IVES, Edward D.

b. White Plains, N.Y.  1925
May 6, 1959

Mr. Edward D. Ives
State Street
Veazie, Maine

Dear Mr. Ives:

Your diligence in gathering Maine folksongs, and in having them recorded is admirable, and we congratulate you on the completion of this outstanding work. We hope that many people will know of the availability of the record, and that it can be conveniently secured by those interested.

Although a record is not a book, more and more libraries are adding record collections to their holdings. We do not yet have the facilities for such a collection, but we write at present regarding the Maine Author Collection. This is a permanent exhibit of books written by Maine people, or written about Maine; and the collection also includes music pertaining to Maine. For this reason, we think your record would be a suitable and distinguished addition to the Maine Author Collection; don't you?

Most of the items in the collection are inscribed presentation copies, and we hope that you may be interested to inscribe and present one of your records. We would include it proudly with the other Maine Material.

Meanwhile, you have our very good wishes for the success of the record, which we hope is only the first.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
May 17, 1959

Mrs. F.W. Jacobs
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacobs:

I have your letter of May 6. I am sorry to say that I have no copies of my record to spare, having recently sold the last one of my consignment. You might write to Folkways Records, 117 West 46th Street, New York 17, New York, and see if they can oblige. If you waned me to inscribe it, I'd be glad to do that if you'd send it up to me.

Thank you for your good wishes.

Sincerely,

Edward D. Ives
May 26, 1959

Mr. Edward D. Ives
220 Stevens Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine

Dear Mr. Ives:

We have written to Folkways Records, as you suggested; and now we wait -- hopefully. We'll let you know what happens.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
May 26, 1959

Folkways Records
117 West 46th Street
New York City 17

Gentlemen:

The recent issue of Edward D. Ives' record of Maine folksongs interests us. We wrote to him about the possibility of including it in the Maine Author Collection, and he has referred us to you.

The Maine Author Collection is a permanent exhibit of works by Maine authors, and it includes music, occasional pictures, and such allied material. We preserve the correspondence, gather biographical and critical material, and in general try to have as complete information on our authors and musicians as possible.

We think that the record would be a most suitable addition to this exhibit, and we wonder whether you might like to present one for the purpose.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
June 2, 1959

Folkways Records
117 West 46th Street
New York City 17

Gentlemen:

Sandy Ives' record was received safely, and we are delighted to have it for the Maine Author Collection.

Thank you very much for your interest and generosity, and for making it possible for the collection to include this unusually interesting collection of folksongs.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
June 2, 1959

Mr. Edward D. Ives
220 Stevens Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine

Dear Mr. Ives:

Folkways Records responded beautifully and promptly, and we are proud and delighted to tell you that we have your record now as a part of the Maine Author Collection.

We'd like very much to have it inscribed, but are a little fearful of trustng it to the mail. Are you likely to be in Augusta some day during library hours? We are open Monday through Friday, the main doors from nine to four, and the staff from eight to five.

It is a most interesting record, and we are impressed with your diligence and effective and simple presentation.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
Professor Probes The Mystery
Of A Ballad Singing Woodsman

By Julia Brake, Area Correspondent

DID YOU KNOW Joe Scott, the ballader woodsman or ever heard of him? Was he really married, a ladies man? Was he loved or feared? How did he die? Violently in a bar brawl, in the woods alone or in a mental hospital?

Are these ballads familiar to you? "Benjamin Deane" who shot his wife in Berlin, N.H. or the song of "Howard Carrick" who hanged himself in his room in Rumford Falls, or "The Plain Golden Band"?

Dr. Edward Ives, an outstanding scholar as well as a folklorist and singer of folk songs, needs to know. He is trying to collect all Joe Scott's songs from people who knew them. Sandy, as he is called by colleagues, is an associate professor in the English department at the University of Indiana and the only folklorist for miles around.

He has a record album and a book to his credit. The album, a 1969 offering on Folkways label is titled Folk Music of Maine. His book, published in 1964 by Indiana University Press, is "Laurie German, the Man Who Made the Songs." Dr. Ives refers to his beloved folk lore as the "legitimate child of literature and anthropology."

Joe Scott was born in 1867 near Woodstock, New Brunswick, Canada and came as a young woodsman to work the Androscoggin River. He roamed the forests around Norwood, Rumford, Patten and Berlin, N.H.

He lived and sang his songs in rough lumber camps and his ballads tell of death, lurid calamity, sentimental love and SCSI melodv. One is about "Norman Mitchell" who poisoned himself over a girl. The first verse begins: "I was born in Pattern, Maine."

Another is of "William Sullivan who was killed when a tree stump fell on him."

Ives captured the ballad on a tape recorder. It goes:

"Good people all both great and small, Read these lines penned by me. These lines are written by a man deprived of liberty who is serving out a sentence for a deed that I have done. And it's here I fear I will remain till my race on earth is run."

According to the ballad, Ben runs a fruit and candy store but greed for gold causes him to start a fire and set his own house and sell rum. His wife, begging him to retrace his steps, cries: "Dear Ben, the pash you tread leads to death and disgrace."

Ben says, "Had I but heeded her warning I would not be here now. And my wife would still be living with no frown upon her brow." She left him, but he followed and walked in on her and another man, "And when she saw the weapon it was loudly she did cry, 'for God's sake do not shoot me, Ben, for I'm not prepared to die.'" But he shot moral statement about not being led astray by a thirst for gold.

Some versions run to 18 or 20 stanzas, Ives wants as many versions as he can locate. He explains that these songs come out of context seen in New Hampshire and Maine. "They are all part of the woods and repertoire."

Dr. Ives is on sabbatical leave from the university this year and has been granted a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation to pursue his work as folklorist.

He says, "This book may be done within a year, but it will take a real human effort. I'm still collecting interview notes, taking thousands of pages of manuscript. I need these before I can even consider beginning to write."

He is interviewing his way through a list of a hundred leads from an ad he placed in the papers of New Hampshire, New Brunswick and Maine. "The response generally is, 'I'm not glad somebody is writing something on that man'. The only difficulty is that people want to see me I'm not expecting to see an old professor expect me to have a grey beard, a curved stem pipe and look disheveled."

Dr. Ives did his undergraduate work at Hamilton College, earned his master's degree from Columbia and his doctorate from the University of Indiana. As to why he is writing this book, Ives explains, "From a scholarly point of view the way a folk song comes into being has never been studied. We have never seen a ballader author up close and the aim of this book is to give us a chance to see one."

"This also is a chance to rescue the songs of a historic Maine era. These ballads are dying. The men don't sit around and sing them in the old way. Now they watch television like everyone.

Edward (Sandy) Ives, professor, folklorist, recording artist and biographer relaxes in his "study", which stands behind his home in Veazie. His potbellied stove and general atmosphere, saged on: writing a book about Joe Scott, a Maine backwoodsman and balladeer. If you know anything about Scott or his songs, Ives would like to hear from you. Letters should be addressed to Dr. Ives, Edward (Sandy), Probes, The Mystery, Of A Ballad Singing Woodsman.