

THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DESIGN OF TOYS

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CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS .....	Page 4
INTRODUCTION .....	do. 8
ROCKING HORSES .....	do. 9
TEDDY BEARS .....	do. 31
SPINNING TOPS .....	do. 47
SUMMARY .....	do. 63
FOOT NOTES .....	do. 68
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	do. 73

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## ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Boy with hobby horse. Japan.
2. 17th century English rocking horse.
3. 18th century English rocking horse.
4. 19th century English rocking horse.
5. Haddons of London 20th century fibreglass swingarm rocking horse
6. Gamages "Bronco" the Safety Hobby Horse 1913.
7. Haddons of London 20th century fibreglass Swingarm rocking horse.
8. Midland Tent and Strong Toy Co. England Late 19th century "Strong Toy.
9. Homecraft worker, Wicklow, Ireland &
10. £200 pine.
11. Funfur, stuffed with wood shavings/ straw 1981 English.
12. Early 2-th century tin body, rubber head German.
13. English funfur tubular steel rockers 1982
14. Late 19th century English Velocipedes.
15. 1900 English Velocipedes with unusual method of propulsion.
16. Margaret Steiff, German Seamstress with Friend Petz 1903.



## ILLUSTRATIONS

17. Cartoon called "Drawing line at Mississ-  
ippi" published in an American newspaper  
by the famous cartoonist Berryman.
18. Charles Michton and the earliest teddy  
bear made by him 1903
19. Peter the Bear of German design in 1925  
until 1928
20. Early 1910 English teddy bear.
21. Funfur English teddy bear late 20th century
22. Early 20th century English teddy bear.  
Teddy on left is jointed.
23. Design of bears through the ages with the  
Accrophilles code and poster. A collector  
of teddy bears is known as an Accrophilliac.
24. Display of tops in Pollocks Toy Museum  
London
25. 12th and 18th Dynasty Egyptian tops.
26. Early Eskimo spinner or twirler.
27. Hanukkah, Jewish Teetotum.
28. German Teetotum.
29. Korean Teetotum.
30. Reverse motion top. U. S. A.
31. Supported in starting top with bracket  
in place.



## ILLUSTRATIONS

32. Two brackets or handles for supported in starting top.
  33. German peg top, 19th century.
  34. German peg top, wooden stalk.
  35. 18th century German peg top, wooden top steel peg.
  36. Examples of classical scenes on ceramic yo-yos.
  37. Plunger type, helical axis, musical spring top.
  38. Selection of plastic 20th century tops.
  39. Print of primitive tribe playing with tops
  40. Examples of early whip tops and batons.
  41. Victorian print.
  42. Greek vase, illustrating whipping top.
  43. Japanese print.
-







## INTRODUCTION

Rocking horse, teddy bear, spinning top. These toys we remember from our childhood. They have lasted, have been remembered and are mentioned and illustrated over and over again in books. They are a part of growing up, and are called traditional toys.

These toys were very interesting to research. They can tell so much about the time and country they were made in. Their design and materials were influenced by society, industry, politics and the environment. In future chapters the origins and the development of toys through the ages and the reason for their popularity will be covered.

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## ROCKING HORSES

Of all the animals taken as a model for toys, the horse is the most popular. Throughout the world and down through the centuries it reigns supreme in the hearts of many children. Between the clay horses of the ancients and the sophisticated horses of today come many varieties: little clay horses, pull-a-long horses, hobby horses, ride-on-horses, velocipedes and rocking horses, the latter probably being the largest toy in the nursery.

A beautiful little bronze horse, still intact, was discovered during excavations in the broad valley where the Olympic Games were held from 776 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Maybe it was a toy dropped by a child, or it could have been a talisman for one of the athletes. The Egyptians, in 500 B.C., made wooden horses about 8½ inches high on strong wheels, the axle passing through the solid legs of the horse. In 400 B.C. the Greeks made terracotta horsemen about the same size. The early horses may be dated by the harnesses which were sometimes indicated with paint. Real horses had saddles made of leather in 304 A.D., but stirrups were not in use until 400 A.D. and then rarely in England. Possibly the first hollow wooden toy horses were those sold to travellers in the city of Troy in 425 A.D. By the year 700 A.D. horses were shod only in time of frost,<sup>2</sup>



and later William the Conqueror was said to have introduced the shoeing of horses into England. Saddles were more common and in the year 886 A.D. horses began to wear collars. Stirrups were not in general use in England until after 1100.

Small toy horses about  $5\frac{3}{4}$  inches high appeared in the 13th century in Germany. They were made of clay, with a figure of a knight seated in a saddle on the horses<sup>3</sup> back. A French 13th century toy shows a knight on horseback, one of the earliest tin toys in existence and only  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches high. Reins, collar and saddle were indicated and also stirrups for the knight. Horses were made at Sieburg in the 15th century, sometimes with the use of mould - many being complete with rider.

By 1520 there were bronze knights made in Germany, riding on horses which were fixed to stands, with four wheels. The toys were small, being about 5 inches high. These were probably playthings for the sons of Lords, for it was considered necessary for the nobility to be familiar with horses. The little models show various horse trappings and details of the knight's armour.

Firstly came large wooden horses on wheels, at the end<sup>4</sup> of the 16th century, which were big enough for a child



to sit on. These were more popular with younger children, who could push themselves along, while sitting. They were used to strengthen little legs as an aid to walking. Hobby horses were for older children who could career around indoors and out, waving a whip at the same time. "The honourablest and most commendable games that ye can use are games on horseback, for it becometh a prince best of any man to be a fair and good horseman." In 1603 with these words, King James urged his son to play, in addition, to practise running jumping, wrestling, fencing and dancing.

From 1516, woodcuts and surviving models illustrate the high standard of construction achieved in this sphere, at a time when dolls were still being made with minimal realism. As nursery rhymes recall, the first rocking horse was probably an obliging adult's knee, upon which a child could jog up and down. What ultimately became training for grown-up duties, started as imitative play and children copied their elders who worked and rode horses as an essential part of daily life.

"The possession of a splendid horse was a matter of pride to men of all classes from the beginning of civilisation." This was why the horse was so popular especially among the royalty. The rocking horse is



the largest toy in the nursery. It trained children in the techniques of riding for adult life and gave them wholesome exercise. Some of the rocking horses were 5 feet off the ground and would prepare a child for such heights when he eventually would have a horse of his own.

There are three main derivatives of the rocking horse:- the hobby horse, the pull-a-long horse and the velocipedes.

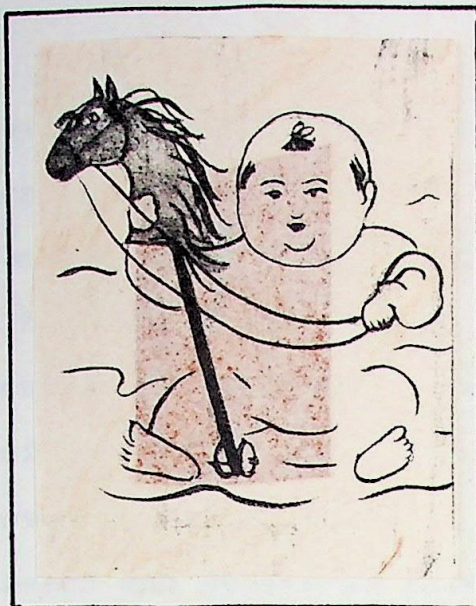


## ROCKING HORSES

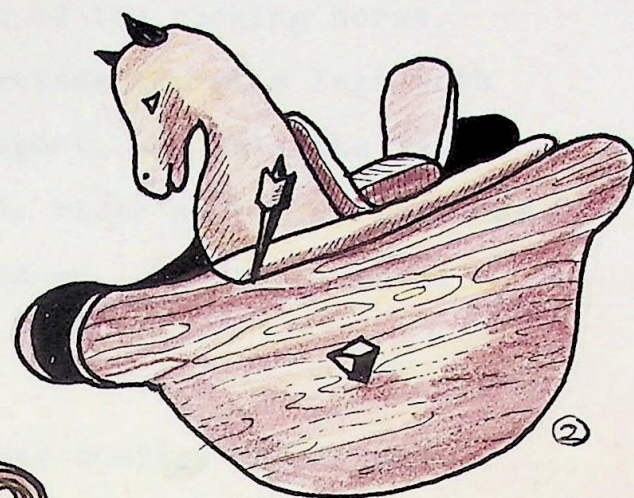
The earliest example of the rocking horse now in existence, was given to Charles I as a boy in 1628. This is a very fine example, as rocking horses were only made privately for the royalty and the very rich at the time. This example is very solidly built, yet very primitive in design. The body consisted of two almost semi-circular flat pieces of timber placed side by side, with two thick pieces curved away, giving a suggestion of outstreeched legs, with a block of wood set between the straight edges, to form a seat. In front of this was set the head and shoulders, a flat piece of timber with beautifully carved detail and a carved tail at the back. Two blocks of timber, one on either side, were set as footrests, also a wooden holster.

Further developments up to the 17th century consisted of a seat covered with leather. Mostly the shoulder *was* 2. and head were carved in some detail, but the legs and lower body were painted on flat sides. This solved the problem of making realistic slim legs to support the horse and rider. This style is likened to a rocking boat. The semi-circular pieces gradually assumed a different appearance. The curves appeared lower down on the body of the horse and *was* 3.

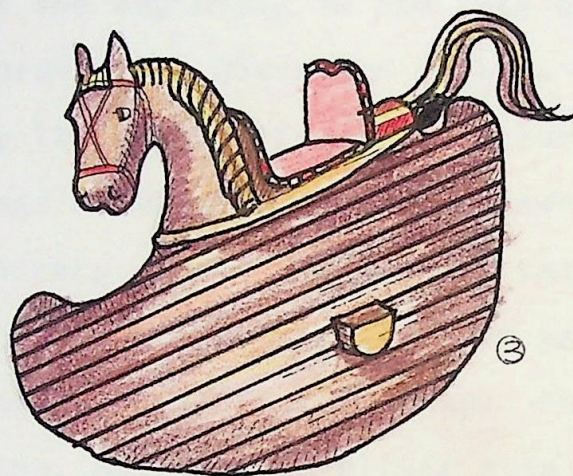




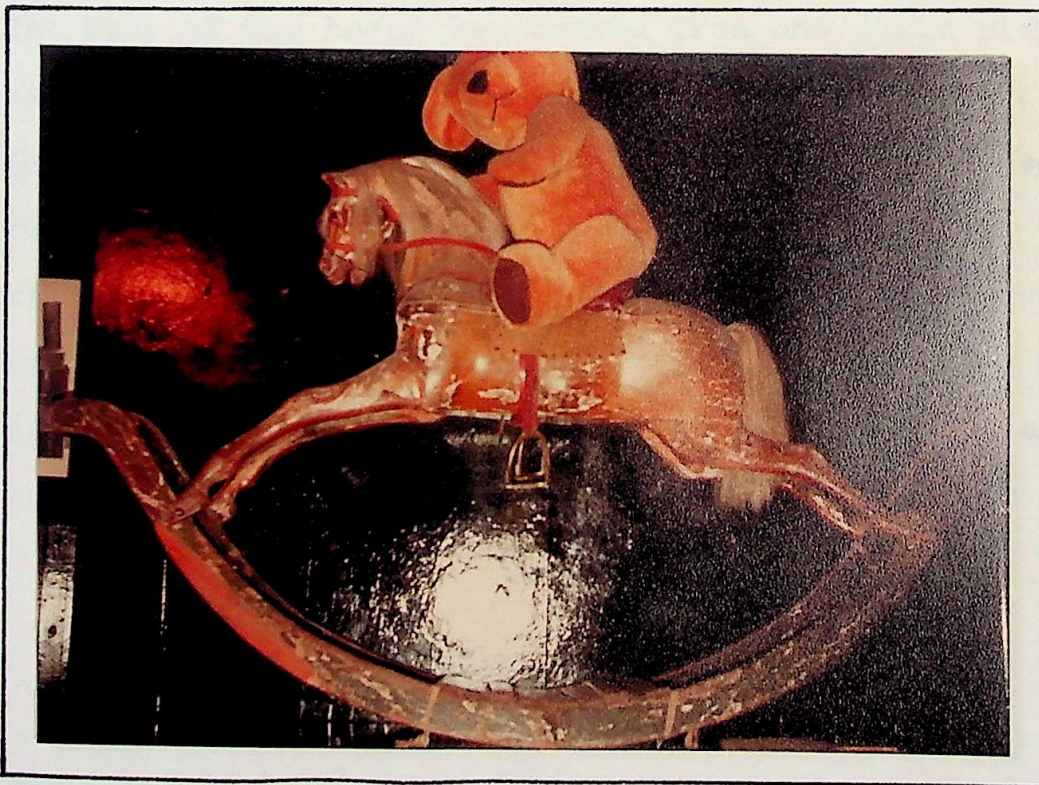
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③



④



eventually a gap between the legs was cut away - the carved horse was almost complete. This was a big breakthrough in the design of the rocking horse. The problem was to make necessarily slim legs with sufficient strength to support, not only the weight of the horse's body, but the rider as well. This was overcome by Lines Bros. London, who made legs of beech and bodies of pine.<sup>7</sup>

At the beginning of the 18th century these carved horses were placed on rockers made of thick timber in the centre, tapering to curved ends with the horses' legs outstretched and attached to the outside of the rockers at the hooves. It wasn't until 1785 that William Long (Cabinet maker and carver) arrived in the U. S. A. from England. He supplied, for the first time, stirrups on either side of a leather saddle with leather reins and a real horsehair mane and tail.<sup>8</sup> The body of the horse was carved from one solid piece of wood, rather than two flat sections of timber. The eyes of the horse were painted or of glass. Heavy rockers were then succeeded by 2 foot long curved strips fixed together with a platform in the centre and a turned up piece at either end. The two long curved pieces getting closer together at the ends and looking less like a rocking chair. In 1800 it was



found necessary to have the rockers protruding far beyond the horses' legs, for safety, as rocking horses were often 5 feet off the ground and were prone to toppling over due to over zealous passengers. .

Early in the 19th century, Sonneberg in France flour-<sup>9</sup> ished by making papier mâché and skin covered rocking horses. The papier mâché was put in a mould, later baked and then the two halves were glued together. They were then either painted or given a surface by powdered rags dusted on to a glued surface. This technique was later brought to a halt because the dust caused respiratory disease. Papier mâché rocking horses in the long term proved unsuitable for large horses. They crumbled when exposed to damp and were later mainly used for small toys.

At this time horses were painted with a dappling effect which consisted of uneven strokes of black paint on white background. This was later developed in 1830 when some horses had a fly-net fitted over their backs, wire was later translated into brush strokes and called "wire netting stipple". Later in 1964 I. C. I. were to produce a special paint with<sup>10</sup> which one application could paint a rocking horse, spots and all.



In 1852 horses were mounted on iron rockers, rather than the usual timber ones and their bodies were covered with hide. Since they were so popular, people attempted to make them more life like, more attractive to look at, more comfortable and lighter. ILLUS 4. Numerous patents were then taken out on the rocking horse. For example George Burrow (England) and William Kennedy (U. S. A. ) who patented a rocking horse with a wire frame stand. This design is still used today, except with modern technology we find tubular steel lighter and more durable. In 1840 wooden handles were fitted into the arch of the horse's neck.

The Crandalls (London) a very wellknown family business, were influenced by the German designs and designed themselves a rocking horse, originally covered with skin from still-born calves and foals. Later he returned to painted carved wood as this was found to be more economical. This rocking horse was called the "Shoo fly": it moved up and down on springs, an oscillating, leaping, spring type version which was popular among the royalty. They also designed a double rocking horse, with a wide seat and various low trotting devices, which was developed by William Kennedy in 1861, with metallic springs. 12



Originally, the Germans were the main producers of rocking horses, but in the 1860's England sprang up and took a firm hold of the market. The Germans could not be outclassed on their manufacture of tin tops, France could not be compared to with their artistic production of dolls and England's craftsmanship was very high as the rocking horses were made by hand by estate carpenters. From 1861 - 1865 production dropped rapidly because of the Civil War, but later galloped ahead with new ideas, like "Teddy's Horse," which was made to capitalize on the popularity of Theodore Roosevelt, the leader of the "Rough Riders" <sup>13</sup> in the Civil War. In 1869, M. Klein, a German, designed a child's horse stamped in metal (The Cricket) which became quite popular after 1880, when metal was very cheap because of the Industrial Revolution. The "Cricket" was originally covered with hide, but later the German returned to painted wood, which was cheaper and much stronger. In 1877 production grew - eleven different rocking horses were patented. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, communications aided distribution of wares abroad.

At the end of the 19th century rockers were replaced by a frame with a system of rollers and pulleys - (Spring Horse). The horse, usually dappled grey, had



an arched neck, flashing glass eyes, mane and tale of real horsehair and legs stretched out at a jump.

"Spring" horses encouraged children to take exercise.

In 1880 W. A. Marque (U. S. A.) patented a rocking horse on which a stand replaced the rockers. The horse would swing to and fro by means of metal rods affixed to parallel bars either side of the horse and metallic springs were attached to give it an up and down motion as well. These stands continue into the 20th century. In America these "Swing-bar Horses" were covered with hide or deerskin, tail and mane of real horse hair. The cheaper models were painted bright colours, their tail and mane of cowhair. 14

Walter Lines the famous English toymaker likened his rocking horse to fairground horses; a charging steed, they were dappled grey, open jaw shooting rather frightening teeth, he had real horsehair mane and a rather bushy tail, leather reins, american style saddle and stirrups and the whole horse was mounted on rockers.

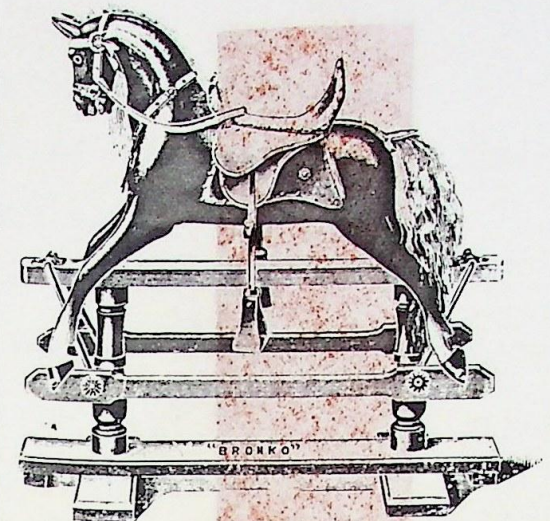
By 1890 rocking horses were less heavy than earlier models, they had a hollowed out body and sometimes pennies and other treasures were posted inside them. 15

Dobbin was the most popular name for a rocking horse in these Victorian times. Especially popular were 16





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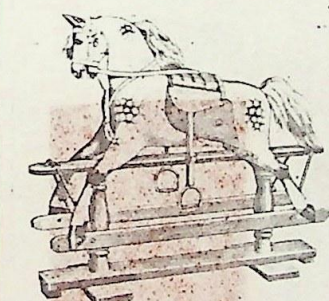


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Len. of stand, 36½ in. 44 in. 62 in. 67½ in.

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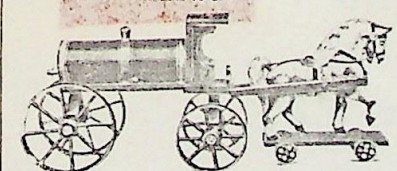
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the models that had a detachable platform, making them a dual purpose rocker and a pull-a-long toy. In 1913 "Gamages" a famous department store in London, displayed their own design - "Bronco the Safety Horse".<sup>16</sup> This rocking horse was one of the basic safety rocker type and was fitted with a sharply upswept cowboy saddle, to keep the child safely in position. In the same year the "Gee Swing" arrived. The horse is suspended on adjustable hemp ropes, threaded through heavy metal lugs attached to the wooden body of the horse. "The latest novelty for nursery and gymnasium, with adjustable hemp ropes", the object of the exercise was that the child had free movement in any direction. In 1934 Hamleys of London supplied Dobbin, the rocking horse with an extra strong detachable saddle. In 1948 "Mobo Broncho" was born. This was a great novelty and can be likened to the "Bucking Bronco" now used for the entertainment of adults in America. The weight of the child on the saddle causes the legs of the horse to contract, pressure on the stirrups shoots them forward, thus causing the horse to canter. By the 1950's, there was plenty of competition in the rocking horse industry. No new styles were being invented, so designers attempted to outwit each other by supplying extras with the horses, for example; adjustable padded saddle with removable attachments

ILLUS 6.



for riding side-saddle, cavalry harness, martingale saddle cloth with brush and comb, military bridle, shoe cases, valise, holsters, adjustable stirrups, plaited tail for horse. In 1963 Heals of London made the cheaper box shaped bodies which were easier to mass produce. Other parts of the rocking horse remained traditional but the rocking horses began to lose their proud disdainful look and began to be influenced by the Walt Disney style.

In the last ten years no dramatic changes have taken place with the design of the rocking horse. The most popular and reliable producing countries are England and Canada - cheaper models being available from Korea, Taiwan and China. Nearly all rocking horses are now made of fibreglass because of its durability, permanent colour, its light weight and immense strength. "Super Jouets" of Paris, make 17 beautiful dual rocking horses and pull-a-long, by the use of rollers with swing arm action that can be folded up underneath the horse's body, to reveal carved rockers. This model can carry up to 26 stone weight of passengers travelling on the pull-a-long stand or on the rocking horse. Not many traditional rocker type rocking horses are made today except for private craft workers, who make them especially to

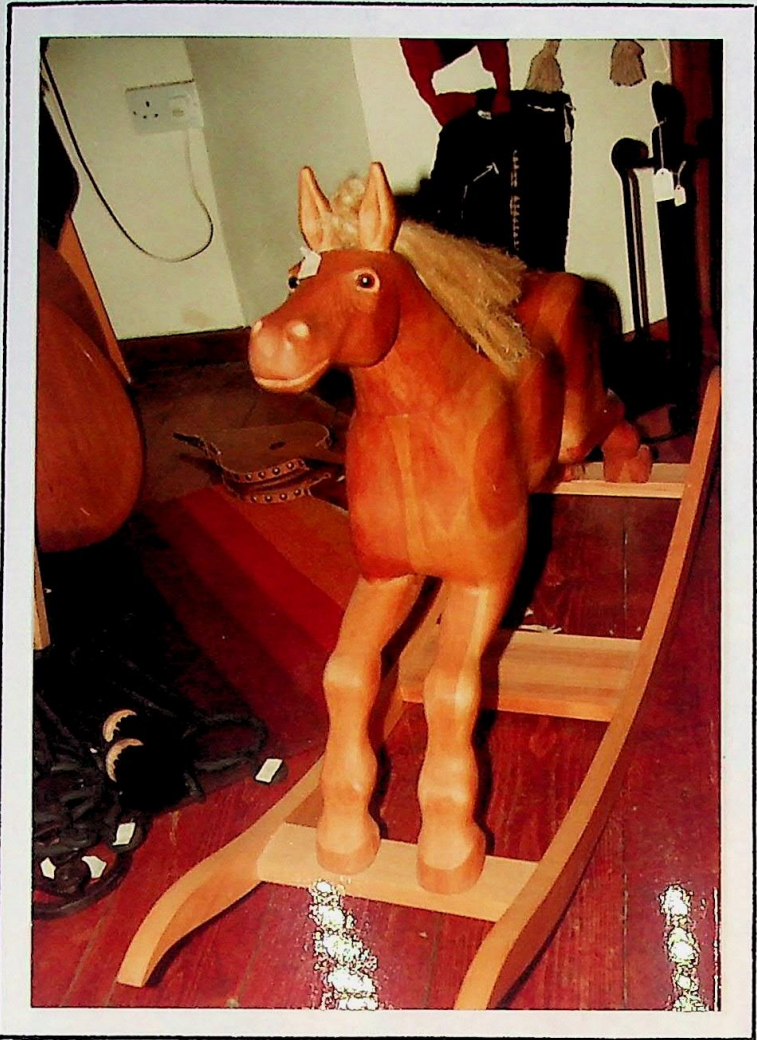


to order in beautiful timbers. A lot of people are taking advantage of these craft workers and want original traditional designs for decoration of their homes. Nowadays, rocking horses are not bought for the same reasons as in earlier centuries. Rocking horses are more animated in design, not very high off the ground, more safety conscious and are mainly used only for pleasure. There are tubular steel frame cuddly soft toys, funfur type rocking horse with little furry backrest for toddlers, which are used to strengthen little legs for walking. ILLUS. 9, 10

For older children, swing-bar horses are popular. Pegasus and Haddons of England are the most reliable and popular brands. Haddons specialize exclusively for rocking horses. They have fibreglass models beautifully hand-built - Georgian bow rockers for traditional tastes - swing-bar horses with stirrups or foot rests. They all have small dual bow rocking horse and pull-a-long horses with detachable platform for use as a pull-a-long or rocking horse, with safety seat for those unable to support themselves. Haddons also supply a specially equipped Jeenay safety seat for disabled children, leather extras, naturally coloured horsehair, tail and mane. Ragamuffin toys in 1977, designed a moulded glass fibre bucking horse ILLUS. 11, 12, 13

ILLUS. 5, 7





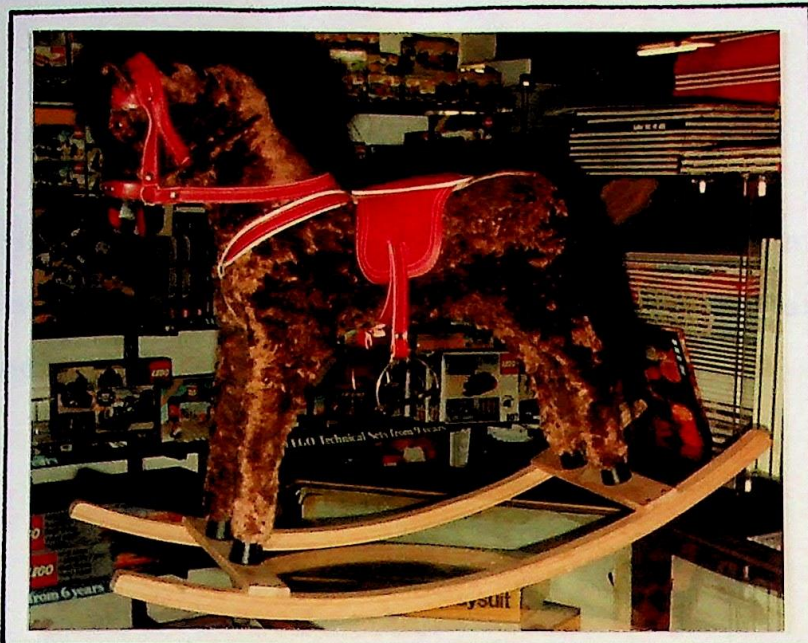
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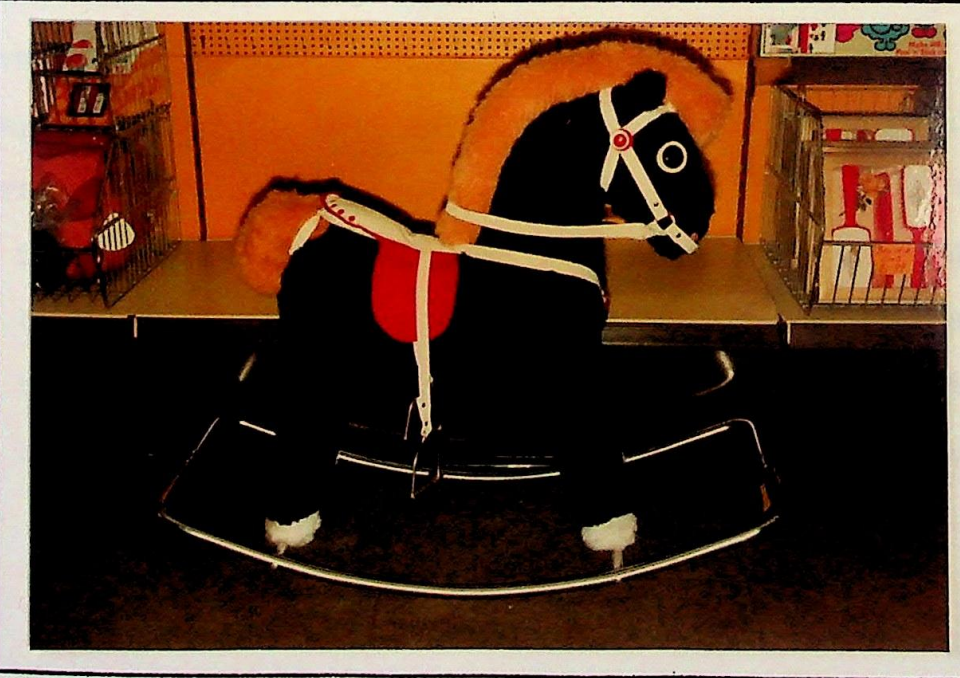
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13





with two front legs high in the air, with hind legs firmly attached to springs - a very frightening experience for children.

#### HOBBY HORSES

Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,  
To see a fine lady upon a white horse;  
Rings on her fingers and bells on her toes:  
She shall have music wherever she goes.

It is well known that the children of Socrates<sup>1a</sup> had a hobby horse. It was used to get children to exercise more and grow strong and clear of mind. 14th century manuscripts show illustrations of boys riding on sticks, also in Nuremberg, Germany, they have woodcuts of boys with these toys, in which the horse's head is attached to a stick and held up by reins. Hobby horses were originally introduced into England by the Normans when they conquered in the 11th century. They left behind them these warlike toys. The hobby horse consisted of a long stick with a slit cut out of it and a horse's head fixed on top which was held up by two reins. The children would grasp the reins or handle and imitate a galloping movement with whip in hand. This was originally a training for grown up



duties. However crude the hobby horse, it was a favourite toy of the Middle Ages. They were sold at markets and fairs, especially at St. Bartholamew's fair in London every 24th August.<sup>20</sup> Not many hobby horses have survived to this day as they were very fragile in construction. By 1821, hobby horses had a real mane, carved head and a pretty top-knot of wire pennons and bells. Later one wheel was attached to the end of the hobby horse and eventually two wheels were used, also leather reins were used rather than painted and a crossbar was sometimes attached. The head of the hobby horse was usually painted, but in the more expensive models, it was covered with hide. The Chinese used hobby horses during the Ming Dynasty. "A Chinese Childhood" 1909 Chiang Yee says of hobby horses:

"In China children rode on bamboo horses made of bamboo sticks of about 3 cms diameter and 2 or 3 metres long. I would put the stick between my legs, holding the uppermost part of it with my right hand as if yielding a whip and I made a sound to urge my steed forward. Our elders brought paper heads for us to fasten on our bamboo sticks, but my father asked a carpenter to make ten wooden ones instead."

Gradually hobby horses went out of fashion - rocking



horses were much more exciting. However, recent modern examples have soft heads and woolen mane, while others have the traditional painted wooden heads.

#### VELOCIPEDES

In the early 19th century mechanical horses called "Velocimanes" (driven by hand) were designed - the counterpart, driven by feet was called "Velocipedes". Early examples of these are characterised by their slim timber bodies and narrow heads. The French inventor M. Gourdout in 1822, fixed a timber horse <sup>22</sup> in three wheels. The horse was of carved timber and was powered by a chain wheel drive on the back wheels, and worked by handles positioned each side of the horse's head. Later, model tricycles with only horse's head and tail attached were pedalled along with the feet. These were very popular on the European and American markets. An advertisement in 1850, in the Philadelphia Public Ledger, offered "Velocipedes - a few superior ones suitable for using<sup>23</sup> in the house". Wheels of earlier examples were of wood with a metal tread. In 1860, wooden spokes,<sup>24</sup> were superceded by metal spokes. Velocipedes were particularly popular with the Royalty, the Prince Imperial had one in 1865. In 1858 Richard Brooman,<sup>25</sup>

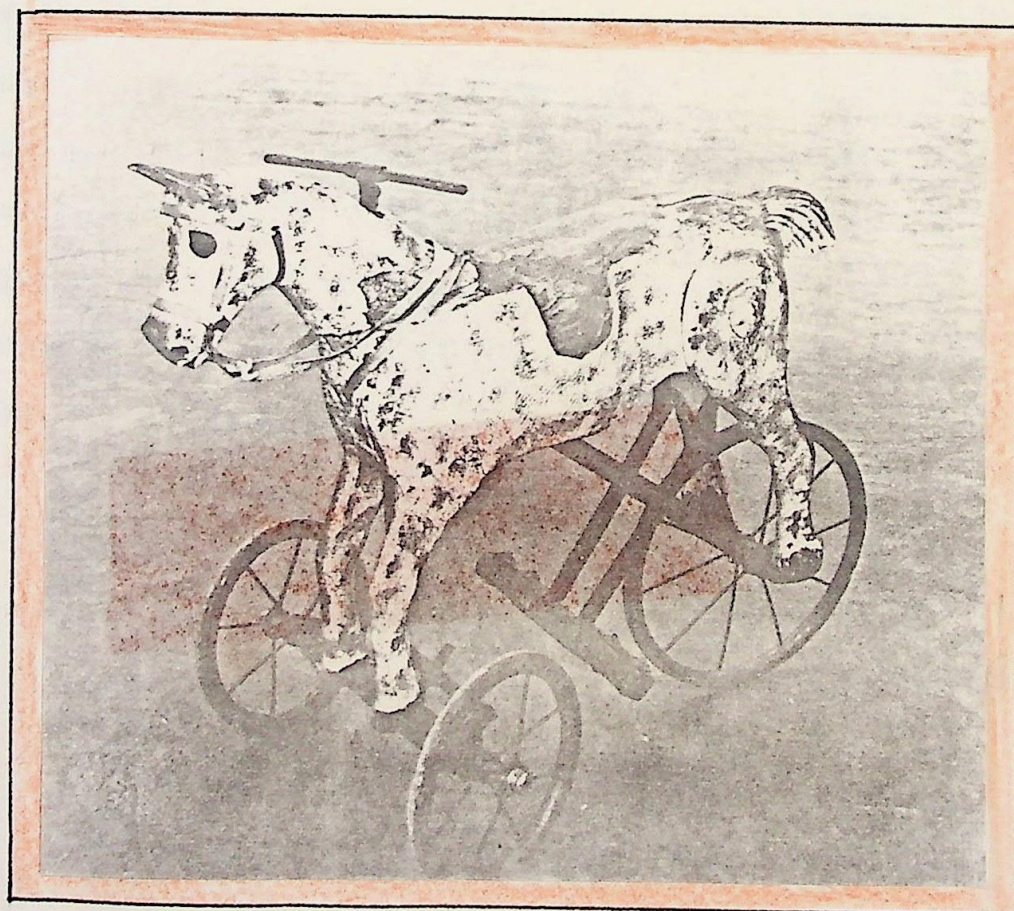
ILLUS. 14.

ILLUS. 15.





14



15



an Englishman, designed a hobby horse on a very complicated frame with four wheels. Various methods of propulsion were carried out, for example in the U. S. A. in 1860, a horse tricycle had three iron rimmed wheels. The horse had a timber body and metal head and it was chain driven. Some tricycles had two wheels in the front and one in the back and were propelled by a pressure flap motion. In 1876 the famous family business, the Crandalls, designed a "Cantering Tricycle" that had springs attaching the horse to the tricycle and moved up and down. Ayres of England, had a horse tricycle with beautifully decorated iron panels fixing the horse to the axle of the back wheels. Later, in the early 1900's rubber tyred wheels were developed. Times have changed - Velocipedes have gone off the market and even three wheeled bikes have very nearly gone. Bicycles are now used outdoors, while Velocipedes were only for rich families, to be used in large spacious nurseries.



## TEDDY BEAR

There is great dispute as to who originally invented the Teddy Bear. He is so popular that three countries have laid claim to him; Germany, England and America.

In Germany, Margaret Steif, confined to a wheelchair<sup>26</sup> made small soft animals for young children. She was an accomplished seamstress and by 1880 she had made elephants, monkeys, horses, pigs, donkeys, camels all out of remnants. In 1903 she made a small bear with the help of her brother who sketched animals in the Stuttgart Zoo. ILLUS 16.

In England, the toy was so called after a visit of<sup>27</sup> King Edward VII, the Prince of Wales, to London Zoo, when he took a fancy to a Koala Bear.

But far better known is the American tale of Pres-<sup>28</sup>ident Theodore Roosevelt, while out on a hunting expedition near the Mississippi in November 1902. ILLUS 17. A small bear cut across his track and Roosevelt refused to shoot it. Later a political cartoon was published in an American newspaper by the famous Berryman (cartoonist) called "Drawing the line at Mississippi" showing Teddy Roosevelt refusing to shoot the little bear. The little bear was destined to become a kind of symbolical signature to many famous Berryman political cartoons, and to provide the President with an endearing and valuable tag.





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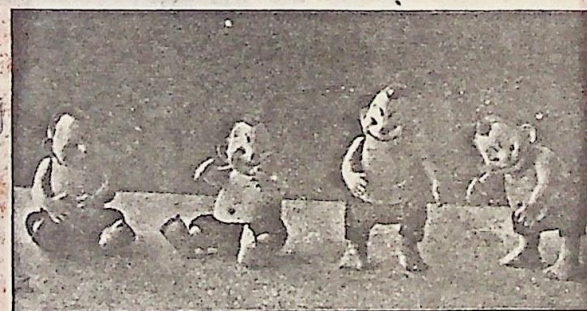
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STIEFF'S  
DOLLS.



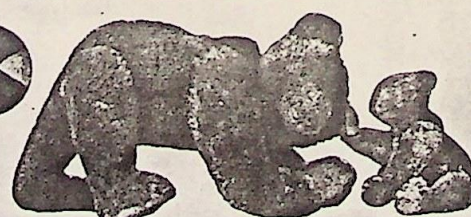
STIEFF'S  
DOLLS.



Steiff's Latest Novelty, Krackjack, to retail at 3/6

### IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The "Button in Ear" is Steiff's registered and patented Trade Mark. Anybody offering animals of any other make with a button or label in the ear, is liable to prosecution.



STIEFF'S TEDDY BEARS ALWAYS IN STOCK IN LONDON.







Morris Michton, the proprietor of a small store in Brooklyn sold handmade toys. The moment he saw the drawing, he had a brilliant idea. He cut out the shape of a brown plush bear and stuffed it and put it in his shop window. He called it "Teddy's Bear" and it sold immediately with a brisk demand for copies. Later he wrote to the President to ask him permission to use his name. This was granted and a great new industry was born. Michton developed his production <sup>illus 18.</sup> of "Teddy's bear" and by 1903<sub>29</sub> he was manufacturing them by the hundreds, and had established himself as the "Ideal Novelty & Toy Company". In 1907 the company became a corporation and today it is one of the biggest toy manufacturers in America. Because it was impossible to patent a trade name in 1903, it was <sub>30</sub> not long before others were copying Michtons success and soon there were at least twenty-four other teddy bear manufacturers in America. One based in Chicago was even called "the Theodore Bear Company".

In the early years of the teddy bear industry, they were made of plush, which is the clip off angora goats. The four paws were backed with felt and the nose was black leather or worked in wool. Arms and legs were jointed and worked like a doll, not on all fours. Their noses were longer than nowadays and their expression more fierce. These early teddy bears were brown



in colour, with a hump between the two shoulders at the back. They were much taller and slimmer in shape.

The teddy bear caught on very fast, as he appealed to boys as well as girls. Before this boys only had gollywogs<sup>31</sup> to play with. The Steif Company in Germany originally were the biggest producers with their bear called "Friend Petz". These were marked by the firm's button clamped in the ear. 12,000 bears out of 974,000 were exported by 1907. Some 400 factory hands and 1,800 women worked in their homes, to keep pace with orders.<sup>32</sup> But England soon followed to produce a much plumper body than the German version and more shaping was given to the limbs - he was altogether a happier looking fellow. The teddy bears were filled with kapok and the head with a type of wood wool. Some bears were fitted with growlers in 1908 and when the bear was turned over on his tummy, it let out a very realistic animal like growl. In the same way a squeaker apparatus makes a doll cry. Growlers were expensive, so the cheaper bears were supplied with a press squeaker which operated when pressed in the tummy.

In 1906 teddys began to wear clothes and later came a "Tumbling Bear" - the arms were turned around to wind up a simple motor, and this started the movement of the teddy bear. In 1907 "Electric Bright Eye" was<sup>33</sup>



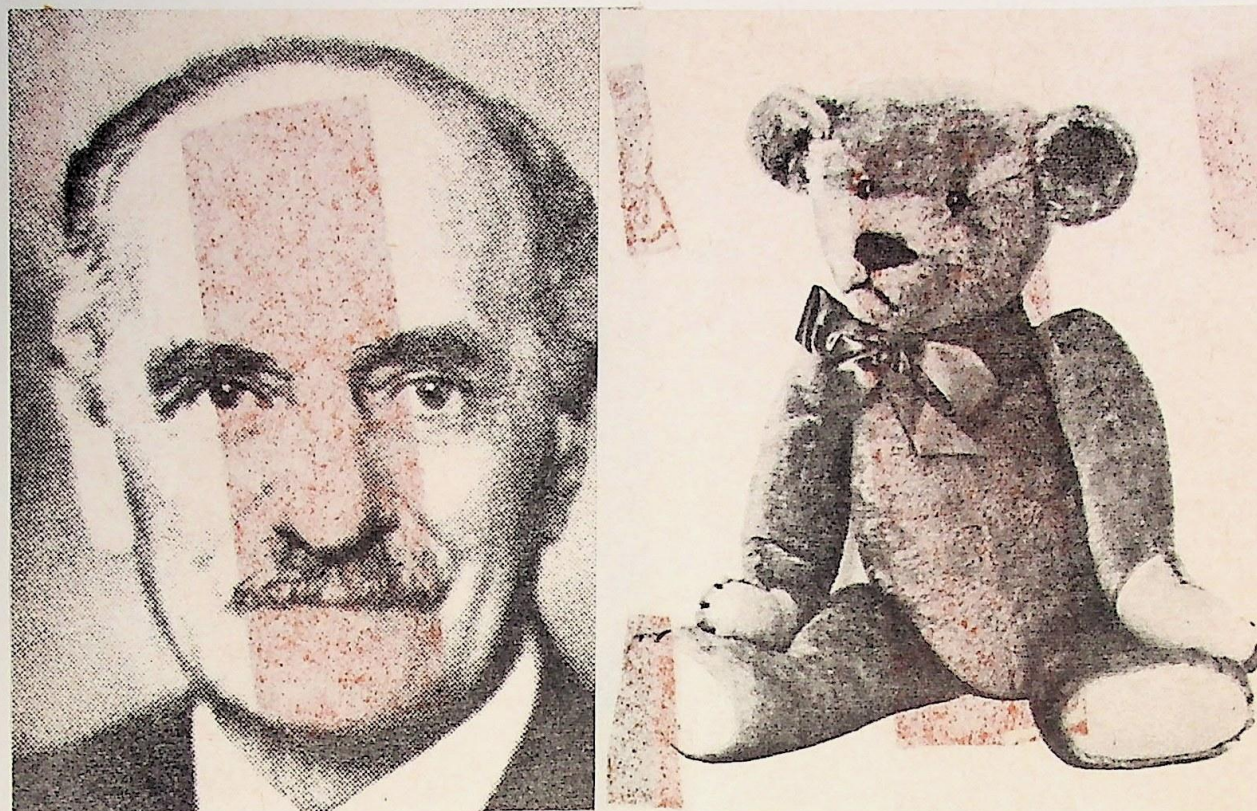
invented - the child shakes the teddy bear's paw and the eyes light up. Other mechanical teddys had a metal tail, and when his tail was wagged, his head turned. Printed cotton flannelette bears which could be cut out and assembled at home, were made as a cheap alternative by Samuel Finsberg & Company.<sup>34</sup> These were marketed in 1909, but furry plush was always more popular, because the warmth of the furry texture was very attractive.

These were the most successful years of the teddy bear - they were called the "Bärenjahre" (the bear<sup>35</sup> years). The teddy bear craze soared ahead with pails teasetts, 36 inch teddy bear with car, teddy carts and cage, hammocks, squeeze balls, paper dolls, targets, party games, pennybanks, scarf pins, water pistols, candy boxes, card games, even teddy bear biscuits. These biscuits by Peak Freans were found to be very popular. Elegant young women paraded on the sea shore, carried little teddy bear mascots. Motorists and cyclists fixed them to their machines. Teddy bears appeared as ornaments and were proudly put on display at fashionable parties.

Because of the interest held by young ladies in teddy bears - Decamps of Paris decided to put Barbara, a<sup>36</sup>



18



19





rival female bear on the market, but unfortunately she was not popular and teddy still reigns. This marked a decline in dolls and doll makers retaliated with a new teddy bear. He had a regular plush body and a china doll face inserted in the head, but these did not catch on either.

The Germans were still using the popular mohair type furry plush for their teddy bears, but they found this very expensive. They changed to Yorkshire cloth for a while, but sales dropped so they returned to the use of furry plush. Eyes developed from stitched to buttons and on to glass eyes.

England, proud of their exclusive use of hygienic materials in 1920, had the largest bear at this time - 28 inches high. He could be obtained in "Long Beaver-brown" or more popular "Best Long Golden Fur". These teddy bears could be purchased in six qualities and thirteen different sizes.

Between 1925 - 1928 Genröder Süssenguth produced a <sup>37</sup> completely unique bear called "Peter the Bear". He illus. 19. had a very realistic face, glass eyes that rolled from side to side and a mouth that opened to reveal a moving tongue and two rows of sharp curved wooden teeth. He was also fitted with a growler which was particularly



loud and realistic. It is sad, in fact, that these cleverly made but ferocious bears obviously frightened their young owners and put adults off buying them, so that few have survived. The problem was that they had not got what is called - 'cuddle power' - the bears looked far too independent.

In the 1930's came Funfur - teddys could be bought in many different colours. Velvet padded paws were added and sometimes teddy was stuffed with straw or wood shavings, rather than kapok. Musical teddys arrived with, for the first time, open mouths, also bright glass eyes, sewn noses and swivel heads.

The year 1920 was marked by the development of the first character bear. Rupert the Bear, was followed by Sooty the hand puppet and in 1948, Winnie the Pooh was designed, and later Paddington Bear. These bears appealed to all ages and are collected the world over. T-shirts, comics, puppets, TV programmes, books, songs, records, clothing, wallpaper and nightdress cases are just some of the things one can get depicting these bears. Winnie the Pooh<sup>39</sup> is the wealthiest bear, he alone has 200 products on sale and earns £5 million per annum on books.

22



"Underneath the Dining Chair,  
Pray take care.  
Don't go there,  
Or you'll get an awful scare".

These bears had their own individual characters, children and adults could identify with them. They wore their own special clothes, went on fantastic adventures - they were and still are enjoyed by all.

The teddy bear has not changed dramatically since the beginning of the century, except for the rapid decline of the jointed teddy bear. Teddys are now made in all materials - plush/wollen fabrics, rubber, china, plastic and metal.

Materials have now improved since the introduction of I. I. R. S. rules and regulations regarding toys, especially because of the major disaster in Poland in 1973.<sup>40</sup> Teddys were stuffed with a mix of powdered resin and wood shavings. This was poisonous to children. The toxic chemical caused formal dehydration. Now, teddys are made of flameproof hair and eyes are tested by attaching a 3lb weight to each eye for a period of time to test their permanency. So now eyes are



clamped in position or are sewn with wool.

Teddy bears are suitable for all age groups, 40% of teddy bears are bought by adults for adults. Manufacturers have come to realise this and have produced very highly finished bears with lifelike specially printed hair, and pure leather extras. Fur is exclusively treated and exclusively printed. Some manufacturers have an arrangement that a percentage of each soft toy sold is donated to the Wild Life Fund.<sup>41</sup>

For the younger age groups, Timco of Hong Kong, in 1980 designed "Sleepy Bear". A flame retardent plush material bear. A sound box is inserted in the bear with a tape of the mother's heartbeat (Silicon Chip). This was medically tested and these pre-birth sounds in figures, showed that 90% babies stopped crying and 85% babies were asleep within 60 seconds.<sup>42</sup>

In England now, for young children, there are many new and redesigned teddys on the market. All teddy bear manufacturers are very safety conscious with fillings made of safe, shredded clippings, shredded



20



21



22





<sup>43</sup>  
cellulose fibres and even chopped nut shells. All this information, by law, must be marked on the toy. Teddy bears can be purchased in any size, any colour and made from a variety of materials from soft vel-lux fluff to funfur. Teddy bears can be now bought with detachable clothes and accessories, and some are even scented. Musical animals are still being manufactured, but are on the decline because of their short life. Ajena, Knickerbocker and Amtoy appear ILLUS. 21 to be the most popular contestants for these specialised teddy bears.

The most popular teddy of all is still the golden jointed teddy bear. He is now over double the price of the ordinary stitched teddy and the biggest manufacturer of teddys is "Super Jouets" of Paris.

A popular song exclusive to teddy bears arrived in 1932 - "The Teddy Bear's Picnic", and it is still high in popularity.

Teddys go everywhere and do everything. There is not one corner of the globe that they have not penetrated, if not with children then with adults. They have gone into battle on guns, tanks and in haversacks.



They have saved lives by intercepting bullets, flown all over the world in aeroplanes, been drowned in floods, burned in concentration camps and worshipped as totems. They are used extensively in advertising campaigns, collected by filmstars, ballerinas, actresses, used as talisman and mascot. Endless songs and verses have been written about them. The teddy bear is really part of our daily lives, and he is looked on with loyalty, dependability and commonsense by all age groups.

In America on October 27th,<sup>44</sup> the anniversary of President Roosevelt's birthday and also in a town called "Bear Town", near Berne, Switzerland is celebrated "Good Bear Day". This town is the Headquarters of the International Humanitarian Association pledged to form local groups called Dens, to raise money to buy teddy bears for sick children and those of any age in need of them.

The "Bear Town" local newspaper announced "The Appeal of the teddy bear is universal. He is an international symbol of friendship and goodwill and a bringer of comfort and affection in times of stress". Doctors say that teddys do have considerable therapeutic



(23)

# Brotherhood of Teddy Bears

## CODE

Teddy Bears never die, they just grow old

1. To forever strive toward the preservation of the dignity of the brotherhood of Teddy Bears.
2. To love, honour and obey the master or mistress regardless of their age, sex or colour, whosoever fortune may result in my custody.
3. To provide through our presence even under threat of suffocation the feeling of safety and security to the young when things go bump in the night.
4. To forever preserve the patience toward exuberant treatment I may be exposed to in my lifetime.
5. To listen with patience to the words of the young and never grow tired of their attempts at conversation.
6. To forever represent a loving link with youth in the eyes and hearts of the not so young.
7. To meet at least once a year with fellow bears in friendly greeting in the cause of cementing the bonds of fellowship among Teddy Bears and their custodians.
8. To continue always in our efforts to maintain the universal appeal and worldwide popularity of the entire Teddy Bear race.

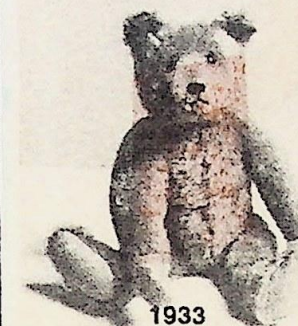
Mark Steele



1914



1926



1933



1953



1966



1977

# Good Bear Day



1977



value not only for children, but also for sick, lonely and elderly adults. In the local "Dens", the male members are known as "Bearos", women as "Bearines", and children as Cubs. Today the association in the U. S. A. has 1,500 members, the U. K. has over 400 members and there are "Dens" also in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Norway and Austria.

"TEDDY BEARS NEVER DIE, THEY JUST GROW OLD".



## SPINNING TOP

Information on the spinning top is scarce. The date and place of their origin is unknown. Our only source of information is that it is mentioned in classical literature and drawings depicting top playing, were<sup>45</sup> widely used in decoration of plates, vases and paintings. Tops were part of a culture and it is the opinion of many that- play- brought the top into existence. It is easy to imagine primitive man amusing himself with a stone or a piece of rock, which were in abundance, thus, twisting and casting developed into recreational participation. It is believed that the top is the oldest toy in existence, as it is not known whether the top was used before the discovery of the wheel, but the top has appeared in many cultures where the<sup>45</sup> wheel was unknown. Early civilization in Messopotamia, Egypt, possessed the top, but although primitive races in the 19th century and 20th century have been found to have used tops, there is no evidence to show that knowledge of tops came from them.

It appears that the spinning top was part of the culture of the people. The design of the top did not develop generally, but particular designs developed within particular regions.



Japanese and Chinese people have developed their tops extensively. The top is very highly rated and special names are given to each design. The Japanese are fascinated by the inertia of the top, the peacefulness as an aid to meditation.

The Greeks and Romans used tops extensively. The Greeks were great athletes and believed in a healthy body and therefore, used the more energetic tops - the whipping top, and the yo-yo. This top playing is illustrated in the Greeks beautiful ceramic vases, plates and ceramic yo-yos.

In medieval England, each region had their own "Parish<sup>47</sup> Top". It is believed that the reason this parish top originated was because of the lack of attendance at church because of the latest top craze. So the parson had a parish top specially made for the recreation of the parishioners - to be used after church service.

In Victorian England, young boys used the whipping top, while little girls played with doll's houses. But this was later changed by the introduction of the "Diavolo". Young ladies and young gentlemen<sup>48</sup> were permitted to participate in this gallant game.



The top was used for divination, fascination with motion, as a navigational aid and a gambling device.

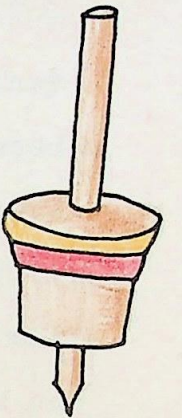
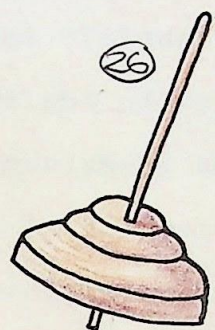
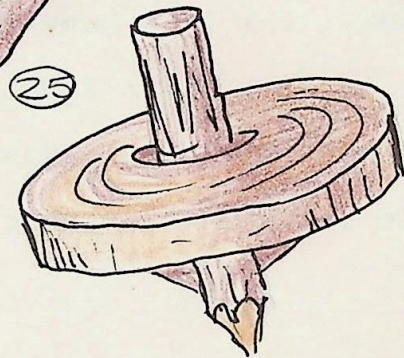
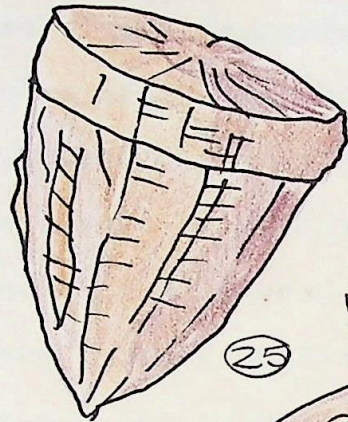
- (a) The Twirler: Started by a twisting action of the fingers or hands upon the axis.
- (b) The Supported Top: Started by cord while the top is held upright.
- (c) The Peg Top: The top is cast and the twisting action of a cord on the body of the top imparts spin.
- (d) The Yo-Yo: Bidirectional motion due to inertia and successive energy output.
- (e) The Spring Top: A downward thrust on the plunger which in turn moves in a spiral path down a threaded cone, imparts rotary motion.
- (f) The Whipping Top: The body of the top is lashed to give continued motion.

#### The Twirler.

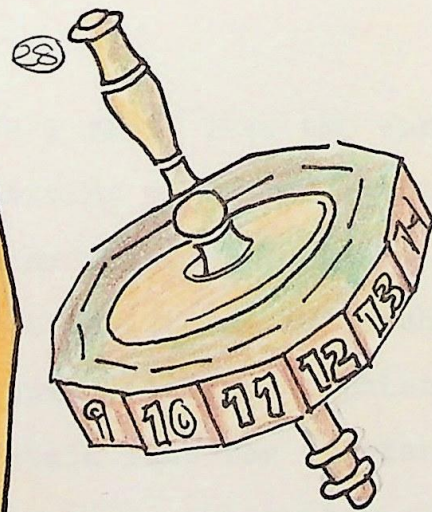
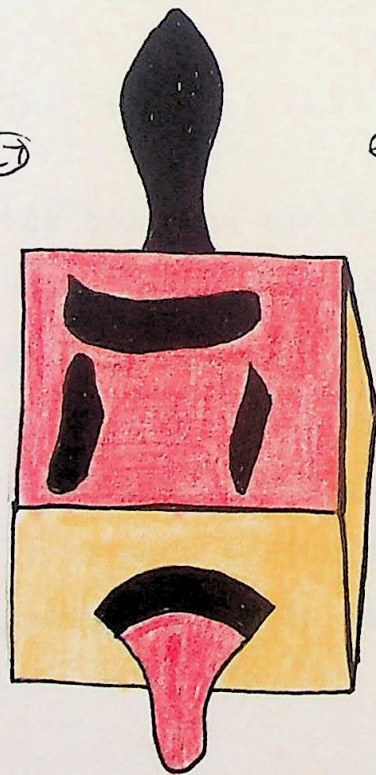
The earliest twirlers were made of a very rough wooden disc, with a wooden stem driven through the centre of the disc. It was very primitive, but could spin for up to 20 seconds. The Eskimos like the Indians used them extensively, but called them spinners. These were made from bone or wood.



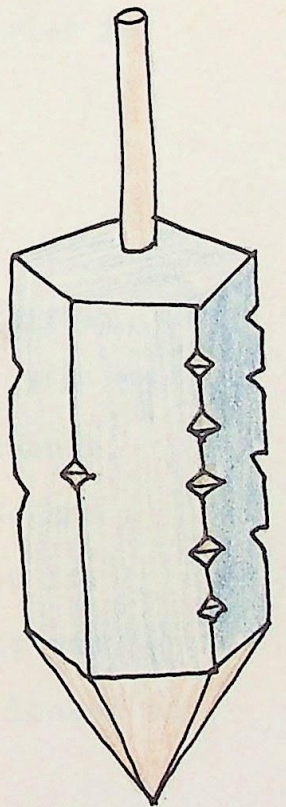
(24)



(29)



(31)





Gradually the twirler changed with the development of<sup>49</sup> piercing tools which enabled the further use of larger harder shelled nuts or discs. Longer shaped stems made the top heavier, faster, steadier and in turn aided accurate symmetry and balance. The now longer stem and smoother top enabled the player to roll the stem between the palms of the hands, for better control. The Japanese introduced the "Tetsudo" they added an iron ring threetimes the weight of the wooden body, therefore this weight in the periphery allowed a great deal of energy to be stored in the rotary top. The metal band worked like a fly-wheel, also the metal peg was rounded instead of pointed. This tetsudo had fivetimes the energy rotation then that of a wooden top. The most popular derivative of the twirler is the "Teetotum.

#### The Teetotum.

The teetotum can be a disc, like the early twirler, a polygonal plate having up to twelve sides or a 50 polyhedron. It was mainly used in games of chance, or sometimes for telling fortunes. Each side has a letter, symbol or number etched or painted on it. It is spun by the stalk like the twirler. It was used extensively in Japan, where it was not looked on

ILLUS. 27.



as a means of serious gambling - for to profit from the play was dishonourable. Teetotums were mainly given as presents at festive times. The design has changed from country to country according to their needs. Quality of materials rather than quality of design has been uppermost with the teetotum, as no skill was necessary in using it. Especially for the short spins in games of chance. illus. 28.

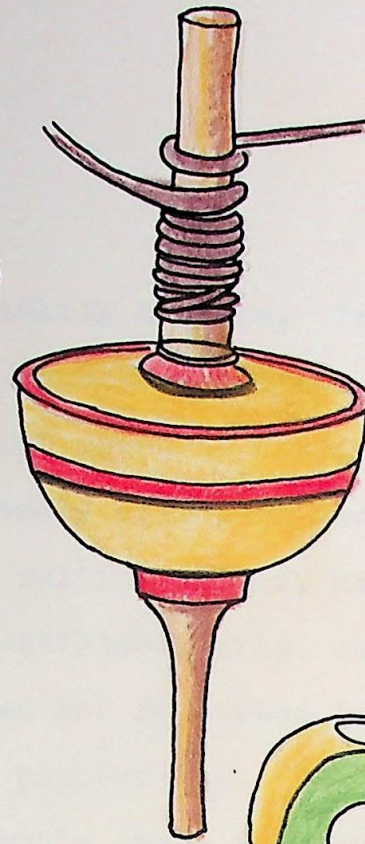
#### The Supported Top.

The fire drill bow led to this advance. The act of turning the stem of the top with a bow string. This was quite successful. The bow string gives a bidirectional rotation if the string is kept taught.

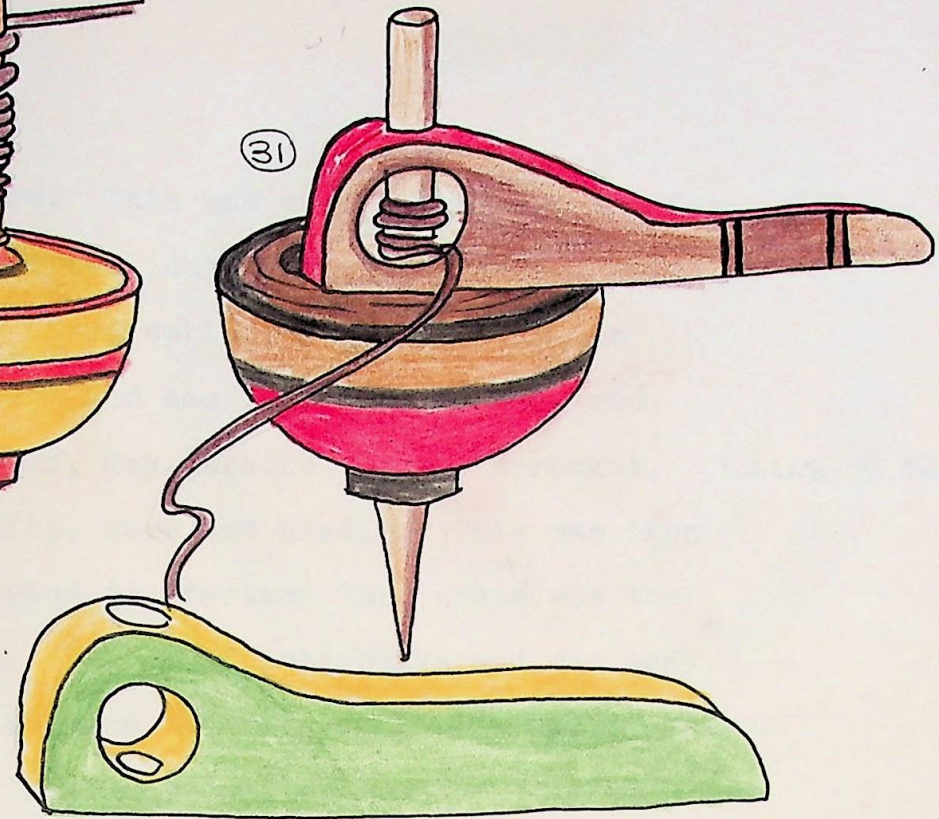
A further development was, a cord wound tightly for several turns about the supported top stem. The free end was pulled smartly, setting the top into rapid motion. This was further developed by a doubled cord wound about the stem of a long stemmed top. When the two ends of the string were pulled in opposite directions by lateral movement of the hands the top is spun and the cord comes free of the stem. This was difficult to manage, so a specialised support was developed. It was made of wood or shell



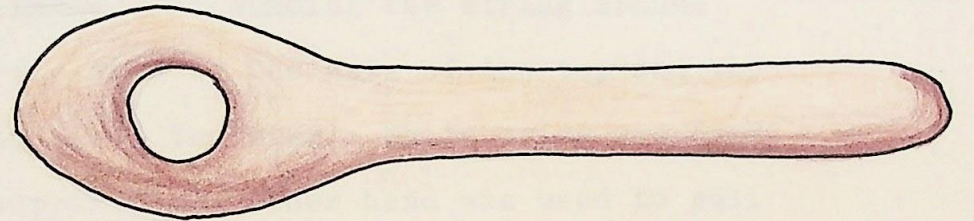
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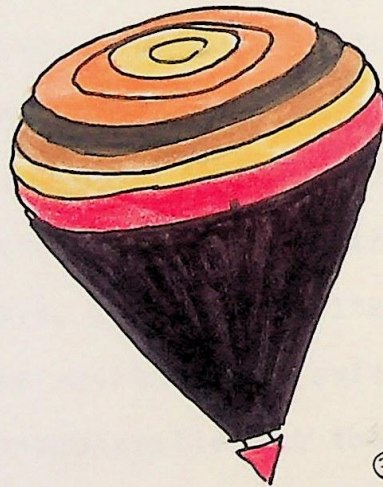
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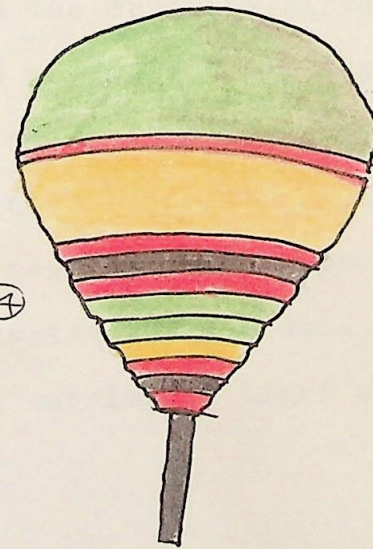
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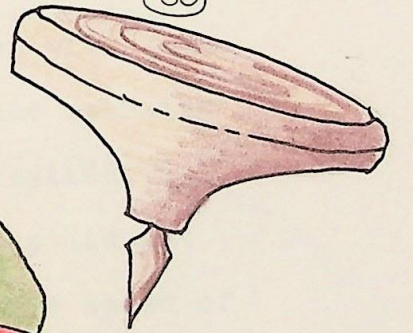
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34



35





to simplify matters. This was used to support the top in a vertical position, until the top acquired sufficient speed to stand upright itself. This was extremely efficient and has been updated over and over calling itself, key, bracket, yoke, sprocket, lift-off-tool, grip, cage, and handle. This was then called the Supported in Starting Top. This was the most popular top. It looked impressive and was easy to handle, more so than the whip top, peg top, or yo-yo. This was further developed and called the Reverse Motion Top. Instead of winding the string around the stem, it was tied to the axis of the top and the cord was wound about the stem. While using one hand to hold the support, the other hand was used to pull on the string, thereby unwinding the cord from the stem. The cord is then relaxed, the top will spin and the inertia will cause it to continue spinning and rewind the cord in the opposite direction. This is likened to the yo-yo, but the top did not move, it spins on its axis. Sometimes the speed of the rotation was sufficiently high for holes or irregularities in the top's surface to produce a pleasant hum. This humming top was said to give solace to the defeated warrior in times of war.

ILLUS. 31, 32

ILLUS. 30.





36





### The Peg Top.

The peg top is the Queen of tops. It lends itself to competition because player's skill can be measured. The peg top was found in South-East Asia, the Pacific Islands and other primitive cultures. Peg tops were usually made out of good strong wood for casting. Usually the spinning contact point was the sharpened end of the body. This was easily split, so insets<sup>51</sup> of hardwood, or bone were used and finally a very reliable brad or nail was used. Peg top fighting was very popular. The aim was to render your opponent's top inactive. illus. 33, 35

### The Yo-Yo.

The yo-yo is a recuperative top. It was used by the Filipino tribes as a weapon. A cord is wound several<sup>52</sup> times around the centre of the yo-yo. The yo-yo is then cast away from you while still holding the end of the string. The cord unwinds and the top is rotated about its axis. When it reaches the end of the cord, its kinetic energy manifests itself in inertia and the top continues to rotate and appears illus. 36 to climb the string. The Greeks used the yo-yo

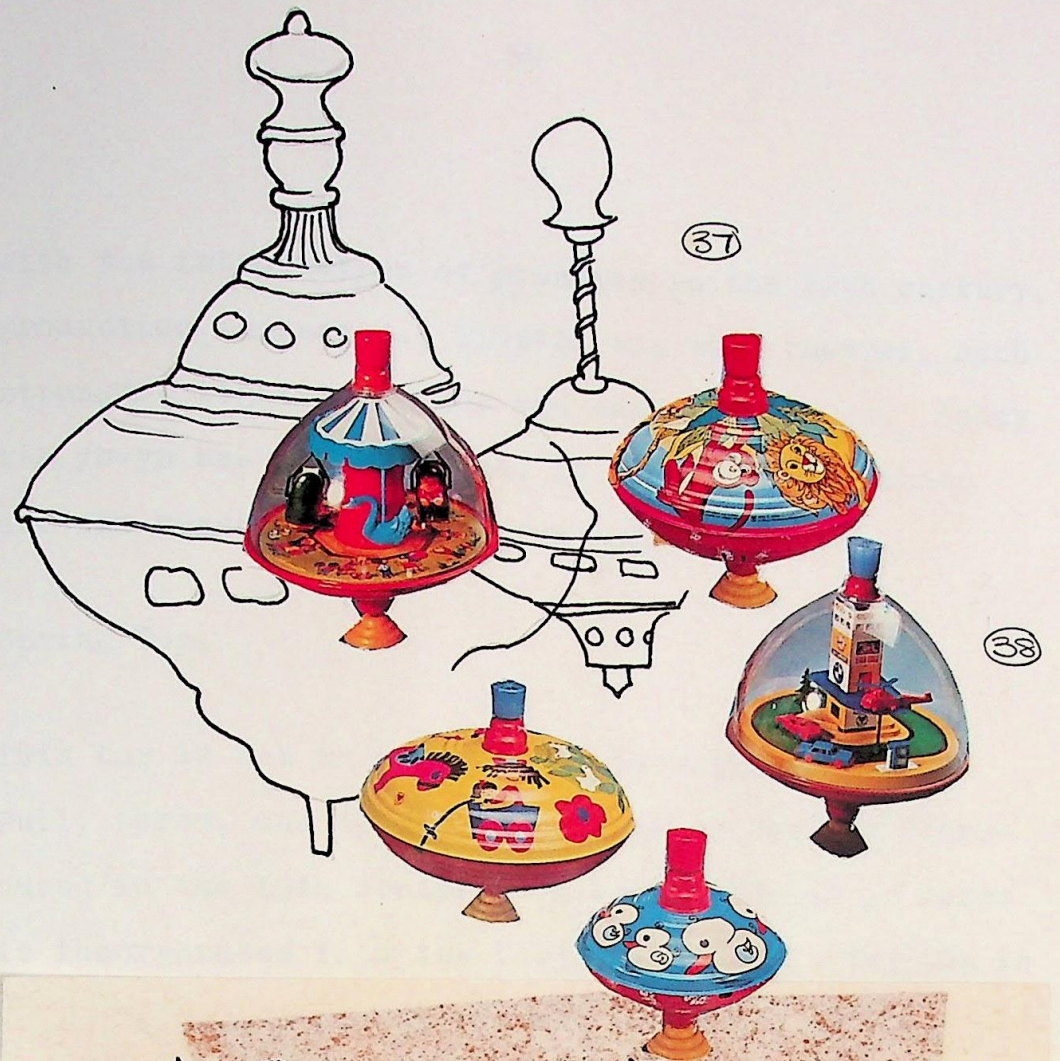


extensively and it can be traced back to 500 B.C. by vase decoration. Ceramic yo-yos were popular. They were thought to be votive but when first found, it was believed to have been used as a spool for thread. It is not known when it appeared in Modern Europe. In Larousses Grand Dictionnaire (Paris 1866), it <sup>53</sup> states that the top was invented in 1791. But Meyers Lexikon (Leipzig 1927) calls the toy Kietterkreisel and said it was the Greeks that brought it to Paris from the Orient in 1790. Others say the top was brought to France from Peking by returning missionaries.

Around 1790 the yo-yo replaced the Bilboquet (Ball and cup). Popularity of the yo-yo led to the formation of clubs that could complete different intricate tricks with the toy. In England it was called "Bandilor" or Travelling Top, in Greece it was called the Disc de Coblenz. The yo-yo was so popular that in a Persian newspaper it was asked that they were to be kept indoors, as they were "a danger, imported from the U. S. A. An example of time consuming..... an immoral novelty".

Mostly the yo-yo was made from wood, ceramic in Greece, and from univalve shells in East Asia. Wax and lead was put into the shells to make them heavier. But <sup>54</sup>

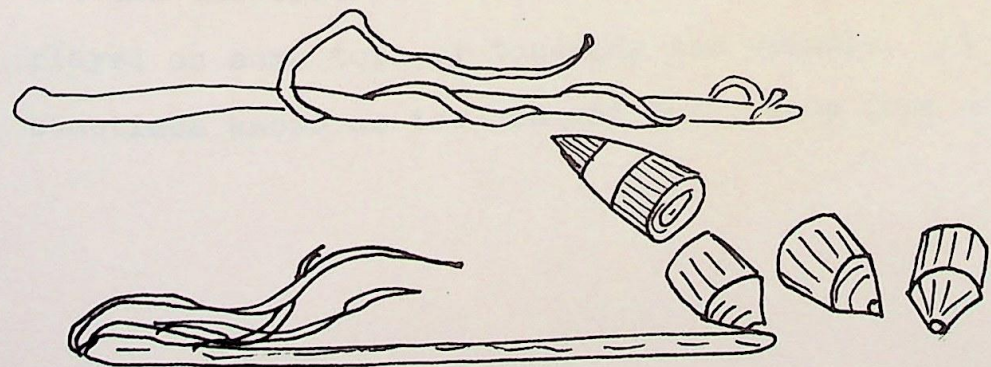




(39)



(40)





with the introduction of plastics in the 20th century, production increased. Plastic was much cheaper, much stronger, light in weight and easy to produce. Today the yo-yo has another name, it is called a spinner and can reach a speed of over 1,200 rpm. 55.

### Spring Top.

This top is set in motion by a thrusting motion. Pull, throw, and thrust. This spring top was introduced in the 19th century. A spiral thread or screw is incorporated into the top's mechanism. The top is surrounded by a tin shell with holes around it, and is usually made of brightly coloured painted tin. 1000.37.

A downward thrust on the plunger, which in turn moves in a spiral path down a threaded core, imparts rotary motion to the body of the top. On completion of the downward stroke, the plunger is disentangled and drawn up for another stroke, momentum has kept the top in motion. The spring top stands unsupported on its point. If the action is done fast, the top will emit a distinct hum, because of the air flowing past the holes of the shell, sets the edge of the metal and the enclosed air into vibration. Tunes can be played on some tops by touching the spindle. It is sometimes known as the "Choral Top", made from



chromium plated mild steel, with a wooden handle. This made a sound like an organ and was invented by a German in 1900. These are still used by children today. The design has not changed except for little extras like a suction pad, to prevent the top from falling over when in action and also a brighter appearance, and sometimes transparent plastic shell *illus. 38* with a clever moving platform inside the body of the top itself. For example a train circling a track, or little animals riding on a merry-go-round. The spring top can reach a speed of 2,000 - 3,200 rpm.

#### Whipping Tops.

Whip Top Whip Top, turn about and never stop,  
 Mondays top will spin away,  
 Tuesdays top will sing all day,  
 Wednesdays top is never slow,  
 Thursdays top to sleep will go,  
 Fridays top will dance about,  
 Saturdays top will tire you out.

Whip Top Whip Top, turn around and never stop.

Alison Uttley.

The whip top is likened to the shape of a pine cone. *illus 31*.  
 It is usually made of wood, but does not have to be.



Symmetrical for prolonged spinning. Two people could play at this game. The top is whipped by a cord to keep it moving.

Belskin was recommended highly for whipping, while primitive cultures successfully used tendons, woven textile cords and strips of skin. The whipping top unfortunately is very rarely used now. Children are just not interest in exercise.<sup>56</sup>

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illus. 40

85



(41)

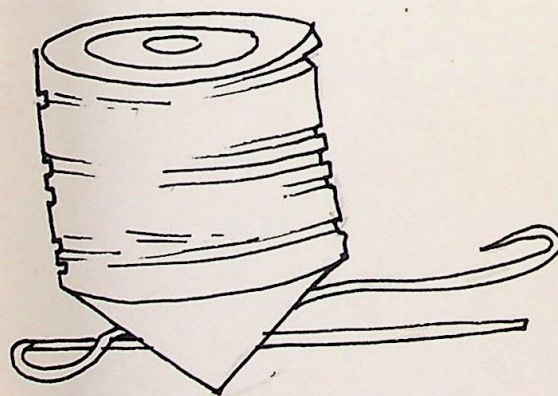


This is good exercise, and we know no reason why girls should not use it, in moderation, as well as boys; for, when they have been working with a needle for some time in cold weather, the exercise will tend much to promote their health.

(42)



(43)





## SUMMARY

Toys mirror a culture.

Before the 18th century there were virtually no manufacturers of toys, in Europe or the U. S. A. No books were written or produced especially for children. They shared games and recreations with adults. The world of the child was not precisely separated from the realm of the adult. No special sector or segment of the culture was devoted exclusively to children.

Dr. Johnson defined toys, in his famous "Dictionary"<sup>57</sup> "a petty commodity, a plaything, a bauble". There was no mention of children.

Children were small adults and were treated and dressed as so. Any miniature examples of everyday life found before the 18th century were not toys, but small examples for children to handle and participate in the daily work with their parents. Children in the 16th century were depicted as rigid, formal, miniature grown-ups. At the beginning of the 18th century this changed, and children were recognised as children and not adults. Later in the 18th century<sup>58</sup> with the gradual improvements in living standards of the artisans, the great divergence of standards



between toys for rich and poor narrowed.

In the 19th century the Victorian era, children were seen and not heard, and were looked on as angels, posed and sentimental. The children had special Sunday toys, which were instructive, with a biblical background. Now in the 20th century, children are relaxed and unaffected, compared to previous centuries.

Toys tell you alot about life. They show attitudes to children firstly, then attitudes to social, polital, and industrial life. The design and materials used for these toys have been improved through the years but they are still popular.

The spinning top is hard to locate and date, its distribution of invention is confined to regions. The spinning top and its derivitives are very much boom or craze toys. Crazes in toys are nothing new. Fashions in toys just catch on. The yo-yo is a particular example of this. It took the Western world by storm in the 1920's and crops up every few years.

The spinning top was used by boys rather then girls



<sup>59</sup>  
 until "The Buzzer" used by the Greeks, and the Diabolo, popular with the young ladies in the victorian era, were invented. Other fascinating examples of variations in the spinning top, influenced by inexpensive tin during the Industrial Revolution, are the Silhouette<sup>60</sup> Top, and also the Gyrograph, which was supposed to be used as a navigational aid by John Serson in 1744, but was later abandoned, as it was too difficult to manage. The rocking horse was used originally to train young boys in the techniques of riding for adult life. It was the largest toy in the nursery made usually only for the royalty and the very rich. The first rocking horse was very basic in design and could be likened to a rocking boat. Made of wood, the design was later streamlined and leather saddle was included. The semicircular timber pieces gradually dissappeared and the body and legs of the horse were modelled in their place. At the beginning of the 18th century and later into the 19th century, the horse was covered with hide and had real horsehair. The rocking horse then moved away from the traditional rockers and acquired springs and swingbar action. Production dropped from 1861 - 1865, because of the Civil War<sup>61</sup> but gained popularity again. Horses were made lighter



by hollowing out the body. Rocking horses were specialist items and it was only in the 19th century that cheaper models were sold commercially. These were brightly coloured and had cowhair. The next development was the "Gee Swing". This was designed, because Victorian mothers complained of the noise and tracks left on the nursery floor by the rocking horse, and the gee swing overcame this. The horse was hung from the nursery ceiling by adjustable hemp ropes and gave free movement in every direction. Rocking horses are now made of fibreglass. Manufacturers are very safety conscious. Rocking horses are today, bought for just pleasure and are enjoyed by both boys and girls.

The teddy bears popularity is still growing. Not many changes have taken place in the image of the teddy bear. He arrived in 1903 and was popular immediately. He did not belong to any particular social class and was not confined to one set of people. Little boys as well as girls were attracted to teddys, particularly boys, as previously they had only the golly og. The materials in the teddy bear are really the only thing about him that has changed over the years. Many new ideas were tried out,



Musical, walking, tumbling bears, but the original design is still most popular. The safety factor, however is very important today, as children are very attached to their teddys and drag them everywhere. Because of this they must withstand a lot of wear and tear. Teddy has become shorter, plumper, and more cheerful looking through the years. He is attractive to all ages, especially since the introduction of the character bears.

The attraction of these toys is that they are so popular and they were introduced at such different periods in time for such diverse reasons, they have all evolved to become the best loved toys today.

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England 1978
2. King, Constance Eileen. The Encyclopaedia of Toys  
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3. Fritzch & Bachmann: An Illustrated History of  
Toys England 1966
4. Fraser, Antonia A History of Toys England 1972
5. King, Constance Eileen The Encyclopaedia of Toys  
England 1978.
6. Bethnal Green, Museum of Childhood, London.
7. King, Constance Eileen The Encyclopaedia of Toys  
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8. Cadbury, Betty Playthings Past America 1976
9. Fraser, Antonia A History of Toys. England 1972
10. Jackson, Neville Toys of Other Days England 1975
11. King, Constance Eileen The Encyclopaedia of Toys  
England 1978
12. The Crandalls, a prolific company, won a gold medal  
at the Philadelphia Exhibition 1876 for their  
designing.
13. Fraser, Antonia A History of Toys England 1972
14. King, Constance Eileen The Encyclopaedia of Toys  
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15. White, Gwen Antique Toys (Their background)  
England 1971.



16. "Bronco the Safety Hoboy Horse" registered design  
No. 467670
17. "Super Jouets" catalogue 1930
18. Haddens catalogue 1982.
19. White, Gwen Antique Toys and Their Background  
England 1971
20. Cadbury, Betty Playthings Past
21. White, Gwen Antique Toys and Their Background  
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22. King, Constance Eileen Encyclopaedia of Toys  
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23. King, Constance Eileen Encyclopaedia of Toys  
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24. Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood London
25. King, Constance Eileen Encyclopaedia of Toys  
England 1973
26. Hutchings, Margaret The Book of the Teddy Bear  
England 1980  
Margaret Steiff worked and lived in the Black  
Forest
27. Pollocks Toy Museum, London
28. Bull, Peter Peter Bulls Book of Teddy Bears  
U. S. A. 1977
29. Bull, Peter Peter Bulls Book of Teddy Bears  
U. S. A. 1977.  
The President's reply was "Dear Mr. Minton,



## FOOTNOTES

29. Contd.

I don't think my name is likely to be worth much in the toy business, but you are welcome to use it."

30. Hutchings, Margaret The Book of the Teddy Bear  
England 1980

31. White, Gwen Antique Toys and Their Background  
England 1971.

32. Hutchings, Margaret The Book of Teddy Bears  
England 1980.

Friend Petz, his first order was for 3,000.

33. Hutchings, Margaret The Book of the Teddy Bear  
England 1980

34. Bull, Peter Peter Bulls Book of Teddy Bears  
U. S. A. 1977

35. Bull, Peter Peter Bulls Book of Teddy Bears  
U. S. A. 1977

36. Bull, Peter Peter Bulls Book of Teddy Bears  
U. S. A. 1977

37. Designed by the Gebruder Sussenguth factory near  
Coburg between 1925 - 1928.

38. Hutchings, Margaret The Book of the Teddy Bear  
England 1980

39. Hutchings Margaret The Book of the Teddy Bear  
England 1980

40. Which Magazine December 1967. London Consumer  
Association Monthly.

41. Wild Life Association London.



## FOOTNOTES

42. Toy International & the retailer December 1980
43. Ajena, Amtoy, Knickerbocker, England.
44. Colonel Henderson founded G. B. W.  
Good Bear Day, October 27th was officially  
inaugurated by a special gathering at the  
Bellevue Palace Hotel Berne. The centre has  
now changed from Bear Town, Berne to Honolulu,  
Hawaii.
45. Plato "A wheel or top, which moves up a fixed  
axis or centre may be said to move or not to  
move, that is, it may move at its circumference  
while its axis (concieved as a straight line)  
stands still."
46. White, Gwen Antique Toys and Their Background  
England 1971
47. Bremer, John History Today Volume 30 December 1980  
The genesis of the Modern Toy.
48. The Diavolo very popular late 18th century.  
The rotation of a double cone shaped top bal-  
anced on a cord secured to and held by two batons.
49. Gould, D. W. The Top: Universal Toy. England 1975
50. Gould D. W. The Top: Universal Toy England 1975
51. The peg was set permanently by cementing it in  
place with horse manure.
52. Gould, D. W. The Top: Universal Toy England 1975.



## FOOTNOTES

53. Gould, D. W. The Top: Universal Toy England 1975
54. Gould D. W. The Top: Universal Toy England 1975
55. White, Gwen Antique Toys and Their Background  
England 1971.
56. Gould D. W. The Top: Universal Toy England 1975
57. Erikson, E. H. Toys and Reasons : Stages in the  
Ritualization of Experience U. S. A. 1978
58. Brewer, John History Today: The Genesis of the  
Modern Toy Volume 30 December 1980
59. Buzzer, Whizzer or Magic Wheel. A flat circular  
disc made of leather, a button, ivory, bone or  
wood. Two cords are passed through the rotor  
and twisted. The buzzer then spins and it is  
used a lot in Greece. It is usually found in a  
scene of affluence or of Olympians.
60. A wire form is inserted in the centre of a platform  
It spins with the platform and creates an illusion  
of a solid.
61. American Civil War.



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