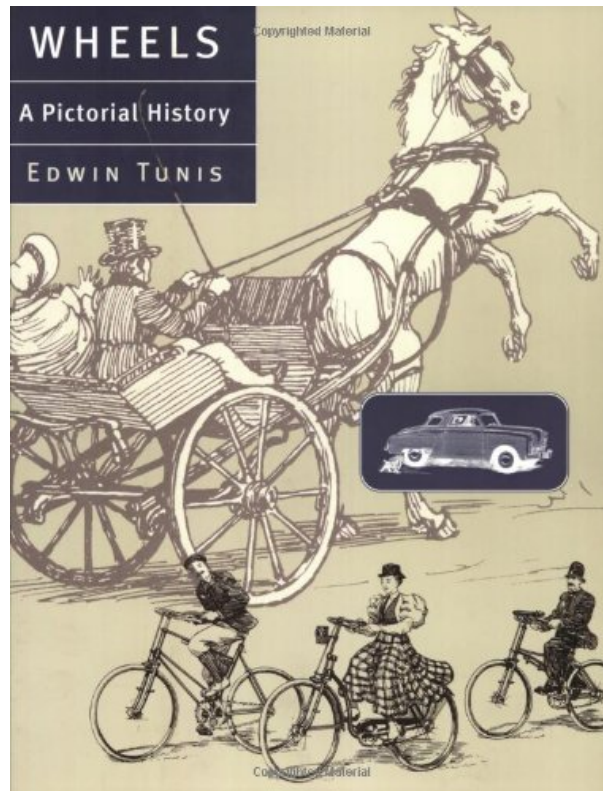
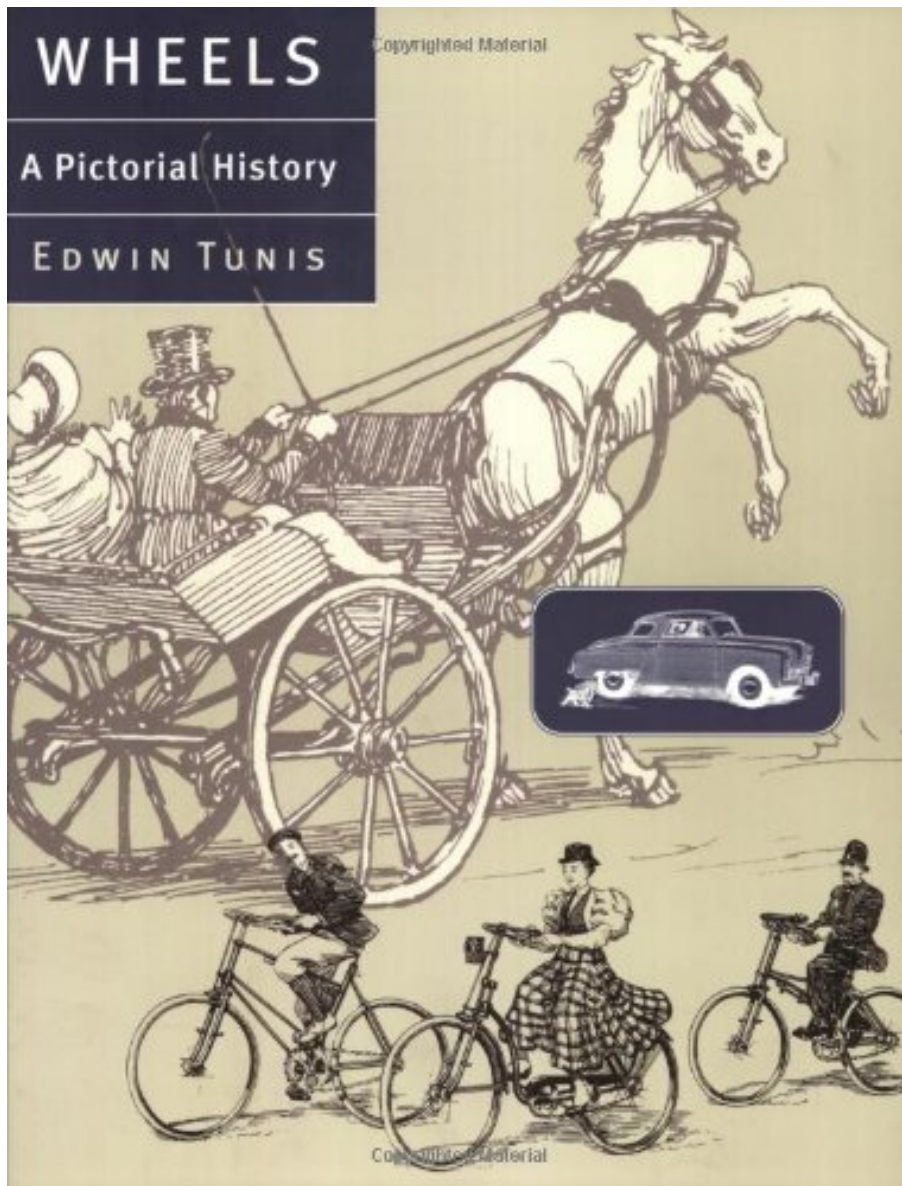


WHEELS: A PICTORIAL HISTORY BY EDWIN TUNIS



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About the Author

Edwin Tunis (1897–1973) was born in Cold Spring Harbor, New York, and spent much of his life in Maryland. A well-known artist, illustrator, and muralist, his work appeared at the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Society of American Etchers, the National Academy of Design, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. His other books include *Colonial Craftsmen*; *Colonial Living*; *Weapons*; *Oars, Sails and Steam*; and *The Tavern at the Ferry*, all available in paperback from Johns Hopkins.

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WHEELS: A PICTORIAL HISTORY BY EDWIN TUNIS PDF

Nothing like the wheel exists in nature; it may be one of humanity's greatest inventions. In *Wheels*, writer and illustrator Edwin Tunis traces the development of the wheel over 5,000 years, his accurate drawings and lucid text depicting the human victory over space and inertia. Beginning with the first primitive form of wheel—the captive roller—Tunis takes readers through the history of land transportation from the Elamite chariot—the first recorded passenger chariot—to the ancient wheeled vehicles of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Persians, Romans, Chinese, and Indians; the whirlicotes, carrosses, berlines, fiacres, and phaetons that traveled the roads of Europe from the Middle Ages to the Industrial Age; the Conestoga wagons, prairie schooners, and Concord coaches that carried Americans westward; the velocipede, the world's first bicycle, and its successor, the penny-farthing; steam-powered wheeled carriages like the Dudgeon and La Mancelle; Karl Benz's 1885 gasoline tricycle and the 1896 Ford quadricycle; the roadsters of the Jazz Age; and the gloriously chromed and tail-finned sedans of the 1950s.

The history of the wheel is the story of civilization, and in *Wheels*—which won the Boy's Club of America's Gold Medal when it was first published in 1955—Tunis tells it with wit and illustrates it with striking drawings that will delight readers of all ages.

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Most helpful customer reviews

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Not a book for an engineer

By Michael Paulson

I had seen stagecoach wheels in historical displays and the wheel/axle junction was interesting, not straight, but cone shaped. As an engineer, I really wanted a history of the discovery of the wheel and how it worked and was improved over the centuries. I had read that the wheel is actually so difficult to invent that a wheel sturdy enough for a work vehicle that it was only invented one time and copied thereafter. (While Central American Indians had made the wheel, they had not figured out how to make it sturdy enough to be anything other than a child's toy.) This book is only a bunch of pictures, I didn't really learn anything I wanted from them.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

A fascinating overview of one of mankind's most fundamental inventions

By C. L. Fluty

We often cite the invention of the wheel as one of humankind's most basic discoveries, since it occurred relatively early in human history and is fundamental to so much of our technology. Yet, most of us have no real idea of when or where the wheel was actually invented and how it came to be used in transportation.

While the potter's wheel appears to be the earliest use of some form of wheel, the earliest of these didn't actually pivot the wheel on an axle. The first use of axle-pivoted wheels appears to have been on a peculiar two-wheeled "chariot" in the region of what is now Kazakhstan in central Asia nearly three thousand years ago. From there, the concept of wheeled transport spread east to China, where it appears as a two-wheeled chariot only 1-200 years later, and south to Babylonia, where it shows up as a four-wheeled war wagon drawn by asses painted on the side of a 2800 year old harp. (Interestingly, when I researched the domestication and spread of horses, their use follows almost exactly the same timeline and geographical distribution.)

The book goes on to show the spread of wheeled vehicles throughout the world, with the development of improvements such as the spoked wheel, systems for pivoting the axle so that the vehicle can make turns and methods for cushioning the ride to make it easier on passengers. It continues on through the development of motor vehicles, up to the present, all with clear diagrams and pictures.

This book provides a fascinating survey of the history of an invention that surrounds us every day, one basic to all of our technology and yet, one we take for granted. The idea of running a pole through the middle of two round slabs of wood, with a box on top for passengers or cargo, seems simple and obvious to us now, yet it's only been around for about the last 5,000 years. I salute the anonymous genius in Kazakhstan who came up with the idea! We owe him (or her?) a profound debt of gratitude.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent

By Pea Jay Kay

Edwin Tunis brought a lot of history to life for me as a kid and I enjoy the opportunity, now, to experience more of his work. Wheels: A Pictorial History is another excellent addition to my collection.

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