From early days of the Great War dates this German propaganda card, published as no. 54 by Wilhelm S. Schröder Nachf., Berlin (publisher/wholesaler better known under W. S. S. B.) The mighty Michel (pained German) holds a note that further declarations of war are accepted. Around his feet, figures representing France, England, Belgium, Russia and Japan are in trouble with German soldiers. Signed 'Ad. Hoffmann', Monochrom collotype. P. Tu Sept. 1914.

(Below) All cards distributed by a Heinst. Knoebel. Blaustreu (Dresdent. Half-tone printed, some b/w, others in dark green, violet, dark brown. Card no. always found on picture side. Untypical 'Forest paths' card no. 72 not p/t, all other cards in 200 no. range p/.-1/-2 Jan-Feb. 1917, sent home by a member of the 2nd Ind. Div., at that time at the western front I believe. Views look like press photos. However, the absence of any captions and other information make these cards different in my opinion. Plenty destroyed building, landscape, trenches, usually one or two German soldiers in the picture. But no this town was destroyed by French artillery - Village near after being occupied by German troops or similar messages. Views show nothing but war pictures, without comment, something the soldiers in the field were used to. Perhaps the same views appeared in a war publication together with full description?

would see lower demand for PPC's. There would be little point in ordering and paying for cards in November (as if they were not to be sold until the high summer months). The demand for cards from the UK was very strong in 1908 and this led to Röder needing to increase capacity again for 1904.

1904 Production rate increased to 20,000. Numbering 35,000 to 55,000.
Both the English and German PPC boom were continuing very strongly and the USA was getting seriously interested.

1905 Production rate 20,000. Numbering 55,000 to 75,000.
Again a heavy year in Germany and the UK with very definite signs of interest from the USA, this led to a major increase in capacity for 1906.

1906 Production rate increased to 35,000. Numbering 75,000 to 110,000.
Another very strong year, heavy demand from Germany, the UK and the USA and indeed the whole world.

1907 Production rate 35,000. Numbering 110,000 to 145,000.
Röder is known to have had 36 collotype presses in this year. We see that the number of collotype presses correlates again with the dedicated production rate, of about 1000 per year for each machine. Demand was pressing hard from Germany, the UK, USA and just about everywhere else in the world.

1908 Production rate 45,000. Numbering 145,000 to 190,000.
The demand from the USA was extremely heavy in this year. This far more than made up for the slight weakening of demand from Germany and the UK. There are anecdotal stories of USA postcard publishing representatives scouring Leipzig to get their cards printed. Possibly Röder bought a few more presses and employed some more workers in this year? Alternatively the 'normal' printing season might have been extended!

Röder offered to print cards in lots from a minimum of 1000 to 6000 per view. I could imagine that the average batch size went as high as 3000 cards in this year (I do not know if the average could have been much higher, as a lot of these cards were of the type of Main Street, Very Small Town, USA. This would give an output of about 140 Million cards per annum. This was probably their best year as the PPC bubble was about to burst.

1909 Production rate 35,000. Numbering 190,000 to 225,000.
The USA Senate passed a restrictive tariff on postcards in August 1909. It was especially aimed at view cards which was Röder's specialty. On top of this punitive tariff the USA was rapidly losing interest in view cards. (The USA demand for non-view cards still continued steadily however). This was of course a serious blow to Röder, as view cards were their livelihood, but there was still enough interest from the rest of the world to keep production quotas filled.

1910 Production rate about 30,000. Numbering 225,000 to 255,000.
This was the last year of the 'old' first register numbering. The numbers seem to have got as high as about 255,000. The highest 'old register' number I have seen is 253,984 (p/t 1914).

1911 Production rate 35,000. Numbering 1 to 35,000.
In 1910, Röder had started job numbering with No 1 again. The PPC world was then in a bad way, with demand falling off in a number of countries (but not all). On the other hand a thorough clear out with other major collotype firms going bankrupt (e.g. Knackstedt & Nähler of Hamburg and other major) allowed Röder to survive and indeed prosper in a modest way. I suspect that this new numbering, starting at No 1 again, may have been part of a cartelisation agreement with the other Leipzig major producer Emil Pirkau. I can only trace Pirkau's card numbering back to 1915 when this firm had got to 2500 (coded number). But they presumably were numbering their batches before this, without putting the details on their cards. These might lead back to Pirkau also starting from the beginning in 1913 also? Very speculative I know, but the Leipzig cartel was strong and some sort of “market sharing” simply had to be reached. This was very common practice with German firms at that time, the chemical industry was a very pronounced example of “market sharing” and certainly the printing industry was not far behind.

Another reason to think this was a cartelisation agreement is that Röder’s production share stayed precisely and exactly the same at 35,000 jobs per year until the end of WW1 in 1918. Another example possibly of cartelisation sharing was Pirkau’s very steady “allowance” of 400 lots per year in the 1920's.

World War One produced plenty of ‘propaganda cards’ on all sides. The direct, aggressive type also more subtle ones. The cards published did change while the war and killing went on. Keep in mind that all picture war postcards (in Germany) had to pass the official censor. It appears to me however, that there was room for publishers to show the war as it was. And, these cards were bought by front line fighting men. I came across a huge series of which I would like to show you a few samples. Form your own opinion please.

C.G. Röder – 1901 to 1944

Röder printed for a number of the British major companies. This particular Tuck card (Bromborough, 'Scenery, Tucks “Passepartout” make for local pub. Leopold Breiden) has no number but the border style on the front is distinctively Röder (Numbered Tucks printed by Röder do exist, see TPA 11). Other publishers using Röder include Peacock (Pictorial Stationery Co) numbered 132 085. 'Stylochrom' card, Ferranti Valve, Guaranteed Abraham of Kesteven no 44 153 3 3 (Coaches descending Dunmall Ruse, series no. 438j and G.W. Wilson (foot shown). All cards from the collection of Chris Rutcliffe.

C.G. Röder and the British market

Röder for a number of the British major companies. This particular Tuck card (Bromborough, 'Scenery, Tucks “Passepartout” make for local pub. Leopold Breiden) has no number but the border style on the front is distinctively Röder (Numbered Tucks printed by Röder do exist, see TPA 11). Other publishers using Röder include Peacock (Pictorial Stationery Co) numbered 132 085. 'Stylochrom' card, Ferranti Valve, Guaranteed Abraham of Kesteven no 44 153 3 3 (Coaches descending Dunmall Ruse, series no. 438j and G.W. Wilson (foot shown). All cards from the collection of Chris Rutcliffe.

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THE POSTCARD ALBUM #20
Background to this research.
The printing firm of C.G. Röder in Leipzig was a major producer of picture postcards (mainly viewed mostly printed using the collotype process.
This firm was so dominant that their history must reflect the history of cards themselves and it is this that makes it so interesting.
Most cards were given a job number and it is possible to date these cards simply using this job number. Accurate listing is necessary because, although reliable (for example see the probable Valentine’s ‘indescriptions’ in this article). The main benefit of dating these cards accurately is that you can trace how Röder’s production responded to events from 1901 right through to 1944 and it is this history that appeals, as opposed to the necessary number listing.

Pre-1901
Röder is known to have had collotype printing capacity pre-1901, for instance the firm had a set of collotype presses before 1901. This is difficult territory which is still under research.

1901
Production rate about 7 to 8 thousand cards per day. Numbering 1 to 7800 approximately. (The three highest p/s cards seen for 1901 are 7558, 7559, 7560)
Röder mass production of numbered p/s started in early 1901. It seems that Röder numbers were produced by a ‘7’ (8) over 1901 (and 1902). I am now inclined to broaden this as an ‘8’ and not as a ‘7’ at all, Indexing and Index Number. There has been considerable discussion of this “7” or “8”, but for my part, I am satisfied that Röder assumed that future PPC production was going to be limited and that they could keep indexed details of mass printed cards, allowing very few cheap reprints when necessary.
The English publisher Wrench suffered from the same delusion and this brought him down as the PPC boom took off. It was not possible to store all these details in a way that had gone PPC mad and was crying novel and change all the time.
As Röder was keeping indexed records of the 1901-02 printing there was no need for the customer to put a large order for each card. We are all used to seeing Röder promotional cards in later years, implying that the minimum order was 1000 cards and that 3000 would be better. This would not apply in these first years of 1901 and 1902. Judging by the number of repeat printings we find for the Swiss publishers Goetz and Gaggenheim in 1901-02, it would seem that they were not ordering in large quantities each time, but were content to order exactly what they judged they could easily sell. When these were sold, then they went back for a few more!
Things were to change drastically in later years, when if inexpensive cards were sold then they had to take thousands of cards per order. Heinrieth reports that the Röder total PPC production was about 7 Million cards for 1901. I have found that Röder handled their first 1000 PPC cards per job, which gives an average of order under 1000 cards per job. This is ridiculously low for mass production printing. Order 2 to 3000 cards per job, would be where the real profits were to be had. Clearly the missing PPC contributors coming back for reprints at a rate of hundreds at a time, had to stop and be replaced by thousands.

1902
Production rate about 12 thousand cards per day. Numbering 7801 approxi- mately to 20,000.
Röder continued with this awkward for them PPC system, finally dropping it in 1902 (I have not seen a “7” card above 20,000).
The German market was strong and the mass market was strong PPC boom was starting up in this year. (Prior to this date the UK market for PPC was relatively small, catering for the middle classes)

1903
Production rate 15,000 jobs per annum. Numbering 20,000 to 35,000.
It is known that Röder had 16 collotype presses in this year. Roughly speaking then it looks as if each machine correlates with some 1000 PPC jobs per year. This is only a rough “hallmark” correlation. Heinrieth points out that the collotype machines were not used exclusively for PPC’s and for part of the year they were used for printing book illustrations etc. This makes sense, as I imagine the mild winter months of November, December and January (≈)

The remains and groves of a German cemetery near Le Pain, France. Photo card without publ. imprint, not p/s. A small “8” is found at the lower left corner. When the war went on, cards like this turned more and more often. Usually with some publisher imprint, some issued only in small number. I am not sure if this view would have received official caption. The caption reads as it was without any emotionalism. The way the caption was written as well as the small number makes me believe that a photographer behind the front produced a small run of cards on photo paper with pre-printed address.

(former Kaiser) Wilhelm II on his way to Holland – forced to say farewell to his native country. The end of WWI was also the end of monarchical in Germany. Wilhelm II had to resign on Nov. 9, 1918 and went to Holland. Together with his family and a small staff Wilhelm II stayed as guest for some time with Count Godard Bentinck at castle Amerongen. On May 15, 1920 the former Kaiser moved into “Haus Doorn”, a country seat situated near the city of Utrecht. He continued the luxury life he was used to until his death on June 4, 1941. “Haus Doorn” is now a museum holding a collection of about 15,000 different items from the Kaiser era.

The card below bears a dementary message in rhyme form. The meaning is that Wilhelm’s pomp and circumstance is now over for all times, that he was chased away from his palace. The German people lost their patience, wanted an end of the war, genocide.

It’s autographed, by a F. Poisson from Leipzig Plagwitz. Not often seen card.

Nordische Kunststanz Ernst Schmidt & Co. from Liibeck (formed 1908 and still around today) published and printed (collotype) this view of a memorial for the dead of the German 9. Res. Army Corps near Auri- court. This place believed to be found somewhere in the Somme region. The 9 Res. Army Corps lost most of their men (dead, missing, wounded) during the Somme Battle in mid 1916. The inscription of the usual memorial is hard to read. The plate below bears a inscription in French – added later for the dead French soldiers? Two cities are mentioned: Nozon and Roye. Both places turn up frequently in WWI literature, even as late as April 1918.
The monument has an interesting shape. On top of a stone plinth, a pyramid was erected. It looks as gnu cases were used, something they had surely available in great quantity.

Unusual, but matching somehow.
This card is not p/s. At least post-1916 origin I believe, or perhaps even post-war date.

Gross aus Lipton & Altstidern
Multi view Flotten Crayon OLM.
Photographic prints using platinum instead silver salts were highly regarded in the early 2000’s. This OLM Röder collotype printed card (p/s 28/02/03) beautifully reproduces the “platinum” look. It has an “8” number 19,402 which is the highest 1/ number that I have. (Chris Rat-telle reports, as his highest “1” number 19,370, for the publisher Gaggenheim). It must be very doubtful if these “8” numbers went over the 20,000 mark.

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