

Jack Dalton picks up the guitar in his Farmington Hills office. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

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He runs after that elusive hit

By LETHA D. WILLIAMS

Wearing jeans and a red plaid shirt, he cradles his guitar and writes anoth-

wearing peans and a red plaid shirt, wearing peans and a red plaid shirt, he cradles his guitar and writes another song. Singer-songwriter Jack Dalton is one of the Midwest's leading composers and and and the commercial music. But that doesn't satisfy his creativity. At 35, Dalton remains dedicated to an effort that began 19 years ago—writing the elusive hit song. In 1976, Dalton and producer Jeff Parsons founded "The Road Company, Inc.," a commercial production agency, hen, in Southfield, Last year they mean the production agency should be a song the son

productions.

But Dalton wants to write hit songs and he says it requires more than musical talent. Like winning the Lottery, it takes luck and persistence.

For 10 years the lean, curly haired musician pursued luck between Detroit and Los Angeles. Committed now to his partnership in "The Road Company," he remains in the Detroit area, writing,

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WITH SIX brothers and sisters, Dal-ton grew up entertaining. His sister, MaryAnn, was a club di-rector in the U.S. Army. She played USO shows and later married comedi-

rector in the US. Arm., was a consideration of the US. Arm. She played USO shows and the married comedian Tim Conway.

Dallon's other sister, Peggy, and a brother, Tommy, lead more private lives, but play musical instruments. His brother, Jerry, is a Canadian songwriter.

Dallon left his Dearborn home in 1960 with his remaining two brothers, Danny and Wally, Touring the West Coast, the trio called themselves "The Dalton Boys" like the old West outlaws. "We had a lot of talent," Dalton said. "We could have been as successful as the Kingston Trior." "The Dalton Boys" like the old West outlaws. "We had a lot of talent," Dalton said. "We could have been as successful as the Kingston Trior." "The Dalton Boys" like the old West outlaws. "The Dalton Boys" were inspired and encouraged in their talents. But the young trio wanted to record. "California club dates and guest spots on ABO flootenanny shows kept them working. However, the recording convening the way of the working the way the way the way was the west was the were we should be in the placement of our careers," Dalton said. "We couldn't have gone too much further except selling records. That was what we weren't doing."

DISCOURAGED, Dalton teamed up

DISCOURAGED, Dalton teamed up with writer-musician Gary Montgom-

ery. They returned to Detroit in 1900 and auditioned for Motown. To their amazement, they were signed as individual artists and writers and became the only two white performers on the label.

But Motown was storming the world with black singers like Diana Ross and

But Motown was storming the world with black singers like Dlana Ross and Stevie Wonder.

"They were not about to take the promotional money from Diana Ross and put it toward us," Dalton said.

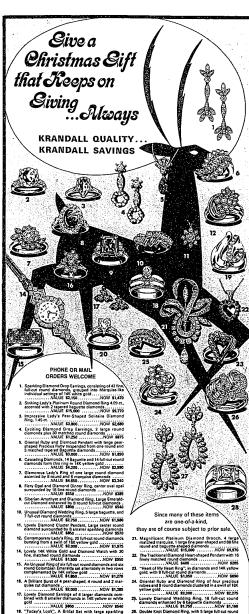
His only Motown release, "Twe Been Cheated," was aired hourly on CKLW before Ross' "I Hear A Symphony." Dalton's soing was hit-bound. "It just never made it," he said.

After a frustrating year at Motown, Dalton and Montgomery returned to Los Angeles and signed briefly with Whitewell Records. Later, they secured a contract with Robbins Publishing House as writers and singers. Calling themselves "The Colours," they wrote and recorded their first about Robbins soid it to Dot Records. The Colours, "and diseast raked the two companies. "The Colours" second album was equally doomed.

"In those days the marketing men in those days the marketing men din't want to see a second album by a (Continued on page 4C)

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