The history of solid rubber and subsequently of pneumatic tires applied to the wheels of vehicles with animal and motor traction is intimately linked to the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. Their roots trace back to The Rubber Tire Wheel company, founded in 1894 in Springfield, Ohio by Edwin Stewart Kelly (1857-1935), his older brother Oliver Warren Kelly (1851-1922) and Arthur W. Grant, dedicated to the manufacture of solid rubber tires for carriages. Edwin grew up with his eleven brothers in a family of Irish origin. He was an enterprising man linked to multiple commercial activities. Although his company of solid rubber tires was the best known, Edwin S. Kelly diversified his business activity by establishing or participating in the creation and management of businesses. Among them, the following stand out as the most prominent: The Springfield Publishing Co., editor of the local newspaper *Republic-Times*; the electric company Home Lighting, Power and Heating Co.; the Kelly-Springfield Truck Co.; and the Grant Axle & Wheel Co. (fig. 1).

By the end of 1880, the first wheels had appeared with glued on bands of solid rubber for the trendy new personal transport vehicle—the bicycle. Human traction coexisted with merchandise-loaded wagons, passenger carriages, carts and two-wheeled buggies pulled by horses. These vehicles used radial wooden wheels whose perimeter was covered with metal strips for traveling over cobbled and dirt roads. Soon they began to apply solid rubber tires to these vehicles, achieving a smoother ride with less vibrations and improving passenger comfort. Solid rubber tires were better able to absorb bumps on the road without breaking and lasted longer than metal ones. However, these tires glued onto the surface of the wheel’s perimeter would loosen and fall off. This was a common occurrence in the streets of large cities, crossed by tram rails which transport vehicle wheels would collide with and become immobilized.

1. The launch of the firm

The association of Edwin S. Kelly with Arthur W. Grant, also a citizen of Springfield, resolved this technological obstacle and marked the beginning of success for the company that both had founded. Grant, an inventor born in Michigan, moved to Springfield to manage the Tricycle Manufacturing Co., specializing in the manufacture of metallic wheels for velocipedes, a type of tricycle. During his more than ten...
years of working for the company, he developed an idea to improve the wheels that utilized rubber tires. With the help of Kelly, in 1896 Grant patented a system to ensure that the solid rubber tire stayed in place. Firstly, a circular metal rim with a flat ‘U’-shaped section was placed onto the outer perimeter of the wooden wheel. Secondly, two wires were inserted longitudinally and in parallel into the interior of the solid rubber tire, each with their respective ends joined, forming an internally reinforced circular band. The tire was attached to the rim and, tensioned, would latch onto the wheel.

This problem had endured for more than forty years, being dealt with on the basis of inventions exhibiting greater or lesser fortune. However, the solution of Arthur W. Grant was definitive. This new wooden wheel fitted with a highly resistant solid rubber tire that remained in place despite road obstacles — thanks to its rim and tension wires — was quickly known as the original Kelly-Springfield Tire. This was the name utilized in press campaign advertisements.

During the first months of The Rubber Tire Wheel Co.’s activity the North American market was dominated by imports of English wheels equipped with solid rubber tires. However, by the end of the decade more than 45,000 American wagons utilized the wheels manufactured by Kelly and Grant’s company, which already dominated 95% of the market. The company had eight international branch offices—in countries such as England, France, Italy and Spain—and approximately 50 licenses to exploit the patent for its technology. The Kelly-Springfield Tire wheel with solid rubber tires became a standard and the company continued to grow, protected by their patent.

2. Consolidation … and change

In 1899, a New York financial group led by Emerson McMillin acquired The Rubber Tire Wheel Co. The company was refounded with the intention of managing the enormous profits from Grant’s patent licenses, and changed their name to Consolidated Rubber Tire Company. Thus, this new company did not manufacture wheels in the same way their predecessor did. They manufactured wooden wagon wheels, whose treads were equipped with a shock-absorbing layer of rubber. The rubber was rolled into large coils in the form of a continuous strip that was cut to the required size in each case, according to the diameter of any given wheel.

The commercial exploitation of Consolidated’s patent benefited both the cart/wagon construction companies and the manufacturers of solid rubber tires. Of the latter, Consolidated litigated constantly to preserve their rights with firms such as Firestone, Goodyear, Pennsylvania Rubber, Goodrich and Diamond. When the change to Consolidated occurred, Grant left his management positions at the firm although he remained linked to it, developing technical improvements and new inventions. Kelly continued as Vice President and General Manager of Consolidated, but he was losing power and participation and ended up separating from the company in 1905, turning his efforts to other businesses. In 1911, Consolidated’s important branch office in New York was legally registered as the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co., leading the way so that in 1914, the company changed their name to the definitive one of Kelly-Springfield Tire Company, recovering the surname of their founder.

3. A breath of air for tires

Towards the end of the century, a new technology imported from Europe began to dominate, the pneumatic tire. It dealt with a hollow rubber tube inflated with air, which allowed a smoother and more comfortable ride compared to that offered by the rigid solid rubber tires. Edwin S. Kelly, conditioned
by the future expiration of Grant’s patent rights—which would take place on February 18, 1913—, reacted by directing his interests to the new tire technology that was being increasingly applied to carriages, bicycles and the emerging market of motor vehicles. For this reason, in 1899 he acquired the Columbia Pneumatic Wagon Wheel Co., a company legally registered in August 1895 with experience in solid rubber and pneumatic tires for carriages (fig. 2), and created the Buckeye Rubber Co. in July 1900, oriented to the manufacture of solid rubber tires for automobiles and trucks. The Consolidated Rubber Tire Co. would work jointly with both companies in the development and manufacture of the first pneumatic tires for automobiles which were finally launched in 1908.

In any case, the principal market of Consolidated/Kelly-Springfield during the first decade of the 20th century continued to be that of solid rubber tires for cargo and passenger vehicles, trucks, tractors and heavy agricultural machinery. In a world where speed prevailed, light bicycles and automobiles floating on the air-filled tires had the ability to maneuver smoothly and quickly through ever improving roads. However, the same could not be said for trucks. The heaviness and slow speed of the vehicles once loaded required solid rubber tires, which were easy to manufacture and had an important advantage: they could not be punctured or deflated. Solid rubber tires continued to be widely utilized until the 1940s. The Buckeye factory in Akron, Ohio became the main manufacturing center for the solid and pneumatic tires of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co., complemented by the activity of the factories in Wooster, Ohio, acquired in 1915, and that in Buffalo, New York, acquired in 1917 from the Northland Rubber Company. In 1910, about 200 people worked at the Akron factory for a daily production of 200 pneumatic tires, in addition to making solid rubber tires and pneumatic inner tubes. Towards the end of 1915 and the beginning of 1916, the same factory already offered a daily production of nearly 400 solid rubber tires for trucks and 1,500 pneumatic tires for automobiles. By the beginning of the twenties they employed 7,000 workers, with a daily production capacity of 3,500 tires.

In 1916, as a response to the growing demand for solid rubber and pneumatic tires, the building of a large factory in the town of Cumberland, Maryland began. The construction took longer than expected. During the First World War, Kelly-Springfield diversified their business to respond to government orders which in 1918 accounted for nearly 50% of their production. The first pneumatic tire that inaugurated the productive capacity of the new Kelly-Springfield facilities in Cumberland—with an estimated daily production of 5,000 solid rubber truck tires and 10,000 pneumatic tires—was manufactured on April 2, 1921. The expectations with which Kelly-Springfield faced the new post-war stage seemed encouraging. Advertising during 1921 had increased by 10% compared to the previous year. In addition, according to a company manager, anticipating growth in business for 1922, Kelly-Springfield intended to intensify their advertising activities and increase this budget by approximately 20%.

However, the debt acquired after more than five years of starting up the new factory—part of the delays were due to the situation created during the Great War—, together with the recession of the early twenties and the changes in the company’s top management, initiated a period of financial weakness that would end in the crisis of the thirties. Between 1929 and 1933, the company’s total profits were halved. In 1934, the production of the Cumberland factory, with a capacity of 12,000-15,000 tires per day, had dropped to 3,000 daily units. A year later, the situation led to bankruptcy; in August 1935, The Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. would be acquired by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, which would keep them as one of the group’s companies. Between 1941 and 1943, the Kelly-Springfield factory was converted into a center for the production of weapons, ammunition, bombs and projectiles for the U.S. military involved in World War II. Nonetheless, tires were still manufactured as they were also needed
for military vehicles. In the post-war years, the company experienced a recovery phase and at the end of the 1950s, under the supervision of Goodyear and with George B. Newman as General Manager, the company began one of their most fertile periods.

At the end of the sixties, The Kelly-Springfield Tire Company specialized in supplying their Kelly-Springfield tires to independent distributors such as Montgomery Ward, Sears, O.K. Rubber, Penney’s or Mobil, as well as manufacturing tires with other brands for oil companies. This was the case of Atlas tires, which were sold in stores of the service stations owned by American Oil Co., Humble Oil, California Oil and Standard Oil of Ohio, among others. In the early nineties, The Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. was absorbed by Goodyear and disappeared as a company belonging to the group. However, the label “Kelly Tires” was retained as a brand name for Goodyear’s own line of tires for passenger and cargo vehicles, which is still active to date (2015).

4. The early stages

The first press advertisements for Kelly-Springfield, the brand of wheels for carriages equipped with solid rubber tires, showed images of the product either by illustrating its technological characteristics or by portraying them in use, depicting scenes of carriages, wagons and stagecoaches pulled by horses (figs. 4-9 and 11-13). In addition to these types of images, other campaigns presented allegorical compositions emphasizing the universality of the product and its features, emphasizing the comfort they provided for passengers (figs. 3 and 13). As for graphic elements, borders and frames with wooden spoke wheels were combined with lettering and typography, Victorian illustration and the initial phases of photography. The presence of the Kelly-Springfield wheel in other markets, mainly in Europe—protected by the contracted exploitation of Grant’s patent—also served as an advertising appeal to support its virtues (figs. 14-19).

The firm’s advertisements proudly exposed how the world’s principal rulers and royalty used Kelly-Springfield for their carriages: the President of the United States, the Prince of Wales, the President of the French Republic, King Pedro of Serbia … Also, celebrities of the time contributed their testimony and public image to the Kelly-Springfield campaigns, such as the soprano Frances Alda (1879-1952), a regular at New York’s Metropolitan Opera House; baseball star pitcher Walter Johnson (1887-1943); the New York actress Julia Sanderson (1887-1975), popular in musical shows; and the dancer and actress Queenie Smith (1898-1978) of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York (fig. 182).

5. The tire mascot

After the change from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, the growing demand for automobile tires caused Consolidated Rubber to place their stakes on the new motorized vehicle, while maintaining their natural market of carriage/wagon tires. The manufacturer’s advertising account was managed by the Calkins & Holden agency in New York, formed just a year earlier by Earnest Elmo Calkins (1868-1964) and Ralph Holden (1871-1926); the first would be the creative director, while the second would act as account executive. Calkins was a well-known copywriter and had previously participated with his rhyming compositions and jingles in the construction of two famous advertising mascots: Phoebe Snow, the female character of the railroad company Delaware, Lackawanna & Western (DL & W) from Pennsylvania, in 1901; and Sunny Jim, protagonist of 1901 advertisements for Force cereals elaborated by the Force Food Company.
The relationship between Consolidated/Kelly-Springfield and Calkins & Holden was maintained until the end of 1918. In January of the following year, the account was transferred to the Gardiner, Atkinson & Wells agency—soon reduced to Gardiner & Wells Co.—, founded in 1917 by the publicist William Ray Gardiner with offices on Madison Avenue, New York. This agency handled the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. advertising account during the 1920s.\footnote{11}

The effort put into the launch of the new product posed fresh challenges for the company’s advertising communication. Thus, in November 1908 the Kelly-Springfield tires for automobiles were already advertised, in which “the experience in making rubber composition for the most successful solid carriage tire is well utilized in making Kelly-Springfield Pneumatic Tires for Automobiles.”\footnote{11} In mid-1910 the images of the advertisements, until then based on illustrations portraying driving scenes (figs. 20-22), gave way to the photographic portrait of a female model sitting on a pneumatic tire. The pose was not by chance, it was purposefully planned to show the product’s resistance, maintaining its shape without bending under the weight of an adult person. The young woman was dressed according to the fashion of the time, with a long overcoat and a hat with straps that held its position firmly with a bow at the nape of her neck (fig. 24). All this established a feminine model that could occasionally be found in other tire advertisements for rival brands (fig. 29). The distinction from the rest was the Kelly-Springfield tire brand’s persistent and continued use of the same character. From that moment on the “Kelly girl,” the proposed personality of the company and their agency Calkins & Holden, would become the mascot that would accompany Kelly-Springfield tires for years in their advertising journey, being applied to different supports (figs. 23-28).

In June 1911, Printers’ Ink magazine, one that specialized in the publishing and advertising sector, published an article that inquired into the details of how the character was created. The response was facilitated by an agency that was never named directly—of course it dealt with Calkins & Holden—, which made the following statements on the subject:

“The maker of the Kelly-Springfield automobile tire has been making [solid] rubber tires for the past fifteen years. They have been advertised nearly that long (…) Therefore, the chief purpose of this advertising is to keep the name before the people and to remind people that it is the same name they have depended upon in the past in getting the best tires for their carriages. In view of this we have not felt it necessary to go into lengthy arguments relative to the construction of Kelly-Springfield automobile tires. What we have striven to do was first to secure attention and then leave an impression. The natural thing in an automobile tire advertisement would be to show a cut of the tire, but a cut of a Kelly-Springfield tire looks just like the cut of any other automobile tire (…) The thing that gets an attractive young woman into an advertisement is this—that an attractive young woman is something that attracts most people (…) The only purpose of the Kelly-Springfield girl is to draw attention to the Kelly-Springfield tire.”\footnote{13}

Between 1911 and 1914, the photographic portrait of the Kelly girl was applied in press advertisements, newspapers and in general and specialized magazines of the automotive sector. She toured the entire country from coast to coast stamped on the front of letters in various promotional mailings and was reproduced lithographically to full size for decorating the windows of establishments associated with the commercial network of Consolidated Rubber where Kelly-Springfield tires were sold. Her image was presented in three characteristic poses based on the same photographic portrait: a full-bodied figure sitting on the tire and two variants—a frontal and a lateral one—in which an enlarged close-up was
framed by a tire. In the first case, the portrait was presented in a frontal view with the form of a circular tondo and in the second, in a lateral view, as a vertical oval tondo (figs. 25-28). These last variants, where the tire served as a “window” or frame through which the character emerged, became a configuration applied thereafter to the mascot’s appearances (figs. 30-35).

6. A feminine smile
In January 1915 a new advertising director, Maurice Switzer (1870-1929), joined the renowned Kelly-Springfield Tire Company. He had been previously employed in the advertising department of the Leslie-Judge Co. publishing house in New York, owner of the general magazine Leslie’s Weekly and the humorous magazine Judge. Moreover, he also served in both publications as an editorial collaborator in charge of different sections in which he published his own texts and humorous poems. The influence of Switzer on the development of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. was such that in 1925, he became the company’s Vice President and a member of the board of directors.

In my opinion it is likely that this incorporation was due to a prior fluid relationship and good understanding between the advertising agency, Calkin & Holden, and Judge magazine and its publishing house where Switzer worked. It is precisely in this publication where a series of interesting and original advertisements for Kelly-Springfield tires accompanied by female figures were published in 1914. In the issues corresponding to January 3, April 11 and August 1 of Judge, on the back cover of the magazine— and, therefore, reproduced in full color—Kelly-Springfield advertisements were published. These recaptured the illustration and design of the cover for that same issue and reinterpreted it by applying certain changes for advertising purposes (figs. 88-91). This referential and narrative strategy between the front and back covers required a great deal of creativity and effective coordination between the parties involved, a process in which it is highly likely that the talent of Switzer was engaged.

On the other hand, irony, humor and witticisms were a style that characterized the texts and rhymes of Switzer, very much in line with the advertising approaches applied by Earnest Elmo Calkins in his advertising activity. This is evidenced in The Kant Slip Motor Goose [referring to the nursery rhymes of Mother Goose] a story published in 1917 by Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. that could be ordered for the price of 20 cents. It contained verses from Switzer and caricatures and humorous illustrations by August William Hutaf (1879-1942) which featured the tire (figs. 62-63).

One of Switzer’s first tasks—where he applied his editorial knowledge—was the start-up and direction of the corporate magazine or house-organ of the company. The first issue of The Kant Slip appeared in October 1915 and was published monthly until October 1923 (figs. 60-61). Two other publications followed suit, Motor Chat (1925-1926) and The Kellygram (1927). Kant Slip was the name of the non-skid pneumatic tire model whose 100% rubber tread included ‘X’-shaped studs with rounded tips, and was launched in 1915 under the trade name “Kelly-Springfield Kant Slip Tread.” The term “Kant Slip”—probably a contribution by Switzer himself—was a play on words of the phrase “can’t slip” which defined the new tire cover’s qualities to grip the road while in motion.

In the first issue of the magazine—designed 23 x 28 cm and printed in two colors—, the publication consisted of fourteen pages plus covers. The front cover portrayed the “Kelly girl” peeking through a tire and her figure, shown in different poses, adorned sections and interior editorial content as well. As Switzer expressed in an article published in November 1917, the magazine had five objectives: to create a means of cohesion for the commercial network; establish a bond of comradery between members of
the organization; provide suggestions and assistance to the retailer; produce information that raised merchants and consumers’ awareness of the high quality of Kelly-Springfield brand tires and inner tubes and the care with which they were manufactured; and, finally, which was highlighted as a differential characteristic of the publication, to offer articles on general topics of interest to the motoring public that were not directly related to the company’s brands or activities. According to his words, “A house-organ that constantly talks shop—its own shop—is tedious company; as dull as the fellow who everlastingly talks about himself.”

Following these parameters, the photographic images were utilized in certain cases to portray company employees or show the facades and shop windows of the establishments associated with the commercial network. Still and all, illustrations—more specifically, caricature illustrations—held a prominent role as a vehicle of humor that permeated the entire publication, especially in those early years. Switzer himself wrote many of the articles and humorous rhymes that were published in each issue.

Taking advantage of the mascot’s stellar debut in the corporate magazine, for her public launch Switzer gave the character a new look that was more in keeping with female fashion and the trends of that period. Also, for the first time she was presented with her own name: Lotta Miles. Again, an ingenious play on words was employed as ‘Lotta’ was an informal diminutive of the name Carlotta, and also the contraction of ‘a lot of’. As such, Lotta Miles could be interpreted as ‘a lot of miles’ making a clear reference to the long life of Kelly-Springfield pneumatic tires.

7. Models, actresses and divas

By 1916, the canonical way of depicting Lotta Miles in advertisements had been established: the mascot’s upper torso was portrayed protruding out of a pneumatic tire. This representation would be repeated constantly over the years, mutating and adapting the appearance of the face, hairstyle and clothing to the style of the times and replacing the obsolete tire model with the new one (figs. 30-35 and 41-53). The image became so popular among people that it was customary to portray themselves informally within a Kelly-Springfield tire—or that of another brand—imitating her characteristic pose.

It should be noted that image of Lotta Miles was never used in the market segment of solid rubber tires for cargo vehicles. An example is seen in advertisements for the massive Kelly Kats truck tires, which included the slogan “The tire with nine lives” and employed the drawing of a cat’s silhouette as a representative symbol next to the name of the firm. Of course, the slogan referred to the popular saying about the numerous lives a cat has, which is nine in the case of Anglo-Saxon culture (figs. 64-72).

To give life to the character, the company hired young actresses and models. One of the first to embody the Kelly girl was the actress and singer Florence Court (1893-1937). Converted into an image of the company, she posed for the Kelly-Springfield tire advertisements and, from that moment on, she adopted the stage name of Lotta Miles. Thus, this was how she appeared in the distribution of performances advertised in posters and theatrical programs. Perhaps the most famous of her performances was as a leading actress, along with the Marx brothers—the famous comedians—in the hit musical comedy I’ll say she is! a popular expression in reference to the affirmation “Isn’t she gorgeous?” Originally starring actress Muriel Hudson, who appeared with her real name, the play premiered in different theaters throughout 1923. At the end of that year, Florence Court entered the cast to replace Hudson and the posters, advertisements, and playbills showed her name as Miss Lotta Miles (figs. 36-40).
Other models and actresses interpreted Kelly-Springfield’s character. One of them was the budding actress Norma Shearer (1900–1983), who subsequently turned into a famous actress and diva of silent film and later, those with sound. This Canadian model moved from Montreal to New York in February 1921, and began to pose professionally for different agencies and advertisers before making the leap to stage performances and the silver screen (figs. 31-35). How did Shearer become the Kelly girl? Gavin Lambert (1990) explained this in his book Norma Shearer: A Life:

“Norma moved back from Montréal to New York in early February of 1921 and started posing for advertisements. Norma sniffing a vial of perfume on a magazine cover caught the eye of an executive of the Springfield Tire and Rubber Company. He chose her as the new model for Springfield tires, and she graduated to a large billboard at Columbus Circle, floodlit at night. Miss Lotta Miles first appeared in public sitting inside the rim of a tire; she wore a rakish fedora and smiled down at the traffic. Next she was featured from the waist up, in a swimsuit. Smiling again at the traffic below, Miss Lotta Miles made a neat swan dive through the middle of the tire.”

8. Lotta Miles, a star on celluloid and on paper

The Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. was one of the most active tire industry companies in employing the emerging film industry as an advertising platform. Between 1916 and 1920 they produced at least three different films whose themes were related to the automotive world and featured Lotta Miles as the leading actress. Kelly-Springfield tires would appear in them, inserted in small stories of drama and comedy that were not explicitly presented as advertising. This followed the line of what we understand today as product placement, which is so commonplace in film and television productions. From the company’s advertising department—whose offices were located in a building on the corner of 57th Street and Broadway—, copies of these films were distributed to the tire stores and distributors throughout the country that requested them. The purpose was to project them as a complement to the principal shows in sessions that were held at theater halls of their respective towns.

In 1916, The Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. commissioned their first film, The Fable of Adelbert and the Tire, produced by the study Lee Lash Co. in New York. The story starred the actor and playwright Cecil Lean and the actress Cleo Mayfield who were married in real life since 1914. They were one of the most famous artistic couples of the time and performed on Broadway and in theaters throughout the country. In this silent film, Mayfield interpreted Lotta Miles, who emerged from a burning billboard to help Adelbert, a troubled motorist played by Lean.

On the morning of December 9, 1920, the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. presented at the Rialto Theater in New York—a limited access, by invitation only—première—their two new films: Shoeing the Horse of Progress and Blowout Bill’s Busted Romance. Both were commissioned to the producer Bauer Films Inc.—a film studio specializing in entertainment, industrial and educational films—, were directed by Harry A. Pollard and featured the actress Katherine Spencer in the starring role of Lotta Miles. The second film, a story eleven minutes long, featured Blowout Bill, an unfortunate user of other tire brands—incarnated by actor Bud Geary—who was aided on the road by Lotta Miles (figs. 54-56).

The playbills of theatrical performances, shows and film sessions that took place in prominent stages during the first part of the twentieth century, such as Broadway theaters, constituted ideal channels for advertising major brands. The luxury, exclusivity and purchasing power of the social class that came to
these theaters was reflected in the products shown: Murad Turkish cigarettes, Colgate cosmetics, Buick cars … and, of course, the new Kelly-Springfield tires. Moreover, in the preshow and intermissions of the performances and film screenings, the stage was converted into a large billboard as the screen exhibited the projected slides and transparencies containing commercial messages (figs. 57-59).

As explained in Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.’s commercial advertising manual—produced by the company and intended to guide contracted distributors on the issue—in reference to the advertising slides: “Everybody goes to the movies—that’s why sales messages flashed upon the screen are effective advertising. The attention of the audience at a motion picture show is focused on the screen, and when an ad appears upon it everybody sees it (…) People go to the movies for entertainment. They generally are in a contented state of mind, free from distraction during the program, which increases the opportunities of the screen ad to ‘put over’ its message.”

Between 1918 and 1925, theater programs were repeatedly utilized to advertise Kelly-Springfield tires. These included colorful advertisements that were combined with illustrations of automobile scenes—without the presence of Lotta Miles—(figs. 78-87), and others in which she continued being the only protagonist. Of the latter, the series of advertisements illustrated by Louis Mayer (1869-1969) stand out (figs. 41-52). This type of advertising demonstrated one of the company’s strategic approaches, which consisted of targeting and gaining the loyalty of consumers with high purchasing power. This target group was expanded to include a segment of the population impregnated with an aspirational feeling that reflected the name and status enjoyed by performing arts stars and the world of glamor and luxury that surrounded them (figs. 180-182).

9. Advertising lights and shadows

Although the mascot Lotta Miles was present in a large part of the press advertisements for Kelly-Springfield tires, she was not always the main figure. Throughout 1916, for example, one campaign used cartoon-like illustrations, in synthetic black and white horizontal comic strips that headed the compositions. They depicted humorous scenes full of cartoon characters—illustrated by Charles E. Howell—and in the footer, under the persuasive text, the mascot appeared as a cut out in a small size, protruding out of the tire (figs. 73-77).

During 1916-1919, Lotta Miles maintained an intense presence in the corporate, promotional and advertising communication of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. From 1920, her relevance in press campaigns was reduced to sporadic appearances in certain advertisements. However, her status as a company mascot was maintained for outdoor advertising displays—panels, wall murals and highway billboards—that were developed throughout this decade (figs. 174 and 176-180). For example, in the three-month campaign that took place between April and June 1923, the image of tires accompanied by Lotta Miles was applied in a large format. This dealt with posters that were composed of different lithographed sheets fitted together and glued onto wooden support panels; approximately 19,000 such billboards were distributed throughout the country.

These gigantic landscape posters alternated with a new type of advertising support that took advantage of the new possibilities provided by electricity: illuminated billboards. Although their manufacture, assembly and maintenance represented an enormous economic expenditure, their advertising effect was unquestionable. Thus, certain strategically chosen enclaves and the city centers of major U.S. metropolises were illuminated by the deployment of huge advertising structures where the name of the com-
pany shone (figs. 183-185). One of the most spectacular electric billboards—in this particular case without the presence of Lotta Miles—was the one in 1914 that was assembled in New York City on the roof of a building facing Times Square. The installation, 27 meters wide by 22.5 meters high, showed the message “Kelly-Springfield—the last word in TIRES” composed of 3,000 aligned light bulbs (fig. 186).

10. A fine and elegant line
In 1918, an advertising campaign was launched that featured large black and white illustrations linked to witty, subtle and pleasant humorous dialogues, which included positive references to the qualities of Kelly-Springfield pneumatic tires. The influence of Maurice Switzer in the company’s advertising approach resulted in the hiring of an illustrator capable of transmitting the elitist and modern image that was to be associated with the tire brand. The individual chosen was Laurence Fellows (1885-1964), a prestigious free-lance illustrator with a defined line, sharp and fine lines, who also stood out for his subsequent fashion illustrations in Esquire magazine. His elegant style evolved in the advertisements he made for Kelly, going from a strict and austere initial use of line drawings to monochromatic gouache and its shades of gray. Golf courses, picnic scenes, characters on the road with luxurious cars … the stylized human types portrayed by Fellows—which included the uninhibited flappers—represented the sophisticated, elegant and idle world of American high society in the twenties, the era of jazz and dances such as the Charleston.

The fact that Fellows had been a longstanding regularly contributing illustrator for Judge magazine was a key factor in his being hired. Switzer and Fellows had coincided over an extended period of time, from 1912 to 1914, one contributing his texts and the other his drawings to the publication’s editorial pages. Fellows used to illustrate sections and short stories, often using automotive themes (figs. 92-94 and 96). This is probably why he was hired by Switzer after the latter had been incorporated in January 1915 into the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company as advertising director. Between March and July of that same year, Fellows illustrated a few advertisements for the Kelly-Springfield tires that were published in color and in black and white in the humorous magazines Judge and Life, as well as in other types of publications such as The National Geographic (fig. 95).

Thus, in the 1918 campaign the collaboration with Laurence Fellows resumed, proposing that he work side by side with the copywriter Henry R. Hurd, who was Maurice Switzer’s right hand man in the advertising department. Hurd had fulfilled this role at least since 1919 and subsequently, he would become Fellows’ successor as advertising director. In autumn of that year, Hurd took over the editorial direction of The Kant Slip magazine, assisted by art directors Beverly Towers and, later, by Clarence A. De Giers (1888-1987). The advertisements resulting from the collaboration of the tandem Hurd-Fellows presented a single illustration accompanied by a humorous message related to the scene, which usually did not surpass two lines in length. The text referred to Kelly-Springfield tires, but the advertisement did not include any additional corporate information, not even a slogan, the company’s logotype and business address, nor the image of Lotta Miles (figs. 97-105).

The conditions to take into account when referring to the creation of the illustrations, in terms of the subject, were as follows: scenes that were depicted had to be related in some way to motoring—cars parked, in transit, refueling at service stations, in the repair shop or damaged on the road—where at least one human figure appeared and one of the wheels of the vehicle shown was equipped with a Kelly-Springfield tire. Regarding the technical and stylistic conditions, the illustration had to be strictly black and white—a point that evolved later, maintaining the monochrome drawing with line profiles but
allowing certain shades of gray with fillings. This granted freedom to adapt, as needed, the whiteness of the page leaving large “empty” spaces to generate tensions in the composition (fig. 104). 32 In an article published February 1920 in the magazine Printers’ Ink, dedicated exclusively to these advertisements, Switzer defended the humorous approach, which comprised another of the campaign’s basic tenets:

“Why do people read magazines, anyhow? Primarily for entertainment or relaxation. Only secondarily for instruction. We use many of the publications of the lighter and amusing sort. It is therefore our belief that the advertisement which will appeal to the reader most is that which is in accord with his mood—his desire to be entertained or amused. Consequently, ours carries a light touch. It is meant to be amusing or entertaining in itself. The picture often portrays a humorous situation and the little conversational bits of copy are written in harmony with it. We are not afraid of humor in advertising. On the contrary, we have proof of effectiveness (…) In the second place, it must be remembered that few persons in this day and time read a periodical from cover to cover. They skim over the pages and pause only at something that has an instant attraction for them. Therefore, our advertisements are intended to meet that necessity. We depend on the picture to arrest attention. The copy is then kept brief and pungent so as to make its point quickly and show the reader that he faces no long argument.” 33

The following presents a statement expressed by Hurd in describing these advertisements for an advertising campaign that would last, without variations in its design, until 1931. The level of complicity between the two was to such a degree during these thirteen years of joint work that, according to Hurd:

“At that time we were the Tiffany of the tire industry. We felt that for an ambitious million dollar advertising budget, we needed something more than merely a punning (Lotta Miles) trade character such as we had been using in our outdoor display (…) Sometimes I would send him the copy and he would do a drawing to fit the text; sometimes I would run dry and write copy to whatever picture he felt like producing.” 34

In 1930, a year that marked the beginning of the deep economic recession, a press campaign was developed with full-page advertisements showing a large tire, accompanied with a reduced illustration by Fellows. It was an indication of the depletion of an advertising strategy that had been successful during a given period of time (figs. 112-116). During the economic slump, some of the advertisements previously published in black and white were resuscitated in a smaller format than what had been originally printed in magazines. The same illustrations were used in advertisements inserted in small theatrical programs, but these were published in color. Significantly, Laurence Fellows’ signature—who was probably not involved in this reutilization—had been eliminated.

11. From family car to transport vehicles
The illustration of scenes portraying the automotive world initiated by Laurence Fellows had continuity between 1925 and 1926 in other shorter but noteworthy campaigns. The most interesting ones, illustrated by the artists Peter Helck and Otto Kuhler, were also published in black and white. The advertisements for this series also excluded the company’s female mascot, who was confined to commercial and corporate stationery and exterior advertising elements.
Clarence Peter Helck (1893-1988) was one of the greatest illustrators who specialized in portraying the automobile age. The symbiosis between man and machine, in scenes where movement and speed are always present, was a constant in his work throughout his career. Among his advertising commissions for the tire industry the following advertisements stand out: those made in 1925 for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.; his previous collaboration with The Fisk Rubber Company between 1918 and 1919, as discussed in Chapter 23, and their advertising mascot, the sleepy boy in pajamas.

During 1925, Helck illustrated a series of advertisements for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. entitled “The Peregrinations of the Pecks” starring a fictional family, the Pecks, that would be published in the travel magazine *The National Geographic* and in the generalist magazines *The Saturday Evening Post* and *The Literary Digest*. This campaign, composed of a dozen advertisements, debuted with a first entry in *The Saturday Evening Post* on March 7 and the series was closed four months later, with the publication of the last advertisement on July 11. The plot was developed to advertise the Kelly-Springfield Flexible Cord tires with cord technology. They offered a much higher level of resistance and longer wear than that of previous fabric technology models. As such, the reference to a long road trip that would test the virtues of the new tires was contemplated in the plot (figs. 117-125).

The first advertisement of the series relates that Jim Peck, father of a New York family whose work comprised of selling life, fire and accident insurance, decides to make a long-delayed project a reality: a family trip by car to California that would last several weeks, crossing the country from coast to coast and sharing experiences with his wife and two children. It’s an adventure they had been talking about for three years and taking advantage of a long vacation, they are finally going to make it happen. As can be read in the text of the initial advertisement: “This is the first vacation that Jim has taken in five years. Changing tires on the road is one of the things he is NOT planning to do, hence the Kellys “(fig. 117).

Advertisements transitioned from the high-class sophistication of those by Laurence Fellows to the vicissitudes of a suburban New York family portrayed by Peter Helck. Jim Peck, his wife, his son Jim and his daughter would travel through different scenarios in a car equipped with Kelly-Springfield tires and having only two spare tires. There would never be a need to utilize them except for when they were lent to a motorist with a flat tire (fig. 123).

The original illustrations of Peter Helck were authentic paintings, full of nuances and of precise figurative drawing that was reproduced in a single ink for all the campaign advertisements. Helck recreated detailed locations with compositions that enhanced the depth of the scenes, in which characters were placed performing some kind of action and never in static poses. In these paintings, the perspective applied to the automobile—a compulsory element—helped to emphasize the presence of its tires.

During the first half of 1926, the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company launched a campaign to jointly promote two basic tire lines from their catalog that were designed to equip heavy vehicles: their already known solid rubber tire models branded as the Kelly Kats and Kelly Caterpillar, suitable for trucks and freight vehicles; and their novel Heavy Duty Cord tires with cord technology designed for passenger transport vehicles. The illustrations of the six advertisements in the series were made by Otto Augustus Kuhler (1894-1976). Of German origin but residing in the United States—he obtained U.S. nationality in 1928—, Kuhler was a recognized industrial designer of automobile bodies and modern locomotives in the thirties and forties, as well as a painter, illustrator, graphic designer and writer. As an advertising illustrator, he specialized in sketched illustrations on architecture and engineering, suitable for advertising the activities and products of companies related to these professions in an ‘artistic’ manner. In
the case of The Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.’s commission, the illustrations of buses and trucks were technically portrayed with a line similar to the one obtained in sketch drawings and the combination of dry techniques such as charcoal and graphite, with rough, thick sketched lines and blurred, indistinct contours (figs 126-131).

12. A premature retirement: the crisis of the forties

Between 1910, the date that Lotta Miles first appeared, and the late 1930s, the female mascot of Kelly-Springfield starred in countless advertisements for the company. In 1935, Kelly-Springfield became a subsidiary of Goodyear and, as seen in the advertising campaigns developed from then on, the new directives did not contemplate extricating Lotta Miles from her dormant state.

Between 1935 and 1940, the advertisements for Kelly-Springfield tires depicted the manufacturer’s official service stations, a guarantee of personalized assistance for customers. Photography was the graphic tool used to show these establishments and their users, portraying individuals, couples, groups of friends and families being served by qualified employees. Women drivers were taken into account as a consumer. Although the majority of advertisements represented her as a passenger companion for a male driver, in certain images a modern, determined, independent woman was portrayed, who was in command of the steering wheel and of her life and whose car was equipped with Kelly tires. In this sense, one of the most utilized support images in these campaigns was that of a woman driving the car equipped with a Kelly-Springfield spare tire attached to the side of the vehicle, perhaps constituting a reference to the omnipresent Lotta Miles of yesteryear. It is also within this period that green was established as the corporate color that would define the brand from that moment on and lasting to the present day (figs. 141-146).

Between 1944 and 1948, after a period of activity focused on manufacturing weapons for the army, advertising production resumed. A series of consecutive campaigns were launched that presented the same basic graphic design and which recovered full-color illustrations as the mode of representation. A single advertisement at the beginning of the series paid tribute to Lotta Miles as a symbol of the company and as an example of commercial service that had been provided for so many years (fig. 147). The composition of these campaigns followed the prototypes previously established by Hurd and Fellows’ advertisements, which showed an automobile scene accompanied by dialoguing characters. However, in contrast to the originals, a lower section was added which integrated corporate information and small illustrations, including the image of Lotta Miles or a Kelly service man.

In the illustrations, mostly signed by Slayton Underhill (1913-2002), the characters and Kelly-Springfield tires were realistically portrayed in full color. In contrast, the rest of the elements such as the background, objects or the automobile was outlined with schematic green contour lines—the corporate color—over a white background. In this way, the goal was to highlight the protagonists and to bolster the connection between the tire and the human element.36

The last public appearances of Lotta Miles are limited to the advertisements for this campaign. An updated Lotta Miles with long, wavy blond hair emerged from a Kelly-Springfield pneumatic tire, emblematically signing the advertisements within a thick green footer and in her characteristic pose as corporate mascot and company symbol (figs. 149-154). However, she was not the only character performing these functions of corporate representation and gradually, she was phased out. The tires were presented and offered by new advertising mascots—in this case of the male gender—, the “Kelly service men.”
The advertisements included, in these and in subsequent campaigns, the image of uniformed and smiling service station employees, willing to advise and remedy the problems of the motoring consumer (figs. 155-163). This was also the case in the series of advertisements from the early fifties illustrated by Robert “Bob” Childress (1915-1983), in which scenes of driving and in traffic featuring families with children were presented. These scenes were accompanied by the cut-out detail of a uniformed employee holding a tire next to a sign identifying The Kelly-Springfield Tire Company service stations. The advertisements, which were all reproduced in black and white, employed a detailed and realistic drawing style which was characteristic of the advertising graphics of the times (figs. 164-166).

The figure of Lotta Miles faded away in this new scenario, completely ceasing to be utilized as of the fifties. She was only resuscitated on rare occasions, which basically consisted of being applied to commemorative material for the company.
Notes
1. “Rubber tired wheel,” United States Patent, solicited on November 14, 1895 and granted on February 18, 1896 with the reference number 554675.
3. The Buckeye Rubber Co. was registered on July 9, 1900 in the state of New Jersey, although their offices were located in Akron, Ohio. The Stark County Democrat (Canton, Ohio), July 13, 1900.
4. “Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.,” The India Rubber World, April 1, 1917.
5. According to news published in the magazine The India Rubber World, as follows: “The rubber trade at Akron,” October 1, 1910, p. 27; “The Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.,” December 1, 1915; “The rubber trade in Ohio,” November 1, 1925.
6. “Growth to follow on war demands,” Automobile Topics, November 23, 1918, pp. 215 and 221.
7. “Southern notes,” The India Rubber World, November 1, 1919, p. 111.
10. The attribution of Consolidated Rubber’s advertising account to Calkins & Holden is the result of my research, based on the lists of their clients published in the news and articles of the specialized magazine Printers’ Ink: “Some striking page ads,” November 18, 1903, p. 28; “A ‘copy’ agency,” March 16, 1904, pp. 8-9; “Selecting an agency,” July 17, 1907, p. 4; and in the Calkins & Holden advertisement dated January 8, 1914, p. 7.
11. William Ray Gardinier was Vice President and advertising agent for the Curtis-Newhall agency in Los Angeles, California, which he left in mid-1917 to start his own company. The Gardiner & Wells agency, with headquarters on Madison Avenue in New York, rapidly grew. In 1921 they already had a delegation in Chicago and managed accounts as important as the NK Fairbank Co.—with leading brands such as Fairy Soap or Gold Dust detergents—or the National Biscuit Company (Nabisco), as well as that of Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. “Advertising agents,” Advertising & Selling, August 1917, p. 10; Bulletin no. 4025. American Newspaper Publishers Association, New York, January 4, 1919, which lists the advertising agents recognized by the association. The last identified reference that relates Gardinier & Wells to Kelly’s advertising is in the review “Advertising accounts now being placed by the agencies,” The Fourth Estate, April 15, 1922, p. 26.
12. As can be read in the advertisement published in Life magazine, November 19, 1908, reproduced in this chapter.
15. Switzer continued to maintain contact and collaborate sporadically with Judge while working for Kelly, in addition to writing articles in specialist magazines in the printing and advertising sector such as Printing Art, Advertising & Selling and The Mailbag. He also wrote fifteen books, usually in a humorous tone, among which are certain advertising topics such as Wild and Tame Advertising or How to Become a Director of Publicity in One Lesson (1914); Who pays the advertising bills? (1915) and Trying it on the Dog (1921). Switzer was born in 1970 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Established in New York, he worked as a director and advertising manager at the Havana-American Company between 1900-1901. He later held the same position at the Wilson Distilling Company for a decade, before entering Judge’s advertising department in 1914. “Switzer joins MAMA Council,” Automobile Topics, August 5, 1922.
Advertising Department was responsible for editing the monthly magazine, under the direction of Lowell R. Stark. The magazine could be purchased for 10 cents per issue or for a twelve-month subscription which cost $1. The magazine was offered to businesses affiliated with the Kelly-Springfield commercial network at advantageous conditions. Starting from the fact that in these cases the cost of each copy of the magazine was 5 cents, the conditions were the following:

If 200 copies of each monthly number were ordered for one year, the total cost was $10 and in each edition a personalized business advertisement inserted as a full-page inside cover was included;
If 100 copies of each monthly number were ordered for a year, the total cost was $5.00 and the name of the business and its address was displayed on a front page footer banner.

Information taken from the magazine *Motor Chat*, October 1925 and from the attached reprint addressed to tire distributors and businesses.

17. The tread was patented on June 24, 1913, reference number 44,241. The brand “Kelly-Springfield Kant Slip Tread” was approved on September 14, 1915, reference number 71,401. “Trade Marks,” *The India Rubber World*, October 1, 1915, p. 43.


20. After the creation of the Kelly girl, in 1910, the delegation of The Consolidated Rubber Tire Company in Philadelphia organized a contest at the end of the year to name the character. In their facilities a full-scale cut out display of her figure sitting on a tire was exhibited. The award for the best name consisted of a new automobile pneumatic tire. “Philadelphia,” *Automobile Topics* magazine, December 3, 1910.

21. The slogan “Kelly Kats the tire with nine lives” accompanied the silhouettes of two cats and was inscribed as a registered brand, and accepted on May 30, 1922 with the reference number 155,463.

22. A 1924 news item published in the press presented brief statements made by Florence Court regarding her relationship with the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.: “I am the most photographed girl in America. You see, I started my career as a professional photographer’s model. It is a regular business. I was posed in every possible way and my picture adorned tooth paste advertisements, automobile ads, ads for silk underwear and corset ads. That is how I happened to take the name of Lotta Miles. I am known all over the United States as the girl who is photographed in the ads about a certain well known automobile tire. My real name is Florence Court, but when I went on the stage I took the name Lotta Miles because the automobile tire is supposed to last a ‘lot of miles’. Isn’t that unique?.” “Prima donna most photographed girl in United States,” *The Evening Review* (East Liverpool, Ohio), January 25, 1924, p. 10.

23. In 1986, the Kelly-Springfield corporate magazine of the time, *K-S Today*, interviewed a nonagenarian Charlotte Moeller, who had worked as an advertising and fashion model in New York between 1912 and the 1920s. Moeller interpreted Lotta Miles in the 1920s, as a model for promotional photographs and illustrations applied to billboards and press advertisements. As she explained, at that time her salary as a model was around 200-300 dollars per week, which was tax-exempt. “Model’s beauty helped promote K-S tires,” *K-S Today*, January 1896.

24. Her first roles had brought her a reputation as a “modern woman,” sexually uninhibited and belligerent with the repressive Victorian morality, an authentic flapper. Her transition to sound film came without any problems, premiering her first film with her own voice in 1929. Nominated six times for Hollywood’s Academy Awards, she won the best actress award for her role in *The Divorcee* (1930), one of more than fifty films in which she participated before retiring in 1942. LAMBERT, Gavin. *Norma Shearer: A Life*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1990, p. 28.


28. I have been able to find scarce information about this illustrator, who specializes in the creation of vignettes with characters and lettering for advertising and editorial use. Charles E. Howell began his career in Washington, DC, working as an editorial cartoonist for the Washington Post. Subsequently he moved to New York, to work first for the New York World and then for the New York Globe. He joined the art department of Calkins & Holden, probably at the time he made the series of advertisements for Kelly-Springfield (1916). Later he became independent and formed his own agency, the Cartoonaday Company, specializing in small accompanying illustrations, called “Howell cuts.” He also collaborated intensively in The Nation’s Business magazine, regularly illustrating articles for the publication since 1916 until the early 1920s.


30. As an example, the two full-color advertisements of 1915, inserted in Judge, March 27 and May 22; and black and white advertisements of the same year inserted in Life, June 17, and in the monthly magazine The National Geographic, in July.

31. Henry R. Hurd appeared in June 1919 as the associate editor—the editor-in-chief being Switzer—in the editorial listing of the corporate magazine The Kant Slip, together with the art director Beverly Towles. In the December issue, Hurd was already the managing editor, accompanied by art director Clarence A. De Giers. In 1936, after the purchase of Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. by Goodyear, that same year Hurd would leave the company to work for the competitor The Fisk Rubber Corp. as advertising director, a position he held until March 1940. “Hurd leaves Fisk,” Automobile Topics, March 18, 1940.

32. As explained in the article by Russell, C. P. “‘Unprofessional’ advertising that builds for future sales,” Printers’ Ink, February 12, 1920, pp. 49-51, in which the explanations offered by Switzer regarding the campaign are exposed.

In regards to the “empty” spaces in these types of advertisements, in my opinion, they are an expressive and graphic element that allows the advertiser to convey that they can afford not to “fill” contracted space, a valuable space whose cost per line, per square centimeter, was perfectly stipulated. In this way, the Kelly-Springfield advertisements represent a high-end product, aimed at a select, elite, discerning consumer, who does not need to be harassed or saturated with an accumulation of persuasive or propagandistic information.

33. Russell, C. P. “‘Unprofessional’ advertising that builds for future sales,” Printers’ Ink, February 12, 1920, p. 50. In the article the verbatim, quoted statements of Switzer were compiled. Subsequently, Switzer himself published an article with direct reference to this campaign: Switzer, Maurice. “Taking the ad out of advertising,” Advertising & Selling, December 16, 1925, pp. 28 and 46.


35. As explained in the advertisements’ texts, the trip began after the Pecks depart from their residence, loading their car on a ferry to cross the Hudson and reach the shores of the state of New Jersey. From there they left for Washington, the county seat of Daviess County, Indiana, where they stayed for three days and then, to Pinehurst, North Carolina, a place of reference for golf lovers. Then they continued on to Saint Louis, Missouri, making part of the trip by steamboat across the Mississippi.
Later, they resumed the trip towards the Grand Canyon in Colorado, where they practiced throwing a lasso, just like authentic cowboys. Their next stage led them to visit several towns of native American Indians in New Mexico, and then continued their way to the movie mecca, Los Angeles. From there they left for San Francisco, stopping to visit one of the historic Spanish missions, still run by a religious community. Once in San Francisco, where they stayed several days, they visited typical places, such as the city’s Chinatown district.

It is likely that the story portrayed by Helck was based on the suggestions and indications of William Ray Gardiner’s personal life experiences. He was the director of the advertising agency Gardiner & Wells who managed the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. account. Gardiner had a wife and a son, Ray Gardiner Jr. who in 1924 already worked with his father in the agency. During the investigation I discovered an indicative news item about the topic in the press: “Gardiners are back in New York City after southern trip,” Washington Herald, February 4, 1924. The news item explains that W. R. Gardiner was a native of Washington, Indiana and that the couple had a winter residence in New York City and a summer one in Huntington, Long Island, New York. They had recently returned from a trip to the south of the country, visiting the town of Pinehurst, North Carolina.

36. Slayton Underhill was an illustrator who specialized in portraits which he applied working as a cover artist for leading generalist magazines such as The Saturday Evening Post, Life, Collier’s and Time. He was known as the “Master of the Hat,” due to his advertising portraits for the Stetson hat brand. In them models included famous celebrities such as Douglas Fairbanks and Bing Crosby, who appeared wearing “fedora” hats. He also worked for prestigious brands such as Viceroy cigarettes and Lincoln and Mercury automobile brands. In 1944, he made illustrations for several advertisements of the tire company BF Goodrich, a competitor of Kelly.

Bibliography


2. Page from the Catalog for the Columbia Pneumatic Wagon Wheel Co. showing their wheels with pneumatic tires for carriages and wagons, c. 1895.

3. Half-page vertical advertising module published in the magazine McClure’s, June 1901.
RUBBER AND WIRES. The above image shows the advertisement for the Consolidated Rubber Tire Co. and their three types of solid rubber tires, reinforced by internal tension wires—one, two and four wires, respectively, in each model—which allowed for their secure attachment to the rims of the vehicles’ wooden wheels. The uniqueness of this advertisement is that it presents the solid rubber tires for automobiles, published in the magazine The Horseless Age, thus emphasizing “the era [of vehicles] without horses.”

4. Full-page advertisement published in the specialized sector magazine The Horseless Age, April 11, 1900.
The examples included on this page present advertisements for wheels with solid rubber Kelly-Springfield tires for carriages and coaches. The illustrated cross section shows the basic components of the technology used in their construction. In this case, there are two or three wires that reinforce the rubber internally. The characteristic shape of the section of rubber tire fitted onto the wheel's rim served as a compositional element to graphically define advertising modules published in the press. The 1902 advertisement shown above demonstrates how the tire's cross sectional outline was employed as a frame containing information and serving as a base for the illustration. The images on the left depict the tire cross section— with its two wires—being transformed into an illustrated vignette accompanied by a persuasive text with the signature of Consolidated Rubber Tire Co. This last series from 1903 is signed 'CH', the initials of the Calkins & Holden agency.

6-9. Advertising modules published during 1903 in Scribner's Magazine, September; and The Literary Digest, October 3, November 7 and December 5.
CUPIDS AND SUSPENSION. The above illustration portrays a group of cupids pulling a carriage, suspended in the air above the clouds. This serves as an allegory about the qualities of the solid rubber tires that equipped the wheels of the vehicle. The shock absorption provided by the rubber minimized vibrations resulting from the jolting caused by driving over irregularities and potholes of pathways and roads. The passengers, such as the lady portrayed in the image—who carries a branch of fluffy cotton, alluding to yet another attribute—benefited from a smoother ride, as though riding on air to their destination.

13. Advertising module published in Life magazine, January 17, 1907. In this case, the advertisement’s design stands out for employing photography, combined with the illustration of a wheel which simulates the face of a clock.
SOLD ALL OVER THE WORLD.
The above image constitutes an explicit advertisement for the Consolidated Rubber Tire Co., showing the markets in which they were present in 1901 and the commercial exploitation of their patented technology of solid rubber tires with tension wires. Below, two examples of solid rubber tire advertising are presented, disseminated in countries such as Italy and Australia.

15. Promotional postcard for the Italian import dealership H. Partridge Smith in Milan, c. 1900.
The page shows three examples of the Consolidated Rubber Tire Co.'s advertisements during the early 20th century. The first two consist of allegorical images relaying the acceptance of their solid rubber tires in international markets. The third advertisement portrays their leadership in the U.S. market represented by a well-known patriotic image.

17. Advertising module in the magazine Frank Leslie’s Popular Monthly, May 1901.
18. Advertising module in the Horseless Age, June 26, 1901.
AUTOMOBILE TIRES. This page shows three examples of the first press campaigns created to present the Kelly-Springfield brand of pneumatic tires for automobiles manufactured by the Consolidated Rubber Tire Co.

This page presents two examples of the advertising and promotional debut of the Consolidated Rubber Tire Company’s female mascot. Above, an image of the factory of the Buckeye Rubber Tire Co. in Akron, where the tires were produced. The image on the left depicts one of the characteristic advertising modules with the figure of the smiling Kelly girl sitting on a pneumatic tire.

FEMININE PRESENCE.
This page presents four examples of the application of the corporate mascot’s image in press advertisements and promotional elements via advertising supports such as postcards and playing cards.

27. Photographic promotional postcard, c. 1913.
DRESSED FOR EVERY OCCASION. Above, examples of the most utilized images of Lotta Miles in advertisements and advertising material for Kelly-Springfield tires. The majority are photographic portraits although some are graphically presented as illustrations. Several women interpreted the character; among those shown who could be identified are Florence Court and Norma Shearer. As for the tire model, those presented include the Kant Slip tread with X-shaped studs, the Kelly-Springfield Cord with rhombus-shaped studs, and the Lotta Miles model which was launched on the market in 1930.

INTERPRETING LOTTA MILES.

This page presents several examples of the actress Norma Shearer working as a model for Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. advertisements. The photo shoots served to obtain different snapshots that would be used directly in their photographic format or as a reference to create illustrations representing Lotta Miles.

31-32. Photographic portraits of Norma Shearer as Lotta Miles c. 1920.
33. Photographic portrait of Norma Shearer in an advertisement for Kelly-Springfield tires in the magazine *Automobile Topics*, August 26, 1922.
34-35. Kelly-Springfield tire advertisements with illustrated portraits of Norma Shearer as Lotta Miles, c. 1920. The largest, on the left, bears the signature of Clarence A. De Giers, illustrator and art director for the corporate magazine *The Kant Slip*. 
THE ROLE OF FLORENCE COURT.
The musical theater actress and singer Florence Reutti—Florence Court as of 1919 after her first marriage—was one of the most active interpreters of Lotta Miles, who utilized the advertising name as her artistic name. This page shows her in a photo shoot for Kelly-Springfield tire advertising. On the opposite page, three examples are presented of portraits published in the press in which Florence Court appeared under the name of Lotta Miles.

36-37. Florence Court posing for two promotional photographs, c. 1920.
38. (opposite page) Florence Court on the cover of *The New York Times* weekly magazine, the *Mid-Week Pictorial*, July 31, 1924.
39. (opposite page) Florence Court posing, in a review published in the newspaper the *Syracuse Herald*, September 28, 1924, p. 11.
40. (opposite page) Florence Court next to a new automobile Reo, in a news review published in the *New York Sun* newspaper, September 10, 1924.
27. KELLY-SPRINGFIELD AND MISS CARLOTTA MILES

A "LOTTA" MILES IN THIS REX.

Here we have Carlotta Miles of the "I'll Say She Is" Company, with her new Rae touring car. It is generally agreed that both look well.
A TROOP OF FEMALES. On this page, several examples are shown of Lotta Miles portraits made by the illustrator, painter and sculptor Louis Mayer (1869-1969) from Wisconsin. He trained at the Wisconsin Art Institute and in Europe, at the Weimar Art School, the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and the Julian Academy in Paris. He specialized in female portraits which were ideal to illustrate the covers of popular magazines such as Theater Magazine, Metropolitan, The American Magazine and the humorous magazines Puck and Judge.

41-46. Kelly-Springfield advertisements published in a variety of theater programs between 1918-1920. Illustrated by Louis Mayer.
THE KELLY GIRLS. The above images present another series of advertisements from the twenties, unsigned and made by several illustrators. The different figures of Lotta Miles shown here portray a differential aspect in each case, some perceptible changes in the physiognomy of the face, the color and type of hair as well as a variety of hairstyles.

47-52. Kelly-Springfield advertisements published in a variety of theater programs between 1920-1924, approximately.

LEAD ROLE. In the two photographs on this page the character Lotta Miles is shown in two promotional films, both interpreted by the actress Catherine Spencer.

55. Emblem for Bauer Films, in an advertisement published in Reel and Slide, June 1919.
INDOOR BILLBOARDS. The advertising medium known as “glass slides” consisted of an advertisement reproduced on the transparent surface of an acetate, with the back colored by hand and protected between two pieces of glass fastened with a frame. That way it could be projected onto cinema screens and stage backgrounds, which in essence, were converted into billboards.

57. Advertising glass slide produced by the Manhattan Slide & Film Co. Inc, Chicago, for Kelly-Springfield. c. 1919.
THE CALENDAR GIRL. This double page shows the twelve pages of the Kelly-Springfield 1917 calendar corresponding to each month of the year. Every month Lotta Miles is portrayed wearing a different outfit. The calendar was sent out December 1916 to the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.’s branch offices from the company’s Advertising Department, located at the corner of Broadway and 57th St. in New York City. It seems that the initiative was highly successful, as a story ironically relates which was published in the magazine Automobile Topics on December 23 of that year: “Morris Switzer, advertising manager of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. is being besieged by his bachelor friends who have seen the new Lotta Miles calendar for 1917. Lotta Miles has a lot of smiles, and each month peeps forth in exceedingly fetching guise from the halo of a Kelly-Springfield tire. Hence the inquiries as to Switzer’s sources of supply.”

60. The Lotta Miles Calendar, Hanging calendar. Dimensions: 9 x 10 ½ inches, 1916.
27. KELLY-SPRINGFIELD AND MISS CARLOTTA MILES
THE MAGAZINE THAT DOESN’T SLIP.
The internal publication that Kelly-Springfield offered to their employees, representatives and distributors was called *The Kant Slip*, created in 1915 and published monthly until 1925. From then on it was transformed and the name was changed to *Motor Chat*. The magazine contained articles, stories, cartoons and various lighthearted news items accompanied by photographs, with special emphasis on social and promotional activities organized by the company. From the first issue, Lotta Miles was incorporated in a leading role, and the mascot was featured in a large number of covers and interior details. The illustration shown above is signed by Louis Mayer; the cover of the Christmas December issue—showing Lotta Miles properly dressed in red—is signed by Clarence A. De Giers himself, who was the corporate magazine’s art director.

A CHILDISH AIR. The director of publicity for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. intervened directly in the creation of certain promotional elements, such as the texts of this story with nursery rhymes adapted to advertising language. The verses of Morris Switzer and the illustrations of August W. Hutaf extolled the prominence of the Kant Slip tire model.

MEN AT WORK. The female mascot Lotta Miles was utilized only in advertisements for pneumatic tires. The campaigns dealing with solid rubber tires for heavy vehicles employed illustrations that showed the power of this product. As such, scenes depicting loading and transport in construction and other activities such as the maintenance of road infrastructures were portrayed.

FACE TO FACE. Cargo trucks, passenger trucks and a host of industrial vehicles utilized Kelly-Springfield solid rubber wheels. The Caterpillar and Kelly Kats models were suitable for traction wheels equipping the heaviest vehicles and were formed by two solid rubber bands with blocks or studs placed in parallel but asymmetrically. This asymmetry allowed for a considerable reduction in vibrations while driving. The emblem of Kelly Kats picked up on this idea and featured two cats facing each other on either side of the logotype. The cats appear in different advertisements from this period as the two positions shown here, without there being an apparent reason in the choice of one model or another. Curiously, a similar graphic had already been utilized for years as a symbol and mascot in the advertisements for the well-known rubber heels for footwear manufactured by the Foster Rubber Co. in Boston.

69. Illustrated detail from the solid rubber Kelly Kats tires, in an advertisement published in *The American City*, October 1923.

70-71. Variations of the emblem for the solid rubber Kelly Kats tires, shown in advertisements published in the monthly magazine *The American City*, September and October 1923.

During 1916 a press advertising campaign was developed in which an extensive rationale was utilized. 

It was headed by an illustrated slogan presented in a caricaturized manner employing humorous scenes where numerous characters intervened, drawn by the New York illustrator Charles E. Howell. The advertisement was accompanied by a small vignette in the footer with the image of Lotta Miles. She was portrayed in two variations, reproduced as needed by means of a photograph or a line illustration.

27. KELLY-SPRINGFIELD AND MISS CARLOTTA MILES


76. Full-page advertisement published in the monthly magazine *The Travel Magazine*, April 1916.

77. Full-page advertisement published in the humorous magazine *Judge*, May 20 1916.

78. Full-page advertisement published in the generalist magazine *The Literary Digest*, August 26, 1916.
TRAVELING WITH KELLY.
This page presents a compilation of some examples from the campaign illustrated by the painter and muralist Justin C. Gruelle (1889-1978) from Indianapolis. This series featured images of driving that extolled the pleasure of traveling, tourism and leisure that many yearned for and that few could afford. These were accompanied by the characteristic verses that were frequently utilized in the company’s advertisements.

Another series of advertisements also reproducing Justin Gruelle’s illustrations in color omitted any type of message, with text being limited to the identification slogan “Kelly-Springfield tires.” Limousines and high-end automobiles, often driven by women, as well as certain scenes provided evidence about the consumer to whom the advertisements were targeting. They dealt with an exclusive, glamorous, sophisticated and modern audience, consumers of social events such as opera and theater, whose programs the tire advertisements were published in.

Advertisements for Kelly-Springfield tires published in theater programs during 1918-1925. Illustrated by Justin Gruelle.
BEGINNING ... AND THE END. This double page presents three examples of the continuity campaign for Kelly tires that, in Judge magazine, mixed editorial content in an original and witty way. This consisted of the publication’s same cover page being reinterpreted on the space of the back cover in the form of advertising content.

89. Cover page illustrated by James Montgomery Flagg (1877-1960) and corresponding advertisement published on the back cover of the same magazine. Judge, January 3, 1914.

90. Cover page signed by Alfred Everitt Orr (1886-1939) and corresponding advertisement published on the back cover of the same magazine. Judge, April 11, 1914.
A MUTATING SPIRIT.

The image on the left depicts the advertising adaptation that the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. made of Judge magazine’s cover page—shown above—on the back cover of the magazine. The original oil painting by illustrator and painter Walter Dean Goldbeck, entitled The Light of New York, was utilized in an advertisement for electric lighting by General Electric. The scene is presented as an allegory that employs a female mythological character with a bat-wing headdress [possibly a nocturnal goddess?] who squeezes a bunch of grapes in her hands. The radiant juice of the fruits drenches the river that surrounds a darkened city in shadows, illuminating it. In 1914, the work was adapted for the magazine cover with the slogan “The Spirit of New York.” The final transformation occurred in the work known as “The Spirit of Perfection” for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. tire advertisement. In this case, the goddess—wearing the typical winged cap of Mercury, messenger of the gods and patron of trade—creates tires, which sprout from her hands and spread through the territory at her feet. The inclusion of the characteristic portrait of Lotta Miles stands out.

91-92. Cover page illustrated by Walter Dean Goldbeck (1882-1925) and advertisement published on the back cover of the same magazine. Judge, August 1, 1914.
GRAPHIC GLAMOR. The precise drawing of Laurence Fellows and his graphic synthesis were expressed in synthetic, elegant illustrations, which combined the delicacy and control of the line with large areas of uniform colors.

93-94. Illustrations published in Judge magazine, April 5 and May 24, 1913. Illustrated by Laurence Fellows.
PARISIAN INFLUENCES.
The artistic training of Fellows, born on September 12, 1885 in Armor, Pennsylvania, began at the Pennsylvania Academy of Arts where he studied until 1907. He then made a European sojourn, moving to England and France, where he attended the Julian Academy in Paris. After his return around 1910, his European graphic influences had endowed him with a differential style that would allow him to start a long relationship with the magazine Judge in March 1912.

95. Illustration in Judge magazine, February 14, 1914.
97. Illustration in Judge magazine, January 3, 1914.
LINE AND SHADOW. In the first advertisements for the campaigns of 1918-1931, Laurence Fellows resorted to his delicate strokes of line drawings. Subsequently, he utilized shading by employing ink wash and gouache in illustrations that were reproduced photomechanically.

“Forty miles before we hit even a service station! We’ll be in a real fix if we have a blowout, with no spare!”
“I’m not worrying about blowouts; we’ve got Kelly-Springfields on all around. It’s the gas I’m thinking about.”

“Two punctures and a blowout in less than a thousand miles, and all on that left front, too! Fancy that our tires seem to get all the trouble.”
“No, because your other three tires are Kelly-Springfields.”

102-103. Full-page advertisements published in The National Geographic, June and September, 1926.
ROAD SIGNS. Certain advertisements of the campaign illustrated by Laurence Fellows included advertising elements for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. within the illustration, such as the example shown here with a roadside billboard portraying Lotta Miles as an advertising appeal.

LOTTA MILES IN LONDON. The advertisement illustrated by Laurence Fellows and dated in 1922 is set in London. In the scene a poster with Lotta Miles is depicted, applied to the side panels of the typical double-decker buses of the English capital.

106. Full-page advertisement published in the specialized magazine Motor, January 1924.
INVENTED CONVERSATIONS. Taking advantage of the notoriety of the press campaign with the witty texts by Hurd and the elegant illustrations by Laurence Fellows, the advertising agency of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. organized a contest to choose the best short monologue or dialogue that could accompany the scene created by Fellows, without exceeding 45 words.

107. Advertisement announcing the contest, published full-page in the monthly magazine The National Geographic, April 1921.
VALUABLE WORDS. After the six months established for participating in the event, the winner of the contest was announced in the advertisement shown above. Miss Claire Newman received the prize of $250 for her proposed dialogue between the main characters portrayed in Laurence Fellows’ illustration, as applied in the image presented here.

108. Advertisement with the outcome of the contest, published full-page in *The National Geographic*, October 1921.
"Your car certainly rides a lot easier than mine, but don't you find that balloon tires wear out faster than cords?"

"Not these; they're Kelly-Springfields."
PARODYING FELLOWS ... AND ROCKWELL.
An example of the popularity of the tire campaign illustrated by Fellows is found in the parody dedicated to him by the humorous magazine Judge in 1926. In a special issue, entitled The Saturday Evening Post Number, the Judge illustrators imitated the presentation of the contents and advertisements of the prestigious magazine, starting with the cover. In the case of the Kelly advertisement, a disgusted woman gets out of the automobile and walks away, abandoning the driver. It seems that he had to stop abruptly to let her get out of the car [the tires, like the woman, knew when to “stop in time”].

110-111. Cover page of Judge: The Saturday Evening Post Number, May 8, 1926, and a parody of the Kelly original advertisement by Robert Patterson (1898-1981), published on the inside pages of the magazine.
ACCOMPANYING VIGNETTES. In the 1930 campaign shown on this double page, the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. resumed the graphic resources that had been relegated by the notoriety of Laurence Fellows’ series of illustrations. The tire, portrayed in a large size, once again became the protagonist, and the long persuasive texts were revived. The scenes of characters depicted in automotive environments presented as small accompanying vignettes marked the closure of a campaign that had begun in 1918. With the end of the twenties and the traumatic beginning of the thirties, the merriment, frivolity and glamor exhibited in the previous decade gave way to a sobering wave of reality. The panorama was not conducive to such levity.

The Kelly Flexible Cord

The Peregrinations of the Pecks

The Pecks live in a New York suburb. Jim Peck is the head of a small but successful business; he is also—at least nominally—the head of the Peck family. For three years the family has been talking about a trip to the Coast, and at last they are actually going.

This is the first vacation Jim has taken in five years. Changing tires on the road is one of the things he is NOT planning to do, hence the Kellys.

In subsequent issues of this magazine we shall meet the Pecks on their travels.

When you start out on a trip you want to feel reasonably sure that it is going to be made in comfort, and comfort means riding comfort as well as freedom from tire trouble.

Kelly Flexible Cords will give you real riding comfort and are dependable besides.

The reason is found in the Integral Bead construction, used only by Kelly. Instead of thousands of short cords, each cut off and held rigidly at the bead, the carcass of the Kelly Flexible Cord contains only a few hundred long cords, looped around the bead. This makes it as flexible as an old glove and also makes it possible to use a flexible tread.

Try these new Kellys. In addition to their easy-riding qualities, they will out-mile any tire you have ever used.

Kelly-Springfield Tires
FAMILY VACATIONS. This double page shows the first five advertisements in the series illustrated by Peter Helck "The Peregrinations of the Pecks." Starting from their home in New York City, the Peck family's trip by car took them after completing several stages to the Grand Canyon in Colorado, from where they would continue their journey to the West Coast.

118. Full-page advertisement published in *The National Geographic*, April 1925.
END OF THE JOURNEY. This double page shows the rest of the advertisements in the campaign.
From the Grand Canyon, the Peck family left for their final destination San Francisco.
They would remain there several days before starting the return trip to New York City.

124. Advertisement published in the magazine House & Garden, 1925.
126. Full-page advertisement published in The Saturday Evening Post magazine, June 27, 1925.
The Peregriinations of the Pecks

After several delightful, sun-kissed, fun-filled months, the Pecks came to the end of the season (Michigan, and the San Francisco so much that they were desirous to prolong their stay there. One of the first places they visited is of course the city's famous Chinatown, which is always冲up with the great fire, but still full of interest and color.

The riding qualities of the Kelly Flexible Cord have probably never been equaled in any other high-pressure tire, while the Integral Bead—the unique construction feature which makes the tire's extraordinary flexibility possible—also adds immeasurably to its wearing qualities. The Kelly Flexible Cord is this year's outstanding achievement of the tire industry.
If you are the owner of a passenger car, a heavy truck or a motor coach, there is a Kelly-Springfield tire designed to meet your special needs. Kelly Balloons or Kelly Flexible Gords for your car; Kelly Kasts, Kelly Aircovers or Kelly Cushions for your truck; and Kelly Heavy Duty Gords for buses—each one of these tires was evolved to meet the peculiar requirements of a particular service. When you buy a Kelly tire, you have the satisfaction of knowing that it is not only a thoroughly well built tire but the best possible type of tire for your needs.
TWO TRACKS. The press advertising campaign in the of the first half of 1926, illustrated by Otto Augustus Kulher, served to present the two lines of tires for transport vehicles manufactured by Kelly-Springfield Co.: solid rubber tires for the transport of goods and industrial products and pneumatic tires for passenger transport. The main advertisement on the opposite page shows the two tire models equipping their respective types of vehicles, one for a truck and another for a bus.

THE ENDORSEMENT OF LOTTA MILES. The National Map Company was an Indianapolis business active since 1885 that specialized in cartographic editions of atlases and maps. Their Multi-Unit System consisting of a series of large maps structured in folding panels, similar to a book, was designed to offer companies a useful tool for visualizing their business territories and marking their strategic areas of activity in them. The image chosen as an example was the system applied by the commercial department of one of their customers, the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. The title—“An Endorsement by Miss Lotta Miles”—and her accompanying photo provide evidence that the female mascot was a recognizable symbol and representative of the tire business.

133. Full-page advertisement published in the specialized monthly Sales Management, April 1921.
BYE-BYE, LOTTAS MILES!
The image of Lotta Miles, inactive during the second half of the twenties, would be utilized once again at the end of that decade. This was especially true during 1930-1931 with the presentation of the new tire model Lotta Miles. The image shown on the left is one of the last advertisements where the mascot appears, before her definitive withdrawal as the main protagonist and the secondary usage she was given during the following decade. The debut of the thirties showed the growing importance of photography as a reflection of reality — to the detriment of illustration — and the photographic portrait of Lotta Miles responds to this advertising trend.

134. Advertisement inserted in a theater program, 1928.
WILLKOMMEN, BIENVENUE, WELCOME.

1929-1931 constituted the years for the launch and production of the Lotta Miles tire model as well as the corporate mascot’s international projection. The portrait of the mascot used at that time in the United States traveled to European markets accompanying the exports of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. The image on the right shows an earlier advertising adaptation, most likely for the Asian market. In Europe, the mascot was disseminated locally in press advertisements and in different media by the contracted import companies in Denmark, Spain, Germany and Austria.

137. Image of Lotta Miles printed on corporate commercial stationary for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co., 1930.
139. Enameded identification sign for the Danish dealership importing Kelly tires, 1930. Dimensions: 40 x 60 cm. Produced by Københavns Emaljeværk, industrial enamel works company created in 1911 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

140. Full-page advertisement for the Spanish representative of Kelly tires published in the newspaper ABC (Madrid) March 4, 1930.

KELLY SMILES. Kelly-Springfield’s advertising campaigns developed between 1935 and the end of the decade—as a company controlled by Goodyear—utilized photography to portray and identify service stations and their efficient employees as well as different consumer groups and users benefitting from their care and assistance.

27. KELLY-SPRINGFIELD AND MISS CARLOTTA MILES

The examples shown here present the image that was repeated in different advertisements and supports. It dealt with the representation of a modern and independent woman behind the wheel of her car who was being advised by a Kelly man from the brand’s official service stations.


147. Promotional match cover, c. 1935.
READY FOR SERVICE.

Between 1941 and 1943, a large part of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company’s production facilities were reoriented to the manufacture of war materials such as weapons and ammunition. This patriotic reconversion to the service of the country during war time was translated publicity-wise into the temporary recruitment of one of the most faithful reservist employees: Lotta Miles. This was carried out in the advertisement published in January 1944 shown above—once the manufacture of tires had been fully resumed—in which text states: “Remember ‘Lotta Miles’? For years she smiled through thousands of Kelly Tires from thousands of billboards. She was the highway sweetheart of the U.S.A.—symbol of Kelly dependability.”

149. Promotional matchbook, c. 1944.
NEW GENERATIONS. The return of the soldiers after the end of the Second World War was featured in this peculiar advertisement published in the autumn of 1945, illustrated by Slayton Underhill. The intention of the advertisement is to praise the long history of the tire manufacturer and their historic Kelly-Springfield brand. However, the passage of time leaves its mark, as highlighted in the dialogue between the grandfather and his soldier grandson. Lotta Miles had turned into a character who was practically unknown by the new generations of that time.

“—Cute girl on that billboard, Gramps.” “—That’s Kelly’s Lotta Miles—she was tops in my day too!”

Full-page advertisement published in the generalist magazine *The Saturday Evening Post*, October 20, 1945.
A REJUVENATED LOTTA MILES. Between 1945 and 1946, the campaign illustrated by Slayton Underhill incorporated the cut out figure of Lotta Miles emerging from a tire next to the company’s logotype. The mascot, whose appearance was more in keeping with the standards of those times, was portrayed in the same established pose. However she did have slight variations in her hairstyle and clothing as can be seen in the series of five advertisements shown here. The main illustrations depicted members of the same family, couples and groups of friends interacting in social situations, without the necessity of showing the Kelly tires.

Full-page advertisements published in the generalist magazine *The Saturday Evening Post*, on the following dates: April 14 and December 22, 1945; and March 23 and December 21, 1946.
TAKING OVER. The corporate emblem and the strict use of green accompanied the new Kelly Service men, shown uniformed and smiling. After the war, the male succession in representing the company was already a fact in Kelly-Springfield’s advertising.

MASCUINE SMILE. The above images present four examples of how the new mascot was portrayed in the campaign that maintained the same basic structure since its launch in 1944. Kelly’s uniformed service man marked the definitive retirement of Lotta Miles.

158-161. Full-page advertisements published in The Saturday Evening Post, on the following dates: April 19, May 17, June 14 and September 6, 1947.
The campaign initiated in 1944 by Slayton Underhill was continued during 1948-1949 by other illustrators. The above images present two examples of artwork by Bill Randall, who stood out as a portrait artist of evocative pin-up girls. On the right, an advertisement illustrated by Lyman Anderson, a renowned cover artist for popular detective, action and mystery novels. Both artists created different scenes that illustrated Kelly’s slogan: “Know-how makes them better,” alluding to the long experience in tire manufacturing acting as a guarantee of their product’s superiority. The campaign featured expert athletes practicing their respective disciplines. If in previous campaigns a footer was utilized below the main illustration which contained persuasive text, the company’s emblem and mascot, in the 1949 advertisements, a large vertical box was employed, positioned to one side of the illustration.


The 1950 campaign inaugurated the decade and continued utilizing the elements and basic resources of previous campaigns. In this series of advertisements, it was decided to highlight the protection that Kelly tires offered to the driver and the passengers of the vehicles that were equipped with them. To that end, the illustrator Robert Childress (1915-1983) mainly portrayed families, adults and children, traveling in cars which were equipped with tires that gave them peace of mind.

SIGNAGE PLATES. This double page shows three examples of establishments, service stations and businesses associated with the commercial network of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. As can be seen, they are duly identified with exterior signage plates, which reproduced the portrait of the recognizable corporate mascot.

168. Photograph of the Gibson Bros. service station, located in Eastern Texas, c. 1930.
169. Photograph of employees working at a service station, c. 1930.
170. Lithographed metal sign, indicating the establishments associated with the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.’s commercial network. Dimensions: 60 cm in diameter.
171. Photograph of an automobile components and service station contracted as a Kelly-Springfield tire establishment, c. 1930.

172. Lithographed embossed tin identification sign with the image of Lotta Miles protruding from the tire, c. 1919. Dimensions: 50 x 35 cm.

173. Double sided lithographed tin identification sign with lateral fixture for hanging on walls, c. 1930. Dimensions: 60 cm in diameter.
A VERY APPLICABLE YOUNG LADY. The above image represents one of the most popular portraits of Lotta Miles that was utilized for Kelly advertising. The examples here show her applied to billboards and on side panels of supports that held tires displayed in the shop windows of contracted establishments, as can be seen in the opposite page.

175. Photograph of a billboard placed in the town of Fallsington, Pennsylvania, September 1922.
176. (opposite page) Photograph of The Tire Shop establishment in Hood River, Oregon, 1917.
Special Sale
Kelly Cords
30% Off. Reduced to $1.15 10
Regular Price is $1.60 10
While They Last
TAKING A DIP WITH LOTTA MILES. The panoramic photograph reproduced below shows the beaches of touristic Atlantic City facing the ocean and the famous promenade behind them. There you can see different brands advertised on billboards, including one of large dimensions with the figure of Lotta Miles.

177. Photograph of an advertising billboard located in the city of Asbury Park, New Jersey, c. 1919.
178. Photograph of the Atlantic City, New Jersey beach and ocean side promenade, August 24, 1919.
179. Advertisement for the outdoor publicity company The Harry H. Packer Co. in Cleveland, published in the specialized sector magazine Printers’ Ink, January 6, 1921.

The image on the left depicts the premiere of Louis Burt Mayer’s film production *The Woman in His House* at the Metropolitan Theater in Washington DC in October 1920. The confirmed presence of the star of the show, the famous actress Mildred Harris Chaplin—the wife at that time of the comedian Charles Chaplin—created a great deal of excitement as well as crowds in the street and in the access to the hall. On the wall adjoining the theater, rising above the classically-inspired pediment that crowned the Metropolitan façade, a large mural painting showed the image of Lotta Miles framed in a tire. The R. C. Maxwell Co., who specialized in outdoor advertising, was responsible for placing the billboard in a location that was ideal for the strategic interests of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co.

181. Photograph of the entrance to the Metropolitan Theatre in Washington D. C., during a cinematographic debut, October 1920.
183. Queenie Smith, ballerina of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, for a Kelly-Springfield tire advertisement, 1917.
27. KELLY–SPRINGFIELD AND MISS CARLOTTA MILES
LOTTA BY NIGHT AND BY DAY.
Four years separate the photographs shown on this double page. In 1915, the firm Boss Rubber Co. from Salt Lake City, Utah was an establishment that belonged to the Kelly-Springfield commercial network. They took advantage of the roof of their premises to place a huge luminous sign—with the image of Lotta Miles also illuminated in spotlights—that could be seen from adjacent roads. In 1919, the business had changed their name directly to Kelly-Springfield Tire Co., and the sign also featured a new and distinct portrait of the smiling Lotta Miles.

184. Photograph of the facilities of the Boss Rubber Company from Salt Lake City, Utah. Taken by the Harry Shipler/Shipler Commercial Photographers studio, August 5, 1915.
185. Photograph of the facilities of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. store located in Salt Lake City, Utah, taken by the Harry Shipler/Shipler Commercial Photographers studio, January 7, 1919.
27. KELLY-SPRINGFIELD AND MISS CARLOTTA MILES

NEXT TO THE OPERA.
The above image presents the advertisement showing the 1914 luminous sign of enormous dimensions placed in Times Square, New York City. This established the pattern of similar advertising installations in principal cities throughout the country. The photograph on the left provides an overview of Woodward Avenue in downtown Detroit, Michigan, traversed by streetcars, trucks, automobiles and pedestrians. Kelly-Springfield’s lighted sign is located on the roof of a building that is located right next to the Detroit Opera House. Once again, the company sought to enhance the association between Kelly-Springfield tires and the exclusive world of leading performing artists.

186. Photograph of Woodward Avenue in Detroit, c. 1917.
187. Advertisement in the special issue of the humorous magazine Judge; Automobile Number, January 2, 1915.