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

a user working with the collection. This chapter was, for me, at least, the most inter-
esting and includes many examples of data entry windows which show how the system
was put together and how it may be used.

The work ends with an examination of methods being considered for the future
enhancement of the system to make it easier to use and more accessible for the
Archives staff and public users.

The chapters to the book are enhanced by two appendices. The first appendix pre-
sents data elements in the archival sound recordings database and gives their MARC
equivalent. This gives the reader a good idea of how much more detailed and compli-
cated this type of cataloging than "standard" bibliographic cataloging of textual mate-
rials, especially when the entries include, as they must, an exhaustive physical
description of the item(s) in question. The second appendix presents twenty-five flow-
charts in which the author offers an overview of the archival sound recording database
structure. *Reviewed by Peter G. Orr.*

The Mercury Labels: A Discography. Volume I The 1945-1956 Era; Volume II The 1956-1964 Era; Volume III The 1964-1969 Era; Volume IV The 1969-1991 Era and Classical Recordings; Volume V Record and Artist Indexes.

*Compiled by Michel Ruppli and Ed Novitsky. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press
(Discographies Number 51) 1993. ISBN 0-313-27371-5 (set). $395.00 per set.*

1995 marks the 50th anniversary of Mercury Records. This exhaustive, meticulously-
researched set is a fitting tribute to a label which has not received its due credit as a
major. Ruppli and Novitsky have given us a reason to look at Mercury, if not with the
same respect as a Columbia or Warner Bros., at least with renewed appreciation for
its musical output.

In that respect *The Mercury Labels* serves a similar function to the solid, though
less ambitious history/discography *Liberty Records: A History of the Recording
Company And Its Stars, 1955-1971,* by Michael "Doc Rock" Kelly (McFarland, 1993).

But the aim here is not to present an historical narrative. There is a brief histori-
cal note in the introduction and part of the preface. Since this set is meant to be sold
separately as well, each volume repeats the above sections.

As noted above, the books are divided by era. They list not only Mercury Records,
but subsidiaries (Emarcy, Fontana, Smash, etc.), and material either leased, pur-
chased from other labels, or distributed by Mercury.

The format is sturdy: Volume V ties it all together with tables of stereo/mono
equivalent masters (complete with record number or notations such as "rejected" or
"unissued"). It also has a complete artist index for all volumes. This lists not only solo
artists, groups or orchestras, but also supporting musicians or vocalists. Each entry is
referred to the proper volume and page number. Each volume also has its own self-
contained artist index.

The set's main organization is around recording sessions/master numbers. This
may put off or daunt the casual reader, though librarians or music researchers should
pick up the organization quickly enough. The main point to remember is that you
won't find all recordings by an artist grouped together. For this reason, many libraries
may need the whole set.