Stamping Out Disease: Celebrating Vaccine Successes
WITH ARTIFACTS FROM THE KURT LEKISCH, MD COLLECTION

The Rise and Spread of Infectious Disease
Humans share the world with tiny organisms that cause disease. In small, isolated groups, nomadic hunters and gatherers carried these in their bodies without consequence. However, the rise of civilizations brought humans closer together, resulting in infectious diseases. Ever since, humans have struggled to understand disease origins and how to prevent them.

The Golden Age of Microbiology
In the 19th and 20th centuries, with the help of microscopes, scientists discovered that bacteria, parasites, and viruses caused infectious disease. The race was on to find a cure for conditions that had vexed humankind since the dawn of civilization.

Immunology: A Brave New World
In the 20th century, scientists discovered that antibodies like penicillin and sulfa effectively fight bacterial infections, but vaccines remain the only way to prevent disease. Today more than 200 vaccines have been developed, and scientists are working on immunity triggers through DNA manipulation and other gene-sharing techniques to prevent disease.