

# Marvin "Smokey" Montgomery: A Life in Texas Music

By John Dempsey



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*The Light Crust Doughboys launched the careers of Bob Wills, who went on to legendary status as the "King of Western Swing," and W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel, who became a popular, but lightly regarded, governor of Texas and U.S. senator. Another original Doughboy, vocalist Milton Brown, was perhaps the most popular musical performer in Texas when he was killed in a car accident in 1936. The Doughboys' popular noontime radio program became an integral part of daily life in Texas from the 1930s to the 1950s. The lives of Wills, O'Daniel, and Brown have been chronicled in full-scale biographies. But the man who became the Doughboys' foundation, over an era lasting more than 65 years, was Marvin "Smokey" Montgomery, a four-string banjo virtuoso whose boundless energy led him into other venues as Las Vegas entertainer, television performer, hit-record producer, and musical impresario.*

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Marvin Montgomery was an Iowa farm boy who “never learned to milk a cow.” Born in Rinard, Iowa, a town of 160 people, on March 7, 1913, as Marvin Dooley Wetter, his musical career began when he won a ukulele as an award for delivering newspapers. “I got me a little chord book,” Montgomery later recalled. “I’ve still got that book. . . . It said, Learn the Ukulele in Five Easy Lessons. My mother, every time she would go to Fort Dodge, Kansas, would bring back some sheet music. I’d learn to play the chords along with her [as she played on piano]. Then she got this banjo for my brother and I picked it up.”<sup>1</sup>

Montgomery’s father, Charles Henry Wetter, “gambled” on the grain market. “One day we would be rich, and the next day

Morgan, was impressed by Montgomery’s banjo virtuosity. “About two weeks later, after I entered that contest, J. Doug sent me a telegram and said, ‘Can you join the show down in Grinnell, Iowa?’ My grandfather carried me down, and we saw the tent. He dumped me out with my suitcase and my banjo, and I’ve been on the road ever since.”<sup>4</sup>

Soon after, Marvin Wetter became Marvin Montgomery. An official with the show, Neal Helvey, said “Wetter” would not look good on a marquee. “At that time, Robert Montgomery, the movie star, was real famous. I said, ‘I like ol’ Robert Montgomery.’ . . . So I became ‘Marvin Montgomery: The Boy with Two Voices and the Fastest-Playing Banjo Player in the

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he wouldn’t have anything,” Montgomery remembered. His parents divorced when he was 13. “I’ve been on my own since then,” Montgomery said. “I always wanted to be in show business or to be a musician, in my heart. I called my cousins, and I got kazoos. I organized little orchestras with those kids playing the kazoos. None of them could carry a tune. . . . Out in the old barn, where my grandfather kept his car, I built a little stage in there and had a little show. Charlie Chaplin was the big guy then, and I would be Charlie Chaplin and do these little shows.”<sup>2</sup>

Music was very important in the Wetter family, and especially to Marvin, who showed his commanding presence as a musical leader at an early age. Montgomery ruefully remembered the time when he was about six years old, and he and his younger brother sang a song in church. “We rehearsed that song, and during rehearsal my brother just goofed off and wouldn’t sing his line right. Sure enough, that night when we were doing the Christmas program at the church, he missed his line, and I slapped him. Boy, I felt bad about that. . . . In the back of my mind, I’ve always had a guilty conscience about that incident. I was the serious one about music.” In high school, during the early days of the Depression, Marvin played in a dance band with his mother Mabel and for a time traveled from town to town with a piano-tuner cousin, passing the hat or playing for a dozen eggs. In 1933, a traveling tent show from Texas came to Ames, Iowa. Marvin won second place in an amateur contest, playing on his banjo “The World is Waiting for the Sunrise,” a song he would still be performing 65 years later with the Light Crust Doughboys. “This little gal won the five dollars [first place]. She was about five years old and did a tap dance. I won the three dollars. That was enough to eat for two weeks.”<sup>3</sup> The manager of the tent show from Jacksonville, Texas, J. Doug

World.” Two voices? “Oh, I used to do a thing where I would sing, ‘Carolina Moon Keep Shining,’ in a normal voice, and then I would sing it higher.”<sup>5</sup>

Playing with the Texas tent show, Montgomery became homesick for Iowa. He soon left for home, but his money only took him as far as Dallas. He arrived about 4 a.m. and walked to the Adolphus Hotel knowing that Blackie Simmons and His Bluejackets performed an early-morning show on KRLD, which had its studios in the hotel. “I said, ‘I’m a banjo player and a guitar player,’ and I picked up a guitar and did a few things. I stayed for the program, and he [Simmons] said, ‘Are you looking for a job?’ I said, ‘I sure am.’ I was broke. I had spent all my money for my train ticket.” Simmons told Montgomery that the manager of KRLD needed a guitar player for a party that night. “That night, the piano player picked me up, and we went out to the Dallas Country Club, of all places. It was a stag party, and I’d never seen a stag party. This gal took off things she didn’t even have on. We played the music, and I was crosseyed looking at the girl.”<sup>6</sup> Suddenly, Montgomery was not homesick for Iowa anymore.

The piano player at the party told Montgomery that a fiddle band called the Wanderers, who performed on *The Early Birds* program on WFAA, needed a banjo player, so he went to audition. “I played a few licks on the banjo, and they said, ‘Well, play with us on the program this morning.’” Later, the Wanderers invited Montgomery to play a show with them. “They said, ‘Come on, we’ll try you out. We’re going down to Kilgore [Texas] tonight and play at the Casa Linda Ballroom.’ . . . I became an important part of the group.”<sup>7</sup>

While young Marvin Montgomery was busy launching his remarkable career in music, the Light Crust Doughboys were establishing themselves as the most popular musical performers

in Texas. The Doughboys — originally Bob Wills on fiddle, Milton Brown, guitarist Herman Arnsperger, and sometimes Brown's younger brother Derwood on guitar — promoted Light Crust Flour, manufactured by the Burrus Mill and Elevator Company of Fort Worth, first on Fort Worth radio station KFJZ beginning in early 1931, and later on WBAP. W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel was the sales manager of Burrus Mill. At the urging of Wills, O'Daniel spoke a few words on the program one day, and soon became the program's master of ceremonies, spouting homespun philosophy while pitching Light Crust Flour. Soon, the Doughboys, broadcasting on the O'Daniel-instigated Texas Quality Network, became household names across the state.<sup>8</sup>

The Doughboys were best known for their jaunty theme song, whose lyrics Milton Brown wrote as an adaptation of "Eagle Riding Papa," a song recorded by Mississippi bluesman Big Bill Broonzy's group, the Famous Hokum Boys:

Now listen everybody from far and near,  
If you want to know who we are,  
We're the Light Crust Doughboys,  
From Burrus Mill.<sup>9</sup>

Leon McAuliffe, who later served two stints with the O'Daniel-era Doughboys and became a legendary steel guitarist as a member of Wills's Texas Playboys, remembered hearing the

and was making more on Saturday night than Bob was making all week long. Because of continued conflicts between Wills and O'Daniel, O'Daniel fired Wills in August 1933.<sup>13</sup>

The Light Crust Doughboys continued to prosper even after the departure of Bob Wills, with a succession of members coming and going. "Bob, at that time, wasn't as big in Texas as the Doughboys, not by a long ways," Montgomery said.<sup>14</sup> As Wills biographer Charles Townsend wrote:

The Light Crust Doughboys, which he [Wills] originated, went on to even greater success. They had one of the most popular radio shows in the Southwest for the next twenty years, made over two hundred records, and, like most of the western bands in that area, maintained much of the musical style Willis set in the beginning. Between 1929 and 1933 Bob Wills made Fort Worth the cradle of western swing and western jazz.<sup>15</sup>

The bad blood did not end when Wills left the Doughboys. O'Daniel later sued Wills for using the "Light Crust Doughboys" name in promoting performances of Wills's new band, which would become the Texas Playboys. O'Daniel lost the case in a Waco court, but he continued to hound Wills. "He had a vendetta against Bob when Bob left," Montgomery recalled.

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Doughboys' noon-hour program on KPRC as a teenager in Houston. "The people of Houston had never heard anything like it," he said. "There was no western music there at the time. . . . I would walk three blocks to the store and never miss a word of a song. In the summer every window was open, and every radio was tuned to the Light Crust Doughboys."<sup>10</sup>

However, by mid-1933, the original Doughboys had gone their separate ways. O'Daniel wanted to maintain a wholesome image for the Doughboys and forbade them to play dances. Milton Brown thought he could make more money performing at dances with his own band and left in 1932. Bob Wills also chafed at the ban on dances, but he valued the security of a steady job at the height of the Depression, so he stayed with O'Daniel. Wills replaced Brown with vocalist Tommy Duncan, later a mainstay of Wills's Texas Playboys.<sup>11</sup>

The Doughboys managed to play dances on the sly, but Wills continued to resent O'Daniel's "no-dances" edict. "Bob wanted to play dances," Marvin Montgomery related. "Milton Brown was playing at Crystal Springs and had his band going real good

While Wills biographer Ruth Sheldon wrote that Wills left Waco [and WACO radio station] at the end of 1933, because the Central Texas cotton-picking season was over and Wills knew money would be scarce,<sup>16</sup> Marvin Montgomery told a different story. "Bob had his band down in Waco [playing on WACO], and Pappy went down and told the radio station, 'I'll buy an hour of your time [daily] if you'll kick Bob off the air.' They kicked him off, and he [Wills] went to Oklahoma City. They did the same thing up there, and Bob was really getting discouraged by that time. His manager at the time called KVOO in Tulsa, and told them what was happening. They said, 'Well, come on up here, and we won't let Pappy take your time.'"<sup>17</sup>

By 1935, O'Daniel himself was on the way out. "Jack Burrus, who owned the Burrus Mill and Elevator Company, had a percentage deal with W. Lee 'Pappy' O'Daniel, where Pappy received so much money for every sack of flour he sold," Montgomery said.

Pappy had the Light Crust Doughboys going and making more money than Burrus was making. Mr. Burrus was looking

to get rid of Pappy. O'Daniel was taking the Doughboys up to Oklahoma City and playing a theater and maybe getting \$1,500, which in those days was a stack of money. Pappy was keeping the money himself; he wasn't splitting it with the boys, and he wasn't turning it into the mill. Ol' Cliff [Gross, the fiddle player who took Bob Wills's place in the group] – 'Doctor' we called him – went to Mr. Burrus and told him about it. That gave Burrus the chance, the excuse, to get rid of Pappy. . . . Burrus, said, 'Pappy, get your stuff and go.' He did. That was the way Pappy lost his job."<sup>18</sup>

While the drama surrounding the Light Crust Doughboys was unfolding, Marvin Montgomery was establishing himself as a top musician in the Dallas-Fort Worth radio business. The unceremonious departure of W. Lee O'Daniel indirectly led to Montgomery's joining the Light Crust Doughboys on October 22, 1935. "Mr. Burrus hired Eddie Dunn [the *WFAA Early Birds* program announcer] to take Pappy's place," Montgomery said. The Wanderers, including Montgomery, played on the *Early Birds* show. Dunn essentially brought the Wanderers with him to Burrus Mill.

Gene Autry pays a visit to the Light Crust Doughboys at their Burrus Mill studio.

L to R: Cliff Gross, Zeke Campbell, Bert Dodson, (unidentified), Autry, announcer Eddie Dunn, Marvin Montgomery, Kenneth Pitts. Photo courtesy of Art Greenhaw and the Light Crust Doughboys.



"The Doughboys then had nine musicians," Montgomery recalled. "Eddie wanted to upgrade the band, and he wanted Bert Dodson and Dick Reinhart [members of the Wanderers] to come over and join. They were both singers, and Dick played the guitar, and Bert played the bass. Mr. [Roy] Dodson [Bert's father and the Wanderers' manager] said, 'If you take Marvin, I'll break up the band. I'm tired of riding around in that old station wagon [playing dances] every night anyway.' Eddie said, 'Okay, I'll take three of them,' so Eddie fired six of the guys in the Doughboys and kept three. With us three, we had a six-piece band."<sup>19</sup> Marvin Montgomery would be a Doughboy for the rest of his life.

A Doughboys custom that began with O'Daniel continued after he left to pursue his political career. After he fired Bob Wills, O'Daniel hit upon the idea of giving the members of the Doughboys generic nicknames, so that as the inevitable

them," Marvin Montgomery said. "If he had made a record by himself on guitar, you'd probably think he was a black guy. He'd do 'Matchbox Blues' and 'Gulf Coast Blues.'"<sup>24</sup> In trips to Deep Ellum, the downtown Dallas district of bars and music clubs, Marvin Montgomery was introduced to African-American blues. "Dick would say, 'Come on, let's go down to Elm Street,'" Montgomery recalled. "He'd name a place. I don't remember what the names were. But he'd take his guitar, and I'd listen and watch them play. We'd be the only white people in there."<sup>25</sup>

In their book *Deep Ellum and Central Track*, Alan B. Govenar and Jay F. Brakefield wrote: "As a musician, Montgomery touches on all the musical diversity that Deep Ellum has come to represent. . . . Montgomery is completely eclectic, integrating elements of black and white minstrelsy, popular songs, and show tunes with strains of traditional country, jazz and blues."<sup>26</sup> Montgomery

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personnel changes continued, they would be less apparent to the public. For example, during the post-O'Daniel, pre-World War II period, Marvin Montgomery was "Junior," and guitarist Muryel Campbell was "Zeke," a nickname that stayed with him the rest of his life. Fiddler Kenneth Pitts was "Abner," bassist Ramon DeArmon was "Snub," fiddler Clifford Gross was "Doctor," and guitarist Dick Reinhart was "Bashful." "Part of the formula for the Doughboys' enormous popularity was personalizing the band," Pitts's daughter, Janis Stout, wrote. "People followed them like friends of the family."<sup>20</sup> As musicians came and went, most of the listeners were unaware of it. Fiddlers Robert "Buck" Buchanan and Cecil Brower (who used his own given name), guitarist/bassist Jim ("Bashful") Boyd, guitarist/bassist Joe ("Bashful") Ferguson, and pianist John "Knocky" Parker later played for the group during the period.<sup>21</sup> "In the 1930s, after O'Daniel left, we were just as popular in Texas as The Beatles became in the 1960s," Montgomery said. "We would announce on the radio that we were going to be in Hillsboro at 10:00 tomorrow morning at the square to play a 15- or 20-minute program. If we were going to San Antonio, we'd stop at two or three places. Boy, there would be 10,000 people there, everybody in town plus a lot more people would show up. All we had to do was announce it on the air."<sup>22</sup>

O'Daniel favored traditional numbers and hymns, such as "Shall We Gather at the River."<sup>23</sup> But the Doughboys' new personnel brought an increasingly complex sound to the group. Dick Reinhart introduced a guitar style that was heavily influenced by black music to the Doughboys. "Dick was the only one I knew who really picked up their [black musicians'] songs and learned

believed the Doughboys played a major role in bringing the style of black musicians to a wider audience in Texas and the Southwest. "Once we did a song on the Doughboys program, everybody did it. . . . Every other band started playing it. Like 'South' [an instrumental hit by the Doughboys], every other band picked up on that real quick. 'Trouble in Mind' and several of those songs that Dick [Reinhart] learned from those guys [Dallas black musicians], we started doing them, and first thing you knew, everybody else was recording them and doing them, too."<sup>27</sup>

After joining the Doughboys, Marvin Montgomery changed from playing mostly rhythm to playing solo. "I tuned my banjo like a viola and fingered it the same as a violin, only it was pitched a fifth lower," he said. "This came out so vaudeville musicians could switch from violin to banjo. When Dixieland jazz got popular in the 1920s and earlier, a lot of fiddle players began to lose their jobs and they started playing the banjo."<sup>28</sup>

The Doughboys recorded for Columbia under its subsidiary labels Brunswick and Vocalion, and were produced by the Country Music Hall of Fame member "Uncle Art" Satherley. But they never sold a lot of records on a national scale. The record business was different then; sales to jukebox operators were important, and the Doughboys concentrated on that market, which accounted for half of the record sales in late 1930s.<sup>29</sup>

The Doughboys and others recorded songs not meant to be played on the radio, but, rather, on honky-tonk jukeboxes. One of these was provocatively named, even by today's standards: "Pussy, Pussy, Pussy,"<sup>30</sup> a song which innocently began with Marvin Montgomery himself asking in falsetto, "Fellas, will you help me look for my cat?" The other members replied, "Sure.



The Doughboys go to Hollywood for their appearance in the Gene Autry movie *Oh Susannah*.  
L to R: Zeke Campbell, Dick Reinhart, Marvin Montgomery, Kenneth Pitts, Cliff Gross, Bert Dodson. Photo courtesy of Art Greenhaw and the Light Crust Doughboys.

Here, pussy, pussy, pussy . . .”<sup>31</sup> Obviously, there is curiosity about a song with the title of “Pussy, Pussy, Pussy.” Montgomery said the record sold well as far away as New York, despite the understandable absence of radio airplay. “Knocky [Parker] went up to see ol’ Fats Waller [the jazz pianist], who was real popular and wrote a lot of good music. He went to Fats and said, ‘I’m Knocky Parker with the Light Crust Doughboys from Fort Worth, Texas.’ Fats said, ‘Oh, you were the boys who put out ‘Pussy, Pussy, Pussy.’ . . . I don’t know where I got the idea for that song. It’s only got two chords. We had three chords and took one of them out. I was trying to write songs that I thought the jukeboxes would take, and they took that one.”<sup>32</sup>

Many, many years later, Montgomery was stunned to find that the Doughboys’ recording of “Pussy, Pussy, Pussy” had been included in the soundtrack to the Demi Moore movie, *Striptease*. The novelty song is briefly used in a scene featuring a dancer in a cat outfit. The movie’s closing credits list Marvin Montgomery as the composer and the Light Crust Doughboys as the performers. Finally, Montgomery received a payment. “They thought I was dead,” he said.<sup>33</sup>

Montgomery recalled making records when the master recordings were literally made of wax. “One of my first sessions they used a disc about this thick [indicates about one inch] of bees’ wax,” he said. “They’d tell you, ‘If you make a mistake,

don't quit unless we [the technicians] stop.' The minute they got one made, they'd put it in a big box, I guess they used some kind of ice, and when they got six of 'em [individual recordings] they'd send them up to the plant in up in Connecticut to have 'em processed."<sup>34</sup>

In his 1989 discography of the Light Crust Doughboys, Montgomery identified the June 14, 1939 session as the best recording session ever for the Doughboys. "We recorded in the old Brunswick Warehouse with no air conditioning and it was hot. We played with our shirts off, and I suspect the bottle was passed around a few times among some of the band members as well as the boss man [Parker Willson, by that time the Doughboys' master of ceremonies] – why hide it – Willson, Brower, DeArman and [Art Satherley's associate] Don Law, and maybe a swag or two by Boyd." In this day-long session, the Doughboys recorded "Let's Make Believe We're Sweethearts," "Thinking of You," "If I Didn't Care," "Mary Lou," "In Ol' Oklahoma," "Tea for Two," "Little Rock Get-a-way," and "The Cattle Call." They also recorded the Marvin Montgomery compositions "She Gave Me the Bird," "Three Naughty Kittens," "We Must Have Beer," "The Texas Song of Pride," and the follow-up to the notorious "Pussy, Pussy, Pussy," "We Found Her Little Pussy Cat."<sup>35</sup>

The Doughboys' massive radio popularity led to a brief movie career. They were hired to appear in a Gene Autry movie, *Oh, Susanna*. "'Uncle Art' Satherley of Columbia Records recommended that we go," Montgomery said. "He was the fellow who was the A&R man for Columbia who made our records for us. He produced them, so he recommended to Republic Pictures that they use the Light Crust Doughboys. We were the first regular well-known group to be in a musical western. . . . Of course, later on Bob Wills and a lot of guys got into it, but we were the first ones."<sup>36</sup> Marvin Montgomery had fond memories of performing in the singing cowboy movie, even though he was less than a natural horseman. "I went to get on this horse, and this ol' Hollywood cowboy, he was holding the horse. I put the wrong foot in the stirrup and started up, and I realized I was getting on the horse backwards. They said, 'Here's a kid from Texas who doesn't even how to get on a horse!'"<sup>37</sup> Part of the Doughboys' second movie with Autry, *The Big Show*, was filmed at the site of the Texas centennial celebration, Dallas's new Fair Park. Another legendary group, the Sons of the Pioneers, also was appearing in the movie. While working on the movie, Montgomery made friends with young Leonard "Len" Slye, then an upcoming Western singer. The world would soon know him as Roy Rogers. Montgomery tells a story about Len Slye that contrasts sharply with the image of Roy Rogers, the man who would later become the wholesome hero to millions of American boys and girls. Because Slye had a tendency to prowl the city streets at night and get into trouble, Republic Pictures executives locked him in his room at the Adolphus Hotel in

Dallas, Montgomery said. But, while Montgomery waited outside his door, Slye would climb over the transom, and he and Montgomery would then hit the funky clubs in Dallas's Deep Ellum district.<sup>38</sup> The Gene Autry movies may have had a greater impact musically than they did as films. "I'm surprised how many banjo players I influenced by their seeing me in that movie, *Oh, Susanna*," Montgomery said. "This one guy said, 'I was nine years old and I went to see that movie 10 times just to see you play 'Tiger Rag.'"<sup>39</sup>

Under W. Lee O'Daniel, the Doughboys had traveled in a customized car. But just before Montgomery joined the group, O'Daniel had acquired a new tour bus that was to stay with them for two decades. The bus cost more than \$50,000 in 1935. The Doughboys used it for the first time on their trip to California to make *Oh, Susanna* with Gene Autry.<sup>40</sup> They performed on a sizable back porch built into the bus, similar to the train-caboose platforms used by politicians on whistle-stop campaigns. Marvin Montgomery and Knocky Parker recalled sitting on the platform and jamming together as the bus was speeding down the blacktop.<sup>41</sup> Montgomery remembered the bus with great fondness. "The last time I drove it, it had over 200,000 miles on it, which I made every one," he said. In the 1950s, the bus was sold to the American Legion and was used for a time in the Fort Worth Fat Stock Show parade. "The last time I saw it, it was sitting up on a hill over in Fort Worth, up above Herring's [recording] studio. It was just falling apart. I wish that I had got a hold of it. Later on, this guy who has the [transportation] museum in Fort Worth, called me and wanted to know if I could find it. He wanted to put it in that museum. . . . I called everybody I knew . . . I sure wish I could have found it for him, because if he had it down there, it would be there yet."<sup>42</sup>

Montgomery recalled that life on the road for the Doughboys was relatively sedate, by today's standards. "I did a little hugging and kissing, but I was afraid of a social disease," Montgomery wryly recalled. "Of course, we had all kinds of chances with these little sixteen-year-old girls." Montgomery remembered one Doughboy member who would proposition young women in the bluntest possible way. "He'd be successful about one out of four times, I'd say."<sup>43</sup> Joe Ferguson, who inherited the nickname "Bashful," recalled, "Those ol' girls would be on the back of that bus, and they would say, 'You don't look bashful to me!'"<sup>44</sup>

With any group of young men traveling and performing together, tempers are bound to flare. But one incident on the Doughboys' bus nearly got out of hand. Montgomery remembered an incident involving Clifford Gross. Soon after Montgomery joined the group, the Doughboys were performing a skit involving a moonshine jug. Someone put black goo from a melted acetate in the jug, and it ran out on Gross's shirt. Gross took offense, and later on the bus, he pulled a switchblade knife and held it to announcer Parker Willson's throat. "We were

scared," Montgomery said. "Dick Reinhart started talking to Gross – they were kind of buddy buddy – and he talked him out of hurting Parker. Gross finally pulled the knife away." Gross quit the group the next day.<sup>45</sup>

Although the Doughboys' daily radio program remained popular even after the start of World War II, Montgomery said it did not come as a shock when Burrus Mill dropped the original radio program in 1942. "They couldn't get tires or anything for that big bus to send us around [because of war rationing]," Montgomery recalled. "And several of the guys already had been drafted. . . . We had to keep getting guys to come in who couldn't play."<sup>46</sup>

During the war, Montgomery served as a shift supervisor at Crown Machine and Tool in Fort Worth, making shells for the

Doughboys," he said. "But obviously their power and their grip on the Texas public remained well after World War II. Bob Wills was out on the West Coast. They [the Doughboys] were sort of the standard bearers after Wills went West."<sup>50</sup>

The Light Crust Doughboys first return to radio lasted about three years. The program on the Texas Quality Network began in 1945 and ended before the end of 1948, despite their growing popularity. The Doughboys' loyalty to their musicians' union would help bring about their demise. The fierce leader of the American Federation of Musicians, James Caesar Petrillo, in an effort to protect musicians' jobs, called several strikes to fight the increased on-the-air use of recordings.<sup>51</sup> That prevented the Doughboys from making recorded programs, then called

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U.S. Navy, and played part-time on some radio programs.<sup>47</sup> But after the war, Montgomery joined a new incarnation of the Light Crust Doughboys. Burrus Mill and the Tracy Locke Advertising agency built the new band by combining former Doughboys with WFAA radio's vocal group, the Flying X Ranchboys, which included Mel Cox, Red Kidwell and Hal Harris. The newly reinvented Doughboys then added guitarist Lefty Perkins, accordionist Charley Godwin, and fiddler Carroll Hubbard. "Of course, they knew that I had been with the Doughboys for years and years. Burrus Mill asked them to see if they could get me back. Of course, I jumped at the chance to get back with them. . . . I went back with the Doughboys, and got the name 'Junior' again. I've been playing with them ever since. I guess if it wasn't for me, they'd have never lasted this long."<sup>48</sup>

The new Doughboys quickly picked up where the old group had left off, even surpassing the former band, in terms of popularity. In late 1946, the new Doughboys reached 861,000 listeners per day on the live Texas Quality Network program, and the transcribed program reached another 2.285 million people, for a total of 3.146 million listeners, according to figures compiled by Burrus Mill. The Doughboys had stations in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The program was heard in such major cities as Atlanta, New Orleans, Memphis, and San Diego.<sup>49</sup> Texas music historian John Morthland believes the post-war Doughboys continued to have a major influence on the state's musicians. "When people talk about the Doughboys, they generally talk about the pre-war

"transcriptions." "Petrillo up in Chicago put a strike on union musicians making recordings," Montgomery said. "So we lost our jobs, as union musicians. And they [Burrus Mill] hired a scab outfit out of Dallas. They were on for about three months or so, with Jimmy Jeffries from the *Early Bird* show [on WFAA] as MC. They just made transcriptions. They weren't on the air live. . . . The guys they [Burrus Mill] picked up were all union guys, but we had enough loyalty that we wouldn't do it [record the transcriptions] because we were union."<sup>52</sup>

Fortunately for the "real" Doughboys, the union dispute came just as television was getting its start. The Doughboys performed for about a year on WBAP-TV, now KXAS, under the old "Flying X Ranchboys" name. In fact, they became the first musical group to perform on television in Texas, when WBAP-TV, the earliest television station to make regular broadcasts in the state, sent out its first test transmission on June 20, 1948.<sup>53</sup> Marvin Montgomery acquired his nickname of "Smokey" while performing on television as a member of the Flying X Ranchboys. "I lost my nickname ['Junior'] in September of 1948, when I went on Channel 5, which was WBAP at that time. It was black and white. . . . When I played my banjo, a solo, my hand would blur. That old black-and-white television couldn't keep up with my hand. Ol' Mel Cox, our MC, would say, 'Junior will now smoke up the banjo.' That's how I got a new nickname. I said, 'Give me the name Smokey from now on, and get rid of the 'Junior.'"<sup>54</sup>

Meanwhile, the group continued to perform in live shows for Burrus Mill as the Light Crust Doughboys. At the same time, Burrus Mill created a new radio program for the group, aimed



at advertising the company's Texo Livestock Feed. As the Texo Hired Hands, Montgomery and others performed on WBAP at 12:30 p.m. daily from the Fort Worth Livestock Exchange. "We'd go out and make these trips around the state, down to Louisiana and Arkansas," Montgomery said. "In one town we'd be the Texo Hired Hands with [WBAP agriculture reporter] Ted

traveling. We were doing the hard work. He [Thompson] was doing the easy work," Montgomery said.<sup>62</sup> It was not the first time an upcoming singer's name had been attached to an ersatz Doughboys' radio show. In 1949, yodeling Slim Whitman briefly hosted a program under the Light Crust Doughboys name.<sup>63</sup> And in 1951, Tennessee Ernie Ford performed on *The Light*

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*As the Country Gentlemen, the group performed on an East Texas tour with the young Elvis Presley. They played three shows a day. "We had to go get him [Presley]," Montgomery recalled. "He'd go back to the room and go to sleep. He was a sleepy kid. He was lazy or something. . . . We'd go wake him up: 'Time to do a show, Elvis! Come on!'"*

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Gouldy as our MC, and the next town we'd be the Light Crust Doughboys. We'd just put on a Doughboys shirt, and Paul Blunt, our steel guitar player, would MC. He took the place of Mel Cox. [Cox] never did get back with us after the union strike."<sup>55</sup>

In 1951, the Light Crust Doughboys returned to the air for the final time on a regular basis. "They [Burrus Mill] got on this Mutual Network, or the Dixie Network [a part of Mutual], and we did some of that. This was in 1951 and 1952." During that time, the group recorded transcriptions (no longer banned by the union) at the WFAA studios in Dallas.<sup>56</sup> Smokey Montgomery remembered that, for the Dixie Network show, the Light Crust Doughboys played on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday, Montgomery (on guitar) and Doughboy Paul Blunt (on steel guitar) played with an organist and a singer, while a woman broadcaster delivered Light Crust recipes.<sup>57</sup> "They [Burrus Mill] didn't want to pay enough to have the Doughboys five days," Montgomery said wryly.<sup>58</sup> The early 1950s radio incarnation of the Doughboys was heard on about 170 stations from New Mexico to Florida.<sup>59</sup>

As television grew more popular and radio tried to compete, the Doughboys were replaced on radio by yet another reincarnation of the Light Crust Doughboys. Hank Thompson, a Country Music Hall of Fame member from Waco well known for "The Wild Side of Life" and other hits with the Brazos Valley Boys, hosted a radio program from 1952 to 1954 as "Hank Thompson and the Light Crust Doughboys." Thompson was actually backed by his own group.<sup>60</sup> "Live radio was fading," Thompson said. "Some of your network [radio] shows, like Gunsmoke, went into the '50s. But television was really taking hold about that time. We were kind of in the waning days of live radio. If I had had that show five or ten years before, it would have been a great success. Radio became a secondary thing."<sup>61</sup> Meanwhile, a touring group of Doughboys, led by Montgomery, remained on the road. "We were doing the

*Crust/Tennessee Ernie Show*, which used the famous Light Crust Doughboys' theme.<sup>64</sup>

Even after the Doughboys stopped performing regularly on the radio, their association with Light Crust Flour continued. The Doughboys still promoted Light Crust at county fairs, grocery store openings, and other live performances well into the 1980s, when Cargill, the company that bought Light Crust in 1972,<sup>65</sup> sold the brand to the Martha White company.<sup>66</sup> Meanwhile, Smokey Montgomery branched out into other successful musical ventures. Throughout the 1950s, Montgomery served as the music director of the *Big D Jamboree*, a weekly country music radio show at the Sportatorium in downtown Dallas. For these shows, the Doughboys performed as the house band under the name of the Country Gentlemen. As the Country Gentlemen, the group performed on an East Texas tour with the young Elvis Presley. They played three shows a day. "We had to go get him [Presley]," Montgomery recalled. "He'd go back to the room and go to sleep. He was a sleepy kid. He was lazy or something. . . . We'd go wake him up: 'Time to do a show, Elvis! Come on!'"<sup>67</sup>

During the folk boom of the early 1960s, Montgomery began playing on a regular basis at the Levee Club, a popular nightclub owned by his friend Ed Bernet, with whom Montgomery became the co-owner of the Sumet Recording Studio in Dallas. Montgomery, Bernet, erstwhile Waxahachie rock 'n' roller Ronnie Dawson (who did a tour of duty with the Doughboys in the late 1950s), and Bob Christopher formed a folk singing group called The Levee Singers.<sup>68</sup> The group performed at the Mockingbird Lane club five nights a week. "Sometimes there'd be so many people that it'd take 15 minutes to get to the stage," Dawson said.<sup>69</sup> Christopher recalled: "I sat down and did the numbers once. We played five nights a week for 10 years. A million people saw us at The Levee, and probably six million saw us live across the country."<sup>70</sup>

Skillfully promoted by Hollywood agent David Sonntag, the Levee Singers were soon performing in Las Vegas as the opening act for comedian Joey Bishop. Montgomery recalled that they got great support from major stars such as Milton Berle, whom they met while performing at the Mapes Hotel and the Sands. "When we opened at the Sands that first night, we were all kind of scared. And in the front row was Milton Berle. He jumped up and yelled, 'There's my boys, there's my boys!' . . . He got the crowd with us."<sup>71</sup> Then came television appearances on *The Danny Kaye Show*, *The Hollywood Palace*, *Hootenanny*, and *The Jimmy Dean Show*, among others.<sup>72</sup>

Despite his long career in western swing and country music, Montgomery became a highly successful Top 40 record producer in the 1960s. He produced "Hey Baby," a 1962 hit for Bruce Chamel of Jacksonville, Texas. Montgomery played piano on the record while Ronnie Dawson played drums. "Hey Baby" featured the bluesy harmonica playing of Delbert McClinton,<sup>73</sup> a young Texas rhythm 'n' blues singer who later became known for "Givin' It Up for Your Love." McClinton's harp blowing on the record caught the ear of John Lennon, who produced similar sounds on The Beatles' first three hits in Great Britain, "Love Me Do," "Please Please Me," and "From Me to You." The Beatles even performed "Hey Baby" in their early stage act.<sup>74</sup> In fact, as Chamel's tour manager, Montgomery traveled to England, where he, Chamel, and McClinton met the Fab Four in the Cavern, the dank Liverpool club in which they got their start. "Delbert, of course, had his mouth organ with him, and he sat there and played with them," Montgomery said. "And the Beatles just went nuts."<sup>75</sup>

In 1962, Montgomery produced an even bigger hit, "Hey Paula," by "Paul and Paula," who were, in reality, Ray Hildebrand and Jill Jackson from Brownwood, Texas. Montgomery played guitar and vibes on the record, Dawson again played drums, and latter-day Doughboy Bill Simmons played piano. Jackson's mother called Montgomery and asked him to audition her daughter. Hildebrand came along, and they sang "Hey Paula," which Hildebrand had written the night before. They quickly recorded the song. "About that time Major Bill [Smith, the owner of the recording studio] came in," Montgomery recalled, "and he said, 'Make me an acetate and I'll take it over to KFJZ tonight and see what they think of it.' Well, about midnight, the phone rang and it was Major Bill. 'Hey, Marv, we've got a cotton pickin' hit.'" Released in late 1962, "Hey Paula" earned a gold record, sold 1,030,000 copies, and became the second-biggest selling single of 1963.<sup>76</sup>

As a leading figure in the Dallas-Fort Worth music scene for over six decades, Montgomery was part of Bob Wills's final recording session. Wills continued to perform and record throughout the 1960s, but his health began to fail in the early 1970s. In December 1973, country superstar Merle Haggard gathered some of the surviving Playboys and others in Dallas

for one last recording with their mentor and friend. The 24-tracks resulting from the session were released as *Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys For The Last Time*. Smokey Montgomery recalled:

They brought Bob Wills over in a wheelchair. He'd give the guys the right tempo, then we put a mike in front of him so he could do some of his "ah-hahhs." He was so weak we couldn't use them. Hoyle Nix was there, who could imitate Bob to a tee. We got Hoyle Nix to do a bunch of "ah-hahhs." Those "ah-hahhs" you hear [on the record] are Hoyle. That night, [Bob] had one of those massive strokes. I don't think he ever got out of bed after that. The next day, of course he couldn't be there, and the guys were recording "San Antonio Rose," and they all started crying, they just couldn't hardly do it. They figured the stroke he'd had would be his last one. And of course it was.

Wills never recovered from the stroke before he died on May 13, 1975 at 70 years old.<sup>77</sup>

While keeping the Light Crust Doughboys going, Montgomery continued to push ahead musically, at an age when most men have left the creative life behind. In 1989, in a flight of fancy, Montgomery founded the Dallas Banjo Band. The Banjo Band comprised 30 or more banjos and a tuba. They tackled such unlikely numbers as *Beethoven's Fifth Symphony* and George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. "Every tune that they played when I sat in on a practice last weekend made me think idly about picnics and summer swims and somebody's great-grandfather throwing down his crutches and dancing at a tent revival," wrote *Dallas Morning News* columnist Jacquielynn Floyd.<sup>78</sup> Montgomery's musical enterprises also included the Dixieland groups Smokey and the Bearkats and the Hot Five.

In the 1990s, the Light Crust Doughboys enjoyed a remarkable renaissance when a younger man, Art Greenhaw, joined the group and teamed up with Smokey Montgomery in what would be a final burst of creativity for the banjo virtuoso. Gospel music was always part of the Doughboys' repertoire, but they entered the field in a major way, recording several gospel albums with gospel music legend James Blackwood, the last surviving member of the Blackwood Brothers, and Elvis Presley's vocal backing group, the Jordanaires. Three of the recordings on Greenhaw's independent Dallas-based label received Grammy nominations in the gospel category: *Keep Lookin' Up: The Texas Swing Sessions* in 1998, *They Gave the World a Smile: The Stamps Quartet Tribute Album* in 1999, and *The Great Gospel Hit Parade* in 2001.<sup>79</sup>

At the same time, the Doughboys tackled several ambitious live performance projects. In 1998, they collaborated with the



Smokey Montgomery later in life. Courtesy of Art Greenhaw and the LightCrust Doughboys

Lone Star Ballet in Amarillo for a joint performance. Greenhaw, Montgomery, and his second wife Barbara (whom he married following the death in 1992 of his wife of 55 years, Kathleen)<sup>80</sup> wrote the music and lyrics for the performance, which was called *God Bless Amarillo (And All the Cowboys, Too)*. The Doughboys recorded the songs and released them on a CD. In fall 2000, the

inducted Montgomery into its Ring of Honor in 1997, and he was the first person inducted into the National Four-String Banjo Hall of Fame Museum, also in Guthrie.<sup>84</sup> After a long battle with leukemia, Smokey Montgomery died on June 6, 2001. He had performed on stage with the Light Crust Doughboys less than a month earlier in a concert with the

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*Montgomery arranged for the musical performances by bands that he had led. But the greatest performance was to take place beyond the sight and hearing of the mourners: A heavenly reunion of the departed Light Crust Doughboys. "When I get there, we'll have the biggest jam session ever," he said.*

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Doughboys performed again with the Lone Star Ballet in a program called *Gospel, Strauss and Patsy Cline*. The group also performed with the Fort Worth Symphony, the Dallas Wind Symphony, the Texas Wind Symphony, the Abilene Philharmonic, and the Midland-Odessa Symphony.<sup>81</sup>

Montgomery took a very active role in all of these projects. "People don't realize what a great arranger Smokey is," latter-day Doughboy fiddler Jim Baker said. "He can just do stuff on the fly. The first [recording] session I got to do with the Doughboys, we had three fiddles, Johnny Strawn, John Walden, and me. He had some stuff written out and we weren't quite getting it, so he just grabbed it up, rearranged it, and slapped it back down, and we went on. He's a whiz."<sup>82</sup> The bold musical collaborations thrilled Montgomery, by this time well into his 80s. "We played in Abilene a couple of years ago. . . . We had a big rehearsal, and they had all these violins playing behind us on 'Tumblin' Tumbleweeds,' and it gave me goose pimples," Montgomery said, laughing at his own exhilaration.<sup>83</sup>

Montgomery was a member of the Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame, as a member of the Light Crust Doughboys, and the Western Swing Halls of Fame in Sacramento, Seattle, and Nashville. The Jazz Banjo Festival in Guthrie, Oklahoma,

Abilene Philharmonic. He received a funeral service befitting his status as a Texas music legend. The Hall of State on the Texas State Fair grounds in Dallas was the setting. Montgomery's Dixieland group, the Bearkats, performed, as did the Dallas Banjo Band. And, of course, the Light Crust Doughboys took center stage, with Montgomery's stool placed before his microphone, and his beloved tenor banjo resting on its stand between keyboard player Bill Simmons and fiddler John Walden. The Doughboys performed Art Greenhaw's gospel composition, "Sending Me You," Montgomery and his wife Barbara's song, "Lord, Take All of Me," and "How Great Thou Art." After the service, the Bearkats led a New Orleans-style musical procession to the hearse, and again from the hearse to the grave.<sup>85</sup>

Montgomery had planned his own funeral years before, with the exception of its setting in the Hall of State, which Greenhaw orchestrated. Montgomery arranged for the musical performances by bands that he had led. But the greatest performance was to take place beyond the sight and hearing of the mourners: A heavenly reunion of the departed Light Crust Doughboys. "When I get there, we'll have the biggest jam session ever," he said.<sup>86</sup> ■

## Notes

1 The story of Smokey Montgomery's early life is found in John Daniels, Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery, University of North Texas Oral History Collection, No. 1152, , 7 September 1996, 9.  
2 Ibid., 10.  
3 Ibid., 2.  
4 Ibid., 20.  
5 Ibid., 30-31.  
6 Ibid., 33.  
7 Ibid., 35.

8 Cary Ginell, *Milton Brown and the Founding of Western Swing* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Charles R. Townsend, *San Antonio Rose* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1976). Ginell and Townsend each covered the first three years of the Light Crust Doughboys' history. Although Ginell writes from Milton Brown's perspective and Townsend from Wills's, they agree on most basic facts. Ginell also contains information about other members of the Light Crust Doughboys, including Cecil Brower, Buck

Buchanan, Kenneth Pitts, John "Knocky" Parker, and Dick Reinhart.  
9 Ginell, *Milton Brown*, 38, 46.  
10 Townsend, *San Antonio Rose*, 73.  
11 Ginell, *Milton Brown*; Townsend, *San Antonio Rose*.  
12 Townsend, *San Antonio Rose*, 76.  
13 Daniels, Interview, 96-7.  
14 Townsend, *San Antonio Rose*, 77.  
15 Ruth Sheldon, *Hubbin' It: The Life of Bob Wills* (Kingsport, Tenn.: Kingsport Press, Inc., 1938), 119.  
16 Daniels, Interview, 96.

- 18 Ibid., 38-40.
- 19 Ibid., 40-1.
- 20 Janis Stout, "The Light Crust Doughboys Were On the Air: A Memoir," *The Journal of Country Music*, 18, no. 3 (1996): 5.
- 21 Marvin Montgomery, "Light Crust Doughboy Recording Sessions," unpublished manuscript, 1989, 17, collection of Janis Stout, Bryan, Texas.
- 22 Daniels, Interview, 95.
- 23 Robert Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Path to Power* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1983), 696. Caro wrote about W. Lee O'Daniel in connection with Lyndon Johnson's campaign against O'Daniel for the U.S. Senate in 1941. O'Daniel won the election, the only time Johnson ever lost. After O'Daniel left Burrus Mill, he promoted his own brand of flour, Hillbilly Flour, and started a new string band, the Hillbilly Boys. The Hillbilly Boys performed on radio and toured with O'Daniel around the state of Texas, promoting Hillbilly Flour and O'Daniel's candidacy for governor and senator. O'Daniel had been elected governor in 1938 and 1940, was elected to a full term in the senate in 1942, and did not seek re-election in 1948. (Caro 1983, 698-702, 706-2; Seth Shepard McKay, *W. Lee O'Daniel and Texas Politics, 1938-1942* [Lubbock, Texas: Texas Tech Press, 1944] 615-616; Ginell 1994, 225-226). It is a common mistake to say that the Doughboys toured with O'Daniel on his political campaigns.
- 24 Alan B. Govenar and Jay F. Brakefield, *Deep Ellum and Central Track* (Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Press, 1998), 144. Govenar and Brakefield provide a good deal of information about other members of the pre-war Light Crust Doughboys, including Jim Boyd, Cecil Brower, John "Knocky" Parker, and Dick Reinhart. Reinhart later left the Doughboys, recorded with his own band, the "Lone Star Boys," became a member of Gene Autry's band and played on Autry's radio program *Melody Ranch*. (Ginell, Milton Brown, 260). Govenar and Brakefield also published Marvin Montgomery's discography of the Light Crust Doughboys as an appendix to their book.
- 25 Govenar and Brakefield, *Deep Ellum*, 143.
- 26 Ibid., 138-9.
- 27 Daniels, Interview, 111.
- 28 Govenar and Brakefield, *Deep Ellum*, 145.
- 29 Daniels, Interview, 65; Chris Rasmussen, "Risky Records (or, The 'Dirty Thirties'): Risque Songs and Jukeboxes in the 1930s," paper presented to the Popular Culture Association, Philadelphia, PA, 14 April 2001.
- 30 Daniels, Interview, 105, 194.
- 31 Govenar and Brakefield, *Deep Ellum*, 160-1.
- 32 Daniels, Interview, 130.
- 33 David Tarrant, "Smokey Montgomery: The Doughboys' Longtime Banjo Player is Far from Stale," *Dallas Morning News*, 19 January 1997, 1-E; Marvin Montgomery, interview by author, Denton, Texas, 3 May 2001.
- 34 Marvin Montgomery, interview by author, tape recording, Dallas, Texas, 21 March 2001.
- 35 Montgomery, "Light Crust Doughboy Recording Sessions," 10-11.
- 36 Daniels, Interview, 45-7.
- 37 Ibid., 53.
- 38 Ibid., 56-57.
- 39 Marvin Montgomery, interview by author, tape recording, Mesquite, Texas, 3 January 2001.
- 40 John Daniels, Interview with William 'Zeke' Campbell, University of North Texas Oral History Collection, No. 1138, 14 September 1996, 90; Daniels, Interview, 43.
- 41 Lowell Schreyer, "Banjo Legend: Smokey Montgomery," *FIGA* [Fretted Instruments Guild of America] Magazine, May/June 1997, <<http://www.texas-music.com/old/figa.htm>> (10 May 2001).
- 42 Daniels, Interview, 146-8.
- 43 Ibid., 119.
- 44 John Daniels, "Interview with Joe Frank Ferguson," University of North Texas Oral History Collection, No. 1161, 9 November 1996, 66.
- 45 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 82, 84-85.
- 46 Montgomery, interview by author, 21 March 2001; Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 87-8.
- 47 Ibid., 88.
- 48 Ibid., 131, 137.
- 49 "Burrus Mill and Elevator Company — Radio Stations Carrying Transcribed Light Crust Doughboys as of 11/7/46," advertising poster, collection of Art Greenhaw, Mesquite, Texas.
- 50 John Morthland, interview by author, tape recording, Denton, Texas, 4 May 2001.
- 51 "Petrillo, James Caesar," Infoplease.com, <<http://infoplease.looksmart.com/ce6/people/A0838631.html>> (23 February 2001).
- 52 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 138; Montgomery, interview by author, 3 January 2001.
- 53 Richard Schroeder, *Texas Signs On* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M Press, 1998), 139; Ginell *Milton Brown*, 226, 268.
- 54 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 59.
- 55 Montgomery, interview by author, 3 January, 2001.
- 56 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 145.
- 57 Ibid., 115.
- 58 Marvin Montgomery, interview by author, Dallas, Texas, May 28, 2001.
- 59 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 167.
- 60 "Hank Thompson: Biography," <<http://www.country.com/gen/music/artist/hank-thompson.html>> (8 March 2001); Hank Thompson, interview by author, tape recording, Denton, Texas, 8 March 2001.
- 61 Thompson, interview by author, 8 March 2001.
- 62 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 167.
- 63 K.L. Gible, *Mr. Songman: The Slim Whitman Story* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1982), 60; L.K. Knapp, e-mail note to author, 10 April 2001. Knapp manages a web page dedicated to information on Slim Whitman.
- 64 Montgomery, interview by author, 3 January 2001; Glenn White, letter to author, 24 March 2001. White is a collector of Light Crust Doughboys memorabilia and owns a recording of one of the Tennessee Ernie/Light Crust shows.
- 65 Bruce Bruemmer, e-mail note to author, 9 March 2001. Bruemmer works for Cargill as a public relations specialist.
- 66 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 149.
- 67 Daniels, "Interview with Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery," 70.
- 68 Matt Weitz, "A Flood of Memories: The Levee Singers Regroup for a Good Cause," *Dallas Morning News*, 18 January 2001, 5-C. The article was published on the occasion of a reunion performance of the Levee Singers, including Smokey Montgomery.
- 69 Ronnie Dawson, interview by author, tape recording, Denton, Texas, 14 March 2001.
- 70 Weitz, "A Flood," 5-C.
- 71 Montgomery, interview by author, 21 March 2001; Weitz, "A Flood," 5-C.
- 72 Montgomery, interview by author, 3 January 2001.
- 73 Montgomery, interview by author, 21 March 2001.
- 74 *The Beatles Anthology* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000), 101.
- 75 Montgomery interview by author, 21 March 2001.
- 76 Montgomery, interview by author, 3 January 2001; "2 singles, 27 LPs certified by RIAA," *Billboard*, 76, no. 1 (4 January 1964): 3.
- 77 "Famous Texans: Bob Wills," <<http://www.famoustexans.com/bobwills.htm>> (25 April 2001); "Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys," <<http://www.westernmusic.org/fame/BobWills.html>> (24 April 2001).
- 78 Jacquelynn Floyd, "For a Joyful Noise, Pick a Banjo Band," *Dallas Morning News*, 13 July 2000, 23-A.
- 79 Press Release, Light Crust Doughboys Official Web Site, <<http://www.lightcrustdoughboys.com/news/grammy/htm>> (30 July 2001); Press Release, Light Crust Doughboys Official Web Site, <<http://www.lightcrustdoughboys.com/news/third/htm>> (30 July 2001); Darren Watkins, "Greenhaw Record Grabs Grammy Nod," *Mesquite News*, 11 January 2001, p. 1; Susan Morrison, "Local Band Xnags Grammy Nomination," *Mesquite News*, 15 January 1998, p. 1.
- 80 Tarrant, "Smokey Montgomery," 2-E.
- 81 Jeff Rhoads, "Lone Star Ballet to Perform with Forefathers of Western Swing," *Amarillo Globe-News*, 8 February 1998, 9-D; Neil Hess, interview by author, Denton, Texas, 24 April 2001; Art Greenhaw, interview by author, tape recording, 26 March 2001; Montgomery, interview by author, 3 January 2001, 21 March 2001, 28 May 2001.
- 82 Jim Baker, interview by author, tape recording, Denton, Texas, 17 April 2001.
- 83 Montgomery, interview by author, 21 March 2001.
- 84 Joanne Smith, "Seven Decades of Western Swing: The Light Crust Doughboys," *Texas Highways*, 47, no. 1 (January 2000): 18.
- 85 Art Greenhaw, interview by author, tape recording, Denton, Texas, 29 June 2001.
- 86 Tarrant, "Smokey Montgomery," 2-E.