

RECORD MIRROR

STILL ONLY 6p

JIMMY OSMOND'S next single will be his new US hit, Tweedle Dee, an old 50's hit. But it will not be released until new 45's have been released by both The Osmonds as a group, and by Donny. Neither of these titles has yet been decided, as both are being chosen from brand new material, currently being recorded.

Jimmy's album will be released on January 22, and will include a number of famous old hits — The Temptations' My Girl, made famous here by Otis Redding; Elvis' Teddy Bear; Bobby Vee's Rubber Ball and Neil Reid's Mother of Mine. Two of the other titles are Little Girls Are Fun, and If My Dad Were President. See R. M.'s album preview next week.

The current number one, Long-Haired Lover From Liverpool, has now sold more than 700,000 in Britain alone, as well as beating the million worldwide, and could well outsell Donny's Puppy Love. And Jimmy's the youngest-ever singer to reach number one.



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'My plans to appear with David Cassidy'

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A teenager's personal view!



DAVID BOWIE

ADVERTISEMENT

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RECORD MIRROR

TOP FIFTY

SINGLES

Now	Last Week	Weeks in Chart	
1	1	7	LONG HAIR LOVER FROM LIVERPOOL Little Jimmy Osmond MGM 2006109
2	4	5	THE JEAN GENIE David Bowie RCA 2302
3	2	5	SOLID GOLD EASY ACTION T. Rex EMI MARC 3
4	3	9	CRAZY HORSES Osmonds MGM 2006142
5	10	5	HI HI HI/C MOON Wings Apple R5973
6	15	5	BALL PARK INCIDENT Wizzard Harvest Hair 5062
7	20	4	YOU'RE SO VAIN Carly Simon Elektra K 12077
8	11	5	BIG SEVEN Judge Dread Biashot B1613
9	5	7	GUDBUY T'JANE Slade Polydor 2058312
10	13	4	ALWAYS ON MY MIND Elvis Presley RCA 2304
11	8	7	SHOTGUN WEDDING Roy C. UK 19
12	12	7	BEN Michael Jackson Tamla Motown TMG 834
13	9	6	NIGHTS IN WHITE SATIN Moody Blues Deram DM 161
14	7	11	MY DING-A-LING Chuck Berry Chess 6145019
15	6	5	HAPPY CHRISTMAS, WAR IS OVER John & Yoko/P. O. B. /Harlem Community Choir Apple R5970
16	—	—	BLOCKBUSTER Sweet RCA 2305
17	16	9	WHY Donny Osmond MGM 2006119
18	14	7	HELP ME MAKE IT THROUGH THE NIGHT Gladys Knight & The Pips Tamla Motown TMG 830
19	22	4	DESPERATE DAN Lieutenant Pigeon Decca F 13365
20	17	10	CROCODILE ROCK Elton John DJM DJS 271
21	28	5	CAN'T KEEP IT IN Cat Stevens Island WIP 6152
22	19	6	LITTLE DRUMMER BOY Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Band RCA 2301
23	18	6	GETTING A DRAG Lynsey De Paul MAM 88
24	27	6	COME SOFTLY TO ME New Seekers Polydor 2058315
25	26	9	STAY WITH ME Blue Mink Regal Zonophone R23064
26	—	—	WISHING WELL Free Island WIP 6146
27	25	12	CLAIR Gilbert O'Sullivan MAM 84
28	23	8	ANGEL/WHAT MADE MILWAUKEE FAMOUS Rod Stewart Mercury 6052198
29	21	7	ROCK ME BABY David Cassidy Bell BELL 1268
30	—	—	IF YOU DON'T KNOW ME BY NOW Harold Melvin & The Bluenotes CBS 8496
31	30	2	I'M ON MY WAY TO A BETTER PLACE Chairmen of the Board Invictus INV 527
32	24	9	LOOKIN' THROUGH THE WINDOWS Jackson Five Tamla Motown TMG 833
33	—	—	RELAY Who Track 2094106
34	29	8	KEEPER OF THE CASTLE Four Tops Probe PRO 575
35	—	18	BIG SIX Judge Dread Big Shot BI 608
36	—	2	SING DON'T SPEAK Blackfoot Sue Jam JAM 29
37	—	—	PAPA WAS A ROLLIN' STONE Temptations Tamla Motown TMG 839
38	—	9	LAY DOWN Strawbs A&M AMS 7035
39	—	—	BIG CITY/THINK ABOUT THAT Dandy Livingstone Horse HOSS 25
40	—	—	PAPER PLANE Status Quo Vertigo 6059071
41	—	15	MOULDY OLD DOUGH Lieutenant Pigeon Decca F 13278
42	—	—	ME AND MRS. JONES Billy Paul Epic 1055
43	—	—	YOU ARE AWFUL Dick Emery Pye 7N 45202
44	—	8	HI HO SILVER LINING Jeff Beck RAK Replay RR 3
45	—	4	DON'T DO THAT Geordie Regal Zonophone RZ 3067
46	—	6	JUST OUT OF REACH (OF MY TWO EMPTY ARMS) Ken Dodd Columbia DB 8947
47	—	—	ON A SATURDAY NIGHT Terry Dactyl & The Dinosaurs UK 21
48	—	11	LEADER OF THE PACK Shangri-Las Kama Sutra 2013024
49	—	11	LET'S DANCE Chris Montez London HL 10205
50	—	—	TAKE ME HOME COUNTRY ROADS Olivia Newton-John Pye 7N 25599

ALBUMS

Now	Last Week	Weeks in Chart	
1	5	5	SLAYED? Slade Polydor 2383 163
2	4	7	20 FANTASTIC HITS VOL. 2. Various Arcade 2891 002
3	6	8	BACK TO FRONT Gilbert O'Sullivan MAM 502
4	2	6	25 ROCKIN' & ROLLING GREATS Various K-TEL NE 493
5	3	7	22 DYNAMIC HITS VOL. 2 Various K-TEL TE 291
6	1	14	20 ALL TIME HITS OF THE 50's Various K-TEL 490
7	8	16	PORTRAIT OF DONNY Donny Osmond MGM 2315 108
8	9	25	SIMON AND GARFUNKEL'S GREATEST HITS CBS 69003
9	19	4	CRAZY HORSES Osmonds MGM 2315 123
10	7	4	TOO YOUNG Donny Osmond MGM 2315 113
11	19	53	BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER Simon & Garfunkel CBS 63699
12	22	40	SLADE ALIVE Slade Polydor 2383 101
13	39	7	CARAVANSERAI Santana CBS 65299
14	22	7	MOTOWN CHARTBUSTERS VOL. 7 Various Tamla Motown STML 11215
15	12	23	NEVER A DULL MOMENT. Rod Stewart Mercury 6499 153
16	—	1	THE RISE AND FALL OF ZIGGY STARDUST David Bowie RCA Victor SF 8287
17	—	—	BEN Michael Jackson Tamla Motown STML 11220
18	20	6	SEVENTH SOJOURN Moody Blues Threshold THS 7
19	16	2	DEEP PURPLE (MADE IN JAPAN) Deep Purple Purple TPSP 351
20	23	14	CATCH BULL AT FOUR Cat Stevens Island ILPS 9206
21	—	1	THE SLIDER T. Rex EMI BLN 5001
22	29	12	GILBERT O'SULLIVAN HIMSELF MAM 501
23	31	4	ANDY WILLIAMS GREATEST HITS VOL. 2 CBS 65151
24	13	6	THE OSMONDS LIVE MGM 2315 117

Seasonal pressure on returns
has reduced this week's
Album Chart to 24.
The full 50 will be back next week.

RM/BBC chart

CHART
CHATTER

HEY, welcome to Chart Parade! And come to that welcome to the only pop paper to publish singles and album Top 50's every week. Need I say that RM has exclusive rights to the authoritative BMRB charts, as used by the BBC. You can use them to follow the Sunday afternoon special on Radio One. There's plenty to talk about from these charts and that's what Chart Parade is about. And if you've any burning thoughts on what you would like Chart Parade to cover, let us know!

YEAH, Bowie is giving strong notice he has no intention of staying out in the cold as far as the 1973 singles chart compilation is concerned.

His most commercial release is selling thousands daily and the guy described last week in RM by Charles Webster as showing "that even rock music can produce world class stars who would grace the stages of any concert hall on earth" is right there in the charts at Two. He could easily be the main man of 1973.

Carole King will have to fight hard to keep her right to claim the girl singer crown, for just look at Mrs. James Taylor continuing her fast and furious climb up the charts. She came in at 27, moved to 20 and see the jump this week for she's moved 13 places and is there in the Top 10 at number seven. Who knows, we may at last have a girl singer, other than Carole, able to take on the male singers and groups.

The main competition to stop her making number one is of course Bowie but Wings could also hit the top with their double-sided hit of Hi-Hi Hi / C Moon. The Beeb may not be playing the former title but there's certainly plenty of plays for the chugging, getting into your head system, Moon. There's also Wizard! The end of the road seems to be in sight for Chuck Berry's My Ding-A-Ling, and I doubt if there will be many more weeks for the excellent double-sided Rod Stewart hit and come to that Gilbert O'Sullivan and Jackson Five.

Good to see Status Quo making a welcome return. On some recent days their single was selling 3,000 copies and the album Piledriver has every chance of being in next week's Album 50 making it a good double to start the New Year for the Quo.

Due to Christmas pressures last week we could only run a 30 and this means an abnormal number of new entries. Among these the most promising seem to be Blackfoot Sue, maybe the catchy humorous Dick Emery disc You Are Awful, The Who and the Temptations. This isn't to forget Sweet and Free.

Their discs are going to sell like mad. The most fascinating to watch on the basis of being new to a great number of people this side of the Atlantic is the sound of Harold Melvin and The Bluenotes. Not new to RM's James Hamilton. He's been extolling them for quite a time.

Yes, the Tears guy Ken Dodd is around just out of reach as it were of the 40 and higher things. Cat Stevens is getting plenty of plays but even though he's gone up seven places it all seems a bit slow for someone of his class.

Next week? Will Little Jimmy Osmond give way at long last?

CHA
Compile

ALBUM TALK

All quiet
after
Christmas

Not much change as indeed you might expect with Christmas returns still counting and it's too early for the crop of New Year releases to make chart impact.

The really big jumpers in recent weeks have been Hawkwind with Dorem Fasol Latido plus Made in Japan from Deep Purple. It could well be a year to remember for both groups, though a good part of '72 was certainly pretty good. Hawkwind's In Search of Space spent 17 weeks or so in the Top 50 with highest position being at 18. Their new one has already made 14. Deep Purple hit number one with Machine Head and Fireball was last January 8 at eighth position and so twelve months later they're there challenging once more for top placings.

Those K-Tel and Arcade albums show no sign of slipping and nor do those fast and furious musicians Slade with Slayed. 1973 is still a year for Bridge Over Troubled Water and there's plenty of life left with The Sound of Music. I am still slightly surprised not to see the Moodies making more progress with Seventh Sojourn and marvel at the continued progress of Bobby Crush but then more than delighted to see Santana's Caravanserai continuing to sell well.

Loggins with Messina, Free, Traffic and Michael Jackson are a few with new January releases and they could well bring change to the album charts.



CARLOS SANTANA

FIVE TO TEN

JANUARY 13, 1968

- 1 Hello Goodbye. Beatles (Parlophone)
- 2 Magical Mystery Tour. Beatles (Parlophone)
- 3 Walk Away Renee. Four Tops (Tamla)
- 4 Ballad of Bonnie and Clyde. Georgie Fame (CBS)
- 5 Daydream Believer. Monkees (RCA)
- 6 Thank U Very Much. Scaffold (Decca)
- 7 I'm Coming Home. Tom Jones (Decca)
- 8 If The World Stopped Loving. Val Doonican (Pye)
- 9 Kites. Simon Dupree (Columbia)
- 10 Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush. Traffic (Island)

RM CHART SURVEY OF 1972

ON TOP OF THE WORLD!

O'Sullivan takes international singles crown

HE'S SHY, all right. That Gilbert O'Sullivan is a very shy guy, and maybe that's the reason he was shielded for so long from making concert appearances in front of "live" audiences — but nowadays he's forcing himself to be a bit more ebullient and extrovert.

Why, Gilbert has even agreed to allow a fan-club, or appreciation society, to be formed on his behalf. He says: "We weren't going to have a fan-club originally but there have been so many letters asking for one, and it does seem an ideal way of keeping those people who want to know in

(boiled) or eggs (poached).

A most eligible bachelor, Gilbert nevertheless doesn't allow too much chick-chasing to interrupt his song-writing.

He certainly nicked a large share of the honours in our chart survey. He's won three categories, and is a close runner-up in several others. The year under review saw him go to America on disc, and get two smash hits — Alone Again and Claire. The year in question saw him "grow up" in all ways; notably from shortish trousers, cropped hair and army boots to smooth gear, longhair and some of it displayed on a pin-uppy torso.

In the autumn he played his first live concert . . . in Dublin, his home town . . . and this year he's out on three tours. On March 3, he flies to Nashville to be honoured at America's foremost record award presentation ceremony.

And there will be a return to Dublin on one of his tours. "I want to go back home and play to the people who couldn't get to see me at the last concert," he says. His third tour will be in America. Coast to coast.

On the record front, this third album is being completed in the next few weeks, and he's already written fourteen tracks — one to come out as a single in February, with the album following in March.

Maybe statistics help prove just how 1972 was so much the year of Gilbert. He sold a million singles in Britain alone. Plus 300,000 albums. And through the world, fans have spent more than £4,000,000 on his records. Every single single, except Underneath The Blanket, has sold more than 250,000 world-wide.



touch with what's happening."

Yet . . . for all his fantastic success, for all those words of praise on behalf of Gilbert the Genius, the lad himself still feels a need to shun the limelight. "I love going on tour now, and I'm at ease on television, but I have to make sure that I have enough time to write my songs, and make my records."

It was the songs, of course, that turned on top manager Gordon Mills to the O'Sullivan flair and talent. He nursed the former department-store clerk along. Gave him financial security, a lot of time and all the solitude he needed.

Not that Gilbert looks like ever being the sort of pop artist to go rampaging off the rails, spending wildly. Even now, he "makes do" on ten quid a week, and his staple diet is either eggs



What happened in 1972

HERE IT IS! Yes the annual breakdown of the best — selling disc artists over the past 12 months. The results come from the chart service provided for RECORD MIRROR by the British Market Research Bureau . . . the same chart used by the BBC.

World results first but then comes the breakdown into British, American and Continental artists. And it's been a year of change at the top.

Just take the International scene first of all for there's a new number 1. The great Elvis has slipped to 3 and there crashing in from nowhere to the greatly sought after first place our own Gilbert O'Sullivan.

That's just one major happening in this year's chart scene. There have been other new faces and equally some familiars have disappeared.

Not until the last of 1972's charts did we resolve the winner of the International male artist album — wise and the same goes in a desperate fight between Elvis and Michael Jackson for second place International Male, singles.

So it's congratulations to all the winners. Remember no one voted for these artists. The Record Mirror's reader's poll comes later in the year.

The results give a fairly accurate picture of what artists and their records sold over the shop counter to you.

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

SINGLES MALE

- 1 GILBERT O'SULLIVAN (BRIT)
- 2 MICHAEL JACKSON (US)
- 3 ELVIS PRESLEY (US)
- 4 DONNY OSMOND (US)
- 5 DON McLEAN (US)
- 6 DAVID CASSIDY (US)
- 7 JOHNNY NASH (US)
- 8 GARY GLITTER (BRITAIN)
- 9 ELTON JOHN (BRITAIN)
- 10 HARRY NILSSON (US)

SINGLES GIRL

- 1 VICKY LEANDROS (GREEK)
- 2 (TIE) JUDYCOLINS (US) LYNSEY DE PAUL (BRITAIN)
- 4 MELANIE (US)
- 5 ROBERTA FLACK (US)
- 6 OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN (BRITAIN)
- 7 DIANA ROSS (US)
- 8 MARY WELLS (US)
- 9 CILLA BLACK (BRITAIN)

SINGLES GROUPS

- 1 T. REX (BRITAIN)
- 2 NEW SEEKERS (BRITAIN)
- 3 SLADE (BRITAIN)

- 4 SWEET (BRITAIN)
- 5 ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOONS (BRITAIN)
- 6 DRIFTERS (US)
- 7 ALICE COOPER (US)
- 8 PARTRIDGEE FAMILY (US)
- 9 LINDISFARNE (BRITAIN)
- 10 CHICORY TIP (BRITAIN)

ALBUMS GROUPS

- 1 SIMON AND GARFUNKEL (US)
- 2 LINDISFARNE (BRITAIN)
- 3 T. REX (BRITAIN)
- 4 SLADE (BRITAIN)
- 5 LENNON-ONO PLASTIC BAND (BRITAIN)
- 6 DEEP PURPLE (BRITAIN)
- 7 NEW SEEKERS (BRITAIN)
- 8 CARPENTERS (US)
- 9 BREAD (US)
- 10 LED ZEPPELIN (BRITAIN)

ALBUMS MALE

- 1 CAT STEVENS (BRITAIN)
- 2 ROD STEWART (BRITAIN)
- 3 GILBERT O'SULLIVAN (BRITAIN)
- 5 NEIL YOUNG (US)
- 6 DAVID CASSIDY (US)
- 7 NEIL DIAMOND (US)
- 8 ANDY WILLIAMS (US)
- 9 ELVIS PRESLEY (US)
- 10 DAVID BOWIE (BRITAIN)

ALBUMS GIRL

- 1 CAROLE KING (US)
- 2 MELANIE (US)
- 3 SHIRLEY BASSEY (BRITAIN)
- 4 NANA MOUSKOURI (GREEK)
- 5 DIANA ROSS (US)
- 6 JANIS JOPLIN (US)



Vicky Leandros — top girl singer in the world.

Rest of the chart results: pages 16-17

RM CHART SURVEY OF 1972

BRITISH SECTION



Singles: MALE

- 1 GILBERT O'SULLIVAN
- 2 GARY GLITTER
- 3 ELTON JOHN
- 4 ROD STEWART
- 5 NEIL REID
- 6 DAVID BOWIE
- 7 JUDGE DREAD
- 8 HURRICANE SMITH
- 9 CLIFF RICHARD
- 10 TOM JONES



Lynsey De Paul

Singles: GIRL

- 1 LYNSEY DE PAUL
- 2 OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN
- 3 CILLA BLACK

Singles: GROUPS

- 1 T. REX
- 2 NEW SEEKERS
- 3 SLADE
- 4 SWEET
- 5 ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOONS
- 6 LINDISFARNE
- 7 CHICORY TIP
- 8 LIEUT PIGEON

Albums: MALE

- 1 CAT STEVENS
- 2 ROD STEWART
- 3 GILBERT O'SULLIVAN
- 4 DAVID BOWIE
- 5 ELTON JOHN
- 6 MAX BYGRAVES
- 7 NEIL REID

Albums: GIRL

- 1 SHIRLEY BASSEY

Albums: GROUP

- 1 LINDISFARNE
- 2 T. REX
- 3 SLADE
- 4 LENNON-ONO BAND
- 5 DEEP PURPLE
- 6 NEW SEEKERS
- 7 LED ZEPPELIN

Left: Cat Stevens, Gary Glitter and Marc Bolan.

U.S. RESULTS

Singles: MALE

- 1 MICHAEL JACKSON
- 2 ELVIS PRESLEY
- 3 DONNY OSMOND
- 4 DON McLEAN
- 5 DAVID CASSIDY
- 6 JOHNNY NASH
- 7 HARRY NILSSON

Albums: MALE

- 1 DON McCLEAN
- 2 NEIL YOUNG
- 3 DAVID CASSIDY
- 4 NEIL DIAMOND
- 5 ANDY WILLIAMS
- 6 ELVIS PRESLEY
- 7 PAUL SIMON
- 8 HARRY NILSSON



Singles: GIRL

- 1 JUDY COLLINS
- 2 MELANIE
- 3 ROBERTA FLACK
- 4 DIANA ROSS
- 5 MARY WELLS
- 6 HOLLY SHERWOOD

Albums: GIRL

- 1 CAROLE KING
- 2 MELANIE
- 3 DIANA ROSS
- 4 JANIS JOPLIN

Singles: GROUP

- 1 DRIFTERS
- 2 ALICE COOPER
- 3 PARTRIDGE FAMILY
- 4 STYLISTICS
- 5 CHI-LITES
- 6 DR. HOOK
- 7 AMERICA

Albums: GROUPS

- 1 SIMON AND GARFUNKEL
- 2 CARPENTERS
- 3 BREAD
- 4 JACKSON 5
- 5 AMERICA
- 6 PARTRIDGE FAMILY
- 7 DRIFTERS

Left: Donny Osmond, Elvis and Judy Collins



Vicky Leandros

Vicky Leandros has won the BMRB and BBC Charts 1972 Top Continental Female singles seller award with "Come What May"

Her new single is "The Love In Your Eyes"



Nana Mouskouri

Nana Mouskouri has won the 1972 Top Continental Female Album—seller award.

Nana Mouskouri British Concert (Double Album)



No.1

From Phonogram—
the best sounds around

Elton John: Just trying to find something different



Extra-ordinary Elton John talks to Valerie Mabbs

THERE was a time when young Reg Dwight lived in Pinner and just dreamed about being a part of that big music industry. Piano lessons at an early age got him off on to the right foot, and then after signing up to DJM Records, with songwriting partner Bernie Taupin, Elton John (as he became) began appearing in the "right" places hoping to further his cause.

At an Edward Woodward reception some years ago, Elton persuaded me to hear some of his tapes — and very good they were, too. He's come a long way since then, and now it's my turn to be standing outside — at the front door of his imposing home on a secluded estate in Virginia Water.

Inside a Hoover is roaring, then as the bell rings the sound stops, and Elton's mum is opening the door. She's been clearing up the debris following a hectic party which Elton hosted — to follow on to the New Year party held by Donovan at his nearby home.

Elton lists as his other "neighbours", Keith Moon and Chris Squire who's just moved in a short distance away. The whole atmosphere of Elton's home is luxurious — And somewhat bizarre.

'Everybody lives here'

"I love it here," he says. "I've got so much stuff that I could never get into a flat like I had before. It's so peaceful, and everybody lives round here!"

Usually Elton doesn't manage to spend much time at home, but since suffering from glandular fever and having completed an incredible eight worldwide tours the pre-

vious year, during 1972 he has managed to relax a little more.

"We did a three week college tour of America to break Davey Johnstone in, then a big one at the end of the year. One tour of America a year is enough, that's about all you can take."

"I'd rather get it all over with in one go — not that I don't enjoy working there — but it's better than breaking it up into parts. The Moodies go over every year for their annual visit, and that's really ideal."

Elton is currently planning a lengthy tour of England — about 30 dates in all — and is having no trouble planning venues.

Covering the country

"I want to get back to the Locarno Streathams and the Basildon Gilderdromes," he explains. "There are loads of places to play that would be a good laugh. There are no 10,000-seaters, but you can cover the country quite well."

For his American tour Elton carefully planned his show to include a tap dance to Singing In The Rain, featuring himself, Legs Larry and 10 lovely ladies known as the Rockettes! And the whole show was choreographed by Debbie Reynolds' choreographer.

"We had to do it right," says Elton. "You couldn't have 10 girls coming on kicking their legs up in any way. Larry and I kicked along with them, and the kids lapped it all up. I think it would definitely work in England because people's sense of humour here is better than in America."

But we won't be seeing the Rockettes or Larry on

Elton's next tour, because Larry is busy forming his own group, and Elton is more intent on presenting his next album, Don't Shoot Me I'm Only The Piano Player, to the British public.

The album was recorded at Strawberry studios and features a song I Want To Be A Teenage Idol, dedicated to Marc Bolan — "he likes it" — and a very

out before Christmas, and that would be a terrible mistake.

"James Taylor, Carole King, Neil Young, all the Warner Brothers lot have albums out... 700 albums this week, folks. It's the same with the single, Dick James thinks it will be bad for my career to put it out."

But Elton says the release will be January 12 —



moving number, Have Mercy On The Criminal, as well as Elton's next single, Daniel, due for release at the end of this month.

"I don't want to get into the syndrome of releasing too many albums a year," Elton told me. "And Honky is still selling well in the States. But everyone wanted this album to be

and he's banking his hopes on the single which is a complete contrast to Honky Cat. His own contract with DJM is set to run another two years, but Elton is forming his own Rocket Records company for the benefit of other artists. Offices have already been set up in Wardour Street, and business affairs will be handled by

Elton's manager John Reid, with help of various kinds from Steve Brown and Stuart Apps, previously of DJM.

"I'd like to get a great reggae album out on the label and to find a good soul act," Elton told me. "What we want to do basically is to get a better deal for the artist... instead of two percent over the first per cent years with three successful albums. We're all brought down with big system companies. WEA may seem hip and groovy, but they're into parking lots and shoes."

"The Beatles got ripped off for masses and masses. They were the innovators of the demand for a high royalty rate; a new group from Clapham want 50,000 dollars advance and they've got a good chance of getting it now, but that would never have happened then."

Black and white

"Everyone's learned by their mistakes. They started Apple and we learnt from it because where they went wrong is written down in black and white." (Elton was referring to Peter McCabe and Robert Schonfeld's Apple To The Core).

Elton is still basically the shy person he has always been, but now he enjoys mixing with other musicians. Marc Bolan is a good friend — though Elton hasn't yet seen him work — and Elton spent an afternoon in the studio to record his section for Born to Boogie.

"I had a good time," he told me. "When we did Children Of The Revolution in the studio it was so good, but it couldn't go out

as a single because it was over seven minutes long."

Elton also became friendly with David Cassidy in America.

"He's so fed up with what he's doing," he told me. "He gets up at six every morning of the year, does the Partridge Family, then he's recording. He's trying to break away. I remember when he made Rock Me Baby he was all pleased with that."

Keeping in touch

David, says Elton, is "so sweet". He'll be playing piano for David at his Wembley concert, if that's possible. In fact Elton keeps very much in touch with pop's happenings. He laughs at the fact that Radio One banned Hi Hi Hi, but play Lou Reed's Walk On The Wild Side... and bemoans the lack of support given to Colin Blunstone's I Don't Believe In Miracles.

"How didn't that record make it," he wonders. "I can't believe that wasn't a big hit. I would have put £100 on that record being a top five."

Which highlights just how strange this old business can be.

"I like to send it all up," says Elton. "I like to wear outrageous things. I started that about three years ago, but I shudder to think what I looked like! I got knocked for it then, but a lot of people have come along and done the same things since, and people have become so much more colourful. Now I'm just trying to find something a little bit different."

In search of the extraordinary undoubtedly some more success and luxury to boot!