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Preface



Mrs. Regeera Dowdy is an anagramic pen name of American writer and artist Edward Gorey (1925 - 2000), probably best known for his 1963 illustrated book, *The Gashlycrumb Tinies*. (“A is for Amy who fell down the stairs; B is for Basil assaulted by bears...”) The inspiration for this album came from Gorey's illustrated corpus, as well as my love of old haunted things. (I leave it to you to decipher the significance of Colonel Gouraud.)

Actually, it began with me howling into my iPhone in a car in late May 2011. I'd been dabbling with black ambient soundscapes and vocal manipulations for a few years. Each year around Memorial Day I began forming the conceptual basis for my next Halloween mixtape, which usually takes all summer. (I'd been making one each year since 2007, spending dozens of hours piecing songs together, and adding a few original creations.) Then this spring I had some inkling that I might try to make an album of my own. It wouldn't be as easy, I thought, but why not at least give it a try? So I moaned, screamed, whimpered, and howled into my iPhone Voice Memo app from an enclosed car that afternoon (didn't want to summon the police) with all vigor, and the first track of my first album was born.

The idea to employ old 78s and wax cylinders as a vehicle of terror was born on my 2010 Halloween mixtape *Father Morning Presents...*, in which I wove together shards of an old phonographic recording and the closing credits of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. In 2009's *You've Been Sick* I sampled heavily from the saturation chamber sequence of the 1999 remake of *The House On Haunted Hill*, where 100 year-old ghosts are pitted against the living in an abandoned asylum for the criminally insane. (Ditto for *Session 9*, which I seem to sample just about every year.)

But this time I wanted something closer, more intimate. I wanted to leave out all the extraneous tracks and movie samples. Each year's Halloween mixtape had become less about collecting other people's music and more about making the kind of music I wish other people would make. So finally this year I stripped away everything but me and some recordings from another century. Why old recordings? Because, as I pointed out earlier, nobody is scared of a ghost from the 1980s with mall bangs. But you probably wouldn't fuck with a haunted victrola, would you?

Neither would I.

I love to frighten. I love to conjure up ghastly images and ghoulish landscapes with nothing but the human voice. This is exactly what I feel I have accomplished on *Allusions and homages*, which in a way is really an homage to the first recording artists of history, those brave souls of the 1880s who whispered into strange machines with absolutely no idea that, 130 years later, some macabre eccentric with another strange machine (the computer) would be reinterpreting their voices for the sole purpose of scaring the petticoats off the unsuspecting.

Here, then, are the stories behind the recordings within *Allusions & homages to Mrs. Regeera Dowdy, on the anniversary of her first published correspondence with Colonel Gouraud*.

*Percival Ravenwood, esq. watched with some horror as the phosphorescent ectoplasm
crawled up the ribs of Duchess Claxton's whalebone bodice.*

"The Lost Chord" is a song composed by Arthur Sullivan in 1877 at the bedside of his brother Fred during Fred's last illness. The manuscript is dated 13 January 1877; Fred Sullivan died five days later. The lyric was written as a poem by Adelaide Anne Procter called "A Lost Chord," published in 1858 in *The English Woman's Journal*.

The song was immediately successful and became particularly associated with American contralto Antoinette Sterling, with Sullivan's close friend and mistress, Fanny Ronalds, and with British contralto Clara Butt. Sullivan was proud of the song and later noted: "I have composed much music since then, but have never written a second Lost Chord."

Many singers have recorded the song, including Enrico Caruso, who sang it at the Metropolitan Opera House on 29 April 1912 at a benefit concert for families of victims of the Titanic disaster. The piece has endured as one of Sullivan's best-known songs, and the setting is still performed today.

- *Wikipedia*

Sample: Edison phonograph cylinder (1888) of Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) - The Lost Chord & Speech; Source: NME.com (<http://www.nme.com/nme-video/youtube/id/Lv7i-gkSWn0/search/sir-artur-sullivan>); Notes: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lost_Chord

*Seated one day at the organ,
I was weary and ill at ease,
And my fingers wandered idly
Over the noisy keys.*

*I know not what I was playing,
Or what I was dreaming then;
But I struck one chord of music,
Like the sound of a great Amen.*

*It flooded the crimson twilight,
Like the close of an angel's psalm,
And it lay on my fevered spirit
With a touch of infinite calm.*

*It quieted pain and sorrow,
Like love overcoming strife;
It seemed the harmonious echo
From our discordant life.*

*It linked all perplexèd meanings
Into one perfect peace,
And trembled away into silence
As if it were loth to cease.*

*I have sought, but I seek it vainly,
That one lost chord divine,
Which came from the soul of the organ,
And entered into mine.*

*It may be that death's bright angel
Will speak in that chord again,
It may be that only in Heav'n
I shall hear that grand Amen.*

- *Adelaide Anne Procter*

"Dear Mr. Edison, if my friend Edmund Yates has been a little incoherent it is in consequence of the excellent dinner and good wines that he has drunk. Therefore I think you will excuse him. He has his lucid intervals. For myself, I can only say that I am astonished and somewhat terrified at the result of this evening's experiments: astonished at the wonderful power you have developed, and terrified at the thought that so much hideous and bad music may be put on record for ever. But all the same I think it is the most wonderful thing that I have ever experienced, and I congratulate you with all my heart on this wonderful discovery. Arthur Sullivan."

*An unexpected change of meteorological affairs drew all attention eastward,
causing well-wishers and passersby to feel suddenly and strangely unwell.*

Rob Perks and Will Prentice wrote the following for Playback No. 33, the bulletin of the British Library Sound Archive:

In May 1890 a minor public scandal erupted when it was discovered that many veterans of the Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War were destitute. The Secretary for War stated in Parliament that he could not offer assistance, and in response the St. James's Gazette set up the Light Brigade Relief Fund. We are indebted to the work of Bennett Maxwell, an expert in cylinder recordings, for some of the details in the story that follows.

We are so used to charity records today that the idea of producing recordings to raise money for good causes has become commonplace, but at that time - so soon after Thomas A. Edison's invention of the first sound recording machine in 1877 - it must have seemed an extraordinary innovation. Colonel Gouraud, Edison's representative in Britain, arranged to make three wax cylinder recordings to support the fund: Martin Lanfried,* trumpeter and veteran, sounding the charge as heard at Balaclava; Alfred Lord Tennyson, reading his poem The Charge of the Light Brigade; and Florence Nightingale, celebrated for her nursing achievements in the Crimean War, delivering a message to the veterans, recorded on 30 July 1890 at her home at 10 South Street, Park Lane, London.

We also know that Florence Nightingale presented Colonel Gouraud with a print of The Return, Lady Butler's painting of the aftermath of the Charge, with the intention that it be sold to raise money. The print and the letter to Colonel Gouraud are now held in the regimental Museum of the 17th/21st Lancers at Belvoir Castle.

The cylinder was still being exhibited 15 years later. In April 1905 Talking Machine News reported that 'One of the most interesting cylinders in Mr Johnstone's collection is that bearing a short sentence by Florence Nightingale. The occasion was an exhibition promoted at Edison House to help the survivors of Balaclava. The date is July 30th 1890. Very clearly the gallant little lady speaks: 'God bless my gallant [sic] comrades of Balaclava, and bring them safe to shore,' and then, after a pause, 'Florence Nightingale'.'

Meanwhile, Colonel Gouraud's Edison Phonograph Company, set up in 1888, became the Edison Bell Phonograph Corporation, and later the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co. In 1897, Edisonia Ltd. was formed, inheriting the business of the latter. In 1909, J. E. Hough purchased the assets of Edisonia Ltd., forming J. E. Hough Ltd., a company that went public in 1926 as Edison Bell Ltd.

In a letter to The Sound Wave on 21 June 1910, Hough confirmed that the cylinders previously held by C.R. Johnstone, including that of Florence Nightingale, were now in his possession:

'I am in possession of vocal records delivered in 1890, which might be considered priceless if they could be put to public use, for instance three by Alfred, Lord Tennyson ... and Mr Gladstone ... Florence Nightingale, Prince Napoleon, H M Stanley, Phineas T Barnum, but these records are merely venerated relics, and so far as any public use is made of them they might as well be buried in oblivion.'

Mr Hough would surely be delighted if he knew how treasured these very same recordings are today! As the cylinder market declined, Edison Bell Ltd. was driven to bankruptcy and was subsequently bought out by Howard Flynn, who reformed the company under the name Edison Bell (1933) Ltd. On 24 March 1934 Flynn took part in a BBC radio programme, *In Town Tonight* (only a transcript of the programme has survived) in which he recalled that:

'We were looking over old matrices in the archives of the present Edison Bell Company last year when we came across an old mahogany box, securely fastened and labelled "Old Wax Cylinder Masters 1888-1890". We opened it and found inside a number of old wax cylinders ...The cylinders bore traces of fungus and for some time we were afraid to even test them for fear of serious damage. Eventually however, we got out the original old machine on which they had been recorded, carefully overhauled it and its reproducer, and selected one of the waxes. It was labelled "Florence Nightingale 1890". For some seconds we heard nothing but a terrible scraping sound and then suddenly we listened awestruck to this great lady, long dead, speaking clearly but faintly, and what I heard thrilled me from head to toe.'

In the radio broadcast Flynn announced the imminent release of a new record to be called *Florence Nightingale: An Episode of the Crimean War*, with royalties going to the Red Cross and hospital charities 'so much beloved by this great lady'. A letter from Decca to Flynn dated 11 June 1935 confirms that they were ready to produce copies of the record at 4/6d per dozen for the first 160,000 ('cash with order') and a series of discs was planned as 'British Celebrities'. Apparently sales of this, the first in the series, were 'almost negligible', and no others are known to have been issued. The firm went into liquidation in 1938, after selling the goodwill and stock of the business to Decca in 1937.

In 1935, Flynn presented the original cylinder to the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, from where it was subsequently passed on to the Wellcome Trust Library. An unsigned carbon of a letter from Flynn to Sir Henry Wellcome dated 17 May 1935 survives, presenting 'the original Master record of the voice of the great English lady, Miss Florence Nightingale ...This tiny wax cylinder ...has made possible the permanent preservation of her words. Into the care of you, Sir Henry, who knew her so well, we give this record of her voice, to rest for all time in your Museum.'

And there it did indeed rest, until March 2004, when Dr Michael Clark of the Wellcome Trust brought to the British Library a brown wax cylinder, held in a small wooden and glass case with a plaque identifying it as the voice of Florence Nightingale. New transcriptions have been made by Sound Archive technical staff of the two recordings on the cylinder, both of the same speech, and for the first time the complete contents of the cylinder can be heard on the Sound Archive's new 2CD set of historic speech recordings, *Voices of History*, published in November last year [2004].

'When I am no longer even a memory, just a name, I hope my voice may perpetuate the great work of my life. God bless my dear old comrades of Balaclava and bring them safe to shore. Florence Nightingale.'

Sample: Florence Nightingale [sound recording] : greetings to the dear old comrades of Balaclava, 1890;

Source: The Wellcome Library (<http://catalogue.wellcome.ac.uk/record=b1590740~S3>);

Notes: <http://www.countryjoe.com/nightingale/cylinder.htm>

*The supernatural effects of Harry Houdini's demonstration have caused
Mrs. Gravesbottom to lose consciousness.*

One of the most fantastic finds in the world of magic was the discovery of six Edison Wax Cylinders containing recordings of Harry Houdini's long lost voice. Below is an article from the Los Angeles Times, July 4, 1970, reporting the discovery. - WildAboutHoudini.com

RECORDED VOICE NO ILLUSION

Houdini Up to Old Tricks --Through Magic of Edison

Los Angeles Times 7.4.70

NEW YORK (AP)—In a dark corridor of an old red brick laboratory in West Orange, N.J., four men stood breathlessly as the voice of Harry Houdini was heard for the first time in almost 44 years.

But the voice of the greatest magician of all was not coming from the grave, as so many had hoped it would ever since Houdini vowed to return from the spirit world if it could be done.

The voice came from a 3-inch cylinder, turning on an old machine in the laboratory once used by its inventor, Thomas A. Edison.

The story of the discovery of Houdini's voice on records was told Thursday by Milbourne Christopher, former president of the Society of American Magicians, biographer of Houdini and a major collector of Houdini memorabilia.

He believes the cylinder and five others like it are the only recordings in existence of the voice of the great illusionist and escape artist who died Oct. 31, 1926.

Christopher said the six cylinders—the earliest type of phonograph recordings—were found recently among the effects of another famed magician, John Mulholland, who died last February.

The cylinders sat mute for lack of a machine to play them until someone remembered that early Edison phonographs were on display at the Edison National Historical Site at West Orange.

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Houdini Up to Old Tricks, Speaks Again!

Continued from First Page

Christopher and his companions drove there Wednesday. Two machines were tried without success and then a third was brought out.

"We were in a dark corridor," Christopher recalled, "because there was too much traffic noise in the laboratory. At 15 minutes past noon, the voice of Houdini came out of the big horn attached to the strange machine.

Can't Get Air

"His first words were: 'Ladies and gentlemen, my latest invention, the water torture cell. There is nothing supernatural about it. . . .'

The voice then described the famous act, in which Houdini had himself locked into stocks, hauled upside down and lowered into a huge glass-fronted tank filled with water.

"I claim," the recorded voice said, "It is impossible for anyone to get air in



Harry Houdini

the position I'm locked in the cell."

Another cylinder con-

tained the same spiel with slight changes, including an offer of \$1,000 to anyone who could prove he could get air in the "water cell." In each instance, Houdini invited persons from the audience to inspect the tank. He explained that the glass front, curtained during part of the act, was to permit an assistant to peek through the curtain and, if things were going wrong, smash the glass and rescue the magician.

"Accidents do happen," Houdini's voice said, "though we don't expect one tonight."

The Houdini buffs con-

cluded the records were made while Houdini was practicing his speech, or just having fun with the machine.

The recording did not reveal the secret of the water torture cell. That went with Houdini to his grave.

Houdini promised to try to return from the grave as part of his campaign to expose phony spiritualists. Countless persons have sat

in seances on Halloween, the anniversary of his death, waiting for his voice.

Mrs. Houdini, who died in 1943, had a secret code and offered \$10,000 to any medium who could summon her husband's spirit. But after a seance in Hollywood on the 10th anniversary of his death in 1936, when Houdini did not speak or open a pair of locked handcuffs, she gave up hope.

The "supernatural" sample is Harry Houdini. Wicked laughing is provided by the twin Santas.

Sample: Edison machine rehearsal (1914) – Harry Houdini;

Source: Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/details/HarryHoudini>);

Notes: <http://www.wildabouthoudini.com/2010/11/houdini-speaks-in-1970.html>

Sample: Santa Claus Hides In Your Phonograph (1922);

Source: Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/details/santahide1922>)

Sample: Voices of Christmas Past - 1898 to 1922 (1922) -- Track 20, "Uncle Josh Plays Santa Claus";

Source: Internet Archive (http://www.archive.org/details/Voices_of_Christmas_Past_1898_to_1922)

Lady Willowthorn's Studebaker, which has stalled on the tracks just outside of Professor Lemon's Sweet Shop at precisely the worst possible time, refuses all attempts at revival.

Albert Benzler was a cylinder artist--first for Edison's National Phonograph Company, later for the rival company U.S. Phonograph Company (maker of U-S Everlasting Cylinders). He is not known to have made disc records.



From the late 1890s to 1908, he recorded dozens of titles as chief xylophone and bells player for Edison's company. He was also one of Edison's house pianists, sharing duties with Fred Bachman, Frank P. Banta (he died in late 1903), and a few others. As an uncredited piano accompanist, he may be heard on various cylinders, but it was as a bells soloist that Benzler made his debut as a featured Edison artist. The July 1903 issue of Edison Phonograph Monthly credits the performance of "Alita" to "Albert Bengler [sic], another new entertainer."

However, Benzler worked for Edison long before making records credited to him. He is one of 42 Edison artists in a 1900 photograph reprinted in the January 1971 issue of Hobbies. Before Benzler made bells solos, the company issued similar records by Edward F. Rubsam (he later recorded bells for Columbia). After Benzler left the company, Charles Daab made Edison cylinders featuring bells.

Benzler cut some duets with chimes player H. Nesbit. He made Edison cylinders into the wax Amberol period, with "Light as a Feather" (Amberol 9) being the only wax Amberol cylinder credited to him. When issued in November 1908, it was described as "By far the most elaborate Bells solo ever attempted." His final bells solo record for Edison was "Two Old Songs" (Standard 10232), issued in August 1909.

He made some solo piano records for Edison, including "Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms" (Standard 9437), issued in January 1907. Around 1910 he recorded the same for the U-S Phonograph Company.

Benzler served as a musical advisor for Edison's National Phonograph Company and hoped to be promoted to musical director. When interviewed in 1968 by researcher Leo Kimmett, a former Edison employee named Clarence Ferguson recalled Thomas A. Edison and Benzler disagreeing over methods for picking which records to release. Edison insisted that ordinary folks had an instinct for what would satisfy the record-buying public. He let factory or office workers--

that is, non-musicians--hear test records and then vote on whether numbers should be released. Benzler believed musicians should decide what is released, not what he called "the jackass committee."

If he had hoped to be appointed musical director, he must have been frustrated by announcements that famous composer Victor Herbert would act as musical consultant effective June 1, 1909. The June 1909 issue of Edison Phonograph Monthly states, "Mr. Herbert has just signed an exclusive contract with the National Phonograph Company, by which he will become the musical adviser and expert critic of all of the better instrumental compositions reproduced on Edison Records...He will go regularly to our recording laboratory, suggesting compositions for reproduction, taking part in making up the musical organization to play them and criticizing the making of masters as the work progresses."

Benzler left Edison's company in 1909 to serve as musical director for the new U.S. Phonograph Company, which began to market in mid-1910 cylinders called U-S Everlasting Records. Charles L. Hibbard also left Edison around this time to serve as the rival company's sound engineer. Based in Cleveland, the company had a recording studio at 662 6th Avenue in New York City, once a location for the Norcross Phonograph Company. From 1910 to 1913, more than a thousand U-S Everlasting Records titles were issued, with those distributed by Montgomery Ward and Company being called Lakeside cylinders.

Through Benzler's recruiting efforts, some Edison artists recorded for the U.S. Phonograph Company. The company ceased production in 1914, at which point Benzler evidently left the recording industry.

A significant (and rare) Benzler recording is "Black and White Rag," issued on U-S Everlasting 380 around 1909. It may be the first time in the United States that a true "rag," or ragtime composition, was recorded as a solo piano work (in 1901 C. H. H. Booth had recorded "Creole Belles" for Victor but this is more of a cakewalk novelty than a true rag). Ragtime was otherwise recorded by bands in this period, despite the many rags written for piano.

He was born in Newark, New Jersey, and also died in that city. Jim Walsh reports in the January 1954 issue of Hobbies that according to Benzler's death certificate states, he succumbed to "sudden death in a grocery store" of "hypertensive cardio-renal disease." He was sometimes called Albert W. Benzler but Walsh was unable to learn what the middle initial stood for.



- Tim Gracyk's Phonographs, Singers, and Old Records

Albert Benzler was with the Edison company between April 28, 1904 and April 16, 1908. One of their most versatile studio artists, Benzler played orchestra bells, chimes, xylophone, piano, organ and occasionally helped out in the Edison Orchestra on violin. He usually had standard selections prepared to fill in should an artist not appear or be in poor voice. Benzler's records were usually good sellers and could always be used to fill out a supplement.

During his time at Edison, Benzler made thirty-four solo recordings on bells and twenty-five on xylophone. He also re-recorded for Edison some of the popular titles originally performed by J. Frank Hopkins before 1904. Shortly after his arrival at Edison, Benzler made two recordings of bells and chimes duets with Henry Nesbit (including A Summer Dream #8956, recorded in April 1905). The only other xylophonist to appear in the Edison catalog during Benzler's stay was Frederick W. Hager, who made one recording with Benzler of the xylophone and bells duet Blue Bell #8829, recorded at the end of 1904.

Benzler resigned from Edison to become music director for the new U.S. Phonograph Company that began producing two-minute celluloid records in 1908. By 1909, they were selling four-minute celluloid records under the Everlasting label. Benzler made ten xylophone solo and five bells solos on four-minute records. He also recorded a few piano numbers. He remained at U.S. Phonograph until 1913 when the business closed.

- *The Percussive Arts Society*

Hello, little folks! Do you know who I am? You've heard of me often. Some say I'm a sham. Ho ho ha ha... But most of you know that cannot be true. For every Christmas you've seen what I do. And now, you not only know just what I do, but you hear my own voice as I'm speaking to you.

"Who is it?" you say. Hush! Close all the doors and I'll tell you a secret: I'm old Santa Claus! Ho ho ha ha... Perhaps you're curious to know why I hide in this phonograph. For I'm right here inside! Ho ho ha ha... I'll tell you, my dears, if you'll give me your word that you won't tell a soul about what you have heard.

You've seen Santa's picture quite often, I'm sure, with his great big white whiskers half down to the floor, and his ruddy red cheeks and his jolly old smile. And often you've wished you could see him a while. But children, though I'd love to come out of this box, I'm really afraid to, because of the shocks that all of you'd get if you saw me come out. Why you'd all run away with a terrible shout! Ho ho ha ha...

My beautiful whiskers are black with the dirt, and the dust's in my eyes so that both of them hurt. And my lovely red robe with its trimming of white is as black as the black of a black winter's night. Ho ho ha ha... And it's all because I have to climb down the many long chimneys you have in this town. Before I can possibly come out and greet you, I must take a warm bath, and then perhaps I'll meet you.

Don't think that I mind getting dirty like this, for it's something I'd really be sorry to miss. I have to go down all these sooty old places to bring gifts to the children and smiles to their faces. But before I get out and disappear soon, I'll give you a treat. It's a bit of a tune that I'll play on my chimes that I've got with me here. So listen, dear children, to some real Christmas cheer.

There now, how did you like that? Well, now I must be off, if I can ever get out of this box! Hmph! There! My, that was a tight squeeze. Come on now. Up Prancer! Away! Goodnight! Goodnight! Goodnight! Ho ho ha ha...

- *Santa Claus (Harry E. Humphrey)*

Sample: Sweet Little Daisies - Bell Solo with Orchestra - Albert Benzler - Edison Gold Moulded Cylinder (1905);

Source: Internet Archive

(<http://www.archive.org/details/SweetLittleDaisies-BellsSoloWithOrchestra-PlayedByAlbertBenzler->);

Notes: <http://www.gracyk.com/albertbenzler.shtml>;

<http://www.pas.org/experience/GerhardtCylinder/CylinderRecordings/AlbertBenzler.aspx>

Sample: santa claus hides in the phonograph (alan brown) By santa claus himself (ernest hare) brunswick (1922);

Source: Internet archive

(<http://www.archive.org/details/SantaClausHidesInThePhonographalanBrownBySantaClausHimselfernest>);

Notes: (80 rpm) the brunswick-balke-collender company, chicago, il.

Sample: Santa Claus Hides In Your Phonograph (1922) by Harry E. Humphrey;

Source: Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/details/santahide1922>)

Notes: <http://homepages.bw.edu/~rdensmor/EdisonRecordsList/index.html>

*A choir of boys with hollowed-out eyes was glimpsed in the old rehearsal room
at the end of the basement hall.*

Alle Jahre wieder (English: Every Year Again) is a well known Christmas carol, written in 1837 by Johann Wilhelm Hey (1789–1854) and set to music by Friedrich Silcher. The German composers Ernst Anschütz and Christian Heinrich Rinck also set these words to music. - *Wikipedia*

German

*Alle Jahre wieder
kommt das Christuskind
auf die Erde nieder;
wo wir Menschen sind.*

*Kehrt mit seinem Segen
ein in jedes Haus,
geht auf allen Wegen
mit uns ein und aus.*

*Steht auch mir zur Seite
still und unerkant,
dass es treu mich leite
an der lieben Hand.*

English

*Every year again
Comes the Christ Child
Down to earth
Where we humans are.*

*Stops with his blessing
At every house
Walks on all paths
With us in and out.*

*Stands also at my side
Quietly and unrecognized
To guide me loyally
By the dear hand.*



Friedrich Silcher

Sample: *Alle Jahre wieder* (1906);

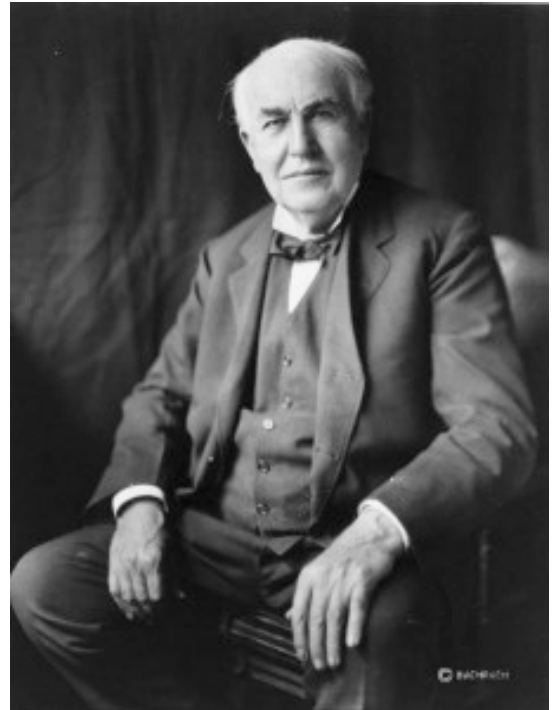
Source: Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/details/allejahr1906>);

Notes: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alle_Jahre_wieder

*The dreadful occasion forced Mr. Edison to reconsider his
well-established and probably prudent policy.*

“Thomas A. Edison, the inventor of the phonograph, has never before permitted his voice to be recorded for the public. Today, however, he has a message for you that is important enough to cause him to break his long established rule. Mr. Edison will now give you that message. I beg to introduce Mr. Thomas A. Edison.”

“This is Edison speaking. Our boys made good in France, the word 'American' has a new meaning in Europe. Our soldiers have made it mean courage, generosity, self-restraint and modesty. We are proud of the North Americans who risked their lives for the liberty of the world. But we must not forget and we must not permit demagogues to belittle the part played by our gallant allies. Their casualty list tells the story. However proud we may be of our own achievements, let us remember always, that the war could not have been won if the Belgians, the British, the French and the Italians had not fought like bull-dogs in the face of overwhelming odds. The Great War will live dilately in the minds of Americans for the next hundred years. I hope that when we do reverence to the memory of our brave boys who fell in France, we shall not forget their brothers in arms who wore the uniform of our allies. I believe that the national airs of France, Great Britain, Italy and Belgium should for all time to come be as familiar to us as our own Star Spangled Banner.”



Sample: Let us not forget - A message to the American people (December 30, 1918);

Source: Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/details/edba-3756>);

Notes: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90mg38iGOYA>

*The automatic toastmaster contraption failed to impress little Billy "ne'er do well"
Buckswallow the day before he was brained by a falling harpsichord.*

The 1888 Crystal Palace Recordings - Dinner With Colonel Gouraud
Written by Chris Goddard, Webrarian.co.uk

By October 1888, the Perfected Phonograph had had many public demonstrations in London and plenty of mentions in the Press. At least two private dinner parties had already taken place at Little Menlo, to which friends and acquaintances of Gouraud were invited, and then made recordings of themselves afterwards. One of these dinners, on 30th August, was probably the occasion when Sir Henry Irving made his earliest recordings and Sir August Manns made his phonogram for Theodore Thomas.



On 5th October, Colonel Gouraud invited some more special friends to dinner at Little Menlo. They comprised, among others, Alexander Meyrick Broadley [left], English lawyer, journalist and historian. Defender of Arabi Pacha, counsel to Khedive Ismail Pacha, Broadley acted as toastmaster for Gouraud.

Broadley: Dear Mr. Edison, It would be very difficult for me to convey to you any idea of the impression which your invention has caused tonight upon the guests who have assembled around the hospitable table of Colonel Gouraud.

The mysteries of the East, and the mysteries of Egypt pale before an invention which is doubtless destined to effect a revolution in the means of communication throughout the civilized world. I trust that one of the first outcomes of the dinner today will be a safer transmission of your phonographic records to their destinations. As I am speaking to you, the Postmaster General is holding a serious consultation with Colonel Gouraud upon the subject of the transmission of these records.

There is one other subject to which I think these phonographs may be very judiciously applied, and that is as a substitute for the great plethora of after-dinner speaking for us on which we do to some extent suffer in this country.

I have had the privilege tonight of officiating as phonographic toastmaster; and when this instrument is introduced for that purpose I shall claim to be the ancestor of a long line of toastmasters who instead of discharging their function – er - in the present manner have recourse to the Phonograph for the expeditious – er - fulfillment of those duties which in this country we are sufficiently familiar. Er - I can only express – er - my great thanks to Colonel Gouraud for giving us the opportunity of which it has been your intention, and express an earnest hope that – er - in the near future we may have again an opportunity of witnessing some further experiments...with the Phonograph.

A.M. Broadley, Barrister-at-law

Sample: A. M. Broadley's speech (1888);

Source: Internet Archive

(<http://www.archive.org/details/A.M.BroadleysSpeech1888>);

Notes: <http://www.webrarian.co.uk/crystalpalace/crystal20.html>

~ Eight ~

*Duet by Marie and Mabel Church, who died horribly in a
vinegar works factory explosion and are now ghosts.*

Sadly not a shred of documentation seems to exist for this recording, other than it happened, save for the brief and entirely unhelpful passage at Internet Archive, “Singers singing likely at a state fair.”

Sample: Marie and Mabel Church - Brown wax home recording (140 rpm) 1915;

Source: Internet Archive

(<http://www.archive.org/details/MarieAndMabelChurch-BrownWaxHomeRecording140Rpm1915>)

The apparition's scream caused the trembling chandelier finally to collapse, inspiring more than a few of the assembled and noble guests to hasten the seance's conclusion.

Toward the end of June the phonograph record came - shipped from Brattleboro, since Akeley was unwilling to trust conditions on the branch line north of there. He had begun to feel an increased sense of espionage, aggravated by the loss of some of our letters; and said much about the insidious deeds of certain men whom he considered tools and agents of the hidden beings. Most of all he suspected the surly farmer Walter Brown, who lived alone on a run-down hillside place near the deep woods, and who was often seen loafing around corners in Brattleboro, Bellows Falls, Newfane, and South Londonderry in the most inexplicable and seemingly unmotivated way. Brown's voice, he felt convinced, was one of those he had overheard on a certain occasion in a very terrible conversation; and he had once found a footprint or clawprint near Brown's house which might possess the most ominous significance. It had been curiously near some of Brown's own footprints - footprints that faced toward it.

So the record was shipped from Brattleboro, whither Akeley drove in his Ford car along the lonely Vermont back roads. He confessed in an accompanying note that he was beginning to be afraid of those roads, and that he would not even go into Townshend for supplies now except in broad daylight. It did not pay, he repeated again and again, to know too much unless one were very remote from those silent and problematical hills. He would be going to California pretty soon to live with his son, though it was hard to leave a place where all one's memories and ancestral feelings centered.

Before trying the record on the commercial machine which I borrowed from the college administration building I carefully went over all the explanatory matter in Akeley's various letters. This record, he had said, was obtained about 1 A.M. on the 1st of May, 1915, near the closed mouth of a cave where the wooded west slope of Dark Mountain rises out of Lee's swamp. The place had always been unusually plagued with strange voices, this being the reason he



had brought the phonograph, dictaphone, and blank in expectation of results. Former experience had told him that May Eve - the hideous Sabbat-night of underground European legend - would probably be more fruitful than any other date, and he was not disappointed. It was noteworthy, though, that he never again heard voices at that particular spot.

Unlike most of the overheard forest voices, the substance of the record was quasi-ritualistic, and included one palpably human voice which Akeley had never been able to place. It was not Brown's, but seemed to be that of a man of greater cultivation. The second voice, however, was the real crux of the thing - for this was the accursed buzzing which had no likeness to humanity despite the human words which it uttered in good English grammar and a scholarly accent.

The recording phonograph and dictaphone had not worked uniformly well, and had of course been at a great disadvantage because of the remote and muffled nature of the overheard ritual; so that the actual speech secured was very fragmentary. Akeley had given me a transcript of what he believed the spoken words to be, and I glanced through this again as I prepared the machine for action. The text was darkly mysterious rather than openly horrible, though a knowledge of its origin and manner of gathering gave it all the associative horror which any words could well possess. I will present it here in full as I remember it - and I am fairly confident that I know it correctly by heart, not only from reading the transcript, but from playing the record itself over and over again. It is not a thing which one might readily forget! (Indistinguishable Sounds)

(A Cultivated Male Human Voice)

...is the Lord of the Wood, even to... and the gifts of the men of Leng... so from the wells of night to the gulfs of space, and from the gulfs of space to the wells of night, ever the praises of Great Cthulhu, of Tsathoggua, and of Him Who is not to be Named. Ever Their praises, and abundance to the Black Goat of the Woods. Ia! Shub-Niggurath! The Goat with a Thousand Young!

(A Buzzing Imitation of Human Speech)

Ia! Shub-Niggurath! The Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young!

(Human Voice)

And it has come to pass that the Lord of the Woods, being... seven and nine, down the onyx steps . . . (tri)butes to Him in the Gulf, Azathoth, He of Whom Thou has taught us marv(els). . . on the wings of night out beyond space, out beyond th... to That whereof Yuggoth is the youngest child, rolling alone in black aether at the rim...

(Buzzing Voice)

...go out among men and find the ways thereof, that He in the Gulf may know. To Nyarlathotep, Mighty Messenger, must all things be told. And He shall put on the semblance of men, the waxen mask and the robe that hides, and come down from the world of Seven Suns to mock...

(Human Voice)

(Nyarl)athotep, Great Messenger, bringer of strange joy to Yuggoth through the void, Father of the Million Favoured Ones, Stalker among...

(Speech Cut Off by End of Record)

Such were the words for which I was to listen when I started the phonograph. It was with a trace of genuine dread and reluctance that I pressed the lever and heard the preliminary scratching of the sapphire point, and I was glad that the first faint, fragmentary words were in a human voice - a mellow, educated voice which seemed vaguely Bostonian in accent, and which was certainly not that of any native of the Vermont hills. As I listened to the tantalisingly feeble rendering, I seemed to find the speech identical with Akeley's carefully prepared transcript. On it chanted, in that mellow Bostonian voice. . . "Ia! Shub-Niggurath! The Goat with a Thousand Young!..."

- H.P. Lovecraft, *The Whisperer in the Darkness* (*Weird Tales*, 1931)

CROWLEY'S AUDIO RECORDINGS OF THE FIRST TWO ENOCHIAN KEYS

In English and Enochian

The eighteen Enochian Keys or Calls, and the nineteenth that is known as the Call of the Thirty Aethyrs (or Aires), are poems as well as incantations. There is considerable music in the Keys. The imagery in the English versions, transmitted directly to Dee and Kelley by the Enochian angels, is striking and original. The Enochian versions, also transmitted directly from the angels themselves, have a guttural power and rhythm. Even were the Keys not potent invocations, they would possess virtue for their artistry alone.

The Keys are intended to be voiced aloud, and to be heard recited aloud. Aleister Crowley recorded the first two Keys in both English and in the style of spoken Enochian that Crowley had learned during his Golden Dawn training. So far as I am aware, these are the only extant audio recordings of the Keys made by Crowley. If he made more, they do not appear to have survived.

The quality of the audio is quite poor due to the crude technology of the period in which the recordings were made. They were originally recorded onto wax cylinders, and at a later date transferred to 78 rpm disks. They are fascinating for what they reveal about Crowley's voice, and for the extremely theatrical way in which he recites the Keys. This is

undoubtedly the style taught to him by Allan Bennett and MacGregor Mathers, two of his mentors in the Golden Dawn.

Crowley made a number of recordings in addition to the first two Keys, including an extract from his Gnostic Mass and a scattering of his short poems. There is even a song that is supposed to be in Crowley's voice, though I have my doubts about its authenticity. These audio recordings by Crowley have been collected together onto a CD that is available for sale in many esoteric book stores.



The edition of the CD that I possess was published by Transparency. The CD liner notes read: "These recordings were made on wax cylinders between 1910 and 1914 and then later preserved onto 78 rpm acetates." In the table of contents to the Transparency CD the first two Keys are referred to as "The Call of the First Aethyr" and "The Call of the Second Aethyr." This is incorrect. The thirty Aethyrs or Aires are based on the nineteenth Key, and are all identical except for the changing name of the Aethyr itself in the first sentence. In other words, all thirty Aethyrs are the Nineteenth Key, but with a different name for an Aethyr in each.

It might seem that there was no reason to reproduce Crowley's rendition of the first two Keys, since they are available elsewhere. However, the versions presented here have been digitally cleaned, making them much clearer than the versions on the CD mentioned above. I have applied audio filters to remove the hiss and have manually edited out pops and other defects. The result is far from perfect, but it may well be the clearest version of Crowley's recitation of the Keys available anywhere.

- Donald Tyson's *Supernatural World*

In the Years of the Primal Course, in the dawn of terrestrial birth, Man mastered the mammoth and horse, and Man was the Lord of the Earth. He made him an hollow skin from the heart of an holy tree, He compassed the earth therien, and Man was the Lord of the Sea. He controlled the vigour of steam, he harnessed the lightning for hire; He drove the celestial team, and man was the Lord of the Fire. Deep-mouthed from their thrones deep-seated, the choirs of the æons declare The last of the demons defeated, for Man is the Lord of the Air. Arise, O Man, in thy strength! the kingdom is thine to inherit, Till the high gods witness at length that Man is the Lord of his spirit.

- *The Pentagram* by Aleister Crowley

Sample: Big Ben clock tower of Westminster (1890);

Source: Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/details/EDIS-SWDPC-01-03>);

Notes: Big Ben clock tower of Westminster striking half past 10, quarter to 11, and 11 o'clock. Recording date: July 16, 1890. Location: Westminster, London, England. Recorded by: Miss Ferguson and Graham Hope, (for George Gouraud). Record format: Edison brown wax cylinder (unissued). NPS object catalog number: EDIS 39839

Sample: Aleister Crowley - The Call of the Second Æthyr (Enochian);

Source: 1910-1914 Black Magic Recordings

(<http://www.discogs.com/Aleister-Crowley-1910-1914-Black-Magic-Recordings/release/2085967>);

Notes: <http://www.donaldtyson.com/keys.html>

Sample: Aleister Crowley - The Call of the Second Æthyr (English);

Source: 1910-1914 Black Magic Recordings

(<http://www.discogs.com/Aleister-Crowley-1910-1914-Black-Magic-Recordings/release/2085967>);

Sample: Akeley's Wax Cylinder Recording (1915);

Source: Internet Archive (http://www.archive.org/details/Akeleys_Wax_Cylinder_Recording);

Notes: <http://www.yog-sothoth.com/content/1007-The-Whisperer-in-Wax-New-Cylinder-from-Yog-Sothoth>

Sample: Aleister Crowley - Excerpts from the Gnostic Mass;

Source: 1910-1914 Black Magic Recordings

(<http://www.discogs.com/Aleister-Crowley-1910-1914-Black-Magic-Recordings/release/2085967>);

Sample: Aleister Crowley - The Pentagram;

Source: 1910-1914 Black Magic Recordings

(<http://www.discogs.com/Aleister-Crowley-1910-1914-Black-Magic-Recordings/release/2085967>);

~ Epilogue ~

All non-phonographic voices are me, recorded on the iPhone 4 Voice Memo app. The audio files were transferred to and manipulated on TwistedWave 1.10.1 (Snow Leopard). All effects consist of EQ, delay, reverb, pitch, volume, and looping. Some effects wound up sounding rather otherworldly, and nothing like the human voice. I assure you that they are. (If you can tell it's an old phonograph, it's not my voice.) The only effects added to the phonographs were light reverb and delay.

Almost all of the phonographic source material came from archive.org, which I understand is not the only game in town for this kind of thing, and they sometimes steal from other websites, which whatever. But their media player is fantastic, and their downloads are often in very good condition. I can't thank them enough for having so much fantastic stuff in one place.

A special thanks to Bryan Smith (<http://www.jkalikadesigns.com/pixelperfect.html>) for the cover art.

The Dreadful Occasion is available as a 12", with a remix and stand-alone versions of three other tracks from *Allusions & Homages* (the full-length CD is a continuous mix). Free downloads of both the album and the single are available on my music blog (hardcoremathuser.blogspot.com), as well as the Halloween mixtapes mentioned in the preface.

A limited edition of 200 CDs were pressed and freely distributed to random corners around the Minneapolis area in October 2011. They were blank discs in a plain slim jewel cases, and bore an ink stamp drawing of a phonograph. Album, artist and song data is available via Gracenote / CDDb.

The songs were almost more fun to name than record, and took just about as long.

This album is dedicated to Edward Gorey.
- Jason Herrboldt, Minneapolis, October 2011

