

The Bill of Goods

By Anna Von Reitz



Back in the day, a Bill of Goods was delivered, the recipient checked the list of items shipped against the goods actually received, and if all was in order, the receiver checked each item off and signed the bottom of the list as "received by" and dated it.

The Shipper was either then paid directly by cash in hand and the Bill of Goods "canceled" by the Shipper or his Agent writing "Paid in Full" across the receipt, and returning it to the Receiver, or, the Agent took the signed receipt back to the Shipper who then applied to a Local Agent for the Receiver for payment.

Either way, a Bill of Goods functioned to inventory and to track receipt of goods in transit, then served as a Bill for services performed, and in the end, as a Second Receipt to confirm that payment for Shipping was made.

It was entirely routine in my youth to receive a receipt stamped "Paid in Full" in red ink whenever we contracted to receive shipped goods.

When the goods arrived, we'd go down to the train station or wherever else the goods were delivered and warehoused, and receive the Bill of Goods (also called Bill of Lading) from the Shipping Agent. We'd check off everything that came in undamaged, note any items that were lost or damaged in transit for insurance claims, and sign off the Bill of Goods at the bottom of the page.

Most of the time, we paid for the shipping in cash on the spot before taking possession of the goods, and the shipper's Agent would apply that big red rectangular stamp: "Paid in Full" and sign the Received by: line that was just underneath those nice words, and also fill in the dateline that was also part of the rectangular stamp block.

The only exception to this system of presenting a Bill of Goods for inventory and signing it off as a Receipt due Payment, was the Collect on Delivery (C.O.D.) process, in which the Shipper acted on good faith to deliver a product that the Received was expected to pay for plus shipping

upon delivery. A C.O.D. was often more difficult to collect and so cost more for the endline Receiver.

The shipper's name and address and contact information appeared at the top of the Bill of Goods (or Bill of Lading which was a direct reference to the Shipping Service in particular) and our name, address, and contact information was written in at the bottom of the Bill, with a space for our sign-off signature and date received right beside.

I used to look at these "Paid in Full" receipts with something approaching joy. It felt good to have stacks of receipts saying, "Paid in Full" blazoned in red and all punched onto a spike-like spindle that a little girl could spin almost like a paper windmill.

I never forgot what a Bill of Goods was, how it functioned, and how it was processed, but somewhere in the late 1960's I stopped seeing Bills of Goods. The train no longer stopped at our little town station, and soon, even the freight trains stopped running. The "Paid in Full" stamps and their red ink disappeared.

Instead, we had receipts printed on roll paper in faint purple ink and they never said "Paid in Full" --- instead, they showed the details of a transaction -- the itemized list, the price, the total price, and the payment offered and the change received.

It was a transaction record, but not a Bill of Goods. Nobody signed for anything. There was no indication that anything was actually "Paid", as in something of substantive value exchanged for something of substantive value.

The only thing suggesting payment was that the transaction record showed nothing owing, which was, I noted, a little bit different than "Paid in Full", especially since the date on the receipt only guaranteed that nothing more was owed on that particular date.

That is, the new receipts didn't absolutely exonerate and cancel any remaining debt resulting from the transaction. They just said that as of that day, nothing more was owed.

What if there was unseen interest accruing on the transactions these receipts recorded? What if it started out with nothing owing on July 10th 1968 and because of that transaction, a penny was owed on [July 11th 1968](#)? After all, the new receipt didn't say, "Paid in Full".

It didn't say "Paid" at all. Maybe it wasn't that kind of transaction?

The world had changed somehow, though as a young kid, I was at a loss to explain it. What was apparent was that people were trading more and more on symbols --- what I would later recognize as commercial paper --- and using actual money, silver dollars and half dollars and quarters and Silver Certificates, less and less.

Only diehards like Moe's Family Shoe Store still stamped these new receipts with red ink Paid in Full stamps, and even they didn't stop and sign the receipts.

I began to notice that without someone's actual signature, the entity to be paid or which owed payment, either one, appeared to be just a name. Who, actually, was "Moe's Family Shoe Store"? And as for the Receiver, there was no reference at all, nothing to show that I, Anna Maria, bought a new pair of red Keds tennis shoes.

These new receipts didn't feel like receipts at all. The transactions they tracked might be useful for inventory purposes, but not much else. Instead of keeping these receipts as records of payment, most people threw them away.

The whole set up felt strange and undefined and open-ended --- and suspicious somehow. Like a Black Market. The sellers were identified, but not the buyers. The transactions showed nothing owed on that day, but not that the Bill had been "Paid in Full". That left the possibility of additional charges accruing and left the nature of the transaction in doubt.

Was it a sale? Or a lease? Was I renting my new tennis shoes? Would I be responsible for paying damages?

The idea that every bank and store and cash register company in America was colluding to pull some kind of Fast One seemed so far-fetched, I shrugged and went on about my business like everyone else.

But they were pulling a Fast One. They were leaving the receipts "open" so that they could accrue and charge interest on a "National Debt" that didn't legitimately exist. Every one of those open-ended transactions accrued service charges and resulted in undisclosed debt.

Who knew?

Lately, I've been thinking about Alice Gebhardt, the woman who inspired me to be a Cancer Coach, and about Billy Carson and one of his recent rants.

Both of them pointed out that when we arrive here on Earth, we are all sold a Bill of Goods.

A name, a sex, a race, a religion, a nationality, and often, even a political party are all dumped on us, free gratis. The mindless Shippers of all these intellectual property interests never imagine that they are loading us down like beasts of burden with all their "gifts" serving to define and limit us, but so they are.

They also give us all sorts of limitations. We are told overtly and by suggestion what is "appropriate" for us, what we can expect out of life, and what our limits are--- intellectually, professionally, socially, culturally, artistically --- in all ways, we are stuck like ants in amber by the time we are five years old.

Those who cripple us are also, ironically, those who love us and protect us. They do it and don't even realize that they are doing us any harm.

Often, we aren't swift enough to realize that, however lovingly, we've been sold a Bill of Goods about who we are, what we want, what we believe --- yes, nearly everything about us has been neatly mapped out and predetermined by others, who are reacting to life on autopilot themselves.

Ask for the day when your eyes are opened and you don't sign the receipt, that moment when you no longer blindly accept who you are and what your limitations are --- as told to you by someone else.

Take a good look around. First, it's your parents and siblings and grandparents doing it to you. Then, it's your teachers and school officials and coaches. Then it's your drill sergeants and senior officers. Then it's your employers and co-workers. And then, most of the time, without a thought, you become one of them, and process your own children through the same cookie cutter one-size-fits-all paradigm.

One size doesn't fit all, and though we all know that, we contrive to ignore the Truth, sign the Bill of Goods, accept the charges.... and then one day, like Alice, we find ourselves dying on schedule, too.

You are two and a half. It's time you were potty trained. You are five. Time for kindergarten. You are eighteen. Time to graduate from High School. Time to join the Service or go to college or trade school. At 22, it's time to find a mate and a job and start raising a family. Or maybe go on to Graduate School. And then, you are 62 or 65, and it's time you retired, Old Sod. Have a few penurious years as the honored and largely invisible walking dead, and oh, yeah, well, you are now 80, time to kick the bucket. Gotta get out your bucket list and do it, if you can still walk.

Alice was 85 and she had Terminal Cancer-- really bad cancer throughout her body, and yes, she was in horrific pain. The doctors burned her, cut her open, poisoned her, and left me the horrible task of taking more blood samples and more biopsies of her dying flesh simply so they could follow -- with morbid curiosity -- her long and painful slow demise.

One day, I couldn't stand it anymore.

I refused to collect any more samples from her. I quit. I gave up on conventional medicine having the answers. And at that point, a miracle occurred.

Alice realized she had been sold a Bill of Goods, and she started laughing. It was all a joke. A farce. A bad dream she believed in, but suddenly, she didn't believe in it anymore.

She started laughing then, and she never stopped laughing the rest of her long, long life. It didn't matter that she was 85. It didn't matter that she had "terminal" cancer. She wasn't ready to die, and she realized it was her choice. So she laughed some more and her spontaneous remission began.

Three weeks later, she walked out of the hospital on her own. No wheelchair. No cancer. She went home and lived on her own, very happily the rest of her days. When she died peacefully in her sleep at almost a hundred, there was no cancer in her postmortem.

Examine the Bill of Goods you've been given. Is it even yours? Or does it belong to someone else?

Just as I asked you all to step outside yourselves and observe yourself from a different corner of the room, or look down at yourself from high up in the sky, or imagine that you are flying far faster than the birds in the sky, know that you are not your body, not your mind, and certainly not what someone else thinks about you.

Their gifted labels and limitations are not yours.

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