



**BIG  
COUNTRY**

**Issue 3 55p**

## Tour dates . . .

A BRITISH tour begins on Thursday April 7. The support band for most English dates, unless otherwise stated, will be Kingdoms from London. In Scotland they will be supported by White China, the band featuring Stuart's brother-in-law Jamie. Unfortunately there are no dates planned in Wales or Northern Ireland at present. Here's the complete rundown:

### APRIL

- 7th: Hacienda, MANCHESTER
- 8th: Floral Hall, Hornsea, HULL
- 10th: Coatham Bowl, REDCAR
- 11th: Dance Factory, Night Moves, EDINBURGH
- 12th: Dance Factory, DUNDEE
- 14th: Rock City, NOTTINGHAM
- 15th: Warehouse, LIVERPOOL
- 17th: Lyceum, LONDON (support bands The Alarm and Baba Luma)
- 18th: Civic Hall, GUILDFORD (support band Shea)
- 19th: PORTSMOUTH Polytechnic
- 21st: Caesar's, BRADFORD
- 22nd: SUNDERLAND Polytechnic
- 23rd: Strathclyde University, GLASGOW

THERE will also be a one-off date at the Venue in London on May 26, when Big Country top the bill at the annual Radio Luxemburg Stuart Henry benefit gig in aid of Multiple Sclerosis Research. Last year the main act was Mari Wilson and the Wilsations, and the year before it was Adam and the Ants. Please contact The Venue to book tickets.

## Recording update

A BRAND new song, title not yet released, will be the follow-up single to Fields of Fire, issued around the end of April or beginning of May. You won't have heard it in the live set, so keep your ears and eyes peeled for the first radio play, or a release date in the music press.

It is being produced by Steve Lillywhite, who also produced Fields of Fire. He's recently had a number one album with "War" by the excellent U2 and has also worked with Joan Armatrading.

On May 25 he goes into the studio with Big Country for five weeks to produce their debut album, due for release around late June, early July. Tracks definitely featuring on the album will be Fields of Fire, A Thousand Stars and the new single. You will have to wait and see what other numbers are included, but it is likely there will be a great deal of new material as the band have been busy writing new songs together.

In the last issue we said Chris Thomas would be producing the album, but for various reasons this was not possible. The band is certainly very happy with Steve (see back page) and he was one of the top choices when they were originally looking for a producer.

A NEW session for the Peter Powell show on Radio One is being recorded on April 19, but the actual broadcast date has not yet been decided. Check Radio Times.

## **BIG COUNTRY OFFICIAL MAGAZINE**

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Please send all correspondence to the above address. Contributions and suggestions are always welcome.

Front cover photo by FRANK PATERSON



Dublin-based band U2

## **BIG COUNTRY discover the magic of U2**

I EXPECT most of you missed the three nights Big Country played support on U2's recent tour, which is a great shame because the two bands complemented each other extremely well... and got on like a house on fire off stage.

The gigs, at Birmingham, Nottingham and Hammersmith, were arranged at very short notice. The U2 countrywide tour had already sold out, and tickets for the extra dates disappeared in a matter of hours, especially as U2's current album "War" reached the top of the LP charts only a week before. Singer Bono and guitarist The Edge went to see Big Country when they played at Liverpool Dingwalls in February, and were impressed with what they heard and saw. The two bands then shared the bill on The Tube TV show in Newcastle. When the extra tour dates came up Big Country were asked to appear - and did so with great pleasure.

By all accounts they were superb gigs, marred only by a couple of technical hitches on the last night at Hammersmith Palais. But nothing could dampen the spirits of these two dedicated and talented bands. It was the finale of a 33 date tour for U2. Their album had reached number one, and a new single, Two Hearts Beat As One, was bounding up the charts. For Big Country it was an emotionally supercharged evening. Fields of Fire had just reached number 13 and suddenly everything seemed to be going their way.

As a final gesture U2 invited Stuart on stage to join them for a last number - their version of Dylan's "Knocking on Heaven's Door". Backstage the champagne flowed ...

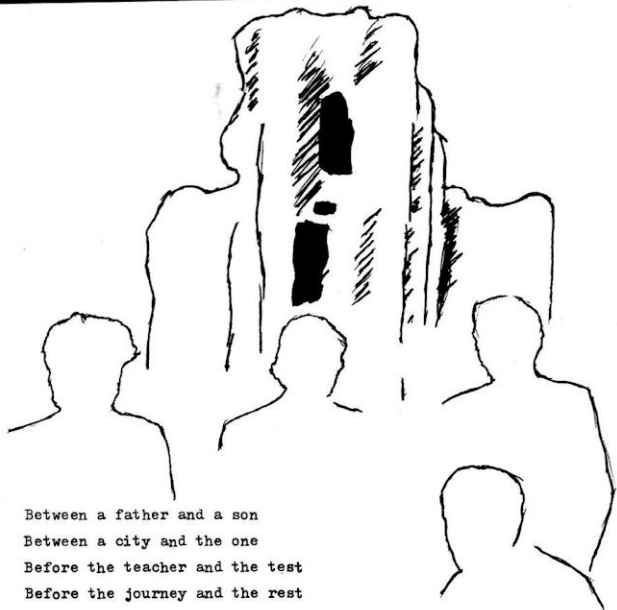
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U2 soon go over to the States for an extensive tour and have invited Big Country to join them when they have finished recording the album, sometime in June. Whether this happens or not, BC will be heading back to the USA this summer. Further details in the next issue.



Picture by FRANK PATERSON

# FIELDS of FIRE



Between a father and a son  
Between a city and the one  
Before the teacher and the test  
Before the journey and the rest

A shining eye will never cry  
A beating heart will never die  
A house on fire holds no shame  
I will be coming home again

Four hundred miles  
Without a word until you smile  
Four hundred miles  
On fields of fire

Between a woman and a boy  
Between a child and his toy  
Before the following to the west  
Before the journey and the rest

Four hundred miles  
Without a word until you smile  
Four hundred miles  
On fields of fire

c. Virgin Music, Big Country Ltd

# 6 The Jam's final curtain

ON THE 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th of December last year Big Country played in support to the Jam at Wembley Arena. Five times. I don't think Dennis Law played there that often. These were to be the Jam's final shows in London and obviously everyone and his brother wanted to see them because of what they had done in music over the last six years. Nothing like a bit of nostalgia, what.

To me places the size of Wembley are not the ideal situation for a group and their fans to say thanks to each other. I have a lot of respect and admiration for what Paul Weller and Bruce and Rick have done and totally agree with a lot of Paul's ideas on rock and roll, maan... Anyway, it went like this. We would come on stage,

unable to see the people at the back of the hall (100 yards away at least) and try to involve everyone who had never heard us, but it's hard to treat people with respect (from both sides) in that situation. As we were playing you could feel the sound being swallowed up by the demon god aircraft hangar.

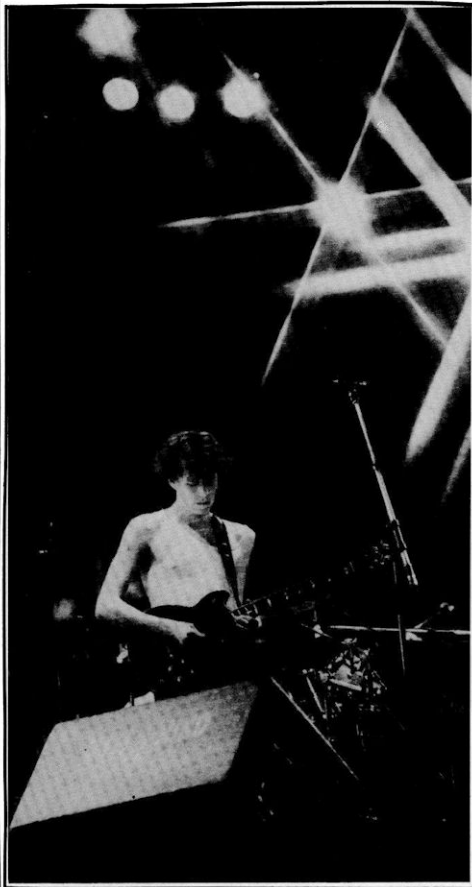
We played and a lot of people seemed to appreciate what we did. Best songs seemed to be Angle Park, Close Action, Porroh Man and Fields of Fire. We did no encores, partly because it wasn't our gig and partly because we didn't feel the situation was right. These weren't our people, but the Jam's.

I have seen the Jam a few times since they began, but have never heard them sound so emotional on stage for about three years. The crowd were great and the band let no-one down. The sound was abysmal most of the time, especially at the back of the hall, but that wasn't important. This was the climax of a group and it was very moving to know they would be splitting up afterwards and not allow themselves to be taken for granted.

The highlights for me were Boy About Town, Pretty Green, Ghosts, Move On Up, Dreams of Children, Bruce and Paul sharing microphones when Paul's went faulty, Paul wrecking his guitar in sheer passion and the crowd... I just don't think it should have been Wembley,

Cheers

STUART ADAMSON



PRETTY daunting prospect, isn't it - supporting the Jam at Wembley on their farewell tour? Obviously it was all too much for Apocalypse (the other support group) who didn't make it to the Saturday show, when I went. Pretty daunting for us fans too, who had gone to see Big Country. We were having to cheer despite rather impolite requests to remain silent from the Parka people. The sound system was not at all good from my vantage point (Upper Tier South) of performers left. We were able to recognize the songs, but not the speech or lyrics. This all changed most surprisingly for the Jam. Straight into opener Angle Park and family favourite Harvest Home. Tony's favourite Close Action was closely followed by Balcony and Porrohman, a delicate and moody piece of music ( yes, I bet you all wondered where Southern Death Cult got that hook line for Fatman - listen again). Being a guitar-based band EC have left that risky raw sound to their music which most polished pop bands forsake for Top of the Pops glory.

Bruce's dancing bears a remarkable resemblance to Hank Marvin on roller skates (not that I've seen Hank on wheels). Mark's bass drum wobbled its way through the rest of the set, but thankfully did remain standing. Whatever You Want favourite Lost Patrol was followed by Heart and Soul, and then that epic The Crossing.

The set closed with Fields of Fire which becomes more impressive with every listen. As Stuart danced to the side of the stage, he was followed by Bruce and Tony leaving Mark and his wobbly drum to beat a fitting conclusion to the set.

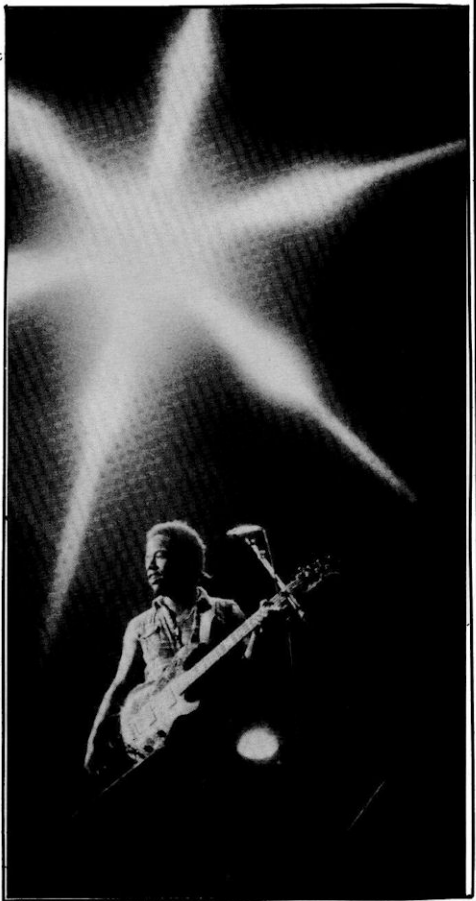
Thursday was reported to be the best night for both bands, but no-one left disappointed, except perhaps Mr Weller who stayed in his dressing room for ages. An indication of a favourable reaction was that only one or two moronic cheers were heard when Stuart announced the final number.

Most encouraging. Many Jam fans who had been earlier in the week tried to convince me that EC closed their part of the evening with a 12 inch dance-scratch-get-down-go-for-it version of "Oive got a bran' new Combine 'Arvester". I think we can forgive them for not doing that, can't we?

GAVIN WOOLLARD

Pictures at Wembley Arena by

CHRIS BATES





## **Whatever you wanted at The Ace . . .**

WEMBLEY Arena seats 8,000 and caters for those groups which could fill Hammersmith Odeon for a month. For a week in December the place was packed with thousands of youngsters sporting neat haircuts and Hush Puppies, clutching Parkas and Beat Surrender posters. They had come to witness the demise of one of the biggest groups of the Seventies. They had come to see the Jam. Very few had even heard of Big Country.

December 16 witnessed a similar event at the Ace Cinema, Brixton. Spiky topped individuals came from far and wide to see the birth of Theatre of Destiny....no, sorry Spear of Hate... or is it Spear of Destiny ???

Once again Big Country were playing to an apathetic audience. However the "punkabillies" in attendance were polite enough to allow the lads to play without screaming "Off, off " after every number. They had come to enjoy themselves and so had Big Country, and by the end of the evening the pleasure that is so distinct in BC's style had won yet more converts.

Big Country tore into their set with a lively rendition of Angle Park. This bouncy song is certainly one of my favourites and reveals the band's ability to mix cleverly structured lyrics with a strong rhythm on bass and drums, whilst completing the layer with some finely thought out guitar work. This clever concoction did not apply to the whole set, and I have reservations about a couple of numbers which appear to lack a solid punch.

A hearty cheer came from the audience for the first single Harvest Home and quite a few people began to dance and sing along. This track appeared on Whatever You Want along with Lost Patrol a few days later. Lost Patrol is a stunner of a track and was delivered with power and vitality. Other tracks worth a mention include Balcony, Fields of Fire, and the excellent Porrohman. I have reservations about Heart and Soul, but the overwhelming majority of Big Country's songs have various attributes which make them memorable. Porrohman is the one song that stands out above all for sheer strength and variation. The tempo is changed constantly throughout and the guitar chopping techniques of Bruce and Stuart worked very well yet again.

One criticism was that BC did get through their set quickly and one person in the audience was heard condemning the band for their lack of communication with the audience. While this statement was a valid one, it must be remembered that Big Country are a new group with few hardcore fans in the London area at the moment, and that to communicate with another band's fans for longer than necessary is not only pretentious, it's also stupid. Big Country will build up an audience and one day we could see Paul Weller's Jazz Funk All Stars and Spear of Destiny supporting them at Wembley. Until then we will have to sit back and enjoy the music of one of the best bands to emerge in the last three years.

MARTIN SOMERS





Pictures by JACKIE WHITEBURN

## GETTING ON THE RIGHT TR

Tony Dutler puts his feet up to tell you all about the making of the Fields of Fire video...

MAKING a video is always an exciting prospect, until you have to get up at 5.30 in the morning. We had to meet up at Kings Cross with a "record company person" who would then drive us to a place called Stibbington just outside Peterborough for a 9am start.

The location is the home of a beautifully preserved steam engine called the "Pride of Peterborough" with a station (Wansford) to match. We were greeted by a cheerful film company who were set up and ready to shoot scenes of us shunting up and down the track. While one camera was capturing our performance inside the carriage, the director had cameras shooting from the engine and the side of the track - shots which were used to great effect in the final composition (bellowing steam, raging steel wheels, etc). The next sequence brought in the first extra, dressed as a piper in full tartan dress, complete with pipes. His role was to stand in the middle of the track with the steam train careering out of a tunnel and stopping just short of his feet. Apparently he was right when he decided to jump out of the way on the second take - the train overshot its marker.



## THE MAKE OR BREAK POWER OF

JACKIE WHITBURN considers the effect of TV on Big Country's progress. Picture of Tony Butler taken by ALAN GLOVER of Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland, from the television screen during the band's performance on 'Riverside'

A FEW short months ago we were all wondering if we would ever see Big Country on our TV screens. Now they are seasoned small screen performers, having appeared on virtually every music show going, barring the Eurovision Song Contest. And those appearances have been an excellent illustration of just what an important part TV plays these days in the making or breaking of new bands.

Not so long ago Top of the Pops and the Old Grey Whistle Test were the only outlets for "popular" music. While TOPP is still recognized as THE programme to watch, attracting up to 12 million viewers each week, it never has done anything to bring new talent to our screens. It does, no doubt about it, help bands once they have reached the charts. Just one appearance saw Big Country soar up 16 places to number 13 with Fields of Fire - but they actually had to be in the Top 40 before they were even considered for a slot in the show. This wasn't the case with Channel 4's Whatever You Want, a mostly dreadful

programme saved only by the bands who played on it. They picked up on Big Country quite early and put out a couple of numbers recorded live at the Ace in Brixton. On the same night a scout from BEC2's Riverside watched the gig, and signed them up for an appearance in January. Suddenly, instead of asking "Are they a country and western band" people would say "Oh yes, I saw them on telly" when the name Big Country was mentioned.

It seems there are a lot of lazy potential music fans who sit around in their front rooms watching bands on TV instead of taking the trouble to come to gigs. Let's face it, it costs nothing, you don't have to venture out into the cold, there's no worrying about catching the last bus home, and you don't feel cheated if the band isn't quite your cup of tea. But, at the same time, if you do see and hear something that takes your fancy, the chances are you might go to the next gig in your area. Unlike the radio, which is doubtless extremely important, you can get an idea of the kind of performance you can expect from a band if you actually SEE something. You're also more likely to go out and buy a record if you're familiar with the faces behind the sounds. That's why record companies are investing thousands of

## RACK FOR A VIDEO SPECTACULAR

After about an hour of the four of us running up and down hill faces pretending to be The Professionals, our first day of filming came to a close. Before I go on to the next day, for any steam train lovers, the Mene Valley Steam Railway is open to the public.

Day 2 started with a quiet drive (record company person at the helm) up to Chobham near Guildford in Surrey - quiet because everybody was asleep owing to the fact we had to get up at 6am. This was the location for the fantasy World War One scenes.

Ourselves and 16 extras had to wear the authentic WW1 British Army uniforms, complete with back packs, gas masks and Lee Enfield rifles. Charging through 200 yards of thick mud with a hot sun beating down on us wasn't easy, but great fun.

Other facets of our acting skills were demonstrated when we had to run about 50 yards with bombs going off left, right and centre. The bombs were special effects controlled by pyrotechnic specialists working with the film crew, but they really were quite frightening. But the biggest thrill was yet

to come - we were to be a gun crew firing an authentic cannon. Stuart was firing, Bruce was cocking the breach and I was unloading and loading the shells. The blank shells they used made one hell of a noise. That was brilliant.

In between shots when the extras and ourselves were just waiting around with all the smoke floating about, we got the feeling of reality and how terrible it must have been, purely because the set and the extras looked so realistic.

Other good shots included Mark beating a drum with troops marching through thick smoke with horses and cannons in the background. At the end of the day it was a relief to get the boots and uniform off, but it was a day I won't forget in a hurry. There is one aspect of the video I haven't mentioned and that's because it was done some days earlier, but basically it features a little boy, a toy train set and toy soldiers.

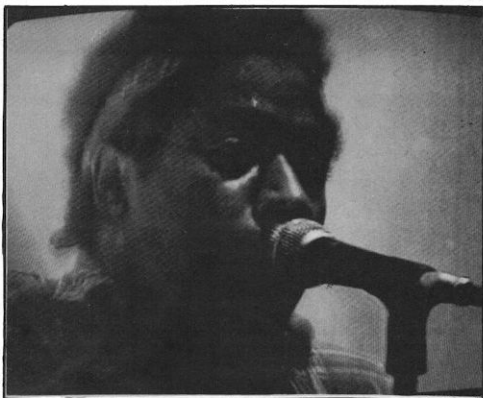
We had a great two days making the video and we hope you get a chance to see and enjoy it.

## TELEVISION

pounds in making videos to promote singles. I'm sure you have noticed the increasing popularity of videos in pubs and clubs, in preference to juke boxes.

For Big Country, Riverside was followed by the Oxford Road show then the Tube, and finally Top of the Pops. It doesn't seem to matter if they're playing live, only singing live, or miming altogether - each appearance attracts more fans to the clan, and that can only be good for all concerned.

Strangely enough the Top of the Pops slot was the most impressive when all is said and done. It may have been mimed in the fake fun atmosphere of a cramped BBC studio in Shepherd's Bush, but on screen it came over as polished, professional and genuine - and just look at the effect it had on record sales. Where will it all lead? Watch this space.



**BBC tv** presents

# RIVERSIDE

# A life in the day at the Venue

WAITING impatiently for the next chance to see Big Country, I was delighted to hear about the one-off gig at The Venue. Knowing instantly that this was not to be missed, I set about planning the trip to London.

At 11.10am on February 14, the day of the gig, I caught a train for Waterloo, accompanied by two enthusiastic BC fans, Robert Buchanan and Nigel Hayes. Having taken a day off college (Ithen sixth form college in Soton), we were well aware we were going to be about seven hours early for the gig in seemingly Arctic conditions - but we were determined to fulfil our aim of meeting the band.

We arrived at Waterloo about 12.45 and immediately set off in search of the Venue. Once there we bought our tickets and were told BC were due to arrive at 4pm. Undeterred by this (which meant a near three-hour wait), the bitter cold and piercing wind, we walked to Hyde Park in order to sit down and eat. Driven away by scavenging gulls and pigeons, we went back to the Venue at 3.30pm and waited ... and waited ... and waited. Soon however our wait was over, thanks to the efforts of Martin Somers, who helps in the fan club. All of a sudden we were face to face with Stuart, Tony and Bruce, shortly followed by Mark. It was great to chat with the band for the first time, while they were quite genuinely surprised that we had come so far and so early. Then they went off in different directions and returned for the soundcheck which we were lucky enough to see. The evening was going to be great, I could sense it.

It didn't take long for the Venue to fill up; the atmosphere was great and there was a fine array of BC tee-shirts and sweatshirts on display. The band definitely have a great following going already. It was also pleasant to talk to fellow fans (especially Mick Leese and Calvin Chesworth from Birmingham and somebody from Southend); the spirit amongst the followers is really hard to comprehend, perhaps even more euphoric than the truly fantastic days of The Skids.

After somewhat mediocre support, although the Popsicles were mildly enchanting, Big Country took the stage and after one chord brought immediate euphoria and rapture to the many enthusiasts at the front, including my friends and I. It is hard to describe the magic which exists within the band, but the sheer power and energy cannot, and did not, fail to scythe through any "heart and soul" in the crowd. The highlights of the night for me were Angle Park, Heart and Soul, Fields of Fire, Lost Patrol and Inwards. It was all a complete triumph - proof that this is the best new band in the country. It only remains to say that success is on the horizon - "just as you sow, you shall reap".

IAN WINTER

THE  
**Venue**  
DATE  
14/2/83  
ARTIST  
Big Country  
AUTHORISATION  
D. Loop

BIG COUNTRY  
Venue

SOUNDS February 26, 1983

Big Country bounded on stage looking so full of life and vigour, they could've been auditioning for a cornflakes ad. The squeals of delight from the girls at the front was probably provoked by the tantalizing glimpse of bare leg - the band looked rather fetching in matching plus-fours and ankle socks.

It's difficult to imagine that any band could have such across-the-board appeal that they number among their fans such diverse personalities as Tony Mitchell and Gairy Bushell, but seeing is believing and it would be hard to dislike Big Country. Their sheer exuberance is madly infectious.

The scope and range of material is reminiscent of the Skids, but that's the only

comparison that can be drawn. Stuart Adamson on vocals is confident and in control, an impressive frontman and his rich, powerful singing instantly dispels any doubts that he might not be able to handle his new role.

Big Country played dance music with a difference. The band favored a bizarre cross between a Highland Fling and a sword dance, while the more restricted audience were forced to opt for a flailing popo.

With not a synth to be seen, Big Country used guitars to the full and proved that they're not as obsolete as some seem to think. The sounds and moods they created were every bit as inventive as any knob twiddler and had the advantage of being very human - music by emotion rather than numbers.

There were swifling anthems which conjured up images of hills and heather, big songs with rolling choruses and a full, swaggering sound, and sensitive slower numbers which showed their versatility. Song titles were lost in a thick Scottish burr, but first single 'Harvest Home' was as rousing as ever, and new release 'On Fields Of Fire' looks destined for well-deserved chart status.

Along with U2, this band prove that modern rock doesn't have to be stagnant or regressive, and do so in a way that is hugely enjoyable. Big Country mean Big Fun.

KAREN SWAYNE

# From within the flightcase

with LES, the "enigmatic" drum roadie, on the February Dingwalls dates

"The gospel according to Stuart's next pair of shoes"

SHEFFIELD: home of no work for the workers and the first gig of the Dingwalls tour. A good reception, two encores and a lot of sweat later its back to a strange overnight stay with the "Swami nonoiseinmyemptyhotel" sect. At 3.15am and sixteen gargoyles in my garden later Stuart displays his intellectual wit (which NME has confused with the way he walks)"how can you be quiet when you have been told to be ?" Limp eggs disguised as being fried set the pace for a throw-up of a journey over Snake Pass. Everything goes on tour, they say, and most of it did - out the car windows on the slopes of the Pennines.

Liverpool Dingwalls, no Yosser Hughes, but there's no room in the dressing room after a gig which brings people on stage, China Crisis back for a drink and a missionary in an RAC uniform. Bedtime. The band to Manchester and the BBC for a four minute appearance on the Oxford Road Show. The equipment goes to Hull where everyone waits. Only 45 minutes late on stage with no soundcheck and there's no cop-outs and taking no prisoners. Thanks to the audience at Hull for being the way you were, the heart and soul and voice of a very grateful band.

Newcastle Dingwalls, a big stage in a big city with big problems. There's not a copy of Fields of Fire left in the shops. Angle Park opens the set and it's non-stop. Encores, Geordies swamp the stage. I didn't spot Kevin Keegan, but it doesn't matter. Big Country take Newcastle and wish to thank Shirley for her dedication and the pleasure of her company at dinner. It's the A1 and time for the flightcase to close...

WIVES FROM  
LIVES FROM  
LIVES FROM

# BIG COUNTRY

Group: BIG COUNTRY Venue: HULL, DINGWALLS Date: Friday, February 25, 1983

THE packed audience squeezed onto the tiny dance floor as Charlie checked the drum kit. A little voice churned over the PA system "You may have seen Big Country on the Oxford Road Show tonight. Well they were playing live, they've just arrived, here's Big Country."  
Bruce, Tony, Mark and Stuart bounced on stage from a tiny porthole of a dressing room. Stuart apologised for being late - they (finally) got on stage at 9.45pm. The crowd was blessed with Angle Park for starters, then the brilliant Harvest Home, shortly followed by hot favourites Heart and Soul, Balcony and Close Action. Everyone enjoyed the lyrically amazing Lost Patrol. Bruce, looking cool and calculating, Mark slapping everything, Tony twanging away and Stuart still apologising for being late. They were all naturally flamboyant and brilliant. The audience caught two encores, the final number a quite stirring Inwards. Then they rode into the distance. Bloody great, ace, etc.  
I met all four of Big Country afterwards and they were extremely kind and helpful (thanks). I had a chat with Stuart, a brilliant man, the best. I got all their autographs which now have pride of place on my bedroom wall.

TIMOTHY DICKSON, GRIMSEY

BIG COUNTRY

BIG COUNTRY  
THE BIG COUNTRY  
WIVES FROM LIVES FROM

# COUNTRY NOTEBOOK

THE whole band ended up in hospital on their way to play at Keele at the beginning of March. The windscreen of their car was shattered as they were on their way up the M1 motorway. A piece of metal flew off a lorry in front of them and hit soundman Bob, who was driving, in the face. He managed to pull over to the hard shoulder where a passing windscreen repair van ( would you believe ) stopped, ferried them all to hospital in Nottingham, and mended the windscreen. Bob had a nasty cut which needed four stitches; Bruce, Stuart and Mark all had to have their eyes checked for splinters of glass, and Stuart's eyeball was slightly scratched; Tony had to have a piece of glass taken out of his forehead, and a particularly unpleasant anti-tetanus injection. Back on course, there were more problems ahead. When they reached Keele, extremely late, Bruce's equipment decided to pack up after the first number, and the band ended up playing the same songs about four times each. They would like to thank the audience for being so patient and appreciative under the circumstances - and hope to make it up with another gig soon.

STUART was voted number 20 in the Best Guitarist section of the Sounds Readers' Poll recently - just below eternal headbanger Francis Rossi. He's also been asked to produce the next single by the outrageous Anti Nowhere League, who say Big Country are their favourite band...

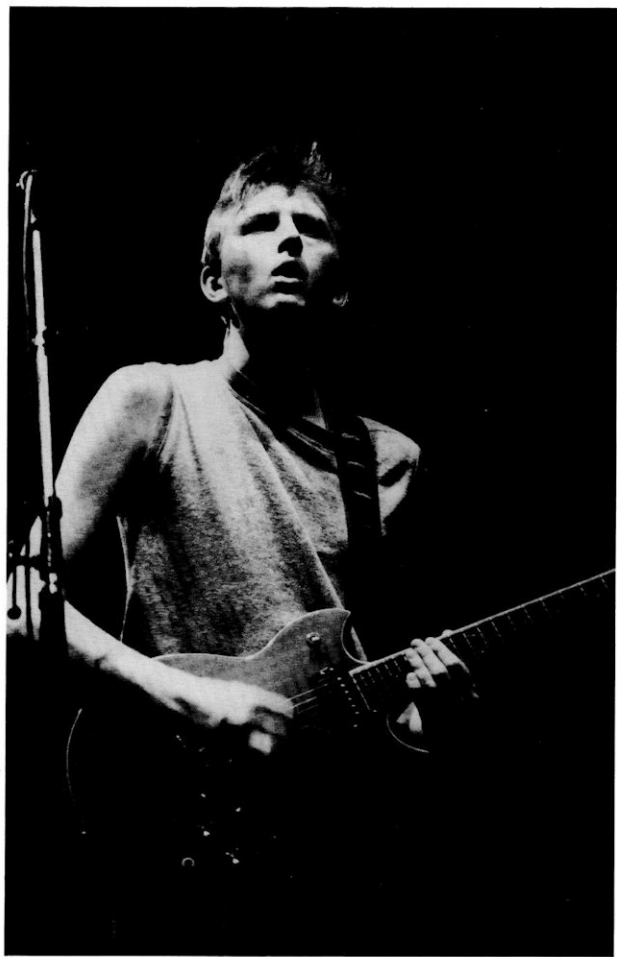
SUPPORTING BC at their gig in Guildford in April are SHEA, featuring Tony and Mark's old friend Simon Townshend. The three used to play together in West London band On The Air, who supported the Skids on tour way back in December 1980. They are all looking forward to sharing the bill again and Simon is expecting to sign an American record deal shortly.

DID you notice the title music on Channel 4's Whatever You Didn't Get which included extra numbers from BC's gig at the Ace, Brixton? Yes it was indeed a chopped-about instrumental version of the band's debut single Harvest Home. The producers liked it so much they asked if they could use it for the whole series.

A PROMISE is a promise, even if it was made years ago in childhood. Well, Mark made a promise that when he appeared on Top of the Pops for the first time, which was a great ambition in his younger days, he would take his Teddy with him. I use the term Teddy loosely, as it looks more like a scruffy dog with floppy ears to me. But when he got to the BBC TV studios in Shepherds Bush he realised poor old Ted was still sitting at home in Twickenham. Fortunately record company Phonogram came to the rescue and sent a taxi to fetch Teddy for his TV debut. Suitably spruced up for the occasion he sat by Mark's drum kit right through their rendition of Fields of Fire. Sadly he wasn't spotted by the cameras - but Mark never promised anything about stardom.

APPARENTLY the Fields of Fire video is too violent for the BBC to show in its entirety. Snippets were shown on Mike Read's Saturday Superstore, but the powers that be reckon the World War One scenes would upset viewers, particularly children. (If you haven't seen it, which is quite likely, see the centre pages for a description). Personally I can't see the difference between this video and the dozens of films and videos about war, crime and violence shown on screen every week. If the film looks realistic, then surely it is to the director's credit. There's certainly no blood and guts in it. I reckon they just haven't seen the basic idea behind the whole film - which is a lot more relevant, and a lot less confusing than many of the other promotional videos around at the moment.

DO THE Top 20 charts confuse you? It seems everyone is doing their own version these days. Each of the music papers has a different one, as do the radio stations. The only one everyone seems to take notice of is the Gallup poll commissioned by the BBC and Music and Video Week magazine. Still, BC were up to number 7 in Radio Luxemburg's chart, while they were down at 13 on the BBC's. One thing's for sure, Fields of Fire sold more than 100,000 copies.



Picture by CHRIS BATES

# Country Postbag

THANKS for the info concerning Big Country's gig at Dingwalls in Newcastle. Thankfully after a dash back from London after the Fulham v Newcastle Utd match, I made it to Dingwalls about 10 minutes before they came on. After seeing all three Skids gigs that were played in the North East I thought they would be hard to beat. But Big Country were superb (I am not trying to compare them they are and were both brilliant bands, but with Stuart Adamson in both it is hard not to). I just thought I had to write to let you know how I and many of my friends felt about the best gig in the North East since the Skids were last here. Congratulations to all the band (not just Stuart) on writing some really brilliant songs.

COLIN FAIRS. South Shields.

JUST a word to say how thrilled I was that Stuart Adamson has made an active attempt to bring his music back to the masses again. I've just bought Fields of Fire, the new single, with its melodic Scottish riff and an excellent back up of bolstering sound and rhythm. I was always convinced that Stuart's voice had great potential, when backing in the Skids - now I'm sure.

I've been with Big Country from the start and now anxiously await seeing them live. If they are as good as on Riverside I can't see myself being let down performance wise.

KEVIN JONES. Wolverhampton

CONGRATULATIONS to Big Country on Fields of Fire. It's just sheer brilliance and probably one of the best records I've ever heard. (Even my old man likes it and he's 45). When I went to Basildon on Saturday, three different record shops were playing it, so it must be the one that makes it. Please keep up the excellent work. Because Chelsea aren't doing too well this season, Big Country is all I've got to shout about.

DAVE DAVENSAC. Basildon.

ON Friday March 4 me and my two mates drove up from Birmingham to see Stuart and the rest of Big Country at Keele University. All I can say is thank you for a magic concert - we shall never forget it. It was a shame that all your equipment was not working properly, but I was glad to see that most of the audience understood the difficulties. We wish you all the best for the future and look forward to seeing you play in Birmingham.

STEVE MILLWARD. Birmingham.



HERE'S a photo taken in Dunfermline at the Big Country gig there. The show was brilliant, and we, coming from Dunfermline, were really proud of the band.

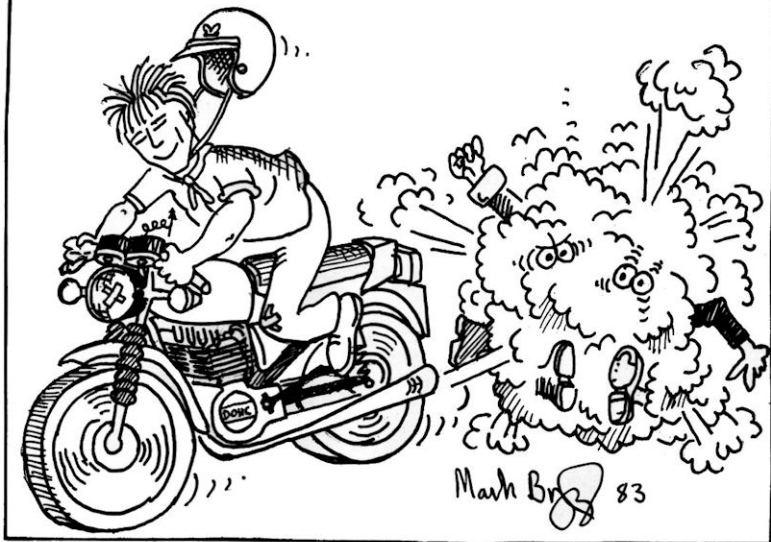
SARAH MACLEOD

A SPECIAL thanks to Stuart, Bruce, Tony and Mark for a great gig in Dunfermline Glen. Having seen many groups in concert, very few seem to get that certain feeling across to their audience. Having seen the Skids at least half a dozen times, I have to say Big Country match them in every department, and also give you that sense of happiness in which the Skids sometimes lacked. Big Country seemed to enjoy playing live very much, so the only group which would match them are another very under-rated band - U2.

ALLAN SMITH

WANT to get in touch with fellow Big Country fans? Maybe you're looking for a companion for trips to gigs. Or perhaps you'd prefer to write to a fellow fan as a pen pal. Just send in your name and address and a few details about yourself, and we will print them in the mag, so others can get in touch, Mark your envelope 'Pen Pal'.





## GET DOWN... GO FOR IT!!

SPUART ADAMSON gets hot under the collar about his secret passion

Illustration by MARK BRZEZICKI

GASP, the skeletons come out of the cupboard dressed in smart suits and vests... I like motorbikes. What an outlaw, I hear you say. Not really. I think that Hells Angel idea of people with bikes is not how the majority of bikers are. There are two or three different ways I see it. Firstly, as a cheap and efficient form of transport. Secondly, I think they're fun, especially on dirt. Thirdly, there is an edge there, perhaps the danger, perhaps the man/machine/poetry/Hunter S. Thompson relationship on a good journey, or on a decent bike (ie not mine). It's a special feeling.

Lately, though, learner motorcyclists have been subject to some ridiculous new laws - laws that car learners don't even consider. What has happened is a two-part test system has been introduced. The first part is an off-road piece of circus riding through cones that is totally irrelevant to everyday riding in traffic, and a second part which is basically the same as the bike test which I passed (at the second attempt). The basic idea behind the new laws is to keep people from having motorcycles. They say it's because they want people to be trained and have experience of biking before they go on public roads. If that's all they want, then surely all a learner needs is a certificate of basic competence from a recognised training body to get a provisional licence, and a more advanced certificate before he or she obtains a full licence. There is also a point that no car driver is taught about how to look out for or have respect for bikes, and it is the "sorry, pal, I didn't see you" car driver who causes the majority of motorcycle casualties. No learner car driver has his provisional licence withdrawn for a year if he hasn't passed his test within two years. Should that type of discrimination go in front of the United Nations civil rights board. "Ride free maaan..."

# Here's how you can join the club

This is is club for all Big Country enthusiasts. Membership is growing daily. We aim to provide as much information about the band as possible, plus badges sweatshirts and posters at rock bottom prices, available only to club members. For just £4.50 you can join the club, and receive the next six issues of the magazine through the post as soon as they are published. You will also be entitled to discount on the merchandise detailed below. Fill in the coupon at the bottom of the page, and send to Big Country Club, 123 Edgware Road, London W2 2HX.

## Merchandise marketplace

For club members only there are a limited number of the following items still available:

- BIG COUNTRY BADGE - square, in green featuring map and band logo  
25p and send SAE, unless ordering other items
- BIG COUNTRY SWEATSHIRT - black, long sleeves, USA made. Logo in red on front, band members names in red on back. Small, medium only.  
£5.50 inc postage

The next items are available to club members and non-members. Please quote your membership number when placing your orders:

- STRIP PATCH - beige with Big Country logo in black. 50p (40p members) plus 20p post/packing.
- SQUARE SCARF - beige, 20" square, with dark brown logo in corner. £1.50 (£1.25 members) plus 25p post/packing
- PHOTOGRAPH - Black and white 10 x 8 photo. 50p plus 20p post/packing
- BUTTON BADGES - Set of two, one inch diameter badges. Big Country logo in white on red AND dark brown compass on green background.  
50p per set (40p members) plus 20p post/packing
- T-SHIRTS - A) Bright red USA made, short-sleeve T-shirt. Big Country logo in white across the front. Medium or large
- B) White USA made, short-sleeve T-shirt. Design front and back in three colours, including Big Country map, Fields of Fire single sleeve design, logo and compass. Medium or large  
£4 each (£3.50 members) plus 35p post/packing. State A or B design.
- SWEATSHIRT - Grey, short-sleeve USA made sweatshirt. Big Country logo on front.  
£8 (£7 members) plus 50p post/packing Medium or large

Please write all orders clearly, including your name and address. Send separately from any other correspondence. Make cheques payable to Big Country Club. Allow 28 days for delivery.

Name ----- Age -----

Address -----  
-----

I want to join the Country Club and enclose a cheque/PO for £4.50 (made payable to Big Country Club).

We're giving away three sets of prizes in this issue's competition, which should be a piece of cake for those of you who have been following the band for a while. Each winner will receive a double signed package of the 12 inch versions of Fields of Fire and Harvest Home. Let's hope that's enough incentive for you all to get out your thinking caps and ballpoint pens and tackle the word puzzle below.

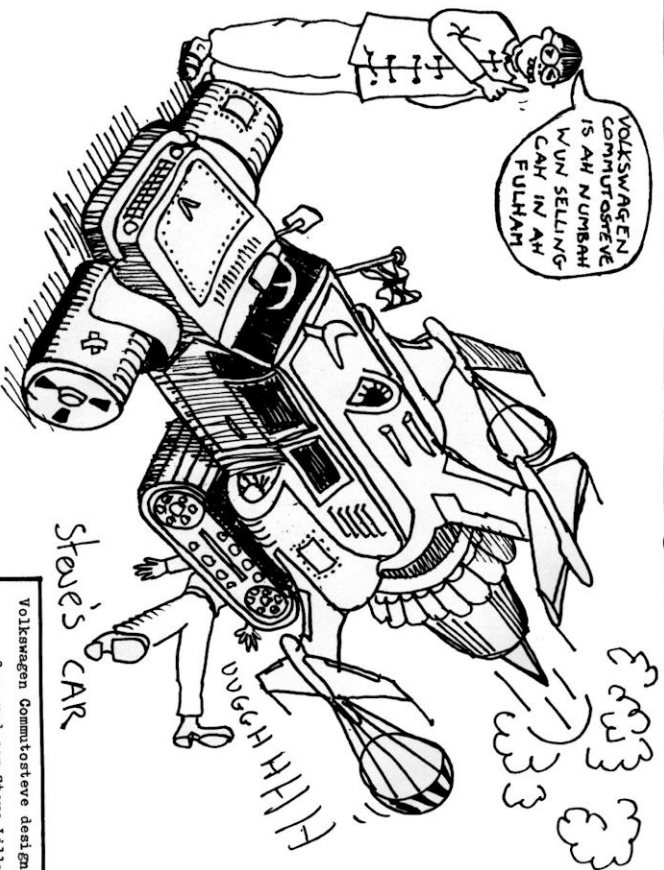
F	R	O	B	A	L	C	O	N	Y	I	E	X
Z	I	E	L	G	N	I	S	S	Y	B	X	L
K	M	E	B	T	W	O	N	U	R	K	F	U
R	S	B	L	G	A	R	E	L	T	U	B	O
A	M	R	L	D	T	Q	I	H	N	G	P	S
P	D	Z	B	D	S	J	V	I	U	H	Q	D
E	P	E	L	Z	O	O	F	K	O	T	I	N
L	Z	Z	B	W	N	Q	F	N	C	L	B	A
G	R	I	L	S	O	H	O	F	G	V	U	T
N	Z	C	B	R	R	G	J	L	I	M	J	R
A	X	K	L	C	R	P	N	Q	B	R	A	A
T	S	I	P	A	D	A	M	S	O	N	E	E
S	C	E	M	O	H	T	S	E	V	R	A	H

Here's all you have to do to be onto a winner...

There are 12 words or titles connected with the band hidden in this square, reading across, down and diagonally, both backwards and forwards. Find the words (all more than 3 letters), circle them and send your entry to Words, Big Country Club, 123 Edgware Road, London W2 2HX. The first three correct entries opened after the closing date, May 15, 1983, will be the winners. Don't forget to include your name and address. Photostat copies will be accepted - I know you don't like cutting up the magazine... By the way, it took Tony an hour and a half to find them, so don't give up too quickly. Good luck.



# Doodles from behind the mixing desk



THE COMMUTOSTEVE

Volkswagen Commutosteve designed exclusively

for producer Steve Lillywhite

by MARK BRZEZALSKI

with assistance from STUART ADAMSON