

and vitality of folk songs, have given her three published collections—*American Folksongs for Children*, *Animal Folksongs* and *American Folksongs for Christmas*\*—their special appeal and authority. The last one appeared only a few days before she died. She left material for one and perhaps two more such collections.

Mrs. Seeger's musical settings are not unlike Bartok's in their bareness and in their rigorous musical relation to the generating musical style, and they are utterly plain and unexacting technically, as Bartok's folk song settings were in the beginning. They do not derive from a pianistic concept of accompaniment at all, but from the nature of the instruments traditionally used in the United States to accompany folk song: the banjo, fiddle, guitar and so-called "dulcimer." About 1950 Mrs. Seeger began to feel she would like to write symphonic music again, and she was looking forward to more elaborate creative use of musical elements from folk song. Meanwhile, one of several pieces entitled *Diaphonic Suite* was published along with music of Charles Seeger in an issue of the quarterly *New Music* (it appeared posthumously) and Columbia Records is to issue her String Quartet in its American Chamber Music Series (a work she never heard performed).

The Seeger home in Washington was an unforgettable centre of warmth and hospitality to musicians, especially those working with folk music anywhere in the world. The stimulus of an evening with the Seegers has been described over and over again by foreign visitors as their most important musical experience in the United States. For all her great creative gifts and wide musical knowledge, Mrs. Seeger was a sturdy personality of the utmost simplicity and naturalness. She had the widest possible sympathies, the quickest loyalty and kindness—a memorably rich and generous human being who was a most rewarding friend.

SIDNEY ROBERTSON COWELL.

### JOHN LINTON MYRES

(1869–1954)

Sir John Myres, Emeritus Professor of Ancient History in the University of Oxford, died at his home in Oxford in 1954. Born in Lancashire in 1869, he emerged from Winchester and New College with much more than the usual Wykehamist fund of classical learning, with a boundless interest in the modern as well as in the ancient world; and with a lightning curiosity, linking the basic conditions of life with the innumerable crystallisations of art, which made him not only classical scholar and archaeologist but also geologist, anthropologist, and folklorist. He left Oxford in 1907 to become Professor of Greek at Liverpool, but returned in 1910 as Wykeham Professor of Ancient History. He held that Chair till 1939, but continued to serve New College as fellow and librarian till the end of the War.

In the First War he had served in the Mediterranean, and Compton Mackenzie in one of his books has recorded the remarkable appearance side by side on a wave-washed deck of two new officers of the R.N.V.R.—R. M. Dawkins with his brilliant red hair and Myres with his black Assyrian beard streaming in the Aegean gale.

Many years after Myres had left his mark on the archaeology of Cyprus, and Crete, and Zimbabwe, his memory was stored not only with the scientific facts but with all the anecdotal embroideries; and only a year or two before his death he was writing letters about the Easter customs of his Lancashire boyhood. He will be sadly missed in Oxford where a certain pressure exists to confine enquiry to one department. He was an exciting teacher, tolerant of ignorance, and intolerant only of those who look at antiquity through a religious haze of false analogy. His most important books were his *Who Were the Greeks?*, fruit of a year's lecturing in California (1930), and *Herodotus Father of History*, published the year before he died. He was also an astonishingly good administrator; founder and editor for many years of *Man*, and a prolific writer; organiser of numerous international conferences; who blessed any number of learned societies with commonsense as well as uncommon learning.

\*See reviews in this *Journal*: II, 75; IV, 91; and p. 75 of the present volume.

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He presided in 1935 at the International Folk Dance Conference\* held in London under the auspices of the International Folk Dance and Song Society, and those who were present will recall with delight and admiration his witty and illuminating contributions to the discussions and his masterly summing-up. He accepted the Presidency of the International Folk Dance Council which proceeded from the Conference and was the forerunner of the International Folk Music Council.

JOHN MAVROGORDATO.

\* See *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, Vol. II, 1935.

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