

COUNTRY MUSIC

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**CARLENE
CARTER
ROCK 'A' BILLY
BUMPER
ALBUM
REVIEWS**

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CARLENE CARTER HIGHS, LOWE'S and INBETWEENS



The original Carter Family — Maybelle, A.P. and Sara.

Christened Rebecca Carlene Smith, she is the eldest daughter of June Carter and her first husband, Carl Smith, and was born in 1956.

During the early fifties, Smith, who mainly sang heart rending ballads, consistently appeared on the country charts.

His marriage to June Carter was over before Carlene (obviously named after her father), was two years old, and these days, Smith raises cattle and horses on his ranch near Franklin, Tennessee.

June Carter of course, is the second of three daughters born to Mother Maybelle Carter and her husband Ezra Carter, (A.P. Carter's brother). Maybelle along with A.P. and Sara Carter formed the original Carter Family in 1926. Prior to Maybelle's death in October 1978, she persuaded Carlene to use the surname Carter for her stage appearances.

Rip Nix was June Carter's next husband and that union produced another daughter, Rozanna Lee, but the marriage only lasted a few years.

FIRST STAGE APPEARANCE, AGED FOUR

The Carter family have performed in many combinations over the past fifty odd years and at the age of four, Carlene made her first stage appearance with them. On that occasion she sang, 'Waterloo' and 'Charlie Brown'.

Carlene grew up in Madison, Tennessee and when not attending school she joined her mother on the road. In 1961, the Carter family, which by then consisted of Maybelle and her daughters, joined the Johnny Cash Road Show.

Cash at the time, was married to Vivian Liberto, but the marriage had broken down and she eventually sued for divorce in 1966. June Carter married Johnny Cash in March 1968, in Franklin, Tennessee with Rozey and Carlene in attendance as Flower girls. Carlene had met Cash for the first time, when he presented

There is no doubt breeding in any species will eventually surface. Carlene is the first member of the third generation of the singing Carter family to find fame in the musical field. The fact that she has managed it, as a solo performer, further reinforces her musical pedigree.

her with a pair of roller skates for her eleventh birthday.

At the age of seven, Carlene had begun piano lessons, but when she was ten she took up the guitar. Between the ages of ten and seventeen, Carlene became extremely self-conscious about singing and during that time she didn't appear on stage with the Carter Family.

Once June and Johnny had married, the family moved into his house on the Old Hickory Lake, near Hendersonville. Johnny's first marriage had produced four daughters, including Rosanne Cash, another member of the clan, who has established herself as a regular contender on the country and pop charts.

During her years of study at Hendersonville High, Carlene managed to find time to run the line as a cheer leader for the school football team.

When she was fifteen, Carlene was married for the first time, with seven hundred guests attending the ceremony, followed by a Virgin Islands' honeymoon. Her daughter Tiffany Anastasia was born in 1972.

The marriage only lasted two years, and in that time Carlene started attending Belmont College in Nashville where she studied music. After the first marriage ended in divorce, Carlene was single for a year, and during that time she started performing in public again, with the Carter Family and the Cash show.

Carlene, Rosey and Rosanne all had a solo track on Johnny's 1974 album, 'The Junkie and the Juice-head and me'. Carlene sang the Jack Routh composition, 'Friendly Gates', in a rather breathy voice

and the lyric had a definite religious overtone.

Routh, in fact was a songwriter for Johnny's House of Cash publishing Company, and he became Carlene's second husband in 1975.

This time, the marriage lasted three years, and a son named, John Jackson, resulted from the union, in 1976. John Jackson has remained in the custody of his father, living on a farm in Kansas, since the marriage broke up; a loss that Carlene has learned to live with.

While she was married to Jack Routh, Carlene began to write her own songs and she eventually signed a contract with her step-father's publishing company.

CARLENE BEGAN TO WRITE

Early in her career, Carlene began to write songs with Susanna Clark, Guy Clark's wife. One of their songs, 'Easy from now on' later appeared on Emmylou Harris' 1978 album, 'Quarter Moon in a ten cent town'. Through the Clark's, Carlene met Rodney Crowell at a party at Waylon Jennings' home in the fall of 1977. Crowell at that time, was in the process of leaving Emmylou's Hot Band, with the intention of launching his own career, as a solo artist. He took time, however, to introduce Carlene to Eddie Tickner, Emmylou's manager, and thereby launched her solo career.

During CMA Week in Nashville in October 1977, Carlene was invited to a party at Warner



The Carter Sisters, Maybelle, Anita, June, Helan.



Bubba Knight of the Pips, B. B. King, Carlene, and Rumour.

Brother's Offices by Tickner, little knowing that she was being scrutinised by the label's hierarchy. Needless to say, she passed the 'audition' and it was suggested that her first album should be recorded in England. Smith suggested that she should use Graham Parker's band The Rumour.

The Rumour included, Brinsley Schwarz, who had had a band of the same name in the early seventies. Martyn Smith had been the Brinsley's agent, and the band also included, a guy called Nick Lowe.

As it turned out, Parker and his band were committed to an American tour, and the initial recording sessions were done with Dave Edmunds and some of his band.

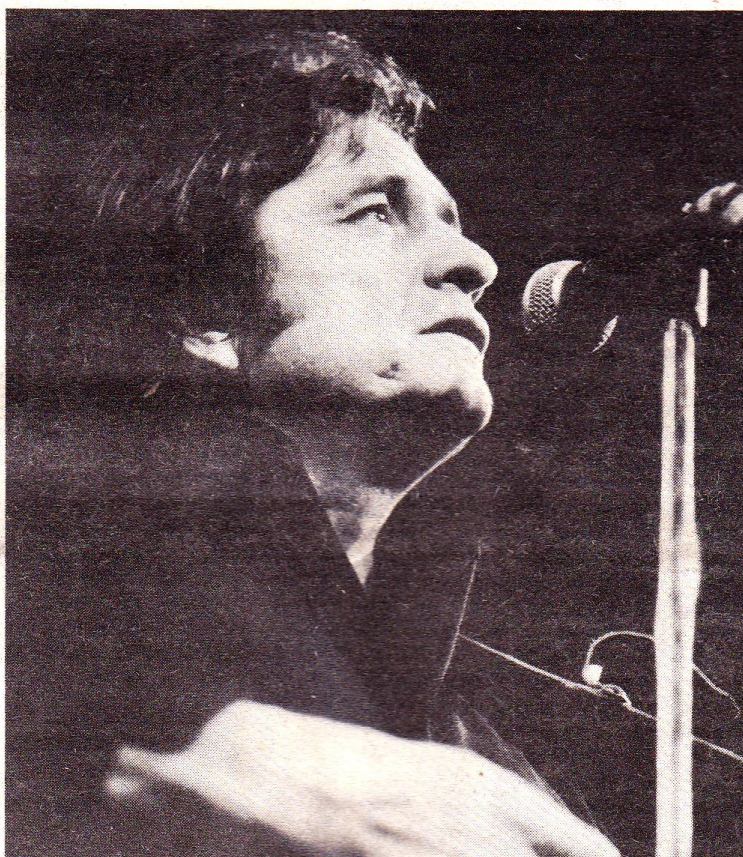
Carlene met Nick Lowe for the first time, during the latter part of those sessions. None of the tracks cut were as successful as expected and only one song, 'I once knew love', appeared on the first album.

THE RUMOUR BROUGHT IN

By a stroke of luck, Parker's American tour was cancelled. The Rumour were brought in, and band members, Bob Andrews and Brinsley Schwarz, produced the album, which was recorded at the Eden Studio, Chiswick.

The ten track album featured four of Carlene's own songs, including one written with her half-sister Rosey Nix. Rodney Crowell's composition, 'Never together but lose sometimes' was the first single taken from the album. The track received a fair amount of airplay, but failed to make an impression on the charts.

Prior to coming to England to record the album, Carlene had toured the States with Tracy Nelson. 'I've been there before', was one of Tracy's latest compositions, and Carlene liked the song, so she recorded it. When she had been pitching her songs around Nashville, Carlene used to record demos at Michael Bacon Studios. Bacon had a band in Nashville and along with Thomas Cain, he had written the song, 'Alabama Morning'. Not unnaturally, a Graham Parker composition, 'Between you and me' was included on the album. Brinsley and Bob Andrews introduced Carlene to the work of that great band Clover, and she included two Alex Call songs, 'Love is gone' and 'Mr Moon', on her first album. The title of the last song is rather appropriate, since Carl Smith, Carlene's father had a country No 1 in 1951, with a song of the same title.



Johnny Cash

During the summer of 1978 Carlene did a tour of the States with the Rumour, and played venues like Bottom Line. Having become a Clover fan, during her British visit, Carlene later tracked them down Stateside and they became her road band till late 1979.

CARLENE RECORDS ALBUM WITH NICK LOWE

Carlene tried to record her second album with Nick Lowe at the controls. Although six tracks were laid down, they didn't feel right and the project was scrapped. The Power Station, in New York City was the venue chosen for the next attempt to record Carlene's second album, and John McFee from Clover, was featured on the sessions. Carlene, however, was far from happy with the resulting album, 'Two sides to every woman', and with the producers Lance Quinn and Tony Bongiovi.

Seven of Carlene's compositions were featured on her second album, including 'Do it in a heartbeat' co-written with Nick and John McFee. The latter track almost made the American Country Top 40 at the beginning of last year, Carlene's penchant for Lyrics that, 'sail close to

the wind', came to the fore on her songs, 'Swap, Meat Rag' (about wife swapping) and, 'Two sides to every woman' (just like the title says). Carlene also recorded Elvis Costello's, 'Radio Sweetheart', undoubtedly due to Nick's connections with that artist.

Carlene's love for things British, and in particular for Nick Lowe, eventually resulted in her settling in England in 1979. Carlene and Nick were eventually married, and he produced her third album, 'Musical Shapes', which was issued in July last year on the F-Beat label.

Two of the tracks, 'Ring of fire' and 'Too proud', (one of her own songs), had been recorded in California during her latter days with Clover. 'Ring of fire', was the June Carter/Merle Kilgore composition which was a major hit for Johnny Cash in 1963.

Carlene recently issued her fourth album titled, 'Blue Nun'. Nick remained at the controls as producer but, Carlene now has her own band, 'The CC Riders.'

The album is excellent and has a much harder rock, almost blues feel, but there is no denying that Carlene's vocal chords come from a solid country background.

BRITISH ROCK

F-Beat have now issued a single, the 'A' side of which features a non-album track, 'Oh

how happy', the old Edwin Starr song. The song is performed as a duet by Carlene and 'C.C. Rider', Paul Carrack.

Carlene undertook a short British and Irish tour in October, mainly performing at small clubs and colleges, although she did appear again at the London Venue.

Her road band, The C.C. Riders consist of former Sincero, Bobby Irwin on drums; James Eller previously with that other F-Beat band, Clive Langer and the Boxes, on bass; Martin Belmont, once a member of the Rumour, is featured on guitar and Paul Carrack late of Squeeze supplies keyboards and vocals. It is probably worth mentioning that 'Squeazes' current chart entry, 'Lanbelled with Love' has an extremely strong country flavour, and with fellow F-Beat artist, Elvis Costello also venturing into that field, it certainly bodes well for the future.

F-Beat apparently intend to re-issue the 'Blue Nun' album as a fourteen track package in the near future. 'Home Run Hitter' from the current release, will be withdrawn, and the tracks; 'Oh how happy', 'Too many teardrops' and 'When you comin' back' will be added.

Surely, it is only a matter of time before Carlene makes a significant impression on the charts. The lady is certainly equipped in most departments, to sustain a long and fruitful career ●

ARTHUR WOOD



Cindy Cash.



TOM GRIBBEN talks LAW, POLITICS and CENSORSHIP

Since the release of his first album earlier this year, Tom Gribben has received a large amount of favourable press for his own brand of multi-influenced Florida Country-rock.

Tom's first show on his current tour was at the Hen and Chickens, Warley, (a rather pleasant venue set in the heart of the Black Country), where I managed to catch him prior to his performance, and started by asking him about his early life.

Could you tell me when and where you were born?

T. "Well, I was born January 2nd, 1949. I'll be thirty three in January, and I was born in Cherry Point, North Carolina."

"Were you brought up there?"

T. "Well, my dad was a military pilot, so I was only there about six months before we moved to the next place. I've lived all over, every time he was transferred to another airfield, I'd go along with him. I wound up in Florida at a young age, and I was raised in Florida really."

"Is there a musical background in your family?"

T. "My father was a good harmonica player, a real good harmonica player. All my family play. My mother plays piano, my sisters play. Everybody was always singing round the house, there was always music."

"Professionally, though, you were trained as a lawyer."

T. "Yea, I went to University of Florida Law School in Gainesville. I was into music and writing before I went to Law School. After I

GRADUATION AND THE FIRST SALTWATER BAND

graduated from school, I didn't know what I was going to do next, and Law School sounded good to me. Remember, we grew up in the '60s as kids and going into college, it was a real political time in the United States; the late Nixon years and Kent State and all that. I guess we were all sort of political people and Law School seemed the natural thing to do.

"I got through Law School and graduated in 1974, and practised law for a few years, but was always into music, the whole time. I even

played my way through Law School."

"Semi-professionally?"

T. "Oh yea, I'd come home and instead of having a drink, I'd pick up my guitar, and lull myself into feeling good. I used to sneak out on the weekends when I was first a lawyer, to beach bars and play. I put together my first band, the Saltwater band, in 1977, and we'd play just on weekends. As a music

MIAMI IS A CARIBBEAN CITY NOW

fan myself, I was greatly influenced by the 'Texas' school of writers and because of this I was nicknamed Texas Tom. When the Saltwater band started playing together, I wasn't sure that I wanted my identity known. Any time we took group shots, I used to pull my hat down. I didn't want my clients or my partners seeing me out there rockin' and rollin' in the clubs, and they just started calling me Texas Tom and it was a tag I picked up."

"What sort of cases did you handle as an attorney?"

T. "Oh boy, I handled the whole thing. I was a trial lawyer, a barrister really, for big cases. I represented football teams, banks and corporations suing each other and also represented people who ... I sued an airline once, who fired a guy for stealin' and he didn't do it. Ruined his life and they slandered him all around town. I handled cases like that. Then I had some big criminal cases too, representing murderers and the like.

"I left the firm to go and do music. It was a big decision. There were about thirty lawyers, who are still good friends of mine, and I was like number six. I just got close to being thirty years old and you know how you do? You try and decide what you want to do for the rest of your life, and I loved music. I was out there on weekends playin' the music and I said, 'Why not give it a shot?' People really liked us when we started. I picked up really good

support from people like Harry Dailey, (from Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefers) who said, 'You should do this. You're good at it, so you should do it'. So, I gave it a shot. We came over to England and we started goin' round the States. We were pickin' up really good signs of response."

Tom and his band are now resident in St Petersburg on the West coast of Florida. Since he had spent most of his working years as a lawyer in a practise in Miami, I was interested in his views on that city. There was one article I read recently that said Miami was now, literally the 'Sink hole' of the USA. Is that true?

T. "There's an argument that can be made for that. I loved Miami when I was there, and they do have problems, I'm not going to say they don't."

"There is a big Cuban and Hiatian population now; the Cubans appear to me to be a fairly volatile race don't they?"

T. "Yea, Columbians running dope and stuff like that. I guess Miami is a Caribbean city now. Its not like anything else in Florida now. It really belongs to the islands now. All the people who flee from South America now, whether they are dictators like Samozza or whether they are just people off the boats like the Hiatians, they all wind up in Miami. Its a very Latin city, but its great, and it'll be better as soon as they sort out its problems."

"Yes, because the image of Miami is a sort of retirement home of the USA."

T. "It used to be. Now its Tombstone. Tombstone East."

"You should read the article ...

T. "I have, there's a guy did it for Rolling Stone."

"That's the one."

T. "Well, I know the guy."

"John Rothchild?"

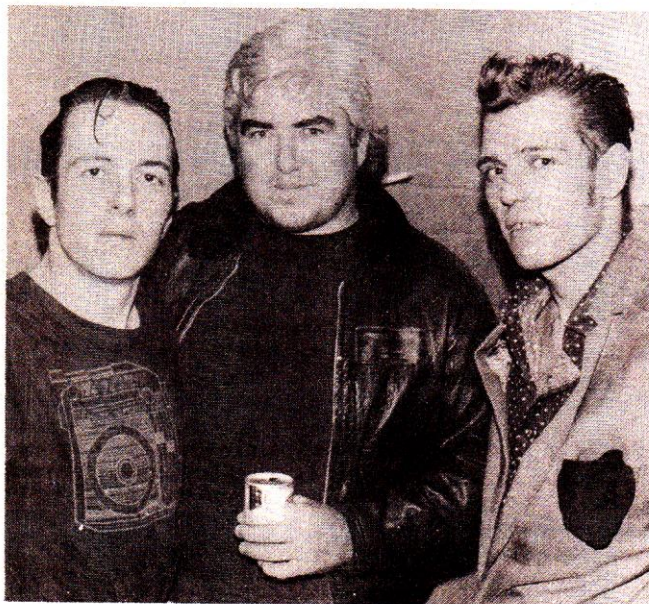
JIMMY BUFFET IS A FRIEND

T. "I mean I know one of his good friends. Remember the last part of that article, where he interviews Governor Graham? Well, Buffett is a friend of mine and I have a lot of respect for him. He's really the grandfather of Florida musicians. People like Mel Tillis, who is from Florida, people don't really know that because he doesn't sing any Florida songs. Jimmy came down there, and changed everything around. He's into promoting the good style and the high style of life. When the Governor appointed him to head the 'Save the Manatee' Committee a lot of people questioned that. I told this to a friend of his, that someone ought to ask Governor Graham how he could do both things. He reiterated to the writer of that article in the Rolling Stone what I told my friend, so it looked as if it came from the Governor, when ... it was really something that had come from me."

"So it was your point?"

T. "I thought whoops, 'cos I'm a supporter of the Governor really."

"The Guns of Brixton", originally written and recorded by



Tom Cribben and Clash.



On the Keys in the Florida sun

the Clash, two years ago, was cut by Tom in Nashville late last year. That song was issued as his first single, and was receiving ample airplay prior to the first outburst of violence in Brixton this summer, after which, its content came to be regarded as controversial. Country Roads, Tom's British label then reluctantly withdrew the single. I asked Tom if he was upset when the single was withdrawn.

T. "I had mixed emotions, because I really like comin' over here, and I like British people. I didn't record the song to offend them. To me, I was singing about Jesse James, because he bucked the system and they called him an outlaw and put a price on his head. Now, in American Folklore, he's a hero, so how do you explain that kind of thing? I'm sure that the widows of his victims didn't feel that way, and so to me, I had mixed emotions.

"As an artiste I always have

mixed emotions about any form of censorship. It bothers me, I guess, as a lawyer too. Since I didn't do it to offend anybody, and I feel when people hear something that offends, and I'm guilty of this too, they don't necessarily try to see the other side of the case. I just get offended, so maybe some people were offended, and didn't try to make the connection of what I

TOURING HERE NEXT YEAR

was trying to do. I wasn't really upset. I laughed about it, after all, it was my first album and for something like that to happen, I didn't like it in one sense, but on the other hand, what the heck? It got me a little notoriety."

"Did you want it out as a single?"

T. "No, actually to be honest with you, I didn't choose the single. I still don't choose them, 'cos I figure it up to the Record Company to decide what is going to sell. I have to admit that the song was controversial, not only because of subject matter, but a song like that is different for a Country singer. Then, those parts of me like, the reggae song, (Tom's current British and American single, 'Johnny Deepwater'), the new wave song, that's all part of the thing I do."

After the interview, Tom was on stage for well over two hours and produced a highly entertaining set. At present the material leans heavily on the Texas school of writers, interspersed with his own compositions. As time passes and he develops as a writer, this will probably change. I fully expect to see Tom touring here next year, by which time his second album should be recorded. ●

COUNTRY MUSIC WORLD'S TEAM SELECTION 1981

ARTHUR'S TEAM

Arthur Wood has written for us from the early issues.

(1) RIDE'M COWBOY

Juice Newton, Capitol Juice

(2) NATIVE DRIVER

Cris Williamson, Olivia

(3) RUN FOR THE ROSES

Don Fogelberg, CBS

(4) TIL' I GAIN CONTROL AGAIN

Rodney Crowell, Warner Bros

(5) THE DREAM GOES ON

Lee Clayton, Capitol

(6) MAYBE TOMORROW MAYBE TONIGHT

Tom Cribbins, Country Roads

(7) DIAMOND HILL

Butch Hancock, Rainlight

(8) I REMEMBER YESTERDAY

Janice Ian, CBS

(9) TRULY BLUE

Mickey Newberry, Mercury

(10) NORTHFIELD

Mary McCaslin, Flying Fish

(11) THE ALBUM JOHN

STEWART DID

NOT RECORD THIS YEAR

COME ON RECORD CO'S WISE UP!

LIVING on the FAULT LINE

surviving on a dream

Sierra/Briar Records are one of a myriad of small American labels which have been created to satisfy the demand for authentic bluegrass, folk and country music, as well as the work of more contemporary acts, who otherwise wouldn't gain contracts from the major labels. This label is however, different from many others in this field, in a number of ways.

The label is based in California, where the major proportion of recording work is probably carried out in the United States.

Other small labels who are contemporaries of Sierra/Briar, such as Flying Fish and Rounder are based in Chicago and Somerville, Massachusetts respectively. (No disrespect to Somerville, but it is hardly the centre of the known universe).

The packaging of the albums from the artwork, right down to track recording details, are presented with a style and panache one normally associates with major labels.

Founder, mentor and director of Sierra Briar Records, is self confessed 'Bluegrass nut', John M. Delgatto. John started out in the music business in the early Sixties as a banjo player, and since then he has worked on radio, in record pressing plants and as a road manager, for acts such as Doc Watson and Family.

Legal Wrangles

The Briar label was actually instigated in 1971, and the first release was to have been a Watson Family album, a project

about which Doc Watson was personally enthusiastic. John had even printed album covers at his own expense, before United Artists and Watson's management stepped in, and legal wrangles arose which prevented the project from reaching fruition.

Undaunted by this set back, in 1972 John recorded the last album by country fiddler, Leslie Keith, once a member of the Stanley Brothers and the Clinch Mountain Boys. The album titled, 'Black Mountain Blues' languished for a number of years, as John was literally selling it direct from his home. By 1974 however, a distribution deal had been signed with Takoma Records and in the ensuing years Briar produced albums by the Stone Mountain Boys, (featuring ace fiddler Byron Berline), Toulouse Englehardt and also the Blue grass Cardinals. Sadly, further legal difficulties arose, and the distribution deal was cancelled in 1976. By this time however, John and his Briar label had gathered a reputation for releasing quality products, even though the albums were hard to find in record stores.

Up to this stage, all the Briar releases had been of a 'traditional' nature, but in 1977, John produced his ideas for a stable mate, — Sierra Records. It was his intention that Sierra Records would concentrate on the recordings of contemporary artists. This would encompass either the leasing of old unreleased material owned by major labels or, the production of new albums. To achieve the efficient operation of the two labels, additional staff

were enlisted in the middle of 1978.

Marsha Necheles, editor and founder of Folkscene Publication, was appointed as managing director, while Victoria Nadsady, also with the aforementioned magazine, became the label's art director. Roz Larman, who had been involved with broadcasting for nearly ten years, was brought in as promotion director and Gene Parson was consulted from time to time, about proposed releases on the label.

West Coast Blue Grass

New offices were opened up in Los Angeles and the future seemed extremely bright for the company, after John had arranged some solid financial backing. Currently, the label's base is in Pasadena and the Los Angeles office appears to have closed.

Marsha now works for Elektra Records, while Vicki has joined a public relations organisation in Los Angeles.

Between 1978 and 1980, the Briar label released eight albums while Sierra issued nine plus one direct to disc album.

The Briar releases included a Scotty Stoneman album with the Kentucky Colonels titled, 'Live in L.A.', and an album pressed on red vinyl, titled, 'It's Hot' by Corn Bred. They were one of the best West Coast bluegrass groups of recent times, and the band included banjo player extraordinaire, John Hickman.

It is the Sierra catalogue however, which is of particular interest to a worn-out old country rocker like myself. Their first release in 1978 was of some ten year old recordings made in the Nashville West Club in El Monte, California, by a group called after the Club. Clarence White, Gene



Ian Anderson and Maggie Holland. Sierra/Briar Artists

Parsons (both later with the Byrds) were members of the group, along with Gib Guilbeau, (currently with the 'new' Burrito Brothers) and Wayne Moore.

This was followed by an album of Gram Parsons' recordings made when he was a member of the Shilos folk group in the early Sixties. The package included a twelve-page booklet on Parsons.

The first studio recordings made by Sierra, were for Gene Parsons' second solo album, titled 'Melodies'. The guest players' list reads like a country rock Who's Who, and included Albert Lee, Herb Pedersen, and Bob Warford.

Gram Parson Album

A contemporary country compilation titled 'Silver Meteor' was released last year. This featured tracks by Clarence White, recorded just prior to his untimely death in 1973. A couple of Everly Brothers' cuts were included, plus a sample of the Blue Velvet Band's work from their 1969 Warners album, 'Sweet Moments with ...'.

Rick Cunha, once a member of seminal country rock band, 'Hearts and Flowers', and who later appeared on Emmylou Harris' early solo albums, had an album released on Sierra titled, 'Moving Pictures'.

The direct to disc album was by

singer, songwriter Steve Gillette and was titled, 'Alone — direct'. Gillette is probably best known for co-penning the folk classic, 'Darcy Farrow'.

All the Sierra/Briar releases are still in print and are available in Britain from Mikes Country Music Room in Aberdeen, or from Projection Records in Leigh-on-Sea. The albums can also be obtained direct from Sierra Records, P.O. Box 5853, Pasadena, California 91107.

I would point out however, that the latter method of obtaining the albums, by mail order, is obviously slow and may result in the additional expense of having to pay import duty. Mike, Craig is probably your best bet, and he always carries a comprehensive stock of Sierra/Briar releases.

And now for the good news: Despite some ill-timed and ill-advised prepublicity earlier this year, regarding the release of the 'Gram Parsons and the Fallen Angels' album, the project, which at one stage appeared to have been abandoned, is now about to reach fruition. Scheduled for release early in December, the album features recordings made at Radio Station WLIR in Hampstead, Long Island, in March 1973, during Gram's last tour of the States.

To obtain the lease for the recordings, John Delgatto has been involved in long and rather delicate negotiations with Warner Brothers and the Parsons family.

The project is one which is particularly dear to his heart, since he was to have been equipment manager on the Fallen Angels tour, but had to decline the job due to the pressure of other commitments.

The album package will include a poster-sized, 'Gram and Emmylou', Family Tree by the inimitable Peter Frame.

Parsons has remained, even since his death, an influential figure on the development of Country Rock and this release will be a welcome addition to a recording career which was tragically cut short.

For those of you interested in reading about Parsons' career, publication is imminent Stateside by Little Caesar Press, of a book titled, 'Grievous Angel — a biography of Gram Parsons', written by Sid Griffin. In addition, the December issue of the American publication, 'Goldmine', should include a genuine Gram Parsons biographical type article, since it is Delgatto's opinion that the October 1976 Crawdaddy article was, at the least, inaccurate.

Mike Craig will be the only British stockist of the Parsons album, and he will also have the Griffin book when it is made available.

In the meantime, do yourself a favour, and check out the rest of the Sierra/Briar catalogue, I can assure you its really worth the effort ● ARTHUR WOOD

Pure Prairie League

Pure Prairie Collection
Tears/You're between
me/Woman/It's all on
me/Early morning riser/Falling
in and out of love/Amie/
Jazzman/Boulder skies/
Angel/Call me, tell me/Two
lane highway/Just can't believe
it/That'll be the day/Goin'
home. (RCA International
INTS 5101).

This excellent fifteen track compilation only uses tracks from the first four of the eight albums which Pure Prairie recorded for RCA.

With the release of their third album, 'Two Lane Highway', the group found themselves with further chart successes. One of their great failing on those early albums however, was the continual change of personnel, thereby failing to create a band identity. Unfortunately, once the band line-up did stabilise, the material became vapid and bland. That probably explains why material from the 1976 'Dance' album onwards hasn't been included. It seems that some days you just can't win.

Anyway, this album, released on RCA's mid price International label is a worthwhile introduction to anyone unfamiliar with the band's work. ●

ARTHUR WOOD



Carlene.