

# contents

list of illustrations ix

**Prologue: Round Midnight** 5

1921–1942 **Say Goodbye to Walker Smith Jr.** 11

1943–1944 **Sugar Ray's Uniform** 55

1945–1946 **Esquire Men** 99

**A Lovely Setup for the Old Man** 137

1947 **Killer** 155

1942–1951 **An Opera in Six Brutal Acts** 185

1951 **Around (a Part of) the World in Fifty Days** 267

1952 **Dreams** 305

1953–1954 **The Very Thought of You Onstage** 329

1954–1956 **Greatness Again** 349

1960–1962 **Battling** 363

1963–1966 **Autumn Leaves** 383

1967–1989 **Saving All Those Walker Smith Juniors** 397

**Epilogue** 409

acknowledgments 415

source notes 419

selected bibliography 421

notes 427

index 443