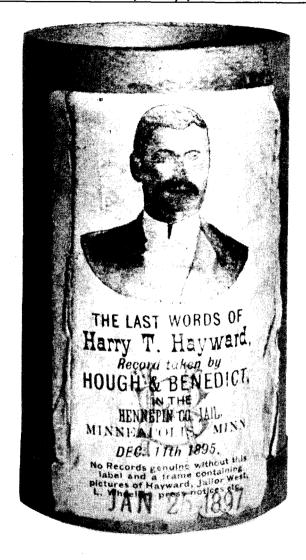
# **FANTIQUE PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY**

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une-July 1973



# THE LAST WORDS OF HARRY HAYWARD

(A TRUE RECORD MYSTERY)

Tim Brooks

One of the most interesting aspects of collecting lies in discovering small clues which lead, with a little digging, to fascinating, and quite extensive stories. Such was the case with the "Harry Hayward Cylinder". It began with the discovery of an old, unlabelled brown wax cylinder containing the voice of a man speaking of an obscure

(Turn to page 3)

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# DEAR APM:

Question: In your first issue, you published a stroboscope disc for cylinder phonographs. Do you plan to publish one for 78 disc records, too?

G. O., Stockton, Calif.

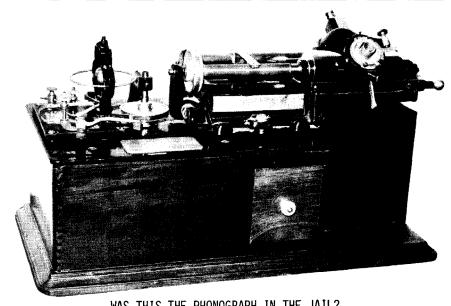
Answer: WWe will eventually print one for our readers. In the meantime, there is one on p. 57 of the April 1973 issue of High Fidelity Magazine.

Question: Can you recommend a polish for phonograph cabinets? D. B., Columbus, Ohio

Answer: We have found that Scott's Liquid Gold Furniture Finish makes an excellent polish and restorative for antique wood. You can also use it with 0000 steel wool, but gently!

Question: Did Edison ever make a string-driven phonograph? A. B., Glendale, Calif.

Answer: Yes. Apparently the first few Edison Home Phonographs made in 1896 utilized a string - drive and a spoked upper pulley wheel. The motors were made by the U. S. Phonograph Co. of Newark, N. J.



event, and ended with the story of the involvement of the primitive phonograph industry with one of the most notorious murder cases of the 19th century.

The cylinder appeared to originate in the midwest in the mid-1890's. It had no announcement or record slip, but began quite clearly, "I, Harry Hayward, desire to make known to the world...my connection with the death of Catherine Ging,..."

On hearing this, a fellow collector volunteered that he had recently seen a cylinder container with Hayward's name on it, which he proceeded to obtain for me. The box was the old style, rough cardboard tube, large enough to permit a cylinder wrapped in cotton to be snugly inserted. There was no top, but an elaborate, custom printed label on the side showed an engraved picture of Hayward and some intriguing names and dates (See illustration on page 1):



HARRY HAYWARD

THE LAST WORDS OF Harry T. Hayward, Record taken by HOUGH & BENEDICT in the Hennepin Co. Jail, Minneapolis, Minn. Dec. 11th, 1895. No Records genuine without this label and a frame containing pictures of Hayward, Jailor West, L. Wheeler, press notices, etc.

Armed with this clue, I made a search of *The New York Times* for the period in question and turned up extensive coverage of a Ging murder case, which took place in Minneapolis in 1894-95 and which attracted nationwide attention. *The Times* carried dozens of reports on the case over a year-long period, but there was no mention of any recordings.

Simultaneously, I was referred to a directory of societies and organizations, which under 'M' (for Murder) led to an outfit with the rather Gothic name of Society of Connoisseurs in Murder. A letter to its co-founder, Thomas M. McDade, brought a prompt and enthusiastic reply ("The Ging murder has always been a favorite of mine...") which indicated that, yes, several recordings had been reportedly made by Hayward shortly before his execution, but none had turned up in the years since. Mr. McDade suggested that I get in touch with still another gentleman, Walter N. Trenerry, who had written a book called Murder in Minnesota, and who might be able to help.

Mr. Trenerry certainly did help, providing a thick packet of photocopies of the Minneapolis newspapers at the time of Hayward's hanging. With these, the story of the

murder, the trial - and the records - finally began to fall into place.

To describe the connection of the phonograph with this well publicized case, it is first necessary to describe the case itself, as it unfolded before the public in 1894-95. The crime which *The New York Times* was later to call "one of the most remarkable of the century" (1) took place in Minneapolis in December, 1894. Harry T. Hayward, well-dressed,



CATHERINE GING

articulate, 29 years old, belonged to a prominent Minneapolis family and moved in the best social circles. He was known as something of a rake, with a propensity for gambling. For several months he had been seen with Catherine Ging, a pretty and ambitious young dressmaker who had come to Minneapolis to establish a shop.

When Harry arranged to meet Catherine on a street corner one evening, nothing seemed amiss. She was to go ahead in the carriage, driven by a hired man, and Harry would follow in a short time. But Harry never came, and a few hours later the pretty dressmaker's body was found on the outskirts of town, a bullet through her head.

In the following days, Harry and his brother Adry were brought in for questioning. Harry had a perfect alibi: at the time of the killing he had been at the theatre with a young society, lady attending a performance of A Trip to Chinatown. But what about the insurance policy on Miss Ging's life made

(Con't on page 4)

(Con't from page 3)

out in Harry's name? That was collateral on a loan he had made her to help establish her shop. For several days the Hayward brothers underwent grueling questioning in the city's notorious "sweat box". Then Adry broke, and told a remarkable story. He said that Harry had plotted to kill Miss Ging for the insurance money, and had sought his assistance, which was refused. Adry had related his brother's plans to an old and respected family friend, who had dismissed them as "just talk".

It then developed that Harry had turned to Claus Blixt, a janitor at the apartment house owned by the Hayward family. Blixt, a simple workingman, was arrested and soon

his "spell". Harry's personality was very strong, and he had been able to bend Blixt to do his bidding. It was Blixt who on the night of December 3, 1894, had driven Miss Ging to the edge of town and shot her, while Harry was coolly establishing his alibi at the theatre.

Faced with a tightening noose of evidence, Harry never lost his cool. In a determined defense, pointed to Blixt as the confessed murderer and excoriated his brother as a liar who was jealous and out to get him. Unfortunately for Harry, Adry's story was corroborated by the family friend to whom Adry had spoken before the murder. Feeling ran high against Harry in the city, and both he and the other principals were removed

be stormed by a lynch mob.

Harry Hayward's trial, which lasted almost two months during early 1895, caused a sensation. There were violent courtroom confrontations between Harry and Adry. Their aged parents sided with Harry in denouncing Adry, and spent many thousands of dollars on the best legal talent obtainable to defend their youngest son. But in the end Harry was convicted, and sentenced to hang. (In a subsequent trial, Blixt, who had turned state's evidence, was also convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.)

A series of appeals and requests for clemency by the governor lasted through the summer and fall of 1895, while Harry was involved in several attempts to bribe of-

ficials and escape from jail. His cell was evidently a congregating place for reporters and friends, and there were regular headlines about his wisecracks and raving vituperation against those who had convicted him. Finally, in December, with all appeals exhausted, the date for his execution was set. A tearful, personal appeal by Harry's elderly parents. and a letter from his chief defense counsel stating that Hayward was obviously insane and "The state cannot afford to hang a lunatic," (2) failed to sway the governor, who stated that though Harry might well be insane now, he was not when he plotted the murder!

As the day of execution approached, most confessed everything. Harry had worked on newspaper reports expected Harry's vaunted him for days, he said, and had brought him bravado to crumble. A few days before he was

to hang, he called for Adry to forgive him. When Adry arrived at the jail, Harry took him quietly aside and saidafew gentle words of forgiveness. Then, as the next morning's papers gleefully reported, Harry motioned to a piece of paper: (3)

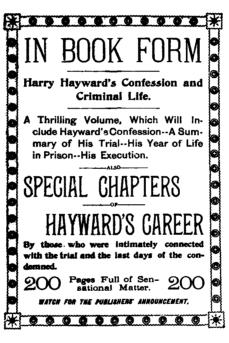
Harry (drawing a figure): "Suppose that this was one of those cold slabs at the morgue, and you were lying there on it and you should open your eyes and seeme standing over you with a knife, like this. Do you know what I would do?"

(the jailor) recounted the terrible scene, he showed by his own hands the different attitudes taken by Harry in the plunging of the knife into the body of his brother and the tearing out of a heart and liver yet palpitating with the

to secret locations for fear the jail would blood of his victim in a manner that was so realistic as to cause a listener to shudder. "That's my forgiveness, Adry," cried

Harry. "How do you like it?"

Adry started to answer and said, "You may think me guilty -- ", when Harry went on. "I will follow you from this time, Adry. I will follow you when you are awake and when you are asleep, my astral body will torment you. I will ruin you in business and wherever you go I will follow. My soul will come back from the dead to be with you. I will curse you from now till you die, whether you are waking or sleeping, and when you die and go to hell, I will be waiting for you at the gates with a red hot prong in one hand, and with the noose they put around my throat in the other. Then I will heap coals of fire on



your head, brother Adry, my brother Adry."
"Oh! It was the most horrible thing you

ever heard," (the jailor) went on.

Virtually every moment of Harry's last hours were reported in macabre detail, not only by the Minneapolis papers but by papers across the country. At the eleventh hour, Harry finally did forgive Adry -- though no one could tell if he really meant it -- and confessed what everybody knew, that he had masterminded the murder of Catherine Ging. He knew full well that the public was hungry for lurid headlines and startling revelations, and so he brought in a stenographer and dictated a long, rambling confession admitting not only to Miss Ging's murder, but to those of three other people as well: a Chinaman in San Francisco, a young girl in Pasadena (for her money), and the brother of another girl in El Paso del Norte. How did he feel about killing? "After the beginning," said Harry, "I rather liked the excitement." (4)

The 30,000 word "confession", (p. 6), which even at the time was considered to be mostly fabrication, was given by Harry to a favored cousin, Edward Goodsell. Harry knew that it would be worth a great deal of money, and he wanted Goodsell to reap the profits.

Then Harry ordered his final meal, a sumptuous repast befitting the genteel society in which he had moved. Shortly thereafter, attired in a fashionable cutaway coat and pinstriped trousers, he walked calmly to the gallows. The execution took place at 2:05 A.M. on December 11th, and went without a hitch. "Flippant!" headlined the next day's Minneapolis Journal. "Harry Hayward's Last Words Savor of the Gaming Table -- He Proves To Be The Coolest Man At His Execution -- Addressing The Spectators In An Easy, Conversational Style -- He Dies In 13 Minutes Without A Sound Or Struggle." (5)

#### THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGERS

If Harry craved lasting notoriety, he could not have assured it in any better way than by an apparently incidental act which went virtually unnoticed at the time. On December 10th, buried in a long story about Harry's last day, appeared this tantalizing paragraph: (6)

Two mysterious strangers, one of them named Benedict, appeared at the jail this morning, carrying with them a large, heavy satchel and a bulky package and an air of mystery. They resisted all attempts to learn the object of their visit, but hinted that they would have something important to divulge tomorrow morning. Harry Hayward and the jail officials seem to be in their secret.

The next day, amid several full pages of pictures and stories about Harry's final hours, the "secret" was revealed. (7)

HAYWARD'S VOICE LIVES EVEN HIS GALLOWS SPEECH RECORDED ON A PHONOGRAPH ROLL

The two mysterious strangers spoken of in last night's Journal as appearing at the

jail yesterday afternoon with a large, heavy valise, a bulky package and an impenetrable air of mystery, turn out to be two well-known Minneapolitans, Messrs. Benedict and Hough, of 223 Washington Avenue S. As hinted yesterday, they have important revealments to make this morning and Harry Hayward and the jail officials were in the secret. This is the secret.

When Harry Hayward began to make his last statement on the gallows this morning, there were many people who tried to make a [written] record of his final words, but concealed in one corner of the chamber of death, there was a little instrument whose wheels were whirring and making a faithful record, not only of what he said, but recorded the very tones in which the victim of the gallows spoke his last words. This machine was a phonograph, which by a liberal use of an unlimited "pull" had been smuggled into the jail and put in place without anyone on the outside knowing anything about it.

Not only that, but for weeks and days past, unknown to even the most observant reporter, Harry had been making statements into the mouthpiece of this same instrument, and all that he has said now remains on record either in the wax or in the metallic [?] copies which have since been made.

Several hundred copies of each cylinder are being made, and in a few days most anyone who has the price will be able to hear the voice of Harry Hayward recounting the deeds the owner did in life.

Several other papers included mention of the cylinders in the aftermath of the execution. The Minneapolis Tribune added that: (8)

The men who secured the record of Hayward's words were H. Benedict and T. C. Hough, and the latter states that, as a matter of strange coincidence, the phonograph with which he took the record was the 13th of a number of similar machines which he bought for exhibition in this city.

The witnesses to the taking of the record were the two men named, and Jailor West and Lon Wheeler, one of Hayward's day watchmen.

What use was made of the Hayward cylinders?
A week after the execution, on December 18th,
The Tribune gave a fascinating clue: (9)
THE VOICE OF HAYWARD

IT IS TO BE PHONOGRAPHICALLY
REPRODUCED AT THE MUSEUM

Among the auditors who listened to Harry Hayward's last speech on the gallows was a phonograph which recorded not only the words he used, but the very tones and inflections of his voice when he drawled out his words. This record of a speech that astonished the world by its indifference, its evident carelessness of the fate which impended and its sang froid, has been reproduced on a number of the little waxen cylinders which when placed in the phonograph give forth the sound again. The Palace Museum, which has already secured the original Hayward gallows, has effected an arrangement by which the gallows speech of Harry Hayward is to be reproduced for its patrons by phonograph. The machines will be in place today, and anyone may stand looking at the gallows on which Hayward was hung and at the same time hear his voice by visiting the Museum. This shows what modern science has been able to accomplish.

And so, it appears, for a small price you could stand in front of the authentic Hayward gallows and hear the disembodied voice of the murderer repeating his last words!

#### THE POSSIBILITY OF "FAKERY"

Or could you? There was a lot of hokum connected with the Hayward trial (including several phony "confessions"), and we should be wary of taking anything written about the case at face value, just because it got into print. Just how, for example, could Hayward have made a recording from the gallows?

Descriptions and pictures show the gallows (See p. 8) to be an immense affair, with its platform nine feet above floor level, situated in a cavernous, two-story high room in the jail. At the time of the execution both the platform and the floor below, to the front of the platform, were crowded with people. The mouthpiece of a "hidden" cylinder machine would have to have been at least 20 feet from Hayward, and it is doubtful whether the primitive equipment of 1895 could register any sort of distinct impression under such conditions.

It is possible, of course, that Hayward spoke into one of Messr. Hough and Benedict's machines while in his cell, perhaps even a preview of his "last words". But he certainly couldn't have recited his full, 30,000 word "confession", both because of its length and because, by all accounts, the confession was given to a stenographer (named) and completed only hours before the execution.

Four Minneapolis papers and at least one out-of-town paper (10) carried mentions of the recordings, but there is no substantive information beyond that given above. If in addition to the museum's display, copies of the Hayward cylinders were sold to the public, as the box seems to suggest, few (if any) could have been original. Only a few dozen copies could be made from an original cylinder in those days, either pantographically or simply by connecting other phonographs with acoustic tubing. Professional recording artists got around this by singing the same selection repeatedly, producing many "masters", but it is unlikely that Harry spoke his last words into the horn over and over.

Because of the difficulty of mass duplication, the early record industry abounded with fakes -- or, to put it more gently, recreations -- of speeches by famous people, and other hard-to-get items. Even a recreation of Hayward's exact words, made at the time he spoke them, would be of interest today, however. (This method of recreation was used with such records as Ingersoll at the Tomb of Napoleon and The Mad Ravings of John McCullough, and the Hayward label [No Records genuine without...] implies this possibility.)

This, apparently, is what my cylinder

really is. Moreover, it seems likely that the "Last Words" container described above. and the cylinder record I have do not go together, though they are both contemporary with the case. The box clearly states that its contents are Harry's "Last Words", as spoken on December 11th, 1895, but the further date of January 25, 1897, is rubber stamped in two places. The record itself, however, is a melange of quotable statements made by Harry over a period of time, and reported widely in the press. It is definitely not what he said on the gallows. That speech is too long to report here, but was reprinted fully at the time and contained no recriminations against anyone. Harry began: (11)

"Well, to you all, there has been a good deal of curiosity and wonder at my actions, and some of you think I am a very devil." There was a peculiar, drawling accent on the first syllable of the last word -- a sort of dillente (sic), careless expression. "Some of you think that I am a very devil, and if you all knew my whole life, you would think so all the more."

Then he confirmed that he had made a full statement of his life to a stenographer, thanked his lawyer and some friends, and even uttered -- apparently insincerely -- a short prayer, as he had been urged to do. His last words? "Pull her tight. I'll stand pat!" (11)

The voice on the cylinder which I have sounds more like an elocutionist than a condemned man, speaking distinctly, deliberately and without much emotion. [But that was also a Hayward characteristic: Ed.] His words, as closely as I can transcribe them, are as follows. Note the similarity of several phrases to those used against Adry in the interview on page 4.

### HARRY'S CYLINDER SPEECH APPEARS ON OPPOSITE PAGE

A few words of clarification. The part played by Claus Blixt and Adry Hayward (pronounced "Audrey" on the cylinder) has been explained. Mike Quinlan was a detective employed by the Haywards to help in the defense, who evidently turned against Harry. The attempt by the detectives to "scare" Harry into a confession refers to an episode just after his arrest, when he was taken to the morgue and confronted with Catherine's lifeless body. He was reportedly shaken, but did not break. The "railroad train" refers to Harry's widely publicized remark upon hearing, on December 7th, that the date of his execution had been set for four days later: "A damned long time to wait for a railroad train."

Thus, Hough and Benedict, or perhaps other regional companies, cashed in on the Hayward publicity by producing cylinders such as the one transcribed, full of familiar phrases they knew the public would recognize as Harry's own. Mine may have originated in Chicago, as the plain brown, 1890's-style container, in which I found the cylinder, is stamped "The Hall Music Company, Chicago, Ill." (Does anyone have any 1890's catalogs or advertisements of this long-forgotten company?)

# THE CONTENTS OF THE HARRY HAYWARD CYLINDER

I, Harry Hayward, desire to make known to the world through the phonograph, a statement concerning my connection with the death of Catherine Ging, for whose murder I am to be executed tomorrow.

The government says that I am guilty of the crime though I was not even present at the killing and had no part in the actual commission of the act. Yet I am to be sent into eternity for a crime which Blixt....(muffled) ... confesses to have perpetrated.

Then I shall die bravely, and show the world that I am made of the right stuff. If I had Adry here now, I would cut his heart out and feed it to the dogs. I would tear him limb from limb and hack him to pieces. I would make his liver

and tripe (?) into a pie and thrust it down his dying throat.

I am a firm believer in spiritualism and I will return, mark me, and haunt my cursed brother till his dying day. And I will meet him on the brink of eternity with a red hot iron. If that deadly Quinlan had not deserted me, I should beat the gallows.

Well, we all have to die, and I care not whether I go to Heaven or Hell. I've got friends in both places! I am as well off in either place as I am in this accursed world.

Those detectives sought to scare me into a confession when they showed me Catherine standing up in her coffin. Hah, Hah! They little knew my calibre.

Well, I swing tomorrow. Heh! It's a long time, gentlemen, to wait for a rail-road train. If anyone wishes to see me tomorrow, they will please call at the Morgue. I shall have changed my address. Ha, Ha!

Alas, my poor -- mother! Would that I might see her once again. As for the rest, to Hell with them! Yours most respectfully, Harry Hayward.

Playing time: 2 3/4 minutes.

It might be indicative of the low esteem in which the phonograph was held in its early days that its promoters sought to cash in on such lurid and macabre events as Harry Havward's execution. (Recall that this was years before respectable artists were willing to associate themselves with the rasping phonograph.) [But even the early Kinetoscope portrayed executions, such as the Hanging of William Carr in 1897: Ed.] Of course, they were not alone. The newspapers, even the lordly New York Times, had a field day, and a number of books about the case were published just after the murder, during the trial and after the execution. Songs were written, such as The Ballad of Kitty Ging (anyone have a copy of that?), and The Harry Hayward Song. Not to mention that gruesome Museum!

If any collector knows of other, perhaps variant recordings by or about Harry Hayward, or of what companies may have advertised them, I hope that he will come forward. The episode is an interesting one, not only from a collecting standpoint, but also from a sociological point of view.

Harry never showed the slightest remorse for his cold-blooded crime, right to the end. He had no interest in religion, and rejected numerous entreaties to confess his sins (he remarked, on receiving a large stack of mail in his cell on his last day, "Religion, I expect, by the ton."). (12) He was in the headlines from the time of his arrest until his execution a year later, and he obviously

savored every minute of it, even though his life hung in the balance.

Probably the most cogent post-mortem given on Harry at the time was by another brother, Dr. Thaddeus Hayward, who was interviewed upon publication of Harry's "confession": (13)

Harry regarded his whole life as a big joke, his execution was a joke, and he decided to top the climax with a joke. I place but little faith in the confession. Someone has said that Harry was a physical coward and a mental hero. I prefer to think that he was a monster. He intimated to me regarding the confession that it was his intention to give the public their fill of blood and thunder stories.... He sort of felt as though he had been fought with a great show and parade and indescriminate lying, and it was his intention to use the same weapons in perpetrating his last joke. Not that he wanted the public to suspect that his confession was a fabrication. He wanted them to believe every word was true...

But there is something so shifting, so unreal about the story as it is toldin that statement that I am greatly confirmed in my position that Harry was one of the most remarkable psychological studies of the century...

Well, if the boy is conscious of what is going on in the mortal world today I think he is enjoying a good laugh at the success of his last -- his posthumous joke. +++ (See p. 8 & 9 for notes and acknowledgements)



WHERE IS THE PHONOGRAPH IN THIS PICTURE?

#### NOTES FOR "THE LAST WORDS OF HARRY HAYWARD"

- 1. The New York Times, Dec. 11, 1895, p. 9. 2. Minneapolis Journal, Dec. 9, 1895, p. 1.
- 3. ibid., Dec. 9, 1895, p. 2.
- 4. The New York Times, Dec. 20, 1895, p. 10.
- 5. Minneapolis Journal, Dec. 11, 1895, pp. 1-2.
- 6. *ibid.*, December 10, 1895, p. 1. 7. ibid., December 11, 1895, p. 3.
- 8. Minneapolis Tribune, Dec. 12, 1895, p. 7. 9. ibid., December 18, 1895, p. 7.
- 10. Milwaukee Journal, Dec. 11, 1895,
- 11. Minneapolis Journal, Dec. 11, 1895, p. 2.
- 12. ibid., December 11, 1895, p. 2.
- 13. ibid., December 20, 1895, p. 2.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (AND AN OFFER)

Acknowledgement is due to a number of helpful people, without whose aid this article could not have been written. First, Paul Charosh; without his locating of the original container the entire subject matter of the Hayward cylinder would probably have remained a mystery; and to Allen Koenigsberg, whose unseemly persistence succeeded in getting me to write it all down. Thomas M. McDade, co-founder of the Society of Connoisseurs in Murder and author of The Annals of Murder, a listing of sources on famous murder cases contemporary to the events. (Con't on next page)

(Con't from page 8) (Two pages are devoted to books on Harry Hayward); Walter N. Trenerry, past President of the Minnesota Historical Society and author of Murder in Minnesota, which contains a chapter on Hayward, who did the real leg-work; and my brother, Prof. John Brooks, who teaches in Wisconsin and who located the reference in the Milwaukee Journal.