



English
Folk
DANCE & SONG SOCIETY

Vaughan Williams
Memorial Library

BROADSIDE DAY

Saturday 11 February 2023

Cecil Sharp House and online



PROGRAMME

	All times are London (Greenwich Mean) Time
9.00am	<i>Registration</i>
9.45am	<i>Welcome</i>
10.00am	Catherine Ann Cullen — Printers, publishers, prophets and poets of Cook Street: the ballad and almanack trade on one Dublin street in the 19th century
10.30am	John Baxter — The role of copyright holders in the decline of the selling of street song sheets (c1870–1920)
11.00am	<i>Break</i>
11.30am	Madeline Zehnder — Freedom in “tiny book form”: On reformatting the Proclamation of Emancipation for the soldier’s pocket
12noon	David Atkinson — ‘Old Ballads’: The materiality of print and the emergence of a genre
12.30pm	Andrew C. Rouse — Anthony, King of Poland? An example of how ‘knowledge’ of European politics was applied to domestic events in broadside ballads
1.00pm	<i>Lunch</i>
2.00pm	Neil McDermott — The last of Ayrshire’s ballad singers
2.30pm	Marie Hanzelková and Jiří Dufka — History of Czech broadside ballads
3pm	<i>Break</i>
3.30pm	Mary L. Shannon — Was Billy Waters funny? or; race, sailor song, and wooden legs in the early 19th century
4.00pm	Kathleen Walkup — Pulling the Devil by the tail: The broadsides of Cuala Press
4.30pm	<i>Final discussion & goodbyes</i>

David Atkinson

‘OLD BALLADS’: THE MATERIALITY OF PRINT AND THE EMERGENCE OF A GENRE

As G. H. Gerould wrote in 1932, the ‘ballad of tradition’ has ‘only the cuckoo’s right to that name’. In reality, the ballad as a genre in England was rooted in the material format of broadside print from the sixteenth through to the nineteenth century. It reached its apogee in the mid-eighteenth century with the consolidation within the print trade of a generic concept of so-called ‘old ballads’, narrative verses printed on half-sheet broadsides. Here we trace the emergence of the genre through the trade and argue that for the time, the half-sheet broadsides of the eighteenth century, largely overlooked by Child, were the ‘genuine ballads of the people’.

David Atkinson has published widely on ballads and street literature. His most recent monograph is The Ballad and its Pasts: Literary Histories and the Play of Memory (2018), and he has co-edited volumes including A Notorious Chaunter in B Flat and Other Characters in Street Literature (2022), Printers, Pedlars, Sailors, Nuns: Aspects of Street Literature (2020), Street Literature and the Circulation of Songs (2019), Cheap Print and the People: Popular Culture in the European Perspective (2019), Street Literature of the Long Nineteenth Century: Producers, Sellers, Consumers (2017), and Street Ballads in Nineteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and North America (2014). He is the Editor of Folk Music Journal.

John Baxter

THE ROLE OF COPYRIGHT HOLDERS IN THE DECLINE OF THE SELLING OF STREET SONG SHEETS (C.1870–1920)

My recent work on the role of Felix McGlennon in the commercialisation of popular songwriting at the end of the long 19th century revealed some interesting insights into the way that copyright holders used the legal system to prosecute the vendors and printers of pirated song sheets. The practice of selling cheap printed “pirated” songs was actively driven out of existence in a series of high-profile court cases in Ireland and mainland UK. This talk will enlarge on this earlier work and discuss in more detail the changing legislative and commercial framework in which songs and music were published in the late 19th and early 20th century. The role of song publishers and other copyright owners both in shaping the legislative framework and later enforcing it will be discussed. I will attempt to outline some of the changes in the ways that these unofficial song sheets were produced and sold during this period.

John Baxter is an amateur folksinger and visiting academic in interdisciplinary studies at the Open University, the former Qualification Director of the BA/BSc Open degree. He is undertaking an ongoing project to explore the intersection of folksong and songs written for the Music Halls, you can explore it at <http://folksongandmusichall.com/>

PRINTERS, PUBLISHERS, PROPHETS AND POETS OF COOK STREET: THE BALLAD AND ALMANACK TRADE ON ONE DUBLIN STREET IN THE 19TH CENTURY

In February 1859, an editorial in *The Saturday Review* newspaper described John Nugent as “a gentleman who carries on the trades of a printer, publisher and prophet,” the third description based on the fact that Nugent produced his own version of *Old Moore’s Almanack*, ingeniously titled *Nugent’s Correct and Genuine Moore’s Almanack*. Nugent and Peter Brereton were responsible for producing the bulk of the surviving ballads written and sold by street poets such as Joseph Sadler and James Kearney in Dublin in the second half of the 19th century. Both printers began their trade just outside the city walls, between the cooks, coffin-makers and tenements of Cook Street. Existing research into them gives us only rudimentary sketches of their operations. This paper will present new evidence on the lives and deaths of Nugent, Brereton and other Cook Street printers and their street poets. It will also trace the short journeys the printers and poets made into other premises in the streets and lanes of the Liberties of Dublin.

Catherine Ann Cullen is an Irish Research Council EP Postdoctoral Fellow at University College Dublin and Poetry Ireland, researching a book on Dublin’s lost street poets and tenement balladeers. She was the inaugural Poet in Residence at Poetry Ireland 2019-21. She is a recipient of the prestigious Kavanagh Fellowship 2018 and a prizewinning poet, children’s author and songwriter. She has presented at Broadside Day in 2019, 2020 and 2021, cochaired the Broadside Extra 2022 seminar in Dublin with Steve Roud, and is published by The Ballad Partners. Her seven books include three poetry collections and four children’s books, the first of which, *The Magical, Mystical, Marvellous Coat* (Little, Brown, 2001) won a gold award for poetry and folklore from the American Parents Association. Her most recent book, *The Song of Brigid’s Cloak* (Beehive 2022), is based on her ballad of the same name. See catherineanncullen.wordpress.com

Marie Hanzelková and Jiří Dufka

HISTORY OF CZECH BROADSIDE BALLADS

Marie Hanzelková: Assistant Professor in the Department of Czech Literature, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Czech Republic, phil.muni.cz/en/about-us/faculty-staff/13963-marie-hanzelkova. Hanzelková has published several articles about Czech hymn books from the sixteenth century and Czech pilgrimage broadside ballads (eg ‘Turning’ of *Czech Pilgrimage Broadside Ballads 2021*; *Broadside Ballads and Religious Pilgrimage Songs: The Virgin Mary of Vranov 2022*). She has co-edited the large collection of essays *Czech Broadside Ballads as Text, Art, and Song in Popular Culture, c. 1600–1900* (2022). marie.hanzelkova@phil.muni.cz

Jiří Dufka: Head of Manuscripts and Early Printed Books Department of the Moravian Library in Brno (www.mzk.cz/en/study-rooms/manuscripts-and-early-printed-books). Dufka has published several articles about the materiality, collecting and cataloguing of old printings (eg *Broadside Ballads as Artefacts 2022*) and edited a monograph (in Czech): *Czech Chapbooks: Font, Illustration, Decor*. jiri.dufka@mzk.cz

THE LAST OF AYRSHIRE'S BALLAD SINGERS

Street singer John McCartney (c.1795–1857) from Dalrymple in Ayrshire was described as “the last of our ballad singers” by the Rev. Roderick Lawson. Of the 4 songs associated with, or composed by him, the earliest or most complete versions of 3 appear on slips and broadsides published by the Glasgow Poet’s Box from 1851–1861. These are forgotten songs. Although each song was adopted by traditional singers and most were carried well into the 20th century — to be collected in the field by celebrated song collectors Rev. J.B. Duncan and Hamish Henderson — none of them persisted in sufficiently popular usage to be adopted in the Folk Revival that flourished in Scotland from the 1950s onwards. The singers that are known to have sung McCartney’s songs include a farm-hand, a coal miner, a shepherd’s daughter and possibly a chapman or ballad hawker (perhaps a contemporary of McCartney’s). This talk will look at these source singers and ask to what degree the early street literature sources and other, more formal and enduring printed sources interacted with oral transmission to form the settings that were collected in the 20th century.

This paper is part of a wider project which will culminate in a revised and expanded second edition of Roderick Lawson’s *The Ballads and Songs of Carrick* supported by the Scottish Book Trust to be launched at the 48th Girvan Traditional Folk Festival in April 2023.

Neil McDermott is a traditional musician based in Glasgow. He has performed with acclaimed balladeer Alasdair Roberts, French a cappella group Tartine de Clous, National Theatre of Scotland and with Scottish/Breton fusion band Askolenn. Originally from Ayrshire, Neil is also the Director of the Girvan Traditional Folk Festival which, now in its 48th year, is one of Scotland’s longest-established gatherings of traditional musicians. By day, Neil is Resource Development Officer for Music at the University of Glasgow where he has worked on online resources for the Political Song Collection (previously the Janey Buchan Political Song Collection) and The Historical Muse of Scotland database (hms.scot).

Andy Rouse

ANTHONY, KING OF POLAND? AN EXAMPLE OF HOW “KNOWLEDGE” OF EUROPEAN POLITICS WAS APPLIED TO DOMESTIC EVENTS IN BROADSIDE BALLADS

Foreign events and figures, factual or fictitious, were on occasion used to lampoon domestic affairs. The recent Christian victory at the second Battle of Mohács was used as an attack on the new fad of coffee houses; ‘A Song upon the Randizvous on Hounsley-Heath’ openly paralleled the newly created barrack in Hounslow with the Christian army’s military success against the Turks. This paper takes a look at ballads and other contemporary printed material featuring “Anthony, King of Poland”, in reality the newly created Earl of Shaftesbury.

*Andrew C. Rouse has lived in Hungary since 1979, where he worked at the Institute of English at Pécs University until his recent retirement. Encouraged by Gerald Porter, he gave his first paper on folksong at the 1995 International Ballad Conference in Swansea, which contributed to his change of direction in both teaching and research. He is the author of *The Remunerated Vernacular Singer and Mr Pepys and the Turk*. Alongside his academic work he has performed with various formations: in 1995 he founded Hungary’s only group to perform English (rather than Celtic) folk music, which is still going strong. He is the organiser of Pécs’s British Autumn, an annual series of events that brings performers and speakers from Britain and Ireland to Pécs. He also translates Hungarian literature and history-related texts into English, most recently (2022) the raunchy poetry of Árpád Lówy (1851–1914).*

Mary L. Shannon

WAS BILLY WATERS FUNNY? OR; RACE, SAILOR SONG, AND WOODEN LEGS IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY

On Friday March 21st 1823 in St Giles' Workhouse in London, Billy Waters, the 'King of the Beggars', died. Billy was an African-American ex-sailor, who lost a leg serving on the ship 'Ganymede' and so turned to busking in London to supplement his meagre pension. Billy's pitch was outside the Adelphi theatre on the Strand; he adopted the distinctive costume of cocked hat, sailor's jacket, and wooden leg which – together with his fiddle-playing, his dancing, and his trademark song 'Kitty will you marry me' – made him a well-known figure on London's streetscape. Billy's widest fame came, however, after he was immortalised in W.T. Moncrieff's hit 1821 stage version of Piers Egan and Robert and George Cruikshank's phenomenally popular serial text *Life in London* (1820–1), and in broadsides and other cheap literature. This paper will consider how Waters' time as a sailor impacted upon the creation and reception of his song and dance performances. These performances were considered comic by many nineteenth-century commentators in terms that would be rightly condemned today. Yet Waters was the original creator of his act, and there is no reason to suppose he did not make his own commercial choices to gain public attention based on the visual and cultural codes available to him at the time. How do we maintain a vital critical suspicion of such accounts, while also not denying Waters his own hard-won agency? Was Billy Waters funny?

*Mary L. Shannon is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Roehampton, London. Her first monograph, *Dickens, Reynolds and Mayhew on Wellington Street: The Print Culture of a London Street*, won the 2016 Colby Prize. She is currently finishing her second about Billy Waters and popular print and visual culture, funded by a Leverhulme Research Fellowship and a Linda H. Peterson Fellowship..*

Kathleen Walkup

PULLING THE DEVIL BY THE TAIL: THE BROADSIDES OF CUALA PRESS

In 1908, a private press in Dublin issued the first of its monthly broadsides. The press, part of Dun Emer Industries, soon left that organization to form Cuala Industries, including Cuala Press. The press's director, printer, publisher and general factotum was Elizabeth Corbet Yeats. Known as Lolly to her illustrious family, Elizabeth Yeats started the press after a month's training in London. With her already famous brother W.B. as editor and another brother, Jack, as chief illustrator, the future boded well for the press. The broadside series—there were three, one from 1908 to 1915, a second series in 1935 and a third and final series in 1937—often included Irish songs; the second series, edited by W.B. Yeats and F.R. Higgins, included the printed music along with the lyrics. All of the broadsides were printed as folios rather than as single sheets. They each contained one or more illustrations along with the text. In the first series the illustrations were done by Jack Yeats in his inimitable, sometimes whimsical, style and were hand coloured by the women employed at Cuala. Jack Yeats also occasionally wrote verses for the broadsides, either anonymously or by signing with a pseudonym. The broadsides were sold by subscription. In addition to the hand colouring, the three series were also printed by the women who worked alongside Elizabeth Yeats at Cuala. Their machine was an Albion handpress, outmoded technically in the early twentieth century but still used for private press work. Elizabeth would have liked to update their press, but the finances did

not stretch to adding a more modern piece of equipment. Ultimately, the press was not profitable, but Elizabeth managed to keep it afloat for 37 years. This illustrated paper will examine the broadside series of Cuala and highlight the work of its proprietor and the women who kept the press going against all odds, Elizabeth Corbet Yeats and her ‘Cuala girls.’

Kathleen Walkup is Professor Emerita of Book Art at Mills College, Oakland, CA, where she held the inaugural Lovelace Family Endowed Professorship. Self-trained as a letterpress printer, Ms. Walkup co-founded Five Trees Press. She has written and lectured extensively on the history of women and printing and will teach a course on that subject in July 2023 for California Rare Book School.

Madeline Zehnder

FREEDOM IN “TINY BOOK FORM”: ON REFORMATTING THE PROCLAMATION OF EMANCIPATION FOR THE SOLDIER’S POCKET

Picture the Proclamation of Emancipation, the US Civil War-era executive order that changed the legal status of enslaved African Americans living in secessionist states, and you are likely to imagine a large broadside, perhaps nailed to a tree or held aloft by President Abraham Lincoln. But one of the earliest editions of this document took the form of a miniature pamphlet, no bigger than a standard playing card. This edition was designed by Boston abolitionist and entrepreneur John Murray Forbes for distribution to formerly enslaved people encountered by Union troops on the march in the US South. By publishing the Proclamation in what he dubbed “tiny book form,” Forbes not only made his edition easier for traveling soldiers to distribute, but also recoded the Proclamation as a tract-like publication designed to influence and persuade. More specifically, I argue, Forbes’s decision to reissue Lincoln’s text as a pocket-sized pamphlet transformed a dry government announcement into a recruiting document, complementing Forbes’s larger efforts to mobilize African American men for the Union Army. This talk will chart the creation, distribution, and reception of Forbes’s pamphlets, while also situating them in relation to a larger wartime ecosystem of tracts and other cheap print for soldiers.

*Madeline Zehnder is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, where she is affiliated with the “Literatur- und Wissensgeschichte kleiner Formen” (Literary and Epistemic History of Small Forms) research group. She received her PhD in English Literature from the University of Virginia and has published her research on book history, material culture, and early American literature in journals including *New Literary History* and *American Literature*. She is currently at work on her first monograph, *Made to Move: Pocket-Sized Print in Nineteenth-Century America*.*

LIBRARY LECTURES, SPRING 2023

Book at efdss.org/librarylectures

HARMER FECIT: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SONGS AND DANCES IN SYLVAN HARMER'S SONG BOOK (1818-1821)

BY SEAN GODDARD

Wednesday 15 February ⇨ 7.30pm ⇨ online, via Zoom

In 2021 Sean completed a MA at the University of Brighton on the History of English Folk Dancing using one gem of the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library: The Sylvan Harmer Song Book. This small handwritten book was compiled around 1820 and gives a glimpse into the songs and dances being performed in rural Sussex. This lecture considers the purpose of the book, and the possible origins of its 11 songs and 23 dances.

Sean Goddard is a dance caller, dance band leader, morris dancer, and PhD researcher of historical English folk dance recordings.

HOW TO SING IN THE STREET

BY OSKAR COX JENSEN

Wednesday 15 March ⇨ 7.30pm ⇨ Cecil Sharp House, and online via OverturePlus

This lecture explores what it meant to sing on the streets of London and beyond in centuries past. Drawing on first-hand accounts of street singers, Oskar explores the art and adventures of the ballad-singer, the challenges they faced, the techniques they used, and the hidden musical histories their stories reveal. Songs will be sung, with ample opportunity to join in. Join us for new sense of history, and maybe a new side to your own singing too!

Oskar Jensen is a NUAfT Fellow in Music at Newcastle University and a BBC New Generation Thinker.

DISTANT COUSINS: CORNISH CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BY KATE NEALE

Wednesday 19 April ⇨ 7.30pm ⇨ Cecil Sharp House, and online via OverturePlus

'Wherever there's a hole in the ground, you're sure to find a Cornishman at the bottom of it, digging for metal'. And also, according to some, singing carols! The 19th century saw a sustained migration of Cornish miners to new mines across the world, and their traditions often continued under new skies. This lecture will trace how a new branch of Cornish carol repertoire flourished in Australia during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Dr Kate Neale's AHRC funded PhD research examined the transfer of Cornish Christmas carol traditions to California and South Australia.