



it wouldn't do some folks any harm to open their eyes and try looking at things in a different light for a change . . .

Would the Partridge Family show be the international sensation it is now, if David hadn't been in it?

Would the records have been chart-certs to the same extent, if David hadn't been the lead singer?

Of course, nobody can *prove* anything either way . . . But I've got my opinions, and I guess you've got yours too. And I wouldn't mind betting that we're unanimously agreed on this one! Maybe it's time the Cassidy-bashers took a look at things that way on for a change . . . Perhaps they'd even get around to giving David the credit he deserves!

Mind you, David's not complaining. He doesn't reckon you get anywhere by battling against your friends for success. And that's how he looks on the entire Partridge team — as his friends.

Of course, they started off just as working partners — remember David never jumps headlong into friendship . . . But, whenever you talk to him about those early days, it's easy to see that there was an excellent relationship building up right from the word go.

David is always full of praise and admiration for the experienced stars who were so nice to him and taught him so much . . . People like Shirley Jones, of course; and others like Producer, Bob Claver and Music-Man, Wes Farrell. Folk like these rapidly became something more to David than part of his working day . . . They were soon personal friends as well.

That's why it makes David a bit uptight when he hears talk of a "bust-up" between him and Wes.

"Look at it like this," he says, "you can be really good friends with somebody, but that doesn't mean that you have to agree with each other about every little thing in life, does it? If you did, it strikes me that you might just as well be *one* guy as two! You could rap with yourself, and you'd get the same place!

"Half the fun in friendship is that the two of you move in different directions . . . Each of you develops in his own way; but you keep contact, and the last thing the other guy would want to do is to hold you back from the way you've gotta go.

"Well, that's how it is between me and Wes right now. For a while, I went his way and I got a lot out of it. But I've known for a time now that, to be a full person in my own right, I had to branch out. *And Wes recognised that too!*

"That doesn't mean we've got being friends. But some folk have read it that way and plastered their own mean ideas all over the place without checking out if they'd gotten it right or not.

"I guess all the legal hassle hasn't helped any, either. 'Cos I've had my hands tied behind my back, till all these bothersome details could be sorted out. Folks keep asking me if I've got recording altogether now, you know, just because of that!"

DAVID'S NEEDED

Why is it that some people find it so hard to recognise and respect David's need to go his own way and be true to himself in his music either?

It's not just in his music either! He's come up against all the same problems about his decision not to renew his contract with the Partridge Family series. As soon as it was announced, the stories started . . . They said David couldn't stand it on the Partridge Family set; he was always falling out with the other members of the cast; he loathed the part of Keith, the music — just about everything, in fact!

Well, is there any truth in any of these rumours?

"Mostly none at all," was David's rather anxious reply when I put the question to him. "You see, they get hold of a grain of truth, but then it gets twisted so it's nobody would ever recognise it . . .

"Sure, I sometimes get fed up with the role of Keith! But not

because it's a bad part . . . Just 'cos I've been playing it now for a solid three years, and in all that time I've never been able to take a 'rest' from it by playing something else for a while . . . That's what I want to do now.

"I guess I feel this need specially strongly because, with Keith, I am playing a kid so much younger than myself, so the kind of feelings and moods are very limited. I want to stretch myself now, and hopefully prove myself as an actor with a wider range."

But that's certainly not to say that David hasn't enjoyed playing the part of Keith!

"It was a great break for me, and I'll always be grateful for that. And it's been tremendous fun for a lot of the time. I've been working with folks I love, which is terribly important when you're the same age as you are after day, week after week, year after year! Boy, if we hadn't have hit it off, there sure could've been fireworks around Columbia Ranch!"

So much for all the stories about bad relations on the Partridge set!

Of course, there are the bad moments, when the tension goes over the top. But they're bound to happen in any family, let alone a show biz one!

I reckon that we should let David have the last word on this . . . Talking about his decision to leave the Partridge "nest", he told me:

"It's kind of like every stage you go through in growing up . . . It means saying goodbye to things you've loved and leaving them behind. You don't stop loving them because of that, but you've got to move on to new things, to new discoveries about yourself, about the world and about other people.

"Of course, I'm kind of sad to be moving on . . . I'm saying goodbye to an important part of my life.

"But I hope to find some exciting new discoveries around the next corner. And you can be good and sure that, when I do, I'll be right back to share them with all of you."