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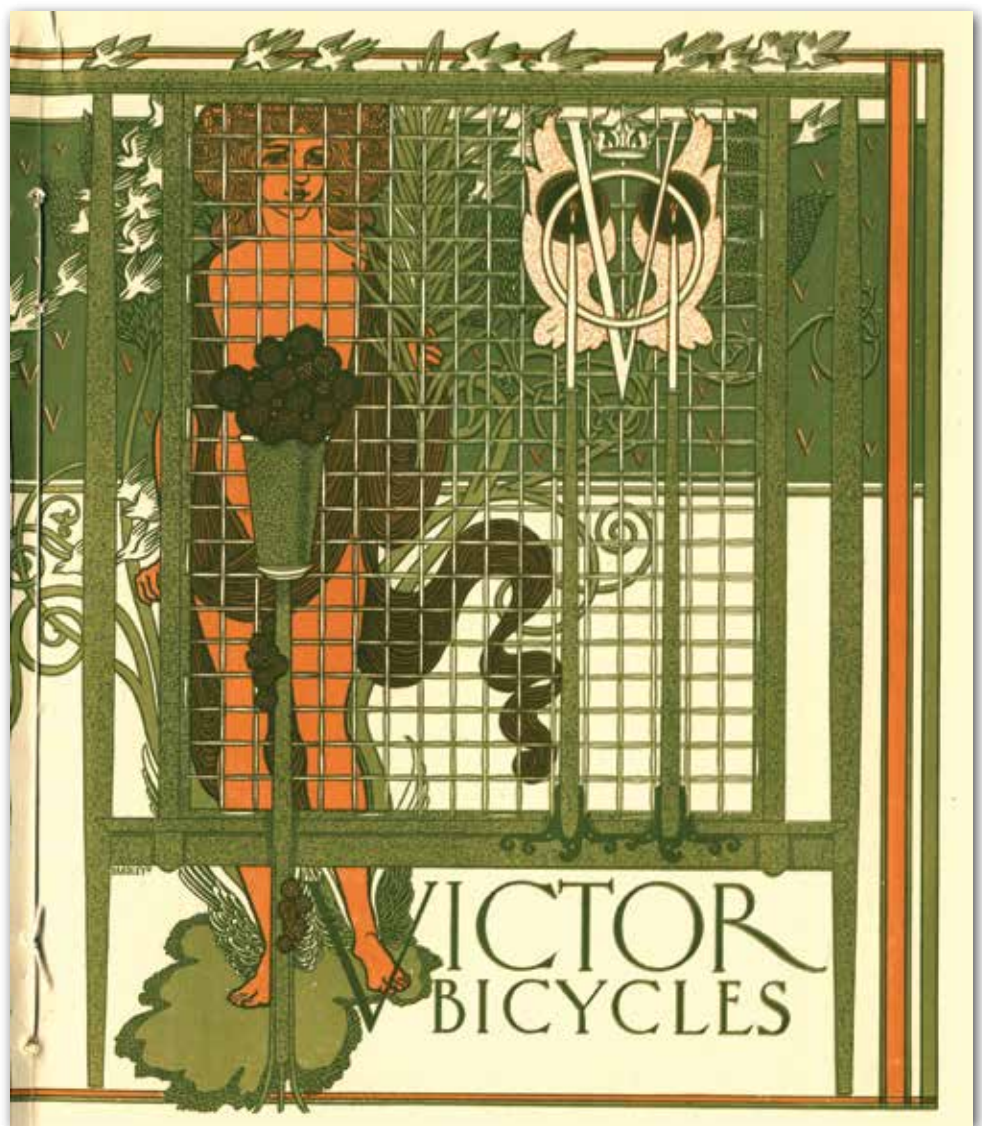
Bicycle Trade Catalogs

BY TALIA S. COUTIN

Before the 'Bicycle Boom' the bicycle was a luxury item with limited reach but, by 1896, America was home to an estimated four million "wheelmen" and "wheelwomen." How and why did bicycles take the country by storm? The 'Golden Age of the Bicycle' coincided with the 'Golden Age of Advertising Art.' Austin Charles Bates, a pioneering adman of the time, estimated that bicycle firms spent more than one billion dollars in 1897. "And yet it paid," he wrote. "Everyone was bicycle crazy..."

Images of wheelmen and wheelwomen appeared everywhere in print, including on products that had nothing to do with bicycling. They graced posters and postcards, magazine covers and cigarette labels, sheet music and card decks – advertising bicycling, if not a particular bicycle brand.

Through trade catalogs, companies tried to distinguish their brands with clever copy and alluring graphic designs. Companies spoke directly to consumers, offering them commercial art they could keep. Examining the material, visual, and textual aspects of catalogs from two of America's leading bicycle manufacturers, the Overman Wheel Company and the Pope Manufacturing Company, reveals how advertising strategies developed between 1881 and 1899 to whet the consumer appetite for bicycles.



A beautiful nymph with spaghetti hair gazes behind a screen in a wildly verdant setting that has nothing to do with bicycles. The competing linear and the curvilinear elements define the unique Art Nouveau style of graphic artist Will H. Bradley, who also designed posters for the Overman Wheel Co. Bradley, lithograph, catalog for Victor Bicycles, Overman Wheel Co., Cambridge: University Press, 1899.

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Deadlines: April 1, August 1,
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Dear Members and Friends:

Until today, I have never had the pleasure of wishing Happy New Year to the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, The New York Public Library, T. Lindsay Baker, and Allyson Brantley. What do they have in common? They are among your nearly 800 fellow members of The Ephemera Society. Mr. Baker resides in Texas and collects windmill trade catalogs. Ms. Brantley is a student at Yale who collects modern political and social movement ephemera. They are important members of the Society and you are too. One of the ephemera treasures of the Library of Congress is a James Montgomery Flagg poster which famously depicts Uncle Sam with his finger urgently pointing at the viewer and imploring: I Want You. We want you-- to consider becoming more active in the Society, to write a piece for our website or blog, to join a committee, to organize a regional meeting, to create and submit a "virtual" display of part of your collection for our website.

You may collect and study ephemera for fun, as primary evidence of history, for the beauty of its design, to learn about printing history, or because the sum (a collection) teaches us more, often about culture, than the component parts. All of these reasons for gathering ephemera will be touched upon at Ephemera 36, Conference and Fair, March 17-20, *Politics, Patriotism & Protest*. While the founders of the U.S. political system focused on ensuring the "pursuit of happiness," many inveterate ephemera collectors are more motivated by "the happiness of pursuit." Happily, both of these pursuits will converge at Ephemera 36 where a group of renowned scholar-collectors will give vividly illustrated talks on such diverse subjects as symbols of patriotism, political protest posters, 19th century political presidential campaigns, black protest movements, and war-related greeting cards. Conference attendees can also acquire ephemera from outstanding dealers at the Fair. For more details about Ephemera 36, please take a look at the enclosed conference brochure or visit our website.

Speaking of our website, you should know that we are actively engaged in a long-term project and fund-raising drive to make available past conferences on our website. These conferences contain an incalculable amount of information and images about ephemera subjects (in recent years: Art, Food, Sports) and about the process of creating ephemera (printing, lithography).

I was delighted to learn that the winner of the 2014 Nobel Prize in Literature is an ephemera collector. The French writer Patrick Madiano, is a "pursuer of old documents" who uses yellowing newspapers, school enrollment registers and old address books as "the factual seedbed of his fiction," according to *The New Yorker*. To our list of never-ending reasons for collecting ephemera we must add: to create fiction.

On behalf of our entire membership, I extend our deepest gratitude to Nancy Rosin, who has served as our President for the past three years with the greatest distinction.

Cheers,



Bruce Shyer, President

Mid-Year Tours

Honoring a tradition of everyday life might have been a theme for the Pennsylvania October tours organized for the Society by Barbara Charles. The Moravians, Protestant missionaries who settled Bethlehem in 1741, kept detailed daily narratives to record their spiritual history that have become a rich field for researchers into the life of 18th and 19th century Americans. Paul Peucker at the Moravian Church Archives in Bethlehem, and Derek Clark at the Moravian Historical Society in nearby Nazareth, introduced their wealth of printed and manuscript ephemera.

When Christian Frederieck Martin looked for a better location than New York City for his 1833 guitar factory, he chose Nazareth because of the Moravian tradition of fine workmanship with wood. The religious community was just beginning to open to outsiders, and Martin guitars benefited. Archivist Dick Boak oversees an archive of ephemera and musical instruments that offers a daily record of instrument making and promotion since the mid 19th century.

Bethlehem Steel also owed its founding to the Moravian community opening up and allowing Bethlehem land to be purchased by outsiders. Although the company stopped production of steel in the 1990s, the site has become a vital multi-faceted recreational and educational center. And, to make sure that the daily lives of several generations of steelworkers was not lost, an organization called Steelworkers' Archives was founded in 2001. Program Director Susan Vitez, volunteer guide Don Trexler, and Dale Kochard of the South Bethlehem Historical Society – all third generation “Steelies” – introduced company records and promotional ephemera, as well as a fine oral history project.

Society tours are open to everyone – watch for details of those planned for Seattle in the autumn.



Late 18th century sketch of the Whitefield House (began 1740 as a Methodist school for Negroes; completed by the Moravians in 1743; served as a communal church-home for 33 newly-married German couples brought over in 1744, as a Moravian girls school and, in the 1750s, as refuge from Indian attack) – home to the Moravian Historical Society in Nazareth.

In this Issue...

Happy Leap Year to all members! **Sue Lynn McDaniel** presents an entertaining overview of the tradition of Leap Year proposals, focusing on Kentucky where she manages the Julius Rather Americana Political Collection's ephemera at WKU.

Honoring perseverance could be one theme for this issue:

Talia Coutin, who received our Philip Jones award in 2014, completed her master's thesis on bicycle advertising and here presents one aspect of her research – into trade catalog design.

The Ampersand Club of Minnesota is honoring its 85 years (since 2015) with a formal history but, as author **John Harris** pointed out, no bibliophilic society has hitherto been described through its ephemera.

120 years ago, in 1886, Levi Strauss approved the logo that still appears on the most popular blue jeans in the world. **Bob Chandler** here follows the trail of competing logos.

Todd Munson writes of the persistence of romanticized images of the Japanese on cigarette cards.

Trade catalogs and letterheads, as ephemera, have been broadly examined – but cigarette cards and post cards are still at the threshold of serious research, and so Professors Munson and McDaniel are in pioneering territory. Bibliophilic keepsakes have more evoked the world of books than of ephemera. But it is significant that in 2015 The Ephemera Society of America was vetted to join the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies – our acceptance as a serious collecting group in that umbrella organization is recognition of the maturity of ephemera studies.

—Diane DeBlois, editor

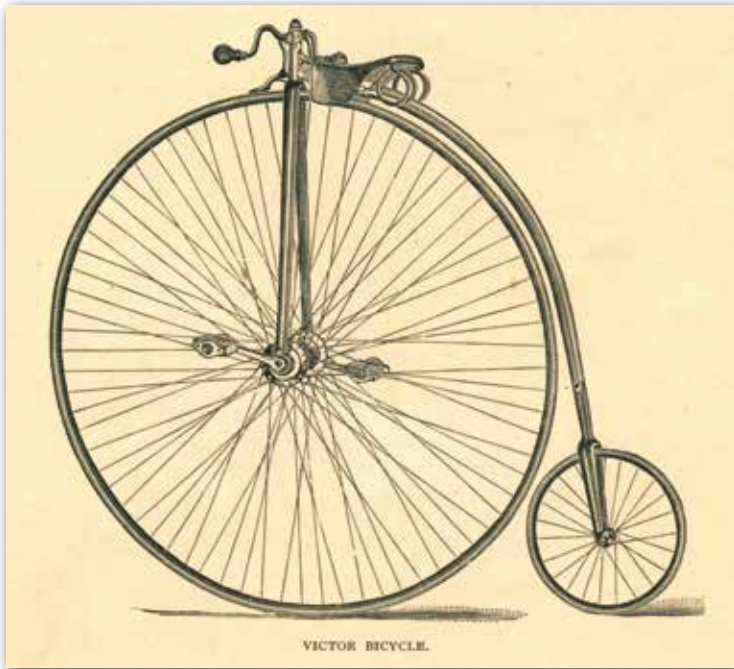


Figure 1. Victor high wheeler from 1885 Overman Wheel Co. catalog. [All illustrations courtesy the Hagley Library]

A Tale of Two Alberts and their Competing Bicycle Empires

The story of American bicycle manufacturing begins with Albert A. Pope and the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876. After seeing an English high wheeler, Pope returned to Hartford, Connecticut and started his company as an importer of English bicycles. He then contracted with the Weed Sewing Machine Company to manufacture bicycles, selling his first model, the Columbia, in 1878.

Pope's rival, Albert H. Overman established his company in Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, just thirty miles from Hartford. After popularizing tricycles in America, the Overman Wheel Company began to manufacture bicycles in 1885, introducing the Victor high wheeler to great fanfare (figure 1). *The Bicycling World* called the Victor "a first-class American bicycle. This is rare fruitage among us..." Overman contracted with the Ames Manufacturing to make their bicycles.

The rivalry between the two Alberts with eponymous companies was fierce and legendary. As a reporter for *Bicycling World* put it, "Both men cordially hated each other." Pope and Overman's frequent court battles marked the era as one of patent warfare.

Graphic Design

The earliest bicycle trade catalogs, as text-only publications, paid little attention to aesthetics. But by 1883 Pope had realized the significance of the visual to advertising and added illustrations of bicycle models to the catalog. Close-up images of bicycle parts showcased innovations in engineering and product design. Engravers like Russell B. Richardson, F. Bolles Jr., and Green & Graves designed illustrations and covers. It was not uncommon for the manufacturing firm to recruit several artists for the production of a single catalog. For example, four different artist-engraver signatures appear in the 1883 catalog for Columbia bicycles. Wood engraving endured as the technique of choice to produce the interior images for catalogs of the 1890s, but covers became more fanciful and colorful through the embossing (figure 2) and lithographic processes.

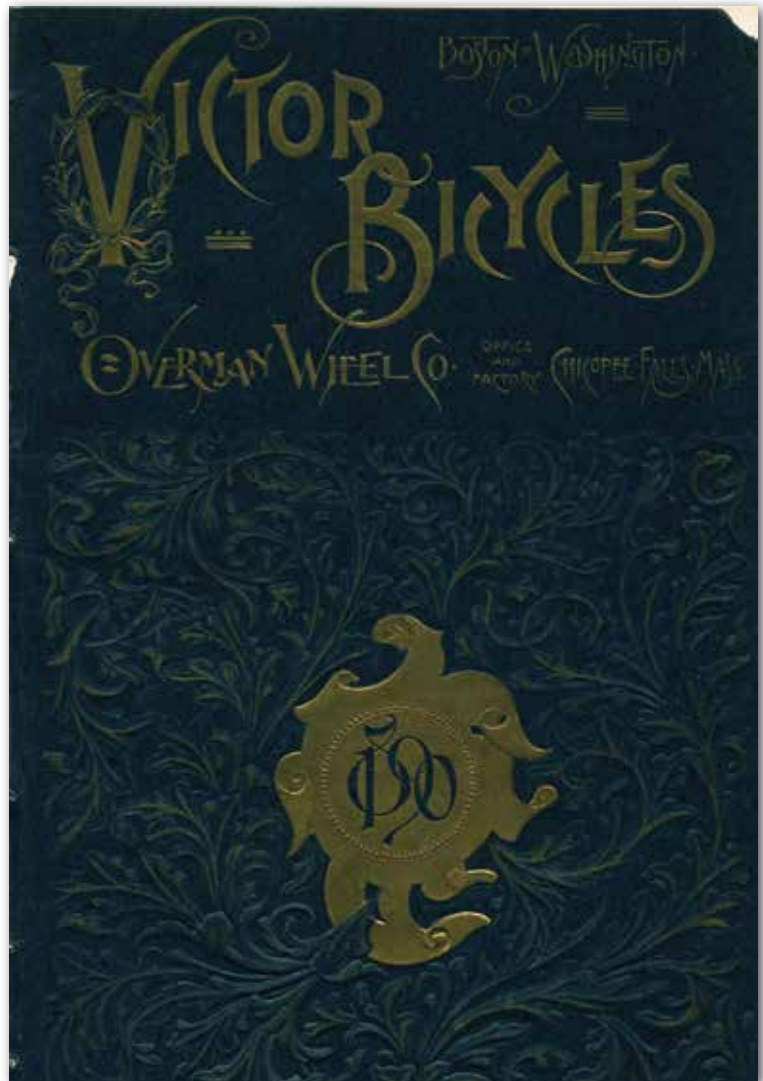


Figure 2. Embossed cover for Victor Bicycles catalog, Overman Wheel Co., 1890.

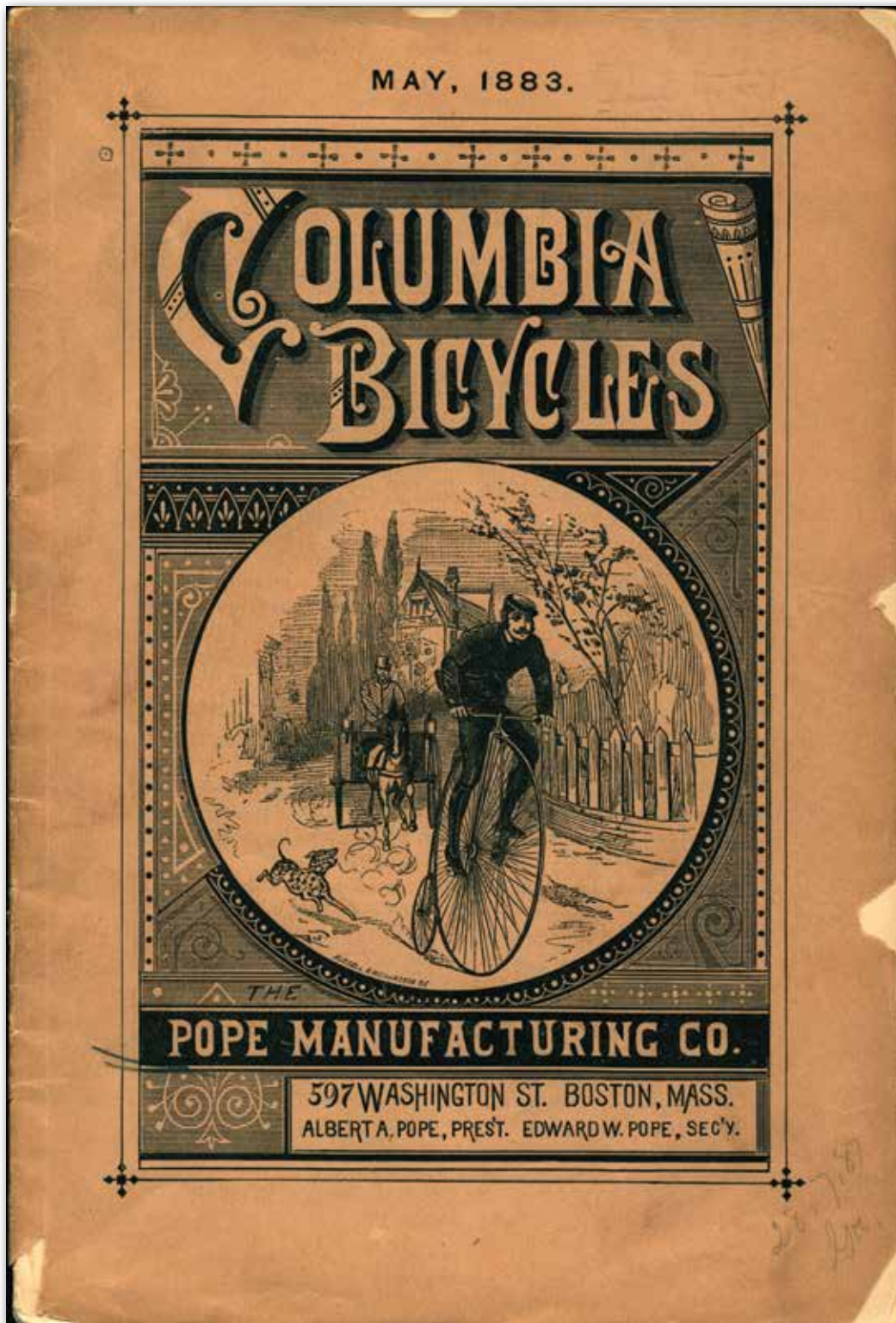


Figure 3. Russell B. Richardson wood engraved cover for Columbia Bicycles catalog, Pope Manufacturing Co., Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1883.

With themes of speed and flight, the graphic art of bicycle advertising indulged the fantasies of consumers. Wings on wheels communicated celerity. The cover for Pope's catalog for Columbia bicycles from 1883 depicts a gentleman atop a high wheeler chased by a dog, while man in a horse-driven buggy struggles to catch up (figure 3). An illustration in the 1895 Pope catalog for Columbia

features a similar arrangement of characters, but this time with women riders (figure 4). The female cyclist dressed in bloomers (trousers gathered at the knee or ankle), gaiters, gloves, with giant gigot sleeves on her fashionable jacket, rides directly into the viewer's space, her wheel washed out of the picture plane through artistic foreshortening. Again, another dog gives chase. Behind

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Figure 4. Bartlett & Co., lithograph for Columbia Bicycles catalog, Pope Manufacturing Co., 1895.

them, a woman rides sidesaddle on horseback. The message is clear: The bicycle has ousted the horse for speedy personal transportation.

Nearly every catalog had an image of the company's manufacturing plant (figure 5). These formidable factories with billowing chimney smoke announced the company's industrial prowess to competitors and consumers alike. Similarly, images of the main office and storefront occupied a page or two to show off a company's architectural grandeur.

Testimonials

Of course, nothing but adulation appeared in the testimonial section. "Have had an experience with four different [bicycles]," wrote Howard C. Mettler of Jersey City in the 1885 Overman catalog, "give me the '84 VICTOR and you give me perfection."

Pope also played this game. "Considering the fact that I have won all my races, and taken my prizes for fancy and slow riding on a 60-inch 'Expert' [Columbia] Bicycle, I cannot do otherwise than speak in its praise," wrote Ed F. Brown, Captain of the Chicago Bicycle Club, in the 1883 Pope catalog.

Testimonials for both Overman and Pope showed that the most enthusiasm for their bicycles came from Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic customers. Catalogs from the late 1880s demonstrate the growth in popularity of both bicycle brands nationally – or at least, the attempts by the copywriters to represent consumers from the

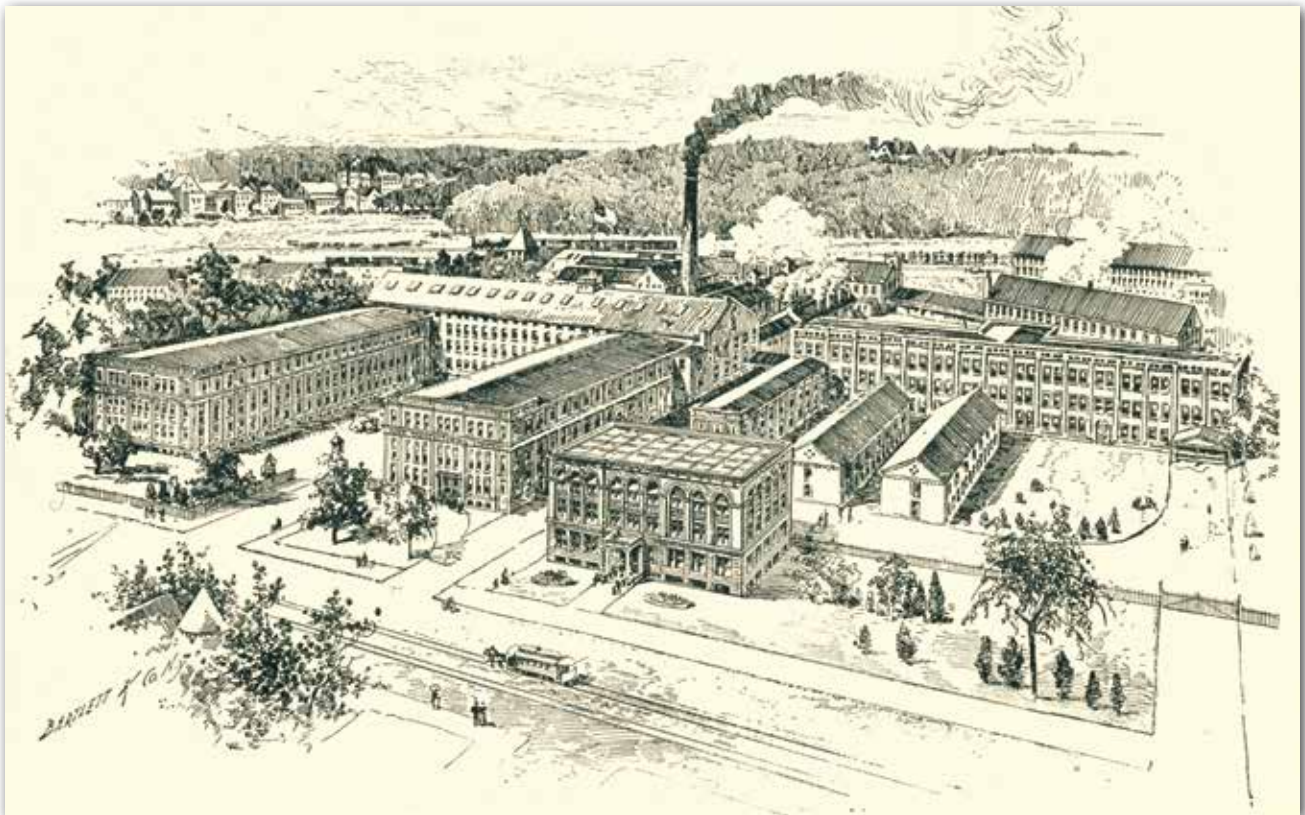


Figure 5. As with many catalogs from this era, Pope's 1895 catalog for Columbia bicycles included aerial images of its factory to emphasize its size and industrial efficiency. Bartlett & Co., wood engraving for Columbia Bicycles catalog, Pope Manufacturing Co., 1895.

Midwest, South, and West. Overman's catalog for 1889 claimed that, due to the high volume of testimonials received, the company would publish a separate pamphlet. Without offering further explanation, both companies dropped the Testimonials section from their catalogs in the 1890s.

Sundries & Spare Parts

Many of the cycling accessories of today made their first appearance in the late nineteenth century. Objects like head and hub lights, tool and shoulder bags, bicycle locks and bicycle stands, bells and oils, hooks to hold trousers in place, and even cyclometers to track one's mileage, indicated the consumer appetite for products of both frivolity and necessity. The first item listed in the Sundries section of the 1890 Overman catalog was the Victor Cyclometer, which cost \$10.00 (figure 6). In the 1890s, there were even more ways to customize one's ride than in the 1880s. Overman's 1899 catalog, for example, offered five different options for handlebars and saddles, each one illustrated (figure 7).

The interchangeability of parts was key for the Victor bikes: "If the parts are not made interchangeable... the machine when repaired will be a PATCHED-UP AFFAIR, and the rider's pocket will need to be patched

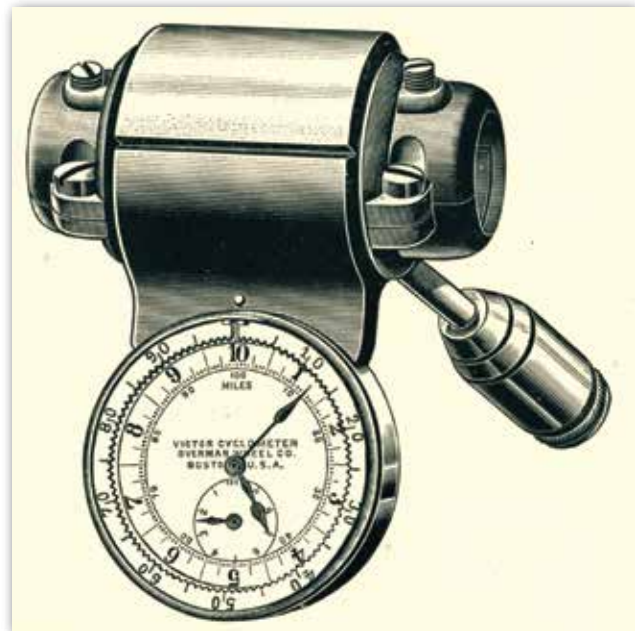


Figure 6. One of the many sundries offered to consumers, the patented Victor cyclometer measured distance traveled and promised to be shock-proof. The gears are adjusted to "the size of cycle wheel by a single exchange wheel corresponding in the number of its teeth to the number of inches in diameter of the cycle wheel." Wood engraving, Overman Wheel Co., 1890, 31.



Figure 7. Will H. Bradley, catalog for Victor Bicycles, Overman Wheel Co., Cambridge: University Press, 1899.

[all-caps in the original].” Pope made similar claims about the interchangeability of their parts, which Overman denounced as fraudulent. Overman claimed in the company's 1890 catalog that “there is not more than one make of bicycles in the world, besides the Victor, which is made interchangeable.”

Patents

Both Overman and Pope devoted a section to listing their patents in order to tout their company's achievements in product design. The 1888 Overman catalog included the Victor cyclometer (figure 6), the Acme bicycle stand and Warwick's Hollow rims, amongst others. The Victor patented spring fork promised to absorb vibration that was common for the early safety bike, contributing to the ease, durability, and speed of the machine. The 1895 catalog for Columbia bicycles by Pope promoted a newly patented crankshaft bracket and cranks as “light, easy-running and admitting of the narrowest tread...”

Price List

A simplified price list at the end of the publication allowed for quick reference. Parts like ball bearings and pedals that came on brand-new bicycles were also

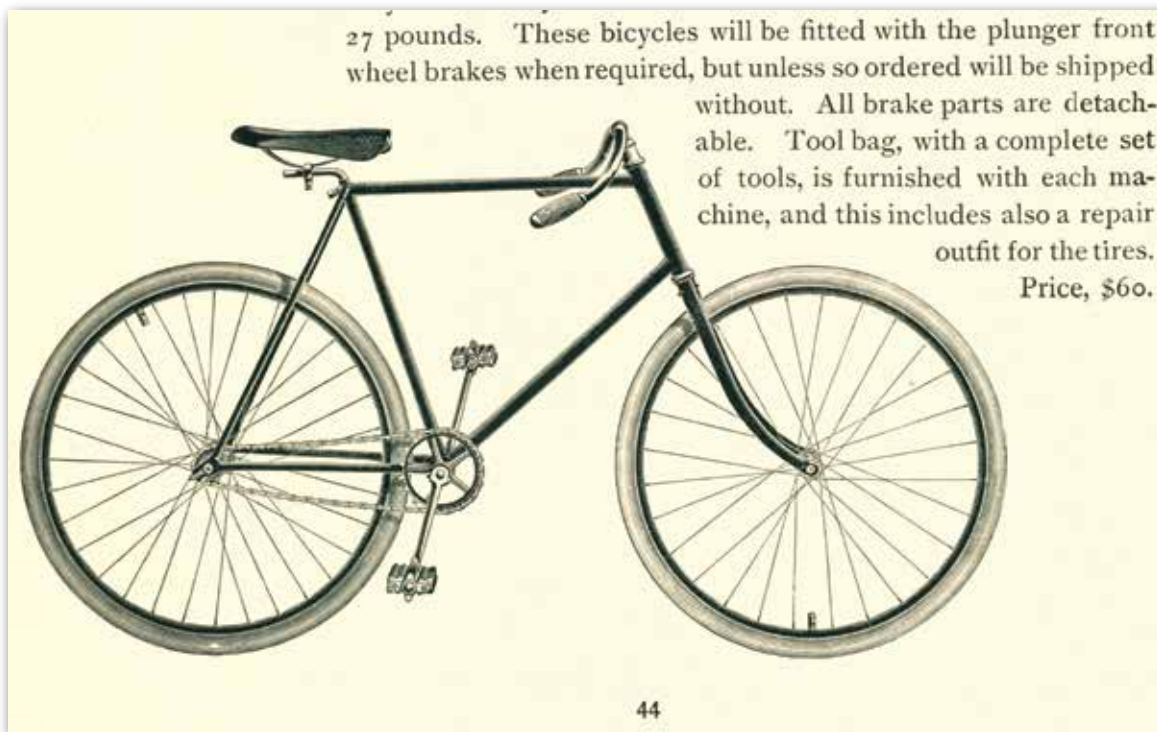


Figure 8. Cropped image of the Hartford no. 3 model. Bartlett & Co., wood engraving, catalog for Columbia Bicycles, Pope Manufacturing Co., 1895.

sold separately. Prices for the Victor in 1888 ranged from \$45 to \$137, and a Columbia cost between \$65 and \$140. Adjusted for inflation to 2014 prices, Victors cost between \$1167.73 and \$3555.08, and Columbias, between \$1686.72 and \$3632.93. High-end high wheelers pinched a pretty penny in the mid-1880s!

The safety bicycle marked a turning point for the affordability of autonomous travel by the mid-1890s. The Hartford Cycle Co., established in 1889 to sell a more affordable line of cycles, was absorbed into Pope's Columbia catalog of 1895 (figure 8). "The Hartford machines will be favorites with those who, in the endeavor to save money, have heretofore bought other makes than Columbias. They are made by skilled exerts trained in the splendid school of Columbia construction and still under our supervision."

Costs for their star Columbia bicycles topped out at \$100 (\$2801.09 in today's prices), while the adult Hartfords were as low as \$60 (\$1680.66). With the growth in bike manufacturers and the ascendancy of the second-hand market, prices continued to drop after 1895.

Size

Pope's catalog of Columbia bicycles grew steadily in size from 14.5 cm by 20.5 cm in 1887 to 18.5 cm by 22 cm in 1895, though in that span of time it remained roughly 50 pages in length. Overman's catalog for Victor bicycles, on the other hand, roughly retained its physical size but increased in page length, from 24 pages in 1885 to 40 pages in 1892. The 1899 Overman catalog, the final one published before the company filed for

bankruptcy, downsized to 26 pages in length. Yet it was a richly decorated catalog lithographed in orange, green, and black, designed by Will H. Bradley (Cover Image). It featured only two bicycles for sale: For men, the Victor; for women, the Victoria.

That these two giants of the industry devoted more paper and ink to their catalogs each year demonstrates the significance of trade catalogs to their advertising efforts. As the technology of bicycles improved their commercial potential, the creativity of trade catalogs facilitated consumer desire for the product.



Talia S. Coutin is a scholar of bicycle history and advertising art. Her master's thesis, "Lady of Shalott on a Bicycle: Will H. Bradley's Graphic Art for the Overman Wheel Co., 1894-99,"

explored the relationship between bicycle design and gendered advertising. She received the Ephemera Society of America's Philip Jones Fellowship in 2014 and was a Lois F. McNeil Fellow in the University of Delaware's Winterthur Program in American Material Culture. Talia currently works at Hagley Library as a Project Cataloger for the Lavoisier Collection. She welcomes comments and questions and can be reached at ts.coutin@gmail.com.

Smoking With Samurai: Japan in Cigarette Cards

BY TODD S. MUNSON

The late nineteenth century witnessed an explosion of photorealistic information about what was then known as the “Orient.” In particular, the advent of picture postcards, stereopticon views, magazines, and the affordable printed book made it possible for middle-class families to explore the world from the comfort of their homes. Though facets of this phenomenon have generated a great deal of useful scholarship, the subject of this brief essay—cigarette cards, also known as tobacco cards—remains something of an outlier. However, by virtue of their collectability and encyclopedic scope, these small collectibles are an ideal means to explore American and European depictions of race and the other, and the ways in which the forces of globalization reached literally into the pockets of the



Figure 1: Allen & Ginter, “Arms of All Nations” (1887).



Figure 2: Kinney Tobacco, “Military” (1888).

common man (and woman). In particular, I hope to question the notion that Japan, as viewed through a western prism, made steady progress from tradition to modernity in the nineteenth century. In fact, I will argue that two dissonant concepts of Japan existed in uneasy tension during that period and beyond.

Machine rolled cigarettes were first widely sold in the United States and Great Britain in the 1880s. The first packs were flimsy, so small rectangles of cardboard were used to protect the cigarettes from being bent. These “stiffeners” were a natural fit for advertising—and used as such—but clever manufacturers also hatched the idea

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Figure 3: Duke, "Holidays" (1890).

of illustrating the blank spaces with colorful pictures, which were organized into series on 'beautiful women' or 'stars of sport.' Within a few short years, a collector craze was born: topics branched out into myriad directions, from plants, animals, flowers, cars, planes, first aid tips, history, geography, stars of theater and film, and so on. At a time when the average family still owned only a few books, a collection of cigarette cards was like a rudimentary encyclopedia (or Wikipedia, in today's world). And, though smokers were primarily men, collectors

came from across the spectrum—it is well documented that women were caught up in the collecting craze, as well as children, who were said to hang around outside tobacco shops to ask adults if they would give away their cards. Cards were also often collected in special albums made by the manufacturers, who would also donate complete albums to hospitals and other places where people would gather. Certainly by the 1910s, the cigarette card was a firmly established part of Western popular culture.

Samurai

Japan was a favorite subject of card manufacturers from the very beginning. Largely isolated up until the mid-nineteenth century, the country was forced by the United States to open to foreign trade in the 1850s, ushering in sweeping changes in virtually all aspects of life. A subsequent overthrow of the shogun's government in 1868 hastened the demise of many customs and traditions thought of as uniquely Japanese, such as the samurai warrior, which we will take up momentarily. The "new and improved" Japan, founded by progressive reformers, was predicated on the belief that wholesale importation of Western customs, politics, and technology was the only way for Japan to survive in a competitive and dangerous modern world. While China and Korea were being "carved up like melons," as the expression went, Japan feverishly attempted to avoid a similar fate.

It should not surprise us to discover, however, that initial representations of Japan on cigarette cards did **not** reflect this recent embrace of Western culture. Rather, the first images of Japan fall into the same familiar stereotypes that had existed for a century or more. Figure 1—a



Figure 4: Allen & Ginter, "World's Smokers" (1888).

card from a series entitled ‘Arms of All Nations,’ made by the American tobacco manufacturer Allen and Ginter in 1887—is perhaps the very first representation of Japan on a cigarette card. The card features a male figure in three-quarters portrait length, bearing a fan and long sword. The unknown artist clearly had *some* concept of his subject matter—the sword and “topknot” hairstyle, for example, cannot be considered inaccurate. Other elements, such as the garish colors and strange epaulettes of the kimono, to say nothing of the sharply triangular Mt Fuji in the distance, suggest the product of an active imagination rather than a photo reference. Other cards of this era, such as the one shown in figure 2, provide greater or lesser degrees of accuracy—but none escape the dated view of their subject; by the time these images were published, the sword-bearing samurai was a relic of an earlier generation. Though they convey a sense of respect for their subject (gross or simplistic racial caricatures are nowhere in evidence), the cards exemplify a clichéd view of a Japan that no longer existed.

Women & Beauty

The samurai was not the only depiction of Japan on early cigarette cards; the other primary representation, in fact, embodies the antithesis of the rigid warrior figure. Japan could also be understood in terms of an idealized, Oriental femininity, with a specific focus on hairstyles and fashion, the latter reflecting contemporary interest in Japonism (which emerged in clothing styles as well as art). Though many Japanese women preferred Western dress by the turn of the twentieth century, women in cards from this period inevitably feature kimono in uncharacteristically bright colors and patterns.

For example, the young lady featured at left in figure 3—from Duke’s 1890 *Holidays* series—is twisted rather unnaturally to show us the design on the back of her kimono, which features a sunburst pattern against a pink background. The card represents the holiday ‘Parliament Day,’ and the woman appears to be observing a session of the new Japanese parliament (in fact we can see the parliamentarians themselves, though they are depicted with the shaven heads of samurai from days long past). The image at right in figure 3—‘Flower Day,’ from the same series—reveals a woman in yellow floral robes and blue *obi*, holding a spring of flowers in one hand and gesturing to a paper message tied to a tree in bloom. What is most remarkable about both of these cards, however, is not the fashion—garish and erroneous as it is—but rather the particular holidays in question. Neither of them actually



Figure 5: Duke, “Rulers, Flags, & Coats of Arms” (1889).

existed! While the Japanese government promulgated its first modern constitution in 1889, and while the cherry blossom season is one of great celebration, neither event has ever had a specific holiday associated with its occurrence. As we consider cigarette cards as “mini-encyclopedias,” it is worth remembering that not all the ‘entries’ were accurate. Though representations of Japan were at least starting to acknowledge the changes of modernization, the facts have been left behind once more.

A fifty-card series of the “world’s smokers,” produced by Allen & Ginter in 1888, features the remarkable images seen in figure 4. I find the ‘Japanese’ card at center particularly striking, because it shows us that the notion of Japanese being demure and stylish was not limited strictly to images of *women*. In contrast to the rigid samurai, this ‘Japanese’ plays into the cliché of the Oriental male as sexless, emasculated, and androgynous. Witness, for example, the hair ornaments—inspired perhaps by a woodblock print of a female prostitute—and the earrings, an accessory worn by neither sex until the mid-twentieth century. His costume, moreover, is the product of pure imagination, a Westerner’s dream of what a Japanese person might wear: red and yellow patterns, a mandarin



Figure 6: Allen & Ginter, "World's Sovereigns" (1889).

collar, and strange clasps holding it all together. Finally, the lips and the placement of hands and pipe cannot help but make this a subtly erotic image as well. This is a mythological creature, an Orientalist fantasy.

The other cards in figure 4 are included to provide some context for this unique figure. On the right is an 'old planter' from the American south, who looks us confidently in the eye, with his cigarette jutting tellingly upward from the corner of his mouth. He projects an air of masculinity, confidence, and triumph. In contrast (at left) is the 'odalisque,' the term referring to young female prostitutes who served in a Turkish harem. This figure—who bears an undeniable resemblance to the Japanese—is perhaps the most classic object of the Orientalist gaze, appearing in countless artifacts produced during the nineteenth century. Whereas the samurai was firm and severe, the Japanese smoker harks back to clichéd image, and demonstrates the opposing views of a people regarded as both fierce *and* gentle. It is no wonder that Japanese people were so commonly misunderstood at the turn of century.

Imperial Modernity

By the 1890s, popular representations of Japan caught up—to a certain degree—with the reality of an emerging modern, industrialized world power, albeit one that consciously retained an ancient monarchy. As a bit of background, the position of the emperor in Japan has existed since the beginning of recorded history, stretching back some 1500 years or so. However, the position held no real power for centuries—from the twelfth through the mid-nineteenth centuries, the country was ruled by a military



Figure 7: Wills, "Soldiers of the World" (1895).

dictatorship referred to in English as a shogunate. When reformers overthrew the Tokugawa shogunate in the 1860s, they somewhat paradoxically utilized the figure of the emperor as a symbol of Japan's modernity and Westernization—by literally dressing him up as a Western-style monarch in military costume, such as Kaiser Wilhelm II, the new government attempted to draw direct parallels between the constitutional monarchs of Europe and their own.

The Japanese emperor, in his new Western iteration, was the subject of many cards in the late 1880s and beyond, such as the one in Duke's 1889 "Sovereigns" series (figure 5). Based on an out-of-date photograph from 1873, the emperor—identified by the archaic term 'mikado' and outfitted in an elaborate (and mis-colored) military costume of red and yellow—looks much younger than his thirty-seven years. It is a dignified and realistic portrait, very much in line with other cards in the series, and demonstrates that Japan was considered on par with the great powers of the West. Allen & Ginter's 1889 "World Sovereigns" series (figure 6), takes the 'westernization' of the Emperor to an absurd and literal extreme: the Emperor's Asian features—particularly the epicanthal folds of eyes—have been removed, his skin has been given a pinkish hue, and his hair is now brown. In modern terms, this would be a pretty serious photo-shopping job.

1894 was the year of the first Sino-Japanese War, which marked Japan's first appearance on the world stage as a military power on par with those of the West. The Chinese, who had failed at their own modernization efforts, were no match for Japan; the quick and decisive victory prompted a dramatic shift in the West's opinion of Japan, and Wills' 1895 "Soldiers of the World" series (figure 7) reflects this trend. Cards of Japanese artillery, cavalry, and infantry depict an up-to-date military no different from any European force. Looking at few other cards in the series, we see an implicit comparison between pre-modern societies, and those who have developed more sophisticated technology—which up until this point had included only Western countries.

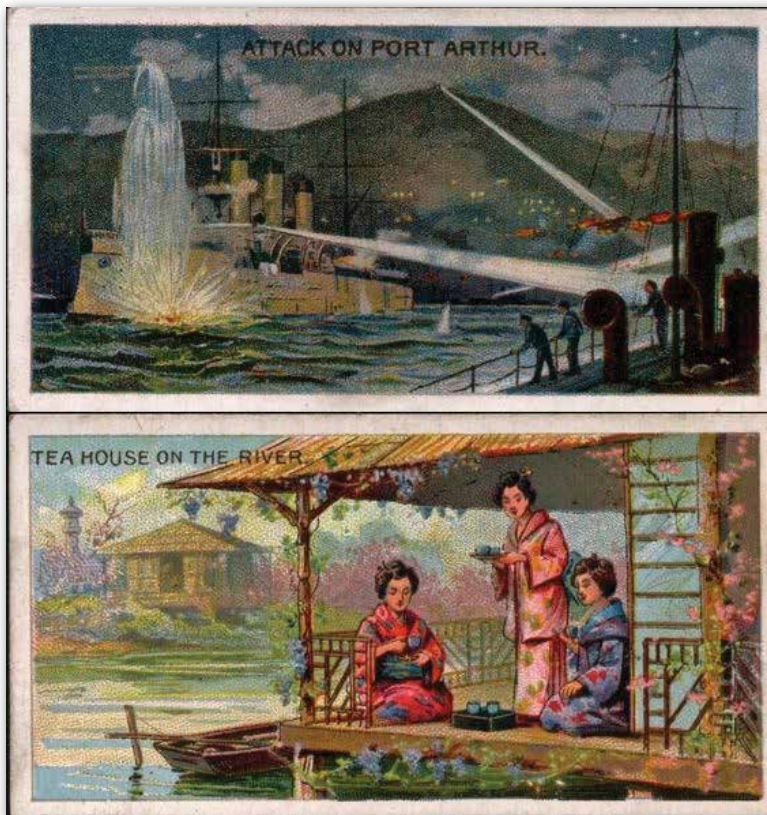


Figure 8: Lambert and Butler, "Japan" (1904).

and Butler, which appeared at some point in 1904. Entitled "Japan," this set was perhaps the first to focus entirely on that country. Lambert and Butler were one of the most prolific of all the cigarette card manufacturers, and their output was high in both quantity and quality. The excellence of the illustration and coloring, and the photorealistic detail make these cards a real highlight.

This set is significant because it attempts to provide a 'whole picture' of Japan and its customs and culture. As such, it is a very useful record of Western public opinion at the peak of Japan's modernization efforts in the early twentieth-century—we see an interpretive tension between the tradition and passivity on one hand, and modernity and militarism on the other. Some of the cards incorporate the hoary tropes of kimonos, rickshaws, and temples that represent a traditional Japan, but there are also cards in the set that highlight Japan's move toward modernity and the military: high-ranking officers, the Emperor in full military garb, battle scenes and naval warships, and so on. Figure 8 shows two representative examples from the series; with geisha serving tea on the one hand, and the first attack against the Russian navy on the other, this set perfectly exemplifies the self-contradictory views of Japan as concomitantly martial and modest.

Another Japan-focused series from that same year, by the British firm Muratti (figure 9), takes as its ambitious subject the developmental history of Japan's military, from the traditional period to the present. There are about a dozen different cards, which were repeated to make a set of 52 playing cards. As far as I can determine, the uniforms are roughly accurate, save perhaps the color schemes. From the

Japan, in the popular imagination, finally seems to have arrived in the latter category. The general is even reading a newspaper, showing how up to date he is on current affairs.

In February 1904, Japan launched a surprise attack on Russia in order to expand its influence in northeastern Asia. The resulting Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 was hugely popular in Western media, fascinated as they were by Japan's ability to successfully defeat a modern army and navy. One example of this newfound fascination comes in a series by the British firm Lambert

samurai to infantryman, the sweep of Japan's long military history is displayed in an organized procession, with about half the cards devoted to Japan's contemporary military. In fact, if the word 'Japan' is omitted from the top of the card at right, I doubt anyone would be able to identify the country the soldier is intended to represent, or even that he is Asian at all. It would seem that the transformation from traditional and other, to modern and Western, was complete by this time.

Conclusion: "Japan"

And yet there are cards like the one depicted in figure 10, taken from a series entitled "Types of Nations" from 1910. This is "Japan." I highlight this card because it is very tempting to assume, as I did initially, that Western representations of Japan progress from traditional and vulnerable to masculine, modern, and lethal. But they do not, as this fellow can attest. He is dark-skinned and sultry, with a hot pink bandana rakishly tied around his head, and sporting a kimono in tropical colors. Coming decades after the country had successfully transitioned into a modern state, this figure reminds us of the two divergent representations that continued to coexist in uneasy tension in the late nineteenth century and beyond – the modern and familiar on one hand, and the exotic and imaginary on the other. The notion of "Japan" remained very much in flux.

As a concluding thought, I believe this dialectic of contradiction resonates with experiences of Japanese-Americans during the same period. As Japan the nation-state was being lauded for having joined the ranks of the modern powers, Japanese people faced egregious acts of racism and discrimination in the United States, one example being the decision of the San Francisco School board to expel Japanese children from public schools a year after the Russo-Japanese War. This card reminds us that no matter how far Japan had become like "us" in the modern imagination, there was always a strong countervailing current pulling in the opposite direction. Whether these



Figure 10: *Recruit (and others)*, "Types of All Nations" (1910).

cards simply reflected current sentiments about Japan and Japanese people, or whether they may have actually impacted attitudes and beliefs about Japan in some way, is difficult to determine, but I would suggest that consumer collectibles such as cigarette cards are actually a very useful tool in understanding how the Western world perceived Japan at the turn of the century.



Figure 9: Muratti, "Japanese" (1904).

Todd S. Munson,

Professor and Director of Asian Studies, Randolph-Macon College, holds a Ph.D. in Japanese and an M.A. in East Asian Studies from Indiana University. He has published widely in areas relating to Japanese and American visual media culture; his monograph *The Periodical Press in Treaty-Port Japan: Conflicting Reports from Yokohama, 1861-1870*, was published by Brill in 2013. Current research explores 19th century print ephemera such as cigarette cards, stereoviews, and kawaraban. He currently serves as co-editor of the *Southeastern Review of Asian Studies*.



Leap Year: Chance, Chase, or Curse?

BY SUE LYNN MCDANIEL

Valentine's Day is typically thought of as the occasion for young males to propose their intentions to young females, but the Leap Year custom allowed women to propose marriage to the man of their choice. This gender reversal was often unwelcome to women overly familiar with the terms "spinsters" or "old maids." Portrayals of unmarried females as undesirable dominated the literature, cartoons, and postcards from 1888 to 1916. "Vinegar valentines" or "comic valentines" were guilty of negative depictions of old maids. Leap Year's influence can be found in correspondence, newspapers, sheet music, dance cards and invitations, but nowhere was it as prominent as during the Golden Age of Postcards.

Ebenezer Cobham Brewer of Cambridge was chiefly responsible for perpetuating the Leap Year myth in his *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, Giving the Derivation, Source, or Origin of Common Phrases, Allusions and Words that have a Tale to Tell*. Since 1870, Brewer's story that "ladies propose, and if not accepted, claim a silk gown" continued the legend that, in the fifth century, St. Bridget of Ireland approached St. Patrick about the mutiny at the nunnery over which she presided where the females were claiming the right of "popping the question." After discussion the duo agreed on every leap year as it was already the odd year, having one extra day.

Encyclopedia Britannica (13th edition) and other sources state that, in 1288, unmarried Queen Margaret of Scotland made the custom into law: "Ordonit that during ye reign of hir maist blisset Majestie Margaret, ilk maiden ladee of baith high and lowe estait shall hae libertie to bespoken ye man she likes – albeit he refuses to talk he shall be muicted in ye sum ane pundis orless." In modern English, a man who refused a woman's proposal during leap year was fined £1 or less, as his estate may be; except and always if he can make it appear that he is betrothed to another, he then shall be free. The encyclopedia adds that "a similar [law was written] in France a few years later, and in Italy in the fifteenth century." One condition, seldom quoted, placed on the female was that she had to wear a red petticoat, with one to two inches visible under her dress. Over time an additional penalty required the offender to give a silk gown or pair of gloves and a kiss to the lady. In 2000, the National Archives of Scotland, Scottish Archive Network and Scottish Records Association researched the tradition. Their investigation found no such decree and problems with the text.



Figure 1. *May I see you home my dear?* - a rebus acquaintance card. (All illustrations courtesy of Library Special Collections, Western Kentucky University.)

But for most ephemera enthusiasts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the lack of documentation makes little difference. Like so many parts of pop culture, it is the mystery that makes the widespread references to a Leap Year proposal's validity intriguing.

In the 1870s and 1880s when etiquette books forbade men from approaching single women without a formal introduction, American calling card manufacturers created a novelty variety as a tool for less formal males to approach less formal females. Known as an "acquaintance card," an "escort card," or an "invitation card," this illustrated card's message was brief (figure 1). Even more rare were the "Leap Year Compliments" cards created for women to use in making their marriage proposals. Bachelors without the

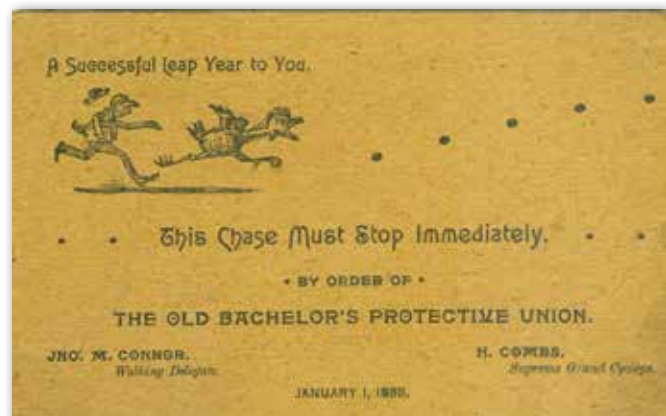


Figure 2. Phineas Hampton "Hamp" Combs had started courting his future bride in 1884. They would marry in 1892.

continued on page 16

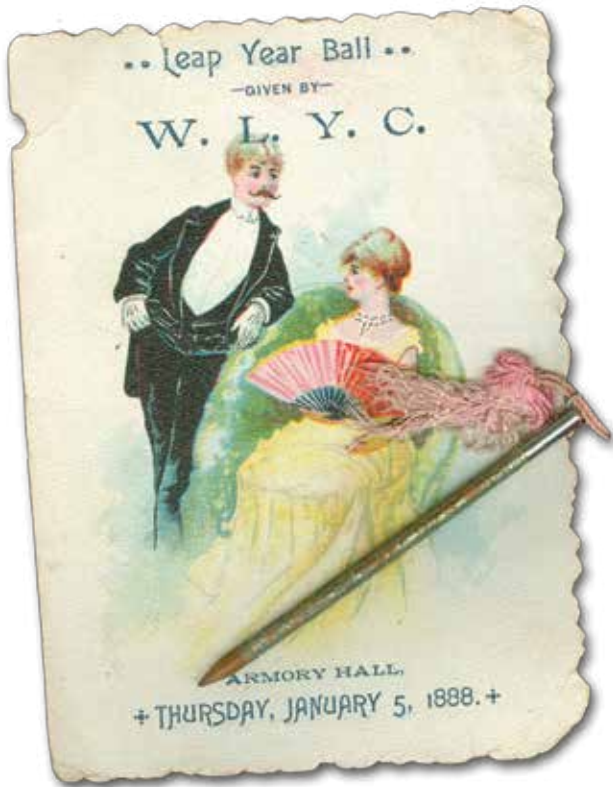


Figure 3. Dance card from one of three known 1888 Leap Year events held in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

means to purchase such cards wrote invitations on slips of paper that were often preserved by maidens as proof of the females' popularity.

By 1904, as more Americans came to accept the evolving roles of women in society, advice columnist Dorothy Dix considered single females ill-equipped to propose marriage and wrote a lengthy article entitled "The Leap Year Proposal." Dix cautioned against proposing in writing because men could say "NO" more easily by pen than in person, making postcards a poor choice for any woman seriously committed to seizing the opportunity. Dix wrote: "The Leap Year girl, however, who proposes to propose must use great tact and discretion, and above all she must study the character of the man whose hand and heart she desires to win, and she must be wary about choosing the psychological place and moment." Dix concluded that Leap Year women should never "propose marriage to a man unless she can take care of him in the same style in which his father has been accustomed to support him."

The citizens of Bowling Green, Kentucky anticipated and discussed Leap Year 1888. Twenty-two year old Lelia Gossom wrote in her diary on January 6, 1887 that she was "almost an old maid but comfort myself with the thought that next year is a Leap year." In 1888, Bowling Green bachelors joined forces and created a card reading: "A Successful Leap Year to You. This chase must stop immediately by order of the Old Bachelor's Protective Union" (figure 2). Leap

Year parties were held locally on January 5th and 20th and December 27th (figure 3). Of the latter occasion, the newspaper wrote: "Many were the lessons taught the boys by the fair ones in Gallantry, attentiveness and easy grace."

In 1898, authors Adelia & Lina Beard defined the gender roles at Leap Year parties in *How to Amuse Yourself and Others: American Girls Handy Book*: "the girls take upon themselves all the duties and courtesies properly belonging to the boys."

An unmarried secretary of a Bowling Green, Kentucky, Sunday School class published a poem in tribute to the other class officers, but good naturedly included a joke directed at herself:

Here's to our Secretary, good people it is I,
Who note[s] with horror the year 1908 is going by,
For young ladies, old maids and all, do you hear?
This is the passing away of another Leap Year.

From coast to coast, American newspapers wrote about Leap Year. The *Los Angeles Times* quoted nine newspapers' comments relevant to Leap Year on February 5, 1896. The *New York Times* reported of a Plainfield, New Jersey, Justice of the Peace who issued a proclamation in 1904 that from "on or after Sunday, February 14, he

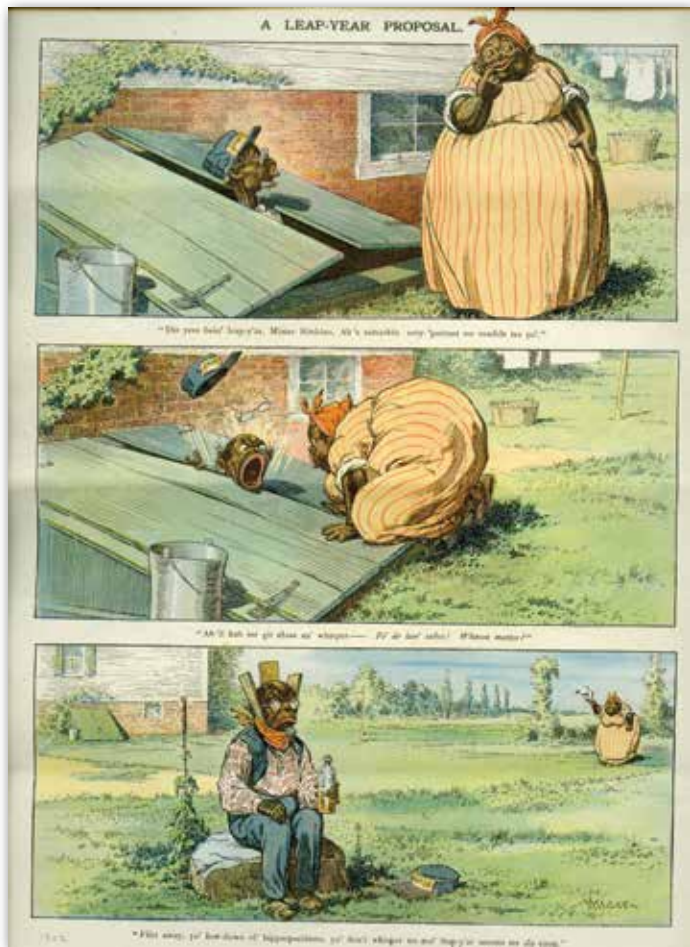


Figure 4. "A Leap Year Proposal," Puck [American humor magazine], [February?] 1902. Bowling Green, Kentucky.



Figure 5. Note the distinctive McLoughlin Brothers of New York trademark in the lower corner.



Figure 6. This valentine copyrighted 1902 (when the recipient, an “old maid school teacher” was 31) was a clue that her diary would tell an unexpected story of courtship.

will marry free of charge all couples coming to him within the next fourteen days in cases where the bride has taken advantage of her prerogative and made the proposition, and he will not only marry free of charge, but will pay the marriage license.” At the reception of a 1904 Leap Year wedding, at least twenty young women and at least ten young men accepted marriage proposals: “Folks may talk about their leap-year parties, but there was never a leap-year party that caused such an outburst of ‘Will-you-be-mines?’ as that brought on by the Columbo wedding.”

Thus far only one comic strip has come to light with a leap year depiction. Published by *Puck* magazine in 1902, it also is a rare example of the use of African Americans. True to the period, it unfortunately depicts the ethnic population with the stereotypes of that generation (figure 4). A contrast in perspectives of single females, Elizie Crisler Segar’s “fearless symbol of spinsterhood,” Olive Oyl, undisputedly helped break ground in the comics: for the first time there was a woman who was seen as an independent person, tied to neither parents nor husband, and making her way in the world of work, charm, ingenuity, and more than a little nerve.

Music reflects the thinking of the period. The popularity of Leap Year is evident in the variety of sheet music titles published, including “Leap Year Has Come and Passed” (1876), “Coronation; or, Leap Year Waltzes” (1878), “Bachelor’s Dream” (1879), “A Leap Year Vision” (1884), “Ah! This is Leap Year” (1884), “Greeting to Leap Year; Galop” (1884), “Leap Year Waltz” (1884), “Leap Year

Mazurka” (1884), “The Trials of Leap Year” (1884), and “Monkey Doodle Dandy” (1908). The first title ends with: “Oh dear Leap Year Fiction, fable that just one leads to fickle frail and foolish deeds.” The latter song includes the lyrics: “It was Leap Year in Monkey Land . . . There lived the King of monkey class, Bachelor so very shy, Until a maiden came, anxious to change her name. . . .”

Valentines frequently commented on the inability of interested females to find a suitable mate. When McLoughlin Brothers, New York, released “To My Valentine, your fate is settled...to be an Old Maid you are destined for sure,” it expressed what so many women past the age of 25 feared (figure 5). “Forlorn hope,” illustrated by a single female unable to shoot an arrow into the target of a male’s heart, told its recipient “the best that you will ever do, is – MISS.” Copyrighted in the first leap year of the twentieth century, a valentine entitled “To My Valentine, The Flirt” (figure 6) was prophetic of its recipient’s fate as was a social event that included “An Auction of Old Maids” (figure 7). The local newspapers, photographs and the local Baptist all-male Bethel College publications documented the popularity Miss Fannie Bryan described in her diary, but she confessed to her diary that she simply could not choose between her suitors.

In 1904, 1908, 1912, and 1916, at least 54 publishing houses flooded the market with Leap Year postcards. Taylor Platt & Company of New York created four sets of Leap Year cards. In 1908 and 1912, D. P. Crane’s cards, vertical in orientation, each included a red heart in

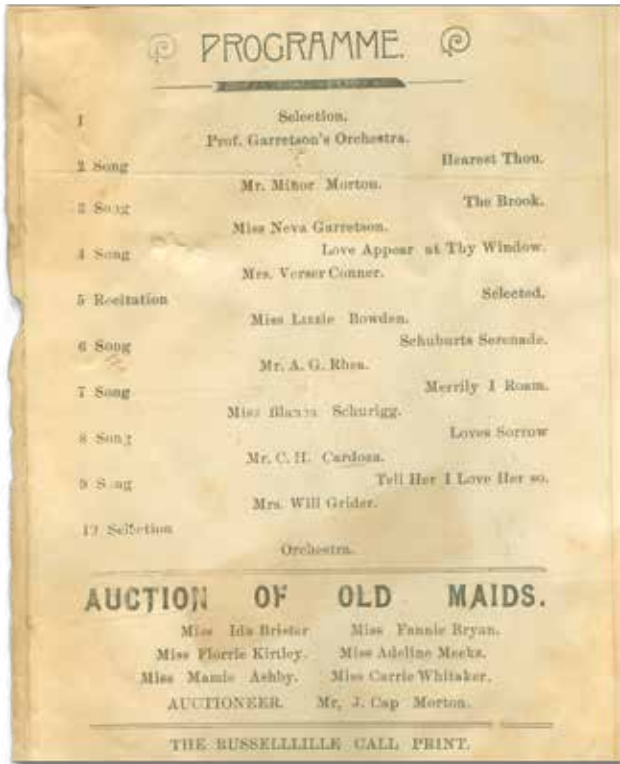


Figure 7. Unable to choose, Miss Fannie Bryan (1870-1965) lived with her parents and then alone. She taught first grade to three generations of children but leaving the teaching profession in order to marry was never discussed in her diary.

the background, the words "Leap-Year" at the top, and a fitting caption for the illustration. The popularity of the 1908 black & white photographic cards from the Acmeograph Company of Chicago, Illinois, led to a 1912 colored photograph series; each including a red heart with the words Leap-Year with the year in the upper right corner and their photographs' copyright by I. Grollman. Samson Company – whose cards featured girls in large hats – display two hearts pierced by an arrow and are vertical in orientation. P. Sander Company of New York published a "kids" series and a series of August Hutaf illustrations of beautiful women in 1908. Gibson Art Company copyrighted a series in 1911 with decorative borders and verses, but no illustrations. The E. Nash Company created the very popular 1908 Lemon series set that features ethnic stereotypes of hillbillies, the Irish, Germans and Jews (figure 8); and the 1912 Now or Never series with swastikas which at that time were associated with good luck.

Donald McGill, Fred Cavally, Clarence Victor Dwiggins (Dwig), and August Hutaf are but a few of the more than 17 talented illustrators of Leap Year postcards. Lance Thackeray created at least three series of cards for Raphael Tuck and Sons. Paul C. Koeber published one of the largest 1908 series, many signed by August Hutaf, and all with the company's distinctive PCK peacock logo on their backs (figure 9). Artist George Reiter Brill's "Leap Year Thoughts" series were etched from drawings and copyrighted in 1911. Although never illustrating a set of Leap Year cards, Bernhardt Wall linked women's suffrage and leap year with his famous card reading: "I would sooner be a leapyearlette than a howling suffragette."

Collectable sets often included many of the themes most prevalent in the cards. Although some depicted the males as pleased with the opportunity to be chosen by a female, overwhelmingly the cards illustrate either beautiful debutants or stereotypically withered, ugly, old maids in hot pursuit or laying traps for unsuspecting males. Quite often the males are tiny in stature compared to the women in pursuit. Amazingly few postcards indicate "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach." Often the cards depict bashful men who need a woman to take the dominant role in the relationship, or as the cards state "wear the pants." In the worst cases, the males being lured into captivity are not desirable; examples include drunkards, railroad hobos, burglars, poor men and males lacking masculinity. Very few postcards depict willing bachelors or women empowered to choose between several suitable mates (figure 10).

Women offered bags of money, their hearts, and secure futures, while bachelors ban together with signs such as "bachelors protective union," "deaf, dumb and blind," and "I'm engaged." While women gathered guns, traps and other weapons or bait, some men sought out hiding places (in caves, in trees or as scarecrows), but the majority



Figure 8. Well-known illustrator and publisher of high quality holiday cards, E. Nash produced this popular Lemon series – any man would do.



Figure 9. Possibly an unsigned illustration by August Hutaf, this Paul C. Koebler publication sums up women's frustrations with the word "Brute!"

simply ran for their lives. Occasional postcards depict two women pulling on one man, warning "the Leap-year Girls have got their eyes on you." Overwhelmingly the question is "May I pop the?"

One of the more unusual postcards shows the "cause and effect of the leap year engagement ring." Using four images, beginning with the engagement ring on the left, the ring transforms into a horrified man with a large open mouth of protest. Beneath the illustrations are the words, "RING," "WRUNG," "STING," and "STUNG." A second card called "Evolution of a Leap Year Bell" is much more benign.

Some of the more popular sets are the 1908 "N 16" series by A. Q. Southwick, New York, many of which read "No Wedding Bells for Me!"; the "After Leap Year Series" by John O. Winsch Company, each with a small square illustrating cupid being booted away; cards illustrated by A. Hustaf, in which handsome men in top hats are pursued by well-dressed attractive women, published by P. Sander or Paul C. Koerber; Dwig's "It's Leap Year" red-bordered cards with comic depictions of the chase; the Leap Year Acrostic series signed by Bishop; the "Leap Year Etiquette"

series by C. L. Ryan which clearly place women in men's roles and chastise them with the language of etiquette books; and the E. Nash Leap Year "Lemon" series.

Postcards, newspapers, and the bachelors' calling card demanded, "this chase must stop immediately," showing the humor and dark side of the Leap Year custom. Dorothy Dix returned to the topic in 1928, saying that although women had gained the right "to vote, to own property, to attend institutions of higher learning, to follow any business or professional career . . . The only masculine right that is denied them is the right to choose their mates."

No evidence exists to suggest that the Leap Year custom has in any way empowered women in their quest for societal equity, but Leap Year cards, parties, weddings, and valentines have been a source of entertainment for individuals intrigued by marital choice, and continue to pique our interest today.

Sue Lynn Stone McDaniel

is an Associate Professor and Special Collections Librarian at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green. To her students, she is the "Ephemera Librarian" or the "Trash Cataloger."



She is the author of several articles on turn-of-the-20th century courtship and mourning etiquette and practice in Kentucky. Consulting for the Adsmore House museum, a Knoxville, Tennessee, television series on "Mountain Mourning," and the Museum of East Tennessee History gave her the opportunity to broaden her teaching. She is a regular lecturer for the Kentucky Humanities Council Speakers Bureau. The breadth of her research incorporates university history, a World War II fighter pilot, and children's author Annie Fellows Johnston and her Little Colonel Series.



Figure 10. Leap Year cards that show men willing to accept proposals are fairly rare.

The Ampersand Club at 85: Bibliophilic Ephemera

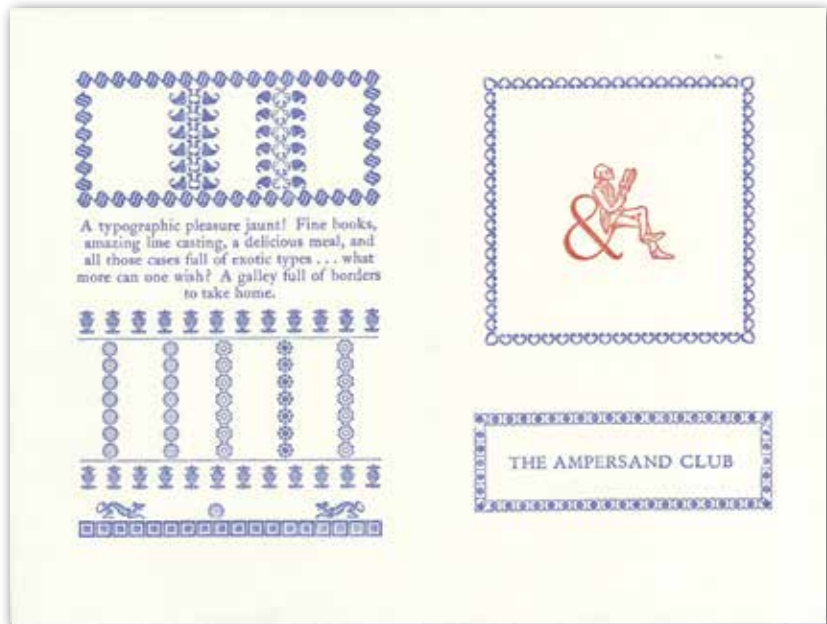
BY LEO J. HARRIS

Introduction

A bibliophile is generally understood to be a person who loves or collects books, especially books that are examples of fine or unusual printing, binding, text or illustrations.

Thirty bibliophilic societies exist in the United States.¹ The Grolier Club in New York City, dating to 1884, is perhaps the earliest and most prominent. Others include, to name just a few, the Caxton Club of Chicago, the Book Club of Texas, The Rowfant Club of Cleveland; and the Tichnor Club in Boston.

Bibliophilic societies function primarily in the educational area, providing lectures and information for members on book-related subjects. These lectures often explore the past, or are forward-looking, encouraging the growth and development of the book arts. Some of the societies have their own premises, in which they maintain book-related libraries and specialized collections. Bibliophilic societies also sponsor exhibits, or take field trips to various related institutions such as libraries, printers, or book artists studios. They also publish newsletters, books and pamphlets, and distribute keepsakes.

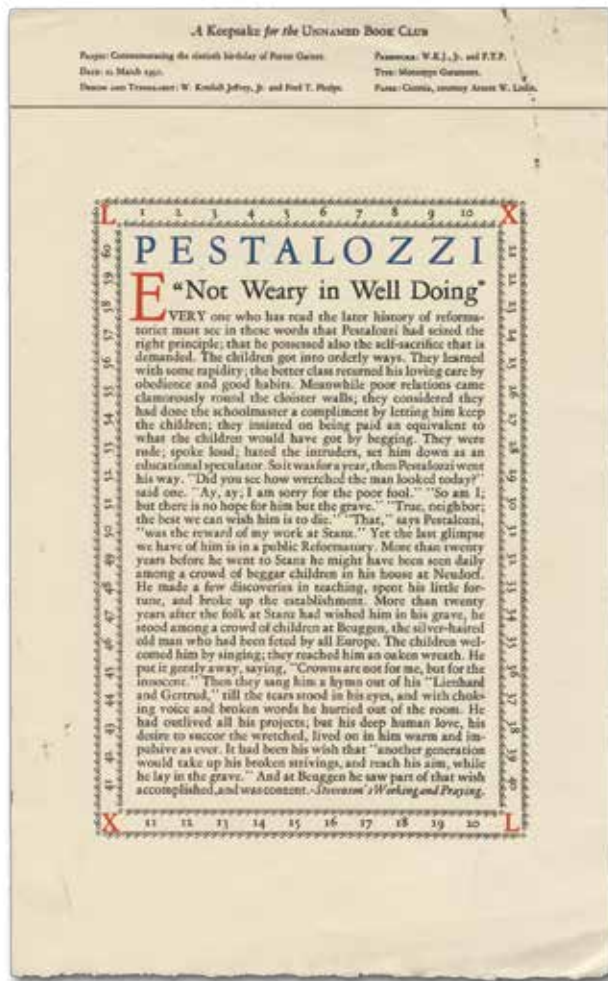


The club's logo, featuring a slim literateur leaning on the club's symbol, was designed in July of 1940 by C.A. Weston. This keepsake, September 12, 1975 accompanied Gary Hentke and Emerson Wulling's talk "Some Interesting Borders. Meticulously Cast on Jim Eckman's Intertype." Eckman was a long-time member of the Club, and the Intertype is a typesetting machine closely resembling a Linotype. Illustrations courtesy of Rob Rulon-Miller unless otherwise noted.

A "keepsake" is roughly defined as an item to help remember a person, place, or event; that is, a memento or souvenir.² Keepsakes often are menus, illustrations,

ERASMUS
AN ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR JAMES D TRACY DEPARTMENT OF
AMONG THE
HISTORY UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA FOR THE AMPERSAND CLUB OF MINNESOTA 7PM
DECONSTR
THURS 14 NOV 91 THE BAKKEN LIBRARY 3537 ZENITH AVE SO MINNEAPOLIS
UCTIONISTS

Meeting invitation, November 14, 1991 at the Bakken library, when University of Minnesota professor James D. Tracy spoke of "Erasmus Among Deconstructionists."



The very first keepsake distributed by the Club was on March 11, 1931 to commemorate the birthday of member Porter Garnet. The format was different from later keepsakes since design, typography and presswork information was provided at the top. The text quoted, by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, a Swiss pedagogue and educational reformer, was taken from *Praying and Working. Religion Work Ethic*, an 1861 book by William Fleming Stevenson. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

or broadsides, as well as invitations to particular meetings. Most keepsakes are letter-press printed, with designs appropriate to the subject of the event, and are distributed by clubs at meetings, Christmas parties, and at annual dinners.

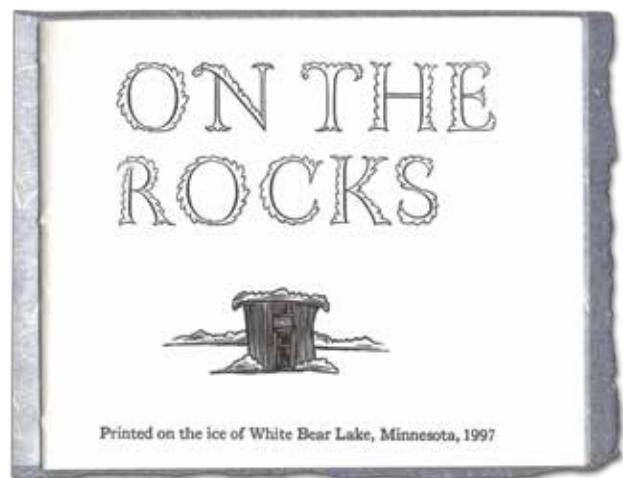
The Ampersand Club

Presses and publishers, book clubs and libraries, and authors all existed in Minnesota during the last part of the nineteenth century, but until 1930 the Twin Cities lacked an organization for those interested in book collecting and the production of books as an art. The new organization had no name for its first five years. Eventually known as the "Ampersand Club," the club is considered by many to be the intellectual cornerstone of Minnesota's Community of the Book.³ Now, in 2015, and celebrating its 85th birthday, the full story of the Ampersand Club is being told elsewhere.⁴

A bright spot in the bleak Minnesota winter of 1930 was the invitation that Arnett W. Leslie and Frank K. Walter issued to men interested in early, fine and rare books⁵ to join in the forming of a new club, which would gather together printers, artists, book collectors, librarians, paper makers, calligraphers, press engineers, type founders, and students. More simply, and said in another way, the purpose was to gather together in a club all those involved in the making of a book.⁶

The Club in its earlier days met sometimes monthly and sometimes more sporadically at the homes of members, in libraries, in an attic, in a garage, or in a back room, as well as in Power's Book Store, at printing shops, in the Walker Art Center galleries, at the Minnesota Press Club in the Radisson Hotel, and in the Minneapolis School of Art. The initial meeting began with a dinner at the Campus Club of the University of Minnesota, for which the catered meal cost 75 cents per person.

How did the club obtain its name? James Grey, a St. Paul newspaper book reviewer, noted "... it was that great bibliophile, Christopher Morley, who christened the organization. It had gone languidly along for five years as the Unnamed Book club. Occasionally a distinguished guest would suggest a name. One of them thought the Bombay Bicycle club would be nice, since most of the members had never been in Bombay and all of them loathed bicycles. The club dallied with the idea for a time and then reluctantly relinquished it. But the members leaped at Christopher Morley's suggestion made on the occasion when he became an honorary Ampersandian – or would he have called himself, as he stood in his honorary position between two regular members, an Ampersandwich."⁷



Title page, *On the Rocks*. This booklet was printed in an ice house on White Bear Lake in 1997. The text is a list of drinking terms collected by M.F.K. Fisher. Courtesy of the author.

The Ampersand Club in its early days limited itself to 30 and then 35 male members. Candidates for membership had to be nominated by two members, and were voted upon by the entire membership. In addition,



Invitation with two folds. Abe Lerner spoke about *Typophiles* and their books at the annual dinner meeting of the Club on May 20, 1992. The *Typophiles* is a national society that encourages the appreciation and production of fine typography and bookbinding.

for many years the Ampersand Club enforced a policy that excluded women as members, although they could come as occasional guests. Since the 1970s the club reverted to an all-inclusive admissions policy. Its current activities are essentially educational.



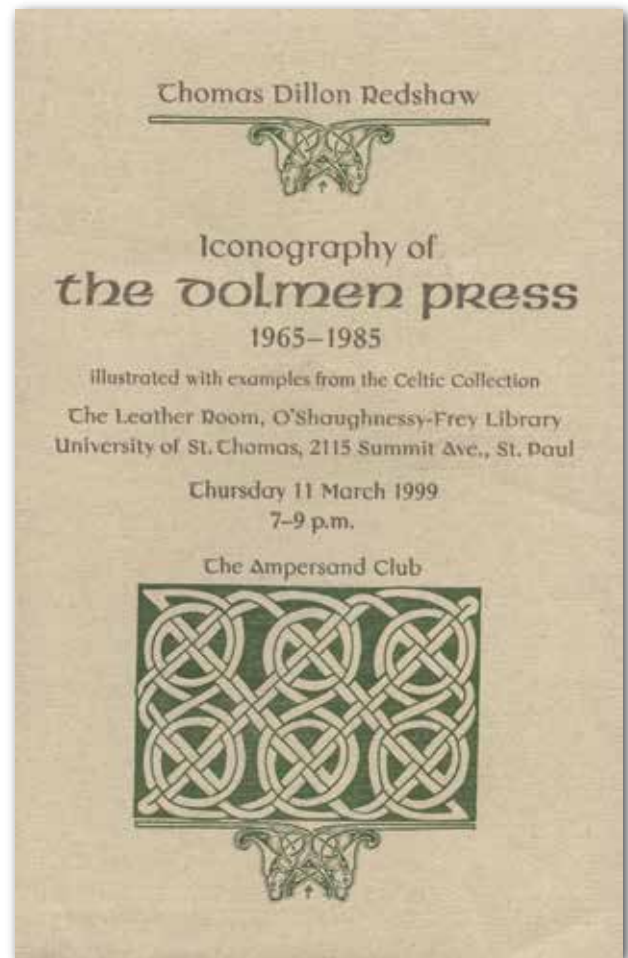
Folded invitation for the January 7, 2000 holiday party of the Club. The convoluted letters read "Y2K Souvenir" (referring to the turning of the millennium) and "Party." Calligraphy by Denis Ruud.

Printed Ephemera of the Ampersand Club

The Board of Directors of the Ampersand Club has customarily named a club member to be in charge of printing ephemera. Through the years this person would, working with his or her choice of other club members who were artists, typesetters, and printers, prepare and print ephemera for the various events of the club. The honoraria for these efforts was usually between \$100 and \$150 for each item. In recent decades

this task was fulfilled by Philip Gallo, Gerald Lange, Chip Shilling, Paulette Myers-Rich, and Robert Johnson.

Printed ephemera of the Ampersand Club consists principally of books or pamphlets, broadsides, invitations, and keepsakes. These ephemeral items are generally typeset in a variety of different fonts. Most come in many different sizes and shapes, are printed on interesting textured paper, and are often folded. Many include illustrations taken from engravings or linoleum blocks, or from other original artwork. In earlier years of the club its keepsakes and invitations were typeset and letterpress printed by members and distributed in limited quantities. Any special artwork was likewise the product of club members. With the advent of the computer and its many



Regular meeting keepsake distributed on March 11, 1999. Thomas D. Redshaw spoke on the iconography of the Dolmen press, with illustrations from the O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library of the University of St. Thomas.

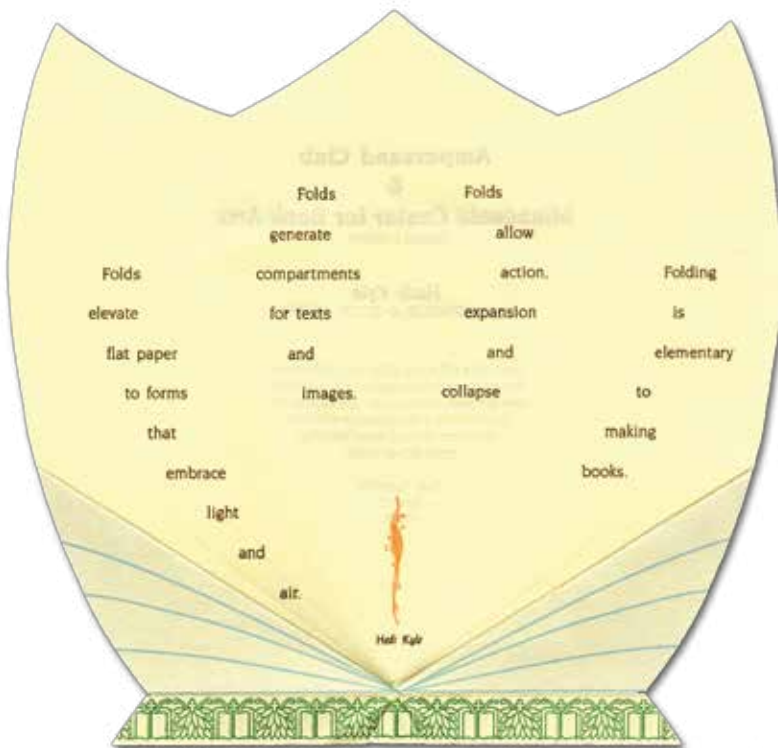
revolutionary changes in the printing process, the club's ephemera has increasingly been computer generated. Nearly two hundred keepsakes of the Ampersand Club were examined in order to select items to be illustrated here.

At the End: the Colophon

Information which includes the place of publication, the publisher, and the date of publication is normally found on the title page of a book. Other information or credits, including but not limited to the paper, the typeface used, and the number of copies printed, often will appear on a page at the end of a book. This information collectively has become generally known as a colophon.

It seems fitting, at the end of this article, to provide a colophon. But how many of us know where that term originated? A short keepsake created by Ampersand member Philip Gallo has this to say: (figure 10)

Colophon was a city-state in Asia Minor and a part of the early Ionian League from the eighth to the fifth century B.C. Strabo (64 B.C. – 21 A.D.), a noted Greek geographer and historian, explained that in earlier wars the cavalry of Colophon was so well-respected that it became proverbial for forcing a speedy solution to a military conflict. Hence, it was the “finishing touch.”⁸ Plato (428 B.C. – 348 B.C.), the Greek philosopher and teacher, provides another explanation, that “...



This unusual origami keepsake, originally folded into the shape of a bird but unfolded here to show the back side, was the keepsake given to attendees at the lecture of Hedi Kyle, conservator and book artist, to the Club on April 12, 1997. Printed by Wilbur Schilling at Indulgence Press.

on account of their having received the Smyrnaeans into their city, the people of Colophon were allowed a casting-vote in the Panionium, or congress of the twelve Ionian cities, and hence the expression was equivalent to ‘turn of the scale.’”⁹ Whatever the actual origin of the

THAT WHEREVER IN WARS THAT WERE HARD
TO BRING TO AN END, THE CAVALRYMEN OF THE
COLOPHONIANS SERVED AS ALLIES, THE WAR
CAME TO AN END; WHENCE AROSE THE PROVERB,
«HE PUT COLOPHON TO IT» WHICH IS QUOTED
WHEN A SURE END IS PUT TO AN AFFAIR

STRABO ON THE CAVALRY OF COLOPHON, AS CITED IN *HIPPEIS* BY LESLIE J. WORLEY

Keepsake: “Weiss Initials (Series 11) on Rives Bfk. Edition of 50. Kerning by Jaime Nigh, Philip Gallo at the Hermetic Press 2012.”

word was, English dictionaries by the middle of the 17th century were using the term Colophon to describe the end matter of a book.

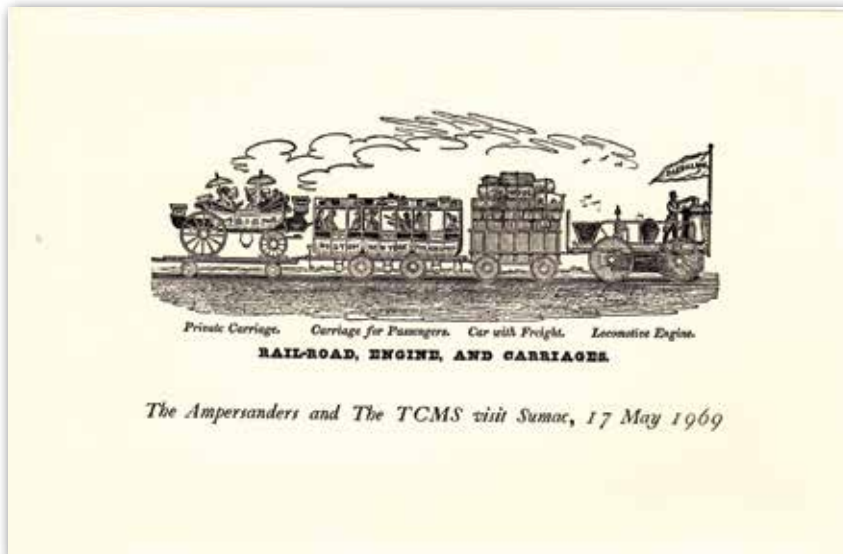
For our more limited purposes in the ephemera world, colophons have often been supplanted by the terms “printer’s imprints” or “printer statements.” These are written statements used to describe the technical details and persons involved in the production of complicated printed ephemera.

The Ampersand Club members who produced the broadsides, keepsakes, and invitations considered here almost exclusively used the term colophon to describe any written summary of their work. It was not customary for them, however, to seek any acknowledgment for their services. Such would be, it was argued, a self-serving way to generate business for themselves. Hence their names rarely if ever appear on such Ampersand Club ephemera and, indeed, there is usually little or no information provided as to the design and printing process for each item.

But we do not have such restraints here, and we honor the vanishing breed of artists who brought their talents to the printed page and the art of the book: Dennis Feigelbaum, Norm Fritzberg, Philip Gallo, Allan Kornblum, Gerald Lange, Les Metz, Paulette Myers-Rich, Fred T. Phelps, Will Powers, Dennis Ruud, Gaylord Schanilec, Richard Stevens, Wilbur Schilling, and Jody Williams.

Endnotes

- ¹ The Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies (FABS) is an umbrella group for these societies, and its newsletter published twice annually, is distributed to the North American societies and to fifteen international affiliates. The Ephemera Society of America Inc. is now a member of FABS.
- ² A longer definition, considering keepsakes in the framework of printing, may be found in Maurice Rickards, *The Encyclopedia of Ephemera. A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator, and Historian*. New York: Routledge (2000), 187.
- ³ The Community of the Book is often looked upon as the infrastructure of literary activity. The first major analysis of this activity in Minnesota was Moira F. Harris, “Minnesota’s Community of the Book,” a chapter in John T. Flanagan, *Minnesota’s Literary Visitors*. St. Paul: Pogo Press (1993), 176.
- ⁴ The club history is scheduled for publication in *Hennepin History*, the journal of the Hennepin County Historical Society, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- ⁵ Walter was the University of Minnesota Librarian, while Leslie was the owner of a large paper company.



The visit of the Ampersand Club and the Twin Cities Manuscript Society to Emerson G. Wullig’s Sumac Press on May 17, 1969 was commemorated with this keepsake.

- ⁶ Information on the organization of the club taken from a number of sources was reprinted from Emerson G. Wullig, “The Ampersand Club. Retrospect and Prospect, 1965,” contained in *The Ampersandpaper (Summer/Fall 1970)*, 1. Major collections of Ampersand materials are found at the University of Minnesota library, the Hennepin County Central library, the Minnesota Historical Society, and in the files of various members.
- ⁷ James Gray, “A Twin City Book Club Makes its Publishing Debut,” *St. Paul Dispatch*, (October 4, 1940). Christopher Morley, journalist, novelist, essayist, playwright, and poet. He also produced stage productions. He was one of the founders, and a long-time contributing editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. One of his novels, *Kitty Foyle*, was made into a highly successful movie.
- ⁸ Leslie J. Worley, *The Cavalry of Ancient Greece*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press (1994), 36. Also see Libanius, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture as Observed by Libanius*. (A. F. Norman, translator.) Liverpool: Liverpool University Press (2000), 55.
- ⁹ Alfred W. Pollard, *An essay on colophons, with specimens and translations*. Chicago: The Caxton Club (1905), 7, 8.

Leo J. (John) Harris shown with his favorite ‘granddaughter,’ had three careers. He served in the Department of State and Foreign Service; as an international lawyer; and as publisher of a small press. In retirement he writes as a hobby concerning local and regional history, popular culture and ephemera, and postal history.



Levi's Letterhead Logo Wars

BY ROBERT J. CHANDLER

On July 2, 1872, Reno tailor Jacob Davis (1831-1908) paid a large bill to Levi Strauss & Co., his dry goods and yardage wholesaler. He included a phonetically-spelled business proposition that changed fashion history:

I also send you by [Wells, Fargo & Co's] Express, 2 prs. Overall, as you will see, one Blue and one made of the 10 oz. [per square yard] Duck, which I have bought in greate many Peces of you, and have made it up in to Pents, such as the sample.

The secratt of them Pents is the Rivits that I put in those Pockets and I found the demand so large that I cannot make them up fast enough. I charge for the Duck \$3.00 and the Blue [denim] \$2.50 a pear. My nabors are getting yealouse of these success and unless I secure it by Patent Papers it will soon become a general thing. Everybody will make them up and thare will be no money in it.

Tharefore, Gentleman, I wish to make you a Proposition that you should take out the Latters Patent in my name, as I am the inventor of it, the expense of it will be about \$68, all complit, and for these \$68 I will give you half the right to sell all such clothing Revited according to the Patent...¹



Figure 3. Unbeatable in 1886; unbeatable now – this trademark probably lithographed by William T. Galloway, who purchased Grafton Brown's company in 1878.

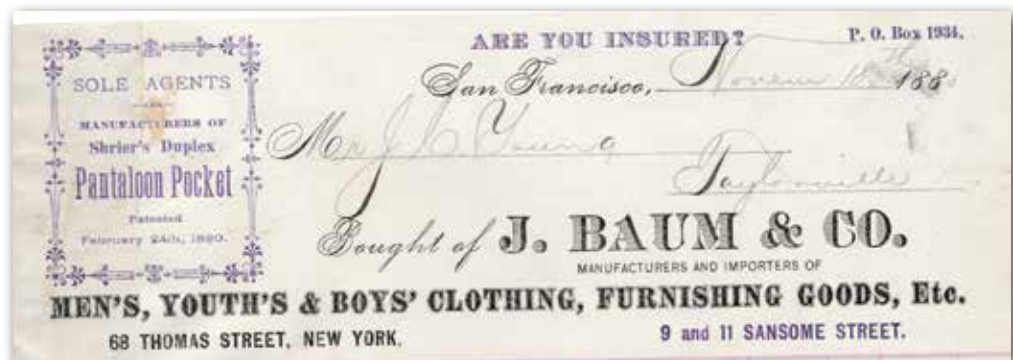
Levi Strauss (1829-1902) agreed, gaining the seventeen-year patent in 1873, and, with Jacob Davis as plant manager, began manufacturing his “celebrated Patent Riveted Duck & Denim Pants” in San Francisco. Brother Jonas in New York City, Levi's dry goods supplier for the previous two decades, also began manufacturing riveted pants.

In the mid-1870s, as his durable riveted clothing came on the market, Levi Strauss hired Grafton Tyler Brown to lithograph company billheads or invoices. The majority of San Francisco business invoices of the period were letterpress printed – and



Figure 1 Above: Grafton Tyler Brown's first lithographed design for Levi's billhead, used 1879.

Figure 2 Right: In 1880, San Franciscan Julius Baum began manufacturing and selling a durable double pants pocket invented by a New York partner, Morris Shrier.





At the turn of the century, the Gold Rush firm of Louis Elkus Co. declared they were the “Sole Manufacturers” of Sampson Overalls or Sampson Pants. Their long-lived trademark showed the strongman attempting to rip apart a pair of pants.



Eloesser-Heynemann Co. introduced their “Can’t Bust Em” Union Made overalls and pants around 1912 (when Levi Strauss & Co. introduced children’s Koveralls, its first product sold nationally). Rather than a test of strength, their trademark portrayed a fence-sitting crowing rooster, wearing their overalls. “Can’t Bust Em” overalls, the company declared, were indeed “Something to Crow About”—even though the trademark gave no evidence of durability. In 1946, the Henry D. Lee Company bought them, gaining the “Boss of the Road” and “Can’t Bust Em” trademarks.



In the 1873 San Francisco city directory Murphy, Grant & Co. is listed as the city’s “largest wholesale dry-goods house.” As “patentees and sole manufacturers” of the “Never Rip” Overall in the 1890s, the firm chose an uninspiring trademark: the owner of the ripped pants gives the enquiring trotting champion no indication of the origin of his tragedy. When Murphy, Grant & Co. dissolved in 1913 its trademark went elsewhere.



The Carson Glove Company, founded in San Francisco in 1887 and still in existence, in 1901 illustrated on their billhead two bulldogs, one named “Trade” on his collar, the other, “Mark,” tugging unsuccessfully on a leather “Will Not Rip” glove a design perhaps inspired by Levi’s.

featured straight lines, squares, and rectangles. Brown, an African American who “passed” as white, drew with oil-based crayons on hard polished limestone allowing him to print black circles, swirls, and fancy lettering (figure 1).

Jacob Davis rightly feared his tailor neighbors. During 1873, the first year of production, Levi Strauss fended off patent infringers. One local pirate was August B. Elfelt & Co., another split firm like Levi’s, with August in New York and Alfred P. Elfelt in San Francisco. A second knock-off artist was Kan Lun, a resident of San Jose’s Chinatown.

Julius Baum & Co., “manufacturers and importers of youth’s and boys’ clothing,” imitated Jacob Davis. Baum sold Morris Shrier’s Patented Duplex Pantaloon Pocket - one covering flap, but two pockets: one entered by the top: the other by the side (figure 2).

Meantime, Levi Strauss, a man who lived, talked, ate and slept business, looked to the future when his patent

would enter the public domain. In 1886, he approved and trademarked the two-horse logo (figure 3): jeans so tough that two horses, pulling in opposite directions, and urged on by their owners, could not rip them.²

Those two powerful horses flummoxed San Francisco competitors as much as the incomparable 501 jeans themselves. For a half century Bay City rivals attempted to equal the quiet strength of that thoughtful trademark. Their billheads display their ephemeral challenges and laughable failures.

Endnotes

¹ Ed Cray, *Levi’s*, 1978.

² Lynn Downey, the company’s first archivist and historian who retired on June 4, 2014, is writing a definitive biography of Strauss. She persuaded the company to advertise its founding in 1853; its first riveted clothing in 1873. CEO Chip Bergh declared Downey was the “newest icon” of Levi Strauss & Co.



On October 30, 1877, David Neustadter patented (#196693) pants with a strong “continuous fly facing” to strengthen the garment where two inner seams met – advertised with an image on the reverse of an 1880s envelope advertising the Neustadter Bros. “Boss of the Road Pat’n Continuous Fly Overalls.” In the twentieth century, a single stubborn, but not particularly distinctive, bulldog became the company’s face. By the 1930s, Eloesser-Heynemann Co. owned that bulldog that claimed to be “Boss of the Road.”



Robert J. Chandler, Ph.D., retired historian of Wells Fargo Bank, began collecting letterheads in 1980. His 2014 book, *San Francisco Lithographer: African American Artist Grafton Tyler Brown*, was published in The Charles M. Russell Center Series on Art and Photography of the American West.



Above: The Henderson Woolen Mills in the Blue Grass State manufactured Kentucky Jeans that were “Strong as a Bull” and “Cannot be Ripped.” The 1898 trademark made jeans look like panties on the horns of a dilemma.

Left: A single man or even two men are not as strong as two horses or even two bulls. Yet, in the ‘teens and twenties, the Everwear Manufacturing Company, with a local San Francisco factory, tested its jeans with just manpower. Everwear stated everywhere: “Can’t Rip; Won’t Rip; A New Pair if They Do.”





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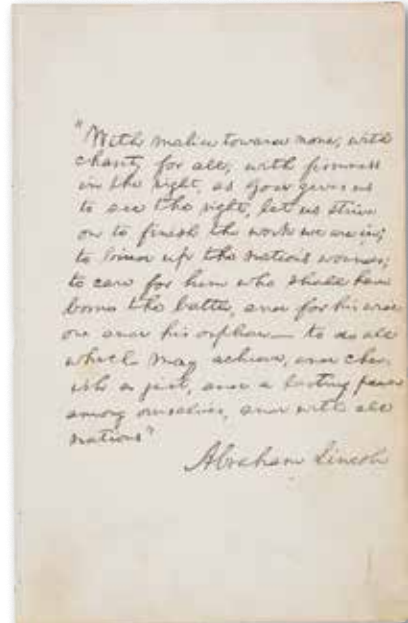
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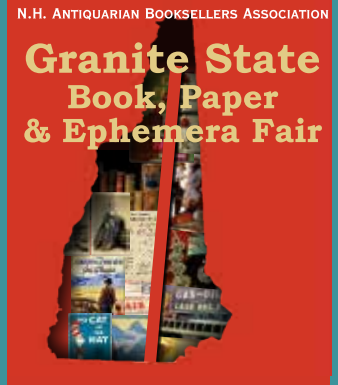
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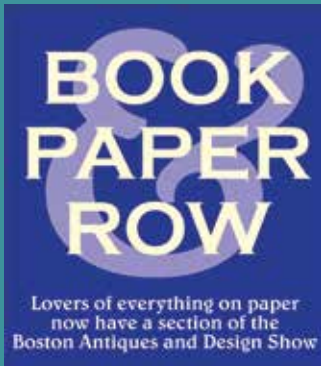
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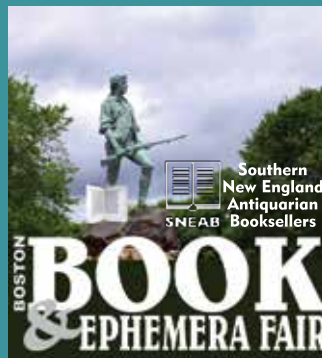
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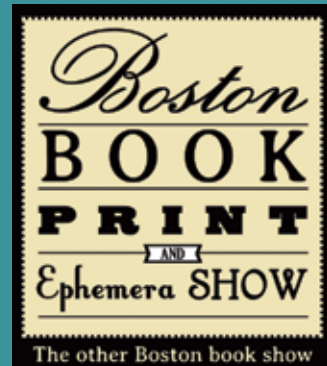
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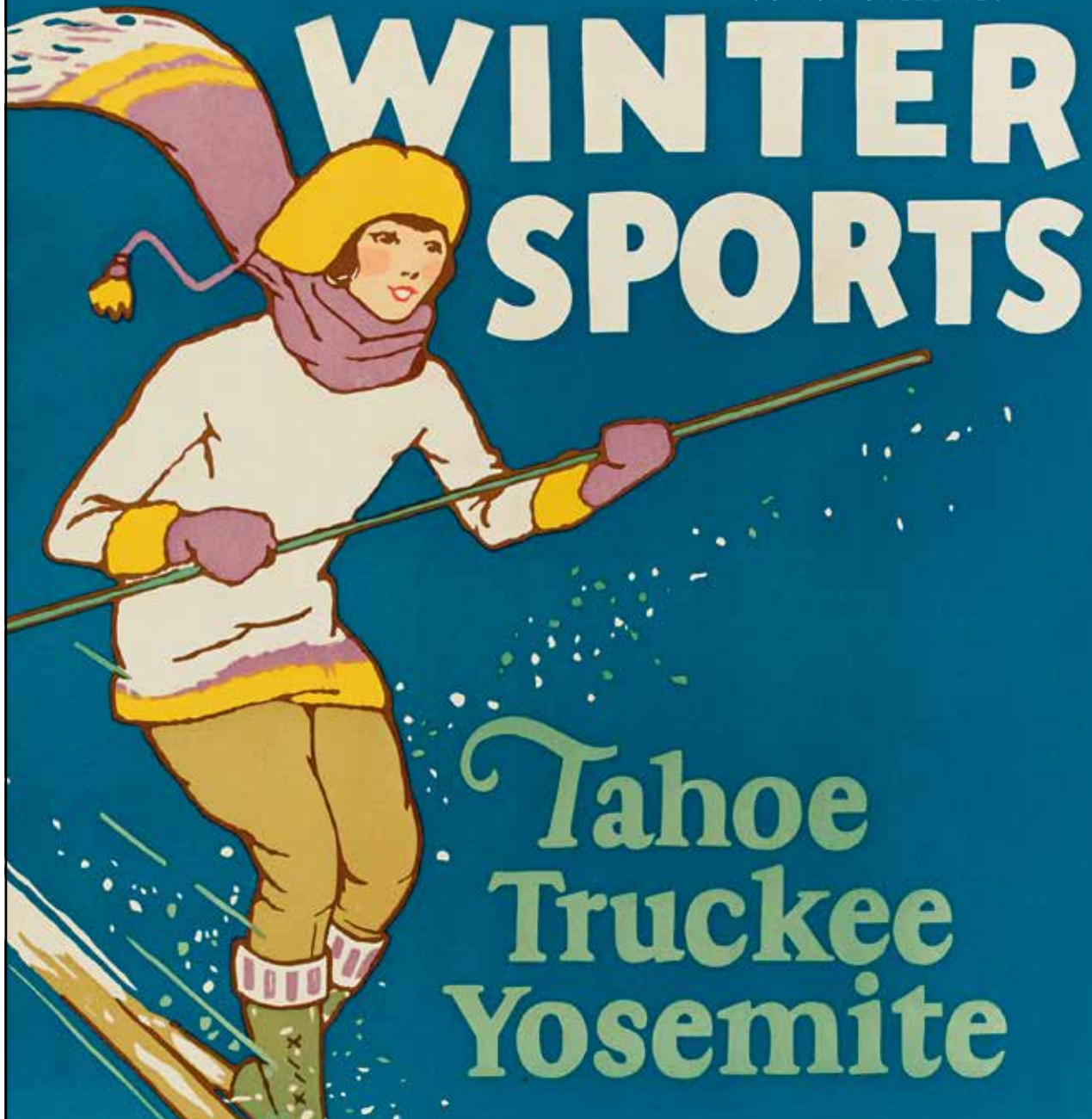
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