

PUBLISHER: Leslie Mackenzie
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: Laura Mars
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Diana Delgado
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Kristen Thatcher
MARKETING DIRECTOR: Jessica Moody

AUTHOR: Scott Derks
CONTRIBUTORS: Jael Bridgemahon, Jimmy Copening, Lucia Derks, Suzi Kirby,
Robert Long, Michael Marturana, J'Vontea Perminter, Jim Reindollar

COPYEDITOR: Elaine Alibrandi
COMPOSITION: NPC Inc.

Grey House Publishing, Inc.
4919 Route 22
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518.789.8700 FAX 845.373.6390
www.greyhouse.com
e-mail: books@greyhouse.com

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INTRODUCTION

Working Americans 1880-2011 Volume XII: Our History Through Music is the 12th volume in the *Working Americans* series. Like its predecessors, this work profiles the lives of Americans – how they lived, how they worked, how they thought – decade by decade. The earliest volumes focus on economic status or social issues. More recent volumes focus on a specific group of Americans – athletes in *Volume X* and entrepreneurs in *Volume XI*. This volume highlights American music and musicians – from classical performers to rock star groupies, from production crews to impresarios. *Our History Through Music* depicts the soundtrack of America – from Appalachia to the Big Apple, from the phonograph to iTunes.

Arranged in 12 chapters, this newest *Working Americans* includes three **Profiles** per chapter for a total of 36. Each profile offers personal insight using *Life at Home*, *Life at Work* and *Life in the Community* categories. These personal topics are followed by historical and economic data of the time. **Historical Snapshots** chronicle major milestones. **Lists of Popular Songs**, **Quotes of Famous Musicians**, and **Timelines** of music-related events, i.e. *Development of the Clarinet*, and the *Creation of the Victor Phonograph Company* appear throughout. A variety of **News Features** puts the subject's life and work in context of the day. These common elements, as well as specialized data, such as **Selected Prices**, in currency of the time, punctuate each chapter and act as statistical comparisons between decades. The 36 individuals profiled in this volume represent all regions of the country, and a wide variety of ages and ethnic backgrounds.

In *Volume XII: Our History Through Music*, you will:

- March with clarinet player Albert Gustoff in John Philip Sousa's Band.
- Go behind the scenes with diva Geraldine Farrar.
- Read of the rivalry between crooners Russ Columbo and Bing Crosby.
- Learn how the Lindbergh kidnapping created the disc jockey.
- Join the Prisonaires behind bars by day and on stage outside by night.
- Get in the mood with Blue Note Records designer Reid Miles.
- Build guitars with master Wayne Henderson.

All twelve volumes, regardless of economic status, time period, or specific focus, offer a unique, almost uncanny, look at those Americans whose talents, desires, motivations, struggles, and values shaped – and continue to shape – this nation. Without exception, the 401 individuals profiled in the twelve volumes of this *Working Americans* series are working toward their version of the American dream.

Like its companion volumes, *Working Americans 1880-2011 Volume XII: Our History Through Music* is a compilation of original research (personal diaries and family histories) plus printed material (government statistics, commercial advertisements, and news features). The text, in easy-to-read bulleted format, is supported with hundreds of

graphics, such as photos, advertisements, pages from printed material, letters, and documents.

All twelve *Working Americans* volumes are “point in time” books, designed to illustrate the reality of that particular time. Some Americans portrayed in this 12th volume went on to realize fame and fortune, while others did not. What they all did, however, is help America find her voice, and many of their stories and struggles march on.

Praise for earlier volumes –

“ . . . by arranging the people chronologically rather than alphabetically, users can see how industry changed over time and how ideas and inventions built upon each other. . . .an outstanding overview of the unique inventions and entrepreneurial efforts . . . This work is highly recommended for school libraries from middle school through high school as well as college libraries from community college through graduate school. It should also be found in public libraries of every size.

American Reference Books Annual

“this volume engages and informs, contributing significantly and meaningfully to the historiography of the working class in America...a compelling and well-organized contribution for those interested in social history and the complexities of working Americans.”

Library Journal

“these interesting, unique compilations of economic and social facts, figures, and graphs...support multiple research needs [and] will engage and enlighten patrons in high school, public, and academic library collections.”

Booklist

“[the author] adds to the genre of social history known as ‘history from the bottom up’ ...Recommended for all colleges and university library collections.”

Choice

“the volume succeeds at presenting various cultural, regional, economic and age-related points of view... [it is] visually appealing [and] certainly a worthwhile purchase...”

Feminist Collections

1880–1899

The last two decades of the nineteenth century danced in the reflected glow of the Gilded Age, when the wealth of a tiny percentage of Americans knew no bounds. It was a time of vast, accumulated wealth and an abundance of emerging technology—all racing to keep up with the restless spirit of the American people. The wealth propelled the founding of the New York Metropolitan Opera in 1883, and the restless spirit discovered its voice in the emerging popularity of ragtime music. The rapid expansion of railroads opened up the nation to new industries, new markets, and the formation of monopolistic trusts that catapulted a handful of corporations into positions of unprecedented power and wealth. This expanding technology also triggered the movement of workers from farm to factory, the rapid expansion of wage labor, and the explosive growth of cities. Farmers, merchants and small-town artisans found themselves increasingly dependent on regional and national market forces. The shift in the concentrations of power was unprecedented in American history. At the same time, professionally trained workers were reshaping America's economy alongside business managers or entrepreneurs eager to capture their piece of the American pie. It was an economy on a roll with few rudders or regulations. In this environment, the popular song industry known as Tin Pan Alley both prospered and dramatically influenced the taste and direction of American music.

Across America the economy—along with its work force—was running away from the land. Before the Civil War, the United States was overwhelmingly an agricultural nation. By the end of the century, non-agricultural occupations employed nearly two-thirds of the workers. As important, two of every three Americans came to rely on wages instead of self-employment as farmers or artisans. At the same time, industrial growth began to center around cities, where wealth accumulated for a few who understood how to harness and use railroads, create new consumer markets, and manage a ready supply of cheap, trainable labor. Jobs offering steady wages and the promise of a better life for workers' children drew people from

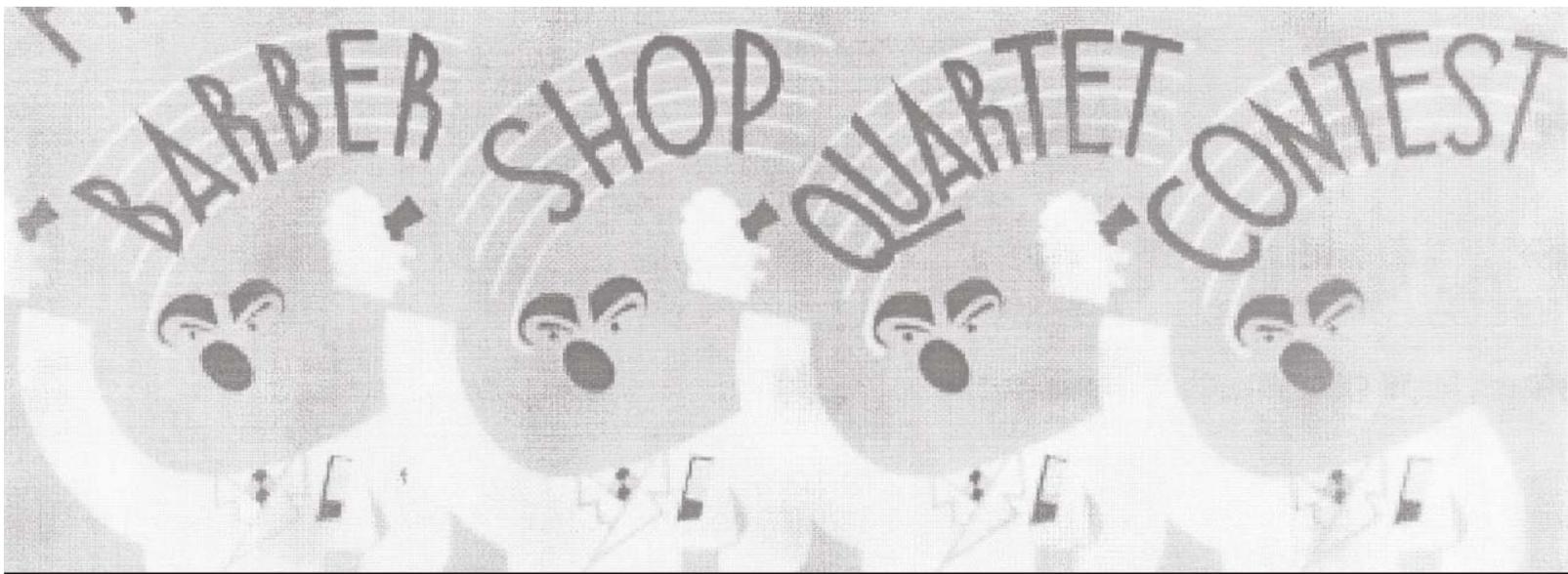
the farms into the cities, which grew at twice the rate of the nation as a whole. A modern, industrially based work force emerged from the traditional farmlands, led by men skilled at managing others and the complicated flow of materials required to keep a factory operating. This led to an increasing demand for attorneys. The new cities of America were home to great wealth and poverty—both produced by the massive migrations and influx of immigrants willing to work at any price. It was a time symbolized by Andrew Carnegie’s steel mills, John D. Rockefeller’s organization of the Standard Oil monopoly, and the manufacture of Alexander Graham Bell’s wonderful invention, the telephone. By 1894, the United States had become the world’s leading industrial power, producing more than England, France, and Germany—its three largest competitors—combined. For much of this period, the nation’s industrial energy focused on the need for railroads requiring large quantities of labor, iron, steel, stone, and lumber. In 1883, nine-tenths of the nation’s entire production of steel went into rails. The most important invention of the period—in an era of tremendous change and innovation—may have been the Bessemer converter, which transformed pig iron into steel at a relatively low cost, increasing steel output 10 times from 1877 to 1892.

The greatest economic event during the last two decades of the nineteenth century was the great wave of immigration that swept America. It is believed to be the largest worldwide population movement in human history, bringing more than 10 million people to the United States to fill the expanding need for workers. In the 1880s alone, 5.25 million immigrants arrived, more than in the first six decades of the nineteenth century. This wave was dominated by Irish, German, and English workers. Scandinavia, Italy, and China sent scores of eager workers, normally men, to fill the expanding labor needs of the United States. To attract this much-needed labor force, railroad and steamship companies advertised throughout Europe and China the glories of American life. To an economically depressed world, it was a welcome call.

The national wealth in 1890 was \$65 billion; nearly \$40 billion was invested in land and buildings, \$9 billion in railroads, and \$4 billion in manufacturing and mining. By 1890, 25 percent of the world’s output of coal was mined in the United States. Annual production of crude petroleum went from 500,000 barrels in 1860 to 63.6 million in 1900. This was more than the wealth of Great Britain, Russia, and Germany put together.

Despite all the signs of economic growth and prosperity, America’s late-nineteenth-century economy was profoundly unstable. Industrial expansion was undercut by a depression from 1882 to 1885, followed in 1893 by a five-year-long economic collapse that devastated rural and urban communities across America. As a result, job security for workers just climbing onto the industrial stage was often fleeting. Few wage-earners found full-time work for the entire year. The unevenness in the economy was caused both by the level of change underway and irresponsible speculation, but more generally to the stubborn adherence of the federal government to a highly inflexible gold standard as the basis of value for currency.

Between the very wealthy and the very poor emerged a new middle stratum, whose appearance was one of the distinctive features of late-nineteenth-century America. The new middle class fueled the purchase of one million light bulbs a year by 1890, even though the first electric light was only 11 years old. It was the middle class also that flocked to buy Royal Baking Powder, (which was easier to use and faster than yeast) and supported the emergence and spread of department stores that were sprouting up across the nation.

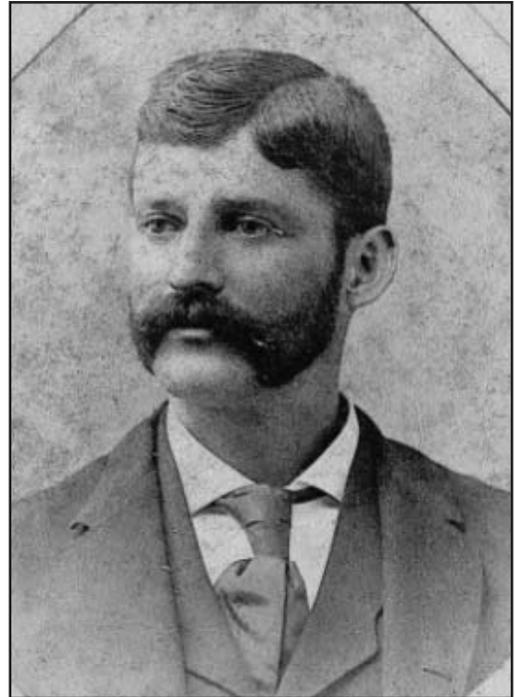


1891 PROFILE

Joshua Hamilton was enamored with the idea of being part of a barbershop quartet, with its unaccompanied four-part harmonies and ringing chords.

Life at Home

- When Joshua Hamilton turned 35 years old, he discovered a new love that haunted him day and night.
- Married with four children—all girls—Joshua found himself humming to himself late in the afternoon as he considered ways to satisfy his new obsession.
- His wife thought his request was crazy, but supported his need to be away every Tuesday night and many a Sunday afternoon.
- But she still could not understand how or why being a member of a barbershop quartet had captured his soul.
- Joshua had sung in the church choir most of his life—his baritone voice prized by every preacher who had traveled through Cincinnati, Ohio—but without explanation, he insisted that being a member of a barbershop quartet was different.
- Born in 1856, prior to the war that divided and devastated the nation, Joshua grew up the son of a merchant whose every expectation was that his biblically named son would follow in his footsteps.
- Not that he objected—Joshua was good at math, found peace in the often meticulous process of stocking shelves, and loved to flirt with the girls who came into the store to buy candy and cloth.
- In fact, he met his future wife in the store and assisted her in the buying of whale-bone corsets and other unmentionables that ladies seemed to require.



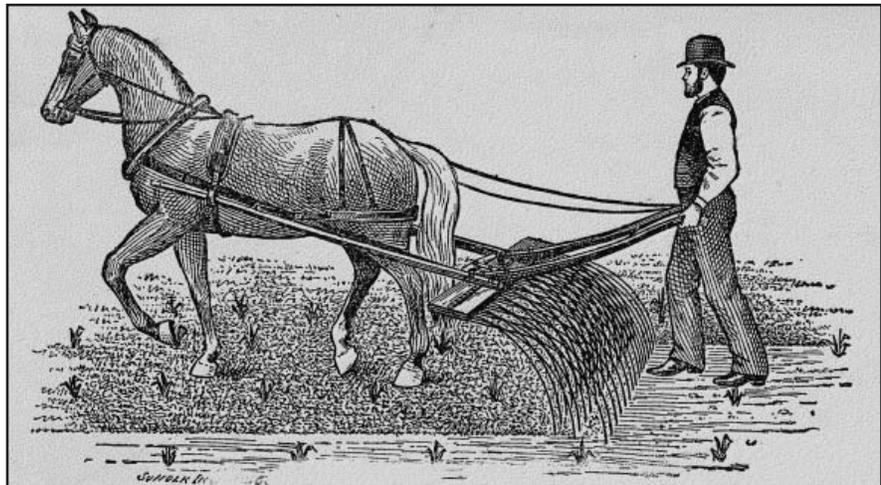
Joshua Hamilton joined a barbershop quartet at age 35, bringing new meaning to his life.



Joshua courted his future wife around her family's piano, his rich voice drowning out other suitors.

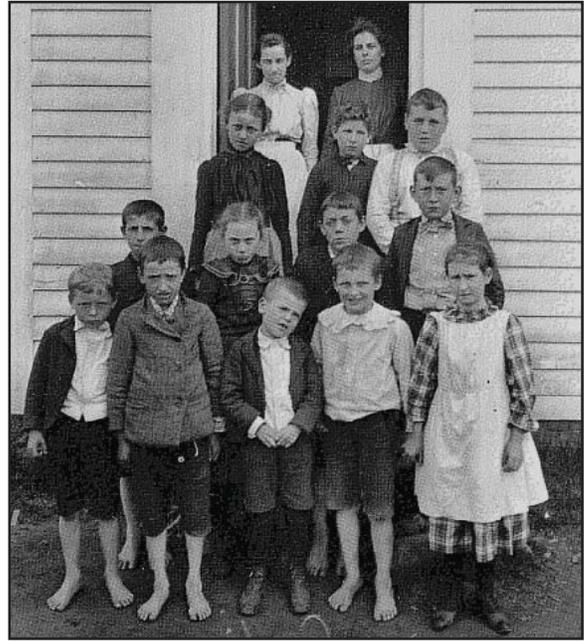
- As was the custom at all stores, no prices were shown on the merchandise, which allowed him to offer her great deals that made her feel special.
- He courted her around her father's piano, where his rich singing voice set him apart from other suitors; during Sunday night family "sings" around the piano, he was always the star.
- Nearly half the homes in middle-class Cincinnati housed pianos for family song sessions; when friends gathered, group singing was often planned and expected.
- Thomas Edison's phonograph machine, invented a decade earlier, was still not in wide distribution, so live music dominated.
- The Hamilton clan had moved to Ohio from Pennsylvania in the 1840s to escape the onslaught of German and Welsh immigrants arriving from Europe.

- Grandpa Hamilton concluded Pennsylvania was just getting too crowded and it was time to move; he established a new store in the countryside outside Cincinnati and watched in amazement as America's population explosion commenced to crowd around him once again.
- By the 1870s, the Cincinnati store was practically within the city and no longer stocked with steel plows or harnesses for a brace of oxen.
- Times had changed: For every farmer moving to the area, there were 20 men looking for factory jobs, which paid steadily and required less risk.
- But supplies for horses and mules still dominated one corner of the store despite the epizootic of 1872, when four million horses—nearly one-fourth of the nation's stock—died of the disease, bringing the nation to a virtual standstill for three months before the winter weather killed the mosquitoes that transmitted the virus.
- The outbreak was blamed on unrestricted immigrant microbes; similarly, the Panic of 1873 was blamed on an excessive supply of unskilled labor, which had run amuck in the economy.
- In 1882, a \$0.50 head tax was imposed on any immigrant entering the country by water, but it did little to slow down the flood of immigrants seeking opportunity in America.
- Most arrived saying they planned to return to their native land once they had made a fortune; one quarter did return, and many more crossed back and forth on an annual basis.
- Immigrants also arrived in Cincinnati as children, wards of the New York Children's Aid Society, whose "orphan trains" annually moved thousands of abandoned and orphaned children from East Coast cities to new homes in the West.



Grandpa Hamilton stocked his Cincinnati store with horse and mule supplies.

- Joshua was four when he first witnessed the spectacle of dozens of children—many of whom couldn't speak English—lined up at the railroad depot station.
- Couples desiring a child would then pick one or two children from the group and take them home for adoption.
- The rest would be loaded onto trains and taken to the next city where they would be picked over by the next set of adults.
- In all, 90,000 children found shelter in this manner—sometimes purely as unpaid labor, sometimes as members of the family.
- The New York Children's Aid Society was the source of Joshua's best friend Wayne, who became the town mortician and a fellow member of the barbershop quartet.
- Wayne was born Gert Derkondoeff, but his new adoptive family didn't think it sounded American enough; they told him at breakfast on his third day in Ohio that he was to call himself Wayne and that was that.
- Wayne's new father was a conductor on the railroad who often returned home after weeks away with wonderful tales of colorful Indians, smelly stockyards in Chicago, and famous people who had ridden on his train.
- During the summers, Wayne's family went to the cool atmosphere of a lakeside resort and Joshua was often invited to go along; Wayne's father would join them every other weekend.
- One night, when the boys were 14 or 15, the evening's entertainment was a barbershop quartet known for its sweet harmonies.
- The boys were mesmerized by what they heard and practiced for weeks without achieving a satisfactory sound.
- When school began in the fall, the experience was set aside.



Abandoned and orphaned children rode America's Orphan Train from coast to coast, with hopes of adoption at every stop.

Life at Work

- With Joshua Hamilton's newfound interest in barbershop quartet singing came a renewed excitement about the store.
- For the first time in years, Joshua took great pleasure in constructing the elaborate chromolithographed W. A. Burpee Seed display, arranging the Merrick's Six Cord Soft Finish Spool Cotton display cabinet, and selling nickel packs of firecrackers to the neighborhood boys.
- Joshua was having fun again.
- The cooperation, the teamwork, the harmonizing sound and the applause all pleased him.
- And just ahead was an opportunity to demonstrate their skills at a fundraiser for the children's school; each of his four girls was sewing a new dress for the big event.



Joshua's singing brought him renewed enthusiasm for working in the family store, and he took great pride in creating elaborate product displays.



Joshua's daughters wore new dresses for their school fundraiser, which starred their father's barbershop quartet.

- Admission was priced at the popular sum of five cents.
- Since 1883, when the Treasury Department issued a five cent coin composed of one part nickel and three parts copper, merchants had been competing for the coin bearing the American Indian profile.
- In Joshua's establishment, customers ordered "a nickel's worth" of cheese; a handful of crackers pulled from the cracker barrel cost a nickel, as did a draft beer down the street.
- Even the "dime" novels sold for a nickel.
- Dr. Will Zimmer, the tenor in Joshua's partnership group, often joked that he would be happy to receive a nickel for his medical services: "It would be more than I'm receiving now."
- The fourth member of the quartet, R. H. Long, came from a long line of theater people and often took the initiative to obtain singing dates and promote the events.
- Barbershop music, with its close, unaccompanied four-part harmonies and ringing chords, was believed to be a uniquely American tradition.
- Joshua believed it had evolved from numerous musical styles featuring uncomplicated melodies that could be harmonized with a variety of four-part chords when sung *a cappella*.
- Barbershop harmony's four voice parts required a tenor, lead, baritone and bass to be effective; the melody was sung by the lead voice while the first tenor harmonized in a lighter voice above it.

- The bass sang the roots and fifth of the chord, while the baritone filled in the chord sometimes below the lead, sometimes above it.
- It was a glorious way to spend an evening with friends—especially when the harmonies were solid and produced the fifth ring.
- The defining characteristic of the barbershop style for Joshua was the ringing chord—also called the angel's voice or the fifth voice.
- Barbershop arrangements stressed chords and chord progressions that favored "ringing" at the expense of suspended and diminished chords.
- Wayne talked about the physical impact on him personally: "a tingling of the spine, the raising of the hairs on the back of the neck, the spontaneous arrival of gooseflesh on the forearm."
- Will often described the effect as an addiction, a great big chord that gets people "hooked."
- Achieving the effect produced in Joshua the emotional impact of rapture.



Business in Cincinnati's downtown grew, as railroads carried people and products in and out of the city.

Life in the Community: Cincinnati, Ohio

- Chartered as a village in 1803, Cincinnati acquired significant growth in 1811 with the introduction of steam navigation on the Ohio River.
- Thanks to the Ohio River, opportunities abounded: hotels, restaurants, and taverns opened to meet the needs of settlers traveling westward; steamboats were manufactured and repaired in the city; and farmers brought their fresh-grown crops to the city for transport down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, Louisiana, one of Ohio's major markets.
- At the same time, the availability of the Miami and Erie Canal reduced the cost of traveling from western Ohio to Cincinnati, allowing the city to develop into an important meatpacking center.
- Farmers brought their livestock—especially pigs—to the city, where they were slaughtered, processed, and sold to Western settlers or shipped to various markets.
- This earned the city a tag as the “Porkopolis” of the United States.
- The first mass migration of Germans in 1830 and then the Irish a decade later swelled Cincinnati's population to close to 50,000 people.
- With the introduction of lager beer in the 1830s, German brewers became the predominant force in the industry, and the number of breweries in the city increased from eight in 1840 to 36 in 1860.
- William Holmes McGuffey first published his *Eclectic Reader* for school children in Cincinnati in 1836, and eventually 122 million copies were sold.
- Harriet Beecher Stowe—the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—called Cincinnati home for 18 years, while the city itself was a hotbed of abolitionist activity located directly across the Ohio River from Kentucky, a slaveholding state.
- Abolitionists taking part in the Underground Railroad began to secretly smuggle runaway slaves across the Ohio River to potential freedom in Ohio.
- Many in the city opposed the abolitionists, fearing that if slavery ended, they would face competition from the freed African-Americans.
- With the outbreak of the Civil War, George B. McClellan, a prominent Cincinnati resident and the commander of Ohio's State Militia, selected a site near the city for the recruitment and training of 50,000 union soldiers.
- By the 1880s, Cincinnati boasted a population of 300,000 and the honor of being the largest city in Ohio.
- During this period, Cincinnati's major cultural institutions also began to take shape, including the art museum and art academy, the conservatory of music, the public library, the zoo, and Cincinnati Music Hall.
- In response to the decline of riverboat trade in the 1870s, the city built its own Southern rail line—the only Ohio city to make such a move—at a cost of \$20 million.
- By 1890, more than 15 railroads connected Cincinnati's industry to other parts of the United States: iron production, meat packing, cloth production and woodworking.
- Cincinnati's industries employed 103,325 people in 1887, and produced more than \$200 million in goods.



HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT

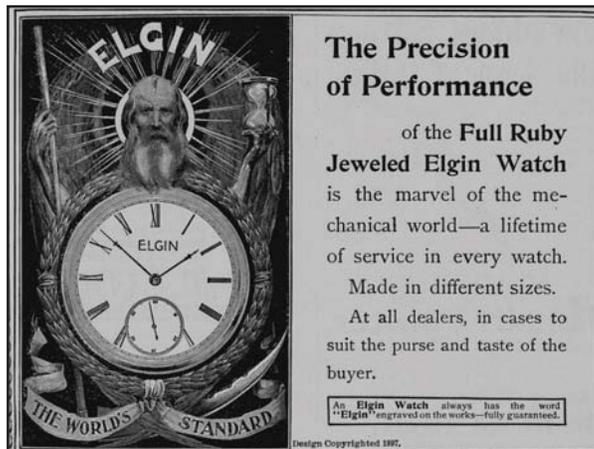
1891

- George A. Hormel & Co. introduced the packaged food Spam
- Painter Paul Gauguin arrived in Papeete, Tahiti
- The penalty kick was introduced into soccer
- The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers was organized
- New Scotland Yard became the headquarters of the London Metropolitan Police
- Eugène Dubois discovered *Homo erectus* fossils in the Dutch colony of Java
- Bicycle designer Charles Duryea, 29, and his toolmaker brother James designed a gasoline engine capable of powering a road vehicle
- Edouard Michelin obtained a patent for a “removable” bicycle tire that could be repaired quickly in the event of puncture
- The Jarvis winch, patented by Glasgow-born Scottish shipmaster John C. B. Jarvis, enabled ships to be manned by far fewer men and permitted the development of the windjammer
- Rice University and Stanford were chartered
- John T. Smith patented corkboard using a process of heat and pressure to combine waste cork together for insulation
- American Express issued the first traveler’s checks
- Commercial bromine was produced electrolytically by Herbert H. Dow’s Midland Chemical Company in Michigan
- Bacteriologist Anna Williams obtained her M.D. from the Women’s Medical College of New York and accepted a position in the newly created diagnostic laboratory of the city’s Health Department, the first such lab in America
- Chicago’s Provident Hospital became the first interracial hospital in America
- The lapidary encyclical “Of New Things” by Pope Leo XIII declared that employers have the moral duty as members of the possessing class to improve the “terrible conditions of the new and often violent process of industrialization”
- Educator William Rainey Harper agreed to become president of the new University of Chicago with funding from merchant Marshall Field and oilman John D. Rockefeller
- Irene Coit became the first woman admitted to Yale University
- The electric self-starter for automobiles was patented
- The first full-service advertising agency was opened in New York by George Batten
- The Automatic Electric Company was founded to promote a dial telephone patented by Kansas City undertaker Almon B. Strowger, who was convinced that “central” was diverting his incoming calls to a rival embalmer
- Important books included *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy; *The Light That Failed* by Rudyard Kipling; *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde, and *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians* by Ambrose Bierce



Selected Prices

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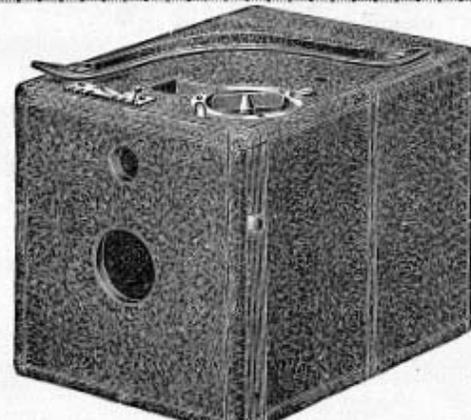


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Top Songs: 1998

1. "I Don't Want To Miss a Thing," Aerosmith
2. "Everybody (Backstreet's Back)," Backstreet Boys
3. "Jump Jive An' Wail," Brian Setzer Orchestra
4. "I Want You Back," N*Sync
5. "The Cup of Life," Ricky Martin
6. "Too Close," Next
7. "Good Riddance (Time Of Your Life)," Green Day
8. "From This Moment On," Shania Twain
9. "My Heart Will Go On," Celine Dion
10. "Suavemente," Elvis Crespo
11. "Nice & Slow," Usher
12. "Tearin' Up My Heart," *NSYNC
13. "A Song For Mama," Boyz II Men
14. "The Boy Is Mine," Brandy & Monica
15. "Ghetto Supastar (That Is What You Are)," Pras Michel
16. "Intergalactic," Beastie Boys
17. "Stay (Wasting Time)," Dave Matthews Band
18. "No, No, No part 2," Destiny's Child
19. "This Is How We Party," S.O.A.P.
20. "I'll Be," Edwin McCain
21. "Just The Two of Us," Will Smith
22. "Cruel Summer," Ace of Base
23. "Gettin' Jiggy Wit It," Will Smith
24. "Zoot Suit Riot," Cherry Poppin' Daddies
25. "Landslide," Fleetwood Mac