

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear David,

Your 'throwaway vicar' (see Issue 22, Editorial) is not, in fact, SBG but another interesting ecclesiastical folk enthusiast, the Reverend Charles Latimer Marson, erstwhile vicar of Hambridge in Somerset. Marson met Cecil Sharp when they were both living in Adelaide and their friendship continued once they were both back in the UK, for a period of about 17 years. It was while staying with Marson at Hambridge in September 1903 that Sharp heard his first folk song, 'The Seeds of Love' sung by Marson's gardener, John England, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Marson and Sharp collaborated at first on the collection of songs in Somerset but with Marson, as with Baring-Gould, the friendship ended in acrimony. While Marson's name appears on the first three volumes of 'Folk-Songs from Somerset' it is absent from the remaining two volumes. Marson died in 1914 and Sharp did, at least, attend the funeral.

Marson was a successful writer, though not in the same league as SBG. It is not clear whether the two ever actually met through their mutual friend Sharp, though they must have known of each other. Marson has not been well served by time though, luckily, his papers and manuscripts are preserved in Oxford. Hugh Anderson, an Australian researcher that I met this summer, is writing a book about Marson and the man Hugh describes sounds a fascinating character.

Best wishes,

Martin Graebe

Dear David,

Please find the attached reference to SBG's 'Cheap Jack Zita'. I found it in a book which I recently purchased entitled, 'Ouse's Silent Tide' by Rev. C.F. Farrar, originally published in 1921, my copy is the 1969 reprint. A 'gaulcher' was a clay digger.

I hope you find it of interest.

Regards,

Raymond Scott

"Every Fenman knows of John Griggs, said to have been the last of the Fen pedlars, 1840 to 1902. He was the original of Baring Gould's 'Cheap Jack Zita,' a very graphic picture of Fen life. Originally a Fen 'gaulcher,' he took to peddling early in life and tramped the Fen roads and droves and banks with his pack and later, obtaining a horse and van, covered the ground between Lynn and Lincoln. He amassed considerable wealth and died in retirement at Middleton in 1902."