



# 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 33

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## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MEMBERSHIP BROCHURE The Society has had printed an introductory brochure. This contains details of the services offered and photographs of some of the reproduction parts we make. The cover photograph which shows an Edison Opera Phonograph was taken by the Christchurch photographer Bill Gamble, and we would like to thank him for allowing us to use it - it is a fine example of the wonderful work he has done in photographing talking machines - and collectors. We shall be happy to send the brochure to anyone interested in possible membership. If you know of any collectors to whom you would like a copy sent just let the Secretary have the name and address.

FOR EXCHANGE A number of hill and dale discs (etched labelled and paper labelled) of opera singers and French music-hall artists and a Pathe motor with winding handle as illustrated in Vol. 5 Issue 4 of The Phonographic Record. WANTED an H.M.V. Lumiere table model gramophone or an Edison Gem phonograph. Contact W. Keessen, Spinnepok 6, Amsterdam-Noord (Molenwijk) Holland.

THIS MONTH WE PROUDLY ANNOUNCE the first of the catalogue reprints which the Society shall, from time to time be issuing. The first is of the Gramophone Co's 1908 'GRAM-O-PHONE CATALOGUE "DE-LUXE"' of twenty-two pages (originally twenty-four but pages 17 and 18 are missing). This is THE catalogue for the collector of outside horn Gramophone Co. machines as it illustrates the Monarchs, the Sheratons A & B, the New Melba, the Ionic and others, as well as the early cabinet models, such as the Gramophone Grand in Chippendale and Sheraton designs. Price sent surface mail anywhere in the world, 75 cents.

WE ARE ALSO PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE a reprint being issued by Walter Norris. This is also a 1908 Catalogue issued by the Columbia Gramophone Co. and it pictures in cylinder machines, The Trump, The Leader, The Jewel, etc., and in disc machines The Regal, The Champion, The Regent, etc. This catalogue contains twelve pages and will be sent surface mail anywhere in the world for 30 cents. In order to make things a little easier for members BOTH catalogues can be ordered direct from the Secretary at the address on the front of this magazine.

ONE OF EACH CATALOGUE FOR \$1.00 NEW ZEALAND.

## AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF EDISON PHONOGRAPHS

### The Improved Spectacle Model

In our last issue we described the first model phonograph to use a spectacle reproducer (speaker) arm. This was the second model, the first being the Tin Foil; the Improved Spectacle Model is the third. This machine (so far not seen in New Zealand) had many improvements which made it much like the model M Electric, which was to come later.



This model had two types of motors and was produced in 1889. It was fitted into a wooden case and was driven by a six to eight volt electric motor, the current being reduced by means of a rheostat from the then used mains voltage of 110. The same model could be had, driven by a two and one half volt D.C. motor, using a battery. A speaker tube was used for recording and ear tubes for play back; the cylinders used were of the standard size and were made of soft white wax (soap). A small drawer was fitted into the wooden case. This, we believe, held a brush and oil can, but we do not know if the speaking tube and ear tubes would also fit into this space. Three other models are depicted in 'From Tin Foil to Sterco' and are claimed to have been produced at the same time (1889 - 1890). Two of these had spectacle reproducer arms; one is a battery powered machine, built on a treadle sewing machine stand, the other is hand powered. The third is also built on a sewing machine stand, but is water powered and is without the spectacle reproducer arm (see Plates II and III). A fourth model, using a treadle sewing machine stand, is depicted in 'The Phonograph and How to Use It' - page 32. This model uses the spectacle reproducer arm and has two drawers to hold the speaking and listening tubes etc. at the side.

All these early machines were designed for office use ONLY; no thought being given to the idea of using the phonograph for fun. They were leased out at a charge of from \$40 per year up to \$60 per year. The purchase price itself was high. The water-powered machine cost \$150; the treadle machine \$140; the electric mains (110) supply model \$170 and the battery model \$190.

We would be pleased to hear from anyone who has any one of these models and who can give us weight, dimensions and other details.

#### THE AEOLIAN COMPANY - A Brief History

Roger Cole.

This American company first came into prominence as maker of player pianos and similar instruments. It was an active company, with magnificent showrooms and business premises in New York. Operations soon expanded to England, and it seems the company must have had immense capital resources, judging from its rapid expansion and almost ostentatious premises.

Although known primarily for its records, variously labelled as "Aeolian", "Aeolian-Vocalion", and later "Vocalion", the company manufactured a gramophone which incorporated a device at the time quite unique. This machine came about as follows:

Late in 1912 a Mr. F.J. Empson arrived in London from Australia, bringing with him a gramophone into which he had put his patented device for controlling musical effects. Meeting with no satisfaction from those whom he expected would back his invention, he was on the point of returning to Australia when a friend persuaded him to take his invention to Aeolian. As we now know, Aeolian grasped at the opportunity, and so the "Aeolian-Vocalion" was born, with its "Graduola" attachment. This attachment gave the operator control of the voice modulation of a singer while sitting in his chair listening to the record, obviating the use of special needles, muted horns, and other attempts at controlling the sound of the gramophone. This attachment consists of a slender, flexible tube stretching from gramophone to operator, with a valve device which is pushed in or retracted as desired. This results in movement of a valve in the machine which reverses the current of sound in the horn and thus the sound becomes fainter.

The records marketed by Aeolian followed the machine by some considerable time, at least 2 years, as this was the time spent in background work on the disc, prior to its being introduced to the public. Being late on the scene of record making, the full field of really good artists was not available to Aeolian, yet they managed to find some excellent artists, among them Elena Gerhardt, Evelyn Scotney, Gladys Moncreiff and Frank Titterton (who also sang on Australian Yellow Label Vocalion under the "non-de-disque" of Francesco Vada). Children's records, called "Vocalion Midget" and measuring 7" in diameter, were made in Australia by electrical recording methods, but probably due to the natural destructiveness of children, these are in the rarity



## Disc GRAPH-o-phones

### The "MAJESTIC"

The very best disc machine ever constructed.



Aluminium Tone Arm.  
Columbia Analyzing Sound Box, with Patent Needle Clip and Dolcer (for regulating volume).  
Nickeled or Decorated Flower Horn.  
Mahogany Cabinet.  
12-inch Turntable with Nickeled Guard.  
Powerful but Noiseless Motor.  
Plays all sizes of Records.

Runs 10 concert records from each winding.

Price £21.

Weight 49 lbs.

### The "IMPERIAL"

Is identical with the Majestic, except that it has a less powerful motor. It plays all sizes of records.

Price £15 15s.

The highest development of the Disc Talking Machine

2

## The "TRUMP"

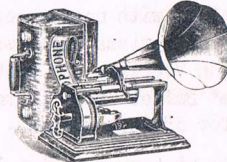
Lyric Reproducer.  
Attractive Cabinet.  
Flower Horn, assorted colors.  
Strong Spring Motor.

Price £2 2s.  
Weight 10 lbs.

This model at £2 2s. is extraordinary value.



Mignon GRAPH-o-phones.  
Type "QQ."



Price £2.

Weight 6½ lbs.

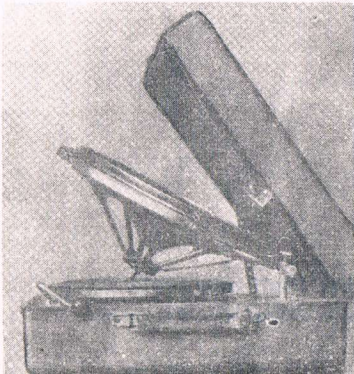
Oak Cabinet. Special Spider Reproducer.  
Flower Horn. Extra Sensitive Recorder.

Type "QC" is identical with the "QQ" except that the recorder is omitted. Price, £1 10s.

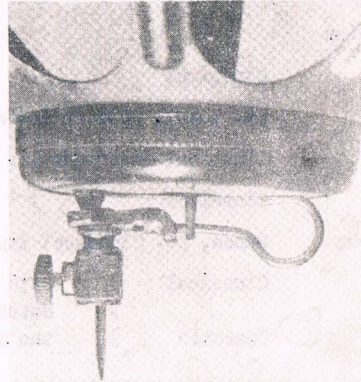
Type "Q" is identical with the "QQ" except that the recorder and cabinet are omitted. Price £1 1s.

11

## TWO PAGES FROM THE REPRINT OF THE 1908 GRAPH-o-phone CATALOGUE



A "PHONOS" PANPHONETIC REPRODUCER ADAPTED TO INEXPENSIVE PORTABLE GRAMOPHONE



THE TENSION-SPRING AND NEEDLE-HOLDER OF A PANPHONETIC REPRODUCER

class. I have one only, containing 5 nursery rhymes.

THE AEOLIAN COMPANY LTD'S LABELS.

Roger Cole.

The earliest records from the Aeolian Company Ltd. carried the "Aeolian" label, with gold lettering and a red or pink centre. Many of these, if not all, were vertically cut and played with an ordinary needle via a swivelling soundbox, similar to the early Emerson discs. Aeolian discs are most uncommon, and any collector finding one should guard it well.

Subsequent to Mr. F.J. Empson's success in 1912 with the Aeolian Company manufacturing the "Aeolian Vocalion" gramophone incorporating his "Graduola" attachment, the name of the disc was also altered, so any "Aeolian" label must be at least pre-1913. On the new label, "Aeolian Vocalion", is to be found much of the popular music of the day, together with some classical and operatic recordings. Along with most recording companies, Aeolian does not seem to have recorded much in the way of serious orchestral works in the early days. I am however the proud owner of a pair of Aeolian Vocalion 12" pink centre discs, A-0247 and A-0248, whereon R. Vaughan Williams' "Old King Cole" Ballet Suite is recorded. It is hardly up to the standard of "Nut-cracker"; I retain it for obvious reasons.

At some stage in its history, someone in the Company must have decided that "Aeolian Vocalion" was too long a title, for later discs are simply "Vocalion", and still later ones are further abbreviated to "ACO". The exact date of the abbreviation is uncertain; most probably it was a gradual process, as I have in my collection X-9122 by Ferrera and Franchini, which on one side is "Aeolian Vocalion", and on the other, simply "Vocalion". Discs of both names were produced in several different colours of label; whether there is any significance to a particular colour is uncertain.

I list below the colours I have found, and the type of music found on each colour of label. If any reader can add further information, I would be very pleased to hear it. In all cases, except where stated, the lettering is gold and the disc is of English manufacture. The colour referred to is the basic or predominant colour in the label.

Aeolian Vocalion

10"	Green	Classical		
	Black	Lt. Vocal, Popular Instrumental.		
	Blue	Classical Instrumental.		
	Pink	Classical		
	Red-Brown	Dance, Lt. Classical Instr.		
12"	Pink	Classical	)	Both these are often found with Explanatory
			)	Notes on the reverse side, the Red being
	Red	Operatic	)	the more common.

Vocalion

10"	Black	Lt. Vocal, Lt. Classical, Dance		
	Blue - Large Label	" " " " "		
	Medium Label	" " " " "		
	Small Label			
	(Australian)	Dance		



Yellow - Small Label Only (Australian)	Lt. Orch., Classical, Lt. Classical.
Dark Purple	A modern, electric type disc. Light popular music.
Cream/White Lettering on Black and Gold (American)	This disc is buff coloured, similar to some of the "Summit" brand, although I have seen the label on a black disc. Dance.
12" Blue	Lt. Classical, Classical, Opera.
ACO	On this disc is found all the types of music popular in the "20's" and "30's". The discs are all 10", red labels with gold lettering.
<u>Vocalion Midget</u>	This most uncommon Australian label is found on 7" children's records. Electrically recorded, with nursery rhymes.

The Australian branch of the Company moved into a sphere of activity all of its own, in manufacturing records under the "Broadcast" label. The types of this label I detail below; again the list is not necessarily exhaustive.

#### Broadcast

10" De Luxe Blue	Classical, Opera, Choral. No reference is made on this disc to the parent company.
"Twelve" Blue	This record, although only 10" in diameter, was claimed to play as long as any 12" disc, hence its name. Described on the envelope as "The Popular Classic Record". Label bears the words "Made in Australia by Vocalion (Foreign) Ltd."
8" Red	General Vocal and Light Classical. No reference to parent company.
6" Broadcast Junior.	Dark blue label, bearing the words "Electrically recorded, to be played at speed of 80.", also "Manufactured by the Vocalion Gramophone Co", and there is a large block about the size of a Royalty stamp, but printed on the label, with the letters "V.G.C." therein. Light vocal and dance.

The final fate of the Company is uncertain - it may well have fallen to the superior size of a larger Company such as Columbia, although I have heard of a Vocalion L.P. being marketed recently. Any further information would be very gratefully received.

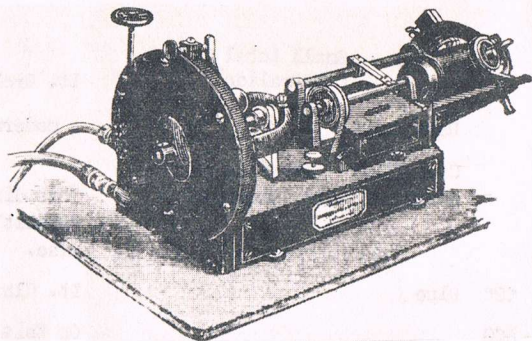
#### THE PANPHONETIC REPRODUCER

by Charles Slater

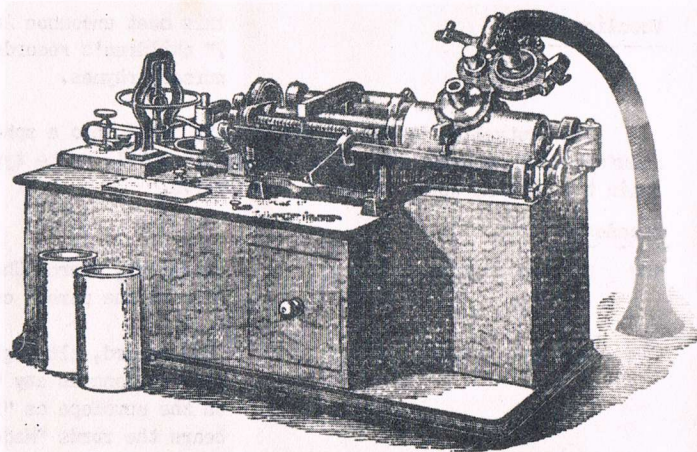
Among the more unusual reproducers developed for the acoustic gramophone was the Panphonic. Apparently inspired by the Lumiere hornless gramophone, the unit resembles a present day 12" loud-speaker with a needle holder fixed to the apex, where the magnet would be. I have not seen one myself, but apparently they were obtainable as late as 1948. I found the following description in an Australian Hobbies magazine of that year.

"The hornless reproducer consists of a parchment cone of 12" diameter, 2½" deep. This is usually painted with gold instrument lacquer to make it moisture resisting. The free edge of the cone is clamped to a light metal ring. Metal supports, extending from the ring to a depth of 4½"





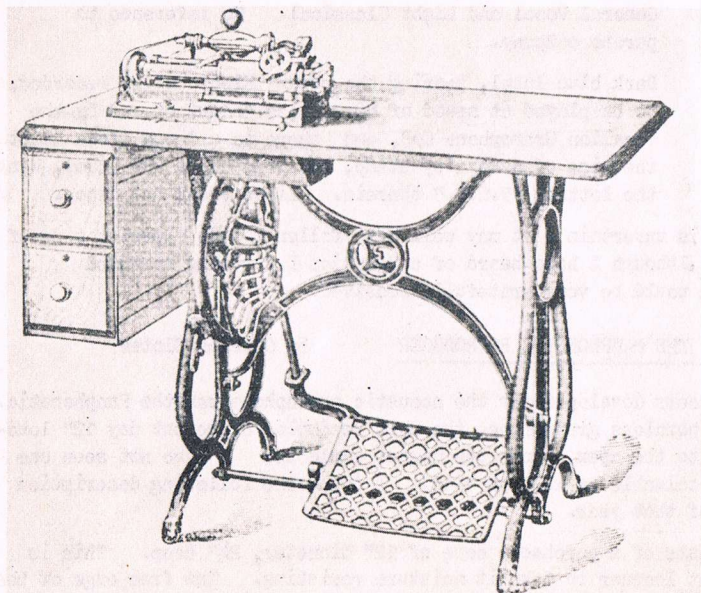
ABOVE:- THE FIRST LATERAL  
CUT AEOLIAN-VOCALION RECORD



ABOVE RIGHT:- THE WATER POWERED  
PHONOGRAPH

RIGHT:- THE IMPROVED SPECTACLE  
MODEL

BELOW:- THE TREADLE MODEL  
PHONOGRAPH



THE BEAUTIFULLY INLAID  
MAHOGANY CASE OF THE SHERATON  
"A" DESCRIBED IN THE REPRINT OF  
THE 1908 GRAMOPHONE CO. CATALOGUE



pass down to a circular block of hard wood  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter, which is faced with a metal plate, and pierced by a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hole. By this means, the conical diaphragm is fully supported inside a light metal frame, as shown in Fig. 1. A thin metal stem is attached to the apex of the diaphragm by means of two knurled nuts and conical metal washers, passing through the circular wooden block to connect at right-angles with a spring-wire cross-bar attached to an ordinary sound-box needle holder, the details of which are shown in Fig. 2. The instrument works best with standard steel needles - it is too heavy for a sapphire point. The outer ring is gimbal mounted by a stirrup pivoted to the outer ring 2" from the centre lines of the diaphragm. This stirrup is fitted to a swivel that plugs into a tubular pillar screwed on to the gramophone, and has a set-screw to adjust the playing angle to the normal  $60^\circ$  between the record and the needle.

The panphonetic reproducer gives well modulated output of great vitality, and has nothing of the sepulchral quality tending to spoil reproduction with the best of acoustic-horn amplifiers. It is excellent for dance records, and with loud-tone needles gives ample volume for a small hall."

#### COLLECTORS AND COLLECTIONS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA by Bill Dini

Visiting Western Australia in May, I was fortunate enough to meet our members there, other collectors, and indeed to sign up one new member and draw another one back into the fold. We now have four members in this 4,000 mile distant outpost of our Society! Our members went out of their way to extend the hand of friendship. The first member - indeed the first collector I contacted was Colin Smith of Subiaco, who is an ardent collector of almost anything antique, bottles, scales, porcelain boxes, lamps, telephones, as well as the things which interest us. You name it, Colin collects it. He has assorted Edisons and bits including a Triumph. A large E.M.G. "Expert" disc gramophone with a tin copy of the original papier mache horn and with metal lid and bottom bead is very unusual. He has a nice Klingsor and 3d in the slot Columbia. He also has a small Symphonium disc-musical box and an Aeolian pianola. He took me to meet Merv Thompson of Como, a vintage car enthusiast with a lovely 1914 Studebaker. Nearly all collectors in Western Australia have vintage cars. He has assorted Edisons, including a Triumph and an Opera (less horn), the only Opera or Concert I saw there. A large horn with two hinges to each petal which folded up, intrigued me; the small ends of the petals fitted into an inner and outer cone. He has a complete Edison Electric M which came from the Goldfields! He has numerous musical boxes, a musical picture and a Kalliope disc musical box. He also has two mechanical zithers and two Diamond Disc machines. Assorted portables, outside horn and underhorn disc machines, large and small, round out his collection. Next, a new member, Richard Rennie of East Fremantle kindly asked me to a meal and afterwards showed me his collection and also a film of an Exhibition the local collectors held in 1967. He has assorted Gems and Standards, a Home, a Triumph E, an Amberola DX, an Amberola V and various Amberola 30's. He has five Diamond Disc machines, a tin horn Pathe, a Canadian Berliner and also part of a musical doll (not Edison). He has a vintage '29 Chevrolet. Noel Fagence of Queens Park is another collector of various tastes - he is restoring a Plymouth car - and also collects telephones. He has two Gems, a Fireside, a Standard, a Triumph F, and also an early Commercial Graphophone, spring driven (a forerunner of the Dictaphone). He gave me an Amberola V horn - white ants had consumed the cabinet.

My next contact was Graeme Lewis of Bentley, who is now a member. He has an enormous collection of 78's. Also a Red Gem, an underhorn and overhorn H.M.V. and a table Brunswick with double Ultona reproducer. Again, a vintage car was in the shed! He had an Amberola VIII which he swapped for something I have yet to send him. I brought this machine home, dismantled, in an out-size suitcase. I then met Harold Collins of Canning Beach. He has two Standards, a Home and an Amberola DX, a 19" Polyphon wall model and a 9" Polyphon table model, both of which are immaculate. He has restored combs on his cylinder musical boxes by consulting the book "Collecting Musical Boxes and How to Repair Them" by Arthur W.J.G. Ord-Hume, which we have in the Society's library. His largest musical box plays ten airs and has bells, castanets and organ.



Last but not least of my visits was to Lou Whiteman of Guildford. His glorious old home contains the most comprehensive collection of furniture, chandeliers, china, watches, ornaments and lamps. The 103 year old flour mill in the back yard contains two vintage cars. Nearby he also has a collection of dozens of vehicles, wool wagons, tractors, steam engines - all too many to enumerate. In our line he has a large Lochmanns Original with 30" discs, similar to a Polyphon but reaching the ceiling. He also has a 19" wall Polyphon and a fascinating little musical box shaped like an upright piano. He has a mahogany Amberola 50 and a Fireside. Being repaired was a large cylinder musical box with bellows - the cylinder is four feet long and 4" diameter. Certainly a monster. Mr. Whiteman is a collector in the widest sense of the word.

Highlights of My Trip: A matchbox with an Edison Fireside from Western Australia's "Inventors" series. A musical toothbrush purchased in Melbourne.

Horn Manufacture: Witches hat horns have been made by three people in Western Australia. I was pleased to hear from a leading collector that the Society's product takes the honours.

Availability and Prices: From studied observation, it appears that the market in Western Australia is surprisingly similar to New Zealand. The pattern of availability and ruling prices runs closely parallel to local conditions.

#### PERCY GRAINGER AND THE PHONOGRAPH

by Pamela Rogers

It often happens that a certain composer becomes popular and his music is the 'in' thing. There is in England at present a revival of interest in the works of the Australian composer, Percy Aldridge Grainger who died in 1961.

Percy Grainger, after his arrival in England in the early 1900's became interested in folk music and it is perhaps because of that he is known to record collectors. I am sure that even the most 'anti pianist' would enjoy the Columbia Recording No. 03620 which is Grainger's delightful playing of his own arrangements of the two folk tunes 'Country Gardens' and 'Shepherds Hey'. I searched for many years for a copy of this recording and eventually bought a perfect one for five cents at a church fair.

It was while searching for these early tunes that Grainger made good use of an Edison Bell Phonograph and wax cylinders. His use of this method made him one of the first of folklorists to use some form of mechanical assistance in collecting. Grainger was not only most enthusiastic about this method, but used it extensively, once recording seventy songs in just two days, amassing in all, with the aid of the Phonograph, seven hundred songs. It is good to know that these have now been transferred to acetate discs and copies are stored in several museums and institutes.

What Grainger could have done with a tape-recorder remains an interesting speculation.

#### RECORDS OF RECORDS

by G.B.E.

Kathleen Mavourneen, sung by William F. Hooley. Single-sided 7 inch Victor Record No. 644.

This record deserves mention here, even if only for the fact that it was the first type of disc made by the Victor Talking Machine Company, being introduced in 1900-1901. William F. Hooley was a well-known singer in the early days of the gramophone, often recording in those quartets and trios so beloved of the early record buyers. He died in 1918.

The song is self-announced, and although my copy is, putting it mildly, 'on its last legs', the quality of the recording is much better than some publications would have us believe, the words and piano accompaniment standing out quite well above the noise of two cracks and a considerable amount of dirt. Another first associated with the 7 inch Victors is that they were the first discs to have a paper label, so it becomes obvious that, if it were not for these little records, our modern 45's and 33 1/3's might have been a lot longer in arriving.