

Home Permanent Finest Wave At Any Price

“Which twin has the *Toni*?”

-- Bill Cullen

Lincoln, Me. (DG)—

The creation of *Toni Home Permanent* opened the door for women who wanted a permanent wave without going to the beauty parlor and paying all outdoors for one. Since its debut, the people of *The Toni Company*, the makers of *Toni Home Permanent*, were finding ways to make their star product better--- and to let the people know of its achievement. In other words, *Toni Home Permanent* was going head on with the other brands of home permanents of the era--- and more importantly, the perms that were done professionally at beauty parlors.

In order to get the word out on the radio, announcer Bill Cullen described a classic advertising promotion on *Toni's* serial program, *THIS IS NORA DRAKE*, and the popular drama, *CASEY, CRIME PHOTOGRAPHER*.

The ad promotion featured identical twin sisters who had identical looking waves done to their hair. There was a slight difference, however. One twin had her hair done professionally at a beauty parlor, and the other twin used *Toni* on her hair. The classic question Cullen asked the listeners was, “Which twin has the *Toni*?”

Now bear in mind, the cost of the perms were \$15 for the professional wave and \$2 for a *Toni Kit*, which includes waving lotion and plastic curlers. Unless the people were told (and they usually were in the small print in the magazine ads), it was inconclusive who had what. For the ladies who wanted a professional looking wave, it was easy to use *Toni* at home and save the extra \$13 for something that needed \$13. As an added note, once the *Toni Kit* was purchased, when another *Toni* perm was the order of the day, the *Toni Refill* (bottle of waving lotion only) was available for \$1. If my math is correct, that would be a saving of \$14 to the professional wave.

With *Toni Home Permanent* an immediate success, it received the ultimate compliment. Its popularity was overwhelming--- which means the competition were creating their own brands of home permanent. “The *Toni Twins*” promotion was so popular, the phrase “Which Twin Has The *Toni*?” became a part of our language. In addition, the *Toni* name itself is now slang for a woman who was about to have a home permanent.

Since twins were used in *Toni* advertising, and the word “twins” is usually associated with the number

2, it made sense if *The Toni Company* came up with a second product to accompany *Toni Home Permanent*--- and they did!



The second product in question was *Toni Creme Shampoo*. Just like *Toni Home Permanent*, “*The Toni Twins*” were featured in its print advertising, and Bill Cullen described on the radio how it gave its users “**Soft Water Shampooing**” even in water as hard as concrete. ■■

What this means, for people who have hair and hard water to contend with, using another shampoo may not necessarily supply much lather to work with. Once the hair was rinsed, the other shampoo was inclined to leave a dulling, soapy-like film on the hair. On the other hand, if the situation was the same as before with the exception of *Toni Creme Shampoo* as the product used, the lather content was rich and abundant. Once it exploded into rich lather, *Toni* was ready to go to work in removing dandruff, dirt, and gunk. Once the shampooing was completed, *Toni Creme Shampoo* rinsed off completely--- along with the dandruff, dirt, and gunk, of course. The final result was fresh, shiny, and easy to manage hair. Of course, *Toni Creme Shampoo* gave the same results for those people who had soft or normal water.

With the creation of *Toni Creme Shampoo*, *The Toni Company** focused on a complete line of products in later years such as *White Rain*, *Spin Curlers*, *Tonette*, *Silver Curl*, *Tame*, *Pamper*, *Adorn*, *Viv*, *Deep Magic*, and many other products for the hair and complexion. Of course, these products were consistent sponsors of radio, TV, and print.

The idea of a getting a professional style wave at home was a major success story for *Toni Home Permanent* and *The Toni Company*. It was also a success story for Bill Cullen, who was the *Toni* commercial spokesman on radio. He went on to a distinguished career as one of the greatest game show M.C.’s of all time. It seems like good things happen to everything and everyone when *Toni* was involved.

Author’s note: I didn’t mention it in the article, and I would like to set the record straight. *The Gillette Safety Razor Company* acquired *The Toni Company* in 1948. This acquisition would give *Gillette* a new line of products for women under *The Toni Company* division, to go along with the famous *Gillette* razors and shaving products for men.