

FreeReed

The Concertina Newsletter



No. 19. AUGUST 1974



FRANK HOLLAND OF
MUDGEES, AUSTRALIA.



ARE

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Vocals, Guitar, Banjo,
Harmonica.

KEITH JONES
Fiddle, Mandolin,
Dulcimer, Melodeon.

KEN JONES
Guitar, Melodeon,
Dulcimer.

KEVIN WHITEHOUSE
Bass, Mandolin, Lute.

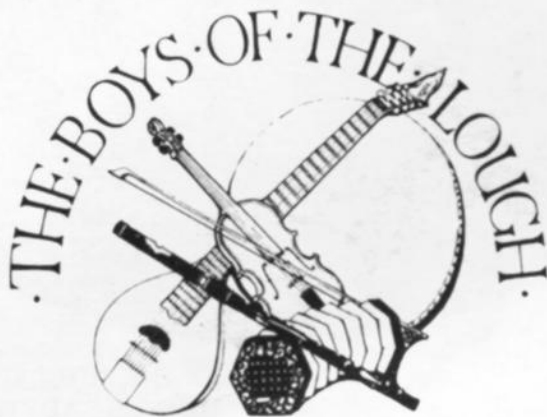
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EDITORIAL

Conventions are coming :

As the Folk Festival season draws to a close, Free Reed is planning its Concertina Convention season, and hope as many readers as possible can get along to one of the next three gatherings. As usual, booking forms and full details will be included in Free Reed which goes out prior to the conventions, but you might like to note the dates in advance.

9th Convention :

Bracknell Arts Centre, Bracknell, Berks.
on Saturday, 2nd November, 1974.

10th Convention :

The Brewery Arts Centre, Kendall, Cumbria,
on Saturday, 4th January, 1975.

11th Convention :

The Poynton Folk Centre, Poynton, Cheshire.

SATURDAY 1st MARCH 1975

In addition, Free Reed has a hand in two dances in the Derby area in the coming months, the first on 26th October, with John K's new band and Tony Hall (melodeon) as guest will probably be recorded for a forthcoming Free Reed Record, while nearer Christmas, we hope to have the amazing Bushwhackers Band from Australia as guest band. One of the high spots of Cambridge Festival, the Bushwhackers feature one of our contributors, Mick Slocum, on button boxes and anglo concertina.

Finances of Free Reed :

I've been taking advice on how better to organise and finance our magazine so that long delays in publication don't recur. A detailed statement will appear in Free Reed 20, but as an interim message, I propose adding two months to the length of all subscriptions which fall due on 1st November, so that no-one misses out due to this years long gap in publication. It really looks like subs are going to have to go up sooner than I'd hoped, but readers wishing to

help in other ways can send as many stamped, unaddressed, 9 inch x 4 inch envelopes as they can — if everyone sends a few, it'll really cut each issue's postage bill — currently £150 per issue, and doubtless due to rise again soon!

Star Magician uses Concertina and Melodeon:

One of the recent new subscribers to Free Reed is an entertainer in the grand tradition of music hall concertina player. Tony Ashmore, in addition to creating a major magical act as 'Martoni', and appearing in many major TV shows, also entertains as 'Mr. Yung', a saucy Chinaman who plays 4-stop melodeon and several sorts of concertina. His photo as 'Mr. Yung' appears elsewhere in this issue, unfortunately in black and white, for his costumes are a blaze of colour!

However, 'Mr. Yung' has an urgent request to Free Reed subscribers — he needs a miniature concertina to complement all the other free reed instruments in his repertoire — anyone who can help, get in touch with him on Sandbach 2559.

Bryan Harris :

It was a great shock to hear of Bryan Harris' recent untimely death. He was a great friend and supporter of Free Reed, a keen concertina player, and one of the major figures of the South Wales Folk revival, creating a thriving club and concert scene virtually single-handed. Our sympathy goes to his wife and daughter, and the many friends who will miss him.

Vicky's Report :

.....however, Vicky's at Sidmouth at the moment, so I'm writing this the day before I go to the U.S.A. However, she'll have posted this issue out single-handed, and is certainly a welcome addition to Free Reed, having got to the bottom of the file of complaints letters already!

I'll be back on 20th September and Vicky will be handling your letters, sub renewals, phone calls and complaints.

Neil Wayne



READERS' LETTERS

JOHN MEECHAN writes :

"Firstly as 'dedicated folk music appreciators' we should be obliged to spread folksong. To be cliquish and secretive about folk song is to destroy the essence of the music — the music of the people.

Ethnics may sneer at the music of the Spinners and Steeleye Span etc. (me included occasionally) but we have to face facts; and and others (including even Bob Dylan, Joan Baez et. al.) have introduced a lot of people into folk music who have since become more deeply involved in traditional music.

I agree with Michael on the subject of folk impressionism. The thing that makes Martin Carthy the artist he is, is not just his fine singing or his brilliant guitar work (although they do tend to help) but his charismatic personality. Impressionists can get some of the techniques but not the personality. So come on, folkies, you too have a personality but you cannot develop it unless you try. If you have to sing Martin Carthy's songs (or anybody else's for that matter) why not treat them differently and stamp them with your personality?

Finally, I would like to pick up Michael's point about excessive 'tina lore — surely the whole point of music (and life itself) is to enjoy oneself. If you prefer the musical theory and history to the playing of the instrument, you concentrate on this — you do what you enjoy — be an individual!

Jim O'Neill of Airdrie, writes . . .

"I feel sure it would help a great deal of less experienced Anglo players like myself if there were more tunes and arrangements specifically for the Anglo in F.R. After all the English and even Duet have been served well in this respect. Although I agree that many of the simple tunes printed are instantly playable, many others require a fair bit of ingenuity to get round and would probably, never sound right except perhaps in the hands of a master! Whilst other tunes still are not really at home on the instrument by their very nature (and that of the Anglo).

So perhaps some sort of short note as to the suitability of printed tunes could be included alongside these tunes, or better still as I stated above more tunes and arrangements with the Anglo in mind?"

Jim O'Neill.

Peter Howard of Grange over Sands, writes . . .

'Thanks for 'Free Reed'. How about a binder for it? EFDSS do a nice one for 'English Dance and Song' (which is about the same size as 'Free Reed'). Their binder has gold lettering and retails at £1.10. I would gladly use such a binder for mine!!

Mira Curtis of London NW3, writes . . .

'It might be of interest to readers that W.H. Smiths do an E.P. and singles record case for around £1.25 which makes an excellent case for the standard 48 English or 2 and 3 row Anglo".

'These cases are really the best cheap concertina cases around" — Neil Wayne.

PETE NALDER

BRITISH FOLK ACCOMPANIED ON RARE AND UNUSUAL
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John Ledbury writes :

'Here's some information about Sheffield Concertina Club. The club started at the beginning of February and has met ever since on alternate Wednesday evenings at the 'Prince of Wales' on Sheffield's Division Street, where we are sometimes able to use a side room and at other times play in the bar. This is not the most satisfactory arrangement and we are currently on the lookout for a more suitable meeting place.

The number of enthusiasts is at present quite small, but our meetings have always been of great interest to those present with an exchange of tunes and ideas, and a certain amount of ensemble playing when sufficient instruments in the same pitch are there. We periodically make the pilgrimage to the Mexborough Concertina Band Club and intend to have the remaining five man nucleus of the band down to Sheffield when we are established in more permanent premises.

Anyone wanting to know more about the club is welcome to 'phone me on Sheffield 304872 (if they can ever catch us at home) or just call in at the 'Prince of Wales' and see us.

Julian Pilling writes :

While in London I saw that Bill Lewington's in Shaftesbury Avenue have a Chinese music department and stock the sheng - I think the price was £35 but am not sure - you might try them for an advert.

I've heard that these shengs, the oldest free reed instrument, are quite well made and musical - though you can buy them for five bob in the Far East!

N.W.

Lynette Milward of Manchester, writes . . .

"The Newsletter is excellent! I'm especially interested to see photographs. Have you any photographs that could relate to the boatmen on the canals? Many of the boatmen are said to have played concertinas. It is difficult to find any music that was obviously 'canal' music. Do you know of any?"

Some records of interest to Concertina Players.

IRISH DANCE MUSIC (FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8821): An excellent album of 78a of Irish Dance Music, edited by Reg Hall. Although there is no concertina here, there are some very fine tracks of button accordion and other semi-traditional Irish folk instruments (Fiddles, flutes, bodhrans and uilleann pipes). A good overview for anyone who hasn't heard much Irish music. Anyone who hasn't heard much Irish music, has not yet begun their education in life! Very nicely remastered and documented. (Available for \$5.98 from Folkways Records, 701 Seventh Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. for \$4.00 from Roundhouse Records, P.O. Box 474, Somerville, Ma. 02144, or £3.00 from Free Reed Records).

Tommy McCarthy, one of the Irish Concertina players mentioned in Issue 13, plays 2 tunes on the LP BONNIE KATE (Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, CL2) His style is very much influenced by modern fiddle players. He plays two technically difficult pieces, however they lack much of the charm of the older Irish folk airs. Some of the other material on the LP is good, too. One of the finest versions of 'The Princess Royal' I've heard is played on the fiddle by Tommy Peoples. Although not in traditional Morris style, it is a version worth learning! Also, some nice flute playing by Cathal McConnell.

Another Deleted album currently in the archives of Fantasy Records is THE BLARNEY STONE, featuring Margaret Barry and Michael Gorman. I managed to pick this record up for 39 ¢ at a bargain store, and it is well worth the price. Gorman plays some very fine traditional fiddle tunes. Margaret Barry belts out some not-too-traditional Music Hall Songs, the best being "The Half Door", to the lovely tune of 'The Band of Shearers'. This album ought to be reprinted! Write to Fantasy at the address mentioned in Issue 14 (Sept. Oct. 1973). from Richard Carlin, Princetown, U.S.A.

TUNE SWAP

There are very few outstanding tunes this month — I need a copy of Skye Crofters (Recorded by Aly on his solo album) also the The Spey in Spate (From the same stable!). On the Irish Front, can anyone provide the dots for The March of the Kings of Laiois (? — it's pronounced 'Leash' anyway) and now for the difficult one — the full set of 'The Battle of Aughrim' — not the march of that name in O'Neill's 1850 but the big pipe piece which is set out like the Fox Chase and has subtitled parts — e.g. The Lament for the Dead, and After the Battle of Aughrim. There was a good response to my request for people able and willing to transcribe from record or tape. In one of the letters I received there was a request for two tunes from Northumbrian Minstrelsy — my filing system appears to have eaten this letter — a repeat request will be dealt with promptly.

Several people have asked me to give some hints on useful tune books and where to buy them. Firstly it must be said that a great many invaluable books are now out of print — even some quite recent ones. Amongst these are the Charlton Memorial Tune book (Northumbrian pipe tunes) and the Fiddler's Tune Books (2 books — EFDSS) Besides many of the great old classics — Petrie, Joyce, Kohler's . . .

In these cases one can wait patiently and hopefully for reprints or one can borrow the books for indulgent friends through the regional library service (or equivalent) or from the Vaughan Williams Library at Cecil Sharp House (If you're a member of the EFDSS). This of course raises the procedure in questionable although I feel it is morally justified in many cases — the main thing is access to reliable and cheap photostat facilities — it's easier than writing them out though!

Leaving this depressing prospect let's look at what is available with ease. Books which I feel are indispensable are : '1001 Gems — The Dance Music of Ireland' by O'Neill, Allan's Irish Fiddler, Kerr's Collection of Merry Melodies for the Violin (4 volumes), The Northumbrian Piper's Tune Book, A Popular Selection of English Dance Airs — EFDSS costs over £2 — they were all under thirty bob when I brought 'em! Useful additions to this list are the following :— O'Neill's 'Music of Ireland' (The '1850' — this is about £8.50) Cole's One Thousand Fiddle Tunes (£2), Breathnach's 'Ceol Rince na h'Eireann' (About £1 or less — a vital book if your main interest is in Irish music), The High Level Ranter's Song and Tune Book (Lots of Aly's tunes — say no more! It's time we had an Alistair Anderson tune book though). Finally a mention for the most useful tune book published since the Piper's Tune Book, this is 'Music from Ireland — Volume 1' by Dave Bulmer & Neil Sharpley. Lots of great tunes never published before — at 75p plus postage. If you want more ideas for tune books look at the list of my collection in the first of this series of articles (in No. 16) or write to me if you want any specific information.

Now for sources of these books — all of them are obtainable from Neil Wayne at ultra-cheap discount prices, all are (or should be) obtainable from Folk Mail, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 7AY. A couple of good shops are Window's Central Arcade, Newcastle upon Tyne and Walton's Musical Galleries, Frederick Street North, Dublin, Eire.

Final footnote — I whole-heartedly agree with John Kirkpatrick's English Dance & Song — it certainly is high time that the English Folk Dance and Song Society published a substantial collection of English Dance tunes — but they probably won't — so how about John and a few others whose names spring to mind getting together and doing the job for them?

All for this month, cheers!

Steve Wood,

26b Cavendish Street, Keighley, Yorkshire.

CAJUN MUSIC

Dave Smith/Marc Savoy/Paul Thompson

Additional contributions from Shirley Bergeron, Floyd Soileau, Eddie Shuler, Mike Leadbitter.

This is the first of several articles about the music of the french-speaking people of South-West Louisiana. We would like to thank Marc Savoy, master instrument-maker from Eunice, Louisiana, for the technical section of this article, which will help Free Reed readers immensely. The aspect of the music of these people — The Cajuns — which fascinates readers of Free Reed Magazine, is undoubtedly their use of a free reed instrument as the lead. Of late Dave and I, and other correspondents, have been referring to it by the British term 'melodeon', which has met with a little shaking of heads from our American friends. The term 'melodeon' makes sense to British readers, as this is what we call a simple button-accordion over here. However, seeing as the type of music we are dealing with in this article is native American, it would be better to use the term accordion — 'Cajun French Accordion' to be precise — throughout.

Firstly, who are the Cajuns?

The first French colony in the New World was established in 1604, in what we now call Nova Scotia, by settlers of Breton, Picard and Normandy origin. They called their new land 'Acadie' and referred to themselves as 'Les Acadiens', and settled down to farm and fish in peace. In 1713, Acadia became a British territory, and in theory the French Acadians were granted complete freedom to follow their own customs and religious practices without hinderance. Over the following forty years, the policies of the authorities became less tolerant, and a programme was commenced to anglify the Acadians. They showed a ferocious determination to resist this however, and in the end the authorities resorted to confiscating their lands and expelling them from British territory.

In 1775, therefore, the majority set out on what seemed like a hopeless sea trek from port to port, Southwards along the East coast of America. A great number of them picked up smallpox on the way and the whole community seemed to be destined to be shunted from one seaport to another — an itinerant health-risk.

When they arrived at New Orleans, where the resident French and Spanish were a little more kindly disposed towards them, they were nevertheless sent westwards into the Bayous to settle. There they stayed, adhering to their particular type of French culture and language. One or two non-french elements have been absorbed into their community, over the years. Now mixed into their blood is the occasional dash of Irish, Spanish, Amerindian and, strangely enough a little Anglo-Saxon. The language has the odd english, spanish or indian word in it, but basically remains this type of french which has not been spoken in France for at least two centuries. The accent, when they speak in English is unmistakable and inimitable.

Within their towns, a negro community also grew. These people adopted to a great extent, the way of life of the Acadians who were their neighbours. Some even began to think of themselves as French.

What about their music?

Obviously the older tunes and songs are of traditional French origin. I know of one or two french folk songs which have their Acadian counterpart. Other folk songs date from later stages in the development of the community, such as the songs where the singer is setting off to make himself a fortune in Texas, or the songs about the Mardi Gras celebrations in New Orleans. To dance the simple rhythms of the waltz and two-step have always been favoured. The 'traditional' Cajun band consists of accordion, fiddle, triangle, and more recently accoustic guitar. A fine example of this kind of ensemble currently recording is the band led by the Balfa Brothers. (They, by the way, feature an extra fiddler).

The accordion was first introduced from Germany in the late 1800s, but two world wars shortened the supply, and the Cajun string band gained popularity, featuring fiddle and mandolin. Between the wars one of the few outstanding accordionists was Joe Falcon. After the second world war, the accordion became popular again. A lot of credit must go to the instrument-makers, who improved the German design and built a truly unique Cajun instrument which has been the basis of the music ever since.

One of my favourite recording artists, who can play equally well with the traditional and electric band line-up is Nathan Abshire. He is also one of the many white Cajuns to be influenced by the music of the neighbouring negroes. Negro influence seems to go back quite a way, and one can only speculate as to when, during the time the two communities have been adjacent, certain songs and rhythms may have been picked up. The song "Donnez-moi Colinda" is derived from the voodoo Kalinda dance. But the largest direct influence was undoubtedly the rural blues, which influences such numbers as Abshires, "Pine Grove Blues". When the twelve bar construction and R&B beat are combined with the modern electric ensemble, the result is distinctive and fascinating. The group headed by Cleveland Crochet, Jay Stutes, and Shorty Leblanc came up with several splendid R&B tracks in English, such as "Sugar Bee" and "Midnight Blues".

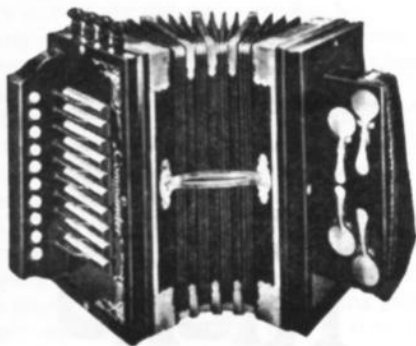
In the years after the second world war, artists such as Hank Williams brought to popularity throughout America a type of Country and Western music with an added 'dance-band' style swing. This type of popular American music influenced many a Cajun artist, and many bands were modernised to include the line-up still popular to this day. With loud electric amplification the bands played for the traditional 'Fais Do Do' dance-parties, with accordion, drums, fiddle, and three guitars — bass, rhythm and steel. They leave their own stamp upon the country swing tunes and still carry off the traditional tunes with panache.

The Cajun artists always have been very quick to pick on the popular tunes of the day and to play their own versions, ever since the modern inventions of radio and gramophone spread through the States. I have the recordings of Cajun versions of such tunes as "You Can't Stop Me From Dreaming", "La Cucaracha", and even "Release Me", to name but three.

Conversely, the Black community has, in its turn, its own music which shows real French influence, although it is basically blues. This style developed in the forties, approximately; it was a unique brand of blues referred to variously as 'French Music', 'La La Music', or more commonly 'Zydeco' or 'Zodico'. This late term is derived from a pronunciation of

the title of an old one-step 'Les Haricots et Pas Sale'. The best known exponent, whose recordings are available in the UK is piano-accordionist Clifton Chenier. He is invariably accompanied by his brother Cleveland, who plays a specially built washboard, rubbing on it with beer can 'ring-pulls'.

Now a word about the instruments used. To a certain extent old German models such as the Hohner HA 114 are used, usually reconditioned and retuned in the Cajun fashion. Agnus Lejune, father of the late and much revered Iry Lejune, has been pictured with a Hohner. Zydeco artist Boozoo Chavis was photographed at a Goldband recording session clutching what appeared to be a Hohner Erica. This is the only example I have come across of evidence of anyone playing a two two-row button-box in Louisiana, and I would welcome any other examples from readers over the Atlantic. The same goes for the use of Piano-accordion. I have already mentioned Clifton Chenier, the only other recording I have come across is Bill Matte's 'Parlez-Vous'.



As I said earlier, the most widely used instrument is the genuine Cajun accordion. The sound is unique. To hear the Cajun musician doing his thing — folk tune, blues, country, or adapted pop music, is a fine experience, and one no fan of free-reed music can possibly afford to miss. If you were to go to the 'Fais Do Do', which is a dance-party which makes a ceilidh look like a whist-drive, in Louisiana you could see first hand. However for those of you in Merrie GB who can't afford the plane fare, there now follows a commercial.

CAJUN RECORD CLUB

By special arrangement with an importer, it will be possible to offer Free Reed patrons in the UK the opportunity to buy the following imported Cajun LPs for £1.75 each, from Paul Thompson, 34 Station Rd., West Wickham, Kent, BR4 0PR. Please quote record label, number, title, artist and quantity required, when ordering. The success of this (non profit making) deal depends on your support.

Here's the record list :

Swallow LP 6001 Best of the Cajun Hits — various artists

" LP 6002 Vin Bruce sings 'Jole Bon' — Vin Bruce

" LP 6003 Cajun Hits Vol 2 — various artists

" LP 6005 Cajun and country songs — various artists

" LP 6006 Vin Bruce's greatest hits — Vin Bruce

" LP 6007 Cajun Rendezvous — various artists

" LP 6008 Cajun Jamboree — Joe Bonsall

" LP 6009 Allons au Fais Do Do — various artists

" LP 6010 Modern Sounds in Cajun Music Belton Richard

" LP 6011 Balfa Bros. play Traditional Cajun Music — Balfa Bros.

" LP 6012 Cajun Jamboree Vol. 2 — Joe Bonsall

" LP 6013 Modern Sounds of Cajun Music Vol. 2 — Belton Richard

" LP 6014 Pine Grove Blues — Nathan Abshire

" LP 8001 Cajun Sole — Mamou Cajun Band

Lanor LP 1000 Cajun Music — Shirley Bergeron

" LP 1001 Cajun Style Music — Shirley Bergeron

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THE HAMMERED DULCIMER,

Here, Tufty Swift, melodeon player with "Whistling Rufus", considers the history of the Hammered Dulcimer which is currently undergoing a revival in the USA, and reviews a fine American Record featuring the instrument.

Historically, there is little written about the hammered dulcimer. It has been primarily a folk or peasant instrument which has its roots in almost every part of the world. It is mentioned in the Bible, which gives us some idea of its antiquity. In the Middle East it is called the Santir. In the Eastern European countries it is the cymbalom, and in Germany, the Hackbrett . . . literally 'hacking board', a block for chopping sausage meat. There it was used in itinerant puppet shows and peasant houses, providing rudimentary musical pleasure without any great skill or training.

In the book 'Men, Women and Pianos' by Arthur Loesser, Bill Spence found an interesting account of what must be the pinnacle of dulcimer development :

In the late 1690's in Leipzig, Saxony, a dancing master and violinist named Pantaleon Hebenstreit evidently became fascinated with the dulcimer and had sort of a super dulcimer constructed to his specifications. This instrument, appropriately called the 'Pantaleon', was a double dulcimer about 6 feet long with two sounding boards, and some 200 strings of gut and metal covering five octave range in complete chromatic scale.

It is difficult for us to imagine the sensation he created in a time when keyboard instruments were limited in dynamic range in a stepped manner . . . such as adding ranks of pipes to the organ or multiple keyboards to the harpsichord. Pantaleon with his super chopping block was able to crescendo and diminuendo at will, bringing a whole new concept of stroke responsiveness to the music world. So impressive was Pantaleon and his instrument, that he was appointed 'Pantalonist' by the Royal Saxon Court at Dresden on May 11, 1714.

Aside from a few proteges, the Pantaleon never gained a large following because of the difficulty in mastering the instrument, however the principle of hammering the strings, loud and soft, was soon adapted to a keyboard,

resulting in our modern piano. In England they are mainly confined to the East Anglian counties, though one at least has turned up in Derbyshire and others parts of the Midlands.

In America the instrument has survived in isolated pockets of old time players in Michigan and Nebraska, and old instruments are now turning up in all parts of the country. Bill Spence recently met a man from Saratoga, New York who showed him a dulcimer that his great aunt once played 'hillbilly music' on in Madison Square Garden. When Henry Ford made square dancing fashionable among the upper class in the 20's, his 'orchestra' included the hammered dulcimer. The kind of music played seems to have been primarily fiddle and dance tunes, and sort of ricky-tick popular music for dancing.

Bill Spence who leads the band on the record is, himself, a dulcimer maker since 1969: he says of his interest in the dulcimer, 'For me, playing the hammered dulcimer is like eating cashews . . . once you start, it's very hard to stop'. Once the initial frustration of trying to figure out where the notes are has passed, picking out tunes and harmonies becomes hypnotic. Everyone I know who plays has a different style, reflecting his or her ideas and abilities. With most instruments there is a wealth of written or recorded material to draw upon, but the dulcimer has essentially no rules, no precedents, and to the musician with a head full of ideas, it soon becomes a magnificent tool with which to express them". This is a philosophy which has much in common with current approaches to concertina playing. People always ask him how hard it is to play. Actually, it is a deceptively easy instrument to play as long as you have the ability to pick out melodies by ear and are able to invent harmonies and rhythmic patterns to suit the melody being played. Unlike the guitar or banjo, both hands are essentially doing the same thing . . . striking strings with hammers, usually alternating between left and right hand with the rhythm of the music. His instrument has fourteen treble courses (groups of strings all tuned the same) and thirteen bass courses, giving him a total of almost three octaves from D below middle C, to C above middle C. With this configuration he can play in the keys of A, D, G and C plus parts of E and F, plus the relative minors.

The bridge is placed so that the interval between the left and right-hand portions of the strings is a major 5th. The scales, however, are not fully chromatic, so there are tunes which cannot be played, but they are few and far between.

The album presents the dulcimer in essentially a band setting, since only one track is exclusively dulcimer, and that's a duet with another dulcimer player.

The musicians who make up Fennig's All-Star String Band present British, Irish and American music of high quality with a line up normally featuring dulcimer, fiddle, banjo and piano. All except the piano take the lead within each set, whilst the others support, giving a very busy but uncluttered dance band sound. With this line-up the band has many similarities of to the Reg Hall — Bob Davenport country music band (LP circa 1962) which has influenced many of the musicians playing English music within the revival today. The tempo and atmosphere the band creates is very English, somewhere between the New North Carolina Ramblers and the Reg Hall Band: something I imagine, like the musicians on English Country Music from East Anglia LP (Topic 12TS 229) would have sounded like had they played together. Possibly this similarity arises from the band taking part in

the revival of Old Time Country dances (longways sets, quadrilles and circle dances) in New York State.

Apart from the very high standard of dulcimer playing, the other musicians in the band are worth noting.

Tom McGreesh, an American or Irish descent, seems to have picked up his fiddle style by a marriage of the two traditions, making for a very effect and unorthodox style.

Jon Pederson is an amazing banjo player! He has a very unusual frailing style which when applied to tunes like "Flowers of Edinburgh" give a great deal of lift to the band's music, just right for dances. When used for lighter tunes, Sandy River Belle, his playing opens a new dimension for this style of banjo.

The band is held together by Joan Pelton on piano vamping continually and unobtrusively in the background.

For my money (and it was — no free review copy!) this is the best American Old Time Country record I've heard since North Carolina Boys (LER 4040). If anyone agrees with me that is stretches into the field of English music, with which I find it has a great affinity, then it comes high up in the charts of English music records.

Mr Yung

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RECORD REVIEW

Ring of Iron — Teeside Fettleers
Tradition T.S.R. 016

After, in my opinion a disastrous L.P. by John Goodluck Tradition bounce back to their old form with this issue. The full 'sound' has returned; the reverb, which was a little excessive on Johnny Collins' L.P. (their best ever) has come nicely under control and, as always, the value for money in playing time is there.

The group — all of whom are extremely able both instrumentally and vocally — attempt a cross-section of their repertoire with the bias towards their part of the N.E. Essentially the group remind me of another of Tradition's groups The Ripley Wayfarers particularly with the very full-bodied sound they produce. There are times when this sound takes on a male voice choir appearance and tends to spoil songs such as Dol-li-a and Ore Boats.

It is the contemporary (but traditional-style) songs which appeal the most; Ring of Iron, Whitley Whaler, Chemical Workers Song and Vin Garbutt's John North. On the whole, though, the material is well chosen and well performed even if I don't always approve of the arrangements — the beauty of Lou Killen's version of Dol-li-a and Blackleg Miner and Jack Elliot's ("Stumbling" not "Rambling") Rap her t'Bank was their simplicity — but, it's a very personal thing.

The Fettleers do not score quite so well with the instrumentals which do not quite get going. John Doonan introduced us to Flute/Bass duets and there's one on this record which does manage to break one of the instrumentals up a bit. My overall criticism is that at times the group gets a little over-awed by their own harmonies (and excellent they are too) and loses some of the umph! Brian Horsfall producer of this record once said that he dreaded a critic saying of one of his productions, 'This record should please their many fans'. In this case it will and make them many more because it's a fine debut album and should enhance their reputation immensely.

Adieu to Old England — Shirley Collins
Topic 12TS 238

I have never been a great fan of Shirley Collins: I can't decide whether it stems from the time a few years ago when I should have met her at a station and missed her and as a result missed half the club or whether it's because her rather bland delivery has left me rather cold. Then along came Ashley and 'No Roses'. Suddenly Shirley develops 'umph'. Then along came this record and Shirley turns into a bit of a belter.

Looking at the liner notes on this rather splendid sleeve the most obvious thing is the unhackneyed choice of material — I had only heard two of the songs before and then only on field recordings. The treatments are varied too and feature an embryonic Etchingham Steam Band, minus Ashley (pity). With the inclusion there of accordion and mouth organ, plus elsewhere two concertinas a melodeon and a flute organ it must be the nearest yet to a Free Reed vocal LP. All the musicians acquaint themselves very well, but it is John Watcham, anglo player with the Albion Morris Men who emerges as a real driving force. He seems to have crept up quietly and appears as a musician of guts and precision. Dolly Collins is also included with her sensitively applied flute-organ — too much in the past, but nicely in balance here. I am not too happy about the final track. It is a live recording of the Albion Morris Men which must visually have been very amusing, but aurally is a bit monotonous.

When Topic went stereo I thought that the end was nigh. Now, reverb. added to the voice in a couple of places, an electric guitar on one track — watch out for a heavy rock album from Fred Jordan. Seriously, though, there's some good stuff on this record — it pleasantly surprised me.

Paul Adams.

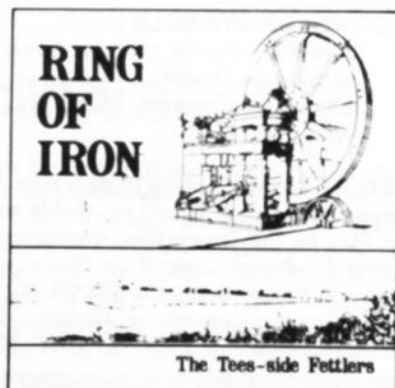
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A LIST OF ANGLO-CONCERTINA TUTORS AVAILABLE in the NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, MUSIC DIVISION AT LINCOLN CENTER, AND THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, MUSIC DIV., WASHINGTON D.C. Compiled by Richard Carlin.*

DEFINITION OF SYMBOLS :

NYPL : New York Public Library, Music Div., at Lincoln Center.

LC : Library of Congress, Music Div., Washington.

CAMERON, George, CAMERON'S new and Improved Concertina Tutor; or, Guide to the Art of Playing the Concertina: Containing a Complete Course of Lessons on Music . . . Marked and Fingered for the 10, 20, 22 and 28-keyed German Concertina, Glasgow; George Cameron publisher, 32 pages, c. 1850. NYPL

HOWE, Elias, HOWE'S Eclectic School for the Concertina. Instructions in English and German. With over 200 of the "Latest and Best" Songs, Polkas, Gallops, Quicksteps &c., arranged for the Instrument, Boston: E. Howe publisher, 1879. NYPL and LC.

(This tutor is interesting because it has instructions in both English and German, so it is obviously catered to a foreign, newly-immigrated community. It has a fairly good collection of popular polkas, horn-pipes, and other popular dances that were very widespread in the United States in the 1800s. Oddly enough, this tutor

was published in Boston, which, as far as I know, was not the center of Anglo Concertina activity, which tended to be found in the mid-western (Chicago) area of the Country).

RYAN, Sidney, TRUE [GERMAN] CONCERTINA INSTRUCTOR, Cincinnati: John Church and Co., 1903.

(This tutor resembles Howe's and Winner's tutors in layout and content. The tune selection is also oriented towards polkas, quicksteps, etc.)

SEDGWICK, Alfred B., SEDGWICK'S Improved and Complete Instructions for the German Concertina . . . N.Y., Firth and Son Co., c. 1865. LC

(Alfred Sedgwick was probably one of the first men to bring an English Concertina to New York, and he wrote a tutor for that instrument. He also performed and arranged for both instruments. (For more on Sedgwick, see my soon-to-be-written paper on the English concertina). This tutor was later published in Boston by Dittson and Co., The Library of Congress has both editions. Sedgwick wrote 2 other Anglo tutors (see below), culminating his effort by writing a "Perfect" tutor!

SEDGWICK, A.B., SEDGWICK'S NEW METHOD FOR THE GERMAN CONCERTINA . . . N.Y., S.T. Gordon, c. 1869

SEDGWICK, A.B., SEDGWICK'S PERFECT METHOD FOR THE GERMAN CONCERTINA . . . N.Y., J.T. Peters, reprinted in other cities by various other publishers. c. 1873. LC.

* A similar list of English Concertina Tutors will be included in my upcoming paper on English Concertina Music.

SILBERHORN, Henry, Instructor for the Concertina, 76, 102, or More Keys [!], Book 1, Chicago: Henry Silberhorn publisher, 56 pages, 6th edition 1927 (Originally published in 1910). LC.

(For a further discussion of Henry Silberhorn's "Concertinas", see my recent article. I have classed this instrument as an "Anglo" only because it also works on the Push-Pull method, although it is probably a closer relative to the Melodeon or Bandoneon. I am not familiar enough with either of those two instruments to hazard a guess.)

WANTED TO SWOP OR BUY. Old or damaged Concertinas and any other old metal reed instruments, and Concertinas with unusual labels, stamps, decorations or keyboard arrangements. I'd be interested in any melophones, symphoniums, square concertinas, and bandoneons that people may wish to part exchange. Concertinas I'm specially interested in are those with the labels of G. Jones, Shakespeare, Ebbelwhite, Sedgwick, George Case, Louis Lachenal, Nickolds, Simpson, Joseph Scates, Myers, Howson, Winrow, G. Jeffries, W. Jeffries, Journet, Metzler, Murdock and early Crabb. Condition is unimportant, and I'd prefer to exchange them for some of my more modern playable Anglos and English instruments. I could also swap for Banjos (Grey, Winsor and Vega) Guitars (Panormo, Lacôte, Gibson), Mandolins, Phonofiddle, Citterns, lutes, or for old Fairground penny Amusement machines, stereo rock records or Antique silver! Large and small duets, Bass and Contrabass Concertinas are also of interest. Information and enquiries to Neil Wayne, c/o the Newsletter.

VILLE, Paul de, THE ECLIPSE INSTRUCTOR FOR [GERMAN] CONCERTINA, New York: Carl Fischer, 1908. NYPL

(A similar volume by the same author was published in 1905, and called **THE CONCERTINA AND HOW TO PLAY IT (INCLUDING 250 PATRIOTIC AND SACRED SONGS and WELL KNOWN MELODIES)**, and was also printed by Carl Fischer. I am not sure if the 1908 tutor is a reprint or update of the 1905 tutor, as I was unable to view the 1908 tutor when visiting New York. The 1905 tutor is still generally available, and I purchased a copy when first struggling with a 20-button Anglo. The tunes are all fairly standard, such as "The Star-Spangled Banner", "The Blue Danube Waltz", and "When Johnnie Comes Marching Home", so it is ethnically less interesting than either Elias Howe's or Septimus Winner's tutors).

WETSTONE, J., THE FIRST STEP: HOW TO PLAY THE ANGLO-CHROMATIC CONCERTINA, London: Keith Prowse and Co., 1935. LC.

(I was unable to view this tutor, although its tune selection is probably radically different than the American tutors).

WINNER, Septimus, (1827-1902), WINNER'S primary School for the Concertina, a Thorough and Complete Course . . . [Including] A Large Collection of the New and Popular Melodies of the Day, Cleveland: S. Brainard's Sons, 79 pages, c. 1872. NYPL.

(Septimus Winner published a great many tutors for various instruments including the bandonion. He also published many volumes of fiddle tunes, specializing in polkas, hornpipes, et. al. A partial list of his fiddle tune books is available in the bibliography of the Library of Congress recording, **AMERICAN FIDDLE TUNES, #L62**, edited by Alan Jarbour).

WOLF, Betty, Concertina Instructor Arranged Especially for the Beginner of Any Age, Chicago: M.M. Cole Pub. Co., c. 1957.

(This tutor was stolen from the Library of Congress in 1968; therefore I was unable to view it. However, I assume from the title and the date and location of publication that it is a tutor for the Anglo Concertina).

UNITED MUSIC TEACHERS, Concertina Course. 1962. LC.

(This is not a commercial tutor, but is meant only for "professionals" 2 fingering charts and some rather obnoxious music included).

THE VITAK-ELSNIC COMPANY OF CHICAGO by Richard Carlin.

Perhaps 50 – 100 titles of sheet music, arranged for the Concertina and published by the Vitak-Elsnic Co. of Chicago, are currently lodged in the Library of Congress. This music was mostly published between 1949–1959. Most of the arrangements that I viewed were monophonic, with many numbers and symbols printed over the notes. This led me to believe that the arrangements were intended for some type of Anglo Concertina, although the sheets only said "Arranged for Concertina."

Most of the music is typical sentimental fare, interspersed with waltzes, polkas, and popular dance tunes. One, "The Maple Leaf Rag" by Scott Joplin, seems to be the only different type of music represented in this company's selection. *Most of the pieces are arranged by Joseph Paul Elsnic, who was born in 1895. (This is all the information I have concerning this man. Does anybody else know about him?) Those who play the Anglo might be interested in visiting the Music Division to view these pieces.

There are also some sheets from Germany also arranged for the "Concertina." (I assume these arrangements are for "Anglos," although I am not sure). The A.B. Weston Co., of Stockholm is also represented with many titles. You must remember that only sheets copyright in the U.S. are necessarily in the library, as part of the copyright law dictates that one piece of all copyright material must be deposited in the Library of Congress. Doubtless much more Anglo sheet music has been published, but is not copyright or is not copyright in the U.S. Readers who know of this music should report of it through the Newsletter.

*For Ragtime is not usually associated with polkas!

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Dave Bulmer and Neil Sharpley have spent the last couple of years playing in just these sort of sessions, especially in the Regent, an 'Irish' pub in Leeds, where the lads are based. They have collected the best of the tunes being played to produce a book which should prove invaluable to anyone interested in Irish music, as most of the tunes included are not readily available elsewhere.

The music is hand-written, (type-set music is a fantastic price) but very easy to read. There are some unfortunate mistakes e.g. accidental signs are placed after the note instead of before, but these do not detract at all from the usefulness of the book as it is really bursting with good tunes, and that is what you're after anyway.

At 75p this is amazingly good value and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to anyone who enjoys playing Irish music.

Alistair Anderson.

"Music from Ireland" is available from Free Reed at 70p.

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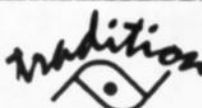
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