## British Rock n Roll Anthology (2009)

CD1: *01. Tommy Steele & The Steelmen - Rock With The Caveman 02. Lonnie Donegan - Cumberland Gap 03. Jim Dale - Be My Girl 04. Lord Rockingham's XI - Hoots Mon! 05. Marty Wilde - A Teenager In Love 06. Johnny Kidd & The Pirates - Shakin' All Over 07. Adam Faith - Poor Me* play *08. Joe Brown & The Bruvvers - A Picture Of You 09. The Viscounts - Who Put The Bomp (In The Bomp Bomp Bomp) 10. Jet Harris - Man With The Golden Arm 11. Tommy Bruce & The Bruisers - Ain't Misbehavin' 12. Eden Kane - Well I Ask You 13. Billy Fury - Wondrous Place 14. The Tornados - Telstar 15. Chris Farlowe - Air Travel 16. Tom Jones - Chills And Fever 17. The High Numbers - I'm The Face 18. Joe Cocker - I'll Cry Instead 19. The Beatles - Ain't She Sweet* CD2: *01. Lonnie Donegan - Rock Island Line 02. Marion Ryan - Why Do Fools Fall In Love 03. Terry Dene - Start Movin' (In My Direction) 04. Colin Hicks - Wild Eyes And Tender Lips 05. Tommy Steele & the Steelmen - Tallahassee Lassie 06. Marty Wilde - Bad Boy 07. Joe Brown & the Bruvvers - Darktown Strutters Ball 08. Jet Harris - Besame Mucho (Kiss Me) 09. The Brook Brothers - Warpaint 10. Cliff Bennett & The Rebel Rousers - You've Got What I Like*
play
*11. Davy Jones - Amapola 12. Helen Shapiro - Don't Treat Me Like A Child 13. The Shadows - Wonderful Land 14. Bern Elliot & The Fenmen - Money 15. Dave Berry - My Baby Left Me 16. Wayne Fontana & The Mindbenders - Hello Josephine 17. The Animals - Baby Let Me Take You Home*
CD3:
*01. Frankie Vaughan - Green Door 02. Lonnie Donegan - Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O 03. Anthony Newley - Idle On Parade 04. Terry Dene - Pretty Little Pearly 05. Marty Wilde - Endless Sleep 06. Craig Douglas - Nothin' Shakin' 07 Billy Fury - Maybe Tomorrow 08. Mort Shuman - Turn Me Loose 09. The Jetstreams - Bongo Rock*
play
*10. Eden Kane - Get Lost (In My Arms) 11. Lyn Cornell - I Sold My Heart To The Junkman 12. Nero & The Gladiators - Entry Of The Gladiators 13. Jimmy Powell - Sugar Babe [Part 2] 14. Cyril Davies - Country Line Special 15. Georgie Fame - Do The Dog 16. Jimmy Justice - Bloodshot Eyes 17. The Marauders - That's What I Want 18. The Mojos - Everything's Alright 19. The Spencer Davis Group – Dimples*
CD4:
*01. Tony Crombie & The Rockets - Teach You To Rock 02. Four Jones Boys - Tutti Frutti 03. Frankie Vaughan - These Dangerous Years 04. The Southlanders - The Mole In The Hole 05 Joey Castell - I'm Left, You're Right, She's Gone 06. Wee Willie Harris - Love Bug Crawl 07.*

*Ted Heath & His Music - Tequila 08. Vince Eager & The Vagabonds - Yea Yea 09. Tommy Steele & The Steelmen - Come On, Let's Go 10. Sally Kelly - Little Cutie 11. The Viscounts - Shortnin' Bread*
*play*
*12. Rhet Stoller - Chariot 13. Louise Cordet - I'm Just A Baby 14. Lee Diamond & The Cherokees - I'll Step Down 15. Jet Harris & Tony Meehan - Diamonds 16. Steve Marriott - Give Her My Regards 17. The Dennisons - Walking The Dog 18. The Undertakers - Just A Little Bit 19. Rod Stewart - Good Morning Little Schoolgirl*
CD5:
*01. Tommy Steele & The Steelmen - Singing The Blues 02. Frankie Vaughan - Seventeen 03. The Goons - Bloodnok's Rock 'n' Roll Call 04. Petula Clark - Baby Lover 05. Lord Rockingham's XI - Wee Tom 06. Marty Wilde - Honeycomb 07. Most Brothers - Whole Lotta Woman 08. Wee Willie Harris - Rockin' At The Two I's 09. Terry Dene - Baby She's Gone 10. Vince Taylor & The Playboys - Brand New Cadillac 11. The Viscounts - Rockin' Little Angel 12. Lonnie Donegan - Have A Drink On Me 13. Joe Brown & The Bruvvers - I'm Henry The Eighth I Am 14. Billy Fury & The Four Jays - That's Love (Alt. Take)*
*play*
*15. Peter Jay & The Jaywalkers - Can Can 62 16. Casey Howie & The Seniors - True Fine Mama 17. The Big Three - Some Other Guy 18. Lulu & The Luvvers – Shout*

As much as anything, this box set charting the development of British pop from 1956 to 1964 confirms that the medium is indeed the message.

Such a stranglehold did the BBC wield on radio back then that alongside some genuinely innovative and exciting moments – from "Rock Island Line" to "Telstar", "Shakin' All Over" to "Shout" – these five discs are littered with the establishment-sanctioned, sanitised pap that the Beeb deemed appropriate for the nation's youth. It seems absurd that Fifties teens were expected to groove to housewives' favourite Frankie Vaughan, big-band holdover Ted Heath, or the novelty songs with which the airwaves were stuffed (significantly, the first rock'n'roll hit was not Tommy Steele's "Rock With The Caveman", as often assumed, but "Bloodnok's Rock'n'Roll Call" by The Goons). But creativity burst out regardless amongst the young, well represented by sparkling contributions from Lonnie Donegan, Joe Brown, Billy Fury, Tom Jones, Joe Meek and of course The Beatles, captured in the first flush of "Ain't She Sweet". The beat-boom's origins in R&B are illustrated via the likes of Joe Cocker, Cyril Davies, Georgie Fame, The Animals and Rod Stewart; but it's hard to ignore the absence of anything by Cliff Richard or the Stones. --- Andy Gill, independent.co.uk

If you are looking for a collection which includes, in the sleevenote writer's words "almost every area in British rock music's rise ... from Big Bands to the Beatles" then this may well be it.

Admittedly, not every single track on this 5 CD set of homegrown rock'n'roll will make the liver quiver, the knees freeze and the bladder splatter (Little Richard's infallible tripartite test for the real thing), but for the average listener - and especially at such a bargain price - this collection provides an excellent overview of the pre-Beatles British rock era, illuminating that time, from the mid fifties onwards, when the likes of Lionel Bart, penning ersatz rock'n'roll hits for the likes of Tommy Steele and Anthony Newley, started the ball rolling for the Fabs.

There are key hits from almost all the major figures, and the emphasis is firmly on rockin': Newley's Idle on Parade is selected, for example, rather than a ballad. Those who came to fame via the 2 I's coffee bar are well represented, of course - Wee Willie Harris's tribute to the place, Rockin' at the 2 I's is present and correct.

Given the number of public domain fifties compilations out there, it's worth noting that this is issued by a major company, Universal, and sound quality is very good. It also comes with a booklet giving a picture of the music scene of that period.

And to entice those who may have bought much of this before there are a few comparative rarities and non-hits now of historical importance including early Tom Jones (Chills and Fever), pre-Who (the High Numbers' I'm the Face), a Joe Cocker Beatles cover which never made it (and isn't all that good: I'll Cry Instead), songwriter Mort Shuman's version of Turn Me Loose and young Rod Stewart's take on Good Morning Little Schoolgirl.

Also of particular note in among the covers of American material is an authentic British rock classic, Shakin' All Over, by Johnny Kidd and the Pirates, not to mention Vince Taylor's Brand New Cadillac. Even the Goons' Bloodnok's Rock'n'Roll Call is included, which suggests a degree of wit on the compiler's part (and unlike the Ying Tong Song it swings).

Among the inevitable covers, the Ted Heath Orchestra's take on the Champs' Tequila is not the equal of the original, but it is enjoyable. And in addition to a few inferior copies, you get the odd intriguing version of an American original, such as Marion Ryan's swinging take on Why Do Fools Fall in Love? Lord Rockingham's 11 were a group of jazzers sending up this new rock'n'roll fad - although such is the exhuberance of Hoots Mon! who really cares? I notice, too, that Joe Brown is well represented, which is as it should be - he held his own when the Beatles were on the bill - and in fact the only major omission that I can think of is Sir Cliff's Move It, but that is easily available elsewhere.

To sum up: in terms of price and range of music covered, a very good introduction for the non-specialist. If you are only interested in a particular genre or label, there are other compilations which will do the trick; the aim of this set, as sleevewriter Dave McAleer says, is to "include almost every area in British rock music's rise" even if that includes novelty numbers and "a few somewhat dated or carefully cloned covers" in among "outstanding original rock songs, instrumentals, teen beat/pop rock, early British R&B and Merseybeat."

Please be clear, therefore, that I am awarding the collection five stars on that basis, not because I cherish each and every track.

For those who want to explore the background further, Andrew Ings' Rockin' at the 2i's Coffee Bar, recently issued in paperback, has testimony from stars and fans, and Spencer Leigh's Halfway to Paradise draws on many hours of interviews with peformers and managers of the period. --- Pismotality, amazon.com

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