

Singing it from the heart

ELLEN FOLEY was sorry she couldn't speak any louder. Her voice had gone. Blame the British climate. Damp destroys the vocal chords don't you know that? Ellen does, but doesn't mind. Don't you know its fun living in the U.K. making records with The Clash?

"My voice always goes though. I don't know why, but it just seems to give out," she said in a soft seductive whisper. The New York accent showing definite signs of becoming Anglophiled.

"You really think so," she says incredulous. "I don't know. I suppose you do adapt to your surroundings though." It turns out Ellen is very good at adapting.

Just recently she's had to do a lot of that. Those precocious American attitudes towards music and living have been blown away.

The result of a brief encounter with Mick Jones of The Clash that followed the love at first sight cliché before becoming the intense, close relationship it is today.

It meant that Ellen decamped from her beloved New York city and began to see things she had never seen before through the blur of whirlwind promotional visits to London.

"I saw what real music was all about for the first time really when I came to London to be with Mick," insists the lady who first saw action with Meatloaf.

She doesn't know whether to be too impressed about that or not. "It was fun but the thing that sickens me about America is that they don't seem to have the same gut feel for music that you do in Britain."

"There is a real feeling here. There's so much going on. I tell you its changed my outlook completely. I think on the last album I was completely sheltered. I never really thought too much about music until I came here."

The results have been radical as you would expect them to be with The Clash and particularly Mick Jones helping out in the studio.

"Really when you look at things I have gone completely the other way to Nightout. I've changed all my ideas around. I'm a totally different person than the one I was a couple of years ago.

"Y'know I never expected to change like this but I guess everyone needs to. You look at things from a different perspective. You find yourself asking 'Why' a lot more. You don't take no for an answer."

Ellen had that tiny frail waif-like appeal. Big eyes, blonde hair. The Goldie Hawn of rock?

"I really resented being pushed as a sex symbol. I mean I understand what the record business is

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★ NOW here's your chance to win a copy of Ellen Foley's new album *Spirit Of St. Louis*. All you have to do is answer the questions below. The first five correct entries to be received before noon next Wednesday will win a copy.

1 Did Ellen Foley sing on *Bat Out Of Hell*?

2 Name her current record company.

Entries should be sent to Ellen Foley Album Competition, Liverpool Echo, P. O. Box 48, Old Hall Street, Liverpool L69 3EB. Normal Echo competition rules apply.



● Ellen Foley.

ROCK FILE
by Peter Trollope

about, that's why I want people to listen to me not because I have good boobs and a bum, which I don't anyway but because it's the real me."

It seems there is a lot of the real Ellen Foley in the new album *Spirit of St. Louis*.

"It took an awful lot of emotion out of me making that record. I think you can tell listening to it.

There is a naturally strong Clash influence through the Strummer-Jones songs but it's Ellens

interpretation which makes the real difference.

Instead of it becoming *Sandinista Vol. 4*, she goes her own way.

"I think anyone who wants to sing really has to sing from the heart. My heart may be a little confused right now living away from New York, but at the same time its probably the most exciting time of my life. I'm putting a lot in and getting a lot more out."

And that's what its like talking to Ms Foley. She's

a lady with a lot to say. If there were space we could have gone on about how she blames herself for being out of the country and allowing Reagan to get in, how the blacks are once more facing real oppression in America, and how she worries at night about El Salvador — "the next Vietnam", and how she's going back to the States soon to try and do something about it.

Sadly that will have to wait until another day. In the meantime try the *Spirit of St. Louis* — a stranger worth getting to know.