

even the easiest of solos; but his electric personality permitted him to "get away" with it. In the eyes and ears of the public, Oakley could do no wrong.

It was tragic when arthritis seized those nimble fingers and forced him into an untimely retirement.

Oakley's real name was Joseph Sharpe and he came from Birmingham, a city notable in banjo history.

In the golden age of the banjo, Birmingham (with London) was one of the two principal centres of its manufacture. Thousands of banjos were turned out there by such makers as Windsor, Matthews, Riley and Houghton, to mention a few that come to mind.

The best-known of these was undoubtedly Arthur Octavius Windsor. As an amateur banjoist he felt the need for better instruments than those obtainable at that time, so he started to make his own; an enterprise (at first with his playing partner Arthur Taylor) which grew into the well-known manufactory.

CALLED "CASTLE"

A. P. Sharpe tells me that at school young Windsor's classmates nicknamed him "Castle", which in later years led him to adopt the silhouette of Windsor Castle as the trade-mark of the company and the name "Castle Works".

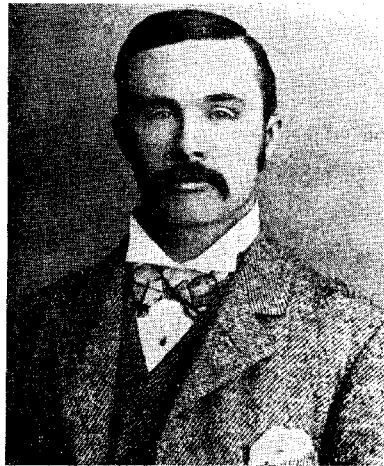
The Windsor works in Newhall St. were a victim of Hitler's bombers in 1940 and the firm was never re-started. Little now seems to be remembered of it, or its personnel. It would be interesting to hear from any of its old employees, if any are still about. I know your Editor would welcome any information and old catalogues, etc.

Surely there must be plenty of old catalogues and banjo brochures lying forgotten at the bottom of drawers all over the country. Have a look and let "A.P." have a look at them.

* * *

Last month we were left struggling with the re-assembly of the control column of my Grundig TK5 tape recorder. It may interest Jeff Pocock to know that with the help of a patient from the Occupational Therapy Clinic up the road all the bits and pieces are now back in their right order and the machine is working better than it ever did.

(To be continued)



From A. P. Sharpe's archives.

ARTHUR O. WINDSOR

Flamenco Guitar

By PETER TOTTENHAM

(Continued from last month's issue)

THIS month we have a look at some of the *toques* specially suited to the "concert" style of flamenco. By that I mean pieces which, probably because of their freer *compas*, allow the guitarist to work out his variations on lines that may not be strictly flamenco.

With these *toques* circumstances have led the guitarist to create something new; something that differs from the original *cante* accompaniment far more than is usual with, say, a *bulerias* or *soleares*.

The reason is these *toques*—chiefly the *Rondeña*, *Granainas* and *Malagueña*—descend from *cante* where the guitar played a very subordinate part. The guitarist plays an Introduction and links the *coplas* (stanzas) but during the actual singing his contribution is largely a question of a *cadenza* here and an *arpeggio* there whilst he may remain silent for bars at a time.

Obviously, when it comes to performing these as guitar solos there is a shortage of usable material. As a result a repertoire of *variaciones* has grown up which has no relevance to the *cante* and thus, in the eyes of the guitarist who remains close to his roots, no validity as flamenco.

This lack of regard is accentuated by the fact that the family of *Fandangos*, to which all three belong, suffers from not being of the purest

flamenco and from a popularity a generation ago which successfully (and often with good reason) alienated all the purists and all true *aficionados*.

However, like the solo flamenco guitar, these *toques* exist and flourish so it is as well to accept them at face value. In any case, we should give the *Fandango* its dues: among its numerous descendants are such magnificent expressions of the tragedy of the human conditions as the *Tarantas* and *Mineras* which come from the mining district of Levant.

If these are not *jondo* it is only because by an accident of geography they do not come from the Andalusian cradle of flamenco.

THE MALAGUENA

For convenience we can distinguish two types of *Malagueña*: one retaining close links with the *cante* and the other having developed very definite characteristics of its own.

The first, paradoxically, as played by Juanito Serrano on record, has an ornateness and reliance on melodic decoration which would be appropriate to the "concert" style but beneath it all can be heard the motifs and musical "punctuation" that belong to the guitar part in the *cante*.

Apart from this, the *Malagueña* is difficult to define since it has few themes distinctive enough to attract the untrained ear.

The second type of *Malagueña*, however, is instantly recognisable since it employs a theme that will be familiar even to those who know nothing about flamenco: that given in Ex. 9 on the following page.

This recurring theme of thumbed bass-note and upper string accompaniment of either single note, plucked chord or tremolo, is also common to the so-called "classical" *Malagueña* where it alternates with a slow *copla*, usually played single-string.

Today a second distinctive theme is common to the *Malagueña*—that of the *Verdiales*. In fact it might be more accurate to call it the "malagueña of Juan Breva" who developed it from the original *Verdiales*—but the distinctiveness does not have much relevance today. There is an increasing tendency to ignore the distinction between *Malagueña* and *Verdiales* with the result that the latter sometimes appears under the first name.

Its usual place, however, is as the coda to the *Malagueña*.

The rhythm of the *Verdiales* is shown in Ex. 10. This is the Introduction and after it comes a distinctive melody broken up by this same *rasgueado* in the chord sequence C. F. C. G. (3rd pos.) C. and concluding with the chordal cadence G. F. Em. This cadence is perhaps the most immediately striking feature of the *Malagueña*.

THE GRANAINAS

Strictly speaking the *Granainas* and *Media Granainas* are two distinct versions of the same *toque*—the one simpler, more naive; the other precocious and glittering. In practice, however, such distinctions are not particularly relevant and the labels are in most cases interchangeable, so we will consider them together.

This *toque* takes its name from Granada, a city where Moorish culture is much in evidence. Thus, although it is an important centre of flamenco, it has given its name to a piece where the gypsy elements are least in evidence.

In the *Granainas* there is none of the force and urgency that pervades flamenco generally. On the contrary, it is extravagant in an inconsequential way; almost pretty, airy, filigree,

“concert” flamenco *par excellence*, if by that term we mean a performance where the guitar is more important than the flamenco roots.

Interestingly enough, Tarréga chose to commemorate the Alhambra in Granada with a tremolo study which, perhaps, suggests the tracery and patterned perfection of the Moorish decoration so typical of the palace.

The *Granaina* seems to strive for the same effect with its ornate arpeggios and rippling tremolo and a typical passage of plucked notes and slurs.

It is difficult to be specific about this *toque* since its more or less free *compas*—and the lack of an obvious structure—mean guitarists have a free rein for their inventiveness.

The most distinctive feature is probably the Introduction: a pattern of sound created by thumbed chords, each preceded by a tremolo (Ex. 11). Apart from this the characteristics of this *toque* are such as to require musical examples of a length that would be impracticable here.

Suffice it to say the ear will, with intelligent listening, learn to recognise the few constant factors.

Much of the general points made above also apply to the less familiar *Rondeña*; a lyrical *Fandango* again without *compas* and without any *coplas* specifically belonging to it.

It consequently becomes a *pot*

pourri of themes and melodies without any real direction, which makes it ideal for demonstrating the resource of the guitar and the guitarist.

There is a version—developed by the great Ramon Montoya—which involves re-tuning the guitar to E. B. F. D. A. D. and this is characterised by a rather haunting sound: much like that of the *Tarantas*.

(To be continued)

From a Bath Chair

By R. TARRANT BAILEY

WHAT a mercy “B.M.G.” is issued on the first, not the fourteenth, day of the month, otherwise one would be put to the inconvenience of hunting for an illustration depicting a pair of Turtle Doves fondling each other on a Lovers’ Knot of pink ribbon, decorated with myosotis rampant, above a pair of closely-clasped hands or two fond hearts so firmly entwined it would be difficult to get the arrow out.

As it is, the photograph opposite will do splendidly as a Valentine to my beloved readers; because these two B. M. and G. Tape Club Members are so fond of each other they are even able to tolerate the noise they make and still remain friends.

The finger-style banjoist is W. J. Ball, L.R.A.M. and the coyly-smiling plectrum guitarist none other than the one and only original Tapeworm, Gordon Dando, whose strong personality, combined with a weakness for wanton mischief, so overpowered the very slight discretion with which I have been blessed, that he inspired—if that is the right word for so regrettable an occurrence—me to write “Disc Chords”, which, in its turn, misdirected Jeff Pocock and made his life one of turmoil by causing him to institute and direct the B. M. and G. Tape Club now disturbing the peace and domestic happiness of so many homes all over the world.

It consoles me to observe that these two gentlemen, who were but school-boys when it was my misfortune to direct their banjorial footsteps, are now cultivating almost exactly the same hairstyle as the one with which I set the fashion to the world some fifty years ago.

The Silver Screen background and unsightly jumble of electronic equip-

Ex. 9

Ex. 10

Ex. 11

faintly), neither do we hear the exact tonal quality of sound.

It follows. If we want to hear what our instrument sounds like we must be prepared to hear both the pleasant and the unpleasant. This is the stage where you must make up your mind if you are going to *re-close* your ears . . . or remove the unpleasant sounds.

There is no doubt about it; if you close—or half-close—your ears you will miss not only the unpleasant sounds but also *all* the fine points of music; tone-production, interpretation, phrasing . . . the lot!

Let us try to apply intensive listening to one of the pieces (we think) we play fairly well. This time you *will* hear all those objectionable noises; this time you will notice that the phrasing, the tone, the interpretation are not really so good after all!

This time, too, if you are serious, your hearing will tell you the *exact* cause of the noises and how to prevent them.

So, applied intelligently, intensive listening (ears at "full boost") must eventually both remove tonal defects and improve quality of production. If at any stage during practice you suspect you are not fully intent, just "tune" your ears to the faintest possible sound—the ticking of your watch, a dog barking two miles away!

(To be continued)

Flamenco Guitar

By PETER TOTTENHAM

(Continued from last month's issue)

FLAMENCO is a large subject and even a series of articles such as this cannot hope to cover its whole range with anything like complete thoroughness: the most it can do is suggest a few basic outlines and provide a guide for fuller understanding.

This month I would like to deal with more than usual so individual treatment will necessarily be even sketchier than in previous articles.

This month's is a miscellaneous group; mostly of lesser importance than the *toques* I have so far described but often very popular. To ignore them would be to leave serious gaps in our knowledge of flamenco—gaps which need filling in before we come

next month to the most serious types of all: the *siguiryas* and the *soleares*.

To begin with we have three *toques* whose names indicate a Latin-American influence or origin. That there should be a connection between Spanish and South-American music is not surprising when one remembers not only the historical and linguistic bonds but also the fact that both use the guitar as the principal instrument in their folk music.

Nor is it surprising that the pieces in question—the *colombianas*, the *guajiras* and the *milonga*—all combine catchy melodies and lilting rhythms that immediately distinguish them from the main body of flamenco.

NO DIFFICULTIES

These are undemanding, immediately likeable pieces whose performance presents few difficulties.

The *guajiras* is thought to have originated in Spain, gone to Cuba with the Spanish army and then returned with a snappy rhythm in 3/4 time. Both this and the *colombianas* are usually in A Major and, like the *Tanguillos*, also in A Major, they may be fitted to a standard pattern as already described — alternating *rasgueado* (a basic form for the *colombianas* is shown in Ex. 12 on this page) and a few easily recognisable melodic themes. This combination makes the *colombianas*, in particular, one of the most charming and effective pieces on the flamenco fringe.

The *milonga* — again Cuban influenced—tends, in solo performance, to be a meandering, free-compass piece, lyrical rather than rhythmic; again making use of melodies from well-known popular songs. Many of these are interchangeable with those of the *farruca*.

The complexity of these three pieces is obviously at the will of the guitarist who may introduce harmonies and variations in accordance with his capabilities.

Of considerably more importance

than these, however, are the *fandangos de huelva*, the *farruca* and the *petenera*.

The *fandangos de huelva* (also called *fandanguillos*) are a very popular part of the vocal repertoire but they also translate well into instrumental solos since they combine distinctive variations, a solid formal structure and opportunities for extended improvisations.

Typically, this *toque* will have an introduction and two themes, derived from the *cante*, separated by a well-defined bridge passage.

For the introduction guitarists have developed a possibly infinite number of formulae that may be used for both solo and accompanying guitar. Increasingly the introduction has become longer and more prelude-like—particularly in the case of the guitar solo—and correspondingly more improvisatory and virtuosic.

OBVIOUS FEATURE

Its most obvious feature is that it is firmly rooted in a pronounced four-bar measure divided into two two-bar phrases which can be counted 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. (6 tacet). This measure persists throughout.

As a sort of repeated anchor point to which the guitar constantly returns, the *Fandangos de Huelva* has the chordal cadence shown in Ex. 13. This both starts and finishes each variation and is often implied at terminal points in the introduction; it is the most distinctive feature of this *toque*.

One of the best known *Fandanguillos* has its first theme composed of four-bar phrases each ending with the successive chords A. E. A. E. A. (tacet) E. This is followed by the cadence already noted; a melodic bridge marked by the repeated count of 5; the cadence again and then the second theme following the same pattern as before but using the chords C. F. C. G. (3rd position) C and final cadence.

Since the melodies used are straightforward the chief artistic interest of the *fandanguillos* lies in the development of the introduction which may be played as anything from a simple *rasgueado* to the most involved arpeggio prelude.

Such is the competence of present-day flamenco guitarists that, in fact, the introduction has become the

"B.M.G." CONTRIBUTORS

are usually pleased to hear from readers with comments on their articles and suggestions for future articles. If your letter requires an answer, please be sure to enclose a self-addressed and stamped envelope.

fandanguillo and only a single theme is played at the end of a dazzling display of technique; almost with a feeling of coming down to earth after the intoxication of flights of imagination.

The *Petenera* is an attractive, whimsical, pleasantly-haunting piece with a clear-cut structural pattern. It usually comes out well in transcriptions and is not a particularly difficult piece. For all its attractiveness, however, you may not hear it very often, either on record or in the flesh since a flamenco superstition says it is unlucky to play it.

If you want to tempt fate it is in 3/4 time in A Minor and part of its *rasgueado* is shown in Ex. 14.

The *Farruca*, possibly because it derives from the stylisation of the dance, has become very formalised and attempts to make it a guitar showpiece only tend to remove it further from flamenco. It is a popular piece and very exciting when well played; working up to a powerful *accelerando* climax.

It is played in A Minor and has the distinctive *rasgueado* introduction and bridge shown in Ex. 15, to which the

guitar always returns after each variation.

There are several well-known themes and hundreds of variations of more or less relevance. The essential point is that the *farruca* revolves round the tonic, subdominant and dominant-seventh and returns to these chords instantly. This makes improvisation very easy, if not always rewarding.

A standard feature is an *accelerando* 12-bar descending run from F on the first string to the open A string before the final *rasgueado*.

Finally, flamenco guitarists have developed the so-called *Danza Mora* as a solo piece of a very individual nature. This exists in as many versions as there are guitarists. It reflects the Moorish influence on Spain by its use of discords and an insistent rhythm in the bass like a drone.

The sixth string is tuned down to D and the bass may be as simple as the repetition of sixth and fourth strings—or a little more interesting as shown in Ex. 16. Whilst this is going on in the bass it is accompanied by various treble figures, usually including a tremolo passage.

The general effect is to evoke Falla, Arabs and other esoteric influences. It is worth working out or stealing a version since its effect is extraordinary. I have seen one—a very poor specimen—reduce an audience nightly to the profoundest silence and, in some case, to tears and convince them they were in the presence of the world's finest guitarist and the most consummate art.

It has thus become an essential part of the repertoire of every guitarist in Spain since it combines intelligibility and the mysterious in such a manner as to confuse all but the most sophisticated listener.

(To be continued)

Focus on Folk

By FRED OSBORNE

(Continued from last month's issue)

LAST month I signed off with a vision of a valiant band of pilgrims and aspiring young folk-singers dutifully practicing their deep-breathing exercises.

We shall proceed with the assumption you have already imbibed the basics of deep breathing: your lung capacity is beginning to increase. Believe me, it is astonishing what one can accomplish in a comparatively short time.

By the use of deep breathing and chest-expander exercises the writer increased the girth of his chest at the rate of one inch per month for several months—at a time when I had appeared to cease to grow and develop!

The girth of the chest in question is now ten inches greater than the original measurements. That was quite a long time ago, of course, but your old "Folk-Focuser" is assuming quite a lot of his readers are young enough to emulate something like this themselves.

A greater chest girth and, more to the point, a greater lung capacity will improve the power of one's singing—though not necessarily the quality of it. But it will help materially, even in the development of this latter point eventually.

Having learned how to breathe deeply, shall we go on to the next simple stage? This is to learn, by practice, how to control the air one breathes in.

Ex. 12

Ex. 13

Ex. 14

Ex. 15

Ex. 16
6th String: D

John Lyndon informs me Joe Custino is now playing H.G. with Benny Kalama's Serenaders at the "Hawaiian Village" Tapa Room. — Eddie Pang has rejoined Sol Kamahele's group in the Surf Room of the "Royal Hawaiian" and Sol himself also plays H.G. now and then.

Waikiki Records recently put out two new 45's by Pua Almeida's group from the Moana Hotel:— 609 "Behave Hula Girl"/"I Will Remember You" and 610 "Hasegawa General Store"/"Lahaina'luna".

(To be continued)

Flamenco Guitar

By PETER TOTTENHAM

(Continued from last month's issue)

IN this brief survey we now come to the *jondo toques*—the profoundest examples of flamenco expression.

I make no apology for repeating what I have said before and emphasise that until you fully appreciate both the spirit and technique of flamenco you should not attempt these *toques*. Not only will you make nothing of them, you will also get nothing out of them.

These are the essence of flamenco: a synthesis of sound, feelings and traditions that make precious little sense musically and has very little relevance to the world outside Andalusian Spain.

I do not believe that only a Spaniard can really appreciate flamenco but I do believe that the experience of *cante jondo* is of a nature that requires the greatest effort at understanding if it is to mean anything—and these *toques* are nothing more than attempts to re-create the spirit and power of the flamenco voice at its most expressive.

They rely on neither the rhythmic interest of the *tanguillo* nor the melodic beauty of the *granainas*: they are—or should be—the expression of primitive but powerful emotions within limited structural framework.

More than any others, these pieces belong to the *cante* to the extent that the mention of them in normal circumstances would never suggest anything but their vocal performance. But the emancipation of the guitar has made them part of the solo repertoire: in fact, as in the *cante*, the most demanding part.

I am talking in particular about the *siguiryas* and the *soleares* but I will also include here the *tarantas*. Even this short list is debatable and some authorities will accept only the *siguiryas* as *jondo*.

The truth is that, historically, the evolution of flamenco is still obscure and no one can say with certainty which are the original forms nor how they are related.

It seems more useful, then, to ignore the historical uncertainty and accept common practice: which leaves us with the forms named.

This should not, however, be allowed to hide the fact that the most profound forms of expression in flamenco are the unaccompanied *martinete* and *debla* and that, in any case, the *siguiryas* and the rest of them are primarily vocal so the guitar can only approximate to the real thing.

The human voice is, after all, a far more expressive instrument than the flamenco guitar.

The *tarantas* are not strictly in this class for geographical reasons—they belong to the mining areas of the *Levante* and that class of songs which include the *mineras* and *cartageneras*

—but they have a profundity and emotional anguish which has put them alongside the most authentic *cante jondo*.

The solo guitar version also benefits from more melodic interest than is customary in this group and from various guitar effects. Like all this class, it emphasises forceful bass notes and repetitive patterns but its most striking feature is an almost discordant note suggesting an Arabian influence. This is particularly evident in the powerful opening arpeggios (Ex. 17).

Another feature is a passage with a marked shuffling rhythm; a vestige of the accompaniment to the vocal.

A characteristic of the *tarantas* is its ominous bass of rippling arpeggios and threatening chords which contrast with a liquid melody on the treble strings. In reality it is a very melodic piece in a grim, haunting sort of way but the melody is never allowed to dominate. Brief snatches of tunefulness are broken by rolling chords of a most suggestive type: a quicksilver figure on the upper strings is contrasted by the most forceful slurs and legatos in the bass.

To do, as Sabicas has done, to

Ex. 17

Ex. 18

Ex. 19 (a)

Ex. 19 (b)

Ex. 20

extract the beauty and play with the tracery of its broken melody—to make it pretty—is maybe marvellous guitar playing but it is poor flamenco.

The *siguiryas* is an uncompromising *toque* that makes no concessions to popular taste in rhythm and melody. It is in D_b Minor (an apt key for the tragedy inherent in it) although its insistent return to the chord of A Major might give a different impression to some.

A further complication is that its time signature alternates from bar to bar between 3/4 and 6/8. Few would dare to say with certainty how the vocal part should be classified. One group of distinguished composers who examined it decided that over this bass the *cante* was in 7/8 time.

The instantly recognisable mark of the *siguiryas* is the insistent two-bar figure shown in Ex 18 and much of the *siguiryas* is taken up with variations on the bass notes in this phrase.

OBSCURE

With a few exceptions the other themes and variations are obscure and performance of this piece depends more on intuition and a feeling for flamenco than on any tangible features that lend themselves to analysis or description.

The *soleares* are easier to categorise. Usually played today in E Minor it has the same compass as the *bulerias* and *allegrias*, which can be expressed in terms of a four-bar unit:

1. 2. 3./4. 5. 6./7. 8. 9./10. x. x.

Many transcriptions of the *soleares* use an older type which may be archaic but is perfectly adequate for the beginner since it gives a better idea of the compass and accent which is of great importance in the performance of this piece.

These use a single four-bar *rasgueado* and a selection of basic variations that include single-string melodies and a tremolo.

However, in actual performance the *soleares* have acquired much of the concert expertise associated with the *fandango* family and it demands a full use of the resources of the guitar in all positions and of the array of flamenco techniques—a complex tremolo, advanced arpeggios, etc.

The one constant is the four-bar *rasgueado* “anchor” to which the variations always return. In the old days this was usually as shown in

Ex. 19a: nowadays it has developed into something like Ex. 19b.

Purists might object but it is also fairly common these days to conclude the *soleares* by speeding up and going into a *bulerias*—using the *bulerias rasgueado* only, or both it and a melodic variation.

Finally, there is a particular variation of the *soleares* called the *caña*. This is usually played with a *soleares* introduction of greater or lesser complexity according to the ability of the player but it is equally effectively played in the older style, since everything about this *toque* suggests an authentic but older tradition.

Thus it is played almost throughout with the thumb and its characteristic *rasgueado* is more or less that of the old-style *soleares*.

Its very distinctive theme is based on the chord sequence C. G. (third position). C. F. and a concluding cadence G. F. E. like so much of flamenco and this cadence is implicit throughout the piece. The typical *caña* is shown in the extract given in Ex. 20.

In a sense the *caña* is the only part of the *soleares* that remains recognisable as a formal motif outside the chordal “anchor” point. The rest has disappeared beneath a flood of imaginative exploration and developing technical accomplishment.

Next month I hope to review some of the many flamenco transcriptions available and indicate those which seem of particular value as flamenco and musically intelligible.

(To be continued)

Hawaiian Holiday

By JOHN A. LYNDON

(Continued from the January issue)

MONDAY dawned bright and clear and I awakened at 7 a.m.—not, as one would expect, to the sound of soft Hawaiian guitars and native chants but to the harsh rattle of a pneumatic road drill. In this land of dreams come true, something had gone wrong with the plumbing.

However, it would have been churlish to have complained on such a beautiful morning so I joined the many others who seemed to have the one destination in mind—Waikiki beach. There, for about two hours, I swam and lazed and became once again a

millionaire—in memories that is; not, unfortunately, in truth.

Lunch came all too quickly and during the afternoon I joined the launch that was to take me on a conducted tour of the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbour. It was a wonderful sight leaving the yacht basin and I began to understand how the Hawaiians must have felt as they sailed away from their beloved Island, perhaps never to return.

The tour was dramatically presented, with not a few poignant recollections among the other visitors, but all too soon we were heading out to sea and it was then I discovered why the Hawaiians sing so often about going home.

The Hawaiian skyline is a marvellous sight—if one can ignore the skyscrapers. The mountains; the beaches with Diamond Head on our starboard quarter; the incredibly blue skies with a few soft fleecy clouds; all this made an unforgettable sight and I used my cine camera to good effect.

We sailed slowly into the harbour accompanied by hordes of swimmers and surfers, all eager to show their prowess and, I might add, their charms.

ENVY

Oh! how I envied those early discoverers of these Islands—until I remembered poor old Captain Cook. So I caught the bus back to the hotel, glad that I could enjoy the menu instead of being part of it.

I had decided that evening to visit the “Barefoot Bar” and listen to the music of Sterling Mossman with Barney Isaacs on the Hawaiian guitar. However, as I was strolling along Kalakaua Avenue, I heard some fantastic Hawaiian guitar playing and discovered, to my amazement, it came from a small beer joint called “The New Frontier”.

Literally fighting my way inside, I found a trio playing Country and Western style. They were led by the Hawaiian guitarist—Len Ryder by name—and he was playing a triple-necked pedal guitar.

The remarkable thing was that even the Islanders thought he was one of the finest players they had heard.

I was almost inclined to agree.

I managed to talk a lot with Len Ryder and he was pleased to hear there was such a large following of Country and Western music in these

Flamenco Guitar

By PETER TOTTENHAM

(Continued from the April issue)

I HAVE often heard complaints from would-be flamenco guitarists that there just is not enough printed music available. The surprising truth is, however, there is a great deal of it and although your local music shop may neither have it nor have heard of it, they could be asked to make the effort and obtain it.

The point of this and next month's article is to indicate what has been printed and to give some idea of whether it would be worth ordering. Give your local dealer the details and he will know from whom to order.

In preparing this survey I have examined no less than 250 complete pieces of varying standard and quality. When you consider there are probably no more than twenty *toques* represented among all these you will appreciate the selection is a wide one and should cater for all tastes.

The one real complaint I have to make is that very few arrangers have succeeded in creating an unambiguous notation for the *rasgueado*. Anyone who wants to learn new flamenco rhythms from music alone is likely to be disappointed. In most instances it is a case of being wise after the event—once you know the *rasgueado* you can see how a particular notation has been made to represent it!

THE PROBLEM

If you have no one to show you, the only sure way to master this rhythmic element of each *toque* is by listening to records—and here the problem is in knowing enough about flamenco to be able to distinguish the essential part from the personal interpretation of the guitarist.

My advice is not to waste your time trying to extract something from records by Sabicas, Montoya and the like but to go instead for the cheap "bargain" LP's by artists one has never heard of. Those ten-shilling LP's by José Pedrillo and Curro Amaya sold in departmental stores and bookshops contain excellent material for learning the basic rhythms and structures of flamenco.

Whether it is good, bad or indifferent is another question. What is important at the moment is that these records

show the essentials with great clarity and with an underlying simplicity which offers a realistic aim for the competent guitarist.

Sheet music may then be used for learning new *falsetas*.

An ideal substitute for a teacher is provided by transcriptions of actual recordings but good examples of these are unfortunately few and far between. However, Luis Maravilla (who is probably responsible for more good flamenco music than any other "composer") has made three EP's (Spanish), which I have also seen on an LP in this country, of some good flamenco guitar and Union Musical Española have published transcriptions of the twelve pieces included.

I have only two criticisms of these: some of the records are duets whilst the transcriptions are solos and some of the *falsetas* have an unfortunate "awkwardness" that Maravilla can get away with but I doubt that anyone else would.

Despite this I think the series includes some of the finest material available to the amateur anywhere—although obviously of high standard.

MOST USEFUL

The most useful of these pieces are probably "Taconeo por Fandangos" (Fandangos de Huelva), "Juerga en el Tablao" (Bulerias) and the two *siguiryas* "Sentimiento por Siguiryas" and "Duquela Gitana" and there is an outstanding *rumba* "Al Compas de una Rumba". As far as this last is concerned, I strongly recommend you attempt it in conjunction with the record: it is the old problem of the marvellous *falsetas* being entirely dependent on the exactness of the *compas*.

The name Maravilla tends to be a guarantee of good, playable flamenco music and it appears on many other publications, including some from Ediciones Musicales and Garzon. The

fandangos de Huelva and a rather more difficult *alegrías por rosa* and *zapateado* published by the former are well worth trying to get. (This publisher's flamenco, incidentally, is issued in both notation and *cifra*).

One of the most interesting works by Maravilla, for my money, is a slim collection called "Flamenco—Accompañamiento del cante y Baile" which has both introductions, *falsetas* and accompaniments, where appropriate, for the *tarantas*, *petenera*, *malagueña*, *sevillana*, *grandinas*, *farruca* and *bulerias*. This seems to me to come near to expressing the roots of flamenco but it is a personal choice. Do not obtain it expecting to find complete solo works; get it rather to fill in gaps in your understanding of flamenco. It is published by Union Musical Española.

MAIN CONCERN

My main concern in this and the following article is to identify music that is playable and this may be a very subjective criterion. By "playable" I mean the printed music should make sense; that it should have some sort of identity and that it should be satisfying to play. In other words, if one is playing a *granadinas* one should know it is being played all the time and not just strings of apparently meaningless notes.

For the player looking for something of this type that is not too difficult to play, the Spanish publishers Boileau issue a series of twelve pieces very suitable. I have not seen all of these but those I know include a good *siguiryas* ("Seguidilla"), an "Alegrías in A" and, if you wish to go further afield, an excellent *jota Aragonesa*. These arrangements, by Angel Iglesias, adhere to the formal, traditional flamenco arrangements but are not old-fashioned in any way.

The same can be said of the Fortea publications (distributed by Schott) which include a few simple pieces such as *tanguillos* and *sevillanas* as well as some described as "less easy and more complete". An *alegrías in A*, *soleares* and *granadinas* are typical of the seven items offered in this second category.

At about the same level, Union Musical Española have a series of seven "Bailes Populares Españoles" which includes *sevillanas*, *soleares*, *farruca* etc. This is also good, basic flamenco.

(To be continued)

WORTH PLAYING SOLOS FOR THE SPANISH GUITAR

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The "Sittin' on a Gate" report, and comments, upon and about "Hick's" visit to the Federation (S.S.) Rally should, if coupled to the B.B.C./TV guitar teaching remarks, ensure a full and fruity "Correspondence" column for some time to come.

About the former I cannot write with any authority as I was not there, but I know "Hick" very well and feel quite certain he exaggerates only when writing about the activities of "The 'B.M.G.' Outside Recording Unit" and sticks firmly to nothing but the truth when dealing with serious matters.

From his report one gathers it was the old story of "Too Many Cooks". If ever there was a one-man-job it is that of Director for the control of a gathering of instrumentalists. He requires helpers, of course, but these must be *real* helpers with enough sense to understand that if the Director is going to be able to direct he *must* insist upon his orders and wishes being carried out without question *or* secretly introduced "improvements". This calls for those rare attributes—loyalty and unselfishness.

WILLING OBEDIENCE

If you have produced and directed as many Banjo Band Concerts as I, you will understand exactly what I mean and agree that the success of the show is frequently the outcome of modest, willing obedience on the part of a quiet second-banjoist in the back row rather than the cocksure certainty often so blatantly exhibited by the "star" instrumentalist.

As to our Editor's forthright comments upon the B.B.C./TV guitar lessons: if there were any doubts as to the attitude he had taken, surely these must be completely dispelled by the support of his view so firmly and strongly expressed by such well-known masters of guitar playing as John W. Duarte, Peter Sensier and R. J. R. White.

One would have thought it obvious that *the* man for this television guitar instruction job was James O'Brien. I do not know if he is pretty enough to justify a television appearance but I *do* know he is exceptionally gifted in the ability to convey *absolutely correct* instruction in simple language, expressed so well it holds the reader's attention and increases interest at every perusal.

No gimmicks are introduced or required. His "Guitar Technique",

from its first appearance to the present day, would, without bewildering or boring, ensure for any beginner wishful to master guitar playing, quite correctly in *the shortest possible time*, success with a very large capital "S".

Jim O'Brien is a modest chap, free from any mistaken impression he is another Segovia but the tone he produces is just as good and his playing delightful to hear.

* * *

The beautiful book "Captions Courageous" Bob White sent me as a Christmas present some years ago rushed back to what is left of my mind when I unrolled last month's "B.M.G." and saw the cover picture. With every respect, I longed to enhance it with the caption: "Go away. If you *dare* touch my flat-back *once* more I shall tell my mother!"

Weep not, dear reader, I knew I was bound to get the sack some day.

(To be continued)

Flamenco Guitar

By PETER TOTTENHAM

(Continued from last month's issue)

PERHAPS the best known series of flamenco music in this country is the Garzon collection. Twelve of these albums are almost exclusively devoted to flamenco but styles and standards vary greatly. Some are transcriptions of records—No. 6, for example, is as recorded by Niño Ricardo which indicates its level. Others also claim to be transcriptions but since I have not heard the records concerned I cannot comment on their accuracy.

The easiest of these albums is No. 1, although only the rather basic *soleares* of the five pieces included is likely to become anyone's party piece. The rest are rather short and not very exciting.

Another fairly easy album is No. 9—a collection of thirteen flamenco rhythms with, in some cases, a few *falsetas*. This is reasonable as far as it goes but the *rasgueados* tend to be rather elementary and, in some examples, only tell half the story.

My personal favourite is album No. 21 (although I have not seen No. 19 which is a transcription of ten recorded pieces and which seems as though it might be ideal teaching material). No. 21 has eight pieces by Rafael de Jerez, including a *farruca*, *verdiales*,

two *alegrias* and a *granadina*. I found these eminently playable and worthy of a place in any flamenco repertoire. They are not too easy but neither are they particularly difficult and should repay study.

Nos. 2 and 6 are difficult, though even these yield interesting *falsetas* if one takes the trouble to look for them. The *farruca* and the *alegrias* of No. 2 and the *alegrias in E* of the Ricardo album No. 6 should prove profitable in this respect.

A few points about some of the remainder.

No. 4 has a quite easy *pot-pourri* of *falsetas* and *rasgueados*, including the *tanguillos*, *alegrias*, *guajiras* and *farruca* which might interest some. It also has a variation of "Los Cuatro Muleros" which is a useful *falseta* for the *bulerias in A*. Nos. 7, 8 and 10 include accompaniment to the *cante* transcribed from some apparently old records but I must confess they do not mean much to me.

WORTH GETTING

Finally, No. 11—the Pepe Martinez album—is good for average players and well worth getting. I find the *peteneras* in this particularly attractive.

Schott also have a Pepe Martinez album which is, perhaps, slightly more difficult but contains some pleasant material.

Hansen publications have a series of albums by Montoya, Escudero and Sabicas. The last named has five long and difficult pieces which appear to be transcriptions of recordings, although I have not heard them. I feel it would be most instructive to have this album along with the record simply to study the Sabicas technique. I do not suppose many of my readers would be able to make much of it otherwise.

Both the Sabicas and Escudero albums are re-prints of music issued separately by the Spanish publishers Ediciones Musicales.

The Escudero album is also advanced but will repay close attention. The *sevillanas* is probably the best concert-type *sevillanas* available and I particularly like the *zapateado* "Repiqueteos Flamencos" which is a concert type variation, melodically rather different from the usual but rhythmically very much a *zapateado*. It is this strong rhythmic sense that makes it easily understandable.

There are two Montoya albums and between them they re-print most of the

