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Carson J. Robison Correspondence

Carson J. Robison, the Cowboy Radio Singer,
1903-1988

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Letter, 1946 August 2, from Lawrence Loy to Carson Robison

Lawrence Loy

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts State College

EXTENSION SERVICE

Amherst

August 2, 1946

Mr. Carson Robison
Pleasant Valley
New York

Dear Carson:

I hope that you have not despaired of ever hearing from me in answer to your letter of July 6, but I have been so busy with the festival and other activities that I really did not have time to give very much thought to plans for an album with MGM. I am sure that we will have no difficulty in working out plans for a square dance album similar to the one that we did for Victor, if Frank Walker is interested.

In regard to the children's album, I still feel that there is a good field there for something worthwhile, as so many of the albums seem to me to be just so much trash. Many of the albums of singing games for children are too fast for children to follow and enjoy. Moreover, they do not give directions and play the melody only once or twice through. I believe that an album of children's singing games with the explanation for the action right on the records would find wide use in the home, as well as in schools and at camps. I think there would be a great demand especially for some games that could be done by small groups of three or four youngsters, or perhaps a child with his mother and father. If in your conference with Mr. Walker the middle of August this idea appeals to him, let me know and I will go to work on it.

I do not know whether I have made myself entirely clear in regard to this, but the record would be much the same type of thing that I do when I actually teach the game to a group. First we would play the music through once. Then I would give a brief explanation of the first part of the action; then we would do that; then an explanation of the next part of the action; then we would do that, and finally put the whole thing together. Then the melody would be played through for the remainder of the record so that the groups could enjoy doing the dance according to the directions that were given. In my opinion, such a recording would be much superior to Looby Lou and Skip to My Lou from Ed Durlacher's Sonora album.

Another idea for an album which could be sold as a children's

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album, but which could also be widely used for family groups, home parties, camps, and schools, would be a collection of fun songs and rounds. We would have a small group, perhaps a trio or quartet, sing the round through once. Then one person or group of persons would start the round, a second group chime in, with the third part being supplied by the people listening to the record. In other words, they would sing the third part of the round to an instrumental accompaniment which would be supplied on the record. Can't you imagine what a kick someone in Podunk might get in singing a round with you and Kate Smith? This same collection could include some fun songs where the listener would supply certain sound effects or would chime in on the chorus. From the experience that I have had in directing community parties, as well as parties for small groups, I am quite sure that there would be a demand for an album of this type.

I was sorry you could not get up for our festival. It was a highly successful and colorful affair, although we were forced indoors because of the rain.

Have you read the article on square dances in the August Country Gentleman?

Cordially,

Lawrence V. Loy

Lawrence V. Loy
Extension Specialist in
Community Organization
and Recreation

LVL:ES