

The Phonographic Record

The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

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Page 17.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

THE 1969 CONVENTION FOR GRAMOPHONE PHONOGRAPH AND RECORD COLLECTORS

The Convention this year will be held at the Dominion Museum, Wellington, New Zealand at Queen's Birthday week-end May 31st - June 2nd. Those who have attended either of the two previous Conventions held in Wellington, will know the extremely efficient way in which they were run. As we write this the programme is still being planned but we know enough of it to assure members that it will be an enjoyable and educational time and a most valuable opportunity to meet and talk with others of similar interests. All New Zealand members will later receive further information and an invitation. If any overseas member would like to be included in the mailing list would he please advise the Secretary who will hand on the name and address to the organising committee.

BACK ISSUES: Over the holiday period and since we have been pleased to enrol new members both in New Zealand and overseas. We are gratified that so many have taken advantage of the opportunity to obtain back issues of the magazine. We have at present supplies of all back volumes. The price per volume is \$1.00 N.Z. making a total of \$3.00 N.Z. for the three volumes. All back issues of the present volume are included in the present subscription.

FROM THE BEGINNING: In this issue you will find the first of a series of articles on the purchase and restoration of talking machines. Would any member who has discovered a method of restoring any part of such a machine, please let us know all about it. We may thus be able to save other collectors from hours of wasted effort.

DIRECTORY OF MEMBERS: We hope to make a start on the Directory in the very near future. We are however handicapped by the non-return of some of the Questionnaires. If you are still completing yours would you please assist us by returning it as soon as possible.

MORE ABOUT REPRODUCERS

THE EDISON AUTOMATIC REPRODUCER

by Walter Norris

This word "speaker" seems to have been used in the early stages but was changed to "reproducer" with the advent of the automatic model.

This model appears to have been produced later than the Standard Speaker and was a vast improvement in many ways. It bore the name "automatic" because it was not rigid like the Standard Speaker and could float sideways, more like the better known Model C. This did away with the need for the adjusting screw and the speaker lever. (our illustration page shows a later model recorder on which the speaker lever was still being used.) This model still used the glass diaphragm and sapphire stylus, but had a larger weight.

The advantages claimed for this reproducer were - because of the construction it always tracked the thread of the record overcoming expansion or contraction of wax cylinders due to temperature change and thus by always following the groove would give louder reproduction.

BITS 'N PIECES

WANTED TO BUY: Record cleaning pads - Gavin East, 60 Garreg Road, Christchurch, 5, New Zealand. Phone Christchurch 517-859.

TARGET FOR LAUGHS: Most public figures have at one time or another been the butt of the cartoonist's wit. And Thomas A. Edison is no exception. On our illustrations page we reproduce two cartoons based on the famous inventor and his phonographs.

LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY: In this issue, we feature a record label of the Crystalate Gramophone Record Manufacturing Company Ltd., London who produced the well-known Imperial Records. These labels were issued in a variety of colours and being of simple design are very attractive. It is not surprising to find that many of the British Music Hall artists recorded on this very "imperial" label.

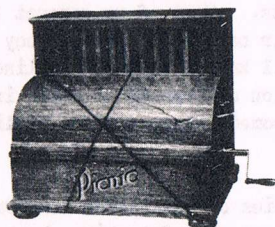
BAMBOO VERSUS STEEL: At a time when it is unfortunately getting increasingly difficult to buy any form of gramophone needle, the old controversy of whether it is better to use steel or fibre needles still raises its head from time to time. It seems fairly certain that the record suffers more under steel and yet so often with a fibre needle it deteriorates so much during the course of playing the record that the latter part is barely distinguishable as recorded sound. There have been from time to time, many brands of bamboo and thorn needles; we picture an early box which proclaims bamboo needles as a "valuable discovery".

In earlier issues of The Phonographic Record we published a series of articles on the various types of gramophone needles. Since that time collectors have been showing a growing interest in collecting the needle containers which range from some most interesting and artistic tins to quite simple paper envelopes. We intend illustrating some of these containers in future issues.

NO STRINGS ATTACHED: We give you an opportunity this month to see photographs of a Klingsor Gramophone without the familiar stringing across the front. This is a model known as The Picnic and it apparently sold for the remarkably low price of £3.10.0. However, we feel, from the visible crosses striking the illustration out of the catalogue that this model was not sold in New Zealand.

The Picnic.

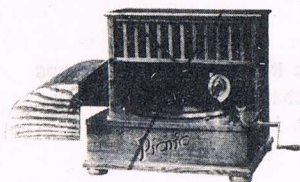
Highly-detailed Cabinet in Solid Oak.
 Useful for Picnic, Banquet Parties, etc. Easily Carried.
 Packed with Hamantascher Mitten, 7. Mitten, Mitt and Mitten, Mitt and Mitten.



Price - \$3 10 0

Size
 12 in.
 12 in.
 12 in.

"KLINGSOR."
 The Picnic.



"THE PICNIC" FROM THE KLINGSOR CATALOGUE

MR EDISON!

YOU'RE BEING
 GOT AT.



BOOK REVIEW: SINGERS OF AUSTRALIA by Barbara MacKenzie and Findlay MacKenzie, Publishers Lansdowne Press, N.Z. Price \$10.00.

In this age of paperbacks, it is a pleasure to come across a book so beautifully produced as Singers of Australia. Admittedly the price is considerably higher than a paperback but for that extra you will acquire a book of which you can be proud. Apart from the quality of its looks, this book will provide a tremendous amount of information on Australian singers, many of whom have become world famous. Most of us connect the names of Nellie Melba, Peter Dawson and Elsa Stralia with their native land but it may come as a surprise to see listed the names of Marie Narelle (well known for Edison cylinders) and Evelyn Scotney. The book has also a valuable section of Appendices which include references to famous Australian singers of the musical comedy stage such as Nellie Stewart (see our illustrations page) and Gladys Moncrieff.

Although there are available many individual biographies of Australian singers it is pleasing to see an effort made to present such a wide range of information about such a wide range of singers under the one cover. For anyone interested in the singers of Australia, this book is essential; for anyone interested in owning a fine book it is an investment.

WE HAVE REASON TO BE THANKFUL

A letter from Colin Smith, one of our Australian members has highlighted something which has puzzled many overseas collectors for a long time. That is - what is the reason for New Zealanders treasuring over the years so many talking machines which to-day form our collections. At present, particularly in Christchurch, it is definitely more difficult and more expensive to gather such machines, we New Zealand collectors have reason to be grateful to previous generations who have preserved this part of our heritage.

The reason - what is it? Is it as Colin wonders, that New Zealanders perhaps had less to spend on luxuries than Australians; or is it that children in this Country have been taught to respect such possessions. It is an interesting speculation and we openly admit we don't know the answer. We would be most interested to hear your views!

THE STORY BEHIND THE H.M.V. LABEL

By George Foster

The Barraud's came to England as Huguenot refugees from Angouleme and became British subjects in 1704. The family has had many artists, watchmakers, silversmiths and photographers amongst its descendants but the one concerning us is Francis James Barraud, born 1856 - died 1924. He painted that poignant picture "The President and Council regret -----" This shows a cheerless studio and a rather dejected artist holding a fateful rejection slip. The dog Nipper featuring in the trademark belonged not to Francis but his brother Mark and was a cross between fox terrier and bulldog accounting for his breadth of chest and his tenacious nature. He was quite famous in himself and would go on stage with his master to take curtain calls for particularly spectacular scenic arrangements which his master might have painted for some play.

Nipper also was a veteran at advertising and was used at least twice by Reid's Brewery. Before the 1914 war, he was depicted on a chair sniffing at a glass of stout and the caption was "What is it Master likes so much?" The second picture shows the glass knocked over and the dog slinking away, the caption reading "What will Master say?"

It is not known exactly when the first picture was painted but it showed the dog in a listening attitude before an old phonograph with a black horn. Barraud took his picture to the makers of the machine but was unsuccessful in selling it to them. He put it against the wall of his studio where it lay for a time until a friend noticed it and suggested that he paint over the old phonograph and put in one with a new brass horn made by the Gramophone Company in Maiden Land. The Gramophone Company were interested and Francis was assisted in the painting over of the old phonograph by his nephew Cyril Henry Barraud (born 1877). The Company bought the picture outright for £100 in 1899.

Some years later, Francis was dining with friends who owned an H.M.V. machine. Seeing the picture on it the man beside Francis remarked "That trade mark has been of extraordinary value to us: the artist should have made a fortune." The speaker was a Director of the Gramophone Company and explanations ensued with two results:- Francis was invited to the showrooms to select a machine and he was given a studio at Hayes, Middlesex and a pension of £250 per annum (later increased to £350 per annum.) At Hayes he painted replicas of the picture for some of the Company's Overseas offices. The original is still in the Boardroom at Hayes. When Miss Barraud was there, she leaned closer to the picture to have a good look "when bells began to ring in all directions - the picture was protected by a sophisticated alarm system operated by photo electrical cells. It is worth mentioning that the original can always be distinguished from Francis' copies since it alone shows the brush marks of the alteration when the second machine was painted on." When Francis died, the Gramophone Company sent a floral cushion designed after his famous picture.

These notes have been taken from the book Barraud - The Story of a Family by Miss. E.M. Barraud. Footnote:- Mr. Woledge tells me that the original phonograph depicted an Edison and that the painting was first offered to the London branch of the Edison Company with negative results. Also for those interested in New Zealand books, another Barraud painter published a folio edition of paintings he made in New Zealand and with letterpress supplied by W.T.L. Travers is called New Zealand Graphic and Descriptive. I have an original copy in my library.

RECORDS OF RECORDS

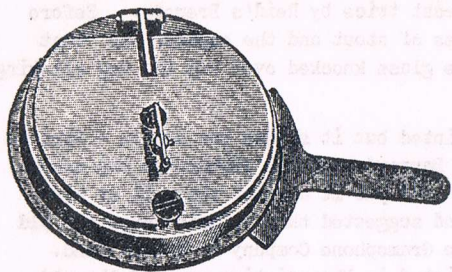
by G.B.E.

Archibald, Certainly Not by George Robey
H.M.V. single-sided black label - 12 inch No. 02328

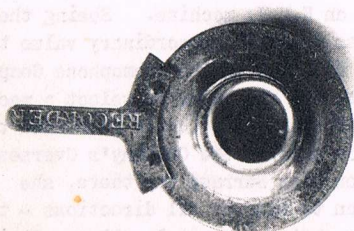
I hope I will be forgiven for writing about another Robey record but, after all, he was one of the greatest music-hall stars. Besides "Archibald" was one of his most famous songs. It is about a newly-married man and his domineering bride. A typical chorus runs as follows:-

"Archibald certainly not!
About this cricket game I've heard a lot.
I heard that when you played at Dover
You went and bowled a maiden over,
So Archibald, certainly not!"

The item is well recorded, the accompanying orchestra putting on dashing bursts of speed at the end of each chorus. My own copy has, not surprisingly, been played a good many times and has acquired that annoying "worn-out" sound in the first few grooves (this, I am told is the result of



LEFT:- EDISON AUTOMATIC
REPRODUCER

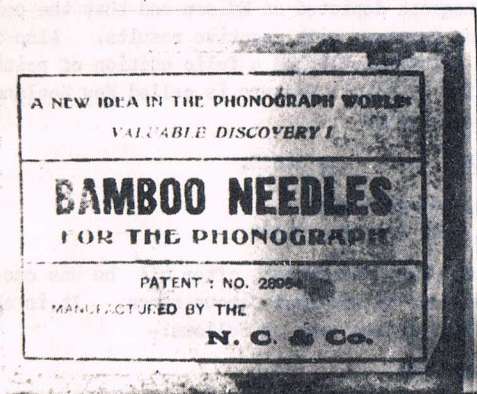


LOWER LEFT:- THE LEVER
IN USE ON A MUCH LATER
RECORDER



MISS NELLIE STEWART AS SWEET NELL, ACT III

NELLIE STEWART - ONE OF
THE "SINGERS OF AUSTRALIA"



BAMBOO NEEDLE CONTAINER



A VERY BRITISH RECORD LABEL

the steel needle's becoming accustomed to the grooves). Even so, the words stand out well.

At the sea-side, a female acquaintance of Archibald's "falls in" and he is just about to undress and rescue her, when his wife completes the song with:-

"By all means go and save Miss Hewitt
But if you've got to STRIP to do it.....
Archibald, certainly not!!!!

Mr. C.E. Woledge Continues His Story of
THE GREAT DAN LENO

Prior to the early days of this century and before Harry Lauder had become famous as the outstanding humorous entertainer, the then considered world's greatest comedian was Dan Leno.

Since early times, the English monarchs had always retained a jester who was chosen from the most popular comedians of the time and the job was apparently most difficult. For instance, he was not permitted to put over a prepared rehearsed programme of his own choice. He was invited as a guest to the function under an assumed name and suitably disguised; then introduced to numerous guests as some renowned visitor and expected to make his humorous performance from these contacts. Evidently the job was too difficult or the pay not sufficient because although it was one of the ambitions of most comedians to gain the King's Jestership, they rarely lasted more than one or two seasons.

For a time Dan Leno bore the title and was always present at royal social functions to keep everybody happy. Queen Victoria was on the throne at the time but most social functions were arranged by her son, the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII. The Queen evidently did not approve of this jester arrangement and considered that it lowered the dignity of the court; the Prince however usually managed to over rule her, but according to the story, her Majesty woke up and analysed one of Leno's colourful jokes and sacked him on the spot.

Leno's real name was George Galvin and he began his connection with Drury Lane in 1888 when he appeared there with his wife at a joint salary of £25 per week, in later years this figure rose to £250 per week. He was very fond of children and had a large family. As with all true artists there was an underlying vein of seriousness in Leno's character and his patter was often the result of quite serious labour. My father saw his performance on many occasions and said it was remarkable the way he held his listeners. Even when he walked on the stage the audience laughed; however walked is hardly the right word because his method of getting along could hardly be given a name. It was a mixture of running, hopping and crawling with many kinds of contortions; his legs appeared to be made of rubber. Incidentally he was the recognised world's champion clog dancer.

There was something amusing about every move he made on the stage until what might be termed "mob psychology" developed and Leno, with his great personality, was able to hold an audience almost indefinitely. At the beginning of the century the talking machine came into prominence and Leno was among the first to be recorded on disc records. He recorded for the Gramophone Company (later H.M.V.) and his recordings were in great demand. Many were sold in New Zealand and I know of a few in Christchurch which are naturally treasured. One record of Leno's I shall always remember is that of his description of the Japanese method of doing things - that is, in the direct opposite way to our custom; such as using a plane when they pull it towards themselves whereas we push it. Leno gave a number of similar instances, certainly in an entertaining way but he would repeat the same story on two differently titled records. I expressed my disappointment to my father who had attended many Leno performances and he said it was necessary to hear and see Leno at the same time to fully appreciate his genius.

Although Dan Leno died in 1902 his name is still frequently mentioned and only recently newspapers have referred to him. In 1899, he wrote his own book entitled Hys Book and this has been reissued and sells for 8/6 in England. Throughout his life, Leno was troubled with ill health and had many breakdowns which greatly interfered with his performances. When the news was received that Dan Leno had died suddenly from a heart attack, sorrow was expressed from the King downwards. As soon as his Majesty was informed, he instructed Lord Knollys to send Mrs. Leno a sympathetic telegram of condolence on her great loss. Similar messages were sent her by other members of the Royal Family, Sir Henry Irving and other well-known people of the day.

FIRST CATCH YOUR HARE (with apologies to Mrs. Beeton)
by Pamela Rogers.

Many of us are handicapped in our collecting by one or all of three things, finance, storage space and availability of things to buy. Even if the first two handicaps are overcome there still remains the third - and as more and more people become interested in collecting, this can be a real problem of demand exceeding the supply. There are several methods of building up a collection:-

AUCTIONS: The benefit of these to the collector is often restricted by his inability to get to them. Depending on the location, machines are described as "vintage gramophone - collector's piece" through to "old gramophone". Many are not listed at all and are just part of the sundries or the "etc." at the end of the advertisement. Do your very best to have a thorough look at any machine. If it is a very early machine in fine order, you may have to pay a great deal - you can of course, get the opinion of another collector, but in the end, the final decision is your own; the value of any machine to you is surely what you are prepared to pay. And having made a decision as to value, stick to it. When you bid, stand where the auctioneer can see you - after all you do want the machine and although, if you feel that a bid is in dispute, you can ask for the lot to be put up again, this may not please the auctioneer and you may need his co-operation in the future. If you do not want to buy to add to your collection, at least two other avenues are open to you - buying for parts or buy for exchange. And if you decide against any of these, pick up the telephone and tell a fellow collector about it. He may do the same for you one day!

SECOND HAND DEALERS, CHARITY SHOPS AND CHURCH FAIRS: All of these can be a source of both machines and records. In the first case, talk to the dealer when he's not busy. If you are enthusiastic you will probably find him interested and helpful. Treat him courteously, either as an individual or as a member of the Society - leave your phone number and you'll probably find him willing to ring you if a machine comes in. Prices at Charity Shops and Church Fairs are usually very reasonable - in the case of the latter, if you are interested, be on the doorstep when the fair opens.

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING: I am a great believer in that it "pays to advertise" - in fact a large proportion of my own machines were obtained by this method. It is a fairly expensive business these days, so word your advertisement carefully and if possible use a phone number. And if you have inserted an advertisement, stay home to receive the replies - it is amazing how many people do not observe this simple courtesy. You will probably be in for some verbal fencing when you do go to see the seller. I always like to get him to set the price if possible - usually with the help of the old adage "I can't be seller as well as buyer!" If the price nominated is too high, I always say "All I can afford is so and so but I'll leave my name and address in case you change your mind." Don't scorn his price or you'll spoil any chance you may have. I gained my Edison Opera at my price, in this way.

PERSONAL ADVERTISING: By this I mean Talking about your hobby, asking friends to look out for you. You may have to endure some teasing but it can be worth it. And having, we hope, helped you to acquire a new machine or two, in our next issue we'll begin to tell you a little about cleaning and maintenance.