

himself, regardless of tiredness or illness, until he literally dropped.

That was how the trouble with his gall bladder had got to be so serious before he'd done anything about it. And it was exactly the same after the operation. David just couldn't bear to cancel any engagement unless it was absolutely unavoidable. So five days after he'd returned to the Partridge Family studios; he was off again. This time to New Jersey for the concert he'd been booked for months before. He was, of course, still very far from being fit—even by normal standards—and even he realised that it would have been wiser to take it easy for a while longer and defer the concert till he was more himself.

BACKED OUT

But then he thought of all the girls who'd bought tickets, and he thought of his return to the national headlines as the star who'd "backed out". And he decided to grit his teeth and show them all that he was going to be a tougher nut to crack than they'd thought.

Strangely enough, it's the people who were close to David at that time who remember the ordeal of that concert most clearly. For David himself, it's faded into a hazy blur: "I guess it most probably was something of an ordeal at the time," he smiled, "But it's a long while back. I know it helped a lot that the show was in New Jersey, because that was almost like going home and I knew Evelyn and grandpa'd be there, backing me every step of the way. So it seemed like a good time to get back into routine again!"

Well, no-one can say that David's ever been one for easing himself into things gently. He's always believed that, if a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing well—and SOON! And on that occasion he sure did jump straight in at the deep end.

But, as you can guess, the concert went fantastically. His fans went wild! Naturally, they'd heard about his illness, along with all the rumours that had accompanied it, and they weren't quite sure what to believe—until they saw David.

Of course, his recent illness had left its marks on him, and the audience didn't miss that. He was noticeably thinner and perhaps he didn't move with quite his usual ease and fluidity. But he was still the same guy with the same unique

talent. They had seen with their own eyes that all those worrying rumours and news reports simply were not true.

Sharon McCrae was thirteen years old then. She is still a loyal fan of David Cassidy and, as she says:

"It was things like that that gave us faith in David. People had been saying terrible things about him—remember, we were only kids then and it's so easy to get things right out of proportion. I can remember crying myself asleep one night after I'd read about David being on drugs and quitting show business. I felt real bitter about it. I was mad about this guy, I'd never seen him in my life, and then, just when I'd gotten a ticket for his concert, he has to choose that moment to quit show business!

"Well, after that, his turning up in New Jersey just about clinched it! I was his for life. From that time on I've never believed anything about David unless I've heard it direct from him in an interview or through the fan club."

Through the fall and winter of 1971 David's many concert appearances gave millions of other girls all over the States a chance to share in Sharon's experience.

Meanwhile, he'd been busy in the studios working solo with Wes Farrell and putting a lot of his concert material on tape. The end product, as everyone knows, was none other than "Cherish" which came straight off the production line into the charts!

By this time David was quite an old hand at the recording game. For a long while he'd been acclaimed as the "star" of the Partridge Family recording team—though he was more surprised than anyone when it happened! But, as he says himself: "It's sort of extra-special when you get a solo hit. Before, I'd never really know whether my fans enjoyed my work in particular or whether they just liked the show generally. 'Cherish' gave me the chance to find out." Well, there could be no doubt at all about the result of that little experiment! Though David was immediately striving for something better once he'd finished work on "Cherish", it was a milestone for him and provided a sure foundation for his more mature music to come.

NEXT MONTH: FIRST VISIT TO BRITAIN

DON'T MISS PART 44
OF THE DAVID CASSIDY STORY
WHICH WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE
APRIL ISSUE OF
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