

# GOTTA TRAVEL ON

HAVE MUSIC  
WILL TRAVEL





1. **Paul Clayton: Gotta Travel On**  
(Paul Clayton) . . . . . © 1959 3:56
2. **Merle Travis: Kentucky Means Paradise**  
(Merle Travis) . . . . . © 1948 2:38
3. **Jimmy Work: Tennessee Border**  
(Jimmy Work) . . . . . © 1949 2:58
4. **Cousin Emmy: Come On All You Virginia Girls**  
(trad.) . . . . . © 1948 2:20
5. **Grandpa Jones: My Carolina Sunshine Girl**  
(Jimmie Rogers) . . . . . © 1962 2:34
6. **Bill Monroe: My Little Georgia Rose**  
(Bill Monroe) . . . . . © 1950 3:09
7. **Curtis Gordon: Mobile, Alabama**  
(Curtis Gordon) . . . . . © 1956 1:59
8. **Jimmie Rodgers: Mississippi Moon**  
(Jimmie Rodgers - Elsie McWilliams) . . . . . © 1928 3:15
9. **Johnnie & Jack: South In New Orleans**  
(Anglin - Anglin - Wright) . . . . . © 1953 2:23
10. **Jimmie Driftwood: Down In The Arkansas**  
(Jimmie Driftwood) . . . . . © 1962 2:50
11. **Jack Guthrie: Oklahoma's Calling**  
(Jack Guthrie) . . . . . © 1947 3:05
12. **The Cowboys & Indians: Say Pardner**  
(Billy Mure - Danny Wolfe) . . . . . © 1959 1:56
13. **Ernest Tubb: Waltz Across Texas**  
(Billy Talmadge Tubb) . . . . . © 1962 2:41
14. **Bob Luman: Big River Rose**  
(Boudleaux & Felice Bryant) . . . . . © 1962 2:48
15. **Sons Of The Pioneers: Santa Fe, New Mexico**  
(Glenn Spencer) . . . . . © 1949 2:42

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 16. <b>DeZurick Sisters (aka the Cackle Sisters): The Arizona Yodeler</b><br>(-) . . . . . © 1938        | 2:27 |
| 17. <b>Webb Pierce: California Blues (Blue Yodel #4)</b><br>(Jimmie Rodgers) . . . . . © 1951            | 3:05 |
| 18. <b>Maddox Brothers &amp; Rose: Philadelphia Lawyer</b><br>(Woody Guthrie) . . . . . © 1951           | 3:13 |
| 19. <b>Marty Robbins: Utah Carol</b><br>(trad.) . . . . . © 1959   | 3:17 |
| 20. <b>The Carter Family: Where The Silvery Colorado Wends Its Way</b><br>(A.P. Carter) . . . . . © 1936 | 2:50 |
| 21. <b>Woody Guthrie: Oregon Trail</b><br>(Woody Guthrie) . . . . . © 1949                               | 2:49 |
| 22. <b>Wade Ray: Idaho Red</b><br>(Seals - Kauzlaric - Sullivan) . . . . . © 1954                        | 2:24 |
| 23. <b>Eddy Arnold: The Red Headed Stranger</b><br>(Carl Stutz - Edith Lindeman) . . . . . © 1959        | 3:30 |
| 24. <b>Wilf Carter: I Long For Old Wyoming</b><br>(Wilf Carter) . . . . . © 1934                         | 3:15 |
| 25. <b>Billy Grammer: Gotta Travel On</b><br>(Paul Clayton) . . . . . © 1959                             | 2:40 |



## Gotta Travel On

### Have Music – Will Travel

It's time to fire up that 1957 Oldsmobile and head for the open road. Like the song says: *Summer's almost gone. Winter's comin' on.* It's time to think seriously about traveling on. Fortunately, we've got a pretty exciting journey mapped out for you.

One thing these vintage travel plans won't include is the use of Interstate highways. It will be years before the interstate system is widely in place. The bad news is, that's going to slow you down considerably. The good news is, that's going to slow you down considerably. What modern politicians call "infrastructure" won't be in place for at least a decade. That means you're going to have to ease your foot off the accelerator, observe local speed limits, enjoy all those old Burma Shave signs, and get a good look at America. There's plenty to enjoy out there when you're not whizzing by at 75 mph.

Be prepared to depend on two lane highways like Route 66 and US 11. It's true. Today's four-lane Interstate marvels like Route 66 started off a lot more humbly as a patchwork of two-lane local highways in various states of disrepair. All that's changed now, but as far as this journey is concerned, those changes are in your future.



The two-lane highways we'll be using do contain occasional passing lanes designed to save you from being interminably stuck behind a farmer's tractor maxed out at 30 mph. But even so, you're not going to be taking the express. You might as well take a deep breath and enjoy all the local color you can absorb. We guarantee you, there's no shortage of it.

So to start with, here's the lesser known version of our title track by "composer" **Paul Clayton**. [The song actually began life as a 19<sup>th</sup> century British folk ballad]. This was the demo used to introduce the song to Billy Grammer, whose 1958 version stayed on the charts for 20 weeks and reached #4. Grammer was a regular guest on Jimmy Dean's nationally televised show, which didn't hurt his chances of success.

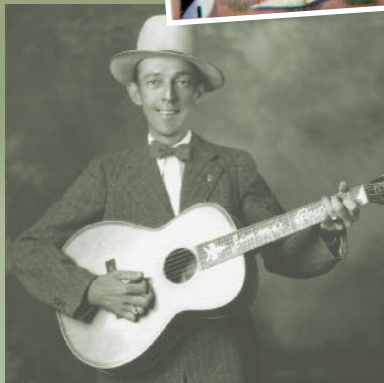
**Merle Travis** was a hard-working country musician and songwriter before he became an icon in the 1950s, owing largely to Tennessee Ernie Ford's best-selling version of Travis's song, *Sixteen Tons*. On *Kentucky Means Paradise*, Merle Travis performs a love song to his home state.

With the help of singer/songwriter **Jimmy Work** we cross the border into Tennessee, just in time to watch the singer get married and avoid the clutches of his bride-to-be's possessive father. Work, and his rural song, received quite a payday when Hank Williams recorded it early in his career, thus elevating the song to the status of "country standard." As an aside, I used the title of Jimmy Work's song as the name of a country and western show I hosted on New York radio during the 1960s. Last I checked, 'Tennessee Border' was still going strong, half a century later on WKCR-FM.

Cynthia May Carter, who worked professionally as **Cousin Emmy**, never had a hit record in her life, but she helped pioneer the career of solo woman performers in country music. Her spirited performances often involved playing both the banjo and fiddle, which she carried on stage with her at the same time. Cousin Emmy, who takes us to the state of Virginia with her song, may not be a household name anymore, but she does have her own Wikipedia page some 40 years after her death.









**Grandpa Jones**, who dressed and acted the part of an old codger when he was in his twenties, pays tribute to the Jimmie Rodgers standard *My Carolina Sunshine Girl* with this updated 1962 version. For the sake of our journey, it's not entirely clear if we're visiting North or South Carolina, but let's not worry about trifles like that.

**Bill Monroe**, the father of bluegrass music, eases us over to the state of Georgia as our journey continues. This 1950 recording of *My Little Georgia Rose* cries out for some vocal harmony, but the cry is in vain. What we do have is Bill's fine mandolin work supported by Jimmy Martin's guitar and Vassar Clement's fiddle. To hear Monroe describe her, *Rose* sounds like she was worth the side trip into Georgia, but now our journey continues.

We are in Alabama now, courtesy of **Curtis Gordon**. Not only has our journey moved South, it has also moved six years into the future to 1956. How critical has that half a dozen years been in the sound of recorded music? We'll let Mr. Gordon answer that question for us in *Mobile, Alabama*. Despite Gordon's decidedly rural voice, the band work has sure moved into future tense. The drummer is smacking that snare, the bass player is slapping those strings for all he's worth, and the lead guitar does harmonic things that would have been unheard of on a country record five years earlier.

Just a few miles back, we paid tribute to **Jimmie Rodgers** courtesy of Grandpa Jones. Here we listen to Rodgers, himself performing a lovely ballad about the charms of the *Mississippi Moon*. Unlike so much of Rogers' most famous work, this one couldn't be further from the Blues. It's really just an old time popular song whose lineage probably goes back over a hundred years. It is quaint in all the loveliest ways, not the least of which is its waltz time performance. It's going to be hard to leave Mississippi after this romantic dalliance.



Over to Louisiana now and where better than its most famous and largest city: New Orleans. Our guides for this part of the journey are the famous 1950s duo of **Johnnie & Jack**. It seems we're not here so much for the scenery, as we are to dance and make love. All of this delightful activity will be accompanied by the Rhumba beat, which was very popular when this record was made in 1953.

As we head north, **Jimmy Driftwood** offers us a humorous panorama of life *Down In The Arkansas*. This song is so detailed, we barely have to get out of our car to learn a whole lot about the quirky life happening all around us. For some reason Driftwood refers to it as "the Arkansas." Hmm. Never heard that one before. Maybe it's some kind of local thing. There's a diner coming up in about a half a mile. Why don't we slip in there for some grits and eggs and we can ask them about this "the" business. Then it's north to our next state.

**Jack Guthrie** is a one-man musical PR firm on *Oklahoma's Calling*. His most famous offering, of course, is *Oklahoma Hills*. But this fine piece of nostalgia sends the same message. "*Oklahoma is one fine state and I miss her, and everyone I loved back there. If I could wave a magic wand, I'd be back in those hills where I belong.*" As we're driving through, let's pause for a moment and think about old Jack and how deeply he was a part of this land.

There are thousands, probably tens of thousands, of songs written about Texas. But we're picking this one. Don't ask us why. In fact, the less you know about this bizarre record, the better for your mental health. About all we'll tell you is it was put together by guitarist Billy Muir and Texas-based entrepreneur Danny Wolfe in 1959. Did they think they had a hit on their hands? Did they think the rest of the world would share their humor? It's hard to tell 60 plus years later, but they did convince the folks at ABC PARAMOUNT to issue it. All we can say is, welcome to Texas. Glad to hear you had no trouble finding it when you left Oklahoma.



Since we've given you the weirdest record ever made about Texas, we owe you this. *Waltz Across Texas* may be the prettiest, most romantic love song ever written about the state. Period. And **Ernest Tubb** simply sings his heart out. Yes, his vocal limitations are legendary. But it's hard to imagine another singer doing a finer job on this song.

We haven't yet left Texas. **Bob Luman**, along with his new wife Rose, can be seen wandering the highways and along the railroad tracks. The weather is turning bad and if you happen to see them out there, you might want to pick them up before the lady freezes to death. This record, from 1962, might be subtitled "*Bob Luman sings Johnny Cash.*" The song would have been a natural for Cash and you can hear echoes of his voice in this recording.

From Texas we move west to New Mexico and join the iconic Western vocal group, **The Sons Of The Pioneers**. When the trade papers in the 1940s and early '50s were trying to establish a category for country music, an early choice was "country and western." The Sons Of The Pioneers were a good example of what the "Western" half referred to. You won't hear anything smoother on this collection than the vocal harmony on this track. You probably also won't hear another accordion solo.

They may be an acquired taste, but **The DeZurick Sisters (aka The Cackle Sisters)** are nothing short of startlingly original. In an industry that regularly resurrects its past, these women have been unfairly forgotten. Their performance on *The Arizona Yodeler* is typically stunning: their harmonies and arrangements were years ahead of the curve, and in case you didn't notice, they could yodel up a storm. How does anyone or anything this exceptional simply get forgotten? These two Minnesota farm sisters recorded six sides for VOCALION in 1938 (this is one of them) and appeared occasionally on the radio, back when the medium was a primary source of family entertainment. Fortunately, you can learn more about the DeZurick Sisters on Wikipedia.



Continuing our journey West, we enter California just in time to hear a very early recording by **Webb Pierce** of the Jimmie Rodgers tune, *California Blues*. Webb's stardom lay just around the corner and the instrumental work on this track is first-rate. Unfortunately, Webb's sense of time is pretty ragged, even within the limited structure of a 12 Bar Blues. On the positive side, the sound of Webb's voice has always appealed to country music fans and the results are no different here.

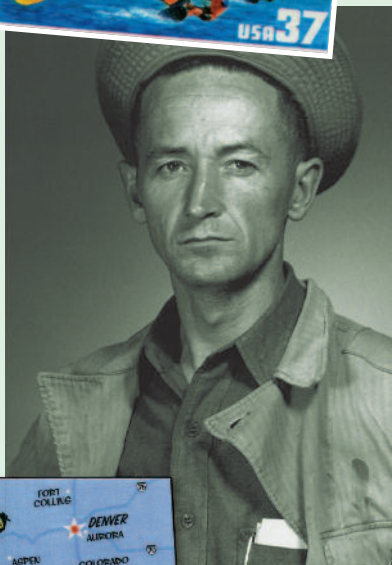
For many years – it's probably changed by now – Reno Nevada was viewed as the nation's divorce capital. Americans would travel to this desert town that built its economy on quickie divorces. *Philadelphia Lawyer* is a wonderful Woody Guthrie song that tells the tale of a slick lawyer from back east who gets his comeuppance from a local cowboy. It's hard not to cheer from the sidelines. By all reports, **Rose Maddox** and her brothers presented a wonderful live show. The woman herself was an essential part of the history of country music and women's place in it. By any reckoning, Rose Maddox was nobody's victim, which until then was the ticket of admission if you were a female performer.

There aren't a whole lot of songs written about Utah and we needed one to accompany our journey. Fortunately, **Marty Robbins** solves the problem for us with *Utah Carol* – a traditional ballad about cowpoke partners out on the trail. Unlike *El Paso*,

Marty is not singing about a woman he loved and lost out on the trail somewhere. *Utah Carol* was a guy. And in case you had any doubts, this is not a *Brokeback Mountain* kind of story. Far from it. This is the tale of a love-struck cowboy killed in a stampede trying to save his lady. The song is so rich in detail, it's like watching a western movie.









Our journey continues from Utah to Colorado. This time we're accompanied by the **Carter Family** and a fairly obscure recording from 1936. One can hear echoes of *Wildwood Flower* in this lament of love and loss way out west. The shadow of sadness looms large over these lyrics as the singer sits by himself in his lonesome cabin. He's buried his loved one and is realistic enough to know the chances of a replacement in this remote location are pretty slim. The Colorado River runs (or "wends its way" according to the title) nearby and seems to be the only sign of life in this man's bereft existence. Spend a few minutes grieving his loss, and then we suggest getting back in your car and continuing your journey as quickly as possible.

More than all those 1960s concoctions like Peter, Paul and Mary and the Kingston Trio, **Woody Guthrie** defined what it meant to be a real folk musician. He was truly a man of the people and of the land. As our journey moves north from Nevada to Oregon, we listen to Woody's 1949 recording of the *Oregon Trail*. Hopefully, our trip to Oregon will be a lot smoother and less eventful than the one Woody was planning. If there was ever an example of "The Grass Is Always Greener," it's this song. Woody sounds pretty upbeat and optimistic, given the list of things that are going wrong in his present life. But you can't help but hope that his optimism will be warranted before his family and their animals starve to death. If we take the lyrics seriously, someone might advise Woody that starting out his journey in the Fall may not be the best idea. One can only hope those Prairie winter storms don't decide to come early.

As our journey heads East toward Idaho, we leave Oregon behind us. *Idaho Red* offers us a vintage piece of pre-rockabilly, hillbilly boogie from 1954. With this song, **Wade Ray** provides an homage to all-night Interstate trucking and the men who made their living doing it. Before we pull into that truck stop, we should take a moment to appreciate these backup musicians. They are hot! That drummer, in particular, was going to be right at home in a couple of years when the music was about to change forever.

We're in Montana now, and if we head over to Blue Rock we're going to meet an old red-headed friend. It may take us a few moments to recognize him, but actually we've known him since about 1975 when Willie Nelson introduced him to us. In fact, Willie introduced him to a lot of folks in one of the best-selling albums of the period. It turns out rather surprisingly that **Eddy Arnold** tried to introduce him 16 years earlier with this recording but comparatively few people were listening. The track appeared as part of Arnold's 'Thereby Hangs A Tale' album, along with *Tennessee Stud*, *Tom Dooley*, and *Ballad Of Davey Crockett*. *The Red Headed Stranger* wasn't even featured by name on the album cover, included instead under the "and more..." category, common to many LPs of the era.

Since Montana is about as far north as you can go without running into Canada, we'll head a bit south for the last leg of our journey. This puts us squarely into "old Wyoming," as **Walt Carter** refers to it in this early recording from 1934. Carter actually did hail from Canada and was an established star in his native country as a yodeling cowboy. But he was also successful in the States, working under the name, Montana Slim. He was a real cowboy, a musician and a songwriter (over 500 compositions).

*I Long for Old Wyoming* is truly a timeless recording. It is the lament of a lonesome cowboy. He misses his mother and his girlfriend. He settles down to sleep at night to the sound of the doggies howling on the range. He doesn't have a smartphone and it's unlikely he could find one bar of reception out there in the middle of nowhere. This is about as under-produced as a recording can get, short of being a documentary.

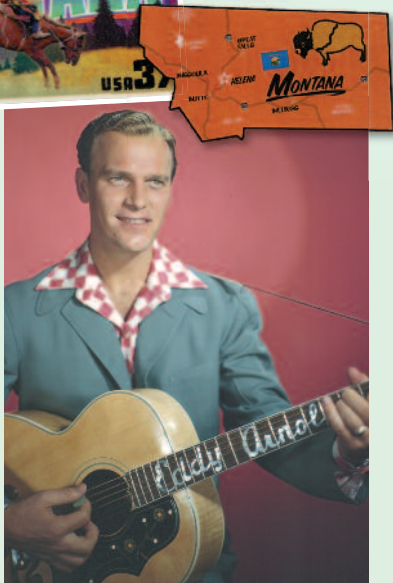
We began our imaginary journey by listening to Paul Clayton's "original" version of the 19<sup>th</sup> century folk tune *Gotta Travel On*. We close with the hit version, the **Billy Grammer** record that – as we told you before – found its way to #4 on the popular music charts in 1958 and remained charted for nearly half a year. It was difficult to be tuned into American popular culture in

(FROM LEFT) Wilf Carter • Eddy Arnold

early 1959 and not cross paths with this tune. Depending on your vintage, this is either a potent bit of nostalgia, or an apt theme song as we leave the great state of Wyoming and drive off into the sunset. Thanks for taking the journey with us. We enjoyed your company.



Hank Davis



(BELOW) Billy Grammer



GOTTA TRAVEL ON...

