

**Street Song**

When John Westerfield was arrested last week for vagrancy he showed the police officer his street singer license. It was a Boston license, though, and the Cambridge policeman who arrested the blind musician wasn't impressed. The officer saw the cigar box between the street singer's legs and charged him with begging without a license. It just happens that there isn't a Cambridge license in existence to correspond with the one issued to street singers in Boston. But the case went to court.

The judge who heard Westerfield's case, according to attorney Mark Schriber, "didn't like the argument that he was just standing there playing music, and that he wasn't soliciting. Contributions were entirely voluntary." Westerfield explained that he'd once tried to get a Cambridge street singer license, and had been told by the police there that no such thing existed and he didn't need to worry anyway; he'd never have any trouble.

The trial went on and on with arguments about the definition of begging and soliciting. Finally the judge agreed that since no license existed for street singing, and since standing in Harvard Square next to Woolworth's with a cigar box between your knees doesn't necessarily constitute begging, Westerfield was not guilty. So . . . Westerfield's back now . . . on Harvard Square, next to Woolworth's playing his banjo and guitar, and with a cigar box between his knees.

**Guns & Butter**

Cliff Gunkles photo

*John Westerfield: Singing in the Clear*