

B: This is November 2, 1974. I'm Lew Barton recording for the University of Florida's History Department and their American Indian Oral History Program. This afternoon is November 2, as I said, 1974 and we are in Silver Springs, Maryland, in the home of Mrs. Doris Atwood. Now with me is Mr. Larry Warria^x and he's going to talk to me about music of yesteryear. Larry, I understand you're ^{sort of} an expert on yesterday's music. ~~You've got uh,~~ you've got all these wonderful recordings of the past^x

W: I do have a fine collection.

B: ~~Now about that,~~ is that a Victrola machine? How old is that machine, Larry?

W: Well, it's about 1902 model.

B: A 1902 model. Do you think it would operate?

W: Oh, sure. ~~Yes,~~ it has the doors, the windup. We'll try a record if you'd like to hear one.

B: Okay. Listen, you wind these machines up, don't you. This is a floor model. It's called [?] ~~what's the reading of the~~

W: Victrola. Manufactured by Victrola Talking Machines. Canading, New Jersey, U.S.A.)

~~B: Um-hum~~

W: Patented in the United States and ⁱⁿ Foreign Countries. That's ^h what it says.

B: ~~Um-hum~~. Let's see, let's hear what it sounds like, Larry.

W: Okay. The first tune we'll play will be Lucilia

B: The Lucia Sextet?

W: Right.

B: Lucia, right?

W: Right.

B: ~~The tune~~. Let's hear just a little bit of what they sounded like. ~~That's~~
~~about~~, that's dated about 1902, right?

W: Right.

B: Alright, I wonder what it's going to sound like.

MUSIC

B: ~~Well, that's~~ we got an idea of what it sounds like. That really sounds
 loud, doesn't it? ~~How do you adjust the volume on that?~~ Is there any
 way to adjust the volume on that Larry?

W: By the doors. Let me.....

B: By the doors.

~~W: Right, it has~~

~~W: The tune~~

W: By the closing and opening of the doors. It smothers the sound.

B: Oh, I see. In other words, you don't have a switch on there you can
 turn it up and down with, do you?

W: No, ~~this is probably~~ this was made strictly without electricity.

B: It was recorded without electricity?

W: Right.

B: And we're playing it without electricity, right? You just turn the
 cranks, to wind it up.

W: Right. Here's one I know you remember, a Gene Autry tune.

B: Oh, good. What's that. What's the name of that one?

W: "I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes"

B: Oh, yes. What's the label on there? What record is that? What
 company?

W: Okeh.

B: Okeh records. Oh, that's an old firm. It's probably been out of business

for years. Okay , let's see what some of that sounds like. This is Gene Autry in his hayday. Can you imagine him playing, was there a date on there , Larry?

W: *let me see if I can...*

B: There should be a date on there. They used to date all these records. But, I remember Gene Autry very well. Gene Autry , of course, ~~was~~ was a cowboy actor and a great idol.

W: Here we go.

MUSIC

B: Oh, me. ? Inaudible

W: *It does not* speed control?

B: ~~Um-hmm~~

W: And I think the slowest speed on it is about 78.

B: ~~Um-hmm~~. Well, that's surprisingly good considering they did it without electricity.

W: It is.

B: ~~They~~ they sang directly into a horn, like, when they were recording this.

END MUSIC

B: We'll cut it off right there and, because we want to play some more of these. What have you got there, Larry?

W: Just to show you that a good voice never fails, here's a little White Christmas by Bing Crosby.

B: Oh, that's an oldy too. It's still a goody. ~~As you know,~~ White Christmas has become a classic. Some of these recordings may skip a little bit. They may, ~~some of the,~~ they're very old, and very delicate.

MUSIC

I think Bing Crosby ~~sold about~~ ^{is} ~~he's~~ among the four people who have sold more records in history than anybody else. Is that right?

W: Yes.

MORE MUSIC

W: It is skipping, I'll have to get over maybe to the center.

B: ~~Um-hmm.~~ Yes.

MORE MUSIC

(Dog barks)

B: Oh, me~~x~~

W: inaudible ?

(Dog barks, again)

B: girl wants to get into the act here. He has a good German Shepard dog .. her name is girl. She wants to get in to the act, too.

(Dog whines, in time to music)

B: The sound quality is amazingly good considering the conditions we've described, right Larry?

W: Yes, sir.

B: What's the label on this record, Larry?

W: Decca Records. This is Decca Records

B: Right.

MUSIC ENDS

B: Well, let us stop it right there because it's acting up a little bit. The threads on it are worn probably.

W: Here's a 1903 recording I think you'll remember.

MUSIC

B: ~~Um-hum~~, girls

W: 1903.

B: Is this Bing too? ~~Is this Bing?~~

W: This is a choir.

B: It was Edison, of course, who invented what people called then "talking machines". We call them now, stereos and record players and that sort of thing. Thomas Edison invented this machine long ago. People thought he was a nut when he went around talking about recording human voices in wax.

W: Right.

B: But he accomplished it, didn't he? And they still record voices in wax,

Larry.

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: Okay

MUSIC ENDS

W: You can tell the thickness of these records, they're...

B: They're very heavy, aren't they?

W: Right.

B: Wonder if they broke easily, Larry?

W: No, they, these have been around for quite a while.

B: Well, they use about half as much wax in the records now as they did then. They made them very thick for some reason. But I suppose that's the way you had to do it back then, right?

W: Right.

B: What's the name of that one you're looking at?

W: This is a "Perfect Day".

B: "A Perfect Day". Who does that one?

W: Imperial Quartet, this is a male quartet.

B: Is that record dated, Larry?

W: ~~It's~~ 1903.

B: 1903. Let's hear a little bit of that. That's interesting. I'll just keep talking while you ~~change~~ change the records there.

W: Maybe I should wind him.

B: Yes, you better wind him, because I forget that, don't you?

W: Right

B: And ~~as~~ when it runs down, of course, it slows up and it distorts the sound. He's got it wound up and we're about ready to go now.

W: You have to wait on these turntables to pick up their speed—they're run by strings.

B: ~~Um-hum~~. Kind of like winding a watch, only it's ~~bigger~~ a bigger mechanism, right?

W: Right, exactly.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: Well, that's the old barbar-shop quartet type singers, isn't it?

W: Right.

B: "When you come to the end of a perfect day." (quoting record) Okay, we'll stop it right there, Larry. Do you have something else over there you're looking at?

W: Right. I'm trying to look for maybe a good march tune, or something.

B: A good march tune.

W: ~~Um-hum~~. I've found one here. This is a Victor. It's by the Victor Millery Band, D.W. Rees^{ves}. This is dated September 22, 1903.

B: I've never heard of the gentleman.

W: March FRANCI. Let's see ~~what it's~~ what it's like.

B: Okay. ~~This is~~, this is interesting to me. I hope it's interesting to others as well.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: That's a really arousing march, isn't it? It's stuck, I believe.

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: These bands were quite good back then, weren't they?

W: Right.

MUSIC CONTINUES

W: Now let me tell you how the volume works. I'll close one door.

B: When you close one door, that cuts the volume down.

W: Right. Now both doors.

B: ~~Um-hmm.~~

W: See, if you did have

B: It smothers the volume.

W: Right.

B: ~~Um-hmm.~~

W: Now with one door open. Now both.

B: ~~Um-hmm.~~ That's amazing.

MUSIC ENDS

B: Larry, I wonder if you've got anything here by Stephen Collins Foster or Stephen Foster Collins?

W: Let me look in here.

B: It's Stephen Collins Foster.

W: Right, yeah.

B: You know, he's the very famous composer who gave us such songs as "Old Kentucky Home" ,

W: I have that one.

B: "Old Black Joe", you have "Old Kentucky Home"?

W: Right, I don't know who made it but I have it.

B: Well, you've got a fabulous collection.

W: Right. Here it is, "My Old Kentucky Home" and it's by Stephen Foster.

B: Yeah, he wrote that.

W: Right.

B: But who's singing it?

W: Supri a with orchestra in English. Alma Cluck. Alright, this is a 1902.

B: It's dated 1902.

W: Right. It even has the price: a dollar - fifty in the United States. It has the dollar sign on it.

B: (laughs) How about that. Well, the prices then haven't changed much over the years, have they?

W: No.

B: The prices remain about the same, even in inflationary times I imagine you can get a record for about two dollars, can't you?

W: Yes.

B: They, okay, let's hear some of Stephen ^{Collins} Foster's "Old Folks at Home" if we can get this

W: Wind him up ^{good!} ~~just~~

B: Yeah, you got to wind, ~~I'd~~ forget about winding it. You can hear him winding it, I guess and you can tell about how long it takes to wind it. ~~Um-hmm.~~

W: Now, we got a nice tight spring. Get ready. Here we go.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: That's a beautiful melody, isn't it, ~~Stephen Collins~~ Stephen Collins Foster. You might say he is the grandfather of country and western. He also wrote "Suwannee River", "Camptown Races" things like this. And "I'm Dreaming of Jeanie with the ^{Light Brown} ~~Flaxen~~ Hair".

W: Let me see. I think I have ^{Swannee} ~~one~~ somewhere~~s~~ here, I'm not positive.

B: "Swannee River", it's probably a different ~~name~~ ^{one} from the one he did, but you know "^uSwannee, ^uSwannee"?

W: No.

B: It's pretty old, too. People play it today. It's become one of the classics and people play it quite frequently. Maybe you could find us one of those. You've got a fabulous collection here.

MUSIC ENDS

W: Well Lew, I found that copy of "^uSwannee".

B: Okay. Let's see what it sounds like, ~~now~~ ^{now} Larry,

W: George Gershwin, is that how it goes?

B: George Gershwin?

W: Right.

B: ^SYeah.

W: This is a September 22, 1903.

B: ~~Yeah~~ I didn't realize that song was that old because it's still played very frequently today, isn't it?

W: ^SYeah, it says saxophone, xylophone and piano for dancing. This is ^uSwannee-One Step. I guess that one-step means some kind of an old type dance, right?

B: Right, right.

W: ^uSwannee has got a dash.

(Third person in background--designated by "T")

T: ^SYeah, ^Syeah, that's a one-step.

B: Like a one step, two-step, three-step.

W: ~~Um-hum~~ ^uYC.

T.: That's a one-step, two-step, three-steps, four.

W: Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: That xylophone's recorded well, isn' t it?

W: It's good.

B: Okay ~~_____~~

W: Here's some of the words to that, Lew, could you sing along with that?

B: (Lew sings)will see me no~~w~~ more, when I get to that Swan^ynee Shore.

How I love you, How I love you my dear old Swan^ynee.

(inaudible)

W: I guess back then they didn't know what a fuzz box and a wa-wa was?

B: No, not at all ? inaudible.

Have you ever noticed ~~that~~ the tone quality is different with different instruments and differ^tent people seem to have voices especially suited to this type of recording like Bing Crosby and like Gene Autry. Speaking of entertainers of yesteryear, I think you have something by Wild Bill and the Tex^eas Playboys?

W: Right. I believe you picked it out and laid it over here. Ye^s, here it is.. It's got "Home in San Antone"

B: San Antone?

W: Right. And Miss Molly

B: Oh , yeah. Let's play a little bit of them.

MUSIC ENDS

W: Wild Bill

B: And the Tex^s Playboys.

W: Right.

B: ~~They~~, they were quite popular ~~at~~ maybe, twenty-five, thirty years ago.

And ~~it~~ longer back than that. ~~It~~ It sounded like the needle's worn.

You have to change these needles. They wear out. They have to do heavy duty on this type of machine, I imagine. And the tone arm is quite

heavy, isn't it Larry?

W? ~~Um-hum~~. Okay, here we go. I had to change the needle.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: I think it's stuck.

W: Wind him up.

B: Let's try it again. ~~We're~~ we forgot to wind up the machine that time.

Oh, thank you.

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: They were strictly western performers, weren't they?

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: That's a steel guitar there, that's electric, isn't it?

Inaudible

W: That's not electric.

B: Well Larry, the sound quality of that's not too good. We'll get something else if you will. Larry, do you have numbers, you know, that are strictly country? Like, say like, "Turkey in the Straw" in the way they used to do it way back?

W: I can try to find. Let me see what this will do, _____
Some of these haven't been played in over a year.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: "I'd like to give my dog to Uncle Sam" (Barton quoted records)

(Inaudible)

W: Is that what will?

B: No, I think that was WW I, Larry. We'll have to check the date on that

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: (inaudible)

W: "Memories of the War"

MUSIC ENDS

B: ~~Oh,~~ check the date on that, Larry, see if it has a date on it. I believe that's WW I.

W: On this one here? "I'd like to Give My Dog to Uncle Sam".

B: "I'd Like to Give My Dog to Uncle Sam". ~~Now~~ people don't have that spirit nowadays, or at least they didn't during the Asian war.

The attitude was quite different than during WW I and WW II. Of course, the Asian war was a quite unpopular war throughout the world. Larry, as you know, music is quite historical because, like literature, music reflects the action of the day and the attitudes of the day.

W: ~~Well, here's,~~ well, here's one, it's February, 1904. This is a Victor record. Conway's Dance, it's "Memories of the War".

B: "Memories of the War"

W: Right. It says.....

B: That must be the Civil War their talking about there

W: Well it's got different songs. It's "Tramp, the Boys are Marching", "Johnny Brown's Body", "When Johnny Comes Marching Home",

B: Oh, yes, that's the Civil War now

W: "Marching Through Georgia," "The Battle Cry of Freedom", "Arkansas Traveller", "Bugle Calls and Drums", "Dixie Star Spangled Banner"

B: ~~Um-hum.~~

W: Dixie, you know "Dixie".

B: Oh yes, ~~let's~~ let's play all that "Dixie" stuff.

W: Okay, well here goes. Let me wind up real good.

B: Southern music certainly reflected the attitude of ~~that day~~ the people during that day.

W: I hope this record doesn't skip any.

B: ~~Um-hum,~~ I hope so too, Larry.

MUSIC BEGINS

W: Let me change the ~~the~~ needle in this, Lew.

B: Okay, Larry, let's hear that. That sounds interesting.

W: We want a little fresher ^{needles} These needles are over twenty or
twenty-five years old.

B: Is that right?

W: That's right.

END SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

B: If you forget to wind her up, you're out of luck.

W: That's right. She'll sure quit on you. See if you can tell me the name of this.

B: Okay.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: ~~Oh~~ "Turkey in the Straw". That's a real folk song. ~~Real.~~

W: I have another here I want to play.

B: What's the date on that one, Larry?

W: I'll have to look after I pick it up.

B: Okay.

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: I believe he's playing a concertina or an accordian--one or the other. He's good at it, too.

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: I like that.

AND CONTINUES

B: Larry, I understand that your folks, on your mother's side, were quite talented musically, is that true?

W: Yes, it seems like all of them played different instruments. I have an uncle St-? that used to ride a bicycle when he was maybe twelve or thirteen and play the guitar. Just ride around and play.

AND CONTINUES

MUSIC ENDS

B: Let's look at the date on that and see if it has a date on it, Larry.

This is a number that's played WVWV by every country and western band in the country, the dance number, square dance number.

W: It is dated January 5, 1904.

B: 1904, that's quite something. Every country band in the world plays that sometimes ~~you know~~, it's a good square dance number. They do it

W: Let me try this. Let me see.

B: What's the name of that one?

W: Let me see if you remember it.

B: Okay.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: That's an Irish singing. I believe that's an Irish tune. Oh, that's "My Wild Irish Rose" I believe.

W: Right.

B: I love that refrain. "The sweetest flower that grows" (Barton quotes song)

"You may search everywhere, but none can compare with my wild Irish rose."

That sounded a little sexy there on the end: "And some^d day for my sake,

~~they~~^{she} may let me take, all the blooms from my wild Irish rose".

W: ~~Um hum.~~ Yes.

B: I'll bet that was considered to be very risqué in that day.

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: (singing) "My wild Irish Rose, the sweetest flower that grows.

You may search everywhere, but none can compare with my wild Irish rose.

My wild Irish rose, the sweetest flower that grows.

And someday for my sake, they may let me take

The blooms from ~~my~~ my wild Irish rose"

MUSIC ENDS

B: Well, I fixed him up, didn't I. Don't you have another song there written by Stephen Collins Foster, like "Mass^{ah's} in the Cold, Cold Ground"?

W: Right (R)

B: Let's play a little bit of that.

MUSIC BEGINS

MUSIC CONTINUES

W: ~~Here's a~~ here's a Gene ~~Auxxx~~ Austin.

B: ~~He was~~ He was ^{an early} ~~another~~ entertainer, too, in the country and western field..

MUSIC ENDS

B: Larry, it's interesting to know that Stephen Collins Foster, although he wrote about the South all the time and is know everywhere for his southern music, was not actually a southerner. He was born in Pennsylvania. He was born and brought up in Pennsylvania.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: ~~That's~~ it's stuck. She's stuck on eight ⁹ ~~ten~~ ^{sy.}

W: Well, so much for that.

B: Yeah. That's kind of cute. It's a novelty song.

W: I'm just reminiscing here, just playing some different ones.

MORE MUSIC

B: ~~Am I~~ Well, you know something? It's amazing that you could get any sound at all out of these records as old as they are. And out of this machine as old as it is. Right, Larry?

W: Right.

B: You can't find a machine like this anywhere that I know of, not today. It still works, I guess there are a few around, but these records are very old and they haven't lost too much of their original sound; except the grooves break through ^{and} they run into each other.. What have you got there, Larry? Something that looks interesting?

W: I'll let you pronounce it.

B: ~~Ah, this is ah, what was,~~ is there a date on this?

W: Ah, no.

B: Let's just see what it sounds like, Larry. ~~Give~~, I'm fascinated by these old records. This certainly gives you an index as to what music was like yesterday.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: It's stuck.

T: That is Chopin's _____.

W: Yes. Chopin _____

B: ~~Inaudible~~ Chopin was a great master in his day.

MUSIC ENDS

B: Would you check and see if it has a date on it ~~is~~ too? This is Chopin, one of the great masters of all time. It's amazing how many of the popular songs take these old melodies by the great masters of yesteryear and put modern lyrics to them. This is done very frequently.

W: I don't see a date on there.

B: For example, Elvis Presley took the melody "Oh Solo Mio" and wrote a modern song about it, At least he recorded it. The name of this is "There's No Tomorrow", (sings) There's no tomorrow. The last two lines go: "There's no tomorrow. There's just tonight." I believe it went, "It's now or never!" is the name of that song, (sings) It's now or never, come hold me tight. Kiss me my darling, be mine tonight. Tomorrow may be to late, It's now or never, my love can't wait" That's the way that went, of it, Elvis Presley did. I was a little mixed up on my ~~into~~ there.

W: ~~What~~^{as} is Pearl Bailey?

B: ~~It~~ goes back quite a way. Let's see what it's like.

MUSIC BEGINS

W: A lot of people do that today.

B: Things haven't changed very much.

MUSIC CONTINUES

~~Inaudible.~~

B: That just goes to show you that the love themes and all, the laments and complaints have changed very little basically over the years, although the ways of presenting them certainly changes. And the music itself changes.

W: Here's one you hear every once in a while.

B: Still hear it every once in a while?

W? Right? I heard it in a movie not too long ago.

~~xxxxxxx~~

MUSIC BEGINS

MUSIC ENDS

W: Just a minute. (I'm) going to have to change my needle again.

B: ~~Um-hmm.~~ These needles wear out very quickly. I think maybe you can play a couple of records with one needle, and then you have to put a new needle in it, because that tone arm is very heavy and they wear down very quickly. While you're doing that, by the way, Larry, how far are we here in Silver Springs, how far is this from Washington, D.C.?

W? Maybe seven miles.

B: About seven miles from Washington.

W: To the White House.

B: ~~Um-hmm.~~

MUSIC BEGINS

B: I believe that was WW II, wasn't it?

W: I believe it was.

B: You need to wind it again, Larry

MUSIC CONTINUES

B: It's a cute arrangement, isn't it?

B: Is that a sax?

W: ~~Uh-huh.~~ Yes.

B: Uh oh.

MUSIC ENDS

B: ~~Am~~ is there a date on that one, Larry? I believe that's WWII. I'm not sure. At least they were playing it during WW II. It was quite popular then, but it might have been written earlier and that record might be earlier than WW II. Is it dated at all?

W: It doesn't have a date on it.

B: I see.

W: Here's one. It says "Country Blues" Redball Rocket Train, Mack O'Dell.

B: Mack O'Dell, okay.

W: Mercury, this is ...

B: Mercury?

W: And this is getting ...

B: Mercury Records.

W: Right

MUSIC BEGINS

B: The tone quality on that is pretty poor, isn't it?

W: Yeah, it's poor.

B: I noticed that the steel guitar he's playing on there is a non-electrified steel guitar. It's what they call in the business a "hound dog" guitar. In other words, it's played with the steel but it's not electrically amplified.

~~W: Um-hum.~~

B: Larry, some of these old hymns really date back. For example, one

record^{we} ran across in your collection is called "Take Up Thy Cross and Follow Me". Do you remember who does that on there?

W: ~~Yes~~....

B: These hymns are quite old.

W: Homer, Roberta and ^{Doris Doe.} ~~Joyce and Gee.~~

B: ~~Un-hum~~. Let's see what that sounds like. This is ~~the~~ church music, really ~~you know~~ you know. This is "Take Up Thy Cross and Follow Me". It's still played sometimes in country and western circles today. It's still pretty popular.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: That's definitely a church organ, isn't it?

W: Right.

B: (quoting record)

I walked one day along a country road

And there a stranger journeyed too.

Then lo, beneath the burden of his cross

There was a cross, a cross I knew.

I cried "Lord Jesus" and He spoke my name

I saw his hands all bruised and torn

I stooped to kiss away that mark of shame

The ^{shame} ~~pain~~ for me that He had born.

Take up thy cross and follow me

I hear the blessed savior call

And Jesus gave his all

My cross I'll carry till the crown appears

And though my journey soon will end

And God himself can wipe away our tears

And _____ fellowship

W: Inaudible

B: Inaudible

B: MUSIC ENDS

B: Larry, this is the second interview with you that I've done

W: ~~Um-hum~~. The last one was in Pembroke, North Carolina

B: ^R Right.

W: And now we're in D.C.

B: Right. But this shows your tremendous interest in music and that you really work at it and that you do have a genuine interest. About how many of these records do you think you have?

W: I've got ¹⁶³ a hundred and sixty-three.

B: ~~A hundred and sixty-three~~ ¹⁶³

W: But the majority of them skip, and, well, it's been over a year since I've been up here last and I fired it up then, but I didn't play but one or two.

B: ~~Um-hum~~. All these were quite old records. This shows that you have a deep and abiding interest in music and, of course, this talent dates back ~~to~~ among your family. Larry, we've been listening to all these old records on this very old machine. This machine is probably about 70 years old, and some of the records are almost that old or maybe that old. And now, we want to switch for contrast and listen for a moment to some of the modern music. You can see that there are some similarities but there is quite a switch—quite a bit of difference in the rhythm, wouldn't you say?

W: Yes.

B: ~~He~~ now who is this you're going to put on there?

W: The Doobie Brothers.

B: The Doobie Brothers.

W: The title of the song is "Nobody".

B: "Nobody", by the Doobie Brothers. This is quite modern. This is _____
would you call this hard rock, Larry?

MUSIC BEGINS

B: Of course, this is electrically amplified with all electric instruments,
just about.

MUSIC ENDS

W: That's some of the Doobie's. Let's see if I can find another one. Here's
one I like.

B: ~~Um-hmm.~~ Y... ,

W:very much.

B: What's the name of it , Larry?

W: "Greenwood Creek".

B: And it's by the Doobie Brothers?too? Okay.

MUSIC BEGINS

B: Of course, this electrically amplified recording and electrical
instruments and everything. Just to show you they really are improved,
arent they?

W: Right.

MUSIC ENDS

B: Larry, I sure appreciate your giving me this interview. It's been
~~be~~ very enlightening and very enjoyable and I want to thank your aunt
and your grandmother ofrcourse, for allowing us to come into your home,
to their home here .

END TRANSCRIPT