

List of the recordings made into the Dictaphone and their playback come next cycle, compiled by Stella in 1984, updated by Stella, and subsequently Aiyo

Recording 1907: Unclear based on evidence, most likely snippets of conversation and Room tone

Playback 1918: Unknown/no attempt made

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Playback 1929: Robert Collins reports the sounds of swooping and a buzzing unlike the buzzing of either cicadas or lightbulbs

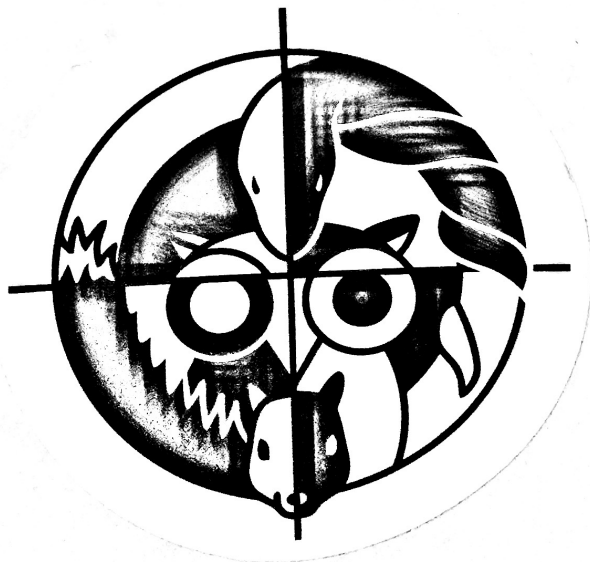
Recording 1929: Robert Collins reports some difficulty operating the machine, but believes that he recorded himself reciting John Donne's "Batter my heart, three person'd God"

Playback 1940: Robert Collins reports hearing a sound like knocking on a heavy door as well as the same buzzing

Recording 1940: Robert Collins reports exhorting his wife Kit Collins to give a dry description of her mathematical research.

Playback 1951: Hark reports hearing "arrhythmic two-tone clicking" and buzzing

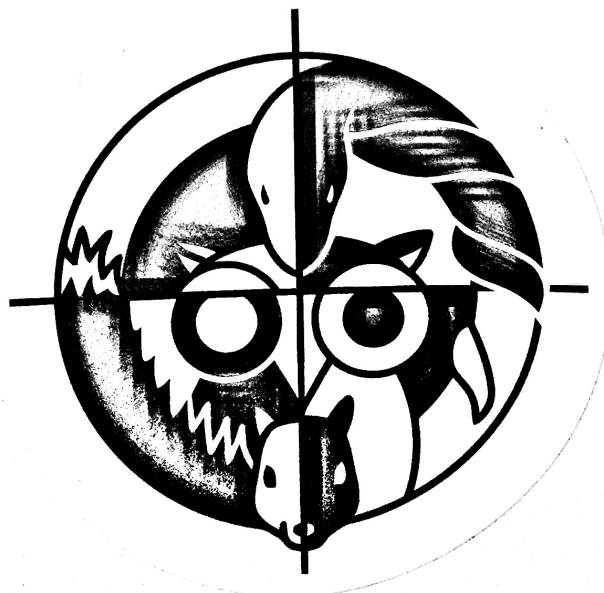
Recording 1951: Four singers (Hark, Alexander, Alvarez, and Lily) improvise. Hark reports that the song is quite strange and a bit sad..



First recorded study of The Last Angel of History, written in 1929 by Robert Collins. Transcribed in 2009 and presented without comment

I will begin as ever with a description of its materials before I try to decipher its images, words, and meaning. This item appears to be a narrow rectangular box, in shape not unlike a slim book, but containing only one slip of paper trapped behind a transparent and thin film. Upon closer inspection it is more like a cleverly designed jewelry box or case with a clear seam along three sides. The box pops open with moderate pressure. Colleagues suggest that the box is not unlike Bakelite, but it is so thin and drab that if it is Bakelite it is Bakelite of the strangest kind. Inside the box is its treasure which is stranger still. It is a metal disc about the thickness of a sheet of paper, moderately rigid, with a hole into the center by which the disk was affixed to the bottom of the box. One side is reflective but distorted around a curve. I suspect that it is like a record somehow, but what needle could play it I have no idea.

The box and the small disc contain also both images and words, the largest being "The Last Angel of History" with the image of a Southern Negro in a pair of queer spectacles....



Of all of the experiments and circumlocutions by which my predecessors have attempted to decipher objects from their futures, among my favorites were those performed on this pair of glasses. Or, should I say, this pair of plastics. While the depth of my esteemed ancestors' bafflement upon being presented with, say, a DVD or the Schrodinger Paradox, one finds in their notes that they were thoroughly stymied without the required knowledge to discern their basic, and in some cases rather banal, function.

These plastics, on the other hand, serve a function that was at least partially intelligible. The anaglyphic three dimensional film has existed slightly longer than Room itself and by 1940 every member had seen a three dimensional film for themselves. This did not stop them, of course, from plumbing the plastics' secondary, tertiary, quaternary functions. It was Alexander who, realizing in 1929 that the application of lenses to skin produced a mild yet intensely transformative feeling of heat, shaved his head completely and spent the entirety of the 1940 Room cloistered within the room with the plastics worn so that the lenses warmed the back of his head. He reported a feeling of remarkable and disturbing focus, and it's known that he kept his head bald for the rest of his life. He's claimed in letters that his hair grew back red and blue. I've read also that he was rather near to bald to begin with and perhaps was glad for an excuse to give up the façade....

