

# CHARLES SEEGER, MUSICOLOGIST, 92

## Father of Folk Singer Was First To Teach Course in U.S.

By C. GERALD FRASER

Charles L. Seeger, the musicologist who taught the first course in musicology in the United States, and was the father of Pete Seeger, the folk singer, died yesterday of a heart attack at his home in Bridgewater, Conn. He was 92 years old.

Mr. Seeger's life was devoted to music. He intended to be a composer, but when he became hard of hearing he turned to studying the history and system of music and musical culture.

In 1977, the University of California at Berkeley held a Charles Seeger celebration, bringing to that campus musicologists and ethnomusicologists to pay homage to Mr. Seeger.

Ann Pescatello, a professor of history at the university, who was assisting Mr. Seeger with his autobiography at the time of his death, said yesterday that his major contribution was as "a thinker in the field of music. He combined original ideas from other disciplines in a synthesis and tried to apply them in many areas of music."

### Founded Musicological Societies

In the 1930's, Mr. Seeger founded the American Musicological Society and later the American Society for Comparative Musicology. After World War II, he attempted to bring ethnomusicologists into the International Musicological Council. When the council rejected that marriage, he and others founded the Society for Ethnomusicology.

Mr. Seeger wrote numerous articles on the relationship between music and culture, on folk music and on music theory. He co-edited "The American Ballad Book" with Duncan B. Emrich in 1946, and in 1977, "Studies in Musicology," bringing together several of his major ideas. At the time of his death, besides his autobiography, he was working on "Principia Musicologica."

He graduated from Harvard College in 1908 and during graduate studies in Germany he conducted at the Cologne Opera. As the second chairman of the music department at the University of California at Berkeley from 1912 to 1919, he introduced the nation's first musicology course. He then taught at the Juilliard School of Music, the New School for Social Research and other institutions.

Mr. Seeger tried to instill in his children an appreciation of good health and the outdoors. Pete Seeger said yesterday that his father hiked daily, and at 88 years of age was teaching his grandchildren how to stand on their heads. The folk singer attributed his father's long and active life to yoga exercises, fresh fruits and vegetables and lots of honey.

Mr. Seeger was divorced from his third wife, Margaret Dickinson. He is survived by his daughters, Peggy Seeger, Barbara Singleton and Penelope Cohen, and his sons, Charles, John, Peter and Michael; 18 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

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