

# AMERICAN FOLK-RECORDS

COWBOY SONGS, HILLBILLY TUNES, SPIRITUALS, ETC.

A column designed to help operators select money-making recordings of folk tunes. Address all communications to Folk Records Editor, The Billboard, 1564 Broadway, New York City.

## News Notes

Personal appearances of folk-record artists and performers on country air programs have always been successful, but this year they have hit new peaks. Two more reported top business recently. One was Boone County Jamboree, which

played a personal appearance at the Toledo Outdoor Opera Theater and turned in the first profit that the theater has seen in five years. It played two performances to excellent business. The other is *Hillbilly Jamboree* at Memphis. The show had already scored phenomenal business in two Sunday showings there—the second having been scheduled after the success of the first—and was brought back for the third time over the Labor Day week-end (5). On its third session it pulled in 13,000 people, to score a \$5,000 gross. . . . There is a double lesson here for music machine operators: (1) that folk artists have tremendous popularity and drawing power thruout the country and that folk records could be tried profitably in many locations that now ignore them; and (2) that highly profitable phonograph tie-ups can be engineered in any locality that has scheduled a personal appearance of country and folk artists. . . . Harold Goodman, who directed the *Who Barn Dance* in Des Moines, has switched to WFAA-KGKO, Dallas, where he will handle the barn dance over those stations and will also direct the stations' country talent. . . . Polly Jenkins and Her Musical Ploughboys are currently touring army camps with the WLS-USO camp show unit.

## Week's Releases

**Texas Jim Lewis and His Lone Star Cowboys (Decca 6064)**

*Tweedle O'Twill and Dusty Skies*  
Lewis and his crew have a terrific job on their hands trying to overtake Gene Autry on *Tweedle O'Twill* (billed as *Tweedle-o-Twill* on the Autry version), but they've turned in excellent work here and may be able to do it. Their recording is replete with outstandingly fine string band work and a typically appealing Lewis vocal; it's as good as the Autry version, and certainly deserves a try. The flipover, a soft, sweet and melodious ballad, is a lovely job on a lovely tune. The Lewis version has real pop possibilities, with its fine build-up of vocal chorus work to amplify the solo vocal on the wind-out.

**John (Dusty) King and His Range Busters (Bluebird B-9038)**

*I Hung My Head and Cried and Someday You'll Know You Did Wrong*  
A solidly appealing couplet, featuring King's fine, clear vocal, backed by his swell aggregation, with fiddle and squeeze-box standing out. *I Hung My Head* is a top job on a tune that has been previously recorded, and stands as the strongest version. It should do well both for itself and for the song. Flip-over, *Someday You'll Know*, while lacking deep or rich country quality, is a pretty song, and gets similar top treatment from King and his crew. King's vocal work, incidentally, rates right at the top, along with the best of pop-band vocalists. He's almost a certainty to go on to wider and wider fields.

## Recommended

Records showing indications of becoming music machine hits, based on nationwide reports and the judgment of The Billboard's Music Department.

**"HAPPY HOUR POLKA":** Plehal Brothers (Decca 4355)—A bright and bouncy polka written by the Plehal Brothers and given top treatment by their crews, consisting of harmonica duet, guitar and bass. A cute tune with a heavy rhythmic beat, it shapes up as excellent for tap and tavern trade. Already, in the few weeks it's been out, it has corralled top spots in various localities, latest to report it as a winner being Milwaukee. Definitely recommended for any location where polkas are popular.

## Letter Box

Gene Autry recordings are still riding ahead, but most recent reports place their top popularity in the East, with the other sections turning again to other artists. Top Autry tunes in the Eastern sector, at the moment, are *Tears on My Pillow* (the leader, according to recent



JAMES CAGNEY AND EDDIE REAGAN help enlist employees of Mills Novelty Company, Chicago, to go over the top for bonds, 10.3 per cent, on the pay-roll deduction plan. Left to right: Ralph Mills, Fred Mills, James Cagney, Don McKiernan. Treasury Department: Eddie Reagan, U. S. S. Marblehead hero; Herb Mills and Admiral E. A. Evers.

reports), *Take Me Back into Your Heart* and *I'll Wait for You*. The Autry sensation, *Tweedle-o-Twill*, still retains its popularity, of course, being strongest in the Midwest. . . . The Plehal Brothers' most recent polka, *Happy Hour* (see "Recommended" slot) is reported as the top nickel-grabber in Milwaukee. . . . Montana Slim's excellent version of *I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes*, which came out months after the tune had achieved top popularity in the Bob Atcher recording, is already making its own mark. It's one of the three best coin-catchers in the Baltimore territory. . . . Ernest Tubbs' long-run favorites, *When the World Has Turned You Down*, is still making itself strongly felt in the Mid-Atlantic section and also in many localities in the Midwest. As a matter of fact, it still remains one of the very highest nickel-grabbers on a national

scale. . . . Bob Wills's *Sitting on Top of the World* is very strong in the Midwest.

## Birmingham, Ala.

BIRMINGHAM, Sept. 12.—Nathan Alley, of Ten Ball Novelty Company, reports his brother, Joe, is off to the army. Already one brother, Louis C. Alley, is encamped in California.

The Hurvich brothers, of Birmingham Vending Company, have just returned from vacations, Harry at Miami and Max at Panama City.

Gus Alley, of Magic City Music Company, is still helping train aviators out at his Central Park Airport.

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