The roots of the Miller company trace back to the modest business founded in 1892 by Jacob Pfeiffer, John Grether and John Lamparter. The three partners, owners of a retail establishment of medical goods and pharmaceuticals, decided to invest their savings in a more ambitious venture: the manufacture and marketing of rubber gloves for surgical purposes. After a difficult start due to the necessary investments for developing productive activity, the company rapidly grew. William F. Pfeiffer—Jacob’s brother—and brothers Harvey and Lee R. Miller were added to the original partners. Together they founded the Miller Rubber Manufacturing Company, registered on May 1, 1898 with a capital stock of $50,000.

The Miller catalog offered dozens of rubber products, mainly designed for hygiene and sanitary use, such as surgical gloves, bathing caps, baby bottle nipples, hot water bottles and rubber sponges. In addition, they produced items related to domestic cleaning and other activities such as rubber soles for shoes as well as balloons and balls for children’s games. With the development of the motor vehicle industry, various molded parts and products such as rubber belts and tubes were added to their inventory.

In autumn 1906, the company was re-founded with the new name of The Miller Rubber Company, with a capital stock of $200,000.1 In the following years, the growth of the business was reflected in the constant improvement of the facilities and in the construction of more production buildings, as well as consecutive gains in capital. In 1910, Miller increased their capital from $250,000 to $500,000, with the intention of doubling productive capacity in the following months and starting the construction of complementary facilities to house the production of two new products: solid rubber tires for heavy-weight trucks and pneumatic tires and inner tubes for cars.2

By 1913, the Miller Rubber Company had already abandoned the production of solid rubber tires to focus solely on pneumatic tire technology. Of the 1,200 workers in the factory, 700 were directly involved in tasks related to tire production, estimated at about 1,000 daily units.3 By mid-1915, Miller’s workforce had grown to reach a total of 1,500 workers, employed in the manufacture of tires and a long list of other merchandise such as rubber soles for shoes.4 In fact, by the end of 1920, in a comparison of the most important manufacturers located in Akron, Miller topped the ranking that year for the
production of rubber soles for footwear with 40 million pairs, exceeding Goodyear’s 30 million pairs and Goodrich’s 22 million. In terms of tire production, during the first half of 1921, nearly 3,000 units were manufactured daily. However, the 1920-1921 recession which affected the entire sector also weakened Miller—their sales fell by half during that period. They closed with losses—and found themselves in a delicate financial position. At the beginning of 1924, the productive capacity reached nearly 10,000 daily tires. In the autumn of 1925—a time when demand fell due to the arrival of bad weather, rain and snow that limited the use of the automobile—, their production was 12,000 tires and 15,000 inner tubes per day.

After the financial crisis caused by the 1929 stock market crash, hard times came for the Miller Rubber Co. as well as for a large part of the U.S. companies in the tire industry. On January 23, 1930, in response to an offer from Goodrich, Miller’s board of directors approved the sale of the company, a decision that was endorsed the following month by shareholders. Goodrich, the giant of the rubber and tire industry, repeated the same operation which one year earlier had allowed them to acquire the Hood Rubber Co. in Watertown, Massachusetts, and which they had already applied in 1912 when they purchased the important competitor Diamond Rubber Co. in Akron, Ohio. The name “Miller” continued to be utilized and advertised—incorporated into the Goodrich brand list—, being associated with tires and their extensive catalog of medical products until the early 1950s, when it was withdrawn.

1. The first campaigns
The start of the Miller Rubber Co.’s tire production was backed by corresponding relevant advertising. During the initial years, the design of the advertisements emphasized the non-skid qualities of the rubber tread for Miller’s Geared-to-the-road model. The term geared, participle of the verb to gear, is translatable in this case by the definitions of “assemble, adjust, interlock or connect.” Thus, the “adjusted-to-the-road” tire—which used hyphens to link words that graphically reinforced the grip of the tread to the road—was interlocked to the road with the same precision as one gear connecting to another. This catchphrase was part of the company’s corporate emblem and the idea would be used recurrently as the principal appeal for texts and certain illustrations in the press and other media advertisements over the years, based on the slogan’s continuity (figs. 1-9 and 74-76).

The illustrations for the 1916 and 1917 campaigns showed typical characters involved in the customary circuit of manufacturer/seller/consumer, each occasionally portrayed in the form of humorous cartoons. These characters included the scientists of Miller’s development department, tire salesmen or vehicle drivers, all of them engaged in ensuring the quality of the manufacturer’s products (figs. 10-15). In June 1916, Miller established a policy of free support to drivers that the contracted establishments linked to their commercial network would provide. In order to deliver this service with a distinguishing feature, the mascot Mr. Quick Service was created, which was utilized in advertisements of the respective businesses in local press and in decorating service delivery vehicles (figs. 19-21).

One month later, Miller presented a new mascot, this time destined to promote their line of hygienic and sanitary products. It dealt with Mr. Miller Merit, an anthropomorphic being formed by linking together some of the most representative rubber items in the manufacturer’s catalog: balls, hot water bottles, gloves and sponges. Mr. Miller Merit was also known as Major Miller Merit. His image was employed for both press advertisements and advertising elements at the point of sale, such as shop windows and cardboard cut-out posters (figs. 16-18).
In the autumn of that same year Miller Talk made its debut. This was Miller’s monthly corporate magazine that offered eight pages with news about employees and other information, using a marked humorous approach peppered with jokes and numerous comic vignettes. The publication of the magazine was interrupted during the months of the Great War and was reissued in 1919 with H. Parker Lowell as the new editor in charge. In June 1920 it was replaced by Tire Trade News, the new monthly magazine directed mainly to the owners of the establishments associated with Miller’s commercial network and their employees. This publication included general information on the rubber sector and on the productive, commercial and social activities of the company. According to its editors, in 1920 the publication’s circulation reached 65,000 copies in a single month (fig. 81).

With regards to Miller’s Advertising Department—in a possibly incomplete but representative list drawn up during the present investigation—some of the directors were: Clyde S. Thompson, since mid-1916; W. S. Campbell, in 1920; George Fishback, from 1923 to the end of 1924; H. R. Baker, active in 1927; Guy Blanchard, active at the time of the company’s takeover by Goodrich and, after this occurrence, promoted as manager for the group’s corporate magazines; and finally, Norman H. Keeling, in June 1930.

2. Maximum demand

In January 1918, the mascot that would thereafter be the representative of the Miller Rubber Company made his first appearance: the Miller Man, an infallible, tireless and dutiful skilled worker. He was the archetypal representation of the professional category of ‘tire builders’ consisting of highly valued skilled workers, experts in the difficult manual and mechanical task of applying strips of nappa and rubber in different layers to cover the pneumatic tire that subsequently would be vulcanized. An idealized but realistic type of illustration sought to portray the Miller Man as the exemplary operator, a mature man dressed in a shirt—with rolled up sleeves and unbuttoned collar due to his work—donning a black vest and above it, protected with a bib or apron characteristic of the trade. However, this had a defining characteristic that identified him: the apron had the initial ‘M’ for Miller stamped on its center. Some excerpts from texts accompanying Miller’s advertisements shed light on the mascot and the message that the company intended to inculcate:

“Uniform tires (99 per cent excellent) built by uniform men (96 per cent efficient).”

“Tires are mostly hand-work. So they are bound to vary about as the workmen do. To build them uniform, ‘human variables’ must go. That’s why we created a masterful system to rid men and tires both—of variables. Three years ago [1915] we began to keep books on every tire built, and on the man who built it. We brought in experts on scientific management. And the master tire builders were used to train the rest. Many withstood this new order of efficiency, and are building Miller Tires today. Those who fell below the mark had to go elsewhere. Perfection demanded the survival of the fittest. So today, this body of Miller Men is known as Tiredom’s crack regiment. Their efficiency averages 96 per cent. And more than 99 per cent of their tires exceed the warranted mileage.”

“Our efficiency experts keep a record of every man and every tire he builds. To pass our inspectors it must reach our 99 per cent grade. If ever a Miller comes back, the builder’s score is penalized. Under this rigid system, only one man in 25 makes good. But those who do average 96 per cent efficient.”
These surprising statements, far from being the most neutral advertising messages, make reference to methods of scientific work organization, scientific management, the basis of the ideology advocated by Frederick W. Taylor (1856-1915). The so-called “Taylorism” sought maximum efficiency in industrial production processes and control and uniformity in the results. Following this policy, an analysis was applied on how long it took to execute tasks—timing each one of them—, the responsibility of the different agents involved and the corresponding salary remuneration. Another factor to take into account to understand the mascot’s character and certain illustrations in their advertisements is the timeframe in which he made his debut. The war conflict that engaged Europe, which led to the military intervention of the United States in the First World War, strongly permeated the environment. The creation of Miller’s efficient and obedient man and their “army of workers” was a reflection of this situation.

Miller invested significantly in advertising, as can be seen in the long-running advertisement campaigns that were full-page and in color (figs. 24-32 and 41-44) as well as in black and white (figs. 23 and 33-40). They were published in major generalist magazines with wide circulation, such as the biweekly *The Saturday Evening Post*, the weekly *The Literary Digest, Life, Collier’s* and *Leslie’s*, as well as in specialized automotive sector magazines such as *Motor Age*. The establishments adhering to Miller’s commercial network received assorted clichés from the company’s Advertising Department which were modular adaptations of the magazine advertisements. These were disseminated for publication as advertisements in corresponding local newspapers, as well as for other elements of identification and promotion such as large outdoor signs, cardboard cut-outs showing the mascot at point of sale, promotional stationery and slides for projection in local theaters and performance venues (figs. 68-73 and 77-84).

The campaign illustrations featured Miller’s 96% efficient superhero, usually portrayed from the waist up and smiling, presenting or holding a tire with one hand and pointing out something relevant with the other. An adamant slogan was employed to accompany that smile: “If ever one comes back—I’m penalized.” Between 1918 and 1919, several authors were responsible for the illustrations. Among those that I identified were William Meade Prince (1893-1951), a prominent contributor to *The Country Gentleman* magazine—for which he made approximately fifty covers between 1924 and 1940—, and Raymond K. Perry (1886-1960) (fig. 34), editorial and advertising illustrator who, in the thirties and forties, directed his career as a comic artist for the publishers Adventure Comics and Action Comics. He also worked in different publications and with popular characters such as Batman and subsequently became the Art Director for National Comics Publications.

**3. Men in reserve**

In 1920, the Miller Man stopped being featured as the company opted for other human figures that represented the quality and virtues of their tires and inner tubes. Instead of the qualified worker he turned into the white-coated scientist, an expert and prescriptive character who used technological appeals to demonstrate these qualities (figs. 45-48). I have identified the signature stamped on the series of illustrations for these advertisements—made in a style similar to those of previous campaigns—, which corresponds to the illustrator Hyman Gilbert Levine (1891-1966).

Between 1921 and 1925, Miller limited their investment and advertising presence, undoubtedly deactivated so as to concentrate efforts in putting their financial accounts into order after the losses caused by the crisis at the beginning of the decade. In the 1926 advertisements the Miller Man regained prominence with the launch of the Miller Balloon tires based on low pressure technology. On this occasion,
however, the character was not presented as an active mascot but rather in the role of a symbol. He was portrayed from the waist up holding a pneumatic tire resting on his shoulder and in a fixed pose, being integrated into the corporate emblem. From that moment on, the character became definitively static, as immobile as a statue. Thus, in 1926 and as part of the emblem, the Miller Man signed a series of advertisements made with a graphic that recalls the sanguine line and published in two inks—black and sepia. He was portrayed in driving scenes set in rural and urban landscapes as well as working as a mechanic in Miller’s official service stations (figs. 50-53).

In 1927, in another series of advertisements designed with two inks as striking red/black or green/black binomials, close-ups of automobiles fitted with Miller tires were shown, accompanied by an increasingly diminished symbol (figs. 54-56). The Miller Man was permanently eliminated from the corporate emblem as early as 1928, when Miller was absorbed by Goodrich. The company that he had worked for faithfully for almost a decade—founded precisely on May 1, 1898—assigned one of their best employees to early retirement.21

4. From exemplary worker to celebrities

Between 1928 and 1929 the advertising strategy was oriented towards another direction. To present and endorse Miller tires, they went from the exemplary model of the permanent, qualified, unpaid worker—a faithful brand mascot—to the temporary and well-paid work of real people. These dealt with personalities who were tire experts as well as popular celebrities whose charisma was employed as a product appeal. The graphic representation of these personalities followed a trend that would become more important over the next two decades. This consisted of the use of illustration for constructing scenes and imaginary characters being transferred to the photographic representation of performing and athletic stars, the popular celebrities of the time. An example of this change can also be seen in the transformation of certain leading American magazines such as Life and Vogue—together with Vanity Fair—, the feminine magazine that champions fashion and aspirational lifestyles. The first was transformed at the end of the thirties into a pioneering head of photojournalism. The second one abandoned a large part of their illustrated images, replacing them with the “reality” component contributed by photographs of model characters and celebrities.

Among the experts in the field who gave their testimony recommending Miller tires were the owners of certain passenger transport companies, executives of companies that manufactured vehicles such as Ford or General Motors as well as business magnates from other highly distinct sectors. All of them declared themselves unconditional users of the Miller brand, whether on a professional level—equipping the fleets of their company—or on a particular basis (figs. 57-59).

Among the celebrities who employed their image as endorsers to be utilized in Miller tire campaigns were: Eddie Cantor (1892-1964), a renowned entertainer, actor and singer; Ben Turpin (1869-1940), a famous comedian who was also a star in silent films; George White (1890-1968), a producer, director and musical actor in vogue; Frankie Frisch (1898-1973) a figure and captain of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team; Irène Bordoni (1885-1953) an actress and singer of Corsican origin; Marylin Miller (1898-1936) a tap dancer and star of musicals; Vincent Lopez (1895-1975), a pianist and one of the most famous directors of dance orchestras; Florenz Ziegfeld (1869-1932) an American theatrical producer and star manager of the show who, on occasion, worked with the musician, composer and violinist Paul Whiteman (1890-1967) who was famous as conductor of his Whiteman Band and other dance orches-
In addition, one of the glittering stars of Hollywood during the forties, the then-well-known MGM actor Clark Gable (1901-1960) utilized Miller tires in several of his luxury vehicles. It was not a coincidence. Gable, son of a worker dedicated to oil extraction, was born in Cadiz, Ohio. In September 1918 at the age of 17, he dropped out of school and moved to Akron, a major city in the state that offered numerous employment opportunities within the rubber sector’s emerging industries. First he was employed at the offices of The Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. and in 1918, he went on to work as a time-keeper for The Miller Rubber Co., earning a salary of $25 a week.\textsuperscript{22} There in Akron, America’s tire capital, after attending a show at the city’s Music Hall that made a great impression on him, Clark Gable decided he would become an actor. After years of experience on stage, his first notable performance in a film came with the movie \textit{The Free Soul} (1931), which was very successful at the time. Playing the role of a tough gangster, Gable was part of the male cast that included actors Lionel Barrymore and Leslie Howard. The protagonist was the diva Norma Shearer (1902-1983) who, curiously, had worked as a model in her youth for the Kelly-Springfield tire company’s advertising, portrayed in photographs and promotional illustrations embodying their female mascot Miss Lotta Miles.\textsuperscript{23}

Starting in 1930, with the brand already integrated into the Goodrich structure, Miller tires were advertised utilizing different illustrated scenes. They occasionally included characters and often resorted to humor and caricature as a way of presenting them (figs. \textit{85-90}).
Notes

3. “Akron, where 20,000 tires are made daily,” *The Automobile*, June 26, 1913.
5. “Make record in heel production,” *The India Rubber World*, August 1, 1921.
8. “Successful year for Miller Rubber Co.,” *The India Rubber World*, February 1, 1924.
15. As indicated in the news item “Year of achievement in Miller advertising,” *Tire Trade News*, March 1921.
17. The first identified appearance of the character is in an advertisement published in the magazine *The Literary Digest*, January 12, 1918.
18. According to the slogan for Miller’s advertisement in the monthly *The American Magazine*, February 1918.
19. According to the text from the same advertisement in *The American Magazine*, February 1918.
21. May Day, falling on May 1st, has been the celebration of the World Labor Movement since 1889, and was the result of the agreement in the Socialist Labor Congress held in Paris that year. Homage was paid to the workers killed in the Chicago workers’ revolts during 1896, in their struggle for better working conditions.
22. The timekeeper was a new type of occupation generated by the application of scientific management. As Gable himself explained in a story included in an interview by *McCall’s* women’s magazine in November 1960: “Akron was a big city, compared with what I was used to, and it fascinated me. I got a job as a timekeeper at the Miller Rubber Company by faking my age.”
23. For more information on Norma Shearer’s role as a tire advertising mascot, see the “Kelly-Springfield and Miss Carlotta Miles” chapter included in the present study.
Bibliography

BLACKFORD, Mansel G.; KERR, Kathel Austin.
   Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1996.

BUSBEY, Ralph C. *A Centennial History of Akron, 1825-1925.*
   Akron, Ohio: Summit County Historical Society, 1925.

DAVIDSON, Bill. “Clark Gable in his 60th year,”
The logotype used by Miller between 1917 and 1930 was composed in upper and lower case utilizing Gothic script with a vertical structure and an angled construction, inclined 30º from the baseline. The word Miller was accompanied by the corporate slogan “Geared-to-the-road” and framed in a border.

After 1930 the elements were simplified. The logotype was composed of capital letters using a high-caliber Egyptian typeface. Egyptian typographies, rising in popularity during the early 1800s, were characterized by their rectangular base and marked angles. They owe their name to the historical moment of romantic exaltation of the Napoleonic campaigns in Egypt. However, they were also known by the name of Mecano as they were extensively employed during the Industrial Revolution.

In particular, this strong typography (figure 7) is almost identical to Stymie typeface—in its Black version—a family created by the great American typographer Morris Fuller Benton (1872-1948) and registered between 1931 and 1935. Benton created more than 200 typefaces as the chief designer for American Type Founders, some being totally original work and others that systematized and renovated already known historical typefaces.

**FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE MODERN ERA ... PASSING THROUGH EGYPT.**

The logotype used by Miller between 1917 and 1930 was composed in upper and lower case utilizing Gothic script with a vertical structure and an angled construction, inclined 30º from the baseline. The word Miller was accompanied by the corporate slogan “Geared-to-the-road” and framed in a border.

After 1930 the elements were simplified. The logotype was composed of capital letters using a high-caliber Egyptian typeface. Egyptian typographies, rising in popularity during the early 1800s, were characterized by their rectangular base and marked angles. They owe their name to the historical moment of romantic exaltation of the Napoleonic campaigns in Egypt. However, they were also known by the name of Mecano as they were extensively employed during the Industrial Revolution.

In particular, this strong typography (figure 7) is almost identical to Stymie typeface—in its Black version—a family created by the great American typographer Morris Fuller Benton (1872-1948) and registered between 1931 and 1935. Benton created more than 200 typefaces as the chief designer for American Type Founders, some being totally original work and others that systematized and renovated already known historical typefaces.
QUESTIONS OF THE DAY. Using the question mark as a compositional graphic element, Miller’s 1915 advertising campaign raised different issues that affected driving and the use of tires. The series of advertisements shown above was inserted both in general as well as in specialized automobile sector press.

Selling Smiles.

This page presents two examples of advertisements where Miller employed occasional cartoon characters in different scenes to introduce, through humor, their advertising appeals. These were aimed at attracting businesses to augment the list of establishments associated with their commercial network.

MADE OF RUBBER. The mascot Mr. Miller Merit was introduced in 1916 to advertise sanitary products manufactured by the Miller Rubber Company. This being came to life by joining together rubber balls, hot water bottles and ice bags for the head, surgical gloves and rubber sponges. It was as though he were one of the characters that emerged from Arcimboldo’s imagination, exchanging food for rubber goods. The image on the right shows the slogan “Guardians of Health and Comfort,” above which two of these characters were presented in military formation, a direct reference to the state of alert that the country found itself given the armed conflict that had been unleashed in Europe.

18. (opposite page) Advertisement published in Good Housekeeping, April 1917.
The C-Kure-Nek
an exclusive feature of Miller Hot Water Bottles, which prevents leaks in the neck, because the metal thimble is embedded in solid rubber.

BUY FOR SERVICE

HIGH prices are teaching people the meaning of value. A few years ago it wasn't so serious a matter if you did buy household rubber goods that soon gave out.

Today it is decidedly worth while to choose rubber goods that will give the longest possible service.

Miller Standard RUBBER GOODS

A hot water bottle is a necessity in every home. The Miller Hot Water Bottle is seamless, one solid piece of rubber, with the exclusive patented C-Kure-Nek in which the metal thimble is embedded in the solid rubber before vulcanizing. Most hot water bottles eventually leak at the neck—a Miller bottle cannot leak.

Keep your hands free from the roughness and stains of housework—wear Miller Household Gloves—the kind that really last.

If there is a baby in your home, you need Miller Sanitare Diapers—both for baby's comfort and for mother's convenience.

Miller Nursing Nipples are non-collapsible. The flow of milk is never too much nor too little. Miller Nipples prevent colic and other feeding troubles.

All Miller Standard Rubber Goods are sold by Miller authorized agencies which display the Miller Agency Sign. Look for the sign and ask for Miller goods by name.

THE MILLER RUBBER COMPANY
AKRON, OHIO, U. S. A.

Also makers of the famous Geared-to-the-Road Tires.
PERSONALIZED SERVICE.

This page shows three samples of how Miller's mascot Mr. Quick Service was utilized. The word "Quick" was depicted on his face in the form of driving glasses and he donned a cap with a visor whose rounded crown consisted of a pneumatic tire.


CHAIN-LIKE WORK.

The above image shows Miller workers practicing at the Miller School of Tire Repairing completing three-week courses complemented with the reading of twenty-four manuals. The entire training process was carried out under the supervision of instructors from the Tire Repair and Vulcanization Department, an internal service of the company. On the left, a Miller advertisement employs the metal chain and its links as a metaphor for uniform and homogeneous assembly line work, carried out by each individual machinist and by the group of specialized operators in the factory as a whole.

23. Full-page advertisement published in the generalist magazine The Literary Digest, March 9, 1918.
29. MILLER RUBBER AND THE EXEMPLARY TIRE BUILDER

FULL-COLOR SMILES. On this double page, examples of full-page, color advertisements inserted in generalist publications such as The Saturday Evening Post and in specialized automotive press such as Motor Age are presented. The Miller Man is smiling despite the [threatening] slogan that accompanies him which serves as the product's guarantee: "I am penalized if ever one comes back".

25. Illustration extracted from a full-page advertisement published in the specialized magazine Motor Age, January 10, 1918.
26-32. Full-page advertisements published in the magazine The Saturday Evening Post, on the following consecutive dates: March 22, July 12, September 6 and 27, November 1 and December 27, 1919; and December 25, 1920.
33. Illustration extracted from a full-page advertisement published in The Literary Digest, January 26, 1918.
34. Full-page advertisement published in the magazine The Literary Digest, March 23, 1918.
35. Advertisement in the magazine Motor Age, May 30, 1918.
36. Advertisement in The Saturday Evening Post, August 31, 1918.
39-40. Full-page advertisements published in the generalist magazine Collier’s, April 5 and September 6, 1919.
On the Nation’s Finest Cars—
Miller Cords

Car owners who demand a tire service of
the same high standard as that given by
their fine cars, choose Miller Cords in preference
to all others.

On big limousines and other closed models,
as well as on high-powered cars that give their
tires the hardest wear, Miller Tires prove them-
selves uniform long-distance runners. Not a few,
but all, give unusual mileage.

Put on a Miller. Keep careful record of the
mileage it gives. Then you will see for yourself
why quality tire buyers everywhere are insisting
on Millers.

THE MILLER RUBBER CO.
Akron, Ohio

Manufacturers of Miller Standard Grade Rubber
Cords, for Bones as well as Horses.

To Dealers:
There are a few exceptional terri-
tories to be awarded soon—write us.

RANGE OF PRODUCTS. The Miller Man was the advertising mascot that endorsed and presented all items in The Miller Rubber Company’s catalog linked to tire technology. These included pneumatic tires and inner tubes as well as a wide range of accessories and products needed for maintenance and repair in the case of blow outs.

42. Advertisement published in the generalist magazine Collier’s, August 30, 1919. Illustrated by William Meadow Prince.
TRUCKS AND BUSES.
The sector of freight vehicles—trucks and vans—and passenger vehicles such as buses constituted a specific market to which The Miller Rubber Co. devoted special attention. The Miller Man was also amply utilized for these cases in his role as promotional mascot as evidenced by the two examples shown here.

43-44. Full-page, color advertisements published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, August 9 and June 14, 1919.
29. MILLER RUBBER AND THE EXEMPLARY TIRE BUILDER

Why Men Came to Millers

The demand, in late years, has multiplied 20-fold

Late Miller Records

Miller Tires

Corded in the Head
The Longest Life is a Tire

Tread Patented

35,000 Miles

The Miller Method

A Tip in Tire Management

'Tis not a tire that is long but when you've"9.1.5. in the service of those who demand the very best in quality. The reason is that Miller's meticulous care and attention to detail result in a superior product that exceeds expectations. Their commitment to innovation and excellence has solidified their reputation as leaders in the industry.

Your own tires a test

The Miller Tubing Cords

Ground in the Head
The Steadiest Life is a Tire

Tread Patented

Miller Inner Tubes

The Miller Rubber Co.

Akron, Ohio, USA
THE ANATOMY LESSON. The 1920 campaigns developed technological persuasive texts that endorsed the "Miller" brand of tires and inner tubes. The corporate mascot was replaced by scientists, technicians and salesmen who were responsible for presenting the tires, as can be seen in the advertisements shown on this double page.

45. (at the top and bottom of the opposite page) Illustrations extracted from a full-page advertisement published in the generalist magazine The Saturday Evening Post, November 27, 1920.
49. Advertisement published in the generalized magazine *The Literary Digest*, April 17, 1926.
IN SEPIA AND BLACK. Miller’s 1926 campaign incorporated a unique design based on illustrations reproduced in two inks and on the conformation of a new emblem where the mascot was incorporated, establishing its static, characteristic pose.

51. Full-page advertisement published in the magazine *The Literary Digest*, September 18, 1926.
STRIKING PERSPECTIVES.
The low-pressure technology tires, present in the U.S. market since the second half of 1923, constituted the new technological and commercial battlefield where Miller and their rivals competed. In the graphic aspect, the illustrations were presented in two inks and portrayed the tires in pronounced foreground perspectives that emphasized the already large size of the new pneumatic products. They were accompanied by the emblem that welcomed the mascot in his new role as a corporate representative.

54. Full-page advertisement published in the magazine *The Literary Digest*, November 13, 1926.
56. Full-page advertisement published in the magazine *The Literary Digest*, January 8, 1927.
TRIAL BY BUS. During 1928 and 1929, Miller’s publicity was based to a large extent on testimonial advertisements that provided the opinion of executives from companies dedicated to the regular transport of passengers by buses and coaches. They were expert spokespersons who were qualified to issue these opinions based on the results of Miller tires put to the test in the daily activity of their passenger vehicles. The above advertisement is signed by R. B. Hayes, President of the Albany Transit Co., a company that had nineteen regular buses covering nearly 49,000 miles each month. On the left, the advertisement displays the compliments of the Cleveland Railway Busses Co., which equipped their buses with Miller tires for two years. After obtaining satisfactory results, they extending their contract for three more years.

58. Full-page advertisement published in the generalist magazine Liberty, May 18, 1929.
ALL FOR MILLER. At the top of the page, two more examples of Miller’s advertising campaign based on testimonials are presented. The first case deals with an expert, Norval A. Hawkins,—former General Sales Manager for the Ford Motor Co. and Director of Advertising services and Sales for General Motors Corp.—, who provides his testimony stating that he also uses Miller tires on a personal level. The second advertisement features the magnate Stephen Rae Hickok (1884-1945), President of Hickok Manufacturing Co., formerly one of the world’s largest manufacturers of belts and other accessories for men. The image directly above this text presents a joint advertisement divulging the testimonies of variety show entertainer Eddie Cantor and music producer George White, both acting as endorsers for Miller tires.


61. Double-page advertisement published in the generalist magazine The Saturday Evening Post, September 1, 1928.
THE MILLER ADVOCATE. The above image presents the Miller advertisement featuring the famous illustrator James Montgomery Flagg as an endorser of the quality of Miller tires. His testimony, which was represented in a text between quotes and showed his signature, was already summarized in the first lines:

"Beauty in everything has always been my creed, and now I have found beauty in tires—the Miller De Luxe Balloons. They complete the fine appearance of my car from the artistic viewpoint."

62. Full-page advertisement published in the generalist magazine *The Saturday Evening Post*, June 1, 1929.
Above, the testimony of Irène Bordoni is presented who was a famous singer in Broadway musicals and a film actress. The advertisement portrays her at the wheel of her car, equipped with Miller tires, highlighting the qualities of “safety and comfort” that the tires provide while driving.

SHOWS ON WHEELS. At the top of this page, two Miller advertisements are presented that depict new testimonial contributions. The first one portrays the producer of musical and variety shows Florenz Ziegfeld and Paul Whiteman, renowned director of music ensembles; both had worked together on several occasions. The second advertisement employs the endorsement of celebrity baseball player Frankie Frisch. The images at the bottom of the page present the musician Vincent Lopez and the singer and dancer Marilyn Miller, whose testimonies have their signature and are stated in quotation marks.

64-66. Advertisements published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, June 30 and December 15, 1928; and February 9, 1929.
67. Full-page black and white advertisement published in the lifestyle and fashion magazine *Vogue*, February 16, 1929.
CHAINED SMILES.
The smiling corporate and promotional mascot of the Miller Rubber Company was replaced by the face and image of renowned celebrities of the time such as Ben Turpin, a successful comedian who forged his way to fame in variety shows, theaters and silent movies. As can be seen in the above image, his characteristic facial expression took advantage of marked natural crossed eyes, an authentic brand image characterizing the comedian.

68-69. Promotional slides with the Miller Man mascot, c. 1918.
70-71. Promotional photograph autographed by Ben Turpin, c. 1930; and an advertisement endorsing Miller tires.
CARGO VEHICLES. The images shown here constitute two examples of promotional vehicles for Miller tires employed by businesses associated with their commercial network. Above, a group of women pose inside a tilted car, utilized as advertising for the D-L-D tire shop, Miller distributor in Holdrege, Nebraska. Below, a delivery van for the corporate fleet of the Northwest Auto Co.

73. Photograph of a vehicle for the establishment Northwest Auto Company in Portland, Oregon, c. 1918.
TIGHTLY GRIPPED. “Geared-to-the-road” was the slogan that accompanied all the advertising campaigns of The Miller Rubber Co. On numerous occasions, the concept was represented by the proper fitting of gears, which had to be done with great precision. The examples shown here reflect this idea, offering an explicit comparison between the perfect coupling of these pieces of machinery and the non-skid tread of Miller’s pneumatic tires on the roads.

74. Page extracted from the catalog A 24 Sheet Poster of the lithograph printshop Edwards & Deutsch Lithographing Co., with headquarters in Chicago and Milwaukee, c. 1917. This includes 72 advertising reproductions that were adapted to large outdoor billboards.

75. Metallic tinplate sign. Dimensions: 128 x 60 cm, c. 1928.

76. Full-page advertisement published in the magazine Motor Age, March 16, 1916.
MILLER ESTABLISHMENTS.
This page shows two examples of tire service and sales stations and the identification signs for establishments associated with Miller’s commercial network. At the bottom of the page, a current image of a still-standing Standard Oil Company gas station from 1932, with two vertical enameled signs advertising Miller tires, after being restored. The service station is located in the town of Odell, Illinois, and is registered—November 9, 1997—in the National Register of Historic Places in the United States as part of the heritage recovery project carried out by the Route 66 Association of the Illinois Preservation Committee.

77. Facade of the establishment
Carl O. Wiley Auto Supplies, c. 1920.
78. Horizontal enameled metallic sign.
Dimensions: 180 x 55 cm, c. 1918.
79. Standard Oil Company gasoline station restored to its original 1932 appearance.
80. Vertical chromolithographed metallic tin sign. Dimensions: 40 x 180 cm, c. 1940.
MILLER’S MAGAZINE. The above images present two examples of Tire Trade News, the house organ or corporate magazine of Miller. The publication contained several sections with numerous news and short articles usually accompanied with photographs of the facades and interiors of establishments comprising the manufacturer’s commercial network as well as portraits of their owners.

81. Two issues of the magazine Tire Trade News from 1921: volume II, number 1, (March) and number 3 (May).
82. Advertising card for Miller with their mascot, the exemplary tire builder, c. 1924.
FROM THE WAIST UP. This page shows two examples of the type of promotional items intended for point of sale that utilized the Miller Man. His figure, in different poses and actions extracted from press advertisement illustrations, was applied to lithographed and cut-out cardboard which was placed on windows and shelves to attract attention.

83. Photograph of the shop window of an unidentified establishment associated with Miller’s commercial network, c. 1918.
LEADING THE WAY AND FOLLOWING THE TRACK.

In the advertising campaign of the mid-thirties, Miller again resorted to graphically employing the characteristic tire track of their non-skid tires. The tread, corresponding to the slogan "Geared-to-the-road," was a guarantee of safety that it provided during driving.

85-86. Full-page advertisements published in the magazine Life, August 23 and July 12, 1937.
87-88. Advertisements published in the generalist magazine The Saturday Evening Post, July 24 and 3, 1937.
THE LAST TIRES. The images presented here are two examples of one of the last advertising campaigns in generalist press which publicized Miller’s “Imperial” tires, a brand that would soon be eliminated from the BF Goodrich general tire catalog. The advertisements combined typographical messages with humorous vignettes illustrated with cartoon characters which were different for each occasion.

89. Full-page advertisement published in the magazine The Saturday Evening Post, 1947.