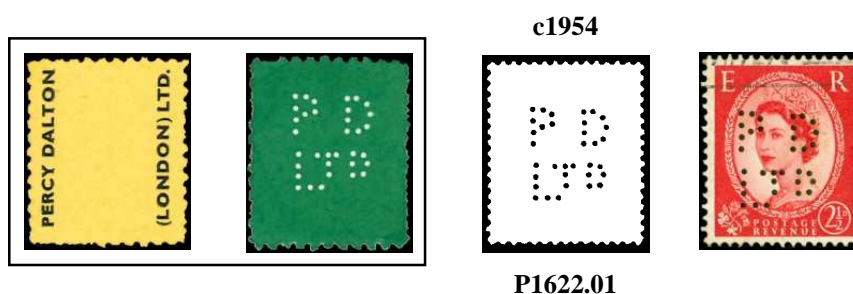


Percy Dalton's 'Famous Roasted Peanuts'.

The catalyst for this piece is *Stephen Steere*, who has recently been indexing the Sloper 'A-K' Ledgers in readiness for uploading to the Perfin Society website. In the ledger he came across the entry for '*Messrs. Percy Dalton (Ldn.) Ltd*', 50/51 Brushfield St, E1, along with 'proofs' of their overprint and Perfin "PD/L^{td}" (P1622.01). I'm afraid I don't have an example on a postage stamp of the *overprint*, but I do have an example of the *Perfin*.

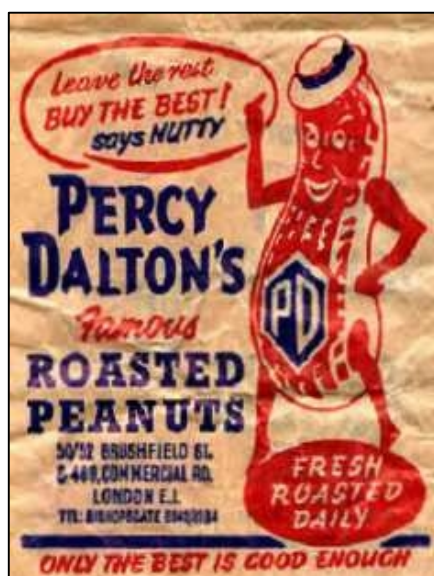


To date this is the *only stamp value* known with the Perfin, a 2½d Wilding (Tudor Crown), introduced on 5th Dec 1952. This was later replaced by the St Edwards Crown watermark on 28th Sep 1955, dating the stamp to c1954.

Inspection of the diadem shows it to be Type I with an incomplete top line, but sadly, that doesn't help in further refining the die in use date range.

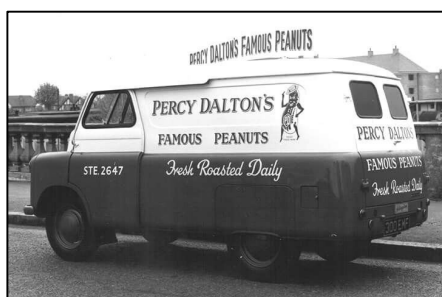
Note - A 2x2 block of the 2½d Wilding is also known with the Perfin, but does anyone now know of its whereabouts? If so, I would like to hear from you!

Percy Dalton was born in Whitechapel (4th November 1908) and, aged fourteen, began work as a 'barrow boy' in a 'street market' in Stepney. He appears in Kelly's London directories as a *fruiterer* in White Horse Street (1931), and as a *fruit salesman* in Spitalfields Market (1937). In 1940 he and other family members took premises at 50-52 Brushfield Street where they traded as *fruit merchants*.



Around 1950 (so just before the use of the Perfin) Percy Dalton came up with the idea of roasting peanuts in their shells and selling them in bags at football matches. I suspect that he'd been roasting them for some time, before hitting on the idea of selling them at sporting events. At the time they sold for 6d a bag.

On a personal basis, as a schoolboy in the Midlands in the 1950's and 1960's, I must confess that I don't recall coming across *Percy Dalton's Famous Roasted Peanuts*. Were they simply a 'Southern' phenomenon, or just for 'Londoners', or conceivably in plain sight and I just didn't see them?



Business must have been good as Percy ran a small fleet of Bedford CA vans, with distinctive red paintwork!
The vans were built in Luton- introduced in 1952, but ceased production in 1969.

There are accounts on the Internet of the intense aroma of 'roasted peanuts' pervading the East End of London, thanks to Percy Dalton,
especially the day the 'roasting house' caught fire early in 1950!

Ten fire pumps were used to put out a fire in a factory used by peanut merchants in Duval St, Stepney, today. The factory, which is used for roasting peanuts, is owned by Messrs Percy Dalton, fruit importers of Brushfield St, Stepney. The fire spread rapidly throughout the building after overheated peanuts had been turned out of a drum and immediately burst into flame.... **Coventry Evening Telegraph** 10th February 1950.

The company moved their warehouse in the 1970's to Dace Road, in an area called 'Fish Island' as some of the roads were named after fish, eventually leaving Brushfield Street in 1977. The company moved again in 2005, but this time out of London, to Haverhill, Suffolk.

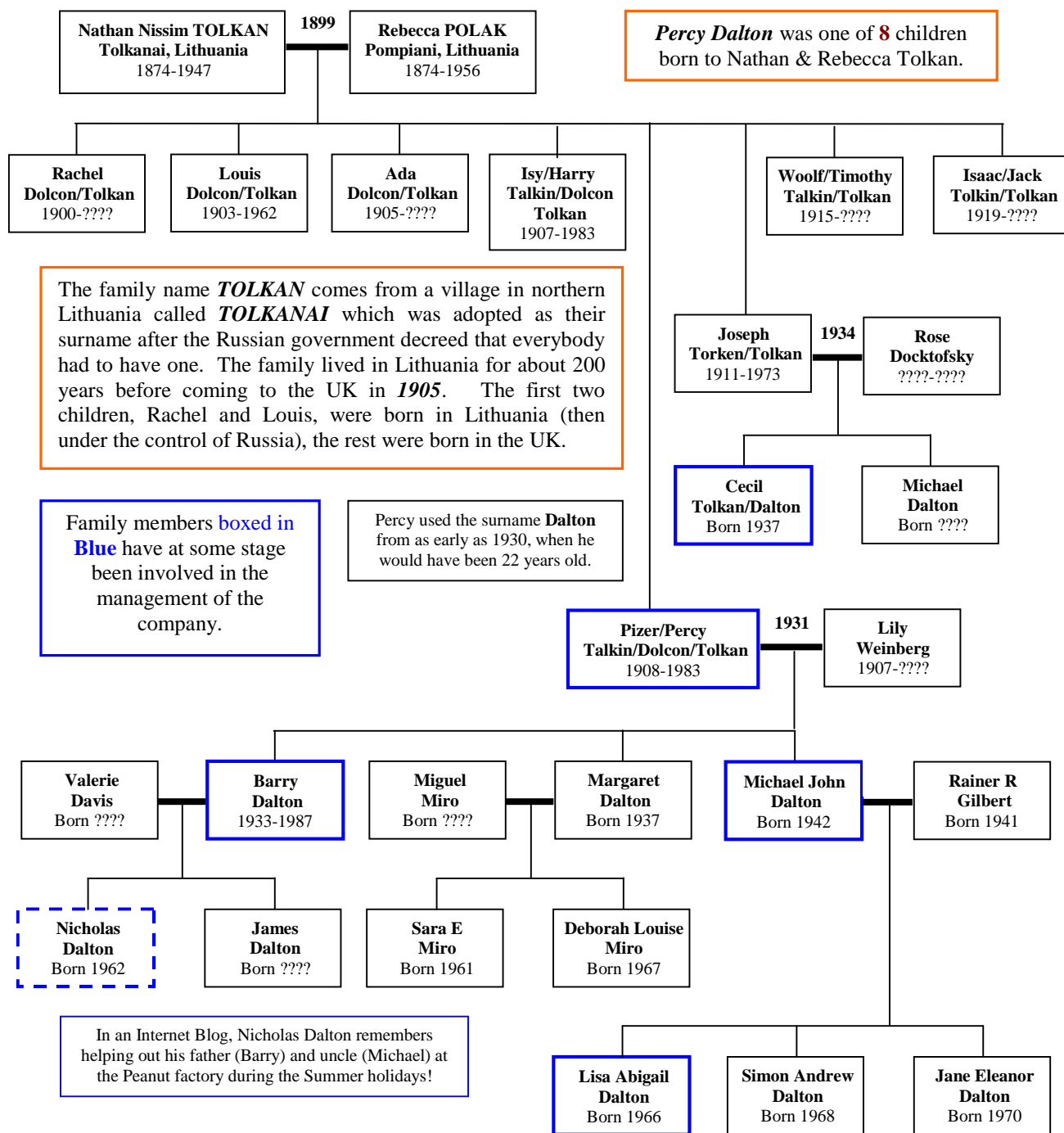
But as to **Percy Dalton** - who was he, and where did his family come from? Records show that **Percy Dalton** married **Lily Weinberg** in Stepney (1931), a marriage that produced **three** children, Barry (1933), Margaret (1937), and Michael (1942). There are records in newspapers featuring two of the children. In 1959, Barry towed his brand new £700 35hp speed boat called 'Peanuts' from London to Dorset behind a Rolls Royce, but disaster struck on its maiden voyage and it sank in Poole Harbour! Margaret's entry is more conventional, her marriage to Miguel Miro (from Spain) early in 1960 after a whirlwind romance.

Percy Dalton retired in 1975, handing over control of the company to his **two** sons, Barry and Michael. Percy's death in Jersey on the 9th August 1983 is recorded in the '**Jewish Chronicle**', but his 'Percy Dalton' brand lives on through the German company, 'Intersnack', who acquired the business in 2009.

The fact that neither Steve nor I could find Percy Dalton's birth registration in 1908, nor an entry for him in the 1911 census, suggests that his family changed their name **to** Dalton either during or shortly after WWI. Enter the third musketeer, **John Mathews**, who noticed that Lily Weinberg's marriage in 1931 gave an additional reference to a **Pizer Tolkan**, which must be Percy Dalton's original birth name. It transpires that Pizer Tolkan (born 1908, registered as Talkin) had at least four* more brothers Harry Tolkan (born 1907, registered as Talkin), Joseph Tolkan (born 1911, registered as Torken), Woolf Tolkan (born 1915, registered as Talkin), and Isaac Tolkan (born 1919, registered as Tolkin). In all five cases the mother's maiden name was **Polak** or a similar sounding variant. Through dogged persistence, John Mathews eventually found the family in the 1911 Census of England & Wales, living at **78 Plumbers' Row, Stepney**, listed as **Dolcon** - yet another variation in spelling.

* Later information reveals that Pizer Tolkan was one of **eight** siblings.

Percy Dalton's Family Tree.



The family tree, originally constructed with the help of *John Mathews* and *Stephen Steere*, has now been vetted, and added to, by *Michael Dalton*, Percy Dalton's son!
My sincere thanks go to you all.



And finally, this 'ghost sign' still sits hauntingly, high up on a building at the corner of Crispin St and Brushfield St (Nº. 52) in London's East End.