

## The Vacuum Tube

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## A Celebration Of Tube Brands

The U. S. tube industry, more than any other, featured a panoramic diversity of brand names. These represented the manufacturers, large and small; the set makers; and a host of private brands used by regional distributors. The hugely successful 201A appeared under 600+ names in the '20s-'30s. RCA is known to have supplied tubes under 250+ private brands in the '30s and later.



As with any consumer product, the marketers strove for brand identities that conveyed an image of value and effectiveness. Here are some clusters of names with particular associations.

"Dynes": Aerodyne, Anodyne, Electrodyne, Kinodyne, Magnadyne.

"Tones": Bell-Tone, Bestone, Brilliantone, Claritone, Clearatone, Goldentone, Goldtone, Good Tone, Grand Tone, Keentone, Klearatone, Kleen Tone, Klear Tone, Live-Tone, Mastertone, Melotone, Nutone, Nutron, Operatone, Pep Tone, Perfectone, Powertone, Pur-A-Tone, Qualitone, Radiotone, Real-Tone, RY-TONE, Silvertone, Supertone, Tripletone, Unitone, Wavetone, Weltone, Wonder-Tone.

"Trons": Actron, Airtron, Alltron, Amertron, Amplitron, AudioTron, Aratron, Archatron, Arco-tron, Arcatron, Atron, Bostron, Claritron, Cleartron, Delatone, Detectron, Detron, Dextron, Diatron, Dis-X-Tron, Distatron, Duotron, Duratron, Dynetron, Echotron, Econotron, Elektron, Elitetrion, Empire-

Tron, Esetron, Etron, EurekaTron, Exceltron, Fastron, Findtron, Fultone, Greentron, Heliotron, Hi-Constron, Hubtron, Hytron, Icatron, Imperialtron, Lectron, Magictron, Magnatron, Mellotron, Monotron, Musiktron, Neotron, Nepton, Novatron, Oscillotron, Peertron, Perfectron, Philotron, Phonotron, Pilotron, Playtron, Purotron, Quadrotron, Q. V. Tron, RA-DEX-TRON, Radiotron, Raytron, Rextron, Royaltron, Solartron, Sonatron, Supertron, Syntron, Tectron, Teletron, Teltron, Thermotron, Trio Tron, Triple Tron, Urekatron, Vactron, Voltron, Valutron, Vultron, Westron.

*Tough Guys*: Champion, Commander, Conqueror, Courier, Crusader, Defender, Dictator, Kadette, Leader, Legion, Pace Setter, Pioneer, Trail Blazer, Victor, Viking.

*Noble Titles*: Admiral, Air King, Aristocrat, Emperor, Imperial, Knight, Master, Premier, Regal, Regent, Rextron, Royal, Sovereign.

*Antiquities:* Ajax, Apollo, Atlas, Diana, Hercules, Jove, Neptune, Marathon, Mercury, Neptune, Odeon, Plato, Samson, Sparton, Titan, Titania, Trojan, Troy, Venus, Vesta.

*Natural Features:* Arcturus, Bright Star, Comet, Crescent, Eclipse, Golden Comet, Meteor (forgetting how fast meteors burn out!), Rainbow, Skyline, Star, Sun, Sunlight.

*Geographic Concepts:* Atlantis, Bay State, Blazing Trail, Boston, Cambridge, Coast to Coast, Continental, Denmark, Dixie, Everest World Top, Gibraltar, Globe, National, Panama, Paramount, Peak, Western, Zenith.

*Weapons:* Armor, Arrow, Golden Shield, Shieldplate.

*Price Symbols:* Buck, Dollar, Econtron, True Value.

*Explorers and Leaders:* Boone, Coronado, Franklin, Jackson, Lafayette, La Salle, Lafayette, Lee, Lincoln, Lord Baltimore, The Leader, Travis

*Captains of Industry:* Atwater Kent, Crosley, Cunningham, Daven, Grunow, Kellogg, Kilbourne & Clark, Moorhead, Mullard, Muntz, Musselman, Myers, Perryman, Philips, Rogers (Can.), Sarkes Tarzian, Schickerling, Stromberg-Carlson, Tobe, Westinghouse, Wurlitzer, Zetka

*Men of Science:* De Forest, Donle, Kelvin, Marconi, McCullough, Weston

*High Performers:* Action, Advance, Airmaster, Aladdin, All Star, Apex, Bull Dog, Champion, Duro, Duratron, Dynamic, Endurance, Eveready, Iroquois, Majestic, Maximus, Navigator, Pace Setter, Pioneer, Ranger, Sturdy, Vim, Wearwell

*Radio Stations:* KMA, WDRC, WLS

*Things That Fly:* Aerodyne, Airhawk, Blue Bird, Bumblebee, Eagle, Oriole, Sea Gull, Songbird.

*Value Symbols:* Ace, Acme, Bond, Buck, Certified, Diamond, Dollar, Double Life, Econotube, Eldorado, Gem, Gold Bond, Gold Medal, Guaranteed, Jewel, Par, Silver, Surety, True Value

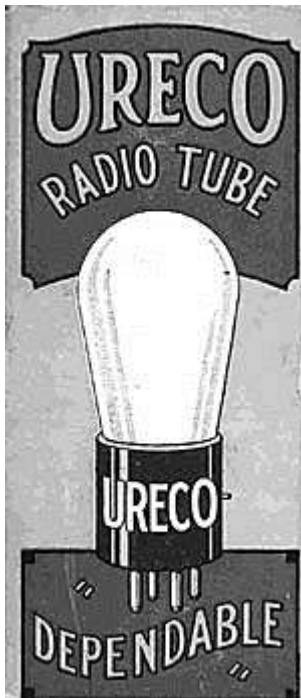
*Musical Concepts:* Concert, Concert Master, Harmonique, Harp, Lyric, Minuet, Mozart, Vox

*Store Chains:* Field's, Macy's, Meier & Frank, Pep Boys, Wards, Wardwear

*Chemicals and Elements:* Argon, Neon, Sodion, Thoria

*Vegetables:* Bluebell, Blue Grass, Clover, Shamrock

A freaky brand was "Cecilian," from the Esetroc Mfg. Co. in Newark. "Esetroc" looks like "Cortese" spelled backward, so



the brand name may have been a play on national origin! The British and European makers were much more staid in their choices of names. The Japanese tube companies played the American game to some extent, with brands like Applotron, Cymotron, Don, Eastron, Kingtron, K. O. Tron, Orion, Rex, Robin, Suntron, Sterling, and Victron.

#### NEW BOOK AVAILABLE

*Radio Waves*, the journal of the Historical Radio Society of Australia, carried "The Valve Box," a series of 16 articles by Fin Stewart in the late '90s. Stewart is known to AWA readers by his article on Australian tube companies in Vol. 6 of the *Review*, and by two chapters of the "Valve Box" series printed in the *OTB* in 1999-2000.

One of the characteristics of the radio and tube markets in much of the world was that British, European, and U. S. manufacturers competed in it. So authors like John Stokes in New Zealand and Stewart in Australia had to be "fluent" in tubes from all sources. The result is a rich world view. Stewart's series covered tube-development history, with products from Germany, Holland, Britain, France, the rest of Europe, and the U. S. He devoted specialized coverage to Arcturus and Western Electric. The set constitutes an insightful and entertaining "read."

Now he has assembled the full series into a book. It's 97 pages in A4 (8 1/2" x 11") format, xeroxed and comb-bound. It's available for US \$25, air postage included, from Fin Stewart, "Cockerdale," 380 Bulga Rd., Wingham, NSW 2429, Australia. He can be reached at [ferowatte.m.380@bigpond.com](mailto:ferowatte.m.380@bigpond.com), and PayPal payment can be sent to [cockerdale1@bigpond.com](mailto:cockerdale1@bigpond.com).

#### MORE COLLECTIONS?

A while back this column featured a story on the tube collection of Bob Deuel, K2GLO. It would be valuable to write up other such collections, as each tube enthusiast has his own ideas of what to acquire and how to display it. The very nature of tube display is evolving, with the arrival of Web-based photo galleries. Two prominent examples are Jeremy Harmer's "Virtual Valve Museum" (<http://www.tubecollector.org>) and Norm Wilson's "Transmitting Tube Museum" (<http://n6jv.us>). These provide an educational outreach that is lacking in conventional private displays, allowing anyone to check up on odd or rare tubes. Collectors who would like to share the news of their collections, in physical or Web-page form, via this column are welcome to contact the writer at

[tubelore@jeffnet.org](mailto:tubelore@jeffnet.org) or (541) 855-5207 begin\_of\_the\_skype\_highlighting (541) 855-5207 FREE end\_of\_the\_skype\_highlighting.