

BMI -- CAPITOL SINGLES RESUME

A Confidential Report Covering 1956-64 to Alan W. Livingston
From Dave Dexter, Jr., International A. & R. Director

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A bit of background on the Capitol-EMI singles situation as it exists today seems necessary in order to show why Capitol has certain procedures in effect. Capitol issued its first EMI single 13 February 1956, just three weeks before we began the Capitol of the World album series. Through the remainder of 1956, Capitol released British singles featuring these artists, all of whom were strong on the English charts at the time and most of whom enjoyed No. 1 rankings there:

(Total Sales are in Parentheses)

Big Ben Banjo Band (1,563)	Frank Weir (1,165)	Johnny Dankworth (17,214)
Ruby Murray (503)	Ruby Murray (1,603)	Cliff Townsend (358)
Ray Martin (1,765)	Eve Boswell (720)	Ray Martin (7,009)
Eddie Calvert (4,960)	Ron Goodwin (552)	Philip Green Orch. (1,742)
Big Ben Banjo Band (1,019)	Barbara Lyon (270)	

Of the above 14 records, only one was profitable to Capitol. Two earned a few dollars, and 11 were losers. The following year, 1957, Capitol issued 18 British singles, again including at least a dozen which were No. 1 sellers in the U.K.:

Big Ben Banjo Band (5,644)	Ron Goodwin (564)	Ray Martin (1,549)
Barbara Lyon (-80)	Vipers (449)	Malcolm Vaughn (226)
Ronnie RONALDE (569)	Norrie PARAMOR (451)	Ronnie HILTON (78)
Ray Martin (1,380)	Eddie CALVERT (621)	Johnny DUNCAN (594)
Vipers (1,640)	Tommy WATTS (6,596)	Eve BOSWELL (322)
Eve Boswell (267)	Ron Goodwin (102,454)	Ron Goodwin (16,994)

The Goodwin hit was an orchestra single which sold virtually nothing in England but which attracted attention here. Over there it was titled "SKIPFLIN' STRINGS" and because that was meaningless here, we changed it to "SWINGIN' SWEETHEARTS." Again, the other issues were extremely disappointing as the figures indicate.

The year 1958 saw Capitol release 16 singles from the U.K., with these sales results:

Semprini (456)	Ruby Murray (164)	Michael Holliday (95)
Jim Dale (297)	Big Ben Banjo Band (2,160)	Bernard Bresslaw (4,858)
Laurie London (1,002,477)	Laurie London (33,083)	Cliff Richard (1,104)
Ron Goodwin (2,274)	Jim Dale (805)	Joy and David (85)
Don Lang (599)	Toni Dalll (14,277)	Ray Martin (659)
Do and Dena Farrell (112)		

The Laurie London entry was perhaps the biggest selling single in the industry, but unfortunately, he was strictly a one-shot artist and disappeared from the charts by the end of the year. You will note that Cliff Richard, who was and still is the Presley of England, failed to impress on his first record and a youngster named Jim Dale, who dominated the British charts with Richard that year, was a complete failure, failing to sell even 1,000 copies over here.

The year 1959 brought about 17 additional British singles including one by Peter Sellers which was a very big hit in England, another by Russ Conway, who was the hottest thing on records outside the U.S.A., and this is how they sold:

Laurie London (1,002)	Russ Conway (5,164)	Sharkey Todd (171)
Ron Goodwin (2,102)	Billie Anthony (42)	Ruby Murray (307)
Cliff Richard (566)	Ron Goodwin (-202)	Norrie Paramor (463)
Peter Sellers (138)	Teddy Johnson & Pearl Carr (-39)	The Four Jets (323)
Alma Cogan (132)	John Barry Seven (672)	Manuel (812)
Malcolm Vaughn (112)	The Drifters (Shadows) (109)	

Obviously, the year 1959 was a horribly disappointing period. Neither Laurie London nor Ron Goodwin could repeat their earlier successes and several of Britain's biggest stars continued to be failures here, including Richard, Ruby Murray, Malcolm Vaughn and Alma Cogan. As I recall, Capitol's year was saved by Franck Pourcel's French smash ("ONLY YOU") which neared the million mark in sales. It might also be pointed out that the COW album series continued to grow in consumer acceptance and company profits.

Because of the alarming disinterest in British singles experienced the previous year, in 1960 we issued only five more, but of the five Jordan and Bruce were both powerful No. 1 chart busters in U.K. Note how they fared here:

Eric Jupp
(3,570)

Tommy Bruce
(237)

Richard Allan
(84)

Jerry Jordan
(763)

Johnny Gavotte
(227)

Helen Shapiro's spectacular success, not only in England but throughout the world, was the big news of 1961. Over here, again Capitol was unable to establish her as a top-flight artist. Note that her first record sold 101 copies although it was No. 1 in charts from Singapore to Johannesburg to Glasgow on the green English Columbia label. In deference to Len Wood, we decided to "stay with her" and go all out to establish her as the first EMI artist of top stature in North America. Her second record did 3,365. By paying a few pennies bonus to every record shop sales girl in thousands of stores throughout the 50 states, Capitol pushed her third single up to nearly 19,000 but it was a phony "hype" and as Epic proved a couple of years later, the girl simply did not have the sound for success in the American market. Here is a review of the year:

Michael Hill
(1,418)

Nelson Keene
(65)

Cliff Bennett
(156)

Peter Sellers and
Sophia Loren
(186)

Alma Cogan
(154)

Helen Shapiro
(3,365)

Helen Shapiro
(101)

Helen Shapiro
(18,919)

I want to call particular attention to 1962. After I auditioned and scheduled four British singles, Joe Csida walked me down the street early in February and advised that in the future he would handle all 45 rpm releases from EMI companies throughout the world. Thus for the following seven months, we waited for new singles to be scheduled from Csida's New York office and not one ever was. By the time we advised EMI companies throughout the world that the scheduling of singles would resume from the Tower instead of New York, I was able to issue only one more record in 1962. It is obvious that this was the most disastrous year yet and in my opinion, EMI had every right to protest and complain that they were not getting a fair shake from Capitol.

Ricky Stevens
(125)

Helen Shapiro
(4,149)

Johnny De Little
(403)

Freddy Gardner
(3,693)

Mrs. Mills
(72)

The situation could only improve in 1963. During the depths of the 1962 depression, Management refused my urgent request that I visit England for a few days in an attempt to solidify our communications and improve other aspects of the Capitol-EMI A. & R. relationship. Our British contact no longer was Roland Rennie and I felt that the new man, Tony Palmer, did not understand our requirements and that only personal meetings would improve the situation. It was not until a year later, August of 1963, that I finally was allowed (after four years) to visit England, spend a lot of time with Palmer, Wood and EMI producers Ridley, Paramor, Martin and Newell. Today it is obvious that Capitol never would have reacquired the Beatles had I not been in London last August, nor would Capitol have gotten Frank Ifield, who although dormant today, sold a lot of singles and albums for us in a brief period of time. Oddly, at the time I was in England in 1963, Freddie and the Dreamers were sizzling hot and were consistent No. 1 chart toppers.

Here are the 1963 Capitol sales, bearing in mind that the Beatles' first single was issued 28 December:

Grazina (446)	Dick Kallman (1,370)	Frank Ifield (54,716)
Frank Ifield (71,666)	Johnny Kidd (96)	The Beatles (2,967,422)
Freddie & the Dreamers (105)		

The Beatles had originally been offered to Capitol more than a year previously. In a carton containing 17 other singles, I received "LOVE ME DO" and "P. S. I LOVE YOU," was not impressed, and so informed Tony Palmer by checking a 6 x 4 form and airmailing it back to him that same day. I have the carbon of this rejection along with the 17 other carbons as a museum piece which I will attach to this report. Several months later, in early 1963, Vee Jay accepted the record along with several other Capitol rejects but sold only a few, about 6,100, I was advised later. As the Beatles became more prominent in England, Vee Jay in May of 1963 issued a second single but it sold even more poorly than the first. In the summer of 1963, Vee Jay went bankrupt and Swan acquired the rights to the third American Beatles single. Apparently, it sold fewer than 1,000 copies and Swan had no further interest in the group. By the time I returned from England in August of 1963, it was apparent that the Beatles were the hottest thing England had ever encountered and when I learned that Swan had waived on the group, I then somewhat hysterically started urging Livingston, Gilmore and Dunn to exert every possible pressure on EMI and Epstein. Mainly, promises of a promotional campaign.

In 1964, Capitol not only has enjoyed fantastic success with the Beatles but great profits with Peter & Gordon and Cilla Black. Frank Ifield, in my opinion, no longer has a large sales potential and will be dropped. Since last June, all British singles have been auditioned by a committee from the A. & R. staff and it may be of interest to someone somewhere along the line that this week in England, "I'M INTO SOMETHING GOOD" by Herman's Hermits is No. 1 throughout the U.K. and is being rushed out here by MGM -- the first error to be made by the new committee! We have high hopes for a new British group, the Cherokees, who are No. 46 on the English charts this week and the committee feels that the Cresters and Shirley & Johnny have strong possibilities. Another group, the Zephyrs, we liked and I ordered their tape, but we learned their artist royalty was more than Capitol cares to pay.

You have the Beatles story above. Let's look at some of the others:
THE ANIMALS -- Their big "HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN" was their third single in England. The first two were failures. Capitol waived on the group when their first disc was submitted. It was called "BABY LET ME TAKE YOU HOME" (DB 7247) and did not sell any place in the world. "HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN" was never submitted to us because we have waived on the group on March 27th, 1964.

MANFRED MANN -- Similar situation. I waived on his "BROTHER JACK" September 3rd, 1963 and EMI could not place him anywhere. November 20th, I rejected Mann's "COCK-A-HOOP." EMI submitted him around again and got no bite.

In January of this year, Manfred Mann's "FIVE-FOUR-THREE-TWO-ONE" was offered to Capitol but Roland Rennie of Transglobal had already placed it elsewhere at the time Tony Palmer sent me a sample. The record was not very big in the U.S.A. but his succeeding records have been extremely successful.

GERRY AND THE PACEMAKERS -- I have no excuses here. I did not think the sound of the group was extraordinary and I still believe that out of the hundreds and hundreds of samples submitted featuring various combos, that Gerry is nothing special. I missed!

ROLF HARRIS -- This novelty singer from Australia was originally issued on Capitol. We got no response at all. After he migrated to England two or three years later, his masters wound up on Epic.

FRANK IFIELD -- Similar case. We issued him when he was an Australian star. No response. It took us four years to get him back again on the label, but meanwhile he had a smash, "I REMEMBER YOU" on Vee Jay.

THE SWINGIN' BLUE JEANS -- I missed on this group. They sounded like 983 other combos and they have enjoyed fair if not memorable success on a competitive American label.

BILLY J. KRAMER)
DAVE CLARK FIVE) -- In the case of these two groups I refuse to be the goat. When their first singles were submitted to Capitol, I started to get cables from London and phone calls from Rennie, who had moved to New York to operate Transglobal. Both demanded immediate decisions and rather than hang them up, I tried to be a good guy and waive on them, virtually without hearing their samples. We are allowed 30 days to make a decision but EMI frequently hustles us for a decision and in several cases, have cabled for a decision several days before the samples were received here.

The above are profit-making artists I have allowed to get away. I will herewith list just a few of the groups and combos submitted to Capitol in 1964 alone which we waived on, which were placed with other American companies and which failed, perhaps justifying our judgment and acumen: THE MESSENGERS, THE HEALEY SISTERS, THE CLEARWAYS, CHRIS FARLOW & THE THUNDERBIRDS, MARGO & THE MARVETTES,

THE NU-NOTES, THE COLLEGE BOYS, THE JUNIORS, THE SHOWTIMERS, THE WRANGLERS, THE NATURALS, THE MOQUETTES, THE INNOCENTS, TRENDSETTERS LIMITED, THE EXECUTIVES, MIKE SHERIDAN, LEE STIRLING & THE BRUISERS, THE JYX, THE LE ROYS, GEORGIE FAME, THE SINNERS, THE DOWLINERS SECT, THE HEARTS, THE U.K.'S, THE WHIRLWINDS, HOUSTON WELLS & THE OUTLAWS, CHRISTIAN'S CRUSADERS, LAURIE JAY COMBO, RICKY LIVID & THE TONE DEAPS, THE DRUIDS, TONY BROOK WITH THE BREAKERS, THE ORIGINELLS, THE VISCOUNTS, THE VALKYRIES, THE NATURALS, THE TRIPFIDS, TRENDSETTERS LIMITED, THE COUGARS, JOHNNY DOUGLAS & MANDOS SOUND, PAT WAYNE & THE BEACHCOMBERS, SAMMY KING & THE VOLTAIRS, SOUNDS INCORPORATED, SANDY & THE TEACHERS, THE TEXANS, THE ACES, TONY RIVERS & THE CASTAWAYS, KEITH POWELL & THE VALETS, THE MC KINDLEYS.

In fairness to EMI, may I conclude with a most emphatic observation that Capitol down through the years has never been willing to go out and spend money on British artists and try to promote them high on the charts as Capitol does with certain domestic talent. Up until the Beatles, it was an ordeal for me to try to get British, Italian, German and other imported singles on release -- sometimes I would wait several months. After release, Capitol did virtually nothing in the way of advertising or specialized efforts in the field. Our shipment of samples to disc jockeys was the only promotion medium utilized. Our exploitation of Cliff Richard was nil, although he was selling as many records during the Presley hysteria as Presley himself everywhere but the U.S.A. I am convinced we could have made Freddie and the Dreamers bigger than the Animals, Manfred Mann or Dave Clark, but we spent not a penny in his behalf. Until the Beatles came along there existed a depressing and hopeless apathy not only throughout our promotion and advertising personnel, but in our own A. & R. division as well. For several years it was obvious that only Glenn Wallichs had the slightest interest in our singles acquired from EMI, and he was in no position to demand high-powered exploitation.

There have been times when my judgment was bad and already we have proven that the committee system of auditioning is far from foolproof. On the brighter side, the company enthusiasm toward EMI singles is today the best it has ever been even though company attitude on our COW album line seems to be disintegrating.

It is obvious, although Management may not agree, that "in person" consultations between A. & R. personnel of London and Hollywood is vital. Going from 1959 through most of 1963 without any personal liaison no doubt had something to do with the incredibly poor sales figures of those years. England's Tony Palmer should be allowed to visit here occasionally and Capitol should visit London at least once annually to meet with all the many personnel at Manchester Square.

The future of the EMI-Capitol alliance is limitless, but it will require constant new procedures and new thinking. The record business is a hell of a lot different than it was even a short year ago.

Att.

1964 SALES FIGURES BY RELEASE

Frank Ifield (9,939)	Byron Lee (Ska) (346)	The Beatles (461,535)
Freddie & the Dreamers (250)	Cilla Black (121,500)	Shirley & Johnny (5,947)
The Beatles (976,444)	Peter and Gordon (306,139)	The Cresters (7,176)
Peter and Gordon (497,741)	The Beatles (1,210,740)	The Beatles (415,147)
Frank Ifield (6,408)	The Beatles (514,029)	Cilla Black (21,257)

The above artists' records were released prior to August 31st, and partial sales figures are available on them. The records listed below have been released since August 31st, and no figures are available on them as yet.

Richard Anthony

Peter and Gordon

Frank Ifield

The Cherokees (cancelled)

Cliff Bennett

ADDITIONAL ENGLISH SINGLES SUBMITTED TO CAPITOL IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS
WHICH WE REFUSED AND WHICH DID NOT SELL IN THE U.S.A. PROFITABLY

MIKE LE ROY
DEKE ARLO & THE OFF-BEATS
SALLY & THE ALLEY CATS
BARRY BARNETT
PETER HARVEY
BILL ODDIE
DON CHARLES
SAMMY KING
NOLA YORK
MARK RAYMOND
CHRIS RAYBURN
JONI ADAMS
DON CHARLES
BILLY BOYLE
LOU BENNETT
ANDEE SILVER
JEAN & THE STATESIDES
ROSEMARY SQUIRES
BOBBY TAYLOR
CEDRIC WEST
LAUREL AITKEN
JULIE ANDREWS
MADELINE BELL
IAN WALLACE
JUDD PROCTOR
ALAN CADDY
FORTYTWO BIG BAND
JESS CONRAD
EARL GUEST
DEV DOUGLAS
THE BEACHCOMBERS
THE FEDERALS
BOBIE ROYAL
DEKE ARSON
CARL BARON
THE BRUISERS
THE PARAMOUNTS
WOUT STEENHUIS
KEN THORNE-RAY DAVIES
THE CHEYNES
THE ROULETTES
THE MARKSMEN
STEVE LESTER
LITTLE JOHNNY STARR
RUPERT DAVIES
GRAHAM JAMES
SANDRA BROWNE
DEE CHAMP

RAY ANTON AND THE PEPPERMINT MEN
THE TWO OF CLUBS
BACK O'TOWN SYNCOPATORS
MIKE SARNE & THE LE ROYS
GLENDA COLLINS
LAURENCE HARVEY
BILLIE DAVIS
SIMON SCOTT
JACKIE LYNN
THE MASSED ALBERTS
CLINTON FORD
PATSY ANN NOBLE
KEN KIRKHAM
BERNARD GRIBBINS
DONALD PEERS
BERT WEEDON
ALAN DREW
HAMILTON KING
JOHNNY CHRISTIAN
DAVID KOSSOFF
BUSTER NOBLE
ROSS MC MANUS
JACKIE & JILL
BYRON LEE & THE DRAGONAIRES
CHRISTINE CAMPBELL
MANHATTAN BROTHERS
LESLEY DUNCAN
DUFFY POWER
THE FOUR SIGHTS
LINDA LAINE
THE CAMEOS
JULIE DE MARCO
THE LADY BIRDS
GUNILLA THORN
JIMMY CRAWFORD
JOAN SIMS
THE GEORGE BRADLEY BAND
FRANKIE DAVIDSON
RICHARD BOND
LANCE PERCIVAL
LEE CHEVIN
STEVE RACE & ORCHESTRA
THE ANTS
SHEILA SOUTHERN
DAVANI & THE D-MEN
GEOFF GODDARD-JOE MEEK
JULIE DRISCOLL