

MRS. JIMMIE RODGERS
OUR FIRST LADY
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

PRYNCE WHEELER, V.-PRES.
P. O. Box 349
GREAT FALLS, MONT. 59401

Jimmie Rodgers Society

JIM EVANS, PRES. 1908 DIXIE DRIVE
LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79405

Dec. 20, 1969

Mr. Frank Goodwyn
9709 Lorain Ave.,
Silver Spring, Md.

Dear Frank:

Received your Vol.1, No.1, Winter Edition of "The JOURNAL of the FOLKLORE Society of GREATER Washington", 1969-70. Thanks a lot with a special thanks for autographing it for me. Also yours of Dec. 9th.

Read the Journal before receiving your letter--and found parts rather interesting, tho, to be honest (the only way I know to be; want the other fellow to be, and feel he expects it of me), I found little interest (to me) in most of it. On the other hand I could become very interested as well as involved. I have more irons in the fire now than I can possible take care of--infact, many have already burned up. Soooo, I have to fight against becoming too involved in other fields.

Let me say that the Journal is well edited, layed out and very nicely printed. You see--I was a commercial printer for a quarter of a century; wearing out three or four mimeographs before that. Now--I'm back on the mimeo, which is rather rough on an old printer who has always felt the best wasn't good enough.

Good to learn that you "was an avid fan of the traditional Jimmie Rodgers". Feel you still have a lot of respect for him since you have most of his LPs.

I have been in ill health the past 10 years and unable to take care of 1/10th of the daily mail I still receive. (Running around 4,000 unanswered letters and over 50 correspondance tapes behind at present. Keep hoping to get News Letters mimeographed to send some 2,000 members and to "Prospective Members". Sometimes my faith and hope wears rather thin--but I keep trying. I'm the little guy with big ideas. Will be 64 the 18th of Jan., but still about as ambitious as ever--going to bed every night planning what I hope to accomplish tomorrow; but Tomorrow Never Comes. I get little to nothing accomplished.

I sincerely and greatly appreciate you asking me to contribute an article on the one and only legendary Jimmie Rodgers, and tho I've been writing about the man for over 30 years and could go on for another 30, I don't feel worthy or in a position to do an article for your Folklore Society Journal at this time--due to ill health, inability to concentrate, lack of time, and despart need of additional finance. My little \$140.40 Social Security disability check just doesn't reach to first base, due to heavy doctor and medical bills. I am not old enough yet, or considered disabled enough to draw Medicare. Sooo, I have to spend all the time I feel like it at all in trying to add a little butter to our bread. And this definately NOT ment as a hint for pay for such an article. I would love to do it IF I only felt up to it Frank.

Another thing--I am afraid my barnyard philosophy just wouldn't fit in a Ph. D. edited publication. I can write to or for any real Jimmie Rodgers fan, but not in the Folkloriest style. Some one like Archie Green would be able to do you, your readers and Jimmie Rodgers far more justic than I along this line.

A few months ago Thurston Moore asked me to do an article on Jimmie for his 1970 edition of Who's Who In Country Music. This would be a great honor and opertunity for this ole country boy, but I just had to turn him down.

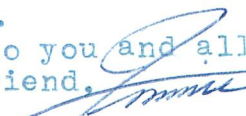
I receive one or two letters per week asking for an article on Jimmie Rodgers for some publication (from fan Club journals on up); information for Radio and TV programs, or from some grade, high, college or university student for a school paper, theme, etc. Also for books. Many, ofcourse use one of the above catagories to get such info. for their own personal collections. I spent over a month of long letter writing with Nolan Porterfield in prepairing the chapter on Jimmie Rodgers for Bob Shelton's book, "The Country Music Story", and then Bob seem to insist on printing a few things--I'd say, as HE wanted them. Like Earle Hines playing piano on Blue Yodel, No.9. We have definate proof that it was Lillian Armstrong, (Louis' wife at the time) played piano. Mean no criticism as this is by far the best book I've had the pleasure of reading on Country Music, and errows are to be expected, due to lateness in the start of collecting such material, lack of facts, taking too much for granted, and the few old timers, who are still with us, being able to remember the true, straight facts. I know buddy, I've reached that age (due largely, ofcourse, to ill health).

I noticed Roger Welsch's book: SOD WALLS. This brought back old memories as I've lived un just about every type house built in America, and I've even helped build a few as a youngster in New Mexico, where the oldest doby building, built by the indians well over 300 years ago, are still standing in Santa Fe, N.M. The "Sod Shanties", were cut from the grassie prairie with a shovel, or a moldboard breaking plow--if they were lucky enough to have one, and it was found on all wagons moving westward looking for farm land, tho a "mortar of mud" was used to seal the slabs of earth together and seal up the cracks.

As for the wild stories, naturaly, many are deep rooted, tho not all by any means. Man, my old granddady could tell such yarns day-in and day-out, tho he didn't make them up as he went along as so many are capable of doing--as I heard him tell the same tale over and over from the time I could remember until his death (when I was about 17), but I never tired of hearing them again. As you know, some people can't talk with out lieing, or atleast, stretching the truth--and they expect you to believe them. Grandpa didn't.

And...as you see, I am a longwinded Kuntry boy. That is one of my greatiest handicaps. I spend too much time with each person I write instead of scattering it out and catching more letters. I do like a good understanding with my fellow me, and I want you to know that I DO appreciate your baby and what you are doing in behalf of all concerned. Thanks a lot.

I invie people who managed to obsorbe as much book learnin' as possible, as the lack of it has always been my greatiest handicap. On the other hand, I wouldn't swap the good judgement (horse-sense) I inhearted from my ole daddy for all the book learning in the world--without reasonable and sensible judgement as a foundation. To me, that would be like planting seed on a rock, or out on the shifting sands of the desert. I am by that like I am by my type musicians. If a musician can't play any tune you can whistle (or without a sheet of notes in front of him), he is artificial and NOT a real musician. And again I have no objections to a musican learning all he needs to know about music, as that tune he may want to play just might be on a sheet of paper that can't whistle. Ha. My advise to all young people is to learn all they possibly can (from books, experience and others) while they are young, as it will stick with them thru most of their active lives. You can't teach an old dog new tricks, and if you did it would all have to be done over the next day. I still remember most all of Jimmie's songs, plus others and some I thru together back in my 20s. I got a fling for writing songs during my 40s, but couldn't possible sing, or repeat a single one of them today. And, I add (while I'm rambling) that all real songs (like musicians) are born, not written--otherwise they are just a poem, or words that rhyme, set to music, or musical notes set to the words. Sorry 'bout that.

Will be yodeling along, with best possible wishes to you and all concerned.
Season's Greetings. I am, A friend,  Jimmie Dim Evans