L&A Treasures
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It isn't so much the words, but perhaps the sentiment and sheer beauty of valentines from years past, that make the cards special.

In fact, the valentines donated to the History Center's Library & Archives from the late-1800s and early- to mid-1900s rarely contain a personal message, and in some cases, no message at all. Instead, the scenes subtly convey feelings of love. Pop-up varieties depict cherubic characters or sweet-looking children surrounded by flowers.

One of the more direct valentines includes a tag-shaped greeting that reads: I have linked your heart to mine, For I love you, Valentine.

On back, the sender wrote: For Wuzie, My Valentine I'm tagged for you.

Another valentine is apparently a marriage proposal. The card, depicting a girl holding a newspaper reads: This notice I give That I never will live A bachelor's life anymore, I mean to get wed To my darling instead To the sweet little girl I adore

Some are quite innocent and bittersweet, as is an 1882 valentine meant to be sent from father to daughter that ends with: When she is sixteen, alas the day! This little daughter mine May find another's vows more dear Than Papa's Valentine.

The History Center's Library & Archives collects materials such as valentines and correspondence that relate to life in Western Pennsylvania. These materials and others relating to the region's history are available for viewing by visitors Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

HO, HO, HO!
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