
CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY

By Tim Brooks

“Current Bibliography” is an annotated index to research on recording history that has appeared recently in small circulation journals. To be indexed here an article must be in English, be reasonably substantive, and deal with *recording history*—as opposed to musicology, sociology, or contemporary subjects (such as reviews). “W/D” or “discog.” indicates that the article was accompanied by something at least remotely resembling a discography.

Issues covered this time were received between February and October, 1992. If you contact one of these publishers or authors, please mention ARSC and “Current Bibliography.”

Notes

This is something of a golden age for collectors wishing to outfit their music room with state-of-the-art, near-archive quality reproduction equipment. After years of being told to scour junk shops for old, discontinued equipment, collectors can currently buy excellent variable-speed turntables (from Esoteric Sound and Diapason, among others), filtering and reequalization units (from Owl and KAB), a kit for electrically reproducing cylinders (from Owl), and even disc cleaning machines, including motorized models (from Nitty Gritty). None of this is truly cheap, of course, but most of the aforementioned items are in the \$50 to a few hundred dollar range, far less than the thousands of dollars that used to be the norm for professional archival products.

Many of these products have been reviewed in publications covered by “Current Bibliography.” Full articles about restoration and reproduction are listed under the “Preservation and Reproduction of Recordings” heading. Readers are also directed to the side-by-side specifications for the Esoteric Sound and Diapason turntables in recent issues of *The Record Finder* (which sells them), and to reviews of two inexpensive computer record cataloging programs (“Music Maestro” and “For Record Collectors”) in *International Talking Machine Review*, No. 78. Additional information is available from the manufacturers, Esoteric Sound (4813 Wallbank Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515); Diapason (5 Catamount Road, Tewksbury, MA 01876); Owl (Audio 78, P.O. Box 387, Pacifica, CA 94044); KAB and Nitty Gritty (KAB, Box 2922, Plainfield, NJ 07062-0922). Perhaps more of these fine folks, and others I may have missed, should consider advertising their products in the pages of the *ARSC Journal*.

Those concerned about the longevity of the compact disc format will be interested in “How Long Will Your Compact Discs Last?” by Michael Fremer, in *Goldmine*, October 2, 1992.

Antique Phonograph Monthly No. 87 contains two news-making articles. The cover story, by collector Aaron Cramer, describes the discovery and authentication of what may be the oldest playable recording in existence, an experimental cylinder (engraved in lead!) made by inventor Frank Lambert in 1879 or 1880. And what does a long-dead voice say to us from more than 110 years ago? "One o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock..." It is apparently the soundtrack for a talking clock! (Additional portions of the recording are still being deciphered; maybe we'll find Jenny Lind yet.) Observant readers may recall the discovery a couple of years ago of another early experimental recording, apparently dating from the early to mid 1880s, announced in *The Sound Box* (November 1990). That one was etched in wax deposited in the grooves of a tin foil machine which had been modified by Augustus Stroh. West Coast collector John Woodward, who owns it, claimed that it contained "a mixed program of voice and music" but he has yet to reveal any more about it, or allow it to be analyzed by experts.

The second notable *APM* article concerns the alleged recording of the voice of poet Walt Whitman, who died in 1892. The possibility of its existence was raised in a *New York Times* story on March 16, 1992. After considerable detective work, author Allen Koenigsberg concludes that the recording was in all likelihood a fraud perpetrated by collector Roscoe Haley in the 1940s. Let us hope it does not become another "Lie That Will Not Die."

Controversy swirls around another "alleged" nineteenth-century celebrity recording as well. A great deal has been written about the supposed c.1890 recording of Queen Victoria, described in the book *The Lost Voice of Queen Victoria* by Paul Tritton. Tritton does not claim that it is the Queen, only that it might be, and a series of letters and articles in *The Hillandale News* (see listings) cast further doubt on its authenticity—and even on what is actually being said. (The cylinder is said to be virtually indecipherable.) Our thanks to British sound detective Joe Pengelly for keeping us informed on this.

We note several new books and monographs by ARSC members which do not qualify for listing in "Current Bibliography" (since they are not articles), but which deserve mention. Michael Sherman has published a new and greatly enlarged version of his excellent guide to Victor 78 rpm labels. Formerly titled *The Paper Dog*, it is now *The Collector's Guide to Victor Records* and is available for \$30 plus postage from Sherman at 100 Heritage Plaza, Highland Park Village, Dallas TX 75205-2788. Nick Tosches' new book is *Dino: Living High in the Dirty Business of Dreams*, a biography of singer Dean Martin, published by Doubleday. Jack Raymond has issued *The Numerical List of Liberty Music Shop Records*; the 20-page pamphlet is available from Raymond at 3709 George Mason Drive, Apt. 1011, Falls Church, VA 22041. Finally, Hugo Strotbaum (not yet a member, but we are hoping) has favored us with an English-language copy of his 40-page article "Seventy-Eight Revolutions Per Minute in the Levant: Discography of Favorite's Oriental Recordings," concerning the European Favorite label. This originally appeared as monograph in the Dutch book *De Turcicis Aliisque Rebus Commentarii Henry Hofman dedicati*; an updated version is available from the author at Abstederdijk 61, 3582 BB Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Flash

A new discographical publication arrived just as this installment of "Current Bibliography" was being submitted. *International Discographers* edited by Ross Laird, and 80-page issue No. 1 is available from him at Box 197 Dickson, A.C.T., Australia. Annual subscriptions ("two or three issues") are US\$25 for individuals, US\$45 for institutions (surface). The focus appears to be rather broad, open to all fields of music

(although classical does not appear in No. 1), all countries, and all decades of the 78 rpm era. Among the distinguished contributing editors are Dr. Ranier Lotz, Brian Rust, and Dick Spottswood, and among the debut articles are pieces on black artists in Europe, 1904-1912, the Columbia 15000-D and Capitol 57-70000 series, and a discography of West Indian recordings from 1912 to 1945. The issue will be fully indexed in the next "Current Bibliography."

Quote of the Month

From an article in the July 1992 *Historic Record*, by "Old Timer," reminiscing about record collecting in Europe during the 1930s:

As I wandered round a shabby open market in Cologne, a pimp offered me the services of his young ladies. When I told him that what I wanted was old records, he said he could see to that too, for a consideration, and so he did, leading me round a series of dingy second-hand and junk shops so that I came away with something, at least... I recollect my breathless enthusiasm at finding cylinders by Jeanne Deschamps-Jehin, the first "Delilah" in Saint-Saens' opera...

My thanks to Michael Stosich of Esoteric Sound for input this time. If you publish a qualifying article in a place where we may not see it, please let "Current Bibliography" know. Send a copy, together with the name and address of the publication in which it appears, to P.O. Box 41, Glenville Stn., Greenwich, CT 06831.

Publications Listed:

Absolute Sound, P.O. Box L, Sea Cliff, NY 11579.

American Music, University of Illinois Press, 54 E. Gregory Drive, Champaign, IL 61820

Antique Phonograph Monthly, 502 East 17th St., Brooklyn, NY 11226

Antique Phonograph News, Canadian Antique Phonograph Society, 122 Major St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2L2 Canada

Audio, P.O. Box 51011, Boulder, CO 80321-1011

Australasian Record and Music Review, 15 Lowanna Ave., Baulkham Hills, NSW 2153, Australia

Bluegrass Unlimited, Box 111, Broad Run, VA 22014

DISCoveries, Box 255, Port Townsend, WA 98368

Echoes Of the Past, Box 40, Agawam, MA 01001

Goldmine, 700 East State St., Iola, WI 54990

Hillandale News, c/o D.M. Field, Hon. Treasurer, City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society, 116 Tanhouse Lane, Malvern Link, Worcs., England WR14 1LG

Historic Record, The, 185 The Wheel, Ecclesfield, Sheffield S30 3ZA, England

IAJRC Journal, International Assoc. of Jazz Record Collectors, c/o Gil Erskine, P.O. Box 800, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

In The Groove, Michigan Antique Phonograph Society, 2609 Devonshire, Lansing, MI 48910

International Talking Machine Review, 105 Sturdee Ave., Gillingham, Kent ME7 2HG, England

Joslin's Jazz Journal, Box 213, Parsons, KS 67357

Journal of Country Music, Country Music Foundation, 4 Music Square East, Nashville, TN 37203

Memory Lane, 226 Station Rd., Leigh on Sea, Essex, SS9 3BS England

- New Amberola Graphic*, 37 Caledonia St., St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
New Orleans Music, 127 Mount Drive, Urmston, Manchester M31 1QA, England
Old Time Country, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677
Popular Music & Society, Bowling Green University Popular Press, Bowling Green, OH 43403
Record Collector, c/o Larry Lustig, 111 Longshots Close, Broomfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 5DU, England
Record Collectors Monthly, Box 75, Mendham, NJ 07945
Record Finder, Box 1047, Glen Allen, VA 23060
Record Research, 65 Grand Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11205
Rejoice!, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677
Resound, Archives of Traditional Music, Maxwell Hall 057, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405
Rhythm Rag, 8 Oakmont Drive, Waterlooville, Portsmouth, Hants., PO8 8TH England
Rockin' 50s, 3022 56th St., Lubbock, TX 79413
78 Quarterly, P.O. Box 283, Key West, FL 33041
Show Music, 5800 Pebble Beach Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89108
Skivsamlaren, P.O. Box 25065, S-400 31, Goteborg, Sweden
Sound Box, The, Calif. Antique Phono. Society, Box 67, Duarte, CA 91010
Soundtrack!, c/o Roger Feigelson, P.O. Box 13835, Stanford, CA 94309
Tailgate Ramblings, 3608 35th St. NW, Washington, DC 20016
Vintage Light Music, 4 Harvest Bank Road, West Wickham, Kent, England

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