

NEW WAVE — NEW WAVES

RECORD MIRROR looks at the new wave bands outside of London

Newcastle

PENETRATION

AVOIDING CONDESCENSION. That's the 'When The Boat Comes In', 'Howay the lads' kind that invariably leads to a tide mark around the tongue.

Conditioning processes abound when Newcastle is mentioned to any non-Geordie, especially Londoners. Cranes and caps and dirty waves and steel and smoke and pitchfork houses and dislocated pubs and punk bands and corporate identities and...

Wait a minute. Punk bands?

Well, punk band actually, Penetration (don't go to my head), primo pushers of the big noise down in the boomdock. They're 16-19 and on the way up.

They've played The Roxy (if that means anything), supported The Vibrators three times, seen The Pistols seven times, laid down a few demos, been banned from Newcastle University, written some pretty good songs.

And been interviewed by RECORD MIRROR of course.

That was on the night they supported The Vibrators for the third time at Sunderland's Seaburn Hall. From that, easy to see they've got an acre of a following.

Okay, introductions. This is Pauline, a real crackertea with waylaid black hair and eyes of venom. She sings. "Hi."

And the Empire State on bass here is simply called 'R'. "Alright." The Bill Nelson lookalike on guitar is Gary Chaplin. "Hullo". And on drums 16 year - old Gary Smallman. "How yer going?"

"Some of the people in our own town don't treat us the same as they would a London band," says Smallman. "That really gets up my nose."

Their songs are complex, heavily influenced by The Pistols' Wayfaring spirit. "I like words, interesting words. I look at things way, way out in the distance," says Pauline who has titles to her credit like 'Duty Free Technology', 'Don't Dictate', 'Destroy', 'Silent Community', 'I'm Nobody', 'Firing Squad'.

They smack of Teeside bleakness — oops, falling into that trap again.

"The Pistols made you feel as though you could go and try to do it yourself. They made me start singing. That's their secret," she adds.

Anyway, Penetration are creating enough interest to have had at least two record companies sniffing around. They laid down a couple of numbers in the studios of one and they seemed very impressed. Early days.

"There's been a lot of crap put out recently," says Chaplin, "but we set our standards a lot higher. There's no way we would ever release something that we weren't absolutely sure of. Okay, so we haven't got a deal yet, but if not when we do, we want control over anything that is released."

They ain't boastful, just realistic and perhaps a little fanciful. So what's the scene like in Newcastle?

"There's not one place to go where they regularly play our kind of music," Chaplin. "It's picking up fast now but it's getting frustrating. I think it's mainly to do with adverse publicity. Like, we had never been threatened until this bunch of crap started appearing in the nationals."

"Now we're getting intimidated and we can't even walk around the streets of our hometown on our own. It's ridiculous 'cos who had really ever heard of Teds in such numbers before the papers picked up on it?"

"And the worrying thing is that people are actually believing what they read."

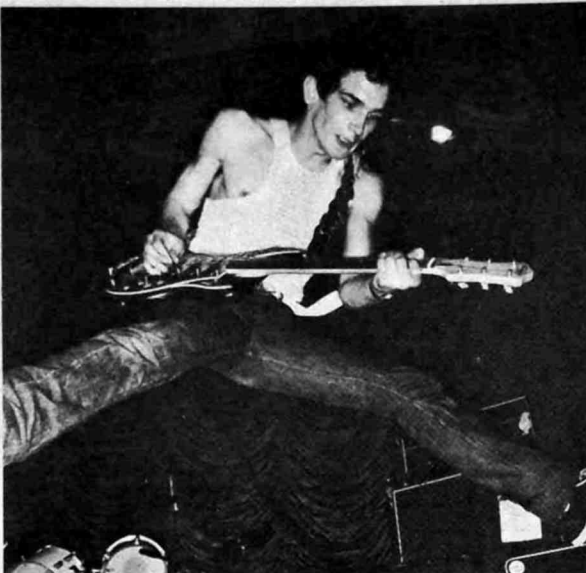
Smallman: "We wanna make music for people to enjoy, not for yobos to go mad on."

"We work out our frustrations on stage. I could no more smash someone's head in than walk a tightrope." Gary Chaplin said that.

"I wanna destroy passers by." Johnny Rotten said that.

BARRY CAIN

Bristol THE CORTINAS



THE CORTINAS: Nick Sheppard

WELL, YOU'RE A schoolboy in Bristol, a pretty well off schoolboy at that.

But that's boring y'know, so to alleviate the damage you form a band playing Dr Feelgood rip-offs. That gets boring too. Then you see the Sex Pistols.

So now you got directions sonny. But you don't wanna be another voidoid and legless fascist. That's no fun my babe. How can you write songs about dole delights when you're sunbathing in your own spacious garden?

The Cortinas' dilemma? Not really. They don't inflict themselves with fake identities, just cigarette burns on the arm. The elevator high class structure has ensconced them firmly on the second floor and they have no particular desire to walk down.

An all-embracing blanket sensing 'I'm so poor' stance is out. The false idol purveyors of the new / now music can go hang themselves. But I disappear up my own garrulous black hole.

The Cortinas are — Jeremy 'Fatty Potato' Valentine vocals, Dexter 'The doctor said I'm the most unhealthy teenager he's ever examined' Dalwood bass, Nick Sheppard guitar, Mike Fewins lead guitar, Danny Swandrum.

We're in the living room of Danny's dad's house. The band have just played an open-air festival in a Bristol park. Abysmal set thanks to almost non-existent PA. Okay, I'll say cheerio now and leave you with the boys.

Danny — "A lot of people in London get the impression that we're a bunch of square kids just because we happen to be middle class. Okay, we know punk is essentially a working class thing but that

doesn't mean to say we can't have a place in it as well."

Jeremy — "Lower class kids are bored kids. All they seem to want is football on Saturday afternoons and afterwards got out and get drunk. They don't want to think about things. It's always been down to the middle class kids to say whatever they want."

Nick — "The hard up kids haven't had a chance. They've been indoctrinated since the day they were born. They don't need anything, their life is planned."

Danny — "Working class kids often resent middle class kids and you can blame them when they get some university grad into communism trying to flog them a copy of Soviet Weekly? They'll just beat him up because they don't know what he's talking about."

Dexter — "Certain things are expected of us. Like going to university. Like getting a good job. Like thinking for yourself, although decisions have always been made for you."

Nick — "And when middle class teenagers dropped out what did they become? Hippies. Living in squats. Nothing positive. Now we're saying something."

Like their song 'Further Education'. 'Why should I sit for a board of metrication. Just to go on to further education?'

What's the point of qualifications, if it don't include the complications?

Nick — "People say we should be working class but we bloody ain't."

Dexter — "And we don't profess to be."

Nick — "It's pointless us writing songs about class things 'cos we don't know anything about it. There will always be a class

structure, that's all. If we did write like that and somebody came here and saw this house we would be maligned."

Jeremy — "There's always been London. We were terrified at the prospect of playing there but when we did we soon realised that a lot of what you read about it in the music press is a fabrication. I mean, we thought it was the centre of the world (laughter)."

Dexter — "The punk thing has already changed. It started off totally new but bands soon realised they had to use the establishment to get through."

Nick — "I mean, there's no real way the Clash are gonna change anything physically. They had to go to CBS and get money to get their message across."

Dexter — "Most bands in this area despise us because we have done in one year what they haven't in 10. We loved playing R&B but after seeing the Pistols you get to thinking er... See, you've got to support what you write."

Nick — "It's like the bands saying they've been on the dole and they haven't. Yet they're trying to create a movement against lying."

Nick — "Rebellion is getting stronger all the time. There will be another one if this one doesn't do it. I may be getting a very privileged education — but I'm also getting a higher level of backlash."

And to set the record straight about the single 'Facist Dictator'.

Jeremy — "It's about a guy who doesn't want to be tied down in a serious romantic situation."

"I don't want love as it's a bore."

"I don't want love just some street whore."

"I don't want love 'cos it's a waste of time."

But don't forget that you are mine."

BARRY CAIN

Ireland

BOOMTOWN RATS

WHEN THE Boomtown Rats came to London from their native Ireland, it was to escape the strangling influence of the "showband mafia". They'd had threats from people who didn't want them muscling in on the showband territory and gigs pulled out by concert halls managers who suddenly discovered new rules in the lease.

They knew when they started playing in Britain, they'd have problems; they were prepared to start again at the bottom of the ladder. What they weren't prepared for, was that they'd get labelled as a punk band, which they say they are not, and that they'd meet so much violence at their gigs.

The show at the Music Machine in Camden depressed them all — lead singer Bob Geldoff just didn't feel like going on, after he was attacked onstage and some fans were hurt. He visited one of the kids in hospital last week.

But the band has some resilience. They survived a tour as support to Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, which wasn't without its difficulties. They couldn't afford any publicity material, so they manufactured their own posters with a tin of emulsion paint and a roll of wallpaper. Apparently Tom Petty and his lads weren't too happy with this obtrusive method of advertising.

"I think it was after we started getting good reviews," said Geldoff. "We noticed a change of attitude. We didn't get to use the lights we had paid for on some of the gigs and they told us to stop making our posters. They thought we were a bunch of clowns and amateurs. Then when we started calling them Tin Potty and the Windbreakers, they didn't think it was very funny. If they hadn't been nasty, we wouldn't have done it."

"They wouldn't even talk to us at breakfast. Even their roadcrew couldn't stand them. But ultimately it's down to what you play and they were stupid to have us on the bill, because we're good."

All of which would lead you to believe that the Rats would be sympathetic to any support band who worked with them. Then why was Skrewdriver grousing outside the Music Machine in Camden the other night (after a variety of unpleasant events).

+THEY SAID that the Boomtown Rats had turned down the sound during Skrewdriver's set.

+THEY SAID that the Rats had asked them for £5 towards the use of the PA and then upped it to £10.

+THEY SAID that Bob Geldoff had slung a glass at one of their friends, from the stage.

Bob Geldoff checked out these accusations. "We were hiring the PA for £75," said Bob. "We agreed to pay £50 towards that, Skrewdriver were asked to pay £10 and 999 were asked to pay £15. Skrewdriver said they couldn't afford to pay £10, so we paid £5 of that. We lost money. And I made a point of apologising to them for the delay in getting a soundcheck."

"As for the sound, they had their own man doing the sound and if it was turned down it was because he didn't like them! We never went near the sound desk."

But more than any of this inter group row, the thing that upsets the Rats is the violence.

"We're not a punk band", said Bob. "And we hope to still be around when all the fashion progresses to something else."

Line up: Bob Geldoff (vocals), Simon Crowe (drums), Pat Cusack (bass), Gerry Cott (lead guitar), Johnny Fingers (keyboards) and Gary Roberts (rhythm guitar).

ROSALIND RUSSELL



BOOMTOWN RATS: not punks



PENETRATION: venom eyed Pauline