

Dennis Rookard on recording folk music in Essex

It was a journey of discovery. It was like going into a, you know— Tell me when you first went into a library, when you first learnt to read. Now I learnt to read when I was late, about nine. So of course when you went into a library, you know, there was this pent up thing, like right, I'm going through this thing. You went through it like— like, I don't know, what do you go through like— a knife goes through butter. You want everything. You devour those books. It was four books every week, you know. You were in there three or four times. It was like that with folk music. You knew that you were getting material which was brilliant. In later days I suddenly realised what material I was getting, that's when I started to collect it. At the same time, because my recorder was always there, and they knew I was there, I got this lovely— I was able to build up that sort of relationship with the stars, which said, look, it'll only be used for hospital radio, I'm not going to take your tapes and flog it off to some record company. That's how I got seven hours of Paul Simon...

Listen to the interview on Essex Archives Online: [SA 30/7/1/2/1](#)