecting, teaching, and especially the practice of folk song and dance. Never academic in pointing out its values, Mrs. Campbell gave to everyone who knew her in the Southern Appalachians a sense of her own keen pleasure, her taste, and her expert critical ability, thus communicating everywhere a love of folk song in its proper proportions.

* *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, 16 (1911).

† *Ibid.*, 28–30 (1924–6).