



In both Canada and the U.S. baseball and tobacco had a lengthy advertising interaction. Their earliest affiliation was the first tobacco baseball ad. It was also the first ad of any kind to feature a baseball player. This was the 1874 Red Stockings Cigar ad with George Wright. The HOFer was a good choice in that Wright played for both the Cincinnati Red Stockings and then the Boston Red Stockings. George was the younger brother of legendary Harry Wright, deemed “the father of professional baseball.”

1874 Red Stocking Cigar ad with George Wright

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Baseball programs sold in stadiums are replete with cigarette ads, but pre-WWII Canadian programs are very scarce;



Pictured at left is a 1942 Toronto Maple Leafs program vs. the Montreal Royals. The cigarette ads reflect the war effort. Note too that the cigarette ads are on the most prominent locations in the program. Cigarette ads are usually found on the back cover and/or adjacent to the score sheet.



I found early ads to compete in attractiveness with that Red Stockings poster. These were put out by Philip Morris for Buckingham Cigarettes.



1929 - BUCKY GAUDETTE - MONTREAL ROYALS - LA PRESSE

1932 WALTER "DOC" GAUTREAU MONTREAL ROYALS LA PRESSE Buckingham (Philip Morris)



Baseball/tobacco ephemera from cities other than Montreal and Toronto is elusive. This 1948 Vancouver Capilanos schedule was designed to resemble a pack of Buckingham cigarettes.

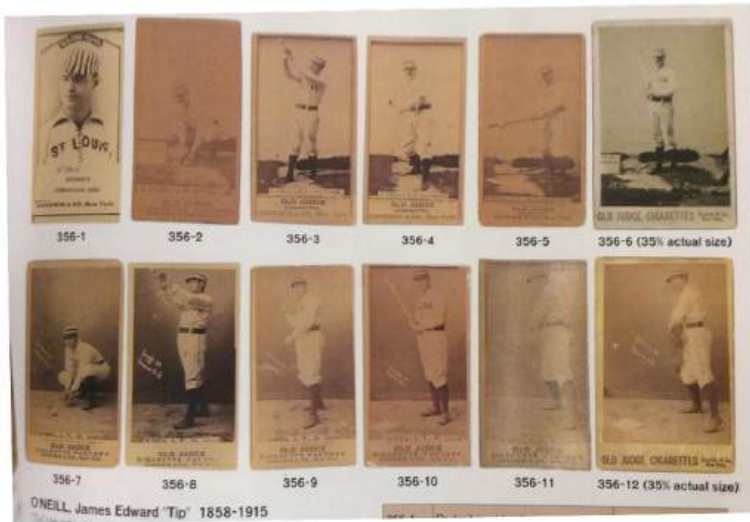


1948 Vancouver Capilanos schedule.



The best-known baseball and tobacco connection is the insertion of cards into cigarette packs. These cardboard giveaways had a dual purpose for cigarette manufacturers. The cards provided backing support for the packages as well as incentivizing baseball fans to buy their products.

The first major baseball card promotion was from Goodwin and Company 1886-



The Photographic Baseball Cards of Goodman & Company 1886-1890

Miller Gonsowski & Masson

1890. The most noteworthy Canadian contributions are the cards of Tip O'Neill, of which there are 12 different poses.

During that time in Canada, D. Ritchie & Co. began inserting non-sport cards into their Derby cigarette packs.





D. Ritchie & Co. began their tobacco manufacturing business in Montreal in 1864. They were one of the pioneers in the cigarette industry with Derby Cigarettes. Though these cards may seem superfluous to this presentation, I show them because of the information the backs provide. There is precious little information to be found about the early years of D. Ritchie & Co. and their best-selling and most relevant brand, Derby Cigarettes.

In 1888 S. Davis & Sons Cigar Company of Montreal bought D. Ritchie & Co. The 1880s cigar box pictured at right shows ball players on the label. This is the earliest baseball cigar box I have



come across. I have been unsuccessful locating any D. Ritchie & Co. original cigarette packaging.



I have found a Puritan Cut Plug sign. As you see there is no mention of a successor. I have been unable to find an S. Davis & Sons successor to D. Ritchie & Co. package or sign. It is possible that S. Davis & Sons did not alter the D. Ritchie & Co.

packaging.

In 1895 J.B. Duke, head of the American Tobacco Company (ATC), formed a partnership with Mortimer Davis, then head of S. Davis & Sons Tobacco, to form ATC Canada. This meant that ATC Canada had control of the Canadian cigarette market by selling the two largest cigarette brands in Canada - Sweet Caporal and Derby.

In 1902, ATC USA formed an alliance with Imperial Tobacco UK in which they would control the worldwide cigarette markets. J.B. Duke would stay out of the UK, but would be the major shareholder of the new company BAT. In 1908 BAT then bought out ATC Canada and called the new company IT Company of Canada. In 1912 the name was changed to ITC Canada Ltd.

When ITC took over Derby and the other D. Ritchie & Co. brands from ATC Canada, the name D. Ritchie remained on the box and "ITC Successor" was added. There is no mention of the earlier successors (S. Davis & Sons and ATC Canada).





In 1910 and 1911 ITC Canada, via Derby Cigarettes, issued the most valuable of all hockey cards. In 1912, the only tobacco baseball cards ever issued in Canada were again put into Derby Cigarette packs. These C46 International League baseball cards, like the earlier

hockey cards, had no attribution whatsoever.

Derby cigarettes had one additional give-away for baseball fans around 1912. They inserted silks with baseball motifs. The ten silks were of different colours, but were otherwise alike.



BAT (British American Tobacco) is the largest tobacco company in the world (according to *Wikipedia*, 2021). It was formed in 1902 when ATC (American Tobacco Company, USA) and ITC (Imperial Tobacco Company, UK) formed an alliance to control/monopolize the world cigarette market. The merger also allowed products of ATC and ITC to be sold in each other's country through BAT. ITC Canada is a wholly owned subsidiary of BAT.

Through BAT, British tobacco could be sold in the USA. With that acronym, it would appear the company could not overlook the obvious tie-in and would use baseball as a vehicle for its sales.



I have in my collection four baseball tobacco tins. Two are Chicago Cubs tins that held chewing tobacco. The other two are Philadelphia A's tins, also having held chewing tobacco. The A's offerings prominently display BAT on their tins. At left, you can see the "Phila Athletic" on the white baseball with the red BAT. The square BAT tin to its right features the same "Phil Athletic" marking.



**Q:** As this is the Canadian Baseball History Conference, why are these in the discussion?



**A:** Closer scrutiny reveals that **none of the tins shown has any connection with BAT (British American Tobacco)**. All four were made by Rock City Tobacco Co. Ltd. of Quebec. Although much smaller, Rock City was a competitor of BAT.

Given all the legal wrangling that Big Tobacco were involved in, you would think there would be lawsuits filed against Rock City. Oddly, I found no evidence of BAT (through ITC Canada Ltd.) contesting Rock City's usage of their patented acronym.



A: Closer scrutiny reveals that **NONE** of the tins shown, have **any connection with BAT (British American Tobacco)**!



As well, the Wrigley Family, who owned the Chicago Cubs, did not sue over the Chicago Cubs' name usage. (This is reminiscent of Curtis Candy, who sued Babe Ruth for using his own name on a candy bar. Curtis successfully argued that Babe Ruth had infringed on their copyrighted bar named "Baby Ruth".)

Rock City was founded in 1899. That year, they produced a brand of tobacco called Kodak. George Eastman acted against Rock City for patent infringement. Rock City ceased production of Kodak tobacco.



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(AntiqueAdvertising.Com Apr 110, 2018)

The principal founder of Rock City Tobacco was Napoleon Drouin. Drouin was mayor of Quebec City between 1910 and 1916. He had a close association with La Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste (SSJB), dedicated to the preservation of French culture in North America. It is here where the seeds of sovereignty were sown in the 1960s.

The target market for Drouin was Western Canada and the USA. You cannot find a single French word on any of the cans. Well, business is business. Note however,





1939, and the Rochester Red Wings in 1940.

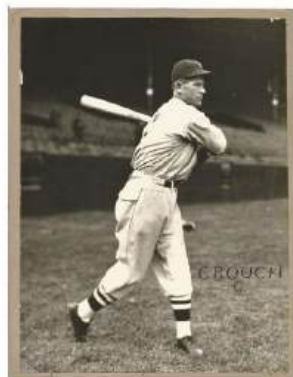
The image above shows Blakely, If in the Leafs' lineup (6<sup>th</sup> from the top). Note the cigarette ad on the program's back cover, and the British Consuls cigarette ad beside the lineup. The image at left shows the program's interior page featuring



the lineups of both the Royals and the Leafs. Note that the British Consuls (MacDonald's Tobacco) ad is beside both lineups. Also note the Simpson's ad at the top of the page. Simpson's was one of the largest department stores in Canada;

among the thousands of products they carried, they chose to advertise lighters.

At right is the photo for Jack Crouch, a catcher who played for Toronto between 1934 and 1936, and for the Rochester Red Wings in 1940. He played in the Majors for the St. Louis Browns in 1930, '31 and '33, and for the Cincinnati Reds in 1933.



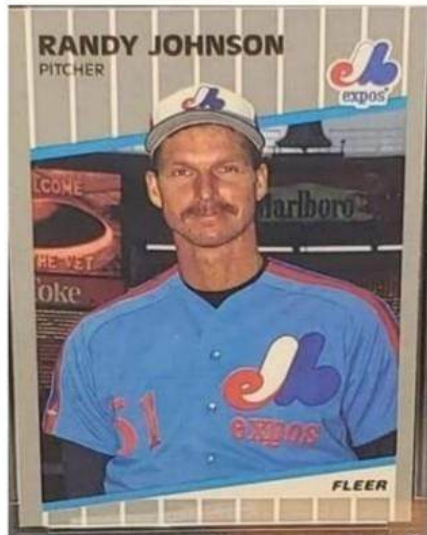
Jack Crouch, Catcher  
TML 1934 - 1936



"PROPERTY OF ROYAL CANADIAN TOBACCO CO. LOANED FOR DISPLAY PURPOSES ONLY"

Well, the talk opened with the first ever baseball ad for tobacco, a cigar ad. It is fitting that the final images are of the last ad of a ball player and tobacco. This time it is a cigarette ad. The ad is on a trading card instead of a poster, and appeared 125 years after George Wright and the Red Stockings cigar ad.

Any idea who it was? Unlike George Wright of the Red Stockings ad, the player in this ad played for the Montreal Expos. (An outfielder named George Wright also played for the Expos in 1986.) What makes this card interesting is that the ad featured on it was completely unintended, and was discovered very early in the print run. Many ways to block it out were tried, resulting in numerous variations, with new ones still being discovered.



The photo of Randy Johnson on his 1989 Fleer rookie card was taken at Veteran's Stadium in Philadelphia. The 1989 trade of Johnson for Mark Langston was one of baseball's worst ever. The Expos had a chance to win the division in 1989. Seattle was willing to trade Langston because he had turned down their offer of 7 million dollars for 3 years. When the deal was announced, the question on everyone's mind was "Can you sign him?" GM Dave Dombrowski was confident, but wrong. Johnson won the Cy Young Award in four consecutive years, and became the oldest to pitch a perfect game (at age 40). He is among the greatest of pitchers, and was a first ballot lock for the Hall of Fame.

Fred Toulch  
November 2024



