

THE MAKING OF FOIL PAPER
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The article of commerce known to every school boy and school girl as "silver paper," but which really consists of a layer of tin or aluminium (as the case may be) upon a paper base has long been familiar."

For very many years the principal source of supply was Germany, but of late years English manufacturers have devoted their attention to the matter with the result that not only is the quality of the finished product very much improved upon that which was formerly available with a much greater certainty for the use of absolutely pure material; but the use of silvered paper in packing quite a number of articles for commerce has very considerably increased.

The Ewell Manufacturing Co Ltd of Thames Street, Sunbury, Middlesex, are among the most prominent makers, and a recent visit to their premises revealed the inner secrets of the process.

Silvered paper is manufactured in a number of weights or thicknesses; moreover, the process of making differs according to the use of tin or aluminium.

The main argument in favour of foil-coated paper is that of attractiveness. But it also has the further effect of acting as a damp-resisting material, keeping tobacco or cigarettes moist, and preventing dampness of any kind from penetrating packages containing goods likely to be affected.

We propose, therefore, in imagination to conduct the reader through the works, and explain the entire procedure.

In the case of tin-foil papers, which range from a very light weight to a substance which is most substantial, the paper is received from the makers in the form of rolls. One of these rolls, the length of which will vary according to the weight of the paper, is lifted on to a spindle journaled on to two posts on the machine. It is then led over a roller which rotates in a bath containing a specially prepared solution of tin. Part of this solution is deposited on to the surface of the paper as it passes on its way. The paper being therefore mechanically coated proceeds through a series of steam-heated rollers until it emerges finally perfectly dry. It is a boast of the Ewell Manufacturing Co. Ltd. that they are able to completely perform this series of operations within a space of twenty feet instead of the great area required by many other manufacturers of other forms of coated papers.

When the coated paper has emerged from the machine perfectly dry, it presents an appearance totally unlike what we might expect, being of a dull pinkish grey. In this respect it resembles, to some extent, an undeveloped photographic negative. Perhaps a better simile would be a blackened shoe waiting to be polished.

The roll of coated paper is, in due course, lifted to a polishing machine on which the polishing roller is like burnished silver. Steam-heated pressure upon the undeveloped paper, as it is passed through the polishing rollers, brings up the latent polish, and the paper may be then passed on to the warehouse for storing, or to the cutting department to be cut to any size desired.

Or, on the other hand, it may pass through a still further process, that of embossing. The diamond-shaped designs, seen on so many pieces of tin-foiled paper, or the pin-head design seen on other specimens, or even more attractive still, the star design, are all

produced by similar means—a roller engraved with the selected design, and for the purpose of embossing, the paper is once more passed through, taking a fully impressed replica perfect in detail.

Now let us turn our attention to paper covered with aluminium. An extra roller is necessary to carry rolls of aluminium foil, and also a pasting roller. As the rolls of paper and foil pass through, they are met by the pasting roller, a layer of the adhesive is applied, and then, passing through the heavy rollers, the whole is brought into close union, and a perfect cohesion is the result. This coated aluminium paper does not need the polishing process, but may of course be embossed in the usual way.

Those who are not cognisant of the facts can form no conception of the marvellous extent to which this variety of packing paper is used. The Ewell Manufacturing Co. Ltd., calculate that for packing tea and tobacco alone, they supply the paper for from eight to ten million packets per week.

It will also be found in many manifold books, both in front and at the back, since its impermeability assists in keeping the usual blue leaf dry, and in countless other ways the paper is utilised.

As manufactured at the Ewell Manufacturing Company's works, which are not only extensive in themselves, as our illustrations will indicate, but which are already too small, and are in process of extension, the article can be obtained "in the flat" or quires, that is to say, in full-sized sheets, or in rolls of any desired width, or even cut down to shape and size ready for instant use.

The cutting into rolls is effected by means of circular cutting machines, sharp-edged rollers cutting with perfect mechanical accuracy; a guillotine cuts the smaller sizes.

The company holds a sufficient stock to meet any sudden call, and guarantee delivery in London of material suitable for any tea or tobacco packing machine, within a couple of hours of an urgent telephone order (Sunbury, No. 61).

The machinery is in every respect the latest and most up-to-date, and much of it is the result of the Company's own invention. Where English-made machines are not used, it's only because recourse has been necessary to Continental makes but the business itself, its directorate, its capital, and its staff are, of the British, British.