

Earl Wilson

David Cassidy puts his money in oil

Publishers-Hall Syndicate

NEW YORK — Gentle-voiced little David Cassidy was buying a pineapple island in the Pacific from his big earnings as a teen-agers' superstar that recent afternoon. He was rehearsing in a studio on W. 41st Street and gesturing to the orchestra as he sang to an imaginary sweetheart. "I can't live without chuuu." He was the least ostentatious, and most successful, man in the building, and probably the smallest (120 pounds) and youngest (22 next month).

He'd been drinking from a can of beer as he worked, but with his bell-bottom corduroys flapping, we moved to a quiet upstairs room around a piano.

"Who's taking care of your money, David?"

"LEE BUSH, a business manager and accountant. I'm investing in oil. I'm in the process of buying quite a bit of land on an island in the Pacific." He explained as he looked up at me, "If you own a lot of land, you can stand in the middle of it and they really can't see you. I like to be alone sometimes and I find it difficult to be alone. It'd be kind of nice to live on a farm and eat some fruit off the trees. Just enough space to spread out and be free and be in a positive frame of mind."

"You're a positive thinker?"

"I'm more a positive believer than a positive thinker." He tugged at the collar of his flowered shirt. "Positive thinking is not necessarily positive believing. Sometimes you say, 'I'm not scared' and you're shaking like a leaf."



David Cassidy

"Is this Dr. Norman Vincent Peale?"

HE WAGGED his head negatively.

"Actually my mother and I formed this cult."

David added, "My real mother," to distinguish between Shirley Jones, his stepmother, the wife of Jack Cassidy, who plays his mother on "The Partridge Family" which brought him fame and riches, and his real mother who brought him up, Evelyn Ward. "What accounts for your success?"

"I suppose it's timing. The vehicle, the show, had a lot to do with it. And the records. People were ready for it and for me."

"When did you start doing good?"

"When did I start making bread? When I was 18, I made \$5,000 that year, when I was 19, under \$10,000. From then on, I don't know what happened. Something blessed me."

WAS HE GOING to make a million dollars this year?

"I haven't heard any legitimate figure. You can estimate \$1 million, \$2 million, or \$100,000. Depends how many records you sell, how you do on concerts. . ."

He was smaller than I expected, his hair not as long, his manner quieter and easier: for example, his greeting to me was: "Good of you to come." And his manner with the musicians was almost apologetic rather than that of a lordly star. He remarked to one of his entourage, "That girl was really pretty, Henry," referring to some visitor. He said he had no plans to get married. "But some day I'd like to do that with somebody."

"How are things with your father? Somebody said you were asked, 'How does it feel to be the star of the family?' and you said, 'You'd have to ask my father.'"

"I couldn't have said that," he smiled. "He and I get along fine. I don't see him that often. It's a pleasant relationship. But I'm not really a member of his family. His family is Shirley and his kids. I'm his son but I really never lived with him after I was 5 or 6. He left, I think, when I was 5."

"I'm a great fan of your father's," I said.

"Me, too," David said. "I love to watch him work." He wore a ring from his father with the family crest, and a chained medal around his neck from his mother. "But he had nothing to do with my career. No one really did. I did it myself."