

Extra Notes on the Songs of the Isle of Wight

For Stone, Black, Long songs

Legends and Lays of the Wight Percy Stone.

Stone has a mixed set of legends and lays/songs. One set was possibly for a sophisticated audience that he dedicated to Princess Henry of Battenberg. This is a set are songs without dialect. Then he has a dialect set of songs. Some of the last set are in other books just titled Old Song but may have come from elsewhere.

Percy Stone travelled extensively around the Island in the course of his work as an architect. Percy was an antiquarian and an extrovert character, with friends in artistic circles. He was immersed in local affairs where he gained extensive knowledge of the island ways. He married into the folky Smith family of Languard, Shanklin.

It was at these various villages and towns working alongside local islanders that he must have picked up the dialect, the local stories and songs. He gradually developed these over 20 years until he published his book Lays and Legends. He is best known of course for his architectural work which included the rebuilding of Carisbrooke Castle (gatehouse, chapel), the unearthing of Quarr Abbey and the restoration of many churches. His book is "The Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight from the XIth to the XVIIth". Something we would love to have a look at.

He had connections with the following villages and towns plus we expect many more.

Merstone in the centre of the island, where he lived. Others include Bonchurch, St Lawrence, Totland, Shorewell, Shanklin, Wootton, Arreton, Niton, Shalfleet, Bembridge, Brading, Newport, Osborne, Nunwell, Carisbrooke.....

Y= we produced song

Legends

Vectis

Brading Haven Y

The Danish Raid

Godshill Started

The Arrest of Odo

St Catherine's (Atherfield Ledge) Y

The Silver Bow Y

St Albin

The Princess Cecily

The Bishop's Acre

Gilbert Lee (Rat of Wight) Y

The Damask Rose Y

St Tristram's Weird

George Morland

Lays

March of the Wightmen Y

Fox lays:

Cubbing

The Wilderness Fox Y

A Tally-Ho Day

For'ard away

How they ran the first fox in the Wight

How they introduced foxes to the Wight

The Seasons:

Spring Y

Summer Y

Autumn Y

Winter Y

The Widow Y

Newtown Randy Y

My Maid Y

Shickshack Day Y

The Carter's Mate Y

The Old Grey Hen Y

Mary Y

Forsaken Y

The Recruiting Sergeant Y

A Christmas Party Y

A Scrow Day Y

Other Percy Stone Songs

Christmas Carol An Island carol in the Anthology of Island Poets.

(At the moment I cannot find reference to the book the ones below were in.)

The Parson of Chale Y

The Tortoise-Shell Cat Started

Golden Gorse Y

Frederick Black KGB

(He collected and revised some stories/songs)

Southern Farmer

Dunkey's Egg Started

Songs sung by the Peasantry in the Island. Collected by Long. Brief extra notes, unfinished, may help someone in the future

Many workers came to the island in the summer months to pull vegetables and pick fruit. They came from Somerset, Dorset and Hampshire. This mixing with the locals would almost certainly have brought over mainland songs. Over the years these would have changed into island versions. Although it must be noted they do not contain any dialect words. It seems almost all these songs have mainland versions and are not distinct island songs. Many are broadside ballads. That said some are great songs!

Abroad as I was Walking

Hampshire Gardiner 1907. Has a repeat end line and words somewhat different. Versions sung by Patrick Shuldham-Shaw and the Fureys.

The Maiden's Complaint

"I was abroad one morning" Not sure about this.

The banks of the sweet Primroses

Hampshire, Gardiner 1905. Very common in the IOW and elsewhere.

The Spotted Cow

Popular song. Copper family did it.

Cupid's Garden

Popular song. Copper family did it.

The Gardener's Choice

A version of the Seeds of Love. Very popular.

Roger and Dolly

Great song. Found in collections.

Richard of Taunton Dean

Popular Song. Also Sussex. Version Tony Wales 1957

Cis and Harry

"The clock had struck but I can't tell what" Great song to do.

The Old Man Clothed in Leather

Often called "One misty moisty morning." Very popular on Isle of Wight and elsewhere.

The banks of the sweet Dundee

Scottish ballad sung everywhere. Popular with ballad singers.

I'm in Haste

Interesting song from Somerset. In Haste. "I crossed the field the other morn" Sabine Gould. "Quick for I'm in haste." "Be quick for I'm in haste"

The Dark Eyed Sailor

Popular song. Everybody does this one but great song.

The Sailor's Return

Portsmouth Song. Heard it sung.

The Pretty Ploughboy

Hammond. Dorset 1905. Many broadsides survive. Standard tune (in Foggy Dew book)

The Lost Sailor

Better known as The Old Miser

The British man of War

Several versions from Devon to Sussex. Great IOW version. In Wanton Seed, Gardiner "In a British Man O'War", Southampton 1906 other tune.

Polly Oliver

There is a special Isle of Wight version. Sang normal version not sure why. See extra notes

The Rambling Sailor

Cannot remember who sung this on the island but we all joined in last line. Sharp, Somerset 1904

The Mermaid

Adapted to local version.

The Loss of the Ramillies

Many different versions of this song. Historical. Not sure how this one went. Devon / Cornwall. Walter Pardon / Jumbo Brightwell

The Death of General Wolfe

Copper Family and other versions. Historical. Bob Hart of Suffolk

Paul Jones, the Pirate

1779. The events described took place near Flamborough Head off Yorkshire on September 23, 1779, when a fleet commanded by John Paul Jones in his flagship, The Bonhomme Richard, met a fleet of British merchantmen escorted by two British men-of-war. During the battle, Captain Pearson, commander of the Serapis, asked John Paul Jones, greatly outgunned, to surrender. Jones responded, "Surrender, be damned. I have not begun to fight." Jones won the battle, but The Bonhomme Richard was so badly damaged it had to be abandoned and Jones sailed the Serapis home. Use Paul Jones tune. There is another completely different version. John Paul Jones is a pirate another one. John Millar sings version to well known tune.

The Lowlands Low

Often called "The Golden Vanity" Popular song. Hampshire 1907.

The Honest Thresherman

From "The Noblemen's Generous Kindness" or "The Poor Country Man's unexpected happiness" which was a long version. Also called "The Squire and the Thrasher". Tune "The Two English Travellers or Chevy Chase" 1670 ish Roxburghe Collection.

The Jolly Wagonner

Good old song many versions.

The Farmer's Boy

Seems to be sung every session!

The Barley Mow Song

Sung every session.

The Song of Sixpence

I like this. Various versions.

My Billy Boy

Popular song with island version

What is Your One Oh

Say no more!

Nicholas Wood

"Oh when shall we be married" 1630. Not heard

While Joan's Ale was New

Sung all the time. "When Jones ale was new"

Jolly Fellows

Come Landlord. Always very popular in a pub singsong.

Dick Turpin, or Turpin Hero

Almost recorded this with John. Decided it had been done too often!

The Jolly Butchers

1672-1679 by Paul Burges set in Norfolk then Northumberland. Vaughan Williams Essex 1904. Version by Gryphon.

The Carrion Crow

Sharp, Berkshire 1909. IOW version with pork!

The Fox

Sung many a time, an old favourite.

Moss the Miller and his Mare

Know nothing about this one

The Crockery Ware

Popular song about a chamber pot!

The Britches

The Breeches or “Wearing the breeches” “Who wears the Breeches?” “Will and his wife’s fight for the breeches”. Many variations of a common theme found all over. Tune as used for many songs.

Wearing the Britches

As above

The Bonny Bunch of Roses O

Gardiner. Lyndhurst Hampshire 1906.

Others include some ballads and Music hall songs.