



The Phonographic Record

The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

Vol. 1, Issue 2.

January, 1966.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Thank you for the comments and encouragement which reached us after the publication of the first issue of "The Phonographic Record". We hope to incorporate as many of these ideas as possible in succeeding issues.

OFFICERS: In our first issue we told you a little about the first meeting of the Society. Now we would like to introduce you to the officers elected that evening. They will bear office initially for one year until the Annual General Meeting which will be held as near as possible to our anniversary, September 9th. Patron: Mr. C.E. Woledge, President: Mr. W.T. Norris, Vice-President: Mr. W.S. Dini, Secretary-Treasurer: Miss P.G. Rogers, Committee: Messrs. W.E. Webb, A.M. Otley and J.S. Cowper who is our Publicity Officer.

QUESTIONNAIRE: Many thanks to those members who have already returned their questionnaires. We have been impressed on reading them, by the willingness of members to assist one another in making parts, in reconstructing machines and in offering to exchange records. This is the Society fulfilling one of its main functions.

INCORPORATION: At the November meeting, when the Society rules were discussed and passed by those present, it was decided to become an Incorporated Society and this will be undertaken in the New Year.

ITEMS OF INTEREST: We would be grateful to members who have come across unusual parts, needles, records etc., if they would write a short article for this magazine. During the last week, we have heard of a simple method of "trueing up" otherwise unusable cylinders, an unusual "on-off" system for a gramophone and a needle for a disc machine which can be adjusted to play softly, medium or loudly. An article on such as these would be of value to our readers.

2.

The Editor,

It was with great interest that I awaited the first issue of "The Phonographic Record". When it arrived I was both pleased and disappointed - pleased with the quality of the articles (and hopeful of even better things to come) but disappointed that what appears to be the mascot of the Vintage Phonograph Society is not a phonograph but a replica of that new fangled invention of Mr. Berliner, a gramophone. In the very words of an advertisement for this strange device "The Gramophone bears no resemblance in a scientific aspect to the phonograph or graphophone". (See reproduction of advertisement on the cover of the October issue of the "Hillandale News", the official magazine of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society).

As everyone knows, a phonograph is a machine which plays records of a cylindrical shape at a speed of 160 revolutions per minute.

I trust you will remove the offending machine from your letterhead with the utmost alacrity and replace it with a real phonograph.

I am, Fredison.

We have made a close check on our membership list and can find no member by the name of Fredison which leads us to think that it may be a nom-de-plume! Whatever the true identity of our correspondent we feel that a reply should be made to the rather interesting point raised.

During the early development of recording machines there were many names coined by the various companies and inventors:- Phonautograph (Scott 1857) Phonograph (Edison 1877) Gramophone (Berliner 1887) and Graphophone (Bell-Tainter 1889). The word "phonograph" seems to have been coined almost simultaneously in France (by the Abbe Lenoir) and America (by Thomas Edison). Lenoir actually coined the word about two months before Edison did. Until about 1914, the terminology was quite plain - a "phonograph" was a machine using cylinders, a "gramophone" used discs. Eventually the word "gramophone" replaced "phonograph" in England while "phonograph" was used exclusively in America.

To-day phonograph is a word which is little heard (even gramophone is rarely heard - "recordplayer" being used instead) so perhaps it is very appropriate for a Society which is concerned

with machines which are not heard very often.

We would be interested to hear from members as to whether they think the Berliner should be retained and whether they have a "yen" to become "The Vintage Phonograph and Gramophone Society of New Zealand".

Editor.

GUIDES TO RECORD COLLECTING.

P.G. Rogers.

Cylinders being fairly difficult to obtain, collectors are usually willing to accept a mixed bag, but with discs the supply is generally much wider and it is sometimes a little difficult to discriminate. Although the final choice will no doubt be a matter of personal taste, there are several publications which are a guide to both beginner and advanced collector. Probably the most generally useful is Boris Semeonoff's "Record Collecting". This book deals in an uncomplicated but informative manner with most aspects of collecting, including storage, condition, dating and identification etc. Dr. Semeonoff includes excellent sections on singers, instrumentalists, etc. grading records for rarity and also including a chapter on collecting jazz records. Another small but helpful booklet is "The £ s d of Record Collecting" by James Martin and although this has a slight bias towards buying and selling for profit, it contains much to interest the general collector and contains a chapter on cylinders and hill-and-dale records. It is interesting to note whilst reading Mr. Martin's book that British record prices are very much higher than New Zealand; in fact he takes as his lower limit, the price of five shillings which would, I think eliminate nearly all the discs which we buy and sell in this country. Other excellent publications which can be recommended to the collector of Operatic and Golden Age records include P.G. Hurst's "The Golden Age Recorded" and the magazine "The Record Collector". The collector of variety and music-hall records may find it more difficult to obtain guidance. Mr. W. Macqueen Pope's wonderful and complete history of the music-hall "The Melodies Linger On" mentions the "specialities" of many of the performers and individual biographies of music-hall stars provide clues to other worthwhile records. Fred Gaisberg's "Music on Record" the story of the Gramophone Co. also is most helpful. It is not easy nor can it be done cheaply to build up a library of reference books but it is a fascinating part of the hobby and I would be pleased to assist any member regarding the availability of books and of

sources of supply.

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RECORD DUPLICATION No. 2.

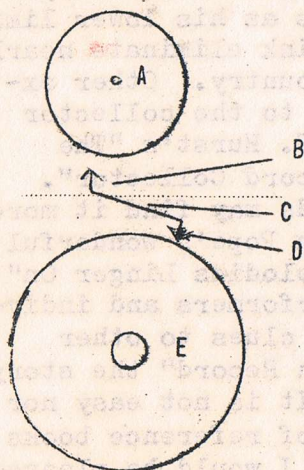
Because of the expense entailed in making these individual cylinders other methods were looked for and soon found, the first of these appears to be by The American Gramophone Co. (see Johnson's Patent 10,066 of 1896).

Edison and Bettini followed soon after with new types and Petit came out with a different type for which he took out a patent in 1900. These methods were all the same in principle in that the stylus (or needle) as it played one cylinder, was linked to a cutting stylus which cut the same record on another cylinder, hence only in playing the cylinder through could another copy be made. The fault with this system can easily be seen; that being that the master cylinder received almost the same amount of wear as an audible playing for a copy to be made.

One point though, that I must mention, was that this process was done at a lot slower speed than that used for normal playing. Also, in the case of Edison, a larger cylinder (Concert) was made from a standard cylinder.

The Pathe Company produced hill-and-dale discs from cylinders by this system in early years and by the use of slow speed and lever linkage, the disc proved better than the master cylinder from which it was duplicated.

Figure 1 shows how the Edison and Bettini system works.



- A. is the cylinder record which is being copied.
- B. is a sapphire of the type used in an ordinary reproducer.
- C. is the axis on which the linkage moves.
- D. is the cutting stylus the same as used in a recording head.
- E. is the record blank, in the diagram a five inch size.

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Fig. 1.