
G&T GAZETTE

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In December 1935 THE GRAMOPHONE asked a number of prominent artists to nominate their best recordings. Here is a selection along with their picks.

ADRIAN BOULT

You have asked a very difficult question. I am inclined to think, though perhaps you will be rather shocked, the fourth side of our Tragic Overture, which includes three of the Brahms Hungarian Dances, contains some very slick rubato playing which I hope experts will think in keeping with the style of the Dances.

H.M.V. DB 1804. Of bigger stuff, I am inclined to think that the Schubert C major Symphony which we did recently under conditions of extraordinary pressure (regarding time) come out pretty well in the circumstances **H.M.V. DB 2415-20** .

GEORGE BAKER

The first part of the question is difficult for me to answer, because I have made such a vast number of records of almost every conceivable type of song. However, now you demand an answer, at the point of the pistol, I must make up my mind and with all possible speed, but I claim the right to answer the question as I like. In other words, I shall mention two " best records " songs of widely different character.

1. The Lord Chancellor's Song from Act II of *Iolanthe* by Gilbert and Sullivan. **H.M.V. D 1704.** No. 2. -The Hums of Pooh, by A. A. Milne and H. Fraser-Simson. **H.M.V. B 3386-8.** Why? In both records I believe I have achieved 'What I set out to do, i.e., good tone and Phrasing, subtle inflections, clean diction,

and that inscrutable something that seems to make the record spring to life. In the case of No. 1 the clean diction is the more remarkable because the song is sung at a tremendous pace. I am hoping to go down to fame as having made one of the best diction records in existence. That is my hope, but what will be the verdict of my judges ? Ah!

HARRIET COHEN

For sentimental reasons and also because I think they are lovely records, I place Elgar's Quintet very high up. When I say sentimental reasons, it is because he wished me to do it above everybody else, and I had a note from him and a few words written on his death-bed, thanking me for my interpretation, and after his death the King and Queen accepted an album of these records. So you see, they mean terribly much to me. **H.M.V. DB 2094-7.**

GRACIE FIELDS

You have given me a very difficult question to answer as I cannot say that I prefer any one record more than another. I have always put my heart and soul into my work. I believe the public like my record *When I Grow Too Old to Dream* **Rex 8557.** As you know, I am extremely

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EDITORIAL

I was pleased to receive two supportive submissions for this issue of the *G&T Gazette*, one is from Peter Fry and the other from David Morriss. It helps me greatly to have contributions of this sort. I'm sure we can expect more interesting items from others as time goes by.

Things have been very quiet on the record collecting front. The last addition to my collection was a Russian 3 LP set of *La Traviata*, with Ivan Kovlovsky (Alfredo), E. Gribova (Flora), I. Manshavin (Marquis), K. Tarekhin (Doctor) and N. Nelina (Annina). Shumskaja (Violetta), Paval Lisitsian (Giorgio Germont), A. Yakhontov (Baron), Y. Filin (Gastone), E. Gribova (Flora, I. Manshavin (Marquis), with the USSR Acad. Ch. & Orch. conducted by A. Orlov. It was recorded in 1961. I found it in a second hand bookshop in Petone and for \$5 it has been a very useful addition to my collection as I am very weak in sets like this from the former Communist bloc.

A useful addition to my library was a book from the recycling shop at the Porirua tip which cost me 50 cents. Its a large format picture

book on Richard Strauss. The lesson from these two purchases is that you don't have to go to extremes (meaning overseas) for gems of this sort.

Other contributions to this edition of the *G&T Gazette* take the form of a document which came to me from a dream-time sequence and some cartoons from that wonderful standby, my often plundered volumes of the *The Gramophone*. It's a wonder that no one else seems to use this publication as frequently as I do.

I notice that my recently discovered pundit from these files on things I hold dear like the Ballads of Carl Loewe and the recordings of Heinrich Schlusnus, has done two further articles which I may use in the future to fill the gaps in these columns. They concern the songs of Richard Strauss and the recordings of Enrico Caruso. The Caruso is spread over four issues of the gramophone and would pre-date the Freeston/Drummond book by 25 years. In fact as I took this book down from my shelves to check the details, I see that the authors do credit Mr. Robt. W.F. Potter's articles in their preface.

A few days ago after a delicious lunch, I was playing one of my favourite recordings, (Leo Slezak's Tom der Reimer) when I felt the urge to have a little nap. It wasn't long before I drowsed off and imagined I was in heaven. Before I could look up all my singers from the past, an old man approached me and thrust a piece of paper in my hand saying, "I've been wanting to give you this for some time. Don't read it now, but when you get back, give it some thought"! When I woke up there was nothing in my hand. But I'd cheated on my mysterious friend and had read its contents and this is what it said.



**Rules for hosting a Scratchy Record Session,
written and postulated by P.G.Hurst and the "Morte Gramofile Group"
c/o P.O. Box 78, Celestial Heaven.**

Rule No.1 Never prepare a programme which exceeds two hours running time (including intervals) which usually involves anything from 18 records maximum of mixed 10-12 inch 78rpm discs or the same amount of playing time in LPs, CDs, or DVDs..

Rule no.2 In preparing your programme never assume you are repeating something which has already been played before by another member. Experience has taught us that we like hearing the same aria or excerpt over and over again. If you can put a new twist on it, then well and good. Give it a try!

Rule no.3 Then again, don't go over the top and play items which are esoteric to a point that no one can comprehend your interest or reason for a particular item.

Rule no.4 If you need to explain an item, then don't hesitate to state the obvious like (a) who is it, (b) what is it, (c) and why you are playing it. The last being the most important.

Rule no.5 Don't be disappointed if there is a lack of interest from your audience as it reacts to one of your feature items. The reason for this might be for a variety of reasons. They are listed below.

- A Everyone is asleep.
- B You've presented it badly.
- C Musically it's beyond the groups comprehension.
- D You've served too much wine.
- E Don't be despondent. Try it again a few years later!

Rule no.6 Be prepared to suffer from chit chat and discussion. If this happens a lot, then go with the flow. Basically it means everyone is enjoying themselves. Involvement of this sort of thing is important and in time you will learn how to manage it - especially when you're bursting to put on the next item. A look or nod to a senior member will alert them to the problems and they will assist you in restoring order!

Rule no.7 Don't bore your guests with a recitation from an encyclopaedia. If you have miles of information and would like to share your knowledge with others, think how you might do it subtly. Set baited questions! Don't spill the beans all at once! Pause and let others chip in with the bits they know. You'll find it works like a charm.

Rule no.8 The second most important rule governing Scratchy Record Meetings is the socialising aspect. Make sure you have food and wine that will tempt them to stay on after you've concluded your programme. If you have a 2pm start and your programme ends around 4pm, then you've done well!

Rule no.9 Finally, make mental notes as you go through your programme. Record what went well or what went down like a damp squid! Recall and remember these things as you prepare your next programme.

Rule no.10 Equipment - Test run everything you intend to use during your programme. If you haven't played a particular recording for some time, give it a good clean. Dust, dirt and mildew can often mar a performance!

Finally producing a programme or playing list. If you can put down on paper the sequence of your programme, well and good. This help others who may forget the fact that you've played something they had in mind. As well, your programme could become a piece of history, when future generation study our archives to see what was favoured in our group.

Here are the latest and most up-to-date definitions of some traditional musical terms,

submitted by Peter Fry

ALLREGRETTO

When you're 160 measures into the piece and realize you took too fast a tempo.

ANGUS DEI

To play with a-divinely beefy tone.

A PATELLA

Accompanied by knee-slapping.

APPOLOGGIATURRA

A composition that you regret -playing.

APPROXIMATURA

A series of notes not intended by the composer, yet played with an "I meant to do that" attitude.

APPROXIMENTO

A musical entrance that is somewhere in the vicinity of the correct pitch.

CACOPHANY

A composition incorporating many people with chest colds.

CORAL SYMPHONY

A large, multi-movement work from Beethoven's Caribbean Period.

DILL PICCOLINI

An exceedingly small wind instrument that plays only sour notes.

FERMANTRA

A note held over and over and over and over and. . . .

FERMOOTA

A note of dubious value held for indefinite length.

FIDDLER CRABS

Grumpy string players.

FLUTE FLIES

Those tiny mosquitoes that bother musicians or, outboo gigs.

FRUGALHORN

A sensible and inexpensive brass instrument.

GAUL BLATTER

A French horn player.

GREGORIAN CHAMP

The title bestowed upon the monk who can hold a note the longest.

GROUND HOG

Someone who takes control of the repeated bass line and wont let anyone else play it.

PLACEBO DOMINGO

A faux tenor.

SCHMALZANDO

A sudden burst of music from the Guy Lombardo band.

THE RIGHT OF STRINGS

Manifesto of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Violists.



One of the Cantankerous Correspondents

SPRIT ZICATO

An indication to string instruments to produce a bright and bubbly sound

TEMPO TANTRUM

What an elementary school orchestra is having when it's not following the conductor.

TROUBLE CLEF

Any clef one can't read: e.g., alto clef for pianists.

VESUVIOSO

An indication to build up to a fiery conclusion.

VIBRATTO

Child prodigy son of the concertmaster.

AN-DANTE

A tempo that's infernally slow.

ANTIPHONAL

Referring to the prohibition of cell phones in the concert hall.

BAR LINE

What musicians form after the concert.

BASSO CONTINUO

When musicians are still fishing long after the legal season has ended.

BEN SOSTENUTO

First cousin of the second trombonist.

CADENZA

Something that happens when you forget what the composer wrote.

CANTABILE

To achieve a complaining sound, as if you have a sour stomach.

COL LEGNO

An indication to cellists to hold on tight with their lower extremities.

CON SORDINO

An indication to string players to bow in a slashing, rapier motion.

ESPRESSIVO

Used to indicate permission to take a coffee break.

LIST ESSO TEMPO

An indication to play listlessly (e.g., as if you don't care)

MAESTRO

A person who, standing in front of the orchestra and/or chorus, is able to follow them precisely.

OPERA BUFFFA

Musical stage production performed by nudists.



fond of children and I am sure everybody will enjoy listening to my record *Safety First for Children*, which is to be issued shortly.

REGINALD DIXON

In my opinion my best record is Dixon Hits No. 3. **Rex 8615**. I enjoyed "making the arrangements of my signature tune, *Beside the Seaside* in Other Lands, as I thought it would be played in other countries.

STANLEY HOLLOWAY

From a singing point of view, the best record I have made is *The Mimus* and I, because it was my first attempt and I did not know the many pitfalls that lie before a singer when endeavouring to get a faithful reproduction of the voice on "wax." **H.M.V. B 1446** (now withdrawn from the catalogue). Old Sam the best talking one, because it paved the way for all the others and started a vogue. **Columbia DX 168**.

RONALD FRANKAU

It is a difficult question to select the best out of my twenty-five recordings. My favourite record ought to be *They Get a Much Better Time When They're Naughty*, for the reason that it is my biggest seller. **Parlophone R1114**. Actually, I prefer *Way Out in the Blue* because it has an atmosphere, as my other record *Let's Go Wild* had.

Parlophone R 1982. It isn't just me singing or putting over a number. I am writing this, however, before my best record is out; *I'd Rather be a Savage* beats both the other two of the same genre, in my opinion, especially as I am accompanied by one of the best rhythm bands. **Parlophone R2138**.

LESLIE SARONY

It is very difficult for me to say which is the best record I have made, as I have done so many and cannot remember half of them. If you were to ask me which records I liked best in recent times, I should be inclined to say *My Old Dog* and *Bashful Tom*. The former, because I felt the number, and the

latter because it gave me an opportunity of getting away from the usual jazzy comedy song, and was, to my mind, a welcome change by virtue of its vocal and melodious value, while still retaining a tinge of domestic comedy. **Rex 8446** and **8309**.

HENRY HALL

The record which appeals to me most of all is that of *April in Paris*. It is associated with two happy, memories-for one thing, I brought the tune back from America after my first holiday visit there, and it reminds me of another holiday: a very happy April in -Paris. Incidentally, it is the kind of tune that I like, played in the style that I like for my band, and with the kind of recording that I like. **Columbia C 13705**.

BERT AMBROSE

I consider my best record to be I'm on a *See Saw*, **Decca F 5377**, because it is perfectly played, perfectly recorded, and a perfect arrangement.

ROY FOX

I consider *Rhapsody in Blue* to be the best record I have ever made. It is, in my opinion, a very fine performance, especially in view of the comparative smallness of my band. **Regal Zonophone MR 957**.

BILLY COTTON

I consider my best record is *Truckin*. **Decca F5704**. It is a good number to play, it is the first record to introduce my new discovery, Little Mary Lee, and also it, introduces a new dance step which is likely to be popular.

JACK PAYNE

The record I like better than any other is my *Bolero* made for **Columbia. DX273**. It is difficult for me to explain why I like this best, but I think it is well played and is "something different.". You will remember that I was the first to introduce, the, *Bolero* in its condensed " form. It was the most popular piece of music I ever broadcast. I

got more requests for this than such numbers as *Fire, Fire, Fire* and *Pat on the Back*, and it amazed me that the British listening public appreciated this kind of music

HARRY ROY

I personally consider that *South American Joe* is one of the finest numbers we have ever made. Firstly, the number is typically our style, to my mind my band plays it marvellously, the arrangement is brilliant, and the vocal ideal for my type of singing. I consider it a fine all-round record, which I think is proved by the knowledge that it is one of our biggest sellers. **Parlophone F207.**

NAT GONELLA

You have asked me very difficult question, but I think, the Medley record which includes *Georgia Trumpet, Dinah, Let him Live, Oh, Monah, and Sing* wants some beating. The reason I say so is that the six numbers mentioned have been my greatest successes during my broadcasting career. **Parlophone R 1982.**

CHARLIE KUNZ

My first Piano Medley still remains a high light amongst the records I have made, but technically I consider my best recording is my *Piano Medley R.10. Rex 8651.*

JOHN BARBIROLI

I think in many ways one of my most successful records is the Brindisi from Verdi's *Otello* with Inghilleri, Dua, Cilla, Covent Garden Chorus; and Orchestra. **H.M.V. D 1698.** Not an easy piece to record because of the number of parts, the speed at which it moves, and the clarity it is essential to maintain, without loss of vitality. The recorders served me magnificently that day (it was made in large Queen's Hall) and I am conceited or just normal enough to derive the greatest enjoyment from listening to this record.

EILEEN JOYCE

This is going to be a battle between my fingers and my brain : the fingers vote for the *Etude, in A flat*, by Schlozer **Parlophone E 11237**, my first record, because they consider it rather brilliant, and the brain plumps for the *Rhapsodie in E flat*, by Brahms, thinking it not too badly interpreted. **Parlophone E 11259.** Both control my pen, so that cannot decide, and I dare not do so myself, as either could let me down at my next recording. What is to be done ?

ESSIE ACKLAND

Listening to a reproduction of your own voice for the first time is a thrill, but as this record, *Poor Man's Garden and Love's Old Sweet Song*, was made at St. Margaret's, Westminster, in surroundings steeped in such great tradition that every Australian is taught to revere from childhood, and the knowledge that my own dear ones and friends, so many thousands of miles away, would be able to hear me in their own homes, has, made this record (through sentimental reasons) my favourite. **H.M.V. C 1410.**

ALBERT SANDLER

My favourite record is *Stindchen*, by Heykens. **Columbia DB 469.** This number was unknown and nobody would give it a trial. I did, and broadcast it, and received over 1,000 letters of appreciation after that broadcast. Then I made a record of it and have sold over 200,000 copies of this record. I like this record best for its great popularity both with my gramophone and wireless public. It has been such a success that I have adopted this number as my signature tune on the halls. I have also included this number in a record called *Sandler's Serenades.*

FRANK TITTERTON

I am afraid I do not possess a " best record " ! Every record I make falls short of
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Peter Hoar Peter Hoar (peter.hoar@aut.ac.nz) 'In me are sounds embalmed': recordings, music and listening in New Zealand 1879-1939.

My research is into the ways people listened to music in New Zealand. The rapid diffusion of the phonograph, gramophone and radio changed the modes of musical production, distribution and consumption. New cultural hierarchies emerged along with new genres of music such as Jazz and Country. This period saw major realignments of social structures, national identities and cultural allegiances, Recorded music was first heard in New Zealand in 1879. It was regarded as a wonderful novelty. By 1939 gramophones and radios were common household items. There was a complex interplay between these technologies and the ideologies that underlay the social constructions of taste, leisure and behaviour both public and private. The technologies associated with recorded sound played a key role in changes in the performance, repertoire and consumption of music as it became a culture industry the 'industry of human happiness' as the recording industry likes to describe itself. These changes are significant for what they reveal about the ways New Zealanders saw themselves in relation to each other and the world. And if anyone has any wax cylinders, acetates or interesting 78 rpm records I would be interested to see them.

David Morriss gleaned this information off the internet.

what I would like it to be and I hope to do better next time. An *English Rose* from Merrie England " seems to be a " best seller," so I suppose the public consider that my best record. **Decca F 5530.**

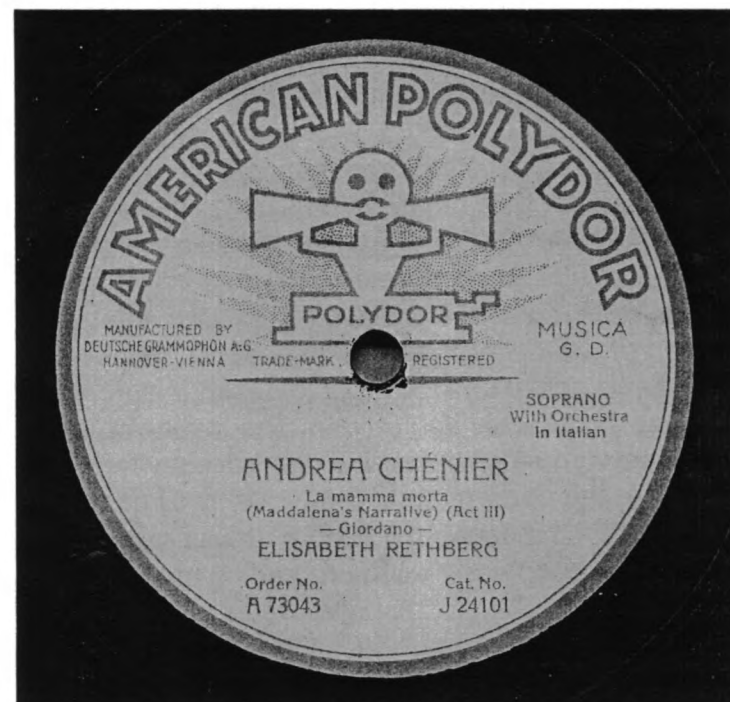
NORMAN LONG

It is hard to select one particular record, but I suppose *Firty Fousand Quid* would be about my favourite. It is humorous and at the same time contains some good sound philosophy. **Columbia DB 978.** The sequel

to this, *Them days is gorn*, promises to be better still. **Columbia FB 1191.**

BERTHA WILLMOTT

The best record I have made is quite a recent one, *Love is Everywhere* and *Look Up and Laugh*. I particularly like this one as they are two nicely contrasted numbers, a thing I always aim for in my ordinary work ; also the accompaniment by R. W. Hartley is so good. **Rex 8600.**



One interesting label to come from Ray Hedges collection was this American label Polydor. It has gold lettering on a very pale green label. Before Ray owned it, a collector who inscribed his own catalogue number in blue black ink with the prefix letters VS marked the reverse, (Mimi's aria from La Boheme) VS 12723, which I take to be his 723rd 12 inch recording. What a collection this must have been! Sadly Ray could not recall anything about this type of marking or who it was that made it.

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