

# THE RECORD NEWS

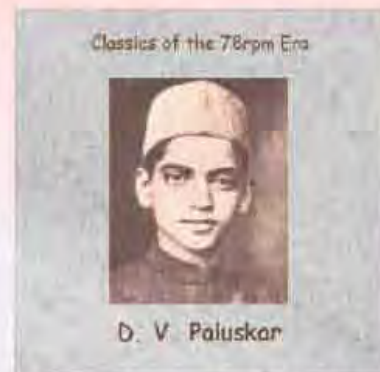
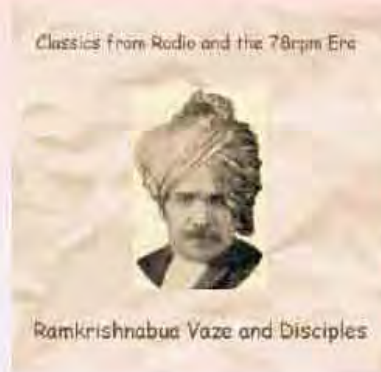
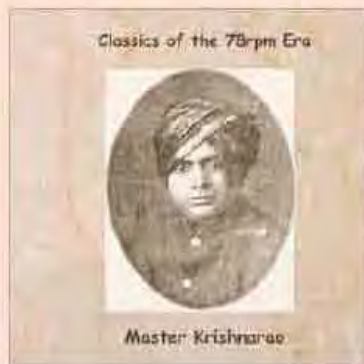
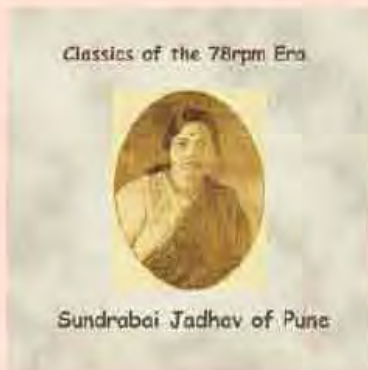
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**Feature Article in this Issue: Gramophone Celebrities-II**  
Other articles : Teheran Records, O. P. Nayar.



# **‘The Record News’ – Annual magazine of**

**‘Society of Indian Record Collectors’ [SIRC]**

{Established: 1990}

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Members joining anytime during the year [July-June] pay the full membership fee and get a copy of ‘The Record News’ published in that year. Life members are entitled to receive all the back issues in five bound volumes.

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## From the Editor

I am pleased to present our annual issue – ‘The Record News’ (TRN-2007) to all the members, wellwishers and friends of ‘Society of Indian Record Collectors’ [SIRC]. In addition to Mumbai, record collectors at small and remote places such as Amravati, Tuljapur and Ahemadnagar are doing very well. They do meet once in a month to listen to old music from gramophone discs. Solapur unit has been broadcasting radio programs from local radio station from last many years. Public reading library in Solapur has now provided for storage and listening room for the old discs. They have just begun computerization and digitization of the records.

TRN 2006 had twenty articles on ‘Gramophone Celebrities’. This issue contains more articles [21-40] in part-II of this series. A special feature on Hindi film music director O. P .Nayyar is also included. Hope you will like this issue and appreciate our little efforts.

- Suresh Chandvankar
- Editor

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Front page pictures: ‘Gramophone Celebrities and record labels’.



## **SIRC NEWS FROM MUMBAI**

During the period of this report, Mumbai unit of SIRC has presented the listening sessions by invitations from the following organizations:

- 1] Cultural wing of Ashay Film Club, Pune
- 2] Y. B. Chavan Pratishthan, Mumbai
- 3] Arohi Sangeet Academy, Dombivli
- 4] Karnatak Sangh, matunga
- 5] Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Kanpur
- 6] Bhatkhande Music University, Lucknow

Topics of the listening sessions held were – Kesarbai Kerkar, Heerabai Barodekar, Amir Khan, Kojagirichee gaani, Music of Vasant Desai, Roshan, O. P. Nayar, Vande Mataram, Hinglish songs, Bal Gandharva, Purvasurince Sur

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## Gramophone Celebrities - 21

### Bai Sunderabai Jadhav Punekar (1885-1952)

Around 1920, Bal Gandharva staged Ram Ganesh Gadkari's Marathi drama – 'Ekach Pyala'. Bai Sunderabai of Poona composed its music. Songs from this drama are popular even today, after a long gap of over eighty-seven years. She used kawali 'Katla mujhe kar dala rama' for the pad 'Satya vade vachanala natha' and gazal 'Dile bekarar tune' for most famous pad 'Kashi ya tyaju padala', both sung by the heroine Sindhu. Tune of this gazal and song became so much popular that Mr. K. R. Vaidya, Marathi poet of Nalasopara (near Mumbai) wrote a parody song and she recorded it on twelve inch diameter, 78 rpm record – 'Tu haansalees majala tirva karuni dola'. It also became very popular.

Born in 1885 at Pune, Sunderabai was a child prodigy. Her father realized talent in her voice and encouraged her to pursue this as a career. Her attachment to her birthplace was so intense that it could be heard at the end of some of her early 78 rpm recordings wherein she ends the song with an announcement – 'My name is Bai Sunderabai of Poona'. However, she spent most of her working life in Mumbai (Bombay). Initially, she lived in Girgaon and learnt bhajans from Thakurdasboa who used to perform in Ram Mandir in Girgaon area. Later on she moved to Indore for some time and learnt from Ustad Dhamman Khan, Ustad Gulam Rasool Khan and Pandit Keshav Bhaiyya. In addition to pure classical music, she learnt almost all styles of light classical music. In Mumbai, she used to sing in prestigious music circles such as Laxmi Baug wherein great musicians like Bhaskarboa Bakhale, Master Krishnarao and Bal Gandharva attended her concerts. She was promptly recommended for music conferences outside Maharashtra. Later she regularly performed at prestigious conferences at Banaras, Allahabad, Hyderabad and Calcutta.

Bai Sunderabai became very popular and earned lot of money, fame and name as 'Bai Sunderabai Jadhav Punekar'. She bought two motor cars and rented complete top floor of the building opposite to Victoria Terminus railway station in Bombay. This building is next to Capitol cinema house, presently occupied with McDonald outlet on the ground floor.

She cut few records with the gramophone company in early period where her voice was rather thin and high pitched. She announces her name in these records. She again cut records in October 1921, in which her guru Ustad Dhamman Khan has accompanied her on tabla. She cut over 150 songs (75 records) on H.M.V., Odeon, Regal, Columbia and Young India labels. These songs were in Urdu, Hindustani, Pharsi, Bhojpuri and Marathi language. She has sung few ragas such as Jogia, Jaunpuri. However, she was very comfortable with light music. Although she was expert in Hori, Gazal, Dadra, Kawali, Bhajan and Thumri, her speciality was Marathi Lavni. Some of her famous lavni's are – 'Tumhi majhe savkaar', 'Dipawalichya sani' and 'Katheen bai badudyachee

chakaree'. Her bhajans 'Vanavasi ram majha sanga kuni pahila', 'Sunder sari mori', 'Radhe Krishna Bol Mukhase', 'Mathura na sahi, gukul hi sahi' crossed borders and she became popular in North India through her records.

Sunderabai lived for over seventy years. She adapted herself with all the new modern and emerging media including radio and cinema. She acted in couple of films – Marathi 'Sangam' (1941), Hindi / Marathi 'Admi / Manoos' (C.1937) and her role of hero's innocent and pious mother was very well received. She planned to launch a new record company titled – 'The Navbharat Record mfg. Company' with the help of Mr. Dattopant Phatak, Pune who was also associated with Odeon record mfg. company. She thought of making several new records through her own company. However the company was never formed and her dreams were shattered. She lost all her money, property, cars and had to live in a small room with her paralysed daughter. She received the job with All India Radio, Bombay. She persuaded several musicians including Ustad Abdul Kareem Khan for cutting records with the Odeon Company and also to give cncerts for radio. Mr. Z. A. Bukhari, station director of Bombay radio was very helpful to artists and he encouraged and honored them during his tenure. Sunderabai organized several radio programs of Bal Gandharva who was like her brother. She died in 1952 while in service with radio. Today, she could be seen singing a religious song if you play VCD/DVD of 'Manoos/Admi' –

Mana papi bhoola, kauna ise samajhaye

Sukhaka saath, dukha sankatmen, kabhi kaam naa aave  
Jisko tune jagmen jalaya, vohi tujhko jalaye.....1

Shahad shakkarse milke ne hoga meetha kadava phal  
Tan dhoyega, manko kaise dhoye gangajal.....2

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Miss Sunderabai  
मिस सुंदरबाई.



Master Krishna  
मास्टर कृष्ण.

## Gramophone Celebrities - 22

### Sangeet Kalanidhi – Master Krishnarao

Master Krishnarao Phulambrikar (1898-1974) alias 'Master Krishna' was ten years younger to Bal Gandharva. Both of them were the disciples of Bhaskarboa Bakhale. He learnt music from 1911-1915 and joined Gandharva Natak Mandali formed by his gurubandhu Narayanrao Rajhans alias Bal Gandharva. He acted both in male and female roles in musical plays such as Sanshay Kallol, Swayamvar, Draupadi, Asha-Nirasha, Nandkumar, Amrutsiddhi and Kanhopatra. He also set tunes to songs from these plays and in this respect Bal Gandharva always honoured him as his guru.

In about 1933/34, both of them joined Prabhat Film Company - Bal Gandharva in acting department and Master Krishnarao in music department. Meanwhile, Shankarcharya Dr. Kurtakoti had conferred title 'Sangeet Kalanidhi' to Master Krishnarao. His songs from Prabhat Company's hit films viz. Dharmatma, Gopalkrishna, Manoos / Admi, Amarjyoti and Shejari / Padosi became so much popular that he had to sing them in his private music concerts. Later on he moved to Bombay in Rajkamal Film Company formed by V. Shantaram. He acted and provided music to Rajkamal Films Bhakticha Mala / Mali in Hindi.

He then again turned to Marathi drama around 1943-45, not as an actor but as a music director. His first drama 'Sangeet Kulvadhu' was hit due to its music. Songs such as 'Bola amrut bola', 'Manaramana madhusudana' are popular even today. He set number of tunes to 'Vande Mataram' song and used to sing in his concerts. In 1935, he was refused to sing this song on radio. So, he stopped singing on radio till he could sing it again after independence in 1947. During 1948-50, he worked very hard to get it accepted as 'The Anthem' in the parliament. He made special records required as per the norms and guidelines of 'The Anthem'. However, 'Vande Mataram' was not selected for non-musical (political) reasons. In the later years of his life, he turned to religious music. Some of his Marathi songs 'krishna majhi mata', 'bhav tethe dev', 'tujhiye nidhali' were very popular and played on radio for several years.

He passed away in 1974. Child prodigy 'Master Krishna' to 'Sangeet Kalanidhi' was a very long journey and he cut over 110 songs on 55 gramophone records. These records were made in both acoustic (pre 1925) and electrical era. In 1922, guru Bhaskarboa Bakhale was much pleased with his recorded songs 'Mundari mori kaheko' (Adana) and 'Kahe aab tuma aaye' (Sohoni). He made records in classical music, light music, stage songs, devotional songs, film songs and patriotic songs. Most of these records were made on HMV, Columbia, Odeon, The Twin and Young India labels. In 1937, Broadcast record mfg. Company, Bombay cut four records that play for five minutes per side. These are in raga bhimpalas, pahadi, bageshree, bhairvi and two songs from Marathi drama 'savitri'. In 1998, his birth centenary was celebrated in Maharashtra.

Gramophone Company reissued some of his most popular records on audio tapes and later on compact discs. Although Bakhaleboa did not record single song, both Bal Gandharva and Master Krishnarao have cut hundreds of records representing his gayaki and music.

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## **Gramophone Celebrities - 23**

### **Principal Bapurao Ketkar (1898-1954)**

Bhaskarboa Bakhale had several disciples including females Rahimubai Vajeer and his own daughter Pramila Bakhale. Both of them made couple of records that have now gone into oblivion. Next to Bal Gandharva and Master Krishnarao, Bapurao Ketkar was the only disciple of bakhaleboa who made ten records with the gramophone company.

Ketkar family belonged to Ketki, a tiny village near Chiplun in Konkan. Lakshmanboa Ketkar was a court singer in Ramdurg state in Karnataka. His son bapurao made considerable progress in dhrupad-dhamar style of singing while studying for matriculation. After sudden death of his father, Ketkar family had to move to Pune. Bapurao was then 20 years old. He began to continue his music lessons with Ustad Abdul Kareem Khan who was in Pune and had established Arya Sangeet Vidyalaya, an institution for imparting music education in a traditional guru-shishya parampara. He met Bhaskarboa Bakhale through Master Krishna and then joined his tuition with the permission of Kareem Khan. Bapurao then not only learnt music form his guru but also nurtured the Bharat Gayan Samaj established by Bhaskarboa. He was the Principal of this Samaj / and the music vidyalaya (school). He staged several shows of ' Sangeet Sanshay Kallol', 'Varvanchana', 'Panchangi Jugar' plays for raising building funds of Bharat Gayan Samaj. He used to play roles and sing songs in these plays. He also acted in plays of Gandharva Natak Company whenever Bal Gandharva had problems in getting replacement actors. With the suggestion of Master Krishnarao, he went to Karachi for establishing unit of Bhara Gayan Samaj. He met Sheth Lakshmidas Ishwardas who was a great admirer and patron of both Bhaskarboa and Master Krishnarao. Lakshmidas organized several concerts of bapurao and music lovers of Karachi were much pleased. However, there was no move in establishing the institution in Karachi. Hence, bapurao returned to Pune in 1932 and resumed his work at Bharat Gayan Samaj.

In 1932, he also composed music for Saraswati Cinetones Marathi talkie film 'Shyamsundar'. It was also dubbed in Hindi and Bengali and was shown for over 27 weeks in Bombay. Thus, this was the first Indian film that celebrated silver jubilee of film screening. In this film, Shahu Modak acted as a child Shree Krishna and Bapurao Ketkar played the role of Naarad. Later, in 1935, Baburao Painter and Dadasaheb Phalke invited him to compose music for Hindi film 'Sati Sulochana'. The film reels are no more available. However, some of the



gramophone records of these films are available with the collectors. Bapurao did not pursue this career and returned to his work as the Principal Ketkar.

Odeon Company invited Bapurao in 1935 to cut seven records (14 sides). He has recorded ragas Bageshree, Durga, Shankara, Kafi, Sohoni, Marwa, Todi, Deskar, Adana, Devgandhar and Bharavi. He has also recorded songs from Marathi drama. Bapurao's pronunciations of the words of bandish and natyapad are clear and sweet. Odeon Company published his photograph in their catalogue containing publicity material. Bapurao had received rigorous taalim from Bhaskarboa for 2/3 years. Experts found glimpses of Bhaskarboa's style in his singing in the concerts. Bal Gandharva used to remark, 'Bapurao sings Asthai / Antara like our guruji Bhaskarboa'. Thus, these records represent true gayaki of Bhaskarboa Bakhale. 'Alurkar Music House' of Pune published / reissued some of his songs on audio-tapes in late eighty's.

Marathi song from drama 'Varvanchana' recorded on A 245009 became very popular – 'Sundera gamena tee bala, daveena majla jee prem leela'.

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## Gramophone Celebrities - 24

### Gayanacharya Vazeboa (1871-1945)

Ramkrishna Narhar Vaze, born in 1871 at a small village Ozare, in Sawantwadi State, had no music background in his family. However, he had keen interest in music since early childhood. Although married at young age, as per the tradition of that time, he left home in pursuit of music and struggled for over twelve years in North India. He tried to learn from many different Ustads and Pandits of different gharana. He also learnt a lot just by listening to many stalwarts including Taanras Khan, Bande Ali, Nissar Hussain Khan, Rahimatkhani and many others. He used to note and write down the songs and bandishes that he received during this long period. He toured with the circus company of Prof. Vishnupant Chatre and also visited court of Nepal Naresh. During this period, he also met Swamy Vivekanand and sang for him. Thus, he added several other colors (rang) to his Gwalior gayaki and became an expert and renowned singer. He earned name fame and money and became known as Vazeboa. He had a voluminous voice and very aggressive style of singing.

He returned home after fourteen years and met his mother and wife. He then moved to Pune and built a house in Sadashiv Peth. The house is now changed into a big complex named after him as 'Ramkrishna Housing Society' in which his grandchildren live in a spacious flat. Soon, he became busy in tuitions, music conferences and like Bhaskarboa, he also began to compose music for Marathi drama companies. He composed music for Master Deenanath Mangeshkar's 'Balwant' company and Bapurao Pendharkar's 'Lalit Kaladarsh' company. Both of them treated him as guru. His tunes were based on pure classical music. Songs from Marathi plays 'Rakshasi mahatvakanksha', 'Ranadundubhi', 'Turungachya daaraat', 'Sanyashacha sansaar', 'Sanyast khadga' became very popular and the records were sold for many years.

He was very busy and always on tour. As a result, he could not teach many students. During 1933-40, he cut nine records (eighteen sides / songs) and these were released on Columbia Company label. These are electrical recordings and Vazeboa's matured voice at the age of seventy could be heard quite clearly. He has sung classical ragas viz. todi, khat, bhatiyar, sarang, bhairav bahar, khambavati, kafi Kanada, tilak kamod, marwa, nat bihag, tilang, bageshree and miya malhar (bolere papiyara). He has also sung Meera bhajan 'Udho karmanki gat nyari'. Mr. Frank Choun recorded few records in 1932 at S. Rose and Co. near Kala Ghoda where Rhythm House stands today. In 1939, M. J. P. Sen recorded rest of the songs at Universal Building, Fort, Mumbai in HMV head office in Bombay. These records were listed in Columbia Company's catalogue upto 1962. Around 1997, eight records out of nine were reissued on tape by HMV Company. Vazeboa also sang on All India Radio and Mr. Z. A. Bukhari was fan of his music. Vazeboa's twenty-seven minutes AIR recording of raga Miya Malhar is in circulation among die-hard collectors. This recording begins with an

announcement by Mr. Bukhari. Ustad Bundu Khan has accompanied him on sarangi whereas tabla accompanied was by Alla Rakha. During Vazeboa's visit and stay with Swamy Vivekanand, Swamiji gave him dohara:

'Sangeet kala hai naari, sabko ho gayi pyari  
Koi din gali galimen phirati, koi din thadi rajdarbari  
Aaisi naari jis ko milat hai, baaki hai balihari'.  
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**Gayanacharya Vazeboa**

## Gramophone Celebrities - 25

### Bapurao Pendharkar (1892-1937)

Vyankatesh Balwant (V.B.) alias Bapurao Pendharkar was born in 1892 in Jamkhindi state. He studied in Pune. Just before completing his matriculation in 1915, he left school to join Keshavrao Bhosle's 'Lalit Kaladarsh' drama company. He had neither good height nor beautiful voice and face required for the female roles. However, Keshavrao trained him so intensely that he learnt to overcome all his shortcomings and turned them into assets. He began with the insignificant female role in 'Sangeet Sharada' and made progress to enact the role of heroine Bhamini in 'Sangeet Manapman'.

In Lalit Kaladarsh compamny, he became 'gandabaddha' disciple of guru Ramkrishnaboa Vaze. Until then, he was mostly imitating Keshavrao Bhosle's singing style. Vazeboa taught him to give up this habit and sing in his own voice and style. He devoted himself to the company. Hence, when Keshavrao passed away in 1921, he took over as the owner and carried out his responsibilities till 1937. At the age of forty five years, he passed away in Gwalior. After his death, his son Bhalchandra (Anna) Pendharkar took over and has been keeping up the company till today in 2007. This is probably the longest lived drama company in India. Bapurao staged B. V. alias Mama Varerkar's 'Satteche Gulam' in 1922. He then produced number of plays and most of them were successful. Some of his important plays are: Turungachya Daraat, Krishnarjun Yuddha, Shree, Karagrahan, Shikka Katyar, Sajjan, Vadhu Pariksha, Nekjat Maratha, Sonyacha Kalas, Patit Pawan and Swayamsevak. This was also beginning of talkie films and many persons from stage were attracted to this medium. Bapurao founded 'Lalitkaladarsh Movietone Company' and produced Marathi film 'Vijayachi Lagne', ('Shadika Mamla' in Hindi).

Bapurao's records were cut after Keshavrao passed away. In 1922, he recorded 'Devata kamukata rahita' song from drama 'Shaha Shivaji'. British engineer George Dillnut recorded this song at S. Rose and Company (present Rhythm House) premises. Later, he cut over 140 songs on about 70 records. These were reissued on black color HMV labels, green color Zonophone labels and yellow color The Twin labels. He has recorded highest number of songs among three generations of singers of Lalit Kaladarsha Company. Most of his popular satge songs have been recorded and his son has preserved them for posterity. In 1974, selected songs were reissued on one Long Playing record. In 1996, HMV released four audio cassette-packs of sixty-four most popular stage songs. Bapurao's few songs have been included in this compilation. Famous musician Mr. Keshavrao Bhole has written about these records in his book. He writes, "Bapurao's voice has a volume that fills the theater. He sings in all the three octaves. His style of singing with high pitch notes and expressing the mood and feelings of the song has made them most popular. 'Baare panduranga', 'Ahankar

majha', 'Mukharata ka shobhe', 'Varta maunada he', 'Mama bandhu sakha', 'Tujhe palanewala' are among these key songs that led him to great success".

He recorded two songs on record number P 7366 in April 1926. One song is 'Bol brijlala' from drama 'Punyaprabhav'. Flip side of this record has a poem by Govindgraj (Ram Ganesh Gadkari) – 'Rajhans majha nijala'. It is not known whether he recorded this as a gap filler or he liked the poetry. Thus, he becomes the first ever singer who has recorded Marathi 'Bhavgeet' on gramophone record. The song is a mother's grief over the death of her baby. She laments:

"He kona bolale bola, rajhans majha nijala  
Durdaiva nagachya shikhari, nava vidhava dukhhi aai  
Te hridaya kase aaiche, me ugach sangaat nahi  
Je anandehi radate, dukhhat kase te hoi  
He kuni kuna sangave, aaichya bala thave, Premachya gava jave  
Mag aikave ya bola, rajhans majha nijala".

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**Bapurao Pendharkar**

## Gramophone Celebrities - 26

### **'Balwant' Gayaki – Master Deenanath Mangeshkar (1900-1942)**

'Ganda badhha' disciple of Vazebo! However, his singing style was an unusual combination of many different gharanas that he imbibed from many Ustads and Pandits. The gayaki was bright, aggressive and 'Balwant' (strong). As a child prodigy, he appeared on Marathi stage in a Mangeshi festival in Goa. Later on he entered Kirloskar Natak Mandali as a replacement of Bal Gandharva who had left the company to form his own Gandharva Natak Mandali. He played a female role of Kamla in Urdu drama 'Taj-e-wafa'. This role and the songs made him famous as a new star. His comic role in 'Kantomen Phool' was also popular. His audience consisted of Parsis, Gujrathi, Bhatiyeh, Multanis and Urdu speaking Muslims. He also used to act in old Marathi drama revived and staged by Kirloskar Drama Company. Haunted by his melodious voice, Mr. Achyut Balwant Kolhatkar gave him title of – 'Master' meaning child prodigy. Kirloskar Company toured extensively in North India during 1916-17. Thus, he had an opportunity to see and listen to many different acting and music styles during this tour. Around this time his voice became more masculine and consequently it affected and changed his style of singing. In 1918, Kirloskar Company had a second major split. Deenanath took initiative to form a new company and with the suggestion of Mr. Ram Ganesh Gadkari named it as 'Balwant Natak Mandali', in memory of Annasaheb Kirloskar. Company flourished and became famous under his able leadership and was active until about 1933. Gadkari's 'Ekach Pyala' was so popular that company earned Rs. 75,000 in those days. Among other dramatists, 'Balwant' staged the plays of Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar, Shreepad Krishna Kolhatkar, Tatyasaheb Kelkar, Vasudevshastri Khare, Veer Vamanrao Joshi, Achyut Balwant Kolhatkar, Vitthal Sitaram Gurjar, Swatantryaveer Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and Vishram Bedekar (Brahmakumari). This period was full of struggle for independence and patriotism was often expressed in plays such as Ugramangal, Ranadundubhi, Sanyasta Khadga, Manapman, Rajlakshmi, Rajsanyas and Deshkantak. Around 1937, Deenanath also produced 'Krishnarjun yudhha' film under his 'Balwant Pictures' banner and burnt his fingers like Bapurao Pendharkar. This led to the tragic turn of his career due to the debt. He had to close down his company, and finally he died in 1942 at very young age. He left behind his widow and five children who were to become great singers later. His eldest daughter Lata Mangeshkar became the legendary singer of the century.

Even in such a short span of just forty-two years, Master Deenanath has left behind his music in over fifty songs (twenty five records). These were recorded using electrical method (during 1930-37) and issued on HMV, The Twin, and Young India labels. Majority of these are famous songs from the Marathi drama. He has also sung ragas Jaijaiwanti, Basant, Bahaduri Todi, Sindhura and also songs in Kanadi and Telugu languages. His first records were cut in 1930 in a studio on Rampart Row, next to Rhythm House and 1931 catalogue of HMV has