

FOR THE RECORD

By Michael Biel

Entries represent information gleaned from a number of sources and do not represent endorsement by ARSC but are chosen at the discretion of this columnist. Additionally, the opinions stated here are those of this columnist and do not necessarily represent those of ARSC (or of anybody else, for that matter!)

PART 1 CENTENNIAL OF RECORDED SOUND

Because this is being written prior to the appearance in print of the earlier installment of this department, I am holding off on citing any further publications concerning the 100th anniversary of the phonograph in 1977 until all of you readers tell me which ones I missed the last time. Instead, I want to take a little space to place the year 1977 in perspective.

Anticipation is hardly a strong enough word for the feelings collectors and archivists held for the year 1977. This was to be the year of the phonograph. A milestone and also a year filled with historical celebrations. Now that it is over, I have to look back on it with mixed emotions. In some ways it could not have been better. The postage stamp design was a little too slap-dash for the historians among us, but we were more than compensated by the wonderful publications outlined in my last column and by all of the meetings we could attend: ARSC at Edison National Historic Site, the lawn party at Glenmont, the conferences at the Royal Scottish Museum, Syracuse University, the British Institute of Recorded Sound, Brooklyn College; the exhibitions at the Library of Congress, Rodgers and Hammerstein Library, Canadian National Exhibition, and the AES convention in New York. All of these were what made the year well worth the wait.

But was it worth it? I know this sounds strange, but when you boil everything down to pluses and minuses, this year comes out as a loss. A big loss. For, although it all would have happened anyway--centennial or no centennial--we have all suffered terribly irreconcilable losses in 1977. No matter what your interest in recorded sound is--spoken word, classical music, jazz, popular music, rock, Broadway shows, technical advances, or even the business aspect--death claimed one of your favorites, one of your heroes, in 1977. Somehow the fates seemed to decree that in the year of the 100th anniversary of the invention of the phonograph many of those who had played the biggest part in the phonograph's recent history would depart. This was not a usual year, these losses are far greater than any other single year that I could recall. I doubt we will have another like it.

Leopold Stokowski was the first truly important conductor to record with a major American symphony orchestra (for Victor in 1917, shortly after Victor recorded the Boston Symphony Orchestra with the German conductor

Karl Muck). In the sixty years that followed, Stokowski was in the forefront of the development of improved sonics in recording--electrical recording of orchestras, stereophonic sound, orchestral balance, magnetic recording, etc. His conducting was not easy to overlook--you either loved it or hated it--but he dominated the music scene for over half of the life of the phonograph.

America will never seem the same without Bing Crosby. While it was no longer true that a second would not go by without a Bing Crosby record being played on radio somewhere in the world, his career was still a world-wide phenomenon. The Decca records he had made thirty years earlier still sold (when MCA retained them in their abbreviated "catalogue") while the British branch of United Artists was supplying him with an outlet for his newest creative efforts. He was still going strong fifty years after the jazz days with Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys, not just a memory but still a powerful and important entertainer.

Most of us measure the eras in popular music through the careers of Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra (whose mother was killed in an airplane crash in 1977) and Elvis Presley. Presley's influence on music and life in America was dramatic--and traumatic, to some. The musical revolution of the mid-1950's would have come anyway, but Elvis the Pelvis has had a lasting effect on the world, whether you like it or not. By early 1978 RCA was said to have had gross sales of \$135 million on Elvis Presley recordings since his death. Here too, was a career that had faded out only to emerge just as strong at his death as it had ever been.

We collectors and archivists would not have any records to collect and "archive" if it were not for the record companies and the executives that run them. Most collectors have few kind words for record company executives because they are forever deleting the most important records from their catalogue. An exception was Goddard Lieberman, the guiding force behind Columbia during most of the LP era. He himself produced most of the truly important Broadway original cast and revival recordings on his label, and instituted the famed Legacy series, and the Literary Series of Distinguished Authors. What is more important, he had a true understanding of the responsibility of a major recording company to keep important recordings in their catalogue. His far-seeing policy was somewhat spoiled during the infamous Clive Davis Era, but the current Columbia Collectors Series--expensive as it is--has saved many a library from having big holes in its collections. Many members of the record industry have said that Goddard Lieberman was their source of inspiration, and we can only hope that in his absence the major companies be guided by his disciples and his principles.

Within twelve hours of the 100th anniversary of Edison's "Mary had a little lamb . . ." the father of the long playing record was killed in a traffic accident on one of the most beautiful--but most dangerous--of the highways in the New York City area. Peter C. Goldmark developed the modern LP out of an inventive genius to do things without paying heed to the previous failures of others when doing the same thing. (Even

microgroove was not a new invention--the Bell Labs recording ledger shows the use of an .001 stylus at 33 1/3 r.p.m. as far back as March 21, 1930. The master of one of these records still exists in Columbia's vault!) Aided by high quality 16-inch safety masters to dub from, Goldmark's LP came complete with "the fuzz of the bow" and low cost turntable attachments made by Philco--and a marketing insight that RCA Victor did not have when they attempted the same thing in 1931. But he was more interested in bigger things, even beyond his scanning-disc color TV system that was adapted for live color lunar TV. He was concerned with how technology was changing our society and our lives. While these influences were not always for the better, he was deeply involved with putting technology to positive uses at the time of his death. Indeed, this was the subject he spoke on at a phonograph centenary conference at Syracuse University a month before his death--not the LP.

Music can be glamorous, and Maria Callas seemed to be the most successful example. She fit well with the bejeweled opera-going set, and her artistry in her prime was unsurpassed. Like Stokowski, she always evoked strong feelings among the critics. She was either loved or hated, but unfortunately too many of the comments were colored by the observers' opinions of her temperament and her private life.

Such also was the fate in later life of Charlie Chaplin, the master of the silent movie comedy. He was loved as a young and an old man, but the years in the 1940's and 1950's were dark indeed. Just in case you were wondering why Chaplin of the silent movies is being honored here, he is not entirely unrepresented on phonograph records. His autograph appears in a rare military band record he conducted on a 5-inch Emerson, and he later conducted a late acoustical Brunswick record with Abe Lyman's Orchestra. The latter record is interesting only for Chaplin's name on the label--the recording and his compositions are only average. While these records are rare, I believe Chaplin's most lasting phonographic legacy will be the seemingly endless supply of his Decca soundtrack LP of "A Countess from Hong Kong" which will probably live forever in the bargain bins and dump piles of your favorite discount store.

If vocal comedy was more your cup of tea, then you too lost some of your favorites. Groucho Marx was part of one of the greatest comedy teams to hit Broadway and Hollywood, and it is with his brothers that he is available on movie and broadcast recordings. (Gummo Marx also died in 1977.) But Groucho also recorded on his own, and these rare discs are among the most understatedly riotous records ever recorded. His "The Funniest Song In The World" on Young People's Records YPR 719 is a true classic. It could possibly be the most musically complex record ever made for two-to-five-year-olds, in addition to having a superb message of love and toleration for others who are different from you. It was 1949 and within a few years this liberal viewpoint and Young People's Records itself would come under attack as a "Communist Plot against our youth." Groucho went untouched by this, but Zero Mostel was one of many who became a victim of the blacklist. Happily he attained the success he deserved in the 1960's and his marvelous voice enhances such albums as

"The Producers," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and the best (and first) cast album of "Fiddler on the Roof." Both Mostel and Groucho had an affinity for the songs of Harry Ruby, and each of them made their own album of Ruby's songs. Mostel's is on Vanguard as "Songs My Mother Never Sang," while you have to go to England for the Ace of Hearts reissue of Groucho's American Decca's which include Ruby songs.

While we are on the subject of magnificent voices, (I brought that up in reference to Zero Mostel) we lost three of the most fascinating that were ever created. Cyril Ritchard's lilting tones were the highlight of a 1950's childhood--could there be any other Captain Hook? (No, not even Boris Karloff or Danny Kaye.) When Ritchard spoke it was with a voice that could melt butter. His was totally unique. I never heard any imitator ever attempt to duplicate it. However, every imitator does Eddie "Rochester" Anderson and Andy Devine. These two delightful men both had sparkling personalities and gravel voices that would break frozen butter. Shatter it into little pieces. And we would love it. If you can remember back that far, Andy Devine would occasionally substitute for Eddie Anderson on Jack Benny's program. It was radio, and a jolly plump white man could take the role normally played by a black man as a servant. And that would be part of the joke. It was probably missed by most Americans at the time, but it was a great laugh at racial stereotypes and prejudices thirty years before "All in the Family." There are a few children's records with Andy Devine, and Eddie Anderson's four sides for Columbia in 1940 are unforgettable. "Waitin' For Jane" is a plaintive cry that tears at your hair while you are trying to hold onto the arms of your chair.

Most of those mentioned in this listing had led full lives before their death in 1977. Some were very, very long, and all were most productive. The following life was tragically short and was really only starting to enrich ours. Freddie Prinze's name should not be included here. It should be in this week's TV Guide, on a Las Vegas marquee, and on more than just one lonely Columbia LP. We have lost a lot of young entertainers, from Rudolph Valentino and Russ Columbo to Janis Joplin and Jim Croce, but Freddie Prinze's death is the most tragic. He made us laugh but it made his life unbearable. It is not fair that it should be so hard on a human being to bring joy to the rest of us.

Thomas Schippers also seems to have been so young. He looked so young--not like we expect conductors to look. E. Power Biggs was not young, but he certainly projected a youthful attitude even when playing a 17th century piece on a 300-year-old organ. He enjoyed what he was doing, at least all the pictures I have ever seen of him project a feeling of pure joy at playing the music. His Pedal Harpsichord albums are a delight, and it is hard not to smile while listening to them. Isn't it wonderful to hear something new in an old common repertoire item? But Biggs was the King of the King of instruments.

Two grand old ladies of the blues left us this year, Ethel Waters and Eva Taylor. Miss Waters had a clear and pure voice that could ring

out strong and true. Superb phrasing that would bring out the true hidden meaning in any song, and an evocative acting style that made us all love her. Eva Taylor was not as well known, but she was the hit of our own convention held earlier in 1977 at the Edison National Historic Site. She was a delight to hear and to talk to, and we'll all miss her. Her's is one of the happier stories of the old timer's who lived long enough to see the younger generations re-discover the talents of the past and to realize that she was not forgotten.

Webley Edwards' name is synonymous with Hawaii, not only with Hawaiian music, but with the culture, history, and bombing of the Islands. He was on the air in Honolulu that morning in 1941, and he was heard again in 1945 as one of the two pool reporters narrating the shipboard surrender of Japan. "Hawaii Calls" was his trademark, and his many albums on Capitol are not the ordinary tourist-trap culture tours.

Sebastian Cabot was a fine actor beyond the roles he was called upon to play on television. While he does not appear on the album from his finest series "Checkmate," he did do an album of poetry readings on MGM of the lyrics of Bob Dylan. The opening selection "Who Killed Davy Moore" is well worth the price of the album. I have not yet come across any records by Alfred Lunt in my collection, but surely he must have recorded some of his many roles during his long career. (I do have his wife's solo recording of Alice Duer Miller's "The White Cliffs of Dover" on RCA Victor.)

Jan Garbor, "The Idol of the Airwaves" died in the phonograph centennial year of 1977 as did composer-arranger Norman Paris. They too had played a part in the history of the phonograph and in the life and culture of the past half century or so. As the year drew to a close on December 31, 1977 there just seemed to be something wrong. With the deaths of Crosby, Presley, Stokowski, Groucho, Lieberson, Chaplin, and all the others, our world would not be the same. But as the seconds were counted down to end this milestone year we were reminded that Ben Grauer would no longer be there to describe the scene in Times Square as he had done for longer than I could remember, and there was a different Lombardo brother leading the band in the Hotel Roosevelt. Guy Lombardo's music has not changed much in fifty years, and I trust it will remain the same for another fifty. His Victor's, Columbia's and Decca's of the twenties, thirties, and forties are not much different from his Capitol's and London's of the fifties, sixties, and seventies--many can be played simultaneously in synchronization. While the live band will continue in the tradition, much as Glenn Miller's and Duke Ellington's have, it is the heritage that all of these departed artists left on their recordings that will sustain their artistry and reputation in the years ahead. This has been a difficult column to write--it is almost spooky how many of the truly great died in 1977--but there is the consolation that, unlike the performers that passed on a century ago before the phonograph (and the motion picture) their work can be preserved intact. That is, if we are careful enough as collectors and archivists to do the job completely and correctly.

PART 2 SOURCES OF UNUSUAL REISSUES

A lot of record collectors in recent years have been anxious to share their favorite records with the world and have gone into business with their own re-issue record labels. There is a vast wealth of material available on these basement and garage labels. Some of it is schlock and is not worth the highly extended vinylite they are pressed on, but the majority is well worth the effort extended to produce it. However there is another effort that must be extended: yours to try to get a copy. Most record stores would not dream of touching this kind of collectors' stuff, and even when they do the distribution of most labels is haphazard. Fortunately there are a number of mail order houses which specialize in handling as many of these records as possible. It is strongly recommended that the catalogues of these houses be retained by collectors and libraries as discographical source material--there's practically no other way to obtain listings of these small labels.

. . . And All That Jazz! P.O. Box 462, Ingram, Texas 78025

Jeff Forsythe, 14 Jason Lane, Mamaroneck, New York 10543

Jazz Etc., P.O. Box 393, Bergenfield, N.J. 07621

Morbros International, Inc., P.O. Box 414202, Miami Beach,
Florida 33141

Oak Lawn Books, Box 2663, Providence, R.I. 02907

(This is also a major source of hard to find discographies and other books about music and records. This is the source you have been looking for since the death of Walter C. Allen.)

Palm Record & Tape Distributors, Inc., 3800 South Ocean Dr.,
Hollywood, Florida 33019

Zim Records, P.O. Box 158, Jericho, New York 11753.

Art Zimmerman specializes mainly in imports.

PART 3 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST SITTING ON MY DESK

No, I'm not going to describe my stapler, typewriter, and scotch tape dispenser. Whenever something of interest comes in it lands in a pile on my desk (which is why I can never find things when I need them--except when writing this column.)

Ada Jones Memorial Collection Discography and Want List.

Milford H. Fargo, 12 Park Circle Drive, Fairport, N.Y. 14450. Milford has compiled a 13-page cylinder list, a 37-page disc list, and a 4-page addenda--all single-spaced typed sheets listing every record Ada Jones is known to have made. It is in numerical order by label and release number with handy symbols to designate the status of the

item in the memorial collection. Matrix numbers and takes are given when known. Ask nicely and Milford will throw in a copy of his two-page biography of Ada.

Chick Bullock Discography Check List. Jerry Valburn, 17 Eva Lane, Plainview, N.Y. 11803. Jerry is starting a Chick Bullock Society and is trying to compile a complete collection of Chick's recordings on tape, as well as complete a disc collection as is possible. A 14-page single-spaced check list by recording date and matrix number lists all of the masters without release numbers and labels. Some of these release numbers can be found on a four-page want list he will supply. We should add that Jerry is intending to give Chick a taped set of all of his records!

"Berliner Records in the Library of Congress" and a tentative list of the Berliner block numbering system to 1899. Compiled by James Smart of the Recorded Sound Section of the Library of Congress for a presentation during the February 1978 ARSC Convention. These two items and Jim's talk appeared to be the result of years of study and research. In reality he only had a little over a month's notice to put together what we all felt was a breathtaking summary of how Berliner records were numbered, released, and sold. Hopefully Jim will have enough of these little booklets to go around. The first is a 24-page booklet and the second is a two-page mimeographed sheet.

"A Subject Guide To the Radio & Television Collection of The Museum of Broadcasting." (as of September 1, 1977) Vol. 1, No. 1, 56+III pp. \$2.50. 1 East 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022.

The Museum of Broadcasting was featured in an article in the last ARSC Journal and in a session at the February 1978 ARSC Conference. This is a computer printout of the alphabetical listing of subject headings giving the accession number and title of each program under each subject. Unfortunately they do not even include the date of the program which makes the listing useless except as a guide to their own collection. While I can be persuaded to go along with their decision to not have a subject category titled "News" (because that would cover just about all non-fiction programs in the collection--see ARSC Journal Vol. IX, No. 2-3, p. 11) there is no rational reason not to have a category of "Newscast." A newscast is a specific form of programming totally unlike documentaries, live coverage of a news event such as an assassination, space launch, bicentennial or peace celebration, inauguration, or speech. A newscast is a newscast and there are no two ways about it. When a newscaster sits there while an announcer says "Here is the News," and the newscaster proceeds to tell us about many totally unrelated events that have happened in the last 24 hours, that is a newscast and must be indexed as such. Newscasts occurred during the complete days of broadcasting in this collection and there is no reason why these should not be indexed just like the soap operas, variety shows, and dramas. There is even no listing for "commentary" or "editorial," two other specific programming formats. And while there is a rather lengthy category for "Drama"

there is no listing for an equally important programming category: Comedy. There were 179 "I Love Lucy" episodes filmed, yet to discover through this catalogue if there is one in the collection the reader has to guess which of these episodes was selected and look up the subject of that episode: "Pregnancy and Birth." "All in the Family" is classified under "Prejudices and Antipathies" just as if it were a program called "World Security Workshop" which is also listed under that category. (At least they didn't put "All in the Family" under "Polish-Americans - Social Conditions". "My Friend Irma" is listed only under "Psychiatry." There is nothing wrong with that--these episodes concerned those subjects--but there should be some warning such as: "Psychiatry - Comedy" or "Pregnancy and Birth - Humor." Plus a general listing for comedy or humor which will list every comedy show in the collection to enable someone to find an obscure comedy show he may never have heard of. It is possible to study the history of broadcast drama without knowing the titles of the programs selected for inclusion in this collection, but that is impossible with comedy.

But this is a good start, and these complaints are relatively minor. It would be nice if we all could cross-index our collections, but most of us have enough trouble putting together a title list! On-site users naturally will have the advantages of the complete card catalogue which indexes titles, dates, and personalities other than regular stars in program series. Hopefully we can convince the Museum of Broadcasting to program the computer to include the dates for each show the next time an updated subject list is printed. A supplement was promised for the Spring of 1978, but has not been prepared as of late May.

"Public Law 94-553, 94th Congress, 90 Stat. 2541"

Better known as The Copyright Law. This new law is of vital concern to all of us and has provided numerous worries and puzzles to all concerned--even the Copyright Office! The law itself (62 pages) as well as a number of informative booklets are available from the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20559: Circular R 21 "Copyright and the Librarian"
Circular R 99 "Highlights of the New Copyright Law"

"Announcement from the Copyright Office", a blue booklet containing ML-139, 142, 146, 161, 166, 173, 180, and 181. Later notices are available separately, such as ML-192. That latter one concerns "Performance Rights in Sound Recordings," with a letter to the President from Bárbara Ringer and Daniel J. Boorstin.

"Unauthorized Duplication of Sound Recordings" by Barbara Ringer, Register of Copyrights. Reprint available from Recorded Sound Research, 1506 West Barker, Peoria, Il 61606. \$6.00

While we are on the subject of copyrights, I should remind you that this historical study of the legal implications of the earlier non-copyrightability of sound recordings belongs on every bookshelf.

It may be confusing to a non-lawyer, but it is a valuable guide to the history of this area.

"Library Photocopying In the United States, A Summary." 13 pp. 1977. Available from Public Documents Distribution Center, Dept. 15, Pueblo, Colorado 81009. \$1.00. (item 38U8) This deals mainly with print material, but the implications of user duplication of printed matter in libraries has an effect on the fair uses of recorded material in libraries. The full governmental study is also available for \$4.50 from Dept. 15 at the above address (item 151T8.)

"The American Bicentennial Jazz Celebration." U.S. Gov'n't Printing Office, 1976. 65¢ 28 pp. illus.

This booklet is a souvenir prospectus of a multi-city series of events celebrating America's major native musical art form. An extra copy of this could be used to make an attractive display of the numerous full-page (8½ x 8½) black and white portraits of the major jazz artists by Alex Mattison.

Kastlemusic Monthly Bulletin, Kastlemusic, Inc., 901 Washington St., Wilmington, Del. 19801. \$12 per year.

Published since about 1976, this well-printed magazine features several articles on collecting and discographic subjects along with many short filler items. Many of the items stress monetary value of the records and about half of the magazine is taken up with dealer and collector advertisements. As strange feature of most of these ads is the inclusion of the phrase "Please mention Kastlemusick" after the name of the company and before the street address. They also publish two directories, one of dealers and another of collectors at \$12.50 for the set.

"Immortal Performances" P.O. Box 8316, 3007 Fruth Street, Austin, Texas 78712. Although mainly a sales and auction list of classical and operatic recordings, Jim Cartwright has published some excellent artist discographies taken from the files of the manufacturers. The most recent issue contains a 16-page listing of every acoustical matrix recorded by Leopold Stokowski (and I might add that the pages are 8½ x 14.) Jim's large collection is also readily available to musicians, students, discographers, etc. for study and/or taping.

The Journal of Country Music has been published irregularly by the Country Music Foundation since 1970. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to have received this publication free for these years should now note that with the publication of Volume VI, Number 4 in January 1978, the JCM will now be available only on a paid subscription basis. Originally appearing just like the earlier stapled issues of this ARSC Journal, the JCM is now increased in size and printing quality over its earlier issues, with the subscription cost of three issues a year for \$10.00. A regular publication schedule has been promised by the Executive Editor, William Ivey, a longtime ARSC member. The research being published by the JCM is amazingly thorough and exhaustive.

Prior back issues are mostly available for \$1.00 apiece from The Journal of Country Music, Country Music Foundation, 4 Music Square East, Nashville, Tenn. 37203.

New Amberola Graphic is a quarterly magazine of discographic data and research published by Martin F. Bryan of the New Amberola Phonograph Co., 37 Caledonia Street, St. Johnsbury, Vt. 05819. Subscriptions are \$2.25 for two years (8 issues) and an additional dollar will provide mailing by first class. All back issues are available postpaid for \$6.00 for the set. Some of the finest discographical research in recent years has been published in this mimeographed journal. The printing is neat and clear, showing great care in both the production and the research. They also publish fine reprints of early record catalogues which will be detailed in the next issue of this column.

Record Research is now the grand old man of discographical research publications. Published by Len Kunststadt and Bob Colton since 1955, this profusely illustrated bi-monthly is chock full of countless items of discographical importance. Len and Bob publish mainly information discovered during ongoing research, but occasionally expanded articles and issues of completed research appear. This has included issues devoted to complete discographies of Hit of the Week, Vogue picture records, the Perfect dance and race series, Edison lateral electric discs, and others. Hundreds of popular and jazz artists have been pictured and their rarest and most unusual recordings detailed. An auction of several thousand items is a feature in every issue and has become legendary due to the extraordinary teeny-tiny printing used! A subscription for 10 issues is \$4.00, and a set of back issues dating to issue #71 (October 1965) is \$41.50. With a little bit of luck we will all live long enough to see the publication of the final installment of the long-running listing of the Plaza 5000 matrix series compiled by Carl Kendziora. It's been running since issue #36 in July 1961 and has now come up to matrix 8407! The address is: Record Research, 65 Grand Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11205.

Antique Phonograph Monthly has been in the forefront in developing the popularity of collecting phonographs since 1973. Although occasionally discussing records (such as the recent issue which finally provided conclusive information dating Caruso's IRCC recordings), most of this well-printed journal is devoted to research and information about the machines the records were played on. There are also classified ads for collectors buying and selling machines, parts, records, or needing research information. This is invaluable if you want to get a machine or need to find repair parts or a repairman. Subscriptions are \$7.50 for a ten-issue volume. A complete set of back issues is available at the same price per volume. The address is Allen Koenigsberg, 650 Ocean Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11226. Allen also publishes an extremely fine series of reprints of phonograph and record catalogues from the 1890's to the early 1900's

(which will be detailed in the next issue of this column.) In addition, Allen can supply you with many of the centennial of sound recording publications which were detailed in the previous issue of this column. This includes the publications by the Royal Scottish Museum, British Institute of Recorded Sound, Library of Congress, High Fidelity, Billboard, Leonard de Vries, and others.

"A Preliminary Checklist of the Non-Commercial Recordings of Duke Ellington." is a nicely arranged 16-page listing compiled by Joseph H. Igo, 9022 25th Ave., Kenosha, Wisc. 53140, \$1.00. This listing was made in preparation for the forthcoming completion and publication of The Ellington Chronicle, a three-part work which will detail everything Duke Ellington ever did. The Itinerary will list the daily locations of the Ellington band from 1927 to 1974. The Discography will list every commercial recording, with one full page being devoted to each separate recording. The third section, called the Paradiscography, will give the complete data for all of the "unofficial non-commercial" Ellington recordings no matter what the source. It is this third section which concerns the checklist at hand. Any collector having a recording which does not appear on this list is urged to contact Igo so it can be included in the final work.

The New York Philharmonic is seeking to locate every recording ever made of a New York Philharmonic broadcast or concert. ARSC member Steven Smolian is undertaking this effort and is planning to eventually publish a listing of all of the broadcasts (including those which have not been found to be recorded.) All readers are urged to contact Steve if you have any Philharmonic broadcast recordings even if they are incomplete. (Don't worry, your recording will not be confiscated and you will not be sued.) Steve's address is Smolian Sound Studios, R.D. 1, Box 152C, Catskill, N.Y. 12414.

The Estate of Harold D. Smith, an executive of the Victor Talking Machine Co. between 1915 and 1935, is being offered for sale by the heirs through Steve Smolian (at the above address.) Although the selling price of \$30,000 is beyond the means of most of us (and/or of our institutions), we all should take note of this collection. Smith had worked first in the Educational then the Foreign Language divisions, thus the collection contains more of an unusual and rare nature than might otherwise be expected. There are about 7,000 78's, 1,000 of them being test pressings. But far more important than even these rare and valuable records is the vast amount of paper material. Smith saved everything; thus there is an unbelievable amount of Victor catalogues, publications, flyers, supplements, magazines, letters, window displays, salesman's daily reports, and recording ledger sheets. A four-page description of the collection is available, and if the collection is not sold intact there is a possibility of sale of individual groups of items.

Forthcoming: a book illustrating in color just about every record label

and label variation imaginable. It is being compiled by that master of all record collectors George Blacker with photographic work by C. Collins. George has been borrowing samples of rare items from collectors all over the world (including myself), so coupled with items from his own collection we should finally have some sort of definitive guide to label styles. The original photography is magnificent--George recently sent me one of the extra 4 x 5 inch transparencies--so it should turn out to be a display item we will all need to own.

Collections sold: Les Zeiger, formerly of Brooklyn and the Bronx, has retired and moved to Florida. The main part of his broadcast transcription collection was sold to Dave Goldin of Radio Yesteryear and Radiola Records who is continuing to offer Les's catalogue of "Z Tapes" (successor of "Z Discs") which are dubs from the record collection. The phonograph record portion of the Zeiger collection was purchased by Robert Altshuler of Columbia Records.

The broadcast transcription portion of the Linn Andersen collection of Harvard, Illinois has been purchased by Michael Stosich of Bolingbrook, Illinois.

The American Broadcasting Company collection of 27,000 discs and 1,000 tapes of broadcasts from 1943 to 1971 has been donated to the National Archives. A six-page preliminary summary of the contents of the collection can be obtained by serious researchers and archives from Mr. Leslie Waffan, National Archives and Records Service, Audiovisual Archives Division, Washington, D.C. 20408.

The National Broadcasting Company collection of between 100,000 and 200,000 discs of broadcasts dating back to 1927 has been obtained by the Museum of Broadcasting. The Museum plans to have listening copies of a small selection of the programs available for on-site listening only. No final decision has yet been made on the ultimate disposition of the original discs--in total one of the most valuable research and reference collections of broadcast recordings.

The Yesteryear Museum of Morristown, New Jersey has closed its doors and sold most of its holdings at a massive three-day auction in December 1977. Lee Munsick has maintained a valuable collection of research materials, however. Additionally, he has opened up a Yesteryear shop in Boonton, N.J. 07005 to sell phonographic and music box items including reprints, Victrola key reproductions, and belt buckles. (More about these items in the next issue of this column.)

Ceased publication: Record Collector's Journal. This monthly tabloid covered everything from Berliners to rock but somehow didn't make it. Many of the rock collectors have moved on to reading the publications mentioned in the final section of this column.

Songs and Records International. Although this was only an auction list of records offered by this Burbank, California company, I have been treating it like a publication because of its size and printing style. Ranging up to over 80 pages printed by typeset process on pulp paper, these tri-monthly issues provided some great laughs for some of us East Coast collectors. If I might offer a reason for the

demise of this company, it could be due to the outrageously high minimum bids set on a record-by-record basis. But this is what things seem to be coming to. For further information and uncalled-for opinions, see the aforementioned final section of this column.

PART 4 THE "WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT MYSELF" DEPARTMENT

Warped records have always been a bother. They hit the undersides of the tone arm or cartridge, knock the stylus out of the grooves, and cause increased wear at the point of the warp. At 78 r.p.m. a warp can knock the arm off with enormous force. Most of us have discovered that with a little patience we can guide the arm with our fingers when we must track that warped record. For some strange reason only a finger will work. Placing a quarter on the arm often doesn't help, foam rubber padding does not have the same absorbent qualities as does finger flesh and viscous damping is hard to control. Only a finger is immediately adaptable to changes in the record. But fatigue sets in. If only someone would invent some kind of holder that you could put, say, a fresh finger from a cadaver in it to hold the arm in place. (That sounds gruesome, doesn't it, but remember that Alexander Graham Bell used the ear of a cadaver to make a better horn for his Phonograph!) But such dismemberment is no longer necessary. Discwasher has come up with a device called DiscTracker that fits on the front of the tone arm and places a pneumatic plunger on the record to absorb shocks and allow the arm to lift and drop with the warp. I have not had a chance to use it, so can not say if it works as well for 78 r.p.m. records as for LP's, but it seems like a good idea. The main reason it was built was to reduce the sub-sonic warp resonance that was causing distortion with the new low-mass, low-tracking weight, state-of-the-art cartridges now being designed. It costs about \$25 so it might pay to get a demonstration first with your favorite warped record--if you can find a showroom with a 78 r.p.m. turntable!

A similar device is built into the brand new Shure V15 Type IV Super Track IV Stereo Dynetic PhonoCartridge. Called the Dynamic Stabilizer, it is a small viscous-damped brush of conductive fibers that cleans the record, discharges the electrical potential on the record, and maintains the cartridge at a constant distance from the record in spite of warps. The reviews and the technical articles about this cartridge are excellent, but I have not yet seen any mention of the availability of Shure's elliptical 78 r.p.m. stylus for this cartridge.

Another note of consideration: maybe one or the other of these devices might solve the problem of electrical reproduction of cylinders. While it would not eliminate the pitch changes caused by an out-of-round cylinder, the 160 r.p.m. speed has made tracking these cylinders very difficult. Likewise the enormous velocities built up by an off-center 12-inch 78 r.p.m. might be dissipated or absorbed without knocking the arm off the disc. This columnist would be interested in reporting the results of any reader's experiments.

PART 5 THE "I KNEW IT HAD TO COME TO THIS" DEPARTMENT

I don't know whether to laugh or cry. I have been collecting records for twenty-five years or so and I thought I had seen just about everything that could possibly happen in this hobby. But here it is right in front of me. A little while ago I opened up my copy of the February 1978 issue of Goldmine, No. 23, a tabloid-sized magazine devoted mainly to advertisements listing collectors' rock records for auction or set-price sale. On the inside back cover they have just instituted a feature they call "The Collectors Showcase," a boxed feature ad section at \$7.00 for 1½ inches, for selling "that special item." These ads caught my eye, especially one. I'll let you see for yourself:

ORIGINAL PAUL WHITEMAN 78 RPM
"WHISPERING" and
"THE JAPANESE SANDMAN"
Label: Victor Talking Machine
Will accept best bid over \$100

┌Name and address of the advertiser┐

No, that was not a misprint. That really was one hundred dollars. You would not expect someone to take a \$7.00 ad to sell a record at either \$1.00 or \$10. No, I do not know at this time whether he actually got bidders and sold the record, but that would only be anti-climactic. But something is happening here almost behind most of our backs that we ought to take a look at.

Just in case there are any uninitiated out there reading this, the Whiteman record mentioned above is not rare, nor is it worth \$100--or even \$10--and many of you might feel that even \$1.00 is stretching it a little. It was Whiteman's first released recording on Victor 18690. Charles Edward Smith indicates that it "sold in the millions," and the copy in front of me has 14A and 16G stampers (which indicate over 350 stampers wore out before this copy was pressed), but I must admit that it was many years before I stumbled across my first copy of it. However since then I have seen many, many more and probably have two or three other copies tucked away somewhere. It is the only Whiteman recording listed on RCA Victor's January 1, 1967 "Million Selling Single Record" list (as 447-0442 "Whispering" backed with "Three O'Clock In The Morning.") It is an important record--it's about as good a landmark for the mainstream of American society's entrance into the "roaring twenties" as any--but not particularly valuable monetarily.

Why did someone offer it for \$100.00 minimum bid. Certainly there was no intention of the advertiser to cheat anyone. He probably honestly believed it to be a valuable record. But why? I might narrow it down to a number of things, but I will start off with the same reasons an antique dealer priced an empty Edison Gold Mould cylinder box at \$5.00: unfamiliarity with the speciality of records and inflated pricing in adjacent collecting fields. We come across Edison cylinders in boxes all the time, but how does a collector of advertising items and product containers know

that this particular item is not really as rare as an equally old cereal or soap box. Likewise the rock record collector when he comes across a 57-year-old record when he is normally happy to come across a 17-year-old record. It's older, so it must be rarer and more expensive. Additionally it is famous, so it must be worth even more.

In case you haven't been looking over your shoulder, there is a new breed of record collector aborning. (By the way, if you happen to be one of these new and younger collectors, don't be insulted. I'm just trying to bridge the generation gap for our readers.) These new collectors have been brought up on rock and have been led into a highly organized form of collecting the records from that era only. It has evolved from, among other things, comic book collecting. Following the age-old traditions of antiquarian book dealing, price guides rapidly became the mainstay of the comic book industry. These guides are usually followed like a bible. Go to any comic book convention and ask about a specific book and watch the dealers whip out the latest edition of the price guide. Someone has set the prices and they come down from the holy mountain engraved in stone tablets. And the novice collector (usually a kid in high school) believes in it. These novices then become the grown-up collectors who continue to abide by the laws as set forth in the price guide. Voilà a generation has become indoctrinated. The high prices paid for particular items become a status symbol. The talk usually is about how high a price he had to pay for his collection--the higher the better. Maybe this is an exaggeration, but some of these collectors seem proud of an item only if they paid (or can say they paid) a high price for it--"Hey! Look at what I paid \$25.00 for!" denotes status whereas "Hey! Look what I paid 25¢ for!" denotes cheapness. If he paid \$25 for it then it must be valuable, if he only paid 25¢ for it then it must be a piece of junk. Naturally the dealers just love this attitude.

If you think I lie, then take this specific case. Rock collectors have been looking for years for a copy of "Stormy Weather" by The Five Sharps on Jubilee 5104 (mx. JB-1-116), recorded December 1952. Only one cracked copy had ever been found and the masters had accidentally been destroyed in a fire. Jubilee reissued it from the cracked copy but that did not satisfy collectors. A whole copy was eventually discovered and was offered at auction last year by The Record Exchanger, another publication. I am not going to ask you to guess how much the record went for, because you would never come even close. Two collectors teamed up to bid successfully a grand total of \$3866.00. That's right. Three thousand eight hundred and sixty-six dollars! For one 25-year-old 10-inch 78 r.p.m. record. On Jubilee no less! Now, why did they do it? Were they doing it as an investment to be able to reissue it, sell a million and become rich? No, there does not seem to be any move to reissue it or to even let other collectors hear it. (At least nothing I have heard of.) Were they researching the era and writing a book or a doctoral dissertation that would not be complete unless they could hear and describe the record? Doesn't seem so. Maybe they were on the record? Definitely not. Maybe we should let one of the purchasers explain. His name is David Hall (no, not our David Hall at the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archive of Recorded Sound

at Lincoln Center; this David Hall lives in Huntington Beach, California.) A letter he wrote to Jerry Osborne, author of numerous record price guides, was published in Osborne's Record Digest, Vol. 1, No. 12, March 1, 1978. Hall praised Osborne for having influenced him to become an "original label collector" and for truly appreciating what this purchase meant. He explained:

"Record collecting is entering a new era. The days of the collector who can build a nice collection strictly from thrift store and swap meets are limited.

"More and more collectors will be happy and willing to pay higher prices for the records they need.

"Price Guides . . . and Conventions . . . and media coverage are bringing forth a new sophisticated stage in the hobby's history.

"Certainly one of the most important events, in this new era is the sale of just ONE RECORD for \$3866.00. . . .

"We bought the record together because we both wanted it badly but being rational businessmen and friends who started collecting together, we didn't want to bump heads in the auction (no telling what it would have brought if we were bidding against each other. . . .

"Many of these new, or 'new breed' of collector's sic, are professional business people, like myself, who don't have time to scrounge through thrift shops but are willing to spend the money necessary to acquire the records we want.

"One fact that will remain crystal clear is that when 'At The Hop' by Danny & The Juniors, on Singular sells for \$500 and when an Elvis Sun can bring \$1000, then \$3866 for 'Stormy Weather' is going to seem like the bargain of the century."

That's quite a prediction, that prices will continue to go up. I have always felt that a record is worth only what someone is willing to pay for it. Heretofore, most collectors have had a wide and deep knowledge of the recording industry and the history of the items recorded. They never lost sight of the intrinsic value of the particular record in question. Was it truly significant? Was this a unique performance or artist? Would it lose its value if the recording was available in another issue? And most importantly, would it lose its value if another copy--or several other copies--were found? Judging from the story in the Record Exchanger announcing the auction, while it might be a nice recording, its only monetary value seems to lie in the fact that in fifteen years of looking, only one other cracked copy has been found since the only other known copy was broken and discarded.

I have been sitting here trying to think of records that might rival this record in monetary value if they were to be found. Alternate takes and test pressings of all sorts have turned up but none ever seems to have commanded that kind of a price even though these would be one-of-a-kind items. Not even Bix or Benny. How about the Caruso excerpt from Rigoletto that Bill Moran at Stanford found and re-issued (see ARSC Journal Vol. VI, No. 2, pp. 79-80)? I have sat and listened to

Phil Miller tell about the day the lady walked into the New York Public Library with the complete set of the 1903 Columbia Grand Opera Series (recently reissued again, this time on Odyssey), but that's a set of 33 discs. Fred Williams has moaned to me about how much he had to bid to get his three 3-inch 1889 Berliner discs, but Fred, you aren't even close. How about a verified recording of the real William McKinley? Any takers for nearly \$4,000? Wait a minute, I know what would grab your attention. How about a Bettini cylinder of Jean de Reszke, or the cylinder Mark Twain is said to have made for Bettini in December 1893? Anyone interested? (If there is, I'll go downstairs to my cylinder machine and make one!)

No, what I'm trying to say is that it seems that this new breed of collector does not realize that such high prices should not be necessary. There must be some realistic judgments made as to what the item is really worth. The yardsticks being used for measuring this are not based on time-tested scales which will be accurate years from now. It is almost like the recent "Pet Rock" craze: some sharp salesman dreams up a convincing way to sell people a worthless rock for \$4.98 and they buy it because he tells them it's worth \$4.98. Dealers have convinced collectors --many of them very naive and inexperienced kids--that these records are worth a lot of money, and if enough of them believe it these inflated prices become the norm. But it's all in their own little world. The little circle of rock record collectors are inbreeding artificial values onto their records because without contact with the outside world of more experienced and realistic collectors' pricing valuations they have nothing to rely on except others who are in turn relying on them! The blind are leading the blind and the dealers and the hoarders are raking in the profits. It has gone one step further in the production and release of special collector's item records, especially in bootleg Elvis concert and interview discs. Prices of \$5.00 for a single 45 r.p.m. record or up to \$18.00 for 1p's, or \$24.00 for cassettes are not uncommon. Some of these are mastered from low quality tapes and pressed for 25¢ for a single or 55¢ for an lp. Several special Canadian RCA Elvis singles on colored plastic are being sold by dealers in the U.S. for three to six times their original price while still in print at the original price! What has happened to the "Moody Blue" album by Elvis is quite a good example. Originally RCA intended to press only the initial quantity on blue vinyl. The discs pressed just before he died were to be only the beginning of the standard black vinyl stock. Instantly the blue copies became high priced when collectors and dealers realized that those bought in the big post-mortem rush were ordinary black. RCA looked at their cash register and immediately resumed the blue pressings. Only in the past few weeks has it dawned on collectors that now it is the black copies that are rare! They are being offered for up to \$25.00. What is going to happen next time RCA gets tired of using the blue vinyl--a lot of \$25.00 records are going to be worth \$5.00 again. Most collectors of rock records have never learned how to read matrix numbers and stamper markings to discover the significant information that lies there. I shudder to think what will happen when someone tell them how to distinguish among the three RCA pressing plants (R=Rockaway, N.J., I=Indianapolis, H=Hollywood) and RCA Victor records that were pressed by Capitol, MGM, Presswell of New Jersey, and other

companies that occasionally took up the overload because of a hit or a strike. Wait till collectors discover what the "dash numbers" on RCA Victor 45's and LP's mean. All of them will start looking for -1S copies from all three pressing plants.'

I hope I have not seemed unduly critical of the collectors. I have just tried to explain to the traditional collectors what has been happening while hopefully trying to show the more astute rock collector that reason and study should prevail. I am not against price guide books--to the contrary, the guides by Jerry Osborne seem to have very conservative and reasonable prices. This is probably why I have never seen a collector's shop or oldies dealer sell these guides on the counter--they want to charge their customers higher prices than are in the guides. Julian Morton Moses was condemned by many collectors 25 years ago when he first published his Price Guide to Collectors' Records for American acoustical classical discs. In the quarter century since then, his prices have proved to be relatively stable, but some, especially the Caruso listings, are still too high compared with the amounts these records get at auction. However, a non-collector, or an inexperienced one might pay a higher price for a common Caruso record to be able to tell friends that he has one and he had to pay a lot for it. Some dealers are asking \$18.00 or more for so-so condition used copies of the Beatles first Capitol album "Meet the Beatles" in mono and some fifteen-year-old kids are paying that price because they don't realize that the record sold so many copies that it can't possibly be considered rare. And besides, the record is as old as they themselves are, and that is old. (I still find it in garage sales for 25¢.)

In future columns I will have listings of the price guides and periodicals that cater to the new breed of original label rock record collectors, but for now I suggest that libraries which have youngsters as users might consider subscribing to two of the publications I have quoted from. They will prove to be interesting reading to both you and your patrons, and might aid in your discovery of what records in your collection are already monetarily valuable and require added protection. Additionally, there is some very serious research being published in these journals, and although much of it does not meet what we consider to be the minimum standards of discographical research, some of the writers are learning.

Goldmine. Monthly (ex. My/Ju & J1/Ag) First issue approx. January 1976. 6 issues-\$4.50, 10 issues-\$7.00. Arena Magazine Company, Box 61, Fraser, Michigan 48026. Best of Goldmine, featuring the articles in the early issues is \$1.50.

Record Digest. Bi-weekly. First issue September 15, 1977. 1 yr (24 issues)-\$19.00, 6 mo. (12 issues)-\$11.00, 3 mo (6 issues)-\$6.00. Record Digest, Groom Creek, Prescott, Arizona 86301, or phone (800) 331-1000. A short-term subscription will at least get you the information about the leading price guide books and the current trend of the "hobby."

Record Finder. Monthly. First issue May-June 1978. 10 issues-\$5.00. Record Finder, 12592 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, Virginia 23606. This brand new entry into the field is similar to but thinner than Goldmine. It contains articles and ads, but also a "Record Barometer" feature similar to that in the departed "Songs and Records International" lists: it lists the highest prices paid for selected items from various dealers' auctions.

COMING NEXT ISSUE OF THIS COLUMN:

I am putting together a complete and descriptive listing of all reprinted catalogues, manuals, instruction sheets, and booklets concerning the phonograph and records. All publishers of this material are encouraged to contact this columnist as soon as possible. In addition, there will be another section of display items about the phonograph and records. Original items suitable for display will be discussed, but this section also includes reprints of original posters, replicas of other types of display items such as plaster HMV dogs, and newly made items such as needle-point kits of the HMV picture. Again, all those knowing of or manufacturing such items should contact me so they can be included.

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