

THE FOLKMUSIC FANZINE

CARAVAN

Nº 1

AUGUST 1957

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This is a non-profit, great-cost
amateur publication. It is
committed monthly by Lee Shaw
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Opinions expressed herein are not
necessarily those of the editor-
publisher and/or those other members
of the staff, who come and go so
rapidly.

This magazine is
FREE FOR THE ASKING

A FOLK MUSIC FANZINE? WHY...?

Well, it started with CHOOOG, is a magazine published in a typical amateur press group. I put out two specialized issues of CHOOOG, devoted solely to folk music. The response was alarming. People who'd known me casually for years were suddenly asking, "Oh, are you interested in folk music too? You've got to come over some evening and hear my Cynthia Gooding records." or "I'll lend you my tape of Dave Van Ronk, if you promise to return it." or even, "When are you going to put out another issue of the folk music CHOOOGs?"

So after discussing the matter with a number of fellow folk music enthusiasts and amateur publishers, and hashing over too many forms, formats and publication schedules, this is the result.

CARAVAN is free to anyone who wants it badly enough to write occasionally and let me know you're still interested. In fact, you'll have to acknowledge this issue by September 1st, if you want to be on the list for the second issue.

CARAVAN will be published the first of every month, as long as reader-interest, my enthusiasm, and funds hold out. It may run small some months, but that's life. It isn't likely to run large any particular month, either.

Material content will depend on you, the readers. This is strictly an amateur publication, so payment for material is limited to gobos and an extra copy of the issue your work appears in. But the glory is worth more than money anyway. (I keep telling people.) Any material pertinent to folk music will be gladly considered.

Any letters received will be considered for publication, unless specifically marked not for prying eyes.

I'll be glad to include within these pages any news or notices pertinent to the field, such as announcements of gatherings or concerts, who wants to buy or sell a banjo, what your favorite record is, whether you lost your jacket at the last Richard Dyer-Bennett concert and did anybody pick it up there, the fact that you are now offering expert instruction on the mountain dulcimer at a reasonable rate, etc etc.

DEADLINES: for articles, the deadline will be the 15th of each month. For announcements and news items, the 20th, although in months other than February we might be able to squeeze in last minute items as late as the 25th. Don't count on it though.

Remember WRITE IF YOU WANT THE NEXT ISSUE! A postcard will do, but please include your full name and address.

Lee Shaw

THE ELEKTRA CATALOG - A Sarcophagus

Sitting in front of me, I have a copy of an Elektra Records catalog. Somewhere in the background an LP of folksongs by Clarence Cooper - also on Elektra - is warbling innocuously. Since I write better when I'm annoyed, and since both the catalog before me and the ditties in back of me annoy the bejesus out of me, I might as well take this as a starting point for my favorite kind of essay - a diatribe.

A casual thumbing through Elektra's catalog gives on the impression of wide scope ingenuously combined with selectivity. Obviously the people in charge know their folkmusic and have worked tirelessly to disseminate this knowledge to the world at large. Certainly there is no lack of variety - Israeli folksongs, Old English and Hatian, Turkish, Spanish, Mexican, Blues, and Mountain Style, and God knows what else. But a good catalog is nothing more than a good catalog, and before we pat its engineers on the heads for a job well done, lets examine some of the records.

For example, "Festival in Haiti" EKL - 130. Since I have neither the record nor album notes at hand, I will have to go chiefly by memory, but I have heard and read the contents of same thoroughly.

Jean Léon Destiné, the star performer on this album has a rather pretty voice, sort of a Harry Belafonte type. Most of the accompaniment is supplied by drums. Like everything else on this record, the drumming is remarkably smooth and proficient, and if we are to believe the jacket notes, this is the REAL AUTHENTIC music of Haiti, in all its primitive vigor. Fortunately, this is not the case and you can settle the matter for yourself with little effort. Listen to some of the records cut on location in Haiti by Harold Courlander, and released on Folkways (P-403, P-407). After fifteen minutes with these field recordings turn again to Destiné. Pretty palid? Sounds like a chic niteclub act? Exactly. The guts have been deftly extracted and the corpse neatly stuffed, tied with a pink ribbon and placed on exhibit in Elektra's marvelous museum.

So too with Clarence Cooper and the old standby, Josh White. Here is a short extract from the album notes appended to Cooper's opus on Elektra ("Goin' Down The Road" - EKL 27) "Clarence Cooper, someone once remarked, is a folksinger with a voice...but a well developed and pleasant voice does not qualify a person to sing folksongs. He must feel them in his guts..." Which is precisely my point. For example, Coop's job on St. James Infirmary; if ever a song was made to be felt in the guts of a singer, this is it. But the only sounds that I can hear, the only emotion expressed insofar as I am able to detect, is a sickening glibness. Flamenco musicians have a concise term for what I mean. "False". As simple as that.

Blind Rafferty (2)

"And in the 20th Century, he must be something of a scholar too" the jacket notes further venture. "Coop is a scholar and a man with a voice." I'll go along with this. The man knows his material - cerebrally at least, and he has a "voice", which is more than Leadbelly or Blind Willie Johnson or Woody Guthrie could say. But somehow I cannot help but feel that the traditions that these men represented are sold out on this record for the sake of prettiness, that the intensity inherent in the music that Cooper interprets is sacrificed in order to put the songs over to modern Americans who can understand no such intensity.

All this goes double for Josh White, who should know better.

As I said before, I have chosen these records as examples. I honestly believe that they represent the overall approach of the record company in question - at least in those areas of folk music that I know well enough to judge. Moreover, I think that this approach is very much in keeping with the zeitgeist of the so-called "Folkmusic Revival" in America.

Even at my angriest, I cannot truthfully say that many of Elektra's records are catually "bad". They lack even that much character. The aim of the A and R (Arrangement and repertoire) men seems to be to avoid frightening or offending anyone. Whether or not this is literally true, I am amazed at Elektra's ability to turn out one innocuous little album right after another - genteel, sophisticated, and utterly false.

--Blind Rafferty

EDITOR'S NOTE:

There is a long sad story about why this zine did not make the planned mailing date of August 1st. Mostly the story concerns a paper shortage of confusing nature. I shan't bore you with the details. But due to all this, (a) I have no idea just when the next issue will be out, although I'll try for September 1st, if I can get enough paper in time, and (b) I'll forgive you if you don't write by that date, so long as you do write sometime in the immediate future.

With My Ear To The Ground

The boys of Chris Barber's jazz band, one of Britain's most popular traditional jazz groups, had finished the instrumental numbers scheduled for their recording session. One more was needed to fill up the second side of a four-number EP. So they piled most of the instruments over in a corner, and their banjoist-guitarist did a vocal item with rhythm accompaniment.

For some reason it caught on. Disc jockeys played it. Then the fans started to buy it. Then, in very short order, they'd forgotten that Chris Barber had anything to do with it. Not surprising. The said banjoist-guitarist, seeing he was on to a mighty fine thing, had started off on his own.

Currently, he's topping the bill at one of London's biggest variety theatres, the Hippodrome. He's already been at the Palladium and the Prince of Wales. His name is Lonnie Donegan - Lonnie, after his early idol, Lonnie Johnson.

And the vocal number the group originally taped to fill a gap in a record? That was Rock Island Line...

Jesus came to save from sin -
When I get to heaven gonna meet him agin!
The Rock Island Line is a mighty good road,
Rock Island Line, that's the road to ride.
Rock Island Line is a mighty good road,
If you want to ride, you gotta ride it like you find it,
Get your ticket at the station on the Rock Island Line...

And then, of course:

"A B C double-you X Y Z - "

"That has social significance, maybe?"

Well, when a record does good enough business to be parodied by Stan Freburg, it's going places. And people suddenly sat up and said, "What the heck is this, anyway?" The Lonnie Donegan skiffle group? What's skiffle?

Now that is a good question. The commonly accepted derivation is that skiffle was rent party music - the kind of stuff beaten out by scratch bands at parties in the poorer, and specifically the negro, areas of big cities during about the 1930's. In fact, you can trace it back much further than that. My personal belief is that the word is cognate with scuffle, and means nothing more nor less than the music for a dance. Big Bill Broonzy says, "Where I come from, they always played the blues for dancing," and in London they're playing them for dancing again. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

The people who adhere to the rent party theory maintain that skiffle should strictly be applied to music like that turned out by the many small jazz groups - mostly centered around Johnny Dodd's clarinet, and featuring Natty Dominique, the Jimmy's - Blyth and Bertrand - and pianist like Frank Melrose, which recorded what you might call miniature-band jazz, often using Swanee whistles, washboards and other unorthodox gadget:

Me, I believe that in actual fact the typical British skiffle group is very much the kind of combo to which the term was actually applied. Let's analyse its development and its structure.

Some six years ago, or thereabouts, Ken Colyer, who was then one of Britain's more interesting traditional jazz trumpeters, organised a supplementary group within his own band, to perform blues, worksongs, negro ballads and other material which contributed to the birth of jazz. Its composition was influenced in part by the street spasm bands, and by the scratch country-blues-playing dance groups referred to above. With Ken himself leading on guitar and singing, it consisted usually of bass, wash board, and supporting guitar, mandolin or banjo.

This, generally speaking, is the regular, accepted instrumentation of a British skiffle group. Harmonica is quite commonly added, though no one in this country can play even remotely like Sonny Terry. Piano is not common. The bass may be a tea-chest and broomhandle. A group lucky enough to have a really versatile member may at times feature hillbilly fiddle or mandolin lead.

And the pattern of the music is, quite simply, a solo lead singer with unison or harmonised support from the rest of the group, with a powerful, uncomplicated rhythmic accompaniment.

This was the form which Barber's group took over from Colyer when the two of them split up; it is the form which Donegan has made into big business. And it has this important point about it: the vast majority of its source material is pure folk. None at all is drawn from the current output of Tin Pan Alley.

It was authoritatively stated recently that there are now from one to two such skiffle groups in every major English-speaking centre from Glasgow to Cape Town.

Let's survey the situation as it stands today, after an interval in which skiffle has successfully competed with Rock and Roll for the affection of the public, and seems to have proved a more viable life-form.

On the commercial side, anything Lonnie Donegan records is destined for the Top Twenty list of best-sellers, generally speaking. His big hits to date have included Rock Island Line, Bring A Little Water Sylvie, Lost John, Cumberland Gap and Don't She Rock Me Daddy-O. Donegan himself is more of a showman than a singer, though his sincerity in preferring folk material is unquestioned. Personally, I find his voice and presentation unpleasant; he has the bad affectations of the hillbilly and few of the good ones. Nonetheless, he has succeeded in building up folk material to the point where it is a good business proposition.

Major competition to Donegan is offered by the Vipers, a group whose genesis took place on the spur of the moment in a Soho coffeehouse, when two or three of the wandering troubadours who have become a feature of the London scene in the past three years got together and agreed to play there regularly. Their record hits have included Pick A Bale Of Cotton and I Was Born About Ten Thousand Years Ago. They have also topped the bill at the Prince of Wales.

These "wandering troubadours" I just mentioned are an itinerant crowd of suitarist-singers, all young, mostly amateur, who found this sudden popularity of the coffeehouse as a rendezvous a boon to them. Many distinguished members of the younger generation of singers cut their teeth in the school. Among one of its most prominent products is Nancy Whisky, a 21-year-old lass from Glasgow, who had been singing folk songs before she teamed up with Chas McDevitt's group and recorded a charming song called Freight Train, which Peggy Seeger had brought to this country

This disc is now doing enormous business in the States.

Outside the sphere of big business, in the specialized clubs which feature traditional jazz - and of which there are some forty-odd in the London area alone - it has now become a commonplace to find a skiffle group as supporting attraction. Chas McDevitt's group originally found its following when they were resident at the Crane River jazz club a few years back.

Many clubs in London now feature skiffle and folk music exclusively. Biggest of these is the Skiffle Cellar in Soho, which is open seven nights a week, and run by a bearded artist called Russel Quay, whose City Ramblers group was the first to have its own club, except for the Hasted crowd (of them more in a minute), and was also the first that I heard.

John Hasted has for some time been prominently associated with the Worker's Music Association in London; he is professionally a lecturer in physics at London University. His group started in a small way to feature folkmusic and blues before the skiffle movement was really under way, and has never been associated with the movement proper, because his interests lean away from the purely American/Negro source material where in most of the regular skiffle groups find their inspiration towards the European folk field. Another, similar organisation is the club run by and featuring Cyril Davis and Alexis Korner. Alexis is a great personal friend and admirer of Big Bill Broonzy, and he and Cyril have been playing the blues for specialised addicts around London, again, since before the skiffle movement started. Alexis is one of our most capable guitarists, but has no great originality; Cyril sings and plays in a manner that shows strong traces of the influence of Leadbelly and Muddy Waters.

There is a close connection between the followers of traditional jazz and of skiffle, owing to the fact that skiffle uses so much American and Negro material. You're as likely to find Careless Love or St James Infirmary played by a jazz group as sung by a skiffle group. However, there is also quite a strong trend among the jazz fans to dismiss skiffle as - in the assonantal epitomisation of a recent writer in the Melody Maker - piffle.

The more versatile and original skiffers, those not content to follow Donegan and who have taken the trouble to learn more than three chords on their guitars, expand their activities into related fields. Calypsos are popular, especially since London has a rapidly growing West Indian population, and the West Indies cricket team is currently touring Britain. The City Ramblers feature such tunes as Three Lovely Ladies in Banyon, and some of the Weaver's repertoire; Chas McDevitt's group use some of Merle Travis's songs and also ragtime, rhythm-and-blue and white country-style songs; Hasted's crowd regularly feature union and slavery-time songs, while Nancy Whisky prefers to draw her own material from the vast store of Scottish and Irish songs, with special emphasis on those reflecting current or recent social problems.

Individual folk singers who were already established do not seem to have capitalised much on the possibilities of the skiffle movement. At the Nancy Whisky Club, which recently dissolved when Nancy and Chas's commercial commitments grew too heavy for them to continue, some of the finest evenings were spent listening to Ewan MacColl and A.L. Lloyd either solo or together. Many American singers passing through London are featured in the skiffle clubs. Guy Carawan is in town at the moment of writing; Jack Elliott and Darroll Evans, Nick Thatcher, John Gibbons Brooks Taylor, Peggy Seeger and others I have heard in the clubs.

Broadly speaking, however, the skiffle movement has produced its own solo attractions. A number of individual stars have come up from the coffeehouse circuit - Johnny Guitar, of the Vipers, was one of them. Many popular solo singers are still working that circuit; many others do an occasional stint there. Among these last is Rory MacEwen, a very capable young man whom I first heard when he was a student at Cambridge and who has since shown promise of turning into one of the really great folk singers of the coming generation, a name to be mentioned in the same breath as Ewan MacColl and Isla Cameron.

The skiffle and folk music scene in London is complex and difficult to follow because it is changing from week to week as new arrivals move into the places left by the Vipers, McDevitt, and the others who have now achieved commercial success. But it's a thoroughly vital phenomenon.

Following the success of McDevitt's Freight Train, the Melody Maker Chicago correspondent reports that the people have finally discovered folk. Maybe, for once, a trend has moved the opposite way from the one to which we have been accustomed in pop music since Gideon Melville brought the Ragtime Octet to this country in the early years of the century. Maybe, for once, America is following Britain's lead. If the result is to make folk music once again a part of the main stream of popular music, I for one won't regret it for a moment.

* * *

And that's the background. With my ear to the ground, as I said at the start, I've picked up all I could on the progress of one of the most remarkable occurrences in popular music for some time. Future columns won't be this length, in all probability; however, many of the readers of this magazine won't be familiar with the story of the revival of interest in folk music now taking place in Britain.

Brunner (5)

I mentioned that owing to the rapid growth of our West Indian population, calypso is now much liked in London. Something what has a relation to this is the success of a group which probably has no equivalent, or even parallel, in the States. I went to a dance given by the West Africa Students' Union the other evening, for the pleasure of hearing Ambrose Campbell's West African Rhythm Brothers, one of the most interesting and exciting groups I know in Britain. As far as I know, it is the only West African dance band in the country.

To the fairly orthodox European instruments - tenor saxophone, piano, electric guitar, amplified acoustic guitar - is added a rhythm section including hun, Hunpi (species of African drums), bongos and claves. The pattern of the music is most unusual; the electric guitar (very, very good indeed) leads the voicing, while the tenor sax is used predominantly as a counterpoint or for an occasional change of lead. They play ordinary dance tunes suitable for their instrumentation - tangos, rhumbas, sambas, and calypsos, mostly - plus a liberal admixture of West African high-lives and popular songs. Their rhythmic ability, their swing, is phenomenal. They play without music, from memory or improvising. Campbell himself plays acoustic guitar and handles most of the singing.

This dance was at the St Pancras Town Hall, twenty minutes by bus from my home; for some reason it is very popular with non-British societies, such as students' unions. Recently I also attended a concert and recital of Indian music and dancing there. Although the dancing was of a rather low standard, the music was excellent, particularly two ragas played by a very good violinist with accompaniment by melodeon (a sort of portable organ) and drums. He played in the Indian style, sitting crosslegged with the scroll of the violin resting on the floor in front of him.

And that's about it for this time round. I hope, all things being equal, to be with you regularly from now on to report how things are on the folk music and allied fronts here in London.

---John K H Brunner
July 1957
London, England

Eavesdropped:

"The way he frails, he gets the strings wrapped around his fingers a couple of times, stretches them out about a foot from the banjo, and then lets go."

A CHECKLIST OF ED McCURDY LP'S

10"

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| FRANKIE AND JOHNNY and other folk songs | By-line BL - 1 |
| *SIN SONGS pro and con | Elektra 24 |
| *BAD MEN & HEROS (with Oscar Brand & Jack Elliott) | Elektra 16 |
| CANADIAN FOLK SONGS (made in Canada) | Manhattan SR. 044 |

12"

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| BLOOD, ROOZE 'n' BONES (banjo-Erik Darling) | Elektra 108 |
| WHEN DALLIANCE WAS IN FLOWER | Elektra 110 |
| (banjo-Erik Darling recorder-Alan Arkin) | |
| THE BALLAD RECORD | Riverside RLP 12-601 |
| A BALLAD SINGER'S CHOICE | Tradition TLP 1003 |
| BARROOM BALLADS | Riverside RLP 12-807 |
| songs of the OLD WEST (banjo-Erik Darling) | Elektra 112 |
| SONGS OF THE SEA (made in Canada) | Cambridge VP.11 |

*BAD MEN AND HEROS is being released as one side of a 12" lp, by Elektra, with Dick Wilder singing PIRATE SONGS on the flip.
SIN SONGS, Pro and Con, is being released as a 12" lp with the addition of several more selections by Ed McCurdy.

This checklist is not guaranteed complete. In fact, I'm certain there are more Canadian releases I haven't listed. So if you have any information to add, please send it along so that I can include it in a later issue. LS

NOTE TO INTERESTED PARTIES:

advt.

The 50th anniversary issue of
SONGS OF THE I.W.W.

is available from: LIBERTARIAN LEAGUE
P O Box 261, Cooper Station
New York 3, N.Y.

for 25¢ a copy.

letters

Chuch Harris
Rainham, Essex,
England

Dear Lee,

Now, your "whitewash on the wall" song. It's old, -- 1914 or so. I think -- wait a minute, -- here's a copy of it:

THE TOP OF THE DIXIE LID

Coolness under fire, (twice)
Mentioned in despatches
For pinching company rations,
Coolness under fire.

Whiter than the whitewash on the wall, (twice)
Wash me in the water
Where you wash your dirty daughter
And I shall be whiter
Than the whitewash on the wall

Now he's on the peg, (twice)
Mentioned in despatches
For drinking the Company rum.
Now he's on the peg.

Whiter than the top of the dixie-lid, (twice)
Wash me in the water
Where you wash your dirty daughter
And I shall be whiter
Than the top of the dixie-lid.

Anon. War of 1914-1918

I'm sorry that I can't give you the music along with the words. There are several other versions to it, of course, but most of them are fairly clean, unfortunately, and I can only remember snatches of them.

War songs are an odd business. I was speculating that one would expect fiercer songs from men concerned with death: a sort of tuneful Banzai rather than a cynical piece about petty thievery. It never does seem to happen though, and the tougher the men, the more innocuous are their songs. The Aussies, for instance. From such men you might expect, reasonably, cess-pools of song, but it is not so. From my

Chuck Harris (2)

experience I would say that if any Aussie died with the mythical song on his lips, it was a safe bet that the tune was "The Wizard of Oz". I don't think they ever sang anything else. Great, tough, hard-bitten men and endlessly singing, "We're OFF to see the Wizard, the wonderful wizard of Oz. We hear he is a whizz of a Wiz, if ever a Wiz there was." Incongruous? Well, I think it's a damn sight more baffling than the Marie Celeste.

It strikes me that what you call folk-music is, partly, what I call bath-night songs, the epics by Anon that I chant on those rare occasions when I venture into the water. I can't say for certain without the tune, but The Dying Aviator is almost certainly a parody of The Tarpaulin Jacket--an English song that dates from the Napoleonic Wars or even earlier. I'll bet you a million pounds sterling (I have it right here on the table mixed up with the carbon paper) that the tune is the same.

Personally, my own favorite is the one Bob Shaw likes best. "One Friday morn, when we set sail, and our ship not far from the land, when we did espy a fair pretty maid, with a comb and a glass in her hand, her hand, her hand, with a comb and a glass in her hand. And the raging seas did roar, and the stormy winds did blow, and usjolly sailor boys were up aloft, and the land-lubbers lying down below, below, below, and the landlubbers lying down below." I think Bob preferred it because he visualised that glass as a pint glass full of frothing Guinness, rather than a mirror, but I always liked it more for the lilt itself.

Very best,
Chuck

((Thanks for the notes on the Whitewash Song, but I'm still confused. As to the Dying Aviator, the tune I know is not the same as Tarpaulin Jacket. In the American Songbag, Carl Sandburg gives the following, to the melody of Wrap Me Up In My Tarpaulin Jacket:

The Handsome Young Airman

A handsome young airman lay dying,
And as on the airdrome he lay,
To mechanics who 'round him came sighing,
These last parting words he did say:

"Take the cylinders out of my kidneys,
The connecting rods out of my brain,
The crankshaft out of my backbone,
And assemble the engine again."

These words are only a little different from the Dying Aviator as we know them, but it is definitely a different melody. Of course, you may know Tarpaulin Jacket to a different tune than I do.....Lee))

Dick Ellington
98 Suffolk St. Apt 3A
New York 2, NY

Dear Lee,

I like Ed McCurdy and Josh White myself. Also, applaud and heartily second your vaguish definition of folk music. Of course, as in jazz, you'll find a merry ole multitude of purists of one form or another.

Your accounts of Oscar Brand, boy folk-singer, are quite interesting. I've never seen him in person tho I have listened to his program off and on for 5 or 6 years now.

That WHISKEY IN THE JAR--ever hear the American version of it--b'lieve it's Frank Warner that does it most often. After looking hither and thither I find I can't find the lyrics for it. Anyway, it starts out something like:

As I was a-goin' over Gilgarrey mountain,
I met Colonel Pepper and his money he was countin'.
(Then there's some I forget and a chorus of:)
Whack fol-a-daddly-o (I think)
It isn't bad anyhow, and undoubtedly descended from the one you printed.

Re Folkmusic in hard-covers: another one packed and jammed with a million and a half different things is SONG FEST, edited by Dick and Beth Best (Crown Publishers, New York 1955) which just gives a line or two of music per song and devotes the rest to lyrics--160 pages of them, indexed.

Re High Barbaree: there is a 10" lp of Pirate Songs by Dick Wilder that contains about the best I've heard on this line.

Re folk-songs and their age: I had a little thing called the Beloit College Poetry Journal, a folksong Chapbook edited by one of the staff--this issue I had, I mean--and contained many things of a modern origin--not "written" but collected out among the people and besides a lot of newish things the kids are singing while skipping rope and such, it had such little gems as the parody on the Pepsi-Cola song that goes:

Christianity hits the spot,
Twelve apostles, that's a lot,
Father, Son and the Holy Ghost,
Christianity, it's the most!
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus....

which is a true and for real type folk song, being non-written, non-commercially composed--just something some agnostic-atheist or what have you thot up one day and has been passed around through word of mouth. Actually, a lot of what is generally considered folk-music today, not only did not come from the po' folk but did not even come from the people who gave the group its form, unless youcount what exists historically as its true form--I'm referring of course, to many of the Elizabethian type ballads and such--particularly madrigals and such like--

Ellington (2)

which were sung only by the educated, musically "alert" elite groups-- and that's why many of them were even written down and passed along for Dyer-Bennett to record note by note.

You'll note that Dyer-Bennett with his beautiful, musically trained voice, does not cut many records or sing many songs of the burly American variety, and those he does do go over with people in general like the proverbial lead balloon. Yet, for the old-English stuff he specializes in, he's really good and has that old English minstrel tenor that carries it on with a definite atmosphere.

I think that's what I like about Josh White--he changes songs no end sometimes but what he does do to them usually fits, and his guitar-playing is a thing of beauty.

Appreciate your check-list on Brand records. Never dreamed he had so many out. You should see me digging into old Josh White. This man has cut so many records it's unbelievable. Every time I turn around I run into another lp or old 78 album of his. Have 2 or 3 lps and about 8 albums right now and have not even made a dent into the files of them. And then he keeps putting the damn things out new alla time and who can afford them?

'By
Dick

((Oscar Brand sang that version of Whiskey in the Jar at his McMillan concert, reported here last issue. He said that Frank Warner collected it from Yankee John Galusha, in the Adirondacks. # The Dick Wilder record you mention is being rereleased by Elektra, as one side of a 12" disc. The other side is BAD MEN AND HEROS, with Oscar Brand, Ed McCurdy and Jack Elliott, which was also out as a 10" some time back. Both are good records. # I note that when Dyer-Bennett played TOWN HALL last, he was billed as singing "folk songs and art songs". We'd be happy to run a check-list of Josh White discs, if somebody will supply us with one. --Lee))

Ron Bennett
Southway,
Harrogate,
England

Dear Lee and Larry,

Yes, I'm interested in Folkmusic, and I'm also interested in Oscar Brand, following your FAPazine on him. Oh, yes, I have the zine, ta muchly - just that you might like to know that someone here was interested in your ravings. I hadn't heard of him before this, but I'll promise to look out for him in the future. This conservative land of ours will probably even get records of him some day.

Bestest,
Cecil, Joan, &
Ron

THE NEW YORK CITY SCENE:

Summer is still upon us, and with it the hiatus in activity of almost any sort, except the Sunday gatherings in Washington Square. Rain killed what promised to be an exciting Sunday about two weeks ago. Word was out that Art Ford would be scouting the Square for talent for his Villager TV show this fall, and natural-born Villagers from Yonkers to Staten Island could be heard tuning up their banjos for the afternoon's gatherings. And then the rains came.

Well, a few people are drifting back into town, despite the heat. Dave Van Ronk is back. Theo Bikel is expected back in the immediate future. Things should start picking up.

They tell me that the new coffee-shop-what-have-you that is in the works on West Third between MacDougal & Sullivan Sts. will provide a happy home for itinebant folkmusic fans and/or performers once opened. More details next issue, we hope.

Oscar Brand is giving away folksong words again. If you don't know about this already (you should) pick up complete information on his FOLKSONG FESTIVAL ("12th year on the air") on WNYC at 6 PM Sundays. It's a good show.

Watch this zine for the Inside Story on Folklore Center...

By the way, if you want the mail-order catalog from Folklore Center, their address is 110 MacDougal St. NYC. Even if you don't want their catalog, keep it in mind. When you start searching for some really rare item in the the folklore field, you'll need their address.

If you're an out-of-towner and someday you might drop in at the Center (open from late afternoon until early morning, generally, except Mondays). Quite often there's something really interesting going on, whst with people like Tom Paley drifting in to sing a bit to the bystanders. Sometimes it really swings.

Also, they sell good books, records and other stuff.

Don't forget, if you want the next issue, and the following issues of CARAVAN, drop us a post card, or letter, or something to let us know. Include your address. And if you've got anything to say (no matter how trivial) about the folkmusic field, why not make an article out of it? Articles, printable letters, unprintable letters, news items, classified-type advertisements, and so forth, all solicited (but remember, not paid for in money, only in glory).

Yrs,

Lee

Bill Sattler