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Arkansas Memories Project

Interview with
Dale Hawkins
North Little Rock, Arkansas
16 January 2008

Interviewer: Bob Cochran

Dale Hawkins: Okay. Then I dump—I take it right out of—out of it and shoot it right into the Alesis or either to Nuendo which I used to mix with. It's a—to me, it's as good as Pro Tools. Pro Tools is for somebody that's, you know, is really into high tech [gack?], to me, is gonna do a good job. I know a lot of guys—but I can do anything with Nuendo. I mean—well, I—yeah, because software costs me \$5,000, and the cards that I got to use here—I've got three different sound cards—I've got—that I use when I start to mixing. Because that's the key to it. The key to it is the sound.

Bob Cochran: Yeah.

DH: Yeah. You want me another way? Just tell me.

Kris Katrosh: We just want to put you back in the spot.

DH: Sure. Sure.

KK: Slide your chair up. Sorry. There you go.

DH: And I'll show you what it looks like before you leave, okay?

BC: Okay. Are you ready to go?

Joy Endicott: Just about.

Scott Lunsford: Not quite.

BC: Because I don't want to miss—well, let's just wait because I'll just ask you to say it again if we—and I'll stay with it. Don't worry. . .

DH: All right.

BC: . . . I won't forget this.

DH: Okay.

SL: Okay. You just need to sign up here. And I don't know your zip code.

JE: You can move around a little bit after I do this to you, too.

BC: Yeah.

JE: As long as you don't leave the chair [laughs].

BC: Here's what I'm going to do; I'm going to take this off.

JE: Okay.

Lynn Hodges: Hey Joy, could you get Bob to hand you that green folder and CD?

JE: Yes, Ma'am.

KK: I'm gonna drag you over just sit where you are.

DH: All right.

KK: There you go.

BC: Okay. Great. 'Cause I'll burn them. Okay. Want me to sign, too?

SL: Yeah.

BC: All right. Right there.

DH: What I was gonna tell you—what I'm doing now is—they have—doo wop shows are big now, and they—I bet you I do two doo wop shows a month. The Ultimate doo wop shows all over, man, and I just—I do at least one or two a month.

BC: I'm not going to be on camera, though, am I?

SL: You have to go somewhere and do them, or. . .?

DH: Oh, yeah, I go everywhere, man. I got—Saturday night, the twenty-fifth, I'll be in Dallas, and from there I'll do one in Cincinnati and one in Atlanta. . .

SL: You know, I think I just quit. [Laughter] I'm just going to follow this guy. [Laughter] I'm just going to go with you.


BC: Kris, you gotta look for yourself a new guy. [Laughter]

DH: It is what it is.

BC: He's gonna be a roadie for Dale.

DH: Shoot.

KK: I could think of worse jobs. [Laughter]

 DH: It is—you know, it's kind of—it really is, you know—I mean, as far as certain types of music—I mean, I don't have one. I mean, throw me in the middle of all of them; I'll come out [Laughter]. But this is true. I—like. . .

KK: We're rolling.

SL: Oh, okay. So we would need to—you want me to go ahead and intro this?

DH: This Axel Foley?

SL: We good over here Joy.

JE: I'm rolling, yah.

SL: Okay I'm gonna.

DH: Axel Foley? [Laughter]

SL: Go ahead.

DH: Go ahead. What did you want me to say?

SL: Well, I've got to do some business here right at the front end.

DH: Okay.

SL: First of all I've got to say that today we're doing a recording for the Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History. We are with Dale Hawkins. . .

DH: Hello.

SL: . . .and Bob Cochran, and we are at the Hawk's Nest Recording Studio in North Little Rock, Arkansas. Today's date is January 16, 2008. And, Dale, I'm going to ask if it's all right with you that we're videotaping this, and that this tape will reside in the archives of the special collections unit at the University of Arkansas Mullins Library in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

DH: And that's what it's for.

SL: That's what it's for.

DH: Then, yes turn it. [Laughs]

SL: Okay. That's great. And then—let me think. There was one other thing. What else am I supposed to do here? Oh, we need to have you say your name and spell your full name for us.

DH: Delmar Allen Hawkins, Jr. D-E-L-M-A-R. A-L-L-E-N. H-A-W-K-I-N-S.
Junior.

SL: Good. And you go by Dale.



DH: Dale. Mmm hmm. I got hooked with that name. Whenever they started off—and you won't believe this [Laughter]. The stuff went to Chess, alright, and I played baseball and I was Del, D-E-L, because Delmar—D-E-L-M-A-R—everybody called me Del.

SL: Yeah.

DH: Whenever it came out, they had D-A-L-E on it, and the thing was a hit, and I—they couldn't pull it in to change it. They spelled Susie Q wrong on the LP three different ways. I mean, you know, it was—it was, you know, a little different.

SL: Okay, now. I'm going to let you look at Bob now.

DH: Okay.

Bob Cochran: Okay.

SL: I'll just get out of the room, so y'all. . .

BC: All right.

SL: . . .y'all just get on. . .

BC: Well, let's start with Delmar then. You—that's a family name, right? Because you had an uncle, or it was your dad.

DH: It was my dad.

BC: Your dad's name was Delmar.

DH: Yeah. Mmm hmm.

BC: Okay.

SL: Bob, we do need to kind of get some chronology here—who his parents were and if he knows anything about his grandparents and. . .

BC: Sure. We'll go—we'll start there.

DH: I tell you what—you want to do that now?

SL: Uh huh.

BC: Yeah. Let's go ahead and start, so—since we started with Delmar, was your dad also named after a parent or grandparent of his?

DH: I really don't know.

BC: You just don't know.

DH: I don't know. Uh uh.

BC: Okay. What do you know about your dad's parents?

DH: Um. . .

BC: Where they were from, where your family was from. . .

DH: Family—my—God only knows about my granddad and grandmother, and my



uncles and aunts—let me get my water. I'm gonna need it. Oh, here it is. And the Hawkinses settled up in North Arkansas. They went in there to—the reason why was—what I was told that they settled in there was to pull the timber, excuse me, out with mules because they couldn't get up there with anything else.

BC: Yeah.



[00:06:13] DH: And so all Hawkinses played music; they played some kind of instrument or whatever, sang . . . and our entertainment—what we had to do on a Friday night or a Saturday night was everybody would get together and put a kind of a washtub out in the middle of the floor, and all of 'em gather around and we would be—we'd play and sing and spit their tobacco in that. And I had some great, great times as a kid growing up. I didn't get to stay up there. I was only

with my Grandma Hawkins for a short time, about three—about three months, and I went to the school in St. Paul there.

BC: Okay.

DH: and I came back to Louisiana. Louisiana is my home where I was born and raised.

BC: Okay. So you—was that because of your mother's family was down there?

DH: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: Okay. Where was it in Louisiana? We're talking north Louisiana?

DH: I was born on a plantation—gosh, about twenty miles south of Monroe.

BC: Okay.

DH: An area called Gold Mine.

BC: Okay.

DH: It's a—the plantation was a big plantation. But we were sharecroppers.

BC: Okay.

DH: And I was going through some papers the other day when Mother passed on and I found a receipt—this might be of interest to you or not—but where my grandfather paid Dr. [McConnell?] the only doctor in that part of the parishes . . .

BC: Uh huh.

DH: . . . twelve dollars—he paid him two dollars a month to come out and bring me into the world.

BC: Take care of your mama while she was pregnant and deliver you.

DH: Yes. That's it.

BC: Wow.

DH: Twelve dollars. Two dollars a month.

BC: I imagine they would be *quite* interested in that.

DH: [Laughs]

BC: It cost a whole lot more now.

DH: Oh, yeah. Yeah. [Laughter]

BC: So he came to the house. You were delivered at home.

DH: At home, yeah.

BC: Yeah. What year were you born?

DH: 1936.

BC: 1936. Okay.

DH: Mmm hmm. Yeah.

BC: So you've got roots in Arkansas and Louisiana, basically.


DH: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

BC: Okay. And you mentioned music. Did you—what—what instruments did your father play?

DH: Almost anything you handed him. He was a good guitar player, bass, mandolin, fiddle, but I would say that his real instrument was guitar, lead guitar. He was really the best musician of all the Hawkinses. He—that's—you know, being a musician and being on the road—he and my mother only stayed together about two-and-a-half years, so I was raised by my grandparents in Louisiana.

BC: Maternal grandparents.

DH: Right. And I—that led, I think, to a lot of the types of sounds that I do music wise



because I was in the melting pot of good music—is about the time that—when—

when—being a marshal, he could—he could go in the saloons—is what they called, saloons, and you’d have the front would be where the white people were, and if you swing the door, you’d be where—and you’d hear Hank Williams sing “Lovesick Blues.” And then on the other side, you’d go into Elmore James [] “Dust My Broom,” or, you know, some good—some good, classic blues. Plus the churches—I mean, people don’t realize that all of the churches with the exception of the Catholic and Episcopal sang the same hymns but sang it with different feelings.

BC: Just a little different, yeah.

DH: You see what I’m saying?

BC: Yes.

DH: It’s how you express the spirit, when you being, you know—and I used to sell Grit [laughs]—Grit newspapers [laughs] probably nobody knows what [] they are, but . . . [<http://www.grit.com/>]

BC: Oh, I know what they are, yeah.

DH: And I got to be real good friends with Professor [Lyles?]. He was head of the Black school for that district, and he was the preacher also. And I got to go up and sit in and sing with them.

BC: In the church service.

DH: yes, sir.

BC: That’s great. You mentioned the word *marshal*. We hadn’t talked about—who was the marshal? Was that your grandfather?

DH: My grandfather, yeah.

BC: Your maternal grandfather.

DH: My maternal grandfather. Whenever—whenever he was elected marshal, I was about—about two years old. And so we moved from there into a little town called Mangham. M-A-N-G-H-A-M. It's about twelve miles—let's just say—stick with the Monroe place on the map.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And so we have parishes in Louisiana.

BC: Not counties, parishes.

DH: Not counties, yeah. And it was great. I got a good basic foundation for—even though I didn't have my parents with me there, my—in right and wrong.

BC: From your grandparents.

DH: From my grandfather. And he didn't talk much, but every time he talked, he said something.

BC: Said something, yeah.

DH: [Laughs]

BC: What about your grandmother? Did she sing? Or did she play any instruments?

DH: My grandmother—no, no, she didn't. She was—[Momma?] was with that many kids around and I had—I had uncles and aunts. And she—she had her hands full taking care of—of the family in general. . .

BC: Yeah.

DH: . . . 'cause everybody would be there to eat, you know, when it was time to come in from the field. You know, she'd hand us something to eat, and we had a little pallet out in the breezeway where we'd lay down.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And until we left there—I was born working.

BC: Yeah.

DH: I never knew how *not* to.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But I was really—whenever we moved—we moved from a small town [of] 270 people—the war [WWII] was on—to Bossier—Shreveport area.

BC: Yeah. So you moved right across the state, basically.

DH: Yeah. And I didn't like it. I didn't like it [laughs].

BC: That was the big city, wasn't it?

DH: It was. In two weeks I had me a job at a pack-a-sack store mopping the floor for \$10 a week. My \$20 I left Bossier City going this way. Get me out of town [laughs]. I'm serious. I started running, you know, at fifteen. At fifteen I was able to—to get my uncle to sign for me to just be able to get into the navy, and so I spent, like, '53, the latter of '52, '53 and part of '54 in Korea.

BC: Okay.

DH: And I came back—well there was only one thing that I wanted to do. You know, I wanted to go ahead and try to do some things that I felt like—as far as education was concerned—but, when you—when you start playing music—and that's what you really *are*, you know, if you're a creative person—you—you don't—you might punch the key to put the money in and not know what kind of loaf of bread the lady got from the store, all right? Whenever you're—you hear some music, you don't know *why* you like it, you know?



BC: Yeah.

DH: and the reason why you like it is because it's the spirit. If it touches you, you know—go way back.

BC: Well, talk about when you first noticed that. Because you were singing in church real early.

DH: Oh, yeah.

BC: What was the—what was—if you had to describe when you first knew that . . .

Trey Marley: Bob, I need you to stop for just one second.

BC: Thanks.

JE: I've got some here if you want some more.

DH: My—my—my biggest danger is dehydration.

BC: Okay, well . . .

DH: So, I mean, I keep it with me, you know.

BC: All right, well you're—you ain't gonna get dehydrated today. She'll—she'll come closer to drowning you . . .

DH: Yeah.

BC: . . . than dehydrating you. You ready to go?

DH: Okay. And I . . .

BC: Alright.

DH: I spent—I spent, well basically it was a year four months 13 days in Korea, when the war—anyway I got hurt and I got a medical discharge for—they sent me out to California. There wasn't anything that—that could be done. But I—I got out of the Navy and went—went back to Bossier . . .

BC: Right.

DH: . . . where my mother lived.

BC: So you were over in Korea while the war was going on?

DH: There was some—oh yeah—that’s—actually the Korean War went on through until—til ’55.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But, like I said, I lied about my age.

BC: To get in young.

DH: Yeah, I got in young it was a good place to—got—had some meals everyday and had a place to sleep, and you know. It was a growing thing for me.

BC: Uh-huh

DH: So I—I’m—I’m grateful for the opportunity to have served. [To me?] I’m really grateful for is that we have the facilities that we have like the VA [Veterans Affairs] hospitals and people can knock them all day long and say things about them. And I’ll tell you what, the hospital here is one of the best VA hospitals in the world . . .

BC: Mhmm.

DH: . . . and they take care of us.

BC: Boy that’s good to hear that.

DH: Yes sir.

BC: And, I’ve heard that from other people as well.

DH: And I pay tribute to ’em in the new CD that’s out now.

BC: Okay.

DH: [] so, people really don't know until they've been there.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know?

BC: Yeah. Do you have anything else you want to say about Korea? What—what unit you were in . . .

DH: I was on a destroyer . . .

BC: . . . where you did basic training or ?

DH: Basic training I took was Marine—Marine training was out on the west coast. Let me see, what was the name? We closed—we closed it down. I can't think of the name. . .

BC: Ok.

DH: . . . the name of it. But I was on a destroyer [USS] Maddox DD-731 and I was the gunnery yeoman which comes—and I had to—had to keep track of all the ammunition and all of the—you know, the shells and where—how many was in each turret and what they needed, you know, whenever they—when we was firing off, how soon to get 'em in there and who was going to get 'em and I had to keep track of that. That was my job.

BC: Ok.

DH: And um . . .

BC: How did you get hurt?

DH: Believe it or not—when I was—we would—we were firing off Goat Island and, they fired, and—when they did—the [story?] comes like this [gestures to show rocking movement] . . .

BC: Yeah.

DH: . . . and then back and when it went like this and started to go back I reached for the top bar and fell [laughs]—fell and hit the lifeline on my back and couldn't—couldn't move for a while.

BC: Ok.

DH: But um . . .

BC: They got you so you could move again.

DH: Yeah, they did that.

BC: And they're still taking good care of you.

DH: They are, sure, for sure.

BC: Well, good. Now let's go way back.

DH: Ok.

BC: Unless you've got anything else . . .

DH: No, I've . . .

BC: . . . you want to say about Korea? Remember I had asked you and then we got interrupted. Your earliest sense—when did you sort of first know that music was going to be it for you? You mentioned . . .

DH: I didn't . . .

BC: . . . singing in church real early. . .

DH: Oh, well, you don't really—I didn't *really* know that . . .

BC: Uh-huh.

DH: . . . you know. You—you had—and I'm gonna tell you this—people can laugh and say what they want to but, you take—there's—uh, like you have Baptist,

Methodist, etc., yeah, Pentecostal. Wanna tell you, when I was a kid there was a Pentecostal church about two blocks from my house and on a Sunday nights buddy, they got it on. I mean they played some music, it was just so great, you know. And then they'd look like—well—that guy can't play, his hand is this way—you're not supposed to be able to play—they played. And then you understand what the movement of the spirit really is when you see—or listen to them. But that was [phone rings]. . . I think ...[phone rings] excuse me just a second.

BC: No problem.

DH: Hello. Hey Jerry, how you doing? Excuse me, it's my brother.

BC: Sure.

DH: I wanted to wish you a happy birthday tomorrow, tell you for the past—past couple of days I've—I've been feeling real good. . . . You remember the crew that was up—that came up to us—filmed the deal up at St. Paul when we had the family reunion . . . well they're here now doing a thing on me and I'm sitting here . . . well anyway, happy birthday . . . sorry, sometime I know you're busy and, you know, but I'll give you a holler tomorrow OK? . . . Oh yeah, you take care now . . . I love you bro, bye.

BC: Are you rolling and stuff?

DH: Ready. I'm sorry –I just ...

BC: No problem. All right. Well, you were talking about when you were young, going down to that . . .

DH: Right.

BC: Pentecostal church ...

DH: Oh, yeah.

BC: ... two blocks from your house and you had a sense that this was—this was ...

DH: I mean it—it ...

BC: ... something special.

DH: It was special. You know, because, you—basically whatever you hear comes from a—regardless of what kind of music it is it's —its' the feeling and—and—and the phrasing of that feeling that goes through whether it be opera, whether it be bluegrass, whether it be what, you know. And—and if—if it'll—if you—if you ... anything that'll reach in there and touch you—whether you could be riding down might not even know you like—you're hearing something you like, you know, the next thing you know you're singing with it, you know. It's—it's just a ... different things for different people and it's where you were raised and how you were raised.

BC: Yeah. So it touch—this—this music in this church touched you?

DH: Oh yeah. All of the churches around.

BC: And you wanted to be a part of it, so you were willing to sing in church?

DH: Oh *yeah*.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Yeah, well we sung in—I mean if—every time the church door opened, we was kicked in it just about [laughs].

BC: So your grandparents were church going people?

DH: Oh yeah.

BC: They took you to church?

DH: Yeah, and ...

BC: Ok. Well let me ask you...

DH: ... if we didn't go and we were supposed to they knew that too 'cause I mean everybody knew [laughs] everybody's business, you know, you couldn't get away with much, man [laughs].

BC: Then you mentioned the pastor and the schoolteacher ...

DH: Uh-huh.

BC: ... of the black church ...

DH: Professor [Lyles?] was his name.

BC: Professor [Lyles?] yea, and he encouraged you to come to his church?

DH: Yeah, he encouraged me, I just—I just, you know, I told him how much I liked it and he said “Why don't you just come up here on Sunday?” And—and, like, wow!

BC: Yeah.

DH: And it was, you know, it was a thing where ... it was no—no color. It was *sound*.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know? That's—that's part of it.

BC: Well just in 15 minutes here you've mentioned a pretty wide musical stream. That you went around with the marshal ...

DH: Uh-huh.

BC: ... and you'd hear country music and blues ...

DH: Uh-huh.

BC: ... and then you'd hear gospel in both black and white churches ...

DH: Yeah. Right.

BC: So how old are you when this is going on?

DH: I'm—let's see ... seven—about seven years old.

BC: Yeah. Okay. Now, at your own pace, just bring it forward. When did you form your first band? When did you start playing instruments? Things like that.

DH: Oh, okay. Well, I—whenever I got out of the navy, we started playing—I say “we,” the band I put together—on the strip out in Bossier because I knew I wasn't gonna []. I'd go in and I'd just be—you know, the next day I wouldn't have any—I was trying to go to college, you know, to try to do everything that everybody else said, “That's what you're supposed to do.”

BC: Yeah. Didn't fit.

DH: And I found out that everybody just go and do, you know [], but the—you always want to, you know. To me, [] my end and what really is lasting is the creative heart of creating music, you know. That—that—in other words, take it from the note right there to that one there [] the end. And that's what I like to do. I mean, whenever our first record that I had was a hit, it was a song called “Susie Q,” and it took me three months to put that song together—three months—we'd play, maybe, two nights a week somewhere, you know, to make enough money to do whatever [laughs] we did [].

BC: This is in Bossier City, now.

DH: In Bossier City because—see, we had no recording studios; all we had was a radio station there. [00:24:14]

BC: Of course, that was a big radio station.

DH: Oh, yeah. KWKH was a big radio station.

BC: Yeah. Yeah.

DH: So, if you listen to it, you'll hear one thing—and I'm not—I'm saying, "Thank you, Lord, for letting me have it," okay, but if you listen to that song, you'll hear song starts off with a cowbell [] drums. []. You'll hear it kick in with a blues and a [] lick. You'll hear it in two until it comes to the bridge, then it goes into a four, okay? And this—I mean, I didn't know exactly what I was doing, but I knew when it was *right* and when it was wrong [laughs] and changed it, you know. And so I went in and demoed, laid it down a couple of times—and a friend of mine was a disc jockey there at a radio station called KENT in Shreveport. And so one night we were able to get KWKH changed towers. They were a 50,000 watt station; and we'll get into some good talk about the 50,000 watt stations.

BC: Yeah.

DH: They're very, very important.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And so we had an hour and a half to—of the studio. I mean, to be able to lay down that song. I know three of us rode our bicycles up there, okay? And all we had was the studio part—we had four microphones. We had four microphones then the [] and then they had—we used RCA pods, you know. And the thing about it is—and this will always be true—you've got to find it or create it. You've got to learn it before you can perform it. And we knew the song when we

went in the studio. I mean, there wasn't no two ways about it. I mean, we were able to get down six takes of that song. Having a good time, you know. Some of the—there was three black guys that used to come in the record store all the time, and we'd get together out on the street and be singing, and they came up, and you can hear them clapping in the background [DH claps his hands]—having a good time. But we knew the song.

BC: Before you ever got there.

DH: Before, Lord, yeah.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And that comes on the heading of producing.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And with every song I ever had that was a hit, I'd produced and got *into* producing. And now they—they're up to, like, nineteen songs that I was responsible for as a producer as being a hit.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And so—back to the—to that area, I guess, that you're looking at—at the KWKH area. And the bad thing about it was nobody knew what to do after we got it cut, so we sent it up to Chess [Leonard Chess of Chess Records]; he likes it, and three months later, I'm still waiting. The other guys were able to go ahead and get a job somewhere with another band or whatever. And I stayed and wrassled with old Stan Lewis and Leonard Chess until I met a man named Jerry Wexler from Atlantic Records.

BC: Mmm hmm. Sure.

DH: He wanted it, and I told him—I said, “Mr. Wexler, Mr. Chess has got it, and he’s just sitting on it. And I got to get it out because I’ve got to, you know, make something happen. We’ve got a hit song.” And he said, “What?” He said, “You tell him I said this.” And I’m not gonna say it the way he said it, but, anyway, he said, “You tell him you talked to me, I want it, and for him to either”—oh, how can I say it—“Go to the bathroom on it ...

BC: Yeah.

DH: ... or take a dump or whatever,” anyway.

BC: I think—we’re archival, right? You can say anything you want.

Unknown Voice: You can say anything you want.

BC: What you’re trying to say is “Shit or get off the pot.”

DH: Okay. He said, “Tell that son—You tell him to either shit or get out a the pot.” I said, “Just like that?” He said, “Just like that.” So I called Leonard and I told him—I said, “Mr. Chess,” I said, “I know you’ve got a lot of things going.” I said, “I was talking to a Mr. Wexler, and he really likes the song, and he wants to put it out.” And he started to say something—anyway, I said, “And he said for me to tell you this just this way: ‘Leonard, either fucking shit or get off the pot!’” There was a pause there for about ten seconds. I never heard in my whole life Leonard saying ten seconds of nothing. He said, “I’ll call you back in a week.” Three days and it was on the street—bam! I mean, so—and it broke in rhythm and blues. It went first rhythm and blues, like, to number seven in the rhythm and blues chart. And it was them having to take a blues label with a white artist [] and put him out into a pop field.

BC: [Coughs]

DH: You know. The first white artist to ever play the Apollo Theater, was me. The first white artist on that label, was me. And the main reason was that he thought basically that I was part black or black or whatever—coon-ass—whatever you want to call anybody from [our?] part of the world.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And so that—that's—was how "Susie Q" got to come out. Had to break it—from that time, what I mean *break*: is—each city is considered a market. I say New York is a 16.5. You know what I'm talking about.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Nashville is maybe a ten, you know. Had to break it city by city through the North from Philadelphia—from Chicago across to Philadelphia and then up. And it was—quite some different experiences for me, I'll tell ya.

BC: Did they just put out the ones you recorded in Bossier City?

DH: Yes, Sir.

BC: Straight up. They didn't re-record it or anything.

DH: Bam! No.

BC: Okay.

DH: The only thing—and I tell you what—that Leonard did that was—that really helped a lot—I think that it was there already, but he had just built a—2120 S. Michigan [Ave., Chicago, IL]—a real good recording studio and had just finished making a long channel tunnel for echo. And we were down there fooling around

until we got it—the sound—where it would be like—it’s not—it wouldn’t be slapback. It would be like reverb in and out.

BC: Okay.

DH: As a matter of fact ... and that helped a lot. I was playing with Albert Lee over in England—a great player, guitar player—and so—this will []. He’s playing, and boy, I mean he is wearing it out.

BC: Oh, yeah, he’s the “Ten Years After” guy, right?

DH: No. He’s the guy. Albert Lee is from England.

BC: Yeah.

DH: His group was Hogan’s Heroes but he plays all of the stuff here in—like the Everly Brothers and everybody, and stays in the studio—picker. He’s a great—there’s a picture of him right there.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Albert Lee.

BC: Right out by your door. I saw it coming in.

DH: Yeah. So I said, “Albert, what are you *doing*, son?” He said, “I’m using this third string to get that reverb sound you all used to get.” I said to myself, “Reverb?” And I backed up. I never told him there was no reverb in 1956 [laughs] and 1957; there was reverb later, you know?

BC: Yeah.

DH: So I never explained that before.

BC: But that tunnel thing that Leonard Chess had ...

DH: It gave us just enough to close in a little space in there.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And it helped out a lot. [00:32:52]

BC: Yeah. So you were twenty-one years old.

DH: Yeah.

BC: And it's a kind of unusual thing because your first song, your first record is a *huge* monster hit.

DH: Yeah.

BC: Okay. Then what?

DH: Then what? Ooh. Let me have a drink here and start to talk. Mmm. I ran into some of the greatest musicians and people that I'd ever met in my life—in Chicago at Chess.

BC: Yeah. You were up there with Chess. It was a golden era up there. Willie Dixon's up there.

DH: Let me tell you what—Dixon? Well, Dixon wrote the words to “My Babe,” which we did, which was a Rosetta Tharpe song, a church song.

BC: Yeah. Sure, “This train []”

DH: “This train is bound for glory.” That's right. I do that song every show, just about. But I got to go—I got to hang out with Muddy [Waters]. I went on the South Side with Little Walter and Howlin' Wolf and did about fifteen minutes on stage with—I mean, they were like, you know, kind of telling me how to get along, you know, in situations.

BC: In the city.

DH: Yeah. And Sonny Boy Williamson gave me some of the best advice that I think anybody would ever ... under certain ...

BC: Now this is the—this is [Alex] “Rice” Miller, not the original Sonny—well, he’s dead by this time.

DH: Sonny—no Sonny Boy—1956—I mean ’57—Sonny Boy wasn’t dead.

BC: No, I mean John Williamson—you know, the *first* Sonny Boy Williamson—he’s been killed in 1949, isn’t he?

DH: Oh, yeah I guess so. I don’t know. I just know ...

BC: But you mean the guy from Arkansas. The guy that played on “King Biscuit.”

DH: Right. Yeah. I didn’t know where he was from; I just know he was there, and he had some—“Don’t start me talkin’, I’ll tell everything I know.”

BC: Oh, yeah, “Fattenin’ Frogs for Snakes.”

DH: Yeah.

BC: I mean, he had all the—yeah. Okay.

DH: That’s it, “Fattenin’ Frogs” yeah. So I’m sitting in the lobby—we’re sitting waiting to go in and see Leonard, and I was trying to get enough [laughs] money out of him to get an amplifier because we were pulling everything we had—mics and electrical cords for the bass and the guitars through two amps. And he said, “Hey, Dale [].” He reached down in his briefcase and takes out a little flask, and he said, “I’ll tell you what, Dale, you want a little taste of this?” I said, “No, Sonny, I’ve got to go in. I want to try to keep my head as straight as I can.” He said, “I want to tell you something.” He said “Out here in this world in this business, people are going to try to get you to take all kinds of things, drink all

kinds of. Whenever you get a little uptight, instead of going crazy with them crazy [], just take you a little nip of this; that's all you need." I said, "Sonny, hand me that." [Laughs] And that was somebody—I mean, didn't care, really, didn't *know* me, yet he cared enough about me to try to give me some advice. The demons—I mean, they're there, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And being creative people—I mean, it's like it is today. You out—now they're saying it's steroids, but I don't know anything about that. All I know is back then ... it was whiskey and pills, you know. But what he was trying to tell me was, you know, "Stay away from everything if you can." Appreciated that. Muddy gave me some good advice, too. He talked about how to get along with the Chess family's family. As a matter of fact, I'm probably one of the few people that ever went out and stayed a couple of nights at Leonard's house. Because they didn't understand me being a gentleman, you know. You're raised a certain way—"No, Ma'am; yes, Ma'am," whatever it was. And so I consider myself a lucky person to have been able to have associated and was able to hang out with some of those guys. [00:36:43]

BC: With both the Chess family and with Sonny Boy Williamson and Muddy Waters.

DH: Yes, Sir. That's right.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And anybody wants to bother you, just call Wolf. Howlin' Wolf's [laughs] head was as big as—he could put a harmonica in his mouth and sing and play, too. Now, you quit laughing, girl! That's the truth. [Laughs]

BC: You know who you sound a little bit like when you talk about this? It's clear that one of your real loves is producing.

DH: Yeah. Oh, yeah. That's all I...

BC: I mean, some people just like to play the guitar and sing and, you know, make—be the vocalist, but you like to do the whole thing. You sound like Sam. You sound like Sam Phillips a little bit.

DH: Do I? I don't ...

BC: You were talking about slapback a few minutes ago, and that's his word.

DH: Oh, sure it is! I mean, he had slapback—I mean, not before—not before reverb. Slapback was there—I'm sorry [] take that back. Slapback, *then* reverb.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Okay? It's just like that up there. It was—it was all tape looped at a certain speed until somebody got it and figured out how to make it a little bit different, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: The first electric slide blues lick that was ever a hit, that was ever played, was played in Chicago by a guy named Hubert Summerlin ...

BC: Oh, yeah.

DH: ... on a thing called "Little Red Rooster." And Hubert is an Arkansas musician.

BC: Yeah.

DH: He's still alive. I played the Chicago Blue Festival with him five years ago.

BC: He's finally getting some recognition, isn't he.

DH: Yeah. I hope he does.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Yeah. 'Cause he's so good.

BC: Okay. So "Susie Q"'s a big hit. Do they put you on any of these package shows where you go around and—you know, there are seven or eight acts on the same bill?

DH: Oh, Lord, yeah.

BC: Because that was so popular then.

DH: This was ...

BC: Can you talk a little about that?

DH: Yeah. But they—what they had me doing was—because everybody seemed to like me, you know—is he had me on the road going from radio station to radio station from city to city and working with promotion people and the distributors in the cities. What people don't realize is very, very important to have a good distributor, all right?

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: And I would go and they would need—they were going to have a record hop. I'd go out and lip sync, say "Hi" to everybody all the—you know, everybody—and I did that for almost a year, you know? Because—in two different veins. You had the blues vein. I was interviewed in Chicago—I'm sorry, in Philadelphia. As you well know they all had—most radio stations in most cities at the time had a—like WVOK or WVON—[answering machine beeps] just let the thing go—and so—this is kind of get you off on an interview. This—this is black disc jockey—I walk in with Max Cooperstein—he's a promotion man []. Walk in, and he

raises up and looks at me, he says “*You’re Dale Hawkins?*” Oh, man, he flipped out. He almost rolled on the floor laughing, you know. [He said], “You can’t be!” So he interviewed me, and it was a good interview. We got through, hung up [and] the lights on the telephone light up—bam, bam, bam. Here comes the phone calls, the mothers, okay? “Dale, you’re such a *good* artist! You sound so good, but work on your diction” [laughs] “a little bit better” you know “for your people.” I said, “Yes, Ma’am. I sure will.” [Laughter] What are you gonna do, you know? But I never had any problems. The second biggest thing was after I had played—I couldn’t pull in what I wanted, because I couldn’t get the guys together. So we went back. I got—I had two guys playing with me who ended up being the Newbeats Dean and []. We went back to Shreveport to cut “La-dodada,” which was the second biggest hit I ever had. We still had nothing but a mono machine. We had to have back-up singers, okay? The only way we could do that was, we sang, it would come to this tape deck here and then as it went across, the background singers would sing, and it would come out over here. [00:41:34] And that’s the first time that that was ever done. There wasn’t any other way we could *do* it.

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: You know, because we had to have the vocals. And we had *part* of them, but we didn’t have enough to make it full. And from then on, I—I left the road. I played—I got to play Birdland. I played almost all the good clubs on the East Coast and Chicago. Didn’t do much on the West Coast but I—I had my own TV show. I got a—it was 1959. It was on CBS in Philadelphia. I went up promoting

another song that I had out, and they were having trouble at the time with a payola investigation. And they asked me if I ever thought about doing TV work []. “No, I never thought about it.” Anyway, I ended up for about a year with a CBS show.

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: And it was syndicated. And had the payola not hit so hard, because I mean, whenever they found out that somebody was getting paid to play a record—how horrible that was—they—the government came in within your majors, with the exception of Dick Clark. Dick Clark was a smart man. Any—anybody on any TV show of any kind that their company was involved in payola was taken off the air. And so I—I put a band together. They [had to play?] the eastern seacoast. We played from New York all the way down to Miami. And I got married, and at the time, and, I said, “Well, this is not a way to live—away, you know, on the road, the same thing again.” And so, I went back to Shreveport. And, the only thing I knew how to do, and I really loved, was produce. There was a group that came to me down there, and, the name—by the name of the Uniques, and I couldn’t get *anybody* to put up any money to cut this song. I got—I got a copy of it here somewhere: “The Golden Years of...” Anyway, I wrote a \$187 hot check [laughs]. I’d got to—a friend of mine over in Tyler named Robin Brian, one of the best engineers that ever lived—and we worked good together for so many years. And so when I got back I couldn’t get Stan [Lewis] to give me any [money], so I went down and hocked a bunch of stuff, got it to him, you know. I couldn’t get Stan to come out with the doggone record. It was his first—first

record on Paula [Paula Records]. He had Jewel—Jewel and Paula [Records] [<http://www.bsnpubs.com/gulfcoast/jewel-paulastory.html>] and I'll tell you about that. And so finally, I got to helping him promote his blues, and I said, "Well why don't you let's just go ahead and—you know, let's get a little stock on this song here not too long ago by the Uniques." So whenever they came in, we had 400 stock copies and 100 DJ copies. And I said, "I got to figure out a way to just get this guy." I said, "Okay, Stan. Look, we've got some blues stuff that's good. Let me take that, and I'll hit the road. And, let's try to get something happening blueswise." Because Leonard wanted—I meant Stan, wanted to be like Chess, you know, have his label and, you know, all that. I stole 200 copies of that—of "Not Too Long Ago" by the Uniques out of the back [laughs] of the store. Lit out—bam! Monroe, [Vicksburg?]
—all the way across into Atlanta. The distributor there I had known for a long time because I did a lot of free record hops for them. It was playing. By the time I rounded [hit Ft. Lauderdale?] going into New Orleans, it was a stone hit. They were playing it, and he *had* to put it out. And that time—at that time it was a 900,000 seller, which was a good... .

BC: Yeah.

DH: And so from that, from them, the Uniques and "Not Too Long Ago"—"Not Too Long Ago" was the name of the song. They had all these sayings—I'm sure you've heard—if you hadn't—it still sounds good.

BC: What was Stan's last name?

DH: Lewis.

BC: Stan Lewis. Okay. [00:46:33]

DH: Yeah. So I got John—John Fred [Gourrier] and the Playboys. And got them signed with Stan. And, I began to see that there was no way, I mean, that Stan was gonna—gonna do anything *right* as far as, you know, compensation. And, this man called me and said, you know, “Why don’t you come over here and meet this man? He has a son that wants to be an artist [].” And, so, he offered me the job, and I—I had a wife and two kids, all right? And it was—it was steady, and the man was a wealthy man. He had three insurance companies—in Texas at that time, was—insurance companies were hot.

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: All right. [] But what he did—I said, “I tell ya, I promise ya—I promise you, if you let me have the job, and leave me alone, that I’ll bring this company up and, you know, you’ll have what you want.” So after a lot of soul searching and everything between [], fine. A label [] have to remember, at the time, you had all the fields of the music business looking you in the face. You’re a brand new label, okay? Two years in a row we won—we were the up and coming label of the year, all right? I cut seven hit records for him. I did cut a song [for] his son that was a hit. I promised him I would if he would do *this*. I said, “If I *do*, then this is what I want for me and I want for my family.” And so after “Judy in Disguise [With Glasses]” came off of being the number one record, “Western Union”—I produced by the Five Americans, which was a top ten record.

BC: Yeah. I remember that one.

DH: And—let’s see, what was the other one. I was associate with? [DH sings]
“Everybody’s talkin’...”—[Harry] Nilsson, theme from *Midnight Cowboy*.

BC: Okay.

DH: But after I had done all—all I said, I went in and I said, “Well, let’s get down to my, you know, my thing.” The man had done everything he said, but it—it was all belonged to his corporation. And it signed me and locked me in, if I took it, okay? The job—I mean, if I took what he was going to give me, which was [] a house, you know, and this is what I wanted. But what *he* did, was he was smart enough to know that if he *owned* the property and everything—his companies—they were *his*. And that liked to broke my heart. And, so, I told him, flat footed—I just looked at him, I said, “Mr. [John] Abdnor [Sr.],” I says, “I’ll never ever do a thing else for you. I’ll never do any recording for you again as long as I live.” “What do you mean? What are you gonna do?” I said, “Well, I’ve had some calls from some people that want me to come to work for ‘em.” And it was the truth. Larry [Udall?] at Bell Records—[Amy and Mala?] Bell was one of the up and coming—it was like Stacks [], Atlantic []. And he called me, and we talked, and he said, “Well, I’d like to have you come to work for me.” So we worked out a pretty good deal. So I went back in and he said, “Well, you know you owe me money.” I said, “Owe you money for what?” He said, “Well, you were getting part salary and part advance against it.” You dig what I’m saying?

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: So I called up Larry Uttal at Bell Records—Bell—Amy-Mala-Bell [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bell_Records_(1950s-70s)] was—was one of the up and coming—it was like Stax/Volt, Atlantic []. And, he—he called me and we talked and he says “Well, I’d like to have you to come to work for me.” So we worked out a pretty good deal. And, so I went back in and he [John Abdnor] says “Well you know you owe me money.” And I said “Owe you money for *what?*” He said “Well you know, you were gettin’ part salary and part advance against it.” All right, you dig what I’m sayin’?

BC: Mmhmm.

DH: All right. So, I called up Larry Uttal and I said, “Larry,” I said “this guy says I owe him this much money.” He said, “Well, just, you know, let me know if it’s over \$25,000.” It wasn’t but about \$4,000 dollars, you know, I said well, you know, \$25,000. So anyway, he writes the check, gets it to him, I’m released, he can’t hold me, and then that’s when I went to work mostly Bruce Channel stuff I produced. I produced two hits on Bruce in—in Tyler. Jeez, how many hits did I have?

BC: So Mr. Uttal was working out of Tyler, Texas. [00:51:24]

DH: No, Mr. Uttal was out of New York.

BC: Oh, okay.

DH: I was—I was the southwest division manager for Amy-Mala-Bell.

BC: Oh, okay.

DH: And, and it—it can get confusing, and if I’m confusing it, let’s back up. Is it being confusing?

BC: No, just in that one place, because you had mentioned that album...

DH: Yeah.

BC: ... you know, Memphis...

DH: L.A. Memphis ...

BC: ... Tyler and L.A. Yeah.

DH: Yeah. That was—he had—we'd built the label up real big. We took most all of the stuff out of Memphis. We took the Box Tops. We had—everything that was done at American studio, almost, we leased and put out. And Columbia offered him a real good deal, and I begged him—I said, “Don't, don't sell. Don't sell it.” You know? Anyway, he sold it, and I worked for Screen Gems for a while. But the only thing that I can say is, I really don't know how to do producing or this or any parts of that; it's just there. It comes. You know—you know what you *hear* [] put together. And the preservation of the art of creating that type music where you—it—it doesn't hurt to have all kinds of—of education for this [], but there's one thing that you—that is a natural to me [] is some people are better at producing and putting things together, after a certain age than they are trying to be an artist.

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: And that's all I ever wanted to do was produce.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Yeah.

BC: And you're still doing it.

DH: Oh, yeah.

BC: So let's—we can go back and get other stuff. What brings you to Arkansas?
What brings you back to Arkansas?

DH: Well, I came—I was going up to—to see some of my relatives up in St. Paul, and I wasn't really happy anywhere. And, I—I came back through here—going through up to Fayetteville.

BC: Uh huh.

DH: And I just—for some reason or other I just—you *love* the people immediately. Whenever you see a car lot, with a sign up in front instead of say “Car for Sale,” they got “Sooiee Pig”—well, you know, they got to be good people ‘cause they’re backing their folks, is what I’m saying? [Laughter] You know, usually be “Car for Sale.” They got “Sooiee Pig.” So I started going over and looking over at the old houses and some of the old stained glass and the Episcopal Church, you know, so, I’ve always said, I kind of fooled around and fell in love. And I was—decided I was going to stay here.

BC: When would this be?

DH: Let’s see.

BC: Roughly.

DH: Coming through here it would have been ‘80—‘86 [1986].

BC: Okay. Had you stayed in touch during this time—I mean, how well did you—back in the time when “Susie Q” was a hit ... ?

DH: Uh huh.

BC: ... you know, pretty much the same time Ronnie’s having his biggest hits.

DH: Right. Uh huh.

BC: So, remember Ronnie [Hawkins] said in that last interview—he said, when he first heard “Susie Q,” he didn’t know it was you. Is that just B.S., or is that ...?

DH: No, that’s the truth. I mean, I didn’t—I never heard of Ronnie in my life. Ronnie says, “Man, I just thought you was another one of them old black singers down there.” And then well I said, “No, man, but I didn’t have to *steal* somebody’s song to sing it.” [Laughter] I said, “You took ‘Thirty Days’ and put ‘Forty’ on it, and you’re going, ‘Don’t talk to me.’”

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know—but the only time—I got to spend about two or three weeks with Ronnie when we were younger. The next time I saw Ronnie was in New York. He’s coming down—we’re on—I’m on Broadway, all right?

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: I’m going north; he’s coming south. And he’s got one foot on the ground on the sidewalk and the other one in the street. “Dale Hawkins! Shoot low, Sheriff; they’re riding Shetlands!” You know, this guy coming on was crazy stuff to me, man.

BC: [Laughs]

DH: And I’m—you know [laughter].

BC: So he was there with Roulette, then, is that right? [00:55:42]

DH: Yeah. He came up—as a matter of fact, I met him whenever he *signed* his contract; he had—he had signed his contract with Roulette, yeah.

BC: Did you know Henry Glover, then, too?

DH: Sure!

BC: Wasn't Henry Glover working for—wasn't he their some sort of...?

DH: Glover was—he worked for—Henry Glover worked for Roulette.

BC: Yeah.

DH: He—as a matter of fact, he—we did the Peppermint Lounge thing, and he—
Glover came in and was the engineer—yeah, yeah.

BC: Yeah. He's another Arkansas guy.

DH: Is that right?

BC: Yeah. That's right.

DH: Well, we have some old good [].

BC: So you got some Arkansas boys up there in New York.

DH: Yeah. I'll tell you what; they know where to import them from up there. Ahmet
Ertegun sent King Curtis down to New Orleans to hang out with—with the sax
player that was playing on all of the hits, everything that came out.

BC: Sure. Yeah.

DH: Lee—Lee Allen. They couldn't figure out how he was getting the sound. So, I
mean—this is the Gospel truth. King Curtis is a great sax man. I played—you
know, he was in this band. I played with his band and did songs [with them?].

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: But Lee Allen had it in him, and—as did *most* of the people in New Orleans
where all those hits were cut. They were cut by the same rhythm section, same
engineer, right?

BC: Yeah.

DH: All right. And with the same feel, all right?

BC: Yeah. I know who you're talking about: Cosimo ...

DH: Matassa!

BC: Yeah! [Claps hands] that's it. Isn't that right?

DH: That's right.

BC: Yeah.

TM: Hey, guys, I need to change tapes.

DH: Sure.

BC: Okay. Cosimo Matassa. Yeah.

DH: Cosimo Matassa. Yeah.

BC: That's—[laughter] remember his [].

DH: Yeah [laughs].

BC: Well, he will never be forgotten—Wexler—in the music business.

DH: No. No.

BC: He's the guy who finally—I mean, among other things—he's the guy who finally recognized that Aretha Franklin was not Nina Simone, you know? He was the guy who finally realized what to do with Aretha Franklin, and if he never did another thing in his life, he'd be famous for that. Don't you think?

DH: Do you know the name *Rhythm and Blues*—he started out ...

BC: Yeah.

DH: ... as a writer, you know, for *Billboard*.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And he was doing—you know, he was—he was just into music; he loved it.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But the name *rhythm*—because they were—they’re trying to update or upgrade the name to a little bit better name instead of just “blues.”

BC: Race records or something, yeah [laughs].

DH: Yeah. *Rhythm and Blues*—he coined that name.

BC: I didn’t know that. I didn’t know that.

DH: Yes.

BC: That’s a great story. But, I mean, he was like John Hammond, right? He had that sense [snaps fingers]—like you said, he knew when it worked.

DH: Yep. And he and I spent quite a bit of time together. And—and our philosophy’s the same as far as producers are concerned, you know. You—you find a producer who would be like, let’s say, a *clone* producer. Like—his comparison was, “Okay. Leonard walked in a bar, heard Muddy Waters, took him in a studio and recorded him.” Okay. In other words, he knew what was there. He took it in and laid it down.

BC: Got it down. Yeah.

DH: The second kind of producer—now that’s, you know, that’s one. The second kind of producer is like a Phil Spector; it’s where everything the producer does is around the—“I’m the star.”

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know, “You hear my stuff here.”

BC: Yeah. The wall of sound, right?

DH: Right.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And then you find a producer who gives a damn and cares about the material and wants to do the best that he can with it. And cares. And that's the kind of producers that we consider ourselves to be.

BC: Yeah.

DH: I—man, it'd be kind of hard for me—I'd have to be really hungry to tell somebody that I thought they had a—something good to record and take their money. I couldn't do that—that's—that would—that would tear down what you believe.

BC: Yeah. And what you're trying to build up with the people.

DH: That's right. Yep.

BC: Yeah.

DH: There was—"How long you—when you gonna stop, Mr. Hawkins?" "When I drop." [Laughs] You know?

BC: Yeah.

DH: This is a way of life, and I'm just fortunate with the things that have happened to me that, that it seems like it just keeps coming, keeps going.

BC: Well, I have never seen this Bear Family thing. That's wonderful. I mean, you *know* they're the gold standard for this.

DH: Yeah.

BC: They're the best reissue outfit in the world.

DH: Yeah.

BC: And there you are: the complete works.

DH: Yeah.

BC: You know, up to a certain point.

DH: And I didn't know—yeah, that's just—that's the Chess stuff.

BC: That's the early stuff.

DH: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And—and now [] this historian that's doing the follow ups on the songs and the things I've produced—and part of the things that we've talked about now ...

BC: Yeah.

DH: ... that nobody knew about.

BC: That's right.

DH: You know? And, which—I'm glad that I'm recognized for what I did as a producer.

BC: For producing as well as—yeah.

DH: Yeah.

BC: Yeah, you don't want to sort of be the Archie Bunker of music, where you're remembered for “Susie Q,” and that's it.

DH: And that's it, yeah.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But I'm—it seems to be that—that music is taking a turn—I hope, the remembrance of melody line—how's that? [] good. But, the real art of creating is coming back in. Because I listen—I go all over the world, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And in the states, now, they're sending out—they got doo-wop shows going out all the time. Well, there's a company—and I don't have—there's no *gender* [genre] for my music because I can—I can—you throw me in the middle and I can come out with [laughs] just about *anybody*, you know.

BC: Sure.

DH: As far as that part is concerned, you know. I had two pop hits. But the main thing was that I *liked* to do it. When it got to where it was a pain, and you'd have to get up and get half stoned to get in the studio to make it through the day...

BC: Time to do something else.

DH: Time to do—time to go home.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And that's what I did.

BC: So what are these doo-wop shows like when you ...?

DH: Oh, lots of fun! They have some of the, like, the older artists' names: Flamingos, Moonglows, et cetera. And—and they have, maybe, one of them that still can [] sound—still sound great.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But there's a—I'm going into Dallas this weekend—I mean, the twenty-fifth, I'm sorry. And there'll be—it's like fourteen acts.

BC: Okay.

DH: And I'll be the only white rock and roll act on the show because there's not too many of us left [laughs], you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But I turn right around, and I'll be playing, you know, Vegas...

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: ...if it's right. And, just taking it as it comes.

BC: I looked on the back of this—this new CD, and—is this continuing to be a family deal here? You got—you've got some younger Hawkinses on there with you.

DH: Oh, that's my son on "New Generation." Yeah. Yeah. [01:03:31]

BC: So talk a little about that; that must be fun for you.

DH: It was fun. I started—we started writing it, fifteen years ago. I was just trying to get him, you know, away from heavy metal stuff, you know. Everybody goes there own way, but it was a good song, and I hung onto it. I had the O.J. [Simpson]—I put O.J.—I had Geraldo [Rivera] in there at first, you know []. He's definitely a comic. You know, anybody that thinks that people are gonna believe that he gonna be down in the—in the alley under the Chicago tunnels hunting for Al Capone's money? [Laughter] Get real! You know. And I think that he's—I think that he's good at certain things, but whenever he did that, I said, "Man, I've got to use him as Barnum's biography reader," you know? 'Cause if you can sell that, you can sell anything.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And then, the Oprah thing—but, when I was writing it was Morton Downey, Jr. You remember Morton Downey, Jr.?

BC: Yeah.

DH: He'd come out with these red socks up to here. And so I changed it from Morton Downey, Jr. to Jerry Springer, you know. 'Cause if you've got a Jerry Springer

around you've got a three-ring circus with nuts and a clown. You know. It's just things that you've got. Are you kidding? The girls getting up and walking across hitting each other, and they're selling it? [Laughs] I don't know. You know. [Laughs]

BC: Yeah.

DH: I don't have anything against anybody that likes to watch that; it's just that I think that it, you know, it needs to be, like, for a certain age of people, you know that— younger people to just tell them, “Hey, you don't have to be big, fat, go across and be somebody else's girlfriend while you—you're having a baby over here by somebody”—you know, and wanting to *fight* on TV. [] They come across there—bam, bam, bam! I said, “Goddog, what have we got here?” You know? But that's how come I wrote that song.

BC: Yeah. It's a kind of spoof of—yeah.

DH: Yeah.

BC: What I like is the guys with *security* written on the back of their jackets.

DH: Yeah.

BC: You know, like, there's something real going on [laughter].

DH: Woo shoot! Well, I tell you what, it gets real once in a while.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Some of them big sisters, man, hit the other ones and knock them across the floor [laughter], you know? But it's good. There's a couple of the groups that are on these shows that I play through May. I play Seattle and [] that were on Chess the same time I was: the Flamingos ...

BC: Mm hmm.

DH: ... and, the El Dorados. But, it's like—it's the same old show, you know. They go out and can still sing great.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And—but—you know, it just goes to show you—I mean, I played Houston on the fifth, okay? I play the doo-wop—it's the Ultimate Doo-Wop Show. There was over 20,000 tickets sold.

BC: Wow.

DH: Okay.

BC: And this is the act that had, like, fourteen acts?

DH: Right. Mmm hmm.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And what I did—the day I got my itinerary—what hotel I'm staying at, what time my plane leaves, where it [], what time the sound check is—you're there for that, you know, it's—they're really organized.

BC: Really well organized.

DH: Yeah.

BC: Would you say—I mean, this is just a guess on my part ...

DH: Mm hmm.

BC: ... that this is a contemporary equivalent to the kind of shows that you used to do at the Regal and the Apollo?

DH: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: It's what's still—it's today's thing.

DH: Right. Yeah. And on the other hand, too, you look at your—PBS, to me, they opened the door when they started having the doo-wop shows on PBS.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Well, you had Jerry Butler—I mean, you—[] if you want to.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Because—I mean, I was *there*; I know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And I think it sparkled, and there is enough group names with enough of the group's original people...

BC: To be credible.

DH: ...to be credible.

BC: Yeah. Well, that's great material. I mean, Jerry Butler—"He Don't Love You" and stuff, yeah.

DH: Oh, yeah.

BC: So talk a little about that, because we haven't taped that. Talk about what it was like to play the Apollo and—if you—you know, you ever watch people like Jackie Wilson or Clyde McPhatter.

DH: Jackie Wilson was my—one of my best friends. Clyde McPhatter, I love—I mean—I tell you what, he was, to me, one of the best singers—or probably—and I have to say it again: Clyde McPhatter was my favorite singer. And I got to play dice at—shooting it on the floor at the back of the Apollo Theater, man. He showed me how to play—the dice game was called *three, four, five*. You know,

like, it would be one, two, three. Or if you had two sixes, you'd have a pair of sixes. Or one, two, three—you'd have a straight, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: So I didn't know what the heck was going on, you know, but [] just get down on the floor and roll 'em, you know. And I won all this money.

BC: [Laughs]

DH: I didn't take it, you know. I just split it with him. I said, "Man, thanks for teaching me." I mean, what are you going [laughs] to do? You're just sitting there with somebody that you admire.

BC: Taking all his money.

DH: Well, anyway, [sings in high voice], "Yigh, yigh, yigh," you know.

BC: Oh, he was a wonderful singer.

DH: You know. I was running barefooted up and down the streets of Mangham when that was going on [laughs], you know? And then to get to play with him, it's—it was something else.

BC: Were the crowds at the Apollo real receptive to your music and stuff?

DH: Yeah. Yeah. They, they accepted it. I—like I said, I was the first *white* artist to play there.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And I think it was kind of an unusual thing, but the Fridays—I meant, the Saturday and Sunday shows were sold out. We would do—we did four shows a day.

BC: Yeah. They didn't—they weren't slow about working you hard, were they.

DH: Mmm mmm. No. And ...

BC: That's great. How'd you feel when that Buddy Holly film came out where Buddy Holly gets to be the first guy...?

DH: It didn't—you know, I—I—I said to myself—I mean, you know, "Why should I say something?" It's documented, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And I said, "It's a movie." I loved Buddy. Buddy was a friend of mine.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And [] I'm gonna jump up and say I'm mad 'cause they said Buddy Holly played []? Go on! Get away from me!

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know. It—it comes around.

BC: Yeah. So he might have gone in there and played, but it was after you.

DH: Yeah. It was three weeks after I did.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Yeah.

BC: Well, that must have been quite an experience, you know...

DH: It was.

BC: ...being on a show with people—with the Drifters and...

DH: Yeah.

BC: ...you know.

DH: I—there's this MySpace [<http://www.myspace.com/dalehawkinsofficial>] thing, which is really—some of the ones I get, I'll listen to, to see what kind of music it

is. And the group that headlined the show at the Apollo that night was the Cadillacs. You remember the Cadillacs—“Speedo”?

BC: “Speedo,” yeah.

DH: And I got...

BC: It wasn’t a swimsuit in those days.

DH: No. [Laughter] It was—it was—you had to get it—I mean, the audiences at the Apollo at that time were really—they’d tell you, “Get your motherfucking ass offstage, man!” “You ain’t”—you know, I mean, if they weren’t doing [laughs]...

BC: Yeah. If they didn’t like you, they didn’t like you. [Laughter]

DH: They’d call out, “Man, bring the sheep catcher!” You know, the guy with the long pole; they’d pull you off [laughter].

BC: That’s great. Those are wonderful stories.

DH: Yeah. I just—I hope that, you know, sometimes—to complicate simplicity is a sin.

BC: Yeah. Well, I gotta say, I envy you ‘cause I never saw Jackie Wilson.

DH: Oh.

BC: And I never—you know, I mean, I’m just enough younger that I didn’t get to see those guys. And Chuck Willis—he died young.

DH: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I didn’t—I never got to meet Chuck. But the first time I saw Jackie Wilson, we were fixing to do the Alan Freed Show. He walks in—suit, tie—looks like a lawyer with his briefcase of music. He opens it up and hands everybody their charts and counts it, “One, two, “Reet Petite”” Or “Lonely Teardrops.” I said, “I wanna meet this guy.” I don’t know where he’s from, but I

wanna meet him. And I did. I hung on, man, until we got to be friends. We used to meet over there—the Brill Building was at 49th Street. That’s where the music writers—most of them—are.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And I stayed at 49th and [], which was the Forest Hotel [224 West 49th Street, New York City]. And there was just certain nights after—after the shows where all of the entertainers would come. And they [] had an oyster bar down there, and we used to get down there and just really, really talk and get it together. [1:12:45] It was—it’s been a great experience for me. I—I can say that I—I don’t—I was never mistreated.

BC: Yeah. Well, you know Elvis thought Jackie Wilson was the greatest entertainer he ever saw.

DH: Did he? I didn’t know that.

BC: Yeah. So—I mean, he had all those sort of stage moves that, you know...

DH: See, he was a boxer at one time, and that’s why—you could tell when he would start to move he would come like this, like maybe his—at the time when—wasn’t enough elastic to hold your pants up.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know. And he would start, and he would go into his moves.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But he couldn’t be beat.

BC: Yeah. Well, since I mentioned Elvis, did you ever have any interactions with Elvis? Just to sort of get that on record.

DH: I met him in—let’s see, when he got out of the military—DJ Fontana played drums with him.

BC: Mmm hmm. Yeah.

DH: And he invited me to come down when he was getting out of the military for that—[Frank] Sinatra and all those people were together. And I got to spend about forty-five minutes with Elvis, just he and I. And he had the suite at the . And I walked in, and he was singing “Susie Q” to me, and showing me some new kicks—“What do you think about this, Hawk?” He says, “I’ll *never* try to cover that one!” [Laughs]

BC: Well, good.

DH: But he—I mean, he was—he was a country boy.

BC: You didn’t run into him when you were in Bossier and he came down for the Louisiana Hayride?

DH: No.

BC: Okay.

DH: No, no, I—I, of course, was aware of it, but, at that time ...

BC: You didn’t have “Susie Q” yet at that time.

DH: Not yet. I was still parking cars out in the parking lot at the Hayride. []
I was.

BC: Yeah. Is that right?

DH: Yeah.

BC: That’s a great story. I’ve never heard you tell that story.

DH: Oh, yeah. Well, let's—they had parking for the, you know, people who come to the show, and it was fifty—was fifty cents for them to park. And my brother and I and—anyway, we worked parking the cars, getting them right. And when they filled up all of that—all of the Hayride parking lot, there was a big public parking lot, so [laughter]...

BC: I know where *this* is going! [Laughter]

DH: Oh, it's the truth, man! [Laughter]

BC: Charging people to park there! [Laughter]

DH: That's right! We did! One night, the police got after us. Boy, we was heading up through there—ran through these—between these two buildings. Jerry got—there was a clothesline going across there—caught him right there and flipped him [laughs] over.

BC: This is the Jerry that just called you on the phone, yeah.

DH: My brother. Yeah. Yeah.

BC: Well, I've—things I've heard—you didn't want to get arrested in Bossier City.

DH: No, no, and besides that, we had a pocketful of money, you know, we thought we—but, you know, it was just a—it was kind of a thing that you did, you know?

BC: Yeah. Make a little money.

DH: [Laughs] That's right. [Laughter]

BC: Well, you know, I've never heard you tell that story. That's a great story.

DH: Yeah.

BC: So you go from parking cars at the Hayride to being a star at the Hayride.

DH: Yeah. I don't know if I was a *star* or not, but I played there. Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know, you'd be surprised at how many people know about the Louisiana Hayride and things. There was a lot of creative juices flowing.

BC: Oh, yeah. Outside the [Grand Ole] Opry, it was the biggest—it was the biggest—don't you think?

DH: Sure!

BC: It was the best, biggest barn dance show outside the Opry.

DH: Sure! Yeah. It was. And if—if the Shreveport people had had enough sense to realize the commerciality and what was happening in Nashville, Shreveport would've *been* Nashville.

BC: Yeah.

DH: 'Cause all of the great musicians like Floyd Kramer, some—you know—were going into Nashville because they could make money doing recording sessions.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And the unions were—it was so squirrely—anyway, it ended up, you now, what it is. Nashville—you had guys like Chet Atkins, you had guys like Grady Martin.

BC: Harlan Howard. Yeah. And people—the great songwriters down there.

DH: Shoot! Yeah. [1:16:48]

BC: So you're saying they could've been sitting in a bar in Shreveport.

DH: That's exactly right.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Yep.

BC: Anything else?

TM: Oh, yeah, *tons* of stuff.

BC: Okay.

TM: I guess—I know we talked a little bit about, the payola thing, as far as records and stuff go, but can we dive deeper in to that, do you have ...?

DH: Would you like to know how it worked?

TM: Yeah. Exactly.

DH: Turn it on.

BC: Sure.

DH: You got it on?

TM: We're rolling.

BC: Yeah.

DH: All right. When we started promoting, Leonard would—would take and go down and buy these lizard shoes, like, for a dollar and a half apiece, just off the boat, okay? And we'd load the back end of the car up with these lizard shoes—lizard skin. You know, just old cardboard shoes [laughs], but that and a record that would be hot, like, maybe "Juke," [by Little Walter?] or something like that.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And we'd leave out of Chicago and pull into a town that had a rhythm—had an R&B station. We'd go in, go up and introduce yourself, take him [], give him a record, you know, and say, "Hey, what size shoe you wear, man?" Well, he'd tell you what size. "Dale, go down there and see if we haven't got a pair of those imports that we got in." All right? I'd come back up with this dollar and a quarter pair of shoes, man ...

BC: They'd be good for a week.

DH: ... and [laughter] give it to this guy, and he thinks that [] [laughs] you know? One time—let me tell you what—and we'd be leaving out of town, and Leonard would be punching the buttons to find that station to make sure the guy was playing the record, you know? One time, if we hadn't been so far out, he was gonna go back 'cause the guy wasn't playing the record.

BC: Take the shoes right off his feet.

DH: Take the shoes away from him. [Laughter] And to get into what you, I'm sure, wanted to know was how the payola end worked. That was one way. Everybody—to—the jockeys weren't making much money at that time, all right? And to be able to pick up an extra \$100 or [\$150], you know, it was helping him keep his family alive. The way it worked is the distributors—you would have your major disc jockeys in your major markets, okay? There was two ways, all right? We would ship in—let's say they ordered 1,000 of the record, all right? We would ship in 1,400. And they would sell the other—the 400 that wasn't stocked for them, they would sell and pay the jockey. That was—that was when it didn't get into the ultra high, high tech. But, really and truly, the labels would send in their artists to do, record hops or do, like, a "Bandstand" show ...

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: ... type thing. And then they would do that, and it wouldn't cost them a nickel, you know, for us to go in and do it. You know, I say this; I can only speak for me and the label I ran.

BC: Yeah.

DH: I—it was the same, basically, and, I think that Freed, Alan Freed, had just, you know—that was the camel’s back broke.

BC: Yeah.

DH: It—Alan wouldn’t yield, and, you know, he’d just tell the FFA [FCC; Federal Communications Commission] to kiss off, you know? And that was wrong because they were—they—at that time, it was still at the time, demonized music, you know. Alan Freed did a lot for the music business. He never played a cover record. And we got covered on everything. I mean, everybody that was with an independent label.

BC: Yeah. As soon as you got even a minor hit, it’d get covered, right?

DH: That’s right. And ...

BC: By a major. By RCA or somebody like that. Yeah.

DH: Right. Right. And, the man that was a smart man, was Dick Clark. Dick Clark was a businessman—smart man—had money before he took the show. He would—would sit down and write a letter, right, that “I am going to play”—let’s just say—“‘Lonely Teardrops’ for two-and-a-half weeks every day, and it will not be a hit”—sign it, get somebody to witness the signature, seal it, send it back to himself certified. Okay? So, what he said was, it does not—I mean, a song has got to *have* it before you hit the top ten. It’s got to be in the grooves, or it’s not gonna be. And the judges—because he said, “I’m gonna play this one, and it’s going to be” because it, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And he had—he—he could *prove* what he said.

BC: That he hadn't been paid to play the song.

DH: Right.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Even though there were many other ways that he got paid.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But that was the main one. They were after all those horrible disc jockeys, you know?

BC: Yeah. Yeah. We gotta understand the word *horrible* here is used ironically.

DH: Yeah. There was a good bunch of folks.

BC: We don't feel that they were particularly bad at all.

DH: No, Sir.

BC: What about—this might be a good place to talk about those 50,000 watt clear channel stations, too.

DH: Okay.

BC: You know, just a handful of them, but, you know...

DH: It was—I'm gonna have to stop in a few minutes to take my medicine [].

BC: Okay. But you and I talked about Randy's and Ernie's Record Shop and WLAC
[<http://wwns.com/wlac/history.html>]
[<http://www.nashvillebroadcastinghistory.com/id5.html>]

[<http://www.yodaslair.com/dumboozle/wlac/wlacadex.html>].

DH: Okay, this is—this is the thing that nobody really, really has really pushed, and it's *the* making—they *made*—you had WLS; you had WLAC—KWKH, KARK

and WNOE out of New Orleans. All 50,000, clear channel, watt stations. At night, most of your local radio stations would either shut down at 10:00 or so ...

BC: Yeah. Shut down at 10:00.

DH: And that—rock and roll was still considered—or blues, was still considered “blue” or race records.

BC: Yeah.

DH: The local stations wouldn't play 'em. So the way they did it was this: the record labels, like Chess, Specialty, Imperial, Atlantic, right?

BC: Uh huh.

DH: Got together and started what I call package marketing. They would take a record—five records and one free for \$2.98, and you had—you had people listening—I mean they were going in because you—they wanted to hear some Little Richard. They wanted to hear, you know, and stuff they couldn't hear locally because they—you know, the stations wouldn't play 'em. And it forced the local markets to *have* to yield in and start playing them.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And that, is the real breaking through, of rock and roll.

BC: Yeah. 'Cause those guys ruled the night, didn't they?

DH: They ruled it and forced the other stations and major market stations to start playing rock and roll.

BC: Would you talk then a little—see, I'm—this is where I grew up. I mean, I grew up listening to these radio stations ...

DH: Uh huh.

BC: ... and ordering records from places like Gallatin, Tennessee, you know.

DH: Right. Oh, yeah, sure.

BC: But were the record stores in fact in some ways fronts for the record companies?

DH: Oh, no. There were labels like Dot Records ...

BC: Yeah.

DH: ... you had Randy's out of Gallatin.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You had the Excello Group.

BC: Yeah, that's out of Louisiana—that's out of Crowley, Louisiana, right?

DH: Right. Right.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And then you had—you had Chess, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But, now like, that—it really—it really, as long as the label was an independent label, they didn't have to have a whole lot of money. If you had a good song, and you had a good artist, and you had a good record, they were going to play it on []...

BC: Oh, yeah.

DH: ...Randy—I mean, Gene Nobles—I've sat there with him, man, *many* a night. Selling that "Five for \$2.98, and get the Rizoil Crizown the Hizar Drizessing [Royal Crown Hair Dressing] [<http://www.yodaslair.com/dumboozle/wlac/wave/royal-crown.wav>]."

BC: Yeah.

DH: And “You gonna look good! Listen to this one!”

BC: Yeah. They would be listed as a sponsor, right?

DH: Yeah!

BC: Like White Rose Petroleum Jelly, remember?

DH: White Rose Petroleum Jelly! Yeah. Yeah. And we’ll get on the corner and I’ll see ya and we’ll sing. [Laughter]

BC: Yeah.

DH: That’s how it was.

BC: Sure. I mean, those Excello—that was a *tiny* company. I mean, that guy—but he had Lazy Lester and...

DH: And how many came off []?

BC: ...Slim Harpo. Yeah.

DH: Yeah. Every time he went in with a new harmonica player, there was another hit record coming out [laughs].

BC: So—you’re right. I mean, they would get on these big stations.

DH: Mmm hmm.

BC: And I remember I’d never *heard* of these guys. And then you’d—there’d I’d be up in Indiana listening to these, these things.

DH: Yeah.

BC: And then you’d order the records for eight-nine cents, or \$2.98.

DH: “\$2.98 for five and one free, just for you.” [Laughter] Can—I’m gonna take about five minutes.

BC: Sure.

TM: Yeah, yeah. No problem. [01:26:58] Watch your head there.

BC: [] the mic.

DH: Oh, I keep forgetting. That's a *big* son of a gun!

BC: Don't wanna knock yourself out on the mic. [Laughter]

DH: What kind of mic is that?

JE: It's a Sennheiser inside there.

DH: Sennheiser.

JE: This, we're still rolling?

TM: Yeah, I know.

BC: I never get tired of that.

[Tape Stopped] [01:27:15]

[Tape Started]

DH: If you don't get what you need, you know, let me know [and] you can come back some other time.

TM: Just for your—you know, to maybe shoot some of your walls and stuff. It's just—it's a *museum* here.

DH: You'd be welcome to come [].

BC: That receipt you mentioned—I think they might be interested in that. You know ... [laughter].

DH: Which receipt?

BC: You know, at the very beginning—the medical report, the receipt from the doctor for delivering him for \$12? [Laughter]

DH: Yeah. It's in that ...

BC: Nine months of medic—of prenatal care and a delivery is \$12; thank you very much [laughter].

DH: And probably some eggs and a chicken [laughter] or something like that, you know. It's in that—the receipt is in that folder.

KK: I think she's got it.

JE: She's got it; she's taking pictures of it now [].

BC: So many others. I mean, that's just some. I put some stuff together, you know.

TM: Well, we can go back, and we'll take a look at what we got, and you know, like I said, we'll just have to come back.

DH: Okay.

TM: But this is going real well. And anything that you want to say...?

BC: Just carry it away.

DH: I don't really—I mean, I just—the thing I really wanna say is—and really, really mean is that *real* things last. Anyway you look at it. *Real* things last. You take—let's just take “The Lion Sleeps Tonight.” This is—closes what—what we were talking about. “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” was a chant that was done in Africa, okay? Yet, that *same* [DH sings part of song] .

BC: Yeah.

DH: Anyway, it's whenever they—[] said when they went, took it, and cut it, they kept [DH sings part of song], okay? It's still an African chant, or a war dance for hunting—going out to hunt lions. And so—all I'm trying to say is the *sound* and the way that it's—let's just say—let's say that we're talking—we're—

you're from the northern part of Arkansas, and I'm from the northern part of Louisiana.

BC: Louisiana.

DH: There's still a change in—in the way that we say things, you know? Like—I remember Mama—well, Grandma Hawkins would say, “You-uns come back!” Well, [], you know, people say, “Y'all come on back!” You know, it's the same thing; it just depends on where you're from and how you're raised. But you could take—and, and that chant will be on forever. *Real* music—I think that the timeless music came in, like, in '52, maybe '53 and took us—took it through, like, say '67, '68. That gender of music, or whatever you want to call it—I call it just commercial *sounds*.

BC: Yeah.

DH: From Stax to this to that to whatever, to whatever, whatever—you—you didn't have to be born in Memphis listening to Stax to appreciate it. You—you know—I mean, I'm using this as an example. I was in Chicago. I heard, “I'm a soul man.” I got on the phone; I started calling everybody I knew. I said, “Man, this is a hit coming to you!” I mean, I got along real good with the jocks when I was running a record label. But it didn't matter to me, I mean, if I liked it and thought it was good, I'd call everybody and tell them about it.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Because, as you said, Aretha Franklin...

BC: Yeah. Good example. I mean, she put out six or eight albums that went *nowhere* on Mercury.

DH: Yeah.

BC: And then Wexler heard who she really was, right.

DH: He—he, yeah, he did.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Ertegün—what he did with her—it was amazing.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Well, he took and let her be.

BC: Let her be herself.

DH: That's right, Brother! You got that right!

BC: Here's one you'll know. You know Dusty Springfield?

DH: Not really.

BC: Okay. English girl, right? And Wexler does the same thing with her. "Son of a Preacher Man," you remember that song?

DH: In a heartbeat.

BC: Killer.

DH: Killer song.

BC: Killer song. English woman.

DH: I didn't know that!

BC: Yeah, she's English. He brought her over and recorded her down at Muscle Shoals. And Aretha turned the song down. They offered that song to Aretha.

DH: [Sings] "...was the son of a preacher man..."

BC: Yeah. She didn't want it. And it becomes this monster hit for an English singer.

DH: Yeah. Well, I tell you what, I'm glad for her. Maybe Aretha thought it was something *horrible*, to be seduced by a preacher man. [Laughs]

BC: She loved it. After she heard it, she loved it. But let me make sure we're understanding what you're saying about the lion song ...

DH: Okay.

BC: ... that no matter who records that song—right? The Weavers do it, for example—they *did*.

DH: Right.

BC: There's a core ...

DH: [Hums part of the melody]

BC: There's a core in that song that is gonna be there no matter who does it.

DH: That's right.

BC: Where, and we'll all hear it.

DH: That's right.

BC: Is that right?

DH: That's right.

BC: Okay. Yeah.

DH: You'll know it, and you'll feel it. It might not be but just five seconds of a chord, part of a chord, but you'll never get away from it. You can't—I mean, there's no way you could change it.

BC: That reminds me of another thing I think is real important that you touched on: "Susie Q" was a pop song, but it was—talk a little more—you gave a very nice

account of it, but it becomes clear that it was very carefully assembled and put together.

DH: Yes, Sir.

BC: So it may be a piece of pop music, which makes people take it too lightly, but it was carefully crafted and assembled.

DH: Yes.

BC: So was that—would you say that that's what more often than not is the case?

That songs that sound almost improvisational or sound almost spontaneous are, in fact, carefully—would you talk a little about that?

DH: The—it *could* be that way. It could be that way, all right? You've got to not—you've got to know where you're going. I mean, you—let's say from here to Memphis, all right? We—that's our reason for going is to Memphis, but we get to Memphis, and we get through, and that's not really the reason we went. On the way back, we stopped off at a little club over here and heard this group, and they were great! So why did we go to Memphis? We went to Memphis to get this group on the way back so we could bring 'em in and cut 'em. Okay? Because it—it cannot—the reason why the Brits, even today, have a problem with trying to—and God bless 'em. They kept our music alive, and I say at every show [] “Thanks to all the thieves, bootleggers—whatever y'all did over here to keep our music alive, I love you to death. Now, pay me.” You know [laughter]. [] bootleg. They—I mean—you know, it was—whatever, whatever. But to try to answer your question, I—I really got off on a side tale there. I was trying to explain the reasons. You cannot duplicate creative art in rock and roll music. It

cannot be done the same time—same way two times. [01:35:09] You can't do it. You take the mint that you put the dollar on, okay? Each one of those—you can't take and re-create that plate—the dollar bill plate [] cannot be because there's always something different because each one of them are made by different artists. You see what I'm saying?

BC: Mm hmm.


DH: So, and if you could take and—because ours was more—I mean, when we started out, it was more of a feel, okay? There was no set rules. Can you see somebody saying, “Maybelline, why don't be true [],” and beat it? I mean, can you beat Chuck Berry today? Listen to “Maybelline.” Listen to any song you want to, and say, “I can duplicate that to a T.” You can't do it, man. The Brits had a problem because we took side roads [laughs] and was able to get back on the main road before we got off it again [laughs]. And that was because playing together, being from the same—you know, we might start and—and say, “Well, let's go to this chord!” We'll be singing, all right. And, it might work; it might not. But you've got—you've got to try. You know? And you can't—I guarantee you—you cannot take and duplicate, I mean copy. And they learned “One, two, three, four, one two, three, four.” And we learned, “One *and* two, three”—you know, it wasn't any set way you had to do it; you did how you felt. And that was the spirit; you did it like you felt it, man.

BC: Okay.

DH: You know—and nobody wanted to be not *liked*, you know. I mean, for me, it was a thing because people liked what I did was one of the reasons why I did what I

did. It made me—if you’ve ever been out in the audience [claps his hands], and you’re on the stage, you’re hooked! Because somebody likes something you did or somebody likes, you know, something—whatever it is.

BC: Makes you want to do it some more.

DH: That’s—it makes you go head-on, man. Just say, you know, because I—the thing I was trying to get over—sometimes I get, really, too many side roads going off—but the main thing I’m trying to say is you cannot—you cannot take—and that is the why—the reason why there is no hardly *any* tunes coming out in America today, okay, that *have* melody lines that are great melody lines. Well, when we— when we got through playing a show, instead of going out to a bar or somewhere, we’d be in the studio—we’d be in a motel room trying to write a song, you know? Listening for—you know, it was just a “want to” thing, and to be appreciated and to be liked for what you did and feel good about it, [01:38:40] you know? ‘Cause it sure beats the hell out of picking cotton, you know?

BC: Well, you mentioned that ...

DH: [Laughs]

BC: ... as part of the background, and I’ve heard that over and over. I heard it from Sonny Burgess; I’ve heard it from...

DH: Did you?

BC: Yeah.

DH: Well, you know, that’s a funny thing, man. A lot of people think that that’s a bunch of bull, but it’s not. I mean, I straddled the row many a day, man.

BC: Yeah. So it’s a way out of the fields among all the other things it is, but...

DH: Oh, yeah—not. I'll just say that for bullshit. That's general bull shit. It takes you—it—what it did for me is it gave me an opportunity to—to do what I like to do.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And, not—not having enough sense to try to do something else and stay with it, I followed—I followed the—I followed the money, you know.

BC: And I think that's probably true over generations. You know, you go clear back to the earliest—the [Leland?] Brothers—some of those people—they talk about how they come out of that background—sharecropping background—and Johnny Cash talked about some of that.

DH: And the *reasons*—you tell—even the reasons—the hills up in Virginia—bluegrass? Oh, man, I'm gonna tell you what, some of the best music in the world, you know? But I guarantee you, from Bill Monroe on through, there's one guy out there now—Ricky Scaggs—shh, good. But still, to reach in and [sings] “Blue moon of Kentucky keep on shinin'”—now listen to that, and then listen to Ricky sing it. Ricky is good; he's right on it and he's singing good, but he still aint got that down in here the way the man that sung it the first time and it came out is. Does that make sense to you?

BC: Sure. I know—I know what you mean. When it—let's touch—we talked about your earliest sort of inspirations and listening at church. Would there be professional musicians that you heard when you were coming up that, you know, influenced you or you thought were particularly good?

DH: Yeah.

BC: You mentioned Rosetta Tharpe twice today.

DH: Sure.

BC: Talk a little about some of your favorites when you were a listener.

DH: Some of my favorites—I liked Roy Acuff. I liked Flatt & Scruggs, Bill Monroe, Hank Williams. There—I mean, the songs and the way they did them is—it really—let’s take Roy Acuff [sings] “What a beautiful [],” he said, concerning the grey speckled bird, all right? Here it is, man, that many years ago, yet the song is still there.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And it still says the same thing. But I would say that—into the gospel side, that was a cover because you—everybody, just about, from the South or where we were from, were raised in church. You know, you have the [RAs and GAs ?] and this and that, but we got to sing, too, you know, [sings] “Be a little [],” you know, and it carries over. And—like some people being afraid to—to get up and sing. We weren’t, you know. I wasn’t, after I knew what I was gonna do. But, it’s—[] to go back one more time and say this: there was a group out of Alabama or Mississippi—one—called The Original Five Blind Boys.

BC: Oh, yeah. Five Blind Boys. Actually, there are Five Blind Boys of both places ...

DH: Oh, I tell you what.

BC: ... Alabama and Mississippi.

DH: And—and what that is, believe it or not, people, it is a cross between gospel and the R & B side. Between the straight gospel and then bring in blues in on top of that. Bring in the blues; in other words, just by using different words ...

BC: Yeah.

DH: ... was a feeling for that market that it is. I, I really, in a way, and I can't say that, whether I'm disappointed, or whether you're disappointed, or whoever's disappointed. I am disappointed that, that things are becoming so easy with technology that it takes the want to and the drive, to do it the hard way and not give in, you know, to the challenge—to the challenge, that we do not lose the positive side of the art of creating music, you know? I can't—when you're—when you were growing up—a little song you would—you would know—you know, one that maybe you sang, would be what?

BC: Oh, I think the first song I ever bought was “Good Golly, Miss Molly.”

DH: That was a great song. But what about when you were a kid? When you were growing up? When you were, like, say, five, seven, eight years old?

BC: Yeah. Probably be the songs my, my parents would sing.

DH: Right. It's how you and how you would talk. It's your, your roots, your background; it's what you are.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Yeah. But I think I saw the other day that “Good Golly, Miss Molly” or either “Lucille”—one of them—is the number one rock and roll record of all time.

BC: Really?

DH: Yeah. It's Little Richard.

BC: Both of them are Little Richard songs.

DH: Yeah. Is there anything else you'd like to hit on there, that you ... ?

TM: Well, we kind of hit, I guess—when you were five and six—were talking about the church...

BC: Church music.

TM: Church music was your influence there.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Um...

DH: My influence was anytime I could hear it [laughs], you know?

TM: Uh huh.

DH: Believe me, because we had a Philco radio.

BC: So you listened to Grand Ole Opry.

DH: Shoot, yeah! On Saturday night, that was our, that was our big thing, you know?

[01:45:27] But I try [] anything that you wanna...

TM: Are you okay?

DH: Yeah. I'm fine now, yeah.

TM: Okay. What about possibly—what it was like to—hit on being on that circuit and travelin' around. I know we touched on that. Maybe run back on that.

DH: Okay.

TM: I think before you mentioned traveling [] Buddy Holly.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Okay. Right. The fun times in my life as a performer, an artist—it sure wasn't the Dick Clark Caravan [of Stars]. I like to play where you can get up and let it go. We went out several times—the Roy Hamilton Show tour, a couple for Dick—they were *horrible*, man. You'd be on the bus and there'd be about three

or four different groups, and after so many hours together on the bus, you go in and you do your show and you get back on the bus 'cause you gotta be someplace else—after a couple of days, the stink starts to get to you a little bit. Then, you can't stop to pee 'cause it's snowing, and you're scared you can't get out, so they open the door to let you go pee. How's that one, huh? Finally, the third day you get [laughs] a good night's rest at a motel, and that's one of the best things about it. But it was kind of like you—you dreamed it would be, you know. But the most fun that you'll ever have is when you've got guys that, that you can bounce off of that you play with. And what I mean *bounce* is to trade feelings.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Let me see.

BC: And that's not the caravans; that's not the package shows where you're only gonna do two or three songs, and [snaps fingers] somebody's gonna be right before you, and somebody's gonna be right after you.

DH: Yeah. That was the caravan show. Yeah.

BC: And that's *not* where you're gonna get that; is that what you're saying?

DH: That's exactly right.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Yeah. That was—that was after it was done, and they went out to make money. And, I never did—I worked with Leiber and Stoller, and I worked with Phil Spector—just about anybody that you could *name*, you know, at that period until, like, '62. I was gonna—I was gonna pull one out that we did here and, and play it for you.

BC: Okay.

DH: I don't know if we can do it now [] we got hooked up to here. But there's a song on the first CD that we did here. I'm gonna tell you the truth. We sat—didn't have all the equipment in. It was coming in. And we—I—Joe Osborn came up from—and some other friends of mine that you might have heard, and we actually, for about a week just stayed, slept on the floor. We didn't even have the light. I wouldn't let a clock in the house, and when we ate [laughs] they say I made them hand it through the mail chute because, you know. You can have everything, all the equipment in the world; I will give that to you. Give me musicians or artists that *want* to have it, and I'll beat you. I'll cut a better record, and give you all this; just give me enough to get by on. I guarantee it. Because if—the want to—the “want-to-ers” want to. It just depends on how much you wanna give up, [] you know. You judge your success by what you had to give up or pay for to get it.

BC: So, when you—when you were talking about these tours ...

DH: Uhhuh.

BC: ... and the good times of actually trading, you know, musical ideas with people you liked to play with, that would be one of the reason you quit touring, right? So you could actually stay in one place and get some musicians together?

DH: Yeah. Right. Yeah.

BC: Okay. So how long—how long did you actually—'cause you said you were, at one point—I didn't get the dates clear on this, but, you got married, and you started a family, and *that* for many musicians is a drive to get *off* the road, right?

DH: Well, it—first of all, I never thought I'd get married. I got married. My wife got pregnant, and I could see that, I was going to be in situations where I'd be gone for a long time. In other words, the way that I was, was raised, it's, it's like—it stays with you.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Okay? And it might have been a mistake for me to leave the road. Had I *not* left the road, I would never have been hungry enough to fight to produce the way I had to fight. I had to—I mean, I didn't care if I had to go out and cut the wood, go borrow a match and then have somebody blow it while I'm—while I'm lighting the fire. I went after it.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And, I spent two-thirds of my life or more in the record business. The only hat I never wore, was CEO of a major, okay? I wouldn't—I mean—I would just, there was no way in the world I was qualified, but anything else from A, that note, to the end, where you—you take it and, you've got your check back from the promotion end of it, back. I run publishing, producing, marketing, you know?



Because I learned from the best. I mean, how are you gonna learn from better people than Chess or Wexler, Ertegun, et cetera?

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know? And didn't know a hill of beans what in the world I was learning until about seven years into the business, I said, "Wow!" And it was too late, you know, to, to go to—to try to go back and—mistakes you made or contracts you signed you didn't mean to, you know.

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: Okay. “Sign here.” Why, sure. I believed everybody, what they said, you know.
[Laughs] Where I was raised where you could keep your door unlocked if you wanted to, you know. But they took us to the, to the cleaners.

BC: Oh, yeah.

DH: Yeah.

BC: Yeah. I interviewed Maxine Brown from the Browns ...

DH: Uh huh.

BC: ... a few years ago and, boy, she told lots of stories like that.

DH: Yeah.

BC: Lots of snakes in that grass.

DH: Oh, Lord, yeah. But I—you know something [].

BC: But you met some good ones, too, though, didn’t you. I mean, you really met some good people in that record business.

DH: I met—yeah. Yeah.

BC: I mean—as you described it, they taught you how to, to ...

DH: Well.

BC: ... make your way through the business.

DH: Through the business. And I—and I learned I *loved* it, you know.

BC: Yeah.

DH: It’s like—it’s like a part of you. It’s like—like when you retire—when you get ready to retire—do you think you will ever retire from what you are?

BC: Huh uh.

DH: Aint no way in the world.

BC: No. I can identify with that line about “when I drop.” [Laughs]

DH: That’s right. And that’s the truth. “Are you thinking of—when you gonna peak and stop?” Oh, when I drop, I guess. Because, being able to—to have this now and the way that things have been worked out for me, it keeps me wanting to continue to create by having an opportunity to do it. [] being [] whatever reason. [01:53:33] And, had I not—if—if you lose the drive, the drive is irreparable, and you, you don’t want to anymore, there aint no way you’re gonna do it , except, I guess, it’s time to quit. But I don’t believe—and the other gentleman that was in here a while ago—he said, “I keep my calendar, like, six months ahead because it gives me—keeps me alive enough to know that I got something coming up,” you know.

BC: That I gotta do.

DH: That you gotta do, so I’ll roll down and do it. If I don’t, I might kick back and watch, if I got some good football games on, that’s a different horse, but, to work with young—younger engineers and, and, to help them understand how to *use* technology—which I don’t really know how, I just *know* what the sounds are that I want.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And it just blows their mind, you know.

BC: Well, I hope we can hook it up to—so that we can film you playing some music.

‘Cause that way—his delight in that is obvious. We do wanna get Joy’s thing.

Can we go back? She mentioned that we didn’t get you to talk about your

siblings. So we know you have a brother, Jerry. Would you just, for the record, you know, give us—you had other brothers and sisters, or is that it?

DH: I had a half-sister.

BC: You had a half-sister. Okay.

DH: She came along, just about the time I hit the road.

BC: Okay.

JE: And how close in age are you and Jerry?

DH: My brother and I? Sixteen months. So we had each other.

BC: So you were real close.

DH: Shoot. We had each other, and that was it, brother.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You come out fighting. [Laughs]

BC: Is he older, or are you older?

DH: Sixteen—me. I'm the oldest.

BC: You're the oldest. Okay. Good. I had forgotten to ask that, and she reminded me that we wanted to get that.

DH: Yeah.

JE: I do want to do the—we'll try and get it hooked up so I can get it direct, but before we go, there's one thing that you mentioned that piqued my interest a little bit, was talking about the English, the Brits, basically, bootlegging all our old rhythm & blues.

DH: Mmm hmm.

JE: I'd like you to talk a little bit about that, basically, because one of the greatest rock and roll bands of all time stole *all* the old blues: [Led] Zeppelin.

DH: That's exactly right.

JE: Led Zeppelin took everything from ...

DH: Led Zeppelin did. And you take the Beatles. The first two CDs out of the box were cover records of our music.

BC: Yeah.

TM: Go ahead and talk to Bob when [].

DH: Okay.

BC: And the Stones too, the Rolling Stones.

DH: The Stones. Man, I told that stupid—what's his name—let me say this, I don't want to—I think they did some great stuff, but I think that's the worst version of "Susie Q" that they did that I ever heard in my life. And I told them. I said, "Man, that sucks!" [Laughter] You know? Mick Jagger's saying, "Well, man, you sound like a black man!" I said, "Well, I am what I am." You know? But I—then when they went in there and was cutting all the hits that they—they did, they cut all of the Chess—blues, wanted to be blues—wanted to be—they come—wanted to know where we came from so they could go down there and look around. Just—they—they made it out of the country [laughs].

BC: Yeah.

DH: But, you know, you take the Stones—even you take [Eric] Clapton. As great a guitarist as Clapton is, he—I tell you what, J.J. Cale is a *bad-ass* writer and guitar player. Clapton would give anything to play like J.J. Cale, okay? J.J. Cale wrote

“After Midnight,” “Cocaine,” and many other songs. You turn around, and for so long, Clapton took a big cardboard picture of Muddy on the road with him, and, it’s a freak thing, but you take all of the artists—they couldn’t—even when I did my first BBC interview Stuart Coleman was the guy’s name. He said, “We didn’t know what to do. We didn’t—we couldn’t get a hit if the ball was pitched two feet from you.” He said, “We didn’t know what was happening.” And so, I guess you have to say that the music influenced a certain age here that was ready to accept—not to accept—ready to *listen* to what was happening by people who didn’t know their A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H—you know and a little in the middle. But had it not been for American roots—roots American music is the three words that people should always remember, because it was roots American music that we gave to the world. And, I’ll say that to anybody.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Not that I could ever, be somebody else, be like somebody else. I don’t really care because I—to tell you the truth, I always say, [laughs] I don’t do circus tricks onstage and I don’t [stutters] ahuh-ahuh-ahuh, you know, I still don’t—I don’t stutter.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know. I say—[Laughs]—and that, did that pass you, by? [Sings] “A hunk-a hunk-a burning love,” you know.

BC: Yeah. I knew what you were doing [laughter].

DH: These guys over yonder ...

BC: You don’t imitate that.

DH: ... Oh, man! And I don't put a guitar behind—I don't roll across the stage, you know.

BC: Don't play the guitar behind your back?

DH: No, I don't, and ...

BC: You don't light it on fire, either, do you?

DH: Heck, no!

BC: [Laughs]

DH: But do you know what I mean?

BC: Yeah.

DH: I just—I get up and do what I do. It's like—now, especially, the shows I do are better than—we come out kicking and then you see, you see people like—from like seventeen up to thirty-three, thirty-four that you would never think you would ever see them like your material—singing your songs with you, man. You know. And, it's, it's having a big effect. Or what's *happening* is from Scandinavian—you take, Helsinki—take Finland. The music is starting to come—that I call commercial was—so in that—from that area of the country across to Italy. All right? And the only way that you can say that is take and listen to the production that's done with certain artists and you can say, “Okay, if I was twenty years younger, I would be right now heading for the airport to go to Helsinki because there's a producer over there that's one of the best in the world.” But he don't know it, you know? There's—there's nobody, really, you know—really grabbing it and going. But the funny thing about it is, is there are—there will always be this



link to the world, the music that came from down here and went over there, or everywhere. It's—it's that simple.

BC: Yeah. That's right. That's why those guys—I mean, I know it's kind of silly that they wanna go down and look at the country.

DH: Yeah.

BC: But that's *why* they want to do it.

DH: Yeah. That's exactly why.

BC: They—I mean, there's a genuine reason behind it.

DH: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: They can never really *get* there...

DH: Right.

BC: ...but they wanna go look at it.

DH: Go see it, yeah.

BC: Yeah. The band wanted...

TM: Excuse me, we need to change tapes. I'm sorry.

BC: Okay.

TM: And ...

[Tape Stopped]

[Tape Started]

[Song playing in background]

SL: Sounds great doesn't it? You know, earlier, he was singing in my ear while this was on.

BC: Yeah. The same thing was going on with me

SL: It sounded *great*.

DH: Where'd she go?

SL: Oh, she's going to get a cable.

LH: Gone out to the truck.

BC: Do you just want—I think you just want to get that pleasure, you know, the obvious pleasure. Don't you?

SL: I guess what we're talking about doing is [] and messing with [] on the board and just turning around and talking to Bob like you've been.

BC: Yeah. He goes right into it. Feet start moving.

SL: That way we don't have to change all the lights.

DH: What we were talking about while ago—look here, man. I know, I know you.

[Another song plays]

BC: Little slide, bottleneck stick. It's *beautiful*.

DH: Goin' down the road feelin' bad.

BC: Yeah. [Laughter]

DH: Now, you *know* you heard that []. Therefore you do associate [DH taps foot].

BC: That is wonderful.

DH: Thank you.

LH: Good, just getting' lonely. So there was a break, wanted to come in and be a part of it.

SL: Are you still busy?

LH: Yeah. I gotta do the CD now.

DH: [] and it's called "Summertime Down South." [Another song plays.

DH sings along] Now, my cats were named Ghandi and Thatcher, Mr. G. and

Ms. T., so you don't their cats. People can imagine [].

BC: Whatever they want, right?

DH: That's right. [Laughter] [Song continues playing]

SL: Let's go ahead and ...

DH: Here darlin'.

SL: Yeah go ahead ...

DH: [Sings along] People, people can—it can mean whatever, you know.

BC: Yeah. They make their own story.

DH: That's exactly right. Are you getting the signal over there, hon?

JE: I was just about to check when you turned it off [laughs].

DH: Okay.

TM: If you could scoot up just enough so you guys can kind of have a good line of sight. [] might have to peek around so you can scoot up a little more.

DH: That was—this was the first one.

BC: [] further back.

TM: No, you scoot up, that way you have a better line of sight with him.

BC: So he doesn't have to crane or something.

Tm: Yeah. Neither one of you do, so ...

BC: Okay.

[Tape Stopped]

[Tape Started]

[Another song plays]

DH: We could come out of the back here, but I've got this damn new driver in this—
this delta—let's see, coming out. Let me see something. Where's your rig?

JE: My line? Let me see.

BC: I'm gonna go look at something I hadn't noticed yet.

[Tape Stopped]

[Tape Started]

BC: [Another song plays] In his very first recording he was recorded by John Lomax.

DH: Is that right?

BC: Yeah. 1941.

DH: Wow! Anyway, this was the first thing that we did here—this album here. CD.
And I produced...

BC: What album is that, Dale?

DH: It's the "Wildcat Tamer."

BC: Oh, Okay.

DH: I'll have to keep up with you. I'll burn you one.

BC: Okay. I'd love it.

DH: I don't have anymore.

BC: It's called "Wildcat Tamer."

DH: That's right. Okay.

BC: Every guy's dream [laughs].

DH: All right. Let me see.

SL: Do we need to do something with Bob so he can ... ?

TM: I think if he pushes up enough right here. Now just scoot this way just a little bit
[].

DH: Okay.

JE: All right. We're good to go.

DH: Okay.

BC: What do you want? Because...

DH: Because I gotta get to where you want me.

JE: Where you can reach those still. [].

DH: And reach this, too.

[Tape Stopped]

[Tape Started]

BC: So many people say that, you know, "I like this" [laughter]. And I never thought
I'd ever...

DH: "Thunder on the Mountain." [Reference to Bob Dylan song] Have you ever
heard?

BC: Oh, I love "Thunder on the Mountain."

DH: Shit! That's one of the best songs in the world, man!

BC: The groove in that is about as deep as any groove I've ever heard.

DH: I tell you what, man.

BC: Have you heard that song?

SL: Yes.

BC: Put it on; let's play it! Just to gear ourselves up.

TM: Bob, if you wanna punch in ...

BC: Okay. If I want to what?

TM: You just wanna kind of punch it in, sit down, and get comfy.

BC: Okay. So *punch in* means....

TM: Well, I guess at that point I was saying, means, sit down [laughter].

BC: Okay. “Sit down.” [Laughter] That’s the first time I’ve ever been told to punch in.

DH: Common there. Common. Here we go.

BC: Two-thirds of the way through this song, I think I’d never heard anything quite as deeply-grooved in. [”Thunder on the Mountain” begins to play]

DH: Well, now listen—listen to what’s happening.

BC: Oh, this is great!

DH: When the—when the bass comes in. I’m gonna take some of that, but I’m gonna use it. Hear it? I tell you what, this is the only song, this guy—oh—uh oh—said, you know, “Dale” he says, “heard this,” and he said, “I thought about you.” And he said, of “Ophelia” he said “I sure wish you’d have cut this one.” I never would listen to Bob Dylan, man, I’m in the floor man, for a couple hours, I said, “Goddang, look at this shit, man! It is good!” [02:09:29] You know—I mean, it does [] good to know that—anyway, he’s learned how to sing and even play guitar a little bit, so [] you know, down the road. We’ll put the first one in—are we...?

BC: We’re ready to go.

DH: Go? Okay.

TM: Ready to go. Is the firestore good?

BC: So this piece here is the first...

DH: This is the first CD...

BC: ...CD that you produced here.

DH: Yeah, that I did here. Yeah.

BC: Okay.

DH: And, the way this came to be is a great story. I had [coughs] some friends of mine—there's this slide delta blues guitar player from over in Mississippi, and—let me [Song starts and stops]—his name is Kenny Brown. Kenny Brown played with R.L. Burnside. I don't know if you ever heard of him or not. Anyway, he's great. And, I, I was teaching them how to work without having to have all that

technology [] to do it. So, anyway, we were just out there having a good time and laid it down just—because he had never played a rhythm guitar on a

session before in his life. He said, "I didn't know—man! That sounds good!" I said, "Kenny,"—listen to what I tell him, on the beginning, whenever he finally

gets it. [Song begins to play] And I said, "You lose it, I'm gonna kick your ..."

[Song stops] And what made—what made, this exceptional was I'd already had it mixed, already had it mastered, but I wanted that [DH makes bass sounds] on it, you know?

BC: Uh huh.

DH: And so I brought that son of a gun out of the back of DATs [Digital Audio Tape recorders] from this DAT took it over here, back through the board and *mastered* that son of a gun. I took it down, man, 'cause that [DH makes bass sounds] holds



that in there together, you know? And it just sounds like it's—what else—it does belong. I was, I was really, really happy whenever we got it done. This next one—let me see what we can play here. It's "Going Down the Road," a song that we all was raised listening to.

BC: Yeah.

DH: One way or the other with many different types of what they call gender? Is that what it is? [Song begins to play]

BC: Genre.

DH: Genre. And this is—we're all sitting around. And I said—did you hear me say "Whenever the mood hits you?"

BC: Yeah.

DH: And that's what I mean by bouncing off. And that's just like sitting on the back porch, you know? I love a Dobro anyway. Let me see. [Song stops] Let me see what else here. A couple there "Summertime." This is the one they did the video on

[<http://vids.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=vids.individual&videoid=43619324>]. It's a song I wrote in one chord—one chord. But I built it with percussion.

You know?

BC: Okay.

DH: Whenever []. I'll play you a little bit of it.

BC: What's it called, Dale?

DH: It's called "Going Down"—shoot, here we go—ah, where are you, were are you?

[]. This right here. It's called "Country Girl." [Song begins to

play] I'll show you what I mean. Now I got the []. I had []
percussion. Hear it? Now watch another one come in. Horn section.

BC: Oh, yeah.

DH: Anyway, it seems to amaze some people that you write a song with just one
chord, yet you can take and build that son of a gun into a monster if you know
how to use percussion. Is that enough on this one here.

SL: I'm gonna brush your hair.

TM: We're gonna do some make-up here. [Laughter]

BC: I think you wanna let him look wild, here. [Laughter]

SL: This isn't gonna help that much. [Laughter]

JE: I'm gonna turn this over since you're looking the other way. Scott's kind of got
me upside down here.

TM: This is really great, so—I mean, if you're good, we're good, and this is all really
great stuff. I love hearing any of your insights to this stuff and ...

DH: Okay. I just thought I would take each CD and play some songs off of it.

BC: That's great.

TM: Yeah, that's great.

JE: We love it.

BC: It's great stuff.

JE: Give me just one second.

DH: I'll play you the stuff that I told you [] about a little bit earlier.

BC: Oh, you can play anything that you find in there that you wanna tell us about.

JE: Put this one on the other side.

DH: Some of the stuff I produced that you'll remember ... let's see ...

BC: Yeah, you can play us the Uniques; you can play us anything you want.

DH: Yeah, I'll play the Uniques. [Someone claps hands] Let me see. Now, this was the—the first thing that I produced when I quit the road—make sure I got the right one here. Here we go.

BC: So can you put a year on this, or close to it?

DH: On the Uniques?

BC: This one. The first thing you produced after you came off the road.

DH: About nine months to a year, yeah. Because it was—it was strictly, you know, a thing that you had to make happen.

BC: Okay.

DH: You know? Which I like.

BC: Okay. [Song begins to play] [Another song begins to play]

DH: This is it.

BC: Okay.

DH: We had a two-track machine. Didn't have ... and nobody would believe me.
[DH sings along] Remember that?

BC: Yeah, I do. I do remember it.

DH: Man, I went home scared to death—ah, let me see—because I'd written that hot check, but I knew...

JE: What year was that?

DH: That was in 1963—late '63 early '64.

BC: Yeah. And this is the one you wrote the hot check to get it done.

DH: Yeah. I got the hot check, in there [laughter] ...

BC: Well, that's belief. You believe in it enough to do that, you're a true believer.

DH: If I believe in it, I'm gonna go. I'm after it. Let's see, I was gonna play you a little bit...

BC: How big did that one go? That went real big, didn't it?

DH: That was a top-ten record.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You might remember—this was a big record for me, I produced. This was, this was the number four record in the nation.

BC: Is this the Uniques again?

DH: No, this is the Five Americans.

BC: The Five Americans, okay.

DH: Yeah. I'll play you just a little bit of it. Now—man, you talk about some splicing and cutting. A razor blade—that's all I had: a razor blade, an intro and a verse.

[Song begins to play]

BC: Oh, I remember this.

DH: You know what I did? I turned right around and copied the British Invasion.

BC: Yeah. [02:18:31]

DH: Watch this, now. There's a hook. It's one thing. [DH sings along] Did you ever hear this song before?

Unknown Voice: []

DH: Anyway, that's one. Ah, let's see. Whenever we got through with a session, I had the intro, which had the hook ...

BC: Yeah.

DH: ... as I call it. I had part of the bridge, and I had a verse, and that razorblade. And, boy, we spliced that sucker I don't know how many times.

BC: To put it together.

DH: Yeah, to put it together. This is ... let's see ...

BC: That's a beautiful thing [] guys with British accents.

DH: That's what I did.

BC: Do you remember that Sir Douglas Quintet? When Doug Sahm had to pretend—he was a guy from San Antonio—you know, he pretends like he's British. The Sir Douglas Quintet.

DH: Quintet?

BC: Yeah. So you ...

DH: I just—to me, what the Brits did is—you see, instead of laying the voice down one time, some laid it down two—I laid it down *three* times because if you've got three coming in, and they have—you have to sing them each time, all right? And, you will not—if you—if you come in with two, you'll hear mistakes that you'll make from one to the other. You'll hear mistakes—they won't be the same.

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: Even if you're the best singers in the world. But if you take *three* tracks coming in—same song, same song, same [], and pan 'em, pan them all the way this way and bring one right down the middle, there aint no way in the world you're gonna have nothing but a strong, strong section. I'll show you what I mean—just

this one thing. And you can hear it come in on this, this thing here. []

[Plays song again] That's three voices. Hear them change there?

BC: Yeah. [DH sings along]

DH: This is the hook. When you hear that, you're hooked. Okay [laughs]. And it's—we, actually wrote the song in the studio. They had part of it [written], and I finished it up.

BC: What year, what year did you come out with that?

DH: This was a hit in 1967.

BC: '67.

DH: And there's some stuff I did that I didn't even ... I never ...

BC: That's got a "Last Train to Clarksville" sound to it, doesn't it?

DH: Yeah, it does. I—I don't know, really, where—they, they had a melody line.

They didn't know what—the hook to the song was [DH and BC sing hook]. And the harmonies of that, you know. Anything else is—it don't matter.

BC: Window dressing.

DH: That's it. Let's see now, put this back here. The—let me see—this is the second CD here. This is the one—I wanted to get—I've got that "Mojo" magazine out there. I'll show you—about this—to me, if you've got a good song, you've got a good song. You just gotta—you know, you can't push it like you used to, which is good. I mean, you can't—you know, take it good, take it easy and find out where that type of music is playing. [Song begins to play] Now, this is the "New Generation." This song here—I wrote this song, my son and I. I never could get him to get with me to finish the words [DH sings along]. And this is my opinion



of the world. I'm telling you, man. [DH sings along] That did have Geraldo. [DH sings along] That's cool. [DH sings along] Now, this next song, is actually the selling song on the CD. It's called "Bang, Bang." And all it is, is I wrote about everybody that was in the studio because I had to have—you know, I wrote about the engineer. I wrote about Gandhi and Zinger when I had my Manx. The Manx said to the—the Siamese said to the Manx, "Zinger, why are your legs so long?" And Zinger said, "Gandhi, my tail is gone bang, bang." You know, Manx has a long, long back leg. But that—I'll play you a little bit of that. This is—it comes in—oh, wait it's never been—I did this with, a baritone bass. [Song begins to play] [DH sings along] Pootie Tang was the—Spiderman of the hood. You know, he went out and cleaned it up and—I tell ya ... Now, hear this—"Here comes Sally with a rag on her head; slept on a table, she can't find a Fred." Now, dig this. This is what Ghandi said to Zinger. [DH sings along] That was—that was—I can't—there, I got it right here in front of me. There's some, there's some good stuff on there—I'm trying to—[another song begins to play]. This is called "The Mighty Mississippi," and you'll never know I went through hell [DH sings along]. Yeah, that's, I wanted to ... [Another song begins to play] This, this one everybody likes. There's two versions of it. This is the version I like. [Another song begins to play] It's called "This Love of Mine." I wrote it a *long* time ago. [DH sings along] And I'll tell you the reason why, man. When I was mixing ... the guitar was out of tune when he was playing. I about went crazy. And so rather, than—I forgot about even putting this in, here comes [clarinet plays] clarinet. And what I did is I had forgot about overdubbing the clarinet and it



sounded good enough for release, until I had the other one already cut, and so I stuck them both on there. But—let’s see, we got [] in here. I don’t remember what they are here. This is [song begins to play] a thing called “Do the Thing.” Got some good horn parts. That’s what they used to say: “Well, we’re gonna do the thing” [laughs]. This is where it—I should have brought the harmonica in the verse before, but I didn’t. Anyway, this is the one that, is out now.

BC: Mmm hmm.

DH: I’ll play you a little bit of the one I just got through producing. Like I said, I don’t—I’m kind of not particular, I just—if I like it—this guy here—his name’s Johnny Jay. He’s a guitar player from New Orleans, and he went on the road with me and played, you know, for about a year or so, and I promised him that I’d do a CD on him, okay. [02:30:46] And so this is it.

BC: So this is the Johnny Jay CD.

DH: Right. This is the session I started on the analog in New Orleans and brought it up here and finished. I wanted to get that analog in.

BC: So you’re working on this now.

DH: Yeah, I’m through with it.

BC: Oh, Okay. You’re done with it.

DH: Yeah. [Song begins to play] The songs that I did [song begins to play]—now, this song here—now, that’s us. [Another song begins to play] Let’s see here. What we tried to do was to get a sound—was to get a sound [another song begins to play]—live sound first—like a live sound [].

BC: Yeah.

DH: Get it on tape, then take it and overdub the guitar parts that needed to be overdubbed to make it a full section.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And so that's what we did. Had a drummer—had him in a booth. Had the bass man in the studio, and had Johnny in—in a room over to the left where he could see me, and what he was doing. And so, every song they took down—all right—it took us three days; we did three songs a day. And on the last day we did two more to make twelve. And as long as I had a bass drum, a bass, and the guitar and the vocal all separated. And I had direct boxes coming in, so that if I wanted to take and use the bass another way, with another sound, I've still got the original, that, you know, I can—I can test and work with until I get the sound. So basically what we got are old, old songs that I had never heard before. And, when I got there, you know, they started and I said, "Well, Johnny, that's the—have you got—have you got me a D.I. [direct input] coming in on the guitars?" And, so, I said, "Okay, 'cause if you haven't, blow it off right now." So we had a D.I. coming in over the guitars. We had a guitar coming in off the bass. His voice—I knew if I had his voice, that I could, I could work his voice. So what we did, we got back here, we came in, we put the guitar parts on it—I'll play you a little bit of it, but with them on there, where you can hear them more. But I tried to get a, southern kind of, rockabilly feel yet had a class of difference as far as, trying to make somebody from Brooklyn be from Mississippi, you know. And this is where this guy's from. But, we just—I just finished it. I just got it off to him. As

a matter of fact, it took—but there was three different ways. I got what I wanted analog, live coming in on a two-incher. The serial number was 2—was 00026. That's how old that—that tape recorder that we went to was. And sometimes [laughs], man, we'd end the song and it would still be turning, and we'd reach up there and have to hold it, you know, to get it—back it up, and the needles wouldn't go. You know, those needles that they used back in those days to go back and forth were not spring. It was a lube of some kind, and it would get hot—you know, the light would? And then it would stay over; you'd have to go over there and hit it. Now anyway, I had that—we, we did all the rest of it here, you know. And, let me see.

BC: And then when you ship it to him, you're done with that job, right?

DH: Yeah.

BC: Right. It's his job to take it to some place and, you know, arrange to have ...

DH: Yeah. This one ... this song here—James Burton came through about, about three years ago, and we laid this down. It's called "Fool's Paradise." It's a good song. [Song begins to play]

BC: Does James Burton do the vocal, or do you do the vocal? You the vocal?

DH: Yeah. [DH sings along] The voices were a little bit out. [DH sings along] That's got a good, lazy feel to it, man. Let me see here. This song I did—I'm gonna play you now—I did in 1965. I never got to hear it till about six years ago, when they found a lot of stuff that they had of mine and had it hid. This one is, I used the One O'Clock Lab Band horn section out of North Texas State and some guys that were playing []. See if you recognize ...

BC: Is this that Memphis, Tyler and L.A.?

DH: No. I played []. I mean, it's a bad—L.A., Memphis and Tyler band.

BC: Okay. But this is an old piece—'65.

DH: Yeah, '65. This was before ... I had—I don't even remember doing it, okay?
And it—what it is [song begins to play] ... yeah. Yeah. [].
[DH sings along] You know the song now?

BC: Yeah. "Mama Don't Allow."

DH: That's right. Boogie woogie chillen'. [BC sings along] Just think, man, all the years I never got to hear this, man. And about seven years ago, it popped up.

BC: Somebody popped it up, yeah.

DH: It ... What I did is I used two songs. This next song in this, in this arrangement, is a Frankie Lee Sims song. He's an old blues guy.

BC: Yeah.

DH: But see how I changed it in there. Would you like to hear that part?

BC: Sure. I'd love to hear it. The model for your first one was John Lee Hooker, right?

DH: Oh, yeah! [Song continues to play] [DH sings along] That's it.

BC: Yeah.

DH: And there's, there's several of them on here that—they, they found more than thirty sides of mine.

BC: Wow.

DH: Are you guys ready to go, or you want...?

JE: I was making sure I was getting both sides. I was a little—needed a little adjusting.

DH: Okay.

JE: I'm good now.

DH: You good now?

JE: Mmm hmm.

DH: Okay. I'm gonna play something—if you couldn't play this kind of stuff here in Bossier City on the strip...

BC: You're outta work.

DH: ... you didn't work long.

BC: Yeah. [Song begins to play] It's a big boss man rap, isn't it?

DH: Huh? [Song stops]

BC: It's a big boss man.

DH: That's exactly right, the same feel. Let's see if there's anything here. There's some good stuff on here. I don't wanna back off any. [] Let me see—to get into it, let's see []. This—this is a good song. I, I forgot all about it. [Song begins to play] I signed a contract with United Artists so I could get this other company [DH sings long]. Did this in New York, back in 1964, '65. It's ... it's more of a pop swing thing, but there's some—if you like good funky stuff ... on this is some good stuff. Let's see, what have I got here? Is there anything you guys wanna ask me now?

TM: Well, you know, it's—I like going down this road. I think any—you know, we can do this for a little bit—I would like to at some point before we really wrap it

up maybe talk a little bit about the difference between recording back when you first got going and what it is now with, you know the digital—and you kind of touched on it here and there, but...

DH: Oh, we've touched on it real good.

BC: Yeah.

DH: What did you want—now, what did you want...?

TM: Let me think of a specific question. Maybe comment—and there have been a lot of comments made on the sonic quality and the difference in the sonic quality, I guess.

DH: Okay. What ... The sound quality—I don't think the sound quality makes any difference in the world; I think it's—it's what you ... It's just what kind of sounds touch you. This is a—this is a Helsinki, song that—listen to this [song begins to play]—come on. Don't—you aint got to even listen to the singer. Isn't that nice, man?

BC: Yeah, it's a nice layer.

DH: And he uses—the way he uses the instru—instruments and voices to change. He just uses them and takes them out real gentle.

BC: Oh, yeah.

DH: See what I'm saying?

BC: Yeah. [Song stops]

DH: And every time I get any kind of music in from anywhere...

BC: Yeah. I'm starting to get a sense of what you like. You like a thick, layered sound, don't you? Lots of little—like Steve Cropper—when he would come in on some of...

DH: Oh, that was some nice stuff.

BC: He would just come in at exactly the right time.

DH: And then get out.

BC: Yeah. Yeah.

DH: When you're supposed to get out [laughs].

BC: And you like that, don't you?

DH: Yeah. Yeah. Well, guys, I got some other stuff I could play for you here. This guy that I just...

BC: 'Cause, you know, there's a great variety in the stuff you've been playing for us. I mean, there's a lot of different sounds here.

DH: Yeah.

BC: You know, some of it sounds kind of country, and, you know, even that one reminded me of The Monkees, you know? That stuff that the Five Americans—you did with them?

DH: Yeah. Mm hmm.

BC: So, there was a lot of different kinds of things that could grab you, weren't there?

DH: Yeah. I could produce most anything. There's one song on here, if I could find it. It's a song I did in '68. It was a big hit ... these three black guys from Dallas. I mean, I was broke, and I was down. And I cut this think *knowing* that it was a hit, all right? When the sucker hit, they went to Chicago to do some shows, and

they got in this race deal, you know, and one of them got killed, man. That just about broke my heart, but the thing about it is I had completely forgotten about doing it, you know, and if I can find it here, I'll play it for you. It's ... and this historian down at Louisiana Tech is the one that found it. Give me just a second, okay?

BC: Yeah. I'd love to hear it. [02:46:34]

DH: Where are you? Where are you? [Pause]

TM: This is a real neat little musical tour.

BC: Yeah.

TM: It's neat—it's kind of neat to ...

BC: Yeah.

DH: Give me just a minute, I'll find this thing. If I don't find it, we'll go on. But it shows you another field that I was really good in, and that was producing.

BC: Yeah. Producing R & B.

DH: Right.

BC: Okay. You remember the name of the song that you're looking for?

DH: I should. It was The Festivals ... "You Got the Makings of a Lover" is the name of it, so it'd be down here under the ...

BC: And the name of—the group called themselves The Festivals?

DH: Yeah. The Festivals.

BC: Okay.

DH: And the name of the song is "The Making of a Lover." Let me see if I can find it, 'cause if I do it'd be well-worth hearing. I might not have it on this. [Pause] I'm

sorry, I can't—I don't see it. You've got the—but what it is, is it shows you the different ways I could use the horns for pop sounds. And it was at a good time ... let me see if this is it, guys—I hope. [Song begins to play] [DH sings along] That's—those harmonies were, were just *excellent*.

BC: Yeah.

DH: I mean, they—we worked and worked on them but we got []. Anyway, I didn't—I hadn't heard this until about a year ago.

BC: And you made this in Texas.

DH: Yeah. It really ...

BC: In '68. That's the time when, you know, you can hear—you can sort of hear The Impressions and ...

DH: Yeah, you can hear that

BC: ... those Motown guys.

DH: ... guy, yeah, Motown, and you can hear—he was out of Chicago—that had those harmonies the way that he used them, and I used some of his ideas on it. But, just to—to put together in Dallas, this, was—it was pretty good.

BC: It was nice

DH: Hey, guys, I—let's see, is there anything else that you'd like to hear, hon?

TM: Scott, can you think of anything that ...?

SL: Let me ask you this: have y'all talked about "Susie Q"?

BC: Yeah. We talked about how carefully it was put together.

DH: We talked [all we need to?].

SL: Did we—did he—did you play it for us and talk about each part?

BC: We did not play it. Would you like to have it played? If ...

SL: Well, I mean, he might say something about ...

BC: It's the number one cut on that Bear Family [].

DH: Well now, the thing about it is, is we—I did and I did this is a very unusual thing is, I did break down to him and explain to him why each part of the song built.

SL: Okay.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Like, on the intro—there had never been a song with a bell—cowbell and drums.

SL: Yes.

BC: Yeah.

DH: Had never been a song that came in with a lick and a two ... and stay in a two—until the bridge and break into a four.

BC: Four, yeah. And he talked about all that, so it was the closest analysis of the song I've ever heard ...

SL: Okay.

DH: Well, you've got this, too right? You're getting' it now. Okay, [].

BC: ...but it didn't—we didn't play it.

SL: So, we can play it [].

BC: Yeah.

DH: You can play it and listen to it and [] everything I said whenever we were talking about it earlier ...

BC: It'll be just clearer.

DH: And if it's not, you can holler, okay?

SL: Well, I'm thinking we'll probably end up coming back down here, anyway.
There's so many photographs...

BC: And Trey said this stuff on the wall you wanna get, too, yeah. Would you talk a little about—I mean, this is a crazy thing just for me—maybe not for the thing—but what's that photograph up on the upper left up there?

DH: All the way up, that black-and-white?

BC: Yeah.

DH: That is—that is what is called a typical L.A session in 1960—1965—when Simon and Garfunkel, I think it was the “Bridge Over Troubled Water.”

BC: Okay.

DH: And that was—you had the rhythm section was Hal Blaine, drums; Larry Ketchel, piano; and Joe Osborn on bass.

BC: Okay.

DH: Joe Osborn was my first guitar player, after James. On “La Do Dada” he played guitar.

BC: Okay.

DH: But, if you'll go up in the web and check out his website
[<http://www.myspace.com/joeosborn>], you'll see that he played on over 200 top-ten records.

BC: Wow.

DH: I've been real blessed by having people that would listen, because if they don't listen, I can't communicate, you know. But most everybody that I—from James Burton, Roy Buchanan ... Gosh, I had a bunch of guitar players, great guitar

players. And, the reason why is because James does not play rhythm; James only picks and runs to the chords, okay? Roy uses probably the heaviest gauge guitar strings that anybody I know of ever used, which were fourteens, okay? The little E—the Es down there, usually nines and tens—he used fourteens, alrighty? Carl Adams—and I had Carl Adams and Roy Buchanan, too. Carl had these two fingers shot off when he was a kid; his dad [] squirrel hunting. [02:53:42]

And I'll, I'll tell you this in closing: he, you know, wanted to continue to play music. We're from the same—I've even got a picture of us being in the same grade—in seventh grade at school together. And, so whenever "Susie Q" came out, I had to have somebody with me that I knew I could count on. So, what Carl did—he had a handicap, all right? What's a handicap? Tell me this is something, he had to turn the guitar over this way, and it gave him the ability to *pull* the strings, instead of push, or move them another way. And he'd take a pick here, a pick here, and a pick here. And I'll play you some of, of Carl's stuff. He and Roy together were, were really, really ... something else. But he took it and made a full house out of that handicap man, because it had never been done. Never been done. You know—and I'm a Gibson man—but what's his name, Les Paul, saw Roy play, and he said, "That boy's not supposed to be playing pushing them strings like that." When he died, I heard he made a statement—as a matter of fact, it's on his biography thing, that one of the greatest guitar players that ever lived ...

BC: Was Roy Buchanan.

DH: Right. And the reason why that Roy ended up being so good was because he had me on his head half the time. [Laughter] [] But was Carl Adams and me. Because they could play, and, you would have two different sounds. And I'm gonna play you the first sound that I ever heard in my life when two guitars became one, okay? And, and I'll let you go. [Pause] This was done, maybe in late 19—like late '58, early '59. And it's at a—in Fort Worth, in an old recording studio, and we were just in there messing, around, but it's—all you're gonna hear are just two guitars and me playing the piano—trying to. And I didn't even have *these* until about, I think—my boys brought me my stuff from over in Dallas—all of those acetates—the original hits. [Song begins to play] Right here. That was the demo of “Susie Q.” [Another song begins to play and stops] [Another song begins to play] Hear what I'm saying?

SL: That's amazing.

DH: You know, nobody—you know, you—I could take that and explain it to somebody, and if they had any sense at all they could say, “Wow!” you know, “listen to that!” But that was the first time that I have ever heard...

SL: Two guitars make one.

DH: Yeah. And that—it was surely—again, it was—it was something that definitely wasn't planned.

BC: Yeah.

DH: You know? This one right here, “Number Nine Train”—I did this in 1958. [Song begins to play] Now that's the *real* shit! Can't say much for the vocal [laughter], but, anyway, that's, that's about it for today, guys. I'm burning down.

JE: Can I ask you one question about your drummer?

DH: Sure. Mmm hmm.

JE: Did you always—did you have a—you seem to talk about your guitar players a lot. Did you have a regular drummer?

DH: Hmm Mm, I ...

JE: Just whoever you could find?

DH: I took whoever I thought could do the job best, or, that was available, you know. I—mmm mmm—no.

JE: Just curious.

TM: Okay. That was excellent.

JE: Thank you.

SL: It was excellent.

BC: Thank you so much, Dale.

DH: You're welcome.

BC: I knew driving down here I was gonna have a good time, and I did.

DH: Well, I'm glad you came, man. This is yours.

SL: Could be. Yeah. Dale, I left a check in there, and whatever these guys wanna get, CD-wise, and Lynn has—you know I've got that—your newest CD and the one that was done in '68.

DH: Uh huh.

SL: And the one ...

DH: Bear Family?

SL: Yeah. So I've got those three, and I think Trey wanted one or two of something...

DH: Okay,

SL: Whatever you've got ...

DH: Trey, what—which ones did you want?

TM: The Bear Family and the one we listened to on the way out here. If you've got copies of everything, if not I can order ...

DH: Yeah. I can go in there and get them for you.

TM: I'd just as soon give you the money than ...

BC: If I had a choice, I'd like the Bear Family one and the one with the first studio—first place you ever played. Remember that? Did you see that cover? The wrecked building in Louisiana?

SL: Yes. Yes, yes. That's his newest—that's his newest one.

BC: So I want the newest one and the Bear Family one.

SL: Gather all those up, and—well, I've already got a check signed, and it's blank.

BC: Oh, boy. That's trust! [Laughter]

SL: If it's not too big, it won't bounce too hard [laughter].

DH: Thank the good Lord for bouncing checks [laughter].

BC: He talked today at some length about a hot check that *he* wrote.

SL: He did? [03:00:11]

[End of Interview]

[Transcribed by Rebecca Willhite]