

BIOGRAPHY



GO BUY IT.

THE GUITARS OF ELVIS

A step-by-step breakdown of the playing techniques of Scotty Moore, Hank Garland, and James Burton. Accompanying audio presents each song in stereo-split with full band backing. Songs include: Heartbreak Hotel • Hound Dog • Jailhouse Rock • and more!

Read more

*Inventory #HL696507
Book/CD \$19.95 (US)*

James Burton

Best known as Elvis' guitarist in the later years, James Burton created a blistering Telecaster® rockabilly style in the early days of rock 'n' roll playing with teen idol Ricky Nelson.

While still a teenager himself in Shreveport, Louisiana, Burton got a great gig playing with the Louisiana Hayride, a famous country music radio show of the day. He had gotten a Telecaster when they were still a novelty at the age of 12. His first studio session was playing lead on a song that would become not only a hit but a classic - Dale Hawkins' "Suzy Q" in 1956. Shortly after that session he was discovered by Ricky Nelson, who made Burton his guitarist for the next eight years.

Playing on TV with Nelson, Burton inspired guitarists nationwide with his wild string-bending techniques, and developed his trademark "chicken pickin'" that combines country and rockabilly elements.

After his long stint with Ricky Nelson, Burton became a Hollywood session man, playing with stars like Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, Sammy Davis Jr., Dean Martin, and many others, as well as other studio aces like Tommy Tedesco and Barney Kessel.

In 1969 he got the call from The King, and became the guitarist for the TCB (Taking Care of Business) Band that stayed with Elvis through the Las Vegas years until his death in 1977.

Although perhaps overshadowed by his work with Elvis, Burton's other accomplishments include session work for many other stars over the years, including John Denver, Merle Haggard, Emmylou Harris, and even Elvis Costello. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2001 in the Side-man category.

Click below for a James Burton article from Fender Frontline:

GO READ THE FULL STORY. 

GO BACK TO TOP.