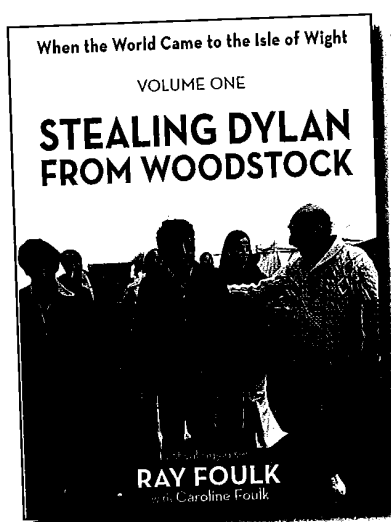


## When the World Came to the Isle of Wight Volume One: Stealing Dylan From Woodstock

by Ray and Caroline Foulk

(Medina Publishing Ltd)



Joint promoter of the three Isle of Wight festivals and much more besides, Ray Foulk has written this book with his daughter Caroline. A two-volume collection, this first volume looks at the small 1968 festival and Dylan and the 1969 festival, whilst Volume Two will be about the huge and often controversial 1970 event.

Published by Medina Publishing Ltd on May 20, 2015, the 312-page

hardback book tells

the story of the first two Isle of Wight festivals from a unique first-hand perspective. These extraordinary festivals were pioneering events and I for one would like to thank the Foulk brothers and their cohorts for their Herculean efforts.

As Ray Foulk states in his Prologue "This Volume is part personal memoir, part history of the 1968 and 1969 Isle of Wight Festivals, and a study of the role of the singular star of the latter occasion; how such an unlikely scenario unfolded and how the event was positioned in Bob Dylan's own extraordinary story."

In Chapter One, "Alfred Lord Tennyson", we quickly learn that the long standing information given by Judy Lewis to the authors of "Isle of Wight Rock" that: "There was no time [for the Dylans] to get to Farringford" is seemingly incorrect. According to Ray Foulk, the then owner of Farringford House – home of Alfred Lord Tennyson – Fred Poitín (of British holiday camp fame) "was among those Island elders passionately against the festival" and as such he refused to have Dylan visit the historic mansion, even though it was a hotel at the time.

Chapter Two, "Prospecting," takes us all the way back to Dylan's childhood, the Mesabi iron range and Hell Rust open pit mine. Foulk reveals that his family "had been wage slaves of the Derbyshire coal mines for generations" and then transports us back in time to learn about his family background including their move from Sutton Scarsdale, Chesterfield to Totland Bay on the Isle of Wight.

With Chapter Three we move on to the Isle of Wight Indoor Swimming Association and the efforts to provide the people of the island with an indoor swimming pool which in turn lead to plans for a fundraising event and the staging of the 1968 IoW Pop Festival. In Chapter Four, "To Hell and Back", we read about the festival itself.

With Chapter Five, "How About Bob Dylan?" we learn the about the nuts and bolts of how the 1969 festival began to take shape and how the brothers Foulk decided to go after the reclusive superstar Bob Dylan. As one might expect, the accounts are extremely detailed and full of first-hand facts: "A friend of Steve Ross introduced us to Ron Phillips, the main farmer involved," Foulk says. "We struck a very acceptable deal of £250 for the rental of 41 acres, with the £25 deposit payable within one month."

A few pages further on in Chapter Six, "Bob Wants to Meet You", Foulk outlines the cost of getting Dylan to the Isle of Wight. It has been documented before that Dylan's fee was \$50,000 and the Band's set would cost a further \$20,000. We also knew that Grossman requested that another of his acts, Richie Havens, should play for a fee of \$7,000 but here Foulk goes a little further into the costs. "In addition," Foulk says. "[T]here were airfares for the complete party, amounting to a further \$10,000. In all this came to \$87,000 (£725,000 in today's money). In addition, we were to pay for all accommodation at our end, including the country house and staff, and U.K. transport costs."

In Chapter Seven, "Seven-and-a-half Years", Foulk backtracks, looking at Dylan's time off the road from before the brothers tempted him to come and play on the Isle of Wight.

Chapter Eight, "Help Bob Dylan Sink the Isle of Wight", is an in-depth look at Dylan's arrival in Britain, and his time at Forelands Farm, whilst Chapter Nine, "We Cannot Control the Morals of 100,000 People", looks back in great depth at the first day festival.

Chapter Ten, "Serving the Master Well", deals with the main event on the Sunday and again there is a great deal of detail about the various performers. Here we discover that Fairport's Sandy Denny was in the press enclosure; something I was previously unaware of. In fact, it seems that she was "jostled in the stampede to get a seat for Dylan" and was discovered by Adrian Henri as she was departing the enclosure in floods of tears. Henri, founder of Liverpool Scene, the opening act on Sunday's bill, took Denny by the arm "put [his] elbows out and charged in with her", as he so poetically put it, "like opening time in Liverpool."

Later we discover that when Richie Havens and Tom Paxton were driven to their hotel after the concert the hotel manager refused to allow Havens and his band in because they were black! Foulk says that Tom Paxton immediately said that if they were not allowed to stay, then neither would he. The promoters eventually found somewhere else for the musicians to stay.

As the title suggests, Chapter Eleven, "Great to be Here, Sure Is", focuses on the historic "comeback" performance of the man himself but before that we get a lengthy rundown of The Band's set including a discussion / explanation regarding the infamous "delay". I'll let you read this for yourself but I was interested to read Ray Foulk's comments about the length of time it took the Pye Mobile people to set up the maze of new fangled microphones they used to capture Bob's set, the recording of which was of course released in 2013 as part of "Bob Dylan: Another Self-Portrait: Bootleg Series Volume

10". I've never seen this mentioned before but yeah, it makes sense to take this into account when discussing the delay!

Nearly "D" time now, and as Dylan waited anxiously to take the stage, Bob's chauffeur, Chris Colley, who was standing close by, later described how jumpy Bob was: "He was all ready to go on, with an acoustic guitar around his neck," Colley says. "It was a wide stage with two ramps. He was walking up and down there, with Sara hanging on to him, strumming his guitar in a manic and tuneless fashion. He seemed really anxious and Sara was comforting him. 'Bob, it's gonna be alright. They want to hear you. Really you're gonna be great.' Sara had her arm around him. It was really shocking, as he was such a big star."

This quote is followed by nineteen pages concerning Dylan's performance and a further sixteen pages of great (mostly previously unseen) assorted photographs.

The book is in fact absolutely littered with photos (black & white, tinted and full colour) and items of memorabilia.

The promoters' official photographer, Stephen Goldblatt, was granted exclusive access to capture the scene backstage and thus provides us with many never before seen photos including some of Dylan and of various Beatles wrapped in blankets! Extracts from Ray Foulk's "office workbook" are even included. One of the notes concerns the hire of Dylan's car. A Humber Super Snipe from Wight Motors, at £15 per week plus £6 or £7 for insurance. Great stuff! There are also

a number of photos of Dylan on and off stage that I have not previously seen.

The final pages recount some of the press coverage (national press and the music papers) and a brief look at the aftermath both for Dylan and for the festival promoters, Fiery Creations.

I very much wanted the recent Victor / Jacob Maymudes book, "Another Side of Bob Dylan", to be a winner, but it was mostly a letdown. I was therefore delighted by the quality of writing, information and entertainment provided by Ray and Caroline Foulk in their "Stealing Dylan From Woodstock" tome. My enjoyment may possibly have been amplified by my deep interest in the festival and also in the Foulk brothers' later events, most of which I attended. There are one or two typos / mistakes but I won't comment on these as such here because the pre-publication pdf that I received from the publisher is almost certainly an uncorrected proof.

Published June 4, 2015, "When the World Came to the Isle of Wight Volume One: Stealing Dylan From Woodstock" is now available to order. U.K. Price £21.99 including post and packing from [www.bobdylanisis.com](http://www.bobdylanisis.com) or by post to **ISIS Magazine**. By arrangement with the publisher, **ISIS** will have this book prior to the publication date and all our copies will be signed by Ray Foulk.

"When the World Came to the Isle of Wight: Volume Two: The Last Great Event" is due for publication in Autumn 2015.