

OFFICIAL



WSM



GRAND OLE OPRY

HISTORY-PICTURE BOOK



PRICE \$1.00

VOL. 2 • NO. 2



WSM
Home OF
GEORGE OPRY

NATIONAL LIFE MAIL
LIFE INSURANCE
FOR EVERY
MEMBER OF
THE FAMILY



WSM

GRAND OLE OPRY

The most amazing and enduring spectacle ever staged. . . the **ONLY** radio program in the world that has never had a summer replacement, never had an intermission, never missed a performance since it started in 1925.

It has the **LARGEST** cast of **ANY** radio show. . . (over 125 - see picture on opposite page) and plays to the **LARGEST** audience every Saturday night (over 4,000).

GRAND OLE OPRY stars have starring roles in **MOVIES** (Faron Young played opposite Zsa Zsa Gabor) in **TELEVISION** (Minnie Pearl is one of **TENNESSEE** Ernie Ford's most frequent guests) and travel over 9,000,000 miles by plane, car and bus to make over 3,000 yearly **PERSONAL APPEARANCES** which draw 10 million paid attendance in the United States and Canada.

The **GRAND OLE OPRY** is 'HOME' for the greats of country music. . . Eddie Arnold, Johnny Cash, Red Foley, Carl Smith, Little Jimmie Dickens, the Everly Brothers and such stars as Jimmy Wakely, Gene Autry, Tex Ritter and many, many more come back periodically to absorb the Opry's dynamic atmosphere.

GRAND OLE OPRY stars record over 69% of the country music records played annually by disc jockeys and heard on the nation's juke boxes.

The **GRAND OLE OPRY** is the main reason why over half the country's **POP** as well as **COUNTRY** records are made here in **MUSIC CITY, USA**. . . and why country music in this city now amounts to a \$35,000,000 a year industry.

Over 7,000,000 people have come to Nashville to see the **GRAND OLE OPRY**. . . Tennessee's **NUMBER ONE** tourist attraction.

Each show is four and a half hours long. . . and at least part of each show is heard by as many as ten million listeners.

It's the traditional **SATURDAY NIGHT**. . . not only for folks in America but all over the world. . . unbeatable. . . unmatched. . . mirroring the kaleidoscopic emotions of its listeners. . . this is the **GRAND OLE OPRY**.

IT all started in the early fall of 1925 when the headlines in the Nashville papers read: "Construction of radio station here is begun...call letters WSM assigned to National Life." In those days of crystal sets (and not too many of them at that) it was inconceivable that this would be the beginning of a station that would build a city - MUSIC CITY, USA!

THE "FOUNDATION" of the city was laid on November 28, 1925 when George D. Hay launched the "WSM BARN DANCE" . . . a name that was changed within a short time to GRAND OLE OPRY.

In the years to follow THE GRAND OLE OPRY was to create a city that would house:

- 1100 professional musicians
- Hundreds of 'amateur' musicians
- 95 B M I Music Publishers
- 16 A S C A P Music Publishers
- 179 full time B M I song writers
- 100 part time B M I song writers
- 20 full time A S C A P song writers
- 30 part time A S C A P song writers
- Untold thousands of 'would be' writers
- 15 recording studios, two of which operate on a seven day around the clock basis
- 12 artists bureaus or booking agencies
- "Upwards" of 1600 "artists" . . . singers, fiddlers, gospel quartets and highly specialized soloists who may do nothing more than make the "background" noise in a recording session.
- Create a city that would become the second largest recording center in the world. . . and bring to the South a \$35,000,000 industry.

BUT let's go back to the beginning.

It was on October 5, 1925 that WSM (standing for WE SHIELD MILLIONS), the broadcasting service of the National Life and Accident Insurance Company, first went on the air.

Attending its dedicatory program were three of the Nation's most popular announcers. . . George D. Hay, the "Solemn Ole Judge" of WLS, Chicago (who had just been voted America's most popular radio announcer in a nationwide contest conducted by THE RADIO DIGEST), Landin Kay, the "Little Colonel" of WSB, Atlanta and Leo Fitzpatrick of WJR, Detroit, the "Merry Old Chief" of the Night Hawks.

ONE of them, George D. Hay, came and stayed as WSM's first director.

Before going to WLS, where he originated the WLS Barn Dance, later to be known as the National Barn Dance, George D. Hay had been a newspaper man with the *Commercial Appeal* of Memphis, Tennessee. As a reporter he was sent to cover the funeral of a World War One hero in the Ozark foothills near Mammoth Springs, Arkansas. After filing his story, Mr. Hay attended a hoedown in a log cabin about a mile up a muddy road, 'lighted by a coal oil lamp in one corner' that 'carried on until the crack o'dawn! Reminiscing, Mr. Hay said: "No one has ever had more fun than those Ozark mountaineers had that night. It stuck with me until the idea became the Grand Ole Opry seven or eight years later."

SO during that first year at WSM (to be exact), on Saturday, November 28, 1925 at 8 o'clock, George Hay presented himself as "The Solemn Ole Judge" (though he was only thirty years of age) and launched the WSM Barn Dance. His first and only artist that night was a bearded 80 year old gentleman named Uncle Jimmy Thompson who played an old time fiddle and boasted he knew a thousand tunes and could fiddle "the bugs off a sweet tater vine." He played an hour that first night and didn't want to stop. According to him 'a man can't hardly get warmed up in an hour.' This sixty minute event, impromptu and somewhat unplanned, marked the beginning of country music as an important segment of radio programming and also the genesis of what later was to become the Grand Ole Opry.

THE station was amazed at the response, and Uncle Jimmy was established as a regular Saturday night performer. What was even more amazing were the droves of country musicians, inspired by Uncle Jimmy's example, who poured into the station to 'get into the act.'

From Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama (remember Nashville is situated in the heart of the rural area) came the best fiddlers, yodler, banjo and guitar strummers, mandolin pickers, harmonica players, jews-harp twangers and even a zither player now and then. These were not 'professional' musicians. . . they were farmers, blacksmiths, mechanics, grocery clerks. . . SATURDAY NIGHT MUSIC MAKERS. . . who came to Nashville to play FOR FUN.

Gradually a large cast of country musical units were built up. Among the early groups was Dr. Humphrey Bate, an Estill Springs, Tennessee physician whose hobby was folk music, and his POSSUM HUNTERS. They're still a part of the Grand Ole Opry and have two of their original members. . . Mrs. Alcyone Bate Beasley (Dr. Bate's daughter) and Staley Walton. Other early, similar groups were the Crook Brothers, the Fruit Jar Drinkers and the Gully Jumpers.

DURING the early days the numbers were almost entirely instrumental, with an occasional whoop and holler from a member of the

band or the audience. The time was ripe for a 'singing star' and one appeared in 1926. He wore a 'double breasted waistcoat (always unbuttoned), a wide brimmed black felt hat. . . summer or winter. . . and a 'gates a jar collar.' He was known as the Dixie Dewdrop. . . his name was **UNCLE DAVE MACON** and for fifteen years he was the show's biggest attraction.

IT was in the fall of 1927 that the WSM Barn Dance took on the more descriptive title that it now bears. Now that WSM had become an NBC outlet, the show, which had developed into a three hour presentation, followed the NBC Music Appreciation Hour, conducted by the famous orchestra conductor and composer, Dr. Walter Damrosch. (As Judge Hay said: "We must confess that the change in pace and quality was immense, but that is part of America, fine lace and homespun cloth, our show being covered entirely by the latter.") One night, Dr. Damrosch, in introducing the final number, said: "While most artists realize that there is no place in the classics for realism, I am going to break one of my rules and present a composition by a young composer from Iowa. This young man has sent us his latest composition, which depicts the on-rush of a locomotive."

JUDGE HAY listened and when time came to begin WSM's Barn Dance. . . began by remarking, "Dr. Damrosch told us it was generally agreed that there is no place in the classics for realism. However, from here on out for the next three hours we will present nothing but realism. It will be down to earth for the earthy! In respectful contrast to Dr. Damrosch's presentation of the number which depicts the on-rush of the locomotive, we will call on one of our performers, Deford Bailey, with his harmonica to give us the country version of his "Pan American Blues."

Upon completion of the number, "Judge Hay" resumed, "For the past hour we have been listening to music taken largely from Grand Opera, but from now on we will present "The Grand Ole Opry!"

And that's the way the Opry. . . got its name!

IN the early days of the Opry, visitors would pack around a big plate glass window to watch the performers. As its popularity grew so did the insistence of its listeners. . . they wanted to 'get closer' to the performers. . . so management began admitting as many as could get into the studio. . . about 75, to sit around the musicians and cheer them on. Their applause and shouts added to the program's folksy flavor and constituted one of the first audience participation shows. But more room was needed, not only for the audience. . . but for the 50 or more performers, so WSM built an auditorium-studio (now WSM's famous Studio C) which seated 500. This held only a fraction of the great crowd that came to see the show. . . and although the Opry's popularity pleased the station's owners and operators and performers. . . it precipitated an incident which momentarily endangered the show's existence due to crowding in the building. . . that brought a ban against live audiences.

THE Opry continued but it was soon realized that the performers missed the spark ignited by the spectator's presence and applause. The situation was soon remedied when WSM rented the Hillsboro Theater to house the show. But soon this became too small for the increasing crowds. This led to the use of a larger hall, a tabernacle in East Nashville. This building was also temporary because of its location and the parking problems involved. Within two years the Opry's next address became the War Memorial Auditorium. It seated 2200 persons and was a building that lent itself to a much better production of the show as well as one that offered better viewing by the spectators. Up until this time, 1939, tickets to the Opry had been distributed free, but as a measure of gaining control of the live audience, twenty-five cents was now charged for general admission.

The time now was 1941. . . and the Opry cast which had only one member in 1925, Uncle Jimmy Thompson, now numbered almost a hundred.

THERE was Roy Acuff, whose singing of the Great Speckled Bird the first night he appeared on the Opry, brought in TRUCKLOADS of mail. . . the Delmore Brothers, Smiling Jack and his Missouri Mountaineers and Asher and Little Jimmie, the Singing Sizemores. . . who bought a house full of furniture with the quarters sent in for their song-book! There was Jack, Nap and Dec. . . Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, Zeke Clements, Pee Wee King and the Golden West Cowboys (with a sideman called Eddy Arnold). Lasses White and Jamup and Honey. . . Ernest Tubb and the Texas Troubadours. . . so many great stars. . . that it would be impossible to list them all.

And as the cast grew. . . the audience grew. . . and once more it was time to look for a larger auditorium. This time the move was to the historic Ryman Auditorium. . . where it still originates.

THE Ryman, a staid old fashioned structure, was built by a river boat captain, Captain Tom Ryman, who owned and operated a line of pleasure boats on the Cumberland River during the last half of the 19th century. It was around 1891 when Captain Ryman, not exactly a religious man, was challenged by a noted revivalist of the day, Sam Jones, to attend one of his services. Ryman not only accepted the invitation but brought along his crew of rough riverboat roustabouts and deckhands. Ryman, who came to heckle the preacher, remained at the service to pray and was converted. As a result, he reformed his ways, got rid of the gambling tables and bars on his steamers and immediately established a fund to build a tremendous tabernacle to be available for all such revivalists as Jones, regardless of creed or denomination. Thus, Ryman Auditorium was built and completed in 1892. The Confederate Veteran's reunion was scheduled in 1897 and a balcony was added for the meetings. It is officially known, and so marked today. . . as THE CONFEDERATE GALLERY.

ACTUALLY few physical changes have been made in the Ryman Auditorium. The old building retains its narrow pointed windows. . . and its original hard oak church pews that seat nearly 4,000. The rostrum has been converted into a huge stage. . . and several coats of paint have been added. . . but at first glance it seems to be just another old tired building! That is. . . until Saturday night. . . THEN it becomes ALIVE. . . ELECTRIFIED. . . AMERICA'S FAVORITE SHOW-PLACE!

On the stage over 100 of Country Music's greatest stars. . . waiting to entertain. . . out front. . . 4,000 (and sometimes more) of the most wonderful people in the world. . . OPRY FANS. . . waiting to be entertained.

WHETHER you're looking at the opry from 'out front' or from 'back stage' the over-all effect may be one of 'controlled chaos'. . . but this is misleading. . . because much professional planning goes into each performance.

It starts on Monday when Ott Devine, Manager of the Grand Ole Opry, Vito Pellietri, veteran stage manager, and their assistants contact all performers for the numbers to be used on the Opry the following Saturday night! Each show is 'laid out' in fifteen and thirty minute segments. The talent line-up is then given to the CONTINUITY DEPARTMENT who in the meantime have contacted all sponsors for the correct commercial to be used. Then comes the intricate job of putting the talent and the copy together. . . the typing of scripts and their distribution. All this, remember, takes place before SATURDAY!

On Saturday night. . . you see ONLY what goes on out front! Back stage. . . working for the most part where no one ever sees them. . . are the people who make the show 'tick'!

FOR instance, on Saturday night. . . between the hours of 7:30 and 12:00 you will see approximately 100 stars! In addition to these 'front men' each segment of the Grand Ole Opry requires. . . an announcer. . . a producer. . . two engineers. . . stage manager. . . two payroll assistants and from one to seven stagehands. "Out front" . . . it's still another story! To insure the comfort of the audience. . . on duty at all times. . . are 17 policemen, 6 firemen, 1 house manager, 7 stagehands, 13 ushers, 2 ticket sellers, 1 ticket taker, 11 souvenir salesmen and 17 on concessions. So you see, contrary to popular belief, the OPRY doesn't just HAPPEN. . . it's PLANNED. . . every four and a half hours of it. . . every 270 minutes of it!

In the early 40's, in addition to the move to the Ryman. . . an even more important change took place at the Opry!

Heretofore the SINGER. . . was just a part of the band. . . always subordinate to the musicians. Then came ROY ACUFF! The trend was reversed! From now on. . . the OPRY would feature SINGERS. . . backed by a band!

Now things really began to happen.

Ernest Tubb became a star with I'M WALKING THE FLOOR OVER YOU. Red Foley hit with SMOKE ON THE WATER and PEACE IN THE VALLEY. . . Cowboy Copas brought out FILIPINO BABY and the late great Hank Williams leaped to a sensational successful singing and songwriting career. . . triggered by his COLD COLD HEART.

During the next 20 PLUS years the Opry and its stars would receive world wide recognition.

Republic Pictures made a movie titled GRAND OLE OPRY which brought further fame to the show and its stars.

WITH World War II came bigger audiences. . . at home. . . and abroad. . . because the Opry stars invaded the European fighting front. Later in the Korean War, groups of Opry performers visited the servicemen and won their hearts with the 'music from home'! And today, the Opry stars are still entertaining service men. . . wherever they're needed. . . Australia, Alaska, Germany. . . there they go!

THIS was the day of Little Jimmie Dickens and his OLE COLD TATER. . . of Carl Smith. . . George Morgan and his CANDY KISSES. . . Faron Young, Ray Price, Jimmy Newman, Jim Reeves and his FOUR WALLS, Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs, Kitty Wells, Lonzo and Oscar, Del Wood, The Wilburn Brothers, Johnny Cash, the Everly Brothers, Hank Snow and I'M MOVING ON. . . and oh so many more. . . that would make Country Music History.

The early 40's saw a change, too, in the 'comedy star' of the Grand Ole Opry. Lasses White, Jamup and Honey, Sari and Sally. . . were replaced by the Gossip of Grinders Switch, COUSIN MINNIE PEARL and the Hohenwald Flash, ROD BRASFIELD.

And the Opry cast continued to grow bigger and bigger and bigger. . . until now. . . IT WAS THE LARGEST OF ANY RADIO SHOW IN THE WORLD!

OPRY stars were traveling over 9,000,000 miles a year to make personal appearances to packed houses. They were starring in movies. . . making guest appearances on network television shows and they were recording the nation's top tunes.

It was during the 50's that another important change took place at the Opry. Country music was no longer COUNTRY. . . it was now sweeping the POP field. Hank Williams and his COLD COLD HEART was perhaps the first to make the 'cross over' followed closely by Marty Robbins, Jim Reeves, Faron Young, Patsy Cline and Ferlin Husky.

In its many years of existence the Grand Ole Opry has meant much to many.

Thousands are dependent upon it for their livelihood.

It is Tennessee's greatest tourist attraction . . . bringing into the state yearly over a million and a half dollars.

Over SEVEN MILLION people have come to Nashville to see this Saturday night spectacular.

Its stars are recognized as the greatest in their field.

NATIONAL publications such as LIFE, ESQUIRE, NEWSWEEK, TIME, SATURDAY REVIEW, MCCALLS . . . and many more have told its story over and over again.

To the Country Music Artist the OPRY is a 'symbol of success' . . . more elusive than Hollywood is to the starlet.

It is the FOUNDATION . . . of the city . . . created by WSM . . . MUSIC CITY, USA.

AND more important of all . . . it is the 'honored guest' in the homes of millions of people every Saturday night!



GEORGE D. HAY
"The Solemn Old Judge"

George D. Hay is one of America's pioneer radio showmen. A reporter for the Memphis "Commercial Appeal," he started his radio career when he was appointed radio editor for the newspaper. He first went on the air over the "Commercial Appeal" radio station, WMC, in June of 1923. It was there that he gained nationwide acclaim when he scooped the nation on the death of President Harding. Just thirteen minutes after Harding died in San Francisco, Hay was on the air with the news and stayed on the air for three hours, bringing the latest information on the attending national crisis.

In April of 1924 he went to Chicago and was appointed chief announcer of Radio Station WLS where he was voted America's most popular radio announcer in a nationwide contest conducted by "The Radio Digest" in the summer of that same year. It was also at this station that he originated the WLS Barn Dance, which later became known as the National Barn Dance.

In the following year he came to Nashville for the dedicatory exercises, inaugurating WSM as the broadcasting service of the National Life and Accident Insurance Company. This took place on October 5, 1925. One month later he joined the station as its first director.

Hay recognized the vast potential of folk music talent and material that lay in the area. As a result, it was at 8:00 P.M. on November 28, 1925 that he announced himself as "The Solemn Old Judge" (though he was only thirty years old) and launched the WSM Barn Dance. In 1927 he gave it the title, "The Grand Ole Opry" and served as its Master of Ceremonies for many years. "Judge" Hay now lives with one of his two daughters in Riverdale, Maryland.



ROY ACUFF

NAME: ROY ACUFF.

HOMETOWN: Maynardville, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: September 15.

BACKGROUND: Was outstanding high school athlete and thought of baseball as a career but illness caused him to abandon it; became interested in music during recuperation period and learned to play the fiddle; organized own band in 1933 and made first professional appearances in Knoxville; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1938; has the longest tenure of any star on the Opry.

One of the "All-Time Greats of Country Music" he is known as "The King of Country Music"; he and the "Smoky Mountain Boys" are perhaps the most widely traveled Opry group; have toured four continents and over fifteen foreign countries; candidate for Governor of Tennessee in 1948.

FAMILY: Roy and wife, Mildred, and son Roy Neill, 18, live in Hendersonville, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Hickory Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "The Wabash Cannonball"
"The Great Speckled Bird"

INTERESTS: Co-owner of Acuff-Rose Music Publishing Company; owner and operator of Dunbar Cave, a recreational park open the year round near Clarksville, Tennessee.

The stories concerning Roy Acuff, the King of Country Singers, are legion. One seldom told goes back to the early days of 'one night stands' when Roy and the Smoky Mountain Boys would finish a performance . . . get in their cars and drive all night to the next one. This particular time all six were traveling through Virginia in a station wagon pulling a trailer filled with instruments and clothes. Fiddler Tommy Magnus was driving and Jess Esterday (the Smoky Mountain boy who never smiled on stage) was sleeping in the back seat along with the rest of the boys. It was about 2 o'clock in the morning . . . and the trailer lights weren't working. Suddenly, from out of nowhere came the siren of the Highway Police. Pulling them over to the side of the road . . . the officer proceeded, as only officers can, to inform them of the fact. When he finally came to a stopping place, Tommy started his apology: "Officer" he said, "I had no idea that the trailer lights weren't burning . . . why just before I got into the car . . . I examined those lights and they were . . ." just about then . . . Jess . . . roused long enough to say: "Tommy . . . I told you more than two weeks ago that those lights were out!" A great quiet descended . . . then Tommy with fire in his eyes said: "That's a lie Jess Esterday . . . you never told me no such thing! I wish you'd keep your big fat mouth shut!" Fortunately, the officer was an understanding friend . . . and also an Opry fan . . . he pocketed his ticket book . . . and said . . . "Drive on friends . . . but be SURE you have those lights fixed before next week."



BILL ANDERSON

NAME: BILL ANDERSON.

HOMETOWN: Decatur, Georgia.

BIRTHDAY: November 1.

BACKGROUND: First learned to play the guitar at twelve; in high school organized a country band and played in talent contests and for civic clubs; first professional experience came when the band played over Atlanta, Ga., radio and television stations; graduated from the Univ. of Georgia in 1959 with a B.A. degree in Journalism; while in college worked as a disk jockey at WGAU in Athens, Ga., and at WJJC in Commerce, Ga.; joined the Grand Ole Opry in June of 1961; is a prolific songwriter, having composed nearly 300 songs, fifty of which have been recorded by himself and other artists; first big hit was "City Lights," the top country and western song of 1958. In 1960 was voted by the nation's disk jockeys as one of the five top country and western songwriters and one of the three top artists in his field.

FAMILY: Bill and wife, Bette, and their seven-month-old daughter, Terri Lee, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "The Tip of My Fingers"
"Po' Folks"

INTERESTS: Songwriting, photography, and baseball.

The time is: March 11, 1961. The place: The Chestnut Inn in Kansas City, Missouri. The characters: Bill Anderson and a more than slightly inebriated gentleman. Bill's Decca recording of WALK OUT BACKWARDS was the Number One tune in Kansas City . . . throughout the week he had been 'plugging' the record and it was being played on radio stations throughout the city . . . almost on the hour! During his engagement at the Chestnut Inn he was requested to sing it at least twice an hour! On this particular evening . . . just at closing time . . . he was asked to sing it just 'once more' by a gentleman who was obviously feeling no pain! Bill obliged . . . and with the last note . . . started putting away his guitar. The gentleman stood there a minute and then said: "I sure do like that song of yours." "Thank you," said Bill. "You sure do sing it good." Another "thank you" from Bill! Then the man put his arm around Bill and said: "I'll just be honest with you. You sing it a lot better than that guy on the record."



CHET ATKINS

NAME: CHET ATKINS.

HOMETOWN: Columbus, Georgia.

BIRTHDAY: June 20.

BACKGROUND: Musical training started with voice and piano, taught by his father; influenced by the music heard by Negro workers on his family's farm; first professional job at WNOX in Knoxville, Tenn., and at radio stations in Springfield, Mo., Raleigh, N. C., Richmond, Va., and Denver, Colo.; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1950; records country, popular, and semi-classical pieces.

Known as "Mr. Guitar"; is Manager of Popular Artists and Repertoire Production of RCA-Victor Recording Studio in Nashville; voted the most popular country music instrumentalist for the past ten years and selected as "Country Music Man of the Year" for 1960; considered by many to be the greatest guitarist in country music.

FAMILY: Chet and wife, Leona, and daughter, Merle, 14, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Mister Sandman"
"Poor People of Paris"

INTERESTS: Electronics, designs electric guitars, golf.

Most people know Chet Atkins only through his music . . . the artist himself is almost unknown due to his own modesty. However, his friends are always willing to tell a lot about his accomplishments. They'll tell you that he has designed at least 3 guitars, is the author of the Chet Atkins Guitar Methods Book, manages to cut 600 'sides' a year and is often referred to as America's "Mister Guitar." Special friends will tell you other things, too . . . how Archie Campbell hired him for three dollars as a FIDDLER, how guitars are as much a part of the Atkins household as the kitchen sink, how Chet never sits down at home without a guitar in his hands. Day in and day out he practices like a schoolboy . . . because, as he says, "If there's anything that really worries me, it's the fear that someday I'll wake up to find myself satisfied with my work. You have to keep getting better to stay as good."



MARGIE BOWES

NAME: MARGIE BOWES.

HOMETOWN: Roxboro, North Carolina.

BIRTHDAY: March 18.

BACKGROUND: Born in a musically-minded family; won an amateur talent contest which led to a job at WRXO and guest appearances for a year and a half on Virginia Barn Dance in Danville, Va.; appeared on radio and television shows in Roanoke, Va., and Richmond, Va., and in Durham, N. C., and Greensboro, N. C.; won first place in the 1st Annual Pet Milk Grand Ole Opry Talent Contest in 1958; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1959.

FAMILY: Is single; lives in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Mercury Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Poor Ole Heartsick Me"
"My Love and Little Me"

INTERESTS: Collects records.

Margie, the Cinderella Girl of the Grand Ole Opry spends about half of the average month on the road touring with members of the Opry . . . but she is still a little wide eyed and leery of the people she sometimes meets. Not too long ago, her personal manager received a collect phone call from Margie who was "stranded" in Orofino, Idaho. She had arrived at Orofino by plane, but the only transportation to nearby Lewiston, Idaho, where she was scheduled to sing was by cab. "The only way I can get there is by cab," Margie wailed, "and the cab driver says it will cost five dollars. I just wanted to ask you if I ought to go ahead and pay him." Her manager reminded her what the long distance phone call was costing her and Margie promptly hung up and took the cab!



CARL BUTLER

NAME: CARL BUTLER.

HOMETOWN: Knoxville, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: June 2.

BACKGROUND: At an early age learned to play the guitar which his mother had given to him for Christmas; turned professional at twelve when he had his first show date, playing for a square dance and singing between sets; played over radio stations in Raleigh, N. C., and in Knoxville, Tenn.; performed on numerous radio and television shows in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Kentucky; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1958; has composed over 200 songs; also sings gospel songs.

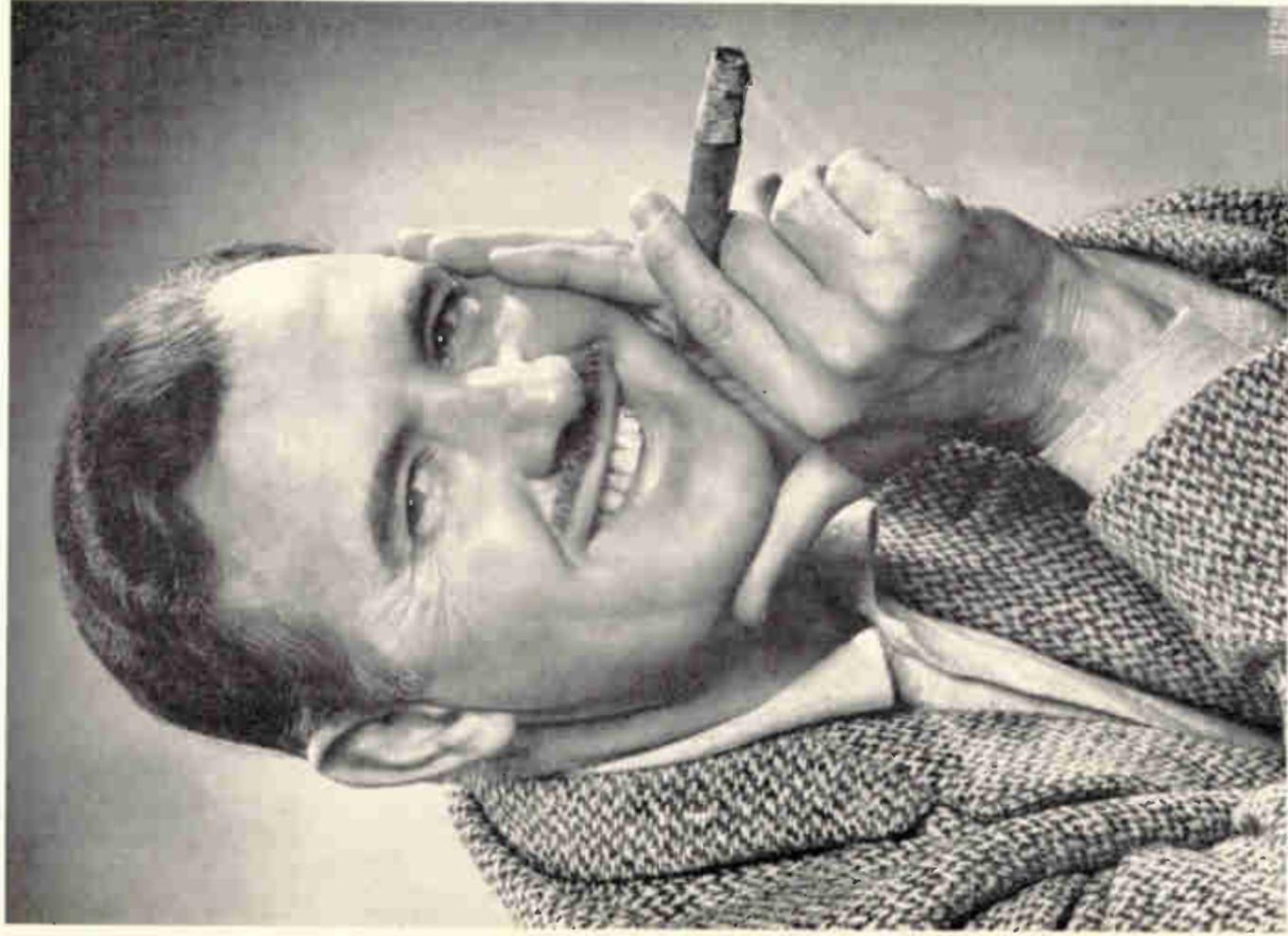
FAMILY: Carl and wife, Pearl, who also composes, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "If Teardrops Were Pennies"
"I Know What It Means to Be
Lonesome"

INTERESTS: Songwriting and fishing.

If you should ask Carl Butler just who his wife is married to he'd probably say, "I wish I knew!" It all happened this way. At the time of their marriage Pearl and Carl were not on the best of terms. On the pretense of taking Pearl to the Doctor for an appendicitis examination, Carl secured a blood test. While waiting for the results they decided to go to a movie (picking up some fruit at the A & P) . . . on the way. After picking up the Doctor's report they headed for the Courthouse where, for the first time, Carl informed Miss Pearl that they were going to get a license and get married! Pearl was speechless (first and last time, according to Carl)! Time was running out . . . and they rushed to the Courthouse where a friendly guide named CHARLIE took them to the 'right window' for their license and then to the Justice of the Peace. The Justice of the Peace, an elderly, nearsighted gentleman, was going out the door, but he removed his hat long enough to perform the ceremony with CHARLIE taking the part of the groom! At the end of the ceremony the Justice of the Peace noticing Carl bent double with laughter asked what was so funny. Carl said, "My name is Carl, not Charlie, and you just married my girl to the wrong man! NOTE: The ceremony was performed a second time and Pearl and Carl lived happily ever after!



ARCHIE CAMPBELL

NAME: ARCHIE CAMPBELL.

HOMETOWN: Knoxville, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: November 7.

BACKGROUND: After graduation from Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, N. C., spent some time as a portrait painter; later joined Roy Acuff at WNOX in Knoxville, Tenn., in 1936, playing the guitar and singing; at the same time started his comedy act; spent three years in the Navy; from 1954-1958 did television shows in Chattanooga, Tenn., Knoxville, Tenn., Bristol, Tenn., and Johnson City, Tenn.; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1959.

FAMILY: Archie and wife, Mary, and their two sons, Stephen, 14, and Philip, 9, live in Powell, Tennessee.

RECORD LABEL: Starday Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Trouble in the Amen Corner"
"Make Friends"

INTERESTS: Golf, landscape painting.

Archie Campbell has probably had a closer association with more famous country music stars than any other artist. He started with Roy Acuff in 1936, and in the years to follow had an act with Bill Carlisle, Chet Atkins, Carl Butler, Eddie Arnold and Carl Smith. Played with George Gobel, Homer and Jethro, Pee Wee King, a fiddler named Boudeleaux Bryant, Molly O'Day and numerous others. But country music stars are not the only famous people Archie has met . . . take the time he was in . . . but let's let him tell it, "I volunteered for the Navy . . . as all good Americans should do. I still have splinters under my fingernails where they pulled me off the front porch to take me in the Navy. I spent three years in the Navy . . . as a photographer. I worked in the Lab in the McCallise Hotel on Biscayne Boulevard in Miami for fourteen months (tough duty). One day I was making identification pictures of young officers that were being processed through the base. We stood them in front of the camera and banged away, as fast as they could come through but I was taking their names and rank, etc. I didn't even look up to see who they were, except one day, I said, "Name please" . . . and the voice said, "Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr." I looked up and there he was . . . looking just like his father."



BILL CARLISLE

NAME: BILL CARLISLE.

HOMETOWN: Wakefield, Kentucky.

BIRTHDAY: December 19.

BACKGROUND: With brother Cliff gave first radio appearance in Louisville, Ky., as "The Carlises"; appeared over radio stations in Lexington, Ky., Knoxville, Tenn., Charlotte, N. C., Atlanta, Ga., Asheville, N. C., and on the Louisiana Hayride and the Ozark Jubilee; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1953.

Among the sixty-two awards he holds are: "Most Programmed Country and Western Vocal Group," 1953-55, "Best Comedian of the Year," 1955, his "Too Old to Cut the Mustard" and "No Help Wanted" voted the "Best Record of the Year" in 1953 and 1954, respectively.

FAMILY: Bill and wife, Leona, and two children, Bill, Jr., 18, and Shelia, 14, live in Goodlettsville, Tenn. When not in school Bill and Shelia join him in his act.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Too Old to Cut the Mustard"
"No Help Wanted"

INTERESTS: Fishing, hunting.

To Bill Carlisle life is a continuous series of SURPRISES. He was SURPRISED back in 1930 when country music fans were buzzing over a BLUEBIRD recording by the Carlisle Brothers called "Rattlesnake Daddy." (Cliff, you'll remember, was the other 'brother' who was so conscientious about their act that he insisted on long hard hours of rehearsing and when Brother Bill got tired the only way he could make him stop was to break a string.) Bill was even more surprised in 1953 and 1954 . . . when the best records of the year were . . . TOO OLD TO CUT THE MUSTARD and NO HELP WANTED. But his most painful surprise came one winter evening when he and Cliff were boys at home. This was a particularly cold evening and the boys who had been out "duding" around came home to find the house dark and cold as kraut. As was their custom, they never bothered to light the lamp, but started peeling off their clothes . . . getting ready for bed the minute they hit the door. Bill was two jumps ahead of Cliff (even back then he was a pretty high jumper) and from the middle of the room he dived for the bed which had always been in the corner of the room. You know the rest. You can imagine Bill's SURPRISE when he came to lying on the FLOOR and seeing the bed in the opposite side of the room!



JUNE CARTER

NAME: JUNE CARTER.

HOMETOWN: Maces Springs, Virginia.

BIRTHDAY: June 23

BACKGROUND: Began to sing professionally at eleven when she joined sisters Helen and Anita and Mother Maybelle to carry on the Carter Family tradition of singing folk music; the group sang at radio stations in Del Rio, Texas, Charlotte, N. C., Richmond, Va., and Knoxville, Tenn.; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1951; in recent years has worked as a free lance artist, studied dramatics in New York, and continued with tours and personal appearances on major network television shows; rejoined the Grand Ole Opry in 1958.

FAMILY: June and husband, Rip Nix, and their two children, Rebecca Carlene, 5, and Rozanna Lee, 2, live in Madison, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Liberty Records

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Baby, It's Cold Outside," (with Homer and Jethroe)
"Music, Music" (with Homer and Jethroe)

INTERESTS: Skiing, fishing.

As Minnie Pearl is known by her yellow organdy dress and floppy straw hat . . . Stringbean by his long waisted shirt . . . so is June Carter outstanding for a particular article in her wardrobe. The funny fancy dancing of this talented artist is glamorized by ruffled pantaloons which she wears for public appearances and for her weekly stint on the Grand Ole Opry. June recalls one incident about her 'bloomers' that makes her blush even to tell it. At one personal appearance, in the middle of a dance, she was ready to show off her bloomers when she remembered just in time, that she had forgotten to put them on. "I forgot something" . . . she announced . . . and retreated quickly backstage to complete her dressing. On another occasion . . . her elastic . . . not her memory failed her and the bloomers slid their merry way to the floor.



PATSY CLINE

NAME: PATSY CLINE.

HOMETOWN: Winchester, Virginia.

BIRTHDAY: September 8.

BACKGROUND: At four she won top honors in tap dancing; later started singing and accompanying herself on the piano; after performing with a band on the hometown radio station, she did group work in nearby towns and nightclubs; later sang on Jimmy Dean's network television show and won on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts with "Walkin' After Midnight"; has done some pop singing; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1960.

Among her awards are: "Most Promising Country Female Artist in 1957," "Greatest Achievement in Records in 1957."

FAMILY: Patsy and husband, Charles Dick, and their two children, Julie, 3, and Randy, six months, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Decca.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Walkin' After Midnight"
"I Fall To Pieces"

INTERESTS: Collects earrings, salt and pepper shakers, and pictures of country and western stars.

Patsy Cline would be the first to tell you that whatever success she has achieved . . . she owes it all to the wonderful people who have given her a helping hand along the way. One in particular was Arthur Godfrey . . . who once said to her, "Patsy . . . you may not always be the wide-eyed-little country girl you are now . . . but don't you ever change from the girl that you really are . . . because no one will ever love or respect you." One time the advice he gave her was before 10 million people on his daytime morning television show. It was time for her song . . . and he said, "Now ladies and gentlemen . . . I want you to meet one of the finest country-western-blues singers in the world. Here's a gal that can sing just about any kind of a song that was ever written and make you love it. We think she's got everything . . . sincerity in the delivery of a song, poise, finesse" here he turned to Patsy and said, "by the way, Patsy, just what do you contribute your success to?" And Patsy not knowing what he meant . . . hesitated a moment . . . and said, "I don't know . . . I guess that's just me!" Over the applause of the crowd, Mr. Godfrey said, "Well just leave it like it is . . . don't ever change it!" And she hasn't!



COWBOY COPAS

NAME: COWBOY COPAS (Lloyd T. Copas).

HOMETOWN: Muskogee, Oklahoma.

BIRTHDAY: July 15.

BACKGROUND: His early childhood was spent on a ranch where he learned to play his mother's guitar and was taught to sing by his father; at eleven won second place in an amateur contest; at fourteen began to appear regularly on the radio and started playing one-night stands at country fairs and similar events; has appeared at well over 200 radio stations; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1946; recently scored an outstanding success with "Alabam"; known as "The Oklahoma Cowboy."

FAMILY: "Cope" and his wife, Lucy, and their three children, Katha Loma Hughes, 25, Gary Lee, 22, and Michael, 10, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Starday Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Signed, Sealed and Delivered"
"Filipino Baby"

INTERESTS: Hunting, golf.

If you were to ask Cowboy Copas what was the most important thing that ever happened to him . . . he'd tell you "Becoming a member of the Grand Ole Opry!" It was this move that brought about one of his biggest hits . . . FILIPPINO BABY. Another big hit of his . . . came about simply through LUCK! You see, ALABAM was recorded by accident. Copas was at the studio recording an LP and they wanted to include an example of old style flattop picking. Copas remembered that he had written a song 30 years ago called ALABAM that he thought might be a pretty good example of old fashioned unadorned picking and singing. They tried and it broke up their recording session! A copy of the LP was sent to WSM's Opry Star Spotlight disk jockey . . . Ralph Emery. He played it . . . liked it . . . and so did his listeners. A 'single' was released and you know the rest. Of course, not all recordings are hits . . . but that's all right with Copas . . . he'll be happy just as long as he can keep writing songs . . . sing a little and every Saturday night appear on the GRAND OLE OPRY!



WILMA LEE and STONEY COOPER

NAMES: WILMA LEE and STONEY COOPER

HOMETOWNS: Valley Head, West Virginia (Wilma Lee Cooper).
Harman, West Virginia (Stoney Cooper).

BIRTHDAYS: February 7 (Wilma Lee Cooper).
October 16 (Stoney Cooper).

BACKGROUND: Wilma Lee comes from the Leary Family, singers of religious songs, and met Stoney when they hired him; she attended Davis and Elkins College, bent on a business career but turned to music instead; Stoney came from a family of school teachers, learned to play the guitar at twelve; is an authority on Bluegrass music; they have been in radio since 1945; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1957; are backed by the "Clinch Mountain Gang."

"Midnight Special," (on which they collaborated in writing) and "Come Walk With Me" won awards for being two of the Top Ten Hits in 1959; the same was true for "There's a Big Wheel" in 1960.

FAMILY: Wilma Lee and Stoney live in Nashville; they have one daughter, Carolee, who used to sing with them; she is now married to the Rev. Jimmie Snow, son of Hank Snow, and a traveling evangelist for the Assembly of God church.

RECORD LABEL: Hickory Records

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "There's a Big Wheel"
"Midnight Special"

INTERESTS: Hunting and fishing.

In the earlier days before Wilma Lee and Stoney met and were Mr. and Mrs., Wilma Lee sang in a gospel group with her family and toured the south-east area of the country while Stoney led a dance band of country musicians. Times being what they were and dance engagements few and far between Stoney and his boys were hard pressed at times. So it was no wonder that when Stoney was asked to join the gospel group as a singer and fiddle player he accepted quickly. To his great joy he not only got a regular salary but got to eat regularly of Wilma Lee's mother's fine cooking. Boys being what they are and girls being what they are too . . . it wasn't long til Wilma Lee and Stoney were in love. It was then that Wilma's mother told her . . . "Honey . . . Stoney's a fine boy and I think all the world of him . . . but if you two get married you'd just as well face it. He'll eat you both out of house and home." They were married . . . a true love match . . . and have a fine home of their own . . . thanks to their great success. Which all goes to prove that Mother-in-laws aren't always right.



Ever wonder why Vic Willis is such an accomplished accompanist?



How's this for an appreciative audience? Honk Snow, T. Tommy Cutrer and Archie Compbell.

BACKSTAGE AT THE OPRY



Roy and Bobbye Drusky, Skeeter Davis, Ralph Emery (Mr. and Mrs.) and Archie Campbell at WSM's 9th Annual Country Music Festival.

Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs and Grandpo Jones compose 'G's in the Opry dressing room.





CARL BUTLER



WILLIS BROTHERS



PORTER WAGONER

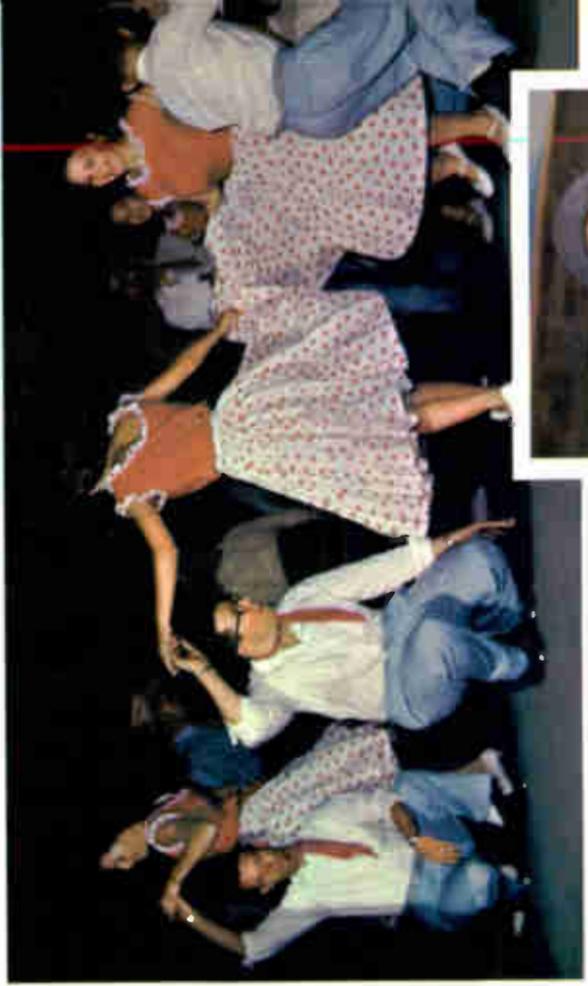


LONZO & OSCAR

STRINGBEAN



STONY MOUNTAIN CLOGGERS



TENNESSEE TRAVELERS



COUSIN JODY



ARCHIE CAMPBELL



BILLY WALKER



FARON YOUNG



DON GIBSON

THE BROWNS

Jim Edward—Maxine—Bonnie

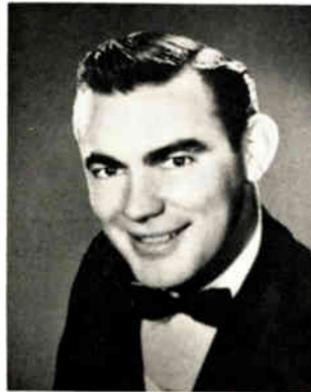


Name: Ella Maxine Brown Russell
Hometown: Pine Bluff, Ark.
Birthday: April 27

Name: Bonnie Jean Brown Ring
Hometown: Pine Bluff, Ark.
Birthday: July 31



Name: James Edward Brown
Hometown: Pine Bluff, Ark.
Birthday: April 1



One of today's most delightful and talented vocal groups, THE BROWNS really started in the entertainment world as a 'single.' Jim Edward entered and won a talent contest in Little Rock, Ark. Wishing to share the laurels of his victory, he called sister Maxine up from the audience to join him in a duet. The pair was so successful that they were signed for a weekly program. A year or so later sister Bonnie joined the group and the TRIO was born. Exciting things followed . . . network television . . . personal appearances throughout the United States and Europe and a recording contract with RCA Victor. Listed among their more popular recordings are SCARLET RIBBONS, THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER and THE THREE BELLS . . . for which the trio received their gold record. Since Jim is the proud father of a one year old son, Maxine the mother of three . . . and Bonnie . . . the mother of two . . . someday in the far future the Browns may become a quintet or even a sextet.



SKEETER DAVIS

NAME: SKEETER DAVIS.

HOMETOWN: Dry Ridge, Kentucky.

BIRTHDAY: December 30.

BACKGROUND: In high school formed duo singing team with Betty Jack Davis, called "The Davis Sisters"; began singing over WCPO in Cincinnati, Ohio; their first record, "I Forgot More Than You'll Ever Know" became the No. 1 song for 1953; gave up singing temporarily after Betty Jack was killed in an automobile accident; later joined Ernest Tubb and his "Texas Troubadours" and toured with them; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1959.

In 1958 was voted "The Most Promising Country Music Female Artist"; her own composition, "I'm Falling Too," was one of the Top Ten Hits in 1960.

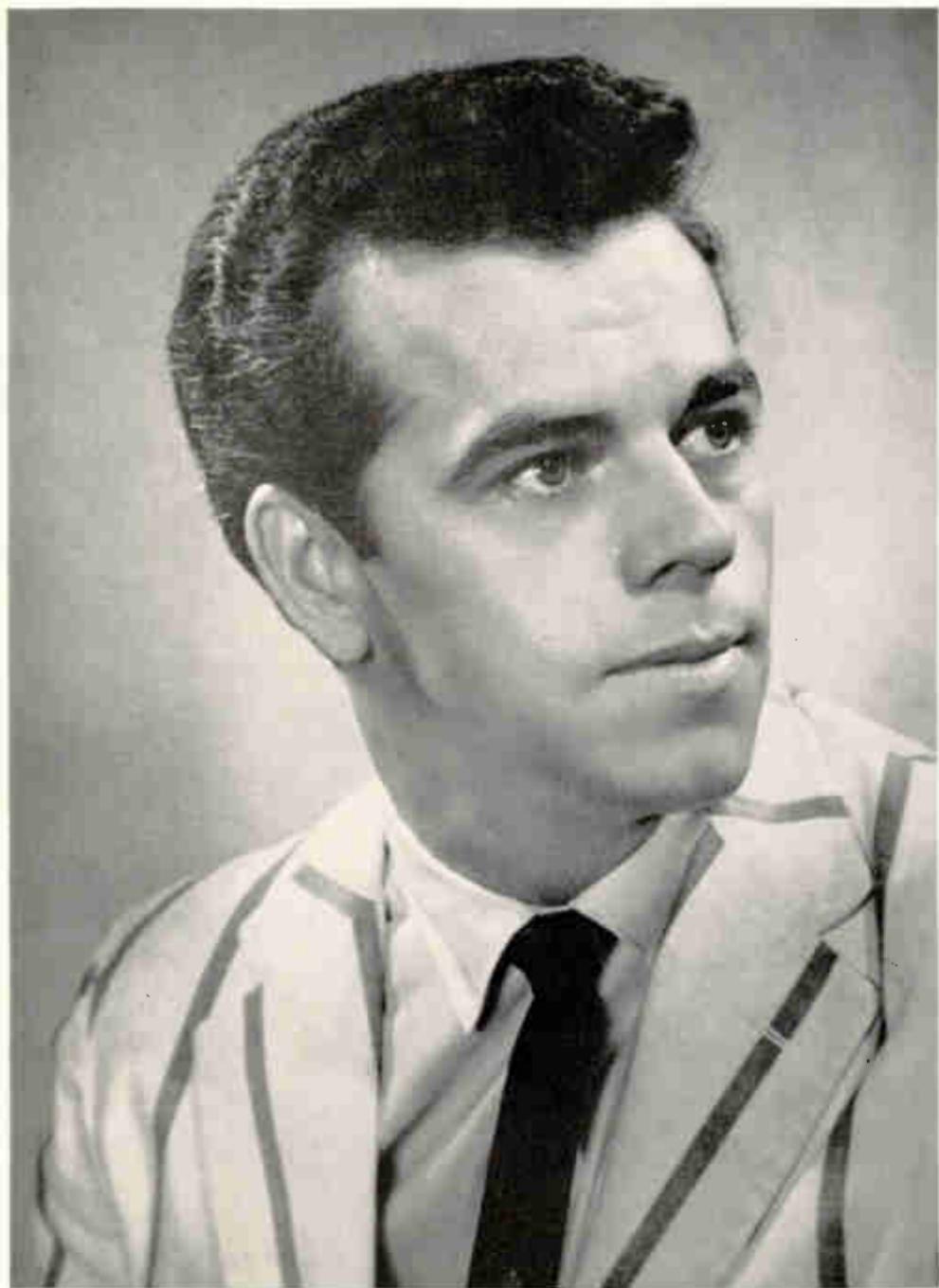
FAMILY: Skeeter and husband, WSM's Ralph Emery, the nation's No. 1 Country and Western Disk Jockey, and recording artist for Liberty Records, and his son, Steve, 8, live on a farm at Ridgetop, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "I'm Falling Too"
"My Last Date With You"

INTERESTS: Songwriting.

Today, when Skeeter Davis steps up to make a hit record or walks out on the stage of the Ryman for an appearance on The Grand Ole Opry she exhibits all the poise and calmness of a real professional. But there was a time when Skeeter wasn't so calm . . . and that was back in 1953 when she was first scheduled to record in Nashville for the RCA Victor people. The studio was a dingy old garage, converted for recording . . . with no dressing rooms and little in the way of other comforts. Skeeter and her ill fated partner B. J. Davis were as nervous as any two people could be . . . but they had a great song to record and the ability to sing. Time after time the number was recorded . . . and each time the director felt that the girls could do better. Finally . . . on the tenth or eleventh take . . . Skeeter isn't actually sure which it was . . . she and B. J. stepped out of their shoes . . . and sang their song. That was the great "I Forgot More Than You'll Ever Know" . . . that went on to the number one spot in the charts. To this day Skeeter isn't sure whether takin' off the shoes had anything to do with the success of the number . . . but when she's in a tight "pinch" . . . off come those shoes!



ROY DRUSKY

NAME: ROY DRUSKY.

HOMETOWN: Atlanta, Georgia.

BIRTHDAY: June 22.

BACKGROUND: In kindergarten was a band leader and drummer; studied the piano and clarinet later but baseball overshadowed his music interests in high school; was offered a contract with the Cleveland Indians but joined the Navy; became interested in country music and learned to play the guitar; after discharge formed a band and was heard over WEAS, Decatur, Ga.; recordings and personal appearances followed; later became a disk jockey in Decatur and in Minneapolis, Minn.; after winning fame with his own compositions, joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1958.

His "Another" was one of the Top Ten Hits in 1960.

FAMILY: Roy and wife, Bobbye, and their two sons, Roy Frank III, 3, and Tracy, eight months, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Anymore"
"Three Hearts in a Tangle"

INTERESTS: Baseball, raising French poodles.

Aside from being a great singer and song-writer, Roy Drusky has always been and still is . . . a great baseball fan. Having played ball in school in Atlanta . . . he was offered a chance to play ball with one of the major league farm clubs. But Roy chose to make his career in the music world and has never regretted it. HOWEVER . . . that didn't keep him from sneakin' off from time to time and playin' a little ball with the kids in the neighborhood. And to field a "fast grounder" or spear a "hard drive down first base line" still brings him a great thrill. But a musicians hands are valuable . . . and fingering the frets on a guitar and playin' ball don't mix. After showin' up at the Opry several times with "sprained fingers" and "swollen knuckles" . . . Ott Devine . . . the Grand Ole Opry Manager finally had to tell Roy that he had to give up his ball playing. As Roy puts it now: "The top umpire in the business has sent me to the showers for good. My ball playing days are over . . . except for a little 'catch' with my kids.



LESTER FLATT and EARL SCRUGGS

NAMES: LESTER FLATT and EARL SCRUGGS.

HOMETOWNS: Sparta, Tennessee (Lester Flatt).
Shelby, North Carolina (Earl Scruggs).

BIRTHDAYS: June 28 (Lester Flatt).
January 6 (Earl Scruggs).

BACKGROUND: Flatt and Scruggs organized their band in 1948 when they started out as "The Flatt and Scruggs Show" with the "Foggy Mountain Boys" on WCYB in Bristol, Va.; Flatt began his music career in Roanoke, Va., and came to the Grand Ole Opry in 1944 as a featured vocalist and guitarist; Scruggs came to the Grand Ole Opry in 1945, introducing a new form of banjo picking, now nationally known as "Scruggs Style Picking," are outstanding exponents of Bluegrass music.

Voted the "No. 1 Country and Western Instrumental Band," 1955-1958.

FAMILIES: Lester Flatt and his wife, Gladys, and their daughter, Brenda, 16, live on their farm near Sparta, Tenn.; Earl Scruggs and his wife, Louise, and their three sons, Gary, 12, Randy, 7, and Stevie, 3, live in Madison, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Polka on a Banjo"
"Cabin on the Hill"

INTERESTS: Hunting (Lester Flatt).
Flying (Earl Scruggs).

Lester and Earl have traveled thousands of miles as they have toured the country making personal appearances. In the early days . . . it was by car . . . "a pretty old one" . . . Les remembers. But today they travel in air conditioned comfort in a special built bus . . . complete with living quarters for the entire outfit. But this wasn't enough for Earl . . . who finally realized a long time ambition when he purchased an airplane and learned to fly. One day . . . when Les and Earl had a quick date to play in Indiana . . . Earl offered to fly Les to the destination. Now off stage . . . Les is a man of few words . . . and when Earl made the offer . . . Les said: "Earl . . . I love you like a brother. I'll sing with you . . . I'll pick guitar with you . . . I'll even lend you money. But when it comes to this flyin' business . . . nothin' doin'." And 'nothin' doin' it's been! In fact, according to Earl: "If Les had to choose between walking and flying to Knoxville . . . he'd walk"! So if you ever see a fellow, walking up the highway carrying a guitar . . . better pick him up . . . because it just might be Lester Flatt!



DON GIBSON

NAME: DON GIBSON.

HOMETOWN: Shelby, North Carolina.

BIRTHDAY: April 28.

BACKGROUND: Made his professional debut at fourteen; later moved to Knoxville, Tenn., and starred at WNOX on the "Tennessee Barn Dance" and the "Mid-Day Merry Go-Round"; in 1958 his "Oh Lonesome Me" established his fame; organized his own band and played club dates and made radio and television appearances; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1958.

In 1958 was named the "No. 1 Country Male Artist of the Year" and "Most Promising Male Artist"; the same year "Oh Lonesome Me" was "The Country and Western Record of the Year"; is a prolific song writer with his "Just One Time" and "There's a Big Wheel" being award winners for 1960.

FAMILY: Don and wife, Polly, and their daughter, Autumn Scarlet, 2, live in Knoxville, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Oh Lonesome Me"
"Just One Time"

INTERESTS: Songwriting, dogs.

Don Gibson is one of the nations most gifted song writers. And this is as it should be for Don's idol is the gifted but ill-fated songwriter Stephen Foster who's melodies hold a bright place in the American music tradition. To Don, one of the greatest tragedies in the world is the fact that the gifted Foster whose songs made bright lives of millions was left to die, penniless and alone in the charity ward of a New York Hospital. Many times Don has speculated on the events that may have led up to the finding of the injured Foster, lying in the dingy doorway of a New York address, prior to his removal to the charity hospital where he died, alone and friendless, never regaining consciousness. To Don, in his compassion, it will always be one of the world's great mysteries. Needless to say . . . Don feels that he'd trade everything in the world except Polly and the baby for Foster's ability to put into song the melodies that grip peoples hearts.



CHUCK, TOMPALL and JIM GLASER

NAMES: TOMPALL GLASER, CHUCK GLASER, JIM GLASER.

HOMETOWN: Spalding, Nebraska.

BIRTHDAYS: September 3 (Tompall Glaser).

February 27 (Chuck Glaser).

December 16 (Jim Glaser).

BACKGROUND: Were encouraged to sing by their father, Louis Glaser, Tompall starting at four; made their first appearance over WJAG in Norfolk, Neb. and later won first place on an amateur show; made personal appearances on KHOL-TV in Holdrege, Neb.; after Tompall's discharge from the army they won first place on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts; were associated with Marty Robbins before forming their own independent group when they joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1960; frequently collaborate in writing songs.

FAMILY: All brothers are married and live in Madison, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "She Loves the Love I Give Her"
"Careless Love"

INTERESTS: Songwriting.

Ever had a cop pull you to the side of the road on the New York turnpike and ask you to prove whose car you were driving and you couldn't That's what happened to Tompall! The Glaser's, in Chuck's car, were on their way to a personal appearance. Tompall and Jim were in the front and Chuck asleep in the back. At about 2 o'clock in the morning they stopped at a filling station. Tompall and Jim got out to get something to eat . . . came back . . . drove off THINKING Chuck was still asleep. IN THE MEANTIME . . . Chuck awakens . . . goes to look for the brothers . . . returning just in time to see the car pulling out. He immediately contacts the Highway Police who located the boys some 50 miles up the highway. As they pull them to the side of the road, Tompall . . . thinking he had exceeded the speed limit reached for his drivers license . . . but is asked for his car registration instead. Realizing that he isn't driving HIS car . . . he turns to ask Chuck for his . . . and for the first time—finds Chuck gone! After enjoying Tompall's and Jim's consternation the patrolman 'turns the table' and 'confesses all' . . . reuniting the brothers three!



BILLY GRAMMER

NAME: BILLY GRAMMER.

HOMETOWN: Franklin Co., Illinois.

BIRTHDAY: August 28.

BACKGROUND: Is one of thirteen children; learned to play the violin at five from his father; soon learned to play the guitar, banjo and mandolin and was performing at various public events; served in the Army; started his entertainment career at WARL in Arlington, Va.; worked for various stars and then organized his own band; transcribed radio shows for military recruiting purposes; in 1958 his first record, "Gotta Travel On," sold over a million copies; the same year he joined the Grand Ole Opry.

FAMILY: Billy and wife, Ruth, and their three children, Donna, 15, Dianne, 13, and Billy, 8, live near Brentwood, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Gotta Travel On"
"Bonapart's Retreat"

INTERESTS: Owns his own music publishing company, RuBi-DiDo, and is part owner of Gower Guitar Co. Is also an avid fisherman.

Music to Billy Grammer was just a pastime . . . God's gift to a country boy . . . to be shared after the day's work was done with family and friends. Music as a career was not only unheard of but unthought of! Then came the war and the "recession." Veteran Billy, a tool and die maker, could find no work. In desperation he tried everything from odd jobs to baling hay. It was then that he received a letter from a friend in Arlington, Virginia, saying that a DJ there was looking for talent for a radio program. Knowing that Billy loved to play a guitar and sing he wondered if he didn't want to give it a try. Billy did. He picked up his guitar (he didn't even own a case) stuffed some clothes in an old suit case and 'thumbed' his way to Arlington. The next morning he had an audition and was hired! And as Billy puts it: "Suddenly the sun began to shine." There were network radio and television shows, personal appearances and of course, his first great record, GOTTA TRAVEL ON! And whether it was of his own choosing or not Bill was started on a musical career. But the talented Mr. Grammer is not one to put all his eggs in one basket . . . he's still one of the finest tool and die makers around!



GEORGE HAMILTON IV

NAME: GEORGE HAMILTON IV.

HOMETOWN: Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

BIRTHDAY: July 19.

BACKGROUND: Embarked upon a music career in high school by forming a three piece combo and entertained for various school and community functions; as a freshman at the University of North Carolina established himself as a pop star with "Rose and a Baby Ruth"; later had his own network television show; forsook a promising career in the popular music field and entered the country music field; has made many personal appearances in night clubs and on television shows; came to the Grand Ole Opry in 1960; also composes many songs.

FAMILY: George and wife, Tinky, and their two sons, Edwin, 2, and George V, six months, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Before This Day Ends"
"Three Steps to the Phone"

INTERESTS: Occasional songwriting, collects records.

George Hamilton IV writes:

"In mid October of 1956 I auditioned for and was accepted as a contestant on the "Arthur Godfrey Talent Scouts" TV show. Needless to say, I was thrilled . . . so much so that I was scared to death! I felt that this was the "big break" that I had been waiting and hoping and working for. My best girl (who is now my wife) consented to be my talent scout and everyone in my hometown was watching and pulling for us. I felt like this was the most important night of my life. Well, to put it bluntly, I lost! My girl "Tinky" and my mother and I went up on the Empire State Building and looked out over the skyline of New York City after the show. Words can't express how despondent I was at this moment. A week later my recording of "A Rose and a Baby Ruth" was released nationally and went on to sell over a million records. Also, Mr. Godfrey was kind enough to have me back as guest on many of his shows . . . as a matter of fact, he kept me on for a week after the contest even though I didn't win. This was one of the greatest lessons in my life. I learned that the "darkest moment really can be just before the light of dawn" and also that no one gets anything easy or with an "overnight big break"—only through hard work and many disappointments can anything really worthwhile be accomplished."



HAWKSHAW HAWKINS

NAME: HAWKSHAW HAWKINS (Harold Hawkins).

HOMETOWN: Huntington, West Virginia.

BIRTHDAY: December 22.

BACKGROUND: Won his first radio job as first prize in amateur talent contest in Huntington; continued to sing and compose; won more contests and starred on the Wheeling Jamboree at WWVA, Wheeling, West Va.; toured with rodeos and Indian shows, becoming an exceptional horseman and an expert with the bull whip; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1955; in the summers has a wild west show, appearing at fairs and rodeos.

FAMILY: Hawkshaw and wife, Grand Ole Opry star, Jean Shepard, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Slow Poke"
"Soldier's Joy"

INTERESTS: Has stable of expertly trained horses; is an expert horseman and rifleman; trains bird dogs; boating and hunting.

Aside from being a great singer and entertainer on The Grand Ole Opry Hawkshaw Hawkins is a great "circus" man . . . being an expert with the "bull whip." And out of this comes a funny story. One season not so long ago Hawk was working some fair dates in connection with an Indian and Wild West Show where one of the Indians, a trick shot with a forty-five caliber pistol, fired a shot into a heavy block of wood held by his Indian squaw. One day the squaw was ill and unable to perform so the chief asked Hawk if he would help out in the act and hold the block of wood. Being a showman . . . and certain in his own mind that the act was done by trickery . . . Hawk consented. Bravely he stood up—held the block of wood against his chest—and stood calmly as the Chief took careful aim. To Hawk's surprise, when the Chief fired, a real bullet struck the wood and almost knocked him down. Later, white faced and shaken, Hawk complained about the Chief using real bullets. "Sure" said the chief, "Me use real bullets. That why squaw so good to me. She afraid if she make me mad . . . I get nervous and miss block of wood."



FERLIN HUSKY

NAME: FERLIN HUSKY.

HOMETOWN: Hickory Grove, Missouri.

BIRTHDAY: December 3.

BACKGROUND: As a youth played in local amateur contests and community affairs; worked at a variety of jobs and then served five years in the Merchant Marine; first professional job was over KXLW in St. Louis, Mo.; in 1947 went to Hollywood where he sang and played the bass and guitar; toured with Smiley Burnette; in 1951 got a contract with Capitol Records and then developed his "Simon Crum" comedy routine while a disk jockey; has worked under the names of "Tex Terry" and "Terry Preston"; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1954; has appeared on many network television shows; has written over 200 songs.

FAMILY: Ferlin and wife, Betty, and their four children, Danny, 8, Dana Rene, 5, Denise, 3, and David Ferlin, three months, live in Madison, Tenn. Ferlin is also the father of an older daughter, Donna, 15.

RECORD LABEL: Capitol Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Gone"
"On the wings of a Dove"

INTERESTS: Fishing and hunting.

If you were to ask Ferlin Husky which one he's had the most of—jobs or names—he'd probably tell you it was a toss up! The first name change came when he was hardly 'dry behind the ears' in the music business. As most young fellows he headed west to make his fortune as a country-western singer. Naturally, he went by way of Texas and everybody knows it wouldn't even be safe to get within 'yodeling' distance of Texas with a name like FERLIN! So Ferlin became Tex and Husky Terry. That is until he reached California and there, to his dismay, he found a TEX on every radio station doorstep. This time the name was changed to TERRY PRESTON and under this name he recorded for Capitol Records. But TERRY PRESTON was also doomed because a fellow named SIMON CRUM kept getting into the act. Then came a chance to record an album of the late Hank Williams tunes and a decision must be made—should he record under the name of Terry Preston or once more change his name? You know the rest—the name is now FERLIN HUSKY and according to Mr. Ferlin Tex Terry, Terry Preston, Simon Crum, Husky . . . it's going to stay that way!



STONEWALL JACKSON

NAME: STONEWALL JACKSON.

HOMETOWN: Moultrie, Georgia.

BIRTHDAY: November 6.

BACKGROUND: Started playing when he served in the Navy; did some farming and logging; drove his truck to Nashville from Moultrie for an audition on the Grand Ole Opry with Judge Hay, promptly won a spot on the show, joining in 1956; has written over 500 songs over a period of ten years.

In 1959 was voted "The Most Promising Country Music Male Artist."

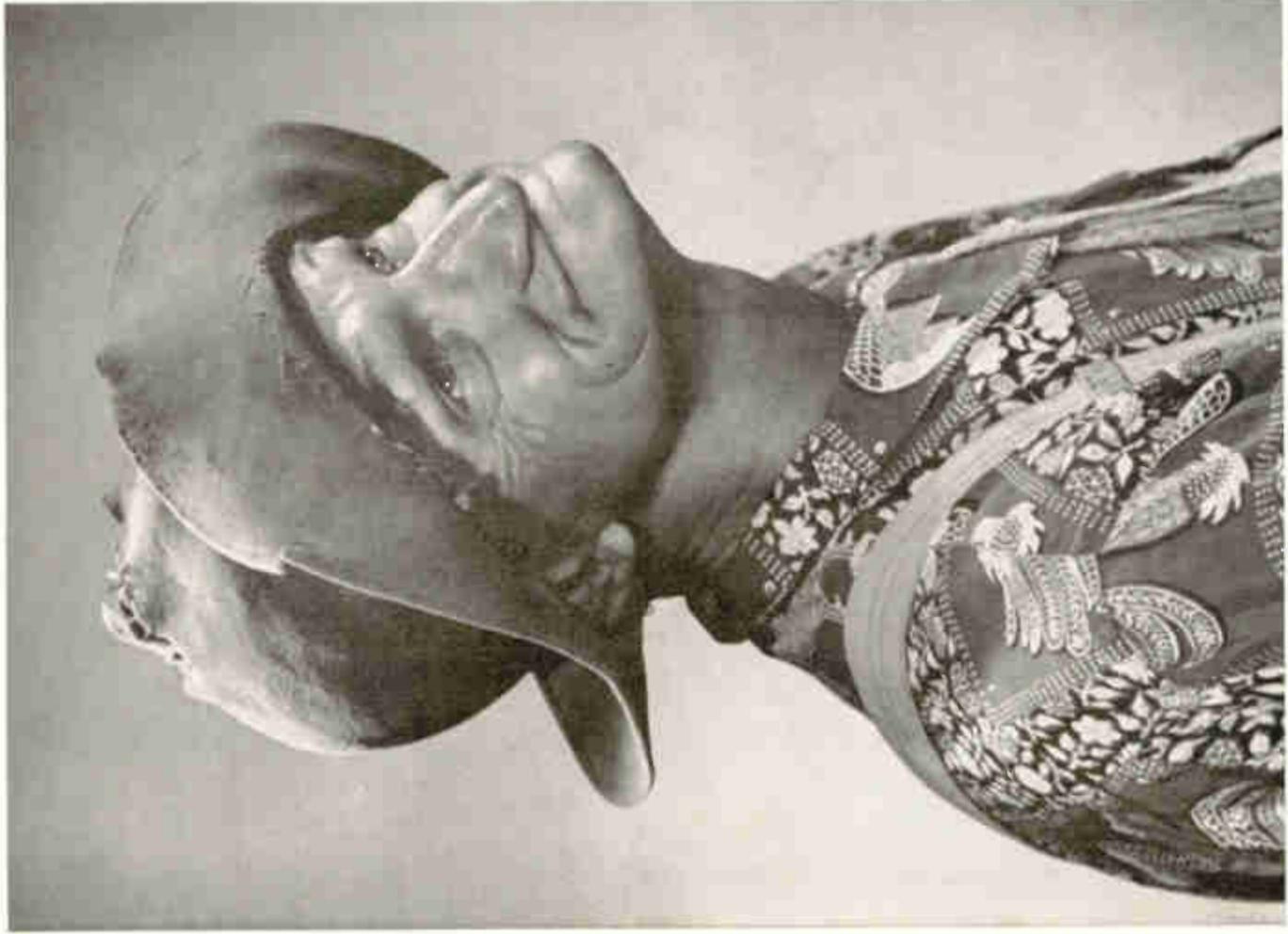
FAMILY: Stonewall and wife, Juanita, who also composes, and their son, Stonewall, Jr., I, live in Brentwood, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Waterloo"
"Life to Go"

INTERESTS: Maintains his private lake, "Lake Waterloo," for public fishing; songwriting.

"Tears" are a personal thing and like grief and happiness are seldom shared. And many, particularly the deeply sensitive shed few. Stonewall, for instance, remembers vividly the three occasions that brought tears to his eyes. The first . . . when he signed his Grand Ole Opry contract (and incidentally, he came to Nashville in a PICKUP not a logging truck). Judge Hay auditioned him, then called in other WSM officials with the remark: "I've got a boy here that sings so country he's cute!" He was sent on a tour with Ernest Tubb (who still calls him SON) and upon his return was called into the office to sign the contract. The second time came as the result of his acceptance by the audience at the Grand Ole Opry. The third time when the Doctor said: "Stonewall your wife is doing just fine and you have a five and a half pound son!" (Note: Stonewall Junior's arrival was proclaimed on the Friday Night Opry by an excited father who, when Grant Turner asked how much his son weighed said: "Five OUNCES!")



COUSIN JODY

NAME: COUSIN JODY (James C. Summey)

HOMETOWN: Sevierville, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: December 11.

BACKGROUND: First radio appearance was on WNOX in Knoxville, Tenn. where he started the "Mid-Day Merry-Go-Round"; continued to make personal appearances and play for square dances; served in the Army; played with Pee Wee King's band; has made several movies and many television appearances; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1938 as a member of Roy Acuff's band; in 1955 formed his comedy and singing act, "Cousin Jody and His Country Cousins," which includes three men and a girl, Jerry Johnson.

FAMILY: Jody and wife, Sarah, and their daughter, Jodena, 4, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Starday Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Television Set"
"Lady Cop"

INTERESTS: Owns a record company, (Jodena label), a music publishing company, a talent agency, and a magazine; woodwork, fishing and hunting.

As one Grand Ole Opry star said: "The Lord must have intended for Cousin Jody to be a comedian or he wouldn't have let him be born in a place called POSSUM HOLLOW, Tennessee." And a comedian he's always been! There was one time though when things weren't too funny to Cousin Jody. The time he was trying to get enough money to marry Miss Sarah. The first time Jody saw Miss Sarah she was walking down the street and he turned to his companion and said: "You know that girl" . . . "No," . . . said his friend . . . "I don't either NOW . . . but that pretty little thing is going to be my wife." Well, Jody managed to meet Miss Sarah . . . do a little courtin' and get the date set. There was just one drawback . . . he didn't have any money! So he decided to book a country music show—he put every cent he had into it . . . In fact, the day the show was to play Jody had only five cents in his pocket, just enough to buy a bag of tobacco. And Jody really needed that smoke because since daylight it had been raining cats and dogs! The show was set for 2 o'clock. At 12 o'clock it was still raining and then all of a sudden, it was almost as if someone had turned the faucet off—it stopped—and the sun came out and with it a country side full of people! Jody got the money and Miss Sarah and he learned a lesson, too—that every cloud has a silver lining!

1962-63 Grand Ole Opry Stars



CURLY FOX

NAME: JIMMIE DRIFTWOOD (James Morris).

HOMETOWN: Timbo, Arkansas.

BIRTHDAY: June 20.

BACKGROUND: Composer . . . Artist . . . Folklorist . . . Song Collector . . . Scholar . . . Farmer! It takes all these and MORE to describe "America's Best Bard" . . . Jimmie Driftwood. An authority on the **LONGBOW** and other ole time instruments, he is much in demand for concerts in Colleges and Universities . . . as well as appearances on network radio and television. Best known compositions: Battle of New Orleans and Tennessee Stud. Most popular RCA VICTOR albums: The Wilderness Road and Jimmie Driftwood and Songs of Billy Yank and Johnny Reb. With wife Cleda and sons, James and Bing, he lives on a 500 acre ranch surrounded by white face cattle, horses, blackface sheep, pedigreed hogs (and according to Mrs. Driftwood) too many hound dogs.

1962-63 Grand Ole Opry Stars

NAME: CURLY FOX (Arnim Leroy Fox).

HOMETOWN: Dayton, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: November 9.

BACKGROUND: First came to the Grand Ole Opry in 1936 with wife, Miss Texas Ruby . . . one of the Opry's most popular stars. Left in 1938 to participate in "Fiddlin' Exhibitions" throughout the United States. Was never defeated and retains the title of National Champion Ole Time Fiddler. Returned to Opry from 1944 to 1948. Then went to KPRC in Houston, Texas, where for seven years he had the most popular night-time TV and radio show in the Southwest. Extremely versatile . . . he was one of the first to introduce the 'double stop' type fiddling. His inimitable styling makes his playing of **JOHNSON'S OLE GREY MULE** and **LISTEN TO THE MOCKINGBIRD** two of the Opry's most requested numbers. Records for Starday.

JIMMIE DRIFTWOOD





JOHNNY and JACK

NAME: JOHNNY WRIGHT and JACK ANGLIN.

HOMETOWNS: Mount Juliet, Tennessee (Johnny Wright).
Columbia, Tennessee (Jack Anglin).

BIRTHDAYS: May 13 (Johnny Wright).
May 13 (Jack Anglin).

BACKGROUND: Both inherited their love for music from their fathers, each teaching their sons to play the guitar; formed their team while playing in Nashville; began their professional career in 1940 when they started their personal appearance tours and later working at radio stations in North Carolina, West Virginia, Tennessee, and on the Louisiana Hayride; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1952; also featured with their Act is Johnny's wife, Kitty Wells, "The Queen of Country Music," and "The Tennessee Mountain Boys."

From 1953-1958 were recognized as the "Nation's No. 1 Country Music Duet."

FAMILIES: Johnny and wife, Kitty Wells, and their three children, also recording artists, Ruby, 21, Bobby, 19, and Carol Sue, 15, live in Madison, Tenn. Jack and wife, Louise, and their son, Terry, 7, live in Madison, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Poison Love"
"Oh Baby Mine"

INTERESTS: Has a collection of over 2,000 records; fishing (Johnny Wright).
Hunting and fishing (Jack Anglin).

Johnny Wright and Jack Anglin . . . the team of Johnny and Jack . . . certainly know what hard work is for both these personable young men were born and raised on farms right here in middle Tennessee. But success . . . and certainly no two ever deserved it more . . . has come to the boys, what with their great popularity . . . their RCA Victor recordings and their place on the Grand Ole Opry. Today, the boys travel the country in air conditioned cars, but both of them still remember a trip and a rough one made by train a number of years back. Times were hard and pay was small and when they had to go from one city to another, they only had money enough for one ticket. Soooo . . . they both got on the train and while Jack held the ticket, Johnny hid in the wash room. After the conductor came through and punched the ticket and gave Jack the stub . . . he quitely went and gave the stub to Johnny. From then on . . . for the next hundred or so miles . . . they alternated . . . holding the one ticket stub and one hiding out in the wash room when the conductor came by. They were never caught . . . and reached their destination and played the date and some months later they sent the railroad the extra fare and told what they had done. Nobody ever said anything . . . but to this day . . . both boys say that was the most "nervous" ride they ever took.



THE JORDANARES

NAMES: THE JORDANAIREs (Gordon Stoker, Hoyt Hawkins, Neal Matthews, Ray Walker).

HOMETOWNS: Gleason, Tennessee (Gordon Stoker).
Paducah, Kentucky (Hoyt Hawkins).
Nashville, Tennessee (Neal Matthews).
Centerville, Mississippi (Ray Walker).

BIRTHDAYS: August 3 (Gordon Stoker).
March 31 (Hoyt Hawkins).
October 26 (Neal Matthews).
March 16 (Ray Walker).

BACKGROUND: The quartet was organized in Springfield, Mo. in 1948, originally singing spirituals and barbershop songs; a year later it joined WSM; won on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts in 1956, the same year they opened a new field of recording, initiating a new type of vocalizing by providing a background of vocal harmonizing for leading singers; Gordon Stoker joined the group in 1949, Hoyt Hawkins in 1950, Neal Matthews in 1953, and Ray Walker in 1958; have sung with such stars as Elvis Presley, Jim Reeves, Marty Robbins, Ricky Nelson, "Tennessee" Ernie Ford, and Patti Page.

FAMILIES: All the Jordanaires are married, have families and live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Capitol Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Sugaree"
"Peace in the Valley"

INTERESTS: Gardening (Gordon Stoker).
Boating (Hoyt Hawkins).
Golf (Neal Matthews).
Interior Decorating (Ray Walker).

To most people the Jordanaires are one of the country's most versatile quartets whose voices are heard on more than 20 million records and albums each year . . . but to approximately 10,000 Elvis Presley fans in Detroit they're the four young men who ran 'interference' for their idol helping him to escape from a "we want Elvis" crazed crowd. The show was just finishing and suddenly Elvis looked out at the crowd and said: "Let's get out of here fast . . . they're coming after us." And come they did! As Gordon Stoker says: "It was as if someone had suddenly turned loose millions of bees . . . the crowd literally began to 'swarm' . . . they filled the aisle . . . climbed on the stage . . . grabbed the music . . . stands and all . . . nothing could stop them. With Elvis in front we rushed down the stairs and into a waiting car surrounded by policemen. Our buttons had all been torn off . . . our coat pockets ripped . . . our pocket handkerchiefs taken. We were pushed into the car . . . the doors slammed and locked and off we went. We were completely exhausted and just to be honest . . . downright scared. And we didn't feel any better when Elvis said: 'Man, were we lucky that time! In a crowd like that I usually always lose a coat and a shirt!'"



HANK LOCKLIN

NAME: HANK LOCKLIN.

HOMETOWN: McLellen, Florida.

BIRTHDAY: February 15.

BACKGROUND: Learned to play the guitar at seven; first appearance on WCOA in Pensacola, Fla.; in 1942 made his professional debut in Whistler, Ala.; served in the Army; after personal appearances and broadcasts joined a band and worked in Louisiana and later in Houston, Texas, at KLIT and at KRLD in Dallas, Texas; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1960; sometimes known as "The Mayor of McLellen."

FAMILY: Hank and wife, Willa, live on their ranch near McLellen, Fla. They have three children, Margaret Kent, who lives in Munson, Fla., and Maurice, 17, and Beth, 13.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Please Help Me, I'm Falling"
"Send Me the Pillow You Dream On"

INTERESTS: Has a collection of old phonographs and over 300 rare records; also collects various sorts of antiques.

How long does it take to become a star on the Grand Ole Opry? Hank Locklin would tell you: "A hundred years or more . . . why, I can't remember a time when I wanted to be anything else. When I was just a kid, listening with the rest of the folks in McLellen to the Grand Ole Opry on the only radio in town, I knew then that some day I was going to be on the Grand Ole Opry. It was many years though before I even got to Nashville. I came up on a Monday to record LET ME BE THE ONE . . . after the session, I walked down to the Old Ryman Auditorium . . . went in and stood for a moment or two in the center of the stage . . . looking out at those thousands of empty seats. And I thought . . . what a thrill it would be to sing not only to the audience there but to that great unseen one. A year later I had the privilege of doing just that . . . but only as a GUEST. In the years that followed I came back often . . . but ALWAYS as a GUEST. In 1959 . . . I was lucky and had three hit records . . . GEISHA GIRL, SEND ME THE PILLOW YOU DREAM ON and A LITTLE MORE LIKE HEAVEN . . . but still no call from the Opry! Sure, I was blue and discouraged but I never gave up hope . . . my faith was actually stronger then . . . than it was when I was a child . . . I KNEW that someday I'd be a member of the Grand Ole Opry. That day finally came in November, 1960! How long did it take? Like I said . . . a hundred years or maybe longer . . . it doesn't really matter . . . because they faded away into nothing . . . the first time the announcer said: 'And now here's GRAND OLE OPRY STAR . . . HANK LOCKLIN.'"

BACKSTAGE AT THE OPRY

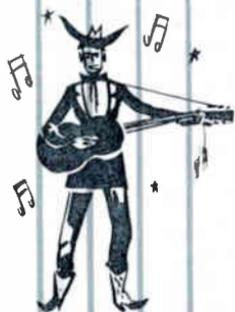


Ralph Emery, Steve Sholes, Manager RCA's West Coast Operations, and Hank Snow on "Opry Star Spotlight" during celebration of Hank Snow's 25 years with RCA Victor.

Hank Locklin, Bob Cooper, General Manager of WSM and Jimmy Wakley.



George Morgan . . . Roy Drusky, Carl Butler, Minnie Pearl and Hawkshaw Hawkins.



MARGIE BOWES



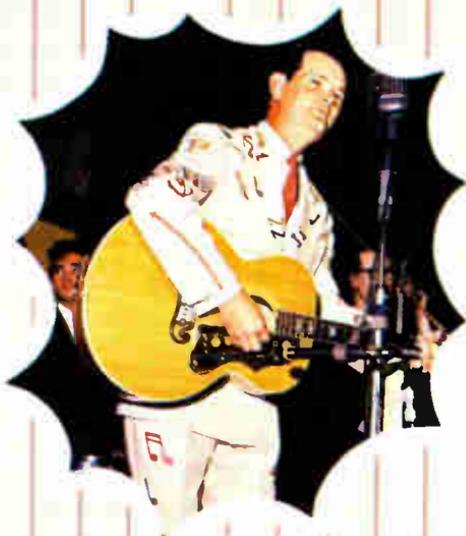
HAWKSHAW HAWKINS



OLD HICKORY SINGERS



THE CARISLES



HANK LOCKLIN



GEORGE HAMILTON, IV



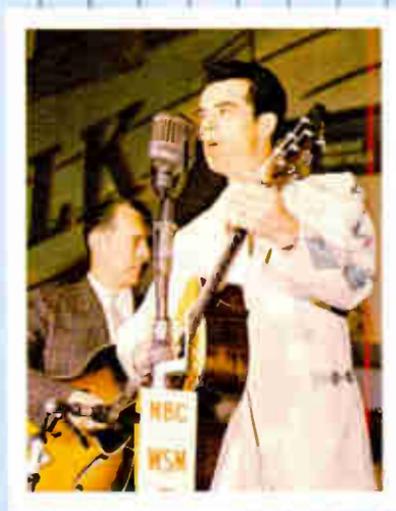
THE GLASER BROTHERS



HANK SNOW



JIMMY NEWMAN



ROY DRUSKY



ROY ACUFF



MARTY ROBBINS



ERNEST TUBB



MINNIE PEARL



JIM REEVES



RAY PRICE



BILL MONROE



JUNE CARTER



JOHNNIE & JACK



BILLY GRAMMER



BOBBY LORD



BILL ANDERSON



SKEETER DAVIS



PATSY CLINE



COWBOY COPAS



GEORGE MORGAN

**BACKSTAGE
AT THE
OPRY**



●
Marty Robbins and Mrs. Carl Butler
. . . better known as "Miss Pearl."



Roy Acuff and the Smoky Mountain
Boys 'turn the tables' and go 'out
front' to watch the Grand Ole Opry.



●
Shirley Welch and Dorothy Crowell
look on as Minnie Pearl helps String-
bean 'sign the log'!



LONZO and OSCAR

NAMES: LONZO AND OSCAR (Johnny Sullivan and Rollin Sullivan).

HOMETOWN: Edmonton, Kentucky.

BIRTHDAYS: July 7 (Lonzo).
January 9 (Oscar).

BACKGROUND: Made their professional debut on WTJS in Jackson, Tenn.; World War II interrupted their careers but afterwards they rejoined a band at WAVE in Louisville, Ky.; in 1946 Ken Marvin and Rollin formed the team of "Lonzo and Oscar," having been with Eddy Arnold on the Grand Ole Opry for some time; in 1950 Johnny replaced Ken Marvin as "Lonzo"; he and Rollin have been together ever since; since 1959 have been working as a duo without a band; specialize in country humor with satires and parodies of country musicians and songs.

FAMILIES: Johnny and wife, Mildred, and their three sons, Danny Wayne, 18, Donnie, 14, and Mike, 6, live in Goodlettsville, Tenn.; Rollin also lives in Goodlettsville and has one daughter, Linda Kay Pennick, 18, who lives in Nashville. In July, 1961, he married the former Geneva Busby.

RECORD LABEL: Starday Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "I'm My Own Grandpa"
"Country Music Time"

INTERESTS: Hunting, fishing and farming.

In show business most artists owe much to many but to Lonzo and Oscar the 'helping hand' in their career was extended by EDDY ARNOLD . . . who hired them, fired them, helped them to become stars of the Grand Ole Opry and got them their first recording contract. And it was that first record that brought Lonzo and Oscar national recognition. They went to that first recording session armed with a million tunes . . . none of which the director of the session particularly liked. In the outer office a young fellow tried to interest them in a tune called I'M MY OWN GRANDPA . . . they didn't like it . . . but the director did and said: "If you boys can get the words right . . . we'll use it." "Well," as Lonzo said, "remember this was our first record . . . and if he had told us to tattoo the words on our arms and sing the song standing on our heads . . . we'd have done it! We ran thru the song once . . . then a second time . . . and the director said that's it." Since that time it has been recorded on 12 labels . . . and has become one of Country Music's biggest hits. "It's still one of our most requested numbers," says Oscar . . . "but you know Lonzo and I always feel a little guilty singing it. You see, we thought it was a pretty lousy tune . . . fact about the matter . . . that day we recorded it, the fellow who wrote it offered to sell it to us for \$500 . . . and you know what we said: "Good Buddy . . . we wouldn't give you 25 cents for that one . . . it never will be a hit!"



BOBBY LORD

NAME: BOBBY LORD.

HOMETOWN: Tampa, Florida.

BIRTHDAY: January 6.

BACKGROUND: In high school won, for three years in a row, first place in the annual high school talent show; while attending for two years the University of Tampa had his own television show, "Bobby Lord's Homefolks"; winning an amateur contest led him to guest appearance on Paul Whiteman's television show; joined "Jubilee U. S. A." after leaving college in 1954; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1960; sometimes known as "Hawkeye" after one of his hit songs.

FAMILY: Bobby and wife, Mozelle, and their two children, Robbie, 3, and Sarah, five months, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Without Your Love"
"When the Snow Falls"

INTERESTS: Painting and drawing; fishing and golf.

Whether he likes it or not . . . one of the things a star must learn to become accustomed to is the way a master of ceremonies introduces him! Anything's liable to happen. Take, for instance, the time the emcee said: "And ladies and gentlemen . . . here's country music's greatest star . . . a man who's sold millions of records . . . appeared in movies . . . television . . . who's face and name is as familiar as your very own. Ladies and gentlemen here's (pause) . . . here's (longer pause)." He then turned to the star and said: "Just what is your name!" Of course, it's not always that bad but every once in a while after a particularly long introduction the artist might think . . . "Why don't they introduce me like they do the President of the United States and just say . . . ladies and gentlemen . . . Grand Ole Opry Star . . . Joe Doakes!" Bobby Lord remembers a time not too long ago when he wasn't quite sure how he would be introduced. He had reason to be worried, too . . . because for a week the papers had been carrying this announcement: "DIRECT from network television and radio . . . Columbia recording artist . . . BABY LARD!" Fortunately, Bobby's fans . . . knew better and overflowed the auditorium!



THE LOUVIN BROTHERS

NAMES: CHARLIE LOUVIN and IRA LOUVIN.

HOMETOWN: Henegar, Alabama.

BIRTHDAYS: July 7 (Charlie Louvin).
April 21 (Ira Louvin).

BACKGROUND: Made their initial break into show business by winning on a talent show in Chattanooga, Tenn.; starred on "Mid-Day Merry-Go-Round" on WNOX in Knoxville, Tenn.; continued farming along with their singing; Army service during World War II temporarily interrupted their career; later worked in a post office and sang in Memphis, Tenn., then in Birmingham, Ala.; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1955.

Have eighteen national awards, including ones for being the "No. 1 Sacred Group," 1951-1956. Others: "Favorite Country and Western Small Vocal Group," 1958 and 1959, "Most Programmed Vocal Group," 1956 and 1957; also have eight awards for songwriting.

FAMILIES: Charlie and wife, Betty, and their three sons, Charlie, Jr., 7, Ken, 4, and Glenn, six months, live in Fairview, Tenn. Ira and wife, Fay, and their daughter Kathy, 4, live in Madison, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Capitol Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "When I Stop Dreaming"
"I Don't Believe You've Met My Baby"

INTERESTS: Hunting and fishing (Charlie Louvin).
Carving (Ira Louvin).

It takes a lot to scare Ira and Charlie Louvin because these two boys have served their hitch in the service and in addition have performed before some of the biggest and toughest audiences in the world . . . and always left them wanting more. But one time they were both plenty scared and it was all the result of a practical joke. They'd been over to Roy Acuff's home on Old Hickory Lake and while there had seen some special "wild life department" ducks swimming around in the water. Charlie remarked that he'd like to have one and was told by Shot Jackson, one of Roy's musicians, that these particular ducks were banded and protected by the government and even to molest one carried a fine of a thousand dollars and a year in jail. Then, unknown to Charlie and Ira, as they were leaving Shot hid one of the ducks in the trunk of their car. Shot then called a friend of his, a State Trooper, told him of the gag and the Trooper went after Louvin's car. He stopped it . . . insisted that they had stolen a piece of government property and demanded to search the car. When he did . . . there to Ira and Charlie's amazement . . . was the duck, and try as they would they couldn't seem to convince the trooper of their innocence. At that moment Shot drove up and everybody had a big laugh. But to this day . . . Ira and Charlie still keep a wary eye on Shot.



BILL MONROE

NAME: BILL MONROE.

HOMETOWN: Rosine, Kentucky.

BIRTHDAY: September 13.

BACKGROUND: As a young boy was a church vocalist; has continued to sing religious and gospel songs during his professional career; learned to play the fiddle from his Uncle Pen; started playing an early form of the mandolin; in 1927 formed a band with two of his brothers and played throughout several states; made first radio appearance in 1930 and in 1938 left his brothers' band and formed the "Bluegrass Boys"; the next year joined the Grand Ole Opry; considered one of the first musicians to play bluegrass music; is known as the "King of Bluegrass Music."

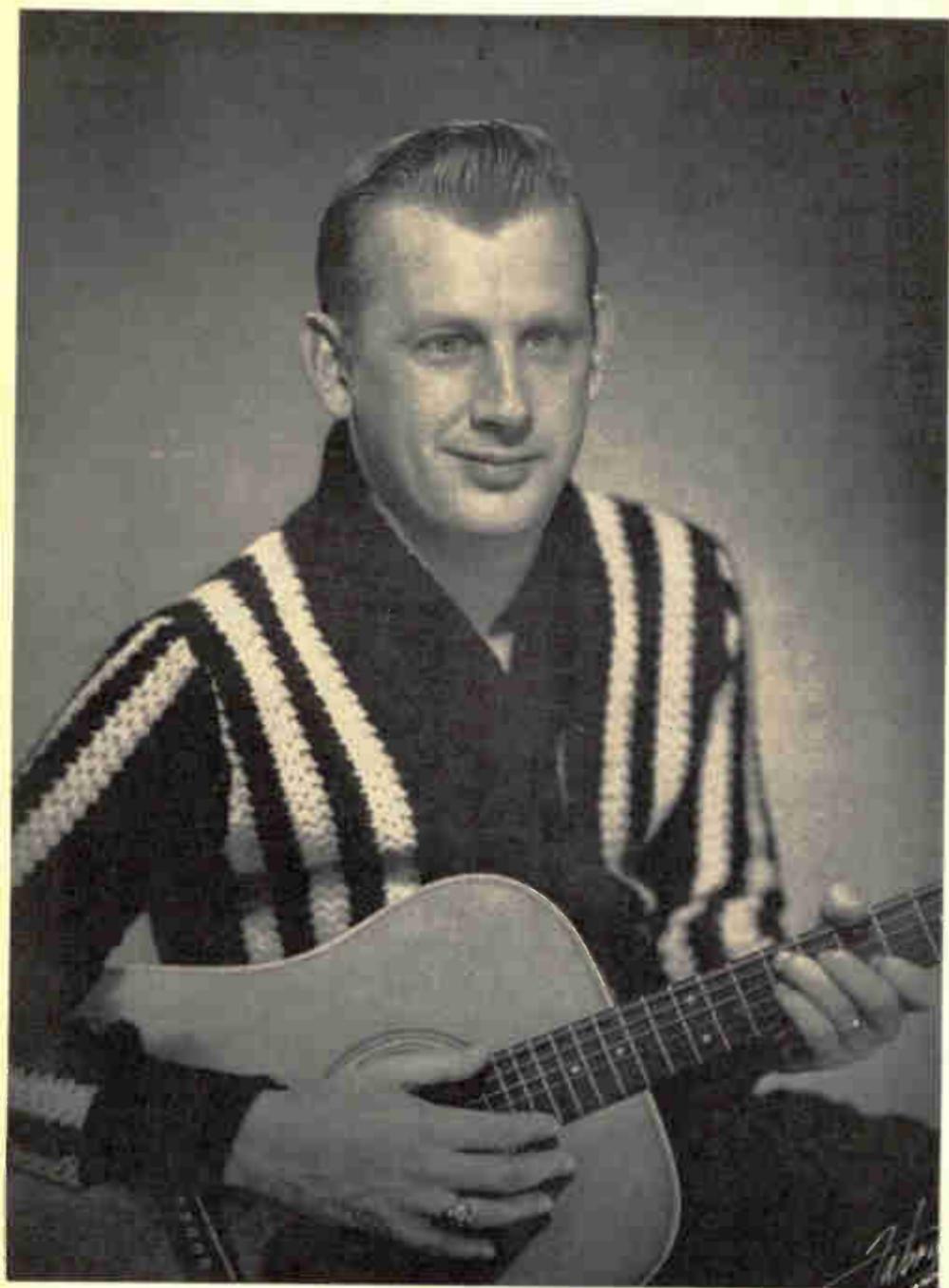
FAMILY: Bill lives in Nashville; his two children, Melissa, 24, and William, 20, also live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Mule Skinner's Blues"
"Blue Moon of Kentucky"

INTERESTS: Owns an amusement park in Bean Blossom, Ind., where Grand Ole Opry stars appear; maintains farms near Nashville and owns a pack of trained fox hounds.

"Uncle Pen" was Bill Monroe's idol. Not only was he a 'real' uncle (his mother's brother) who lived close by but, and this was the most important of all, he was the finest fiddle player in the country. He had a million and one tunes in his head and he was ready to play them any time he could get anyone to listen to them. To Bill Monroe and his five brothers and two sisters it didn't matter how hard or how long you worked on the farm during the day as long as you knew Uncle Pen would be dropping by in the evening to fiddle to the accompaniment of crickets and hoot owls. It was Uncle Pen who taught Bill to pick a guitar—to play a fiddle and the 'tater' mandolin. And it was from Uncle Pen that he learned the tunes that would someday become the ground roots of Bluegrass Music. Between chores, Bill practiced diligently on the guitar hoping someday to be good enough to 'back up' Uncle Pen's flying bow and fingers. The day finally came and from then on, as soon as the sun went down, Bill would throw a feed sack on the horse, put his guitar in a grass sack and Uncle Pen, his fiddle in a case, and away they'd go riding 'double.' They were quite a pair and by far the most popular 'pickers' in the county, in constant demand for square dances, corn huskings and "get-togethers." They'd play all night for two, three and sometimes as much as five dollars . . . but no matter what it was . . . Uncle Pen always gave half of it to Bill! Many years have passed since then but the memories of those days and Bill's 'Idol' will live on forever in a number written by Bill and appropriately titled **UNCLE PEN!**



GEORGE MORGAN

NAME: GEORGE MORGAN.

HOMETOWN: Waverly, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: June 28.

BACKGROUND: Learned to play the guitar at eleven; sang over WAKR in Akron, Ohio, and then later worked at WWST in Wooster, Ohio, and WWVA in Wheeling, West Va.; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1948; his "Candy Kisses," which he wrote, has sold over two million copies and has been recorded by twenty-six different artists; his group, "The Candy Kids," back him on his personal appearances and recordings.

FAMILY: George and wife, Anna, and their five children, Candy Kay, 11, Bethany, 9, Liana, 8, Marty, 7, and Loretta, 3, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Candy Kisses"
"Almost"

INTERESTS: Is co-owner with his brother, Bill, of Morgan-Shelley Music Publishers.

George Morgan writes:

"My first night at the Grand Ole Opry had its trying moments. I had never seen the Ryman Auditorium and about an hour before I was scheduled to make my appearance, I left my downtown room to find the place. After about twenty minutes of walking, I finally decided I was lost. I looked around and saw two fellows with their backs toward me, talking to a parking lot attendant. Walking up to them, I said, 'Pardon me, gentlemen, but would you please tell me where the Grand Ole Opry is?' They both turned around and I recognized Eddy Arnold and Gabe Tucker. Eddy, whom I had met the week before, thought I was joking and said, 'My name is Gene Autry and this is Hoot Gibson.' So we stood there about ten minutes swapping stories but my watch told me time was running out . . . so I said, 'Look, Eddy, I'm not kidding. I'm really lost, where is the Ryman Auditorium?' At this Eddy, who loves a good laugh, practically went into hysterics and actually got down on that parking lot dirt, rolled over with laughter. Finally he caught his breath and said 'Gabe, here's a guy who has a job on the biggest country show there is and can't even find the place he's supposed to work in.' Then he took me by the arm and pointing just across the street, said: 'There it is, you're almost in the back door right now!' Sure enough, we were standing on 4th Avenue just behind the Old Ryman! And that's the way I found the greatest show on earth—the Grand Ole Opry!"



JIMMY NEWMAN

NAME: JIMMY NEWMAN.

HOMETOWN: Big Mamou, Louisiana

BIRTHDAY: August 29.

BACKGROUND: Entered show business in 1946 with a band in Ville Platte, La.; later developed his own television show on KPLC-TV in Lake Charles, La., before joining the "Louisiana Hayride"; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1956; also composes, recording about one-fourth of his own compositions; coming from a Cajun background, he speaks the language fluently and occasionally sings and records Cajun songs.

FAMILY: Jimmy and wife, Mae, and their son, Gary, 12, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Fallen Star"
"Cry, Cry Darling"

INTERESTS: Golf.

Big Mamou, Louisiana, may be a long way from Nashville, Tennessee, but it's just a hop, skip and a jump compared to Jimmy Newman's great "lost Northwest tour." It all started harmlessly enough. This was just another tour. In fact, Jimmy was looking forward to it because he and the band would be traveling with Jean Shepard and Hawkshaw Hawkins. And to facilitate matters they'd all be riding in Hawk's big bus. Everything went according to plans the first couple of days. Then things began to happen. First the bus seemed to literally fall to pieces. The battery went dead in Hutcheson, Kansas; they blew a gasket in Emporia and the transmission blew out in Holly, Colorado, and every time they passed over a gravel they had another blowout. Then the bus started catching on fire, little ones of course, just large enough to send everyone running for cover in case it blew up. Their most frightening experience occurred in Oregon when an avalanche missed them by inches. Their last show was in Reno, Nevada. They were twenty miles outside of the city and as Hawk said, "\$2,200 poorer," and it happened. The engine once again caught fire and turned into a junior Vesuvius. Hawk, who by this time, was at his wits end . . . said, "LET HER BURN." So Jimmy and the band started emptying the bus of all personal belongings. Then just as the last load was carried off of the bus, the fire went out. It seems that on this bus the radiator was above the engine and when the engine caught fire it burnt the water hose thus extinguishing the fire! The story does have a delayed happy ending—when they reached home, Hawk JUNKED the bus.



MINNIE PEARL

NAME: MINNIE PEARL (Ophelia Colley Cannon).

HOMETOWN: Centerville, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: October 25.

BACKGROUND: Born and grew up in Centerville, Tenn. (which is three miles from Grinder's Switch), and attended Ward-Belmont College in Nashville where she learned stage technique; later taught school and directed amateur plays and talent shows for school and communities throughout the South; gradually created the role of "Minnie Pearl" through her experiences of traveling in rural areas; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1940.

FAMILY: Minnie Pearl and husband, Henry Cannon, who is her business manager and also flies her on personal appearances, live in Brentwood, Tenn.

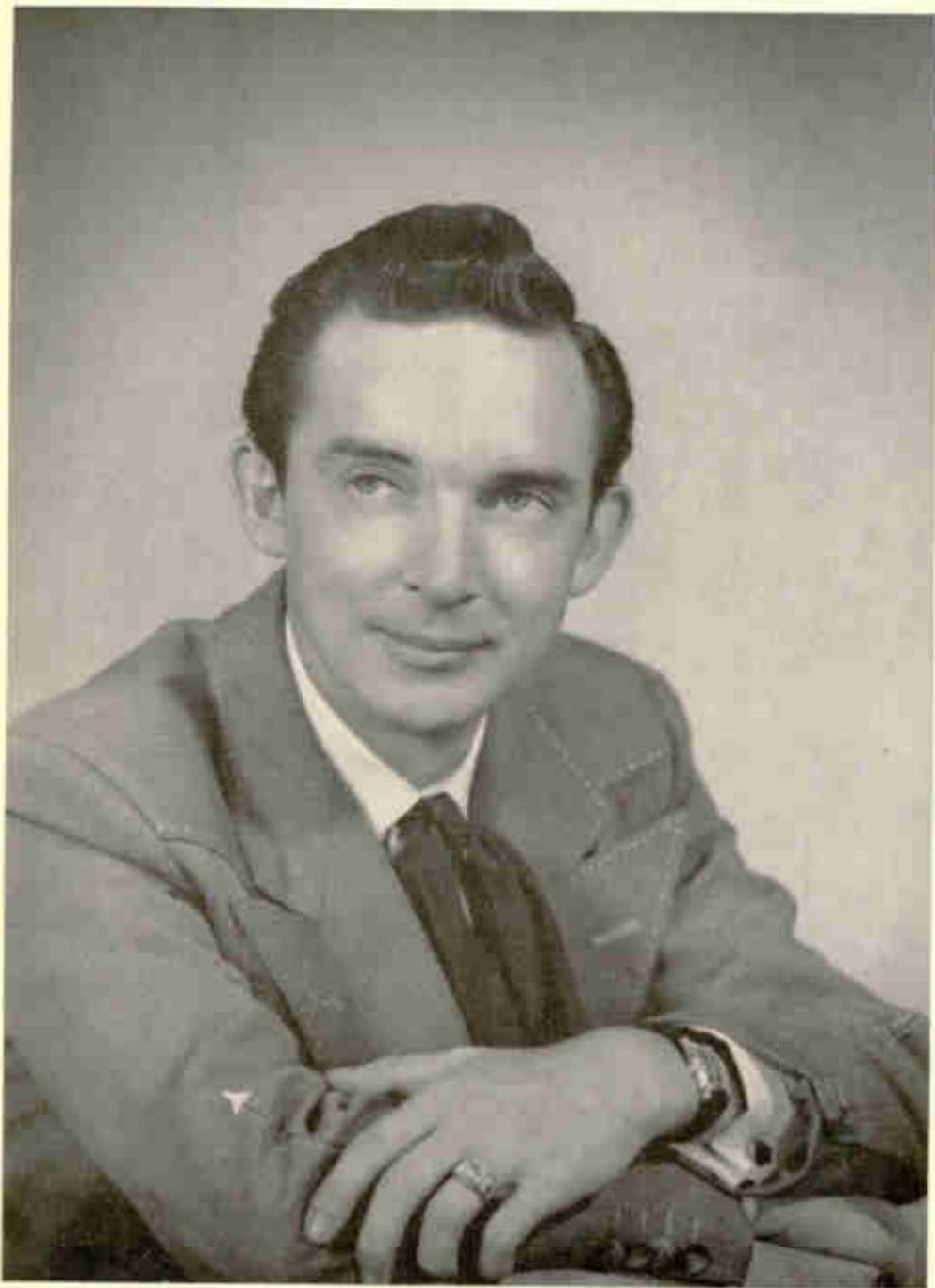
RECORD LABEL: Everest Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORD: "Minnie Pearl" (album)

INTERESTS: Is very active in church and social welfare work.

The Gossip of Grinder's Switch . . . COUSIN MINNIE PEARL, writes:

"I guess the most interesting, exciting, amusing incident in my life occurred on May 1, 1957. That was the day I was hoodwinked into going to Hollywood as the subject of Ralph Edwards' 'This Is Your Life.' Never have I been more completely surprised and stunned. How my husband and family kept the secret from me is a story too long to repeat here. But they did it and I went unsuspectingly out to Hollywood, supposedly to make some television film clips to call attention to the fact that our station WSM had been with NBC for 30 years. Imagine my shock and dismay to be sitting unconcernedly in the makeup room at NBC to have my mother's voice come through a concealed loud speaker, followed by the familiar theme song and Ralph Edwards with his familiar 'SARAH OPHELIA COLLEY CANNON . . . THIS IS YOUR LIFE.' Then, followed thirty minutes of a dream life procession of relatives and friends as my life was relived. There were tears at first of shock and emotion but then followed laughter and happy memories. There's never been another night like that for Minnie Pearl!"



RAY PRICE

NAME: RAY PRICE.

HOMETOWN: Perryville, Texas.

BIRTHDAY: January 12.

BACKGROUND: Began playing the guitar at nine; attended North Texas State College during which time he played in night clubs; after service in the Marines organized a band; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1952; of Cherokee Indian descent, he uses the Indian motif in his stage dress and in that of his band, "The Cherokee Cowboys"; known as "The Cherokee Cowboy."

In nine years twenty-five of his records have appeared on the lists of the Top Ten Hits; his "Crazy Arms" led all country music trade charts in 1956; in 1959 was named "Favorite Country and Western Male Vocalist"; in the same year his "Heartaches By the Number" was the leading country and western record.

FAMILY: Ray and wife, Linda, and their son, Clifton Ray, 3, live in Hendersonville, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Crazy Arms"
"Heartaches By the Number"

INTERESTS: Is an expert flycaster and marksman; collects antique guns and has a kennel of bird dogs; hunts and fishes.

When you mention the name "Ray Price" you need go no further for everybody knows him as one of the Grand Ole Opry "greats." His "Crazy Arms" was picked as tops by all three recording magazines . . . and his "Heartaches By the Number" was picked as the favorite Country and Western single. But Ray is really known to a few friends and intimates for much besides his singing. He has three and a half years towards a veterinary medicine degree and is always called on for advice when pets are "off their feed." Ray is a skilled hunter and fisherman and it's surprising how well he can "fix" a broken shotgun or a high powered rifle. But Ray's greatest accomplishment of the moment is a special boat he designed from start to finish. Naturally, it's a sportsman craft for fishing and hunting and at first glance, it looks pretty much like any other boat. But to the skilled eye . . . there's lots of difference. The clean sweep of line, the narrow bow, the look of built-in stability tells of its excellence. And to everybody's surprise, this boat has speed with a capital S. As a matter of fact, on its trial run . . . it did better than fifty miles an hour . . . powered with a comparatively small motor. So . . . if Ray ever gets tired of singing, which we hope he never does . . . he could go into boat building . . . and who knows . . . become as famous in that line as he has in his musical career.



JIM REEVES

NAME: JIM REEVES.

HOMETOWN: Panola Co., Texas.

BIRTHDAY: August 20.

BACKGROUND: As a boy learned to play the guitar; attended the University of Texas and later was a pitcher with the St. Louis Cardinals farm system before an injury forced him to quit; worked as a radio announcer and also sang; in 1953 his "Mexican Joe" became the top seller in country and western music; a year later his "Bimbo" did equally as well; starred on the "Louisiana Hayride"; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1955.

In 1960 won twelve different awards, among them are: "Favorite Country and Western Male Vocalist," "Most Programmed Country and Western Male Singer"; "He'll Have to Go" (along with "El Paso") was the "Most Programmed Record."

FAMILY: Jim and wife, Mary, live in Madison, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "He'll Have to Go"
"Four Walls"

INTERESTS: Owns and operates Open Road Music, Inc., and Tuckahoe Music, Inc.; has a collection of antique automobiles and guns; owns two radio stations; golf.

How do you really learn to know a man? Through his friends and only through them. Take Jim Reeves, for instance, as one of his friends said: "Jim is too modest to tell of the many things he does for people, like the time he and Mary were on their vacation and drove 150 miles out of their way to visit a small boy confined to a hospital who had expressed the desire to become a country singer when he grew up." And it took a friend to tell us of the time when Jim and Mickey Mantle opened a bowling alley in Henderson, Texas. Before the opening the 'boys' were having the usual 'bull session' sharing experiences, swapping jokes and since all the doors and windows were closed, were singing some of Mickey's favorite tunes. After the third or fourth song, Jim said, "Mickey, you know something, you're a fair country singer." To this Mickey replied: "Well, I can remember a time when you were a pretty fair country pitcher!" "What do you mean FAIR?" Jim asked. "Why if I were pitching to you, I would toss only three balls, the first would be so and so, the second so and so and the last so and so." Mickey looked up with amazement and said: "That's my weakness all right . . . now how many of your records am I going to have to buy to keep you from telling it?"



MARTY ROBBINS

NAME: MARTY ROBBINS.

HOMETOWN: Glendale, Arizona.

BIRTHDAY: September 26.

BACKGROUND: Professional career started in 1946 after discharge from the Navy; worked at a variety of jobs and then joined a road show and toured the western states; sang and played over radio stations in Mesa, Ariz., and Phoenix, Ariz., during which time he organized his own band; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1953.

In 1957 was judged the "Most Programmed Country and Western Artist" and the "Favorite Country and Western Male Artist"; in the same year his "Singing the Blues" led all country music trade charts; in 1960 his "El Paso" (along with "He'll Have to Go") was "The Most Programmed Record"; has written more than 120 songs.

FAMILY: Marty and wife, Marizona, and their two children, Ronnie and Janet, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "White Sport Coat and Pink Carnation"
"Don't Worry"

INTERESTS: Owns two music publishing companies, Marty's Music and Marizona Music; takes an active interest in racing "micro-midget" cars and owns a track near Smyrna, Tenn.

If Marty Robbins were asked "are songwriters born or made" he no doubt would say in a loud voice—BORN. In fact, he'd probably go further and say, "The same applies to guitar players." Because, you see, with Marty guitar playing and songwriting 'just happened.' At 13, both were pretty far removed from Marty's mind. That was the year he and a friend hired out to help with some farming. They were to "batch" . . . Marty would cook supper and drive the tractor from 4 to 12. His friend would prepare lunch and drive from 6 to 12. The friend had brought along his guitar and he showed Marty the basic chords . . . so . . . if he felt like it . . . he could play in his 'off hours.' Marty wasn't too interested until one day when he came back from the field, hot, tired and hungry, and found that his friend hadn't even started lunch. The Robbins' temper flared, he grabbed the guitar and literally started 'beating' out the chords. Suddenly, to his surprise he realized that he had conquered the difficult job of changing chords fast. He was actually playing the guitar. His songwriting came about just as unexpectedly. He was about fourteen and had just discovered GIRLS and fell in love on the average of once a week. And then along came a pretty little Miss and Marty thought this is the real thing. It was, for a month. Then she jilted him for a 'soda clerk.' Naturally, Marty was heartbroken. So he sat down and wrote a song. His first. We wish we could say that this was SINGING THE BLUES or WHITE SPORT COAT or even EL PASO but we can't. In fact, nobody seems to be able to remember the name of the song or the lyrics and even worse, Marty can't even remember the name of the girl!



JEAN SHEPARD

NAME: JEAN SHEPARD.

HOMETOWN: Paul's Valley, Oklahoma.

BIRTHDAY: November 21.

BACKGROUND: As a high school student in California she organized and led her own band, "The Melody Ranch Girls," and also played the bass fiddle, drums and sang; Hank Thompson was instrumental in helping her get a record contract; starred on "Jubilee U. S. A."; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1955.

In 1953 she was voted the "Most Promising Female Country Music Singer."

FAMILY: Jean and husband, Grand Ole Opry star Hawkshaw Hawkins, live in Nashville, Tennessee.

RECORD LABEL: Capitol Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "A Dear John Letter" (With Ferlin Husky)
"Satisfied Mind"

INTERESTS: Is an expert horsewoman; trains bird dogs.

One of the strangest and most heartwarming incidents in lovely Jean Shepard's life occurred when she was on tour in Canada with husband Hawkshaw Hawkins and a group of Opry stars. As everyone knows, Hawk is an avid collector of guns and while in Canada a fan presented Hawk with a rare German-made pistol. Hawk was delighted and accepted with thanks . . . placing the gun in the glove compartment of the car in which he and Jean were riding. When they reached the border, they naturally were stopped and among the many questions were asked if they had any undeclared guns. Proudly, Hawk showed his new gun and to his surprise and that of Jean, they were placed in custody at the border station until they could post a large cash bond. And here is the heartwarming part of the story. A total stranger by the name of Hank Williams, NOT the Hank Williams of Opry fame, but a great admirer of country music and a fan of Jean's and Hawk's, stepped up and secured their release. As Jean tells it, "I was never so grateful to anyone in all my life as I was to that man, not because I had visions of being held there at the border for days on end till Hawk could prove his story about the gun, but because here was a stranger with love enough in his heart, not for us, but for COUNTRY MUSIC, to risk a great sum of money. And it proved again what I have always known—that country music fans are the greatest people in the world."



HANK SNOW

NAME: HANK SNOW (Clarence Eugene Snow).

HOMETOWN: Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

BIRTHDAY: May 9.

BACKGROUND: At twelve learned to play the harmonica and guitar; like Ernest Tubb, was very much influenced by Jimmie Rodgers and after various jobs in Halifax, worked at CHNS; gave and took guitar lessons simultaneously; later had his own radio show; in 1946 toured Canada and the United States; later moved to Texas; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1950; known as "The Singing Ranger."

For the past ten years has been voted the top country singer in Canada; selected as one of the "All-Time Greats of Country Music"; in 1959 was voted the "Most Popular Country Music Male Artist"; has written seventy-five percent of the songs he has recorded; has the longest tenure of any star under contract with RCA-Victor Records, twenty-five years.

FAMILY: Hank and Wife, Min, live on their ranch in Madison, Tenn. Their son, the Rev. Jimmie Snow, is a traveling evangelist for the Assembly of God church and is married to Carolee Cooper, daughter of Grand Ole Opry stars Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "I'm Movin' On"
"With This Ring I Thee Wed"

INTERESTS: Owns the Hank Snow Music Center and the Silver Star Music Company in Nashville and the Hank Snow Music Publishing Company in New York; owns two radio stations.

In his 25 years as an exclusive RCA-Victor Recording artist . . . Hank Snow has recorded over 25 albums and an untold number of single records. His great success as a recording star has made possible many things—his beautiful Rainbow Ranch, his Music Center, Publishing Company and the Folkways Broadcasting Company. There was a time though when Hank doubted if he would ever be a recording artist, let alone a successful one. In the early days jobs were scarce, there were times when there was barely enough food in the house and his only child was born in a charity ward of the Salvation Army Hospital. But Hank and Mrs. Hank ("the sweetest and most thoughtful girl in the whole wide world, my personal A & R chief") never became discouraged, not even when the royalty statements for that first year as an RCA recording artist were only \$8.91 . . . \$3.09 . . . \$1.68 and \$1.65—a total of \$15.33 for the entire year. As Hank says, "It's been a long hard struggle but if it be the wish of the one who has made it possible, the Great Almighty, I hope to be able to carry on for many, many years to come. With his help, we'll just keep MOVIN' ON!



STRINGBEAN

NAME: STRINGBEAN (Dave Akeman).

HOMETOWN: Annville, Kentucky.

BIRTHDAY: June 17.

BACKGROUND: At thirteen he and a friend made a banjo and learned to play it; farmed with his father and also played for country music gatherings; first entertainment experience was at WLAP in Lexington, Ky.; for three years was with Charley Monroe and his "Kentucky Partners" over WBIG in Greensboro, N. C.; starred on "Jubilee U. S. A."; joined the Grand Ole Opry as a member of Bill Monroe's "Bluegrass Boys" in 1942; later toured for three years with Lew Childre as part of a comedy act.

FAMILY: Stringbean and wife, Estelle, live on a farm near Goodlettsville, Tenn.

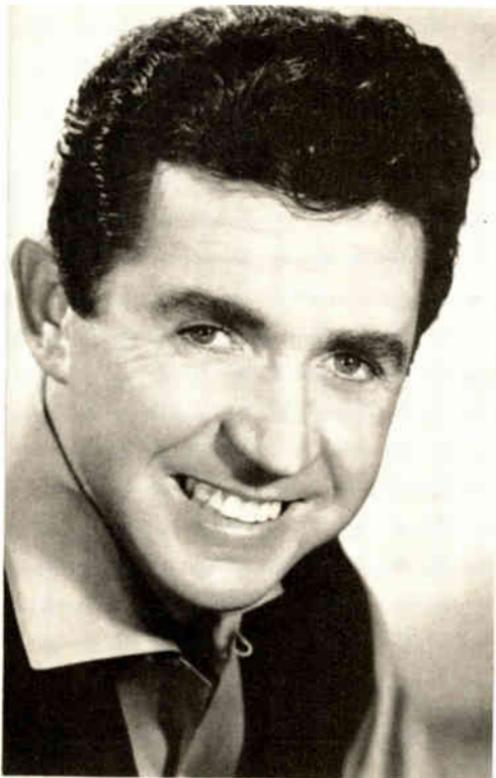
RECORD LABEL: Starday Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Barn Yard Banjo Picking"
"Twenty Cent Cotton and Ninety Cent Meat"

INTERESTS: Fishing, hunting, baseball.

Stringbean, the man with the short-waisted pants and the long shirt, is really Dave Akeman in real life and he and his lovely wife, Estelle, live on a small farm not far outside of Nashville. This, Dave says, gives him a chance to keep his hand in at farming but doesn't interfere at all with his banjo pickin' or hunting and fishing and you may take it from us, Dave's skill at playing the five-string banjo and singing his own style of songs is only exceeded by his deadly aim with a shotgun or his ability to place a 'plug' just where the big bass are waiting. A sure shot, String likes to hunt and fish alone and thereby hangs a story. Once he was persuaded to go on a deer hunt with a group of other entertainers, among them a true 'green horn' who shall be nameless. This novice carried a highpowered rifle and he shot at anything that moved. String cautioned him and then for safety sake moved as far away from this beginner as possible. Hours later, the 'green horn' came upon String sitting on a stump smoking his pipe. "String" . . . the man asked . . . "are all the boys out of the woods yet?" "Yep," said String, "they're all safe." "Praise be," said the other one. "Then I've shot a deer." And sure enough, he had. But String vowed then and there to hunt by himself thereafter. As String puts it, "A man who plays the five-string banjo has got it made. It never interferes with any of the pleasures in his life."

1962-63 Grand Ole Opry Stars



SONNY JAMES

NAME: LORETTA LYNN.

HOMETOWN: Van Lear, Kentucky

BIRTHDAY: April 14.

BACKGROUND: This happy young Miss joined the Opry September 25th. Although a native of Kentucky, Loretta started her singing career in Custer, Washington where she headed her own band. She came to Nashville on a promotional tour for her first record "I'M A HONKY TONK GIRL" and made a guest appearance on the Grand Ole Opry. The listener response was overwhelming . . . so much so that Ott Devine, Manager of the Grand Ole Opry, kept a watchful eye on the young lady and within a short time invited her to become a member of the Opry. One of Decca's brightest stars, she is best known for her records of SUCCESS, I WALKED AWAY FROM THE WRECK and THE OTHER WOMAN.

1962-63 Grand Ole Opry Stars

NAME: SONNY JAMES (Jimmie Loden).

HOMETOWN: Hackleburg, Alabama.

BIRTHDAY: May 1.

BACKGROUND: "The Southern Gentleman" Sonny James has been 'on stage' the better part of his life. As a member of a family unit, he was featured on radio stations throughout the South, but it wasn't until after high school graduation and a period of military service that he became nationally known. It was then that a series of very popular recordings including YOUNG LOVE projected him into a worldwide spotlight. An extremely versatile recording artist . . . his LEGEND OF THE BROWN MOUNTAIN LIGHT and A MILE AND A QUARTER have made him one of the most popular entertainers in the folk and country music field. He and his charming wife, Dorris, divide their time between Nashville and Hackleburg.

LORETTA LYNN





ERNEST TUBB

NAME: ERNEST TUBB.

HOMETOWN: Crisp, Texas.

BIRTHDAY: February 9.

BACKGROUND: As a child sang for square dances; like Hank Snow, was very much influenced by Jimmie Rodgers and also imitated his yodeling style of singing; first radio appearance was at KONO in San Antonio, Texas, at nineteen; continued to work at various jobs and sang throughout Texas; entered radio professionally at KGKO in Ft. Worth, Texas, in 1941; shortly afterwards his recording of "I'm Walking the Floor Over You" established his fame; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1942; has written over 100 songs; his band, "The Texas Troubadours," backed him on his personal appearances; known as "The Texas Troubadour."

Has been selected as one of the "All-Time Greats of Country Music."

FAMILY: Ernest and wife, Olene, and their five children, Erlene, 10, Gayle, 9, Ernest, Jr., 4, Larry Dean, 3, and Karen Delene, 1, live in Nashville. Ernest also has two other children, Grand Ole Opry star, Justin Tubb, 26, and Elaine, 21.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "I'm Walking the Floor Over You"
"Rainbow at Midnight"

INTERESTS: Owns and operates the Ernest Tubb Record Shop in Nashville, a center for country and western music and artists; through this enterprise helps promote and encourage young aspiring performers; golf and horseback riding.

Ernest Tubb, one of the Grand Ole Opry GREATS, is mentioned by just about all the Opry youngsters as "a guy who helped me." Perhaps this great desire to help young artists stems from the fact that he, too, needed help as a young man and that help came from the widow of his idol, the "Singing Brakeman," Jimmie Rodgers. At the time, everyone except Mrs. Rodgers thought Ernest was a carbon copy of Jimmie. She did think though that "he had a feeling in his voice." "And Jimmie always thought that was the most important thing of all. I'd like to do what I can to help you." And help him she did. She got Ernest his first recording contract and a theater tour by promising to come along and introduce him from the stage. And it's that first appearance that Ernest will never forget. The stage was a small six foot square platform, a foot and a half high, surrounded by foot and spot lights which completely blinded him and the stage was so small that he could hardly move. He was using Jimmie's famous guitar and he was scared to death. At the end of his numbers, bowing to the audience's applause, he started backing off the platform feeling his way with his right foot! The audience sensing that something was wrong stopped their applause just as Ernest's right foot went off the platform and he went down on his knees. Fortunately, only his pride was hurt because he fell holding Jimmie Rodgers' famous guitar high over his head!

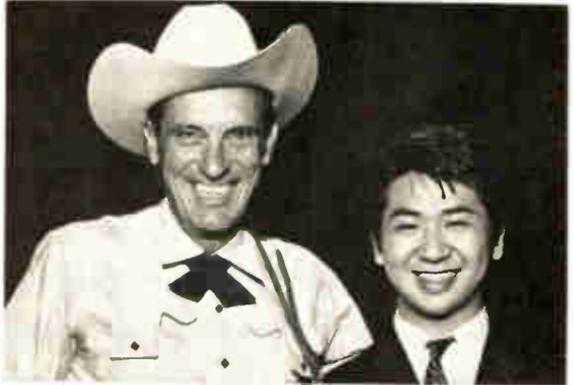
**BACKSTAGE
AT THE
OPRY**



Tennessee Ernie Ford
comes 'HOME'!



Miss Del Wood



Ernest Tubb and Michio Higashi, Japanese country music fan who came to the United States just to see the Grand Ole Opry.



Stonewall Jackson, Minnie Pearl and Ott Devine, Opry Manager, are on hand when Nashville Councilwoman Frances Doyle tells the Grand Ole Opry audience that the name of the street on which the Ryman stands has been renamed OPRY PLACE!



DEL WOOD



THE LOUVIN BROTHERS



JUSTIN TUBB



WILMA LEE & STONEY COOPER



KITTY WELLS



GRANDPA JONES



THE JORDANAIREs

JEAN SHEPARD



THE WIBURN BROTHERS



STONEWALL JACKSON



FLATT & SCRUGGS



CHET ATKINS



FERLIN HUSKY

Opry at Carnegie Hall



Grand Ole Opry goes to New York's Carnegie Hall and the papers proclaimed: "OPRY AT CARNEGIE IS SELLOUT TRIUMPH". Picture was taken as Marty Robbins sang to the SRO audience.

On Every Highway Leading Into Nashville



For the first time in the Opry's history signs on all major highways will call attention to the fact that Nashville is the HOME OF THE GRAND OLE OPRY. In making the presentation to Ott Devine and the Opry audience Mayor Ben West said that the Opry was Nashville's #1 tourist attraction.

1962-63 Grand Ole Opry Stars

NAME: LEROY VAN DYKE.

HOMETOWN: Sedalia, Missouri.

BIRTHDAY: October 4th.

BACKGROUND: This handsome magnetic MERCURY recording star has all the attributes of a great artist. A graduate of the University of Missouri and a veteran of the Korean conflict, his first record AUCTIONEER not only established him as a singer and composer but paved the way for future success. He has entertained America from coast to coast via network radio, television and personal appearances. All of his records such as BIG MAN IN A BIG HOUSE and BLACK CLOUD have met with great success and his WALK ON BY was voted the top recording of 1962. With wife, Sue, and young son, Ray, he now makes his home in Music City, USA. Should Leroy ever tire of making hit records, he can always return to his first love 'auctioneering'!



MARION WORTH

1962-63 Grand Ole Opry Stars

LEROY VAN DYKE



NAME: MARION WORTH (Mary Ann Wilson).

HOMETOWN: Birmingham, Alabama.

BIRTHDAY: July 4th (at 4 o'clock).

BACKGROUND: Began professional career by singing duets with her sister in Birmingham. As a single act was featured vocalist with Happy Wilson and his Golden River Boys on WAPI and WAPI-TV. Although she started song writing as a hobby, her compositions have won numerous awards. Her first record ARE YOU WILLING, WILLIE was her own number, as was THAT'S MY KIND OF LOVE. In 1960 she signed a recording contract with COLUMBIA and as Marion says: "Suddenly everything was all sunshine and roses." Releases of importance . . . GO ON HOME and SHAKE ME I RATTLE. A petite, green eyed, five foot two inch blonde that tips the scales at 105 pounds . . . Marion is an avid reader and when time permits, pursues her favorite subject . . . world history.

1962-63 Grand Ole Opry Stars



NAME: CARTER FAMILY.

Mother Maybelle (Carter), Anita (Davis), Helen (Jones), June (Nix).

HOMETOWN: Maces Springs, Virginia.

BIRTHDAYS: Maybelle (May 10th), Anita (March 31st), Helen (September 12th), June (June 23rd).

BACKGROUND: Offspring from the original Carter Family . . . here is perhaps the most versatile group in radio and television today . . . Mother and three daughters are all artists in their own right. As a family they record on LIBERTY. Anita is heard on RCA VICTOR and MERCURY (Anita Carter Sings Folk Songs Old and New), Helen on MGM (My Love), June on Liberty (Money, Money, Money and Overalls and Dungarees) and Maybelle on SMASH (Mother Maybelle Plays the Auto Harp).

●
**BACKSTAGE
AT
THE
OPRY**
●



Bob Cooper, WSM Manager and Ray Price.

Mrs. Robert Cooper, Cliff Thomas, Writer and Producer of Pet Milk's Grand Ole Opry, Jimmy Wakley and June Carter.



Opry fans waiting for the doors to open at the Ryman . . . picture made June 1961.



JUSTIN TUBB

NAME: JUSTIN TUBB.

HOMETOWN: San Antonio, Texas.

BIRTHDAY: August 20:

BACKGROUND: Attended schools in Texas and Tennessee, including one year at the University of Texas; at father's recommendation worked for one year as a disk jockey at WHIN in Gallatin, Tenn., in order to gain experience before a microphone; two years later, in 1955, joined the Grand Ole Opry; has appeared on "Jubilee U. S. A."; is fast establishing himself of some repute with his compositions being recorded by Grand Ole Opry stars.

FAMILY: Justin and wife, Bee, and their daughter, Leah-Lisa, 3, live in Donelson, Tenn.; is the son of Grand Ole Opry star, Ernest Tubb.

RECORD LABEL: Starday Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Looking Back to See" (with Goldie Hill)
"I Gotta Go Get My Baby"

INTERESTS: Collects records; is an avid sports fan and an excellent bowler, winning with Leslie Wilburn, the 1959 Tennessee State Handicap Doubles Championship.

"Walking in My Father's Footsteps" might easily be the theme song of Justin Tubb. This has been his life since he was a little boy. As a child, Justin traveled with the illustrious Ernest, leaving him only when school opened. Always quiet, always well behaved, the young Justin became a well-known figure backstage. In Justin's days when he attended military school he was a familiar figure backstage at the Old Ryman when the Opry was in full swing on a Saturday night. And Justin was a great favorite with the fans who loaded him with gifts and presents. He was also a great favorite of Colonel Tom Parker, the man who managed the career of Eddy Arnold and presently that of Elvis Presley, who once went out of his way to send Justin a pony. And always everyone in show business said, "Won't Justin and his father make a great team and do some great shows together when Justin gets a little older." Yes, that was the way people thought but they didn't know Justin. Never once has he appeared on a show professionally with his Dad. The reason! As Justin puts it, "I'm proud of my Dad. I think he's one of the greatest in the business. I want to be like him. But I have to make it on my own as Justin Tubb, entertainer, not Justin Tubb, son of one of the greats."



PORTER WAGONER

NAME: PORTER WAGONER.

HOMETOWN: West Plains, Missouri.

BIRTHDAY: August 12.

BACKGROUND: As a butcher and clerk in a hometown market did some singing and consequently his boss bought some radio time for him; as a featured performer on the show attained great popularity singing and playing the guitar; later organized a band and won first place in an amateur contest and then appeared on KWTO in Springfield, Mo.; after six years on the "Ozark Jubilee" came to the Grand Ole Opry in 1957.

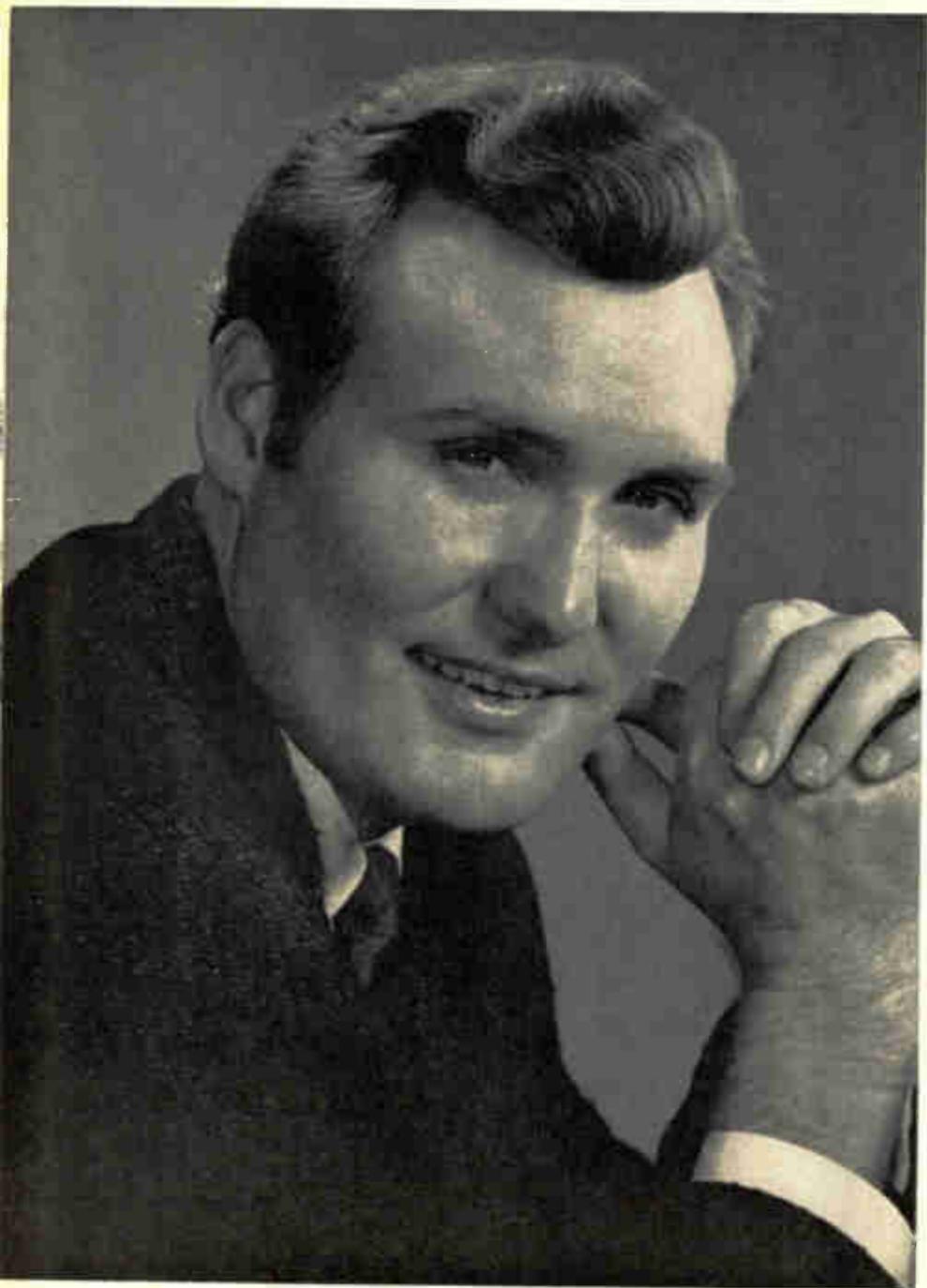
FAMILY: Porter and wife, Ruth, and their three children, Richard, 15, Deborah, 8, and Denise, 6, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: RCA-Victor Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Satisfied Mind"
"Your Ole Love Letters"

INTERESTS: Is co-owner with Don Warden, of Warden Music Company in Nashville; is one of Nashville's leading golfers.

Country musicians get their start in many different ways but to our knowledge Porter Wagoner is the only one who entered the music field through a super market. Of course, he'd had singing experience before . . . as he plowed "new ground" behind a team of mules . . . but as Porter says . . . that didn't really count because the mules weren't much of an audience. His break came when he went to work in Ray Vaughn's store in Missouri—sweeping out and doin' general store work. But it was better than followin' a team of mules and Porter continued to sing at his work. One day Mr. Vaughn bought some time on a local radio station and when the regular singers failed to show up—he sent his general "handy man" Porter over to do the job. We asked Porter if he got paid extra for his singing and his answer was . . . "No . . . but in addition to singin' regular after that . . . I got to keep my old job in the store." Seriously . . . how well Porter's singing was liked is evidenced by the fact that from that time on he has been pleasing more and more people as time goes by.



BILLY WALKER

NAME: BILLY WALKER.

HOMETOWN: Ralls, Texas.

BIRTHDAY: January 14.

BACKGROUND: Started entertainment career at fifteen by winning an amateur contest over KICA in Clovis, New Mexico, which led to a job with the station; in later years joined a traveling band and then played on "Big D Jamboree" in Dallas, Texas, billed as "The Traveling Texan"; was with the "Louisiana Hayride" for three years and with the "Ozark Jubilee" for five years; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1960.

FAMILY: Billy and wife, Sylvia, and their three girls, Judy Lynn, 12, Deana Ann, 8, and Tina Kay, 2, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Columbia Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Anything Your Heart Desires"
"Thank You for Calling"

INTERESTS: Horses, golf, fishing.

At first Billy Walker didn't like Hank Williams. In fact, the first time he appeared on a show with him, he hated him. As Billy puts it, "I believe I could have killed him!" And for good reason! It was time for Billy's number—he was to sing—BACKSTREET AFFAIR which was one of his most popular numbers. The emcee introduced him, the crowd applauded, Billy struck a chord on his guitar, opened his mouth to sing and suddenly from out of nowhere, impulsive Hank Williams came running on the stage with the announcement that "he and Billie Jones were ready to get married. Right then! On the stage." There was nothing for Billy to do but close his mouth and wait till after the wedding to sing his number. Hank, later, realizing what he had done, asked Billy to go on a ten-day tour with him . . . a tour that was to be Hank's last. And it was on this tour that Billy and Hank became friends. It was to Billy that Hank confided his innermost dreams. He told him of his childhood, how he sang in 'honky tonks' when he was just a little boy, how he begged for pennies on the streets. He told him of the songs that 'swam in his head' . . . of his ambitions for his son 'Bosepheus.' He told him, too, of his fears . . . how he was afraid to close his eyes at night. Billy watched as Hank became weaker and weaker. But no matter how bad the days and nights were, Hank was there when the lights and the curtain went up. In these last days, Billy perhaps learned more about the real HANK WILLIAMS than anyone else. As Billy said, "I guess most people will remember Hank for the great songs he's written . . . but not me . . . I'll remember him for his great concern for the little people—his deep loyalty to those he loved!"



KITTY WELLS

NAME: KITTY WELLS.

HOMETOWN: Nashville, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: August 30.

BACKGROUND: Started to play a guitar and sing spirituals at fifteen; began her professional career as a member of a duet in Nashville when she met her husband, Johnny Wright, of the Johnny and Jack team; throughout the 1940's she gave personal appearances with Johnny and Jack at radio stations in Knoxville, Tenn., and Raleigh, N. C., and was on the "Louisiana Hayride." In 1952 she joined the Grand Ole Opry.

Has reigned as the "Queen of Country Music" as judged in all country music polls for the past eight years, being voted the "No. 1 Country Female Singer."

FAMILY: Kitty and husband, Johnny Wright, and their three children (who are also recording artists), Ruby, 21, Bobby, 19, and Carol Sue, 15, live in Madison, Tenn.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels"
"Searching"

INTERESTS: Collecting records, cooking.

Miss Kitty Wells, Mrs. Johnnie Wright in real life and the mother of three lovely children, holds the unique distinction of being one of the very few women country singers to reach the peak of her chosen profession. But reach it, she has, as proven by the tremendous sale of her Decca recordings, with hit after hit and a collection of awards and citations from trade papers and magazines that would in themselves almost fill a book. Nobody has ever been able to give a satisfactory answer as to just why it is so hard for a woman to make her mark in the country field. As Kitty herself once said, without any bitterness, "I guess it's like all things in the world—a woman usually has a little harder time of it than a man. Everybody is braced for you to use the fact that you're a girl as a way to get along and in some ways resent it . . . even if you never take advantage of the situation. It's as though they expect you to break out in tears just to get your own way." Whatever it takes Miss Kitty certainly "has it" for she is one of the Opry's most popular stars. No doubt . . . ONE of Miss Kitty's "magic ingredients" is her sincerity and the fact that her songs, like most good country music, deals with real life problems that most of us face every day.



THE WILBURN BROTHERS

NAMES: DOYLE WILBURN and TEDDY WILBURN.

HOMETOWN: Hardy, Arkansas.

BIRTHDAYS: July 7 (Doyle Wilburn).
November 30 (Teddy Wilburn).

BACKGROUND: Were trained early by their father as professional musicians and sang together at church picnics, farm sales and other community affairs; made their first professional appearance in Thayer, Mo.; in 1938 sang with their family in first radio appearance in Jonesboro, Ark.; in 1940 Roy Acuff brought them to the Grand Ole Opry after hearing them in a talent contest; later were on "Louisiana Hayride" with two older brothers, Leslie and Lester; served in the Army during the Korean conflict; rejoined the Grand Ole Opry in 1953.

In 1960 were voted the "Favorite Small Vocal Group in Country and Western Music."

FAMILY: Teddy and Doyle live with their parents and brothers in Nashville. An older sister, Geraldine, is married and lives in Hot Springs, Ark.

RECORD LABEL: Decca Records:

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "The Knoxville Girl"
"Somebody's Back in Town"

INTERESTS: Own and manage a music publishing company, Sure-Fire Music Co., Inc.; and also a talent agency, Wil-Helm Agency. Bowling and golf (Teddy); baseball and golf (Doyle).

Teddy and Doyle, as they are known to their friends, happen to be only TWO of the Wilburn Brothers, though they are the most active of the group—doing all the singing now. But there was a time when ALL the Wilburn kids played and sang together. There was Teddy and Doyle with Teddy being the 'baby' of the family in addition to sister Geraldine and older brothers Lester and Leslie. And these kids started early, playing and singing for audiences at "platform shows" in their own backyard. Schooled and trained by "Pop" Wilburn, a disabled World War I veteran, the youngsters were soon well known in their hometown of Hardy, Arkansas. But the great depression was on and money was scarce especially for entertainers. Teddy and Doyle remember one depression year vividly even though they were not yet in their teens. It was Christmas time and there was very little money in the Wilburn's pocket-book. Things looked black indeed. But the little group went out to sing. And perhaps the urgency, perhaps the spirit of the season, the young voices of Teddy and Doyle soared through the crisp December air like those of angels. Whatever it was, the "Take" that day was enough to relieve the financial pressure on the Wilburn family and they had, if not one of the best Christmas seasons, at least one of their most remembered. And in the years of prosperity that have followed, Teddy and Doyle can never sing a Christmas hymn without being thankful for the kindness of people on that day.



THE WILLIS BROTHERS

NAMES: GUY (James) WILLIS, SKEETER (Charles) WILLIS, VIC WILLIS.

HOMETOWN: Schullter, Oklahoma.

BIRTHDAYS: July 15 (Guy Willis).
December 20 (Skeeter Willis).
May 31 (Vic Willis).

BACKGROUND: Were influenced by their father who prepared them for a musical career; began radio career at KGEF in Shawnee, Oklahoma; later moved to Kansas City and appeared in night clubs; after World War II joined the Grand Ole Opry as members of Eddy Arnold's group; in 1954 pioneered "Jubilee U. S. A." and then were featured on NBC's Midwestern Hayride"; rejoined the Grand Ole Opry in 1960; in nine years have done a total of 1240 television shows; have been known as "The Oklahoma Wranglers."

FAMILIES: All three brothers are married and have families of their own; Guy and Skeeter live in Madison, Tenn. and Vic lives in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Starday Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Pretty Diamonds"
"Footprints in the Snow"

INTERESTS: Golf (Skeeter Willis).
Fishing (Guy Willis and Vic Willis).

The Willis Brothers are perhaps the Opry's most famous group of practical jokers, stemming, no doubt, from the fact that THREE HEADS are better THAN ONE at thinking up pranks. Not too long ago they played one that almost boomeranged! They were traveling through the Bad Lands of South Dakota with Cowboy Copas and the Stoney Mountain Cloggers. Since all eight of the Stoney Mountain Cloggers were riding in one car, the Willis Brothers decided to put their bass player 'Peanuts Montgomery' (fiddle and all) out on the highway and force the Cloggers to pick him up. Peanut's story would be that he had quarreled with the Willis Brothers and they'd put him out of the car. To make the story fool proof, they took all of his money and left him standing on the highway surrounded by his luggage and the bass fiddle. The Willis Brothers were to drive until they came to the first filling station, a distance (at least it turned out to be) of some 60 miles. Before too long, the Clogger's drove by and recognizing Peanuts slammed on the brakes and asked "what goes?" naturally, Peanuts explanation was long, pitiful and successful. Although packed in the car, they made room for Peanuts, his luggage and the bass fiddle! Then Peanuts, finding a receptive audience, started! He told the Cloggers that the Willis Brothers were dishonest, had taken every cent away from him. And the farther they drove the wilder the stories and the more incensed the Cloggers became and when they reached the filling station they stopped (as planned by Peanuts and the Willis Brothers), climbed out 'with blood in their eyes' and literally attacked the Willis'. Fortunately, the boys did some pretty fast talking vowing that this would be the last practical joke they would ever play . . . at least until the next time!



DEL WOOD

NAME: DEL WOOD.

HOMETOWN: Nashville, Tennessee.

BIRTHDAY: February 22.

BACKGROUND: Was presented a piano on her fifth birthday; throughout her youth studied the piano and served as accompanist for various activities at East High School; began her recording career as a member of a band for various artists; in 1950 as a substitute pianist at WLBJ in Bowling Green, Ky. she played "Down Yonder" which established her fame; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1951 known as "The Queen of the Ivories."

Has repeatedly won magazine polls as the "Outstanding Female Instrumentalist in Country and Western Music."

FAMILY: Del and husband, Carson Hazelwood, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Mercury Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Down Yonder"
"Raggin' the Keys"

INTERESTS: Sewing and cooking.

If Shakespeare had asked Del Wood—WHAT'S IN A NAME—she would probably have said: "A lot of confusion, at least at times!" Del was christened "ADELAIDE" and even though she was 'the prettiest little girl in the neighborhood' she didn't like to play dolls. She preferred spending all her time 'pretending.' She was the neighborhood 'impresario' and never a week passed without a production or two being shown in the family garage. From the beginning 'Adelaide' was determined to get into show business. Years passed, the little girl grew up and married and finally the opportunity arose for her to record her now famous DOWN YONDER. She must have a name! So she took the Del from ADELAIDE and the WOOD from Hazelwood (her married name) and got DEL WOOD! Here *she thought* was a simple, euphonic name but not her fans! They had millions of questions. First how did she spell it, DEL, DELL, DALE or what? Was she any kin to Dale Rogers and was she a DJ in Chicago. But the greatest confusion concerning her name occurred not too many years ago when one of North Carolina's favorite DJ's decided to have a DEL WOOD day. He would feature her records for a week and on Friday he planned a private party at which Del was to appear. Everything went according to schedule except for one thing, the DJ assuming that DEL was a MAN had planned a STAG party! Even then, A GRAND TIME WAS HAD BY ALL except DEL who spent the evening alone reading!



FARON YOUNG

NAME: FARON YOUNG.

HOMETOWN: Shreveport, Louisiana.

BIRTHDAY: February 25.

BACKGROUND: As a school child performed in plays and in talent shows; in high school organized a band and played school programs and benefits; attended Centenary College in Shreveport for one year; left college to join the "Louisiana Hayride"; also had a radio show of his own; appeared on "Jubilee U. S. A."; served in the Army and performed frequently as a Special Services entertainer, taking Eddie Fisher's place; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1952; writes many of the songs he records; known as "The Young Sheriff."

FAMILY: Faron and wife, Hilda, and their two sons, Damion Ray, 6, and Robin Farrell, 4, live in Nashville.

RECORD LABEL: Capitol Records.

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Goin' Steady"
"Hello Walls"

INTERESTS: Owns, with Hubert Long, Lancaster Publishing Company and is a Director of American Investors Corporation; owns a radio station; and interest in a photography studio; songwriting and boating.

Like so many of our great Opry entertainers, Faron Young got started at an early age. While growing up on his Dad's dairy farm in Louisiana, Faron and some of his friends acquired some instruments and taught themselves to play. They worked local dances and the like but actually Faron's main interest was song writing. Just how many he turned out nobody knows but later when he left college to try his hand at being a full time song writer he really covered ground—contacting many of the top recording artists trying to get them to cut his numbers. It was then that he made contact with Webb Pierce, who listened patiently, hour after hour, as Faron sang his songs. As a matter of fact, Webb accepted and did record some. Encouraged, Faron wrote fast and furiously adding more and more to his stock of material. And more and more the patient Webb Pierce listened as Faron sang. Finally, one day after a particularly long session Webb said quietly, "Faron, I've been listening to you sing your songs a long time now and do you know what? You sing a whole lot better than you write. I think it's time you started SINGING with my outfit." How right Webb was has been proven time and time again as witnessed by such Faron Young SINGING hits as "Country Girl" and "Hello Walls," and a dozen others.

Early Opry Groups

**THE
POSSUM
HUNTERS**



**THE
CROOK
BROTHERS**

Many members of these bands today were with the original groups in the early days of the Grand Ole Opry.



**SAM and
KIRK McGEE**



**THE
FRUIT JAR
DRINKERS**



**THE
GULLY
JUMPERS**



HANK WILLIAMS

HOMETOWN: Montgomery, Alabama

BIRTHDAY: September 17, 1923

BACKGROUND: Born on a farm near Georgiana, Ala. but later moved to Montgomery; at eight received a guitar as a Christmas present from his parents who encouraged his singing and playing; learned the basic country chords from an old Negro street singer; won an amateur talent contest which gave him his first radio job, at the age of thirteen, over Radio Station WSFA in Montgomery, Ala.; a year later organized his own country band and played at square dances across the state; later performed over radio stations in Alabama and Louisiana; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1949; it was during this period with WSM and the Grand Ole Opry (1949-1953) that he received national recognition for his songwriting and recordings; died of a heart and hemorrhage condition on January 1, 1953; known as "Luke the Drifter."

Was widely acclaimed as the leading country blues singer and composer in the nation; in 1949 was voted one of the "All-Time Greats of Country Music"; wrote over 100 songs.

FAMILY: Hank Williams was married twice; he and his first wife, Audrey, had one son, Randall Hank, now 13, and an adopted daughter, Lycrecia Ann, now 22, married and living in Montgomery, Ala.; his second wife was Billie Jones.

RECORD LABEL: M-G-M Records

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Your Cheating Heart"
"Cold Cold Heart"
"Jambalaya"



RODNEY LEON (Rod) BRASFIELD

HOMETOWN: Hohenwald, Tennessee

BIRTHDAY: August 2, 1910

BACKGROUND: Was born on a farm near Smithville, Miss., the son of a rural mail carrier; at sixteen joined a touring tent show with his brother, Lawrence; later they worked together in an act with Bisbee Comedians during which time Rod had to substitute for his brother and took up the role of a comedian; Lawrence is now known as "Uncle Cyp," a country comedian; after traveling ten years with the show, Rod joined the Air Force; after his discharge he returned to the show; joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1944; made one record, "Rod's Trip to Chicago," for Hickory Records in 1954; died of a heart attack on September 12, 1958; known as "The Hohenwald Flash."

FAMILY: Rod Brasfield was married twice, his first wife being Eleanor Humphreys and his second wife being Cindy Rushing; had one adopted son, Jim.



DAVID ("Uncle Dave") MACON

HOMETOWN: Readyville, Tennessee

BIRTHDAY: October 7, 1870

BACKGROUND: Was born on a farm near McMinnville, Tenn.; lived for a while in Nashville where his father operated a hotel for theatre and vaudeville stars; attended what is now Hume-Fogg Technical High School; during this period he developed his talents as a banjo picker and comedy singer; remained for the first part of his life as a farmer and minstrel; lived on his farm at Readyville, Tennessee where he raised a family of seven sons; at forty-eight he began his professional career as an entertainer when a talent scout for Loew's Theatres heard him play at a party and booked him at a leading theatre in Birmingham, Ala.; in 1926, at the age of fifty-six, he joined the Grand Ole Opry, becoming its first singing star and also its biggest single attraction for fifteen years; after a short illness he died on March 22, 1952; known as "The Dixie Dewdrop."

FAMILY: "Uncle" Dave Macon was married to Mary Richardson; they had seven sons, one of whom, Dorris, is still with the Grand Ole Opry.

RECORD LABELS: RCA-Bluebird, Vocalion, Okeh

MOST POPULAR RECORDS: "Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy"
"Eleven Cents Cotton, Forty Cents Meat"
"I'm the Man That Rode the Mule Around the World"

Pet Milk Grand Ole Opry Talent Contest



Faron Young and
Johnny Rose

Each year the Pet Milk Company in cooperation with WSM and the GRAND OLE OPRY conduct a nation wide search for country music talent. The winner is awarded a recording contract and six professional appearances on the PET MILK GRAND OLE OPRY . . . which is heard over WSM . . . and over 200 stations of the Keystone Broadcasting Network. Winner of the FIRST talent contest was MARGIE BOWES, Second . . . The Townsell Sisters . . . Third . . . Johnny Milnor and Fourth . . . Johnny Rose . . . Writer and Producer of the Pet Milk Grand Ole Opry is Cliff Thomas.



Margie Bowes

1952



SCENES FROM WSM's COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

In 1952 WSM invited approximately 100 country music disk jockeys to come to Nashville to help celebrate the 'birthday' of the Grand Ole Opry. Out of this has grown one of the outstanding music gatherings in the country . . . known NATIONALLY as WSM's COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL. On these pages are pictures taken at the first 9 festivals . . . how many GRAND OLE OPRY STARS and other Country Music Greats do you recognize!

1953





**SCENES FROM
WSM's
COUNTRY
MUSIC
FESTIVAL**

1954



1955





1956



1957



1961

SCENES FROM WSM's COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL



1958



1959



1962

- SCENES FROM
WSM's
COUNTRY
MUSIC
FESTIVAL



1960

WSM's Who's Who

JOHN H. DeWITT, JR., President of WSM, Inc.

GEORGE A. REYNOLDS, Vice President and Technical Director of WSM, Inc.

ROBERT E. COOPER, General Manager WSM



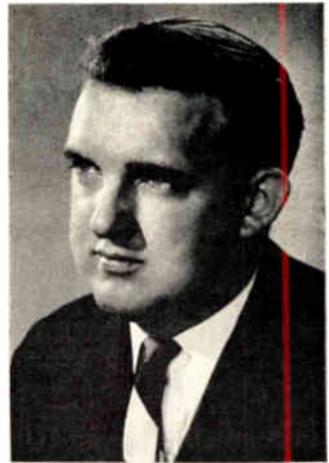
OTT DEVINE In his capacity of GRAND OLE OPRY and WSM Program Manager, Ott Devine directs the selection of talent on the station's extensive schedule of live programming, including the FRIDAY NIGHT OPRY and the GRAND OLE OPRY. He began his radio career at WJBY Gadsden, Alabama in the early '30's joining WSM in 1935 as staff announcer. He was named chief announcer in 1939. In 1942 he moved into the Program Department, and in that capacity produced and presented more commercial and sustaining network programs than were originated by any radio station in the country with the exception of the network centers in New York, Hollywood and Chicago.

DAVID COBB Came to WSM in 1937. Back in those days he gave a helping hand to struggling young artists such as Dinah Shore, Snooky Lanson, and others. After a four year hitch in the Navy during World War II, he returned to WSM where he originated many of the station's most popular programs and christened Nashville with the name MUSIC CITY, U.S.A. Weekdays Dave MC's the "World of Music."



T. TOMMY CUTRER One of WSM's best known personalities, T. Tommy Cutrer is also one of the busiest. In addition to his appearance on the GRAND OLE OPRY weekdays, he joins WSM's Farm Director John McDonald on NOONTIME NEIGHBORS and country music fans throughout the United States see him on television as he MC's their favorite show. Born in Osyke, Miss., his first announcing job was on WSKB at McComb, Miss. He was at stations in Houston, Texas and Shreveport Louisiana, before coming to WSM.

RALPH EMERY When America's Number One Country Music Disk Jockey takes over the WSM microphone . . . Monday thru Friday . . . at 10:15 P.M. on OPRY STAR SPOTLIGHT, anything is likely to happen . . . from a request by a jet pilot overhead to a call from the F.B.I. asking assistance in tracing a fugitive. Ralph Emery attended Nashville public schools and Belmont College. His radio career started at WTPR, Paris, Tennessee, and he has been associated with several radio stations in Nashville.



TOM HANSERD WSM's Operations Manager, joined the WSM announcing staff in 1949. A native of Birmingham, Alabama, he attended high school in Monroe, Georgia where he first developed interest in radio. His family moved to Columbia, Tennessee in 1936 and Hanserd got his first radio job with WKRM when it went on the air. In July 1947, he went to WAPI in Birmingham for news and record shows, and a year later became program director for WBRC-FM in the same city. He was made Operations Manager of WSM in July 1960

JOHN McDONALD Brought up on a farm and a graduate of the University of Tennessee College of Agriculture, John McDonald rounded out his agrarian talents with fifteen years of teaching and farm educational work before coming to WSM in 1945 to originate NOON-TIME NEIGHBORS. To keep abreast of farm trends, John does extensive traveling here and abroad . . . The recipient of almost every farm award given, John is past president of the National Association of Radio and Television Farm Directors.





LARRY MUNSON A native of Minneapolis and an alumnus of the University of Minnesota, Larry Munson joined the WSM staff in 1956 as its **SPORTS DIRECTOR**. Selected by his contemporaries as the 'outstanding sportscaster of Tennessee' . . . Larry's sports broadcasts include Vanderbilt basketball and football games as well as local high school football and basketball. He conducts a daily outdoor show each afternoon along with his regular sportscasts and is the emcee of one of WSM's most popular afternoon shows **PUSH-BUTTON ONE**.

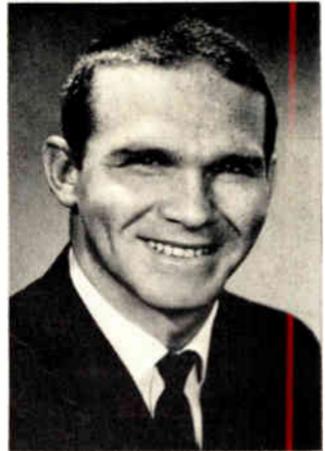
DAVE OVERTON A 'master of the ad-lib' Dave Overton is the versatile MC of WSM's **WAKING CREW** . . . A native of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, he began his announcing career at WJRD while a student at the University of Alabama. After serving nearly three years in the radio division of the Air Force Public Relations Department, he became staff announcer for WBRC in Birmingham. In 1949 he joined the announcing staff of WSM.



VITO PELLETTIERI Stage boss of the Grand Ole Opry, Vito Pellettieri is also the 'right hand' of Grand Ole Opry Manager Ott Devine. Before coming to WSM and the Opry in 1935, Vito had for more than 20 years one of the outstanding dance bands in the South. A native of Nashville, Vito attended Hume-Fogg High School. He is an expert in classical and popular music . . . as well as an authority in the country field.



BILL RANDALL WSM's youngest announcer . . . in years and service . . . Bill Randall nevertheless has years of broadcasting service to his credit. Born William Randall Aydelotte, Bill is a native of Columbia, Tennessee, and the youngest of 11 children. He has worked at radio stations in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, Canton, North Carolina and Columbia, Tennessee, and was with WKDA in Nashville for two years before coming to WSM.



GRANT TURNER Made his airway debut in his hometown of Abilene, Texas. Unable to find an announcing position in the late '30's Grant worked as a newspaper reporter and advertising salesman . . . In the early '40's he was associated with WBIR in Knoxville, Tennessee and KRRB in Sherman, Texas . . . joining WSM in June 1944. A great friend to all the stars of the Grand Ole Opry, Grant is a 'walking encyclopedia' concerning their appearances, recordings and personal life.

BILL WILLIAMS WSM's Director of News and Special Events, doubles as the "Rhyming Weather Man." Bill also does eleven daily newscasts. An alumnus of the University of Omaha, Creighton University, University of Arizona and University of Nebraska, Bill has been a member of the WSM staff for ten years. Among the honors which have come his way are the Radio-Television News Directors Association Award (twice), for outstanding radio news operations; the Civitan Award for coverage of a single story; election to the Presidency of the Tennessee Associated Press Broadcasters and the board of directors of United Press International



WSMpire

The loyalty of the Opry audience is demonstrated in many ways. THE MAP ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE is a graphic illustration. It is a sort of work sheet borrowed from one of the Opry advertisers showing the locations from which WSM listeners wrote in concerning an offer on his program. WSM regularly receives thousands of letters and postcards from all parts of the United States and Canada. . . occasional mail from Alaska, Mexico, Bermuda and ships at sea. A Saturday evening tour of the parking lots around the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville will turn up auto license tags from at least forty states. Interviews with these Opry visitors reveal that the average distance traveled to Nashville is 485 miles.

Ralph Emery will sometimes accept long distance phone calls during his all-night Opry Startime program on WSM. . . within an hour he will receive an average of twenty calls from as many states. The experts figure that WSM's Friday and Saturday night programs are heard by one out of every ten persons in the United States.

The Solemn Ole Judge described the Opry as "the darlin' of the men and women who do the work of the world." Visiting producers marvel at the fast pace of the four and a half hour program, can't figure how the 125 artists know exactly where and how to be on stage at the right minute. . . call it "organized chaos." The Opry artists themselves affectionately call it "The Grand Ole Uproar." The advertisers, most of whom have been on the Opry for years and years, call it "The best kept secret on Madison Avenue." Roy Acuff says that if the doors of the Ryman are ever closed the people will continue to pour into Nashville every week and pound on the doors. Apparently this statement will never be put to the test because if the first 36 years give any indication to its popularity. . . the GRAND OLE OPRY will go on forever!

