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Timbromanie

By VINCE KING

Timbromanie was a term given by the French to a stamp collecting craze that closely followed the issuance of the first postage labels in the mid 19th century. These first government postage stamps appealed to young women, children, and just the curious citizen, who tended to gather them as decorative objects. This casual collecting was quickly popularized and was widely known as “timbromanie.” In 1865, a more scholarly term (philately) was proposed by an elite core of collectors who felt the whiff of mania was too derogatory.

In 1840, when Great Britain issued the first government labels for the prepayment of postage, the public was well aware of the concept of collecting objects. Private collections of books, art, maps, shells and coins had been organized, catalogued and widely discussed in newspapers and publications. While the urge to collect knew no social or economic bounds, one had to have means. The 1840 Penny Black cost just a penny, and this miniature artwork arrived free-of-charge on letters. The issuance, use and proliferation

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Figure 1. Superimposed on an 1826 map published by Anthony Finley of Philadelphia, *The World*, on a globular projection, exhibiting the geographical researches of modern travellers & navigators, are postage stamps as issued by 12 countries in the first two decades after Great Britain issued the one penny stamp in 1840.

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The Ephemera Journal

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Members and Friends

Thankfully, the Ephemera Society of America successfully navigated 2021. This second Covid year literally closed one door but opened many others. Despite the loss of the physical conference/fair, the Zoom conference/fairs have been a fantastic success. The March virtual event brought more than FIVE times as many people to the ESA conference. The virtual fair had 9,618 visitors and generated 294,137 page views. The fair sales sell-through rate was 22%, more than double the average virtual book fair. As a result, there was an almost 20% increase in ESA membership. Virtual events are here to stay as a tool to reach people, build relationships, spread the word about ephemera and grow the ESA.

We welcome our new board members, Jim Arsenault, Barbara Loe, Tom Horrocks, and John Sayers, who is returning to be the Treasurer. We will strive to continue to make the ESA more visible using the best of the latest technology to reach new audiences — think Instagram, Twitter & TikTok. Our goal is to introduce the ESA to new underserved audiences, such as students in ephemera research and writing, and to explore opportunities to partner with like organizations.

Our long-standing members and trade partners are our essential lifeline during these uncertain times. We appreciate the continued support of each and every member. Our sincere thanks go to out-going president Dick Sheaff. Dick led the important effort to enhance the ESA website, and his blog posts and exhibit contributions adorned both the website and the conferences. We also wish to thank Henry Voigt, the Finance Chair, who brought much needed experience as a strategic thinker on the Executive Committee. Tamar Zimmerman was chair of the Programs Committee and offered great insights on the Conference Committee.

What can you expect in 2022? A physical mid-March conference and show in Greenwich "Creating Places & Spaces:" more on-line presentations; this journal three times a year and the monthly eNews; and a mid-year meeting in Portland, tentatively set for the second week in October prior to the Seattle Book Fair.

Ephemera is gorgeous, accessible, and an important interpretation of our material culture. We will continue to spread the word and look forward to your continued support.

David

David Lilburne



Obituaries

Jay T. Last

October 18, 1929 - November 11, 2021

The computer I sit at owes two debts to the late Jay Last. As every memorial emphasizes (and there have been many), Jay was one of a group of scientists who discovered and patented the integrated circuit silicon chips that made personal computers feasible. And, when Jay discovered that I was producing the *Ephemera News* on a typewriter in the 1990s, he donated funds to the Society for me to choose a computer suitable for desktop publishing.

We ephemerists all owe Jay gratitude for translating his passion for chromolithography into an estimable reference work (*The Color Explosion*, that won the Newman Award for outstanding book of the year 2007), and for funding accessibility to his collection at the Huntington Library: "The Jay T. Last Collection of Graphic Arts and Social History." Beginning in 2005 Jay gave his more than 250,000 examples of American prints, posters and ephemera. And that gift attracted other collections to the Huntington, including those of six other Rickards award winners (Jay was awarded his in 2005): Robert Staples & Barbara Charles (1986), William Helfand (2006), Jonathan Bulkley (2010), José Rodriguez (2014), Nancy Rosin (2016), and Al Malpa (2021). In 2010, Jay Last made a gift for the endowment of the Jay T. Last Curator of Graphic Arts and Social History. He has since funded cataloging and digitization projects for prints and ephemera including a current three-year initiative to catalog 20,000 items of American sheet music in his collection.

Here are just a few other grateful voices:

David Mihaly: *Learning from Jay was a tremendous joy. I am in awe of what he knew and what he amassed since scouring flea markets in the 1970s in search of citrus box labels. The quality and comprehensiveness of his archive truly represents a collection of collections. He never stopped building it and he was pleased to know that his materials are now united with those assembled by other award-winning collectors to form one of the great ephemera study collections in the world.*

Bruce Shyer: *We have lost a trailblazing scholar of printing history, a monumentally distinguished ephemera collector, a major supporter of the Ephemera Society, a joyful reciter of humorous limericks, and a dear friend.*

Dick Sheaff: *Jay certainly was a lion, and in so many areas: transistors/integrated circuits, African art, collecting ephemera, printing history, philanthropy, and, I'm sure, others.*

Robert Dalton Harris: *I am profoundly grateful to Jay for teaching me the affective equivalence of the color lithograph and the integrated circuit. A fellow physicist, he once gave me a book entitled, How the Hippies Saved Physics.*

Georgia (Gigi) Barnhill: *Jay Last was both a friend and a mainstay of my professional life. Our friendship developed and grew through his visits to the American Antiquarian Society and his attendance at meetings of the Ephemera Society and the North American Print Conference. I regret that a continent divided us--we always had a great deal to talk about in the worlds of ephemera and print collecting, curatorship, scholarly research, digital innovations, preservation, and sharing of materials. Walking through the Ephemera Society Fair one spring, we came across two copies of a Charles Magnus lettersheet. One went to the Huntington Library, the other to AAS. What a special way to share!*

Such encounters led to his very generous support of AAS. His support of acquisitions in the late 1990s was simply a curator's dream experience. His interest in promoting scholarly research led to the Jay and Deborah Last Fellowships at AAS in 2007. These started slowly but he kept enlarging the program. Well over 150 scholars and artists



This photo of Jay is a still from an interview with me, accessible at www.ephemerasy.org

In this Issue...

We explore some of the outreach of our Society. In the world of postage stamps as ephemera, we give an award at the annual event of the American Philatelic Society for the best exhibit that incorporates ephemera. In 2021 it was won by **Vince King**, whose essay based on the exhibit is our cover article.

We want to appeal to collectors and to dealers (who often are the most avid of collectors). **Ed Smith's** short piece on deciphering a Japanese Savings Stamp illustrates his method of collecting, and then researching, whatever catches his eye.

Robin Bledsoe, a seasoned dealer, has collected and specialized in selling equine ephemera, and here explores the borderland between the horse and the horseless carriage.

We often reach out to the world of rare book collecting and, to honor the first major American book fair in two years, **Bruce Shyer** will create an exhibit of many examples of Art Nouveau ephemera - a sample appearing here.

Beginning with this issue, we share something from our sister organization, Down Under, with the encouragement of their editor Mandy Bede. The short piece that describes an Australian postcard is also the first in a series that will thoroughly deconstruct a singular image; postcard collecting is another field for our Society to explore.

—Diane DeBlois, editor

Continued on page 12



Figure 2. Pennsylvania schoolboy David Latimer's stamps collected around 1856 in a German textbook. He wrote: "Keep Clean/ David T. Latimer/D. Latimer's Book/D.T. Latimers/Do not handle this book for he who steals it, will be punished according to law which is that he will be hung up on the mast of a ship & be exposed naked for 6 days."

of postage stamps worldwide propelled the interest in these new curiosities, admired for their aesthetic qualities of color, texture, shape and design. From 1840 to 1860, 84 countries and postal entities issued roughly 640 adhesives of different designs for the prepayment of mail [Figure 1]. As a result, stamps touched all the corners of the globe, and timbromanie spread.

In Great Britain, collectors of used postage stamps had four visually distinct varieties to assemble by the end of 1841: the original Penny Black that paid for a half ounce any distance within the country; the two penny blue issued just two days later to pay up to an ounce any distance; the Penny Red, issued in 1841 because cancellation marks were hard to see on the black; and a new color and altered design for the two penny blue.

The first published account about the new mania of collecting old postage



Figure 3. Circular for Kline's Emporium in Philadelphia. In addition to "postage, official & revenue stamps" that are illustrated (prominently the Cape of Good Hope triangular four pence of 1853) he imported and dealt in all sorts of curiosities "& Articles of Vertu."

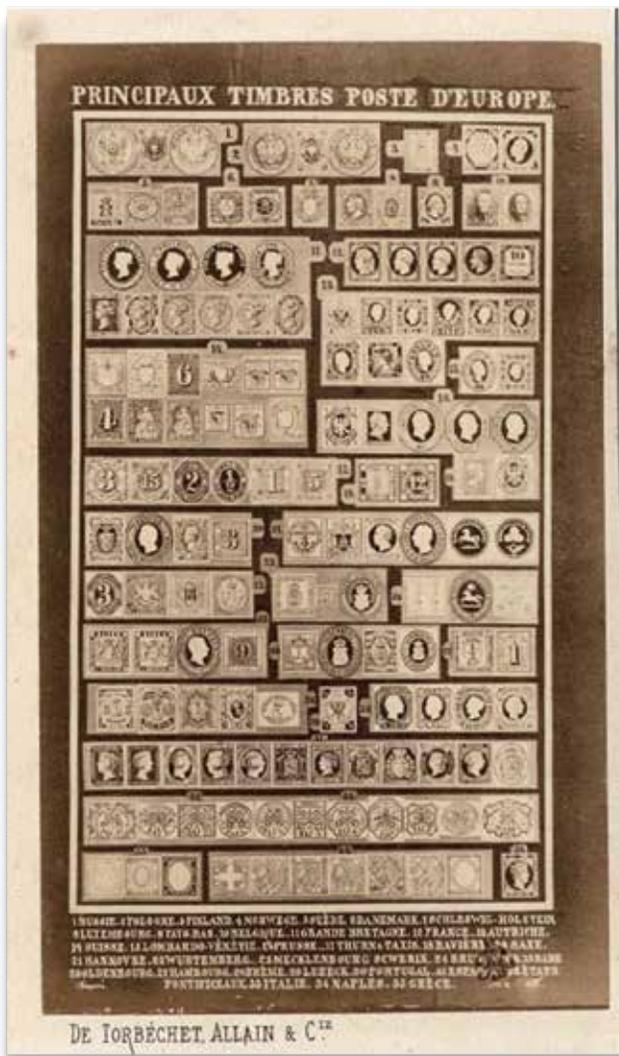


Figure 4. The French firm of De Torbéchet, Allain & Cie. published this carte-de-visite with an assemblage of European postage stamps, identified with a key included in the photograph's negative, around 1862. These were probably the first published photographs of the curiosities.

stamps appeared in *Punch or the London Charivari* January 29, 1842 (Volume 2, No. 28, page 76). Coverage included a poem that began:

When was a folly so pestilent hit upon,
As folks running made to collect every spit upon
Post-office stamp that's been soil'd and been writ
upon?

The world's first published solicitation to collectors to exchange used postal stamps (in this case for the purpose of decorating a library) was published in a weekly magazine, the *Family Herald*, of March 22, 1851, London (Vol. VIII, No. 411, page 747). The advertisement was signed T.H.S. and described Smith's Library on 20 Brewer Street, Golden Square, as having a ceiling decorated with 80,000 postage stamps. Smith

promised to give in exchange, four Penny Red stamps for one oval from a stamped envelope.

The earliest reported collection of postage stamps with a provenance was begun in 1855 by Charles DeJaeger (1837-1868) inside a tiny notebook of 108 pages, titled in manuscript: "Collection de Timbres-poste et de Pavillons. Institute royal d'horticulture, Gand, 21 May 1855." After Charles drowned accidentally in a canal, his sister continued to add to the collection and it now contains 315 postage stamps (having suffered some excisions). Charles had been trained as a horticulturist by his father and had an inclination to collect objects and record their data. Moreover, he was for a time assistant postmaster at Ghent (Gand).

The earliest known American collection of postage stamps was kept by David Teford Latimer in 1856 while he was a student at Nazareth Hall boarding school in Nazareth, Pennsylvania [Figure 2]. In that

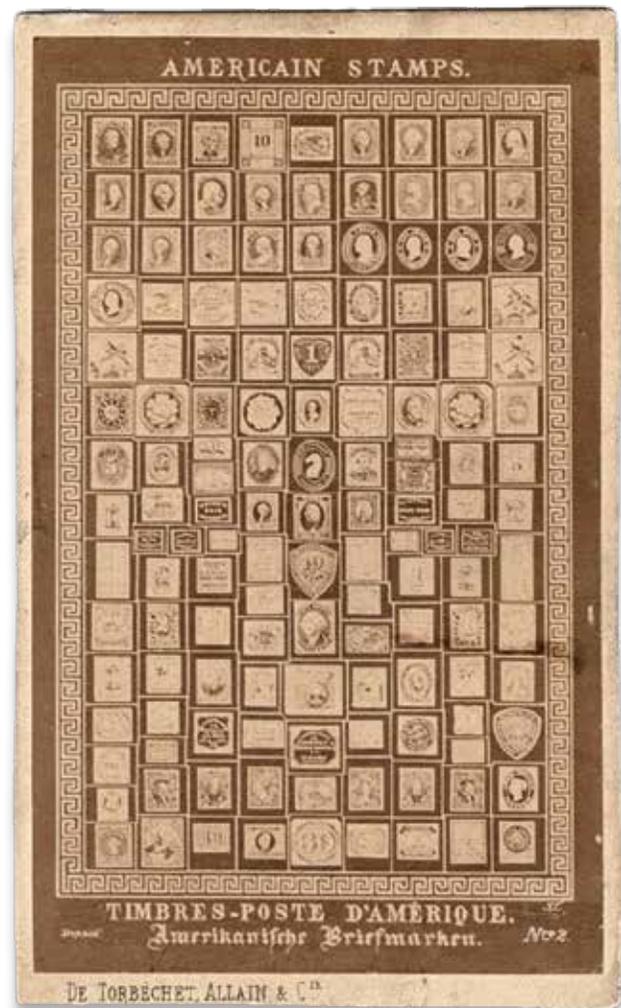


Figure 5. The same firm also published an assemblage of "Americain Stamps" [sic] titled in both French and German to appeal to a broad audience. In addition to stamps issued by the United States Post Office Department, both cut from sheets and from embossed stamped envelopes, this grouping included stamps issued by private and local carriers.

year, the 14-year-old pasted 35 postally used imperforate 3 cent George Washington postage stamps of the U.S. 1851 issue to the inside front cover of his German grammar textbook, *Ollendorf's New Method of Learning to Read, Write, and Speak the German Language*, D. Appleton & Company of New York, 1854 (David's October 1, 1855 account in the Nazareth Hall ledger book, page 158, shows that he purchased a Germ[an] Gram[mar Book] for \$1.) Such casual assemblages of stamps were common as there were no published stamp albums for collectors to house, organize or display their treasures. In general, during the timbromanie era, there was little consideration given to stamp preservation. In most cases, stamps were cut or torn from folded letters or envelopes, then trimmed prior to affixing.

The earliest reported American letter that mentions the new pursuit was written from Boston on April 17, 1859: "... If you think of it when you see Charles Brace, will you ask him if he has any foreign letters from any place but England, & if he would let Pat have the postage stamps if it is not too much trouble to take them off. I thought he probably has correspondents in Sweden, Norway and Germany, & Pat's book is really very pretty, & he wants to have it complete as possible. ..."

In 1897, Walter Scott of Cardiff, Wales, reminisced about how his collecting fascination began:

"I cannot claim the term 'excellent' for my own collection, but, such as it is, I have held it and continued it uninterruptedly since I first commenced making it in 1859. I well remember the circumstance which first called my attention to stamps. My father had gone to India, and my interest was aroused by seeing



Figure 6. The photographer A. Villeneuve of Paris published this assemblage of worldwide stamps, with an identifying key. On the back is the signature of John K[err] Tiffany, 1842-1897, of St. Louis who was one of the earliest prominent American stamp collectors. He began collecting as a student in France, where he purchased this card perhaps to use when calling on other collectors.

the curious stamps (the first 2 and 4 annas) that came home on his letters. The second type of these values was in issue at this time, and I can only account for my father using the first types by assuming that in the Western provinces, where he was stationed, the old stock had not been used up ..." (to the editor of the *London Philatelist: The Monthly Journal of the Philatelic Society*, London, Volume VI, November 1897, Number 71, page 335.)



The first published description of the design attributes of a postage stamp, including why it should appeal to a collector, appeared in *The Leisure Hour*, London July 21, 1859 (Vol. VIII, No. 395, pages 489-492). Under the title “Something About Postage Stamps” appeared details about the production of stamps and Queen Victoria’s image: “The Queen’s head, delicately engraved, is relieved by a dark background formed of finest lines ...” as well as a description of the hobby: “As there are collectors of almost everything old under the sun ... so also are there collectors of old postage stamps. This odd sort of antiquaries beg old stamps

Figure 7 (left). A lithograph by Charles Vernier (1813-1892), published by Imprimeries Lemerrier & Cie. in Paris around 1864, “Mademoiselle Va a la Bourse (aux timbres poste)” depicts three young women engaged in acquiring stamps for their albums that they have brought with them to the bourse. The implication was that stamp collecting might be a way to meet interesting young men. Most of Vernier’s work was published in Le Charivari, and became known for humorous observations on the customs of the day.

Figure 8 (below). Lithographed cover to a wooden box for a postage stamp game, undated and with no publisher, designed for an international audience.





Figure 9. Cover lithograph by Gerlier to sheet music, a polka *Timbres-Poste* composed by G. Oscart, published by Simonau in Paris and Brussels around 1864. The postal courier, a uniformed horse, spurs on a winged locomotive called “Veloce” or *Speed*, while the letters fly away.

wherever they go, and amass them by hundreds of thousands, for some cherished purpose of their own, on the accomplishment of which they have set their hearts ...”

The first image of a postal adhesive published for popular consumption appeared in *Le Magazine Pittoresque* in June 1862 (Paris, M. Édouard Charton), beginning a series of 53 articles “*Les Timbres-Poste, de Tous les États du Globe.*” The first country to have its stamps pictured was Finland: “*Empire de Russia, Grand-duché de Finlande,*” the text written by a non-collector, Natalie Rondot, who was a corresponding member of the French Academy of Fine Arts. The series of articles provided readers with accurate and impressive detailed information on the different stamp issues, and as such was a forerunner to philatelic catalogs.

One of the first catalogs published to help collectors identify postage stamps, the *Manuel du Collectionneur de Timbres-Poste* by Jean-Baptiste Moens, was published in Brussels in January 1862. At 72 pages, it was printed on green paper with descriptive listings of stamps and no illustrations. In May 1862, William Mount Brown Published in London a *Catalogue of British, Colonial, and Foreign Postage Stamps*. Its 62 pages described 1,200 stamps but again with no illustrations. In December 1862, A.C. Kline, a

Philadelphia dealer in collectibles since 1857, published *The Stamp Collector’s Manual* [Figure 3]. Its 48 pages described 1,500 varieties of American and foreign stamps. With the exception of the U.S. and Confederate sections it was plagiarized from the Third Edition of the Mount Brown Catalogue, but it did contain the most complete list of U.S. Carrier and Local stamps known at that time.

The first albums published to hold collectors’ stamps also appeared in 1862. Justin Lallier created an *Album-Timbres-Poste orné de cartes*, published in Paris in June by A. Lenègre, “*Manufacture d’Albums, Reliure et Maroquinerie.*” The English Edition of this album appeared in August. The first American album was D. Appleton & Co.’s *Album for Postage and Other Stamps, American and Foreign*, published in New York in 1863 (advertisements for the album appeared in the *New York Daily-Tribune* of December 17, 1862.).

Among the first specialist magazines devoted to the mania were: *The Stamp Collectors Magazine*, Bath, England, February 1863; *Le Collectionneur de Timbres-Poste*, Paris, September 1864; and *Le Timbrophile*, Paris, November 1864.

Items about stamp collecting began to appear in the popular press. In *Le Journal Amusant*, a French satirical weekly magazine, of October 25, 1862, editor-in-chief Pierre Véron published a light-hearted piece about the collecting mania, illustrated with 12 drawings by Charles Tronson, known as Carlo Grip. In the November 29th edition, 7 illustrations appeared by Félix Regamey, under the heading “*Toujours la Timbropostomanie*” with one showing that the fashion for collecting cartes-de-visites was being supplanted by stamp collecting.

Cartes-de-visites, however, also embraced timbromanie, on both sides of the Atlantic. Miniature stamp collections appeared as photographic collages, and can be dated by identifying the postage stamps [Figures 4 and 5]. Serious stamp collectors purchased these, perhaps to use as calling cards that promoted their interest [Figure 6].

Charles Dickens in July 1862 published a short story in his weekly magazine, *All the Year Round*. “*My Nephew’s Collection*” describes the famous author being educated by the youngster in the new hobby.

In *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* of August 1863, an article entitled “*An American Family in Germany*” described a German family of stamp collectors: “... Then there is the postage-stamp-mania, which has hopelessly seized the entire family without distinction of age or sex. ... The researches of the entire family in distant parts of the globe for the purpose of ferreting out and securing new and rare postage-stamps, she says, have already enlarged their minds. ... Stamp-books of every size and variety have become absolutely essential to their happiness at whatever cost.” (No. CLIX, Vol. XXVII, pages 306-320, Harper & Brothers, New York). This story demonstrates not only that the mania

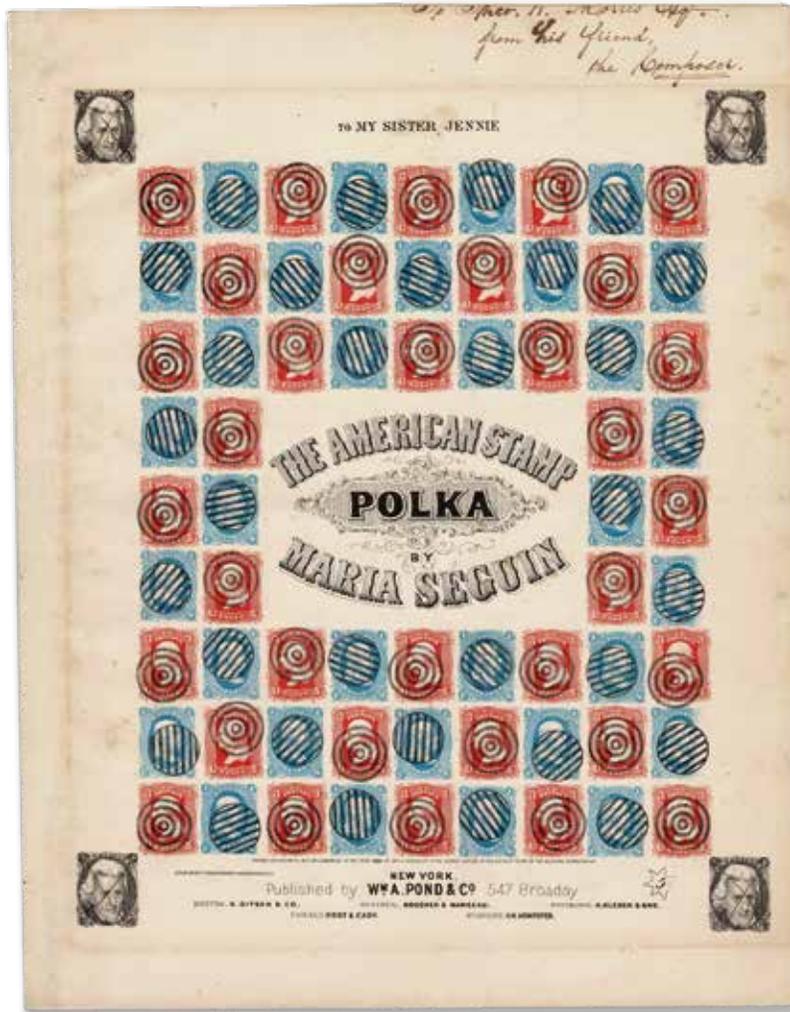


Figure 10. An 1864 cover lithograph by Sarony, Major & Knapp of New York, copyright by the publisher Wm. A. Pond, for The American Stamp Polka by Maria Seguin. This copy was signed by Seguin as a gift to his friend Theo. W. Morris (a New York composer). Illustrated are the one, two and three cent 1861 postage stamps of the United States.

Timbromanie before 1865 also joined the parlor music stand and became a theme in both European and American sheet music. Music was a mainstay of Victorian domestic life and popular culture. The mere existence of no fewer than four musical compositions featuring postage stamps indicates a growing public interest in timbromanie [Figures 9 and 10].

From 1865 onward, stamp collecting became more specialized, more codified, and more intensely studied. Known as the King of Hobbies, it is still globally popular despite the disappearance of postage stamps from most written communication.

2020 Exhibit QR code



was expanding globally, but that stamp collecting was now regarded as a serious pursuit.

The pastime of stamp trading between collectors also developed. Trades were made between friends, in person and by post, and now at bourses, events designed for stamp barter or commerce [Figure 7].

At the same time, stamp collecting also joined other parlor entertainments. Around 1865 a multi-lingual wooden block puzzle was published with the delight of children and their parents in mind [Figure 8]. 35 split blocks housed in a wooden box featured color lithographs of stamps from different countries affixed to 5 sides of each block. The sixth side showed a portion of a map of France or Italy. One of the game's challenges was to match the proper blocks to complete the images of the correct stamp on all sides. A secondary challenge would have been to properly arrange the map images.

Vince King was a stamp collector from the age of seven who inherited his love of history from his father and the collecting gene from his mother, who had important collections of Victorian pattern glass and Staffordshire pottery figures. Holding a Mechanical Engineering degree from Texas A&M University, he worked in the power generation sector prior to establishing his own engineering firm in 1991. Vince became a serious collector and student of Texas postal history in 1995. As an exhibitor, he has garnered multiple national gold medals and special awards for his postal history of Texas, and a 2013 international gold medal in Australia for *Under Six Flags-Expanding the Mail Service in Texas, 1801-1865*. Honored in 2011 as Distinguished Philatelic Texan and in 2016 with the Nicholas G. Carter Award, Mr. King has been a behind-the-scenes major hobby supporter, organizer and benefactor for over 15 years. His photograph here was taken in Chicago at the national convention of the American Philatelic Society in August 2021, where his Timbromanie exhibit, upon which this article is based, won a gold medal. (He designed plexiglass vitrines to attach to the conventional exhibit frames so that items like stamp albums, and philatelic games could be displayed.)



A Japanese Saving Stamp

BY EDWARD SMITH

Savings stamps in the United States have been issued by various entities from 1880 until 1970.

Beginning December 1, 1917, the United States Treasury Department issued 25-cent thrift stamps, to help pay for the war effort [Figure 1]. These stamps were intended to be affixed to “thrift cards” designed to hold 16, totaling \$4.00 [Figure 2], which could then be used to purchase one War Savings Certificate Stamp [Figure 3]. When that stamp matured on January 1, 1923, it would be worth \$5.00.

The Japanese issued a similar savings stamp, which I was determined to read [Figure 4]. It is printed in Kanji, the Japanese script system closest to traditional Chinese characters, more drawn than written and produced methodically one stroke at a time. In 1442, King Sejong the Great of Korea simplified the Kanji characters, and his innovation was copied by both Japan and China.

Reading from top right corner and around the stamp to top left corner:

貯 金 紙 用

This translates as “chokin Yoshi” or “money paper used for savings.”

壹 錢

In the center of the stamp, the two largest characters read “one sen.” I initially read the second character as “mace” the Chinese unit of both coinage and currency weight - which is synonymous with “sen,” both terms having the same place in the hierarchy of monetary measure. A sen is the equivalent of a penny; a yen, of a dollar.



Figure 1.

福 信 用 組 合

To the right and left of the characters declaring the value of the savings stamp, the characters read “Fuku Sin’yō Kumiai.” Or “Good Fortune Credit Association.” As this is fairly generic, it allowed the stamp to be used by different credit associations of which there were, and still are, many in Japan.

Ninomiya Sontoku (1787-1856), a self-taught agricultural leader, philosopher, moralist and economist established the first credit association. Born into a peasant family, Sontoku lost both his parents by age 16 and was sent to work on his uncle’s land. By age 20, he had acquired abandoned land and transformed it into farms. Sonoku achieved considerable wealth as a landlord while still in his 20s, and was recruited to run a small feudal district that was facing financial difficulty. He revived the local economy, particularly by founding village-based cooperative financial institutions, *gojokou*, to allow people to borrow and invest in improving their own land. He was eventually recruited to run Odawara Domain,

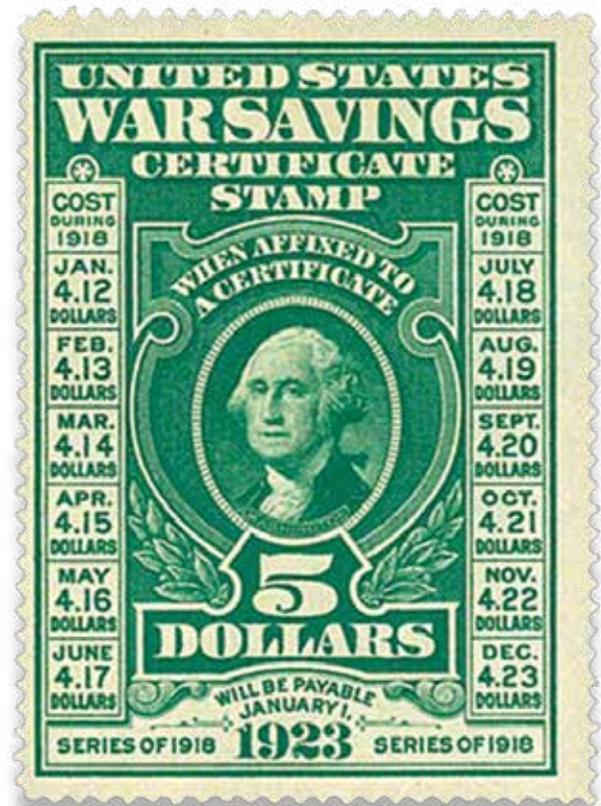


Figure 3.

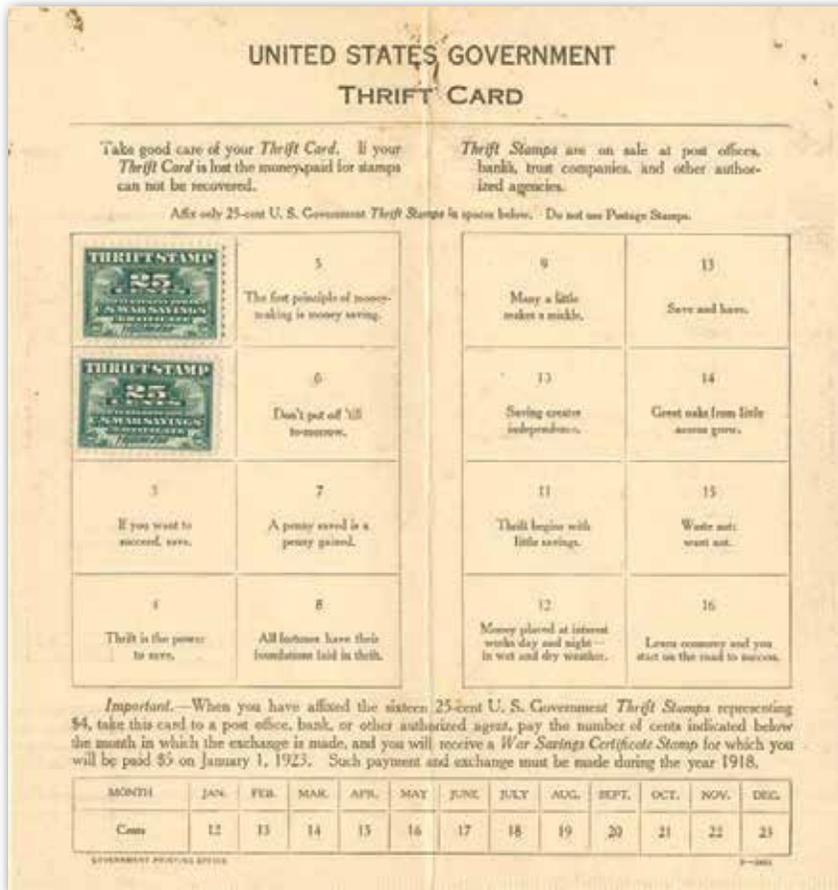


Figure 2.

then Sagami Province. Sontoku died only three years after Commodore Perry sailed his fleet into Tokyo Harbor and opened Japan to the western world. But the model that



Figure 4.

his village-based cooperative financial institutions provided played a role in the growth of the country in the second half of the 19th century, and these institutions remain important today.

The character “Fuku” shares a root with the characters used for both Fukui Prefecture and Fukui City, located east of Tokyo, facing the Sea of Japan and the Asian mainland. It is possible that this savings stamp was issued by the Fukui Credit Association. According to Dun and Bradstreet, the Fukui Credit Association may have been absorbed into one of these credit associations, still in business: Fukue Shinso; Fukuokaken Chuo Credit Cooperative; Fukuokaken Nanbu Credit Cooperative.

My first thoughts were that this savings stamp was issued just before World War II, when the spirit of Nationalism was strong enough that the Japanese government didn't care if non-Japanese could read the Kanji text. I have a 2 Rial coin minted by the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1982, two years after the American hostages were released. It is entirely in Farsi. At that time, Iran had a similar attitude.

Kanji, even in Japan, is favored most by scholars and calligraphers. It is ancient, venerable, and traditional. Kanji might be described as Inner Core Japanese, something one has to be truly Japanese to understand. Perhaps Kanji represents Reliability. To an American, it is like the image of George Washington on that United States War Savings Certificate stamp from World War I.

Edward Smith was born, bred and live in Brooklyn NY, though he'd like now to move to another state with rich soil and a generous growing season where he could eat from his own garden. He collects coins, stamps, fossils, rocks, minerals, sea shells, books and art - and whatever catches

his eye at flea markets, and occasionally on the sidewalk heading home from a Swissburger Deluxe with Curly Fries. A process has evolved: first he picks up or buys the object, then asks questions about it, then does the research, then asks more questions. His computer camera has caught him in front of a ca1960 oil painting on wood of the Long Island rail yard in Long Island City by Leonard Dolice.



Obituaries (continued from page 3)

have benefitted from these fellowships over the past fifteen years. He made a very significant contribution to the Society's stack addition some twenty years ago, and gave AAS a copy of the Julius Bien edition of Audubon's *Birds of America* at the time of my retirement in 2012. What an honor for me!

From time to time, I had the occasion to be in Los Angeles for meetings and was fortunate to be able to visit Jay and Debbie. The welcome was always warm and I enjoyed many luncheons with them at one of their favorite restaurants. The Cobb salads I devoured set a standard never met anywhere else. There was always time to look through some of Jay's recent acquisitions. What fun that was! I made a special trip to see the opening exhibition at the Huntington Library. How wonderful that there is such a magnificent collection available to scholars on the West Coast.

I join many others who miss Jay's presence in our lives. His generosity was unparalleled and many have benefitted in countless ways.

Charles Wood: Jay began his extraordinary life in the world of collecting by focussing on California orange box labels - which were printed lithographically. He was a man of extraordinary intelligence and curiosity that drew him to explore the early history of the medium. He was able to gather together fine examples of the earliest lithography from Europe, England and America. As everyone in the Ephemera Society knows, he went on to form a world-class collection of American chromolithography, and write what is now the standard work on the subject. Jay had a great gift - a sweet disposition and a wonderful sense of humor. We will miss him.

Glen Mason: If I had to pick one book if I were stranded on an island, it would be *The Color Explosion*. It is ironic that just a few weeks after Jay Last passed away, I learned of our dear friend Bob Staples's death. Not so long ago, during a Portland show, our house guests included Bob Staples and Barbara Fahs Charles. The other dealers were familiar neither with Bob's involvement in ephemera nor Jay Last's book. So, I brought out *The Color Explosion* out and, as the dealers were oohing and aahing over the illustrated pieces, Bob quietly said, "He got that one from me"... not just once, but multiple times! That wonderful connection between dealers and collectors, and those of us who are hybrids! Judith and I can imagine Jay and Bob "up there" reminiscing about those wonderful exchanges. Both will be greatly missed.

Robert Louis Staples

March 12, 1933 to November 30, 2021

Designer: Office of Charles and Ray Eames, 1957-1973
Senior designer and partner: Staples & Charles, Ltd., 1973-2018

Maurice Rickards Medal, with Barbara Fahs Charles, 1986

Robert Staples Metamorphic Collection placed at The Library Company of Philadelphia, 2020

William P. Barlow Jr.

February 11, 1934 to October 20, 2021

Bill Barlow of Oakland, California was a consummate collector — rare books, wine, stamps, printing equipment. One of his most interesting collections was of restaurant menus and related ephemera. On numerous occasions while growing up in the 1950s, he and his brother and their parents got in the family Cadillac, and went and saw America first, using the travel books published by Duncan Hines as a guide to the restaurants and hotels they encountered along the way. Many years later, he inherited (and completed) his family's annotated run of Duncan Hines guides, and began using them to collect (at first) menus, (and then) postcards, match books, ashtrays, and examples of dinner ware with the logos or restaurants' names of the places that he and his family had visited. Eventually, he expanded the scope of the collection to include examples of ephemera from restaurants that his family might have visited. This collection was so large and comprehensive that he could fashion a lecture on almost any city in the United States, illustrated by images of their local restaurants back into the 1940s and before.

Bill was active in the most prestigious collecting groups on both coasts — generous with his time and his expertise. He was awarded the Hubert Howe Bancroft Award (2004) and the Sir Thomas More Medal for Book Collecting (1989). He taught many courses at the Rare Book School in Virginia, and at the California version, beginning in 1994 — my favorite, from 1997: "Book Dealers are from Mercury/Book Collectors are from Pluto."



Eric Johnson

August 25, 1944 to October 29, 2021

Eric was editor of our Society publications before me, and brought his gentle expertise to the job. His university education was in journalism, and his work included writing for the Bermuda Department of Tourism, and translating engineering jargon into eloquent, accessible language for Carrier Corporation in Syracuse. He made Cazenovia NY his home — and, although not a collector, came to the world of ephemera when his wife, Susie, became our Society's Administrative Director.

Eric took over the quarterly *Ephemera News* for the Summer issue of 2000, and ended with the Spring issue of 2011 when both he and Susie retired. For economic reasons, the *Ephemera News* then became a monthly *eNews*, and I began editing the triennial *Ephemera Journal*.

Both Eric and Susie were a delight to share the annual meetings with — it's a pleasure to know how much the two of them enjoyed retirement. For a full obituary: <https://www.clementsfuneralservice.com/obituaries/Eric--Douglas-Johnson?obId=22846540#/obituaryInfo>



A View of 1919 Australian Quarantine

(from the *Ephemera Journal of Australia*, Issue Six/September 2020)

Real Photo postcard of the Wallangarra Quarantine Camp in 1919 at the border of New South Wales and Queensland [Australia]. Printed on Kodak Austral paper, this is probably an amateur souvenir view of which other similar views are known. A message on the back reads: "The arrival of our [train?]. No. 2 Compound Quarantine Camp Wallangarra Qld 1st March 1919. Note the rope that divides N.S.W. from Qld. I have put a small X (not a Kiss) over my head." At the start of the Spanish Flu epidemic in Australia, first the Queensland and Victorian borders were closed [January 29, 1919] and then others. Quarantine camps were set up to enable residents to return home. By March 6, 1919 the only way to enter Queensland by land was via the Wallangarra camp which was located entirely within NSW but run by the Queensland government and health officials. Before travelers could come from Sydney they had to obtain a permit from the Queensland Tourist Bureau in Sydney and be

inoculated. At their arrival, they declared they were residents of Queensland and paid, in advance, the 7 shillings 6 pence a day maintenance for the 7 day stay. This photograph shows the wealth of detail possible in postcard views: the boundary rope in the foreground, the four steaming cauldrons to boil water for individual "billies" and a pile of firewood. The tents in the background await allocation, and the various groups of men, women and children wait with their piled luggage, and bedding. Recognizable is a small group of returned ANZAC soldiers. The image appeared spread across two pages in the *Ephemera Journal of Australia* for September 2020, an issue subtitled "Unprecedented. Once in a 100 Years." Editorial comment: "This is the equivalent of today's Hotel Quarantine. Someone is trying to make a living by documenting the moment ... there is an uncanny parallel to how we use social media today: tweet the news as it happens. Postcards were the *Twitter* of that era."



Exhibiting Art Nouveau Ephemera

BY BRUCE SHYER

To celebrate the reemergence of the California Antiquarian Book Fair in February 2022, the Society's booth will exhibit "new art" or Art Nouveau ephemera from the Bruce Shyer collection. Our booth serves to attract new members and, consistent with the Society's mission, to educate the general public about ephemera.

During the 1880s, until approximately the onset of World War I, a "new art" or Art Nouveau appeared in architecture, the decorative arts, and graphic design on many types of ephemera. The style had various names reflecting its international presence. For example, in France it was also called Style Jules Verne and Le Style Métro (referring to Hector Guimard's iron and glass subway entrances, a miniature of which will be in this exhibit). In Germany, it was referred to as Jugendstil or "young life." In Austria and Hungary it had the name Sezessionstil (since artists were seceding from what came before).

This style, with its flowing and curving lines, was inspired by nature (think slithering vines) and was also an outgrowth of previous art movements, such as Arts and Crafts. Japanese wood block prints,



Valentine card, embossed and die-cut (4 x 6)



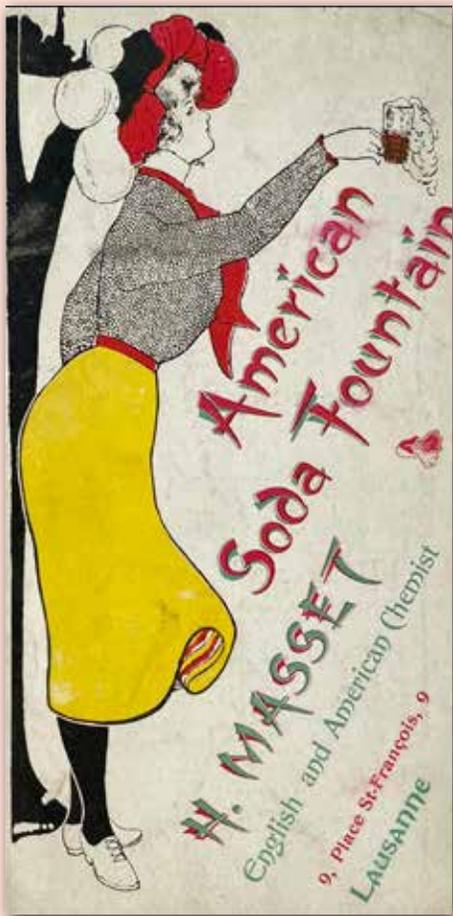
Wallpaper label "Lincrusta" Belgium, coated stock (8.25 x 5.5)



Advertising card distributed at the 1900 Paris exposition, and overprinted with the medal won for white goods, Grand Prix (5 x 3)



Cover of an advertising booklet, 6 panel including photograph of the Paris storefront (4.75 x 3.5)



Cover to folding menu, 4 panel including photograph of the American-style soda fountain in Switzerland (3.75 x 7.25)



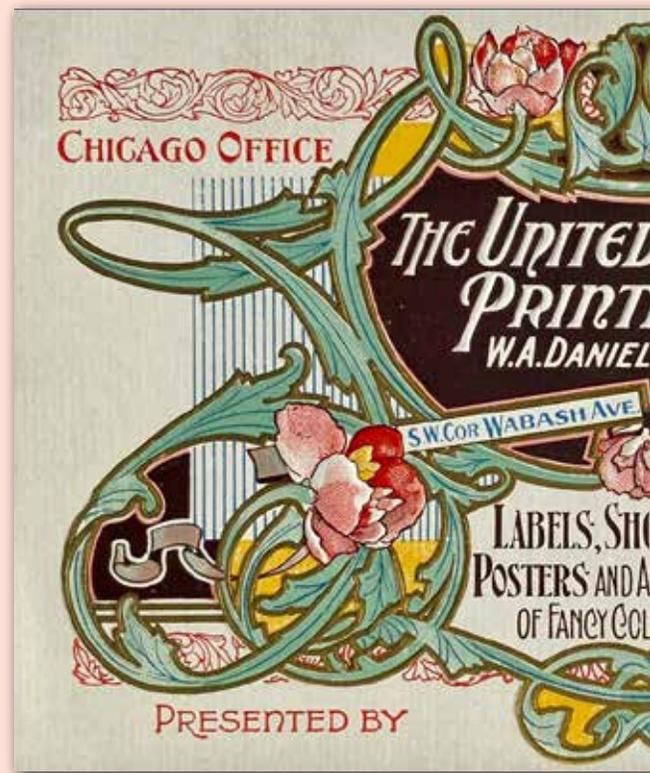
Card to promote an autumn 1905 exhibit of Paris fashions in Philadelphia (4.5 x 3.25)



Bookmark to promote the magazine Jugend, text on back, Munich (8.25 x 1.75)



Label for strawberry flavored custard powder, German (4 x 3)



Card for a Chicago printing company (6 x 4)



Menu card, published by a French biscuit company, manuscript meal at a hotel, die-cut (4.25 x 6.75)



Cover to trade catalog of autumn fashions, London (5 x 7.5)

TELEPHONE 1004 MAIN

STATES
ING Co.
S. MANAGER.

& RANDOLPH ST.

OW CARDS,
LL DESCRIPTIONS
ORED WORK

T. E. LESTER.

A Mademoiselle SYLVIA

LORSQUE
LES
FEMMES
SONT
JOLIES

Créeé par
ME NADEAU
l'Eden-Concert.

Romance

Paroles de
E. BOUSQUAT
Musique de
Léopold GANGLOFF

IFEVRE

PARIS
S. ONDET Editeur
83, Faub. St. Denis.

Paris d'Éditions de Traduction et Production
et d'Éditions révisées.

Imp. J. J. P. P.

THE BOTTLE
BEFORE USE

FINE TONIC & DIGESTIVE

BRAND'S
INTERNATIONAL
SAUCE

THE
A.1.

THIS
MOST WHOLESOME
& EXCELLENT SAUCE
EXCELS WITH

Cold Beef and Mutton
Veal Cutlets, Pork and
Mutton Chops
Fillet of Beef, Rump
Steak and Plain Dressed
Fish, Poultry, Game,
Salad and Cheese

IN GENERAL USE

In The Royal Household
The Houses of
Lords and Commons
India and other
Government Offices,
Army and Navy Mess
Rooms, The Clubs,
Restaurants &c.

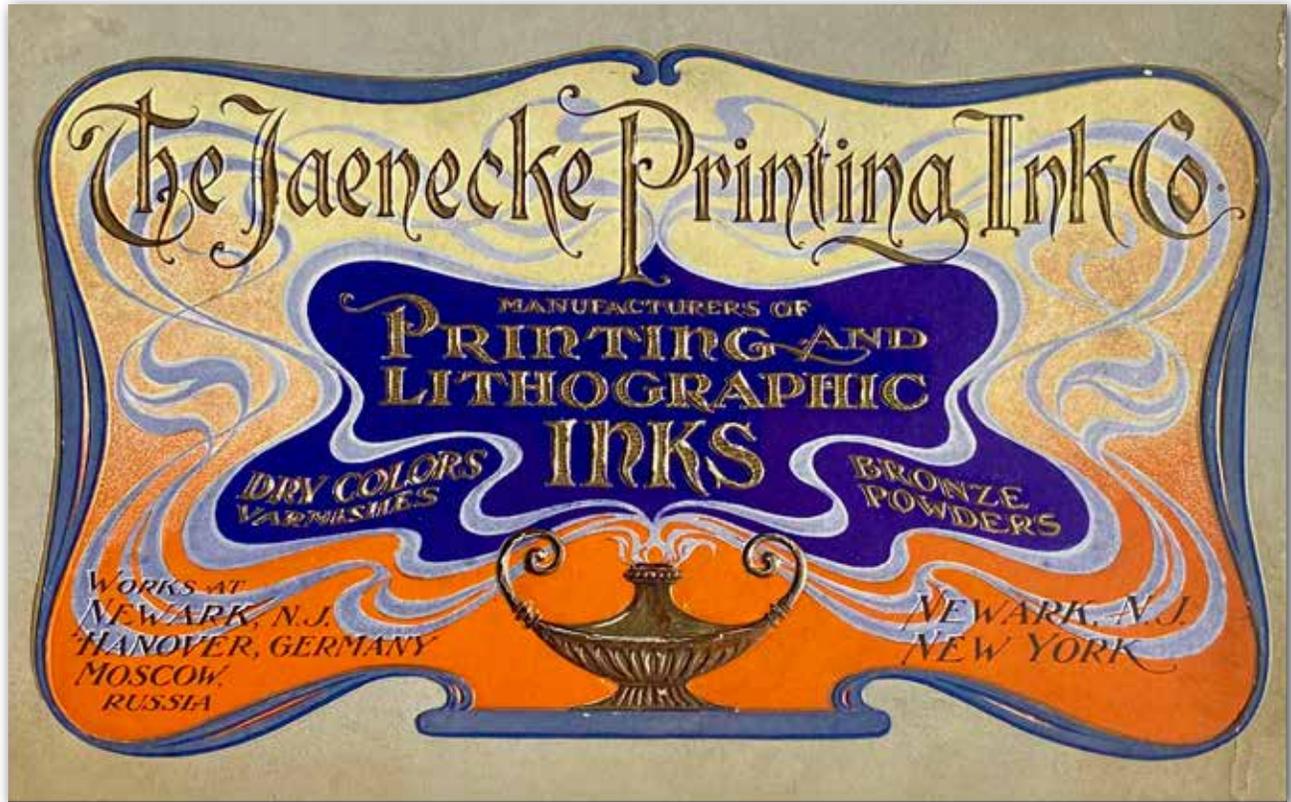
MAYFAIR WORKS, Vauxhall
LONDON, S.W.

**HAVE YOU
TRIED
BRAND'S
A.1.
SAUCE?**

IT CAN BE OBTAINED
OF ALL
GROGERS & STORES.

Cover to sheet music, published in Paris (6.75 x 10.75)

A 1 sauce bookmark, London (1.75 x 6.25)



Card for printing ink, Newark NJ, embossed (6.25 x 4)



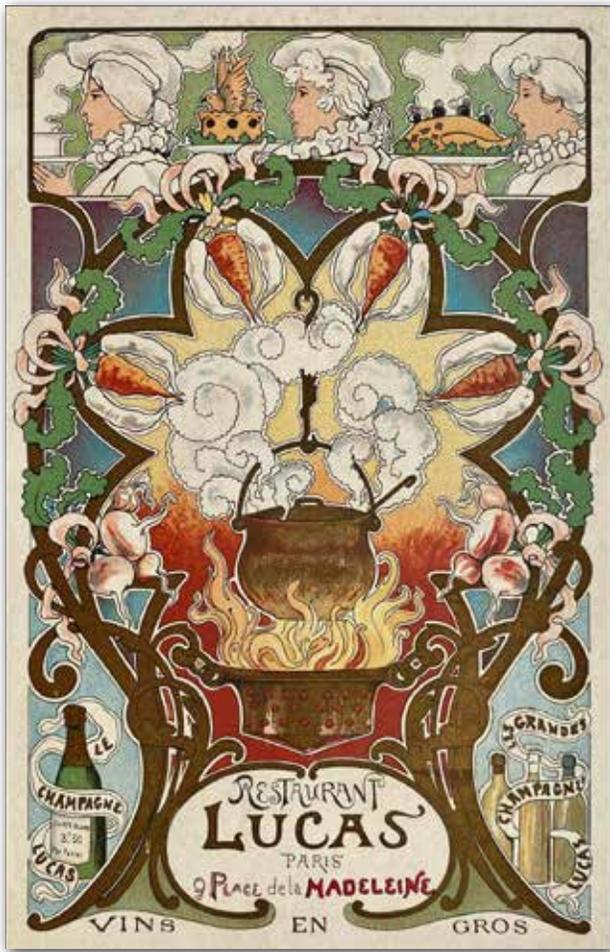
Flyer to advertise Belgian cognac (5.25 x 6.25)

which became generally available in the West during this period, influenced the style. One can see the similarities between Nouveau's characteristic "whiplash curves" and the shape of the waves which appear in some Japanese prints.

Art Nouveau became an international phenomenon largely due to its use in the graphic arts, such as periodicals and posters. But undoubtedly its appearance on many other types of ephemera contributed to its borderless use and appeal. This exhibit will show the design on menus, postcards, Valentines, tradecards, business cards, labels, poster stamps, trade catalogs, sheet music, letterheads, billheads, cosmetic boxes, brochures, bookmarks, perfume cards, advertisements, book jackets, and other types of ephemera.

Art Nouveau began its decline from incandescence to smolder after members of the Vienna Secession manifested a preference for angular or geometric forms conjuring up an "industrial" aesthetic rather than one inspired by nature.

In the 1960s, the "new art" itself was renewed and reworked by psychedelic rock poster artists, particularly those associated with the Fillmore in San Francisco [see the article by Malcolm Whyte "A Search for the Last Rock Poster" in *The Ephemera Journal* Volume 23, Number 2]. Some of the designs of these posters were mere "nods" to the style exhibiting characteristic lettering or other style



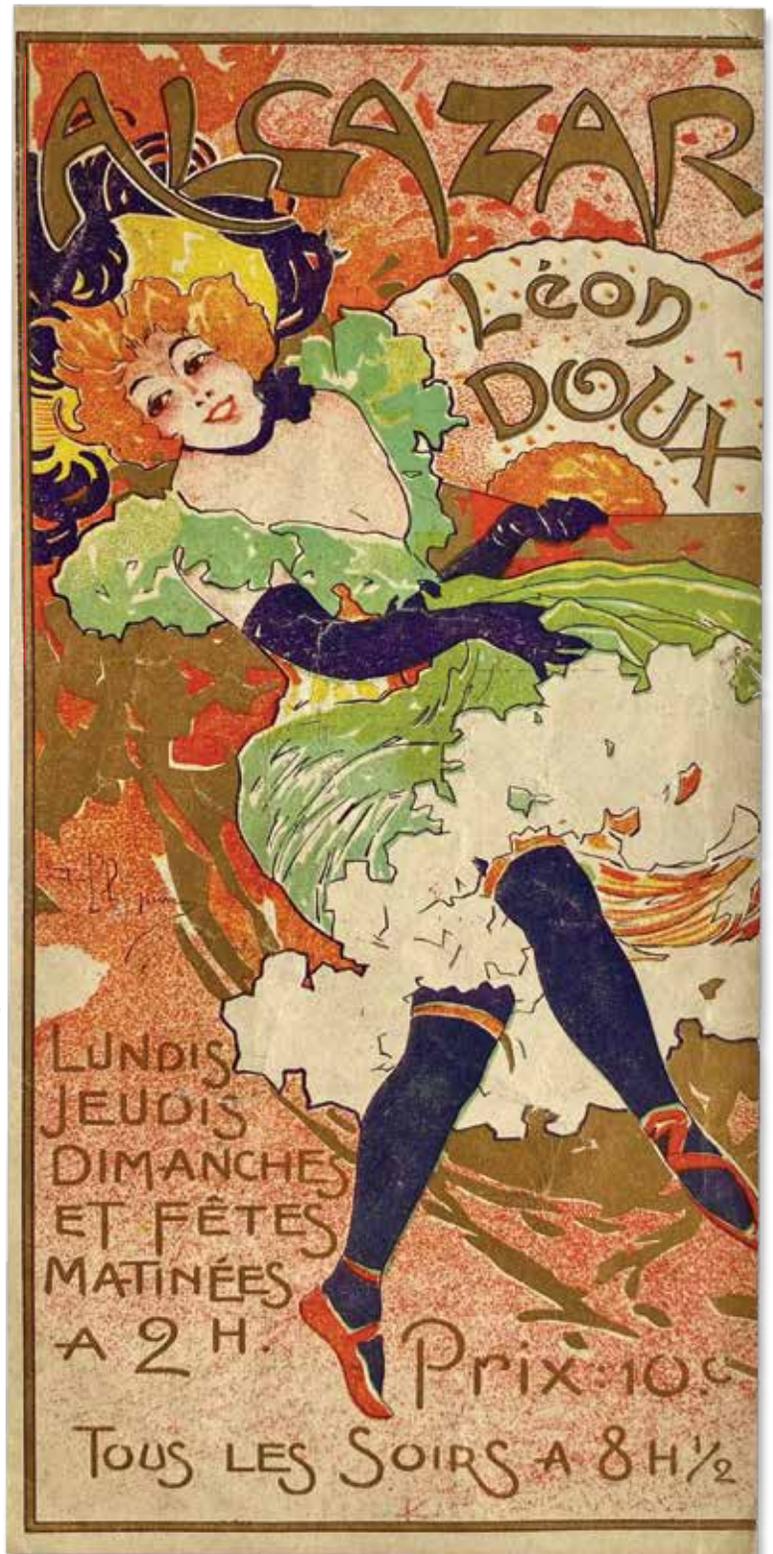
Cover to menu list of wines, Paris (6.25 x 10)

elements such as flowing fair and curling tendrils. However, other artists incorporated an historic Nouveau image but put it “on acid” by reversing colors or using other techniques to “vibrate” the fin-de-siècle work.

This exhibit is offered in the spirit of renewal and regeneration, an aim of Art Nouveau creators and the artists and designers who were influenced by them.



Bruce Shyer, a retired California lawyer, has served the Ephemera Society longer than any other director, for the maximum number of terms, then as Vice President and President. He is pictured here in front of a glass case exhibit of some of his Art Deco material, that he both underwrote and painstakingly curated, to accompany the Society’s information booth at the 2020 International California Book Fair in Oakland. Bruce’s several exhibits of this calibre, on behalf of the Society, have been true show-stoppers!



Theatre program, printed both sides, Marseilles (4.75 x 10.75)

“The Horse Is Here to Stay”

BY ROBIN BLEDSOE

This is a story about history’s losers. We’re all familiar with the triumphant ingenuity, engineering, and assembly-line production that put a motor car in every American driveway. We know less about technology’s also-rans: the millions of Americans who worked with horses for a living. The historical record may be silent on their fate, yet hundreds of books and ephemera of roughly the 1880s-1920s tell us they didn’t always go quietly. How these horsemen—and they were mostly men—variously responded to their dwindling livelihoods, and to the departure of a sentient being that greeted them in the morning, is a theme I’ve enjoyed collecting for many years. The material is often humble and plain, printed for and well used by down-to-earth working folk, so take a good look at the colorful exception in Figure 1.¹

Nothing is quainter than the “horse and buggy age,” yet American carriages, wagons, and sulkies were once the

wonder of the world. I’ll discuss first how carriage makers met the challenges of the horseless age, as shown in their many trade publications. I’ll then explore the extensive paper trail left by other groups with vested interests in horse power, such as the breeders and users of work and carriage horses. Finally, I’ll look at some popular imagery that reflects the often paradoxical changing role of horses as they were disappearing from our streets, and as girls and women were taking up the animals their menfolk had abandoned.

Although by the end of the nineteenth century the railroad had long replaced conveyances like the “swaggering, rakish” mail coach in Dickens’s *Martin Chuzzlewit*, a speedy driving horse was still an object of scientific interest, commercial value, and personal pride. Equine locomotion was studied from every angle, from Eadweard Muybridge’s sequential photographs to determine a trotter’s footfall, to the articles in *Scientific American* and other technical



Figure 1. The 5/A Peerless, plate from an unidentified S.W. Baker Company horse blanket catalogue, showing “but a few of the large variety of novel and beautiful patterns.” Baker’s successor firm still sells trademarked 5/A plaid horse blankets.

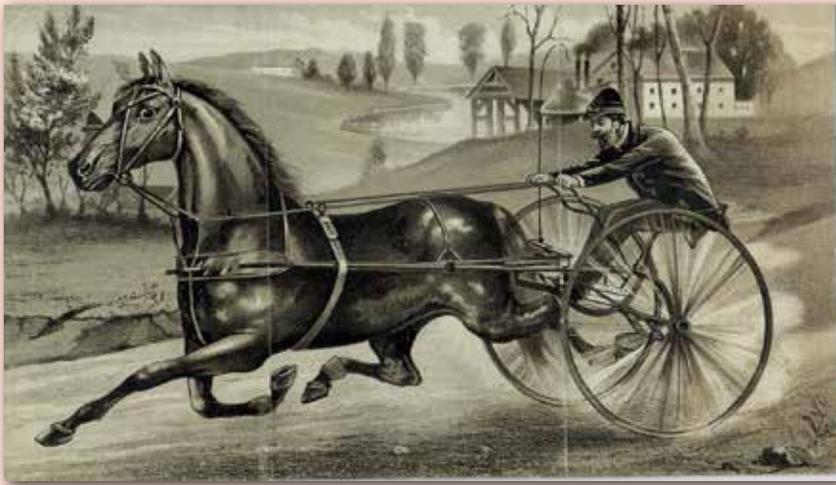


Figure 2. Lithographed flyer for Pratt's Perfection Road Cart made by A.L. Pratt & Co., Kalamazoo, Michigan, ca. late 1890s. Doctors could order a model with under-seat storage for their medicine cases.

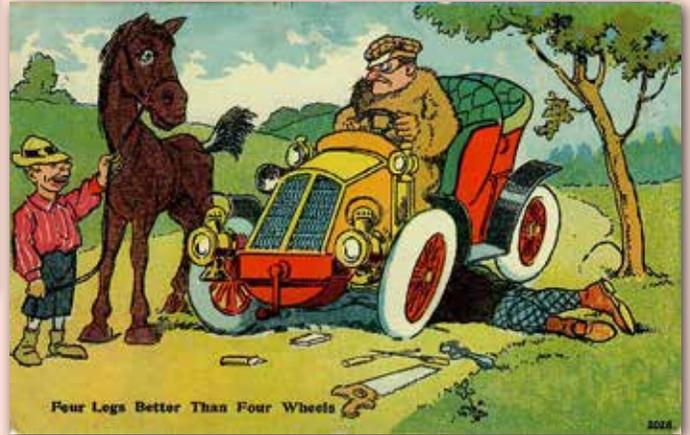


Figure 4. "Four Legs Better Than Four Wheels." No. 2028 in the Uncle Sam's Comics Anglo Series of postcards. Postmarked St. Louis, 1908.

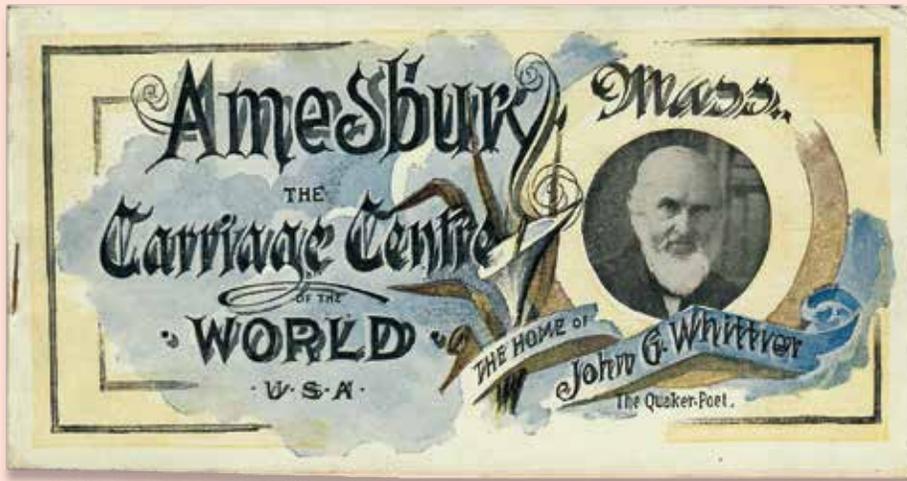


Figure 3. Amesbury, Mass., The Carriage Centre of the World, U.S.A. Catalogue of Amesbury's World Columbian Exhibit, 1893. The Amesbury Carriage Museum today forms part of the city's heritage center.



Figure 6. "Some of the Relics at Mark Ellinwoods." Real photo postcard, postmarked Davisville, N.H., 1908. The extensive Brewster papers and original drawings are archived at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure 5. Banner Buggy Company, St. Louis. Catalog No. 37. N.d. [ca.1920]. By now the firm was also making auto bodies for Chevrolet.

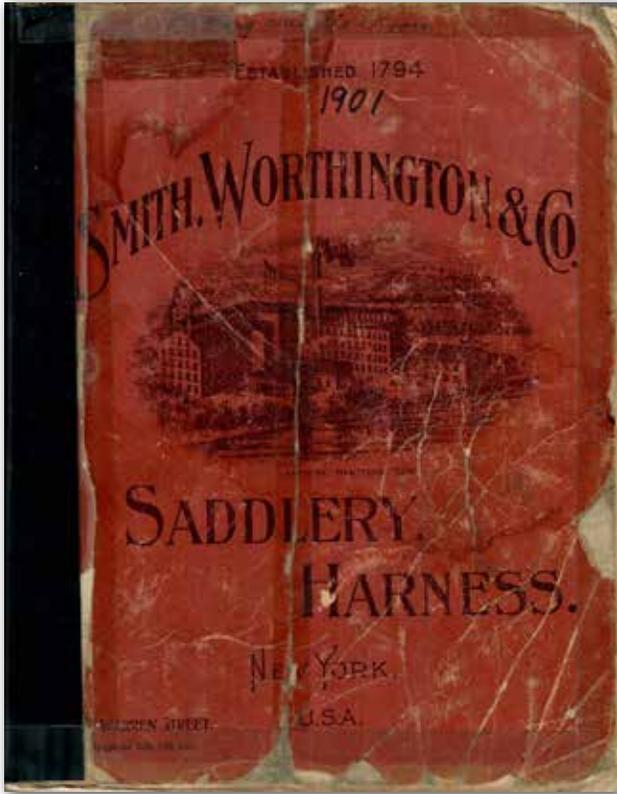


Figure 7. Smith, Worthington & Co., New York. *Saddlery, Harness*. January 1, 1901. WorldCat locates only two copies, both of which seem to be photocopies, perhaps even the same copy. By 1915 the firm was also carrying “motor car supplies.”

journals that aimed to unlock the mechanics of racing speed. M.W. Savage merchandised his feed company by blanketing America with images of his champion pacer Dan Patch in such media as booklets, postcards, tobacco tins, and photo flip books with the enticing promise of moving pictures “you can carry in your pocket.” The advertising flyer in Figure 2 is a good example of the many images of maniacal speed from these years.

At the time of the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the vehicles pulled by these animals were supplied by around 25,000 carriage builders and many thousand dealers. Firms from the great American carriage-making cities—Amesbury, Cambridge, Cincinnati, Columbus, Elkhart, New Haven, South Bend, Troy, and more—proudly showcased their wares at the fair. The makers from Amesbury, Massachusetts, one of several so-called carriage centers of the world, published an elegant small catalogue of their joint exhibition (Figure 3). The identities of many other companies are more elusive; their histories remain to be recovered from city directories, advertisements, ledger books, and other such documents.

Large or small, stormy days were ahead for all of them. No horse could outrun the horseless carriage, auto-buggy, auto-car, auto-wagon, self-propelled buggy, gas buggy, motor car, or machine. We see trade journals metamorphose; the venerable *Carriage Monthly* becomes *The Vehicle Monthly* in 1916, then *Motor Vehicle Monthly*

in 1921. Many die, such as *Carriage and Wagon Workers Journal* in 1908, *The Carriage Dealers’ Journal* not until 1915. Trade gossip and the latest carriage designs now jostle for space with articles on automobiling and automotive ads. In a 1917 issue of *The Blacksmith & Wheelwright* you could follow the fluctuating price of horseshoes and also learn how to repair your motorcycle. Even if you bought a motor of some sort, however, you couldn’t drive it far until the good roads movement saw to it that miles of roads were paved. You certainly didn’t have a handy garage. Countless cartoons, songs, postcards, and jokes spoofed axle-deep mud, motoring fiends, and mechanical mishaps (Figure 4).

The trade catalogues of carriage and horse-goods manufacturers also reflect the uneasy times. Some carriage makers pivoted nimbly into automobile manufacture, notably Studebaker Brothers, and some harness makers turned their focus to pleasure riding equipment or automotive accessories. Many whistled in the dark as they faded away. A lavish buggy catalogue of around 1920 opens with spirit: “Is The Horse Coming Back? Why, Man Alive! He Has Never Been Away!” But as we can guess from its picture of Uncle Sam as flying mailman, the firm has let go its “drummers” and is spinning this belt-tightening measure as direct-mail savings for the consumer (Figure 5). As late

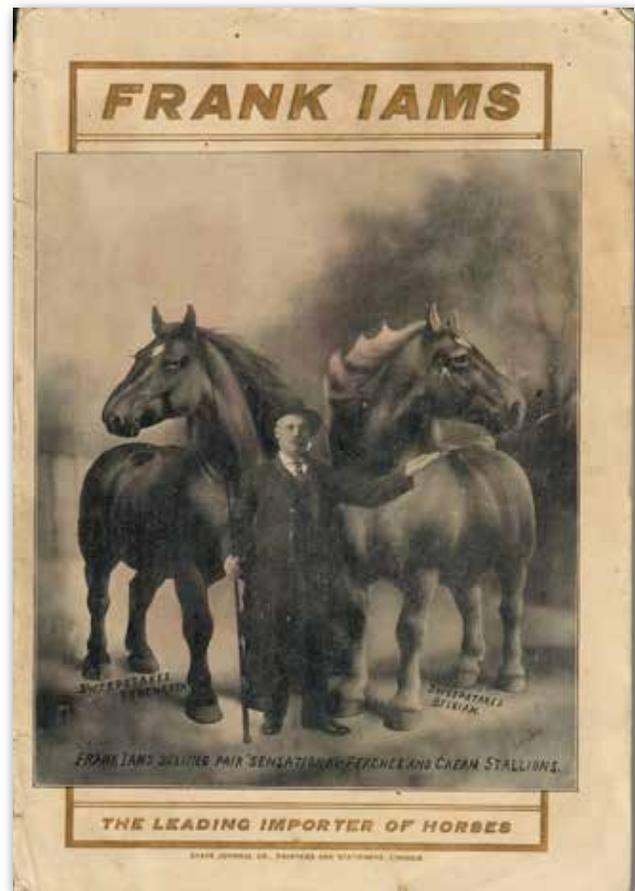


Figure 8. The 1908 catalogue of Frank Iams’ Stud, St. Paul, Nebraska. In lush prose and paintings by Lou Burk, it rhapsodizes over its “200 Black Percheron, Royal Belgian, and German Coach Stallions and Mares.”

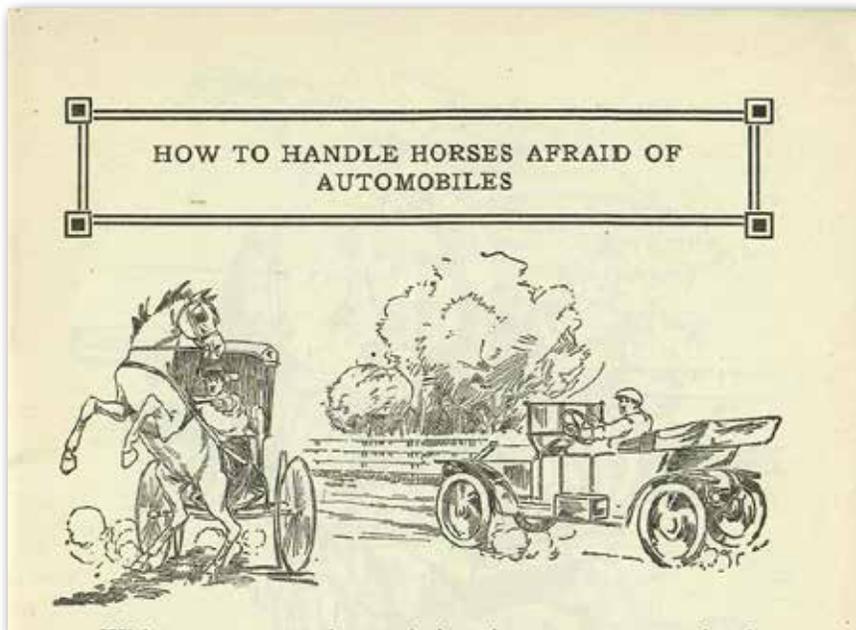


Figure 9. Prof. Beery's Mail Course in Horsemanship, Book No. 7: Overcoming Special Fears. Pleasant Hill, Ohio: Jesse Beery, copyrighted 1908 but probably later. From 1890 into at least the 1970s, the Beery School of Horsemanship printed hundreds of thousands of lesson booklets and related advertising. This long-lived business has its own niche in the history of American mail-order marketing.

as 1937 the Gleckner harness company of Canton, Pa., proclaimed, "The Horse Is Back." Tell that to Brewster & Brothers, long the maker of the most elegant carriages in America, which began to craft automobile bodies in 1915. In "You're the Top" of 1934, Cole Porter ranks "a Brewster body" up there with cellophane and Garbo's salary. Three years later the fancy New York company was as dead as Mark Ellinwood's New Hampshire wagon outfit (Figure 6).

One exception to this dying industry stands out. Figure 7 shows a rare document of American economic history, the first catalogue of Smith, Worthington, & Co. Established in Hartford in 1794—"since George Washington was president," as it later boasted—this horse-goods manufacturer also operated out of New York and became one of America's oldest continuously running businesses. The ambitious inaugural catalogue describes, prices, and illustrates in detailed line engravings, thousands of once common horse goods, from rein buttons and horn drenchers to express housings and trotting rolls. The firm served generations of equestrians until, sadly, it closed its doors in 2021.

Turning to the producers and users of America's tens of millions of horses, the heyday and decline of the horse market is amply recorded in the farm and sale catalogues that poured out of job printers in the Midwest and Plains states. A very few breeders could afford to issue fat catalogues and commission portraits of their horses by fashionable artists (Figure 8). Many catalogues are little more than pamphlets, perhaps with an electrotyped stock

cut. All of them, including the later dispersal catalogues that dumped superfluous horses, bear witness to the hopes and strategies of once essential participants in the American economy. This category of print is to my mind an overlooked resource for the history of regional printing and commerce.

Horses continued to be used for short-distance trips and hauling, which meant that automobile and carriage drivers had to learn how to share the road. The Lima, Ohio, Automobile Club published a 1907 booklet on "the highways of road etiquette." It repeatedly warns the automobilist, "There is but one thing to remember—RIGHT! Turn to the right—STICK TO THE RIGHT—and you will always BE RIGHT." In a 1909 letter, which I quote exactly, an Indiana pastor apologizes for not attending a funeral: "On last Sunday a week we had a bad accident, Our horse took fright at an Auto mobiel, and upset us in a ditch. I got out with some cuts and bruises but my wife in connection with cuts and bruises, got her rite arm broken, at the wrist. She is getting along



Figure 10. Real photo postcard. Message on back from Shenandoah, Pa., 1914.

continued on page 24

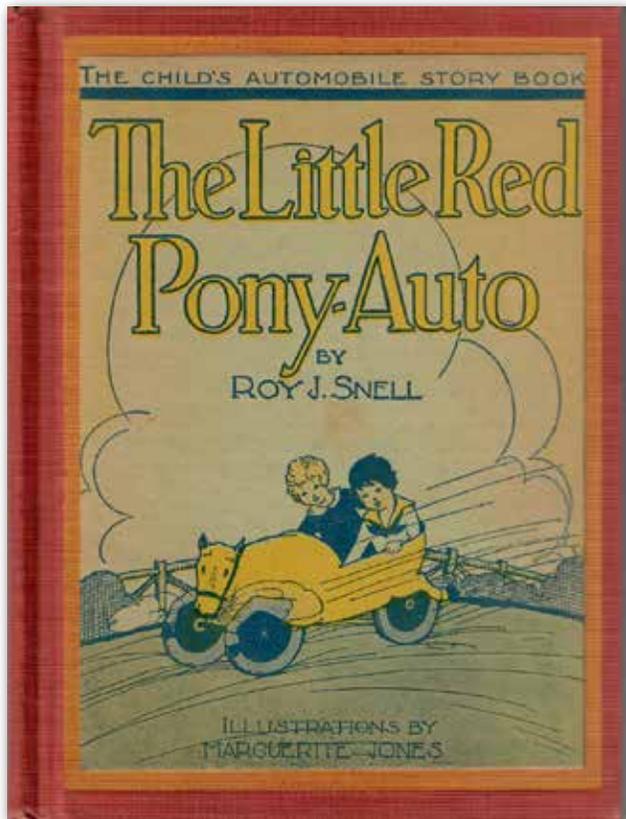


Figure 11. Roy J. Snell, *The Little Red Pony-Auto*, the “child’s automobile story book.” Chicago: Albert Whitman, 1930 (first published 1924). Illustrated by Marguerite Jones. This is the cover; inside the book, the pony-auto is red.

niceley but will not be abel to be with you in this your great sorrow.” The correspondence courses of Ohio horse trainer Professor Jesse Beery began to offer lessons on how to handle horses afraid of automobiles—you had a “chauffeur” drive a car past your horse and vehicle until he was used to it (Figure 9).

Despite the millions of horses and mules that Canada and the United States sent to a bloody end in World War I, the equine population stayed fairly constant into the mid-1920s. Not until 1924 did cars, trucks, and tractors outnumber horses and mules, according to USDA statistics. Figure 10 shows one farmer who probably didn’t part readily with his partner. In these years many groups with vested interests weighed in on life with or without horses. The U.S. Horse and Mule Association debated horse versus tractor power and published hundreds of booklets on horse care and use. From 1890 to 1942 the Bureau of Animal Industry printed eight editions of its *Diseases of the Horse*, which Congressmen gave out by the tens of thousands to their constituents. The War Department shifted horses to mostly non-combat duties, while still running a mounted cavalry school and issuing horsemanship manuals. One fact—spoiler ahead—always amazes me: “As late as November, 1944, the War Department was still discussing the possibility of using horse-cavalry units in the final stages of the war with Japan, but nothing came of it.”²

The early 20th-century “pony fad” breathed some life

into suppliers of Shetland ponies and carts through stories, raffles, and pony-naming contests. Itinerant photographers snapped joyful kids on pinto ponies, while children who wanted more daring adventures could follow the travels of a somewhat bizarre pony-auto (Figure 11). Progressive reformers spearheaded the animal welfare movement. From 1890 on millions of copies of *Black Beauty*, complete with its diagram of how to humanely shoot a horse, were given out to schoolchildren and stablemen alike. In Boston an annual work horse parade, which rewarded teamsters and owners for well-kept horses and vehicles, was held from 1903 into at least 1927, accompanied by thick programs that listed hundreds of entries in classes for everything from fire engines and laundry wagons to old horses and veteran drivers.

But a funny thing happened while smelly, dirty, dangerous, expensive, and woefully outmoded horses were trudging off our streets. No longer living machines, they

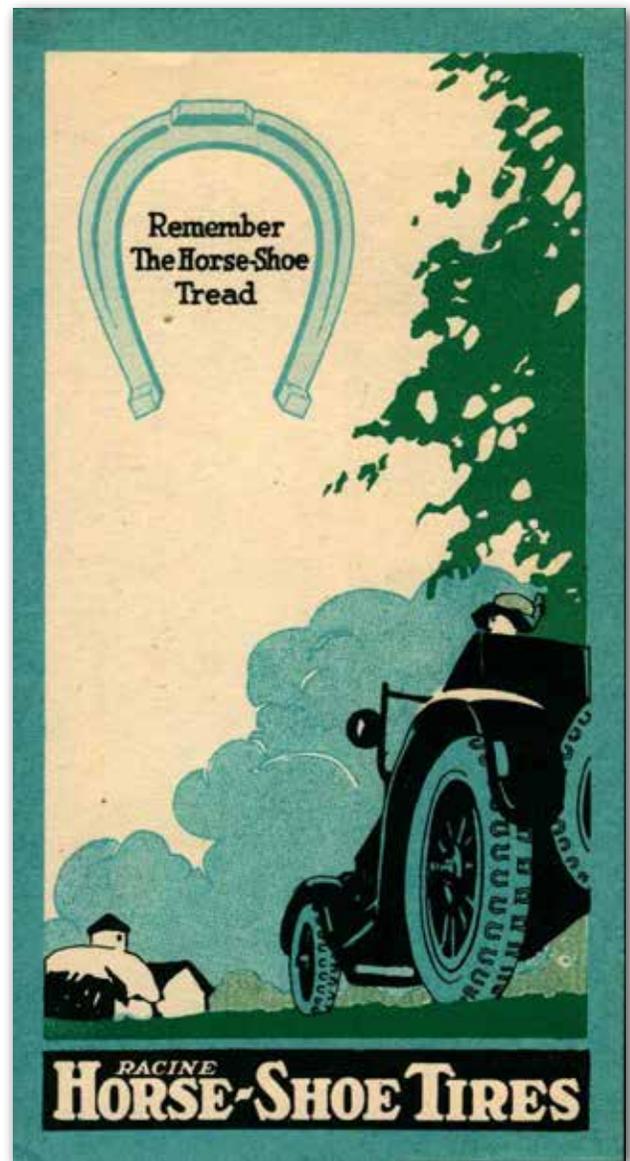


Figure 12. “Remember the Horse-Shoe Tread,” flyer from Racine Horse-Shoe Tires, Racine, Wisconsin, 1921.

A Timely Tip from U.S.A.'s No. 1 "War Horse"!!

"Get More Miles per Gallon!"

Gasoline is Vital today...Have your car put in shape to last long—and get the Most from Every Drop...

1. Clean your radiator, your headlights, your windshield, your spark plug stay in top order, you'll get long gasoline mileage. And your car will last far longer too.

2. Your Mobilgas Dealer's Washline Can Service Plan save you time like to study...

3. Check over the pressure wash to have better and greater.

4. Wash your tires every 1,000 miles. Wash the motor—make the motor hot and bright.

5. Change your oil every 1,000 miles. Wash with soap. Wash the motor's bearing setting oil.

6. Check battery every 2 weeks.

7. Wash radiator once per week.

8. 1,000 miles—grease your axles, your front ends, your wheels, your suspension, the shafts, the axles, the wheels, the tires, the bearings, the suspension, the motor, the oil, the oil.

9. Wash your gas line—the right grade of Mobiloil (see 10).

10. Clean your spark plug every 1,000 miles. Use only the best (see 11) of your gas!

11. Clean your car filter every 2,000 miles—helps save gasoline. Change oil filter every 1,000 miles—helps save gasoline.

12. MOBIL OIL MOTOR OIL, Inc. and others. Register Patent Co., General Petroleum Co. of Ltd.

Mobilgas
SOCCNY-VACUUM

Mobiloil
SPECIAL MOTOR OIL COMPANY
SPECIAL OIL

For Most Miles per Gallon—

GET MOBILGAS DEALER SERVICE

Figure 13. "A Timely Tip from U.S.A.'s No. 1 'War Horse.'" Magazine ad, 1940s. Frederic Stanley, artist.

RANCH ROMANCES

Still 15¢ Only

SECOND SEPTEMBER NUMBER

Gunman's Ghost

a novelette by
FRANK RICHARDSON PIERCE

By DOROTHY L. BONAR

Figure 16. Ranch Romances. New York: Warner Publications, September 16, 1949. Artist uncredited.

SHOULD OLD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT!

© REINHOLD & NEWMAN, 1924, N. Y.

Figure 15. "Should Old Acquaintance Be Forgot!" No. 222 in a series printed by Reinthal & Newman, New York. Message on back, 1914. The quotation is from a letter written to an unidentified 1905 New York newspaper.

OLD DOBBIN'S NOT MAD!

Figure 14. "Old Dobbin's Not Mad." I tore this ad out of a magazine in the early 1950s, which makes it the first item in my collection. Illustration signed Nulsen.



Figure 17. Real photo postcard. N.d. [ca. first third of the 20th century?]. Printed on CYKO photographic paper. Ink stamp of W.C. Gardner on the back. Can any reader identify the occasion?

began to be used to advertise the very machines that had replaced them, as continues to this day. Horseshoes, of all things, sold tires, and a wise old campaigner donned a GI's helmet to pitch Mobilgas (Figures 12 and 13). A decade later, dreamy Dobbin gave his okay to the trucks and highways that put him out to pasture (Figure 14). No longer a common sight, horses took on oppositional new roles—playthings simply reeking of class, and at the same time the stuff of sentiment and nostalgia. “A Miserable, Merry Christmas” by Lincoln Steffens is a tear-jerker of a memoir about the day his Christmas pony didn’t show up. Forest ranger H.R. Elliott’s oft-reprinted poem “To the Horse” runs along the lines of “No gas bills climbing up each day, | Stealing joy of life away” and ends with “Your wants are few and easy [sic] met, | You’re SOMETHING on the auto yet.”

In the most significant cultural shift of all, horses were displaced as the prime source of “sexualized power over time and space,” as Virginia Scharff notes.³ Many men who returned from the war took up jobs working with cars and planes. Boys who had once heeded Theodore Roosevelt’s advice to pursue riding as a “manly” sport that developed “courage, resolution, and endurance,” were cautioned by the 1925 Boy Scout manual, “Horsemanship as a profession in itself offers few inducements to the genuinely ambitious.” A mid-1930s psychology test that aimed to identify gender-appropriate behavior in adolescents concluded that the most “feminine” pastimes of all were hopscotch, cooking, collecting flowers, and horseback riding. Though women had long taken part in horse shows, more equestrian fields were opening up to them. As horsemanship and horse handling became devalued spheres of masculinity, men and boys tossed the reins to their wives, daughters, and sisters, who happily picked them up.

Pretty girls sell, and images of women and horses are everywhere. Long before body-shop pinups, many a feed-store calendar pictured a young lady with luxuriant

hair and come-hither eyes nuzzling up to a favorite steed. Perhaps her daughter was torn between companions old and new, as in Figure 15, or perhaps she agreed with the young woman who wrote, “the more you keep your machine in view, the more the neighbors think of you . . . [T]o up your social stock, one machine in front of your house for three or four hours a day is better than a whole stable of blueblood horses.” Maybe her granddaughter became the haughty deb in the pages of glossy society papers, savoring a cocktail with her beau—his Pierce-Arrow and polo ponies close at hand. And let’s say the calendar lovely’s great-granddaughter lit out for the west, riding up in time to rescue panicked Jimmy Jalopy (Figure 16). Who’s the sissy now?

Although the real photo postcard in Figure 17 tells us the horse died in A.D. 1941, reports of his death are greatly

exaggerated. He’s still used for work and play around the world. Enthusiasts still drive vintage carriages, riders still learn from the U.S. cavalry manuals, and little girls still cry over *Black Beauty*. There is a growing scholarly field of equestrian studies, in which historians are doing exciting cross-cultural, inter-disciplinary research into all aspects of the horse-human relationship.⁴ The old is new again.

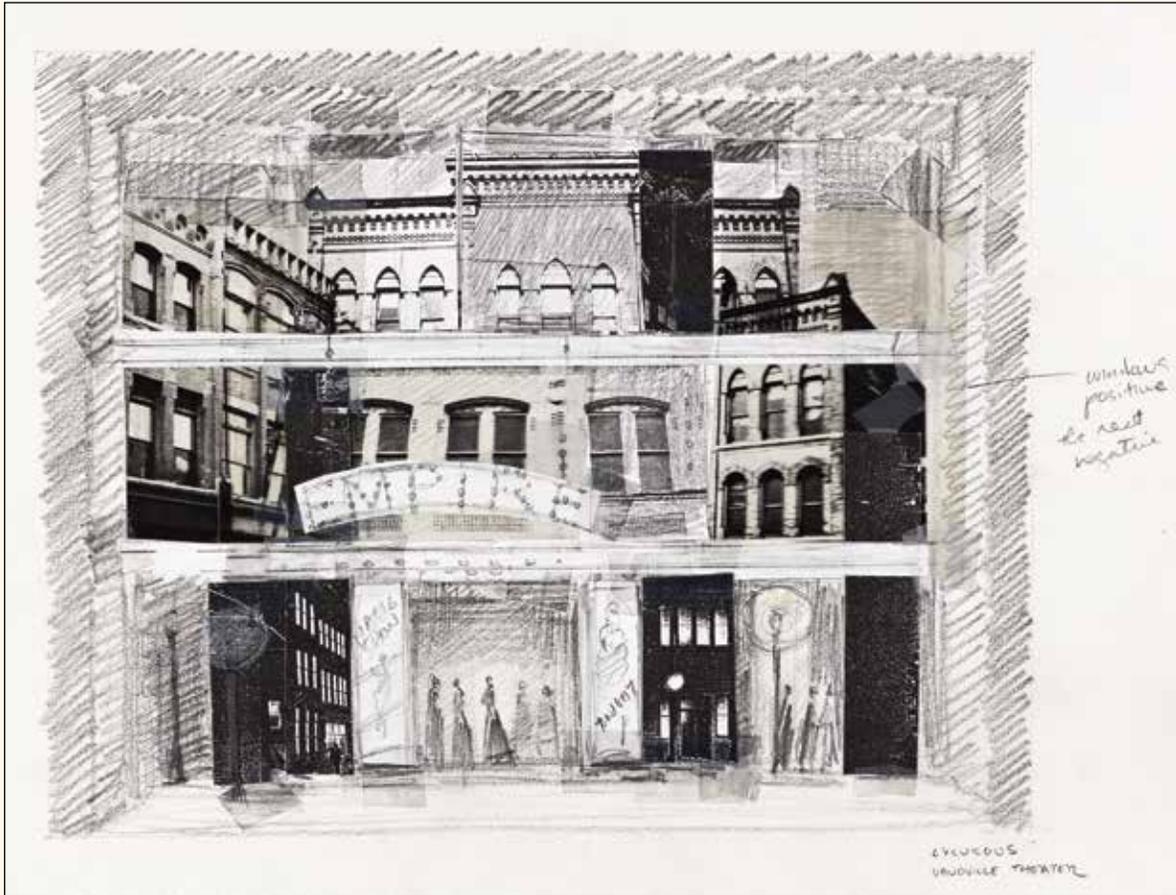
Endnotes

- ¹ Here, “horses” as work animals is almost always meant to include mules, which were a vital part of American agriculture. “Carriages” usually stands in for all non-racing vehicles, though to specialists carriages are a specific vehicle type.
- ² Cavalry historian Randy Steffen in *The Horse Soldier 1776-1943* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), 4:132.
- ³ *Taking the Wheel: Women and the Coming of the Motor Age* (Free Press, 1991), 22.
- ⁴ One good online resource is the Equine History Collective, <http://equinehistory.org>.



Robin Bledsoe,

a California native, has dealt in equestrian and art books and ephemera since 1973. After her career as an art history book editor, she and colleague Harvey Mendelsohn ran an open shop in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for 37 years. She now sells at virtual book fairs and online at www.bledsoebooks.com. Robin also has a large collection of books and ephemera about the horse in New England. She is photographed with winter visitors to the bookshop.



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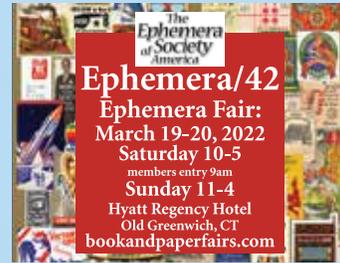
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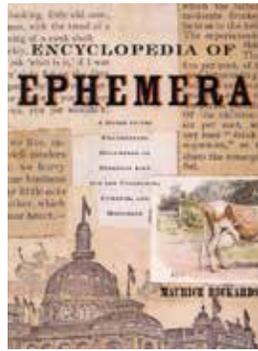
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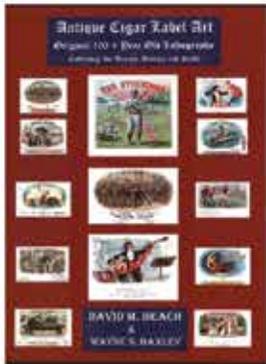
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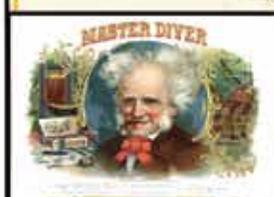
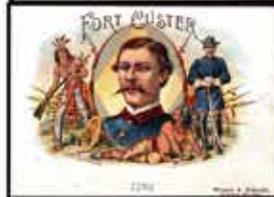
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