

A PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO
**THE GEAR OF
THE BRITISH
INVASION**

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Greetings, fellow tone hounds! Last week, we discussed some of the biggest bands behind the British Invasion, their gear, and why they are important to the overall sound that defined this incredible time period in the history of rock n' roll. This week, we are going to

go more in-depth on the stories behind the gear that defined a lot of these musician's sounds. Whether it be brash, vocal, sweet or fuzzy, we here at *Tone Report* have got it all covered. Let's dive right in!

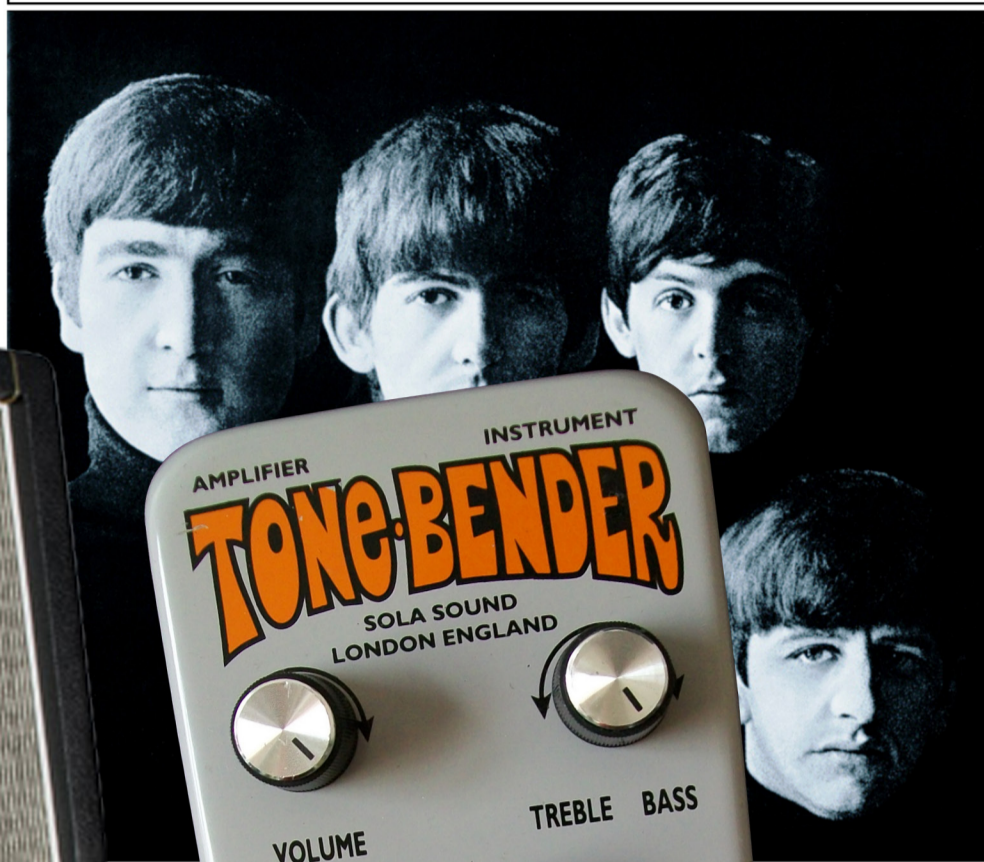
PART TWO

KINKS



MEET THE BEATLES!

The First Album by England's Phenomenal Pop Combo



[HIWATT]

Hiwatt was the brainchild of former Mullard employee Dave Reeves, and is known until today to be one of the toughest, baddest, loudest, meanest, and cleanest amplifiers. Their unmistakably British character of a punchy and thick response was one of the signature sounds that helped drive the British Invasion across the ocean. Dave Reeves and his family had close relationships with many of the users of the amps, and there are stories of the guys from The Who, Pink Floyd, Jethro Tull, and many other big names hanging out in the Reeves family living room! Behind many of the biggest acts of the '60s and '70s you will undoubtedly see that familiar white badge. Unfortunately, Dave Reeves suddenly passed away in 1981, leaving the company in limbo and sending the Reeves family into a spiral of lawsuits and generally dirty dealings. The "official" name has switched names

and owners more times than anyone can count, and is now in the hands of Music Ground in the UK. These "official" amps however, while not being bad amps, are not built to the same standard as the Dave Reeves originals. There are many unsolicited "clones" of vintage Hiwatt amps claiming to get you that classic tone only a vintage Hiwatt can provide, however there is only one endorsed and approved by the Dave Reeves family, which is Hi-Tone Amplification, out of Columbus, Indiana.

Users of Hiwatt amps: Pete Townshend, David Gilmour, Keith Emerson (used them to power his Hammonds and Leslies), Jethro Tull (both Glenn Cornick and Martin Barre used Hiwatts on a good chunk of Jethro Tull's discography until the '80s.)



PINK FLOYD



STEREO
JETHRO TULL



HIWATT

HIWATT



HIWATT

CUSTOM HIWATT 100

HIWATT

HIWATT

[MARSHALL]

From the humble beginnings of a drum shop owner and instructor, Jim Marshall is known today as the Father of Loud for his incredible contributions to the world of rock n' roll and his subsequent solidification in the pop culture lexicon. Behind many giants of the six strings you will find his last name emblazoned in white across walls of speakers. The Marshall amplifier was originally conceived when Jim Marshall thought he could make a cheaper and more reliable version of the expensive American amps Fender was making across the pond. Marshall and his partners started out with a Fender Bassman circuit, and tweaked it until they reached what we know today as the Marshall sound (not surprisingly, many of the early Marshall amps were almost identical to the Bassman!) Many guitarists at the time were not satisfied with the tonal and volume constraints of the current offerings of the amp market,

and Jim Marshall's offering of volume and a "new sound" very much appealed to them. That new sound was his very first amp, the JTM45 (named after Jim and his son, Terry Marshall). With loads of midrange and a fat, almost syrupy attack, the Marshall amplifier reverberated throughout concert halls and arenas across the world from its inception in 1963, and arguably drove rock n' roll from teeny bopper to full-on testosterone-laced rebellion. (The British Invasion was driven by Hiwatt and Marshall, their tonal character is at the heart of some of the most coveted tones to this date.) Until this very day, Marshall amps are found on almost every backline across the world, still fueling some of the biggest and most powerful bands across almost every genre.

Users of Marshall amps: Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page, Rory Gallagher

LED ZEPPELIN

STEREO

STEREO
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As you experienced

FRESH CREAM



Marshall

Marshall



[VOX]

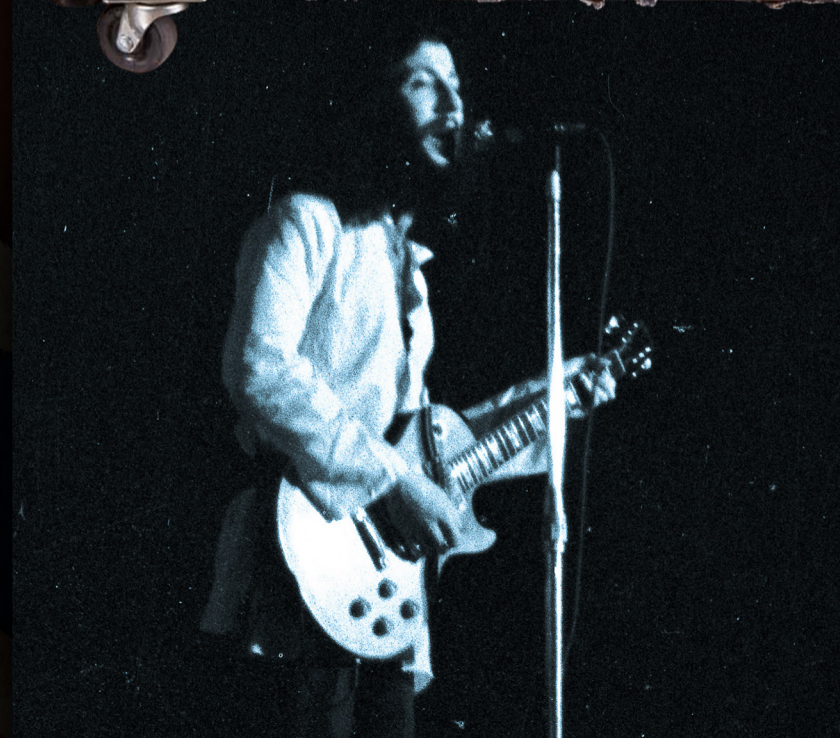
The Jennings Organ Company, or Vox as we know it today, was formed from the ashes of World War II. Dick Dennings (who would later invent some of the most endearing guitar technology for JMI/Vox), a backline guitar player during the war in big bands, approached Mr. Jennings with a prototype guitar amp that would become the Vox AC15. After having the AC15 out for a few years, like many music companies at the time, they were pressured to keep up with the louder and more powerful offerings across the pond from Fender. So they doubled the power of the AC15 and later added the famed "Top Boost" circuit, solidifying the classic design of the AC30 that we know today, and subsequently becoming another driving force behind the sound and power of the British Invasion. The AC30 went through very few changes throughout the years, although in the late '60s they opted for solid-state rectification instead of tube, which, among

other changes to cut manufacturing costs, alienated some guitarists. However, Vox still remains to have a heavy-handed influence up there with Marshall and Hiwatt to sculpting the sound of the British Invasion. The Beatles, The Shadows, The Yardbirds, The Kinks, and countless other acts used and continue to use this amp, and many modern bands and artists inspired by the early sounds of the British Invasion such as Radiohead, Muse, and John Scofield continue to use and enjoy the AC30s. Not only was Vox known for creating one of the most endearing British amps, they are also credited with being one of the first suppliers of wah pedals in Britain, and almost every wah sound you hear on British records from the '60s and '70s were Vox branded wah pedals.

Users of the Vox AC30: Camel, The Beatles, The Yardbirds, Hank Marvin & The Shadows, Peter Green



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[MAESTRO/ COLORSOUND]

The Maestro FZ-1, or Fuzz Tone, was the very first commercially available transistorized guitar effect. There is some debate over its exact conception, and the stories vary, but according to *AnalogMan's Guide to Vintage Effects*, a Nashville engineer by the name of Glenn Snotty came up with the concept for the very first fuzz box, when trying to emulate the fuzzy, distorted sound a broken channel on his mixing console gave him. He later showed his prototype design to someone at Gibson and you can guess what happened next. After the release of the Rolling Stones's "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," the demand for fuzz exploded, and everyone and their mothers wanted a fuzz pedal. Like many other chapters in this story, legions of manufacturers predictably set out to cash in on this craze, leading to many different flavors of fuzz all over the market. On the other side of the pond however, the FZ-1, like a lot of American gear, was incredibly

expensive, and the Macari brothers of London set out to "approximate" the Fuzz Tone, have it more readily available in the UK. That design (which is rumored to be originally conceived by none other than Vox/JMI engineer Dick Dennings) became the Tone Bender, marketed under the Sola Sound brand, which later became Colorsound. From about 1964 onward, there were many other popular fuzzes at the time in both the US and the UK, but perhaps the most influential is that famous metal smiley face that was born from the Dallas-Arbiter merger in England, the Fuzz Face.

Popular uses of the FZ-1 and Tone Bender:

The Rolling Stones – "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" (*Out of Our Heads* – 1965), FZ-1

Jeff Beck Group – "Beck's Bolero" (*Truth* – 1968), Tone Bender

Yardbirds – "Heart Full of Soul" (*Having a Rave Up With The Yardbirds* – 1965), Tone Bender



[CLYDE MCCOY WAH]

There are many differing opinions on how the wah was actually conceived, so I again decided to dive into one of my favorite books, *AnalogMan's Guide to Vintage Effects*, to really find out the story behind the conception of this seminal guitar pedal. It was introduced around 1967, and was originally marketed towards horn and trumpet players to do away with the need for a mute (much to the chagrin of the original designer, who was a guitar player and meant it to be used for guitar). However, the inventor of the original wah pedal was Del Casher, a session musician who was asked to be a Vox endorsee, and later became an engineer for Vox. He was toying with the Q section of the Vox amp, and subsequently created the wah pedal we know today, which in essence is a sweepable low-pass or band pass filter with a bit of resonance, which creates that vocal tone. This first wah was named the Clyde McCoy,

who was a trumpet player famous for his use of mutes. While it didn't really catch on for its originally marketed purpose, guitar players on both sides of the pond snapped up this cool new sound, and it made its way to the forefront of many guitar solos in the '60s.

Examples: Jeff Beck Group – "I Ain't Superstitious" (*Truth* - 1968)

Cream – "White Room" (*Wheels of Fire* – 1968)

Funkadelic – "Maggot Brain" (*Maggot Brain* – 1971) **While not a song from the British Invasion, I find this soulful and powerful 10 minute solo by guitarist Eddie Hazel almost always necessary to mention when talking about the wah pedal. There are many legends as to how this incredible solo came to fruition, and you can do well to look them up yourself, but the fact remains that this solo remains a poignant statement to the sheer emotion created by this one effect.

