

# **Not Carriages, but the Parts Thereof: Cleveland and the Making of the Horse-Drawn Vehicle Accessory Industry**

**Thomas A. Kinney**

This presentation provides a brief overview of the origins and development of the manufacture of parts for horse-drawn vehicles in Cleveland, examines two leading Cleveland accessory manufacturers, and summarizes the importance of these firms to the wagon and carriage industry in the United States. Nineteenth century Cleveland, like most major American cities, possessed its own horse-drawn vehicle manufacturers. Skilled immigrants and native born craftsmen labored in small shops spread across the city to meet local need for wagons, carriages, carts, and sleighs. Though a few such firms achieved a size and an output which assured them an important place in the local vehicle trade, the city did not possess examples of the enormous wholesale vehicle factories found in places such as Cincinnati. While Cleveland could not claim national leadership in the making of carriages, it did establish itself as the home of firms specializing in the large-scale production of parts used in their construction. Cleveland's early advances in iron and steel making and related metal trades encouraged the development of parts manufacture on a scale unequalled in other locations. The accessory industry, as it came to be called, was vital to the transformation of American horse-drawn vehicle manufacture from a craft to an industry, and stands as Cleveland's seminal contribution to an important nineteenth century industry.