

Doyle Dykes is one of the great guitar players of our time. His melodic approach and great technique are only mirrored by his heart for people. He spreads a great light on us, and through his stories and adventures in this book, he leads us to the Source.

*Larry Thomas – CEO, Fender Musical Instrument Corporation*

Doyle ministers with a humble pastor's heart and a highly skilled musician's hands. He's played at several of our Christian Musician Summit Conferences over the years and I'm constantly amazed as I watch the audience's jaws just drop as they realize the talent they're witnessing. Doyle is a remarkable performer and an effective minister, simply by being himself!

*Bruce Adolph – Producer, Christian Music Summit Conferences; publisher, Christian Musician magazine*

From the mysteries of God to the Lights of Marfa, no one tells a great story quite like Doyle. This book is filled with true stories you will want to read again and tell others – stories that light your soul, light your path, and warm your heart.

*Dan Reiland – Executive Pastor, 12 Stone Church, Lawrenceville, Georgia*

Doyle has played at Saddleback more than any other guest artist in history. He is an amazing guitarist and has impacted thousands of musicians and non-musicians with his music. He is also a man of deep faith and a master storyteller. *The Lights of Marfa* is a compelling book that will capture your imagination and inspire your faith and love for God.

*Rick Muchow – Pastor of Worship, Saddleback Church*

Our pilgrimage on this earth is filled with divine appointments all too often unperceived because of the static and pace of life makes us miss the vertical. Wonderfully, Doyle portrays how a loving heavenly Father stoops down and brings LIGHT to our daily experiences. Thank you, Doyle, for this delightful collection of encounters lit by His presence. I will read it again and again.

*Joe Focht – Pastor, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia*

There is so much love in this book, so many wonderful tales and so much inspiration, not only for musicians, but also for fathers, sons, and husbands everywhere. Doyle finger-picks stories from his life with as much alacrity as from the strings of his guitar – a treat for all with an appreciation of music and life. Just as his music lifts hearts worldwide – so too now his words, with a wealth of inspirational stories from his extraordinary life. And as I say when I watch him play – I can't fathom how he just did that!

*Lord Henry Lytton Cobbold – Screenwriter, producer, and occupant of Knebworth House, Hertfordshire, England*

# THE Lights OF Marfa

**One of the World's Great  
Guitar Player's Amazing  
Encounters with God**

## DOYLE DYKES



**Moody Publishers  
CHICAGO**



Doyle Deluxe model  
(DDX) Taylor guitar

## CHAPTER 2



### Why the Guitar, Doyle?

**I've been asked this question many times,** often on live television and radio shows around the world (secular and Christian). Whether I'm on the *Mark & Brian Show* with Mark Thompson and Brian Phelps at KLOS in Los Angeles (one

of the most popular shows in the country), the *Mitch Albom Show* on WJR in Detroit, the *Steve & Johnnie Show* on WGN in Chicago, or a radio station in Shanghai, my answer is always the same. So this is my story.

As a boy I was raised in a Christian environment in my hometown of Jacksonville, Florida. Church was the center of our lives, aside from music. We had church morning and evening on Sunday, prayer meeting on Wednesday nights, and then youth service on Friday nights. The youth service was called Y.P.E. or Young People's Endeavor (how hip!!!!), and everyone young and "otherwise" attended. Also, we had "Revival Meetings" at least once or twice a year that went on every night and sometimes lasted for weeks. Except for the music, which

was my favorite part, as far as I was concerned going to church mainly meant missing *Lassie* and Disney on Sunday nights. My



AND HERE THEY ARE... THE BUBBA DYKES FAMILY!  
ME, MOM, DAD, AND AUBREY.

grandfather was the choir director at our church for over thirty-three years. I really loved him and would go and help him clean the church on Saturdays as he was also the janitor. They didn't have associate pastors and worship leaders in those days, so that's how he got paid.

Sometimes they'd do really cool things like a passion play at Easter or other drama programs around Christmas and such. I remember my uncle Ronnie Dykes coming over to produce such a play for Easter service. There would be this guy (Brother Udell Jump) propped up on a cross inside the baptistery, and when it came time for the thunder and lightning, Uncle Ronnie would run over and bang on the bass notes of the grand piano with the sustain pedal pushed down, and someone else would sneak up close to Brother Udell with an Instamatic camera and try to get as many flash cubes to go off as they could for the lightning effect. You could hear a lot of clicks from the camera because those flash cubes didn't always work. We'd sit and giggle and then after church we'd all go up to the piano and try to make thunderous sound effects like Uncle Ronnie did. That was pretty cool.

Soon after that my brother, Aubrey, and I would play "Jesus on the cross" at home. It was one of our favorite games for a while. Mom's clotheslines were held up by two T-shaped poles in the backyard and we'd wrap our arms around the top poles. I remember one day telling Aubrey it was his turn to be Jesus and to shut his eyes and pretend he was dead. Then, we normally would take a stick or a broom handle and act like it was a spear and pretend to thrust it in his side, only one time I picked up two handfuls of rotten plums lying on the ground and threw them at him. He proceeded to chase me with a rope when I fell over our homemade go-cart and hit my head on the driveway, giving myself a concussion . . . and that's when I started playing the guitar! HA! Well, not exactly.

**In June of 1965 our pastor, Rev. F. L. Braddock, announced that we were having a Summer Revival.** This was the time that a little lady named "Minnie" Irene Baxter came to our church to conduct the revival in place of her late husband. She had a presence and persona that communicated well with people, especially the young people. Over fifty young people gave their hearts to Jesus in her two-week revival. I was one of those people as well as my brother, Aubrey. "Sister" Baxter spoke in such a way that a child could understand. I was eleven years old but I knew in my heart that something was



STICK 'EM UP! WE GOT NEW COWBOY DUDS  
EVERY CHRISTMAS. THOSE AREN'T EARRINGS  
IN AUBREY'S EARS...THEY'RE HIS PISTOLS!  
HEY, CHECK OUT THE TV AND THE STEREO SPEAKERS!



1994—My first Taylor  
20th Anniversary  
Rosewood

## CHAPTER 5

# A

### A Word from an Outlaw

**A lot of people never knew that I was a pastor** of a small church in Florida. I've been sort of "undercover" for the Lord, I suppose, although I'm certainly not ashamed of that. These were some of the best and most meaningful years of my life.

My copastor then was Roy Nail, who is still a pastor to me and confident prayer partner with me to this day.

During this time certain people came into my life who were critical components in what essentially took me to the place where I am today. The funny thing about all that is I didn't have a clue! I was so wrapped up in my little church and was totally enjoying not having to travel, owning a lawn mower, fishing a little . . . whatever I chose. Except for those two years when Rita and I were married right after leaving the Stamps Quartet, I had been traveling since I was in high school, when I was part of The Bubba Dykes Family, and Jack Fowler and the Crusaders, playing in churches. It was good to go home on a Sunday afternoon and enjoy my family.

guitar they'd ever had. A couple of weeks before the DDSM guitar was introduced, I was in Savannah, Georgia, conducting a clinic for Taylor. I had no idea until after the show that Al and Annie Outlaw were in the audience. After the show, I remember them coming up and Annie just looked me right in the eyes and said, "Do you remember what I told you years ago when we went to your church?" (To tell you the truth, I had forgotten what she had told me on that spring day in 1989 standing in our dirt parking lot.) Annie said, "I told you so!"

Then, good ole Al was still saying, "Yeah, I remember Annie telling you all this . . . I told you she knows how to hear from God!"

That was the last time I ever saw Al, as he's now with the Lord. I'll never forget these two as they were the nicest "Outlaws" I'd ever met.

Since that time at my church, I've been around the world and have indeed been "backed" or supported by some of the leading manufacturers in the music industry! I've worked with Bob Taylor to develop his short-scale guitars as well as two different types of signature guitar strings with the GHS Corporation. I continue to search for new innovations that perhaps will help people – including me – to play and sound better. I also try to encourage others to play and use their gifts to bless others. I'm blessed to continue to promote these companies who have been so good to me and who have genuinely made a difference in music.

People who are keen to listen and obey God are sometimes the ones you least expect it from and sometimes at a time when you least expect to hear it! All I know is that I saw the lights of confirmation, foresight, and encouragement from an "Outlaw" named Annie . . . and it changed my life!



## **FAVORITE SCRIPTURES FOR THIS CHAPTER**

*Proverbs 8:12*

"I, wisdom dwell with prudence,  
and find out knowledge of witty inventions." (KJV)

*First Chronicles 16:33 (KJV)*

"Then shall the trees of the wood  
sing out at the presence of the LORD,  
because he cometh to judge the earth."

*Ephesians 3:20-21*

"Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of)  
the [action of His] power that is at work within us,  
is able to [carry out His purpose and] do  
superabundantly, far over and above all that we  
[dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers,  
desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams] –  
To Him be glory in the church and  
in Christ Jesus throughout all generations  
forever and ever. Amen (so be it)." (AMP)



## CHAPTER 15



### My Personal British Invasion

**If you were around during the 1960s,** you'll remember that the whole Beatles experience blew across the Atlantic like a tidal wave directly from the shores of England. Their hairstyles, their fashionable clothes, their pointed boots,

their unusual guitars (they played German instruments like Paul's Hofner bass, and they made the American-made Rickenbacker 12-string famous) and VOX amplifiers, and their English accents set them apart from any other entertainers—including Elvis. AM radio was huge, and WAPE in Jacksonville, Florida, (The Big Ape) aired their music most all of the time. Plus, they had just played on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, and that was about as incredible as life could get.

But as you know by now, I was raised in a conservative Christian home and our entire lives were centered around our church, so to us the Beatles were like aliens from another planet. The closest thing to us seeing a “foreigner” where I grew up was watching a group of French sailors

walking down the street while in port from the shipyards a few blocks from our house. Europe wasn't merely another country or continent . . . to us it was like going to the moon! So even though a lot of people thought they were cool and talented, my folks wouldn't have any part of their revolution. We felt they were infidels without God and without any real purpose.

**T**

**The thought came to me that I was forty-four years old and had never owned a Beatles album.**



It shouldn't surprise you that my dad wasn't past having a little fun at their expense. I remember gas stations with their "gas wars" offering a black-and-white photo of the band and a cheesy molded plastic "Beatle wig" with every fill-up. Even though he didn't seem to care for their music, he couldn't pass that up—he would take all our guests into the kitchen where he would jokingly show them the Beatles' photo tacked inside the cabinet, explaining how it would "keep the beetles out of the cabinet." Then he would put on that old cheap-looking plastic wig that he got from the gas station. It was awful looking but he thought it was funny. We all did!

That's why we didn't pay too much attention when the Beatles came to Jacksonville on September 11, 1964—which was the day after Hurricane Dora hit our city. They still played to 23,000 people in 45 mph winds at the Gator Bowl—but we were more focused on dealing with the cleanup after the storm. We went without electricity for several days and actually stayed at our church since they'd opened it up as a storm shelter. It almost seemed eerie how such a violent storm hit our community at the same time the most popular rock band in the world came to our city.

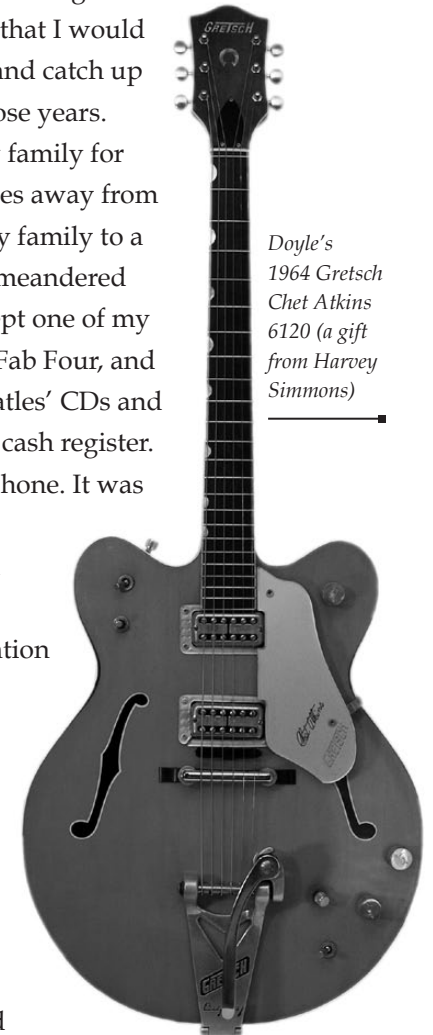
Now, let's move up to 1998. The thought came to me that I was forty-four years old and had never owned a Beatles album. I had

just performed a concert in St. Petersburg, Florida, and was on my way home. I was trying to make it past the Georgia line as I was on my way home for a couple of days and anxious to see my family. The only thing was, I was so obsessed by not having ever owned a Beatles album that I pulled over to an all-night Walmart store in Lake City, Florida, and circled the parking lot about midnight. Then I decided that I obviously needed a "support group" and got back on the interstate, on my way home once again.

However, I was determined that I would buy every Beatles CD available and catch up on what I'd missed out on all those years.

The next afternoon I met my family for dinner in Chattanooga a few miles away from our home. After dinner I took my family to a local record store. We all sort of meandered about doing our own thing, except one of my daughters helped me locate the Fab Four, and soon I had an armload of the Beatles' CDs and was looking for Rita to go to the cash register. Just then I got a call on my cell phone. It was my producer Larry Hamby from Windham Hill / BMG Records in California. He said, "Hey Doyle, we're putting together a compilation album of all Beatles songs called *Here, There and Everywhere*, and I've recommended that you find one of your favorites and record it for the album."

There I was holding two armloads of Beatles records (or CDs) and for a moment I was speechless. I was looking around



*Doyle's  
1964 Gretsch  
Chet Atkins  
6120 (a gift  
from Harvey  
Simmons)*

Then, he took me outside to the front of the building and showed me the “Wall of Fame” – bricks that had names inscribed in each of them. The centerpiece of the wall was a plaque describing the wall and its purpose and a bit of the history of the Cavern.



**I thought he was taking me out of the place to scold or ridicule me—instead he honored me.**

Around the plaque were the names of musicians and bands such as the Beatles, of course, with a brick for John, Paul, George, and Ringo, and then others like Oasis, Chuck Berry, the Rolling Stones, John Lee Hooker, the Hollies, the Shadows, Stevie Wonder, and many more. He explained the entire idea of the Wall of Fame and how it began. He also explained that the people who were honored were not only people who had played at the Cavern, but that they also made a “mark” or influence on the people through their performances there.

I thought it was very interesting but unusual that he took me there at the time he did, right as I was about to meet the folks there. It was almost as if he couldn’t wait to tell me about it. Then, he looked me right in the eyes and said, “We all agree that you deserve to have your name up there too!”

I couldn’t believe my ears. I thought he was taking me out of the place to scold or ridicule me – instead he honored me. There was actually no “invasion” but an “invitation” into this world that had always seemed so foreign to me in more ways than one. This was so far beyond my thoughts it’s hard to describe even to this very day (Ephesians 3:20).

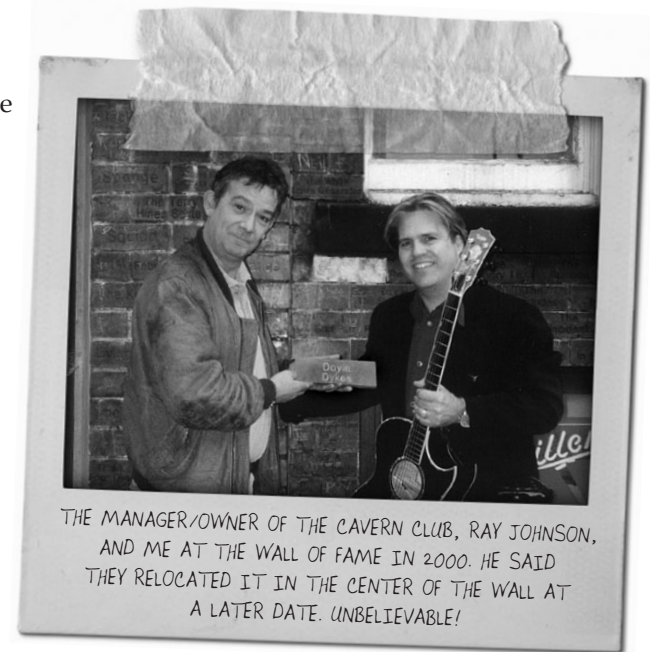
The next day before we left, we were taken on a bus tour called “the Magical Mystery Tour,” which was owned by the same people who now own the Cavern Club. The tour took us to the childhood homes of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and

Ringo Starr and to some of the places that inspired their songs, such as Eleanor Rigby’s home and church, and Strawberry Fields (which was a private school). We could see everything Paul McCartney was seeing when he penned the song “Penny Lane” as we rode down that very street – such as the fish and chips shop, the bank, and the fire station. It was actually quite enjoyable. We saw the humble beginnings where these “kids” would get together and write songs . . . the songs that took America and the rest of the world by storm.

I also saw the place where John’s mother was killed by a car as she was crossing the road after visiting her son at the home of her sister, “Mimi,” who raised John as her own son. I never knew this until I was at the very place where it happened. You never know where people come from and what they’ve gone through in life.

Oh yes, I remember the controversial words of John Lennon about Christianity and the Beatles being “more popular” than Jesus Christ. He apologized for that later, but the damage was

done to many of us Bible-belters in the South. This caused such a disturbance that there were record burnings and their images were burned in effigy. I would be a



**One other “Beatles experience” happened** when I stayed in a small hotel called the Regent in Doncaster, England, where “the boys” once stayed. The room had never been redecorated. Even the drapes and wallpaper had never been changed. There were still the same four small beds in the room. The Beatles had just hit the charts and had to be carried away secretly in an armored truck to divert the crowds. The hotel people told me that the night the Beatles stayed there they had opened the show for Roy Orbison, and the story goes he wouldn’t allow them to open for him again. They had become the big draw, although the Beatles so admired Roy Orbison and were no doubt thrilled to be onstage with him. However, that night was the last time they opened a show for him or anyone else. Cool experience!

I’ve also been to Knebworth House, which was the largest rock venue in Europe, hosting festivals with the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, and even the boys from Jacksonville, Lynyrd Skynyrd, who were a huge hit at Knebworth. Lord Henry Lytton Cobbold and his lovely wife, Martha, and their family have been a blessing to me. The estate has been in his family since 1491. I wrote a song for their house called “Knebworth Dream,” featured on their DVD for their house tours. I recorded it in their five-hundred-year-old barn, which is now a studio. I made a DVD called *Live Sessions* and taped “Knebworth Dream” in the same room where Michael Keaton and Kim Basinger were in the dining hall as it was portrayed as Bruce Wayne Manor in the movie *Batman*. Winston Churchill had painted a picture of the room and it was displayed behind me. Knebworth House was one of his favorite places to visit.

I also recorded a song I wrote for Robert Wilson’s home and especially dedicated it to his wife, Mary, called “At Swangleys Farm.” Each year I play at their local church just down the road for the Evensong service. In the beginning there were only a few people, but each year it has grown to a full house of people who even come up from London, many of whom are involved in the

music industry. So God has blessed me with friendships and opportunities that I never dreamed I would ever see.

I’ve also been to Scotland and Ireland many times. The first time I went to Belfast, I was in a hotel lobby just across the street from the airport. The concierge approached me and asked quietly, “The manager thinks she recognizes you. Could you please tell me your name?” I told him and he responded, “Who, sir? Okay, thanks, I’ll tell her.” My daughter Haley asked what he wanted and I told her that he thought the manager had recognized me. She thought that was pretty cool since we’d never been to Belfast before. However, I told her I believed they thought I was someone else. She said, “Oh Dad, they probably saw you on that musician channel or something.”

I said, “No, Haley, I believe they thought I was Meat Loaf.” I’ve actually gotten that before. She insisted they knew who I was!

A few minutes later we were driven downtown to the Belfast BBC (British Broadcasting Company) radio studios. As we were on our way, Haley burst into laughter in the taxi. I asked what on earth was so funny and she pointed to a huge sign on the side of a building that said, “Meat Loaf Is Coming to Belfast!”

That night as we were leaving the venue (ironically in front of the docks where the *Titanic* was built), the taxi driver randomly turned to the host of our event and asked, “Isn’t that Doyle Dykes the guitar player?” When they told me that later, I didn’t believe them. In fact, I didn’t believe them for a couple of days. It was told to me that a UK channel called Sky TV had been running some videos of me. Astonishing!

**For several days some people had warned us not to talk about “religion” in Belfast.** In fact, so many people had mentioned it that Haley got worried about it and I told her how my old friend Rev. Danny Drake (a pastor I had worked with in the ’80s) once told me that the Holy Spirit was a gentleman and that He knows how to work in the right situation without offending people.

That's not to diminish the work of the Holy Spirit to convict, but it is His work—not ours. I told Haley to "just be yourself," as I was going to do, and the Lord would take care of the rest.

When we got into the studio of the BBC, the afternoon deejay was a most interesting-looking chap. He had tattoos and piercings and that cool Irish musical accent and had the energy of a teenager. "All right, Doyle, you've played U2, and Grand Ole Opry stuff . . . we heard you also play sacred music on the guitar. What's that like?" Haley looked at me and cracked a smile, and I said we'll be glad to show you. I didn't say a word but just began to play "Amazing Grace" and He showed up once again but this time on national radio that was broadcast all over Ireland. Haley began to sing and when we finished, the deejay was rubbing his arms as he said, "Whoa . . . That was very fantastic. I wish you people could feel what I feel in the studio today!" He had goose bumps all over his tattoos and you could definitely sense the presence of the Lord there that day.

Through my personal British invasion, I saw the reality that these "aliens" called the Beatles were really just kids whose outlet in life was music—just like mine was. They even came from the same kind of port city. I saw the lights of forgiveness toward these musicians whom I'd never met but who had influenced me in my guitar playing. And I've made lifelong friends who live in castles and farmhouses; I've played to kids who have lived a lifetime by the time they've reached their late teens. They stole my heart.

Because of the impact these folks have made on my family, even my grandson's name is William Lennon Brown—known as "Lenny." The British "invaded" my life, and I'll always be grateful for that intrusion.

*To watch Doyle play "Birmingham Steele," which he started writing in Tennessee but finished when he got to England, pop in your DVD or go to*

[www.doylelykes.com/tlom.htm](http://www.doylelykes.com/tlom.htm)



## SOME OF MY FAVORITE BRITISH EXPERIENCES

Camden Market; Knebworth House; the Lake District and Chatsworth; the city of Bath; York; Cambridge; the Borders and the Highlands of Scotland; Devon County; the music district of Dublin; Belfast; London and the theatres in the West End.

## FAVORITE SCRIPTURES FOR THIS CHAPTER

*Philippians 4:13*

"I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency]." (AMP)

*Matthew 7:3-5*

"And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?  
Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye?  
First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."



**Guitar Stuff** . . . Most of the guitars I use on the road are short scale 24 7/8 inches. I fly them around in the original Taylor cases with Colorado Case Co. covers. I use Shubb capos.

### SOME OF MY FAVORITE GUITARS ARE

Taylor Doyle Dykes Signature Models. Currently I have the three original prototypes. I also have the Desert Rose DDSM, The DDSM Nylon, The DDSM Anniversary, and several working models I use on the road.

A Del Vecchio I got on a missions trip in Brazil and a Del Vecchio copy designed for Rose Morris, UK, under my pal Robert Wilson.

I bought it at Guitar Guitar, Glasgow, Scotland.

A Gibson L-5CESN (which was a gift from my wife, Rita).

A black Gibson L-4 customized for my dad, "Bubba."

I gave it to him for his seventieth birthday.

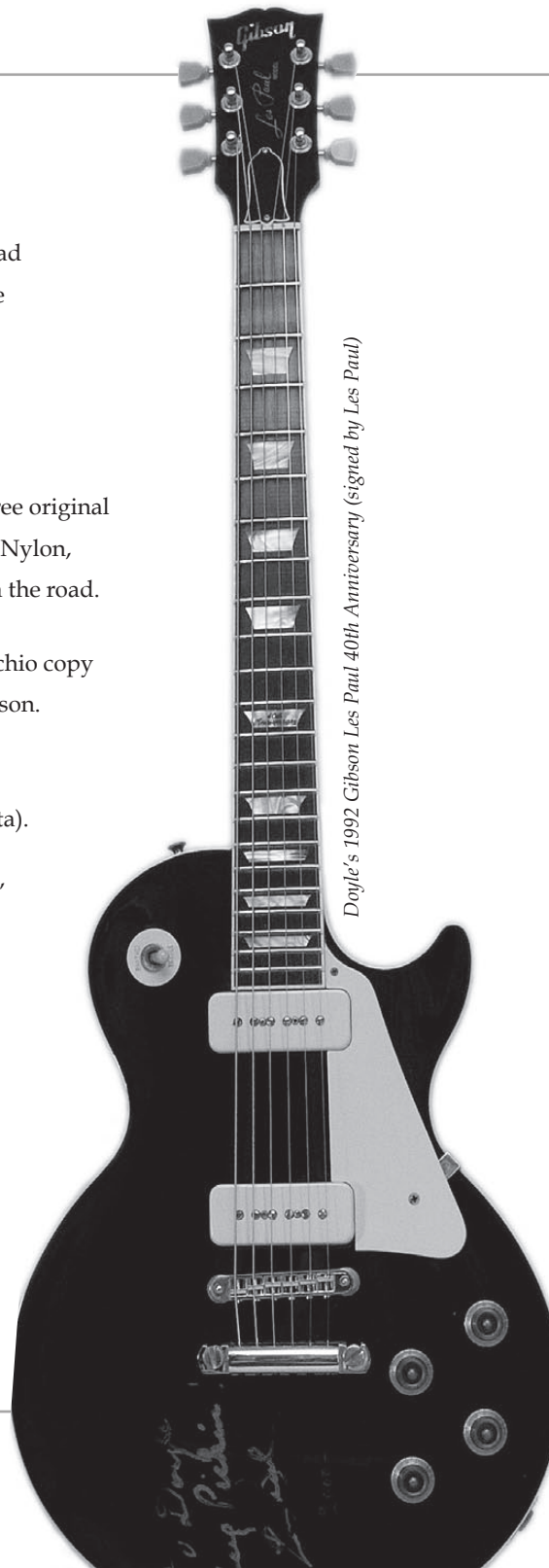
Mom gave it back to me after he passed away.

A Gibson Chet Atkins C.E. that was Chet's personal guitar and his gift to me.

A couple of Gretsch 6120s from the '60s that were a gift from one of my childhood guitar heroes

Harvey Simmons. I always admired them when I was a kid going to his barbershop.

Harvey would cut your hair, then sit and pick you a tune! I also own a 1958 Gretsch 6120.



*Doyle's 1992 Gibson Les Paul 40th Anniversary (signed by Les Paul)*



Three R. Taylor guitars. (6- and 12-string models)

My original 20th Anniversary Taylor . . . and another 20th, a personal gift from Bob Taylor.

30th Anniversary Taylor Grand Concert

Taylor Electrics (solid body, T-3s, T-5s)

Les Paul 40th Anniversary (signed by Les)

A custom Presentation Taylor Brazilian (First guitar Taylor ever gave me)

James Burton Tele<sup>1</sup> — a gift from James Burton

A couple of old Fender Telecasters ('50s and '60s)

A very early '50s Gibson ES-5

A Kirk Sand electric nylon string guitar (Doyle Dykes Laguna Sand model)

### STRINGS

GHS<sup>2</sup> . . . always

### AMPS

Rivera Sedona<sup>3</sup> and Venus 33. (I have several Sedona and Sedona lite amps, which are my signature amps.) Music Man RD 50s and RD 65, and a 1958 Magnatone amplifier