Ronson to join Mott?
Will he replace Bender?

Pete Townshend reviews new Who album
G. Dead
M. Oldfield
Totally unbiased reviewer appraises new Who collection. (Would we lie to you?)

Words: PETE TOWNSHEND

God, this is embarrassing! I don't know where to hide. Well, I mean, the whole thing about... Him is that He is Everywhere. Isn't He? A modest beginning to the musical-spiritual work of the inquisitive Who.

This reminds me of The Bee Gees. The guitar solo is the thing I've ever heard. They're great boys you know, the rest of the boys in the band. Do you think anybody else would've put up with this nonsense? Anyway, the whole idea is pretentious - something bigger than US? US! THE WHO? A quick listen to this, ladies, and you'll bring us quick- ly down to size. I can assure you.

"I'm The Face". Quite simply our first record. Words by Pete, music by me. It's about a man with desert boots, blue jeans, and red and yellow pop writers every page of his address book. Music was written by "Get Love If You Want It" by Slim Harpo. Pay your royalties.

"Naked Eye". Another track from the LP. This was written around a riff we often played on stage at the end of our act around the time we were touring easily "Tommy". It came to be one of our best stage numbers. This was never released because we always hoped we could get a proper version out. But then we're such a lively group.

"Long Live Rock". Well, there are dozens of self-conscious songs to the last 15 years appearing these days, and here's another one. This was featured briefly in the film "Tommy" but I think the music for that "It'll Be Me" was better. But this is definitely the definitive version.

I had an idea for a new album. This is the group's version of some songs are as faithful to the original demo as this one. At its best, it can make their terrible mark. Another track from the abortive Life House story. It's a strange, really, that this never appeared on "Tommy". Because the whole concept behind the Life House idea was anything and all.

This month, the Who's 'Odds and Sods' LP is released.

This week, One Who Was There explains its existence.
THE WHO: "Odds & Sods" (Track)

THESE TRACKS from the past show that The Who's unpublished back pages are far more illuminating than some of the current entries being made by established bands who imagine they've got it firmly together. Basically, "Odds & Sods" is a collection of rare draft sketches written by Pete Townshend while contemplating future directions. To quote the band themselves, they're "grand dreams that didn't see the light of day."

Adding to the value of this musical documentary, there's also a note from John Entwistle ("Postcard") plus the stray sentiments on the "Tenth Face" from the days when the band still traded under the auspices of The High Numbers on London's Goldblad Road. And even though there's the odd embarrassing moment the tracks are totally unaltered.

Fundamentally, the album concentrates on three separate and vitally important periods in The Who's prolific existence.

1968: The fact that "Glory Girl" (backed with "Road A & B") contains the germ on an idea which eventually grew into "Tommy" shouldn't detract from its own particular merits.

Contrary to what you might think, "Glory Girl" is not concerned with punks and blind kids, but with a air disaster which the writer describes using journalistic devices: "Sequences and beggar, several stars of the band." "Lots of Woodward's make up a very quiet news that's your out-time place, sentimentality's going. 4 million little memories, a million little lies." - Copyright Fabulous Music Ltd 1974.

In retrospect, the only indication of "Tommy" is the echo in the vocals, which repeats the lines "It's a girl Mrs. Walker..." a soft fluttering. From this same period comes "Little Billy," some anti-smoking propaganda (reminiscent of the "I'm A Boy" and "Happy Jack") commissioned by the American Cancer Society but never used to denigrate national youth from taking the danger of lung destruction. In "Smoothing Bigger," which finds Townshend digressing a religious mood, it is only real turkey and the least said is better.

1969: Around this time there was considerable talk of The Who's move to the EP selling at the same price as a single. They permitted the material in concept and almost set the release date. But for some unknown reason, the EP never materialised in its intended form.

Two tracks did make it as sides: "Don't Do It Yourself" was coupled with "Won't Get Fooled Again," and "Water" accompanied "5.15" into the charts. And as far as we know, Entwistle's "Postcard" and a still-active stage number, "Naked Eye," were to make up the second. The latter two were included here together with "New Year's Fireworks," which according to Townshend's main, was also intended as an EP nite.

"Postcard," is one of the finest things The Who has ever committed to wax, and a definitive on-the-road confession:

"There's lots of feline flies, disagreeing eyes in the USA. We've been reclusive since I don't know when. There's just one thing wrong, you've been here too long, the Who's got a new home."

And also:

"There's noonJuice and we're back in Australia. Turned off the plane for drinking beer. So long on the phone it drove us insane, so long on the plane."

- Copyright Who Stole Rhymes Ltd, 1974

"Now I'm a Farmer" in Townsend's finest mood, while "Naked Eye" substantiates the fact that this number shouldn't have remained in the can for so long.

1972: "Put The Money Down," and "Too Much Of Anything" stems from the "Who's Next" sessions, which themselves contained a number of segments from the much larger "Life House" multimedia project — abandoned in favour of "Quadrophenia." Also from this era is "Postcard II," which included on Pete's solo album, fact, the only reason three tracks removed of version because "Who's Next" was eventually released as a single album and not as another double.

"Money Down" is a killer, revealing Townsend's rhythmicism: with many of the things going on around him.

In the music industry in particular:

There are bands killing others,
My hero's getting pushed around, round, round.

Townshend's expertise as an observer of his scenes is further exemplified in the lyrics of "Long Live Rock" — which Billy Fury performed in "That'll Be The Day."

"Down at the Astoria the scene was changing, slogs and rock were pushing for the front. We were the first band to vomit in the bars.

And find the distance to the stage too far...

But play this...

Jack is in the alley telling everyone's got it in Kong. Promoters in the pay box. Wonderings.


With the standard of material like this in the works, maybe there's still hope that things like "Mary," "Joker James," "Join My Gang" and Pete's epochal..." In the near future, these tapes will eventually be made public. It's not often that a band will actually allow the listener to go through their box of tracks, but them not every band is The Who who a band who takes it better than most folk's final tapes... Ray Carr.