

PERKINS BACON TRADE SAMPLE PRINTS

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PRINTED MARCH, 1929. COPY OF PRINT MADE IN 1902.
PERKINS, BACON & Co., Ltd.

A Perkins, Bacon Trade Sample Sheet

This article is being written for the benefit of the collector inexperienced in the art of engraved die making. Hopefully it will save him from the blandishments of recently arrived and self proclaimed EXPERT dealers and auctioneers. In Canada, and more recently in the U.S.A., there has arisen a group of new dealers who have lately acquired (at unbelievable prices) the remnants of the Harry Nissen vaults. This material, comprised of things that Harry had not disposed of himself, came originally from the files of the Perkins Bacon firm, which went under in 1936.

A wealth of proofs, art work, trial runs and file remainders was acquired, too much to be dispensed in large quantities, and Harry wisely doled it out sparsely over a period of time. When final disposal came at the hands of another dealer and auctioneer, thoughtful distribution was abandoned and mass disposal to quickly realize profit flooded the market with excess material. The gullible and unknowledgable dealers who purchased the remainders liked the sweet talk of the seller, and now we have a market full of badly described and falsely imputed proof material.

What am I referring to is, of course, the Perkins Bacon Trade Samples. Today these novices are calling them reprinted die proofs. To unravel this misuse of words one can do three things: first, read this article; second, if this article intrigues you, read the synopsis on the Trade Sample sheets in the author's book *The Pence Issues of Newfoundland*, recently published by the Vincent G. Greene Philatelic Foundation of Toronto (and being sold today by some of the very dealers and auctioneers involved). A whole chapter is devoted to this subject, along with detailed information on Plate X, which was not available when the next item was written; third, if you desire still more detail, the author wrote a lengthy article, *A Preliminary Report on the Perkins Bacon Trade Sample Sheets of 1902 and Later*, which included detailed descriptions of the many papers and colours involved. This article was run in the May, June and July 1968 issues, Volume 82-No's 5, 6, & 7 of the *American Philatelist*. The information gathered by reading any or all of these articles will dispell any doubt about the origination of the items called "Reprinted Die Proofs".



PRINTED MAY, 1929. REPRINTS OF SPECIMENS PRINTED 1902 1919.
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Plate 1A, Showing Defacement

A word about die making in the mid 1880's. This was the period of the line engraved die, and the masters who created these wonderful designs. The engravers worked with their own special tools, which were able to cut deep or shallow lines in a specially prepared soft block of hardenable iron. These lines, when filled with ink which would then transfer to a suitable impressable piece of soft board or paper, left the engraved impression in the form of raised ink on the board. After the engravers work was finished and the design approved, marking lines were often added to make multiple transfers to a SOFT plate possible. The die was then hardened and finished die proofs taken. Prior to this stage, the engraver would from time to time make proofs, for observation of his own work and to make corrections possible.

How then to transfer this marvelous work to a plate with multiple impressions? A soft roller was firmly pressed into the hardened die by rolling back and forth. If unneeded raised lines resulted (don't forget, the roller would have the reverse condition-raised instead of cut, lines) they would be removed by trimming to roller height. With the roller in satisfactory condition, it too was hardened and the resultant raised image transferred to multiple impressions on the soft plate. After all the items had been impressed, this plate was also hardened (for stamps, but not always for Trade Sample Sheets) and sent to the press room where the printed replicas were made.

This short course in plate making will

give the reader a reasonable background from which to judge if the reproductions from a plate, reprinted or not, can in any way be considered DIE PROOFS.

Illustrated in this article are two of the plates from which the Trade Samples emerge. On plate 1A you will note that most of the value tablets have been defaced. This type of defacement exists only on this particular plate, and a few post usage die proofs of the 8d in black (circa 1929). This also brings to mind that, with one exception, the die proofs were never on any other paper than soft board and a greyish white medium paper for the 1d and 3d. (The exception - a single 1 shilling orange on laid paper.) All of these are extremely rare. The original dies are presently in the trophy room of the Royal Philatelic Society in London. They have been rendered useless by surface scratches purposely made, however they in no way bear defacements in any way resembling Plate 1A.

The Trade Sample sheets were originally prepared for the Herts Philatelic Society, to embellish their annual banquet menus. They were the vehicle from which defaced die proofs were made. This later was expanded so as to give the Monarch some undefaced imperforate examples, in muted colours, of the previously existing stamps.

After World War I additional sheets were prepared, from the original roller, to give a prominent dealer in London exact examples of the early stamps for comparison against forgeries. These were in colours lovely to see, but not the

same as the issued colours. Later, cupidity raised its ugly head. With the help of a conniving printer the old sheets were again reproduced, this time in more garish colours, and items detached and sold as die proofs to reward (it is said) the printer and a relative of a member of the firm. When this affair was discovered, more sheets were printed, this time with a lower title explaining that they were reprints of sheets prepared in 1902 and later. Single examples, separated from the sheets and the lower title,

are what are now being touted as reprinted die proofs.

I hope this story will prove effective, and that we shall see the last of 'reprinted die proofs', and that these neophytes will learn how to properly describe the Perkins Bacon Trade Sample Sheet remainders. It is curious that they already know how to describe similar items prepared by the American Bank Note Company. Let's get Perkins Bacon in proper perspective.

IN MEMORIAM

DAVID LIDMAN

David Lidman, makeup editor of the New York Times from 1954 until his retirement in 1973, and the newspaper's stamp columnist for more than a decade, died recently at his home in Southbury, Conn. He was an Emeritus member (#263) of BNAPS.

His *Treasury of Stamps*, a large work of philatelic history, was published in 1976. Previous works included *Philately Below Zero* (1958), a postal history of Alaska; and *The New York Times Guide To Collecting Stamps* (1970).

Mr. Lidman also edited many major philatelic publications such as a weekly stamp journal entitled *Philately*, which he helped found in 1946; the *APS American Philatelist*, 1951-1960; *Chambers Stamp Journal*; *Western Stamp Collector* (eastern editor); *The Essay-Proof Journal*; *The Congress Book*; and *The National Philatelic Museum Bulletin* (1951-57).

R. A. PETERS

R. A. 'Ray' Peters, BNAPS member 1202, passed away in Phoenix, Arizona on June 19.

A native of Detroit, he was the owner of Peters Sausage Co. in that city until 1956, when he moved to Phoenix.

In 1962 he purchased the Phoenix Stamp Shop and became a familiar figure at stamp shows around the country.

His philatelic interests included Mexico, Canada and the US, and his exhibits of this

material won numerous awards.

Peters was also a member of the American Stamp Dealers' Association, the American Philatelic Society, the Arizona Philatelic Rangers, the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, the Collectors Club of New York, and numerous other philatelic organizations.

ROBERT J. WOOLLEY

Bob Woolley, BNAPS # 68, was born in England in 1898. Following service with the British Army in World War I, during which he was wounded, he came to Canada in 1921. He became a land agent in the Department of Transport of the Federal Government. During World War II he served as a Recruiting and Personnel Officer with the Canadian Army.

While in high school, Bob started collecting stamps, building up a fine British Empire collection and specializing in British North America. Fond of perfin when they really were 'back-of-the-book' material, Bob was the long time Secretary of the BNAPS Perfin Study Group and a guiding force in the publication of the first three editions of the Perfin Handbook.

Bob was a former President of the West Toronto Club, in which he served as an officer for over 20 years. He was a member of the Toronto Stamp Collector's Club for 47 years, and served as its President in 1964-65.

Although in failing health in recent years, he still managed to attend quite a number of club meetings until his passing earlier this year.

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