



The Phonographic Record

The Journal of The Vintage Phonographic Society of New Zealand

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

We are pleased to report that the executive have been able to find and appoint a Secretary for 1975. We welcome Mrs. Drummond and hope she enjoys working for us. We would like to thank members who collected and answered mail during the period we were without a Secretary. We look forward to your letters and hope we can be more prompt with replies in the future.

There will be some members who will still be awaiting parts; those members who live in the Northern Hemisphere, please remember that it has been summer in New Zealand and with daylight saving which has made for longer evenings in the out-doors. This copy of "The Phonographic Record" will be produced by an improved process which will improve the quality of the illustrations, something we have wanted for a long time. We hope you will approve.

AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BERLINER DISC PHONOGRAPHS

1901-2

No. 25

Last issue we illustrated a model "C" Victor which we believe was manufactured in Europe.

The model illustrated in this issue which appears almost the same is reputed to be manufactured in the United States of America. Another photograph by the kindness of Larry Schlick.

THE DISCS - THE RECORDING ANGEL TRADE MARK

1890-1909

In 1966 we illustrated three seven inch Berliner disc records (see Vol. 2, Issue 2). In 1970 Vol. 7, Issue 4 we stated what we then knew about Berliner discs. Under the above title we hope to bring to light more information in this issue. The "Hillandale News", December, 1965, produced a very fine illustrated article on Berliner's Machines and Dolls.

THREE INCH RECORD

This described and illustrates a three inch disc record (8 cm) which has a hand engraved title with 'E. Berliner's GRAMMOPHON' stamped into the disc above the spindle note:- Note the spelling of "GRAMMOPHON".

W. Schenker, who wrote the article, states that Kemmer and Reinhardt produced records and machines at their factory at Walterhausen, Thuringia, Germany, from as early as 1887 and dolls from 1890. The pressed lettering of "E. Berliner's Gramophone" seem to be what was used as Berliner's first trade mark.

FIVE INCH RECORD

The records we have in New Zealand were also made in Germany and pressed at Hanover. They have E. Berliner's Gramophone (spelt with two 'm's) with what Schenker claims is the Patent number which is D.R.P. 45048. The catalogue number is in raised letters on one side and inscribed or etched on the other. The Title and Artist are hand written, we believe with a thin stylus. This record is thin - well under one-sixteenth of an inch which makes it very flexible, light, and almost unbreakable. The reverse side is plain except for some of the words of the song and the catalogue number are attached on a small printed square of paper.

These discs which at the date of production were called 'plates', are well under five inches in diameter, four and seven-eighths inches to be exact.

SEVEN INCH RECORD

In this issue we are repeating the three Berliner's illustrations, used about eighty years ago, in an attempt to piece together what we have been able to discover about the Gramophone Companies Trade marks.

Illustration No. 1

This record has the stamped E. Berliner's Gramophone type trade mark (Gramophone spelt with one 'm' and an 'e') but otherwise is much the same as the five inch, except for the addition of a number of patent dates. The title of the selection is hand written (we believe into the original wax with a stylus) as well as the name of the artist and date the record was made. The one illustrated is dated 'May 15-96' (1896); is over twice the thickness of the five inch and is easily breakable; is six and seven-eighths inch in diameter and has a perfectly plain reverse side.

The record to follow (not illustrated) was the first to our knowledge to use the Recording Angel Trade Mark. This depicts an angel holding a feather quill sitting on a record. This Angel trade mark is etched into the record to the left of the spindle hole, with the date opposite which is 18-5-00 (i.e. 18th of May, 1900). The title and artist's name are neatly written into the wax with what appears to be a thicker stylus; this makes it more easily read. The reverse side is plain except for "Reproduced in Hanover" in raised lettering. We also have one record clearly dated 18.2.01 (1901) which has the Angel trade mark in raised form at the top with E. Berliner's Patent printed the same way. Underneath the title, artist and date are all engraved as in Illustration No. 1.

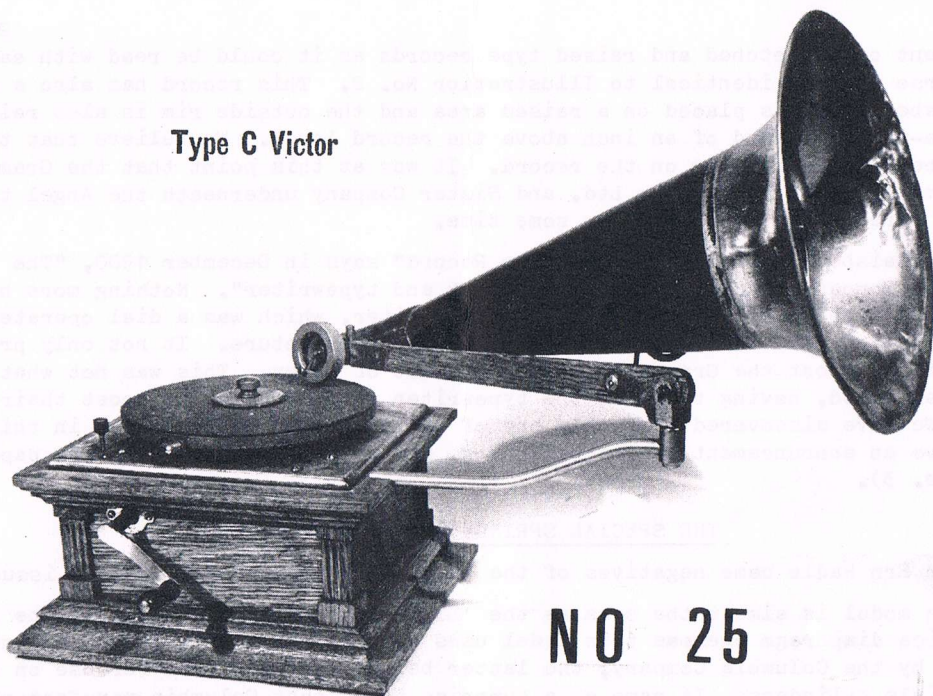
Illustration No. 2.

This record has come out clearly in our illustration and is much improved on the previous two records as regards readability. Trade mark, title, artist, catalogue number and E. Berliner's Gramophone all appear in raised type. No patent or recording dates appear on this record, other than below where the catalogue number is engraved "L 131-R". This, to us, appears to be a matrix number. The reverse side has the Angel trade mark in the centre underneath which is printed "Reproduced in Hanover" and round the outside in one inch letter is the word "GRAMOPHON".

Illustration No. 3.

This record must be what was the first of the paper labels to which we are accustomed. As can be seen from the illustration the label was a vast

Type C Victor



NO 25



NO 1

BERLINER

DISCS



NO 2



NO 3

improvement on the etched and raised type records as it could be read with ease. The reverse side is identical to Illustration No. 2. This record has also a small centre label which is placed on a raised area and the outside rim is also raised about one-thirty-second of an inch above the record level. We believe that this was to keep the reproducer on the record. It was at this point that the Gramophone Company added Typewriter Ltd. and Sister Company underneath the Angel trade mark and here it was to remain for some time.

F.W. Gaisberg in his book "Music on Record" says in December 1900, "The Gramophone Company adopted an electric clock and typewriter". Nothing more has been heard of the clock, but the Lambert typewriter, which was a dial operated machine, proved hard to operate and difficult to manufacture. It not only proved a failure, but cost the Gramophone Company a lot of money. This was not what the Company expected, having taken on the typewriter manufacturing to boost their business. We have discovered that only one of the disc records described in this issue have an announcement at the beginning, and this is the one with the paper label (No. 3).

THE SPECIAL SPRING-TENSION REPRODUCER

From Ern Radle came negatives of the reproducer illustrated in this issue.

This model is almost the same as the 'LYRIC' (See Vol. 1 Issue 8). The Lyric used a mica diaphragm whereas this model uses a metal one. Both types were manufactured by the Columbia Company, the latter being specially made for use on indestructible cylinders. It came as a surprise to us that Columbia manufactured a reproducer to fit anything other than their own machines.

We also illustrate a copy of an original advertising leaflet headed "The Special Spring-Tension Reproducer".

Close study of this will show how much alike Mr Radke's reproducer is.

The fine print at the bottom of the advertisement stated that this reproducer could be supplied for attachment to all other makes of cylinder machines.

OFFICIAL BOY SCOUT RECORD

We are indebted to Roger Cole of Christchurch New Zealand for the clear illustration of the Boy Scout Record depicted in this issue. Manufactured by the American Record Manufacturing Company Framingham Massachusetts USA is all we know, can someone help with more information?

BROADCAST RECORDS

These were mentioned in the article "Vocalion Records the Melbourne Scene" by Chris. Long, see Vol. 10, No. 2 (last issue) and have taken the opportunity to include an illustration of the eight inch in this issue. The eight inch size (illustrated) has a red and gold label and is under three inches across on the inside from track to track. This is one way of giving an increase in playing time, as the same playing time as a standard ten inch is claimed for the eight inch and so on for the ten. For this reason "Long Playing Record" is clearly printed on the label.

The ten inch is blue and gold in colour and has the same distance as the eight inch across the centre.

VOCALION RECORDS - THE MELBOURNE SCENE - 1928 to 1931 (Part III) by C. Long

In September 1929, a new policy was tried whereby all the previous labels were dropped, and custom labels for sale through various chain stores were introduced. The Vocalion Company's own outlets used the "Broadcast De-Luxe" label, whereas Coles stores used the "Embassy" label and Edments used the "Arcadia" label. Another rarer label is known. This is the black "Savoy" label, though the stores through which these were sold are, as yet, unknown to me. Many titles are common to all these, the same master being used on the four different labels, often with four different pseudonyms!

The usual blue Vocalion label was very soon re-introduced very late in 1929, though with a slightly smaller label than they had prior to September. A small-size brown label was also introduced.

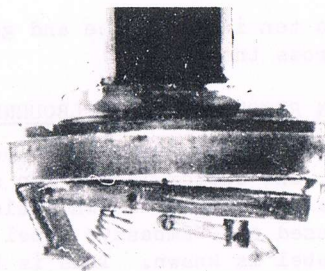
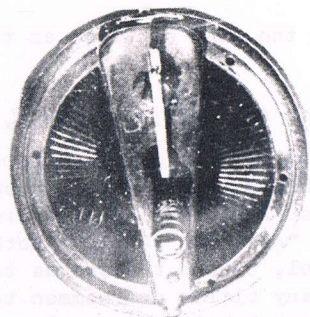
In 1931 Vocalion (Foreign) found itself in stiff financial problems, with a great debt owing to the English Vocalion Company. The main reason for this was that the technically superior Sydney "Regal" records had been dropped in price to 2/6, the same price as Vocalion. Vocalion records were all made of an in-homogenous composition of slate dust and shellac, giving a scratchy surface, whereas the Regal records were laminated, with very smooth pure shellac surfaces and tough core of bonding material.

To put it mildly, the bottom had dropped out of Vocalion's market and they found themselves in an overwhelming financial debacle, with Vocalion (Foreign) going out of business, in September 1931. Early in 1932 Moulded Products (Decca Records) took over the old Vocalion plant. Alas, I have not yet found the story behind the Decca takeover, but if anyone can supply more information here, it would be appreciated. In any event, the new company no longer issued locally recorded popular music records. Instead, records of radio advertisements were made for commercial use, and some privately managed recordings were done, including the first recording actually made in the Australian bush of the song of the lyre-bird. Along with these semi-private efforts, pressings of overseas material were issued with a blue Decca label almost identical to the English Decca pressings.

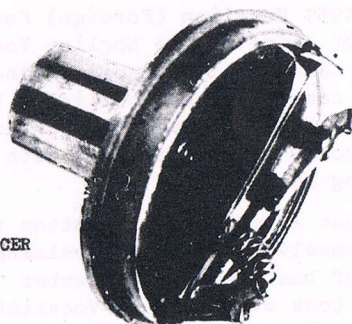
The new company was just getting on its feet when tragedy struck again. This time in 1933, the Richmond factory was burnt to the ground! Most of the pressing plant and many of the masters and stampers were lost. It simply was not worth starting again from scratch at this stage, so the production of Decca records shifted to the Columbia factory in Sydney, and was done under contract. Thus was Vocalion, in the long run, absorbed into E.M.I. in Australia.

At least one of the old moulded products recordings must have survived the fire, as the lyre-bird record was released by Columbia on laminated pressings in the mid-1930's. The disc is obviously the same recording and take as that released on the earlier moulded products pressings.

I cannot say what happened to the English company after 1930, but I am sure that it must have gone on into the late 1930's. I have only ever seen two records which I would call really late - one being a recording of Fred Astaire c. 1935, the other being one with a black label and gold print.



THREE VIEWS OF
THE SPECIAL REPRODUCER



ADVERTISING LEAFLET

Photographs by E. Radke



BOY SCOUT LABEL



8" BROADCAST LABEL

On the label is written the following:

Vocalion
ORIGINS OF JAZZ SERIES
E. 2632 V. 1009

"Too Bad"

Played by King Oliver's Dixie Syncopaters.

The record is obviously a dubbing of an earlier electric recording. From the group stated I would guess the original recording to be about 1926 vintage, and I would guess that this issue had been put out a decade later. The dubbing is quite well done for the time.

It may interest New Zealand readers to know that I have a January 1931 Vocalion prospectus (or information circular) in which it states: "The Company has a contract for two years with a well-known and substantial New Zealand House with a minimum of 250,000 records per annum".

By this statement I guess Vocalion records must be fairly common in New Zealand. I am also surprised to hear that Mr Stokes has an Australian Vocalion catalogue. I have seen numerous English Vocalion catalogues in this city (Melbourne) but never an Australian one. Being the Melbourne archivist for the Phonograph Society of Australia this interests me greatly, as I am presently attempting to list the Melbourne recordings from the pressings in collections 'round about.

THE "GENNETT" RECORD COMPANY, U.S.A.
(Edited by Adair Otley)

(Part 7) - "Studio Supervision"

Artists employed at the Gennett Studio received rigid supervision; they were told what to do and made to do it.

One particular record pressed gave an amusing instance of control - Alberta Jones singing: 'I'm gonna put you right in Jail/Lucky Numbers Blues' and 'Lulu Belle's Boy Friends' (GENNETT - 3403). The first number includes the line: "You don't do nothin' but fool around", and here Alberta was ordered to make the word "fool" sound as much like another word as possible.

However, it was to be another ten years before one Patricia Norman exploited the full "sensation value" of the only Anglo-Saxon word, which is still part of our Modern English vocabulary.

The "hottest" Gennett recording ever produced was the young Duke Ellington's "Lil' Farina" (GENNETT - 3342) and Bubber Miley, in his efforts to oblige, nearly broke a blood vessel!

The quest was carried out to every extreme for novelty appeal and sales angles, so the Gennett Catalogue eventually included such oddities as Carillions, Indian War Cries and speeches by William Jennings Bryan - the "free silver" policy advocate.

The backbone of Gennett's prosperity were the "Hill Billy" traders - from the remote areas beyond any City influences - and the catalogues as a whole was aimed directly at them. It found its way into communities which were in fact too small to support a specialised musical store - and as a result later Gennett's products were to be found on sale in Grocery Stores; in the Blacksmith's shop - and even the Undertakers!

(Part 8 Next Issue)

RECORD LISTENING POST NO. 10

by Barry Sheppard

A bracket of three recordings are the first to be covered in this Issue, and once again our friends at FESTIVAL have started off our review with a Bang!

For the 'Big Band' lovers comes a mighty double pressing entitled: "REMEMBER TOMMY" - the music of the one and only Tommy Dorsey, played by Dorsey's Big Band of years gone by, and here re-recorded again on 20th Century Records (L-45313/4). Believe me this 'double' is a Must, with a capital 'M', as the whole album brings back all the old numbers which for many years travelled your turntable at 78 r.p.m. - numbers like:-

SONG OF INDIA/ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET/LOSERS WEEPERS/ and WAGON WHEELS - just to quote a few. Soundwise, the recordings are good, with only a very minor hiss on two of the tracks. Thanks to FESTIVAL - listeners can now hear these great numbers again; this time at a slower speed.

The second and third pressings are Single Albums, but are just as good probably because they are taken from 'New Masters' and not from the old 78's. First comes those famous duo-pianists - Ferrante & Teicher playing those pulse-pounding ditties under the title of "THE ROARING 20'S" - on United Artists (L-34943). The selection includes: FIVE FOOT TWO/IT HAD TO BE YOU/CAROLINA IN THE MORNING/WHO'S SORRY NOW? - and many, more; all played in the style that only the Masters can play them. I think this is a good buy - for a Recording with so much to offer.

Now with the third album, in this bracket, I was just a little disappointed although soundwise the whole album was good. The title is: "THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN" - on United Artists (L-35370). This is the Soundtrack music from the film of the same name, which I'm sure will be well received by all James Bond fans. Listening to this pressing I found most of the tracks slow and durgy, but to the 'Bond Fans' I'm sure this won't matter; after all, an exciting movie often helps to sell an album, even if its music is not quite up to the mark.

Our final bracket of four in this Issue, comes from REED PACIFIC RECORDS, and I must say at this point that although these four records are of different value, they are all rated First Class. First comes Kiri Te Kanawa - with the title: "THE BEST OF KIRI" - on the KIWI Label (SCL-85). This Album, which is a sheer delight to listen to, has the following numbers: HAERE MAI/THE NUN'S CHORUS (fr. Casanova)/THE LAUGHING SONG/ONE FINE DAY/THEY CALL ME MIMI and a host of others.

The second pressing in this series is called: "PACIFIC BRASS AND VOICES" - performed by the Royal Fiji Police Band. This record is a unique souvenir of a proud and colourful tradition. The men of the famous Royal Fiji Police Band both play and sing with equal zest and proficiency, to delight the listener. The number for this stirring Album is: HIBISCUS (HLS-18).

Now for our third Album which is by the Band of the New Zealand Army - under the KIWI Label - (SLC-53). Such vitalising music presented here including:- BLUES ON THE MARCH/NIGHT TEMPLER/JACK O'LANTERN and even a selection from THE BLACK AND WHITE MINSTREL SHOW! This Record is really good value and I'm sure it will find it's way into the Band Lover's record collection. Soundwise - very, very good!

(The Fourth and final Album will be reviewed next Issue).