

A BRIEF HISTORY OF VINTAGE CHILDREN'S RECORDS

HOW MUCH CAN I EXPECT TO GET IF I WANT TO SELL MY RECORDS?

In this price guide, I have listed the retail value of the records. As with any collectible, the price realized from a sale will vary widely, depending on who the buyer is. The amount that a dealer will pay can range anywhere from 10% to 60% and more, depending on the desirability and condition of the record and cover. On the other hand, if a record is sold directly to a collector, the price realized can be even more than that shown in this book.

To avoid disappointment, figure on the average, a sale to a dealer will get you about 20¢ to 25¢ on the dollar.

In closing, here is a reminder: Don't ever lose sight of the fact that a hobby is generally defined as an activity or interest pursued outside one's regular occupation and engaged in primarily for pleasure. The operative word here is *pleasure*. When the enjoyment of this activity diminishes greatly, it is probably time to move on. So, go out and enjoy!



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING THE LABEL NOTES & IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

The sections shown below follow the format of perhaps 98% of the record labels and companies covered in this book. A few exceptions have been made for the largest and most complex companies, such as Columbia, Victor, Decca, and perhaps a few others. A more narrative discussion will be used for them.

FACTS ABOUT THE LABEL:

ASSOCIATED/SUBSIDIARY LABELS:

Most of the major record companies and many of the smaller ones, especially those not producing children's records exclusively, issued differently named labels as well as variations of the main company name.

Okeh Records is an example of a subsidiary. Columbia acquired the Okeh label in 1926. Okeh had already been in existence as a stand-alone company since 1918. From 1926 to 1935, and again from 1940 to 1946, and finally in the 1950s, Columbia produced,

manufactured, and distributed 78-rpm records under that label. (Note: The scope of this book is limited to 78-rpms. There will be almost no information on LPs and 45s, even though production of those types of records continued by the companies after 78s were discontinued.)

In some cases, a new label was created solely for the purpose of allowing a distributor to have exclusive rights to a series of records or for the purpose of facilitating royalties to a favored artist. An example of this is the Tops for Tots label. This was a spin-off of Voco. The founder of Voco, Cy Leslie, created Tops for Tots so that a certain chain of retail stores could have an exclusive distributorship. The masters used were the exact same as on the Voco label.

Finally, label variations will be shown, to the extent known and appropriate for this book. The most well-known and notable example is the Bluebird label, a variation of Victor and RCA-Victor. Bluebird was considered the budget line. There are dozens of others, as you will discover as you read on.

DISTRIBUTED, PRODUCED, AND MANUFACTURED BY:

Most of the information on these three lines is taken from the record labels and record jackets. In some cases, I rely on second- and third-hand sources. If I cannot determine specific information for this section, rather than assume a fact, I will state it as "unknown." I heartily invite readers of this book to contact me with any missing or corrected information.

OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF CONTENT:

Rather than automatically classify every listing as simply for children, I have made an attempt to classify the various series in a few main categories. Most will be

classified as "general children's entertainment." Others, however, might be shown to be "educational/instructional," "religious," "adult market with some children's material," etc.

Note: Many record labels are not record companies in the usual sense. A label may be a private issue, i.e., a small production run of one or a few records by an organization, a company, or even an individual. These are included in the listings if they are children's records, but the label name may not look like a company in the traditional sense. Most of these listings will be found in the miscellaneous section, in any case, and not come with much detail as to the company.



PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RECORDS (FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES):

RECORD MATERIAL:

SHELLAC: This refers to hard fragile substances such as shellac, celluloid, hard rubber, Bakelite, or similar. I will lump all of these into generic "shellac" identification.

VINYL: A general term that includes various types of "unbreakable" or "nonbreakable" materials, including but not limited to vinyl, polyvinyl, polystyrene, and the like.

CARDBOARD: All paper-based discs, including thin or thick cardboard, plastic laminated, flexible, etc.

RECORD SIZE, SHAPE, AND COLOR:

SIZE: This refers to the diameter, rounded off to the nearest whole inch for the most part. In the case of die-cut or other "shaped" records, the actual size of the playing part of the item is shown. The title of each

section will list the size of the records in that particular series. For example: "DECCA CU series 12" singles." For all listings (except in the Miscellaneous section), all records will be the size indicated in the title line unless otherwise indicated next to the record or set number. For example, in this particular series (Decca CU), all the records listed are 12" except CU-110, which is 10" and is so noted next to the record number.

SHAPE: Unless otherwise indicated, all records are round. This would seem obvious on the surface; however, one of the joys of collecting kiddie records is the sub-category known as shaped records. This group includes die-cut records (some Voco), records that form the cover of a book whereby the entire book is placed on the record spindle (Magic Talking Books), and records attached to die-cut backings (Talking Books).

COLOR: As implied, the color of the playing surface is shown here. Variations on solid color are mottled/mixed, translucent, and picture discs.