

Dear Mr Gowers,

I understand you are collecting evidence and views with regard to the proposed 'retrospective' extension to 95 years of 'mechanical copyright' from the present 50. I collect and enjoy Music Hall & Musical Comedy recordings that were made in the first three decades of the twentieth century. I have been collecting for many years now but long ago realised that there are some I would never be able to get. They exist only in a handful of copies world wide. So when some enthusiast re-issues such on CD I am happy to buy and enjoy a recording that would never have otherwise seen the light of day.

If the law is changed, especially retrospectively, it is unlikely in the extreme that my minority interest would be catered for by the companies that would own the copyright. I would have to wait until the 95 years had expired and they could be re-issued by another enthusiast.

I'm afraid I probably won't live that long.

This seems to me to be too draconian a measure to take affecting as it does, the legality of re-issues of these early recordings made before 1930.

If the proposal were that it be extended to 95 years from say 1956 recordings onwards I would not be so concerned.

The companies who would own copyright on pre-1930 recordings have not looked after their archives very well. I suspect most pre 1920 recordings exist only in the hands of private collectors. But they will not last for ever. Shellac is very brittle and records break very easily. Re-issues do guarantee the record's survival.

Owning a copyright does not seem to carry the responsibility of the preservation of these early recordings for future generations to enjoy or study. Perhaps it should.

I suspect my type of music is being affected as a side issue to the main thrust of the argument. Very very few of the people whose records I collect are still alive.

There **must** be some possibility of compromise that would allow people like me to continue to share our interest in early recordings but still allow large companies their opportunities for profits.

I trust that when a decision is made, the reasons for it will be made public and they will address the concerns of collectors of early sound recordings.

sincerely

Peter Sandercock