

Leon Russell has found Shelter.

Leon Russell's first album
Shelter Records
Pressing History
1970 to 1989



shelter records, hollywood, calif.

DISTRIBUTED BY BLUE THUMB RECORDS, INC.

A Shelter for Hits

NEW YORK — Shelter Records' Leon Russell and Denny Cordell were in New York last week to talk about Shelter, Joe Cocker's new conglomeration, Leon Russell and Shelter's first release, and for Leon to see a chiropodist. "His snakeskin boots got to him," explained Cordell.

Cordell and Russell are the two principles of Shelter and according to Cordell, Russell and he "are partners in everything we do." Cordell, who produced Cocker's past records, described how and why the switch from a four-man back-up group to a gigantic revue which at present includes 22 pieces in the band and 25 assorted people who "have come along in various capacities." This number excludes Mad Dogs and Englishmen's one dog and three children. Cocker had come over to the states for a rest and had tried to cancel a scheduled tour with the Grease Band with which "he had gone as far as he could," said Cordell.

Promoters, unions and immigration authorities wouldn't hear of the tour being cancelled and Russell was called upon

to put together a new group. He assembled the masses in six days (it took a full seven to put the universe on its feet) and no day of rest was included. The people assembled were all people Russell has known for sometime. He calls them "my musical pick to click."

Now that his own LP, which, as are all Shelter records, is distributed by Blue Thumb, is starting to sell he'll be touring on his own. With Joe Cocker's show, for which he plays piano and guitar, he felt a bit reticent about singing due to his policy of letting "the singer sing." His act may include a choir motif and "will undoubtedly be with people I know." As for his album, he says that he's "very pleased with it and people seem to like it."

Leon Russell didn't just pop on the scene out of nowhere. Aside from his work with Joe Cocker and Delaney and Bonnie (he's a "friend"), he goes back to sessions with the Byrds ("Mr. Tambourine Man"), Phil Spector ("everything between 'He's a Rebel' and 'You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling'") and with Herb Alpert. Easy listening in his background? "Word categories are for writers and program directors; music is music" is his comeback. He summed up his musical past which included playing with the Starlighters of Tulsa, Okla. (his home town), by stating, "I've never had trouble finding work."

Feels Good

Shelter is not his first experience in the administration end

of the record business. He disclosed that he was Vice President of Viva Records. As for the future, "This [Shelter] is going to be fantastic; I feel good about this."

Future Releases . . .

Cordell is now producing exclusively for Shelter with the exception of Joe Cocker. Future releases include LPs by Jackson Brown who is a singer, guitarist and writer; and Jim Horn, who played sax in Duane Eddy's band and on "Hummingbird" on the Leon Russell LP. Also coming from Shelter is an album by Claudia Linnear who, though she is neither a mad dog nor an Englishman, sings with the group. The label's first single will be "Roll Away the Stone" b/w "Hummingbird" by Leon Russell.

Leon Russell
SHE-1001



Monarch (promotional)



Columbia Terre Haute

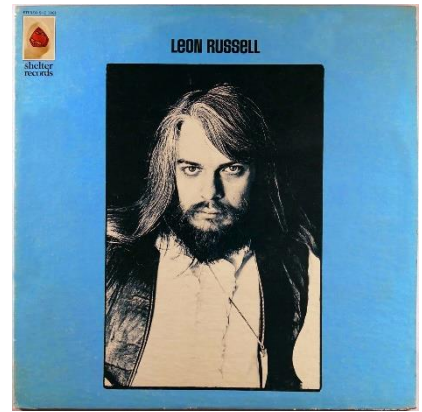
Leon Russell
BB March 28, 1970



Monarch



Columbia Santa Maria



POP
LEON RUSSELL—
Shelter SHE 1001 (5)

Another newcomer exponent of contemporary blues at its best is American performer/writer Leon Russell who debuts on Blue Thumb-distributed Shelter label. Russell has written for some of today's top record stars and his own virile and gravelly voice is well suited to his songs. Highlights include "A Song For You" and "Delta Lady."

In the issue dated September 12, 1970, Blue Thumb and Capitol Records jointly announced a manufacturing and distribution deal. As a result, Capitol would press and distribute all Blue Thumb records, including the Shelter label.

Capitol, Blue Thumb Enter \$, Distrib Pact

By ELIOT TIEGEL

LOS ANGELES — Blue Thumb is aligning with Capitol for distribution and financial backing after dissolving a similar arrangement with GRT. Capitol's company-owned dis-

tribution warehouses will pick up Blue Thumb's floor inventory at Columbia Records' three pressing locations, and Capitol's field salesmen will soon begin offering four new Blue Thumb packages by Love, Gabor Szabo, Joao Donato and the triumvirate of Buddy Guy, Junior Mance and Junior Wells. Also involved is product on the Shelter label, owned by Leon Russell and Denny Cordell, which Blue Thumb has been distributing.

Blue Thumb's distribution deal calls for Capitol to have

access to all the label's releases created during its first year and one-half of operation. Blue Thumb retains its masters and publishing interests.

Capitol will manufacture, merchandise and sell all Blue Thumb's material for distribution in the United States. Blue Thumb's international distribution remains with EMI (Capitol's parent) with two market exceptions: Japan, where King is the licensee, and Canada, where Polydor is the representative.

In return for using the Capitol organization (graphics, advertising, sales, promotion), Capitol receives a royalty on records sold at wholesale. This royalty increases on an escalating scale, based on Blue Thumb's sales performance.

Among the other independent labels distributed by Capitol are 1-2-3, Harvest, Invictus,

Apple, Chips, Trump and Crazy Horse.

Capitol's financial involvement helps Blue Thumb pay off longterm notes it signed with GRT in order to buy back its company.

The Bob Krasnow-headed company had formed a joint venture firm, Blue Thumb Sales Co., with GRT, a year and a half ago. In dissolving Blue Thumb Sales Co., the organization which manufactured and sold Blue Thumb Records, Krasnow and his two partners, Don Graham and Tommy Li-Puma, have taken on all accounts receivable and payable.

GRT remains Blue Thumb's tape duplicator and merchandiser until, according to Krasnow, it has received payment on the longterm notes.

Blue Thumb retains its company logo on all product. A tag line announces Capitol's distribution involvement.

Capitol's field force will be given an in-depth talk on Blue Thumb, when Blue Thumb's vice president Don Graham and Charlie Nuccio, Capitol's promotion vice president, visit the company's offices in New York Sept. 21, Atlanta Sept. 22, Chicago Sept. 23 and back here Sept. 24.

Capitol sent a creative team to Blue Thumb's Beverly Hills offices last week to develop the sight and sound presentation.

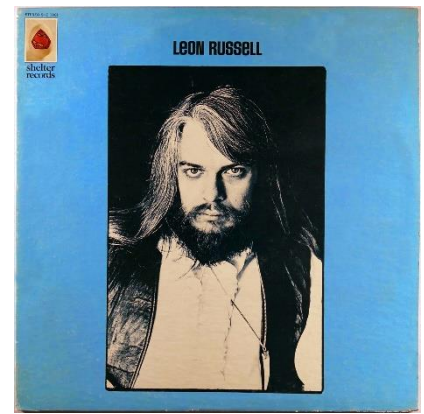
Like the other independent labels distributed by Capitol, Blue Thumb retains its autonomy, according to the agreement.

The Blue Thumb-Capitol arrangement, which includes distribution of Shelter Records, covers more than five years and includes a minimum of 16 albums over the span.

Leon Russell
SHE-8901

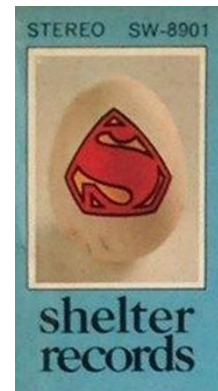


Leon Russell
c. fall 1970 to 1971



The Capitol issue of the album lacks the song “Old Masters,” which appears on the copies pressed by Columbia and Monarch. “Old Masters” was actually Bob Dylan’s “Masters of War,” sung to the tune of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

First Capitol pressings (1970-71) feature the Shelter “egg” logo at the left side, where it had appeared on the Blue Thumb release.

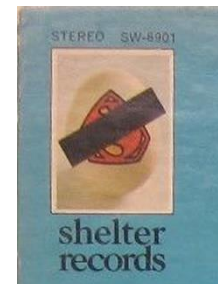


Later copies of *Leon Russell* with the SHE- prefix have the Shelter logo moved to the top of the label. During this run, Capitol changed the prefix from SHE- to its more familiar pricing code, SW-. As the transition took place in 1971, copies appeared on the market with the above (SHE-) labels and the new cover with the SW- prefix.

Leon Russell
SW-8901



Leon Russell
c. early 1972 to 1973

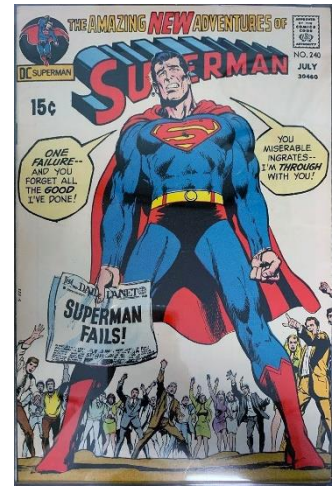


Shelter Sued By Superman

LOS ANGELES—National Periodical Publications, the publishers of Superman comic books, filed a \$2 million suit against Shelter Records in Federal Court here, seeking an injunction to compel Shelter to stop using the red and yellow S (in a 8-sided polygon seen on the chest of Superman's costume) as part of the recording company's visual logo.

National Periodical claimed that Shelter is infringing on a trademark registered as part of the Superman character since 1938 and that Shelter's graphic of the Superman-type S on an egg, which accompanied various promotion campaigns for Leon Russell and the Grease Band, implies Superman is endorsing these rock records.

The comic book publisher is asking \$2 million in punitive damages and destruction of all Shelter products bearing the Superman S symbol.



In early September, 1971, National Periodical Publications – the owners of the Superman trademark – announced that they were suing Shelter Records over the unauthorized use of Supie’s logo. Y’see, the Shelter “S” was simply the Superman “S” turned upside-down. Capitol responded by immediately “blacking out” the logo on all of the new printed labels. Within two months, Shelter had created a new “S” logo (in an egg) that didn’t look anything like Superman’s.

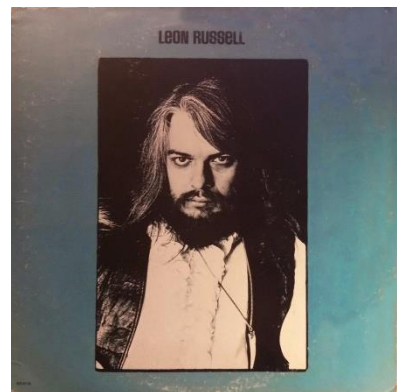
In late January 1974, the industry scuttlebutt ran with the information that Shelter Records would soon be moving away from Capitol and to MCA Records. That turned out to be true, and the Shelter back catalog soon found its way to MCA.

Looks as if Shelter Records is moving from Capitol Records, their current distributor, to MCA Records. Details will be announced soon...

Leon Russell SR-2118



Leon Russell September 1974 to 1976



The matrix numbers indicate a release date in September 1974. The MCA front cover does not have the Shelter logo on it but rather has the new catalog number by itself in the lower left corner.

On October 25, 1975, Leon Russell asked a court in Los Angeles to assist with the dissolution of Shelter Records, which was losing \$25,000 every month (by his account). Russell moved to Paradise Records, which obtained a distribution deal with Warner Brothers. However, Shelter continued to release records without him. Russell and his wife released a Wedding Album on Paradise in April.

Shelter, without Russell, announced in June an agreement for distribution by ABC Records. Two weeks later, they heralded this joint venture with a “wedding album” of their own.

Shelter To Be Distributed By ABC In U.S., Can.

LOS ANGELES — Shelter Records will be distributed by ABC according to a joint announcement made by Jerry Rubinstein, chairman of ABC Records, and Denny Cordell, president of Shelter Records. Shelter has signed a contract that licenses ABC to distribute all Shelter products in the United States and Canada, both releases and their catalog, which includes albums by Leon Russell, J.J. Cale, Willis Alan Ramsey, Mary McCreeary, Richard Torrance and Phoebe Snow among others.

New Product

New releases under the ABC/Shelter pact will include the debut LP from the Dwight Twilley Band and new albums from Shelter recording artists J.J. Cale, Tom Petty, Larry Hoferd, and Lyons and Clark. The first single release under the new contract will be Larry Hoferd's "Nobody Remembers The Ladies."

Staying In L.A.

Shelter Records will maintain their Los Angeles headquarters at 5112 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90027 and will continue to be under the direction of general manager Ron Henry.

"We're at ABC Records," Rubinstein said, "look forward to a long and prosperous association with Shelter Records. Their fine artists are a welcome addition to the ABC Records family and we are eager to work with gentlemen like Denny Cordell and Ron Henry."

OUR WEDDING ALBUM

ABC and Shelter Records proudly announce their new association with the release of the debut album by

The Dwight Twilley Band
Sincerely

SRL-52007

The album features their hit single, *I'm On Fire*, which was hailed by the San Francisco Chronicle as "possibly the most exciting debut single by an American rock band ever..."

The Dwight Twilley Band
And that's just for openers.



Leon Russell
SRL-52007

Leon Russell
October 1976



The album remained on Shelter/ABC for just over two years. At the end of January 1979, ABC sold out to MCA. This pushed the Shelter catalog back onto the MCA label.

ABC Buy Boosting Power

By ED HARRISON

LOS ANGELES—MCA's buy of ABC Records Wednesday (31) adds fuel to its aggressive drive toward a more dominant position among major branch operations.

If current talks with other potent independent labels including Philadelphia International, are implemented, MCA's market posture will be further strengthened.

These moves follow the aggressive pattern set by the company with the launch of its second label, Infinity, in the spring of last year and the creation of MCA Distributing Corp. last October as an entity separate from the labels.

Al Bergamo, president of MCA Distributing, believes that with the addition of ABC, it should rank MCA fifth behind CBS, Polygram, WEA and RCA in terms of overall branch operation size and volume.

He is projecting that MCA Distributing will triple its volume this year, bringing total sales to \$200 million. "It could be done now even without other deals that might be made," he says.

"We won't sign distribution deals for the sake of it. But we are interested in talking to anyone who makes sense," he says.

(Continued on page 14)

At some point during the year 1979, using covers that had been printed for ABC, MCA reissued the Shelter line onto its MCA Coral budget label.

Leon Russell
MCA-682



Leon Russell
1979



Less than a year later, MCA stopped using the Coral label for its Shelter reissues and put them out on the main MCA line, with the same catalog number.

Leon Russell
MCA-682



Leon Russell
1980

At the beginning of 1981, MCA absorbed Shelter, meaning that there would be no more new releases using the brand. The last album came out in February, and a single drawn from the album appeared shortly thereafter. MCA continued to release copies of *Leon Russell*, but notice that these no longer bear the Shelter Records name or logo on the label. That brings us to the end of the vinyl LP period.