

Caravan

10¢

MAY 1958



BILLY FAIER

NEWBERRY

CARAVAN

Folkmusic Magazine

#10
May 1958

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Cover photo of Billy Faier.

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THE ART OF BILLY FAIER

Seven or eight years ago Pete Seeger recorded the "Darling Corey" album. This was the first long-playing record issued that featured folk songs accompanied by the five-string banjo. This record, and Pete Seeger himself, in his many coast-to-coast personal appearances, inspired a whole generation of young people to play the five-string banjo. It seems to me that Billy Faier's new record, "The Art of the Five-String Banjo" is the most significant event for banjo players and enthusiasts since the initial appearance of "Darling Corey". A good many of us have learned to play the banjo, using a number of styles, but nowhere is there a banjo player with the imagination, the depth of feeling, and the technical ability of Billy Faier. To borrow a phrase from jazz piano buffs, Billy is a two-handed banjo player. The right hand constantly spins out new variations in exciting and variegated tempos, varying from soft and startling arpeggios to complex and exciting strums. Meanwhile the left hand is always busy, chording, hammering on and pulling off, racing to reach a chord here and a note there. This is a record which is enjoyable to anyone who loves fine music; it is warm and rich as folk music can be, it is harmonically and rhythmically well-developed, and each song displays an artist's knowledge of origins, derivations, and meanings. The selections include items from the music of the Southern Appalachians, Ireland, Israel, England, Spain, Greece, and Yugoslavia. And for good measure we are treated to Billy's own "Lute Song".

The guitar backgrounds on the album are played by Frank Hamilton, who contributes his wonderfully imaginative understanding of world music. His vocal harmonies, especially on "High Barbaree", are superb, and his guitar is a powerful support and second melodic line for Billy's lyrical banjo. In "The Last of Callahan", Frank's guitar beautifully conveys the feeling of Callahan's impending doom, while Billy plays the fiddle part (!) at break-neck speed.

It is difficult for me to find words enough to praise this record. Absolutely every song, with just one exception*, is literally a revelation of how the banjo sounds in the hands of a serious musician. Pete Seeger contributes an intelligent introductory note, and a fine capsule description of the significance of Billy's achievement. The only negative criticisms I have of this album are minor ones: some of the endings for the songs are abrupt and harsh, and the notes about the songs are adequate song-histories but provide no information about the banjo techniques displayed. It would have been more appropriate, perhaps, if Billy had written about the numbers himself. And surely Frank Hamilton deserves a little more billing than he receives in the notes, for the superb backing which he contributes. Finally, to describe the banjo as a primitive instrument is an absurd insult to the art of Billy Faier.

Weissman (2)

Let's hope that we can look forward to some more solo records by Billy Faier, and perhaps an Art of the Guitar album by Frank Hamilton.

*This exception is The Darby Ram, which is quite nice, but is not a unique or especially individual contribution to the art of the five-string banjo. In my opinion every other number in the album constitutes such a contribution.

--Dick Weissman

A BILLY FAIER DISCOGRAPHY

- Elektra 136 Banjo accompaniments on Glenn Yarbrough's "Here We Go Baby".
- Elektra 140 Guitar and banjo on "When Dalliance Was In Flower" Vol II, sung by Ed McCurdy.
- Judson J3017 Vocals and banjo on "Banjos, Banjos and More Banjos" with Eric Weissberg and Dick Weissman.
- Riverside RLP 12-813 "The Art of the Five-String Banjo" Banjo any vocals, accompanied by Frank Hamilton.*
- Tradition TLP 1027 Banjo and guitar accompaniments on "Children's Songs" sung by Ed McCurdy.

* Billy has notated six of the selections from the record "Art of the Five-String Banjo" and they have been published in booklet form by Hargail Music Press. It is titled "Billy Faier's Banjo Selections from his 'Art of the 5-String Banjo'" (#H-605) and is available from Folklore Center, 110 MacDougal Street, NYC 12 or from Panpipes, 1318 Grant Avenue, San Francisco 11, Calif. at \$1.00 per copy.

The Folk Process:

I'm gonna make an audition tape,
Take it to Riverside, take it to Riverside, take it to Riverside,
I'm gonna make an audition tape,
Take it to Riverside,
Ain't gonna study guitar no more.

BILLY FAIER & "ART OF THE 5-STRING BANJO"

I don't see why anyone --banjo player or listener-- should buy "The Art of the Five String Banjo". If you are a listener you will find it difficult to just sit back and enjoy the sounds of "folk music" here. And if you are a banjo picker you will scarcely sit still in the face of this onslaught of ability and brilliance and you may be left to feel inadequate in your own banjo attempts. This record has no relaxed pace --it is an electrifying thing-- so if you "get with it" you have to keep jumping along with Billy.

In its basic concept, this record is not entertainment --but neither is it educational-- for all the various numbers played here have been communicated elsewhere already, and in the original spirit for which they were intended by old time fiddlers, European folk dance orchestras, gin-hall swing bands, and in the parlors of not quite sophisticated middle-class ladies entertaining their visitors with a piano recital of music from romantic old Spain.

Perhaps what we have here is a display of virtuosity, but if you just look at it that way you are going to miss a lot. I prefer to think of this record as a presentation of Billy's vision, which seems to be looking at the world of music through banjo-colored glasses.

In a sense, his approach is reminiscent of the one that Fred Van Eps and Paul Caldwell have shared us --yet their way appears traditional by comparison to Billy's-- whose only tradition seemed to evolve by sitting down in a room somewhere with that banjo and trying to work out all those nice sounds he heard, without too much attention to how they were originally made.

Throughout this record the limitations on the music presented are those limits of the banjo, and the cruel fact that Billy only has ten fingers which can only move so rapidly. But one senses that these limitations have been exploited for all they are worth and then a good bit more --in the direction which Billy has chosen to explore. The pace would be more furious yet and there would be many more trills and triplets if he possibly could fit them in.

Part of the excitement of this record stems from the tension created by encountering so many little delicate twists and embellishments in the midst of this high speed production. One often senses the struggle going on here, to "get it right" while keeping it moving. In the "Last of Callahan" Billy has really carried off the trick and made it sound easy while remaining fantastic.

At this point in the race, I think Billy can play faster and clearer than he can sing and sometimes he sings as if he were furious at this fact.

When Frank and Billy play together, there are certain moments sel-

Cohen (2)

dom encountered in folk music. There is a really wonderful game of tag going on -- while one chases up the banjo the other chases down the guitar. There is something merry that Billy is trying to express although he often sounds angry as he expresses it.

Generally I don't waste so much breath over records, but in this case I felt there is something worthwhile going on. The general effect is still bewildering to me, but is worth examining further.

The Art of Billy Faier's Five String Banjo is a demonstration of an individual's approach and investigation of his own direction in music and is valid as such. It will probably influence many to follow the same lines, but since we are not dealing with traditional material it would be much nicer if each person would follow his own line, or at least try to find out for himself as Billy has done.

--John Cohen
April 1958

(for an explanation see page 27)

Where To... in California

Concerts: Stan Wilson, May 10th in Palo Alto, May 11th in Berkeley
Guy Carawan will be touring on the West Coast through May 31st. Check locally for dates and places.

Radio: Berkeley KPFA Billy Faier's "The Story of Folkmusic" on Thurs at 4:45 PM, and Sat at 5 PM.

Berkeley KPFA Barry Olivier's "Midnight Special" Sat 11:30 PM
Los Angeles, Skip Weshner does a show on FM which features folkmusic, so I am told, but I have no definite information.
Oakland KAFE (FM) 98.1 mg "Solo in Hi-Fi" (time unk) will program folkmusic. "Midnight Special" will feature requests, including folkmusic, and where possible, live and taped interviews with folksingers.

Instruction: Billy Faier c/o Panpipes Music Store, 1318 Grant Avenue, San Francisco 11, Cal. GARfield 1-8696 (guitar, banjo & mandolin)

Contacts:

San Francisco: Billy Faier (address above)

Jack's Record Cellar, 400 Haight St, SF 17

Los Angeles: Boulevard Book House, 10634 W Pico Blvd. LA 64

Folksings:

San Francisco: Thursday nights at "The Brighton Express"*

Berkeley: Wednesday nights at "The Bagel Shop"*

*for details contact Billy Faier

Menlo Park, Calif: open house at Jack Franklin's, 4204 Fair Oaks Ave.
Anyone in the area is welcome to come by.

----- WANTED DESPERATELY!

The March 1958 issue of Caravan. Will trade for an October issue.
Contact Peter Stevens through The Folklore Center, 110 MacDougal St.
NYC 12.

-advt

The Folklore Center

110 MacDougal St.
NYC 12, NY

Announces

Free mail and message service
for folksingers

The Folklore Center has been taking messages and forwarding mail, for the past year, in a desultory manner. We have now bought a special file and we will be glad to serve as a mail drop and forwarding agency in a more regular manner befitting folksingers. Please don't hesitate to use this service.

* * *

Announces

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MacColl: Personal Choice	.75
" : Shuttle & Cage	.50
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Galvin: Irish Songs of Resistance	1.50
Get On Board	1.00
Elizabethan Song Book	1.25
I Know Where I'm Going	.75
Penguin Part Song Book	.95
Tumbalalaika	.75
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Announces

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Folkways	\$3.25 and \$4.25

* * *

Announces

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* * *

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Ginandes: French Trad. Songs	\$2.25
Warner: American Songs and Ballads	\$2.25

Only a few left.

* * * * *

I have reprints of
Carter Family records
in stock. I will list
them in the next issue.

* * * * *

A bound copy of all back issues of
Caravan and its precursor, CHOOOG,
will be one file soon.

* * *

Back copies of SING OUT and People's
Songs bulletins on sale. Also a
complete file.

Folklore Center gift certificates are available in any demonination.

politics and folk music

One of the favorite myths current in folk song circles today is that the "political" folk song is a Communist invention. Not only is this an inaccurate reading of history, but it gives the Communist Party entirely too much credit for a phenomenon which is at least as old as the most ancient folk song.

This fact was called sharply to mind again upon reading Roger Lass' "Chronicle of the Urban Folksinger" in the March issue of *Caravan*. Just as Marxists--utopian, scientific and self-styled--invented neither politics nor folksong, it is also fallacious to attribute the wedding of the two to those who have adopted the name of Marx for their philosophy and program.

History shows us that the use of folk song for an immediate political purpose dates back to the dawn of humanity when warring tribes invoked chants and incantations to gird themselves for battle against their foes. The inspirational, agitational and educational properties of folk song were ancient history before Moses led the Jews out of bondage in Egypt and while some of our Nordic ancestors were solving the housing problem of their day with cooperative caves.

Contemporary folk song, it is generally conceded, dates back roughly to the 13th and 14th Centuries--at least in Anglo-Saxon England which is one of the two main sources of our own folk heritage. (The other, our African heritage, more than likely goes back much further, since the civilization of African Negroes is far older than that of the British Isles. (It was a civilization largely without permanent records, however, and therefore is more difficult to trace.)

A study of early English folk song is highly instructive in this connection. A.L. Lloyd's brilliant documentation of the essentially political origin of The Cutty Wren in 14th Century England (see The Singing Englishman) clearly shows the fundamental social roots of this ancestor to our own Billy Barlow. Even such a classic as Four Nights Drunk originally Our Goodman (Child #274) has its origin in the Scottish Wars and the vain attempt to restore Bonnie Prince Charlie to the throne of England.

And here I am speaking of politics only in its narrowest sense--that is the actual organized attempt to affect a change in government. If we examine the old ballads from a social-political standpoint, the meaning of many more songs becomes clear. It hardly takes an over-active imagination to see the conflict between peasant and Lord in such songs as Wraggle-Taggle Gypsies (Child #200) or Matty Groves (Child #81) or the Robin Hood ballads.

But why limit it to England? American folk song--both inherited

Silber (2).

and indigenous--is filled with examples of the adaptation of folk song to political ends.

As early as 1733, a song was publicly burned in New York City for commenting rather unfavorably on the practices of the British-appointed governor. In the years to follow, countless ditties and ballads were employed in the growing struggle between the increasingly independent colonies and Mother England. In 1768, John Dickinson wrote his famous "Liberty Song"--to the tune of "Hearts of Oak"--and it shortly became something of an anthem for the Sons of Liberty. The song was so popular and so effective that it then became the basis for a battle of the ballads which lasted a number of years, in which rebel and Tory exchanged barbs in the form of parodies to the "Liberty Song".

The most cursory examination of the American electoral process will reveal an abundance of political folk song dating back to George Washington. From "Fair and Free Elections" (a protest against the Alien and Sedition Acts) in 1798 to "Lincoln and Liberty" in 1860 and "I Like Ike" in 1952, songs have been used to win votes. In 19th Century America, most of these songs were adaptations of folk tunes. Tunes like "Rosin the Beau", "Yankee Doodle", "Girl I Left Behind Me" and "Old Dan Tucker" were among the most popular for campaign songs.

Various causes in history have also produced a wealth of political song. Abolition and the struggle against slavery produced scores of widely-popular songs; woman suffrage, temperance, populism, socialism, have also been the subject of numerous songs.

In the 20th Century, the greatest single basis for political folk song has been the emergence of the trade union movement. In the hey-day of the IWW, every good Wobbly faithfully carried his "Little Red Song-book" along with his Wobbly card. Here he could read and sing the biting, hard-hitting lyrics written by Joe Hill, Ralph Chaplin, T-Bone Slim, and scores of other early proletarian song-writers.

Among the miners, people like Aunt Molly Jackson, Jim Garland, and Sara Ogan, began to write songs born out of their own experiences in the hills of Kentucky. In the textile mills of the South, where workers were striking against intolerable conditions, people like Ella Mae Wiggin began to fashion new words to the traditional mountain tunes in order to express something of what their life was about.

It is this tradition from which contemporary political song springs. The Almanac Singers, People's Songs, People's Artists, The Weavers, SING OUT, and every other group which has ever used the medium of song to comment on the world of today has based itself on this part of our American heritage.

To the extent that Communists at any given point were in tune with mass sentiment on vital issues, they too utilized the political folk song to win popular support. And certainly in the late 1930's and shortly after the war, as well, many of the major causes for which Americans fought had the active participation (and sometimes, leadership) of left-wingers.

Silber (3)

To make it appear that the political folk song, even in recent times, is largely a Communist invention is to cast into the shadows one of the most important parts of our folk song heritage. The tradition of the topical song--from Mother Goose to Calypso and from "Yankee Doodle" to "Solidarity Forever" is far too precious to be made the property of any one political trend.

The political folk song belongs to all of us--and maybe if more of us exercised our rights in using it and developing it, we would be helping to make America a better place to live in.

--Irwin Silber

"We enjoys the Shanty Boys"

Record Review

Harlan Ellison

"MARTHA SCHLAMME sings Folk Songs of Many Lands"

Tanya Gould, piano

Vanguard VRS-9019

A note: the comments anent this record are based on a completely personal attitude, delivered with all due respect for Miss Schlamme's beauty and talent and reputation, but...

A comment: the attempt on these sides to deliver folk songs of Israel, Austria, Norway, Russia, Ireland, America and several splinter-dialect origins, comes off very badly indeed, on the purest of grounds: lack of warmth, absence of individual styling, and a distinct impression that while Miss Schlamme might very well be at east and at home on the concert stage delivering the "Bell Song" from Lakme, her application of operatic technique to what must be essentially unpolished material, is sterile. Much too long a sentence.

An explanation: the birdlike trillings and pipings of Martha Schlamme's voice applied to the earthy phrases of the sod-tenders of Israel, is nearly offensive. It is vaguely comparable to Kathryn Grayson diddly-bopping in an Ella Fitzgerald style. These songs were meant to be sung with changes of beat and syncopation at times, at others with a calculated disregard for meter, but an overall sincerity and warmth.

This sincerity is lacking in Miss Schlamme's performance. She is an accomplished concert soprano, and trying to cookie-cut folk songs to her temperament is almost a cardinal offence. There are some bright and witty, some wise and sensitive, some mournful and pleading songs on the record, but each is delivered with the sameness and--yes--sterility of a die-stamper on an assembly line.

I cannot in all fairness recommend this record, save to those who reveled in Jane Powell's warbling, or who wish to be treated to "operatic folk singing". The piano backgrounds are merely competent. No notes were missed.

--Harlan Ellison

A Letter Printed in Whole

Mary Corby
55 Taylor Avenue
East Keansburg, N.J.

Is Folk Music Becoming A "Cult"?

Dear Lee:

In the field of folk-music I am an outsider. I am not a folk-musician--I play no musical instrument. I am not a folk-singer--I have not much of a voice, and I sing only for myself or my family because singing is something we have always done. We could no more stop singing, I think, than we could stop eating or drinking. I don't collect records--I can't afford them. I do collect songs, but only if I personally like them. I can't imagine wasting space, time, or memory on some of the things people in the folk-music field seem to go in for. I guess when you come right down to it, I'm just one of the "folk" that all the shouting seems to be about. Perhaps, then, being one of the folk, my opinion may have some validity.

Whatever other definitions of folk-music there may be, to me, it seems to be that music that has been passed on from one generation to another and kept alive and loved because the people who passed on this music, like those who learned it, wanted it kept alive. They sang these songs not because they were "ethnic" or "rare", but simply because they liked them, and they fitted some mood of the moment. They changed in the passing on, not because some singer decided the songs sounded better when changed, but because of the natural short-comings of people's memories. When I learned a song called "The Four Marys" from Granny Campbell, did I sing it years later as a grown woman the way she sang it, or the way I remembered it? Since the "official" song is called "The Queen's Maries" and had a somewhat different tune from the one I remembered, whose memory was at fault, Granny Campbell's or mine? Or was it the person who first sang the song for Granny Campbell? Perhaps it was the one who set down the "official" version. Who knows or who can tell? Songs are changed, that's all. But I agree with Roger Abrahams remarks in the April issue about change in folk-songs.

A slight aside to Ellen Stekert--"The Three Sisters" is my own title for the singing game that was printed in Caravan under that name. I never heard any title for it, and when we wanted to play the game we would say "Let's play The Three Sisters". So far as I know it is not current as a game. After all, it is a long time since I was a child. Does anyone know how it got the name of "Babylon"? What does Babylon have to do with a song about some sisters and robbers?

The preceding paragraph leads me into something that rankles with me. Like too many other cults, the folk-music cult has developed its own language. Your writers are constantly using words that have no real meaning to those outside the field. Among these is the practice of calling a song Child #___. I assume from this that you mean a certain song is version no. ___ of some original theme. Yet this does not seem to fit the facts. Many of the songs so labelled are quite dissimilar. How can they have a common origin?

Corby (2)

Or am I merely showing my lack of knowledge of a specialized field? In the April issue, the note concerning Paul Clayton says... "Paul had a liking for Bluegrass as a change from Greensleeving..." Now I ask you! Does this mean, as I might take it, that "Paul had a liking for skiffle type music as a change from the traditional balladeering."? If it does mean this, why not say so. If it doesn't mean this then why not say just what it is supposed to mean.

All of this is only one outsider's opinion, so I don't suppose it will cause any change in the esoteric language used by most of your contributors.

I meant to comment on the articles by Sandy Paton (and there's a brace of fine old Scots names!) and his remarks about the songs he heard sung in Glasgow. Does no one any more sing the old songs we used to sing? I suppose Burns' songs are not considered "folk", though what could be more "folk" than Burns, I don't know. He was one of the people and wrote in their language, and his songs were written for old and traditional melody. Didn't anyone sing any of the translations from the Gaelic (if not the originals) that we used to know? There was no mention of "Nut-Brown Maiden", "Turn Ye To Me", "The Mist-Covered Mountains of Home", and so many others. From all I can tell, this "cult" of folk-music has degenerated into a contest to see who can sing the most novelties without any regard for the true worth of the songs. It's all right for the experts to turn up their noses, but unhappily for their "expertness" the people go right on singing the songs they love.

I still enjoy reading Caravan, Lee. It's just that the experts need to be told a few things occasionally.

Mary

P.S. WQXR does not have Folk Music Around the World from 2 to 5 on Sunday. I've been listening.

Ed note: "Child # ___" refers to the index number of the ballad as collected in by F.J. Child in his work "English and Scottish Popular Ballads". We hope to have an article on Bluegrass in the next issue which should explain this term more thoroughly than space permits here. The listing for WQXR's show was given as "2.5". This was a typo for "2.05". The program was still on the air at this time a few weeks ago. Can anyone give further information?

CARAVAN Folkmusic Magazine is published monthly by Lee Shaw, Apt 5P, 780 Greenwich Street, New York 14, NY. It is sold for 10¢, ten issues for \$1.00. In New York it can be purchased at Folklore Center, 110 MacDougal St, NY 12. In Los Angeles it is sold at Boulevard Book House 10634 W Pico Blvd. LA 64. In non-dollar countries subs are available from John Brunner, 144 Fellows Rd, London NW 3, England, at 6d per copy. Caravan depends on its readers for its contents. We cannot pay for material but we'll give you a copy of the issue in which your work appears, and our thanks. If you have something to say about folkmusic say it in writing. All letters are considered for publication unless clearly marked otherwise (a DNQ for Do Not Quote will suffice). Opinions expressed in Caravan do not necessarily represent the opinions of the publisher or the editorial staff, and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the magazine, except insofar as we believe in freedom of opinion.

Editor: Lee Shaw Associate editor: Roger Lass

Joe Bennardello

A WORD OR TWO ABOUT AN "INSIDER"

About three weeks ago I was down at the Folklore Center and I overheard a conversation between Israel Young (Prop.) and two other chaps. They were discussing the Hootenanny, "Midnight Special", and they were evaluating the quality of the performers. One fellow thought the Harvesters were rather good and he expressed this to Izzy. Izzy replied, "I didn't think they were too good. First of all, their banjo player was out of tune and secondly, where do they come off singing the Ox Driver's Song? None of them has ever worked a day in their lives and here they are describing how tough things were in those days when Ox Driving teams made their treks across the country."

It would be the understatement of the year if I were to say that this just moved me slightly. It shocked me! How could a guy like Israel Young (supposedly a folk expert) question the right of the Harvesters to sing a work song? So they may not have worked a day in their lives (or so Izzy says). What has this got to do with their singing a work song? Do we abandon a song just because we haven't had the actual experience that the song relates? If this were so, I'm sure we'd have very few folk songs, and Izzy would be out of business.

Israel went on to say that he likes a performer who expresses the right spirit and feeling about what he's doing. He claims he doesn't really place too much emphasis on the professional quality of a performer. It's attitude and feeling that count most. This is fine and I heartily agree. On the basis of this, one may safely assume that one reason Izzy did not enjoy the Harvesters' performance was that they did not relate this spiritual feeling to him. Evidently, the other people at the hoot did get this feeling or they wouldn't have applauded for an encore by the Harvesters. (No, I'm not one of the Harvesters, and in fact I don't even know them. My only concern as a folk enthusiast is folk music and its future. If everybody expressed Izzy's views, I'm sure folk music would be forever lost.)

Izzy expounded a bit and said that there were too many groups coming about lately. He said, "Nowadays everybody is a folk singer and every group is trying to be another Weavers". So? Is that bad? I think it's great! Let's spread this wonderful world of folk music. Let it reach every soul in this country. Let's have everybody singing and everybody playing an instrument. Let's have thousands of groups. Let's make this a singing country and exchange ideas and thoughts through songs. Why not let everybody leave their TV sets and join in a little folk singing? People can be creative--just give them a chance, and outlet. My God, Izzy, don't stunt the growth of folk music -- let it grow! I'm all for getting folk music back into the hands of the people, where it came from originally and where it belongs. Everybody is a folksinger and everybody has the right to be a folk singer.

--Joe Bennardello

March 27, 1958

GUY CARAWAN

Will Be Touring
SEPT 26 - DEC 27

The following areas will be covered.

Sept. 26 - Oct. 8th
Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico

Oct. 9 - Oct. 15th
Texas and Louisiana

Oct. 16 - Oct. 26th
Oklahoma and Colorado

Oct. 27 - Nov. 11th
Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri

Nov. 12 - Nov. 24th
Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota

Nov. 25 - Dec. 1st
British Columbia and Washington

Dec. 2 - Dec. 7th
Oregon

Dec. 8 - Dec. 14th
Northern California

Dec. 15 - Dec. 27th
Southern California

MANAGEMENT: Paul Endicott
30532 Sheridan
Garden City, Mich.

Garfield 2-7580

Advt.

HAVE RIGHT BACK AT THEE, ED BADEAUX

I think that Mr. Badeaux is taking issue not so much with the things I have written in my article (Chronicle of the Urban Folksinger; Caravan, March 1958) as with his own semantic mis-conceptions. He has imputed things to me that I did not say at all. Aside from his gratuitously angry chip-on-the-shoulder attitude toward me and the "academic mind" (which by the way I certainly am not), the following might be mentioned:

a) I did not say that the younger generation in the South is "going to hell". I merely stated that there has been a culturally determined shift in the focus of their musical interest, away from the old traditional Child ballads, etc., to Hillbilly music and Rock'n'Roll. I did not "slough off" anything, or deprecate.

As far as my not paying enough attention (none, in fact) to Hillbilly music, especially Bluegrass, in my article, I plead guilty. This is a subject which I would like to take up sometime in the future, but I will just mention here in agreement with Mr. Badeaux the tremendous indebtedness of today's folksinger to the people he mentions, as well as Bill Monroe, the Stanley Brothers, Rena and Smiley, Larry Richardson, and so on. The interaction of Bluegrass and urban folk music is too complex to deal with in a short space, as is the rise of such stylistic syntheses as the Shanty Boys. More about this at a later date. Suffice to say that I am not in any way deprecating Hillbilly music--I play it myself, and I wouldn't if I didn't like it.

b) About the "musty old" Library of Congress records: That is a matter of taste, I suppose, but I would a hell of a lot rather listen to Rufus Crisp or Justus Begley than some of the semi-competent frailers and robot-like Scruggs-pickers who grace Washington Square.

c) Concerning the Spanish Civil War and Mr. Badeaux's ill-concealed allegations as to my evident Fascist leanings: I was also the Hell on OUR side during the war, and I fully realize that we fought Hitler and Mussolini. I am also as aware that both these parties aided Franco during the Civil War. However, these two are irrelevant to the point I was making. What I was referring to as the Myth of Heroization is the subsequent idealization of the thoroughly undignified mess of petty squabbling and factionalism among the Left-wing splinter groups, which, according to Orwell's (and my) feelings contributed at least in part to the Loyalist defeat. Enough said. My point in the article was merely a parenthesis, as is this comment. I merely resent Mr. Badeaux' attitude as much as he resents mine.

d) Finally, in reference to my "attitude" and my evidently appalling lack of humility; I do not consider it necessary to preface every remark I make with an apology for the fact that I am not omniscient, nor, on the other hand, do I set myself up as an infallible authority.

Lass (2)

I am presenting a subject as I see it, and there is no need for me to labor that point in print. As far as humbleness is concerned, the folk are no more humble than anyone else, nor am I.

--Roger Lass

Letter excerpt

Cynthia Gooding

AN OBJECTION, ED BADEAUX

I object very strongly to Ed Badeaux's closing paragraph about Roger Lass's article. The specific quote is: "...I wish they (the scholars) would adopt a folk approach, one of humbleness and of willingness to learn..."

What new myth has been created about the "folk" now? They are as pigheaded as anybody else who thinks he's right! And a scholar who does not clearly state his opinions is cheating just as a folk singer would be cheating if he sang and then looked about at the audience 'humbly', to see whether or not his version had been found acceptable.

It sounds as if Mr. Badeaux had been working for Arthur Godfrey and wants to keep his job as well as to convince himself that the humble approach - the 'off the top of my head' approach is the best. It's the wishy-washys who are bores, because you never can get hold of their argument. They keep changing to please or suit the audience.

Mr. Lass's categories were arbitrary in the extreme, they were amusing -- and deadly in that there was no 'good' category, which would mean that the others were 'bad'.

As for "it is nice to see the academic mind take an interest in folk songs...", who does Mr. Badeaux think invented this revival? I'll answer. The scholars who went out with their paper and pencil to note down songs that everyone else in the late Victorian culture thought were vulgar in the extreme.

I feel better now.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Gooding

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:

NYC

Every Sunday night, from 8 til 10:30, a Song Fest is held by the American Youth Hostel in their building at 14 W 8th Street (just off Fifth Avenue). The charge is 50¢ to non-AYH'ers, to members 35¢. Participating performers are admitted free. The Song Fest includes group singing and solos. It's all under the leadership of Barry Kornfeld.

"Of Maids and Mistresses" sung by Tom Kines
With additional guitar and recorder accompaniments by Fred Hellerman

Within the rigid structures of the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic ballad form, Tom Kines herein presents sixteen most pleasant story-songs. There is the same strength and weakness displayed in Mr Kines' style and interpretations that may be found in the work of Cynthia Gooding, and as far as it goes, it is rewarding, and mildly listenable.

On the up-tempo numbers--such as "Banks of the Virgie-O"--Kines injects the faint ratchet-tone of virility and insinuation that lends the un-tag-able extra to ballads of this sort.

On the wistful and sorrowing bands, he whispers and hugs the minors like a Porsche at the Mille Millia.

Many of the numbers are seldom-heard, and all are delivered with a careful attention to pronunciation and timbre. The guitar work is "hoked up", more sophisticated than would be expected in the true folk idiom, but for all that, fitting and proper for the approach of Mr Kines.

When the last band has played, the record leaves a feeling of good cheer and satisfaction. If you enjoy this sort of beat-beat-beat ballad, Kines has something to offer you, definitely.

--Harlan Ellison

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Journal of The Kentucky Folklore Society
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Authentic songs, tales, riddles, games, and other lore
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MESSAGE FROM THE WEST

At the end of my last message I mentioned that I was starting a weekly community Folksinging deal at a place called The Brighton Express in San Francisco. Since then we have had four nights (Thursday) of it and I would like to tell about them. Now, there is nothing startling about a bunch of people getting together and singing, especially to the New York singers, but during the four months I spent in New York last spring I never saw it happen once. Of course I didn't get to go everywhere either so I may have missed it. Also, I am and was then, as anxious as the next fellow to be heard solo and so I'm sure I didn't contribute much to "community singing" when I was there. Anyway, the first singing night at The Brighton Express was a tremendous experience for me (aside from the fact that I got the take of 50¢ a head). It vividly recalled to my mind the Good Old Days in New York when I first got interested in folksinging. Every Friday night Allen and Jean Block would lead singing at Gabe Katz's studio on East Tenth Street and it was there that I learned my first bunch of songs. (It was an event when Tom Paley showed up). I really had forgotten what a tremendous experience it is to be a part of 30 to 50 people singing together and I warmly recommend it to my contemporaries in New York as a tonic for their possibly jaded feelings about Folk Music.

Last week Archie Green and I went to see Aunt Molly Jackson in Sacramento. She is hale and hearty at 78 years of age and still vitally interested in the Miners' Struggles. We captured some interesting song variants on tape from her along with her highly colorful comments and stories about the songs. She lives in a mountain type cabin (in the middle of Sacramento, mind you--all level ground). The walls are plastered with pictures of herself, F.D.R., and various and assorted movie stars from the Sunday supplements, and she is engaged in writing a book of Religious Songs at present. The result of the visit, in one respect, is that we learned that Aunt Molly still has much material to offer, not just union and mining songs either, and I am going back next week to see her again. The reason I mention all the little details about her, aside from general interest, is that the picture I have always had of her (and I think most other city folksingers) was completely wrong. Why, I wonder?

Glory be, the "Art of the Five String Banjo" (Riverside 12-813) and "Banjos, Banjos and more Banjos" (Judson 3017) are in the stores. I don't know about you, but I've been waiting for almost a year.

MUSIC AS A NON-COMPETITIVE ACTIVITY - The Thursday night folksinging at The Brighton Express was so successful that I started the same thing at the "Bagel Shop" in Berkeley on Wed. nights. The local young folksingers were so miffed at having to pay good money to be led by me in singing that instead of going home and mumbling in their various beards they did the fastest job of organizing a group that I have ever seen.

Faier (2)

They gathered on the street outside and offered some damn good competition (musically speaking) but made it impossible to continue the activities inside, so I had to go out and give them a very stern lecture (imagine--me) upon which they slunk off down the street a ways, sung for another ten minutes and then went home.

--Billy Faier

15 April 58

Record Review

"THE THREE RAVENS, Songs of Folk and Minstrelsy out of Elizabethan England" sung by Alfred Deller, with Desmond Dupré accompanying on guitar and lute. Vanguard VRS-479

If you're at all interested in the songs of Elizabethan England, this is for you. Alfred Deller is a counter-tenor (male alto) with a beautifully pure voice. He sings in the formal concert manner, but with a rare ease and naturalness. This record is like a fine old tapestry; its characters are the graceful, noble figures in armour and the fair maidens in silks and laces, the fragile dream-like people who might die of unrequited love. It is not folk music in the terms we usually apply, and Vanguard makes no claim that it is. It is not the music of weather-beaten old men who sing around a hearthfire, or of weary women who rock cradles or churn butter while they sing. There is nothing rough-hewn or earthy in it. It is far more the music of the professional minstrel, singing for the Lord and Lady of the Manor, in their high hall. And it is quite beautiful.

--LS

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WITH MY EAR TO THE GROUND

7th March, 1958

Dear Mr MacColl,

I've been told by my friends Eric Winter and Michael Myer that on Sunday and Wednesday of this week you announced to the audience at the Princess Louise I had insulted Harry Cox in my column in CARAVAN.

I don't know why you said this, since I have never mentioned Harry Cox in any of my articles; I know Harry is not a West Country man, but I presume what you refer to is the sentence in which I said:

"It's fascinating, true, to hear a seventy-five-year-old Dorset farm labourer creaking out a ballad that's been lost otherwise for fifty years, just as it is to hear a convict work-gang chopping to the accompaniment of a song you can only learn by going up the river'."

I hope it was only by coincidence that I was at the Louise on neither of the occasions when you publicly stated this was a reference to Harry. That I would never dream of insulting him in print is beside the point; the fact is, I didn't, and the example given was chosen as much at random as was the convict work-gang.

I'm extremely sorry you did this; it doesn't do me or CARAVAN any good, and I'd be glad if you would correct the false impression you've given - I think it deserves a withdrawal under the same circumstances in which it was made.

Yours sincerely,
(John K.H. Brunner),
C A R A V A N

I greatly regret the necessity which has led to the publication of this letter to Ewan MacColl, but unfortunately this is the only course open to me. I should perhaps give details of the events leading up to it; regular readers of this magazine who saw my column in the February issue will recognise the passage from which my quotation comes.

I apologise particularly to Eric Winter of SING and Michael Myer for involving them; however, at the time of writing that letter, I knew of what had happened only by their courtesy in informing me. Since then, another friend of mine has taken the trouble to write to me and say: "By the way, Ewan MacColl called your mild statements in CARAVAN 'an unprincipled attack on singers who can't hit back'." I confess the reason for all this escapes me, as it does many other people of whom I have inquired.

At the Princess Louise hootenanny the Sunday following the writing of the above-quoted letter, I approached Mr MacColl personally

and put to him the points raised in it. I do not claim to be able to recall the exact words he used in reply - there were too many of them, and some of them were unprintable. Broadly, though, this was what he said.

In the first place, if I had not insulted Harry Cox I had insulted a tradition, because some of the finest British songs come from Dorset and Norfolk (this of course is indisputable; likewise, some of the richest folk material in America has been collected from convict work-gangs). Secondly, I had "jumped into print" on a subject about which I knew "b---r all" (I quote), and it was the responsibility of people who knew better to contradict me.

In my submission, these two points are totally irrelevant. In the same column I had in fact specifically disclaimed any pretensions to being an authority on folk music (CARAVAN, February 1958, page 20, lines 19-20); and if anyone so regards me I must disillusion them. I do not claim, and have never claimed, to be more than a very interested student. But I am convinced the argument regarding "authenticity" in folksong in connection with which this matter arose is a valid one, and that conviction is subscribed to by many people whose status in the field is considerable.

I therefore wish to make two apologies: first, to that distinguished Norfolk (not Dorset) singer Harry Cox, not for insulting him - something I did not do - but for many people having been told that I insulted him; secondly, to the readers of CARAVAN for taking up so much of the magazine's space on an essentially rather trivial matter.

When a folksinger makes a record for a commercial label, it seldom causes a major sensation. Even with the current enthusiasm for skiffle and rock-and-roll, which has introduced many genuine folk and country-and-western artists, not to mention many good rhythm-and-blues groups, to a larger public than they might otherwise have had, sensations normally remain the prerogative of the professional with the most highly powered publicity organs.

But - some two weeks ago at the time of writing - a record was issued in Britain, by a folksinger, which bids fair to make a very great impact on the public.

It's on the Pye-Nixa label; it's by Guy Carawan, who made the recording shortly before he returned to the States; and it's his version of "Talking Atomic Blues", titled on the actual record "Old Man Atom".

(I sincerely hope no one needs to be told what "Talking Atomic" is about; it has been well known in this country either under that title or as "Talking Radiation" for several years, though this is its first committal to record so far as I know. A Californian newspaperman called Vern Partlow wrote the number after interviewing Einstein about the Hiroshima bomb, and you can sum up its theme effectively by quoting from it this line:

"You can choose between the Brotherhood of Man...and smithereens.")

I'm not slighting Guy by contrasting him with the present-day pro-

John Brunner (3)

professional pop-singer, believe me; the number of averagely incompetent "singers" who have been built up artificially to "star" status in this country is beyond belief. In effect, I'd say his performance was actually professional in the best sense of the word - polished, skilful and impressive.

Whether the disc will achieve the commercial success it so richly merits is open to question; at the time of writing it hasn't been broadcast, which is normally the way a recording makes the greatest impact on the public. The staid B.B.C. states that it has not been banned, but any disc-jockey wishing to play it would have to ask permission to make sure it is played "in the right context" - whatever that may mean! - while the major commercial station, Radio Luxembourg, say that "they may play it". I'm indebted for this information to Maurice Burman's column in the Melody Maker; he is the paper's regular writer on radio topics, and in a recent column devoted entirely to this record he stated - along with the above facts - that it was "artistically performed in a folk and blues manner" (agreed!) and that it should be played every day on the air.

The Melody Maker has been giving this disc excellent coverage; the week it appeared they ran a large picture of Guy, together with a caption describing the record, and also a double paragraph in the editor's column reporting its launching. Humphrey Lyttelton (for the benefit of our American readers, one of our foremost jazz trumpeters) applauded it as the first song expressive of a constructive opinion on a topical subject to appear in this way since "We're Gonna Hang Out the Washing on the Siegfried Line" early in World War II. I'd like to express a pious and personal hope that the more recent song doesn't meet with the same fate as did the earlier; it wasn't long after the latter's appearance that the British and French forces were rolled up like a carpet by the Germans, and the singing grew a little forced.

The backing is a very enjoyable rendering of "Michael Row the Boat Ashore", also a song we had the pleasure of hearing Guy do in person while he was with us. To anyone and everyone who combines a liking for folk-type material with concern for the state of our extremely bloody modern world, I won't have to recommend the record; to anyone else I can only say, "Hear it - and think. Carefully."

Readers may recall that I made brief mention of a Liverpool Irishman from Cambridge, by name Stan Kelly, in my report of the ceilidh given by Eric Winter of SING prior to Guy's return home. On 17th March the B.B.C. broadcast a very good half-hour programme about him in a series called "People Today". The producer was Sasha Moorson, who has also been responsible for many excellent broadcasts by Alan Lomax.

The introductory note to the programme in the Radio Times summed Stan up as "folksinger and mathematician", which is a very fair description. Hailing from the Irish section of Liverpool, he learned the guitar and many of his songs there, studied maths and helped to pay his way through Cambridge University by organising a skiffle

John Brunner (4)

group (now the Folksong Club). Currently he lives in Cambridge with his family and works in London with a firm specialising in office automation, managing to combine this with a good deal of work in the folksong field. A remarkable combination - but then, he is plainly a remarkable young man.

Likewise a fine singer.

In my last column I promised a report of a Ballads and Blues Association social which was being held slightly too late for my deadline. I regret to report that on the whole it turned out much less well than I hoped. Most people who attended, I gather, anticipated something on the lines of a party; in actual fact, it was little more than another session like those at the Louise, with a group of singers performing together or separately before a static audience.

Speaking personally, I enjoyed most of all some excellent songs from A.L. Lloyd - but then, I feel he usually manages to steal any show when he's around. Bert Lloyd, as he is generally called, is a solidly built man, rather bald, with a most infectious and charming smile, and his knowledge of the folk music field is of course encyclopedic. When he sings, he usually puts one hand up to his face as though thinking carefully about every word, and he delivers songs bawdy and not so bawdy in a rather high voice, shaking his head disarmingly if a line momentarily escapes his memory. He can be heard on a good many records if you're not lucky enough to catch him in person - I'm particularly fond of the group of sea-shanties he did on Topic with Ewan MacColl and Alf Edwards: the one called "The Black Ball Line". (Incidentally, readers who saw the film of "Moby Dick" will remember him as the shanty-man in that.)

I might draw your attention to the fact that he's editor of a new and very good bi-monthly magazine called Recorded Folk Music, which costs 1/- (1/4 by post) from Collet's Holdings Ltd., 44-45 Museum St., London WC 1, which I'd like to recommend to anyone not yet getting it. I don't know the American subscription rates; 25¢ should certainly bring a copy, though. The March-April (current) issue features "American Folk Song: The Present Situation", by A.L. Lloyd; "Jazz and Folk Music" by Eric Hobsbawm, and many record reviews.

In the next column I hope to have the collaboration of Sandy Paton for a survey of the London folk music scene in general, and a discussion of various points raised in past issues. I shall also be covering something completely different from anything I've written about in earlier columns, but I daren't give details at this stage because I haven't the shadow of an idea how it will turn out!

John K.H. Brunner,
London,
March 1958.

"We enjoys the Shanty Boys"

THE FOLKLORE CENTER
presents

Tony Saletan
Folksinger with guitar

Barry Kornfeld
folksongs and instrumentals
5-string banjo--12 string guitar

on Saturday, May 17th, 1958 - 8:30 PM
at Carnegie Chapter Hall - 7th Avenue and 57th Street

Tony Saletan is one of the top folksingers in Boston. He is noted for his fine voice and guitar back up, his song leading abilities, and his introduction of many popular folk tunes such as "Michael Row The Boat Ashore", "Kumbayah", and "Alabama Bound" #2. Altho he has appeared in Carnegie Hall, his appearances in NY are few and far between. Thus this is a rare opportunity for Gotham folksingers to hear Tony at length. Some of his other appearances include Jordan Hall, Boston - Swarthmore & Oberlin colleges and his own TV show in Boston.

Barry Kornfeld has been picking banjo and guitar (and most of the fretted instruments featuring his latest fetish, the 12-string guitar) around the NY Scene for some time now. Thanks to his songleading and co-ordination abilities he is Director of Folkmusic for the American Youth Hostel in NY and Buck's Rock Work Camp. He has appeared at two NY Folksingers Guild Concerts, Town Hall, Manhattan Center, and Carnegie Chapter Hall.

Tony and Barry met in 1950 at Buck's Rock Work Camp where they co-lead the folk music and dance program. They have been exchanging songs, and instrumental work over since (in the style of a true folk friendship).
ad

Record Review

THE WEAVERS ON TOUR, Vanguard VRS 9013

This is a sequel to Vanguard's best selling disc, THE WEAVERS AT CARNEGIE HALL, and it takes up where that one left off, presenting more of the Weavers' very popular material. It, too, is a recording of a live performance at Carnegie, which is unfortunately evidence in the quality of the sound. But it does have the vitality of performers working to an audience instead of singing at a maze of metal and wire. On numbers like "Michael Row the Boat Ashore" the audience is pressed into service on choruses (as you might have anticipated). There's a little bit of almost everything on this disc: old favorites like "On Top of Old Smoky" and "So Long", newly composed pieces like "Two Brothers" and "Wasn't That A Time", a Talking Blues, a Hebrew song of Chanukah, Christmas songs, campfire songs like "Clementine" and the "Frozen Logger", and quite a bit more. Recommended.

A third volume of Weavers is expected from Vanguard in the near future, "The Weavers At Home".

"We enjoys the Shanty Boys"

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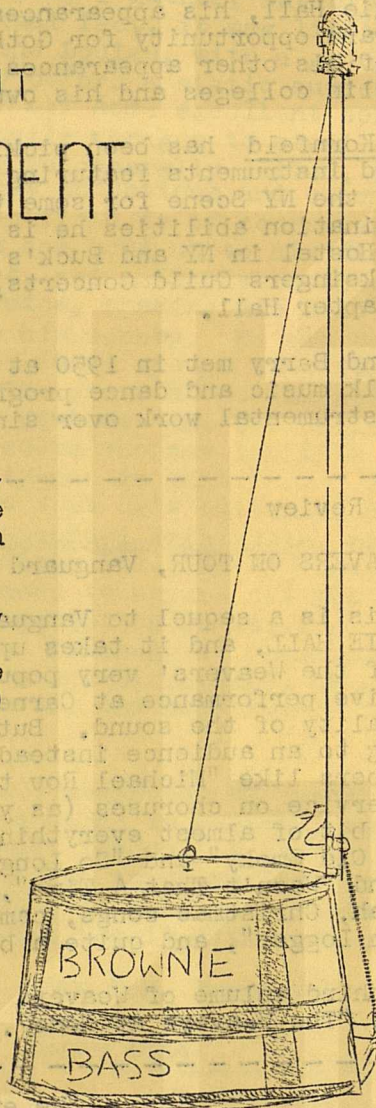
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WHERE TO...DEPT

This dept is rapidly outgrowing its host, and busting out all over. The California section, for instance, is on page 7. And the info below is right cramped. Because it is getting so big, it's about to be decapitated. We'll continue to list current events when we have news of them. But the "permanent entries" such as instructors and radio shows will be listed only if there is enough room for them. Meanwhile we hope to compile as much info as possible and transfer all the "permanent entries" into a booklet which will be pubned separately from Caravan. So if you have info for any of these categories, please send it to us.

NEW YORK: Coming events May 9, Carnegie Hall, PAUL ROBESON, folk & traditional songs and readings from Shakespeare (tickets sold out)

May 17th, Carnegie Chapter Hall, BARRY KORNFELD & TONY SALETAN, tickets available at Folklore Center. See page 25 for more details.

May 2nd, THE SHANTY BOYS, Studio 205, CBS Bldg, 213 W 53rd St 90¢ 8:30
June 6th, THE SHANTY BOYS, (as above)

Every Sunday from 8 PM til 10:30, AYH Song Fest (see page 17)

NY radio: Sunday: 11:30 AM WBAI-FM Jac Holzman - 2:05 WQXR - 6 PM WNYC Oscar Brand - 10 PM WBAI George Lorrie. Monday: 11 PM WBAI Theo Bikel - Tues & Thurs WKCR-FM 9 PM Steve Werdenschlag.

To Buy or Sell Instruments and/or Related Items: Cortesano Instrument Co., 106 MacDougal St., NY12 AL 4-7470 (instruments & repairs)
Harry Newcorn & Son, 140 Park Row, NY7 W0 2-1162 (instruments, repairs, repair parts, etc.)
Roger Abrahams, 159 Prince St, GR 7-7046 (guitars, dulcimers & banjos)
Folklore Center, 110 MacDougal, NY12, GR 3-7590 (dulcimers; etc.)
Lionel Kilberg, c/o Caravan (Brownie Bases - see page 26)
Roger Sprung, 255 W 88th, NY24, SC 4-4176 ("Scruggs" Boxes" - page 20)

Instruction (Guitar & Banjo unless otherwise noted)

Dick Weissman, 410 W 110th St, NYC 25 MO 3-1139
Roger Abrahams, 159 Prince St, GR 7-7046 (beginners)
Ed Badeaux, 639 E 11th St, NYC (music instruction)
Dave Van Ronk c/o Folklore Center (blues guitar only)
Paul Clayton c/o Folklore Center (dulcimer only)
Roger Sprung, 255 W 88th St, NYC24, SC 4-4176
Mike Resnick, 1030 President St, Brooklyn, IN 7-5369
Ollie Phillips, 426 W 49th St, NY19 PL 7-4534 (bass fiddle)
Roger Lass, 908 Rutland Rd, Brooklyn, PR 1-8334 (beginners & advanced)
Metropolitan Music School, 18 W 74th St (individual & Bess Hawes System)
Lionel Kilberg c/o Caravan (Brownie Bass)

(There is no charge for listing in the Where To...Dept.
Just let us know that you want a listing, and what info you'd like to have included in it.)

Where To (Illinois)

Concerts: May 16th ODETTA, Cahn Audit. (Sheridan & University Pl.) in Evanston.

May 3 ODETTA, Ill. Institute of Tech. Concert, Chicago

May 10 ODETTA Kenwood Health Center, 46th & Greenwood, Chicago

June 8, MARTHA SCHLAMME, Austin High School, Chicago

June 13 GATEWAY SINGERS, 8th St Theater in Chicago

BOB GIBSON will be at the Gate of Horn during May.

Radio - Wed: WFMT 9PM Studs Terkel's "Almanac" - Sat 10:10 PM (rebroadcast Tues 4 PM) Studs Terkel's "Midnight Special"

Instruction: Elion Kenin, 741 Linn, Burton Judson Ct, 1005 E 60th St Chi 37 (banjo & guitar)

Old Town School of Folk Music, 333 West North Ave, Chi 10. Phone Whitehall 4-7475 after 1 PM (Bess Hawes system)

Contacts: Jan & Jack Tangerman, 624 Park Ave, Wilmette, Ill. AL 1-3234
Drinking Gourd Soc. Philip Green (Business Manager), 7644 South Euclid Ave., Chi. Regent 4-4010.

(PETE SEEGER will be in the Iowa-Illinois area May 6-14.
Check locally for dates & places.)

PENNSYLVANIA: contact Jesse Carpenter, 2318 Spruce, Phil 3 for info.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: Contact John Dildine c/o WASH-FM, "Folk Music Program", 1913 F Street, Washington 4. for info.

INDIANA: Bloomington - Dick Gillespie, 305 E 2nd St 2-1741

Wabash - Robert & Jaunita Coulson, 105 Stitt St.

NEW ENGLAND: Jim Butler, 51 Dana St., Cambridge, Mass.

WASHINGTON STATE: Paul Schoenwetter US 51396391 Hq & Hq Co., 1st B.G - 12th Inf., Ft Lewis, Wash.

FOLKLORE CENTER, INC. 4100 University Way, Seattle 5.

ARIZONA: Clyde R. Appleton, 313 W 44th St, Tucson, Arizona

GREAT BRITAIN: Mike Moorcock, 36, Semley Rd., Norbury, London SW 16
After 7 PM, phone POLLARDS 8161.

John Brunner, 144 Fellows Rd., Hempstead, London NW 3 business house phone GULLIVER 6016.

OKLAHOMA: Wes Whittlesey, 614 Independence. Sapulpa.

(These people can give you information on what - if anything - is happening in folk music in their areas.)

We offer many apologies for skimping so on the Where To's this month. In the future we hope to present you with a far more extensive, detailed and accurate listing.

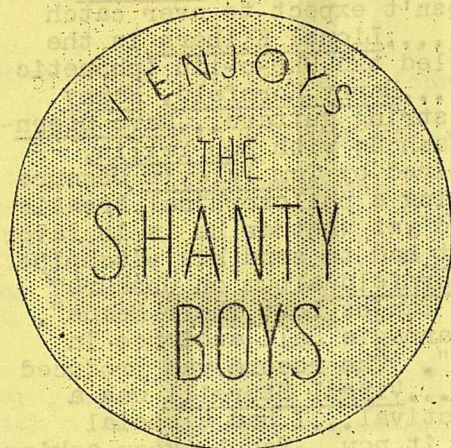
Folkmusic Magazines: SING OUT, Rm 631, 80 E 11th St, NY 3, quarterly 50¢ per copy. Includes songs with music & guitar chords, plus articles. SING ALONG c/o Ray Hull, #34-1070 Haro St., Vancouver 5, B.C. Canada. FOLK STYLE, George Tye, 47 Holbrook Way, Bromley, Kent. England 30¢ (2/-) COUNTRY-WESTERN EXPRESS George Tye (above address) 30¢ (2/6d) RECORDED FOLK MUSIC (see John Brunner's column, this issue)

NEW YORK SCENE

The New York Scene is a busy one these days what with Wash Sq open every Sunday afternoon, AYH Song Fests every Sunday evening, upwards of eight or ten folksinging parties a month, a NY Folksingers Guild concert along about the last week in each month, The Shanty Boys' regular shindig the first Friday of each month, some gentlemen in Newark featuring C&W performers quite frequently, Art D'Lugoff opening his new club where folksingers have a special invitation, and uncountable concerts by various people.

Goerge Lorrie has been running programs at Carnegie Chapter Hall, featuring old folksong films like Pete Seeger's "To Hear My Banjo Ring" (and like his new film about steel drums), along with assorted live performers. The ever-popular Barry Kornfeld was featured in the most recent of these, and his performance, with 5-string banjo and 12-string guitar (alternately), was the high point of the live portion of the show. Lori Holland (who has an album of Scottish folksongs for women on Folkways) brightened the scene. A trio calling themselves "The City Folk" (Garry Gross, Debbie Beller and Bernie Stolls) put on a good show.

Billy Faier writes to inform us that his middle name is David, not Boyd.



Now recording on
Elektra Records.

Dick Weissman advises us that a shop called BELL MUSIC BOX on 6th Avenue between 29th and 30th Sts. has a large collection of folk music and blues, out of print 78's, which they'll copy on LP or tape -- artists like Seeger, Leadbelly, Josh White & blues singers like Blind Boy Fuller, Bo Carter, Kokomo Arnold and Sleepy John Estes.

Roger Sprung advises us of some new discs of particular interest to banjo pickers: "Foggy Mtn Jamboree" Scruggs (some reissues, some new) Columbia CL 1019 and "Country Music" Mercury MG20358 Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs & Foggy Mtn Boys (old 78's reissued on lp). "Sacred Songs" by Don Reno & Red Smiley on King 550 and "Instrumentals by Don Reno & Red Smiley" on King 552. For the finest fiddling and mandolin playing Roger recommends "Square Dance Tonight" (without calls) by Tommy Jackson.

Art D'Lugoff's new place is THE VILLAGE GATE, 183-5 Thompson St in the Village (between Bleeker & Houston). They'll be featuring beer, barbeque and folk songs. They've tendered a special invitation to folk singers and enthusiasts.

Swarthmore weekend saw AYH holding a small, rather quiet sing, what with song leader Barry Kornfeld, and most of the regular soloists out of town. But those of us in attendance had the pleasure of listening to and singing with Mike Cohen, which made the evening well worth the price.

Roy Berkeley has asked us to print the following: "I have never been involved, not am I presently involved (contrary to bathroom scrawls) with Maybelle Carter or Buddy Stern. Maybelle (with all due respect) is a bit too old for me and Stein's intentions do not include marriage. Besides, my taste generally runs to girls, preferably dancers with pretty eyes. Thanx, R.G. Berkeley His Mark X"

"I enjoys 'em too," says Theo Bikel.

SOCIAL NOTES FROM ALL OVER: Country Dave Sadler is gone, drafted. He's much missed on the local Bluegrass scene... Mike Cohen is now Executive Director of the Metropolitan Council of AYH... Barry Kornfeld has been dripping money and banjo picks all over AYH... Terri Thal had German measles... Isreal Young's long-standing threat to remodel the Folklore Center is no longer a threat; it's an accomplished fact (well, almost accomplished)... Roger Sprung uses genuine Erector set gears in his Scruggs box... The Roger Lass's are planning to move to Manhattan... At the monthly Shanty Boys concert, Roger and Lionel previewed an item from forthcoming Obscure album, "The Shanty Boys Play Mozart"... Lee Shaw is so far behind in letter writing that she doesn't expect to ever catch up; she offers apologies for unanswered mail... Lionel Kilberg is the proud player of a 32 stringed instrument called the Uke-o-lin (phonetic spelling) by some (the Mandolayle by others)... Barry Kornfeld, Happy Traum and Dick Weissman have all acquired 12 string guitars... Dave Sternlight was seen (and heard) Bluegrassing in Wash Sq with Bob Yellin, Ollie Phillips and others... John Cohen, inspired by Tom Paley's Obscure album "Tuning the 5-String Banjo", is preparing a philosophical treatise entitled "Why Tune". It has not been revealed yet whether he is in favor of tuning, or opposed to it... Dave Sternlight had to send his pitchpipe out to be tuned... Have you heard the Barry Kornfeld album on Obscure? It's titled "When Frailing Was in Flower and Banjos Lost Their Heads". Outstanding item on it is Barry, leading a Carnegie Hall audience in the singing of "Michael Row The Boat Aground". The record was produced by Dave Sternlight, who thought up the title... Virgil Sturgill was a most welcome guest at the Swarthmore Folk Festival... I had a social note about Pooky somewhere, but I can't find it now... People keep asking Ray Sullivan is he's Tom Burnside... Yed spent a wild and wonderful evening a few weeks ago, travelling up to Arrowhead for the Shanty Boys' Concert there. It was well worth the trip... and who should turn up at Arrowhead that weekend but the omnipresent Dave Sternlight?... Bob Brill is proving to be the finest writer of song satire this side of Larry Block... Happy Traum's young brother turned up in Wash Sq a couple of weeks ago, picking banjo with the coming generation... Barry Kornfeld writes, "DNQ"... Billy Faier writes, "DWBNQ"... gardyloo!

Barry Kornfeld

QUEENS SCENE

Many people don't realize that Queens has an extensive indigenous folk culture. From the rural, grass roots culture of Western Long Island come such songs as "On Springfield Boulevard There Did Dwell..." and the many Jamacian folksongs which so recently hit the country by storm. Thanks to this great folk heritage we have, today, a large portion of the total New York folk population living in Queens. With the IND, the Queensboro & Triboro Bridges, and the Queens-Midtown Tunnel as our only connecting links to civilization (Manhattan), very little of our local folk doings can reach Lee Shaw for her New York Scene. The result is that I've taken it upon myself to supply Caravan with the Queens info.

SOCIAL NOTES FROM QUEENS: Tondalaya Schwarts of Rego Park will graduate from Music & Art High School just as soon as her pony tail reaches her waist. She recently put nylon strings on her Stella 12-stringer and was thrilled to carry it around at the last Hootenanny. She wouldn't let her play it, though.

Happy Traum came out to Queens last week. Then he realized that he had taken the "F" train instead of the "D" train. On the way back he took a "GG" and hasn't been heard from since.

Jo Inklebot is singing and playing at "Down in the Dumps", which is an empty lot near Queens Blvd. and Union Turnpike. Her parents won't let her play in the house.

Tom Paley's folks (Kew Gardens Hills) expect a letter from him sometime within the next four months.

Lee Shaw found her capo but lost her concertina.

Heave Wordenschlager is running a folk music show on WQCR (Queens Crown Radio). It can be heard within a five block radius of his home, on Thursdays; 1 AM - 4 PM. I just got a letter from him which said "I MY live guest lineup will be: May 1 - Pete Seeger; May 8 - Theo Bikel; May 15 - Odetta; May 22 - Dick Dyer-Bennet, May 29 - Irwin Lutzky; May 36 - Huddie Ledbetter."

Barry Kornfeld's car - "The Deerslayer" - was voted the most popular car going to the Swarthmore Folk Festival. During his famed collision with a deer he broke one headlamp and has been driving around with a "black eye".

Israel Young is sponsoring a folk concert with that fine folk trio from Queens - "The Folkniks".

They are still planning to build a depressing 4 lane highway right through Grand Central Parkway where Queens folksingers meet Monday mornings for singing and drag racing. I hope that everyone will write to Mayor Wagner about this deplorable situation.

--bingo--

--Barry Kornfeld

THE CLANCY BROTHERS OF TRADITION RECORDS

The Clancy brothers - Liam, Pat and Tom - not only recorded for Tradition ("The Rising Of The Moon", Irish Songs of Rebellion), they run the company. It might seem that they would be taking unfair advantage of their position in making a record under their own imprint, but judging by the quality of the record, we can only welcome more of them.

"The Rising Of The Moon" is of the same high quality as almost all of Traditions releases. It is well-recorded, alive, and very much in the traditional manner. And the Clancys are a delight to listen to. Their voices are fresh, strong and clear, and their style somewhat recalls Ewan MacColl and A.L. Lloyd or Seamus Ennis.

The Clancy brothers (and their eight brothers and sisters, who are still there) were born in Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. Liam, the youngest of the three, is twenty one, Tom is thirty one, and Pat is thirty five. In addition to their activities in recording, they have all been active in the theatre and other arts.

Liam has done a good deal of folksong collecting, in the Southern Appalachian Mountains and in Ireland, and besides singing, his interests include acting, writing, drawing, and photography. This year he has been acting in the Poets Theatre in a series of Yeats Plays. He sang background songs in the Hallmark Theatre (TV) show "Little Moon of Alban" (in which he and his brother, Tom, both appeared as Irish Rébels). He acted the part of the cripple boy in the MPO film, "The Return". He directed and photographed the short film "Wicked John and the Devil" (a Southern Appalachian folk tale). And, in Ireland, he won a national prize for his drawing.

Tom Clancy did some acting in Ireland and England, and since he came to the United States in 1948, he has appeared in such productions as Orson Welles' "King Lear", the Phoenix Theatre's presentation of Shaw's "St Joan", "Under the Milkwood", and Ben Hecht's "Winkleberg". For the past few seasons he has been a resident actor in Group 20, and has made numerous appearances on TV and at folksong concerts. At present he can be found almost any eveing at the White Horse.

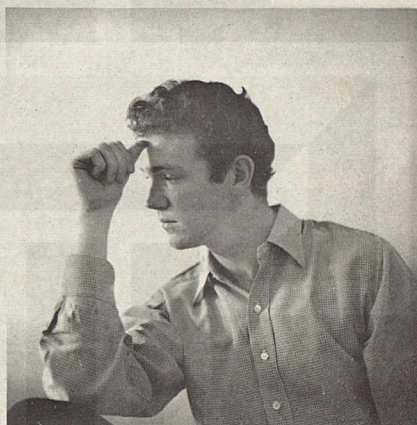
Pat, the oldest of the three brothers, was an active member of the IRA before he came to the US, and as such has had a close contact with the Irish Rebel songs he and his brothers sing on their record. He has had many occupations and travelled widely in the British Isles, Canada, India, the US, and at present is in Venezuela, making films and tapes in the jungles.

The Clancy brothers of Tradition make their homes in Greenwich Village, convenient not only to the Tradition office on Christopher, but also to this focal point of folkmusic activity.

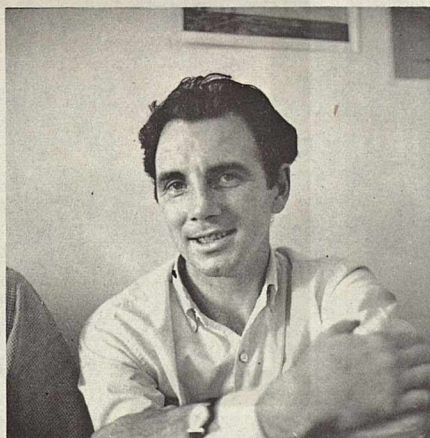
The Clancys of Tradition



Liam



Pat



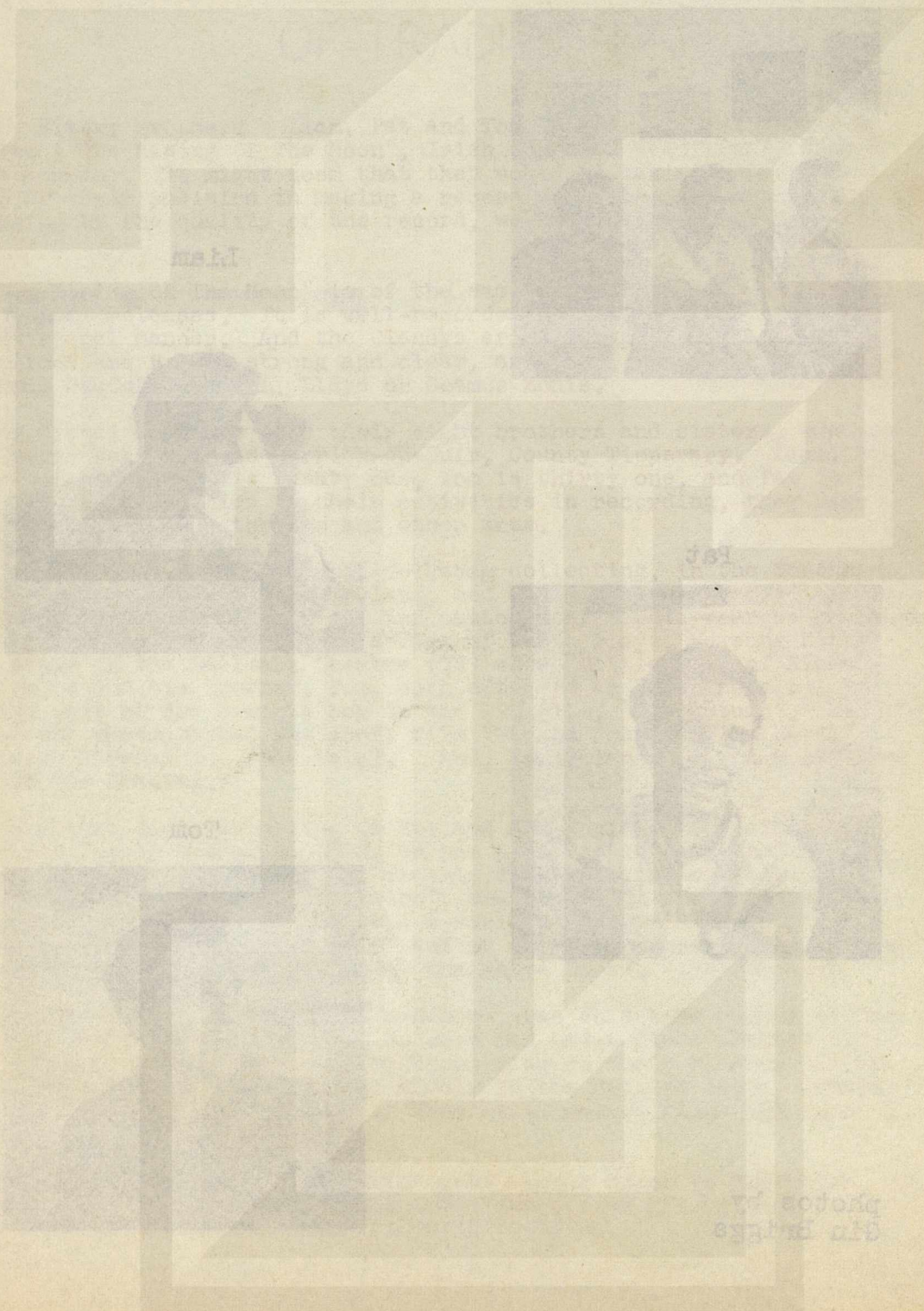
Tom



photos by
Gin Briggs



The Clans of Tradition



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