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Roll Away

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Roll Away

by [countrycake](#) » Sun Feb 26, 2017 9:25 pm

I remember Dusty saying that she liked the phrase 'It's only time and the river', which appears in the lyrics of *Roll Away*.

The American author Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938) was mentioned during an obituary of someone else on the radio this evening. Amongst Wolfe's novels was *Of Time And The River*, published in 1935. I wonder if this novel title was the source of the phrase.

An earlier novel of Wolfe's was *Look Homeward Angel* (1929). This title was used by American songwriter Wally Gold for a song recorded in 1956 by, amongst others, Johnny Ray. I knew it from the 1964 recording by The Fortunes. Gold was a prolific and successful songwriter, counting *It's My Party* and *Hurting Each Other* among his hits.

Jim



[countrycake](#)

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Re: Roll Away

by [Sweetbaby](#) » Mon Feb 27, 2017 1:10 am



I'd be very surprised if the lyrics of *Roll Away* specifically cited the title of Wolfe's novel **Of Time & the River**: more likely it's an occurrence of an association of time and/or life with a flowing river which seems to be a longstanding metaphor in the universal consciousness. Of course Dusty's own songbook yields another example in the chorus of *It Goes Like It Goes*: another good example is Alan Parson's *Time* from 1981.

However Wolfe's novel's title IMHO may be confidently ID'd as the inspiration for another song: in 1960 Nat King Cole reached both the US and the UK Top 30 with *Time & the River* - written by Wally Gold! Wally seems to have had a predilection for literary titles: besides borrowing Wolfe titles for two of his songs, Wally had written a song entitled *Sweet Bird of Youth* - title from Tennessee Williams - which had been the precedent Nat King Cole single to *Time & the River*.

BTW - Wolfe borrowed the title of **Look Homeward Angel** from an earlier literary source, *Look homeward angel now, and melt with ruth* being a line in one of my favourite poems: John Milton's *Lycidas*.



[Sweetbaby](#)

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