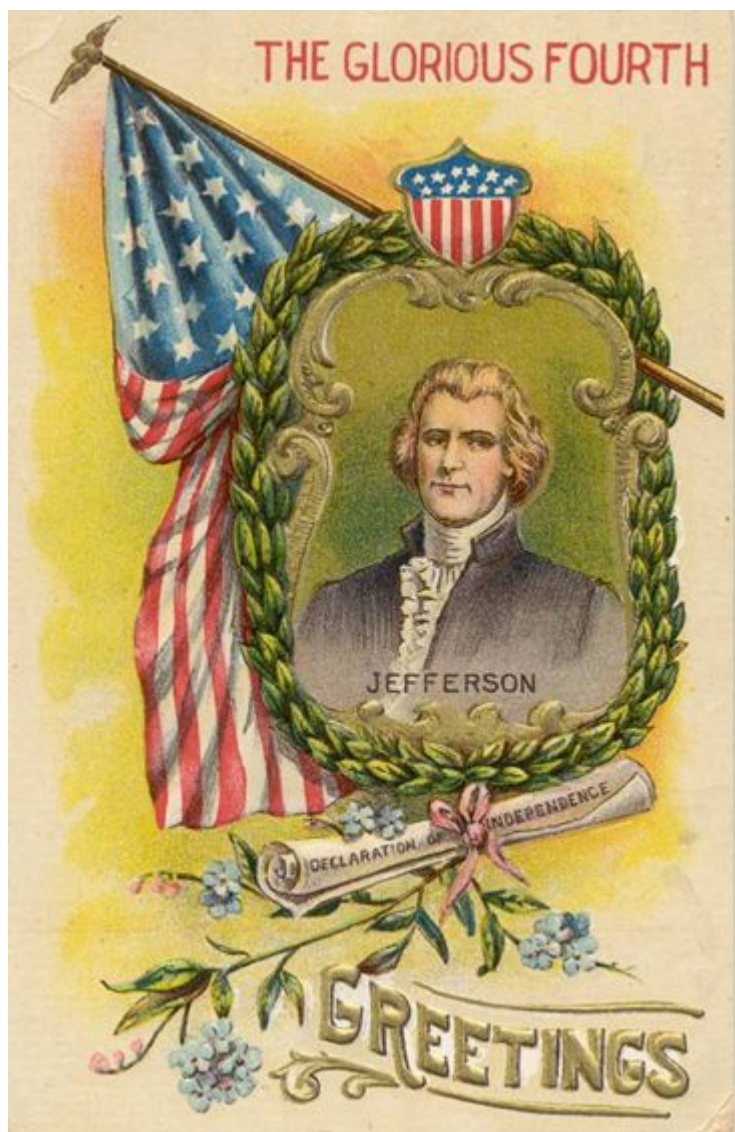


Postcard Images of Jefferson

by Lisa Francavilla - November 15, 2010

I am always interested in, and often entertained by, some of the ways I have seen Jefferson and other “Founding Fathers” portrayed outside of more traditional portraiture.

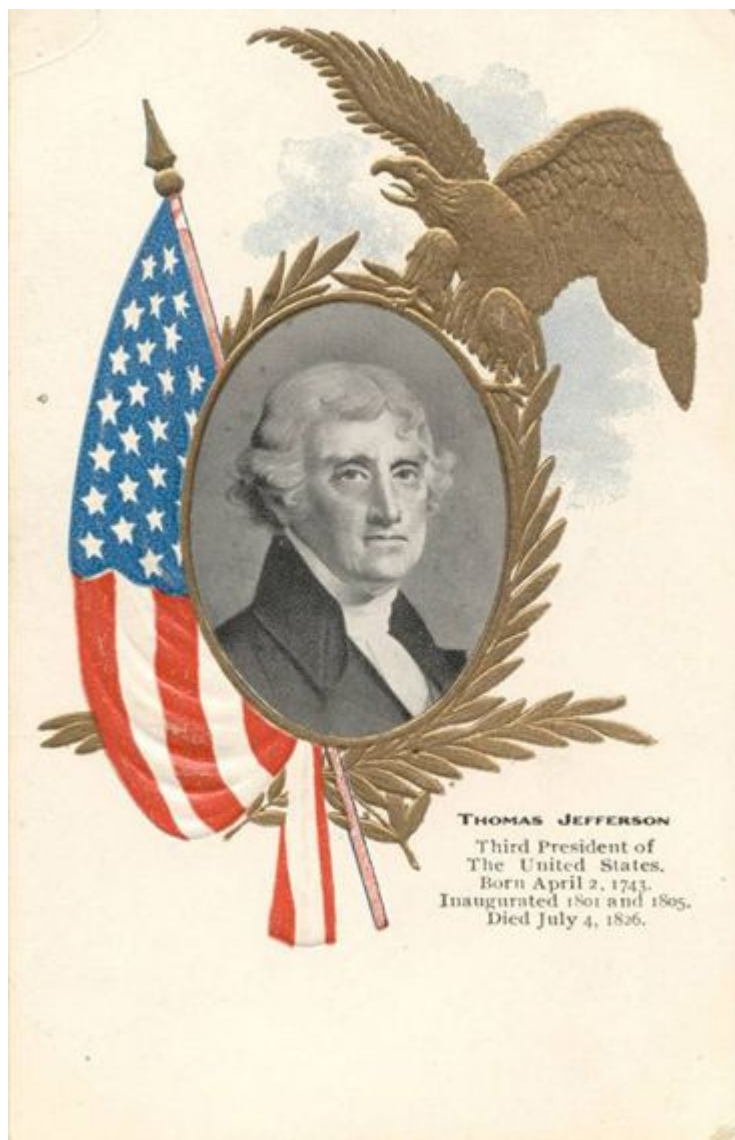
I do not usually collect postcards. I know that a lot of people do, so please forgive my ignorance on this front. I do occasionally run across one that I can not resist, however, like this one:



It has a divided back and an adhesive 1-cent Benjamin Franklin stamp. A young woman named Isabelle sent it from Pennsylvania to her Uncle Tom Emery in South Dakota on July 1st, probably sometime between 1907 and 1914.

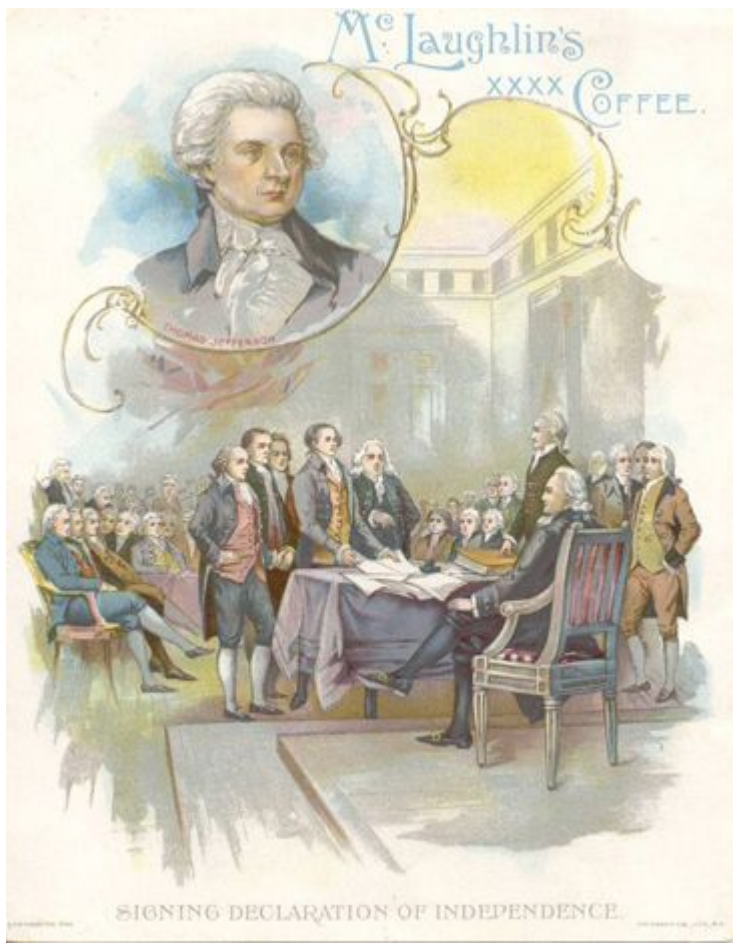
I am glad the portrait is labeled because I do not think I would have recognized Jefferson, tho' the rolled up Declaration of Independence tied with a pretty pink bow may have tipped me off.

This next one is possibly World War II era:



At least, that is what the screaming eagle and the font style suggest to me. Perhaps someone else knows for certain? There is an undivided back and it calls for a 1-cent stamp. Sadly, this card is unused. Maybe – from a collector's standpoint – it is better to have them this way, but I like the wee bit of history that can sometimes fit on the back.

Now here is one of my favorites. True, it is not actually a postcard, but I do like especially to see the way images of Thomas Jefferson have appeared in advertising.



This trade card was copyrighted in 1892 (lower left corner). I am not really sure what the artist was looking at when he or she came up with this portrait of Jefferson. Perhaps it was this portrait painted by John Trumbull (<https://www.monticello.org/research-education/thomas-jefferson-encyclopedia/john-trumbull/>) in 1788. Again, the label on the trade card helped because I think it looks more like John Adams, painted in the same year by Mather Brown.

McLaughlin's Manor House Coffee was part of W. F. McLaughlin & Co., of Chicago, established in 1852. The Made In Chicago Museum has a terrific article on the history of this company. The back of the trade card tells you that it was part of a series. The cast of notable s included Jefferson and the Continental Congress, Abraham Lincoln, Civil War Generals Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, and Philip Sheridan, Christopher Columbus at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, Queen Victoria, Kaiser Wilhelm II,

and Mrs. [Grover] Cleveland and Baby Ruth. Drinkers of McLaughlin's coffee were urged to collect all thirteen, 16 x 22 inch pictures. For each, all anyone had to do was send in "FIFTEEN" labels as proof of purchase with their name, address, and a 2-cent stamp to cover the postage on the picture.

Perhaps this ties into a home decorating fashion around the turn of the century? Can you imagine seeing images like this one, only larger, hanging on the walls of your home in 1900? What were they meant to convey? I'd be interested in hearing more about this if anyone knows. I suppose now they would be kind of fun. I have a couple of old magazine ads featuring Jefferson hanging on my office wall just for that reason.

They make for an intriguing and entertaining snapshot of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century advertising. Jefferson did say that coffee was "the favorite beverage of the civilized world."