

"Our Mission is to serve as an authoritative resource for information, education and research about animal-drawn vehicles and related subjects."

Newsletter Fall 2010



The Carriage in Miniature

Ken Wheeling

As far back as 3000 B.C. one can find models of animal drawn vehicles. Artifacts from such ancient civilizations as the Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian cultures have survived to provide us some small insight to the different types of vehicles used in ancient Mesopotamia and other Near Eastern countries.

It is not entirely clear what the role was these exactly played in the cultural life of the people. Some were obviously votive offerings and some with unknown religious significance. That they were toys is entirely possible, and that that were even "objets d'arts", i. e. meant as a decorative item in some home or palace of an ancient citizen. One has but to page through the illustrations of Mary A. Littauer and J. H. Crouwel's *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals of the Ancient Near East* to find wagons, with clay sticks for axles, or Through four is no evidence of the

Stuart Piggott, *Wheeled Transport*, a traces the beginnings in Central Europe, model vehicles, e. cart, 6th century B. (p.191). Admittedly, on the remnants of than the miniature



This clay quadriga was found in Cyprus and can be seen in the Museo Barracco, Rome.

examples of little clay wheels mounted on chariots, or sledges. millennia, however, there articulating front axle.

in his *The Earliest* monumental work which of the wheeled wagon depicts some of these g. a bronze model of a C. from Bolsena, Italy he does concentrate full-size vehicles rather versions.

Another carriage historian, László Tarr, in *The History of the Carriage*, gives us an illustration of a little clay quadriga, pulled by four horses and carrying some goddess (Ill. XI). The driver is a much smaller individual, a human, whose size denotes his inferior creation.

All through the later pages of human existence in Europe and the Near East, examples abound of the animal-drawn vehicle in miniature.

As we get into the Middle Ages, the models become more sophisticated, as do the life-size wagons and coaches themselves. In the museum at Heidenheim, there is a model of a *Wagen*, very similar to the Pennsylvania Conestoga, with drover astride a wheel horse and six animals pulling it. In the Hermes Museum in Paris, there is a very wonderful little model of a 18th century Berlin, featured in an article by Rudolf Wackernagle in *Achse, Rad und Wagen*, 2, p. 31-35. A model of the coach presented by James I to Tsar Boris Godunov, in 1603 resides in The Science Museum, London, a reminder of the munificent gift itself.

One of the more historic models is the one made by Rudolf Ackermann of the Lord Chancellor's Coach, kept at the Lady Lever Art Museum in Port Sunlight, England. It is correct in every detail, mimicking the full size coach which is in Dublin, Ireland.

The most sumptuous miniature in the world is the model of Catherine the Great's Coronation Coach. It is four inches long and fits inside one of Peter Carl Fabergé's fabulously jeweled Easter eggs. This particular one, the Imperial Coronation Egg, was made in 1897 to commemorate the coronation of Nicholas II and Alexandra the previous year. The estimated price of it, when sold in 2004, was 24 million dollars.



Fabergé's Coronation Egg

In America, hundreds would-be young car designers tested the metal against the experts in putting together that Fisher Body symbol, the Napoleonic Coach. Supplied with kits containing the parts, they vied with one another to see who could produce the very best imitation of the coach originally built by the Fishers, father and son.



Completed on October 1, 1970, this Hose Wagon was the last model that Collin's made.

More recently, professional modelers like John Thompson and Eric Homewood in England and Ivan Collins in the United States produced exact replicas of famous carriages and coaches. Homewood's models of The Brougham and The Victoria have commanded relatively high prices when offered either privately or at auction. Thompson's model of Queen Alexandra's State Coach is an award-worthy complexity of miniature pieces and parts.

Ivan Collins' entire collection of scale model vehicles which once were in the forefront of the American transportation scene are now housed at the Oregon Historical Society in Portland, Oregon. A book, *Historic Vehicles in Miniature, The Genius of Ivan Collins*, authored by Ron Brentano, was published by that society, which also markets copies of Mr. Collins' exact technical drawings, one inch to the foot.

Through the long years of vehicle development, every civilization, culture and country has seen its animal-drawn vehicles copied and produced in various scales, for various purposes and reasons. The miniature vehicle continues to fascinate its beholders, whether it be the merest toy or a magnificently wrought piece of fine gold and precious stones.



W.E.G. REPORT

This is an exciting time to be located at the center of the Kentucky Horse Park! With the world coming to our doorstep, we have been very busy preparing for our guests. The photos to the right show some of our efforts, but I hope you have a chance to stop by our office and see them for yourself. The exhibit of model carriages will be up through November, and we will bring the banners back out for future events. The Library is open all year, but it is best to call for an appointment if you are planning a visit. With our ongoing effort to digitize the collection, many questions can be answered through email. We are happy to help you with any carriage question, so drop us a line!



These banners are 8' x 10' blow ups of photographs from the CMA Archives.

This couple was photographed in their Concord Buggy in Manchester, NH circa 1880.

From the Directors

It has been a while since the Carriage Museum of America produced an Annual Newsletter. But we are back up to speed and want you to know of our recent progress to benefit you. 2010 began with the very sad and tragic loss of our friend and President Cy Gerde. Cy generously shared his passion and energy to lead the Carriage Museum of America (CMA) forward to our new home at the Kentucky Horse Park and had seemingly inexhaustible enthusiasm over our future. Pris Gerde continues Cy's commitment and generosity by donating the Gerde Library to us. This incredible gift essentially doubles our current collection, from 2,500 to 5,000! Beyond the shock, Cy's sudden passing prompted the CMA directors to reflect on and reaffirm our direction, goals and priorities.

We are now nicely settled, 'squeezed' may be a more apt description, in our Kentucky Horse Park offices that we share with the Carriage Association of America (CAA). Katherine Magruder has been busy organizing and cataloguing our extensive library and periodical collection that is available for selected research. Our special collection of 40 original and unusual vehicles have been catalogued and are in safe keeping in Augusta, Georgia through the generosity of William Morris. This entire cataloguing process, while time consuming, was critically important in order to enhance our ability to efficiently conduct research and answer your technical and historical questions.

Speaking of the CAA, we often hear confusion over the roles of the CMA and CAA. How are we different? Our sister organization, the CAA, is largely about collection, care and driving of carriages through active learning and driving events. The CMA plays a complementary role by focusing almost exclusively on preserving and providing INFORMATION on carriages in the "safe haven" of a separate legal entity. The CMA and CAA work very closely together, without duplicating efforts, to support our own missions and most importantly, the interests of private and public collectors, researchers, and educators. The CAA's highly informative Carriage Journal relies heavily on the CMA as an authoritative information resource and the CMA relies on CAA to help disseminate information. Together, the CMA and the CAA are a team working in tandem and worth more than their sum; as well we should, given our common roots. Another example of that working relationship, the Websites of the CAA and CAA now contain

Edward Brooke is shown here in his Private Coach by Quiet et Cie in Fairmont Park, Philadelphia in 1898. Mr. Brooke was a member of the Four-In-Hand Club of Philadelphia



The foyer area of the CAA shop has been transformed for our WEG Exhibit. Eleven scale carriage models are on loan from the Kentucky Horse Park. A selection of photos and prints from the CMA collection round out the display and introduce visitors to the history of Four-In-Hand Driving.

complementary links to each other so that viewers can easily toggle back and forth for the information provided by each.

This past year, our accomplishments include production and publication of “The Great Blue Army Wagon.” This was our first venture with an outside author and was highly successful. We also reprinted “Two Wheeled Vehicles for Equine” and “Working Drawings of Horse Drawn Vehicles” so that these popular publications continue to be readily available. Katherine’s column in the Carriage Journal covered topics ranging from Sleigh Colors to Historic Figures in Coach Making. With the new format of the Carriage Journal, the CMA will continue to provide interesting images and articles from our archives and the occasional researched article. Katherine also enhanced the content of our website with more articles on carriage manufacturers.

In 2011, we will continue to produce articles in print and on-line as well as provide research services for the public. Especially noteworthy, we will be tackling the truly enormous undertaking of accessioning the Gerde Library. Once we have finished all the sorting and cataloging, we will be left with many duplicate copies. We plan to hold a Duplicate Book Sale similar to the one held annually by the National Sporting Library.

With the inventory of our assets well underway, we are finally in a position to strategically improve our collections. Items that are either redundant or do not meet our collection criteria will be sold through public auction such as Martin Auctions Fall sale this October 15th. A few vehicles from the carriage collection have been identified as either not unique or not in original condition and will be deaccessioned at a public auction. The venue and date of this sale has not been determined but will be well publicized. Stay tuned.

Inventory and cataloging effort benefits us in many ways. 1) it forces us to remain true to our mission, 2) it reduces our need for space, 3) it enables us to prioritize within our collection and identify needs and gaps, and 4) it provides revenue for the important work of preservation, conservation, and acquisition. But regardless of how finely tuned our collections are, housing for our sizable collections will continue to be a challenge and one that our Curatorial and Permanent Site Committees will be addressing in the upcoming year.

As the end of 2010 draws near, we hope you will consider becoming a Friend of the Carriage Museum of America. Each donation counts toward improving the CMA’s research and information services to carriage enthusiasts and scholars around the globe.

If you have thoughts or comments on how we can serve you better, please let us know.

Stewart Morris Jr., Chairman

John Greenall, President

Books for Sale

1. GREAT BLUE ARMY WAGON By Thomas Lindmier \$30.00
2. TWO WHEELED VEHICLES FOR EQUINE \$55.00
3. A MANUAL OF COACHING By Fairman Rogers \$85.00
4. SPRINGS FOR HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES \$40.00
5. VOLUME 15 OF THE HUB \$125
6. HORSE-DRAWN AMBULANCES. \$35.00
7. HORSE-DRAWN CABS \$27.00
8. HORSE-DRAWN FUNERAL VEHICLES \$37.00
9. AXLE MAKING \$45.00
10. HITCH WAGONS FOR CITY DRIVING \$45.00
11. MANUAL OF FALLING BOW TOPS \$70.00
12. ROYAL MEWS. \$26.00
13. COLORED PLATES FROM THE HUB NOVEMBER 1882 - JANUARY 1892. \$100
14. TREATISE ON CARRIAGES By William Felton. \$65.00
15. COLLECTION OF ESSAYS ON HORSE DRAWN CARRIAGES AND CARRIAGE PARTS. \$20.00
16. COSON CARRIAGE COLLECTION \$35.00
17. HORSE DRAWN SLEIGHS \$30.00
18. WHEELMAKING \$30.00

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