FEW rock bands create household names of their entire line-up, from vocalist to drummer. But throughout the 14-year history of the original Who, the group functioned as a four-way study in personal dynamics. Pete Townshend, Roger Daltrey, John Entwistle and Keith Moon each existed as distinct public personalities in their own right. What happened after Keith's death in 1978 proved that as soon as you stripped away one of the four, the entire edifice was in danger of collapse.

More recently, Townshend has assumed effective command of the Who's legacy. As the band's songwriter, guitarist and, above all, conceptualist, he's been able to make an articulate case for seeing the band as a vehicle for his own startling development as a writer. Pete has achieved this posthumous leadership of the Who almost unconsciously, helped by sympathetic handling from the 'serious' rock press. Meanwhile, the rest of the band have been left in the shadows. Keith Moon is dead; John Entwistle rarely speaks in public; so that leaves Roger Daltrey to put the case for the opposition.

Any suggestion that the Who's charismatic vocalist was merely a pawn in Townshend's master plan was dispelled when he spoke to U.S. journalist Ken Sharp earlier this year. Showing a keen ear for what really matters in the Who's back catalogue, he proved to be an articulate and combative interviewee — eager to remind the world that the Who wasn't a Pete Townshend creation, but a equal partnership who might just have been the greatest rock band in the world.

RECORD COLLECTOR: You once said that "rock and roll saved my life."

ROGER DALTRY: I was a bit of a tearaway. I think I would have been jailbait. We weren't wealthy but we definitely weren't poor. There was a wonderful community in Shepherd's Bush where I grew up. All my friends were into villainy and crime! But it wasn't like it was today with all the drug problems. It was petty theiving and just general larking about. A lot of my friends ended up robbing banks. I used to like a lot of excitement. Rock and roll gave me all of that. I did it legitimately. Well (laughs), kind of legitimately.

RC: The Marquee was a great training ground for the Who in the early 60s, wasn't it?

RD: We played there every Tuesday night. When we first did the job, Tuesday was slow, that's why they let us in there. God, they didn't know what hit them. The great thing about the Marquee was that it was the West End — it was like the whole of England starts there. So it expanded our audience potential by literally a million. I don't mean this as sour grapes, but it is hard to play for fans who see you all the time.

RC: "I Can't Explain" was a Kinks-styled song, as Pete Townshend has confessed since. Was there a rivalry between the Who and the Kinks?
Dalrymple the archetypal Mod in 1966: he treated his natural early hair with what he calls "dippy-doo" to fit the fashion demands of the day.

RD: We were London bands, but there was camaraderie. If there was any rivalry, it was friendly.
RC: Why did Jimmy Page play rhythm guitar on that single, and the Ivy League do the backing vocals?
RD: Well, producer Shel Talmy didn’t think that Pete’s guitar playing was up to it, or our backing vocals. He was right about the backing vocals! And in those days you didn’t have overdub facilities. You made the record and that was it.
RC: What do you remember about making the “My Generation” album?
RD: We did the recording between gigs — literally. We did it in two afternoons, and by the end of the week we were playing the stuff on stage.
RC: Are those early days a blur for you? It’s well-known that Keith Moon didn’t remember playing on the “Substitute” session. He didn’t think it was him.
RD: (laughs) I think if Keith was here, and you asked him to recall his early life, he wouldn’t be able to. My main memory is that I always used to develop a cold going into the studio. We used to record in the afternoons, we’d be playing all night, we never used to stop playing. And my voice never used to warm up until about nine o’clock at night, so in the studio I used to sound like a foghorn.
RC: Was “Substitute” a quick track to cut?
RD: Yeah. All those tracks were quick. The first slow track was “I Can See For Miles” — when I say slow, I mean it took a whole day, and we spent most of that doing the harmonies. The backing and the lead vocal were done in a couple of hours, and then we spent eight hours overlaying harmony after harmony after harmony. And the single never did that well. It was big in America, but in the rest of the world they didn’t seem to take to it. I still think it’s probably our best single. The energy is incredible.
RC: How did you come to cover “Heatwave” on your second album?
RD: In the early days, before Pete started to RD: In those days I don’t think there were even demos. I can’t remember. “I Can’t Explain” was a demo, I think, but I’m vague on that. “Anyway, Anyhow, Anywhere” wasn’t a demo, because we wrote that on stage at the Marquee — literally. He had a thing going on guitar and we started putting lyrics to it. Pete had the basic verse structure and I think I wrote the bridge and bits of the chorus. We recorded it the next day, which is why there’s no demo of it.
RC: Do you wish you’d written more songs with Pete?
RD: Of course I do.
RC: Why didn’t it happen?
RD: Well, he’s an insular guy and it probably wouldn’t have been as good as it turned out if I had done. I wish I could write with him now.
RC: You started out on lead guitar in the D ocean and Pete played rhythm. Why did it take so long for you to play guitar on stage with the Who? I think it was only during the 1968 tour.
RD: It was confidence. I had to work. The Who in those days were incredibly poor. They were still at college and school and I was making guitars. I was a metal worker, and if you see sheet metal workers’ hands, you’ve never seen so many cuts in your life. You’re better off being a bricklayer if you want to play guitar! It just became impossible in the end, and my confidence totally went. Part of the early Who career was all about knocking people’s confidences out.
RC: Many people have surmised that Pete became an over-achiever due to his
inferiority complex about his looks, and that's why he resorted to smashing guitars and the rest, to take attention away from how he looked. Do you agree?
RD: Well, it seems to be that the whole theory bears no sense at all. To take away from his appearance, it seems to me that he was trying to attract attention! That's a complete paradox, isn't it? I think Pete did have a hard time as a kid with his appearance, but don't all kids have a hard time? God, I had a hard time too. I was little with big legs and rickets. I used to get picked on, like everyone else. That's how I learned to look after myself. But contrary to what some people seem to think, I was never a bully, I was just a hard man.

I read somewhere recently where Pete suggested that the first time he met me, I punched him in the nose at school. Well, that is quite honestly not true. I met Pete first when he came to one of our rehearsals with a guitar. I saw him at school, he was a character. You could hardly miss him. But he loves to make those kind of stories up, and we have had a lot of fights in the past and I did use to rule the band with an iron fist. But the band needed it! They wouldn't have gotten anywhere. And Pete now readily admits that he would have laid in bed all day if I hadn't dragged him out and forced him to come to a gig. So I don't make any apologies for that behaviour. It was what was necessary at the time.

RC: Pete once said that he really admired your change in the band from a somewhat hard character to 'Peaceful Percy'.
RD: Well, they threatened to kick me out, that's what it was! I didn't want to do anything else in my life except be in this band. Even though I used to fight with them, it was the fights you have with a girlfriend you love.

RC: Back in the history, you covered two Rolling Stones' songs, "The Last Time" and "Under My Thumb".
RD: They'd been jailed. Keith and Mick had been jailed for smoking grass. Or had been caught with cannabis, anyway, and we did it as a gesture — all the proceeds were going to go to legal things to mount a campaign to get them out. We thought it was a disgraceful sentence.

They're almost as good as the Stones' versions! It was fun to sing somebody else's song. And they got jailed in the afternoon the previous day; we went in at eight the next morning and recorded them. John was on vacation so Pete played the bass.

RC: One of my favourite promo clips is the one for "Happy Jack", which was a precursor to the MTV-style music video. Where was it shot?
RD: That was filmed in Robert Stigwood's office in London, which was completely trashed! He was not a happy man. That cake went everywhere. We didn't eat much of it. It seemed to go everywhere but our mouths.

It was directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg, who also directed my pay-per-view special this year. He did all the great 'Ready, Steady, Go!' stuff. He was the best rock or pop director for that time.

RC: In 'The Kids Are Alright' film, there's another scene with Keith is walking around like a mechanical robot with the music of "Cobwebs And Strange" playing. But that wasn't the original music, was it?
RD: It was for "Call Me Lightning". We filmed that in Los Angeles in a warehouse. We were just bored one afternoon and we had to get something out because we were on tour with Herman's Hermits.

RC: What do you recall about playing the Monterey Pop Festival?
RD: God, that was a good day. But I remember the Fillmore West that we played the week before Monterey. That was much more memorable for me. The first time in San Francisco. Monterey was kind of a drugs blur (laughs), but my most affectionate picture of it was just before we went on stage. The dressing-rooms were under the stage and there was a jam session going on with Jimi Hendrix — Brian Jones was there, and Mama Cass. There was Townshend and Moon and everybody was bashing and crashing something. Janis Joplin was there. Hendrix was doing some Beatles song, "Sgt. Pepper", and this jam just went on and on. It was better than any of the shows on the show. It was amazing.

RC: For the "A Quick One" album, everybody in the band was contracted to come up with two songs each. You only managed one, "See My Way".
RD: My song is the demo. The Who never recorded my song. It's basically the demo I recorded, not Pete and me. Those were war days with me and the guys. The whole album was tongue-in-cheek, in fact. The only think I really remember about it is the mini-opera.

That was Kit Lambert's idea. His father was a very famous English composer, Con- stant Lambert, who started the Covent Garden Opera House. Kit was educated in classical music, but he loved pop music, and rock'n'roll. He always said he could do much more with what it was actually doing. He hated what Elton John was doing, he thought that it had become pompous for this over-fed middle-class with their noses in the air. Composers like Mozart wrote those songs for the people — it was the pop music of its time. Kit loved the three-minute single, which is one of the things that's sadly missing in popular music these days.

RC: "Pictures Of Lily" is one of those perfect three-minute singles. I loved seeing you do that on the '69 tour.
RD: I have problems singing it now, as the sound of my voice isn't the same anymore. I think "Pictures Of Lily" is a great song. It's another rip-off from the Kinks. I tried to get Ray Davies to sing it at the Carnegie Hall shows, but he was playing Wembley and
couldnt take the time out of his schedule. He sent me a wonderful note, though. Think about Ray singing that song, and it becomes more of a Kinks number than it ever was a Who song.

**RC:** One of the last songs from the second album was "So Sual About Us"?

**RD:** It's a great song. It's very melodic, but there's an angst behind it. I can't really remember whether Pete wrote it as a single for the Merseys and they did it first, or whether we did it and they covered it. I think that's one of the few hit singles Pete's had with any other artists.

**RC:** What do you remember about the Who's appearance on the 'Rock & Roll Circus' TV show?

**RD:** Not a lot. The grass was good! I felt that we did a fairly reasonable performance of the mini-opera. Brian Jones wasn't in good shape in those days, sadly, but it was one of those memorable occasions.

**RC:** The Who opened for the Beatles a couple of times — I feel like I missed out on all those great concerts!

**RD:** You didn't really miss much. You couldn't hear fuck all, apart from the screaming. All you could do was watch them. We were back-stage when the Beatles were on and it was just a noise.

I got on great with Lennon. Keith got on great with Ringo, and George is a lovely guy. I've known Paul for 30 years: he loved the Who. He did a lot for our career in America, and me and Paul Simon.

**RC:** Paul Simon?

**RD:** He was the first guy to bring us to America. He made Murray The K aware of us, and he brought us over for his Easter show.

**RC:** Is it true that at the RKO Theatre in New York you used to torment Murray The K wearing animal masks?

**RD:** We did everything to Murray The K. I broke every microphone on the show, and the last one left was his own personal gold-plated microphone. We did four or five shows in a day there, doing something like "Substitute" and then "My Generation". We'd do one song and then smash all the gear up. We had Bobby Pridden back-stage permanently glueing guitars back together.

**RC:** Speaking of smashing guitars, the Who's appearance on 'The Smothers Brothers' TV show is legendary. Someone must have lost their hearing with the explosion that Keith caused.

**RD:** Keith just got the pyrotechnic guy drunk and paid him a few hundred dollars to put four or five times the amount of charge that should have been there. It went off like a grenade. It was a huge explosion, huge! The Smothers Brothers nearly got sacked for that.

We did "I Can See For Miles" and "My Generation" there, with live vocals on a backing track. I used to sing live on a lot of those TV shows.

**RC:** Tell me about the 1968 tour of Australia you did with the Small Faces. I heard it was a totally wild affair.

**RD:** It was crazy, because Australia was really a psychotic country then. We couldn't afford to take our own equipment, so we had to hire what was there. We used these PA systems from World War II, it was unbelievable! And the Aussies at that time had no sense of humour, so they threw us out after three weeks. They didn't like us at all. But the Small Faces were fun to be with.

**RC:** Did you work with them in England as well?

**RD:** No, they were regarded as much more of a pop group than we were. We were too rough at the edges to be a pop group. We were too fucking ugly. This is a statement of fact!

**RC:** How'd you wind up being the one smothered by Helas bashed beans on the cover of "The Who Sell Out"?

**RD:** I was the last one to be done. They all grabbed the easy ones and thought, "Oh, we'll get Daltrey in the tub of baked beans." It was awful. I got very sick because they just got the bloody things out of the freezer.

Then I think it was Moon who had the bright idea of putting an electric fire around the back of the tub. One half of me was cooking, but my feet were freezing, and it made me very ill.

**RC:** Who came up with the idea for all the phoney adverts on that album?

**RD:** Chris Stamp. At the time, we relied heavily on the pirate radio stations, as the BBC only played about two rock 'n' roll records a day! That was it. So all these renegade people set up in ships off the shore and beamed in rock 'n' roll. For the first time ever, we had DJs who were happy to be playing the music they loved. It was so different from today, where you get DJs who are told what to play.

That album was recorded when the government had brought in legislation to sink them and stop them broadcasting. "Sell Out" came out literally within a week of them being turned off. To placate us, the government gave the BBC their own pop station, and it was awful!

**RC:** Didn't the Who do a Coca-Cola jingle?

**RD:** Yeah, we did a Coke jingle. They're crazy for not digging that one out again, 'cos it's a great jingle.

**RC:** And didn't Pete do a U.S. Air Force commercial?

**RD:** Yeah, he did that. (in loud voice) Yeah, get killed in Vietnam, join the Air Force! It's easy to put it down in retrospect, but we weren't aware of all the politics. We were English, and that's no excuse, but we were.

**RC:** What do you think of the "Sell Out" album?

**RD:** I love it, I think it's great. I love the jingles, the cover, everything about it. It's got humour, great songs, irony.

**RC:** People thought the Who were raking in the money at this time, but you were actually in great debt. Was that because of destroying all the equipment and hotel rooms?

**RD:** You have to remember that Keith was inventing the rock and roll lifestyle at that time, which was a very expensive occupation.

**RC:** Were there any hotels that welcomed the band?

**RD:** In the end they did. When we used to pay the bills in cash they welcomed us back. There were some hotels where I think Keith paid to have the whole hotel decorated. They put him in the worst room in the hotel, knowing full well he would smash the hell out of it and we'd pay in cash.

There were some hotels where Keith paid to have the whole hotel decorated. They put him in the worst room, knowing full well he would smash the hell out of it and we'd pay in cash.
RD: But they came out after “Tommy”. That was the first one with an actual storyline, where you could follow the narrative from one song to the next.

RC: What did you think of the new song, “I Believe My Own Eyes”, that Pete wrote for the Broadway play of “Tommy”. Was it a song the Who could have done?

RD: Of course it was a song the Who could have done. Whether we would have done it, I don’t know. I have to be careful what I say about “Tommy” on Broadway, because I hate hurting people’s feelings in the press. But I don’t like it at all. I like the music, I’m pleased with Pete’s success, but I don’t like what they’ve done to it. But who am I to knock it? It’s a huge success.

RC: Did you like Pete’s new song?

RD: I don’t think I should comment.

RC: I saw the Disney Channel’s “Tommy” special, and it was totally honest. I thought there were too many interviews with the Broadway cast and crew, and not enough of the Who.

RD: They know fuck all about “Tommy”.

RC: It was interesting in that special, though, how you said “Tommy” wasn’t based on you at all, and then Pete said it was based on you and him, and John thought “Tommy” was you as well. Is this how things always operated in the Who, with everyone having different perceptions?

RD: You have to understand that Pete was writing his best material when he was doing it through a third person, and that person was always me. And let’s be honest, what would “Tommy” have been if it wasn’t recorded by a bunch of lunatics like the Who. Here was a band who were two million dollars in debt. No one else would have been prepared to take those kind of chances!

RC: If “Tommy” had been a failure, would the Who have broken up?

RD: No. I don’t think there’s any way it could have failed. We didn’t know failure in this band. We got to know it a little after a while, but at that time there was no such word.

Pete definitely did write his best stuff when he was writing about a character that he could see very clearly outside of himself. When he gets introspective, I think it turns into melodrama. Some of it’s very good, and I admire his courage for doing that.

I was that outside figure. And of course I personified “Tommy”. I was the guy who used to play that part. I played the damn part for five years. I slog my balls off around the world, sweating it out. People thought I was “Tommy”. I used to get called Tommy in the street.

RC: What did you think about performing “Tommy” at New York’s Metropolitan Opera House?

RD: It was just another gig to me. That was how I used to feel about everything. I was never impressed with any of that shit. It’s a hole with a stage. So it had chandeliers — so what?

RC: Did the band have anything to do with the “Tommy” album cover?

RD: No, it was Mike McInerney who did that, and I think it’s incredibly good. He mostly worked with Pete and Chris.

RC: Was playing at Woodstock as miserable for the Who as everyone says?

RD: The only reason it was miserable as far as I was concerned was that as an artist, you always want to give your best. By the time we got on stage, we were in no condition whatsoever to play a show.

RC: Because you were spiked...
RD: Well, nobody spiked us, everybody was spiked! I mean, everything was spiked (laughs), and we were there for like ten hours before we went on stage and you had to drink something. After that, I couldn't perform my best. But let's be honest, Woodstock did our career an immense amount of good. And the fact that the sun came up during the "See Me, Feel Me" bit was extraordinary. It really was like a gift from God.

RC: "Live At Leeds" is viewed as the definitive live album by the Who, but there were a lot of songs missing from the show.
RD: I've always wondered why — I must dig out the rest of that show. I mean, "Live At Leeds" is the end of a two-and-three-quarter-hour show. It's just the jamming bit at the end! The rest of the show is hardly there.

RC: The Who live at the Fillmore East is one of the best live Who gigs.
RD: Well, some of our bootlegs are better than our records!
RC: Did you ever perform "The Seeker" live?
RD: Yeah, but I've always found it a bit ploddy. It's a real late 60s rhythm. I don't like it that much.
RC: Tell me about "Lifehouse". Some of the Who's best songs were earmarked for that record.
RD: The whole problem with "Lifehouse" was that the concept was too ethereal. Music-wise it was some of the best songs Pete's ever written. But the narrative was very strong. We would have needed another three years before recording it to make it complete.

RC: Would you like to have seen more of the "Lifehouse" songs on "Who's Next"?
RD: You know, what would it have changed? "Who's Next" is a great album in itself, so what would have changed if "Pure And Easy" had been on it? It just would have made it a longer great album.

RC: Were you intrigued by the new sounds Pete was getting for "Who's Next" with his Arp 2600 synthesizer?
RD: I used to hate that fucking thing! Oh God, it used to drive us nuts! All it could do is go "wheezing..." (imitates high-pitched sound). I mean, I could do the same with a paper and comb!

RC: What about the tape loops on another track on the "Who's Next" album, "Baba O'Reilly"?
RD: The loops were great. "Won't Get Fooled Again" has an organ, it's not a synthesizer at all. I used to love "Bargain", but I hate the solo. It's like someone with a belly ache! Can you imagine what that would be like with a great guitar solo? That's what I hated, any excuse not to play a great guitar solo! I really did loathe this machine.

RC: Didn't you record some tracks at Mick Jagger's house?
RD: We did it at 'Stargroves'. Jagger had this big old house out in the country, and they had a mobile studio. We recorded "Won't Get Fooled Again" there and quite a lot of other stuff.

RC: Where was the front cover shot?
RD: That's a composite, with the background put on. The big concrete block photo was taken just outside Sheffield. I don't think it's there anymore. They used to pick up these big blocks to hold slag heaps from mine shafts, to stop them from slipping. It was just there on this big black mountain of slag. There was this big white concrete block sticking out.

RC: And you had all had bladder problems that day.
RD: That's right! It looked like a great place to piss!

RC: I know you were unhappy with the "Quadrophenia" album because of the mix.
RD: I love the album but I still think it should be remixed. I've never heard a good mix of it. It's incredibly weak, it's thin. I've heard what's on the tapes. It lacks the real power that I know is there from hearing it in the studio. I always remember when I first heard the record, I thought, "Oh dear, maybe I should have another listen to it". I think a lot of the vocals are very low.

RC: Did you like John Entwistle's remix for the "Quadrophenia" soundtrack album?
RD: No, not at all. I hated it. I thought everything was totally out of balance. I mean, it's all just bass. It doesn't work having a lead
bass guitar. You just lose a lot of the guitar power. I think it needs a great mixer, someone like Matt Lange, to do it.

How come “Love Reign O’er Me” on stage is 25,000 times more powerful than “Love Reign O’er Me” on the record? We’re playing exactly the same stuff and singing it the same way.

In one way, though, “Quadrophenia” was great because I had my own studio at the time, and I was running the songs down there before I went to record with the Who. That helped a lot, and allowed me to do some vocal harmonies.

RC: Didn’t you have a lot of technical problems on the 1974 “Quadrophenia” tour?
RD: Yeah. That was before samplers and all these things. We had to put all these sounds on tape and again I used to hate it. Once we were playing with a tape, that’s when it started to die for me. You were no longer free to do what you felt like doing. You’d be stuck in this thing. It made the sound bigger, and we were still just a four-piece, but it didn’t work creatively for me at all.

RC: You had a major fight with Pete while you were recording “5.15”. Did the band ever get along?
RD: We got along very well. Everybody talks about this big fight. It wasn’t a big fight. We were rehearsing “Quadrophenia” and we had a film crew to film the rehearsal. We’d played almost the whole album and this film crew were all sitting on their trunks watching the show, against a camera. So I just said, “For fuck’s sake, when are you lot gonna start filming? You’re waiting for me to wear my voice out so you can film me when I’m flogged out! This is a hard piece of work to sing, I don’t want to sing it twice!”

Pete came over to me, and started poking me: “You do as you’re fucking told”. He was poking me in the chest. The roadies know that when I get rolling, I’m a little tiger, so they all jumped on me! They’re holding me down (laughs). Pete hits me with his Gibson across the shoulder while I’m being held, and then he starts spitting at me, calling me a “little cunt”. Then he says, “I’ll fucking kill him”.

So they let me go and he threw two punches. One went one side of my head and the next went the other side. He was throwing a right at me, and he was totally off-balance, and I hit him with an upper cut and he went six inches off the ground and passed out. I had to escort him to the hospital because I thought I’d killed him! No-one was sorrier than I was! But it wasn’t a big fight. He was pissed and he thought he could fight me, and he can’t (laughs). You have to know how to fight.

“I love his voice, I love all his songs”, says Roger Daltrey of Who bassist John Entwistle. “He’s a fabulous bass player, very much a maestro. And he’s got such a unique sense of humour, incredibly dark.”

RC: Did the press make out the Townsend vs. Daltrey feud to be bigger than it really was?
RD: Of course they did. We used it too. We were guilty of it. But it’s not important. It was like the wife hitting you with a frying pan. The next minute, you’re in bed fucking each other to death (laughs).

RC: Tell me about the time when Keith Moon passed out at a gig in San Francisco, and a 19-year-old drummer from the audience called Scott Halpin played with the Who.
RD: What do you do when your drummer is passed out on literally the third song in the show? You’re just about to premiere your new work, “Quadrophenia”, which is a difficult piece anyway. There you are, and you have 14,000 raving fans. We weren’t quitters. So I stood up and said, “Is there a drummer in the audience?” Simple as that. And they all lined up, and we picked one out, and we basically had a jam session. The audience were happy. Keith was happy, he was out of his brain (laughs). John was unhappy because Keith smashed his French horn!

RC: What did you think of Keith’s solo record, “Two Sides Of The Moon”?
RD: Well, only Moon would have the balls to make an album where he sings! And I love it for that. I love “Don’t Worry Baby”. Keith loved the Beach Boys. I’m producing a film about Keith at the moment, and I was thinking about calling it “The Last Beach Boy”. That’s all he ever wanted to do, was be in the Beach Boys. He never wanted to be in the fucking Who, we played rubbish! So we used to do “Barbara Ann” to keep him happy: “Moon’s in a mood, quick, play “Barbara Ann!” And “Bucket T”, that was another one that would keep him happy.

RC: You said “The Who By Numbers” was the record where Pete took over the leadership role, but it’s a brilliant album.
I'm working with him at the moment. He's gonna guest with me on some shows on my tour. Not all of them, some of them. He's very much a muse, unlike myself, where I have people I work with. I think he's a real musician and there are other things I do. He's a fabulous bass player. He's got such a unique sense of humour, incredibly dark.

RC: For the "Who Are You" album, I know you had some problems with producer Glyn John.

RD: I hid a punch-up with Glyn, mainly because he put strings on John's track. "Had Enough". I went into the studio in the afternoon the day before they put on the strings. I thought, "Fucking hell, strings on a Who track!" It was just slushy, and I don't likeathy string-laden orchestrations, but I like them triumphant.

He said, "What do you think?", and I said, "Don't like it much". And he went up the fucking wall. So I think he smacked me and I

smacked him and that's how we were in those days. No big deal.

I've read his recollections of those events, how he was always going to get me to sing differently. That's bollocks! There's not one rock and roll singer who's ever sung in more different styles than I have. Don't give me that bullshit! From "Tattoo" to "Beyond Blue Eyes" with that softness and vulnerability, to "Who Are You"...

All that happened was that I disagreed with him about the direction of the album. I still don't think he was the right producer for it. He was the right one for "Who's Next", because we'd already done lots of pre-production. But he did like the record, and Jon Astley's mixing was brilliant.

RC: Why didn't Keith play drums on "Music Must Change"?

RD: He just couldn't get it together. That was just when he was really bad on the alcohol. He just started to go for a cure.

RC: Around this time, he was given a promo job with Shepperton Studios. Was he being phased out of the group?

RD: We wanted to get him back to England because he was killing himself back in Los Angeles, and we wanted to get him back and gave him this job to do. He loved to be in the press, and the press loved Keith. He was a journalist's dream. There was always something to write about, and if it ever got dull he'd invent something.

I read in Dave Marsh's book about the Who ("Before I Get Old") where it talks about John and I wanting to get Keith out of the band. It's really not true. The truth of what was happening is we had to make a record and we had to get it finished. John and I were prepared to get in another drummer to finish the record, which is not the same as getting Keith out of the band. It was a totally different thing.

This had been going on for a long time, as we'd had to deal with the problems when Keith took the overdose of mortgage tranquillisers in San Francisco. We had this whole tour booked. Keith couldn't even walk for three days then. We did seriously consider getting another drummer to get us through. You do these things to keep together as a band, but you don't talk about it. You pretend it isn't the case by the side of the Blake. I mean, the Who without Keith Moon. Who do they think we are, fucking mad?

RC: Moonie's playing on "Who Are You" is great.

RD: Oh yeah, but it was hell to get it. He could be good for an hour.

RC: Did he know that his playing was deteriorating?

RD: Yeah, and he was so sad about it. He was so upset. He used to cry. Nobody knew more than Keith. He used to break his heart.

When Keith said he'd get a phone call he knew was going to come one day.

RD: Well, the truth with Keith is that it was a phone call that was bound to happen. He lived nine lives, and I saw him nearly die several times. When people talk about living on the edge, they don't know what it's like unless they've seen how Keith Moon used to live. I've never met anyone who lived like him. He really lived on the fucking edge.

RC: If you could see him today, what would you say to him?

RD: I'd love him. I'd miss him. I really miss him, God I miss him. The world misses him. He was a wonderful human being. He had his narcissistic streak in him, but his main aim was to entertain people. Mostly at his own expense. In the end, it was at the expense of his own life.