

Eric Clapton

And yet another live one . . .

By JOHN VANORE

How many live albums has Eric Clapton, Superstar, been on? Since I doubt the existence of live tapes from that time slot, I'll omit his pre-Cream days with the Yardbirds and John Mayall. Let's see, for starters there was "Wheels of Fire," of which only sides 3 and 4 were recorded live. Then we got three live cuts from the "Goodbye" album. After Cream dissolved, Atco issued "Live Cream, Volumes I and II."

Derek and the Dominos started a new chapter in Clapton's career, and the great rock classic "Layla" was quickly followed up by a live double LP. Last but not least(?) was the infamous "Rainbow Concert" recording, a marvel of poor engineering which muddled up songs like "Badge," another Cream classic.

And how could anyone ever forget the Benefit Concert for Bangladesh?

It seems that Clapton has compiled an impressive list of live recordings on the market, probably more than any other single performer on record.

In this light, I think it's only fair we should ask: "Why another live album?" "E. C. Was Here," Clapton's latest offering, seems a trifle redundant, if not ridiculous, especially considering that "Presence of the Lord," for instance, is presented here in its third post-Blind Faith live recording. When's it all going to end?

Well, I can't answer that, but I can offer a few insights on the matter. For starters, Clapton now spends at least as much time on the road as in the studio. He's a natural concert performer.

Next, go listen to the "Rainbow Concert." On that LP, Clapton was about as strung-out and wasted as a human being can be and yet live. Pete Townsend and Ronnie Wood carried all the guitar work there, and tried to cover up for Clapton's lifelessness. So he's got a bonafide turkey to make amends for.

Enough of this gibberish — let's get back to "E. C. Was Here." There was no information on the jacket that told where the stuff was taped, so I tried to contact Atlantic/RSO Records for that. All I found

out was that it was culled from a tour and remixed, no dates given.

The six cuts performed here are in the basic Clapton style of part boggie and lots of blues. Two of the cuts are re-runs from "Derek and the Dominos in Concert," and, now that Duane Allman is no longer with us, I doubt that Clapton would ever sanction a live recording of "Layla" without the virtuoso slide guitarist performing.

Aside from all that, the recording and mixing are excellent. Have no fears of another "Rainbow" fiasco.

Side One opens with "Have You Ever Loved a Woman," and "Presence of the Lord" follows hot on its heels. These cuts are the two returns I mentioned earlier. Bassist Carl Radle, the only survivor from the days of Derek and the Dominos, backs up some magnificently fluid opening blues licks by Clapton. George Terry and Dick Sims, on rhythm guitar and organ, respectively, round out the sound nicely. "Have You Ever Loved a Woman" is very probably the finest recording of Clapton paying tribute to his

mentors — the masters of the American Negro blues guitar.

"Presence of the Lord," in its present form, is about the rawest and earthiest version around. Emotion pours out of Clapton as he sings, and vocalist Yvonne Elliman adds a new dimension to this Clapton classic.

The title of the song pretty well describes "Drifting Blues," a short guitar piece with some token singing, which fades to a premature close.

"Can't Find My Way Home" alone would sell me on an album, and it kicks off Side Two magnificently. Soft guitar and rich harmonies work into this re-make from the days of Blind Faith for live rendition.

We get another helping of traditional boozey blues in "Rambling on my Mind." While it's not quite as fully developed, in my opinion, as "Have You Ever Loved a Woman," Clapton still uses the song to wind down and cut loose with some really

funky, unwatered blues playing.

Strangely enough, on each successive listening, it sounds more and more like some of Robby Krieger's slower blues playing on the Doors' "L. A. Woman" L.P. Here again, Clapton uses this seven-and-a-half minute cut as a vehicle for a smooth, extended blues solo. After all, that's what this album is all about — Eric Clapton as blues guitarist extraordinaire.

The influence of fellow British gonzo guitarist Alvin Lee, of Ten Years After fame, is evident on "Farther On Up the Road." This, the last cut on the album, is a prime example of your basic boggie blues.

Not much remains to be said. Just about everyone is aware of Clapton's reputation as the first real guitar idol, and as one of the "poets of the guitar" as it were, with his flowing, almost vocal guitar lines. I highly recommend this album to anyone who is serious about really good rock music.

Editorial
Morbid spectacle

Reveille III, Texas A&M mascot that died May 31, will be buried tonight with full Aggie honors.

Many say that we're paying Reveille III a high honor with the pomp and ceremony. In my mind, however, we are trying to honor our own traditions.

Reveille III died three full months ago. Instead of burying her then, she has been kept frozen at the Vet school all summer so that we can make a production of laying her to rest.

The Ross Volunteers will fire a 21 gun salute, the Singing Cadets will sing "Auld Lang Syne" and the Yell Leaders and Aggie Band will conduct a yell practice.

In spite of the good intentions of those who planned the funeral, it remains a morbid spectacle.

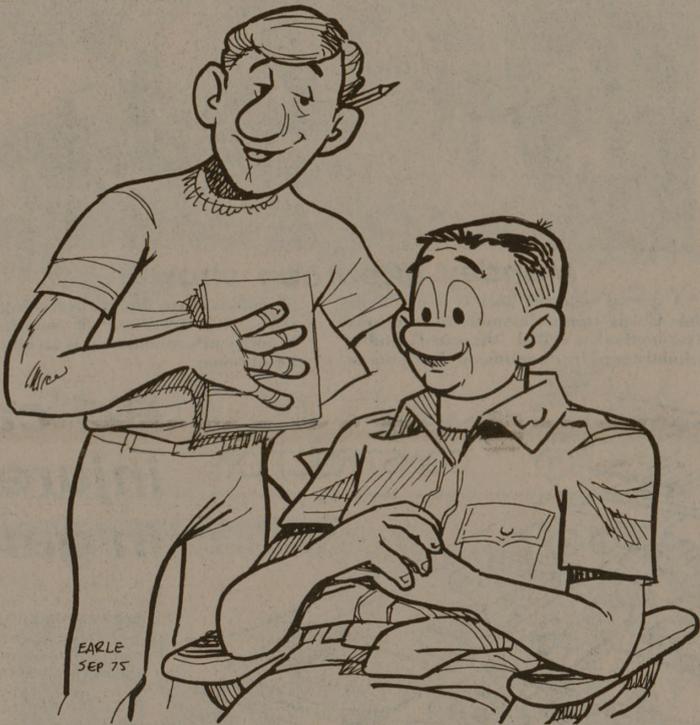
Reveille III served A&M for nearly 10 years. It is indecent to expect her to serve us now by making her body the focal point of some belated ceremony.

If you attend tonight's burial, you will probably be impressed with the elaborate funeral. But death is never a pleasant thing, we shouldn't sacrifice the sanctity of a decent burial for a dog just so we can all participate.

Reveille III died in May. We should have buried her then.

SLOUCH

By JIM EARLE



"LIKE TO KNOW HOW MANY HOURS ARE LEFT UNTIL GRADUATION?"



The Battalion

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