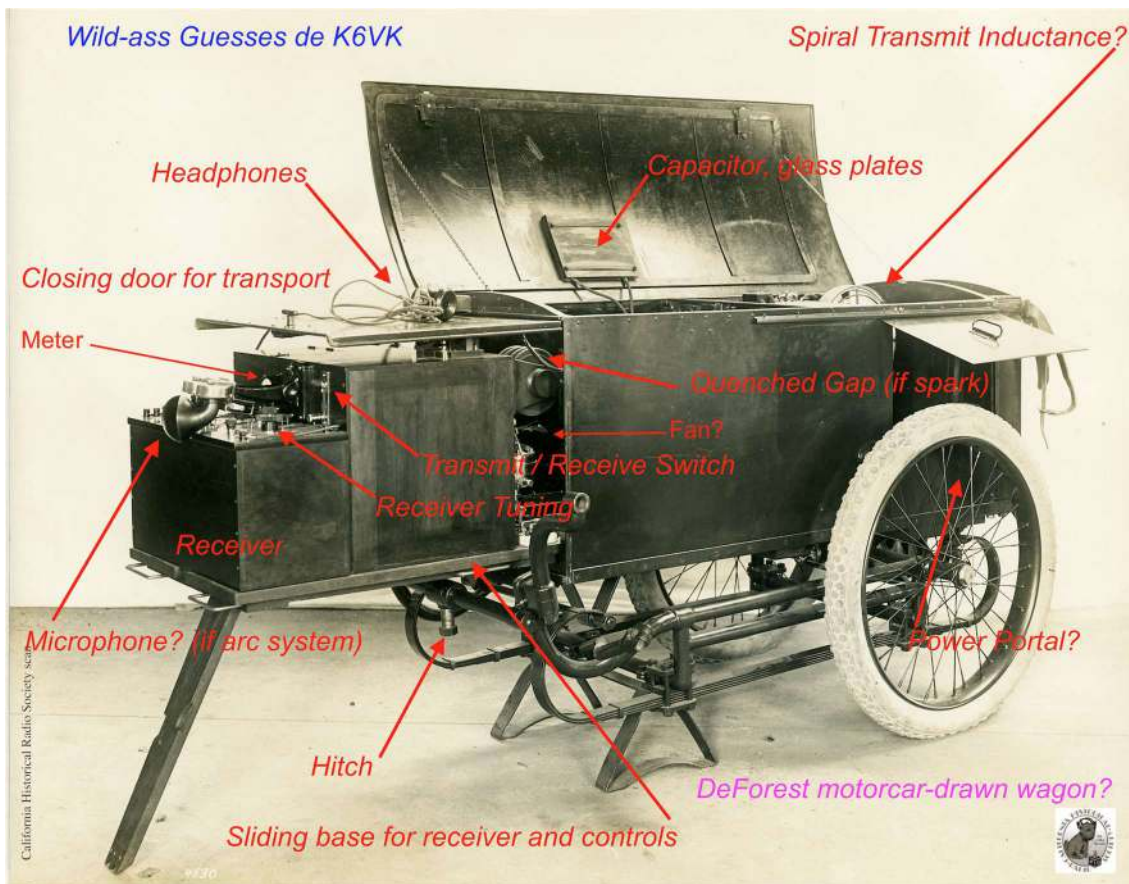


# A Lee de Forest Wireless Wagon, Hitherto Unknown

By Bart Lee, K6VK, a CHRS Fellow in History

CHRS Deputy Archivist Bob Rydzewski is examining some of the Society of Wireless Pioneers files. He has found some original Lee de Forest materials, maybe dating from his Palo Alto days with Federal Telephone and Telegraph and perhaps from later as well. It's too soon to tell. De Forest was a serial entrepreneur as well as a serial marryer. Almost all of the de Forest archives live at History San Jose, in the Perham Collections. Some, however, seem to have been inherited by the Society of Wireless Pioneers.



One of Bob's finds is a catalog of wireless gear. Outstanding in this item is a wireless wagon, above. This object does not seem to be otherwise documented. The picture may just be a prototype. It is the sort of thing a new company would like to sell to the military.

It's hard to know exactly what was on offer. But Bob and your Archivist have made some guesses on the accompanying annotated image. De Forest worked with arc radiotelephone transmitters as early as 1908, the year the Great White Fleet carried them around the world, broadcasting Chief Mennerati's recorded music. This wagon seems to have a microphone in the forward operating position. Perhaps de Forest was trying to sell the army a similar tactical radio-telephone. On the other hand, there appears to be a large quenched spark gap with a fan under it just behind the operating position.

. All further suppositions are welcome! (de K6VK, V '18; correspondence: bart.lee.K6VK@gmail.com)