



10-1-1990

## The Age of Wonders

John Sterling Harris

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### Recommended Citation

Harris, John Sterling (1990) "The Age of Wonders," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 30 : Iss. 4 , Article 11.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol30/iss4/11>

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## The Age of Wonders

In those days there were marvels and I saw them:  
 The lombardy poplars along the street  
 That were even-spaced and all the same size;  
 The hollyhocks that made into ladies in petal gowns;  
 The six-sided tiles in the barbershop floor  
 That lay in straight rows in every direction;  
 The horse-drawn wagons of gravel that dumped  
 By turning the floor boards on edge  
 So the gravel sifted through;  
 Sam Lee, the blacksmith, who could shape  
 Red iron on an anvil with a hammer;  
 The seeds in apricot pits that tasted like almonds;  
 And baby rabbits were born without hair.

A horse could scratch his back by rolling over  
 And show he was old enough to ride;  
 Pine boards had a grain and could be split  
 Along their length but not across;  
 A dog's nose was cold, a cow's nose wet,  
 And a horse's nose was velvet;  
 Wood shavings curled as they came from the plane;  
 A bicycle rim without its spokes lost all its strength;  
 Frost patterns on windows grew like fern leaves;  
 And I could bend a bar of plumber's lead  
 With my bare hands;  
 The striders that skated on the water  
 Sank when I added soap;  
 Bert Weight could scribe a line  
 Across a piece of glass  
 Then break it absolutely straight;  
 And old Erb Matson could whistle two notes at once.

And thus I learned how the world was made  
 In forms and laws, results and beauty  
 From what the wonders were.

—John Sterling Harris