

Jamboree Sees Fame For Jimmy Newman

He's rising on a *Fallen Star*, he's becoming great in a big field, he's beginning to reap grain after years of sowing, he's spent a young lifetime earning stature as a Country singer—he's Jimmy Newman, the Louisiana Cajun Country strong boy who became a fulltime farm-boy after five grades in school.

Last month's *Jamboree* carried the prediction that Jimmy Newman will be among the "top five in Country Music within five months."

Today it looks like the time can be shortened.

Newman today is really a "New Man" compared to six months ago.

He has broken a sort of "time barrier" that separates "goodness" from "greatness" in singing. He has suddenly become a "big man" in Country Music. He should last as such the rest of his singing years.

Jimmy's case is somewhat typical in the rugged Country Music world. It's a matter of toil and struggle, courage and sacrifice—usually on the part of two people, a man and his wife—and often the children share equally in this kind of life.

Fallen Star is a song written by the owner of a bus company in Florence, Ala.

About three months ago Jimmy recorded it for Dot Records. For a long time the Newman name, along with that of Mac Wiseman and Billy Walker (San Antonio, Tex.), had been the brightest in the Dot Country Music catalogue. In fact Dot has been shy on Country Music until Mac started pumping some life into it recently with the newly established separate "Country Music department."

Fallen Star hit the charts in a short time. It has tremendous vitality. And the Jimmy Newman treatment gives it just the "umph" needed.

Prior to *Fallen Star* Jimmy had some other good records, like *Let the Whole Town Talk*, *Honky Tonk Tears*, *Cry, Cry Darling* (his first for Dot), *Come Back to Me*, *Day Dreaming*, *Blue Darling*, *God Was So Good*, and *Seasons*



Jimmy Newman, son Wayne, and Mrs. Newman, at home in Nashville—where Newman has become one of the brightest stars on the *Grand Ole Opry*.

of My Heart.

Jimmy's vitality goes back to a rugged childhood. Born near Big Mamou, La., he had to quit school in the sixth grade to work fulltime on his father's farm. It was a small farm, attached to a small country store operated by his father, crippled by polio as a child.

When just 13 Jimmy went to work as a laborer in a magnesium plant at Jennings, La. He also worked in construction. At 18 he caught fire on the music bandwagon, started playing guitar because a brother, Walter, did, too.

And Jimmy joined a band at Big Mamou, to play six years with Chuck Gillory.

Ambitious Jimmy, with lots of initiative, formed his own band and toured southern Louisiana. He recorded for Feature Records, owned by J. D. Miller, well known songwriter of Crowley, La.

Murray Nash, then with Acuff-Rose Music Publications, Nashville, Tenn., discovered Jimmy on a field trip—showed his records to the late great Fred Rose. Fred got him a Dot contract from Randy Wood, the miracle man of music

who started a plant in Gallatin—20 miles from Nashville.

Jimmy joined the *Louisiana Hayride* at Shreveport in June, 1954. After a year he left there and devoted fulltime to playing theaters and personal appearances. Slick Norris of Highlands, Texas, a disc jockey, gave Jimmy a great deal of help—writing to disc jockeys and encouraging him in other ways.

Eventually Jimmy was invited to guest at the *Grand Ole Opry*—and he became a regular in August, 1956.

It was fulfillment of a boy's dream. "As long as I can remember—back home on the farm—we listened to *Grand Ole Opry* every Saturday night on a small battery radio," recalls Jimmy. "Coming here to Nashville with the *Opry* represents my dream from those days. It's hard to believe it's come true."

In the farm days with that small radio, they tuned in only to the *Opry*, "saving juice in the battery" for this special occasion.

Helping Jimmy face the struggle of years gone by were first his parents—then a lovely person whose name is Elva Mae Daire of Ville Platte, La. She became Mrs. Jimmy Newman about 10 years ago.

They have a husky youngster, Wayne, who ought to grow to six feet like his dad, because he's a big boy at 8.

What does Jimmy Newman—today a big star—say about the *Opry* and his friends? Here's that remark:

"The *Opry* has been a wonderful experience for me. I am most grateful for the friendships it has brought, as well as the opportunity to travel throughout the country in behalf of Country Music."

There lies the lasting greatness of Jimmy Newman—his gratitude, his humility, his sincerity, will keep him great.

Jimmy's a good part French and has a French song he uses on every personal appearance. It's *Jolie Blonde* which we understand means "Lovely Blonde." But if memory serves us right, his Elva Mae is a pronounced brunette.