

British Royalty Pot Lids

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Today, sport stars, movie actors and music idols are paid large sums to endorse various products in the market place. Although it is unlikely that present-day royals, prime ministers or presidents would become involved in such a commercial venture, it has not always been so. Starting in the first half of the 19th century British manufacturing firms, both with and without royal patronage, took advantage of the tremendous popularity of the royal family to hawk their wares. In the United States, although they may have less appeal, presidents were similarly used.

Queen Victoria was the most popular person to be featured on pot lids in general including pomades, cold creams, shaving creams and regenerators. Looking at toothpaste alone, Princess Alexandra of Denmark, later Queen consort to Edward VII, was

the most popular royal. She appears on 15 known varieties issued by five different toothpaste manufacturers: Victoria appears on ten from six companies.

Edward VII's portrait appears on lids issued by three different companies manufacturing toothpaste.

Three of Victoria's nine children and one grandchild appear on lids. In addition to Edward VII there was Princess Beatrice and Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught. Princess Patricia, daughter of the Duke, was not particularly attractive: one can only speculate on whether this factor or use of the more perishable (above the glaze) manufacturing process, account for the lid's extreme rarity.

In all 17, different toothpaste firms risked the royal censure and sported a royal picture. The most common of these was produced by John Gosnell and Company. They were marketed all over the world for sixty years, and the brochure accompanying the toothpaste was printed in five languages.



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