

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

At the Ward-Cassidy house in West Orange, New Jersey, music was part of the day-to-day life. My mother Ethel played piano and sang, my uncle played the violin, my aunt played piano and flute, and Jack and I sang. My dad Fred with the "audience". Every Saturday night we had a family "musical" — and music was constantly played and sung in the house every day of the week. So, from the very beginning, David was exposed to music, and from the age of about two and one half on he often saw his mom and dad — together or separately — in various Broadway, Off Broadway and summer stock musical productions.

The way David started singing himself was rather odd. I had decided early that my son wouldn't be spoiled and that he would be "independent". I wanted him to be a real *boy-man* one day. One of my upbringing "rules" for David was that he learn to sleep alone. I never left a light on in his room, but I always left the hall light on and the door cracked slightly open. When he was about four, David began to object to sleeping alone — he wanted to join the "adults" — so I developed a little "technique" to get him to go to sleep, and it became a ritual. I spoke a little French and I used to teach him French lessons. So each night I would put David to bed, give him a French lesson, have him say his prayers, and then sing to him for about five minutes. When I thought he was asleep, I'd quietly slip out of the room.

Naturally, thirty seconds later, I'd hear, "Mom, I want a glass of water." I'd bring him a glass of water. After he drank it, he'd close his eyes, I'd sing a few more lines and I'd leave the room again. About 30 seconds later, I'd hear, "Mom, I have to go to the bathroom." *In* I'd go again, *out* I'd take him, *back* to the room I'd take him — sing a few more lines and slip out again. This particular ritual went on for about ten minutes. Finally, I would get a chair, sit beside David and sing

to him until he fell asleep.

When David was about four, I decided that this nonsense had to stop. So when David tried to pull a "number" on me, I'd just sing to him a little while, leave the room and not respond to his calls. At first he cried his little head off, but he *finally* got the message! One night, while I was sitting in the living room and studying a script, I heard a kind of singing coming from somewhere. It was almost like an echo of one of the songs I had been singing to David at bedtime — the same melody and *almost* the same words! Of course, I knew instantly that it was my son David.

I tiptoed down the hall, stopped just outside his door and listened. Yes, it *was*! David Cassidy, lying in bed, was singing away — singing himself to sleep! I was very touched and quite proud of him. *Wait until Jack comes home and hears about this!*, I thought. I went back to the living room, smiling contentedly, and resumed reading my script.

The hum-like singing continued. Then it got louder. And louder. And LOUDER! Then it got REALLY LOUD!! By now, you could hear David throughout the entire house — maybe even the entire block! The sound of David's voice echoed and reverberated all over the place! For a moment, I didn't know what to do, and then I decided — *Well, if he wants to sing, let him sing. Singing never hurt anybody. In fact, it's good for the soul.* After about five minutes, David suddenly stopped singing and went right to sleep. It was funny, it was charming, it was beautiful — and it was an indication of very important things to come!

Be sure to visit with me again next month in 16, when I will tell you more about my son David. I'll be in the March issue of 16, which goes on sale January 21. Reserve your copy now — and I'll have lots more to tell you about my son — David!!



David hated to go to sleep at night, so he learned to "sing himself to sleep" — the auspicious beginning of a great career!



David today—and the rest of **The Partridge Family** gang. David still loves singing and has already had one big hit record **I Think I Love You**.