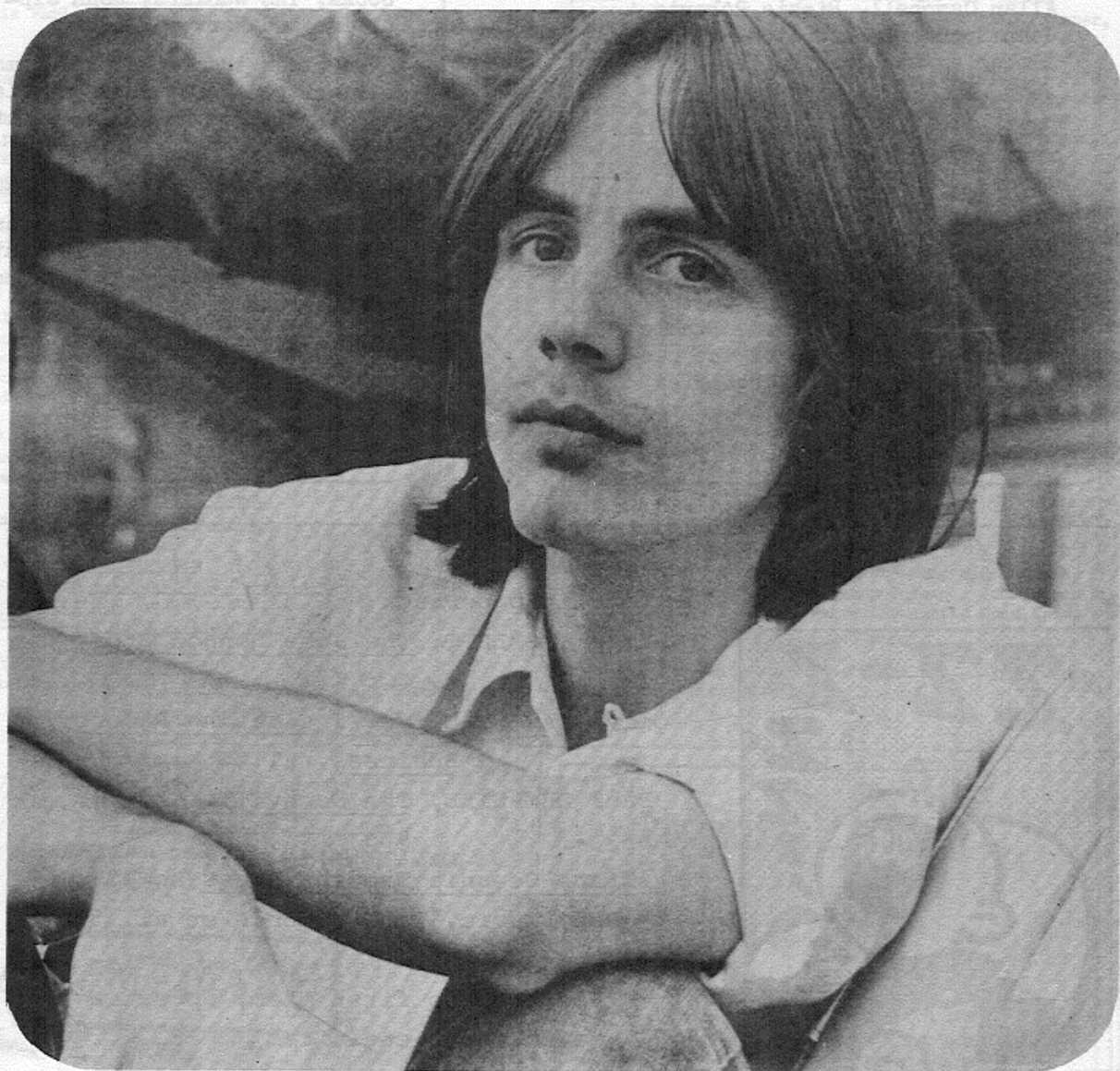


HOT WACKS 10

Vol. 2
No 4



JACKSON BROWNE . JOHN HAMMOND
BARRY MELTON . EMMYLOU HARRIS
BRYN HAWORTH . The IMMEDIATE story 20p.

Hot Wacks 10

- 2nd Anniversary Issue -

Editor: Bert Muirhead.

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Thanks this issue to;

Allan Campbell, Richie Roberts.
John Spencer, Pete Stone Nick
Kimberley and John Tobler.

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Publications. If you want to
reprint anything please write
first.

NB: The magazine and the record
sales are now being run as two
separate entities. Due to the
amount of work involved, Richie
Roberts is in charge of the rec-
ord division and all enquiries
should now go to him. Ta.

back wacks

Very few back issues remain -
don't be caught short. Invest
now.

HW6: Joe Cocker, Traffic, CSNY,
Boz Scaggs, Moby Grape, Doctor
Feelgood.

HW8: Apple discography, Dylan
books, The Wackers, John Cip-
ollina and Harvey Mandel.

HW9: (less than 20 copies remain,
as I write.) Raspberries, Dillard
and Clark, Terry Melcher, Elektra
discography, Johnny Rivers.

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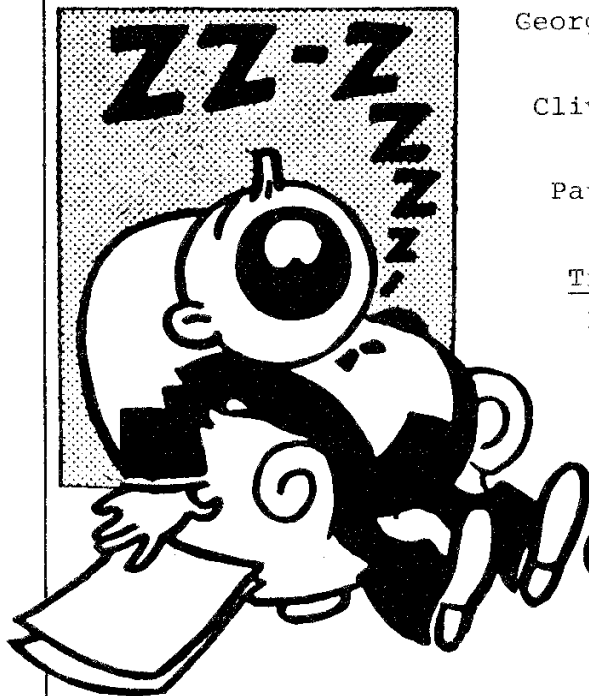
George TREMLETT, The John Lennon Story,
60p

Clive DAVIS, Clive. Inside the Record
Business, £1.20

Paul HEMPHILL, The Nashville Sound,
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Here we are then, two years and ten issues old. I honestly never thought we would ever get this far, and even when issue 8 loomed up I still wasn't convinced that we would hit the magical double figures. However, now that we've made it we can feel pretty confident about overtaking Fat Angel and reaching issue 20. Those of you who have stuck with us since issues one or two deserve a special thanks for your support, but everybody who has ever bought a copy or spread the word gets a thank you too.. Slowly but surely Hot Wacks is growing and who knows, monthly publication may soon become a reality. Basically it's not so much a question of cash nowadays, it's more a lack of time. Time to finish off articles properly; to polish them up and be really proud of them. To that end, it would be great if I could make a living solely from the magazine and the record sales, but that's still at the pipedream stage right now. We keep plugging away tho' and as long as Michael Foot doesn't set us in chains the future looks pretty good.

I'm sure you are all aware of the new-improved Zig-Zag; it's really good to have it back and looking in classic shape. Pete has a ton of amazing stuff stockpiled for future issues which I'm really looking forward to. A lot of credit must go to that enterprising gent, Graham Andrews - printer to the underground and all-round good guy. Just think, ZigZag 100 is only three-and-a-half years away!

What about the Melody Maker fanzine piece then, quite an undertaking. I did almost 2½ hours of telephone interview with them (Tobler did four hours and Omaha O' Brien did another two hours), tho' you wouldn't have thought it from the half-dozen or so quotes that they used. One or two of which were so drastically out-of-context as to make me wonder about the value of it all. However, we did get a few enquiries, (nobody really got the expected avalanche of mail tho') which, I suppose, was the object of the exercise.. Oh, one thing that did cause some confusion; Peter O' Brien DOESN'T wear that track-suit to gigs he's got a dress one!

As you will see from page 2, only Hot Wacks 6 & 8 remain - while I can only feel flattered that interest in earlier issues is still high, I can only repeat that chances of locating any remain slight, to say the least. I've checked out all the people who bought bulk amounts - Compendium, Virgin and Rock On, and they're all cleaned out too. Issue 2 is still the most requested but HW5 is not too far behind (both incidentally, my two all-time favourite issues as well). People say, "why don't you reprint them in that case", but that would be cheating. "Let sleeping back issues lie" is what I say.

So what does the future hold for Hot Wacks - hard to say really, we've stumbled along to issue 10 without ever having a clear and defined policy. I can never really say who is going to be in the next issue because I never really know. Right now, the only certainty - ainty for Hot Wacks 11 is the life and times of Jerry Jeff Walker (.and that could change too). A bit hazardous sure, but that's the essence of the fanzine. Life's no fun when it's predictable. However, that said, the Jan and Dean Special and the Ian Matthews Special will be out before summer's here, Both are all-embracing in their scope and size and will dwarf even the lengthy Van Dyke Parks special (of which, over 700 have been sold so far - the Parks cult still flourishes). The "we're running out of bands to write about" quote in MM has to be seen in perspective - sure I'm running out of heroes, but there is still about 100 people that I want to write about (an no doubt, more will flourish along the way.....)

Of the nicer things that have happened recently was my getting a pre-dawn phone call from Bob Segarini - it was about 6.15 am of a January morning. Despite the hour I was happy to chat (it was 1 a.m. in Montreal.) According to Bob, the new Dudes album is nearly ready

and self-produced this time. They also hope to come to Britain soon, which would be a treat for all concerned. Bob said he sings back-up vocals on the upcoming Ian Hunter album (they've got the same manager) and maybe that association will help push them to stardom. He's also just finished producing an Alex Chilton solo album for Amherst, which I look forward to hearing a lot. A thoroughly nice guy to whom success is long overdue.

Onto fanzines (the real press, according to Segarini): quite a crop to hand this month. Firstly, Omaha Rainbow's finest hour - issue 8 is out now and packed with articles on Glen D. Hardin, John Ware (some amazing Nesmith-ian recollections & hilariously funny in parts), Billy Swan, Roger Bush of Country Gazette and, of course, John Stewart. Particularly impressive and a bargain at 30p (including post & packing). Write to Peter at 10 Lesley Court, Harcourt Road, Wallington, Surrey (and if you haven't already got your Poco special, you better do so quickly - they're going fast.) Bam Balam has also had a birthday, its first; issue one is sold out, issue two is nearly gone and everybody surely must have some affection for the Kinks. In which case Bam Balam 3 is for you - devoted entirely to the Kinks. 34p (inc p&p) from Flat 1, Castellau, Dunbar, East Lothian (watch for change of address soon!) Dark Star 2 has surfaced and is out now featuring the Eagles, Great Society, Country Joe and the G. Dead. 20 fun-packed pages for 30p plus 7p postage (I omitted to mention the postage in HW9, which caused DS some distress. Sorry Mike, but at least you got the plug - hint, hint.) Write to Mike Bushill at 04 Atbara Road, Teddington, Middlesex. Our old ally in the United States; Trans Oceanic Trouser Press carries on in its ever-educational style. Still devoted to British rock (although there is a four-page lowdown on various New York bands), their issue 12 features such diverse talents as Dave Edmunds, Renaissance, Roxy Music, Al Stewart, Andy Ellison and Blackfoot Sue (?). Available from Nick Kimberley at Compendium Books for 55p plus 11p postage. (FAIRLY STEEP, I know, but definitely worth it for the auctions.) Fat Angel after an absence of some 21 months is set to roar again in a new, expanded and professional format. Available late-April from Andy Childs (now domiciled at a certain record company whose roster includes such diverse talents as Shirley Bassey, Jerry Garcia and Slim Whitman) at 213 Eastcote Lane, South Harrow, Middlesex. No price set yet - but watch this space for details. Lastly, the first issue of Nuggets reached me this very morning. An interesting 'zine with features on Linda Ronstadt, BeBop-Deluxe and Richard Digance amongst a very mixed bag. 25pence from my good mate Dave Seal at 17 Wentworth Road, Harborne, Birmingham. Check it out.

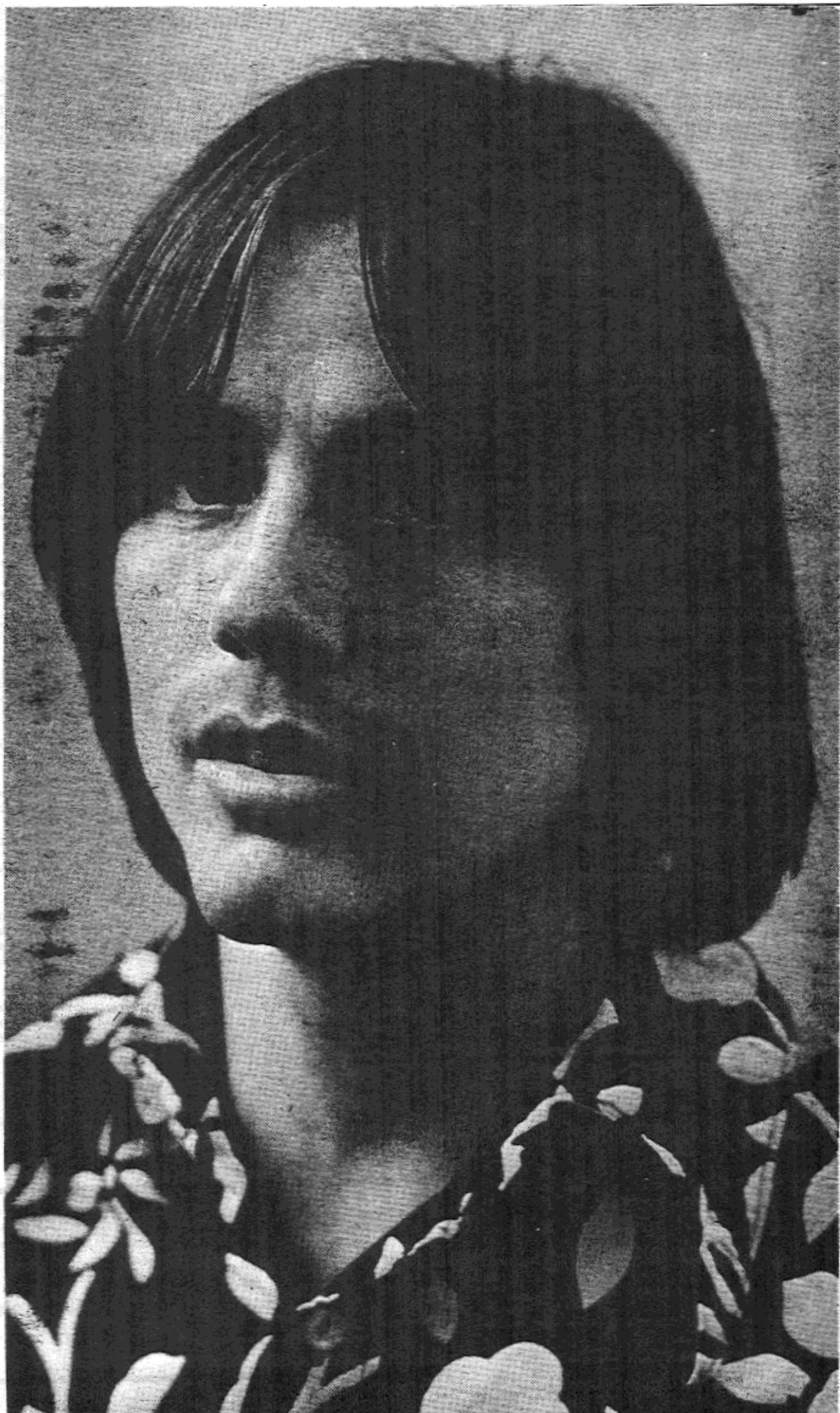
That's about it for now. Thanks to everybody who has helped us get this far. You're too numerous to mention, but you know who you are. I'm off to get ready for the Neil Young concert. See you soon.

BERT HOT WACKS Issue 10 APRIL/MAY 1976.
Wackadoo Publications Inc.,

(Thanks to Chalkie Davies for the Emmylou pic and to Jym Parrett for the logos y

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JACKSON BROWNE

Although his first solo album didn't appear until late in 1971, Jackson Browne had been around for a long time before that - mid 1966 as far as this story is concerned. So ten years on, why isn't he as famous as his better known songs?? Hopefully the next few pages will help explain the mystery.

Orange County Incident

The tangle of names and connecting threads that are bound up in Jackson's early days would tax even Pete Frame's ability to put it all down concisely in a family tree, so where does that leave me. You will forgive me if some blind alleys are not explored, merely remarked upon. To do this properly would involve the following personages; Tim Buckley, Steve Noonan, Greg Copeland, Pamela Polland, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Chris Darrow, Curt Boettcher, Van Dyke Parks, the Gentle Soul, Sunshine Company, Nico, Penny Nichols, Peanut Butter Conspiracy, the fledgling Byrds, Michele O'Malley, Terry Melcher, Linda Rondstadt, the Eagles and a lot more. Phew!! So no complaining letters if I miss out something of less than earth-shattering importance.

Everybody by now is aware of the semi-legendary "Orange County Three" axis of Jackson Browne, Tim Buckley and Steve Noonan, but as Buckley pointed out in HW4, they never actually played together, it was more of a label which was stuck on the three of them (by Tom Nolan, who wrote an excellent piece on them, under the same title, for 'Cheetah' magazine in early '68). They had gone to the same high school together, and had even been on the same bill together. (Tim Buckley, in having two ecstatically received albums out, was deemed the heavy of the three with Jackson and Steve Noonan getting a lot of reflected glory). Paradoxically, it was East Coast acceptance that gave birth to the 'Orange County Three' moniker, the gig in question being at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, in early 1967 and only a fortnight after the Airplane had made their first East Coast appearance at the same venue. As Richard Meltzer puts it, "Jackson Browne... was the prototype singer-songwriter years before it had a context". So, early in 1967, we have Jackson as a confident 17 year old hanging out at the legendary Dom club (Andy Warhol's launching pad for the Velvet) in the company of Buckley, Warhol, Nico and young Lou Reed in New York, but the darker side of that city proved too much for him and he quickly got back to that California sunshine.

Back in Long Beach, Jackson had joined the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and left them about as quickly, but not without leaving his mark. As well as contributing two songs to their first album, "Buy For Me The Rain" in "Melissa" and "Holding", his influence would last right through to their third album. Steve Noonan gets in on the act too in that he wrote "Buy For Me The Rain" which proved to be a smash hit for the NCDB and almost launched them to superstardom but they just couldn't find a follow-up hit. Their second album ('Ricochet') had yet another two Jackson songs; "Shadow Dream Song" and "It's Raining Here In Long Beach" while Steve Noonan chipped in with "Tide Of Love". An interesting chronological note here, NCDB's third album (and first with Hot Wacks hero Chris Darrow - see interview in HW3) contains a version of one of JB's most dynamite songs, "These Days", not committed to vinyl by Jackson until 1973, almost five years later. At this point, the Dirt Band fade out of the story (despite going onto eventual aesthetic and commercial success and still being a fine band, deserving a lot more space, but that'll have to wait for now.) altho' they did a version of "Jamaica Say You Will" in 1971 on "All The Good Times" and a few months before Jackson's version appeared on his debut album, so obviously they still remained quite close.

But we're jumping ahead. Still in 1967, Jackson and Steve Noonan were writing lots of songs together in a definite folk-pop style, a bit dated now, but quite

pleasant then I have no doubt. Steve Noonan had beat Jackson in the 'race' for cover versions and CLEAR LIGHT did a version of 'Street Singer' on their fabulous album. This allied to the success of the Dirt Band's "Buy For Me The Rain" got Steve signed to Elektra and a solo album produced by Paul Rothchild (not credited on the album because of a series of disputes between the two. Billy James, Steve, Jackson and the early Byrd manager, when hearing that Rothchild did not want to be linked with the album suggested that they take Noonan's name off the album also). The album contains Steve's version of "Rain" and five Jackson Browne songs; "She's A Flying Thing", "Tumbledown", "The Painter" and "Trusting Is A Harder Thing". The remaining songs are mainly Steve Noonan/Greg Copeland songs. Greg had gone to school with Jackson and Steve and at this point was actively involved with the other two and some of his lyrics are more interesting than either Jackson's or Steve's. Both now seem to have vanished. Steve's album didn't mean much outside California, and his voice is a bit too precise and 'pear-shaped' (thanks Ken) for my taste, but an extremely pleasant album nonetheless. Linda Eastman took the rear sleeve pic, trivia buffs. Apparently he drifted off into obscurity and was reportedly helping out in a Santa Cruz record store in 1971 and building a house there. Apart from a few impromptu benefit gigs and suchlike, he has vanished. Greg Copeland too, after his stint with Steve and Jackson did quite a few lyrics for the first Ars Nova album and hasn't been heard of in a long time. He was romantically involved with Pamela Polland and apparently beat off fierce competition from Jackson and Steve who had both been moved to write songs for her. Pamela, as you should know from HW7 was involved with the Gentle Soul album (featuring Van Dyke Parks and Ry Cooder) before emerging as one of Joe Cocker's Mad Dogs entourage and later did the mandatory LA-session crowd solo album. A fascination with meditation and things mystical is probably the reason she doesn't do too much, these days.

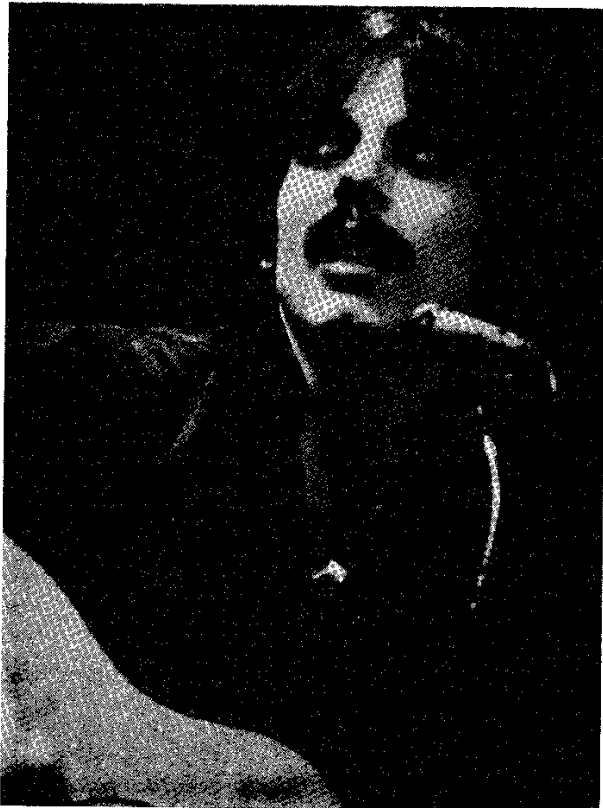
Still in this time span (and if you go back two paras and pick up on the New York bit, you should get back on course) Jackson had also cut some demos for Elektra in New York which included the five tracks from the Steve Noonan album (now here's one to ponder; it's said that Elektra didn't sign Jackson because his voice wasn't so hot SO if Noonan was signed in preference to Jackson and bearing in mind my comments about Noonan's voice, what then must Jackson's have been like?). Other songs included "Colours Of The Sun", "Dancing Sam" and three songs which turned up on Nico's "Chelsea Girl" album; "Fairest Of The Seasons", "These Days" and "Somewhere There's A Feather". (The version of "These Days" is most like Terry Melcher's later version (see HW9) and maybe the one he based his version on). The next step on Jackson's road to acceptance came with Tom Rush's patronage. (Poor ol' Tom Rush, he's got a marvellous ear for a tune and despite picking up on not only Jackson Browne but also James Taylor and Joni Mitchell he's never really been afforded the success he deserves. Adding insult to injury, the reformed Walker Brothers have carbon-copied his version of 'No Regrets' to the upper reaches of the chart. See HW3 for more on Tom Rush). As well as coering a version of "Shadow Dream Song" Tom also does versions of 'These Days' and 'Colours Of The Sun' on his first CBS album ('Tom Rush').

Elektra were still keen to have an album from Jackson as he was rapidly developing as a writer and would have fitted nicely into their roster. They moved him back to California from New York to work with Barry Friedman at the Elektra Ranch studio in the bucolic isolation of Northern California. Again, on the rumour level, it's said that the place was started as a creative environment for Jackson's writing, however a few albums had already been done there including Spider John Koerner and Willie Murphy's "Running Jumping Standing Still". He did finish an album there but like its predecessor it never saw a release, bootlegs of it abound tho' and it is reportedly very good. (anybody got one?)

Jackson finds Asylum

Having terminated his relationship with Elektra, Jackson sent a demo to David Geffen, then still in management at CMA with Elliot Roberts. Being no fool, and realising he could be at home on Geffen's roster which included Crosby Stills Nash & Young, Joni Mitchell and Laura Nyro, Jackson contacted Geffen "out of respect for the artists you represent". Geffen, with typical acumen flung it in the bucket, where, reportedly a secretary taken by Jackson's good looks, on the accompanying photo, fished it out of the bucket, took it home played it and flipped (the moral being that Geffen's secretary knew more about rock than he did) and then insisted that he play it. He did and was just knocked out by "Jamaica Say You Will" and eventually, about three months later managed to get hold of Jackson for an audition. Things were beginning to happen in a big way now, it's unclear whether David Crosby started proselytising for Jackson before or after his signing to Geffen's stable, but it all helped. The Byrds did a version of "Jamaica Say You Will" and Jackson started to become a cult name in LA and graduated to big local scenes like the Troubador and the Ash Grove. He apparently also took voice lessons and generally lived the precocious, fragile singer-songwriter image to the hilt, even to the extent of lecturing noisy/exuberant audiences about their ignorance in disturbing his songs. So, here we are in late-1971, Jackson is signed to Geffen's newly formed Asylum label and is also put on a bill with Lauro Nyro on one of her final tours (which must've been a barrel of laughs). The scene was set for Jackson's first album, some five years after his arrival as a promising young writer.

That first album, called simply "Jackson Browne" and not 'Saturate Before Using' as some would have it, is a classic of its kind and one of the finest records produced in the so-far sterile Seventies. The musicianship is impeccable; with a band comprising the ever dependable Kunkel and Sklar on drums and bass, Craig Doerge on piano and guest appearances by Clarence White, Albert Lee, Jesse Ed Davis, Sneaky Pete and Jimmy Faden (from the NGDB) on harmonica. Oh, and David Crosby on harmonies par excellence. The album produced three all-time classics in "Jamaica Say You Will", "Doctor My Eyes" and "Rock Me On The Water" and I'm sure everyone of you has at least one version of each of these songs



in your collection. "Doctor My Eyes" was a Top-10 hit for Jackson in March 72, followed up by "Rock Me..". two months later, which peaked at 43. In fact the whole of the first side is a classic and as well as "Jamaica" and "Doctor" we have "A Child In These Hills", "Song For Adam" (one of his finest songs yet) and "From Silver Lake". There are some obvious influences in Jackson's style, one of them being that of Van Morrison. In parts of "Jamaica Say You Will" it is uncanny; with all the Morrison tricks - the drawn-out phrasing, the halting in mid-phrase.... there's more, but it would be churlish to criticise him for it. As well as using James Taylor's band, he does indeed sound like him in parts, like on "Under The Falling Sky" the tonal similarity is very close indeed. Overall however, the Browne voice is not a particularly distinguished one. It's great for what he does but it neither rises nor falls (like Morrison's can) and has a certain blandness to it, which is noticeable on his more uninspired songs. Then again his good friends the Eagles have had like a dozen straight chart hits featuring some of the most bland and emotionless singing ever committed to record. However, when it's mixed way up front and seems to soar over the backing, then it's just fine.

To promote the album he went out on tour with Joni Mitchell and fitted into her audience just perfectly, but despite the success of "Doctor My Eyes" and this exposure, the album sold moderately. However, the wheels were turning in the Asylum empire and first Linda Ronstadt ("Rock Me On The Water") and then the Eagles ("Take It Easy") had hits with Browne songs. The Eagles also included Jackson's "Nightingale" on their first album and suddenly everybody wanted to know.

A band seemed the next step for Jackson and he landed one of the finest musicians anywhere in David Lindley (an astute piece of business, that) who was not only an exceptional guitarist but also adept on fiddle and slide guitar. Doug Haywood was recruited as bassist and a succession of drummers were tried and they began rehearsing material for the second album, and doing the odd gig or two to keep their hand in. It was almost two years (20 months) before the arrival of "For Everyman" which points to a possible lack of inspiration/material. The inclusion (at last) of "These Days", "Colors Of The Sun" and "Take It Easy" point to that fact. The album continues in gospel-influenced folk/rock style of the first and again, in addition to Lindley and Doug Haywood, features the very best of LA rockdom; Sneaky Pete, Jim Keltner, Don Henley, Gary Mallaber, Spooner Oldham, Glenn Frey, Bonnie Raitt, Joni Mitchell and tons more (including one Rockaday Johnny on piano on "Redneck Friend" - S Stills perhaps?). Truly a classic (again) the album contains some exceptional lyrical insights and imagery allied with some devastating playing (especially from David Lindley). Earlier I complained of the inclusion of familiar/old material but that adds to the acceptance of the album. "Take It Easy" opens the album and shows how interchangeable the styles of the Eagles and Jackson are. However, the rocking sections of "Red Neck Friend" and "Ready Or Not" along with the instrumental fire of "These Days" place Jackson several rungs above the Eagles on an all-out rocking scale. Witness "James Dean" (co-written by Jackson coincidentally) as the Eagles at THEIR rockiest and you'll see what I mean. The whole album is more consistent than "Jackson Browne" and holds the attention a lot easier. "Red Neck Friend" proved another smash single for Jackson and is generally accepted as being a near-perfect radio song while still retaining the emphasis on the words, whereas "Take It Easy" sees the melody holding the appeal of the song.

So much for "For Everyman", but we're jumping ahead again - all through the summer of 1972, Jackson had been working on a subject dear to his heart; a concept album of sorts, a tribute to bandits and desperadoes. More specifically to the Doolin-Dalton gang, who were a real loser bunch. Unlike Smith and Jones, everything went wrong for them. Right then, we all know where that ended up; with the Eagles. Obviously Jackson's songs for the Eagles first album and Geffen's encouragement for his acts to collaborate with each other allied to the Eagles cowboy-ish/Old West image made his idea a much more viable proposition for the Eagles rather than Jackson. So, along the line somewhere, and probably at boardroom level, the idea was transferred to the

Eagles with predictably devastating results. (The actual finished album only contains Jackson's "Doolin-Dalton" theme - co-written with the band - from his original vision, so maybe there's more lying around).

Into '74 and we see Jackson on the crest of a wave, a successful coast-to-coast tour is completed with Jackson and band headlining (Bonnie Raitt being the supporting act) and everything is going well. Walter Egan (HW's man in California) reported on one particular gig in HW5 and later, early '75 wrote to say that he was auditioning for Jackson's new expanded band who were touring as of March 1st 1975. The original plan for Walt to play rhythm guitar and sing back-up vocals was changed to Walt just doing vocal harmonies. This didn't go down to well with young Egan and he withdrew from the tour and ended up doing odd sessions for A & M (At the time, Walt was gonna send us reports of the tour, backstage pix, the whole lot - which would've made fabulous reading. Actually, there is quite a connection between the two., Walt and Jackson are mates from their folk club days and kept in touch quite a lot. But there's more; remember Walt gigged with Chris Darrow, well often David Lindley would come and play with Walt and Chris at benefits and things, and David is Chris' brother-in-law, so we have this four-way tie-up between Jackson, David, Walt and Chris. Small world, eh? I just hope everything works out OK for Chris, 'cos he's a fabulous bloke too. To bring Walt's story up-to-date, a postcard

dated mid-March 1976 informs me that he's doing tapes for UA and Andrew Lauder and that ex-Brinsley Nick Lowe is to produce him. Great stuff - see you soon mate). I digress - back to Jackson's mammoth '75 tour. Not only was this Jackson's biggest and most successful tour yet, it also gave him another two single hits, taken from his then current album, "Late For The Sky". The support act on the tour, Phoebe Snow didn't do too badly out of it either. She landed a number one album (as well as a pile of lawsuits between Shelter and Columbia, Columbia won and she's gonna be huge - but that's the last you'll hear of her in these pages tho').

"Late For The Sky" is Jackson's most successful album to date, despite the overall lack of sheet standout material like "Rock Me On The Water", "These Days" or "Doctor My Eyes" (very few cover versions to date, but that's a dubious yardstick anyway). Musically however, it is a beautifully crafted album, the discipline and tightness that ouring brings is evident. No session name here, other than on vocal harmonies, just a band of Lindley and Doug Haywood from "Everyman" and Larry Zack on drums and Jai Winding on piano and organ. David Lindley, in particular is allowed a lot of freedom and dominates about every track on the album with his tasteful, restrained playing. But he's no paper tiger, some of his playing really burns especially his deceptive slide playing. As I've already mentioned, picking up on Lindley was one of the best bits of business Jackson ever did, and I'm sure that if Asylum have seen fit to push Andrew Gold into the spotlight then why not do the same with David Lindley? (Before then tho', the 'lost' Kaleidoscope album will be out on Nesmith's Pacific Arts label and who knows, if it's successful, we may yet see David Lindley leading a band). There is no doubt this combination of a good songwriter, working within the accepted singer/songwriter framework (writing lyrics of a personal nature but which can be applied in a more general sphere) allied to the talents of a tight, ass-kicking band has put Jackson way out in front of Asylum's other also-rans; J D Souther, Ned Doheny, Rod Taylor, Steve Ferguson and even David Blue - all of whom are capable of writing good songs but who fall into the same trap of not being able to inject enough interest into them and being unable to transcend the mediocrity of content and arrangements. Wise up you guys, rock out a little (David Blue is almost there!)

Lyricaly, Jackson is beginning to take a more than passing preoccupation in themes of life and death, alluding to it in four of the eight songs. There are also various biblical references, usually all-egorical as opposed to literal, definitely apocalyptical i.e. either about death or the end of the world. Familiar themes, and one that everybody dwells upon from time to time - Dylan, James Taylor et al. However, it 's not all down and doomy and the two rockers on the album, "The Road And The Sky" and "Walking Slow", moved Asylum to make comparisons

with the Stones. A bit overstated obviously, but "The Road" does have a carbon-copy "Brown Sugar" intro. In "Before the Deluge" (the end of the world song) there is some vintage Dylan/Al Kooper organ chords, and some eerie violin from David Lindley. In all, a fine album which deserved to be a smash (and was).

As mentioned before, the promotional tour on the album was another great success, but all was not well for Jackson. Other than a few sessions and jams (most notably with the Eagles at the Wembley concert, June 1975 - where, ironically, nobody noticed the frail guy behind the piano until the Eagles announced who he was.) the rest of '75 was spent in relative unactivity and uncertainty. (although one notable burst of energy was in September, when Jackson and David Lindley did 12 benefit shows for the Main Point club in Philadelphia. Each night Jackson would do a three hour set, including most of his recorded work and favourites like "Do You Wanna Dance" and Del Shannon's "Runaway". David got a solo spot too!)

Rumours filtered through of Jackson's songwriting drought. He did make a guest appearance on three tracks on Bonnie Raitt's "Home Plate" in a chorus comprising himself, Linda Rondstadt, Emmylou Harris and Terry Reid, but you need particularly keen ears to pick out his contribution. Rolling Stone ran an interesting few lines in their Random Notes recently which told of Jackson renting a derelict shop and moving in only a piano and a sleeping bag in an effort to get the creativity going again. If this is true it's a pretty desperate situation, and it would be particularly ironic if after five years of hard work leading up to his first album...like saving up all those songs and experiences and then running short of ideas and inspiration after only three albums. Three albums which already contained a lot of early material at that, so maybe the older Jackson Browne failed to live up to his early promise. He's got youth on his side tho', and at 25 has surely still a long way to go. In fact, I read that Jon Landau has given up his gig at Rolling Stone to go full-time in record production (track record: MC5/"Back In The USA" and Bruce Springsteen's "Born To Run" one genuine classic and one overblown one.) and his first project will be Jackson's next album scheduled for later in the year. I don't know how much to read into this but he's scheduled to come to Britain in September around which time the album should be ready if all goes well. If it does, then it will mean a gap of almost two years between it and "Late For The Sky" and Asylum will be keen for him to do Stateside promotion before they consider his coming over here.

Whatever happens, he's already done enough to guarantee his place in rock's history books. Let's just hope there's a lot more still to come.

Albums:

	<u>HERT</u>
"Jackson Browne"	Asylum SYL 9002
"For Everyman"	Asylum SYL 9013
"Late For The Sky"	Asylum SYL 9018



JOHN HAMMOND



EARLY YEARS; VANGUARD

Atlanta, Georgia, situated in the Deep South has had a blues tradition since the thirties, when thousands of negroes were moving out of the rural south to find a "better life" in the industrial north. Atlanta was not only one of the first cities that they would encounter on their travels, and so perhaps remain in for a while, but also an axis on the railroads for those negroes moving further north west to Chicago and Detroit, or north east to New York and Washington. Today it still attracts negroes and their music. A glance through the musical calendar for November (1974) reveals forthcoming attractions such as Muddy Waters, Buddy Miles, Sonny Terry and Brownie McChee, McCoy Tyner and Taj Mahal. Also in town that month was John Hammond, scheduled to play the Twelfth Gate. In the Gate that night, seated at the back of the room, was Buddy Moss, an old Atlanta bluesman who had been part of that migration in the thirties, who had spent some of his professional career in Atlanta and had moved further north to record for ARC in New York.

Hammond's first set, an assortment of blues styles on acoustic and resonator guitar, closes. After the interval Buddy Moss is invited by the club owner, to join Hammond on stage for the second set. At first they play around each other nervously, but eventually build up a rapport, born of mutual respect for each other's talent.

John Hammond's music is essentially blues, and he is a singer of a rare calibre. Not only has he got it technically, but emotionally he's there too and it's this latter quality which is important in a person if he or she is going to play or sing the blues. His musical development from his first album "John Hammond" to his latest "Can't Beat The Kid" reflects the development of blues in general, i.e. from solo country blues to large band blues orientated rock, as seen in the work of surviving black bluesmen, such as Muddy Waters, B B King and John Lee Hooker. Over the last ten years, blues has gained the recognition it deserves through the work of white musicians such as John Hammond and Paul Butterfield in the States, and the Stones, Clapton and John Mayall in this country, inasmuch as not only is their blues work appreciated, but also they have provided a door through which people can come into contact with the work of the originals who inspired them in the first place.

The term "blues" covers a number of different styles and the variations can be traced not only historically and geographically, but also as regards individual approaches to the music. John Hammond's work covers most of them and he is as proficient at country blues as he is at big band R & B, though as he explains "I like to play with small instrumentation, I like to play alone, just acoustic. I've recorded a lot of acoustic albums over the years. When I left Vanguard in 1965, I found that Atlantic and Columbia were not interested in releasing anything acoustic solo, because they said they didn't know how the market was going. However, I don't think I've ever compromised myself, whether they're new songs or old songs, everything I do has my brand on it".

"My material is very big, it's not just one thing, it's hundreds of styles of blues, and I do a lot of Bo Diddley type of stuff, in other words up-tempo not so heavy blues - in other words, blues-orientated rock 'n' roll, whatever that means".

Being the son of John Hammond Sr., the noted jazz authority who recorded Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday and Meade-Lux-Lewis it is easy to see from where John's musical motivation stems. "From the time I was born I was exposed to the jazz and blues my father was producing. Sub-

consciously it was always in my mind". "Even so", he adds wryly "my father thought I was crazy wanting to be a singer". Possessing the kind of voice and feeling for the music that would be the envy of many an aspiring blues singer, he taught himself to play guitar in a matter of months and, by the time he entered college, was playing semi-professionally.

He had been listening to Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley in the legendary Alan Freed shows. "I went out of my mind when I heard them. I thought they were the greatest thing there ever was. I didn't like white rock 'n' roll much - it was only half-way; not enough feeling and not enough fun". Next came Lightnin' Hopkins, Muddy Waters and Robert Johnson, and the idea of maybe a life in this music.

He went down to Boca Grande, in Florida, where he played his music in the black quarters of town in his spare time, and worked as a maintenance man. Talking about his feelings at that time: "They seemed to like what I was doing and that gave my confidence a real boost". Black guys digging a white guy playing what is traditionally their music.

Early in 1964, Bill Henderson, who was then singing with the Count Basie Orchestra, was listening to a selection of vocal recordings. His reaction to one of them: "That's beautiful! It sounds like Brownie McChee with Sonny Terry.... without these guys, I don't think there's going to be any blues to be sung....this is the real blues. I don't think anybody today would be able to duplicate this, because they haven't lived this way....but you get the message right away, what they're telling you". Henderson rated the album "as many stars as you can give it".

He was listening to John Hammond's first album "John Hammond" on Vanguard.

The experience he had gained at Boca Grande had given Hammond the confidence he needed. He had quit his job, and college and given everything over to singing and playing blues. His travels had taken him first to L.A. where he had landed a few gigs and a TV spot as "a sort of freak playing blues". He had then drifted back to New York, had gained a regular spot at Gerdes Folk City, and then it had actually happened. A rep. had caught his act there and within a week he had been signed to Vanguard. He'd been playing less than a year.

As his repertoire at that time was mostly country blues, Vanguard didn't push any of the usual hype on him, regarding him more as an album artiste than a singles star, which suited John fine.

"John Hammond" was released in 1963. It is an acoustic country blues set, featuring songs by Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters, with a fine, acoustic version of Chuck Berry's "Maybelline", transforming this classic, electric R 'n' B song into an up-tempo country blues number. It's interesting that he takes a later development of the blues and sets it in an earlier mould. Usually, country blues is updated to amplified, electric, city tastes, and Hammond does this on later albums.

As a first album it is an amazing accomplishment. The spirit of Robert Johnson is present not only in the songs attributed to him on the album, but also in the guitar/vocal style throughout and in the painful emotion evoked.

In the following year, Vanguard released his second album, "Big City Blues", which recalls the migration of country blues singers north to the cities, the subsequent adaptation of their music to amplified electric instrumentation, and the formation of bands, rather than solo performers. These bands would usually consist of drums, bass, two guitars, piano and harmonica. Blues has gone through a lot of changes over the years. From field hollers and work songs, to country blues, to 'cited' country blues, to city blues to urban blues. The music has become more sophisticated and refined, while still remaining in essence, the blues.

"Big City Blues", which features Billy Butler and James Spruill on guitars; Jimmy Lewis on bass and Bobby Donaldson on drums, contains examples of 'cited' country blues ("Midnight Hour Blues" and "Barbecue Blues"), city blues ("My Babe" and "I'm Ready"), and rhythm and blues, an offshoot of city blues leaning towards rock 'n' roll, as in "I'm A Man" and "No Money Down".

Each of his albums on Vanguard fall into either a country blues set ("John Hammond" and "Country Blues") or an electric city blues format ("Big City Blues" and "So Many Roads"). The last has an impressive line-up of backing musicians by any standards. Jimmy Lewis on bass and Charlie Musselwhite on harmonica, and no less than Robbie Robertson, Levon Helm and Garth Hudson, who were later to form "The Band" and back Dylan. (In fact it was Hammond who introduced them to Dylan).

In an interview with Royston Eldridge in 1971, John expressed the fact that although Vanguard had not pushed him in any way, they had not really let him record how he wanted, and this could be the reason why he quit the label. Subsequent to his departure Vanguard assembled some previously unreleased material covering his solo country blues work on one side, and on the other material recorded with both the bands that he had employed on Vanguard. It was titled "Mirrors". A reflective look at John Hammond. Later in 1971 Vanguard released a "Best of John Hammond" double covering work that had been on one or the other of his previous Vanguard albums. This is still available.

ATLANTIC SESSIONS

In 1965, he signed with Redbird and recorded "I Can Tell". However, the label went bust and he took the tapes to Atlantic. It was around this time that Atlantic were experimenting with southern independent outlets and had already had success at Muscle Shoals with black soul artists such as Aretha Franklin and Wilson Pickett (who had recorded what is arguably their best stuff there). Now, they were signing up white artists and developing a style described by Jerry Wexler at the time as "southern swamp music" - R 'n' B played by Southern whites. An integral part of this sound was the housebands employed by the studios, especially those at Muscle Shoals. However "I Can Tell" although it came out on Atlantic, had not been recorded under these conditions. It features bass by Rick Jarko, Charles Otis on drums, and Robbie Robertson on guitar along with Hammond. The album has him playing up-tempo rocking blues in a freer style than on his previous Vanguard albums. It was eventually released in 1963.

Atlantic has always had the reputation of taking a personal interest in its artists but for some reason or other they seem to have been somewhat less than falling over backwards to help John Hammond. Their attitude towards him is summed up by John himself. "They never had to spend no money on me so they never had the incentive to hype me in any way. Everything was slapdash there and I wound up having to do all the work myself as far as recording and making sure they were released and that kind of thing. They sent me down to Muscle Shoals to record with their houseband that had recorded behind Aretha Franklin and Wilson Pickett. Those guys were all white and all very talented, but they didn't know me, they never heard me. We had three days to cut an album and I had to meet those guys and tell them where I was at. It was hard and we cut this album, it was good, Atlantic wanted a real commercial sound, but there was no-one there to really supervise, no one that I knew that I could exchange my ideas with". The result was "Southern Fried". An altogether smoother and more sophisticated sounding piece of work than his previous stuff, as one would expect from Muscle Shoals. It was a good album, though and definitely for John, commercial. The appearance of Duane Allman on three of the tracks is a real bonus, he plays beautiful slide guitar. The rest of the band were Barry Beckett, keyboard; Eddie Hinton guitar; David Hood, bass; Roger Hawkins, drums (plus horn augmentation). There is no solo acoustic work on either "I Can Tell" or "Southern Fried", whereas with

the Vanguard material there was an overall 50/50 mix. But for his electric blues his sources and choice of material remain the same - Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon, Howlin' Wolf, Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley (inter alia). This absence of solo acoustic was a result of the record company policy stated earlier. Although Hammond has expressed the fact that, in spite of record companies wanting him to record electric, and that he does like to play the whole spectrum of blues, he does prefer to play solo acoustic country blues.

However, I feel that electric R 'n' B is closer, in reality, to John Hammond's (and any white blues singers) own experience of life and consequently he can portray that music with more credibility than a lot (though by no means all) of earlier country blues material. Comparisons can be drawn here with Ryland Cooder and Bonnie Raitt, both of whom draw heavily on early blues. Ms Raitt is the closer of the two to John Hammond's approach to blues i.e. a style of playing and singing where the listener, maybe by chance, though I suspect by design, is given the impression that the performer is personally involved not only in the musical genre but the actual lifestyle that the lyrics portray. In a nutshell, that they have lived the life they sing about. To try and give this impression when singing about social circumstances indigenous to the fact of being a negro is, I feel, a little pretentious, even with the best will in the world and a genuine love for the music. There are, however, many themes in country blues which are universal in application, and these can be portrayed by young white musicians in a credible and beautiful way. However, there are references in some of the country blues that John has recorded that would apply only to a negro living in the south in the twenties and thirties. Bonnie Raitt, consciously or not, avoids these conflicts of experience in her choice of country blues material.

On the other hand, this doesn't mean to say that these blues cannot be played by white folks today. They can. But the approach must be of a different nature. Ry Cooder has managed to retell experiences portrayed in songs with which he could have no actual personal identity. He does this by "standing back" as it were, although emotionally involved with the songs, and not pretending to actually live the life portrayed therein. He also employs a slight 'tongue-in-cheek' approach sometimes to help get over this problem. These techniques do not in any way mar the effect of the song on the listener and provide an escape from any embarrassing pretension.

However, all this discussion is small criticism of a talent as immense as John Hammond's, and applies only to a small proportion of his work. Suffice to say, when this pitfall is avoided, blues played by white people today is as satisfying and relevant as it has ever been, which testifies to its magnificence as a musical (art) form. In fact, John Hammond's solo acoustic work is excellent; his command of blues guitar, no matter what the idiom, is staggering, as is his incredible voice.

There was, around this time, an album entitled "Sooner or Later". I have never been able to get hold of it, or have seen it in any catalogues. But I am assured of its existence by one or two people; one of which has a copy in South Africa and the other in Belgium. It remains a mystery to me.

Anyway, in 1971 John Hammond leaves Atlantic, with eight albums of excellent music behind him and still the need for constant low budget touring to make ends meet, in front of him. As far as touring and live performance are concerned he has divided his time between playing solo and using a band. When employing a band he likes to keep it small (bass, drums, harmonica, and maybe one other guitar), but has expressed the desire to be able to use horn sections when he feels like it, but that is uneconomical as he finds it hard paying that many musicians out of the proceeds. When asked by Royston Eldridge if he enjoyed playing alone, he replied "I do, I do. Its much harder for me because I didn't have anybody to rely on. I play all, anywhere, weird gigs, and also big concerts where there's five thousand people and you get up there alone, and they've never heard of you."

About this time a break came for him in the form of Neil Young, an old friend of his, with an invitation to join him on tour. They had met at a gig, two or three years previous in Washington DC, when Neil was with Crazy Horse and John was headlining the bill. They became close friends. Subsequently, Neil made it with CSNY, and they caught John's act at a club in L.A. and offered him the gig.

"It was the best tour I've ever been on. It was the most good work I've had at one time. I made more money than I made in one tour all my life. I played for more people than I've ever played for. It really helped me out incredibly".

Later, that same year, "Sourcepoint" was released on CBS, his new label. Heavyweight session men and brass went out the window and the personnel were trimmed down to a trio Charles Otis on drums and Billy Nichols on bass. John works well in this context. no frills - simple driving blues - "Got Love if You Want It", "Mellow Down Easy", "Takin' care of Business", "Juncos Partner" and "Tell Me Mama", interspersed with some slow blues like Muddy Waters' "She Moves Me".

His next album for Columbia "I'm Satisfied" is, to my mind, a masterpiece. Having talked about his moving away from the sophisticated multi-instrumental arrangements of "Southern Fried" to the simplicity of "Sourcepoint", "I'm Satisfied" marks a return to more grandiose arrangements. The effect is a strangely brooding album, even eerie at times. Delany Bramlett produced it, and its quite, quite different from anything John has done before. It's still blues though - magnificent. It must surely be a high point for not only John Hammond, but Delaney Bramlett too. I think that his previous albums were self-produced (no producing credits are given on the sleeves, except for "Southern Fried" where John co-produces with Marlin Greene and "Sourcepoint" credits Hammond as producer). One gets the feeling on "I'm Satisfied" that there was a great rapport between everyone who worked on it, from the string (yes, string) arranger to the drummer. Delaney Bramlett also wrote half the songs on it and it shows the deeprooted sympathy he has for Southern Blues. The songs are mature, contemporary blues and the production arrangements and playing equally so. The polarity of "Sourcepoint" and "I'm Satisfied" display the immense flexibility of the blues idiom. The latter being an album I would recommend unreservedly to anyone and everyone, whether you're into blues or not.

Columbia took advantage of the momentum generated by these two albums and prepared (yes, they actually did something about him!) for the big push to bring him to a wider audience. Which came in the form of "Triumvirate", where John is accompanied by Mike Bloomfield and DrJohn, both better known musicians than John himself. The three of them are pictured on the cover with Hammond in the middle. Hopefully, people, who were not familiar with John, would purchase the album on the strength of Dr John or Mike Bloomfield and possibly thereby turn on to him. It was not an altogether happy collaboration and was almost scrapped before completion.

John Hammond: "Triumvirate was my album. American Columbia wanted to repack it so Dr John's name would be included. I thought it was my record, and it was. I picked all the songs, I sang, all the songs and OK'd all the arrangements but Columbia wanted to make a supersession thing, which is alright except it chopped my money in a third". It is a John Hammond album, it has his stamp all over it; with contributions from the others. It was an attempt, probably well-meaning, to get him across to a wider audience, but even though it was a good idea it denied John most of the credit (to which he was due), thus defeating the object by making him seem a mere adjunct to the other two (or at most equi-responsible for the album).

Not only were there packaging problems; but also at first musical differences, which were eventually ironed out. A fine album of blues orientated rock and straight blues emerged from the sessions. It is his most commercial album and consequently his best selling.

His latest album "Can't Beat The Kid" is on Capricorn - another label casting its net for the "southern sound". The musicians on the record are, apart from John Hammond on guitar, slide guitar, harmonica and vocals; Kenny Buttrey on drums, Tommy Cogbill on bass; Spooner Oldham, piano; and Eddie Hinton on second guitar and piano. John returns to his 50/50 electric/acoustic arrangement this time; possibly Capricorn loosened the commercial thumbscrews. Side one is electric, with the aforementioned personnel, while side two is acoustic solo. Side one has the feel of "Southern Fried", tight smooth - some of the old Muscle Shoals boys back in there. Side two is 6 and 12 string acoustic solo reminiscent of Vanguard. Jesus, I don't know, he just keeps turning out good albums (no turkeys) in his own inimitable way. There's the good news, here's the bad - The album won't be released here. According to Capricorn in London, sales in America did not merit its release here. Elvin



Bishop scraped through. However, you can get it on import. And if you like blues, do. The title track, Spooner penned, is a catchy tongue-in-cheek groover taken at a strolling pace (but funky - make no mistake). From then on in, the side doesn't let up as we go through Little Walters "I Hate To See You Go", Sonny Boy's "Help Me", Bo Diddley's "Diddley Daddy", Otis Redding's and Steve Cropper's "It's Groovin' Time" and Otis Hicks/J West's "It's Mighty Crazy". "South bound Blues" slows side one down to a halt. Side two opens with Blind Willie McTell's classic "Statesboro Blues". Then on to Robert Johnson's classic, "Terrestrial Blues" (all his stuff is classic) and Sleepy John Estes' classic "Drop Down Mama". Also on this side is "Catanoooga choo choo" which may sound an odd choice, but breaks up the heavy blues nicely without losing the feel; along with a couple of other traditional songs "Screamin' and Cryin'" and "Rag Mama". Needless to say the whole thing is played as good as you'll ever hear it, the band are excellent, and while it's not the best he has ever done, John Hammond is here still, head and shoulders above anyone else in his field. Credit too to Eddie Hinton for production.

Because of his sincerity towards his music and the immense talent he has for it, he has had little trouble being accepted by black people as a bona fide bluesman. "I've played for black audiences and never had any hassles. I was a sideman with Big Mama Thornton at the Apollo Theatre (in Harlem). At the Ash Grove, Los Angeles, where I was on a show with Dreddy King, we played for predominantly black audiences every night. People who dig my music really dig it, no matter what colour they are. Once, when I was playing, Boulder Colorado, a black musician, came backstage after the show and said "How can you do that? I can't do it myself!". Out of the dozen or so albums, he's made about £2,000 which works out less than £200 an album. So to make any kind of living at all, he has to tour constantly, for the most part solo. 'I've played with some bands over the years, but it's so expensive I've gone broke every-time I've done it."

However, if commercial success has consistently eluded him, this nonpareil bluesman has undoubtedly succeeded artistically. He has uncompromisingly stuck to the decision he made in his early teens - to be a blues singer, and through this commitment has had to forego a lot of easy money which anyone with half his talent could get on the merrygoround of the rock/pop circuit.

There may still be time for public acclaim to catch up with critical acclaim. As a conclusion, I would like to quote the liner notes by Michael Gross on "I'm Satisfied" It has always been a mixed blessing for a performer to be known as a "musician's musician". Most often it has meant tremendous critical acclaim and not much money. The admiration of one's peers and obscurity as far as the average listener is concerned. That John Hammond is a "Musician's musician" is amply attested to by the likes of - Jimmi Hendrix, Robbie Robertson, Duane Allman and Delancy Bramlett. Brilliant musicians to say the least, they have all respected John's music enough to help him make it, and no higher compliment can be paid one artist by another".

DISCOGRAPHY

VANGUARD

			Availability
'John Hammond'	1963	VSD 2148	US Import
'Big City Blues'	1964	VSD 79153	"
'So Many Roads'	1965	VSD 79178	"
'Country Blues'	1966	VSD 79198	"
'Mirrors'	1967	VSD 79245	"
'Best Of' (double)	1971	VSD 11/12	UK release

ATLANTIC

'I Can Tell'	1967	deleted	
'Sooner or Later'	-	The Mysterious one.	
'Southern Fried'	1970	SD8251	US import

CBS

'Sourcepoint'	1971	COL C-30458	US Import
'I'm Satisfied'	1972	deleted	
'Triumvirate'	1973	deleted	

CAPRICORN

'Can't Beat The Kid'	1975 CP 0153		US Import
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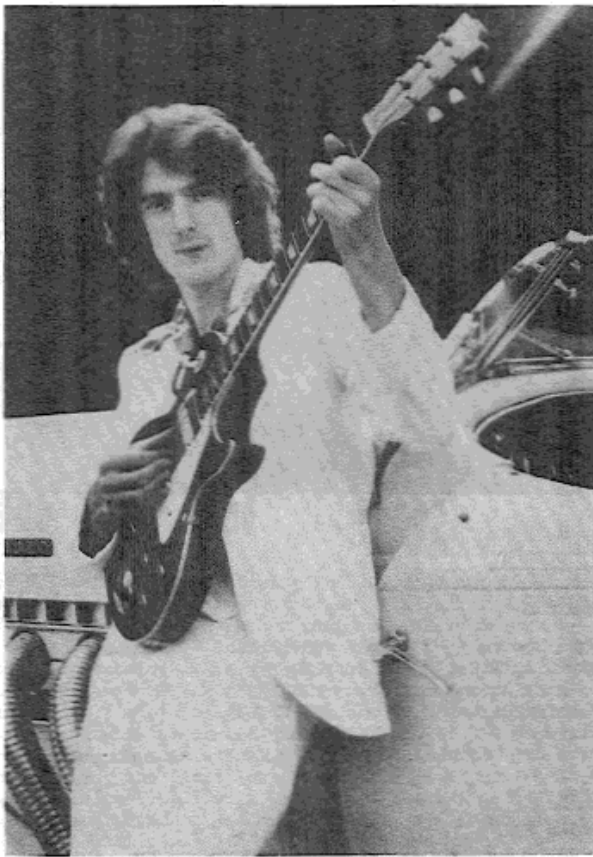
OTHER RECORDED WORK

'John Hammond & Larry Johnson' on Biograph BLP 12028 Soundtrack for the Film "Little Big Man" - deleted

Had appeared here and there on other albums, but not really a session musician as such.

JOHN SPENCER





This interview was done on Bryn's tour of clubs and colleges in late November, last year. His second album had just been released and things were looking good for Bryn but since then I haven't heard of so much of him. Which is a shame because as you'll see, he has an interesting story to tell.

"I came down to London in 1966, with a guy called Nick Weaver (aka Wynder K Frogg), we lived in the same town, knew each other quite well and sometimes played in local bands together. He had a flat in London and he used to let me stay there. It was a bit rough at first, sleeping on the floor, eating infrequently, that sort of scene. This went on for quite a while, until I got to know one of the guys in a band called Fleur De Lys...his girl was living in this place and one night when he came round we got talking about music. Well, it so happened that I was just leaving for an audition as bassist with the Herd, Gary Taylor had just left and I was going round to the Marquee that night. I just arrived at the Marquee and there was Gordon Haskell, also of the Fleur De Lys, who said, 'we're looking for a rhythm guitarist, why not join us instead?'. So I said ok, there and then, just sorta jumped in their van and drove off".

The Fleur De Lys were a fairly well known London band of the mid-sixties. They were signed to Immediate in '65 and before Bryn joined, had two singles released, "Wooddreams"/"Wait For Me" Immediate 020 (produced by Jimmy Page) and "Circles"/"So Come On" (032). By the time Bryn joined them however, they were on the downward slope, the various members all made good (except for the drummer, Keith Guster who Bryn says "is playing in a Palais band in Reading...but he's happy), Pete Sears is now a famous session man on both sides of the Atlantic, notably for his work with Rod Stewart and as a member of Copperhead. Gordon Haskell went on to King Crimson before doing a solo album for Atlantic (I think he's the same Gordon Haskell who did a weird mid-sixties album for CBS). And, of course, Bryn.

Later on, we virtually ended up as backing group for Sharon Tandy (who released a fabulous disco classic called 'Hold On'). She was married to her manager, Frank Fenter, and introduced us to him and he got us the job as house band at Atlantic. We did quite a lot of sessions; we did all of Donnie Elbert's Sharon's "Hold On"...the

Letting The Days Go By with BRYN HAWORTH

thing is, we were really into that soul stuff. In fact I learned guitar from Booker T's "Soul Dressing" album, they were like my favourite band...and when we met them - well, it was great. Those things really happened, guys like Isaac Hayes and Dave Porter came over, Tom Dowd did too, they were bashing out the songs, and it was like 'quick, get this down'. Great days."

"I felt though, that the music I was wanting to play and be a part of was happening in California, so in July 1969 I went over there. My first gig was with Leigh Stephens, late of Blue Cheer and who had just released a solo album called 'Red Weather'. I stuck with him for about two weeks, but it just wasn't happening at all, so I left. Not long after that I met a guitarist called Israel Zacuto and after jamming and playing together, we decided to form a band. Things happened quickly and we added Lee Sclar, (soon to be elevated to superstardom via James Taylor), Bugs Pemberton (late of the Undertakers) and Kevin Kelly (a pianist but not related to the Byrds or Fever Tree Kevin Kelly, as is sometime assumed). We landed a management deal with Bill Graham and his Fillmore corporation, they gave us the Fillmore to rehearse in and put us on various bills at the Fillmore West and Winterland. (The most famous of which being three nights in November 1969 on a bill with Led Zeppelin, Isaac Hayes and Roland Kirk). We made an album, produced by David Robinson, which was never released because we split up."

"After that, Israel and I crossed the country and went up to New York, where we met up with Jackie Lonax. He was living in Woodstock at that time and we played with him for a while. Then he said, 'Look, why don't you play on my album ('Home Is In My Head' - Warners No. 0000?)', and we rehearsed and it was great. Then we toured and did another album with him "Jackie Lonax Three" (Warners No. 0005).

Bryn's contribution to "Home" had to be under a pseudonym because he wasn't in the Musicians Union. Hence Frank Furter credit. There is also a credit for Rickie Redstreak, rumoured over the years to have been Paul McCartney (remember Paul's plans for the Beatles to play anonymous gigs under the title Rickie and the Redstreaks) but according to Bryn it was just Jackie. McCartney was in the next studio at that time tho', doing 'Maybe I'm Amazed' so maybe that's how that rumour started" says Bryn. By the time "Three" was released Bryn was credited under his own name, even co-writing one of the tracks, "No Reason". Bryn reminisces fondly of his times with Jackie, "He was pretty big on the East Coast, and we played a lot of gigs.....oh, all sorts of places, colleges, big halls, we even did a tour as support to T. Rex. I haven't seen Jackie much since then, although I did play on one track on his 'White Lady' album. He's with Capitol now I hear, and he's using the same guy as did my album (Richard Digby Smith). I've heard some tapes of his and they're pretty good" (for fuller info on Jackie Lonax, see ZigZag 43).

"We decided to come to England after this, Israel and I and we formed the original version of Kokomo, along with Bruce Rowland (late of the Grease Band and who had also been in Jackie Lonax's band) and Chrissie Stewart. We rehearsed as such, recorded as such, Bruce still has the tapes...but I was unsettled over here, so it was back to the States again one more time. I got another band together, once again it was based around me, Bugs Pemberton, Kevin Kelly and Israel but we also had Richie Hayward - who had just left Little Feat - and Joel Tepp, who you may know from his work with Ian Matthews, he played clarinet, harmonica and pedal steel. It was a promising band with quite a lot going for it, we did some tapes, but once again it fell apart and I came back to Britain for good." (so ends Bryn's American adventures; Bugs Pemberton joined Ain (featuring Loren McKirk of the Chris Darrow albums fame and Michael Overly) who did an album for Blue Thumb. Richie Hayward, of course, rejoined Little Feat (after a brief spell with Rick Nelson's band) and was nearly killed in a motor-bike accident last year. Israel Zacuto apparently joined up with John Prine,

but he doesn't get a mention on any of the recent Prine albums. That leaves Kevin Kelly, who is doing sessions. Bryn too, arrived here a changed man, he had quit dope and alcohol and had found peace of mind. The Bible now plays a big part in his life, as does the Lord, but unlike so many others he doesn't push it. He just rolls with the flow).

"When I came back, I was sharing a flat with John Porter, who was then basically a member of Roxy Music, having been bassist on their first album. I didn't have any particular plans at that time, so John said 'why don't you take your tapes round to Richard Williams at Island? He really likes your songs, y'know. He knows you from a long time ago.' So Richard liked them and I signed with Island."

So Bryn became a member of the folk/rock community at Island and began work on his first solo album. The songs had been written over a period of time in various places - New York, Woodstock, Toronto, while touring with Lomax, Montreux, Wales and, obviously, California. The album, "Let The Days Go By", is roughly split between traditional folk-rock themes, mandolin based like "Grappenhall Rag" and "Be I Love You Lass" but there's a lot more to Bryn Haworth. As you would expect from an old rocker turned folkie, old habits die hard. In fact, "I Won't Lie" is pure Little Feat in construction, right down to the vocal styling and the guitar/keybord influence - this track could've come from "Dixie Chicken". Likewise, "All I Want" is distinguished by some fine Mel Collins saxophone. Ry Cooder is a big influence on Bryn and the slide guitar parts on 'Get Yourself A Man' are certainly testament to that. And so it goes. The two tracks recorded in the States tho', represent a completely different side to Bryn. The title track is a hypnotic song, very relaxing and it just washes over you. Lovely music for a summer's day (or a winter one) and similarly "Anywhere You Want To Be" is just Bryn and slide guitar recorded over a backdrop of the Pacific Ocean again extremely peaceful and once again showing Bryn's new found inner peace.

I think one of the reasons the album works so well, in this variety of styles, is because of Bryn's familiarity with his sidemen. Bruce Rowland does most of the drumming as does Bugs Pemberton and Terry Stannard of Kokomo; on bass it's usually Gordon Haskell or Alan Spenner. Most of these guys have worked together in various combinations over the years, so the sessions must've been more like a reunion.

With the album out in early 1974, it sold 3000 copies before Bryn even played a gig. When that time came, he was a bit apprehensive. "I had never played on my own before and I was really scared. I went to Germany for a couple of gigs with Traffic; Rosko Gee hadn't long joined them and they were doing warm-up dates to their British tour. As I say, I went on and was really scared, but at the end, the crowd were cheering and clapping and I felt just great. After that I did a full tour with the Fairports and it was great too."

The major part of 1975 was spent gigging and preparing for the second album. Bryn had ambitions to form a band to play more uptempo material and was writing more rock based songs. Recording began in earnest in late summer and a basic nucleus of Bruce Rowland, Alan Spenner, Chris Stainton was used, as well as the Island house crew of Mattacks, Dave Pegg, Pat Donaldson and Dave Swarbrick. Released in November '75 it is an absolute revelation when compared to "Let The Days Go By". The first track "Good Job" is another Little Feat soundalike, complete with Lowell George vocal and slide licks, built around one of the most infectious riffs anywhere. Despite just being a trio, Bryn, Bruce and Chris Stainton turn in some fine boogie on "Pick Me Up"; Bryn's slide and Chris's phased piano being particularly effective. "Darlin' Cory" sees the more traditional side of Bryn, as he explains, "It's an old traditional ballad, that Israel found in a book. Trouble was, he didn't know all the verses, so I had to make up the ending" (but you can't see the join). Alan Munde was recruited from Country Gazette for the banjo part (it was around the time of their New Victoria gig with the Starry-eyed). "Give All You Got To Give" was nearly a hit single, and there are a couple of interesting stories behind it. First of all, it's virtually a Kokomo track, "It was recorded all in one day, I got the band in in the morning and the sing-

ers in the afternoon. An incredible session really. Then Mel Collins came in and put on all the sax parts. It was one of these super days when everything goes just right". I remark that, as we are talking, it is Johnnie Walker's 'Record Of The Week', "Sunny you should mention that, but when I was at Atlantic, Johnnie was on pirate radio and used to come into the office all the time as he was going out with one of the secretaries. That's how I got to know him" (can't complain really - Tony Blackburn used to do similar favours for Al Stewart as they were in the same band once. However, as Al's music began to get more eclectic, Tony's interest - naturally - waned). The title track, is an updated version of the old standard, "Sunny Side Of The Street", - it's ok, unless you have vivid memories of the original. Bryn likes it 'cos it was always playing in his house when he was young. It's also a nice, positive song. Incidentally, Bryn changes one of the choruses from "rich as Rockefeller" to "rich as Island Records" in case you wondered what the mumbly was about. Again, the religious influence shows on "Peace of Mind", "Heaven Knows" (fabulous track) and "Thank The Lord" (all self-explanatory really) but not in a forced way. As Bryn says, "I can't help it when I'm writing like that, it just comes to me. Naturally.


Again, an excellent album in all respects and a band was quickly found to back Bryn on the road. "Rosko's been on the idea of a band from the start, the original drummer was going to be Godfrey MacLean from Gonzales (Rosko's old band) but he bowed out, as did Terry Stannard because of Kokomo's commitments, however Bruce Rowland had a gap between Fairport's tours and recording so it was good to get him. Jackie MacAnley is a mate of Rosko's (and also an ex-member of Them, Trader Horne and he also did a solo album for Dawn) and a fine guitarist. Rabbit, I had known from Island and he was glad to do it. In fact I'll probably be working on some of his stuff."

This aggregation of session names might have overpowered a lesser talent, but with Bryn's background and history, he had their respect and the tour went down well. Due to some of the previously mentioned commitments, rehearsals were few and four gigs were undertaken on unsuspecting Dutch audiences, then an unadvertised gig at Preston before kicking off the tour proper with four gigs in Scotland. It ended at the Roundhouse on the same Sunday as Mike Nesmith was playing his last London gig and he remarked upon the fact that when he was last here, Bryn was his support act and Mattacks and Pegg were backing Bryn and now were backing him. Small world indeed. Unfortunately for Bryn, in terms of numbers and press coverage, Nesmith won out and little has been heard of him so far this year. Which is a shame, as he is a great talent, a fine songwriter and an exceptional guitarist. If you haven't already made yourself aware of his albums, do so without hesitation.

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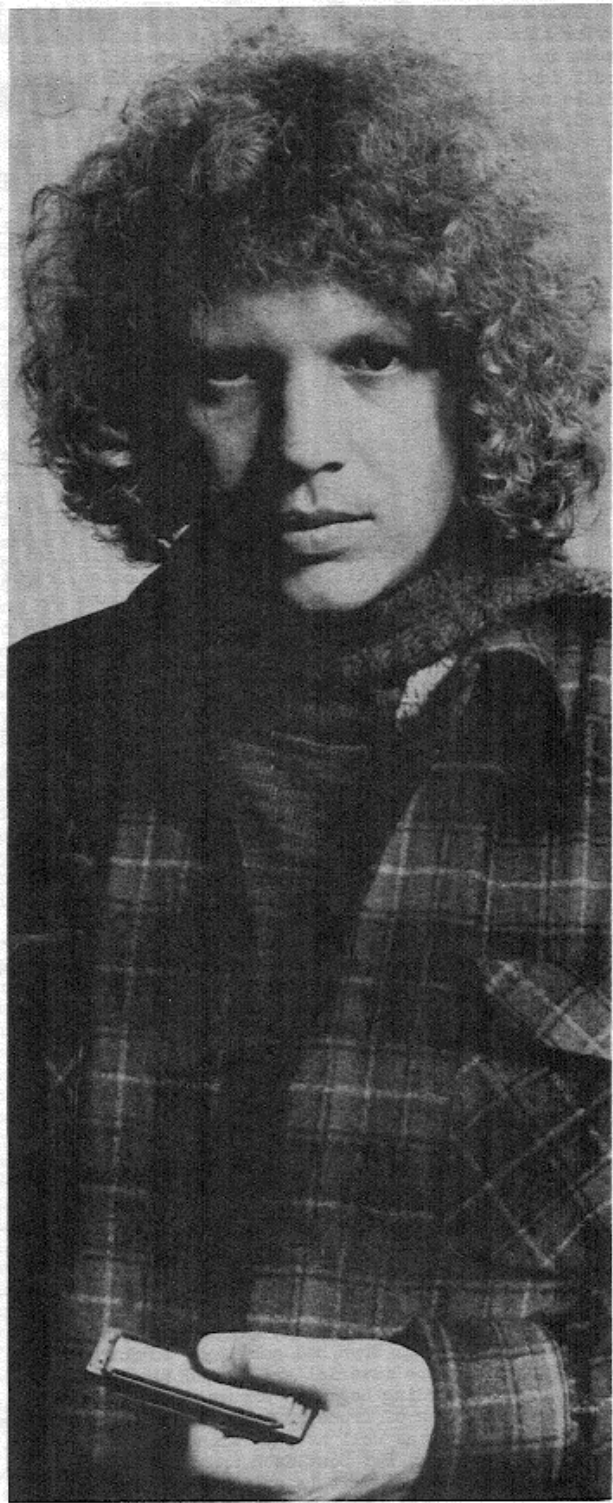
BARRY MELTON ;

A TALE OF THE COAST .

There's been a lot of water flowed under the bridge since the palmy days of '67 but it was still an exciting experience to meet Barry Melton on his rare visit to Edinburgh. After all he's been through its surprising the amount of enthusiasm he still puts into his playing. Essentially a fun-loving figure Barry was most expansive and helpful discussing his solo work and his old days with Country Joe. Their careers have always been closely linked, although Barry's part is frequently underestimated. So, here begins the life and good times of Barry Melton, not forgetting Joe McDonald.

'The Fish' and 'Ragbaby'

Joe McDonald had been staying in L.A. up until 1965, when he moved to Berkeley and teamed up with Barry. Details of the early days are rather confused; "We went out as a duo called Country Joe and the Fish; doing mostly folk things, but before this we had the INSTANT ACTION JUG-BAND. That was RICHARD SAUNDERS (washtub bass), PHIL MARSH (gtr), who's playing with Joe now, PAUL ARMSTRONG (washboard and tambourine) and LARRY GRANZ" (?) Joe had previously run a political magazine called "ET TU" in Los Angeles (the first issue appearing in August '64) and was doing likewise in Berkeley. It was "Rag Baby" (a nickname given to Joe by ED DENSON, who co-ran the mag), which also gave the name to the two EPs out by Barry and Joe. "The first E.P. was a jug band with entirely different people on it - BILL STEEL on washtub bass, CARL SCHRABGER on washboard, kazoo and bells and me and Joe on guitar and singing. MIKE BEARDSLEY was singing with us too, I think. That was our first jug band, that was Country Joe and the Fish Jug Band, then we changed to an electric format in April or May 1966. Of the two E.P.s the first was the jug band and the second the electric band. The actual label was called Rag Baby records after the magazine which wasn't really political - it was more a folk music newsletter. The guy who first recorded us as a jug band was CHRIS STRACHNITZ, the owner of ARHOLIE Records who record American traditional music". It was at his house that they first recorded "Fixin' To Die Rag" and "Superbird". In May of 1966 the electric band - then comprising Joe (gtr, vocal) Barry (gtr) and BRUCE BARTHOL on harmonica, tambourine ("I've known Bruce since I was 12 or 13. We played together in High School when I was president of the Folk Song Society!"), PAUL ARMSTRONG (Bass), DAVID COHEN (gtr. and keyboard) and JOHN FRANCIS CUSHING (drums) - they recorded "Section 43", "Love" and "Superbird", and in the following month "Bass Strings". "The Rock group EPs sold about 20,000 and the Jug band one about 10,000, although a lot of those were given away." How had Barry got to know Ed Denson, co-owner with JOHN FAHEY of TAKOMA Records? "Ed is responsible along with John Fahey for bringing music out of the South. Ed brought MISSISSIPPI, JOHN HURT out of the South and the music of CHARLEY PATTON, BOOKER T. WASHINGTON WHITE - one of the great guitar players of our time, (who has an album on Takoma - "MISSISSIPPI BLUES" BLOOL, made in 1963). Also involved in that was Dick WATERMAN and SAM CHARTERS, a great blues researcher and collector. It was a chain of events - Joe and I both knew him and he went to manage a group called the BLUES PROJECT, road managing them actually, and went to New York with them. Previously I had acted with him in the San Francisco MINE TROUPE and PUPPET THEATRE during the Free Speech Movement. Anyway, Joe and I decided to hitch-hike to New York and become rich and famous, because the whole thing with the electric band had become pretty frustrating. On the way there we found ourselves in Nebraska without any dope so we stopped at a seed store and bought a couple of thousand morning glory seeds and we swallowed them all down with a pint of gin and ended throwing up in a cornfield in Nebraska!



We threw up for ten or twelve hours and when we got out on the road we were totally broke, we had about 50¢ in our pockets, and this car load of people stopped by and said 'why its Joe McDonald and Barry Melton!! and laid ten bucks on us and we hitch hiked back and found Ed and rode back with the Blues Projects equipment - 3,000 miles across the country driving at 30 mph in a volkswagen bus and Ed became our manager!"

Flying High with Electric Music

Denson fixed up a deal with VANGUARD Records in New York and gave the first album its title - "Electric Music for the Mind and Body". It was released on Mayday 1967, having been recorded throughout February of the same year at SIERRA SOUND STUDIOS, Berkeley (by ROBERT DI SOUZA). One week before the sessions JOHN FRANCIS GUNNING was fired, to be replaced by "CHICKEN" HIRSCH on drums. "Chicken was an old friend of mine and had been working with a rock band called BLACKBURN AND SNOW which was one of the early Bay Area bands featuring SHERRY SNOW who later sang with DAN HICKS AND HIS HOT LICKS. They were pioneers and would have been one of the original San Francisco bands had it not been for YIN-YANG difficulties". The song "Grace" is about Grace Slick - "we played our first gig with THE GREAT SOCIETY at the Fillmore Auditorium. Grace was singing with them, at that time Signe Anderson was with the Jefferson Airplane and Skip Spence was drumming. - Beautiful person Skip Spence". During the recording of "Love" Barry had the "Neopolitan bone ache" (the love disease) and passed out! There were also problems at the dubbing stage. "COWSLEY came in for the overdubs with Grace and we all got so f_____d up that we almost erased all the tapes!" By now the band line-up was the best known McDonald - Melton - Barthol - Cohen - Hirsch one, Paul Armstrong having left in September 1966. Sam Charters, who produced the album and mixed the tapes in New York, explained it's design to be the movement from "the openness of songs like 'Flying High' and 'Superbird' into the haunting world of 'Section 43' and 'Grace'...from the place where the music was most direct to the place where it was most deeply veiled in the inner meaning". A case in point is "Bass Strings" (a phrase used by Bruce for scoring) which drifts mesmerically with Cohen's organwork swirling in the background. It's interesting to note that their revolutionary principles were more than just lip service, with all profits from records and publishing being equally divided amongst the band and roadies despite the fact that Joe did almost all the writing. Shortly after the album was released it made the US top 50. Things were beginning to move.

The Fall of '67 saw the band moving to New York to record their second album "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die". Some of the material had been written before the first album was recorded, and some songs were written for friends - "Janis" for Janis Joplin and "Magoo" for a gentleman of the same name; "Magoo is the president of the San Francisco chapter of the Hells Angels. I still have a lot of friends who are Hells Angels. Despite negative publicity I believe that the Hells Angels are the last true Outlaws - they're the one percenters and I'm a one percenter so I understand them". And what of "Pat's song"? "Pat is a she, a guitar player from Berkeley". "Fixin'-to Die" was dedicated to three people who had played vital roles within the bands organisation. "JOHN CAMPBELL owned a music store and he 'financed' us in a way, he gave us all our original equipment on credit. JEFF TODD HUNTER and DAVE TALCOTT were our original roadies. On our first trip east, we were the first Bay Area band of that period to ever go

to the east or to Europe, they were driving our equipment in a van when they crashed in Nevada. Dave Talcott broke his neck and Jeff Todd Hunter broke his arm and shattered some vertebrae. At the time the album came out they were both in the hospital. It was really a rough trip - we had no insurance or anything". This album saw the beginning of many wrangles with Vanguard. On this occasion the point of dispute was the sleeve photo. "Vanguard were responsible for modifying that cover. Originally Chicken was dressed in a priest's costume with a priests hat on but it was airbrushed out. I was dressed in a Nazi general's uniform and they arased the Swastika and put the American flag on because they were afraid the swastika would offend people. Vanguard also managed to squelch our nude album cover which would have come out a full year and a half before John Lennon's. Vanguard is run by these two brothers MAYNARD and SEYMOUR SOLOMON and they said they didn't want to deal with it, that the rack jobbers won't carry it. We told them to wrap it in brown paper and mark it 'X'. In a last ditch attempt at reconciliation Maynard Solomon produced Joe's last album for Vanguard ("COUNTRY JOE")". In a similar vein to the first album, the acid trip and politics were combined (ostensibly on "THE BOBIS SONG" and "THE ACID CELEBRIAL") featuring the same shimmering instrumental work overlaid by Barry's quicksilver runs on guitar, complete with masterful reverb and vibrato work. The album also emulated its predecessor's success.

Here we are Together again

"The first two albums went gold but the third one ("TOGETHER") went higher on the charts than either of them but it acted like a true pop album. It went up quick and down quick. The other two just sold consistently over the years". On "Together" Joe appears on only half the numbers and there were definite signs that the band were experiencing the pressures of success. Barry, however, was contributing more vocals, "We were trying to work out a new democratic principle. I didn't sing on the early Fish - I now consider myself a singer as much as a guitar player - but now I'm twenty eight years old. When I started with the Fish I was a teenager and my voice was changing and I didn't sing because you rarely find 17 year olds fronting a band, who sing". The standard was not as high as on the previous albums and the title was a misnomer but there still remained some good songs - "Rock and Soul Music" was part of their live repertoire for a long time and ofcourse, there is the delightfully naive "Harlem Song" which describes the ghetto in travel-brochure terms - full of friendly, grinning "Picaninnies" waiting to invite you into their homes. The album was cut in March '68 with Bruce Barthol leaving that same year, to be followed by David Cohen, early in '69. The subsequent album "Here We Are Again" meant replacements had to be found (by this time Bruce had formed FORMERLY FAT HARRY - one album on Harvest and David Cohen had joined THE BLUES PROJECT, album on Capitol) for recording purposes. "Jack Casady played bass as did PETER ALBIN and MARK RYAN, DAVE GETZ (drums was



Country Joe....
and The Fish.



also on it. ED BOGAS did some arrangements for it - we used to call him "QUICK PENCIL McFLURISH"! He appeared on the first EARH OPERA album and was, still is in fact, a member of the Vanguard Staff. He has P.H.D. in music from the University of California. He's a musical genius and was a staff producer for Fantasy Records for a while, producing lesser known bands from the Bay Area like CLOVER and also the song "He We Go Again", the version recorded by THE BROTHERS FOUR. Ed Bland is quite well known arranger and besides this album also wrote some of the charts for my solo album. "Bright Sun Is Shining". The album didn't seem to find much favour - many felt that the music had moved too far from the original - they were now using strings and horns. But I still find it a most enjoyable work and superior album to "Together". Barry was contributing more songs - three in fact - including the well known "Doctor of Electricity", which contains some rather whimsical lyrics, "Lighty armies of gasoline attendants/come to wipe my windows clean/ I can hear them laughing/their jokes are a riot/something is changing/and its brooding the machine". It's a curiously effective song and a good album, all things considered.

From CJ to Castro

The band had to tour but most of the studio musicians already had commitments - so full time replacements were sought. Cassidy did play with the band (under the pseudonym of PEREGRINE PICKLE) at the Fillmore West in January '69, alongside Chicken (who also left shortly after), and MARK RYAN (later to join Quicksilver) had held down the bass job 2 months earlier at the Fillmore East. Eventually it was DOUG NETZNER who got the thumbs up. At one time he played with THE GROUP IMAGE from New York City. The band was complemented with GREG DEWEY; "He was with a band called MAD RIVER and was with GROOZIA for a while, who put out an album produced by MARTY BALIN and also played drums with Marty's own group BODACIOUS D F (Those of you into "frucking" slang will know via C W McCALL'S "convoy" single that Bodacious means "A good signal; clear transmission") Mark KAPNER (keyboards) is like a local Berkeley cabaret type of folk singer". This was the band along with Joe and Barry that appeared at Woodstock in the August of 1969. "It was real hard work and a twenty four hour job on the part of the people putting it on. Everybody else may have had a grand time but it was because a lot of people were working very, very hard behind the scenes and I was really bound up in that more than sitting back and enjoying the festival, although I did witness some fantastic performances. Now, Monterey was the first real pop festival (The Fish played there in '67) and it set a precedent for two or three years. It was really an outgrowth of the jazz and folk festivals that preceded it at Monterey. It also gave birth to a lot of fine artists - Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Grateful Dead, Otis Reading".

But Country Joe and the Fish were nearly ready to close a chapter of their history, going into the studios in early 1970 to record what was to be their last album "C J FISH". " We had reached a creative impasse that people reach together. Actually we'd been in and out of it for over five years. It wasn't so much an impasse as a new reality. I grew up in that band, I grew to adulthood playing guitar with them and I became a singer and a writer and it was to be either half a set each or spread out and do what we can do". It was to be the latter, but "C J Fish" proved to be a memorable swansong, marking a return to their best. Unlike the previous album which had all been produced by Sam Charteris this one was handled by TOM WILSON, one time staff jazz producer for MGM-VERVE who had also worked with such disparate performers as Simon and Garfunkel and the Mothers. "I'd met Tom previously and we just called him up - we wanted to try something new, shake things up and try a new producer. He has a very large reputation for being able to produce things for people in all frameworks and states of mind and so we called on him". Wilson's production was a quality job that brought out all the best aspects in Barry's playing. "Silver and Gold" particularly, has beautiful, fleeting passages of guitar running through the song. In the songwriting department Barry contributed "Sing Sing

Sing" a breezy album opener and "The Love Machine", again another highlight of their live set. It was a far better epitaph than might have been hoped for and a strong work in its own right. Shortly before their demise the Fish had appeared in the film ZACHARLAN "the first electric western", produced by GEORGE SEGLUND, in which they played a band of outlaws called THE CRACKERS. They play one song "We're The Crackers" and Barry performs "All I Need" solo (a number he still plays in his set); "I think the Grateful Dead passed on that film (as did The Band) because they had some other gigs and we ended up doing it. We found out what Hollywood can really do to a script when they really work on it. Each time they would modify the lines until when they finally added it together it didn't make any sense, and it was visually difficult to watch. They started out with a great script by the FIREIGN THEATRE, and ruined it as far as I'm concerned." The only other film besides Woodstock that the band have appeared in is JACK O'CONNELL'S "REVOLUTION" which also featured Quicksilver, Steve Miller and Mother Earth, but the Fish never made it onto the soundtrack album.

Barry assures us that FIDEL CASTRO listens to the Fish albums; "There's a movie called 'Fidel' that was produced by SAUL LANDAU the same guy who produced 'QUE HACER?' / "What is to be done?" (a film about the ALLENDE government, which only featured Joe when he went down to Chile) and he travelled to Cuba in the 60's when it was still dangerous for Americans to go there and produced this movie with Fidel Castro and gave him copies of all our albums, because he was a friend of the bands. He has footage of Fidel holding the albums with a big cigar sticking out his mouth!" I feel that must be a seal of approval few other bands can match!

various solo escapades

With the Fish firmly stuck in their "creative impasse" it was Barry who decided to stretch out with a solo project. Released in the February of 1970 "BRIGHT SUN IS SHINING" was, surprisingly enough, essentially a blues album. "That was out in New York and Chicago. It was done with the WILSON/PICKETT band in New York and the CHESS house band in Chicago, which was Donny Hathaway, MORRIS JEWELLINGS (drums) and PHIL UPCHURCH (Bass). I've been into blues a long time. I've always enjoyed it. Surprisingly enough that album is still available, although it didn't do much. It was never imported here (the UK) for whatever reason I don't know." The Fall of 1970 found Barry with a chance to relax after almost four years of extensive touring and no longer having commitments with Country Joe and the Fish he took the opportunity to 'retire' from full-time music and his activities were restricted to the proverbial "hanging out" and was really only noticeable on the record front by dint of his appearance as producer of the embryonic west coast band JOY OF COOKING, and co-writing "TRAVELLING" with JOE for his album "HOLD ON ITS COMING" (Vanguard VSD 79314 April 1971). It was not until 1972 that Barry felt the urge to get another band together. This was to be MELTON, LEVY AND THE DEY BROTHERS, who cut an album of the same name for Columbia. Had it been CLIVE DAVIS that had signed the band? "(Pause) Yes, it was. I signed with him but for a longer contract, not just the one album. The album came out in August, which also happened to be the time Clive Davis was axed from Columbia and so was his entire staff. We got lost in the rush and went down with about forty other acts. They gave up about \$ 20 million worth of investment just when they got rid of him. The Band? Well, RICK DEY (Bass, vocals) who is now deceased, was TONY DEY's (drums, vocals) brother, and wrote the first hit for an American band called PAUL HEVERE AND THE RAIDERS, "Just Like Me". He was really a songwriter principally during his brief career. Tony Dey played for a while with VAN MORRISON. JAY LEVY was from the East Coast and was suggested by our Columbia A and R man. The album just dropped out of sight. They didn't even bother to promote it. Mike Bloomfield, who's an old friend of mine, did the production (along with NORMAN DAYRON). As a matter of fact we've just played a gig together in San Francisco, in a new club just opened called the SAVOY." It was Columbia's loss that they didn't try to sell the album, because it featured some fine work. "S.O.S." boasts, as far as I know,

Mr Melton's only recorded trombone work where he adds the necessary 'oomph' to the song's rousing soul chorus along with (presumably) his wife GLENISSE MELTON on back-up vocals. Additional personnel includes 'Bloomer' on guitar for one number and RICK JAGGER (misprinted, as he frequently is, as JAGGER) who's presently drummer with Dave Mason's band.

There is only one acoustic number - the snappy "Newsboy", where Barry pokes fun at the old myth that even a newsboy can become president of the U.S.A. On his recent tour Barry featured "Closer" from the album and it's basically a riff-based, soul, call and response number which allows him plenty of chance to loon around in the audience. It's interesting to note that there is a BLAIRE HARDMAN song "Highway 1" included, as he had recorded with Joe back in 1964 in Los Angeles. There's not a great deal of Barry's guitar work on the album but they're all good strong songs without a poor one amongst them. It's a shame it is no longer widely available. The only black mark against the album is the horrific front photo of a cat grinning with a set of human teeth, although the back photo of the band is neat, with them all dressed to the nines and Jay Levy resplendent in top hat!

After only a few performances, an album nobody was interested in and some rather loose organisation things drifted apart and it was back to Marin county, where Barry had struck up a friendship with Grateful Dead associate and occasional player MICKY HART. Barry holed up with Mickey on his ranch at NOVATO and this resulted in him working on the drummer's solo album for Warners, "ROLLING THUNDER". "Mickey's a good friend of mine. He has his own studio and we make what you would call 'home music.'" Although British copies of the album were never pressed Warners did ship over a small number for resale here which soon went, but its worth procuring the album even if its only for Alton Kelly's sleeve design! Shortly after working on the album Barry put together a 12 piece soul band with tenor saxophonist HERBIE "SNOOKY" FLOWERS, (who had replaced TONY CLEMENS in what was variously called THE JANIS JOPLIN REVUE, MAIN SQUEEZE or THE KOZMIC BLUES BAND some years before). This band only played a handful of dates but did record, with both Garcia and Grace Slick featured. There are hints that the album, tentatively titled "HEADHUNTERS", could land a British release (it has never appeared anywhere else before) through the efforts of a small enterprising body.

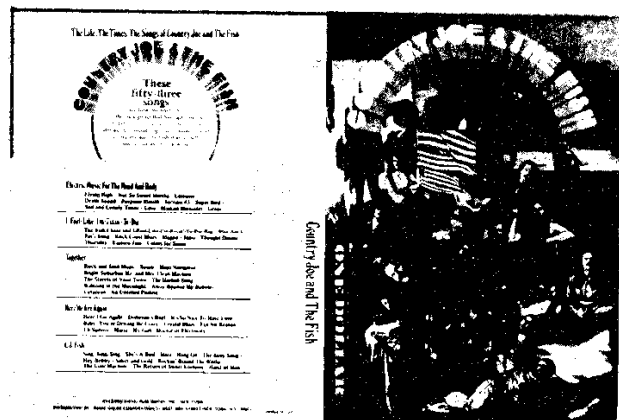
After this brief outing on the road Barry found himself involved in various different projects, playing on and co-producing Dead lyricist Robert Hunter's album "TALES OF THE GREAT RUN RUNNERS" and also getting involved in films, about which he is reticent to say much. "I've produced film sound-tracks - a couple of horror films. I actually worked as an engineer and did the soundtrack for a movie called "GAS-S-S" which was directed by Roger Corman who has done "The Rise and Fall of the House of Usher", "The Masque of the Red Death", "Willard" and "Hell's Angels '69". He just does horror films. I've done various other Hollywood work and I did a lot of studio work which I'd rather be anonymous about. Some of it did really well but I was just a ringer for people supposedly playing on it".

In between times there was always plenty of opportunities for recording at Micky's. Was it correct that he had already recorded a solo album? "That's true, some of the songs popped up on the present album and others were just left behind. It was totally non-viable for the record listening market, however, to me it was very aesthetic! Oh, there were a lot of people on that album - John Cipollina, Mickey Hart, David Freiberg". Eventually Barry came across to the Rockfield Studios in Wales to record, using KEN WHALEY (Bass), RAY MARTINEZ (gtr), DAVID CHARLES (Drums) and TOMMY EYRE (keyboards). Whaley, ofcourse, used to play with HELP YOURSELF (?) and KAH. Tommy Eyre has played for many people most notably MARK ALMOND AND THE ATNSLEY DUNBAR RETALIATION.

"Jessie James" appears (it was originally used by Joe on his last Vanguard album "Country Joe") and a couple of songs co-written with Mickey; "Those songs were written in the city of SUNRISE, Florida during an expedition we had there with a bottle of - what's a good word for it? - a certain German discovered chemical. It's manufactured by all the reputable firms! Originally they were going to be for Mickey's second album on

Warner Brothers which, by the time it was supposed to come out Grateful Dead was forming its own record company called Round Records and he gave them the 'elusive elusion' and now he's coming out on Round records with a new band called the DICA RHYTHM BAND. It's headed up by Mickey playing western drums and ZAKHIR who sings and is Alla Rakah's (the tabla player) son. It's a blend of Eastern and Western, mostly percussive. It's brilliant, unclassifiable, like a new form of music". Both "Marshmallow Road" and "Ice-cream Man" were recorded at the Roundhouse last May when Barry supported Man (with John Cipollina) on "West Coast Weekend" bill. They're both humorous the former being a plea for tolerance of the marshmallow ("We're really quite appealing") and the latter describes a veritable cornucopia of frozen delights to be had from your local ice cream man! It's not a startling album but rather an easy-going musical journey that is a real pleasure to listen to. Again, many of Barry's solos are lost in the fade out (when are we going to get the definitive Melton guitar album that we all know he's capable of?) but there's still plenty to hold the attention. The album winds up with "CALIFORNIA SEACAST", one of those songs that have made the West Coast the apparent paradise we bedraggled Britishers believe it to be, lying out on the beach as the sun sets and sauntering through the sultry evening streets of San Francisco (pass me that travel brochure!) Thankfully Barry's live work has been increasing of late and he has played solo as a duo with Joe and with his band (that of his latest solo album minus Tommy Eyre), supporting Commander Cody on his British tour. The future promises a reunion album from Country Joe and the Fish on Fantasy, with the probable line-up being Bruce Barthol (bass), John Blakely (gtr), Ted Ashford (piano) and Peter Milio (drums). Whether this line-up will tour or not remains to be seen, in fact, there is a question mark as to whether the whole thing will come to pass. "There is some doubt that this reality will take place", Barry says, as there are various business problems to clear up, but all being well the album should appear, and with it guest appearances by the old Fish members, David Cohen and 'Chicken' Hirsh. Basically a gregarious creature with a considerable propensity for the 'good time' Barry continues his way with only the occasional glance over his shoulder at the past and the many friends and musicians he has known; "I only hope I'll be able to play with them all again, you know?" So after his all too brief visit to Britain its back to Marin County and down to the business of making music for the sheer hell of it, and rest assured there will be plenty more of that in the future. We can only hope there will be many people listening.

ALLAN CAMPBELL



A song book publishing event:
**THE LIFE, THE TIMES, THE SONGS
 OF COUNTRY JOE AND THE FISH**

53 of the most challenging songs of our decade
 Piano and Guitar accompaniments
 Commentary by Samuel Charters
 Illustrated by a photographic history

BARRY MELTON - DISCOGRAPHY

2 "RAG BABY" E.P.s - Limited Editions

With Country Joe and the Fish:

- "ELECTRIC MUSIC FOR THE MIND AND BODY" Vanguard VSD 79244
- "I-FEEL-LIKE-I'M-FIXIN' TO-DIE" VSD 79266
- "TOGETHER" VSD 79277*deleted
- "HERE WE ARE AGAIN" VSD 79299*deleted
- "GREATEST HITS" VSD 6545 *deleted
- "C J FISH" VSD 6555
- "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF C J AND THE FISH (from Haight-Ashbury to Woodstock)" VSD 27/23
- "THE BEST OF COUNTRY JOE AND THE FISH" VSD 7900
- "WOODSTOCK ONE" - Cotillion SD 3-500
- "ZACHARLAN" Probe SPB 1026 (U.S. - ABC)

SOLO:

- "BRIGHT SUN IS SHINING" - Vanguard VSD 6551
- "MELTON LEVY AND THE DEY BROS" - Columbia KC 31279
- "THE FISH" - United Artists/Rockfield UAS 29903

SESSIONS

- "CRYING THUR" - Otis Spann Vanguard
- "ROLLING THUNDER" Mickey Hart - Warner Bros BS 2635
- "TALES OF THE GREAT RUN NUMBERS" Robert Hunter Round RX 101
- "GAS-S-S" Soundtrack (American International Pictures) Air Records A 1033

GREG DEWEY:

- with MAD RIVER: Limited Edition E P *
"MAD RIVER" Capitol ST 2985*
"PARADISE BAR AND GRILL" Capitol ST 185
- with GROOTNA "GROOTNA" Columbia C 31033*
- with BODACIOUS D.F. "BODACIOUS D.F." RCA/Grant 0206*

BRUCE BARTHOL

"FORMERLY FAT HARRY"*Harvest

DAVID COLIN

"BLUES PROJECT" Capitol E-ST 11017*
"FEVER TREE" - Columbia*

MARK RYAN

"LIFE AND TIMES OF C J & FISH" VSD 27/23
"THE MILL VALLEY JAM SESSIONS" * - the Mill Valley Bunch Polydor 2310 300
"QUICKSILVER" Capitol E-SW 319
"COLIN" THRU" " Capitol
Quicksilver on "LAST DAYS AT THE WILLMORE" Warmers 23 31390

Other items of interest -

- CLOVER "CLOVER" Fantasy S 8395*
- "FORTY-NINER" Fantasy S 8405*

Some late additions and info; courtesy of A W CAMPBELL and Brian Long (of the West Coast Newsletter and confidante of Melton's).

: Add to discography: "SOS"/"Closer" - Melton, Levy & Dey Bros.

: Barry claims to have made more money from Robert Hunters' album than from any of the Fish albums.

: Re the Snooky Flowers album - it lasts 36 minutes and features Barry, Snooky, Grace Slick (albeit briefly) Terry Hagarty, Jerry Garcia, Mickey Hart, Coke Escovedo, Steve Schuster and others. Brian Long has this to say, "Ask people to write in to show support for the album and to send any letters to Snooky c/o Barry's address on "The Fish" album" (I've heard it, and it's fabulous - Bert.)

: "Fire On The Mountain" is the title of the abandoned Mickey Hart album referred to in the article. Probably no relation to the Diga Rhythm Devils which is just out on Round. Tracks included 4 appearances from Barry - "Checker Man", "Ariel" (an alternative version of this is on Hunter's 'Tiger Rose') and the two tracks of "The Fish" - "Speedracer" and "Marshmallow Man". Comment from Brian Long..."absolutely great album".

: Unreleased Vanguard material includes a tape featuring Steve Miller, Jorma Kaukonen, Jack Casady, Mickey Hart, John Cipollina and the Fish. A great session, but an attempt to have it released was nixed by record company politics.

: The line up on the scrapped Melton solo album we mentioned was Cipollina, Hart, Hunter, Phil Lesh, Country Joe, Robbie Stokes, Lee Bittner, Bruce Barthol, Steve Schuster, David La Flamme, Mike Bloomfield, Snooky and David Friedberg. Phew. Two tracks not on Barry's album from that session are "Sunshine" and "Love Is A Mystery".

: Barry is still keen to work here and plans another visit to Rockfield in April with the Martinez/Whaley/Charles line-up.

: The hideous front cover on "Melton, Levy and The Dey Bros" actually won a design award. Whaddaya know?

Right, between the article in ZZ53 and this epic, you should have the definitive Barry Melton history. He's an ace guy and anyone interested in writing to him (or Snooky or Mickey Hart) should drop a line to the address below:

Barry Melton

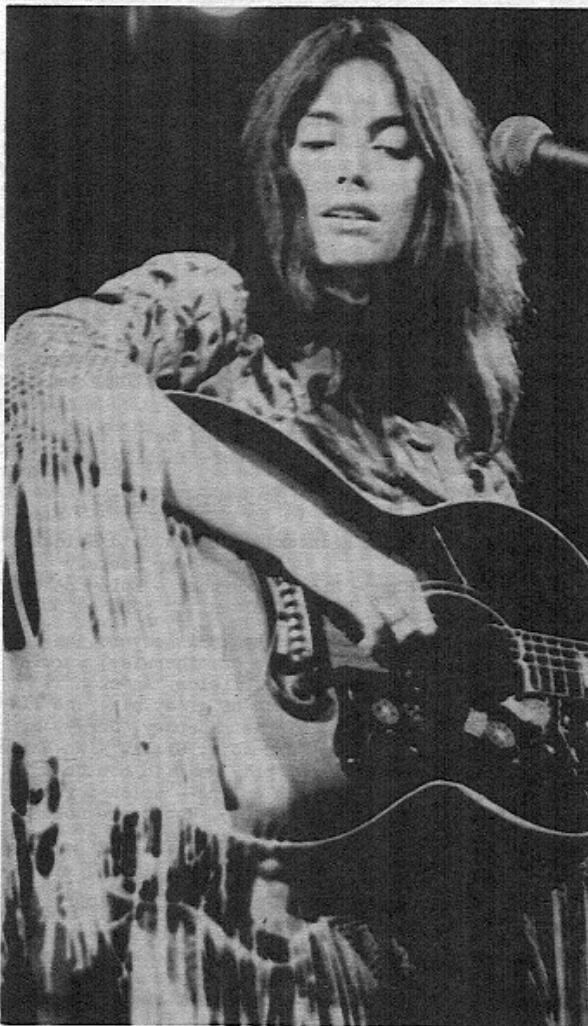
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(from p. 19)

drawn-out version of the old classic SHOP AROUND which not only gives the band a chance to solo at length ("helps them sleep at night if they get to play a bit" laughs Emmy) but also reveals Emmy to have a voice of near Janis Joplin proportions as she belts out the chorus. Well well, who would've thought that. Off they go again but are brought back once more, the audience shouting out requests. There's really only one number she can do now and that's QUEEN OF THE SILVER DOLLAR which goes down an absolute storm; the crowd are all mobbed round the foot of the stage, dancing and singing along. Then, amazingly, more rock 'n' roll and another classic stomper 40 DAYS. Then it was all over, the crowd still shouting for more, but in fairness to have demanded more would have been churlish. The house lights go up and everyone troops home. Backstage, Steve Clarke is busily engaged in asking John Ware, "how many albums did you cut with Mike Nesmith???" James Burton strolls about, every inch the country gentleman in his monogrammed jersey. They all seem to have various stages of the 'flu bug; bottles of cough syrup abound. We leave with John Ware dryly recounting his contribution to the First National Band to Clarkey (in fairness, his article the following week is good). A marvellous evening over we go home in high spirits. As we pass the stage door, we see Campbell being ejected - he had sneaked in and was hiding out amongst the amps to avoid detection, only when he tried to get backstage was he noticed. The band were genuinely surprised at the reception they received all over the country and I'm sure it won't be too long before they are back again. BERT.



EMMYLOU live !

Louvin and Monroe were) LEFT THE CHURCH ROLL ON and finally finishing up with a stomping DOWN AT THE CREEK - all done more gospel than bluegrass, but extremely pleasant. Next followed, I think, TRAIN SONG an unrecorded Emmylou/Rodney Crowell song which will be on the next album. A very quick first half (exactly one hour) finished with TOMITE THE BOTTLE LET ME DOWN and I CAN'T DANCE. The audience had been slow to warm up and I think the band had sensed this, but the applause must've reassured them and they trooped off with Emmy assuring us, "We'll be back in ten minutes and we'll play all night for you". In keeping with the mood of the evening, the Eagles "One of These Nights" was played quietly over the PA. The second half starts with HERE THERE AND EVERYWHERE which is an extremely bold move in that it assumes everyone has trooped in from the prompt twenty minute interval and is seated and attentive. (As it happens, Brian from the Warners press office is in the pub next door along with Steve 'NED' Clarke and various guys from Scottish papers - as we leave, Clarke is regaling the assembled cub reporters with his Greatest Hits...."I recall writing in one review that,,,blah, blah". And all these guys nodding away. I recall the same Steve Clarke in his piece on Clapton writing (by his reckoning) that Clapton played with Lennon at the 'Live Peace In Toronto' gig then the following summer formed Blind Faith.) Anyway, that wins everybody over - only hearts of stone could resist such beauty. Allan Campbell, standing side stage has tears streaming down his face. In the second set, Emmy does all the songs from "Elite Hotel" except for "Sweet Dreams" and next comes ONE OF THESE DAYS with Emmy's voice soaring around the hall. So far we haven't mentioned the band too much but a whole lot of it's success is due to James Burton, a masterly guitarist and Hank De Vito; a really ace pedal steel player, almost hidden in the shadows stage right. FEELIN' SINGLE - SEEMIN' DOUBLE is one of those infectious mainstream country numbers that Emmy does so well. I'm glad Parsons got to her before Nashville did. Next is Buck Owens TOGETHER AGAIN and this one sees Emmy explaining all about "Hee-Haw" (a country-style 'Laugh In' which is uproariously funny in a corny way) which Buck hosts. "He ain't much of a comedian or a comper - but he writes a lovely song" and she's right. A fabulous song.

Well, that's one of the necest events of the year behind us - the Emmylou Harris tour, I mean. Judging by the mail that came in, most of you managed to catch one of the concerts. I spoke to Emmylou in Edinburgh and she knew about the magazine via Walter Egan who had told her about his article in HW5 (which incidentally was the first feature on Emmy in a British paper, coming as it did before the release of her first album). An interview seemed superfluous as all the weeklies as well as ZZ, LIR, and Streetlife had featured the lady in depth and there wasn't much I could add, other than finding out about a few sessions she had been on in earlier times. Instead, here's a review of the Edinburgh concert.

JASH ON THE BARRELHEAD opened the concert, and was done very much like the recorded version on 'Greivous Angel' (as were all the songs) the band sounded a bit nervous and the balance was awful but the sound man soon had things under control and THAT'S ALL IT TOOK came over as clear as a bell. Emmylou certainly keeps the spirit of Gram's music alive, maybe even playing a set along the lines of which Gram would've done himself. The only disturbing thing about the concert was Emmy's assumption that the audience knew next to nothing about the C&W culture and tradition. Like before doing COAT OF MANY COLOURS, she explained all about Dolly Parton. This would happen quite a lot throughout the set and slightly annoyed me, especially as the audience were mainly hardcore country rock types who I would assume would be aware of such things.

Other than the bluegrass/gospel medley, the set only included two unrecorded songs, the first of which was that country standard, WINNER LOSES ALL with vocal assistance from Rodney Crowell. The medley was an absolute joy, Emory Gordy swapped bass for barjo and he, Rodney and James Burton all huddled round one mike to sing along on the Louvin Brothers THE ANGELS REJOICED IN HEAVEN which was followed by Bill Monroe's (more explanations about the

AMARILLO is another Rodney Crowell/Emmylou song and not the Tony Christie one (as somebody opined in the foyer - so maybe all these explanations were needed). Emmy gets in a plug for Rodney's album hereabouts, which I'm sure will be a treat. It's back to Gram's numbers and RETURN OF THE GREIVOUS ANGEL gets a massive cheer as does SIN CITY and again Emmy's voice soars around the hall. She puts so much into her singing, it's not an act, it's more of a celebration. And, as John Ware says in Omaha Rainbow 3, when she plays the guitar, it's not for adornment it's for real. She really does. The audience is getting wilder by the minute and BLUEBIRD WINE really powers along - the evening building to a joyful climax. There's still a bit to go yet and after a brief introduction of the band it's into WHEELS, yet another Parsons classic. In all, nearly half the set was of songs associated with Gram either solo or with the Burritos. In all fairness however, the ones from 'GP' and 'Greivous Angel' were originally recorded with Emmy. TILL I GAIN CONTROL AGAIN is one of the finest songs on 'Elite Hotel'; achingly sad and splendidly sung - you could hear a pin drop during this song. This is followed by the only 'bad' song of the evening. The band attempt a version of "Hot Burrito No 3" (from the 'Last Of The Red Hot Burritos' album) - now I regard this song as Al Perkins all-time classic performance on guitar and pedal steel and that version (live also) is imprinted in my 'great guitar solos' memory bank and I'm afraid this version flops sadly. Burton and Hank De Vito, polished and gifted musicians they may be but the original of the song is for rock musicians, not for country pickers. However, all is quickly forgiven as the band launch into OOH LAS VEGAS where that solo; fast runs and picked notes is right up Burton's street. The concert ends with JAMBALAY and everybody sings along. What a finish, but it's not over and the first encore number, BOULDER TO BIRMINGHAM slows things right down. One of the few songs Emmy has written, but what a gem. Next by way of complete change is a long

(cont. on page 18)

BLACK WACKS

KEEP YOUR HAT ON - The Jess Roden Band - Island ILPS 9349

Something of a make or break album for Jess. It's been a long time coming and obviously there have been a few abandoned sessions along the way. It's nearly fifteen months since the follow-up to "Jess Roden" was scheduled, which is a long time to hang around. None of the originals they included in their set last year have been recorded and the inclusion of four 'obvious' covers would point to some indecision by Jess' management/record company.

Randy Newman's "You Can Leave Your Hat On" was originally meant to be more of a send up of, shall we say, 'deviant lovemaking' but here it's for real. Watch out gal. Dr John's "MamaRoux" is a perfect vehicle for the band, that tight New Orleans funk-style, being in a similar vein to the tracks done with the Meters on his first solo album. The other two non-originals show that Jess has been digging country-rock recently. His version of "Desperado" is particularly good and features his best vocals of the album and "Too Far Gone" the Billy Sherrill song from Emmy's first album is close to that version albeit without the poignancy Emmy endows the song with. The originals are all pleasant, if somewhat understated, and everyone concerned seems to be holding back a bit. Jess' voice is more subdued than of late; the band play tight and economically with only occasional flashes of great playing. The horns are as ever tasteful and efficient, as are the twin guitars of Steve Webb and Bruce Roberts. There's just that flash of brilliance missing. Nonetheless, 'Keep Your Hat On' is still a very good album and deserving of your time.

BERT

KGB - KGB - MCA MCF 2749

As an old blueshound, I eagerly awaited the arrival of this album. The buzz from the States had been good; a series of good gigs around the Bay Area and enough talent in the band to fill an issue of the magazine. Bloomfield and Goldberg; old mates from the blues boom days and purveyors of some fine music over the years. Rick Grech and Carmen Appice, excellent sidemen with a host of bands behind them. Even Ray Kennedy, while not so celebrated as the others, gets points for his association with Brian Wilson and Van Dyke Parks. (I don't know how much of a hand in it he had, but anybody who can come up with a song as good as 'Sail On Sailor' gets my vote)

On record tho' it's a bit different. Jim Price, fresh from his endeavours with Cocker has tried to enforce the white-soul tag on KGB with judicious use of back-up singers and an unnamed horn section (probably including himself) mixed well up. Everything goes through the Jim Price steamroller, he's even brought along Daniel Moore and Peggy Sandvig from the Cocker clique to duplicate his efforts. It's a shame to see Mike Bloomfield's guitar playing being so relegated and submerged. It's a bigger shame to see songs like the Beatles "I've Got A Feeling" and the aforementioned "Sail On Sailor" being reduced to this gospel/white-soul pulp. Rick Grech seems to have realised this and has baled out to form a band along the lines of Gram Parsons one he played in. (good move lad). As a jamming and nightclub band, KGB was probably pretty good but this document only adds to the devaluing currency of Bloomfield and Goldberg's reputation. Oi vey.

RICHIE ROBERTS

SWEET HARMONY - Maria Muldaur - Reprise K54049

KATE AND ANNA McGARRIGLE - Warners BS 2862

This is more like it. Maria's third solo album sees her getting ever more eclectic and all the more delightful for it. The songs, be they from the Seventies or the Thirties all sit comfortably together. Be it the muted trumpets and tinkling cocktail piano of Hoagy Carmichael's "Rocking Chair" or the gospel shouting style of 'Jon The Generator' (credited to one Jon Herald, but better known as the traditional blues 'John The Revelator'), or tasteful versions of Smokey Robinson's "Sweet Harmony" and Neil Sedaka's "Sad Eyes". So if you like a mixture

of gospel, soul, Bette Midler and Billie Holiday mixed with more standard fare than Maria Muldaur is for you.

The McGarrigles are different however, they are primarily songwriters first and singers some time later. It's debatable but if it hadn't been for the patronage of Linda Ronstadt, Maria Muldaur and, of course, Loudon Wainwright this fine album might never have emerged. Which would have been a shame, 'cos the girls have a lot going for them. The harmonies are marvellous as is the way the voices interchange with each other. They also write extremely well - best evidenced by "Heart Like A Wheel" which in terms of emotion leaves Linda Ronstadt's version at the starting post. Like Muldaur, they run through a series of styles and influences - gospel, folk, traditional French-Canadian (their background) - but they win out on originality. Added to their singing and writing abilities, is the session might of Andrew Gold, Lowell George, Joel Tepp and a host of others.

Check out either one with confidence, but I think the McGarrigles album will prove of more lasting worth.

RICHIE ROBERTS

"The Improbable Rise of Redneck Rock" Jan Reid/Heidelberg Books

"Swans Against The Sun" - Michael Murphey - Epic Epc 69224

"Red Headed Stranger" - Willie Nelson CBS 69200

"Redneck Rock" is a fascinating book; it covers the careers of various Texans (native or otherwise) working in the folk-rock and country-rock fields. As such it covers in 350 pages (and hundreds of great pix) the lives and times of Willie Nelson, Michael Murphey, Jerry Jeff Walker, B W Stevenson, Steve Fromholz, Willis Alan Ramsey, Kinky Friedman amongst others (pity Nesmith couldn't be included; but he's a Texas emigre - which is the opposite of what this book is about). There are some telling insights to the lifestyles and careers of those mentioned, as well as a look at peripheral things like Jim Franklin and the Armadillo World Headquarters. Totally absorbing, but at £6.00 an expensive import, well worth checking out.

Willie Nelson used to be typical of the Nashville writer/musician; safe, of the redneck mentality and conforming to the norms of Music City. But all that changed and he made the cross-over to country rock via the patronage of Doug Sahm, Leon Russell and Michael Murphey. So now Willie lives in Austin, Texas and enjoys a new lease of life as a writer and singer of bitter sweet love songs, gritty tales of the West - HE is the red headed stranger of his songs. He's even had a hit off this album, "Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain" which along with his RCA collaboration with Waylon Jennings and Jessi Colter ('Outlaws') meant that he had to cancel out on a projected British tour. Until he gets here this album is warmly recommended.

It's no exaggeration to say that Michael Murphey should be a leader in his particular field - but he's not. "Geronimo's Cadillac", his most famous song, hangs round his neck like a millstone. This is his fifth album to date (as well as writing extensively for Kenny Rogers, Jerry Jeff Walker and his sometime co-writer, Charles John Quarto - who had a goodish album on Atlantic produced by Graham Nash). His album, "Blue Sky Night Thunder" gave him two US hit singles but nothing here, so that doesn't hold up much hope for this one. The title track could be a hit with a bit luck, it's in that light romantic ballad style that almost made "Wildfire" a hit. It's reminiscent of (whisper it) John Denver (who sings on the track and is an old mate of Murphey's from the Colorado days. That makes both John Stewart and Murphey with Denver on their current albums - are they looking for the wider market or is Denver looking for credibility from us cynics. Time will tell). The rest of the album is divided between similar ballads, Eagles-type songs and guitar/banjo/harmonica workouts a la Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, (who are represented here by Jeff Hanna and John McEuen). Murphey's songs as ever, show a concern and preoccupation with the Indian and the old West, but there is a more personal side to his writing too which also puts him up there in classic singer/songwriter territory.

The ideal way for you to get into this would be to buy the book, stack up these records and absorb it visually and aurally - just like 'The Prison' concept really; wish I'd thought of it first. Books 'n' soundtracks, that's where it's at.

BERT

POCO "Live" Epic EPC 80705
JUICE NEWTON & SILVER SPUR RCA APL 1-1004

The old and the new then, but Rusty Young's on them both so that's the connecting thread. The POCO album is by no means an 'official' release but neither is it the usual cash-in job by a former record company. This was apparently the album POCO were due to Epic before they left for ABC. In their wisdom Epic issued the double "Very Best of POCO" last summer to fulfil the contract. So I don't quite know how this one fits in.

Recorded over three nights in November 1974 the album is neatly divided into two contrasting sides; the first is the country side of the band while the second shows their more rocking side. The country side is the more refreshing and enjoyable of the two; just listen to the harmonies on "Blue Water", the banjo and steel duet on "Foggy Mountain Breakdown", but it's the audience that sums it up the best. Just listen to the sigh of recognition when the band launch into "Bad Weather". If side one belongs mainly to Rusty, then side two is Paul Cotton's. I'm less fond of this aspect of POCO, Paul's lead playing is not sufficiently distinctive to lift the songs above being merely average. It also submerges the harmonies in places. Overall however, "Live" is a fine album and the enthusiasm and freshness of a POCO concert comes over well. Certainly good enough to tide us all over until their next ABC album.

Juice Newton is a lady singer of the current country-rock school, not quite as clear and precise as Emmy and not quite as beautiful as Linda Ronstadt, but you get the picture. Silver Spur are two guys, Otha Young (no relation to Rusty Young) who writes most of their songs and Tom Kealey. They are backed by a studio band of Rusty Young on pedal steel, Mike Melvin on keyboards and Hal Blaine on drums. Production is by Bones Howe, so they have quite a lot going for them.

The songs are extremely well performed, although Young's writing is a bit plagiaristic, echoes of Dylan, Commander Cody and, in fact, the whole country-rock genre abound. But don't let that detract from the album; most of the songs are uptempo and extremely pleasant to listen to. Juice is a fine singer and the band are super-competent. Rusty Young particularly, freed from the disciplines of POCO, gets in some vintage country licks, just listen to the intro to "Love Is A Word" for instance. If you're at all into country-rock and looking for something other than desperados and cosmic cowboys, Juice Newton is for you. I can only hope it doesn't get overlooked - it's been out since October and RCA have apparently only imported a few hundred copies. Do try and hear it.

BERT

"The Great Artists" - The Kurasaal Flyers UK UKAL 1018

The Kurasaals really deserve to succeed; they work hard at their act - planning it and putting it over. They know where they want to go and when. Will Birch, as well as being a great guy and a record loony (one of the few musicians you'll ever see in the import stores looking for hot new goodies), also is something of a visionary as far as the band is concerned and has their future strategy well planned. No hippy trippy ideals in this band, they have a definite goal to aim at and they deserve to get there.

"Chocs Away", their first album, was mainly criticised because of a faulty production job; nobody really complained about the music. "The Great Artists" continues much in the style that "Chocs Away" began. They are still basically country-rock influenced with a healthy dose of rock 'n' roll flung in for good measure. "Ugly Guys" is the classic tale of the session musicians who outlive the stars they work behind while the title track is sung in vintage Dylan tones with dazzling pedal steel from Vic Collins and banjo pyrotechnics from Richie Bull. "Cruising For Love" is a typical car song, but with an interesting backing; a synthesiser duplicates Richie's banjo lines and works most interestingly. "Back To The Book" is a sad tale of a guy who can't find the right

woman and it's done in typical Commander Cody/Bob Willis swing style.

"Palais De Danse" is this album's "Kung Fu", and like "Kung Fu" can probably be best enjoyed live. "Hypocondriac" too, is a bit of a piss-take, not too far fetched (uppers to counteract downers"), just taken to absurd conclusions ("stop shooting up my Calamine Lotion") and again, done in that mock West Indian accent that Paul Shuttleworth does so well. "Television" is the C&W genre taken to similar absurd levels, "since you been gone, all I do is watch TV". The album ends with the cautionary tale of the guy who needs to go to the loo but doesn't want to lose his seat, and apart from that his chick hasn't turned up. Sad.

A fine follow-up to 'Chocs Away' then, maybe the musical side was neglected a bit in favour of the lyrical content and presentation of the lyrics but that's a minor point. There are few bands as genuinely refreshing and entertaining as the Kurasaals going the rounds right now, and just you watch them go if they ever get any regular radio exposure.

ROD COXON

"Put It In Your Ear" - Paul Butterfield - Bearsville
K55509

Paul Butterfield was last in Hot Wacks in issue one, so maybe it's fitting he gets another mention this time. It's been all of two years since his last album, "It All Comes Back". Nothing much has happened since then to ol' Butter - he still hangs out in Woodstock with Bobby Charles and does a few local gigs. Nothing strenuous tho', just takes things easy. He seems to have disbanded his Better Days group, as the singular billing would imply. Obviously his infrequent schedule precludes the need for a band and with Geoff Muldaur, Rod Hicks, David Sanborn and Amos Garret all drifting into other ventures, only Bobby Charles remains of the prominent Better Days gang. Not that the ghastly cover tells you much anyway, although it looks like it began its life as a fold-out and was cheapo-cheapo-ed for British release. Other than the song titles, there is no information at all. On first playing, the album came over as being pretty mediocre but subsequent playing shows it up in a better light. There is a more than usual (for Butterfield) dependence on string arrangements and chick singers and far too little of the patented Butterfield harmonica. (it only really surfaces on "I Don't Wanna Go", a classic slow blues reminiscent of classic Butterfield). Producer Henry Glover wrote (one co-written with Butterfield) four of the tracks here, so maybe he should accept responsibility for saddling Butterfield with some turgid arrangements, hackneyed horn lines and a-typical back-up vocals, although Butterfield does his utmost to rescue things on Glover's "Breadline" (the harmonica being reminiscent of the earlier "Blues With A Feeling"). In all however, despite a few stirring moments, this is pretty poor fare. Maybe Butterfield should coax Mike Bloomfield and Barry Goldberg from the remains of KGB, fix up John Kahn on bass, find a good drummer and tour as the reformed, supercharged Butterfield Blues Band and clean up.

BERT

Odds and ends: I've always liked Speedy Keen since his Thunderclap Newman days (which has just been reissued in the States with a picture of Speedy himself in front of the Hollywood hills, no mention of T'clap tho'). His debut album for Island, "Y'Know What I Mean" is a good, solid set distinguished by "Someone To Love" issued last year as a single which deserved a better fate than it received. It stands head and shoulders above the rest of the material here, and had the rest of the album matched up to it this would have made a killer album. Definitely recommended if the price is right. Two slightly disappointing albums by bands I expected more of are Quicksilver's "Solid Silver" - too much Dino Valente and not enough Cipollina - and The Band's "Northern Lights - Southern Cross". I've been loathe to admit it before, but the Band are getting mighty boring. Onto some compilations: as an old Spooky Tooth fan I was pleased to see the arrival of 'The Best Of Spooky Tooth', maybe it could've done without the inclusion of two each tracks from 'Witness' and 'You Broke My Heart..'

IMMEDIATE

label discography

Continuing our discography series, we look at Andrew Olham's ill-fated Immediate label, which ran for just under five years. Officially winding up business on February 23rd, 1970. Recent hits via Amen Corner and the Small Faces re-issues have sparked off some interest in the original venture. Just run your eyes down that singles list and a host of 60's memories will come flooding back.

- 001 McCoys * Hang On Sloopy/I Can't Believe It
 002 Fifth Avenue Bells of Rhythmy/Just Like Anyone Would Do (Prod. by Jimmy Page)
 003 Nico I'm Not Sayin'/The Last Mile
 004 Gregory Phillips Down In the Boondocks/That's The One
 005 Masterminds Shee Belongs To Me/Taken My Love
 006 The Poets Call Again/Somethings I Can't Forget
 007 Strangeloves* Cara-Lin/Roll On Mississippi
 008 Van Lenton Gotta Get Away/You Don't Care
 009 The Factotums In My Lonely Room/?
 010 Golden Apples of the Sun The Monkey Time/Cocolate Rolls, Tea & Monopoly
 011 Barbara Lynn* You Can't Buy My Love/That's What A Friend Will Do
 012 John Mayall's Bluesbreakers I'm Your Witchdoctor/Telephone Blues (Prod. Jimmy Page)
 013 Glyn Johns Mary Anne/Like Grains of Yellow Sand
 014 Mick Softley I'm So Confused/She's My Girl ("This record advertised in Britain as "The record America was afraid to release.")
 015 Mockingbirds You Stole My Love/Skit Skat (Early LOCC Configuration)
 016 Chris Farlowe The Fool/Treat Her Good
 017 Joey Vine Down and Out/The Out of Towner
 018 Jimmy Tarbuck Someday/Wastin Time
 019 The Variations The Man With all the Toys/She'll Know I'm Sorry
 020 Les Fleur De Lys Moondreams/Wait For Me (Prod. by Jimmy Page)
 021 The McCoys* Fever/Sorrow
 022 The Factotums You're So Good To Me/Can't Go Home Anymore My Love
 023 Chris Farlowe* Think/Don't Just Look At Me
 024 The Poets Baby Don't You Do It/I'll Come Home
 025 Charles Dickens So Much In Love/Our Soul Brothers (Jagger-Richard Song)
 026 Goldie Going Back/Headlines (Of Goldie & Gingerbreads; withdrawn at time of release)
 027 Tony Rivers & Castaways Girl Don't Tell Me/Girl from Salt Lake City (Beach Boys Covers;)
 028 The McCoys Don't Worry Mother, Your Son's Heart is Pure/Ko-Ko
 029 The McCoys Up and Down/If You Tell a Lie
 030 The London Waits Softly Softly/Seramatio
 031 The Turtles You Baby/Wanderin' Kind
 032 Les Fleur De Lys Circles/So Come On
 033 Twice As Much* Sittin on a Fence/Baby I Want You (Jagger-Richard song)
 034 The McCoys Runaway/Come On Let's Go
 035 Chris Farlowe* Out of Time/Baby Make It Soon (Prod. Mick Jagger)
 036 Twice as Much Step Out of Line/Simplified
 037 The McCoys (You Make Me Feel) So Good/Everyday I Have to Cry
 038 Chris Farlowe* Ride on Baby/Headlines
 039 Twice as Much True Story/You're So Good For Me
 040 P P Arnold Everything's Gonna Be Alright/Life is But Nothing
 041 Chris Farlowe* My Way of Giving/You're So Good To Me (Marriott-Lane song)
 042 Twice as Much Crystal Ball/Why Can't They All Go and Leave Me Alone
 043 Apostolic Invervention (Tell Me) Have You Ever Seen Me/Madame Garcia
 044 Nicky Scott Big City/Everythings Gonna Be Alright
 045 Nicky Scott Backstreet Girl/Chain Reaction (Jagger-Richard song)
 046 McCoys I Got to Go Back/Dynamitey
 047 P P Arnold* First Cut is the Deepest/Speak To Me
 048 Mort Shuman IV Monday Monday/Little Children
 049 Chris Farlowe Yesterday's Papers/Life is But Nothing (Jagger-Richard song)
 050 Small Faces* Here Comes the Nice/Talk To You
 051 John Mayall Telephone Blues/I'm Your Witchdoctor
 052 The Marquis of Kensington Changing of the Guard/Reverse Thrust
 053 Murray Head She Was Perfection/Secondhand Monday (of Jesus Christ Superstar fame)
 054 Australian Playboys Black Sheep R.I.P./Sad
 055 PP Arnold* The Time Has Come/If You See What I Mean
 056 Chris Farlowe* Moanin'/What Have I Been Doing
 057 Small Faces* Itchycoo Park/I'm Only Dreaming
 058 Warm Sounds Sticks and Stones/Angeline
 059 The Nice Thoughts of Emerlist Davjack/Angel of Death
 060 Rod Stewart Little Miss Understood/So Much to Say (Prod. by Mike D'Abo)
 061 P P Arnold* (If You Think You're)Groovy/Though it Hurts Me Badly (A side written & prod. by Marriott-Lane; B side prod by Jagger)
 062 Small Faces* Tin Soldier/I Feel Much Better
 063 Billy Nicholls Would You Believe/Daytime Girl (A side prod. Marriott-Lane)
 064 Small Faces* Lazy Sunday/Rollin Over
 065 Chris Farlowe* Handbags and Gladrags/Everyone Makes a Mistake
 066 Chris Farlowe The Last Goodbye/Paperman Fly in the Sky
 067 P P Arnold* Angel of the Morning/Life is But Nothing
 068 The Nice* America/Diamond Hard Apples of the Moon
 069 Small Faces* The Universal/Donkey Rides A Penny A Glass
 070 Duncan Browne On The Bombsite/Alfred Bell
 071 Chris Farlowe Paint it Black/I Just Need Your Lovin'
 072 The Nice Brandenburger/Happy Freuds
 073 Amen Corner* Half As Nice/Hey Hey Girl
 074 Chris Farlowe & Thunderbirds Dawn/April was the Month
 075 Michael D'Abo Gulliver's Travels Pts 1 & 2

IMMEDIATE

FARLOWE
IN THE
MIDNIGHT
HOUR
Chris
Farlowe

IN THE MIDNIGHT HOUR
MR. PITIFUL
I can't get no SATISFACTION
WHO CAN I TURN TO?

- 076 The McCoy's Hang on Sloopy/This is Where We Came In
 077 Small Faces* Afterglow/Them Sam Thank you Man
 078 Chris Farlowe Out of Time/Kide on Baby
 079 P P Arnold First Cut is the Deepest/Time Has Come
 080 Fleetwood Mac* Man of the World/Somebody's Gonna
 Get Their Head Kicked In
 081 Amen Corner* Hello Susie/Svil Man's Gonna Win
 (Roy Wood song)
 082 Humble Pie* Natural Born Boogie/Wrist Job
 083 Amen Corner Get Back/Farewell to the Real Magnificent
 Seven

* = Top 50 hit

EP's:

- 001 Chris Farlowe In The Midnight Hour
 002 The McCoy's Hits Vol 1
 003 The McCoy's Hits Vol 2
 004 Chris Farlowe Hits

LP's:

- 001 McCoy's Hang On Sloopy
 002 Sam Cooke Wonderful World of
 003 Arambee Pop Symphony Orchestra Today's Pop Symphonies
 (produced by Keith Richards)
 004 Mark Murphy Who Can I Turn to
 005 Chris Farlowe 14 Things To Think About
 006 Chris Farlowe The Art Of
 007 Twice As Much Own Up
 008 Small Faces Small Faces
 009 Not released
 010 Chris Farlowe Best of Vol 1
 011 P P Arnold 1st Lady of Immediata
 012 Small Faces Order's Not Gone Flake
 013 Twice As Much That's All
 014 Assort. Artists Blues Anytime Vol 1
 015 Assort. Artists Blues Anytime Vol 2
 (Later re-issued as Anthology of British Blues)
 016 The Nice Thoughts of Emerlist Davjack
 017 P P Arnold Kafunta
 018 Duncan Browne Give Me Take You
 019 Various Blues Anytime Vol 3
 020 The Nice Ars Longa Vita Brevis
 021 Chris Farlowe The Last Goodbye
 022 Small Faces In Memoriam
 023 Amen Corner National West Coast Live...
 024 Blues Leftovers Assorted Artists
 025 Humble Pie As Safe as Yesterday
 026 The Nice Nice
 027 Humble Pie Town & Country
 028 Amen Corner Farewell to the Real Magnificent Seven
 IMLY IN 1 Sampler Immediate Let You In
 IMLY IN 2 Sampler Happy to be Part of The Industry of
 Human Kindness
 IMALO 1/2 Small Faces Autumn Stone (Double LP)
 IMALO 3/4 Var. Arts Anthology of British Blues
 IMALO 5/6 Var. Arts Anthology of British Blues
 INSTANT Records (Immed. Subsidiary)IMLP 003 Cullivers
 Travels

IMMEDIATE

but at least their version of 'The Weight' is on album for the first time. While I was never an ardent King Crimson fan, I must admit that "A Young Persons Guide To King Crimson" is everything a compilation should be; well thought out, generous running time; the inclusion of unreleased and alternate versions and an accompanying booklet packed with enough pix and info to keep a certain US mag in articles for a year. Other companies please take note.

BERT

SMALL ADS

WANTED: Cream No 20 (Jan '73). Plus any Roy Harper rarities. (tapes, cuttings etc.) Steve Wheatley, 10 Bassenthwaite Road, Blackpool, Lancs FY3 9UJ.

FOR SALE: As complete bundles. SOUNDS (Oct 70) No 1 to Sept 73 inclusive. 81 RECORD MIRRORS from '66 and '67. Best offer for either secures. Mike Tresise, "bareppa", New Road, Swanmore, Southampton, Hants SO3 2PF

WANTED: ZIGZAG 1 - 43 inclusive. Dave Peart, 34 Burchell Road, Newbury, Berks.

WANTED: 'Let It Rock' 8.9.11.13.14 and 16. 'Omaha Rainbow' 1-3. Hot Wacks 1-2. Offers to: Alison Skinner, 30 Steele's Road, LONDON NW3.

WANTED: Love - "Laughing Stock": Legend 'boot' album B A Zucker, 7 Park Way, London NW11. Tel (01)-349-2870.

WANTED: Gene Clark/Gosdin Bros album. "American Dreamer" (soundtrack). "Lyin' Down The Middle", "Why not Your Baby" (all Gene Clark). Prices negotiable. John Rogan, Dept of English, The University, Newcastle NE8 7RU

FOR SALE: KALEIDOSCOPE - "Incredible": BRUCE PALMER - "The Cycle is Complete". Roy Goodman, 7 Cefn Draw, Three Crosses, Swansea.

WANTED: Punk rock albums and singles, almost anything in that category. Please write first stating price and condition. Also wanted: Hot Wacks 1.2.4. Mint cond. only. Lindsay Hutton, 60 Hamilton Road, CRANEMOUTH, Stirlingshire.

AUCTION: Send International Reply Coupon for lists. BEAU BRUMMELS "Triangle"/YARDBIRDS "Live" (Page)/CREATION /KEITH WEST/MIGHTY BABY. Many others. Heinz Kogel, Langestr 44, 2880 BRAKE, W Germany.

JIMI HENDRIX: Wanted singles (US UK or other) concert pix, cuttings, and related memorabilia. Will swap or pay good prices. Bert, Box 4, Hot Wacks.

Wanted: Byrds, Burritos & related groups photos and cuttings in concert everywhere. Songs, lyrics and record reviews also. Write for details and wishes. Raffaele Galli, via Rezzonico 12, 20030 Barlassina (MI) Italy.
 Refuse Collector seeks old singles - any old rubbish, preferably in bulk. Must be cheapo cheapo. John Rogan, Dept of English, The University, Newcastle Upon Tyne.

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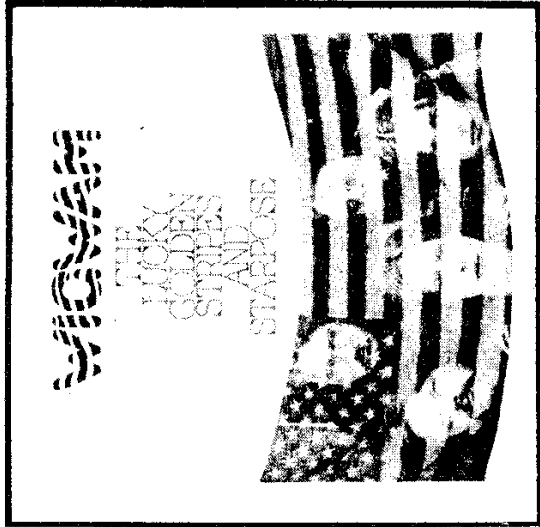
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