THE ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDE

THE BEATLES



I WANT YOU ★ HEAVY DELUXE EDITION

"IF JOHN AND PAUL CAN DO IT..."
GEORGE'S *ABBEY ROAD* TRIUMPH

THE NEW REMIXES REVIEWED

YULE BE MINE
THE XMAS SINGLES

CLASSIC INTERVIEWS
RARE PHOTOS
IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

THE COMPLETE STORY OF
THE BEATLES

FROM THE MAKERS OF **UNCUT**



Beatles in a beach banner, circa 1962

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

"A splendid time is guaranteed for all..."

CLOSE TO The Beatles, but never so close as to lose objectivity, the British rock'n' roller Tony Sheridan had a succinct take on the Band's formative two years in Hamburg. "It wasn't sex, drugs and rock'n'roll," he told me some years ago. "It was music, music, music."

We have become accustomed to the idea that the German language has an accurate way of describing every situation, and so it proves here. What Sheridan recalled about his encounters with the band between 1960 and 1962 he described as an extension of *wohngemeinschaft* – a kind of shared living.

As Tony explained it, this extended beyond the – actually generally horrible – accommodation the Hamburg bands lived in, but also a more philosophical sharing of resources. So enthused were the bands about their pursuit – in a time when musicians were considered a kind of reviled social underclass – that they shared resources, knowledge, even group members, all in the name of their wider mission.

Could this be the first flowering of the musical questing, the inclusiveness and open-mindedness that we think of when we think of The Beatles? If it's not an idea to rule on, it's a warm feeling that you'll be able to trace throughout this new and updated deluxe edition of our *Ultimate Music Guide To The Beatles*.

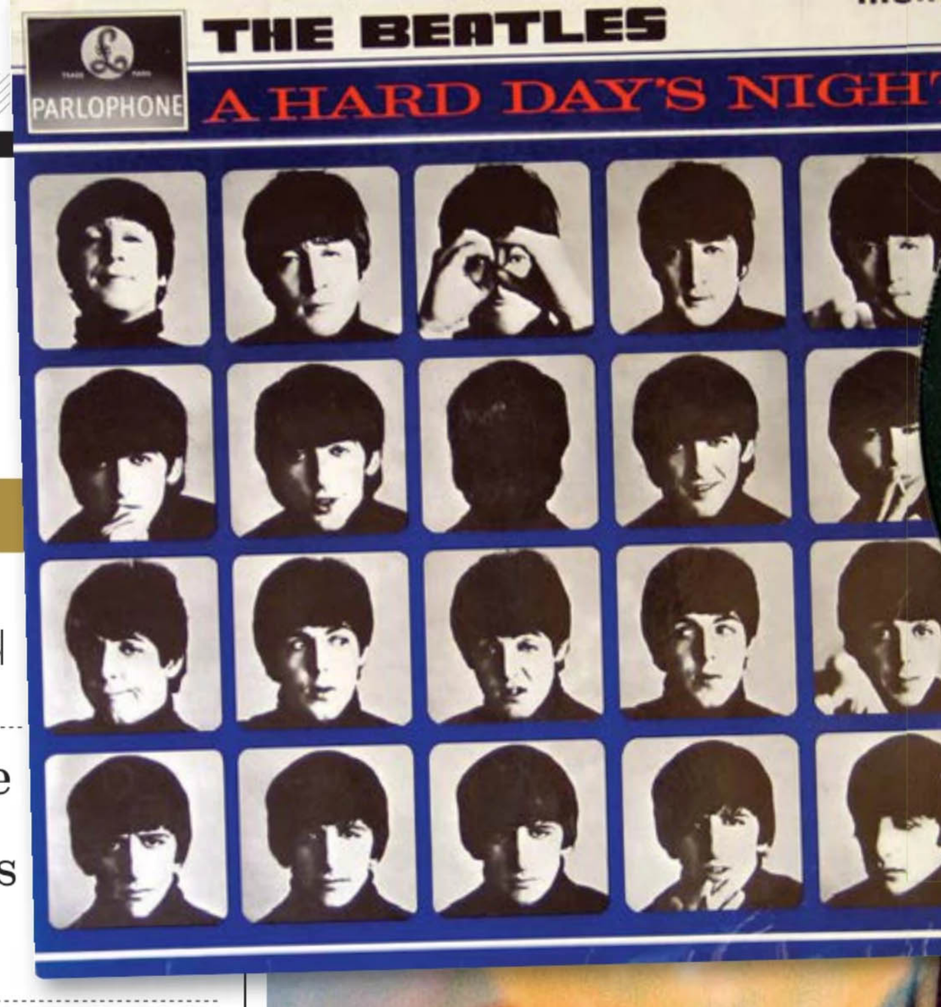
Access all areas doesn't really have the same sort of meaning today as it did when *NME*'s news editor Chris Hutchins spent the afternoon on a boat listening to the new Bob Dylan album with The Rolling Stones, before joining The Beatles backstage at Shea Stadium. That's just a flavour of the refreshing openness which underpins the band's dealings with the press, which you'll find in the archive features included here.

Even when the band are in dispute with each other, John Lennon is still receiving callers from the world's reporters to explain his position on peace, Yoko, and of course The Beatles. Of Paul's many innovations, his retreat from the spotlight and subsequent ownership of the narrative to announce his first solo record seems particularly striking – it's one of the few times a Beatle broke new ground in the press without a journalist being present.

Alongside these archival pieces, *Uncut*'s writers have made their own insightful trips inside The Beatles' music, to chart the band's recorded course from "1-2-3-4!" "*...the love you make*". We bring things right up to date with a deep look at the new Giles Martin remixes of *Sgt Pepper*, *The Beatles*, and *Abbey Road*.

Very much as they were in their lifetime, 50 years on from *Abbey Road*, The Beatles are finding new ways for us to examine with a fresh outlook things we thought we already knew very well indeed. ***JOHN ROBINSON***

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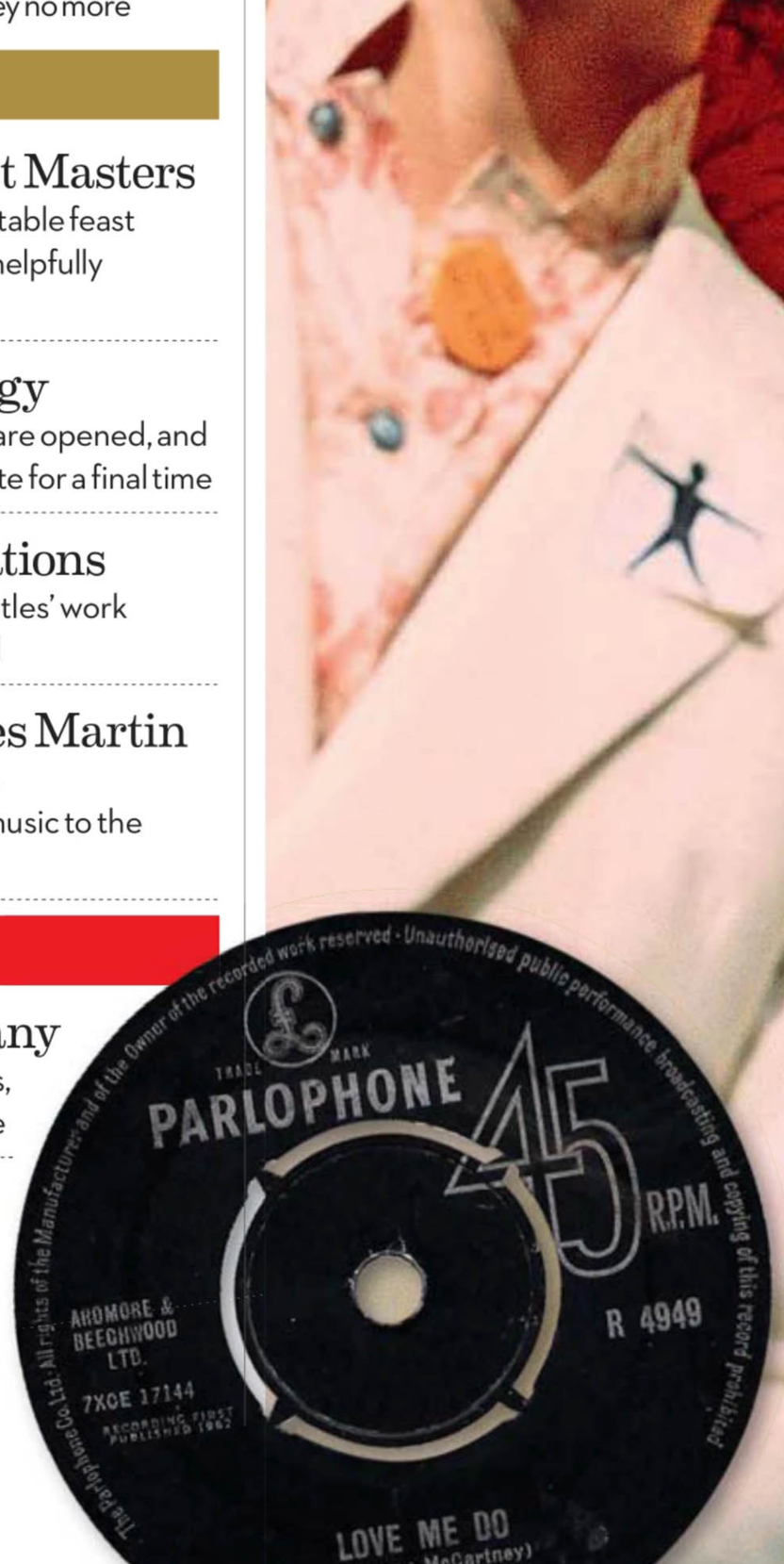
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DAVID MAGNUS/REX FEATURES

"We're lucky. We get on like a house on fire"

And so it begins... Four Liverpool boys, with distinctive haircuts, a German fanbase and 100 of their own songs, arrive in the *NME* and *Melody Maker*. Surely, though, their manager must be exaggerating when he calls them "The biggest thing to happen to the music scene since Elvis Presley"?

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 26|10|1962



MAKING THEIR NME Chart debut with "Love Me Do" this week are The Beatles, a vocal-instrumental group who hail from Liverpool, the birthplace of such stars as Billy Fury, Frankie Vaughan, Norman Vaughan and Ken Dodd. Their own composition, "Love Me Do", is their first disc to be released on a British label. Previously they were with Polydor and had several discs released on the Continent, including one with singer Tony Sheridan, of [*TV show*] *Oh Boy* note.

Why are they called "The Beatles" ? The boys laughingly put off this question by saying:

HARRY HAMMOND/V&A IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

The Fab Four pose for an early group portrait, 1962

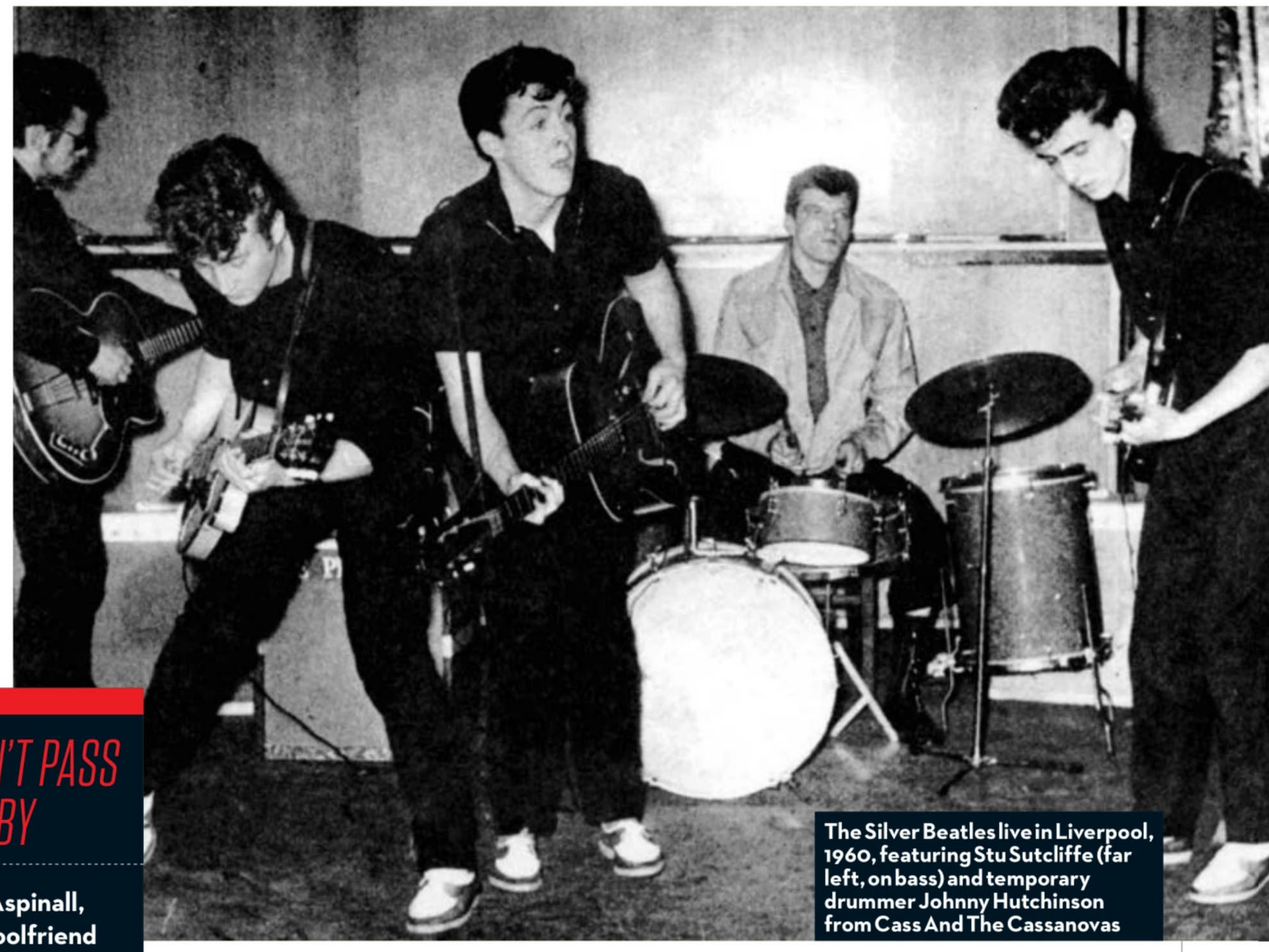
"The name came to us in a vision!"

The lineup is John Lennon (harmonica, rhythm guitar and vocal), Paul McCartney (bass, vocal), George Harrison (lead guitar), and Ringo Starr (drums). Ringo, who joined the group earlier this year, was in the same class as Billy Fury at Dingle Vale Secondary School.

During their brief but eventful career, The Beatles have become firm favourites at the Star-Club in Hamburg, apart from appearing at shows in Britain with Little Richard, Bruce Channel, Gene Vincent, Acker Bilk, Kenny Ball and Joe Brown. Joe is among their stoutest admirers.

As well as "Love Me Do", the boys have written more than 100 of their own songs. The flipside, "PS I Love You", is also one of their compositions.

ALAN SMITH



The Silver Beatles live in Liverpool, 1960, featuring Stu Sutcliffe (far left, on bass) and temporary drummer Johnny Hutchinson from Cass And The Cassanovas

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 1|2|1963



THINGS ARE BEGINNING to move for The Beatles, the R'n'B-styled British group who crashed back into the NME Chart this week at No 17. The disc – "Please Please Me" – follows closely on the heels of their first hit "Love Me Do", written by group members John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

Says Paul: "We also wrote 'Please Please Me', but that hasn't exhausted our supply of compositions. We've got nearly a hundred up our sleeves, and we're writing all the time! I suppose 'writing' is the wrong word, really. John and I hammer out a number on our instruments. If we want anyone to hear it we record it, then send them a tape. We've had disappointments, but coming in at No 17 has pleased-pleased us!" he quipped.

The boys were rehearsing their act for the forthcoming Helen Shapiro tour when I met them in their hometown of Liverpool on Sunday. And at Norrie Paramor's request, they were composing a song for Helen to record when she goes to Nashville shortly.

Said Paul: "We've called it 'Misery', but it isn't as slow as it sounds. It moves along at quite a steady pace and we think Helen will make a pretty good job of it. We've also done a number for Duffy Power which he's going to record."

This isn't The Beatles' first taste of success. The clipped black sound they achieve has brought them a fantastic following in Germany, where they had a Polydor single in the charts more than a year ago. They spent Christmas performing in Hamburg – their fifth visit. In the north of England, too, they've built up a reputation that takes some beating. In the past I've seen them billed with equal prominence alongside such names as Little Richard and Joe Brown!

Talking of Little Richard, the rock'n'roll star became one of The Beatles' biggest fans during his recent visit. He told me: "I've never heard that sound from English musicians before. Honestly, if I hadn't seen them with my own eyes I'd have thought they were a coloured group from back home."

So far it seems that only northern fans and visiting American stars have appreciated their talents (the Crickets went overboard when they heard them), but "Please Please Me" will change everything. Southerners have been flocking to buy the disc since it was released two weeks ago.

Comments John: "We tried to make it as simple as possible. Some of the stuff we've written in the past has been a bit way-out, but we aimed this one straight at the hit parade."

At the sessions for "Please Please Me", shortly before Christmas, the boys' recording manager, George Martin, told me: "The thing I like about The Beatles is their great sense of humour as well as their talent."

It looks like a bright future for The Beatles, but knowing them, I don't think they'll let it go to their heads. It'll be a long time, for instance, before they forget the time they provided the music for Janice The Stripper in a Liverpool nightclub...!

ALAN SMITH

DON'T PASS ME BY

Neil Aspinall, a schoolfriend of Paul and George, became The Beatles' road manager when they returned from Hamburg, after offering "to get a van and run them about in my spare time". Aspinall's investment paid off: he eventually became Chief Executive of Apple Corps.

★ TAKEN FROM

MM 9|2|1963



FIRST IT WAS their name that intrigued record-buyers. Then the sound they made – straight out of Nashville, or anywhere you like in America's Southern music belt. Now... everyone knows The Beatles are most likeable creatures, and the Liverpool lads with an "A" to distinguish them from the multi-legged insect, and a style to distinguish them from every teenbeat group in Britain, are heading for star status – faster than crawling pace.

With their first two records both Beatles originals, they hit the disc market right in the jukebox. Their debut on Parlophone, "Love Me Do", is still in the *MM* Pop 50 at No 41, while the even stronger "Please Please Me" is playing follow-my-leader at No 9, and sure to climb higher. And after only 18 short months in the set-'em-up-knock-'em-down business of one-nighters, dancehall and concert dates from Hamburg to Hartlepool, they have taken their place on two major concert tours. One, with Helen Shapiro, started this week. The other, with Chris Montez and Tommy Roe, opens in March.

It's all happening, you might say, for the group that's "the biggest thing to happen to the music scene since Elvis Presley", according to personal manager Brian Epstein. It was at his office in Liverpool that I spoke to guitarist-vocalist John Lennon and bass guitarist-vocalist Paul McCartney. "We don't play real rhythm and blues," John began. "No, not Ray Charles-style either, though we used to do 'What'd I Say', like everyone did, a couple of years ago. Our musical tastes are various – we like a bit of classical music, a bit of modern jazz, a bit of everything. One artist I like is Arthur Alexander – you don't hear much of him over here.

"We try to change about as much as we can. One number we do is 'Twist And Shout' by The Isley Brothers. That's a knockout number. I don't know whether you'd call it rhythm and blues."

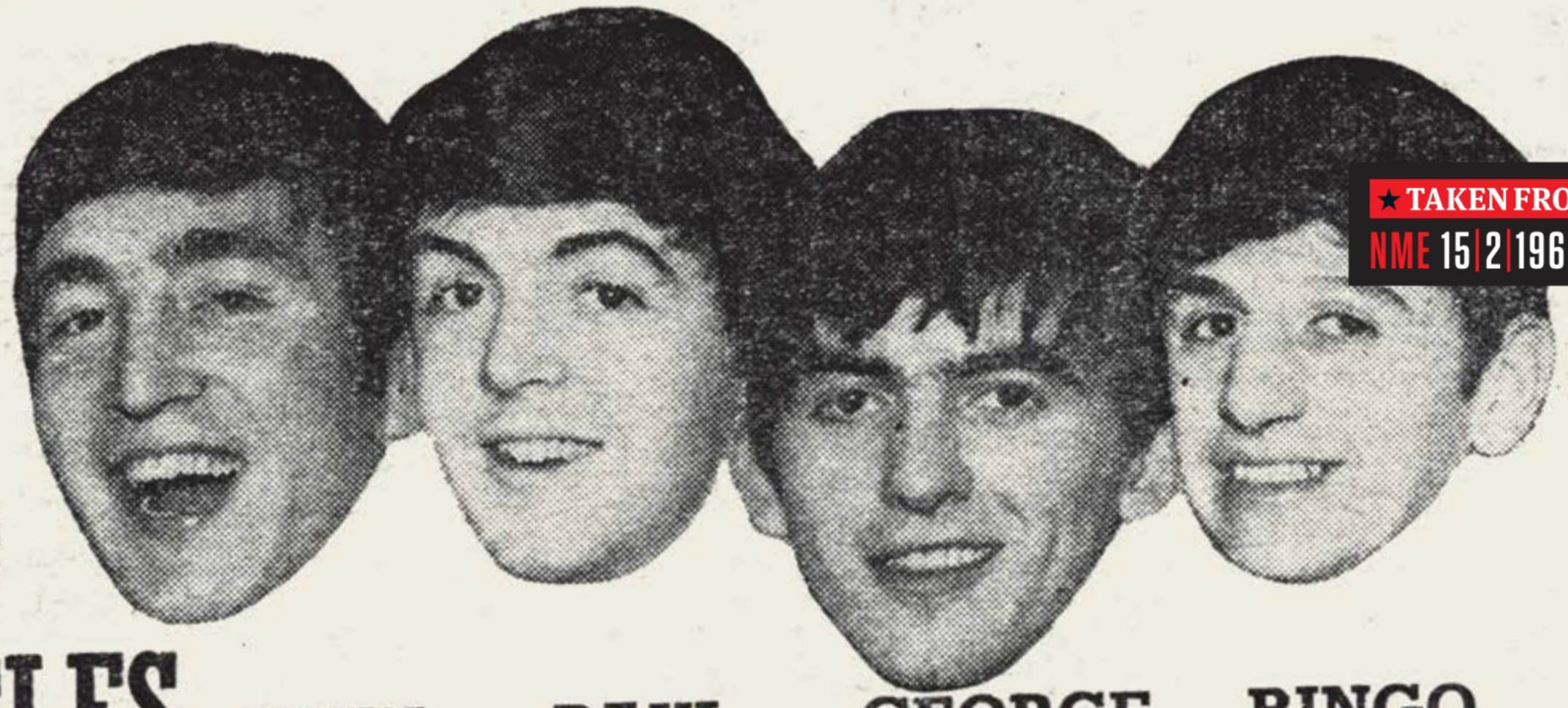
What did John think gave The Beatles their distinctive sound?

"Well, one of the things is we work without echo. When they came out, we couldn't afford one. By the time we could afford it, we didn't like it. So we never use it on stage. It was a good thing in a way, not getting echo, 'cos we would probably have sounded like all the other groups.

"It's true we've written about 100 songs – some

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

Life-lines of the BEATLES



★ TAKEN FROM
NME 15|2|1963

	JOHN	PAUL	GEORGE	RINGO (STARR)
Real name :	John Lennon	Paul McCartney	George Harrison	Richard Starkey
Birth date :	October 9, 1940.	June 18, 1942.	February 25, 1942.	July, 7, 1940.
Birthplace :	Liverpool.	Liverpool.	Liverpool.	Liverpool.
Height :	5 ft. 11 in.	5 ft. 11 in.	5 ft. 11 in.	5 ft. 8 in.
Weight :	11 st. 5 lb.	11 st. 4 lb.	10 st. 2 lb.	9 st. 8 lb.
Colour of eyes :	Brown.	Hazel.	Dark brown.	Blue.
Colour of hair :	Brown.	Black.	Brown.	Dark brown.
Brothers, sisters :	None.	Mike.	Louise, Peter and Harry.	None.
Instruments played :	Rhythm guitar, harmonica, percussion, piano.	Bass guitar, drums, piano, banjo.	Guitar, piano, drums.	Drums, guitar.
Educated :	Quarry Bank Grammar and Liverpool College of Art.	Liverpool Institute High School.	Liverpool Institute High School.	Liverpool Secondary Modern, Riversdale Technical College.
Age entered show business :	20.	18.	17.	18.
Former occupation:	Art student.	Student.	Student.	Engineer.
Hobbies :	Writing songs, poems and plays; girls, painting, TV, meeting people.	Girls, songwriting, sleeping.	Driving, records, girls.	Night-driving, sleeping, Westerns.
Favourite singers :	Shirelles, Miracles, Chuck Jackson, Ben E. King.	Ben E. King, Little Richard, Chuck Jackson, Larry Williams.	Little Richard, Eartha Kitt.	Brook Benton, Sam "Lightning" Hopkins.
Favourite actors :	Robert Mitchum, Peter Sellers.	Marlon Brando, Tony Perkins.	Vic Morrow.	Paul Newman, Jack Palance.
Favourite actresses:	Juliette Greco, Sophia Loren.	Brigitte Bardot, Juliette Greco.	Brigitte Bardot.	Brigitte Bardot.
Favourite foods :	Curry and jelly.	Chicken Maryland.	Lamb chops, chips.	Steak.
Favourite drinks :	Whisky and tea.	Milk.	Tea.	Whisky.
Favourite clothes :	Sombre.	Good suits, suede.	Anything.	Suits.
Favourite band :	Quincy Jones.	Billy Cotton.	Duane Eddy group.	Arthur Lyman.
Favourite instrumentalist :	Sonny Terry.	None special.	Chet Atkins.	None special.
Favourite composers :	Luther Dixon.	Goffin-King.	None special.	Bert Bacharach McCartney and Lennon.
Likes :	Blondes, leather.	Music, TV.	Driving.	Fast cars.
Dislikes :	Stupid people.	Shaving.	Haircuts.	Onions and Donald Duck.
Tastes in music :	R-and-b, gospel.	R-and-b, modern jazz.	Spanish guitar, c-and-w.	C-and-w, r-and-b.
Personal ambitions :	To write musical.	To have my picture in the "Dandy."	To design a guitar.	To be happy.
Professional ambition :	To be rich and famous.	To popularise our sound.	To fulfil all group's hopes.	To get to the top.

of them are rubbish, of course. We started in the Buddy Holly days when everyone thought they could turn out simple songs like his, and we've been writing ever since. The harmonies? We work them out and remember them.

"When we went to London for the first recording, 'Love Me Do' was a slower number like 'Halfway To Paradise', y'know, 'DUM-di-di-di-DUM', but recording manager George Martin suggested we do it faster. I'm glad we did."

And so say all The Beatles – John, Paul, George Harrison and Ringo Starr. And so say all of us. A hefty shot of their exciting music is just what the meandering pop scene needed.

CHRIS ROBERTS

★ TAKEN FROM
MM 23|2|1963



REMEMBER THE Tony Curtis haircut? Well, there's a new one on the way – the Beatles Cut! It may not have reached you yet – but it will.

Meanwhile, Liverpool barbers are rapidly becoming expert in the new style. For it is inspired by the Merseyside group who are challenging hard for top spot in the record charts; this week they're at No 2.

By the same rule, many local groups and others farther afield are inevitably trying to imitate The Beatles' sound. But they should take warning – this is not the way to succeed. Who says so? The Beatles themselves.

"If you want to get ahead – get a sound," was the unison passage that greeted me when I talked to the boys in the Liverpool office of their manager, agent, guide, mentor – and close friend – Brian Epstein, of NEMS Enterprises.

"In 1960, when the group first got together, we went straight off to the Kaiserkeller in Hamburg for a season which lasted four-and-a-half months, playing seven hours a night, seven days a week," he told me. "We learned to live together, discovered how to adapt ourselves to what the people wanted – and developed our own particular style. And it was our own.



Leathered up: The Beatles in their typical 1961 stage gear (with Pete Best on drums)

"We had neither the time nor the wish to listen to others. We developed along the lines that we felt suited us best. And as it became obvious that the public liked us, we became more confident – and more polished. When we got back to England, The Shadows had soared right out in front with the teenagers. All around us, groups were trying to copy them. But we had our own Beatles sound – and in and around Merseyside, we began to discover that they liked us, too."

"We were lucky," was their modest comment when I asked them what theme for success they could pass on to would-be recording groups. Maybe they were – but it isn't just luck that has made them top record-sellers and capacity attractions in ballrooms and theatres.

A big slice of the credit for this must go to Brian Epstein, a young man who has carefully exploited them, and who negotiated the recording contract that has brought national recognition. And he has dispelled the illusion that, for success, a group must be handled in London.

"Once you have the sound, you must have a good manager," says John Lennon, 22-year-old rhythm guitarist and composer of "Please Please Me", who originally formed the group. "But please, please don't copy. Try to be original, as we have done. Play what you like and don't try to be too clever. Keep it simple."

"We learned this at our first recording session," chipped in bass guitarist Paul McCartney (20). "After we had recorded 'Love Me Do' and 'PS I Love You', we played 'Please Please Me' over to recording manager George Martin. It was a bit fussy, and he advised us to smooth it out a bit. Simplify it. We did – and the result speaks for itself."

And it's Paul who advises budding guitarists to learn to read. But he was on his own with this



one. The rest of the boys disagree. It is not necessary, they say, if you can express yourself adequately on the instrument. If you can't, then obviously you must learn the legitimate way.

"None of us can read," added solo guitarist George Harrison, "but we seem to get by. And I too am certain that whatever success we have attained is because we have avoided being influenced by any other groups. I'm equally certain that ours is the only way. Get your group together and play – and play. Find out what you do best, and go on doing it – but better."

The group's newest member, Ringo Starr (22), has similar advice to offer to other drummers.

"Practice is the thing – but with a group. A session with a group, however tatty it might be, is worth hours and hours of solo practice in a bedroom."

"There again, we're lucky," says Paul. "We get on like a house on fire. That makes it easier."

Summed up, their advice is: be original in sound and if possible in material. Work hard as a group. Find the right manager to handle the business side. "This isn't just a job," was their final remark. "It's a dedication."

Which is perhaps the real reason for their success.

JERRY DAWSON

DON'T PASS ME BY

The Beatles used to wear "the maddest gear" at The Cavern, according to Paul (*NME*, Aug 1963): "I had shredded newspaper sticking out the bottom of my trouser legs. John wore a Cellophane bag around his shoes. We came on wearing collars and ties and nothing else above the waist."

★ **TAKEN FROM**

NME 8|3|1963



THE BEATLES OPENED a copy of the *NME* and gazed proudly at the charts when "Please Please Me" hit the top recently. It was a big moment for the talented boys from Liverpool, worth waiting a long time for.

"But what made it more exciting," revealed group member John Lennon when I met him this week, "was that we almost abandoned it as the B-side of 'Love Me Do'! Imagine that – a number that could get us to the top, just tucked away! We changed our minds only because we were so tired the night we did 'Love Me Do'. We'd been going over it a few times and when we came to the question of the flipside we intended using 'Please Please Me'.

"Our recording manager, George Martin, thought our arrangement was fussy, so we tried to make it simpler. We were getting very tired, though, and we just couldn't seem to get it right. We're conscientious about our work and we don't like to rush things. Eventually, George suggested we do another song. 'Leave "Please Please Me" 'til some other time,' he said, 'and see if you can tidy it up a bit.'

"Are we glad we did! In the following weeks we went over it again and again. We changed the tempo a little. We altered the words slightly. And we went over the idea of featuring the harmonica, just as we'd done on 'Love Me Do'. By the time the session came around we were so happy with the result, we couldn't get it recorded fast enough."

I know what he means, for the boys were certainly in high spirits that night! Once "Please Please Me" was in the can they went for a celebration meal in London's West End, where their distinctive hairstyles and stylish taste for suede clothes created quite a stir. As they were hardly known in their own right at the time, they decided to impersonate The Shadows!

This was a job made easier by the fact that, off stage, John wears heavy-rimmed "Hank Marvin" glasses. He doesn't use them on stage because he doesn't want the group to be accused of any imitation. On this occasion, however, the specs came in quite useful – and the conversation began to include such gems as "Will you order, Hank?" and "Brian, did Cliff mention so-and so?"

Some distance away a young man and his girlfriend were watching. After a while he came over, asked them to sign their autographs, and asked: "You are The Tornados, aren't you?"! [*Laughter in restaurant*]

It's not widely known that Decca turned down The Beatles before they were snapped up by EMI. It happened nearly a year ago, shortly

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

With Gerry Marsden, 1962. Inset: Gene Vincent at the Star Club, Hamburg, 1960



after the group's German-made disc, with Tony Sheridan, "My Bonnie", was released in this country on Polydor.

Says John: "That disc was a tremendous hit in Germany. Because of this we thought we stood a reasonable chance of being accepted by a British label, so you can imagine our disappointment. Still, we didn't let it upset us too much. We just tried to keep on improving."

If there's one thing The Beatles are determined on, it's... not to move to London. They've a great fondness for their home city, Liverpool.

"We love the place," says Paul. "We all met at school there, and it's where we got our first big breaks. The fans were – and still are – terrific. They made us feel somebody."

I saw a sample of this Merseyside hero worship while in Liverpool to see Larry Parnes' Billy Fury package last autumn. A girl spotted the boys in the audience, sitting right in the middle of a row, and a near-riot started in the interval because of the clamour for autographs. As they'd gone along incognito it was something of an embarrassment, but they obliged by signing as many as they could (so many, in fact, that my fountain pen, which they'd borrowed, ran dry!).

Paul recalls an amusing episode. "At one time the rest of the boys and I used to work at a club in Liverpool's Upper Parliament Street, playing for a striptease girl. We played behind her, but at the end of the act she would turn round and... well, we were all young lads and we blushed like mad! Four blushing lads in pink mohair suits... what a colour picture!

"The fans in Liverpool were – and still are – terrific. They made us feel somebody"
Paul McCartney

"She brought sheets of music for us to play her arrangements, things like Beethoven and the 'Spanish Fire Dance'. We can't read music, so in the end we said: 'Sorry! But instead of the "Spanish Fire Dance" we can give you "The Harry Lime Cha-Cha", which we've arranged ourselves, and instead of Beethoven you can have "Moonglow" or "September Song"!' She had no choice – she had to accept them as a bare necessity," he chuckled.

At the moment The Beatles are looking forward to the issue of their first LP, featuring mostly numbers that have been written by John and Paul. It is due for release on Parlophone in the next few weeks. Believe me, it's going to be a tremendous album debut. As a Merseysider myself, I've had to wonder if I'm not simply being patriotic. But I think Beatle fans will be far from disappointed.

Incredibly, the boys recorded non-stop for almost 10 hours, even though Lennon had a heavy cold at the time. And after the final number – a scorching, thumping and pulsating version of "Twist And Shout" – A&R manager George Martin looked down from the control room in sheer amazement.

"How could anybody," he asked, "achieve such a fantastic sound after so long? The tougher the conditions, the better they get!"

Although 10 titles were taped at that session, none will be used as the A-side of their next single.

"It hasn't been written yet," says John, "but you can bet we're thinking about it. We're off to the Canary Isles soon to snatch a bit of a holiday. Perhaps we can pick up a good tune from the canaries...?!"

ALAN SMITH

HAYDN JONES/REX FEATURES, DIETER RADTKE - K & K/REDFERNS

22 MARCH | 1963

Please Please Me

February 11, 1963: The Beatles and George Martin spend 585 minutes recording a debut album. Oh, and music is changed forever. *By John Robinson*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"Fourteen exciting tracks, with the vocal instrumental drive which has put this Liverpool group way up on top in a very short time."
ALLEN EVANS, NME, APRIL 5, 1963

"The Liverpool group is one up on the batch of pop groups in the country for their combination of top-class twang, and exciting all-stops-out vocal work links into a formidably commercial sound."
MELODY MAKER, APRIL 20, 1963

OF ALL THE studio stories about The Beatles, it's the ones about their first album that are the most powerful. Others have their own evocative magic – how they wanted to create the sound of a Buddhist chanting on top of a mountain; how they cut tape into pieces, threw it in the air and stuck it together again; the mysteries of the "Hard Day's Night" chord – but they all have their origin here. For rock groups, *Please Please Me* raised the stakes – and showed that a band might now be more actively involved in the writing and arrangement of the music it recorded. For the poet Philip Larkin, it did nothing less than signpost a new permissive era, "when sexual intercourse began".

To achieve all this, The Beatles took a little under 10 hours. An album recorded quickly in order to capitalise on the success of "Please Please Me", their No 1 single of that January, in their February 11, 1963 session, The Beatles essentially made a studio recording of their live repertoire – the same set that the band had been playing, in fact, at Doncaster Gaumont the previous week. It was, as George Martin remembered it, "a broadcast", and one undertaken in less than ideal circumstances. It was a pitiless winter, The Beatles had colds, and the band spent the sessions (recording and mixing at the rate of about one song an hour from 10am–1pm, 2.30pm–5.30pm and 7.30pm–10.30pm) self-medicating with Peter Stuyvesant cigarettes, milk, and throat lozenge of the moment, Zubes.

What the Abbey Road studio timesheets can't account for, however, is the degree of preparation that had been made for these 585 minutes. However domesticated their debut single "Love Me Do" may have sounded, this was at heart still a lean and hungry rock'n'roll band, and their commitment ran deep. They had spent much of the previous three years either hardening their act in Hamburg, or in front of club audiences at home. For years, Lennon and McCartney had been in possession of songs as strong as album opener "I Saw Her Standing There" (that one written in the McCartney family home at Forthlin Road). Thanks to their experiences at another record label, meanwhile, the band had also effectively already had a first shot at making an album.

On the surface there shouldn't be a huge difference between the music recorded at the fabled Beatles "Decca Audition" of January 1, 1962 and that recorded for *Please Please Me*. It's about the same number of songs, some originals, some covers. It's three of the same people playing (Ringo Starr having replaced Pete Best). Still, to hear that tape, you can instantly hear why one set of songs is the album that sowed the seeds of Beatlemania and the other is the reason Decca turned down The Beatles. There are some good things about the Decca tape (particularly the feisty "Bésame Mucho", which they later ran past George Martin, who didn't like it). But what was missing from those recordings, paradoxically, was The Beatles.

That's them playing and singing, for sure. But even though their manager Brian Epstein selected their Decca audition setlist as representative of the group's many talents (innovative arrangement, great harmony, original composition), the particular virtue of *Please Please Me* was that it was a record produced by someone who instantly understood that the uniqueness of The Beatles lay not solely in their varied musical abilities, but also in their personalities. George Martin produced it, played the piano on it, and helped prune the material for it. But he also understood that if the debut Beatles album was



going to be a success, it would have to convey who John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr *were*, and why their fans at the Cavern felt such empathy with them. To compare and contrast the two experiences: George Martin went so far as to consider recording The Beatles' debut album live at the Cavern. Shadows drummer Tony Meehan, who recorded them at Decca, never even met the band. According to Paul McCartney, The Beatles let themselves in through a back door. And as we know, let themselves out again an hour later, for good.

Please Please Me starts with an excitable McCartney count-in, ends with a Lennon yawp of relief, and is elsewhere filled with identifiably living, laughing, whooping Beatles. Maybe we can't help but think of "She Loves You" as the paradigm of the pre-sitar Beatles, but "I Saw Her Standing There", composed by McCartney-Lennon (as they would be billed on the sleeve) is a fabulous opener, McCartney's "*ooooh!*" (the way Sir Paul today answers his mobile phone) a signature sound that would endure all the while The Beatles still played live.

The long-player isn't yet a medium for a well-programmed sequence of songs (The Beatles won't get round to reinventing it as such until *Rubber Soul*), so *Please Please Me* is an uneven ride, veering between minor original compositions ("Misery", rejected by Helen Shapiro; "Ask Me Why"), R'n'B covers ("Anna", "Chains"), and the hits, placed at the end of Side One and the start of Side Two. This is still a record of huge character, which does a magnificent job of introducing the personalities. Ringo's vocal showcase on "Boys" really gets things going. When he cues up the solo with "*All right, George...*", the turntable fairly glows with group bonhomie. George gets his own vocal spotlight on "Do You Want To Know A Secret", not a favourite of Lennon's among his own songs (his demo featured him flushing a toilet at the end).

> However domesticated "Love Me Do" may have sounded, this was at heart a lean, hungry rock'n'roll band

Beatles or no, at times the album can't help but sound utterly of its era. "A Taste Of Honey", the title song of the 1961 Rita Tushingham-starring film about teen pregnancy, transports you to a black-and-white world, all social realism and shaving in the sink. In just a few minutes' time, however, we're swept away by the last song: Lennon's bravura performance of the Hamburg staple "Twist And Shout", recorded at the very end of the day so he didn't ruin his voice for the other songs. The reading of the song is unhinged, the vocals the work of someone giving it their all. At the end of this take (the first), there's an audible gasp of relief. For one thing, they've made it to the end of the song. For another, the world as they know it is very shortly about to change.

SLEEVENOTES | PLEASE PLEASE ME

1. I Saw Her Standing There
2. Misery
3. Anna (Go To Him)
4. Chains
5. Boys
6. Ask Me Why
7. Please Please Me
8. Love Me Do
9. P.S. I Love You
10. Baby It's You
11. Do You Want To Know A Secret
12. A Taste Of Honey
13. There's A Place
14. Twist And Shout

Released:
March 22, 1963
Label:
Parlophone (UK only)

Produced by:
George Martin

Recorded at:
EMI Studios (Abbey Road), London

Personnel: John Lennon (lead and backing vocals, acoustic and rhythm guitars, harmonica, handclaps), Paul McCartney (lead and backing vocals, bass guitar, handclaps), George Harrison (backing vocals, lead vocals, lead guitar, acoustic guitar, handclaps), Ringo Starr (drums, tambourine, handclaps, lead vocals), George Martin (piano on "Misery", additional arrangements)

Highest charting position:
UK 1



“I’m better at being nice to people now...”

The Beatles mime to "I Want To Hold Your Hand" and "This Boy" on Granada's *Late Scene Extra*, November 25, 1963

So reckons John Lennon, as Beatlemania intensifies and the quartet's individual characters emerge. Plans are afoot, too, for their next ventures: a go-karting circuit, a chain of women's hairdressers, and a play about Jesus returning to Earth as a Liverpudlian called Pilchard...

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 21|6|1963



"*IF THERE'S ANYTHING that you want,*" teased The Beatles... and nearly 5,000 screaming fans responded at New Brighton's Tower ballroom as performing Liverpoplians faced adoring Liverpudlians. I travelled to Merseyside last weekend to see the first joint appearance of The Beatles and the Pacemakers in their home territory since "I Like It" and "From Me To You" crashed into and up to the top of the charts.

You could have boiled an egg in there as the temperature soared. Girls were plucked from the front row in a state of collapse and carried across the stage to a team of first-aid workers who had more on their hands than they could tackle. It was a fantastic night and one that echoed the success of these hit-makers. Later, as they sipped ice-cold drinks in their dressing room, The Beatles talked about the date: a little annoyed about the interference with their act that the numerous "collapses" had caused, but nonetheless grateful that they were such an attraction at a venue where they would once have played for nothing, just for the fun of it. Refreshed and changed, they decided that we should spend the early hours at the Blue Angel, a tiny Liverpool club where they had once played for "peanuts". In leather jackets and jeans they slipped unnoticed through the dancers at the Tower – until someone ➤

ITV/SHUTTERSTOCK

recognised them and the word – rather, scream – went around like wildfire!

Outside we piled into Paul McCartney's car and headed off at speed for the late-night parley – too great a speed, for the car was soon flagged down by a pursuing patrol car and Paul learned the hard way that even Beatles in their home territory are subject to speed limits!

It was well after midnight when we finally reached our destination and the group settled down to talk about their friends, the fans. One by one they recalled incidents, like the occasion when Ringo Starr's home in the district of Dingle was surrounded by more than 200 fans.

"I had already left for a show but my father wasn't able to convince them I wasn't there. In the end he had to take my mother out for the evening because they couldn't hear the telly for the noise outside!" Ringo recalled.

Fans who called recently at George Harrison's house were greeted at the door by the Beatle himself. But apparently unrecognised he was merely asked if Paul McCartney lived there and was promptly left alone on the doorstep when he answered "No!"

Maybe it's because they look so much like other local teenagers that The Beatles often pass without recognition. Asked at his front door if John Lennon was at home, John couldn't resist the urge to say "No", but was more than amazed when the questioners walked away convinced. Personal calls at their now well-known homes are becoming more and more frequent. Nine times out of ten, the request to their parents, brothers and sisters is the same: "Is the Beatle at home?" More often than not, fans are admitted and take tea in the household like visitors to a stately home, scanning the rooms for a glimpse of something that belongs to "him"!

"But our homes have suffered a bit from souvenir hunters," John told me. "In my front garden they've stripped off much of the bark from a tree and started on the branches."

"Our car suffers, too," pointed out Paul. "It frequently loses mirrors, radio aerials, door handles and other removable parts. Often our road manager Mal [*Evans*] has to walk to a garage to get a missing part and arrives back to find something else gone!"

"What sort of a scrapbook can they put those things in?" queried George.

On tour, too, the fan fever runs high. In one northern town on their recent stage tour, a boy leapt on the stage and stood doing the Cavern Stomp (yes, it's a new dance craze) immediately in front of John yelling out, "These Beatles are fabulous." In another town, two boys hid in one of the hotel rooms for seven hours just to shake The Beatles by the hand when they came back from the theatre.

It seems that not all of The Beatles' fans are souvenir takers. Some are givers. The group is daily swamped with assortments of presents ranging from bags of jelly babies to a giant teddy bear with a music box inside. Literally scores of presents had arrived for Paul at the McCartney home in time for his 21st birthday celebrations on Tuesday. Liverpool's other favourites were there to start opening a mound of parcels which poured in from all parts of Britain.

"It's a wonderful life and we wouldn't be missing it for the world," John told me. "Though they seem to be with us night and day now, we love the fans and wouldn't like to think we had lost a single one of them. It's such a pity we can't meet them all," he sighed.

But if last Saturday's mammoth event was anything to go by, then it would take them a few weeks to shake hands with their fans in Liverpool alone!

CHRIS HUTCHINS

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 9|8|1963



I WENT ROOF-CLIMBING with The Beatles – up a rickety wooden ladder, over drainpipes, and past the huge chimney-pots of London's plush Washington Hotel. The traffic bustled dizzily below. "After YOU!" laughed Paul McCartney, pointing to the gaping emptiness that stretched down to the street. He was joking (I hope). There was an 80-foot drop! But Paul's usually like that, anyway – courteous, and cheerful with it! Fame hasn't changed him.

"If anything," he told me, "it's other people who are different. I can't quite explain it, but when I meet some of my old mates, they don't seem the same. They have a different attitude towards me. Perhaps they think we've all gone big-time since getting into the charts, I don't know. But they're so wrong." We reached the top of the ladder and The Beatles posed against some chimney-pots for a breathless photographer.

"Mind you," said Paul, "I'm not knocking anybody. I suppose people can't help feeling we've changed. It's a natural reaction."

There's a lot that's not known about Paul, who's the first in our "Close-Up On A Beatle" series... about his early days as a guitarist, his home life, and the beginning of his association with John Lennon.

"I didn't start in a very spectacular way," he told me. "I got my first guitar when I was 15, and I just used to fool about with it, more or less, as time went by, though, I got more interested. I was still 15 when I met John Lennon at a village fête in Woolton, in Liverpool. He was playing with a couple of fellows and I asked if I could join in. That's how it started, really.

"I suppose we just went on from strength to strength – John, me, George and another lad named Pete Best, who's now with another group. You'd never dream the names we had: 'Johnny [*that was John Lennon*] And The Moondogs', 'the Quarrymen' and 'the Rainbows'. We were called the last because we all had different coloured shirts and we couldn't afford any others! After that, somebody wanted to calls us 'Long John Silver And The Pieces Of Eight'! We weren't standing for that, but we did end up as 'the Silver Beetles' for a while. After that it became just The Beatles.

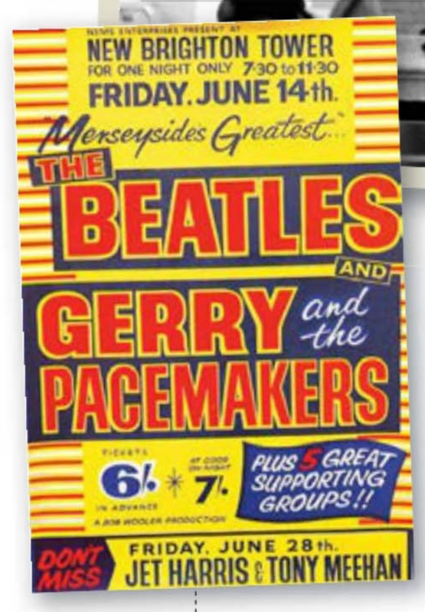
"I guess it's pure chance that I met John. You see, my mother was a district nurse until she died when I was 14, and we used to move from time to time because of her work. One move brought me into contact with John. Since then I suppose John and I have written about 100 songs together, including 'Bad To Me' for Billy J Kramer. Fab about it doing so well, isn't it?"

Paul comes from Allerton, a suburban area of Liverpool, where his father still works as a cotton salesman. He attended Liverpool Institute school and chalked up several GCEs before leaving.

"I decided I'd like to enter art college if we flopped in show business," he says. "I got my GCE in art, and I'm still very interested in the subject. I often sketch when we're on tour – when I'm not writing songs or go-karting! That's the big rage for me these days, go-karting. We were doing some of it recently and now I'm thinking of taking it up in a big way. I'm not really interested in sport apart from that, except for swimming – but that's the thing these hot days, isn't it? It really cools you off."

How do the rest of The Beatles get on with Paul? "Oh, fine," they laughed, as we leaned against a chimney-stack. "He hasn't changed a bit, you know. He's just the same old big-'ead we all know and love!"

"Funny habits?" asked John. "I'll say! Did you know he sleeps with his eyes open? We've watched him, dozing there with the whites of his eyes showing. And he won't believe us when we tell him. He's a good lad, really. We don't have much





In Liverpool, February 19, 1963 – the day the band learned that "Please Please Me" had hit No 1 in some charts

DON'T PASS ME BY

"They stole top honours for entertainment and audience reaction," *NME* reported, of the Fabs' March 1963 tour with Chris Montez and Tommy Roe. "They still need better production, and a good choreographer, tailor and barber, but that apart, they are the most exciting newcomers in Britain today."

MICHAEL WARD/GETTY IMAGES, GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS



The Silver Beatles, with Pete Best, 1962

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SILVER BEATLES

trouble with him, except that he gets a bit restless at feeding time. He's always good when we tell him, because he knows if he isn't, we won't take him for a walk on his chain!"

Paul takes all this with characteristic good humour. "You have to laugh, don't you? If you don't live this life with a sense of humour, it could soon get you down. That's the way I look at it, anyway. Sometimes, you know, I feel as if there's nothing I'd like better than to get back to the kind of thing we were doing a year ago. Just playing the Cavern and some of the other places around Liverpool. I suppose the rest of the lads feel that way at times, too. You feel as if you'd like to turn back the clock.

"It's only a passing mood, though. Most of the time lately we've been living on top of the world. Everything has been going right for us!

"No, I haven't bought anything special for myself since everything happened. Perhaps I could get a cine-camera – then the lads could film me while I'm dozing, and I'd know if I really sleep with my eyes open!"

ALAN SMITH

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 16|8|1963



GEORGE HARRISON leaned against a table in Liverpool's Blue Angel club, idly tapping the green baize as he looked through a swirl of cigarette smoke. It was 1am... and George was in a reflective mood as we talked about his role in the success story of The Beatles. He sipped a Pepsi-Cola. "You know, The Beatles have almost been my career. I had only one other job, lasted two months. I left Liverpool Institute when I was 17, then I worked for an electrician. Rewiring and that kind of thing. But I couldn't stick it. I liked music too much.

"Besides, I'd met Paul at school and we both had this interest in guitars. Paul had a trumpet at first: we always used to be playing 'When The Saints Came Marching In'. On and on, always 'The Saints...'! The Beatles might have had a 'Liverpool trumpet sound' now, if Paul could have sung and played at the same time! He got a guitar, then we met John. I didn't realise, but John and I went to the same primary school, Dovedale Road. We never met until 16 or 17.

"At one time [*laughs*], I used to have a group of my own called The Rebels, or some such name. Later on I appeared at British Legion halls and working men's clubs with the Quarrymen. They were John, Paul and myself. But it wasn't steady, I did a bit of freelancing for a while; in fact, at one stage I was in about three groups all at the same time!

"Some of my old mates don't seem the same. Perhaps they think we've all gone big-time..."
Paul McCartney

"I remember when Paul and I used to play guitar, and John would just sing. We were on a Buddy Holly kick in those days, with numbers like 'Think It Over' and 'It's So Easy'. We certainly had some laughs. We did a *Carroll Levis Discovery* show in Manchester once, and Billy Fury was at the first audition. He was Ronald Wycherley then, and he did 'Margo' for his number. I think we were Johnny And The Moondogs then. You were judged by the applause, you know, but we had to catch a train home before the end. We never did find out if we'd won! But Billy passed his audition, I remember that.

"It's funny, the Cavern is a home-from-home for us in Liverpool today, but they didn't used to be too keen on us a few years ago. That was when the place was mostly jazz and skiffle. We used to go on and play wild rockers like 'Whole Lotta Shakin'...', and they'd pass notes up to the stage telling us to cool down! I think 'No Other Baby' was the only country or skiffle number we knew, so we used to play it over and over again. It got so bad, they wouldn't book us!

"Nothing seemed to happen for a while. I think we broke up, then we got together with a lad named Stuart Sutcliffe. Stu left the group after one of our trips to Hamburg, because he wanted to stay in Germany, where, I regret to say, he has since died."

He lit a cigarette. "We had an audition for Larry Parnes and he sent us to do a date in Scotland. We must have had about eight drumkits by then, as every time we had a new drummer, he seemed to leave us with his gear! Paul even did a bit of drumming. After that we went to Germany. That must have been in August, 1960. I remember it well because the German police discovered I was underage to be working in the clubs, and had me sent back home to Liverpool.

"A few days later the rest of the lads came home, but it was a while before we decided it was time we got some work – and we owe ➤

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

it to Bob Wooler. I think Bob must know more about the Liverpool scene than anybody. He's now compere at the Cavern.

"Bob got us this job at a dancehall after Christmas 1960. It was funny: we'd spend so much of our time in Germany, nobody knew us. We were billed as 'direct from Hamburg', and everybody thought we were German! One girl came up to me and said: 'Aye, don't you speak good English.'"

Someone brought George another Pepsi-Cola and paused to welcome Bob Wooler, who'd just come in.

Said Bob: "I'll tell you this about George – he's completely unaffected by stardom. I've written the lyrics to a number Billy J Kramer has recorded for future releases on an LP. I didn't think I'd hear the finished version for some time, but George got hold of a copy and drove four miles to let me hear it. That may not seem much, but what struck me was the way he went right out of his way to be helpful."

George looked modest. "Well, you'd do the same for anybody, wouldn't you? I know what it's like when you want to hear how a disc has come out. After we recorded for Polydor in Germany, I didn't stop playing the disc for days. Actually, I've an idea we weren't called The Beatles when that record was released. It was untranslateable, so they called us Beat Brothers on the label.

"Do I have any hobbies? I'm lucky in that I actually like music. I'm always playing my guitar off stage. Or putting on records. Lately we've been having fun with a tape recorder. John writes down the words – you can't really call it poetry – and then I read it out on the tape. It's weird stuff. I'm not sure that anybody else would know what it's all about!

"We had a gear time with the recorder a few weeks ago, when we were with Gerry And The Pacemakers at Weston-super-Mare. We were in a car and Gerry was wearing dark glasses, asking people the way to the local golf course. We got some dead funny replies. Just like *Candid Camera* it was, only in sound!

"Then there's this idea we've got for a go-karting track. I was talking to Adam Faith, I think he's as keen on it as we are. We might be able to get a few more people interested."

George discounts theories that The Beatles might split up in years to come.

"We've known each other for six or seven years. If we couldn't get along, we'd know it by now. I'm very happy. Ringo says I'm an irritable so-and-so, but I think he's just having me on.

"I think the future holds a lot. I'd like to invest money and perhaps branch out in different showbusiness ventures. I've been a bit lucky when it comes to songwriting. I haven't bothered in the same way as John and Paul, though I'd like to have a stab at it sooner or later.

"I did actually write one number, if you could call it 'writing'. It was in Hamburg about the time The Shadows' 'Apache' came out. Somebody asked John and myself how the tune went and we tried to demonstrate. The result wasn't a bit like 'Apache' but we liked it and we used it in the act for a while. We even called it 'Cry For A Shadow'. Now it's on our Polydor LP."

George Harrison doesn't claim to be much of a get-up-and-go Beatle. "I like parties and a bit of fun like anyone else," he says, "but there's nothing better, for me, than a bit of peace and quiet. Sitting around a big fire with your slippers on and watching the telly. That's the life!"

ALAN SMITH



Harrison backstage at The Beatles' Christmas show, Finsbury Park Astoria, London, Dec 30, 1963

DON'T PASS ME BY

According to Roy Orbison in May 1963, The Beatles "have something that's entirely new even to us Americans, and I believe your own boys could top our charts as frequently as they seem to be doing here. But it would be important to bill them as 'The Beatles Of England' to get over their big appeal."

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 23|8|1963



RINGO IS the quiet Beatle: silent, even mournful, until he takes his place at the back of the stage. Then he starts to play and the silence is shattered as his drums shake and quiver with a thunder of blows. He admits he rarely looks happy. "I've got one of those faces," he told me. "It's a miserable face, and it just falls like that. I feel OK inside. Sometimes I'm feeling grand, but people come up and say: 'Aaah, poor Ringo. Doesn't he look sad?' It's a laugh, really. I'm a bit on the sentimental side now and again, but that's all."

Ringo is a comparatively new addition to the ranks of The Beatles. Whereas John, Paul, and George have been together from the start, he joined only last August after an urgent phone call from manager Brian Epstein.

Says Ringo: "I was playing with Rory Storm & The Hurricanes at Butlins in Skegness, doing a season. Brian said could I join The Beatles the next day? That was out of the question, but I gave in my notice and was with them by the end of the week.

"I'd often sat in with The Beatles when their previous drummer, Pete Best, was sick. So I was no stranger. And it was no risk, because the group had been around Merseyside for a long time, getting good fees and drawing huge crowds. One night I drummed with them and got £9. I thought it was fantastic! I went out and put the money towards my first car, a Zodiac I bought for £50."

Ringo's first serious drumming job was with Liverpool's Eddie Clayton Skiffle Group, but this broke up and he played for a while with another group called the Cadillacs. He went on to join Rory Storm and stayed for several years, playing in Hamburg, France and at Butlins camps.

"It's funny the way I started!" he laughs. "I'd always liked the idea of drumming and when I heard any music I used to tap on tins and bin lids and all kinds of things. When I was 18 my mum and dad got me my first drumkit as a Christmas present. It was a sort of mixture of different parts, about 25 years old. I was really proud. Every time I got behind it, it used to hide me, what with me being little and the drum being a fantastic size. I wouldn't be surprised if you told me it was 10ft across.

"I couldn't play a note at the time. I just used to bash around in the house until I got some idea. One night my mum came in and said a neighbour's husband was in a band, and why didn't I go along and join. I think she thought they played jazz. Anyway, I went along to rehearsals and there was this crowd of blokes playing in a silver band! They were all working out the numbers they were going to do in the park that Sunday. It wasn't for me... I left the same night!

"After about two months I got in with the skiffle group, but I still didn't have a clue. And I used to have to borrow different drumkits wherever we went, because I didn't have any transport at the time. That was how I taught myself, but it was good experience. In the end I decided to give up my job and go fully professional. I was an apprentice engineer with a firm that was right next door to our house, making children's playground equipment.

"By a bad bit of luck, really, after I joined, the firm moved to somewhere else in the city and I had to get up half-an-hour earlier to get to work!"

Ringo was in his Llandudno hotel room, packing for the move to Torquay the next day.

"Sometimes I feel really tired after a show,

VAL WILMER/REDFERNS



The group in Studio Two, Abbey Road, on the day they cut third single "From Me To You" and its B-side, "Thank You Girl", March 5, 1963

completely drained of energy. Other times it's not so bad. Soon the tiredness goes and I feel like going out and ripping it up. I used to do a lot of night driving once. I'd get the car and just drive around by myself, anywhere really, I used to get a lot of kicks out of it, although I don't have a car any more. We didn't have a garage, and people started pulling pieces off when they saw it outside the house."

Ringo is the only member of The Beatles to change his name. He was born Richard Starkey in the tough Dingle area of Liverpool, the son of a painter. He began to call himself Ringo Starr when people noticed his habit of wearing rings. "I always wear four," he says. "Two on each hand. The big one on my right hand was a present from my mother, and the wedding ring was my grandfather's until he died. The other two were presents from girls. I've got quite a few things like that; necklets and so on. You probably think it sounds strange, but I assure you I'm no sissy! I just happen to like trinkets."

What does he intend to do with his earnings? With sound business sense, he says he wants to open a chain of women's hairdressing salons.

"I figure it would be a good business move," he says. "Girls will always want their hair doing, and if The Beatles ever fell through I'd have a good sideline. I could go round from time to time saying: 'Is everything all right, madam? A cup of coffee, perhaps? Or would you like a tot of whisky?'" He laughed heartily at the idea.

"No, I haven't really got round to the idea of composing. I did think up one tune, called 'Don't Pass Me By'. There, it even sounds miserable. And every time I play it to the lads, they just laugh!"

The likeable Ringo is a never-ending source of surprise. Soon, I heard this week, he may begin to front The Beatles as a dancer – while another member of the group takes on the drums!

"It would only be for certain numbers," says Paul McCartney, "but it's an idea we're working on. We all mess around on drums a bit and we could take his place now and again. Mind you, we could never be as good as Ringo. He's the best drummer we've ever had. The rest of us have always got on well, but he's just fitted into the group like a glove. We've had other drummers we've got on well with, but no-one could beat Ringo."

He laughed. "We hear rumours that he's leaving, but there's absolutely no truth in them. Besides, if he went we'd miss his morning dance

"I did think up one tune, 'Don't Pass Me By'. Every time I play it to the lads, they just laugh!"
Ringo Starr

session! When he gets up in the morning, he's full of jokes, like doing the foxtrot with a lampshade or something. There's no doubt about it: he's certainly got a flair for dancing. One night we all went to The Saddle Room in London, and Helene Cordet was showing us how to do the Hully Gully. We didn't know what it was all about, but Ringo picked it up in a couple of minutes. In the end, we had to learn it from him!

"Yes, Ringo is a great lad. John and I are writing a number for him to sing on our next album, after the success of 'Boys' on the last. If it all comes off, it's going to be quite a novelty to announce him as 'the Singing-Dancing-Drummer'!"

ALAN SMITH

★ **TAKEN FROM**

NME 30|8|1963



WITHOUT JOHN LENNON, The Beatles could not have continued the fantastic story of their success in this week's NME Chart – because there would be no Beatles. Today John is the only original member of the Quarrymen, a small group of skiffle fans who took their name from Liverpool's Quarry Bank Grammar School. This was in the late 1950s. And as time went by, almost the entire lineup changed to make way for "new boys" like Paul McCartney and George Harrison.

It was John's own idea to call them The Beatles. They were moving away from skiffle to produce their own wild sound and a different name was needed to project the new image. Soon they became the sensation of Merseyside with their driving music, unruly hair and distinctive black leather jackets.

John remembers the early days well. "I used to borrow a guitar at first. I couldn't play, but a pal of mine had one and it fascinated me. Eventually my mother bought me one from one of these mail-order firms. I suppose it was a bit crummy, when you think about it. But I played it all the time and I got a lot of practice.

"After a while we formed the Quarrymen with a lad named Eric Griffiths, Pete Shotton – my best mate at school – and myself. We also had a lad named Gary, who's now an architect, and ➤

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

somebody else named Ivan. Ivan went to the same school as Paul and he brought him along one day when we were playing at a garden fête. Well, Paul and I hit it off right away. I was just a little bit worried because my old mates were going and new people like Paul and George were joining, but we soon got used to each other.

"Shortly after that we started to do big beat numbers like 'Twenty Flight Rock' – funny, really, because we were still meant to be a skiffle group; 'Let's Have A Party' used to be my big number. I used to sing Lonnie Donegan songs to keep my hand in, though I found I was getting to like Chuck Berry's material more than anything else. It was Elvis who got me interested in pop music and started me buying records. I thought that early stuff of his was great.

"The Bill Haley era passed me by, in a way. When his records came on the wireless my mother would start dancing around, she thought they were so good. I used to hear them, but they didn't do anything for me. It was Elvis who got me hooked for beat music. When I heard 'Heartbreak Hotel' I thought, 'This is it,' and I started trying to grow sideboards and all that gear.

"Mind you, I knew all about stars like Tennessee Ernie Ford and Johnnie Ray. Gary and I would do impersonations. I used to be Johnnie Ray and he'd be Frankie Laine, or it might have been the other way round, I can't remember!"

John plucked at his guitar in the Bournemouth dressing room. "I suppose I started to get off-beat, musically, when I found I liked the Carl Perkins version of 'Blue Suede Shoes' better than Presley's. After that, we all started to buy records by little-known American groups, mostly R'n'B stuff."

He talks with refreshing frankness about his schooldays in Liverpool.

"I think I went a bit wild when I was about 14," says John. "I was just drifting, I wouldn't study at school, and when I was put in for nine GCEs I was a hopeless failure. My whole school life was a case of 'I couldn't care less'. It was just a joke as far as I was concerned. Art was the only thing I could do, and my headmaster told me that if I didn't go to art school, I 'might as well give up life'.

"I wasn't really keen. I thought it would be a crowd of old men, but I should make the effort to try and make something of myself. I stayed for five years doing commercial art. Frankly, I found it all as bad as maths and science. And I loathed those. The funny thing was, I didn't even pass art in the GCE. I spent the exam time drawing daft cartoons. I got into art school by doing some decent stuff and taking it along to show them.

"During my whole time at art school I just used to disappear from time to time. When my first exam came up I was with The Beatles in Scotland, backing Johnny Gentle. For the second, I was away with the group in Hamburg. Eventually I decided to leave whether I ever passed an exam or not, but when I got back there was a note saying, 'Don't bother to come back.' Believe it or not, I actually got annoyed!"

He looked serious for a moment. "Don't think I'm proud of it all... I wouldn't want anybody to follow my example. In fact, I'm sorry now that I didn't make more effort with things like English, which I know I'm quite good at. I was too interested in the easy life, that was my trouble.

"What kind of things have I written? Well, all sorts really. Since I left school I've written little essays about a character called Small Sam, and offbeat things about Liverpool. I even had a bash at writing a serious play with Paul. It was about Jesus coming back to Earth today, and living in the slums. We called the character Pilchard. It all fell through in the end, but we aim to do at least one big play or musical together. That's our ambition – a West End production with our own words and music. We'd do it about Liverpool, but somebody is working on that already with *Maggie May*. Besides, it would be about anything really. It wouldn't do us any harm to broaden our scope.

"My hobbies? Nothing, I suppose! You just don't get the time. There's one thing you could call my sideline, and that's Northern Songs Ltd – our own publishing company. Writing numbers for other people is quite an occupation.

"I don't think I'd like us to record a single we hadn't written ourselves. We're trying to stick to a policy. Mind you, we'd be daft if we were offered a terrific number and we turned it down just because of that."

John talks alertly, intelligently, about the past and the future of The Beatles. He wanted to be a journalist when he was 14 and now one of his hopes is to write a book. John sums himself up like this: "When I think about it, I suppose I'm a bit of an exhibitionist. I've always been performing in one way or another, making jokes or wanting to get up on to a stage and sing. Still, I suppose you have to be like that in showbusiness.

"I know that success has changed me for the good. I'm probably better at being nice to people, now The Beatles are doing so well and we're all so happy."

ALAN SMITH

DON'T PASS ME BY

In June '63, The Beatles reviewed the singles in *MM*. "I Know A Man" by Rolf Harris appeared to be their favourite. "Best record of the year," said McCartney, as Harrison noted the "marvellous sound with that 12-string guitar". "It's fab," added Ringo, "the backing's fab, he's fab. It must be a hit."

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 28|9|1963



TWENTY FEET above the recording studio floor, a mouse sat on a ledge looking through the control room window. Which makes him The Beatles' strangest fan – for it was beat-crazy Britain's favourite four staring back. The mouse was very cool. He took another long whisker-twitching look, ran away, and left the crowd in the room overlooking Studio Two at EMI's St John's Wood building [*Abbey Rd*] in London full of surprise and a few "oohs" from ladies present.

"Must be a beat fan," said George Martin, The Beatles' recording manager. Presumably, the mouse had shared the previous three-and-a half hours with us – witnessing a Beatles recording session, which, as it turned out wasn't quite typical, but mainly topical, since it was one of a number for their second LP.

The beat mouse (English species, found in fields of music) had come in on the last act. The final playback of the day's work while four valuable throats relaxed the tightness that grips after singing through the equivalent of four one-night stands, one after the other.

I had arrived to find the session underway. Through the thick glass of the observation window, The Beatles could be seen on the floor – the studio floor – standing, lounging, Ringo Starr beating a pair of giant tympanis. Paul McCartney sitting behind Ringo's drums tinging a cymbal, John Lennon in front of a microphone, George Harrison playing his guitar.

Their conversation, echoing through the studio's amplification equipment, came through the speakers in one corner of the room. The speaker jabbered as the tape console wound back a number at high speed, ready for a fresh recording, then slowed to a mass of deep-echoing space rocket noises as it stopped. The recording engineer glanced professionally at his panel of dials, switches and buttons and lit another cigarette.

George Martin, the man of the moment, sipped from his cup of milk, and reached for another sandwich.

"It's the only chance we get to eat," he explained with a grin.

Martin, tall and good-looking, reminds me of a good-humoured schoolmaster, in his manner, and the way he "deals with" his four effervescent charges. He lets them have their head to a certain extent, then, gently but firmly, steers them back to the serious business of recording. Too much tight discipline, obviously, would be quite out of place in the studio, where The Beatles have to be themselves and mould their vocal personalities on to the thousand feet of tape that make an LP.

For the next take, the only performers were John Lennon and George Martin – who is an excellent pianist, with a "feel" for a song, and who often adds his personal touch to different artists recording in the studio. This time, he was playing a simple bass note accompaniment to the song, while John sang over his own voice, and a rolling Cramer-style solo in the middle.

The tape machines started to roll, the engineer switched the red studio warning light on, and another Beatle track began to emerge. As John followed his vocal part, Paul and George waltzed madly around the carpeted floor, making elaborate bows to each other. John's voice, with the previous recording, and the piano, came solidly through the speaker, with the balance being continually adjusted by the watchful engineer, to whom driving a car must be child's play after his day's work.



The Beatles sign autographs for fans in their dressing room, May 4, 1963

John stopped his fade-out finish on the recording, because of the difficulty in following his first, impromptu ending.

"Is that where you're going to stop?" queried the engineer over the studio intercom.

"Well, I'd like to go on, but I did the first one all wild," Lennon's voice boomed back. "I can't follow it properly."

Paul McCartney's more distant voice broke in, with a laugh. "Sing it like... *'Alright, yeah, yeah, alright, woah, one more time, live it up, woah yeah, one more, what'd I say...'*"

"Just carry on singing at the end," said the engineer, settling the hubbub.

Red light. Piano intro from George. John singing, with Paul standing on the other side of the mic, doing a Presley wiggle. Piano solo from George, with the other George leaning casually, and at an impossible angle, on the piano. Ringo wandering about. Fade-out. Red light off. It was like a different recording.

Three or four takes later, with the song becoming more familiar all the time, George Martin decided to call it quits, and The Beatles climbed the ship's ladder set of steps to the operations room to listen to the result. A case of Coca-Cola and a bottle of something stronger was broken out, and the dry-throated crew swooped with teacups for their share.

"It's your turn now," John told George Harrison, with great satisfaction. "I'm looking forward to this."

"Huh," said George, wearing his overcoat.

Break over, The Beatles descended to the studio again. I followed them down for a closer look at the fabulous four in action. The next number was George's, with the group playing behind him. In the lull before battle began, Paul went over to the piano and started playing little snatches of soul-style modern jazz.

Manager Martin herded the strays into their places, over the studio speakers, and the group started on their second number of the evening. From the floor, without the advantage of the playback speaker, the voice could only be heard faintly, with most of the sound coming from the amplifiers and Ringo's drums.

"When I heard 'Heartbreak Hotel', I started trying to grow sideboards and all that gear"

John Lennon

George sang close to the microphone as if all the fans he'd ever played to were contained in the fine wire mesh, concentration in every phrase lighting his face, and giving him a different facial expression every few seconds.

The first take wasn't too successful, and when they had rearranged the opening bars, John produced a "fuzzbox" – a device for blurring the amplified sound of a guitar, giving it a "new" sound. John was knocked out with the result, George Martin wasn't too happy.

"You'll have to do something, John. It's already distorting from the amplifier. Do you think it sounds OK – are you sure about it?"

"Well, *he* likes it," John said pointing to innocent me, in the corner of the studio.

George shot me with his outstretched finger, as he walked back up to the control room, smiling. The sound still wasn't right, and George paid another visit to the tired team, while Paul took Ringo's place behind the drums and played a mad bossa nova beat.

"Can we have a compressor on this guitar, Norman?" George asked the engineer. "We might try to get a sort of organ sound."

A compressor was brought into the control room, coupled up to the main switchboard and the whole thing started again. George sang, The Beatles played, George Martin drank his milk, the engineer smoked, the tapes hissed around. Once again, and then it was successful. The Beatles came up to the control room, to hear their efforts played back.

"Don't take this as a typical session, please," said George Martin. "It was one of those days."

One of those nights...

It was then that the mouse appeared. I fully believed that it could only have happened to The Beatles.

CHRIS ROBERTS

MANCHESTER DAILY MAIL PICTURE /SHUTTERSTOCK

22 NOVEMBER | 1963

With The Beatles

Motown and showtune covers! "Roll Over Beethoven"! Revelatory originals! And they don't even bother including their best songs... *By David Quantick*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"If there are any Beatle-haters left in Britain, I doubt they'll remain unmoved after this. It's a knockout. If it doesn't stay at the top of the *NME* LP chart for at least eight weeks, I'll walk up and down Lime Street carrying an 'I hate The Beatles' sandwich-board!"
ALAN SMITH, NME, NOV 15, 1963

"It's a certain No 1, but somehow, to me, The Beatles' records do not improve. I find their record 'From Me To You' far more musical than this new one."
PETE MURRAY, MELODY MAKER, NOV 23, 1963

THE MOST PARODIED album sleeve in the world (*Sgt Pepper*'s is too hard). Three faces in a row, one below, half black and half white, moody in rollneck sweaters under a curiously jaunty typeface. Even the Americans, whose apparent mission in life at this time was to disassemble every new Beatles album, remove half the songs and call it something like 'Beatles Beach Jambalooby!', kept the sleeve (although they did rename it *Meet The Beatles!*, late as usual – see World War II for further details).

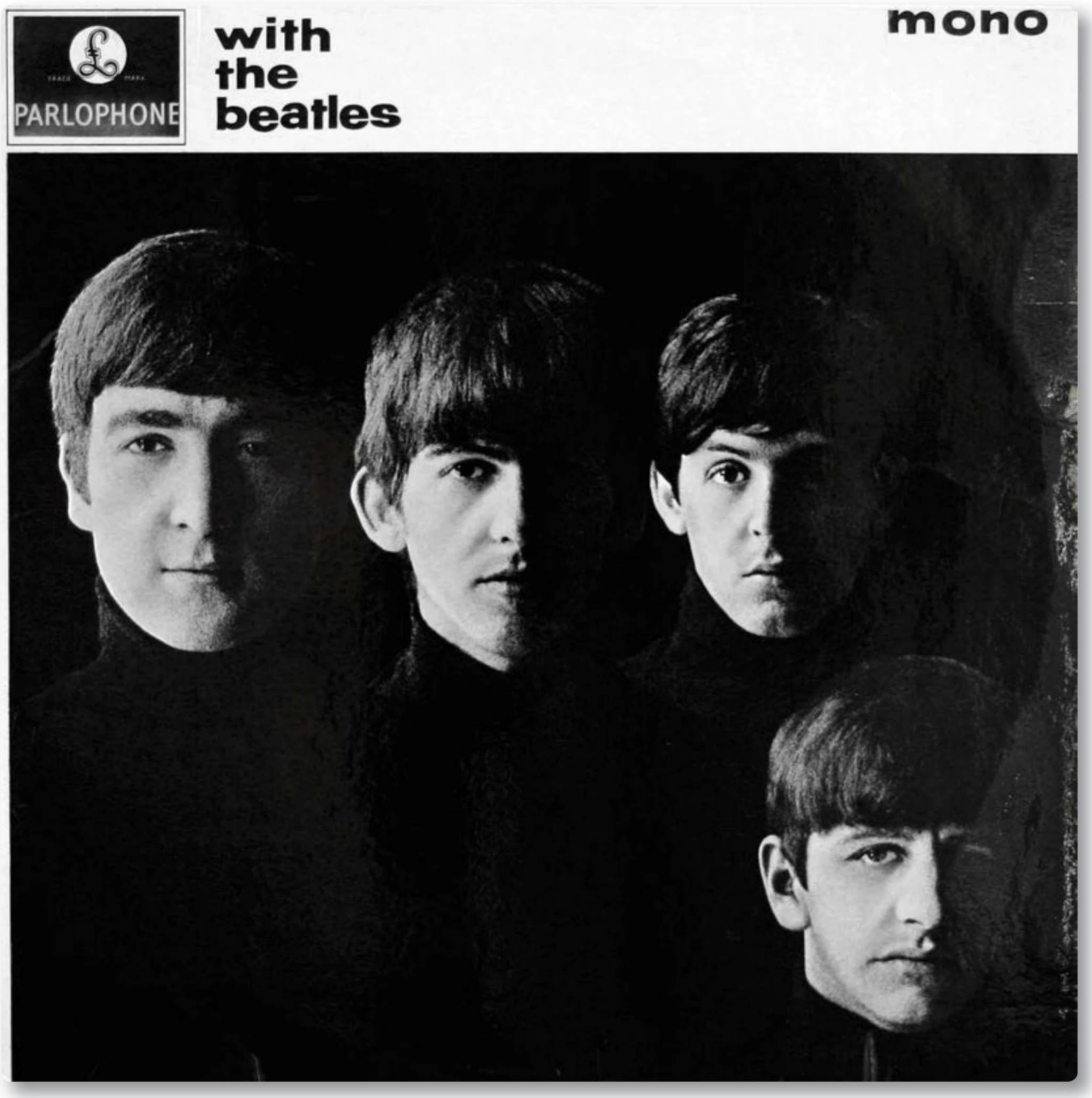
The sleeve was a message to the world, and that message was: We are not Gerry And The Pacemakers. We do not do songs written for us by Tin Pan Alley hacks (although we do do rock'n'roll and R'n'B covers and the odd showtune). We do not wave our legs in the air for the camera and, if asked to perform at variety shows, will tell the audience to rattle their jewellery. We are The Beatles. Are you with us?

With The Beatles is an extraordinary album, the first made by the band after they had become famous. It hasn't got "I Want To Hold Your Hand" or "She Loves You" on it, the two most exciting records of the early 1960s, because bands didn't put singles on albums then, and because if it had, it might actually have exploded. Instead it's got "All My Loving", the single that never was (an EP hit here, where it counts), it's got a showtune ("Til There Was You", the ballad from *The Music Man*, a show best known for "Seventy-Six Trombones"), and it's got some of the best-chosen cover versions ever – three Motown songs, at a time when nobody in Britain even knew what Motown was, and the song that gave Chuck Berry something to be miserly about (ie, lots of money), "Roll Over Beethoven".

It's got a lot of early-1960s Britain in it, too – you can almost hear the cups of tea and the fags in Lennon's phlegmy vocals (and in George's vocals you can hear buses and rain and one-bar fires if you listen closely enough). It's a black-and-white mono record because the world was black and white and mono then, just waiting for John and Paul and George and Ringo to bring the colour and the stereo (and, despite what the Apple ads and the audiophiles tell you, *With The Beatles* sounds brilliant in stereo: turn down Paul in the speaker and singalonga "All My Loving").

And it's got The Beatles pulling up their roots and examining them; there are songs here that sound like rock'n'roll, and songs that sound like soul, and there's country'n'western – although, weirdly, the songs that want to be pop songs are the least successful, as though The Beatles don't know they're The Beatles yet, because they're still full of Hamburg and the Cavern Club. The great pop songs were still on 45 at this time; the glorious tunes were yet to come. That's not to say some of the best Lennon and McCartney songs aren't here, they are – they just haven't worked out how to write the incredible melodies that start to fill their records from *A Hard Day's Night* onwards, relying on both oldies and songs of their own with a rawness they'd lose on their next album.

With The Beatles ends with a Motown song and begins with a Motown pastiche – the rhino charge of "It Won't Be Long". There's a small play on words in there ("*belong*"/"*be long*"), but the song hurtles at your chest, call and response and full of grenades. It's followed, almost like an emergency stop, by "All I've Got To Do", Lennon's brilliant attempt at being Arthur Alexander and one of the first great Beatle album tracks; with a tough and tender vocal



and a soaring middle-eight, there wouldn't be another Lennon song like this until *Let It Be*'s "Don't Let Me Down".

Then there's "All My Loving", with an effortless Paul melody (partly palmed by Pete Townshend for The Who's "The Kids Are Alright") and George's most swingy guitar break, the loosest thing he ever did. Harrison writes and sings the next song, the bedridden-with-flu-inspired "Don't Bother Me", which sets the tone for every sardonic, lugubrious song in his career. It's followed by the girl-group-esque "Little Child", which displays the band's skill at crossing over genders as well as genres. And then (we're still on Side One), it's "Til There Was You", performed by Paul with skill and seriousness and an odd pronunciation of "*saw*", and followed by the first Motown song here, The Marvelettes' "Please Mr Postman", which has a fantastic George Martin production (that initial "*Wait!*" with Ringo's drum crashing in) and sympathetic Lennon vocal.

Side Two doesn't quite keep up the momentum. "Roll Over Beethoven" doesn't benefit from George's adenoidal vocal or his rather thin guitar playing, and remains one of the few Beatles rock'n'roll covers that's better in the original, and it's followed by "Hold Me Tight", one of the strangest early Beatles songs. In *The Beatles: An Illustrated Record*, Roy Carr and Tony Tyler suggest that "Hold Me Tight" is somewhat unfinished, and certainly Paul does seem to be struggling with one or two unwilling melodies (and, as trivia buffs know, it's the only occasion where McCartney has written two songs with the same title, the other "Hold Me Tight" on Wings' *Red Rose Speedway*).

Lennon steps in to rescue things with his version of Smokey Robinson's "You Really Got A Hold On Me", which is just about as good as the original ("*I don't like you/But I love you*" is a great line), Ringo sings "I Wanna Be Your Man" better than Jagger (and Rutles fans chorus, "They ran around the corner to the pub to write this song and came back with it and played it to us and it was horrible") and George makes a decent fist of The Donays' girl-group classic "Devil In Her Heart". John also offers up the acceptable "Not A Second Time" (covered, oddly, by Robert Palmer 15 years later) and then we're out on a proper finale, Lennon being only marginally more respectful to Barrett Strong's "Money" (co-written by Berry Gordy and Motown's first hit single) than he was to The Isley Brothers' "Twist And Shout".

> This is an extraordinary album — if it had had "She Loves You" on it, it might actually have exploded

And that's *With The Beatles*: 32-and-a-half minutes of energy, invention and unwitting cultural devastation. A month after it was released, President Kennedy was assassinated and America looked for something to ease the pain. The rest is everyone's history.

SLEEVENOTES | WITH THE BEATLES

1. It Won't Be Long
2. All I've Got To Do
3. All My Loving
4. Don't Bother Me
5. Little Child
6. Till There Was You
7. Please Mister Postman
8. Roll Over Beethoven
9. Hold Me Tight
10. You Really Got A Hold On Me
11. I Wanna Be Your Man
12. Devil In Her Heart
13. Not A Second Time
14. Money (That's What I Want)

Released: November 22, 1963
Label: Parlophone (UK only)

Produced by: George Martin

Recorded at: EMI Studios (Abbey Road), London

Personnel: John Lennon (lead and backing vocals, acoustic guitars, harmonica, handclaps, Hammond organ), Paul McCartney (lead and backing vocals, bass guitar, handclaps, piano, claves), George Harrison (backing vocals, lead vocals, lead guitar, acoustic guitar, handclaps), Ringo Starr (drums, tambourine, maracas, handclaps, lead vocals, loose skin bongos), George Martin (piano, additional arrangements)

Highest charting position: UK 1

“This isn’t Merseyside – they wear mink bikinis here!”

The “Mopheads” invade America, and *NME*’s CHRIS HUTCHINS is embedded in their entourage as they dodge fans and jelly beans, play *The Ed Sullivan Show* and arenas, and go sailing off Miami. Then it’s a train to Devon, as *A Hard Day’s Night* begins to take chaotic shape.

Ocean reign: the Fabs in Miami, Florida, February 16, 1964

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 14|2|1964



TUESDAY PROVED a sensationally historic night for British pop music when The Beatles performed their first live US concert in Washington to an overwhelming reception. The capacity audience of 8,000 screaming American teenagers stood up as Paul soloed in "Long Tall Sally" to close a terrific 30-minute act.

Headlining the bill, which included our own Caravelles, and Tommy Roe and The Chiffons, they closed the show with 12 Beatles favourites, moving for each to a different side of a square stage in the centre of the massive Coliseum Arena. The crowd went berserk with delight at this gesture, each quarter of the auditorium sharing The Beatles face-on for three numbers.

Titles were: "Roll Over Beethoven", "From Me To You", "I Saw Her Standing There", "This Boy", "All My Loving", "I Wanna Be Your Man" (featuring Ringo to fans' delight), "Please Please Me", "Till There Was You", "She Loves You", "I Want To Hold Your Hand", "Twist And Shout", before the fantastic "Long Tall Sally" finale.

I watched the concert from the back of the arena with Beatles manager Brian Epstein. All the Beatlemania ingredients are here in Washington, as they were in New York previously. The imitation Beatle cuts – on boys as well as girls. The throwing of jelly beans.

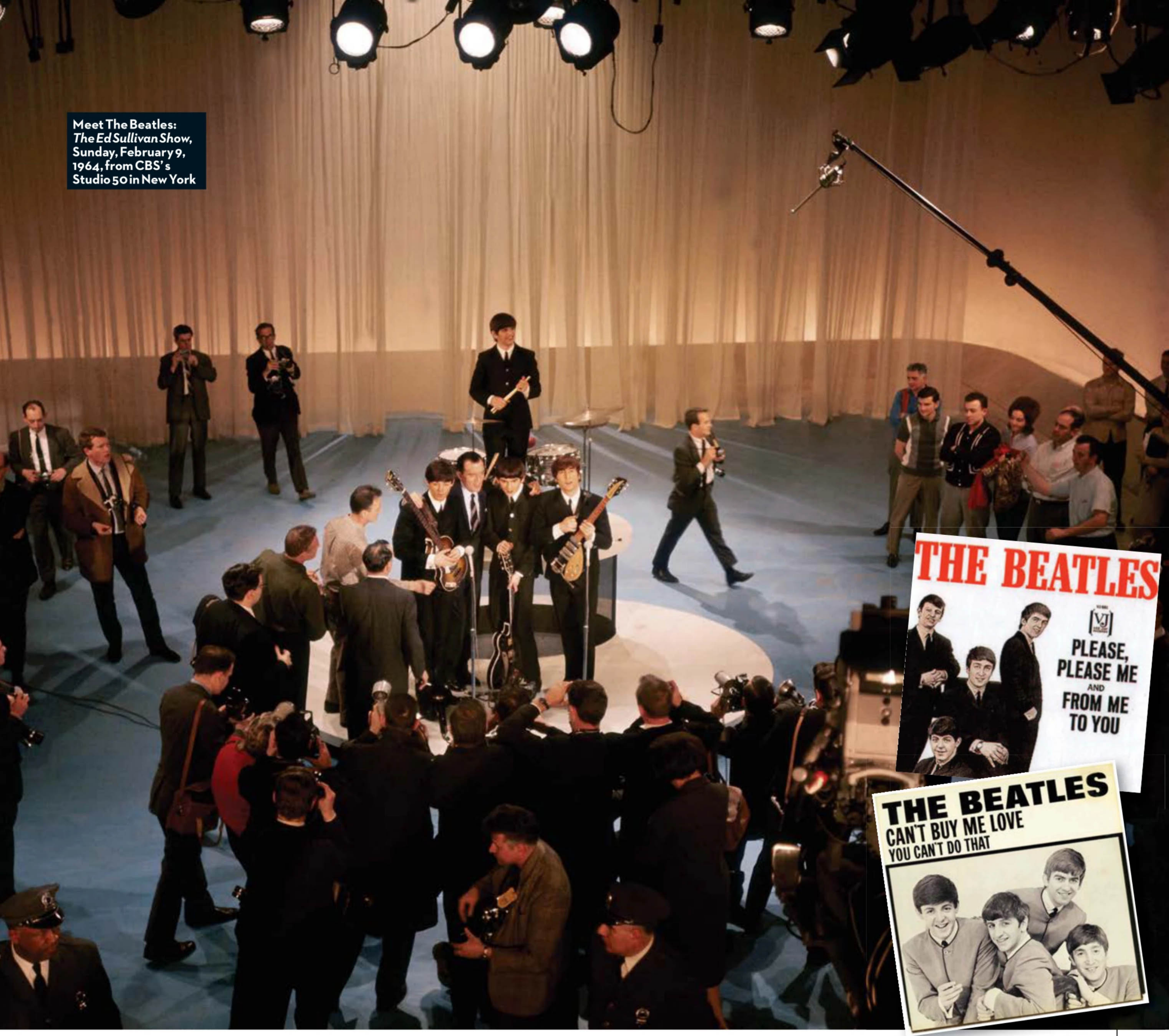
Said Paul: "They must be the nearest thing here to jelly babies back home. What's more, they're harder when they hit you!"

All four Beatles obviously regarded this Washington concert as a big challenge in their storming career. Before they went on they were unusually tense – but once onstage they clicked into action. The squeals and the screams drove them on to more effort. The police and arena attendants eyed the audience uneasily.

There could have been trouble getting the foursome on to the stage, set like an island in the middle of the audience. As it was, 40 attendants in red coats provided a mass guard to get them there – and get them off! And dozens of police lined the stage to stop the fans leaping on to it.

After their concert, The Beatles were guests of honour of the British Ambassador in Washington at a masked ball. The ambassador, Sir

CBS VIA GETTY IMAGES



Meet The Beatles: *The Ed Sullivan Show*, Sunday, February 9, 1964, from CBS's Studio 50 in New York

David Ormsby-Gore, and his wife, looked delighted when they came face to face with Britain's pop music ambassadors. However, perhaps Ringo wasn't all that diplomatic. "What do you do?" he asked Sir David!

Even at this dance, Beatlemania reared its head... a major-general attached to the British Embassy in Washington was wearing a Beatle wig! The transition from an audience of teenage screamers to the more elderly diplomatic set didn't bother The Beatles. They were entirely at ease and stayed on until 1 am. They would have stayed later, but we have to return to New York – and those Carnegie Hall performances.

Occasionally, one of the group breathes in wonder: "Imagine it, the Carnegie Hall!"

Going back over the fantastic last four days, here are the highlights...

SUNDAY

"It's from Elvis!" shouted Paul McCartney. He had just opened in front of me one of hundreds of cables to arrive after The Beatles' *Ed Sullivan* appearances here in New York on Sunday.

"Elvis who?" quipped John Lennon.

"Shurrup!" yelled Paul, as he read the message: "'CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR APPEARANCE ON THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW AND YOUR VISIT TO AMERICA. WE HOPE YOUR ENGAGEMENT WILL BE A SUCCESSFUL ONE AND YOUR VISIT PLEASANT GIVE OUR BEST TO ED SULLIVAN – SINCERELY, ELVIS AND THE COLONEL.'"

It was addressed to them all by their full names.

Only minutes before they were due on the show, John realised that he had lost his cufflinks. He borrowed mine before dashing down three flights of stairs to the stage – a tiny speaker from a radio in his pocket still plugged into his ear – to make one of the most important appearances of The Beatles' entire career. Their two spots in the show were sensational.

Later, I returned to the Plaza with them in an American limousine. Apart from a leading police escort, it was the only vehicle in the jammed main streets – traffic had been halted for several minutes before almost the entire route. It is hard to imagine a royal procession being more highly privileged.

Under the supervision of a certain Captain Kane, a score of New York policemen are guarding all entrances to the Plaza Hotel on Fifth Avenue. On the 12th floor, security guards have sealed off one corridor, bundling intruders into a nearby route to the back exit. This is how our Beatles are guarded round the clock during their visit to the US. The precautions are necessary, for Beatlemania is at fever pitch and even Elvis Presley couldn't be more sought-after at this time than our friends from Merseyside.

When I arrived in New York on Sunday afternoon to report from The Beatles' midst for the *NME*, their name was on everyone's lips. When I told the customs official at the airport I was staying at the Plaza he laughed: "That's if you can get past the mob!" This wasn't so funny when he tried to explain that his own three children were among those spending the entire weekend watching the hotel lobby as near as the police would allow!

From the hotel I made my way to the CBS studios, where mounted policemen blocked the entrances to the street where the studios are located. "They're wonderful, real entertainers, I love 'em," exclaimed veteran English comedienne Tessie O'Shea, standing

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



The band party at New York's Peppermint Lounge, February 7, 1964 (with Cynthia Lennon and Murray The K to the right of the front row)

with me as we watched the boys rehearse.

Later in the dressing room they told me of their tremendous surprise at the American reception – as four radios blared different Beatles records and Beatles chat from four separate stations!

"It's like Liddypool on a Saturday night," joked Ringo.

MONDAY

The Beatles awoke to find New York covered in snow this morning, but to them it made little difference, for the day had been set aside for press conferences and picture sessions. They simply moved from one room to another in the hotel to face a new barrage of microphones and cameras, but they took it all in good spirit.

Asked how he felt about a scathing review of their *Ed Sullivan* debut which appeared in that morning's *New York Times*, John Lennon declared, "It's all lies," to the delight of the TV and radio interviewers.

Told by another that there were long-haired mammoths in the Natural History Museum which resembled The Beatles, John addressed his informant: "I don't like your tie."

Through their manager, Brian Epstein, the boys cabled thanks to Elvis Presley and his manager, Col. Tom Parker, for the goodwill telegram received the previous night. Elvis Presley's manager thinks The Beatles are wonderful and praised their debut appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in a telephone conversation with me on Monday. I spoke at length to the Colonel in a call from New York to his Hollywood office. At that stage he didn't know what Elvis had thought of The Beatles' performance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, as Elvis had seen it in Las Vegas, where he is on holiday.

Colonel Parker told me he had made a point of watching it. He said: "Two weeks ago I told Elvis that I hoped the American teenagers would be as good to The Beatles on their arrival as The Beatles have been to us. El felt the same way."

Colonel Parker revealed that the March Of Dimes charity had just announced it was unable to accept Presley's offer of the presidential yacht, *Potomac*, he had bought in an auction.

"Maybe we will offer it to The Beatles for a nice relaxing holiday," he told me.

The Colonel also said that he had tried to phone George Harrison on hearing that The Beatle was suffering from a bout of flu, but the hotel wouldn't put him through.

"They seem great boys, and I hope we will all meet up some day soon. Give them my best wishes," he added.

The Beatles spent Monday night relaxing in their hotel suite reading the mixed reviews given them by the US press. Most of the reports were favourable, though several came down harshly on the boys. It was in stark contrast to the early hours of the same day when they were taken on a tour of the New York clubs – including the Peppermint Lounge – escorted by disc jockey Murray The K, who is undoubtedly Jimmy Savile's counterpart.

At the Lounge, Ringo was the star. His torrid "Shake" had everyone shaking – with laughter. As he read one review on Monday evening, that suggested the band should move permanently to America, Paul assured me: "That will never happen. It's gear, but we love Britain and our British fans too much to make this any more than another country to visit now and then."

TUESDAY

The Beatles decided to make today's journey to Washington by train instead of air, and arrangements were made for a complete carriage to be reserved. As I prepared to join them on the journey to America's capital, a newscaster announced, "Frank Sinatra Jr arrived back from London, and told reporters that The Beatles' music wasn't his cup of tea."

Evangelist Billy Graham said he couldn't understand The Beatles – he was only just getting used to elephants.

We checked in to Shoreham Hotel and then took limousines to the Coliseum Stadium.

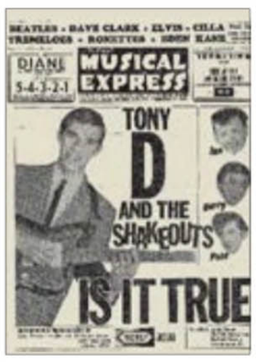
As you read this today (Friday), The Beatles will be basking in the sun in Miami, Florida. George told me: "Some people have offered us a boat and we want to spend our one and only free day in America just relaxing." I will relax with them. Tell you about it next week!

DON'T PASS ME BY

Andrew Loog Oldham became a Beatles publicist in early 1963, after meeting Brian Epstein at the *Thank Your Lucky Stars* TV show. The Beatles' "main talent is their enthusiasm, they will go on and on," he told *NME* in March 1964, by then manager of The Rolling Stones.

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 21|2|1964



THE HUE AND cry of The Beatles' fantastic reception in America – on which I reported last week – seemed 10,000 miles away, as a millionaire's yacht, name of *Southern Trail*, slipped gently through the waters around Miami, Florida with John, Paul, George and Ringo aboard. Overhead the sun beat down from a clear blue sky to raise the temperature to 85°.

The Beatles were taking the first opportunity they have had to relax since arriving in the US. I was the only journalist invited aboard the luxury yacht loaned to them for a day – "You can carry the Cokes," Ringo had said at the hotel before we left. However, the captain had had to turn *Southern Trail* back after 20 minutes at sea to put ashore representatives of a Miami paper who had stowed away below decks.

"Foony 'ow all these people have pools when the sea is just at the bottom of their gardens," said Ringo, as the craft sailed past white-walled houses which skirted the waterside.

"Well, this isn't Merseyside – they wear mink bikinis here," volunteered John, as he focused his camera on George basking in the sun. From the cabin, where a mink-covered couch was just one item of evidence to support John's information, came the sound of music. Paul was playing a few of his favourite tunes on a piano.

As the yacht made its way past a small beach someone recognised the 'Mopheads', as The Beatles have become known in America, and dozens of hands waved in greeting. Many people grabbed cameras to record what they saw – only to discover that John and George were already taking pictures of them!

I thought how remarkable it was that success had not managed to change the foursome. They're still as down-to-earth and friendly as when I first met them in Hamburg 18 months ago. Frequently in America I watched them step towards a crowd to sign autographs or shake hands with fans when police had cleared a way for them to make a quick entry or departure from a building.

"'Allo, 'ow you doin'? All right?" Paul would say in his friendly Lancashire accent as thousands of American teenagers screamed at the very sight of him and the other 'Mopheads'.

Carnegie Hall, where they did two shows, merely underlined the fantastic success of The Beatles. Socialites and teenagers mingled in the audience, extra seats were installed and the group performed under a rain of jelly beans. They sang their usual number of hits.

The welcome which greeted them at Miami airport when our plane arrived from New York was one of the most fantastic sights ever seen in Florida, according to a state newspaper. Thousands upon thousands of their southern fans had turned out to line the tops of airport buildings as far as the eye could see. And no one was more pleasantly surprised than The Beatles themselves: "New York and Washington had ➤

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

convinced us that we were pretty popular in those places, but we didn't expect anything like it down here," John had told me.

At a press conference soon after their arrival in the resort, the boys had continued their brilliantly funny interviews. Many of the gags were against themselves – like when they were asked who wrote their music and John retorted: "What music?"

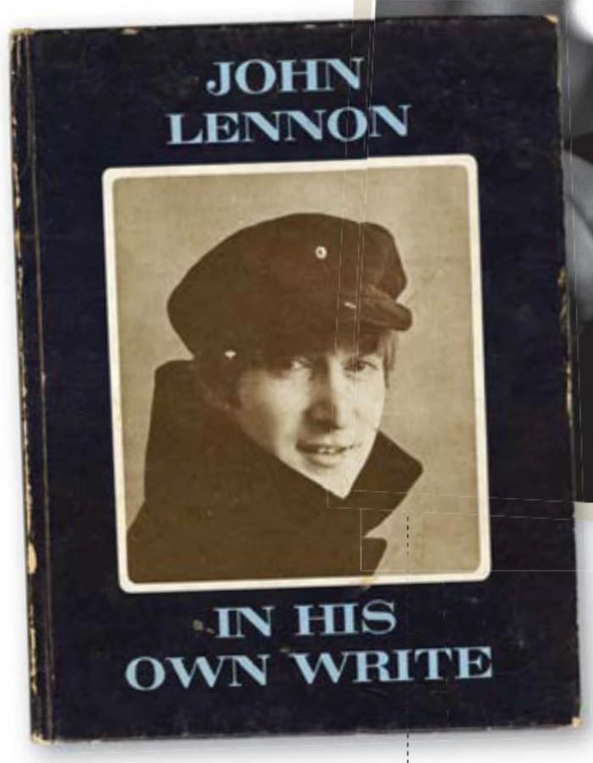
Asked by another if they thought they would last as long as Frank Sinatra, Paul quipped: "We should last longer, we don't drink!"

Someone else wanted to know if The Beatles ever got tired of the press following their every move: "No, if they weren't with us I'd miss 'em. Matter of fact I miss 'em when I'm asleep!" John had answered.

My recollections were interrupted as Ringo summoned Paul to the galley to help make some coffee and a new voice warned George not to take too much sun. The voice belonged to Bud Dresner, a friendly police sergeant who accompanied the four wherever they went in Miami, offering advice and occasionally steering them as firmly as a manager.

The following night – on the eve of their second nationwide TV appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* – Bud took all four home to have dinner with his wife and children: "We had roast beef – enough to feed an army," George told me the next morning.

"I like you guys. I think you're funny. Your records are great too," Bud said. He was certainly more pro-Beatle than the cop in Washington who stuck a bullet in each ear when the foursome took the stage for their debut American concert.



As we lazed in the sun, George threw biscuits into the sea. They were snapped up by a pelican which had been following the yacht for several minutes, oblivious of its famous passengers. The spot seemed sufficiently isolated for an uninterrupted swim and The Beatles stripped to their bathing trunks, three of them diving into the clear Atlantic together, as Ringo sat astride the rail to photograph the scene. But it seemed no sooner had they hit the water than several previously unnoticed craft headed towards the *Southern Trail*.

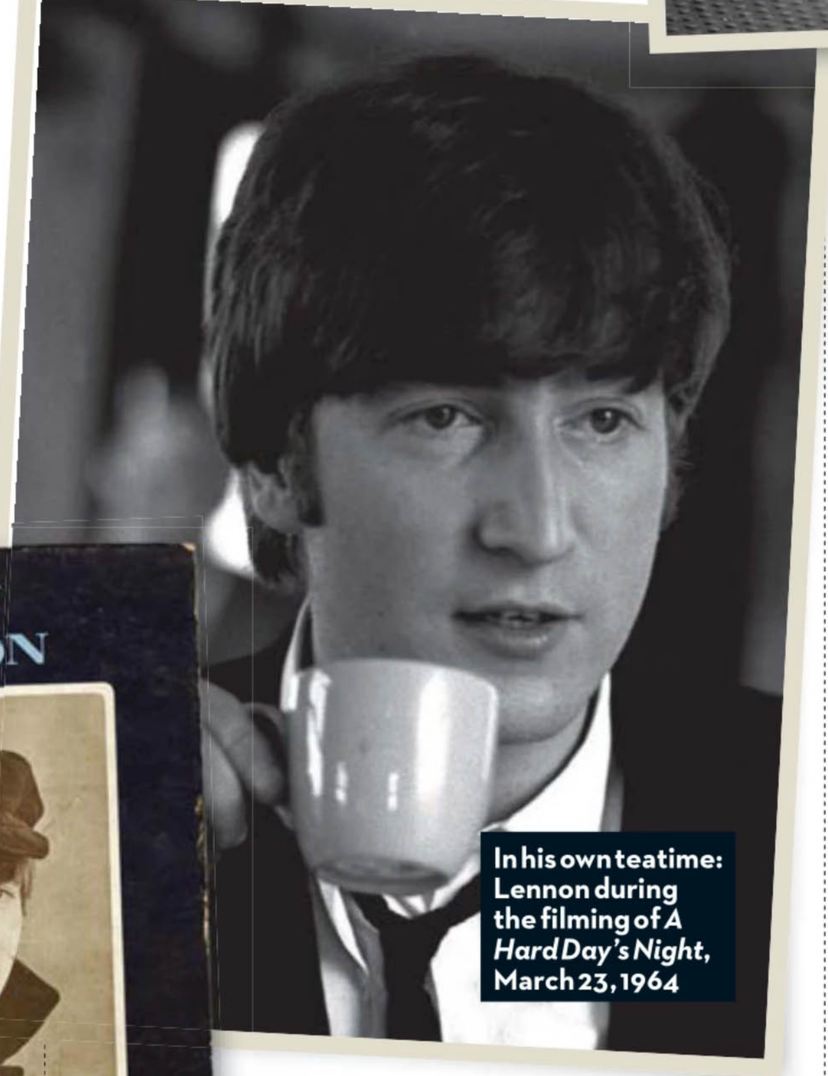
"It's The Beatles!" someone yelled, and as the boys clambered aboard, the visitors called to them and levelled cameras. In return, Beatle cameras were aimed and the Liverpoolians snapped a few more pics to show to the folk in Bootle before waving back their greetings.

On the way home, the boys stretched out in the sun, determined to get a deep Florida tan on this trip just in case the opportunity didn't arise again.

They were wise. The next day the scene outside their hotel resembled that outside the Hotel Plaza in New York, when police feared for the safety of fans who pushed at wooden barriers until they snapped.

"We'd love to meet them, but can't when there are so many outside. It's just impossible," said George.

But they did get a chance to say "hello" to four bikini-clad beauties who wrote "We Love The Beatles" in six-foot letters in the sand below their Miami hotel when the boys went for a dip between a rehearsal and transmission of their *Ed Sullivan Show* on Sunday. The same day, Paul scotched rumours of romance between himself and a British-born movie actress called Jill Haworth, who trailed the group 1,200 miles from New York to Miami.


In his own teatime: Lennon during the filming of *A Hard Day's Night*, March 23, 1964

"I didn't ask her to come. Only met her twice," Paul told me with typical Beatle frankness, as stories of a romance appeared in several papers.

Despite their constant police supervision and orders not to move out of the hotel without giving an hour's prior notice, the four had fun in Miami. They visited the clubs and watched American stars at work in many of them – comedian Don Rickles, "the sultan of insult", called them Zulus as they watched his act!

They visited a drive-in cinema and had whirlwind tours of the tropical locality where palm trees grow dozens to the acre. And there was work, too: *The Ed Sullivan Show*, in which they starred with Mitzi Gaynor, called for six numbers from The Beatles – the highest number anyone has performed on the show. Brian Epstein watched the appearance on a television set in his hotel room wearing a "Stamp Out The Beatles" sweater – he was joking, of course!

I flew back to London on Tuesday ahead of The Beatles. At New York airport, the fans were already gathering, although they had no idea when the boys would be passing through. But it's a safe guess that the crowds will be pretty enormous at Miami, New York and London when The Beatles begin their journey home today...


Paul filming *A Hard Day's Night* with Wilfrid Brambell, April 5, 1964

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 13|3|1964



GETTING UP EARLY and travelling are the two things it's essential to do nowadays if you're to keep up with The Beatles. Already this year I have journeyed to Paris, New York, Washington, Miami... and Newton Abbot(!) to accompany the foursome on the *NME*'s behalf, losing many an hour's slumber in the process.

But it was well worth rising at dawn on Monday to join The Beatles on a day's shooting for their film which still hasn't got a name – though to cheer up Dr Beeching, it has already run up a £2,500 bill with British Railways.

It was Newton Abbot's turn for a visit – though none of us knew until the train was under way, not even John, Paul, George or Ringo. It so happens that I have a particular affection for the market town in South Devon – and it took out the sting of the early rise to board the Beatles Special (John called it the Musical Express!).

The Beatles are natural early risers these days, the four are out of bed each morning soon after daylight to make the film all Britain (and much of the rest of the world) now knows about. The train, provided by BR at a handsome cost, is just one of the strange "studio" sets.

We started with breakfast. "I'll have porridge," ordered John, soon after The Beatles had boarded the train. "Grab a look at me book – the first copies arrived today." He told me, passing a copy of *In His Own Write* across the breakfast table. The contents are pretty unusual – to put it mildly! Made up of sketches, short stories and poems (all by 'imself) and with a preface by Paul, it makes for amusing reading. The jargon (pardon the expression) in which it is written could catch on, like Beatle fashion and hairstyles have.

With the first meal of the day (Ringo argued it was still night) dispensed with, they settled down to talk about the schedule ahead.

"The film virtually opens with our departures

MAX SCHELER – K & K/REDFERNS; KAYE/EXPRESS/GETTY IMAGES



Window shopping for a Beatle: fans look in on the filming of *A Hard Day's Night*'s train scenes

from somewhere like Liverpool to somewhere like London, and that's how we come to be on the train," Paul explained to me. "The song in the story is that my Irish grandfather (played in the film by Wilfrid "Steptoe" Brambell) is always interfering, telling everybody that he manages us and so on – so we lock him up in the wire enclosure of the guard's van," Paul continued.

And that scene also has quite a wild conclusion, too, though I wouldn't dream of giving the secret away.

"How about my book, then? Don't forget my scene reading it," interrupted John. "It'll get into the Top 10. Takes authors like me and Ian Fleming and Churchill to do that," he joked, before someone called him away for a make-up appointment.

George took up the story: "When we get to the big city we have to make our way to a television studio for a bit show – and that's where the speciality acts like Lionel Blair Dancers come in."

Incidentally, when Cliff Richard goes to see the film, he'll recognise more than Paul, George, John and Ringo in it. One of the dancers chosen by Lionel Blair is Cliff's former girlfriend, Jackie Irving.

"That takes up the one day which the film was originally going to be based on. But I think they're going to make it two days in the lives of us Beatles now," George added, in his still-quite-thick Mersey accent (something I am certain none will ever lose).

The film will have quite a spectacular finish, with the boys being whisked away in a helicopter, disappearing into nowhere.

Ringo then produced a pack of "singles" and George proffered us all a light from the solid-gold lighter which was manager Brian Epstein's 21st-birthday present to him last week. While the work of setting up cameras, lighting and sound equipment was going on in the carriage where this particular part of the film was being made, The Beatles' conversation turned to the musical side of the film.

I learned several things about The Beatles' next record – both the A-side, "Can't Buy Me Love", and its coupling, "You Can't Do That".

John – now back from his date with the make-up department – sang half through "Can't Buy Me Love", then told me: "That one is Paul's solo. None of us sing on the track at all, except Paul. He and I wrote the song in Paris and we recorded it there during our French sessions with George Martin in January," John added.

George took it up with, "For the first time ever on record I play a 12-string guitar on 'You Can't Do That', which is much wilder! I had the guitar given to me in America and will be featuring it in some of the numbers we do onstage in the future."

John and George were summoned away to start work on the first piece of the film for that day, as Ringo revealed: "In the film John is going to play mouth-organ for the first time for ages. He'll do it during a number called "I Should Have Known Better", which we'll probably use in the guard's van scene."

Another of the songs is called "And I Love Her". Altogether there'll be just six numbers cleverly woven into the production – not enough to make an album, but plenty to keep the pace moving through the 90-minute-or-so virtually non-stop Beatles-as-they-are-in-real-life film (or to use a John Lennon-type phrase, "Beatles-at-their-natural").

As mile after mile of countryside sped by, The Beatles talked, smoked, ate – and worked: completely naturally at all times. They waved to fans who lined stations and halts along the supposedly secret route, knowing that this was the last journey of the Beatles Special. On Tuesday, studio shooting began – although even for this picture, The Beatles still have a lot of travelling to do.

And from what I saw, by the time we eventually chugged into Paddington Station early that evening, I can assure you that this is going to be quite a picture. Early morning starts and all!

DON'T PASS ME BY

According to George Harrison in a March 1964 *Melody Maker* interview, the band's favourite British group was The Searchers. Their world favourites, Smokey Robinson & The Miracles, had sent them a telegram looking forward to "recording some tracks with you for an LP like *Friends Across The Water*."

MAX SCHELER – K & K/REDFERNS

10 JULY | 1964

A Hard Day's Night

They've been working like a dog... A quick movie cash-in becomes an exuberant masterpiece, as Lennon vigorously asserts himself. *By Graeme Thomson*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"I'm sure every *NME* reader already has a copy on order, so you don't need me to recommend you buy it. The only way my words will come as a revelation is if some square happens to read them, while eating fish and chips out of this *NME*!"
DEREK JOHNSON, NME, JULY 3, 1964

"I've just heard the new Beatles, 'A Hard Day's Night'. Quite good, but not their best. As a song it's quite good, and they play it well, but I expected something more out of the ordinary."
MICK JAGGER, MELODY MAKER, JULY 11, 1964

THERE IS AN innate pragmatism underpinning The Beatles' third album. The impetus which drives a pop group to make a film is rarely about the desire to create a deathless artistic statement. Then as now, a celluloid quickie with a tacked-on soundtrack album is generally conceived as an act of mainstream consolidation. *A Hard Day's Night* was no different. The band may have been two albums and a handful of hit singles into a pop career of unprecedented success, but who knew how long the magic was going to last? Why not knock out a capermovie and a few songs to go with it before that fickle pop audience started seeking their thrills elsewhere? It seemed to be keeping Elvis in business.

That both the album and Richard Lester's film manage to transcend these prosaic parameters – by, ooh, shall we agree on a factor of around a thousand? – says much about how fast The Beatles were moving at the time. In many ways *A Hard Day's Night* provides the first definitive, indisputable proof that they were operating at a level far beyond the standards demanded of pop ephemera.

The first seven songs (Side One in old money) all feature in the film; the remaining six don't. The qualification barely matters, for this is hardly a standard soundtrack. Rather, it's a gloriously unified album which in exactly half an hour manages to capture the sheer energy and excitement of cresting Beatlemania, while the band are also perfecting the art of crafting smart, thoughtful pop music. They aren't afraid to send dark shadows flickering across the early-'60s sunshine, either.

Named after a classic Ringo malapropism, *A Hard Day's Night* bristles with exuberance, confidence (cockiness, actually – and with good reason) and a sense of uncomplicated accomplishment, effortlessly upping the stakes without making a great fuss about it.

Fittingly, it starts with the sound of The Beatles embracing their own myth. The seismic opening chord on the title track, a shifting mixture of 12-string Rickenbacker, Gibson acoustic, Hofner bass and Steinway grand, was added to the song as a deliberately dramatic opening statement. It is the cosmic gong announcing the beginning of the most imperious of all imperial phases.

There are several firsts on *A Hard Day's Night*, not least the fact that the band are no longer leaning on old rock'n'roll and R'n'B covers for support. For the first time, every song is credited to Lennon-McCartney, although in truth it's mostly Lennon's party. With the pair's "eyeball-to-eyeball" songwriting sessions now largely a thing of the past, Lennon is responsible for 10 of the 13 tracks. Stung into action by "Can't Buy Me Love", McCartney's first A-side, recorded in Paris in January 1964 and released in March, he wrote the title track as a direct response to a perceived threat to his role as the band's de facto top dog. It was composed – more or less in its final form, notwithstanding a few lyrical improvements and some tightening on the middle-eight – during the night of April 13, 1964, the day *A Hard Day's Night* was confirmed as the title of the film, and recorded within 72 hours. If that's not ambition run gloriously amok then it's hard to imagine what might be.

There are sparks coming off Lennon throughout *A Hard Day's Night*. The best of his rockers – not only the title song but "Any Time At All", "When I Get Home" and "You Can't Do That" – are rough-hewn, fast and



aggressive. The latter in particular is fantastic, a kinetic blues-based assault featuring a vocal verging on the manic. Lyrically it's a precursor of "Run For Your Life", an unsettling macho smackdown where jealousy spills over into a desperate assertion of authority.

These moments of sinewy rock'n'roll from Lennon are counter-weighted by "If I Fell" and "I'll Be Back". Ambitiously chorded, tender and vulnerable, the relatively complex push-and-pull structures of both are reliant on close-knit – and occasionally wobbly – harmonies. Elsewhere we can hear the first stirrings of what will become a rapidly evolving love affair with Dylan in the rattling "I Should Have Known Better". Though melodically limited and lyrically more than a bit will-this-do, it puffs away with an infectious energy.

Confronted by Lennon's purple patch, McCartney is very much a supporting player. He contributes one gold-class belter in "Can't Buy Me Love", a loose, irresistibly upbeat blues, which by the time of the album's release had already become another super-sized global smash. He also delivers a couple of slow-burning keepers. According to personal taste, "And I Love Her", a mordant little minor-key love song written for Jane Asher, is either an exercise in beautiful stillness or else just a little flat. "Things We Said Today" is more interesting, its rattling acoustic guitars and vaguely ominous musical structure creating a satisfyingly tense counter-argument to McCartney's (oddly unconvincing) portrait of present and future romantic bliss.

There is some evidence of Beatles-by-numbers. "I'll Cry Instead" is a slight country throwaway, while you can hear Lennon physically trying to drag "Tell Me Why"

> There are sparks coming off Lennon throughout — the best of his rockers are rough-hewn, fast and aggressive

beyond its intrinsic ordinariness (he just about succeeds). And you suspect that the doggedly formulaic "I'm Happy Just To Dance With You" was given to Harrison to sing because neither Lennon nor McCartney would have entertained the idea of singing it themselves. Though very much still the junior partner in terms of songwriting and singing, Harrison was starting to blossom as a lead guitarist, introducing his distinctive, soon to be hugely influential 12-string Rickenbacker sound on the solo to "I Should Have Known Better", adding biting fills to "Any Time At All" and a dazzling modern outro on the title track.

Almost half a century after its release, everywhere you look there is something to enjoy, admire and surprise. There may well be more sophisticated Beatles albums than *A Hard Day's Night*, but I doubt that there is a more straightforwardly enjoyable one.

SLEEVENOTES | A HARD DAY'S NIGHT

1. A Hard Day's Night
2. I Should Have Known Better
3. If I Fell
4. I'm Happy Just To Dance With You
5. And I Love Her
6. Tell Me Why
7. Can't Buy Me Love
8. Any Time At All
9. I'll Cry Instead
10. Things We Said Today
11. When I Get Home
12. You Can't Do That
13. I'll Be Back

Released: July 10, 1964
Label: Parlophone (UK only)

Produced by: George Martin

Recorded at: EMI Studios (Abbey Road), London, and Pathé Marconi Studios, Paris

Personnel: John Lennon (lead and backing vocals, acoustic and electric guitars, piano, harmonica, tambourine), Paul McCartney (lead and backing vocals, bass, guitars, piano, cowbell), George Harrison (lead and backing vocals, acoustic and electric guitars, claves), Ringo Starr (drums, percussion), George Martin (piano on "A Hard Day's Night")
Highest charting position: UK 1

"Hear those screams..."

Another dizzying tour of the States, and CHRIS HUTCHINS is once again along for the ride. This time, there are riots, sleepless nights, gifts from Colonel Tom Parker, swimming parties at Burt Lancaster's place, club dates with Jayne Mansfield... and "the triumph of Ringo"!

★ TAKEN FROM
NME 21|8|1964



PAUL, JOHN, RINGO and George spent a happy, tension-free, 13-hour air trip from London to San Francisco, but just as we circled over the airfield at San Francisco, watching thousands of fans waiting to greet Britain's Beatles, I could feel the boys start to get worried. They all admitted they were terrified. I was too. This was it... the first concert venue, the first drive into a new city on a new tour.

Our aircraft touched down gently and stopped miles from the main building. I began to feel like a wartime spy as I left the plane with The Beatles at the end of a long runway. We climbed into two limousines as the plane shut its doors and taxied to the main building with the rest of the passengers.

Surrounding the cars were hordes of police, headed by City Sheriff Whitmore. With a posse of motorcycle outsiders, we whisked across the airfield to Beatlesville.

This was a special enclosure, high-fenced all round, in which a platform had been erected from which The Beatles were to speak to the fans – tens of thousands of whom had crowded into the special town, giving the Coke and hotdog sellers a bonanza day!

As our cars approached, a huge wail went up from the compound. The atmosphere was electric. A gate swung open and the front car, carrying The Beatles, started to push its way towards the platform, but the police cordon broke and, in Paul's words to me later, "It was the ugliest moment of our career."

Hundreds of fans rushed at the car. The only solution was to shout to the driver to back out before the car was crushed and fans were seriously hurt. He did so, and the gate was jammed shut again. There was nothing to do but pull out, and the Sheriff gave orders for the cars to make their way into the city. So The Beatles never got to set foot in Beatlesville.

"Half an hour on stage takes more out of us than a soccer match demands from a pro footballer"
Ringo Starr

They were all disappointed, and John said: "After all their wonderful effort, it's hell for us not being able to thank them."

With police sirens adding to the excitement, we swept into town. Huge crowds, mostly girls, lined the route and at every flyover fans hung out welcoming banners and waved frantically. I saw two girls fall to their knees at the roadside, biting their hands to stem the ecstasy of seeing the foursome. Two motorcyclists collided in the commotion, but neither was badly hurt. At last we arrived at the Hilton Hotel and I am writing this in my room on the 15th floor, which is The Beatles' floor.

In a few hours, The Beatles will be giving their first concert in the Cow Palace, which sprang into the news during the Republican convention.

The boys are resting after a press conference, but just a few moments ago, Ringo summed up the welcome by saying: "Hear those screams..." And we gave our sole attention to them for a moment, although we'd heard them ever since we'd entered the hotel. "It's great to think America still likes us so much," added Ringo.

It was a ball flying 6,000 miles with The

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

"It's great to think America still likes us so much...":
The Beatles arrive in San Francisco, August 18, 1964

Beatles, with our two short stops in Winnipeg, Canada, and Los Angeles. We whooped it up with champagne and caviar. The boys had great fun sending up the air hostess as she demonstrated the safety devices.

Later we relaxed with Scotch and lemonade – Coke seems to be out with The Beatles now – and John, George and I had some hilarious verbal battles, trying to make puns and funnies, while perched on the back of a double seat. At one point John talked at great length about his inferiority complex, but whether he was sending us up or not I couldn't say. Anyway, he admitted more than once that dining out in a swish restaurant to him is pure hell. "I'm terrified even to lift a phone to book a table," he told me.

We landed briefly in Winnipeg, Canada, which is in the centre of the Dominion and capital of Manitoba, the wheat-growing province. About 2,000 teenagers were at the airport and The Beatles went out to stretch their legs, give TV and radio interviews and wave to the fans on the other side of the "customs" barrier.

North West Mounted policemen, in their colourful uniforms (their hats made John call them Scoutmasters), formed a cordon, but one youth broke through, and ran up the steps of the plane. But he was soon caught by a policeman.

On our hop from Winnipeg to Los Angeles, I played cards with Paul and Brian Epstein, The Beatles' manager. Paul won. He's pretty good and remembers what cards have been played with quite a lot of skill. Behind us, Ringo and George were in earnest discussion with John about John's next book, some of which he started writing on the plane. From the snatches of conversation I heard it should be a very startling volume.



Paul tries his luck in Las Vegas before a show at the Convention Hall, the second date on the band's first US tour, August 20, 1964

HARRY BENSON/GETTY IMAGES

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 11|9|1964



THE PRESS CONFERENCE was becoming monotonous; too many 10-year-old "reporters" were asking tedious questions like "What is The Beatles' favourite colour?" Then a radio newsman queried, "What would happen if those 10,000 kids broke through the barriers and stormed the stage?"

Answered John: "We'd die laughing."

The newsmen laughed, the journalists laughed and the child reporters laughed. Even George Harrison raised a smile from his apparent boredom with the whole thing. But for the police of all 15 states on The Beatles' visiting list, protection is no laughing matter. America has never encountered anything like The Beatles before and the Liverpoplians have required armies of guards to escort their every movement.

The Beatles, their press officer Derek Taylor, road manager Neil Aspinall and I were the sole occupants of a 60-seater coach chartered to take them the 50-mile journey from Atlantic City to Philadelphia towards the end of last week. To get them to the coach was itself a major security operation. They were smuggled down a service lift of their Atlantic City hotel and into a laundry van which took them to a limousine more than a mile away. The limousine took them to a bus in a quiet cul-de-sac on the city's outskirts.

A police escort for the bus would have drawn other motorists' attention to it. Instead a helicopter hovered over the road half a mile ahead, maintaining radio contact with police cars and motorcycles standing by. The operation was a success. The seemingly empty coach made its way to the back of Philadelphia Convention Hall without attracting the slightest attention from thousands of wailing fans.

It was probably inevitable that the authorities and The Beatles should fall out somewhere along the line. Trouble started in Milwaukee, when the police insisted on the group slipping away from the airport without driving past crowds who had been waiting all day for them. Within an hour a second bombshell was dropped. The Beatles were told on arrival in Chicago the following day the mayor would not allow them to go near an anticipated crowd of 20,000 at the major airport. Instead they were diverted to a small airfield and driven almost unnoticed to the Stockyard Inn adjoining the enormous hall where they were to perform. A city official described The Beatles' intended spectacular arrival as "a cheap publicity trick".

Paul fired back for The Beatles. He gave TV and radio interviews, apologising to the fans who had waited at the airport in vain, announcing that the security operations were not of The Beatles' choice – and "a bit of a drag".

When Paul was asked what he thought of Chicago, he replied: "Gangsters. I've heard all about 'em with their big hats and guns."

John said he was planning to "take up knitting" in reply to a questioner who wanted to know what The Beatles will do "when it's over".

"There's enough money in America to keep us all going," said John to a reporter who asked how they felt about other upcoming groups.

THERE WAS AN embarrassing moment for Jayne Mansfield the day she decided to call on The Beatles. Burt Lancaster didn't seem the least surprised when George and Ringo jumped into his pool at midnight, but Colonel Tom Parker raised an eyebrow when he found himself the only Indian the afternoon The Beatles decided to play cowboys! These are just a few of the humorous incidents I recall from a hilarious stay in Hollywood with the Fab Four.

For three days they lived in a rented mansion in the star-studded Bel Air district of Beverly Hills with a chef, a waitress and 150 state policemen for company. The cops kept up a day-and-night vigil blockading Saint Pierre – the road in which Beatleville was located. Other residents had to produce passes to get to their homes. Cops patrolled neighbouring gardens to keep out fans who tried to make it across country! They even whipped two teenage girls out of a laundry van as it made its way up St Pierre.

It was a particularly hot afternoon when I accompanied Colonel Tom Parker to the house. His station wagon was loaded with presents for John, Paul, George and Ringo.

"I put on a tie specially for these guys," the Colonel told me as we drove towards Bel Air.

The boys had just finished lunch when we arrived. John was still in trunks following his morning swim. They were all casually dressed and their meeting with the man who created the world's biggest showbusiness attraction before they came on the scene was decidedly informal.

Colonel Parker sat at the dining room table where the remains of lunch still waited to be cleared away. He told The Beatles: "Elvis phoned this morning to say he was sorry he wasn't here to greet you but he'd welcome you all at Graceland – his home – if you'd like to stop by at Memphis as you travel over it."

They discussed the idea with enthusiasm but Brian Epstein shook his head. "I don't think our schedule will permit," he said solemnly.

The Colonel shrugged. You could almost sense Elvis's disappointment! From a huge box Colonel Parker, looking rather like a midsummer Santa Claus, handed out his presents. For each of The Beatles there was a valuable leather belt with holster, for Brian a gold one, for me a silver one spangled with rhinestone.

Ringo dashed into the kitchen and borrowed a cowboy hat from the chef. Complete with blue jeans and his long hair, he looked as though he had just ridden in from a ranch!

"Bang bang," said Paul on one

DON'T PASS ME BY

While The Beatles played Carnegie Hall, Peter Best And His Original All Stars were touring ballrooms in North Wales. "I don't know to this day why we parted company," he told *Melody Maker*. "I want to prove to people who made my name mud a couple of years ago that I have a good group."



Fringe meeting: four tourists from England hold a press conference at Los Angeles International Airport, 18 August, 1964

note as he aimed his gun at the Colonel. Ringo ran around the table waving his shooting irons.

John pointed his gun at his own head and said, "Bang." George said, "I wish we had real guns." John looked at him.

When the Colonel had left, we went down to the pool. In a pair of borrowed trunks I jumped in alongside Ringo. Neither of us could swim but we learned before the afternoon was out. John jumped in still wearing his sweater and called out to road manager Neil Aspinall, "Pass me a tie, I feel undressed."

That evening, George, Paul and Ringo went across to Burt Lancaster's £350,000 home to watch a private showing of Peter Sellers' latest film, *A Shot In The Dark*. Afterwards, they had a midnight swim in the pool which virtually surrounds the house. "That pool even reaches under the house and appears in one of the bedrooms," George told me later.

Meanwhile, back at St Pierre, John was receiving visitors like Bobby Darin and Sandra Dee. Then someone told him Jayne Mansfield had arrived. John helped himself to another drink and went through to meet the star.

"Why, it's the Jayne Mansfield," he greeted her. "And Mickey Hargitay, good to see you," he said turning to a man accompanying her.

"Chicago? Gangsters. I've heard all about 'em with their big hats and guns..."
Paul McCartney

"Oh silly," giggled Jayne. "Mickey's my ex, this is another friend."

An hour later, John left the house to join George and Ringo at the Whisky A Go Go, a swinging club on Sunset Strip. And there again was Jayne Mansfield. It was here that George flung the remains of his Scotch at a photographer who tried to take a picture of the three Beatles with Jayne Mansfield. She had summoned the cameraman over. No pictures had been the rule for the visit to the club, and George meant to enforce it – although the photographer got a better picture than he could ever have wished for. Within hours it was wired around the world. Ten minutes after their arrival there was chaos, and John, George and Ringo decided to leave. They made their way back to St Pierre in a police car and waved to the fans who had insisted on waiting all night. In the house they slept. And for a few hours Hollywood rested too.

Despite the tremendous success of their American tour, The Beatles can't wait to get home. The long and arduous schedule has taken its toll on their morale as well as their health.

"Half an hour on stage takes more out of us than a soccer match demands from a professional footballer. And we're doing it every night," said Ringo to me after a doctor had been called to see all four Beatles in Milwaukee.

In several places they have visited the temperature has been more than 100°F. Everywhere they have had to scramble through crowds; run to a dressing room, a car or a hotel room. Even at night they have had to greet celebrities or local dignitaries.

As George put it one day on the plane: "Of course we'll be glad to get back to England. We've got homes of our own now and we've also got some money but no time to enjoy it."

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

"Sometimes I wonder how the hell we keep it up"

John Lennon is "crushing and cruel". Paul McCartney is "a 24-hour actor". George Harrison is The Beatles' "business brain". And Ringo? "You could say I've come to terms with my own nose." RAY COLEMAN files a series of insightful profiles, as the band start to understand the downside of their extraordinary success.

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 24|10|64


Melody Maker

TOP U.S. STARS STORM IN

Sandie pipped by Orbison

THE BEATLES WERE in their dressing room and due on stage within minutes. John Lennon, having washed the dandruff out of his hair, was applying powder to his face and looking mournfully into a mirror. "I wish I could paint a smile on, too," he said. "Don't think I'll manage one tonight. Sometimes I wonder how the hell we keep it up."

It was a remarkable comment from a "pop star". But then, Lennon is a remarkable man. He is honest. He refuses to conform to the star cult. He hates phoney smiles. He is almost suicidally frank. The Beatles collect a colossal number of hangers-on. They are badgered by bores 24 hours daily. And while no Beatle is angelic when it comes to dishing out rebukes, 24-year-old John Winston Lennon is crushing and cruel, biting and belligerent. No Beatle suffers fools for long. Lennon suffers them not at all. John has a hard face and his temperament matches it. If anyone hurls an insult or a clever-clever remark at The Beatles, Lennon's hip, fierce rejoinder smacks them down. His comments are often so scathing as to be unanswerable. He signs autographs while watching TV or conducting a deep conversation. He rarely looks at the paper or books as he writes his name artistically. He is never lost for a reply. He wins most arguments.

John also knows of every conceivable antic yet devised by fans to gain personal contact with a Beatle. In a restaurant last week where The Beatles had stopped for unscheduled lunch, a waiter approached the table. "Personal call for Mr Lennon from Liverpool," he said. "Rubbish," snorted Lennon immediately. "Nobody knows we're here. It's a con. We've gone." All this might paint a picture of a pretty intolerable young upstart who has tasted the rich fruits of world fame. But Lennon is not merely a Beatle with musical talent. He is the most powerful personality in the group. Paul McCartney said in jest one day: "Two things I hate in life, y'know, racial discrimination and coloured people!"

John weighed in instantly. "People who talk like that really don't like coloured people, otherwise they wouldn't think that way at all. I've heard it all before [*he adopted a broad Lancashire accent*]: 'Aye, theer all reet, but they're so dirty and they bring down the value of property.'" Lennon is highly conscious of racialism and loathes it. So does Paul.

Nobody tells John what to do. He is supremely independent. However, it should be recorded that he is not big-headed. One night last week between shows during The Beatles' current British concert tour, John uttered unprintable comments about a pop act on TV in their dressing room, and took refuge on a corner chair. He drank Cokes and answered the question: where do The Beatles go from here? And particularly, what is his future? He is reported as having said he will be "out of it in a few years, anyway".

"I said that during a conversation with Mick Jagger," John began, "I was talking about when I was 30. I don't want to be fiddling round the world singing '*It's been a hard day's night*' on one-nighters when I'm 30, do I? If the films work out well, I'll like that. People say that's where The Beatles are heading for, and I suppose it makes sense. I also like A&R-ing records. Haven't done much of it, but from what I've done and from what I see, I'd like to try more. Mind you, I still enjoy playing. I get slightly less kick out of things now, compared with a few years ago, but that's natural. I enjoy playing, really, but in America it was spoiled for me because of the crap there."

Fed up?

"You know – meeting people we don't want to meet. It spoils things for me because I'm a bit intolerant. But is it any wonder I got fed up? When they kept sending in autograph books and we signed them only to find out they

JEFF HOCHBERG/GETTY IMAGES

Backstage before two shows at Bradford's Gaumont Cinema, October 9, 1964

belonged to officials – promoters, police and the rest of that lot? The real fans – they'd waited for hours, days – well, they were treated like halfwits because they wanted our autographs. But the cops made sure they got theirs. I bet every policeman's daughter in Britain's got our autograph. Half of them aren't our fans, I bet, but what can you do? It's bloody unfair on the kids who really want them."

At this point, Paul McCartney, sitting opposite us and listening to John, shouted: "Hey, I've had enough of you blasting off, John."

Lennon, unmoved, retorted: "You say what you want to say and I'll say what I want to say. OK?"

Paul: "You're bad for my image!"

John: "You're soft. Shurrup and watch the telly like a good boy."

Lennon went on to talk about the lack of new material to perform, and said he and Paul did not get enough time to write songs. "We might have got some good ideas if we hadn't got stupid people to contend with," he continued. "You know, we got about 400 records in the States, and they might have had something on them for us, but we couldn't get them through customs here. They asked £4,000 for them. Must think we're mad. Anyway, we got it down to £200 and then we still refused to pay that amount. So they're still there, waiting, as far as we know. It's costing the authorities more to keep sending them backwards and forwards from America to London than it would to hand them over."

John became thoughtful when asked for his views on theories that The Beatles' popularity was waning and that The Rolling Stones were moving in. "We-e-e-ll," he said, "there comes a point where the only thing left to do to a group like us is to knock. I get on all right with Jagger – I'll call him that because he refers to me as 'Lennon' – but ask him where the hell's their new record? They need one out now. I'd know what to say. I get fed up with the whole crazy scene sometimes. 'The Beatles are slipping', 'The Beatles've had it'. What the hell's it all amount to?

"I think there probably was a moment a few weeks ago when the Stones had it over us just a bit. Jagger's the one, of course. He *is* the Stones, isn't he? Well, about the time everybody went potty for Jagger, that's when it could have meant something about them 'taking over'. But I don't know about now. I just don't know."

John is unquestionably the literary Beatle. Would he one day write the book about The Beatles? "I don't know – don't think so, really," he replied. "It would be too much like writing an essay at school for me to write a book. I'm more interested in making things up than in documentaries. Anyway, I've got a lousy memory, really. I can never remember anything – what city we're in, where we're going, what hall we're at.

"It's just a sea of faces, then back in the car. For instance, you know Cyn [*John's abbreviation for his wife, Cynthia*] and I have moved into this house in Surrey? Well, the other night the chauffeur was taking me home, and he said: 'Where to?' I hadn't a clue, even though we've been living there a month. Couldn't remember where I lived.

"We drove around for three hours before we got from London to my home. So you can imagine the sort of mind I'd have for writing a book and remembering all the things that've happened to us!"

John is acutely aware of the *Melody Maker*'s Mailbag controversy about what is rhythm and blues and what isn't.

"We were pop when we started. Now you get Mary Wells and Bo Diddley saying they are pop. What's it all amount to anyway? When Diddley says he's pop, you might as well pack it in. It makes all those letters on the back page ridiculous. He's R'n'B, to me. But it's such a ridiculous subject anyway. People get so heated about it and it amounts to a lot of rubbish."

Time for the show. Lennon and the other Beatles got changed and John started fingering his guitar – playing little runs in the way guitarists do. He reverted for a second to talk of their success before dashing on stage: "It's fantastic really, how all this happened," John remarked. "I mean, we're lucky sods, aren't we?"

DON'T PASS ME BY

In October 1964, the Duke Of Edinburgh was reported to have said The Beatles were "on the wane". "I bet the Duke's book hasn't sold so much as our records," answered Macca. The Duke subsequently contacted Brian Epstein and claimed he had said The Beatles were "away", not "on the wane".



Recording an all-British special edition of US pop show *Shindig!*, Granville Studios, west London, October 3, 1964

DAVID REDFERN/REDFERNS

★ TAKEN FROM MELODY MAKER 31|10|64



WHILE SHREWD John Lennon is the cynical Beatle with searing speech, Paul McCartney stands out as the one possessing instant, mass-appeal wit. If a crowd of new faces enters The Beatles' dressing room peddling autograph books, Paul is the one who usually welcomes them. He talks to strangers with consummate ease and onlookers get the impression that a blazing friendship is about to develop. Sometimes it does. But equally, Paul displays astonishing political skill at getting rid of hangers-on. He is tactful, tolerant – and terse.

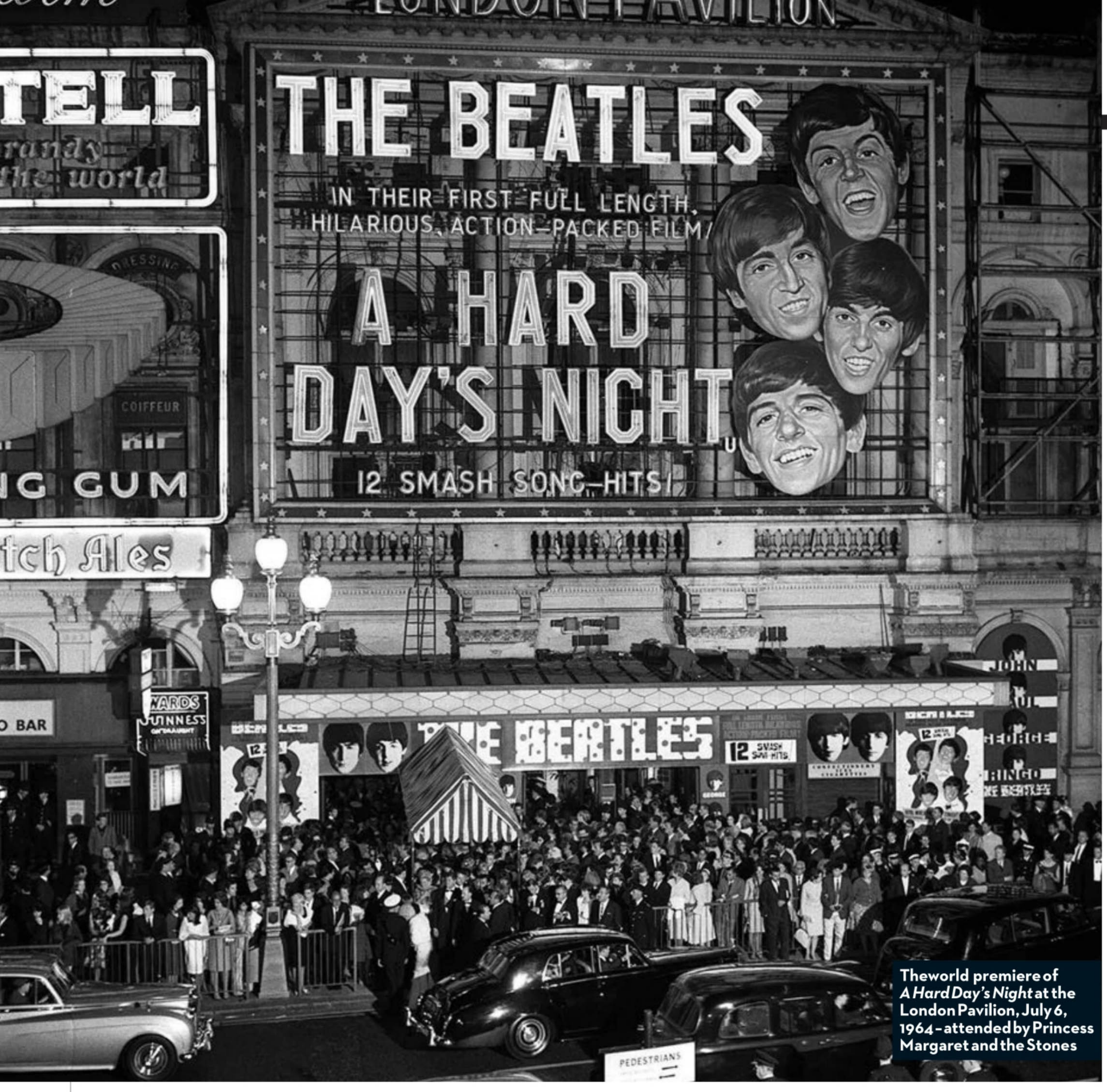
McCartney is probably as sharp and as quick-thinking as Lennon, but he delivers his feelings differently. Chief hallmark of his personality is sarcasm. He "sends everybody up" – and unless you are in tune with Beatle thinking and Beatle behaviour, he can appear rude at a time when he is merely joking. At one o'clock one morning, The Beatles were having a pleasant after-show banquet in the provincial hotel where they were spending the night. About an hour later, the "stargazers" arrived – a few young ladies with autograph books. Paul said quietly to the other three sitting at the dinner table, "Oh, let 'em come in, eh? It's the usual – they just want to check up and see that we're *real*."

For an uncomfortable second, it appeared that one of the invaders had heard him. But it passed over. When the autograph-signing and chatting was over, Paul adopted the broad Northern mickey-taking accent he delights in: "Ay, well, that's it then, all reet? Unless there's any more out there who'd like to come in and see the grotto, you can collect your programmes on the way out!" Fortunately, the visitors took it as a joke and a hint. They left.

McCartney is a 24-hour actor. If he walked alone on Piccadilly Circus, London, and a person approached him with an autograph book, he could persuade the man he'd got the wrong man. Much has been made of his boyish charm and "pretty" appearance, but his main characteristic is alertness. Few things escape his huge, eagle eyes. Paul relaxes easily, though, and he did this one night as he reflected on the theme – where do The Beatles stand today?

"I don't think we realise – never have, never will do, at least not for a long time – how big we are," he said. "We know we get big hits with records round the world, and we know we earn quite a lot of money. But sitting here, just the four of us always together when we're playing, you just can't get the impression the public gets of the extent to which we've made it, can you? 'Course we know what's being said now. People say it's changing, and The Beatles are sliding."

Paul affected his favourite Northern accent, and shaking his head, said mockingly: "Beatles? Noah noah! They've 'ad it!" He continued seriously: "But are we?



Theworld premiere of *A Hard Day's Night* at the London Pavilion, July 6, 1964 – attended by Princess Margaret and the Stones

You see, we came into this business professionally – into the hit parade scene – as a recording group. We came into this business to sell records of the music we like. We're basically a recording group. If you look at who's generally leading the sales in that field, right now, the answer, from whichever way to try to analyse it, has got to be us.

"I mean, we've sold 85 million records altogether now, and for all I know, more." He stopped and shuddered at the thought as the figure dawned on him. "It's fantastic." He said it quietly but forcefully, like a criminal who had just heard of his reprieve. "Fantastic. I can hardly believe it. Can you, John?"

Lennon, quaking with laughter at Arthur Haynes on TV, replied: "What?"

"Oh forget it," said Paul. "You get people saying so-and-so is chasing The Beatles, and they may be, in some ways. But I'd like to get this on record now, so we make our position clear: we've only ever gone by record sales. When we stop selling records, we'll probably pack it in. We came into this business like we are now to sell records, and we're selling records, I'm glad to say. I hope a lot of others are doing well, too, you know. But from where I'm sitting The Beatles look to be doing OK, slipping or not."

Being a Beatle places some strain on the private lives of Paul, John, George and Ringo. Did McCartney miss the freedom of going anywhere he felt like?

"Until I was 19," Paul answered, "I had every bit of freedom any teenager has. Then this lot came along and, of course, there's a considerable lack of privacy. But let's face it, there are bound to be some disadvantages when you are earning money. Any job that gives you good pay has disadvantages. So you come to accept that you have to think twice before you can move around in our position. Mind you, we've got it all worked out nicely now: we all move around London quite easily. We can do what we like most of the time – not like ordinary people, though.

"We shouldn't push our luck by releasing too many records. We're aiming for three a year..."
Paul McCartney

"For instance, when we go to the pictures, instead of going in when the lights are up, we sneak in just as the lights go down and the film's about to start. We have to arrange that sort of thing with the cinemas before we go. It's just the bother of thinking before we do things like that. But if you work things out, you can do almost anything without getting huge crowds.

"But I'm not daft. I know for a fact that one day, interest in us is bound to die down. Then we'll be able to sit back with privacy. Then the big laugh will be that we've got the cash. The hard fact is that one has to go through this sort of thing to get the cash.

"You know," Paul continued, "we hear a lot of people think we don't work for our money and all that goes with it. They are just thick. I had two jobs before I came into this lot. Once I was in coil-winding, and the other job I was in was as second man on a lorry. Well, I'd say they're about as average as anybody could get, aren't they? Both those jobs were 10 times easier than this one. This job I've got now – it's like teaching. You never stop. Or a vicar's. Only instead of planning sermons, we're writing songs and singing them. Mind you, we love it. I remember in the early days we never dreamed we'd earn big money doing what we're doing now. I suppose we were just lucky.

"There were hundreds of good groups that could have made it like we did. We just happened to be coming up at the right place at the right time." Paul went silent for a moment, and thought. "And to think," he said, "people still come up to us, you know, and say: 'Was it worth it? All the trouble?' They do, you know. Of course it's worth it. We thought we had something and we've proved it. But I'll never forget this much," he added. "You need about 75 per cent luck."

Paul talks about music and the pop scene with clarity and sense. "I don't believe we should push our luck too much by releasing too many records. We're aiming for about three a year at the moment," he said. "If you put out too many, you bore people – and anyway, when we had about five in the British Top 20, people came up to us accusing us of flooding the market and edging everybody else out. What do we do for the best?"

He is honest to the point of modesty about his guitar-playing. "I won't talk technically about bass-playing because I can't read music, for a kick-off," he said. "I know little about bass, really, and all I do is play what sounds right, what suits the song. Millions of people know more about bass than me, and that's a fact.

"Still, you can get your own thing going. Acker Bilk plays clarinet better than a lot of people who read music. I find the best bass I can play in some songs is two-in-a-bar. Lots of people would be disgusted with that, but for my money it can be the most effective bass ever. Those early Little Richard records still move like hell. My policy's straightforward enough, really: I always keep in with what Ringo's doing on his bass drum.If he does one-in-the bar, I do."

HARRY MYERS/REX FEATURES

04 DECEMBER | 1964

Beatles For Sale

Rushed back into the studio, the pressure starts to tell. But even as they revisit their Star-Club setlist, there are glimpses of the momentous next step.

By Stephen Troussé

CRITICS' VERDICT

"The latest package from the Liverpool quartet is worth every penny asked. It's riproaring infectious stuff, with the accent on beat throughout."
DEREK JOHNSON, NME, NOVEMBER 13, 1964

"Double-tracking is used but there are no gimmicks. The music is honest and again displays The Beatles' success formula – Talent."
CHRIS WELCH, MELODY MAKER, NOVEMBER 14, 1964

MY MUM WAS a Merseybeat teen, chancing upon the band at some Huyton hall in 1961, then following them down to the Cavern as they forged local legend. But *Beatles For Sale* was the last of their records she bought. I inherited it exactly 20 years later when I got my first record player, around the time of The Smiths' *Hatful Of Hollow*. For me the two records were uncanny echoes, the beginning of it all, a foundation of British pop. For my mum the record was evidently the end of something.

Beatles For Sale catches a band on the cusp in so many ways. Between Britain and the world (the recording was cobbled together either side of their first proper US tour in the late summer of 1964). Between black and white and colour (hard to imagine a more monochromatic colour photograph than Robert Freeman's cover shot of four pale, exhausted faces). Between rock'n'roll and folk (George had raved about *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* to John, who spent the summer strumming an acoustic, absorbing its artfully windblown blues). Between amphetamine sulphate and marijuana (meeting Dylan for the first time in New York on August 28, 1964 – one of those precise moments when, like Virginia Woolf, you might say "human character changed" – the boys got high and experienced a first inkling of some expanded consciousness). And, mostly obviously, between The Beatles as awesome club band and The Beatles as studio sophisticates.

Following the swaggering, self-composed *A Hard Day's Night*, *Beatles For Sale* was widely seen as a retrograde step, featuring, like their first two albums, six covers drawn from their early live sets. This was borne of necessity: for product to be in the shops for Christmas, recording began on August 11, 1964, barely a month after the previous album's release. Despite reports of the bounty of the Lennon-McCartney songbook, stock was already running low and Derek Taylor's sleevenotes – " [this] isn't a potboiling quick-sale any-old-thing-will-do-for-Christmas mixture" – clearly protest too much. Coupled with the evident exhaustion displayed on the cover, the title, then, was heavily sardonic.

Even the new songs seemed overwhelmingly downbeat. "No Reply" was a stunning opener, their finest studio moment yet, but there was a dawning sense that their feel for making records was threatening to overwhelm their material, the drama of the chorus – "*I saw the light!*" – pushing up against the limits of songs about holding hands.

"I'm A Loser" is widely accepted as the first strange fruit of John's Dylan infatuation, but what's apparent is how Dylan is felt more as a mood of disquiet rather than as formal influence – a dour cloud drifting through the skiffly Sun picking and harmonica wail. The same dark cloud looms over the lonesome harmonies and dismal twang of the strange rockabilly sea shanty, "Baby's In Black".

It's a sure sign of the prevailing low spirits that even Paul's indomitable optimism is embattled. "I'll Follow The Sun", a song written in Hamburg (further sign of the group's desperation for new material), is characteristically pretty but cruel, while the bright, playful, pre-Byrdsian "What You're Doing" is



petulantly bad-tempered. Even "Eight Days A Week", briefly considered as a single in the UK (and released as such in the US), among the most radiant beams of Fab sunshine pop, feels (superbly) contrived, professionally distanced. The false note is heightened by John's singing what in many ways feels like a quintessentially Paul track, inescapably souring the sweetness of the song.

This effect is reprised even more intensely on the superb "Every Little Thing", where John comes down from the melody of "*Yes, I know I'm a lucky guy*" with all the joie de vivre of a guy who's just seen his tour schedule for the next month ("October 1964: 36 performances, 5 TV engagements").

The retreat to the hardy standards could have been an admission of creative exhaustion – and to be honest, by the time of "Honey Don't" and "Everybody's Trying To Be My Baby" that's exactly what it sounds like – but a lot of the time they're remarkably enjoyable and leaven what might have been otherwise an unbearably maudlin set of Lennon-McCartney originals. The covers serve as the group's last farewell to the music of their youth (which they would spend much of their post-*Pepper* careers striving to reclaim): Carl Perkins, Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, Little Richard, and, yes, even Dr Feelgood & The Interns. But also as a kind of pledge of spiritual allegiance to serve them through the years ahead.

The tired and emotional nature of the recordings actually suits the material: "Rock And Roll Music" was recorded right at the end of a marathon eight-hour session on October 18, furiously trying to meet their deadline, which brought the old Hamburg rawness to the surface of John's vocal. Even on "Mr Moonlight", with Paul's shameless Hammond organ solo, widely reviled as The Beatles' nadir, there's something splendid about the group's devotion to the full spectrum of rock'n'roll, even its most cornball moments. This was doubtless precisely The Beatles my mum had loved.

> The tired and emotional nature of the recordings suits the material: there's an old Hamburg rawness to John's vocals

They were to leave her and the Cavern diehards behind with the amplified whine that begins "I Feel Fine", recorded during these sessions but swiftly reserved as the non-album single. In that hum you could hear all the hysteria of the Beatlemania, the supersonic shriek of their reception, feeding back into the very fabric of the music, warping the weft of rock'n'roll, and conjuring the rich and strange moment of The Beatles' high '60s to come.

SLEEVENOTES | BEATLES FOR SALE

1. No Reply
2. I'm A Loser
3. Baby's In Black
4. Rock And Roll Music
5. I'll Follow The Sun
6. Mr Moonlight
7. Kansas City/Hey-Hey-Hey-Hey!
8. Eight Days A Week
9. Words Of Love
10. Honey Don't
11. Every Little Thing
12. I Don't Want To Spoil The Party
13. What You're Doing
14. Everybody's Trying To Be My Baby

Released:
December 4, 1964
Label:
Parlophone (UK only)
Produced by:
George Martin
Recorded at:
EMI Studios (Abbey Road), London
Personel: John Lennon (vocals, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, acoustic 12-string guitar, harmonica, tambourine, handclaps), Paul McCartney (vocals, bass guitar, piano, Hammond organ, handclaps), George Harrison (vocals, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, African drum, handclaps), Ringo Starr (vocals, drums, tambourine, timpani, percussion, handclaps), George Martin (piano)

Highest charting position:
UK 1

"People talk a load of rubbish about us"

1965, and Lennon is already having to deny that the band are breaking up. But, as RAY COLEMAN visits the recording sessions for *Help!*, The Beatles have plenty on their minds: what, for a start, are they going to buy Ringo as a wedding present? A "bloody big gold clock"?

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 27|2|1965



FEW POP STARS think beyond their latest hit. But John Lennon does. He is the mastermind of The Beatles. A born cynic with built-in scepticism when things appear to be going smoothly. There is an indestructible bond of friendship and ambition between John, Paul, George and Ringo. But 24-year-old Lennon is the deepest thinker, the most pungent wit, and the Beatle with plans for the future. He is a millionaire. But you would never know it. He carries little money, is always scrounging cigarettes, and uses matches instead of a flashy lighter. He is more interested in poking fun or administering the verbal knife than in physical flamboyance. But above all, John is deeply interested in his music.

Ironically, it was at last week's Beatles recording session in London that Lennon spoke of his plans to become an independent recording manager. While Paul played electric piano during a lull and George and Ringo danced to a playback of a song The Beatles had taped, John answered questions about the future of The Beatles and his personal plans.

Some say The Beatles have now "done everything" to such a degree that there is nothing left. Was the day approaching when The Beatles would no longer be pop stars? With their second film starting this week and a third already titled, would they now be abdicating from the hit parade?

John's reply was immediate. "No. We'll still be pop stars as long as we continue making records. And we intend to go on doing that."

Did they treat filming as a serious business and an important new field, or did they regard it as an excursion into light relief?

"Yes, we regard filming as a bit of a giggle. We regard recording as a bit of a giggle as well. So we're film stars and pop stars. We hope."

What about the rumours that they have reached the end of the line? And talk that they might soon disband to retire gracefully in a blaze of glory?

"I don't see why these things are even being considered," said Lennon without hesitation. "The supposition that, just because we've done well, we might as well pack it in. The much more sensible thing for anybody to say is that we'll never pack it in completely because we've made so much money and we still are making it.

"People talk a load of rubbish about us. We have no plans to break up. We might be interested in doing other things as well as making records and films, but The Beatles will still be The Beatles."

Exactly what did Lennon have in mind for his future?

"Well, I'll tell you exactly what I'm involved in right now," he replied. "I'm definitely going to do some A&R work. I want to be an independent record producer. I'd like to find someone as good as, say, Tom Jones, and record them. Probably Paul and me, actually, working together. Until now, there's never been time. But there might be now.

"I was going to have a recording studio built at my house. But I gave up the idea. I've decided I couldn't work it. Good God, I can't even work ➤

EXPRESS NEWSPAPERS/GETTY IMAGES

Rocks stars: The Beatles near Nassau, the Bahamas, during the filming of *Help!*, February 23, 1965

a bloody tape recorder, so I can't see myself doing the big equipment bit!"

So how did the untechnical Lennon plan to make records?

"Well, I'm getting this shed built at the back of the house. That's for practice. I'll discover people and then hire a studio to record them. It won't be for some time yet, so I don't want hundreds of people imagining that I'm walking around with a big cigar and open to offers!"

What sort of artists did he have in mind? Mainly groups, or chiefly soloists?

"I've been thinking about this. I reckon there's nobody in the world equivalent in popularity, I suppose you'd say, to Presley or us. I mean a girl singer. That's who I'd really like to discover. Someone with the looks of Bardot and the voice of Dionne Warwick. Do I like Dionne that much? Well, her voice is OK. I'm not exactly crazy about her, but that's the sort of combination I'm thinking of. A big sex symbol. A girl who looks great and sings wild. She's got to be *somewhere*. There's never been anybody like that as I can remember. The sort of girl I'd be interested in for this would be someone with such a voice that all the fellas would queue up to see what she looks like. And when they see what she looks like..."

If John was so interested in building a big solo star, did it mean he thought the group scene might be quietening?

"All I can see in that way," Lennon answered, "is that this year the record companies won't be signing up all the crappy groups like they did last year. There was a time when the companies signed up anybody who made a noise like four men with guitars. They got lumbered and they deserved to get lumbered."

Did John think this had injured the British music scene generally?

"I don't know," said the Beatle. "And I couldn't care less. It's just true – they signed up rubbish and when they didn't all get hits they started running. Can't blame 'em, but they should have been more sensible."

George wandered over: "Who should have been more sensible, John?"

Lennon: "What do you want?"

Harrison: "What are you talking about?"

Lennon: "Mind your own bloody business. Got a ciggie?"

John helped himself to a cigarette from George's top pocket before Harrison could reply.

Exit George.

John went on to declare that he enjoyed recording sessions more than anything else connected with being a Beatle.

Asked if he got as much kick from making records now, he said: "Yeah – much more, really. When we started recording, I didn't know much about it – what to do, what sounds to expect at the end. But now we all know little bits about it, it makes it much more interesting. I get a great kick from recording. You never know what's going to happen."

Did the group ever consider breaking away from their accepted formula, musically, and trying something completely new?

"If that happened, it would happen accidentally," said John. "We've never had policies or anything. We're just a group."

How strong was his personal enthusiasm for Bob Dylan material and Dylan interpretations?

"I just started doing it because it was different and I like it. I'm not going over to it permanently – just now and then, when I feel like it. I just felt like going that way a bit, y'know. If I'd not heard Dylan, it might have been that I'd have written stuff and sung it like Dominic Behan, or somebody like that."

Finally, how did John see the role of The Beatles as a group or individually in five years' time?

"Don't know. Who can answer that? Even if we retired we wouldn't split from each other altogether.

"Anyway, who wants to talk about retiring now? It would be a drag. None of us could stick it."



Ringo and Maureen Cox on their wedding day, London, February 11, 1965

THE BEATLES HAD just finished a recording and George Harrison was passing around cigarettes. Ringo ran across the floor of Studio Two and leapt up the stairs to talk to recording manager George Martin. The time was right for the other three to speak privately.

John: "Look, what *are* we going to get him as a bloody wedding present? Let's get it sorted out right now."

Paul: "I don't know what you're worried about, I've brought him back something from Tunisia."

John: "What?"

Paul: "A silver apple – nice, Arabic thing. Very unusual."

George: "What's your game then? You're sucking up to Ringo a bit, aren't you?"

John: "What are you after, Paul? A job in Ringo's group when we give him the push? I reckon somebody should go out and buy him and Maureen a bloody big gold clock. The biggest gold clock there is. Didn't you realise we waited for you to come back from holiday before deciding what to buy him from all of us? Listen, somebody, go out and spend a lot of money on this lovely gold clock. Then we'll send him a note saying he's out of the group!"

It was a fairly severe joke, but knife-edged jokes are flying all the time at a Beatles recording session. Anyone taking them seriously would wrongly think The Beatles lived on the precipice of real disaster.

The truth is that they revel in that sort of humour. A snipe is meant as a joke. Their personalities are basically so similar that they have an uncanny understanding of each other's apparent attacks.

By last Thursday night, the world's biggest pop music phenomena had spent four days at EMI's recording studios in St John's Wood, London.

Their days had begun there at about 2pm and ended at about 11pm. They had recorded six new Lennon-McCartney songs and two new ones by George Harrison.

"We're on the way out, John and me," said Paul. "George is moving in. Him and Ray Davies are taking over. Folks, they are the new hit-writers!"

Some of the songs are for the Beatles film which began shooting this week in the Bahamas. Others are for stock. They might have just recorded their next single: they are not sure.

"We've just been getting plenty of stuff recorded and we'll decide what to do with it later," said John Lennon.

The atmosphere at a Beatles session is unique. The four stars enjoy making records more than anything else. Their dedication is unswerving. But the laughter flows. Studio Two with The Beatles locked inside is the most entertaining place in the world.

John is dressed in an open-necked pink shirt with navy trousers from his suit. George wears a shabby woollen pullover, even shabbier light blue jeans and a fawn suede jacket. Ringo is in a scarlet shirt and brown slacks. Paul, as immaculate as ever, is dressed almost as for dinner: black pin-striped suit, white shirt, black tie.

At 7pm, The Beatles are working up to their time for a long-deserved break, and food and drink. They are just completing a song which features Ringo singing.

"I wrote it," says John. "It's the funniest thing I've ever done – listen to the words."

Ringo was singing something like "*You've gone soft in the head*", and

DON'T PASS ME BY

An anxious piece in *MM*, Feb 20, 1965, worried how Ringo's marriage might affect the band. "I realise the news of Ringo's marriage must be shattering for the pop fans round the world," deadpanned Harrison. "I suppose that people will start saying, 'Ah well, I always did like Paul the best.'"

JOHN WATERMAN/FOX PHOTOS/GETTY IMAGES

Camera shy: filming *Help!* at Twickenham Studios, London, March 31, 1965

Lennon laughed. "I didn't expect anybody to want to record it," says Lennon.

Recording manager George Martin, remaining calm despite a frenzied career and a week of keeping The Beatles under control, speaks over the mic: "Right Ringo. That sounded OK. Let's try it for taping properly now."

Ringo sings. The song has a slight Bo Diddley beat. It is difficult to hear it properly in the studio. While the red light is on and Ringo is singing, Lennon's smile as he hears his words to the song is enough to harass any singer. The song ends and the red light is off.

George Martin: "OK, John and Paul played awfully but Ringo was very good." He was joking. "Right. Have your food."

A man appears with trays full of food. Paul eats pork and spinach. John grabs a pint of milk and gulps it quickly. George and Ringo grumble at their road manager, Neil Aspinall: "I can afford real chicken, y'know. This looks bloody horrible."

Aspinall: "But you asked for chicken sandwiches."

Ringo: "I know. But if this is the best chicken sandwich there is, get me a whole chicken next time. I've never seen imitation chicken before tonight." He wanders back to his drums muttering and swearing.

George Harrison produces his own private recording of all the songs that they have recorded that week. He switches it on. He and Ringo start to dance. Ringo nearly chokes on his chicken sandwich and his spluttered comments don't bear thinking about.

Paul: "He's never been the same since he got married. Still, I don't think it will harm his career. It will mature him as a man!"

John: "Hey, listen [*points to recording machine*]. Hear that part by Paul? He's been doing a bit of lead guitar work this week. Gear. I reckon he's moving in."

Lennon has also been featured on electric piano, as well as Paul. "Listen," says John. "On that one, George and Paul are playing the same break exactly, both playing but in different octaves."

"People will be watching us [*in Help!*] and expecting better. We can only do our worst – I mean best"
Ringo Starr

Paul said he thought the sound was one of the best they had got on record, instrumentally. John said they were still searching for the ideal sound. "I don't know if we'll ever find it. We still haven't made the sort of sound we have to, and we don't even know what we're after."

Lennon has made another record with a Bob Dylan influence. He wrote this song. "Well, it's not pure Dylan, really," he says. "Just a folky song I try to sing in a Dylan style. I don't want to overdo it, but I like it.

"Out of the eight songs we've done so far, I've written three, Paul's written three and George has done two. What did I say? George has written *two*? He'll have to go!"

John talks again of Dylan. "It's not easy to write songs like Bob's. 'Ere, who's seen that bloke Donovan on TV?"

George: "I have. All that bit about 'This Machine Kills' on his guitar."

John: "I think I'll have 'This Machine Smells' on mine."

George Martin reappears and the session restarts. The next two-and-a-half hours are productive. Martin is perched on a high chair and the four Beatles are around him, singing lightly and playing acoustic guitars. Martin sings a song with them. It looks rather like a Christmas singalong with Martin singing the leads.

Eventually, they do another run-through. The group tapes the instrumental backing with George forsaking his guitar and getting a comb-and-paper effect with a drumstick and a piece of wood.

COLLEEN HAYWARD/GETTY IMAGES



Golden boys: the group are photographed with Des O'Connor at the Daily Mirror Golden Ball, Royal Albert Hall, February 18, 1965

Ringo, who isn't featured, climbs on the back of Mal Evans, their road manager, and they walk off to talk. The music stops.

George Martin: "Let's have one more go at the backing, then we'll record your voices separately. This time, we'll get it exactly right."

Paul: "Why – what was exactly wrong?"

Martin: "The tuning sounded wrong. And you, George, should be coming in on the second beat every time instead of every fourth beat."

Harrison: "Oh, I see."

The music starts.

Martin: "Stop. Somebody played the wrong note."

Ringo whistles and looks at Paul. The red light goes on and this time the music – a lilting song by John – comes off with no hitch.

When it's over, Lennon shouts to George: "Give us a ciggy quick."

During a lull, they play back their private recording again. "Have you heard George Martin's orchestral version of 'I Feel Fine'?" asks John. He and Paul rave about it. "Gear."

They record the vocal by Lennon and McCartney, and later, they over-record on to the original with Lennon, cigarette between lips, shaking a tambourine and Ringo playing maracas. "We want the Mexican effect," says Lennon. And so the same song went on, they must have tried it half a dozen times before being finally satisfied. And not once did they tire of retaping it completely or restarting halfway through.

TRINITY MIRROR / MIRRORPIX / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

DON'T PASS ME BY

Ray Coleman flew with the Fabs from London to Salzburg for work on *Help!*, and reported, "They eat, drink and smoke heavily. Lennon drinks brandy. 'They've run out of wine on this bloody aeroplane,' he says, 'and somebody told me to just drink wine because it keeps the weight down. So wine is my drink now.'"

At 10pm, with Paul playing electric piano, John shouted across to road manager Evans: "I like electric pianos, Mal. Buy me one tomorrow."

Ringo was by now getting changed, preparing for the Daily Mirror Ball at London's Albert Hall. He put on his mauve and white striped shirt and sharp black suit and looked splendid. A lady with a trayful of tea embarrassed him as he changed trousers, and he darted behind a screen. Later, he admitted he had tried to put on his trousers while still wearing his boots.

John sang "I'm A Loser" to mark the event.

Paul said it had been an enjoyable night. George said he wanted to go back to Ringo's flat to get changed for the Mirror Ball. John said he came in his chauffeur-driven Rolls. "Still scared of driving myself."

George Martin said: "See you tomorrow." Paul said yes, and could they have a go at the song he thought he'd finished writing a few hours earlier?

George Harrison said America was a mad, mad country and he wondered what the scene would be like when they got there "with all the DJs going potty".

John said he couldn't care less.

The Beatles fled from Studio Two. A dozen fans outside, who had waited since 7pm, were rewarded with a glimpse. Inside, on the floor of the studio, lay a torn yellow envelope which had contained a wedding congratulations cable from an American fan.

Ringo spoke of that cable as he left.

"See – they still care..."

THE BEATLES regard the success of their first film as a bit of a handicap. They know that with their second, the world will be watching, ready to judge them as acting failures who rode to success with *A Hard Day's Night* mainly because of their personal magnetism. They have set themselves such a high standard that it is difficult to match it.

This week, in the Bahamas, they will approach the first shooting scenes of their second picture with concern. Ringo, the star of the first Beatles film, summed it up like this: "It's just like doing your first one – only worse. People will be watching us and expecting better. We can only do our worst – I mean best."

"It's much worse this time," said John. "Having something to live up to. I suppose if nobody likes it, that's it."

Up to last Thursday night, John, George and Ringo had read the script. Paul had not. This was because of his 11-hour return from holiday in Tunisia.

"I don't know a lot about it," said McCartney. And then, in a send-up with deadpan face: "I believe it's provisionally titled 'All Aboard For Fun'." The theme centres on a chase of Ringo's ring, with the other three Beatles among the chasers.

"I hate the idea of being the central figure again this time," said Ringo. "I didn't want to be anything special in the last one, and nor in this one. But I didn't have any say in it.

"I suppose if they'd been chasing a boot in the film's story, it might have been one of the others who had this part. But it's obvious if it's rings, they choose Ringo. Drag, in a way."

Wasn't the drummer delighted at the acclaim he received for his first screen work?

"It didn't do me any harm. When we made that, people got the idea we could act. But let's get this sorted out before the new one comes: that one film doesn't make us actors. We'll do our best again, and if it works, it's great. If it doesn't – then goodbye, Beatle people!"

The songs recorded last week – two by George Harrison, the rest by the old firm of Lennon and McCartney – are not necessarily all for the film.

"They haven't been tailored for the film or anything," said John. "They're just songs. If they fit the story and the sequences, some of them will be in. It's up to the film bosses. We've just concentrated this week on making records.

"There are a couple of obvious songs for the film, at least we think so, but nothing's been decided. We haven't written anything with the film in mind. If you do that, it restricts the storyline."

There was a roar of laughter from all four when they were asked if they could remember their parts, or if they knew the complete story. Ringo's brief sentence was unprintable. John, Paul and George looked at each other in disbelief before creasing into laughter.

They should have fun in the Bahamas.

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I'll follow the snow: on location filming *Help!* in Obertauern, Austria, March 1965

"I hope we're not mature. People are simply realising that we're growing up"

Ringo can't imagine playing drums at 30. John wants to paint himself green and red in his dotage. George hates dirty old men on buses. RAY COLEMAN hunts down the four Beatles for his most revealing interviews yet – including a day spent with a distinctly unsavoury Lennon and his wife... "You're talking rubbish again."

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 27|3|1965



IN THE AUSTRIAN mountains last week, where The Beatles were filming, John Lennon became angry with the crowds who rushed up to them on the set, taking pictures and asking for autographs. And anyone who incurs Lennon's displeasure gets the message loudly, clearly and sometimes crudely. Charm and gentle persuasion are not his greatest attributes. They belong more to the world of Paul McCartney, whose tact and friendliness is becoming emphasised with most people among whom The Beatles work. As John becomes more aggressive, Paul becomes more impressive in the field of public relations. This is one of the most interesting aspects of The Beatles as they roll from success to success. John is accepted as the outspoken one, George the dry and funny one who everyone finds natural and unaffected, Ringo the swinging comedian whose jolt into the limelight surprised everybody, including the other three. Paul has not changed much. Today, he possesses much breezy confidence and always finds time for hangers-on and interruptions. McCartney too has become probably more press-conscious than the others. Not in the sense that he courts personal publicity. But when he is asked questions he considers them with deeper thought.

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

In the restaurant of the Hotel Edelweiss, Obertauern, Austria, one night last week, it was time for a fresh look at Paul. Over a dinner of artichokes and salami, white wine, veal and rice, and pears, he brooded over questions designed to bring us up-to-date on Beatles thinking. We were joined after half an hour by the remaining trio – hungry after a day leaping around in the snow – but 22-year-old McCartney retained his hold over the interview. He answered questions reflectively, intelligently, and without consulting the others.

Do you think you have any responsibility to your fans in your personal behaviour? Do young fans look up to you and act on things you say?

[*Long pause*] "No. It would probably be a nicer answer if I said yes, we *have* a responsibility to fans. But I can't be noble for the sake of it. The answer's no. I don't believe we have any responsibility, frankly, and it takes a bit of saying. It's insulting the intelligence of a lot of young people to say we have. We used to get requests from people, asking us if we'd go to a meeting and tell loads of people they shouldn't drink. What do they take us for? We'd get laughed at if we said the youth of Britain shouldn't drink. It'd be bloody impertinent. I haven't the right to interfere with anybody else's life. Do you think just because a Beatle said 'Don't go beating people up', the crime figures would go down? They wouldn't. And it's a cheek to expect us to do it. And I'd feel a right nit saying 'Thou Shalt Not Drink'."

Is The Beatles' image changing and if so how?

"Yes, I think it is. At least, I do feel it is switching a bit now. Let's get one thing clear, though: it's other people looking at us that creates the image. We can't create it. We can just notice it, and sort of say: 'Ah well...' I think it is good that it is changing, as well. You ask how is it changing? I'd hesitate to use the word 'maturing'. That word has certain connotations. People who are mature are respectable, ordinary and I think dull. They use the word mature when what they mean is that people are in a rut. I hope we're not mature. My feeling about our changing image is this: everybody goes through certain stages of growing up. For us, this is one of them. People are simply realising that we're growing up."

What will be your reaction if the next Beatles single, "Ticket To Ride", does not go straight to No 1 in the Hit Parade?

"It would be a terrible drag and then I'll really pay attention to the knockers who say The Beatles are slipping! I mean, think of those horrible quotes we'd have to give people – 'Proves there's room for everybody', we'd say, if it goes in the chart at No 15! Seriously, if it doesn't get to the top first go, I'd say damn and blast it, because as you know I never swear [*smiles broadly*]. I might say flipping heck! Come off it. Truthfully, I'd feel very depressed and I'd be in a disappointed mood."

Do you expect it to reach the top immediately?

"It's not a question of expecting, but hoping. It's always hope rather than expectancy. Once you start expecting success you get blasé. We'll never get to the stage of releasing rubbish because we know people will buy it. Disaster. We've always been terrified with each new release and we're the same now. We like it, but people might hate it – and that's their right. This business of singles has always been a real worry for us, and I mean this, because every time we've tried for something different, and we have done this time. Not that we've got the Black Dyke Mills Band backing us! The worst attitude anybody in the chart can have is 'The last one did OK so this one will.' All I say is: let us pray."

Has the time now arrived when the Beatle knockers are moving on?

"One thing on this subject had always struck me as stupid. You get people who say things like: 'A bit of criticism is always good for you. Being taken down a peg and getting advice never hurt anyone.' It's a load of rubbish, I've never met anyone yet who liked being criticised, even when the criticism was meant as advice. Let's face it: our knockers aren't interested in helping us, or giving us advice. They're simply malicious. Another thing I hate is where somebody tells you his opinion after the event. 'Well, if you want my honest opinion, I didn't like it in the first place.' It's cowardly. We've always been worried about knockers. Isn't everyone? If somebody walked up to another person in the street and said: 'That's a lousy jacket you're wearing', he'd be a knocker. And the bloke wearing the jacket would hate it. So do we. If the knockers are moving in now, we don't like it. We don't like Clever Henrys."

DON'T PASS ME BY

After reports that The Beatles had shown "bad manners and equally bad language" to journalists during filming in the Bahamas, McCartney told *MM*, "Anyone who doesn't realise by now that we are not clean-living little angels must be mad. We don't pretend to be anything like that."





GETTY, TOM HANLEY/REDFERNS

What are your feelings about intrusion into Beatles privacy – wives, girlfriends being photographed and interviewed?

"Mainly, yes, we all resent it a bit. It depends on my mood. If I'm away on holiday and photographers start chasing, I get fed up. But if the photographer's OK and asks if I'd pose for a picture, and he's reasonable about it, I'm not annoyed. After all, you've got to face the fact the press is after you, haven't you? It's when people start sneaking pictures and wrecking a private holiday that I get temperamental."

What do you think of John's plans to become an independent record producer? He says this will probably be in partnership with you.

"I don't mind the idea, as long as he lets me set up the mics for him. Just to keep my hand in, like. Seriously, I'd love it. It'd be a challenge."

Is there anything you dislike about showbusiness?

"Shaving! Right, I'll answer this properly. Those daft people who go backstage after an opening night and say: 'Dahling, you were super!' Women in showbusiness who swear like the troopers to make everybody know they are in showbusiness. Showbiz women who act like men. I hate this type. All the 'Oh Dahling' types. Horrible. Also people who walk around calling each other 'Love'. Not the 'luv' that shop assistants in the North mean, but the showbiz 'Love'. This type is often the floor manager on a TV show. It is so affected. They think these affectations make them individual. Actually, they are following every rule in the book, and falling into every possible showbiz trap that makes them unindividual. To me, this is one of the drags of showbusiness." (John: "That's it, Paul. Have a bash! Have a go!")

"We'll never get to the stage of releasing rubbish because we know people will buy it. Disaster..."
Paul McCartney

How conscious are you of personal images within the group and do you discuss this?

"I used to panic about images, because I'm very easily influenced – impressionable, truthfully. I used to worry about whether we should smoke on photographs. Then I realised it would be daft not to. I used to panic about being seen anywhere with Jane, because I used to have this old-fashioned ideas that recording people were never seen out with girlfriends. Now, I don't care much. No, these things don't matter to me or any of us, because we don't really believe in images. We never talk about them, except to 'send up' the word 'image'."

How would you describe a Beatle hanger-on?

"There are various kinds of hangers-on, we find. Some hang on because they can tell their friends they've met The Beatles. Big deal. Some hang on because it's their job to do so. The worst hanger-on is the one you discover was a hanger-on three weeks after he's left your company."

Do you think the success and achievements of The Beatles will ever be surpassed?

"Yes, I think they might easily be. Nobody thought Elvis's successes could be surpassed, but I think we might have surpassed one or two of his, haven't we?"

Would you ever live permanently outside Britain?

"Definitely not. Out of everywhere I've been I like England best."

(George: "Leave England? Never. Best country in the world to live in.")

How would you like to be remembered as Beatles when you are old?

Paul: "With a smile."

John: "I won't be interested in being remembered. I'll be in a mental home and the *MM* will run articles saying: 'Now direct from the mental home, we present John Lennon in Blind Date [*MM column where stars review new releases*].' No I'd like to be remembered as the one with the twinkle in his eye!"

George: "I just don't curr."

Ringo: "I'd like to be remembered as Mrs Starkey's little boy!"

★ TAKEN FROM
MELODY MAKER 10|4|1965



THE ROLLS-ROYCE CARRYING John Lennon swung out of Twickenham film studios and faced a sea of fans blocking the road. The chauffeur drove on. Girls banged the doors and wings of the Rolls and screamed: "John! John!" The Beatle carried on reading and locked himself in. It was not very unusual. Just another battery of fans attacking his symbol of fame. They were ➤





Up in arms: Filming *Help!* March 1965, Obertauern, Austria

MICHAEL OCHS/GETTY

beaten by a ruthless driver. The average Rolls owner might have shuddered with horror at the thought of a few dents. "The way I see it," said John as the car glided out of Twickenham, "is that they bought the car, so they've got the right to smash it up." It was 5.30pm. Lennon had knocked off from work at the film set and was on his way home to dinner with Cynthia. The next 12 hours provided a powerful look at life with the Lennons. After dinner, it was a film. After the film, on to London's Ad Lib Club. Hundreds of thousands of words later, and at 5am on Friday, the Lennons were on their way back home to Weybridge, Surrey. "We're going to see *The Ipcress File*," said John, as the Rolls sped on. "We hire this cinema in town quite often." Throughout the journey to his home, John talked – mainly about the hit parade, and of Beatles prospects with "Ticket To Ride".

"First time I saw Donovan on TV I fell off my chair. I couldn't believe it. We'd got back from Austria and I thought: 'Good God, Dylan's in Britain.' I still can't believe it.

"Yeah, great to see Dylan doing so well. I never thought he'd do much with this single. Hope we get the chance to get together again when he comes over – I'll have him out to the house if he'll come."

He said it wouldn't surprise him if "Ticket To Ride" didn't arrive in the chart at the top. "It's got to happen sometime so it might as well be now."

Lennon does not sit in his Rolls. He lies in it. His feet operate the electrically controlled windows, and he plays ups-and-downs with them all the time. He also smokes a lot and often passes a fag to the chauffeur. At traffic lights,

"I didn't work for the title of the vicious Beatle with the rapier wit... but it's handy being tagged like this"
John Lennon

people glance inside, see the mophead, and do a double take. "It isn't – it *is*." They nudge their passengers. John either stares them out with the world's most freezing stare, or ignores them. "This is it," he said as the car pulled to the top of a long drive. "Let's go and play some records."

Lennon's country house cost him £20,000 and it looks it. It is comfortable, but not ostentatiously furnished. His new Ferrari was resplendent outside the front door.

"Marvellous car. George and I ran it in the other night down the road – in one burst of 120 miles an hour." John said hello to Cynthia ("Cyn") and introduced his son, Julian. "He's two, I think." After a lot of fiddling with his record player, Lennon started playing "Subterranean Homesick Blues", the next Dylan single out here, and pronounced it as "great, very Chuck Berry-ish". John and Cynthia spend about a quarter of an hour trying unsuccessfully to work out the words Dylan sings. He carted huge boxful after huge boxful of LPs into the lounge and finally settled for the *Blues, Rags And Hollers* album, which he loves.

Cynthia said the cook was ready to serve dinner. Over a splendid meal of chicken, red wine and apple pie and ice cream, John talked. Easily the most pungent, electrifying pop star in Britain, the 24-year-old Beatle was in searing form. He spoke of his hate of growing old; about



The Beatles at Cliveden House, Bucks (standing in for Buckingham Palace), while filming *Help!*, May 1965

STAN MEAGHER/GETTY, MICHAEL OCHS/GETTY



Lennon gets mobbed while filming *Help!* in Twickenham, London, March 15, 1965

the Bernard Levin affair and *Not So Much A Programme, More A Way Of Life*. About spastics and his image; about the British pop scene. "The scene's in a funny position at the moment. It came up with Proby, then went down, and up again with Tom Jones. It's gone a bit thin at the moment, with corny songs in the chart. There are good things around, like The Yardbirds and The Who, but I keep thinking how much better their records could have been. "Then there's this folk thing. If Donovan thinks he's a folk singer, what about Count Basie? LP winner!"

It must be explained here that Lennon is currently playing a game all his own. He makes outrageous statements like that one, totally irreverent to the conversation and then adds the words: "LP winner." It's a send-up of the *Melody Maker*'s Mailbag writers, renowned for advancing deep theoretical arguments about what's folk and what isn't, what's R'n'B and what isn't. John finds it hilarious. In between eating and drinking wine, John was getting up and down and walking into the lounge, changing records. Cynthia was finally driven to say: "For goodness' sake, sit down. You're giving me indigestion." She had a point.

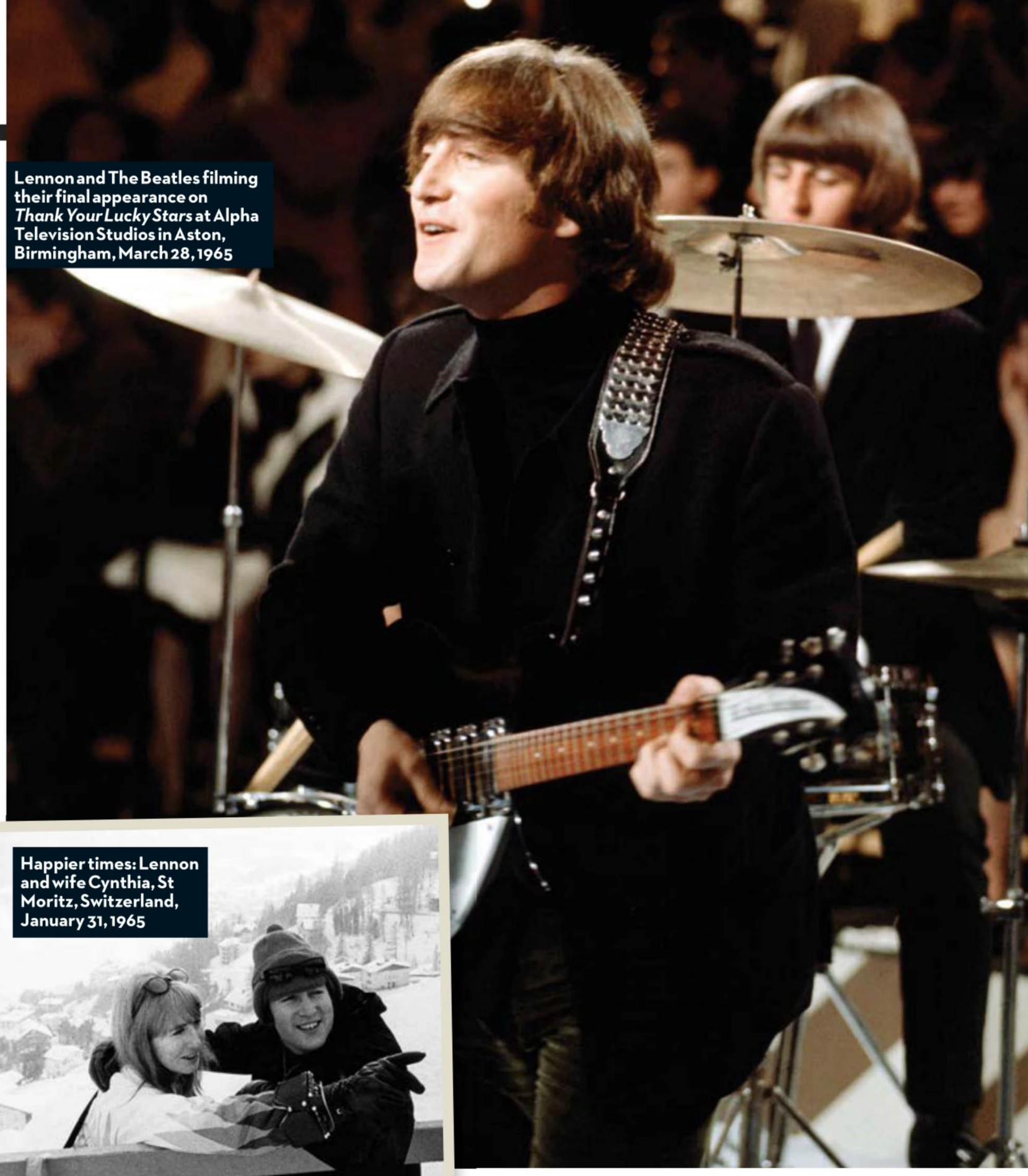
"I think Levin was a bit soft saying that bloke's an imbecile," said John. "He's been waiting for people to have a go at him for a long time. Now it's happened. If he thinks he can get away with it like Proby did, he can't. What about R'n'B? Signed Al Saxon, Stoke-on-Trent, LP winner!

"I like the pop shows on TV. Even enjoy seeing the rubbish. I like plays as well. There have been some good ones lately. I like pop shows first, plays second. I watch *Not So Much A Programme*... But sometimes they get terrible drags on the panel. I was asked to go on it but I turned it down. I'd only go on if they had people on the panel I like, otherwise it would just be a nasty night. They'd probably carve me up and if that happened I'd get bloody rude."

On growing old: "It's very difficult to imagine. I sometimes try to look into the future and stop myself doing it because it's such a drag thought. Thinking about an old Beatle, or a grey-haired Beatle, or a spastic Beatle. Butthe thought of somebody coming up andsaying 'How old are you?' and me saying '50' is a bit off-putting. You know what I hate about the thought of growing old? When I was 16 or 17, people kept saying to me: 'Wait 'til you're 20 or 24, and you'll laugh at how you looked and behaved at 16.' And bloody hell, they're right. If I grow old and miserable, I'll paint myself green and red and have balloons popping out my earholes."

Cynthia gave him a look that could only have meant: "You're talking rubbish again."

Would everything now be an anti-climax for The Beatles after so much success? "I want no more from being a record star," said Lennon. "I'm not disinterested but there is more now than to make good records and sell them. I'd like to see us making better and better films. That's very difficult and unlike pop music it allows you to grow up as a person. I'm not craving for any more gold discs, even though they're a nice boost. That's all over. I just want to be an all-round spastic LP winner."



Lennon and The Beatles filming their final appearance on *Thank Your Lucky Stars* at Alpha Television Studios in Aston, Birmingham, March 28, 1965



Happier times: Lennon and wife Cynthia, St Moritz, Switzerland, January 31, 1965

There must be a deep psychological reason for it, for John is obsessed with spastics. He talks about them a lot. Why?

"I mean nothing nasty, honest," he answered, jumping up and down again. "I don't think I'd know a spastic from a Polaroid lens. I'm not hung up about them. When I use the word 'spastic', I don't mean to say it literally. I feel terrible sympathy for these people – it seems the end of the world when you see deformed spastics, and we have had a lot of them in our travels.

"In the States, they were bringing hundreds of 'em along backstage and it was fantastic. I can't stand looking at 'em. I have to turn away. I have to laugh or I'd just collapse from hate. Listen, in the States, they lined 'em up and you got the impression The Beatles were being treated as bloody faith healers. It was sickening. I use the word spastic as slang. It's old-fashioned to say, 'He's got a leg missing.' If you talk spastics, at least you're modern."

Cynthia gave him a rebuking look. "Enjoying your dinner?" asked John. Since the rise of The Beatles, John has gained the image of the vicious, outspoken Beatle. How did he like it?

"It's been very useful," he replied. "A lot of slimey little reporter types seem to have got to fear me, it's fantastic. I didn't work for the title of the vicious Beatle, the biting Beatle, the one with the rapier wit. It's a load of crap. It's handy being tagged like this. When I meet intelligent and hip people I have to be on my toes not to disillusion them. The people who have fallen for my image and publicity go to Paul, which I think's funnier still.

"Paul can be very cynical and much more biting than me when he's driven to it. 'Course, he's got more patience. But he can carve people up in no time at all, when he's pushed. He hits the nail right on the head and doesn't beat around the bush, does Paul. LP winner."

Cynthia said that if they were going to leave the house by 8pm, they'd better move. John said he wanted to look round the house and play more records. He said hello to his huge dog, Nigel – "He's soft so I bought him to protect me." One of the rooms in John's house contains 11 guitars.

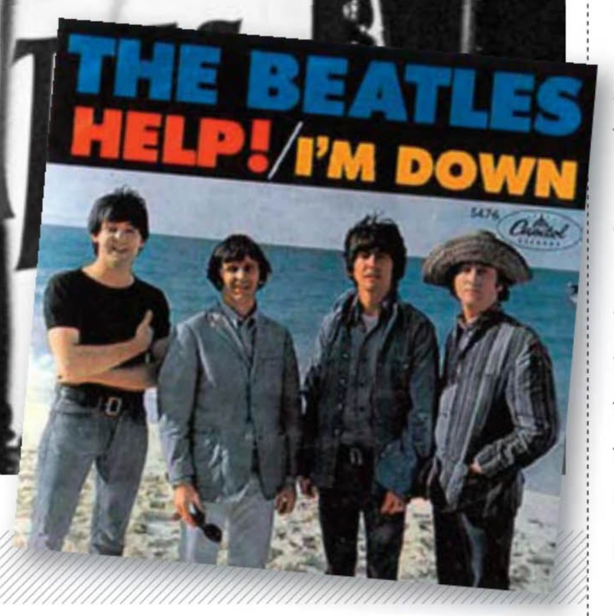
John and Cynthia took off in the Rolls for a West End basement cinema. The Rolls car radio blared out Radio London. A record by Bobby Goldsboro came on and Lennon said, "'Ere, that's the bloke who turned me on to contact lenses during the Orbison show. He used to be Orbison's guitarist."

Next tune was "I'll Follow The Sun", by The Beatles. "I suppose they think that's folk," said John. "Paul wrote that when he was 10. So how can it be folk? LP winner."

KEYSTONE, GETTY/REDFERNS



Starr sticksman, 1965



The Rolls arrived at the cinema. Soon, John and Cynthia were joined by Ringo and Maureen, George and Pattie Boyd, Paul and Jane Asher, film producer Walter Shenson, and road managers Neil Aspinall and Malcolm Evans. They were served drinks.

John kept singing "Goldfinger" to the theme tune of *The Ipcress File*. Afterwards, he declared the picture suffered from a slow start but was "not bad". Paul was knocked out by it; George and Ringo liked it. On to the Ad Lib – John in his Rolls, George in his E-type and Paul in a Mini.

After about an hour, John and Cynthia were the only Beatles left. They drank whisky and Cokes. "Notice the place fill up after we arrived?" said John. He spent the next few hours talking to Alan Price of The Animals, to Dionne Warwick. Lennon and Price shared some side-splitting recollections of early fights they had "on the way up" – Lennon in Hamburg, Price in Newcastle.

At 4.30am it was time to evacuate a closed Ad Lib Club. Cynthia slept in the car on the journey to Surrey. John said: "Let's go and wake up the others." But he didn't. It occurred to him he had to be on the film set at 8am. As the car passed Twickenham, John said: "I might as well sleep in a chair at the studio." He was still very much awake, joking about the pop scene.

"I bet you won't be joking in a couple of hours," said Cynthia. "He's terrible first thing." John gave her that cynical look and started singing "A Hard Day's Night". It seemed the right thing to do.

"I never liked buses and I hate them now – because they get in the way of my posh car!"
George Harrison

★ **TAKEN FROM**

MELODY MAKER 17|4|1965



MORE than at any time since they stormed to the top, The Beatles are now thinking about the future. Fame and fortune have been achieved. But there is more to life than that. Ringo sat in his flat last week taking a panoramic view of the world, and contemplating the years ahead. "It bothers me, sometimes, when I sit wondering about what's going to happen," he said. "It's impossible to say that if we stop being The Beatles in two years, we'll split up. We've come too far to split away from each other. We couldn't go our separate ways, never seeing each other again. But the funny thing right now is we're in a corner. There's no straight line for us. I'd love to know how all this will end. It would be stupid to pack it up while things are like they are. None of us want to. At the moment, everything's great.

"But if we carry on playing and wait for the records to start slipping, as they're bound to one day, people will say we're packing it all in because we've had it. I'd hate that. Then I look at Elvis, who's 30, and I wonder how he keeps on. John and I often have a laugh and say to each other: 'I'm not going onstage when I'm 30.' I wouldn't go on tour as a rock'n'roll drummer with a group if I was 30. I'd feel so old and out of it. I feel old now, man. When I get on that stage and see the audience I think: 'Good God. They're 16 and I'm 24.' It doesn't seem right.

"I suppose the best thing to do is roll along and say: 'Well, let it happen as it does.' But I've been wondering where it's all going.

"I want our end as The Beatles to be a good one, man. I mean, some of the rockers of the late '50s thought they were the living end at the time, then one day the public didn't want to know and they were finished. They got to be mentally washed up, as well. It finished them. We don't want that to happen to us. And it could. One day, we're going to have to stop, and I only hope everything's nice when we do stop.

"I hope I'm not giving the impression it's nearly all over. That's not true. But there comes a moment when you start thinking about where the whole thing's going. But I've always been a bit of an optimist. Things worked out great on the way up, and I hope it's as smooth the other way. I've always said that if you've got a pain, don't dwell on it. Think to yourself: 'Well, one day it's going to go.' And it does."

The senior Beatle was spending an afternoon in his flat, having been given a few hours off from filming. "This is more of a home than the other flat," said Ringo. "And being married is great, man. I hope we'll be able to live here for a long time. I only hope I don't get thrown out of this place like I did the last one because of the behaviour of fans, if they can be called fans. They're a lot of scrubbers and exhibitionists who hang around, shout all day and night, ring the bells. It's enough to drive me mad. They can't be fans. Real fans don't behave like that.

"I can't understand why people don't let me lead a reasonably normal life when I come home from work. If I get out of the car and refuse to sign

MICHAEL OCHS/GETTY

autographs, they shout four-letter words at me and everybody hears it. It's not very nice. I've tried saying please be quiet but they won't. I've tried signing autographs but they stay shouting at the door. It's a shame 'cos if any genuine fan comes down, they suffer because of the others."

He put on his latest buy – an LP by Woody Guthrie – and talked about the letter to the *Melody Maker*'s Mailbag page last week. It urged The Beatles to feature Ringo singing more on singles. Would he like to?

"It doesn't bother me. I'm quite happy with my one little track on each album. I enjoy singing the odd number or so, and I wouldn't like to do too much. I don't see myself as the lead singer and certainly not the best singer. Still, I'd like to thank that reader – Mark Radford – for writing such a nice letter. Why wasn't he an LP winner? Tell him I'd like to buy him an LP for writing it. Tell him to send the bill to the *Melody Maker* and I'll pay."

He talked about the prospect of being a father.

"I'm made up – out of my mind with happiness, and Maureen's so thrilled. The baby's only the size of a sixpence, so let's not get that carried away. As far as the baby's future life's concerned, well, I didn't have the best education in the world. I attended secondary modern and I've not done badly out of it. If the kid passes exams, he or she can go to university or college but I'd never push it. And I'd never be the sort of dad who says: 'You won't get your bike unless you pass your exams.' I hate that, man."

Would the child be encouraged to be a musician? And how much would he or she have to live with the "image" as being the son or daughter of a Beatle or ex-Beatle?

"If I had a 10-year-old son or daughter now, yes. He'd probably be lumbered with being described as my kid. But by the time he grows up, I won't be playing rock'n'roll drums, will I? It will be very funny. I can imagine him playing our records and saying: 'Come off it, Dad. Why did you play all this old-fashioned rubbish? Listen to *this* sound, man!' I don't care if he's a musician or not. Let them make their own mistakes.

"I met Maureen three days after I'd joined The Beatles and it's been a knockout all the way. We met at the Cavern. Doesn't everybody?"

The Starr poodle scampered around and Ringo laughed at it. "Very intelligent dog. Much more intelligent than John's. John's dog is just dim. Tiger isn't – poodles are very brainy. Y'know, there are times when I'd give all my earnings to hear this dog speak... Well, a week's earnings."

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 1|5|1965



GEORGE HARRISON IS deeply interested in money. He likes to know precisely what is happening to The Beatles' cash. When John Lennon, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr are asked about money, they say flatly: "Ask George – he's the only one who asks the questions and finds out where it's going." The 22-year-old lead guitarist is no financial wizard. But he spends more time than the other three thinking about investments. "I'm not really the most interested money Beatle," said Harrison in his £20,000 Surrey house the other week. "Just the only one interested in what's happening to it. I can quite understand why the others aren't so bothered. We sit at accountants' meetings and it's confusing, boring and like being back at school.

"Well, after a year or so of The Beatles making records and doing well, I started trying to find out where it was going. John, Paul and Ringo were equally interested. But they gave in. I didn't. I'm no more money-mad than the others. I've just persevered and found out." George went on to give some details.

"We all have some private investments. Believe it or not, we still haven't got a terrific amount of money in real capital. There are a lot of group investments in the name of Beatles Ltd, obviously because that's a very safe thing. There are lump sums in bank deposit accounts in the names of all four of us, I believe. There isn't a million pounds in cash or anything like that. It's mostly investments.

"Ringo has got this brick-building company and John and I have got a supermarket somewhere – I don't know where it is exactly. I don't know about Paul. But I'm sure he has got some good investments as well."

The Beatles are often called millionaires. "I wouldn't like to say I or Ringo was a millionaire in any way," George declared. "I'd say there's a fair chance John and Paul are because of all the money they've earned through Northern Songs. I think it would be very hard for all four of us to be real millionaires, anyway. Let's say, for example, that a big pop star in Britain is earning £2,000 a night. Then say, for example, The Beatles earn £4,000 a night. That solo star's got the £2,000 for himself. With us, it's got to be split four times for a performance. That makes, on paper, £1,000 a show. We just don't do that many real shows. And for us to be millionaires – every one of us – would mean The Beatles would have to gross £4 million altogether for a split of the money.

"And don't forget there's a tax fee to be paid, plus Eppy's percentages. So I'm sure Ringo and I can't be millionaires. With John and Paul it's different because of their songwriting. Hey, it sounds like I'm talking myself into being broke! It's not that bad. I know I'm OK.

"If I've got £500,000, I'm not really bothered with the other half a million. For half a million, you can buy the sort of house you want, furnish it, and the sort of car you want. The millionaire business is just status. There's a limit to how much you want to spend, in my opinion."

Despite their fortunes, The Beatles are not obsessed by money in day-to-day activities. They do not walk around with bulging wallets. Big bills are settled through their office, and Ringo says: "I just don't find anything to spend money on if I've got it. Sometimes I haven't got any money on me and I have to borrow from Nell or Mal [*Neil Aspinall and Malcolm Evans*]."

Do The Beatles ever think about the poverty of years ago? Do they miss not being able to walk around without being mobbed?

Says George: "We've never really thought that much about what we've done and what we've earned and how well-off we are. That's one reason we've kept our heads.

"Everything still knocks us out – we're not the types to say: 'We've earned plenty – that's enough.' When we hear we've sold another million, we still go out of our minds thinking how great it is.

"It wasn't the money in the first place. We never sat down and said we wanted to be rich and all that. The money's nice, naturally. But it was getting somewhere that mattered – pride. I thought recently it would be nice to walk down a street without people saying: 'That's George Harrison.' But then you see, I probably wouldn't be in that street and able to buy from the shops there if they weren't saying that, would I? People say: 'Don't you miss going for a bus ride like any normal bloke?' The answer's no. What? Get some dirty old man breathing down your neck? And anyway, you can never get on buses when you want to. I used to stand in bus queues and think about how great it would be to have a car – especially when they put the chain across the bus and the conductor said: 'Sorry – full!'

"I never liked buses and I hate them now – because they get in the way of my posh car!"

DON'T PASS ME BY

The Beatles learned they were to be awarded MBEs in June 1965. "I think I'll have mine made into a bell-push," said John Lennon, "so that people have to press it when they come to the house." "It doesn't make me feel any more respectable," continued McCartney. "I'm still a scruff."



Harrison: "I'm no more money-mad than the others..."

ITN/SHUTTERSTOCK

06 AUGUST | 1965

Help!

LSD, Dylan, secret messages and the irresistible rise of Paul McCartney. Yesterday, all their troubles seemed so far away... *By Garry Mulholland*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"It's typical Beatles material, and offers very few surprises. But then who wants surprises from The Beatles?"
DEREK JOHNSON, NME, JULY 23, 1965

"'Yesterday' is unbelievable. The best track on the album. It's sung by Paul and played by string quartet... There's something of the medieval minstrels about The Beatles. One imagines them performing beneath some bird's window. They communicate."
CHRIS WELCH, MELODY MAKER, JULY 24, 1965

HELP! IS, AT face value, among the easiest Beatles albums to define. It's the soundtrack to their second movie. It's the last album where John Lennon's songwriting dominates. And it's the album that completes Phase One of The Beatles' career, whereby straightforward and relatively trite love songs are delivered with enough vocal skill, compositional sophistication and fizzy effervescence to transcend the beat pop of their time.

But *Help!* is, like most things Beatles, more than the sum of its parts. New technology had made overdubbing easier, and, from the February 1965 recording of "Ticket To Ride" onwards, The Beatles would build recordings gradually from an initial rhythm track, changing the way music was recorded and preparing the way for their forthcoming move from touring band to studio-bound artists. Lennon and Harrison had tried LSD for the first time just before the *Help!* sessions, and coded references began to seep into the lyrics, which, for the first time, were both acute *and* vague enough to be picked over by Beatles geeks searching for double-meanings. Its sleeve photo played the same sort of trick, as The Beatles in windcheaters and wacky headgear (except the hatless Paul) spelled out the apparently nonsensical N-V-U-J in semaphore: except that, if you held the sleeve up to a mirror, they were actually spelling L-P-U-S... help us. A neat prophecy of the amount of time conspiracy theorists would spend running Beatles records backwards to decode secret messages.

But the most significant new thing on *Help!* was purely musical. It was called "Yesterday" and it heralded The Rise Of Paul. As he and George Martin wrote the string arrangement and completed a perfect track without any contribution from the other Beatles, McCartney found himself as an artist and gained the confidence and substance to gradually replace his songwriting partner as the de facto leader of The Beatles.

Help! stuck to the *A Hard Day's Night* template. Seven songs – the old vinyl Side One – that were used in the movie, and seven songs that weren't.

A couple of covers were included to ease the relentless pressure of writing new material, a perennial problem that led to the first Harrison originals appearing on record since "Don't Bother Me" on *With The Beatles*. The remaining Lennon/McCartney originals mark out *Help!* as one of pop's most obvious transition albums, as six crank-'em-out beat-pop gems are somewhat submerged beneath the impact of four of the greatest pop songs ever written, all of which point towards the giant creative leap The Beatles were about to take on *Rubber Soul*.

Alongside Macca's "Yesterday", Lennon's "Ticket To Ride" and the title track form a triple-whammy of big hits (although "Yesterday" was not released as a single in the UK). We all know that Lennon later confessed "Help!" was a cry for exactly that, a wail of depression and desperation dressed in jolly jangle-pop gladrags. But it's even more intriguing to read "Help!" as a response to Lennon's first acid experiences, as Lennon finds he's "*changed my mind/ And opened up the doors*" (of perception?) and that his "*independence* (the ego) *seems to vanish in the haze*" (the universal one-ness of enlightenment?). After all, anyone who's ever had a bad trip will recognize the usefulness of someone being around to help you get your "*feet back on the ground*", and that that trusted someone can't be "*just anybody*".



The staggering Ringo tom-toms of "Ticket To Ride" backdrop one of Lennon's richest melodies (Macca later claimed 40 per cent credit) and the beginnings of The Beatles' heavier style, while the frantic double-speed coda hints at their growing disregard for formula song structures. Meanwhile, the submissive lyric bemoaning the independence of a new breed of '60s woman might also be an in-joke about the prostitutes of Hamburg, who apparently needed to carry a special ID card to prove to clients that they were free of venereal disease.

Lennon always freely admitted that the sublime, mournful drone-waltz, "You've Got To Hide Your Love Away", was heavily influenced by Dylan, but never went near the rumour that the guilt-ridden lyric was about Brian Epstein and the alleged one-off sexual tryst between manager and protégé. Elsewhere, the warm, driving electric pianos that underpin "The Night Before", "You Like Me Too Much" and "Tell Me What You See" preface the funkier approach The Beatles would take on *Rubber Soul* and even the *Get Back* sessions. George's "I Need You" is full of limpid sincerity in tribute to Pattie Boyd. "Another Girl", "You're Going To Lose That Girl" and Lennon's slyly self-mocking "It's Only Love" prove that The Beatles on love song auto-pilot could still write improbably catchy tunes. And the wild card is Macca's "I've Just Seen A Face", a bluegrass-without-banjos curio that captures the tongue-tied excitement of seeing an obscure object of desire for the first time. The deftness and enthusiasm with which it's performed stands in stark contrast to "Act Naturally", the stiff cover of the 1963 Buck Owens song that provided Ringo with his traditional comic interlude and an ironic dig at the parent movie.

Six crank-'em-out beat-pop gems are submerged beneath the impact of four of the greatest pop songs ever written

There is, perhaps, no more jarring ending to a major album than Lennon's typically rasping but essentially pointless take on Larry Williams' 1958 rocker "Dizzy Miss Lizzy", coming straight after the aching classicism of "Yesterday". Put it down to the belief, in and around The Beatles, that fans still expected lightweight rock'n'roll, a belief that forced Lennon to perform "Help!" as an ebullient rocker rather than the ballad he had initially envisaged. This is still The Beatles who, weeks after *Help!*'s release, would play to 55,000 at Shea Stadium and eagerly jump at a jokey photo opportunity with a grudging Elvis.

The tone of *Help!* suggests that The Beatles knew a change had to come, but weren't entirely resolved to their brave new world. A not-so-fond farewell to Beatlemania, and a tentative step toward the introspection, innovation and estrangement of four grown men in the eye of a storm.

SLEEVENOTES | HELP!

1. Help!
2. The Night Before
3. You've Got To Hide Your Love Away
4. I Need You
5. Another Girl
6. You're Going To Lose That Girl
7. Ticket To Ride
8. Act Naturally
9. It's Only Love
10. You Like Me Too Much
11. Tell Me What You See
12. I've Just Seen A Face
13. Yesterday
14. Dizzy Miss Lizzy

Released: August 6, 1965
Label: Parlophone/Capitol (US)
Produced by: George Martin
Recorded at: EMI Studios (Abbey Road), London
Personnel: John Lennon (vocals, guitars, electric piano), Paul McCartney (vocals, bass, guitars, piano, electric piano, güiro), George Harrison (vocals, guitars), Ringo Starr (drums, percussion, vocals on "Act Naturally"), George Martin (piano), John Scott (flutes on "You've Got To Hide Your Love Away"), Tony Gilbert (violin), Sidney Sax (violin), Kenneth Essex (viola), Francisco Gabarro (cello)
Highest charting position: UK 1; US 1

“I don’t think I’ve ever felt so exhilarated in my life”

Having a ball at Shea Stadium, August 15, 1965



The official programme for the band's '65 US tour

Meanwhile, back in the States, CHRIS HUTCHINS follows The Beatles from Shea Stadium to the Hollywood Bowl, and witnesses the Stones, The Byrds, The Beach Boys, Dylan and The Supremes come to pay homage. Dinner with Sinatra is turned down. A jam with Elvis, on the other hand, "beats talking, doesn't it?"

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 20|8|1965



THE MOST SPECTACULAR concert in American history! An invitation to a party from Frank Sinatra! Royalty treatment from civil authorities! And a police force that cordoned off a square mile of New York City!

These are just a few of the thrills The Beatles have encountered during their first four days of this historic American tour. During these four days, John, Paul, George and Ringo have been the sole occupants of the 33rd floor of New York's Warwick Hotel.

To get within half a mile of the hotel you have to prove to police at specially erected barriers that you are either staying there or are visiting another building nearby. Even the hotel's employees have to show a Beatle pass to get to work! At the Warwick itself, there are guards in the lobby, riding in the lifts and on floor 33. But the same security which has kept the fans out is also keeping The Beatles in!

On the night we arrived (last Friday), The Beatles had to cancel a plan to go to the Copacabana and see The Supremes! The atmosphere in the streets here is hot and sticky, which stimulates Beatle frenzy, and the police refused to allow them out – in case riots started.

And on Monday night The Beatles had to say "no" to an invitation from Frank Sinatra to a late-night dinner party. "We would love to go," said George Harrison, "but the police won't give permission for anything. We would cause a lot of chaos if we went out."

NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES



The Fabs face the press in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 21, 1965

Sinatra's representative was sent on his way with word that The Beatles would be pleased to entertain him in their suite if he'd care to visit. But he didn't care. The Supremes, Del Shannon and Bob Dylan were the only callers that night. Another star disappointed earlier in the day was Paul Anka. He arrived to wish The Beatles well but was unable to get to floor 33.

On Saturday, The Beatles were sprung from their hotel by a pre-prepared plan and driven through the streets of New York with a heavy police escort to the CBS studios to film their appearance for *The Ed Sullivan Show*. The journey was not a difficult one: all traffic had been stopped minutes beforehand on the route!

At the show, they renewed their friendship with Sullivan, who welcomed them back to America, and then got down to rehearsals. John said later: "We have never worked so hard before in our lives. They couldn't get the sound balanced, and by six o'clock we were ready to give it in and go home!"

I sympathised with him. For four hours I sat in the studio audience with Cilla Black (who is also on the TV show), while The Beatles went over and over their numbers as engineers fiddled with the controls. The boys did exactly the same programme of songs as they featured in *Blackpool Night Out* on August 1. After it, they went back to their 33rd-floor prison!

I TRAVELLED TO SHEA STADIUM on Sunday night with Mick Jagger, Keith Richards and Andrew Oldham, after spending the day with them on board the luxury yacht *Princess*, which belongs to the Stones' American lawyer, Allen Klein.

During the day, I talked with The Beatles over the yacht's radio telephone and Mick spoke to George Harrison about plans for that evening. At that stage, The Beatles were anxious to come aboard the yacht after their show, but police security later prevented it.

George was talking through the hotel switchboard but during the conversation he gave us the hush-hush number of a private line to their suite. He didn't realise, however, that he was speaking to us on a radio telephone with something like 2,000 other vessels in the Hudson River basin tuned in! Needless to say, that secret number was jammed for the rest of our stay in New York.

After the call and as we lazed in the sunshine, Mick told me: "I don't envy those Beatles. Look how much freedom we have and they're locked up in their hotel bedrooms without being able to take a car ride, let alone do something like us." Then he played Bob Dylan's latest single, "pressed secretly for us eager maniacs", and danced on deck in the extrovert style that identifies him on stage.

We found that a radio station had monitored the call and broadcast the Stones' plans to land at a berth near the stadium. We had to run ashore and jump into a waiting car, which took our small party through an entrance at the side of the stadium. On our way in we were able to gaze amazed at the 56,000 ticketholders, stacked in tiers from the open side of the horseshoe-shaped stadium. "It's frightening," exclaimed Jagger.

"It's deafening," retorted Richards. The roar of the crowd was like a dozen jets taking off. Without any doubt, it was the greatest, most awe-inspiring sight any of us had ever witnessed. We were rushed in through the artists' entrance and met The Beatles, standing ready to go on stage.

"It's the famous Stones!" yelled John Lennon.

"Who are all these people?" yelled a harassed cop.

"They're the same as Beatles," roared Lennon.

The cop bawled back: "Nobody can stand in the aisle. There's a fire regulation."

"Then put it out," quipped George.

The cop gave in just as The Beatles were called on stage. They had to run across the baseball diamond to the rostrum in the centre. And as they did, 56,000 fans went hysterical. We all knew beforehand that this had to be The Beatles' greatest concert with an audience like that. But nobody could have foreseen the pandemonium unleashed as the four went through hit after hit, building the fevered excitement with each number. The crowd roared approval as Lennon played an organ with his elbow in "I'm Down". And many fans broke through the 2,000-strong police cordon around the edge of the baseball diamond only to be brought down in rugby tackles by a new line of guards nearer the stage.

It was an unbelievable experience. But it was a relief when it ended. There was a great tension – not only from the brilliance of The Beatles, but from the feeling of apprehension of what could happen if the crowd got out of control.

But it was all's well that ends well. Said George to me in the hotel afterwards: "It was terrifying at first when we saw the crowd. But I don't think I have ever felt so exhilarated in my life. It was unbelievable that so many people wanted to see us. Even though we are used to big crowds, this surprised us."

John added: "It could have been better still if we could have heard what we were playing. I wasn't sure what key I was in in two of the numbers. It was ridiculous!"

Paul said: "Fantastic! Wonder if we'll ever be able to do it again?"

Ringo nodded, but said nothing. Later, the Stones joined The Beatles in a rave-up celebration – back on floor 33!

THERE WERE NEAR-RIOTS when our chartered jet arrived in Toronto two hours late on Tuesday afternoon after being delayed with engine trouble in New York. The first show at the Maple Leaf Gardens was delayed by more than an hour, and fans had to be quelled by police with riot sticks.

The Beatles were rushed to the Gardens, but somebody overlooked the fact that the rest of the show's participants were stranded on the plane and should have gone first to start the show!

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 27|8|1965



I WATCHED THE Beatles face death at the weekend. As world headlines have proclaimed, one engine of our charter plane belched black smoke and we landed on three engines at Portland (Oregon) Airport. A fire engine rushed out on to the tarmac in case flames enveloped us as we landed.

I was so fascinated watching The Beatles, I forgot to be frightened myself. It was an unforgettable, though terrifying experience observing the foursome facing a possible calamity. John and Paul sat silently, with fixed, serious expressions. Pale-faced Ringo wanted to know what was happening and what to do if we crashed. George stood by the emergency exit, and remarked ironically: "Now perhaps people will stop joking about how long we're going to last."

I don't think he meant it as a laugh, but it broke the tension, as did John's shout of: "Beatles, women and children first!"

We all heaved sighs of relief when the plane landed safely and the fire engine wasn't required! This was one dramatic highlight of many since I wrote to you last. We hopped from Toronto, Canada, to Atlanta, in the Southern state of Georgia, on Wednesday last for what will probably prove to be the best concert of the tour.

During the afternoon before the show I went shopping with Brian Epstein. Or that was the intention. Beatles fans were quick to spot their manager! He was chased through the first store we went into and had to take refuge in the changing room! Back at the Atlanta Stadium we found The Beatles in the middle of a press conference.

"Do you like being Beatles?" asked one reporter.

"Sure! If we didn't we'd be Rolling Stones!" answered John.

Before they went on stage at Atlanta, The Beatles opened huge cartons of presents sent by fans. Contents of the parcels ranged from tape recorders and a camera to an electric boot polisher, teddy bears and dolls! "Great! It's Christmas every day," exclaimed Ringo.

"I like this Atlanta now! Look at us, digging in like soft kids,"

DON'T PASS ME BY

"Elvis did much better stuff in the early days," Paul McCartney told *Melody Maker* in July 1964. "We all liked him much better then. I still like Elvis' singing... but I wish he would come away from the films for his records. Then, I think things would be much better."

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY/CORBIS/CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES



The birth of stadium rock... The Beatles perform at New York's Shea Stadium, August 15, 1965

shouted Lennon, opening more packages.

No present is being discarded on this trip; they're being packed into the front of the plane and the toys will go to John Jr, and Ringo's expected baby. As they sorted out the gifts and read the notes, a crowd of 35,000 fans waited eagerly outside in the magnificent open-air Atlanta Stadium.

Once on stage The Beatles sang and played their hearts out with the benefit of what Paul described later as "one of the greatest sound systems we've ever had". Every note could be heard and the balance was so good they could have been miming to their records. The fans loved it! They stood, screamed, shouted and waved banners like: 'Tallahassee Lassies Love Liverpool Laddies.' Yes, The Beatles will go home with happy memories of Atlanta.

Not so of Houston, Texas, however! An incredible situation developed on our arrival in the early hours of Thursday morning. Police security failed miserably to keep the fans back, and they swarmed around the aircraft as it came to a halt. Many of the hundreds outside were obviously not fans, but hoodlums, and there were fears for The Beatles' safety. These mischief-makers climbed on to the wings and banged on the windows. To taxi the plane away was impossible. Starting one of the turbo props suddenly would have meant slicing at least six people in half. A tractor came to tow the plane away, but it moved slower than the crowd.

The police chief refused to call out a fire truck with hoses to clear the mob. "They'll turn it over," he called back to our chief pilot.

After being besieged for a terrifying 40 minutes, The Beatles were finally "sprung". They were dropped nine feet from an emergency exit, directly into a service truck, which had braved the crowd. It got the boys away.

The rest of us in the aircraft had to wait another half-hour for the crowd to disperse. At a press conference later that day The Beatles were asked how they felt about the incident. "I was terrified," said Ringo.

"It happens every time we come to Texas – we nearly get killed," answered John, and he spun round in his seat as a poster fell from the wall behind their table. "I thought we were getting shot," he yelped.

"I don't envy those Beatles. Look how much freedom we have, and they're locked up in their hotel"
Mick Jagger

The temperature was 102°F in Houston and the heat seemed to generate extra excitement. All our nerves were on edge and for the first time on the tour John went into his shell. We heard nothing from him on the plane that night; even the other three did not attempt to probe his mood.

At the press conference in Minneapolis on Saturday afternoon, a 14-year-old boy broke through the tough questioning to tell Ringo he'd been learning to play drums by studying The Beatles' records. "You'll never get anywhere listening to me," drawled Ringo.

"And he's been playing drums for 30 years," added John. At the conference, George was presented with a new guitar, and was so pleased with it he used it on stage last night.

There were two shows at Portland's Coliseum on Sunday, and between them The Beatles were visited by two members of top American group The Beach Boys – Carl Wilson and Mike Love. The Beatles listened amazed as Carl explained that group leader Brian Wilson arranges and produces their records, but no longer appears in shows with them. Instead he provides a substitute. "Sounds fun. You three can get a stand-in for me on the next tour," joked Paul.

On returning to Portland Airport that night, we learned that our plane had been taken out of service and substituted by an older aircraft, which was to take an hour longer to cover the 900-mile journey to Los Angeles. Needless to say, everyone was nervous on that night. I sat with George – reputed to be the most nervous Beatle where flying is concerned – and we talked between his bouts of air sickness.

Of all The Beatles, George has been the major surprise of this trip. Ringo has reverted to the role of the silent one and, to the delight of his millions of American fans, George has opened up. "I was tagged the quiet Beatle here before, it's true, but on this tour there have been more banners out with my name on and I have been asked more questions at the press conference, so I suppose it's given me a little more confidence."

Incidentally, George disclosed that he is buying a house in Liverpool for his parents.

"They have been looking at different ones for ages and quibbling about whether I would

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES



The world premiere of *Help!*, London Pavilion, July 29, 1965

like them or not, but it doesn't matter to me because I have my own. Anyway, they saw one they liked recently and even though they wouldn't make their minds up, I told the office to go ahead and buy it on my behalf just before the tour. Otherwise they would have waited another year!"

We reached Los Angeles at three on Monday morning and The Beatles were driven direct to the ranch-style home they had rented for their stay in Benedict Canyon, just behind Beverly Hills. The horseshoe-shaped house has been staffed with cooks and maids for the week The Beatles are there, and the four have hired their own corps of guards, following advice from the Los Angeles police that they could not be responsible for their security this time.

Monday was their first day of rest and they spent it around the swimming pool in the garden – George reading the *NME*, Paul strumming a guitar, John and Ringo inspecting a selection of American casual clothes which had been sent from a Hollywood boutique to the house on their request. The day also presented the first visitors in the form of The Byrds, summoned by The Beatles. They had met first at a London night club quite recently.

DON'T PASS ME BY

John Lennon was present at the Royal Albert Hall show of Dylan's notorious electric tour in 1966. "All that Dylan being booed has been exaggerated," he said in *MM*. "About five or six people booed – everyone else in the audience was shutting them up. The newspaper writers got it completely wrong."

HOLLYWOOD WEST – this palm-filled, star-studded city – is about to stage the production of the century: the meeting of Elvis Presley and The Beatles!

I can reveal it is about to take place after visiting Elvis and learning that the singer from Memphis and the group from Liverpool still run something of a mutual admiration society. The only problem now is which of them will accept the other's invitation first! Elvis is keen to entertain them at his rented home in Bel Air. But The Beatles are besieged by fans in their house in Benedict Canyon. Their departure wouldn't be easy.

On top of which they both have managers keen to preserve their artists' prestige, and neither man is falling over himself to send his star act around to see the other.

Enter the *New Musical Express*! Last year, I arranged the Elvis Presley-Paul McCartney telephone hook-up on behalf of *NME*. Now I have the job of setting up the historical meeting, preferably on neutral territory!

Yesterday's meeting with Presley was my first. I took the day off from living with The Beatles to spend it with Elvis' manager, Colonel Tom Parker, at Paramount film studios. We were on our way to lunch when, quite unexpectedly, the Colonel led me through a door into a darkened room – and there was Elvis, watching television! The light went on, and the tall, well-tanned figure (as handsome as his pictures suggest) of Elvis jumped up to shake hands (as courteous as his reputation promised). He was wearing a green shirt with puffed sleeves clipped in at the cuff and a pair of tight-fitting slacks.

I told him we had been surprised to learn that he was back in Los Angeles. "We got through filming in Hawaii sooner than expected, and came straight back to finish the picture in the studio," he commented in his rich Tennessee accent.

He asked for news of The Beatles' tour, and if they were comfortable in their house, adding: "My girlfriend drove up around there yesterday, and said there were a heck of a lot of fans outside. Those guys can't get much peace at all." He didn't name the girl!

At the end of the afternoon's filming I took the Colonel up to The Beatles' house, where he was asked about Elvis' career. He answered the boys' questions frankly. As he left he assured The Beatles that they would have their long-cherished meeting with Elvis, subject to me being able to fix up a convenient time and place for it.

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 3|9|1965



FOR FIVE DAYS The Beatles basked in the glorious Californian sunshine by the swimming pool of their rented house in Benedict Canyon. Although the house was several miles out of town beyond Beverly Hills, it seemed as though every fan in Los Angeles made a pilgrimage at one time or another to stand and wave at the gates for a few seconds before being moved on by the police.

Some came by the helicopter they had saved for months to charter and waved from the sky. Others walked up the hill in the intense heat. One little girl took 4 ½ hours to climb the hill on crutches and hand to the guard at the gate a letter and a ring she had made for Ringo. Then she turned round and started the journey back.

The Beatles rarely slipped out and only did so by night. Early in their stay, George and Paul went to a Byrds recording session and heard the American group wax its new US single "The Times They Are A-Changin'". There were frequent visitors to the house, including Joan Baez, who spent most of Monday chatting to John by the pool.

The Beatles travelled by road on Saturday. On the return journey their limousine broke down and they had to wait by the roadside outside a mortuary for a replacement vehicle.

Another regular visitor to The Beatles' home was actor Peter Fonda, but after two entire days at the house he got the Beatle brush-off when he arrived for a third. "Please call me soon, Rosemary Clooney" was typical of the telegrams which arrived hourly from The Beatles' star neighbours. "We don't even know her," said Paul, putting the message on one side.

Each day The Beatles swam, but John and Ringo, with sensitive skin, wrapped themselves in towel coats to keep the sun from burning, so don't be surprised that only two Beatles arrive home tanned. Each evening a chef prepared steaks on a charcoal grill in the garden for their dinner. They rarely went to bed before dawn or rose before noon. John was excited when somebody gave him an old copy of Gene Vincent's "Be-Bop-A-Lula" and it was played incessantly.

Needless to say, The Beatles' two Hollywood Bowl concerts were enormously successful. They collected £15,000 for each one, but had the Bowl been three times as big they would have filled it. But despite the success of their tour and the rich living they enjoyed in the house on the hill at Benedict Canyon, John, Paul, George and Ringo were all homesick before the end of their third American stay. And I know that by this weekend they will all be happily settled back in their own homes with countless souvenirs of a tour all America has saluted.

ELVIS PRESLEY WAS playing bass guitar, with the benefit of a little instruction from Paul McCartney; John Lennon was on rhythm guitar. The record they were backing was Cilla Black's "You're My World". Suddenly John exclaimed: "This beats talking, doesn't it?" And that's how it was – the world's No 1 solo star and the world's No 1 group were meeting for the first time and communicating through music.

The get-together took three days of planning and was shrouded in secrecy to avoid the two armies of Beatles and Presley fans gathering in one spot. The Beatles had accepted Elvis's invitation to spend last Friday evening (August 27) at his home. It was my great privilege to be the only journalist invited. There is not a picture in existence to record the great event. No-one with a camera was allowed inside.

Colonel Parker escorted The Beatles to Presley's Bel Air home shortly after 10pm. Police stopped traffic to prevent fans tailing them. The Colonel's associate, Tom Diskin, and I collected Brian Epstein from Los Angeles Airport, to which he had flown specially from New York to be present, and we arrived at the house a few minutes after The Beatles.

When we entered, Elvis was sitting with Paul on one side of him and his current girlfriend on the other. John sat next to Paul. George was cross-legged on the floor. Ringo was inspecting Elvis's collection of records. They were watching

HARRY MYERS/REX FEATURES



When I get home: the Fabs arrive at London Airport after their second US tour, September 2,1965



a colour television set in the centre of the room, but the sound was off. Later, an American hit blared from the record player.

"Somebody bring in the guitars," said Elvis. One of the ten pals he employs as his constant companions obliged. Three electric guitars were plugged into amplifiers scattered around the room. "Here's how I play the bass. Not too good, but I'm practising," he told Paul, and joined in to accompany a record on the player. John added a few chords, while George studied the third instrument before playing.

That's how it went for the first hour. Elvis, John and George providing the costliest-ever backing to a selection of British and American discs, including one by The Shadows. Presley, dressed in a red shirt and close-fitting black jerkin with the collar turned up, gave the occasional hint of his famous wiggle, even though seated in his chair strumming the bass part to each record. The Beatles were also casually dressed. Ringo, in a white jerkin and white trousers, looked at the guitarists without smiling. "Too bad we left the drums in Memphis," Elvis consoled him.

I wandered around the room. A white grand piano occupied a corner by the bar and next to it was a jukebox which contained no British records and only one by its owner, "Return To Sender". Elvis's companions kept up a supply of drinks for The Beatles, but the host himself neither touched one nor accepted any of the cigarettes offered. Even in this relaxed, carefree atmosphere I never heard him swear.

I'm sure The Beatles were as impressed as I was with his balanced way of life. "Zis is ze way it should be," said Lennon in a mock Peter Sellers accent: "Ze small homely gathering wiz a few friends and a little muzic!" Elvis smiled.

At the back of the room Brian Epstein and Colonel Tom Parker (the latter, by the way, was making one of his rare appearances at the house) sat watching over their stars like parents. They later adjourned for roulette in the games room. Epstein won some, Parker lost a little.

When they tired of their music, Elvis, John, George, Paul and Ringo sat back and relaxed. Our host opened a new chapter of the unique conversation when he said: "Some funny things happen to you on the road, don't they? Once in Vancouver we'd only done a number or two when they rushed the stage. I was lucky we got off in time. They tipped the whole rostrum over."

"It happens every time we come to Texas – we nearly get killed... I thought we were being shot!"
John Lennon

Paul: "We've had some crazy experiences. One fellow rushed on stage and pulled the leads out of the amplifiers and said to me, 'One move and you're dead.'"

Elvis: "It used to get pretty scaring at times."

John: "But you're just one. At least we've got each other up there. If somebody pushed me on stage and said 'You're on your own', like they did with you, I'd just break up."

The conversations turned to planes and Presley told The Beatles of some of the experiences that had unnerved him for flying. "I once took off from Atlanta, Georgia, in a small plane that had only two engines and one of them failed. Boy, I was really scared, I thought my number was really up. We had to remove sharp objects from our pockets and rest our heads on pillows between our knees. When we landed, our pilot was soaking wet with sweat, although there was snow on the ground outside," Elvis told The Beatles. In return, George related the story of his flight from Liverpool when the window beside him sprang open. The talk of close shaves exhausted, the topic switched to cars. Said Elvis: "I've got a Rolls-Royce Phantom V..."

"Snap," exclaimed Lennon. "Saw yours outside. Mine's just the same only I've had all the chrome bits painted black."

Shortly before 2am – early for The Beatles but late for Elvis – someone decided it was time to go. "Softly As I Leave You" was spinning on the record player as The Beatles shook hands with Elvis inside his home, and thanked him for the large boxes of all his records each one had received from Parker on Presley's behalf.

As they climbed into their limousine in the courtyard a handful of fans keeping vigil on the wall surrounding the house chanted alternatively "Elvis is King" and "We want The Beatles". All the way home John, Paul, George and Ringo chatted about the experience and agreed that the meeting was an unforgettable and pleasant highlight of their lives.

EVENING STANDARD/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

1977 – 1994

The Beatles' Live Recordings

The Star-Club, 1962. The Hollywood Bowl, 1964. The Hollywood Bowl, 1965. Various BBC Studios, 1963–1965... Shake it up, baby! *By David Quantick*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"Even though the individual Beatles have gone on to demonstrate with appalling clarity that none of it and none of us were perfect, it's hard to believe it while listening to *The Beatles At The Hollywood Bowl*. For nearly 28 minutes, The Beatles are perfect again. It's all beautiful... Gorgeous pop songs performed with rock'n'roll muscle."
CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY ON ... *HOLLYWOOD BOWL*, NME, MAY 7, 1977

"The motherlode, the ore from which their future art was smelted."
GAVIN MARTIN ON *LIVE AT THE BBC*, NME, DECEMBER 3, 1994

THESE DAYS YOU can't move for Paul McCartney's countless live re-recordings of Beatles songs, but once upon a time a live album of Beatles songs was a very rare thing indeed, largely because the band were very concerned about quality control – and in the case of ***Live! At The Star-Club In Hamburg, Germany; 1962***, legality. Famously recorded on a mono home tape-recorder placed in front of the band by fellow Merseybeat singer Kingsize Taylor, the Hamburg recording (released 1977) captures The Beatles (minus Sutcliffe and Best, and plus Ringo Starr) in front of an enthusiastic half-sailor, half-prostitute crowd sometime in late 1962. It sounds lo-fi, and it sounds incredible; on songs like "Kansas City" and "Roll Over Beethoven", The Beatles are as good as any of their allegedly rockier peers, while the dafter moments are offset by a fantastic rawness, and John swearing a lot. If you buy music to test your speakers, you won't enjoy this. But if you enjoy hearing the sound of sweat on walls, this is an essential album, albeit one whose official releases tend to be frequently blocked.

The year 1977 also saw the release, uncoincidentally, of ***At The Hollywood Bowl***, a concert recording based on two shows from 1964 and 1965. Never issued on CD and currently unavailable, this album may have existed to drown out *Live! At The Star-Club*, but it's a wonderful thing in its own right. The band hated it for its bum notes, its muffed mix and, above all, the "Jumbo jet" roar of the teenage American audience. But think of the screams as living, human feedback, marvel at the rawness – and revel in George Martin's astonishing salvage work, which makes the songs jump out at you from the speakers – and you have not only a fantastic record of the very peak of Beatlemania, but also an album which stands up, ironically, to anything released in punk's peak year. It's still out of print... Track it down, anyway you can.

Far from the madding crowd is the British Broadcasting Corporation and, as governments and media barons continue to try and end its life, it's worth looking at a copy of ***Live At The BBC*** (1994) and just realising that the BBC made a conscious decision to record The Beatles, live and in conversation, for three solid years between 1963–65.

And while we might regret that the Fabs never went on to do sessions for John Peel's *Top Gear* ("The Beatles there, with a version of 'Only A Northern Song'. Better than the one on the album, in my opinion"), this is a striking document of what it was to be a band – any band – in the days before psychedelia, free love and proper amplifiers.

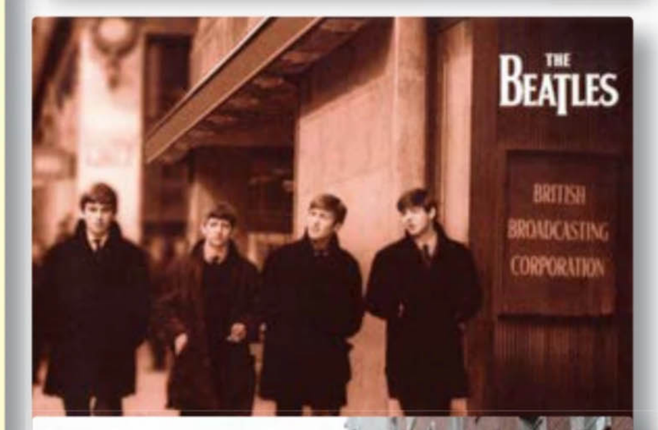
Alongside the banter between the band and several DJs (most notably the great Brian Matthew), we hear a tamer side to The Beatles. The muted quality of the recordings (lacking the punch of the EMI versions) is often disappointing, while the jokiness reminds the listener that *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and 'The White Album' are still very, very far away.

This is by no means the best Beatles album (it's not even the best 'Live At The BBC' album), but it's a snapshot of a time that you can listen to and enjoy. And it contains the only official recording of The Beatles doing Lennon and McCartney's "I'll Be On My Way".

Released in 2013, *On Air – Live At The BBC Volume 2* repeated the exercise, with perhaps greater success. More *Goon*ish snippets and skits punctuate 40 previously









unreleased tracks, mostly material from the first four albums. Along the way, surprises: John lip-curls his way through the amphetamine rock'n'roll of Chuck Berry's "I'm Talking About You", "Anna" has added bite, and the version of Carl Perkins' "Lend Me Your Comb" is blissfully countryish. George's guitar on "Lucille", meanwhile, reminds you that even The Beatles did bum notes.

For even more, you'll want *The Beatles Bootleg Recordings 1963*, initially released through Apple's iTunes Store in December 2013. A surprise bonus for Beatleheads, and a great wheeze commercially, this performed the function of keeping Beatles material firmly out of the public domain for another 20 years. (The EU protects copyright in recordings for 70 years, but only if they get official release, see?) Here you'll find 15 studio outtakes and 42 live BBC tracks, which are different versions to those included on the two Beeb albums above. Completists will also want now-legit access to two Lennon demos: "Bad to Me" and "I'm in Love".

These sets pretty much have the best of The Beatles live covered. Most other official live Beatles recordings – the rooftop concert featured in the still-not-re-released *Let It Be* apart – are spread across the three *Anthologies*. They vary greatly, from screaming Beatlemania chaos to daftness with Morecambe & Wise, so if you want to go further, you have to either break the law or go on YouTube. There you can experience the extraordinary Shea Stadium concert from 1965, and find recordings of the San Francisco Candlestick Park show from August 29, 1966, which is a reasonable, if muddy, record of what turned out to be the band's last ever show in front of a paying (and baying) audience. ***ADDITIONAL REPORTING: MARK BENTLEY***

SLEEVENOTES | LIVE ALBUMS

Live! At The Star-Club In Hamburg, Germany; 1962
Released: April 8, 1977
Label: Lingasong/Bellaphon
Highest chart position:
UK N/A; US 111

1. Introduction/I Saw Her Standing There
2. Roll Over Beethoven
3. Hippy Hippy Shake
4. Sweet Little Sixteen
5. Lend Me Your Comb
6. Your Feet's Too Big
7. Twist And Shout
8. Mr Moonlight
9. A Taste Of Honey
10. Bésame Mucho
11. Reminiscing
12. Kansas City/Hey, Hey, Hey, Hey
13. Nothin' Shakin' (But The Leaves On The Trees)
14. To Know Her Is To Love Her
15. Little Queenie
16. Falling In Love Again (Can't Help It)
17. Ask Me Why
18. Be-Bop-A-Lula
19. Hallelujah I Love Her So
20. Red Sails In The Sunset
21. Everybody's Trying To Be My Baby
22. Matchbox
23. I'm Talking About You
24. Shimmy Like Kate
25. Long Tall Sally
26. I Remember You

The Beatles At The Hollywood Bowl
Released: May 4, 1977
Label: Capitol (US), Parlophone (UK)

Highest chart position:
US 2; UK 1

1. Twist And Shout (Aug 30, 1965)
2. She's A Woman (Aug 30, 1965)
3. Dizzy Miss Lizzy (Aug 29/30, 1965)
4. Ticket To Ride (Aug 29, 1965)
5. Can't Buy Me Love (Aug 30, 1965)
6. Things We Said Today (Aug 23, 1964)
7. Roll Over Beethoven (Aug 23, 1964)
8. Boys (Aug 23, 1964)
9. A Hard Day's Night (Aug 30, 1965)
10. Help! (August 29, 1965)
11. All My Loving (August 23, 1964)
12. She Loves You (Aug 23, 1964)
13. Long Tall Sally (Aug 23, 1964)

Live At The BBC
Released: Nov 30, 1994
Label: Apple
Highest chart position:
US 3; UK 1

FEATURED SESSIONS:
The Public Ear, Nov 3, 1963
From Us To You, Mar 30, 1964
Top Gear, Nov 26, 1964
Pop Go The Beatles, Aug 13, 1963 and Sept 10, 1963
Saturday Club, Jan 26, 1963
Side By Side, June 24, 1963
Pop Go The Beatles, June 11, Aug 27, June 18, 1963
Easy Beat, June 23, 1963
Pop Go The Beatles, July 16, Aug 6, July 23, 1963
Saturday Club, Aug 24, 1963
Easy Beat, Oct 20, 1963
Saturday Club, Feb 15, 1964
Pop Go The Beatles, July 30, 1963
Saturday Club, 5 Oct 1963
Top Gear, July 16, 1964
Pop Go..., Aug 20, 1963
Saturday Club, Dec 26, 1964
The Beatles Invite You To Take A Ticket To Ride, June 6, 1965
From Us To You, May 18, 1964
Pop Go..., Sep 3, 1963

On Air - Live At The BBC Volume 2
Released: November 11, 2013
Label: Apple
Featuring 40 previously unreleased tracks from The Beatles' 1963–1964 BBC Radio broadcasts (accompanied by 23 interview tracks from the associated broadcasts)

03 DECEMBER | 1965

Rubber Soul

In which The Beatles really start exploring the possibilities of the recording studio, the word "love" becomes universal, and George buys a sitar. *By Rob Young*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"The great thing about this LP is that The Beatles are still finding different ways to make us enjoy listening to them."
ALLEN EVANS, NME, DEC 3, 1965

"Without a shade of doubt, The Beatles' sound has matured, but unfortunately it also seems to have become a little subdued. Several of the tracks, 'You Won't See Me' and 'Nowhere Man', almost get monotonous, an unBeatle like feature, if ever there was one."
MELODY MAKER, DEC 4, 1965

THE LUGUBRIOUS AUTUMNAL tones of Robert Freeman's sleeve, with its artificially elongated Beatle faces, have led to a kneejerk pigeonholing of *Rubber Soul* as a prototype for both folk-rock and psychedelia. And yet, with a few exceptions, the contents don't quite feel matched to that palette – this is no album of sensual derangements à la *Revolver* or *Sgt Pepper*. It is, in many ways, a confused album – but The Beatles, of course, often achieved their greatest music in such exploratory states. It's openly striving to find new directions sonically, and greater depth lyrically. And it conducts several different musical conversations with rivals – most notably Dylan, The Byrds, and soul. It contains some of The Beatles' greatest and best loved songs, and looks forward to their imminent creative peak even if, at times, it still seems to keep a suede Chelsea boot in an earlier era.

After all, barely a year before the main October 1965 sessions for this transitional LP began, the group were still blithely recording Buddy Holly numbers and songs like "I Feel Fine", the apotheosis of moptoppery (indeed, "Wait" was part-recorded on June 17, 1965, at the tail end of the *Help!* sessions). Between *Help!* and *Rubber Soul*, though, they'd toured the US, endured the meltdown of Shea Stadium, and met with Dylan and Elvis. In August, Lennon and Harrison enjoyed their second LSD trip, and Starr lost his acid cherry (McCartney waited another year before necking a tab). But *Rubber Soul* is far more marijuana-wreathed than lysergic.

The biggest progression is that it's entirely Beatles-scripted, and they are audibly becoming involved in the sound texture, too. The rhythm section is toughened up, guitar solos more keenly whetted, and small incidental sounds on particular tracks – sitar, fuzz bass, electric piano – seem to carry their weight across the whole album, flavouring and infusing it with more exotic aromas without upsetting the acoustic balance. "Drive My Car" must be the punchiest opening to any Beatles LP, with a soulful, funky heft (interesting to note that Otis Redding was one of the most prolific black interpreters of the Beatles catalogue at the same time).

"Norwegian Wood" is a little enigma of a song, with a peculiarly spiteful kiss-off. Reputedly the result of an affair Lennon had with a journalist, the narrative places him in a lover's pad, drinking wine, the air charged with potential eroticism. That atmosphere comes courtesy of Harrison's sitar, famously one of the earliest uses of the instrument on a pop record. Its buzz is so effective here as it's not deployed as a self-consciously 'Indian' reference, but just as a discomfiting texture that feels so right for the mood: you can almost imagine a Ravi Shankar LP rotating on the bedsit turntable as Lennon casts around for a nonexistent chair to sit on. "Norwegian Wood" has the ring of authentic experience that elevates it above the doggerel of so many of their early love songs.

That experience also leaches into the next track, "You Won't See Me". It's McCartney's lyric, and thematically similar to his other track "I'm Looking Through You". Ostensibly written about his troubled relationship with Jane Asher, both songs are about miscommunication and partners turning invisible to one another. "Nowhere Man", with its ravishing Byrds-meet-Watersons vocal weave, sums up the alienation of a man with the world



"at your command" but who feels utterly powerless.

An equivalent mutedness pervades the album's more reflective passages. The wispy mood piece "Michelle" began life as a Rive Gauche parody by McCartney, a homage to Juliette Gréco he used to trot out at parties. "Girl" is cut from similar cloth: a sighing abasement before female perfection punctuated by Lennon's lustful intakes of breath. But the standout in this vein is "In My Life", an unsentimentally nostalgic precursor to "Penny Lane" and "Strawberry Fields Forever" – in the sense that its musing on unrecoupable time past began as a 'Liverpool song'. George Martin's punched-in, Bachian electric piano solo – famously recorded at half-speed, to achieve that dilated, mechanical Glenn Gould effect – is one of the album's most memorable effusions.

Such regretful sentiments are intrinsic to *Rubber Soul*'s bitter aftertaste, and a sense that these boys were adults with lives of loneliness and sadness behind the starry carapace.

Even the rockier numbers have a downtrodden subject matter: Harrison's "If I Needed Someone", for instance, with its raga-steeped Rickenbacker chimes, is a kind of worshipful rejection letter. "Wait" is Lennon's message to a forsaken lover (wife?) whose quaint adolescent boy-girl language ("*I've been good/As good as I can be*") comes off as insincere. And the closing "Run For Your Life" is plain awful, a piece of Lennon misogyny that's patronising and threatening by turns. It's a sour note on which to end.

But before that comes "The Word" – the first inkling, in a catalogue hitherto bursting with conventional love songs, of the more universal meaning of 'love' (as a liberating, socially binding force for good) that would soon dominate songs like "All You Need Is Love" and Lennon's idealistic solo work. Likewise, "Think For Yourself" – pawed all over by McCartney's delightfully raspy fuzz bass – is a caution to sheep-like fans that mirrors Dylan's "*don't follow leaders*". In these songs, the group appears to be slowly waking up to its capacity to speak to and for a generation.

> Sitar, fuzz bass and mandolin seem to carry their weight across the album, infusing it with more exotic aromas

Sonically, it rarely attempts the multicoloured hues of the next three albums, but its base layer of acoustic guitars, boomy bass and Starr's rocksteadiest drumming to date, makes for a more relaxed yet spacious sound than ever before. For all its niggling faults, *Rubber Soul* somehow remains a satisfying whole, as well as the last glimpse of The Beatles before the serious drugs really took hold. It's a grassy, rather than acidic experience, their future direction quietly budding before its glorious spring.

SLEEVENOTES | RUBBER SOUL

1. Drive My Car
2. Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown)
3. You Won't See Me
4. Nowhere Man
5. Think For Yourself
6. The Word
7. Michelle
8. What Goes On
9. Girl
10. I'm Looking Through You
11. In My Life
12. Wait
13. If I Needed Someone
14. Run For Your Life

Released: December 3, 1965
Label: Parlophone (UK), Capitol (US)

Produced by: George Martin

Recorded at: EMI Studios (Abbey Road), London

Personnel: John Lennon (vocals, rhythm and acoustic guitar, electric piano), Paul McCartney (vocals, lead and acoustic guitar, bass, piano), George Harrison (vocals, lead guitar, rhythm guitar, acoustic guitar, bass, sitar), Ringo Starr (drums, percussion, vocals, organ), George Martin (electric piano, harmonium), Mal Evans (organ)

Highest charting position: UK 1; US version 1

Eye-watering: a press conference at Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich June 23, 1966

"I find life is an education..."

The Beatles' minds are expanding as work progresses on the next LP – 'Magic Circles'? 'Beatles On Safari'? 'Revolver'? – and Paul immerses himself in Stockhausen and the *Tibetan Book Of The Dead*. First, though, there's a return to Hamburg, and an emotional reunion with Astrid Kirchherr

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 11|3|1966



JOHN LENNON AND I tried something unusual last week – we went to lunch. Unusual for him because he never lunches out and unusual for me because I normally eat before 3.30pm! But then journalists have to get up earlier than Beatles do.

John arrived (on time) to test the new experience and we moved away in style in the luxury of his Rolls-Royce Phantom V, surveying Mayfair from behind darkened windows that allow you to see out but no-one to see in. It's something like travelling in an ambulance, but ambulances are rarely fitted with a TV and fridge! The phone in the back of the car hummed: "Can't be for me," said John, "no-one's got the number."

We arrived at the restaurant in Regent Street and John sent the car away, asking the driver to return in 90 minutes. Only when it had gone did we discover that the restaurant, where our table was booked for 3.15, closes at 3... "Ere, it's John Lennon," said a woman to her friend, but before her friend had turned round we were in the back of a taxi. The driver said he knew a nice little caff in Soho, and that sounded better than sandwiches and tea at NEMS (the Epstein Emporium), so off we went. The place was empty and the food smelt good, though sherry in the soup was the closest we could get to alcohol at that time, much to the regret of our waiter. John removed his PVC mac ("Bought it in Tahiti for 15 bob") and the Lennon interview began...

You have often said you don't want to be playing in a pop group when you reach 30; you are now in your 26th year. The only firm date in The Beatles' diary seems to be the *NME* Poll Winners Concert on May 1. Is this the start of the retirement process?

No, we're going to Germany, America and Japan this year. It's an accident that we're not working now; we should have had two weeks' holiday after Christmas and then started on the next film, but it isn't ready. We want to work and we've got plenty to do, writing songs, taping things and so on. Paul and I ought to get down to writing some songs for the new LP next week.

"14 songs – all got to be written and recorded 'til you're satisfied with them. It's hard work, man"

Paul McCartney

I hope he and Jane aren't going away or God knows when we'll be ready to record. George thought we'd written them and were all ready – that's why he came dashing back from his honeymoon and we hadn't got a thing ready. We'll have to get started, there's been too much messing round. But I feel we've only just finished *Rubber Soul*, then I realise we did it months ago. We're obviously not going to work harder than we want to now, but you get a bit fed up of doing nothing.

Now that you've got all the money you need and plenty of time on your hands, don't you ever get the urge to do something different?

I've had one or two things up my sleeve, I was going to make recordings of some of my poetry. But I'm not high-powered. I just sort of stand there and let things happen to me. I should have finished a new book – it's supposed to be out this month but I've only done one page! I thought, 'Why should I break me back getting books out like records?'

Do you ever worry that the money you have won't be enough to last your lifetime?

Yes! I get fits of worrying about that. I get visions of being one of those fools who do it all in by the time they're 30. Then I imagine writing a series for *The People* saying "I was going to spend, spend, spend..." I thought about this a while back, so I put the Ferrari and the Mini up for sale. Then one of the accountants said I was all right, so I got the cars back. It's the old story of ➤

FIONA ADAMS/REDFERNS

never knowing how much money we've got. I've tried to find out, but with income tax to be deducted and the money coming in from all over the place, the sums get too complicated for me, I can't even do my times table. If I'm spending £10,000 I say to myself: "You've had to earn £30,000 before tax to get that."

What sort of people are your guests at home in Weybridge?
We entertain very few. Proby was there one night, Martin another, those are the only two we've specifically said, 'Come to dinner' to and made preparations. Normally I like people to drop round on the off chance. It cuts out all that formal entertaining business. We've just had Ivan and Jean down for a weekend – old friends from Liverpool – and Pete Shotton, the fellow who runs my supermarket, came round on Saturday.

Is the Weybridge house a permanent home?
No, it's not. I'm dying to move into town but I'm waiting to see how Paul gets on when he goes into his townhouse. If he gets by all right, then I'll sell the place at Weybridge. I was thinking the other night, though, it might not be easy to find a buyer. How do you sell somebody a pink, green and purple house? We've had purple velvet put up on the dining room walls – it sets off the old, scrubbed table we eat on. Then there's the "funny" room upstairs. I painted that all colours, changing from one to another as I emptied each can of paint. And there's the plants in the bath... I suppose I could have a flat in town but I don't want to spend another £20,000 just to have somewhere to stay overnight when I've had too much bevvy to drive home.

What kind of TV programmes do you watch?
The Power Game is my favourite. I love that. And next to it *Danger Man* and *The Rat Catchers* – did you see that episode when that spy, the clever one, shot a nun by mistake? I love that and I was so glad it happened to the clever one.

What's going to come out of the next recording sessions?
Literally, anything. Electronic music, jokes – the next LP is going to be very different. We wanted it so there was no space between the tracks – just continuous. But they wouldn't wear it. Paul and I are very keen on this electronic music. You make it clinking glasses together or with bleeps from the radio, then you loop the tape to repeat the noises at intervals. Some people build up whole symphonies from it. It would have been better than the background music we had for the last film. All those silly bands. Never again!

CHRIS HUTCHINS

★ TAKEN FROM
NME 24|6|1966



I HAVE INTERVIEWED Paul McCartney travelling in a car at speed. Battling up a crowded flight of stairs. In a smoky billiards room. On the telephone. At a recording session. Climbing up a ladder. Walking along Tottenham Court Road. In a taxi. Trapped in a room with fans breaking the door down. Even on a roof.

Bizarre situations some of them may have been, but the one that beats them all took place at BBC TV's *Top Of The Pops* the other day. Paul, perched on the edge of a bath, answered my questions. I sat on a lavatory! An odd place for an interview, perhaps, but at that time the room in question happened to be just about the only quiet place in the entire TV Centre.

Girls were here, there and everywhere: mooning up and down the corridors, standing in the entrance hall, and being forced away from The Beatles' dressing room next door. Cups of tea were brought in and Paul rested his in the washbasin.

"Fans," he said simply, almost thinking aloud. "Funny, really. Some of them have a go at me, and John and George and Ringo. They say we don't make enough personal appearances. If only they'd realise. I mean, they think we've just been loafing about the past few months. Don't they realise we've been working on our next album since April? It's a long time.

"I suppose there's some won't like it, but if we tried to please everyone we'd never get started. We try to be as varied as possible... on the next LP there's a track with Ringo doin' a children's song, and another with electronic sounds."

He started to finger his lip, almost without thinking, and I asked him about reports that he'd broken a tooth.

"You're right," he admitted candidly. "I did it not long ago when I came off a moped. Now I've had it capped... look."

I looked but I couldn't see anything. A perfect mend. Only a small scar remains on his lip as a souvenir.

"It was quite a serious accident at the time. It probably sounds daft, having a serious accident on a motorised bicycle, but I came off hard and I got knocked about a bit. My head and lip were cut and I broke the tooth. I was only doing 30, but it was dark and I hit a stone and went flyin' through the air. It was my fault, all right. It was a nice night and I was looking at the moon!"

He sipped his tea and reached for a cigarette.

"What about all this 'Didn't Paul McCartney look ill on TV', then?" he went on, referring to Mama Cass' remarks in *NME*'s America Calling last week. "I haven't been ill. Apart from the accident, I'm dead fit. I know what it was, though. When we filmed those TV clips for 'Paperback Writer', I'd only just bashed my tooth, an' we'd been working a bit hard on the LP an' I hadn't had much sleep. That was it.

"We haven't had much time for anything but the LP. I mean, 14 songs – all got to be written and recorded 'til you're satisfied with them. It's hard work, man.

"I've done a bit of reading, though – Frank Harris, *My Life And Loves*. I don't believe half of it! He can't 'arf boast. I also read Jean Cocteau's *Opium*. Frightening. No. What am I saying? It's not frightening at all.

"Films? Yeah, I saw *Cul-De-Sac*, with Donald Pleasence. Not bad, not bad. But it's a bit drawn out towards the end. I also saw the play, *Juno And The Paycock*. Great!

"No, I don't think any of us will write a play or a musical, not for a long time. People are always asking us that, but the thing is that we put all our imagination and ideas into our songs. Honestly, they take so much concentration.

"'Paperback Writer'? Well, this came about because I love the word 'Paperback'."

He seemed to savour the word and rolled it around his tongue.

"Anyway, when we did the song, we wrote the words down like we were writing a letter." He waved his arm as if writing across a sheet of paper. "We sort of started off 'Dear Sir or Madam', then carried on from there. If you look at the words I think you'll see what I mean, the way they flow like a letter. But that's it really, there's no story behind it and it wasn't inspired by any real-life characters."

Paul and the rest of the Beatles shrugged off questions about them not making No 1 first time

★ TAKEN FROM
MM 01/01/1966

pop think in

PAUL McCARTNEY

Glamour, films, Eppy —Paul leads off in the Beatle's pop think-in month

FILMS
I love them, but I can't stand westerns. But I love going to the pictures. Peanuts.

SPOTS
Never had all that many and I was thankful to the guiding forces.

VIETNAM
Bombs and shooting and killing and people doing things they shouldn't.

FRANCE
Paris. A great looking city. One of my favourite countries. The language sounds great. Maybe because I didn't do it at school and I can't speak a word.

WIMPOLE STREET
Dentists . . . and friendly faces.

PLAYBOY
You couldn't print it.

GLAMOUR GIRLS
Most are so unglamorous, it isn't true. Girls with Brillo pad hair who shouldn't bother.

BUSES
I love buses.

STRING BASSES
They hurt your fingers, especially if you're a two-pound weakling like me.

EPPY
Someone who's learned a lot in a very short time and is as straight as they come.

TITO BURNS
While Rome fiddles.

CIGGIES
I seem to smoke them all the time and get great pleasure from it, so there.

GEORGE MARTIN
Great fellow who's very good at his job.

PHOTOGRAPHERS
They've got a hell of a job because if the editor says go and get a picture of Onassis in his bath, they have to do it. They probably realise it's a dirty trick but they do it just the same. It's a good thing they realise it's a low trick, but they still have to do it.

PSYCHIATRY
It helps but it's not the whole answer.

DRESSING GOWNS
I like them. I like the backing. Good to dance to.

LIVERPOOL
Home.

CARS
I like them, but mainly because they get you from place to place.

RHODESIA
Colour prejudice, I suppose.

DOGS
The only ones I don't like are Great Danes without a sense of proportion.

CATS
I like them but my dad hates them because they pee on the lavender.

ITALY
I like Rome. It's another fantastic looking place. It's one of the greatest looking cities in the world.

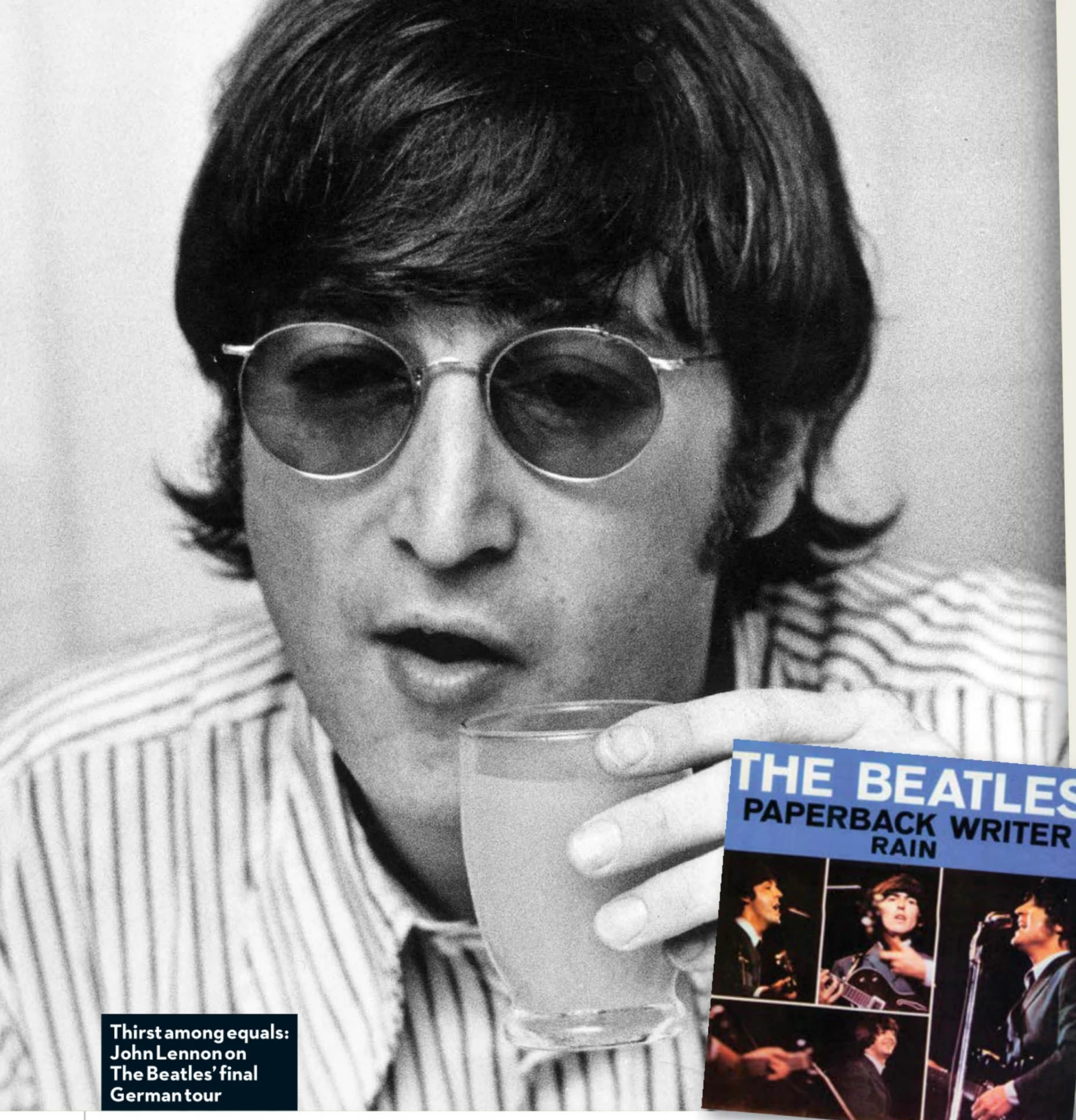
DE GAULLE
De Gerrier!

COWBOYS
I don't like them but I liked pretending to be one in America last year.

CHILDREN
Up to a certain age, I love all of them. After that, some of them get wrecked, mainly by parents.

COUNT BASIE
I haven't heard enough of him to know if I like him or not.

TOOTH PASTE
Fab. Gear. Madison. Twist. Crazy. Dig. Most.



Thirst among equals: John Lennon on The Beatles' final German tour

pop think in

★ TAKEN FROM MM 15/01/1966

JOHN LENNON

John Lennon knew all about the MM's Pop Think-in when he was approached to sit in the "hot seat". "Yeah, it'll be a laugh," he said, settling himself down in his chair and waiting for the first question, "but I hope I don't get rotten questions like I get rotten records in Blind Date."

VIETNAM
P. F. Sloan. I don't like what's happening there.

MONEY
Nice. Great.

PLAYBOY
The magazine or the man? The magazine. It's nice.

LITTLE ANNIE FANNY (Playboy cartoon).
I don't read the cartoon. I hardly read the book. I have seen it though. Imagine what the bloke who draws it thinks about!

GUITARS
Guitars are great. Part of life.

AEROPLANES
I don't like them. At first they were a nice adventure. I like flying less the more we do. We can get to most places well enough by road. We've flown so much, something could happen the more we do.

EPPY
He's great, you know. When people talk about him, they say he's harsh and hard and I expect he can be a bit of a bastard at times. He's a businessman, so he has to be. He's never a businessman with us though. We only talk business about twice a year. He sometimes has a go at us, then we have a go back and it's forgotten.

MILK
It's great. It goes on corn flakes, on your porridge or in tea. It does everything. I always drink a pint before going out on the booze. Or I drink it when I come back. It keeps you going, too. Two Aspros and a glass of milk can keep you going for days.

TOURS
Great—if they're great tours. There was only one I didn't enjoy and I can't remember which one that was now.

NEGROES
I always think of music when I hear someone say Negro. I suppose I should think about anti-apartheid and all that. I don't agree with apartheid. But Negroes mean music to me.

BABIES
I'm not keen on any except my own. I'm typical of most men in that respect, I suppose. I think he does marvellous things which no other baby ever does. For instance, if he pounds on the piano I think, look at that, it's marvellous, when any kid would do the same in time if there was a piano in the house.

LIVERPOOL
It's still home. Even though my aunt has moved away and I have to stay with Paul if I go there. If I'm in London, home is Weybridge, but if I say I'm going home, I mean Liverpool. It'd be the same if I was from Paris and lived in Marseilles. Paris would always be home.

PUNCH-UPS
They aren't there any more with me. It all happened when I was 18 and 19.

PUBS
I've never gone much on pubs. There have been very few pubs I've had much to do with and they were in Liverpool, like the Grapes near the Cavern, which was the one we used to use.

SKETCHING
I don't sketch. I occasionally draw things but I don't sketch.

WHISKY
I go on it and off it. At the moment, I'm off it. I've been drinking solidly for three years.

JOURNALISTS
On the whole they are all right. There's a horrible nasty element in a few, the same as any job. Usually though the bastards are famous for being bastards. It's the ones who seem nice and prove to be bastards later that I can't stand. They're all part of the machine after all. If there were no journalists there'd be no us.

SNOW
I liked it in Austria and Switzerland. I liked Austria when I was there.

CHRISTMAS CARDS
I never think about them. If I do it's usually too late.

ROLLS ROYCES
Great, but even they are not perfect.

SHORT HAIR
Okay if you've a short head. Some people suit their hair long and some suit it short.

AMERICA
Some of it's great and some is awful. Good and bad.

TV POP SHOWS
They could be better or worse. I'd sooner have a bad pop show on TV than none at all.

RHODESIA
I dunno what they're up to. I don't like that Smith bloke. I don't really know enough about it.

BOOTS
They keep me warm. I don't always wear them though.

GOYA
Some of it's all right. Doesn't he paint ballet pictures? No? Oh well * * * * it then!

COMBS
I only like the kind my aunt gets me from Woolworths in Liverpool.

'No more punch-ups. It all happened at 18 and 19'

with "Paperback Writer" with a sort of "That's showbusiness" air. They regard it as just one of those things... and as they're up there at No 1 this week, perhaps they're right. Paul shows more interest when you ask him about his homes. There are three now: one in St John's Wood, London, for which he is reputed to have paid £40,000; one in Liverpool; and the newest acquisition – a farm in Scotland.

"Aye the noo," he beamed, affecting a credible Scots accent. "It's just a wee small place, up there at the tip of Scotland, and aye plarrn tae make the occasional trip therre for a wee spell of solitude."

Suddenly, he dropped the Scots bit and got back to normal. "It's not bad, though – 200 acres and a farmhouse. I can't tell you how much it was, but it was well worth the money as far as I'm concerned. As far as the St John's Wood house goes, I've furnished it in traditional style because I don't go for this modern stuff that always looks as if it needs something doing to it. I like it to be comfortable. Those mod leather chairs... ugh. They're too cold." He looked suitably pained.

"Do I know anything about property? Not really. Well, I suppose I do, come to think of it. I'm being vague. But don't think I'm a big property tycoon. I only buy places I like. I haven't got anything abroad."

I asked him about the mystery instrument mentioned in my *NME* feature last week, bought for £110 by recording manager George Martin and used by him on one track of the forthcoming album. George had amiably refused to name it until The Beatles had given the all-clear.

Paul laughed. "Why the mystery? It's only a clavichord and it makes a nice sound. There's no real weird stuff on this LP. Anyway, I've stopped regarding things as way-out any more."

I reminded him of an occasion when I'd told him that "Twist And Shout" was well worth releasing as a single, and he'd answered that it was too "way-out".

He agreed. "You're right. We thought it was at the time. Anyway, these days I've stopped thinking that anything is weird or different. There'll always be people about like that Andy Warhol in the States, the bloke who makes great long films of people just sleeping. Nothin' weird anymore. We sit down and write, or go into the recording studios, and we just see what comes up."

He took another sip of tea.

"D'you know the longest session we ever did in the studios? It was for the *Rubber Soul* album, an' it went on from five in the evening till half-past-six the next day. Yeah, it was tough, OK, but we had to do it. We do a lot of longer sessions now than we used to, because I suppose we're far more interested in our sound."

I asked him about The Beatles' film situation.

"Still the same," said Paul, flatly. "There's nothing yet, but we don't mind waiting. One thing is definite, in the next film we want to do all the music ourselves. It hasn't been what we've wanted before, with us writing songs and others doing the score. I suppose we'll also get down to a musical one day, but you can bet it won't be like any other musical. We don't want to do any of that stuff Lionel Bart was doin' 50 years ago."

He fingered a red carnation in his lapel (all The Beatles had them; gifts of a girl at London Airport terminal, where they'd been for cholera injections in time for their Far East tour).

"I'm learning all the time. You do, if you keep your eyes open. I find life is an education. I go to plays and I am interested in the arts, but it's only because I keep my eyes open and I see what's going on around me. Anyone can learn... if they look. I mean, nowadays I'm interested in the electronic music of people like Berio and Stockhausen, who's great. It opens your eyes and ears.

"On the LP, we've got this track with electronic effects I worked out myself, with words from the *Tibetan Book Of The Dead*. We did it because I, for one, am sick of doing sounds that people can claim to have heard before. Anyway, we played it to the Stones and The Who, and they visibly sat up and were interested.

"We also played it to Cilla... who just laughed!" He himself grinned at the memory.

Before our bathroom interview, Paul, John, George and Ringo had taken part in a small press conference in another odd location: a

DON'T PASS ME BY

In July 1966, The Beatles revealed their dreams to *NME*. John Lennon remembered schoolboy dreams of flying over Liverpool in a plane: "It was probably a subconscious urge to get above people. I used to mess around at school, but I must have had ambition without realising it."

FIONA ADAMS/REDFERNS

spartan-looking changing room of the kind we used to have at school. There were no seats and the few invited journalists had to mingle with the famous four as best they could. I saw that no-one seemed to be speaking to Ringo, who stood on his own in a corner, so I struggled over and almost strangled myself on a coat rack in the process.

It was the same old Ringo: pleasant, but a little staccato with the conversation. "Yeah, life's great," he confirmed. "Bin workin' hard though. Not much time to rest. When I'm free? Well, I get up about two-ish most days, and I usually go clubbing till three in the mornin'. I like that. If it's a nice day I go over and have a swim in John's pool. I'd get one meself, but it's not worth it when John's is just up the road.

"Me buildin' business? Not bad, not bad. We've sold quite a few flats and my firm's been doin' a bit of work round at George's and John's places."

"So you've been making a bit of money out of George and John?" I ventured brightly.

"Yeah," said Ringo mournfully.

I bade farewell as Ringo shouted drily to an amiable-looking Mr Epstein nearby: "Alan Smith's gonna do a fantastic, exclusive article all about me." I hastened over to John and George in another corner.

"...it's like any job," George was saying. "You work hard so you can sit back when you want to. That's what we've done. We've got ourselves into this position so we can relax a bit. No, we're not rushing into a film. We'll wait 10 years if we have to. Why rush?

"No, we're not thinking of writing a script ourselves. It's not our job. Yeah, there's someone special I'd like to meet when we go to Germany next week – Adolf Hitler!

"Yeah, there is a good reason why we don't do too many appearances in Britain. We've got to live here as well as work. If we don't appear too often, it makes it easier for us to live out of the public eye. No, we..." The door opened and the rest of it was hidden by the noise of the hubbub outside. There's no doubt about it: it's still a hectic life, being a Beatle.

ALAN SMITH

★ TAKEN FROM
NME 01|07|1966



THE LETTER WRITTEN by John Lennon summed it all up: it was sent by him some years ago to the late Beatle, Stuart Sutcliffe, and was one of a collection handed back to him in Hamburg on Sunday. In the letter John wrote: "I've got one ciggy to last 'til Thursday."

That's the sort of memory The Beatles have of Hamburg – miserable poverty. On Sunday, however, they returned in triumph. They swept into the city at the head of an eight-car motorcade escorted by motorcycle policemen. To most of Hamburg, the world-beating Beatles had arrived. But to a handful in the Grosse Freiheit – a tiny street of sordid clubs (they once lived above one) – John, Paul, George and Ringo were back. And the friends they made then filtered through the militant-like German security to renew acquaintances.

There was Betina, the buxom blonde who worked in the Star-Club bar and who had a crush on John. "She used to call out for her favourite numbers," John later recalled, adding, "She got me drinks when we had no money. And pills – print that!" Friends like Cory, the attractive girl Paul once courted. Her parents own a restaurant in the Grosse Freiheit – the street that houses the Star-Club – and that was often a source of food for the hungry Beatles.

And Bert Kaempfert – the man who recorded The Beatles in their Hamburg days. He called backstage on Sunday to see them and pay his respects like the others. And Astrid Kirchherr, the girl who was engaged to Stuart Sutcliffe. She arrived with her fiancé, Gibson Kemp, and the little bundle of letters from John to Stu, "the best present I've had in years," he said as he thumbed through them, showing the occasional one to those around him. Many were in picture form – Lennon drawings that would probably fetch a fortune if they were auctioned today.

So The Beatles were in Hamburg. But apart from the friends there was little to remind the four of earlier days spent there. They sang to a crowd of more than 7,000 in the huge Ernst Merck Hall – a concrete palace they had never even seen before. There was no return to the Star-Club where their music first took its shape.

"We'd like to go," John admitted sadly, "but there'd be millions of people there and it would be no fun. We'd probably get crushed to death."

They stayed at the magnificent Schloss Hotel in Tremsbüttel – more than 30 miles from Hamburg, deep in the country. Dozens of green-uniformed policemen patrolled the grounds, searching out fans who had journeyed from the city and surrounding towns in the hope of sneaking a glimpse of their idols. There was no return to the little flat over a strip club where they once lived. Although its owner had cleared out the tenant so that The Beatles could go back for a party, the rooms stayed empty.

"Security," the Beatles-minders explained. "We couldn't possibly let them go there."

A pity, for The Beatles will never again see that former home. Within a month, the building is to be demolished. They rode in a limousine heading the procession of vehicles which carried the entourage. The whole fleet of Mercedes cruised uninterrupted in and out of the city as the escort of outriders sealed off side roads and ordered traffic to pull off the road until The Beatles had passed.

Their concerts were promoted by a German magazine, which never rated them a mention in their Star-Club days. But rumour has it that the journal paid the group so much for the concerts in Munich, Essen and Hamburg that even with capacity audiences it lost money on the "Blitztournee", as it triumphantly named the three-day tour. Doubtless, Axel Springer, the German press baron who counts the magazine among his collection, would willingly have paid twice the price. To buy The Beatles for three days is no small feat and worth a fortune in prestige.

I was especially interested to report The Beatles' return to Hamburg – for it was that city that I first met them in in the autumn of 1962. I was there for a week to report Little Richard's appearance at the Star-Club and The Beatles were on the same bill. There were friendly arguments between Lennon and Little Richard, which always ended with Lennon

DON'T PASS ME BY

...In further 1966 analyses, George Harrison dreamed about "weird things like houses with distorting mirrors, or people walkin' around with pan lids on top of their heads." Ringo's dream confession involved one "about a canary – only it had spider's legs. Work that one out!"

pop think in

RINGO STARR

★ TAKEN FROM
MM 08/01/1966

Ringo used to be called the silent Beatle. He's also the deep Beatle. He considered every word thrown at him carefully and his answers were thought out, fearless and without rancour. His answers show that there's a lot going on behind that implacable front.

Millionaires? The thing I've got against them is they've got more money than me. I'd like to be one

Christmas
Happy times. Food and drink. It doesn't mean anything religious to me. This year, it meant a holiday.

Chris Farlowe
I enjoyed him on Ready Steady Go, but I've never seen him live in a club.

Birth Control
Each to his own ideas.

Clean-up-TV campaign
It's a load of rubbish. Those people are living in the past.

Jagger
Mick Jagger? A friend. A good fellow. Britain's best ballad singer.

Oldham
Andrew Loog! He's trying, I think. One of the few A & R men who are trying to do something different. God rest Phil Spector.

Pop Art
I like the Who. It doesn't interest me. It's okay, I suppose. I don't buy all the clothes. Half of them are rubbish.

Millionaires
I'd like to be one. The only thing I've got against them is, they've got more money than me.

Obscene Lyrics
Never heard any. It's an individual thing. You can read obscene lyrics into any song.

Folk
I like folk.

Public Schools
I don't like them. They're against any upbringing I've ever had. A bad thing for me and my family.

Jimmy Clitheroe
I wish he'd get a pair of long pants. Not one of my favourite comedians.

Murray the K
Fastest talker I've ever met. He knows what's happening in radio. I wish we had someone like him here.

Communism
I don't like Communism. We're restricted enough as it is. If they got in it'd be last. Nothing would happen.

Elvis
I liked his early records. Don't like what he's doing now. Met him. He's okay.

Middle-aged Autograph Hunters
Silly people. Because they hate to admit they like you, too. They think it's wrong.

Cliff
Ballad singer. Never bought one of his records in my life.

Godfrey Winn
Journalist . . . of sorts. Only met him once.

James Bond
Best comedian on the scene today.

God
Somebody must like him.

P. J. Proby
Good singer. Someone who is silly to himself.

Zoot Money
Organ. Nice fellow. I think it's too late for him to make it very big now.

Policemen
A regiment of ants in blue uniforms.

Scrubbers
I hate them. They come round to the flat and shout and scream and annoy everyone.



The group perform one of their two sets that day at Munich's Circus-Krone-Bau, June 24, 1966

★ TAKEN FROM MM 22/01/1966

pop think in

GEORGE HARRISON

CHRISTMAS
Fun and twinkling lights. Nothing religious for me, really.

CHRIS FARLOWE
Great voice and nice lad.

BIRTH CONTROL
Nothing. I don't think about it.

CLEAN-UP-TV CAMPAIGN
Rubbish. Stupid. The more true-to-life TV the better.

JAGGER
Mick. The singer with the Stones.

OLDHAM
Andrew. I think a lot of Andrew as an A & R man. I agree with his ideas about recording pop music.

POP ART
I haven't seen enough to form an opinion.

MILLIONAIRES
Anyone who can be a millionaire in this country with the government taking most of it is a real winner. We're not millionaires.

OBSCENE LYRICS
Haven't heard any yet. It's more a case of obscene minds listening to them.

HAMBURG
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

EWAN MacCOLL
I only heard of him for the first time when he moaned about Dylan.

FOLK
Good folk is great, but there's too much bad folk which people say is great.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS
They are a case of trying to buy brains for thick kids.

I think a lot of Oldham as an A&R man. I agree with his ideas

MURRAY THE K
He's smart, because he's always first one around with anything.

DEBS
I don't get them at all. Debs are something that've passed. Some people wish they hadn't.

EPPY
An amazing businessman and our pal.

COMMUNISM
It's terrible. I only know a little bit about it, but what I know is off.

ELVIS
Well done.

MIDDLE-AGED AUTOGRAPH HUNTERS
Depends on their attitude. They are not bad on their own.

CARNABY STREET
I haven't been there. It's a nice street, I believe.

CLIFF
Looking rather undernourished.

FATHER
Which Art in Heaven.

JAMES BOND
Over-done.

GOD
The Naz.

PRIVATE EYE
Not as funny as they think it is, but quite nice.

P. J. PROBY
A bit foolish, but great to have around.

BOXING
A violent sport.

THE WHO
Great ideas.

ZOOT MONEY
Big voice and big smile.

PUNCH-UPS
To be avoided.

A TALENT FOR LOVING
A good book. A western, but different to others.

POLICEMEN
A bit simple and not understanding.

GERMANY
Good fun and laughs.

SCRUBBERS
Need scrubbing.

HIPSTERS
Great. I like hipsters. As trousers, not as people.

exclaiming, "Shuddup grandfather" at the older man. But one night I heard Richard remark to the club owner, Manfred Weissleder, "Those Beatles are so good – watch them Manfred, they could be the biggest thing in the whole world."

Manfred attached no more importance to Little Richard's words than I did, but we both recalled them well enough when I visited the Star-Club last Saturday night. Manfred also remembered a business argument with Brian Epstein shortly before they began that last season at the Star-Club. The Beatles' manager was demanding £250 a week for his group – half as much again as they had received before.

Manfred had said it was too much. "Nonsense," retorted Epstein. "These boys will soon be bigger than Elvis Presley."

Weissleder didn't believe the argument – but he paid the money. The tall, blond German had a flood of stories to retell about The Beatles. His earliest memory of them went back to some two years before even he first employed them: "One night I saw them going into a club opposite mine. They looked so strange I turned to a friend and said, 'They must be visitors from another planet.'"

Manfred laughed at the memory of the night he says John went on the Star-Club stage naked – apart from the guitar. Though John later told me he had on a pair of shorts ("And a toilet seat around me 'ead"). And Weissleder recalled the day he lent them a car to drive to the seaside. "That night I had to interrupt them on stage to ask Paul – the only one who could drive – where the car was. He said, 'Oh, the engine is broken so we left it there.' A practically new £2,000 car, and they had dumped it by the seaside!"

We talked into the early hours of Sunday morning – at a time when the luxury express train specially hired for the Beatles entourage was bearing its precious party the 300 miles from Essen to Hamburg itself. They arrived at breakfast time and went straight to bed at the hotel in Tremsbüttel.

By lunchtime the crowds had gathered outside. I joined John, Paul and Ringo (George was a late-riser) in their suite in the midst of a discussion about the title of their next LP.

"We've had all sorts of ideas during this trip – 'Magic Circles', 'Beatles On Safari' and 'Revolver' – that's the one John likes the best," Paul told me. Minutes later they made an appearance on the hotel balcony, to the delight of the crowd outside. As they walked to the waiting cars, I heard John comment; "How about Betina being on the station at seven o'clock this morning? Thought she was going to ask for a number!"

The motorcade took a devious route through country roads. There were no incidents but the German police had taken no chances – outside the hall another squad of motorcycles and a number of vehicles that looked like armoured cars stood by. The Beatles, however, made a quick and easy entrance to their backstage dressing room and were safely locked away before a gang of youths attempted in vain to storm the door, aiming tear gas bombs at the police, who retaliated with high-powered water hoses, drenching the would-be Beatles assailants.

Then came the first show. More than 10 minutes after Peter & Gordon's act had finished, the chanting, impatient audience gave The Beatles a wild reception. The group played well, but John's voice was showing that it doesn't pay to keep out of practice for seven months – for after the Munich and Essen concerts he could barely croak a note. It was particularly noticeable in "Paperback Writer". Even weeks of recording sessions had failed to strengthen his voice sufficiently for concerts. This was the second warning they got about keeping in practice – in Munich I understand they had to rehearse in their hotel room for fear of forgetting their hits on stage!

"We've got this track with electronic effects – we played it to the Stones and The Who, and they visibly sat up"
Paul McCartney

Between concerts they suffered another insane press conference, answering questions like, "John, how about Ringo?" (To which Lennon replied, "I think you're soft.") One irked reporter asked, "Beatles, why are you such horrid snobbies?" to which George replied that they weren't and that it was all in her mind. Then Paul made a little speech about how they believed in answering questions directly even if it made them unpopular. And he got a round of applause.

Then they retired to the dressing room, where the small collection of friends was waiting. Before the second show, I asked John about a local story that The Beatles had been "arrested" by the police on a previous visit for attempting to set fire to a club where they were appearing.

He said: "That one's got a bit twisted. We set fire to this, well, this little thing on stage and the club owner – who wanted to get us banned because we had told him we weren't going to play there anymore but were moving to the Star-Club – called the police."

Paul nodded. Then Ringo announced, "Come on chaps, let's go and do another rock'n'roll show," in his best send-up voice.

After the show, they were whisked straight back to Tremsbüttel where invitation after invitation for them to attend a variety of parties – including one specially staged by a count at his castle in the forest – were declined. But the saddest message of all was wired on The Beatles' behalf to Manfred Weissleder at the Star-Club. It said, "Sorry we can't make it tonight." And in his office overlooking the Grosse Freiheit, Manfred shook his head and said: "It's a pity, they never missed a night before..."

CHRIS HUTCHINS

DPA PICTURE ALLIANCE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

1964–1966

The Beatles' American Albums

You can't do that! How the States heard The Beatles: a complex catalogue explained. *By Bud Scoppa*

IN MID-DECEMBER, 1963, hoping to lighten the post-JFK-assassination gloom, the campus radio station of Indiana's University Of Notre Dame, where I was then a student, played "I Want To Hold Your Hand" non-stop for 24 hours. At the time, the notion of a bunch of skinny English kids with outlandish hairstyles playing American rock'n'roll seemed ludicrous, and we snickered as we listened on our dorm room radios.

We knew very little about The Beatles beyond news reports that they were a sensation in Britain; we didn't realise that Vee-Jay, a black-owned label out of Chicago, had released the cuts "Please Please Me" and "From Me To You" earlier that year in the States, or that Philadelphia indie Swan had put out "She Loves You". American radio had ignored these UK hits, and so had Capitol Records, EMI's stateside affiliate, which had concluded The Beatles wouldn't "do anything" in the US, forcing Brian Epstein to shop the band's early sides.

By the time the Notre Dame student body returned from Christmas break in early January, our derision had turned to budding fascination. Hoping to cash in on what it figured was a passing fad, Capitol rush-released the album ***Meet The Beatles!*** on January 20, and we snapped it up as if it were manna from heaven. When The Beatles appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* on February 9, the TV rooms across the campus were packed with newly minted fans eager to get their first look at the moptops – a microcosm of the phenomenon that was gripping the country as a whole.

We had no idea that *Meet The Beatles!* was a rapidly thrown-together assortment, containing nine of the 14 tracks on the band's second UK album, *With The Beatles*, plus "I Want To Hold Your Hand", its UK B-side, "This Boy", and "I Saw Her Standing There" from the previous *Please Please Me*, which Vee-Jay had picked up and released as ***Introducing... The Beatles*** after Capitol passed on it. Ironically, this slice-and-dice approach, predicated on making a quick buck off a passing fad – and rooted in the pre-album era, which The Beatles themselves would soon hasten to an end – resulted in an absolutely killer album, one that was arguably superior to the thoughtfully sequenced LP it bastardised. Side One in particular shreds from beginning to end, kicking off with the double shot of adrenalin, "I Want To Hold Your Hand" and "I Saw Her Standing There", followed by "This Boy", "It Won't Be Long" and "All I've Gotta Do", into "All My Loving".

> Ironically, the slice-and-dice approach of *Meet The Beatles!*, predicated on making a quick buck, resulted in a killer album

Meet The Beatles! set the template for Capitol's pragmatic, profit-driven treatment of every subsequent UK album for the next two-and-a-half years. (The differences between UK and US releases are demonstrated – celebrated even – in 2014's 13-disc, limited-edition boxset, ***The US Albums***.) The five *With The Beatles* cover songs held off of *Meet The Beatles!* were consigned to ***The Beatles' Second Album***, issued less than three months later, joining three B-sides – "Thank You Girl", "I'll Get You" and "You Can't Do That" – along with the then-No 1 single (on Swan, no less!), "She Loves You", and the newly recorded "Long Tall Sally" and "I Call Your Name". That's a total of 11, only five of which are originals. Despite the LP's relative shortcomings, it was still a Beatles album after all, and it went straight to No 1 on the *Billboard* Album Chart. On the week of April 11, 1964, The Beatles had the No 1 and No 2 albums in the US, along with 14 songs on the *Billboard* Hot 100. The previous week, the Top 5 singles were all Beatles songs, an unprecedented feat.

A Hard Day's Night came out two months later, not on









Capitol but on the label of the film's US distributor, United Artists. The Fabs shared the platter with George Martin and his orchestra, whose four film-score instrumentals were interspersed with eight Beatles songs, seven from the movie. But we didn't know what we were missing (namely, five of the six non-film songs on Side Two of the UK album) and we had all the songs from the magical movie, plus "I'll Cry Instead", so we weren't complaining.

In all, Capitol turned the first five Beatles albums into seven shorter cut-and-paste LPs, with UA's *A Hard Day's Night* bringing the total to eight – not counting the double album of interviews, *The Beatles Story*. The 14 cuts on *Beatles For Sale* were spread over two Capitol albums, ***Beatles '65*** (December '64) and ***Beatles VI*** (June '65), the first filled out by then-current single "I Feel Fine" b/w "She's A Woman", and "I'll Be Back", the last remaining cut from *A Hard Day's Night*; the second by three cuts cannibalised from the *Help!* soundtrack, which wouldn't appear until two months later. The US label's version of ***Help!*** was an even bigger rip-off than the first soundtrack, with a measly seven songs interrupted by five more score instrumentals.

With ***Rubber Soul***, Capitol seemed to exhibit some actual artistic judgement, replacing four electric tracks – "Drive My Car", "Nowhere Man", "What Goes On" and "If I Needed Someone" – with two acoustic leftovers from *Help!* in "I've Just Seen A Face" (which became the opening track) and "It's Only Love". This move served to further burnish the LP's Dylan-inspired acoustic vibe, making for an even richer aural experience than the band had originally intended.

Capitol saved its most egregious offence for last – a two-stage sacrilege that began in June 1966 when the label grabbed "I'm Only Sleeping", "Doctor Robert" and "And Your Bird Can Sing" off the still-in-progress *Revolver* for ***Yesterday And Today*** (which initially bore the quickly withdrawn "butcher" cover photo). This crazy-quilt LP also contained a pair of leftovers from *Help!*, the four hoarded cuts from *Rubber Soul* and both sides of the "Day Tripper"/"We Can Work It Out" single. One can't fault the quality of the 11 tracks, but Capitol's cavalier attitude toward the music of The Beatles is another matter altogether. That left the US version of ***Revolver*** with the remaining 11 tracks. Apparently, no-one considered adding "Paperback Writer" and "Rain", the two sides of the most recent single, which would've made the altered *Revolver* as mind-blowing as the original. The practice ended – as it had to – with *Sgt Pepper*. In the States, we would've raised holy hell if they'd dared to fuck with the Holy Grail.

SLEEVENOTES | AMERICAN ALBUMS

Introducing... The Beatles
Released: January 10, 1964
Label: Vee-Jay **US chart:** 2

Meet The Beatles!
Released: January 20, 1964
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 1

The Beatles' Second Album
Released: April 10, 1964
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 1

Something New
Released: July 20, 1964
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 2

A Hard Day's Night
Released: June 26, 1964
Label: United Artists
US chart: 1

The Beatles' Story
Released: November 23, 1964
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 7

The Early Beatles
Released: March 22, 1965
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 43

Beatles VI
Released: June 14, 1965
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 1

Help!
Released: August 13, 1965
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 1

Rubber Soul
Released: December 6, 1965
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 1

Yesterday And Today
Released: June 20, 1966
Label: Capitol **US chart:** 1

Revolver
Released: August 8, 1966
Label: Capitol
US chart: 1

05 AUGUST | 1966

Revolver

Into The Void... The Beatles see the meaning of within – among other things – as the psychedelic experiments begin in earnest. *By Andy Gill*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"*Revolver* certainly has new sounds and new ideas, and should cause plenty of argument amongst fans as to whether it is as good or better than previous efforts. One thing seems certain – you'll all soon be singing about a 'Yellow Submarine'."
ALLEN EVANS, NME, JULY 29, 1966

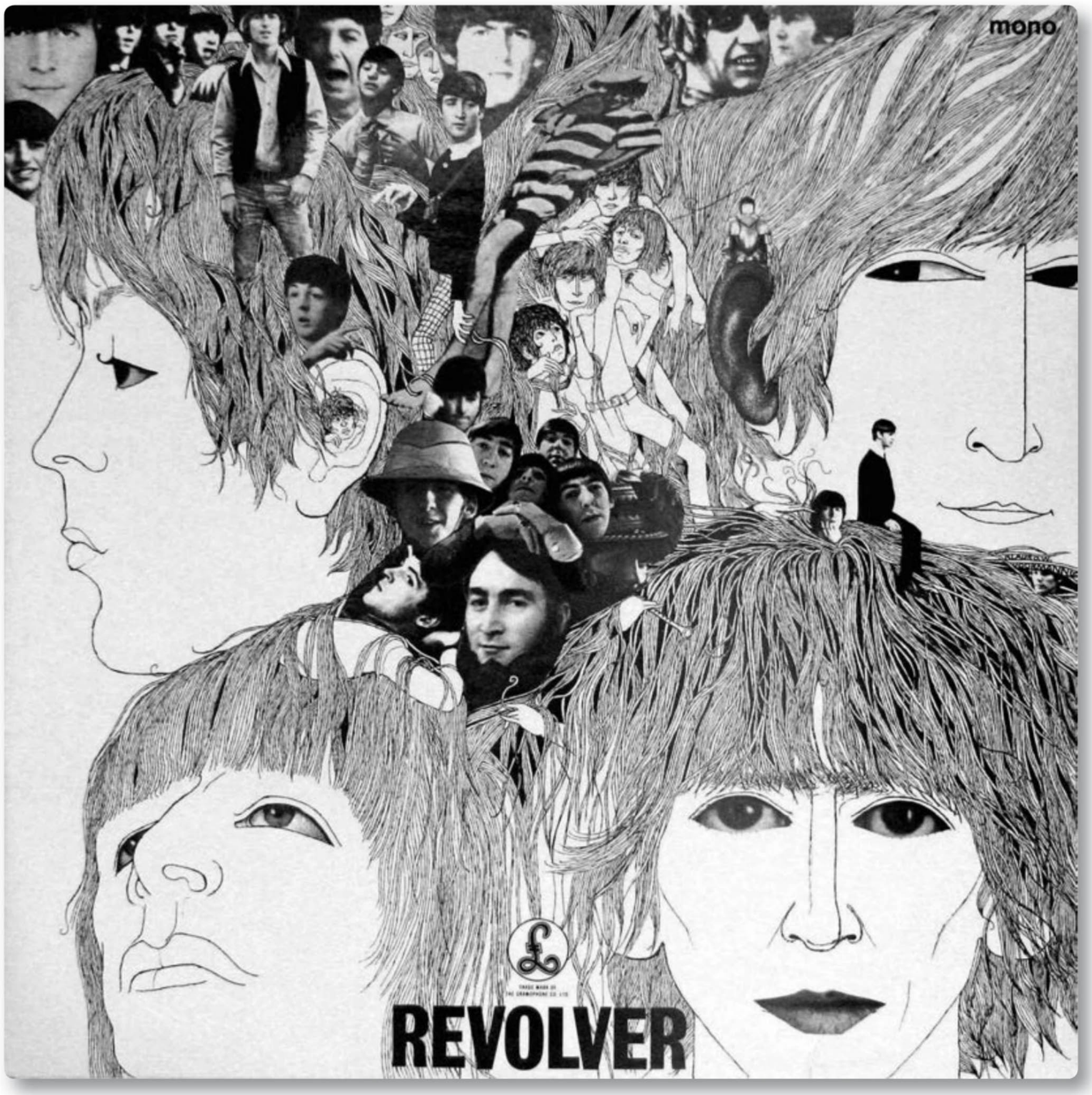
"There are still more ideas buzzing around The Beatles' heads than in most of the pop world put together. A lot of them have been poured into *Revolver*, and the result is a veritable goldmine..."
MELODY MAKER, JULY 30, 1966

GEORGE HARRISON ONCE said that he didn't see much difference between *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver*, that they could be Volume One and Volume Two of the same project. And certainly, both made giant strides from what had gone before. But the degree of sonic innovation applied to *Revolver* sets it firmly apart from its predecessor. This was pop's Great Leap Forward, both the herald of a new age of musical development, and exemplar of what might be achieved in that new age. One of the record's original working titles, "Abracadabra!", conveys just what a magical feat of imagination it was. The album was recorded in the midst of pop's annus mirabilis, when every week's singles chart was a garland of enduring classics; and as such, it reflected the broadening musical landscape, from Motown soul to Beach Boys harmonies, from the brass band of Dylan's "Rainy Day Women Nos 12 & 35" to the serpentine elegance of Indian ragas, from the kitchen-sink realism of The Kinks to the laid-back, spaced-out proto-hippy strains of The Byrds and Lovin' Spoonful, from the classical soundtrack arrangements of Bernard Herrmann to the musique concrète experimentalism of Stockhausen.

The reflections were not merely musical, but also signalled the changing social and cultural preoccupations of the time. Songs like "I'm Only Sleeping", "And Your Bird Can Sing", "I Want To Tell You" and especially "Tomorrow Never Knows" were the sound of a generation gap evolving into a full-scale change of consciousness. It was, though, tempered by John Lennon's innate sceptical cynicism in the likes of "Doctor Robert" (surely a reference to the dentist friend who supplied the band with LSD) and "She Said She Said", the latter inspired by a trip he had taken with The Byrds' David Crosby and Roger McGuinn, during which Peter Fonda had insisted on telling an appalled Lennon, "I know what it's like to be dead." Even the most apparently innocent songs harboured deeper messages, Paul McCartney later admitting that "Got To Get You Into My Life" was about marijuana: "It's an ode to pot," he explained, "like someone might write an ode to chocolate, or a good claret."

Another huge stride separating *Revolver* from previous Beatles albums was the continuing shift away from simplistic romantic material, the group's three songwriters extending *Rubber Soul*'s Dylan-inspired introspective musings into new and often troubling areas: loneliness, laziness, economics, death, drugs and spirituality. And, of course, underwater travel. The album's sole love song was McCartney's "Here, There And Everywhere", a Beach Boys-influenced pastel-pop charmer which effectively served as a high-water mark of pure romantic pop – certainly, McCartney has claimed it a favourite among his own compositions. But elsewhere, both musically and lyrically, the album acknowledged that there was a whole world out there that pop had never bothered exploring. And from this point on, it would be the only territory worth traversing.

Revolver was recorded following the group's final UK concerts, and reflects their deepening conviction that their musical future lay in the studio rather than the limiting arena of live performance. Some idea of how convinced they were of this move is that the first track recorded for the album was "Tomorrow Never Knows", such a radical harbinger of things to come that it was placed right at the end of the album; a heady swirl of psychedelic sound for fans to ruminate upon, but only once they had journeyed through *Revolver*'s maze of exotic delights, like initiates



following steps to gain entry to an order, whose ultimate revelatory epiphany is this remarkable piece of music.

Originally titled "The Void", it was based on Lennon's recitation, via Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert's translation, of parts of the *Tibetan Book Of The Dead*, a Buddhist text designed to be whispered to the dying as they approached their next incarnation. Lennon had become an enthusiastic convert to LSD, and every effort was taken to musically evoke the psychedelic experience, from the extraordinary drumtrack to the otherworldly sounds of five different tape loops spooling Mellotron, sitar, orchestra and what sounds like seagulls (actually a treated tape of McCartney laughing) through the song, augmented by a reversed, cut-up, slowed-down burst of McCartney's guitar solo from "Taxman" – a timely, Buddhist link back to the start of the LP. To approximate Lennon's desire for the vocals to sound like chanting monks, his voice was fed through a Leslie speaker cabinet, the final disorienting touch to a track that still challenges conventional perceptions of pop structure. Though less apparent, similar effects were employed throughout the album: the jolly middle section of "Yellow Submarine" featured randomly sequenced fragments of nautical sound, while "I'm Only Sleeping", Lennon's ode to introspective indolence, featured slowed-down cymbals, varispeeded vocals and a backwards guitar solo by George Harrison.

Even when tracks didn't require such extreme treatment, the innovations in songwriting, particularly by McCartney, demanded equally innovatory strategies when it came to the arrangements. Sometimes it was just a matter of a musical flourish obliquely emphasising a song's mood (as when George Martin's barrelhouse piano solo livens up "Good Day Sunshine", in Small Faces style; or more dramatically, the startling piano discord crucial to Harrison's "I Want To Tell You"), but for McCartney's sombre "For No One" and "Eleanor Rigby", horn and string arrangements were required, reflecting his recent interest in classical music. Featuring just vocals and a stern string octet, the latter was pop's equivalent of classical art song, a tragic *Play For Today* sketched in three scenes lasting just two minutes.

"For No One", marked by Alan Civil's elegantly mournful French horn solo, seems to have been inspired by the dissolution of the singer's relationship with a former girlfriend, just as "And Your Bird Can Sing" reflected Lennon's disenchantment with marriage to Cynthia: in both songs, the feeling of distance and dwindling affection – "*you don't get me!*" – is indicative of more general changes sweeping through the group at this time.

One such was Harrison's coming of age as a songwriter, contributing three songs including the raga-based "Love You To" and "Taxman". The latter, which found him chafing at the UK's punitive tax rate that allowed the band just one shilling (five pence) from every pound earned, shows another side to the "quiet one", PR man Tony Barrow later revealing that Harrison was the most money-conscious Beatle, the one who was always checking with Epstein on royalties and cheques. With its count-in offering a perfect start to the LP, "Taxman" also offered a worldly, materialist point from which the rest of *Revolver*'s more spiritual and intellectual themes could diverge; a series of signposts to the endless possibilities ahead.

SLEEVENOTES | REVOLVER

1. Taxman
2. Eleanor Rigby
3. I'm Only Sleeping
4. Love You To
5. Here, There And Everywhere
6. Yellow Submarine
7. She Said, She Said
8. Good Day Sunshine
9. And Your Bird Can Sing
10. For No One
11. Doctor Robert
12. I Want To Tell You
13. Got To Get You Into My Life
14. Tomorrow Never Knows

Released: August 5, 1966
Label: Parlophone (UK), Capitol (US)
Produced by: George Martin
Recorded at: Abbey Road
Personnel include: Lennon (vocals, guitar, keys, tape loops), McCartney (vocals, bass, guitar, keys, tape loops), Harrison (vocals, guitar, sitar, tamboura, tape loops), Starr (vocals, drums, percussion, tape loops), George Martin (keys), Eddie Thornton, Ian Hamer, Les Gordon (trumpet), Alan Branscombe, Peter Coe (tenor sax), Anil Bhagwat (tabla), North London Asian Music Circle (sitar, tamboura), Tony Gilbert, Sidney Sax, John Sharpe, Jurgen Hess (violin), Stephen Shingles, John Underwood (viola), Derek Simpson, Norman Jones (cello), Alan Civil (French horn), Neil Aspinall, Patti Harrison, Donovan, Brian Jones, Marianne Faithfull, Alf Bicknell (vocals)
Highest charting position: UK 1; US version 1

“Only through recording do people listen to us”



Tired of the screaming, The Beatles retreat to the studio. George Martin reveals the secrets of “Yellow Submarine”. Lennon rails against “red-nosed” showbiz types. McCartney explains why they’ve stopped touring. And then, a select dinner party accompanies the arrival of the mysterious *Sgt Pepper*...

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 19|08|1966



SANDBAGS, RAGS SLURPING about in buckets of water, and Beatles blowing bubbles through straws – these were some of the hilarious sights and sounds at EMI’s St John’s Wood studios the day Ringo and co recorded their top-of-the-charts “Yellow Submarine”! As recording manager George Martin told me this week: “It must have been one of the most unusual Beatles sessions ever... more like the things I’ve done with the Goons and Peter Sellers. The boys loved every minute of it.

“The sandbags? Well, we needed all kinds of sound effects, and these were bumped about while John blew bubbles, and George made swirling sounds with the water. I think it worked out very well indeed. Then, of course, there was the brass band. This wasn’t a sound effect on tape – the band was right there in the studio, not to mention a massed chorus made up of anybody who happened to be around at the time.

“This means you don’t just hear Ringo and the other Beatles singing on ‘Yellow Submarine’. You hear Patti Harrison, studio staff, sound engineers, faithful road managers Mal and Neil; and even me!

“I was keen that the track be released in some way apart from the album, but you have to realise that The Beatles aren’t usually very happy about issuing material twice in this way. They feel that they might be cheating the public. And, of course, there is also the question that it might affect the sales. However, we got to thinking about it, and we realised that the fans aren’t really being cheated at all. Most albums have only 12 tracks; The Beatles always do 14! So even with ‘Yellow Submarine’ and ‘Eleanor Rigby’ released as a single, everyone is still getting value for money.”

Incidentally, John isn’t speaking through a bottle when he repeats Ringo’s words in “Submarine”. This idea didn’t work out, so Mal evolved an ingenious method by which the words were spoken through John’s guitar amp.

Another interesting point about the “Submarine” session is that the basic music track was recorded without George Martin’s supervision. He had a touch of ’flu for several days and the Beatles decided to go ahead and record themselves. But George stepped in for those crazy finishing touches that make



Orchestral manoeuvres: McCartney conducts 41 musicians during sessions for "A Day In The Life", February 10, 1967

"Submarine" one of the most unusual discs of the year.

About "Eleanor Rigby", George says: "This was done very much on the lines of 'Yesterday'. Paul came round to my flat. He played the piano, and I took a note of his music. There is also an octet on the record, made up of four violins, two violas and two cellos."

George once again made it clear that there are no secret, unissued Beatles tapes in case of emergency. Everything The Beatles have recorded has been released.

"It has to be this way," he emphasised. "The demand is so strong, it is difficult even keeping up with it."

Right now he is busy completing yet another of his famous albums of orchestral versions of Beatles tunes. This will be released in America within a few weeks, but not in Britain until about Christmas. Title may be "Girls And Things". This, he explains, is because most of the tracks are on the lines of "Anna", "Eleanor Rigby", "Girl" and "Michelle". "Girl" (which George describes as "possibly John Lennon's greatest composition") has been given a "Zorba The Greek" flavour, complete with a bouzouki brought back after a recent honeymoon. "Woman" has been done with a more sophisticated bayone rhythm; and "Eleanor Rigby" has the same tempo as Paul's version, except that the sound is bigger.

I asked George if the success of "Yellow Submarine" might mean a flow of comedy discs from The Beatles in the future.

"I don't think so," he replied. "The Beatles don't think in terms of trends or even singles. Every record is something different, something original. If a comedy idea comes up again, then I'm sure they'll try it – because they've always had plenty of humour anyway. But I don't know. Anything can happen with The Beatles!"

ALAN SMITH

★ **TAKEN FROM**

MELODY MAKER 03|09|1966


Melody Maker
SCOTT — THE FACTS
CHARLES LLOYD COMING
Jerry Lee's dates fixed

WHAT HAPPENS IF, someday, somebody turns off the floodlights and the mystique of idolatry that now bathes The Beatles? Would these vastly talented writers turn their pens to the legitimate musical stage?

"Most of legitimate theatre is just a load of rubbish as far as we're concerned," said John Lennon this week. "We would never want to be like Rodgers and Hammerstein or anyone who preceded us. If we did anything, it would be a musical of today, not the '20s like the *Hello, Dolly!* thing."

Paul McCartney took exception to the term 'legitimate musical': "That puts it all in a slot, like 'Funny Girl' and a lot of others. We'd never be able to write that way because we wouldn't feel that kind of show. I don't mind that type and I quite like seeing them, but we'd have to put far more into it. Lionel Bart once told us that the easiest way to do a show is to write 12 songs and give them to a great producer like Joan Littlewood and have her build the whole show around the songs.

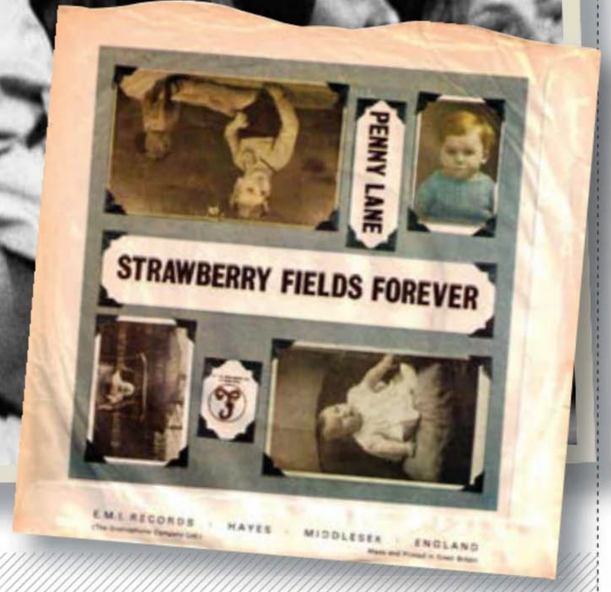
"I don't think we could work that way. It would be harder for us because we would have to put much more into it. I don't like the term 'legitimate'. I guess if we ever do a show, we'll have to call it an illegitimate show."

"I never lie awake thinking of what I'll be writing next year or about showbusiness for that matter," came back John. "Because I probably won't be in it at some point. Showbusiness we never really ever see. That business is a little bunch of red-nosed people who live together and call themselves showbusiness. We know some people in that club but we don't belong to it." ➤

LARRY ELLIS/EXPRESS/GETTY IMAGES



Living the scream: a Beatles audience in Germany, 1966



I asked Lennon about pop music and people in America. "I'm no soothsayer on music and where it's going," Lennon went on. "I just hope it continues to get better, that it progresses and doesn't step back. I think, for instance, that Brian Wilson is great, he's doing some very good things. We like The Beach Boys, The Byrds, The Mamas & The Papas, a lot of them. They make sounds we like. You know? And we listen to everything we can.

"With Americans, well, I don't like to generalise, but I think we showed some people here that not all Englishmen are like John Bull or a happy-go-lucky Cockney. Well, once I thought Americans were all loudmouths with big ties and lots of cameras. Well, they're not. I hope I get to see more of America because it's the kind of place that might blow up someday, by itself, or with the help of some other country."

But The Beatles aren't worried about "blowing up" or about their ultimate downfall, as one reporter expressed it.

"There'll be no downfall for us," said McCartney. "We're not worried. We don't dread it. When we get sick of all the hocus pocus and the press and the screaming, we'll just take a fat holiday on our fat wallets."

REN GREVATT

"In ourselves we don't feel big-time at all. It's only when people keep telling us that we even think of it..."

Paul McCartney

★ **TAKEN FROM**

NME 31|12|1966



"ONE REASON WE don't want to tour any more is that when we're onstage nobody can hear us or listen to us," Paul McCartney told me.

He was referring to the screamers who drown out all hope of hearing The Beatles in person. "And another reason is that our stage act hasn't improved one bit since we started touring four years ago. The days when three guitarists and a drummer can stand up onstage must be over. Stage performance as an art is going out anyway. I think The Rolling Stones had a shock when they didn't do a bomb on their last tour. I think Mick was worried.

"Many of our tracks now have big backings. We couldn't produce the sound onstage without an orchestra. And if we were to do ourselves justice onstage now, we'd have to have at least three months to produce a brand new act. And it would probably be very unlike what you'd expect from The Beatles," went on Paul.

This was Paul's answer to my query about their future touring. Of their forthcoming recordings, he said: "We feel that only through recording do people listen to us, so that is our most important form of communication. We have never thought of ourselves as one sound... Merseybeat wasn't our invention. We have always changed our style as we went along and we've never been frightened to develop and change.

"I think this has been the reason for our continued success. We could have stopped thinking up new things and brought out 'The Son Of Please Please Me' or 'The Son Of Love Me Do', but that was not on. We work on one song and record it and then get tired of it. So we think up something very different. The strength of any act is doing something that you wouldn't associate with them. For instance, I feel that The Supremes are too alike with most of their discs. If they did something good and you said: 'Who's that?' And were told, 'The Supremes' and you hadn't identified it with them, you'd be pleasantly surprised. That would add strength to their appeal. So we keep on doing tracks which can be any style at all. We're not limited that way, or with time any more. We take as much time as we want on a track, until we get it to our satisfaction. Before, we had a set time in the recording studio, and that was that. If it wasn't exactly as we wanted, that was too bad.

"Now we take time because we haven't any pressing engagements like tours to limit us. All we want is to make one track better than the last. We make all 'A' sides and never go into the studio thinking, 'This will be our next single.' We just make tracks, then listen to them and decide from what we have what will be a single, what will go on an LP."

Paul went on to give me an insight into their formula for writing hits.

"The words are written down, but the music is never, because we can't write music. We play it to each other and soon pick it up, and fool around with it a bit. George suggests something extra, then John adds a new idea and so on until we have the music the way we want it. Then we record. Then we forget about it and get on with the next track."

On the subject of jealousy within the group, Paul was most emphatic. "There isn't any. Jealousy doesn't exist. When John wanted to do a film on his own, we were all happy for him. Now that he's done it, he has passed on to us information about all sorts of things he has learned. I wrote film music and found out other things, which I've passed on.

"This rumour we were splitting up was rubbish, too. One would think it is the first time any of us had done anything on his own. John wrote books on his own all along, and we all have sidelines we get on with as individuals. Besides, we're all great friends and we don't want to split up. There's never been any talk or sign of it... except in the minds of others."

Paul also let off steam about those who think they have gone "big-time".

"In ourselves we don't feel big-time at all. It's only when people keep telling us we are big-time that we even think of it. But what angers me is when some journalists say I've said something I haven't and describe me as talking in my 'natural zany beat style'. I don't talk in any 'zany beat style'... it's the writer thinking that I should. They give us images and those images are usually very inaccurate."

But Paul admitted that they had changed over the years. "We had to. If you've got the money you don't buy a £3 camera if you would rather have a £50 one. Our whole outlook on life is changing because our circumstances have changed our surroundings. But this hasn't done anything to disunite The Beatles. We are going to keep on making better tracks and become better entertainers – as The Beatles."

Ringo Starr confirmed, a few hours after I spoke to Paul, that The Beatles are very much united and in no way thinking of splitting. "This idea of jealousy is in other people's brains. We

BILL ORCHARD/SHUTTERSTOCK

didn't mind John doing a film on his own. We were glad he wanted to. And when the time comes, if it does, that I will get a role on my own, the others will say, 'Good luck.' That's how we are. We all work for each other's success."

I asked Ringo if he was going to do a film. "Nothing definite at the moment. We get scripts sent in every day, but most of them are so bad. We all get offers of parts, but until something is very good, we're not interested. Same with the film we'll do together. Until the script is to all our liking, we won't do it."

As far as live performances are concerned. Ringo's feelings were: "We can't do the same act, with a couple of numbers and a couple of jokes. And on tours we're not playing properly, but nobody hears, anyways. We'd have to rehearse something new."

Ringo also made the first reference to the fact that The Beach Boys had come out on top in the World Vocal Group section of the *NME* poll.

"Good luck to them," he said. "The Poll was fine. We haven't been doing much and it was run at a time when The Beach Boys had something good out. We're all four fans of The Beach Boys... maybe we voted for them," he concluded.

ANDY GRAY

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 27|05|1967



JOHN LENNON WALKED into the room first. Then came George Harrison and Paul McCartney, followed closely by Ringo Starr and road managers Neil Aspinall and Mal Evans. The Beatles had arrived at a small dinner party in Brian Epstein's Belgravia home, to talk to journalists and disc jockeys for the first time in months.

For almost a year they have been virtually incommunicado. No interviews, no public appearances, no "live" TV dates. We knew they were making an LP and that they intended to start work on another film, but that was all, apart from the occasional snatched photograph of a not-particularly-happy-looking Beatle.

We saw the new John Lennon look when he was filming *How I Won The War*. We saw the change in George Harrison when he returned from India and we learned that Ringo and Paul had grown moustaches. Their last single "Penny Lane"/"Strawberry Fields Forever" failed to make No 1 and the rumours and speculation started. Only last week one newspaper described them rather incongruously as "contemplative, secretive and exclusive".

Well, The Beatles are contemplative. So what? And secretive? Only when it's required of them. As for exclusive, surely they've always been that. But The Beatles most certainly have not become four mystical introverts as some people would have us imagine. Despite their flamboyant clothes which made even Jimmy Savile look startled, The Beatles are still the same sane, straightforward people they were four years ago. Their opinions and beliefs are the same, only now they understand why they believe in them.

"I've had a lot of time to think," said John, peering at me through his white-rimmed specs, "and only now am I beginning to realise many of the things I should have known years ago. I'm getting to understand my own feelings. Don't forget that under this frilly shirt is a hundred-year-old man who's seen and done so much – but at the same time knowing so little."

John regards The Beatles' new LP, *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, as one of the most important steps in the group's career.

"It had to be just right. We tried and I think succeeded in achieving what we set out to do. If we hadn't, then it wouldn't be out now."

Apart from his green frilly shirt, John was wearing maroon trousers and round his waist was a sporran. Why the sporran, I enquired.

"A relative in Edinburgh gave it to Cynthia as a present and as there are no pockets in these trousers it comes in handy for holding my cigarettes and front door keys."

I joined George sitting quietly on a settee, nibbling on a stick of celery. He was wearing dark trousers and a maroon velvet jacket. On the lapel was a badge from the New York Workshop In Nonviolence. Their emblem is a yellow submarine with what looked like daffodils sprouting from it.

"Naturally, I'm opposed to all forms of war," said George seriously. "The idea of man killing man is terrible."

I asked him about his visit to India and what it had taught him.

"Firstly, I think too many people here have the wrong idea about India. Everyone immediately associates India with poverty, suffering and starvation but there's much, much more than that. There's the spirit of the people, the beauty and goodness. The people there have a tremendous spiritual strength which I don't think is found elsewhere. That's what I've been trying to learn about."

George has taken the time to find out about many religions. Not merely just to dabble in them but really to learn and know. He believes that religion is a day-to-day experience. "You find it all around. You live it. Religion is here and now. Not something that just comes on Sundays."

What had he been doing for the past year, I asked. Didn't he ever get bored?

"Oh, I've never been bored, there's so much to find out about," he said enthusiastically. "We've been writing and recording and so on."

The LP, *Sgt Pepper*, took them almost six months to make and it has received mixed reviews from the critics. Having achieved worldwide fame by singing pleasant, hummable numbers, don't they feel they may be too far ahead of the record-buyers?

George thinks not: "People are very, very aware of what's going on around them nowadays. They think for themselves and I don't think we can ever be accused of underestimating the intelligence of our fans."

John agrees with him. "The people who have bought our records in the past must realise that we couldn't go on making the same type forever. We must change and I believe those people know this."

Of all four Beatles, Ringo, I think, is the one who has changed the least. Perhaps a little more talkative, more forthcoming. The one whose personality isn't quite as obvious as the others and still the most reticent. He is very contented, and what's best by the others is all right by him. What had inspired the sleeve cover of the album – a montage of familiar faces crowding round The Beatles? "We just thought we'd like to put together a lot of people we like and admire," said Ringo.

Included in the picture are Diana Dors, Oscar Wilde, Karl Marx, Shirley Temple, Max Miller, Lawrence Of Arabia, Bob Dylan and Stuart Sutcliffe, the former Beatle who died in Hamburg.

I drifted over to where the now clean-shaven, and much thinner Paul was sitting sipping a glass of champagne. He greeted me in his usual charming manner and enquired after my health.

"You know," he said, "we've really been looking forward to this evening. We wanted to meet a few people because so many distorted stories were being printed. We have never thought about splitting up. We want to go on recording together. The Beatles live!" he said raising his glass in the air.

At this stage I should mention that although all four Beatles are extremely charming and courteous, they are still the masters of subtle evasion. No-one, in my experience, has perfected to such an art how to give a feasible answer to a pointed question without saying yes or no. They're not sure whether they'll be making any personal appearances in the future, although they'd like to; plans for their next film are scanty, and they're working on a new single which they're not sure about. As I said, secretive when they need to be and still very, very exclusive.

NORRIE DRUMMOND

DON'T PASS ME BY

Producer George Martin's biggest disappointment in A&R, he told *NME* in March 1964, was "when Jim Dale decided not to pursue his career as a singer." Martin's "biggest boob", meanwhile, was not giving "a second thought" to Tommy Steele, when the singer worked at the legendary 2i's coffee bar in Soho.



Far out: The Beatles at Brian Epstein's house, London, for the *Sgt Pepper* press launch, May 19, 1967

TRINITY MIRROR / MIRRORPIX / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

01 JUNE | 1967

Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

Another revolution, as The Beatles build a new world of awe and wonder. Can *Sgt Pepper* possibly be *underrated*? *By David Cavanagh*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"Whether this album was worth the five months it took to make, I would argue. But it is very good and will sell like hot cakes. It's a most eerie piece of music and the final sounds of the 41-piece orchestra are really frightening."
ALLEN EVANS, NME, MAY 20, 1967

"It has become almost inevitable that a Beatles album is the pop LP of the year... *Sgt Pepper* makes you wonder how they can ever top it in 1968. The only certainty is that they will."
ALAN WALSH, MELODY MAKER, NOVEMBER 9, 1967

MORE THAN ANY other Beatles album, *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* is full of activity. Verbs proliferate. People clutch handkerchiefs, grab their hats, dig the weeds and paint the room in a colourful way. It's a *doing* album. Climb in the back of a newspaper taxi. Undertake 10 somersets on solid ground. At its finale, in a near-religious communion of tragedy and beauty, an army wins a war and a socialite dies in his car. Wherever you look in *Pepper*, things are happening. It's not surprising that so many things happened because of it.

The final piano chord was both decisive and infinite: a resounding E major *slam* that required four pairs of hands and galvanised contemporaries into upping their game. Within 72 hours of its release, McCartney and Harrison were in the audience at London's Saville Theatre to see Jimi Hendrix perform *Pepper*'s title track as a tribute. David Crosby played a tape of the entire album in a Seattle hotel lobby as dozens of girls sat in silence on the stairs. Jefferson Airplane's Paul Kantner, who was present, said later: "Something enveloped the whole world and it just exploded into a renaissance." The final months of 1967 saw *Pepper*-influenced albums like *Their Satanic Majesties Request* (The Rolling Stones) and *After Bathing At Baxter's* (Jefferson Airplane) dispensing with conventional structure in an attempt to take the listener on a more open-ended trip. The exploding renaissance sowed the seeds of progressive rock. The concept album was born.

Some people disagree that *Pepper* is a concept album. John Lennon never saw it as one, arguing that his songs had no connection with McCartney's fictitious military band. But concepts don't have to be storylines. The "story" of *Pepper* is forgotten after two songs (once Billy Shears has sung "With A Little Help From My Friends"), but there's another way to think about *Pepper*: as a mosaic of sounds, sights and sensations in which one song links to another like scenes in a dream. Growing out of the December 1966 sessions that produced "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "Penny Lane" – both inspired by childhood memories – *Pepper* is dreamlike in a way that would make logical sense to a child's mind. Greetings are exaggerated. Traffic wardens are friendly. The circus has come to town. We've been transported back to an England of whirligigs and fairgrounds, big tops and Victorian bandstands. The lyrics that Lennon and McCartney write are mesmerically good at creating a child's paintbox reality ("*cellophane flowers of yellow and green*", "*filling in a ticket in her little white book*"), and it's these linguistic idiosyncrasies that give *Pepper* its continuity, and by extension its concept. It's not about a brass band, it's about a strange community that exists in a bygone age in a hole in time. When a character escapes and breaks the fourth wall, as the girl in "She's Leaving Home" does, it's noticeable that the new town she arrives in ("*meeting a man from the motor trade*") has the same coating of ineludible oddness shared with songs like "Fixing A Hole" and "Lovely Rita". It's like the episode of *The Prisoner* where Number 6 thinks he's made it back to London but he's really still in The Village.

Being for the benefit of vivid imaginations, *Pepper* is a journey of awe and wonder that seems to last much longer than its official running time of 39 and a half minutes. A typically confident Beatlesque miscellany of



musical styles, many of them way outside the pop sphere, it begins with a cheeky deception – an orchestra tunes up but a rock band starts to play – and ends in pandemonium as the orchestra appears to go rogue and descend into anarchy. McCartney looks back fondly to music hall. Harrison gazes east to India. Lennon, perhaps the walking epitome of psychedelia during *Pepper*'s five months of recording, cheerfully tears down the partitions separating high art from pop culture. "A Day In The Life" is the climax, the hallucination next to which all previous hallucinations look parochial, as Lennon's brain moves lysergically on a vast scale, trying to focus on newspaper headlines but getting distracted by an intense kaleidoscope of thought patterns ("*Now they know how many holes it takes to fill the Albert Hall*") which override national and global events. For five minutes, the stoned elite and the non-inhaling man on the street could hear exactly what John Lennon was thinking.

Pepper was the best-selling pop album of its time – it spent 27 weeks at No 1 – and they say you could walk down any street that summer and hear it playing from half a dozen windows. But the post-life of *Pepper* has seen a curious turnaround. For years, it was traditionally regarded as the benchmark to which other albums should aspire. In 1974, when *NME* published an All-Time Top 100 Albums list, *Pepper* was the clear winner. It retained its *Citizen Kane*-like status of sacrosanct masterpiece until the 1990s, when a revisionist campaign suddenly turned on it. *Pepper* was condemned as overrated, conceptually confused and propped up with filler. Thom Yorke called it "a complete mess". In a Top 100 list nowadays, *Pepper* will be placed around 23rd or 24th – an acknowledgment of its existence but a pointed way of taking it down a peg or two. Meanwhile, *Revolver* is the new *Citizen Kane*.

> Paul looks back, George gazes east, and John tears down the partitions between high art and pop culture

The importance of *Pepper* to history is a matter of record. Its importance to those who love it is beyond measure and possibly language. It may be fashionable to knock it, but then, as McCartney says, they've been going in and out of style. If his original calculations are right, it's now 72 years since *Pepper* taught the band to play. He must have done his tuition in 1947 – but nobody seriously believes that the venerable gentlemen hail from the year of Hollywood blacklists and coal mines being nationalised. No, they belong to Utopia. They belong to illusion. They belong to the optic nerve and the brain's incredible power. The eyes that perceived them never saw the world like that again.

SLEEVENOTES | SGT PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND

1. Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
2. With A Little Help From My Friends
3. Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds
4. Getting Better
5. Fixing A Hole
6. She's Leaving Home
7. Being For The Benefit Of Mr Kite
8. Within You Without You
9. When I'm Sixty-Four
10. Lovely Rita
11. Good Morning Good Morning
12. Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (Reprise)
13. A Day In The Life

Released: June 1, 1967
Label: Parlophone (UK), Capitol (US)
Produced by: George Martin
Recorded at: EMI and Regent Sound Studios, London
Personnel: John Lennon (vocals, rhythm guitar, lead guitar, acoustic guitar, piano, organ, paper and comb, cowbell), Paul McCartney (vocals, bass, lead guitar, piano, organ, paper and comb), George Harrison (vocals, lead guitar, acoustic guitar, sitar, tambura, harmonica, congas, paper and comb), Ringo Starr (vocals, drums, congas, maracas, tambourine, bells, harmonica, paper and comb), George Martin (piano, organ, harmonium, harpsichord, glockenspiel, tape effects), Mal Evans (harmonica), Neil Aspinall (harmonica, tambura). Plus orchestra...
Highest charting position: UK 1; US 1



Brian Epstein at work: "I finally decided to admit I had taken LSD as well..."

"What is the thing you fear most in life?" "Loneliness. I hope I'll never be lonely."

Days before his death, Brian Epstein gives MIKE HENNESSEY a remarkable interview. To be discussed: drugs, depression, marriage, sexuality, anti-Semitism, faith, suicide – and, of course, his critical role in The Beatles' success...

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 5|8|1967



RECENTLY, BEATLES MANAGER Brian Epstein talked at length to *Melody Maker* writer Mike Hennessey. Because of the wide range of subjects outside music covered in these penetrating interviews, the *Melody Maker* may seem a curious vehicle for them. Yet while Brian Epstein, the manager of The Beatles, the most phenomenally successful artists in the history of popular entertainment, is well-known throughout the world, far less is known about Brian Epstein the man. This remarkable series of interviews gives the very first in-depth portrait of the man behind The Beatles.

Your recent admission that you have taken LSD has been attacked by some people as irresponsible in that it may influence younger people to try the drug, what is your reaction to this? Let me tell you the background to this. Paul rang me one Saturday to tell me that he had admitted to the press that he had taken LSD. At that time I was very worried. I don't think I slept that night and I thought about it all the following day. Then I came up to London on the Monday knowing that I was going to be asked to comment on Paul's admission. I finally decided to admit that I had taken LSD as well. There were several reasons for this. One was certainly to make things easier for Paul. People don't particularly enjoy being lone wolves; and I didn't feel like being dishonest and covering up, especially as I believe that an awful lot of good has come from hallucinatory drugs. People tend to think of the San Francisco hippies as dirty and unhappy, but, in fact, they are doing rather better things than the people who lead our nation. Coupled with my admission was a warning that neither Paul nor I advocated the general use of LSD by all and sundry. We issued a statement to this effect. So my intention was, to a certain extent, to warn as well as to own up. There is also another factor in this. We wanted to help the cause of The Rolling Stones. It is particularly unfortunate that they should have been scapegoats.

What made you take LSD in the first place? I'd heard a lot of good about it and I had sufficient understanding of it to know what I was doing. I had also read a lot about it.

Did you take it before The Beatles did? No. But we are a closely knit circle and we influenced each other. All five of us come from Liverpool and lived within a few hundred yards of each other. In fact, the circle is even wider because Neil, Mal, Alistair Taylor and Peter Brown are from the same background.

How many times have you taken LSD? About five times in the last 14 months

Will you take it again? I don't know.

Did you "turn on" in the first place because you felt the need for drugs? No, it was an experiment.

Have you ever smoked marijuana? Yes, from time to time. I really believe that pot, marijuana or hash – whatever you like to call it – is less harmful, without question, than, say, alcohol. I think there is a terrific misunderstanding about marijuana and its effects. So many people have said it must be bad that this verdict is accepted without question and, of course, there is the malicious association between drugs and pop music. I think society's whole attitude to soft drugs must eventually change. There is a parallel with homosexuality when that was a cardinal sin. Isn't it silly that we have had to wait all this time for the reforming legislation to go through?

Do you, then, support the provisions of the new bill which legalises homosexual acts between consenting adults in private? Of course! In fact, the majority of people do, I'm ➤

DEZO HOFFMAN/SHUTTERSTOCK

certain. You hear of very few prosecutions for homosexual offences these days.

To return to the question of soft drugs, do you not think there is a danger that the men who supply marijuana, and those who are also very often pushers of hard drugs like heroin and cocaine, will try to turn their customers on to the more expensive and more addictive hard drugs? The laws governing soft drugs principally create the danger. But the danger exists already with alcoholics who turn on to hard drugs. I think, however, that the danger is remote in the present context. None of the people I know who smoke pot are interested in harder drugs. They are certainly aware of the dangers involved.

Did you have no apprehension when you took LSD and smoked marijuana that you might become addicted? I did have some apprehension, but I took that risk. It was a calculated risk. But then I am in no way addicted to alcohol and seldom smoke cigarettes.

You know that LSD could have extremely damaging and sometimes fatal effects? It is true that LSD affects different people in different ways. Some people are supposed to have had bad experiences. There was a terrible programme on television the other night when a panel of so-called experts talked a lot of nonsense about the drug. People who have had a bad experience are really few and far between – certainly not as numerous as the people who have died from overdoses of alcohol. And in any case we don't know the details of these cases. They may have mixed alcohol with LSD. I certainly didn't feel I wanted to fly or jump off a ledge.

What did you feel? The feeling is too impressive and personal to convey in words. I know that I have sometimes had too much to drink and felt awful and unpleasant the day after. But I have never had a hangover from smoking pot or taking LSD. I think LSD helped me to know myself better and I think it helped me to become less bad-tempered.

Is bad-temperedness one of your failings? Yes.

What are the others? Well, I reproach myself most often for being bad-tempered and for being mean from time to time. When I'm rude or mean to somebody it takes me days to get over it.

Which failings do you dislike most in other people? I dislike ignorance, pettiness and prejudice. On the other hand, egomaniacs don't put me off. I think I, myself, have overcome a very large ego, so I'm very forgiving and tolerant of egomaniacs. There are a lot of them about and some of them are very brilliant and clever. I think this is the one failing one must be tolerant of. I also dislike dictatorship and I've never tried to dictate to my artists, although I'm aware that I command quite a bit of respect. The manager-artist relationship is one of mutual dependence and one of the most perfect relationships there has ever been, in my experience, is that which exists between The Beatles and myself. If I'd been domineering or dictatorial they would never have accepted it and it would all have gone wrong. You have to allow for freedom. You can easily be cut down to size in certain situations and you realise that humility is very important. When you waffle a great deal and it has no effect you realise that you have to modify your attitude.

Have The Beatles helped cut you down to size? Yes, they influenced me – and I think I influenced them. They are, after all, The Beatles. I also think that LSD has probably lessened my ego.

You once told me in an interview some years ago that you were anxious to find some creative outlet. Do you still feel frustrated over this? Whatever may have happened in the intervening time, I have learned to live with the idea that I'm The Beatles' manager. I'm a creative person to a degree, but the biggest thing that has ever happened to me is The Beatles. I have overcome the feelings of frustration, but The Beatles always make an effort to involve me in what they are doing. And they do involve me. They wanted me to sit in on the TV thing, but I wanted to watch it come over on TV so I wasn't there. And I'm still very nervous of cameras.

What is the thing you fear most in life? Loneliness. I hope I'll never be lonely. Although, actually, one inflicts loneliness on oneself to a certain extent.

DON'T PASS ME BY

At a playback of *Sgt Pepper*, John Lennon confirmed that The Beatles' touring days were over. "No more tours, no more moptops. We could never hear ourselves properly on tour. Anyway, what more could we do after playing to 50,000 people? What next? More fame? More money?"



Brian Epstein outside the Saville Theatre, London, April 2, 1965



LARRY ELLIS/GETTY IMIAGES

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 12|8|1967



YOU SAID IN the first interview that the thing you feared most in life was loneliness. Have you ever thought about marriage? Yes. Very often. I'd like it to happen – if it could happen. Apart from the companionship it represents I would welcome it because I get very put out having to run two homes on my own.

Do you think marriage is likely in the immediate future? No.

Is that because of your attitude or because of a lack of suitable candidates? I think because of me.

What do you look for in a woman? Simplicity, understanding and a love that appeals to me.

Have you met no women with these characteristics? Of course I have – I've been introduced to many whom I would have liked to



Lennon plays guitar as Harrison, Epstein, Starr and McCartney kick back in Paris



With George Martin, 1965

get to know better, but it just hasn't happened.

Are you happy in the society of women? Sometimes.

But you are fairly convinced that the prospects of your marrying are remote? I think the wish is slightly idealistic and unlikely to be fulfilled. But it is one of the biggest disappointments to me because I must be missing out somewhere not having a wife and children. I would love to have children.

Coming from a Jewish family, have you ever encountered any personal anti-Jewish prejudice? I've been very lucky. But I think a lot of anti-Jewish prejudice is occasioned not by people who are anti-Semitic but by those who are affected by it. In other words, Jewish people sometimes have a defensive attitude because they expect a hostile reception. Funnily enough, I was with a man the other evening who commented on the fact that I was staying at a hotel run by Jews. "But I'm a Jew," I told him. He was very embarrassed and said quickly, "Yes, but the owners of that hotel are not very nice Jews." Well, they may not have been very nice. I didn't meet them. But if they were not nice it was not because they were Jews. There are unpleasant Jews, Catholics, Protestants and so on.

I believe you were asked to help the Israeli cause in the recent Middle East crisis and refused. Why? I refused to help because I'm as sorry for a wounded Arab as I am for a wounded Israeli. People fundamentally are all the same and I can't discriminate between Israelis and Arabs.

Did your refusal to help upset your Jewish friends? I think Bernard Delfont and Cyril Shane, who were among many who particularly asked me to help, were somewhat surprised at my negative reaction! But I can't help it. I feel that people should have no greater concern for the suffering of one race than they have for any other. I believe in and want to help, as far as I can, to understand mankind, whatever colour, creed, religion or nationality. And I think this sort of philosophy, however broad and general it sounds, is the only basic one the leaders of the world can work from to attain world peace.

Is the Jewish faith important to you? Yes, naturally it figures necessarily in my thought. There are many beautiful and good things written in the scriptures and prayers, which I believe to be good and true. However, I find it difficult to accept religion of any kind in a ritualistic form. I find myself uneasy and unable to comprehend so much within the precincts of a Jewish house of worship. Indeed the same would apply to any specific house of worship. But because I'm of Jewish parentage I find myself respectful and tolerant. I love my family dearly.

Have you ever prayed? Yes, I prayed as a child. I loosely studied Judaism and other religions. At school I found myself interested in Roman Catholicism. I think that belief in life and God that ever prevails is better than ritualistic and religious praying.

Is there any justification for the frequent association of Jewishness with meanness? No, I don't think so. Everybody is a bit mean. I'm mean because although I know I've got enough money, I'll suddenly put the brakes on and think, "I can't carry on like this forever."

You have got a great deal out of life. What have you put into it? I have done what I can and will continue to do so. People who criticise me may have a point and may be sincere – but it doesn't really matter what they say. I know I have done my best. People get too wound up and serious. I've been rude to people in

"I had heard a lot of good things about LSD and I had sufficient understanding of it"
Brian Epstein

HARRY BENSON/GETTY, REX

my life, too. But one discovers that it is quite unnecessary. During the very, very active period of Beatles management, I maintained as much calm and gave them as much of a boost to their morale as I could. I would agree that I was particularly lucky to have found them in the first place – but maybe it was destined to happen. That, to a certain extent, I believe.

Do you have strong political views? I am becoming more and more politically minded. I feel strongly about some issues and the main problem, not only in Vietnam but throughout the world, is that politicians are not single-minded in their beliefs. I think so many politicians allow so many other pressures to bear on them, restricting truthful and honest thought.

Are you inclined towards the right or to the left in politics? I suppose I'm left really and I think I always have been.

What social reform would you most like to see? I would like to see more tolerance all round, more understanding and less ignorance by those who consider themselves the leaders of the country.

Do you think The Rolling Stones' trial was an example of establishment intolerance and misunderstanding? I think it was an appalling mess which should have never reached the stage it did. On the other hand, maybe we will be grateful in the future that they were scapegoats. I really think the press interest in The Rolling Stones and drugs is in excess of the public interest.

You've had an immensely successful career, but has there ever been a period when you were filled with despair? There have been many instances throughout my successful, semi-successful and failure periods.

Would you care to talk about them? No, they are too personal.

Has any period of despair ever been acute enough for you to contemplate suicide? Yes. But I think I've got over that period now.

Outside The Beatles and NEMS empire, what are your interests? I have a natural curiosity about everything. And at present I am very keen on Spanish things. Also I'm now very involved with my Sussex home which I bought five months ago.

How much did it cost you? About £30,000. I moved in with just the hangings and the carpets and now I'm enjoying installing bits and pieces of furniture and pictures.

Where do you prefer to spend your off-duty time? Either in Sussex or New York. I'm greatly attracted to New York and feel great in that environment. It is a beautiful city. Fortunately, I'm also able to work from either place.

What do you think of the current flower power scene both here and in America? Flower power is becoming a tiny bit of a drag. It's becoming a cliché and a fashionable cult. I'm currently wondering whether the cult is not slightly akin to rock'n'roll, Merseybeat, Swinging London and so on. Basically there's a lot to be said for the general attitude and if the move in this direction which is toward love and things could grow throughout the world we might find this planet a better place to be living on. There is certainly nothing wrong with the attitudes expressed by the flower children. I think I've been a flower child all my life but I hope the mood will progress and not become a commercial businessman's paradise because then it defeats its purpose. There are some signs of this but the attitude is so good, sincere and lovely that one cannot but help be happy to be in its midst. It's an international feeling so I cannot differentiate.

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 19|8|1967



I UNDERSTAND THAT your contract with The Beatles runs out towards the end of this year. Do you have the slightest doubt that they will re-sign with you? No, I don't. I don't think they mind how long I sign them for. A contract doesn't mean much unless you can work and be happy together. And I am certain that they would not agree to be managed by anyone else. Obviously I wouldn't (and couldn't) make them do anything they didn't want because of any legal rights I hold. Most of the time we think in the same direction anyway. And so we just groove along. In fact the principal value of a contract between us is really for the benefit of the lawyers, accountants and all that scene, because those people always think these things should be "proved" on paper.

When did you first sign them up? In December, 1961, after hearing them at the Cavern in November.

It is widely believed that you went to see them after receiving repeated requests for their records in the record departments you managed. Is this true? More or less. At the time I was getting very bored with what I was doing. I'd been selling records in my family's stores for about five years and had attained just about as much success in that sphere as possible. I'd tried window-dressing, selling furniture, soldiering, selling books in Charing Cross Road with varying degrees of success and just about that time I was looking for something challenging and exciting.

You must frequently have been asked if you foresaw the tremendous success of The Beatles when you signed them. May I ask you yet again? I never had any doubts that they wouldn't be huge. But I couldn't have seen the turn of events. I saw the potential of The Beatles without knowing how it would evolve. The timing was right as well.

If you had not met and signed The Beatles, do you think you would still have become a manager and impresario? I don't know. At 16, I wanted to be a dress designer, but it didn't happen. At 22, I wanted to be an actor so I went to RADA but I didn't like it. And then I started selling records and after that I met The Beatles.

How much do you think you have contributed to the success of The Beatles? Well, they are certainly not where they are today, because of me, if that is what you are suggesting. But our good relationship has been a contributing factor. When people ask why The Beatles have been so tremendously successful they always expect one short answer. But there isn't one. There are hundreds of contributory factors.

Would The Beatles have been so successful if they had been managed by someone else? They may have been as successful, but I didn't think they would have been as happy. I do know that I have always been straightforward and honest with them, and they appreciate this.

Do you take 25 per cent of their earnings? I certainly did at the beginning when I had more expense in promoting them. But now it works out roughly at a 20 per cent share for all five of us.

I imagine, however, that Paul and John, as composers, have the biggest incomes? Yes, I imagine that, too.

There have been suggestions in the past that you used The Beatles to promote other artists. Is this true? In spite of everything that may have been said, this is absolutely untrue. I have never used them to promote other artists. I have always been perfectly single-minded about this and I must say, in fairness, that The Beatles have been easy to manage. If they had decided on someone else to manage them I am sure they would maintain the same faith and ideals. Faith and belief has existed mutually between us since the beginning.

Has the phenomenal success of The Beatles caused people to overrate your gifts as a pop Svengali? I think this used to happen more than it does now. I was simply showered with talent. But I am not looking for it any more. I have delegated all my responsibilities as agent and I think people have stopped overrating me.

DON'T PASS ME BY

After Brian Epstein's death, his interviewer Mike Hennessey wrote, "The impression I formed was of a man desperately wanting to express himself artistically, but knowing he was destined for second-hand fame. He was only too aware he couldn't match their wit, genius, or inexhaustible inventiveness."



Macca blows his own trumpet for Eppy, EMI Studios, Abbey Road, 1967

People have referred to The Monkees as the biggest pop music sensation since The Beatles. How do you regard this claim? I think The Monkees have been a great boost to the music industry, but I don't think they can seriously compare with The Beatles.

Do you think a phenomenon like The Beatles could ever occur again? I think it unlikely in the same form or magnitude. When people refer to a group as being 'the new Beatles' it doesn't worry me. It is the same as Bardot. She doesn't mind that there are 48 girls all being hailed as the new Bardot. But if another Beatles phenomenon does occur I know that I'll be watching it rather than handling it. I've been through all the phases of management with The Beatles and that is sufficient for me. I'd like to go on with The Beatles and with Cilla [Black], and I'd like to see Gerry [And The Pacemakers] happen. Naturally, I am also proud to be associated through NEMS Enterprises with other artists. Especially The Cream, The Bee Gees, The Who, Matt Monro, Donovan and so on. But I obviously could not deal with all NEMS activities personally, so I've given these responsibilities to the people who I think are right for the job.

As well as successes, you've had your share of failures in artist management. How do you feel about them? I feel very sorry for the artists who didn't make it under my management.

Do you think in these cases that your judgement was at fault or was it the judgement of the public? I think mostly, in the past, I was at fault. Then there are other factors of young people growing up and not maturing and progressing as one would have liked.

"I was simply showered with talent. But I think, now, people have stopped overrating me"
Brian Epstein

Have The Beatles changed very much since you first met them? Yes, a lot.

A frequent criticism of The Beatles these days is that they have lost touch with the public who made them. What do you think of this? This is quite untrue. I don't think it is a good idea for them to talk in the press every minute. On the other hand they have been quite open about a lot of things. Paul talked quite freely to the press recently. But there has to be somewhere that you can stop. There are 100,000 reporters who want to interview them. When we launched the *Sgt Pepper* LP we considered for a long time the best way to do it. Finally we decided to have a party at my pad. It was difficult to decide who to invite – we wanted people who were close to us and people who would spread the word. I suppose we had about 15 journalists there. It proved a good idea because the story went round the world.

But will The Beatles be making any more concert appearances? Not in the usual form. But it is difficult to predict future developments. For instance I couldn't have said twelve months ago that The Beatles were going to appear to the whole world to tell everybody "All You Need Is Love". As you know The Beatles are working towards a TV programme for distribution throughout the world. They are also keen to develop ideas for a film. *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* has been a fantastic success. To date it has sold 521,043 copies in Britain, nearly two million in America and huge sale figures have been received from many other countries. I think they would like to make a *Sgt Pepper* film. They have proved that they can do the sound part and now they feel they can tackle the visual part as well. They would like the film to come within our orbit and there are plenty of good people in NEMS who can help them with this. They want complete freedom to make it and create it in their own way.

Is it true that The Beatles are getting more and more outside help on their records and are less personally involved? No, they're not. Quite the reverse. They are more involved in the making of their records than they have ever been. I cannot emphasise the truth of that statement too much. Of course George Martin and others play their part. But The Beatles are still the creators. They go to many of the mixing sessions and have maintained control over everything. As far as I am concerned, I believe in them more than ever.

DAVID MAGNUS/SHUTTERSTOCK

"Everyone is a potential Jesus Christ"

A spiritually and chemically liberated George Harrison returns from Haight-Ashbury to tell ALAN WALSH about his relationship with hippies, and about how he's got the "material thing in perspective". "I envy George, because he now has a great faith," says Paul, when NORRIE DRUMMOND visits him at home in St John's Wood...

★ TAKEN FROM
MELODY MAKER 2|9|1967



"YOU MAY THINK this interview is of no importance to me," said George Harrison across a table in NEMS Enterprises' Mayfair offices. "But you'd be wrong. It's very important. We have realised that it's up to everyone – including The Beatles – to spread love and understanding and to communicate this in any way we can." George, radiant in flowered shirt and trousers, long flowing hair and bushy moustache, lit up a dismal wet London day by his clothes, his friendliness and the warmth of his replies. George spoke quietly but frankly about many subjects – from God to LSD – and the 90-minute conversation examined the whole existence of the most introspective Beatle.

You have just returned from Haight-Ashbury, San Francisco. What were your impressions of life there? Well, we were only in Haight-Ashbury for about 30 minutes but I did see quite a bit. We parked our limo a block away just to appear the same and walked along the street for about 100 yards, half like a tourist and half like a hippy. We were trying to have a look in a few shops.

Who was with you? Pattie, her sister Jenny, a friend of Jenny's, Derek Taylor, Neil Aspinall, our road manager, and Magic Alex, who's a friend. We walked along and it was nice. At first they were just saying "Hello" and "Can I shake your hand?". Then more and more people arrived and it got bigger and bigger. We walked into the park and it just became a bit of a joke. All these people were just following us along.

One of them tried to give you STP, I believe? They were trying to give me everything. This is a thing that I want to try and get over to people. Although we've been identified a lot with hippies, especially since all this thing about pot and LSD has come out, we don't want to tell anyone else to have it because it's something that's up to the person himself. Although it was like a key that opened the door and showed a lot of things on the other side, it's still up to people themselves what they do with it. LSD isn't a real answer. It doesn't give you anything. It enables you to see a lot of possibilities that you may never have noticed before, but it isn't the answer. You don't just take LSD and that's it forever, you're OK.

A hippy is supposed to be someone who becomes aware – you're hip if you know what's going on. But if you're really hip, you don't get involved with LSD and things like that. You see the potential that it has and the good that can come from it, but you also see that you don't really need it. I needed it the first time I ever had it. Actually, I didn't know that I'd had it. I'd never even heard of it then. This is something that just hasn't been told. Everybody now knows that we've had it, but the circumstances were that somebody just shoved it in our coffee before we'd ever heard of the stuff. So we happened to have it quite unaware of the fact.

I don't mind telling people I've had it. I'm not embarrassed. It makes no difference 'cos I know that I didn't actually go out and try to get some.

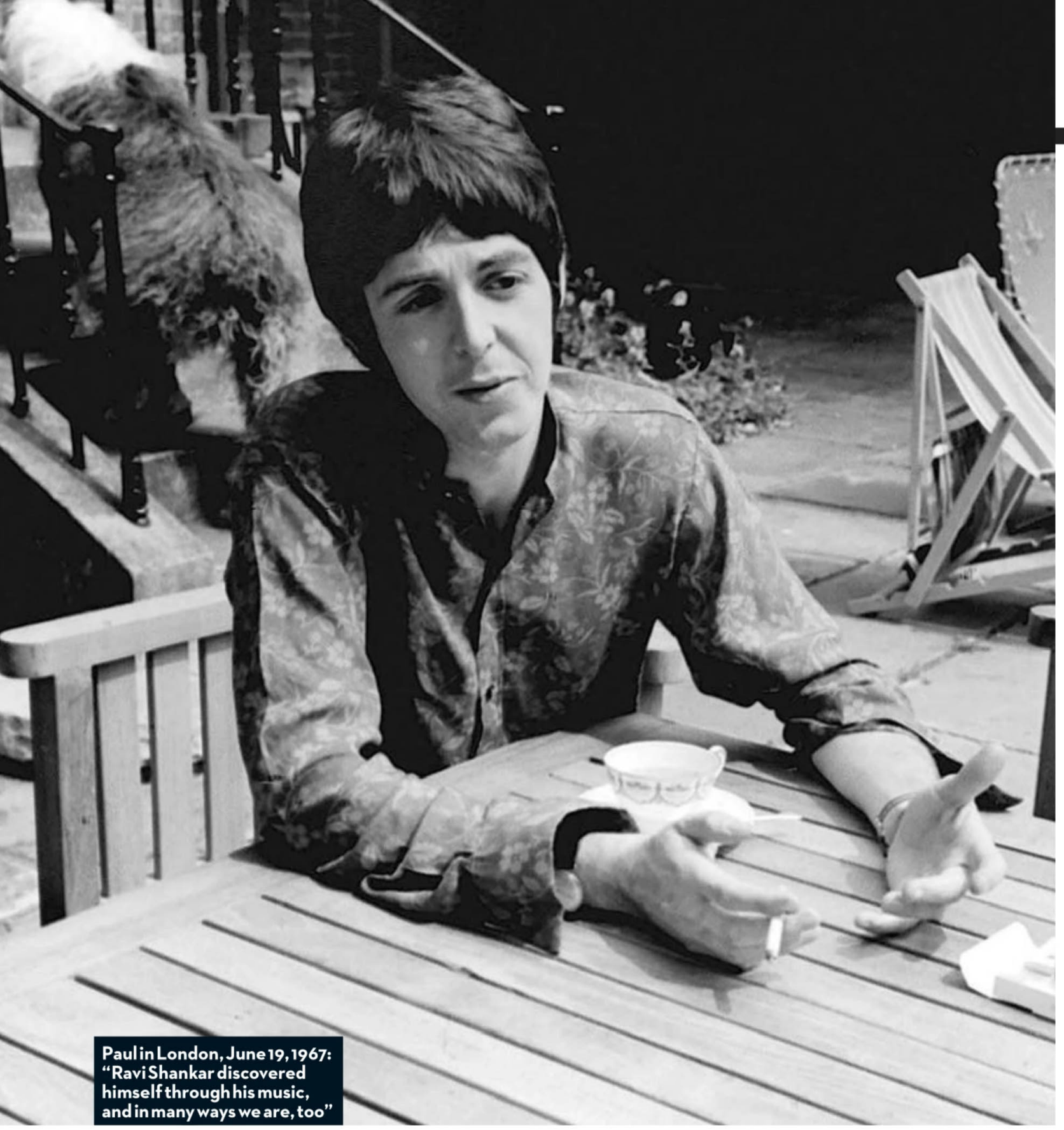
You've never deliberately set out to take LSD? No, not really. For me, it was a good thing but it showed me that LSD isn't really the answer to everything. It can help you to go from A to B, but when you get to B, you see C. And you see that to get really high, you have to do it straight. There are special ways of getting high without drugs – with yoga, meditation and all those things. So this was the disappointing thing about LSD. In this physical world we live in, there's always duality – good and bad, black and white, yes and no. Whatever there is, there's always the opposite. There's always something equal and opposite to everything and this is why you can't say LSD is good or it's bad because it's good AND it's bad. It's both of them and it's neither of them all together. People don't consider that.

Haight-Ashbury was a bit of a shock because although there were so many great people, really nice people who only wanted to be friends and didn't want to impose anything or be anything, there was still the black bit, the opposite. There was the bit where people were so out of their minds trying to shove STP on me, and acid – every step I took there was somebody trying to give me something – but I didn't want to know about that. I want to get high and you can't get high on LSD. You can take it and take it as many times as you like, but you get to a point that you can't get any further unless you stop taking it.

Haight-Ashbury reminded me a bit of the Bowery. There were these people just sitting round the pavement begging, saying, "give us some money for a blanket." These are hypocrites. They are making fun of tourists and all that and at the same time, they are holding

DAVID MAGNUS/REX FEATURES

Harrison at Abbey Road for *Our World*, the first live global television link, 1967



Paul in London, June 19, 1967: "Ravi Shankar discovered himself through his music, and in many ways we are, too"

their hands out begging off them, that's what I don't like. I don't mind anybody dropping out of anything, but it's the imposition on somebody else I don't like. The moment you start dropping out and then begging off somebody else to help you, then it's no good. I've just realised through a lot of things that it doesn't matter what you are as long as you work. It doesn't matter if you chop wood, as long as you chop and keep chopping. Then you get what's coming to you. You don't have to drop out. In fact, if you drop out, you put yourselves further away from the goal of life than if you keep working.

Have you any defined idea of what your goal in life is? We've all got the same goal whether we realise it or not. We're all striving for something which is called God. For a reunion, complete. Everybody has realised at some time or other that no matter how happy they are, there's still always unhappiness that comes with it. Everyone is a potential Jesus Christ, really. We are all trying to get to where Jesus Christ got. And we're going to be on this world until we get there. We're all different people doing different things in life, but that doesn't matter because the whole point of life is to harmonise with everything, every aspect in creation. That means down to not killing the flies, eating the meat, killing people or chopping trees down.

Can we ever get it down to this level? You can only do it if you believe in it. Everybody is potentially divine. It's just a matter of self-realisation before it will all happen. The hippies are a good idea – love, flowers and that is great – but when you see the other half of it, it's like anything. I love all these people too, those who are honest and trying to find a bit of truth and to straighten out the untruths. I'm with them 100 per cent but when I see the bad side of it, I'm not so happy.

To get anywhere near what you are talking about, do you believe you have to be a hippy or a flower person? Anybody can do it. I doubt if anyone who is a hippy or flower person feels that he is. It's only you, the press, who call us that. They've always got to have some tag. If you like, I'm a hippy or a flower person. I know I'm not. I'm George Harrison, a person. Just like everybody else, but different at the same time. You get to a point where you realise that it doesn't matter what people think you are, it's what you think you are yourselves that matters. Or what you know you are. Anyone can make it. You don't have to put a flowery shirt on.

Could a bank clerk make it? Anyone can, but they've got to have the desire. The Beatles got all the material wealth that we needed and that was enough to show us that this thing wasn't material. We are all in the physical world, yet what we are striving for isn't physical. We all get so hung up with material things like cars and televisions and houses, yet what they can give you is only there for a little bit and then it's gone.

Did you ever reach the point where you considered getting rid of the material wealth? Yes, but now that I've got the material thing in perspective, it's OK. The whole reason I've got material things is because they were given to me as a gift. So it's not really bad that I've got it, because I didn't ask for it. All we ever had to do was just be ourselves and it all happened. It was there, given to us. All this. But then, it was given to us to enable us to see that that wasn't it. There was more to it.

Where do these beliefs fit in with the musical side of The Beatles? I'm a musician. I don't know why. This is a thing that I've looked back on since my birth. Many people think life is predestined. I think it is vaguely but it's still up to you which way your life's going to go. All I've ever done is keep being me and it's just all worked out. It just did it all... magic... it just did it. We never planned anything. So it's obvious – because I'm a musician now, that's what I was destined to be. It's my gig.

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 9|9|1967



GEORGE, CAN YOU tell where The Beatles are at musically today? What are you trying to do? Nothing. We're not trying to do anything. This is the big joke. It's all Cosmic Joke 43. Everyone gets our records and says, "Wonder how they thought of that?" or "Wonder what they're planning next?" or whatever they do say. But we don't plan anything. We don't do anything. All we do is just keep on being ourselves. It just comes out. It's The Beatles.

All any of us are trying to do now is get as much peace and love as possible. Love will never be played out because you can't play out the truth. Whatever I say can be taken a million different ways depending on how screwed up the reader is. But The Beatles is just a hobby really... it's just doing it on its own. We don't even have to think about it. The songs write themselves. It just all works out. Everything that we're taking into our minds and trying to learn or find out – and I feel personally it's such a lot, there's so much to get in – and yet the output coming out the back end is still so much smaller than what you're putting in. Everything is relative to everything else. We know that now.

So we've got to a point where when people say "There's nothing else you can do", we know that's only from where they are. They look up and think we can't do any more, but when you're up there you see you haven't started. Take Ravi Shankar, who is so brilliant. With pop music, the more you listen to it, the more you get to know it, the more you pace through it and the less satisfaction it gives you, whereas Indian music and Ravi Shankar as a person... it's exactly the opposite because the more you're able to understand the music, the more you see there is to appreciate... the more you get back out of it.

You can have just one record of Indian music and play it for the rest of your life and you'd probably still never see all the subtleties in it. It's the same with Ravi Shankar. He feels as though he hasn't started and yet he's doing so much, teaching so many people, writing film music, everything.

TRINITY MIRROR / MIRRORPIX / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Have you any idea what The Beatles will do next time you go into the studios? No idea. We won't know until we do it. We're naturally influenced by everything that's going on around us. If you weren't influenced, you wouldn't be able to do anything. That's all anything is, an influence from one person to another. We'll write songs and go into the studios and record them and we'll try and make them good. We'll make a better LP than *Sgt Pepper*. But I don't know what it's going to be.

If you had a child, do you know what you would try to do as a father? I haven't, and I can't really know what I'd do. But I know I wouldn't let it go to school. I'm not letting fascist teachers put things into the child's head. I'd get an Indian guru to teach him – and me, too.

I believe The Beatles are thinking about making a film in which you create the visual as well as the sound and music? Yes. We've got to the point now where we've found out that if you rely on other people, things never work out. This may sound conceited but it's not. It's just what happens. The things that we've decided ourselves and that we've done ourselves have always worked out right – or at least satisfactorily – whereas the moment you get involved with other people, it goes wrong. It's like a record company. You hand them the whole LP and the sleeve and everything there on a plate. All they've got to do is print it. Then all the crap starts: "You can't have that" and "You don't do this" and we get so involved with trivial things that it all starts deteriorating around us.

And it's the same with a film. The more involved we get with film people, the less of a Beatles film it's going to be. Take that *Our World* television show. We were trying to make it into a recording session and a good time and the BBC were trying to make it into a television show. It's a constant struggle to get ourselves across through all these other people, all hassling.

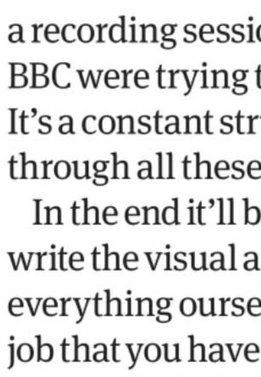
In the end it'll be best if we write the music, write the visual and the script, film it, edit it, do everything ourselves. But then it's such a hell of a job that you have to get involved and that means you couldn't do other things. But we'll have to get other people to do things because we can't give that much time to just a film because it's only a film and there are more important things in life.

Do you think the film will come off in the near future? Yes. I think it'll probably all happen next year sometime.

ALAN WALSH

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 9|9|1967



AS MOST PEOPLE must have noticed, The Beatles have undergone a major change in the past year. The moptops have gone and been replaced by four highly individual creative personalities. The "yeah-yeahs" and the "ooohs" have given way to sitars and Mellotrons. The Beatle boots and round-collared jackets have been replaced by kaftans and beads. No longer is it news when they are seen at clubs or theatres. At last, the screams are fading away.

To find out more about the great Beatles transformation, I visited Paul McCartney at his St John's Wood home recently. I told my taxi driver the address. "Oh, you mean where that Beatle lives," he said. No more than half a dozen fans were waiting patiently at the massive iron gates of his house.

The gates were opened by his housekeeper, Mrs Mills ("She still hasn't given me a tune yet," says Paul), who led me into the lounge. Paul's huge Old English sheepdog Martha bounded forward, leapt up, put both front paws on my shoulders and started chewing my tie. His three cats – Jesus, Joseph and Mary – were crawling over each other underneath the television set.

Paul, dressed in a green floral-patterned shirt and green slacks, sat cross-legged in a large green velvet armchair. Mike McGear, Paul's brother, was just leaving with several kaftans over his arm.

A large *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* poster is pinned to one wall. His book collection includes many works on yoga and meditation.

At the moment, all four Beatles are on holiday, although they have been recording. "When I used to tell you we didn't know what our plans were, it was simply that we hadn't been told what we were going to be doing. Now we simply just don't know."

Mrs Mills reappeared, bearing cups of tea and a large cream sponge. "The only thing lined up for us is the TV show," said Paul, stirring his tea. "But we're still trying to work out the format. We've also been recording the past few nights, and our next album will probably come from the TV show."

Anything that The Beatles now indulge in, they obviously do for love, not for money. "We can now sit back and pick and choose what we want to do. We're not going to turn out records or films just for the sake of it. We don't want to talk unless we've got something to say. When you don't have to make a living, a job has a different meaning. Most people have to earn a wage to live. If you don't, you take a job to relieve the boredom – but you do something which gives you pleasure.

"We enjoy recording, but we want to go even further. I would like to come up with a completely new form of music, invent new sounds. I want to do something, but I don't know what. At the moment, I'm thinking things out. There seems to be a pause in my life right now – a time for reassessment."

I asked Paul if he ever regarded himself as being rather like a retired man of 65, who was now only pottering around, dabbling in his favourite hobby. To a certain extent he was inclined to agree. "I don't regard myself as having retired, but what do most people do when they retire? As you say, they become wrapped up in a hobby. Either that or they find another job. I would like to do something else, but what that will be I don't know."

Despite the fact that three of The Beatles are married and they are, all four of them, very different individuals, they still have that same bond of loyalty to each other that they have always had. They are still each other's best friends. If they are asked to do something as a group and any of them doesn't want to take part, then the scheme is dropped.

"If three of us wanted to make a film, for instance, and the fourth didn't think it was a good idea, we'd forget about it, because the fourth person would have a very good reason for not wanting to do it."

In the past year, Paul has become a much more introspective person. He is constantly striving to discover more about himself and about other people. What is depression? Why do people become bored? What is his ultimate goal? These are questions to which Paul has tried to find the answers in books of meditation and lectures by men who know more about it than he does. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi is playing a big part in developing the Beatle minds. He is the man who gave them strength when they heard of Brian Epstein's tragic death.

"I'm more tolerant now than I was, and I feel more at ease myself, but I'm now less certain about many things," said Paul. "In some ways I envy George, because he now has a great faith. He seems to have found what he's been searching for. When we went to India we were amazed. So many people living in terrible poverty – but everyone was so happy. They were always laughing and smiling, even though most of them were starving. For people in the Western world to understand why these people can be so happy is a very difficult thing."

With John, George and Ringo, Paul will be flying to India again shortly to study transcendental meditation with the Maharishi. To a certain extent, Paul's music is his greatest emotional outlet. "Ravi Shankar discovered himself through his music, and I suppose in many ways we are, too."

This is apparent in their latest albums, which feature many tracks based on personal experiences. But how far can one go with any new art form, be it music, films or theatre? Will the greatest general public accept it?

"We've never set out with the sole intention of trying to please people. It's been wonderful that so many have appreciated what we've done. We don't want to come to a point where we wave cheerio to anyone. We want to take them along with us."

Paul McCartney certainly is more at ease now and much more tolerant and understanding. But he's still searching for something. Whether or not he'll find it, I just don't know. But he is determined to, somehow.

NORRIE DRUMMOND

DON'T PASS ME BY

After McCartney admitted to taking LSD, *MM* polled 100 "youngsters" in July '67 on whether acid should be legal. 76% said yes, 18% no, with 6% uncertain. "What possessed him to do it baffles me," said Tom Key, 19. "The fact he went rambling on about God convinces me that LSD pickles the brain."

08 DECEMBER | 1967

Magical Mystery Tour

Two weeks after Brian Epstein's death, the Fabs take a trip into the psychedelic West Country. Meaning: lost in transit. Tunes: could be worse. *By Louis Pattison*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"The Beatles are at it again, stretching pop music to its limits on beautiful sound canvases, casting wonderful spells to turn the dullest plastic disc into a magical mystery tour of sounds fantastic, sounds unbelievable!"
NICK LOGAN, NME, NOVEMBER 25, 1967

"They've done it again – six tracks which no other pop group in the world could begin to approach for originality combined with the popular touch..."
MELODY MAKER, NOVEMBER 25, 1967

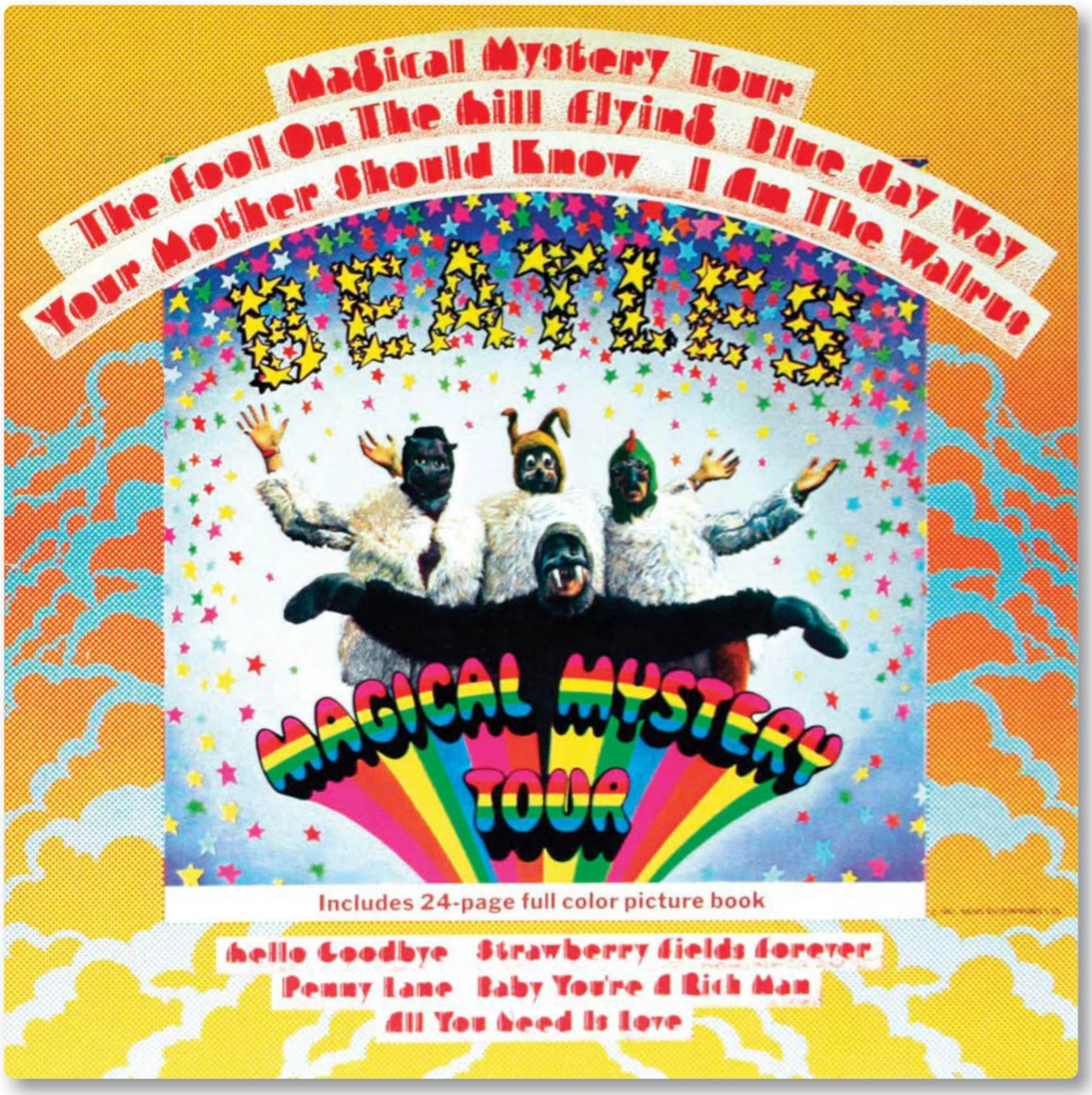
IT WAS SEPTEMBER 1967, just as the Summer Of Love was giving way to autumn, and The Beatles were on a trip. A coach trip, to be precise – piled on to a Bedford VAL Panorama among friends and relatives, jobbing actors, and extras paid the weekly sum of £5, and sent out to wheel around Hampshire, Devon and Somerset.

What was intended, far out in the West Country, wasn't entirely clear – the script of *Magical Mystery Tour*, if you could call it that, constituted a number of segments sketched out by McCartney in the form of a pie chart on a single sheet of paper. Little more than two weeks after the passing of Brian Epstein, dead of a drug overdose, the idea of a sojourn to the English countryside probably had its appeal. But the magnitude of The Beatles' fame made getting away from it all somewhat difficult. As the coach turned up at their first port of call in Teignmouth, Devon, 400 teenagers turned out to meet them. Cooped up for five days, trailed by a motorcade of fans and the press, tempers flared. While stuck in a traffic jam, an infuriated Lennon jumped out and tore the colourful lettering off the side of the bus.

Magical Mystery Tour, edited from 10 hours of footage to a still-sprawling 52 minutes, screened to an audience of 15 million on Boxing Day 1967. Forsaking conventional narrative for a set of bizarre set-pieces and dreamlike segues, it received a largely bewildered reception – often suggestive more "of a nightmare, rather than a Mystery Tour", as one aggrieved viewer scribbled to the BBC. Part of the problem, surely, was its broadcast in black and white, colour television still being in its infancy in the UK. "We didn't want to do something that didn't represent where we were up to," said McCartney. "But the trouble is, most people didn't know where we were up to." Both figuratively, and literally, The Beatles were seeing in Technicolor, while the rest of the UK were stuck in monochrome.

Certainly, you can see *Magical Mystery Tour* as a sincere attempt to articulate what it was like to be a Beatle in 1967. Part big-budget home movie, part arthouse invention inspired by McCartney's experiments with Super-8 film, it was a freeform mix of Merry Pranksters-inspired acid weirdness, Monty Pythonesque surrealism, musical performances and memories of their Liverpool upbringing. The plot itself is loosely focused on Richard Starkey (Ringo Starr) and his Aunt Bessie (Jessie Robins), who bicker incessantly on a charabanc-style bus holiday peopled by a collection of misfits – tour director Jimmy Johnson, conductor Buster Bloodvessel (played by Ivor Cutler), and the rest of The Beatles. It is incoherent, often witty, occasionally rather tedious, often deliriously fun. Along the way, there are wrestling midgets, a dancing walrus, a scene in an Army Recruitment office where the band are barracked incoherently by drill sergeant Victor Spinetti, a diner having spaghetti shovelled onto his overflowing plate, and the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band playing "Death Cab For Cutie" as a stripper distracts Neil Innes with a pink feather boa.

It is remembered most fondly, of course, for its musical performances. The Lewis Carroll-inspired "I Am The Walrus", Lennon's finest flight of lyrical surrealism, was filmed at an airfield in Kent, amid huge concrete structures designed to protect parked



World War II bombers. A lovely pastoral segment accompanies "Fool On The Hill". As a sort of decompression from the dreamy surrealism, "Your Mother Should Know" closes the film with an old-fashioned dance routine, a nod to the music hall, with The Beatles descending a staircase in white tuxedos.

But transferring the stuff of *Magical Mystery Tour* into a conventional LP was not straightforward. Too many songs for an EP, not enough for an album, it was originally issued in the UK as a six-track double EP before later being supplanted by an expanded piece collecting non-album singles. This serves to confuse an already confusing theme. On the bright side, though, this 11-track piece is, hit for hit, up there with anything The Beatles ever did. The giddy acceleration of the title track finds its contrast in other explorations in travel and motion – the gorgeous, Mellotron-soaked instrumental "Flying", and Harrison's "Blue Jay Way", which echoes the dislocation of its lyric with eerie double-tracking, backwards tape effects and drone-like qualities inspired by Indian raga.

Then there are the singles. Lennon's haunted, pastoral "Strawberry Fields Forever" and its double A-side, "Penny Lane", are considered by George Martin as the greatest Beatles pairing. "Hello Goodbye", released as the A-side to "...Walrus", offers fine contrast to Lennon's pornographic gobbledegook, demonstrating McCartney's skill for combining the melodically rich with the almost childishly simple. The closest the album gets to a weak link is "Baby You're A Rich Man", a slightly lightweight satire of "*the beautiful people*". But then, to close, there is "All You Need Is Love", a reminder that even in these days of psychedelic voyages into the weird English vale, The Beatles could still talk to the world, and find it listening.

> The Beatles were now seeing in Technicolor, while the rest of the UK were stuck in monochrome

At the time, *Magical Mystery Tour* was observed as a sign of The Beatles faltering. It is an interpretation not entirely without merit. Without Epstein, The Beatles lacked a guiding hand to pull their more outré schemes together. He left a void that would be filled by squabbling and rancour – although this in itself was creative progress, in that it led to the fractured 'White Album'. Meanwhile, *Magical Mystery Tour* stood as one final sure signpost. The Beatles, it indicated, were no longer here to entertain us. If *Sgt Pepper* had felt like a benevolent attempt to switch on the world, here you got the sense that John, Paul, George and Ringo weren't concerned if their devotees were following or not. Indeed, maybe getting a little lost was part of the design.

SLEEVENOTES | MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR

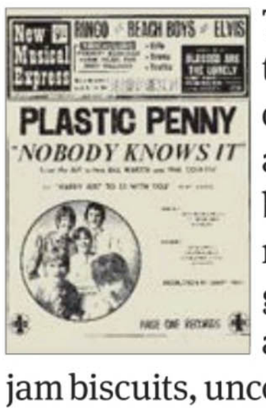
1. Magical Mystery Tour
2. The Fool On The Hill
3. Flying
4. Blue Jay Way
5. Your Mother Should Know
6. I Am The Walrus
7. Hello Goodbye
8. Strawberry Fields Forever
9. Penny Lane
10. Baby You're A Rich Man
11. All You Need Is Love

Released:
November 27, 1967 (US), November 19, 1976 (first UK LP release)
Label:
Capitol (US), Parlophone (UK)
Produced by:
George Martin
Recorded at:
EMI and Olympic Studios, London
Personnel include:
Lennon (vocals, guitar, piano, Mellotron, clavioline), McCartney (vocals, bass, piano, Mellotron), Harrison (vocals, guitar, organs, harmonica), Starr (drums and percussion), Mal Evans, Neil Aspinall (percussion), Christoper Taylor, Richard Taylor, Jack Ellory (flutes, "The Fool On The Hill"), The Mike Sammes Singers (vocals, "I Am The Walrus")
Highest charting position:
US 1; UK 31

"The truth about me is that I'm pleasantly insincere!"

Paul drags along ALAN SMITH for a lost weekend in Bedfordshire and reveals a little more of his true self along the way. Ringo, meanwhile, discusses everything from the Maharishi to his building business. "I guess," he says, "we're not too big in Tehran!"

★ TAKEN FROM
NME 23|3|1968



THE SUNTAN PEEPED around the fringes of Ringo Starr's dark, magnificent moustache, and he sat forward on a hard-backed Regency chair in a room of white walls and deep green carpet. He pulled up another chair for his coffee and jam biscuits, unconsciously flicked his blue-and-white striped shirt with one strap of his braces (a gift from Maureen, emblazoned with a line of pink elephants side by side), and then turned his blue eyes towards me and waited for the questions. ➤



Paul outside his house in London's St John's Wood his sheepdog Martha, December 1967

TRINITY MIRROR / MIRRORPIX / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO





Ringo in *Candy* and, inset, leaving for India with his wife, Maureen

ASSOCIATED NEWSPAPERS/REX FEATURES

You could say that if the Ringo Starr of 1962 was a sombre-faced study in black and white, today's Ringo is a gentle picture of colour and contentment. He is more mellow, relaxed and articulate than ever before. He once shrugged off interviews with deadpan Groucho-isms – now he combines his humour with an obviously pleasant disposition and a wish to be helpful.

Ringo '68 is a nice guy who found himself, who is happiest at home with Maureen, Zak, Jason, Tiger the poodle, and their nine cats, and who can talk amiably on most topics from rock'n'roll to Rishikesh. We chatted, in fact, about almost everything – rock'n'roll; the days when I used to try and get the unknown Beatles a mention in *NME* by pointing out that "drummer Ringo Starr went to school with Billy Fury"; how Ringo got home from India without being recognised by a soul; our mutual admiration for Fats Domino and Eddie Cochran. His role as a randy handyman in *Candy*; was he growing away from George, Paul and John?; *King Kong*; what the charts mean to him today; the future; the ignorance of some older people; respect for his privacy; some old rock 78s now being worth 30 bob a time; and did I want to buy five flats and two houses he still had for sale because of Harold Wilson?

He smiled a magnificent moustached smile and told me that getting back from India without publicity was "the easiest thing in the world".

"Usually," said Ringo, "I tell people I want to get somewhere quietly, and it turns out everyone knows. A hundred people are in on the secret. I know what it is: the airline like to get you photographed with the name. This time, we just drove into Delhi, got a ticket, and that was it. We stopped off in Tehran and this bloke from the airline came up and said: 'Excuse me, are you one of The Beatles?' I said 'No,' and he just walked away and that was that. I guess we're not too big in Tehran!

"Rock'n' roll? If it does come back, it won't be for more than six months, or it will be re-releases of the old classics by Elvis, Little Richard, Jerry Lee and Fats Domino. Fats was... well... fantastic." His eyes lit up and we both did a bit of jumping about in praise of numbers like "Blueberry Hill". He said he remembered playing on the Gene Vincent tour with Rory Storm And The Hurricanes, and how he remembered being choked when Eddie Cochran went and got killed and he wasn't able to see him play on some of the dates.

"It was a great tour, though," said Ringo. "All the Teds were throwing pennies."

He recalled having a great collection of rock 78s – Alan Freed and so on – and whistled at the thought that they now sell for 30 bob a time to collectors. "I gave mine away to my cousin when she bought a record player," he said with a touch of nostalgic regret, "I don't know why. I just did."

He loved contributing a cameo role to *Candy*, which is still in production with other big names like Burton, Brando and Elsa Martinelli.

Said Ringo: "Brian brought me the offer about a year ago, and I'd just been sitting on it. But one day I got to thinking I hadn't been doing enough, so I said yes. Mind you, I'd read the book of the film, and I thought: 'You're joking, how can they make that into a film?' Randy isn't the word for it. No wonder it's been banned! Doing a small role like that was good, because I'd forgotten all about film techniques and *Help!*. I could have starred in things myself, but a nice two weeks was enough for me. Yes, I like the idea of starring in my own film one day, but not right now. At the moment I'm thinking about one we're hoping to make with all of us – one in which we could play all kinds of roles, with me popping up as a chauffeur one minute and King Kong the next. That's the most important."

He suddenly harked back to *Candy* and we both looked suitably leery as he described the racy rough-and-tumble he has in the scenes with his delectable co-star. He says he won't believe it if the film gets anything less than an "X" [*adult certificate*].

And how about "Lady Madonna"? I hadn't heard the record at the time (he rectified this by kindly giving me one belonging to Beatles publicist Tony Barrow!) and Ringo said it could best be described as "rockaswing". He mentioned "Bad Penny Blues", and said that on the disc he swung on the brushes, somewhat in the same

style. He couldn't really say what the lyric was about: only Paul knew what he had in his mind. Paul had composed the song at home, and originally done it on piano with a touch of the Fats Wallers. I said I realised the technical difficulties involved, but could Ringo honestly tell me if he thought The Beatles would tour again? "Not the way I see it," he said after a moment. "I don't want to tour or do interviews or anything!"

I looked a bit put out – I thought he was dropping hints I should pick up me tea and biscuits and head for the door – but he explained he had four interviews that afternoon and they weren't really "him"; although he did have to confess he liked to read them in the papers. "The trouble is," said Ringo with consideration, "sometimes I hear myself saying the same things over again. But I do try and it's nice not to be talking about India all the time."

We had a laugh about those "Apple" ads which have been appearing on the back page of *NME* for some time. According to Ringo: "Paul picks them all out at the Keystone picture agency. He just went down there and browsed through the old photos they had. They don't really mean anything on their own, but they're leading up to something... and one week, they'll just say it."

I asked about the philosophy behind The Beatles' single – there were pundits going about saying The Beatles had decided to go back to simple rock'n'roll because they felt they couldn't progress any further. Was that the case?

"A load of rubbish," said Our Ritchie, commendably slicing though such rubbish like a knife through a butty. "What we do is just go into the studio and make records. We make as many as we can, then just listen and pick out a single. We just pick what we think is the best single. It could be rock or anything. Naturally, we made the record, so that much of it is our own decision. But apart from that, we just choose a track. Funny, isn't it... people always like to read something deeper.

"No, we're not heading for a scene where we just make LPs. We have to make singles, don't we? It's one of those things. I know I still get a kick out of the charts, but I don't worry about our position the way I used to. I used to see us at No 1 and I used to worry about us getting there. Now I relax and accept whatever happens."

We talked about people ("I try to get away sometimes. I want to live a normal life after all those years of leaping about") and especially the rudeness he experienced from some people over 40. "They shout down teenagers," said Ringo, "but they've often got more manners than older people. I find older people are often much more taken up with their own importance. You know how it is: you get a little local councillor, and he'd be just an ordinary bloke except he's got his little bit of power.

"I've had a good eye view of the human race since The Beatles happened, and I've met and seen all kinds. There are nice people who respect your wishes – people who know you're out trying to enjoy yourself and who try to respect your privacy, not like you're out of a zoo. Then there are other people who think they're so hip, they should ignore you altogether, and it's a funny feeling walking into a place and nobody comes up to say hello because they don't want to bug you.

"When it's like that, it's like there's a barrier between you, you can feel people consciously not looking up in case they catch your eye. You can actually feel them flinching!"

I told Ringo there were those who felt that because he didn't seem always to share the same interests as George, John and Paul, he and they might be growing apart. He paused and (understandably, I suppose) seemed embarrassed by the topic.

"You see," said Ringo after a while, "there have always been the four of us, and no matter what one did, the others knew about it. But we're also individuals. We are all as interested in India, but it depends how far you want to take it. Obviously, I'm far more involved with my family and home.

"I have a lot to do... what with Zak, who's aged three and who's a bloody terror, and Jason who's six months. Zak is like any other kid, he wants to play with his own toys and mine as well. Then we've got our nine cats [*81 lives?*], although five of them are kittens we've had for three months, and we haven't got around to naming them yet. The older ones are Patty, Gilbert, Thomas and Edna. Then there's also Tiger, the poodle, who's a peach or apricot colour, and whom we've had for three years as a wedding present. They all take up a lot of time."

How about Ringo, the Ritchie Starkey under the moustache and the suntan? How was he these days?

He told me he doesn't now get so very depressed; that usually he didn't like the idea of partying, except once in a while, when he went out and positively amazed himself; and that he had always preferred to be more or less on his own with only a few people around him. He now has two film projectors at home, so a long film can run straight through without him getting up to change the reels – he'd often thought about setting up a real cinema in his house, he said, where you pressed a button and it all started to happen. But he'd never got round to it. In fact, he didn't even have a proper screen. He just projected the films on to a wall.

How about his building firm?

"I finished it," said Ringo. "It was impossible, with Harold Wilson. We got left with five houses and two flats, what with the freeze. Are you interested? I'll sell them if you like."

I had, deliberately, left the Maharishi to last. But I asked Ringo how he felt about the theory that the Yogi was simply hobnobbing with wealthy stars, while hungry Indians starved outside the gates?

"He's a nice guy," said Ringo, "and you really have to meet him to understand what he wants to do. It's the only way. Look at it this way: even if the Maharishi gave all his money away, it still wouldn't help the question of famine. People are twisting it. What he wants to do is to set up centres in every country, to help people to help themselves. He wants to help the world, and obviously it makes it easier if he gets publicity and we and others are involved.

"I was very happy in India, we just came back because we missed the children and everything. The Maharishi is very shrewd; if he doesn't think you're ready for the answer to a question, he won't tell you. He waits 'til the right stage. He doesn't try to fill your head with too much too soon.

"Yes, we met Mia Farrow, twice. She's quiet. As for Mike Love, he's crazy. He goes on and on like Spike Milligan."

Suddenly, I switched from the Indian bit and asked Ringo to tell me his greatest fear in life... what would it take to really shatter his present peace of mind?

Answer: (*with head falling into hands*) "God help us, I need a psychiatrist's couch with you.

"I have a lot of fears – like anyone else, I suppose. I fear for my wife and for the safety of my kids, and everything else close to me. I can't think of any other fear, though. I really can't."

ALAN SMITH

DON'T PASS ME BY

"Sometime during this mad summer," McCartney told *MM* in June '68, "George and John got a call from a medium who said Brian [Epstein] was trying to contact us. We didn't want to pass up any chances, so John and George went along to a séance. But they didn't believe it all. There was nothing in it."

"I used to see us at No 1 and worry about us getting there. Now I relax and accept whatever happens"
Ringo Starr

★ TAKEN FROM
NME 10|8|1968



SOME WEEKS AGO I begged to be excused from the full story of Paul McCartney and the village of Harrold, which began in Bradford one hot Sunday afternoon and ended with me staggering home in London in the thin, cold light of the Monday dawn. The cider had got to me. It was also right there in the middle of my holiday, and I wanted the time to sit down and write about it as it was.

And it was, as I still remember vividly, a dusk-to-dawn encounter that taught me a great deal about the Inner Mind of the Amiable Mr McCartney and at least a little about myself. It all started when Paul, Peter Asher, Derek Taylor and Tony Bramwell kindly offered me a lift back to London after the recording of The Black Dyke Mills Band.

One hour and a half later we were still in Bradford, sitting in the deserted hotel, talking to people, drinking tea, being friendly. A



Eastern promises: the Fabs and their wives/girlfriends at Rishikesh, India, with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in March 1968

BBC TV unit turned up and Paul stood outside in the sun to be filmed chatting up some of the local talent.

We leave. The thermometer inside the Rolls had been at 110°F, but a touch of the button and the window opens and a nice breeze blows around us via Paul's giant sheepdog, Martha.

On and on to the M1. Miles and miles of white concrete, conversation, Paul pushing buttons on the radio and hearing the Marmalade's "Lovin' Things" with eyes wide open... "Fantastic! Get that bit!" Alan Freeman's *Pick Of The Pops*. Des O'Connor's "I Pretend" ..."but he's a nice bloke," says somebody. Esther & Abi's "One More Dance".

"God," says Paul, "are the charts all like this?"

Push of the button – "Sing Something Simple" on Radio 2. Community singing... we all join in. "Music, Maestro, Please" and "Michael Row The Boat". Well, it's a laugh, isn't it? And there's only that damn concrete, stretching on and on along the M1.

Boredom. Brilliant wit of Apple PRO Derek Taylor (ex-Hoylake, Cheshire, ex-*Daily Express*, ex-an interesting and satisfying life in America and elsewhere ever since) comes to the fore. Fills in two Diners Club application forms, one from Max Wax, "Professional Killer", the other from Norman Prince, of Wallasey, "part-time joiner at Grayson, Rollo and Clover" on Merseyside. No chance!

Back to *Pick Of The Pops*. Easybeats' "Good Times" slamming out of the speaker. Paul, Peter Asher and all knocked out by the sheer guts of it.

"So now it's getting back to how it should be... rockers... rocking. Where The Beatles should be"

Paul McCartney

Sudden decision to get away from the M1 and an Asher eye sees the name. "Harrold," a Bedfordshire village. We head towards it but "Good Times" is still kicking around in people's heads and the car is stopped and an attempt made to get through to Alan Freeman and say what about putting it on again?

No luck. Choked faces in the callbox. It's a live show, isn't it, but they won't even put you through to the studio. All you get is some stuffed-shirt Duty Officer saying it is not possible to make contact with Mr Freeman during the course of the programme. (And Mr Freeman, when I tell him later, is choked about it himself. They didn't even give him the message.)

Two scruffy urchins go by, bless 'em, with dirt on their faces, and their shirts hanging out, and they look up at the big Rolls and then at the famous passenger in the back. But there is no recognition. They walk on their way.

Eventually Harrold. Early Sunday evening, and only the sound of feet crunching along the road and birds' singing and Paul asking: "So where's the Ouse then?" – hadn't Derek said we could find the River Ouse somewhere around there, and what are we doing stumbling around fields when we could be in the local village pub?

Bearded man in garden shows no immediate reaction to request from Paul for whereabouts of local boozer, delivered in heavy Liverpool accent, but gives Irish-accent directions to the Magpie down the road. This turns out to be a cosy little place the size of a bathroom, with a Jolly Joker machine in the corner and a dartboard behind the door.

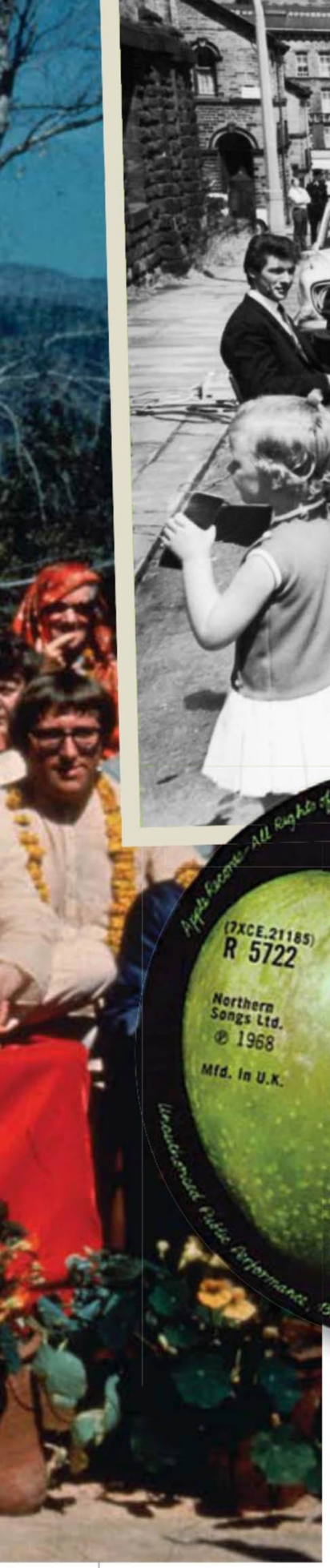
All of us are speakin' like we do in d'Pool, wack, but there is no reaction from the customers to the effect that here is an international star sitting in their pub eating a piece of pie and drinking a beer and dipping into a bag of crisps. They're all British, aren't they? – nobody is going to blow his cool. The only thing is that from time to time the door opens and somebody is standing there red-faced and gasping for breath as if he's just finished a two-minute mile, and immediately a corner of his eye falls on Paul and he forcibly regains his composure and walks casually over to the bar.

But what, I asked myself in one case, is that particular customer doing, wearing an "I Love The Beatles" badge on his lapel in his local pub on a Sunday?

HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



Paul (with Martha) visits the mill town of Saltaire to record music he had written with the Black Dyke Mill brass band, June 30, 1968



The Bearded Irishman arrives with his wife Pat, and we get talking to him and he turns out to be a most genial man named Gordon, who is the local dentist.

I'm not too sure about the rest of it (the cider, you see – it was the cider), but the memories include a visit to another pleasant pub, and Paul at the piano in the half-light, gravelling out Fats Domino songs like "Blueberry Hill" and "Red Sails In The Sunset" and then a visit to the home of Gordon and Pat for meat and rice, and more cider and wine.

The children come downstairs in dressing gowns in the wee small hours and play hide and seek, bashful about being seen by their famous guest until he shows one of the little girls some magic tricks and wins their confidence.

Time drags on. Is it 3am? Four? The room is almost dark, but Paul sits at the head of the table, head dipped over acoustic guitar, singing songs I have never heard before. The voice aches over words of sadness and power and I wish, only wish, I could recall them now. They have to be from the next LP, I remember thinking, and pulling out a chequebook and trying to write some notes on the back. Something went wrong somewhere. All I see now is some faint scribble. Time to go. Farewells to Pat and Gordon and the family. The crunch of the Rolls on gravel, then out on the road to London and conversations about people and life. St John's Wood. The first light of dawn. Farewell to Paul outside the high walls of his home and then on in the car to my part of town.

Trip over the dustbins. Turn the key. Bed.

ALAN SMITH

★ **TAKEN FROM**

NME 17|8|1968



HOT SUN ON the back of my neck, exhaust fumes at the back of my throat, four friends in front of the tape recorder. Left to right Mr Derek Taylor, Mr James Paul McCartney, Mr Peter Asher and Mr Tony Bramwell, some of whom may be known to you. Hand reaches down to the recording button... push forward... raise the mic and speak.

Inhibited by the wayside Question Time, and the first inquiry is an inarticulate one. "Films? How about films? I mean, you must give me something specific... the United Artists commitment..."

P Mac Cee: "The only trouble is, Alan, I don't like to be specific. Now, I wouldn't mind if I had a few things to say. But I'm afraid it has to be... it has to be... more general."

Looks like it's going to be hard going, this. Yes but, I say, and Paul sends the whole thing up wid dis sudden Brooklyn bit about we's just a group of boys who get togedder, by d'roadside, and we's gonna make it big wid our next album on d'Apple label.

Yes, yes, I struggle, but the commitment to United Artists...

P Mac Cee: "Right, well go on, and I'll give you some evasive generalisation: There's a few films in the air. There's films I'd like to make on my own, with not me in 'em, just people in 'em. Just anything films. Films of what goes on. Films of grass. Films of people moving about. And then films I'd like to make with The Beatles band. Which would be musical films.

"But... they shouldn't just be musical films, which everybody offers. They should be the other thing, as well. And it's probably going to be up to us to think of it, because people don't seem to be coming forward with offers."

It's going nicely now, I'm warming up to it. I ask Paul if The Beatles are now dedicated to making money, for whatever reason.

"No, that's not what we're dedicated to. We're dedicated to making what should be made, and incidentally – there'll be money. If you didn't need to get things, and if you got things by swapping 'em, then by a roundabout method we'd be dedicated to swapping. We're only dedicated to doing." But then, I say, you're obviously out to expand Apple and make it a thriving business concern, and Mr Asher agrees but points out the reason is not to make a fortune. Mr Taylor agrees and says the Apple policy is to make and sell hits, hits, hits – hit records, hit films and hit electronics.

Suddenly: "There's something also you want to know, Alan, and I'm willing to give it to you. But if you just sort of say: 'Films,' then I'll say: 'Right, Alan, Eggs.'"

Get a bit hurt. Ah yes, I say, but you know what I want to know.

"Yes," beams Paul, "I know I do."

Mr Derek Taylor puts it all in focus; he interviews me. Alan Smith, he says – are you dedicated to making money, as it is said of you that you are? I have to admit it, I am. I believe money will help my loved ones and me to live in comfort and style. "And style," emphasises Taylor, "you're in good shape, Alan." It was nice to have me on the show.

I'm being put down, and although goodwill dilutes the sting, it's still a bit uncomfortable being grilled by so many chefs at the roadside barbecue. So it's back to the car and I think – Right, mate. No punches pulled this time. Turn the tape over, put it at the beginning, switch on and know I'm wiping out Cilla Black and Davy Jones with every word.

Do the bold bit about now, look here, I interview many artists and most of them are specific, you know.

"OK then," says P Mac Cee, feet up and defences coming down. "Whenever we lay off recording for a long period of time – which we do – we get out of the habit, and it's not together and it's not happening. It takes us a couple of weeks to get to know each other again and how we play. For instance, when I went to LA, I heard things on the radio that completely changed a lot of things I'd been thinking about music and about sounds I was hearing. So it made me write a couple of songs differently or arrange them differently."

Hint of things to come... "So now it's getting back to how it should be again... rockers... rocking. Which is where The Beatles should be and what we should be doing."

Long discussion about Apple and what it means and what it stands for. Paul points out ➤

DON'T PASS ME BY

"We get new ideas every day, but I hope it will be made quicker than *Pepper*," McCartney said to *NME*, as 'The White Album' was being made. "We are family grocers. You want yogurt? We give you it. You want cornflakes? We have that too. Mums and dads can't take some of our LP stuff, so we make it simple ... on singles."

TRINITY MIRROR / MIRRORPIX / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



Fans flock to the Apple Boutique in Baker Street, London, during a giveaway for the permanent closing of the store, July1968

that in the past there were creative people who had to go on their knees for work, records and films and to get the breaks, man. "And everyone gets down on their knees and grovels a bit."

The idea now is that Apple is an organisation where you don't have to do that, where if you're good you get recognised. The trouble is that so much of the pop and record business at the moment is run by people who don't have a clue what it is about. The ones who do know – it shows. Jerry Wexler, Herb Alpert, Berry Gordy and so on. When you have thinking, involved people like this, it isn't necessary to depend all the time on the Big Fat Men.

Start to get around to the no-punches-pulled bit. Talk about cripples (or disabled persons, as my correspondent of last week tells me. Sorry. A word can cut like a knife).

What about helping people like this, I ask? What about giving them the money to buy things to make things, to obtain their satisfaction and self-respect?

Paul: "Well, what about helping the cripples?"

Me: "Well, why not?"

Paul: "Well, why?"

Me: "Because maybe they're having a hard time of it, and you're doing all right. Don't you believe in human kindness?"

Paul: "Cripples are not necessarily having a hard time of it. And even if they are having a hard time of it – it's their hard time. It is, man, it doesn't matter what you say about helping cripples or India, there's no way to pour millions of pounds into India and make India all right."

Let me get to your conscience, I say. You must have seen, in India, people with their bellies hanging out with hunger. "No," says Paul. "I didn't see that. Have you?"

But doesn't it worry you?

"No," says Paul flatly, "starvation in India doesn't worry me one bit. Not one iota. It doesn't, man. And it doesn't worry you, if you're honest. You just pose. You don't even know it exists. You've only seen the Oxfam ads. You can't pretend to me that an Oxfam ad can reach down into the depths of your soul and actually make you feel for these people – more, for instance, than you feel about getting a new car.

"If it comes to a toss-up between getting a new car, you'd get a new car. And don't say you wouldn't – 'cos that's the scene, with you and most people. The point is also: 'Do you really feel for Vietnam?' and the answers are the same. Maybe I'd rather listen to a rock record than go there to entertain, that's the truth in all of us. I know one is morally better than the other, but I know I'd never get you round to it. I'd be a hypocrite."

Says he believes in something called God, but anything and everything is God. Never thinks about eternity or outer space – more concerned with inner space.

The Crunch. Ask him to analyse himself and tell him I have always believed him to be likeably – repeat, likeably – insincere.

Pause. "To you, possibly," says Paul. "Because I don't think, 'Here's *NME* newspaper, I don't think Alan Smith, person, at all. I have to watch what I say because you don't say certain things to a paper. I think maybe *NME* – Enemy! Whenever I'm faced with a Pop Press Conference or a drink with the reporters, I can't be sincere... because I wouldn't be there. But I suppose that by being pleasantly insincere, I can at least get to know people on some level in the short space of time."

Long conversation and then, finally, a statement. "The Truth about me," says Paul, "is that I'm... pleasantly insincere! And really that's the whole truth, and nothing but."

ALAN SMITH

DON'T PASS ME BY

In June '68, *NME* also visited McCartney and Jane Asher at his new farm in the Kintyre hills, where he kept 90 sheep and some beef cattle. "At a recent sale of lambs and sheep," the paper reported, "some of Paul's animals brought a good price of £5 each."

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 30|11|1968



PAUL McCARTNEY HAS been talking about The Beatles' new double album and he is understandably and humanely chuffed at the cover versions of his songs. He appreciates that "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da" is currently the fave rave, but I've a feeling he has reservations about the number of versions and whether this could affect the hit chances of one or the other. (And why shouldn't he worry about things like that; is there shame in success?) There is now no secrecy over the real composing credits for various Lennon-McCartney numbers. Paul is obviously "Ob-La-Di" and admits to tracks like "Martha My Dear".

"It's definitely about my dog, Martha," he says, "but that's only because the thought happened to come into my head when I was writing the song. You see, I never usually write a song and think: 'Right, now this is going to be about something specific.' It's just that the words happen. I never try to make any serious social point. Just words to go with the music – and you can read anything you like into it."

Both he and John began work on the songs on the new LP in India. "Rocky Raccoon" was composed on a roof at the Maharishi's place.

Says Paul: "I was with John on this roof, and we were just sitting around playing guitar with Donovan and enjoying ourselves. I started playing the chords and originally the title was 'Rocky Sassoon'. Then the three of us started marking up words and they came very quickly and eventually it became 'Raccoon'... The way the words just come into your head is like John writing his books... I don't know how he does it, and he doesn't know how he does it. But he just writes, and people who create and write do it like that. It just flows into their hands and then into their heads."

Of his other compositions/part-compositions, he said on Radio Luxembourg last week:

"BLACKBIRD": This is just one of those pick-and-sing songs. It doesn't need anything else in the backing 'cos as a song there's nothing to it. We added a blackbird sound at the end, that's all.

"WHY DON'T WE DO IT IN THE ROAD": We've always been a rock group. It's just that we're not completely rock'n'roll. That's why we do 'Ob-La-Di' one minute and this the next. In Hamburg we didn't just play rock'n'roll all evening because we had these fat old businessmen as well – saying 'play us a mambo or a rumba'. So we had to get into this kind of stuff.

"I WILL": This is pretty smoochy stuff. We have to do it. That's why there's a great variety on this LP and in everything we do. We just haven't got one bag. On one hand you'll get 'I Will' and then you'll get 'Why Don't We Do It In The Road'. It's me feeling both of them, the same feller, and I wrote both. I can't explain it, but there we are."

"BIRTHDAY": *The Girl Can't Help It* was on television. Fats Domino, Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran were in it, and we wanted to see it, so we started recording at five o'clock and just did a backing track, a very simple 12-bar blues thing with a few bits here and there. We had no idea what it was going to be. We'd just say 12 bars in A then we'll change to D then we'll do a few beats in C. Just like that. We went back to my house and watched the film, and then back to the studio and made up the words. It's one of my favourites because it was instantaneous

"HELTER SKELTER": I read a review of a record which said the group goes wild with echo and screaming and I thought, 'That's a pity, I'd have liked to do something like that.' Then I heard it and it was nothing like; it was straight and sophisticated. So we did this. I like noise.

"HONEY PIE": My dad's always played fruity old songs like this and I like them. I'd have liked to have been a 1920s writer because I like that top-hat-and-tails thing.

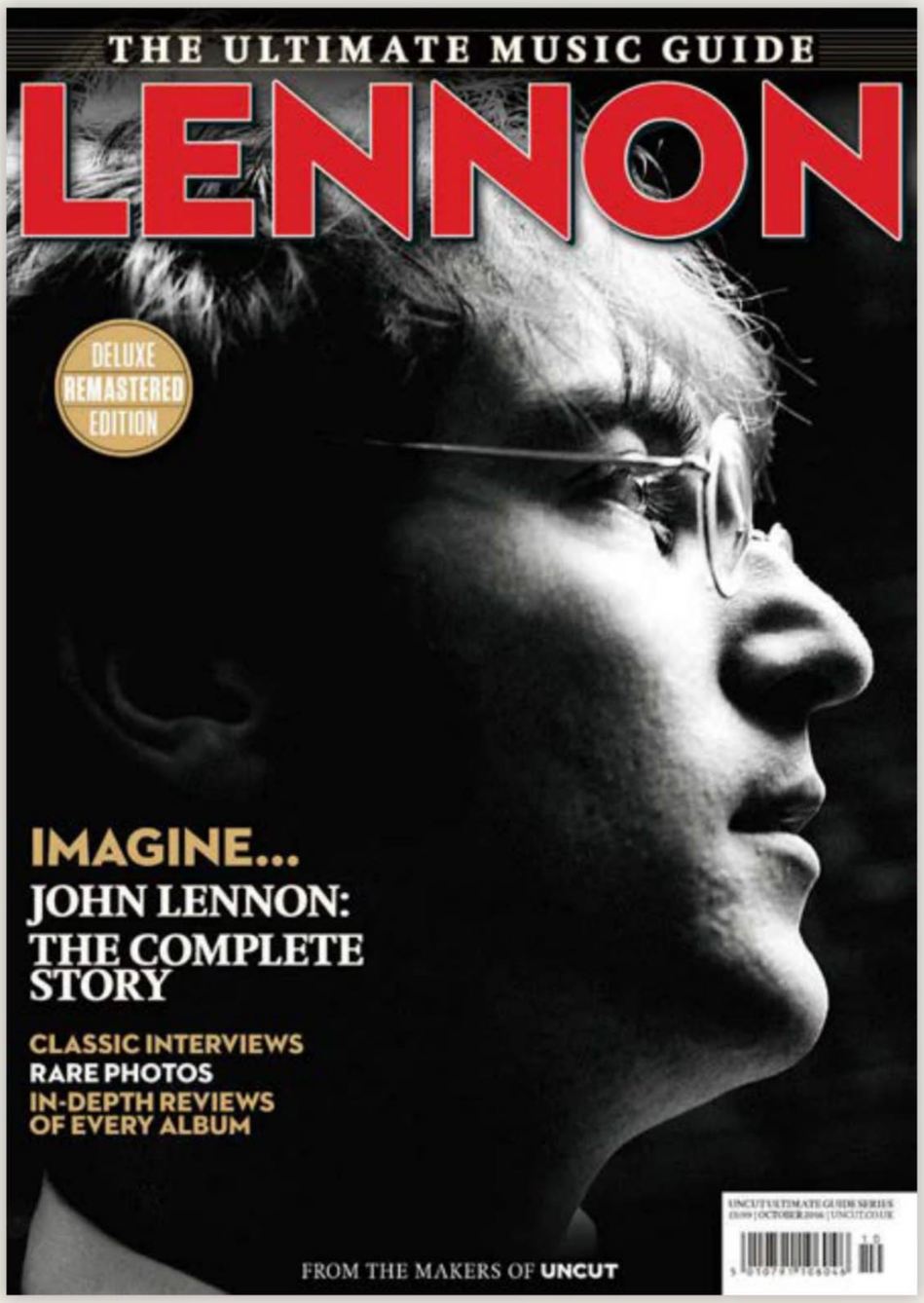
ALAN SMITH

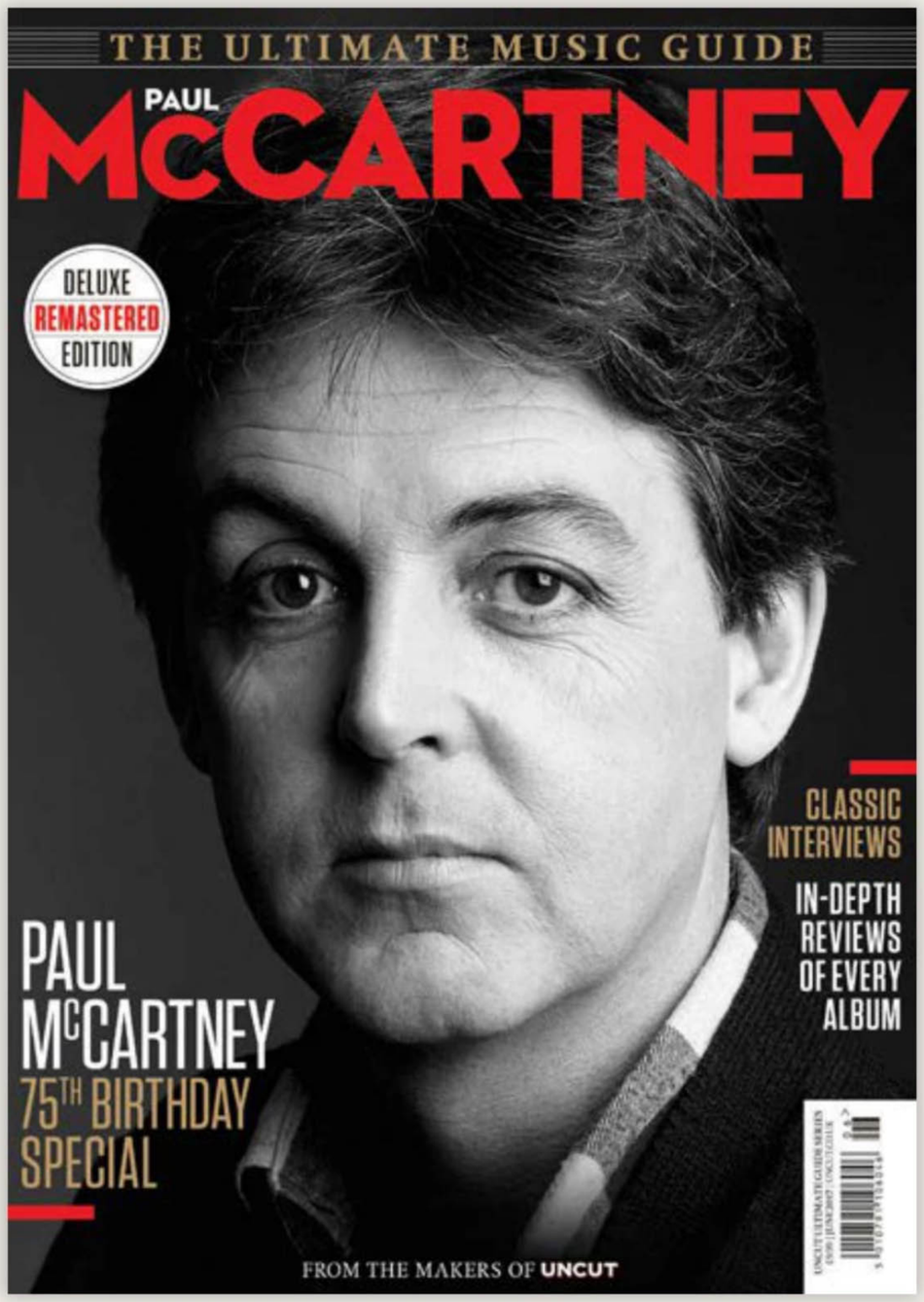
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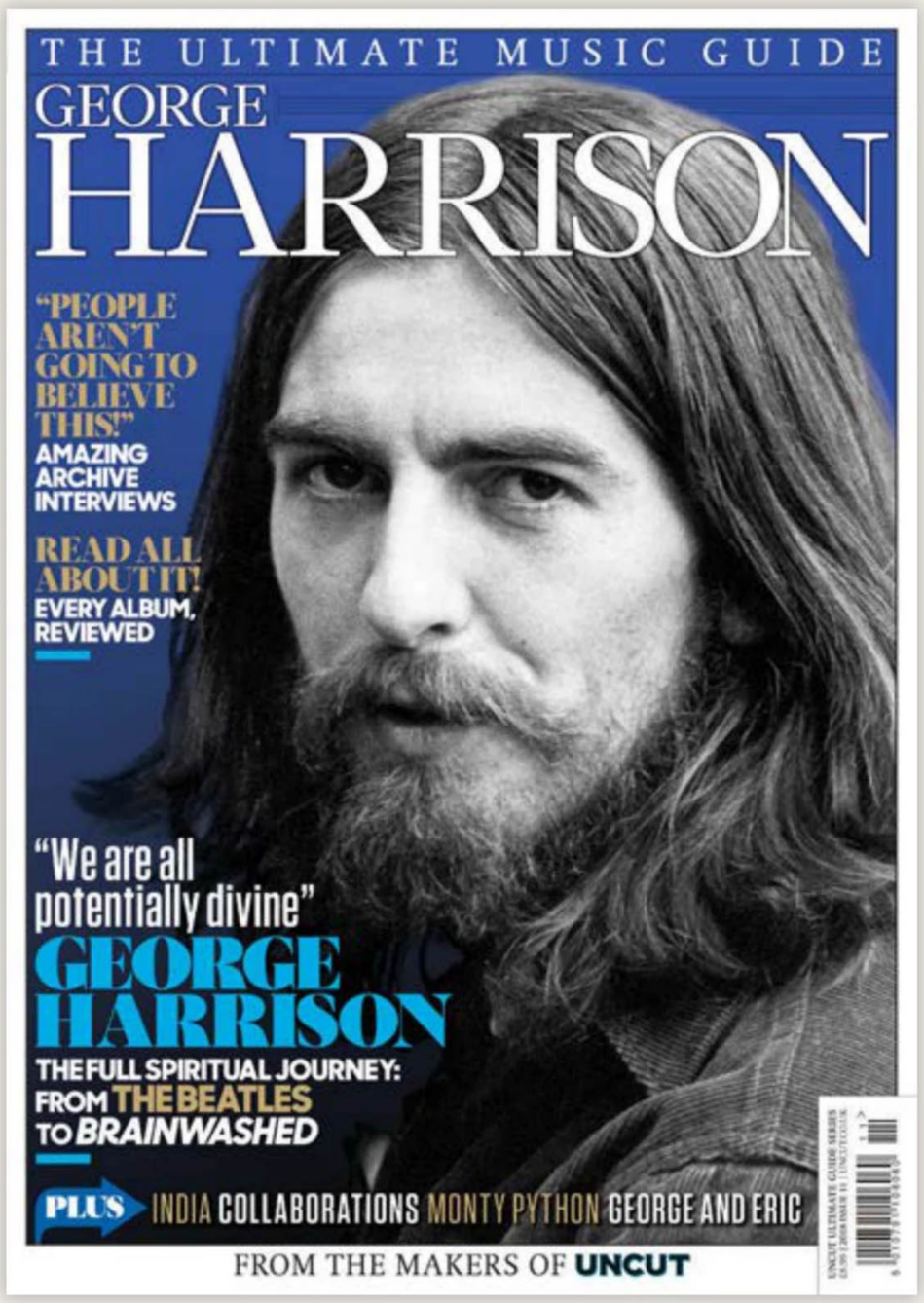
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ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDES TO THE SOLO BEATLES









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22 NOVEMBER | 1968

The Beatles

Relationships are degenerating in the camp – not that you can tell from the inventive sprawl of "The White Album". O-bla-di, o-bla-da, life goes on...

By Andrew Mueller

CRITICS' VERDICT

"The 30 tracks do not possess the overall pattern of a *Sgt Pepper*, and neither do most of them have the compelling unreality of that uniquely special journey into the mind... 'Revolution 9' is a pretentious piece of old codswallop which is no more than a long collection of noises and sounds seemingly dedicated towards the expanding sale of Aspro."

ALAN SMITH, NME, NOV 9, 1968

"I doubt this album will stand as high in the world's opinion as *Sgt Pepper* did..."

ALAN WALSH, MM, DEC 14, 1968

AND AFTER ALL that – after recording 30 tracks, in almost as many styles and genres – they barely bothered to name the album, or put anything on its cover. When one looks, again, at the packaging of The Beatles' blank, eponymous ninth album after consuming, again, its extraordinary and peculiar contents, it seems plausible that the group put everything up to and including the very last idea in their heads into the music, leaving no inspiration in reserve for such mundanities as a title or artwork. So they called it *The Beatles* and bunged it out in a plain sleeve. The world called it "The White Album".

That "The White Album" is coherent at all is remarkable. That "The White Album" is a masterpiece is miraculous. Everything required for the concoction of a catastrophic, hubristic folly lurked in abundance when The Beatles began work at Abbey Road in May 1968. The band weren't getting along – Ringo Starr actually left the group for a couple of weeks at one point (according to some sources, that's Paul McCartney playing drums on the two opening tracks, "Back In The USSR" and "Dear Prudence"). Their longtime manager and mentor, Brian Epstein, had died of a drug overdose nine months previously, aged just 32. Their longtime producer, George Martin, went on holiday during the sessions. Their recording engineer, Geoff Emerick, a sidekick since *Revolver*, quit. They were distracted by the chaotic launch of their new corporation – "The White Album" was the first Beatles album to be released by Apple Records. John Lennon's new girlfriend, Japanese artist Yoko Ono, was a frequent guest to the sessions, and gratitude for her input was not universal. They had done much of the writing while on rustic retreat under the guidance of a bearded subcontinental mystic, a tack that usually worked out rather better for the enterprising gurus of the 1960s than it did for the artists who were in their care (when Maharishi Mahesh Yogi decamped this corporeal realm in 2008, he left a huge earthly fortune). There were, it seems safe to assert, drugs involved.

And barely had "The White Album" overcome this formidable course of obstacles to its gestation when its reputation was besmirched by events beyond – despite the claims of some – its control. In the summer of 1969, another hirsute quack with a commune – this one an American, by the name of Charles Manson – informed his small and dimwitted following that he perceived in "The White Album" a coded order of battle for a conclusive war between black and white. Manson's morons attempted to kick this apocalypse off by committing a series of horrific murders, decorating at least one of the scenes with mis-spelt Beatles lyrics daubed in the blood of the victims. Vincent Bugliosi, the attorney who conducted the subsequent prosecution, wrote a book about the case, and called it *Helter Skelter*: Manson has haunted this particular feast ever since.

This is obviously unfair on The Beatles, who had not in the years before, and have not in the decades since, exhibited much in the way of apparent interest in inciting racial Armageddon. And it's especially unfair on *The Beatles* – which, once you shoo Manson's gormless spectre from the background, is plausibly the most playful of all The Beatles' albums. If you didn't know better, you'd imagine that the people who made this record were having the time of their lives by day, and laughing themselves to sleep at night.



In November 1968, shortly before the release of "The White Album", Paul McCartney gave an interview to Radio Luxembourg, in which he signally failed to sound like he'd been suffering for his art. He recalled writing the surreal potted western "Rocky Raccoon" with John Lennon and Donovan on a rooftop in India ("I don't know anything about the Appalachian Mountains or cowboys and Indians or anything. I just made it up, you know.") He cheerfully announced that the pretty fairground romp "Martha My Dear" was "me singing to my dog". And that the daffy boogie "Birthday" was slapped together as a response to a group revisiting of 1956 rock'n'roll comedy *The Girl Can't Help It*.

Amiable whimsy was already stereotyped as McCartney's department, of course – and McCartney never got more amiable and whimsical than track four, Side One, "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da", the jaunty nursery rhyme which Lennon eye-rollingly dismissed as "Paul's granny shit". But for all that Lennon was seen, not least by himself, as the more serious artist, many of his contributions to "The White Album" are notably wry, arch and even subversive. The puckish "Glass Onion" is essentially a Beatles song about The Beatles, making explicit or implicit reference to several previous Beatles songs ("*The walrus was Paul*", and so forth). "Revolution 1" is a weary, mordant commentary on the '60s protest song – and by extension, the entire '60s protest movement that peaked in the tumultuous year of the album's release. It upends all traditions of the genre by being, essentially, a plea for moderation and common sense: "*If you go carrying pictures of Chairman Mao/You ain't gonna make it with anyone anyhow*", etc. And the opaque sound collage "Revolution 9" can be heard, in these circumstances, as less a serious experimental exploration, more a stoned goof-off.

> If you didn't know better, you'd imagine the people who made this record were having the time of their lives

"The White Album" does have a serious side. On an album with four sides, there is room enough for all of human life, and some of the ballads are among The Beatles' most affecting: Lennon's "Julia" and "I'm So Tired"; McCartney's "Blackbird" and "I Will"; George Harrison's "While My Guitar Gently Weeps", featuring a cameo by Eric Clapton.

As is the case with the entire Beatles catalogue, hearing "The White Album" properly necessitates setting aside the complacency borne of ubiquity: we hear The Beatles so often involuntarily that it's easy to forget to listen to them deliberately. If you can hear past the tensions involved in the creation of "The White Album", it's a glorious, giddy, liberating hoot, including the world in the invitation extended to Prudence. Won't you come out to play?

SLEEVENOTES | THE BEATLES

Disc One:
1. Back In The USSR
2. Dear Prudence
3. Glass Onion
4. Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da
5. Wild Honey Pie
6. The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill
7. While My Guitar Gently Weeps
8. Happiness Is A Warm Gun
9. Martha My Dear
10. I'm So Tired
11. Blackbird
12. Piggies
13. Rocky Raccoon
14. Don't Pass Me By
15. Why Don't We Do It In The Road?
16. I Will
17. Julia

Disc Two:
1. Birthday
2. Yer Blues
3. Mother Nature's Son
4. Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey
5. Sexy Sadie
6. Helter Skelter
7. Long, Long, Long
8. Revolution 1
9. Honey Pie
10. Savoy Truffle
11. Cry Baby Cry
12. Revolution 9
13. Good Night

Released: November 22, 1968
Label: Apple **Produced by:** George Martin **Recorded at:** Abbey Road and Trident **Personnel include:** Lennon (vocals, guitar, keys, harmonica, sax), McCartney (vocals, bass, guitar, keys, drums), Harrison (guitar, vocals), Starr (drums, vocals), Eric Clapton (guitar, "While My Guitar Gently Weeps") **Highest charting position:** UK 1; US 1

17 JANUARY | 1969

Yellow Submarine

"*As we live a life of ease…*" The Beatles rest on their laurels, while another game-changing work is created in their name. *By Stephen Troussé*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"Two Beatles single hits – 'Yellow Submarine' and 'All You Need Is Love' – with four so-so songs written for the film."
ALLEN EVANS, NME, JANUARY 18, 1969

"Good, but if you can't afford both [*this and 'The White Album'*], then go for the double-album instead."
MELODY MAKER, FEBRUARY 1, 1969

OF THE MYRIAD artefacts of mid-'60s Fabsploitation tat, the Beatles cartoon that ran on ABC from 1965–67 is one of the cheapest and most charmless. Barely animated, with lousy scripts and sub-Dick Van Dyke accents, it was conceived by legendary TV hack Al Brodax. Although it was ludicrously successful, the band themselves loathed it and insisted it was never broadcast in the UK. So it was a surprise that in 1967, with United Artists chasing them for the third and final film of their contract, the man they should choose to produce it was Brodax.

The band had their reasons: after the dismal experience of filming *Help!* and the bemused reaction to *Magical Mystery Tour*, the prospect of an animated movie that would require the absolute minimum of involvement had undeniable appeal. In practice, they weren't even required to record their own voiceovers, being surreally but charmingly impersonated by actors including Paul Angelis (aka PC Bannerman from *Z-Cars*) and Geoffrey Hughes (aka *Corrie*'s Eddie Yeats). Apart from a short, excruciatingly lame live cameo at the end of the film, which they hoped would satisfy UA, The Beatles' only contribution was to be four "new" songs for the soundtrack.

Consequently the soundtrack album of *Yellow Submarine* is widely regarded as the runt of The Beatles' discography. In his cursory mention of "Only A Northern Song" in *Revolution In The Head*, Ian MacDonald writes, "Quickly set aside and forgotten, it was later issued, along with some similarly dismal rejects for the soundtrack of the cartoon feature."

It's certainly hard to argue for the merits of the soundtrack as it was eventually released. Of the new songs "All Together Now" is McCartney's diminishingly slight return to playground singalongs. The inclusion of "Only A Northern Song" and "It's All Too Much" seem a way of fobbing off George from his lack of presence on *Pepper*. And though "Hey Bulldog" is a superb piece of Lennon surreal R'n'B (indeed, engineer Geoff Emerick claimed it was the last time The Beatles really came together as a band) it was cut from the US print, supposedly to keep the film under 90 minutes.

Elsewhere the album reissues the title track and "All You Need Is Love", both for their third appearance in two years, while the second side consists of George Martin's anodyne orchestral themes. Five years earlier, in the sleevenotes for *Beatles For Sale*, Derek Taylor had praised the band's astonishing workrate: "The Beatles have tossed in far more value than the market usually demands." The overwhelming message from *Yellow Submarine*, by contrast, seemed to be "Will this do?"

The real value, in this case, was added by the animators. Though narratively slight, *Yellow Submarine* is a far richer film than anyone, not least The Beatles, had any right to expect. And like most soundtracks, *Yellow Submarine* the album is not much more than a colourful souvenir of the movie. Apple themselves seemed to acknowledge this in 1999, issuing the *Yellow Submarine Song Track*, ditching the orchestration and instead including (almost) every song that appeared in the film. But



really, as a kind of Child's Introduction To The Beatles, there's no substitute for experiencing the songs in the context of the film.

Around the same time as *Yellow Submarine* was being conceived, The Beatles had been approached by Disney with a view to voicing the moptop vultures in *The Jungle Book*, and you can imagine a Disney version of the Beatles songbook being as sentimental, pompous and pretentious as *Fantasia*. The team of animators assembled by George Dunning (a protégé of the great Scots-Canadian musical animator Norman McLaren) and the Czech surrealist illustrator Heinz Edelmann, and given remarkably free rein by Brodax, instead deliberately conceived themselves as the anti-Disney. It's no coincidence that the Blue Meanies seem to be wearing Mickey Mouse ears throughout.

Yellow Submarine draws together an alternative graphic history, incorporating John Tenniel, Aubrey Beardsley, *Porky In Wackyland*, Saul Steinberg and Milton Glaser. A lot of the gratuitously random psychedelic imagery now seems facile, though any pothead portentousness is generally undercut by the Scouse deadpan dialogue courtesy of an uncredited Roger McGough. But the scene of the submarine's arrival in Liverpool, cut to "Eleanor Rigby", is sublime, like Magritte collaborating with Lowry.

The rotoscope choreography cut to "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds" delightfully dodges the bullet of the lyrics. At times, like the concluding delirium cut to "It's All Too Much", the animation actually redeems the music, makes it sound infinitely richer than it does on record. In its own way, the film has been just as influential as the music has, feeding into everything from Terry Gilliam's Monty Python interludes to *The Simpsons*.

> As a Child's Introduction To The Beatles, there's no substitute for experiencing the songs in the context of the film

In one respect *Yellow Submarine* was way ahead of its time. Released only two years after *Pepper*, it already anticipated our current hysterical retromania, the way the 21st century is shaping up to be one long jukebox musical, endlessly rechurning the cultural achievements of the '60s and '70s. In the light of *We Will Rock You* and *Mamma Mia!*, *Yellow Submarine* looks rather charming. Following the *Love* extravaganza and *The Beatles™: Rock Band™*, as the Fab back catalogue is remixed, remastered and refashioned into ever more new media formats, it begins to look like an exemplary, loving and even subversive example of catalogue exploitation.

SLEEVENOTES | YELLOW SUBMARINE

1. Yellow Submarine
2. Only A Northern Song
3. All Together Now
4. Hey Bulldog
5. It's All Too Much
6. All You Need Is Love
7. Pepperland
8. Sea Of Time
9. Sea Of Holes
10. Sea Of Monsters
11. March Of The Meanies
12. Pepperland Laid Waste
13. Yellow Submarine In Pepperland

Released: January 17, 1969
Label: Apple
Produced by: George Martin
Recorded at: EMI and De Lane Lea studios, London

Personnel: John Lennon (vocals, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, tape effects, noises, ukulele, harmonica, piano, harpischord, banjo), Paul McCartney (vocals, bass, trumpet, tape effects, noises, tambourine, cowbell, double bass), George Harrison (vocals, organ, tape effects, noises, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, Hammond organ, violin), Ringo Starr (vocals, drums, percussion), George Martin (piano), David Mason (trumpets), The George Martin Orchestra (orchestration on Side Two)

Highest charting position: UK 3; US 2

“I think I’m going to make a pop record with Yoko…”

“I don’t know what people think of John at the moment,” says Ringo, but while he films *The Magic Christian* and the world awaits *Abbey Road*, Lennon is moving on. Lennon reveals to ALAN SMITH and RICHARD WILLIAMS the full extent of his interests in 1969. Bed-ins! Financial shenanigans with Apple! Art films! Macrobiotic food! And the burning of baby dolls to promote world peace…

★ TAKEN FROM
NME 29|3|1969



A DESERTED CENTURION tank and a ‘dummy’ tree upturned in a ditch provide the first bizarre indications that we’ve arrived. A viciously cold wind sweeps in across the common, buffeting the white tent in the distance and the group of moving figures that together form an oasis of life amid the unfriendly sea of bracken and stubbly brown grass.

Out there on Chobham Common, in wildest Surrey, they are on location filming a Beatle and an ex-Goon in *The Magic Christian*. As the only route out to the film unit is not so much a road as a switchback over a mudbath, the wisest move is to adjourn to the mobile press office parked among a cluster of vehicles off the road while a courier with a walkie-talkie is dispatched to Mr Starr.

The press room is inside what looks from the outside like a much travelled furniture truck and in fact is, except that inside it is plushly furnished with heater, phone link, desk, leather settee and well-stocked bar. “First in the world – ingeniously incognito,” gloat the publicity people with justifiable pride. When eventually the familiar Beatle face appears grinning at the rear, it is a Ringo attired in tweedy plus fours and deerstalker and accompanied by the sound of stomping feet shaking mud from a hefty pair of labourer’s boots.

“You’ve never done me before,” says Ringo as welcome, begging a few minutes’ grace to get his circulation on the move. If John is the Beatle the public has singled out for the brunt of ridicule and contempt, then Ringo is the Beatle they cling to for reassurance as the flak of shattered images falls about their heads. Ringo is the cosy Beatle, the good-old moptop-Beatle boy who is nearing his 30th year – as everyone keeps reminding him.

“I think maybe people think they are safe with me,” says the least objectionable or the most loveable Beatle, whichever way you look at him. “I am married. I am a family man. There is nothing bad – bad from the public’s view – to publish about me. I try to keep two lives going. One is only to do with me and mine and the other is to do with thous and thine. I agree to give them the Beatle, the Ringo. But the Ritchie I prefer to keep for my family.”

And John?

“John has just had a divorce and been busted, so of course he is sorted out for it. People forget that divorce is happening all over the world. But Mrs Smith, she never gets a mention.

CENTRAL PRESS/GETTY IMAGES

Newlyweds John and Yoko's 'Bed-in for peace' in opposition to the Vietnam War, the Amsterdam Hilton, March 25–31, 1969



Odd couple: Peter Sellers and Ringo Starr in *The Magic Christian*, 1969

KEYSTONE PRESS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

I don't know what people think of John at the moment. Maureen was in Liverpool and I know a lot of people there are saying that he has gone a bit crazy. But all he is doing is not keeping up with the image they have created and they think he has gone off his head. All we are is nice people. I'm not being smart saying that. We are just nice people."

Ringo's services were required back on the common, so we piled into a crowded Land Rover, collected Peter Sellers and with a warning "Mind your heads in the back" and a cry of "All the fun of the fair!" from Mr Starr, we made our bumpy way to where the action was. Sellers, playing the richest man in the world, and Ringo, his adopted son, were supposed to be on a grouse shoot in which the army intervenes. The two are required to stroll side by side, guns in hand, down a slope. No dialogue needed. It is over in five minutes: "No need for Orson Welles to worry there," cracks Ringo, as we make our way back.

Meanwhile, back at the camp, it is lunchtime and with Mr Starr and Mr Sellers in the rear of Mr Starr's silver-grey Mercedes, it is off to the village pub where a table and steaks have been booked. While Ringo reaches for the wine and attacks his steak, we discuss The Beatles' bad press and he argues that it goes in cycles, and that what might be bad for the public to read is not necessarily bad press for them.

"One minute the press will be all over you saying 'Good old Beatle boys'. Next year it will be 'Those dirty old scruffs!' I prefer it when it is nice, but the other doesn't bother me any more."

A shrugging of Beatle shoulders is accompanied by morose Ringo expression. Can he put his finger on the turning point of what was, for a long time, a good relationship with the press?

"Drugs," he answered. "But there was a lot before that. It always has depended on the journalist or the paper, however they felt at the time. They can write a story good or they can write it bad. For instance, when we were on tour you might find in one paper it was 'Beatlemania in Bradford' and in another 'Beatle Rioters Smash Up Bradford'. Perhaps the reporter came round and tried to get an interview and couldn't get in, so he went off and wrote it badly. If they managed to get in and we gave them Scotch then it would be good old Beatles doing a grand job for Britain."

"One minute the press will be saying 'good old Beatles boys'. Next year it'll be 'those dirty old scruffs!'"
Ringo Starr

Does he always understand the actions of his fellow Beatles?

"No, I don't always understand – but then I am in a privileged position of being the person who is probably closest to them and I can go and ask. I read the paper like anyone else and I think what's this, what's going on? But then I can go and ask them what it's all about."

The lady who served our steaks came to tell Ringo that she had a daughter away at art school who'd be ever so popular if she had his autograph. Ringo obliged. What was his reaction to John and Paul's weddings?

"Fantastic. I heard about Paul's when he phoned me to tell me and I heard about John through the office. I knew why he went away, that he was going abroad somewhere to marry, but I didn't know where or when."

On to the cheese and biscuits and talk about his son, Zak, who is now nearly four and approaching the age where his schooling must be considered. Ringo expresses interest in Summerhill, the "freedom" school. "I hated my schooldays," he says suddenly. No, he wouldn't send his son to public school, unless he asked to go for himself.

Twenty-eight now, Ringo enters his 30th year in July. "When I was 18 I thought that was the time to die. But the old thing is true about being as old as you feel and I don't think I look my age. It doesn't worry me."

His role in *Candy*, he feels, came off well, but he adds that in *The Magic Christian* he is largely playing himself. His next film, he hopes, will see Ringo develop as an actor who can sustain a totally different character for 90 minutes. He doesn't find acting particularly difficult.

"*Candy* was the test and I thought it was easy, so I felt confident to accept this one."

A film featuring all The Beatles is now closer than it's been for a long while, he says, because for the first time all four have agreed that they should do one. It is now just a question of the right script – which won't be easy.

"Everything that has come up has been *A Hard Day's Night* or *Help!* and the casting was like in those films. It was just the four-lads-rags-to-riches thing in different forms. John would be witty, Paul would be pretty, I would be shy and George would be George. If we do one, Paul and I should be baddies. Why? Because no-one would expect Paul and I to be naughty. People

really have tried to typecast us. They think we are still little moptops and we are not."

Current Beatle work involves the completion of their next LP and among the several tracks so far recorded is one by Ringo titled "In An Octopus's Garden" (or "I Would Like To Live Up A Tree").

Virtually certain to be their next single is "Get Back", which features organist Billy Preston. What's it like? "Paul takes lead vocal and you can say it's a lovely little toe-tapper."

With an infectious beat that'll get your feet tapping?

"Yes," says Ringo grinning. "If you can sit down when this one is on, says Ringo Starr, then you're a stronger man than I am. Put that in. It'll give me a smile when I read it. It'll make me happy!"

Loveable shake of moptop head.

NICK LOGAN

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 3|5|1969



SAYS JOHN LENNON: If I could only get the time to myself right now – instead of all this monopoly and financial business with Northern Songs – I think I could probably write about 30 songs a day. As it is I probably average about 12 a night. Paul, too... he's mad on it. It's something that gets in your blood. I've got things going around in my head right now, and as soon as I leave here I'm going round to Paul's place and we'll sit down and start work.

The way we're writing at the moment, it's straightforward and there's nothing weird. Songs like "Get Back", things like that. We recorded that one on the Apple roof, but I'm not sure if that's the version that went out. We always record about 10 versions – you get lost in the end. I'm not really interested in the production of our records. In fact, I wish I didn't have to go through the production and balancing the bass and all that. For me, the satisfaction of writing a song is in the performing of it. The production bit is a bore. If some guy would invent a robot to do it, then it would be great.

But all that "get the bass right, get the drums right" – that's a drag to me. All I want to do is get my guitar out and sing songs. Sure, I quite fancy giving some live shows, but Ringo doesn't because he says you know it'll be just the same when we got on, nothing different. I can't give you any definite plans for a live show when we're not even agreed on it. We've got to come to an agreement. For a start, there's too much going on now for us to even talk realistically about going on tour. In a way, that's why it's unfortunate that all the publicity came out about doing live shows when it did. We were only thinking about it vaguely, but it kind of got out of hand.

I suppose the next Great Beatle Event will be the next LP, in about eight weeks. A lot of the tracks will be like "Get Back", and a lot of that we did in a one-take kind of thing. We've done about 12 tracks, some of them still to be remixed, and Paul and I are now working on a kind of song montage that we might do as one piece on one side. We've got two weeks to finish the whole thing, so we're really working at it. All the songs we're doing sound normal to me, but probably they might sound unusual to you. There's no "Revolution No 9" there – but there's a few heavy sounds.

I couldn't pin us down to being on a heavy scene, or a commercial pop scene or a straight tuneful scene. We're just on whatever's going now. Just rockin' along. The follow-up to "Get Back" is "Ballad Of John And Yoko". It's something I wrote, and it's like an old-time ballad, but we won't now bring it out straight away. We'll release it as soon as the other Apple singles go out of the charts... we don't want to kill the sales. ➤

DON'T PASS ME BY

"I'd like to have about four acts on Apple who were really great and that's it," suggested George Harrison in December 1969. "I'd like Apple to be The Beatles, the Stones, Bob Dylan and Delaney & Bonnie... Who needs anything else?"

EXPRESS/EXPRESS/GETTY IMAGES



"I hope we passed the audition": with Billy Preston on organ and Yoko watching, The Beatles film a segment for Michael Lindsay-Hogg's doc *Let It Be* on the roof of Apple HQ, Savile Row, London, January 30, 1969



Paul with Apple signing Mary Hopkin, whose 1969 debut LP, *Post Card*, he is producing

The song? Well, it's just the story of us going along getting married, going to Paris, going to Amsterdam, all that. It's "Johnny B Paperback Writer"!

As I say, we don't want to release it straight away, because it might kill the sales, and I suppose we're cowards that way. I don't regard it as a separate record scene... it's The Beatles' next single, simple as that. The story came out that only Paul and I were on the record, but I wouldn't have bothered publicising that. It doesn't mean anything, it just so happened that there were only us two there. George was abroad, and Ringo was on the film and he couldn't come that night. Because of that, it was a choice of either remixing or doing a new one – and you always go for doing a new one instead of fiddling about with an old one. So we did, and it turned out well.

As for all this financial business that's going on – it does get in the way of writing, but I don't find it much of a drag. It's like *Monopoly*... what with all these bankers, and played round a big table with all the heavies. You know the bit: "Then I'll give you the Strand or Old Kent Road," and you say no – you give me two houses. It's just like that. Really, the outcome of this whole financial business doesn't matter. We'll still be making records and somebody will be copping some money, and we'll be copping some money, and that'll be that. I don't have any involvement in Mary Hopkin's records, it's pure Paul.

But there is one discovery I'd like to promote. We got this other song we were singing last night, and I think it'll be quite a laugh for her to do a pop record. It's one I've written myself, and it's about Yoko, but I'll just change the word, Yoko, to John, and she can sing it about me.

This TV film, *Rape*, we did for Austrian TV – so it didn't get fantastic reviews, but then neither does every record The Beatles make. Hell, do you remember the reviews of "Hey Jude". I remember Stuart Henry saying, "Och weel, y'either like it orr y'don't." The critics are the same with *Rape*. It's a good film, and we stand by it. There's a few people understand it, and the rest have no idea. They don't know the difference between Jean-Luc Godard and Walt Disney. It's funny. The critics can accept it from Godard but they can't accept it from us two – because they're so hung up on who Yoko and I are and what we do, they can't see the product.

But that'll die, and Yoko and I will have to overcome our image, and people will have to judge us on our art and not the way we look. Back to songwriting, though – you can't say Paul and I are writing separately these days. We do both. When it comes to needing 500 songs for Friday, you gotta get together. I definitely find I work better when I've got a deadline to meet. It really frightens you, and you've got to churn 'em out. All the time I'm sort of arranging things in my mind. This film The Beatles made recently, of us recording and working – somebody's editing that at the moment. It's 68 hours, and they're trying to get it down to five for several TV specials. Or then, it might be a movie. I don't know. It might make a series like *The Dales*!

This "image" thing people are always on about with The Beatles – image is something in Joe Public's eye. That's why it's a drag when people talk about fresh-faced Beatles like it was five years ago. I mean, we're always changing. Like the TV clip of "Get Back". Now I've got the beard – Paul's clean shaven – George is the one with the moustache. Even we can't keep up with our own image. I come into Apple one day, and there's George got a new head on him! So if that's the way it is with us, I tell you, the public doesn't stand a chance of keeping up with how we look. And anyway, how we are is up to ourselves personally.

Music is what's important, and as far as that's concerned in my case, Yoko and I stimulate each other like crazy. For instance, did you know she'd trained as a classical musician? I didn't know that until this morning. In college she majored in classical composition. I've just written a song called "Because"... Yoko was playing some classical bit, and I said, "Play that backwards," and we had a tune. We'll probably write a lot more in the future. I've written with other people, as well. For instance, there was a mad thing I wrote half with our electronics genius, Alex. It was called "What A Shame Mary Jane Had A Pain At The Party", and it was meant for the last Beatles album. It was real madness, but we never released it. I'd like to do it again.

There was another song I wrote around *Pepper* time that's still in the can, called "You Know My Name (Look Up The Number)". That's the only words to it. It just goes on all the way like that, and we did these mad backings. But I never did finish it. And I must. Why did we spring "Get Back" on the public so suddenly? Well, we'd been talking about it since we recorded it, and we kept saying, "That's a single."

Eventually, we got so fed up talking about it, that we suddenly said: "OK. That's it. Get it out tomorrow."

ALAN SMITH

"Even if people don't get the gist of us... they know we're in favour of peace. They'll soon know our message"

John Lennon

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 21|6|1969



THE SUN BURNS brightly through the Savile Row window and it's a hot and sticky busy day at Apple, with Yoko hammering away at the electric typewriter and John Lennon in conversation, and all the while the beautiful No 1 smash sound of an unreleased Lennon song called "Give Peace A Chance" soaring and thumping around the room.

A statement of fact is that this record will sell several million and that, like "All You Need Is Love", it will echo like an anthem across the world.

A pleasant and intriguing Irishman named Cecil McCartney has been in, not to claim some long-forgotten Beatles relationship, but to talk about war and peace and his loathing for the fiery death they call Napalm. Lennon has been inspired and the result is that several hundred plastic children's dolls have been bought and now await mutilation and destruction in a grisly protest burning in London's King's Road the following day. One of them lies on the table, naked and pink and innocent and with its feeding bottle aloft.

"We're only at the beginning of selling our peace product," John is saying, "and I think and I hope it's beginning to work. Yoko and I can only go on the reactions we get from people when we're going down the streets together – of course. I know we don't get people really against us. Some of them do give us a dirty look, but the others... bus drivers and lorry drivers and that... some of them say, 'Ow yer doin?' and 'Good luck,' and all that stuff.

"The way I see it is, even if they don't get the gist of us, or why are those people hammering in nails or staying in bed... they know we're in favour of peace. They know what we stand for. This is only the start of the campaign, and they'll soon all know our message, and what we're trying to say.

"Sure, I know we've been criticised by some papers, but you know, some of these journalists and people talk as if they feel they represent somebody. One journalist might think we need more communication... but that's unfortunate. They must get out of the habit – newspaper men and pop stars, anybody – must talk for themselves. I mean, how does one journalist know how most people feel? OK, so the people in

GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS

his office might agree with him. But how many straights does he know – how many people that aren't boozy journalists?"

I nod, swigging swiftly at the bottle of whisky I whip from my pocket in a sudden secretive swoop.

"In the same way, I can only judge from my side in that how many straights do I know besides at Apple, or those I meet? I can only judge the reaction I get by people waving or sending me letters. And that happens. Sure, Yoko and I both know the criticisms about us spending £2,000 at the Hilton on a bed-in when we could spend it feeding babies in Biafra. The situation is, I've done that, as well – the charity bit. And I respect the sentiments behind charity, and I will continue to do things like that. But it doesn't solve the problem.

"It's like nursing the cancer after somebody's got it. There's a lot of cancer to be cured. But it still doesn't stop research. And we look to what we're trying to do for peace as research – to prevent Biafra happening next time. I could give all my money to Biafra, and maybe a few thousand kids would be safe for that day. But the war would still go on. I'm using my money as an overall campaign to advertise the cause of peace.

"You know, these people who criticise... what are they doing? You've got to remember – all of you – that this is me and Yoko's best effort. It's with both of our minds. So if any of you out there can think of a better idea, then we'll do that. But until you come up with an alternative, and not just 'Why don't you give it to the spastics and not to the deaf', then we'll stick the way we are.

"The thing about trying to bring change is that everybody in the world sits back and blames everybody else. The whole human race is like that. We vote people into parliament to run the government for us, and then we sit back and claim how badly they're doing it. We always use a scapegoat, and the whole system's just like that. Everybody sits in the armchair and says Harold Wilson did this and Harold Wilson did that... but it's our fault, not Harold Wilson's."

He picks up the pink doll and pulls its plastic arm out of the socket, and pauses for a moment and looks at the table and listens as Yoko speaks rapid Japanese into the telephone.

"Once," I told him, "you used to frighten the hell out of me. There was a time when I'd expect your next words to be 'You four-eyed git.' Now, I find myself more at ease in your company: you're far more mellow."

He tries to push the doll's arm back into place and he says: "That's because I'm more myself now. I'm introverted and in saying that, it would have been to prevent you saying 'four-eyed git!' to me. It's just a case of simple games... The Games People Play. It's just that. I had the game of aggression. Aggression was my defence. As soon as somebody came near me, I'd make the first punch. If they couldn't handle that, then maybe I'd be cruel – or maybe I'd be kind. Now, I'm relaxed enough to be myself and be less frightened of what people are going to say. Another thing is, when I didn't wear glasses I used to be more uninhibited. In Hamburg, for instance, when I could never see the audience – I'd just get carried away on my own."

He looks around for a prising instrument and then he puts down the baby's arm and takes hold of the feeding bottle, and then he tries to jam the bottle into the empty armpit. He doesn't say anything, but he gets it in in the end – one arm, one feeding bottle.

"The thing about performing now is," he says, "we still just don't agree on it. We're just four middle-aged teenagers, who don't agree on it. We're all professional musicians, sure, but musicians aren't necessarily performers. I mean, I'd go out. But you're talking to me, and The Beatles as such don't want to go out on the road. I don't mind... having a bed-in is being out on the road as far as I'm concerned. I think George and Ringo don't really fancy it, but I don't want to point a finger at them and say they're the reason. Maybe there's also a little something inside me saying the same thing.

"Singing in front of an audience and playing, I'd enjoy. But the rest of it all... that's the problem. Maybe in 10 years... like Elvis... who knows."

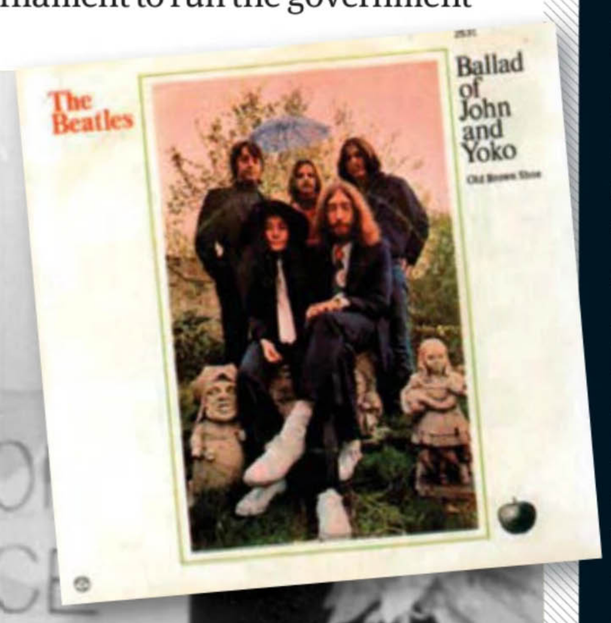
He takes hold of the spare arm and he pulls it and presses it and moulds it to a pliable plastic.

"I'm happy with life," he answers me, "as happy as anybody can be. The only blots are violence and war and starvation and all that. You can't be happy with all that going on.

"If I have a good percentage of happiness, it's because I'm grateful for life, and I'm in love and I'm happy with my wife and I thank God for it. And all that bit. In fighting and doing my bit for peace, I don't believe that thing that man will ➤

DON'T PASS ME BY

...McCartney, meanwhile, was enthusing about Jefferson Airplane – "They're nice people. But really, I'd rather see Elvis. I'd love to produce an album for Elvis. As I am a fan of his, I think I'd be able to produce him well. I'd try and get the same feel as the first couple of his albums had."



It's a wrap: presenter Eamonn Andrews joins in with John and Yoko Ono's recreation of their bed-in for the Thames TV news show *Today*, April 1, 1969

BOB AYLOTT/GETTY IMAGES

always fight because it's in his nature. That's just the Establishment, for thousands of years, telling us that. They say that because it suits the Establishment, it suits the military, to tell us we're all basically soldiers. We're just as much non-violent as we are violent. It's all that 'Be a man, my son' thing we get, and 'You wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for me, my son.' 'I fought'... you know, the whole thing.

"I believe you can use music as some sort of a platform to bring people together, but so can you use dancing and painting and even walking and all of the media."

Musically, adds John Lennon, The Beatles have more than ever before to say, and they have one album ready and another one half-ready.

"The Beatles album that's ready is like an unfinished rehearsal for that show that we never did. It's the Beatles show that never was. There's bits of dialogue on it and 'Get Back''s the most finished tune. So you can imagine what some of it's like. We've no date for it yet because there's a book with it and that's not ready yet. There is another album, and that's by John and Yoko – and that's also got a book with it. It's like a wedding album. And it's great.

"In all this new Beatles stuff there's obviously McCartney hits there... and there's one beautiful ballad called 'Let It Be' which is a cert for somebody. A cert. And there's quite a few cert hits on it for other people."

He twists the doll's arm inside out and looks down at it with some satisfaction.

"I think Apple's running much better," he says. "I don't know if you can tell. We're rectifying the past mistakes. Clearing up. It's also been convenient for people to leave at this time. I like that expression: 'Convenient to leave at this time'.

"I'd like Apple to be more commercial – sure. I'd like it to be economically viable. I don't care about respect. We'd still like to attract talent, but we want it to be self-contained and to be able to look after itself. In the past, all we got when we said 'Come to Apple' was people who'd been turned down everywhere else.

"At the moment, there's only really us and Mary Hopkin as names on Apple, although George's done some good stuff with Billy Preston and I think he's got good possibilities."

It's time to go, and he smiles warmly and proffers the inside-out doll's arm, with its hand which now faces in the wrong direction. I get the impression he only now appreciates the subconscious havoc he has piled upon it.

"Here," he says, "d'y want this arm? As a souvenir?"

ALAN SMITH

★ **TAKEN FROM**

NME 28|6|1969



KEYSTONE PRESS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

THESE DAYS, JOHN Lennon is happy to talk but not to drop himself into some new, fresh drag of a controversy. And on some topics, he's become pleasantly and likeably evasive in the way that only Paul McCartney has really developed to a fine art.

He told me: "There's one film idea we're interested in, but I'm not telling you what it is. There's certainly hope for us doing another film... it's being kicked around. The only reason I don't want to talk is that other people are naturally involved, and I don't want to screw 'em up.

"Anyway, we got a fantastic film out of making our next LP. It really is incredible... just the sweat and strain of four guys making an LP. It's pared down to about four hours. It could make a major movie. About our music, these characters who talk about us progressing, or not, really want to mind their own business! Progressing to what?

"Music is music. All these characters complain about us and Dylan not being progressive, but we're the ones that turned them on to the other stuff – so let 'em take our word for it. This is music, baby.

"When we feel like changing, then fine. It's the same with this other half album we're into, the one after the next. This'll probably please the critics a bit more, because we got a bit tired of being sort of just strumming along for ever. We got a bit into production again.

"I'm not interested in history, only as a hobby. I'm interested in NOW. And the future"
John Lennon

"I tell you, this next Beatles album but one is really something. So tell the armchair people to hold their tongues and wait. 'Shuttup and listen,' that's the answer. And remember... there can be just as much complexity in one note as there can be in any symphony or *Sgt Pepper*.

"Not that I'm interested in classical music – I think it's history, and I'm not interested in history, only as a hobby. I'm interested in NOW. And the future."

About America: "I can't disguise that to get my visa back means a lot. A lot. I need to go there, for business at least. I'll just have to keep trying. I know Donovan seems to have been OK about getting his visa back, but he only did a big anti-narcotics thing, didn't he? So there we are.

"Anyway, these days I don't take drugs, alcohol or meat. They all interfere with my head. And that's straight. Or sugar... I think it's all bad. These days, I'm completely macrobiotic. I know it sounds strange, but it's great... and it keeps you high all the time.

"You don't just get high now and then this way... you're permanently high."

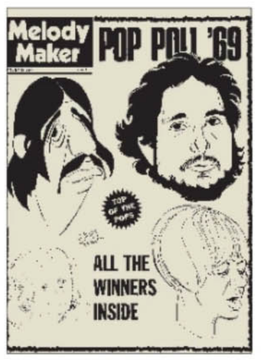
ALAN SMITH



High art: at "Groovy Bob" Fraser's London gallery, John and Yoko launch their 'You Are Here' exhibition with the release of 365 helium-filled balloons, June 6, 1969

★ **TAKEN FROM**

MELODY MAKER 20|9|1969



JOHN LENNON HASN'T had a royalty cheque for two years. And, believe it or not, he's feeling the pinch. The man whose group has again been voted top in both the British and International sections of the *Melody Maker* poll told me that The Beatles' own company, Apple, has become something of a monster which is out of control.

"The problem is that two years ago our accountants made us sign over 80 per cent of our royalties to Apple," he said. "We can't touch any of it, and it's a ridiculous situation. All the money comes into this little building and it never gets out. If I could get my money out of the company I'd split away and start doing my own projects independently. I'd have much more freedom and we'd all be happier. I still feel part of Apple and The Beatles, and there's no animosity, but they tend to ignore Yoko and me.

"For instance, [*Radio 1 DJ*] Kenny Everett recently made a promotional record for Apple which was played at the big yearly EMI meeting. It plugged James Taylor, The Ivies and so on, but it didn't mention the things Yoko and I had been doing. And I think that what we're doing is a lot more important than James Taylor. Apple seem to be scared of us. They didn't want to have anything to do with our *Two Virgins* film, for instance.

"The Beatles' wealth is all a myth. The only expensive things I've ever owned are my house and cars, and I just haven't got anything else. Don't even break even on the films we make, and that worries me."

I asked John about his recent evening of films at the ICA [*A selection of John and Yoko's films, including Ono's Bottoms and Lennon's Self-Portrait, which detailed the rise (and fall) of his penis, were shown at the New Cinema Club, Institute of Contemporary Arts, September 10, 1969.*] Why, for instance, did he feel it necessary to make a film like *Self-Portrait*, with its highly controversial content, when Andy Warhol did the same thing years ago with his films *Empire State* and *Sleep*?



Lennon playing with 'Dirty Mac' at The Rolling Stones' *Rock And Roll Circus*, December 11, 1968

"It's not like Warhol at all. He's negative and we're positive. I can't stand negative things, and our attitude is completely different. *Self-Portrait* has vibrations of love, and it has an immediate message of humanity.

"When Yoko showed me her *Bottoms* film I thought it was ridiculous, but she explained it to me and I was convinced – I don't remember how. I think it was the humour of the film, and that's what we try to keep in our films. If we're going to get these films shown, we've got to get into the scene. We'd like to make a film that wasn't so underground in concept, but we wouldn't do something like *Barbarella* or *2001* – although that was a lovely trip.

"Films are moving ahead so fast – much faster than music or anything else. We're hoping to have talks with a big production company which I shouldn't name – oh well, why not, it's United Artists – who seem to be interested. We'd like to get on at the West End."

Yoko, who was sitting by John's side, chipped in: "We don't know how to go about it. We're sussing it out at the moment."

John continued: "It's not like films, it's more like TV. Dylan was right – it should be less important. Our films, and the Beatles and Stones albums, shouldn't have so much noise made about them. The process of production is so slow. We'd like to speed the process up, and get a new album and film out every month. For instance, we haven't been able to get our *Wedding* film out yet. And the trouble is that people will say we copied Jane Birkin on one track, but we didn't. It's just that we couldn't get ours out fast enough.

"Most of our films are like portraits. For instance, *Smile* is simply a portrait of me sending out love vibrations to Yoko, who's on the other end of the camera. People say it's boring, but they'll look at Van Gogh which doesn't move at all, and they'll have it on their walls."

I suggested that perhaps the audience at the ICA had been dissatisfied because the environment was wrong.

"Yes, it would probably be best if people had the film at home and could show it on their walls and look at it when they felt like it. The ICA night was too long – but they asked for five hours of film and that's what I gave them."

Wasn't the work of John and Yoko coming to resemble an open diary, I asked? And don't most people keep their diaries in their desks at home?

"Yes, but who doesn't like to read other people's diaries?" he replied. "That's exactly what it is – but you must realise that The Beatles' albums, and Dylan's for that matter, are all diaries. We're just bringing it out into the open and making it more honest."

Does this theory inevitably lead to disposable works of art?

"Yes, that's what we're aiming at," said John. "Yoko's having her book of poetry, *Grapefruit*, reprinted and at the end there's an instruction to the reader to eat the book."

Yoko added: "When you keep things they become tombstones. The world would be clogged up with useless objects."

Have they any new ideas for their well-publicised campaign for peace?

"There's this Peace Ship plan," said John, "which is very strange because I recently read a book which contained almost exactly the same idea. There was this bloke in a white ship from which he broadcast peace messages, and then when I'd read the book a real guy came to me with the plan for doing it. Someone's also given me some ideas for doing things in Nigeria and Biafra, but I can't talk about it at the moment."

Does this suggest a more direct involvement with war and peace?

"Not really, because I think that what we've done already, like staying in bed for peace, has been very direct. It wouldn't do any good, for instance, if I was to go to Vietnam and get shot. That proves nothing, but it's what people are always telling me to do.

"We're after people's minds. If we go to see Nixon for instance, it wouldn't make him down tools but we think we could find out what he thinks and tell other people. We'd know where he was at.

"You can't change anything by violence. You have to be aggressive, that's part of everyone and I'm aggressive, but we have the machinery to challenge it. We don't have to get involved in other people's games, and I think that all the killers should be allowed to take their tanks into the desert and kill each other off. But I don't want any part of it, and we've got the power to do something about it."

With two albums in the can – *Abbey Road* and *Get Back* – would there now be a lull in The Beatles' recording schedule?

"The trouble is that we've got too much material. Now that George is writing a lot we could put out a double-album every month, but they're so difficult to produce. After *Get Back* [*unreleased*] is recorded in January, we'll probably go back into the studio and record another one. It's just a shame we can't get more albums out faster."

RICHARD WILLIAMS

DON'T PASS ME BY

In July 1969, *Melody Maker* interviewed "American financial wizard" Allen Klein about his work with The Beatles. "If being 100 per cent concerned with the people I represent is being ruthless, then I am ruthless," he said. "John is probably one of the most commercially minded of them all."

ANDREW MACLEAR/REDFERNS

16 SEPTEMBER | 1969

Abbey Road

In which four diversifying spirits come together for one last stand. Paul's not dead – but The Beatles soon will be. *By David Cavanagh*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"Show me any other group packing so much originality, composition and honest pop music on to one album. Show me! 'Come Together' is probably the funkiest thing The Beatles have ever done. Nice words too, and I raise my eyebrows to them."
ALAN SMITH, NME, SEPT 21, 1969

"From the first bars of the moody 'Come Together', one senses Beatle Magic at work... [*the*] drumming on several tracks is quite a revelation, and it's nice to hear John in the best rock'n'roll vocal form."
CHRIS WELCH, MM, SEPT 27, 1969

WHY DID THE Beatles cross the road? Because it was cheaper than climbing Mount Everest! It's not much of a joke, but then they probably didn't think *Abbey Road* was much of a photograph. A zebra crossing. A white Volkswagen. Who would give them a second glance? A world forensically trained in Beatlemania, that's who. Conspiracy theorists pored over the significance of the Volkswagen's number plate and McCartney's bare feet. The zebra crossing became a Mecca. The death in 2008 of a pedestrian who'd unwittingly wandered into the shot made worldwide news.

Intended as a rebuilding of bridges after the bitter sessions in Twickenham, *Abbey Road* was an album of divisions and connections. Side Two connected literally, with eight songs linked together in a 16-minute medley. However, the first of them, McCartney's "You Never Give Me Your Money", revealed the width of the division. A coded attack on Allen Klein – and by extension the other Beatles – it gave vent to the feelings of anger and despair that would later drive McCartney to the sanctuary of his Scottish farmhouse. Nor was he the only exasperated Beatle. Harrison ached to be free, not least from McCartney's chummy tyranny. And then there was Lennon. On the day *Abbey Road*'s cover photograph was taken (August 8), the Plastic Ono Band stood at No 2 in the charts with their single "Give Peace A Chance". More interested in making music with Yoko than with Paul, Lennon would privately resign from The Beatles on September 20. *Abbey Road* was made by four men who knew that time was running out.

But as much as it papers over the cracks, and as much as it hides a terminal ailment, *Abbey Road* has always had something warm and comforting about it that makes it one of The Beatles' best-loved records. The 47-minute album, which they'd considered calling "Everest" (after a cigarette brand), had something for the counterculture, "*something in the way she moves*", and something for the middle-aged and elderly. Lennon may have recoiled in horror from "Maxwell's Silver Hammer", and future CD programmers may have chosen to skip "Octopus's Garden", but McCartney and Starr never forgot that the biggest pop group on Earth had won their fame by achieving a pan-generational impact. Everyone from Frank Sinatra to *Sesame Street*'s Muppets found a song to love on *Abbey Road*. There was even a hidden track for the Queen to rattle her jewellery to.

But "Come Together", Lennon's opening tirade, was a song of politics and revolution. Years later, during rehearsals for the Las Vegas show *Love*, Yoko would tear a strip off the writer-director for devising a sexually suggestive dance routine that misunderstood the song's original purpose. Wilfully nonsensical, Lennon's hipster lyrics seem on the surface to be an exercise in Lear-isms. But they add up to a scorching condemnation of a powerful conman ("*got to be good-looking 'cos he's so hard to see*") whose baleful influence in almost every area of society – from philosophy to commerce – makes him the natural enemy of all who fight for freedom. "Come Together" is linguistically absurd, but it's also deadly serious. It's as serious as any song Lennon wrote in a year that saw his wife endure unceasing racist attacks in the press and suffer painful injuries in a car crash. No wonder Yoko was furious to see "Come Together" interpreted as a hip-grinding raunch.



Lennon's other major contribution to the album, "I Want You (She's So Heavy)", lays bare his lust for Yoko in a performance that almost overwhelms with its intensity. There's a moment at 4:28 when Lennon runs out of language and unleashes a proto-primal scream. McCartney plays fantastic bass and the eight-minute track forces its way upwards like a man climbing a ladder in a snowstorm. The Beatles, here, are showing us what kind of prog-rock band they might have become if they'd survived into the '70s. They might have given Edgar Broughton and The Groundhogs a run for their money.

With all due respect to octopi and hammer-wielding killers, the third standout song on the first side of *Abbey Road* is Harrison's "Something", agreed by Lennon and McCartney to be his coming of age as a writer. He borrows the first line off James Taylor (whose debut LP had been released by Apple), but after that he's on his own. Smile. Style. Knows. Shows. It's all done with a featherlight touch and a proud husband's courteousness. He never specifies what her exact qualities are, but that's the secret. Too much detail and he would have excluded everyone who wasn't Pattie Boyd – and Sinatra, Elvis, Shirley Bassey and others wouldn't have made "Something" a pop standard of the 20th century. Equally gorgeous is Harrison's "Here Comes The Sun", composed in Eric Clapton's garden in innocent times before the Clapton-Harrison-Boyd love triangle exploded into the open.

Feeling suddenly good to be alive, we proceed deeper into Side Two and the music begins to chop itself up into exciting sections that paradoxically flow together like streams of rainwater meeting on a window. There's beatific sungazing, earthy fun ("Polythene Pam"), classic McCartney page-turning ("*And so I quit the police department*"), a lullaby and a finale to Beatledom that features three Beatle lead guitarists soloing in rotation before the 16-minute medley ends in a slushy moment ("*...is equal to the love...*") of Disney magic. If it's a little bit too sentimental, the sentiment is in this case justified. Think what the four of them had been through. Think of the divorce court they were heading for. We can forgive them some schmaltz as they wave farewell.

> Though it hides a terminal ailment, *Abbey Road* is warm and comforting – and one of their best-loved albums

With its booming basslines, its Moog synthesiser and its three brutal murders at the hands of wretched Maxwell, *Abbey Road* is the album that did what it was intended to: banish the sour taste of Twickenham and go out smiling. It's hard to visualise The Beatles having a joyful time making it, knowing what we know of the schisms. But the album is a union, and a harmonious one at that, even if the band no longer was.

SLEEVENOTES | ABBEY ROAD

1. Come Together
2. Something
3. Maxwell's Silver Hammer
4. Oh! Darling
5. Octopus's Garden
6. I Want You (She's So Heavy)
7. Here Comes The Sun
8. Because
9. You Never Give Me Your Money
10. Sun King
11. Mean Mr Mustard
12. Polythene Pam
13. She Came In Through The Bathroom Window
14. Golden Slumbers
15. Carry That Weight
16. The End
17. Her Majesty

Released: September 16, 1969
Label: Apple
Produced by: George Martin
Recorded at: Abbey Road, Olympic and Trident studios, London
Personnel: John Lennon (lead guitar, rhythm guitar, 12-string acoustic guitar, piano, organ, Moog synthesiser, maracas, handclaps, vocals), Paul McCartney (bass, acoustic and electric guitar, piano, electric piano, harmonium, Moog synthesiser, wind chimes, tape loops, handclaps, vocals), George Harrison (lead guitar, acoustic guitar, bass, harmonium, Moog synthesiser, handclaps, vocals), Ringo Starr (drums, congas, bongos, maracas, cowbell, tambourine, anvil, percussion, effects, handclaps, vocals), Billy Preston (organ), George Martin (organ, electric harpsichord) plus violins, violas, celli, double bass, horns, trumpets, trombones, piccolos, flutes and clarinets
Highest chart position: UK 1; US 1

"I wrote 'Here Comes The Sun' in Eric Clapton's garden"

Abbey Road is out, but with 40 unrecorded songs ready, George has more to contribute to The Beatles. As he unveils a Hare Krishna side project, he also seems to be heading for a new spiritual breakthrough. New pal Bob Dylan, meanwhile, "is very charming".

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 20|9|1969



I JOINED AN Apple Records "Magical Mystery" coach tour recently and ended up squatting on the moist grass on a lawn in Sydenham, sheltered from the breeze by the flapping canvas of a marquee which also contained a fully bearded Beatle George; open-mouthed fellow members of the press; and an assortment of seemingly sincere bald-headed gentlemen who cried, "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna," over and over again.

It was quite a day.

The Krishna people mainly had American accents, white faces and Indian robes which tucked up between their legs; and they hopped and sang and ate curried goodies amongst the heady, heavy smell of joss smoke.

The occasion marked the launching of the Apple single of the "Hare Krishna Mantra" by members of the London Radha Krishna Temple, produced by George Harrison. The music is featured in the show *Hair*, and there are now several other singles – but this is the one which comes into the *NME* Chart this week at No 28.

George says he feels he has more in common with followers of the Krishna philosophy than other persuasions. Mainly they were younger people who'd been through different scenes The Beatles had been through, like drugs, until they had transcended them in the search for higher states of consciousness.

"If I'm going to sing songs on record, they might as well be my own"

George Harrison

"To go to an ordinary Church of England or Roman Catholic church is quite nice," added George, "but they don't show you the way to achieve Christ-consciousness. They tell you all about it, but they don't show you the way. Every man is basically Christ-conscious... but due to the association of the material world, many lose it.

"Actually, I feel more drawn towards Hinduism than anything else. It was through Hinduism that I learned about Christ. Christ was really a yogi."

According to the Krishna Temple's spokesman in Britain – an amiable American who now calls himself Gurudas ("servant of the guru") – the 17 members of the Temple here believe in any public way of spreading their influence. Records are only part of the picture.

He told me this week that they already have plans for a follow-up, and that he believes many of their chants have what it takes to become hits. "They have already lasted thousands of years," he said, "and I would say some of them even have a jazz feeling."

Members of the Temple say they use the Hare Krishna mantra or song (it literally means "Praise God") to start a mental vibration which will give them "pure consciousness" and cleanse all their misgivings.

TALKING ABOUT HIS songwriting on the new Beatles album, *Abbey Road*, and his future plans as a composer, George said: "I believe that if I'm going to sing songs on record, they might as well be my own. And I also feel ➤

NEWS SYNDICATION

Rubber plant soul: George Harrison at home in Esher, Surrey, April 6, 1969

you can say more in two minutes of a song than in 10 years.

"The first song I ever wrote was in Bournemouth, and it was 'Don't Bother Me'. It wasn't very good, but I was sick in bed and I thought I might as well write something, and it went on our second album.

"The most difficult thing for me is following Paul's and John's songs. Their earlier songs weren't as good as they are now, though, and they obviously got better and better, and that's what I have to do.

"I've got about 40 tunes I haven't recorded, and some of them I think are quite good. I wrote one called 'The Art Of Dying' three years ago, and at that time I thought it was too far out. But I'm still going to record it.

"I used to have a hang-up about telling John and Paul and Ringo I had a song for the albums, because I felt mentally, at that time, as if I was trying to compete. And in a way, the standard of the songs had to be good, because theirs were very good.

"Another thing is, I don't want The Beatles to be recording rubbish for my sake... just because I wrote it. And on the other hand, I don't want to record rubbish, just because they wrote it. The group comes first.

"It took time for me to get more confidence as a songwriter, and now I don't care if they don't like it. I can shrug it off.

"Another thing with The Beatles is, it's sometimes a matter of whoever pushes hardest gets the most tunes on the album.

"Then, it's down to personalities as whoever's going to push. And more often, I just leave it until somebody would like to do one of my tunes..."

ALAN SMITH

★ **TAKEN FROM**

NME 1|11|1969



1969 WILL END up being George Harrison's year. He's waited a long time for real recognition, has George, but his composition "Something" is released as a Beatles single this week and it is destined to become a landmark in his acceptance both as an individual and as a songwriter of increasing style.



The house of love: Harrison's bungalow Kinfauns near Esher, Surrey, August 1969

He was never the personal pusher, but as a well-wishing observer since around 1960 I am happy that the standing-in-the-shadows bit seems at last to be over. As he told me: "I know I'm writing better.

"The fact is, the more you do it – the better it becomes. And I'm doing it a lot. I just get the compulsion... Like the other week, when I suddenly had the desire to write a country-and-western song, and I didn't have any idea of its shape but I just had to do it.

"I just knew, somehow, that there was a song there inside my head. And the big thing was just to get it out.

"Like Donovan said: 'Songs are all around you. Just reach out and capture one.'

"You know, it's nice to talk about music occasionally, and remind people of what we really are. That was one of the big bugs about our previous tours – especially towards the last couple of years – in that we became a political thing. People forgot everything else.

"We couldn't go out on the road just like a pop band... like we were there just to sing a few tunes. It became all this bit about politics, and 'What do you think of President de Gaulle?' and all that.

"That's why it's nice to remind people that we are, basically, primarily musicians. And politicians, and anything else, secondly.

"Some people tell me this 'Something' track is one of the best things I've ever written. I don't know! Maybe they're right, maybe they're wrong. It's very flattering.

"If there's any reason, maybe it's that now I can get over more what I want to do. I like the exercise of songwriting. And I like being stimulated to composing something I hear, or think, or say, or read.

"There was a period – about two years back – when I started believing that the whole universe was one big song. Things people would say... I'd think, 'Hey, that's a song,' and I'd go off and write it.

"I feel it's only a matter of me becoming more aware as a Beatle and as a person. Anybody can do anything if they set their mind to it. I did.

"I've said it before, but one of the real reasons I started getting into composing is that I thought: 'Well, if John and Paul can write songs...'

"When I first started at it, I used to forget to keep going and to finish things off. It's like washing your teeth. If you've never washed your teeth before, it takes a bit of time to get into the habit. And then you just do it naturally.

"The hang-up of playing my songs to John and Paul always used to hold me back, as I've said, because I knew how it would sound finished, and I had to try and convince them in one play.

"For that reason, there are a lot of numbers of mine that I decided not to do anything about. It was a shyness – a withdrawal – and I always used to take the easy way out.

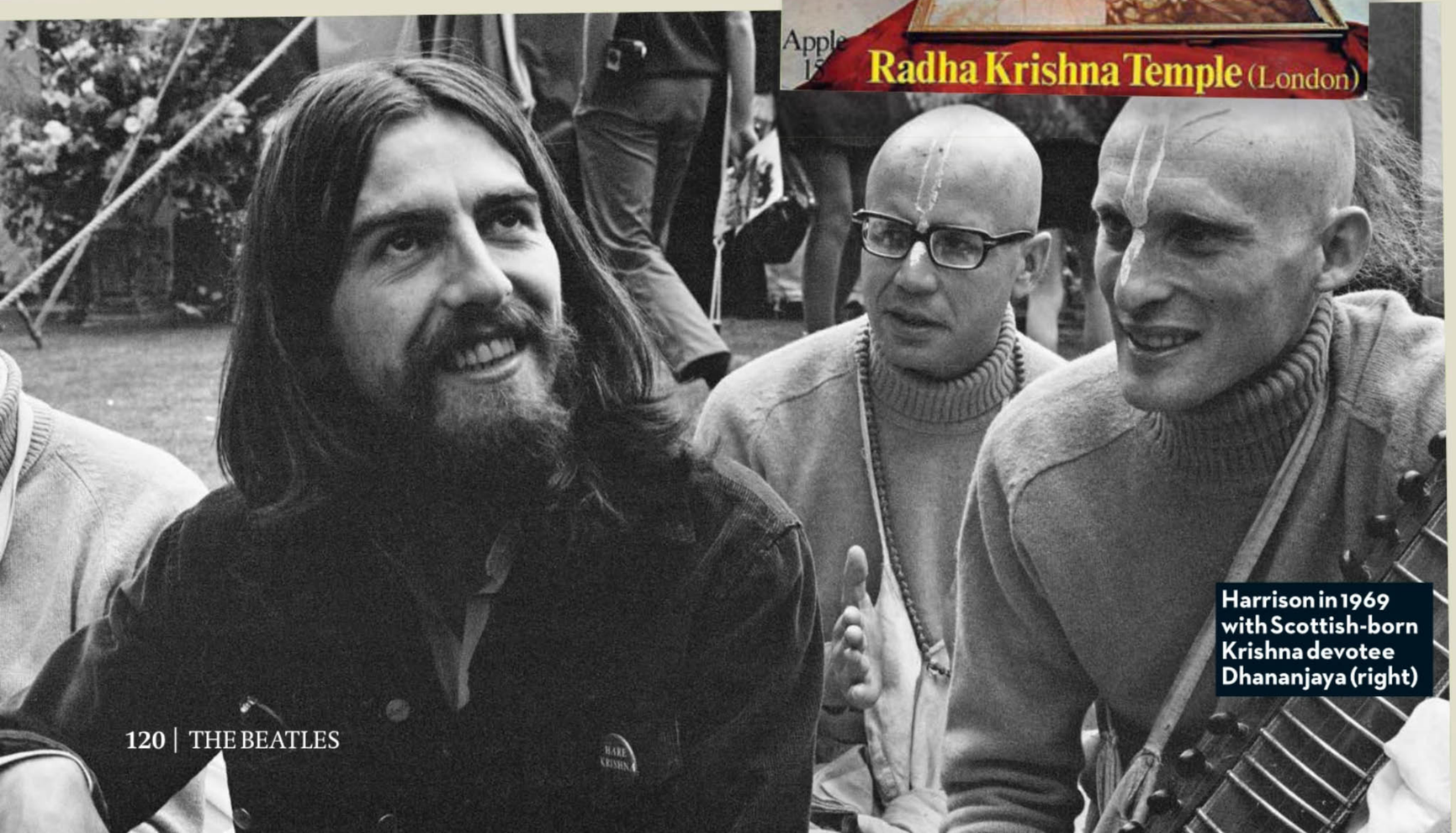
"Now? Well, maybe I'm cocky! Because now, I don't care if anybody else likes it. It's a matter of taste. And maybe I don't like some of their songs, either.

"What I still do, though, is to bring out the numbers I think are the easiest to get across. The ones I think will take the shortest time to make an impact... the ones that'll sound the nicest tunes.

"I remember when I came to do a song for the *Abbey Road* LP, I did that one called 'Here Comes The Sun' because it didn't need any real production. I must just go to the loo."

The two-minute break and a cup of tea.





Harrison in 1969 with Scottish-born Krishna devotee Dhananjaya (right)

WOLSTENHOLME/DAILY EXPRESS/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES, TRACKSIMAGES.COM / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



Inside the Apple core: George, John and Yoko at The Beatles' London HQ on Savile Row, 1969

"As I was saying... about the LP. In future we're going to get an equal rights thing, so we all have as much on the album.

"I also thought of doing an album of my own, mainly just to get rid of all the songs I've got stacked up. I've got such a backlog, and at the rate of doing two or three an album, I'm not even going to get the ones I've done out for three or four years.

"I suppose I'm waiting till I've got myself a proper studio at home. And then I can just knock 'em off when I feel like it.

"It's a bit of a vicious circle, because I don't want to get a studio fitted up until I move, and I've been trying to move for a long time. I'm still in Esher and I've been there for years... the house isn't really big enough to have a proper studio. I've got all sorts of equipment together, but there's hardly any room to move.

"I think at home would be the ideal place for me to record. I hate the hang-up of booking a studio. And I think it's the same with many artists... I'll bet they sing their songs much better at home, where they're completely relaxed.

"I know that if I were doing it like that I'd probably do it more like the Plastic Ono Band, where you just bash away! I know I've got demos of things that went on that Beatles' 'White Album' that were much better.

"It's like 'Revolution'. Even though we did two versions of it, I still think the best version is the one I've got at home on tape, which we did just on an Ampex four-track machine with acoustic guitars, and Ringo just bashing on maracas or something in the corner.

"Summing me up, I don't mind admitting that I definitely used to be self-conscious. But now I've got less hang-ups about everything, not just music.

"I wrote 'Here Comes The Sun' in Eric Clapton's garden – name-dropping! – and it was done just about the time we had all those business meetings and I had headaches. So one day I stayed off, didn't come in, and went to Eric's, because it's nice with trees and things. And in that setting, the song just came right out.

"'Something' I wrote towards the end of the double album, about a year ago now. I just got the bit about '*Something in the way she moves*' and then the chord progression seemed to follow naturally. I finished it early this year.

"The words are nothing, really. There are lots of songs like that in my head. I must get them down. Maybe even other people would like to sing them." *ALAN SMITH*



"I don't want The Beatles to record rubbish for my sake... just because I wrote it"

George Harrison

★ **TAKEN FROM**

MELODY MAKER 22|11|1969



"I KNOW MANY people think we're eccentric and do crazy things. But if they don't understand what we're trying to do, why put it down like that?"

George Harrison was protesting against the intolerance The Beatles often encounter today.

"They should keep an open mind and realise there is a chance that what we're saying and doing could be related directly to them.

"Maybe Joe Public isn't happy about our personal appearance or anything else we're trying to do at the moment. But who is to say that every one of the Joe Publics, put in the same position and schooling of life as we went through, would not be doing the same things?

"I know it can be argued that if people think we're eccentric they won't take what we're trying to do seriously. But that's a chance we have to take.

"It's like with John. Maybe they think he's a lunatic or something. But because he keeps on being the same lunatic, time heals and the public begins to realise he's genuine. And even if we all still think he's a lunatic, at least he's a genuine lunatic.

"All I can say is that there's a purpose to life. Like Shakespeare said: 'All the world's a stage and men and women merely players.' And we in The Beatles are just four of the actors. In the circumstances, all I and the others can do is act out our parts in the way we believe.

"Not that I, or anyone else, can't try to change. I've changed such a lot and I'm going to try and keep changing. Life itself is one constant change. Day and night... everything is always changing.

"Joe Public should realise that in the end, he is probably looking for the same things in life as we are. Somebody who criticises us may, for instance, be the kind of person who would get his happiness out of a new telly or a new car. But what happens to someone who's got a million tellies and a million cars and all the money in the world and a thousand palaces and castles... what happens then?

"He sits there looking for happiness. And it can only come from within – which is the basis of everything I believe in."

Talking about Bob Dylan: "I've been greatly influenced by him, just as I am by all kinds of other people and music. The Beatles often suffer from people misunderstanding them; so does Dylan.

"People don't realise that he has changed quietly; and that he has his wife and family and he's happy. Personally, I find him a really great guy.

"The trouble with the things that've been written about him is that so much attention and pressure have been put on him for the wrong reasons.

"Dylan can't understand why people want to bug him about all kinds of things that aren't to do with his music. He didn't make himself into a cult – the press did. Now he can't understand why people want to ask him silly questions about what to do about Vietnam. Dylan just wants to write songs and sing songs... And if people want to talk to him about his music, he's really very charming." *LH*

WOLSTENHOLME/DAILY EXPRESS/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



“I don’t know if I want to record together again...”

PICTURELUX / THE HOLLYWOOD ARCHIVE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

The end is nigh... In a series of candid interviews, the Ono-Lennons open their hearts to RICHARD WILLIAMS and ALAN SMITH. Then, four months on, Paul McCartney interviews himself for *NME*. Question: “Do you foresee a time when Lennon-McCartney becomes an active songwriting partnership again?” Answer: “No.”



We can't work it out: The Beatles' final photo session at John's place, Tittenhurst Park near Ascot, Berks, August 22, 1969

★ TAKEN FROM

MELODY MAKER 6|12|1969



THE RETURN OF his famous MBE may have been the starting-point of a new era for John Lennon – an era in which he feels freer to talk about all that has happened to him in the past seven years of Beatledom.

It is an undeniable fact that the four Beatles have grown further away from each other over the years and, as this happens, the truth about their early days is coming out. To some, the revelation of this truth represents the unnecessary shattering of a beautiful myth, the exploding of a fairytale which depicted the group as the Fab Moptops, ever-ready with a handy witticism or a hummable song.

But to John Lennon, this opening-up is a vital step. Having lived within the legend for so long, he can maintain it no longer without being inconsistent. And honesty is undoubtedly one of John's main qualities. It makes some people squirm and write outraged letters to the newspapers, but it should be given a long-overdue welcome for the rare quality it is.

Last week I spent some time with John, during which he told me the truth about the early days, the current relationships within The Beatles, and his consequent need for independence, and a host of other subjects. We begin with the group's rise to fame, and John's feelings about the way it was achieved.

"In the beginning it was a constant fight between Brian [*Epstein*] and Paul on one side and me and George on the other," he told me. "Brian put us in neat suits and shirts, and Paul was right behind him. I didn't dig that, and I used to try and get George to rebel with me. I'd say to him: 'Look, we don't need these f___ing suits. Let's chuck them out of the window.' My rebellion was to have my tie loose, with the top button of my shirt undone, but Paul'd always come up to me and put it straight.

"I saw a film the other night, the first television film we ever did. The Granada people came down to film us, and there we were in suits and everything – it just wasn't us, and watching that film I knew that that was where we started to sell out. We had to do a lot of selling out then. Taking the MBE was a sell-out for me. You know, before you get an MBE the Palace writes to you to ask if you're going to accept it, because you're not supposed to reject it publicly and they sound you out first.

"I chucked the letter in with all the fanmail, until Brian asked me if I had it. He and a few other people persuaded me that it was in our interests to take it, and it was hypocritical of me to accept it. But I'm glad, really, that I did accept it – because it meant that four years later I could use it to make a gesture.

"We did manage to refuse all sorts of things that people don't know about. For instance, we did the Royal Variety Show once, and we were asked discreetly to do it every year after that – but we always said, 'Stuff it.' So every year there was always a story in the newspapers saying: 'Why No Beatles For The Queen?' which was pretty funny, because they didn't know we'd refused it.

"That show was a bad gig anyway. Everybody's very nervous and uptight, and nobody performs well. The time we did do it, I cracked a joke on stage. I was fantastically nervous but I wanted to say something, just to rebel a bit, and that was the best I could do."

Was there, in fact, anything at all that he enjoyed about the years of Beatlemania?

"Oh sure. I dug the fame, the power, the money, and playing to big crowds. Conquering America was the best thing. You see, we wanted to be bigger than Elvis – that was the main

thing. At first we wanted to be Goffin and King, then we wanted to be Eddie Cochran, then we wanted to be Buddy Holly, and finally we arrived at wanting to be bigger than the biggest – and that was Elvis.

"We reckoned we could make it because there were four of us. None of us would've made it alone, because Paul wasn't quite strong enough, I didn't have enough girl-appeal, George was too quiet, and Ringo was the drummer. But we thought that everyone would be able to dig at least one of us, and that's how it turned out."

When John returned his MBE in protest against Britain's involvement in the Vietnam and Biafra conflicts, he added: "And against 'Cold Turkey' slipping down the charts."

Does that mean that "Cold Turkey" is a specially important record for you?

"Yes, because it's MY record. When I wrote it, I went to the other three Beatles and said, 'Hey lads, I think I've written a new single.' But they all said, 'Ummm... arrrrrr... welll...' because it was going to be my project, and so I thought, 'Bugger you! I'll put it out myself.' That had happened once before, when I wanted to put 'Revolution' out as a single, but 'Hey Jude' went out instead."

Does that mean that Plastic Ono Band is, for John, a kind of alternative Beatles, particularly in view of Ringo's refusal to go on tour again?

"Yes, I suppose so. It's a way of getting my music out to the public. I don't bother so much about the others' songs. For instance I don't give a damn about how 'Something' is doing in the charts – I watch 'Come Together', because that's my song."

Can he ever conceive of a time when he wouldn't want his songs to be on the same album as Paul's or George's?

"I can see it happening. The Beatles can go on appealing to a wide audience as long as they make albums like *Abbey Road*, which have nice little folk songs like 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer' for the grannies to dig.

"About 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer' – well, all I can say is that I dig Engelbert Humperdinck as much as I dig John Cage, and I don't listen to either of them," he said with a marvellously relevant irrelevance.

"I always wanted to have other people on our records, like the Stones and our other friends. But some of the others wanted to keep it tight – just like The Beatles, you know? But you wait – it's starting to get looser, and there should be some fantastic sessions in the next few years. That's what I wanted all along."

Going back to the past, did he enjoy doing The Beatles' two films, *Help!* and *A Hard Day's Night*?

"I dug *A Hard Day's Night*, although Alun Owen only came with us for two days before he wrote the script. He invented that word 'grotty' – did you know that? We thought the word was really weird, and George curled up with embarrassment every time he had to say it. But it's part of the language now – you hear society people using it. Amazing.

"*Help!* was a drag, because we didn't know what was happening. In fact [*Richard*] Lester was a bit ahead of his time, but we were on pot by then and all the best stuff is on the cutting-room floor, with us breaking up and falling about all over the place."

The present: has Allen Klein made an agreeable difference to Apple, which was bothering John the last time I spoke to him?

"Oh, it's really marvellous. People were very scared of him to start with – and some still are – but that's probably good. He's swept out all the rubbish and the dead wood, and stopped it being a rest house for all the world's hippies. He won't let people order antique furniture for their offices and so forth... He's really tightened it up and it's starting to work a lot better.

"Brian Epstein put us in neat suits and shirts, and Paul was right behind him. I didn't dig that"
John Lennon

"He's noticed that The Beatles had stopped selling records as they were doing around the world, and he found out that it was because the record company simply wasn't bothering to push them. They thought that our records would sell themselves, and they were wrong. They don't. If you can get to No 1 in Turkey, Greece, Switzerland and a couple of other countries, then that's as good financially as getting a No 1 in Britain – they don't realise that.

"Klein's very good – he's going to make sure they stop sitting on the records and actually release them. He's even keeping tabs on me – I usually make mistakes about who to get in to survey my house, and I can spend a fortune without getting anything done. He's making sure that I do it the right way."

JOHN LENNON'S "Peace Crusade" inspires a variety of emotions in people. Sadly, few of those emotions are worthy ones. John and Yoko have been mercilessly lampooned and vilified by the public and mass media, and a great proportion of this reaction has been thoughtless and hurtful.

It would surely have been enough to make any lesser man, whose heart was not in his cause, retire from the field to a more comfortable, less publicised existence. But not the Lennons. They have kept up their output of peaceful propaganda in the face of a ceaseless barrage of insults, and the time will surely come when even their most jaundiced and gout-ridden detractors will realise their essential honesty, and their right to exercise it in the way they see most fit.

But like it or not, John Lennon and his lovely wife are in the process of becoming leaders in the public eye. They stand for a cause, and as public figures they can be held responsible for the failings and excesses of that cause.

This is not how they want it. Leadership in any form is the last cloak that Lennon wishes to put on, as he told me.

"I'm not falling for that one. Like Pete Seeger said, we don't have a leader but we have a song – 'Give Peace A Chance'. So I refuse to be leader, and I'll always show my genitals or do something which prevents me from being Martin Luther King or Gandhi and getting killed. Because that's what happens to leaders. Our whole mistake is having leaders and people we can rely on or point a finger at."

Yoko, as always at John's side, chipped in: "For instance, many people say if you want to do that kind of thing, about peace, don't do anything that is misleading like showing your genitals. Always keep a clean image so that people can believe in your peace movement.

"But that's exactly what the Establishment is doing [*"And that's what the Beatles did, too" – John*], taking their children to church on Sundays. This is showing that, 'I'm the President of the United States and I'm all right and I'm healthy and very moral, etcetera.' You don't get anywhere that way – you become just another hypocrite, and you're playing the Establishment game. We don't want to do that. We try to be honest and the point is, if we are really honest, just to make it between us is a lifetime thing, and if we can't make it together and endure each other, the world is nowhere.

"If ordinary couples can make it together and make it with their children and so forth, love-wise [*"She doesn't mean 'make it' as you 'lay'" – John*], then you can look after the world."

John continued: "One thing we've found out is that love is a great gift, like a precious flower or something. You have to feed it and look after it, and it has storms to go through and snow, but you have to protect it. It's like a pet cat. You know, people get a cat and they don't want to feed it, or they get a dog and they don't want to walk it. But love has to be nurtured like a very sensitive animal, because that's what it is. And you have to work at love, you don't just sit round with it and it doesn't just do it for you. You've got to be very careful with it; it's the most delicate thing you can be given. It's a very delicate situation."

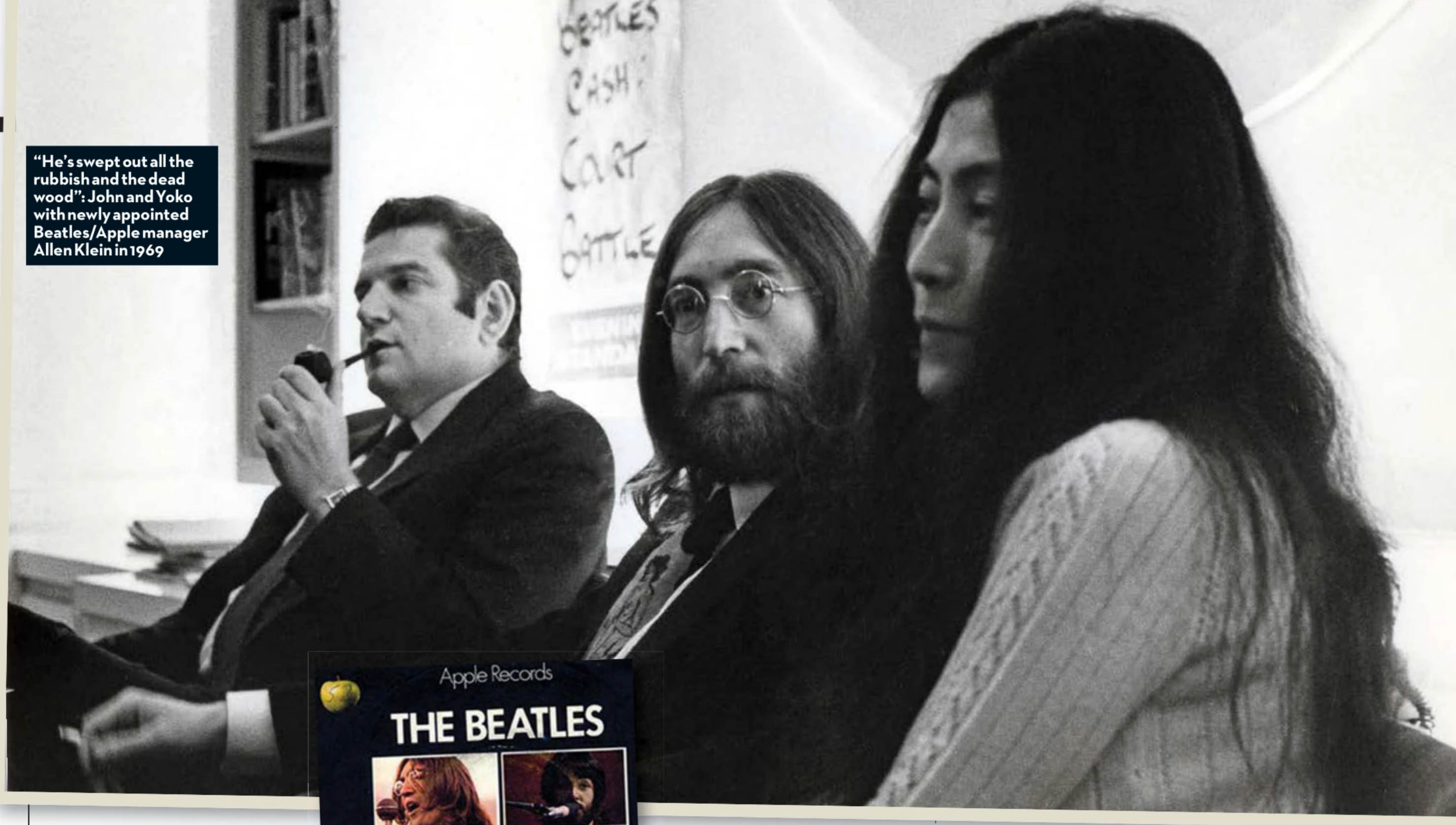
What will John and Yoko do about Vietnam and Biafra, which John mentioned in the letter which accompanied his MBE back to the Queen?

"We'll keep promoting peace in the way we do which, whichever way you look at it, is our way, because we're artists and not politicians. We don't organise – we do it in the best way we know how, to make people aware that, if they want war to stop, only they can do it.

"The politicians can't do it. I think our whole movement is successful, as shown by Nixon, who's having to

DON'T PASS ME BY

"In the future," George Harrison told *NME* in November 1969, "we're going to get an equal rights thing so we all have as much on the album. I have thought of doing an album of my own, mainly just to get rid of all the songs that I've got stacked up."



"He's swept out all the rubbish and the dead wood": John and Yoko with newly appointed Beatles/Apple manager Allen Klein in 1969



wriggle around a bit now and make propaganda films on the Moratorium, claiming that the 'silent majority' is with him, with a highly polished Negro in an Italian suit saying how great it is to be American. Nixon has been moved by the peace movement – that includes John and Yoko and all the people in the world who are doing it, and that's how we're doing to change it. We're not going to Vietnam to die for it or going to Biafra to die for it. We've considered everything, not dying, but going to the places.

"People prefer a dead saint to a living annoyance like John and Yoko. But we don't intend to be dead saints for people's convenience. They prefer Gandhi and Martin Luther King since they died, but you should see them in India now, celebrating Gandhi Year – anything less like Gandhi's principles going on in India you've never seen. It's a hoax. And so we don't intend to be dead saints – or living saints either. People don't like saints."

Their highly unusual *Wedding Album* has caused its share of controversy. Why did they make it?

Yoko: "It's like a diary, it reflects our love and peace ideas."

John: "When people get married they usually make their own wedding albums. We're public personalities and I'd enjoy reading Jackie Onassis's album. Our wedding was public, we were sharing our diaries and our feelings with the world. So one side shows our involvement with each other, and the other side shows what we do together outside of our involvement with each other, which is promote peace."

Isn't there a danger that the diary of Yoko and John will become too public?

"We have nothing to hide. *'Everybody's got something to hide except for me and my monkey'*, you know? We keep certain parts of our life private because we're not as wild as people think. I doubt if we'll ever make love in public, or invite the TV cameras into our bedroom, and I doubt if I'll ever go to the toilet in public. Just because I think some things, I don't want to show that side of me."

Yoko: "We're from a certain generation, you can't deny that, and for people in our generation it is so difficult, and maybe the next John and Yoko will..."

"Show all," said John. "Maybe we will before we die. People hide themselves from each other all the time, and everybody's frightened of saying something nice about somebody in case they don't say anything nice back, or in case they get hurt, or of looking at somebody in case they say, 'What are you looking at?'

"Everybody's so uptight and they're always building these walls around themselves. All you can do is try and break the walls down and show that there's nothing there but PEOPLE. It's just like looking in the mirror, there's nothing to worry about – it's only people."

Yoko: "And even we are not relaxed enough as people. We have many complexities and tensions. We try hard to be honest and expose ourselves, but there are certain things that we just can't... Maybe in the next generation they can, good luck to them."

John has always tried to carry out his philosophies and campaigns in a sense of fun. Are they, as some cynics suggest, in fact taking the mickey?

"That's true, although we're not taking the mickey. Everybody's frightened of being conned, of being tricked. If you say something nice to somebody they're not sure if you mean it, so that rather than respond to your loving movement they'll reject you, and that's what the press do. Because they're frightened of what we did with the MBE about the Biafra thing, they'll write about my Auntie Mimi's reaction to me giving the MBE back, because they don't want to fall for the con of 'Is he joking?'.

"Of course we're joking, as well. We mustn't take ourselves too seriously, otherwise it's the end. We think the mistake of everyone – Gandhi and Martin Luther King *and* the left wing *and* the students and all society – is taking it too seriously. If you take it seriously, it *is* serious. What we try and do is be non-serious about things, but we are very serious about being not serious."

Yoko: "We may be too serious, even. We try to have a sense of humour and we try to smile at everyone a really genuine smile from the bottom of our hearts. But it's very difficult for our generation to really genuinely smile, but we're trying."

John: "It's like when I sent the MBE back, and I wrote that it was against Britain's involvement in Biafra and Vietnam and against 'Cold Turkey' slipping down the charts. When we thought of that we were screaming with laughter, and so a few snobs and hypocrites got very upset about mentioning 'Cold Turkey' with the problem of Biafra and Vietnam, but that saved it from being too serious and being another colonel protesting! You have to try and do everything with humour, and keep smiling."

FROM ALL THE publicity, welcome and unwelcome, that they have received during their two years together, John and Yoko Lennon might seem to have little or no private life together. In fact, they appear wilfully to present their joint life to the public, for that most altruistic and most misunderstood reason: to set a good example.

John has said in the past that he'd like them to be remembered as the Romeo and Juliet of the age, and when he says that, I don't believe he's being egotistical. In fact, the Lennons may, in a left-handed sort of way, be doing the Establishment a favour – by bringing marriage back into fashion.

Like anybody else, they do have a more private side to their life, and John comments: "There's nothing I like more than to get home at the end of the day and sit next to Yoko and say, 'Well, we're together at last.' Although we may have ➤

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been holding hands all day, it's not the same when we're working or talking to the press. We feel a hundred miles apart by comparison."

It's obvious that they have changed each other, the change in John being more noticeable because we knew more of his earlier self. But how did meeting John change Yoko's life?

"He's changed everything in a sense that I was a very lonely person before I met him," she says. "Most people in the world are very lonely, that's the biggest problem, and because of their loneliness they become suspicious. And the reason we're lonely is because we can't communicate enough from the various complexes we have and from the various social habits we've created. We become very inhibited, but when I met John I started to open up a little, through love, you know, and that's the greatest thing that happened to me yet.

"There are various facets to my life and my personality, and I never met anybody else who could understand me. We understand each other so well, and I'm not lonely any more – which is a shocking experience, really. Also, through loneliness or something, I was starting to become a very firm and strong ego... but that's melting away, and it's very nice."

On the other side of the coin, how does John feel Yoko has changed him?

"Exactly the same, of course. I was lonely, and didn't have full communication with anybody and it took a bit of adjusting. She rediscovered or cultivated the thing that existed in me before I left Liverpool, maybe, and recultivated the natural John Lennon that had been lost in the Beatles thing and the worldwide thing. She encouraged me to be myself, because it was me that she fell in love with, not The Beatles or whatever I was.

"When you get sidetracked you believe it, and when you're in the dark you believe it. She came and reminded me there was light, and when you remember there's light you don't want to get back in the dark again. That's what she did for me."

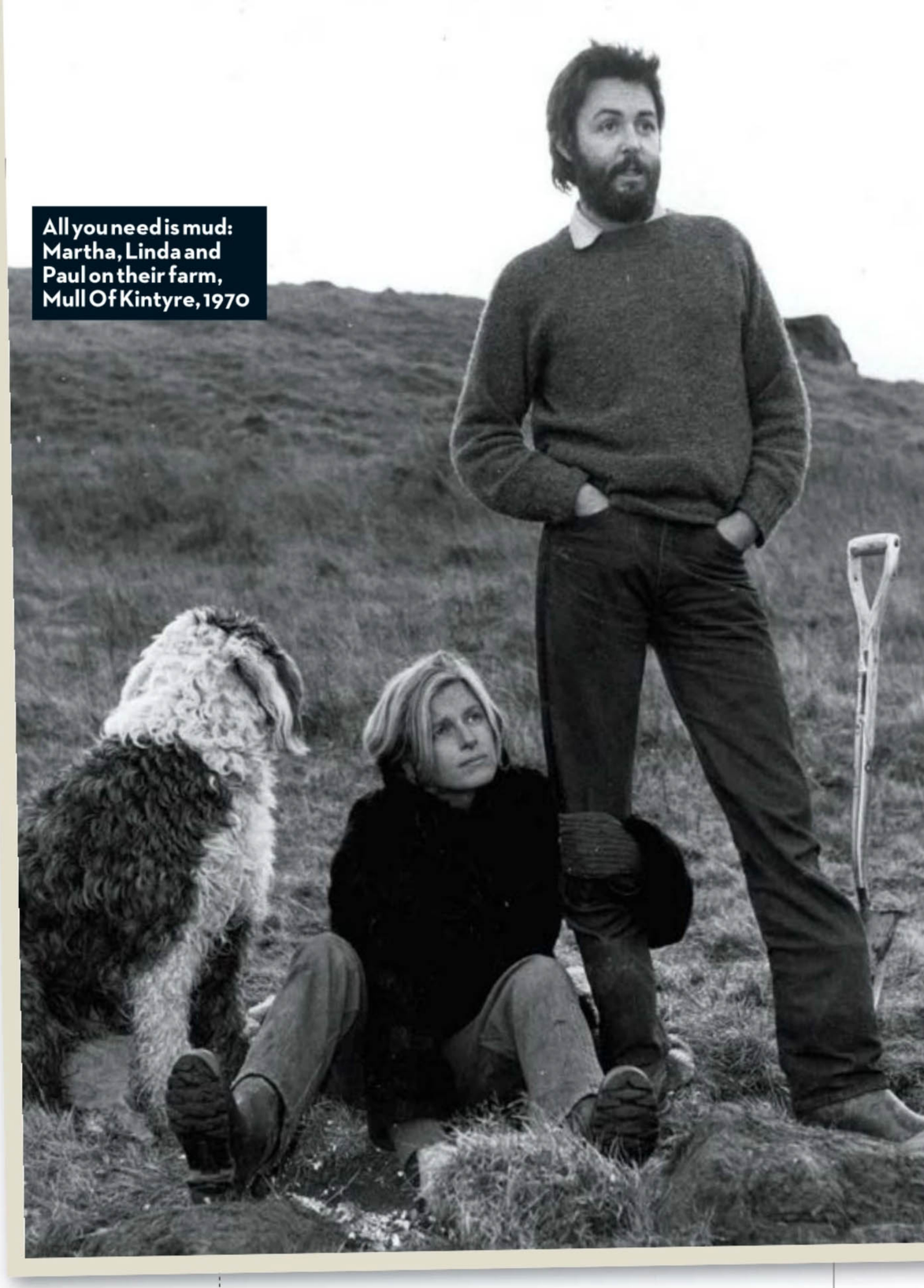
Yoko: "But you know I didn't do it intentionally or anything. It's the falling-in-love bit: you start to see all sorts of things that you don't see if you're not in love. I found that he has all these qualities that he was hiding away. Even in a practical sense, music-wise, he was doing all sorts of freaky things at home, just recording it on a cassette or something, but not showing it publicly. Publicly he was doing The Beatles' things. But he showed me all these cassettes and things and I said, 'Why don't you produce these as records?'

"I performed the role of a mirror, in a way. He was doing all those things anyway – I didn't suggest them. It was there – and that goes for his drawing, paintings and poetry, too – especially his drawings. He's got a stack of beautiful drawings at home, and this one series he did is going to be produced as a sort of lithograph. They're not like his cartoons – they're another kind of drawing. I think they're better than Picasso."

"She's biased," said John happily.

"You'll see them next year," continued Yoko. "And those things were always there in John – they just came out, but artists do need encouragement. We're always together, like 24 hours of the day. At the beginning, when we were less sure and we were still the previous us, once in a while when John was recording I'd go shopping on the King's Road or something – now we couldn't conceive of that.

"People say that if you're together 24 hours a day for two years you must get sick and tired of each other, but it's the contrary," asserted Yoko. "We got so addicted to that situation that we miss each other more. It's a very strange scene."



All you need is mud: Martha, Linda and Paul on their farm, Mull Of Kintyre, 1970

John: "Somebody said, 'Won't you get so reliant on each other that you can't manage without each other?' and we said yes! The only thing that could split us is death, and we have to face that... and we don't even believe we'll be split then, if we work on it. Our only worry in the world is that we die together, otherwise even if it's only three minutes later it's going to be hell. I couldn't bear three minutes of it.

"Most marriages have a little pretence going on, and we thought are we going to have to pretend that we're happy together because we daren't say that we want to be apart? But that doesn't happen. When two of you are together, man and wife, there's nothing that can touch you. You have the power of two people, you have the protection – you don't need the society or the room or the uniform or the gun because you have the power of two minds, which is a pretty powerful thing."

A major part of most marriages is childbearing. John and Yoko have one child each by their previous marriages, and Yoko has had two miscarriages since they've been together. How important do they think a child will be to their relationship?

"We're not even sure that we want children," said John. "We're that jealous. But if God or whoever gives us a child, we'll accept it. Maybe we'd like two or three. But even then we have to consider: is a child going to interfere between us? How can we look after a child and be together 24 hours a day?"

Yoko: "It's not fair to the child, maybe, because we are so close. The child will be somebody that will be saying 'Hello' once in a while."

John: "Obviously it'll probably be different if we have one, because all the times she's pregnant we consider it. We're full into it, wanting a child, but when you lose it and you get over the pain then you consider whether you wanted the child. Now maybe we had that in the back of our minds all along, and that's why she lost it. We don't really know whether we want one or not. If she gets pregnant we'll want one, but I'd like her not to be pregnant for a bit – she's been pregnant since I met her!

"I'd like her to stay slim for a year and then maybe have one. But we don't fancy birth pills because I don't trust them and anything else is out of the question [*laughs*] because it's inconvenient. We're not like that – we try to act naturally at all times.

"That's one of our problems, besides death. It's in God's hands."

RICHARD WILLIAMS

DON'T PASS ME BY

As late as March 1970, Ringo was still telling *NME* that "everything's fine. But I've got things to do, and George has got things to do, and Paul has his solo album, and John has his peace thing. We can't do everything at once. Time will tell."

★ TAKEN FROM

NME 13|12|1969



I MAY BE wrong, and I hope I am, but these are dark days for The Beatles. A few days ago John and Yoko and I talked in a one-hour-15-minute exclusive interview. He was pleasant, together, straightforward, mellow and resolute, and only in references to Paul did his voice drop in doubt.

He told me: "Paul and I both have differences of opinion on how things should be run. But instead of it being a private argument about how an LP should be done, or a certain track, it's now

EVENING STANDARD/GETTY IMAGES

PAUL

TWO PAGES ON THE HERMIT BEATLE

QUESTION-TIME WITH PAUL

CONDUCTED BY PAUL!!

No more songs with John

PAUL McCARTNEY speaks . . . or rather sends out his words via a printed sheet which we reproduce below, just as he sent it out. That way we cannot get anything wrong, something Paul accuses the Press of doing from time to time!

Paul has used the time honoured NME Question-Time format to put his message over, writing the questions and giving the answers himself.

You'll find what he thinks of Lennon; and Allan Klein; how he made his new album; who gets the composing credits; if he missed other Beatles and George Martin on the sessions; and what he wants to do in the future.

Here is what he has to say . . .

Question Why did you decide to make a solo album?

Answer Because I got a Studer 4 track recording machine at home – practised on it (playing all instruments) – liked the result, and decided to make it into an album.

Question Were you influenced by John's adventures with the Plastic Ono Band, and Ringo's solo LP?

Answer Sort of but not really.

Question Are all the songs by Paul McCartney alone?

Answer Yes sir.

Question Will they be so credited: McCartney?

Answer It's a bit daft for them to be Lennon/McCartney credited, so "McCartney" it is.

Question Did you enjoy working as a solo?

Answer Very much. I only had me to ask for a decision, and I agreed with me. Remember Linda's on it too, so it's really a double act.

Question What is Linda's contribution?

Answer Strictly speaking she harmonises, but of course it's more than that because she is a shoulder to lean on, a second opinion, and a photographer of renown.
More than all this, she believes in me – constantly.

Question Where was the album recorded?

Answer At home, at E.M.I. (no. 2 studio) and at Morgan Studios (WILLESDEN!)

Question What is your home equipment, (in some detail)

Answer STUDER 4 TRACK machine.
I only had, however, one mike, and, as Mr. Pender, Mr. Sweatenham and others only managed to take 6 months or so (slight delay) I worked without V.U. meters or a mixer, which meant that everything had to be listened to first (for distortion etc. . . .) then recorded.
So the answer
STUDER,
1 MIKE,
and nerve.

Question Why did you choose to work in the studios you chose?

Answer They were available.
E.M.I. is technically good, and Morgan is cosy.

Question The album was not known about until it was nearly completed. Was this deliberate?

Answer Yes, because normally an album is old before it comes out.
(A side.) Witness "Get Back".

Question Why?

Answer I've always wanted to buy a Beatle's album like "people" do and be as surprised as they must be. So this was the next best thing.
Linda and I are the only two who will be sick of it by the release date.
We love it really.

Question Are you able to describe the texture or the feel or the theme of the album in a few words?

Answer Home, Family, Love.

Question How long did it take to complete – from when to when?

Answer From just before (I think) Xmas, until now.
"The Lovely Linda" was the first thing I recorded at home, and was originally to test the equipment. That was around Xmas.

Question Assuming all the songs are new to the public, how new are they to you? Are they recent?

Answer One was 1959 (Hot as Sun). Two from India, Junk, Teddy Boy, and the rest are pretty recent.
Valentine Day, Momma Miss America, and OO You, were ad-libbed on the spot.

Question Which instruments have you played on the album?

Answer Bass, drums, acoustic guitar, lead guitar, piano and organ-mellotron, toy xylophone, bow and arrow.

Question Have you played all these instruments on earlier recordings?

Answer Yes, – drums being the one that I wouldn't normally do.

Question Why did you do all the instruments yourself?

Answer I think I'm pretty good.

Question Will Linda be heard on all future records?

Answer Could be; we love singing together, and have plenty of opportunity for practice.

Question Will Paul and Linda become a John and Yoko?

Answer No, they will become Paul and Linda.

Question Are you pleased with your work?

Answer Yes.

Question Will the other Beatles receive the first copies?

Answer Wait and see.

Question What has recording alone taught you?

Answer That to make your own decisions about what you do is easy, and playing with yourself is difficult, but satisfying.

Question Who has done the art-work?

Answer Linda has taken all the photos, and she and I designed the package.

Question Is it true that neither Allen Klein nor ABKCO have been nor will be in any way involved with the production manufacturing, distribution or promotion of this new album?

Answer Not if I can help it.

Question Did you miss the other Beatles and George Martin. Was there a moment, e.g. when you thought: "Wish Ringo was here for this break"?

Answer No.

Question Assuming this is a very big hit album, will you do another?

Answer Even if it isn't, I will continue to do what I want – when I want to.

Question Are you planning a new album or single with the Beatles?



PAUL and LINDA and a thumbs-up sign.

Answer No.

Question Is this album a rest away from Beatles, or start of solo career?

Answer Time will tell.
Being a solo album means it's "the start of a solo career" . . . and not being done with the Beatles means it's a rest.
So it's both.

Question Is your break with the Beatles, temporary or permanent, due to personal differences, or musical ones?

Answer Personal differences, Business differences, Musical differences, but most of all because I have a better time with my family.
Temporary or permanent?
I don't know.

Question Do you foresee a time when Lennon-McCartney becomes an active songwriting partnership again?

Answer No.

Question Were any of the songs on the album originally written with the Beatles in mind?

Answer The older ones were. Junk was intended for Abbey Road, but something happened.
Teddy Boy was for "Get Back" but something happened.

Question Were you pleased with Abbey Road? Was it musically restricting?

Answer It was a good album. (No. 1 for a long time.)

Question What is your relationship with Klein?

Answer It isn't.
I am not in contact with him, and he does not represent me in ANY way.

Question What is your relationship with Apple?

Answer It is the office of a company which I own part own with the other 3 Beatles.
I don't go there because I don't like offices or businesses especially when I'm on holiday.

Question Have you any plans to set up an independent production company?

Answer McCartney Productions.

Question What sort of music has influenced you on this album?

Answer Light and loose.

Question Are you writing more prolifically now? Or less so?

Answer About the same. I have a queue waiting to be recorded.

Question What are your plans now? A holiday? A musical? A movie? Retirement?

Answer My only plan is to grow up.

a larger argument about the organisation of Apple itself. Whether we both want the same thing from Apple in the end is a matter of opinion. But how to achieve it – that's where we differ. Mainly, we disagree on the Klein bit. But you know, I don't want to discuss Paul without him here. It's just that as far as I can see, Paul was always waiting for This Guy to just appear and come and save us from the mess we were in.

"I'm a quarter of this building and it became a question of whether I should pull my money out if I could – which I probably can't. I did say I wanted out at one time. It was just that all my income was going in to Apple and being wasted by the joy-riding people who were here.

"Yoko encouraged me to be myself. Because it was me she fell in love with. Not The Beatles"
John Lennon

We needed a businessman.

"I know that's what's going on all the time. People come to me and say, 'Paul wants this done, what do you think?', and they know damn well what I think and they say 'All right' and then they go to Paul and say, 'John wants this done, he's off again.' The result is that we kept sending in different instructions and nothing was being done. Like people anywhere, they were getting away with what they could. We were naïve and stupid. What I want is for the freeloading to stop, but the old Apple spirit to remain. The spirit will be there, because if Apple is not a problem to The Beatles – which it was – it just can't help but get better.

"Our job is to put the creative side into Apple. If The Beatles never recorded together again, but each put their creative efforts through Apple... that at least would be better than me having a company, Paul having a company, George having a company, and Ringo having a company. Together we at least have that much more power. The only way we can help other artists at Apple is the same way The Beatles helped other artists... by breaking new barriers. That's what we didn't get before. We sat back, and we started to believe our own publicity, to tell ourselves how The Beatles helped people get long hair, and The Beatles started off this, and the other.

"The Beatles split up? It just depends how much we all want to record together. I don't know if I want to record together again. I go off and on it. I really do.

"The problem is that in the old days, when we needed an album, Paul and I got together and produced enough songs for it. Nowadays, there's three of us writing prolifically and trying to fit it all onto one album. Or we have to think of a double album every time, which takes six months. That's the hang-up we have. It's not a personal 'The Beatles are fighting' thing, so much as an actual, physical problem.

"What do you do? I don't want to spend six months making an album I have two tracks on! And neither do Paul or George, probably. That's the problem. If we can overcome that, maybe it'll sort itself out. None of us want to be background musicians most of the time. It's a waste. We didn't spend 10 years making it to have the freedom of recording studios, to be able to have two tracks on an album.

"It's not like we spend our time wrestling in the studio trying to get our own songs on. We all do it the same way... we take it in turns to record a track. It's just that usually in the past, George lost out. Because Paul and I are tougher. It's nothing new, the way things are. It's human. We've always said we've had fights. It's no news that we argue. I'm more interested in my songs. Paul's more interested in his, and George is more interested in his. That's always been.

"This is why I've started with the Plastic Ono and working with Yoko... to have more outlet. There isn't enough outlet for me in The Beatles. The Ono Band is my escape valve. And how important that gets, as compared to The Beatles for me, I'll have to wait and see.

"You have to realise that there's a peculiar situation in that if 'Cold Turkey' had had the name 'Beatles' on it, probably it would have been a No 1. 'Cold Turkey' has got Ringo and me on, and yet on half the Beatles tracks off *Abbey Road* I'm not on, or half the tracks on the double album – and even way back. Sometimes there might be only two Beatles on a track. It's got to the situation where if we have the name 'Beatle' on it, it sells. So you get to think: 'What are we selling? Do they buy it because it's worth it, or just because it says Beatles?'

"George is in the same position. I mean, he's got songs he's been trying to get on since 1920. He's got to make an album of his own. And maybe if he puts 'Beatles' on the label rather than George Harrison, it might sell more. That's the drag. Of course, we could each make an album and call it 'The Beatles'. But that would be cheating. And that's not my scene.

"Anyway, folks, remember the Plastic Ono Band LP from Toronto released December 12, with a nice picture of the sky, and a fab calendar inside of a year's events with John and Yoko, with poetry and fun."

ALAN SMITH

08 MAY | 1970

Let It Be

Lennon hands over raw, abandoned sessions to Phil Spector. McCartney is so outraged that he intervenes... 34 years later. The bitter end. *By John Lewis*

CRITICS' VERDICT

"If *Let It Be* is to be their last, then it will stand as a cheapskate epitaph, a cardboard tombstone, a sad and tatty end... On the reckoning of this, The Beatles have lost their self-respect and sold out all the principles for which they stood."
ALAN SMITH, NME, MAY 9, 1970

"The differences between *Let It Be* and *Abbey Road*, are enormous: here they are singing and playing together... despite the small clashes of interest."
RICHARD WILLIAMS, MELODY MAKER, MAY 9, 1970

TODAY WE'RE ALL familiar with the jaded rock band going back to basics, delving into rock'n'roll's primordial past, reconnecting with their roots. We've seen the Unplugged session, the album of urgent rock covers, the webcam on the wall of the studio jam, the surprise gigs in unexpected venues.

Such ideas were unknown in January 1969 when The Beatles regrouped after a three-month break. The initial idea was a response to the sprawling curate's egg that was 'The White Album'; an "honest" album, with no overdubs or tape trickery. Accompanying it would be a live-in-the-studio documentary film, inspired, perhaps, by the Stones footage in Jean-Luc Godard's *Sympathy For The Devil (One Plus One)*. The director they chose was Michael Lindsay-Hogg, the American-born baronet who'd just helmed *The Rolling Stones Rock And Roll Circus*. For the first time, The Beatles wanted to be the Stones – enviously stealing a sideways glance at their grubby, bluesy comrade-rivals as they entered their imperial phase.

Instead of the luxurious familiarity of Abbey Road, The Beatles rehearsed at a soundstage in Twickenham Film Studios before retreating to a spartan studio in the basement of Savile Row's Apple offices, using only an eight-track tape deck. In the end, after just over a week of studio sessions, the band shelved the results to work on *Abbey Road*. A year later, Lennon, against McCartney's wishes, presented the master tapes to his pal Phil Spector to complete by overdubbing strings, horns and choirs over several tracks. Lennon famously opined that Spector "was given the shittiest load of badly recorded shit... and he made something of it". An understandably undermined McCartney was (and still is) furious: in 2003 he even proffered his "director's cut" of the album, *Let It Be... Naked*.

Looking at the chronology, the project actually started well, and the first few recordings fulfilled the initial brief. Lennon's "Dig A Pony" is a grungy, slightly chaotic waltz which swings and grooves with a certain Hendrix-ish swagger. "I've Got A Feeling" is an elegantly distressed Lennon-McCartney co-write, with John crooning the middle-eight and Paul giving the chorus a full-throttle "Helter Skelter" proto-metal howl. "Don't Let Me Down" – not on the finished album, but a B-side to "Get Back" – is an oft-overlooked Lennon gem, one that owes a little to Dylan's "I Shall Be Released" (a particularly punky version ends up on *Let It Be... Naked*).

And "Get Back" itself, the album's lead single, is a great 16-bar blues, featuring a magnificent workout from Billy Preston, the Californian "fifth Beatle" who sits in on most of the album's tracks. Preston – only 22 at the time but already a veteran of Sam Cooke, Little Richard and Ray Charles lineups – rarely shows off; instead he embeds himself in the rhythm section, switching between Fender Rhodes and Lowrey organ, wearing his chops lightly, adding a quietly funky bounce to the Fab Four.

The band were comfortable with "Get Back", "Pony", "Feeling" and "Don't Let Me Down", performing each of them twice on that famous rooftop gig on January 30. It was the remaining tracks where the cracks in the project started to show. The movie captures snippets of many aimless studio jams: a 12-minute improvisation called "Dig It"; numerous early rock'n'roll faves (including "Mailman, Bring Me No More Blues", "Kansas City", "Blue Suede Shoes", "Shake, Rattle And Roll" and "Rip It Up"),



R'n'B covers ("You Really Got A Hold On Me", "Tracks Of My Tears"), and a daft folk ad lib ("Maggie Mae"). In keeping with the retro mood is the stiff "One After 909", written by Lennon and McCartney as early as 1956 and never really transcending its status as juvenile pastiche.

In a project where The Beatles were trying to ape the Stones, it doesn't help that each Beatle was arguably not as good a musician as each Stone, and these technical failings are problematic. "For You Blue" is marred by Lennon's slide guitar solo (compare and contrast with the Stones' "Parachute Woman"). "Two Of Us" might be a wonderful song (a John-Paul bromance assisted by some terrific Everly Brothers harmonies), but it features some hamfisted acoustic guitar scrubbing (by both Lennon and McCartney) and some arthritic basslines (played by Harrison on a lead guitar). Worst of all might be "The Long And Winding Road". In *Revolution In The Head*, Ian MacDonald gives a schoolmasterly critique of Lennon's bassline, suggesting that his numerous fluffs and glitches were a deliberate attempt to sabotage McCartney's composition. What MacDonald ignores is that McCartney's clunky piano comping is every bit as bad.

Some tracks – like "Let It Be", "The Long And Winding Road" and "Across The Universe" — only work because Spector's remixes ignore the strict back-to-basics philosophy. "Across The Universe" sits uncomfortably here; a year older than the rest of the tracks, it was a relic from Lennon's flirtation with the Maharishi. Spector's lullaby choirs and Disney strings take Lennon's limpid guitar and innocent voice into another dimension, oddly prescient of Alice Coltrane's Hare Krishna material. "Let It Be" is not the hymnal piano ballad originally intended – it ends up as a wonderfully overblown epic; where McCartney and Preston share the piano/organ gospel sound perfected by The Band. Harrison's "I Me Mine", completed long after every other song here, and the last song The Beatles would ever record, is not only a lovely jazz-waltz, but also a suitably mournful lament for a band mired in litigation. And, for all McCartney's protestations, his fine melody on "The Long And Winding Road" is rescued by Richard Hewson's string arrangement, which gives the song a Jimmy Webb gravitas.

> John Lennon famously said Spector "was given a load of badly recorded shit… and he made something of it"

In each case, the Spectorised versions win hands-down, and the *Let It Be... Naked* responses sound oddly joyless and empty – the sound of a band that had run its course and had no way of carrying on into the next decade. As it happens, that's probably a more accurate and authentic portrait of the Beatles in 1969 – but it's certainly not a better album.

SLEEVENOTES | LET IT BE

1. Two Of Us
2. Dig A Pony
3. Across The Universe
4. I Me Mine
5. Dig It
6. Let It Be
7. Maggie Mae
8. I've Got A Feeling
9. One After 909
10. The Long And Winding Road
11. For You Blue
12. Get Back

Released: May 8, 1970
Label: Apple
Produced by: George Martin (uncredited), Phil Spector
Recorded at: Abbey Road, Olympic and Trident studios
Personnel: John Lennon (vocals, lead and rhythm guitar, six-string bass, whistles), Paul McCartney (vocals, bass guitar, acoustic guitar, piano, Hammond organ, maracas), George Harrison (lead and rhythm guitar, acoustic guitar, tamboura, six-string bass, vocals), Ringo Starr (drums, percussion), Billy Preston (electric piano, Hammond organ), Richard Hewson (string and brass arrangements), John Barham (choral arr.), George Martin (string and brass arr., shaker), Linda McCartney (backing vocals), Brian Rogers (string and brass arr.)
Highest charting position: UK 1; US 1

07 MARCH | 1988

Past Masters Volumes One & Two

"Komm, Gib Mir Deine Hand"... I think you'll understand. The Beatles arrive on CD, and their stray tracks are usefully rounded up. *By Mark Bentley*

FIRST APPEARING IN March 1988, the two volumes of *Past Masters* were strategic components of that most anticipated of events: the release of the entire Beatles catalogue on CD. For the CD reissues, which commenced in February 1987, Apple had taken the decision to standardise all albums as the UK versions, save *Magical Mystery Tour*. There would be no 'bonus' tracks: the sanctity of the original tracklistings would be preserved. And the concept behind *Past Masters* – the sole 'new' releases in the reissue campaign – was simple. These two discs would be an audio repository for every track that didn't have another home elsewhere – singles, B-sides, EP tracks and more. Compiled by Mark Lewisohn, this would supersede other compilations that had appeared over the years, including *Rock'n'Roll Music*, *Rarities*, *Love Songs* and, initially, *1962–1966* and *1967–1970*, which didn't appear on CD until 1994.

Past Masters didn't sell as well as Apple might have hoped, both sets barely scraping the UK top 50 (compare that to *Pepper*, which made No 3 on its CD issue in June 1987). The problem with *Past Masters* (let's refer to it now in terms of the remastered 2CD set, issued in 2009) is that it sticks too slavishly to its function. It's the non-album songs, in order of release, and not a penny more. It contains 12 UK hits, and 10 No 1s, but it's not a greatest hits, because key, killer singles like "Help!" or "A Hard Day's Night" are available elsewhere. It's not a holistic listening experience, because as a compilation, its 'flow' is undermined by this rigorous efficiency. Surely it would have been nice to have all the Beatles UK A-sides, with all their B-sides, in one place? And it doesn't work as a 'rarities' comp either, because the freshness of hearing, say, the German-language "Komm, Gib Mir Deine Hand", is rather punctured by the inclusion of the original. No, *Past Masters* is the comp equivalent of a Fifth Form Latin Master: strict, unbending and lacking passion for the job.

> There are at least a dozen exclusive songs here that are as good as anything in The Beatles' canon

But yet, what riches lie within. Assuming you don't need reminding of the brilliance of most of the singles themselves, there are at least a dozen exclusive Lennon-McCartney and Harrison compositions here that are as good as anything in The Beatles' canon. Take "Thank You Girl", the B-side of "From Me To You". It lacks the earworm buoyancy of the single, but with its identical harmonica-plus-harmony palette, offers some kind of careworn romanticism, prefiguring the more thoughtful moments of *With The Beatles*. It sets the precedent for a string of B-sides that were anything but throwaway: "I'll Get You" (the flip of "She Loves You") and particularly the mournful "This Boy" (the B-side of "I Want To Hold Your Hand") are intricate, experimental even. "This Boy" was recorded on October 17, 1963, the first day the band had access to a higher-tech four-track tape machine, and it shows in some needlepoint harmony vocals.

The two German cuts here are one-listen novelties, but "Sie Liebt Dich" has historical significance because it is an entirely new version, as the English vocal track could not be separated from the instrumentation. The next four songs are taken from "Long Tall Sally" – the only UK Beatles EP that didn't include selected album cuts – and find the band in rock'n'rolling form. "Long Tall Sally" itself is fun, the dirgey Ringo-sung "Matchbox" less so, but the gem here is "I Call Your Name" – the sole John/Paul composition on the EP.

More levity arrives when John wraps his leathery cords around Larry Williams' "Bad Boy" ("*Hey Junior, be-haaave*



yourself") and Paul indulges in bad couplets during "She's A Woman" (the flip of "I Feel Fine"), which dares to rhyme "*presents*" with "*peasant*". Disc One concludes with two of the finest Fabs songs: the eerie "Yes It Is" has the same cavernous, effortless beauty as their best love songs, while the adrenalised "I'm Down" matches raucousness with complexity. Astonishingly, having laid down those throat-burning vocals, Paul popped back that day – June 14, 1965 – to cut "Yesterday".

The second disc, too, possesses standalone moments of genius – the most famous of which is probably the droning, driving "Rain", the B-side to "Paperback Writer". Amid a booming, almost funky bassline, John delivers a matchless vocal; the sneering, "*sunnnschee-ine*" providing the vocal template for, well, pretty much everything Liam Gallagher has ever recorded. 1968's "The Inner Light", meanwhile, was George's first B-side and recorded initially in sessions for the *Wonderwall Music* soundtrack. Expansive and melodic, it's lyrically a loose rendering of the 47th chapter of the Tao Te Ching, and has the meditative quality of some of George's contributions to 'The White Album'. Whatever, it's a contrast to "Lady Madonna". George's second B-side was "Old Brown Shoe", a slice of spooked boogie, substantially better conceived than its A-side, "Ballad Of John And Yoko".

Alongside the celebrated "Don't Let Me Down" and "Across The Universe", the remaining curio here is "You Know My Name (Look Up The Number)". This meandering artefact, more knockabout jam than song, originally dates from a recording session in 1967, with the Stones' Brian Jones on sax. It underwent a number of metamorphoses, including as a potential release for the Plastic Ono Band, before appearing as the B-side to "Let It Be". Interestingly for a song from the late '60s, it only ever appeared in a mono version. The stereo vs mono debate opens up a whole new set of completist possibilities for the Beatles fan, with many audiophiles claiming mono versions represent a more Fab-friendly listening experience. Apple responded, too, with the 2009 issue of *Mono Masters*, a companion piece to this set, which omits the stereo singles and adds mono mixes of cuts from *Yellow Submarine*.

Past Masters, then, represents a triumph of form over function. There is enough Fab gear here to make the set an essential purchase. But, in this world of boxsets and multiple mixes, it represents a missed opportunity for Apple – both in 1988 and on reissue in 2009. We've got the greatest hits, now, thanks to *1*. But what of the darker corners of the band's catalogue? With this core content, they could have created something rather special indeed.

SLEEVENOTES | PAST MASTERS (2009 2CD REISSUE)

Disc 1
1. Love Me Do
2. From Me To You
3. Thank You Girl
4. She Loves You
5. I'll Get You
6. I Want To Hold Your Hand
7. This Boy
8. Komm, Gib Mir Deine Hand
9. Sie Liebt Dich
10. Long Tall Sally
11. I Call Your Name
12. Slow Down
13. Matchbox
14. I Feel Fine
15. She's A Woman
16. Bad Boy
17. Yes It Is
18. I'm Down

Disc 2
1. Day Tripper
2. We Can Work It Out
3. Paperback Writer
4. Rain
5. Lady Madonna
6. The Inner Light
7. Hey Jude
8. Revolution
9. Get Back
10. Don't Let Me Down
11. Ballad Of John And Yoko
12. Old Brown Shoe
13. Across The Universe
14. Let It Be
15. You Know My Name...

Released: March 7, 1988
Label: Parlophone, Capitol
Recorded at: Abbey Road, Apple, Olympic and Trident studios, London; Pathé Marconi Studio, Paris; EMI Studios, Bombay
Highest charting position: UK 31; US 34

1995-1996

Anthology 1–3

George Martin and the surviving Beatles unlock the door to their archives – and, fleetingly, engineer a reunion with their dead comrade. *By Nick Hasted*

SLEEVENOTES
ANTHOLOGY PARTS 1–3

Anthology 1
Released: November 20, 1995
Label: Apple
Highest chart position: UK 2; US 1

Anthology 2
Released: March 18, 1996
Label: Apple
Highest chart position: UK 1; US 1

Anthology 3
Released: October 28, 1996
Label: Apple
Highest chart position: UK 4; US 1

THE MID-1990S WERE the last period when The Beatles could be considered active participants in British pop music. In 1994, Ian MacDonald's book *Revolution In The Head* explored their catalogue in revelatory, definitive detail and Oasis began the ancestor-worship that climaxed in October 1995 with *(What's The Story) Morning Glory?* and "Wonderwall". With the Gallaghers at the core of British pop and youth culture, the band they revered returned with all their remaining force the next month. A double-album of unreleased tracks, *Anthology 1*, a new single built from a Lennon demo, "Free As A Bird", and a mammoth documentary series on Sunday ITV prime time also called *The Beatles Anthology* (and later a book), were all released with the full co-operation of McCartney, Harrison, Starr and Ono. The Beatles were as back as they would ever be, at the optimum moment.

The TV ratings quickly plummeted, showing that the general public's appetite for rock history is negligible, even for the Fabs. Excitement over the supposed wealth of new material and a second new song, "Real Love", faded over the two subsequent, chronological double-albums. By the time the third *Anthology* was released, the so-called "Threatles" had again dissolved in some acrimony, unwilling to record the scheduled single for *Anthology 3*. But 20 years on, how does this partial resurrection stand up?

Both singles were much maligned for Jeff Lynne's "contemporary", drum-heavy production, making Ringo's presence redundant. Harrison demanded Lynne, responsible for his 1987 LP *Cloud Nine*, as producer because George Martin was seen as a McCartney man – as if the 'Get Back' sessions were ongoing. Lennon's presence on "Free As A Bird", summoned from a 1977 cassette demo, is necessarily spectral, but met with a lovely, rising McCartney middle-eight which reflects and transcends what's been lost: "*Whatever happened to/The life that we once knew... Where did we lose the touch/That seemed to mean so much/It always made me feel/So free.*" George unmistakably solos over pure harmonies, before a false ending, phasing and an impish ukulele. Once you've adjusted to the Lynne production, it's a touching coda to their career. "Real Love", meanwhile, is just an undeveloped Lennon song about loving Yoko, leaving his ex-bandmates with nowhere to go. So it proved with this séance-style comeback.

Anthology 1, which kicks off with "Free As A Bird", is the most valuable collection. A 1958 Quarrymen single is music from deep in the last century, guitars scratching through the surface noise like old country blues. The infamous Decca audition tape of 1962, raw and undercut with goofy humour, doesn't sound like the work of a band likely to be signed anytime soon. If they had been signed to Decca, they would never have met George Martin, invaluable for his assertive A&R skills as much as for his production genius. "Love Me Do" on their first EMI session is a leap forward, but badly mistimed drums by Pete Best prove that he had to be dumped.

"Our best work was never recorded," Lennon claims in the TV *Anthology* of their leather-jacketed, clubland beginnings. But the way they ride the screams of early Beatlemania in the many live tracks here gives a clue as to what that work was like. The happy, sexual attack of Lennon's growling "*twist a little closer*", in front of the Queen Mum, shows the ground they carved out. The







dialogue here, and their every movement on TV, proves how confident, thrilled, hilarious and united they were.

Some of that thrill is gone in *Anthology 2*. There are confused, scattered screams as McCartney debuts "Yesterday" on a Blackpool TV variety show, then oppressive ones as they futilely attempt their rock'n'roll set, just pre-*Revolver*, in Japan. That ends CD1, and on the 1967 of CD2 such contradictions are erased. A controlled lifting of the magician's curtain follows. George Martin (who "directed and produced" *Anthology*) remixes, remodels and merges alternate takes from *Sgt Pepper* (an intervention not so different from the later *Love*), still unwilling to let his old charges meet the world naked. In this "A Day In The Life", Lennon's opiated croon contrasts with an unpleasantly escalating scream of strings. "Good Morning Good Morning" is even tougher than the released version – like "Only A Northern Song" and the reprise of "Sgt Pepper", more Mod soul than hippy psychedelia. But this is the least satisfying *Anthology*, with little to be learned from hearing their stumbling works-in-progress. Sharing their studio isolation is, anyway, duller than hearing the live madness of Beatlemania.

Derek Taylor calls The Beatles "the greatest romance of the 20th century" in his introduction to *Anthology 3*, a volume which should serve as their divorce papers. But at least in these passages, what's remarkable is how close Lennon and McCartney still sound in the studio, always up for some Northern cabaret parody ("You Know My Name (Look Up The Number)" on *Anthology 2*, but finished in 1969, with McCartney predating Vic Reeves' Pub Singer, is the daft peak). "What's The New Mary Jane", the most widely bootlegged unreleased song here, is an unconvincing, lengthy collage. Mostly, CD1's 'White Album' outtakes are The Beatles as singer-songwriters, operating simply but well: Harrison softly sad on "While My Guitar Gently Weeps"; Lennon with the spooky "Cry Baby Cry"; "Hey Jude", before McCartney realised how big he could make it. The acrimony is there on CD2, Lennon asking, "Are we supposed to giddle [*giggle*] in the solo?" before "Let It Be". But he sings McCartney's "Two Of Us", so wistful for their old bond, straight. In *Anthology*'s full span, we've heard them beginning as a rock'n'roll band and ending with an attempt to return to that. Their last live seconds, "Get Back" on the roof with police closing in, give it an honourable go.

> In *Anthology*, we've heard The Beatles beginning as a rock'n'roll band and ending with an attempt to return to that

As everyone realised at the time, there's little you'd play in preference to The Beatles' finished, unimprovable story. Once you get used to this alternative, fallible world, though, it has a warm, sometimes harsh intimacy.

CRITICS' VERDICT

"The first CD here is almost unlistenable – including the Decca audition, despite Pete Best's recent claims in *The Sun* that "this is the best Beatles LP released yet". *Anthology 1* does The Beatles a great, great disservice."
EVERETT TRUE ON ANTHOLOGY 1, MELODY MAKER, DECEMBER 2, 1995

"This album is the sound of The Beatles throwing their earlier career out the window – the tours, the Sunday Nights at the Palladium, the moptops and the suits – and demonstrating that they could start again from scratch."
DAVID QUANTICK ON ANTHOLOGY 2, NME, MARCH 16, 1996

"Forget the unreleased material, which won't be hard, and the comedic failed outtakes. The treasure here on *Anthology 3* is in discarded versions of familiar numbers, often more sublime than the approved ones."
DAVID BENNUN ON ANTHOLOGY 3, MELODY MAKER, OCTOBER 26, 1996

FAB COLLECTIONS

The Beatles Compilations

Oldies, 'Red' & 'Blue', *1*, *Love*... How The Beatles were collected and recontextualised for subsequent generations. *By Neil Spencer*

THE BEATLES RELEASED just one 'greatest hits' album when they were together and only two in the five years after their break-up, a reminder that until their contract with EMI expired in February 1976 it allowed them, rather than the record company, to decide what was released.

Besides, when The Beatles were together, everything they issued was a greatest hit, every last single, B-side, EP and album, so there was little point compiling old tracks when the group were busy issuing new ones. In Beatledom, 'now' was always so much more interesting than 'then'.

When they did look back, on *A Collection Of Beatles Oldies* (1966), the group seemed to be making just that point. As they were in the studio recording *Pepper*, the album was a stopgap for the Christmas market. The festive season had always been a happy commercial hunting ground for the Fabs (a reflection, in part, of Brian Epstein's background as record shop owner), an association strengthened by their annual fan-club-only Christmas record, one that would be maintained even after they split.

Oldies was amiable enough, packing a dozen hits into its flower power cover, along with some Macca balladry and a stinging, unreleased version of Larry Williams "Bad Boy". At 40 minutes it was the longest Beatles LP to date and the first not to hit No 1 (it made 7). Fans already owned this stuff. The cover is 1966 London fossilised, complete with the Edwardian nostalgia that would reappear on *Pepper*, while Robert Whitaker's terrific back cover shot portrayed the group as the avant-garde 'underground' alchemists they had become. It's a pause between two eras.

The two double-LP collections that arrived in 1973 – *1962-1966* and *1967-1970*, the much-loved 'Red' and 'Blue' – fracture at the same point in their career, the tipping point between The Beatles as pop group and as cultural avatars. It's a change etched large into the two cover shots: 'Red''s out-take from the photo sessions for *Please Please Me*; and 'Blue''s, shot in the same stairwell at EMI HQ in Manchester Square, for the abandoned 'Get Back' album.

One reason it had taken three years since The Beatles' bust-up for 'Red' and 'Blue' to emerge was that each ex-Beatle was way too busy promoting landmark solo work to want competition from their past. The advent of a bootleg, *Alpha-Omega* (amazingly, sold on US TV), made an authorised retrospective urgent. There is some dispute about who compiled 'Red' and 'Blue' – Allen Klein is the usual suspect, though in 1980 Lennon says he entrusted the job to George Martin. The group were surely consulted, while in the mind of some fanciful fans the Fabs chose the red and blue colour scheme to honour the strips of their hometown's football rivals, Liverpool and Everton.

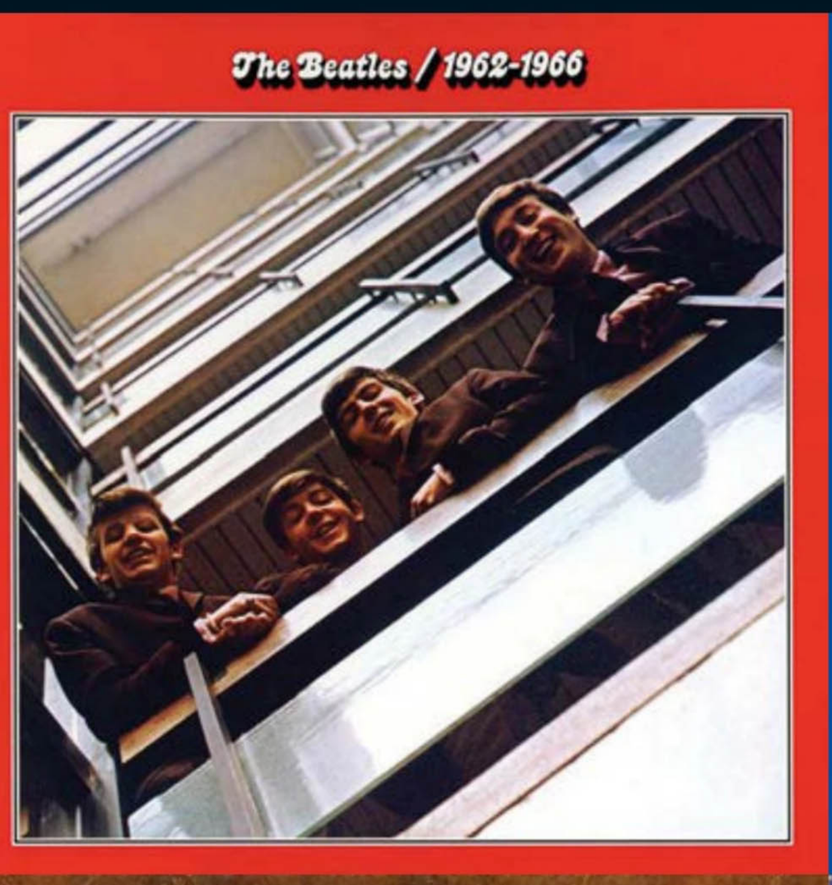
Whoever put together 'Red' and 'Blue' did an exemplary job. Their mix of hit singles and favourite album tracks distilled The Beatles' career into eight vinyl sides of singalong joy. 'Red' majored in moptop-shakers and swooning ballads ("Girl", "Michelle", "And I Love Her"), 'Blue' had psych moments – "Strawberry Fields Forever", "A Day In The Life" – while maintaining an uptempo, accessible mood. To help you join in, the lyrics were printed on the inner sleeves.

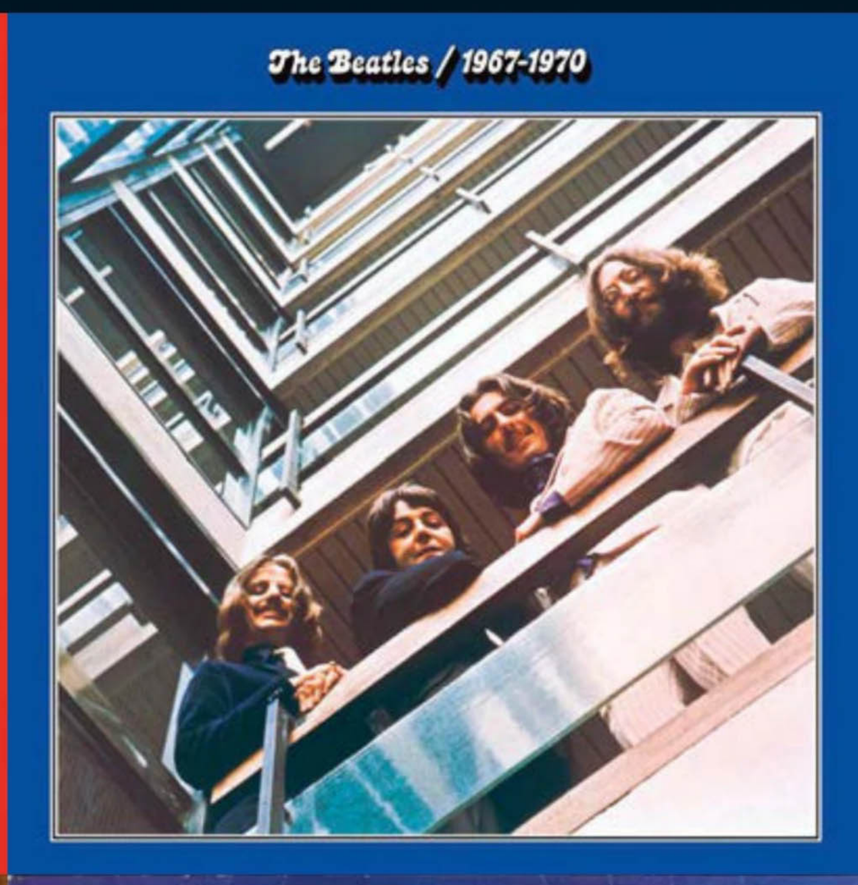
> 'Red' and 'Blue' were and still are *the* Beatles albums — the starting point for fans to explore the studio albums

For fans too young for the '60s, and those who wanted their memories nicely wrapped and in new-fangled stereo (even when it was mock stereo) 'Red' and 'Blue' were and still are *the* Beatles albums, the beginning point of their exploration of the studio albums rather than the summation. Hugely popular round the world, neither made it to No 1 at home, but they became a ubiquitous presence in UK life, as defining of the '70s as chopper bikes, stripey jumpers and custard yellow cars. Here were the People's Beatles, a feeling caught in a centrefold shot (from 1968's 'Mad Day Out') showing the Fabs mingling with the public in the churchyard of St Pancras Old Church.

After 'Red' and 'Blue' there was no real need for further compilations, but EMI didn't see it that way. Within months of The Beatles' contract expiring in early '76, the label issued *Rock'n'Roll Music*, a double album of random uptempo numbers heavily laced with R'n'B cover versions. Shoddily, indeed shamefully packaged, it was a half-assed attempt ➤


A COLLECTION OF BEATLES
OLDIES
Odeon


The Beatles / 1962-1966

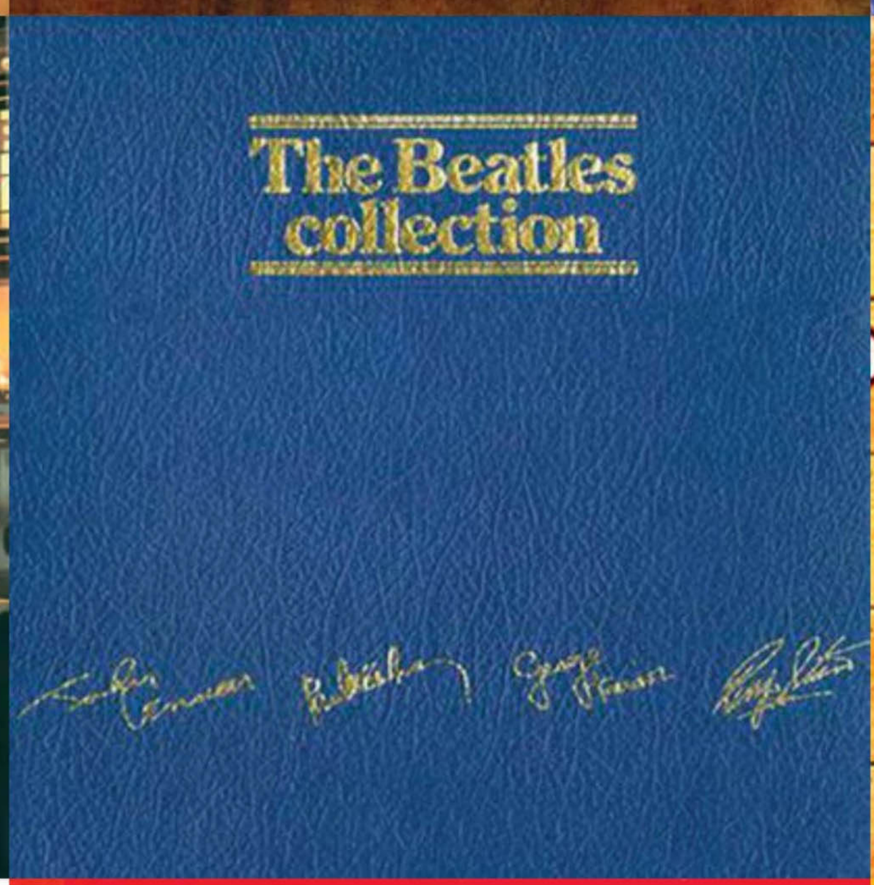

The Beatles / 1967-1970

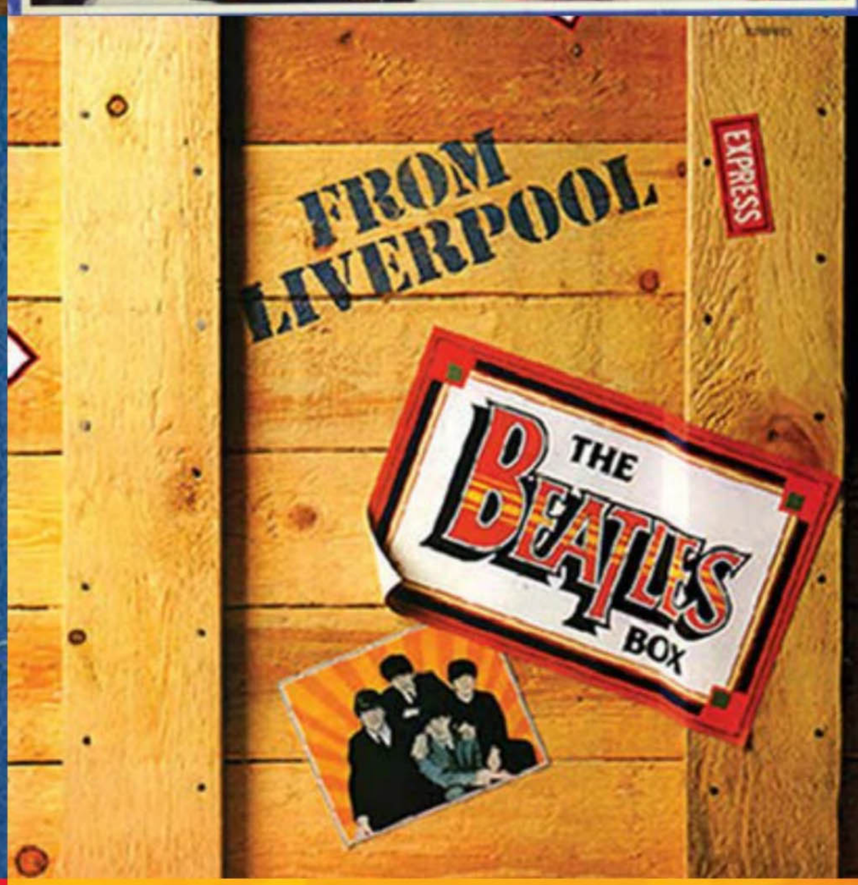

the
BEATLES
ROCK 'N' ROLL
music

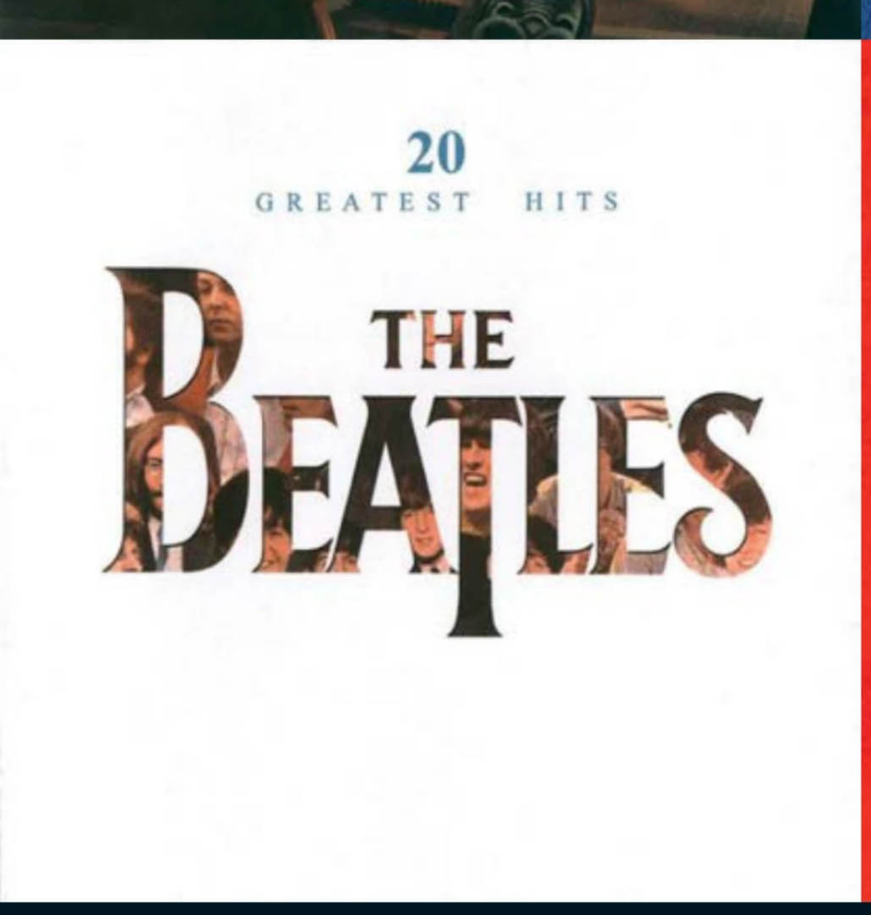

LOVE SONGS
THE BEATLES

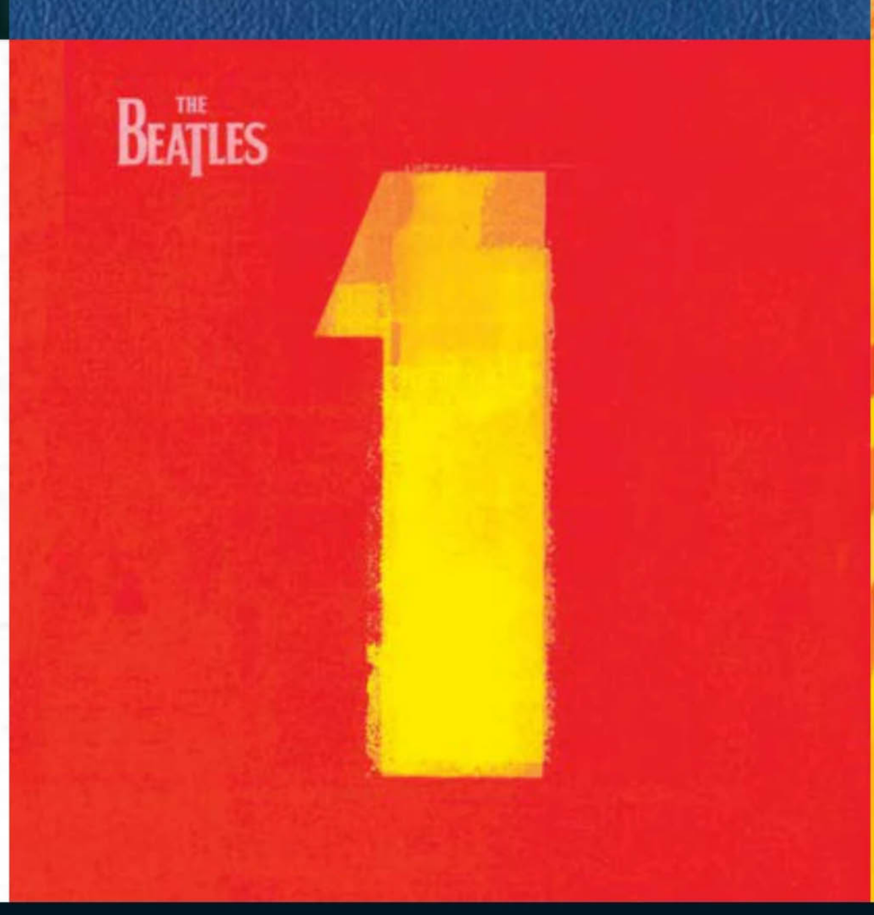

THE BEATLES BALLADS
20 ORIGINAL TRACKS


THE BEATLES
REEL MUSIC
A HARD DAYS NIGHT AND MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR
LET IT BE, HELP! AND YELLOW SUBMARINE


The Beatles
collection


FROM LIVERPOOL
EXPRESS
THE BEATLES BOX


20
GREATEST HITS
THE BEATLES


THE BEATLES
1


THE BEATLES
LOVE

The Beatles in Abbey Road, early 1965

to connect The Beatles to the 1950s nostalgia boom (*American Graffiti* and, soon, *Grease*) complete with centrefold artwork that looked left over from an old Elton album. Further ignominy came in 1980 when the collection was released as two separate albums on the budget Music For Pleasure label. Talk about not valuing your assets.

Theming Beatle tunes was one EMI strategy to squeeze the udders of their favourite cash cow. After *Rock'n'Roll* came *Love Songs* (1977), a double collection distinguished mainly by a centrefold assemblage of four sumptuous Richard Avedon portraits. The soppy collection on *Ballads* (1980), issued with an uber-hippy cover borrowed from Alan Aldridge's 1969 *The Beatles Illustrated Lyrics*, was intended for the Christmas market but unintentionally caught the wave of sorrow that followed John Lennon's assassination, and charted. By contrast, *Reel Music* (1982), 14 tracks from Beatle movies, deservedly perished in the marketplace, despite its trying-hard artwork.

The boxset was the other obvious tactic. First came *The Beatles Collection* (1978), which stacked up stereo versions of all 12 full studio albums along with a bonus album of bits and B-sides, *Rarities*, that obtained a stand-alone release the following year, still with the wine menu artwork adopted for *Collection*. Around this time, EMI were also issuing picture-disc versions of *Pepper* and *Abbey Road*, with 'Red' and 'Blue' on coloured vinyl. The same whiff of cashing-in also emanated from the UK release of *Hey Jude*, a messy US compilation from 1970 that typified US Capitol's mangling of the Fabs' catalogue.

The Beatles Box (1980) was a mail-order-only eight-LP/eight-cassette set (marketed by EMI subsidiary World Records) that repacked the band's history in roughly chronological order in brash new sleeves. Mixing LPs and singles, its sequencing wasn't too bad, but it felt phoney and exploitative nonetheless. Whether by accident or design, *Beatles Box* included several different mixes and mono/stereo variations from the originals, which was enough to race the pulses of collectors. Years later, presumably after someone discovered a warehouse full of leftover tapes, *Beatles Box* was offered in cassette-only version in a 'Last Chance' offer. A duff comp in an outdated format – how could anyone refuse? 1988 saw the first CD box, The *Ultimate Collection*, the 12 studio LPs plus the 2CD set, *Past Masters*, from the same year, packaged in various funereal black boxes (you paid more for a limited-edition with a drumkit hologram). Lastly, 21 years later (on 9/9/9 – 'number nine'), came the 2009 remastering campaign, which offered everything – the studio albums, *Past Masters*, and the previously export-only box, *In Mono*, that collected the first 10 albums in their mono versions.

The concept has been extended internationally: now, completists can add two more lavishly packaged boxsets to their shelf-creaking collections, both issued as 50th anniversary specials in 2014. *The US Albums* collects the vastly different tracklistings and cut-and-paste commercialism of the early US releases (see p82), while *The Japan Box* does the honours for the Odeon label issues in (obviously) Japan. For the latter, a 100-page book will guide you through *Meet The Beatles!*, *The Beatles' Second Album*, *A Hard Day's Night*, *The Beatles No 5*, and *Help!*

For the fan who had nothing or who just wanted the hits in a row came *20 Greatest Hits* in 1982, lining up a score of hit singles in a vacuous white cover, which was issued worldwide (with two minutes lopped off "Hey Jude" for the American version). It was superseded by *1*, the 2000 collection that does what it says in the title; delivers all The Beatles' No 1 hits in chronological order, a 27-track blitz that sold, and continues to sell, in phenomenal quantities. It remains one of the biggest-selling albums of the 21st century, having shifted over 31 million copies worldwide, and over 3.1 million in the UK alone.

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

CRITICS' VERDICT

"The group can't help but believe in their own rubber holiness, and at the centre of 'Let It Be' you hear the exact moment Noel Gallagher froze in awe... If you listen to the album all in one sitting, you'll be exhausted."

PAUL MORLEY ON *1*, UNCUT, JANUARY 2001

"Completists will enjoy a newly unearthed demo version of 'Strawberry Fields Forever', but it is George Martin's obsessive quest for innovation which deserves the garlands."

PAUL MOODY ON *LOVE*, UNCUT, DECEMBER 2006

SLEEVENOTES
COMPILATION RATINGS

A Collection Of Beatles Oldies ★★★★

'Red' and 'Blue' ★★★★★

Rock'n'Roll Music ★★

Love Songs ★★★

Ballads ★★★

Reel Music ★★

The Beatles Collection ★★★★

Rarities ★★★

Hey Jude ★

The Beatles Box ★★★

The Ultimate Collection ★★★★★

The Beatles Remasters (2009) ★★★★★

20 Greatest Hits ★★★

1 ★★★★

Love ★★★★

1 is The Beatles' legacy in capsule form, a feat abetted by an accompanying booklet stuffed with evocative imagery. In that sense it's a near-faultless package, though to qualify all 27 tracks for inclusion required a little sleight of hand by using both UK and US charts – "Love Me Do", for example, only scraped the UK Top 20 in 1962, but topped the US charts two years later in 1964. Even so, two vital tracks get excluded: "Please Please Me", which only made No 2 in the Record Retailer charts (but was No 1 in *NME*'s) and "Strawberry Fields Forever", which, as a double A-side with "Penny Lane", had half its sales discounted. Bah.

1 was a smart move, and not just because it shifted so many units; it also solidified The Beatles' reputation for the new millennium, though like every other compilation, it was ultimately just another reshuffle of the back catalogue.

Love, in 2006, was something altogether different – an attempt to "create a new Beatles album", as producer George Martin put it. By the time of its release the Beatles story had been variously reconfigured – as comedy with The Rutles, as heroic tragedy in *Backbeat*, as Britpop legend. No-one, however, imagined it becoming a Las Vegas circus act. No-one but Guy Laliberté, the founder of Canada's Cirque Du Soleil, and billionaire – thanks mainly to installing his troupe's spectacular shows in Las Vegas.

Love has its roots in George Harrison and Laliberté meeting at a Formula 1 race. The two men hit it off, and at one of Laliberté's extravagant parties, the idea of *Love* was born, a musical modelled on the story of The Beatles, studded by set pieces about characters from their songs; Eleanor Rigby, Sergeant Pepper *et al*. So far, so potentially mundane. The masterstroke was to involve George Martin in its soundtrack. Although tailored to the needs of the show, *Love* is also Martin's homage to The Beatles, its weave of songs, studio repartee and instrumental parts delivered with astonishing clarity, especially on surround sound (the format used for the show, right down to speakers in seats).

To achieve *Love*'s sonic assault, Martin, helped by his son Giles, returned to the master tapes and disinterred the defunct four- and eight-track machines on which they had been recorded at EMI's Abbey Road studio. Many of The Beatles' later records were the result of 'bouncing down' individual parts, say, recording bass and guitar separately, then combining them on one track. In that way, multiple parts could be squeezed onto four or eight tracks.

For *Love*, Martin and son restored autonomy to each part before remixing them into a 26-number soundscape that contained fragments of 130 songs, the only new recording being Martin's elegant string part for an acoustic "While My Guitar Gently Weeps". The result was musical Marmite – anathema to some fans, utterly entrancing for others.

Even dissenters couldn't but be impressed by the opening "Because", its naked, immaculate three-part harmony set to a noisy dawn chorus. "Get Back" arrives like a juggernaut. The fairground organs of "...Mr Kite" reel past as if you were standing next to a roundabout. Throughout the record, trebles sing and sizzle, bass and drums boom.

If the fusions and segues between songs are sometimes irksome – do "The Word" and "What You're Doing" really belong together? – individual numbers shine anew, psych pieces especially. "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "I Am The Walrus" emerge less as pop songs than avant-garde masterpieces. "A Day In The Life" and its churning orchestral climax surely sound closer to how its creators imagined it than what was delivered on *Pepper*.

There's plenty of rock here – "Revolution", Lady Madonna" – but not much of it from moptop days, which are glimpsed early on through a hail of Shea Stadium screams. *Love* is resolutely Technicolor Fabs – Martin plays up the wistfulness that always ran through The Beatles' output, with snatches of "Nowhere Man", "Can You Take Me Back" and others floating spectrally in the mix.

2015-2019...

The Giles Martin Remixes

Giles Martin takes The Beatles' music to the next sonic level. Now with demos, too! *By Paul Moody*

UP UNTIL RECENTLY, tinkering with The Beatles' back catalogue would have been seen as being as ill-advised as applying a lick of paint to the Sistine Chapel ceiling. What could possibly be gained from such an act of cultural vandalism, other than to fleece yet more cash from the more gullible wing of the band's worldwide fan club?

In fact, the reissue programme which began with the 50th anniversary edition of *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in June 2017 marked the start of a radical new phase in Apple's curation of the band's music.

Because alongside the treasure trove of outtakes – the biggest bonanza for Beatle obsessives since the three-volume *Anthology* series began 25 years ago – came a brand-new stereo mix by producer Giles Martin (son of George).

Designed to appeal to the streaming generation, Martin's new mix achieved the near-impossible, *Pepper*-like feat of delighting both young and old, breathing new life into an album whose mercurial properties had been dulled by decades of over-familiarity and pop cultural analysis.

"No-one has ever said that *Sgt Pepper* sounds bad," stressed a clearly nervous Martin at the time of release. "The original mixes have a great immersive quality to them. However, they were made for speakers and systems that were made 50 years ago. It's about improving the mixes, but retaining the original feel and the character of the music."

The path which led the producer to these painstaking acts of sonic reconstruction – he has since remixed the 'White Album' and *Abbey Road* – began in 2006, when George Martin was persuaded by the two remaining Beatles to come out of retirement to remix and rearrange some of their most iconic songs for Cirque Du Soleil's Las Vegas stage production, *Love*.

Conscious that, at 80, his hearing was no longer up to the task, Martin recruited Giles – already an established producer, having worked with artists including Jeff Beck, Elvis Costello and Kate Bush – to act as both sounding board and musical collaborator.

Rather than take a back seat, Giles brought a dare-devil energy to the project. Encouraged by Paul McCartney's enthusiastic reaction to an early demo which spliced together elements of "Within You Without You" and "Tomorrow Never Knows", Martin delivered a high-concept mash-up of the band's back catalogue, combining some of their most famous musical motifs – the opening chord from "A Hard Day's Night", the orchestral swell from A "Day In The Life" and Ringo's drum solo from "The End" – in a thrillingly inventive sonic tapestry.

Having passed a further test when, at the band's behest, Martin created 5.1 mixes for song videos to be included in the *1+* boxset in 2015, he was the obvious choice when the decision was made to create a new stereo mix of *Sgt Pepper* in 2017 which would stand up in a world where streaming invites instant – if unwitting – sonic comparisons.

"The Beatles want to do this and they are incredibly supportive of everything we do," explained the producer of his paymasters' motivations. Paul will say to me, 'Your job is to push things as much as you can and we'll tell you if you've gone too far,' and that's the way it works."

> "Paul will say to me, 'Your job is to push things as much as you can and we'll tell you if you've gone too far"
> **Giles Martin**

Beginning work in October 2016, Martin, senior engineer Sam Okell and Abbey Road's team of audio restoration specialists began transferring the recordings from the original four-track master tapes into Pro Tools. Recorded over 300 hours of studio time between December 1966 and April 1967, the original *Sgt Pepper* incorporated countless technical innovations – including the first use of DI (direct inputs into the desk), pitch control, the bouncing of tracks, close-miking of the drums and a process called ADT, aka artificial double-tracking.

However, by retrieving the sound files from the analogue tapes – rather than later generations of tape which the sound had been 'bounced' onto – Martin discovered that, miraculously, the original takes retained the crystal clarity they had on being laid down in 1967.

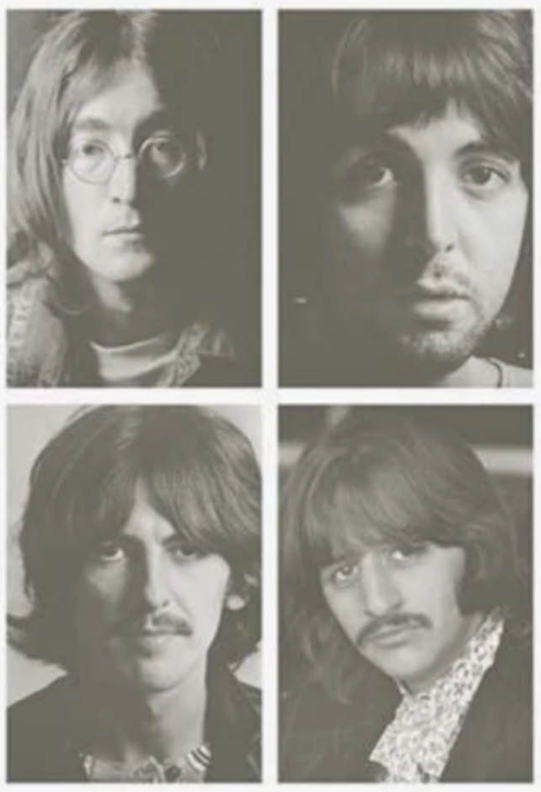
Resisting the temptation to use modern techniques such as digital time-stretching and auto-tuning to 'improve' upon the original performances, he concentrated instead on bringing the band back to life, warts and all.

"Humans are not perfect, and it is really important that we preserve that," he later said of his modus operandi. So with regards to *Sgt Pepper*, we did not fix anything. In general, everything we did was about capturing the performances."

While being based at Abbey Road enabled Martin to 'wheel in' the original REDD and TG Mk III desks and the studio's EMT 140 plate for







The BEATLES

№ 0080677





Pepper spray: pack shot of the boxset

reverb where required, there was another major factor in the producer's favour.

In 1967, with stereo still considered a luxury, The Beatles had put all their energies into the mono mix, spending three weeks adding all manner of tweaks and improvements. Consequently, the original stereo album – mixed in three days yet the one in most people's collections – had long been criticised for its muffled drum sound and lack of dynamics.

Using the superior mono version as his blueprint, Martin and Okell painstakingly corrected these omissions, returning the drums and vocals to a central position in the mix and replacing each of the 'lost' elements – notably semi-tone pitch alterations to "She's Leaving Home", "Lovely Rita" and "Lucy In the Sky With Diamonds".

However, Martin wasn't content just to restore former glories. He also provided *Sgt Pepper* with a sonic face-lift, isolating Ringo's vocal in "With A Little Help From My Friends", adding a rhythmic swing to "Good Morning Good Morning" and bringing a metallic edge to "It's Getting Better", transforming it from a saccharine pop song to a thrilling yin-and- yang tussle between McCartney's optimism and Lennon's cynicism.

A new mix of "A Day In The Life" meanwhile, draws out John Lennon's vocal, the previously oblique lyrics about *"4,000 holes in Blackburn, Lancashire"* suddenly acting as a tacit acknowledgement of the singer's own existential emptiness at the time of recording.

The additional tracks also find the sonic sweet spot. Three unreleased versions of "Strawberry Fields Forever" (Takes, 1, 4 and 7) find a woozy Lennon seemingly drifting off into a dream-like reverie at the song's close rather than psychedelic night horrors. In contrast, a glowing new stereo mix of "Penny Lane", sees Martin provide the full sonic spa treatment – rolling back the years to reveal the youthful vitality present on the day it was recorded.

This sense of Martin using his mix to hear past, present and future possibilities was transformative – it was as if he was smashing the glass case around rock's most iconic museum and liberating The Beatles' creative spirit. With The Beatles full approval – "Now you can hear my drums," piped up Ringo, suggesting that the stereo mix had been irritating him for half a century – the album duly topped the charts in the UK and reached the Top 5 in dozens of other countries, including the US.

All of which resulted in the producer being presented with the equally tricky task of remixing 1968's self-titled follow-up, universally known as the 'White Album'. A sprawling 30-track double reflecting both the volatile political climate and their own turbulent private lives, it threw up a very different set of challenges.

This time around Martin took on the role of archivist, sifting through the mind-boggling wealth of source material unearthed at George Harrison's house in Surrey.

Recorded in May 1968 and known as "The Esher Demos", these 27 tracks (all included on the 2CD deluxe version) represent the holy grail for Fab Fundamentalists. Full of creative ideas following their trip to Rishikesh, all four Beatles assembled at the guitarist's hippie bungalow – far from London and all its distractions – to make full use of his new-fangled Ampex reel-to-reel tape recorder.

A combination of impressive solo demos (check McCartney's basically finished "...USSR") and sprawling jams emerged. They also include material squirrelled away for later projects. Lennon's "Child Of Nature" would later morph into "Jealous Guy", while an acoustic version of George's "Not Guilty" would be lost until its re- emergence as an explosive rocker on *Anthology 3*. (The guitarist's mournful "Circles" meanwhile, wouldn't find a home until 1982's *Gone Troppo*.)

> "You can hear the drums," said Ringo, suggesting the stereo mix had been irritating him for half a century

As they struggled to recreate this intimate, campfire feel over five gruelling months in the studio, tempers frayed and sessions went long into the night. The gargantuan task of sifting through them all – there were 107 takes of "Sexy Sadie" alone – saw the producer consulting regularly with his team at Abbey Road about which takes warranted inclusion. "The key thing is: does it tell a story?" he said of a painstaking process fuelled by countless cups of tea and slices of cake. "If you didn't know the song existed, would this be interesting to listen to?"

With this in mind, it's easy to see why one particular rehearsal take of "Julia" made the cut – Lennon's respect for George Martin obvious as the pair discuss the best way to approach the song.

For the original album, Martin took a similarly decisive approach. Having completed a mix in December 2017, he scrapped it and started over the following January, conscious that he'd sapped the recordings of their visceral edge, leaving something which sounded – according to Martin – "like Steely Dan or Dire Straits".

Returning once more to the original tapes, he simplified the process - accentuating the guitars in "Dear Prudence", highlighting the gnarliness of Lennon's vocal in "Glass Onion" and sacrificing the piano trills in "Back In The USSR" for a thumping bottom end.

If the band's synergistic chemistry was made clearest of all on a newly ferocious "Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey" and a swaggering, proto-glam version of "Savoy Truffle", it's the sheer vivacity on display which made the new mix so compelling, the layered overdubs of *Sgt Pepper* traded for a rawness in keeping with the original album's more spontaneous feel. Far from being the sound of a band on the brink of break up, Martin's mix revealed them to be four focused musicians pulling together for the





Sir George Martin and son Giles Martin, producers of The Beatles' *Love* album, at Capitol Studios, 2006

greater good – with McCartney's basslines, in particular, brighter and bristling with purpose throughout.

The acoustic songs, meanwhile, came with a crystal clarity aimed at a tech-savvy 21st-century audience. "We live in a world of streaming, where 'Blackbird' could be played next to Ed Sheeran and they should both sound as young and fresh as each other," Martin explained. "That's the key for me. Paul will always be that age on 'Blackbird' because a recording is a timestamp."

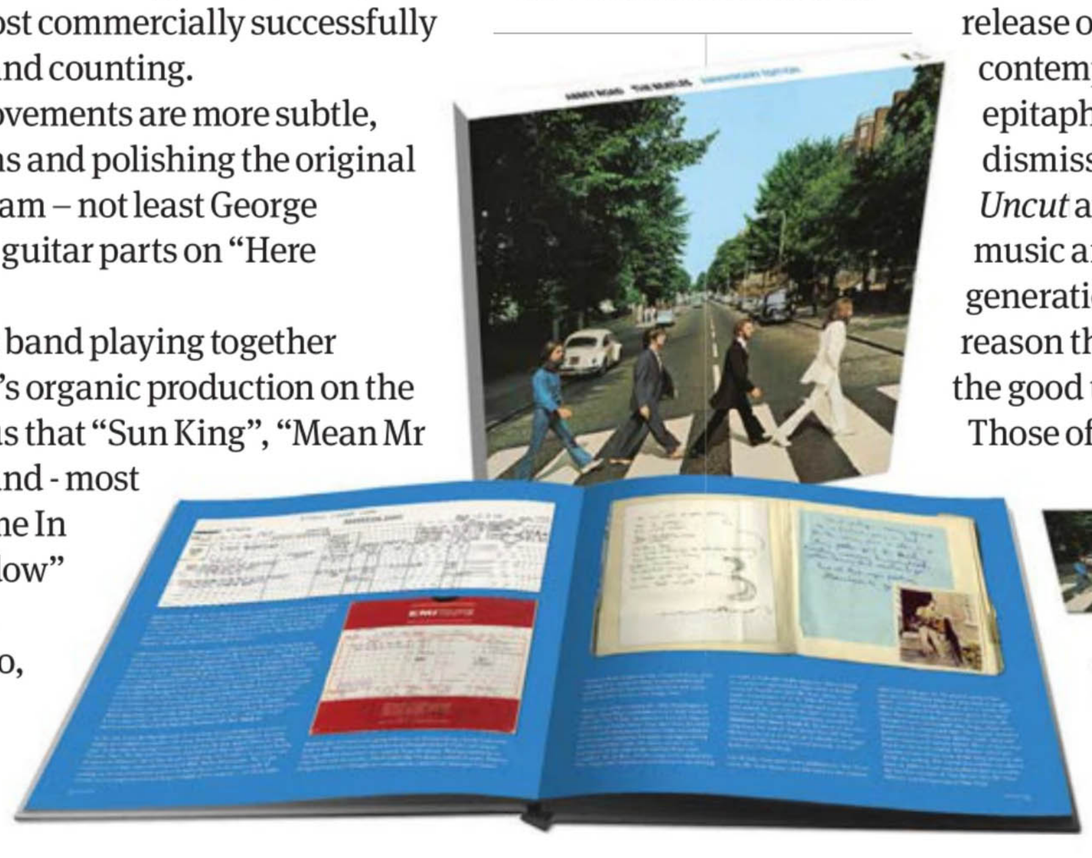
Following the album's success, it would have been tempting for Martin to use the 50th-anniversary edition of *Abbey Road* (released in November 2019) as an amiable stroll down rock's most famous memory lane. Recorded on eight-track tape rather than four – and therefore with a far less condensed sound than its predecessors – *Abbey Road*'s appeal lies partly in its modernity, borne out by the fact it remains The Beatles most commercially successfully album, with 31 million sales and counting.

Accordingly, Martin's improvements are more subtle, adding depth to Ringo's drums and polishing the original parts to a surround sound gleam – not least George Harrison's dazzling arpeggio guitar parts on "Here Comes The Sun".

Once more it's the sense of a band playing together which draws the ear – Martin's organic production on the Side Two medley reminding us that "Sun King", "Mean Mr Mustard", "Polythene Pam" and - most impressively of all – "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window" were all recorded in one take.

The unreleased material, too, is presented with the sonic equivalent of straight face – a pumped-up outtake of "Come Together" from January 1969 suggesting a band still working at full capacity, despite their imminent demise.

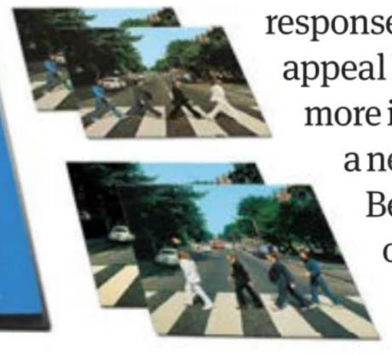
Abbey Road's appeal lies partly in its modernity, borne out by the fact it remains The Beatles' most successful LP



It's the extras however, which show the herculean extent of George Martin's original production job. The producer was always encouraging The Beatles to think along classical lines, and it's fascinating to see the genesis of the Side Two medley, referred to here as simply "The Long One". While Martin's central role as peacemaker becomes obvious on (take 12) of "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" – which finds McCartney instructing Ringo how to play the drums – Macca's pop genius is also to the fore, delivering a version of "Come And Get It" which eclipses Badfinger's version.

While hindsight allows us to fill in the gaps on *Abbey Road* as a whole –Lennon had told his fellow Beatles he would be quitting the band six days before the album's release on September 26, 1969 – Martin's mix adds a contemporary bite while letting the band's musical epitaph do the talking, "I hate the idea of people dismissing *Abbey Road* just because it's old," he told *Uncut* at the time of release. "It should be judged for the music and the musicianship of the band. I'd love a new generation to discover The Beatles' music purely for the reason that it makes people happy. It's full of love and all the good things the world needs right now."

Those of a more Luddite persuasion might argue that Martin's mixes are simply a knee-jerk response to a modern world where appeal has to be instant. Much more importantly, it's opened up a new way of listening to The Beatles – the group above all others who encouraged new ways of listening.

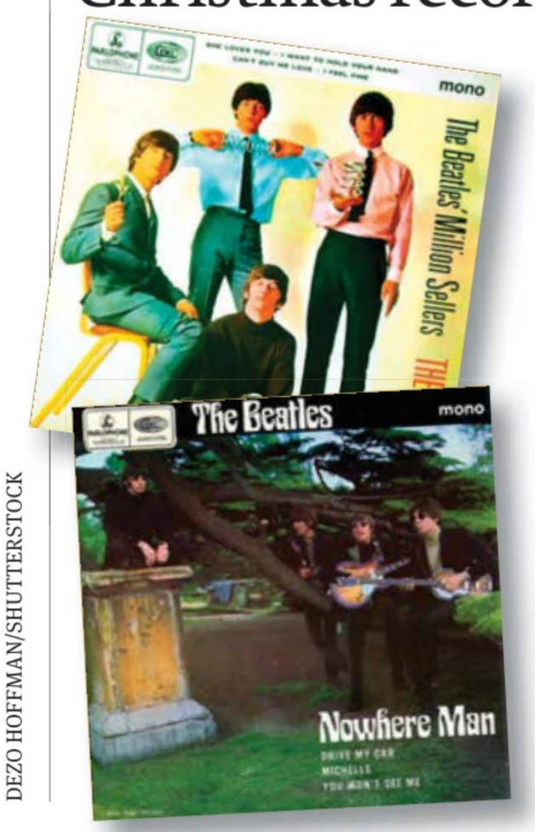


LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE

Beatles For Sale



The Fabs' miscellany: collectables, EPs, vinyl valuations, Fan Club Christmas records and more... *By Mark Bentley*



DEZO HOFFMAN/SHUTTERSTOCK

THOSE MILLION-SELLING SINGLES 'made' The Beatles. But for many fans, the 7" extended play was the most effective way of pledging allegiance to the Fabs. Consider this: in the early 1960s, full-price LPs cost at least one pound, six shillings, estimated to be around £25 in today's money. Seven-inch singles retailed at something like six or seven shillings. At 10s 6d, EPs – which contained four songs, usually, in a pretty picture sleeve, underscored by the recently deceased PR man Tony Barrow's hyperventilating liner notes – represented significant value for money. Parlophone responded to this lucrative mini-market, issuing 13 UK EPs between 1963 and 1967. Some ("Twist And Shout", say, or "Magical Mystery Tour") are undoubtedly iconic Beatles releases. Others give fresh perspective to perhaps overfamiliar songs (how cool is that "Nowhere Man" sleeve!).

Interestingly, Beatles EPs rarely contained new material, with only "Long Tall Sally" and "Magical Mystery Tour" offering songs unavailable on contemporaneous album releases. Note how the EPs' release dates began to lag considerably behind their parent album: as a way of repackaging old gear, the format represented a great return on investment for Parlophone, too.

As the album gained primacy in the later part of the decade, EP sales dwindled, meaning – for today's collector at least – the later issues are the most desirable. Early issues are worth around £10–£20, say, while a copy of "Yesterday" sold recently for £56. Remember that picture sleeves were never issued as standard for 7" singles – an EP's collectability is based not on content, but those beautiful, occasionally startling cover images...

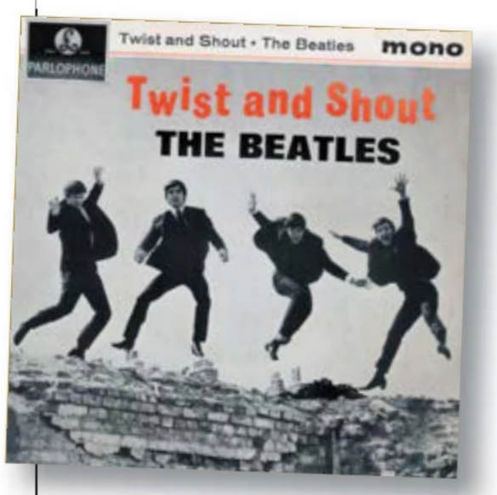
THE BEATLES' UK EPS

Twist And Shout

Parlophone, July 1963

Tracklisting: Twist And Shout/A Taste Of Honey/Do You Want To Know A Secret/There's A Place

Clocking up in excess of 800,000 sales, this will always be the biggest-selling EP in UK chart history. It even made the Top 20 of some published singles charts!



The Beatles' Hits

Parlophone, September 1963

Tracklisting: From Me To You/Thank You Girl/Please Please Me/Love Me Do

The Beatles No 1

Parlophone, November 1963

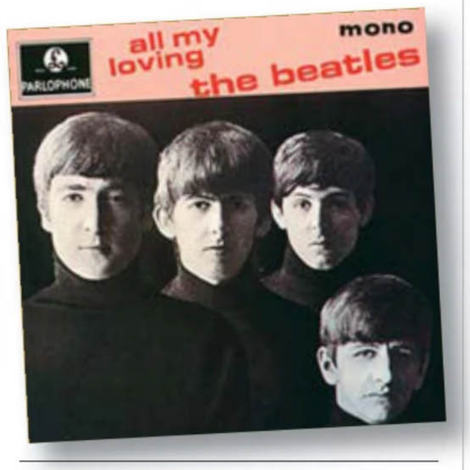
Tracklisting: I Saw Her Standing There/ Misery/ Anna (Go To Him)/Chains

Four further tracks from *Please Please Me*, issued just three weeks before *With The Beatles* hit the shelves.

All My Loving

Parlophone, February 1964

Tracklisting: All My Loving/Ask Me Why/Money/PS I Love You



Long Tall Sally

Parlophone, June 1964

Tracklisting: Long Tall Sally/I Call Your Name/Slow Down/Matchbox

With *A Hard Day's Night* imminent, Beatles fans were treated to some brand-new content: a rock'n'rolling interlude. With *The Beatles EP Collection* out of print, you can find the tracks on *Past Masters*.

A Hard Day's Night (Extracts From The Film)

Parlophone, November 1964

Tracklisting: I Should Have Known Better/If I Fell/ Tell Me Why/And I Love Her

...some confusion intended? These songs are on the album, too!

A Hard Day's Night (Extracts From The Album)

Parlophone, November 1964

Tracklisting: Any Time At All/ I'll Cry Instead/Things We Said Today/When I Get Home

An anachronism even in its own time: this arrived four months after the parent album's issue, and with follow-up *Beatles For Sale* almost ready to begin its lengthy chart run.



Beatles For Sale

Parlophone, April 1965

Tracklisting: No Reply/I'm A Loser/Rock And Roll Music/ Eight Days A Week

Beatles For Sale No 2

Parlophone, June 1965

Tracklisting: I'll Follow The Sun/ Baby's In Black/Words Of Love/ I Don't Want To Spoil The Party

The USP here is that lovely colour shot, taken by Robert Freeman.



The Beatles' Million Sellers

Parlophone, December 1965

Tracklisting: She Loves You/ I Want To Hold Your Hand/ Can't Buy Me Love/I Feel Fine

Yesterday

Parlophone, March 1966

Tracklisting: Yesterday/Act Naturally/You Like Me Too Much/It's Only Love

Songs from *Help!*. The title track was, of course, a US No 1. But until "Yesterday"'s release as a standalone single in 1976 – it made No 8 – this was the sole place to find The Beatles' most enduring standard on 7" in the UK.



Nowhere Man

Parlophone, July 1966

Tracklisting: Nowhere Man/ Drive My Car/Michelle/ You Won't See Me

Another good example of the EP/album overlap: the songs are from *Rubber Soul*, but the stunning cover shot – by Robert Whitaker – was taken in Chiswick Park, London, for sessions for the "Paperback Writer"/"Rain" promo.

Magical Mystery Tour

Parlophone, December 1967

Tracklisting – Record 1: Magical Mystery Tour/Your Mother Should Know/I Am The Walrus ("No you're not" said Little Nicola) Record 2: The Fool On The Hill/Flying/Blue Jay Way

A special double-EP package for the TV special, with 32-page book including lyrics, cast list and cartoon strip. It's *almost* an album in its own right, and this beautiful release has since been superseded in Apple release programmes by the conflated US version. This was the last EP of The Beatles' lifetime, and the only one to be available in both mono and stereo. It cost a whopping 19s 6d; today punters will pay in excess of £200 for a mint version.

VALUING YOUR BEATLES COLLECTION

Despite selling by the Shea Stadium-load, bog-standard Beatles records remain highly desirable, collectable, and in many cases, pricey. But valuing a Beatles collection is a forensic exercise, with a mass of seemingly small details having a major impact on market value, including such arcana as the sleeve printer, label text and pressing matrix on the run-off groove. The cost of UK Beatles releases seems to be rising all the time (and US-wise, a 'butcher' cover went for $30k in autumn 2019), so here's a very rough guide to what drives the prices up. Remember the three rules: condition, condition, condition!

UP

First stereo editions of the early LPs, with the 'gold' lettering *Please Please Me* still top of the pile (one copy sold for £14,994 in 2014!)

First editions of the early 1960s albums in breathtaking condition (£1,000-plus).

Rare label typing errors or omissions – eg, "I'm a Losser" [sic], "Norweigian Wood" [sic], the missing "A Day In The Life" on *Sgt Pepper*

Revolver with the 'long' version of "Tomorrow Never Knows" and matrix number XEX 606-1

The original 'White Album' with all the prints and black inners and a low-ish number

Pepper with The Fool's 'red/pink/white' inner sleeve and all cutouts

Second or third pressings of the early albums made between 1963 and 1966 – they were seldom out of print

The "Strawberry Fields Forever"/ "Penny Lane" single in a picture sleeve

First pressings of *Help!* or *A Hard Day's Night* – these come on the market a great deal

Original reel-to-reel pressings – not actually as sought-after as you might think – although a stereo version of *Rubber Soul* did sell for £595 in spring 2016!

Original albums in 'well loved' condition, with non-audible scratches to the records, obvious wear, tear or writing on the sleeves

Original UK singles, in green Parlophone sleeves: only in rarer cases ("Something") or utterly amazing should these be more than £30 or so. Eight-track cartridges fetch similar, unless they're still sealed!

1970s retrospectives of the Parlophone material (eg, *Love Songs*, *Rarities*)

1970s repressings of the albums, except those in mint condition

1980s picture discs. Very cute, but unfortunately not so rare.

Those two 1970s *Rock'n'Roll Music* albums on Music For Pleasure

'80s repressings of the singles, in their picture sleeves. Look: quite nice. Worth: not so much.

1980s 'Tony Sheridan' or Hamburg-era retrospectives

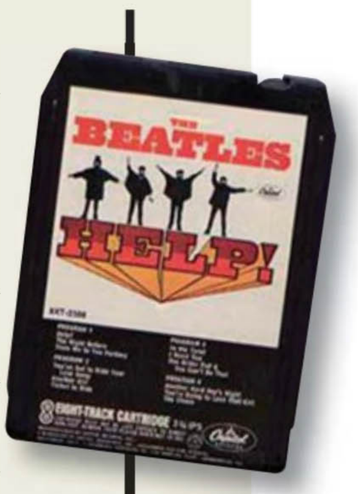
1970s reissued Parlophone singles in gloss green card



DOWN



REALLY DOWN



DOWN, DOWN ON THE GROUND

Money Can Buy You Love



The state of the market for Beatles collectables...

BEATLES MEMORABILIA LONG ago ceased to be merely 'collectable', and the preserve of rock'n'roll fans. Fabs memorabilia is an industry, and a defined commercial specialisation in the antiques world: many international auction houses have their own appointed Beatles expert, and The Beatles merit their own, detailed multi-page entry in antiques bible *Miller's Collectables Price Guide*.

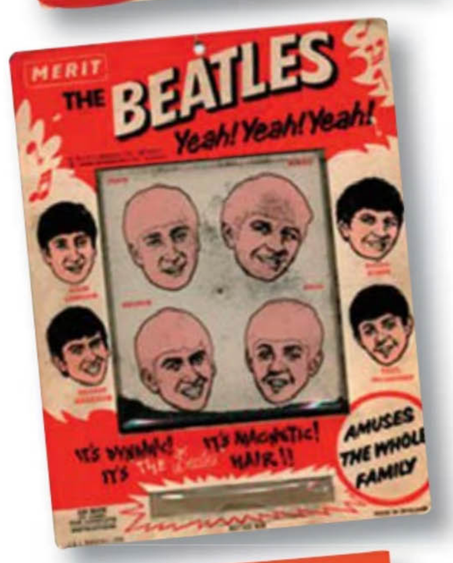
"The market is stronger than ever, with rare and unique items selling for increasingly high prices all over the world," says Beatles expert Jason Cornthwaite of Tracks, dealers in pop and rock memorabilia. "Any anniversaries that come around relating to the group do seem to generate new interest in the band and the memorabilia that surrounds them."

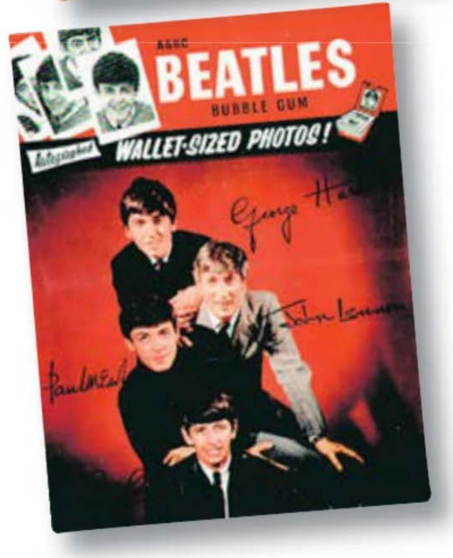
Some hyper-rare, ultra-desirable Beatles items are now rated as 'investment grade' collectables – that is, pieces to be laid down, untouched, with the purpose of accruing value. "I think that over the past 10 years the investment grade material has really made its mark with unique pieces selling for five-, six- and seven-figure sums on a regular basis," advises Cornthwaite. To fetch that kind of cash, a piece needs to be a total one-off, demonstrate a personal connection with the band, and have a very strong provenance (proof of authenticity). Exhibit A, then, would be the leather collar worn by John Lennon throughout 1967 and 1968, in which he was regularly pictured. It made over £100,000 for its owner – "Magic" Alex Mardas, Apple's electronics wizard, and a close friend of the band.

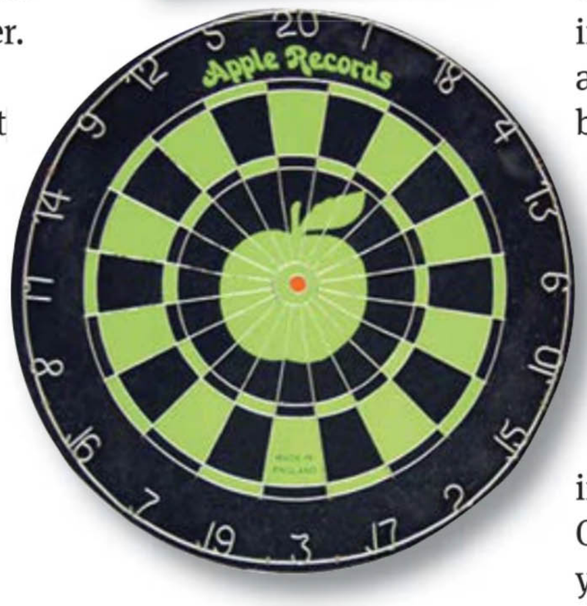
The acknowledged holy grails of collectability illustrate that 'personal connection' angle perfectly. "Not in any particular order, the five most requested items would be Beatles handwritten lyrics, personally owned items, signed albums, Beatles autographs, or concert-related memorabilia, such as posters, tickets, and handbills," says Cornthwaite. Punters are even after their own 'I Was There' moment, even if it was originally someone else's. "Posters are extremely collectable; generally the earlier the better. Concert ticket stubs are a major growth area, too. Many shows were performed in front of thousands of fans, but the market for Beatles concert tickets is 'hot' and has really come on over the past few years."

Tracks runs a dedicated website – we-buy-beatles.com – which helpfully lists the kind of prices they are willing to pay you for collectables. And there are some big prices on there: how about the Apple promo-only dartboard (used: £800. Unused: £2,000)? Or the concert programme for the 1963 Annual Urmston Show (around £1,000; the band played in a marquee in Abbotsfield Park, near Manchester, that Bank Holiday









August)? Cornthwaite and colleagues are interested in any unique photos of the band you might have, too: they will pay around £80 to £150 per Beatles negative with copyright, dependent on factors like location, date, composition and whether it's black and white or colour. The biggest quoted values are for those original concert posters, such as a stunning 'variety style' design from the ABC Cinema gig in Croydon, March 1963, where the band supported Chris Montez and Tommy Roe. Tracks will stump up an eye-catching £5,000-plus for a 20" x 30" poster, and £8,000 if it measures 30" x 40".

The website doesn't provide price ranges for everything. How much would a set of autographs be? "The price differs as there are so many aspects to a set of autographs – what it's signed on, when it was signed, how rare it is..." counsels Cornthwaite. In a market like this, with an acknowledged counterfeiting subculture, authenticity is key, and valuation is an artform. This, understandably, makes the experts cautious. When I ask him if my copy of the "Ticket To Ride" single (signed by George) will allow me to retire tomorrow, he replies: "I'm afraid not. Although it's still a nice, desirable item." If you have any signed memorabilia, try approaching a reputable, established dealer or expert who can authenticate it first.

Let's move downmarket a little. From dolls to combs, wigs and cork stoppers to toy guitars and tie pins, the band's name was licensed relentlessly on a huge range of product throughout the 1960s (and beyond!). Much of this material, designed to be throwaway, literally, is now only of moderate value except if it is in mint condition, or in the original packaging. ("Sometimes people think that an item is more valuable than it actually is just because it has The Beatles' name on it," adds Cornthwaite.) Novelty big-ticket desirables would include the Beatles Subbuteo figures (boxed, please), and 'With The Beatles' talcum powder, issued by Margo of Mayfair in 1965. 'With The Beatles' perfume (unopened!) is another highly sought-after piece of ephemera, worth bundles simply because it has survived in unused condition. And where would any Beatles vinyl collection be without a red plastic record rack?

But with such a diverse range of collectables out there, what is the strangest thing Tracks have ever come across? "The oddest and most elusive piece of licensed merchandise is definitely the Beatles 'Bingo' set," concludes Cornthwaite. "I have only ever seen one in pictures. It's worth thousands if I could find one." Can anyone help him get a full house? It might be worth your while...

GOO-GOO YOU-TUBE! | FOUR FAB BEATLES TV APPEARANCES TO VIEW ONLINE

August 22, 1962: "Some Other Guy" on *Know The North*

Pre-dating even "Love Me Do", here's footage from their first TV spot – with new drummer Ringo – for a Granada programme. Not broadcast at the time, it did air 15 months later on *Scene At 6.30*. Audio footage reveals punters shouting, "We want Pete." **YouTube keywords:** Some Other Guy Beatles Cavern remaster

October 30, 1963: "Twist And Shout" on Swedish TV

From their first tour outside the UK comes this appearance on Swedish pop shebang *Drop In*. Gentlemanly banter from Paul, polite hysteria from the Swedish dolly birds. "If you will, make a noise..." **Keywords:** Drop In Sweden Beatles

December 1965: *The Music Of Lennon & McCartney*, Granada

Swingerrific contemporary TV special with 'new' footage and performances, and much more from The Beatles, alongside Cilla Black, Marianne Faithfull, Billy J Kramer, Lulu and – of course! – Peter Sellers. Not rescreened since 1985, it's worth your time. The full show is available online. **Keywords:** Music Lennon McCartney Granada 1965

September 4, 1968: *Frost On Saturday*

The Beatles' final live television appearance as a band, shot in cinematic quality: Frost resembles an out-of-his-depth supply teacher as the boys muck about ahead of a storming (mostly mimed) "Hey Jude". And the crowd scenes are brilliant. **Keywords:** Beatles Frost 1968



From Them To Yule

The Beatles Fan Club Christmas Records

EACH DECEMBER FROM 1963 to 1969, the band issued a special Christmas flexidisc for the official fan club. A mix of scripted messages, knockabout chat and the occasional bit of music, these flexis were only available to paid-up members, and – despite an average runtime of five minutes or so – remain highly sought after. Apple repackaged all seven Christmas messages in early 1971, again for members only, but released them all to the wider market with a limited-edition boxset in 2017. Heard back to back, they document the band's changing relationship with their public – and each other.



The Beatles Christmas Record

Released December 6, 1963

The sound of four excitable boys enjoying the ride. Recorded at Abbey Road Studio Two that October, and featuring an amusing whistling version of "God Save The Queen".

Another Beatles Christmas Record

Released December 18, 1964

The only Beatles Fan Club Xmas record that played at 45rpm. Sample John dialogue: "There's another one [*album*] out soon. It'll be the usual rubbish but it won't cost much."

The Beatles' Third Christmas Record

Released December 17, 1965

A neat cover shot, taken on November 1 at the recording of Granada TV's special *The Music of Lennon & McCartney*.

Pantomime (Everywhere It's Christmas)

Issued December 16, 1966

Much goofy *Goon Show* sketch content here – apparently at the instigation of Paul, who also designed the cover.

Sample Ringo narration: "Meanwhile, two elderly Scotchmen munched on some rare cheese..."

Christmas Time (Is Here Again)

Issued December 15, 1967

The last Christmas release The Beatles recorded as a group, cover designed by John and Ringo. The song "Christmas Time (Is Here Again)" was released as a B-side to "Free As A Bird" in '95. Actor pal Victor Spinetti is on hand as a guest.



The Beatles' 1968 Christmas Record

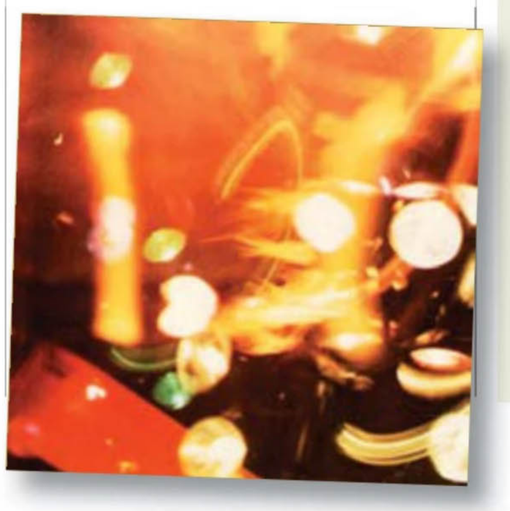
Issued December 20, 1968

This was recorded by the four Beatles separately during rehearsals for the 'White Album'. It was then re-edited into a 'sound collage' by none other than Kenny Everett (under real name Maurice Cole), and features nice festive Macca strummage beside effects-tweaked John nonsense verse. Sample George sarcasm: "I'd like to take this opportunity – all the way from America – to say 'Happy Christmas to you, our faithful beloved fans.'"

Happy Christmas 1969

Released December 19, 1969

Another Maurice Cole production, the final festive release was recorded at John and Yoko's home in Ascot, Ringo's home in Surrey, Paul's home in London and Apple's offices. "What would you like for Christmas?" asks Yoko. "Cornflakes prepared by Parisian hands," sniggers John.



JOHN, PAUL, GEORGE... AND TOMMY QUICKLY?

During the band's lifetime, a number of Lennon-McCartney compositions were 'gifted', often to close associates and Merseybeaters, under the aegis of Brian Epstein

Billy J Kramer & The Dakotas "I'll Be On My Way"* (B-side to "Do You Want To Know A Secret", April 1963); "Bad To Me" (Jul 1963, UK No 1); "I Call Your Name"* (B-side of "Bad To Me"); "I'll Keep You Satisfied" (Nov 1963, No 4); "From A Window " (Jul 1964, No 10)

Tommy Quickly "Tip Of My Tongue" (August 1963, didn't chart)

The Fourmost "Hello Little Girl"* (Aug 1963, No 9) "I'm In Love" (Nov 1963, No 17)

Cilla Black "Love Of The Loved" (Sept 1963, No 35); "It's For You" (July 1964, No 7); "Step Inside Love"* (Mar 1968, No 8)

Peter & Gordon "A World Without Love" (Feb 1964, UK No 1); "Nobody I Know" (May 1964, No 10); "I Don't Want To See You Again" (Sep '64, didn't chart); see also "Woman" (Jan 1966, No 28, credited to "Bernard Webb", written by McCartney)

The Rolling Stones "I Wanna Be Your Man"* (November 1963, No 12, pre-dating the Beatles version on *With...* by just three weeks)

The Strangers with Mike Shannon "One And One Is Two" (May 1964, didn't chart)

The Applejacks "Like Dreamers Do"* (June 1964, No 20)

PJ Proby "That Means A Lot"* (Sept 1965, No 30)

Chris Barber Band "Cat Call" (Oct 1967 – an LP instrumental apparently demoed by the full band in 1962 as "Catswalk")

John Foster & Son Ltd Black Dyke Mills Band "Thingumybob" (Aug '68 – one of the first four Apple singles, didn't chart)

Mary Hopkin "Goodbye" (Mar '69, No 2 – by Paul, credited to both, kept off No 1 by "Get Back")

**For Beatles-era hit singles, see also: "Sour Milk Sea" (Jackie Lomax, written by George); "Badge" (Cream, written by Clapton-Harrison) and "Come And Get It" (Badfinger, credited solely to McCartney)*

GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS



Stop me
if you've heard this one before

October 1962. ROY CARR meets The Beatles for the first time at noted "shithole" The Cavern, and John Lennon tries to nick his records…

IN THE EARLY '60s when I formed my first band in Blackpool, there was no real club scene there, like there was in Manchester and Liverpool. In fact, there was only one club, The Picador, run by a dyed-in-the-wool rocker named Arnold Franken, whose idols were Billy Fury and Johnny Kidd.

Arnold brought people like Gene Vincent to Blackpool. Gene liked it there so much he stayed for the whole of one summer. He was completely off his fucking head. One night we were at the house he shared with this backing band, who I think were called The Puppets. He comes in and he's got a fucking big carving knife and he wants to know if anyone's seen his wife, evidently having forgotten that a couple of days earlier he'd put her on a plane back to America.

Anyway, Arnold told me one night he'd had someone called Brian Epstein on the phone, offering him a deal to put on some bands in Blackpool over the summer, including The Beatles. Arnold had never heard of them. It so happened The Beatles were due on some early evening TV show and Arnold took a look and didn't like what he saw. He watched it and he was appalled. He called Epstein and said, "I've just seen your fucking band on the telly and they're shit. If I put them on at my club, they'll be booed off."

Arnold cancelled the contract and not long after that, The Beatles were in the charts. He could have had them all summer for next to nothing and probably made a fortune. The thing was, he wasn't alone, Arnold, in thinking The Beatles would never make it. That was the opinion of other people I knew, who'd seen this band that everybody in Liverpool, at least, was talking about. They thought they were noisy, amateurish and unruly and would never catch on.

At the time, as far as I was concerned, The Beatles were just another band from Liverpool. In those days in Liverpool, there was a pub on every corner and a band playing in every one. It was like anybody who was under 25 in Liverpool banged a drum, strummed a guitar or sang in a band. It was such a thriving scene it merited its own paper, *Mersey Beat*, a kind of Liverpool version of *NME* or *Melody Maker*, created by Bill Harry. That's where I first read about The Beatles, just a story about them doing another season in Hamburg and a picture of four blokes in leather.

I didn't pay much attention and it wasn't until I actually saw them at The Cavern that I realised how different they really were to everyone else. It was October 12, 1962, and I'd gone to Liverpool to see Little Richard at the Tower Ballroom, in New Brighton. We got to Liverpool early and went to The Cavern, where I'd played a couple of times with my band. It was a shithole, really, these railway arches with bad toilets. The Beatles were playing a couple of lunchtime shows, but we were less interested in seeing them than meeting some girls. We were just looking for a good time.

Anyway, they came on and the first thing that struck me was how noisy they were. They were louder than anyone I'd heard before. They looked different, too. Before them, you'd see a band and they'd all be dressed like The Shadows, in shiny suits and bowties, like they were playing in cabaret. Suddenly, these guys came out and they're chatting away to the crowd and each other, cracking jokes and smoking. I remember John Lennon, who seemed to know the names of everybody in the crowd, saying to someone down front, "Give us a ciggie." No-one in those days smoked onstage. My God, it was taboo! If a theatre manager saw you smoking onstage, you'd be hauled off and thrown out. But they were puffing away and then they'd break into a number and they'd be deafening, absolutely deafening.



"An absolute shambles…": The Beatles at The Cavern, Liverpool, August 1962

> I had a bag of records. John Lennon pulled one out and said, "Can I have this? You don't want want it, do you?"

It's amazing now to recall how noisy they were, and really hard-hitting. I'd never seen anything like them – the noise, the humour, the presentation, or lack of it. It all seemed an absolute shambles. Lennon was doing this German accent and they were all fooling around as if they weren't taking it seriously. But it was mesmerising.

They were still in leathers – or, at least, leather waistcoats, I think that was the look – and frankly looked like they needed a good scrub. They played two sets of about 30 minutes, did some of their own songs, some Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley. Afterwards, I went backstage, where I bumped into John Lennon. I gave him a nod and told him I liked his band. I had a bag of records I'd bought, American imports, rare stuff. He pulled one out and said, "Can I have this? You don't want it, do you?" I said, "Of course I fucking want it. I just paid 10 bob for it." He was a complete scally. And I don't think he ever changed in all the time I knew him. There was nothing put on about him, then or ever.

Years later, when I was working for *NME*, I was up at Apple one day and I'd just been out buying records – some Otis Redding, I think. Lennon was there and he saw me and said, "Still got your bag of records, then?" We started talking about when we first met and The Cavern and The Iron Door and other Liverpool clubs where The Beatles had played. He said as far as he was concerned, The Beatles were only really The Beatles when they were playing Liverpool and Hamburg, when they were blasting through four sets a night. Then came Beatlemania and everything changed.

He said that after they became successful, it all became a routine. They'd go on, play the hits and fuck off, as he put it. Some nights, they never really bothered. They couldn't hear themselves, anyway. The noise of the crowds was like being on a runway at Heathrow, he remembered, with four jets starting up at once. It got to the point where they couldn't wait to get off. In Hamburg and Liverpool, they'd always played what he called "freewheeling" sets of whatever songs took their fancy.

"Suddenly, we've got setlists and we have to open with this and finish with that and then run for our lives. That's what it was like every night," he said. "And from that point on," he added, "we weren't The Beatles any more."

Roy Carr

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

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"WE'RE LUCKY. WE GET ON LIKE A HOUSE ON FIRE"

How the four Beatles became Fab

"I'VE NEVER FELT SO EXHILARATED"

Beatlemania hits the USA

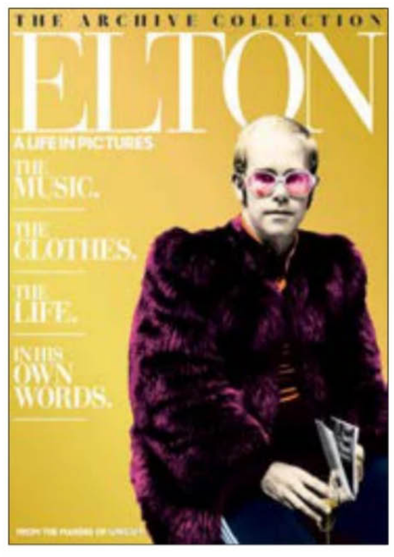
"I WROTE 'HERE COMES THE SUN' IN ERIC CLAPTON'S GARDEN"

George's *Abbey Road* adventures

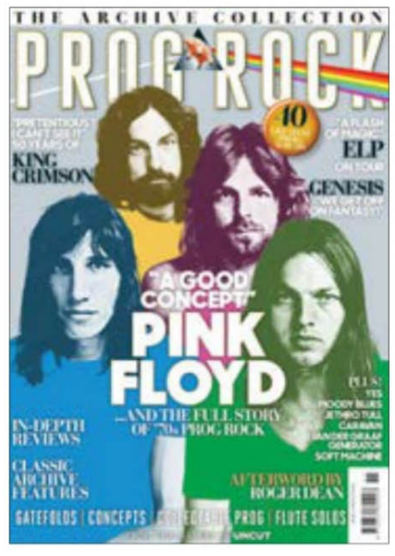
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