

1920 THE PHILADELPHIA FOLK MONOPOLY GAME

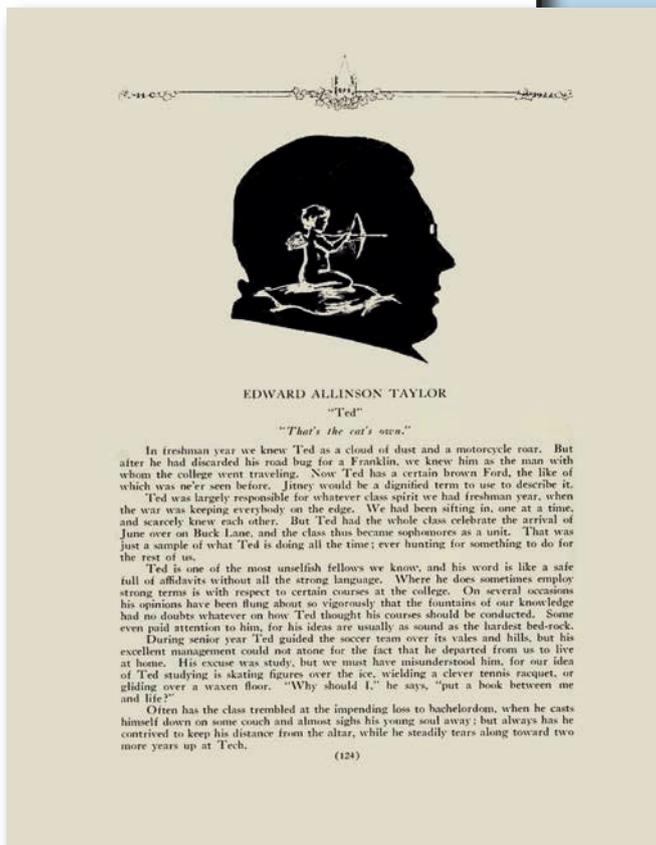


Article and photos by
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The 1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game is an original, nearly 100 year old, Monopoly game created in the fall of 1920. It reflects the Philadelphia, PA area in the '20s, especially the Main Line western suburbs near Haverford College. The game set was created by two sons of an old Main Line Quaker family who were members of the Haverford College classes of 1922 and 1924. The game was played with classmates at Haverford College and in their nearby family home in Haverford, PA.

The two brothers, Edward (Ted) Allinson Taylor and Lawrence (Larry) Newbold Taylor, learned about the folk monopoly game during the late summer of 1920 while staying at their family's cabin within the private Pocono Lake Preserve. Larry and Ted were taught the game by Rexford Guy Tugwell, who along with his wife, spent two weeks as guests of Henry Woolman at his nearby cabin within the Preserve.

Consequently, the 1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game is part of the "Wharton Woodies" lineage. "Wharton Woodies" is an appellation coined by the writer that applies to wood folk monopoly game boards originating out of the Wharton School during the 1914-1915 school year with the Wharton Class of 1915, of which Rex Tugwell was a member, obtaining his B.S. in Economics that year. "Wharton Woodies" also includes the wood folk monopoly game board descendants of these 1915 folk monopoly games. Yes, this writer is declaring that the folk monopoly game originated at Wharton during the 1914-1915 school year. >>

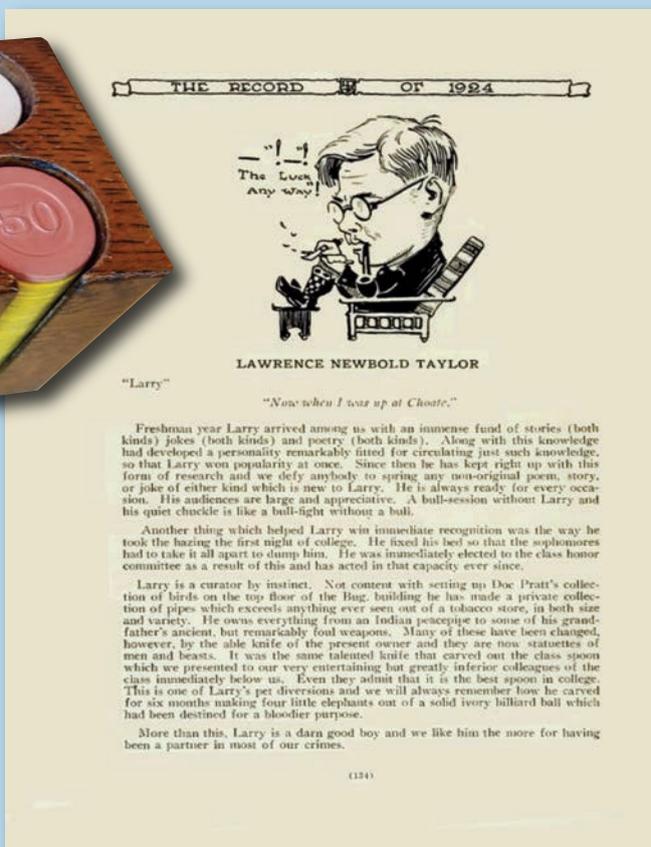


At Left: 1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game board

Above: Haverford College Record of 1922: Edward Allinson Taylor;

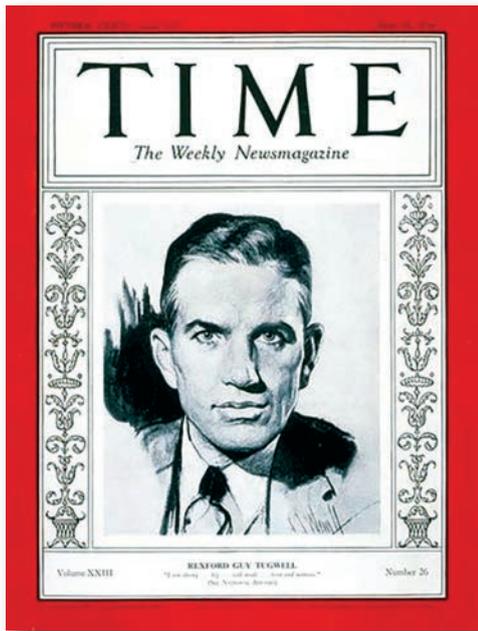
Monopoly Money (Game Poker Chips) shown with dollar denominations;

At Right: Haverford College Record of 1924: Lawrence Newbold Taylor





1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game board; Rexford Guy Tugwell on the cover of *TIME* magazine (Volume XXIII, Number 26); Monopoly houses, Deeds, and "action" cards.



the folk monopoly and folk landlord's games there. As an active supporter of the New Deal, Tugwell was a member of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Brain Trust"—a group of six academics who advised FDR during his time as New York governor and later during his presidency.

Monopoly Game game board during his only year (1920-21) at Haverford College. Afterwards he left Haverford to study art at the University of Pennsylvania. Rosskam later went on to become a famous depression era photographer within the Roosevelt Administration and thereafter.

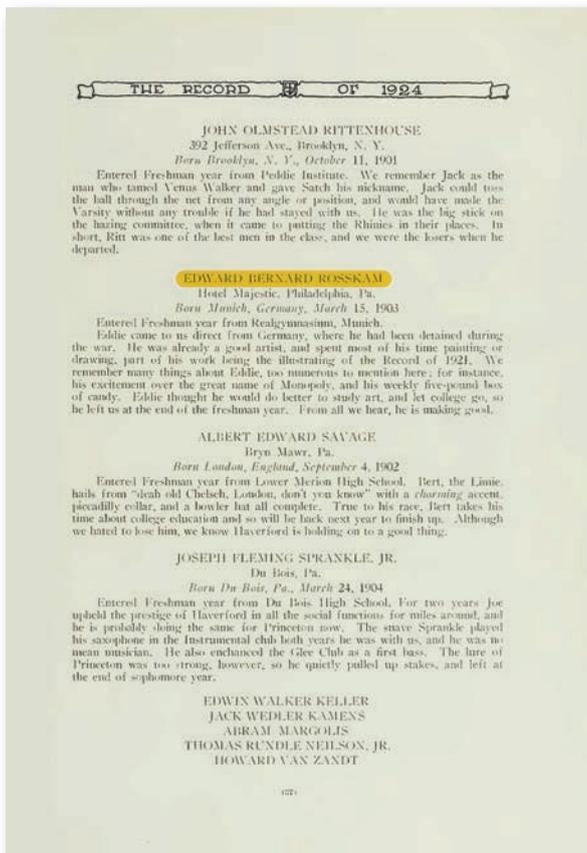
Coincidentally, another direct link between the 1920 *Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* and the FDR administration is Edwin (Edward) Bernard Rosskam. Rosskam was a freshman classmate of Larry Taylor and he was the artist who painted the 1920 *Philadelphia Folk*

In 1928, eight years after the creation of their *Monopoly* game, Larry and Ted closed the old family home after the death of their mother. During this process, the 1920 *Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* set was misplaced and was never recovered by the Taylor brothers.

After obtaining his master's degree in 1916, Rex Tugwell subsequently left Wharton to teach at the University of Washington the following year. He departed to France during World War I and later returned to Wharton in 1919 to pursue his doctorate.

During this time—in late summer 1920—while pursuing his doctorate at the Wharton, Tugwell was transitioning his household from Philadelphia, PA to New York City to take up a professorship position at the Columbia graduate school of economics. He was a member of the Columbia faculty from 1920-1936. The two-week stay at the Pocono Lake Preserve was a vacation layover during this transition. As an economics professor at Columbia, he introduced both





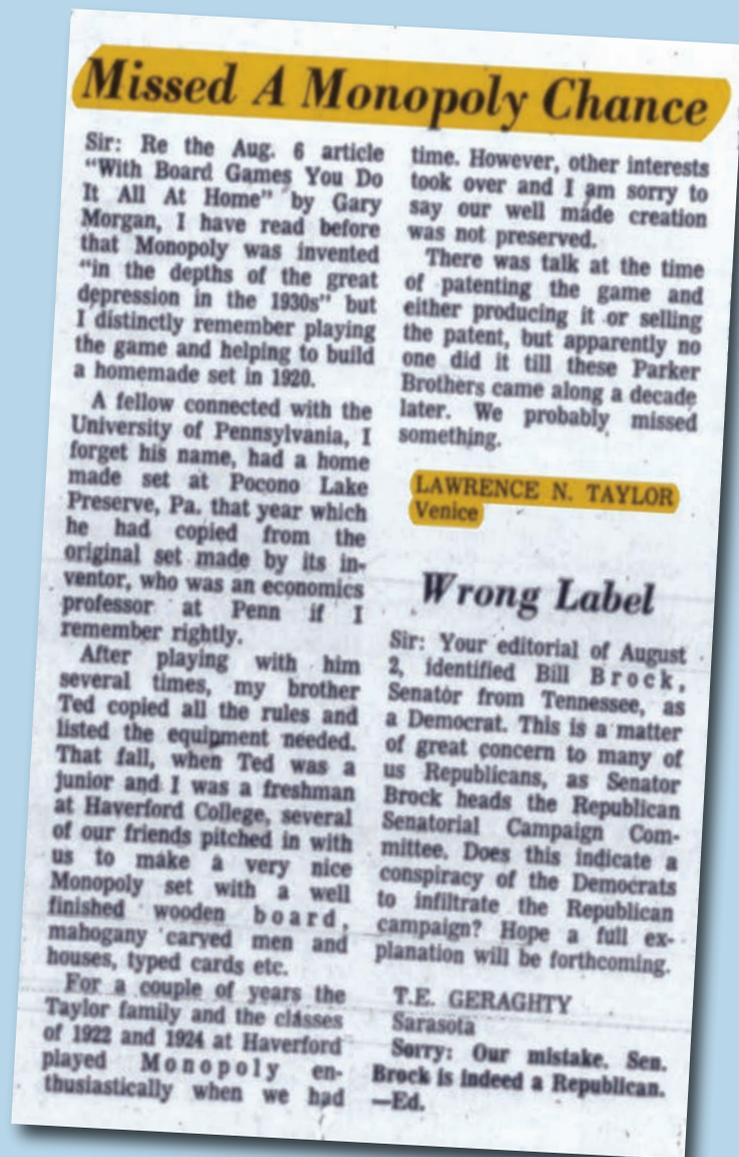
Haverford Record of 1924: Edward [Edwin] Bernard Roskam

Forty-five years later in 1973, Larry Taylor responded to a newspaper article regarding the fictional Charles Darrow *Monopoly* creation story. He wrote a letter-to-the-editor of the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* titled "Missed A Monopoly Chance," signed Lawrence N. Taylor, Venice, that was published on Sunday, August 12, 1973. The letter describes the handcrafted *Monopoly* game that he and his brother Ted created in the fall of 1920. Larry wrote about their game's history and attributes that clearly identifies the 1920 *Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game*.

Two years later in 1975, Larry Taylor was deposed as part of the Anspach-Parker Bros. litigation. In his deposition, Larry identified additional attributes of the handmade game he and his brother made that definitively identifies the 1920 *Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* set. In addition, the game set itself exhibits attributes specifically with reference to Ted, and Ted and Larry Taylor's extended family holdings. This provides capstone and indisputable provenance of the direct linkage between the 1920 *Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* and its makers Ted and Larry Taylor.

Fast-forward thirty-nine years to the summer of 2014, and the 1920 *Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* resurfaces, 86 years after the Taylor brothers lost possession of their folk monopoly game and 94 years after they created it, when their folk monopoly game set was listed on eBay and auctioned as part of an unrelated Philadelphia family estate sale. >>

"We probably missed something."



1973-08-12—Sarasota Herald Tribune—
Letter to the Editor: "Missed A Monopoly Chance"

"...I have read before that *Monopoly* was invented "in the depths of the great depression in the 1930s" but I distinctly remember playing the game and helping to build a homemade set in 1920."

The auction was subsequently won by the writer. At the time, there were only two pieces of information about the *Monopoly* game provided by the estate liquidator that was obtained from the estate heir. One was that the heir's mother, from whose estate the game set originated, told the heir not to give the game away because it was worth some money. And two, the game was originally owned within the family by the heir's grandfather. This was the extent of what they knew about the game. The estate liquidator would not divulge any additional information regarding the estate. However, the writer was able to locate the necessary information via the estate liquidator's website since it was the only estate being handled by the estate liquidator at the time. The family's name and the estate liquidator's name remains confidential in respect for their privacy.

Based upon an extensive in-depth research of the estate family and the *1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* properties, the writer determined that the heir's grandfather did not create the game. He and his extended family of the era did not fit the demographic profile, and not a single family member of the era had attended any college or university. Let alone a college circa 1917-1923 which was the origin date range established based upon property dating. Of course, the exact dating and lineage of the *1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* was later identified in 2017 when Larry's 1973 letter-to-the-editor of the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* was discovered by the writer. As a result, the *1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game's* origin history and lineage has been re-established and the game is now back in the public domain. As a nearly 100 year old *Monopoly* game, it becomes an antique *Monopoly* game in 2020. One critically unique characteristic of the *1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* set is that it is clearly and indisputably

a formal *Monopoly* real estate board game. The game board center prominently exhibits the word "MONOPOLY" and is the only known folk monopoly game set to date that does so. And, did so approximately 15 years prior to the 1935 issuance of Charles Darrow's errant *Monopoly* patent and the 1935 issuance of Parker Brothers' related *Monopoly* trademark.

Consequently, the *1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* is tangible evidence of a formal *Monopoly* real estate trading game extant in the public domain in 1920. It reinforces the voluminous circumstantial evidence gathered by Ralph Anspach of numerous folk monopoly players who testified they played a real estate game called "monopoly" within the 1914-1933 era before Charles Darrow's introduction to folk monopoly. The 1914-1933 date range was established due to facts discovered by the author that support later dating for two documented folk monopoly games—the Joseph A. Buckwalter game from 1910 to circa 1914, and the Roy Ormerod Heap game from 1909 to circa 1916-17.

Regardless, based upon information recently discovered by the author, the 1914-1915 school year represents the genesis of the folk monopoly game at Wharton and subsequent expansion from there to colleges and universities within the northeastern, eastern, southeastern and midwestern regions of the USA well before 1935 when questionable circumstances resulted in a *Monopoly* patent issued to Darrow and a related *Monopoly* trademark to Parker Brothers.

Finally, the *1920 Philadelphia Folk Monopoly Game* is the oldest known formal *Monopoly* game set exhibiting a number of firsts in the folk monopoly world as follows:

1. The game set uses both paper and poker chip money.
2. The game set includes custom made-for-the-game movers/markers/tokens which are literally "men" as they represent 11 U.S. Presidents. Made of mahogany wood, they were hand carved by Larry Taylor, who was known at Haverford College as a carver of little men.
3. The game set exhibits unique hand-carved three-dimensional (also by Larry Taylor) rectangular mahogany wood houses which exhibit two additional unique characteristics:

a. Each house has a pin stuck in the bottom center of the house that is snugly fitted into a single hole drilled into the game board adjacent to the property numbers—consequently, the houses are not easily knocked off the board, an act that most players have personally experienced; and

b. There are five categories of houses with holes drilled from side-to-side so that each of the four sides of each house exhibit at least one window that one can see through and up to five windows per side—in other words, the number of windows per house (1-5) indicates the number of housing improvement on a property which eliminates the crowding of multiple houses on a property since only one house, with the correct number of windows, is snugly fitted to the property to which it belongs and mitigates the need for hotels.

As a result of these characteristics, this game set is the total package. And, the quality of materials and construction speak for themselves. AGPI



*Monopoly playing tokens represent U.S. presidents.
Storage box for playing implements.*

