

# Canadian 1940s McColl-Frontenac "Follow the Red Indian Trail" sign brings \$24,780 (Canadian) in Miller & Miller auction

*The sign, by legendary Canadian sign painter Nathan Appleby, was the overall top achiever of the two days of online-only auctions held October 27th and 28th.*

NEW HAMBURG, ONTARIO, CANADA, November 6, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A [1940s Canadian McColl-Frontenac Red Indian reverse-on-glass sign](#) realized more than double its high estimate for \$24,780, and an [American Red Top Flour single-sided porcelain 'convex' sign](#) from the 1920s changed hands for \$10,620 in two days of online-only auctions held on October 27th and 28th by Miller & Miller Auctions, Ltd.

All prices quoted here are in Canadian dollars and include an 18 percent buyer's premium.

The October 27th event was an Advertising & Americana auction featuring 271 lots of advertising signs, soda advertising, music machines and tobacciana. That was followed the next day by an Advertising, Petroliana & Coin-Op auction, boasting 407 lots of advertising signs, petroliana, breweriana, clocks, soda advertising and coin-ops. There was no live gallery bidding.

"The demand at this auction for straight, honest advertising was very strong," said Ethan Miller of Miller & Miller Auctions, Ltd. "Spending was closely linked to condition. Untouched, top-grade original performed the best, as expected. Our savvy buyers see signs as works of art and as the art market has shown us, there is a great deal of room for upward potential in this segment."



Sign painter Nathan Appleby's masterpiece, a McColl-Frontenac Red Indian reverse-on-glass "Follow the Indian Trail" sign from the 1940s, 17 ½ inches by 24 inches, signed (CA\$24,780).

Most of the top-selling items came up for bid on Day 2. The top lot of Day 1 was a [1940s Canadian Black Cats Cigarettes poster](#) on lithographed paper, in the original frame. The poster, in excellent condition, measured 27 inches by 19 ½ inches and was in excellent shape (\$3,835).

As expected, the McColl-Frontenac “Follow the Red Indian Trail” sign by legendary Canadian sign painter Nathan Appleby was the overall top achiever of the two days. What wasn’t expected was the fact that the sign blasted through its \$9,000-\$12,000 estimate to finish as well as it did. But bidders saw the 17 ½ inch by 24 inch sign for what it was – a reverse-on-glass masterpiece.

Runner-up honors went to the Red Top Flour single-sided porcelain ‘convex’ sign from the 1920s, with a fabulously detailed image seldom seen on porcelain signs. It’s one of the great American advertising signs, in excellent condition, marked on the bottom right edge, “Burdick, Consumers Bldg, Chi & Beaver Falls PA”. The sign measured a stout 22 inches by 18 ¼ inches.

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*Ethan Miller*



Red Top Flour single-sided porcelain ‘convex’ sign from the 1920s, in excellent condition, with a detailed image seldom seen on porcelain signs, 22 inches by 18 ¼ inches. (CA\$10,620)

Following are additional highlights from the auctions. On October 27th, 215 users registered to place 3,692 online bids for a total gross of \$87,526.50. All lots were sold, with 58 percent of the top 50 lots exceeding estimate. On October 28th, 425 users registered to place 9,088 online bids for a total gross of \$423,561. 99 percent of all lots were sold, with 60 percent of the top 50 lots exceeding estimate. Internet bidding was via LiveAuctioneers.com and Miller & Miller Live.

Two very different lots posted identical selling prices of \$8,850. One was a 1946 Wurlitzer model 1015 jukebox, housed in a veneer case with plastic and nickel-plated trim, tagged, “Wurlitzer Multi-Selector Phonograph Manufactured by Siegel Distributing Co., Toronto, Canada.” The

exceptionally clean original example included a selection of records, mostly Elvis originals. The other was a made-in-America 1950s Ford Tractors & Equipment Dealer double-sided porcelain die-cut sign, measuring 28 ½ inches in height by 42 ½ inches wide.

Two other unrelated lots also realized identical prices – of \$8,260. The first was a King Cole Tea and Coffee single-sided porcelain die-cut sign, among Canada's most colorful and detailed porcelain signs, 15 inches by 9 ½ inches. The second was a 1950s Bennett 756 North Star Gasoline pump, made in America of painted steel, 77 inches tall by 29 inches wide and tagged on the nozzle side with the maker's plate. The wide body globe was a replacement.

A round North Star Service Station double-sided porcelain dealer sign (Canadian, 1950s), 72 inches in diameter, originally from the Northstar Dealer in Steinbach, Manitoba (opened in 1956), offered by the original family, achieved \$7,080. Also, a K & S Tires (Toronto) double-sided lithographed steel flange die-cut sign, with vibrant color and gloss, 20 inches by 12 ½ inches, marked, "St. Thomas Metal Signs Ltd." to the bottom edge, commanded \$5,605.

All the items described so far are from Day 2, except for the Black Cats Cigarettes poster, which took top lot honors on Day 1. Runner-up to the poster was an Ortlieb's Beer lighted animated counter sign (American, 1950s), with a powder-coated case and reverse glass face, marked, "Ohio Advertising Display Co., Cincinnati, Ohio", in working condition (\$2,360).

Soda collectibles were a big hit with bidders. A few of the top performers were as follows:

- A large, single-sided tin Whistle Soda sign (American, 1940s), impressive at 40 inches by 63 inches and marked, "Beach, Coshocton, O.", bottom left edge (\$1,770).
- A Sun Crest Soda single-sided aluminum vertical sign, in excellent condition and appearing to be new old stock, 21 ¾ inches by 7 ¾ inches, marked, "Made in U.S.A." and "Evans Glen Co." bottom left and right edges (\$1,534).
- A Stubby Soda wall calendar from 1945 (Canadian), printed on single-sided lithographed paper



1946 Wurlitzer model 1015 jukebox, 59 inches tall, housed in a veneer case, an exceptionally clean original example including a selection of records, mostly Elvis originals (CA\$8,850).

and professionally framed, overall 23 ¼ inches by 12 ½ inches, signed “Stapleton” by the illustration artist on the top right of the image (\$1,416).

A single-sided tin Zig-Zag Cigarette Paper dispenser (American, 1930s), diminutive at 8 inches by 3 ¼ inches, with some minor scattered surface scratches and oxidation, changed hands for \$1,770. Also, an Iroquois Beer lighted counter sign (American, 1940s), made from stamped metal and applied composite components, in working condition, marked “Property of Iroquois Beverage Corporation, Buffalo, N.Y.”, 19 ½ inches by 19 inches, realized \$1,298.

An Astatic 600S Conneaut “Rocket Ship” crystal standing microphone with a plastic grill and chrome fins, having an on/off switch and mounted on a chrome-plated floor stand with a round black base, made in America in the 1950s by the Astatic Corp. of Ohio, hit CA\$1,121.

Miller & Miller Auctions, Ltd. will close out the year with two more sales, both online-only. The first will be a Luxury Watches auction on Friday, November 17th, featuring the Matheson Collection. The second is a Toys, Motorcycles & Automobilia auction on Saturday, December 9th, featuring the late Howard Meyer Legacy Collection. Watch the website for more details.

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This Canadian Black Cat Cigarettes lithographed paper poster from the 1940s in the original frame, 27 inches by 19 ½ inches, was the top lot on Day 1, finishing at CA\$3,835.



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Made-in-America 1950s Ford Tractors & Equipment Dealer double-sided porcelain die-cut sign, measuring 28 ½ inches in height by 42 ½ inches wide (CA\$8,850).

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