

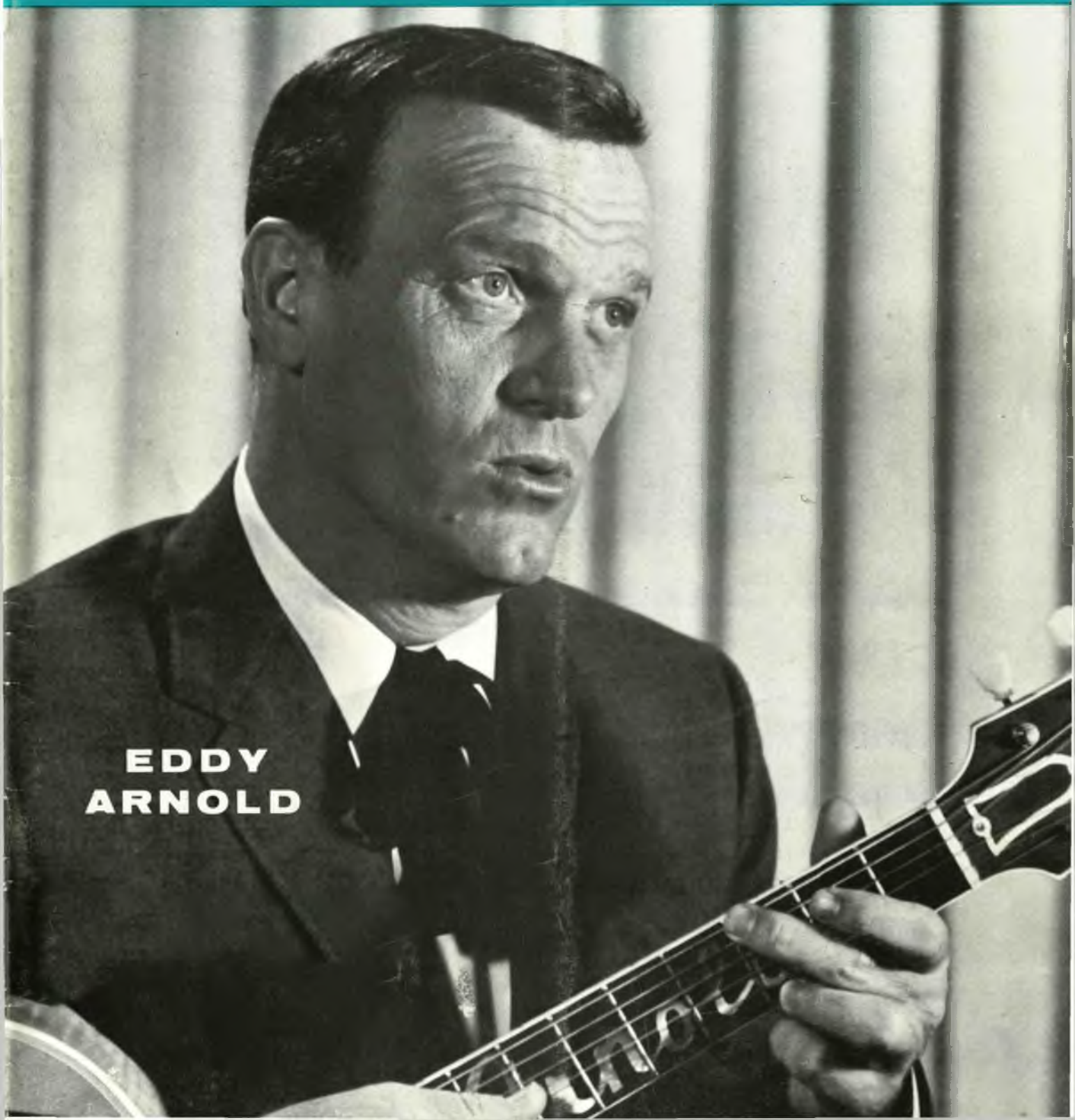
MARCH 1966

50c

Country Life

- *Eddy Arnold*
- *Dottie West*
- *Little Jimmy Dickens*
- *C.M.L. Answers The "Post"*

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ARNOLD**



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MARCH 1966

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Eddy Arnold has been singing ballads to a nation for years. See story on Page 28.

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Next
Month
In

Country Music
LIFE

Carl Smith Wilburn Brothers Wilma Burgess Archie Campbell

"TIPS FROM THE TOP" BY BILL ANDERSON

and many other exciting stories, news and articles plus our regular departments, such as "Tips From The Top," "Nashville Notes," "Where The Stars Are Shining," etc.

C.M.L. Answers the Post!

editorial

In the February 12 issue of *Saturday Evening Post*, Editor William A. Emerson, Jr., spent \$200,000 of that magazine's space (seven pages at \$28,000 a page advertising rate) in an apparent attempt to make country music look ridiculous to their seven million readers.

This article was written by a Charles Portis, who obviously knows nothing about the Country Music field, didn't bother to research the facts, and apparently cared less.

Seven pages were devoted to false statements, mis-statements, quarter truths and half truths. This reporting abortion was, in my estimation, a journalism prostitution of a reporting assignment that apparently started in good faith.

The article titled "That New Sound From Nashville" has apparently made a deliberate attempt to set country music back fifteen years. The years and years of untiring efforts by music company executives, publicity and public relations men to inform and educate the American public of the "new" country music, have been shot down in flames.

He started the article by describing Nashville as the "Athens of the South" and the home of several colleges and universities. As you labor through his story, the impression is created that everyone in Nashville . . . all those associated with the country music business have a third grade education, and are still looking forward to their first pair of shoes. He completely neglects to even mention that many of the biggest stars are college graduates. Artists like Bill Anderson, who graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in Journalism . . . Leroy Van Dyke, who holds a degree from the University of Missouri, and many, many others.

He states that "Nashville has Ernest Tubb and doesn't quite know what to do with him except ignore him." This is the person that was just elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame . . . he is one of the two living members in the Hall of Fame. His constant reference to "hillbilly" and "hoedown" are as obsolete in the country music field as the term "flying machine" is to the aircraft industry. According to his implication, Radio Station WSM owned by the National Life Insurance Company, who attribute much of their success to the Grand Ole Opry, are apparently ashamed to be associated with country music. I find this hard to believe!

He further implies that country music was the music of a few isolated back hill areas until shortly after the rock 'n roll craze. However in another part of the article, he states that "In 1944 the U.S.O. polled G.I.'s in Europe to determine the most popular singer and, lo, Roy Acuff's name lead all the rest." He further states "It was much the same in Korea." The Korean war, as we all know, was in the fifties.

Charles Portis, the apparent cosmopolitan boy

from the big city, describes the music on the Opry as "hillbilly." This he defines as: "Hillbilly is characterized by a squonking fiddle introduction, a funereal steel guitar and an overall whiney draggy sound that has never set well with urban ears." He points out that "The master minds of the Nashville sound have abandoned all that." Anyone who has seen the Opry, or watched it on television, is certainly aware that the artists usually sing and perform their current hit records while appearing on the Opry. These are the same records that have been produced by the Nashville "master minds."

On one hand, as we stated above, he describes the music on the Opry as "a sound that has never set well with urban ears," and further in his article, he describes how Station WJRZ in Newark, New Jersey, a former pop station, has increased its audience 1,000% since they adopted an all country format—for the New York Metropolitan area!

While talking about country music, he states: "The songs had been scorned and ridiculed so long by outsiders that the performers themselves have come to place little value on them. A good many of the singers, one gathers, would turn to pop music tomorrow morning if they could change their accents and get booked in Las Vegas." I don't know where Mr. Portis did his research, but of the many "country" stars and artists, whom I know personally, I have yet to find one that was not proud that he was in the country field.

In a deliberate attempt to ridicule Buck Owens' pledge to country music, he quotes the scroll as stating "I shall sing no song that is not a country song." He then states "Fair enough, except that one of Buck's latest releases, a big seller, is an instrumental called Buckaroo and that you can do the Watusi to." This is the most ridiculous statement I have ever heard! I am sure that if the tempo were picked up to "Ravel's Bolero" that the kids would not have any problem dancing the Watusi to it . . . however, I hardly think you would call Ravel a Watusi song writer.

In reference to "All them old country boys being in the chips, driving Cadillacs with six shooter door handles" is an obvious generalization that does not exist. I know of only two such cars — one owned by Nudie of Hollywood and one owned by Hank Williams, Jr. Both cars are used for publicity purposes.

As Mr. Portis starts talking about the country record business, one would assume, according to his article, that just about every hit record in the country field sells about 15,000 copies, and, if the artist who made the record is real lucky, he might possibly earn \$272 for his hit. He further implies that Eddie Arnold, Roger Miller, Johnny Cash and Buck Owens are the only ones who make any money from their records. He completely neglects to mention anything at all of the many Gold records (1,000,000 sales) that have been presented to many country artists.

In reference to the Grand Ole Opry, he describes

continued on page 6

LEROY VAN DYKE'S SON DROWNS

The son of Leroy Van Dyke, Ray Leroy Van Dyke, 5 years old, and a young playmate were drowned after they plunged through thin ice in a small lake.

Ray's body was recovered from the cold water after neighborhood children sounded the alarm that two children had fallen into the lake. The body of the other boy, Phillip Goodall, 8 years old, was pulled from the icy waters an hour and a half later. Leroy's son, Ray, was given mouth to mouth resuscitation and rushed to General Hospital where efforts to revive him were in vain.

Survivors, in addition to his parents and brother, include his paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank B. Van Dyke, Sedalia, Mo., and maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Greathouse, Hindsboro, Ill.

The entire staff of Country Music Life wish to extend their deepest sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Van Dyke.

FIRE WIPES OUT HOWARD VOKES

COUNTRY MUSIC LIFE extends its deepest regrets to nice guy Howard Vokes on his recent fire in which he was practically "wiped out." We reprint his letter in the hope that its circulation may help him to recover a small portion of his loss.

My Dear Friends in Country Music:

On January 30th, 1966 my entire Vokes Music Operation which housed Vokes Music - Record and Promotion Co. was completely destroyed by fire. The entire business went up in flames, and what little was saved is in very bad condition. All equipment to operate the business was destroyed, and great loss was in various master tapes, copyrights, Record Books, new and old songs, name and D.J. lists, old and new 45 RPM and 78 RPM recordings, and scrapbooks which told the story of my life's work in writings and pictures for 15 years. The sad part is that there wasn't any insurance coverage and money-wise the loss is tremendous. This was truly a Tragedy and Disaster for me, and I am heartsick over it.

Perhaps you, my country friends out there can be of help in locating old and new items concerning all my operations. This would include stories, clippings, pictures, record ratings, news items, our various recordings, sheet music, lead sheets, tapes, etc. Your help greatly appreciated, and I hope I can get back into the business real soon.

Your friend, Howard Vokes

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4



WHAT KINDA DEAL IS THIS

Bill Carlisle—Hickory 1348

5



WAITIN' IN YOUR WELFARE LINE

Buck Owens—Capitol 5566

6



SNOW FLAKE

Jim Reeves—RCA Victor 8719

7



BABY

Wilma Burgess—Decca 31862

8



WOMEN DO FUNNY THINGS TO ME

Del Reeves—United Artists 943

9



ENGLAND SWINGS

Roger Miller—Smash 2010

10



SKID ROW JOE

Porter Wagoner—RCA Victor 8723

EDITORIAL *continued from page 4*

it as "The pay is bad on this show and the working conditions are primitive, but a country singer will do anything — lose money, drive a log truck up from Maltbie, Georgia — to get on it." It is universally understood that the artists perform on the Opry not for the money, but for the exposure and prestige that the show gives them. The exposure that enables them to continue making personal appearances and enables them to earn the money that they do when making these personal appearances.

The article goes on and on with more distortions of the facts than one would believe possible.

I can't help but wonder how a magazine the size of the *Post*, with research staffs at their command, could possibly do such a bad job of reporting an entire industry to the American public.

While Mr. Portis was trekking around Music City Boulevard in Nashville, I wonder why he didn't walk down to the corner . . . to the office of the Country Music Association and talk to Bill Denny or Jo Walker . . . where he could have obtained the true facts for the article. If an accurate reporting job had been done, the opportunity to tell our true story to seven million readers of the *Saturday Evening Post* could have been a tremendous lift to the entire industry. However, Mr. Charles Portis has done everything in his power to attempt to set the industry back a good many years.

TIPS FROM THE TOP

continued

strive to please each individual I happen to work with, whether he be promoter, agent, musician, fellow singer, or stage hand. Start being nice to them now and years later you will thank yourself for it.

To sum it all up, my creed on conduct is this: Just because you are an entertainer doesn't give you the right to be rude or arrogant, doesn't give you the right to be sloppy in your appearance. Being an entertainer doesn't give you the right to report for work drunk, and doesn't make you a darn bit better than anyone else. God gave you talent. Be thankful to Him for it, and use it wisely. Use it to please people, not to offend them.

SOUTHEAST NOTES

continued

contest. Entries must be in no later than April 12, and winners will be announced April 15. Now is your chance to "cash in" on your knowledge of the Opry and its stars. All you have to do is to identify every person in a full cast picture of the Opry personalities! First prize is a color television set; second-prize, a portable television, and there are other prizes of radios, etc. Also, Saturday night, April 16, WBMD is having another country music spectacular starring Marty Robbins, George Jones, Faron Young, Teddy and Doyle the Wilburn Brothers, Connie Smith, and Quinine Gumstump and his Cajun Buddy Buck. Ticket information in the Newsletter.

WKCW, 5,000 watt all country station, Warrenton, Va., reports serious disc distress on major as well as minor labels—all records are given "a fair shake" and are sorely needed.

NASHVILLE NOTES

continued from page 4

up two more markets, namely Beaumont and Port Arthur, Tex. Be on the lookout for guests Bobby Bare, Hank Locklin, Stonewall Jackson, the Osborne Bros., Earl Scott and Jean Shepard. Jeanie is scheduled for tours in the Far East. March finds Don Bailey in Germany and the Wilburns with Loretta Lynn will jet to Germany. Their Sure Fire Publishing Co. has signed writers Billy Henson and Vince Finneran (he wrote "Dear One").

The Hubert Long stable of stars have added three stories to their building on 806-16th Ave. South—with Dick Blake, Aubrey Mayhew, Kapp Records, Joe Taylor-Ray Pillow and Jo Coulter renting the modern offices. Of high interest to the women, Jo is the first in our business locale to set up a full time show biz makeup studio. She will service black and white plus color, TV, stage and movie with full makeup facilities and still maintain her charm school at another address. We are looking forward to the Woolner Bros. Pictures Inc. of Hollywood movie, partly filmed here starring Ferlin, Jayne Mansfield, Mamie Van Doren, Del Reeves, Connie Smith, Sonny James, Bill Anderson: I was privileged to appear in one scene and you can imagine how thrilled Hank Mills is to have six or seven songs featured in this Las Vegas themed cinema. I feel we are gradually evolving into a "little Hollywood." Best wishes to C&W columnist Red O'Donnel and Mrs. Les Leverett, who are recuperating from hospital illness. See you all next month.

MIDWEST NOTES

continued from page 5

Mike Hoyer, of WHO in Des Moines, Ia., recently got his first on-the-air phone call from a fellow 50,000 watt DJ—none other than WJJD's John Trotter! Honest John called from Chicago's Rivoli Club where Dottie West had just finished a successful engagement. The same week Mike was joined by an "in person" surprise guest for his all night "Country Music U.S.A.", competitor Tex Ritter. Fans may have wondered what station they were listening to that night.

And would you believe it, "Country WJJD" is over a year old already? They celebrated their first birthday as Chicago's all C&W station on February 15 in a real bang-up way—with a birthday card contest.

Thanks for all the many letters we've received the past few weeks from you C.M.L. readers!!

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TIPS FROM THE TOP

"Tips From The Top" is primarily for the benefit of new and "up and coming" entertainers who are anxious to learn more about this wonderful Country Music "Show Business."

GEORGE MORGAN



I have been asked to be your columnist this month and it pleases me very much to be able to do so, because for a long time, I have wanted to express my opinion on one important aspect of this business—mainly, conduct. We'll discuss several different kinds of conduct and I think each is important to anyone with an entertainment career in mind.

First, conduct on stage: You can take anyone off the street, put him on stage, have him tell all the dirty jokes he knows and he is bound to get a laugh somewhere along the line. This doesn't mean he has talent. People will laugh to be sure, but at the same time will leave the Auditorium offended. Short simple jokes are fine, but leave the long dialogue to the comedian. If people came to hear you sing, they don't expect you to be one of the 3 Stooges. Above all, keep it clean.

Second, conduct in public: Remember you represent one of the finest institutions in the world — Country Music. In everything you do, remember to uphold the dignity of your profession. No matter what you may see other entertainers do, keep in mind that the public is likely to judge the whole industry by your conduct. Stay neat, clean, and presentable, and if you must drink alcoholic beverages, do it in privacy or only among close friends.

Third, your conduct backstage: Be rude to no one. Bear in mind that when people quit asking for your autograph, you are liable to quit eating. Never forget how thrilled you were the first time someone asked for your autograph. That first time initiated you into the world of celebrities, so act like one—and a celebrity doesn't have to be a snob or consider himself on a higher plane than his fans. They, and they alone, create every star and they can easily cause you to cease to exist as far as the limelight is concerned. This doesn't mean that they have the right to invade your privacy, or to become personal with questions and comments, but with a little common sense anyone can handle fans diplomatically and leave them thinking "Say, he's alright!" Being nice can in itself sell a lot more records for you and bring you back to certain towns for another performance later on.

Last, conduct among your fellow entertainers: Being well liked by the people you work with seems very important to me. Perhaps there are some in our profession who say it couldn't matter less, but I

continued on page 6

Nashville

NOTES



By
PAUL AND RUTH CHARON

Compliments have been pouring in about Frank Harris, our editor, since his January visit here in Music City. We had refreshments at the Little Jimmy Dickens' home and daughter Pamela is getting quite attached to his tiny chihuahua, Bronco. Nudie the tailor is designing a Bird of Paradise suit for this wisp of a dog—then Jim will take it on tour with him. He and Ray Price were marooned in snowbound Rochester, N.Y. trying to put on their show; this lasted three days, and worse yet, the police could not allow the show to go on because of dangerous traffic conditions. These lawmen had to make their rounds on snowshoes in that 42 inch snow!

Having just formed his own company, Bill Claiborne and Assoc., doing promotion work, the first artist Bill signed to the roster was Johnny Cash. Frank and I interviewed them both at Columbia, minutes before Johnny's last recording session.

Lorene Mann is starting out strong again with her third RCA Victor release, "Please Don't Take The Children From Me," following up soon with a duet album co-starring Justin Tubb. Donna and Sandra, the Rhodes Sisters, did their first National Life Grand Ole Opry TV Show January 21, guesting also on the Friday and Saturday night Opry. The following week Skeeter Davis worked this syndicated taping, the last for the 26 week series (until summer or thereabouts), with Paul Charon and Ron Light.

Veteran C&W promotion man Little Richie Johnson of Albuquerque is here to record his new artist, Kenny Vernon, and to present him as a guest on the Opry. Ken's manager is Bob Johnson and they are excited about the abilities of this newcomer.

In a call from Shreveport, La., Deanna Marie Smith tells me she is appearing at The Stagedoor in that city. Pete Drake can tell you how great this girl's voice is and we look to hear a lot more from her. This reminds me of a girl now approaching the top —Wilma Burgess. I was at her home watching the Jimmy Dean Show on which she sang "Baby," watching herself, she worried whether her first network TV appearance would be good. Then February 3 found her playing the plush Sammy C's Rivoli Club in Chicago.

"Act Naturally" writer, Johnny Russell, reports the Wilburn Brothers' Wilhelm Agency activities. He and Dixie Deen have penned a song on the latest Burl Ives album. Dixie was laid up 12 days with the chicken pox, caught from Faron Young's kiddies. Buddy Spiker is the new fiddle man on the Wilburns' WSM syndicated TV show. The program has picked

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Midwest

NOTES

By
MARY ANN COOPER

Harry "Hap" Peebles has already signed country music entertainment to well over 150 fairs in 14 Midwestern states for the coming season, including the State fairs for Illinois, Kentucky, Kansas, Oklahoma, Montana and North Dakota. The Illinois State Fair at Springfield has had record breaking crowds for gigantic Saturday night C&W shows the past several years. This being Hap's first time at booking our fair, he has made a change well needed—instead of one long performance, he will present a matinee and night show each of the two days, August 20-21. Already booked are Ernest Tubb & The Texas Troubadours, Loretta Lynn, Lonzo & Oscar, The Plainsmen Quartet, Pee Wee King & The Golden West Cowboys, Redd Stewart, Jack Leonard and The Collins Sisters. We understand that WSM's Ralph Emery will be emceeing the shows as in past years.

Sadness prevailed throughout the St. Louis area with the recent passing of Roy Shaffer, disc jockey there these thirty-some years.

WXCL, Peoria's Jack Barlow is receiving tremendous reaction all over the country with his newest Dial record release of "Dear Ma," a recitation that carries the "forgive and forget" theme. Jack's biggest ambition is to become a fulltime artist and leave the turn tables, as a record spinner himself—just let the other jocks spin his records along with the rest of the great C&W sounds. He certainly has the talent—and the ambition!

Indianapolis all night deejay, Bernie Waldon has a new release on the Floyd label, receiving quite a few plays throughout the Midwest, "There Ain't No Time Like The Present" b/w "Someday, Somewhere, Someone."

WGEM-TV, Quincy, Illinois has good reason to be mighty proud of its "Possum Holler Opry," now in its sixth year. The long-run, popular country music show is soon to become syndicated and filmed in color! Wait 'til you see Toby Dick Ellis' hair!

Speaking of television, the WHOW radio station's "Cornbelt Country Style" crew taped its first two WICS-TV (Springfield) shows in sub-zero weather January 29 with a studio full of live audience. We look for this to be another successful TV series for our area.

I have received some mail asking for the whereabouts of Marty Roberts. Marty is currently the early morning DJ with WMAY in Springfield, Ill. He also has the "Country Hit Parade" on Saturday evenings, so be sure to direct new record releases to Marty at Springfield—not Decatur which he left two years ago! (I still receive letters from new artists and promoters who say they have sent Marty records at WDZ and ask if he is playing them.)

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Southeast

NOTES

By RED WILCOX

Genuinely in the warmth of country music, Washington D.C. has had at least three benefit shows in the past year—all for area musicians hurt or incapacitated. The last one was held in January for the benefit of Van Stoneman of the very famous Stoneman Family. Van was severely injured in an automobile accident early in December as he was making "last minute preparations" before going to Nashville to join the rest of the Stonemans. Van is not expected to be able to walk without crutches for at least 18 months. Some of the Washington area musicians coming to the Crossroads Restaurant to play and sing were Dave & The Country Playboys, Bill Harrell, Buck Ryan, Smitty Irwin, and Stoney Edwards, otherwise known as the Virginians, Red Allen, Bill and Wayne Yates, Porter Church, EvaLena Chenault, Chick Stripland, Nickie Newland, Roy Self, Jimmy Case, Tommy Lake, Dub Howington and his Tennessee Haymakers, Jack Tottle and The Lonesome River Boys, PatMcKinney, Smokey McClenny, Herbie Jones, Carol Gaye, WXRA DJ's Lou Franklin and Ted Swenton—plus Patsy Stoneman and brother Scott Stoneman.

New record releases for the month include sweet Eva Lena Chenault's "I'll Step Out Of Your Way" b/w "I'm Sinful Cinderella" which is on the Nashville Label and received some excellent reviews. Jimmy Thompson has a new one coming out on Gambler Label and the Stoneman Family ditto on MGM.

During the last few days of January, Washington was paralyzed with a crippling snowstorm. The snow was so deep that DJ's at WXRA (Alexandria's FM station) couldn't get near the station, and WXRA was off the air for three days. They were really missed!

Although still recuperating from a bad accident involving his legs, Smokey McClenny is back at work at the Village Barn. Smokey is a real "trouper" in every sense of the word!

On January 15 most area radios all over the East were tuned in to the WVVA Wheeling, W. Va. Jamboree for the Heart Fund Benefit show which was headlined by Buck Owens. This reporter and wife, Bea, will have a full report feature in next month's COUNTRY MUSIC LIFE on this tremendous show which drew over 5,000 people—including the highest government officials of West Virginia. Washington area participants in this show were WVVA regulars Red Allen, Bill and Wayne Yates, and Porter Church; the Oxon Hill Cloggers square dance group; and Tom, Bill and Harry—The Compton Brothers.

All country music fans in the Baltimore, Md. and surrounding areas are urged to write for WBMD radio's "Wonderful World of Country Music" Newsletter which carries information on all the big shows coming into the Baltimore Civic Center. In the next issue (which, by the way, is a free service of WBMD), are details and picture for the Big Opry Sweepstakes

continued on page 6

NEWS NEWS NEWS



ED PORTER (left), McMinnville Tenn. Jaycee president, and Cowan Odom, local theater manager, "got the message" last week from local-gal-made-good Dottie West. The giant telegram was an expression of gratitude for her town's support of her career and will be on permanent display in the city's Park Theater.

* * * * *

BUCK Owens and the Buckaroos are set to appear at New York's famed Carnegie Hall on Friday, March 25. Two further dates in the Metropolitan New York area have also been confirmed—March 26 at the Symphony Hall in Newark, N. J., and March 27 at Brooklyn's Academy of Music.

* * * * *

DICK Curless and Kay Adams are preparing to record a duet single and album for Tower during the month of February. Both artists are signed with OMAC Artist Corp. of Bakersfield and will be appearing frequently with the Buck Owens Show this year.

* * * * *

LEROY Van Dyke will play the "Sky-High Stampede" in San Luis Valley, Colorado for four days in August....

* * * * *

FERLIN Husky, Leroy Van Dyke and Melba Montgomery are set for an 18-day tour in Canada during March and April.

* * * * *

HUGH X. Lewis' first album on Kapp is out this week—appropriately titled "The Hugh X. Lewis album," Kapp KL 1462 . . . to quote A&R man Paul Cohen, "It's sensational."

* * * * *

COUNTRY singer Clyde Beavers who is on the Hickory label has joined Acuff-Rose Artists in Nashville as an agent. Beavers, well known for his discs and his personal appearances, will report to Howard Forrester, fiddler with the Smokey Mountain Boys. Beavers will continue his career as an artist, in addition to his new role as a booker.

* * * * *



FOUR-month-old Larry Dean Smith and his Mom, Goldie, found their first photo session to be a funny one. Provoking laughter was Poppa Carl's comment: "I hope he grows up to have Dean's dimples and Moeller's money." Larry Dean was named after family friends Jimmy Dean and Larry Moeller.



JACK McFadden (left) welcomes Dick Curless to OMAC Artist Corp.

Dick Curless, favorite son of Bangor, Maine, has joined OMAC Artist Corporation, the pride of Bakersfield, California — and if that's not a long-distance move, we don't know what is! Curless rose to fame a year ago with his Tower hit, "A Tombstone Every Mile," a tune describing the hazards of driving on an ice-covered road in the northern woods of Maine. Subsequent hits, "Six Times A Day," "'Tater Raisin' Man" and "Travelin' Man," helped establish him as a prime attraction at auditoriums, clubs and in record stores from coast to coast. Two of the three major music trade publications honored him as the No. 1 Most Promising New Star of 1965.

* * * * *

RCA Victor's Paul Anka joined the Nashville parade recently for recording sessions there

NEWS NEWS NEWS



OPRY humorist Archie Campbell and youthful admirer Cynthia Rice read for relaxation during a break in Campbell's most recent RCA Victor recording session. By coincidence, one of the songs cut by Campbell was "The Men In My Little Girl's Life," his current best-seller.

* * * * *

Follow-up to Little Jimmy Dickens' all time hit single, "May the Bird of Paradise Fly Up Your Nose" will be "Truckload of Starving Kangaroos," b/w "When The Ship Hit The Sand." The Columbia recording is due for immediate release.

* * * * *

Musicor Records acquired a hot new country master which is expected to further bolster the firm's already expanding activity in the country field. The disc, by DJ John Trotter, of WJJD, Chicago's prime country outlet, is titled "I'm a Square." Meanwhile, the firm is swinging with a recently released side by veteran chanter Rex Allen. The Allen side, "Take It Back and Change it For a Boy" is on numerous charts around the country.

* * * * *

GENE Pitney and Melba Montgomery have hit pay dirt with their first joint effort, "Baby, Ain't That Fine." An album which features the triple threat talent package of George Jones, with Pitney and Miss Montgomery, is also a hot item. Musicor chief, Art Talmadge, in association with his country A&R head, Pappy Daily, first found the hit duo formula last year with Pitney and Jones in a succession of heavy-selling albums and singles. The label is also prepping new releases by a host of other top country names, including Connie Hall, Moon Mullican and Benny Barnes. Next spring the firm also expects to add to its roster a top country girl singer who is now most closely identified with the Vegas-Tahoe-Reno night club circuit.

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Chick Stripling will join the Stanley Bros. of King Records for a week tour in Germany and England.

"It was one of the most graphic illustrations of the power of country music I've ever seen, and I wouldn't have missed it for the world." So said president Hubert Long of Long Talent agency. A package unit booked by the agency, including Sonny James, Wilma Burgess, Ernest Tubb, Porter Wagoner and others, were on hand to play the Charlotte Coliseum. Much to Long's amazement was the event being held at the same time next door in Charlotte's Ovens Auditorium, which was the "Grand Opera." While the torrid Bizet opera "Carmen" was playing to a tiara and cummerbund crowd of Charlotte socialites, next door the Opry group warmed to a packed house. Long, a confirmed house-checker, dropped by both performances to estimate heads. The "Nashville Sound" had outpulled the "La Scala" sound almost three to one, some 8500 payees, according to the Nashville impressario's account.

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U. S. troops in Viet Nam were able to view a Country Music Spectacular by means of video tape through an innovation used by some educational TV outlets in the Midwest. A special four hour Grand Ole Opry Show, featuring top country stars was taped in Nashville on January 14 as a salute to troops in the Vietnamese conflict. The show, featuring the talents of Marion Worth, Charlie Louvin, Roy Drusky and a host of other performers was played back to troops in rest areas through a recorder-transmitter mounted in a military plane. The plane circled the broadcast area for the duration of the show. The package, presented as a service feature of WSM-TV and the performers involved, was emceed by Roy Acuff.

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DON Gibson was booked for his third appearance on the Jimmy Dean (ABC-TV) show. He was in New York for the taping February 21 to 25. The singer-composer, who is booked through Acuff-Rose Artists, guested on the Dean show twice last fall within six weeks. His current RCA Victor single is "A Born Loser," published by Acuff-Rose.

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Acuff-Rose Artists Corp. have recently concluded a deal with WSM-TV to represent the station for overseas distribution of a vast catalog of tapes of stars of the Grand Ole Opry in action. Among the shows included are the Grand Ole Opry, the Bobby Lord Show and the station's tape library of performances by many of the great country stars. Firth will take several of the shows home to England with him.

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BUCK Owens goes the syndication route early in February with his own weekly show, which will feature, along with Buck and the Buckaroos, Merle Haggard, Tommy Collins, Rose & Joe Maphis, Kay Adams and Billy Mize. Show will originate in Bakersfield, California.

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NEWS NEWS NEWS



GEORGE Riddle, Nashville recording artist, has appointed Moeller Talent, Inc. to represent him in booking personal appearances. His most recent recording is "Sad Tale of Woe" on the Starday label.

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Jefferson Productions of Charlotte, N.C. have taken over complete production of the Bill Anderson syndicated TV show. The move is expected to trigger wider distribution of the show. Anderson states: "We've been taping our show at Jefferson since we began the show in January 1965 but their people, whom I consider to be among the most capable in TV, have never had a free hand in producing our show. I believe the quality of our upcoming series will far surpass anything we have done up to now." Jan Howard has been signed as featured female vocalist and Anderson plans to have fellow C/M artists Don Gibson, Don Bowman, Ferlin Husky and Skeeter Davis as guests on the show. In the near future also watch for Dottie West, Charlie Walker and Clyde Beavers.

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REX Allen almost stood up by his horse while starring at the Arizona Livestock Show in Phoenix! Allen arrived there by plane, but his four-legged sidekick Koko, coming through in his private trailer, was held up at the Arizona-California border for lack of the overlooked but necessary health certificate. The celebrated animal was impounded, but not behind bars until clearance was given by the proper officials. Koko was then on his happy way to join his very happy master.

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It was a busy week for Warner Mack who made a rush return to Nashville from a combination business-pleasure to Elkhart, Ind. The pleasure was in visiting part of his family there, and at the same time Warner picked up a brand new 1966 Cadillac. In Nashville, it was a whirlwind schedule of work with Arnold Brown and William Becker of McCann-Erickson Agency in New York in writing, preparing, producing and recording a series of jingles for the Coca-Cola Co. Brown and Becker of the New York Agency expressed great satisfaction at the finished product, praising Mack as an artist and writer and also the excellent group of Nashville Sound musicians who did the actual recording sessions at the Columbia Studios. Listen for Warner singing for Coke soon.

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"1965 has been our best year since entering the agency business in Nashville," said Bob Neal of the Neal Agency, "and 1966 looks even better. We are going to limit the number of artists we represent, thus being able to offer them more in personal attention and development of their careers." Artists represented by Neal are Carl Belew, Tommy Cash, Stonewall Jackson, Sonny James, Warner Mack, Johnny Paycheck, Pete Drake, Connie Hall and Jimmy Martin.

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COMPOSER Neil Merrith and Mrs. Merrith at MCM Christmas party. He is writer of "Bird of Paradise"... Lady at right is Ruth Charon, CML Associate Editor.

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DALE Harris has a new release—"The Writing On The Wall" b/w "Night Life." On the Merimac Label and written by Winston Glenville Music (BMI). Music was arranged by Mike Henderson and the session was produced by Kim Fowley. *It is refreshing to see a Country song that has been "arranged" — not just a talk-over arrangement.*

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Singer Bobby Helms, whose career has taken a rapid upswing in the past few months since his recording by Kapp's Paul Cohen has signed booking agreements with Nashville's Bob Neal agency, Helms, owner of one of the true "standard" country records with his great "Fraulein" and "Jingle Bell Rock," is currently hitting many of the top charts with his "Snowy Blowy Days Of Winter," a followup to his first Kapp release "I'm The Man." Neal said, "we feel that Bobby is one of the true all time hits of country music and that there is a great career ahead for him. We are happy to represent him."

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Hilltop's Johnny Paycheck, one of the most exciting new artists to burst on the country music scene, is keeping up with a busy schedule of road shows according to booking agent Bob Neal. February appearances will see Paycheck making a half dozen appearances in Texas as well as on a package at Arlington, Pa., Gettysburg, Pa. and Allentown, Pa. The schedule for "Little Darling" for March, April and May looks like one of the busiest.

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SHORTY Lavender of Hubert Long Talent Agency announces a star-studded country package has been booked into Younstown, O.'s Stambough Auditorium for a June 11 show. The police-sponsored shindig will feature the talents of Faron Young, Sonny James, Connie Smith and Country comic Don Bowman. Also scheduled are Ferlin Huskey and Skeeter Davis to a Texas tour which included a February 3 stop at Houston, 4th at Austin, 5th at Shreveport, La. and San Antonio on the 6th. Skeeter Dee and friend Simon reported pleased houses all the way.

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While 90% of Nashville's secretaries were still dubbing in '65 instead of '66, Kitty Wells (left) and her entertainer-husband Johnny Wright were contemplating the dates of 1967. They have been booked for a solid month of return engagements in Germany, Italy and France one year away in January. Negotiations for the popular Country act began January 1 of this year and were confirmed on the 17th.



COUNTRY Music Life magazine recently announced that Frankie Starr has joined their firm as Regional Advertising Manager of the Nashville area. Frankie's many years of experience in the Country field, both as an artist and as a music publisher, should prove to be an excellent association for both Frankie Starr and Country Music Life.

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Friends of Archie Campbell call him "the complete esthete," because almost everything the Opry humorist does is connected in some way, with the creative. "When I sing," he explains, "they call me an artist. When I work the Mary Carter Banquet Circuit, I'm a 'painter.' But when I actually put in time at my easel and art board, they call me a ham." No matter what the "nom de plume," Campbell is actively involved in all three of the aforementioned activities. Recordingwise, his career is flourishing. His latest single, "The Men in My Little Girl's Life," is getting an exceptional amount of chart action across the nation. He was the first Country and Western artist to cover Mike Douglas' successful pop version. For the Mary Carter Paint Company, he'll do two mid-February weeks of banqueting across the nation, taking the rostrum in such cities as San Francisco, Houston, Philadelphia and Atlanta. And with oils, he's made another sizeable splash. He has been commissioned, by WSM Radio, to illustrate the cover of the station's new Grand Ole Opry booklet edition and a Music City art shop is pitching "portraits by Campbell" for Valentine's Day.

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Thoughts of apple blossoms and Springtime are not all wishful thinking . . . warm weather plans for many of our C/W stars have already been made . . . Leroy Van Dyke, Tex Ritter, Marion Worth, Jim Edward Brown, Bill Anderson and Skeeter Davis have been signed to play the Melody Ranch Park in Hartford, Michigan during June. Buddy Terry and Bill Teeters have also slated Tompall and The Glazers, Del Reeves, Margie Bowes, David Houston, Hugh X. Lewis, and Johnny Sea for the Bridal month. Ferlin Husky, Charlie Louvin, Wilma Burgess and Charlie Walker will round out the early summer package.

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Beginning May 1966 most shows scheduled for America's No. 1 Country artist, Buck Owens, will include the total new "Buck Owens American Music Show." Along with Buck Owens and the Buckaroos, the package will include Dick Curless, Tommy Collins, Merle Haggard, Bonnie Owens, Kay Adams, Wynn Stewart, Joe & Rose Lee Maphis. To transport all this talent from city to city, Buck Owens has purchased a brand new, ultra-luxurious \$60,000 custom bus. Some of its unique features include a telephone, intercom system, stereo, taped music, lounge and sleeping accommodations. Buck Owens is well represented in both country and pop charts these days. His own Capitol recording of "Waitin' In Your Welfare Line" is zooming up both charts like the latest rocket from Cape Kennedy. Two other Owens hits, Ray Charles' "Cryin' Time" recording, and Johnny Rivers' "Under Your Spell Again," are among the top tunes in the nation. The Buck Owens Show, also featuring Dick Curless, is set to play Carnegie Hall March 25. There's a motion picture in Buck's near future, and manager "Colonel" Jack McFadden is negotiating a network television variety show for next season.

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SONNY James and The Southern Gentlemen are keeping Sonny's new \$40,000 "Starliner" busy. Sonny and his boys are back in from a rush trip to the West Coast where they performed in four sell-out packages in Phoenix, Los Angeles and San Diego. And heading into New York in the middle of February for talks concerning appearances on some of the nation's most popular TV shows. Incidentally, current bookings indicate that from the middle of March until the middle of June The Southern Gentleman and his Company won't be spending many days in Music City—their bookings are that heavy.

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There's a great deal of hush-hush and excitement about a new release due soon from Stonewall Jackson. The Columbia session, directed by Don Law and Frank Jones has produced what may be Jackson's greatest of many hits. Incidentally, Stonewall is now holding a new record—the largest Wednesday night crowd ever drawn by a country artist at Houston's Esquire Ballroom!

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A most unusual Valentine's Day gift is the idea conceived and implemented by Bobby Harden (center) for his sisters Arleen (left) and Robbie. The thoughtful "Harden Trio" leader made special arrangements with W. E. (Lucky) Moeller (standing) to have the group's personal appearance dates handled by the Moeller agency. The deal was a surprise to the girls, who responded in a most "un-sister-like" manner.

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Billy Wallace, composer of many hit songs recorded by Grand Ole Opry stars, is now writing for Vokes Music Publishing Co. located in New Kensington, Pa. Billy's "Back Street Affair" made a star of Webb Pierce and has since become a standard. Other great Wallace songs include "Slaves Of A Hopeless Love Affair" — "Judge Of Hearts" — "Cheatin's A Sin" — "Who's Shoulder Will You Cry On" etc. Billy has placed several of his compositions with the Vokes firm headed by Country Music man Howard Vokes. All the songs have been recorded and Billy is set for an album release soon titled "Billy Wallace Sings His Hits." Billy has a record on Del-Ray Records titled "Honky Tonk Row" b/w "Sycamore Tree"

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Western star Rex Allen signed contracts for personal appearances in Japan, Okinawa, Formosa and the Philippines starting March 3 through 19. Accompanying Allen will be his musical trio, "The Men of the West." OMAC Artist Corporation represented Ichibei-cho of Japan and Mickey Gross Enterprises for Rex Allen.

NEWS NEWS NEWS

"SONNY James is going 'first class' in 1966," was the comment of Bob Neal, Sonny's manager as he announced the purchase of a late model road cruiser for the travel needs of Sonny James and his Southern Gentlemen. "The Starliner," as the cruiser has been named, is a combination of elements of a beautiful new bus, plus extensive interior remodeling and customizing geared to make one of music City's busiest show units more comfortable and safe for the 1966 tour schedule. At the same time Neal announced the affiliation of Sonny James with the General Artists Corp. "This agreement in no way takes Sonny out of the Country Music area," he said. "We plan to set up a number of guest appearances for Sonny and his group on network TV, as well as arrange a number of appearances at some of the largest fairs in the country."

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JOHNNY Owen of the Hubert Long Talent Agency has been named talent coordinator for the upcoming "Festival of Country Stars" planned for Chicago's International Amphitheatre. The Festival, brain-child of Rivoli Club owner, Sammy "C", will play four sessions in two days to an anticipated forty thousand people. 75% of the net will go to Chicago charities and a good portion to the CMA fund. Owen visualizes one of the largest Country packages ever assembled playing the Festival. Overtures have gone out to some out-of-USA artists to give the Festival an International flavor. Owen has signed several artists into the Rivoli Club for '66, including Bill Anderson, George Jones, Dottie West, Leroy Van Dyke, Wilma Burgess, Roy Acuff and band, Little Jimmy Dickens and Roy Clark. Owen notes increased interest among fair executives in the drawing power of Country packages and expects to see increased cash in the Country coffers from 1966 Fair appearances.

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The largest completely paid crowd to witness a single Country Music show packed Houston's Astrodome January 8 — and had the time of its life. Performers were Roger Miller, Webb Pierce, Faron Young, Red Sovine, Jimmy Dickens, Kitty Wells, Johnny Wright, Bill Phillips, Ruby Wright, Minnie Pearl, Justin Wilson and Bladge Ruffino. Official gate receipts showed 30,398 people paid at prices ranging from \$2 to 3.50 per ticket. From start to finish, three hours later, endless ovations rang out as eight spotlights focused on each of the performers who were introduced and paraded around the arena. The affair was officially called "The Skipper's Jamboree" and produced by Sydney Shlenker, assisted by Lucky Moeller and Ruth Johnston, executive secretary of the Houston Boat & Sports Show. Houston's annual, 7-day boat show accounted for the salty tang of the Jamboree and officially began with that event. Bill Bailey, executive of Houston's radio station KIKK, mastered the ceremonies which, in addition to individual performances, were highlighted by 14-ft. high and 18-ft. long animations of "The Bird of Paradise" and "Giddyup Go."



RED Sovine (left), Starday recording artist, and Larry Moeller admire the singer's "Top Country Single" award which he received this week from *Billboard Magazine* for his all-time best selling Country single, "Giddyup Go." The song has made Red one of the hottest pieces of property in Music City and has been Number One in nationwide charts for the past eight consecutive weeks.

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A new record company has been formed in Lubbock, Texas under the label "Banner Records." Owned and operated by Col. Bill Crawford, the new company has signed Jack Reno, Joan Reynolds, Elton Williams and Jimmie Peters.

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DEL Reeves, who is recently back from a tour of U.S. bases in Germany, has one word to describe the Germans—FAST. Del, booked for a two week tour by Hubert Long Talent Agency, first noticed the mania for getting around quickly while flying to Stuttgart on a German-operated 707. "I think that pilot got his training with the Luftwaffe," said Reeves. "He banked that big liner like he was piloting a Messersmitt fighter under attack." He got more speed while driving on the German autobahn, their network of super highways. As he putted along in a small compact, a Mercedes whizzed by at a hundred miles an hour. Del, still riding high with "Girl On The Billboard" and "Women Do Funny Things To Me," longed for the protection of that trailer-truck he sings about.

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CHICAGOLAND has as its first female DJ with a Country Music show "Country Music Time With Maxine." She is on station WTAQ in La Grange, Ill., suburb of Chicago. WTAQ has country music six nights a week from 6:30 to 9:30. Curly Barrix from 6:30 to 7:30, Wayne Berk from 7:30 to 9:00 and Maxine Johnson from 9:00 to 9:30. They also have an engineer, Pat Nugent. So you see they are right with the times—their own Lady Bird Johnson and Pat Nugent!

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"COUNTRY'S"

DOTTIE WEST

By FRANK HARRIS

When McMinnville, Tenn. proclaimed "Dottie West Day" last July, its namesake made no bones about how she felt. Mounting the podium, before state dignitaries, an adoring hometown crowd, and hundreds of well wishers, she cried . . . and in so doing, lost for a moment the composure she normally has.

"It was the greatest day of my life," she confided to COUNTRY MUSIC LIFE, "something I'd always dreamed about, but never thought would happen to me."

Dottie West has come a long way from the small town country girl who made no bones of her ambitions to become a Country Music singer. Even in high school, she harbored the ambition and proudly points to a small loving cup she won, her first, at a local talent contest when she was in her teens. Her winning song, she recalls, was "Won't You Ride In My Little Red Wagon."

"Now that I think about it," she recalled, "I guess I've worked ever since I've been able to. Even when I was young, there were farm chores to be rationed out among the children, everything from milking to carrying water considerable distances, but I don't consider it any misfortune at all. As a matter of fact, I actually think it helped prepare me for the tremendous struggle ahead in the music business."

After high school, Dottie continued her education as a working student at Tennessee Tech, in Cookeville, where she majored in Music. And therein lies another tale.

Two days before we contacted Dottie for this story, she had just received a long distance telephone call from the head of the Music Department at Tennessee Tech requesting her to play a performance at a student assembly this Spring. Needless to say, she was deeply touched by the honor and will do everything possible to work it into her schedule.

But we're getting slightly ahead of our story, and we shouldn't.

"One of the greatest things that ever happened to me," continued Dottie, "was meeting Bill at college. It was love at first sight, and we dated steadily until our marriage after graduation."

The Bill she refers to, naturally, is Bill West, her husband and constant companion. The two travel together to all of Dottie's engagements, but he's no idle back stage onlooker. He plays steel guitar and is a "must" item, by request, in every backup group which accompanies Dottie.

Some stars feel that the disclosure of a happy marriage might have an adverse effect upon their fans. Not Dottie. When she first greets any audience, her



initial introduction is of her husband and she wouldn't have it any other way.

"I may be old fashioned in that regard," she explains, "but I'm proud of having a happy home and a husband who works so hard for my, or rather OUR, success."

Such an attitude certainly hasn't affected her popularity or the sale of her records. As a matter of fact, her fans seem to feel all that much closer to her — perhaps because of it.

Bill and Dottie make a dynamic duo and play to packed houses almost everywhere they go. Naturally, Dottie gets the spotlight, but it's a family affair.

Bill studied engineering in college and has a degree to show for all the long hours he put in prior to graduation.

When the two were married, they honeymooned en route to Bill's job as an engineer at Thompson Products and Republic Steel in Cleveland, Ohio. There the couple stayed for five years, with Bill being the breadwinner prior to their decision to move to Nashville and devote full time to Dottie's singing career.

During "the Cleveland years," they kept up their musical interests by working as regulars on the city's weekly TV show, "Landmark Jamboree," a position they auditioned for and won. Incidentally, in college they had formed a group known as "The Tech Two-By-Fours," and, naturally, carried this interest with them when they left "The Hallowed Halls."

A casual visit to Nashville cemented their determination to "give a go" to Dottie's career. While in Music City, Dottie took a tape to Starday Records,



HER proudest possession is the gold plated Grammy she's holding. She was awarded it in 1965 and her career has sky-rocketed ever since.



DOTTIE utilizes a woman's prerogative in her home and takes precautions to insure that all of her awards and citations are properly aligned.

found favor, and signed her first recording contract. Then the move was effected.

After two years on Starday, Dottie spent a brief spell with the Atlantic label before signing a long-term RCA Victor contract at the urging of Chet Atkins.

Reflecting on the approximate 10-year-period just referred to, Dottie explained: "It seems so simple to just reel off facts and dates regarding my career. The truth of the matter is that those years weren't 'simple' or 'ordinary' at all. Remember, we changed jobs, one that Bill had studied all his life for, moved from city to city, worked with different record labels and — on top of all that — I managed to have four of the loveliest children in the world. No, those weren't simple or ordinary years by any means."

The children referred to may account for Dottie's radiance and wholesome attitude toward life. She simply adores them and refuses to take away from "their time with me" when she's not traveling or playing an engagement.



HERE Dottie examines a contract for a California personal appearance. The RCA songstress is in great demand all over the United States.



IT doesn't take much to amuse these two. After weeks and weeks of roadwork, even the simplest things seem great fun.

A full-time companion and loyal friend, Jean McDaniel, lives-in with the Wests and thus provides constant supervision of Morris, 12, Kerry, 9, Shelly, 7, and Alan Dale, 4, when Dottie and Bill are on the road.

The four children, Dottie, Bill and Jean, live in an attractively decorated brick home in Nashville. As



BILL and Dottie take time out to feed their feathered friends on a winter's day in Nashville. Their favorite strolling spot is Shelby Park, where this picture was taken, a public area only minutes away from their home.

you might suspect, the West home is "lived in," not just laid out for looks. An interesting note here is that a prominent wall feature in Dottie's den is a huge color photograph of Patsy Cline, at one time her dearest friend.

"Here Comes My Baby Back Again" was, perhaps, the most significant song in Dottie's career. It established her as a major artist and writer. And, when Perry Como recorded it, her capabilities were introduced to the Pop markets.

No doubt it was instrumental in garnering her the 1964 GRAMMY Award (the recording industry's Oscar) for the "Best Female Vocal Performance of the Year." She received the award in 1965 and big things have happened fast ever since.

First was the aforementioned "Dottie West Day" in her hometown, proceeds of which went toward the creation of a Little League baseball field named, appropriately, "Dottie West Diamond." A street was also named in her honor.

Then came a string of increasingly bigger and better personal appearances everywhere from Miami, Fla. to Bangor, Maine, in packed auditoriums and night clubs.

Faron Young paid the ultimate compliment by tabbing the raven-haired beauty as female lead on "The Faron Young Show," a syndicated opus filmed in Oklahoma and carried throughout the United States. She also was hand-picked as female lead for the "Webb Pierce Show" TV pilot.

Before this publication goes to press, she will have cut another album to follow up her present hit LP "Dottie West Sings" and tremendous single, "When The Ring On Your Finger Turns Green."

We were privileged, during our Nashville visit, to be Dottie's guest backstage at the Grand Ole Opry. Perhaps a compliment she would have cherished most, had she heard it, came her way during a performance. Three young girls, all daughters of entertainers, crowded and squealed their way into position to watch their idol at work. Said one: "Oh golly, isn't she the greatest? I want to be just like her when I grow up."



A winter's walk relaxes the road-weary travelers.



CURTIS LEACH

His Golden Guitar

By TEXAS JIM COOPER

*"He's still a star,
He plays with a band of angels
— That's his . . . Golden Guitar."*

These are the last lines in a rhythmic hit, "Golden Guitar," co-written by and sung by the late Curtis Alvin Leach. The lines can easily be a descriptive farewell tribute to Leach himself, for since his death on Tuesday morning, December 14, he surely sings in Hillbilly Heaven with his Golden Guitar amidst a host of immortals.

Leach was slain at his humble home in Mesquite, near Dallas, Texas, just at the time when his name was becoming known and when his Country Western music career was rising to infinite heights. The loss of the 37-year-old composer is one deeply felt by the world of music, and in particular, in the C/W field.

One C/W figure deeply touched by the young writer-singer's tragic demise is Dewey Groom, owner of Saran Music Company and Longhorn Records, both of Dallas, for which Leach wrote and sang. Of the Catoosa, Oklahoma native, Groom says, "I think his name will be immortal, like that of Hank Williams. Curtis was a genius and left enough writing to take care of his children."

C/W singing writers like Willie Nelson and Hank Thompson, notes Groom, acknowledge that Curtis Leach was unique as a master of the musical word. Leach's "Golden Guitar" was also recorded by Bill Anderson in an album, "Bright Lights and Country Music." Response to the number was so significant that "Golden Guitar" was taken from the album and released as an Anderson single. Bobby Bare, says Groom, wants to record three of Leach's philosophical or inspirational compositions, "Big Railroad Man," "Two Sinners," and "Lightning Strikes Twice," while Tex Ritter has his recording eye on "Ginny

Pour The Wine," a gunfighter ballad written by Leach. Curtis Leach left "a sack full" of potent compositions that grasp the heartstrings with fervent effect, reports Groom.

Curtis, who wrote his first song as a lad of ten, could write a variety of tune types. He could drive home with a moving sacred melody or set a standard with a light hearted composition. He was adept at producing straight-from-life lyrics or bringing forth a stirring song of love. His writing power was apparently limitless, always rich and mighty. Some of those great compositions are found in his first album, now out. Groom explains that it was hard to find a title which sounded appropriate until the people of Longhorn Records came up with "The Indescribable Curtis Leach." Groom adds that one of the last earthly rewards Leach had was in getting to see the decorative cover of that first album.

It will not be Curtis Leach's only album, however, for he left a legacy of 20 master tapes before he died. Leach started out with a recording of "The Highway Man," which he had written. He helped to compose "One Man Band" and "Country Guitar" for Phil Baugh, another popular Longhorn Records talent. And then there was the impressive "Golden Guitar." His singles were (and are) worthy of much praise for they were all good enough perhaps to start a legend. They were songs that Curtis Leach could build upon and add to, even after death, with potential chart-rating albums.

Curtis Leach is gone—but not forgotten. Can't you hear him now, singing from the wings of Hillbilly Heaven, his voice ever clear and beautiful and eternal? *"He's still a star, He plays with a band of angels — That's his . . . Golden Guitar."*

MAY THE BIRD OF PARADISE.....



By FRANK HARRIS

"The next time President Johnson asks us all to keep our traveling confined to the United States, I'll do as he says," joked Jimmy Dickens with COUNTRY MUSIC LIFE recently. "Why look at me. Before I started all this traveling, I used to be 6 ft. 3 in. tall. Guess you'd say it's worn me down a bit!"

The pun-packed personality of "Little Jimmy" Dickens is as refreshing as a breath of Spring. This diminutive dynamo literally exudes happiness to all who come in contact with him, and, within the last six months the drowds have been getting bigger and bigger every day.

"'The Bird of Paradise' has been great to Tater. There's no doubt about that," injected Larry Moeller, "however, please don't forget that he's been in this business over 30 years and has played to increasingly larger crowds every year. This man didn't just happen overnight. He's been a top box office draw for a long, long time."

There's little doubt that his agent knows the score. Despite the fact that millions who had never before heard of Jimmy Dickens became fans of his because of "The Bird of Paradise," there are scores and scores of people like this reporter who have followed his fantastic career since the days of "Old Cold Tater," "A-Sleepin' At The Foot Of The Bed" and "Country Boy."

But, in all fairness, perhaps we should examine a little closer "The Bird of Paradise."

The song was brought to Dickens's attention one night while he was recording at Columbia Studios in Nashville. His old friend Happy Wilson, with whom he'd collaborated before advantageously, came rushing up with "a hit" and pleaded with Jimmy to stop everything at once.

Stopping everything in the middle of a recording session for the purpose of hearing another song is unheard of. But Dickens and Wilson had known each other too long, so Dickens stopped to see what his friend had. It was the smartest thing he ever did.

"That kooky, completely crazy song just grew on me each time I heard it," explained Tater, "and I knew, as well as I'd ever known anything before, that we had a hit. It had been a long, dry spell and I dammed sure didn't want this one to get away from me."

The rest is history, of course. He grabbed the song, and it parlayed him into a household word everywhere music is played. There's no doubt that it is the hottest record he ever had, making charts on the Pop as well as Country Music markets.

He appeared before millions and millions of viewers with "The Bird of Paradise" on such major network television shows as The Jimmy Dean Show, Hullabaloo, The Lloyd Thaxton Show, The Johnny Carson Show, 9th Street West and Hollywood A-Go-Go. The latter show was seen not only in the United States but in seven foreign countries as well. Another added interesting note here is that the Hullabaloo appearance marked the first time a Country Music artist had made an appearance on the all-Pop-Rock-and-Roll Show.



THIS 20-year-old shot was just a prelude of what lay ahead. When "The Bird of Paradise" reached its height, Jimmy received almost this much every day.

LITTLE JIMMY DICKENS



Obviously record sales took off like a rocket launch at Cape Kennedy, and stayed in orbit for months. "All of a sudden I've got my 'old friends' back," chuckled Jimmy, referring, of course, to the bee-hive of buddies which always seem to swarm around a winner, any winner.

Date-wise, Tater's booked as solidly as ever, but that's saying a mouthful. Year-in and year-out he probably plays as many personal appearances as any entertainer anywhere. As a matter of fact, his fellow tradesmen jest that he's been in and out of more hotels than a Gideon Bible salesman!

In the Spring of 1964, for example, he became the first Country Music artist to completely circle the globe on a world tour. The adventure began in January with a 21-day Far East fling from which he returned to Minneapolis for a series of show dates. Throughout most of February, Tater covered Canada, dropping down into Texas for personal appearances. After a March sojourn into Nebraska, Missouri, South Dakota and Iowa, he left for a month and a half of bookings in every major European city.

With Europe out of the way, Jimmy and Gino King, his constant companion and stage counterpart, returned to completely saturate all of our 50 states. At one stretch, the twosome worked 190 of 210 consecutive days before taking a brief break prior to another Far East invasion.

What makes Jimmy run? Larry Noeller speculates thusly: "Tater might be small, but he's wound up tight. He's got more energy than any five men I know. Certainly he doesn't need this much work. No man alive does. But between an absolute avalanche of requests for the guy and his own personal push, there's simply no holding him back.

"Why when he was in Viet Nam recently, between his regularly scheduled shows he herded his backup men into a jeep and roared right up to the front lines to play for the fighting troops. The battle didn't lull

Pam's Petty-Cab (right) provides a perch for Poodles Fifi and Laomi. The cab was purchased in the Far East by Jimmy and shipped to the States. Christened 'The Bird of Paradise Special,' Jimmy and Ernestine bear the banner for COUNTRY MUSIC LIFE.



A Peacock Pie highlighted Jimmy's recent surprise birthday party planned by Ernestine. Over a hundred wellwishers dropped by for cake and ice cream.



JIMMY and Ernestine "Talk Turkey" at the 1958 Disc Jockey Convention in Nashville.



A pensive Pamela ponders the cameraman at a pre-Christmas photo session. Jimmy's schedule called for European personal appearances on December 25 so the family exchanged gifts early.

at all, but Dickens kept right on picking and singing for the fellows from home."

Historically, show business jesters wear only masks of humor and fun. But in Jimmy Dickens, there's no facade to disguise sadness. The outward glow equals the inner and the man we see is the man that is.

This happy person loves life. At home we encountered two reasons: his lovely wife, Ernestine, and equally charming daughter Pamela Jean, age 9.

His home is a rambling, modernistic one bustling with activity. Pamela's menagerie includes dogs, ducks, birds and horses and, of course, the most



"DADS will be boys, sometimes," especially when their kids momentarily abandon their toys. Here Jimmy earns his spurs on the three-wheeler.



STEVE Hardee (right) came to live with Ernestine and Jimmy when he was 13. Here, he's decked out in his cadet uniform while a student at Junior Military Academy, Cookeville, Tenn. Today, he wears the uniform of a soldier and is stationed at Wichita Falls with his new wife.

unique gifts imaginable brought home by Poppa from his globe-girdling adventures.

Jimmy's own boyhood was spent as one of 13 children in Bolt, W. Va., a small coal-mining town, and one would suspect that the luxuries he lavishes on Pamela and her Mom are those which he was denied as a youth. "My earlier songs," he insists, "were more than just strange lyrics put to music. Shucks, I wish I had a nickel for every 'ole cold tater' I've eaten, or every time I've slept at the foot of the bed!"

Stop wondering why the entertainer never grew past 4 ft. 11 ins. tall. The answer is obvious. It takes time, plus three meals a day and plenty of rest to grow!

LEFTY FRIZZELL

By
TEXAS JIM COOPER

When William Orville Frizzell, born in Corsicana, Texas in 1928, traded his boxing gloves for a guitar and started singing professionally, he scored a bigger knockout in the musical world than he ever did in the fight ring.

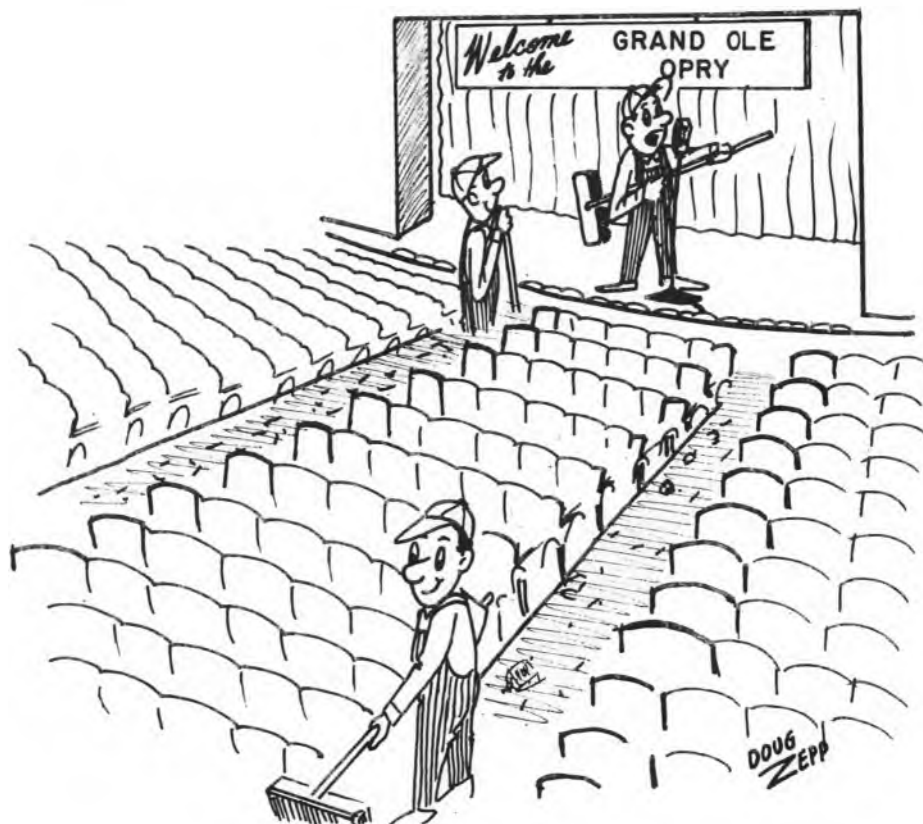
He got the name Lefty by using his left hand for knockout punches in Golden Gloves competition. In 1950, strumming his guitar with his right hand, Lefty sang "If You've Got The Money, Honey, I've Got The Time" for Columbia and it was a best seller. As a matter of fact, Lefty wrote that song. Again and again Lefty musically scored with recordings like "The Long Black Veil," "Always Late," "Mom And Dad Waltz," and "Saginaw, Michigan." In time Lefty had set a record with 13 top ten songs.

His reputation made as "one of the most compelling of performers," Lefty was imitated by a host of younger singers who loved the Frizzell style and tried, in vain, to capture it. Today the Frizzell style remains matchless.



Lefty lives with his wife Alice, daughter Lois, and sons Ricky and Marlon on a Nashville, Tennessee estate, where he can spend his spare time thinking, fishing, enjoying the family pets, or just relaxing with his family.

But when it comes time to cut a new record and set a record for hit-lovers, then he will report to Columbia studios and tape a disc that when released pleases his public and proves again that there is only one like him—the incomparable Texas native, Lefty Frizzell!



"... Your Cheatin' Heart ..."

KFOX *Saturday Nite*



Buck Owens



Loretta Lynn



Leroy Van Dyke

By JIM HARRIS

Los Angeles is a bustling community of some eight million people spread out over approximately 450 square miles of Southern California. It is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world. It is the only place I can think of where people think absolutely nothing of driving 50 miles to see a show.

Located in the heart of downtown L.A. (as we locals call it) is a huge building known as the Shrine Auditorium. The Shrine has been the scene of many a performance by many an artist, but never have the walls echoed with such pure excitement as they did that night. For January 29 was the night of the KFOX Grand Ole Opry and Country Music Spectacular, and believe me that it was. A real spectacular — a real Saturday night blow-out.

The greatest lineup of talent was present for the first show of 1966, and if this show was any indication of what is in store for the country music fan in '66, it is going to be a great year!

Before the show "backstage" was a beehive of activity—a real sight to behold. People were running around getting everything ready for the start of the show. This writer has no conception of the amount of work involved in putting together a show of this size, but judging from what I observed backstage before and during the show, it was apparently no easy job for all that were involved. Dick Schofield, general manager of KFOX was glimpsed occasionally as he dashed by—headed somewhere—never standing still. The same can be said for Biff Collie, KFOX DJ—Biff was on the run all night. On stage it was a little different. DJ Lee Ross had a record player set up and was playing top country records for the people in the audience while they were waiting for the show to begin.

Before any one knew it show time was upon us, and again Biff Collie charged by. The show opened with a bang, as the first performer to take his turn at the mike was the great Leroy Van Dyke with all the Auctioneers. Leroy, the tremendous performer that he is, sang all his favorite songs including the Auctioneer song, which always amazes everyone, and wrapped it up with his all-time greatest hit. The band wasn't two bars into the song when the audience broke into thunderous applause as they recognized "Walk On By." As Leroy finished they clapped, whistled, stomped and clapped some more and everyone knew they were witnessing one of the greatest shows Southern California had ever seen.

Hugh Cherry came out and talked for a couple of minutes and the next thing anyone remembers is "How-DEE! I'm just so proud to be here." Who else could that be but the first lady of country comedy, that girl from Grinders Switch, Tennessee, Cousin Minnie Pearl. Minnie literally rocked the place with her own brand of humor as only she can do.

An unexpected artist joined Minnie on stage for a few minutes, to the audience's delight. America's favorite Marine, Jim Nabors, better known to millions of TV viewers as "Gomer Pyle, USMC." By the time Minnie and Jim were through, if anyone had had a pill for aching sides they wouldn't have been able to give them away fast enough.

With the audience still recuperating from Minnie Pearl and Jim Nabors, and brushing the dust off from rolling in the aisles, Dick Haynes started into an introduction to end all introductions: Buck Owens and the Buckaroos! They came on stage to a round of applause like nothing ever heard before.

Buck, in his black and gold country outfit and the Buckaroos in pink and silver outfits made just about

BLOWOUT



Roy Clark



Minnie Pearl



Sonny James

the most colorful group imaginable. The band immediately started playing an extended version of the introduction to one of Buck's greatest hits, while Buck himself talked to the audience. As Buck talked, there were little murmurs of applause coming from the far corners of the auditorium as people started to recognize the music, but when he leaned back and belted out "They're gonna put me in the movies," the audience erupted into applause like nothing I have ever heard before. If you have never witnessed a show with Buck and his band you have missed one of the great moments of your life. There are singers and then there are entertainers and Buck Owens is both with some to spare.

His band is undoubtedly one of the great country music bands of all time and every one of the Buckaroos is a showman in himself. Coupled with Buck, they make a combination that is unequalled anywhere. His performance was like a live version of the "Buck Owens Songbook." Everything from "Loves Gonna Live Here" to "I've Got a Tiger By The Tail." Each one greeted with a round of applause that shook the walls.

The next artist on the program was none other than "that big tall man" Dick Curless. Dick did a tremendous job and the audience just loved him. He is a great performer and has as fine a voice as anyone in the business.

By this time the audience was so charged up with the show that the back half of every seat in the auditorium hadn't been sat in for the last hour. They were ready for "The Showman's Showman."

When Lee Ross introduced Roy Clark the people went wild with applause. The man of many talents used them all that night. He is a fine singer, a fantastic comedian, and a more-than-fantastic guitarist.

I have his album "The Roy Clark Guitar Spectacular," but listening to this man play on a record and seeing him perform on stage in person are two completely different experiences. Roy is unquestionably one of the greatest entertainers in this country, and if you have never seen (or heard) him play that guitar, you have missed one of the experiences of your life. How anyone can play that fast and still maintain the accuracy that he does is beyond me, but he does. Roy had to return for an encore—the audience wasn't about to let anything as good as this end so soon.

One of the sweetest and nicest people one could hope to meet was the next artist to contribute to the blistering of palms. When Cliffie Stone introduced Loretta Lynn the walls rocked again with applause. Loretta put on such a good show that everybody just loved her as they always have. To hear her belt out a song like no one else can is truly an experience in itself. Then to have her switch just like that to a slow ballad makes one wonder where she got all that talent—but talent she has and when Loretta is in the spotlight she doesn't hold back anything. Everything she has goes into that song whether it's a "tear jerker" or a "toe tapper." Loretta always has time, as do so many of our wonderful country entertainers, to stop and chat with anyone and everyone. Small wonder that she is referred to as the Number One girl singer in the country.

The last, but certainly not least, artist to occupy the spotlight was a person who could best be described as "just a real nice guy" as well as a great performer. The band goes by the name of "The Southern Gentlemen" and of course the man is THE Southern Gentleman, Sonny James. Mere words cannot do justice to Sonny's talents. A terrific artist, a great performer and a nice guy. Sonny dressed very modestly



We don't know what Roy Clark just said to Minnie Pearl, but it must have been funny. Two great comedians — two wonderful people. Whatever it was, looks like KFOX DJ Cliffie Stone is laughing too.



The first lady of country song, pert Loretta Lynn. Her dress was a bright pink, almost a magenta. With silver trim it was quite colorful.



Tommy Wiggins and Dick Curless talking over some things. Something very funny must be going on because Mae Boren Axton (Hoyt's mother) and Mrs. Buck Owens are both laughing at something over there.

in slacks and a sport shirt and his band in black suits with silver vests were a dazzling sight to behold. All of his songs got the spotlight that night with several rounds of applause. When Sonny was through, the audience, aware that they had just seen one of the greatest, if not the greatest, country music show ever staged, rocked the walls with applause. They clapped and clapped until one thought there would be no end.

All in all it was a sensational show with some of the greatest talent in the country, presented on one



Leroy Van Dyke takes a breather and chats with KFOX DJ Hugh Cherry. Hugh has been active in country music since "way back when."



Tommy Wiggins, a great performer in his own right, was backstage during the entire show. We managed to catch him here talking to his good friend Leroy Van Dyke.



Jim Nabors (we know him as Gomer Pyle) dropped backstage to say hello to all his "country cousins." Minnie Pearl thinks he's just about the funniest person there is.

stage. Dick Schofield and all the KFOX gang should be complimented, not only for presenting a tremendous show, but also for bringing so many of our favorite country artists to Southern California.

They say the next one will be bigger and better, but I don't see how.

The Singing Dentist



(DOCTOR) **PAUL MOORE**



Dr. Paul Moore's "records" are changing — from patients' records to record releases.

The "Singing Dentist," as he's known on Nashville's Record Row, has a hankering for show business that's as persistent as a toothache.

Singing is more than a sideline for Dr. Moore: it's sort of a way of life. His high school prophesy, in fact, tabbed him as a "picker" long before grinding and drilling ever entered his head.

As a university student at Vanderbilt in Nashville, he played regularly with a square dance group called the "Dixie Dewdrops." This, plus private party entertainment, sustained his interest in country music through the University of Tennessee's College of Dentistry and a two-year stint as a commissioned officer in the Navy.

While a lieutenant, he took flying lessons from a civilian stunt pilot on weekends and ultimately acquired a private pilot's license.

Paul's love of Country Music stayed with him through this period of acquiring degrees, licenses and various skills and ultimately persuaded him to pitch his talents to publishers and promoters in Music City. The pitch was well received and resulted in a recording contract with K-Ark Records in Nashville.

As perhaps the only practicing dentist in America under recording contract, his latest release is creating more than a fair share of interest. One side, "Della Joe," was written by Roger Miller. Paul penned its backside, "Country Music Show."

He jokes that he's driven the route to Nashville so many times, from his place of practise 60 miles away, that his car just automatically makes each curve and bend in the road.

Paul's wife, Sylvia, stays put while he's wending his way to Nashville through Tennessee hills after, and in between, office hours. Two good reasons are their children, Mike and Elizabeth, ages 8 and 7. Then there's also their 25-acre homestead to hold down, plus her full time job as Chief of Nursing at the local hospital.

The Doc's magnificent obsession with Country Music isn't something he sees as a lark. He's dead serious about the possibility of entering the entertainment world on an exclusive, full time basis. His future in this regard, however, will be largely determined by the progress, or lack of it, made by his latest release.

Oh well . . . once upon a time there was this golf-loving dentist named Cary Middlecoff . . .



EDDY ARNOLD

Balladeer To A Nation!

By TEXAS JIM COOPER

Among the established pioneers, kings, and other greats of Country Western music, like Roy Acuff, Red Foley, and Jimmie Davis, one name—that of America's ever popular balladeer, Eddy Arnold, looms majestically over the horizon of musical history.

That name has been a national byword since about 1945 when Eddy Arnold recorded his first hit "Mommy Please Stay Home With Me" which in six weeks time sold 85,000 copies. A year later, the "Tennessee Plowboy" recorded "That's How Much I Love You," which Eddy helped compose. It easily became one of Eddy Arnold's acclaimed 27 million record-sellers by becoming in itself a hit that sold a million copies.

Richard Edward Arnold's was a humble beginning born of hard-working farm parents. When the farm had to be sold at a public auction, Eddy and his two older brothers became sharecroppers on their late father's very land. These were indeed hard times.

But there was rising hope in the recollection of good times gone by—the times when Eddy's musical education began. As a lad of eight, Eddy's only toy was a beat-up harmonica, which he learned to play while listening to an aged phonograph record of Jimmie Rodgers singing "T For Texas." With a cousin's guitar a little later, Eddy, whose father had played fiddle and sung bass in the church in nearby Henderson, learned to strum and pick, after receiving a few lessons from his mother and a traveling musician. With his natural gift for singing, Eddy soon was good enough at 18 to leave farming for a chosen career in music.

In Jackson, Tenn., Eddy played with a band which landed a featured spot on local radio and then, briefly, on Memphis radio. The ambitious young Arnold afterwards took off on his own and secured singing time on a radio station in St. Louis, Mo.

Stardom started for the strapping six-footer when he joined the Golden West Cowboys, the band of famed Pee Wee King, who would give to the world such hits as "The Tennessee Waltz" which he and Redd Stewart composed. In time, however, handsome and brown-haired Eddy Arnold left his position as guitar-vocalist for Pee Wee King to form his own group, "The Tennessee Plowboys." As "Eddy Arnold and His Tennessee Plowboys" grew in popularity, an RCA Victor recording contract came to them. The "Tennessee Plowboys" provided the instrumental background, of course, while Eddy sang his way by records into the hearts of millions of the world's citizens. Already a WSM-Grand Ole Opry favorite, Eddy added to his first

releases with many chart-stopping hits like "Anytime," "It's A Sin," "Bouquet of Roses," "Don't Rob Another Man's Castle," "The Tennessee Waltz," "I Really Don't Want To Know," "Cuddle-Buggin' Baby," "I'll Hold You In My Heart," "A Heart Full of Love," "Molly Darling," "Rockin' Alone," "Will The Circle Be Unbroken?" "Who At My Door Is Standing?" "Cattle Call," and "Texarkana Baby."

Besides Eddy Arnold's albums of hits and best sellers, he has recorded albums of songs that are better classified as personal favorites. There have been four of these released on the RCA Camden economy line. Two of these albums—"Eddy's Songs" and "Eddy Arnold," for example—contain such favorites as "Why Should I Cry?" "One Kiss Too Many," "There's No Wings On My Angel," "Roll Along Kentucky Moon," "Condemned Without Trial," "Kentucky Waltz," "When My Blue Moon Turns To Gold Again," "Chip Off The Old Block," "The Day You Left Me," "I'm A Good Boy," "The Worst Night Of My Life," "Eddy's Song," "That's How Much I Love You," "The Mills Of the Gods," "Wabash Cannonball," "How Did You Know?" "No One To Cry To," "Lovin' Up A Storm," "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine," "What A Way To Die," "Singing The Blues," "Take A Tiger By The Tail," "Do You Miss Me?" and "Ready Willing And Able."

Eddy's singles and albums have been award-winners, in a number of cases. In 1963 his record of "Cattle Call" was picked as the Number One all time favorite country single, and "Anytime," his long playing collection of twelve of his greatest hits, was rated the same year as the Number One all time favorite country album. Eddy, a singer who has had some 56 top ten hits—14 of which have made Number One, had two singles that made the 1964 charts. These two were "I Thank My Lucky Stars" and "Molly," the latter which is different from Eddy's better known "Molly Darling." One of the top ten singles of 1965 was Eddy's "What's He Doing In My world?" Also in 1965, two Arnold albums, "Faithfully Yours" and "The Easy Way," ranked in the selection of top LP's for the first eight months of the year. "The Easy Way," in addition, reached the cherished spot of Number One.

Two men who have been the most instrumental in guiding Eddy's career to stardom are Steve Sholes, RCA division vice president, and Colonel Tom Parker, the agent. It is said that Parker made his first million dollars by managing Eddy. And Sholes has said of



Eddy Arnold is an old and dear friend of mine and I feel that he typifies the very best in Country Music.

Eddy is a man of high moral standards, great musical talent and above all, he is a gentleman.

Through sound management he has garnered not only great personal respect in his home community but has also become tremendously influential in business and real estate circles.

I am proud to call him my friend.

Governor Frank Clement



AMERICA'S First Family are friends and ardent fans of Eddy Arnold's. Left to right, Luci, Lynda, Lady Bird, and President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Eddy, one of 70 nominees to the Country Music Hall of Fame of 1965, that Arnold "just naturally sings right. It's an unusual quality. Caruso had it and so has Bing Crosby, but they're the only ones I can think of besides Eddy."

A person with a most interesting personality, Eddy is a man who likes "a simple song where the lyrics lay it right on the line." Eddy, the man with a gift for singing "naturally" has not limited his perfect sounding simple songs to recordings, but has delivered

them in two films, three television programs—"Eddy Arnold Sings," "Eddy Arnold Time," and "Today On The Farm"—in particular, many theater and night club engagements, and numerous other personal appearances. Eddy Arnold goes on the road every three months, coast to coast. However, it has been ten years since he has played those gruelling one night stands.

Eddy has made two concert appearances, the first being in Milwaukee about 1960. The second was in Dallas, Tex. December 11, 1965. Backed by the unique musical magic of the 92 member Dallas Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of conductor George Trautwein, Eddy sang to a filled house, giving forth with wonderful renditions of his hits. Eddy's relaxed, country music crooning-style made Dallas' third seasonal Promenade Pops concert a performance memory-maker and a box office sell-out.

In his years of successful entertaining, Eddy Arnold has made countless friends. One of them is President Lyndon Johnson, whom Eddy first met in 1953. Eddy first visited the Johnson Ranch in 1959 to entertain for former President Harry Truman, the late Congressman Sam Rayburn of Texas, Lopez Mateos, then President of Mexico, and the nation's present First Family. Eddy occasionally goes to the 400-acre-plus LBJ spread to hunt, fish, chat, sample some of Johnson's legendary barbecue, and to sing in that familiar way of his of which the President is such a fan.

Like President Johnson, Eddy is a rancher, possessing two cattle spreads of his own. Eddy Arnold, a wealthy businessman, also owns various thriving businesses and lives quietly near Nashville, Tenn. with his wife Sally, whom he wed in 1941, and daughter Jo Ann and son Dick, who, like their parents, are becoming fine people.

Eddy Arnold entered the New Year during his tour of Europe. He spent almost a week in London promoting a new record and appearing on British television. This was followed by a sojourn to Ireland.

Country-Western music will always have its giants and among those magnificent monarchs of the musical field, one name will always stand out and be recalled with affection and admiration—that of Eddy Arnold.

VERNON GLEN'S

By MARVIN L. HOERNER

To Vernon Glen, known throughout the Midwest as "Mr. Talent," this year's DJ Convention was scheduled to be another pleasant opportunity of visiting friends he has made during his career in Country Music; he was also looking for a chance to thank many of the DJs for help and encouragement in past months. However, the days from October 21 to 23 were destined to be far more significant than he could have thought possible.

But to give meaning to the importance of the DJ convention in Nashville, you must first understand a little of the background of Vernon Glen. He started as a professional entertainer at the age of 15 when he played steel with a country band in Southern Illinois. From the steel guitar he switched to the upright bass and started singing lead vocal with numerous bands. His popularity as a singer grew, and he dropped the bass for the conventional rhythm guitar.

Then Vernon tried his hand at songwriting. His first two records featured his own tunes and were well accepted; in fact, he had the distinction of having both on the "top ten" for many months in South America and various markets in the States.

Along with his recording activities, he made hundreds of personal appearances with members of The Grand Ole Opry and other leading names of Country Music. He made it a major point to attend as many conventions as possible, including the "Colorado Country Music Festival" in Denver, and the conventions of the Northeast Country Music Assn., where he was elected to the Board of Directors of both organizations, positions he is most proud of.

While at the Northeast Country Music Convention, Kay Arnold suggested he cut his next session in Nashville and to strive for the authentic "Nashville Sound." He made an appointment with Kay and her husband, Buster Doss, to audition some of Kay's material during his attendance at the next Nashville DJ Convention.

Months passed and at last Vernon was "on the road to Nashville." Upon his arrival in "Music City USA," he visited with Kay and Buster, and taking Kay's advice, carefully listened for that all important "Nashville Sound." He found it! "Looks Like I'm Gonna Fight Again," was perfect for him and topical of the times. Kay "doctored" the material for his special styling and carefully coached him for better effect. Buster agreed to represent Glen as his personal manager and signed him to the Buster Doss Talent Agency.

As the convention rolled into full swing, they decided to move fast; to cut the session immediately; and try to lease the release to a major label.

Buster made all the necessary arrangements and in a few short days, Glen was standing in front of a mike at Bradley Studios, surrounded by some of

ROAD TO NASHVILLE

Nashville's leading musicians. Included were Billy Grammer and Pete Drake.

In less than 45 minutes, the session was over. As Vernon said later, "I'd been dreaming of a Nashville session for 15 years, and before I knew it - it was over." He was wrong. It had all just begun.

The A&R man of that session was young and dynamic Russell Sims of Sims Records. He was so enthused over the session and the "easy recording style," that three hours later Glen was signed to an exclusive Sims recording contract with three upcoming releases and a possible album in 1966.

That "road to Nashville" has been a long one . . . from the time a scared kid of 15 climbed on a hayrack and started playing the steel guitar . . . to the present where he finds himself with an exclusive recording contract with a leading Nashville label and a potential hit record. Known as one of the friendliest entertainers in Country Music, Vernon Glen richly deserves the success that is now his. As one of his ardent fans said, "It couldn't happen to a nicer guy."



How a Record is Made

Follow Vernon Glen Through the Process of Making a Record

By MARVIN L. HOERNER

To the people who wanted to know the "why's and how come's" of a recording session . . . we'll follow the path taken by Glen Lewis, which resulted in an excellent Nashville session. Plus the added benefits of a recording contract with a leading Nashville label, a booking agency and a personal manager.

Because of space limitations we'll "conveniently" skip the years of patience, hundreds of personal appearances, three previous record releases and hours upon hours of plain hard work. For Glen, it paid off!



Before you make a "master" tape, you must have a label. Here, Glen, (who from here on out will record under the name of Vernon Glen) signs that all important contract. Seen with Vernon is Russell Sims, President of Sims Records.



Before you cut a session, you must have solid material to record. Here Vernon is "auditioning" song material, written by Kay Arnold, with his personal manager, Buster Doss. After "Looks Like I'm Gonna Fight Again" was selected, Kay "doctored" the material to fit his style and delivery . . . thus being more effective.



Now it's time for that important "sound" to enter the picture. Vernon, standing before the "singers' mike in Columbia Studios, is seen recording his first Sims release. Around the studio are the five musicians, each placed so as to give proper sound and dimension . . . to produce the famous "Nashville Sound" so desired these days.

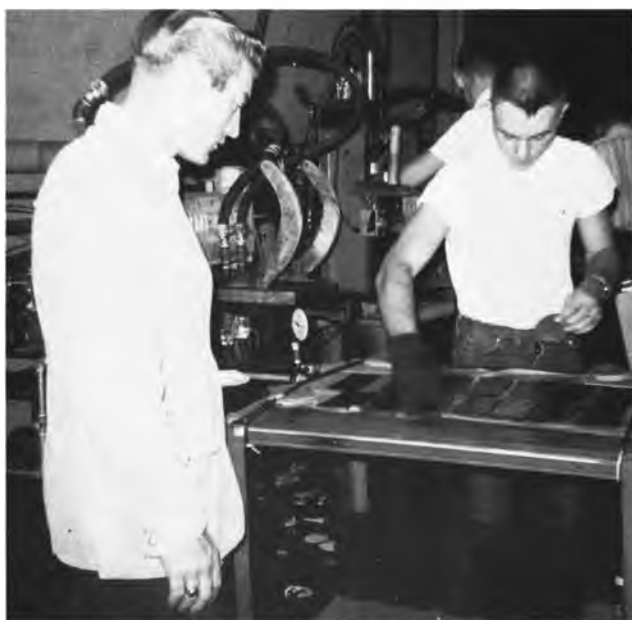


Pictured above are the four most responsible for the release . . . Vernon Glen, recording artist; Buster Doss, Vernon's manager who selected the

musicians (including Pete Drake on Steel), and booked the studio; Billy Grammer, who assisted on the arrangements and directed the musicians; and Russell Sims, record label President who A & R'd the complete session.



As we said, the "sound" is the all-important item and here Vernon listens carefully to the taping session in the control room. From here the duo tape is taken to another studio for mastering.



After the tape is mastered it goes to the pressing plant where Vernon is watching his record being pressed. From these small pieces of plastic comes the 45 release you place on your phonograph.

I have simplified the whole procedure but basically that is the story. To make that small 45 disc you must have the songwriter, song publisher, artist, musicians and the important A & R man . . . plus an excellent recording studio, an engineer who knows how to get the sound you want and the record label to stand behind you all the way. After the record is pressed, it goes out to the DJ's for exposure and to the national distributors who make it available to the local record shops.



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CHARLIE PRIDE

Sceptics also scoffed at color television, silly putty and Bat Man, saying they would never make it.

But along came Charley Pride, a Negro Country Music singer who never heard a discouraging word—and today stands on the threshold of making it in a way no member of his race ever has before, except, perhaps, Jackie Robinson or Harry Bellafonte. But this is Country Music, a horse of another color.

Although Negroes have been active in Country Music before, the debut of Montana entertainer Charley Pride is a milestone for members of his race. Specifically, it marks the first time ever a Negro Country Music artist has been signed to a long term contract by a major record label.

Pride signed a 5-year pact with RCA Victor last November and his first single went on sale this month. The two sides, "Snakes Crawl At Night" and "Atlantic Coastal Line," were co-written by Cedarwood Publishing Company's Mel Tillis and Fred Burch, two of the nation's top songwriters. Extra lustre stems from the fact that Pride's initial RCA session was produced by veterans Chet Atkins and Jack Clement.

Charley's emergence as a Country and Western entertainer is not without precedent, though the field heretofore has admittedly been a relatively "closed shop" for members of his race when compared to the Pop and Rock 'n Roll markets.

DeFord Bailey, for example, a Negro, played on the Grand Ole Opry for years. And a featured member of Roy Acuff's band, at one time, was a Negro who played the spoons. But the parallel goes back even further. There are a number of facts which indicate that Negroes have played a significant role in the development of modern-day Country Music.

The banjo, Country Music's trademark, for example, is a traditional American instrument introduced to mountain folk by Southern Negro workers when railroads were being carved into the Southern Appalachian Mountain areas. Minstrels carried sound and song into modern times, until a Memphis youngster named Elvis Presley combined the Southern Negro jazz beat with Country Music and came up with "Rock-A-Billy."

"A Negro Country Entertainer?

Forget it Mac,

it will never happen!"

Thus, Charley's role isn't entirely unique, except, of course, that he's the first to be given the go-ahead in such a formal manner.

Jack Johnson, his discoverer and present co-manager with Clement, voices optimism in Charley's future: "He's a tremendous talent and is respected as such by his fellow Country Music entertainers. Although his style is distinct and original, he has many qualities which remind me of some of the top Country singers. I feel that he has the 'soul' of Hank Williams, the voice of Jim Reeves, and sings as 'Country' as Stonewall Jackson. With a combination like this, I don't see how he can miss."

Charley's background is made up of the "stuff" that country music comes from—earthiness, hard work, high hopes and heartbreak. And his love for it is genuine, developed during boyhood. Some of his fondest memories are of song sessions around the radio, with the Grand Ole Opry tuned in on Saturday night after a hard week's work.

Following two rear-rank years as a foot-soldier after high school graduation, he devoted a major portion of his young life to pursuing a professional baseball career, and, for a brief period, was called up for service with the Los Angeles Angels. During off season, he entertained regularly at a number of Montana night clubs.

While on a tryout trip with the New York Mets at their training camp in St. Petersburg, Fla., he toured through Nashville and auditioned for Johnson. From that point on, at Johnson's urging, he chucked his baseball bat in favor of a guitar.

Like all entertainers, his future will be determined by public acceptance . . . and one of Country Music's proudest boasts is that it is the music "of the people."



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