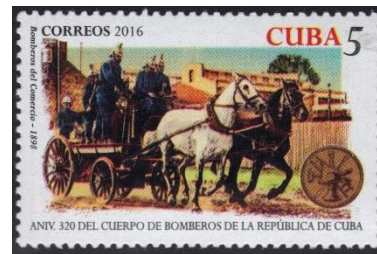


The Romantic Age of the Fire Horses

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Early fire 'engines' were often equipped with harnesses, but not for horses. They were for the firefighters themselves, to help them pull the heavy carts to the fire. As fire engines got bigger and heavier, horses were brought in to pull the unwieldy apparatus.

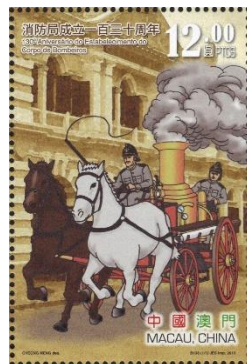
Initially, horses were resisted as an affront to the firefighters' abilities. But larger wagons and then the weight of the newly introduced steam powered pumps made horses a necessity.



Soon horses became a point of pride in the fire service. A matched team of powerful horses came to symbolize the romance and excitement of the headlong rush to confront the fire!



The clattering of hooves, the clanging fire bell, and smoke and steam billowing from the boilers made the race to the fire scene a spectacle to behold!



Horses served faithfully and fearlessly, rushing towards danger that everyone else was fleeing, until they were replaced in the early 20th century by internal combustion engines.