

# Nipper in the Jungle

BY ALEX  
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ONE OF THE world's most recognizable logos is that of Nipper, the little black and white fox terrier, head cocked, that peers perplexedly into the horn of a phonograph as a record is played. Painted in the 1890s by Francis

Johnson was a businessman with a strong sense of civic ethics who used his wealth to fund a number of philanthropic causes, including a park in Camden, the University of Pennsylvania, and in particular, its Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. In 1931 he became the Chairman of the Museum's Board of Managers. His interests in the Museum were varied, funding expeditions to Central and South America, buying important Chinese collections, and even offering to pick up a monolithic statue from Easter Island with his yacht (a deal that fell through when the trip did not take place).

Barraud, a British landscape painter, and titled "His Master's Voice," the logo was adopted in 1901 as the trademark of the Victor Talking Machine Company of Camden, New Jersey. This company was founded by Eldridge Reeves Johnson (1867–1945), who developed and patented a spring motor that made possible the mass-production of phonographs. Through the recordings of the famous tenor Enrico Caruso and other artists of the time, his company became a household name. Eventually, however, the stress of protracted lawsuits over patents persuaded Johnson to sell the company, with the trademark, to RCA in 1927.



For the 1931 expedition to Mato Grosso, Brazil, Johnson provided an airplane to help the team find villages in unexplored areas of the Amazonian jungle where the famous British explorer, Colonel Percy H. Fawcett, had disappeared in 1925. His son E. R. Fenimore also participated in the project. It was Fenimore who brought along his own fox terrier, as well as a small brass casting of Nipper, to be offered as a present or a trade item to the Indians of the area. Thus the dog from "His Master's Voice" appeared even farther afield than the company's top salesmen could have imagined. 🐕

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The label from an early phonographic recording showing the iconic logo of "His Master's Voice."



The Mato Grosso Expedition of 1931. E. R. Fenimore Johnson, holding his fox terrier, Tupi, talks to Vincenzo Petruccio, the project's Scientific Director, in front of the expedition airplane, a Sikorsky S-38 amphibian. UPM Neg. 25618.



The Tsuva lived along the Xingu River in the heart of the Amazon. Though they had rarely, if ever, seen European Americans before and were unlikely to start playing the popular music of the time, prominent members of their group were nonetheless soon sporting the latest symbols of capitalist and technological progress—a spear or staff capped with the brass Nipper. UPM Neg. 27670.