

nieces and nephews in America, and other brief moments penetrate the carefully cultivated serenity of Patti the celebrity.

William R. Moran's discography of Patti (pp. 305-316) has been significantly enhanced and reorganized from the one he and Clifford Williams prepared for a 1956 issue of *The Record Collector* (1956;10[8&9]:169-195). The new discography table is numbered by title with variant performances in matrix-number order; this results in a listing of twenty-two titles. The new table includes the (no-matrix-number) "Christmas Greeting to Baron Cederström"; the earlier one did not.

Moran devotes considerable attention to recommended playing speeds in the discography. Although he does not say so, this may account for his decision to omit mention of all but one of the LP reissues and one CD reissue of Patti's recordings. He does discuss the EMI RLS 711 (LP) set which contains all twenty-eight of the known sides and the Pearl GEMM 9312 issue on CD which presents twenty-two selections. In both cases he notes the playing speeds used for dubbing the recordings and compares them with his own conclusions.

In his final paragraph, Moran deals with the question of cylinder recordings of Patti's voice. Without completely destroying the hopes of those who will continue to search out rumored treasures, he again refutes the contention of a tiny number of promoters of the authenticity of the supposed Patti cylinder dubbed onto IRCC 219 and 3100 (subsequently other labels) by setting forth the source of the recording and identity of the singer. One can only hope that publication of the facts in so authoritative a book will end the matter.

Thomas Kaufman's 68-page chronology of Patti's appearances and his listing of her operatic repertory conclude the book. He includes a separate bibliography in his introduction. Kaufman lists the participating artists, when known, for the opera appearances and for the concert tours made with other artists (a frequent practice by Patti). Individual concert programs are not given. Kaufman's listings will be useful to those doing research on artists who sang with Patti at one time or another.

This is an outstanding work. The research has been as thorough as existing source material permits. The notes and bibliographies are extensive. The authors' presentations are factual and balanced. The distribution of the 154 illustrations contributes to the effectiveness of the narrative. There is an extensive and well organized index. Above all, Dr. Cone has achieved a high degree of elegance in reflecting the Victorian era and in illuminating "the age of Patti" and the unique singer who became "Queen of Hearts." *Reviewed by Elwood A. McKee.*

***EJS: Discography of the Edward J. Smith  
Recordings—"The Golden Age of Opera," 1956-1971***

*By William Shaman, William J. Collins, and Calvin M. Goodwin. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994. 856 pp, notes, appendix, indexes. \$125.00.*

Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear, when the radio brought us the sounds of which legends are made: Rosa Ponselle and Giovanni Martinelli singing Verdi, Ezio Pinza as Don Giovanni and Figaro, all of Wagner with Melchior, Flagstad, and Schorr, and Bruno Walter or Sir Thomas Beecham in the pit — not just in arias and scenes but whole operas, operas by the dozens. This was the promise of Edward J. Smith's "Golden Age of Opera," and the promise was kept. And more: the monthly bulletins were filled with operas and composers unheard and sometimes unheard of. On

this label and others, Smith assembled and published a catalog of opera such as no record company before or since has ever matched, or even attempted.

It was almost all piracy, of course. Smith rarely got permission from the artists and never from the opera companies and radio networks whose performances he published. He got away with it by keeping the number of copies per title small enough to discourage legal action — or by claiming that he did. In the 60s, the word was that a record passed as a “private” issue if sold by mail and if fewer than 100 copies were made — hence the name of another 60s label, Club “99.” The new copyright law, which took effect in 1978, halted Smith for a few months, but then he was back with much the same kind of offerings as before, except that now he avoided Metropolitan Opera and other American material. His numerous farewells to his customers were worthy of his beloved divas, but the bulletins and LPs kept coming until 1981, when worsening health finally brought the grand enterprise to its end.

The scope and richness of Smith’s output, and its success with record collectors, arose from his taste, his market sense, his many sources of material to publish, and his lack of scruples. Until 1978, he seems to have felt free to publish anything he had — and many things he did *not* have. Mistaken attributions are common, with instances of outright fakery. The most infamous is EJS 267 with its 14 “purported Mapleson Cylinders (1888-1904)” [*sic*]. Not one is an actual Mapleson, and some are not even of the artists named on the label. The note in the EJS discography says that Smith did not actually fake the records himself, but cannot state whether he knew they were frauds or was taken in by them like his more gullible customers. Other fakery on other LPs certainly was his, or done for him, for example the patches for live Vienna State Opera recordings from the 30s (now appearing on Koch/Schwann). Carelessness and ignorance also played their part; Pfitzner’s *Palestrina* (EJS 521) is augmented after Act 1 by the Song of the Wood Dove from Schoenberg’s *Gurrelieder*, and some of Smith’s credits, taken down by ear from the announcements on foreign tapes, are quite baffling. Both Smith’s recordings and his documentation are full of traps for the unwary.

The great achievement of *EJS: Discography of the Edward J. Smith Recordings* is that the authors have succeeded so well in telling us what Smith wouldn’t, or couldn’t. They have obtained all the bulletins and most if not all of the records, and have obviously listened with sharp ears and often with score in hand. Selections are properly identified and described, mentioning performance cuts and further cuts made by Smith to fit his material onto the fewest possible LPs; performances are identified, fully described, and usually dated; mistakes and misstatements in Smith’s documentation are corrected. Brief descriptions of the sound quality are provided when exceptionally bad — EJS records seldom sound actually good — and playing speeds are often suggested, sometimes for each selection. Many notes list further LP and CD issues of the same material; though these references are far from complete, sometimes even omitting reissues on Smith’s own UORC label, they are a real boon to the collector who cannot acquire the EJS originals, or who would like to do better.

Most impressive, I think, is the identification of hundreds of items on Smith’s pot-pourri discs — taken not only from live opera performances and concerts but radio shows and film soundtracks, published and unpublished commercial records, and truly private recordings made in the singer’s home. Often Smith himself gave only the vaguest suggestion of where each selection may have come from. The entry for EJS 432, a Kirten Flagstad collection, is a model example: sources include the *General Motors Hour*, the *Ford Sunday Evening Hour*, a local Christmas Eve broadcast in New

York, two BBC broadcasts, and the Immolation Scene on then unpublished RCA Victor masters. All present and accounted for. Bravo!

Error has crept in as it always does, mostly in the form of typos — Pina for Pinza, Keutch for Kutsch (of Kutsch & Riemens), Bonzo as a character in *Madama Butterfly*. No doubt the authors spotted most of these after typing the pages for offset reproduction, but perhaps balked at retyping with its risk of adding new and more insidious ones, not to mention the expense of added time and labor. One can sympathize but not agree. These flyspecks, even when harmless, must undermine confidence in the accuracy of less verifiable information like dates and numbers. Authors who provide their publishers with repro copy should always prepare it on a word processor or personal computer, so that corrections can readily be made without wholesale retyping.

Other errors are not typos. Wilfrid Pelletier's name is always misspelled Wilfred. The American baritone Ivan Petroff is called Petrov, inviting confusion with the Soviet bass. Some are worthy of Smith himself, like "Coeur la Riene" for the Cours la Reine scene in *Manon*. More substantively, the 1941 Metropolitan Opera performance of *Fidelio*, Bruno Walter conducting, used the spoken dialog, not recitatives as claimed in the note for EJS 126. (The authors may have confused this performance with the 1938 *Fidelio*, also with Flagstad, in which the conductor Bodanzky's recitatives were indeed performed. Or did Smith actually splice Bodanzky's recitatives into EJS 126?) Flagstad's HMV recording as Purcell's Dido came from the studio, not live from the Mermaid Theatre as stated in a note to EJS 183. And so on. I've noted substantive corrections or amplifications, many of them minor or debatable, for about 40 entries or notes — a very small yield for a very large book packed with thousands of pieces of information.

The entries' format is comprehensive, logical, and clear, and is well described in the Introduction. With one exception: dates of performance are sometimes ambiguous, as in "RAI broadcast, Milan, 24 Oct 1957." This date, from RAI's published chronology, is of the first transmission, not necessarily the performance itself, which at least from the 1950s on was often prerecorded. In some entries, where the authors have verified a recording date, they give it beside the broadcast date; in others they summarize the less conclusive evidence in a note. But usually there is no such clue for the reader, who may not realize that the date given may not be that of the actual performance.

The selective bibliography and list of consultants contain many familiar names and titles, and many others not so familiar. I am surprised to find no mention of sources which have aided my own research, such as *Opera*, *Opera News*, *Opernwelt*, *Das Opernglas*, *Orpheus*, *Opéra International*, and other specialist magazines. Doubtless the authors had their reasons for bypassing them, or not including them in the source list. An important but less well-known source is the files and periodical library of the former Central Opera Service, now held by OPERA America, which chronicle and index opera in the U.S. and abroad since the 50s. I mention these further sources not to find fault with the EJS discography but for the benefit of those who also may be researching live opera performances for discographic or other purposes.

The discography's usefulness is greatly increased by the eight indexes, particularly those by artist and by works performed. (A composers' index would have been welcome too.) The index of radio and television programs includes a description of each, reminding us that American radio during the 30s and 40s, and television during the 50s, resounded with live music, and that the leading classical singers, instrumentalists, and conductors of the day were media stars. And who remembers now that Ezio Pinza had a situation comedy on NBC Television in 1953? It was called *Bonino*. I had never heard of it before reading the EJS discography.

These corrections and quibbles should not obscure the authors' outstanding achievement. They have searched for information far and wide, examined their findings carefully, and presented them clearly and judiciously. Now, please, may we have the necessary sequel, a discography of the other EJS labels? I have been told that the work is indeed in progress, and look forward impatiently to the day of publication.  
*Reviewed by John W. N. Francis.*

***Archival information processing for sound recordings: the design of a database for the Rodgers & Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound.***

*By David H. Thomas. Canton, MA: Music Library Association, 1992. 120 pp. ISBN 0914954458 ISSN 0094-5099*

This book examines the process of cataloging the archival sound recordings collections of the Rodgers & Hammerstein Archives at the New York Public Library. It examines the problems presented by the vastness and great variety of noncommercial sound recordings which make up the collections, and then supplies the technique the author of the work, David H. Thomas, used to make this collection accessible to the staff and users of the sound archives.

The report first examines the theoretical underpinnings of the database and presents a description of its development. It then gives a description of the fundamental differences between archival and bibliographic descriptive techniques as they apply to general collections of standard bibliographic items, showing how sound recordings require a level of detail beyond that required by textual materials so that the resulting cataloging records will be of use to the users of the collections. This detail includes a greater variety of access points than stipulated by standard bibliographic cataloging, including the tracing of creators of works and the tracing of different performances of the works create. Both of these factors are complicated, in essence because sound recordings usually include multiple works on a single discographic item, and therefore demand a greater complexity of analytic added entries than noted in a standard bibliographic record. The fragile nature of these items makes the inclusion of other information even more necessary than with texts, in part because they may not be browsed through as books may be.

Other problems in cataloging these works include listings made for radio concerts, which may contain multiple works on a number of tapes or discs. This naturally does not begin to sort out the problems of maintaining, storing and operating the great variety of special equipment needed for listening to these works. On a broader level, the author argues that an adequate descriptive and analytic catalog entry must also include information about the provenance of a collection, its creators, and the subjects covered by the collection.

There follows a description of the Rodgers & Hammerstein collection, plus an account of the evolution of the information gathering process for noncommercial sound recordings, which began using word-processed finding aids and has thus far moved to today's relational database applications. An overview of the relational database examines in detail problems of field length, indexing, programming flexibility, and finding aids, and then shows how this multifile structure was designed to serve a variety of needs.

A detailed description of the database follows, which offers a field-by-field description of the database described in the order in which the fields would be encountered by