

HMV's Iconic Dog Gets British Blue Plaque His Master's Voice Resonates Forever

Wednesday 29 October, 2014

Nipper – the HMV dog – an icon of global music – received his very own British Blue Plaque at a ceremony in London today (Tuesday October 28th).

The terrier cross breed – painted in 1899 with his ear to a wind up phonogram – featured on hundreds of millions of records produced by the company over more than a hundred years.

His place in the musical history of the country was marked at the ceremony, attended, by senior British Plaque Trust and HMV executives.

Nipper was universally loved in the world of music – with artists as varied as Elvis and great classical performers – posing with his image.

The plaque is to receive a permanent position at the Cavalry and Guards Club, 127 Piccadilly, London – the site where artist Francis Barraud (the son of the original owner) painted Nipper from memory.

By the 1890s, Disc gramophones had begun to appear and by 1902 the forerunner to HMV, the Gramophone Company, was taking shape. In February 1907 they built a factory at Hayes, for making records. These were sold in music shops and other retailers, with the Company opening the very first store under the HMV name.

The store was on HMV's current site in Oxford Street, a former men's clothing shop, and was opened by the composer Edward Elgar in July 1921.

By the 30s, the HMV and Marconiphone names also began to feature on radio and television sets made at the Hayes factory, while in 1931 the Gramophone Company, with its His Master's Voice record label, merged with the Columbia Gramophone Company to form Electric and Musical Industries Ltd...EMI....meaning that Nipper would not only feature on the HMV label but also over the years, on associated brands, EMI, RCA Victor, the Talking Machine Company, JVC and Deutsche Grammophon.

About the British Plaque Trust

The British Plaque Trust raises funds for the presentation of plaques to commemorate personalities and/or organisations who have contributed to the British way of life; to assist in promoting British culture and history by making grants of money in order to offer financial support and other services to charities, organisations or individuals as voted for by the Trustees.

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