

THE '60s: TEEN TIME



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

The
ROCK'N'ROLL
•ERA•

Digital Remaster

THE '60s: TEEN TIME

- 1 **Love Came to Me** Dion (1962)
- 2 **Thou Shalt Not Steal**
Dick and Dee Dee (1964)
- 3 **Ta Ta** Clyde McPhatter (1960)
- 4 **The Gypsy Cried** Lou Christie (1963)
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- 22 **Have You Heard** The Duprees (1963)

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The ROCK'N'ROLL ERA

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COMPACT
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DIGITAL AUDIO



2RNR-40
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*Jimmy Gilmer
and the Fireballs*

THE '60s: TEEN TIME

Young, innocent and oh-so-idealistic, the rock 'n' rollers who followed Elvis, Jerry Lee, Chuck, Bo and Richard didn't seem to have the hard edge those men retained even when singing pure escapist fare. This second wave of rockers owed as much to pop music as to primal rock 'n' roll. They were thus living proof that rock 'n' roll could go mainstream.

Much of what they did was fluff, but it was often good fluff. And there were, as always, exceptions. Dion and the Belmonts started as rebels off the streets of the Bronx in 1957. Two years later they exploded with *Teenager in Love*, which managed to strike a balance between the teen and the tough that they sustained until 1960. After their hit* that year with Rodgers and Hart's *Where or When*, the Belmonts wanted to settle into rich, Four Freshman-type harmonies while Dion—backed by the Del Satins, who remained anonymous—continued to walk that line between pop and rock. **Love Came to Me** turned out to be the last side he recorded for the Laurie label until he returned briefly six years later for *Abraham, Martin and John*. But **Tell Me Why** proved there was also still a place for the increasingly baroque Belmonts.

Paul Anka was perhaps more typical of the era. A precocious Canadian, he spent the summer of 1954 (when he was 13) in Hollywood, hustling songs and looking for an opening. In 1957, after one regional hit back in his native Ottawa, he won a contest saving soup-can labels and was presented a free trip to New York City. He used his growing list of show-biz contacts to wrangle a deal with ABC-Paramount and cut *Diana*, a love song to his former babysitter. But Anka aspired to a Las Vegas career à la Sammy Davis Jr., and in 1960, the year of **My Home Town**, he became the youngest performer ever booked into the Copacabana. He wound up writing for artists as diverse as Buddy Holly and Frank Sinatra, and even penned

Johnny's Theme for The Tonight Show.

There was plenty of room for black singers in this new pop equation, too. Eddie Holland's **Jamie** was one of the Motown label's first hits. In fact, Holland had worked with founder Berry Gordy Jr. before there even was a label, singing on the demos Gordy wrote for Jackie Wilson. Holland's *Jamie* parroted the Wilson style almost perfectly, with perhaps a dash of Sam Cooke thrown in for seasoning. Gordy used the Detroit Symphony behind Holland to get the uptown R & B sound created for Wilson on the East Coast. Despite his success, the shy Holland hated performing; he quickly went behind the scenes to form, with his brother Brian and Lamont Dozier, the great writing-producing team responsible for the Supremes, the Four Tops and other Motown stalwarts.

Clarence "Frogman" Henry was a New Orleans R & B singer known primarily for novelties, but he was in Chicago when he cut **You Always Hurt the One You Love**, inspired by the 1957 recording of the oldie by his old high-school classmate Bobby Mitchell. Henry—who had intended to cut *I'm a Fool to Care* at these sessions, only to be beaten to the punch by Louisiana swamp-rocker Joe Barry—flew pianist-producer Allen Toussaint in from New Orleans to get the right feel.

Ta Ta was Clyde McPhatter's first release for Mercury, and completed his transformation from searing, gospel-based lead tenor, first for Billy Ward and the Dominoes and then for the Drifters, into mainstream solo star. Major Lance's **Hey Little Girl** was a pivotal record in the creation of writer-producer (and Impressions leader) Curtis Mayfield's Chicago soul sound, which rivaled Motown for its ingenious use of strings and horns.

Steve Alaimo was a young white man from Rochester, New York, with a decent black pop feel; his **Every Day I Have to Cry**, written by Alabama country-soul artist Ar-

thur Alexander (*You Better Move On*), was recorded after Alaimo had gone to Miami to attend college. He was still in Miami in the 1970s, working for the innovative disco outfit TK Productions; Alexander, meanwhile, finally had his own modest hit with *Every Day I Have to Cry* in 1975.

Girl groups represented the most delightful fusion of rock 'n' roll with R & B, and the Chiffons represented this innocent form at its simplest. They were Harlem and South Bronx teens discovered by Ronnie Mack, a fast-talking songwriter from the area's housing projects. He recruited them to sing the demos of his material, taking the tapes to the Tokens (*The Lion Sleeps Tonight*), whose production company quickly signed both writer and group.

Soon after *He's So Fine* became one of the top hits of 1963, Mack collapsed on the street from Hodgkin's disease, an illness he'd managed to conceal from everybody. The Tokens presented him his gold record for *He's So Fine* at the hospital, and a few days later he died. The Chiffons (who also used the name the Four Pennies) turned to Brill Building veterans for subsequent material, and **I Have a Boyfriend** was their next-to-last top-40 hit before they were swamped by the British Invasion.

The creative force behind Patty and the Emblems' **Mixed-Up, Shook-Up Girl** was Leon Huff, a New York sessions pianist who moved to Philadelphia in 1963 to work for the Cameo-Parkway labels. He assembled the group basically to cut this one composition, which he leased back to a New York label he had done sessions for. The Exciters (**He's Got the Power**) were one of the few acts with a girl-group sound and a male singer.

The New Jersey trio the Angels originally straddled the stylistic fence between old harmony groups like the Chordettes and the emergent black style. But **Cry Baby Cry** won them a gig at Harlem's fabled Apollo Theater, pretty heady stuff for white kids from the suburbs. It also led to a meeting with the song-writing and production team of Jerry Goldstein, Richard Gottelher and Robert

Conway Twitty (second from left) performs in a rockabilly group early in his career.





Feldman, which placed them with a major label and gave them the No. 1 classic *My Boyfriend's Back*.

The Crests—two blacks, an Italian and a Puerto Rican—personified the racial mix rock 'n' roll was creating in New York. **Trouble in Paradise** was their last hit before lead singer Johnny Maestro split; he later joined forces with the Rhythm Method and the Del Satins to form the Brooklyn Bridge. Conway Twitty's **Is a Blue Bird Blue** was written by Dan Penn, who later became one of the white architects of the soul sounds of Muscle Shoals, Alabama, and Memphis.

Freddy "Boom Boom" Cannon, who co-wrote his first smash (*Tallahassee Lassie*) with his mother in 1959, specialized in place-name titles for several years before switching to equally gimmicky titles like **Transistor Sister**. **The Gypsy Cried**, the first hit for Lou Christie, was inspired by his mentor, Twyla Herbert, a gypsy, psychic and concert pianist from his hometown outside Pittsburgh. She helped him finish it one evening while cooking dinner for her family, and the pair became regular, if unlikely, collaborators.

Commercial "folk" music was also beginning to surface. **Thou Shalt Not Steal**, written by Nashville tunesmith John D. Loudermilk and recorded by Santa Monica High School classmates Dick (St. John Gosting) and Dee Dee (Sperling), was a harbinger. But Jimmy Gilmer and the Fireballs—united by Norman Petty, the New Mexico studio owner who launched Buddy Holly's career—clinched the trend. They got **Sugar Shack** from Keith McCormack of the Stringalongs, another group from the Texas-New Mexico border area. McCormack had written the song at 5 o'clock one morning at his aunt's house after a long evening of cruising town and drinking beer. He made the song up out of whole cloth, never having encountered a beatnik, a coffee house, a set of bongos or a cup of espresso.

McCormack gave his aunt half the publishing rights when he wrote the song, and he concealed the whole thing from

his mother, also a songwriter, because he thought it was so dumb. But Gilmer's father, whose job required him to visit Phillips 66 gas stations around the Southwest, promoted the single everywhere he went, making it a regional hit until a Detroit radio station finally broke it nationally. And by 1967, Jimmy Gilmer was up in Greenwich Village, hanging out in real folk clubs with real folkies.

—John Morthland



Ill at ease in the spotlight, Eddie Holland later found a song-writing niche as one third of Motown's formidable Holland-Dozier-Holland.

DISCOGRAPHY

*Indicates highest Billboard chart position

- 1. Love Came to Me** Dion • Music and lyrics by Dion DiMucci and John Falbo. Laurie 3145 (1962). Courtesy of Laurie Records. No. 8*
- 2. Thou Shalt Not Steal** Dick and Dee Dee • Music and lyrics by John D. Loundermilk. Warner 5482 (1964). Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 13*
- 3. Ta Ta** Clyde McPhatter • Music and lyrics by Jimmy Oliver and Clyde McPhatter. Mercury 71660 (1960). Courtesy of PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 23*
- 4. The Gypsy Cried** Lou Christie • Music and lyrics by Tuyla Herber and Logee A. G. Sacco. Roulette 4457 (1963). Licensed from Rhino Records, Inc. No. 24*
- 5. I Have a Boyfriend** The Chiffons • Music and lyrics by Henry Madres. Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich. Laurie 3212 (1963). Courtesy of Laurie Records. No. 36*
- 6. Is a Blue Bird Blue** Conway Twitty • Music and lyrics by Don Pennington. MGM 12911 (1960). Courtesy of PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 35*
- 7. Trouble in Paradise** The Crests • Music and lyrics by Allison R. Krent and Billy Dawn Smith. Coed 531 (1960). Courtesy of Post Records, No. 20*
- 8. My Home Town** Paul Anka • Music and lyrics by Paul Anka. ABC-Paramount 10106 (1960). Courtesy of Paul Anka. No. 8*
- 9. Hey Jean, Hey Dean** Dean and Jean • Music and lyrics by Ernest Maresca and Louis Zeralo. Rust 5075 (1964). Courtesy of Continental Communications Corp. No. 32*
- 10. Jamie** Eddie Holland • Music and lyrics by Barrett Strong and William Stevenson. Motown 1021 (1962). Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 30*
- 11. Cry Baby Cry** The Angels • Music and lyrics by Morris Bailey Jr. Caprice 112 (1962). Courtesy of Jerry Granahan c/o Original Sound Entertainment. No. 38*
- 12. He's Got the Power** The Exciters • Music and lyrics by Ellie Greenwich and Tony Powers. United Artists 572 (1963). Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc. under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 57*
- 13. Translator** Slater Freddy Cannon • Music and lyrics by Frank C. Slay Jr. and Chuck Dougherty. Swan 4078 (1961). Courtesy of Freddy Cannon. No. 35*
- 14. Tell Me Why** The Belmonts • Music and lyrics by Marshall Helland and Don Carter. Sabrina 500 (1961). Courtesy of Jerry Granahan c/o Original Sound Entertainment. No. 18*
- 15. Sugar Shack** Jimmy Gilmer and the Fireballs • Music and lyrics by Keith McCormack and Faye Voss. Dot 16487 (1963). Produced under license from Dundee Music. No. 1*
- 16. You Always Hurt the One You Love** Clarence Henry • Music and lyrics by Allan Roberts and Doris Fisher. Argo 5388 (1961). Courtesy of Chess/MCA Records, Inc. No. 12*
- 17. I Really Love You** The Stereos • Music and lyrics by Leroy Swearingen. Cub 9095 (1961). Courtesy of PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 29*
- 18. Hey Little Girl** Major Lance • Music and lyrics by Curtis Mayfield. Okeh 7181 (1963). Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 13*
- 19. Mixed-Up, Sbook-Up Girl** Patty and the Emblems • Music and lyrics by Leon Huff and Ralston McGriff. Herald 590 (1964). Produced under license from Aristo Records, Inc. No. 37*
- 20. Every Day I Have to Cry** Steve Alaimo • Music and lyrics by Arthur Alexander. Checker 1032 (1963). Courtesy of Chess/MCA Records, Inc. No. 46*
- 21. Rip Van Winkle** The Devotions • Music and lyrics by Raymond Sanchez. Roulette 4541 (1964). Licensed from Rhino Records, Inc. No. 36*
- 22. Have You Heard** The Duprees • Music and lyrics by Lew Douglas, Frank LuVere and Roy Rodde. Coed 585 (1963). Courtesy of Post Records. No. 18*

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NOTES INSIDE

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