

Clyde McPhatter

Clyde Lensley McPhatter was the son of a minister. He was born in Durham, North Carolina in 1932 and raised in New Jersey. Clyde sang in the choir of his father's church until 1946 when he joined a professional gospel group.

Clyde became the lead singer for *Billy Ward's Dominos* in 1950. During Clyde's first year, the group recorded 3 top Rhythm and Blues hits, *Do Something for Me*, *I Am With You*, and *Sixty Minute Man*. *Sixty Minute Man* was also a hit on the Pop charts. From 1951 to 1952, Clyde recorded the top ten hits, *The Bells*, *These Foolish Things Remind Me of You*, *Have Mercy Baby*, and *I'd Be Satisfied*.

In 1953 Clyde formed his own group called *The Drifters* and recorded for *Atlantic Records*. The group consisted of *William Anderson*, *David Baldwin*, *David Baughan*, and *James Johnson*, all former members of the *Mount Lebanon Singers*. Some of the Drifters top hits were *Lucille*, *Money Honey*, *Honey Love*, *Such a Night*, *Whatcha Gonna do*, and *White Christmas*. The group disbanded after Clyde was drafted into the Army in 1954.

Clyde returned to the music business in 1955 with *Love Has Joined Us Together* which was number eight on the Rhythm and Blues charts and *A Lover's Question* which hit the top ten on the Pop charts. Clyde's singing style was a major influence on both *Sam Cooke* and *Elvis Presley*.

Clyde began recording for *Mercury Records* in 1960. He recorded just three hits on that label. They were *Ta Ta*, *I Never Knew* and *Crying Won't Help You Now*. By the mid 1960s Clyde's alcoholism began to catch up with him and his career started to go downhill.

Clyde McPhatter died of a heart attack on June 13, 1972. He was inducted into the *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame* in 1987.

Sources:

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
Atlanta Music Group (AMG)