

G&T GAZETTE

Established 1995. Incorporating the *Edison Echo*

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

2002



On the 15th of July I broke my journey back to New Zealand to visit Stockport near Manchester to take in the frontage and interior of a business which would send shivers down the spine of any dedicated record collector. How I came to be there and what I obtained as a result of my visit to this establishment is outlined inside. Read and enjoy!



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GLEANINGS FROM HERE AND THERE (MAINLY MACHINERY MATTERS)

I wonder how many in our group noted the ingenious invention which was used to amplify 78s at Don Laing's programme in Newtown in May. His external horn add-on panels on either side of the normal table top gramophone horn opening seemed to do the job admirably in the time honoured tradition of Kiwi Ingenuity! Good-on-ya Don! As well we are glad to report, another excellent programme with a printed programme. We are being spoilt by these extra touches.

Those with a slightly less tolerant threshold to subtle sound were at times stressed to listen to a programme put on by Pat Byrne in June. His table top wind-up machine seems so faint as to be unbelievable! Even your editor was stumped on how to increase the volume emitting from his gramophone. We hope this investment into authentic acoustic reproduction will not deter others in our group from exploiting this avenue of authentic sound reproduction.

If anything, this swing back to playing 78 on vintage equipment seems to be a plague in our midst, raging unchecked. Both George Boraman and Neil and Betty McDonald have long been known for their predilection for entertaining us to records played on a variety of wind-up instruments. Those who attended George's presentation in August will savour for many years the splendid quality of sound which poured forth from his Edison Laboratory Diamond Disc machine and his Brunswick-Pathe/Reproducer. Concerning the Pathe items, I would like to go on records as saying this is the best I have ever heard these discs being played acoustically - or for that matter electrically amplified. From George's introduction to this part of the programme we learnt that Brian Blackford had helped George get his arm and reproducer in sync. The 1904/5 Albert Garcia item (a rarity indeed) came through loud and clear.

It's not going to stop there. If I'm not mistaken Neil & Betty McDonald are just itching to demonstrate their new MELOTROPE in September. From what we've read and heard from those who've seen this machine demonstrated, we are in for a great treat.

THE HERALD and MINSTREL labels Adam Miller *A work in progress*

In 1913-14, the Christchurch-based firm of importers, E.W. Pidgeon & Co Ltd, organised the production of two series of 78rpm records in Europe, destined for import into New Zealand.

The labels were THE HERALD and MINSTREL, and are the earliest known record label manufactured especially for New Zealand. This activity ceased with the commencement of WWI.

The majority were pressed by Edison Bell (UK) Ltd using their own masters, predominantly from WINNER, although BELL and VELVET-FACE were also used. Edison Bell offered to issue special labels to firms prepared to take a certain number of their records. A catalogue was sent out, and from this E.W. Pidgeon chose the titles, and later issued their own catalogues [1]. Other labels issued under this scheme include CURRY'S and EXO (both English).

For illustrations of the labels see the back cover.

THE HERALD label exists in two types, both gold on a dark green ground. The commoner series (Type 1) commenced at 1 and reached at least 127 and are Edison Bell pressings. The much scarcer 1000 series (Type 2) has been seen to 1044 and used Beka masters. This was probably pressed in London by Beka themselves, who were established there in 1913. The designs differ in the placement of the words in the panel between the two heralds.

The MINSTREL label also exists in two types, both gold on a maroon ground. Again there is a commoner series (Type 1) commencing at 1 and reaching at least 60 using Edison Bell masters. A single copy, number 2004 (Type 2), is known using Favorite masters, and is additionally inscribed PRESSED ABROAD. The matrix symbols on the label and the small shapes punched out of the label (lower left) are typical of German Favorite's other contract pressings, e.g. Lyric (>I^/.

Both labels had a mix of popular music of the day, including many military bands, famous comedians including Little Tich, and popular vocalists such as Robert Evans, Elda May or Anderson Nicol. Occasionally the name of the artist was altered. For instance THE HERALD 98 features carols by the "Christchurch Quartette" but the original WINNER 2227 was by the Belgravia Choir.
Sleeves, Seals & Stamps

Special record sleeves came with the records (see illustrations on page 5), but their survival rate is very low as the paper used was thin and easily damaged.

It is interesting to note that THE HERALD sleeve advertises the Herald Gramophone available from £3 to £60 - quite a sum in 1914. Does anyone know of any extant? Sadly neither sleeve gives any useful information about the records themselves, such as price or catalogue. [1] notes that the original selling price was 3/6 for THE HERALD and 2/6 for the MINSTREL, with these prices being forced through competition to fall.

This is not borne out by the blue price seal (see back cover) from MINSTREL 2004, showing a price of 3/-, unless it was a more expensive series. Curiously, some POPULAR records (1913-14) bear a vermilion seal inscribed "Controlled by Minstrel Gramophone Company Box 258 Christchurch". This seal has not been seen on any of THE HERALD or MINSTREL labels.

Most records found bear one or two copyright stamps, circular-punched out of the sheet. This is a signature action of Edison Bell and is seen on their other pressings, e.g. REXOPHONE. That the stamps found on MINSTREL 2004 are complete is a further indicator (should one be needed) that they were produced by another concern.

E.W. Pidgeon & Co Ltd

Edward Walker Pidgeon (page 5) born 1 Jan 1868 at Bird Street Lichfield Staffordshire [2]. He arrived in Christchurch in 1886 to join his brother in the firm of P Nind-Ward & Co, General Merchants [3]. In 1898 the firm became Pidgeon & Co (Nind-Ward & Co). By 1909 it was E.W. Pidgeon & Co Ltd, and was listed in Wise's Post Office directory as Wholesale Cycle and General Importers, with branches in Christchurch and Wellington. By 1911, they had branched out into Gramophones, and now had offices in Dunedin and Auckland. Wise's 1913 entry is particularly revealing and is repeated here in full.

Cycle and Motor Factors

Proprietors: Referee Cycle Co of NZ - Referee & Club cycles, Herald Gramophone Co of NZ - Herald Gramophones & records. NZ rep: BF Goodrich Co, Akron, USA - rubber goods; the Rover Co Ltd - Rover motor cycles. Wholesale distributors: Thos. A. Edison Ltd - Edison phonographs.

The Herald Gramophone Co from the record sleeve is there, but there is no mention of the Minstrel Gramophone Co from the vermilion seal. The firm was now based in Tuam St, Christchurch, with branches in New Zealand's main centres, plus Napier and Wanganui.

Commencing in 1908, the company issued a monthly gazette, for New Zealand music factors, entitled "The N.Z. Record Herald and Goodrich Gazette", reflecting their joint interests in music and motoring. A surviving copy (possibly the only one) is No. 116 of March 1918. This was reproduced and circulated as an insert with The Phonographic Record some years ago. It includes a catalogue of Edison products - Blue Amberols and Diamond Discs, plus assorted adverts

and brief articles on both Edison and B.F. Goodrich products. It remains tantalising to suppose that the issues for 1913-14 would hold much of interest regarding THE HERALD and MINSTREL records.

After the end of WW1, the firm continued to expand into other New Zealand centres, but the focus was on cycles and motoring. E.W. Pidgeon & Co was first absorbed into H.W. Smith, and ultimately became part of the Repco Group.

When the family cleared out the old premises over 20 years ago, all that remained of the music heritage was an Edison player and some Diamond Discs. The family were unaware of the link to New Zealand's first record labels.

Notes:

[1] *The Phonographic Record*, May 1967

[2] Private Correspondence, Pidgeon family, Christchurch.

[3] Obituary, Christchurch Times 25 March 1937



HERALD

POPULAR - BRIGHT - LOUD - CLEAR - SMOOTHEST AND BEST

Label Type 1 - The Words "GRAMOPHONE RECORD" are in two horizontal lines.

Cat.no.	Matrix	Year	Artist	Title	Original Issue
4	83H	1912	Royal Military Band [1]	Handel's Largo	Winner 2043
	84O	1912	Royal Military Band [1]	Hallelujah Chorus	Winner 2043
9	42F	1912	Albert Pearce (Tenor)	Love me and the world is mine	Winner 2021
	157P	1912	Royal Military Band	Intermezzo - Rainbow	Winner 2087
16	124F	1912	Royal Guards Band	Selection - Ireland Forever	Winner 2061
	3087V	1912	Albert Crawley	Song - The Minstrel Boy	-
18	2485P	1910	Royal Military Band	Selection - Chocolate Soldier pt.1	Winner 2037
	2486Q	1910	Royal Military Band	Selection - Chocolate Soldier pt.2	Winner 2037
42	98B	1912	Pipe-Major Forsyth	Bagpipe - Cock'O the North	Winner 2150
	225A	1912	H.Merrylees	Song - Just a Wee Dock and Doris	Winner 2112
46	-	-	Oakley,Opferman & Kirkby	Descriptive - The Buskers	Winner 2124
	-	-	Kirkby & Oakley?	Ragtime Medley?	Winner 2124?
51	223J & H	1912	Robert Carr	Ballad - come sing to me	Winner 2111
	224N	1912	Miss Vera Moore	Song - My Hero - Chocolate Soldier	Winner 2111
53	423R	1912	J.Wallis	Song - Your eyes say remember, though your lips say forget.	Winner 2213
	424Q	1912	H. Marchmont	Song - Only a faded Rose	Winner 2213
54	3301R	1912	Bransby Williams	Talking - The Street Watchman	Winner 2234
	464Z	1912	Bransby Williams	Talking - The same old game	Winner 2234
55	2456E	1910	Alexander Prince	Concertina Solo - Hornpipe Melody	Winner 2167
	334Q	1912	Alexander Prince	Concertina Solo - Woodland Flowers	Winner 2167
57	309D	1912	C.Penrose	Comic - I tried to keep from laughing	Winner 2155
	310A	1912	C.Penrose	Comic -He'd a funny way with him	Winner 2155
67	85N	-	W.W.Whitlock [2]	Bell Solo - Dainty Daisy Dimple	Winner 2044
	86K	-	W.W.Whitlock [2]	Bell Solo - The Skaters' Waltz	Winner 2044
71	203J	1912	Stanley Kirkby	Comic - Johsu-ah	Winner 2101/2
	402B	1912	Jack Charman	Song - Oh you beautiful Doll	Winner 2202
88	514V	1913	Royal Court Orchestra	Viel Dance - Mystic Beauty	Winner 2260
	515A	1913	Royal Court Orchestra	Love Dance from "Madame Sherry"	Winner 2260
96	449R	1912	Christchurch Quartet [3]	While Shepherds Watched	Winner 2227
	451Y	1912	Christchurch Quartet [3]	Christians Awake	Winner 2227
113	3644V	1913	Alfred Kastner & A. Fransella	Harp & Flute - Serenade	Velvet Face
	3646V	1913	Alfred Kastner & A. Fransella	Harp & Flute - The Swan	Velvet Face
121	824B	1913	Ted Dewar	Bell Solo - Shepherds Gavotte	Winner 2415
	3502V	1913	Ted Dewar	Bell Solo - Sunbeams	Velvet Face
127	2800A	1911	Robert Evans	Song - Parted	-
	865A	1913	Robert Evans & Chorus	Come where my love lies dreaming	Winner 2435

HERALD

Label Type 2

The words "GRAMOPHONE RECORD" appear one either side of the central top panel. New Catalogue series.

1023	41257	Little Tich	Song - The Dentist	Beka?
	41280	Little Tich	Song - The Zookeeper	Beka?
1044	41584	Goldin	Comic - See what Percy picked up in the Park	Beka?
	41585	Goldin	Comic - I don't care if the Mormons	Beka?

MINSTREL

BRIGHTEST, SMOOTHEST, SWEETEST AND BEST . MINSTREL GRAMOPHONE CO., MAKERS OF MUSIC & MIRTH

Label Type 1

Cat.No.	Matrix	Year	Artist	Title	Original Issue
3	2804E	1911	Mme. Jean Brola	Song - The last rose of summer	Bell Disc?
	2807V	1911	Mme. Jean Brola	Song - Home sweet home	Bell Disc?
4	350Q	1912	Belgravia Choir	Miserere - Trovatore	Winner 2175
	2558A	1913	Wilfrid Virgo & Edna May	Venetian Songs	Winner 2435
5	-	-	Schumann Quartet	Titl's Serenade	Winner 2106
	-	-	Schumann Quartet?	Braga's Serenade	Winner 2106
10	227D	1912	Jack Charman w.Banjo acc.	Song - Mandys Wedding	Winner 2113 [4]
	426K	1912	Jack Charman	I'm going back to Dixie	Winner 2215
12	490C	1912	Royal Guards Band	Popular Ragtimes 1	Winner 2248 [5]
∞	491W	1912	Royal Guards Band	Popular Ragtimes 2	Winner 2248 [6]
13	193W	1912	H.M.Royal Artillery Band	Carmen Selection 1	Winner 2096 [7]
	194W	1912	H.M.Royal Artillery Band	Carmen selection 2	Winner 2096 [8]
15	2573N	1910	Edna May	Jewel Spong - Faust	-
	2773W	1911	Edna May	Flower Song - Faust	-
16	2941N	1911	Edna Vine & M.Brewer	Song w. Flute - The Nightingale	-
	2943V	1911	Edna Vine & M Brewer	Song w. Flute - Songster's Awakening	-
22	748C	1913	Arthur Lennard	Comic - Upsey Daisy	Winner 2377
	827B	1913	Arthur Lennard	Comic - In Dreamland	Winner 2416
23	2685	1913	G.H.Chigwin	Song - The Blind Boy	-
	2153-1	1912	G.H.Chigwin	Song - My Fiddle is my Sweetheart	Winner 2194
24	2197H	1912	Descriptive	March past of the Brigade	Winner 2041
	138M	1912	King Edward's Horse Band	Boys of the Old Brigade	Winner 2068
29	3000B	-	Royal Court Orchestra	Two Step - The Glad Eye	-
	3306B	-	Royal Military Band	Schottische - The Night of the Party	-
38	3278B	1912	John Lloyd	Song - Good-bye, Sweetheart, Good-bye	-
	3277V	1913	John Lloyd	Song - The Anchor's Weighed	Winner 2359
42	3419V	1913	Belgravia Quartette	The Dear Little Shmrock	Winner 2532
	3421A	1913	Belgravia Quartette	Silver Threads among the Gold	Winner 2532
49	383L	1913	Band of King Edward's Horse	Mikado selections 1	Winner 2192 [9]
	384N	1913	Band of King Edward's Horse	Mikado selections 2	Winner 2192 [10]
53	2663B	1911	Royal Court Orchestra	In the Shadows	Winner 2027 [11]
	53N	"	" " "	" " "	" " "
	2882D	1912	Royal Court Orchestra	Intermezzo - Hearts & Flowers	Winner 2166
	331B	"	" " "	" " "	" "
54	813X	1913	Anderson Nicol	Song - Somewhere a voice is calling	Winner 2409
∞	3326W	1912	Anderson Nicol	Song - Sound an Alarm	-
58	488A	-	Miller and Harvey	Duet - There's a Girl in Havanna	Winner 2246 [12]
	502B	-	Miller and Harvey	Duet - Take ma Finger Tips, Malinda	Winner 2254 [13]
60	3225Q	1913	Royal Guards Band	March - Washington Greys	-
	330R	1912	Royal Guards Band	A Cavalry Charge	-
Label Type 2					
2004	67183	-	Billy Williams	Comic - Father Papered the Parlor	Favorite 332
	67184	-	Billy Williams	Comic - Here We Are Again	Favorite 332

Notes:

- [1] On the Winner label the band is shown as H.M. Scotts Guards
- [2] On the Winner label Whitlock is shown as being accompanied with an orchestra.
- [3] On the Winner label the artists shown are the Belgravia Choir.
- [4] On the Winner label the artists shown are Stanley Kirkby & Olly Oakley.
- [5/6] On the Winner label the band shown is the Winner Ragtime Band.
- [7/8] On the Winner label the band shown is the London Regimental Band.
- [9/10] On the Winner label the band shown is the Royal Military Band
- [11] On the Winner label the band shown is the Royal Military Band
- [12/13] On the Winner label the artists are named H.Cove & T.Jackson.

*The author would welcome additions to this catalogue.
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OUR COVER STORY

As most of you will probably know, your editor is not prone to making hasty decisions - especially when it involves lots of money and a flight to the other side of the world. But all that went out the window when I read in a Magic Lantern publication that there was going to be a three-day conference in mid July in Sheffield, England called VISUAL DELIGHTS. I discovered that there were going to be papers on Edwardian Postcards, Silent Films and other temptations led me like a shot to my travel agent to see if they could get me in and out of England via Manchester - Sheffield being a short train journey from the airport.

The conference which was held at the University was well run and attended by about 90 delegates. What really grabbed me by the short and curlies was a day trip to Holmfirth, where the TV series *The Last of the Summer Wine* was shot. Besides my interest in seeing all the locations where this enchanting series was made, I wanted to pay homage to a firm which worked out of Holmfirth called Bamforth's. They produced sets of magic lantern slides and postcards which are top of their range - if you into that sort of thing. This was the icing on the cake for me!

Well on the last day of the conference, I got talking to a fellow delgate who told me he collected 78rpm speech recordings. He advised me to alter my travel plans back to make my way on foot from the Southport Railway Station to a very Dickensian part of Southport where I found "The 78 Record Exchange". Fronting up to the owner I asked if he had any Rosina Buckman records! 30 minutes later I left the proud owner of five new titles on original 78s for my collection. While they cost far more than I'd care to remember £5 - £7, I did have my wits about me and dutifully asked if I could look through his Páthe and Edison Diamond Disc holdings. Páthe drew a blank but a very nice Richard Martin - a bass singing Schubert's 'The Wanderer' in English on an Edison disc.

Engaging the owner in conversation after our transaction, I discovered he'd been in the business of selling 78 since 1957. If anyone in our group has a hankering to take over his operation, I'm sure he'd welcome inquiries. The stock is well set out and although I was the only customer during the time I was in the shop, I'm sure the stock of machines and records is a good investment. Even brown paper record packets have a place in his wares. I noted with some amusement, he places £2 - £3 on those which have interesting illustrations or graphics. A new deviation into collecting 78s as far as I'm concerned.

THE REASON WHY

(an explanation for a special gathering at *Time Cinema* Saturday 10th August 2002)

As one whose fascination with Edison's phonographs and recordings goes back 45 years, I felt it appropriate that some recognition of Thomas Alva Edison's achievements in recording the first stanza/verse of "Mary had a little lamb" on the 12th of August 1877, should be celebrated in some fashion. After all 125 years of recorded sound is something to ponder in an age where invention come and go unnoticed.

Through my position as editor of the *G&T Gazette* - for our group I announced my intention stage a special meeting to celebrate the occasion. As I began to formulate a programme, I widened the event to embrace the other Edison invention which had a great impact in the field of home entertainments.

Digging deeply into a lifetime accumulation of semi forgotten appliances in my shed, I produced an Edison Home Kinetoscope projector and films of about 1912 vintage. After some wizardry by John Turnbull and friends in Napier, it was made to perform perfectly, showing a ten minute film by Edison called "Betty's Buttons."

Turning to the audio segment of the programme, I then asked my long time friend Michael Woolf to decipher of facts and fiction surrounding the excitements which greeted Edison's invention in 1877. With some visuals and audio clips he delivered an introduction that emphasised the ability of how Edison's inventions were developed and made available for the public at large.

Rod Cornelius of Auckland, explained how Edison advertised his phonograph and concluded his short talk with a repeat performance by John Turnbull reciting "Mary had a little lamb", using vintage equipment.

Finally, before committing all the above to perform I had the task of finding a venue for all this to take place. Fortunately I didn't have to go far for this to be accomplished. As my friend John Bell reminds me from time to time, I once attempted to teach him art at the old Wellington Technical College. This obviously left a deep impression on him which has materialised in the form of this wonderful enterprise called TIME CINEMA.

Two performances were given to full houses



Herald Label Type 1 & 2 Deep Green and Gold.(note the placement of words GRAMOPHONE RECORD)



Seals: Left Vermilion off POPULAR.. Right Blue off MINSTREL Type 2.



Minstrel Label Type 1 & 2 Maroon and Gold (note the insertion of the MADE ABROAD under the word RECORD)