

THE SEASON FOR LOVE: A Selection of Choice Valentines from the John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera

Valentines form just one of 680 subject headings in the John Johnson Collection. John Johnson named the section of valentines and Christmas cards in his collection after E. Maude Hayter. A visitor to Johnson's own exhibition of valentines at the Medici Galleries in 1935, Miss Hayter subsequently made him small gifts of such material.



Bank of Hymen
Desires to give on Valentine's Day
the Undivided Love of the Suppliants
1869 Feb 14 London 14 Feb 1869
Love *For the Gov and Comps of the*
BANK OF HYMEN.
Alupid

An Exhibition of
VALENTINES
will be open from
January 30th, 1935
at the
MEDICI GALLERIES
7 Grafton St., Bond St., W.1
until
St. Valentine's Day
February 14th

★

The collection, which has been made by
Dr. John Johnson, of the University
Press, Oxford, shows examples dating
from the end of the XVIII Century.

Open 10 a.m. = = 6 p.m.
Sats.: 10 a.m. = = 1 p.m.

THIS CARD ADMITS FREE

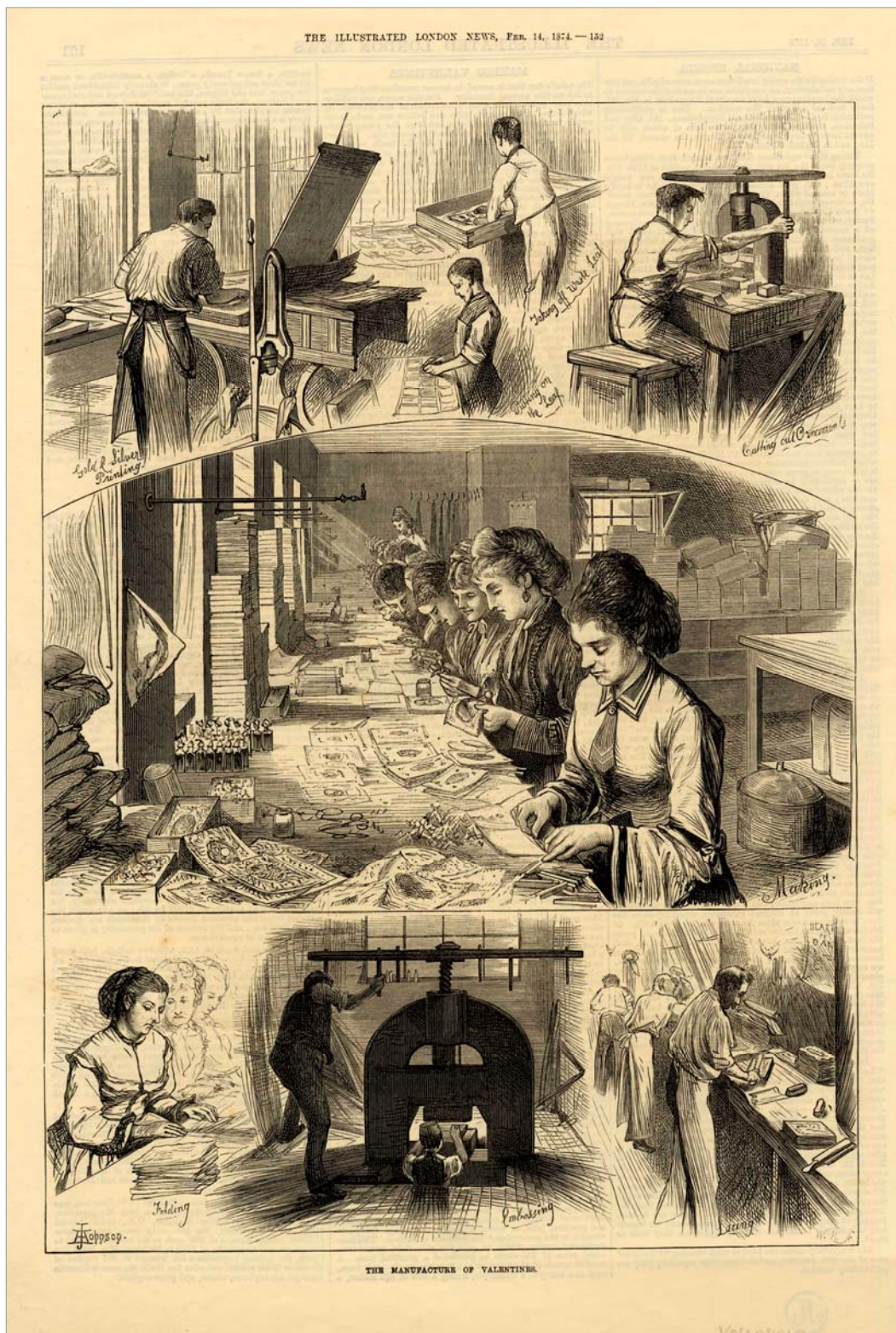
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1) **Hand painted & fancy valentines in great variety.** Chromolithographed display card for the valentine-maker Jonathan King, London, c. 1870s. *JJ Window Bills & Advertisements 3 (8)*



2) **Tinseller's stock book.** Inscribed 'Messrs. Law Brothers, London', it contains sample designs in tinsel offered by the brothers William and Edward Law, who worked as embossers c. 1872–89. *JJ Tinselling*

3) ***The Manufacture of Valentines.*** Illustration from *The Illustrated London News*, 14 February 1874, depicting the printing premises of George Meek and the workshop of Eugene Rimmel. JJ *Valentines folder*



4) Paintbox manufactured by George Blackman (c. 1759–1819), ‘superfine colour preparer’, with unused watercolour cakes, mixing pots, an ink stick and a stubby brush. London, c. 1810s. *JJ Games drawer 6 (13)*

5) Copperplate with engraved designs of cupids, etc. Plate divided into twelve vignettes, c. 1820s. *JJ Copperplates*

6) The stock book is volume I of a Collection of Valentines 1822 to 1850 in two volumes. Formerly in the ownership of Andrew White Tuer, both volumes are a rich source of information about the valentine trade, notwithstanding that the printer himself is not identified. They contain both sentimental and comic valentines, and some original artwork, including sketches by ‘Crowquill’ (really the brothers Charles and Alfred Forrester, fl. 1827-1844). Spanning nearly 30 years, they reveal a switch in this printer’s production methods from engraving to lithographic printing around 1830, and his introduction of embossing around 1832. One hand (probably that of Tuer) has added commentaries to some of the left-hand (blank) pages, identifying engravers such as Robert Cruikshank (1789-1856), George Cruikshank (1792-1878), Henry Heath (fl. 1824-1850) and ‘Crowquill’, and giving information about the longevity of plates (‘March 25 1830 but used about 1820 or earlier’. or ‘Gardner has this pattern’. Most valentines have information about the dates of printing and the (often small) numbers produced, ‘plain’, ‘ploughed’, ‘coloured’ or ‘embossed’. There are some amendments to the verses (mostly the addition of titles) and (more) corrections to the images (‘Modern cap. Much younger. Smaller spirit lamp’) or their colouring: ‘The ladies [sic] dress much brighter’. *JJ Albums 1/1*

7) **The matrimonial ladder.** Novelty possibly inspired by the divorce proceedings between King George IV and Queen Caroline. On one side, lovers gaily ascend the rungs of love to 'Solemnization'; on the other, they descend into bitter 'Separation'. Published by W. Darton, London, 1819–30. *JJ Valentines*



8) ***Thy breath is like the flowers, my love.*** Flower-cage valentine, with the central image of A butterfly cut into an intricate spiral and lifted by a thread to reveal the hidden picture of a blue-bird carrying a love-letter. Addressed to 'Dear Ellen' (Ellen Carter), and postmarked Ludlow, 15 February 1843. *JJ Valentines*

9) ***Cupid's dream and life.*** Chromolithograph , c. 1850–70, featuring a concertina paper 'book' that opens out to tell the story, in both words (verso) and pictures (recto), of how Cupid plans mischief with lovers' hearts on 14 February. *JJ Valentines*

10) **Valentine presented in paper picture frame.**

Chromolithograph, c. 1850–70. Three-dimensional valentine in 'gilded' paper frame, depicting lovers by a lake with Cupid in the sky above. *JJ Valentines*

11) *Sweetmeat.* Hand-made pop-up valentine, *c.* 1840–60, with a smiling woman emerging from a sweetmeat jar. A manuscript verse (incomplete) on verso begins: ‘Artist portrays with truth, judgement & grace’. JJ *Valentines*



12) *Forget me not.* Lace-paper valentine, *c.* 1870s, with silver-printed mount and woven silk centre-piece. The woven picture (but not necessarily the valentine itself) is by Thomas Stevens of Coventry and was also issued as a bookmark, or ‘Stevengraph’. JJ *Valentines*

13) *To a bachelor with fondest love.* Novelty valentine, printed in gold, incorporating buttons, thread and needles. Published by Angus Thomas, *c.* 1870–80. JJ *Valentines*

14) *To my love.* Three-dimensional boxed valentine by Thomas Stevens, Coventry & London (maker’s stamp in lid), *c.* 1870s. Thomas Stevens was better known for his ‘Stevengraphs’ (see no. 12). JJ *Valentines*

15) *With devoted affection.* Lace-paper valentine, *c.* 1870s, decorated with the figure of a woman holding a parasol; the woman’s upper body is made from an embossed scrap, while her skirt is glued-on fabric. JJ *Valentines*

16) *Valentine enclosed in delicate lace-paper envelope.* Decorated with embossing and scraps, *c.* 1870s. JJ *Valentines*

17) *Sweetness attracts me.* Perfumed satin valentine sachet, *c.* 1860s–70s, embellished with scraps and some hand-painting to create a central image of a flower garland encircling a beehive. JJ *Valentines*

18) *Your love my happiness.* Three-dimensional valentine, c. 1860–80, with silver printing, scraps, gauze and vivid blue artificial flowers. *JJ Valentines*

19) *Valentine* by Kate Greenaway. Chromolithographed card, showing a girl in a rust coat and beaver hat. One of a set of three entitled ‘Party girl’, the designs were also used for Christmas, birthday and New Year cards with variant greetings on the versos. Marcus Ward & Co., 1870s–80s. *JJ Kate Greenaway*

20) *My valentine, in every rose discern the wish I would disclose.* Chromolithograph, 1881. Kate Greenaway valentine card, also issued as a Christmas card. One of two in a set entitled ‘Procession’, published by Marcus Ward & Co. *JJ Kate Greenaway*

21) *Valentine* by Walter Crane. This valentine, one of a series of four, was illustrated in *The Quiver of Love, a collection of valentines ancient & modern* (Marcus Ward & Co., 1876). *JJ Valentines*

22) Uncut scrap sheet, showing women's hands holding posies and various amorous mottoes. Published by Raphael Tuck & Sons Ltd, London, c. 1870–1900. *JJ Scraps 1 (58+++)*



23) Constancy. Three-dimensional elaborate valentine, c. 1860–80, ornamented with scraps, artificial flowers and moss on silver-printed lace paper. *JJ Valentines*

24) *These light but glowing feathers show, No borrow'd artificial hue.* Lace-paper valentine with hand-painted satin, scraps, feathers and tinselling. Embossed by Dobbs, Bailey & Co. Watermarked and postmarked 1845, addressed to Miss Powys. JJ Valentines



25) *Flowers you cultivate and prize.* Woodcut valentine, c. 1840s, crudely coloured, depicting a gardener picking a red rose for his beloved. Printed on cheap, plain paper, it would have been priced at the lower end of the market. JJ Valentines

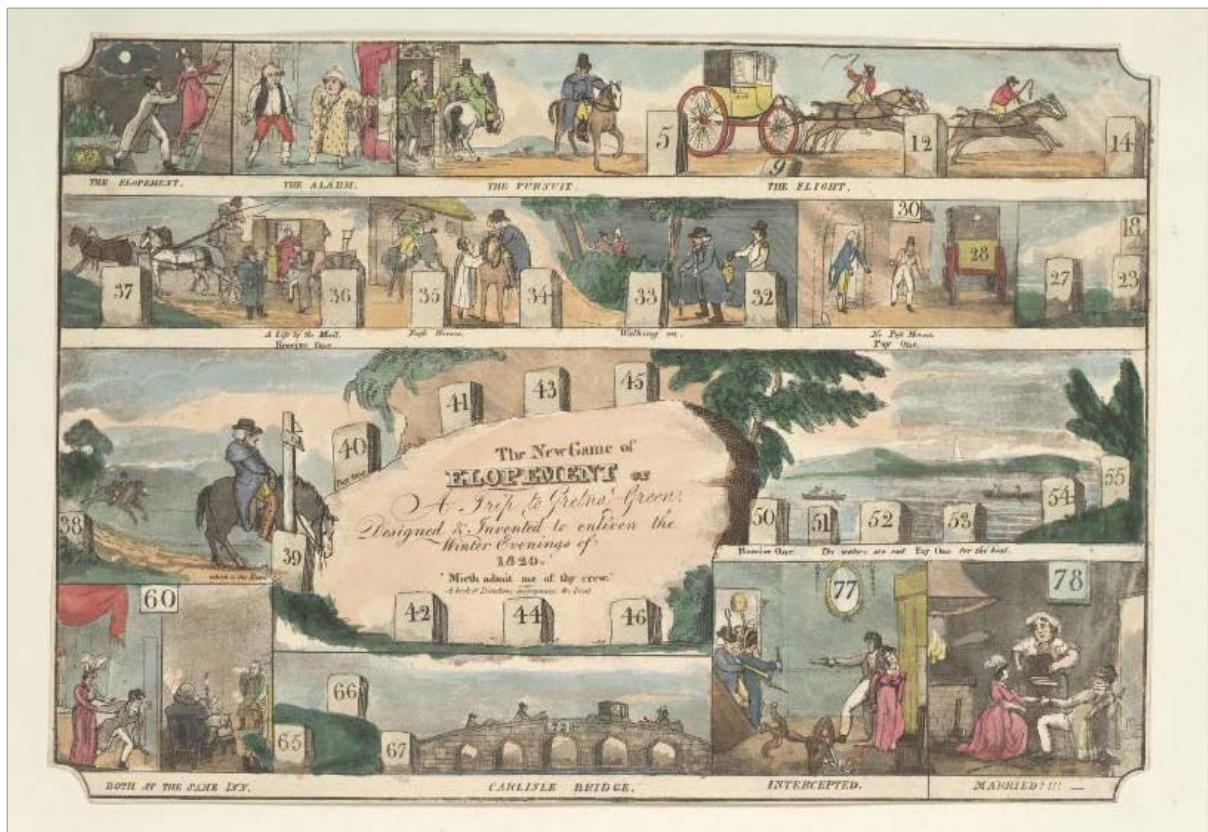


26) Pin-cushion heart mounted in glazed case. Love-token with lace frill, decorated with patriotic Union Jacks, a woven silk cross, and colourful beads held in place by pins. Possibly dating from the second Boer War (1899–1902), when disabled soldiers produced similar pin-cushions as part of their rehabilitation. *JJ Artefacts*

27) Triptych valentine, c. 1860s–80s, open to reveal a central image on black velvet. The doors have scraps mounted on green satin. Text on verso: 'I'll not forget thee', with verse. *JJ Valentines*

28) Triptych valentine, c. 1860s–80s, which opens to reveal a central image on black velvet. The doors have scraps mounted upside-down on mauve satin. Verso has scrap only (damaged). Shown closed. *JJ Valentines*

29) The new game of elopement, or, A trip to Gretna Green. Hand-coloured etching and aquatint, 1820. Board game depicting the adventures of a couple eloping to Gretna Green with the lady's father in close pursuit; players race to arrive first at the blacksmith's anvil. *JJ Games folder (7)*



30, 31) *Curious Hieroglyphick Valentine.* Hand-coloured valentine, c. 1840s, in the form of a rebus or word puzzle; the pictograms must be deciphered to unlock its expressions of adoration. No. 30 is displayed to show a manuscript verse on the verso beginning: 'Valentine / Meet me tomorrow / 'Though dark be the sky.' The solution is shown below. *JJ Valentines*

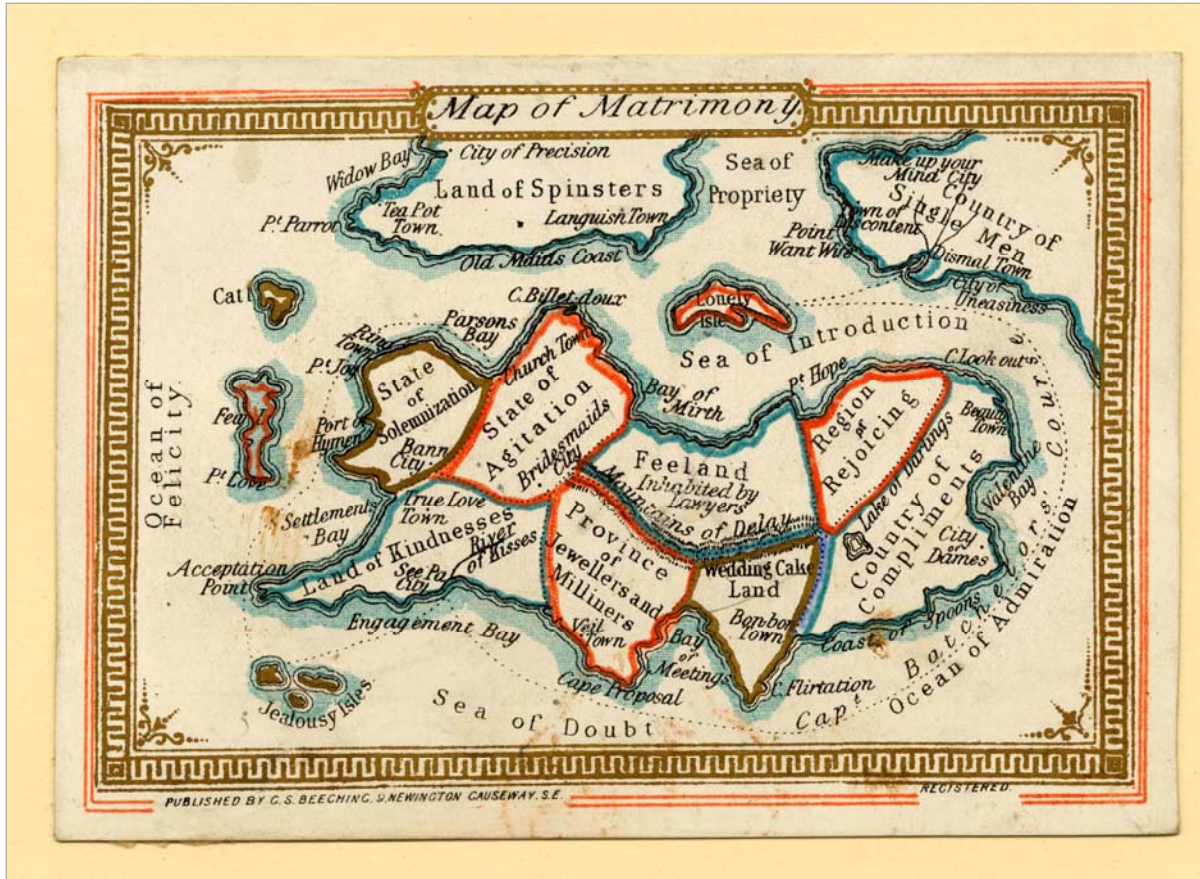
Curious Hieroglyphic Valentine

Fair is the morning the dove leaves its nest
And sings a salute to the crown
The sun in full splendour embroiders the east
And brightens the dew on the ground
Tis Valentine's day, and my love I address
This letter can boast of a flame
So pure and so true, I want words to express
But I ask you to give it a name,
And while my dear love on this letter you gaze
Heave a sigh for a heart that is true,
And believe that it such warm affection conveys
As exists for no other but you.



32) Spoof banknote valentine issued by the 'Bank of Hymen'. Signed 'W. Cupid', it promises 'to give on demand the undivided love of the suppliant'. London, 1868. *JJ Valentines*

33) Map of Matrimony. Humorous print charting a fictional landscape of Matrimony; would-be lovers must safely navigate a course to Engagement Bay and the ultimate goal: Bann City and the Port of Hymen. Published by G. Skaife Beeching, London, *c.* 1880s. *JJ Valentines*



36) Don't get too proud when this you see.

Stencil-coloured woodcut, c. 1830–50. Comic valentine, with illustration of an ugly bachelor, and a dismissive verse beginning: ‘Don’t get too proud when this you see, / For this is your portrait drawn by me.’ */// Valentines*

37) *If the devil step'd, old lady, from his regions just below.* Stencil-coloured woodcut published by A. Park, London, c. 1835–40. Comic valentine, with illustration of an ugly spinster, and verse sniping: 'If the devil step'd, old lady, from his regions just below, / He couldn't find a picture like the one before me now.' JJ *Valentines*



38) *accept dear girl this card from me.* Monoprint and collage by Tom Williams, Ruskin School of Drawing & Fine Art, 2010. Tom has worked with Bodleian curators on this display and designed the accompanying leaflet.