



# The Phonographic Record

*The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand*

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

Vol. 4. Issue 4.

April, 1969.

Page 25.

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## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MAY 31st - June 2nd, 1969: Just a reminder to those members who wish to attend the 1969 Convention to be held in Wellington on the above dates to return their application forms to the organisers as soon as possible.

IF YOU ARE TIRED of blowing your own horn why not use a Society one instead. We are pleased to advise that horns are once again available - 'witches hats' at \$3:50 and 'Gem' at \$2:00 (New Zealand currency) - plus postage. We are pleased to be able to offer these at no rise in price. They are supplied unpainted but with painting instructions if required.

MARCH MEETING: For our programme we had what we hope will be only the first of 'getting to know you' talks to us by our fellow Vintage and Antique Societies. Ivan Taylor and Norman Skevington of the Canterbury Branch of the Vintage Car Club of New Zealand showed us slides and chatted informally about the many cars and motor-cycles featured in them. Once again we marvelled at the number of vehicles which have been unearthed (sometimes literally) in this country and at the enthusiasm of the very large membership of the Club. In May we hope to have a speaker from the Antique Arms Association.

There was another opportunity for us to meet up with other vintage enthusiasts recently and Joffre Marshall who was responsible for our efforts in this connection reports on:-

## THE TRACTION ENGINE RALLY - HURUNUI DOMAIN 29th and 30th March, 1969.

A display by members of the Vintage Phonograph Society was one of the leading features of the Traction Engine and Vintage Machinery Rally held in the Hurunui Domain, North Canterbury. This display was the first one to be staged at a public function and its success was very gratifying to those members who exhibited. A good range of phonographs, mechanical musical instruments and needle tins was on view to the general public. The display opened at 10:30 a.m. each day and a total of some two thousand people passed through the exhibition area. The public were most interested in the working exhibits and the demonstrations were enjoyed by both young and old.

## MR. MUYBRIDGE AND MOTION PICTURES

by A.J.R.

"The cinema has developed from so many sources that it is impossible to say who was the inventor, but it was not Edison as is often supposed." I came across the above quotation in a very



interesting book by Frederick Willis called 101 Jubilee Road. Subtitled 'A Book of London Yesterdays' it gives a fascinating and living picture of the life of everyday people in and around London at the beginning of this century. To quote again from Mr. Willis - "Long before Edison, Sir Frederick Leighton, Huxley, Gladstone, Tyndall, Lord Tennyson and others were watching a film show in the theatre of the Royal Institution. This was given by Mr. Muybridge, of Palo Alto, California, the inventor and the year was 1882".

Who was 'Mr. Muybridge' and what do we know of his moving pictures?

In the 1830's there was invented a device called the Zeotrope, or a 'wheel-of-life'. By means of an optical phenomenon known as 'persistence of vision' it was able to create the illusion of movement. The Zeotrope was of very simple construction consisting of a cannister mounted on a vertical spindle. On the interior of the cannister was a series of pictures of an object in motion. Around the cannister were made a similar number of vertical slots which enabled the viewer to see the picture directly opposite. By spinning the cannister and looking through the slots one 'saw' a man walking or raising his hat. Initially drawings were used, but by the 1870's photographs came to be used instead.

Marey in France was one of the early experimenters and in America, Muybridge was another. Muybridge is known for a series of photographs he took showing horses in full gallop. He did this by means of a series of cameras spaced along a race course. Each camera was activated by the horse coming into contact with a trip wire. This series of pictures Muybridge was able to project through a magic lantern by a piece of apparatus like the 'wheel-of-life'.

Muybridge made a series of lecture tours both in his own country and abroad. During the course of one such tour in 1886 he visited Thomas Edison and showed him his pictures of horses, dogs and other animals in motion. Being of an enquiring and inventive mind, Edison could not but help becoming interested in motion pictures, but that must be the subject of my next article.

#### COST OF MANUFACTURE - FIFTY CENTS

Talking machines have been made for many different purposes, in many ways and at a wide range of cost. But one of the cheapest ever made must surely be the RCA hand-driven phonograph shown on our illustrations page. This machine was designed with the purpose of getting the Western viewpoint into Iron Curtain countries and jungle trouble spots at the time the late President Eisenhower was in the White House. It was felt that the novelty of the device would ensure its use. There are only four parts in the machine and it can be assembled in a few moments by almost anybody. The parts are a metal handle, a base, a turntable and a tone arm of unbreakable plastic. The whole outfit weighs seven ounces and packs into a cardboard carton measuring eight by eight by four inches. The records are 7" unbreakable vinylite discs and designed to be played at the conventional speed of 78 r.p.m. which also happens to be a convenient one for hand-cranking.

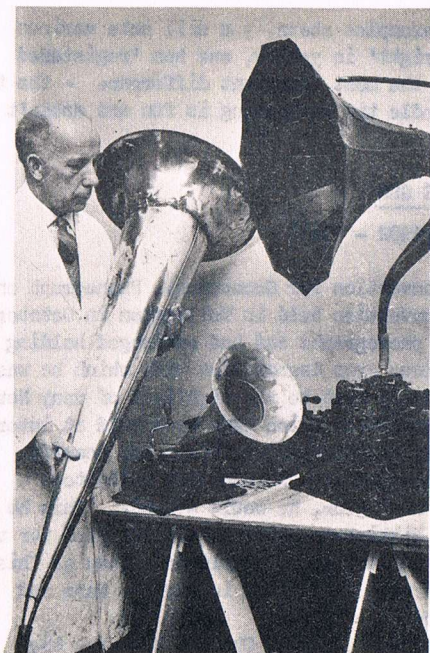
#### NIPPER AND THE NEEDLES

by Pamela Rogers

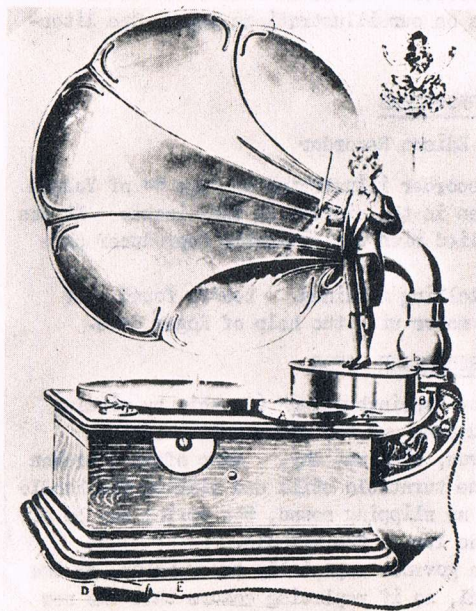
On the illustrations page, we feature two tins which are probably very familiar to most of our members. When I first started collecting needle containers, I convinced myself that I had the two sets of 'His Master's Voice' tins. I had the tins of the old series with their more elaborate design and I had the new series with their much more 'swept-up' design. Then curiosity made me look again. Some of the tins had 'His Master's Voice' in small letters, on others it was larger; on some, the word 'copyright' was in white and on some in yellow, while on still others it became 'picture copyright'. In fact it seemed that the Company had, over a period of years, changed the design in many ways - so many times that at present I have tins belonging to about fourteen different series. And of course, there were several series issued in Sydney, Australia as well as aluminium tins and a special tin for Melba needles.

The Tungstyle needles had long flat tins into which the needles clipped.

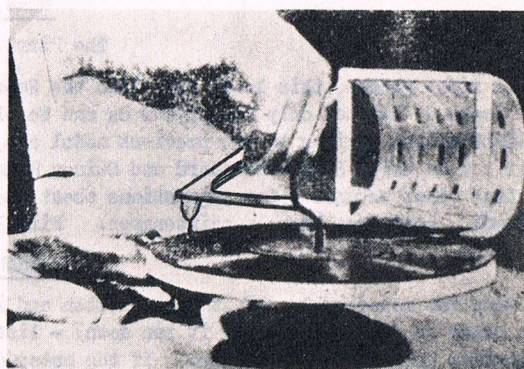




THE MAN BEHIND THE GUN - CHARLES J. LINDSAY



THE PHONO DOLL



COST PRICE - 50 CENTS



The variety seems endless - and fascinating. In the two examples shown, you will note various differences. The tin shapes are different, one has 'copyright' in yellow, one has 'registered trade mark' in white, the other in black. And of course, the most important difference - the top tin is of the new design, the lower one from the old. Needle tin collecting is fun and doesn't take up too much space!

#### THE MAN BEHIND THE GUN

Charles J. Lindsay (1902 - 1966)

It seems an appropriate time, on the eve of the Fifth Convention for Gramophone, Phonograph and Record Collectors, to recall the organising of the First Convention held in Wellington in October, 1963. Charlie Lindsay had, for years, been interested in phonographs and had envisaged holding a Convention similar to that organised annually by the Antique Arms Association with which he was associated. From this initial thought has evolved what surely must be the highlight of many New Zealanders 'collecting life' - attendance at one of the Conventions which have been held at intervals since 1963. At that first Convention, Charlie Lindsay demonstrated machines and records belonging to the Dominion Museum collection and at that time promised Christchurch collectors that, should they be prepared to organise a Convention the next year, he would attend. This he did and many of us remember him pulling from his pocket, a Mikkiphone which he demonstrated for us. While he had no collection of machines of his own he regarded that of the Dominion Museum as 'his' and did much to further it over a period of years. He was also interested in vintage cars and went on the Haast Rally with our Blenheim member, Ron Osgood.

This was Charles Lindsay, the historian and the taxidermist. What of Charles Lindsay, the man. He had a gift of spreading his enthusiasm; any visitor to the Dominion Museum was made most welcome by his pleasant and sincere manner. We are glad he organised that first Convention - much has come from it and in the fact that the fifth Convention is being held with even more enthusiasts in this country is a fitting tribute to his efforts. We would like to thank Mr. H.M. Sansum of Wellington who arranged for the photographs on our illustrations page. One literally shows 'The Man Behind the Gun'.

#### MORE ABOUT REPRODUCERS

##### The First Separate Edison Recorder

At first glance, this looks very like the Reproducer/recorder illustrated on Page 14 of Volume 4 Issue 2, but has only one stylus as can be clearly seen in the picture in this issue. It has a light weight similar to the previous model and was supplied with the Automatic Reproducer as a pair for an early Edison Standard and Edison Home.

Last issue we made a few suggestions about unearthing talking machines. You've found one? Good! Let's get busy on maintenance. Firstly of the motor with the help of Roger Cole.

#### OVERHAULING A GRAMOPHONE MOTOR

Does the motor run? If it does, listen and inspect for "springbumping" (do this by winding the motor up fully and letting it run down) - listen for bumping and for other noises such as excessive gear or bearing noise. If the motor does not run, find out why. Most often a broken spring is the reason and this can be located by holding the turntable still and winding the handle slowly. The spring will be heard to slip. If there is no slipping sound, the spring may be off the centre spindle and needs only to be re-located onto the lug on the spindle.

Sometimes parts are missing, most often portions of the governor especially the weights, or the governor springs may be broken. All weights must be equal, so if replacing ensure that the new weight is correct. Often the spring and weight unit from another machine will do quite well -



I have an Edison Fireside running perfectly with a governor set from an H.M.V. portable. Check also for loose parts. Grub screws on gears have a habit of coming loose and other loose parts may have fallen into a gear and jammed it.

Now that you have all the parts and have located all sources of undue noise, you are ready to dismantle the motor, after letting it completely run down, taking careful note of the way it goes together, although for most machines re-assembly is self-evident. Some even have a diagram under the top and this makes re-assembly child's play. Put all parts in a tin or box from whence they cannot be lost. Nothing is worse than having a machine which won't go because of one lost part - this I know from bitter experience.

Wash all parts in petrol (kerosene will do but petrol is preferable) using a stiff brush to remove all grease and dirt. If using petrol, take care that you are in the open with no naked flame for a considerable distance. Don't throw a small part away with the dirty petrol; it's very easy to do.

Now let's deal with running problems. Firstly the spring. AND PLEASE REMEMBER: TAKE EVERY CARE WHEN DEALING WITH A SPRING. Mishandling can be extremely dangerous. If in any doubt of your ability to handle this part please leave it to the expert. If you feel thoroughly capable of dealing with it then the following may be of assistance. If it is broken extract from the spring cage and if possible obtain a new one. Take great care when refitting - you need strong hands and a large amount of patience. Locate the outside end hole on the lug inside the cage and feed the spring in, holding it in very firmly as you do so. If the spring is bumping, firstly get as much grease out as possible using a screwdriver or similar implement and then wash in petrol. To remove the last bit mix baking soda and water (one level teaspoon to a pint of cold water) and boil up the spring in this. The spring should not be removed from the cage unless it is being replaced. Scap powder may be used instead of baking soda. Don't boil longer than necessary, although the temper of the spring should not be affected. Fifteen minutes should shift the worst of the grease. Re-grease the spring using a good quality graphite grease and plenty of it. But take care not to overdo it in the centre of the cage as the pressure created by too much grease can cause the spring to bend and break when wound up.

To be continued.

#### THE PHONO DOLL - 1908

This is another picture from the Klingsor Catalogue and shows one of the numerous 'gramophone toys' which were produced to provide a novelty for gramophone owners and no doubt to boost sales along. As far as we know this particular toy did not sell in New Zealand although many of the others did. The makers of the 'Phono Doll' claimed that "by means of a regulating screw, the conductor waves his baton, lifts his hands and turns his head, keeping in perfect time with the music and the danseuse (who is magnificently dressed) moves her legs, arms and body in perfect concord with the music. The doll works precisely at the will of the operator. It can be attached to any disc machine and manipulated by a child.

Price with Conductor or Dancer

18/-

Price with both figures

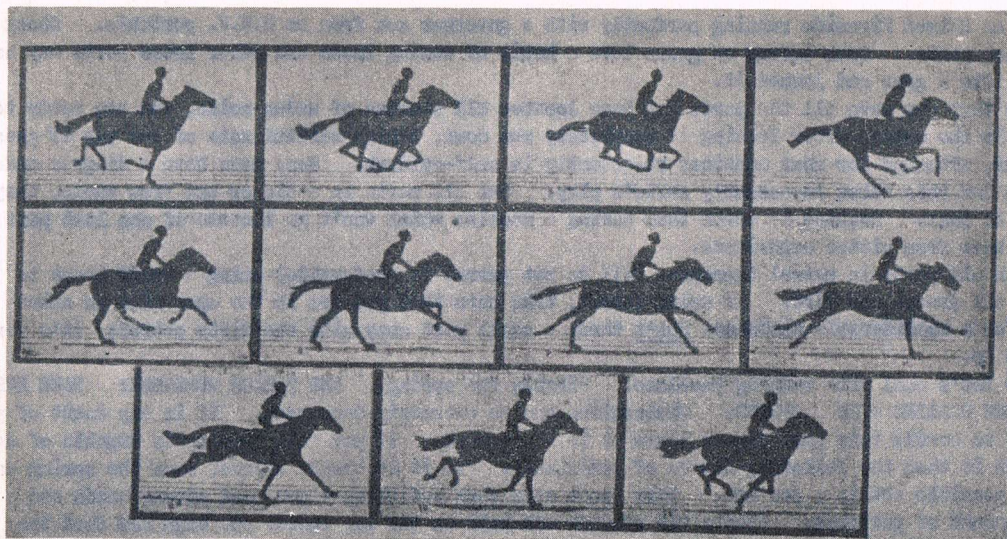
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with special flexible attachment by means of which the doll can be regulated  
for a distance 3/- extra.

#### THE MYSTERIOUS NUMBER

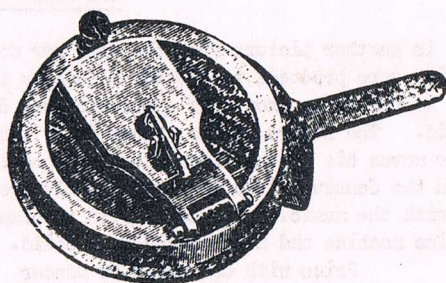
Since an article appeared under this heading in Volume 4 Issue 1 (October 1968) letters have been received from members who say they cannot agree with Mr. Woledge in his statements concerning the matrix number. Much discussion and research into the subject has resulted. We are grateful to all who have written to us and have in this second article combined many of the thoughts and comments.





## SECTIONS OF THE FIRST REAL MOTION PICTURE

Taken by Muybridge with a battery of camer



## THE FIRST SEPARATE EDISON RECORDER

CAN YOU PICK THE  
DIFFERENCE?



Firstly let us state that we have referred back to Mr. Wolledge on this subject and he says that he has never before heard this questioned; however that is not the case today!

One correspondent says that we have confused the issue by mixing 'take' and 'matrix' and that the small number is the superscript number. Another states that this is the number of the mould and that Dr. Deakins in his book on cylinders confirms this. Yet another feels that this is the number of the recording head used to make the cylinder i.e. different heads used for different instruments etc.

Whatever is the purpose of this number, it is most useful when cataloguing cylinders; with the aid of it, it is possible to select exactly the same copy of any Blue Amberol as all of this type of cylinder are identifiable in this way. All four-minute Black Wax cylinders have it and (to correct a mis-statement in the original article) many two-minute also. Incidentally these latter cylinders are referred to in official Catalogues as Edison Standard Cylinders.

We feel that 'the mysterious number' must have had considerable importance for the Edison Company to have placed it on all its later cylinders. As has been brought to our notice by some of our correspondents; there are also other numbers to be found on cylinders. They seem to be confined to most Blue Amberols. - but not all. They appear on the playing surface before and after the grooves and can be found on cylinders with a square edge more often than those with the tapered edge.

On one copy of 'Just Plain Folks' there is a small number scratched on the smooth surface before the grooves. This number, 286 - 38 is the same as the Catalogue Number of the four-minute Black Wax, produced before the Blue Amberol. At the opposite end there is another number which looks like 4M 200 - 3 followed by a small 2. The small number on the edge after the patent date is 7 so there appears no connection here.

On many cylinders, we have discovered the scratched number refers to the Black Wax predecessor. One collector states that he feels that these are all the matrix numbers and the take numbers and he could well be right; we leave this over to members to study these cylinders and reach their own conclusions. We can also confirm that Mr. Wolledge is correct in his statement that some Blue Amberols of the same title are distinctly different. We have listened to several copies of the Billy Williams cylinder 'Wait Till I'm as Old as Father' and found that his patter at the beginning and end of the song varies by a very large extent. A copy of 'The Preacher and the Bear' with the small number 94 has an announcement but number 11 had no announcement.

One of the few things of which we are certain is that Edison made his first 'stamper' as the disc makers say, by cutting into soft wax and then electroplating this with gold to produce a gold mould. To remove the soft wax, it had to be melted out so the original was destroyed. We also know that cylinder duplication for this reason, proved a problem. Some writers, including a contributor to 'The Record Collector' an English publication, state that Diamond Disc masters were used to produce Blue Amberols.

We would like to conclude this article with two quotes:- Firstly from F.W. Gaisberg's book 'Music on Record' "Inventors of genius made heroic efforts to match up the phonograph cylinder to the gramophone disc, but they could never get round the two basic advantages of the latter; simple stamping of endless copies from one master and the sound-track in the disc to guide the reproducing tone-arm".

And from Dr. Deakin - "Small numbers after the words 'Thomas A. Edison Pat'd may be seen on most records. This signifies the mould number from which the record was made. Thus the more popular the selection the more moulds used and the higher the number would be on the last cylinders made of that particular selection".

You will probably feel that we haven't presented any definite conclusions but it is difficult when every collector's theory is along a different line. It seems that only one person could really give us the answer "Are you listening Mr. Edison?".



At the present time, a great deal of interest is being taken in past happenings and the collecting of antique articles. There are many collectors deriving great pleasure - and sometimes profit, but even non-collectors can look back with pleasure to the earlier days and it is often songs and music which revive memories. Only a week ago some elderly folk were watching a television programme when a song which was very popular over seventy years ago was sung on The Black and White Minstrel Show. The old people were thrilled to hear the number as it brought back many memories of their childhood days. Then by strange coincidence, the same tune was played as a band march over the radio. The song was:-

THE GREAT LIMERICK COMIC SONG - Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-Ay

There is a touch of history concerning this song which has been much discussed among the old people and I am able to recall the best known story. At the time of its introduction, about 1894, composers usually sold their compositions to music publishers who in their turn arranged for some leading theatrical performer to popularise the item and induce sales. Two famous artists were in the same travelling company and each was endeavouring to popularise a song; neither was being very successful. One of the artists was Miss Lottie Collins who was considered one of the greatest female stars of the time and the song she was attempting to popularise was 'The Way to Kiss a Girl'. The other artist was, I think Mr. R.G. Knowles also a leading performer. (Both he and Miss Collins toured New Zealand) His song was Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-Ay - and he was also meeting with little success: in an endeavour to improve the situation, the two decided to exchange items. This decision led to a huge success and the two songs became probably the most famous throughout the English speaking world and one at least is popular to this day.

Herr Carl Joosten, the German Consul in Christchurch some years ago gave many Musical Evenings and invariably wound up by singing Ta-Ra-Ra-De-Boom-De-Ay - in German. The following information may be of interest to record collectors:- 'The Way to Kiss a Girl' is listed as being recorded on a 10" disc: the first verse is - "First you place your loving arms around her and hold her in a firm embrace,

Then you put her head upon your shoulder and look down in her face,  
Then you hug her, just as tightly as you can, squeeze her until both  
Your hearts are in a whirl,

Let your lips to hers be pressed and she will do the rest  
That's the way to kiss a girl."

"Ta-Ra-Ra-De-Boom-De-Ay" is a limerick song. (For the uninitiated, a limerick is a five line verse of which the fifth can be left blank to be supplied by the entertainer. It must rhyme with the first two lines. In the American version of this song, the chorus of the more familiar English version is replaced with the Fol-The-Rol Lol chorus). The song is listed as a Two-minute Black Wax in the Edison Catalogue. The artist is Edward M. Favour and this version contains eight verses. It is also listed in the first issue of Edison 4 Minute Amberol Records as Number 14 with the same artist singing eighteen verses. It is also on the Blue Amberol list. The first verse of Miss Lottie Collins' rendering was:-

"If you have a nice young man,  
Feed him up on bread and jam,  
Tell him all the lies you can  
Until he looks just like a clam,  
Then dump him in the frying pan."

It is my intention to list a number of the old songs which still live and the 'limerick song' must certainly be included.

RECORD OF RECORDS

By G.B.E.

La Paloma by C. Francisco, H.M.V. single-sided 12" black label No. 062004  
This song is probably the best-selling 'tango' type melody of all time and this recorded version by Signor 'Francisco' is possibly the best-known vocal interpretation of the item. Why the inverted commas around 'Francisco'? Because it was merely a 'nom de disque' of that great baritone, Emilio De Gogorza. Perhaps better known on the American continent than in Europe, he was famous for his artistic interpretation of the remarkable variety of music which he sang. Among his other famous songs were 'The Toreador Song' and 'O Sole Mio'. Incidentally he was the husband of the famous soprano Emma Eames. The piece is well recorded; De Gogorza singing in a clear if restrained manner in a number often 'over-done'.