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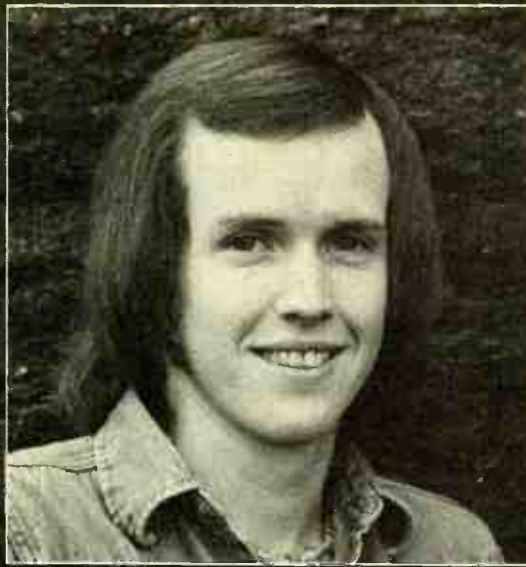


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COUNTRY MUSIC

Volume Five, Number Six, March, 1976

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WASTED DAYS, WASTED NIGHTS? ROXY GORDON 22
Stomping across the nation on his usual insane schedule, Freddy Fender becomes all things to all people—a rocker for rockers, a Chicano for Chicanos, a country singer for the friends and neighbors. That's because he's naturally a nice guy, because he's smart, and because he's hungry.

JOHNNY WHO? RICK BOLSON 28
When they announced the Instrumentalist of the Year Award at the '75 CMA Awards show, you could almost hear the TV audience scratching their heads. But the folks at the Opry knew who Johnny Gimble was. Now it's your turn.

ARTIST OF THE MONTH: MERLE HAGGARD 32

STONEY EDWARDS GLENN HUNTER 36
Who's Number One? Charley Pride, of course. But the days when Charley was the one and only black in country music are over: Stoney's plugging on.

HILLBILLY HEAVEN: THE SOLUTION ACCORDING TO RAY PRICE DAVE HICKEY 40
Ray Price, who worked with Hank Williams and stayed his course in Music City, finally gave up and went home to Texas. Hickey visits him there, and explores the ranch. Hickey figures it's Hill-billy Heaven, and so does Ray.

HI-FI CORNER HANS FANTEL 44

THE HALL OF FAME DOUG GREEN & PATRICK CARR 52
It looks like a cross between a church and a barn, it's the biggest tourist attraction in Nashville, and it's doing a damn good job of keeping the past alive. The Hall of Fame/Country Music Foundation is a gold mine.

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COVER PHOTO: EMERSON-LOEW
CENTERFOLD PHOTO: JOHN LEE

Letters

As both an old-time fiddle and banjo player and a college folklore teacher, I've generally been pretty skeptical of large-circulation magazines about country music. Most of them contain more "fan raves" than solid information or evaluation.

Your magazine is different. Since buying your first issue off a newsstand, I've been a subscriber. The writing quality continues to improve, and the pieces by Greil Marcus ("Elvis and America") and Jerry Rivers ("The Last Medicine Show") in your November issue were superb. As for the old record business ("Hillbilly Fever," December issue)—I bought and sold 78's and 45's for five years. The article quotes Elvis's Sun 209 ("That's All Right") at \$300. I guess that's inflation; back in 1968 I bought a mint copy for \$3. When I sold it via mail auction in 1969 for \$16, I thought I'd made a killing!

CHRISTOPHER BROOKS
FRANCONIA, N.H.

On March 7, 1969, at the Diamond Ballroom in Oklahoma City, Bob Wills gave his consent to the "Bob Wills Round-Up Association." Our main purpose is to round up all of Bob's music and build a lasting tribute to America's number one Western Swing band.

Roxy Gordon's review of James Talley's *Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money. But We Sure Got a Lot of Love* (November '75) forces us to correct a mistake. The song "W. Lee O'Daniel and the Light Crust Dough Boys," on the album, makes reference to the Doughboys playing at Cains Ballroom. Whether Talley meant it to be factual, only he knows. Our research over the last 16 years indicates that the Doughboys under O'Daniel's leadership never played dances. They played theaters, schools, civic events, and, of course, radio, but no dances. In fact, O'Daniel's abstaining from ever playing dances was one of the reasons O'Daniel and Burriss Mills filed suit against Bob Wills for stating in his dance ads, "formerly the Lightcrust

Doughboys," because they felt this reflected badly against their flour mill.

O'Daniel and Burriss Mills lost the suit. In about April of 1935, O'Daniel left Burriss Mills and organized his own sponsorship, Hillbilly Flour. By taking some of his early Lightcrust Doughboys and adding new ones he called them the Hillbilly Boys. Very easily the third set of Doughboys could have played dances under new leadership, but not under O'Daniel, as he had severed relationships with the Doughboys.

We hope this clarifies the mistake. Thanks also for the article in the September issue on Bob Wills by Dr. Charles Townsend. I always admired Bob's philosophy about his music, "Nothing forced or fancy."

GLENN P. WHITE
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.

I read Dave Hickey's article on George Jones in the December *COUNTRY MUSIC*. I like George as a person but don't care for his singing. He either sounds like he's talking instead of singing, or else he sounds off key.

However, what I'm really writing about is the comment that Charley Pride sings "dumb" songs. Charley does *not* sing *dumb* songs. They have meaning and he puts his heart into them. What's so dumb about "Kiss An Angel Good Morning," "Who Am I," "Just Between You and Me," and all his other songs? I think it was unfair to knock Charley.

MARY ANN SZUREK
AMSTERDAM, NY

Thanks for the article on George Jones (December, *COUNTRY MUSIC*). I have been a fan of his for the last 15 years, and have over 40 of his albums. Whenever he is in our area on a personal appearance, my husband and I go to see him and he is *great*. Although he has had problems, I agree with Dave Hickey that he is the best country singer in the world.

So keep them coming George.

MRS. WILLIAM STREBER
KINGSTON, OHIO

While quietly listening to the Nov. 15 Grand Ole Opry broadcast, my ears were suddenly shaken by vocal fireworks. Billy Grammer was casting aspersions on the producers of ABC's excellent Hal Holbrook-hosted special, "The Opry at 50."

Mr. Grammer complained that he and a multitude of musicians who have appeared on the Opry were not given an opportunity to display their talents to a national TV audience.

I admire Grammer's talent, but in this case I cannot agree with his opinion. He forgets that the program was limited to 90 minutes. To try and include everyone who has woven their talents into the tapestry of our music would be highly laudable, but also highly impossible this side of "hillbilly heaven."

REV. C. MICHAEL MILLS
COVINGTON, KY.

I want to thank you for the article on Mother Maybelle and Sarah Carter, which appeared in the December issue. Also, many of your readers may remember a girl by the name of Frances Lyell, who appeared with the Carters in the 50's and 60's. She was the first winner of the Junior Grand Ole Opry Contest at WSM back in 1953. Soon afterwards she started working with Mother Maybelle and the Carter Sisters on the Opry and road for 16 years. Now, after six years retirement, Frances is back working with the third generation Carter Family.

I hope all your readers who remember her will sit up and listen.

WANDA TISELL
GALVESTON, TX

Regarding Nancy Naglin's review of Dolly Parton's album, "Dolly" (January '76 *COUNTRY MUSIC*): My review of Nancy Naglin is that she is a "poor simple-minded creature." She needs to listen more closely to "The Seeker."

Dolly's songs are what life is all about. I, for one, can live without Nancy Naglin's "sappy" reviews.

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People on the Scene

George and Tammy Have a Date
Statlers Visit Mae West?
Charlie Rich Is Sorry

by AUDREY WINTERS

George Jones's Possum Holler Club was packed a couple of months ago in anticipation of seeing George's special guest. About 10 p.m., George announced, "Gonna bring out a young lady right now that everybody will recognize. She's really not able to be here due to recent surgery, but I talked her into it." And out came **Tammy Wynette**. She and George began the set with "We Must Have Been Out of Our Minds."

Later, in the dressing room, Tammy and George talked about their renewal of acquaintance after almost a year, saying they were "just dating," and "still good friends." And guess who bought Tammy's new cream-colored leather outfit that she wore for the show? Mr. Jones, of course. "I'm having a date with Mr. Jones tonight," said Miss Wynette. And with that, they were gone.

Hank Williams, Jr. has been back in the hospital for more surgery to correct injuries he sustained in that Montana hunting accident. This time it was for some dental work. Hank is living in Cullman, Ala., but he visits his estranged wife and small son in Nashville often . . . **June Pointer's** doctors have advised her to permanently retire from all live performances with the **Pointer Sisters** for "reasons of extreme mental and physical exhaustion." Health permitting, June may resume writing and recording with the group in the near future. The sisters have announced that their next release will be an all-country album . . . **Tanya Tucker** is recovering from her sports car accident, but she had to wear special make-up for her appearance on "Country Music Hit Parade" to cover scars left by stitches. Tanya is now being produced by Jerry Crutchfield, head of MCA's



Tammy Wynette and George Jones



Hank Williams, Jr.

Nashville Music Publishing Company—he's her third producer in three years . . . **Delbert McClinton** believes that calling his first ABC album *Victim of Life's Circumstances* made him just that. To be specific, he fell 150 feet into three feet of water while hot air ballooning with a friend in Southwest Texas. Delbert escaped injury, but his friend suffered two broken legs . . . Former Texas Playboy and fiddler **Jesse Ashlock** is in the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Temple, Texas. Jesse had just recently become active again, fiddling with **Willie Nelson** and **Alvin Crow** in the Austin area . . . Finally, picker **Danny "Panama Red" Findlay**, who had just moved to Nashville with his wife to await the arrival of their first child was burned out of house and home just before Christmas. No one was injured and the Nashville music community rallied round to help. Singing Sheriff **Faron Young** had two

things to celebrate recently. First, he opened the doors to his new Young Executive Building near Music Row, where he will have new offices along with Playboy Records, Frank (as in **Sinatra**) and Nancy Music, The Association of Country Entertainers and Scorpion Productions.

The second bit of good fortune Faron had came when the state of Tennessee refused to allow the state of Oklahoma to extradite Young on charges of indecent exposure. A spokesman for Young said the charge was an "accidental type thing that occurred when Mr. Young—after asking people to leave his dressing room so he could dress for his performance—went ahead and changed clothes anyway." Eddie Sisk, counsel to **Gov. Ray Blanton**, told the *New York Times*: "We're not going to let the people of this state be extradited by another state to be prosecuted on a frivolous matter."

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The ineffable **Jack Clement** was in Nashville recently with his wife Sharon, visiting from their home in Round Rock, Texas, to work with in-laws **Waylon Jennings** and **Jessi Colter** on a television project. The idea of the venture, of which West Coast television heavy Pierre Cosette is Executive Producer, is to produce a show starring Waylon and Jessi, and after the first night's videotaping all concerned reported satisfaction with the results.

This move into television is the potential realization of the Cowboy's interest in video and a continuation of his work with Waylon, about which he remarks that Waylon is "the only singer I'm interested in right now—except for myself, that is," and reports that he has been getting himself down on tape recently with Waylon producing.

It looks as though **Webb Pierce** will finally get to build his parking ramp for tour buses. A Tennessee Court of Appeals has ruled in the suit brought against him by neighbor **Ray Stevens**. "I'm glad of the decision," said Pierce.



Waylon Jennings



Jack Clement

Elvis Presley has joined the ranks of performers who only are required to do one show a night in Las Vegas. The only other entertainers who have been allowed to work one show are **Frank Sinatra** and **John Denver**. Meanwhile, Elvis has added a new plane to his fleet. This one, a four-engine Convair 880, customized, natch, has a price tag of \$1.2 million. The former 100-

passenger jet will now accommodate 24.

"Why doncha come up and see me sometime?" said Mae West, and that's what **The Statler Brothers** and their wives did on a recent visit to the west coast. Mike Marx, the Statler's publicity man, said the group talked with Miss West about her films, her

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COUNTRY HITS OF THE '50s - SM 885 \$2.98
Sixteen Tons (Tennessee Ernie Ford); Gone (Ferlin Husky); A Satisfied Mind (Jean Shepard); The Wild Side Of Life (Hank Thompson); Loose Talk (Freddie Hart); Young Love (Sonny James); If You Ain't Lovin' (You Ain't Livin') (Faron Young); A Dear John Letter (Jean Shepard/Ferlin Husky); You Better Not Do That (Tommy Collins); Don't Let The Stars Get In Your Eyes (Skeets McDonald).

18 KING SIZE COUNTRY HITS - CS-946B \$2.98
Signed, Sealed And Delivered; Cowboy Copas; I'll Sail My Ship Alone; Moon Mulligan; It's Raining Here This Morning; Grandpa Jones; Rainbow At Midnight; Carlisle Brothers; Seven Lonely Days; Bonnie You; Why Don't You Haul Off And Love Me, Wayne Rainey; Death Of Little Kathy Fiscus; Jimmy Osborne; Blues Stay Away From Me, Delmore Brothers; Slow Poke, Hawkshaw Hawkins; Tennessee Waltz; Cowboy Copas; Sweeter Than The Flowers; Moon Mulligan; Mountain Dew; Grandpa Jones; I'm The Talk Of The Town; Don Reno & Red Smiley; Next Sunday Darling Is My Birthday; Clyde Moody; Lonesome 7-203; Hawkshaw Hawkins; Death Of Hank Williams; Jack Cardwell; How Far To Little Rock; Stanley Brothers; Money, Marbles And Chalk; Pop Eckler.

COUNTRY HITS OF THE '60s - SM 886 \$2.98
Gentle On My Mind (Glen Campbell); It's Such A Pretty World Today (Wynn Stewart); Right Or Wrong (Wanda Jackson); Hello Walls (Faron Young); I've Got A Tiger By The Tail (Buck Owens); I Dreamed Of A Mill-Billy Heaven (Tex Ritter); Today I Started Loving You Again (Merle Haggard); The Tip Of My Fingers (Roy Clark); The Minute You're Gone (Sonny James); Wings Of A Dove (Ferlin Husky).

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TOMMY DORSEY - ANLI 1087 SPECIAL \$2.98
Marie; Star Dust; Little White Lies; I'll Never Smile Again; Yes Indeed; Boogie Woogie; Please; Once In A While; I'm Gettin' Sentimental Over You.

WEBERLY EDWARDS - HAWAII INSTR'MNTLS SM 715 SPECIAL \$2.98
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LES PAUL AND MARY FORD - SM 11308 \$2.98
The World Is Still Waiting For The Sunrise; How High The Moon; Whispering; The Best Things In Life Are Free; Lover; Bye Bye Blues; Deep In The Blues; The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise; I Really Don't Want To Know; Walkin' and Whistlin' Blues; How Deep Is The Ocean (How High Is The Sky); I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles; Vaya Con Dios.

TENNESSEE ERNIE FORD - SM-2097 SPECIAL \$2.98
Try Me One More Time; No Letter Today; Born To Lose; Don't Rob Another Man's Castle; There'll Be No Tearsdrops Tonight; Worried Mind; No One Will Ever Know; Funny How Time Slips Away; Sweet Dreams; Tears On My Pillow; May You Never Be Alone.

LEFTY FRIZZELL - CS-928B - SPECIAL \$2.98
I Love You A Thousand Ways; Saginaw, Michigan; Mom And Dad's Waltz; Release Me; She's Gone, Gone, Gone; Always Late; I Want To Be With You Always; The Long Black Veil; Shine, Shine, Shower; A Little Unfair; If You've Got The Money, I've Got The Time.

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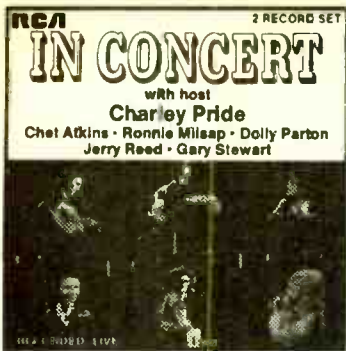
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writing and her work with W.C. Fields.

Charlie Rich has issued a statement to his fans apologizing for his behavior on the nationally televised CMA Awards show. "I wish I could undo that evening," says the Silver Fox in his letter. "The night of the Awards I had taken a pain killing drug for what we thought was a poisonous insect bite and which later proved to be a fracture in my foot. I believe out of this experience I have learned that every man is a better man who can give of himself to others, and yet maintain the balance between his public and private life. That's the path I choose to follow and I hope I have your love and prayers to help me along that road." Charlie is working on a gospel album.



Charlie and Margaret Ann Rich

Charlie's other big news is that he and wife Margaret Ann Rich are back together again after she filed for divorce just after the CMA show incident. Margaret Ann reveals that her action was "a risk that paid off" designed to shock everybody concerned into realizing how Charlie's schedule and professional commitments were ruining his marriage. Now the Rich family plans to spend more time together, and all is reportedly well on the home front.

Word comes from Arkansas that composer and performer Asher Sizemore is dead at 69. The Manchester, Ky., native recorded such songs as "Little Jimmy's Goodbye," "I Miss My Dear Sweet Mother," "Cowboy's Last Ride," and "Tumbledown Cabin." ■

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COUNTRY NEWS

Hee Haw gives John Henry a job

John Henry Faulk, former CBS-Radio personality whose fight against blacklisting in the entertainment industry in the 1950's was dramatized in a recent CBS-TV special, "Fear on Trial" has joined the cast of "Hee Haw."

Frank Peppiatt, owner and executive producer of the show, insists that Faulk's appearances are in no way meant to fill the gap created by the death of David "Stringbean" Akeman, but he was hired, rather, as a direct result of "Fear on Trial." "In the media, John Henry was always referred to as a 'commentator,' but on the show, we saw he was a country humorist. We thought he fitted our needs perfectly."

The 62-year-old Faulk admits that possibly because "nobody has the slightest idea what I do" this is his "first real media job" since his career as a broadcasting personality was cut short in 1956 after he criticized and campaigned against AWARE, a pro-blacklisting group that organized for the alleged purpose of "combatting the Communist conspiracy in the radio and television industry."

Among AWARE's tactics were screening performers for information on their political backgrounds, and circulating lists of suspected Communists and Communist sympathizers to sponsors, advertising agencies and networks, with threats if the performers were employed. Resentful of the power AWARE wielded in the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, the broadcasters' union, Faulk and other broadcasting personalities successfully ran for office in the New York local on a middle-of-the-road, anti-AWARE slate. In retaliation, AWARE issued a special bulletin accusing Faulk of being a Communist or pro-Communist and using his position to advance the Communist cause.



John Henry finally has a job.
Photo: Alanna Nash

Shortly after, Faulk lost his job at CBS, ostensibly because his ratings had fallen.

An outraged Faulk got celebrated attorney Louis Nizer to represent him and sued AWARE for libel. In the six years before his case was decided, he was denied any kind of media job, even that as a stand-in, and he turned to selling encyclopedias for a living. His income plunged from \$30,000 to \$875 a year.

Then in 1962, the jury ruled that AWARE had originated false accusations against Faulk for malicious intent, and awarded him a record \$3.5 million. The amount was ultimately reduced to \$550,000 with Faulk realizing a fractional \$175,000, but the case is recognized as marking the end of blacklisting in the entertainment industry.

Faulk, who will be paid about \$6,000 for the Hee Haw episodes, reports he's "very excited about being associated with 'Hee Haw,' because I'm interested in utilizing traditional American humor to make political and social comment. 'Hee Haw' has always been a favorite of mine. I think it's a terribly important show, with qualities that are very important to American television."

On the 11-segment stint, John Henry can be seen doing much of the same kind of material that made him so popular at the height of his career in the mid-50's, making wry comments on the passing scene through such down-home characters as Peavine Jeffries, Miss Culley and Cousin Ed Snodgrass—all real-life natives of Faulk's own Madison County, Texas.

He is in fact currently living on an 8-acre farm right near Madisonville with his second wife, Liz, and their six-year-old son. He published an account of his blacklisting ordeal, *Fear on Trial*, in 1964. Currently, he does a weekly five-minute commentary for National Public Radio and has recently become in demand for college lecture dates and personal appearances where he is often introduced as "the essence of American courage and heroism."

"That makes me feel silly," Faulk says, "because I know it's absolutely not true. I'm neither courageous nor heroic. I act on principle, that's all."

ALANNA NASH

DAVID ALLAN COE'S STRANGE SAGA



Photo: Charlyn Zlotnik

Is he or isn't he? David Allan's story has come undone; what effect will it have on his future?

It's a peculiar story, this David Allan Coe business. One really doesn't know what to say.

As you may have read by now, David Allan, aka The Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy, may not have killed anyone in prison at all, and probably did not spend time on Death Row. To most people, that might be a nice thing to learn. In the entertainment business, however, it's a different matter.

To refresh your memory, David Allan Coe landed in Nashville November 3,

1968, one day after being released from a year's parole from the Marion Correctional Institution in Marion, Ohio. David was determined to be a country and western star. He immediately commenced doing what a thousand other hopefuls have done—hang around, get to know people, be a nuisance, whatever. Shelby Singleton finally put out two albums of David on his SSS Label—*Penitentiary Blues* and *Requiem for a Harlequin*. Then, Tanya Tucker had a hit with a song he wrote

called "Will You Lay With Me In A Field Of Stone." Columbia picked him up. He put out an album called *Once Upon A Rhyme*; there was a hit single: "You Never Even Called Me By My Name." By September, 1975, seven years after he had hit Nashville, a few people had heard of David Allan Coe. The whole story is not that simple.

On his way up, David had acquired a story. The story helped make him stand out from all those other would-be's in Nashville—it also got him some press. David's story was that he had spent 20 years of his life (counting reform school time) behind bars. In addition, he said he had killed a man in prison—another inmate—and that he had spent 90 days on Death Row. He was saved he said, by the removal of the death penalty and later he was pardoned by the Governor. Not a savory story, to be sure, but it served the purpose of getting attention for David Allan Coe. *Rolling Stone* printed the story. So did *Gallery* and *Penthouse* and numerous other national and local publications.

No one ever bothered to check the story until Dallas public television station—KERA—decided to do a documentary on Coe. The show included a visit to the Ohio State Penitentiary where David had been incarcerated, where the murder took place. When the KERA crew asked to film Death Row, however, they were denied. Prison officials said there was no reason for them to film Death Row, because David had never been on Death Row, that he had never committed murder. In fact, they said, he was in prison for possession of burglary tools, and before that, he had served a stretch for possession of obscene materials. He did have a long juvenile record, but murder was not among the charges against him.

This all put David Allan in the strange position of insisting he was a murderer or admitting he was a liar. He has done neither. His reply to KERA's findings was: "They've got records in Ohio that don't say a lot of things."

So, the public is left in the position of either accepting David's version or accepting the version of the state of Ohio. Take your pick. While choosing, you might reflect on what the whole episode says about the entertainment business. Do we prefer to accept a murderer and reject a liar? It's something to think on.

MARTHA HUME

Red River Dave polls public on Patty

Red River Dave, the 60-year-old singer/songwriter whose *Ballad of Patty Hearst* created quite a stir (January COUNTRY MUSIC) has now released the results of a Patty Hearst poll he conducted to promote his song.

In a series of paid ads in the Nashville *Banner* and *Tennessean*, Dave invited the public to state their opinion as to whether they thought the finding of Patty constituted a *capture* by the FBI or a *release* by the SLA. Respondents—who ranged from students, to professional people to prisoners—were mailed copies of the sheet music of Dave's ballad. The results revealed that 34 percent of those polled believe Patty was rescued, while 66 percent believe she was captured.

Dave, who is convinced that his song inspired the SLA to release the heiress, was mystified.

"I believe this is the first time in history that anyone thinks a kidnap victim has been captured, instead of rescued. I honestly expected more sympathy for a girl who has been through the trials that she went through with her SLA captors. All Americans should read the scripture, Matthew, 7:1 ["Judge not lest you be judged."] Although the poll turned out like it did, the impact of my song will wake up America, and free Patty Hearst."

MADINE SINGER

Wills fans unite

The Bob Wills Round-Up Association, an organization of Western Swing enthusiasts, is looking for old records, tape recordings, photographs and any other material relating to their hero's career. The group, which received Wills's personal stamp of approval at its inauguration at the Diamond Ballroom in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in 1969, hopes to eventually place their findings in a special library devoted to Bob's career.

Readers who have material they wish to sell or donate, or who would like to join the association, can contact Glenn P. White, Secretary, Bob Wills Round-Up Association, 1216 Southwest 24th St., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73109.

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Blue Yodeler's Paradise still waits for Jimmie

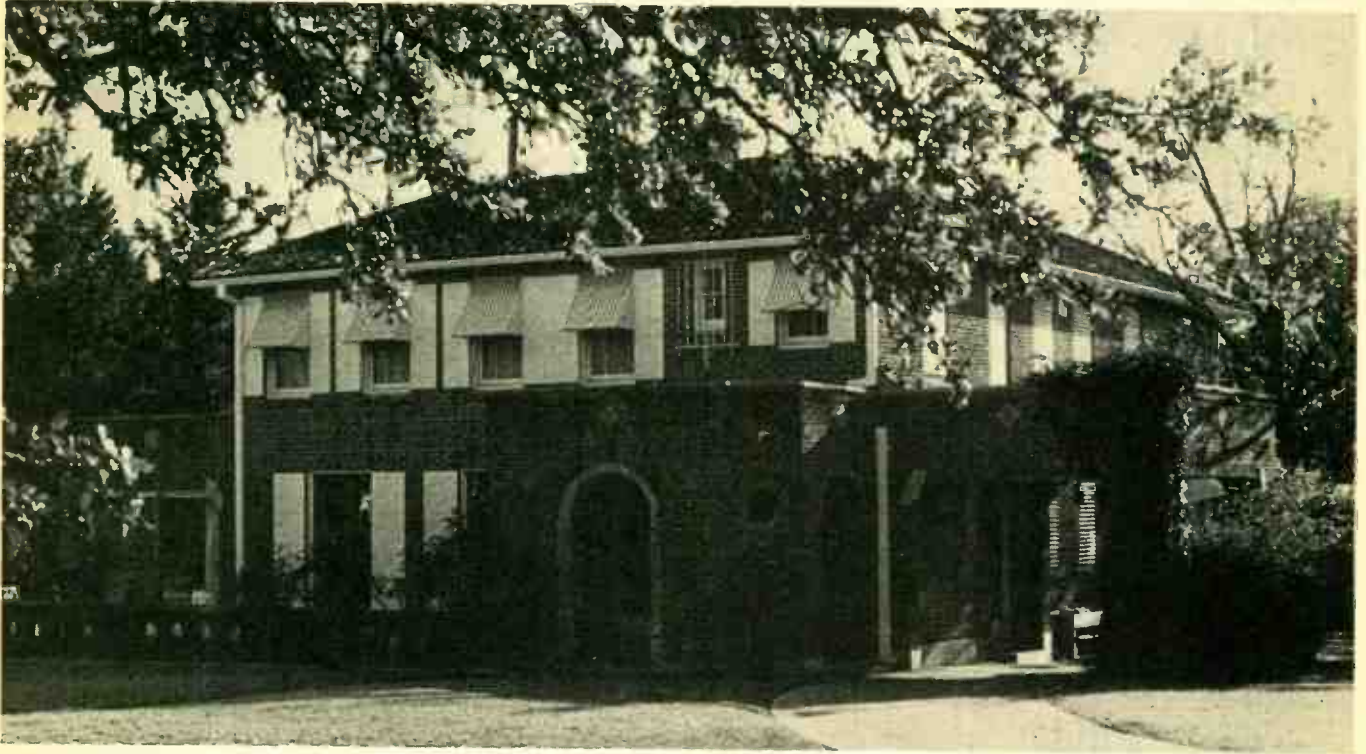


Photo: Charlyn Zlotnik

This is Blue Yodeler's Paradise in Kerrville, Texas, where Jimmie Rodgers came in hopes of curing himself of TB.

Bill Crittenden, a good-natured, white-haired gentleman who runs a beer distributorship in Texas, lives on the west side of Kerrville, in a beautiful beige-brick mansion-like residence, surrounded on all sides by other homes equally large and impressive. But what sets this house apart from the other homes on this lovely street is the fact that it is none other than Blue Yodeler's Paradise, the retreat from show business which Jimmie Rodgers had built for himself in 1930.

Forty-five years brings a few minor adjustments. The street in front of the grand two story residence with the Spanish-tiled roof is marked with One Way and Do Not Enter signs. Gnarled oaks in the yard have grown beyond twenty-feet tall, a patch of cacti abound off to the side, and one lone evergreen leans on the lawn like the Tower of Pisa. But overall Blue Yodeler's Paradise has weathered the aging process better than most.

"The house is essentially the same," reported Bill Crittenden, the present owner. "except for sealing of Rodgers' open air bedroom."

Constructed during the height of the depression and the peak of

Rodgers' career, Blue Yodeler's Paradise cost an unstagging—by today's standards—\$50,000 to construct including that bedroom without a ceiling. Kerrville's agreeable climate and medical facilities attracted the Singing Brakeman in the hope it would work a cure for his TB—though one observer recalls Jimmie spent most of his time "playing poker and smoking cigars." This Hill Country resort town had never seen such a celebrity. During his short stay, Jimmie entertained Will Rogers, often took local citizens for hair-raising rides in his bevy of autos, and serenaded neighbors on his front porch at night. Doctor bills and rapidly failing health forced Rodgers to sell Blue Yodeler's Paradise in 1933, when he and his family moved down to San Antonio shortly before his death. But, according to Crittenden, Jimmie still enjoys a ghostly roam around the spread every now and then.

"I hear him walk around once in a while but I know who it is so it doesn't bother me," Crittenden revealed. "It just took some getting used to."

Crittenden is the fourth owner of the home. With the manicured lawn and fresh coat of white paint on the

shutters, Blue Yodeler's Paradise blends in with the rest of the resplendent houses in the area. Yet somehow the fans find their way. Crittenden figures over 150 people a year pause to take a long look or a photograph. "It's mostly summertime when they come around. They come from all over the United States. 'Course a lot of the old timers heard about Jimmie Rodgers."

Although he didn't personally know Jimmie, or ever play a guitar for that matter, Crittenden did say his daddy had performed with Rodgers in the twenties on St. Louis area radio stations, which is one story he didn't tell a recent late-night pilgrim.

"About 11 o'clock a traveler, one of the hippie types, rang the doorbell and wanted to know if this was Jimmie Rodgers' house. He asked, 'You have any of his records?'"

"I told him, 'What do you mean? Did he ever make a record?' This guy said, 'He sure did. One of the best guitar players that ever played guitar.' I told him I didn't even have a guitar, I didn't know what that is.

"He just looked at me for a while and said, 'Sacrilege! You shouldn't be here.'"

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Watch This Face:



THE AMAZING RHYTHM ACES

The Amazing Rhythm Aces are not really a country band. No matter that their "Third Rate Romance (Low-Rent Rendezvous)" shot up the country charts like Conway Twitty with his tail on fire. No matter that their first album is chocked full of country rockers and Southern gospel. No matter that the Aces' second single, "Amazing Grace (Used To Be Her Favorite Song)," is as country as Minnie Pearl's fried chicken. What the Amazing Rhythm Aces really are, say drummer Butch McDade, vocalist Russell Smith, organist Billy Earheart, pianist James Hooker Brown, guitarist Barry Burton and bassist Jeff Davis, is misunderstood.

"Now don't you misunderstand us," Russell Smith, the author of "Third Rate Romance," is saying. "We like to play country music—it's part of what we do. But there's a lot else more."

Such as, drummer McDade adds, jazz, blues, rhythm and blues, a little classical on the side of the piano player and some plain ole down home funk.

So how did they get off being labeled a country band?

"I don't know," McDade says. "That's been the problem since day one. Labels, you know."

"I'll tell you, it's amazing what the critics have called us. They say we're

country. They say we're rock. They say we're country rock. Hell, one even called us Tex-Mex," says Smith.

We're backstage after a Charlotte, North Carolina, show—their first show after a ten-day layoff and rest. This time out the Aces are fronting for Western rocker-cum-philosopher Michael Murphey. Last tour they opened for country rockers Loggins and Messina.

"I think we've toured with just about everybody," McDade says. "Hell, we've been on the road so much for the last few months we haven't had a chance to rehearse any new songs."

Not that the band has any trouble playing together—the Aces in one permutation or another have been around for years and years. To hear them talk, in fact, you might suspect the Aces were fated to form a band. They all met at one time or another, says McDade, in the Knoxville, Tennessee, music scene.

McDade and Davis eventually left Knoxville for Canada to tour with Jessie Winchester, the expatriot Memphian who was in Canada to avoid the draft. Winchester heard a demo tape of the partial Aces singing "Third Rate Romance," a Russell Smith composition, and decided to include it on his next album, *Learn To Love It*.

"I sung lead on that song," says McDade. "You won't find that out by looking at the album, though."

So the boys headed back to Tennessee—this time to Memphis, where friend Barry Burton was working as a sessions musician in Sam Phillips' studio. They added two sessions people and playing buddies from Muscle Shoals, Alabama: Billy Earheart—Billy E. to the world—and James Hooker, nee James Brown ("Man, if I went on stage with a name like James Brown, they'd be suing me forever."), and, working at night, laid down a whole series of tracks.

And then they went shopping for a label.

With a song like "Third Rate Romance," that didn't prove to be much of a problem. Anybody in the business longer than five minutes could have pegged the now three-year-old song—a sleazy tune about a dispassionate pick-up—as a winner.

When the song took off, so did the band's identity crisis.

"There's as much rhythm and blues in the band as there is country," says McDade. "Country and blues, you know, are very close. In fact, some of our best gigs were down in Louisiana, where they knew what we were talking about."

And in concert the Aces are everything they say they are—an incredibly mixed bag of musical styles, with even a little Tex-Mex a la Doug Sahm bobbing to the surface at various times—sometimes during the same number.

Still, admits Russell Smith, perhaps a bit wistfully, "I'd love to be on the Opry. I know people who'd put off dying just for a chance to go to Nashville and see the Opry."

Off in the corner Burton has picked up his mandolin and started tuning up. Smith picks up a guitar and heads across the room, adding McDade along the way. Before you can say "Rocky Top," the abbreviated Aces have launched into a foot-stomping, throw your head back and wail rendition of "Uncle Pen," genuine bluegrass.

"They do that all the time," says Billy E., tapping his foot as the boys drift into the fine country music of A.P. Carter.

"Lawd," says Burton, "that man wrote some music."

Not bad for a not-so-country band.

MICHAEL BANE

D.C. PUTS ON THE DOG FOR EARL



Earl Scruggs, right, greets Sen. Howard Baker and friends after "Banjoman" premier.

The best thing that can be said of the premier of the movie "Banjoman" at Washington's Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Nov. 16th, is that Earl Scruggs, the center of all the attention, was able to make it.

The Washington affair included the screening of the movie (which is essentially a film of a concert that took place in Manhattan, Kansas, three years ago); a tent supper on the lawn of the Kennedy Center given by Tennessee Senators Bill Brock and Howard Baker; and a mass fly-in of press people to make the whole thing official. The real event, however, was the presence of Mr. Scruggs, who arrived by chartered plane, his left leg and arm in casts; it was his first public appearance since his near-fatal plane crash in September.

Accompanied by his wife, Louise, Mr. Scruggs saw visitors in his suite at the Watergate Hotel and seemed to be in remarkably good spirits, even

(Continued on page 20)

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Ex-cop cops Texas calf fry trophy

Chili cook-offs require innards of iron and *jalapeno* (hot pepper) marathons can wreck the taste buds. But it takes a lot of, uh, guts to be the World Mountain Oyster Eating Champion.

Also called calf fries and best known in the cattle trade as the sole leftover when a bull becomes a steer, this cowpuncher's delicacy was honored with its first World Championship at the Horseshoe Cafe high in the hill country west of Austin, as nine contestants sweated it out for a trophy topped by a gold-plated steer.

Winner was Dan Hansmire, a former police chief of Cedar Park,

Texas, who polished off two pounds, fifteen ounces, of the crispy gems, then boasted to a cheering crowd, "I'm full, but I'm not stuffed." His feat has been submitted for verification to the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Lloyd Glen Rice of Spicewood Springs went home figuring the first prize should have been his. With three minutes to go, Lloyd Glen had downed nearly three and a half pounds (16 bite-sized chunks are the equivalent of two actual mountain oysters) when he paused to burp. Instead he inadvertently violated rule

number three: "Anyone caught trying to get rid of food shall be disqualified."

While Hansmire has already begun training for his title defense next November, and attempts to break the record will undoubtedly crop up wherever cowboys chow down, Ted Looney, proprietor of the Horseshoe, and the championship's organizer, is not worried.

"You can't eat that much," he winked, "unless they're cooked just right."

JOE NICK PATOSKI

EARL

(Continued from page 19)

though he is still confined to a wheelchair. He is recovering well and hopes to be able to play again soon. The only hindrance he has encountered so far is the discovery of a broken bone in his left hand which had to be repaired by surgery, and turned out to be a very delicate operation.

Mr. Scruggs is suffering from what doctors call "retrograde amnesia," which means he cannot remember anything about the crash, which occurred when he was trying to land his single-engine airplane at Cornelia Fork Airport near Nashville. He says he remembers taking off from Murray, Kentucky, contacting the control tower at Berry Field, and being found in some weeds a short way off the airstrip later that morning; he does not remember the crash itself or how he got out of the plane and crawled off the strip.

He was able to attend the screening of the movie, which features the Kansas concert and stars, besides the Earl Scruggs Revue, Joan Baez, David Bromberg, The Byrds, Ramblin' Jack Elliot, Tracy Nelson and Mother Earth, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, and Doc and Merle Watson. Most of the 90-minute film consists of the concert itself, with the camera cutting away occasionally for one of the stars to say something about how Earl Scruggs's music has affected their styles. There is also some material

about Mr. Scruggs's life, but all things considered, the film is little more than an "In Concert" type affair of the sort which is seen on network television on Saturday nights.

Perhaps Mr. Scruggs's comment on the event was the most appropriate. "I'm getting to an age," he said, "where I like to see things preserved."

MARTHA HUME

SUMMER '76

COUNTRY MUSIC is planning its annual listing of summer music festivals. If you are a booker, promoter, or interested fan who has details on such an event in your area, please send the information to "Country News," Country Music Magazine, 475 Park Ave. So., New York, NY 10016.

We're sorry, Stella

If you were confused when you looked at the picture of Stella Parton on page 35 of our February issue, don't feel like the Lone Ranger. So was Stella. The picture, you see, wasn't of Stella; it was of Columbia recording artist Florence Warner.

While the editors of *Country Music* were wiping the egg off our faces, Stella called to let us know that, once again, she'd been mixed up with somebody else. "This always happens to me," said Stella. "They've mixed my picture up with Jeannie C. Riley's twice now."

But Stella, true to her sweet East Tennessee nature, wasn't so much mad as disappointed—she'd been looking forward to her article and so had her fans. And so, for Stella and all her fans, here (right) is a picture of Stella Parton, along with our apologies to all, including Florence Warner and John Miller, the photographer.

One thing's for sure, though. It's going to be a long time before anyone at

Country Music won't be able to recognize a picture of Stella Parton when they see one!



Photo: John Miller

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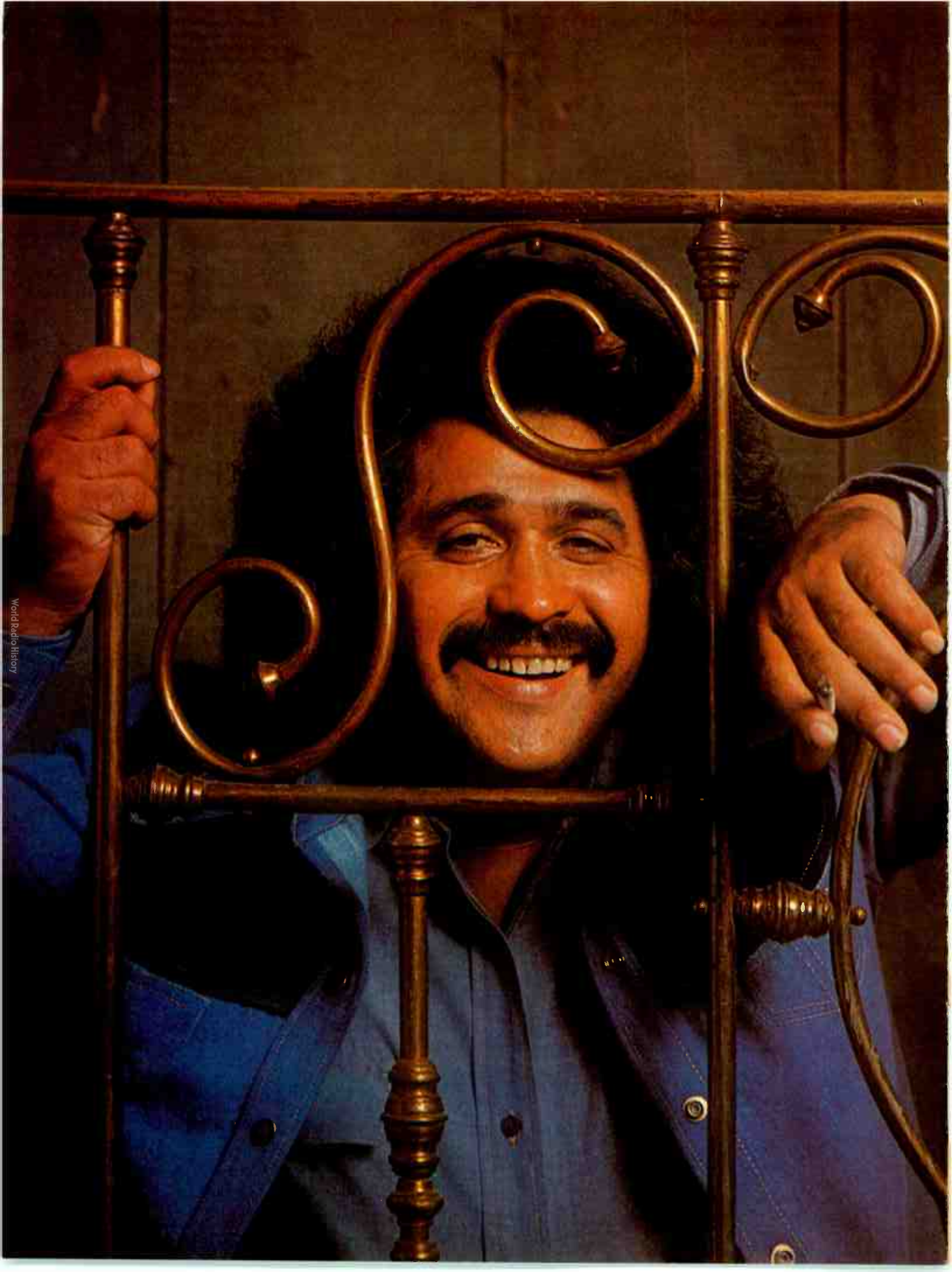
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WASTED DAYS, WASTED NIGHTS?

NOT WHEN YOU'RE FREDDY FENDER MAKING HAY

by ROXY GORDON

The Statler Brothers were leaned up against a fence on Greg Garrison's opulent Hidden Valley Horse Ranch, waiting camera call for the Dean Martin Christmas Special Garrison was making, when Freddy Fender finished his burrito breakfast and ambled over. Freddy faced them, leaning himself on his upended Fender guitar case. Country music was lightly discussed. "I didn't even know what it was a year ago," he said to the Statler Brothers, with only the slightest trace of a smile.

"Well, you sure wrung hell out of it," one of the Statlers replied.

With Freddy's first ABC album now approaching the one-million sales mark, his numerous TV appearances, and his criss-crossing the country almost every day for the concerts, which have largely replaced lower-paying club dates, the Statler was right enough.

I doubt if the Statler took what Freddy said about his new-found knowledge of country seriously, but in fact Freddy has no country bone to pick—as is obvious from the material he records. Freddy's producer and general all around mentor, Huey Meaux, told me that Freddy hated "Before The Next Teardrop Falls" at first and refused to record it. Then there was "Wasted Days and Wasted Nights," which has never been anything but a South Texas rock and roll song. Rock and roll—at least Freddy's brand of rhythm and blues/rockabilly rock—has its roots planted firmly in country soil, though; and the night after he finished the Dean Martin

filming, Freddy got himself to Alabama and laid down a purely country show to a packed house of decidedly non-progressive country fans at the brand new Ozark Civic Center—where he appeared on the grand-opening show. Backed by Mel Tillis's band, he did his hits and a set of standard country that the crowd knew well and had no trouble recognizing.

The place determines the show, which might range from mostly Chicano material in Chicano situations, to classic rock in Austin, to Ozark, Alabama's straight country. But whatever it is, Freddy can do it all. He's packed a lot of all of it into his thirty-odd years, and he's still going. Consider, for example, his schedule for the four days beginning early in the morning of Wednesday, November 26th, 1975, and ending at a similar dark hour during the night of Saturday, November 29th.

I found him in a strange little Hollywood photo studio just after midnight as the 26th began. He'd spent the day at the Dean Martin set, and he was waiting for the *Country Music* cover photo session. There had been some mix-up on the time, and Freddy, suffering from a cold, had been waiting three hours—not exactly waiting patiently, perhaps, but persevering nonetheless. The session was accomplished, and Freddy left at some ungodly hour in the early morning.

Daylight found him at Garrison's ranch, finishing the Dean Martin sessions all day.

That evening found Freddy Fender

waiting—this time more patiently, talking to a Spanish-speaking doorman—at New York's Kennedy Airport while Sam Herro, his road manager, tried to straighten out the numerous complications that day-to-day jet travel imposes on ticket procedures.

The following morning found Freddy Fender riding a rocking horse in a downpour in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

That evening, Freddy played his country concert in Ozark.

The next night, Freddy played the Ector County Coliseum in Odessa, Texas. He also played half the country night clubs in town.

The following night, Houston's Latin World—a Chicano club—was treated to a performance by the one and only Freddy Fender.

This is the kind of pace that reduces most people who become stars to show business zombies. It is indeed strange to lose most of your normal touchstones to reality, the familiar environments that let you know who you are, and after four days of keeping Freddy Fender's schedule, I was more or less non-existent. That day at Garrison's ranch, I'd begun to realize what I was in for, and I started wondering about Freddy. I knew his biography well enough—his South Texas Chicano background, the early rock & roll success, the Penitentiary in Louisiana, the years of playing as a sideman while trying to make a living in the Chicano market, and finally, with seldom-seen suddenness, his rise to national and international stardom—but who was



he? Had *he* lost himself in his schedule? It was Sam Herro, Freddy's road manager, who supplied the answer, plus something more about the reasons behind Freddy's appeal. "He hasn't changed at all," Sam said, "and that's why people like him."

Sam is right about Freddy's reaction to star status. That morning at Greg Garrison's ranch, Nick Donavon, who was coordinating Freddy's visit, asked me to look after Freddy's guitar while he went on some errand. Freddy decided to walk off somewhere while we were talking, and I picked up the guitar case. Freddy stopped and took it from me. "Let's get started off the right way," he said, "you don't have to carry stuff for me."

Greg Garrison is Dean Martin's partner in production and he directs most of Martin's projects. He has a great fancy for putting singers outside, miles from the nearest musician, and

having them mouth their hits while taking part in some outdoorsy activity. He did *Music Country U.S.A.* a few years ago wherein Tom T. Hall and a lot of other country stars leaned on probably every fence at that ranch—and there are a lot of fences. He had Freddy leading a big white horse down the road singing "Secret Love," and had him sit in a tree for one segment—while Ted Baxter's TV girl friend (from the *Mary Tyler Moore Show*) sat backwards on a horse underneath. "And this guy," I kept thinking, "is a genuine Texas rock & roll legend." Of course, legendary status is rarely more than a pain in the ass to maintain—but I suspect that sitting in trees for national TV ain't too much fun either. Freddy took it all with perfect grace. He did what he was told; he kept his cool—which is considerable. "He is a long-suffering man," I said to Nick.

The next day, while he was still suffering from a by-now-worsening

cold, the TV people and Macy's put him on this giant, ridiculous rocking horse and sent him down Broadway in a pouring rain for the Thanksgiving Day parade. Dick Howard (his booking agency's TV man) and I watched on a monitor inside an NBC trailer. Dick is a genuinely good human being (a rarity in agent-types, I expect)—an endless supply of good humor and concern. He paced and fretted about the rain, and finally walked a considerable distance in it to get Freddy an umbrella. He came back shaking his head. "The man is freezing," he said. "He's shivering uncontrollably on that horse."

Freddy, completely soaked, was still shivering in the limousine on the way back to the hotel. "Everything happens to Freddy Fender," he said, "and they ask me why I look so experienced." He was smiling and laughing, in a good mood after going through what I'd figure to be one of



Freddy, an expert, gets off a good quip with Glen Campbell and Diana Trask (left). Above, soulful as an alley cat, he honks at LA's Palomino Club.

the worst experiences possible.

When he fell through a hole in the stage at the Latin World, he found that funny, too—part of the job—and kept singing while somebody lifted him out.

On the plane out of New York, bound for Ozark, he told me, "I just take things as they come."

Later, while he slept, I leaned back in the jet seat to wonder if maybe he wasn't taking things too much as they came—not defending his stance quite enough from the middle-of-the-road pop image that seems to be falling around him.

The next night, by the time he went on stage in Odessa, we'd already been drinking for hours. He'd broken a three-week wagon-ride, first because of his cold—and then just for the fun of it—and he was well enough along on stage to really get into his South Texas Elvis act (or maybe I was well enough along to see it). He rocked, gestured and crooned. I stood in the upper rows above stage and watched, drinking tequila out of a paper cup. Freddy was great and I began to formulate (drunkenly, I must confess) a piece of advice I planned to give him on parting at Houston. "Don't let them make you too middle of the road," I was going to say, "or too country. Keep that South Texas flash." But that was before we spent the rest of the night getting drunker and wandering around Odessa—and before I really took the time to sort all those jet-fast impressions.



Before he was a country star, our man was Baldemar Huerta, Chicano crooner and South Texas R&B legend (above). He was also a convict—that's him below, third from the left, in Angola State Prison. Now he's a TV Personality, not just a country star. Dinah loves him.



"Have you ever been to a Chicano dance?" Freddy wanted to know while we waited for the elevator at the Holiday Inn, on our way to the Latin World.

"Sure," I said, and he wanted to know where.

"Texas. New Mexico. Southern Colorado," I told him.

While gringos and Chicanos in all those places have lived separate lives (side by side), the cultural interchange is actually much greater than politics on both sides sometimes choose to admit. Where I grew up in West Texas, Mexicans (a word both gringos and Chicanos used—and a word Freddy uses still, merely as a cultural and racial designation, not as any kind of political statement) and gringos went to school together, worked together, dated, and sometimes married each other. In New Mexico, social interchange has always been even more pronounced.

Music has crossed the gringo/Mexican line freely. A great portion of Mexican popular music was and is based on the gringo-German polka. "Rancho Grande," which Freddy performs on his first ABC album and as part of his show, was a favorite at gringo dances of the 30s and 40s. Both Mexican and gringo kids loved rock and roll when I was in high school, and in fact great coolness was owned by the gringo kid who spent a good portion of his time at Mexican rock and roll dances.

The Latin World was typical of a certain kind of Chicano dance hall—big, colorful, given to flashing lights. Slim Summers—who is the Freddy Fender concessionaire, marketing t-shirts, records, photos for autographs—delivered us to the front door where security guards escorted Freddy inside. Sometimes, Freddy told me, Chicano dances get a little weird for him; the crowds might hassle him for being a country star instead of a Latin music star. Rodriguez, Freddy said, won't work Chicano places at all for that reason; nor will he speak Spanish around gringos. Two Chicanos speaking Spanish tend to make the gringo nervous in his ignorance of what they might be saying. Freddy thought that was probably a good enough idea, but nevertheless, he carried on Spanish conversations with anyone who spoke to him in Spanish. And in fact where Johnny Rodriguez is a Chicano who has become a country star, Freddy has become a Chicano country star. He said Puerto Ricans

gave him clenched fist power salutes from the Macy's parade audience.

I had expected a lot of Spanish-language material from Freddy at the Latin World. Instead, the pickup band was a gringo country band which made several onstage jokes (either from amazement that they were really there, I guess, or nervousness about the fact that Freddy did a country show). He spoke English from the bandstand. The crowd loved him. Girls actually rushed the dressing room door. One young man, who'd been turned away at the door three or four times, sawed his way through the ceiling.

Freddy is a compact, handsome young man whose looks in person seem to explain the kind of reaction he gets from young and not-so-young



Photo: Charlyn Zlotnik

women, much better than do most of his published photos. He is younger-looking than his photos seem to portray him, and sleeker. Following his show, women wait in crowds for his autograph. They manage to get backstage and clump at the dressing room door. At the Latin World, they grabbed at him and tore the buttons from the rhinestone and studded shirt-suits which have replaced his oft-photographed leisure-suit look. Sometimes he has to check into hotels under assumed names, and rarely can he have a barroom conversation uninterrupted. In Odessa, while a group of sweet young things shouted at the closed dressing room door, Freddy sat inside teasing the promoter's mother—who must be about seventy—calling her "honey" and giving her light kisses on the cheek she'll likely never forget.

Huey Meaux sat beside me in the dressing room while a crowd clustered around Freddy across the room. A

nine-year-old Chicano kid sat a ways back, staring at Freddy. "Freddy will never stop doing Chicano places," Huey said. "He owes them too much." Huey motioned toward the kid. "And the kids, you know, need people to look up to."

Huey is probably even more legendary in Texas than Freddy. He's produced a number of big-time hits and he's been responsible for most of the music that's made the South Texas sound famous. He's done B.J. Thomas, and he presented Doug Sahm with the only major success that Doug's yet had. Freddy told me that Huey picked the material he records. Thinking still of my Odessa tequila revelations, I asked Huey about his choice of material. Huey told me in that incredible, musical, Cajun accent of his, "I like the funkier stuff, but you have to do what sells."

By explanation, he said he preferred his own label's Latin and rock versions of Freddy to the smoothed-down ABC version. But that was only his personal taste—and Freddy's as well. The next album would be funkier—a return to funk after the MOR of the *Are You Ready For Freddy?* album. And there were plans for a live duet album with Doug Sahm.

"You should see the magic of those two together on stage," Huey said. "They been brothers so long."

It was, I think, the fact that Doug dedicated his recording of "Wasted Days and Wasted Nights" to Freddy which began the whole new interest in Freddy. "You know what's ironic," Freddy told me, "people in Texas have been hearing my voice on the radio for twenty years and suddenly all this."

"We helped each other, brother," Huey said. Freddy came to him a few years ago. "Man, I couldn't believe it. I'd heard that voice on the radio for years. I'd just got out of the penitentiary and I was bitter. Freddy, he didn't have anything going. Man, all we had was each other."

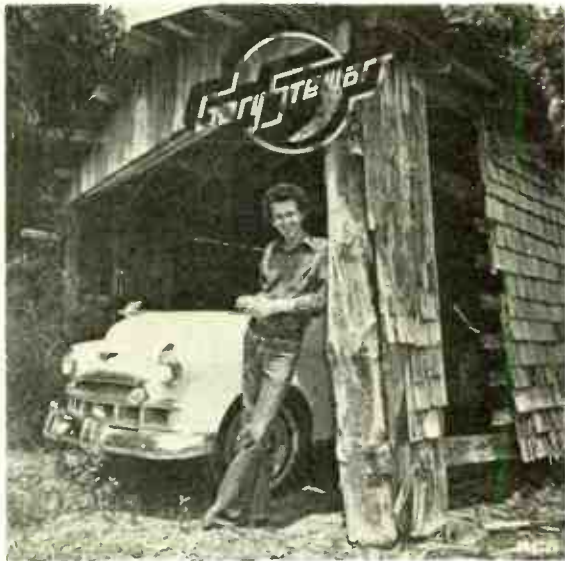
Huey and I watched Freddy smile for a series of Instamatic and Polaroid shots, usually with his arm around a broadly smiling woman. "That's what's so good about him," Huey said. "He's been through so much, man, he's practical, you know? He knows how to get the job done."

Freddy talked to me about drinking. He told me about a couple of times when he got so drunk he fell down on stage—and kept playing

(Continued on page 64)

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Johnny Who?

Revealing The Instrumentalist Of The Year

by Rick Bolson

The 1975 CMA Awards show went along pretty normally. There were some odd moments, of course—John Denver's satellite message, Willie Nelson's guest set, Charlie Rich's performance—but all in all it was the usual business of big stars and big smiles. But right in the middle of all those nationally-known faces and household names, there was one wild card, and that was Johnny Gimble, Instrumentalist of the Year. When they announced *his* name, a ragged chorus must have risen in living rooms across the nation: "Johnny *who?*"

You might have noticed, however, that such was not the case among the members of the audience at Opryland. Those people—stars, music business executives, producers, songwriters and pickers—knew exactly who Johnny Gimble was, and their applause just about raised the roof off that new Opry House. The reason was that Johnny Gimble, apart from being one of the best-liked members of the Nashville community, is also *the* man to call when you need a fiddle player for your latest record.

Every weekday morning Johnny Gimble loads up his car with a couple of fiddles, some mandolins and banjos, and heads out on the 15-mile drive from his suburban home to one of the fifty or so studios of Music Row, where he spends the day adding licks to the latest album by Conway Twitty, Tammy Wynette, Merle Haggard or any one of country music's other stars. Usually he gets back home around late news time, 10 p.m. or so in Nashville, having played on anything up to a dozen future records.

Tonight we find Johnny Gimble relaxing at home after one of those long days in the studios. He looks like a moderately successful cattle rancher; well-dressed, well-fed, the kind of guy you'd like to have a few beers with. His house—a comfortable suburban affair down the road from Andrew Jackson's Hermitage—is full

of stereo equipment and musical instruments, and is stacked with new records he has played on and is proud of. In his music room there is a bookcase (smaller and shabbier than the ones that house the new records) jammed to overflowing with 78-rpm records—big ungainly things compared to their sleek modern counterparts. The names on the labels are Bob Wills, the Shelton Brothers, Dewey Grooms. These are the records he loves. It's Texas music from his younger days, left behind along with the open spaces and changing vistas of his home when he pulled up stakes in Waco and headed up the road for Nashville some seven years ago.

That road began about 35 years ago when Johnny, still in high school, tied his mandolin onto his bicycle and pedaled the six miles from his family's farm to radio station KGKB in Tyler, Texas, to play a fifteen-minute set with the Rose City Swingers on a live broadcast, sandwiched in between the Texas Playboys and the Light Crust Doughboys and all the other spots that filled those Texas airwaves from the middle of the Depression to the time TV arrived and knocked radio for a loop.

"We played whatever we liked," Johnny remembers. "In those days music wasn't tagged country, pop, or whatever. We played them all, our own way, on guitars, mandolins, fiddles and a jug. We were in glory to do this for nothing."

When World War II came along, putting many musicians in uniform, Johnny was too young to go. He joined up with the Shelton Brothers' band, playing mandolin and banjo. He also began fooling with the fiddle, and soon he fell in love with it. There wasn't any school of Texas fiddling to attend, so he went to Cliff Bruner, a legendary Texas fiddler, to get some hints on how to play the new fiddle style they called "hoakum."

"Bruner told me two things," says



Photo: J. D. Sloan





Johnny. "He said, 'Can you hum it? You're not ever going to play any more than you can hum,' and he took me over in a corner and told me 'Never let anyone give you a stick of tea.'" Thus did Johnny pick up his habit of humming while he plays—if you listen carefully, you can sometimes hear it on his records—and learn of the dangers of marijuana.

The postwar years saw Western Swing reach its peak, and at the top of that peak was Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys. Johnny was one of them. After getting out of the service (he became old enough to serve for the last two years of the war), he tried to make a go of it with a family band, but that failed and it was on one of his many post-family band dates that Tiny Moore, Wills's mandolin player, recruited him for the Playboys. He joined in April of 1949, doubling on mandolin and fiddle and singing when he got the chance. Wills thought so much of Johnny's ability that he had him put together his own band to play Wills's Ranchhouse Club in Dallas on the

nights the Playboys were on the road.

But finally the glory days of Western Swing ended. "Music sort of runs in cycles," Johnny says with no trace of bitterness. "Bob Wills's music was so popular during the forties that people got tired of it. Elvis finally came along and blew the whole keg away."

Country music went through some hard days after Elvis and rock & roll burst upon the scene, and Johnny was one of the many musicians who didn't convert to the new music and found himself hard pressed to make money through music. He got himself a barber's license and a job cutting hair at the V.A. Hospital in Waco, keeping his family together and playing weekends on the road. Those weekends of music meant a lot of Fridays and Mondays missed from work, however, and finally the V.A. sent down the word: "Fiddle or cut hair." Right about then, Waco lost a good barber and Nashville gained another aspiring session musician.

Johnny's twenty years of fiddling didn't mean a whole lot in Nashville, and so his first two years were hard as

he struggled to let people know who he was and what he could do. But between session jobs sent his way by friends, and weekend jobs on the road with Pete Drake's band, he kept body and soul together. In the meantime, though, country music was changing. Influences that were not rooted in the rural music of the South were being felt. The music was softening to reach a broader audience, and more and more radio stations were coming to country music and playing it for people who were not farm-raised, who liked a traditional record now and again but demanded variety in their music. Johnny's feel for music, the style he had developed in Texas—swing, jazz, hoakum, call it what you will—was ideal for the new country sound, as the Western fiddler played with a gentler tone than his Eastern counterpart. The layers of harmony developed in Western Swing fiddle licks slid easily into the kind of studio work that Nashville was producing more and more. The sometimes harsh edge of classic bluegrass and mountain fiddle clashed with the new country sound, but Johnny's beautifully understated fiddle and mandolin fills fit right in. Johnny started to get more calls than he could handle. These days he turns down work or passes sessions along to other fiddlers when he feels he has more than he cares to handle. "That's how I started to get work," he remembers.

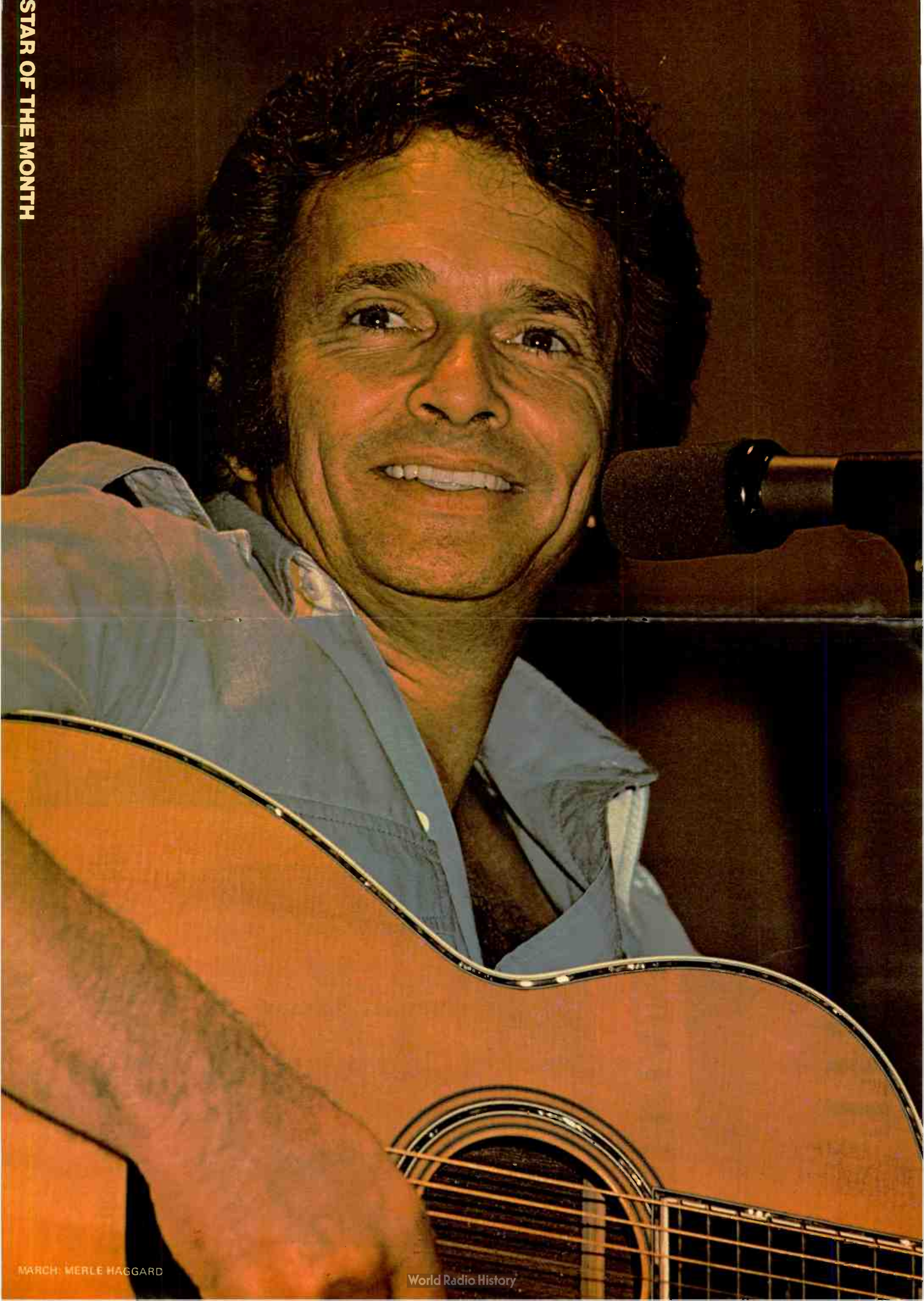
In all his years, Johnny has managed to get only one album out with his name on the top—produced by Merle Haggard (his biggest fan) and released on the Capitol label. It was an instrumental album, and it didn't sell well. There was no request for a follow-up. Johnny had his own ideas about that, and a while ago he took a year's savings, went to Texas, and made his own album of Texas dance music, recorded live, the way it used to be.

The tapes of those sessions are stacked next to the bookcase full of old 78's in Johnny's house—right next to the CMA statuette on the coffee table. Those tapes make him smile a lot, and it's obvious that the experience of being on stage and playing for the people gave him a bigger thrill than he gets in the studio. He doesn't say that, but it shows. And things are on the move for Johnny now: his options are opening up.

"It looks like that album will be coming out now," he says, nodding his head just a touch towards that funny-looking trophy. A little national TV exposure never hurt anyone. ■

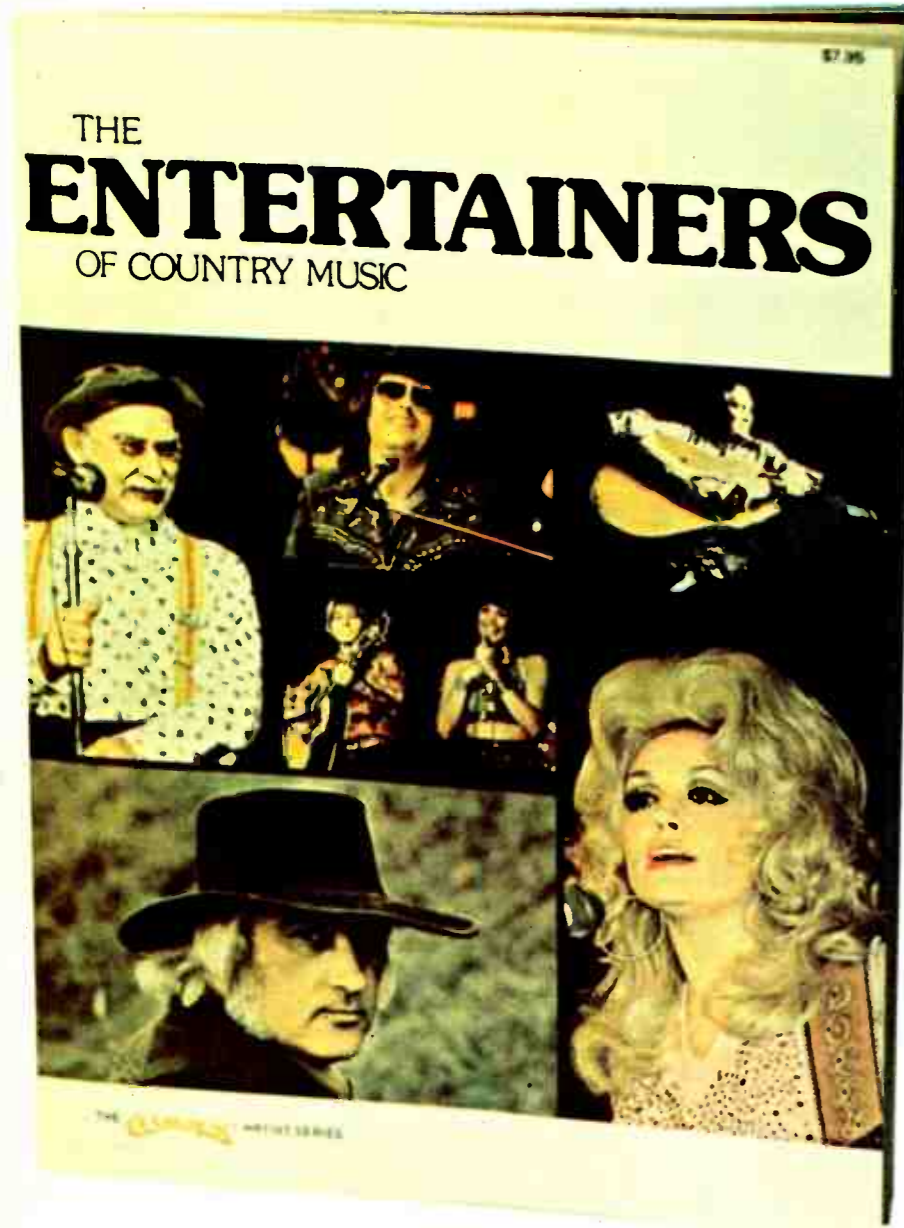
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STONEY EDWARDS

THE CASE OF COUNTRY'S NUMBER TWO BLACK STAR

by GLENN HUNTER

The heater's on and the windows are fogged inside the parked Silver Eagle tour bus where Stoney Edwards and friends are working on dollar cups of beer and a quart of Jack Daniels, killing time between shows this autumn evening at the Ventura, California, County Fairgrounds.

Toward the rear of the bus, two rodeo cowboys squat on their haunches and pass the brown-bagged whiskey bottle among the members of Edwards's five-man band. Up front, Stoney sips at a Coors and considers his reputation as the "number two" black performer of a music associated traditionally with whites.

"Well, I think Charley Pride has done more for the black man than any man except maybe the Rev. Luther King—I think I have done more, too," he says at last. "But when I get out there on stage, nobody owes me a damn thing. I've had people get drunk and call me a nigger or a half-breed or somethin' like that, and I've had people bring their kids up and say, 'I want my daughter to meet you 'cause she's never met a black country and western singer before.'"

He leans forward slightly and begins to smile. "I can remember the biggest compliment I ever got was in some nightclub this fella came up after the show and said, 'You are the singinest damn hillbilly I ever heard in my life. You sing even better'n that other nigger—what's his name?'"

Though after six years with Capitol he's still short of Pride's prominence, the Texas-based Edwards has built a sizable national following on the strength of hard-country hits like "She's My Rock," "Two Dollar Toy," and "Mississippi You're On My Mind." His voice—gritty, unaffected, sentimental—was perhaps heard to best advantage on "Hank and Lefty Raised My Country Soul," a 1973 paean to Hank Williams and Lefty Frizzell written by Dallas Frazier and

A.L. Owens. The song, Edwards says, rose to the top of every C&W playlist in the country, and "even sold 15,000 records in the city of San Francisco."

"When I first heard that song, I turned a flip—oh man, I thought that was the greatest thing I'd ever heard, 'cause Lefty was an idol to me," Stoney says.

"About when the song was doing so good, I walked into this little bar in Nashville where somebody had punched 'Hank and Lefty' on the jukebox. Well, old Lefty was sittin' at a table in the corner by himself, kinda cryin'. Later this guy told me he'd overheard Lefty say, 'Why, that song's a tribute to me . . . and here I didn't think nobody cared a shit about me anymore. And wouldn't you know . . . it had to be by a black man.'"

"Did you take offense?" someone asks Stoney. "Hell no," he roars. "That was a compliment."

Green-eyed and mocha-skinned, natty in a white Levi suit and boots of polished red leather, the 45-year-old singer is drumming his fingers across the bus seat, waiting apprehensively to begin his second performance in a brisk outdoor chill. Feeling the whiskey's warmth, the rodeo cowboys amble uncertainly off the bus now, and drummer Robert Payne laughs and launches into a story about the night in Kerrville, Texas, when folks were walking out on Mickey Gilley. Suddenly the bus door swings open and a chinless fellow with a crew cut and half a cup of beer stumbles up and in.

"Damn carpet in here's better'n the one in my house," he grins, extending an arm toward Stoney. "Name's Doyle. I enjoyed your show real good. I played a bass around here myself for twelve years . . . cut a 12-inch record with a 10-inch hole!" An attractive, pigtailed, blonde woman pops her head in behind Doyle: "Did I leave my purse in here?" Stoney jumps to his feet. "Any money in it? he laughs. "If there is, let me go

get it!"

Doyle and the blonde make for the rodeo bleachers, and Stoney shakes his head slowly. "That's ole Doyle. He's my kind of people."

Born in Seminole, Oklahoma, to a family that would grow to eight children, Stoney says his mother's parents were negro and Indian, his father's a blend of negro, Indian and Irish. He recalls "catchin' rabbits, trappin', and shuckin' potatoes" on the family's small farm until the age of 13, when to help support his five brothers and two sisters he began to brew and sell corn whiskey.

"Runnin' corn liquor and helpin' take care of the farm, I was only able to go up to the third grade," he says. "Later, I was too old, I was plum 'shamed to go back to school. I still don't know how to read or write."

His interest in country music developed early during frequent visits to "a bunch of uncles back in North Carolina," Stoney remembers. "They'd sit around in a ring and pick, and I'd put down right in the middle of 'em. I had them to help steer my interest to Bob Wills and the Grand Ole Opry. I remember even back then, I wanted to sing on the Opry so bad I could taste it."

Ironically, Edwards's country music career started as the result of an industrial accident which nearly took his life.

He'd toiled variously as a car scrubber, cowboy, janitor and pipe fitter before landing a machinist's job at a shipyard in Richmond, Calif. "The accident happened in a tank about the size of a big average room. There was a blower in there that had to be sealed up. I was closed up in it, takin' bolts loose, and wouldn't ya know somebody outside was weldin' the opening shut. I couldn't hear 'em with all the noise. I got welded right up in that thing. I passed out."

Suffering from carbon dioxide poisoning and its aftereffects, Stoney was





Oklahoma's only black country singer gets in tune with that Western thing.

hospitalized in 1969 and nearly committed to a mental institution.

"I was nuts, crazy, I didn't know hardly anything or anybody," he says. "But my wife Rosemary wouldn't go on welfare. I figured if I left her and my two girls, they'd be better off.

"I had my bag all packed one night and was ready to leave when my little girl came in with this ole windup toy I'd bought her. She said, 'Daddy, if I can't go, how come you get to go?' Well, I put my bag down and went back to my room and wrote my first song, 'Two Dollar Toy,' before I went back to bed."

Stoney says he still experiences the malaise which led to 'Toy,' his first country hit: "Every three or four months I'll get these flashes where I just blank out."

In addition to playing guitar, bass, piano and fiddle—though never on stage because "That'd limit my style too much"—Edwards spends much of his non-performing time writing original material like "Cute Little Waitress" and "The Fishin' Song." "I like to go back up to Oklahoma to write—I get more of a feel for it up there," he says. "And when we're on the road, we'll be drivin' along and I'll be back there pumpin' on my guitar and writin'. Course I have to do it all in my head,

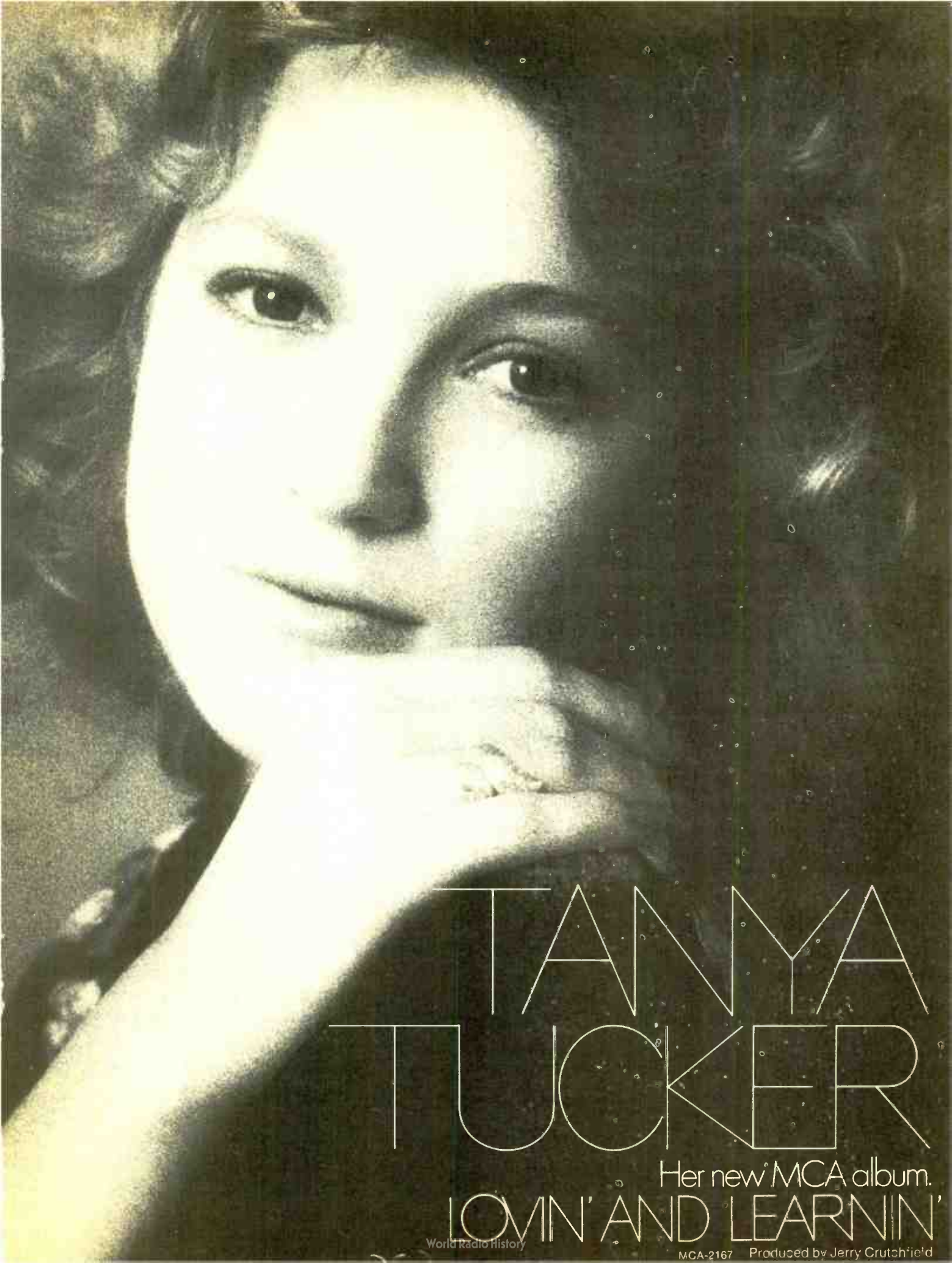
and then say the words into a tape recorder. None of my songs have ever been written down on a piece of paper."

Despite the cold, a crowd of some 200 persons has gathered to hear Stoney on this final leg of a three-week western tour. His band—drummer Robert Payne, guitarist Joe Portman III, fiddler Phil Tremble, brothers Larry and Bailey Anderson on bass and rhythm guitars—completes a six-song warmup set, and now Stoney bounces out onto the portable wooden stage. They twang into "Poor Folks Stick Together," then work quickly and deliberately through "She's My Rock," "Mississippi," "Mama's Love." His eyes downcast, Stoney holds the microphone loosely in his left hand, snaps time to the music with the fingers of his right; like a big-band conductor, he swivels and points to the musicians for solos, calling out their names: "Bailey!" "Joseph!" They break into an up-tempo version of Merle Haggard's "Okie From Muskogee" before Edwards motions for an onlooker's tall cup of beer. "Don't worry, folks, ole Uncle Stoney don't drink," he laughs, taking a long draught. Now he signals "Faded Love" and explains: "We're gonna do this Bob Wills tune, 'cause he had a lot to do with me bein' in country music . . .

"Yes, I was asked to do a benefit show for Bob Wills in Oakland, Calif. in 1970—that was my real break," Stoney is saying back on the bus. "But when I got there, they already had the show planned out, there wasn't no room for me. A singer named Tony Rose said, 'I've heard him sing—it'd be an honor to have him sing on my part of the show' . . . so I went out and did 'Mama's Hungry Eyes.' Afterwards this young attorney came up and asked me, 'How'd you like to record?' I cut a record a week later—we took it to Capitol at ten in the morning and by 11:30 they told me they'd sign me up."

Road manager J.J. Roberts hustles by toward the driver's seat, reminding us that it's an 1100-mile trip to the band's Saturday night date outside Farmington, New Mexico. Portman and the boys want to follow their rodeo friends to the nearby Stallion Club for drinks and a free chicken barbeque. But Stoney's exhausted, ready to bunk in.

"If I got any goals, I guess I'd like to be a rancher, settle down somewhere like on my brother's place in South Texas," he says before calling it a day. "But I'll never quit singin'. Someday I'd like to be as good and as famous as Charley is now — and he be famouser." ■



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Hillbilly Heaven

THE SOLUTION ACCORDING TO RAY PRICE

by Dave Hickey

It's nearly noon, and we're enjoying the shade in front of Vern's Gulf Service and Repair, overlooking a farm-to-market intersection on the outskirts of Mount Pleasant, Texas. I am hunkered down on the concrete apron, sipping a root beer, while Wafer sits up on the cold-drink box, fiddling with his camera. He points the lens out into the sunshine toward a '52 Ford half-ton which has just pulled off the blacktop. When the gravel dust settles, a woman in a flour-sack dress climbs down from the cab and strides toward us. Wafer snaps her picture.

"Got to get into practice," Wafer says, and I agree: if we ever make it out to Ray Price's farm, I will become a journalist and Wafer will become a photographer. For now, however, Wafer is my songwriting partner, which is why he begged himself along—Ray Price is a songwriter's singer, and we are playing "did you know?"

"Did you know that Ray Price cut Bill Anderson's first hit?" I ask, "and Roger Miller's, and Willie Nelson's, Kristofferson's, and Jim Weatherly's?"

"Yeah," Wafer says smugly, "Anderson's was 'City Lights,' and Willie's was 'Night Life;' 'For the Good Times' was Kris's, and Weatherley's was 'The Best Thing That Ever Happened,' I think. What was the Roger Miller?"

"'Invitation to the Blues,' " I say.

"Jeez, did Roger write that? Hell. Did you know that at one time Johnny Paycheck, and Roger Miller, and Willie Nelson, and Johnny Bush were in Price's band?" Wafer says.

"Did you know that Price was responsible for Harlan Howard's first two hits?" I ask. "Harlan gave him 'Pick Me Up on Your Way Down' and 'Heartaches by the Number.' Ray gave 'Pick Me Up' to his buddy Billy Walker, and cut 'Heartaches' himself."

"You know who wrote 'Crazy



Ray Price, right, leaves the Ryman. Eventually, he left Nashville too, and went home to Texas, where a man can do as he pleases.

Photos: Michael Wafer (left) & Grand Ole Opry

Arms?" Wafer asks.

"That was the first song I learned to play on a guitar . . ."

"Ralph Mooney, plays steel for Waylon."

"I knew *that*," I say, "before you learned to sing flat."

A week earlier, my little brother was on his way to Dallas to conduct some horse business with Price and I had tagged along with him to the sleek, ultra-modern offices of Ray Price Enterprises on Stemmons Freeway in Dallas. At first it seemed a little strange, sitting with Price, my little brother and Price's wife Jeanie in that large Star-Trek office, talking about horses and music, mainly because Price (who left Nashville about the time I started hanging around there) had become sort of a reclusive, enigmatic figure in my mind, existing on record and in the charts, but very much out of the highly-visible flux of Nashville life.

But it soon became obvious that Price had no intentions of being enigmatic or reclusive. He just intended to be out of Nashville.

"I have no need to go there," he had said. "I record in Los Angeles. I have my booking and publishing right here, and my horses out at Mount Pleasant. That's the way I like it, and whatever I have now, I've put together since I came here."

Before we left the office on Stemmons, Price invited me out to see the farm, which is about 180 miles northeast of Dallas. I accepted gratefully, which is why Wafer and I are now ensconced at Vern's, waiting for a guide.

"Y'all seen a twelve-foot trailer around here? Did a fellow leave it here last Friday?"

I look up and the woman in the flour-sack dress is standing in front of me. She is about fifty and holds her hands straight down by her sides.

"Ma'am?"

"My boy," she says. "He was over here last Friday from Pittsburg? We're from Pittsburg, you know, and he had this twelve-foot pipe-welded trailer on his car. That's what he does, he's a welder, you know. And he was over here from Pittsburg, Friday, and he'd been drinking, so he didn't wanta drive it and he left it at a service station. The people said they'd look after it, you know, till he come back since he'd been drinking. But he got home all right except he couldn't remember where was the station where he left his trailer. It's twelve-foot, welded, real nice trailer, and the fella said he'd keep it for him on account . . . well, he don't know his way around Mount Pleasant, though he was here Friday and . . ."

Her words fade away, leaving her mouth open as she looks at us.

"Sorry, ma'am," Wafer says, "We just drove in. Been lost ourselves as a matter of fact. We're just waiting for a guide."

"Oh," she says, "I see," although she obviously doesn't.

"You might ask the fellow inside," I say, "He works here. Vern's gone."

"Vern?" she says.

I point at the sign. "Vern's Gulf Service and Repair," I say.

"Oh," she says again, and trails past us into the station, a little distracted.

"My boy. He was over here last Friday from Pittsburg?" we hear her begin, then a bright green pickup pulls into the drive.

"Her boy," Wafer says, pushing himself off the cold-drink box, "ought to get his ass over here and find his own damn trailer."

A kid with hair too long for farming and too short for rock & roll sticks his head out of the pickup and grins. "Y'all need some direction?"

"You got it," I say. "We followed Vern's instructions for about twenty miles into the next county, so we came back and called."

"Y'all just follow me."

So we follow the green pickup into the rolling North Texas countryside.

It's a beautiful day and it's kind of exotic to see the leaves turning bright fall colors. We make a crucial left turn which was omitted from Vern's instructions and in a moment we are cruising down a narrow lane shaded by trees and bordered by neat board fence, painted black, which, to our left, extends across contoured pastures as bright and manicured as fairways where fragile beautiful horses drift about with that light-footed, stilted walk that marks thoroughbreds born to run.

"Beautiful," Wafer says. "Price runs a tight ship."

"I feel like I'm on a calendar," I say. (Like your average country music fan, my idea of getting off in the country is to pull over in a roadside park.) Suddenly the lane crests a ridge and veers down into a shallow valley sheltering a cluster of buildings and a good-sized pond. The boy in the pickup waves us up beside him.

"Ray's over to the barn. Just park on the road, I got to go look after some equipment." He waves and pulls off.

Climbing the slope from the road to the barn (which is actually a stable), we see Ray Price standing just inside the

shadows talking to an older man who towers over him. Price is dressed in twill slacks, boots and a polo shirt—standard Texas horseman; the old man wears starched khakis down over his needlepoint boots, a starched white western shirt, and a crisp yellow straw hat which shades a face as wrinkled as the rest of him is pressed. Further back in the darkness a slight Chicano stands with a bucket in his hand.

"What do you think?" Price is saying, "Is she anything at all?"

"Oh, yes," the cowboy says, "I've had her out in number five for a while and she's a sweet-tempered old mare. I think she'll throw some runners on the ground. She comes speed out of speed, and she has the conformation, a little knock-kneed, of course. . . ."

"Lots of speedballs are," Price says, "You can't stack speed very long without something like that happening."

"That's true enough. You put her with old 'Cowboy' here and you're gonna have some distance horses, worst you could get would be some very fast quarters."

Price notices us and beckons us forward, as the trainer drifts over to talk to the Chicano.

"Good to see y'all," Price says. "You have a beautiful place here," Wafer says.

"But it's dry, dry. You come out here the day after the next rain and you will see some green, son."

"Long way from Dallas," I say, "And not just in miles."

"Couldn't suit me better. The country," he says, pausing for emphasis, "is where it's at." Then he grins at the strange sound of the hip phrase. "What I mean is that the city has *nothing* for me. This is where it's all at." He makes a wide gesture which takes in all of the country spreading away in the sunshine.

"You know, I grew up twenty miles from here, over in Perryville, left there twenty-five years ago to go to Arlington State and be a vet, ended up singing. Took all that time for me to get back where I started. . . . Come on, let me show you my horses. These are all thoroughbreds, but I'm going to get into quarter horses, so I don't have to fly halfway across the country to race 'em. Do you remember Arlington Downs?"

"Sir?" Wafer says.

"Ah, you're too young. It was right there between Fort Worth and Dallas, and, son, they had some *racers* there. Then they banned racing and, hell, I guess it stood there for twenty years just wasting away. Last time I remember seeing it, they were using the infield to store fiberglass boats." He shrugs.

We walk on through the stable, peering into the dark stalls as Price identifies the horses, quotes pedigrees, stakes races, total purses. He moves easily, perfectly at home, and surprisingly fit for a man who had been in the hospital the week before. But *something* has unnerved him and he seems to recite the pedigrees and purses a little defensively. As we walk out the other end of the stable he says, "I haven't ever had any press out here, before. It's not really fixed up for visitors, but then if it *was*, I'd have visitors. These are some brood mares we just bought," he says, as we walk toward the nearest pasture. To the Chicano sitting on the fence he shouts, "Are they getting along now, Chico?"

"Yessir, they were just feisty from traveling." The three of us lean on the fence, looking at a black and a sorrel mare drifting about restlessly.

"What's bothering them, Chico?"

"Flies, I think, sir."

"Well get some of that spray from the barn. Damn. Flies."

(Continued on page 61)

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Hi-Fi Corner

by HANS FANTEL

BETTER SOUND—FOR FREE

Illustration: Peter Bramley



Chances are that you can make your stereo sound just about 100 per cent better without spending a single penny. If you are anything like the typical listener, you probably haven't given much thought to just where to put the speakers. But canny speaker placement may add more range to your system—especially way down in the bass, where it really counts.

If it's extra bass you want—and most of us do—your best bet is putting the speakers in two corners of the room, pushing them as snugly back into the corner as you possibly can. This alone will increase bass efficiency by as much as 80 percent. It gets even better when you put the speakers on the floor rather than putting them up on tables or shelves.

What accounts for the added bass? Well, when you put your speakers on the floor in a corner, the floor and the adjoining walls form sounding boards, and the bass rolls out better along those wall and floor surfaces.

If your furniture arrangement doesn't leave you any empty corners on the floor, you can get the same bass-boost effect by mounting your speakers in ceiling corners, using wall

brackets to hold them up. This is a handy method in small rooms with a shortage of floor space.

If getting more bass is your main problem, it also helps to let the speakers face down the whole length of the room rather than "looking" across the width of the room. That way, the sound has a longer "throw path" before it hits the opposite wall, and this helps the deep notes come through more powerfully.

So far, I've talked mainly about bass because that's the more common problem. After all, it's not easy for a small system to put out enough energy to give you a real gut-feeling on those low thumps of the string bass or the electric guitar. But this doesn't mean that you should neglect the high end of the tonal range. The highs account for clarity in voices, they put across the sharp twang of the banjo, and they let you get a better sense of the fingering on the guitar. To get clear, crisp highs in your music, you need a stereo system with a good pickup cartridge, a "clean," non-distorting amplifier, and speakers with a good pair of tweeters. But whatever the merits of your sound rig, the quality of the highs you hear also depends

on the acoustics of your listening room.

If your room has lots of hard surfaces—plaster walls, tile floors, big picture windows—they reflect the highs like a mirror reflects light, and too much reflection makes the highs bounce all over the place. Result: the music sounds shrill and fuzzy. If that's your trouble, you need something to soak up some of the sound. Put a hanging or a wall rug on the wall that faces the speakers, or put some heavy curtains by the windows. Anything soft will help: pillows, stuffed furniture, sofas, rugs.

Or you may have the opposite problem: too many rugs and pillows stifling the highs and making the music sound dull and soggy, lacking brightness and snap. In that case, take down some draperies, put up a mirror or a large, glass-covered picture.

There are no hard and fast rules about this because no two living rooms are quite alike. To get the best possible sound in your particular setting, you'll have to experiment a bit. For instance, you can try changing the angle of your speakers, which will automatically change the pattern of reflections. Instead of facing the speakers directly toward your usual listening chair, you might make them "wall-eyed" by turning them slightly outward—facing away from each other—toward the nearest wall. Then the sound reaches you on the rebound. This is particularly useful for making the sound seem more spacious in a small room. You might even try laying the speakers on their backs, facing upward, and let the sound bounce off the ceiling.

These are some of the ways by which you can "create" your own kind of sound. And by trying out different speaker positions, it's a safe bet that you will find your system sounding better than it ever did. ■



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How Beautiful Heaven Must Be	Pick	6028	10th Anniversary	Dot	25650	Roy Clark	Pick	6046
Country	Pick	6090	Memories	Dot	25748	Silver Threads & Golden Needles	Pick	6080
BUDDY ALAN			Wish You Were Here, Buddy	Dot	25764	He'll Have to Go	Pick	6094
Whole Lot of Somethin'	Cap	592	Kaiser Bill's Batman	Dot	25805	Take Me As I Am	Pick	6137
BILL ANDERSON			Look Ahead	Dot	25876	Honky Tonk	Pick	6154
Country Style	Voc	73835	ELTON BRITT			Everlovin' Soul	Dot	25972
Just Plain Bill	Voc	73927	Best, Vol. 2	RCA	4822	PATSY CLINE		
JUDY ALLEN			Jimmie Rodgers' Blues	Cam	2295	Here's Patsy Cline	Voc	73753
Especially For You	Stop	1031	JIM ED BROWN			Today, Tomorrow & Forever	Pick	6001
LIZ ANDERSON			Remember Me	RCA	4130	Stop the World	Pick	6039
Friends Are Gonna Be Strangers	Cam	956	Going Up the Country	RCA	4262	In Care of the Blues	Pick	6072
EDDY ARNOLD			Morning	RCA	4461	Country Music Hall of Fame	Pick	6148
I Love How You Love Me	Cam	1-0099	Angel's Sunday	RCA	4525	BEN COLDER		
Then You Can Tell Me Goodbye	Cam	2501	Evening	RCA	4713	Warming Up to Colder	MGM	4807
That's How Much I Love You	Cam	471	Brown is Blue	RCA	4755	Harper Valley PTA	MGM	4614
Songs I Love to Sing	Cam	741	Gentle on My Mind	Cam	2496	Have One on Ben	MGM	4629
Eddy's Songs	Cam	798	Country Cream	Cam	2549	Wacky World	MGM	4876
I'm Throwing Rice	Cam	897	Hey Good Lookin'	Cam	1-0197	Ben Colder	MGM	139
Wanderin'	RCA	1111	MAXINE BROWN			COMPTON BROS		
Let's Make Memories	RCA	2337	Sugar Cane Country	Chart	1012	Haunted House	Dot	25974
Folk Song Book	RCA	2811	BROWNS			WILMA LEE & STONEY COOPER		
I Want to Go With You	RCA	3507	Sing Big Ones From the Country	Cam	2142	Walking My Lord Up Calvary Hill	Power Pak	242
Last Word in Lonesome	RCA	3622	Sing Harvest of Country Songs	Cam	2262	COWBOY COPAS		
Somebody Like Me	RCA	3715	WILMA BURGESS			Tragic Tales of Love & Life	King	714
Lonely Again	RCA	3753	Misty Blue	Dec	74852	Brokenhearted Melodies	King	720
Turn World Around	RCA	3869	Tear Time	Dec	74935	The Country Gentleman	King	817
Everlovin' World	RCA	3931	Parting is Sorrow	Dec	75090	The Legend (with Hawkins)	King	850
Songs of the Young World	RCA	4110	JOHNNY BUSH			COUNTRY GENTLEMEN		
Glory of Love	RCA	4179	Undo the Right	Power Pak	211	Bluegrass Country	Pick	6156
So Many Ways	MGM	4878	Bush Country	Power Pak	217	COUNTRY RAMBLERS		
CHET ATKINS			Sounds of a Heartache	Power Pak	232	Carter Family Songs	Cam	2452
Hum & Strum Along	RCA	2025	You Gave Me a Mountain	Power Pak	214	Snowbird	Cam	2476
Travelin'	RCA	2678	Greatest Hits	Stop	1028	FLOYD CRAMER		
My Favorite Guitar	RCA	3316	BUDDY CAGLE			Distinctive Piano Style	Cam	2104
Solo Flight	RCA	3922	Boxcar Door	Imp	12374	Night Train	Cam	2152
Yestergroovin'	RCA	4331	ARCHIE CAMPBELL			DICK CURLESS		
Guitar Genius	Cam	753	Didn't He Shine	RCA	4582	End of the Road	Pick	6142
Relaxin'	Cam	2296	Bull Session (with Samples)	Chart	1007	JOHNNY DARRELL		
BOBBY BARE			GLENN CAMPBELL			Gone So Long	UA	6707
Best of Bobby Bare	RCA	3479	Burning Bridges	Cap	4653	DANNY DAVIS & NASHVILLE BRASS		
I Need Some Good News Bad	Mer	61342	Country Shindig	Surrey	1007	You Ain't Heard Nothin' Yet	RCA	4334
Folsom Prison Blues	Cam	2290	12-String Guitar	Custom Tone		Super Country	RCA	4571
Memphis, Tennessee	Cam	1-0150	HENSON CARGILL			JIMMIE DAVIS		
I'm a Long Way From Home	Cam	2465	Skip a Rope	Monu	18094	In My Father's House	Voc	73878
JACK BARLOW			None of My Business	Monu	18117	No One Stands Alone	Voc	73676
Son of the South	Dot	25958	MARTHA CARSON			Amazing Grace	Voc	73863
BOB BISHOP			Martha Carson Sings	Cam	906	SKEETER DAVIS		
Somewhere in the Country	ABC	677	JOHNNY CASH			Sing You a Song	RCA	2197
BLACKWOOD BROS			Country Gold	Power Pak	246	Skeeter Davis	RCA	2699
How Big is God	RCA	3521	Golden Hits, Vol. 1	Sun	100	Closest Thing to Love	RCA	4124
Blackwood Bros.	Cam	544	Golden Hits, Vol. 2	Sun	101	Mary Frances	RCA	4200
Keys to the Kingdom	Cam	618	Get Rhythm	Sun	105	Love Takes a Lot of Time	RCA	4557
Give Us This Day	Cam	735	Show Time	Sun	106	Brint It on Home	RCA	4642
JOHNNY BOND			Sunday Down South (with J.L. Lewis)	Sun	119	The Hillbilly Singer	RCA	4818
Here Come the Elephants	Starday	472	Singing Storyteller	Sun	115	I Forgot More Than You'll Ever Know	Cam	818
OWEN BRADLEY			Golden Hits, Vol. 3	Sun	127	Easy to Love	Cam	2367
Great Hymns	Voc	73834	Songs of the Soil	Col	11505	JIMMY DEAN		
WALTER BRENNAN			Fabulous	Col	11506	The Jimmy Dean Show	RCA	3890
Mama Sang a Song	Lib	3266	I Walk the Line	Pick	6097	JIMMY DEMPSEY		
PAT BOONE			Rock Island Line	Pick	6101	Guitar Country	ABC	619
Pat Boone Sings Irving Berlin	Dot	25077	Folsom Prison Blues	Pick	6114	Gospel Guitars	Gospel	708
Yes Indeed	Dot	25121	TOMMY CASH			SENATOR EVERETT DIRKSEN		
This and That	Dot	25285	Six White Horses	Epic	26535	Giant Men	Cap	2643
Moody River	Dot	25384	Rise and Shine	Epic	30107	JOHNNY DOLLAR		
Golden Hits	Dot	25455	Cash Country	Epic	30556	Big Rig Rollin' Man	Chart	1025
Touch of Your Lips	Dot	25546	DON CHERRY					
Boss Beat	Dot	25594	Cherry Smashes	Monu	8049			
			There Goes My Everything	Monu	18075			

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Keep on Truckin'	Mer	1-669	The Hagers	Cap	438	Wanda Jackson in Person	Cap	345
CONNIE EATON			BONNIE GUITAR			Country	Cap	434
Hit the Road, Jack (with Dave Peel)	Chart	1034	Night Train to Memphis	Cam	2330	Please Help Me I'm Falling	Pick	6058
Something Special	Chart	1049	Two Worlds	Dot	25696	We'll Sing in the Sunshine	Pick	6116
BOBBY EDWARDS			Miss Bonnie Guitar	Dot	25737	By the Time I Get to Phoenix	Pick	6123
You're the Reason	Chart	1033	I Believe in Love	Dot	25865	SONNY JAMES		
EVERLY BROTHERS			Leaves Are Tears of Autumn	Dot	25892	Young Love	Cam	2140
Stories We Could Tell	RCA	4620	Affair	Dot	25947	Matter of Time	Cap	432
Pass the Chicken	RCA	4781	MERLE HAGGARD & BONNIE OWENS			WAYLON JENNINGS		
STAN FARLOW			That Makes Two of Us	Pick	6106	Folk Country	RCA	3523
Hot Wheels	Checker	3015	GEORGE HAMILTON IV			Country Folk	RCA	4180
NARVEL FELTS			Best of George Hamilton IV	RCA	4265	Cedartown, Georgia	RCA	4567
Live	Power Pak	237	Back Where It's At	RCA	4342	One and Only	Cam	2183
FLATT & SCRUGGS			Down Home in the Country	RCA	4435	Waylon Jennings	Voc	73873
Pickin' 'Strummin' Singin'	Col	10032	North Country	RCA	4517	Only Daddy That'll Walk the Line	Cam	1-0306
Flatt & Scruggs	Pick	6093	West Texas Highway	RCA	4609	JOHNNY & JACK		
LESTER FLATT			Travelin' Light	RCA	4772	Here's Johnny & Jack	Voc	73832
Kentucky Ridgerunner	RCA	4633	International Ambassador	RCA	4826	JOHNSON BOYS		
Flatt on Victor	RCA	4495	Singin' on the Mountain	Cam	1-0242	Pickin' and Singin'	Bethlehem	4013
Lester N' Mac (with Mac Wiseman)	RCA	4547	(with Arthur Smith)	Cam	2200	ANTHONY ARMSTRONG JONES		
On the South Bound	RCA	4688	Rose and a Baby Ruth	Cam	2268	Take a Letter, Maria	Chart	1027
Flatt Out	Col	1006	Early Morning Rain	Cam	2468	Sugar in the Flowers	Chart	1036
Country Boy	RCA	1-0131	ARLENE HARDEN			GRANDPA JONES		
RED FOLEY			Sings Roy Orbison	Col	9939	Pickin' Time	Coral	20060
I'm Bound for the Kingdom	Voc	73745	BOBBY HARDEN			LELAND JONES		
Red Foley	Voc	73751	Nashville Sensation	Starday	443	Everybody's Doing Their Thing	Redcrest	500
TENNESSEE ERNIE FORD			HARDEN TRIO			BILL JUSTIS		
Standin' in the Need of Prayer	Pick	3222	Big Country Hits	Harmony	11396	Raunchy	Sun	109
Jesus Loves Me	Pick	3275	FREDDIE HART			GEORGE JONES		
Amazing Grace	Pick	3308	Born a Fool	Coral	20011	With Love	Mus	3194
Rock of Ages	Pick	3353	Freddie Hart	Voc	73929	Sings Leon Payne	Mus	3204
WALLY FOWLER			Release Me	Pick	6146	Best of George Jones, Vol. 1	RCA	4716
Gospel Song Festival	King	702	LEE HAZELWOOD			Poor Man's Riches	RCA	4725
Tribute to Mother	Nashwood	100	Houston	Harmony	11290	I Made Leaving Easier For You	RCA	4726
ROB GALBRATH			STAN HITCHCOCK			Tender Years	RCA	4786
Nashville Dirt	Col	1057	Dixie Bell	GRT	20001	Take Me	RCA	4787
GLENN GARRISON			HOMER & JETHRO			Wrapped Around Her Finger	RCA	4801
Country Country	Imp	12346	Best of Homer & Jethro	RCA	3474	I Can Still See Him	RCA	4847
DON GIBSON			Far Out World	RCA	4648	Window Up Above	Nash	2103
Best of Don Gibson	RCA	3376	Strike Back	Cam	707	Golden Hits	UA	3532
Great Gibson, Vol. 1	RCA	4378	Humorous Side	Cam	768	The Young George Jones	UA	3558
Very Best	MGM	4502	Playboy Song	Cam	2315	KENDALLS		
Warm Love (with Sue Thompson)	MGM	4503	Homer & Jethro	King	639	Leavin' On a Jet Plane	Power Pak	212
Don Gibson	MGM	4509	DAVID HOUSTON			PEE WEE KING		
Bring Back Your Love to Me	MGM	4516	David Houston Sings	Cam	2126	Biggest Hits	Cam	2460
I Love You So Much	Cam	2246	David Houston	Harmony	11412	FRANKIE LAINE		
I Walk Alone	Cam	2507	You Mean the World to Me	Col	11522	Memories	Harm	7425
BILLY GOLDEN			David	Epic	26482	Roving Gambler	Harm	11129
Country Music's Golden Boy	Starday	431	Baby, Baby	Epic	26539	I'll Take Care	ABC	604
JACK GREENE			Wonders of the Wine	Epic	30108	I Wanted Someone to Love	ABC	608
Last Letter	Voc	73926	Woman Always Knows	Epic	30657	You Gave Me a Mountain	ABC	682
I Am Not Alone	Dec	75080	IVORY JOE HUNTER			DICKEY LEE		
Until My Dreams Come True	Dec	75086	I've Always Been Country	Para	6080	Ashes of Love	RCA	4715
You Are My Treasure	Dec	74979	FERLIN HUSKEY			BOBBY LEWIS		
What Unlocks the Door	Dec	74939	Easy Livin'	King	728	A World of Love	UA	6616
Whole Lot About a Woman	Dec	75283	Ramblin' Rose	Pick	6135	An Ordinary Miracle	UA	6629
Back in the Arms of Love	Dec	75156	Heavenly Sunshine	Cap	433	Things For You and I	UA	6717
LYLOY GREEN			Sweet Love Lifted Me	Cap	591	The Best of Bobby Lewis	UA	6760
Day for Decision	Little Oarlin'	4002	BURL IVES			Bobby Lewis	UA	6673
JIMMY GRIGGS			Little White Ouck	Harm	14507	LINDA GAIL LEWIS		
Lonely Blue Boy	Gusto	5698	Burl's Broadway	Dec	74876	Two Sides	Smash	67119
			Sweet, Sad & Salty	Dec	75028	JERRY LEE LEWIS		
			Songbook	Coral	20029	Golden Cream of the Country	Sun	108
			Big Rock Candy Mountain	Pick	3393	Golden Hits, Vol. 2	Sun	103

a bonus record from page 46

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Sunday Down South (with J. Cash)	Sun	119	Woman of the World	Decca	75113	Calling You Sweetheart	Cam	2310
Old Time Country Music	Sun	121				GEORGE MORGAN		
Monsters	Sun	124	JUDY LYNN			Sings Like a Bird	Power Pak	212
Golden Hits, Vol. 3	Sun	128	Cesar's Palace	Col	9879	The Real George	Power Pak	225
Gospel	Mer	61318	BENNY MARTIN			JOHNNY & JONIE MOSBY		
There Must Be More to Love	Mer	61323	Greatest Hits	Power Pak	223	My Happiness	Cap	556
Who's Gonna Play This Ole Piano	Mer	61366	BOBBI MARTIN			NASHVILLE STRING BAND		
She Even Woke Me Up			With Love	UA	6755	Down Home	RCA	4363
to Say Goodbye	Smash	67128	For Love of Him	UA	6700	Identified	RCA	4472
I-40 Country	Mer	1-710	Thinking of You	Sunset	5319	WILLIE NELSON		
Southern Roots	Mer	1-690	JIMMY MARTIN			Laying My Burdens Down	RCA	4404
All Country	Smash	67071	Moonshine Hollow	Coral	20010	Yesterday's Wine	RCA	4568
Another Place, Another Time	Smash	67104	DARRELL McCALL			Columbus Stockade Blues	Cam	2444
She Still Comes Around	Smash	67112	Darrell McCall	Wayside	33-000	JIM NESBITT		
Hall of Fame Hits, Vol. 1	Smash	67117	CURTIS McPEAKE			Runnin' Bare	Chart	1031
Hall of Fame Hits, Vol. 2	Smash	67118	Dueling Banjos	Power Pak	210	Best of Jim Nesbitt	Chart	1044
Would You Take Another Chance?	Mer	61346	ROGER MILLER			MICKEY NEWBURY		
Live at the International	Mer	61278	Roger Miller 1970	Smash	67129	Sings His Own	RCA	4675
LAWANDA LINDSEY			Roger Miller	Cam	851	JIMMY NEWMAN		
We'll Sing in the Sunshine	Chart	1035	One and Only	Cam	903	The Jimmy Newman Way	Decca	74960
PEGGY LITTLE			King of the Road	Pick	6109	The Jimmy Newman Style	Decca	75136
Little Bit	Dot	25948	Little Green Apples	Pick	6131	NORMA JEAN		
HANK LOCKLIN			GUY MITCHELL			Heaven's Just a Prayer Away	RCA	3910
Best of Hank Locklin	RCA	3559	Traveling Shoes	Starday	412	Best of Norma Jean	RCA	4227
Encores	King	738	Singin' Up a Storm	Starday	432	Another Man Loved Me	RCA	4351
Best of Hank Locklin	King	672	BILLY MIZE			It's Time	RCA	4446
Candy Kisses	Cam	2447	This Time & Place	Imp	12441	Norma Jean	RCA	4510
CHARLIE LOUVIN			BILL MONROE					
Ten Times Charlie	Cap	555	Sings Country Songs	Voc	73702			
BOB LUMAN			Blue Grass Style	Coral	20077			
Gettin' Back to Norma	Epic	26541						
LORETTA LYNN								
Squaw is on the Warpath	Decca	75084						
Wings Upon Your Horns	Decca	75163						

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RCA-RCA-6014

DAVID HOUSTON-The World Of David Houston-featuring: I've Got A Tiger By The Tail/From A Jack To A King/Release Me/Laura/Lighter Shade Of Blue/King Of The Road/Invisible Tears/Don't Mention Tomorrow/Before The Next Teardrop Falls/Too Far Gone/Before You Travel On/Danny Boy/In The Garden/Chickashay/Old Time Religion/David's Song/I've Been Had/I Love A Rainbow, and more!
EPIC-EGP-502

HANK THOMPSON-25TH Anniversary Album-featuring: Whoa! Sailor/Tomorrow Night/Swing Wide Your Gate Of Love/I'd Do It Again/Most Of All/We've Gone Too Far/Green Light/Wild Side Of Life/Oklahoma Hills/I've Come Awful Close/On Tap, In The Can, Or In The Bottle/New Blackboard Of My Heart/Waiting In The Lobby Of Your Heart/Wildwood Flower/Breakin' The Rules/Where Is The Circus/Teardrops On The Rocks, and more!
DOT-DOS2-2000

EDDIE COCHRAN-featuring: Skinny Jim/Pink Pegged Slacks/Pretty Little Devil/Summertime Blues/Latch On/Blue Suede Shoes/Nervous Breakdown/Eddie's Blues/Jeanie Jeanie Jeanie/I'm Ready/Milk Cow Blues/My Way/Long Tall Sally/Come On Everybody/Bo Weevil/Let's Get Together/Something Else/Who Can I Count On/Thinkin' About You/Hallelujah, I Love Her So/Fourth Man Theme, and more!
UNITED ARTISTS-UAS-9959

SONNY JAMES-Close-Up-featuring: I Know/I'll Never Find Another You/Scars/An Old Sweetheart Of Mine/All My Love, All My Life/Don't Ask For Tomorrow/Back Door To Heaven/On The Fingers Of One Hand/Love Me Like That/Take Good Care Of Her/We're On Our Way/When Your World Stops Turning/There's Always Another Day/Goodbye, Maggie, Goodbye/True Love's A Blessing/Last Time, and many more!
CAPITOL-SWBB-258

HOMER & JETHRO-Country Comedy-featuring: Pore Ol' Koo-Liger/Yaller Rose Of Texas, You-All/Cold, Cold Heart No. 2/He'll Have To Go/Your Clobbered Heart/Slow Poke No. 2/Goodnight Irene/Settin' The Woods On Fire No. 2/Sixteen Tons/Hut-Sut Song/You Tell Her, I Stutter/Let Me Go, Blubber/I Really Don't Want To Know/Mister Sandman/Homer And Jethro's Pickin' And Singin' Medley No. 1/So Long, and many more!
RCA-CXS-9012(e)

OTHER CLASSIC 2-RECORD "CUT OUT" SETS

Cowboy Copas	Cowboy Copas Story	Starday	347	Hank Snow	Wreck Of The Old '97	Cam	9009
Charlie Rich	Fully Realized	Mer	World 7500 History	Porter Wagoner	Blue Moon Of Kentucky	Cam	9010
Lynn Anderson	Lynn Anderson	Chart	1050	Patsy Cline	The Legend	Pick	2019

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ARTIST, TITLE	LABEL	NUMBER	ARTIST, TITLE	LABEL	NUMBER	ARTIST, TITLE	LABEL	NUMBER
Norma Jean Sings Thanks for Lovin' Me Comes From Being Poor Only Way to Hold Your Man Heaven Help the Working Girl Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels	RCA RCA RCA RCA Cam Cam	4587 4691 4745 1-0170 2218 2511	CHARLEY PRIDE Songs of Pride 10th Album From Me to You Heart Songs Songs of Love	RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA	4041 4347 4468 4617 4837	JOHN WESLEY RYLES I Kay	Col	9788
ROY ORBISON Original Sound Sings Hank Williams Roy Orbison Sings Memphis	Sun MGM MGM MGM	113 4683 4835 4867	CURLY PUTMAN Lonesome Country World of Country	ABC ABC	618 686	JUNIOR SAMPLES Bull Session (with Archie Campbell) Best of Junior Samples	Chart Chart	1007 1045
OSBORNE BROTHERS Bluegrass Express The Osborne Brothers	Coral Decca	20003 75271	LYNDA RASK Lynda Rask	Stop	1029	EARL SCRUGGS Dueling Banjos	Col	32268
JIMMY OSBORNE Golden Harvest	King	782	JERRY REED Georgia Sunshine Smell the Flowers	RCA RCA	4391 4660	JEAN SHEPHERD Here and Now	Cap	738
PATTI PAGE Honey Come Back	Col	9999	DEL REEVES Feed for Chickens Friends and Neighbors	UA UA	6530 6789	RED SIMPSON Roll Truck Roll	Pick	6136
DOLLY PARTON Real Live Dolly Golden Streets of Glory Joshua Touch Your Woman My Favorite Songwriter, Porter Wagoner Just the Way I Am	RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA Cam	4387 4398 4507 4686 4752 2583	JIM REEVES My Friend Blue Side of Lonesome Writes You a Record Something Special Missing You Country Side	RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA Cam	4646 3793 4475 4528 4749 686	MARGIE SINGLETON Country Music	Ashley	3003
DOLLY PARTON & PORTER WAGONER Just Between You and Me Always, Always Burning Midnight Oil Together Always	RCA RCA RCA RCA	3926 4186 4628 4761	JACK RENO I Want One	Dot	25921	JIMMY SKINNER Greatest Hits	Power Pak	259
JOHNNY PAYCHECK At Carnegie Hall Lovin' Machine Jukebox Charlie	Little Darlin' Little Darlin' Little Darlin'	4001 4003 4006	CHARLIE RICH She Loved Everybody But Me Songs for Beautiful Girls Entertainer of the Year There Won't Be Anymore Arkansas Traveler The Silver Fox Lonely Weekends Time For Tears Early Years Memphis Sound Golden Treasures Best of Charlie Rich	Cam Pick Pick Power Pak Power Pak Power Pak Sun Sun Sun Sun Sun Sun Sun	2417 6149 6160 241 245 252 110 123 132 133 134 135	J. DAVID SLOAN J. David Sloan	Starday	453
MINNIE PEARL Country Music Story	Starday	397	JEANNIE C. RILEY Yearbooks and Yesterdays Things Go Better With Love Country Music Generation Gap	Plantation Plantation Plantation Plantation	2 3 8 11	CARL SMITH Tribute to Roy Acuff Gentleman in Love	Col Harm	9870 11251
CARL PERKINS My Kind of Country Original Golden Hits	Mer Sun	1-691 111	TEX RITTER Love You Big As Texas High Noon Tex	Pick Pick Pick	6075 6138 6155	CONNIE SMITH Best of Connie Smith Soul of Country Music Connie's Country Back in Baby's Arms Just One Time Ain't We Havin' a Good Time If It Ain't Love Love is the Look Connie in the Country My Heart Has a Mind of Its Own City Lights	RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA Cam Cam Cam	3848 3889 4132 4229 4534 4694 4748 4840 2120 2495 2550
BILL PHILLIPS Country Action Little Boy Sad	Decca Decca	75022 75182	MARTY ROBBINS Time I Get to Phoenix Today	Col Col	11513 30816	SAMMI SMITH Lonesome Something Old, New Best of Sammi Smith Toast	Mega Mega Mega Mega	1007 1011 1019 1021
WEBB PIERCE Country Favorites Country Songs	Voc Voc	73911 73830	MARTY ROBBINS, JR. Marty Robbins, Jr.	Col	9944	HANK SNOW Big Country Hits More Souvenirs Snow in All Seasons Hits Covered By Snow Tracks and Trains Award Winners Jimmie Rodgers Story One and Only Old and Great Songs I Went to Your Wedding Memories Are Made of This Legend of Old Doc Brown	RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA Cam Cam Cam Cam Cam	2458 2812 4122 4166 4501 4601 4708 722 836 2348 2443 2560
ELVIS PRESLEY Love Letters Elvis Now He Touched Me Elvis Raised on Rock Almost in Love You'll Never Walk Alone C'mon Everybody I Got Lucky Burning Love Separate Ways From Elvis in Memphis Back in Memphis	RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA Cam Cam Cam Cam Cam Cam RCA RCA	4530 4671 4690 1-0283 1-0388 2440 2472 2518 2533 2595 2611 4155 4429	KENNY ROBERTS Country Songs	Voc	73770	SONS OF THE PIONEERS Tumbleweed Trail South of the Border Wagons West Tumbling Tumbleweeds	Voc RCA Cam RCA	73715 3964 413 4119
KENNY PRICE Happy Tracks The Heavyweight Charlotte Fever Super Sideman You Almost Slipped My Mind Sea of Heartbreak	RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA RCA	4224 4292 4605 4681 4763 4839	JIMMIE RODGERS Country Music '66	Dot	25710	BILLIE JO SPEARS Just Singin'	Cap	688
			DAVID ROGERS World Called You She Don't Make Me Cry	Col Col	1023 30972	STATESMEN QUARTET Showers of Blessing	RCA	3815
			LINDA RONSTADT Stoney End	Pick	3298	STATLER BROS Carry Me Back Alive At Johnny Mack Brown High School (alias Lester Moran)	Mer Mer	676 1-708

THE HALL OF FAME

It's a Church? It's a Barn?
No! It's SuperCenter!

by DOUG GREEN & PATRICK CARR

Standing serenely at the head of Nashville's increasingly formal Music Row, the building gives off an aura of quiet dignity and reverence which contrasts sharply with the 19th Century hillbilly funk of the old, Ryman-dominated downtown area a few blocks away. It is the Hall of Fame, the flagship showcase of country music tradition, and appropriately enough, it looks like a 20th Century cross between a chapel and a barn, as if the architect of some affluent parish had something

the world (the CMF), and the best display of the world's largest collection of country music memorabilia (the Hall of Fame and Museum). The CMF Library and Media Center is available to the public only by appointment (a simple matter), but the Hall of Fame and Museum is right there for \$1.50. Most Nashville tours have it on their itinerary; since the Ryman closed, it's the biggest tourist attraction inside Nashville city limits.

Once through that imposing frontage, the fan hands over the \$1.50 and proceeds: First there's a short film on country music (soon it'll be a multi-screen slide show), then the "Artists' Gallery," a long room lit by a large panel from which the faces of stars smile as snatches from their hits are played and their individual panels light up. Then there's a simulated recording session (reportedly, the thing Nashville tourists want to do most is attend a *real* recording session. This next best thing is the Museum's most popular attraction), followed by the Hall of Fame itself—plaques and portraits of the 25 Hall of Famers from Jimmie Rodgers to Minnie Pearl displayed around the walls of an arched gallery, ringing central display cases which house the Hall of Famers' guitars, clothing, sheet music and other artifacts. Here the guided tour ends, and the visiting fan is free to roam and take in the sights: dioramas of great moments in country music, displays of things like Hank Snow's saddle and Stringbean's banjo and Merle Haggard's infamous Reagan-signed pardon, a collection of extremely interesting guitars, Thomas Hart Benton's "Sources Of Country Music" mural and other invaluable items.

This is all the end result of an idea proposed originally by Allen Bergofsky, a *Cashbox* trade paper executive, back in 1961. Bergofsky suggested a Country Music Hall of Fame, the idea being that the music industry and some Nashville business would put up the money to build the Hall of Fame. In 1963, Connie B. Gay donated \$10,000, and the project got under way thanks to the efforts of a group including Steve Sholes, Owen Bradley, Hubert Long, Ken Nelson, Wesley Rose, Tex Ritter, Bill Denny, Frances Preston, Frank Jones, Harold Hitt and Roy Acuff. Now, grown considerably from its initial size, the Hall of Fame and Museum supports itself on admissions revenue.

Mecca, shrine and symbol of the past that it is, in some ways the Hall of Fame and Museum is less significant to the



The young staff of the country music SuperCenter pose around their boss, CMF Director Bill Ivey.

vaguely rural in mind when he conceived the design.

This place—the Hall of Fame itself, the accompanying museum, and the offices and library of the Country Music Foundation—is, as they say, dynamite. It houses the best country music archive, research center and library in





future of country music than the Country Music Foundation which occupies the basement of the building. There, under the direction of Bill Ivey, a young and enthusiastic staff takes on the task of researching and preserving country music's past and present. The CMF library has a collection of some 60,000 records ranging from one-of-a-kind 78's to Loretta Lynn's latest album, full runs of over 120 periodicals, a huge selection of books and songbooks, and growing collections of microfilm, photos, clippings, film and videotape and interview and live performance tapes.

Here, by appointment (*write the Country Music Foundation, 4 Music*

Square East, Nashville, Tenn. or call (615) 256-7008 for appointments or information), anyone who's interested can research any country music subject they have a mind to know about. Regular users of these services, which include video and audio labs, are journalists, scholars, and occasional industry personnel.

The CMF also runs three other important projects. First is the Country Music Foundation Press, which has five books in print, second is the quarterly *Journal of Country Music*, and third is the Oral History program, in which over a hundred historically important figures have already been interviewed on about four hundred hours of

tape—a resource which will mean a great deal to future students of country music. These are the kinds of projects paid for by the tourists' dollars in one of the nation's most successful self-supported investigations of its past.

While it's sad to note the fact, it is true that no other form of American music has anything like the CMF on its case, and that's something. As Bill Ivey says, "It is remarkable that the impetus for this came from within the industry itself—few industries have shown such concern for the preservation and study of their own pasts."

So drop into the Hall of Fame next time you're in Nashville. It's cheap, it's interesting, and it's for a good cause.

Opposite page: Some country treasures that lie in wait at the Hall of Fame Museum (seen from inside the front doors in the bottom right color photo) and the Country Music Foundation Library. The top photo shows one of the Museum's nine dioramas depicting historic country music scenes; in this one, pioneer recorder Ralph Peer oversees the first recordings of (left to right) Maybelle Carter, Jimmie Rodgers, Sara Carter and A.P. Carter in Bristol, Tennessee, August 1927 (note the recording booth and the rugs hung on the walls to improve recording quality). The two records—both part of the CMF Library's permanent collection—are examples of a 1930s record-selling gimmick launched by the Vogue label. The idea of making records works of art as well as works of music by coloring the acetate itself was a commercially unsuccessful (and extremely expensive) forerunner of the album jacket concept, and Vogue eventually dropped it.

Below are six examples of the Hall of Fame Museum's priceless guitar collection. From left to right, they are: Kitty Wells' first guitar, a 1942 Martin 0-15; Arkie the Woodchopper's 1932 Martin D-28 prototype, a modified D-2; Merle Travis's solid-body electric, built for him by Paul Bigsby in 1947 and claimed by Travis to be the first ever solid-body electric; Ray Whitley's Gibson SJ-200, the first of its kind (Whitley helped design it); then there's Gene Autrey's 1926 Martin 00-42S and one of the first batch of 92 Martin D-45s, dated 1942. It goes without saying that these instruments are totally irreplaceable.





THE CATHEDRAL QUARTET—For Keeps, featuring: He Came Back/It Is No Secret/Sweet Bye And Bye, and more!
LP—CAS-9776, 8TK—3-9776



THE KINGSMEN—24 Carat Gospel, featuring: Guide My Feet/Jesus Never Fails/Over In The Gloryland, and more!
LP—CAS-9774, 8TK—3-9774



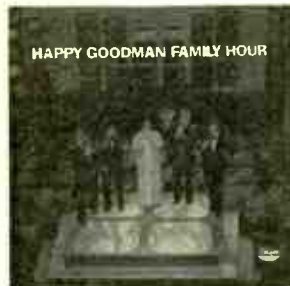
THE HAPPY GOODMANS—Covered In Warmth, featuring: Just Any Day Now/Daddy Come On In/I'll Be Alright, and more!
LP—CAS-9772, 8TK—3-9772



THE INSPIRATIONS—I'm Taking A Flight, featuring: I'm Taking A Flight/The First Million Years, and more!
LP—CAS-9769, 8TK—3-9769



THE THRASHER BROS.—One Day At A Time, featuring: One Day At A Time/The Morning After, and more!
LP—CAS-9748, 8TK—3-9748



HAPPY GOODMAN FAMILY HOUR, featuring: What A Beautiful Day/Why Me, Lord/I Was Nothing, and more!
LP—CAS-9755, 8TK—3-9755



LESTER FLATT & THE NASHVILLE GRASS—Flatt Gospel, featuring: You Can Feel It In Your Soul, and more!
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Records

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\$1.00 discount on all records and tapes reviewed this month. See Page 63 for details.

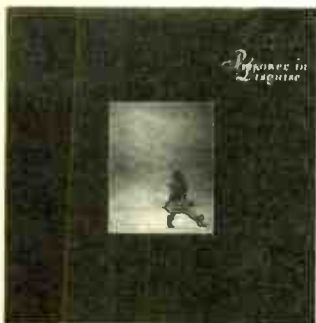
The Flying Burritos Again

Columbia PC-33817 \$6.98
PCA-33817 (tape) \$7.98

Linda Ronstadt

Prisoner in Disguise
Asylum 7E-1045 \$6.98
7E8-1045 (tape) \$7.97

Austin is getting considerable publicity nowadays as the hotbed of progressive country music, that virtually undefinable mixture of rock, contemporary, and mainstream country forms. But this musical merger was anticipated as early as the mid sixties in, of all places, Los Angeles.



Los Angeles, if you think about it, is as likely a place for musical revolution as any city in the United States. The city has long been a haven for make-believe cowboys, and it has

always lured people with differing cultural backgrounds and lifestyles from all over the country. The young musicians who congregated there in the mid-sixties brought a wide range of musical affinities with them. They were eclectic in their tastes, and migratory in their performing habits, moving from band to band. Some of these bands, such as Buffalo Springfield and the Byrds, experimented with the country idiom, but it wasn't until Gram Parsons joined the latter group that a full-fledged fusion of country and rock was attempted. Before his untimely death in 1973, Parsons, unlike many of his contemporaries who condescended to the form, brought a genuine love for country music to the Byrds and, later, to the Flying Burrito Brothers. He tried not only to move country music into a sphere where it had not been before, he also earnestly hoped that the basic country audience would accept the fusion. Though such acceptance may be a long time coming, the Los Angeles country-rock scene is still very much alive; the albums reviewed here are testament to that fact.

Neither Linda Ronstadt nor the Flying Burritos can be neatly categorized. They draw upon many musical resources but are wedded to no particular genre. When they choose to do country music, they can perform it skillfully, if not always convincingly. More often their performances are highly

eclectic, borrowing from and interpreting freely the styles and material they respect, whatever its source.

There may not be a female singer in the broad spectrum of popular music today who can sing better than Linda Ronstadt. Certainly no one has a greater voice command. She can belt a tune, as on "Heat Wave," she can let her voice soar lyrically, as on "Many Rivers To Cross," or she can sing sweet and subdued, as on "Hey Mister, That's Me



Up on the Jukebox." *Prisoner in Disguise* has been skillfully designed to show her artistry and diversity. Only two of the songs come directly from country music, Dolly Parton's "I Will Always Love You," and the sentimental gospel song, "The Sweetest Gift a Mother's Smile." Several others would probably be of marginal interest to the country fan. My favorite cut is "The Sweetest Gift," sung by Linda and her guest harmonizer, Emmylou Harris. She and Emmylou don't sound a bit like the Blue Sky Boys; in fact, their version doesn't sound quite like any I've heard before, but they give a

spine-tingling performance, especially when their voices literally take flight in the chorus.

The Burritos exhibit a similar interest in diverse musical genres. (For example, when they do a song such as "Why Baby Why," they feature the kind of honky-tonk instrumentation originally heard on George Jones's 1955 version.) This is the group's sixth album since 1969, but the Burritos now include only two of their original members, Sneaky Pete Kleinow, on pedal steel, and Chris Ethridge, on bass. Sneaky Pete provides about the only musical continuity that the present Burritos have with the original group. The Burritos are still technically good, but less exciting than in the early days. The sweet, inventive harmonies of Gram Parsons and Chris Hillman are gone, as are those lonesome, almost apocalyptic songs, like "Wheels" and "Sin City," which Parsons wrote. The Burritos today are one of many progressive country bands. They're worth listening to, but they're no longer distinctive. On such songs as "Why Baby Why" and "Dim Lights, Thick Smoke" they come closer to mainstream C&W than earlier Burrito groups did, but they give us little that's worth substituting for the original George Jones and Flatt and Scruggs versions. The Burritos are at their best when doing original material, and they ought to feature more of Gib Guilbeau's songs,

such as "River Road" and "Bon Soir Blues."

Perhaps the new Burritos are wise not to try to sound like the original group (which would be an impossible task), and are struggling to find their new identity. *Again* seems to represent such a search. Their refusal to be a weak imitation of the old Burritos is commendable, but they are still too derivative, too easily influenced. It's almost jarring to hear this band, in one album, sound alternately like Waylon Jennings and a progressive country band, George Jones and a honky-tonk band, Creedence Clearwater, and even like a not-very-good bluegrass band. Will the real Burritos please stand up? The elements of a fine band are here (and glimpses of its potential strength can be had in "Desert Childhood," a clear, unadorned ode to vanishing youth, written by Gene Parsons), but that band has not been realized in this album.

BILL C. MALONE

The Statler Brothers

Holy Bible: Old Testament
Mercury SRM-1-1051 \$6.95
MC-8-1-1051 (tape) \$7.95

Holy Bible: New Testament
Mercury SRM-1-1052 \$6.95
MC-8-1-1052 (tape) \$7.95

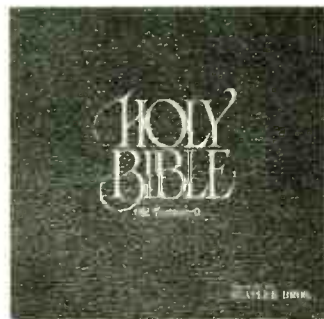
set called *Holy Bible*, he said. "It seems . . . well, it seems kinda wrong, y'all makin' the Bible sound like a Marvel comic book."

"You don't understand," said the Brothers. "We began to see the characters in the stories as human beings. They were concerned with taxes, disease, politics, war, slavery, money, family problems, crime . . ."

"It's a matter of tone," said Carter Stanley. "All that stuff about them being human is very well, but did you *have* to call David 'the man who done it all'? Makes him sound like Hugh Hefner. And that line about Solomon—"

"'Didn't Solomon have it all together?'" said Alton Delmore.

"Right, that's the one," Stanley went on. "Now that's just plain silly. Solomon's ashamed to show his face at Meeting, the way the young angels have been kid-



ding him, slapping him five and all."

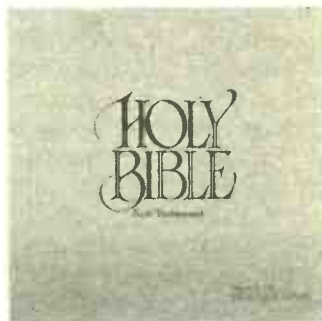
"Don't forget about Eve," Ira Louvin interrupted. "That line about 'You were only a rib, and look at what you did.' I mean, come on."

"And then there's the music," added Hank Williams. "It all sounds like the same song, over and over, and *that* song sounds like so much supermarket Muzak. Where's the fiddles? Where's the steel solos? Now when I cut 'I Saw the

Light'—"

"All right, Hank, you've made your point," said A.P. Carter (for that's who it was). "Now do you Statler boys have anything to say before we pass judgement?"

"The one point we want to make with this album is that these people were hu-



man." the Statlers said. "This project has taken more time and been closer to our hearts than any we have ever undertaken."

"Well, we know your hearts are in the right place," said Carter, "but that's not good enough. We take gospel music seriously up here, and I'm afraid we're going to have to send you to—"

"Not to Hell?"

"Worse than that," said Carter. "Back to Sixteenth Avenue South. You're gonna keep on doing it until you get it right."

MICHAEL GOODWIN

Willie Nelson Country Willie

United Artists UA-LA410-G
\$6.98
UA-LA410-H (tape) \$7.98

What Can You Do to Me
Now
RCA APL1-1234 \$6.98
APSI-1234 (tape) \$7.98

Willie Nelson is pure in a way that perhaps only country and, interestingly, soul artists can be. He has a finely tuned nose for when to hew to his integrity and

when to sell out. That he probably can't always *consciously* tell the difference doesn't matter. These two repackages of old material are excellent documents of this syndrome.

Country Willie is vintage, early sixties Nelson, and purest country, even though it presents a heterogeneity of styles: the swing of "Right or Wrong" and "Columbus Stockade Blues," the Mexican brass of "Seasons of My Heart," and the blues of "Night Life," with its fairly raw piano and guitar breaks. There are plenty of weepers too, of course. Best of all is "There Goes a Man," a dramatic testimonial in which Willie watches his rival (perhaps the same nurd who vanquished him in the title song) slink off in defeat, and speculates self-righteously as to whether the



poor guy would feel as sorry for him if their roles were reversed. A classic on a classic album that would serve as a cornerstone of any collection.

You know that the RCA set is distinctly non-vintage (circa 1965-71) as soon as you hear the stereotyped uptown pop instrumental backdrop to the first cut. Willie's vocal phrasing is less sure here than on *Country Willie*, but considering the material he was given to work with ("Fire and Rain"?), it's understandable. Both singer and setting falter at least once in

each song, and the title track is particularly sodden. Only exception: "I Gotta Get Drunk," in which Willie jubilantly bemoans the excesses he is about to indulge in. Looking forward to the end of the recording session, I imagine.

LESTER BANGS

Lefty Frizzell
Remembering . . . The Greatest Hits of Lefty Frizzell
Columbia KC-33882 \$5.98
CA-33882 (tape) \$6.98

There won't be anymore from Lefty Frizzell, but what he left behind sure goes a long way, and you can hear some of Lefty in just about every pure country singer today, from Haggard on down.

Lefty was from Texas,



honky-tonk country, and there's plenty of that in his music. Though Hank Williams was his only peer, it's still selling Lefty short to refer to him as a honky-tonker plain and simple. The son of an oil well driller who moved often, Lefty was familiar with all kinds of country music by the time he started recording. His first love was the coarse, hip, country blues of Jimmie Rodgers, exemplified here by "Travelin' Blues." "The Long Black Veil" could be as old as the Appalachian Mountains it sounds like it came from (it isn't, and it didn't), and the somber fid-

dle that weaves in and out of the song is a most fitting touch. "Saginaw, Michigan" has elements of pop despite the purest of country vocals.

That was the other key thing about Lefty. At one time he had a semi-yodel; while it didn't last long, it was hardly missed. His resonant voice conveyed everything, and when he slurred a word or slid up to a higher register, the effect could be chilling.

A double album would be more appropriate. I miss "Release Me," "If You've Got the Money I've Got the Time," among others, but Lefty's performances here speak for themselves.

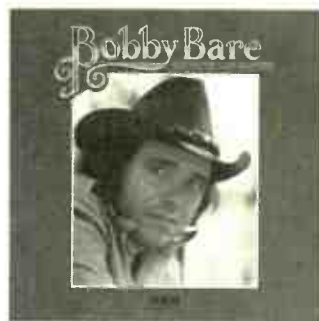
JOHN MORTHLAND

Bobby Bare
Cowboys and Daddys
RCA APL1-1222 \$6.98
APSI-1222 (tape) \$7.98

These days the word "cowboy" has connotations that can be applied to racers, truckers, surfers, and musicians as well as genuine cowboys, and when Bobby Bare writes in the liner notes of *Cowboys and Daddys* that "Today being a 'cowboy' is more an attitude than an occupation," he's stating a fact. With that in mind he's collected twelve modern cowboy songs by various writers and created an album of solid, unified music held together by relaxed singing and down-to-earth production.

As ever with Bare, there's plenty of humor. "He's a Cowboy" slyly explodes some western myths ("Ridin' on the range in the cold makes him wish he was a plumber"). "Amarillo Highway" strings together bald cliches; "The Stranger" is the hilarious tale of a horny cowhand with amorous designs on his cattle.

There are serious numbers, too. Dave Hickey's "Speckled Pony" describes one man's philosophic approach to death. "Cowboys and Daddys," the story of a divorced father and his son, could have become poignant mush in lesser hands, but Bare's understated vocal



keeps the song's delicacy intact. "Chester" by Shel Silverstein is the classic description of a faded, broken rodeo rider. "Pretty Painted Ladies" is timeless, and could have been written three months or thirty years ago. Only "Up Against the Wall Redneck Mother" tends to wear thin.

Bobby Bare is a singer who knows exactly what kind of material suits his style and sound. As a result, his records are lucid and natural, without the shallow pretensions favored by many Nashville artists. Every musician here adds something; none is superfluous. *Cowboys and Daddys* is a captivating album for cowboys of all sorts, sung by a guy who has plenty of cowboy spirit himself.

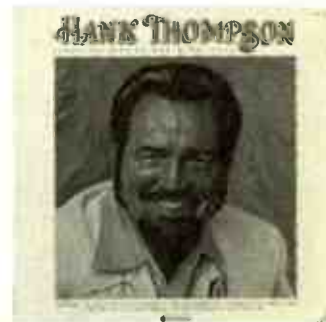
RICH KIENZLE

Hank Thompson
Hank Thompson Sings the Hits of Nat "King" Cole
ABC-Dot DOSD-2032 \$6.98
DOSD-8-2032 (tape) \$7.95

I can hear it now: groans and mutters that Hank Thompson's been untrue to his heritage by recording the

songs of a 'fifties pop crooner whose music had nothing to do with country. Unheard of, you say? Not quite. Among the material Thompson's idol Bob Wills recorded some thirty years ago were "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," "Oh, You Beautiful Doll," and "Lady Be Good," hardly songs that will live forever in country music's consciousness.

Hank's no stranger to recording pop as country; a few years ago he came out with *Cab Driver*, a set of Mills Brothers classics. This album of Nat Cole tunes succeeds because of Hank's knack for selecting songs that he can adapt to his style without attempting to copy the originals. And though Cole's recordings were characterized by lush orchestral charts, Ricci Marenco's production here is low-keyed



and almost conservative (except for the vocal group, which adds nothing).

An exhilarating arrangement of "It's Only a Paper Moon" features that raw sound heard in Hank's days with Capitol. "Ramblin' Rose" is stunning, with Hank's voice gliding over twin fiddles, steel, and piano. "That's All There Is, There Isn't Any More" and "If I May" should have been covered by country singers years ago, for like the best Hank Williams songs they're good in any style. Hank stumbles in only a couple of places: "The Gypsy" is restrained to the

point of boredom (Doug Sahm's version is still best), and "Pretend" is a bit too cute and cloying.

This is a relaxed, engaging album of pleasant music. A lesser artist might have made a syrupy disaster of it. But, as we all know, Hank Thompson has never been what one would call a lesser artist.

RICH KIENZLE

these days.

The latest Western Swing reissue, *The Legendary Bob Wills*, is a joint effort of Columbia Records' Special Products division and *Country Music* magazine. I've only one complaint here, and that's that fourteen of twenty cuts here have already been reissued on *The*



Bob Wills Anthology, which Columbia put out in 1973. Bob Wills recorded 231 different songs for Columbia in the twelve years he was associated with them, and it seems that it's time to start reissuing the less familiar sides. Everyone knows "New San Antonio Rose," but how many people have ever heard Wills's "I'm Free

from the Chain Gang Now"?

That complaint stated, I'll now say that this is a great album. There is stuff here that was among Bob's best work: "That's What I Like 'Bout the South," "Big Beaver," "Time Changes Everything." And there are two cuts, "Black and Blue Rag" and "White Heat," which have never been reissued. (Yes, "White Heat" is as unbelievable as its title.) The liner notes by William Ivey of the Country Music Foundation are a cogent overview of the music and career of Wills and his Texas Playboys.

Someday, maybe, there'll be a huge, terrifyingly priced boxed set of Bob Wills's entire Columbia works. In the meantime, though, *The Legendary Bob Wills* hits the spot.

NICK TOSCHES

Jean Shepard
I'm a Believer
United Artists UA-LA525-G \$6.98
UA-EA525-H (tape) \$7.98

If consistency is the goal of a singer, then Jean Shepard has it made. After twenty years as an Opry performer, and with a respectable string of hits, Shepard can still bring out the best in a song with a voice as fresh as a blue winter sky.

Jean's voice plus quality arrangements and production place *I'm a Believer* apart from the recent easy listening country where you can't hear the steel guitars for the violins. Produced by Larry Butler, the album is a solid package of good country listening. Shepard can't miss when it comes to songs such as "It Keeps Right on A-Hurting" and "Blanket on the Ground." The title cut, also released as a sin-

gle, is a spunky little tribute to the country way of life.

Clearly the best song on the album is "Another Neon Night," written by Carolyn Howard and Jo Ann Spann.

JEAN SHEPARD "I'm a Believer"



When Jean's cut-diamond voice touches lyrics like "Silent stars sing silent songs/Not a word's been said/But another page of loneliness has just been read," the result is a flash of brilliance unequaled by any country song I've heard in a good long while. Jean's voice never wavers, never whines as she sings this picture of loneliness unblurred by cheap sentimentality. It's an almost perfect country song, and *I'm a Believer* is a fine showcase for it.

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Hillbilly Heaven

(Continued from page 42)

We continue to watch the horses, and it turns out that Price, like most country people, talks best to a man standing beside him, looking into the distance, because, suddenly, as if in answer to an unspoken question, he says, "You know, five years ago I had a wife, a million dollars, a career, a record company, some twenty-odd albums, and ten years of two hundred days on the road, and before I got out there they had gutted me, you know. . . I got out of Tennessee with nothing, less than nothing. I left twenty years behind me."

There is silence, and we all continue to look at the horses.

"What happened?" Wafer says, rushing where angels, etc.

"Everything," Price says. "I just wasn't what they wanted me to be, so they decided I wasn't useful to them anymore. I got tired of living on the road, and I wanted to make my own records; I just stopped being a money machine, *their* kind of money machine when I changed my music."

"How did you do that?" I ask.

"Hell, I wanted to use an orchestra and I did. I'd done it on the road for years. Bob Wills did it, Hank Thompson did it. But it wasn't their idea. Columbia's. Of course, they're doing it now, in a half-assed way."

I remember how sad I was when Price abandoned his honky-tonk band. Then I remember that Price had been one of the lone holdouts against "country-politan" in the early sixties (when Sonny James and Eddy Arnold and Marty Robbins and George Hamilton were parading around in tuxes and continental suits). I had to grin at the serene Texas contrariness of it; about the time everybody in Nashville burned their Nehru jackets and started talking about "keeping it country," (which it had never really been), Ray Price of the stone-honky tonk starts making full concert albums, starts cutting Lennon-McCartney tunes along with Willie Nelson and Hank Williams. It's the *one* thing Texas country singers have in common, I decide, from Bob Wills, to Price, to Roger Miller, to Waylon Jennings, to Willie Nelson, to Johnny Bush, to Moe Bandy: *contrariness*. None of them go in the same direction: but whichever way they go you can bet they are swimming upstream, or leaning into the wind, and in general not

living up to the expectations of Tennessee record executives.

"Do you like the concert records they're making now?" I ask. "Billy Sherrill's, for instance?"

Price pushes himself off the fence and we follow him down the road toward a permanently installed house trailer by a pond under several oaks.

"To tell the truth, I really can't separate the music from my feelings about the men who make it, and those feelings are better left unexpressed. I *can* tell you that I never did an orchestral record half-assed. We got the men, and we got the charts, and we made us a *record*. We went to New York, in fact, for a couple of records. Got Ray Ellis to arrange and conduct, got the best of the best to play, and it might not have been country, but it wasn't teenage junk. . . I want you to meet Chub," he says. "He's been with me for twenty years, he's played horn, and conducted and arranged and every damn thing. He lives in Sausalito but he comes down about once a month just to get away. He likes it out here."

Price climbs the steps and leads us into the trailer, which is furnished in basic highway luxury. Shag carpet, Spanish-motif furniture, built-in everything. A Holiday Inn room forty miles from the highway in the middle of a pasture, beside a pond, under a tree. I am thinking: *This is what Hillbilly Heaven is like.*

In the kitchenette, two middle-aged men dressed in terrycloth robes are hunched over the table in the midst of a frenetic backgammon game. They glance up and acknowledge our presence, then return to the game.

"This has been going on for two-and-a-half days," Price says. Then to his friends, "Have y'all been to bed?"

"No, no, no," says the balding man with glasses Price identifies as Chub, "I'm gonna get this bastard yet." And he slaps the counters around the table. "Gotcha!" he cries, "What does that make it?"

"Twenty to ten," the other man says. The phone rings and Price answers it, talks for a moment, and then turns to us: "Can y'all hang around here for a few minutes? I have to run into town for a tractor part. Hey, Chub! These guys are interviewing me, tell them whatever kind of lie they want to hear, and do you have change for a hundred?"

Chub gets up, and without taking his eyes off the board, takes a pair of slacks from the back of a chair and pulls a roll of bills out and hands it to Ray. "Damn

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it, what have you done, now?" he says, dropping back into his hovering position over the backgammon board. Price throws the roll of bills onto the drainboard and exits with a wave, and I glance over at Wafer who looks a little dazed, which isn't surprising. What is surprising, is how at home I feel. This is the older generation of my own kind. American drifters who have managed to mature without settling down, always at home, never at rest.

"Whaddyawannaknow?" Chub says when Ray is gone, still not looking up from the board.

"How long have you been with Ray?"

"Off and on as long as he's been singing. I was doing studio work in Dallas after the war and Ray came in to pitch some tunes to Lefty Frizzell. He was in college at the time, and just writing tunes, not really thinking about being a singer."

"What kind of music were you into then?"

"Same as now," Chub says. "Jazz."

"What kind of jazz?"

"Coltrane," Chub says as if that explained it all. "Did you know Hank Williams gave Ray his start, took him to Nashville? Ray got along with Hank

and so they hired him to open shows for him, and kinda make sure Williams got to the show more or less unwasted. I remember one night Hank eluded Ray, and so Ray went out to open the show, and he kept looking over to see if Hank was there, and Hank wasn't there, and he kept singing, and looking over and no Hank. And Ray was getting nervous 'cause at that time he didn't know that many country songs. Finally he run out of songs and headed for the wings and they wouldn't let him off. Still no Hank, so Ray he just went back to the first and sang them through again."

"Did Hank ever show up?" Wafer asks.

Momentarily, Chub looks up from the table. "You know," he says, "I'm damned if I can remember."

"Well, was Ray really a country singer when he started?"

"Hell, he was from the country and he sang country songs, so I guess so. But you have to remember, this was just after the war, and things weren't quite as compartmentalized as they are now. Dallas and Fort Worth were full of musicians—from the country, from the city, home from the war, swing bands, Western Swing bands, blues bands, hillbilly bands, jazz bands,

everybody played everything. You could play pick-up with Bob Wills one night and Tex Beneke the next, or Hank Williams, or sit in with a bunch of spades at a barbecue joint, if that was your pleasure. Dixieland, Chicago, Kansas City—pick your poison. It was the money guys who divided everything up when they got scared of rock & roll."

"Well, what's Ray into now?" I ask.

"He's into doing whatever he wants to do, and not getting pushed around. He's into horses, and dogs, and fishing." Chub withdraws into the game, and I sit down and look through the magazine rack which includes every specialty magazine in existence. *Flying, Skiing, Hunting, Blood Horse, Grit and Steel, Dogs, Field and Stream, Billboard, Cashbox*. I am perusing the latest issue of *Grit and Steel* when the kid who had brought us out sticks his head through the door.

"Hey, Ray's up with the dogs. Y'all come on up."

We find Price surrounded by hired help and several varieties of lawn mowers, in a wide yard with pens scattered about it. A slight man in khakis and a baseball cap is standing beside him.

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"Hey, boys, I want you to meet my brother-in-law, the best damn bass guide in North Texas," Ray says.

We shake hands with the fisherman, and he gives us a bright smile from under the bill of his cap. "I tell you, Ray," he says, "we gonna do some fishing and hunting this year."

"And some hunting and fishing," Ray says, as an elderly black man churns past us on a rampaging lawn mower. When he has passed us, I notice that Price is just standing there smiling, with his hands in his pockets. "Lord," he says, "I am ready to do something. Fix this place up, hunt and fish, do some concerts, make some records, run some horses. Do you realize, brother, that I spent a year up until last week thinking I was dying of a heart condition? I had every symptom in the world, and the doctors couldn't find anything. The symptoms were just like a heart attack. Then it happened last week at a horse sale and I went in that damned hospital and told 'em I wasn't coming out 'till they found out what was wrong. Last Wednesday they found out I have this abdominal hernia that presses against my heart when I overeat or don't exercise, and that's just what I was doing 'cause I thought I had this heart condition so I didn't move around. Hell, I feel like I been reborn! Hey! come lookit these dogs."

We follow Price to a large pen standing in the middle of the yard. Inside is an old vanilla-colored bitch and a litter of the most beautiful grey-spotted hounds you ever saw.

"Louisiana Leopard Hounds," Price's brother-in-law says. "Look at those blue eyes, that's the sign of them. Cortez brought them over from Spain, he used them to hunt down escaped Indian slaves. Not to bring them back, to kill them; that tended to discourage other slaves escaping. They'll hunt anything, and if they don't tree it, they'll kill it. Not another dog like them."

He opens the gate and seven grey puppies come running and tumbling out. "Hard to imagine anything so cute would grow up so lethal, ain't it," says the man in the ball cap, down on his haunches playing with the puppies, pushing them and rolling them around until he picks up one of them by the scruff. "This 'un the pick of 'em, ain't it Ray?"

But Ray is standing off about twenty feet, gazing into a six-foot pen.

"Wow," I say, "Is that a fighting cock?"

"Yeah," Price says. "I don't fight him, of course, but I keep a couple around. Beautiful, ain't he?"

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And indeed he is, standing head-up in the pen, with the falling sun shining on his incredible skirling feathers that blaze yellow and blue and red and green.

"That, son, is the cock-of-the-walk. That's what they're talking about."

"You have some beautiful animals here," I say. From where I stand, I can see the mares in the pasture below, Wafer and Price's brother-in-law fooling with the Louisiana Leopard Hounds, and the cock-of-the-walk, his feathers ruffed out like an Aztec fan. There are long shadows running out from the trees and the horses. It really does look like Hillbilly Heaven.

"Beautiful and dangerous animals," I say, amending myself after another look into the fighting cock's tiny red eyes.

"Yeah, you could say that," Price says quietly, "but you can be comfortable with an animal, even a dangerous one, 'cause you know it will always act according to its nature, while people. . ."

He lets his voice trail off, then he looks up and calls to the black man on the mower. "Hey, Fred! Get this mess over here before you quit!"

"Boy," he says, "we are really gonna fix things up around here." ■

FREDDY

(Continued from page 26)

while they hauled him away. He laughed, then he grew more serious. "That was when I was playing for nothing. Now I have to be more responsible," he said.

After the show in Odessa, Freddy, Sam and I made it from one club featuring awful bands to another; Sam drinking his Cutty and water, Freddy and I drinking tequila. At each place, Freddy was duly called to sit in, and at each place he duly did, giving them a show each time; each time he shook hands and signed autographs (he must have signed hundreds of them during those four days). After the bars closed, Sam went to sleep at the hotel, but Freddy and I went to a little hole in the wall afterhours place where Freddy once again climbed on stage at the band's call. That night, with a pre-dawn flight to Houston scheduled, we roared until pre-dawn.

After an hour's sleep, I was awakened by a pounding on my door. It was Freddy, looking about like I felt but still, amazingly, on the ball.

"It's not my idea, brother," he said—meaning that such an early departure after such a late night was Sam's doing, not his.

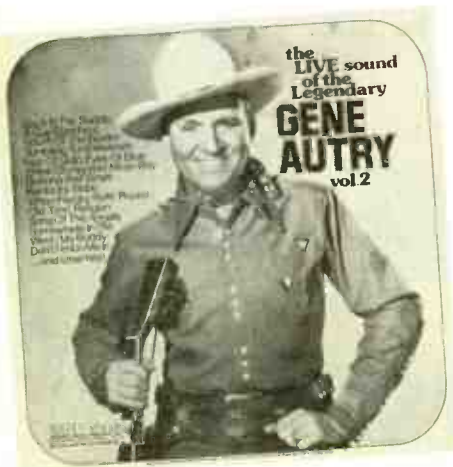
Now Sam Herro is a good man—a club owner from Corpus Christi who booked Freddy before Freddy made it, and is, like Huey and the other people around Freddy, a vastly intelligent man. Freddy's ironic success after twenty years is owed in no small part to Huey and Sam and the rest of them. But it was, after all, Freddy who went to Huey and Freddy who hired Sam.

Both Freddy and I got drunk again in Houston, ending up at nearly dawn again—this time in the Holiday Inn coffee shop, since nothing else was open. I overslept, missing my plane home, but, by some miracle of standby on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, got one a little later. Hung over again, I thought about Freddy that morning in Odessa and realized that was the only time he didn't tell me the complete truth—and in my pain that morning, I forgave him out of our mutual pain of that previous morning. Freddy's not about to miss any flights (travel-wise or otherwise) that he has to make. He hasn't lost any flash at all; he's just gained enough experience to know what he wants. ■

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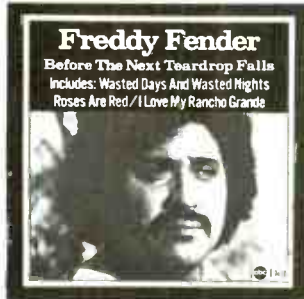
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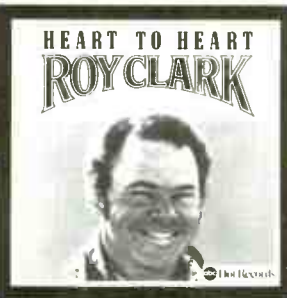
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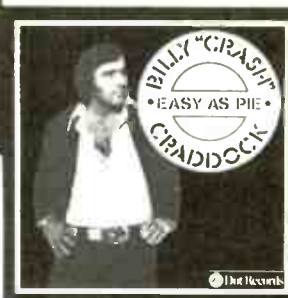
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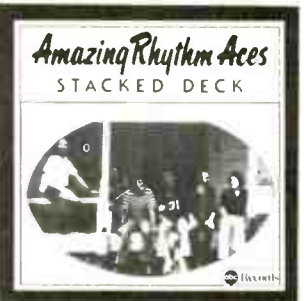
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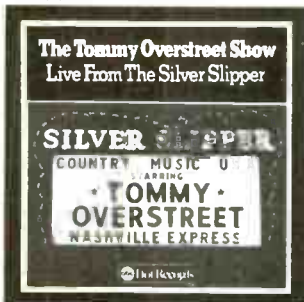
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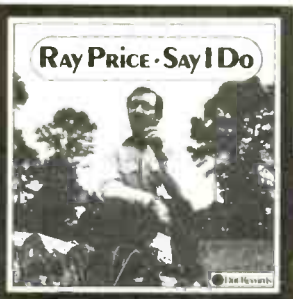
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