

Goodall & Son Patience Boxed Sets

Tony Hall, August 2018

Collecting boxed sets of Goodall & Son patience cards is not as straight forward a hobby as it ought to be! The records and advertisements are limited when attempting to confirm the authenticity of items currently available. For example, this advertisement featured in many of the Goodall early 20th century mini-books advertises its range of Elfin cards available “with fancy backs in a variety of patterns”. Cards can be plain or gilt edged. Very clear and helpful. Elfin cards are clearly marked and the variety can still be found.



I have two boxed sets of Elfin cards as advertised, only one of which has the drop-down front shown in the ad and both lids are detached not hinged..

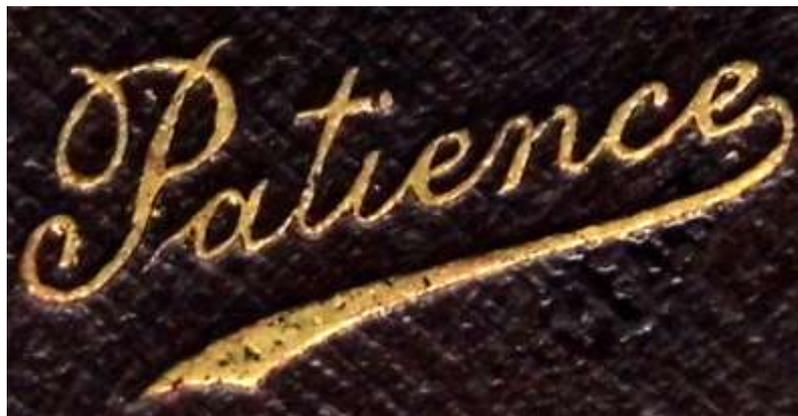


Elfin miniature packs were also sold separately.



However, the advertisement also promotes Patience Boxes “in leather, cloth or enamelled cardboard in a variety of shapes”! This is not as helpful as it might be.

Having acquired a wide variety of boxed sets of patience cards purporting to be by Goodall & Son (by virtue of their contents), I noted that there appeared to be little consistency in the style of the gold lettering on the boxes. However, there are so far seven in my collection which do indeed carry the same or very similar lettering viz numbers G1 – G7 below.



Some are straight forward. Others have contents which do not appear to match the boxes which contain them.



G1.

A Gorgeous leather-look cardboard box set of miniature cards by Goodall & Son; somewhere between 1867 and 1897. Box and cards in excellent condition but no sign of gilt edging.



G2.

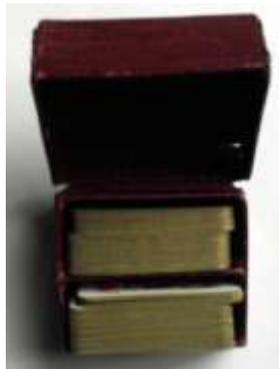
This is similar to G1 but in black.

Both of these appear to resemble one of the regular Goodall ads although the lid in the advertisement is tilted rather than parallel with the top.

"PATIENCE" BOXES,
 In Leather, Wood, Cloth or Enamelled Cardboard, in a Variety of Shapes.
 CONTAINING TWO PACKS OF CARDS.



"ELFIN" CARDS
 size 1 1/2 x 1 1/2.
 Duplex, Round Corners, Thin.
 BOXES FOR ABOVE
 In Leather, Wood, Cloth or Enamelled Cardboard,
 containing Two Packs—Plain or Gilt Edges.



G3.



GOODALL'S
"PATIENCE" CARDS
 size 1 1/2 x 1 1/2.
 DUPLEX, ROUND CORNERS, THIN.
 WITH Fancy Backs in a Variety of Patterns—
 Series B, C and E Lattice Grained.

"PATIENCE" BOXES,
 In Leather, Wood, Cloth or Enamelled Cardboard, in a Variety of Shapes.
 CONTAINING TWO PACKS OF CARDS.



"ELFIN" CARDS
 size 1 1/2 x 1 1/2.
 Duplex, Round Corners, Thin.
 BOXES FOR ABOVE
 In Leather, Wood, Cloth or Enamelled Cardboard,
 containing Two Packs—Plain or Gilt Edges.

The Ace of Spades in these gilt-edged packs indicates that the cards were produced between 1897-1921. The advert from a mini book shows this box still being advertised in 1925.



G4.

A black leatherette-covered card box for two packs of Goodall & Son miniature cards, both in very good condition dating between 1897 – 1921. Unlike G2 above the lid is separate from the base and slides off.



- G5. A leather box with drop-down front and popper mechanism. The miscellaneous cards contained when purchased have nothing to do with the box.



- G6. A red "leather faced" card patience box which closely resembles the advertisement above, including the tilted cut for the lid. However, the box is for medium-sized patience cards which are not included in the ad but which Goodall and Son also produced.



- G7. This box contains two packs of medium-sized patience cards in a red cardboard, leather-look box. When purchased, the cards were by John Waddington dating from sometime between 1925 and 1960. The Aces and jokers are the Goodall & son designs from the early part of the period. The box has the Goodall & Son style gold lettering on the box. It is possible that the cards and the box did not start life together, or that Waddington produced a later box in the style of one of the companies it absorbed over the years. I am inclined to think that the former is more likely but as yet have no evidence.

Two other boxes sold with Goodall & Son contents appear to have very similar, if not identical, cover designs to each other: G8 and G9. I have seen the same style of lettering, with the three-pronged underline flourish, used on Goodall & Son Bezique boxes so suspect that these are genuine.



G8.

This red box measures approx 10.5 x 9 x 4cm and contains two complete sets of Goodall & Son Patience playing cards with a book of instructions by Professor Hoffmann dated January 1st, 1908. (Aces date between 1897-1921,) The book which is "gold" edged is in very good condition and is entitled "Patience With The Joker: Original Patience Games by Professor Hoffmann". The box can be closed with a push button clip (like G5). All appears to be complete and original.



G9.

A two pack box of medium-sized patience cards by Goodall & Son with aces dating from 1897 to 1921, The Goodall booklet is dated 1922 so the entire set looks genuine and complete. The outside is light faded, contrasting with the original colour seen inside.

And to confirm these as Goodall designs, this recently acquired box of medium-sized cards carries an identical gold logo on the lid to G8 and G9. It is similar to the first of the Elfin advertisements shown above, but these are medium-sized cards, not Elfin!

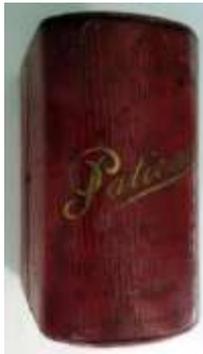


Two other sets (G10 & G11) have a strong similarity of design to each other in the large capital letter and the font, but only one has the underling stroke from the final e. Both share cards of between 1897 and 1921.



G10.

A diminutive double pack of miniature patience cards by Goodall & Son in a delightful brown leather box.



G11.

A boxed set of two medium-sized patience cards. The style of container suggests that these seem likely to be from the turn of century rather than later.

A number of other sets are indisputably from Goodall * Son.



G12.

Apart from a few minor scuffs on the outside of the red box, this boxed set of medium-sized, gilt-edged Goodall patience cards could have come straight from the factory! The cards, booklet and insides are immaculate as if they have never been opened. The hard-backed matching booklet by Professor Hoffmann (Angelo Lewis) is dated 1925. The Aces were produced between 1897 and 1921 but the new designs did not appear until sometime later in 1925.



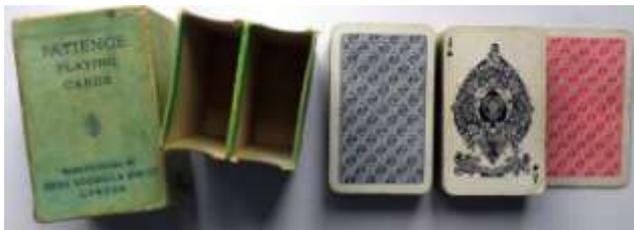
G13.

Box with two packs of miniature cards is from Goodall & Son with Aces in use between 1890 and 1940. Probably the early 1920s before the takeover by De La Rue.



G14.

As G13 above but in red and in excellent condition.



G15.

Twin boxed set with matching blue and white packs by Goodall with aces dating from 1897 to 1921. The style alone suggests that this comes from early in the period. Both packs are in good used condition.



G16.

A single pack of medium-sized "Linette" Patience cards made by Goodall and Son for W.H. Smith & Son Ltd. (See ad from 1922.) Goodall had any number of subsidiaries and brand names. The aces date the pack to between 1897 and 1921.



For the rest, although they contained Goodall cards and/or booklets when purchased, there is, as yet, no definitive confirmation that the box sets originated from Goodall.



G17. Box of Patience cards (two packs) with booklet: Special Patience Games from H.P. Gibson & Sons, London E.C. Two packs of Goodall patience cards printed between 1897-1921. Box and cards might be original but the booklet does not belong.



G18. A medium-sized patience playing card set in red box with two packs of Goodall & Son cards from different periods. One (blue-backed) is Ace-dated 1867-1897; the second (red-backed) is 1897-1921. Clearly not a genuine set.



G19. A delightful boxed set of medium-sized patience cards in excellent condition, complete with the Goodall & Son Angelo Lewis booklet dated 1922. The cards have plain, single colour backs and the Ace of Spades (reproduced on the back of the mini-book) date between 1867 – 1897. The cards are early; the booklet is late! It is impossible, therefore, to know which of these items – box, cards, booklet – are contemporary with each other or the origins of the box.



G20.

A pair of medium-sized Patience card set in a blue card box with two packs of Goodall & Son cards (Ace-dated 1897 – 1921) in fair condition. However, although the cards are identical in size and condition, and fit the box perfectly, they have red and blue backs of different designs. It seems unlikely, therefore that the cards and/or the box started life together.



G21.

Two-pack medium-sized patience set by Chas. Goodall & Son in a black box with gold lettering. The lettering is strikingly similar but not identical to that on those boxes confirmed as from Goodall (G1-G7). Aces suggest somewhere between 1897 – 1921. This may be absolutely right as a complete set, but I have no other evidence to confirm this.



G22.

A delightful red leather boxed set of miniature cards from Goodall & Son. The Ace of spades dates the box between 1867 and 1897. Cards match (red & blue packs) but are well used. The box is in excellent condition.



G23.

This is an intriguing tan leather case containing a full pack of miniature Goodall & Son cards from 1897-1921. The cards fit into six sections perfectly but it does not close flat. I had set this aside as unexplained until seeing a number of similar style items elsewhere which were clearly right and described as “patience travel sets”. It is possible therefore that this is an early (perhaps ill-conceived) patience travelling set, though why this is easier than just carrying a pack in a normal box is beyond me.



G24.

A boxed set in the form of a leather doctor's bag with flap open top containing two packs of medium-sized playing cards. Sadly, the brass catch is missing part of its mechanism but it is a nice thing. Blue and brown matching packs are by Goodall & Son dating between 1897 and 1921. This seems likely to be from the turn of the century rather than later. The cards are grubby and well worn.



G28.

A nice solid leather case in good condition containing two non-matching packs of goodall cards, both from the 1897 – 1921 period. There is nothing on the case to confirm that it was produced by Goodall. I suspect that it has been cobbled together; there is no reference in the catalogue to this type of presentation.

This is as far as I have got with my research. It is striking that Goodall & Son produced a huge variety of sets at different times and for different consumers. Some of the variations seem only slightly different from each other. I guess this is a feature of an industry which, in the early years, at least, was largely hand-crafted rather than mass produced.

Any and all comments, additions or pieces of advice would be most welcome. In the meantime, my collections of De La Rue and other patience sets are growing apace....

Tony Hall

August 2018