CLASSIC COUNTRY &

LONESOME 7-7203"

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- 1. This Ole House 2. Blue Blue Day 3. A Little Birry
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FEVER THAN WINE 5. SAN ANTONIO ROSE 7. MY LAST DATE (WITH YOU)

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10. GONNA FIND ME A BLUEBIRD ALABAM

12. DON'T LET ME CROSS OVER 18 EASY LOVING

14. THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER ODE TO BILLIE JOE



STUART

THIS OLE HOUSE STUART HAMBLEN

Music and lytics by Stuart Hamblen.
RCA Victor 5739 (1934) No. 2 (Bountry), No. 26 (Pop.)
Originally Recorded Prior to 1972. All Rights Reserved by BMG Music, Courtesy of The RCA Records Label Nashwile.

On a hunting trip in the High Sterras, former actor and Texas cowboy STUART HAMBLEN happened upon a grizzled prospector frozen to cleath in his cabin. There was also evidence that a family had lived there. Hamblen grabbed a brown bag and quickly began jotting down the lyrics to This Ole House. About 30 minutes later a country classic was born. Although Hamblen's version crossed over, it was Rosemary Cloonev who put up the huge pop chart numbers.

2 BLUE BLUE DAY DON GIBSON

Music and lyrics by Don Glosen.
RCA Victor 7910 (1956) hs. 1. (Jounnty), No. 20 (Pop).
Originally Recorded Prior to 1972. All Rights Reserved by BMG Music, Courtesy of The RCA Records Label Nashwile.

At his first RCA session in 1957, singer-songwriter **Don Gibson** (along with producer Chet Alkins) went for a real hillbilly sound with fiddles and steel guitar. When nothing clicked hitwise, Alkins took matters into his own hands. He ditched the whiny strings and replaced them with a pop-oriented ensemble of guitars, keyboards and background vocals (by the Jordanaires). **Blue Blue Day**, recorded months before Gibson's smash **Ob Lonesome Me**, followed it to the top of the country charts.

3 A LITTLE BITTY TEAR BURLIVES

Music and lyrics by Hank Cochran.

Decca 31330 (1962) No. 2 (Country), No. 9 (Pop)

Courtesy of MCA Records under license from Universal Music Enterprises.

A true American icon, **Burl Ives** was a folklorist, author, Oscar-winning actor (*The Big Country*) and songwriter whose recording career received a boost in the early '60s when he was marketed as a country artist. Ives learned **A Little Bitty Tear** from a recording by Ray Sanders. He liked the song but thought the tempo should be slower to let the lyrics speak. **A Little Bitty Tear** did the trick as a single and appeared on the album **The Versatile Burl Ives!**

4 IT KEEPS RIGHT ON A-HURTIN' JOHNNY TILLOTSON

Music and lyrics by Johnny Tillotson.

Cadence 1418 (1962) No. 4 (Country), No. 3 (Pop)

Courtesy of Barnaby Records, Inc., by arrangement with Celebrity Licensing Inc.

JOHNNY TILLOTSON was part of the pack of pretty-boy teen idols who emerged in the late '50s after Elvis Presley and other "dangerous" rockers had temporarily left the building. Tillotson grew up as a fan of Hank Williams and Eddy Arnold, and their influences are apparent in *It Keeps** Right On A-Hurtin," which Tillotson wrote after the death of his father. He later charted with pop-country versions of hit songs by Hank Williams and Willie Nelson, among others.

5 YOU'RE THE REASON BOBBY EDWARDS

Music and lytics by Bobby Edwards, Fred Henley, Mildred Imes and Terry Fell. Crest 1075 (1961) No. 4 (Country), No. 11 (Pop) Courtesy of King Records.

Popular music has an ample supply of enigmatic artists. Alabama-born **Bobby Edwards** (whose true identity is shrouded in mystery) recorded with the Four Young Men for several small labels before **You're the Reason** broke. Edwards' cohorts provided the vocal backup for this single, which did remarkably well despite competing versions by Hank Locklin and Joe South. Edwards followed up with two minor hits for Capitol and a handful of inconsequential releases for various labels before he faded away.

RIGHT OR WRONG WANDA JACKSON

Music and lyrics by Wanda Jackson. Capitol 4553 (1961) No. 9 (Country), No. 29 (Pop) Courtesy of Capitol Nashville, Under license from EMI Music Special Markets.

With a devil on one shoulder and an angel on the other, WANDA JACKSON was torn between singing rock 'n' roll and sticking with her first love, country music. She did road shows with Elvis Presley, who persuaded her to join the rock brigade, and Jackson became a rockabilly fireball after signing with Capitol in 1956. Country eventually gained the upper hand, though, and 1961's *Right or Wrong* signaled Jackson's return to the fold.

7 IT'S SUCH A PRETTY WORLD TODAY WYNN STEWART

Music and lyrics by Dale Noe. Capitol 5831 (1967) No. 1 (Country) Courtesy of Capitol Records, Under license from EMI Music Special Markets.

It is ironic that **WYNN STEWART**, who symbolized hardcore West Coast country music, recorded his first and only No. 1 hit in Nashville. He cut *It's Such a Pretty World Today* after reworking the song over a six-month period. Stewart was playing a \$300 club date in Denver when he learned the fate of his record. After the gig he killed the lights and tossed that night's pay in the air, letting his band members scramble for it.

8 FROM A JACK TO A KING NED MILLER

Music and lyrics by Ned Miller.

Fabor 114 (1963) No. 2 (Country), No. 6 (Pop)

Courtesy of Capitol Nashville, Under license from EMI Music Special Markets.

Things might have gone better for **NED MILLER** had he not suffered from such paralyzing stage fright. He refused to tour, and even sent our friends to perform live as Ned Miller. **From a Jack to a King** was the hit that almost wasn't. Miller cut the song in 1957, but it stiffed. When a jukebox operator requested the cut in 1963, Fabor Robison reissued it on his own label and lucked into a huge crossover hit.

GOTTA TRAVEL ON BILLY GRAMMER

Music and lyrics by Paul Clayton, Lary Enrifice, David Lazar and Pete Seeger.

Manument 40 (1955) Na. 5 (Bountry), No. 4 (Pop)

Originally Released 1958 Sony Music Entertailment Inc. Under license from The Sony Music Custem Marketing Group,
A Division of Sony Music, A Boung of Sony Music Entertailment Inc.

Bad luck brought good fortune to **Billy Grammer**. After he lost his job as guitarist in Jimmy Dean's band, his friend Fred Foster asked him if he'd like to cut **Gotta Travel On** for Foster's new label. Grammer became Monument's first artist and gave the label instant credibility by ringing up big sales in the country and pop markets. The record couldn't miss; it capitalized on the current folk music boom, and kids could dance to it.



BOBBY

10 500 MILES AWAY FROM HOME BOBBY BARE

Music and lyrics by Bobby Bare, Charlie Williams and Hedy West.
RCA Victor \$238 (1984) No. 5 (Country), No. 10 (Pop)
Originally Reported Prior to 1972, All Rights Reserved by BMG Music. Countery of The RCA Records Label Nashville.

The country career of **Bobsy Bare** finally got off the ground after he signed with RCA in 1962. Bare had worked farm and factory jobs, done a good bit of traveling and chased his dear for several record labels before he came to Nashville. A natural storyteller, Bare followed his 1963 Grammy-winning single *Detroit City* with another folk-country song about yearning for family, **500 Miles Away from Home** (a tune already cut by Peter, Paul and Mary).

II RINGO LORNE GREENE

Music and lyrics by Don Robertson and Hal Blair. RGA Wicker 8444 (1964) No. 21 (Country), No. 1 (Pop) Arranged and Conducted by Don Ralke Originally Recorded Prior to 1972. All Rights Reserved by BMG Music. Courtesy of The RGA Music Group, A Unit of BMG Music.

There's no mistaking the authoritative tones of LORNE GREENE, better known to millions of TV viewers as Ben Cartwright from the long-running Western series Bonanza. The Ottawaborn Greene was the perfect choice to tell the story of Ringo; he had earned the titles the Voice of Doom and the Voice of Canada during his radio broadcast days at the CBC. Greene got chills when he read the lyrics to Ringo, and sensed that he had a hit on his hands.

12 LET'S THINK ABOUT LIVING BOB LUMAN

Music and lyrics by Boudleaux Bryant. Warner 5172 (1960) No. 9 (Country), No. 7 (Pop) ⊕ 1965 Hickory Records. Courtesy of Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC d/b/a Hickory Records.

Texan **Bob Luman** fell under rockabilly's spell after seeing Elvis Presley tear it up in 1955. Luman went west with his band and landed a record deal with Imperial. Several flops later he was dropped. Imperial star Ricky Nelson acquired his band, which included guitarist James Burton. After signing with Warner Brothers in 1959, Luman charted exclusively as a country artist, although Let's Think about Living had the sound and attitude that appealed to rock 'n' roll fans.



HAWKSHAW HAWKINS

13 LONESOME 7-7203 HAWKSHAW HAWKINS

Music and lyrics by Justin Tubb. King 5712 (1963) No. 1 (Country), No. 108 (Pep) Courtesy of King Records.

During his final sessions for King, **HAWKSHAW HAWKINS** cut a song that his wife, Jean Shepard, had already recorded: **Lonesome 7-7203**. Her version had been shelved by Capitol; the honchos at her label didn't think the tune had any hit potential (neither did the folks at King). Hawkins thought otherwise, and his single entered the *Billboard* charts on March 2, 1963. Three days later he died in the tragic plane crash that also claimed the lives of Patsy Cline and Cowboy Copas.

14 I FORGOT MORE THAN YOU'LL EVER KNOW

THE DAVIS SISTERS

Music and lyrics by Cecil Null.

RCA (Match 5345 (1353) Mo. 1 (Country), No. 18 (Pop)

CO (Popinally Recorded Prior to 1972. All Rights Reserved by BMG Music. Countesy of The RCA Records Label Nashville.

They harmonized like sisters, but Betty Jack Davis and Mary Frances Penick (aka Skeeter Davis) were actually best friends who put the **Davis Sisters** act together while they were in high school. Their big break arrived in 1953 with *I Forgot More Than You'll Ever Know.* Unfortunately, Betty Jack never saw the single hit No. 1; she died in a head-on collision that also left Skeeter seriously injured. The crash occurred minutes after they had heard their record on the car radio.

15 STATUE OF A FOOL JACK GREENE

Music and lyrics by Jan Crutchfield.

Deca 32490 (1969) No. 1 (Country)

Courtesy of MGA Records under license from Universal Music Enterprises.

Ernest Tubb persuaded his "big-eared singing drummer" **JACK GREENE** to leave the Texas Troubadours and go solo in 1967. Greene's 1966 hit *There Goes My Everything* had won two CMA awards and made him a star, so the move was a no-brainer. He turned out a series of big sellers in the late '60s, capped by **Statue of a Fool** in 1969. Twenty years later Ricky Van Shelton just missed the No. 1 slot with his version of the song.

FRAULEIN BOBBY HELMS

Music and lyrics by Lawton Williams.

Decca 30194 (1957) No. 1 (Country), No. 36 (Pop)

Courtesy of MCA Records under license from Universal Music Enterprises

Any singer would love to have the year **Bobby Helms** had in 1957. **Fraulein** held the No. 1 spot for four consecutive weeks (it spent 52 weeks on the charts in all), as did his follow-up smash, My Special Angel. He then delivered a bona fide Christmas classic, Jingle Bell Rock. Helms found only minor success thereafter. The "love her and leave her" theme of Fraulein did, however, inspire "answer songs," namely I Found My Girl in the USA by Jimmie Skinner and (I'll Always Be Your) Fraulein by Kitty Wells.

LONELY WEEKENDS CHARLIE RICH

Music and lyrics by Charlie Rich,
Phillips 3552 (1960) No. 22 (Pop)

1959 Sun Entertainment Corporation. Courtesy of Sun Entertainment Corporation.

A triple threat as a pianist, singer and songwriter, **Charlie Rich** nevertheless had trouble finding his audience. Producer Sam Phillips urged him to compose a pop song that had a big-beat gospel feel. Weeks later Rich brought **Lonety Weekends** to the Sun Records studio, and with a little Memphis magic he had his first pop hit. It was Rich's idea to add the baritione sax break. Local musician Martin Willis had to borrow a sax, and Rich coached him on what to play.



FARON

3 ALONE WITH YOU FARDN YOUNG

Music and lyrics by Lester Vanadore, Faron Young and Roy Drusky, Capitol 3982 (1958) No. 1 (Country), No. 51 (Pop) Courtesy of Capitol Nashville, Under license from EMI Music Special Markets.

Despite its hillbilly roots, rock 'n' roll had a damaging financial impact on many veteran country stars. FARON YOUNG claimed that his earnings decreased by more than 50 percent after Elvis hit. Some artists never recovered. Young's setback was temporary; he and producer Ken Nelson tried a number of pop-country styles that suited Young's voice. Alone with You (1958), supported by a rich array of guitars, brought him his best pop chart showing to date.

DARK MOON BONNIE GUITAR

Music and lyrics by Ned Miller: Dot 15550 (1957) No. 14 (Country), No. 6 (Pop) Courtesy of MCA Records under license from Universal Music Enterprises.

Bonnie Buckingham's friends called her "Guitar" for good reason: she had skills from leading a country band and doing session work in Los Angeles. The nickname stuck, and BONNIE GUITAR arrived in 1957 with Dark Moon. Despite a competing version on the same label (Dot) by actress-singer Gale Storm, Bonnie's single held its own on the pop charts. She later started the Seattle-based Dolton/Dolphin labels, the roster of which included the Fleetwoods and guitar-instrumental stars the Ventures.

KISSES SWEETER THAN WINE JIMMIE RODGERS

Music and tyrics by Lee Hays, Ronnie Gilbert, Fred Hellerman, Pete Seeger and Joel Newman, Roulette 4631 (1957) No. 6 (Country), No. 3 (Peg)

Produced Under License From Rhino Records, Inc. By Arrangement With Warner Special Products.

JIMMIE RODGERS didn't start performing until his military stint in Korea, but his career took off after he returned home to Vancouver, Washington, Boogie-woogie pianist Chuck Miller heard Rodgers playing at a café and lent him airfare money to audition for a recording contract in New York. Roulette took notice, and they rush-released Honeycomb before Rodgers had inked a contract. His follow-up single, Kisses Sweeter Than Wine (4 Weavers favorite), enjoyed a similar crossover fate.

SAN ANTONIO ROSE FLOYD GRAMER

Music by Bob Wills.

RCA Victor 7893 (1961) No. 8 (Country), No. 8 (Pop)

Originally Recorded Prior to 1972, All Rights Reserved by BMG Music. Courtesy of The RCA Records Label Nashville.

When FLOYD CRAMER first came to Nashville in 1952, there were no studio pianists to speak of, aside from Owen Bradley. By the end of the decade, Cramer was the busiest piano man in town, especially after Chet Atkins signed him to RCA. Cramer showcased his "slip-note" (a whole-tone slur) style in the massive 1960 instrumental hit Last Date. This distinctive sound fit Western swing perfectly, as heard in Cramer's take on Bob Wills' San Antonio Rose.

MY LAST DATE (WITH YOU) SKEETER DAVIS

Music and lyrics by Skeeter Davis, Boudleaux Bryant and Floyd Cramer. RCA Victor 7825 (1961) No. 5 (Country), No. 26 (Pon)

RCA Victor 1825 (1961) No. 5 (Country), No. 26 (Pop) Taken from original RCA Nashville recording 47-7825

Originally Recorded Prior to 1972. All Rights Reserved by BMG Music. Courtesy of The RCA Records Label Nashville.

Producer Chet Atkins broadened the appeal of **Skeeter Davis**'s records using simple math. On a tip from pop DJs, he replaced the weepy steel guitar with background strings. *My Last Date (With You)*, a vocal version of Floyd Cramer's hit, beat his original on the country charts. Answer songs were so popular in the '50s and '60s that in 1961, RCA released the album. *Here's the Answer*, a collection of six hits by the label's stars, each followed by Davis's reply.

FUNNY HOW TIME SLIPS AWAY JIMMY ELLEDGE

Music and lyrics by Willie Nelson. RCA Victor 7946 (1962) No. 22 (Pep)

Originally Recorded Prior to 1972. All Rights Reserved by BMG Music. Courtesy of The RCA Records Label Nashville.

With his R&B influences and stratospheric falsetto, JIMMY ELLEDGE wasn't the most likely candidate to tackle Willie Nelson's Funny How Time Stips Away. It was Chet Atkins who "discovered" Elledge, a native Nashvillian who landed a top-40 pop record with his version of the song while still in his teens. Elledge's aggressive style didn't bring him long-term success.

however. Top country chart honors for this Nelson classic go to another singer known for his heaven-piercing falsetto: Narvel Felts.

TALK BACK TREMBLING LIPS ERNEST ASHWORTH

Music and lyrics by John D. Loudermilk.

Hickory 1214 (1983) No. 1 (Country), Ro. 101 (Pop)

© 1983 Hickory Reports. Courtesy of Song/ATV Music Publishing LLC db/a Hickory Reports.

A singer-songwriter who first recorded with minimal success as Billy Worth, Ernest Ashworth was commuting between Nashville and his day job at the Redstone Arsenal defense plant in Huntsville, Alabama, when Talle Back Trembling Lips soared to No. 1. Ashworth gave this Huntsville gig in 1964 and joined the Grand Ole Opry. Although he never had another blockbuster hit, he landed chart records for the rest of the decade and maintained his Opry appearances.

ONNA FIND ME A BLUEBIRD MARVIN RAINWATER

Music and lyrics by Marvin Rainwater.

MGM 12412 (1957) No. 3 (Country), No. 18 (Pop)

Courtesy of Mercury Records under license from Universal Music Enterprises

In a career of missteps, MARVIN RAINWATER had his crowning moment not with a hillbilly or rockabilly record, but with a whistling pop-country number called *Gonna Find Me a Bluebird*. Rainwater, who was one-quarter Cherokee, often appeared in Indian regalia, which typecast him. He also recorded songs that dealt with his heritage, such as *Half Breed* and *Indian Reservation*. In these instances he was ahead of his time: *Indian Reservation* became a pop hit twice and made it to No. I for the Raiders.

ALABAM COWBOY COPAS

Music and lyrics by Covboy Copas. Starday 501 (1960) No. 1 (Country), No. 63 (Pop) Courtesy of Kine Records.

The late-50s surge of rock 'n' roll threatened to sweep away country veterans like **COWBOY COPAS**, who had been recording since World War II. Copas lost his record deal, but in 1959 he signed with Starday, a haven for supposedly washed-up artists, and cut the album *Unforgettable*. One track displayed his guitar-picking alongside a series of folk-derived lyrics. Released as a single. *Alabam* topped the charts for 12 weeks, proving that Copas still had it.

12 DON'T LET ME CROSS OVER CARL AND PEARL BUTLER

Music and tyrics by Penny Jay.

Columbia 47936 (1982) No. 17 (Mounty), No. 88 (Pop)

Originally Released 1962 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Under License From The Sony Music Custom Marketing Group,

A Division Of Sony Music, A Group Of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

It took **CARL BUTLER** a decade to land his first chart record, *Honky Tonkitis* (1961), but this Knoxville songwriter had already composed hit material for other artists, such as *If Teardrops*



COWBOY

Were Pennies (Carl Smith). Butler's wife Pears sang with him at live shows, but she didn't officially become part of the act until 1962, when Columbia released **Don't Let Me Cross Over**. The Butlers did cross over—to the pop side.

13 EASY LOVING FREDDIE HART

Music and lyrics by Freddie Hart. Capitel 3115 (1971) No. 1 (Country), No. 17 (Pop) Courtesy of Richard Davis Management.

"Easy-lovin', so sexy-lookin'...'—that one line says it all," Freddie Harr once said, adding, "I almost took it out of the song." Lucky for him that he didn't. Flart, the composer of such country classics as Loose Talk and Skid Row Joe, was in his 40s when Easy Loving struck, initiating a lucrative six-year period that rarely found him far from the top 10. Easy Loving won the CMA Song of the Year award in 1971 and 1972.

14 THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER

THE BROWNS FEATURING JIM EDWARD BROWN

Music and lyncs by Charles Tobles and Nat Simon.
RCA Wictor 1790 (1860) No. 20 (Country), No. 5 (Pop)
Originally Recorded Prior to 1972. All Rights Reserved by SMG Music. Courtesy of The RCA Music Group, A Unit of BMG Music.

Jim Ed Brown and his sisters Maxine and Bonnie had a smooth harmony sound that nestled easily into the pop-country realm—an ideal spot for a country act in the late '50s. The Browns appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show and American Bandstand, programs that helped them gain wider exposure. As with its previous hits, the trio stayed within a folk context for The Old Lamplighter, which had been a big record for Sammy Kaye's dance band back in 1946.

15 ODE TO BILLIE JOE BOBBIE GENTRY

Music and lyrics by Bobbie Gentry. Capitol 5950 (1967) No. 17. (Country), No. 1. (Pop) Courtesy of Capitol Records, Under license from EMI Music Special Markets.

No one ever figured out what was thrown off the Tallahatchee Bridge in Ode to Billie Joe an irrelevant detail, according to BOBBLE GENTRY, who wrote this Faulkneresque tale for her first Capitol album. It took less than an hour to cut the song, which originally exceeded seven minutes in length. Capitol edited the track and released it as the B side to Mississippi Delta. DJs nationwide spun this sultry flip side, and the record soon topped the pop charts.

-Charles McCardell

