March 12, 1999

Bob Ferguson

Route 7 Box 107

Philadelphia, MS 39350

Dear Mr. Ferguson,

I’m writing a long, two-part article on the production of country music for Tower Records’ magazine Pulse! It aims to orient readers historically and provide them with a context for understanding the recordings that they treasure. I would really like to talk with you, by phone, about your time at RCA. Twenty to thirty minutes is all I’m requesting. I’m interested in asking two sorts of questions. The first is theoretical. How did you understand your role as producer? The second is more practical. I’d like to hear about a few sessions that you produced. As you might expect, I’m especially interested in your work with Dolly Parton.

In the course of researching my article, I’ve spoken to a number of people: Pete Anderson, Chet Atkins, Thom Bresh, Tony Brown, Shelby Singleton, Blake Chancey, Jack Clement, Sid Feller, Tompall Glaser, Jerry Kennedy, Ken Nelson, Don Pierce, and Jerry Wexler. In the next couple of weeks, I’m planning interviews with Booker T. Jones, Billy Sherrill, Jim Ed Norman, James Stroud, and, maybe, Jimmy Bowen. I intend to develop the article that I’m writing into a book.

Still—and this is more fact than flattery—I need to include your comments for my piece to be complete. Could you phone me at (717) 771-4157—that’s my office phone here at Penn State York—and let me know if an interview is possible? If you’re willing to talk, you could leave me a convenient time to call and your phone number. Or you could tell me when to be in my office and ready for your call. If you’re not willing to talk, I’d appreciate you letting me know.

Thanks for considering my request. I greatly admire your work.

Sincerely,

Michael Jarrett