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May 1977, One Dollar

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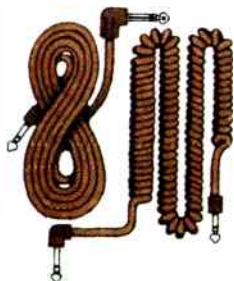


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COUNTRY MUSIC



Volume Five, Number Eight
 May, 1977

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Art Director &
Production Manager:
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Book Editor:
Patrick Carr

Managing Editor:
Michael Bane

Assistant Editor:
Rochelle Friedman

Art Assistant:
Don Mathe

Contributors:
Audrey Winters
J.R. Young
Dave Hickey

Circulation Director:
John D. Hall

Director: Circulation Promotion:
Gloria Thomas

Circulation Fulfillment Manager:
Michael R. McConnell

Circulation Assistant:
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Advertising Sales Director:
John Bowen

Advertising Assistant:
Faye Allen

Director: Direct Marketing:
Anthony Bunting

Direct Marketing Assistant:
Eileen Bell

Accounting Manager:
Alma Braver

Executive, Editorial and
Advertising Offices,
475 Park Avenue South, 16th
Floor, New York, New York 10016
(212) 685-8200

John H. Killion, President
W. Beattie, Treasurer
S. Gross, Secretary

West Coast (Advertising)
The Leonard Company
6355 Topanga Canyon Blvd., #307
Woodland Hills, California 91364
(213) 340-1270

Midwest (Advertising)
The Patis Group
4761 West Touhy Avenue
Lincolnwood, Ill. 60646
(312) 679-1100

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Letters

Sees RED (Foley) By The TUBB (Ernest) Full

I am a loyal country music fan. I listen to all the country stations, buy all the records and read all the magazines. My wife has been telling me that maybe I'm getting too involved with country music and I shouldn't let it affect my life so much. I don't agree with her, but let me tell you what happened the other day:

I had gotten up feeling good, showered, shaved and put on my new BROWN (Jim Ed) suit and had stepped out into the HALL (Tom T.) when my wife came out of the bathroom looking mighty HAGGARD (Merle) because of a hangover from a party the night before. She wanted to know where the DICKENS (Jimmy) I thought I was going and why? I told her I was going down to the office to pick up my PAYCHECK (Johnny). She said, "After you go CASH (Johnny) it don't be spending any of your hard earned money at the PLACE (Mary Kay) where you like to go. If you get into any trouble you will have to pay the PRICE (Ray). I'm not coming down and BOND (Johnny) you out like before."

Well, I got my check and headed for my favorite bar and ordered a shot of DANIELS (Charlie). I was buying drinks for everyone like I was RICH (Charlie). Finally I decided I better leave while I still could and went out and got into my GREENE (Jack) FORD (Tennessee Ernie). At first I thought maybe I ought to head to HOUSTON (David) or RENO (Jack) or maybe give it a try out WEST (Dottie). However, I thought better of it and headed on home. On the way I was thinking that now the SNOW (Hank) is gone it won't be too long before we'll be seeing the ROBBINS (Marty). I should have been paying more attention to the road because a RABBITT (Eddie) ran across in front of me and when I swerved to miss it I heard a CRASH (Craddock). I got out to look and found out I had hit a pole and smashed my FENDER (Freddy). Next thing I know I look up and there's a big HUSKY (Ferlin) officer standing there and he looks as big as a MACK (Warner) truck. He said, "I think you better come with me," and he put ACUFF (Roy) on one of my arms and I just swallowed my PRIDE (Charley) and went with him.

At the jail before locking me up they

stripped me BARE (Bobby) to see if I was hiding anything and then led me away to a cell. I was still feeling pretty good, so this was all a RIDDLE (Jimmy) to me as to what was going on. They put me in a cell with a guy who said he was a recording STARR (Kenny). He said he had been picked up leaving a bar he had gone to after a long day of recording SESSIONS (Ronnie). We talked for about four hours and then my wife showed up with the CASH (Tommy) to get me out. "Well, I hope this teaches you a lesson," she said as we were driving home. It sure does, I said, and I decided right then to change my lifestyle. "LORD (Bobby)," I said. "From now on I'm going to do my drinking at home and just sit home and listen to my favorite country stations. After all, I'm not as YOUNG (Faron) as I used to be."

LARRY G. SPENCE
RAYMONDVILLE, TEXAS

Are Vernon's Fans Organizing?

I enjoyed the article on Vernon Oxford in the January 1977 issue of *Country Music*.

I had the honor of seeing Vernon perform last year when he was on tour with Wanda Jackson in England. He is a truly great performer and deserves the success he is at last achieving in the U.S.

In England he has had a double album and two single albums released—all due to pressure by the fans. This goes to show that even in these days if the public really wants something they can get it. It's also nice to know that even with Vernon's new-found home in the U.S. he still remembers his friends over in England. There is a Vernon Oxford Appreciation Society, c/o Mike Craig, 18 Hilton Ave., Aberdeen, Scotland.

I would be interested to know if one has been formed in the U.S. yet or if there is a chance of one starting.

KEN ALLAN
LANCASTER, ENGLAND

Stands Up For Ray Price

I was puzzled and dismayed to read in your Feb. issue John Morthland's remark about Ray Price's new album *Me & Hank*.

It's difficult to believe that we both listened to the same album for I loved everything about it and believe that Hank Williams would have been very proud



Are you missing half the joy of your guitar?

IF YOU'RE LIKE a lot of people who've taken up the guitar, you went out and bought your guitar with high hopes. You probably bought a little instruction book to go with it, figuring all you had to do was to learn a few chords... and that with a bit of practice, you'd sound pretty good.

But maybe now you're finding that what you've learned isn't enough. Being able to strum some chords and sing a few songs is nice, of course—but you get tired of the same few songs after awhile. You'd like to be able to play other, harder songs... to play melody along with chords... to say things with your guitar that you feel inside, but haven't got the musical skills to express.

If this is the way you feel, we'd like to help you get the skills you need. We'd like to teach you to play the guitar the right way... by note as well as by chords, and by notes and chords in combination.



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We'd like to teach you to read music, too—so you won't be limited to just a few simple songs that you've memorized. We'd like to help you get the freedom and fulfillment you *should* be getting from your guitar—instead of frustration from not being able to play the way you want to.

In short, we'd like to teach you the same kind of things you'd learn if you went to a good, thorough private teacher. The big difference is that you teach yourself to play with the U.S. School of Music courses. By mail.

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of it—for his songs have never been sung better. I am so glad Ray Price pays not the slightest attention to all nitpicking and just goes right on doing what he does so well.

In this time of so many mediocre non-singing singers, what a joy it is to listen to a man who can really sing.

C.C. ELDER
COULEE CITY, WASHINGTON

Ray can really sing, C.C. Maybe Morthland was in a bad mood that day. Ed.

Cheers For Donna Fargo . . .

Thank you for your great article on Donna Fargo. Now all your readers will know what all of Donna's fans have known for years, she is a person of many talents. All one has to do is go to one of her concerts. If people would listen to her songs they would know she is one of the greatest songwriters in country today.

GENEVIEVE L. NICHOLLS
MONTCLAIR, N.J.

Donna is one of the best, isn't she? Ed.

. . . And Boo's For Chinga Chavin

After reading West Coast Weirdness Oozes East by Howard Klein in the March issue, he asks "What do we call Chinga Chavin?"

For a start, let's not call him at all. Or give him space in your publication. I'm not about to rake you over the coals, or cancel a subscription simply because of an article about a character that plays a strung up toilet seat and spouts filth. After all, it is not your problem, but his.

Tell me what positive purpose can be created from an album so obscene the musicians and producer don't even want their names used on the credits? Chavin's "mission" appears to be a negative one. Who really has the sexual hangups here? Please don't feel you have to mention every personality screaming for recognition, no matter how gross or absurd the "talent." Rather, go ahead and play favorites, among the hardworking people with a positive approach to their music and their life.

BARBARA VAUPEL
HENRYETTA, OKLA.

Whatever else he may be, Chinga Chavin is a phenomenon of our times. A major studio and some of Nashville's top pickers saw fit to do his album. Therefore, we feel he is worth a report. Ed.

I have had a subscription to *Country Music* since I purchased the first edition from the newsstand. When my subscription runs out, I won't be renewing it. I won't help support such features as Howard Klein's on Chinga Chavin (March 1977).

I can't imagine why your magazine would help promote or give publicity to

a person who makes a living selling smut.

Thanks for a great magazine up to now.

JUNE WALKER
SEFFNER, FLA.

We hope you change your mind, June. But we don't feel the article promotes Chinga Chavin—merely reports on what he's doing. Ed.

Girls Who Dig Ole Waylon

Many thanks for the Feb. '77 cover of Waylon, but please let's have a good article on him. The girl from Illinois doesn't know a good thing when she sees it. But the gals in Charleston have voted him the most watched guy. . . .

WAYLON FANS
CHARLESTON, S.C.

Kind of tough doing articles on Waylon these days. He's become interview-shy. Ed.

I want to thank you for the beautiful pictures of Waylon Jennings in your February issue. I also enjoyed Dave Hickey's article, *Outlaw Blues*. I want to say that this 40-year-old housewife (and there's many more of us) is not doing her dishes to *Stand By Your Man*. I do mine to *Are You Ready For the Country* by Waylon or *Long Hard Ride* by the Marshall Tucker Band, just to name a couple.

So do count us in as progressive music fans as well as the guy in the honky-tonks,

the youth, and young adults. All we want is for the music to be good regardless of labels. And you can always depend on Waylon's music to be good no matter what it's called.

I really like your magazine. Keep up the good work.

A WAYLON FAN FROM
TERRE HAUTE, IND.

Right on. Good music is good music, no matter what it's called. Ed.

Thinks Delbert's One of the Greats

Country Music magazine is to be commended for the recognition recently given to Delbert McClinton. I speak specifically of the Feb. 1976 issue which contained a feature on Delbert and his Fort Worth Honkytonk music plus mention of him and his music in at least two other articles. He is one of the great musical artists of today. . . .

RANDALE PETERS
RINGGOLD, GA.

Due to our great volume of mail, we regret we can't answer all letters individually. We welcome your opinions, and will publish the most representative letters in this column. Let us hear from you.—Ed

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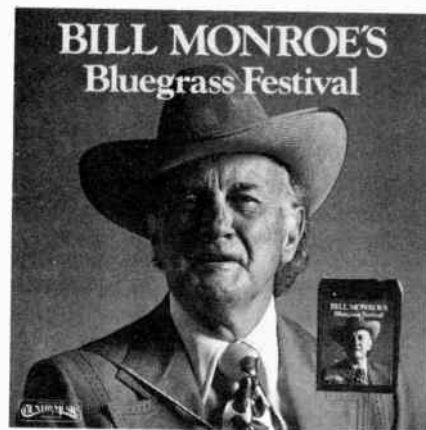


Hank Williams On Stage

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Good Old Country Gospel

RECORD ONE: Loretta Lynn/In The Sweet Bye & Bye; Jimmie Davis/How Great Thou Art; Red Foley/One Step More; Bill Monroe/I Am A Pilgrim; Ernest Tubbs/I Saw The Light; Bill Anderson/Reverend Mr. Black; Loretta Lynn/I'd Rather Have Jesus; Webb Pierce/Far Away; Kitty Wells/Dust On The Bible/Jimmie Davis/Old Rugged Cross RECORD TWO: Red Foley/Amazing Grace; Wilburn Bros./I've Got That Old Time Religion In My Heart; Bill Monroe/Jesus, Hold My Hand; Jimmy Martin/Lift Your Eyes To Jesus; Ernest Tubbs/Wings Of A Dove; Jimmie Davis/Highway To Heaven; Red Foley/Peace In The Valley; Ernest Tubbs/great Speckled Bird; Kitty Wells/I Heard My Savior Call; Red Foley/Just A Closer Walk With Thee

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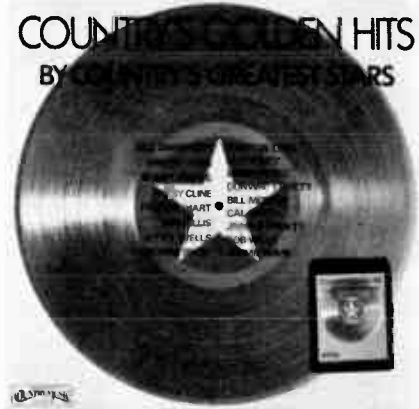


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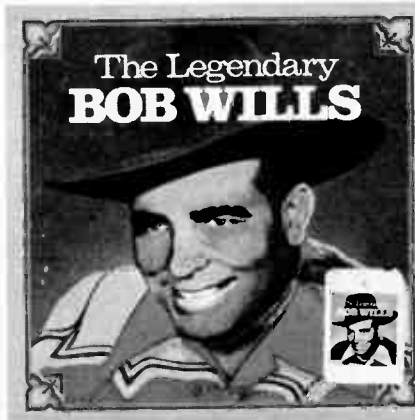
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Country Scene

HILLBILLY CENTRAL

by Hazel Smith



Marshall Chapman



Tompall Glaser

It was a Wednesday afternoon and all veterinarian offices in the Nashville suburb of Goodlettsville closed at noon. Chuck Glaser, producer of Jack Greene/Jeannie Seely, had a business meeting with Jack at his farm in the above mentioned suburban area. Upon arriving Chuck discovered Jack in the barn with a prized cow who was mightily into labor with the calf arriving feet first. With no vet in sight, Chuck, who is still a Neb. farmboy at heart, seated himself on a milking stool and advised Jack as to how to deliver the calf. Cow and calf are doing fine, but the business meeting between producer/artist still ain't took place. Just call that music with a different moo.

The world's greatest co-writer, my friend Frank Dycus, who presently writes

for Broughman Hall, was telling me that he got three songs recorded in a week—two by George Hamilton IV, who is being produced by Allen Reynolds, and one by Joni Lee, daughter of Conway Twitty.

The long-awaited ABC album by Tompall Glaser and his Outlaw Band has found its way to the market place. Between the grooves Tompall has added the missing link to American music by integrating country with R&B and every other kindred music known to man. Playing the Old Time Pickin' Parlor last week, Tompall and his Outlaws literally blew the crowd away to the tune of "best band I ever heard," etc. remarks by listeners, which included the likes of Harlan Howard, Shel Silverstein, Steve Young, most of the band members from Willie Nelson/

Waylon Jennings organizations, Billy Ray Reynolds, Frank Dycus, producer Jimmy Bowen and other heavies. A good time was had by all. Hey, must mention that the opening act was Marshall Chapman who has a single on Epic titled *Somewhere South of Macon* just released and is a multi-talented women—a writer/singer who rocks and picks and sings with the best of the male species.

Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys, off to Japan for an eight-day stint, also have a live album in the making dueting with folks like Emmylou Harris, Dr. Hook, Waylon Jennings and others.

I suggest that Prez Carter get the same security as Charlie Daniels' Volunteer Jam had. I mean nobody could do nothing. Course CDB was on hand as was Willie Nelson, Marshall Tucker and others. I personally spied Alexander Harvey, Tree Publishing's Buddy Killen, MCA Records producer Walter Haynes, Guy Clark, Johnny Rodriguez, Tanya Tucker and the great Billy Sherrill all walking amongst us common folks backstage. 'Course the auditorium was filled to the walls with screaming peoples.

Lee Clayton, the writer of *Ladies Love Outlaws*, which was a past hit for Waylon Jennings, tells me that after making the rounds of LA, NYC and other unmentionable musical sites and scenes that he came back home to Nashville to stay for he feels this is where he belongs.

The Epic showcase featuring Marshall Chapman, Patti Leatherwood and Harlan Sanders was thumbs up. These three young artists are all definite winners. Talented? You bet!

Music Row's Eddie Jackson and Tommy Overstreet on Caribbean cruise. Bobby Bare and Family and his manager also cruising the Atlantic waters in same above area; Jeannie Seely/Hank Cochran in Bahamas, and as far away as I got was Caswell County, N.C. But that is a mite further than Goodlettsville and Nashville, my usual vacationing area!

Bluegrassers Alan Munde with *Country Gazette* and Sam Bush with *New Grass Revival* recording duet guitar/banjo LP at Pete's Place. Should be a collector's item for bluegrass addicts. ■

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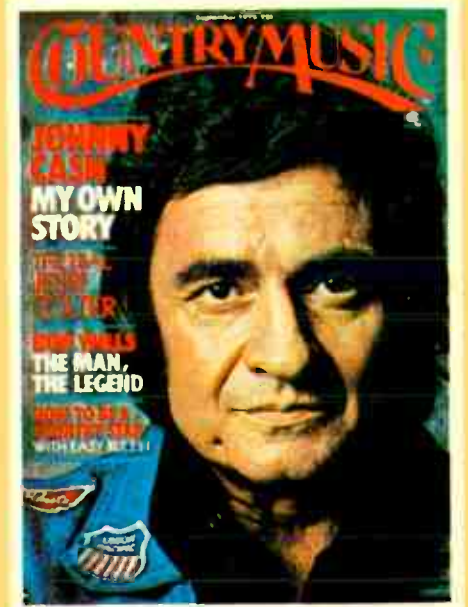
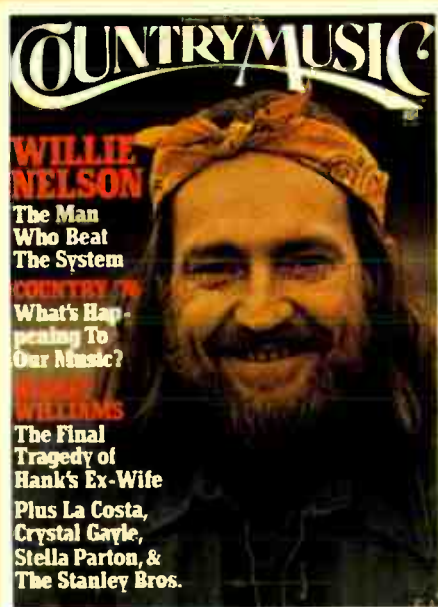
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NEWS

Presidential Pickin' Reigns



Presidential inaugurations took on a new tone this year, with southern rockers Charlie Daniels and the Marshall Tucker Band joining such country heavies as Loretta Lynn and Tom T. Hall to entertain the new President.

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Country Scene



President Carter waves to the crowd at the Armory Ball (left), then joins wife Rosalynn for a quick swing across the dancefloor.



The Charlie Daniels Band fires up a little Inaugural Boogie for the crowds at the Armory Ball, the largest of the week's events.

Watch This Face:



Charly McClain

When Charly McClain's first Epic release hit the radio stations, Memphis' WMC couldn't play it enough.

"Here's Charly with *Lay Down*," the disk jockey would hype. "And when Charly says lay down, every fella in the room does just that."

Maybe it's because Charly is a Memphis girl—that's right, girl—that WMC kept playing her record. Maybe it's because the song itself, *Lay Down*, appealed to everyone's prurient interest. Maybe, just maybe, it's because Charly McClain, 20 years-old and with Epic Records for less than three months, had a hit—not a monster, but not bad for a beginner.

If you've got any doubts that Charly's a Memphian, ask her.

"Ah've lived here all mah lahf," she says softly. (Translated: "I've lived here all my life.")

These qualities in her voice, the softness and the Southernness, are what make her a country singer. Because if it weren't for her Memphis heritage she might be . . . well, she might be a rock singer.

"My music is not *real* country, but it's not rock. I used to sing *real* country all the time, more than I do now. I guess it's changing, too. Personally, I don't care for *real real* country."

Charly's dilemma in defining her music is understandable. She's young enough to look at Olivia Newton-John, John Denver and the Eagles, not as musical interlopers, but as recording artists with a sound she likes. But she's also been brought up on the music of Loretta Lynn, Tammy Wynette and other *real* country artists.

"Everybody in my family plays some sort of instrument," she says, "so I've just kind of been around it. I'd hear Tammy Wynette and think I want to be like that. I used to do almost all her stuff. And Con-

nie Smith. For a long long time I did a lot of Loretta Lynn's stuff. Then Linda Ronstadt started coming up and I started really liking her, and Emmylou Harris, too. But Tammy is probably my main influence—I really like her."

Charly's potpourri of influences are evident in her singing.

"Some people say I sound like Loretta Lynn," she laughs. "Some people say Barbara Mandrell, some say Linda Hargrove, Tanya Tucker—everybody, all of them."

She's got all she wants or needs in Memphis: supportive parents; producer Larry Rogers' recording studios; and a reputable band who cut records and tour with her—Shylo, whose members Ronny Scaife and Danny Hogan wrote *Lay Down*.

Also unlike many other aspiring artists, Charly is ready to work at being a star, even relegating her personal life to second place.

"I'm not married, and I don't plan to. I was almost married once a couple of years ago, but I wanted to sing more than

I wanted to be married. So since from that time on this is what I've wanted to do—I've wanted to do it all my life."

Rogers let her and Shylo cut some tapes in his Memphis studios, and took them to Nashville.

"He said he thought he might be able to get me a deal," Charly says.

"So he called me one day on the phone, and I had this feeling—he don't ever call me from Nashville, not unless it's really important—so he said, 'How'd you like to be on the label Tammy's on?'"

"And I just set there. I said, 'C'mon, you're kiddin'.' He said, 'No, you're on Epic.'"

And Charly's youth finally showed through the sophistication acquired by a country girl who's come far in a short time, as she said, still unbelieving:

"That was such a surprise. I don't think I even realized I was on Epic until I saw the records myself. It's kind of weird, y'know?"

MARY ELLEN MOORE

Swing King Jim Atkins Dies

"I have never underestimated the great influence Jim had on me—he started my interest in music." So wrote Chet Atkins of his half-brother in his autobiography *Country Gentleman*. A superb musician, singer and one third of the original Les Paul trio, Jim Atkins died of a heart attack January 6 in Denver, Colorado, where he was visiting relatives.

Jim was born eleven years before Chet in Luttrell, Tennessee, and left home as a teenager to live with an uncle in Nebraska.

Their father, James Arley Atkins, was a fine singer, musician, music teacher and piano tuner; it is no surprise that his sons should have been so musical themselves. While in Nebraska, Jim won a voice scholarship to the University of Nebraska, but soon abandoned semi-classical music for swing.

Jim obtained some work on a variety of small radio stations (again an inspiration to Chet, who recalled "Jim was a star, and I had a goal: to play music like Jim and work on a radio station") before landing a job under the assumed name of Tommy Tanner on the WLS National Barn Dance in Chicago.

It was in Chicago that Jim met another guitarist disguised as a hillbilly singer: "Rhubarb Red," born Lester Polfus and best known to the world as Les Paul. He, Paul and the bassist Ernie Newton quickly formed a hot pop trio and took New York City by storm.

Their audition for Fred Waring has by

now assumed legendary status: opening their cases in an office hallway, they cut loose when an unsuspecting Waring came by. They awed musicians, secretaries and most of all Waring himself with their swinging musicianship and Jim's lovely Bing Crosby-like vocals.

They stayed with Waring as a featured trio until World War II broke up the Les Paul Trio, and Jim quit music altogether in 1953. The days of the big band were over, and the sun was setting on the era of the smooth vocalist. He spent the next 15 years as program director of KOA in Denver. He did not play much or sing at all until 1958, when Chet and he did an album called *Guitar Genius*; the experience renewed his interest in the instrument, and he began teaching guitar.

In 1968 he joined his younger half-brother in Nashville and began to teach in earnest as well as developing the Fame guitar course. In October of 1975 Les Paul came to Nashville to celebrate the grand opening of Gibson's new factory, which primarily manufactures the popular Les Paul guitar. There a few quick telephone calls reunited the old Les Paul Trio, and hosts of outrageous stories brought about gales of nostalgic laughter. There was even some talk of the trio getting back together again, recording once more. But it was never to happen: Ernie Newton died the following October, and now Jim is gone.

DOUGLAS B. GREEN



Spring Blossom



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Greatest Hits



Greatest Hits Vol. 2



Coal Miner's Daughter

MCA RECORDS

Opry On The Prowl In New York

Prestige surrounds Harlequin Rehearsal Studios. *Equus* is playing at the Helen Hayes Theater just across 46th Street, and right next door is the Lunt-Fontanne, showing *My Fair Lady*. At the Harlequin itself, three flights of narrow stairs take you past troupes of nervously laughing young people clutching sheet music and each other as they wait their turn to get to the room at the top of the stairs and show the judges their stuff.

A would-be George Chakiris, hair-styled and dressed fashionably New Yorkish, performs a number from *West Side Story*; a Barbra Streisand-type dressed in Barbra-type clothes performs a Barbra-type song; as Southern-a-belle as you can find in the Big Apple knocks out the judges with her smiling rendition of *Rock-A-Bye*—Al Jolson would have been amazed, to say the least.

But the Broadway setting is misleading. These hopefuls are not aiming at spots in *A Chorus Line*—they're auditioning for summer jobs in Opryland. That's right, Nashville's entertainment park has come to the Big City to seek talent.

All this is not as unlikely as it may seem, however. Opryland has been acquiring its talent this way for five years. And New York is only one of 22 cities that the judges hit in their search for the best. Some of the talent selected do indeed go on to bigger things—12 alumni are now with Music Hall America.

Bob Whittaker, the park's entertainment director, takes time out from appraising the auditioners to explain the talent search. Why, we wonder, when Music City USA is filled to bursting with untapped talent just waiting to be tapped, does Opryland range far and wide for its performers?

"We don't find legitimate singers in Nashville," says Whittaker, hastily add-

ing as he notices our raised eyebrows, that legitimate singers means singers with a flexible repertoire. Just because Opryland is in the heart of country doesn't mean that's all they perform for the millions of tourists who visit. Folk, razzmatazz jazz, showboat, comedy, Broadway and popular music are just a few of the 11 different shows that are performed daily in the park. Last year, Whittaker directed 10,696 shows in the 130 days of the park's open season.

More than 6,000 people try out for the 300 spots. The search ranges from Ann Arbor, Michigan to Charlotte, N.C. Last year Bloomington, Ind., was the biggie, netting Whittaker and his judges the most talent.

Before Nashville gets its feelings hurt, however, Whittaker does admit that there are more auditions in Nashville than anywhere else and that a lot of the talent does come from there. And country music is by no means neglected—it is very much a part of the program.

Getting back to the Harlequin Studios, where the try-outs are trying to impress the judges with how loud they can sing, how much teeth they can show (smiling is a big point in their favor) and how much they can contort their bodies (mobility is another point): Why would an aspiring performer choose to leave the Broadway atmosphere for a summer in the South?

Well, says Whittaker, "Nashville's Music City, U.S.A., isn't it?" And a lot of good things musically are happening there, so it's not like anyone's giving up the bright lights for the sticks. In addition to the Music Hall America group, some of the Opryland alumni have received songwriting contracts and others are working out on the West Coast on network shows.

MARY ELLEN MOORE



Carrie Cash

Mama Cash Stands Tall Behind Johnny

"Earlier today, June Carter took me shopping. We walked several blocks, and I visited several stores. This is my first trip to New York, and I'm impressed, and terribly excited."

Speaking was Carrie "Mama" Cash, mother of the Man in Black. A resolute, strong woman of 72, she was in New York City for a concert starring Johnny, brother Tommy, most of the Carter Family and assorted friends at the Felt Forum, a 5,000 seat arena jammed with fans.

Her memory is still clear and incisive. "As a child, Johnny always did like to sing. He sang in the church, and when he was six years old, we ordered his first guitar from Sears. Later, when he was in the eleventh grade, we gave him voice and piano lessons; only his teacher told us he didn't need any singing instructions—he had a natural voice."

Mama Cash further reveals that "we were always solidly behind Johnny in his desire to pursue a career in music." Unlike other parents who would prefer their offspring follow more stable career directions, "we were all very thrilled when we first heard Johnny sing on the radio. He was singing *Hey Porter*, which he recorded in the fifties right after he got back from overseas with the Air Force."

What of the bad days, when her famous son fought the now legendary battle with the pills? Mrs. Cash is not afraid to discuss this. As a matter of fact when the subject is raised, a stern look rises in her eyes. Unhesitatingly, she proclaims, "John-

(Continued on page 21)



Terry Mazer



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Ridin' On The Cotton Ball/Give It Away
You're So Close To Me/City Jail




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Five O'Clock In The Morning
Between Carolina And Texas
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Ain't You Something Else/Atlanta Georgia Story
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Down To My Last Goodbye
I Can't Get You Out Of My Mind
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Oliver Swan/Smoky Places/Not Everyone Knows



PZ 34473

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Big River/Blond Haired Woman
He's Got A Way With Women/Sweet Dreams



KE 34445

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Won't You Stay Just A Little Bit Longer!
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When The New Heavens Off Our Love




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Lay Something On My Bad Beadie A Breatin'
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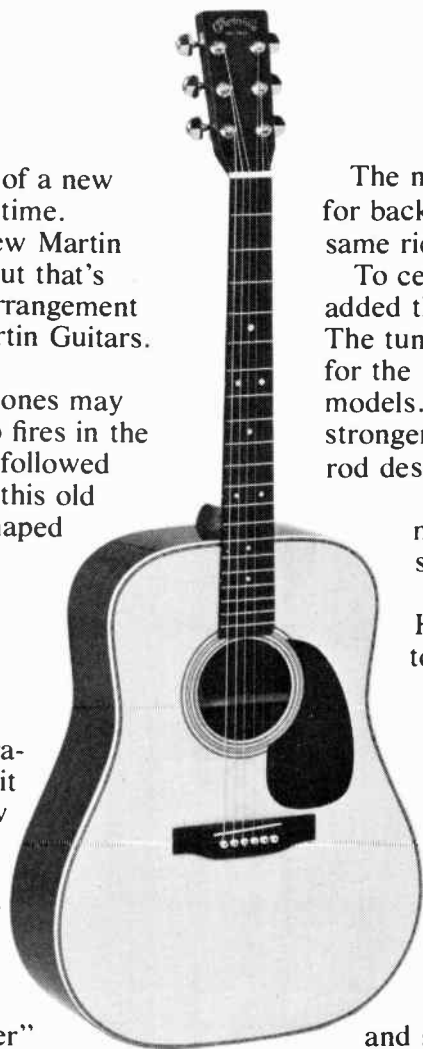
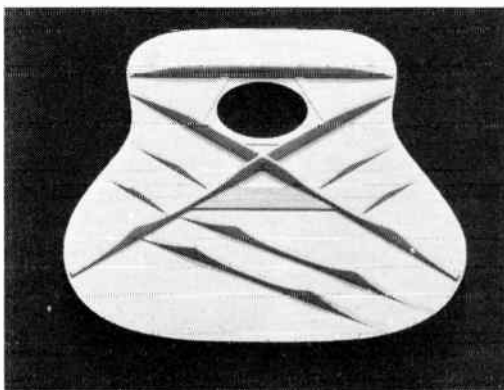
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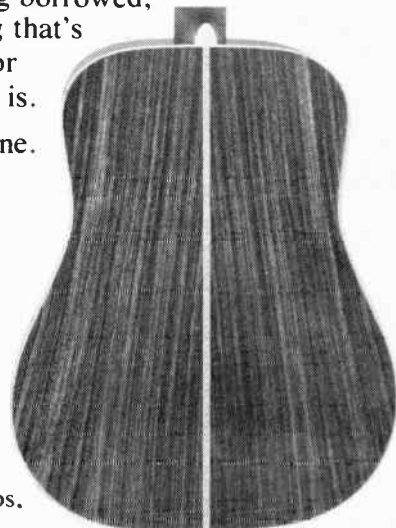
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Country Scene

Third Bob Wills Fiddler Dies

Late in October of last year Keith Coleman, full of exuberance and good cheer, recorded an album for Capitol as part of a regrouped gang of ex-Texas Playboys. On January 5 he was dead, victim of a sudden, swift-moving cancer.

Coleman became the third ex-Playboy fiddler to die within a grim nine months of having played at the April, 1975, Bob Wills Festival in Turkey, Tex. Sleepy Johnson died on-stage at the festival, and tough, scrappy Jesse Ashlock finally lost his longtime battle against cancer in August.

Keith was a native Oklahoman who first joined Wills in 1949 as part of a fiddle team consisting of himself and Bob White. He left after a year, then returned to replace Johnny Gimble in 1951, staying for a three-year stretch. After leaving Wills he toured extensively with Hank Thompson's Brazos Valley Boys, Leon McAuliffe's Cimarron Boys (where he doubled on, of all things, tenor sax), and Ray Price's Cherokee Cowboys.



Keith Coleman

The last few years found him working as a supplies buyer for Jack Stidham in the mobile home business, but this didn't seem to slow his musical activities much.

With Stidham, himself a fine fiddler, he cut two promotional albums, still made an occasional show with McAuliffe and was a common fixture at all Bob Wills festivals, western swing events and especially Texas Playboy reunions, where he and Gimble (and sometimes Stidham) made some of the finest multi-fiddle music this side of heaven. It was he, Gimble and Curly Lewis who played so movingly at Wills' own funeral.

Keith was a lively man, full of fun and laughter; one of his greatest talents could never be caught on record: a bit pot-bellied himself, with the addition of the simple prop of a cigar he was able to transform himself into a sidesplitting—yet deadly accurate—imitation of Bob Wills, strutting across the stage, gesticulating with the fiddle bow. You didn't have to squint your eyes much to believe the Old Man was really there.

We lost another great one when we lost Keith Coleman. Johnny Gimble put it with simple eloquence: "Every fiddle player in the world can move up a notch now, 'cause he was the best."

DOUGLAS B. GREEN

Mama Cash

(Continued from page 18)

ny was raised in the fear and the admonition of the Lord, so I never lost hope he'd come back. The Lord has His hand on him; he's stronger than he has ever been."

June Carter, and indeed the whole Carter family, are universally credited with straightening Johnny out. Mama has nothing but admiration for them, both musically and personally. "I remember listening to the Carters do *Morning Blossom* when we got our first radio. Later, when Johnny lived in California with June, I came out there and met her.

"Yes, it is still a thrill; every time I see him on television, get a new album in the mail, or hear a song of his on the radio."

Perhaps part of the perpetual pride is due to the fact that Mama Cash still retains an active role in her son's career. "He's opened up an office in Nashville to sell albums and pictures, and I'm a salesperson there. We still sell many copies of his book, *A Man In Black*, which, by the way, is one of the most fabulous things he ever did."

Oh, yes. Her favorite Johnny Cash song of all time? "Well, in his heart, he's always been a true Christian, so he's always done sacred music exceptionally well. Of those, I prefer *Ten Commandments* from one of his hymn albums."

RUSSELL SHAW

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TEXAS Southern Cadre Rocks On; Slim Pickins Takes Aim

by Nelson Allen



Joe Ely

Dickie Betts and band, the Marshall Tucker Band, Willie Nelson and family and Charlie Daniels put on a benefit performance in Austin to aid Scooter Herring, the former roadie for the Allman Brothers who received a 75-year prison sentence for dope dealing, with his legal battles. Betts held a brief press conference after the show at which he said, among other things, that he believed that Scooter was a scapegoat and, although possibly guilty to some extent, hardly deserving a 75-year sentence. According to Betts, Scooter's \$100,000 bail was raised by the Allman Brothers, a legal corporation. "It was a unanimous vote," Betts remembered, "with one abstaining."

Many of the southern rock people went on to attend Jimmy Carter's inauguration. James Talley, one of Rosalynn Carter's favorites, was also invited to the inauguration.

Word comes that Blue Canyon Records, the former New Mexico label which moved to L.A., has signed a recording agreement with movie cowboy Slim Pickins. One song they intend to do is *A Stranger in Nashville*, which they describe as a "potentially controversial piece of material which says something about Nashville that a lot of people are feeling about it." Blue Canyon is best known for its re-release of Steve Young's classic *Seven Bridges Road* LP.

Joe Ely's first single from his MCA album is his own tune. *All My Love*. The next single slated to be taken from the album is *Bluebird*, a song written by fellow West Texan Butch Hancock which many people believe will become a country classic.

Armadillo World Headquarters is still struggling to survive, although recent events seem to indicate that the legendary hall is on the comeback trail. Most creditors agreed to help the Dillo as much as possible although KLB radio sued, demanding immediate full payment for past advertising debts. Patrick Nugent, the son-in-law of Lyndon Johnson who worked his way to the top job at KLB some years ago, will hopefully agree to some sort of settlement with the beleaguered honky-tonk.

In a similar vein, Willie Nelson was told he could not appear on the University of Texas campus in a benefit for female athletics. This was done, according to U.T. president Lorraine Rogers, because people with dope follow Willie around. Ms. Rogers later rescinded the absurd order after thinking it over.

Freddie King, the great Texas bluesman, died here at the age of 42. Credited by Eddie Wilson with having practically built the Armadillo World Headquarters with his early enthusiasm and crowd-drawing popularity, King was always a favorite in Texas. B.B. King, Albert King

and Muddy Waters were pallbearers at the funeral in Dallas. King is perhaps best known for his classic blues instrumental *Hideaway*.

Darrell McCall recently recorded a Jesse Ashlock composition and released it as a single . . . Peter Rowen, who wrote *Panama Red*, among other tunes, is moving up to Austin from Helotes . . . Hottest group out in El Paso is Moon Pie, led by an ex-sideman for the late Bobby Fuller of *I Fought the Law and the Law Won* fame . . . Sam Kindrick, who almost single-handedly puts out a San Antonio tabloid called *Action*, came down hard on Jan Reid for the latter's recent article in *Texas Monthly* which put down the Texas music scene. Reid's article was unfair and contrived and kudos to Kindrick for saying what almost everyone I know agrees with . . . Larry Trader a member of Willie Nelson's cadre, was recently busted at one of Willie's performances in Beaumont for smoking (tobacco only) in a no smoking zone. The fine was \$100.

Balcones Fault, the Austin showband, has moved to California for four or five months. They plan to release an LP on Augie Meyer's Texas Re-Cord label.

Can't say enough about Steve Jordan, the Corpus Christi squeeze-box man. He recently made his first appearance at Austin's Soap Creek Saloon. Aside from being a fine songwriter, Jordan is to the accordion what Eric Clapton is to the electric guitar.

Austin artist Michael Priest did the artwork for the cover of *Asleep At The Wheel's* newest LP—a desert scene with a giant wagon wheel rising on the horizon. The album is entitled *The Wheel* . . . *Asleep's* Ray Benson acquired a new scene of his own as well in the form of a tattoo on his arm. It's a Harley-Davidson logo with "The Wheel" written above.

Doug Sahm's single of *Henrietta*, released on Texas Re-Cord label, did so well locally that Doug and gang are considering putting it on his next LP and re-releasing the classic Texas-Louisiana rocker as a national single . . . Alvin Crow and the Pleasant Valley Boys are recording their first LP for Polydor in Dallas with Tommy Allsup producing.

Dolly Parton played Austin for the first time at the Paramount Theatre. It was a great show, but only lasted about an hour, something Austin audiences aren't used to.

Ray Liberto, the San Antonio resident and former brother-in-law of Johnny Cash, wrote a hit song in the fifties called *Wicked Wicked Woman*. The song is now being re-released by Freddy Fender . . . Sax man Frank Rodarte left Doug Sahm's Texas Tornadoes. ■

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DOLLY PARTON:

Eager For The Sky

By ALANNA NASH

Five hours before the concert is to begin, eight middle-aged good ole boys of the stage crew sprawl in the front rows of the Waco (Tex.) Convention Center, yawning and swapping stories, just waiting.

Waiting for Dolly Parton to show up for a sound check. That night, she is to open for Willie Nelson in a show that is advertised to feature "The Outlaw and the Lady." It is not only the first night of the tour, but one of the first performances to demonstrate Dolly's "new direction," or, as an RCA publicity man puts it, "the beginning of a whole new career."

One senses the stage crew is not waiting to pass judgment on Dolly's musical changes, but rather on other of her talents. When one word rises from the otherwise indistinguishable collective mumble, it is usually "Dolly," and it is always followed by good ole boy laughing and grinning.

It's to be all kinds at the concert tonight, then, reflecting the seeming incongruity of a Dolly Parton-Willie Nelson bill. Though it's Nelson territory—a native son gone out and conquered the world and returned home to a hero's welcome—the local media thinks Dolly will draw well, too. "You'll be able to tell who they've come to see as soon as they walk through the door," offers a reporter for the Waco Citizen, who has come early hoping to get not only a Dolly interview, but an autograph as well. "If the guys have long hair and wear dungarees and flannel shirts—that progressive country look—then they've come to see Willie. If they're red-necks with flattops who bring women with teased hair wearing short skirts or tight pants, then they've come to see Dolly."

When the doors open at 6:30, he's proven right. There does seem to be a predominance of the two types, with the dress code

I've been like a captured eagle. You know, an eagle's born to fly. Now that I have won my freedom Like an eagle, I am eager for the sky.

—Light of a Clear Blue Morning

indicating that Willie's fans outnumber Dolly's. The audience is a sea of Willie picnic T-shirts, of felt cowboy hats, hand-tooled leather belts with names on the back (lots of Dwaynes), of high school boys dipping snuff and spitting into open-topped Coke cans, of men and women with mighty, massive thighs packed into Levis.

The portable concession stand sells only soft drinks, but some of that good ole Lone Star product has managed to work itself into the convention center, and by the time the concert is scheduled to begin, the crowd is feeling just fine. Almost an hour later, the show still hasn't started, and when it finally does, two local acts appear before Dolly. Backstage, the rent-a-cops cast frequent glances at the stage door, hoping to see Her, since she never did make it to the sound check, ostensibly because she "had plane trouble" flying out of L.A., and was up all night, according to Don Warden, a diminutive man who was Porter Wagoner's manager

for 22 years before Porter "gave" him to Dolly.

But until just minutes before she is to go on, Dolly remains outside in her bus. Finally, the heavy metal stage door opens with a rush of January air. In she comes, wearing a resplendent pink-and-black sequined pants outfit that is less sensuous than some of her stage clothes, but oh, my gosh, yes, it's true what they say about how breathtakingly beautiful she is; and that she can only really be appreciated in person. As she stands in the wings, the Waco Citizen reporter asks if she's nervous about the tour. She tells him no, and he then asks about the rumor that she's "leaving country." She explains that she's "only doing things a little differently," but adds she'll be glad to go into that further in an interview after the show, if the reporter wants to come to the bus out back.

When the lights dim, Dolly's eight-piece band, Gypsy Fever, filters out on stage, and with the first strains of a rousing, rock rendition of Jackie Wilson's *Higher and Higher*, Dolly walks out to enthusiastic cheers and applause. It is quite a different Dolly than anyone here has ever seen or heard, and the audience is all eyes and ears as she stamps around the stage, sans guitar, Las Vegas style. But by the second tune, *Silver Threads and Golden Needles*, the Willie fans have evidently heard and seen enough of the fabled face and figure for awhile, because they begin talking loudly among themselves. Half-way through the song, Dolly realizes she's also lost the better part of the sound system. Still, she attempts to have her acoustic guitar heard on *Tennessee Mountain Home*, but the combination of the sound problems and the ever-increasing audience rumble make the song almost inaudible. Those fans who do want to hear her leave their seats and cluster in the aisles and in front

of the stage. They're a restless, rowdy group—too much Lone Star—and there are moments when a trace of fear appears in Dolly's blue-green eyes, perhaps when she realizes she does not have the crowd in her control.

All in all, it's a strange, but interesting set; a mixture of the Grand Ole Opry and the M.G.M. Grand. Dolly gives her fans some of the songs they expect to hear—*Jolene*, *Coat of Many Colors*, *I Will Always Love You*—and she also includes a smattering of the more traditional country, *It Wasn't God Who Made Honky-Tonk Angels* and *Muleskinner Blues*. But there are quite a few surprises. Aside from *Higher and Higher*, the most startling is a version of the Temptations' *My Girl*, which Dolly has changed to *My Love*, because, as she jokes to no audience response, "My girl gets mad everytime I sing it like that." The shock of Dolly Parton singing "soul" wears off quickly, however, when she really gets into her rendition, a slow, lovely, languishing version to which Dolly seems to give all her abandon, especially in the ad-libbed fill of "What more could I want?/What more could I need?/What more could I hope to find?" Just as unexpected as the selection of the song is how very well she does it, almost making it her own.

The changes, then, may be most obvious in the choice of additional material, but there are subtler things going on here. There is a heightened sensibility at work, which is what Dolly means when she talks of doing things a little differently. As the show progresses, it is apparent that the occasional rock-out electric guitar intros and Motown choruses are not as important in themselves as the reasoning behind them: Dolly Parton believes she is ready to be heard by every audience—country, rock, pop, what have you—and she is out to make them not only see and hear her, but accept her as well. Not just the small but faithful rock and pop following she's had for some time, but a more general, much larger audience. And it's going to be an all-out campaign, one gets the feeling. Standing there watching the woman in the pink-and-black pants suit—a gypsy outfit, really, in keeping with the name of her band—the little girl who sold Cardui tablets between numbers on the Porter Wagoner show 10 years ago is but a dim memory.

As the sound system hums and sputters, getting worse instead of better, Dolly decides she'd rather quit than go on. She is to have done an hour, but after 12 songs and 35 minutes, she closes with *The Seeker*, and leaves the stage to cheers and whistles from her constituency. It is nothing like the noise 4000 appreciative people can make, however, and the local disc jockey/incee looks embarrassed. "Aw-r-a-a-t, c'MON, Texas! Dolly PART-on!" he admonishes, coaxing another round of hoots and hollers from Dolly's faction. But the other side is not to be outdone, and as if they have waited long enough, some begin

chanting "We want Willie" even as two chivalrous cowboys help Miss Dolly down the stage stairs.

Nelson goes on a half hour later, and soon he calls out for Dolly to join him in singing a number or two. But Dolly is long gone, having holed up on her bus from the moment she left the stage, refusing to see the Waco Citizen reporter she invited earlier, and dispensing with her usual habit of signing autographs, because, she is to say later, the crowd had been drinking. The Waco reporter, however, thinks she is too upset about the show.

Tom Gresham, the promoter, stands by Dolly's bus, talking with Don Warden about the sound. When Warden walks away, Gresham is asked where he thinks Dolly is going with her music. "She's at a real pivotal point in her career," he says in a gentle voice, "but I don't think even she knows where she wants to go."

The belief is a common one in the music industry now, especially in Nashville, and Dolly is not oblivious to that fact. "People are afraid I don't know what I'm doing, but I do," she says two weeks after the concert, sitting on a red oriental rug in her newly-rented English tudor house in

... I felt a need to expand, to try my wings, to have my own organization."

Nashville. "They think I'm headed toward that land of the lost, when in all truth, I have been found all the time."

What has brought on all this concern—and in some cases ridicule—is that Dolly has, in the last year, done quite a few things that are out of the ordinary for the Nashville way of thinking. In short, she has changed almost everything. After splitting with Porter in 1974, Dolly put together the Traveling Family Band, made up of her relatives. But last spring, it became obvious that the group simply wasn't making the kind of headway Dolly thought it should, especially when country music was booming all over the nation, and Dolly, in relation, was not. The band broke up. After that, Dolly began assembling the musicians who now comprise Gypsy Fever, not only as her road band, but as the group she records with—and with whom she now produces albums, including her own. That means Dolly no longer employs Porter as her record producer, signifying a break of one of their last ties. (They still co-own Owepar Publishing and Fireside Recording Studios, although Dolly says she doesn't know how much longer she and Porter will be in business together. Her new material is copyrighted by Velvet Apple Music, her own song publishing

company.)

Gypsy Fever was enough to put some of Nashville off, since the band is decidedly non-country oriented (a couple of its members worked in a Chicago studio doing jingles for years), though it does and can play country and almost anything else when required. But what really set Nashville tongues wagging was Dolly's signing with a Los Angeles-based management company, Katz, Gallin and Cleary, who also represent Mac Davis, Olivia Newton-John, Cher, Tony Orlando and Dawn, the Osmonds and such show business heavies as Kate Smith (no pun intended), Joan Rivers and Florence Henderson. Don Warden, Porter's managerial gift, has been relegated to running the Dolly Parton Enterprises office in Nashville and to road manage Dolly's tours. Dolly has also left Top Billing, the Nashville booking agency, in favor of Monterey Peninsula, another California outfit she learned about through her friendship with Emmylou Harris and Bob Hunka of Happy Sack Productions.

The census in Nashville, then, has been that Dolly has not only turned her back on Music City, but that she is betraying her country roots, "going Hollywood," and worse, "going pop." After all, some have said, didn't she really cancel her summer tour—working only three months of all last year—not because of nodes on her vocal cords, but because she wanted to get out of playing the typical country venues of fairs and high school gymnasiums? And, if she were not leaving country music, then what was she doing singing *Bad, Bad Leroy Brown*, *My Funny Valentine* and *Loves Me Like a Rock* on her syndicated television show? And, about that TV show . . . If Dolly wants to do more television, as she has said, why did she refuse to renew her contract after taping the initial 26 segments, unless she felt she was above a hometown production?

All good questions, indeed, but all points over which there's been a great deal of misunderstanding, Dolly says. Dressed in a flower-print overblouse, jeans and her ever-present wig ("Wigs and gaude is my gimmick: I don't look that way 'cause I don't know no better"), she speaks carefully and slowly, trying to explain for what must seem to her the thousandth time, just what it is she is trying to do with her career and why she has done what she has so far.

She begins with Porter.

"My breakup with Porter was not an easy thing for me, nor for him," she begins. "Because anytime you're in business that long (seven years) with someone, you laugh together, you cry together, you go through hard times together, you grow together. But we disagreed often, because we're quite a bit alike. We're both very creative, both stubborn in our beliefs, and it reached the point to where it just seemed to make better sense if we didn't try to be partners in business anymore, even though I respect Porter for what he has stood for

NEW HARVEST... FIRST GATHERING APL 1-238

Dolly Parton



Featuring: "Light of A Clear Blue Morning," "Apple Jack," "My Girl (My Love)," "How Does It Feel," "(Your Love Has Lifted Me) Higher and Higher."

"Any time you make a change, you gotta pay the price. A lot of country people feel I'm leaving the country, that I'm not proud of Nashville, which is the biggest lie there is.

I don't want to leave the country, but to take the whole country with me wherever I go. There are really no limits now. After the first of the year my new life begins."

Dolly Parton

"They are really all quite wonderful songs . . . it's hard to see how she can miss. Certainly her own spirits are restlessly eager, and as usual her own songs say it best: 'I've been like a captured eagle; you know, an eagle's born to fly.'"

John Rockwell, NEW YORK TIMES, November 19, 1976

RCA Records

in the country music business, and for what he has done in my behalf. It's just one of them things. I had gone as far as I could within a group and organization of somebody else's. I felt a need to expand, to try my wings, to have my own organization.

"When Porter was producing me, I got some of my ideas across because the big part of my ideas were written in the songs, in the arrangement ideas. But there was so much I wanted to do, and he heard it so different, that we just couldn't agree. My songs took on somebody else's personality. They didn't turn out the way I created 'em to be, and all the joy of recordin' the song at all just went away. Now," she says with a sigh and a far-away sound to her voice, "I don't see Porter much anymore."

But are they still friends, as Dolly has told several interviewers? She sighs again, and shifts position on the oriental rug. "I suppose so," she says, and follows that with a long pause. "I don't see Porter much anymore."

With her independence from Porter, Dolly began headlining the Traveling Family Band, and, as she tells it, although everyone involved was excited about the idea, there was an inherent strain almost from the beginning. Several of them wanted an album or a group of their own. The situation was aggravated by the fact that Top Billing was booking the band so heavily as to overwork them, and, according to Dolly, often they had to use sound systems that were so poor as to strain her voice. By last spring, the combination of pressures was enough to pull Dolly off the road.

"The doctor told me I could do permanent damage to my vocal cords," Dolly remembers. "So I had to cancel all summer. (Sixty-five bookings worth \$350,000.) During that time I was off, I got organized, got a new group, new management, new agency. I would never have cancelled those shows unless I absolutely had to, and the rumors I just didn't want to play the typical country places are really unfair. I take great pride in my work. In fact, to fulfill my obligations, I started back in October under the same bad conditions, before the new management was in effect with better sound to where I could hear myself in the monitors and didn't have to ruin my throat. But I lasted a week and a half. My throat just gave out. I was tryin' to put up with that, and tryin' to do an album, and doin' the television show. It was just more than I could take, and that's when the doctor said I couldn't sing for the rest of the year. I decided if I was ever gonna be able to be choosy, I was just gonna have to get choosy about the dates I work. And I am, now, mainly because I need time to write. And since the emotional strain has been off, I ain't had a bit of a problem with my throat here lately."

She *has*, however, had problems convincing people that organizing Gypsy Fever and putting her career in the hands

of Katz, Gallin and Cleary and Monterey Peninsula was the wise thing to do. But if Dolly herself has doubts, they are impossible to detect.

"I changed management because I didn't have what I needed for the things I wanted to do and the places I wanted to go," she explains. "Katz, Gallin and Cleary is putting me in some different places where I haven't had exposure, and it's working out good. I felt perfectly natural and comfortable doing 'Hollywood Squares' and 'The Tonight Show' (where Johnny Carson invited his buxom guest to "sit down and take a load off your feet"). All the people who worked for me before—my booking agency and my group—are wonderful people and good friends. Some are family. They're very qualified for what they do, but our qualifications for each other were not really jellin' that much. So, last year, I just thought, 'Well, I'm 30 years old now. I've held these dreams and plans in my mind for 30 years. I've seen a good many of 'em come true, and because of some people, I've seen a lot of my dreams turn into nightmares, but that's nobody's fault but my own for allowin' it to hap-

**"I haven't turned
my back on Nashville.
I can't show them
now that I haven't,
but they'll see.
They'll know . . ."**

pen.' So, I changed everything. And RCA believed in me. They gave me total freedom with my new album. Even if *New Harvest . . . First Gathering* doesn't sell a nickel's worth, it will always be my special album, because it was the first time in my whole life I got to do something totally on my own. In terms of fulfillment, it's one of the greatest things of my life."

With that, Dolly gets up and puts on the as-then-unreleased album on her turntable. As we move to one of her red velvet Victorian loveseats to listen, she sings along with the first cut, *Light of a Clear Blue Morning*. At five feet, no inches, Dolly's legs do not touch the floor, and as she slaps her thigh to the beat, her tiny (size 6) foot pops up in reflex on the off-beat.

"I want to be a recognized songwriter," Dolly answers, "and I want my songs recorded by people in and outside of country music. I want to leave things behind for the public and for my family. I want to do TV, some specials, not like my show, because I felt that was prematurely done on my part, and wasn't really what I had in mind. It seemed senseless to continue something I didn't feel I was. I didn't know

that woman on TV! And I think the show hurt me, because a lot of the songs I sang, like *Singin' in the Rain*, were not choices of mine. They were totally out of my category, and I couldn't sing 'em, anyway.

"I haven't turned my back on Nashville," she continues. "I can't show them now that I haven't, but they'll see. They'll know. I will be able to do more for the name of country music by going ahead and doing what I feel I should do, by reaching a broader audience and as many people as I can and by having a universal appeal. I'll be able to do more for Nashville than I ever could have done had I stayed here. But don't misunderstand. I wouldn't move to L.A. You couldn't give me that place.

"I love my home in Nashville, and I'll never leave. I love the people here. I have dear friends here. I would never walk out on the Grand Ole Opry. That would be like walkin' out on your mama and daddy—the ones that raised you and took care of you. But, well, I can't preach it. I'll just have to let my work stand on its own.

"I am thankful for everything good that has happened to me, and I will never neglect or turn my back on any person that has ever helped me," she begins. "I will give my country music fans what they want and what they need from me, but I have other fans that I must give what they want and what they need. I also have myself, and I must give myself what I want and what I need, because I have to live with me. If my music has to have a label, I will call it country, mainly because I *am* country. You cannot leave what you are. But I really prefer to call it Dolly Parton music.

"My music will change, yes. It'll have to if I'm going to stay on the charts," she says. "It'll have to stay up with the times, in arrangements, in the instruments and material. But I'll stick with what I believe, and I believe if you do what you know in your heart to be right, then it'll take care of itself. I just hope I can always represent Nashville and country music, or any kind of music, whether it be rock or pop, in a good fashion. My records will be released in the country field, but they'll be released in other markets, too. You see, I never considered the fact that I was going pop. I *will* go pop, as far as crossing over, sooner or later. But I will go there as me. I will go there with my own music, not by trying to be something different than I am. And I will not have to change anything to go there. It's just a matter of promotion. That's what I've been trying to tell you. I'm still part of the country people. I just have a new freedom now to do some things in addition to those I've always done—a freedom I couldn't have before because of involvement with other people. I know that eventually everybody will see that what I'm doin' is really nothin' different from what I've always done."

Well, yes and no. It's true that Dolly's songs have never been all of one style. Nor

(Continued on page 67)



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music flows
from soul to strings
to life...*

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*deep and even...
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the touch
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He's got an ogre inside that he feeds



Psssst: Steve Fromholz says he's nutty as a fruitcake.

by JOE NICK PATOSKI

"I'm nutty as a fruitcake. I know it. But don't tell the readers. It would frighten them. That's why I live in the country."

So what else did you expect from the writer of *I'd Have To Be Crazy*, a part-time bear and self-admitted rumor? A plea of sanity? It's not that the idea of being an underground Texas music cult figure for the last eight years while all your friends were off becoming modern John Denvers or updated musical Jesse James and getting rich that twisted Steven Fromholz' mind beyond comprehension. He's finally earning the same kind of recognition as his old compadres—Michael Murphey, Rusty Wier, and B.W. Stevenson—with his second solo album on the way. And after all, that's Fromholz' deep, brassy voice booming along with

Willie Nelson's on Willie's version of Steve's song *I'd Have To Be Crazy*. Let's just suffice to say it's the nature of the business and the nature of the performer/writer that makes life more agreeable for Steven Fromholz out among the oaks, cedar and cactus of the Texas hill country.

The rolling hills and limestone springs west of Austin are, quite simply, the best place for any musician, sane or insane, in these parts to hide away. Deer, quail, turkey, even the proverbial armadillo, run wild there, painting an authentic Western panorama that can inspire any composer. Austin, the central nervous system of Texas country music, is but a half hour away. Measuring distances in LBJ giant steps (for the late President

driving 60 miles from Johnson City into Austin was something akin to cruising down to the corner grocer) Steven's practically next-door neighbors to Uncle Willie and Jerry Jeff, feeding the notion that the area between Oak Hill and Dripping Springs has developed into a Texas-fried Marin County, a down-home equivalent of that scenic real estate near San Francisco preferred by newly rich rock stars back in the Sixties. And, matching the temperament of that particular breed of reclusive rock-and-rollers, you kind of expect everyone in this modern cowboy's paradise to be, well, laid back and mellow.

When Fromholz emerges from his native stone abode, he fits the role to a "T". He moves in a slow and easy shuffle

with a .38 Smith & Wesson, but he's also one hell of a talent.



with those droopy blue eyes suggesting, like they always do, that he was just aroused from a comly nap and you're not too sure if he's playful or grumpy. Next to him is the head bearkeeper, his wife Janey Lake ("Not Janey Fromholz," Steven explains. "There've been too many Mrs. Fromholzes already. She likes her own name."). She's the woman that Fromholz once described as his "karma control", and gives him just enough guff to keep him from getting out of hand.

Fromholz is the perfect prototype for an Austin buckaroo, I tell him. "Well, I wasn't laid back an hour ago, buddy. I tell you that's for damn sure," he admits, playing with his full beard. "I've been running all over town all day, and town just wound me up. I'm gonna leave Sunday to start my album and there's just seven days in a week."

So how did the tensions of city life dissolve so quickly? Simple. It's a nutty therapy secret. "See that field down there?" he says, pointing to a patch of fenced-in weeds below the house, the earthy remains of a chicken coop. "When I come back from town and I've had a lot of hassles, I come and shoot the pistol." Methodically he relates the ritual.

Discarded bottles are filled with colored water, then set on a fence post. Summarily, they are blasted into psychedelic smitherreens with a Smith & Wesson .38 revolver. Blam! Pop! Splat! Ahh, headache's gone.

Really now, that doesn't seem so nutty, until Fromholz explains that the bottle busting is actually performed to feed the ogre.

"I don't like to really cause trouble unless I see there's no other way to get it done. Then I let the ogre loose," he says matter-of-factly. "I have an ogre that lives inside me and I let him loose when it gets that bad. The ogre is horrible. He's really terrible. If I get bad vibes, I feed those vibes to the ogre. He loves 'em. He eats 'em up."

Though the ogre is quiescent at this particular moment, it has had plenty of time to raise a fuss in years past. Steve is well-known in his home state, but his path to the big time has been plagued by false starts. He hooked into country music while attending North Texas State University in Denton in the early Sixties.

"My first wife gave me a banjo. I was beginning to learn the thinking process that was not taught to me in high school. I learned how to think at North Texas until I started running around with Travis Holland." Fromholz began forming acoustic groups with Holland, who still plays bass with Steven whenever their paths cross, and another Denton folkie, Michael Murphey, until he drifted to Colorado and wound up in a duo called FrummoX with Dan McCrimmon. Their only album, *Here to There*, recorded in 1968, unwittingly established Fromholz as an underground star, mainly because it was released on a label (ABC Probe) that folded before the record had a chance to gain much exposure.

A lyrical concept album, it was best known for Fromholz' *Texas Trilogy*, a stunning song portrait about Kopperl, Texas, a small town in the heat of the summer that's been dying since the train, the freeway and progress passed it by. Although copies of the record fetched as much as \$40 in Dallas, it didn't help pay the bills. After a brief road tour with Stephen Stills' band, lightning struck even closer the second time around. Fromholz recorded his first solo album for ex-Monkee Mike Nesmith's Countryside label in 1973, but the company went under two weeks before the album was scheduled for release. It wasn't until last year's *Rumor In My Own Time* on Capitol that he had an album he could call his own. And the way he tells it he is no worse for the experience.

"I'm not the least bit bitter," he emphasizes. "I was learning. . . I'm not in a hurry. Today. Tomorrow."

The business foul-ups gave him plenty of opportunities to create some concrete ideas. "This time I'm gonna overcut and play a lot of the tunes I've saved up. Perhaps on the next record, *Texas Trilogy*



**'You see, I'm a bear.
I do a dance
sometimes
when I'm real loose
called
the Great Bear,
which is a
wonderful dance.'**

will be recorded again, too. All I know is I don't want my record to be as country as Nashville would make it. But don't get me wrong. I write country songs. I'm a country person and I don't write progressive songs. Progressive country as a term is on its way out, which pleases me a great deal. My attitude is a rural attitude as opposed to an urban attitude. I understand a lot of things about horses and cows, and I don't like to pick cotton."

Although he stresses that his role as a performer is as important as writing, Fromholz' visibility increased appreciably after his guest vocal on Nelson's near-million-selling version of *I'd Have To Be Crazy*. "I was teaching Willie the song," he explains about his appearance. "Mickey Raphael and Bee Spears woke up Willie one morning about three and had the song on the tape. He heard the song and liked it. Later, he was cutting *The Sound In Your Mind* in Garland the same

time I was in Arlington playing a gig, so I drove over there to hang out. I went to the studio and taught everybody the song. While we were doing it Willie just said when it gets to the chorus I want you to sing. So I did." Other takes of the song were attempted, but the one with Fromholz' verbal cues wound up on record.

"We cut it and Neil Reshen (Nelson's manager) didn't like it. But they couldn't mix it out. That's the way it came out. That's a live taping. No overdubs."

But even while he's finally emerged as an aboveground picker, Fromholz has his baby blues set on Klieg lights—the movies. He scored his first job in that field with the help of his bear persona. "You see, I'm a bear. I do a dance sometimes when I'm real loose called the Great Bear, which is a wonderful dance. When the director of *Outlaw Blues* met me, one of the things he liked was the 'hug me beariness' of me." Fromholz' first role is as Elroy, the sound engineer, in Peter Fonda's *Outlaw Blues*, a fictionalized account of an outlaw (actually an escaped con) making it as a country star in Austin.

"Elroy is gonna talk with a leetle bit of authority," Steven slow-drawls. "He's gonna be a good sound engineer, the kind that don't take no shit off of producers and allows the people that make the records—the stars—to do their stuff. He's good buddies with Susan St. James. . ."

Janey overhears the remark and pipes in, "And you know how he minds that." She's been giving the aspiring actor a hard time. Fromholz points to the day's wash drying outside on the line. "I'm even gonna wear my own clothes in the movie," he says stressing the authenticity of the film.

"That's why it's a low budget movie," Janey cracks. "He doesn't get any slack from this family." All the bear can do is make a bear's grin. "I don't get an inch."

No matter how comfortable the cinema seems to Steven ("Movies are just like records—splice and cut, splice and cut.") Hollywood takes a back seat to writing for thrills and therapy. "Writing is a good way to express my emotions. A song with a certain emotion inside of you can bum somebody out if you sing it to them that way. A good writer can take something that could bum somebody out and hit them with a little bit of humor and turn them around.

"I like to play with malapropisms. I was a rumor in my own time. That was a malapropism. In one ear and gone tomorrow. They make people laugh. Part of what I do is make people laugh."

So will he keep up the yucks when he's old and mature and no longer a bear?

"I'm gonna start smoking big fat cigars when I'm forty." In the meantime, he's got plenty of directions into which he can burn off that excess insanity. "Hell yes," he states in his best good-ole-boy accent. "You know it. I'm gonna be busier than a one-legged man in a butt-kicking contest." ■

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THE AMAZING RHYTHM ACES

The New Memphis Minstrels

by **BOB ANDERSON**

In Nashville a short while ago, I happened to be cruising around in search of any restaurant that would serve mountains of food for under four bucks. Allen Reynolds, my gastronomical partner and a fine producer, had the radio on when The Amazing Rhythm Aces began the opening notes of *The End Is Not In Sight*. All talking ceased as we listened to Russell Smith sing in his clipped and punctuated, yet smooth-as-glass style, *Guess I knew it all along, I'd have to come back home.** I wasn't even aware of the car's motion or noise as "Byrd" Burton played the most soul-stirring guitar solos heard on record in the past five years. Burton just plain refuses to quit those tasty licks while Smith laments *And my soul cries out for rest. And the end is not in sight*. Reynolds and I turned to each other after a few moments of respectful silence and were thinking the same thoughts about what we'd just heard.

"Now that's what Memphis was all about," Allen said.

"The ultimate tribute to the style that no one else could quite capture," said I. And that's precisely what the Amazing Rhythm Aces are all about.

The key to that patented Memphis sound, in great part, wasn't what was played, but what was not played. Burton can play guitar as well and as much as anybody you'd care to name, but he doesn't choose to. On *The End*, the beauty of his work is that he plays just the right amount, leaving spaces, just as Smith does in his singing. This space gives their music a simplistic and unpretentious feel. Instead of cramming in twenty instruments playing full bore, and attempting to pound you into submission in three minutes or less, the Aces give their music room to breathe. It's

light and alive with spirit, feeling and humor.

They seem to get a chuckle when you try to categorize them into one neat package, but are also at a loss when they try to give their own music a description. They've been called the perfect bar band, Southern rockers and the point where rockabilly, outlaw and cosmic cowboy music meet, but they're really not any of these. Rather, they're all of the above, and more, if you include rhythm and blues, gospel, jazz, with a little bluegrass thrown in for good measure. Their diversity makes them as important as they are refreshing to the current music scene.

The band was formed around the similar musical interests of singer and writer Smith and drummer Butch McDade. Smith and keyboardist Billy Earheart were writing songs in Tennessee when McDade and bassist Jeff Davis heard some of their songs and took the tape to Canada where they were recording and touring with expatriate Memphian Jesse Winchester. One of the songs, *Third Rate Romance*, later appeared on Winchester's *Learn To Love It* album. Barry Burton was engineering and playing sessions at Sam Phillips' Memphis studios when he heard the tape of Jesse's sessions and brought the four to Memphis to try recording together. Burton became their lead guitarist, and with the addition of James Hooker, an accomplished studio veteran on piano, the band was complete.

A word should be added here concerning Knox Phillips, who got the band its record contract with ABC and was its executive producer at the outset. Phillips is a man who probably knows more about the rise of contemporary music and cares

more about the state of the art than anyone else I've known. Phillips gave the Aces the chance to make it on their own terms. "Knox let us do what we wanted as a band," Smith says. "He didn't tell us we had to wear platform shoes or fancy clothes or to do more boogie. He gave us room to be ourselves."

What the Aces have been able to do is strike responsive chords with audiences that span a wide spectrum from traditional country to rock-and-roll. The fact that *Third Rate Romance* was a country hit came as a shock to them. "It was a big surprise to everybody," says Smith. "We didn't know what to do. We had never made a record before so the whole thing was new. I never even thought about the lyrics being country-oriented when I wrote the song. We were still working on an album when the song was released and we thought: 'What do we do? They liked the record.' We finished the album and rehearsed together for the first time to go on the road while the record was climbing the charts. Our first live gig was in a park in Memphis and our second was the *Midnight Special*. Our third live performance was the *Troubadour* in Los Angeles."

James Hooker laughs. "We didn't even know the songs and there we were playing the *Troubadour*, one of the most important places in the country.

"The way we sound is a total coincidence, just like us all getting together is a coincidence. But it's also a by-product of the way we all play and the people we listened to. If anybody didn't adhere to the same philosophy I don't think they'd ever join this band in the first place. We couldn't play as much music as gets played

(Continued on page 67)

ERNEST TUBB: Still The Texas Troubadour

Time and the road have taken their toll, but ole ET is a survivor.

By PETER GURALNICK

It is some minutes past midnight, and the Grand Ole Opry is running overtime, but the crowd which fills the Ernest Tubb Record Shop on Broadway across from Tootsie's and the darkened Ryman Auditorium contents itself with snapping pictures and looking for familiar faces. They are polite, well-mannered, respectful, recognizing Bill Carlisle, leather-jacketed Little Tommy Collins, veteran announcer Grant Turner, Ernest's oldest son, Justin, a singer, songwriter, and twenty year veteran of the Opry himself who with his tinted aviators, thick mustache, and sleek well-fed look seems out of place somehow in this hardtack setting. Two of Ernest's children from his recently dissolved second marriage are here as well, 20-year-old Ernest Jr., "Tinker" to his family and his father's fans, and Karen May, soon to be sixteen. A toothless old lady in a red kerchief, who has ridden the bus all night from Michigan just to see the show, greets Karen May and is greeted warmly in turn, posing with her for an Instamatic shot. At the front door of the store on the makeshift stage the newest set of Troubadours, resplendent in their tight-fitting blue western suits, joke easily with each other and look over the crowd, while ET himself, fresh from a conference/reunion with Justin, booking agent Hayes Jones, store manager David McCormick and whoever else can be squeezed into the crowded office quarters at the back of the store, peers over his reading glasses and acknowledges the greetings of well-wishers, acquaintances, fans who may not have seen him in twenty years but remember the exact circumstances, the time and place and words exchanged of their last meeting.

He listens patiently, nods, adds his own recollections. At 63 Ernest Tubb is something like a mirror image of his fans. The once lean frame has filled out, there is an involuntary squint in his gaze, and though he continues to hold himself erect in his turquoise suit, white Stetson and gleaming brown boots, the bags under the eyes, wattles under the chin and slow crinkling smile all give him the look of the hard-working men and women who come out to see him. It is almost as if, having cheated fate once when he escaped the bleak West

Texas farmland on which he was raised, he has only met it in another guise further on down the road, his origins made plain in the worn weathered features, the honest creased roadmap of his face.

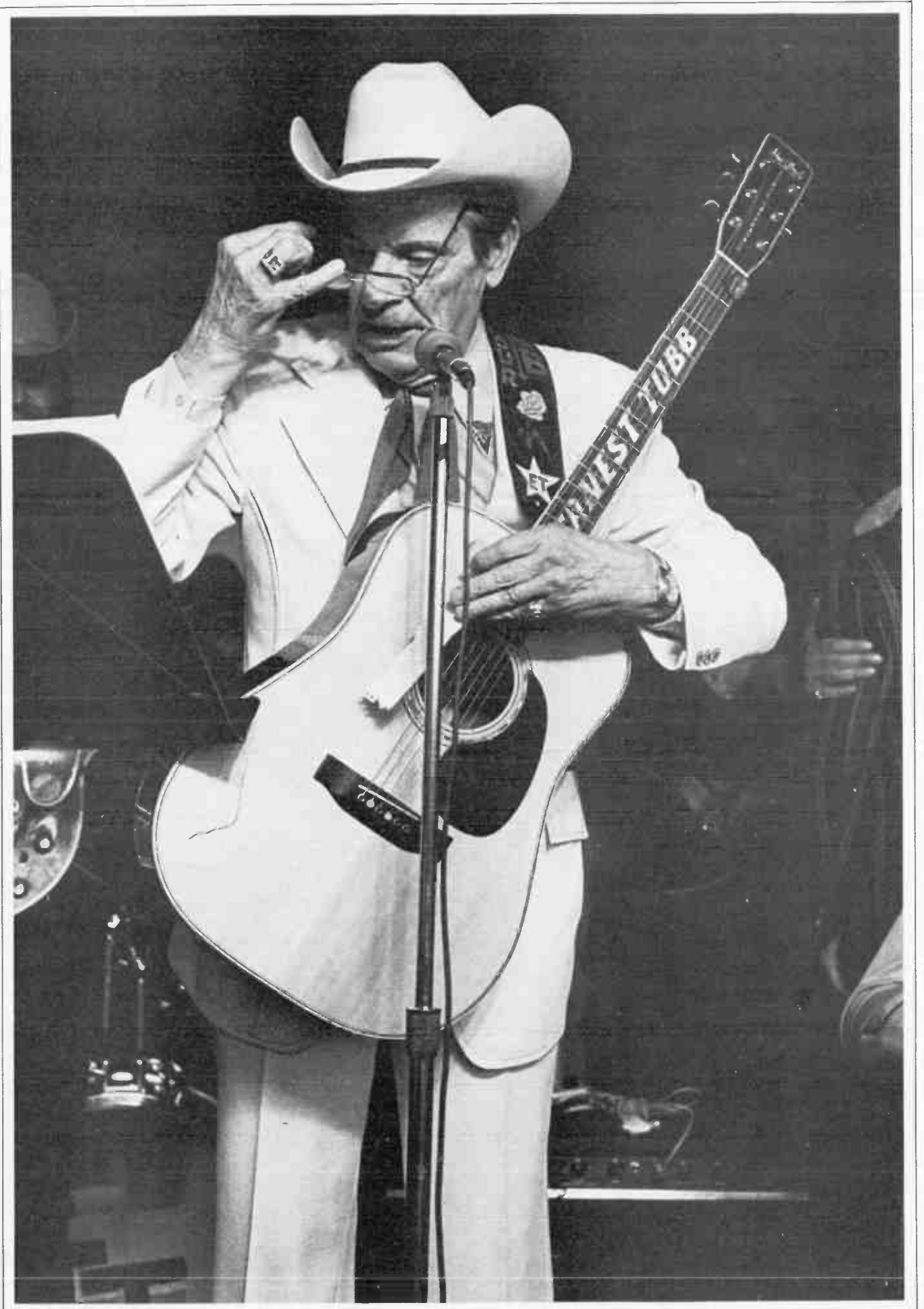
At last the Opry goes off the air, Grant Turner hauls himself with difficulty up the rickety stairs, and a cheer goes up as the Midnight Jamboree direct from the Ernest Tubb Record Shop in Nashville goes out into the night over the powerful WSM airwaves. Ernest Tubb steps up to the microphone, and for the third time that evening (he has already done two Opry shows) and perhaps the ten thousandth time—or maybe the hundred thousandth—in his performing career, launches into the song which he first recorded in 1941, the one number with which he will always be identified, *Walking the Floor Over You*. There is a response of genuine delight; the toothless old lady, well-known to other regulars, nudges her husband in a leather hunting cap; a grizzled-looking old man in over-alls tugs at the hand of his grandson, who has fallen asleep on the floor; 78-year-old Fiddlin' Sid Harkreader, an Opry pioneer, uses his cane to orchestrate the crowd's response. It is like a gathering of the faithful, a family reunion; the flat, plodding quality of the singer's voice, so often imitated in honky tonks and barrooms (Ernest has often insisted that part of the basis for his popularity is the very modesty of his talent, encouraging the guy in the tavern who hears an Ernest Tubb record to say, "Heck, I can sing as good as that," and then go ahead and try) only underlines the bond between Ernest Tubb and his audience, and when he goes off the air with get-well greetings to Roy Acuff, apologies for having to omit the closing hymn, and a heartfelt "Be better to your neighbors, and you'll have better neighbors, doggone you," you are tempted to believe that everything you have ever heard about Ernest Tubb—his loyalty, his fabled kindnesses, his concern for others—may well be true. There is little time to linger, however. Even as the crowd is being dispatched with handshakes and good wishes from Ernest, instruments are packed up, goodbyes are exchanged, arrangements are made with

Little Tommy Collins to do a guest shot in a couple of weeks and Ernest Tubb and his Texas Troubadours, Opry Stars, enter the waiting bus outside. There are two shows to do tomorrow in Clarksville, Indiana.

At this stage in life Ernest Tubb is an authentic legend. Stories about him abound—from his sporadic attempts to reform the bums of Nashville's lower Broadway by presenting them not with money but with a charge account at a local restaurant to the time he shot up the lobby of radio station WSM—and no one in the industry is any more revered. A member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, an Opry star since 1943, the father of honky tonk music and patriarch to a whole Texas clan which extends in a direct line to Waylon and Willie ("A lot of people reacted to me as a rebel when I first started out, because I did what I felt like doing. I think Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings are doing exactly the same thing.") He is the man credited with having removed the "hillbilly" label and "hillbilly" stigma from country music; he was among the first to bring the electric guitar to the Opry stage; along with Red Foley and A&R man Paul Cohen he helped to establish Nashville as a recording center just after WWII. In addition he is renowned for his good deeds both in and out of the industry, boosted country in New York when he gave Carnegie Hall's first honky tonk recital in 1947, and along with fellow aficionado Hank Snow helped keep the spirit of Jimmie Rodgers alive—in his music, in the establishment of Meridian, Miss.' annual Jimmie Rodgers Day in 1956 and through his constant badgering of RCA until they finally released the first in what turned out to be a voluminous series of Rodgers reissue albums.

Along the way he has found the time to help such diverse figures as Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley and Charley Pride and to create in such standards as *Walking the Floor Over You*, *I'll Get Along Somehow* and *Tomorrow Never Comes*, a body of work which remains almost the definition of hard country.

He has, above all, shown an extraordinary loyalty to his fans, and they to him ("To his fans there'll never be any-



body to replace him," says son Justin. "He has a genuine rapport with these people."). Like John Wayne he is almost the last of his kind, the embodiment of a whole set of values, of loyalty, stoicism, unspoken honor, which seem almost to have passed from the present-day scene. And at a time when most of his musical contemporaries are giving thought to retirement, when Roy Acuff confines himself largely to Opry appearances and Hank Snow has cut back drastically on his performance schedule, Ernest Tubb's customized Silver Eagle is still out there for 220 show dates and 120,000 miles every year. Nightclubs, high school auditoriums, the famed Texas ballroom circuit of which a musician might make a whole career—it is not really so very far removed from the flatbed stages and car roofs, the crossroads and schoolhouses where Ernest Tubb, the Texas Troubadour who sold beer town to town for Travis, Blatz, the Southern Brewing Company, started out in the mid-1930's. It was a hard, nomadic existence then and remains so. "You give up a lot," says Ernest himself, somewhat ruefully, today. "Most of all you give up your home life." There is little time as well for any of the frills or amenities which most people enjoy in their day-to-day lives. In the short time that I am with him Ernest has managed to squeeze in tax conferences with the IRS; a court appearance over support payments to his second wife Olene; visits to children, grandchildren, and friends in the hospital and planning for an ACE benefit concert in Memphis next month. On top of that there are family and business problems to straighten out; a bad back to be looked after; a golf game which needs constant attention; the recruitment of a Fan Fair softball team whose first practice Ernest cheerfully oversees amid Little League games and practices behind the Goodlettsville Elementary School. Plus, of course, the Opry, two interviews, the Midnight Jamboree, and the last painful details of his release from MCA, his label of 35 years, to be worked out.

Why? Why does Ernest Tubb stay on the road at a time when it would seem that he should at least be getting some respite from its burdens and pressures? "The years and the miles are catching up with him," concedes Justin, who is taking an increasingly active role in his father's life. At one time he admits that it hurt never to be introduced as anything but Ernest Tubb's son ("He used to have little suits made up for me when I was a kid; they'd call me the Little Texas Troubadour"), but more and more he has sought to guide his father professionally and come closer to him personally in recent years. "He's not in the best of health, but, you know, that bus is home to him. He's got his books, his papers, his tapes, he's got a little bed in the back. He'll eat a bowl of chili, play a little poker and wake up in a fresh town. He loves it."

"It's just something in you," says one-time sideman and Opry star in his own right Jack Greene. "There's a void that you can't fill. Some of us find diversions that we really love, but Ernest does not diversify. I think Ernest will die right in the back of that damn bus."

Others are if anything even more caustic. The industry has been going through some painful changes lately, of which the relocation of the Opry and the opulence of its new setting are only the most visible. There is at the moment in Nashville a kind of cultural schizophrenia in which the present can no longer come to terms with a past which it has always venerated. Money is the root of it, of course, and with the demonstrated potential for crossover success, with an audience increasingly suburban in nature and demographics, country music has moved further and further away from its roots, dismissing almost with embarrassment the continued presence of figures like Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb and Bill Monroe. In the week that I am in Nashville MCA drops nearly every one of its traditional acts, presumably because they do not sell, a prophecy

●
I want my music
to be simple enough,
so that the boy
on the farm can learn it
and practice it
and try to play it.
●

which cannot help but be self-fulfilling since not a penny is spent on production or promotion (Ernest Tubb's last MCA album was cut in three nights). The result is the road.

Justin seems pretty much to agree. "The things he did for Decca 35 years ago don't mean a thing to them today." To Ernest it seems more a question of honor. "They never even recognized me with being on the label for thirty-five years."

"Decca," says Hank Snow, who never speaks out of turn, is always boosting the industry and has himself recently signed a lifetime contract with RCA, his label of 40 years, "is being very unfair with a man who has contributed what Ernest has contributed to the label. It's a harsh thing to say, but friendship doesn't mean a thing in this business any more. I think it's a very shitty deal."

Ernest Tubb was born on February 9, 1914, on a farm outside of Crisp and grew up around Benjamin and Kemp on the West Texas plains where his father was an overseer and the Tubbs tenant farmed on a succession of large plantations. As a boy he hated the work, got his schooling

between growing seasons, and shuttled back and forth between the homes of various relatives after his parents split up in 1926. He grew up working with blacks in the field, listening to phonograph records of Ethel Waters and Bessie Smith and particularly admiring the cowboy songs of a local singer and humorist, Jules Verne Allen, who had not only published books but was one of the earliest recorded singers of western songs. With the encouragement of his mother Tubb wrote poems and sang at dances in Benjamin occasionally, though he didn't have a guitar. The thought of being a professional musician never entered his mind, however, until he heard Jimmie Rodgers' first Blue Yodel, which came out on the Victor label in 1927 when Tubb was 13. From that day on he knew exactly what he wanted to be. Everything he did was aimed at emulating his idol ("I know we're not supposed to worship anyone in this life, but I'm afraid to say I did worship Jimmie Rodgers").

It wasn't until 1933, the year that Jimmie Rodgers died, that he got his first guitar. The same year he moved permanently to San Antonio where after digging ditches for the WPA he got married and went to work managing a drugstore. The owner of the store belonged to all the local service clubs, and on his half hour lunch break Ernest Tubb would peddle his bicycle out to each of the clubs in daily turn and entertain them with his repertoire of Jimmie Rodgers songs. It was by dint of this kind of hard effort that he eventually landed a 15-minute radio show twice a week on 250 watt radio station KONO. He was on the air from 5:30 in the morning till quarter of six, sold his own commercial spots to local merchants, and received no pay for his efforts. He did achieve a measure of celebrity, though, and with this he was content until in October of 1935, two months after his son Justin was born, he idly checked in the phone book one day and to his astonishment discovered the name of Mrs. Jimmie Rodgers, who he had always presumed had moved back to Mississippi when her husband died.

"I picked up the phone and called her right away, 'cause I didn't have a decent picture of Jimmie, just a little wallet-sized one, and I thought she might help me to get one. I said, 'Is this the Mrs. Jimmie Rodgers?' She said, 'Yes, it is.' After I got my tongue, I explained that I was a singer and how much I admired her husband, and she invited me out to the house for the next Sunday. She was just wonderful to me. She showed me his guitar, his boots, his brakeman's cap. I told her, 'You're probably never up at that hour, but I'm on the air on KONO at 5:30 two mornings a week, and I'd be honored if you'd listen, 'cause really all I sing is Jimmie Rodgers songs.'

"About four months later she called me and said that she had been listening to me

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sing and had some ideas. That was the beginning of our friendship, a friendship that lasted right up until her passing in 1961."

It's hard to say what Mrs. Rodgers saw in Ernest Tubb. " 'You don't sing like Jimmie at all,' " he told reporter Ed Linn she once said to him. " 'You're amateurish. But you do have feeling in your voice. The audience knows how you feel about the song you're singing, and Jimmie always thought that was the most important thing of all.' And then she said, 'Ernest, I'd like to do what I can to help you.' "

Help him she did, from setting up a tour and introducing him from the stage to lending him Jimmie's tuxedo and the \$2000 guitar (it was later presented as an outright gift) which he treasures to this day. She also arranged an audition with RCA, and for the subsequent recording session got her sister, Mrs. Elsie McWilliams, who wrote or co-wrote some of Rodgers' best-known tunes, to write some original material for Tubb. Even with this much of a boost the records didn't sell, and Ernest continued his unsettled existence, moving from town to town, representing one commercial concern after another.

Then, in April of 1940, he cut his first sides for Decca Records. Mrs. Rodgers lent him Jimmie's limousine, and he drove to Houston where he recorded *I'll Get Along Somehow* and *Blue-Eyed Elaine*,

two compositions which he had written himself in quite a different style from the six sides he had recorded for RCA. This change came about, oddly enough, not altogether by choice but because of an operation. Ernest Tubb had his tonsils taken out in 1939, whereupon despite the doctor's assurances his voice changed so that he could never yodel again.

"Well, you see, I tried to sing too quick, and then I thought I was finished. I was even gonna sue this doctor. But it was at this time without hardly realizing it that I began to come into my own style and write my own songs. Whereas had I still been yodeling I would still have been a Jimmie Rodgers imitator."

With his new outlook and his new voice he had a good-sized hit right off the bat with *I'll Get Along Somehow*. There were five more releases after that, all with the same patented Jimmie Rodgers-style two-guitar accompaniment, none really making much of a splash. Then in July, 1941, he wrote a song of which he was particularly proud. He cut it in August in Bunny Briggs' tiny studio in Dallas and it was released in September. Ironically he was without the services of Jimmie Short, his regular guitarist and the man on whom the whole Troubadour style—with its succession of inventive, jazz-influenced lead guitarists, from Short to Billy Byrd to Leon Rhodes—is based. A&R man Dave Kapp was not particularly impressed with

the record himself, but Ernest thought it was the best thing he had ever done. "I begged him to release the record. 'Just do this one thing for me, and if I'm wrong I'll never ask for anything again.' " Against his better judgment, Ernest says, Kapp put the record out. It was, of course, *Walking the Floor Over You*.

With his new-found success he was now something more than a local attraction. He was still broadcasting on KGKO in Fort Worth, he was still the Gold Chain Troubadour singing from a platform on top of a brand-new 1941 Plymouth, but on the weekends he was being booked further and further afield. An old friend, Happy Hal Burns, had gone into the booking business with the legendary Oscar Davis, who got into country music when an ice show he was promoting went broke in Atlanta. Davis booked Tubb into a show in Shreveport. That was where he met Joe Frank, who had previously managed Gene Autry, brought Roy Acuff to the Opry and was associated with Pee Wee King, both professionally and as his father-in-law. Frank became his manager on the basis of a handshake; the next step was a guest shot on the Opry. Ernest got three encores when he sang *Walking the Floor Over You*; his guest shot became a four week audition; in January of 1943 he joined the Opry as a regular member, moving his family to Nashville that year.

(Continued on page 67)

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THE SOUNDS IN YOUR MIND

by **HANS FANTEL**

Higher quality country records mean better and better sound—if your stereo system is up to it. *Country Music's* expert will help you untangle all the wires.

Earlier this year, when I went to the big 1977 winter audio show in Chicago to check the latest in stereo equipment, I had a moment of reverie. Standing among acres of electronic sound gear in the huge exhibition hall jutting out into Lake Michigan, I imagined Thomas Edison walking in to see what had become of his invention.

Just a hundred years ago, when Edison was fumbling with his first tin-horn phonograph, he wasn't even thinking about music. All he wanted was to make some kind of dictating machine. In fact, it took almost a whole generation for musicians to get interested in the phonograph. Maybe that isn't really surprising, considering the scratchy and squawky sound of those early machines. As it happened, Edison lived long enough—until 1931—to get the first inkling of the big change his invention was making in the world of music. Today, because of sound recording, most music is no longer heard in the presence of the performer. The phonograph, in its modern stereo version, has become the universal music maker, and it is mostly through recordings that music

nowadays reaches us.

With recordings, on disc or tape, supplying most of our musical fare, the fidelity of our stereo rigs becomes an important concern for everyone who cares about music. Fortunately, the level of performance of most of the new equipment I heard in Chicago was very impressive. Even moderately priced models sounded surprisingly good, and some of the fancier systems were downright fabulous. Today's equipment can bring you music with the kind of "you-are-there" realism that makes your skin tingle. And if you aren't playing your records on a really up-to-date sound system, you've got something to look forward to.

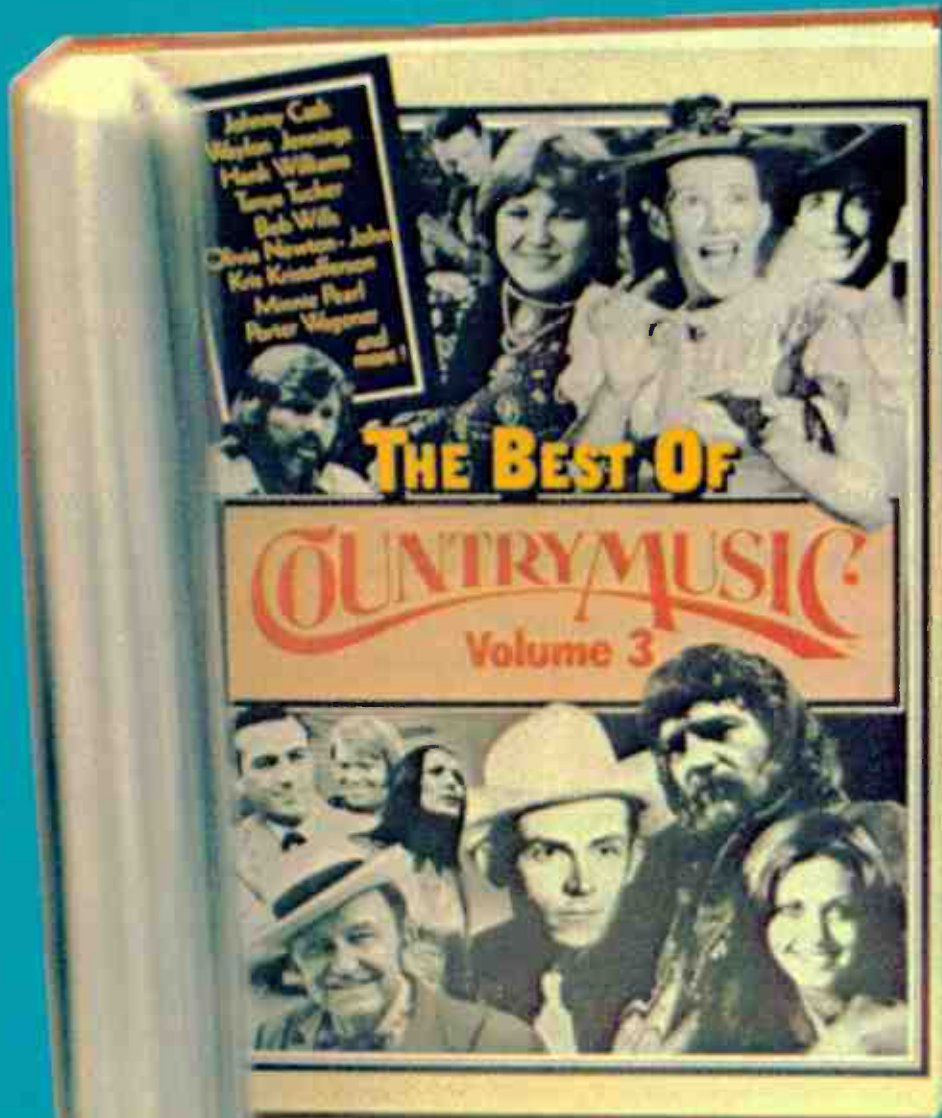
I noticed that the gap between top-notch equipment and some of the less expensive components is narrowing, and some of the relatively low-priced items now come pretty close to the sound of equipment costing several times as much. I don't mean that you can pick up any complete system that sounds anywhere like real music for less than about \$250. You can't. But, regardless of price, you

now get better value. Dollar for dollar, you get more performance—more amplifier power, wider frequency response, less distortion. As a result, you now can get in moderately-priced equipment the kind of performance offered only by top-rank models just a few years back. With almost everything else costing more than it used to, that is a remarkable achievement of the audio industry.

How did you do it, I asked Bernie Mitchell of Pioneer, whose latest low-cost stereo receivers, such as the SX-450 (\$200) are prime examples of more performance for less money. According to Mitchell, improved manufacturing methods using more automation and technical progress in solid-state circuits now enable the industry to produce better sound at lower cost. Other companies, riding the same technical trend, have also come up with outstanding low-cost receivers, notably Sansui's 331 (\$200), Kenwood's KR-2600 JVC's JR-S100 (\$200), Kenwood's KR-2600 (\$190), Technics' SA-5060 (\$170), Miida's Model 3120 (\$220) and Radio Shack's Realistic STA-52 (\$200).



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These receivers contain all the electronic gear in a single unit, combining a stereo amplifier, an AM/FM radio and all necessary controls. You only have to add a pair of speakers and a turntable or record changer to complete the system. Being practical, compact and relatively inexpensive, receivers are probably the best way to get started in component audio. Of course, the low-cost receivers I mentioned don't pack a lot of power. As a group, they run in the range from 12 to 15 watts per channel. But as long as you don't plan to raise the rafters with ear-shattering sound, power isn't the main thing. What matters most for fidelity is low distortion. And in that respect, these new inexpensive receivers compare very favorably with equipment costing lots more.

One way to get plenty of good sound from these receivers despite their power limitations is to match them up with highly efficient speakers—that is, speakers that put out more sound per watt. Until recently, most high-quality speakers just wouldn't do that. The better speakers were really power-hungry, gobbling up heavy wattage from the amplifier to produce big sound. But lately a new breed of speakers has been sounding off that combines fidelity with efficiency and pumps out hefty sound with just 12 or 15 watts of amplifier power per channel. Among the best of this type are the B.I.C.-Venturi speakers, with the lowest-priced model selling for \$75, the Advent-2 (\$77), Altec's Model 1 (\$190) and the Bose 301 (\$109). Combined with any of the above-mentioned receivers, these speakers will produce rich, clear and natural sound that makes any kind of music come alive. Such combinations offer fine sound at an affordable price, and their only limitation is that the very lowest bass notes won't have the kind of thrust that lifts you right out of your seat.

The Bose speaker, by the way, is one of the few designs that makes use of reflected sound. Unlike most speakers, which

throw the sound straight at the listener, the Bose beams the sound sideways to let it reflect from the walls before reaching the listener. "It's like a carom shot, bouncing off the edge of the pool table before hitting the pocket"; that's how a company engineer explained it to me. The idea is to create a so-called "space-effect" with these multiple sound reflections from all over the room. The net result is a sense of spaciousness; you think you're sitting in a concert hall even when you're listening in a small room. Sometimes, particularly on records involving larger groups or whole orchestras, it gives you the feeling of being surrounded by the music, of sitting right among the musicians.

So far, we've talked about low-cost receivers and speakers. Of course, to complete your basic stereo rig you'll also need a platter to spin your records. You can get excellent buys in inexpensive record changers, with the B.I.C. 920 (\$80), the BSR 100BAX (\$110 complete with cartridge) and Radio Shack's Realistic LAB-50 (\$100 complete with cartridge) being notable values.

Many audio fans prefer single-play turntables to automatic changers because their light-tracking tone arms permit the use of more sensitive phono-cartridges with wider frequency range. Tracking the record at extremely light pressure—usually less than 2 grams—such tone arms, if fitted with a good cartridge, are apt to lengthen the life of your records. Also, single-play turntables tend to have somewhat less rumble than automatic changers in the same price class. Rumble, by the way, is the kind of low-pitched growl that you hear along with the music on poor phonographs whenever you turn the volume up high. It results from vibration of the rotating parts of the record player—a vibration that is picked up by the stylus as it scans the record. The only way to eliminate rumble is to cut down the vibration. This requires precision-made parts, carefully balanced and worked to close tolerances.

That's what makes good turntables rather expensive—and the better the turntable, the less the rumble.

Among the latest crop of equipment, even low-cost single-play turntables are remarkably free of rumble. Also, most of them feature shock-absorbing spring suspensions or elastic feet so the stylus won't jump out of the groove even if you're dancing to the music and have wobbly floors. Compared to changers, single-play turntables usually have heavier platters, which act as flywheels and smooth out the rotary motion of the turntable. This makes for greater steadiness of pitch. Among the best low-cost turntables you'll find Kenwood's KD-1033 (\$90) and Pioneer's PL-112D (\$100). Both are equipped with a cue-control, so you don't have to fumble with the tone arm and risk damage to your discs. You just move the arm over the track on the record you want to hear; then you flip a lever and the arm floats down, touching the record very gently.

If you want additional automation and convenience in your single-play turntable, you can get models that position the arm over the record automatically (just like a changer) and return the arm to its resting place when the record is finished. The Kenwood KD-3055 (\$180), the Pioneer PL-117D (\$175) are among the outstanding designs equipped with such features.

Recent progress and innovation is by no means limited to the low-price bracket. Plenty is also going on among fancier designs. Right now, for example, there is a lot of interest among well-heeled audio fans about a new type of turntable employing the "direct drive" principle. One reason why direct drive is such a hot topic at present is that it does away with all the usual belts and pulleys that link the drive motor to the rotating platter. Instead, the platter itself is the motor rotor and on some models the turning speed is regulated by a quartz crystal—the same kind of super-accurate timing device used in quartz watches. The advantage is highly

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accurate turntable speed and super-smooth rotation. Also, with fewer rotating parts, there is less vibration, and rumble is therefore at an inaudible minimum.

Naturally, such refinements don't come cheap. The lowest price for a direct-drive turntable is about \$200, and with quartz control the price rises steeply to about \$500. Excellent models of this kind are available from Sony, Sansui, Pioneer, Technics and Marantz.

One particular direct-drive turntable is attracting lots of attention these days because of a unique feature: it has a built-in mini-computer. The computer counts the different bands on an LP record and will pick out, repeat or skip—or play in any sequence you want—the various selections on a record. You give instructions to the computer from a remote-control programming device that works like the remote-tuning controls for TV sets. This turntable—the Accutrac 4000—is a high-quality design, but keep in mind that the fancy computer control is just a convenience. It has nothing to do with the sound itself. Even so, for some people it's worth the \$500 asking price.

The current choice among medium-priced receivers is so great that it's difficult to pick out the standouts. What's more, most receivers in a given price range are pretty close in their performance ratings. If you want solid sound at medium power at a medium price, by all means take a listen to Kenwood's new KR-4600, Pioneer's SX650 and Sansui's 5050, ranging in price from \$250 to \$320 and delivering about 30 to 35 watts per channel. This is plenty for home listening in average-size rooms. If you listen in a very large room and like to play your music very loudly, you might investigate some heftier gear in the order of 40-50 watts per channel. And if you really want to rock the house (and maybe bust your ears), you had better buy a powerhouse rated at 60-100 watts per

channel, but unless you play heavy symphonic scores with lots of brass and massive bass, you may not really need all that power. In any case, the companies mentioned above all make receivers offering good value in the higher power ranges. Naturally, cost goes up along with the wattage.

All the receivers include an AM/FM stereo radio. If you don't need a radio but just want to play records or tapes, you may be better off buying just an amplifier—without the built-in radio. The same firms make an ample selection of those, and you can also get separate radio tuners to go with these amplifiers. However, most people within range of FM stations (the only ones broadcasting in stereo) find the all-in-one receivers more convenient as well as more economical.

With those high-powered receivers you also need loudspeakers that can make the most of these powerful signals. You can get hefty sound with solid bottom and crisp highs from any number of current models selling between \$100 and \$200. You might like the big sound of the B.I.C.-Venturi Formula 4 (\$160), the smoothly balanced sound of the Dynaco A-35 (\$129), the dramatic "liveness" of Radio Shack's Optimus T-100 (\$140) or the pleasing combination of warmth and brilliance in the sound of Pioneer's HPM-40 (\$150).

I'm fast running out of descriptive phrases because loudspeakers, like fine musical instruments, all have their individual tone coloration. In fact, no two makes of speakers ever sound quite alike, and to find the one that best suits your personal taste, shop around and listen to a variety of speakers. Play the same records on all of them, so you have a basis for comparison. Also, to form a valid personal judgment, be sure to play any speakers you are comparing in an audio dealer's showroom at exactly the same volume. Otherwise, your ears can fool you and the louder speaker will always sound better,

regardless of its true merit.

Watch out for another pitfall: don't get taken in by any speaker with a very dramatic, bright, flashy sound that seems to make the music jump right at you. This may be very impressive at first hearing, but it's hard to live with in the long run. The hallmarks of a really good speaker are a good balance between highs and lows and a sense of clarity and smoothness in the sound. Such speakers sound less spectacular than the raucous ear-bangers that put out what's known in the trade as "disco sound." But you'll find that a more subdued speaker will bring you more enduring musical pleasure over the years.

When it comes to tape equipment, either for recording or playback, cassettes are a clear winner over the other two tape formats—open reel tape and 8-track cartridges. Dealers all across the country now report that for use in high-quality stereo systems, cassette decks are outselling open-reel recorders by a ratio of 10:1.

The obvious appeal of cassette equipment is convenience, compactness and ease of operation. But the decisive factor is their improved sound. The better cassette decks nowadays sound as good as open-reel tape and incomparably better than most 8-track players. Of course, open-reel machines still have one advantage cassettes can't match: they permit editing. If you are a professional musician making your own audition tapes, that's probably important to you. But if you rarely bother to cut and splice your own recordings, a good stereo cassette deck hooked to your receiver is probably your best bet for recording equipment. It will let you copy records, tape off-the-air and make your own "live" recordings via microphone. Prices for high-quality cassette decks with Dolby noise suppressors and rock-steady sound without a trace of wobble start around \$200, and you can



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choose from such reliable makes as TEAC, Pioneer and AIWA, whose AD-6500 goes for \$370. If you do require a professional-type open-reel machine, you can get AKAI's 4000D for \$300, equipped for input mixing and sound-on-sound, or—for about twice the price—TEAC's new A2300SX, a triple-head, 3-motor model with complete monitor facilities.

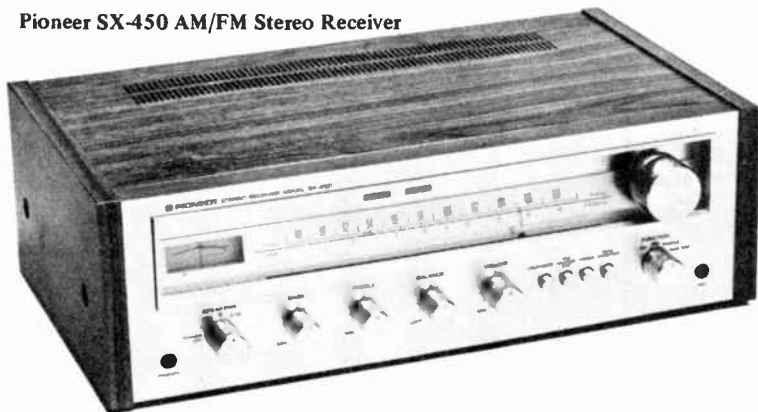
Even in car stereo, where the 8-track cartridge has long been dominant, cas-

ettes are now making a strong takeover bid, with many of the better mobile sound systems now geared for cassettes. Panasonic has just announced one of the first car sound systems capable of genuine high fidelity, to be available by late spring. At least one such system already exists, consisting of a Nakamichi tape deck and a pair of ADS speakers. You are not likely to find it in any auto supply stores, but specialized audio dealers may be able to

obtain it for you.

As a parting tip, let's talk again about money. Not long ago, the government handed down a ruling that manufacturer's list prices—including the ones quoted in this article—aren't binding. Any dealer is free to offer you a discount without having to risk the loss of his franchise. So you can regard any of the prices mentioned here simply as a starting point for bargaining.

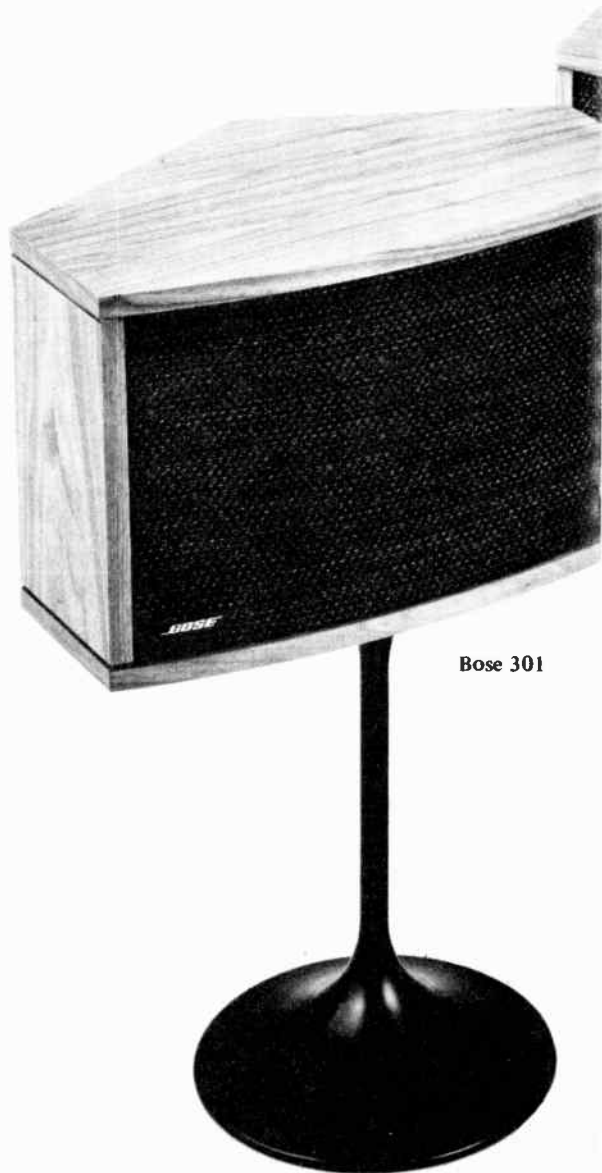
Pioneer SX-450 AM/FM Stereo Receiver



Sony PS3300 Turntable



Bose 301



TEAC A-2300SX
Tape Deck





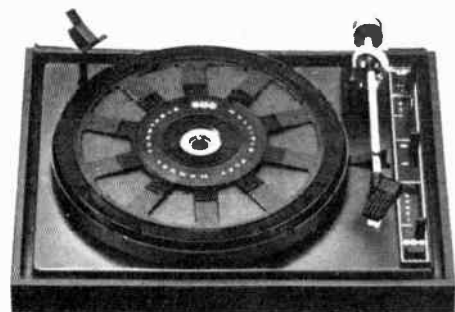
Dynaco LMS-6 'Laboratory Monitor' Speaker



Accutrac 4000



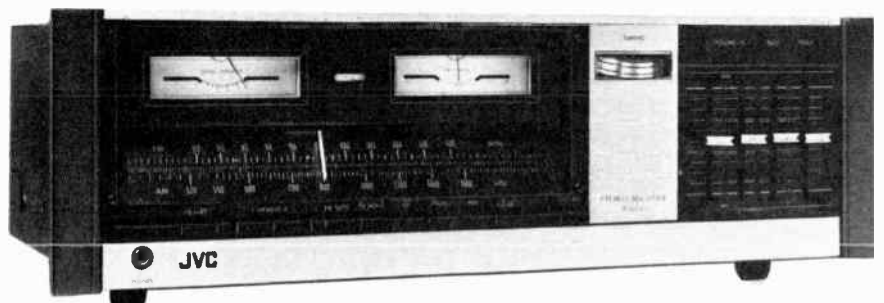
AKAI 4000DS Tape Deck



B.I.C. 940 Manual Turntable



JVC S100 AM/FM Stereo Receiver



Putting it all together:

You've been to the shop, bought your stereo gear and lugged it home. Now you have to set it up in your living room. If it's the first time you're doing this, chances are you feel a bit timid about it.

No need to panic. There's nothing complicated about hooking up a sound system. In principle, it's no different than plugging in a lamp. But there are two basic rules.

Rule No. 1: Before doing anything, read the instructions. Sure, you're eager to put on that first record and fiddle with all those knobs, and maybe you don't want to bother with all that printed stuff. But don't get ahead of yourself. Read it anyway. The instructions that come with each component will tell exactly how to connect it to the other components, and only if you follow these instructions exactly can you be sure the system will sound its best.

Rule No. 2: Don't turn on anything until both loudspeakers are hooked up to the receiver. Otherwise you might damage your equipment.

So let's talk about speaker hookup first. This connection can be made with ordinary lamp cord, but you'd be better off with special speaker hookup wire obtainable from your audio dealer. Strip the ends of these wires and then connect them to the terminals at the rear of the speakers and the rear of the receiver. Do it neatly, without stray wire strands hanging down, because they might cause a short-circuit. The instructions will tell you the details.

All the rest are simple plug-in connections. Your dealer will give you the right kind of cables with fused-on plugs. The

terminals are clearly marked, so you'll know just where the connections go. Just make sure each plug sits firmly in its socket.

The only thing that's tricky in hooking up a sound system is mounting the phono cartridge in the tone arm, and unless you are an old hand at it, better let your dealer do it. Ask him to balance the tone arm for proper stylus pressure—that's the pressure of the needle against the record. Once this adjustment is made, you needn't worry about it any more.

corners. Putting them right down on the floor (instead of propping them up on shelves) also helps pump out those fat low notes.

Keep your stereo speakers at least ten feet apart. You can space them out even wider if you like the extra sound spread. Instead of facing the speakers directly toward you, you might try angling them out in a wall-eyed fashion so the sound bounces off the walls before reaching the listener. This makes for very smooth, spacious sound. Or you can set them up in

an L-pattern, as shown in the diagrams. This will give you the impression of sitting right among the musicians.

As for the rest of your components—the turntable and the receiver—you can put them wherever you like. Usually, they are placed on shelves; but make sure the shelves are sturdy so the turntable doesn't wiggle when you walk across the floor. That would make the record skip. And never put the turntable on the same shelf with the speakers, or right in front of the speakers. Otherwise the vibrations on the music will shake up the tone arm and your system will howl like a coyote when you crank up the volume.

It's a good idea not to shove the receiver right up against the wall, keeping about an

inch clearance in the rear for cooling ventilation. Also, don't pile up anything on top of the receiver—the heat must freely disperse. This little trick alone can add years to the receiver's life.

Try to place the receiver close to your favorite listening chair so you don't have to jump up and walk clear across the room each time you want to change the volume or tune in another station.

That's all there's to it. Now you can settle down and enjoy your new sound rig. After a few days you'll find yourself forgetting all about the hardware, just listening to the music. That, after all, is the payoff. ■



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If your sound system includes a radio receiver, you should have an antenna for it. Without an antenna, FM reception is bound to be spotty. The kind of antenna you need depends pretty much on where you live—the distance of your home from the stations you want to tune in. Your dealer can tell you what kind of antenna is best for you. If you live within twenty miles or so of the stations you want to hear, an indoor antenna is all you need.

One great advantage of owning separate components is that you can put the speakers where they sound best and the rest of your equipment where it looks best. You can get stronger bass, for example, just by moving the speakers into



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By The Number/Open Up Your Heart And Let The Sunshine In/Cold Cold Heart/Divorce, more!



Dottie West/Would You Hold It Against Me
Make The World Go/I'm Sorry/With Pen In Hand/Would You Hold It Against Me/Suffertime, more!



Dolly Parton/Just The Way I Am
Little Bird/Just The Way I Am/The Carroll Country Accident/Gypsy, Joe and Me/Mama Say A Prayer, more!



Dolly Parton/I Wish I Felt This Way At Home
Games People Play/I Wish I Felt This Way At Home/The Only Way Out/My Blue Ridge Mountain Boy, more!



Dolly Parton/Mine
When The Possession Gets Too Strong/But You Loved Me Then/Mine/More Than Their Share/Chas, more!



Dolly Parton/Just Because I'm A Woman
The Fire's Still Burning/Daddy/Mule Skinner Blues/Love Isn't Free/Just Because I'm A Woman/Big Wind, more!



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Bloody, Merry Morning/I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry/Today I Started Loving You Again/San Antonio, more!



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17. Waylon Jennings/Only Daddy That'll Walk The Line	<input type="checkbox"/> ACL-0306	<input type="checkbox"/> C8S-0306
18. Waylon Jennings/Ruby, Don't Take Your Love To Town	<input type="checkbox"/> CAS-2608	<input type="checkbox"/> C8S-1223
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Keeping it all clean:

You plunk down almost six bucks for an LP record. Presumably you like the music so much you want to have it for keeps. But how long will it actually last? And how good will it sound after the first few plays?

Comparison tests have shown that a pampered record, kept clean and properly handled, will sound as lush after 200 playings as after the first. But a neglected record literally bites the dust after only about twenty spins. In short, by taking proper care of your records you can make them last ten times longer. So you get ten times your money's worth out of them. And if a record you're really fond of is no longer available and can't be replaced, lengthening its life means something beyond dollars and cents.

Of all record killers, plain household dust is the most vicious. It can turn the texture of sound from silk to sandpaper and syncopate the music with clicks and crackles. And the irony is that the better your equipment, the worse it sounds with dirty discs. Components that coax every subtle wisp of sound from the record grooves will just as faithfully bring out every screech and scratch.

All this fuss about a few specks of dust? Well, look at the problem from where the music is—from the bottom of the record groove. Its twists and turns exactly spell

out the musical sound. The tip of your stereo stylus races along this crooked path with tremendous force. The downward pressure of the needle (or stylus) against the record may be just a fraction of an ounce, but this weight is concentrated on the tiny area of the stylus tip, which measures only about 1/1000th inch across. So the weight is concentrated—like the weight of a woman ripping a rug with stiletto heels—and the pressure in the record groove is equivalent to about 20,000 pounds per square inch.

Now visualize what happens: As the stylus zooms along the groove, a dust particle suddenly looms in its path like a boulder—a hard rock with razor-sharp edges. The stylus crashes against this "rock." Something has to give. Inevitably, it's the soft vinyl groove in which the rock gets imbedded like a thorn in flesh.

The sound of this dramatic impact? Just a tiny click in your speaker. But in thousandfold repetition, thousands of dust particles spread a tonal fog over your once-brilliant record. The musical waveforms in the grooves become distorted and the sound gets shrill. Later playings pile up more sound-shattering debris, and this acts like a grinding compound that turns your prize records to scrap long before their time.

No wonder experienced audio fans firmly hold to the old proverb that cleanliness is next to godliness. But virtue seldom comes easy. Trouble is that records are about as tricky to keep dust-free as a blue serge suit. And for the same reason: static electricity.

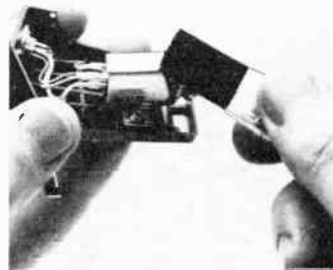
Dust clings to records with the passion of a determined lover. You can't even give it the brush-off. The lint won't take a hint. In fact, ordinary brushing increases the bond between disc and dust by making the static charge still greater. Fortunately, a number of record cleaning devices have recently been developed to overcome these difficulties and trick the record out of its fatal attraction.

Most of these devices combine a special brush with a liquid cleaning solution. Despite their apparent simplicity, both these items must be carefully designed. The brush bristles, for example, must be so shaped that they reach down all the way to the groove bottom to tease out dust grains lodged among the wiggles. And the cleaning solution has to do a two-fold job: it must dissolve encrusted dirt deposits, smudges and fingerprints, and, at the same time, neutralize the static charge. The liquid must do all this without chemically attacking the record itself or leaving any lumpy residue in the grooves. In the past, record cleaning fluids were mostly alcoholic. The alcohol loosened the dirt, all right, but at the same time it leached out the lubricants that are put in the record material to provide permanent lubrication of the surface. By depriving the disc of its built-in lubrication, these old-fashioned record cleaners did more harm than good. The new cleaning formulations—and their manufacturers are pretty close-mouthed about their composition—apparently have overcome these problems.

One of the most effective new record cleaners is the Discwasher (\$15), which



Discwasher



Watts Disc Preener



Discwasher SC-1 Stylus Cleaner



Clean Sound

consists of a nylon brush with bristles shaped and angled to reach deep-seated dust. The brush is moistened with a special solution which flows upward along the bristles. What makes it flow upward rather than downward is a process known as capillary action and it transports the dust particles away from the record and collects the dust in the handsomely grained walnut handle, which can then be cleaned separately. In this way, the dust is actually taken off the disc instead of merely lined up as collected sweepings.

A similar device, the Recoton "Clean Sound," also sells for \$15 and consists of a special plush cleaning fabric stretched over a foam backing that holds and gradually releases the cleaning solution. The foam backing also reduces the matting tendency of the velvet fabric. The velvet, which does a fine job reaching down into the grooves, can be replaced if it wears out after prolonged use.

In Radio Shack's Hydro-Stor record cleaner (\$10), the cleaning fluid is held in a reservoir within the brush handle, which assures continuous moistening of the bristles. The Watts "Disc-Preener," selling for \$6.49, also has an internal reservoir for the cleaning solution located

within a cylindrical velvet brush that can be rotated to lift off dust. Another Watts record cleaner, the Parastat (\$15), is intended mainly for records that have been neglected in the past and suffer from heavy accumulations of dust, fingerprints and similar blemishes. The brush consists of three active sections: two velvet-clad surfaces to remove loose debris and a central nylon bristle segment that pops out when the brush is pushed down harder to provide more energetic scouring action.

Aside from cleaning and de-stating your records, careful handling is the most effective record life-saver. Basically, this means a hands-off policy.

It would be crude to refer to your dainty digits as greasy paws; but the fact remains—and so does an oily film every time you touch your records. This film gathers dust that turns to grime. Keeping your fingers off the grooved part of the record is the best kind of "grime prevention." Hold a record by supporting it beneath the label with your fingers while keeping your thumb against the record rim.

Also, include the stylus—or "needle" as it used to be called—in your cleanup campaign. Dirt—plain or otherwise—comes as natural to a stereo stylus as to a pig: it

just digs it up. But while pork is none the worse for the experience, it's fatal to fidelity. During the play of a single 12-inch side, the stylus literally sweeps up about 2½ miles of groove—the nookiest dust-catcher you ever saw. Dirt mounts in miniature heaps on the stylus and tends to derail it from the record track. Discwasher and Watts make special brushes to sweep those tiny dust balls off the stylus. But do it gently, and move the stylus brush only from back to front—never from side to side. Otherwise you might bend the delicate stylus out of shape.

Just brushing a few specks of dust off a phonograph stylus may seem a trifling matter. Believe me, it isn't. Hi-fi repairmen tell me that in more than half their service calls, stylus cleaning is the only problem. Obviously, that's something you can do yourself—and it takes just about one second.

If you follow the kind of preventive medicine outlined here, your records will enjoy a long and healthy life. According to a government study just concluded, a well cared-for record, played on a high-quality record player under normal conditions (about twice a month) could last more than a hundred years. ■

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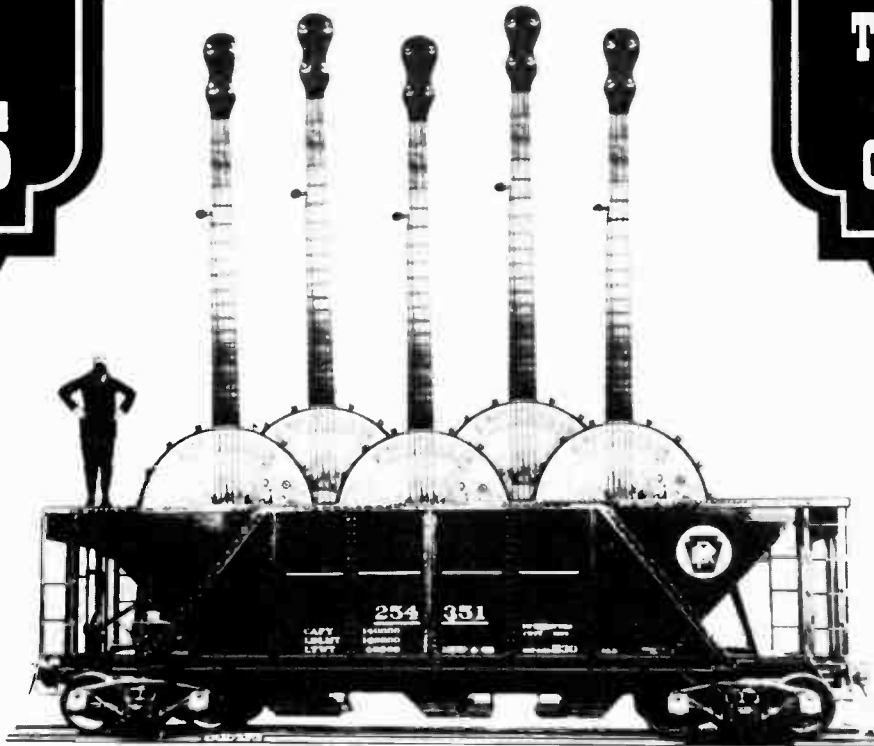
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What's with watts:

One of the first things to decide when you're shopping for sound equipment is the power rating of your amplifier or receiver. Of course, it's easy to say "the bigger the better," but the price of sound gear goes up very steeply with all those extra watts. You may save yourself a tidy sum if you make up your mind in advance just how much power you really need.

A lot of watts doesn't necessarily mean a lot of sound. A 100-watt amplifier, for instance, doesn't play ten times as loud as a 10-watt amplifier, because the human ear doesn't translate power output directly into loudness. What you gain from the added wattage is not so much extra volume, but greater clarity of sound in the loud parts. As a result, you can turn up your rig to higher loudness levels without running into distortion.

Amplifier power is like horsepower in cars: the payoff comes in the tight spots. You don't always drive with the gas pedal jammed down to the floor. Similarly, an amplifier (or receiver) rarely operates at full output. But there are moments in music—just as there are moments on the road—when ample power reserve helps you over the hurdles. On the road, you may need that extra power surge to pull ahead of a trailer truck on a hill. In music, the equivalent of such a moment may be a big orchestral climax, a heavy chord struck full force on the piano, or the deep, punchy thrust of the electric bass. If you don't have the needed power margin at such moments, the sound breaks up.

Even if this break-up lasts only for a second, it spoils the overall effect, causing what is known as listener fatigue—an odd feeling of irritation produced by distorted sound. After a while, you just want to turn the damn thing off. By contrast, an amplifier with sufficient power glides smoothly over those loudness peaks and lets you listen for hours without getting edgy.

Higher power, in addition, also helps pump out better bass.

But enough theory. Let's get down to practical matters. The amount of power you actually need depends on three factors (1) your choice of speakers, (2) the size and furnishings of your room, and (3) your musical taste.

As for Item 1, some speakers are more efficient than others. This simply means that they'll give you more sound per watt of amplifier power. An inefficient speaker isn't necessarily bad. In fact, some of the best speakers on the market today—particularly the bookshelf-type—are highly inefficient. They sound fine but gobble up a lot of watts to produce room-filling loudness levels. To find out how much power your speakers need, look at the spec sheet of the speakers you have chosen. This tells you the minimum power suggested by the speaker manufacturer. Take the number as your basic guide. Even with a low-efficiency speaker, an output of 20 watts per channel should give you a comfortable power margin in a normal room.

Which brings us to Item 2. What's a normal room? Let's say a room with a volume of anywhere from 2000 to 3000 cubic feet. For 4000 cubic feet, you'd better step up your amplifier power to 30 watts per channel and for 6000 cubic feet to 40 watts per channel. If you live in a barn, boost the power to at least 50 watts per channel.

But that's only the beginning of the calculation. Next figure in your furnishings. Suppose the surfaces of your home reflect sound rather than absorb it, with smooth plaster walls, hard floors with just a few scattered rugs, and no heavy draperies. This makes a "live" environment in which the echoes reinforce the output of your sound system. As a result, you can cut your power budget by 30 to 50 percent. (The same is true if you use highly efficient speakers.) But if the environment is acoustically "dead" with wall-to-wall carpeting, draperies, and overstuffed chairs, it will soak up sound and put an extra burden on your amplifier. In that case, increase the power by 30 to 50 percent.

Concerning Item 3, your musical taste, remember that heavily scored orchestral music (symphonies and such) takes even more power than heavy rock. But since you're a country fan, don't worry about that unless someone in the family prefers symphonies, in which case, up that power rating by about 20 percent. Also, if you like to pipe music all through the house—with extension speakers in bedroom, den, and kitchen—you'll just about have to double the power to drive all these music outlets simultaneously. But if you're running only one pair of speakers at a time, you won't need extra power for extensions.

That's how you might figure a realistic power budget for yourself. It should give you all the power you need without paying for something you don't need. ■

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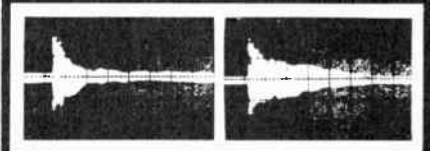
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Records

Don Williams

Visions

ABC/Dot DO-2064 \$6.98

8-DO-2064 (tape) \$7.98

Star rating: ★★

Don Williams' whole concept has pretty much solidified these days, and one of his albums sounds much like another. The hallmarks are the gentle, loping 4/4 beat, the



DON WILLIAMS



weeping dobro, the melodic, tender songs and his low-key vocal approach. His mellow baritone has wrapped itself around some real gems over the last few years, but for some reason the pop market hasn't responded, and not even country listeners have managed to make him into a major star.

It's a shame. I know for a fact that red-blooded American women just plain melt when

they hear Don sing one of the Bob McDill classics that made him famous, and even the most radical student of sexual politics would admit that the hu-

man, vulnerable men he sings about are an improvement on the super-macho, Waylon Jennings types.

But Don Williams (who knows why?) is over-recorded. He does too many songs that sound alike, and only a dedicated fan can weed the good from the bad after a while. And, as one of these dedicated fans, let me tell you that *Visions* is not his best album. In fact, it's one of his least interesting—not one of these songs comes close to his best, and only *I'm Getting Good At Missing You* has any musical or lyrical interest. *I'll Need Someone To Hold Me (When I Cry)* takes the vulnerable, non-macho thing just a little too far and is much too close to Conway Twitty's hit *She Needs Someone To Hold Her (When She Cries)* for comfort. I hope Raymond A. Smith doesn't sue Bob McDill and Wayland Hollyfield.

Don Williams' basic idea is wonderful, but, both on record and live, he needs to vary the tempo of his music and the subject of his lyrics. Conservatism in country music is a laudable quality more often than not. Don Williams just carries it a bit too far.

ED WARD

Glen Campbell

Southern Nights

Capitol SW-11601 \$6.98

8XT-11601 (tape) \$7.98

Star rating: ★★

It really hasn't been so long since I listened to my last Glen Campbell album. I got a copy of the recent Best Of album around Christmastime because I liked *Galveston* and *Wichita Lineman* and even *Rhinestone Cowboy*, but when it came to tracks like Jimmy Webb's *The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress*, I started muttering, "Gimme a break, will ya?"



Because for all the country charm in his voice, and for all the borderline country-politanness of his arrangements, Glen Campbell not only flirts with pretentiousness, he gives himself to it totally. And, it seems, he'll sing what's put in front of him and do the best he can with it.

What's been put in front of him for *Southern Nights*, alas, is a tepid collection of songs by Jim Webb and one Michael Smotherman. Relief is found on the first side with his readings of Alan Toussaint's *Southern Nights*, Neil Diamond's *Sunflower*, and, especially, the Beach Boys' *God Only Knows*, a song nicely suited to Campbell's astonishing range. But overall, the album isn't much from the standpoints of production, material or performance. And, unless *God Only Knows* is it, I don't hear a hit here.

Not to mention—and perhaps I shouldn't—much in the way of country music.

ED WARD

Doug Jernigan

Roadside Rag

Flying Fish 024 \$6.98

(No tape available)

Star rating: ★★★★★

Doug Jernigan has been a steel guitar legend for so long that I was apprehensive about playing this record, afraid he'd never live up to the giant hopes that every steel player I've ever talked to had instilled in me. Well, he's not Jimi Hendrix, and he's not Merle Travis, and he's not Julian Bream, but he is one of the richest, most inventive improvisers on the pedal steel guitar and dobro I've ever heard.

As in all good improvisatory music since the advent of bop,

the songs exist mainly as excuses to hang some dazzling chops on a frame. Hank Wil-



liams' *Half As Much* disappears quickly into some truly complicated chording, and if the exquisite duet study of dynam-

ics with an acoustic guitar is really that tuneless piece of junk *Vincent* by Don McLean, then I know that Jernigan has the ability to turn dross into gold. Tom T. Hall has never been known so much for his music as his words, but Jernigan transforms *Homecoming* into an exciting piece, and traditional numbers like *John Henry* and *Sally Goodin* zip along.

With this record, Doug Jernigan leaps into the forefront of the post-Buddy Emmons generation of steel guitarists. He looks like a young guy. It scares me to think what he'll be doing in ten years.

ED WARD

ALBUM OF THE MONTH

Ray Stevens

Feel The Music

Warner Bros. BS-2997 \$6.98

MB-2997 (tape) \$7.97

Star rating: ★ ★ ★

One never can be quite sure just what to expect from a Ray Stevens record. Will it be wild and woolly or will it be passionate and positive? *Feel The Music* doesn't have any chickens clucking, exhibitionists streaking or apes aspiring to guitar superstardom. But it doesn't have an *Everything Is Beautiful* either. But that's okay because what it does have is good compilation of several styles of music that make pleasant listening if you have leanings toward MOR with a taste of southern funk to perk up the circulation now and then.

Stevens is such a multi-faceted talent that he expresses himself within every kind of music at one time or another, be it novelty songs, country or rock. One side of his personality makes wacky million sellers, while on another just plain ol' solid and serious songwriting and musicianship is exhibited. The serious side of Stevens is what you'll get here; songs of love, daydream romances, life on the road, the joys of music. Whatever the topic, Stevens has always been a master of lyrics.

Four songs provide this album's highlights: *Get Crazy With Me* is a message song of sorts about breaking loose from a heretofore wasted life and the best song here. *Set The Children Free* is beautiful both in words and music and is the only song Ray didn't write. The two songs that close each side of the album are both gems of slow boogie, *Junkie For You* and *Dixie Hummingbird*. It would be good to hear more of this type of rolling blues from Ray in the future.

If you follow the man and his music, you'll want this one. It ain't country but it is Ray Stevens.

BOB ANDERSON



Joe Ely

Joe Ely

MCA 2242 \$6.98

MCA T-2242 (tape) \$7.98

Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

It must be a bit disheartening for an earnest band knocking around Austin for the past two years hoping for a ride on one of the three W's (Willie/Waylon/Walker) coattails to get completely blown off the road by an unassuming bunch of long-haired kickers from Lubbock. But they'll just have to learn to like it or live with it. Because Joe Ely, a kicker of the West Texas blues, has just come out of nowhere with both barrels firing hot enough to stun the jade out of at least one critic's ears.

Simply put, he is a brilliant writer, fragile singer and adept bandleader. He took his own bunch of boys from the High

Plains into the studio and with the help of Chip Young and sidemen like Bobby Emons, rolled out a most satisfying first album. If for no other reason the record proves itself on the basis of the excellent songs written by Ely and two of his longtime Lubbock compadres, Butch Hancock and Jinnie Dale Gilmore. Of the three, it is Hancock's songs that are laced with droll biting humor: *She Never Spoke Spanish to Me* makes Freddy Fender and Marty Robbins seem like *Tio Tacos* (Uncle Toms); *Suckin' On a Big Bottle of Gin* restores drinking to its lost status as a noble activity; and *Tennessee Is Not the State I'm In* compares well to a Billy Joe Shaver tune. Gilmore's sole contribution, *Treat Me Like A Saturday Night*, is a remorseful piece of honky tonk unrequited love. But it's

Ely's songs that get to the point, evoking the strongest images of Texas desolation. *All My Love* and *Johnny Blues*, especially, are the kind of tunes tailored for western dances, a key survival component for any Texas band. Gregg Wright's bass and the quickness of pedal steel Lloyd Maines would make Johnny Bush happy.

Ely's unfettered personality, brilliant material and vulnerable teenage voice will doubtless inspire comparisons to Lubbock's other native son, Buddy Holly, which is logical and fair. But don't go expecting a rockabilly retreat or hiccuping vocalist with horn-rimmed glasses. Go expecting Joe Ely, just the freshest force to be reckoned with in Texas Music in too long a time.

JOE NICK PATOSKI

How We Rate The Albums: 5 Stars...Album of the Month 4 Stars...Excellent
3 Stars...Very Good 2 Stars...Good 1 Star...Fair 0 Stars...Poor

Barbara Mandrell

Midnight Angel

ABC/Dot DOSD 2067 \$6.98

DOSD 2067 (tape) \$7.98

Star rating: ★ ★ ★

Barbara Mandrell's music seems to follow one of two basic molds: euphoric lovin' songs, complete with homage to her man, and tunes of lost love. Not that much of female country doesn't follow this general blueprint; yet when further examined, Barbara's song selection points to some specific approaches.

On works such as *Pillow Pleasure* and *From Saturday Night To Sunday Quiet*, we hear a satisfied female sing about how great it is. Yet the dirty side of such bedtime stories are not indulged in; instead we get deeply reverent images of "curtains being drawn." Barbara usually prefaces the boudoir phrases with qualifiers that insist, in no uncertain terms, that the couple is happily married.



As for the bummer numbers, they almost always take on self-rationalization. Barbara is a strong woman, and can live apart without falling all to pieces.

Midnight Angel doesn't signify any major departures for Barbara Mandrell; the tunes,



penned by Archie Jordan, John Schwerts and others, are delivered with bright, spry intonation, with a self-assertiveness that shines through even the glummer cuts. It's clean, lovin' music for proper housewives.

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Delbert McClinton

Love Rustler
AB-991 \$6.98
022AB-991 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★★☆☆

It's number three for Delbert McClinton and he shows no signs of letting up. His last album, *Genuine Cowhide*, saw him successfully reviving a set of oldies long rendered comatose by lousy



bar-band interpretations.

For those of you who haven't been hooked yet, I suggest you erase from your mind every country music preconception you've ever held, since he's not a member of the Willie, Waylon or Kristofferson camps; nor is he content to hide behind the Hank Williams songbook for want of ideas.

With a background in country, rockabilly, both big band and downhome black blues, the Memphis R & B of Otis Redding and contemporary country rock, Delbert doesn't have to. In short his music is the most distinctive, adventurous thing to come down the pike in years.

That said, let me further warn you that *Love Rustler* is not for the faint of heart, even though two fine ballads, *Let Love Come Between Us* and *That Woman* mellow things a bit. Both the title tune and *Under Suspicion* make clever use of their respective cattle ranch and law 'n order metaphors.

Jimmie Rodgers's *In The Jailhouse Now No. 2* gets an unbelievable update that enhances the original hell-raising theme. Tony Joe White's *Hold On To Your Hiney* is delightfully explicit, maybe too much so for any radio play. *Ain't No Cane On The Brazos*, a folk song as old as Texas itself, becomes an ominous, hypnotic voodoo chant that conjures up images of flaming torches and red bayou moons. The production of Chip Young ties everything together.

RICH KIENZLE

Emmylou Harris

Luxury Liner
Warner Bros. BS 2998 \$6.98
M8-2998 (tape) \$7.97
Star rating: ★

It is quite possible that no other country artist has ever achieved such a large following so fast as Emmylou Harris did with her first two albums, *Pieces Of The Sky* and *Elite Hotel*. And though these al-



bums had a chunk or two of brass thrown in with all the gold, it didn't really matter, because, to paraphrase the ageless saying about George Jones, "You could listen to her sing *Three Blind Mice*."

But only for so long. Which is the main problem with her latest album, *Luxury Liner*, i.e., the songs just aren't there.

And not even Emmylou can sustain a whole album of what is, for the most part, very mediocre material. What's worse, on most cuts she doesn't appear to even try. The entire album is almost totally devoid of the ardor, the intensity, the beauty—the transcendent *soul*—she lavished on her first albums.

There is no real letting go and pouring out her heart; none of the aching, bleeding, burning, heart-breaking, mind-blowing harmonies that so etched such masterpieces as *Together Again* or *If I Could Only Win Your Love*. It's almost as if the album should be titled *Emmylou Goes Standard Nashville Sound*.

Perhaps she just missed this time around. Perhaps she had built our expectations too high. Perhaps because you know how good she *can* be, you almost take it personally when you reluctantly realize what has been foisted off on you. Whatever the reasons, *Luxury Liner* is a keen disappointment.

JOHN PUGH

Lawrence Hammond

Coyote's Dream
Takoma C-1047 \$6.98
10478TRK (tape) \$6.98
Star rating: ★★☆☆

The title, *Coyote's Dream*, provides a good description of this album, for Hammond's tales deal primarily with a western setting. These songs/stories with heavy references to the primary topics of conversation and concern in the mid-west and the west; nature and the weather, respectful remembrances of relatives and friends. Hammond has filled the work with personal memories of his family and the lives of the people he's known well, sung in folk-narrative style. *Ala* Michael Murphey, he paints landscapes of the perils of nature (tornados, dust storms, blizzards) within his songs. Hammond delivers his tunes in a voice that can best be described as sophisticated cowboy, the mid-western now mixed with Californian. He's drawn somewhat from the style of Jimmie Rodgers and is similar in vocal sound to Mike Nesmith.

BOB ANDERSON

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AMAZING RHYTHM ACES	Stacked Deck	ABC	ABCD-913	ABC-913	JIMMY BUFFETT	Havana Daydreamin'	ABC	ABCD-914	ABC-914	JERRY CLOWER	Jerry Clower From Yazoo City	MCA	MCA-33	MCAT-33
	Too Stuffed To Jump	ABC	ABCD-940	ABC-940		A White Sport Coat & A Pink Crustacean	DUNH	DSX-50150	DHL-50150		Mouth Of Mississippi	MCA	MCA-47	MCAT-47
ROY ACUFF	All Time Greatest Hits	MGM	HR-4504	H8G-4504		Living & Dying In 3/4 Time	DUNH	DSD-50132	DHL-50132		Clower Power	MCA	MCA-317	MCAT-317
	Back In The Country	MGM	HR-4507	H8G-4507		Jimmy Buffett A1A	DUNH	DSD-50183	DHL-50183		Country Ham	MCA	MCA-417	MCAT-417
	That's Country	Hick	H3G-4521	H88-4521							Jerry Clower Live In Picayune	MCA	MCA-486	MCAT-486
BILL ANDERSON	Sometimes (with Mary Lou Turner)	MCA	MCA-2182	MCAT-2182	GLEN CAMPBELL	The Best Of Bloodline	CAP	ST-11577	8XT-11577	DAVID ALLEN COE	• Longhaired Redneck	COL	KC-33916	CA-33916
	Peanuts & Diamonds & Other Jewels	MCA	MCA-2222	MCAT-2222			CAP	SW-11516	8XT-11516		• The Mysterious Rhine- stone Cowboy	COL	KC-32942	CA-32942
LYNN ANDERSON	• Greatest Hits Vol. 2	COL	KC-34308	CA-34308	CARTER FAMILY	The Original Carter Family	Old Hom	OH-90045	No Tape	JESSI COLTER	I'm Jessi Colter	CAP	ST-11363	8XT-11363
	• Wrap Your Love All Around Your Man	COL	KC-34439	CA-34439		• Best Of The Carter Family	COL	CS-9119	No Tape					
						• Three Generations	COL	KC-33084	CA-33084	RITA COOLIDGE	It's Only Love	A&M	SP-4531	SP-8-4531
						• Country's First Family	COL	KC-34266	CA-34266					
CHET ATKINS	Chet Atkins & Lester Paul	RCA	APLI-1167	APSI-1167	JOHNNY CARVER	Afternoon Delight	DOT	DOSD-2042	2042M	BILLY "CRASH" CRADDOCK	Still Thinkin' 'Bout You	ABC	ABCD-875	875M
	Chet Atkins & Friends	RCA	APLI-1985	APSI-1985							Easy As Pie	DOT	DOSD-2040	2040M
GENE AUTRY	Melody Ranch	RAD	MR-1048	No Tape	JOHNNY CASH	• Look At Them Beans	COL	KC-33814	CA-33814		Crash	DOT	DOSD-2063	2063M
	Gene Autry Favorites	REP	IRDA-6013	8T-6013		• John R. Cash	COL	KC-33370	CA-33370	CHARLIE DANIELS	• High Lonesome	Epic	PE-34377	EA-34377
	Cowboy Hall Of Fame	REP	IRDA-6012	8T-6012		• One Piece At A Time	COL	KC-34193	CA-34193					
	Live From Madison					• The Last Gunfighter Ballad	COL	KC-34314	CA-34314	DANNY DAVIS	Texas (with Nashville Brass)	RCA	APLI-1578	APSI-1578
	Square Garden	REP	IRDA-6014	8T-6014	JUNE CARTER CASH	• Appalachian Pride	COL	KC-33686	CA-33686					
	American Singing Cowboys	REP	IRDA-6016	8T-6016						MAC DAVIS	• Forever Lovers	COL	PC-3415	PCA-3415
MOE BANDY	• Here I Am Drunk Again	COL	KC-34285	CA-34285	ROY CLARK	Roy Clark Guitar					• Burnin' Thing	COL	PC-33551	CA-33551
	Cowboys And Daddys	RCA	APLI-1222	APSI-1222		Spectacular	CAP	SM-2425	No Tape		• Stop & Smell The Roses	COL	KC-32582	CA-32582
	• I'm Sorry For You, My Friends	COL	KC-34443	CA-34443		Roy Clark Live	DOT	DOS-26005	26005M		• Baby Don't Get Hooked On Me	COL	KC-31770	CA-31770
BOBBY BARE	Singin' In The Kitchen	RCA	APLI-0700	APSI-0700		Roy Clark's Greatest Hits, Vol. 1	DOT	DOSD-2030	2030M	JOHN DENVER	Spirit	RCA	APLI-1694	APSI-1694
	This Is Bare Country	UA	LA-621-G	LA-621-H		A Pair Of Fives (Banjos, That Is)	DOT	DOSD-2015	2015M		Windsong	RCA	APLI-1183	APSI-1183
	The Winner And Other Losers	RCA	APLI-1786	APSI-1786		In Concert	DOT	DOSD-2054	2054M	DAVE DUDLEY	Uncommonly Good Country	UA	LA-512-G	LA-512-H
	Me And McDill	RCA	APLI-2179	APSI-2179	PATSY CLINE	Heart To Heart	DOT	DOSD-2041	2041M					
JIM ED BROWN	I Don't Want To Have To Marry You	RCA	APLI-2024	APSI-2024		Sentimentally Yours	MCA	MCA-90	MCAT-90	THE EAGLES	Greatest Hits	Asylum	7E-1052	TC-5-1052
						A Portrait Of Patsy Cline	MCA	MCA-224	MCAT-224					
						Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits Showcase	MCA	MCA-12	MCAT-12					
							MCA	MCA-87	MCAT-87					

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Hotel California		Asylum	1084	TC-5-1084	For The People In The Last Hard Town	MER	SRM-1-687	MC8-1687		JERRY LEE LEWIS	Country Class	MER	SRM-1-1109	MC8-1-1109
BARBARA FAIRCHILD					Homecoming	MER	SR-61247	No Tape			Odd Man In	MER	SRM-1-1064	MC8-1-1064
• Mississippi		COL	KC-34307	CA-34307	Songs Of Fox Hollow	MER	SR-1-500	MC8-500		HANK LOCKLIN	Hank Locklin	MGM	M3G-4986	No Tape
• A Sweeter Love		COL	KC-31720	CA-31720	Ballad Of Forth Dollars & His Other Great Songs	MER	SR-61211	No Tape		LOUVIN BROS.	The Family Who Prays	CAP	DT-1061	No Tape
• Kid Stuff		COL	KC-32711	CA-32711	The Magnificent Music Machine	MER	SRM-1-1111	MC8-1-1111			The Great Gospel Singing Of The Louvin Bros.	CAP	ST-11193	No Tape
DONNA FARGO					Faster Horses	MER	SRM-1-1076	MC8-1-1076			The Best Of Charles Louvin	CAP	ST-11112	No Tape
Whatever I Say Means I Love You		DOT	DOSD-2029	2029M	Greatest Hits, Vol. 2	MER	SRM-1-1044	MC8-1-1044		BOB LUMAN	• Greatest Hits	Epic	KE-32759	No Tape
The Happiest Girl In The Whole U.S.A.		DOT	DOS-26000	26000M	EMMYLOU HARRIS					• Lonely Women Make Good Lovers	Epic	KE-31746	No Tape	
All About A Feeling		DOT	DOS-26019	26019M	Elite Hotel	WB	BS-2236	B8-2236		• Neither One Of Us	Epic	KE-32192	No Tape	
My Second Album		DOT	DOS-26006	26006M	Luxury Liner	WB	BS-2998	B8-2998		• When You Say Love	Epic	KE-31375	No Tape	
On The Move		WB	BS-2926	M8-2926	FREDDIE HART					LORETTA LYNN	Hymns	MCA	MCA-5	MCAT-5
MARVEL FELTS					Super Kind Of Woman	CAP	ST-11156	No Tape		Don't Come Home A Drinkin'	MCA	MCA-113	MCAT-113	
Narvel Felts		DOT	DOSD-2025	2025M	Easy Loving	CAP	ST-838	8XT-838		You Ain't Woman Enough	MCA	MCA-6	MCAT-6	
Doin' What I Feel		DOT	DOSD-2065	No Tape	Freddie Hart Presents	CAP	ST-11431	No Tape		Back To The Country Home	MCA	MCA-471	MCAT-471	
Narvel The Marvel		DOT	DOSD-2033	2033M	Country Heart 'N' Soul	CAP	ST-11353	No Tape		Somebody Somewhere	MCA	MCA-2146	MCAT-2146	
Greatest Hits, Vol. 1		DOT	DOSD-2036	2036M	The First Time	CAP	ST-11449	8XT-11449		When The Tingle Becomes A Chill	MCA	MCA-2228	MCAT-2228	
FREOY FENDER					FERLIN HUSKY					Loretta Writes 'Em & Sings 'Em	MCA	MCA-133	No Tape	
Before The Next Teardrop Falls		DOT	DOSD-2020	2020M	The Foster And Rice Songbook	ABC	ABCD-884	ABCD-884M		Woman Of The World- To Make A Man	MCA	MCA-280	No Tape	
If You're Ever In Texas		DOT	DOSD-2061	8310-2061H	WAYLON JENNINGS					BARBARA MANDRELL	Midnight Angel	DOT	DOSD-2067	2067M
Rock 'N' Country		DOT	DOSD-2050	8-2050	Ladies Love Outlaws	RCA	LSP-4751	P8S-2016		M.W. McCALL	Black Bear Road	MGM	M3G-5008	M88-5008
Are You Ready For Freddy		DOT	DOSD-2044	2044M	Lonesome, On'ry And Mean	RCA	LSP-4854	P8S-2136		Wolf Creek Pass	MGM	M3G-4989	M8G-4989	
LEFTY FRIZZELL					Honky Tonk Heroes	RCA	APLI-0240	APSI-0240		Rubber Duck	MGM			
• Sings The Songs of Jimmie Rodgers		COL	CS-32249	No Tape	This Time	RCA	APLI-0539	APSI-0539		DELBERT McCLINTON	Genuine Cowhide Victim Of Life's Circumstances	ABC	ABCD-959	8-959
The Classic Style		ABC	ABCD-861	No Tape	The Ramblin' Man	RCA	APLI-0734	APSI-0734		RONNIE MILSAP	Ronnie Milsap Live	RCA	APLI-2043	APSI-2043
• Greatest Hits		COL	CS-9288	No Tape	Dreaming My Dreams	RCA	APLI-1062	APSI-1062		Night Things	RCA	APLI-1223	APSI-1223	
• Remembering The Greatest Hits Of		COL	KC-33882	CA-33882	Music From Mackintosh & T.J.	RCA	APLI-1520	APSI-1520		A Legend In My Time	RCA	APLI-0846	APSI-0846	
CRYSTAL GAYLE					Waylon Live	RCA	APLI-1108	APSI-1108		Pure Love	RCA	APLI-0500	APSI-0500	
I'm Not So Far Away		UA	LA-543-G	LA-543-H	Are You Ready For The Country	RCA	APLI-1816	APSI-1816		20-20 Vision	RCA	APLI-1666	APSI-1666	
Crystal		UA	LA-614-G	LA-614-H	The Best Of Singers Of Sad Songs	RCA	LSP-4341	No Tape		Where My Heart Is	RCA	APLI-0338	APSI-0338	
COUNTRY GAZETTE					GEORGE JONES					BILL MONROE	The High, Lonesome Sounds Of Bill Monroe	MCA	MCA-110	No Tape
Live		Antil	AN-7014	AN8-7014	You Gotta Be My Baby	RCA	APLI-0486	No Tape		• 16 All-Time Greatest Hits	COL	CS-1065	No Tape	
MICKEY GILLEY					Best Of George Jones	RCA	APLI-0316	No Tape		The Weary Traveler	MCA	MCA-2173	MCAT-2173	
Gilley's Smokin'		Playboy	PB-415	PBT-415	• Nothing Ever Hurt Me (Half As Bad As Losing You)	Epic	KE-32412	EA-32412		Bill Monroe	MCA	MCA-426	MCAT-426	
Greatest Hits, Vol. 1		Playboy	PB-409	PBT-409	The Best Of The Best Of George Jones	RCA	APLI-1113	No Tape		Sings Bluegrass, Body And Soul	MCA	MCA-2251	MCAT-2251	
City Lights		Playboy	PB-403	PBT-403	• Alone Again	Epic	KE-34290	EA-34150		MELBA MONTGOMERY	Aching, Breaking Heart	CAP	SM-11347	No Tape
Overnight Sensation		Playboy	PB-408	PBT-408	• The Battle	Epic	KE-34034	EA-34034		Melba Montgomery	Elk	EKS-75069	ET-85069	
Mickey's Movin' On		Playboy	PB-405	PBT-405	• Memories Of Us	Epic	KE-33547	EA-33547		No Charge	Elk	EKS-7507	ET-85079	
Room Full Of Roses		Playboy	PB-401	PBT-401	• Golden Rings (with Tammy Wynette)	COL	KE-34291	EA-34291		GEORGE MORGAN	• Remembering The Greatest Hits Of George Morgan	COL	KC-3389	No Tape
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MERLE HAGGARD					Swamp Grass	WB	BS-2581	M8-2581						
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My Salute To Bob Wills		CAP	ST-638	No Tape	Doug Kershaw	WB	BS-1906	M8-1906						
The Best Of The Best Of Merle Haggard		CAP	ST-11082	8XT-11082	Alive And Pickin'	WB	BS-2851	B8-2851						
If We Make It Through December		CAP	ST-11276	8XT-11276	Ragin' Cajun	WB	BS-2910	B8-2910						
His 30th Album		CAP	ST-11331	8XT-11331	KRIS KRISTOFFERSON									
Keep Movin' On		CAP	ST-11365	8XT-11365	Who's To Bless & Who's To Blame	MON	PZ-33379	PZA-33379						
The Roots Of My Raising		CAP	ST-11586	8XT-11586	Surreal Thing	MON	PZ-34254	PZA-34254						
My Love Affair With Trains		CAP	ST-11544	8XT-11544	DICKEY LEE									
Let Me Tell You About A Song		CAP	ST-882	No Tape	Rocky	RCA	APLI-1243	APSI-1243						
Land Of Many Churches		CAP	SWBO-803	No Tape	Angels, Roses And Rain	RCA	APLI-1725	APSI-1725						
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Artist	Title	Label	LP No.	8-Track Tape No.	Artist	Title	Label	LP No.	8-Track Tape No.	Artist	Title	Label	LP No.	8-Track Tape No.
ANNE MURRAY	Keeping In Touch Together	CAP	ST-11559	8ST-11559	ELVIS PRESLEY	From Elvis Presley Boulevard, Memphis, Tennessee	RCA	APLI-1506	APSI-1506	• Adios Amigo	COL	KE-34448	CA-34448	
		CAP	ST-11433	8ST-11433	The Sun Sessions	RCA	APMI-1675	APSI-1675	• El Paso City	COL	KC-34303	CA-34303		
					A Legendary Performer, Vol. 1	RCA	CPLI-0341	CPS-1-0341	• I've Got A Woman's Love	COL	KC-31628	No Tape		
WILLIE NELSON	• Red Headed Stranger	COL	KC-33482	CA-33482	A Legendary Performer, Vol. 2	RCA	CPLI-1349	CPS-1-1349	• The World Of Marty Robbins	COL	G-30881	GA-3088		
	Wanted (with Jennings, Colter, Glaser)	RCA	APLI-1321	APSI-1321	Today	RCA	APLI-1039	APSI-1039	• My Woman, My Woman, My Wife	COL	CS-9978	18C00864		
	• The Troublemaker	COL	KC-34112	CA-34112	Elvis NOW	RCA	LSP-4671	P8S-1898	JIMMIE RODGERS					
	• The Sound In Your Mind	COL	KC-34092	CA-34092	Elvis Country	RCA	LSP-4460	P8S-1655	Never No Mo' Blues	RCA	LPM-1232	No Tape		
	Country Willie	UA	LA-410-G	LA-410-H	RAY PRICE				Train Whistle Blues	RCA	LPM-1640	APSI-0401		
	What Can You Do To Me Now	RCA	APLI-1234	APSI-1234	Hank 'N' Me	DOT	DOSD-2062	No Tape	My Time Ain't Long	RCA	LPM-2865	No Tape		
					Rainbows & Tears	DOT	DOSD-2053	8-2053	The Best Of The Legendary Jimmie Rodgers	RCA	LPS-3315	P8S-1956		
OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN	Olivia	MCA	MCA-389	MCAT-389	Say I Do	DOT	DOSD-2037	8-2037	This Is Jimmie Rodgers	RCA	VPS-6091	P8S-5145		
	If You Love Me, Let Me Know	MCA	MCA-411	MCAT-411	CHARLEY PRIDE				JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ					
	Have You Never Been Mellow	MCA	MCA-2133	MCAT-2133	The Country Way	RCA	LSP-3895	P8S-1308	Reflecting	MER	SRM-1-1110	MCR4-1-1110		
	Don't Stop Believin'	MCA	MCA-2223	MCAT-2223	Make Mine Country	RCA	LSP-3952	No Tape	Love Put A Song In My Heart	MER	SRM-1-1057	MC-8-1-1057		
	Clearly Love	MCA	MCA-2148	MCAT-2148	Sweet Country	RCA	APLI-0217	APSI-0217	ROY ROGERS					
	Come On Over	MCA	MCA-2186	MCAT-2186	Pride Of America	RCA	APLI-0757	APSI-0757	Happy Trails To You	20 Cen	T-467	8XT-467		
	Let Me Be There	MCA	MCA-389	MCAT-389	The Best Of, Vol. 2	RCA	LSP-4682	P8S-1913	The Bible Tells Me So (with Dale Evans)	CAP	ST-1745	8M-1745		
TOMMY OVERSTREET	Greatest Hits, Vol. 1	DOT	DOSD-2027	8-2027	Charley	RCA	APLI-1038	APSI-1038	LINDA RONSTADT					
	My Friends Call Me T.O.	DOT	DOS-26012	No Tape	Sunday Morning With Charley Pride	RCA	APLI-1359	APSI-1359	Heart Like A Wheel	CAP	ST-11358	8XT-11358		
	Woman, Your Name Is My Song	DOT	DOS-26021	26021M	The Best Of, Vol. 3	RCA	APLI-2023	APSI-2023	Different Drum	CAP	ST-11269	8XT-11269		
	Live From The Velvet Slipper	DOT	DOSD-2038	8-2038	Amazing Love	RCA	APLI-0397	APSI-0397	Hasten Down The Wind	Asylum	7E-1072	ET-8-1072		
	Turn On To Tommy Overstreet	DOT	DOSD-2056	8-2056	Country Feelin'	RCA	APLI-0534	APSI-0534	Prisoner In Disguise	Asylum	7E-1045	ET-8-1045		
					Charley Pride's 10th Album	RCA	LSP-4367	P8S-1593	Greatest Hits	Asylum	7E-1092	ET-8-1092		
ROY ORBISON	I'm Still In Love With You	MER	SRM-1-1045	MC-8-1045	Sings Heart Songs	RCA	LSP-4617	P8S-1848	JOHNNY RUSSELL					
					Songs Of Love	RCA	LSP-4837	P8S-2120	Catfish John/Chained Rednecks, White Socks	RCA	LSP-4851	No Tape		
					A Sunshiny Day	RCA	LSP-4742	P8S-1997	And Blue Ribbon Beer	RCA	APLI-1-0345	No Tape		
					I'm Just Me	RCA	LSP-4560	P8S-1772	Here Comes Johnny Russell	RCA	APLI-1211	APSI-1211		
DOLLY PARTON	The Best Of Dolly Parton	RCA	LSP-4449	P8S-1645	EDDIE RABBITT				She's In Love With A Rodeo Man	RCA	APLI-0542	No Tape		
	Coat Of Many Colors	RCA	LSP-4603	P8S-1826	Rocky Mountain Music	ELEK	7E-1065	ET8-1065	EARL SCRUGGS					
	My Tennessee Mountain Home	RCA	APLI-0033	APSI-0033	JERRY REED				• Where The Lilies Bloom	COL	KC-32806	EA-32806		
	Bubblin' Over	RCA	APLI-0286	No Tape	Both Barrels	RCA	APLI-1861	APSI-1861	• Scroggs Revue Live From Austin City Limits	COL	PC-34464	CA-34464		
	Jolene	RCA	APLI-0473	APSI-0473	Red Hot Picker	RCA	APLI-1226	APSI-1226	• Scroggs Revue Anniversary Special	COL	PC-33416	PCA-33416		
	Dolly Parton & Porter Wagoner Love & Music	RCA	APLI-0248	No Tape	A Good Woman's Love	RCA	APLI-0544	No Tape	JEAN SHEPARD					
	Love Is Like A Butterfly	RCA	APLI-0712	APSI-0712	Tupelo Mississippi Flash	RCA	ACLI-0331	No Tape	Mercy, Ain't Love Good	UA	LA-609-G	EA-609-H		
	The Bargain Store	RCA	APLI-0950	APSI-0950	The Uptown Poker Club	RCA	APLI-0356	No Tape	Greatest Hits	UA	LA-685-G	EA-685-H		
	The Best Of Porter Wagoner & Dolly Parton	RCA	LSP-4556	P8S-1770	JIM REEVES				RED SIMPSON					
	Porter 'N' Dolly	RCA	APLI-0646	APSI-0646	Moonlight And Roses	RCA	LSP-2854	P8S-1020	I'm A Truck	CAP	SM-881	8M-881		
	Best Of Dolly Parton	RCA	APLI-1117	APSI-1117	Distant Drums	RCA	LSP-3542	P8S-1158	The Very Real Red Simpson	CAP	ST-11093	No Tape		
	All I Can Do	RCA	APLI-1665	APSI-1665	Missing You	RCA	LSP-4749	No Tape	CAL SMITH					
	Dolly	RCA	APLI-1221	APSI-1221	Am I That Easy To Forget	RCA	APLI-0039	APSI-0039	Best Of Cal Smith	MCA	MCA-70	MCAT-70		
	We Found It (with Porter Wagoner)	RCA	LSP-4841	No Tape	Songs Of Love	RCA	APLI-1037	APSI-1037	I've Found Someone Of My Own	MCA	MCA-56	No Tape		
	Dolly Parton Sings "My Favorite Songwriter, Porter Wagoner"	RCA	LSP-4752	No Tape	Jim Reeves Writes You A Record	RCA	LSP-4475	No Tape	Country Bumpkin	MCA	MCA-424	MCAT-424		
					A Touch Of Sadness	RCA	LSP-3987	No Tape	It's Time To Pay The Fiddler	MCA	MCA-467	MCAT-467		
					Talkin' To Your Heart	RCA	LSP-2339	No Tape	My Kind Of Country	MCA	MCA-485	MCAT-485		
BUCK OWENS	Buck 'Em	WB	BS-2952	B8-2952	CHARLIE RICH				CONNIE SMITH					
					• Greatest Hits	Epic	PE-34240	PA-34240	• I Don't Wanna Talk It Over Anymore	COL	KC-34270	CA-34270		
JOHNNY PAYCHECK	• Eleven Months And 29 Days	COL	KE-33943	EA-33943	JEANNIE C. RILEY				• A Lady Named Smith	COL	KC-32185	No Tape		
	• Loving You Beats All I've Ever Seen	Epic	KE-33354	EA-33354	Just Jeannie	MGM	SE-4909	No Tape	SAMMI SMITH					
	• Song And Dance Man	COL	KE-32570	EA-32570	TEX RITTER				Sunshine	MEGA	MLPS-611	ML8-611		
	• My Lovemaker	Epic	KE-32387	No Tape	Hillbilly Heaven	CAP	SM-1623	No Tape						
WEBB PIERCE	Greatest Hits	MCA	MCA-120	MCAT-120	Fall Away	CAP	ST-11351	No Tape						
					The Supercountry	CAP	ST-11037	No Tape						
MARY KAY PLACE	• Tonight At The Capri Lounge	COL	PC-34353	EA-34353	Legendary Tex Ritter	CAP	DT-2595	No Tape						
					The Best Of Tex Ritter	CAP	ST-11503	No Tape						
					Comin' After Jimmy	CAP								
					MARTY ROBBINS									
					• Return Of The Gunfighter	COL	CS-8872	No Tape						
					• Gunfighter Ballads	COL	CS-9327	18C00116						
					Marty Robbins	MCA	MCA-342	No Tape						
					Good 'N' Country	MCA	MCA-421	No Tape						

Artist	Title	Label	LP No.	8-Track Tape No.	Artist	Title	Label	LP No.	8-Track Tape No.	Artist	Title	Label	LP No.	8-Track Tape No.
HANK SNOW	You're Easy To Love	RCA	APLI-0908	APSI-0908	HANK THOMPSON	Sings The Hits Of Nat "King" Cole	DOT	DOSD-2032	9-2032	JERRY JEFF WALKER	It's A Good Night For Singin	MCA	MCA-2202	MCAT-2202
	Award Winners	RCA	LSP-4601	No Tape		Back In The Swing Of Things	DOT	DOSD-2060	DOT-2060	JERRY WALLACE	Jerry Wallace	MGM	M3G-5007	No Tape
	That's You & Me	RCA	APLI-0608	No Tape						FREDDY WELLER	• Liquor, Love & Life	COL	KC-34244	CA-34244
	I'm Movin' On	RCA	APLI-0540	No Tape	MEL TILLIS	Welcome To Mel Tillis Country	MGM	MG-1-5022	8T-1-5022	DOTTIE WEST	Carolina Cousins	RCA	LSP-4811	No Tape
	Sings Grand Ole Opry Favorites	RCA	APLI-0162	No Tape		Stomp Them Grapes	MGM	M3G-4960	No Tape		The Best Of	RCA	APLI-1041	APSI-1041
	Now	RCA	APLI-0607	No Tape		Mel Tillis And The Statesiders	MGM	M3G-4987	M8G-4987	SLIM WHITMAN	Everything Leads Back To You	UA	LA-513-G	No Tape
	Hello Love	RCA	APLI-0441	APSI-0441		The Best Of Greatest Hits	MCA	MCA-66	MCAT-66					
SONS OF THE PIONEERS	Cool Water	RCA	LSP-2118	ANSI-1092	FLOYD TILLMAN	• The Best Of	COL	KC-34334	CA-34334	DON WILLIAMS	Greatest Hits, Vol. 1	DOT	DOSD-2035	2035M
	The Best Of	RCA	LSP-3476	No Tape							Harmony	DOT	DOSD-2049	2049M
	Tumbling Tumbleweeds	RCA	LSP-4119	No Tape	TOMPALL	Tompall & His Outlaw Band	ABC	AB-973	8T-973		You're My Best Friend	DOT	DOSD-2021	2021M
RED SOUVINE	Teddy Bear	Starday	SD-968X	SD-8-968X							Visions	DOT	DOSD-2064	2064M
BILLIE JO SPEARS	What I've Got In Mind	UA	LA-608-G	LA-608-H	BUCK TRENT	Bionic Banjo	DOT	DOSD-2058	8-2058	HANK WILLIAMS JR.	Fourteen Greatest Hits	MGM	MG-1-5020	8T-1-5020
	Billie Jo	UA	LA-508-G	LA-508-H							Hank Williams Jr. & Friends	MGM	M3G-5009	M88-5009
	I'm Not Easy	UA	LA-684-G	LA-684-H	ERNEST TUBB	Golden Favorites	MCA	MCA-84	MCAT-84	HANK WILLIAMS SR.	Live At The Grand Ole Opry	MGM	MG-1-5019	8T-1-5019
JOE STAMPLEY	• Ten Songs About Her	Epic	KE-34356	EA-34356		I've Got All The Heart-aches I Can Handle	MCA	MCA-341	MCAT-341		Greatest Hits	MGM	SE-3918	M8G-3918
	All These Things	DOT	DOSD-2059	2059M	MARSHALL TUCKER BAND	Carolina Dreams	CAPR	CPK-0180	M8-0180		14 More Greatest Hits	MGM	SE-4040	M8G-4040
	• Billy, Get Me A Woman	Epic	KE-33546	EA-33546							The Very Best Of	MGM	SE-4168	M8G-4168
THE STATLER BROS.	Sons Of The Motherland	MER	SRM-1-1019	MC8-1-1019	TANYA TUCKER	Here's Some Love	MCA	MCA-2213	MCAT-2213	BOB WILLS	The History Of	MGM	SE-4866	No Tape
	Bed Of Rose's	MER	SR-61317	MC8-61317		Lovin' And Learnin'	MCA	MCA-2167	MCAT-2167		Greatest String Band Hits	MCA	MCA-152	MCAT-152
	Country Music Then And Now	MER	SR-61367	MC8-61367	CONWAY TWITTY	I'm Not Through Loving You Yet	MCA	MCA-441	MCAT-441		The Best Of	MCA	MCA-153	MCAT-153
	Alive At The Johnny Mack Brown High School	MER	SRM-1-708	MC8-1-708		Greatest Hits	MCA	MCA-52	MCAT-52		King Of Western Swing	MCA	MCA-543	MCAT-543
	The Best Of The Statler Bros.	MER	SRM-1-1037	MC8-1-1037		You've Never Been This Far Before	MCA	MCA-359	MCAT-359	TAMMY WYNETTE	• You And Me	Epic	KE-34289	EA-34289
	Holy Bible Old Testament	MER	SRM-1-1051	MC-8-1-1051		Feelins'	MCA	MCA-2143	MCAT-2143		• I Still Believe In Fairy Tales	Epic	KE-33582	EA-33582
	Holy Bible New Testament	MER	SRM-1-1052	MC-8-1-1052		High Priest Of Country Music	MCA	MCA-2144	MCAT-2144	FARON YOUNG	The Best Of, Vol. 2	MER	SRM-11130	MC-8-11130
	The Country America Loves	MER	SRM-1-1125	MC8-1-1125		Now And Then	MCA	MCA-2235	MCAT-2235					
GARY STEWART	Steppin' Out	RCA	APLI-1125	APSI-1125		Greatest Hits, Vol. 2	MCA	MCA-2176	MCA-8-2176	STEVE YOUNG	Renegade Picker	RCA	APLI-1759	APSI-1759
NAT STUCKEY	Independence	MCA	MCA-2184	MCAT-2184		This Time I've Hurt Her								
BILLY SWAN	Rock 'N' Roll Moon	MON	PZ-33805	PZA-33805		More Than She Loves Me								

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Dolly Parton

(Continued from page 28)

have they all been country. Songs such as *Love is Like a Butterfly*, *I Will Always Love You* and *We Used To* are more pop than anything, but no one complained about that when they came out, and no one charged Dolly with turning her back on Nashville. And *Jolene* and *The Bargain Store* are more closely akin to the ballads that the English settlers brought to Appalachia. *Coat of Many Colors*, too, may be country or rural in subject, but its melody and progression is as "folk" as anything Burl Ives ever sang. Because Dolly's music has often been either built on or contained snatches of other forms of music besides country, it has had a certain uniqueness that really defies constrictive labels, and that is how it should be.

That's one reason, though, that it's hard to answer, is Dolly Parton leaving country? Culturally, she is "leaving" it probably not at all, although she might be sampling the West Coast way of doing things more than she has in the past. And musically, well, *New Harvest* . . . *First Gathering* certainly sounds like a radical change, indeed, with only one "countryish" tune, *Applejack*, offsetting nine unabashed pop, ballad and downright rock songs, made even more so by their arrangements and instrumentation. But while it may seem an almost totally new Dolly to us (not even *Butterfly* was this pop), to her, she's not really much further away from country than she has been in the past, especially in her writing. "I've always written things like *My Girl*. It's all a matter of arrangement," she says, and adds that only three of the original songs on *New Harvest* . . . *First Gathering* are recent compositions. The rest, she wrote years ago.

What is really the point here is that Dolly will no longer be restricted to one musical form. She will still be country, but, like Mac Davis and Glen Campbell (could all this fuss be because she is the first woman in country to do this?), she will probably also be rock and pop, hopefully with an underlying country flavor. And, if she gets her way, she will not be pigeonholed to one form of creativity, either, but will be expanding and building on all her talents to realize whatever potential she has as an author, a scriptwriter, a comedienne, an actress and who knows what else? Country music is no longer just the pastime of rural America. It is Big Business, and Dolly Parton wants to be, too. She always has.

"These are the things I came from the mountains to try," she says. "I wanna see what I'm made of. I wanna see who all I am. And I will. There'll be lots of mountains that I'll climb, and there ain't none so tall that I'd be afraid to start up it. I may not make it all the way up every mountain I climb, but that don't mean I ain't gonna be tryin'."

All lyrics Copyright Velvet Apple Music

Aces

(Continued from page 37)

without stepping all over each other, if we all weren't thinking in the same way."

What they were working on for their new album was just as diverse as their listening habits; songs Smith describes as all "typical Aces tunes." But he added, "I don't think we're developing the way some listeners thought we were going to. Some people thought we were just a bunch of studio cats who collect unusual records, kind of an academic trip. Our first and also our second albums were made under different conditions than this one. We're now a complete band. Everybody's singing better and blending together well. We now choose our songs differently because we like to play them on stage a lot before we decide how we want to record them."

"There's more collaboration on this album than on the other two," said pianist James Hooker. "It's interesting to see the different styles and nuances crop up since we're working closer together on this project. It's making the album stronger."

"I'm glad about that," says Smith. "The new record will be a surprise to a lot of people. I was listening to some of the tracks at home the other day and they even surprised me. I like the idea of not knowing what to expect, 'cause it keeps things interesting."

(*The End Is Not In Sight, copyright H.R. Smith, Fourth Floor Music Inc., ASCAP.)


Ernest Tubb

(Continued from page 42)

"When I got to Nashville, I needed a band to make personals. My producer Dave Kapp wanted to keep me like I was, with just the two guitars. His attitude was, why change a formula that's so successful?" Ernest did change it, though; he never hesitated to move ahead with the times, and, having added amplification two years earlier when he sent guitarist Jimmie Short a pick-up with instructions to learn how to use it, he now created a band ("you needed the drums for dancing) and a trademark that enabled him to compete with the raucous good times of the barrooms and dance halls in which he played. That was the start of his career, a career which has moved ahead at a steady unhurried pace to this day. He has never forgotten how Mrs. Jimmie Rodgers helped him, though, nor has he forgotten the struggle along the way. "It was really tough. I mean, you just had to want it so bad," he will say in a surprising burst of emotion. "It has to be the only thing for you—the one thing in your life."

Two giant buses idle outside the Clarksville (Indiana) High School gym. Their fumes choke the parking lot, but it is chilly for April, there are no dressing rooms in side, and hardly enough energy or curiosity among the musicians to get off the bus

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to watch someone else perform. By 4:00 in the afternoon Ernest has already been on and offstage. He stayed up most of the night reading and playing cards and was awakened only minutes before going on for the first show. "I wish they had woken me up earlier," he grumbles as he grabs for his Stetson and his guitar case and confesses to the audience that he hasn't had a chance to see the acts that have gone on already because to tell the truth he was sleeping till just a few minutes ago in the bus, but he's sure that they were good, so let's give them a big hand.

Between shows Ernest rests. The Troubadours, ranging in age from 25 to 40, drift in and out, go out for pizza, and exchange stories of the road.

One of the Troubadours asks if Ernest has had a chance to listen to the tape a hometown friend of his has sent to him. "You better tell him to keep his job," says Ernest with a reluctance that seems almost pained. Another Troubadour comes back to say that they will be closing the second show, not going on stage until at least 9:30 after Del Reeves has finished. Ernest, who wants to get rolling and has already vowed that he isn't going to close, just nods and leans back in his seat. There's about four and a half hours to kill.

"To me singers are stylists," Ernest says. "You don't have to be a great singer or have a fine voice. I've heard a lot of fine singers who couldn't draw fifteen people, because what they were singing just had no feeling in it. I'm not saying I'm a good singer, but I sing like I feel, I think you can tell the feeling is there. Some of this music today is fine in its way, but it's just too complicated. I want my music to be simple enough, so that the boy out there on the farm can learn it and practice it and try to play it."

At last at 9:50 he reappears on stage. In the wings he whispers for the name of the local DJ and then thanks him graciously for his introduction. The show that he puts on is virtually identical to the first show—the same familiar standards, the inevitable Jimmie Rodgers selection, even the country boy jokes with the Troubadours fall in the same places—and if it were not for the evident sincerity of his manner it might almost seem perfunctory. There are no new songs, there are no new compositions ("Oh sure, you lose enthusiasm on a song like *Walking the Floor Over You*, that you've been singing every night for 35 years. But I tell the boys, 'I know we all get tired of them, but this is what the people want.'"), and he goes off after about 45 minutes, leaving the audience, as an old vaudevillian taught him in 1943, "wanting one more piece of pie."

Afterwards he sits on a folding chair at the front of the stage, signing autographs, leaning over to catch a heartfelt greeting, being proudly presented to children and grandchildren. The talk is most-

ly of the past, of World War II or the show that Ernest did twenty-five years ago in Korea or the Texas dancehalls that Ernest played when husband and wife first met. Indeed, so strong is the bond between audience and performer, the reality which they share is so intertwined that after Ernest wrote *Our Baby's Book* about the death in infancy of his second son, Rodger Dean, he could scarcely play a dance for years without being introduced to at least one Rodger Dean, named in his son's honor. "I still average about one a week, and you know something? They didn't have any way of knowing it was a true story, I didn't announce it or anything. But they could tell it was true because the feeling was there. It's the only 100% real song I've ever written." It is the song, needless to say, of which he is proudest, the song more than anything else which bears out his contention that there is nothing frivolous about his music. "Country music," he insists, "is music with a meaning," a real meaning and a literal truth which sets it apart from every other music but the blues.

The line grows smaller, the auditorium slowly empties out and Del Reeves' bus is long since gone, but Ernest stays patiently, as his publicity says that he does, until the last autograph is signed. There are some artists, Hoot Borden says enviously, who would allow him to sell ahead of their signature; he knows of many performers who don't even sign every item that is sold; but Ernest won't permit him to get even one or two ahead, and as a result some fans who get tired of waiting in line just go off without buying anything. Ernest loses a lot of business that way, Hoot grumbles, as he and his son pack up albums, calendars, and other souvenirs. Ernest sits slumped in the chair. His face is lined and weary, and for a moment all the good cheer seems to have drained out of it. There is no question that the road has taken its toll, but Ernest Tubb is a survivor. Hank Williams is long dead, Billy Byrd has recently been working at Shakey's Pizza Parlor, alcohol has cut down many a good man, but Ernest looks as if he will just keep on, staying out on the road as long as there is anyone to listen. He rouses himself at last and makes his way back to the bus, where he says his last courteous good nights. Then the bus roars off, and as I watch it I am reminded of Jack Greene's description of going out on his own following the Top 10 success of two records he cut while still a Troubadour. "Ernest gave me the best advice I ever had. Of course he probably don't know it, but he told me, 'Son, I've lived through the Beatles, I've lived through Fats Domino, Elvis, and all the rest. Son, you just stay what you are, hang on with it, and if it's not your time now, it'll come your time again. So, you just go out there and try to make your money, and if it don't work out, well, you can always come back and be a Troubadour.'"

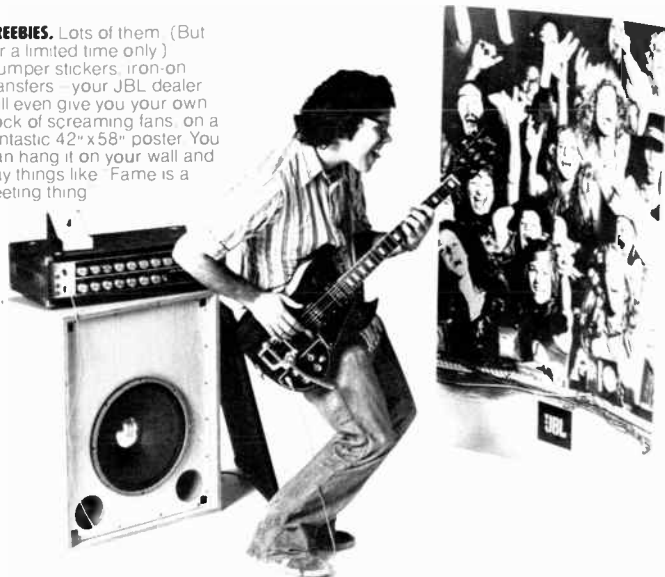
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