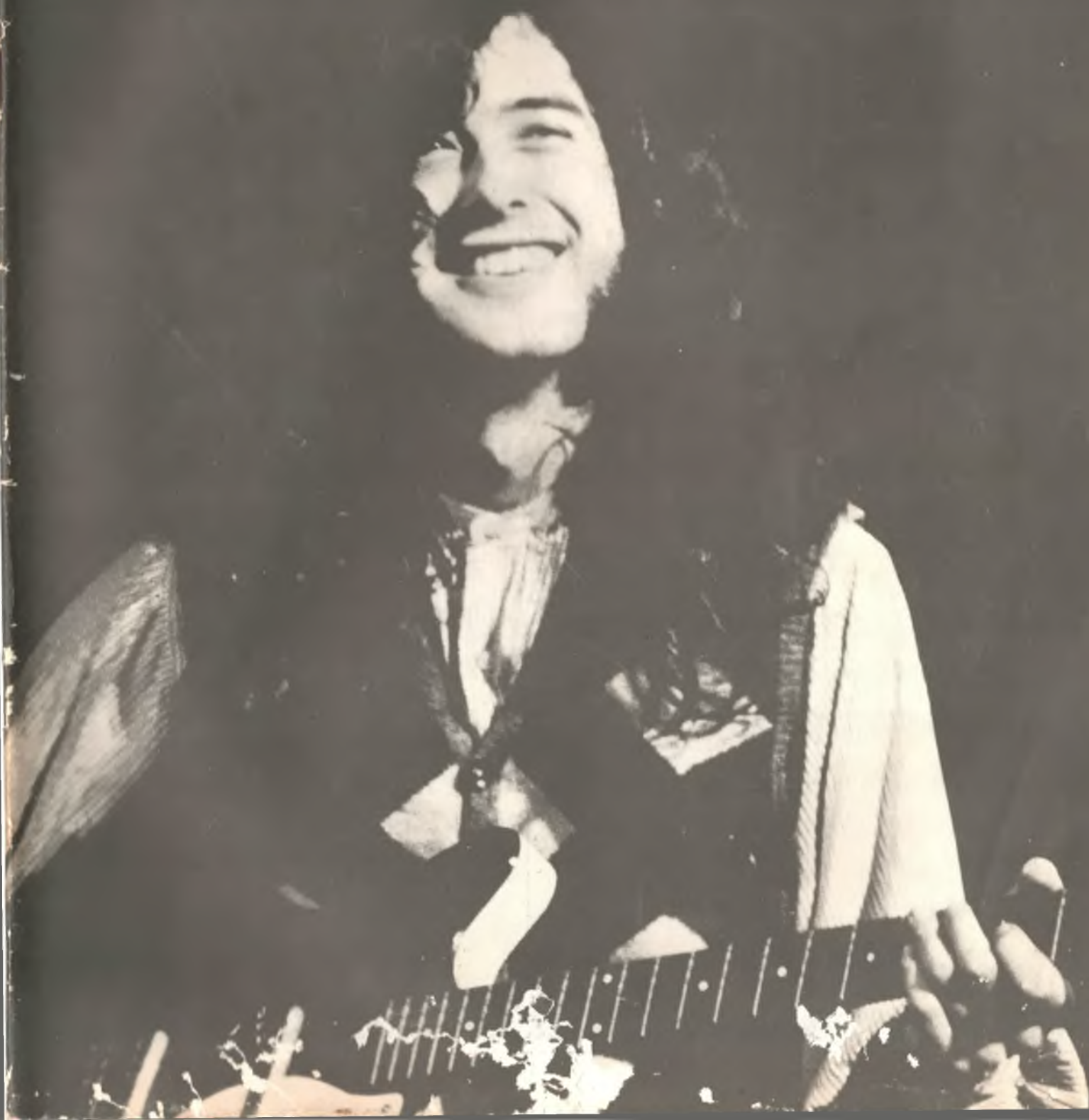


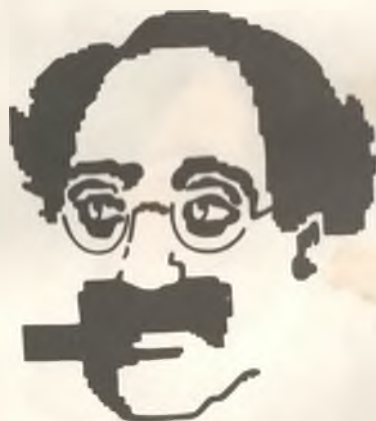
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Where do you start when you go to interview a musician like Jimmy Page? At the beginning, obviously. In this issue we'll investigate his career as a session guitarist, and his work as a Yardbird — then, next month, we'll track the course of the Zeppelin.

ZZ: Before you were doing session work, you began your professional musical career with Neil Christian and the Crusaders, didn't you?

JP: Yes, I was with them when I left school, but all the travelling to one-nighter gigs made me ill — I used to get sick in the van — and so I left to go to art school. Then, when I left there, I began to do sessions bit by bit, and the work just began to escalate; at first, it was a nice scene, because there were good things to be done — around the advent of the Beatles and Stones booms — and I worked as a freelance and, because I was a new face on the scene, I got bookings all over the place.

ZZ: Legend has it that you got into sessions after you were spotted playing at the Marquee.

JP: Yes, it was something like that I used to go up there and play in the interval spot with three other guys — we didn't really know each other outside the Marquee; we just used to meet there, and get up and play.

ZZ: Was that when you were playing with this pianist, Andy Wren?

JP: That's right — I wonder what happened to him . . . he was really good. To back track a moment, when it came to the point when I wasn't going to go on with Neil Christian anymore, I was approached by Cyril Davies, who was forming a group, and I went as far as rehearsing with them before I came to the decision that there was no point in going on because I'd just get into the same situation of feeling sick during all the travelling — so I packed it in and went off to art school for about 18 months.

ZZ: When you started doing sessions, could you pick and choose at all?

JP: Not really; you'd get the sort of situation where, say, a violinist session fixer, who didn't really know many other session musicians, would hear that there was a new guitar player around, and he'd book me for what turned out to be a ludicrous session — like muzak for supermarkets or something like that. Sometimes, I'd be asked to do a session and the fixer would say "so and so wants you to do it" and I knew I'd be OK, that it'd be a suitable sort of job, but often I'd arrive without knowing what it was for — and as I got a little more experienced, those were the sort of things I learnt to avoid I mean, they were just a headache — things I shouldn't have been doing.

ZZ: I think the sessions you're probably best known for are those Shel Talmy productions the Kinks in 1964 and the Who just a few months later.

JP: I was thinking about those the other day, and I was wondering why Shel Talmy got so involved with the session men he used to use, because quite often, they just weren't necessary at all. For instance, I wasn't really needed on the Who's "Can't Explain" session, but I was there — and all I managed to do was sneak in a couple of phrases on the b-side. Maybe Talmy used to have people like me standing by in case the group couldn't quite make it on some level I mean, the Kinks didn't really want me around when they were recording. One aspect of being in the studio whilst potential hits were being made was the press; too many people were making a fuss about the use of session men I wasn't saying anything, obviously, but it just leaked out, and that sort of thing often led to considerable bad feeling.

ZZ: Pete Townshend acknowledges your assistance on "Can't Explain", but Ray Davies is adamant that you played nothing but tambourine on any of the Kinks stuff.

JP: That's fair enough — I didn't really do that much on the Kinks records I know I managed to get a couple of riffs in on their album, but I can't really remember — I know that he didn't really approve of my presence.

ZZ: I've obviously got a few ideas about various records where you played the solos and so on, but would you prefer it if I didn't ask you about specific instances like I can appreciate that session men must have a code of good faith with the people they're employed by.

JP: Well yes, suffice it to say that during the period of 1964-1967, say, I was in there, grovelling around on a lot of sessions, but if I went into details, it would be a bit of a nausea for the people concerned.

ZZ: As a session man, and as the bloke who turned down an offer to replace Clapton in the Yardbirds, you became a bit of a cult figure — especially regarding guitars — like when you got hold of a Les Paul Custom, everybody wanted one. A lot of people learnt from you, but where did you learn from?

JP: I chose that Les Paul Custom purely because it had three pick-ups and such a good range of sounds — it seemed to be the best all-rounder at the time. The Stratocaster is probably the best all-rounder now, but at that time it was the Les Paul. But Eric (Clapton) must take the credit for establishing the "Les Paul Sound", the sort of playing he was doing in the Bluesbreakers, for instance. You see, even though I may have been one of the first to have a Les Paul, I didn't often get the chance to get going on it on the odd occasion, I was able to put a bit of feedback onto some record or other, but it was only after all the other musicians had gone home, because when I played like that, they just used to put their fingers in their ears. The limitations were often really frustrating — a factor which eventually led to my leaving session work — because I rarely had a chance to roar into something the sax players and violinists used to look at me as though I were some kind of joke.

ZZ: So you had no free rein at the time — you just had to play as you were told to?

JP: Not exactly. In most cases, they'd give you a part, which was written down and sometimes it was good, but usually

you'd only play it as it was written if you wanted to be really nasty. Often, the part would be really bad, and you knew that you could do so much better if only you had the chance — you know, things that flowed and sounded better, and had more life in them. It all depended how willing the musical director was; if he accepted your suggestions, you obviously had a freer hand, but if he wanted every part to be his invention, you had to follow his instructions.

ZZ: Who were you listening to and learning from — people like James Burton and Scotty Moore?

JP: That's right — I've always listened to them, and the Everly Brothers had a good steel player (on things like "Lucille" and "I'm not angry") called Johnny Day. I asked the Everlys who that was, because everyone was saying it was Chet Atkins and I didn't think it was. But I was interested in any of those guitarists who were bending strings — all the earthier ones.

ZZ: What about the new wave of British acoustic guitarists who were starting up then (in late '64, early '65), like Bert Jansch and John Renbourn did you pick up on them at all?

JP: I went to see Bert Jansch at Les Cousins, just as his second LP was released (June 1965) and he was great — fantastic, he really was: If he was only still working as a solo now!

ZZ: What about Davy Graham? Bert and John looked on him as a "teacher", and held him above them in stature.

JP: He wasn't for me; I always thought that Bert was the one with the touch he was always far more adventurous and complicated in his technique, although Davy Graham, let's be fair, was the innovator of those raga things and he was really good at those. But you listen to things like "Alice's Wonderland" and "Finches" from the first Jansch LP — they're so complex and full of weird timings, and Davy Graham never did anything like that. So, yes, Bert Jansch really impressed me very greatly — his first album particularly, is just great from beginning to end.

ZZ: I thought that you and Davy Graham were matey in those days, and were involved in a kind of parallel development of Indian and Moroccan tunings and so on.

JP: No, I was friendly with Jon Mark, who in turn was a good friend of Davy Graham's, who I've never met.

ZZ: What I was angling at, was this contention over the sitar. A lot of people take the credit for introducing it to Western pop music, but I feel that you were probably the first person to investigate its possibilities.

JP: Davy Graham never had a sitar, but he must take credit for working out those guitar tunings he used on his raga pieces — they had a somewhat similar tuning to the sitar, though I don't know whether it was intentional or not. I know that he'd been to Morocco and played with musicians over there, but I don't know if he ever got actively interested in Indian music. Jon Mark and I got involved in Indian music, and I had a sitar sent over from India before any other people in pop certainly before George Harrison, for instance. I'd been to see Ravi Shankar, years before he became fashionable because the audience was nearly all adults — there were only about two young people there.

ZZ: I've often read about your having a



sitar, but I can't recall your ever using it on record.

JP: I never did — because I knew what would happen when someone eventually did and I wasn't wrong. To use an instrument, which has been developed over thousands of years, as a quick gimmick — well,

ZZ: You're right about the gimmick value — like, I remember Donovan saying he was going to retire for six months and learn the sitar, and I remember the way the Byrds paraded one at the press conference for "Eight Miles High".

JP: Yes, but that was a great record. I remember that I, personally, wasn't too happy with the way George Harrison used it on "Revolver" — though everyone else seemed to think it was incredible as far as sitar playing went — it wasn't, but later on, when he did "Within You, Without You", I think that's unsurpassed to this day. So he really did good things for Eastern music and was the one who woke people up to it on mass-media level, but it was people like Davy Graham who were into it long before anyone else.

ZZ: Here's a rumour, a Jimmy Page myth, that you can confirm or dispel you are reputed to have followed Albert Lee around with a tape recorder when he was in the Night sounds, so that you could cop his riffs.

JP: I admit that I used to record one or two people — like Cyril Davies and Little Walter and John Lee Hooker — but that was to listen to rather than copy. No, Albert Lee's in a class of his own — country guitar, and I was never into that style.

ZZ: That single you made on Fontana, "She just satisfies" — why did you only make just the one?

JP: I wasn't allowed to make a second one; but that single was a joke and should anyone hear it now and have a good laugh,

the only justification I can offer is that I played all the instruments myself, except the drums. The other side was instrumental featuring harmonica, because I got all interested in that around that time.

ZZ: Hence the Little Walter taping?
JP: Oh no, that was just to listen to — to put in my personal archives, which have quite a lot of interesting stuff — Johnny Kidd, Cliff Bennett, all sorts of people.

ZZ: Can you tell us about that "Blues Anthology" which came out on Immediate (two double albums in December 1969, which was a re-package of earlier single album releases), and which has just been re-released yet again in the States.

JP: That was really a tragedy for me. I got involved with Immediate, producing various things, including John Mayall's "Witchdoctor", "Telephone Blues" and a couple of others (around late 1965) — and Eric and I got friendly and he came down and we did some recording at home, and Immediate found out that I had tapes of it and said they belonged to them, because I was employed by them. I argued that they couldn't put them out, because they were just variations on blues structures, and in the end we dubbed some other instruments over some of them and they came out — with liner notes attributed to me (on earlier copies) though I didn't have anything to do with writing them. I didn't get a penny out of it anyway.

ZZ: Well that's amazing, because they were released three of four times. So the tapes you recorded at home were overdubbed — who was playing the other parts? (There are seven tracks attributed to Clapton and Page, and a couple have added rhythm.)

JP: Stu from the Stones (roadie) was on piano, Mick Jagger did some harp, Bill Wyman played bass and Charlie Watts was on drums.

ZZ: There are also tracks on there by The All Stars, featuring you and Beck and Nicky Hopkins — and all credited as your compositions.

JP: Yes — they were tapes Immediate had in their possession from a long time before it was in fact, the Cyril Davies All Stars without their guitarist, and they were just tracks we'd done for fun after the real session was over. It was just a case of Immediate hustling together whatever they could to fill out the albums, and I'm really embarrassed about the whole thing because everyone thought I'd instigated it, and I hadn't at all. As it was, nobody got paid for any of it and well,

(Note: this is by no means a full history of the pre-Yardbirds or session man Page. There are millions of gaps that may someday be investigated, but for the sake of fitting as much as possible into the time limitations, I chose to leap onto The Yardbirds at this point.)

ZZ: You joined The Yardbirds on bass, replacing Paul Samwell-Smith in July 1966 — can you tell us how that came about?

JP: Yes Paul Samwell-Smith said "I'm leaving." It was a great night, because it was at one of those silly ball things — either Oxford or Cambridge, I can't remember which — but everyone was dressed up in dinner jackets, and Keith Relf (The Yardbirds singer) got totally drunk and was rolling round the stage, grappling with the mike, blowing his

GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE

harmonica in all the wrong places and just singing nonsense words but it was great, just fantastically suitable for the occasion. But Samwell-Smith was always after musical precision and adherence to strictly rehearsed neatness, and it was more than he could take — it was the last straw, he'd just had enough and decided to quit.

ZZ: Were you there then? Did you used to go to gigs with them before you actually joined?

JP: Yes, I used to go to all the gigs with

them because I was really into what they were doing. So he jacked it in, and told the others that they'd do the same if they had any sense, but they had two gigs following closely and felt they had to do them — and it was a case of me helping them out of a spot; I offered to play bass, though I'd never played one in my life before. I knew their act and what they were doing and learnt enough to get through — and then they suggested that I stay on — so I did.

ZZ: We know that you turned down an offer to join The Yardbirds in Jan '65, when Clapton left, but you were also rumoured to be joining as an extra lead guitar earlier in '66.

JP: Jeff (Beck, who replaced Clapton) often used to say "I wish you could join and we could play together" and I agreed that it would be good, but I never took it seriously because there was this thing about five Yardbirds, and to bring in a sixth would have destroyed that so my joining was never a real consideration until Samwell-Smith left and I took over on bass. The idea was that Chris Dreja, who was the rhythm guitarist, should learn bass and when he became proficient enough we'd switch roles and The Yardbirds would then have two lead guitarists, and that eventually manifested itself on the Stones/Ike and Tina Turner Tour (which opened on 23rd Sept 1966). A lot of people think I never played lead alongside Jeff, but in fact we played together for several months.

ZZ: So after about a couple of months, Chris Dreja was able to get around enough on bass?

JP: Yes — but wait a minute, I think the switch was necessitated earlier than planned because of one of Jeff's collapses. We had to play this gig in San Francisco, at the Carousel I believe, and Jeff couldn't make it, so I took over lead that night and Chris played bass. It was really nerve-racking because this was at the height of The Yardbirds reputation and I wasn't exactly ready to roar off on lead guitar, but it went off alright and after that, we stayed that way — so when Jeff recovered, it was two lead guitars from that point on.

ZZ: I read somewhere that you and Beck practised Freddie King solos note for note so that you could play in unison on certain numbers.

JP: It wasn't just Freddie King, we rehearsed hard on all sorts of things, especially introduction riffs to things like "Over Under Sideways Down", which we were doing in harmonies and we had sections worked out where we'd play rehearsed phrases together it was the sort of thing that people like Wishbone Ash and Quiver have perfected, that dual lead guitar idea. Of course, that was all very well in theory and at rehearsal, but on stage Beck would often go off into something else.

ZZ: Did it really develop into a scowling, glaring battle, with you and Beck at opposite sides of the stage?

JP: No, it was never a case of trying to blow each other off, because I was trying to get it working, so you had this stereo effect on the guitars. There was no point in doing battle, that would've just led to a useless sound.

ZZ: When you left session work to play live, did you have to pay special attention to the visual aspects — like learning to leap around instead of just standing still and playing like a session man?

JP: To tell the truth, I didn't even think about it. When I'd been in Neil Christian and the Crusaders, I'd had to do things like arc over backwards until my head touched the stage — you know those silly things that groups used to do — but The Yardbirds were never into choreography or anything like that it was just a case of acting naturally, I suppose.

ZZ: Looking at release dates and listening to records and so on, I've concluded that the only tracks that you and Beck played on together were 'Happenings ten years ago' and 'Psycho Daisies' (both released on a Columbia single: DB 8024, Oct '66).

JP: I think that's right I played bass on 'Psycho Daisies' and there's a bit of a story attached to 'Happenings'. We were in the studio waiting for Beck to turn up, and Relf had this little bit recorded on a tape recorder the sort of riff pattern for the song. Well, I worked on the riff and the structure of it and we'd got it all ready by the time Beck eventually showed up — and he just put some guitar on top of it and that was it but I think it turned out well. There's also a double lead on 'Stroll On' (presumably the one recorded on the 'Blow Up' soundtrack — though Page was on bass in the film, as I recall).

ZZ: After Beck was kicked out at the end of '66, you carried on for about a year and a half, but only released four more singles and that terrible album called 'Little Games' (Released 8/67 in US, but never put out here). When you consider how immeasurably better the first Zeppelin album (a year later) was in terms of sound, performance, thought, arrangement and so on, it makes you wonder how 'Little Games' could've been so skimpy and tatty.

JP: Well, on half the tracks we didn't even hear the playbacks they were first takes. That's how it used to be done; we would spend time on singles, but Mickie Most (the producer) thought that LPs were nothing — just something to stick out after a single.

ZZ: Apart from the title track, which at least had some nice choppy rhythms and things, the rest of it seemed to be basic, naked songs before any ideas or arrangements were developed.

JP: which is all it was.

ZZ: And those last few singles didn't seem at all Yardbirdy — especially 'Ha Ha Said the Clown' and 'Ten little Indians' (neither of which were released here, mercifully). Were they in fact Relf plus session men who Most had got together to do the track while you were out touring?

JP: No, it was us alright, but both of those tracks were a bit of a con-job. It happened like this; Mickie Most would say "Why don't we try to do 'Ha Ha Said the Clown' (which had been a hit for Manfred Mann) but in a Yardbirds style?" And we'd say "Don't be silly". But he'd say "Come on, let's try it — it'd be an interesting experiment if it doesn't work, we'll scrap it". Of course, no sooner was it recorded than out it went, despite the fact that it was terrible and then,

to cap it all, we fell for exactly the same line on Nilsson's 'Ten little Indians', but at least we managed to get one interesting effect on that one. That was the sort of thing that led to a lack of confidence within the group and its eventual split.

ZZ: I know people with copies of that LP 'The Yardbirds with Jimmy Page live at the Anderson Theatre', which was put out in Sept '71 (on US Epic) but withdrawn almost immediately because you slapped an injunction on it.

JP: If you've heard that, you'll know why it was stopped. Those sort of things are always happening in the record business. What happened was, Epic said to us (in late '67) "can we do a live LP?" and they sent down the head of their light music department to do it. The agreement was that if it was good, they'd release it, but if not, they'd just file it away. Of course, it was terrible; the bloke had done things like hang just one mike over the drums so none of the bass drum came out, and he'd miked up a monitor cabinet on my guitar instead of the real one, through which I played all the fuzz and sustain notes — so all that was lost, and we knew it was just a joke when he did it. He assured us it would be alright; "it's amazing what can be done electronically" he said, and then when we went to listen to the master tape there were all the bullfight cheers dubbed on it every time there was a solo and it was just awful, so they had to shelve it. They must've dragged it out of the vaults a few years later when someone realised they had some unreleased Jimmy Page stuff, and out it came. It was just too ridiculous, but it circulated and sold a few copies before we put the injunction on it.

ZZ: It's worth a lot of bread now.

JP: I wish it wasn't; I wish people would accept it for what it is, a pathetic load of crap. We did some studio work with the same guy a little later (their last single 'Goodnight Sweet Josephine'/'Think about it' released here on Columbia DB 8368 in Jan '68), but that was desperation, I suppose, because we were so anxious to get something done if only to prove to ourselves that we could still do it.

ZZ: The Yardbirds finally fell apart in July '68 after a last gig at Luton College of Technology. Relf and McCarty wanted to pack it in, right?

JP: Yes, over the months before the break, Relf, particularly, and McCarty had been talking about starting up a new scene. To counteract the sort of stuff I was listening to, they were into very light things like Simon & Garfunkel, the Turtles and people like that, and they wrote some songs in that vein, which they wanted to go off and record. I was in favour of us keeping the group together and tried to persuade them to stay and record their songs as The Yardbirds, because I knew we had the potential to pull it off — but they just wouldn't have any of it. Keith was really the instigator, I think, and he said this very weird and interesting thing that I'll always remember: "the magic left for me when Eric left". Now I've always thought that The Yardbirds best stuff came from the Beck era, when they did all that incredible experimental stuff — but anyway, they decided to go.

ZZ: So you and Chris Dreja looked for some musicians so you could continue the group as the New Yardbirds?

JP: Well, I didn't want the group to break up, and I thought there was a chance that if we made it clear we were going to carry on, maybe Keith and Jim would change their minds and come back — but they went

off and made their own record, produced by Paul Samwell Smith I can't recall their name at the moment. (I think it may have been Together, who made a single on Columbia in late '68.)

ZZ: From what I can remember, the New Yardbirds was to have been you, Dreja, Terry Reid and a drummer called Paul Francis is that right?

JP: Almost, but I can't remember anything about Paul Francis — he must've been someone who Chris had in mind. Yes, it was going to be Terry Reid, because I'd seen what a good singer he was when we toured with him (on that same Stones/Ike & Tina tour); he was in Peter Jay & the New Jay Walkers then, but by the time I got to him, he'd just been signed to a solo deal with Mickie Most, and he'd got a trio together but he recommended this bloke called Robert Plant. The drummer I had in mind was BJ Wilson (from Procol) but I don't think we ever actually approached him because when I went up to see Robert, who I immediately knew was the one for the job, he suggested I go and check out his friend John Bonham. When I saw what a thrasher Bonzo (Bonham) was, I knew he'd be incredible he was into exactly the same sort of stuff as I was.

ZZ: By September '68, Chris Dreja had gone off to America to become a photographer, and that's presumably when John Paul Jones arrived?

JP: Yes; he got wind that I was forming a new group and phoned to see if it was true and then he asked if he could join and I said "great — you're in". Chris had always been interested in photography, he'd taken some really good pictures, and it had always been a toss-up whether he'd leave The Yardbirds to do photography full time. I think he got a chance to go to New York to work with Irving Penn and that's what he did went through an apprenticeship thing. He's back here now, I think, doing quite well. (He took the back cover shot on the first Zeppelin album.)

ZZ: Plant and Bonham had been in the Band Of Joy, but John Paul Jones had been a session musician, doing a lot of stuff for Mickie Most (arranging Donovan tracks for instance) is that how you knew him?

JP: Yes, I knew him through sessions he even did that cello arrangement on 'Little Games'.

ZZ: So you went out as the New Yardbirds and did a tour of Scandinavia.

JP: Yes, but we dropped that name because we felt it was working under false pretences.

ZZ: So, in October 1968, you became Led Zeppelin and started work on the first album. One last Yardbird question; there was a rumour that The Yardbirds were going to reform for one Roundhouse gig in Summer '70 — was there any truth in that?

JP: Yes, Giorgio Gomelsky (the original Yardbirds manager) wanted us to do it; he was going to make a film and a record of the performance and, for my part, I said I'd do it if it was done chronologically — a set with Eric on lead, a set with Jeff, then a set with Jeff and me, and finally a set with me, because it obviously wouldn't work with all of us on stage at once. I don't know why it never happened — all I can assume is that somebody wouldn't agree to it I don't know.

At this point we called a halt to the discussion which will hopefully continue in the next issue — detailing the rise of Led Zeppelin. We'll have to do a vast thing on the early Yardbirds too. Pete

Right: Yardbird Page in Summer 1966



A DIARY OF TWO BANDS

"I'm in a group, but we don't seem to be getting anywhere. . . . we can't get any gigs, but we're pretty good and if only we got a chance we could make it, I'm sure. Can you advise or help us in any way?" That's typical of many a letter or phone call we get; people turning to us in desperation and praying that even if we can't wave a magic wand, at least we can put them on to someone who can help them get on.

I thought that if we chronicled the ups and downs (or, hopefully, the ups and ups) of 2 down and out bands, it may (as well

as being of general interest) help aspiring rock'n'roll stars in their own struggles. But one thing should be made pretty clear to such would-be Jerry Garcias and Mick Jagger — the mythical mystique of pop stardom, as perpetrated by the business and papers like Zigzag, is only the very tip of the iceberg. For every Led Zepelin, there are ten thousand little bands plodding through countless miles of plain unromantic hard graft. Most of them quit while the quitting's good, but others persevere and of these, a small percentage eventually makes it.

We've chosen two bands, both at the bottom of the ladder but both loaded with ambition; to obtain a contrast, one is a London band with plenty of contacts (the most important asset of all, without any shadow of doubt) and the other is a provincial group with little experience and no contacts at all. This preliminary article will introduce the groups to you, and we'll chart their progress each month, comparing their climb to the top (we hope). This first episode details their histories from when they started up to the beginning of November 1972.

NAME	ducks deluxe	stardust
MEMBERS AND THEIR HISTORIES	They get a wider column because they had more to say. Sean Tyla (alias Space Truck Tyla, alias Duane Roach), guitar and vocals. Has had a relatively long and varied career in music including lead guitar with, to name 2 extremes, people like Geno Washington and Freddie 'Fingers' Lee, was a record producer of all sorts of music from stand-up ballad singers to classical orchestras, retired for a year to start a boutique business, became a £12 a week Tin Pan Alley songwriter for Lionel Bart, made a flop single for CBS as Third World (which included him, Madeline Bell, Tony Burrows, Lesley Duncan and Laura Lee), was a record plugger at the BBC, recorded an album for CBS which he scrapped, joined United Artists and worked on a Dvorak's New World Symphony with lyrics project, and then "snapped . . . I'd gone round the twist" (and no wonder mate!) Under Help Yourself's wing, he recovered and played guitar with them for a while. Left them in mid-September 1972, knowing he wanted to play rock'n'roll. Martin Belmont, guitar and vocals, left college in Bournemouth with a diploma in cinematography (which he never subsequently used). He'd led a Hampshire band called Sunday in St Petersburg, but on coming to London he "bummed around for a while" and drifted into a job as Brinsley Schwarz's roadie, while he was sort of waiting for something to turn up. Ken Whaley, bass, originally a journalist, joined the first formation of Help Yourself (read about him in Zigzag's old Help article) but left because he couldn't adjust to life on the road. Returned to journalism and is now on the editorial staff of the Islington Gazette (for as long as the Ducks, as they are known, remain semi pro). Tim Roper, 19, drummer from Tunbridge Wells. Still working as apprentice gilder. No previous group experience.	Bob Allen, from Potters Bar, Middlesex, on drums. Played in various local rock bands since the age of 13. Last band was a jazz/rock group. Andy Batkin, from St Albans, was first bass player. Had never played in live groups before and has since left to go to university. Considerable difficulty has been experienced in getting a replacement bassist; after advertising in the MM small ads in October, they received 9 replies. Three turned up to audition; the first one didn't like us, the second wasn't really familiar enough with the instrument, and the third, who seemed ok, never came back with his bass . . . so, still no bass. Okay Sutton, from St Albans, on guitar and vocals. Has been in various local rock bands and used to do solo gigs as 'The legendary Pete Sutton' and 'The one man freak show'. Was in The Balloon & Banana Band, Marty Wilde's backing band and Wild Wally's Rock'n'Roll Show. Jeff Cloves, from St Albans, on guitar and vocals. Famed rock writer who's work used to appear in Zigzag a couple of years ago. Was in poetry/jazz group Poetsdoos, and two acoustic groups; the Front Room Band and Movie.

WHEN, HOW, AND WHY THE BAND WAS ORIGINALLY FORMED	Sean had gone to see Help Yourself's first gig after he'd left them, and Ken and Martin were there watching too. A sudden whim prompted him to suggest that they form a band, which they did in August 1972. They took a long time finding what they considered a suitable drummer — Tim arrived only after their manager had unsuccessfully combed Wales in search of a legendary colony of ace drummers!	Formed in April 1972. Originally the idea of Jeff and Okay who shared an interest in writing and playing songs; their aim is to be a songs band — "no 12 minute guitar solos, no pretty harmonies . . . we are after flash and feel!" Have now got a couple of hours worth of songs together, all their own, and believe their material is original and great.
WHERE BASED	They are currently "squatting" in Kentish Town (with the council's permission) until they get booted out when redevelopment begins. A convenient base at the moment because their staple gigs are only round the corner at the Tally Ho.	St Albans in Herts. Live separately.
EQUIPMENT	Equipment mainly provided by manager Dai and his lady Anya (an independent record plugger at the Beeb — nice bird too), who spent £400 (their life savings), plus various contributions by other people — eg, the band provided their own instruments. Sean: Gretsch Country Gentleman/Vox AC30 Ken: Fender Mustang/Vox T 60 bass amp Tim: a mutilated kit, almost smashed to bits A 100 watt Selmer p.a. amp with 4 channels and 2 home-made cabinets each with eight 10" speakers . . . "sounds terrible" Martin: Fender Gommcaster (modified by Ian Gomm of the Brinsleys) and a Vox AC30.	Bob Premier drum kit plus good cymbals. Jeff Vox guitar (Gretch copy) and Vox AC30 amp. Okay Gibson (yes, Gibson) guitar and Selmer Twin Thunderbird combination amp and cabinet. 60 watt Selmer p.a. inherited with Okay. 4 mikes, two boom stands, two uprights. 15 quid Ford Thames van, now on last legs.
MANAGER, AGENCY AND ROADIE	Manager is Dai Davies, ex Music Now journalist, now publicist for Bowie/Mott/etc. He always hankered to manage a group, and now he does. With them since the start. Agency is Iron Horse, United Artists agency, who took them on because they knew Sean. They could, Sean reckons, get them about 5 gigs a week, but are limiting them until next year. Now they play 2 gigs a week, plus the odd suitable gig here and there. Roadie is Gary, who has his own van. Used to be the Brinsley's roadie, but intends only staying with the Ducks for a short time.	No manager, no agent and no roadie.
HOW MANY GIGS, AND THE GROUP'S EARNINGS	They have a residency at the Tally Ho, a Kentish Town pub, where they play twice a week. This brings them a total of £30 a week which, (together with contributions from Ken's pay packet) just about lasts them the week. Tim apparently smokes all his wages before he gets home. Gig situation looks generally healthy next year.	Only played 3 gigs in the whole of their existence; first, Sheffield Poly in April, for £35. Second, a private party in St Albans for which they received nothing. Third, in June, a mixed poetry and music event in St Albans where they backed a local rock'n'roller called Cuddles and also played in own right — no money.
POLICY, AND EFFORTS TO BEGIN THE CLIMB TO STARDOM (!)	Decided to start from bottom as a semi-pro band and work up slowly and steadily, starting with pub gigs until they feel competent and confident enough to go further afield. They all live for rock music and have a taste for going out on the road. Their reputation has already grown relatively huge in London by word of mouth praise and recommendation, and 4 record companies have made offers, all of which have been turned down. They want to wait until the time is right; have no desire to record straight away, and have no illusions about overnight stardom — they've been through that and realise that you have to be totally insane to be a rock musician. "Two fried eggs and dirty underpants — that's what rock'n'roll is all about" says Sean, "and I'd like to finish by saying that Deke Leonard is this generation's Bob Dylan". Next month: Will Father Christmas bring Stardust a recording contract? Will Ducks deLuxe become millionaires by the end of 1975? You never can tell.	Started off rehearsing once or twice each week at the St Albans School of Art, but were denied further use in September, since when they've only done front room rehearsals. Were lined up for a regular Thursday night gig at the Tally Ho in Kentish Town (to replace the Ducks?), but had to back down after their bass player left. Being unable to "show themselves off" at the gigs they couldn't seem to get, they concentrated on the demo-records method. At end of August, recorded 4 songs at Pathway Studios; acetates sent to Charlie Gillet (who is a friend of Jeff's) who was unimpressed, and have been played round the area by 'screaming mad disco'. They are about to take them round the record companies to try their luck. They like the songs and so do their friends. Also made a rough tape for producer Peter Eden, who neither replied nor returned the tapes. They are currently rehearsing without a bass player and plan to make a demo album themselves. One possible gig in December.

MARC BIENNO AMBUSH

On his third album Marc Benno, southern guitarist and one time partner of Leon Russell, is backed by the combined talents of Carl Radle, Jim Keltner, Mike Utley and Bobby Keys, (with a little help from Booker T, Jesse Ed Davis and Bonnie Bramlet). And Marc's own special brand of blues suits them all down to the ground.



Bridget St John

Bridget St John talks to John about her early days, gigging, recording and songwriting.



EARLY DAYS AND GIGGING

"I was studying at Sheffield University, but the only thing that really interested me and caught my imagination was music; I'd been learning how to play the guitar and as soon as I thought I was proficient enough to at least have a go at performing, that's what I did. Once I'd thought about the possibilities of making ends meet as a folksinger, I couldn't seem to think about any other career. That, in a nutshell, is how I happened to enter this sphere, but obviously it wasn't as basic and seemingly mindless as that . . . it was the result of a great deal of thought—but, in the end, I knew that singing and playing was what I wanted to do.

I left university with a degree in French and Italian, but, because I wasn't too involved with the subjects, I didn't do enough work to get a really good pass . . . it was a very ordinary degree, which meant that very few doors were open to me other than teacher training college or a secretarial course. Neither of these was particularly appealing and so, almost inevitably, I pursued this ambition of becoming a professional singer . . . this was in summer 1968.

Having had no "folk" background (I'd never been a regular folk club visitor, for instance), I had no preconceived ideas about the romanticism of a folksinger's life—in fact, I didn't even think of myself as a folksinger, because I was only singing my own songs to begin with—but I started with the optimistic hope that everything would work out alright. As it happened, the very early weeks did work out very smoothly: I mentioned to John Martyn, who I vaguely knew through a friend, that I wanted to try and make it as a singer, and he took me round to Al Stewart's place, where he helped me to record a tape of my songs. At that time, I was going out with Pete Roach, who was involved in John Peel's Night Ride

programme peripherally—he told John about me and got him to listen to the tape . . . John liked it and within three weeks, I'd done a session for his programme. It was just an incredible run of luck—the sort of thing that most singers wait years for, and it just happened to me straight away—even before I'd got enough songs together to perform.

A couple of days after the Night Ride broadcast, John Peel rang up and asked very sheepishly if I'd be interested in singing a song on that television show he was on ('How it is') and of course, I jumped at that . . . just couldn't believe it. Then, continuing his amazing run of luck, The Central Office of Information phoned and asked if I'd do a film with them. So, in the early days, everything fell into place almost by magic.

I was very lucky with performing too, because John often used to take me to gigs where he was playing records, and I was able to get some experience singing in front of an audience, which was relatively new to me. They weren't particularly nice places, but John made them nice because he used to tell the people who I was and that I was going to sing a few songs and they respected him to the degree that I was able to sing to a perfectly silent audience, who were both open minded and appreciative.

It wasn't long after that, that I realised the true shape of things . . . that my career wasn't going to fold out magically in front of me unless I did something to make it, I went through a period of very few gigs, and the ones I did get were often benefits which I didn't get paid for or else gigs which weren't really very suitable—like sharing the bill with a group in some rock club, where the audience weren't even prepared to listen and just talked right through the set. It was then that I realised how difficult it was going to be; I was very naive about the various kinds of pop music,

rock music and folk music and so on, and I had to sit down and have a good think about how I was going to plan out my future. You see, I'd been aware of pop music, like Cliff Richard and the Beatles, but I didn't pick up on folk music until I was at college . . . so my knowledge was really quite limited. I'd learnt some Buffy Sainte Marie songs, because when I was at Sheffield, I shared a flat with five other girls, one of whom played guitar and used to sing Buffy songs which she learnt from her albums, and I learned a couple of Bob Dylan songs, but I was playing a nylon string guitar and none of it was sounding too wonderful—on top of which, I hadn't fully appreciated what was expected of a folk club performer . . . I had no connection with the folk scene at all. It was a question of observing the situation and adapting myself to it, slowly working myself into a position where I could fill the role of a club performer . . . but it was something of a struggle, particularly financially—I had to live with my parents because I couldn't even afford to rent a flat.

Nowadays, I find myself in the pleasant position of being able to be more selective in the gigs I'm offered—like I no longer have to do places which I don't enjoy, because of the audience or because of the barmen ringing up tills throughout my singing, or whatever—because I don't believe that you should perform just for the money, irrespective of whether or not you enjoy it. I can earn enough to get by, without resorting to gigs that I find unpleasant, but in the early days I obviously couldn't pick and choose . . . I had to play every gig I was offered in order to make ends meet, and there was no geographical pattern—it was one gig somewhere in the north, followed by one in the south, then another in the north and so on . . . no carefully planned tours or anything like that, unless I managed to get a few dates

in Scotland, and then my agency tried to work out a little tour for me up there. But I still go off to gigs by myself usually — catch a train to wherever it is — and it could be a solitary sort of existence, but, in many cases, the club organiser or someone meets me at the station and treats me as a great friend and the whole thing is lovely and very complete from beginning to end. On the other hand, some promoters greet you with "I'll show you to your dressing room and come and get you when it's time to go on", and then it does become lonely you just sit there and tune up and rehearse and so on, but I don't really mind that because they're the only opportunities I have to be alone and in peace; if I'm at home the phone's ringing, there are things to be done and so on, and it's good to just sit and play without any disturbance. Most of the places I play though, are friendly, and if they do leave me alone in my dressing room, it's often because they're shy or else maybe think that they'd be disturbing me or intruding on my privacy or something.

Being a one-man band, as it were, has its drawbacks, but it has its compensations too. For instance, if I can't get back home after the gig, there's usually someone willing to let me stay at their place overnight which is invariably better than getting the milk train back or catching a sleeper, which are never conducive to sleep if it's not too hot it's too cold, or else you have to share with some old lady who keeps waking you up to ask what time it is. It's much nicer to go back with someone and continue the feeling of the gig, if you understand what I mean so much better than piling into a cold railway station or a hotel room.

SONGWRITING & RECORDING

As far as songwriting goes, I've got to feel I want to write a song, or it just doesn't happen; it's not inspiration so much as a frame of mind that urges you to write I can't just sit down and think "what shall I write a song about?" — that

would just be meaningless. I recently did a gig with a group and we were talking about our approach to writing; they said that whenever they needed songs, like for an album, they just sat down and worked until they came. If I did that, I doubt if I could be satisfied with anything that came out of it you must lose so much — but then, some people treat songwriting as a necessity for an exercise and don't even try for any feeling it's all a matter of personal choice, I suppose. For instance, I can only write about things I know about I couldn't write a song about Ireland, because, although I feel strongly about the situation there, I don't really know about it first-hand — I've only read about it in the papers. Maybe if I went there and saw things for myself, I could write a song about my observations, but I would never dream of attempting a song which put the whole thing into perspective, or anything like that I must write about things that have affected me personally. In the same way, I no longer sing other people's songs unless I can relate to them in some way or feel close to them.

My first album was recorded at a time when I was very unsure of myself and was more or less feeling my way, and it was one of the first releases on Dandelion. John Peel produced it and neither of us had the technical knowledge to make it a very wonderful record, but it was interesting.

Then there was quite a gap before 'Songs for the Gentle Man' because there had been talk of my doing an album with Paul Samwell-Smith, but all that fell through and I was pretty sad as a result. It took me a long time to prepare the material and work everything out and after I'd given him the rough tapes, everything fell through, and I was left at a bit of a loose end. As it happened, everything worked out very well, because Ron Geesin produced the album and made a beautiful job of it as far as I was concerned. I knew Ron as a friend, and I just asked him if he would do it — much to everybody's horror because they all associated him with weirdness and didn't think for one minute

that he had the delicacy to handle the kind of songs I'd got ready to record. But that freaky stuff is only one facet of his music, the part that he chooses to project on stage, and I knew that he was capable of much more — for instance, he'd just completed the music for 'The Body' and 'Sunday Bloody Sunday' and some of that was just beautiful.

Apart from one song, "The Lady and the Gentle Man", which I don't really like at all any more, that album turned out exactly as I wanted it to I think Ron put in some lovely work on it. At the time, he had his own studio, and I used to go round there and we'd discuss each song I'd go over it, and he'd note the chord shapes and so on, and then I'd leave it to him to arrange, so that when I next saw him, he'd have the arrangement all ready to record.

That was very satisfactory from my point of view, and things worked out very well, but on the other hand I felt a little too detached from the music; I was in effect saying "here's the song, can you do something more to it?" With my last album 'Thank You For . . .', I had total control and did more on my own it was more like going into the studio with friends and working on each song, and I managed to get a little more promotion on it as well. With 'Songs for the Gentle Man', Kinney only gave me one ad (in Zigzag, as it happens) and though the album sold very well, I felt that with a little more advertising, it would have done even better I was a bit resentful, I must admit, because they'd spent so much money doing that place up, and yet they weren't even prepared to spend even one wall of paint's worth on a few more ads.

Dandelion's had more than its share of problems with various record companies, but even if it means that I never sell any more records than I do at the moment, I'd still prefer to stay on with them, because I'd rather feel good and keep chugging along than be wildly successful and be treated as a "product". At least with Dandelion, you feel as though you have a few friends protecting you from all the horrors that can fall upon you in the pop world.



KINKS: INTERVIEW, GRIEST, CUTTINGS, RECORDS, MEMORABILIA, PIX, FAX, INFORMATION & USELESS TRIVIA,

Ever since that incredible run of hits in the mid sixties, the Kinks have been one of my favourite bands — so when Pete rang up and told me that Ray Davies had agreed to speak to us, I was pretty excited. When the day arrived, however, old Frame got sick (too much exotic . . .) and so I had to go on my own. Now Ray Davies is reputed to be a very difficult person to talk to; said to be reluctant to discuss his songs and to adopt a generally incommunicative attitude. Well, fortified by a few pints, I ventured into the Kinks new office at Highgate, and when he turned up, we went to the local pub and started chatting. He was an absolute delight to talk to . . . relaxed and charming — none of the moody stuff that everyone predicted. He tends to distrust tape recorders, however, so I didn't use one, but scribbled frantic notes throughout the conversation. Here are the parts I salvaged from my memory and jottings.

ZZ: I've just been into that pub over the road, which is full of Arsenal photos . . . I've been going to their matches in recent years — a fair weather supporter . . .

Ray: There are plenty of them around. I once played in that pub — Leslie Compton (once upon a time Arsenal's centre half) used to be the guvner . . . that was a few years ago.

ZZ: When you first started you played under about ten names, didn't you? Like the Ravens and the Ramrods?

Ray: Yes, after a while, but before that it was just me and whoever I could get to play with me — this was when I was at art school. Really there was just one another guy, Geoff Prowse, who I'd dearly like to see again; we used to play with just me on piano, and do all sorts of songs and skits.

ZZ: What about this rare Australian guitar you swore by in those days?

Ray: (Thinks very hard) It was called a Maton — there wasn't really anything very special about it . . . I haven't got it any more.

ZZ: So you got a regular gig with Robert Wace?

Ray: Yes; he just wanted a backing group and so he used us, then he stopped singing and became our manager . . .

ZZ: With these other guys — Larry Page and Grenville Collins?

Ray: (Grins) It's all very complicated but it's in the song (begins to recite the words of 'Moneyground' from 'Lola' lp).

ZZ: So you got dressed up in those pink hunting coats and got a new name — who thought of that?

Ray: The velvet thing and the hunting jackets just sort of happened — it wasn't a gimmick idea or anything . . . we went into this shop and those were the kind of clothes I liked. The name was Larry's idea — it was during the start of that fad for kinky boots, you know, Millicent Mar-

tin on That Was The Week That Was. I never really liked the name, but we got stuck with it, and over the years I've got used to it, I suppose.

ZZ: Indian music influenced quite a few people in the sixties — the Yardbirds and Canned Heat, for instance — but you used an Indian drone on 'See my friend' back in '65. I've got a press cutting which says you were into Indian music at least a year earlier . . . you used to eat in Indian Restaurants purely to hear the music — is that right?

Ray: Well, I listened to people like Ravi Shankar, but he never represented Indian music to me — I used to prefer that sort of wailing sound. I mean, I really adore some of those Indian films — the stories aren't much, but the music's fabulous. We heard some fantastic music when we were in the Lebanon in 1968; it had such a full bodied sound, but at the same time it was clear and piercing.

ZZ: There have always been rumours that when Shel Talmy came in to produce 'You really got me', he brought in Jimmy Page and various other session men and used them rather than the bona-fide Kinks.

Ray: No. The take of 'You really got me' that was actually issued was the third . . . there was a demo thing with Dave playing lead, a second cut which may have had Jimmy Page (and which Pye still have), and a third which definitely had Dave on it — I know, I was standing right next to

SAIL TO SANITY WITH ZIGZAG BACK ISSUES

6 Quintessence, Capt. Beefheart, Marsha Hunt, Kinks, Youngbloods, Easy Rider, East of Eden.

7 Bert Jansch, Atomic Rooster, Beatles, Elektra, Love, Principal Edwards, Gypsy, Dorris.

8 Renaissance, Jethro Tull, Capt. Beefheart, Pig poster, Jackie Lomax, Colosseum, Jody Grind.

9 Joe Cocker, Spirit, Buddy Holly, Siren, Kevin Ayers, Pete Brown, Paul Butterfield, Lennon.

10 Love, God rock, Canned Heat, Ackles, 3rd Ear, Hawkwind, T Rex, Argent, Cohen.

11 King Crimson, Simon & Garfunkel, Love, Roy Harper, Steve Miller, San Francisco, Jazz rock.

12 Broughton, Dylan, Quicksilver, Cocker, Brinsley Schwarz, Nico, Everlys, Ian Matthews.

13 Dead, Tom Paxton, Cockroach, IAB Day, Lol Cozwell, Brett Marvin, Randy Newman, etc.

14 Byrds, Dylan, Jelly Bread, Country Joe & the Fish, Fairport, Beefheart, Medicine Head.

15 Leon Russell, Airplane, Joni Mitchell, Thunderclap Newman, Mick Sockley, Stackwaddy, Pink Fairies.

16 Doors, Dave Mason, Cochiase, Velvets, Mott the Hoople, Bread, Peter Dinklage, Lol Wright.

17 Mayall chart, Jack Elliott, Brinsleys, Roy Harper, Stooges, Wild Angels, Quintessence.

18 Groundhogs, Quiver, Sirelys, Lou Reed, Chuck Berry, Steam Hammer, Leeds more.

19 Red Stewart, Duster Bennett, Allman Bros, Help Yourself, The Stones, Grateful Dead, Genesis.

20 Mountain, Jeff Beck, Paul Goodhand, Taut, J. Geils Band, Wildman, Fisher, Snoopy, Melanie.

21 Marc Bolan, Jo Mama's family tree, Al Kooper, Amazing Blondel, Kevin Coyne, Buffy St. Marie.

22 Jack Bruce tree, Mott the Hoople, Al Kooper, Alice Cooper, Donovan tree, Terry Riley, Link Wray.

23 John Sebastian, Colin Burns, Stoneground trees, Rory Gallagher, Big Brother.

24 Pete Townshend, Captain Beefheart, Love, Poco, Buffalo Springfield tree, John Walters, Humble Pie tree.

25 Elton John tree, Lou Reed song, Flamin' Groovies, Zappa tree, Love tree, Pink Floyd.

26 Hawkwind, Joe Cocker, Charlatans, Dan Hicks, Quicksilver/Dead tree, Dave Van Ronk, Deke Leonard, etc.

Coming soon: you'll just have to wait and see (same as we will . . . you don't think we plan ahead, do you?)

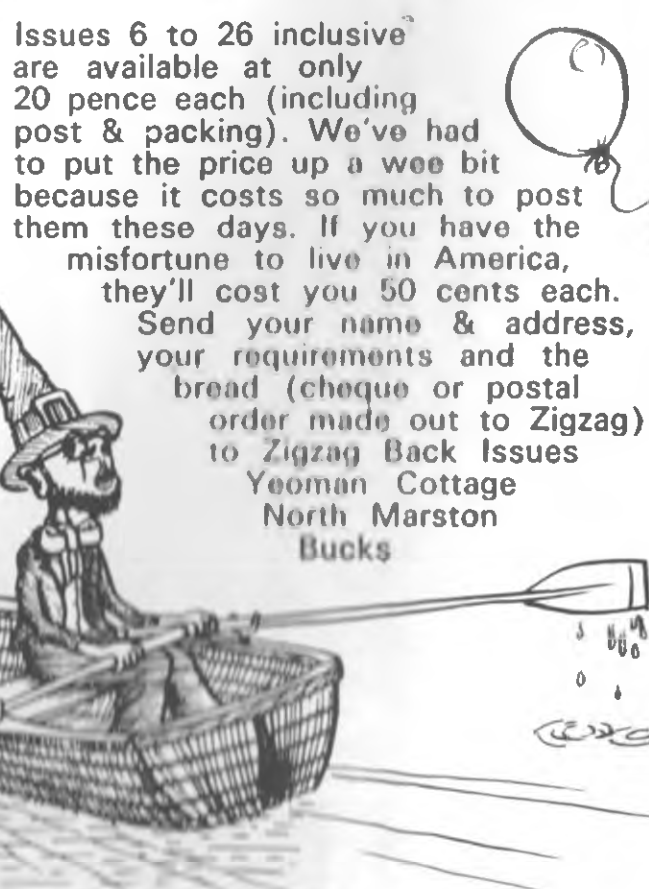


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him when he played it — and that's the one which was released.

ZZ: How long did you continue with Shel Talmy producing?

Ray: Up until 'Sunny Afternoon'.

ZZ: In those early days, the Kinks were notorious for the fights that used to break out at their gigs — both in the audience and on stage. What about this one — Dave got hauled off stage and punched by the bouncers at a 1964 gig at Basildon.

Ray: Well, you've got to remember that times have changed since then — I mean, that was 8 years ago, and in those days you arrived at the ballroom, the promoter and his bouncers grabbed you and locked you away in the dressing room, which was usually no more than a big cupboard, and then they'd come and unlock you when it was time to go on. It was terrible, but you had to put up with it, and it led to a few strange scenes — like one time, Dave fell off the stage but managed to scramble up in time for his solo, I remember.

ZZ: Dave seemed to be at the centre of a lot of those fights.

Ray: Well, he was so young — he was only 16, and the strain was incredible. It was like throwing a boy into the army and then sending him straight to the war.

ZZ: Look at these other cuttings I've got: this one about a fight at Cardiff, where Mick Avory explains a dramatic stage fight. "It was part of a new routine we'd worked out; the idea was that Dave should wave his guitar at my drums and that I should pretend to hit him with the cymbal. Well, last night I did actually hit him, accidentally — when he fell and everybody rushed onstage I felt such a fool, especially when I realised that I'd injured him".

Ray: Well, you had to have explanations ready for the papers. In actual fact, Dave had got annoyed about something and went over and booted the drums about. Mick's drums, of course, were his treasured possession, so he retaliated by belting Dave with a cymbal . . . it was during 'Beautiful Delilah' I remember! He was almost done for grievous bodily harm; the police down there (Cardiff) wanted to charge him.

ZZ: What about this rumpus at Copenhagen?

Ray: That was really funny. It was at the Tivoli and there was a riot . . . total chaos. The only thing that didn't get smashed was a big picture of Jim Reeves! That led to us being banned over there, and Dave got carried away — about forty policemen had arrived to arrest him. It was a bit of a desperate situation because we were supposed to fly to London for the NME pollwinners concert the next day, so we had to bail him out fast and pay off a huge damage bill.

ZZ: You're a very prolific writer and usually when it comes time to record a new album there are songs left over . . . what happens to them?

Ray: Most of them just get forgotten . . . some only get as far as a few chords and some words, but others are complete. A few have been recorded by other people, like Peggy Lee and Sonny & Cher have done songs of mine, and Herman recorded 'Dandy' (off 'Face to Face') which I wanted to put out as the follow up to 'Sunny Afternoon'.

ZZ: A lot of people rate you as one of their greatest influences — Townshend and Kevin Ayers and even the Dead, who used to play a lot of your songs. How do

you feel about that?

Ray: Well, it's very flattering . . . I can't really say much more than that.

ZZ: You've been through a few upheavals with the administrative aspects of the Kinks; Grenville Collins disappeared from the scene, then Larry Page — was that pretty grim at the time?

Ray: What, the lawsuits against us and so on? I wrote 'Powerman' about that whole episode, all about lawyers and things. It was ok . . . the judge called us things like jealous and spoilt adolescents, but, you know . . . I had to leave the courtroom when Mick got up — I would have exploded, he was so funny.

ZZ: The BBC have given you a few rough passages too, haven't they? Like that body-snatchers film you used to promote 'Dead End Street' — they wouldn't show that, and they banned 'Plastic Man' over the word "bum".

Ray: Yes, wasn't that absurd? The other night I saw Lou Reed on tv talking and singing about drugs — something that can be really evil. I don't know . . .

ZZ: What was that film Dave was going to star in?

Ray: Don't know . . . must've been some kind of horror film.

ZZ: It was a bit of a lean time, wasn't it, during this period ('68-'69); sales were down, gigs were thin and the story was out that you were thinking of leaving.

Ray: Well, I was working incredibly hard on Arthur at the time, but there are so many other things that I want to do — like plays and musicals, and I really do want to take up painting again. I suppose that's how that story of me and the Kinks being like Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys came about.

ZZ: In the end, Granada decided not to do the play (Arthur). Why was that?

Ray: It just went over budget and they pulled out. It was awful; I'd put so much work into it and they just turned round and said forget it.

ZZ: You sued them, didn't you?

Ray: Yes, but nothing came of it.

ZZ: And then the album did very little when it came out.

Ray: Yes. We came in for a lot of criticism from people who said we were imitating 'Tommy', but I'd had the idea for ages and had been working on it for the most part of 1968.

ZZ: Pye didn't seem to put everything into the promotion of that album — and they hadn't on the previous one 'Village Green Preservation Society' either. (In fact, I had never even heard of that album until Pete Townshend, in an interview he did with me and John Tobler, mentioned that it was one of his favourite albums ever. Good old Tobler subsequently unearthed and bought about a dozen copies in a Woolworth's deletion rack in Richmond or some such place, and, as Townshend says, it's just incredible. All the strengths of the Kinks are here, and Ray Davies' songs are full of those very simple economical melodies and his incomparably incisive lyrics. It is, I suppose, an album with a central theme, a motif that links all the songs — one of nostalgia for the dying bits of Britain, and alarm at the indifference displayed by most people.) Weren't your record company behind you?

Ray: It was strange; they hardly spent a penny promoting those albums. You see, we had, in their terms, been a singles

A JUDGE talked yesterday about the Kinks pop group and what he described as "highly temperamental, jealous, and spoilt adolescents."

He said the group owed much of their spectacular success — when their earnings rose from almost nothing to about £90,000 a year — to their former personal manager, Mr. Larry Page. Trouble came when the group lost their trust in him. Lord Justice Salmon said in the Appeal Court.



LARRY PAGE
He helped them

But the judge commented: "I think that almost anything a manager might do, however harmless or trivial, could induce hatred and distrust in a group of highly temperamental, jealous, and spoilt adolescents." And he allowed an appeal by Denmark Productions, of which Mr. Page is a director, against a ban of their damages claim against Boscobel Productions.

Kinks drummer Mick

explains it all

DRUMMER MICK AVORY, hit him with my cymbals, but last night I really did hit him. When he fell and everyone rushed on stage I felt such a fool, especially when I realised I had injured him. He added: "Dave is a good-natured man. We share a house in Muswell Hill. He has been saying with his sister since yesterday and I shall be taking him round some cigarettes. And Michael joked: "He has had to have his haircut now, on doctor's orders. Dave will injure the last two Kings of the court, but Ray Davies, leader of the group and brother of Dave said yesterday: "I'm sorry about my brother and also that Mick's drums and I should pretend to be enemies."

Twenty-one-year-old Mick's own face showed scratches, but the drumming was not affected. "I was part of a new routine we had worked out for our song 'You've Really Got Me'." The idea was that Dave should wave his guitar at my drums and I should pretend to be enemies and I should pretend to be enemies."

PETER QUAIFE, of "The Kinks" pop group, said last night that he has been "warned off" by a Danish millionaire whose daughter he was taking out.

Quaife met 20-year-old Annette Paustian, when he went to a Copenhagen clinic for surgery after a car crash.

DAVIES: I'll tell you about Jimmy Page. Dave (Davies, Ray's brother and Kink lead guitarist) is a good guitar player and he played the solos on all our records. Jimmy Page played tambourine on *Long Tall Sherry* because he came into the studio. There was a thing then like when we made our first lp, that everybody was supposed to be friends and they'd all go into the studio together. And like Phil Spector played maracas on the Rolling Stones record and Gene Pinney played piano on the Rolling Stones records. And Jimmy Page was a friend of Shel's... CREEM: It's always been said that Page played the solos on those records... DAVIES: That's a mistake because Dave did all those solos. And I don't mind saying it, but Dave started that sound. But Jimmy Page played tambourine on our first album. It's very good tambourine; he's a very good musician. I'd use him if I was producing a record.



THE KINKS—Ray Davies, Mick Avory, Dave Davies, and Pete Quaife

Rebel

"Okay, so we've got the hair and all that, and some people even say the same attitude. But you could ask: 'Aren't the Stones another Beatles group because of the hair?' There's a bit of the rebel in us, but we're not doing

a Stones. And we don't play R & B. That's the best left to people like Muddy Waters who know what it's all about."

The Kinks' "You Really Got Me" toppled the Honeycombs' "Have I the Right?"

A Giggle

Dave's brother Ray, who is the composer of such lines in the same song as: "One thing he loves is flattery . . . one week he's in polka dots . . . the next week he's in stripes," denied the whole thing was a send up of Carnaby-street. "We're just observing what's going on," he said.

"I wear 'long Johns' . . . you know what they used to call 'combs' in the old days. A lot of the lads don't realise this yet."

But then Avory got up from among his scattered drums, grabbed a microphone and hit Davies on the side of the head.

GUITARIST IS HAULED OFF STAGE

Evening Standard Reporter

The Kinks, currently No. 2 in the hit parade, were involved in riotous scenes at Basildon New Town, Essex, early today, when about 1000 teenagers at the Locarno Ballroom stormed the stage. A barrier of attendants gave way, and the band was hauled off the stage into the crowd. Girls were knocked down as ballroom officials tried to get him to his feet. Several people fainted.

band only; we enjoyed tremendous success with hit singles and it was hard for Pye to think of us as a group who actually made albums as opposed to albums made up from a bunch of singles, shoved together for Christmas or something like that. On 'Village Green', there was no obvious hit track that they could take and exploit — and I would've been offended if they'd taken a single off, because it was an album. Pye wouldn't give us any money to do our cabaret version of the album either; they said we could have the money if we gave them a single, which we didn't. 'Village Green' was in some ways an album of repentance, if you like; we'd been a bunch of incredibly big-time young guys, and it suddenly occurred to me when I got home after some tour or another. I thought about how I'd been interested in getting whatever I could and that I'd been turning my back on the things I grew up from . . . it was sort of like the prodigal son suddenly discovering the world he'd been ignoring for so long, these things that were really valuable. Mind you, the decision to do the album like that wasn't unanimous — Dave's reaction was very adverse.

ZZ: Your fortunes changed for the better with 'Lola' — how did that come about?

Ray: I wrote that during the play I was doing — it's all about the music business and the people who work in it.

ZZ: A lot of people think you slag people off in your songs. Do you think you do?

Ray: Not really; it's more like just seeing them as they are . . . I don't think there's any malice.

ZZ: That tv play you were in, 'The Long distance piano player' — was that role close to you, something you felt . . . being manipulated.

Ray: Sure, it was very much a mirror, as all acting is. I used to do a bit of acting at college . . . I use it as a sort of therapy.

ZZ: Why did you leave Pye in the end — was it down to the "101 different ways to repackage old Kinks hits" way of life that they seem to adhere to?

Ray: Yes, it was the situation I told you about a moment ago; they greeted everything with "give us a single" — and, yes, it was a drag to find tracks coming out on Marble Arch things before they'd even appeared on a proper album.

ZZ: What went wrong with that Rainbow tv thing?

Ray: Everything; it was a total waste . . . it wasn't about the band, and it wasn't about the music either.

ZZ: That cover photo on 'Muswell Hill billies' shows a shop called Cats on holiday — what on earth does that mean?

Ray: Just what it says. It was a place to leave your cats while you went on holiday . . . it's been pulled down now.

ZZ: Rolling Stone said the new album is all about America — is it?

Ray: No. Some of it is — like 'Maximum consumption' is about American food, but 'Morway' was written as I was going up to see Arsenal against Stoke in the cup semi-final last year . . . and then they lost the final! That was the night we played the Bickershaw Festival — we were pretty depressed that night.

ZZ: Last time I saw you, at Watford, you were doing all these Led Zeppelin send ups — why was that?

Ray: Because Dave plays lead guitar on all their records. Connor McKnight

RARE KINKS

Since the release of 'Kinks Kronicles' (in the US only), there aren't nearly as many rare tracks as there were in the past. Cuts like 'King Kong' were always favourite collectors' items, but the 'Kronicles' lp provided 15 fairly rare songs.

Probably the rarest Kinks performance is their second single, 'You still want me' with 'You do something to me' on the flip; reportedly, there are less than a hundred copies in existence in the world. How many are in America (where it was never released)? Less than ten? Definitely. I only know of one guy over here that has it and he refused an offer of fifty dollars for it! On a Kinks tour, in 1969, Grenville Collins, former manager, handed a few copies to American fans, who might have no idea how valuable it is to the right person. Another single, 'Long tall Sally'/'I took my baby home', which was released here on Cameo Records, has a fair rarity value and is a valuable addition to any collection, as is 'Plastic Man'. This was released in England in March 1969 and is the only latterday Kinks song not released here.

Two Dave Davies singles are also very hard to get. Of these, 'Lincoln County' still turns up occasionally, but 'Hold my hand' is extremely difficult to obtain and could conceivably garner 30 dollars in the US.

In the category of rare album tracks, we don't have too much to worry about—most things are available here, and those that aren't are easily accessible on import.

It's almost impossible to list all rare Kinks albums, simply because nearly all record companies in the world put out different albums in each country during the sixties. Hence, many European countries have their own sleeve design and often a bit of track juggling. With ep records, the same is true—in Mexico for instance, they released a series of 6 EPs instead of a couple of regular albums.

As regards unreleased material, my guess is that there must be anywhere from 60 to 80 unreleased songs, of which we have about 15 here at the Kinks Society. A general breakdown is as follows: 12 tracks recorded during 'Muswell Hillbillies' weren't used, a dozen tracks prepared for an LP called 'Kinks Part Two', a dozen recorded for a Dave Davies solo album which never came out, and another dozen were done for a Ray Davies solo which similarly never got released. In addition, between 1965 and 1968, they recorded several 'leftovers', plus some which were meant for the infamous 'Four More Respected Gentlemen', which was withdrawn by Reprise shortly before its release a few years ago—though they are now apparently considering an album to be called 'Son of Kinks Kronicles', which will feature at least 7 of these unreleased tracks. We have in our possession 'Easy come', 'Rosemary Rose', 'Lavender Hill', 'There you went', 'Misty Water', 'Where did my spring go', 'Til death us do part', 'Pictures in the sand', 'All aboard', 'This strange effect', 'Groovy movies', 'The shoemakers daughter', 'Crying', 'Mister Reporter' and several Dave Davies cuts.

Other oddities we have are Ray's songs done by other people: 'I go to sleep' by Peggy Lee and others, 'Toymaker' by a group called Basil, 'She just satisfies' by Jimmy Page (which is actually 'Revenge', from the Kinks first album), 'Son of a gun' by Maple Oak (Pete Quaife's group), etc. Then we have tapes of many live concerts, some out-takes of 'Do you remember Walter?' and 'Top of the pops', as well as release sheets, photos, sheet music, etc. Ray Davies has helped us

here in the Society for a long time and is a close friend and a true gentleman.

If you have any questions, comments, additions, interesting records for sale, or anything to say about the Kinks, drop us a line and we'll be pleased to hear from you. (An international reply coupon would help). Thank you for the days

Gene Davidson,
521 Cromwell Drive, Mansfield, Ohio 44903
(Reprinted from Jamz Magazine of USA)



The Summer '69 Kinks

In their eight plus years of existence, the Kinks have changed personnel only twice: John Dalton was brought in on bass in March 1969 (to replace the wandering Peter Quaife), and John Gosling arrived as pianist in May 1970 after they'd decided to expand their ranks to a five-piece. HOW JOHN DALTON

HOW JOHN DALTON BECAME A KINK

We needed a new bass player, so we auditioned. The first guy who could play a scale was in—that was John Dalton, so he was in. Ray Davies

HOW JOHN GOSLING BECAME A KINK

A long story. Back in the early days of Zigzag, around September 1969 to be precise, when we were green and enthusiastic, this fellow came on the phone, announced that he was Grenville Collins, Kinks manager, and asked if we'd like to interview Ray Davies. Now, in those days, the Kinks weren't as fashionable as they are now; their singles success had dried up and their albums weren't selling either—so they were out of favour with the short-memory singles buying public because they weren't in the top ten and the heavy, man/underground mob generally could see no difference between the Kinks and the Troggs.

Well, we reckoned it was a chance not to miss—we liked their albums a great deal, especially 'Face to Face' and 'Some thing Else', which even to this very day I play to excess. So, we (Ian and I) prepared this giant interview, going into great detail as regards historical information, and motivations and reasons for every song they ever did, etc etc . . . we really went to town, thinking that we'd get an incredible interview.

On the prescribed day, we got to the Kinks office, which was a couple of rooms in a building in Maddox Street, W1, and met Grenville, who whisked us off, by taxi, to his plushy flat where he plied Ian with tumblers of whisky (I don't drink) and played us test pressings of 'Arthur',

which was on the point of release. Then back into a taxi, past the squatters hanging out of the windows of 144 Piccadilly I remember, back to the office where we nervously waited the great Ray's arrival.

We sat round this large circular glass top table, tape recorder at the ready (not knowing his aversion to these instruments), and talked to Grenville until we ran out of things to say meanwhile no sign of Ray, who was coming by minicab because he couldn't drive or something like that. Every time a chair moved or a floorboard creaked, Grenville shot out of his chair and rushed to the outer room calling out "Raymond?", whereupon the girl at the motionless typewriter just looked up momentarily from her nail-filing or whatever and shook her head slowly. It soon became painfully obvious to us that being the Kinks' manager was hardly the most arduous task in the world.

Ray eventually burst in, munching crisps and wearing shades, and proceeded to shrug his way through our questions. Nothing was revealed . . . he would hardly say a word—just shrugged his shoulders and made a face—and fortunately our hapless misery was cut short when his minicab returned, after 20 minutes or so, to take him home. What Ian salvaged out of that terrible afternoon subsequently appeared in Zigzag 6.

Several months later, entirely out of the blue, this same Grenville Collins came on the phone once more, this time to enquire whether I knew any piano players because the Kinks had decided to expand their line-up but didn't want to get into a MM small ads trip.

As it happened, I vaguely knew a bloke called John Gosling. When I was at school—in Lower sixth arts—I was a lunchtime library monitor, and this Gosling fellow, a few years younger than me, instead of playing football in the playground or fighting with the other erks, used to spend all his time in the library reading books about music—Elizabethan music, Beethoven, orchestration, development of instruments, all sorts of stuff. I remember him clearly because me and my mate used to tease him—talk to him about his aspirations to be a fine classical organist and taunt him into saying, in his high pitched voice, "I've got a little organ, you know", whereupon we would collapse in hysterical smutty mirth, leaving him utterly bewildered.

Years later, I met up with Mike Simmons who arrived to participate in cranking out Zigzag, and found that he was in the same form as Gosling and that they were a folk duo of great repute in the Luton area. Lately however, their activities had been curtailed because Gosling was engrossed in his final year of study at the Royal Academy (or some such place of learning).

So, when Grenville Collins phoned, I gave him John Gosling's name and number cautioning him that although John was well versed in the skills of the keyboard and had an excellent knowledge of all spheres of classical, pop, rock and folk music, I didn't think his appearance, scruffy bum that he was, was suited to the clean polish of the Kinks. "You'll have to groom him up a bit", I told him.

Nevertheless, Gosling was the first guy they contacted, was auditioned and accepted, and there you go. That's the story of how a poverty stricken layabout, living on 5 bob a week grant money became a thousand guineas a week superstar over night. (So where's my commission then?) Pete

Not only is this a true story, it's an exercise in taking several pages to say something which may be of interest to less than half a dozen people.

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Gerry Rafferty and Joe Egan's songs are put across with the tight harmonies and mellow rock that

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H to He who am the only one	VAN DER GRAAF GENERATOR	Only £2.15
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String Driven Thing



CAS 1062

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-Melody Maker
(Chris Welch)

"There's something easy about their style that makes
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out recently that I've heard and felt like reviewing straight
away."

-Disc
(Rosalind Russell)

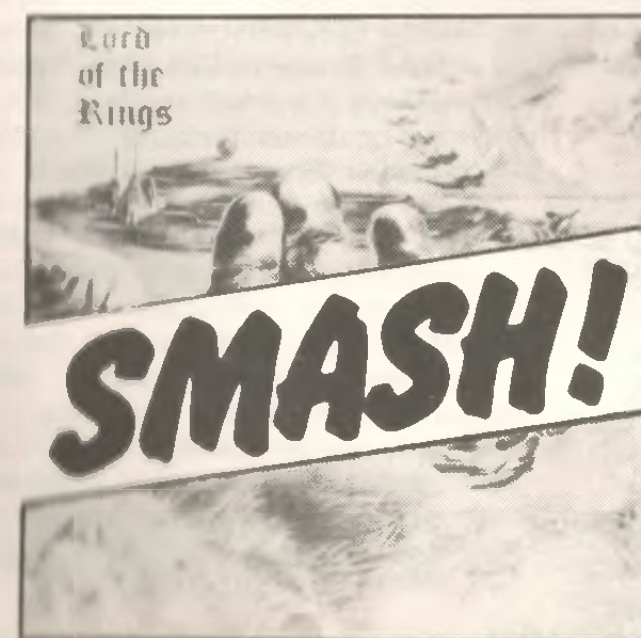
"String Driven Thing, in case the word hasn't yet reached you,
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an extremely healthy buzz among the clientele of most of the
important London rock venues. It's quite justified too, for
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relatively new bands to have lasting promise."

-Sounds
(Ray Telford)



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-N.M.E.
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and often jammed with him. This is an eloquent, talkative,
moody, brooding album."

-Record Mirror
"A highly individual work." - Disc



TRAFFIC were just about the first of the "getting it together in their country cottage" groups; they hid themselves away on the Berkshire Downs where they could play their music and get stoned without any distractions. A fantastic group which never really achieved the commercial success their potential warranted.

TRAFFIC #1 April 1967 - December 1968. Albums: 'MR FANTASY' (Dec 67) ILPS 9061, 'TRAFFIC' (Nov 68) ILPS 9081, 'LAST EXIT' (May 69) ILPS 9097, 'BEST OF TRAFFIC' (Mar 70) ILPS 9112. Dave Mason was in and out of the group like a yo-yo; he left in Dec 1967, rejoined in May 68 and left again in October 1968. Mason & Jim Capaldi had been in Deep Feeling, legendary Birmingham area band, and Chris Wood was in Locomotive.

DAVE MASON guitar & vocals
JIM CAPALDI percussion & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/gtr & vocals

MASON · CAPALDI · WOOD & FROG

January 1969 - March 1969. No records, but there must be some tapes in existence. If formed band formed by the tattered remnants of Traffic - retired to country cottage in Worcestershire, but never really got off the ground.

DAVE MASON guitar & vocals
JIM CAPALDI percussion & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
MICK WEAVER organ & vocals (Wunder K Frog)
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/piano & vocals
RIC GRECH bass ex Family
GINGER BAKER drums (See Jack Bruce in ZZ 22)
ERIC CLAPTON guitar & vocals (ex Cream, who broke up 11.11.68)
Joined Delaney & Bonnie, made solo album, played with Miles Davis, formed Derek & the Dominos, etc (see future where it we can get it together, man)

Flipped out with Delaney & Bonnie, signed with Blue Thumb and released 'ALONE TOGETHER' in June 1970
Went to the States with Mason & played on his album. Rehearsed with Heavy Jelly. Did a bit of session drumming
Team up with Mama Cass Elliot in Sept 70 and made an album with her

TRAFFIC #2 February 1970 - August 1970. Album: 'JOHN BARLEYCORN' (July 1970) ILPS 9116. After the Blind Faith US tour, Stevie started on a solo album (he owed 2 to American UA) and the others arrived to help... the enthusiasm returned and Traffic reformed amidst great rejoicing!!!

JIM CAPALDI percussion & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar & vocals
RIC GRECH bass
Continued in Airforce, then did sessions

TRAFFIC #3 August 1970 - May 1971. No albums released during this period, but Ric Grech comes in on bass and Stevie declares his intention to add a french horn player! A barren period... they go to Morocco to do score of a film that never came out.

JIM CAPALDI percussion & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar & vocals
RIC GRECH bass

TRAFFIC #4 May 1971 - December 1971. Gordon & Reebop joined, and Jim Capaldi switched from drums to tambourine/piano/vocals. Mason returned to London & rejoined briefly. Albums: 'WELCOME TO THE CANTREEN' (Oct 1971) ILPS 9116 & 'THE LOW SPARK OF HIGH HEeled BOYS' (Dec 1971) ILPS 9180. The 'low spark' title was suggested by Michael Robert, who was to star in the abortive film (see above). Toured England & the United States

DAVE MASON guitar & vocals
JIM CAPALDI percussion/keyboard & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar & vocals
RIC GRECH bass - both left - drums (ex Session man, ex Dominos)
JIM GORDON drums (ex Session man, ex Dominos)
REEBOP KWAKU BAAH congas

TRAFFIC #5 January 1972 - the present. No albums released by this line-up but in November 1972 they went to Jamaica to record an album for release next January. Muscle Shoals session men Hawkins & Hood come in to replace Gordon & Grech who disappeared from Traffic in the middle of an American tour. Stevie hospitalised with peritonitis & group 'rested' most of the year

JIM CAPALDI percussion/vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax/vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar/vocals
DAVID HOOD bass
ROGER HAWKINS drums
REEBOP KWAKU BAAH congas

THE SPENCER DAVIS GROUP #1 formed August 1963, turned professional in April 1964 and lasted until April 1967. Albums: 'FIRST ALBUM' (July 1965), 'SECOND ALBUM' (Feb 1966) & 'AUTUMN 66' (Oct 1966) - all on Fontana & all deleted now. Still available: 'THE BEST OF THE SPENCER DAVIS GROUP' (Dec 1967) ILPS 9070. Had minor national success until monster hit 'Keep On Running' (January 1966).

STEVIE WINWOOD keyboard/guitar & vocals

MUFF WINWOOD bass/vocals

PETER YORK drums

SPENCER DAVIS guitar/vocals

Hang up his rock'n'roll shoes while the going was good - sensible fellow. Now a director of Island Records and producer of many fine albums, the latest of which are 'Lifeboat' by the Sutherland Bros & the new Patto album, which by some strange quirk of fate, I am listening to even as I write this chart.

Stevie: "Blind Faith started up as such a beautiful idea, but the whole thing was whisked out of our hands and our control... we became just another commodity."

BLIND FAITH February 1969 - Jan 1970

(In fact it was all over by Sept 69 - bar the counting of all the bread). Subgroup which debuted at Hyde Park on 7.6.69 (see Zigzag 33). One album 'BLIND FAITH' (Aug 69), which netted 1 million dollars, & one 6 week US tour which also netted \$1m.

STEVIE WINWOOD organ/piano & vocals
RIC GRECH bass ex Family
GINGER BAKER drums (See Jack Bruce in ZZ 22)
ERIC CLAPTON guitar & vocals (ex Cream, who broke up 11.11.68)
Joined Delaney & Bonnie, made solo album, played with Miles Davis, formed Derek & the Dominos, etc (see future where it we can get it together, man)

AIRFORCE January 1970 - June 1970. 2 albums

One of the most terrifyingly boring & loud bands ever! However, masochists around the globe found some enjoyment in their music. They made a good single though!

CHRIS WOOD sax/flute
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/vocals
RIC GRECH bass
GINGER BAKER drums
There were lots of other greasers in this band... like Graham Bond, Denny Laine, Harold M. Blair & Phil Seaman.

JIM CAPALDI percussion & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar & vocals
RIC GRECH bass
Continued in Airforce, then did sessions

TRAFFIC #3 August 1970 - May 1971. No albums released during this period, but Ric Grech comes in on bass and Stevie declares his intention to add a french horn player! A barren period... they go to Morocco to do score of a film that never came out.

JIM CAPALDI percussion & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar & vocals
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DAVE MASON guitar & vocals
JIM CAPALDI percussion/keyboard & vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax & vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar & vocals
RIC GRECH bass - both left - drums (ex Session man, ex Dominos)
JIM GORDON drums (ex Session man, ex Dominos)
REEBOP KWAKU BAAH congas

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JIM CAPALDI percussion/vocals
CHRIS WOOD flute/sax/vocals
STEVIE WINWOOD organ/guitar/vocals
DAVID HOOD bass
ROGER HAWKINS drums
REEBOP KWAKU BAAH congas

SPENCER DAVIS GROUP #2 Apr 67 - Dec 67

The world's prophecy that the SDG without Stevie Winwood would be a dead duck was borne out from the word go, despite Spencer's optimism & hard work.

PETER YORK drums
EDDIE HARDIN organ/vocals
SPENCER DAVIS guitar/vocals
PHIL SAWYER lead guitar (ex Shotgun Express & Fleur de Lys)

SPENCER DAVIS GROUP #3 December 1967 - October 1968

This group was fairly successful over the short time it existed but personality problems killed it. In fact, Peter York left in Oct 68, but Eddie Hardin stayed on until the end of the year. Ray Fenwick gradually began to take over the group, and in the end even wanted to continue in the band without Spencer.

PETER YORK drums
EDDIE HARDIN organ/vocals
RAY FENWICK guitar/vocals (ex Alter Tea)

HARDIN AND YORK February 1969 to the present

PETER YORK drums
EDDIE HARDIN organ/vocals

Peter York continues to experiment with his percussion band as well as duo gigs. Made solo album on Decca, did sessions and almost joined Hardin & York.

THE TRAFFIC PROCOL HARUM FAMILY TREE

Some notes on BLIND FAITH. In July 1966, when he left Maybault for Cream, Clapton apparently asked Winwood to join too, but he declined because the Spencer Davis Group was still a going concern. Winwood (from friends 29.5.70): "When Cream split up he asked me again & I went down to his place to play a little. We decided we needed a drummer - and when I went down there the next day, he'd got Ginger Baker down there. Of Ginger, who was exhausted after Cream, hadn't wanted to do it. Jim Capaldi would've

Quote from Cream: "IS ART-R... DEAD? A note was nearly triggered at a Kansas City Procol Harum concert recently; someone in the audience yelled out 'you ain't no Mozart... boogie!!!"

The old Spencer Davis Group was one of the best of the beat era groups, starting off doing American R&B and country blues adaptations around the Birmingham and then Manchester areas and finally making it nationally after being signed up by Chris Blackwell of Island Records, who had gone to Birmingham to see Carl Wayne & the Vikings! The group originally formed after a gig at the Golden Eagle in Hill St where Spencer, a solo, shared the bill with the Muff Winwood Jazz Band, from which Muff & Stevie Winwood & Peter York came to combine as the RBQ which subsequently became the SDG.

SPENCER DAVIS GROUP #4 October 1968 - July 1969, when the group finally split up for good

"I decided that the time had come to kill before it was killed by outside forces... I think that experienced the greatest pleasure of a group."

SPENCER DAVIS guitar/vocals
NIGEL OLSSON drums
DEE MURRAY bass (ex Mirage)

When the Spencer Davis Group collapsed, he wanted to form a new group with Mick Graham & Kirk Duncan (a session pianist who played on a lot of Hollies tracks) but managerial type hassles prevented it - so he went off to Germany to cool down & plan a future. Almost started a group with Jon Mark (to be called Mark's and Spencer's), but he eventually did a lot of folk club work with Alun Davies (laker of Car Stevens fame). In May 1970, he teamed up with Willy Jameson, who he met at the Bottle Neck Blues Club in the East End... album: 'IT'S BEEN TOO LONG' Made a solo album 'MOUSETRAP' (produced by Sneaky Pete Kleinow) - released on UA in May 1972. No-one seems to know what he's doing now.

SPENCER DAVIS guitar/vocals
NIGEL OLSSON drums
DEE MURRAY bass (ex Mirage)

Both did session work until Eton John asked them to be his road band in April 1970 (see Zigzag 25 & 26)

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DEE MURRAY bass (ex Mirage)

Both did session work until Eton John asked them to be his road band in April 1970 (see Zigzag 25 & 26)

Probably been Blind Faith's drummer. We were handled wrongly - sold as a product, and people were hip to see that. We just wanted to play music, not even supermusic - but I hardly knew what was happening because we never had much time to get together off-stage. On that American tour we were playing huge boxing arenas rather than usual venues; they just wanted the biggest places and the largest amount of people... consequently it goes incredibly imper... we couldn't even see the audience. When we finished that tour I was really choked off - not with the band, but with everything that surrounded it & went with it.

PROCOL HARUM #1 April 1967 - July 1967. Single: "WHITER SHADE OF PALE" Formed from Melody Maker small ad applicants to record the songs of Gary Brooker & Keith Reid who had a bunch of songs that they'd been unable to place satisfactorily. Guy Stevens was original adviser, co-manager & member of the group, but he took the demos to Denny Cordell, who arranged new management and financial backing. This line-up only recorded the one single 'Whiter Shade of Pale' which sold literally millions of copies but earned the group nothing. Halfway through the recording of their first album, Royer and Harrison, who proved to be "unsuitable" for the musical policies, were asked to leave & the album scrapped.

RAY ROYER guitar
BOBBY HARRISON drums
DAVE KNIGHTS bass
MATTHEW FISHER organ ex local groups
KEITH REID words
GARY BROOKER piano/vocals

After the Paramounts folded & Gary Brooker teamed up with Keith Reid to write songs, B.J. Wilson joined with various people and Robin Trower got into BB King & formed a trio called The Jam. They just did local Southern area gigs & collapsed when Brooker phoned Trower to come and audition as a replacement for Ray Royer. At the same time, B.J. Wilson came in to replace Bobby Harrison - and the two "reapers" formed Freedom.

THE PARAMOUNTS 1962 - 1966. Started as a local Southern area R&B group, but tried to make it nationally. Made a string of singles for Parlophone between Oct 1963 and Sept 1965 and though the second of these 'Little Billy Partly One' was a minor hit, they never really went anywhere - though the records have subsequently become collectors items in America. The group lasted into the middle of 1966 but broke in in despair after doing a succession of tours backing show-biz artists like Sandie Shaw.

CHRIS COPPING bass
replaced by DERRICK bass
DIZ bass
GARY BROOKER keyboard/vocals
B.J. WILSON drums
ROBIN TROWER guitar

PROCOL HARUM #1 April 1967 - July 1967. Single: "WHITER SHADE OF PALE" Formed from Melody Maker small ad applicants to record the songs of Gary Brooker & Keith Reid who had a bunch of songs that they'd been unable to place satisfactorily. Guy Stevens was original adviser, co-manager & member of the group, but he took the demos to Denny Cordell, who arranged new management and financial backing. This line-up only recorded the one single 'Whiter Shade of Pale' which sold literally millions of copies but earned the group nothing. Halfway through the recording of their first album, Royer and Harrison, who proved to be "unsuitable" for the musical policies, were asked to leave & the album scrapped.

RAY ROYER guitar
BOBBY HARRISON drums
DAVE KNIGHTS bass
MATTHEW FISHER organ ex local groups
KEITH REID words
GARY BROOKER piano/vocals

PROCOL HARUM #2 July 1967 - March 1969. Albums: 'PROCOL HARUM' (Aug 1967 - USA re-released here on Toofa 7, 'SHINE ON BRIGHTLY' (Nov 68) Toofa 10, 'A SAUTY DOG' (April 1969) also Toofa 7. Had a lot of trouble getting gigs in England, but gradually worked up a reputation in America despite various managerial problems. 'At that time, there weren't any suitable concert or ballroom situations like there were in America. In England all the groups took it for granted that you did a cinema package tour & did a 20 minute set. We wouldn't do that, so we were pretty inactive between American tours.'

DAVE KNIGHTS bass
MATTHEW FISHER organ
KEITH REID words
GARY BROOKER piano/vocals
B.J. WILSON drums
ROBIN TROWER guitar

PROCOL HARUM #3 March 1969 - July 1971. Albums: 'HOME' (August 1970) Toofa 10 (re-released Nov 1972), 'BROKEN BARRICADES' (August 1971) ILPS 9158. Gary Brooker: "Considering all the hassles we've had, the group's held together really well - but it's always stopped us from making real progress. But what can you do? We tried to do without a manager, but you need a big organisation to lay out money to do an album - so all you can do is talk to someone you think will be a good manager and trust your judgement. You can always be wrong."

CHRIS COPPING organ/bass
KEITH REID words
GARY BROOKER piano/vocal
B.J. WILSON drums
ROBIN TROWER guitar

PROCOL HARUM #4 August 1971 - Sept 1972. Album: 'LIVE IN CONCERT WITH THE EDMONTON SYMPHONY ORCH' (July 1972) CHR 1004, recorded on their second ever appearance with an orchestra (in November 1971). Keith Reid tries to explain the stream of lead guitarists: "They're unaware that they are good because of what they're in - they don't see that they are good because the whole thing (Procol Harum) is good." A hit single from the album, 'Conquistador' becomes their biggest hit since 1967.

ALUN CARTWRIGHT bass
CHRIS COPPING organ
KEITH REID words
GARY BROOKER piano/vocals
B.J. WILSON drums
DAVE BALL guitar

Left in July 1971 and formed JUDG with Jim Dewar (bass) Olive Bunker (drums) & Frankie Muller (guitar/vocals) which split up in April 1972. Has recently formed a trio with Dewar & Res Isadore. (see over)

PROCOL HARUM #5 September 1972 to present. No albums released yet but a seventh, probably called 'GRAND HOTEL', is on the point of issue. Finally, the group is beginning to break through in England and recently did a packed gig at the Rainbow, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Their bread & butter, however, is still in America, which is where they are at this very moment (on their 394th tour). Do you realise just how difficult it is to fill up all these little spaces with relevant information? What else can I put in here? How about a quote from Gary Brooker: "Whiter Shade of Pale came out around the time of the San Francisco/underground thing and people linked us with it and flower power. We didn't even know if San Francisco was on the East West coast!"

MICK GRABHAM guitar
ALAN CARTWRIGHT bass
CHRIS COPPING organ
KEITH REID words
GARY BROOKER piano/vocals
B.J. WILSON drums
DAVE BALL guitar

Chart drawn by Pete Frame November 1972

ROBIN TROWER

HIS LIFE AND TIMES WITH THE PARAMOUNTS, PROCOL HARUM, JUDE AND HIS NEW TRIO

1. Lean years with The Paramounts

In that period which pop historians call the "beat group era" from around 1962 to 1965, it seemed that everybody in the world was in a group, practising in bedrooms and youth clubs for the day when they would eventually and inevitably succeed the Beatles. Some got within a Stones throw, others never made it outside their own locality, and a great many floundered and flailed in a world of one-nighters, clapped out vans, Fenders on h.p. flop singles, greasy M1 food, swindling managers and thieving agents, and, above all, the certain knowledge that this was only a natural, unavoidable step on the road to the stars — this was "paying ones dues", a misery that every youthful band had to endure if they wanted to make it.

The Paramounts were just such a band — four Southend schoolkids with high hopes and a common interest in rhythm and blues (a sphere which at the time was almost entirely controlled by Pye Records, who were the English outlet for nearly all the good American R&B of the period, but who were lamentably slow in capitalising on the new trend that was beginning to boom as a result of the Mayalls, Korners, Fames and Jagers of this world.) The group, originally Gary Brooker, Robin Trower, Chris Copping and a drummer called Mick who was subsequently replaced by Barry (B. J.) Wilson, were anxious to get out of the backwaters, and signed up with a London agency who sporadically found gigs for them. Robin Trower: "Our first kick was when the Stones heard us; they dug our music, which was somewhat similar to their own, and they introduced us to their gig circuit, which they were in the process of leaving to do cinema tours and things like that. In fact, the Stones were about the only people who helped us . . . everyone else we came into contact with was out to rob us, but they even got us on the bill of some of their package shows." They learnt a lot from the Stones, both musically and also regarding visual presentation — even to the extent of wearing matching waistcoats; the early Stones used to wear blue leather waistcoats (until they got nicked) and the Paramounts borrowed the idea and got some made up from blue suede, but, from the outset, the Stones were cleverly managed and directed.

The Paramounts had no such luck. None of their string of five singles, recorded for Parlophone between October 1963 and September 1965, sounded half as good as the demo tape they made originally to tout round the companies. "We did a demo of 'Poison Ivy' which was engineered by Glyn Johns, who was as knocked out with it as we were — it was real raw R&B. Then when we went to EMI, it was just into the studio and out . . . they let us play the instruments ourselves (unlike some groups) because we were good, but those singles were all echo and . . . well, they didn't really show us in our true light". (Nevertheless, those singles are worth a lot of



bread to American collectors, so if you come across any — send them to me).

As the years rolled by, fatigue, sadness and despair began to erode the optimism and it looked as though they'd never get past their day to day existence. The people who handled a lot of groups in those days were not interested in long term development or trying to further their career; they were out to make a killing . . . suck the teenage/beat music phenomena for all it was worth before it was replaced by a new fad; sell as many hula hoops as you can and then when clackers come in, switch to those . . . you know the sort of thing — make bread while the sun shines, as the proverb remarks. As Robin says: "I don't know any group around that time that didn't get robbed . . . and things are only better now because groups are a little bit smarter; there are still a lot of crooks in the business."

Desperation set in, and our heroes were forced to prostitute themselves or perish. As a temporary measure, until fame would come along and tap them on the shoulder — they cringed in the shadows and did tours backing people like Sandie Shaw. (Can you imagine Sandie Shaw, draped in flowing white silk, leaning against a grand piano played by Gary Brooker?)

2. Even leaner years with The Jam

By this time, Robin Trower had become addicted to B. B. King and spent many hours toiling to reproduce his style — and there was no way that he could fit that kind of playing into mindless showbiz pop tunes, so he left the Paramounts and retreated to a room in Southend where he assembled the Jam, who did nothing but rehearse for six months.

Meanwhile, the Paramounts struggled on valiantly; they broke from the back-up routine, added a new guitarist and a sax player and leapt off to the greener grass on the far side of the hill. They toured the Continent. Their days were numbered, however, and they split up in unlamented ignominy — no one wrote to Disc bewailing the break-up, no-one shed a tear, no-one gave a toss.

Diz Derrick, who had come in on bass when Chris Copping went off to University, left music in search of a firmer future, BJ Wilson backed people like Lulu, Millie and Cat Stevens (and even spent some time drumming in George Bean and the Runners — there's a name from the past!), and Gary Brooker turned recluse to cleanse his soiled musical integrity and to plan a more positive career.

A line of stars to denote the passage of time.

If I were to list the ten men who've had the greatest effect on shaping rock music in Britain, I don't think there's any way I could omit the name of Guy Stevens, dj, adviser, producer, madman, genius, Island Records executive, guide, inspiration, writer, pioneer, trailblazer, striped blazer and red trousers. (Guy Stevens in a nutshell). It so happened that in 1967, Guy, for one reason and another, left Island for about a year and was, among other things, part of psyched-elic-poster company cum recording group recording group extraordinaire, Hapshash and the Coloured Coat. During this time he became involved with the efforts of a pair of songwriters — Gary Brooker, music, and Keith Reid, words.

Reid, a self-confessed academic failure, had confined his interests to reading and had worked, among other things, as an apprentice tailor before he became interested in the prospect of linking his poetry with suitable music to produce songs. Legend has it that he was wandering around for several months, showing various uninterested people his work, before he happened to bump into Brooker at a mutual friend's house. Their combined efforts were originally intended for other groups to record . . . Brooker/Reid were a songwriting team with no immediate notion of becoming performers — Brooker had already seen too many miles of motorway from a crammed van, and Reid was no musician anyway.

They took their songs to Guy Stevens, a friend of Gary's, hoping that, with his

contacts in the business, he'd be able to place them with worthy artists . . . and of course, Guy went potty over them — after all, this was six years ago, and songs like theirs didn't come along every day.

It was decided that the best course of action was to go into a studio and cut demos of four songs, using session men to supplement Gary Brooker's piano playing and singing. Guy Stevens supervised the session and one of the songs, 'A whiter shade of pale' supposedly inspired by a malapropism that Keith Reid had heard someone say, just knocked everyone sideways. Everyone, that is, except Chris Blackwell, head of Island records, who was in the process of trying to launch the VIPs (later Spooky Tooth) and untangle the emerging Traffic from the Spencer Davis Group; he liked the demos, but didn't think they justified the time and effort that would have to be spent if anything was to come of them.

So Guy took them to Denny Cordell, who had produced some amazing stuff by the Move and Denny Laine; he was excited enough to sign them to a deal.

By this time, it had been concluded that Brooker should, after all, form a permanent group. That would be the only way of doing these incredible songs justice. From a Melody Maker small ad, he surrounded himself with what he considered the ideal group, which Guy (who was now co-manager with Keith Reid) christened pleted.

Everyone in the world bought that single (backed with 'Lime Street Blues' on Deram 126), which topped just about every chart in the Western hemisphere — and quite rightly so. (That was a great single, was it not? How well I remember the first time I heard it, on Radio London . . . I couldn't believe it — never heard anything like that before). But things started to go sour — the press discovered that a session drummer had been used and spread the impression that the whole thing was a hype and that the group weren't competent and blah blah blah.

Cordell, however, having procured Procol Harum. The line-up was unusual inasmuch that it featured both piano and organ — a favourite combination of Guy's (two later Stevens creations, Spooky Tooth and Mott the Hoople also had similar line-ups), who's whole life had been changed by the music on 'Highway 61 Revisited' and 'Blonde on Blonde'.

When Cordell took them down to Olympic to cut 'A Whiter Shade of Pale', which was to be their first single, the drummer Bobby Harrison, who had been the last to join, wasn't familiar enough with the song and couldn't achieve the fluidity that it called for, so a session drummer, Johnny Eyden, was brought in and the track commenced and a manager — one Jonathan Weston — immediately set to work on an album . . . this was in April 1967, only two weeks after the single had been put out.

When it was almost complete, the entire album was scrapped, Ray Royer, the guitarist, and drummer Bobby Harrison were found to be "working in the opposite direction" and were kicked out, and they traded Weston in for a new manager, Tony Secunda, who was making a big deal out of the Move.

3. Robin Trower returns to the fold

Brooker got on the phone to his old mates, and before you could say "your trouser cuffs are dirty", Robin Trower and BJ Wilson (not to be confused with BJ Thomas or PJ Proby) were back in the

group, whereupon they began re-recording their first album, currently available (like the other 3 albums recorded on Regal Zonophone) on Fly (or Cube) Doubleback series.

Considering Cordell's subsequent work with people like Leon Russell and Joe Cocker, that first Procol album is a muzzy shambles which, but for the quality of the songs and performances, might have been rejected by record buyers who were still reeling from the engineering magnificence of 'Sgt Pepper'. Not only was it in shabby mono, but it didn't get released here, for reasons connected with Cordell's wheeling and dealing with various record companies,



until many many months after it had been thrown together.

When it was cut, in June 67, Olympic was among the most sophisticated studios in the country — but even so, the equipment was limited to 4 track. Of course, these days it's not unusual to split even a drum sound onto 4 tracks — one, say, for the cymbals, one for the snare, one for the tom toms, and one for the bass drum, but with 4 tracks for the whole band, it was a case of drums and bass on one track, piano and organ on another, guitar on another, and vocals on the other. On top of that, the entire album was allegedly finished in 3 days, with the band completing up to 6 songs in one session.

"I think the material on that album" says Robin, "is the best Procol ever had; it was just bad luck that we didn't have the right producer or manager. If we'd had someone to spend a lot of time and record that material with the imagination and love it deserved, then that probably would have been one of the classic albums of all time. I mean, if the sound matched the performances — can you imagine what it would've been like?"

As it was, despite the long gap between 'Whiter shade' and the album, it was a success in America if not here (one critic, Paul Williams of the everstoned Crawdaddy

described Trower's guitar playing on 'Repent Walpurgis' as, listen to this, "just shattering, brilliant; amid the precise weariness of the piece, he cries out like Thomas Hardy at century's end, himself exhausted, still ready to report whatever hope he finds". ???), and this led to their forsaking England in favour of a string of American tours. In actual fact, nobody in England wanted to know. During those early months of managerial chaos, personnel shuffling and press furore, not only were promoters scared of chancing their arm, but there were hardly any suitable venues other than UFO, where they played a few times. That's their excuse anyway . . . that and the fact that English audiences considered them two-hit wonders and wouldn't be bothered to go and see them.

A second album, again produced by Denny Cordell, 'Shine On Brightly', took an age to record and was no sooner released than they left Secunda, left Cordell and, after a magnificent third album, 'A Salty Dog' (get your hands on this one, folks), produced by Matthew Fisher, they actually broke up in frustration and despair . . . they were labouring in such an uphill poverty smitten struggle that they felt they, like the Paramounts, would never see any rewards for their craft.

A third manager, Ronnie Lyons, persuaded them to remain together and got an American tour lined up; a tour which happened to put them on the road to great acclaim and success — but Matthew Fisher, the brilliant organist who had come straight into the band from a 3 year course at the Guildhall School of Music, wasn't prepared to go on. In Spring 1969, he quit without having made a penny.

The financial aspects of the group, I found unbelievable. When you think of how much money they should've made out of 'Whiter Shade' alone . . . consider; if they were on 3% artists royalties (a pitiful percentage, but the norm), they should've cleared around £10,000 per million copies sold — and how many millions that record must have done — plus the fact that Keith Reid and Gary Brooker should have made an absolute fortune out of writer's royalties. (I read somewhere that a geezer called Laurie London made so much bread from just one hit that he had in 1957, 'He's got the whole world in his hands', that he and his dad were able to retire and live in comfort for ever!)

How much, I wondered, had Procol actually made from 'Whiter Shade'?

Robin: "No-one in the group saw one single penny in artists royalties . . . anything we earned went towards paying off ex managers who were suing us and on expenses that we didn't have any idea we were incurring . . . legally, it was spent on our behalf, but we didn't see any of it".

In fact, they've had to settle out of court with 3 ex managers. "It was a matter of lack of judgement really . . . you put your trust in people, but . . . well, Procol Harum were unlucky to a great degree and foolish to a certain extent".

So, who made all the money?
It's the same old story, isn't it?

4. Procol down to four

So, Mathew Fisher, totally bored with life on the road, split to "become a producer" and Dave Knights left to become manager of a band called Legend, and it was back to the MM small ads to find replacements. After several abortive attempts to find another Fisher, a change of plan was adopted; they'd get a bass player who could double on organ where necessary,

PROCOL HARUM
are looking for a
Hammond Organist
Telephone 493 7758



but in future they concentrate on organless arrangements. Chris Copping, ex Paramount, had by this time been through university and was holding down a good job as well as playing in a group in his spare time. Robin phoned, and along he came — just in time to embark on this 6 week rebuilding tour of America.

The fourth album, 'Home' (like subsequent albums), was recorded under the supervision of Chris Thomas, a George Martin protégé from his AIR studios, and the improvement in sound quality was marked and 'Broken Barricades' their first on Chrysalis (who were now managing them too) was even better, though most of the songs were written in the studio and lacked the majesty of much of their earlier work.

Meanwhile, they were slowly climbing in the States. Each tour saw increasingly better gigs and bread, and corresponding improvements in hotel and travelling facilities.

'Broken Barricades' was the turning point for Trower, however, because, being a guitar dominated album, it required him to step out of the background and stretch himself. Had he remained in the shadows, maintains Brooker, he'd probably have stayed with the group, but on 'Barricades' he discovered he was capable of playing a much wider range of music than that which fell within the somewhat constricted sphere of Procol, which after all was a group where the songs were more important than the personnel.

Much to my amazement, Procol hadn't even begun to turn into one of those bands content to stumble onto the stage and crank out their hits in a mechanical, patronising manner, not caring whether or not they were particularly good. Quite the reverse; they strove for perfection in every performance. The very nature of their material necessitated it apart from anything else.

Robin: "Procol always felt the need to work hard on stage; a band can go on and play loud, fast rock'n'roll really badly and still go down well because of the atmosphere and immediacy and excitement — but Procol always aimed at a really great performance, because if they were sloppy or off form, the music died. To reach the audience with much of the music, which is after all very ponderous, meant working hard all the time and reaching for an emotional concert-hall contact. I mean, you can't bop to it or leap around to it, so you have to reach inside, if you like —

and to do that in a big dance hall, say, means working very, very hard, especially if you're second on the bill to Ten Years After who have attracted an audience basically interested in rocking out."

It was a somewhat courageous decision to walk out of a band which was at the top and likely to stay there for some time, but at the same time, Robin was having to work within limitations which were becoming increasingly boring. 'Song for a dreamer' was the track which finally convinced him that to remain in the group and continue writing would be impossible because his ideas were no longer in keeping with the policies and styles which had been Procol's trademark. In July 1971, he left and the group resorted once more to the MM.

PROCOL HARUM
are looking for a
GUITARIST
Telephone 493 7758

At this stage, Matthew Fisher almost made a reappearance; they'd decided to return to a five piece and he had expressed an interest in returning to the road. The idea was vetoed when they discovered that he intended to do one tour and then split again, and Chris Copping took over role of organist. Meanwhile a friend of BJ's, Alan Cartwright, from the crumbled Every Which Way, arrived as a bassist, as Brooker went through the laborious process of auditioning some of the eighty-odd applicants who hoped to take Trower's place.

In an interview with Penny Valentine in Sounds (25.9.71), Brooker expressed his amazement at the standard of the applicants: "Out of the forty we listened to, only about two had heard our records or were the remotest bit interested in the group; mostly, they would come simply because they were out of work and wanted a job." In the end, Dave Ball, who had been in various Birmingham area groups including Big Bertha, fitted the bill.

For Trower, it was a matter of contrast as much as a desire to change his style: "After playing for so long in that emotional way, always aiming at an emotional peak, I was beginning to feel very limited, apart from anything else every time I played it was to carry the majesty of the music to a higher level, and even if my playing

was great at times, it didn't really lead anywhere unless I let go, which was against the basic structure of Procol's whole style and tradition."

I wonder how audiences in general think about Keith Reid? I've never met him myself, but I've often seen him flitting around at a Procol performance, standing at the back of the hall, taking in everything he sees, or standing in the wings, hands thrust deep in the pockets of a long overcoat, observing in silence. And at almost every interview, he's there to interject his comments, which sometimes give me the impression that he's long been worn down by fools who don't understand and other times makes me feel that he's as happy as a king — but I always feel that he's running the show. He's like a Josiah Wedgewood, running a small family concern which turns out high quality pottery; obviously he requires skilled workmen, but they've got to toe the line and work within the tradition that's been established he doesn't want some bloke coming in and thinking "I don't like this blue base colour, I'll exert my own preferences and change it to red." Do you see what I'm getting at (in my simple bumpkin way)? Procol is primarily a vehicle for the songs — at least, in theory, though I don't think it works that way now — so much.

Robin: "It wasn't really that way. Keith didn't go around maintaining discipline we worked as a co-operative unit and everybody put forward his own ideas when a song was first arranged and prepared for recording. But you're right to an extent; like when a member leaves, they don't get in a big name who'll try and play his own style across every song — they'll find someone who's good, but will continue the Procol style. I think, in the old days, Keith probably used to give a strange impression of himself in the Press; he tended to look down his nose a bit because people didn't understand what he was talking about — but as I see it, it was his problem, not theirs, and it always will be his problem because he lives in a different world, certainly as far as communication goes. He's one of the nicest blokes I know, and I counted him as one of my best friends — but he always had difficulty getting his ideas across to the papers, and as a result the band was often made to seem like buffoons rather than in our true light." (For brief details of the recent history of Procol Harum, refer to the family tree).



PROCOL HARUM number three: Back row; Robin Trower and Keith Reid. In the middle; Chris Copping. In the foreground; Gary Brooker and B J Wilson.

Photos on previous two pages: Robin Trower (left) and Gary Brooker.

Photo left: PROCOL HARUM number five (as they are now): Left to right; Chris Copping, Mick Grabham, Alan Cartwright, Keith Reid, Gary Brooker and B J Wilson.

5. The rise and fall of Jude

Jude, which got together in the Autumn of 1971, comprised Robin Trower (guitar), Frankie Miller (guitar and vocals), Clive Bunker (Jethro Tull's ex-drummer) and Jimmy Dewar (the bass player from Stone The Crows). "It was great for a brief spell, but looking back, the musical policy was just too narrow to allow it to breathe and grow. At its peak it was ok, but it dropped off and we packed up rather than try to recapture something that was never really there".

That was last April, after which Clive Bunker "retired", Frankie Miller began to gig with Brinsley Schwarz at their pub gigs and has recently released a nice album (backed by the Brinsleys) on Chrysalis, and Robin and Jimmy Dewar, having found a musical compatibility, are now in the middle of recording an album to be released under Robin's name. On drums, Reg Isidore (ex Quiver) completes the trio and Mathew Fisher ("a great talent but a dormant one he can't get out of bed in the mornings") is producing.

After Jude had split, Robin left Chrysalis to see what sort of offers he could attract for the album, but as it turned out, Chrysalis offered the best deal and so he's back with them, adding the finishing touches so the record is ready for release in January. "We decided to get the record done before we go out on the road because touring can knock it out of you to the extent that you lose your direction. You see, playing live changes your axis — you have to concentrate on visual aspects and the parts of the music which will have the most impact, especially when you're the support band playing to an audience which hasn't come to see you anyway. We're going to wait until the record does something, either here or in the States, before we go on the road you're knocking your head on a brick wall if you go out too soon — as we found out in Jude".

Do you won't play live at all if the record's not a success?

"Oh, the record will be a success even if not commercially, it will be artistically". Pete

VOXPOP

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STUFF & NONSENSE

from the pen of John Tobler

Hi there, toilet paper lovers! If you can read this, I hope that you, as well as me, think that things are improving in le monde de musique. I confess that I've found myself absolutely delighted with some of the sounds that have caressed rather than assailed my ears of late. Notably, there's my favourite British band, Help Yourself, who I feel sure must be on the verge of something big, and by that I don't mean their king-size manager, John Eichler. If you get the chance, go and see Malcolm, Richard, Dave, Paul and Deke, and help yourself to an evening of Tobler's favourite British band. If you can't, then get hold of their album "Beware of the Shadow" and gaze upon all the Help Yourself tribe thinly disguised, on the back of the sleeve.

Another exceedingly good record belongs to Carol Grimes and Uncle Dog. It seems like over a year since the first vague hustling noises were made about the band, and I'm rather sorry I didn't take more notice. I'm happy to have caught up now — maybe you should also try. Also, as Kevin Coyne is not yet nestled hard on top of the album charts (despite all my proclamations of him going to be the biggest thing since sliced bread) maybe you should take a listen to his latest epic "Case History" and remedy the situation.

While my favourite record company may not have delighted anyone recently, and my dog's thinking of changing her name, "Nuggets" on Elektra cannot fail to come high on anyone's list of wants. It's a double album, featuring twenty three groups from "the first psychedelic era." A really fine collection.

Staying with re-issues, there's an excellent 1960 vintage Mickey Gilley LP on Polydor (Mickey is Jerry Lee's cousin), an almost excellent Brenda Lee collection on MCA, the Spector Xmas album on Apple (now, how about the rest of those Ronettes things?), the next two double-backs on Cube featuring Procol Harum and the rest of Bolan, and the first two Bowie albums on RCA.

Albums by established good guys include Boz Scaggs, Loggins and Messina, Bread, Philip Goodhand-Tait, Carole



King, the Band and Matching Mole, while I was greatly impressed for the first time by McKendree Spring, JSD Band, J. D. Souther, and three Bonnie ladies — Raith, Koloc and Dobson.

While talking of Philip G-T, I saw him live with Lou Reed on a fantastic gig at Kingston Poly. Both Philip and Lou have quite phenomenal new bands, and although I haven't yet heard Lou's new album, I'm sure that it'll be a gas, a decision I've already made about Colin Blunstone's "Ennismore" album, which has far fewer strings and much more beef than his previous, but still nice, album.

I'm highly delighted that Nonesuch records are now being put out by Transatlantic, who should be congratulated for taking the chance on less than a cert. For £1.49 each, you can sample three excellent Joshua Rifkin tours de forces — Piano Rags Vols 1 and 2 and "The Baroque Beatles Book". It's also pretty gratifying to be able to tell you in advance about Roy Buchanan, who I'm tempted to say makes Lonnie Mack sound like Bert Weedon, which, although it's not entirely accurate, gives an idea of the man's guitar ability.

Now, to bash your ears with a few of my ideas about popular conceptions. First of all, the Osmonds versus the Jacksons thing. The reason why the music papers always praise the Jacksons' music so highly seems to be because they're spades, and everyone knows that spades are better singers, dancers etc. (Yes John, there's only a thin veneer of civilisation between the Jacksons and their breast-beating brethren in the Congo.) Generally, however, popularity is given in greater measure to the Osmonds, contrary to the way that the Melody Maker would have us think. Why? Because the majority of impressionable kids in this country are (as yet) white. Think, about it.

The second misconception is that these K-Tel, Arcade, Ronco records with 20 hits for £1.99 are new and good value. People have obviously never heard of the Decca "World of Hits" series, where you get twelve good tracks that contain a greater percentage of hits for only 99p. Now, that's a funny thing. (Come off it, John, all the others are advertised on the all-powerful goggle-box).

We hope to continue the Love saga next time, with a Gary Rowles interview. (Nothing like flogging the old dead horse). It gets a bit like Peyton Place, doesn't it, but I'm sure you all still want to know what Arthur eats for breakfast. Maybe there's something else you'd like us to research to death — if so, let us know, and we'll surely try. Keep rocking till the next time, and don't forget to listen to Andy Finney's "Fresh Garbage" on Radio London. Merry Christmas from me, Nicky, Liz, Jane, Elektra, Clement, Crumble, Sophie, Spoonful, Wink Dinkerson and Roscoe. John. (with acid comments from typist Carole, who should stick to milking cows).

PAPERBACK PERUSAL

'Outlaws Of America; The Underground Press and its Context' by Roger Lewis Pelican 40p
'The Last Whole Earth Catalogue' Penguin £1.75

Mr Lewis has done his research very thoroughly. There are even two mentions of Zigzag in 'Outlaws Of America', a potted social history of the "alternative" society and the media which grew out of it.

Basically, his study is involved with America, although he writes about Britain as well with a welcome caustic touch, after all the gibberings of ageing trend hounds in the "straight" press, who remind me of butterfly collectors taking you around to see their collections: "Yes, that's an early Richard Neville. I got on to him quite fast — that was shortly after I discovered the Melody Maker and found my mind could be made up without listening to records at all, or going to concerts, or meeting anyone at all except myself".

Lewis notes a distinct difference between the American and British underground press. "This has been partly caused by the easy complacency and ethnocentricity of British society. Liberals in the United States find it much harder to be inconsistent in their opinions than liberals in England". He argues that the media in England are "frequently guilty of forms of racism that would never be tolerated in the United States. It is not expressed in blatant rhetoric but in polite, condescending assumptions that to the domestic ear might sound quite inoffensive. It happens because there are no minority groups powerful or organised enough to challenge it effectively, and also because the British are peculiarly insensitive to any national preoccupation except their own. They can jovially mock their imperial past yet, at the same time, see nothing objectionable about the Black and White Minstrel Show".

Ah, the Black and White Minstrel Show. Once I was sent by a serious national newspaper to review a new season of this appalling show, and mentioned in my review that I saw no black people in the audience, no doubt because they would have found it not only embarrassing but stupid as well.

In fact the only worthwhile thing of the evening was a juggling act who did not find it necessary to "black up". I've always wanted to interview a family who move around the world and live by something as bizarre as juggling, so a few weeks after the show I rang them up. They were delighted, but then I got a mysterious phone call from the press officer of the dreaded Minstrels. An order had been made for-bidding me ever to go anywhere near the Black and White Minstrels again. The promoters of the show, I was told, had found my criticism offensive. Irony indeed. Later I met two professional critics, Milton Schulman of the London Evening Standard and Philip Hope Wallace of the Guardian, who noted what I had said. They had mildly agreed with the show, showing no great enthusiasm but admitting that it would be successful. When taxed on why they did not attack this offensive rubbish, they said in defence that they probably had done years ago, but with the passing of time you couldn't exactly keep on about it. The British are willing to accept anything if it goes on long enough.

Mr Lewis finds more specific faults: "The alternative press in England has been undeniably sexist and Oz and It have probably been the worst offenders. Their general level of consciousness has been little better than that of the L. A. Free Press. In America, their offices would almost certainly have been vandalized or taken over by women".

Enough of Mr Lewis's criticisms and on to the more practical side of things, actually running an alternative paper or magazine. Pete "I did it all on baked beans" Frame could tell you a thing or two about that. Lewis is honest enough when he admits: "Some of the practical differences between the British and American papers are quite clear. Printing costs are relatively lower in the United States and a paper can survive on sales alone. Equipment tends to be more modern and some papers possess their own machinery or work through sympathetic movement shops.

"British papers, because costs are higher, often accept blatantly exploitative advertisements American papers are also at an advantage because there is no national press coverage of their whole country".

Printing costs are a problem, in fact the overbearing problem on an alternate publication, but equally as hard is the distribution. In America, therefore, these publications tend to be local like the L. A. Free Press and the Berkeley Barb, etc. This is a worthwhile book because as a phenomenon the alternative culture needed chronicling dispassionately. The trouble with publishers at present is that they are letting forth a clutch of books about the rock industry, much in the way record companies often let loose a whole load of records without pausing to ask themselves why they are releasing them. They hope commercially one or two will stick. Two particularly boring examples of late are Michael Gray's 'Song and Dance Man, the art of Bob Dylan' and Richard Middleton's 'Pop music and the blues'. At least Roger Lewis isn't attempting to fill us up with theories. Ian Whitcomb's 'After the ball' is, by the way, worth going into the public library for, to read the last section which is autobiographical.

However, they are not paperbacks and therefore are not discussed here because I reckon that the cost of hardback books today is almost prohibitive, much as I like owning them. (How about the literary bad taste award of the year going to The Churchill Hotel in London, who have a "library", or so they dare to call it, which is stocked entirely with the glued-on backs of books? I wonder who was the literary landscaper?)

Still, sometimes, paperbacks can cost as much or more than hardbacks; 'The Last Whole Earth Catalogue' is such a work. Yet in its time it has been the reference book of the alternative society and I remember that Friends started a serialised British version some time back. Watching Felix Greene's sympathetic BBC TV series on China, I remember he made the point that the Chinese education system was not based on cramming the human mind as in the West, but they preferred to teach people how to find the sources of information eg reference books, etc. This, to me, seems an excellent method, and this is what the Whole Earth Catalogue really does. There are reference points throughout as well as short cut guides to, for example, breaking horses! Anyway, with all those Christmas book tokens, it's definitely worth the outlay.

Coming soon: a long interview with J P Donleavy about his work.

Michael Wale

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BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST & THE SPRAWLING DINOSAUR

I've always thought of EMI as the dinosaur of record companies: the release department in the tail, the press office in the right forefoot, the administrative sections spread about the trunk, and so on. The co-ordination of the beast seems to be negligible — the brain doesn't fully understand what the left back foot is doing; while the press office is announcing solidarity with the longhairs and introducing its new non-rip off underground label, the accounts department is releasing news of price increases which will make Harvest the most expensive label on the market. And, where as most other companies have at least some faith in their product, and release and promote selected albums accordingly, EMI apparently live by the motto "throw enough crap at the wall and some of it is bound to stick." They release a whole barrage of albums, most of them totally without publicity (or redeeming musical quality), and hope that the odd few will sell enough to compensate for all the flops. In principle I love this idea; the idea that the success of T. Rex should subsidise fine albums by people like Michael Murphey and the Eagles, but living by this maxim means that prices keep rising . . . they have to in order to cover the ridiculous costs and still come out with enough profit to satisfy the shareholders.

David Sandison, a staunch fellow and true friend of the magazine, recently left Island to become EMI's press officer and to thrust a bit of life into the decaying beast. He apparently phoned up, his voice seared with desperation, to see if we'd do an article on Barclay James Harvest. We agreed, but since our files revealed only very limited information on the band, we asked him to dig out all the bumph he could. Do you know what the mighty resources of EMI managed to turn up? A three year old photo, a clipping from the Newmarket Journal, and an album review from the Bradford Argus. That's all they had! If you consider that their record company is typical of the many barriers the group has had to clamber over during the last five years, you'll get some

idea of why Barclay James Harvest have remained in comparative obscurity despite maintaining steady progress.

A few years ago, back in the belly of 1968, Barclay James Harvest were Top Gear heroes and Middle Earth regulars, having enveloped themselves in the mandatory country cottage incubation period that no self respecting group could do without.

The group came together in late '66, veterans of the Beatles boom which had spread radially to Oldham, where they all lived; Les Holroyd and Mel Pritchard had been in the Keepers, John Lees had been in the Sorcerers, and Stuart (Woolly) Wolstenholme had been in a group that used to rehearse a lot, but never actually did any gigs. Their early months were spent working clubs and pubs around the Oldham and Manchester area, where promoters were desperately trying to resuscitate the limping remnants of Merseymania, and they played their own versions of stuff they copied off the first Love album, the Byrds and Simon and Garfunkel albums, as well as the material they were writing themselves. It was all a very shoestring affair, and they were just another mildly ambitious semi-pro group — working all day and playing all evening.

In the spring of 1967, they chanced to get a gig supplying the music for a party in Greenfield, the area of Oldham where the uptown folks live, and attracted the attention of one John Crowther, who offered to become their manager. They accepted his offer and his terms, which involved turning fully professional and going to live in a cottage on the Moors at a place called Diggle.

"We wasted two years of our life there," said Mel (the blond guy in that terrible pastoral photo over there — the only one we could get). "All we did was sit around, get stoned, and do nothing. We used to rehearse in the barn, but it was hardly the creative period of seclusion that you hear

about from other groups who had cottages in the country. We used to play mostly other people's songs and the ones we wrote ourselves turned out very similar to our influences, but I suppose we started to develop our own style after a while."

"We used to put all the gig money into a kitty and it always went on food . . . there was never any left over to buy clothes with or anything like that."

Their first single, "Early Morning", was recorded independently and then a 5 year deal (which will expire early next year) was negotiated with EMI, who handed over a large advance (to their manager). Another single "Brother Thrush" followed, and eventually an album, which came out on the Harvest (SHVL 770) label, which was named after the group.

EMI launched the Harvest label to carry their "Underground/Progressive product" and the early ads featured photos of dawn over Stonehenge . . . a marked contrast to the grim reality of the bleak concrete and glass block that houses EMI's entrails there in Manchester Square. The initial deluge of albums were undistinguished, and it was still a case of "release a whole load and hope some will sell". Barclay James Harvest's first album came in the second batch and did reasonably well, but there was no obvious track suitable for airplay — they were either too long or too complicated, and I'm sure that sales suffered as a result. It was a solid enough album, with a style emerging from the melee of discernible influences (like the Beatles and Procol Harum), but perhaps a little too adventurous; they had attempted a fusion of rock and orchestra, which, no doubt due to time and technical limitations, was often ponderous and lifeless rather than inspired and sparkling, and was only partly successful.

Following this, they did selected dates with "the Barclay James Harvest Orchestra", an ad hoc selection of some 40 musicians (see later) and were generally able to command better gigs than they'd been used to . . . and, together with

groups like King Crimson and the Moody Blues, they were using a mellotron to broaden their sound.

Now, this word "mellotron" is often bandied around in conversations, but I'm sure that many people are unsure of just exactly what a mellotron is and does. I asked Mel if he would explain, and from his technical explanation I gathered that it is an instrument similar to an organ in that a keyboard is employed; when a key is depressed, a pre-recorded tape is played and amplified. Each key plays a 10 second tape of a different note . . . like, for instance, a violin playing A flat or a cello playing F, and so you can simulate the sound of an orchestra to a degree. Depending on the age and sophistication of the instrument, you can have flutes, oboes, trumpets and various other things, so you can achieve quite a sound if you depress the keys in various harmonious combinations.

A second album, "Once Again", (SHVL 788), also sold well without setting the world on fire, and was once again recorded under Norman "Hurricane" Smith's auspices at Abbey Road.

"Looking at his influence over us retrospectively, I'll admit that he got us to do things; he taught us a lot about how to record and how to achieve certain sounds . . . but all our albums were too rushed. It wasn't his fault — he was working under pressure too, but the records suffered because we couldn't perfect them, or at least raise them to a standard which we considered satisfactory."

Smith's assistant, Wally Allen, produced the third album "And Other Stories" (SHVL 794) the sleeve of which once again carried a recoloured fragment of the first sleeve design (and at last it emerged with some clarity as an impressionistic butterfly, rather than just the nice stained glass type pattern that I, in my dumb ignorance, had previously thought of it as). This album too was hurried to meet the EMI clockwatchers' release date: "One track,

"Harry's Song" was left unfinished because we just didn't have any time left to put on the piano, another guitar and all the vocals we wanted."

The album seemed, I thought, left much to be desired. "Once Again" was a double sleeve, the interior of which contained only brief track details which could easily and tastefully have been included on the back of a single sleeve — but Harvest, at that time, had a policy which involved all their albums having a double sleeve — for which fans were charged an extra five bob.

The centre spread of "And Other Stories" (as well as having the usual "file under POPULAR: pop groups" — EMI's inevitable clue to thick record shop proprietors) depicted an unsavoury bunch of individuals who are connected with the group, and revealed the lyrics to all the songs. Standing starkly in print, these lyrics are too introspective and too inconsistent to pass off as poetry and I must confess that wrapping them in extravagant arrangements furthers my desire for them to return to the Barclay James Harvest that I used to know and love four years ago. This is no more than jaded opinion, but of all their albums I prefer (by far and away) — the recently released "Early Morning Onwards" (Starline SRS 5126), which contains an unstructured hotch potch of singles and fave-rave album tracks and which I find most pleasant to the ear . . . most of the Barclay's finest work is included therein. It seemed to me that over the years their themes have become increasingly subjective and confined — and at times, downright depressing . . . as if they were too conscious of striving for a majestic feel which would be suitable for lush orchestration. Old songs, like "Brother Thrush" and "Poor Wages", have a ripple and lilt that's sadly absent in their recent work. But still.

Despite all the albums selling well, Barclay James still weren't getting their share of publicity. In the pop press, on a page devoted almost entirely to, say, Deep Purple, there in the corner, as a space filler written in about five minutes, would be a few lifeless paragraphs on Barclay James Harvest, accompanied by a microscopic photo. Whether this was because they hid themselves away in Oldham or because the pop journalists didn't like their music, or because they weren't pushy enough, or because they didn't employ a publicist to plunder their potential and pester the press . . . they don't know the reason, but they're keeping their fingers crossed for the future, which certainly looks much brighter than the past.

(They did achieve a brief flicker of press notoriety when, playing in the floodlit moat of the Tower of London during the City of London Festival in July, they were ceremoniously unplugged to allow the 700



The changing face of Barclay James Harvest: above 1969, below 1972

year old Ceremony of the Keys to proceed in the silence and dignity the occasion demands. As a result, the incident was accorded nearly as many column inches as the death of Chi Chi the panda, who happened to peg out the same day!

So handsomely have their records sold, that EMI jumped at the chance to negotiate a new and more favourable contract with their current managers Dave Crowe and

Ian Cassie. (The group's relationship with their previous manager was terminated, with a certain amount of ill feeling, some time ago.) Ian, whom they'd known from the old days when he used to be social secretary at the Manchester College of Commerce, and Dave used to run the allegedly notorious White Agency in Manchester, and used to solicit gigs for the Barclays during a time when they really needed the

work — and the bread. (I refer to the "allegedly notorious" White Agency because Stackwaddy used to be associated with them.) It transpires that although they've never had a chart album, the long term sales have been very good — "Once Again", for instance has done over 25,000 — but at less than 3% artistes royalties, relatively high sales don't mean much.

Their new album, which should be ready for release soon, threatens to be a bit funkier, and a bit less pastoral than its predecessors. "We've been given a free hand" says Mel "and there aren't any time restrictions to worry us . . . you can hear the difference it makes; it's much more relaxed, probably partly due to the atmosphere of Strawberry Studios in Stockport where we recorded it, and there is a brightness and happiness about it!"

One thing that has often puzzled me is the way they manage to make concert appearances with Barclay James Harvest Orchestra, as they call it. I'd have thought that the impracticabilities and difficulties would make the tours into a financially unfeasible labour of love . . . art for art's sake rather than for financial gain (which is the motive of over 90% of the pop world). In fact, when the bread is divided after an orchestra gig, the Barclays are left with peanuts — but they consider it aesthetically worthwhile. Admirable.

The 40-piece orchestra comprises students from the Royal Academy or the Royal Society plus session men and other odd bods who convene under Martyn Ford, who sorts it all out, gets it all together, arranges the material and wields the baton. If you can imagine the problems, from getting a sound balance, to transport, to hiring music stands, to rehearsing, etc . . . then you can appreciate the size of the operation.

Obviously, if they moved to London, they'd be at the hub of musical activity instead of being halfway up a spoke, but despite all the advantages they feel that London plays havoc with their stability and creativity, and moving south just in order to bring success a little nearer is a compromise they're not prepared to make . . . and I don't blame them. But all the same, although they're slowly building it up with British and Continental gigs to consolidate their album successes, they're on the lookout for a hit single and their share of American pie. As Mel says "you can only live on dreams for so long . . . then you've got to think in terms of selling or you'll die."

Mac.

NB: This interview was done before we knew anything about the Barclays' South African tour.

ZZ: The last time I spoke to you, you were saying that Manassas stood more chance of surviving than Buffalo Springfield ever did — partly because you are now in a stronger position all round.

Stephen Stills: Well, people go around talking about fee music and stuff like that, but I wonder if they realise how much it costs for a band like Manassas to go on the road I mean, it costs us five grand every time we go onstage; because we want to do the best we can, sound the best we can and give the audience the best we can. That's why I play for two or two and a half, or even three hours — because I want to give and because I enjoy playing I mean, when I start "singing with my guitar", as Eric used to call it, it's higher than you can get. In Buffalo Springfield, we could never make enough money to get it right it just had to fold up because the frustrations were too great.

ZZ: We know much of the history of the Springfield (in the ZZ 24 Poco article) but could you just give us a fairly brief run down?

SS: Sure. It started when I called up Richie Furay; I was in LA and he was still back in New York, and I told him I had a group and asked him to come out and join. He arrives in California and finds that there's no group at all — so we just sit in our apartment singing and playing our acoustic guitars and waiting for something to happen.

Now, eight months earlier, I'd toured Canada with a folk group and I'd met this cat called Neil Young who had a band, and I almost left the folk group to join him — but there were hang-ups with entry visas and work permits and things like that, so I arranged to go back to New York when I'd finished this folk tour and fix up some club gigs and working papers so that he could bring his band into the States. Well, he thought that was a pretty far out idea, so when I got to California, I left the folk group, headed back east, fixed up some jobs and phoned Toronto — only to find that he'd quit the group, they'd split up and he'd gone back to being a folksinger and was living with this folksinger chick.

That was the end of that line — so I went back to LA and messed around with Van Dyke Parks for a while, but little came of that and that's where we came in I called up Richie.

Well, not long after he'd arrived and we'd been working up a few songs, we happened to be driving in LA and we saw this hearse with Ontario plates. "I bet I know who that is," I said, and sure enough, it was Neil and his friend Bruce Palmer. We all went back to a friend of mine's house and started playing our guitars, and things started falling into place

all we needed was a drummer, and this same friend of mine happened to know Dewey Martin, so we got him in.

ZZ: Was it difficult for a newly-formed rock group to get gigs in LA in those days (Spring 1966)?

SS: Well, ironically enough, it was Chris Hillman who is now in Manassas with me, who got us off the ground to begin with. He was in the Byrds, who were really successful at the time, and he happened to come and see us rehearsing on what little equipment we had. He really dug us, and literally got us off the street — he really did; he borrowed equipment from his friends for us and really got us going, as well as getting us a job at the Whisky, and having us second on the bill of a tour that the Byrds made in Southern California.

ZZ: One hears that the three albums didn't do the group justice.

SS: It's true; the real Buffalo Springfield isn't on record and even if we got the original people together again, I don't think we could duplicate that feel. Manassas, however, is the closest thing that I've come to it since.

ZZ: Were the Springfield songs the first that you'd written.

SS: No, I started writing before that — in Regina, Saskatchewan, in a little hotel there. The songs came as a result of depression, and if anyone has ever been

to Regina, they'll know that if there was ever a place to get depressed, Regina is it it's flat as a pancake — nothing for miles, and I was in the tallest building, this old grungy hotel, and I wrote a couple of songs they weren't recorded they were just Tin Pan Alleyish. Songs — they didn't say much.

ZZ: You like to say something in your songs, then?

SS: I always do — either my personal feelings or my observations on certain situations.

ZZ: The first C. S. & N. song we ever got to hear was "Suzie: Judy Blue Eyes" — do you want to talk about that?

SS: It was the result of a very personal experience that took place over a period of months with a certain person. It started out as a huge long narrative poem which just poured out of me. Well, the whole process of writing songs, as far as I'm concerned, is a result of my sitting around playing guitar and doddling at it until I get a nide going — and if I like it and get hung up in it, maybe I'll think of a melody and some words to fit and that'll carry me into a song. In this particular case, I happened on a melody and the words that came to my mind were from that poem, so I went back to the poem and started picking out pieces. Now, that poem changes in form, so I could only fit part of it to the melody — and I had to write an entirely

different melody for other parts where the metre changes.

ZZ: It's strange how the Springfield failed for lack of commercial success and yet, C. S. & N. seemed to fail because it was too commercially successful.

SS: C. S. & N. Y was an incredible series of very carefully devised plans, and well, the best laid plans of mice and men — you know. What we set out to do did work, for a while, but

ZZ: Do you feel like running over the rise and fall of that group?

SS: Well, David Crosby and I were friends, hanging out in LA; he'd left the Byrds and was doing nothing in particular, and since the Springfield had split up, I'd made that "Supersession" album with Al Kooper and had then proceeded to follow Jimi Hendrix around, taking guitar lessons from him. I really was — one day we played for fourteen hours non-stop at my house in Malibu. Ahmet Ertegun of Atlantic Records was supporting me, waiting for me to think of something to do and between times, Dallas Taylor and I were going into the studio we made four or five really good records, which I'll maybe release — Dallas on drums and me overdubbing the rest.

Well, one day, we suddenly sat up and came to the conclusion that a drummer and a guitarist do not a band make.

At that point, I began to hang around with David quite a bit, and one day the Hollies came to town and we spent a bit of time with Willie (that's what we call Graham Nash). We were all up at John Sebastian's house one day, messing around with the first two songs that David and I did together, 'Helplessly Hoping', and 'You don't have to cry', and Willie joined in on the vocals. Well, Crosby and me just looked at each other — it was one of those moments, you know? But though we knew that the combination would be a winner, we didn't think it could ever happen; David and I were talking about it as we drove home, and he was saying "no he'd never do it those guys have been together for ever, but boy, what a sound!" We were really full of it, but didn't dare approach him, so we came to the conclusion that we'd get Cass (Elliott) to ask him — we were just too afraid.

ZZ: As it happened, he didn't take much convincing?

SS: Right. It turned out that he was frustrated. He had songs which he wanted to do, and the Hollies wanted to do "The Hollies Sing Dylan" so he was ready. Anyway, he went back to England, and David and I went to New York to take care of business and there was a lot of jiving and shucking and hustling went

on in New York, I tell you, I went to Ahmet and said "Look, I've got this singing group David Crosby, Graham Nash and me. David isn't under contract any more, but Graham is signed to EMI in England and Epic in the States — can you sort it out?"

Well, Ahmet wasn't amused. "Ah, man, the trouble you cause me" he said, "Why do you make me go through all this trouble with Sir Joseph and Clive Davis just because you want harmony ?" But I said "C'mon, Ahmet, get real, let's take care of it", so he agreed to talk to Sir Joseph Lockwood at EMI and I started thinking about the Clive Davis/Epic part of it.

I had the idea of phoning Richie Furay who by then had formed Poco but who, though signed to Atlantic under his Springfield contract, hadn't made an album yet. I said "Hey, Richie, you've got a country group, right but what's a country group going to do on Atlantic, which, after all, is a R&B label. How would you like to be on Columbia? You see, I honestly felt that Columbia would do right by him.

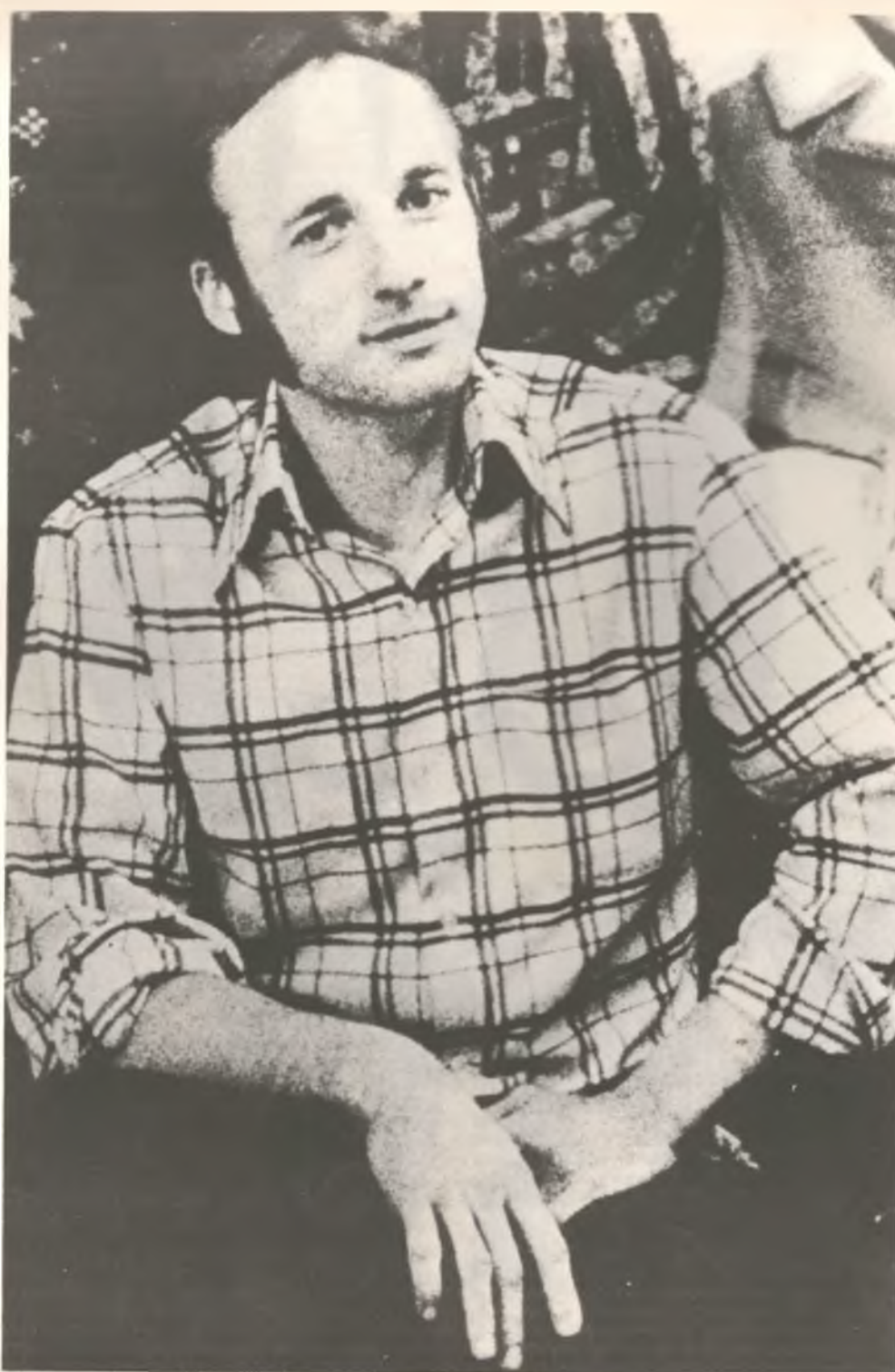
Clive Davis at Columbia owed us a favour anyway, because I'd done that "Supersession" album with Al Kooper, and that had gone down very gracefully. I did the session with Al, then called Ahmet and said "I did an album with Al Kooper for Columbia yesterday — they're going to use my name and picture and call it "Supersession" can you send him a release?" So he did.

ZZ: So Nash was exchanged for Poco?

SS: Yeah, it was sort of like a baseball deal trading players, which is something that had apparently never occurred to anyone before — you see, the record business is such an insulated world. So we pulled that off OK and got all the details worked out. Well, I got home one day and David was on the phone to Willie in England saying "Yeah Graham, we're coming just as soon as we can get some money" — and I was able to produce twenty five one hundred dollar bills from my pocket and scatter them on the floor so David told him we'd be over the next day.

ZZ: You actually got together and rehearsed in London, didn't you?

SS: Yes, we took a flat in Moscow Road (in W2) and rehearsed until we were ready to go back to LA and cut the album with Dallas and me doing most of the tracks and Graham or David sometimes contributing the rhythm. As well as that, Bill Halverston was teaching me how to mix and so I was doing a lot of that, but I was learning a lot from Graham — a British approach, if you like; he taught me a sense of essence getting everything down to just what you needed to get it



across but he didn't know anything about bass or drums.

That album was fun and it was easy and we just did it but we had to go out on the road. David and Graham were in favour of us going out as a sort of augmented Simon and Garfunkel, but I didn't want that — I wanted a band, and so we worked it out that the first half should be acoustic and then we'd bring out the electric stuff in the second half.

Well, I went over New York looking for an organ player, but I just couldn't find anybody, so I went to see Ahmet, who suggested Neil Young being brought in on guitar which would allow me to play keyboards. So I flew back to California, went to Neil's house and asked him what he thought. He'd been to one of our rehearsals and really dug the vocal sound so he came along with us, and we became Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, which I thought contained just enough of the family element but still retained the individual names so we could all go off in our own directions if and when it folded.

Well, as time went by there was a lot of diplomacy and lightweight politics to contend with, and it eventually got too big for us to handle. David Geffen, who had been an agent with CMA, came to manage us, and tried to keep the situation on an even keel, but it just got out of hand, and we felt we'd been forced into a band situation where we were all incredibly frustrated, and fighting for our individuality especially Neil. You can hear it on the first two albums; there's a sort of thread of consciousness which seems to tie 'CSN' together, and that is still one of my favourite albums, especially 'Pre Road Downs' with its backwards guitar and the bass/drum groove that Dallas and I struck that's one of my favourites.

ZZ: What about some of the other songs on that album — like 'Wooden Ships', for instance?

SS: That's quite a tale, that one. David had had that melody and that set of changes for ever, it seemed. He and Paul Kantner were spending some time down on his sailboat in Florida, and I'd just broken up with my old lady, so I went down there too, to hang out. Well, Paul Kantner had written a verse to the song and the first thing I did when I got to the boat was to write another two verses and arrange it — and then David wrote the first part — the conversation part. Afterwards, we got talking about it and I said "hey, do you realise that's a science fiction story? Wouldn't it make a great movie?" Well, I started laying out this incredibly long complicated story — and we kept doing it for months, David and I. We'd keep telling the story back and forth until we

arrived at this really complicated epic plot for a movie, which would cost millions if anybody ever bothered to make it. So it ended up staying a song.

ZZ: How did the lyric on 'Helplessly Hoping' come about?

SS: Well, I'd started to write a song and after I'd done the first line, I remembered an English Language exam in high school . . . there was a question that went something like "explain and exemplify alliteration". Well, I got to thinking, and I thought I'd write the whole song as a study in alliteration — and so I did — it's sort of amusing, I suppose.

ZZ: What about 'You don't have to cry'?

SS: That, in fact, was the very first song that Graham and David and I learnt together, and that again was originally a poem. No — it was a letter that never got sent — I took bits and pieces of it, put them into a song and it got posted through the record business instead of the mail.

ZZ: Who was it to?

SS: None of your business — I mean, come on man, give me a break — I try to make my goldfish bowl as translucent as possible. Thank you very much, because I find that if you don't at least try, you're likely to flip right out.

ZZ: Were you into poetry as opposed to song lyrics then?

SS: For a time, yes, I was into poetry and free verse.

ZZ: How about the adage that the songwriters are the poets of today?

SS: Well, of course. When Dylan went through New Orleans in 1960 he was a poet who would hang out at the Bourbon House and never stop rapping. He couldn't play guitar too well then; I mean, he was really into the blues but he couldn't play enough to do it in front of people. When he learnt to play guitar, he started to write songs rather than poems, but he'd only have enough music to carry the words, because he felt that with just a little music under the words, they would be communicated quicker than stand up poets like Alan Ginsberg or whoever — and it's absolutely true. I mean, when you read some of John Lennon's words, they're absolutely mind-boggling . . . and George Harrison's 'Within you, Without You' is, to me, one of the finest pieces of writing, not only as poetry, but as a statement of the times . . . it's magnificent, says things in a few lines that whole books have been written about.

Personally, I've never had that much confidence in my command of the language to feel that I'm a poet. I mean, being from the Southern States was a disadvantage to begin with because nobody ever said

anything that was in any way complex. It wasn't until I went to Latin America, and later the north eastern part of the States that I was exposed to a few things. It was only when I really started to read and travel that I began to realise that I'd have had a completely different approach if I'd lived in a different environment than the kind of redneck, go-to-sleep-in-school, drink beer, go to the football game, worry about girlfriends community I'd been raised in. If I'd just read a lot more when I was a kid, I'd have been a lot closer — now I read like there was no tomorrow.

ZZ: Which authors?

SS: Well, during the last two weeks I have devoured the Alexandria quartet.

His images and stuff will no doubt be cropping up in my writing for a while I suppose — so in a way I'm more influenced by writers than musicians. You see, ever since I can remember, I've been surrounded by music and I've always been involved — banging on boxes, bashing the piano, taking music lessons, being in the high school bands, and always listening. Like there was life in those records — those R&B tracks had blood flowing through them and you could feel it pulsing . . . but how many books have that communicative effect?

This Alexandria Quartet is full of things that I can relate to . . . like young people living abroad, to the really pathetic self destructive situations they keep

trapping themselves in . . . that book kept me up for days on end, I couldn't put it down. Yeah, I read a lot — science fiction, poetry, but at the same time, I feel that it's maybe a little late in life to start

ZZ: Let's get back to C, S, N&Y; by the time Deja Vu was recorded, the magic you had felt as a group had crumbled?

SS: Well, when we came to record 'Deja Vu', it was just four cats recording their own individual tracks . . . it's just as erratic as my second solo album, which disturbed people because it jumped from acoustic to a great big brass song and so on. By 'Deja Vu', it just wasn't fun any more, what with all the bickering and fighting that went on, but we got into a tough situation where I had to call a difficult shot; we had no rhythm section left, but we had a tour to fulfill. "Come on," I said, "let's get it together or else those promoters will come after us and every penny we've got will be tied up in litigation — we'll be sued really hard if we don't do it."

So, I got Fuzzy to come over to play bass — I'd been working with him in England on my first solo album, which I was making at the time but being careful not to let it interfere with the group. Fuzzy knew my songs, but not many of the others, so until we got to Chicago, and had two days off to rehearse, it was going to be mostly my tunes in the electric half . . . though he had learnt 'Southern Man' and one or two more.

ZZ: So there was even more conflict on that last C, S, N&Y tour?

SS: Yeah — when all that should've happened was a band trying to put on a good show — forget the mistakes and don't take it too seriously. I told them that Fuzzy and John Barbara would pick it up fast enough and that by New York we'd be tight — once they get the tune, they remember it. Anyway, we did the Denver show, and all but two of the (electric set) songs were mine because it was Fuzzy's first gig and they were the only songs he knew — we could depend on those being together. But some people got the idea that it was some crafty design on my part so that I could steal the spotlight, when all I was doing, in fact, was trying to make the best of a difficult situation, and trying to do it musically and professionally. I'd had a "the show must go on" attitude instilled in me since my schooldays, and I was trying to pull through with grace, but all of this leadership and ego trip stuff that was constantly going on . . . well.

I mean, I was trained to conduct an orchestra at school; give me five proficient musicians and I will put together a good piece of music . . . give me a 16 track



Stills in Springfield day

tape recorder and I'll do it myself. Thank you very much, but that's what I'm capable of doing, that's my art. Suppose my tone of voice, but I get a little bit about it, but one thing I'd really like to see eliminated, is this stupid competition between musicians. All this 'we've got to be better than them' and 'we've got to get an album out before them' and stuff. I can understand that in Britain you've got to fight and scratch even to get a job, but once you get up there . . . relax and play with whoever you can. I mean, I followed Jimi Hendrix around so much that people thought we were fags, and others thought I was some kind of groupie . . . all I was doing was taking guitar lessons; he was the greatest guitar player in the world to me, the best that ever lived. I enjoyed hanging out with Jimi, though I didn't like the people he hung out with . . . I didn't see one person out of all of them who realised what a heavy musician he was. He was a Charlie Parker, man, and I nearly quit the business when he went down.

Anyway, to get back to C, S, N&Y, it was my instinct for giving orders and trying to make that tour a musical and professional success that led to a lot of hassles. I expected them to be patient while things worked themselves out, but it didn't work that way.

ZZ: When you formed Manassas, were you consciously trying to avoid personality clashes?

SS: Manassas is a totally different atmosphere than C, S, N&Y was. For instance, Chris Hillman has been a musician for just as long as I have and he thinks exactly as I do . . . he's the closest person I've ever worked with. We listen to and like different kinds of music to an extent, but that's cool, because we both think along the same kind of lines in the music we're playing now, and he can play what I like and vice versa. The main thing is that we can sit down altogether, look each other in the eye, and talk about things . . . no diplomatic games. If he's playing bad, or he's out of tune, I can tell him — "hey, you're sharpening", or "hey, gimme your guitar a moment and I'll show you how to get that flat pick bit" . . . we help each other.

ZZ: Why is the band called Stephen Stills Manassas, rather than just Manassas?

SS: When we cut the album (because we did that before we'd been on the road) we sat down in the studio and talked about that. We concluded that Stephen Stills is a draw, whereas the Burritos didn't draw flies — and if we start as plan Manassas, nobody's going to know who the hell it is. We were all close to broke, and needed to pull the audience, and so we agreed

that for the first eight months or so, it would be Stephen Stills and Manassas, and then after that, when we were established, we'd drop my name and just be Manassas. We've copyrighted that railway sign on the album sleeve as a trademark, and we're a family and we're a band, though I'm the leader of the band and nobody questions that and nobody fights with that. Chris is my right arm — I don't move without asking him . . . and I expect him to shoot holes in my ideas . . . but the whole band is developing all the time.

ZZ: We read in the papers that Chris Hillman and Al Perkins had joined you in a band project, but things seemed to fall into place too smoothly. I mean, didn't you ever question the suitability of your new line-up?

SS: Of course, but the clincher came when we recorded 'Jet Set', which was one of the first we did. When I was a kid, learning how to play, older musicians used to throw a riff at me and see if they could lose me . . . they'd see if you were on your toes by trying to lose you. Anyway, just for fun, I threw a gut-bucket blues at Al Perkins, who was a friend of Chris's and I didn't really know him all that well at the time. Well, he knocked me down, he was so good — and that's when I decided that this could be a band — that was the clincher.

ZZ: It's pretty unusual to have a conga

player — how did that develop?

SS: All my songs have a pulse to them,

something that Anglos don't seem to understand, I think. It's a Latin thing which comes from the mountains and the jungles and the Indians and all of that — it's always been in my music, and although Dallas hears it, he can't really make it apparent on the track because he's playing rock n' roll drums, but Joe Lala puts it right where it belongs. On every song.

ZZ: When's the second Manassas album due?

SS: It's done — recorded and mixed and ready to release — should be out before Christmas. It's like a development of the last album, but some of it has more immediacy — so someone told me. You see, that's the kind of remark I can't make because when you spend a long time working on something and you finish it — then you have to put it out — throw it to the lions. On one side, I'm fighting with my art; I'm fighting to get a nine foot grand piano — all that wood and those strings — a microphone, through a recording studio transferred through a metal diaphragm in board and onto a piece of tape at the other side and make it sound the closest that I can, when it's played back through a set of speakers. Something always gets lost along the way, and you need limiters and compressors and equalizers to compens-

ate — but I refuse to be responsible for what people make of my art.

ZZ: I imagine that any influences you had earlier in your career have by now been more or less assimilated into your own style?

SS: I could name hundreds of people who have influenced me; when I was in the Buffalo Springfield, we tried to make a list of all the people who had influenced us heavily, plus some that hadn't but were funny — and you can see that list on the back of 'Buffalo Springfield Again' (if you're lucky enough to possess that beautiful but deleted album). As it happened, Frank Zappa did the same thing on his 'Freak Out' album, a little before, but we didn't know it at the time. But that list was made in 1967, and as I stand now, I know that Jimi Hendrix has influenced my guitar playing tremendously, as has Eric Clapton . . . and Doc Watson . . . and Chet Atkins . . . and Merle Travis . . . and . . . It's difficult to name them all — I mean, it goes back to the old Appalachian folkies, who influenced the next generation and they influenced the next one and so on until it finally got to me. The lady that taught me piano influenced me, my band master influenced me, the Everly Brothers and the Beatles, everyone influenced me.

ZZ: What about records in particular?

SS: Well, with me, I allow things to take their subliminal form — particularly music. If I listen to records consciously I often find myself working on a song and falling into this incredible riff — only to discover a bit later that it's from some record I've been spending a lot of time listening to. For instance, we just recorded a song where the guitar riff I fell into is the beginning of 'Jumping Jack Flash'. I couldn't help myself; I just fell into it, and then decided to leave it in . . . I figured that those guys being who they are, it won't matter.

ZZ: Are you a disciplined writer . . . can you sit down and begin to write songs when you need to?

SS: Songwriting is a bit like sleepwalking . . . waiting for the magic to come. You can only set up so many circumstances in front, to keep your mind free so you can sleepwalk without bumping into things . . . I make sure the tape recorder is always on, and then maybe it'll come — but the only discipline involved is trying to be as efficient as possible and remembering that the job is to communicate.

Michael Wale.



MANASSAS: Paul Harris/Joe Lala/Chris Hillman/Dallas Taylor/Stephen Stills/Fuzzy Samuels/Al Perkins

Uppers, Downers Turn-You-Rounders

This re-released first album from Gallagher & Lyle is available now.



CHAPTER ONE PRE-FLIGHT, 'PREFLYTE', JET SETS, BEEFEATERS & EARLY BYRDS August 1964 - March 1965

Alright, let's start at the beginning. The Byrds started to come together in August 1964 as the Jet Set . . . but before we go rushing in too fast, some biographical/historical stuff about the 5 original members:

ROGER McGUINN. Born July 13th, 1942 in Chicago, Illinois as James Joseph McGuinn III. (Professional name, Jim McGuinn, subsequently changed to Roger McGuinn . . . see later). "Inspired by Elvis Presley, he asked for a guitar on his 14th birthday and taught himself to play it while attending 13 grammar schools in Chicago, New York and Florida".¹

McGuinn: I was in High School in Chicago, and this young music teacher was involved in the folk scene — played guitar and sang. She was also into classical music, but she brought various folk artists to the school — the only one I can remember was Bob Gibson. So I left rock'n'roll, which was running down at the time, and got involved in folk music. I had started with Elvis, Gene Vincent, Carl Perkins and the Everly Brothers, which was pretty groovy, but I went over to the Old Town School of Folk Music and Frank Hamilton taught me a lot of stuff.²

Influences switch to people like Bob Gibson and Pete Seeger. First public appearances at the Gate of Horn and other Chicago folk clubs in 1959, was then seen by The Limeliters (a popular watered-down-folk-for-the-masses group): "There was about a ten minute lag between my graduating from high school (in summer 1960) and becoming a professional musician. I got a telegram from the Limeliters and they hired me to work at the Ash Grove (an LA folk club) as an accompanist. They had auditioned me before, but I wanted to finish school".³ Stayed with them for 6 weeks, then went to San Francisco to do solo gigs, got a call from the Chad Mitchell Trio (another popular etc etc) and flew to New York to join them. Stayed with them for 2½ years, touring both the American continents and playing all the renowned concert halls.

Left them in 1962 and joined Bobby Darin for a couple of years (Darin, an expop star with a string of late fifties hits such as 'Splish Splash' and 'Dream Lover' had decided to bring a little folkie-type 'culture' into his night-club act), during which time he also did session, arranging and accompanying work for Tom & Jerry (later to become Simon & Garfunkel), Hoyt Axton, Judy Collins (hear him on 'Judy Collins 3', Elektra EKS 7243 If you can find it, that is), the Irish Rovers and various others. Also contributed to two albums, 'The 5 string story' and 'The 12 string story'.⁴

Returned to the solo folk scene in 1964 (after having briefly worked as a

songwriter in Bobby Darin's publishing venture), gigging at Greenwich Village hootenannys, followed by a three week season at the Troubadour in Los Angeles.⁵

Q: I feel that most of the people in that old folk movement (of the early sixties) weren't really interested in the music . . . they didn't want to get inside it, but did it rather to be there and to be seen. I think we almost had to have that strong Beatles scene to clear the air of that strange outlook which evolved through the 'Hootenanny Show' and things like that.

McGuinn: It was getting very commercial and plastic packaged in cellophane . . . a low quality product. The people who were really significant were lost in the shuffle while these others were given great glory by being plastic. I was trying to get out of it. Actually, I never 'made it' in the folk field — I was always an accompanist, so I had a clean slate when I wanted to get into something else.

Q: How and why did you get into electric instruments?

McGuinn: Well, I was in New York and

had just left working for Bobby Darin. I was out in the world scuffling, getting little gigs at coffee houses to pay my way through, and the Beatles came along. In retrospect, I might have been one of the first people to dig what they were into musically, aside from the fad. In their chord changes I could see degrees of complexity that folk music had gotten to by that time, and it struck me as being a groovy thing to get into . . . so I started singing their songs in coffee houses. One place had a sign outside that said 'Beatle imitations'. Then I left New York, came to LA and scuffled for a while, until the Byrds kicked in.⁶

GENE CLARK. Born Tipton, Missouri, on 17th November 1941. "As in the case of his fellow Byrds, Gene concerns himself with his music to the exclusion of show business considerations. For example, when questioned as to the nature of his biggest break, he answered 'to my left leg'".⁶ Ho ho bloody ho! He'd previously been in the New Christy Minstrels for a year, and you can just about discern his clean cut features and bent conk on a

couple of their less impressive albums.

DAVID CROSBY. Born Los Angeles, on 14th August 1941. "Attended a dozen or so grammar schools, a few high schools, and Santa Barbara College. Likes almost every type of music including 'Indian', but tends himself, towards a bluesy folk style".⁶ Apart from the persistent rumour that he was a folksinger for the 5 years preceding his joining the Byrds, there seems to be precious little information about Crosby's past, apart from the fact that, for a while, he was in Les Baxter's Balladeers. (The Les Baxter Orchestra, just to show its square-arsed audience how hip it was to modern trends, would have this quartet of all-American-boys come out and sing a couple of songs to capitalise on the folk boom. Doesn't our David look neat?

The sleeve note of the 'Mr. Tambourine Man' album says he was the trouble maker of the group inasmuch as he used to wrinkle his nose at young girls — a movement that apparently unfailingly provoked a sea of clammy pants.⁷

MICHAEL CLARKE. Born New York on 3rd June 1944. He was a conga-drum playing friend of Crosby's, but apart from that, his past seems to be shrouded in mystery . . . even the 'e' at the end of his name appears to be optional. According to McGuinn: "I knew he was a very good conga player, and David had known him in Big Sur — panhandling and painting. So, on the basis of his conga playing and his painting, we hired him as a rock drummer".⁸

CHRIS HILLMAN. Born Los Angeles on 4th December 1942. Played local coffee/folk houses around 1958, then a year later was with the Scottsville Squirrel Barkers (with Larry Murray, who later wrote 'Bugler'), a San Diego bluegrass group who made an album, I think, on Crown Records. (If anyone's got a copy, please let me know). When they split, he took his mandolin and accepted the invitation of Don Parmley to join him and the Gosdin brothers in a new bluegrass/folk venture which they called The Hillmen. The liner note on the subsequently issued album (on Together ST T 1012, released 1971) remarks on their relative lack of success; "we were immediately booked at the world famous Harlem Lounge in Lynwood California, where we played to capacity crowds of 15 to 20 people". The import album, recorded in late '62 and early '63 by producer Jim Dickson, has become virtually unobtainable since Together (see later) went bust, but includes 2 Dylan songs, one each by Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Maybelle Carter and Bill Monroe, and 5 originals.



Left: Les Baxter's Balladeers (Crosby at the bottom). Right: The Hillmen (Chris Hillman/Don Parnley/Rex Gosdin/Vern Gosdin)

ZZ: You say in the sleeve notes to this album . . .

Chris Hillman: I didn't write them—nor did I have anything at all to do with the album. I don't really like the way that it's been presented either—with my name all over it like that . . . but what can you say?

ZZ: It says the album was recorded in late '62, but it includes 'When the ship comes in', which Dylan didn't bring out until January 1964.

CH: No— for sure, we recorded that album in early '63 . . . we got that song off an early demo, because Dickson knew Dylan in those days. I like the music on 'The Hillmen'—it's good, but someday I'd like to take the tapes and re-release it, doing it right. We're trying to get the master tapes from what's left of Together Records at the moment.

ZZ: Was the gig scene for the Hillmen really as bad as that sleeve note makes out? I mean, during that early 60s folk

boom, was it all down to contemporary folk rather than traditional stuff?

CH: Yeah, in a way. We used to play in folk places and country places, but we were modifying our repertoire to include the contemporary material because you just couldn't make any money playing straight bluegrass. As well as that, we wanted to play songs that said more than the bluegrass ones did . . . which wasn't very much.

ZZ: Presumably, you were on the same

gig circuit as the Kentucky Colonels?

CH: Yes, I was sort of growing up with Clarence White—we were both about the same age and we kept bumping into each other all the time.

ZZ: What happened between your making the 'Hillmen' album in early '63, and your joining the Byrds in Autumn '64?

CH: The Hillmen went broke and split up only months after we made the record. We tried to sell it to various record compan-

ies—like Elektra was going to release it, but they re-negotiated, and in the end they decided not to. So I was broke and I joined this really lousy group which Randy Sparks had got together . . . a sort of New Christy Minstrels group. Then I quit that and was just scuffling around for 3 or 4 months until I joined the Byrds.

"It in no way lessens Chris Hillman's appeal, either off-stage or on, that he seldom smiles; at a recent concert, most of the jelly beans thrown by appreciative fans fell at Chris's feet".⁶ His 'likes' are said to encompass Muddy Waters, Mose Allison, Sleepy John Estes and Melina Mercouri. So there you go.

Right, back to the main story. Jim McGuinn had come back to Los Angeles in Summer 1964 and landed his "historic" 3 week Troubadour gig. Gene Clark saw him there, suggested they form a group, and within 10 minutes (or 24 hours—depending on which source you believe), the erstwhile Balladeer David Crosby had popped up to make it a trio.

Since leaving Les Baxter, Crosby had been aiming at a solo career and had cut a few tracks with Jim (the very same) Dickson during that summer. So, as he knew Dickson, he arranged for the trio to record some demos under his guidance, which they did under their chosen name, The Jet Set. The results can be heard on another Together album ('Early LA', ST T 1014) which, among other things, has 2 solo Crosby tracks and 2 Jet Set tracks.

The Crosby cuts have him singing a couple of folk-blues standards: 'Willie Jean' and 'Come back, baby', against an uninspired session band backing. His 1964 voice is light and sweet but is too weak to stand alone. The Jet Set's 'Only girl', which sounds as if it's just the three of them without session-man embellishment, is the sort of tune that millions of Beatle aspirant groups were rehearsing in bedrooms all over the world. 'You Movin' (a different cut from the one on 'Preflyte') is electric, Beatle-y and unpolished, but shows the beginnings of the Byrdsound. Unfortunately, this album too is just about impossible to get your grubby hands on.

Dickson (who has now been involved with pre-Byrds, Byrds and ex-Byrds for about ten years) on the face of it, seems to have been some sort of early '62-64 West Coast Mickie Most—looking for and recording contemporary talent. What exactly was his capacity?

Hillman: He certainly had a lot of people under his wing, so to speak, but he didn't ever really know what to do with them. In fact, he was a free lance producer—worked for Elektra a lot, did some Dillards albums, a Glen Campbell

album and various others. He knew Crosby, and when he and McGuinn and Clark came up as a trio, he started recording them and working with them as an adviser. He'd take them into his studio, get them to rehearse and record, and then listen to the results with them . . . 'you're making mistakes here and here, and you should try this and that'—you know the sort of thing.

When it became apparent that as a trio, the Jet Set wouldn't be able to play the exact style of music they were aiming at, they decided to expand, and Dickson told Hillman about the group and explained that they were after a bass player.

Hillman: I was a mandolin player and didn't know how to play bass, but they didn't know how to play their instruments either, so I didn't feel too bad about it. None of us were rock'n'rollers; we were all folk musicians and, although it was tremendously exciting, it was such an alien thing to be getting into. The first group that I'd ever seen, the Beau Brummels, had really knocked me out—I'd never seen anything like it before, and I was anxious to go. So I got hold of a bass and set to it.

ZZ: Is that story about you playing an old red Japanese 20 dollar bass true? I mean, hadn't they thought of getting in an established bass player?

CH: Ah well, you see, the original idea was for Crosby to be the bass player, but it wasn't coming naturally to him, so they asked me to have a go. So, when I first joined, the line-up became me on bass, McGuinn on 12 string, Gene Clark on rhythm guitar and Crosby was just singing . . . but they realised that Crosby was a better rhythm player, so he and Clark switched roles. But that's true about the Japanese bass; I didn't have a clue how to play it, but I just listened to records and other people.

ZZ: What about Michael Clarke turning up and playing on cardboard boxes?

CH: Yes, it's true—he learned how to play on cardboard boxes because he didn't have any drums. He knew a few basics, but he virtually learned from scratch . . . learned how to play enough to enable us to go out and perform. We were rehearsing 8 hours a day for months and months in this old Hollywood studio, and we just developed that sound and style . . . from nothing.

So the quintet, still loosely hanging onto the Jet Set name for want of a better, is complete. **McGuinn:** Why did I decide to form the group? I saw the Beatles, that's why . . . bang that's the answer, that's all. That was enough; it turned me on, you know. I wanted to get a four or five piece group together with electric instruments and try to do that because it looked like a lot of fun. The same reason that everyone else is ganging into it. I don't blame them . . . I'm just saying it's a phenomenon. It's happening, and it'll eventually cause the demise of the style.¹⁰

The intention of the group was to bridge the gap between Dylan (who was still very much an acoustic folkie) and the Beatles (around 'Hard Days Night' time and at the height of Beatlemania).

McGuinn: In the spectrum of music at the time, that was the niche that I saw vacant . . . I saw this gap, with Dylan and the Beatles leaning towards each other in concept. That's where we aimed, and we hit it, because there was no competition in that area.²

True; there was virtually no previous instance of electric folk-rock. Bob Dylan had made the single 'Mixed-up Confusion' in December 1962 (a total flop, sales-wise), but the Animals had achieved great success out of recognising Dylan's potential as a source of rockable material.

Both their first single ('Baby let me take you home'—Spring 1964) and the massive hit 'House of the Rising Sun' (Summer '64) were copped and adapted from songs on the first Dylan album, a fact which I heard Eric Burdon unashamedly proclaiming during the Chuck Berry tour of England that year. Until the Byrds thought of converting Dylan material for mass consumption a few months later (though the record didn't get released until the next year), the only other people to make the charts with his songs were Peter Paul & Mary, who prettied-up (rather than rocked-up) 'Blowin' in the wind' and 'Don't think twice' in 1963. Dylan himself got back to rock in his 'Bringing it all back home' album, released in March 1965.

Despite McGuinn's eloquent explanation of the niche between Dylan and the Beatles, I tended to think that the Byrds started out purely as a Beatle-type pop venture and that the folk-rock think was almost accidental. Judging by the material they were working up (as on 'Preflyte'), the emphasis was certainly well away from folk. I asked Chris Hillman about it.

CH: It was almost an accident, yes. As far as writing and influence were concerned, their (McGuinn's and Clark's) heads were at the early Beatle things.

ZZ: Does that mean that when 'Mr. Tambourine Man' was a hit (some 8 months), started throwing the term 'folk-rock' around, you suddenly thought 'Oh Christ, we'd better learn up some more Dylan songs and drop our Beatles-type stuff'?

CH: No, not really, because we were already going in that direction. Between the time we started and the time that 'Tambourine Man' was a hit (some 8 months), we had been going towards folk after the initial Beatle influence had subsided . . . we had started doing other Dylan songs, as well as things like 'The Bells of Rhymney'. None of us liked the idea of putting out 'Mr. Tambourine Man' as a single . . . we argued and argued against it, but Jim Dickson was right—it worked.

ZZ: Did Dickson direct you image-wise as well as musically? Like, did he suggest the Beatle haircuts and English style clothes?

CH: Not really—that's how we were at the time, and that's how we wanted to be.

McGuinn:² We ran into this guy Jim Dickson, who was a producer for World Pacific Records. He led us and fed us, gave us hamburger money, put us up at his house . . . he was one of the freakier A&R men—an underground type, into the hip scene.

At the World Pacific studios, they used the Ampex recorders to practise and work up their repertoire, and 11 of their





Perc



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Crusaders I

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