

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year on Embossed Picture Postcards

The area of greeting picture postcards is extensive, and this exhibit presents only those, which are embossed and with Christmas-New Year's theme. I treated them from different perspectives, shown diverse types and with various accessories. So, there are two stories interwoven in this exhibit. One is about postcards with their characteristics and their publishers/printers. The other story describes embossing/debossing – the most luxurious period of embossed picture postcards started at the end of the 19th century and finished with the First World War, and all postcards shown in this exhibit are from that period.

In the literature, embossed picture postcards are usually counted as one of the golden age novelties. But this technique was already used before postcards in making various cards – in the exhibit are: an embossed religious card from 1832, some embossed greeting cards from the period 1858-1876 and double-sided greeting card from 1892 as an example of blind embossing and colour debossing.

*Bonne Année
sent in 1912,
chromolithograph,
embossed and
gilded, with
die-cut lace,
by an unknown
publisher.*



The last part of the exhibit presents over 20 European and American publishers/printers, which dealt with embossed picture postcards. At the turn of the century, this industry flourished, although the economic crisis caused the collapse of many companies in the USA. It took advantage of European publishers, who until 1909 much exported to the USA. European and American companies were often associated, and many European companies had their affiliates in the United States. Some examples of known connections are described and for each publisher are also displayed their embossed Christmas-New Year's picture postcards.

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Literature and sources:

Slovenian Ethnological Lexicon, Ljubljana, Mladinska knjiga 2011; N. Kuret: Festive year of Slovenians, 2nd book, Ljubljana, Družina 1989; Metropolitan Postcard Club of New York City (<http://www.metropostcard.com>); The Postcard Album, Helmfried Luers, Germany (<http://www.tpa-project.info/>); History of Raphael Tuck and Sons LTD (<http://tuckdb.org/history>), Emotions Greeting Cards & Photography (<http://www.emotionscards.com>); and own research.

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! | |
| Christmas, New Year – meaning of celebration | 2 |
| 2. We know different forms of embossing/debossing, that they were also using for manufacturing of Christmas-New Year's picture postcards | |
| 2.1 They made embossed cards in the 19th century even before picture postcards | 4 |
| (religious card from 1832, greeting cards from period 1858-1876, double-sided greeting card from 1892 - an example of blind embossing and colour debossing) | |
| 2.2 Process of embossing or debossing, embossing/printing errors | 4 |
| (slightly and medium-strong embossing, printed the rest of the ink from a plate for embossing, shifted embossing and colour print, cut postcard in the process of embossing, inscription »address« on the left half of picture postcard's address side) | |
| 2.3 Strongly or high embossing, errors | 4 |
| (process, postcard's address and picture sides in different sizes) | |
| 2.4 Additions, which emphasise embossed image | 8 |
| (gold, silver or bronze colour, glossy finish, »die-cut«, metallic additions, airbrush, silk, paper and plastic accessories, »mechanical« postcards with date, embroideries) | |
| 3. Typical Christmas and New Year motives on embossed picture postcards | 16 |
| (goodbye from old year and celebration of the arrival of a new year, cribs, angels, winter landscape with greenery, children's games, Santa Claus and gifts, Father Time with Baby New Year, dwarfs and other fairy creatures, money; symbols of luck: four-leaf clover, postman, horseshoe, pig, ladybird and bouquets of flowers; years: from 1900 to 1914, the period of war and patriotic symbols) | |
| 4. Well-known European and American publishers/printers who, among other products, issued Christmas-New Year's embossed picture postcards too | |
| 4.1 Some characteristics of this industry in the late 19th and early 20th century | 8 |
| (series of picture postcards with inscriptions and accessories by order, sales patterns, a quick adaptation of picture postcards for export to the USA, thriftiness of some users, thefts of motives; reduction of costs: variants of the same motif, sale of equal picture postcards for all European countries, New Year's picture postcards without printed year) | |
| 4.2 European publishers/printers of such picture postcards | 18 |
| (Paul Suess AG, Koch & Palm, Graphische Anstalt Otto Schloss, E. A. Schwerdtfeger & Co., Gebrüder Obpacher AG, Raphael Tuck & Sons, Paul Finkenrath - PFB, Birn Brothers, Stewart & Woolf, Moriz & Barschall, E. Sborgi, Martin Schlesinger - M.S.i.B., Wildt & Kray, Davidson Brothers) | |
| 4.3 American publishers/printers of such picture postcards | 14 |
| (Whitney Valentine Co., Illustrated Postal Card Co., International Art Publ. Co. - Wolf Company and Ellen Hattie Clapsaddle, M.W. Taggart, John O. Winsch, Sam Gabriel Co. and Frances Brundage, Samson Brothers, Stecher Lithographic Co., A. S. Mecker) | |

Christmas Day

Christmas is a Christian holiday celebrated on December 25th. In the 4th century, it was chosen as the day of Jesus's birth because on that night Roman Christians and non-Christians celebrated the birth of the undefeated Sun. First, it was celebrated only in churches, and since the 14th century, they began to celebrate in women's monasteries. Christmas Day is celebrated religiously by a majority of Christians, as well as culturally by many non-Christians. In a broader sense, Christmas is a period that starts with Christmas Eve (from December 24th to 25th), continues with New Year's Eve and lasts till Three Wise Men's day.

A **crib** is a plastic depiction of the birth of Jesus. Since preparing the crib is a very popular among people during the Christmas period, it has always been a popular motive on Christmas picture postcards.

Right: »25 - ХРИСТОС СЕ РОДИ«
by unknown publisher.
Sent 24.12.1903, Serbia,
embossed chromolithograph.



Above: »GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO« by unknown publisher. Embossed chromolithograph with undivided back, sent in Italy.

New Year's Day

Pope Innocent XII set **January 1** as the first day in a year in 1691 (as the last in history). Before that, the beginning of the new year had been celebrating on different days in various cultures, normally in December, January or March.

New Year's Eve is the last day of the year and the name day of St. Silvestris. For Christians, it is the second Christmas Eve. New Year's Eve celebration nowadays is a modern phenomenon derived from an urban environment in the 20th century - but we can also find the celebration as a motif on picture postcards from the turn of the century.

Right: »1 Januar, Prosit Neujahr! /.../«
by unknown publisher. Sent 31.12.1902,
embossed chromolithograph.



In folk tradition, all three Saints' eves (Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve and Epiphany Eve) are connected by the same or similar customs: prayer by the manger, singing carols and vigil. The table must be festively set, and the ceremonial bread should be on it. Before people started the prayer, landowners sprinkled the house, farm buildings, cattle and fields with blessed water and incensed them with frankincense. This ritual protected the house from bad health and gave a rich harvest the following year. And from these customs come frequent motifs on New Year's picture postcards.

Left: »1 Janvier Heureuse année«
by unknown publisher. Sent 31.12.1906,
embossed chromolithograph with gilding.



The embossed religious card from 1832

In the 19th century, the printing industry developed and grew rapidly. Manufacturers tended to reduce costs, and the price of paper products was falling. They also began to use paper to make many products (toys, ornaments, entertainment items) that had previously been made in wood or lead. With the growth of the middle class, the demand for paper products also increased. The publishers tried to make the products as pleasing to the customers as possible, using various novelties and accessories. And one of those was embossing.

First, they used embossing to make various cards (religious, trade and personal cards) as well as greeting cards (Christmas and Valentines). And when they started producing picture postcards, they used the same (already known) techniques to make them.

In the beginning, they coloured blind embossing by hand, and later they usually combined it with colour lithography. Below is the religious card, dated in 1832, which has blind embossing partly hand-coloured (floral decoration).



The increased copy of the inscription on the back of the religious card.



Above: the embossed religious card, dated 19.11.1832, with blind embossing partly hand-coloured. It consists of two parts glued together, and the lower is made as hand-coloured engraving.

Embossed New Year's greeting cards from 1858-1872

As the use of colour lithography expanded, embossing was often used only to border greeting cards (and other cards as well). Such is the lower greeting card with embossed and hand-painted gilded border, dated 1858.



Right: the chromolithographic greeting card with embossed and gilded border, dated in 1858. Above is the reduced copy of the backside.

Embossing was often combined with die-cutting and creating even more three-dimensional impressions. And such a feeling is usually made even with glued embossed accessories. Such are the New Year's greeting cards below that were glued into an album.

Right: the embossed New Year's greeting card with die-cutting lace, glued on album paper, from around 1870.



Left: the embossed New Year's greeting card from 1872, glued on album paper.



Embossed Christmas-New Year's greeting cards from 1870-1876

The embossing was sometimes also emphasized by the unique shape. The bottom greeting card is in the form of a closed letter and embossed on both sides.



Right: the embossed New Year's greeting card in the form of a letter, with glued colour decorations, from 1870. Above is the reduced copy of the backside.



Left: New Year's greeting card by B. Sulman, London. Embossed chromolithograph from 1875.



Right: the embossed Christmas greeting card, chromolithograph dated in 1876.



The double-sided embossed/debossed Christmas greeting card

The embossed paper (or other material) becomes debossed on the other side. But rare cards were double-sided; they were usually left blank on one side, and it was intended for writing messages.

This Christmas greeting card from 1892 is double-sided. It is blind-embossed on one side and debossed chromolithograph on the other side.

Right: the reduced copy of the backside.




Above: the double-sided Christmas greeting card from 1892. It is blind-embossed on the one side and debossing chromolithograph on the other.

The process of embossing

Most embossed picture postcards were made by pressing a paper between two moulded die forms. The same process was used in the 19th century to create embossed cards, which they produced before postcards.

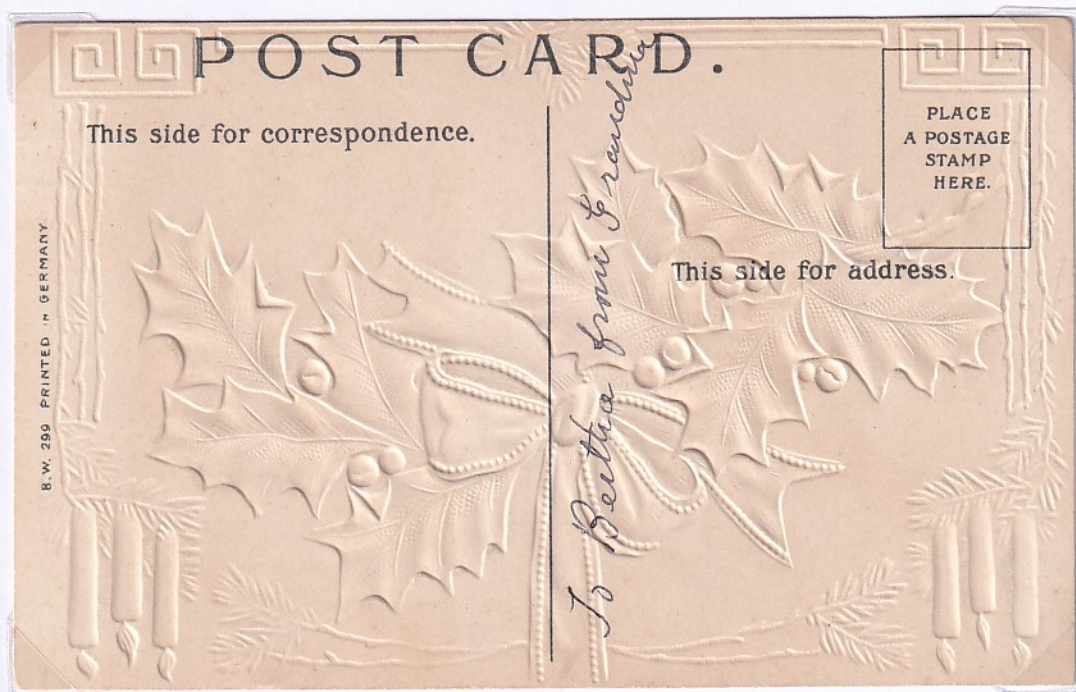
They usually used **two die forms** in the process; one die form (male) is placed on the press bed to push the design upwards, while the other (female) applies pressure to the paper from above. After pressing, the paper is **embossed** on one side and **debossed** on the other – picture postcards are usually embossed on a picture side and debossed on an address side. The embossing emphasizes the image and gives it a three-dimensional look.

The embossing can be of varying strength.

Picture postcards are usually **slightly**  or **normal, medium-strong** embossed.



Right: slightly embossed »Herzliche Glückwünsche zum Neuen Jahre«, sent 31.12.1902.



Above: medium-strong embossed »A Merry Christmas« by B.W., printed in Germany.

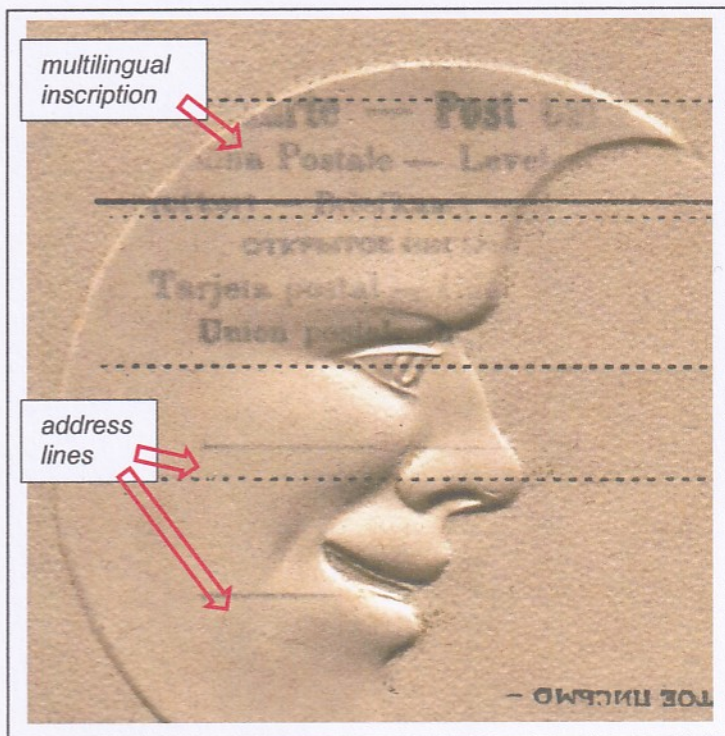
Error – printed the rest of the ink from a plate for embossing

At producing such postcards, embossing and colour printing were done independently, therefore errors could occur.

Colour printing required a flat surface of the paper and some pressure to transfer ink from plate to paper properly. Therefore, printing was done before embossing otherwise, the pressure from printing would most likely flatten any embossing.

In the debossed part, this postcard has also printed the rest of the ink from the plate for embossing. The printer didn't purify the plate (male) after embossing the previous postcard, which has not yet dried. So the ink was transferred to the next postcard.

Visible are multilingual inscription Postkarte and address lines.



Above: the inverted and enlarged copy of the lower picture postcard.

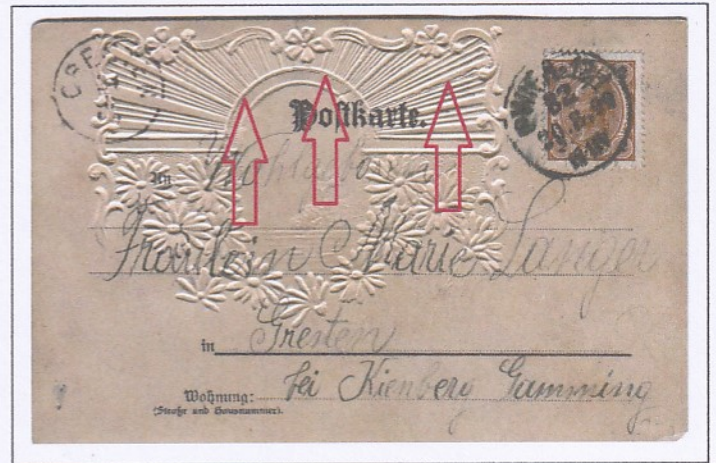


Above: embossed chromolithograph »Amitiés« by unknown publisher/printer. On the debossed part of the address side, it has printed multilingual inscription and address lines.

**Errors – shifted embossing and colour print,
cut postcard within a process of embossing**

Because colour printing and embossing are made separately, they must be done precisely.

Here is an example of a postcard with shifted printing - colour printing and embossing are shifted by 1 cm (the colours are printed too much to the right). Such products publishers usually didn't place on the market unless they wanted to make a unique »artistic« impression on customers.



Above: the reduced copy of the address side of the lower postcard.

An error also occurred in the embossing process because the postcard was cut in several places - on the arch and the left side, the cut places are marked with red arrows.

The causes of such errors could be different: too much pressure or inappropriate paper. They sometimes heated the top die form (female) to shape the paper better, but if it was too hot, the paper »baked« and cracked.



Above: embossed chromolithograph by unknown publisher/printer, sent 20.8.1899 – the colour print and the embossing are shifted for 1 cm.

Error – inscription »address« on the left half of postcard's address side

A divided address side of postcards (divided back) they were introducing in the period from 1902 (in Great Britain) to the year 1907 (in the United States).

On old postcard stocks with undivided backs, some publishers/printers printed vertical line and added inscriptions: address (on the right side) and communicated or correspondence (on the left side). Such is the New Year's French picture postcard below from this transitional period.

But a printer made a mistake - he printed the inscription for the address on the left side and the message on the right side. A sender complied with this wrong instruction in the writing of the address and the message.

Right: the reduced copy of the picture side of the lower postcard.



ADRESSE (on the left) / CORRESPONDANCE (on the right)



Above: slightly embossed New Year's French postcard »365 Jours de Bonheur« by G.B., sent in France, but the date isn't clear; the place for the address is printed on the left side.

Strongly or high embossing – a process

High/strongly embossing **increases a three-dimensional appearance** of a picture.

High embossed/debossed picture postcards consist of two parts usually:

- A picture side - was made from thicker paper that was allowing high embossing. Therefore such postcards have often the appearance of paper pulp on the picture side often. They were made in the same way - by pressing a paper between two die forms.
- An address side - sometimes was glued preprinted paper separately, that it was easier to write on a picture postcard.

Cotton was normally used as a filling between picture and address side.

Right: strongly embossed »Christmas Greetings« by TJC, Series No. 2002, printed in Germany. Dated 18.12.1917.



Above: strongly embossed »Christmas Greetings« by unknown publisher/printer. Written and probably sent in an envelope, divided back.



Here are two picture-sides of strongly/high embossed picture postcards from inside. On the edges of both are visible reminders of glue. Both had glued preprinted address-side for easier writing.

The paper of the top one is fatter/thicker, and it was made from rough paper mass - therefore, it has the appearance of paper pulp. The below postcard is made of white, smooth, medium-thick paper. Also, such paper was appropriate for strongly/high embossing. They were using it especially for postcards, painted with airbrush technique.

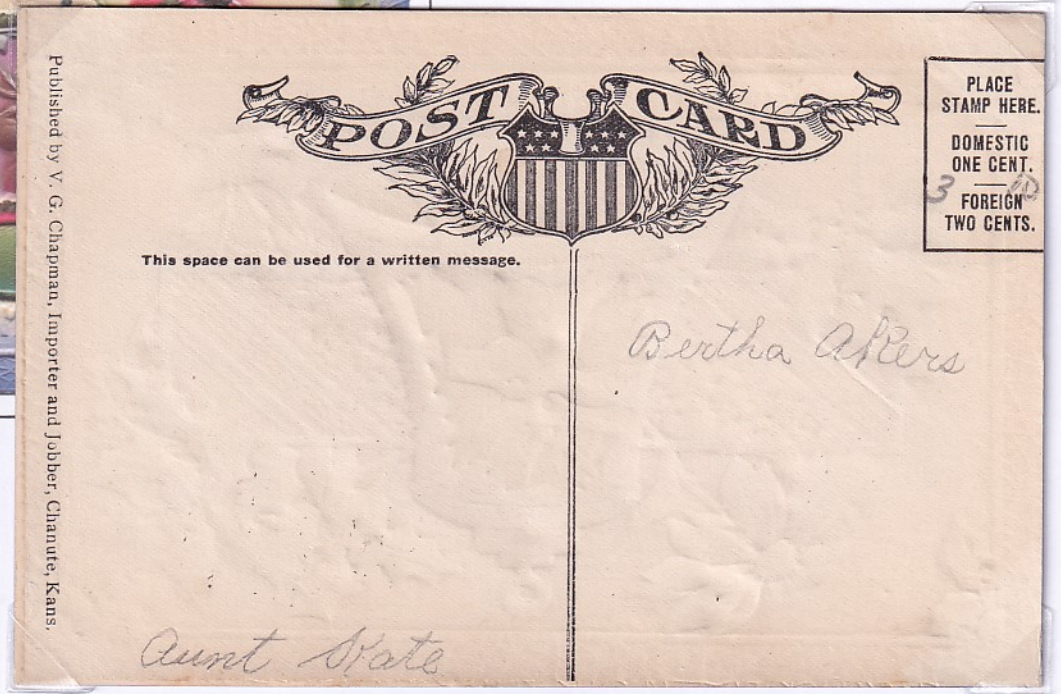
Above and below: picture sides of high/strongly embossed postcards from inside - they are made from a different kinds of paper.



Errors: picture and address side of the postcard are in different sizes



Above:
the reduced copy
of the picture-side.



The most common errors in making such picture postcards occurred when the picture-side and address-side were of different sizes. If the address side was larger than the picture side, they cut the address side - such an example is the picture postcard above. However, if the picture side was too large, it was left alone if cutting would spoil the picture/design. Such an example is the postcard below.



It was hard to write on some postcards without an additional address page



Some printers left strongly/high embossed picture postcards also without an additional address page. Such postcards are beautiful and something special, but it was hard to use them. It was challenging to write the address and message nicely/legibly, also cancellation is unclear. Two examples of such picture postcards are here.

Above and below: high embossed picture postcards without an additional address side, both were sent in 1911.



**Gold, silver or bronze colour,
glossy finishing foil**

On some slightly embossed greeting and festive postcards, slightly embossed with gildings, they added a glossy finishing foil on the picture side. ⇒

Colours are emphasised because of the shiny surface very much on these postcards. Unfortunately, today after one hundred years, this shiny finishing foil likes falling off, especially on edges. .

Gold, silver and bronze colours gave embossed postcards a special festive effect, which was more noticed on black and white picture postcards than on coloured ones.



Right: »Prosit Neujahr!« by Selmar Bayer from Berlin. It is slightly embossed with gildings and glossy finishing foil. It was sent between 1908 and 1918.



Above: »Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum Neuen Jahre« by O.V.H.. It was sent 5.1.1903 and it is slightly embossed with gildings on black and white background.

Die-cut picture postcards

Die-cut products are those that manufacturers mechanically cut out in a different form than the usual rectangle with level edges.

The technological process of die-cutting developed in the last decades of the 19th century, and greeting card producers have taken advantage of it.

The combination of embossing and die-cut was frequent because buyers liked it.

Right: »Bonne et heureuse année« by an unknown publisher; embossed, with die-cut lace edge and glued accessory, sent 1916.



Picture postcards are oftenest made with die-cut lace edges, or they glued die-cut additions on them.

Die-cut picture postcards are at mailing more difficultly kept of undamaged, as they were exposed to injuries more like greeting cards, that they sent in envelopes. Therefore, such postcards were often also sent enclosed in an envelope.

Left: »Bonne année« by an unknown publisher; embossed, with die-cut lace edge and glued accessory, dated 30.12.1908.



Shiny metallic powder

Below: »Heureuse Année« by J.C Paris; embossed and with metallic powder, sent in 1907.



Shiny metallic powders were giving postcards a still more festive appearance. ↑

If they were used together with the embossing, they emphasised the relief appearance of a picture.

If they added the metallic powder to the unembossed picture, it got the appearance of an embossed picture - a relief printed image. ↓



Above: »1903 Bonne Année« by P.M.B., serie 1032. Written, with metallic powder.

Airbrush

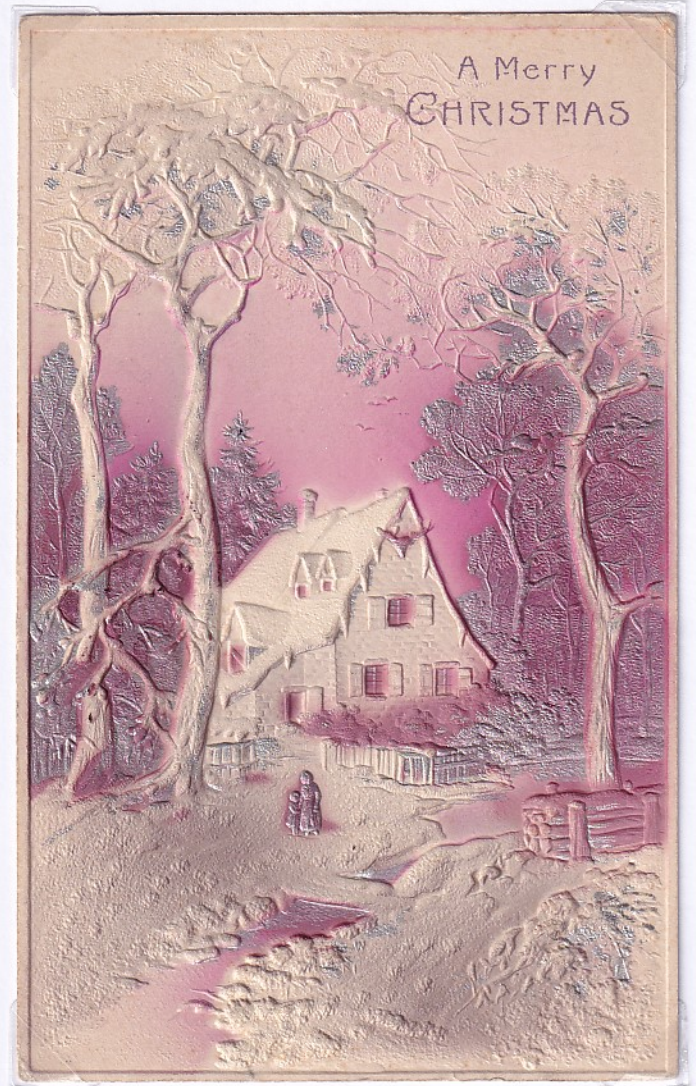
Airbrush was invented by Abner Peeler in 1879, who patented it as a device for applying water-colours or for other artistic purposes.

Charles Burdick patented the first modern airbrush in 1893. And, soon, they used it in the postcards production too. It was very suitable for colouring highly embossed picture postcards.

How does the device work? It mixes paint with air, then puts it through a fine spray to get tiny drops.

Before digitalisation, besides industry, an airbrush was used a lot in photography for repairing photos. They also used it for forging photos which some regimes took advantage of (Stalin, for example).

Right: »A Merry Christmas« by an unknown publisher; embossed and coloured by airbrush technique, sent 21.12.1910.



Above: »A Merry Christmas« by an unknown publisher, printed in Germany; embossed and coloured by airbrush technique.

Embedded silk and plastic additives

With silk and plastic, they usually emphasised flowers and suits to created or enhanced a relief appearance.

Here are two postcards with a simple hold-to-light effect that they made by using colour plastic foil. A transparent foil was inserted between the picture and address sides that it covered openings. They also added silk and made embossing. Colour foil is visible on both sides of the postcard.



Left: the copy of the part of the address side.

Right: »Fröhliche Weihnachten« by an unknown publisher. Embossed and simple hold-to-light with plastic and silk; sent 22.12.1900.



Above: »Buon Natale« by an unknown publisher. Embossed simple hold-to-light postcard with plastic and silk additives, sent 1900.

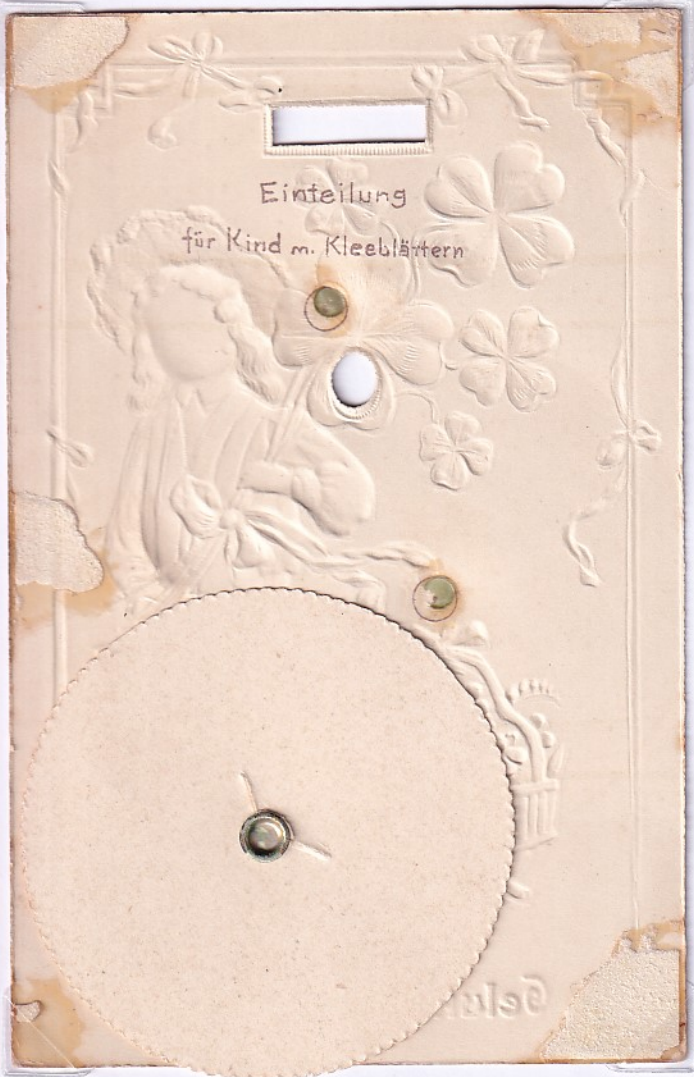
»Mechanical« postcards with date

Mechanical postcards have jagged rings that rotate next to edges. The desired date is able to regulate with the rotation of rings via clipped openings.

Right: »Bonne année« by E.A. Schwerdtfeger & Co. Embossed mechanical postcard with a date.

Below is the interior of the mechanical-date postcard. They glued metallic holders on the embossed picture side and on that affixed three rings: with numbers, days and months (below right).

Below: publisher - E.A. Schwerdtfeger, it has Dutch inscriptions.



Glued silk, paper and plastic additions

Manufacturers often combined embossing with glued paper, silk, and plastic accessories.

The right postcard has glued the paper letter.

Right: »Bonne Année«
by B&R, sent 1903.
Embossed, with the
added letter.

The lower postcard has
on silky base glued the
plastic, embossed fan,
which is very attractive.

Below: »Bonne Année«
by an unknown publisher.
Written, sent probably in
an envelope.
The plastic relief made
fan is glued on the silky
base. It is tied with the
ribbon.



Postcards with embroideries and embossed frames

Right:
»Bonne
Année«.
by J. T..
It was
written on
29.1.1921
and sent
probably in
envelope,
embroidery
with
embossed
frame.



Particularly French publishers issued postcards with embroideries in this period; such postcards own greetings, festively and other themes, and they are carrying inscriptions in different European languages.

Below is shown how they made such a postcard: embroidery was glued round edges on the address side of the postcard, and they glued the embossed frame on it.



TYPICAL MOTIVES

Goodbye from old year and celebration of the arrival of a new year

The beginning of the Christmas celebration is also that time in the year when we begin to say goodbye to the prior year. We hold up excellent and kind memoirs with ourselves. We »sweep« ugly and unpleasant memoirs from our life, and we leave them to the past. A new year means a new beginning and hope for a better life for us, so we toast the arrival of a new year. On postcards from the period before WWI is a **glass of champagne rare motive**. The reason is that champagne as a symbol of celebration was not accessible to ordinary people. Toasting with champagne custom became popular after World War II.

Right: »Bonne Année« by A.S.B.; slightly embossed chromolithograph with gildings, sent 1915.



Above: »Buon Natale« by an unknown publisher, embossed chromolithograph, sent 1904.

Cribs and angels

Christmas crib is a plastic depiction of the birth of Jesus, and it has always been a popular motive on Christmas postcards.

And also, **angels** are part of the nativity scene always. An angel is a creature that is a mediator between God and humans. A Greek and Latin concept meets the Hebrew and Arabic Malak, translated as a messenger (bringer of news). According to Islamic and Christian religious beliefs, each person has his own guardian angel who protects him from misfortune. In the Old Testament, we can find angels: Cherubs, Seraphin, Ariel, etc. At the top of the hierarchy are the archangels Michael, Raphael, Gabriel and Uriel.

*Right: »Vesele božične praznike!«
by Selmar Bayer, Berlin.
Embossed chromolithograph with
gildings, sent 1910.*



*Above: »Joyeux Noël«
by an unknown publisher; embossed chromolithograph with gildings, sent 1913.*

Winter landscape with greenery, children's games

We celebrate Christmas and New Year's holidays in wintertime. Therefore **romantic winter landscape** is also a common motive. A Christmas tree is a spruce or fir tree decorated with ornaments and candles. The tradition of decoration was enforced in Catholic countries in Europe at the end of the 19th century. It is a Protestant custom with Indo-European roots.

Right: »Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum Neuen Jahre«, embossed chromolithograph, sent 1908.



Snow falls within this time, and **child winter plays** can start. We know skiing as the main winter party today. Kids above all sledged on the turn of the century, snowballed and created snowmen. A typical **snowman** consists of three large snowballs of different sizes and some additions for facial and other features. Hands are made from branches, small stones are for a smile and eyes and carrot for a nose. It can also have some human clothing, as there are a hat and a scarf.

Left: »All Christmas joy be yours«, embossed chromolithograph, sent 1909.



Santa Claus and gifts

Santa Claus in a red suit with a cap (bordered with white line) brings gifts to the homes of well-behaved children on the Christmas eve (24th December) or the early morning hours of Christmas Day (25th December). The character of Santa developed into the USA at the beginning of the 19th century, where different cultures and traditions were crossed because of immigrants. He grew out of the traditional character of Saint Nicholas, the British figure of Father Christmas, the Dutch figure of Sinterklaas, the German figure of Christkindl, symbols of Epiphany, Three Kings and Befana. His popularity increased because of the advertisement of Coca Cola. They used this character in red/white suits in advertising before; e. g. already in 1915, he sold mineral water of the company White Rock Beverages.

Right: Santa and children; embossed chromolithograph with gildings, undivided back.



Above: »A merry Christmas to you« by International Art Publ. Company, Copyright 1907, the artist was Ellen H. Clapsaddle, signed; embossed chromolithograph sent 23.12.1907.

Father Time with Baby New Year, dwarfs and other fairy creatures

Father Time is the anthropomorphised depiction of time. Within the 19th century, he was a popular New Year's figure, which meant the departure of the old year. Usually, he is depicted as an older bearded man (sometimes with wings), dressed in a robe and carrying a scythe and an hourglass. This image derives from several sources, including the Grim Reaper and the Greek Cronus. **Baby New Year**, which symbolises the arrival of a new year, usually follows him.

Dwarfs were a component of life in Europe and Russia sometimes. People saw them, and dwarfs could help them or punished them. Therefore people wished themselves on New Year's Day that dwarfs would help them. Within the Germanic tradition, dwarfs were creatures that worked under the land and mined metals.

Right: »Joyeux Noël« by Paul Finkenrath; embossed chromolithograph with gildings, sent 23.12.1905.



Above: »Prosit Neujahr!« by an unknown publisher; embossed chromolithograph, sent 30.12.1903.

We wish you also a lot of money in the new year

Below: »Boldog Uj évét« by Selmar Bayer, embossed chromolithograph with divided back, sent 31.12.1911.



Having a lot of money has always been one of New Year's wishes and, therefore, a common motive.

Despite providing a place for a message on the address side of postcards, some used the picture side to write down a message many years later, probably out of habit. The top postcard with a divided back is an example; they used it in the same way as the bottom with an undivided back.



Above: »Bonne année« by an unknown publisher, embossed chromolithograph, undivided back, sent 1905.

**Symbols of luck:
four-leaf clover brings fortune,
a postman brings pleasant news**

According to folk belief, a **four-leaf clover** symbolises happiness because it has magic power and brings joy in love, health, and games. At the same time, it drives away forces of evil and protects people and animals against them. People like carrying with them four-leaf clovers because they brought them happiness and success. They believed that a four-leaf clover, picked on a midsummer day, had extraordinary power.

Right: »1903 Viel Glück im neuen Jahre« by Paul Suess AG; slightly embossed chromolithograph with gildings, sent 31.12.1902.



All civilizations knew sending of messages and used it in different forms. They knew postal messengers as walkers, runners and riders in the beginning. Later they transported mail by carriages. Late medieval messenger was put on in tight pants, a knee-length reaching tunic, and flat shoes. They wore uniforms later. Also, a postal horn was obligatory equipment. On Christmas-New Year's postcards are postal messengers that bring good news and blessings.

Left: »Veselo novo leto« by an unknown publisher; slightly embossed with gildings, divided back.



**Symbols of luck:
horseshoe, pig, ladybird
and bouquets of flowers**

A **horseshoe** is a well-known symbol that brings happiness, safety and health. They said that each horseshoe that was given or found should be picked up and placed on the outside of the house.

A **pig** is known as a symbol of curiosity, welfare and richness. With its cute round form it is also a sign of rich life and welfare and brings happiness.

Ladybirds are those members of insects that have exactly seven spots that go pale with ageing. A ladybird is a symbol of happiness and fertility. Great luck is brought by a ladybird that lands on your hand while flying.

The **symbolism of flowers** was very modern in this period, as almost every flower owned its meaning. Also, series of picture postcards, that these symbols are presented on, are known.

Right: »Die besten Glückwünsche zum neuen Jahre«; slightly embossed, gildings, sent 14.1.1905.



Above: »Prosit Neujahr!« by W.W.; embossed chromolithograph, sent 30.12.1905.

Picture postcards with printed years: 1900 and 1901

Below: »1900 Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum Neuen Jahre«, embossed with gildings, sent 25.12.1899.



Greeting postcards for New Year holidays **with the printed year** were usually printed in **smaller circulations** because publishers could sell them only for a month or two in the current year. Embossed picture postcards with printed years started appearing in 1900. It was the turning year and as such attractive to people (like 2000 was for us). But they printed years on greeting cards already much before, also embossed and with different additions.



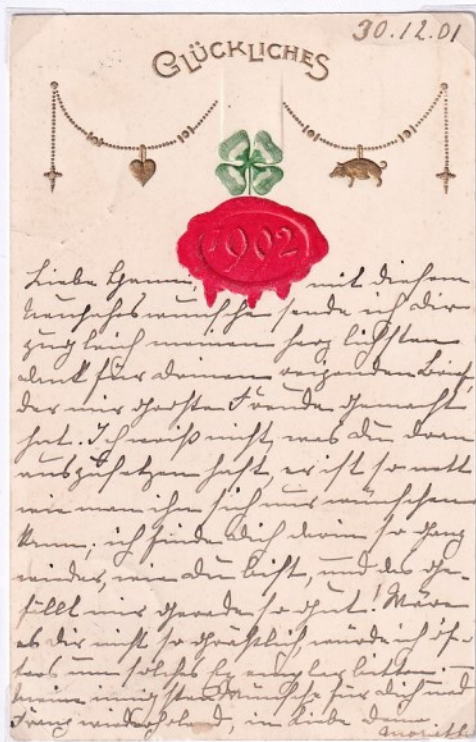
Above: »1901 Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum Jahreswechsel«, embossed with gildings, sent 31.12.1900.

Years: 1902 and 1903

A seal, a sign of an organization or person, is being used to determine the credibility or document's / letter's secrecy. A seal on an envelope guarantees that delivery wasn't opened if the seal isn't split up. It is made of sealing wax. When the wax is still soft, a sign is printed on it.

It was a popular symbol of credibility and trustfulness at the turn of the century.

Right:
»Glückliches 1902« by S. & C.;
embossed, with gildings,
sent 30.12.1901.



The story about handwriting starts in Mesopotamia, in a rich country between Euphrates and Tigris. While the cuneiform handwriting was developing there, Egypt faced the beginning of hieroglyphs. On the other side of the world, around 2000 BC, Chinese developed characters that are used even today. Handwriting on the left postcard is called **the Gothic alphabet**. It started developing in the 11th century and in the 13th century became Gothic texture (literary Gothic). It was used in England, France, Spain and Germany.

Left: »Urkund dieses Das Neue Jahr 1903 hat nur Glückstage, 1 Januar 1903«;
slightly embossed with gildings, sent 1903.



Years: 1904 and 1905

Below: »1904 Bonne Année«, slightly embossed, sent 31.12.1903.



We also find **pigeons and swallows** on Christmas-New Year's postcards often. A pigeon is a primary symbol of purity and humbleness in the history of Jewish-Christian symbolism. It became the image of the Holy Spirit in New Testament. When it brings olive branch aboard Noah's ship, it symbolises peace, harmony, hope and again found fortune. Also, a swallow is an appropriate symbol for this time, as it is the precursor of spring.



Above: »1905 Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum neuen Jahre«; embossed, with silk and gildings, sent 30.12.1904.

Years: 1906 and 1907

Below: »1906 - 365 Jours de Bonheur« by Kunzli Freres; embossed chromolithograph, sent 30.12.1905.



Above: the reduced copy of the address side.

Right:

»1907 January 1
A Happy New Year«
sent 29.12.1906 in the USA,
embossed with
gilded inscription.

In the USA, they started to use divided back in 1907. The lower postcard was made in Europe in 1906 and sent in the USA; it has divided back and multilingual inscriptions.



The American sender didn't use the divided back; therefore, he wrote the address, per old manner, over the whole address side.



Years: 1908 and 1909

1908 and 1909 were also important years for European postcard publishers/printers; this was the last period of mass export of European postcards to the United States.

Both postcards on this page were sent from the U.S. but have different address sides. The most important publishers who exported to the USA printed the address side per American Manner, with an inscription Post Card (below postcard). However, those who wanted to save only added a Post Card sign to the multilingual inscription (the postcard on the right).

Postkarte – Carte postale – Weltpostverein – Union postale universelle
 Levél-ár – Correspondenzkarte – Dohodba – Karta korespondencyjna
 Korespondenčni listek – Briefkärtchen – Post card – Brevkort – Brevkort
 Cartolina postale – Tarjeta postal – Огизиртос-поскоро – Довідка, вістка

Above: the copy of inscription on the right postcard.

Right: »A Happy New Year 1908«
 by an unknown publisher,
 printed in Germany; embossed,
 multilingual inscriptions with
 added inscription Post Card,
 sent 1907.



Above: »1909 A Happy New Year« by Illustrated Postal Card Company. Embossed, with inscription Post Card on the address side, sent 30.12.1908 in the USA.

Years: 1910 and 1911

Below: »A Happy New Year 1910« embossed chromolithograph with silvering, sent 30.12.1909.



Christmas and New Year are in the middle of winter, so **the snow** was also a common motif.

Below is the postcard of American publisher John Winsch. He was still printing his postcards in Germany **after 1909** in large printing company Obpacher Bros. (GOM) in Munich. He could afford this probably because his postcards on the American market were appreciated due to quality and achieved higher selling prices than usual.



Above: »1911 To wish you a Happy New Year« by John Winsch, printed in Germany; embossed, sent 1910.

Years: 1912, 1913 and 1914

One of the motives was also a new year banishing the old one.

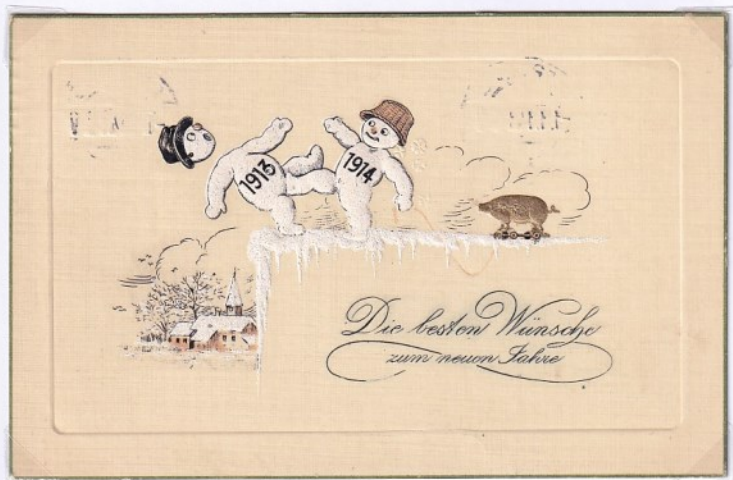
Before the first war, buyers still liked postcards similar to classical greeting cards; here shown postcard has glued notebook, like greeting cards.



Left: the reduced copy of the booklet inside on the right postcard.



Right: »1912« by an unknown publisher, the booklet that is glued on the base card is embossed and with metallic powder, sent probably in an envelope, dated in 1912.



Above: »1913, 1914 Die besten Wünsche zum neuen Jahre« by an unknown publisher, embossed.

The First World War and patriotic symbols

At the beginning of WWI, soldiers began going to the front. They were convinced that the war will be short-lived and that they will be at Christmas already at home. Christmas was a symbol of **peace and joy in the family circle** always. The war just lasted; it started only well at Christmas 1914.

Many soldiers and civilians had only one wish already at that time; they wished themselves that war would be ended and that 1915 would bring peace, joy and end of suffering.

Right: »1915 Friede und Freude im neuen Jahre« by Hermann Wolff, Berlin. slightly embossed, silvering, sent 26.12.1914.



Military Christmas-New Year's postcards issued in time of the first World War and later are decorated with different **patriotic symbols** almost always. They are presented together with symbols of peace often. The connection of these symbols equates combat for a native country and an emperor with fighting for peace - you fight for peace also, if you are an attacker. Successful military authorities always knew how to manipulate people, like this and otherwise.

Left: »1921« by an unknown publisher. Written, sent probably in an envelope, embossed frame, embroideries with a bouquet of dry flowers, with inscriptions Carte postale and Post card on the address side.



Series of postcards, with additions and inscriptions by order

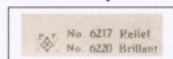
In this period, more prominent publishers issued greeting (and others) postcards, **mostly in series**. So was ensured:

- **larger sale** – collecting of postcards was very fashionable at that time, and collectors bought entire series usually,
- **lower costs** – postcards in series were similar, therefore costs of design were lower; motives were work of the same author, they could repeat, or they were varied just a bit.

*Right: »A Happy New Year«
by Paul Finkenrath - PFB,
series 6217 Relief, 6220 Brilliant;
embossed, with gildings, sent 1908.*



Here are two postcards from the series »6217 Relief, 6220 Brilliant«, issued by publisher Paul Finkenrath – they made inscriptions in chosen language and additions (e.g. gildings) by order.



The postcards are from the same series, but they differentiate:

- ↑ - one has the inscription in English and gildings and
- ← - the other has the inscription in French, and it doesn't have gildings.

*Left: »Heureuse Année« by
Paul Finkenrath - PFB,
series 6217 Relief, 6220 Brilliant;
embossed chromolithograph,
sent 1907.*

Sales patterns

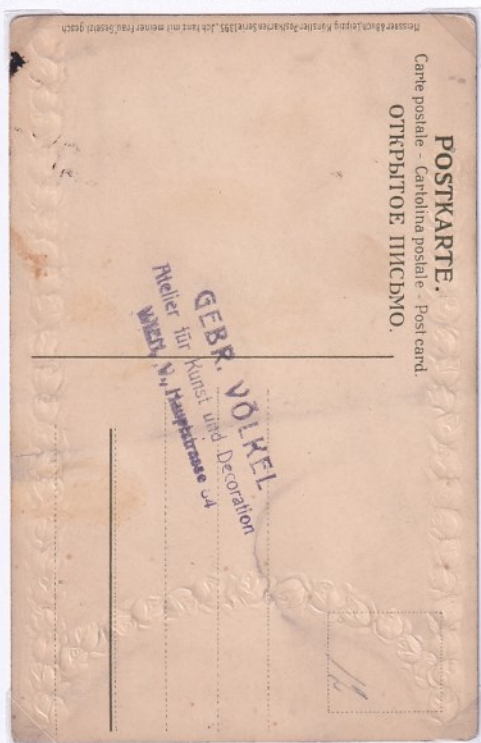
Sales representatives sold postcards with **sales patterns**. Publishers had their own sales representatives, but their postcards had selling also by other companies. Here are postcards from both sales methods.

On the right is the sales pattern of the embossed postcard, issued by **publisher** → **Meissner & Buch** from Leipzig, with the stamp of **seller Gebr. Völkel** from Vienna.

Below is the sales sample of the postcard, which the publisher was **selling directly**. Austrian publisher August J. Schwidernoch from Deutsch - Wagram printed their stamp with sales data: postcard's number, quantity and price.



Right: the sales sample of embossed postcard.
 Publisher: Meissner & Buch, Leipzig.
 Seller: Gebr. Völkel, Wien.



Below: the sales sample of embossed postcard »Prosit Neujahr!«, Publisher and seller: August J. Schwidernoch, Deutsch - Wagram, Austria.



Above: the reduced copy of the picture side.



Quick adaptation of postcards for export to the USA

Below: »The angel brings Christmas tree« by an unknown publisher; embossed chromolithograph, with multilingual inscriptions Carte Postale on the address side, sent 30.12.1907.



Some transformed their postcards quickly for the American market, and such an example is here. On the postcard that a publisher was selling with **multilingual inscriptions in Europe**, they put inscriptions **Post Card and Christmas Greetings**, and it was ready for sale on the American market. *Reduced copies of address sides are beside picture postcards.*



Above: »The angel brings Christmas tree« by an unknown publisher; embossed, with inscriptions **Christmas Greetings and Post Card / Made in Austria** on the address side, sent 24.12.1908 in the USA.

Thriftness of some users

The industry of postcards was developed most at the beginning of the 20th century. Every holiday and almost every place had its postcard, and they were accessible to a large part of the population.

This changed after the First World War when people had to save up.

The postcard, shown on the right, was made in 1905 or earlier but sent in 1930.

Some were economical already before the war, and such is the lower postcard.

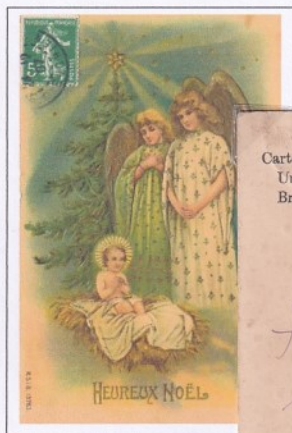
A sender glued analogous paper on the address place and used it again (in 1907).



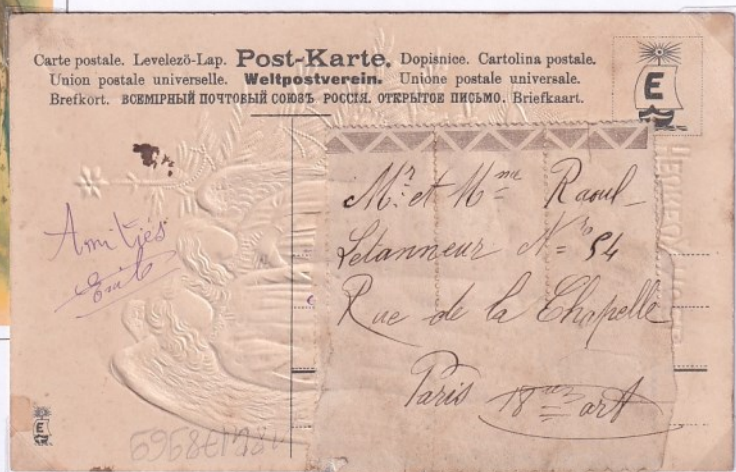
Right: »Srečno in veselo novo leto!« by August J. Schwidernoch (according to the address side); embossed chromolithograph with undivided back, sent 28.12.1930.



Below: »Heureux Noël« by M.S.i.B.; embossed chromolithograph, sent 1907; with a glued new paper on the address side sender reused it.



Above: the reduced copy of the picture side.



Thefts of motives

Professional artists often designed motives for greeting postcards, and known/larger publishers bought off their works. But if artists retained the copyrights, they sold each work to more publishers.

Smaller and unknown publishers this cost often wasn't able (or also wanted) to afford. They copied beautiful motives, changed them a bit and **protected themselves** like this, that they **didn't print a designation on postcards**. Below is an example of such a postcard with a probably stolen motif.

Right: »Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum Jahreswechsel« by A.B.B. No. 47. Embossed chromolithograph with gildings, sent 15.1.1903.



Postcards on this page have undivided back with multilingual inscriptions, and both have an equal embossed motive.

↑ The top postcard has:

the publisher's logo ABB 1890 No. 47, New Year's greeting text in German, and the motif and text are both embossed.

↔ The left postcard has a similar motive,

different coloured and embossed on blue paper; it is without publisher/printer's mark, the greeting text is in Italian. The motif is embossed, but the text is debossed.

Left: »Buon capo d'anno« by an unknown publisher/printer; embossed/debossed picture side and undivided back.

Reduction of costs: variants of the same motif

Many publishers reduced costs with reprints of the same motive that they changed only a bit. Here are postcards published by, according to the address sides, August J. Schwidernoch; they were sent in the period from 1903 to 1905, all are embossed chromolithographs.



This is the variant of motive, printed in darker colour shades and with one silk rose. They sent the postcard in 1905, Belgium.

The variant of motive, printed in lighter colour shades and with two silk roses. It was sent in 1903, Belgium.



This variant is in lighter colours, with two silk roses and the year 1904; written, sent probably in an envelope.

Reduction of costs: sale of equal postcards for all European countries



Left:
»Sretan Božič!«
by E. A.
Schwerdtfeger &
Co.; embossed
chromolithograph,
sent 22.12.1908.

At the beginning of the 20th-century, publishers massively began to print the inscription »postcard« in different languages on the address side of postcards. They wanted to inform their buyers that postcards were an equivalent postal means in all UPU member states. Furthermore, it also allowed the sale of identical postcards in different countries. Some publishers avoided these costs, and they sold postcards without inscription on the address side, they added greeting notes in a domestic language only on the picture side.

Here are two examples of such postcards, published by E. A. Schwerdtfeger.



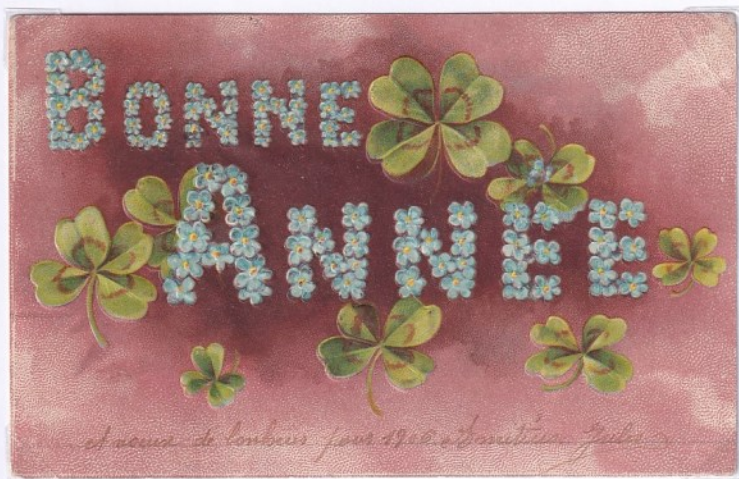
Above: the reduced copy of the address side without inscriptions.



Right:
»Joyeux Noël!« by E. A.
Schwerdtfeger & Co.,
embossed
chromolithograph,
sent 25.12.1907,

Reduction of costs: New Year's postcards without printed year

Right:
 »Bonne
 Année.« by
 an unknown
 publisher;
 embossed
 chromolitho-
 graph, sent
 31.12.1905.



Postcards not marked with the year were probably published in more giant circulations than those with the year because they could sell them for more years.

Below are examples of **two equal postcards, which were sent in 1905 and 1906.**

Below: »Bonne Année« by an unknown publisher, No. 7752.
 Upper sent 29.12.1906, and lower sent 23.12.1905, embossed chromolithographs.



Paul Suess AG (1886-1915)

Heidenau, Germany

(publisher, printer)

*The company's
logo*

In 1886 the company was established by Paul Suess.

Later it was taken over by other investors who renamed it. From 1949 to 1964, it was controlled by the East German governments. It was active till 2002.

Paul Suess started the business with ten employees, but till 1911 it had already 725 employees. The company dealt with the production of deluxe paper and various paper products.

*Right: »Bonne Année«
by ERIKA - Paul Suess, Nr. 2063;
slightly embossed with gildings,
sent 1904.*



Above: »Boldog uj évet« by ERIKA - Paul Suess, Nr. 3550; slightly embossed, sent 1909.

Postcards, published by the company of Paul Suess before 1903, were marked with the word »ERIKA« - in quotations. Their mark ERIKA was used in their logo only after 1903/1904.

The company was a typical printing company publishing and printing various products. Picture postcards had different themes and were printed in various techniques. They published and made a lot of landscape postcards that show places in Europe.

Right: »Herzlichen Glückwunsch zum neuen Jahre« by ERIKA - Paul Suess, Nr. 2519; embossed lithograph combined with airbrush, sent 1906.



They printed also greeting picture postcards in different techniques. Their Christmas-New Year's embossed postcards are slight, medium or strongly/highly embossed. Inscriptions are printed in different European languages on them. Some of such postcards are shown here.

Left: »Heureuse année« by ERIKA - Paul Suess; strongly embossed airbrush, sent 1907.



Koch & Palm (1895-1919)

Elberfeld, Germany

(publisher, printer)


The company's
logo

The company was founded by Fritz Koch and Dr Johannes Palm. In the year 1907, Palm died, and his wife cooperated by 1911 at the direction of this company.

The company was involved in publishing and printing picture postcards and other products. Approximately 200 employees had in the period since 1907 by 1913. Round some sources, they cooperated at the export of postcards also with International Art Publishing Co.

Right: »Bonne année«
by Koch & Palm, 583;
embossed chromolithograph,
sent 1906.



Above: »Buon natale« by Koch & Palm, 1272; embossed chromolithograph.

**Graphische Anstalt Otto Schloss;
Otto Schloss KG – O.S.B. (1897-1917)**
Berlin, Germany
(publisher, printer)



Company's logos,
the first logo was more
famous (according to
some information, there
was also another one).

The company was established in 1899. Before that, O. Schloss had been involved in clothes production. Then he dedicated his activity to printing, and later to publishing/printing picture postcards in his factory.

Right: »Fröhliche Weihnachten!«
by Otto Schloss, No. 1045;
embossed chromolithograph,
sent 1908.



He took good advantage of business opportunities. In 1906 he moved to his 4-floor factory building, which was decorated in art nouveau style. He specialized in the production of different types of greeting postcards. He also made artistic ones by reproducing famous works. Some other products could have been printed in his factory as well. He pulled out of business in 1916 and sold the factory in 1918. He was then involved in paper wholesale till 1924.

Left: »Ein glückliches Neues Jahr!«
by Otto Schloss,
embossed chromolithograph.

E. A. Schwerdtfeger & Co. (1894 -?)

Berlin, London, New York

(publisher, printer)

The company's
logo

They opened branches in London and New York in 1910. They printed their picture postcards in Germany, and beside them, they published calendars and other products. Different themes we can see on their postcards, but the most known series were about famous actresses, children, royal portraits and various festive motives. Between them, we can find also embossed Christmas-New Year's postcards.

Right: »Boldog új évet!«
by E. A. Schwerdtfeger & Co;
embossed chromolithograph,
sent 1913.



In 1922 the Berlin office took over the postcard department of Neue Photographische Gesellschaft, which specialized in publishing postcards based on photographs. EAS company successfully continued with that activity. They renovated a damaged factory in Berlin after the Second World War and became one of the largest German publishers of greeting and festive picture postcards.

Left: »Viel Glück im neuen Jahre!«
by E. A. Schwerdtfeger & Co;
embossed chromolithograph.

Gebrüder Obpacher AG (1867 - c. 1988)**G.O.M.****München, Germany****(publisher, printer)**The company's
logo

The company was founded by two brothers Johann and Joseph Obpacher, on April 15, 1876. The company transformed into a joint-stock company on December 1, 1888, named Lithographisch Artistische Anstalt, formally Gebruder Obpacher AG. They functioned by this name until April 25, 1929. Later they renamed still several times: 1929 Druckerei & Kartonnagen vorm. Gebr. Obpacher AG, 1939 Kunst im Druck Obpacher AG, 1970 Obpacher GmbH.

As business increased at the end of the 19th century, they opened more branches: in Berlin, Paris, London, New York and Chicago. They printed in Munich still and made different products: children's books, greeting cards, advertising cards, picture postcards and various artistic prints. They were engaged in exporting postcards over their branches, and they cooperated with many American companies. **Their branch in London is named Artistic Lithographic Company.**

Art Lithographic Publishing Company named their branch in New York, that worked from 1890 to 1918. They transformed it into subsidiary, probably together with company **Davidson Brothers** from London.



This branch was connected with the American publisher **John O. Winsch**. He worked on the same address for some time: 141 Fifth Avenue, New York. Gebrüder Obpacher printed his postcards and also after 1915, when Winsch closed his company, he still cooperated with them.

This New York branch and the publisher **Wolf Company**



established
**International Art
Publishing
Company.**



They worked since 1895 by 1915, they had branches in New York and Berlin; they are the important publisher of authorial postcards of the American illustrator **Ellen Hattie Clapsaddle.**

Below: »Gesegnete Weihnachten!«
by Gebr. Obpacher; embossed chromolithograph, sent 1910.



Raphael Tuck & Sons (1866-1959)
 London, New York, Paris, Berlin, Montreal
 (publisher, printer)



The
company's
logo



Royal Warrant
of Appointment

The business was started by Raphael Tuck and his wife Ernestine in Bishopsgate in the City of London on October 1866, selling pictures and frames. Raphael Tuck was joined by his three sons and published their first Christmas greeting cards in 1871. They started to issue postcards at the end of the 19th century. A son opened branches: in New York in 1882 and in Paris in 1885. On July 6, 1899, are solemnly opened a new office building, »Raphael House«, which also had a special department for embossed products and other artistic novelties. The delegation visited them from the French Chamber of Commerce on July 8, 1903 (postcard below).



Right: »Greetings...«
by Raphael Tuck & Sons,
printed in Germany,
embossed, sent 1911.



Above: 8.7.1903 - The Deputation from the French Chamber of Commerce visiting "Raphael House", the establishment of Raphael Tuck & Sons »Souvenir« postcard, Series 1203, by Raphael Tuck & Sons; letterpress-halftone, sent 5.8.1903.

Below: »A merry Christmas« by Raphael Tuck & Sons, Christmas Series no. 1026, Art publishers to their Majesties The King & Queen, printed in Germany (Saxony); embossed chromolithograph, sent 1911.



They were printing their picture postcards in Germany from the beginning. But they were always known as innovative and started the business with albums and other accessories needed by postcard collectors. In 1893 Queen Victoria granted the firm the Royal Warrant of Appointment; they became official publishers of the Royal family. Therefore Tuck's greeting cards and other printed products were since 1893 equipped with the inscription »Art Publishers to Her Majesty the Queen« and in the period from 1901 to 1910 with »Publishers by appointment to Their Majesties The King and Queen Alexandra«.



Above: »A happy 1907 New Year« by Raphael Tuck & Sons, embossed chromolithograph with metallic powder.

Paul Finkenrath - PFB (1901-1910)

Berlin, Germany (publisher, printer)

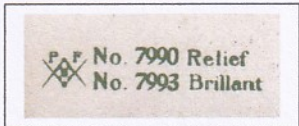


Left – the older type of logo; right – the newer type of logo, which was registered in 1905.

Paul Finkenrath's second company, among greeting-postcard collectors known as PFB, was operated between 1901 and 1910. According to some sources, they published more than 5,000 different designs, and for each, it was possible to order postcards in two or three different qualities. Their greeting postcards are known mainly because of their above-average design and quality, and many of them are embossed.



Above: »Bonne Année!« by PFB, No. 7990 Relief, No. 7993 Brillant; embossed chromolithograph with gildings.



PFB is the **only publisher** I know who gave a **special name to embossed postcards - Radiol**. From the beginning, embossed postcards they called **Relief**. The additional mark **Brillant** meant that they also had gildings added. Later, they sometimes called embossed postcards **Radiol Relief** - why is not known. Here are two such with the same motif from the series 7990.

Left: »Bonne et heureuse Année« by PFB, Serie 7990, Radiol Relief; embossed chromolithograph, sent 1910.



Finkenrath founded his first company **Finkenrath & Grasnick**, together with Paul Grasnick, in July 1897. It operated for only one year and issued chromolithographic landscape postcards, mostly of German places. **From 1898 to 1901**, Finkenrath continued on his own. Grasnick, who had been involved in lithographic printing before, continued with this activity (he probably did some occasional printing for the PFB company as well).

In 1901, Finkenrath transformed his company into a joint-stock company with new partners S. Oettinger and R. Schimpf. PFB was specialized in printing/publishing **subject and greeting** picture postcards, printed in a chromolithographic technique, after 1905, especially for export to the USA.

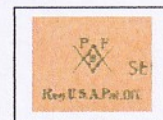
Right: »Prosit Neujahr!« by PFB, No. 6217 Relief, 6221 Brilliant; embossed chromolithograph, sent 1907.



PFB added inscriptions in different languages, and if more than 1,200 copies were ordered, the printing of them was free. The highest numbers of series are higher than 11,000.

On some postcards for export to the USA they added the inscription **Reg. U.S.A. Pat. Off.** It meant protection against copying their design, which was a regular practice in the USA (and in Europe) at that time.

The left postcard was made for the USA. They didn't export it, so they sold it in



Europe – with the Slovene inscription was sent in Slovenia in 1910 (Austria-Hungary at that time).

Left: »Vesele božične praznike!« by PFB, Serie 9446, with inscription Reg. USA Pat. Off.; embossed chromolithograph, sent 1910.



Birn Brothers, Ltd. (1905-1964)

London

(publisher, printer)

The company's
logo

Birn Brothers was a big publishing house from London. Many of their postcards were published under the name BB London and printed in Bavaria. They published a large number of postcards with various themes and made them in different techniques. Here are examples of their Christmas and New Year's postcards. Both have glued embossed greeting cards on the picture side. The right postcard was printed in Germany, lower in Great Britain.

Right: »To Wish you Many Happy Days in the New Year« by B.B. – Birn Brothers, Series No. 520, printed in Germany; with glued embossed booklet.



Above: »A Merry Christmas« by B.B. – Birn Brothers, Ltd., London, Series No. XX 101, printed in Great Britain; with glued embossed letter, sent 1909.

Stewart & Woolf (1900-1940's)

London

(publisher)

The company's
logo

They issued many unique authorial artistic postcards. They are known to be publishers of playing cards too.

A lot of their early postcards, which were printed in Bavaria, are made in **metallic colours**. An example of such a postcard is presented below. Subjects of these postcards included holidays, literature, operas and sayings. Also, their landscape postcards are known, with landscapes within silhouette shape and with many measure of metallic colours.

Right: »Christmas Greetings«, the publisher Stewart & Woolf, Series 296, the printer Fine Art Works from Prussia. Embossed chromolithograph, sent 1906.



Above: »A Merry Christmas« by Stewart & Woolf, Series 635; embossed chromolithograph, sent 1906.

Moriz & Barschall (1907-1935)

Berlin

(publisher, printer)

Company's
logos

In 1907 Georg Moriz and G. F. Barschall bought the company from Carl Hellriegel. The company dealt with the production of deluxe paper and was active since 1842. It was specialised also in the printing of picture postcards and posters. They modernised existing production and moved it to Rixdorf (Neukoelln), at that time the suburban area of Berlin. Mr. Moritz has been the sole owner of the company since 1921.

Right: »Bonne année« by Moriz & Barschall, strongly embossed and airbrushed, sent 1910.



Above: »Gelukkig Nieuwjaar« by Moriz & Barschall, Berlin; strongly embossed and airbrushed, made in 1912 or later.

At the beginning of 1912, the company Moriz & Barschall made some changes in its logo. The letter R was replaced by the letter N because the district Rixdorf was renamed into Neukoelln on January 27, 1912.



Company's logos

They engaged in the printing of different paper products in the company already before the first war. Although they were making various picture postcards, they are between collectors of greeting postcards, probably the most known after own **strongly/high embossed picture postcards, usually coloured with an airbrush.**

Two New Year's are here, with equal motive and in different colours.

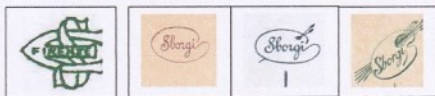
Right: »Bonne année« by Moriz & Barschall, strongly embossed and airbrushed, sent 1909.



Above: »Bonne année« by Moriz & Barschall; strongly embossed and airbrushed, made before 1912.

E. Sborgi (1910 - ?)

Florence, Italy (publisher, printer)



Company's logos

In the beginning, they used a logo on the left or name only. Logos on the right (that are at first sight look like logotype of Stengel company) they used later, especially after the first war. They were among significant printers and publishers of artistic postcards that they printed in Italy in their prior period.

Right: »Buon Natale«.
by E. Sborgi, No. 63;
embossed chromolithograph.



They issued mostly known works of art from the period of the Italian renaissance - they are printed over the entire postcard's image side, or they have placed it to the middle of the postcard and decorated it with a frame. This framework is often embossed. They added still festive inscriptions on some postcards, Christmas and New Year's - two such postcards are here. Their early-stage picture postcards are something special because of **quality chromolithographic print**, printed per strong, weighty paper. Similar postcards were issued by Stengel company also.



Left: »Col Nuovo Anno principi un'era di serenità e d'intenso lavoro«
by publisher/printer E. Sborgi,
artist G. Magni - Regina Pacis;
embossed chromolithograph, sent 1917.

Martin Schlesinger – M.S.i.B.
 Berlin, Germany
 (publisher, printer)



Company's
logos

They used the abbreviation M.S.i.B or two logos. The left one shows a boat with the letter E and, the acronyms M.S.i.B. are added to the right one.

It was a typical German publishing and printing company of that time that exported a lot. Besides landscape picture postcards, they also published greeting postcards for different holidays, most of them embossed.

Right: »Bonne année« by Martin Schlesinger; slightly embossed chromolithograph with glossy finishing foil, sent 1910.



Above: »1902 Glückliches Neujahr!« by M.S.i.B. - Martin Schlesinger, No. 12995; slightly embossed, with gildings.

Wildt & Kray (1903-1915)

London

(publisher)

The company's
logo

Their picture postcards were mostly printed in Great Britain. The printer Reinthal & Newman cooperated with them a lot. Besides greeting postcards, they published postcards with various themes and local ones. They used different printing techniques, also embossing.

Here are two of their embossed postcards that were printed in Germany (Bavaria).

Right: »A Christmas greeting« by Wildt & Kray, Series 2517, printed in Bavaria; embossed chromolithograph made of thicker-cardboard paper.



Above: »Wishes for Christmas ...« by Wildt & Kray, Series 2520, printed in Bavaria; embossed chromolithograph made of thicker-cardboard paper, sent 1912.

Davidson Brothers (1901-1911)

London, New York

(publisher)

The company's
logo

This publisher is known for photo postcards that were tinted in true colours often. During them, we can find landscapes and portraits of well-known people. They also issued comic postcards, festive and different reproductions of works of art.

Right: »Hearty Wishes for Xmas«
by Davidson Bros., Serie 3023;
embossed chromolithograph.



Here are two of their Christmas postcards, printed in Germany but they printed in Great Britain also.

They had a branch office in New York, which probably cooperated with the company Gebr. Obpacher at their American branch Art Lithographic Publishing Company as co-founders.

They are also known as publishers of comic authorial postcards of Tom Brown (1870-1910). He was a very popular English cartoonist, a painter and an illustrator.

Left: »Hearty Good Wishes for Christmas«.
by Davidson Bros., Serie 3001; embossed
chromolithograph, sent 1910.

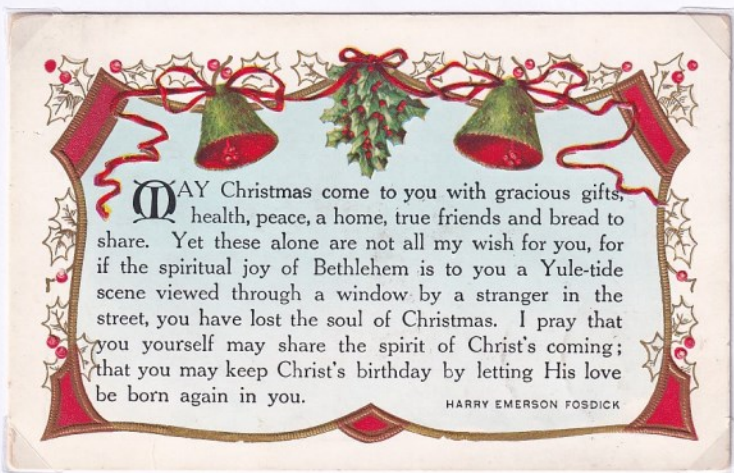
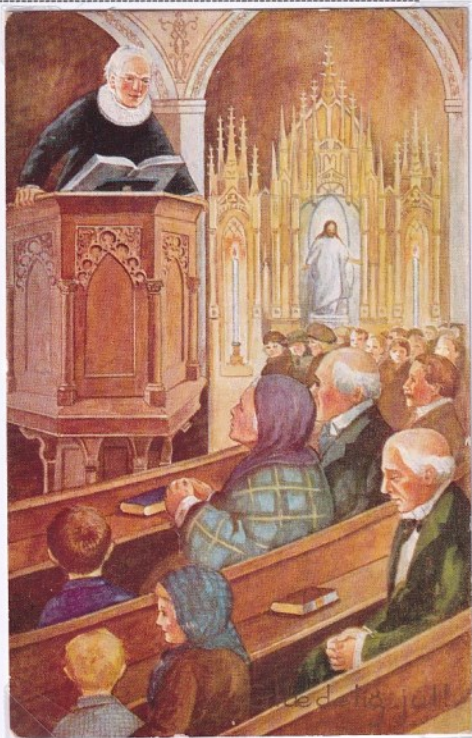


Whitney Valentine Co. (1858-1942)**Worcester, Massachusetts***(publisher, printer)*

The company came out of Sumner Whitney's shop, selling handmade greeting cards for Valentine's Day. They bought many competitive companies by 1888, and they became the important publisher of greeting cards that they produced from special papers usually. The company has a reputation of one of the companies that printed postcards of high quality inside the USA. They invested in the technology of embossing early, so they **didn't depend upon the European printers.**

They knew how to take care of the customers of other nationalities in the United States – the postcard on the right bears the inscription "**Glædelig Jull!**", Merry Christmas in Danish.

Right: »Glædelig jull« by Whitney Valentine Co., printed in the USA around 1910; slightly embossed chromolithograph.



Above: Christmas congratulation, Harry Emerson Fosdick by publisher/printer Whitney Valentine Co., printed in the USA; slightly embossed chromolithograph, sent 24.12.1914.



Above: their postcards have the inscription *Whitney Made*.

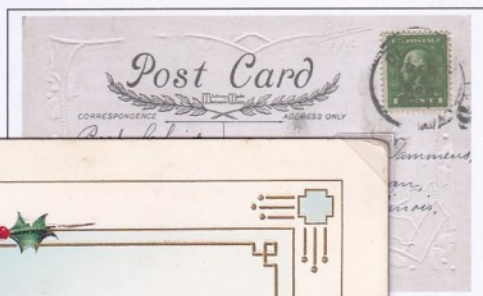
When picture postcards became modern, they diverted to making only these. They also became the important publisher of greeting picture postcards. A fire destroyed their production in 1910, but they renewed the company soon. They had their branches in Boston, New York and Chicago. After 1930, because of increased costs, they started to make picture postcards from ordinary paper.

Right: »I Wish You A Merry Christmas« by Whitney Valentine Co., around 1910, slightly embossed chromolithograph.



Right below: the typical address side of Whitney Valentine's picture postcards.

Below: »A very Merry Christmas...« by Whitney Valentine Co., printed in the USA; slightly embossed chromolithograph, sent 22.12.1914.



Illustrated Postal Card Co. (1904-1914)

New York, Germany

(publisher, printer)

Company's logos

Before 1909 they imported picture postcards from Germany; their leading printer for coloured letterpress-half-tone postcards was **Emil Pinkau** from Leipzig.

Right: »A Merry Christmas« by Illustrated Postal Card Co., printed in Germany, with undivided back; embossed chromolithograph, with metallic powder.



And their artistic chromolithographic postcards were printed in Dresden. They were published in series, and each town or location had its own number. Many of their early postcards were printed without their name, and they just had their logo.

In 1909 they started printing by themselves in letterpress-half-tone technique, and some of the postcards they coloured by hand. They numbered them one after another, without regard to the place.

Left: »A Merry Christmas« by Illustrated Postal Card Co., printed in Germany, with divided back, from period 1907 to 1909; embossed chromolithograph.





Above:
the reduced copy
of the address
side.
Right:
the postcard was
sent on
December 30,
1907.



Here are two embossed picture postcards from their early-stage period (with company logos only). Motive, printed in different colours, is the same. But address pages are made differently – on the **upper postcard is stuck on an additional paper** for easier writing of message and address. In contrast, the lower postcard doesn't have it, so we can see debossed picture.



Above:
the reduced copy of
the address side.
Right:
only the name of the
receiver is written
down on the postcard,
they sent it probably
in an envelope.



International Art Publ. Co.

New York, Berlin (1895-1915)

*(publisher)**The company's logo*

The company was founded by Wolf Co. and Art Lithographic Publishing Co. (Gebr. Obpacher). They issued more than 3,000 different postcards, authorial (of different authors) and patriotic, and all were printed in Germany. They had a branch office in Berlin.

Right: »A Happy Christmas« by International Art Publ. Co., artist Ellen H. Clapsaddle, printed in Germany, 1908, embossed chromolithograph, sent 14.12.1909.

**Wolf Company (1879-1931)**

was founded by brothers Edward, Isaac and Gustave. They became a significant importer, publisher and producer of artistic novelties in the USA.

They also specialised in publishing authorial picture postcards of a famous American illustrator **Ellen Hattie Clapsaddle** (born January 8, 1865, died January 7, 1934). Her works were recognisable and highly appreciated. Today she is known as **one of the most prolific postcard authors** of that time.

Left: »New Year Greetings« by International Art Publ. Co., artist Ellen Hattie Clapsaddle, signed; embossed chromolithograph, sent 26.12.1907.

M.W. Taggart (1905-1910)

New York

(publisher)



This was a big publishing house that operated in New York from 1905 to 1910.

Besides landscape and patriotic picture postcards, they also published other printings and greeting cards with festive themes, which were often embossed.

Right: »Calendar for 1910« by publisher M.W. Taggart, Ser. C. 301; slightly embossed chromolithograph, sent 23.12.1909.



Above: »Calendar for 1911« by M.W. Taggart, Ser. C. 312, design copyright 1909; slightly embossed chromolithograph with metallic powder.

John O. Winsch (1910-1915)

New York

(publisher)

John O. Winsch, who worked in the USA, was a significant publisher of authorial quality postcards, popular between collectors. According to some sources, he issued almost 4,000 different designs. Winsch's postcards were printed in a huge printing company **Obpacher Bros (GOM)** in Munchen. Later they printed also in the USA.

Winsch usually used European artists that could cooperate directly with German printers. **Samuel L. Schmucker**, the American illustrator, became famous for creating the so-called **Winsch's girl**. After the other works he has done for other publishing companies, she is called **Schmucker's girl**, and his wife Catherine was a model for that girl.

Right: »January 1st, A Happy New Year«
by John Winsch, 1910, embossed
chromolithograph, printed in Germany.



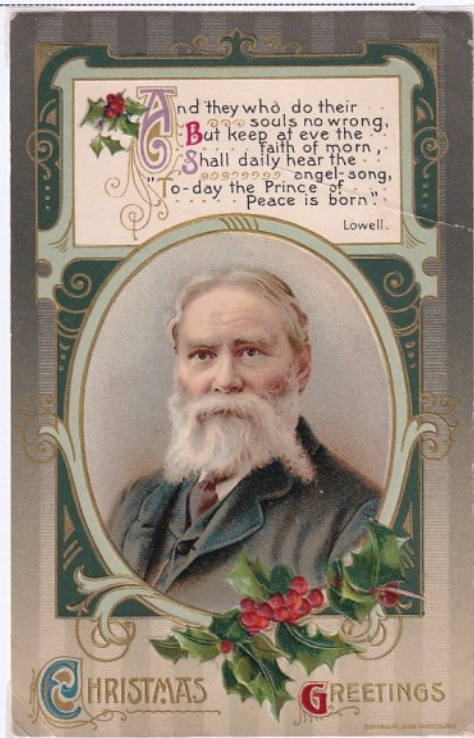
Above: »To Wish You A Merry Christmas«; Design copyrighted John Winsch, 1911, printed in Germany, embossed chromolithograph, sent 22.12.1912.



John Winsch's company was officially active from 1910, but according to his words, he started already in 1907. Some of his postcards sent before 1910 have a typical olive-green background, and these were probably his postcards that were not marked with his name yet.

They forged this background many times because Winsch's postcards were well sold in the USA. Winsch was born in 1865 and died in 1923. He was engaged in the printing business already before 1910. His company worked in New York on the same address as The Art Lithographic Publ. Co. (the branch office of Obpacher Bros.) for some time. He cooperated with them also after 1915 and probably still issued postcards with his name.

Right: Christmas Greetings (James Russel Lowell, 1819-1891, American poet, critic, editor and diplomat, a fighter for the abolition of slavery), by John Winsch 1910, printed in Germany; embossed chromolithograph, sent 21.12.1915.



Above: »A Merry Christmas«, Design Copyrighted John Winsch, 1914; embossed chromolithograph.

Sam Gabriel Co. (1907-1930s)
 (Gabriel & Sons), New York



(publisher)

The company's
logo

Samuel Gabriel founded his company in 1907 on New York's Fifth Avenue. He previously had been a manager of Raphael Tuck's New York City office. Undoubtedly he used contacts acquired by Tuck's office and chose reputable and skilled workers for his new company. They specialise especially in greeting picture postcards. During this time, he also concluded his first contract with **Frances Brundage**. And he is known to up-to-date collectors mainly due to her works of art (according to some sources, they issued 19 sets with ten cards each).

Right: »A Happy New Year«
 by Sam Gabriel Co., series No. 316,
 printed in Germany; artist Frances
 Brundage, embossed chromolithograph,
 sent 1916.



Above: »A Happy New Year« by Sam Gabriel Co., New Year Series Artistic Postcard No. 1301, printed in Germany, artist Frances Brundage, signed (Copyright 1910); embossed chromolithograph.

Below: »Christmas Greetings«by Sam Gabriel Co., series No. 219, printed in Germany, artist Frances Brundage; slightly embossed chromolithograph, sent 22.12.1913.



Frances Brundage (1854 – 1937)

She was a well-known children's illustrator in her time, and she has illustrated hundreds of festive and greeting postcards. In 1900, when Frances Brundage worked for Raphael Tuck & Sons, she began to design their early chromolithographic picture postcards. In 1910 she started to illustrate postcards for the Samuel Gabriel Company.



Above: »A Merry Christmas«by Sam Gabriel Co., series No. 219, printed in Germany, artist Frances Brundage, slightly embossed chromolithograph.

Samson Brothers (1909-1919)

New York

(publisher, printer)

The company's
logo

This company was a publisher and also printer primarily artistic picture postcards by various subjects: romantic, congratulatory, festive and comic. They are an example of a typical publisher from this period that was printing some of their postcards in Germany.

Postcards that they were printing in the USA are usually of lower quality.

Here are two examples of both their prints: the postcard on the right was printed in Germany and the lower postcard in the USA.

Right: »Xmas Greetings« and the increased copy of the address side by publisher Samson Brothers, printed in Germany, Series 1018; embossed chromolithograph.



Below: »With Hearty Christmas Greetings« and the reduced copy of the address side, by Samson Brothers, printed in the USA, series 243, embossed chromolithograph.





Above and below: two postcards from series 31 D of the publisher Samson Brothers were printed in the USA, together with the reduced copies of the address sides.

Publishers tried to issue ever new picture postcards with different motifs, which resulted in higher costs. And Samson Brothers was also one of the publishers who **cut costs by giving the same motif in a different version** - here are his postcards with the same motif in a different colour. Sometimes they published such postcards at the same time in the same series, but sometimes they changed colours at the reprint.



Stecher Lithographic Co. (1887-1936)

Rochester, NY

(publisher, printer)

Company's logos

Printer Frank Stecher took over ownership of the printing company in 1887, which co-founder was since 1875. He renamed it to Stecher Lithographic Company. They became one of the leading printers of chromolithographic printings: posters, cards and trade advertisements.

At the turn of the century, they started also printing artistic chromolithographic greeting picture postcards.

Right: »Happy New Year« by Stecher Lithographic Co., series 218E, printed in the USA; embossed chromolithograph, sent 31.12.1912.

Right below: the typical address side of Stecher Lithographic Co.'s postcards.

Below: »A Merry Xmas« by Stecher Lithographic Co., series 447D, printed in the USA; embossed chromolithograph.



A. S. Meeker (1908-1910)

New York

(publisher)

CHRISTMAS SERIES NUMBER 506
© 1910 A. S. MEEKER, N. Y.

"NEW YEAR" SERIES NUMBER 626
© 1910 A. S. MEEKER, N. Y.

A. S. Meeker from New York was active for a short period, between 1908 and 1910. They published picture postcards with romantic and festive themes. Most of them were published in series.

Many of them were embossed and two such are here: one from Christmas and one from New Year's series.

Right: »A Merry Christmas« by A. S. Meeker, New York, copyright 1910, Christmas series, number 506, slightly embossed chromolithograph.



Above: »A Happy New Year« by A. S. Meeker, copyright 1910, New Year series, number 626; slightly embossed chromolithograph, sent 18.12.1910.