

Posters of Distinction: Art, Advertising and the London, Midland, and Scottish Railways

John Hewitt

Introduction

For more than a century, there has been a close association between advertising and art, particularly modern art. They share a common history. As Kirk Varnedoe observed, "...modern advertising and modern painting were born together in the late nineteenth century."¹ Each has drawn on the other at regular intervals ever since. This has been most evident in the close links between painting and poster designing.

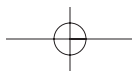
Much has been written about the way modern artists have engaged with advertising. It is not just that artists from Manet to Hockney have produced poster designs, but that, from the beginning, the avant-garde, in particular, have used the content and formal strategies of advertising as a means of establishing a critical and ironic relationship to modernity. This is evident not only in the work of the neo-impressionists, the cubists, and the dadaists, but also in the post-war art of the independent group, American pop, and, more recently, in the very different approaches of Hans Haacke, Barbara Kruger, and Jeff Koons.²

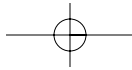
Much less has been written about the equally long history of advertising's engagement with art, particularly in Britain.³ From Pears's use of Millais's painting for the poster *Bubbles* in the 1880s to the equally self-conscious deployment of art in the celebrated campaign for Benson and Hedges cigarettes a hundred years later, advertising has bought, commissioned, parodied, and pastiched art in a calculated strategy to enhance the value and attraction of a variety of commodities and services.

It is clear, however, that, for all their close association, art does not use advertising in the same way that advertising uses art. From the late nineteenth century, artists not only embraced advertising; they transformed it. It was raw material to be worked and reworked. For the avant-garde, it was a means of renewing, reinventing itself, as Thomas Crow has pointed out.⁴ In this way, art was able to retain a critical function.

Advertising's exploitation of art could not have been more different. If art transformed advertising by working on it, advertising secured art by seizing it as a given, already constituted practice with its legitimate modes and relations of production and consumption. Art in advertising became a sign whose connotations of

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- 1 Kirk Varnedoe, ed., *High and Low, Modern Art and Popular Culture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1991), 232.
 - 2 The most comprehensive account of the changing relations of art and advertising since the late nineteenth century is to be found in Varnedoe, *ibid.*, 231–368.
 - 3 John Hewitt, "The 'Nature' and 'Art' of Shell Advertising in the Early 1930s" in *Journal of Design History* 5:2 (1992). Art and advertising in the USA has been better served. See particularly Michelle Boagart, *Artists, Advertising and the Borders of Art* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995).
 - 4 Thomas Crow, "Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts" in Francis Frascina, ed., *Pollock and After* (London: Harper and Row, 1985), 223.





quality, taste, and discernment could be attached to the product or service being advertised. In its deployment of such signifiers, advertising emphasizes one kind of art practice above all others; one notion of production, that of untrammelled individual creativity; and one mode of consumption, that of the recognition of quality through the aesthetic gaze. It is not that the advert itself or the product for sale are presented as art, but rather that the art in advertising appears increasingly, in the twentieth century, as “artness,” a reification of values defined elsewhere in different texts and rituals within a different discursive formation. It is because advertising needs those certainties, those shared assumptions about art and “artness” that it works so hard to preserve and not to challenge them. Nowhere is this more evident than in 1924, when the London Midland and Scottish Railway Company (LMS) commissioned Royal Academicians to design posters for it.

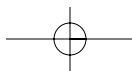
LMS and the Royal Academicians

In the Autumn of 1923, the artist Norman Wilkinson was asked by the LMS to produce three poster designs.⁵ At the same time, according to his account of events written in 1969, he “had been asked by LMS Railways to go to Derby and discuss with their advertising manager what steps could be taken to improve advertising on the system.”⁶ He suggested that they commission designs for a new set of posters from some of the Royal Academicians. The LMS agreed with Wilkinson’s idea and asked him to approach the artists for fear that the Royal Academy might turn the idea down “if it came from a railway company.”⁷

This strategy appeared vindicated by the outcome: of the sixteen Royal Academicians and Associates of the Royal Academy written to by Wilkinson on October 19, 1923 (See Appendix 1), only Frank Brangwyn declined the commission and that was because he was already producing work for LMS’s rival, the London and North Eastern Railway Company (LNER).⁸ In the end Augustus John was unable to deliver his design because he was in the United States at the crucial time.⁹ To this initial group were added William Orpen and Stanhope Forbes, both of whom had accepted the commission by 1924.¹⁰ There is a list of all the artists who contributed to the campaign with the subject matter of their designs in Appendix 2.

I shall be looking later in some detail at the formal structure of the posters, but all were of a standard size, quadroyal (40" x 50"), with the illustration covering an area 35" x 45". The company undertook to ensure that the best reproduction of the original designs would be made regardless of expense. The artists were paid a fee of one hundred pounds, and five thousand copies of each poster were printed at a cost of seven thousand pounds.¹¹ While acknowledging the company’s commitment to high reproduction values, one still needs to ask why such eminent artists accepted this blatantly commercial work so readily and, in some cases, so enthusiastically.¹²

- 5 Wilkinson had produced at least one poster design for the London and North West Railway (LNWR) as early as 1905. The LNWR was one of the constituent companies of the LMS. The poster is reproduced in J. T. Shackelton, *The Golden Age of the Railway Poster* (London: New English Library, 1976), 81.
- 6 Norman Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life* (London: Seeley Service and Co. Ltd., 1969), 104.
- 7 Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life*, 104.
- 8 According to Shaw Sparrow, Brangwyn was commissioned to do *Curzon Street Goods Depot, Birmingham*. See Sparrow, Walter Shaw, *Advertising and British Art* (London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 1924), 171.
- 9 August John’s subject, according to Shaw Sparrow, was the Staffordshire Potteries, Sparrow: *Advertising and British Art*, 171.
- 10 Both artists’ designs are included in the catalog published to accompany an exhibition of the designs in 1924. See *Posters by Royal Academicians* (London: LMS and Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1924).
- 11 *Memorandum to the Directors on Advertising and Publicity Arrangements*, May 1929, PRORAIL 425/7.
- 12 See the selections of replies from the Royal Academicians included in Wilkinson’s autobiography, *A Brush with Life*, 107–9.



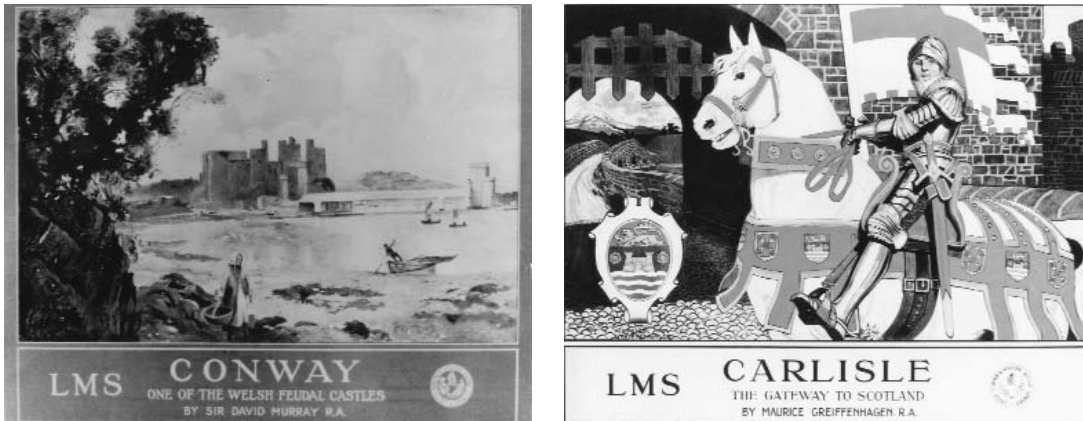


Figure 1

Sir David Murray, RA, *Conway Castle*, 1924, copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

Figure 2

Maurice Greiffenhagen, RA, *Carlisle*, 1924, copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

Clearly Wilkinson's personal role was important. He had stayed with Talmage and Olsson at St. Ives in the 1890s,¹³ and was a member of the Arts Club along with Stokes and Greiffenhagen in the early years of the century.¹⁴ He also was a friend of George Henry.¹⁵ There was, however, more to the artists' involvement than personal and professional contacts. By the 1920s, there were plenty of examples of Royal Academicians providing work for the hoardings. Before the First World War, it was more often a question of a finished painting being bought and then reproduced as a poster¹⁶ but, increasingly during the twentieth century, and particularly after the war, artists began to produce designs specifically for the hoardings. Frank Brangwyn was already an established poster designer and, of the other Royal Academicians approached in 1923, Clausen, Sims, Greiffenhagen, and Cayley-Robinson had produced at least one poster design each for the London Underground.¹⁷

This engagement with commercial art on the part of fine artists was made easier by the fact that they were able to retain an independent role in the relations of poster production even as late as the 1920s. They were commissioned, not employed. While a subject might be requested, the treatment of that subject was left to the artist. Thus the style of David Murray's *Conway Castle* (fig. 1) differed in no way from that of his three landscapes on exhibit in the Royal Academy in 1924.¹⁸ Maurice Greiffenhagen's heraldic design for *Carlisle* (fig. 2) was strongly reminiscent of his decorations for the Langside Library in Glasgow.¹⁹

In fact, since the 1890s, poster designs of a certain kind were seen as a form of applied art, and a number of the Royal Academicians had been employed in such art already. Greiffenhagen had produced book designs and Cayley-Robinson had provided theater designs. Thus, designing a poster was, for them, a legitimate extension of their activity as artists. In fact, there is a sense in which the artistic endeavors of the Academicians, at least as they were described in *The Studio*, often resembled the highly competent practice of skillful professionals rather than the original, creative and disturb-

13 Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life*, 7.

14 Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life*, 44.

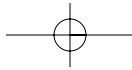
15 Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life*, 108.

16 Sadly, there is no evidence to support the assertion that a painting by Sir E. Landseer was used to advertise dog food. It was, however, common for soap manufacturers to use Royal Academy pictures. Thomas Barrett's use of Millais's *Bubbles* is the most famous instance, but it was far from unique. See Edward Morris, "Advertising and the Acquisition of Contemporary Art" in *Journal of the History of Collections*, 4:1 (1992): 195–200.

17 Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art*, 165–9.

18 *The Studio*, 84, (1922).

19 *The Studio*, 88, (1924), 125.



ing work associated with the avant-garde. This view comes through in a review of an exhibition of Talmage's landscapes held at the Leicester Gallery in 1924. *The Studio* comments that they "had much charm as sensitive records of nature and as sound examples of robust direct craftsmanship."²⁰

Such "robust direct craftsmanship" sounds eminently applicable to a whole range of endeavors in the applied arts, and would lend itself to producing works that did not challenge or undermine attempts by advertisers to attract customers. A more difficult and yet crucial question is why the LMS supported Wilkinson's scheme with such enthusiasm. I believe that there were two motives behind the campaign that were neatly contained in the title of this article, "Posters of Distinction." The word "distinction" can mean both "separate from" and "superior to." The LMS used the posters to give a distinctive image to the company, an embryonic corporate identity, while projecting it as an institution of discernment and civic responsibility. It is the pursuit of this company image that I now want to consider.

In 1923, the hundred and twenty-three separate companies that made up the pre-First World War British railway system were amalgamated into four large organizations, the LMS, the LNER, the Great Western (GW), and the Southern Rail (SR). The LMS took over a large number of the previously independent railways²¹ and emerged as an enormous conglomerate, one of the biggest private enterprises in the world according to Bonavia.²² It was huge, centralized, and somewhat autocratic in its management, and it faced immense difficulties in establishing a coherent identity in the face of local traditions, hierarchies, and loyalties that the constituent groups still retained. An attempt to produce a uniform livery for the company proved too expensive, and was only patchily carried out.²³ Yet, according to Ellis, the LMS searched for an image that would command public respect.²⁴

What more effective and yet relatively inexpensive way to produce such an image than through a publicity campaign that could reach all parts of the new company? This motive might account for the posters' subject matter, which fell into three categories. The first two categories dealt with the industries served by the company, and the tourist spots reached by the company's lines clearly related to the freight and passenger services offered by all of the railways at this time. The third category was different. In posters such as, *The Permanent Way* or *The Night Mail* (fig. 3), it is the company itself and aspects of its work that are being projected.

The company also sought to distinguish itself from other railway organizations; not least the LNER, with whom it competed in various parts of the country. In this context, it is interesting to note, that in 1923, the LNER held an exhibition of forty-three of its pictorial posters in the Board Room of King's Cross Station. A catalog was produced, the introduction written by Collins Baker, Keeper

20 *The Studio*, 87, (1924), 330.

21 These included the London and North West Railway, the Midland Railway, the Caledonian Railway, and the Glasgow and South West Scotland Railways.

22 Michael Bonavia, *The Four Great Railways* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1980).

23 Hamilton Ellis, *London, Midland and Scottish* (London: Ian Allen, 1970).

24 Ellis, *London*, 45.

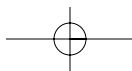




Figure 3
Sir William Orpen, RA, *The Night Mail*, 1924, copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

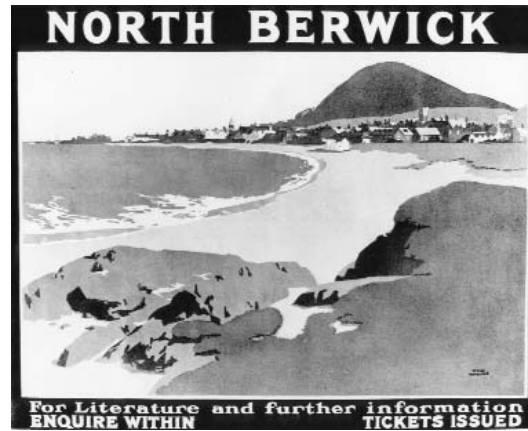


Figure 4
Frank Newbould, *North Berwick*, 1922, copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

at the National Gallery.²⁵ The posters were designed, in the main, by commercial artists who showed a clear understanding of the commercial and advertising necessities of poster design, as well as its aesthetic possibilities. With some exceptions, they were rendered in a flat, silhouetted, and simplified form using bright, relatively unmodulated tones, in a style that became identified with the LNER in particular during the 1920s and early 1930s (fig. 4). The LMS campaign appeared as a stark contrast. The designs of the Royal Academicians, with their painterly style contrasted strikingly with the more commercial composition of the LNER posters. Whereas the LNER posters were frequently specific in their references, and all were concerned with places to visit,²⁶ those of the LMS were more generalized, and less explicitly associated with the direct sell.²⁷ It is difficult to believe that the LMS was unaffected by what had gone on in the headquarters of a rival company in the year before its own campaign was launched.

It is clear from the letter that Wilkinson wrote to the Royal Academicians (Appendix 1) that the purpose of the campaign was to advertise the LMS through an association with the best in art. For a company seeking to establish an image of respectability and worthiness, the choice of Royal Academicians is unsurprising. To choose such artists and to give a public space for the work was presented as an act of discernment and social responsibility. It was in this way that the LMS sought distinction in the second sense of the word. It is the company's emphasis on the artistic nature of its advertising and the reasons for that emphasis that I now want to examine.

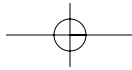
Advertising as Art

If the tenor of Wilkinson's account and his letter to the artists represent accurately the attitude of the LMS, then it is clear that the company wanted to gain respect through the artistic quality of its advertising. Of course, the tone of Wilkinson's letter must be accounted for, in part, by his concern to allay any unease the artists

25 *The Railway Gazette* September 14 (1923): 330.

26 Early in its history, the LNER worked in conjunction with seaside resorts to promote the towns and shared the publicity costs. Their posters usually referred viewers to the town hall or information office for further information.

27 There are none of the direct references or exhortations among the LMS posters of 1924.



may have felt about accepting such a commercial commission. Nonetheless, in their dealings with the artists and in the design of the subsequent posters, the company certainly appeared as patron of the arts. The artists were “commissioned,” not employed. They were given a free hand in interpreting the subject given to them, and the finished work was to be reproduced as faithfully as possible.²⁸ In effect, they would be reproduced as nearly as possible like paintings. Their artistic origins are evident in the posters’ structures. The careful way in which the illustration was framed reinforced these artistic associations. The brief text, limited to the artist’s name and diploma, a description of the subject, and a succinct reference to the company, was placed below the picture like a label in a gallery. The only text on the poster’s illustration was the artist’s signature, the traditional signifier of artistic status. But if the origin of the poster lay in the artist’s studio, it also lay in the printer’s workshop, a fact that is literally marginalized. The name of the printing company is shown in the smallest print in the poster in the bottom right hand corner, where actually and metaphorically, it is outside the frame of art.

When Wilkinson, in his letter, asserted that the reason for using the Academicians was “to break fresh ground in an attempt to do something really artistic and worthy of so great a company,”²⁹ he was describing the formative stages of a campaign that went with the grain of a powerful and critical discourse on the poster. This discourse was articulated in the heavyweight daily and weekend press,³⁰ in art and design journals including *The Studio* and *The Architectural Review*, in the publications of pressure groups such as the National Survey for Controlling the Abuses of Public Advertising (SCAPA), the Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE), the Design and Industries Association (DIA), and in specialist books on advertising and the poster that were published in the early 1920s.³¹ What such texts sought to do was to establish aesthetic, not commercial, criteria by which to judge posters.

This discourse represents a profound unease with advertising, and particularly outdoor publicity. In its deployment of blatant commercial strategies, its visual excess, outdoor publicity, in particular, challenged notions of taste, pleasure, and order by which sectors of the middle class secured their social status.³² It is this that I now want to examine.

In 1922, when the first issues of *Commercial Art* appeared, the opening article by W. R. Titterton was entitled “Taste as a Commercial Asset.” The author averred that “you must interest imagination in an attractive not a repulsive way. That is why beauty has its place in the art of the illustrated advertisement.”³³ He and others who argued so vigorously the case for artistic advertising asserted that the poster was not successful by some artful trickery, but through an appeal to the spectator’s taste.³⁴ In 1923, after the LMS decision was announced but before the first posters appeared, *The*

28 See Wilkinson’s letter in Appendix 1.

29 Ibid.

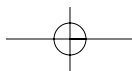
30 These were *The Times*, *The Morning Post*, *The Observer*, and *The Sunday Times*.

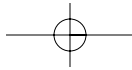
31 Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art*; Edward McKnight Kauffer, ed., *The Art of the Poster* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1924); Sydney Jones, *Posters and Their Designers*, (London: *The Studio*, 1927); Percy Bradshaw, and *Art in Advertising* (London: The Press Art School, 1926).

32 Print advertising incurred none of the hostility reserved for outdoor publicity. This possibly was because it was less threatening to the middle class reader who came across such adverts in magazines and newspapers aimed at a specific audience, and in which advertising and editorial matters appealed to and helped to secure the reader’s sense of self, not the least his/her taste. The poster was not only ubiquitous, it also was more indiscriminate in its appeal.

33 W. R. Titterton, “Taste as a Commercial Asset” in *Commercial Art* October (1922): 3.

34 “[advertising] so obviously ‘designing’ and ‘artful’ that [it] could hardly expect to impress a man of taste and education.” Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising*, vi.





Observer already was celebrating the campaign “as a new chapter in the progress of public taste.”³⁵

Taste is being used here in the sense of correct judgment, the ability to recognize the intrinsic qualities in the object by means of some innate sensibility or acquired discernment. There is not enough space here to discuss the ideological nature of this view; but the universal and disinterested status of this taste could only be secured by bracketing out any consideration of its contingent nature and the interests it served.³⁶ Now, if taste supposedly is displayed by the capacity to discern quality attributed to the object, then the look of the thing is very important. In this notion of taste, not all objects are capable of tasteful consumption, not all had aesthetic quality. Thus, the more the poster looked like a painting, an object whose aesthetic quality had been validated elsewhere, in other sites and discourses, the more it was able to activate tasteful consumption.

All of the LMS posters clearly fell into this artistic category. Their aesthetic quality distinguished them from what *The Observer* referred to as the “painted cant”³⁷ of the hoardings. Moreover, by a series of strategies, the company sought to locate the posters more securely within the category of art. The posters and their original artwork were exhibited in England and New York in 1924, complete with a catalog that attested to their artistic virtues.³⁸ At the inception of the campaign in December, 1923, the artwork and posters were displayed in Wilkinson’s studios in St. John’s Wood, where they were reviewed by *The Times* art critic³⁹ and photographed for inclusion in the *Railway Gazette* of January, 1924.⁴⁰ (fig. 5)

Of course, few of the usual commodity posters could be categorized in this way as is evident by contrasting this Bovril poster (fig. 6) with any from the LMS campaign. The visual structures of such “painted cant” refused disinterested contemplation or tasteful discernment. They did not wait passively for their meaning to be exposed by the sensitive gaze of the connoisseur. Rather, they were active, grabbing the viewer’s attention, pushing the product, and thereby treating the viewer as a consumer not a connoisseur. I will return to this when considering the issue of pleasure.

The growing presence of such commodity posters on the streets represented a threat to the sort of tasteful consumption that many of the middle class were trying to secure. This accounts for the aggressive, frenetic tone of attacks on them. That the critics were not able simply to ignore such “tripe,” but instead sought to reform the hoardings, attests to the way they perceived taste in hegemonic rather than élitist terms, not as the birthright of the few but as something to be inculcated in all of us.⁴¹ Thus, attention is deflected from the relative nature of taste. This approach is evident in Wilkinson’s letter in his reference to the posters “educating public taste,” a view echoed in *The Observer*⁴² and repeated continuously in the inter-war period by “discerning” patrons such as Shell,⁴³ the LNER, and the London Underground.

35 *The Observer* (December 23, 1923): 8.

36 The most perceptive critique of taste as an ideological concept may be found in the work of Pierre Bourdieu. See in particular, Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinctions* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984).

37 *The Observer* (December 23, 1923): 8.

38 For the catalog, see note 10. It was introduced by Sir Martin Conway, who was an art critic and had been Professor of Art at Liverpool University during the 1880s, and at Cambridge from 1901–1904, *The Concise Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1192), 629–30. References to the venues of the exhibition are in *Commercial Art* November (1924): 19.

39 *The Times* (January 1, 1924): 10.

40 *Railway Gazette* (January 25, 1924).

41 At the beginning of the twentieth century in England, one can sense a tension in the debates around art and taste between the conflicting notions of aesthetic discernment as something which was innate or acquired. See Simon Watney, “The Connoisseur as Gourmet” in *Formations of Pleasure* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 66–83.

42 *The Observer* (December 23, 1923).

43 Hewitt, “The ‘Nature’ and ‘Art’ of Shell Advertising in the Early 1930s.”

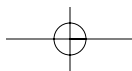




Figure 5
Railway Gazette, (January 25, 1924): 115,
 copyright Science and Society Picture Library.



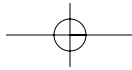
Figure 6
 H. H. Harris, *Bovril Prevents That Sinking Feeling*, 1920, copyright CPC (United Kingdom) Ltd.

I now want to look at the issue of pleasure and its relationship to desire in accounting for the appearance of the LMS posters. Looking affords a different kind of pleasure. That which was most closely associated with tasteful consumption was aesthetic pleasure. Such pleasurable consumption is seen as an end in itself. It is disinterested, contained, and does not prompt action.⁴⁴ By its nature, the poster is plugged into a different kind of emotional circuit. The pleasure it generates has to lead on to a desire which can only be satisfied by purchasing the commodity or service being advertised. In short, its visual structure prompts action, not disinterested contemplation.⁴⁵

44 This notion of aesthetic pleasure is more than an echo of Roger Fry's idea of "disinterested contemplation," and certainly the rituals and discourses surrounding the legitimate consumption of art emphasized the contemplative rather than the active response.

45 Interestingly, Phillips Russell, in an essay "The Poster as a Selling Device" in McKnight Kauffer, *The Art of the Poster*, does attempt to discuss how the poster operates commercially. He deals with the "circuits of desire," but goes no further and settles for the thinnest of aesthetic analyses in explaining the role of pleasure and desire.

What is more, such a poster addresses the viewer not as connoisseur but as consumer. These two subject positions are difficult to reconcile and, in the 1920s, much unease generated by advertising came about because the role of consumer threatened that of connoisseur. The connoisseur could display certainty in his judgment and confidence in his taste because such discernment was ratified by an appeal to aesthetic absolutes. As a subject position, it seemed impersonal and outside of history. In contrast, the consumer occupies a contingent subject position as constituted in history. In the way he or she is addressed, the consumer is classed and gendered, seen to have specific needs and desires, to have "tastes" not "taste."



The critics of advertising referred to above did not, and could not, deny the commercial purpose of the poster. Rather, they sought a way to make the poster a source of aesthetic pleasure without ignoring its status as publicity. Two strategies were used to achieve this. The first is succinctly summarized in the *Railway Gazette* of 1924, where the writer comments, "It must be remembered that the railway poster has a double function to fulfill: it must give information as well as aesthetic pleasure."⁴⁶ Thus, the commercial and aesthetic functions are kept apart giving us both information and pleasure in a civilized, unhectored way. What is more, we receive the information because the poster is a pleasure to look at.⁴⁷

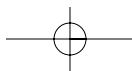
Some critics went a little further and dealt with the issue of persuasion, but not in a way that threatened aesthetic pleasure. The viewer, in this argument, became well disposed to the commodity or service being advertised by virtue of the artistic quality of the poster.⁴⁸ In this strategy, as in the previous one, the viewer is seen as connoisseur, in control, making his purchase as a reward for the good taste shown by the advertiser, and judged as such by the discerning critic.

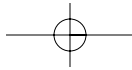
Finally, I want to consider the third element in this middle-class discourse on the poster, the issue of order. The most vituperative criticism of advertising was leveled at all forms of outdoor publicity including the poster. However, the focus of this censure was less on the posters as a medium for exploiting or manipulating our appetites, or corrupting our morals,⁴⁹ and more on its disfiguring and disruptive presence.

These attacks had intensified after 1890 as advertising became an increasingly assertive presence in town and country. The battle lines became more clearly drawn between (on the one hand) the users and producers of advertising—the manufacturer and advertising managers, the printers, agencies, bill-posting companies, and commercial artists—who welcomed and sought to justify the expansion of advertising, and (on the other hand) those sectors of the middle class who sought to contain its public presence. A measure of the progress of the battle can be found in the local and national legislation that was passed from the late nineteenth century onwards, and which was principally concerned to limit the visibility of such publicity.⁵⁰

What seems to be at stake here is some idealized notion of a visual order that certain critics and pressure groups wished to impose on the city and the countryside as a solution to the urban and rural depredations that they saw around them. In the publications of pressure groups such as SCAPA, the CPRE, and the DIA, and in journals including *The Architectural Review*, the problems in town and country often were presented in aesthetic rather than social or economic terms, and thought to be amenable to aesthetic solutions.⁵¹ Tidy these areas up, impose on them a visual order, and many of the problems would be overcome. To produce a city whose visual order

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- 46 *Railway Gazette* (October 23, 1924): 436.
- 47 As Wilkinson commented about the LMS posters, "their artistic qualities will ensure their being studied," *Advertisers' Weekly* (January 4, 1924): 4.
- 48 A good example of this view is J. W. Haynes, "The Progress of Advertising Art" in *Penrose Annual*, (1925).
- 49 No legislation had been passed to deal with indecent or obscene outdoor advertising since the Indecent Advertising Acts of 1889. See Cyril Sheldon, *The History of Poster Advertising* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1937), 130–1. After 1889, most censorship was self-censorship operated by the various national bill-posters associations. See Maurice Rickards, *Banned Posters* (London: Evelyn, Adams and Mackay, 1969).
- 50 Sheldon, *The History of Poster Advertising*, 111–291.
- 51 The best example of this approach, although it is a little later than the date of the LMS campaign, is the DIA Yearbook for 1929–30. Harry Peach and Noel Carrington, eds., *The Face of the Land* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1930).





- 52 Willaim Haywood, "The Citizen and His City" in *Architectural Review* (1923): 176–8.
- 53 A view expressed in the text and photographs of the DIA Yearbooks throughout the 1920s.
- 54 McKnight Kauffer, ed., *The Art of the Poster*, 39.
- 55 W. Shaw Sparrow quoted approvingly from an unnamed source who referred to commercial art as "vulgar peddling." See Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art*, 1. For Percy Bradshaw, crude commercial art was "so blatantly 'boulderish,' so transparently exaggerated, so obviously 'designing,' and 'artful' that [it] could hardly be expected to impress a man of taste and education," Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising*, vi.
- 56 *The Times*, (January 1, 1924).
- 57 This comment by the writer in *The Studio* (1922) typifies this approach. He points out that, though the poster has to attract attention there are socially acceptable ways of doing so: "It is possible to attract the attention of a passerby by stamping on his foot, but attention thus attracted is hardly calculated to fulfill the normal purpose of advertising. Dignity and refinement are essential, but are they not inconsistent with attractiveness and beauty, nor are they a bar to humour," *The Studio*, (1924): 183–4.
- 58 See the rather defensive articles in the *Railway Gazette*, October 3, 1924: 436 and the *Railway Times*, October (1924). The anonymous writers acknowledge the weight of the comments in the *Architect's Journal* and the *Westminster Gazette* about the unsightly exteriors of railway stations, with their collection of gaudy and crude posters. However, the writer in the *Railway Gazette* goes on to add "Just as the movement to prevent advertisements defacing scenes of natural beauty is strongly supported by the best advertisers, it is certain that our railway companies will not be behind hand in the appreciation of the necessity for artistic treatment of all forms of railway publicity."

was harmonious and beautiful would answer a deeply felt need "for a dignified setting to our common life" and would produce a happy populace.⁵² Thus, the rampant and uncontrolled spread of outdoor publicity, and its disfiguring presence, represented a threat to this social and moral order.

If the critics of outdoor publicity found much of it disfiguring, they also found it disruptive. They sought to reform poster advertising by subjecting it to some overriding notion of artistic unity or by advocating, in its place, simple announcements of a restrained and dignified kind.⁵³ Such posters would "gain favorable attention...from desirable customers...by the exercise of good taste and sound craftsmanship."⁵⁴ These phrases are redolent of a notion of civilized conduct and social order that left many of the middle class secure in their position. That the typical commodity poster challenged that position, refused this social group the deference that it took as its due, is evident in the intensity of the language used to denigrate such publicity. The posters were accused of cadging and hustling.⁵⁵ They shouted out their message, and declared it in startling letterpress⁵⁶ in a way that would repel any person of taste.

Much of this criticism, as is evident from the comments above, was framed in terms of a discourse of manners. The poster is presented as actively transgressing the rules of social conduct secured by a notion of correct behavior and an acceptance of the proper rituals of social engagement.⁵⁷ The nature and intensity of the attacks on the bulk of commercial posters can be accounted for by the fact that middle class critics came into contact with most of these placards in one of the few unsegregated social spaces, the street. The poster's aggression, its visual excess, was a constant reminder of how fragile social order was in this urban arena. It was not only that the poster offended by its importuning; worse, it rejected those rules of behavior which secured and made acceptable real social power at the level of polite convention. The poster did not know its place. It was out of order.

Of course, the railway posters placed on the station platforms or in the waiting rooms, and not in the streets or countryside, could easily escape much of the hostility and censure leveled at outdoor advertising. Though even the railway companies were not immune from criticism of unsightly advertising particularly on the forecourts and on the approaches to stations.⁵⁸ However, the contention in this paper is that out of the unease and distaste generated by outdoor advertising in general, emerged criteria for acceptable outdoor advertising that the LMS was well-motivated and well-placed to meet.

Yet, if the commercial nature of the poster could not be denied, nor could its public presence. One way of containing its disorderly and disruptive presence that appealed to these middle class critics was to exhort advertisers to treat the hoardings as an outdoor picture gallery, to contribute to an "academy of the streets."

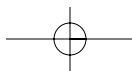




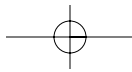
Figure 7
Julius Olsson, RA, *Dunluce Castle*, 1924,
copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

59 This was a view expressed in *The Poster* at its inception in 1898, and was still being expressed by Ashley Havinden, *Advertising and the Artist*, (London: *The Studio* Publications, 1956).

60 According to Tony Bennet, the aesthetic discourse can acquire a momentum and social purchase only when there is existing a "public artistic sphere." To transform the streets into such a public sphere would also give full vent to those dispositions and competencies possessed by certain class fractions which are celebrated in this aesthetic discourse. See Tony Bennet, "Really Useless 'Knowledge': A Political Critique of Aesthetics" in Jerry Palmer and Mo Dodson, eds., *Design and Aesthetics* (London: Routledge, 1996). Also, see Bourdieu, *Distinctions*, 28.

In fact, Wilkinson's letter proposes just that, but it was an idea that had been mooted as early as the 1890s, and continued to be proposed until the 1950s.⁵⁹ For the poster's critics, it was an ideal solution. It represented the poster as an art object, not as a purely commercial medium, and one that would be susceptible to the most legitimate modes of visual consumption.⁶⁰

No worthier object could be found for the people's picture gallery, surely, than the posters produced for the LMS by those eminent Royal Academicians and Associate Royal Academicians. If the tenor of much middle class criticism of outdoor advertising could be expressed in the phrase "Why can't a poster be more like a painting?," then these posters came as close to paintings as reprographic technique would allow. They awaited the connoisseurial gaze. They informed the viewer about the company and its services in a discrete and unemphatic way. Theirs was no vulgar harangue, but a restrained appeal to the man of taste or, more responsibly still, a means of engendering taste in those without access to the best in art. The pleasure they afforded was aesthetic and disinterested. The landscapes and scenes of industrial activity they displayed were idealized and orderly. Clearly, a company capable of such responsible and disinterested patronage merited the public's support. Certainly, they received the plaudits of advertising's fiercest critics.



W. S. Sparrow commented, "How refreshing it would be to find among this cadging confusion one of the ample landscapes published by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway, such as D. Y. Cameron's noble, purple range of Scottish hills, or Julius Olsson's cloudy sunset."⁶¹ (fig. 7)

In the same year, *The Illustrated London News* reproduced Cameron's design under the heading "The Royal Academy of the Railway Station. The Art of the Poster in Sublimated Form."⁶² It seemed that here was a responsible company celebrated for the way it was able to raise its advertising to the status of art.

It is interesting that in the copy of *The Illustrated London News* referred to above, in *The Studio* and in the books by S. R. Jones, Shaw Sparrow and Bradshaw where illustrations of the LMS poster were displayed in the 1920s, only the central design was shown.⁶³ The posters were cropped to exclude the copy. The status of these posters as advertising was effectively effaced. However, to see this campaign as one of elevating advertising to the status of art is to compound this misrepresentation. Far more interesting is to see the campaign as an example of art being used as advertising.

Art as Advertising

Wilkinson's letter to the artists began by stating that the LMS was "anxious to advertise their system."⁶⁴ We must not forget that we are dealing here with an advertising campaign and not an act of enlightened artistic patronage. There is no direct evidence about the campaign apart from Wilkinson's letter, but it is possible to deduce a strategy from a particular reading of the letter and of the subsequent posters. It is clear from the letter that the LMS would "indicate the places or subjects they desire to advertise..." They did not want simply to gain prestige by displaying reproductions of the artists' works on their hoardings. Rather, the artists were advertising the company and its services. There was a need to attract freight and passengers, as well as to promote a positive view of the company, at a time when competition with the LNER was at the level of image, not price. Hence, the emphasis put on places of beauty accessible by LMS (fig. 8), or those heavy industries served by the company (fig. 9), and on the company itself (fig. 10).

Apart from the subject matter, everything else was to be left to the artist. This might suggest that artistic concerns predominated over advertising ones. But another reading of this campaign is possible. It is that the company was eager to secure the artistic status of the poster as a selling point, and that the freedom afforded to the artists was a way of securing that end. It was important that the artist carried out the company's ideas "in exactly his own way" because, through this personal style, associations with his fine art work were asserted and the artistic references in the poster reinforced. Thus, it becomes important that "no pains will be spared in

61 Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art*, 36.

62 *Illustrated London News* (1924): 100.

63 Jones, "Posters and Their Designers," 126–7; Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art*, illustrations to Chapters 1 & 2; Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising*, 281.

64 See Appendix 1.

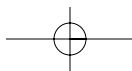




Figure 8
Sir D. Y. Cameron, RA, *The Scottish Highlands*,
1924, copyright Science and Society Picture
Library.



Figure 9
Cayley Robinson, A.R.A., *Cotton*, 1924, copy-
right Science and Society Picture Library.

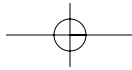
Figure 10
Stanhope Forbes, RA, *The Permanent Way*,
1924, copyright Science and Society Picture
Library.

the reproduction of these posters," and that the images remain free of lettering; thereby underscoring the artistic links.

Once we accept this reading of the poster, a number of other elements fall into place. Those signifiers that assert its artistic status are emphasized in a process of redundancy; the framing of the image and the "label," the reference to the artist and his diploma, the artist's signature, even by the dignified typeface of the copy which is so very different from "staring letterpress" or the cursive script of much commodity advertising. Conversely, those elements that draw attention to the poster's commercial status are played down; the minimal references to the company, whose presence is reduced to its initials and insignia, or literally marginalized in the case of the printer's name, which is relegated to the bottom left hand corner.

Thus, it is not a case of the patron making the work of the best artists available to the public at large, but rather of the company selling its services through "artness." The LMS was particularly well placed to adopt such a strategy. The posters were shown on the station platform. They did not have to compete for attention on the street hoardings, where their subtle coloring and complex structures would have been swamped by the brighter and more simplified designs of other commodity posters. They also could retain dimensions more in keeping with the easel art with which they sought association.

However, the posters were on hoardings and not easels. This is important, for context is crucial for the reading of any image. The fact that these posters were on the hoardings declared them to be advertising, even if their formal structure sought to minimize that fact. Where an image is shown affects our relationship to it, and brings into play certain reading strategies in the form of certain competencies which we acquire culturally. Move a poster from the hoardings to a gallery or into the pages of an art book or history book, and we read it differently. On the hoardings it is advertising,



and we articulate its elements accordingly. We ask what it is selling, not who it is by.⁶⁵ Because we assume it is selling something, an advert need not be blatant in its visual structure. It can be oblique in its appeal, as recent cigarette advertising has shown. However, it cannot be too oblique or it becomes merely a puzzle. Nonetheless, posters such as those of the LMS could move a long way from blatant selling before risking their effectiveness as advertising. The “artness” of LMS advertising also was made possible because it could be perused at leisure on the platform or in the waiting rooms, and did not have to be absorbed instantly as one hurried by in the street. The latter circumstance required of posters that they be more direct and emphatic in their structure if they were to make the necessary impact.

The oblique mode of selling that the controlled environment of the railway station made possible was crucial to the strategy of the campaign. The posters could persuade without appearing to hustle. They could appeal as art, while operating as advertising. In fact, the more the posters looked like art, the more effective they were as advertising because they were appealing to that fraction of the middle class whose unease with the blatant commercialism of so much advertising was articulated so vociferously in the publications referred to in the previous section.⁶⁶

Whether through gentrification, as Wiener suggests,⁶⁷ or as a consequence of professionalization, as Perkin contends,⁶⁸ there is general agreement that, during the late nineteenth century and certainly by the 1920s, large sections of the middle class had distanced themselves from direct involvement in commerce. This sector contrasted its own ideals of civic responsibility and public service with the self-interest and money-making associated with trade. Any advertising addressed to such a group had to acknowledge its distaste as well as its taste.

But what evidence is there to suggest that the campaign was addressed to such a group? In the absence of any clear policy statement from the company, the evidence is circumstantial though persuasive. First, there are the posters themselves. By the 1920s, advertising departments and agencies were familiar with the advantages of targeting particular audiences.⁶⁹ The LMS produced a great deal of publicity, much of it ephemeral. On any platform, passengers might expect to find stickers advertising cheap day excursions, workmen’s specials, and special rates for football matches and the races.⁷⁰ These bills were functional and targeted at specific groups and interests. There is no reason to believe that the posters of the Royal Academicians and Associate Royal Academicians were any less specific in their address. Their visual structures suggest a dignified appeal to someone of civilized though traditional tastes. The artistic treatment of the subject matter distances the viewer from any direct contact with trade or commerce. In Arnesby-Brown’s *Nottingham Castle*, (fig. 11) industrial activity is barely acknowl-

65 In effect, the poster was meaningful in terms of the role advertising was seen to fulfill at the time. This point is well made by Trevor Pateman, “How Is Understanding an Advertisement Possible” in Howard Davis and Paul Walton, eds., *Language, Image, Media* (London: Blackwell, 1983).

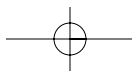
66 There were first class waiting rooms on the platform, and it is probable that the LMS posters were displayed there, thus providing an even more targeted social space. I would like to thank Beverley Cole at the National Railway Museum, York, for this information.

67 Martin Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit 1850–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

68 Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London: Routledge, 1989).

69 At the end of 1923, the new LMS Board of Directors already had decided to employ a journalist and an “advertising expert” to advise them on the company’s publicity. PRORAIL 425/7.

70 See the list of advertising expenditures for 1923 from PRORAIL 425/7.



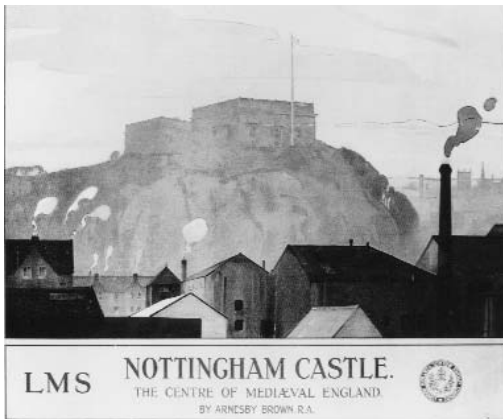


Figure 11
Arnesby Brown, *Nottingham Castle*, 1924,
copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

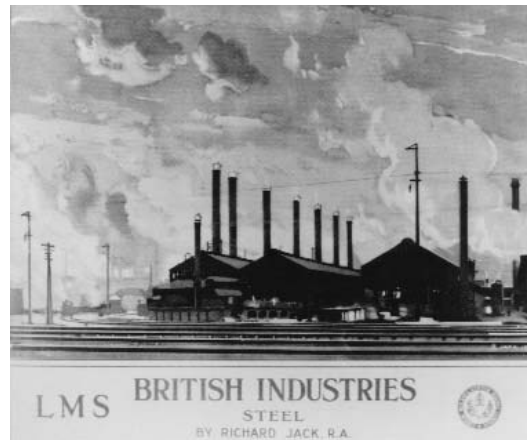


Figure 12
Richard Jack, RA, *Steel*, 1924, copyright
Science and Society Picture Library.

edged, and neither industry nor commerce is even alluded to in any of the other picturesque representations of town and country. While the subject matter of Orpen's *Night Mail* (fig. 3), Cayley-Robinson's *Cotton* (fig. 9) and Jack's *Steel* (fig. 12) is explicitly industrial, labor is made a source of painterly anecdote or effaced altogether in the rendering of the steel mill as an object of dramatic beauty.

There is other evidence to suggest that this campaign was aimed at the professional and upper middle classes. The company advertised its lines in *The Observer* and *The Times*, and in 1924, these advertisements were extolling the delights of the Lakes and the Derbyshire Dales as well as offering the "Royal Route to Scotland" with "useful trains for the Twelfth" (i.e. August 12th, the opening of the grouse shooting season).⁷¹ Both papers carried pen drawings of D. Y. Cameron's *Scottish Highlands* and George Henry's *Edinburgh Castle* (fig. 13) done by the artists.⁷² Thus, the poster campaign was linked through these pen drawings, themselves redolent of the same set of artistic associations as the posters, to a more fully defined set of services offered to a targeted readership of those papers which were already praising the artistic quality of this campaign.

The posters also drew attention to the heavy industries that the company served. In their mode of address, they seemed to acknowledge the taste of that class fraction referred to above and from whose ranks were drawn the shareholders and directors of these companies.⁷³ This same social group made up the substantial majority of the LMS directors,⁷⁴ and their views were clearly being acknowledged when the posters projected an image of a dignified and responsible company.

The middle class viewer of these posters would have found them comforting to look at. They did not leave him uneasy, as did the blatantly commercial placards in the street. They addressed him as if he were a person of taste, an art lover or connoisseur. It was not the only subject position on offer (one could make sense of the posters as an ordinary business man or tourist). It was, however, the

⁷¹ *The Times*, (February 3, 1924).

⁷² *The Times*, (January 6, 1924) and *The Observer* (February 17, 1924).

⁷³ John Stevenson, *British Society, 1914–1945* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984), 351.

⁷⁴ *Memorandum to Directors on Advertising and Publicity Arrangements* May 29 PRORAIL 425/7.

Figure 13

George Henry, RA, *Edinburgh Castle* (Pen Drawing in *The Observer* February 12, 1924).



subject position from which all the signifiers in the poster could be most effectively articulated. But it was not a position, that was available or attractive to anyone. Some would disdain the position and dismiss the kind of taste it assumed. Others would be intimidated by it. However, for many of the upper middle classes, it was a position that fitted them like a glove. It confirmed their taste, their status, and their sense of themselves. It also made them more amenable to the services LMS had to offer. Thus, by the careful deployment of certain artistic signifiers, the posters became more effective as advertising.

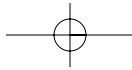
Conclusion

After 1924, no new posters were commissioned from Royal Academicians, and, while picture posters continued to be an element in LMS advertising, only Greiffenhagen's *Carlisle* of the original set was reprinted. Sir Charles Higham, who had been appointed by the LMS in 1927 to advise on publicity, declared in 1929 that the posters based on designs by the Royal Academicians were no longer the most effective way of publicizing the company.⁷⁵ The LMS acknowledged this and, while it wanted to retain "the services of a few eminent artists from time to time to maintain the high tone and standards of LMS poster art," it accepted Higham's suggestion that a greater variety of posters and other media should be used to advertise the company's services.⁷⁶

The advice offered by Higham to the company about what was needed to improve its publicity was very different from that

⁷⁵ Ibid., Appendix B.

⁷⁶ Ibid.



- 77 Sir Charles Higham wrote extensively on advertising in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as running his own agency, Charles F. Higham Ltd. See Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising*, 114.
- 78 Terry Nevett, *Advertising in Britain: A History* (London: Heinemann, 1982), 153–6.
- 79 Apart from the main trade journal, *Advertisers' Weekly*, which began in April 1913 and continued until after the Second World War, there also was *Advertiser's Annual* that began in 1915.
- 80 *Advertising Display* began as a separate publication in 1927.
- 81 *Modern Publicity* began as *Posters and Their Designers* in 1924. See note 85.
- 82 *Commercial Art* began in 1922 before becoming *Commercial Art and Industry* in 1936.
- 83 By the late 1920s, these included *Advertisers' Pocketbook: A Useful Manual* (London: Kingsway, 1913); Charles Knight and Frank Norman, *Commercial Art Practice* (London: Crosby, Lockwood and Son, 1927); R. P. Gossop, *Advertising Design* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1927); B. C. Woodcock, *A Textbook of Advertisement Writing and Design* (London: Constable, 1922) and many others. *The ICS Reference Library* (Scranton, Pennsylvania: Scranton International Textbook Company, 1920) of books on advertising were available for correspondence students in Britain from 1920, even though they originated in the USA.
- 84 In the early editions of *Commercial Art* at the beginning of the decade, there was a series called "Artists Who Help the Advertiser." By the end of the decade, "art" as a category separate from commercial art is rarely addressed in connection with advertising.
- 85 This shift in the significance of the poster is amply demonstrated by the annual publication *Posters and Their Designers* of 1924 which, by 1925, had become *Art and Publicity*, then, in 1927, became *Posters and Publicity* before finally emerging in 1930 as *Modern Publicity*.
- 86 A good example of the continuing prestige of poster designing in commercial art is seen in the career of Tom Purvis. See John Hewitt, *The Commercial Art of Tom Purvis* (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University Press, 1996).

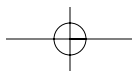
proffered by Norman Wilkinson six years earlier in 1923. If Wilkinson was the artist suggesting how the tone and distinction of LMS posters could be improved, Higham was the advertising man advising on ways to make the whole publicity of the company, including its posters, more commercially effective.⁷⁷

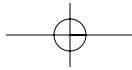
The differences evident in the opinions of these two advisers are indicative of a wider set of changes within advertising and in the attitudes towards it that emerged during the 1920s. The sector continued its rapid expansion in this period and, with this expansion, there developed specialized professional bodies⁷⁸ and trade publications⁷⁹ from which evolved a more sophisticated discourse on the nature of advertising and the kinds of services it could provide. Within this evolving discourse, a more specialized role for art was articulated. In the pages of *Advertising Display*, an offshoot of the principal trade paper *Advertiser's Weekly*,⁸⁰ *Modern Publicity*,⁸¹ and *Commercial Art*⁸² as well as in a whole range of handbooks, career guides, correspondence courses, and other specialized publications⁸³ this commercial art practice was defined and then located with an expanding advertising profession.

What these texts advocated was a particular kind of relationship between art and advertising. The two categories were not seen as distinct, with "art" coming to the aid of "advertising."⁸⁴ Rather, art was integrated with advertising, producing a distinctive visual practice whose effectiveness was measured in commercial terms. It was art with a purpose—commercial art.

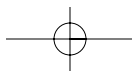
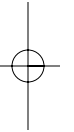
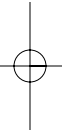
This commercial art or "publicity" as it was frequently called, was less concerned with the poster as preeminent source of artistic skill and examined, instead, the potentialities of the whole of publicity from press ads and packaging to point-of-sale literature. The poster was one of a number of media on offer, not a thing apart.⁸⁵ Of course, one can exaggerate these changes. The emergence of commercial art did not imply the denigration of the poster or the poster designers. To believe that is to accept the crude division of "art" or "tripe" on offer in the writings of W. Shaw Sparrow, or the correspondents and writers in *The Times* and *The Observer*. Poster designing retained much of its prestige during the 1920s and 1930s; it was still something that young, ambitious commercial artists aspired to, but as something distinct from fine art.⁸⁶ Artistic criteria were still deployed when studying a poster's effectiveness, but it was its commercial effectiveness that was the issue.

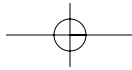
The use of the Royal Academicians by the LMS appeared to clearly signify that separation of art and advertising alluded to earlier which, during the late 1920s, was being challenged. After all, the distinctive nature of fine art could not have been more explicitly manifested than in the work and the social position of the Royal Academicians. The distance between art and advertising surely could not have been greater. However, what has been suggested in this article is that this distance was more apparent than real. The





deployment of the Royal Academicians was motivated by advertising considerations, and by the need to produce an image for the company that would make it both distinctive and distinguished and so increase the appeal of its services to a specifically targeted audience. When the LMS dropped the policy of using Royal Academicians, it was not because it had been alerted to the virtues of active advertising after a period of sober and responsible public appeal, but because its advertising policy, like advertising in general, had simply moved on.





Appendix 1

40 Marlborough Hill,
St. John's Wood, NW. 8.
Hampstead 3533.
19th October 1923.

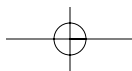
Dear...

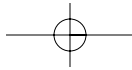
The London Midland & Scottish Railway Group being anxious to advertise their system with a series of pictorial posters, and at the same time to break fresh ground in an attempt to do something really artistic and worthy of so great a concern, have invited me to confer with them with a view to achieving this.

I made a proposal in which I hope you will see your way to assist. In effect it was this—that a series of seventeen posters should be commissioned from members of the Royal Academy with a view to obtaining the best possible work. It seemed to me to be a unique opportunity of giving a lead to pictorial advertising, which is badly in need of some such fillip, and at the same time providing a chance of educating public taste.

No pains will be spared in the re-production of these posters. The Railway Stations provide an excellent opportunity of exhibiting posters, and form what is in effect a great out-door Gallery, seen by thousands of people daily, on which should appear the best work obtainable. The Railway Company will indicate the places or subjects they desire to advertise, after which it will be left to the individual artist to carry out the idea in exactly his own way. In the event of travelling being necessary to obtain material, passes will be issued by the Railway Company and reasonable expenses paid.

Each artist's name and diploma will appear legibly printed below his design. The posters themselves will contain no lettering on the pictorial portion, and very little on the border. The outside size of each poster will be 50 by 40, the design to occupy roughly 45 by 35, and the price offered by the Railway Company £100.





I attach a list of artists whom I have asked to assist in the scheme. On hearing from you that you are agreeable to doing one of these posters, I will supply you with full details early in November.

List of artists invited:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Frank Brangwyn, R.A. | Richard Jack, R.A. |
| J. A. Arnesby Brown, R.A. | Sir David Murray, R.A. |
| G. Clausen, R.A. | Julius Olsson, R.A. |
| M Greiffenhagen, R.A. | Charles Sims, R.A. |
| George Henry, R.A. | Adrian Stokes, R.A. |
| D. Y. Cameron, R.A. | Sir Bertram Mackennal, R.A. |
| Phillip Campbell Taylor, A.R.A. | F. Cayley Robinson, A.R.A. |
| Augustus John, A.R.A. | A. Talmage, A.R.A. |

I should be glad if you would treat this matter as confidential for a few days, except amongst those in the above list.

Yours very sincerely

Norman Wilkinson

Appendix 2

The LMS Posters

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| Brown, Arnesby, R.A. | <i>Nottingham Castle</i> |
| Cameron, Sir D. Y., R.A. | <i>The Scottish Highlands</i> |
| Cameron, Sir D. Y., R.A. | <i>Stirling</i> |
| Clausen, George, R.A. | <i>British Industries: Coal</i> |
| Forbes, Sir Stanhope, R.A. | <i>The Permanent Way: Relaying</i> |
| Greiffenhagen, Maurice, R.A. | <i>Carlisle</i> |
| Henry, George, R.A. | <i>Edinburgh</i> |
| Jack, Richard, R.A. | <i>British Industries: Steel</i> |
| MacKennal, Sir Bertram, R.A. | <i>Speed</i> |
| Murray, Sir David, R.A. | <i>Conway Castle</i> |
| Olssen, Julius, R.A. | <i>Dunluce Castle, Northern Ireland</i> |
| Orpen, Sir William, R.A. | <i>The Night Mail</i> |
| Robinson, Cayley, R.A. | <i>British Industries: Cotton</i> |
| Sims, Charles, R.A. | <i>London</i> |
| Stokes, Adrian, R.A. | <i>Warwick Castle</i> |
| Talmage, Sir Algernon, R.A. | <i>Aberdeen: Brig o'Balgowrie</i> |
| Taylor, L. Campbell, A.R.A. | <i>The Peak District, Peveril Castle</i> |
| Wilkinson, Norman, R.I., R.O.I., O.B.E. | <i>Galloway</i> |
| Wilkinson, Norman, R.I., R.O.I., O.B.E. | <i>To Ireland: Seven LMS Routes</i> |
| Wilkinson, Norman, R.I., R.O.I., O.B.E. | <i>Grangemouth Docks</i> |

