

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 have a number of apologies to make for the errors contained in our last issue. Firstly, there should have been an unusual record label on page 6 instead of a blank space!! We also stated that we had produced five new parts for sale; however we have produced only four new parts, with only three of them for sale - the fourth, a feed screw which will be for sale in the future, was included to try and assess what demand there would be if the manufacture was undertaken. So, if anyone is in need of one or one dozen lead screws, please write in and let your want be known (item d on page 2 issue 1).

We would like any member who is contemplating ordering back issues of the magazine to hop in and order while supplies last, as, due to the high cost of printing, reprints will not be produced in the future. We also have a number of spare copies of the Convention Issue, Volume 12 Issue 4. We are at present prepared to offer back issues at a cut in cost, i.e. \$20 a full set. This would represent a saving of \$4. (Postage extra).

WANTED TO BUY:

The original recordings of: "Pianoflege" (Roy Bargy) played by
'Fate Merable's Society Syncopaters' and any of Zez Confrey
especially "Kitten on the Keys" and "Stumbling" and any by
THE ORIGINAL DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND especially:

Darktown Strutter's Ball, Inetrana
Ostrich Walk, Tiger Rag, Dixie Jazz
Band one-step, Livery Stable Blues,
Fidgety Feet, Lazy Daddy, At the Jazz
Band Ball". Reply to: Mr M. Davidson,
30 Townsend Rd.,
Wellington 3, N.Z.

AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BERLINER DISC PHONOGRAPHS

1902

VICTOR MONARCH JUNIOR

No. 34

VICTOR MODEL "E"

We have very little information about this model and as far as we know, this machine has not yet been discovered in New Zealand. Its owner, Larry Schlick, who supplied illustration, denotes it with the prefix Victor Model E, second model and has included a page from a 1902 Victor catalogue (see illustrations). He says it has a seven inch turn-table and threaded brass elbow, metal support arm and is illustrated with a Concert reproducer (see insert) but an Exhibition reproducer is also correct. Further information appreciated!

IN PASSING by R. Peggio.

Amongst a pile of nondescript G & T's a black-and-silver Columbia unearthed recently in a Christchurch second-hand shop was the early Russian Columbia illustrated. Its finder, a keen collector of early vocals, dreamed of Ershov until he heard it revealed as a clarinet solo. The trademark is a disc adaptation of that familiar on cylinder box labels. This find made me wonder, as so often, how such an exotic disc came to be here. How and why did the original owner buy it? Not many early discs can have been brought out in immigrants' luggage, and of those very few indeed in the cases of non-British arrivals. I believe the answer lies in the fact that so many pre-1914 records must have been sold as mixed selections. The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. issued its first Australian catalogue in, I think, 1907 (no local recordings, of course, just discs obtainable from local stock). Before this, the Company kept the antipodes supplied with vocal and instrumental solos etc. for sale by jobbers as lots with machines. By unloading on the colonies deleted and slow-selling titles, 'head office' unwittingly provided Australian (and, I suppose, New Zealand) collectors with a rich supply of rarities such as the 1902 London red G & T's. By the 1920's, the major labels had secure and distinct agencies, but even then general and mail-order retailers must have sold a curious mixture obtained from wholesalers. How else can we explain the occasional appearance of all those unusual labels - the pre-1914 ones whose patriotic names usually indicated German origin (Guardsman, Colonial Perophone, Anker, Beka etc.) and the minor American makes of the '20's such as Cameo, Lincoln, Puritan and Everybody's?

BOOK REVIEW

by Gavin East

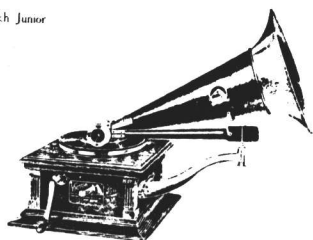
Sixty Years of British Music Hall by John M. Garrett
(London; Chappell, 1976 - UK price £3.50)

A valuable addition to the written history of music hall, this large soft-covered volume concentrates on the captivating world of Victorian music-hall sheet music. Mr Garrett has selected 33 published songs from the copyright collection of Ascherberg, Hopwood and Crew (acquired in 1969 by Chappell & Co.). They are printed in reduced facsimile, complete with glorious lithographed covers (many by Alfred Concanen). I am tempted to acquire a second copy to cut up for framing! Besides an excellent succinct history of music hall and a chapter on music publishing, Mr Garrett supplies informative notes to each reprinted song. It is in one of these that he makes a most irritating error of fact and historical appreciation. His comment on On the Day King Edward gets his Crown is so annoyingly ill-informed that I feel compelled to quote it:

The decades of prim Victorian rule and the seemingly never-ending war in South Africa made the British public yearn for 'something different' - a difference symbolised by the jovial personage of the future Edward VII. These aspirations were summed up in On the Day King Edward gets his Crown - the impending death of Queen Victoria could not come quickly enough for her subjects at the beginning of a gay, hurly-burly era where she seemed totally out of place. Harry Pleon, a comedian-artiste and songwriter, although short of stature, had found a 'greatness' in the public's affections only eclipsed by that of 'Little Tich'. Pleon's unchallenged tilt at royalty in this song demonstrates that he deeply understood the innermost desires of his fellow-countrymen and by his innocent, yet subtle use of humour, he realized his role as the voice of his audiences.



1402 Victor Monarch Junior



NO 34
VICTOR .E.



OUR BUILDING AND PART OF THE
FERRYMEAD TOWNSHIP

Twaddle! Mr Garrett has been carried away by a silly chronological error into interpreting this song as an expression of popular dissatisfaction with the aged Queen Victoria. It is scarcely credible that he should be unaware that the Queen died on 22 January, 1901 and that Edward VII's coronation, planned for 26 June 1902 but postponed because of the King's appendicitis, took place on 9 August 1902. The song was published in 1902, over a year after the Queen's death, and is a simple comic number bringing in the usual music-hall stock characters — the lodger, the landlord, 'Father', 'Auntie'. King Edward VII was certainly - by this time - popular: the atmosphere of the Court was enlivened. But Queen Victoria, after 63 years on the throne, had been revered and mourned as no other British monarch could have been. Once they had got over the fact that the Queen was no more, people awaited with joyful anticipation the first coronation in the memories of any but the aged. The Edwardian era, however, can be dated back to c.1890 (as a social period) and extended to 1914. To claim that the Queen's death was impatiently awaited and that the coronation was the starting-gun for good times is to be guilty of malicious supposition based on a lack of historical knowledge. As for the 'greatness' of Harry Pleon, most music-hall enthusiasts would ask, 'Harry — who?'

Forgive me for affording this unhappy paragraph the unwanted dignity of a formal demolition, but I recommend the rest of Mr Garrett's book to all those interested in the fascinating world of music hall.

REPORTS OF RECENT SOCIETY MEETINGS

by G. East

Zonophone machines of the early period (before the company's absorption by G & T Victor in 1903) were unknown to us locally before last year's convention. To that convention came Andy Young from Palmerston North in the North Island, with photographs of his extensive collection. These included a view of an unusual early Zonophone with small case and large 'back-supported' brass horn. Bill Dini, on a subsequent progress through the North Island, examined the Zonophone and had to disappoint Mr Young by revealing that the tone-arm and bracket and horn were all 'foreigners' to the machine. Being fortunate enough to acquire the case, motor, turntable and handle, Bill consulted every available illustration before reconstructing the Zonophone (or Zon-o-phone) to its original 'front-support' appearance. Those attending our September meeting were impressed by the happy result - a solid little 7-inch machine looking very perky with its nickelled boom and brass-belled horn.

Members who rolled up for our October meeting were lucky indeed, for they heard a most entertaining guest speaker. Mr Willis Williams is, these days, Publicity Officer for the Canterbury Museum, but has had many years' experience in acting and broadcasting. His accounts of incidents in the studios of the old New Zealand Broadcasting Service were nothing short of mirth-provoking. Taking advantage of the rule that an announcer must 'keep his cool' in any situation, technicians could amuse themselves by slowly raising the suspended microphone — Mr Williams recalled valiantly reading a news bulleting while standing on tiptoe on his desk! The feat of continuing a broadcast seemingly oblivious of a glass of ice-cold water down the back can scarcely have been short of heroic.

Your correspondent played a few records by the late Bing Crosby: Empty Saddles (Hill) from the film Rhythm on the Range, on an electric lateral Pathe (BC 10083) 'Made in China', and two early numbers from the RCA LP Young Bing Crosby (RPL 3147, 1959). These were I'm coming Virginia (Cook-Heywood) with Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra (April 1927) and a November 1927 effort by Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys (Bing Crosby, Harry Barris and Al Rinker), That's Grandma (Barris-Crosby-Cavanaugh).

The Society's first two Edison cylinder phonographs were demonstrated at our November meeting. With its case refinished by Mr Bill Drummond (husband of our Secretary) the Standard Model B (2-min.) is ready for display at Ferryroad. The Gem C, also with Model C reproducer, had to be fitted with a borrowed horn and crane, but plays well and will soon be completed. Adair Otley played the tape recording he has made of the 1928 Edison New Zealand speech, then showed the film A Tribute to Richard Rodgers, made for US television in 1951.

MEMBERS' NIGHT AT FERRYMEAD by Joffre Marshall

Not many of us have been to a barbecue at Ferryroad, but on Wednesday 30 November sixteen members of our society and their families joined together with other Ferryroad societies and had a most enjoyable evening. The weather was very kind, mild and warm, and a crowd of 150 enjoyed the evening's activities.

The trams were running, so was the train, complete with air-conditioned carriages (open trucks!). Our society provided hot water for the barbecue, old time music played through our public address system and a warm welcome for all members of other societies who passed through our display. I would like to express my appreciation of the part played by Stuart Hobbs in arranging this function. I am sure that it will be even more successful next year.

THE SOCIETY'S FIRST TWO EDISON CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS

(from the President's address to the November meeting)

In the centenary year of the Edison phonograph it is most fitting that we celebrate the acquisition of two machines, a Standard B and Gem C.

We are most grateful to many members for their assistance in restoring these phonographs. In 1976 we were offered the Standard and our thanks must be extended to Margaret Marshall and Bill Flecknoe for obtaining it from its owners, the Ashley family of Kaiapoi. Bill Flecknoe borer-cured the case and prepared the horn (large morning glory) for repainting. Bill Dini checked and cleaned the motor. Our thanks go to Bill Drummond for repolishing the case and lid. Stuart Hobbs, besides helping me to reassemble the machine, spent many hours restoring the horn to an appropriate colour. The crane was plated by our local firm. The Gem was purchased for the Society by Bill Dini, who has restored the machine and cover. We gratefully acknowledge the time and effort he has contributed. Both photographs will be valuable additions to our display.

THE STEWART "PHONOGRAPH"

by Bill Dini

An advertisement in the Sydney Bulletin of 8 August, 1918, describes and illustrates an unusual gramophone. This is the all-metal Stewart made in Chicago, U.S.A., and sold in Australia for 55 shillings (\$5.50). I suspect the company was the same that made Stewart speedometers, fitted to the majority of American cars in those days.

The machine has a pressed steel body: top 10" dia., bottom 11" dia. and 3" deep. A long narrow motor is shrouded by a baffle which diverts the sound out through slots in the sides of the body and large holes in the heavy cardboard floor.

In 1918 about 1500 Stewarts were sold from the seven wholesalers in Australia and Tasmania, their small size making them compact and portable machines. The Stewart played one 12-inch record with one winding. There were, apparently, at least two models. The one I have is made in Toronto, Canada; the one illustrated in the Bulletin was made in Chicago. There are several small differences, but substantially they are the same.

The machine plays quite well. The reproduction is slightly metallic, which is not surprising as the only non-metal parts are the diaphragm (mica), the heavy cardboard base, wooden knob to winding-handle, 5 rubber feet and the felt on the turntable.

***OUR BUILDING** This photograph was taken in October 1977, at the presentation of display material concerning the Church's history. The Ellesmere Methodist Church was opened on its original site on 7 July, 1911, and cost about £526. The photographs and text presented for display in our building concern the Chamberlain and Withell families, prominent in the district. While changing times have made the church, in one sense, 'redundant', it is serving a better purpose at Ferrymead than it would have as a Hayshed.*

Editorial preface to article on Sousa: The following article is from a recent "Reader's Digest". We are wary of lifting such articles wholesale for two reasons: the danger of copyright infringement and the desire to avoid making your magazine a "scissors-and-paste" job with no originality. However, this information on Sousa is so well written and interesting that we have been unable to resist using it. Perhaps one of our U.S. or other readers can follow it up with some data on Sousa's recordings?

SOUSA

by Ann Lingg

On a nasty November day in 1896, John Philip Sousa was pacing the windswept deck of the S.S. Teutonic. The collar of his coat turned up, his cap pulled down over his eyes, he was in near panic. He and his wife, Jane, had been ending a delightful working holiday in Europe when he read in a week-old Paris newspaper that his manager and trusted friend, David Blakeley, had suffered a fatal stroke in his Carnegie Hall office. Moreover, Sousa, 42, had never handled his own business affairs. How could he manage without Blakeley? Now he looked up. The sky was as grey and gloomy as his mood. Only the ship's American flag provided a touch of colour, its mast a steady marker in a drifting universe. Suddenly, as he paced back and forth, a melody seemed to rise from the waters beyond — a melody that floated briskly along like a flag in a spanking breeze. It was a good melody, inspiring, strong. It made him step to its rhythm. An imaginary band played it in his ears.

The melody stayed with Sousa for the rest of his trip. And on Christmas Day, 1896, he wrote it down, calling it "The Stars and Stripes Forever." Had he never written anything else, Sousa would still be famous. The march became so popular the world over that foreigners sometimes still mistake it for America's National Anthem. Experts say that its firm-beat optimism makes it the finest military and patriotic march ever composed.

Offenbach's Concertmaster. Sousa soon became a legend, and his very name kept people guessing. He was



EARLY RUSSIAN COLUMBIA



JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



WORDS BY **JOSEPH S. LONG.** MUSIC BY **ERNEST J. SYMONS.**
 SUNG WITH IMMENSE SUCCESS BY
G. H. MACDERMOTT.
 LONDON, HOPWOOD & CREW 42 NEW BOND ST W.

AN ILLUSTRATION FROM SIXTY YEARS
 OF BRITISH MUSIC HALL



GUS ELEN



EARLY LABEL OMITTED FROM
 LAST ISSUE

rumoured to be an immigrant, and "Sousa" was said to stand for his initials, S.O., plus the destination - U.S.A. - that he had scrawled on his luggage. Actually, he was a genuine American product. His ancestry was Portuguese and German, but he was born in Washington, near the Capitol, one of ten children of Antonio and Elizabeth Sousa, on November 6, 1854. Papa Sousa, played the trombone in the U.S. Marine Band, and little John Philip used to hang around the barracks grounds. One of his earliest impressions was of the parade marking the Civil War's end. Weaned on patriotism and band music (he learnt to play several instruments, notably the trombone and violin), he always credited his early exposure for his infatuation with marches.

When John Philip was 13, his father apprenticed him to the marine band to keep him from running away with a circus. He quit after several years to tour with theatre companies and variety shows. In 1876 he was concert-master to Jacques Offenbach, who had come to America from Paris to conduct at the Philadelphia Centennial Festival. At 25, married to a Philadelphia debutante and sporting a pirate's beard for dignity, Sousa was rehired by the marine band, this time as its leader, the youngest ever.

Within 12 years, he built the marine band into a first-class concert organization, and wrote numerous marches for it. "Semper Fidelis," commissioned by President Chester Arthur and dedicated to the marines, is still played at all parades and official functions of the corps. In 1889 Sousa composed "The Washington Post", to celebrate a massive state-school essay contest sponsored by that newspaper. The light and festive beat of the new march took America by storm, and before long even dance bands had picked it up. Until then, the traditional two-step had been considered a dry and boring dance. "The Washington Post" pepped it up, and the two-step craze was on. Sousa introduced his own concert band in 1892 at the Columbian Exposition and World Congress in Chicago. From there it went on tour to win audiences that soon were the largest in the country. The band made 32 trans-continental tours and hundreds of shorter trips, went to Europe five times (once as far as Russia), and in 1910-11 circled the globe, trailing headlines. All in all, Sousa and his men covered 2.4 million kilometres, and were seen and heard by more than 50 million people. His business acumen need not have worried him; in spite of paying out some \$28 million in salaries and transportation costs, Sousa became a wealthy man,

"Canned Music", Wherever he went, the zip and verve of his conducting captivated audiences. While he stood with feet firmly planted, the upper part of his body literally acted out the music. To some people he seemed to be swimming or dancing or fencing; others said he handled his baton like a whip or an eggbeater. At the climax of a march, he would swing his right arm up and down like an Indian club, throwing audiences into virtual hysterics with what became known as "the Sousa swing."

In 1914, he signed up with the Hippodrome Variety Theatre to supply musical entertainment twice a day, and a feature show on Sunday nights. These Sunday programmes became big events, with such legendary singers as Emmy Destinn, Nellie Melba, Julia Culp, Olive Fremstad, Maggie Teyte and John McCormack on the Hippodrome's New York City stage with the master himself. Although the movies eventually superseded vaudeville, and the tango gave way to the two-step, people's fancy for marches was unaffected. "Marches will be the music of the world as long as men like to keep in step," Sousa predicted confidently. In all, he wrote over 100 of them (in addition to operettas, symphonic poems and songs). During World War 1, in his sixties, he was called upon to train military bands. The work with young people proved to be a fountain of youth for Sousa, and his fund-raising concerts and parades earned him the title "Pied Piper of Patriotism." His wartime activities netted him two honorary doctorates as well, and the rank of lieutenant-commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve.

As the '20's roared around him, he travelled far and wide (though now in his seventies) to encourage the growing school-band movement. His conducting grew more sedate after he fell from a horse in 1922, fracturing a vertebra. Though he was constantly in pain, the March King carried on in his sturdy, refreshingly old-fashioned way. "The first you'll hear of Sousa's retirement is when you hear 'Sousa dead'," he remarked. Death did finally overtake him on March 6, 1932, in a hotel room in Reading, Pennsylvania, where he suffered a heart attack after a rehearsal and banquet. He had written seven new marches the year before.

Sousa lives on in people's minds as one of the great Americans, above and beyond the call of music. In 1954, his centennial year, a bill was passed by the U.S. Congress to make "The Stars and Stripes Forever" the national march, "to be used for the appearance of high federal and state government officials, other than the President, on public occasions." And on November 1, 1973, Sousa was elected to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans (the only other musicians there being Stephen Foster and Edward MacDowell). Today, the impact of Sousa's stirring marches still shows no signs of fading. Fads may come and go, but John Philip Sousa marches on!

Records of Records, No.2 (new series) by G.B.E.

'E dunno where 'e are (Wright-Eplett), sung by Gus Elen.

Decca F 3097, recorded c.1932.

Gus Elen would be my favourite music-hall artist, but for the fact that the kaleidoscopic variety of talent on the halls defies such a sweeping assertion. This variety was not only vocal: we music-hall record collectors must

remember that instrumental solos were as much a part of the programme as the immortal songs. Unfortunately, scanty documentation often leaves us wondering whether early xylophonists and concertina-players were recognised stage performers or not. But I digress. When, twelve years ago, I began to collect music-hall recordings, I had a 'feel' for the songs, an awareness of the big names (Robey, Leno, Lloyd, Champion etc.), but little familiarity with the style and sound of artists other than those commonly found - notably Harry Lauder and Billy Williams on Blue Amberol. I bought my first Elen, this one, because it was an Elen, but knew not what to expect. Hearing that sardonic, rasping voice deliver a song of such beauty and robust vigour against the background of a pit orchestra, I felt, as I do still, that this was what music hall was all about.

Ernest Augustus Elen was born, presumably in London, in 1862 or 1863. I cannot tell you when he went on the stage, but he had arrived as a top-line coster comedian by 1891. His costume-choker, striped jersey and turned-round cap - was not bizarrely eccentric, just the garb of that mobile greengrocer, the London costermonger. In contrast to the popular image of the music-hall comedian as a rapid-fire 'I say I say' bundle of joy, he portrayed a character of quiet resignation, sometimes sadness; arousing amused sympathy (but not asking for it) by beseeching temperance reformers, Don't stop my 'arf a piht o' beer, or dreaming wistfully of the views he would have from his back garden if it wasn't for the 'ouses in between, but never a 'funny man.'

Fortunately for us, he picked good songs, so that he does not have to be listened to with dogged antiquarian perseverance. Many people still know, at least vaguely, It's a great big shame (Bateman & Le Brunn), the shame being the domestication of a brewer's drayman by his tiny wife, and Down the road (Gilbert), about the racing success of the coster's mare Polly. The 'he' of 'E dunno where 'e are is one Jack Jones, a coster who, on inheriting money (unlikely though that was off the stage), puts on airs and shuns his old working mates at the market. Affecting a cigar rather than a pipe, donning a top hat and kid gloves, he earns Gus' disgust for his snobbishness. Not that the song attacks the existence of social classes - it merely ridicules the idea that money alone brings social superiority.

Elen's unmistakable voice recorded very well, so that his Berliners of 1899 are, vocally, not greatly inferior to the Deccas of c.1932. It is said that, on his first recording date, he had to be restrained from jogging round the room as he did on stage. He made G & T's and acoustic Zonophones, but even the latter are extremely rare here. The Deccas date from around the time of his triumphant appearance in the Royal Variety Performance on 1932. Being active at such a late date, Elen was one of the very few Victorian music-hall artists recorded on sound film. After 1932 he seems to have remained in comfortable retirement by the sea until his death in 1940.

POINTS FROM LETTERS

Harry M. Sansum,
94 Daniell Street,
Newtown, Wellington 2,
NEW ZEALAND

You enquire (in the "Phon.Rec.") for information about flattening L.P. discs which had become curled up somewhat by exposure to sunlight. Well, I mentioned this matter to a young chap from Palm.Nth. who was visiting over Christmas, and he said that he had known the problem to be successfully tackled in the following manner:- If there is a TV set available and used for a few hours each day, lay the record (one disc only at a time) upon the upper surface of the TV set. The record should be in its envelope, of course, and if the top of the TV set is not quite wide enough to supply full support to every segment of the disc, then a perfectly flat, and stout, cardboard sheet should go between the TV top and the record. Then lay upon the record a large flat sheet of some kind - a large (though not too heavy) atlas or something of the sort, that is, something which will press evenly over every segment of the record. The story is that the gentle heat radiated by the TV set while in daily use will, in the course of a few days, restore the disc to its original shape and usefulness. Well, that's how it was told to me by one who said that he knew what he was talking about, and I pass the tip to you for whatever it might be worth to one in need of such advice.

David Stringer,
15 Roydvale Avenue,
Christchurch 4,
NEW ZEALAND

Re your enquiries on LP records, as it is heat which allows them to warp, it is heat which will provide the solution. The records should be left in the sun sandwiched between two plates of glass, with a weight on top. Thus the record is softened, and held flat while it cools. As for cleaning records, by far the best method is to use warm (not hot or they will warp again!!) soapy water, and a soft cloth. This lifts all grit and dirt out of the grooves and works well on all kinds of records, (including 78's) although nothing can repair scratches in the groove, hence it will not remove all the background noise - the best cure is prevention - keep the records clean, in their dust-jackets when not in use, stored vertically (not lying flat), preferably in a high cupboard rather than in a rack on the floor.

Contd. next issue ...