

The *Decca Hillbilly Discography* will be indispensable to any collector with an interest in country music from the period and to all institutions with recorded sound archives. *Reviewed by Dick Spottswood*

¹ Pop music star Les Paul received his first inauspicious exposure on record through two Decca-made Montgomery Ward releases in 1936, calling himself Rhubarb Red!

A Discography of Tudor Church Music.

By Timothy Day. London: The British Library, 1989, 317 pp., £35.

This is one of the finest presentations of discography I have ever had the pleasure to use. Timothy Day, curator of Western art music at the British National Sound Archive (NSA), has chosen the body of polyphony running from the Eton Choirbook to Weelkes and his contemporaries, an appropriate block of musical history even if it extends somewhat beyond the Tudor monarchs.

After a preface which clearly sets forth the solutions to the discographic problems he has created for himself, he offers a 36-page appreciation of the music and its revival in the twentieth century which tells us as much about his own love for the subject as it does about the music itself. Packed with illustrative examples and quotations, he begins with Henry Davey's *History of English Music* published in 1895, detailing precisely how much (rather, how little) Davey could have known at the time about the sixteenth century music that he enthused over. He follows with the revival of Tudor music at Westminster Cathedral in London by Sir Richard Terry, choirmaster there from 1902 to 1924; the publication in ten volumes of *Tudor Church Music* under the lead of E. H. Fellowes; the widespread observance in churches, broadcasts, and recordings of the Byrd tercentenary in 1923; the influence of the BBC Third Programme after 1946, following earlier BBC broadcasts of some regularity in the previous decade; the interest of professional choirs after the war, the improvement in church singing resulting from the pressure of the radio audiences listening to broadcast service, and the major shift in performance practice which began with David Wulstan in the 1960s and spread to several other conductors. All of this places the discography in proper perspective.

The main part of the discography is a chronological list of 729 records and broadcasts containing various amounts of Tudor church music, for this book comprises not only commercial records but BBC transcription discs and the NSA's own off-the-air recordings of BBC broadcasts. All entries are identified by the author's own CL code number, and if the disc or broadcast consists entirely of Tudor music the code number is underlined. The list, beginning in 1921, starts off with seven discs of Fellowes' own group, the English Singers, and closes at the end of 1988.

The second part is an alphabetical list of composers, their works arranged alphabetically, with the recordings of each arranged chronologically; this is not an index but a complete discography with citations of the CL numbers. Next comes an index of performers listed alphabetically, citing their CL numbers with dates and composers. An appendix lists nineteen talks on the subject given on the BBC and taped at NSA, with an informative précis of each talk.

For LPs, CDs, and broadcasts running over half an hour, Day provides the dates of recording. I regret this limitation, for he was in a position to obtain a great many more dates from EMI and other sources close to hand. Even if he did not track down the last elusive date, he could have found most of them with much less trouble than most other discographers.

I have already found the book indispensable. It is informative, easy to use, and much more complete than anything else at hand. His coverage of countries and labels is complete, his list of issue numbers extensive, and he cites important reviews (using his own discretion, as he does in many other aspects cited in the preface).

I have one major complaint. In using the composer lists, it would have been helpful to know which CL numbers are broadcasts rather than discs. For anyone actually doing research at the NSA, the distinction may be less important. For the rest of the world, it is vital. In reviewing what appears to be a new recording, one will look up a piece thought to be recorded for the first time. One may find three listings, but only by looking up each of the three will it be clear that there are no previous discs.

The book is beautifully printed and bound, even if the typeface is quite small for the length of the line. The preface cites an enormous collection of discographic sources (such as a staffer of the NSA would have at hand), including the Rigler and Deutsch Index and Kurt Myers's *Index to Record Reviews*. He has identified all the music (by audition if necessary) in the standard printed editions. Best of all, he has created a format suited to the material that he is dealing with, explaining it clearly for anyone who needs to use it. There is no better way to do this sort of thing. I would have been proud to be the author. *Reviewed by J. F. Weber* 🎧

Correction

Despite our best efforts, an error was made in J. F. Weber's review of *Classical Music Discographies, 1976-1988: A Bibliography* (*ARSC Journal*, vol. 21, No. 1, p. 134). The parenthetic sentence at the end of the fourth paragraph should have read, "(It is also not very accurate, as it happens.)" Our apologies go to the author.
