

'David wasn't even asked to sing at the Partridges audition..!'



The Partridges and their bus

cope. One of my favourite sayings is that if you're some place where it's real cold, you wear a sweater, because it's cold.

"So, if you're suddenly caught in a situation where the spotlight is most always on you, then again you learn to cope. But it sure helps when there are people around you who know how to live life at a normal level."

But back to David's audition for the Partridge Family. He went to three separate auditions, and nobody asked him to do more than read the lines of Keith Partridge. Nobody asked him to sing. In fact, the reason was simple. Quite astonishingly, it had been decreed that somebody else would do the singing for him!

This singer who, since, has packed out the biggest theatres and auditoriums in the world was regarded as being simply an actor. The idea was that when the situation arose, some experienced but anonymous singer would dub the voice on. Fact is that David has always had a "way" with a song, but the producers of the Partridge Family series weren't to

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know that. They'd nabbed him as a straight actor.

David was a bit hesitant about the series as a series, anyway. He wasn't sure that it would do him any good being involved as a lad younger than his own age; and he recalled that life hadn't exactly gone rosily for the Monkees once the first flush of enthusiasm had worn off.

Now the producers of the show were a couple of likeable fellows named Paul Witt and Bob Claver. David decided to talk his problems over with them ... pointing out that he **COULD** sing, that he regarded it as being a bit phoney having somebody employed to do singing **FOR** him, and could they kindly see fit to give his own voice a chance.

It was now that David was to learn a rather stern lesson. They said: "Yes, of course, you can sing on the show." And he was in the middle of heaving a big sigh of gratitude and relief when they added: "It's easier and cheaper for us to dub the voices on in a show of this kind. You can

sing, all right. But it won't matter whether you're off-key or not, because it still won't be **YOUR** voice that goes out over the television series."

David figured that was just a bit too strong. He kept nagging away at Paul and Bob and, in the end, they agreed that they would put the matter fairly and squarely in front of Wes Farrell, one of the top producers in the American music scene and also the guy in charge of the crotchets and quavers in the Partridge Family series.

Okay, so it was only to ride along with David's obsession ... just a little maybe-expensive try-out to get him to forget all about the ludicrous business of him wanting to sing as well as act. So many actors have been convinced they could outsing Sinatra, or Presley, or Paul McCartney, if only they had the chance.

Anyway, David walked confidently into his audition and was gratified to see that Mr. Farrell really did sit up and take notice after only a few bars. There was a "pilot" show to do first, and they couldn't alter the plans for that, but it was decreed that all real shows would feature not only Shirley Jones singing her own parts but David Cassidy as well.

By the way: a "pilot" show is a production created just to be shown to network bosses, just to tempt them into offering contracts for a whole series. After all, they could hardly be expected to spend a lot of money on the Partridge Family without first making sure that it wasn't just a family of our feathered friends!

Let's say here and now that Wes Farrell and David Cassidy got on very well together right from the start. Wes taught David about studio techniques, and even how to write a pop song so that it could be commercial. Wes showed David how to work most of the equipment in the Western Recorders' studios.

Mind you, David was very upset when he first heard his voice coming through those highly expensive speakers in the studios. He felt it was too tinny, too off-key as well as strained. And he had this terrible feeling that he'd caused a storm in a tea-cup where his TV-show producers were concerned ... that he really couldn't sing after all.

But Wes was experienced enough to know that it was all a matter of tension. David had to learn to be at ease in front of all those microphones and he had, more important, to translate his own confidence into the voice. It's not as easy



David showing how he CAN sing



David and Shirley Jones; his 'screen' mother and his real step-mother