



# RESOUND

## A QUARTERLY OF THE

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#### From the Director

Bruno Nettl, a leading ethnomusicologist, appears to be growing more cautious in his appraisal of the role of sound archives in ethnomusicology. In his recent book, *The Study of Ethnomusicology, 29 Issues and Concepts*, Nettl expresses some concern over the usefulness of the proliferating archives. He stresses the importance of collaboration and unity. But how? And unity with whom? The Archives of Traditional Music has taken an important, and probably controversial, step toward addressing these concerns by purchasing a computer terminal and beginning to catalog using the OCLC national database. In this issue's column, I respond to a number of inquiries and explain why. We can provide further information to anyone who cares to write.

OCLC is presently the largest database of its kind in the world. Now international in scope, it was originated by the Ohio College Association for local use. It is easily accessible from small public libraries as well as research institutions. For the public, one of its most important features is that a user can easily discover what books and recordings exist and where they can be found. Since OCLC includes sound and print sources, it is possible to look up Franz Boas, for example, and find out what books he wrote, as well as what wax cylinders he recorded, and to discover that the original cylinders are at the Archives of Traditional Music. Since full documentation is essential for a great deal of ethnomusicological research, simultaneous information on music and printed sources is more useful than a union catalog of sound recordings alone.

For an archives, the usefulness of OCLC lies in the collective cataloging available and our ability to search all holdings for users of the database. In

a modest sample of LP records, we found that 83.5% of them had already been cataloged on OCLC. This can save us considerable cataloging time. After some modification to accommodate our local procedures, we can order printed cards directly from the home office. It is also possible to add information to the cards. This means that at the same time as we make our collection available on a wider scale, we can continue to use our own specially devised cataloging by culture area which was developed for use with field collections. An archives specializing in a certain kind of commercial music could include the names of the sidemen on each recording, and have this in its own internal catalogue.

The greatest drawback of cataloging on OCLC is the expense. It will cost the Archives about \$2,600.00 to keep the terminal connected and to catalog five hundred items in 1984-85. We believe the potential benefits to researchers will more than compensate the expense, but cost is certainly a consideration for archives who wish to adopt the system. While debates continue over how archives should collaborate, we have decided to begin with OCLC. We feel the OCLC system most effectively serves the interests of both researchers and the general public. They will have greater access to the recordings of their ancestors, their ethnic, regional, or national traditions, and to the artistry of outstanding musicians from around the world.

Our own terminal, a specially adapted IBM Personal Computer, should be installed in June.

#### From the Field

##### **The McIntosh Collection of Southern Illinois Folk Music and Folklore**

The late David S. McIntosh taught at Southern Illinois University for thirty-eight years before he retired in 1965. In addition to teaching courses and serving for eighteen years as chairman of the Music Department, he collected, often with his wife Eva, folk songs and oral data throughout southern Illinois.

Professor McIntosh's interest in folk music began at the University of Iowa. For his master's thesis, his department offered him the choice of writing on Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* or doing work on the "new fad" of folk music. Deciding on folksongs and lore, McIntosh collected songs and games from his native Illinois, an endeavor which was to interest him throughout his life.



David S. McIntosh



For many years he taught classes in folk music. Students built and played shepherd's pipes and learned the routines for games and dances. Whenever possible, they transcribed the words and tunes which members of the class knew as part of their heritage. Professor McIntosh insisted on particular care in identifying the source of material contributed and in complete documentation of the songs, games, and tales. The students' work, in turn, was always acknowledged when it became a part of Professor McIntosh's collection.

As a result of his research, Professor McIntosh published *Singing Games and Songs from Southern Illinois* (1941), *Southern Illinois Singing Games and Songs* (1946), and *Sing and Swing from Southern Illinois* (1948). Under his direction, a summer music class of 1940 produced a mimeographed collection, *Songs of Southern Illinois*. Many manuscripts remain unpublished.

The bulk of Professor McIntosh's field work, more than eighty-two hours of recordings, has been deposited at the Archives of Traditional Music.\* The tape recordings include folklore, fiddle tunes, square dance calls and music, and local and family history: a treasury of the Illinois Ozarks.

\*Archives accession number  
82-590-F

David H. McIntosh, Bloomington, Indiana

## **Resound A Quarterly of the Archives of Traditional Music**

Marilyn B. Graf, *Editor*

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## **From the Vault**

### **The M.G. Chandler Collection: A Case Study for Reappraisal of Archival Materials**

The Archives of Traditional Music holds many collections of oral and linguistic data. It provides primary research materials to ethnologists and historians, as well as ethnomusicologists. More than an arcane collection of historic sound recordings, the Archives is continually being enhanced both in the documentation of more obscure items and in aural fidelity of its collections. As recording technology improves, the substance of older sound materials can still be employed for modern study. This discussion will explore an unusual collection of narratives, anecdotes and tales recorded on cylinders from the Winnebago Indians for its potential avenues of contemporary research.\*

During the mid-1920s, Milford G. Chandler, an engineer by trade and folklorist by avocation, recorded ninety cylinders of oral data. He focussed primarily on tales from the War of 1812. His major informant was Oliver Lamer, a Winnebago man who collaborated with a number of field researchers, among them the anthropologist, Paul Radin. Chandler's work is remarkable for the extent to which a relative amateur was able to elicit sensitive material about a time when the United States waged war against both Great Britain and its native inhabitants.

Unfortunately, as often happened to fieldworkers using cylinder technology, Chandler had difficulty controlling the speed of his phonograph. Speech on his recordings was considerably distorted. Many cylinders from this valuable collection were unintelligible to non-native speakers, and for years they remained undocumented in the Archives.

In 1959, Gerd Fraenkel took copies of Chandler's recordings back to Black River Falls, Wisconsin, where he played them for Stella Stacey, a 75-year-old Winnebago woman. Stacey, whose tribal name was Mountain Wolf Woman, listened to the copies of Chandler's material and retold the stories she heard. Fraenkel's reel-to-reel taped reproductions of the cylinders were clearly audible and allowed for a translated synopsis of the data on each cylinder. Documentors in the Archives

were then able to piece together the perspective Chandler had gained on a sensitive area of American history.

What has emerged is a collection rich in oral history and alive with expressive language. Winnebago narratives about Indian participation in the War of 1812 and complaints against federal appropriation of their lands can be heard on cylinder nos. 1765-1801. Sentiments here range from unmasked resentment to an attempt to preach general brotherhood. One cylinder box was labelled "Tecumseh," the name of the Shawnee chief who led the Indian faction at the Battle of Tippecanoe. Tecumseh's brother, Tenskwauiawa, called the Shawnee Prophet, promoted the renunciation of white ways among many tribes neighboring the Shawnee. Much of what has been said of Tenskwauiawa in written history was also preserved in Winnebago oral traditions.

Cylinder nos. 1809, 1823, 1841 and 1951 speak of a drunkard who received a "mission" and was reborn as a prophet. A legend of how the prophet, having once been criticized for making unsuccessful predictions, restored his credibility by foretelling the solar eclipse of 1806, is included on cylinder nos. 1806 and 1936. These recordings suggest an interplay between belief and evidence in times of change and so add to our understanding of Native American revitalization movements.

Indian anxieties about the encroachment of white culture on their traditional lifestyle are recorded on no. 1816: "About tribes whose children go to school," and no. 1818: "The clash between Christian forgiveness and Indian vengeance." But since acculturation occurs to varying degrees within different cultural domains, Chandler was able to gather some traditional lore. See for example cylinder no. 1820: "About fasting in the olden days and the relative value of medicinal herbs," and no. 1835: "What women do when men go to war." The origin myth of the Winnebago tribe is told on no. 1811. The Chandler material exhibits many folkloric motifs and tale types.

Other cylinders are eloquent chronicles of inter-racial perplexities. Cylinder no. 1829 concerns two young boys, one black, the other white, who had lived long enough among the Indians to be trusted as carriers for their war party. When on a raid against the soldiers, the boys were captured by the U.S. Army. The white youth alone was drafted and was told "he now (had) to fight with his own people, i.e. the white army." The Indians discuss the stra-



tegic capabilities of white men on cylinder no. 1838. No. 1821 relates the story of "a night attack against the soldiers that is foiled by an unseen Negro guard," while the next recording speaks of a "fight until dawn when withdrawing Indians are saved by a white man."

A summary of research potentials in the Chandler collection hardly seems necessary. Fraenkel used the material to retrieve a type of political data that is often excluded from conventional statements on American history. The use of archival documents to prompt informants and elicit past memories is coincident with recent feedback techniques in interviewing. Fraenkel's modern recording media capture the stylistic elements of oral performance. His copies bequeath to contemporary sociolinguists a primary record of symbolic linguistics among the Winnebago. Historic knowledge is enriched by the preservation of early sound recordings. Archival materials are not obsolete; they are limited only by injudicious perspectives concerning their utility.

\*Archives accession number  
Pre'54-196-F

\*\*Archives accession number  
59-059-F

*My thanks to Margie Weiler, cylinder project assistant, for her help in the reconstruction of the Chandler collection.*

Carol F. Inman, Archives cylinder project staff

## Cylinder Project News

### Restoring the Past: Technical Developments in Cylinder Repair

The folk adage, "necessity is the mother of invention," is nowhere more apparent than in the daily work of the Archives cylinder project. During the initial phases of the project, director Anthony Seeger asked me to undertake some of the repair and restoration responsibilities. The task became a team effort in creative archiving. Wax cylinders, we quickly discovered, are not a frequent topic in conservation manuals. Literature on the conservation of recorded sound deals primarily with either the various forms of disc recordings (acetate, lacquer, and aluminum), or recordings made on tape. There was little information to help us develop techniques for use with the 7,000 wax cylinders at hand. Our work proceeded on a try it and see basis. Little by little our experiments began to bear fruit, and we now view the repair and restoration aspect of our work with some pride.

As we unpack cylinders (many of which are nearly 100 years old), from their original boxes, we most often discover changes in the condition of the cylinders in the form of mold growth. In severe cases the entire cylinder is covered with a thick layer of seeded mold, much like a piece of old fruit. Our initial task is to remove the mold without further damaging the cylinder. Usually, we can wash off the mold with a mild solution of distilled water and detergent. Several archival soaps

are available, but in our experience, Joy, the commercial detergent, is best for attacking well-rooted mold without harming the surface of the cylinder. After washing the cylinder, we rinse it in a diluted mixture of Kodak Photo-Flo, a chemical used in the prevention of spotting on photographic film. The procedure prevents water spotting of the cylinder as it is allowed to air dry and retards film exudation and mold growth. If mold or film exudation were the only problems with a particular cylinder, it may be recorded after cleaning. Unfortunately, many of the cylinders turn up broken, as illustrated in photo 1, and major repair is necessary. In this aspect of conservation our approach has been most creative.

The first step in repairing a broken cylinder is to piece together what is left of the wax. Initially this is done with small amounts of a commercial "super glue." The glue is used sparingly, for it is intended to be neither the sole nor permanent adhesive. Once the pieces are fitted together, scraps of wax from blank cylinders are melted down, and the soft wax is applied to the inside of the cylinder along the points of fracture. In this way, the cylinder is repaired with material of its own composition, and is better able to withstand future stress. Now that the cylinder is again in one piece, the problem remains of how to repair the gaps where pieces are missing from the surface, or uneven fractures which cut through the sound grooves.

At this point, a mask is cut exposing an area just slightly larger than the missing wax or fracture. The mask is taped over the cylinder so that only that area is exposed (photo 2). Once again, the melted wax is carefully applied to the broken area until the new

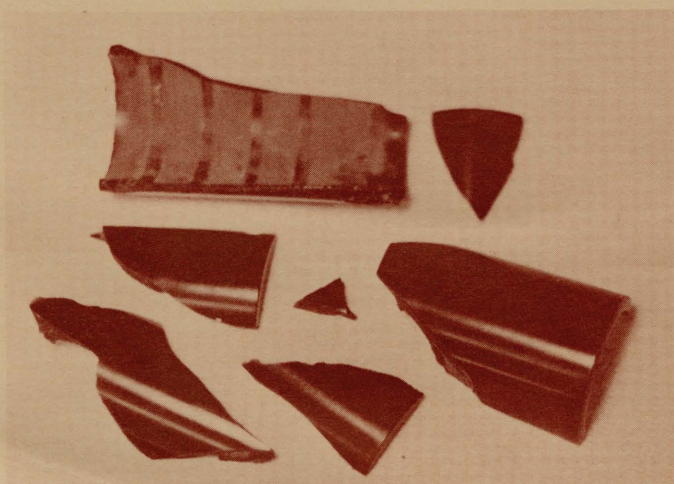


Photo 1. Cylinder fragments.

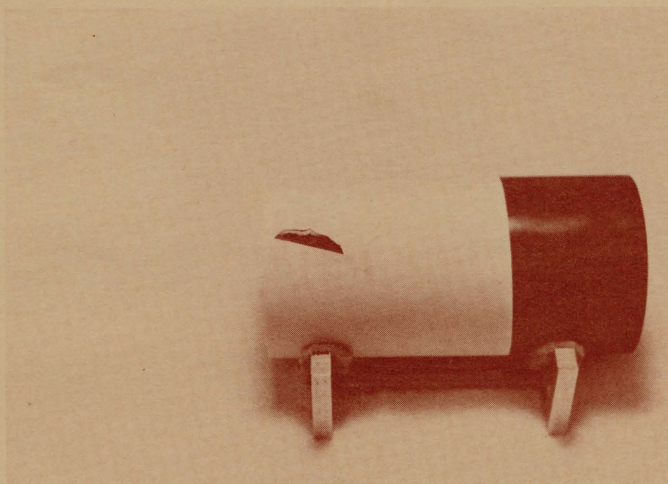
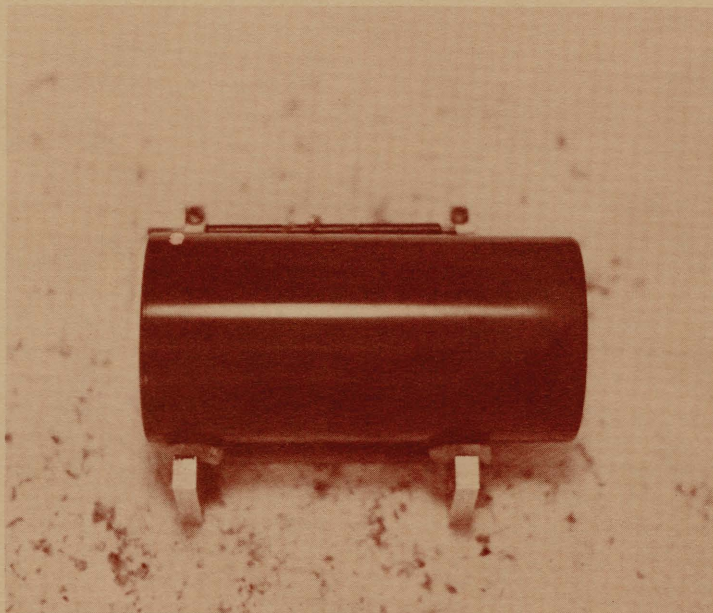


Photo 2. Mask on cylinder exposing fracture.





*Photo 3. Repaired cylinder.*

wax extends over the edges of the mask. The wax is allowed to cool, and is then gradually shaved down with an X-acto knife. Once the new wax is even with the surface of the mask, the area is buffed to create a smooth finish, and the mask is removed. Grooves are then cut into the new wax to match the old tracking, and the result is a playable cylinder where once there were merely pieces (photo 3). When played, the cylinders revolve at an average rate of 100-180 rotations per minute, and the patch of new wax is rarely detectable. In this way we have not only saved a valuable historic artifact, but have once again made rare sounds recorded at the turn of this century available for study and enjoyment.

These techniques represent only two of the developments concerning wax cylinders that the project team has produced in its six months of existence, and due to limitations of space, had to be dealt with summarily. Specific questions concerning further details of the repair or restoration of cylinders, or any aspect of this project may be addressed to the Archives cylinder project.

*Bruce Harrah-Conforth, cylinder project staff*



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