



WLW's "Boone County Jamboree," one of the real pioneers of the personal-appearance field, snapped as it appeared at the Ohio State Fair, Columbus, in 1941, as one of the features of Station WLW's "Star-Spangled Revue," the grandstand attraction for the 10-day run of the fair. Among the veteran c&w artists shown in the above photo are such names as Buddy Ross, Shug Fisher, Hugh Cross, George Biggar, Merle Travis, Hal

O'Halloran, Curly Fox and Texas Ruby, Lulubelle and Scotty, Millie and Dolly Good, Pa and Ma McCormick, Captain Stubby and the Buccaneers, Lazy Jim Day and Roy Starkey. Many are still active in the business today. Managing the above attraction at the time was Bill McCluskey, who is still associated with WLW in an executive capacity. George Biggar was PD at WLW at the time.

slated to run 39 weeks on 11 major Canadian TV stations across Canada, covering a market estimated at 2 million people. The video-taped series featured a guest, along with Smith, each week. Among guests already seen in the series are Kitty Wells, Grandpa Jones, Stonewall Jackson, Tex Ritter and Faron Young.

Fair bookings, one of the major outlets for country and western talent for many years, continued to prosper in 1964, with bookings at fair grandstand shows reported up some 10 per cent. It was back in the late 1930's that bookings of country talent at county and State fairs became a growing factor, until today hardly a State fair in the country is without its country talent at fair time. Many of the county and regional fairs have been using this kind of entertainment on a regular basis year after year, and to bang-up results. One of the pioneers in the fair booking field was the late Jim Denny, of the Jim Denny Talent Agency, Nashville, now the Moeller-Denny office. Denny tackled the fair field late in the 30's and in a few years had a long string of major fairs in the East, Midwest and South featuring c&w acts. Today fair bookings constitute a good 30 per cent of the Moeller-Denny office's bookings.

Possibly the most concentrated string of fair bookings ever held down by a single attraction was that of WLW "Boone Country Jamboree," starting in the early 40's and running for many years. Bill McCluskey, formerly with the WLS "National Barn Dance," Chicago, left there at that time to handle the talent office for WLW, Cincinnati. Under McCluskey's direction, the "Boone Country Jamboree" played some 72 fairs in the area covering Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Kentucky. Forty-two of the fairs were in Ohio alone. This operation continued for a period of more than 10 years.

The booking of country music talent is a healthy business—one that is destined to flourish for many years to come. However, all too frequently there creeps into the picture the illegitimate promoter who relies on misrepresentation and fraud to peddle an inferior attraction. Greatest victim of the unscrupulous promoter is WSM's "Grand Ole Opry." Hardly a day passes that WSM doesn't learn of some phony promoter using the "Grand Ole Opry" title to further his needs. In these instances the promoter has no connection whatsoever with WSM or the "Grand Ole Opry," falsely represents, in billing and otherwise, the

talent as being "direct from" "Grand Ole Opry," ties in with a local civic organization, and then proceeds to flim flam the public with a high-pressure phone solicitation commonly known as boiler room tactics.

WSM officials make every effort to stop these illegitimate promotions whenever possible, but so rampant and widespread are these fraudulent activities that 100 per cent policing becomes virtually impossible. Civic groups approached by promoters who offer second-rate country talent under billing of the "Grand Ole Opry" could do much to protect themselves against the unscrupulous promoter by checking with WSM officials in Nashville before offering support to such a venture.

There is nothing wrong with phone solicitation to promote a country music attraction. It has long been used successfully by other forms of amusement and entertainment, particularly the circus, to promote legitimate attractions. It isn't the phone solicitation idea that is wrong, it is the promoter using fraudulent tactics and misrepresentation to fool the sponsor and the public who can give the business a bum rap. Before getting caught in a jackpot, check the promoter you're doing business with.