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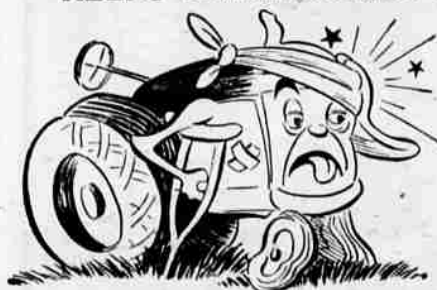
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Children's Records Are A Man Sized Business In U.S.

By HUGH MULLIGAN
AP Newsfeatures Writer

Nearly 75 years ago Thomas Edison shouted "Mary had a little lamb" into a long funnel attached to a revolving cylinder wrapped in tinfoil.

Edison was trying to find a method of recording telegraph messages. Instead, he wound up inventing the phonograph and inadvertently producing the world's first children's record.

The phonograph became a runaway success, survived competition by radio, the movies and television, and remains to this day

the backbone of a billion dollar industry.

Children's records were not quite as successful. For decades only the major companies turned them out, mainly for the prestige of boasting of a complete catalogue.

Long regarded as the stepchild of the industry, children's records in the past three years have staged a remarkable Cinderella act. Sales are nearing the 20 million mark annually and hundreds of new companies have entered what has suddenly become a highly competitive field.

What caused the sudden change? "Two things," according to H. H. Ray Clark, manager of merchandising and planning for RCA Victor's Bluebird Records. "Dropping the price from \$4.95 to \$1.98 and switching the sales focus to supermarkets, drug stores and five and dimes. Parents, usually accompanied by the kids, account for 90 per cent of all sales, and rack jobbers the distributors who supply the grocery chains, account for 50 per cent of these sales."

Along with the drop in price, emphasis has been placed on volume buying, attractive packaging and direct consumer appeal. Where a kiddie record once was considered remarkable if it sold 15,000 copies a year, many now hit 75,000 and 100,000.

The old standbys, like Mother Goose, Grimm's Fairy Tales, Black Beauty and "The Little Engine That Could" are still the top sellers, but almost anything from television kiddie shows will be a runaway hit on records. Popeye, Huckleberry Hound, Shari Lewis, Terry Tunes, Shirley Temple, Captain Kangaroo and just about everything ever done by Walt Disney has proved successful in the children's recording line.

"We had one album," says Clark, "called 'Wyatt Earp and Other TV Theme Songs.' It was instrumental, no words at all, but it sold 75,000. Similarly the 'Songs of the Pioneers' and Roy Rogers 'Twilight on the Trail' did remarkably well."

If there is a king in the kiddie record field, it would have to be Walt Disney. The original sound tracks of "Snow White," "Dumbo," "Alice in Wonderland" and others put out by RCA have been among the all time best sellers, as have his several albums with Columbia, and now just about the entire line produced by his own firm, Disneyland Records.

Since kiddie records began to boom, many top actors and singers have taken a fling at the field, including Charles Laughton, Ralph Bellamy, Perry Como, Ed Wynn, Rosemary Clooney (Columbia's top seller), Vaughn Monroe, Charlton Heston, Robert Preston and Bing Crosby.

Says Clark, "an artist who may be tough to handle in the pops line becomes very docile in doing children's records and takes the job very seriously. Most of them seem

to look upon it as sound public relations, an investment in their future with a coming audience."

Unlike pops or classical albums, a good children's record will sell just as well year after year as it did when it first came out.

"We figure," says Clark, "that

we get a whole new audience every five years. The age range is from about 5 to 10. You used to be able to count on the 11 and 12-year-olds but not anymore. Today when a kid, particularly a girl, passes 10 she's already in the rock 'n' roll class."



AMERICANS IN GERMANY: Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Stewart — he from Texas, she from Brooklyn — are two of the number of Americans who sing in German opera.

American Duet Now Plays In German Opera House

By REINHOLD ENSZ

BERLIN, (AP)—Divided Berlin has opera houses in both East and West. In the West, one of the leading baritones happens to be a real westerner—from Texas.

But hardly anyone would suspect that tall, handsome 31-year-old Thomas Stewart hails from San Saba, Texas. German is the language for almost all of the opera's productions and Stewart sings them like a German.

"His German is often easier to understand than that of German singers," says Dr. Horst Goerges, one of the opera's top officials. "Stewart has a definite gift for languages."

Stewart's pretty, 31-year-old Brooklyn-born wife, whose stage name is Evelyn Lear, also sings with the opera.

Stewart makes 70 to 80 appearances a year, while his soprano wife makes 30 to 40.

"It is unusual that a man and wife are both singers," Stewart says, "but it is even more unusual for them to sing in the same opera house."

When they're not singing, they're at home in West Berlin's fashionable suburb of Dahlem, practicing their opera roles, or playing the roles of parents. They have two children, Jan, 13, and Bonni, 11.

How did the family get to West Berlin?

"It was simple," Stewart says, "my wife and I got Fulbright scholarships for singing lessons here."

The scholarships were for West Berlin's College of Music. They arrived at the school in August, 1957, and immediately began studying German, in addition to singing. It wasn't long before both were singing at the West Berlin opera, thus joining the scores of Americans who are singing professionally in West Germany.

West Germany has about 65 opera houses and many of them have one or more Americans on their rolls. The influx of Americans has caused some grumbling among German singers, some of whom suspect that the American government is forcing the opera houses to hire Americans.

"Anyone who says this is being

naive," Stewart says. "The director of our opera hires only on the basis of singing ability. Germany has a definite shortage of trained singers."

Hamburg's independent newspaper Die Welt recently made a survey on the subject and came to the same conclusion as Stewart. The paper said there is no evidence of favoritism, but added that the United States is turning out more opera singers than it can possibly use.

On this point, Stewart says: "It's very hard to get practical experience in the United States. Only three cities have opera houses—New York, Chicago and San Francisco. What's more, they have short seasons. German opera houses operate 11 months out of the year."

Before starting his singing career, Stewart put in a three-year hitch in the United States Air Force as a statistician. He stuck with statistics for one year after his discharge, but then switched to his real love, singing.

He sang with the New York City Center Opera, with the NBC TV opera and at Chicago's Lyric Theater.

He says there is very little difference between stage life in Germany and America.

"Musicians are musicians. But there is a basic difference in personalities. Germans are much more subdued than Americans.

"The average American will go to a party and within two minutes he will be telling someone his life history. Germans simply do not do that. You have to know a German some time before you can possibly become close friends."

Stewart and his wife want to remain in Germany until 1962. Then they would like to go back to the United States and land jobs at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

"We like Germany," Stewart says, "but after all, America is home. We are well treated and I have never encountered any anti-American resentment."

Stewart adds with a grin: "What's more, you can't get any American-style ice cream over here."

Canadian Family Honored Guests

BRADFORD, Pa. (UPI) — The three members of a family from St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, were surprised recently when their car was halted by city and state police as they entered Bradford.

However, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert C. Snyder and their son David hadn't done anything wrong. It was just that the Bradford Exchange Club had singled them out for de luxe treatment as part of the city's observance of Pennsylvania Week.

The Snyders were taken to a hotel where a suite of rooms were reserved, were guests at a luncheon and a dinner and received gifts from 30 Bradford firms.