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weary tune". It happens to be a favourite of my own.

He will talk about Dylan, but a trifle guiltily. He has enormous respect for Dylan's reticence and feels vaguely disloyal about discussing him. "He will walk out of the room if you attempted to interpret his songs in his presence," he will tell you.

Like me, he worships Dylan. And, like Dylan, he worships Elvis Presley, one of the most important influences in the reshaping of the American pop idiom.

"I had a front-row seat at his 1970 Las Vegas concert. Everyone was there — Col Parker, Pat Boone. He was terrific. He sang protest and folk. I went on a total Presley trip, even came out in a gold suit and sang Presley. I got a lot of boos for that, but I was somehow trying to relate to acid rock and get away from the mainstream of what I had been doing. My disc, 'Gunslinger Carnegie Hall', features this aspect of my work."

Ohio-born Phil, who majored in journalism, became involved with the folk movement in 1961. Jim, of Jim and Jean, taught him to play the guitar.

He was singing with a group called the Sundowners when he

wrote his first song.

"It just came to me. All song writing is like a visitation to me."

After that he decided to quit and go on the stage.

He got a job for three months singing in bars with Bob Gibson, Blue Grass and the Smothers Brothers, then he was persuaded to try his luck in New York.

That was how he wound up in Greenwich Village in '61, and got mixed up with the folk revival.

"It was an incredible period and a very fertile one. I met Dylan, Paxton, Jack Elliot — you name it, they were there.

Pete Seeger was there, helping everybody out. Dylan would get up and say: 'This is a song I wrote this week', and immediately go into 'Masters of War'. Everything he did was to me magic.

"This led to the Newport Festival, Bluegrass Blues and the Balladeers. In '64 and '65 it all exploded. We got enormous audiences. The influence was tremendous politically. As you say, the movement had the effect of shaping the mentality of an entire generation.

"If I died tomorrow, I'd be happy to have lived through that period."

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