

Paris MÔMES



Game
Booklet

FOR CHILDREN

The Coaches gallery

King's Great Stables

CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

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In the background of the painting are the stables as seen from the Palace of Versailles. They are shaped like horseshoe.

Royal coaches – riding high

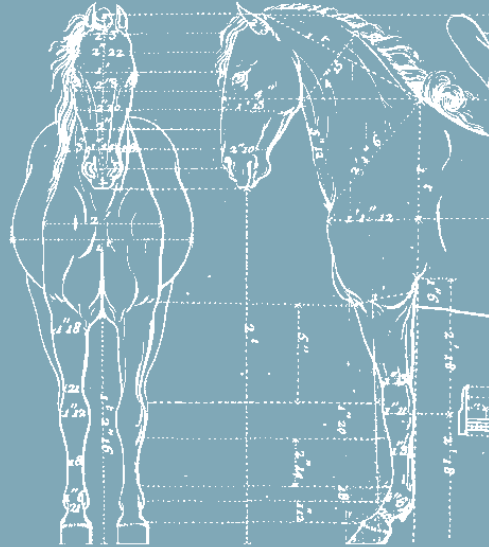
The Coaches gallery at the Palace of Versailles is located in the King's Great Stables. The first modern coaches appeared in France around 1665, during the reign of Louis XIV. Before that people got around on foot or on horseback. The collection at Versailles, one of the largest in Europe, does not present travel coaches, but rather richly decorated gala carriages to show off the King or Emperor's power at grand ceremonies throughout French History: baptisms, marriages, coronations and funerals. Some are real masterpieces made by the greatest artists at Court. Most of the coaches were destroyed during the French Revolution, before making a comeback under the Empire and the Restauration. In 1871, with the return of the Republic, coaches were abandoned in favour of Presidential cars, horse-drawn carriages in a more sober style, but very elegant.

The Royal Stables

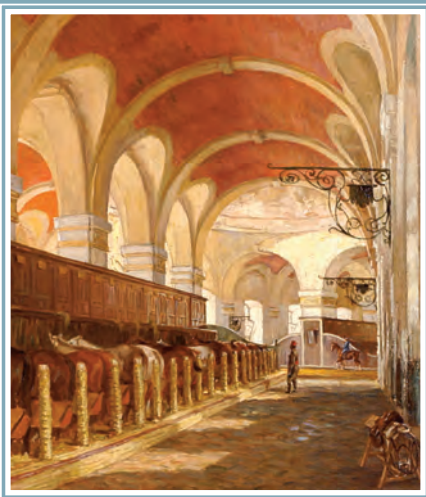
The stables at Versailles were built by Jules Hardouin-Mansart, the official architect of Louis XIV. They are twin buildings shaped like a horseshoe located across from the Palace. What is the difference between the Small Stables and the Great Stables? Back then, “small” meant anything involved in everyday life and “great” concerned things that were solemn and formal. So it had nothing to do with the size of the place. Moreover, the Small Stables are larger than the Great Stables! Designed to house horses and coaches belonging to the King and the Court, the stables were also spaces that were alive with thousands of people and their everyday work! Louis XIV was at the height of his glory, leading a lavish lifestyle. Later on, expenses for the stables will be reduced.



**Look around you. What do you see that could make you think that horses lived here?
Clue: they are made of wood.**



This painting shows the inside of the Small Stables with their huge vaults.



Replace each letter with the letter that comes before it in the alphabet and discover the name of:

- The person who repairs coaches and makes wheels:

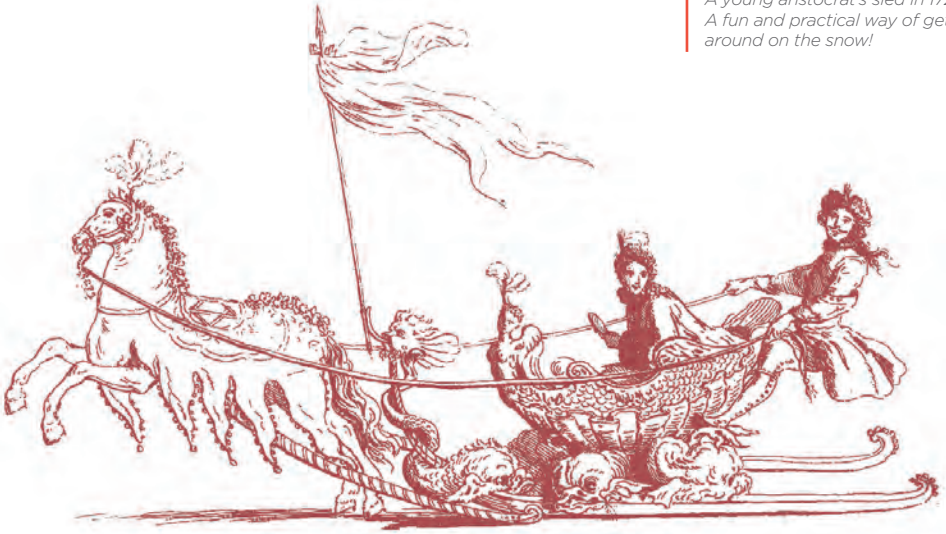
XIFFMXSJHIU



- The person who drives a coach:

DPBDINBO

A young aristocrat's sled in 1729.
A fun and practical way of getting
around on the snow!



Treasures of the Ancien Régime

3

Two small animals
pulled the little carriage
belonging to Dauphin
Louis-Charles.

What were they?

- cats
- mice
- goats



As symbols of royal power, the coaches were destroyed during the French Revolution. The children's cars, sedan chairs and sleds with their fabulous shapes that we can see here are all that remains from the Ancien Régime. In winter, the King and his courtesans held sled races in the gardens of Versailles. Louis XV drove his so fast that the duchesses were afraid to ride with him! Later on, Marie-Antoinette organised rides with snacks. In fact, Versailles was the only court in Europe where women could drive their own sleds! The little berline belonging to Louis-Joseph, the first Dauphin (died in 1789), was pulled by a valet; and the little carriage belonging to Louis-Charles, the future Louis XVII, by two small animals.

The little carriage belonging to Louis-Charles,
the future Louis XVII.

A sumptuous wedding



The name of this Napoleonic berline carriage is on the front: Topaze. All of Napoleon's coaches was named after gemstones.



Look at the symbols of power drawn below and have fun finding them on the coaches. Assign the King and the Emperor their insignia.

The largest number of coaches in the collection date from Napoleon I. They were used on 2 April 1810 for his wedding with Marie-Louise of Austria. That day, 40 luxury berline carriages and more than 240 horses drove down the Champs-Élysées to the Tuileries Garden. Like the kings before him, he showed off his strength and power through the grandeur and beauty of the parade. The Emperor really wanted to do better than the old kings since, for this kind of event, the Bourbons only used 30 coaches!



Eagle

• EMPEROR
KING •



Fleur-de-lis



The crown surmounted by a fleur-de-lis



The two interlaced "C's" of Charles X



The crown with eagles surmounted with a globe and a cross



The "N" of Napoleon

A miraculous birth

Twelve days of festivities! That's what it took to celebrate the baptism of the Duke of Bordeaux, the last and only heir of the Bourbons, whose unexpected birth (29 September 1820) came five months after the assassination of his father, the Duke of Berry. His baptism was celebrated with great fanfare: 27 carriages formed the parade, preceded and followed by the Royal Horse Guards. In the centre, the berline carriage with the child on his governess's knees, next to his sister, Mademoiselle d'Artois.

The baby represented the future of the monarchy. That is why his baptism was organised with such pomp.



The Duke of Bordeaux in his precious crib, watched over by his older sister, Mademoiselle d'Artois.



The baptism was celebrated at the cathedral in Paris. What is its name?

- Sainte-Foy
- Saint-Pierre
- Notre-Dame



The Duke of Bordeaux only reigned for seven days under the name of Henri V.

The triumph of Charles X

The pomp deployed for the coronation of Charles X reached new heights. After the French Revolution and the Empire, the new king wanted to go back to the splendours of the Sun King himself. The ceremony was held in 1825 at Reims Cathedral, and the carriage designed for the event was so extraordinary that it travelled to Reims hidden under a canvas cover, with the sculptures of the roof removed, and on travel wheels, which are more robust and less precious, exhibited here next to it. The unusual wealth of the bronze ornaments made it an extremely heavy vehicle (nearly 4 metric tonnes!). It was used one last time – in 1856 – for the baptism of Napoleon III's son. The royal insignia were replaced by the imperial insignia.

6

The wheels are decorated with lion heads, symbolising strength and power. An ingenious mechanism keeps the head upright as the wheel turns.

Look at these details. They all come from Charles X's carriage, except one. Which one?





The funeral coach of Louis XVIII. In the centre, the king's coffin lies on a purple coat decorated with fleurs-de-lis and is covered by a black velvet shroud.

A grandiose funeral

Impressive in its “majesty and sadness” according to those who were there, Louis XVIII’s funeral coach is the only royal hearse preserved in France. Here again, the pomp of the funeral honoured the glory of the French monarchy. On 23 September 1824, seven days after the sovereign’s death, a huge procession (2.4 km – 1.5 miles!) set off for the Abbey of Saint-Denis, where the Kings of France have been laid to rest since the Middle Ages. Its departure was announced by firing 101 cannons. The hearse was drawn by 8 horses covered in black velvet embroidered with golden fleurs-de-lis. The chiefs of staff of the armed forces opened the march, preceded by 400 poor people dressed in black. Then came the carriages of the officers of the royal household and, just ahead of the funeral coach, the fourteen carriages of the royal family, etc. Burial took place 40 days after transfer of the body to Saint-Denis, in keeping with tradition.



Detail of an angel on the roof of the hearse. He is tipping a torch over, a symbol of death.

7

What was the relationship between Louis XVI, Louis XVIII and Charles X?

- They were best friends
- They were cousins
- They were brothers

Litter or vinaigrette?

A SHORT LEXICON OF THE VARIOUS MODELS OF HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGES

Berline ● So called because it was first made in Berlin, this carriage is well-suited to travel.

Coach ● Designates the first carriages of the 17th century and, more generally, large official vehicles featuring rich decoration.

Coupe ● A coach that has been “coupé” (French for “cut”) down by one third in the front. It was shorter and therefore handled more easily in the streets of Paris. There are only two seats instead of four.

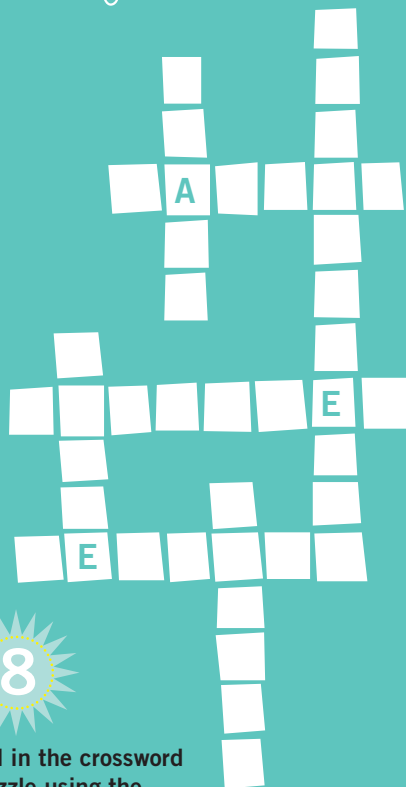
Landau ● Carriage seating four passengers that can be fully opened or closed under a hood.

Litter ● Two-seater with no wheels but equipped with carrier poles, transported by two mules.

Soufflet ● Small two-wheeled convertible that is light and easy to handle. Louis XIV drove his “like a madman”.

Vinaigrette ● Sedan chair equipped with two wheels, pulled by a man or by a horse, used for short trips in cities.

There were already many different vehicle models back then. This is a soufflet.



Fill in the crossword puzzle using the lexicon opposite.



A real work of art

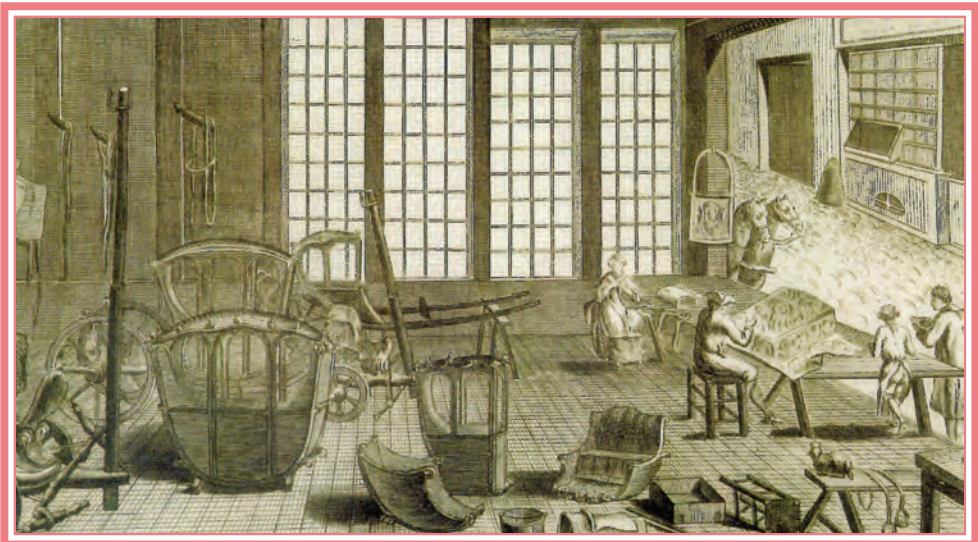
Many artisans are involved in making a coach. The coach builder was in charge of producing the entire vehicle, but he also worked with a vehicle designer, a **joiner**, a **wheelwright**, a **sculptor**, a **painter**, a **gilder**, a **metalworker**, a **mirror-maker**, a lantern-maker and a **saddler** and harness-maker, etc. In all, 25 different professions were involved. Their expertise was such that, from the 17th to the 19th centuries, the quality and elegance of French carriage-making were famous throughout Europe!

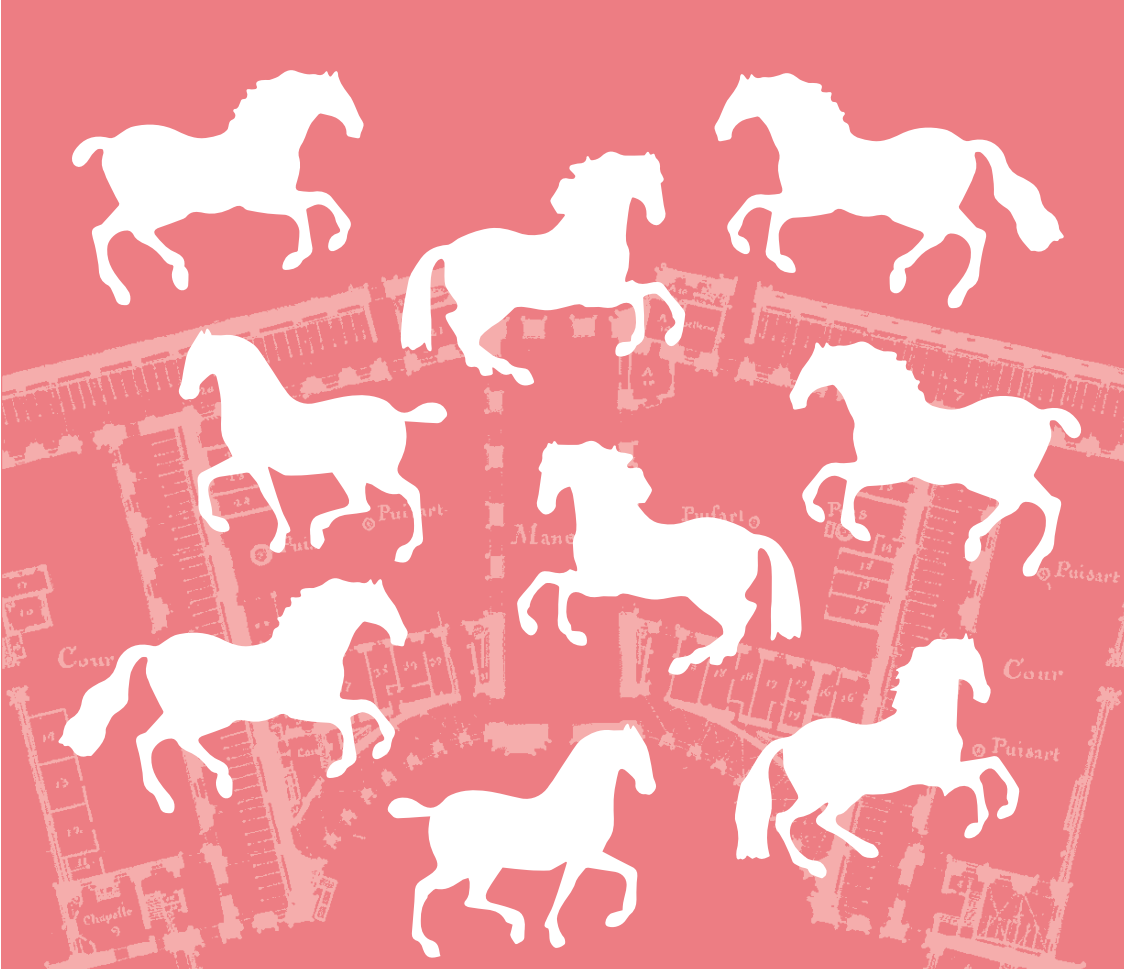
M	K	O	U	W	L	R	N	O	E	A
I	E	W	T	H	M	A	J	H	I	T
R	S	T	R	E	D	L	I	G	L	U
R	I	W	A	E	K	F	N	O	T	I
O	S	C	U	L	P	T	O	R	W	P
R	A	S	U	W	W	U	E	S	H	A
M	D	T	L	R	A	O	J	I	T	I
A	D	J	O	I	N	E	R	M	A	N
K	L	U	L	G	U	F	O	K	J	T
E	E	I	N	H	E	T	R	W	E	E
R	R	O	H	T	I	U	A	W	U	R

An 18th century saddler's workshop. Engraving published in Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*.



Find the professions in bold print in the text. They may be written forward, backward, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.





The King's Horses

The number of horses drawing a coach was also a sign of wealth and power. The King always used 8 horses, the Queen had 6, etc. But only two of the horses, those closest to the coach, pulled the load. The others were just there for show! The number of horses in the royal stables grew from one reign to another: the 382 horses in 1684 grew to 700 in 1715 and more than 2,000 in 1787! The stables were also home to the École des Pages (Squire School), where young noblemen designated by the King trained to become cavalry officers, the most prestigious corps of the French army. To be admitted they had to be 15 years old, be at least “five feet two inches” (1.68 m) tall, “be a well-built person” and provide proof of nobility, which was checked by the King’s genealogist.



Look at these silhouettes. Every horse has a twin, except for one maverick! Which one?

Illustrious families



This table will help you understand the genealogy of the kings and emperors mentioned in this booklet. Power was normally transmitted from father to son, unless the heir died first. Louis XV (1710-1774), Marie-Antoinette (1755-1793) and the Duke of Bordeaux (1820-1883) have been forgotten – put them in their proper place.

