



Greetings and welcome to e-news #5, March 2020

### Magic sets

When I was a boy growing up in the UK, we used to call these 'boxes of tricks', rather than magic sets. Whatever they are called, there is no doubt that they have been the route into magic for many children. Davenports sold thousands of sets over the years and also produced them for other companies. Recent additions to the MAGIC part of the website have majored on magic sets made by Davenports and other companies. I'll just mention two here to give you a flavour of the diversity.

#### Magic set manufactured exclusively for Harrods department store in London, 1960s



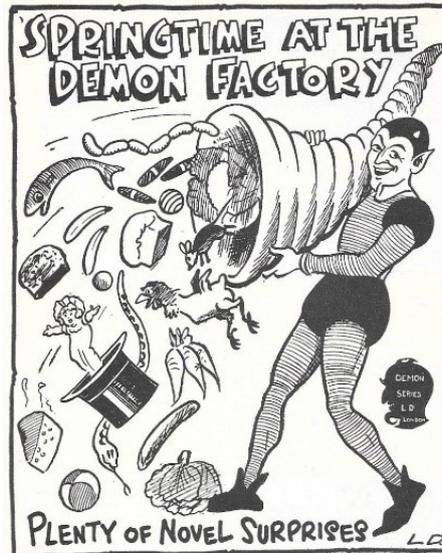
This is a personal favourite of mine - I have helped fill many of them. Harrods wanted a distinctive box full of quality magic, and the long narrow shape is unusual for a magic set. See [N1218](#).

#### Magic set of pocket tricks, 1930s



Today, pocket tricks would be called close-up magic. This set was aimed at the more serious adult magician. See [N1151](#).

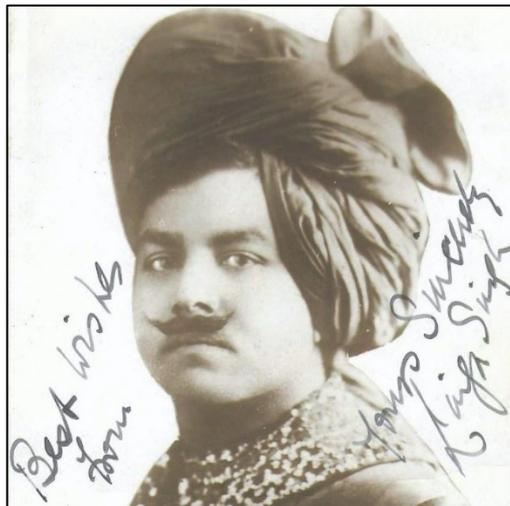
## Jokes



Davenport's had a huge trade in jokes and novelties, including boxed sets such as 'Nine Assorted Boxes of Funny Match Jokes'. See [N1155](#).

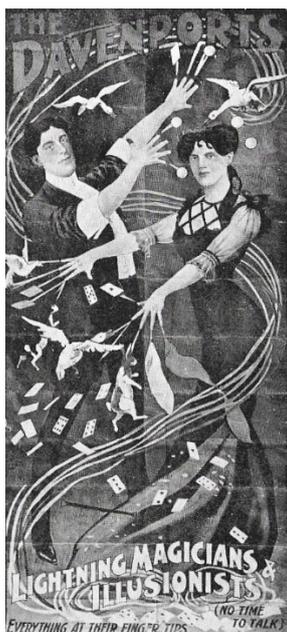
Jokes were particularly beloved of children, but a photograph of the joke does little to convey the joy and laughter it produced. A long-standing Davenport's customer has written a wonderful piece which, I am certain, will take many readers back to their childhood. I urge you to read it [here](#). It will bring a smile, much needed in these troubling times.

## Linga Singh



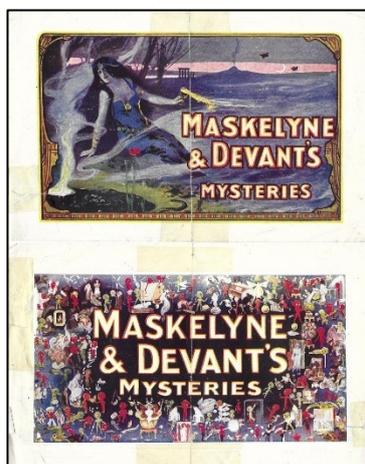
Professional magicians often had lives full of incident, perhaps none more so than Linga Singh who was very popular in the 1920s and 30s. Much of what has been written about Linga Singh is incorrect, simply because journalists and historians repeated the fictitious stories which came from Linga Singh himself. His grandson, Nigel Dutt has spent many years researching Linga Singh. The story that Nigel tells is full of information and surprises. Read the PDF [here](#) to gain insight into one of magic's more colourful performers.

## The magic of Lewis Davenport and his first wife Julia



Lewis Davenport is best known for his 1920s magic act with his second wife Wynne. Less has been written about the earlier act with his first wife Julia; the act had some success in 1904 to 1909. It was a fast-paced act and, most unusually for the first decade of the 20th century, Julia performed some of the magic. Anne Goulden's talk follows their progress and focuses on the tricks that made up the act. Click [here](#) to read how the act developed and what was in it.

### Early days of the Maskelyne & Devant partnership at St. George's Hall



The website has quite a few items relating to the Egyptian Hall era of Maskelyne & Cooke, but so far there is very little for the St. George's Hall era. The EPHEMERA section now contains an interesting item that advertises one of the early St. George's Hall shows. It has four pages with two of them in full colour, most unusual for 1907. See [N1892](#).

Take care and stay safe

John

John Davenport curator of [www.davenportcollection.co.uk](http://www.davenportcollection.co.uk)

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