

design a suitable Christmas card. Horsley produced 1,000 copies — all hand lettered — of which only a dozen or so still exist. The card was inscribed with the soon-to-become-familiar message, "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to You," with room for the sender's and recipient's names.

THE ENGLISH public exchanged homemade cards for years, but small businesses soon began commercial production of cards to meet the growing demand for cards to mail.

The London Times and other English newspapers took Christmas cards so seriously that each year current designs were reviewed, similar to theater reviews. Queen Victoria sent thousands of cards to relatives and neighbors.

Enter Louis Prang in 1874, a Bostonian credited with being the father of American Christmas cards. Prang perfected a multicolor printing process that made his cards superior to those printed in Europe. More American publishers entered the greeting-card field in the early 1900s, and many of the greeting-card companies we know today were born in that era.

Through World War I and the Great Depression, the demand for greeting cards kept increasing and only temporarily was slowed by World War II and the worldwide paper shortage. After the war and in ensuing years, demand again increased. Today billions of cards are sent around the world every year.

But even with all the high technology and gimmicks of today's cards, the most popular message still is Horsley's, "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to You!"



The holidays can't be too far away as card displays begin to appear in shops and stores throughout the area. Saleswoman Mary Cox does the arranging at Cards 'n Things at the Wonderland Shopping Center in Livonia.

# CELEBRATE the holidays!

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