



NEWS & VIEWS

BY THE EDITOR

Research on C.G. Röder, Leipzig, has been neglected a bit during the past year, at least in my opinion. Not surprising, George Webber is still busy with the Pinkau/Trenkler codes, and I think nobody can handle two ppc printing “giants” at the same time.

Research on the contract printer Röder has become a regular feature in TPA since the time Jack Foley was able to identify Röder as prime printer of early Stuart (GB) cards, and A.K.G. Leonard wrote the first article on this big printing firm in “Picture Postcard Monthly (GB)”. In the meantime we (which includes an increasing number of interested collectors worldwide) were able to shed some light on the Röder history and their massive ppc production/characteristic batch number system.

Why is G. G. Röder of interest? They printed “views” only, with very few exceptions, **but** for each and every country you can think of (pre 1914). They produced quite good quality, although they had also plain “cheap” lines. The mass is however of better quality as those printed by Pinkau in my opinion. I am talking of their major process which was collotype with overlay litho colours. In this field Röder was probably the biggest of them all (over 90 presses good for postcard printing (equal number of collotype, litho and letterpress machines; plus other (rotary) presses for music note and especially book printing around 1907). Bigger as Stengel, Dr. Trenkler & Co., Emil Pinkau & Co., Knackstedt & Näther, Schaar & Dathe, etc. etc. Röder had so much press capacity, a solid financial background, that made them independent; with their own prices. In a coming issue I will prove that other ppc printers were “forced” to order certain card qualities from Röder. The profit margin for collotype cards printed was small and competition among German printers severe. There was an attempt to form a trust (led by G. Jährig, the “& Co.” of Dr. Trenkler), but Röder is not mentioned as member.

When I say “Röder was probably the biggest of all German collotype printers”, I want this to be understood on long term. There were firms such as Dr. Trenkler & Co. or Knackstedt & Näther which probably had a bigger yearly ppc output **for one or more years** as the Röder works. Then you suddenly come across other names connected with immense production, that shows how little research was done so far on this topic. For example “**Gebr. Deyhle & Wagner**” from Berlin: *Bob Genovese* states his article “*Development of Colour Postcards in Great Britain*” (in “Postcard Classics”, U.S.A., no. 8, c. 1990 I believe)

that this Berlin based firm was the largest collotype house in 1905, producing 200,000,000 cards a year. I have heard of this printer, but never in connexion which such huge production numbers. Would be interesting to know where Mr. Genovese had discovered this interesting information.

Back to Röder. It seems that Röder works who employed in boom years about 2000+ people at Leipzig, Berlin, London, Paris branches (and ?) was financially strong. Printing postcards was just a “profitable sideline”. In 1913 about 300 workers were busy at the Röder ppc printing dept., which was a quarter of their Leipzig factory workforce (see TPA 13, p28-29). They perfected their ppc production and with all their printing presses were surely able to produce 250,000,000 cards per year. If they actually did, well, I don’t know.

C.G. Röder works continued to print cards until WW2 years and the bombs fell. They even continued to export cards in the 1920’s to late 1930. And so did also Emil Pinkau & Co. Both firms were active on the Canadian market in the 1930’s according research of *Chris McGregor*, B.C., Canada and recent card finds of *Maggie Toms* from Ontario. This is not typical for that time and for German ppc printers, of which many had to close down or concentrated on other printing goods. This shows however, how specialized (and big) both firms, Röder and Pinkau, were.

Post WW2 ppc production!

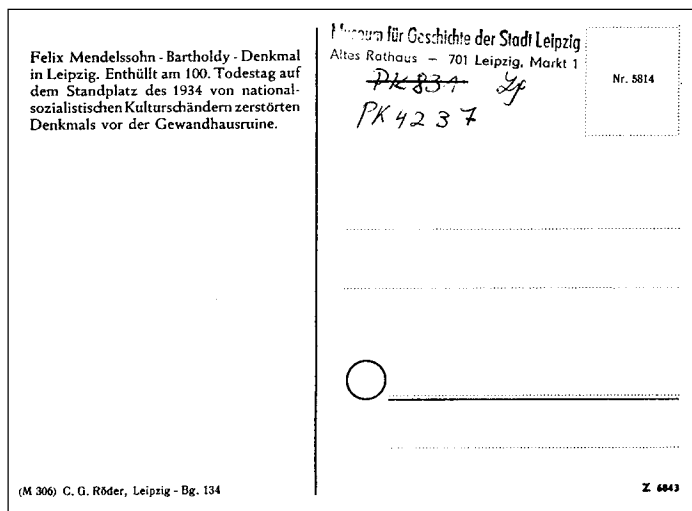
Now comes the surprising find of Henk Voskuilen (NL). We already learned from Henk’s article in TPA 14, that Pinkau continued to print cards after WW2 until the late 1960’s (longer?).

Although their main factory was hit heavily twice by bombs.

Well, the Röder building was also hit and in flames, but not totally destroyed. **They began to print post cards after WW2 again!!** This is really amazing! Henk brought a photocopy of a card from his last Leipzig visit (from “*Museum für Geschichte der Stadt Leipzig*”) and showed it to

me during his recent stay in Rastede. The picture (not good for reproduction) shows a monument of famous composer *Felix Mendelssohn-Batholdy* at Leipzig which was unveiled on the 100th anniversary of *Mendelssohn-Batholdy’s* death. At same place where the first was standing until Nazi’s destroyed it in 1934. Henk’s find is not p/u but this imprinted information helps a great deal. *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy* lived from 1809 - Nov. 4, 1847, so this card was printed in late 1947. By the way, those Leipzig printers back in business after WW2, worked mostly for the Soviet Government, and had to print mostly (school) books in Russian language.

In stamp box we find a “Nr. 5814”, at down hand left position (“M 306) C. G. Röder, Leipzig - Bg.134” and at down right corner a “Z 6843” imprint. My actual theories re these imprints are as following: The number in stamp box is a “new” card number register. The “M 306” number is very interesting (M = material?). Here I strongly believe we have a official allocation identification for paper/card-board. During war years everything was rationed. I have a Röder printed card for the publisher C.T.M. (Carl Thoeicht from Hann. Münden), a long-time customer of Röder, imprinted year date 9/40 and Röder batch no. 589,475 and no “M” number. Two other C.T.M. cards (7/41) 647,316 + 647,317 suddenly show a “M 1360” imprint. Röder batch number 666,332, which is the highest no. I have seen also carries a “M 1360”. Henk brought also some of his Röder’s with him. He has a couple of cards which look like WW2 production but have already a “new” register number (1927 / 1953 / 1959 etc) on.



I strongly believe these "M" numbers were used until about 1949 when the German Democratic Republic was established. The "Z" could be a Zensur (Censor) number. This system was adopted by the GDR authorities and an official (permission) code is found always on all printed matters in the GDR. A lot of control indeed.

I have two cards on cheap card board with typical Emil Pinkau/Trenkler "dot & dash code on. Pinkau used "M 129" together with a consecutive "Z" numbering (1713 and 4627 in this case). So, for the early years after WW2 we can use this information for identification and dating. However, a lot of more research is necessary to find out more on these official codes and dates when they were in use. GDR government reorganized a great deal during their early years. Firms came under official supervision (or previous owners were dispossessed), put together with others, renamed, or turned into VEB's.

One of Henk's cards is worth a special mention. A card printed by post WW2 Röder (imprints in stampbox read: "M 306", another no. "10008", then a "Z 7066" and a "Nr. 6042") for their long-time customer CTM (located in West-Germany!) A "Photo-Plasma Special" process of poor but typical after war quality, and p/u in 1953. So there were quite many (traditional) business contacts between the "two Germany's" - the eastern and western zone(s), before the wall was erected.

THE RÖDER "R" MATTER

The great gift for researchers of Röder ppc production is their batch number system. This number is found of 98% of all Röder printed cards. For many years it goes consecutively upwards until WW2 years and is perfect to date postally unused cards (roughly).

But something important happened at Röder works in 1909. From this year on we have a "double numbering" (see George Webber's articles in TPA 10 + 11). A Röder card with a batch number in the 110,000 Th range, for example, can date from 1906 as well as from 1913. George named this the "Old Register" in use approx. 1904 - 1910) and the "New Register" (from 1909 onwards). Okay, I still not understand why they decided to make it that complicated or what forced them to have two register systems at the same time.

Then we have few cards which are definitely Röder printed without any batch number at all. Then the mysterious "J" Register (on early Röder cards) where the letter "J" is set in front of the batch no's, sometimes even with a 2nd Röder number on found. This is George Webber's research field which I do not want to comment here. Just take a look at my "J" = I" note on page 36.

We found out that other letters placed in front of typical batch numbers were initials of Röder customers. "S" = Seidel; "A.K.L." = Alfred Krieger, Leipzig. Was this arrangement an idea of Röder or a wish of their customers? I have seen Alfred Krieger cards, who operated worldwide, which were definitely NOT printed by Röder but with his initials in front of the card/batch number. Complicated matter, guess in the A.K.L. case Röder put the initials in front of their batch number and Krieg-

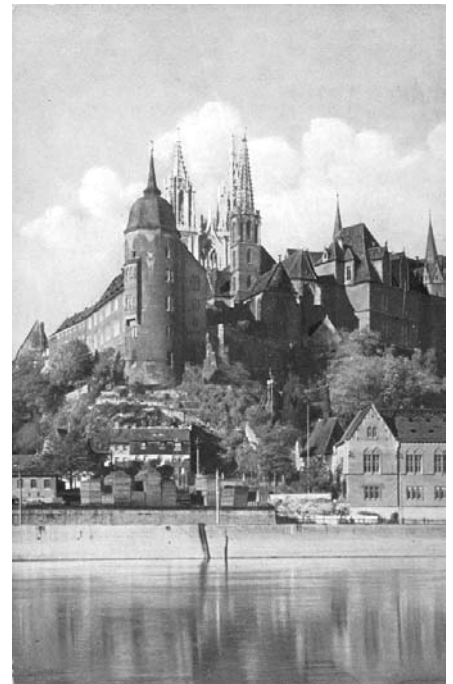
er again adopted this way of identification and asked other printers to do it the same way. But this is just guesswork at the moment.

In TPA 11, p27, George showed a card with a Röder batch number in stampbox and a second (lower) number with an letter "R" at typical down right corner position. I found two other cards also with Röder plus a second "R" number on. Who stood behind this letter "R"? It was the publisher **Reinhard Rothe** from Meissen, Saxony, also known under the name "Mühlbachs Postkarten Verlag". Rothe published mostly cards from his home town Meissen, as well as other places in Saxony. He ordered printing from different printers, BUT the card (or whatever) number has always a "R" in front of it. No idea how this numbering worked, makes no sense at first look. His "R" numbers range from 13,441 to 429,125 on cards I have discovered so far, and date from about 1910 to the 1930's.

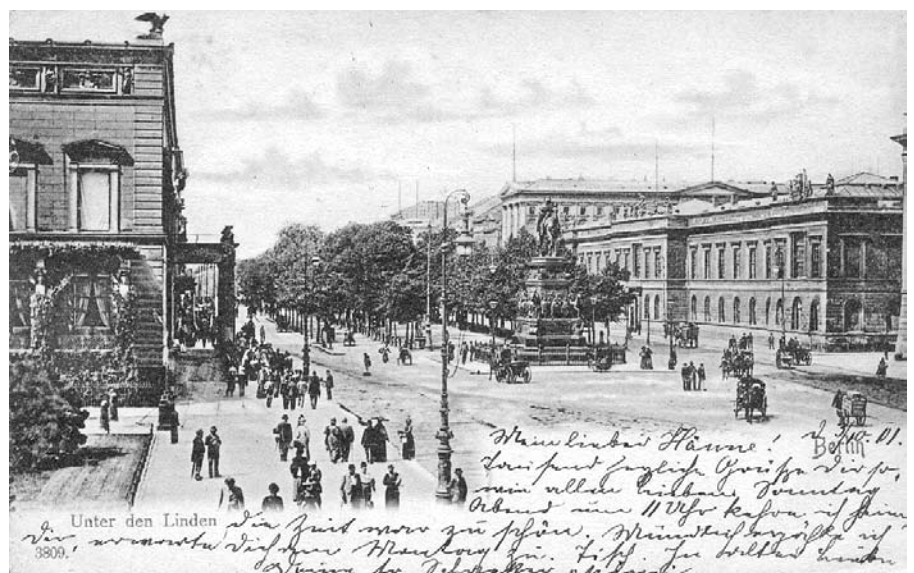
So, was it Reinhard Rothe who wanted always an "R" in front of "printer number" or was it always the printer who placed this letter in front of his batch/production number for easier identification of a (bigger) customer?

At least we have been able to identify all so far discovered letters in front of a Röder batch number as initials of a certain customer/firm. That is what make it difficult to believe that the mysterious "J" register thing is something completely different as George Webber points out.

It this not only the "J" matter which makes the early Röder ppc production numbering confusing. We also see cards with two batch numbers on. Normally found on down hand left and down right hand corner position. The



Meissen - view across the River Elbe in direction Albrechtsburg and Cathedral. Rothe no. 331, colour reproduction by nature (half-tone process) Shown card has imprint "R 429,125", but I have a second card with identical Rothe no. but "R 16786" imprint. Same view but with impressive canvas finish/embossing. This was a patented process named "Degi" by the Leipzig based firm Georgi & Co. which was establ. in 1917 and was in business at least until 1939. About 1000 different "Degi" cards are known.



Illustrated above is **Berlin, Unter den Linden**, a monotone collotype printing, captions imprinted in red ink plus the number "3809". NO publ. listed. P/u Oct. 1901. Röder no. "**J.79.**" which is the lowest "J" I have seen yet. This card comes from the coll. of Henk Voskuilen.

number at the left position lower. So one tends to believe that the left number was that of the original or first printing and the right that of the reprint (Klagenfurt, Austria, for example. Publ. Joh. Leon sen., no. 172 / 1902. Left no. reads 13288 and the other 20034, p/u 1903). This appears to be a short-lived system, as on all cards found the right number, the actual number, is always in the 20,xxx Th.

range. To make it even more complicated we found double numbers, one regular plus another with "J" on typical down right hand corner position. The "J" no. lower. Example: Amsterdam, De Muiderpoort. Publ. local firm Int'l Trading Co. en Jos. Nuss, p/u 1902. Left Röder no. 13107 + J. 11768. I must say, I will gladly leave this sort of numbers confusion to Georges' logically working brain. (cont)

Do you need more Röder batch number mysteries? Well, here is something strange, again cards come from Henk's collection.

Regular readers will remember the name "Otto Leder, Meissen" (photographer & publisher). He used Röder as printer, but also Stengel & Co. (+ others?) Otto Leder (OLM) has a wonderful register system: negative number - colon - year date = eg 1244:02. That the last two numbers stand for the year date is a fact proven by various p/u OLM cards found.

Here we have now **Rotterdam, Park**, publ. by local firm "P. F. v. d. Ende" and p/u in **1903**. On address side down left corner position we find **1244 : 02**. So, Otto Leder took this photo in 1902. The Röder batch number at typical position reads **19663**. (ill. A)

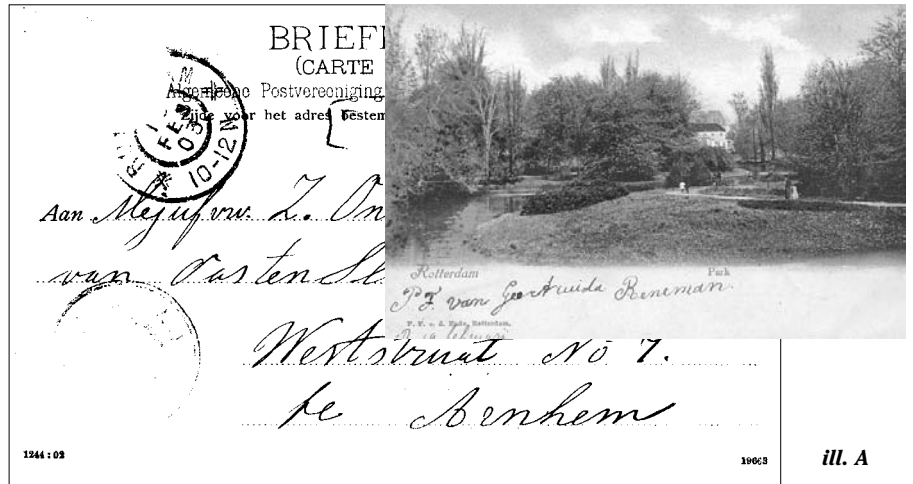
Then a "**Kaffir-hut**", published by "Höveke and Wormser" from Pretoria. Not p/u. From OLM's "**Platin-Crayon**" (good quality monochrome collotype printing) process. Together with imprint **75 : 04**. Otto Leder's name imprinted in full, his business described as "Ansichtskarten-Manufaktur", in Meissen i. Sa. (in Saxony). At down right corner Röder batch number **17946**. (ill. B)

When we say that the Röder numbers go upwards, and don't care of the J-Register/double numbering thing, we have a problem with these two Röder cards and numbers now. A card with Röder no. 19663 bears a OLM code of (late) 1902 and is postally used in 1903. But that from Africa has a OLM code dated (early) 1904 but a lower Röder batch number = 17946. This makes not much sense when relying on a consecutive numbering. I feel the early (batch) numbering system used by Röder works needs some more detailed research. Unfortunately early Röder printed cards are not seen that often.

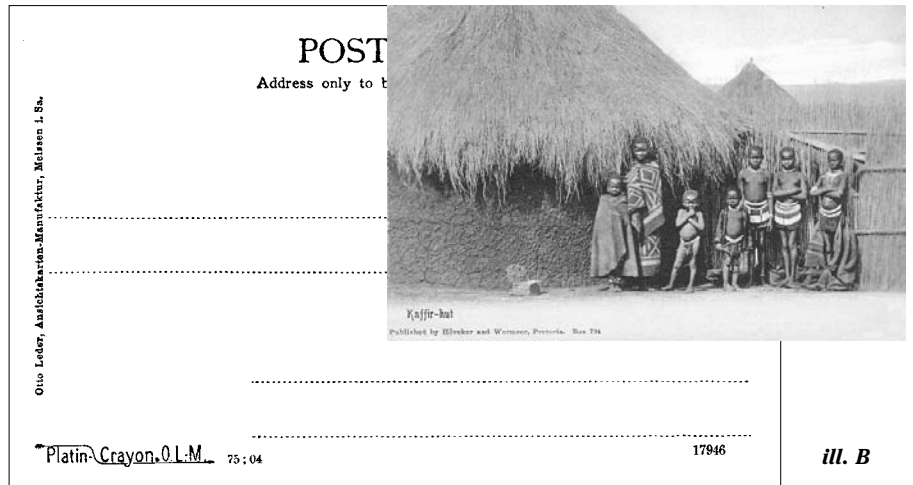
Finally I am still very much interested to find out when C.G. Röder started with (collotype) postcard printing. We know that Röder did some chromolitho cards in pre-1900 years. But Röder's rapid raise to a major ppc printer was based on the collotype process (with litho overlay colours). We know that a collotype dept. was set up at Röder works as early as 1890. In general it is said that the technical development of the collotype process (presses and the important pre-press sector) was suitable for mass production of ppc's around mid 1890's. So far all found early Röder's are postally used in 1901. Some of these must had been printed in 1900. But where are these earlier printings? Maybe we do not know for what we have to look out. Early Röder printed cards don't have to be of similar design/quality as later ones. They might show a different numbering system(?).

Were the "J" register cards the first Röder's? If so, where are pre 1901 postally used samples? Should those batchnumbers set in smaller type to be treated the same way as those set in regular size?

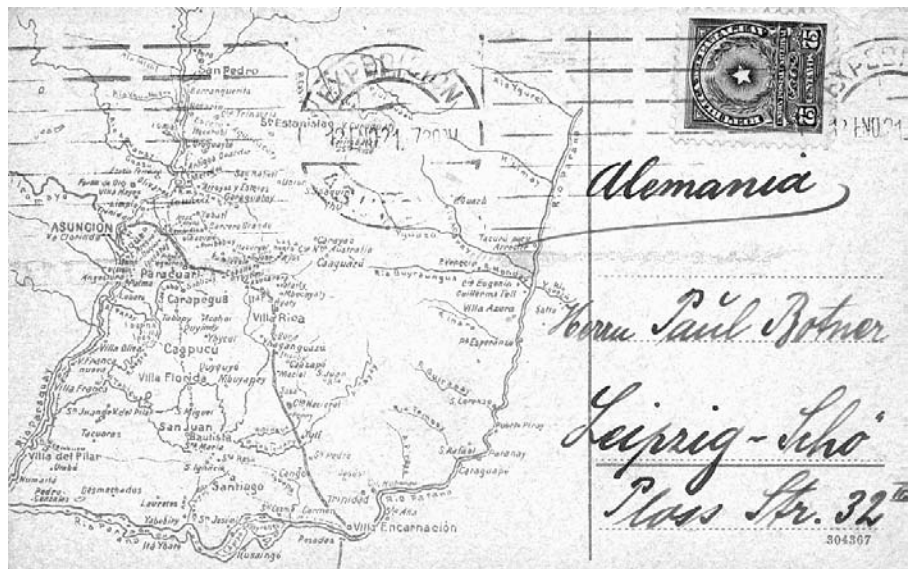
Many questions/mysteries indeed. Hopefully more research will bring some results in the (near) future. The Röder ppc history is well worth be researched. Not only because of their huge ppc output for publishers worldwide, the production figures we can make out. But also for being in ppc printing business for a span of over 50 years.



ill. A



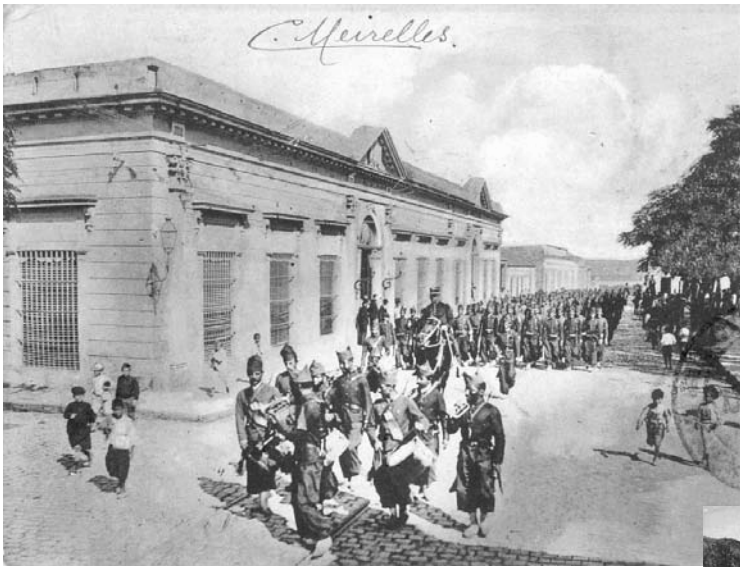
ill. B



An unusual address side layout is found on this Röder printed card (304367) from **Asuncion, Paraguay**. A map of this country occupies most of the address side, leaving not much space left for writing the address. Address side printed in green ink. Mailed from Paraguay to Leipzig, Germany in January 1921. The batch number shows that this is a post 1918 Röder production. Collotype + colour overlays, some halftone patterns found in clouds/retouch.



◆ THE SOUTH AMERICA
 CONNECTION OF C.G. RÖDER
 A SMALL SELECTION OF CARDS FROM
 THE COLLECTION OF CHRIS RATCLIFFE



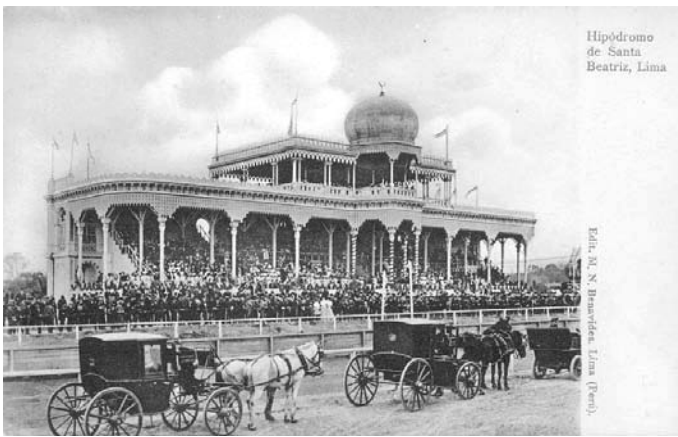
Batallon De-
 partamental y
 Gefatura Poli-
 tica, Salto, Re-
 publica O. del
 Uruguay



← Salto, Uruguay -
 publ. R. Rosauer, Buenos Aires, Ar-
 gentina. Photo by Aurelio Cuenos. Card. no. 22.
 Röder no. 92874. P/u Ja. 1908 to Belgium.

↙ Lima, Peru - publ. M. N. Benavides, Lima.
 "Platin-Crayon" process of OLM (Otto Leder,
 Meissen) 243 : 07. Röder no. 114 458. Not p/u.

↓ Canal Zone (Panama) - Culebra Cut look-
 ing North - publ. J. Maduro jr. OLM code 310 :
 06. P/u Feb. 1907 to Germany. Röder no. 80881.
 Ed. note: I know this is Central America, but
 chose it anyway. Love these "technical" views".



Hipódromo
 de Santa
 Beatriz, Lima

Edif. M. N. Benavides, Lima, (Peru)



Culebra Cut looking North, Canal Zone
 21. 507. Abril 1905. Colon Panama - J. file 1

→ Georgetown - British Guyana - publ. R. P. Kaps (Jeweller), Demerara. "Brilliant-Chromo" OLM - 498 : 05. Röder no. 73070. Not p/u = photo taken in 1905.

↓ Saludo de Venezuela - publ. Gathmann Hnos, Carácas. Card (?) no. 8568. UPU address side layout; undivided. Not p/u. Röder no. 73875.

↘ Bahia - Brazil - Emporio Industrial do Norte. Multi-view of the north-
 ern Brazil trading center, which is also the publisher I believe. Card no.
 20. Not p/u, undivided back. Röder no. 50362, c. 1904-05. Shown are
 various buildings (factory, school (?) and office building, monument
 of founder Luiz Tarquinio, (harbour) pier with a single sailing ves-
 sel. *Interesting!*



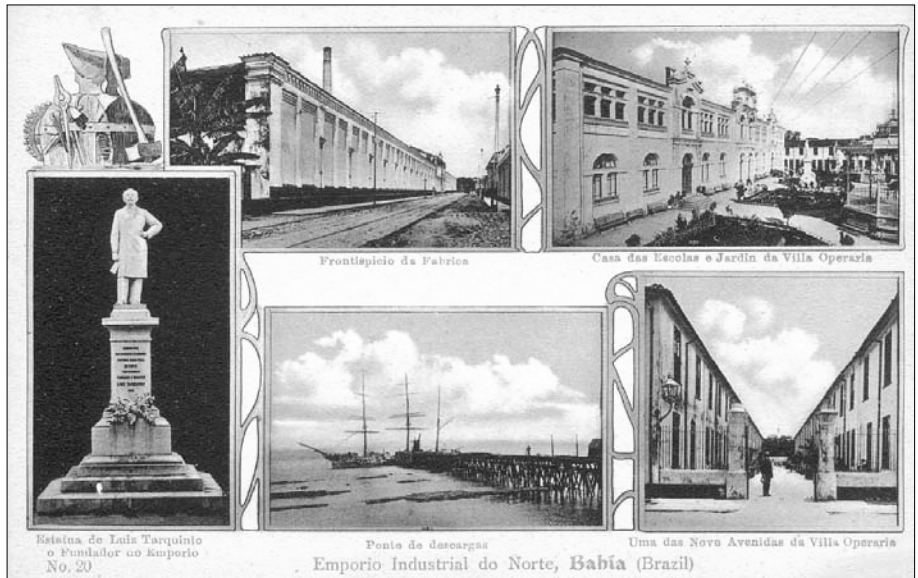
Georgetown,
 Demerara,
 Townhall

Edif. Gathmann, Venezuela, Venezuela



Saludo de Venezuela Jardín de una casa

Gathmann Hnos, Caracas, 1905



Estatua de Luiz Tarquinio
 o Fundador do Imperio
 No. 20

Frontispicio da Fabrica

Casa das Escolas e Jardim da Villa Operaria

Ponta de descargas

Uma das Novas Avenidas da Villa Operaria

Emporio Industrial do Norte, Bahia (Brazil)