

BENDER OF CROYDON

Links to

'Graber Photographic Printing Machine' and 'Printed in Luxembourg' Cards

by
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Bender of Croydon was closely involved with two topics mentioned by Helmfried in TPA 23 and the firm is worth a brief article in its own right. Helmfried in TPA 23, (page 37) asks if anyone has any 'Printed in Luxembourg' cards? Again, separately, on page 52 he mentions the *Graber Photo Printing Machine*. I offer here some info and answers on both these topics.

I gave a list of Bender originated numbered court card in the 'Picture Postcard Monthly Annual' for 1997. A lot of these cards were explicitly 'Printed in Luxembourg'. Also in PPM for June 1996 I gave a review of Bender's involvement with the Gruber Machine. Some more information has come to light since and a brief review of the firm is worth while.

To summarise, Bender & Co. was essentially a Croydon based importer and seller of photographic chemicals, paper, plates etc from Germany. The Bender family turned up in Croydon about 1897. They were German, as the 1901 UK Census lists two of them (Nicholas R. and Joseph) as German and born in Germany. They started an early movie company, 'The Velograph Syndicate Ltd.', which failed badly. A Viktor Robert Bender is mentioned in the Velograph prospectus (22 May 1897) as a shareholder and I guess he was head of the family. They also published an early series of Court Cards which sold moderately well. This was prior to 1901. After that they concentrated mainly on their photographic supply business. This involved travelling to

photographers around the country supplying them which photographic chemicals, paper, plates etc and looking out for any likely opportunities. By 1910 they saw a business opportunity with the Gruber Photo Printing Machine.

'Printed in Luxembourg' Cards

I specialise in collecting early GB cards and about half of the Bender/Velograph pre 1901, numbered cards are explicitly stated to be 'Printed in Luxembourg'. I show St. Leonards on Sea, no. 129, as a typical example with explicit 'Printed in Luxembourg' attribution. I also show a typical Bernhoeft ppc of Luxembourg itself. The caption lettering is clearly the same on both cards. Some of the cards do not have the same explicit 'Luxembourg' designation, but their overall appearance plainly shows they were printed in Luxembourg. All cards in this numbered series are printed in collotype (Lichtdruck).

I had previously worked out that Charles Bernhoeft of Luxembourg was the likely printer by using this identity of style and type. What was new to me was Helmfried's discovery in a 1899 issue of 'Der Photograph' of



St. Leonards-on-Sea. This card no. 129, is a typical Bender/Velograph card from a pre 1901 GB series (p/u July 1898). A lot of cards in this series were explicitly 'Printed in Luxembourg'. Bender were essentially involved in the photographic supply business and would be well placed to gather together orders from individual photographers, to get a good discount on one or two sizeable orders.



Die Vogesen - Les Vosges. This is a typical Charles Bernhoeft card printed in Luxembourg. The caption lettering used is clearly identical to that of the St. Leonards-on-Sea card.

an advertisement from 'Luxemburger Graphische Kunstanstalt Ch. Bernhoeft' offering to print cards in 'Lichtdruck' (collotype). This is further and additional proof that Ch. Bernhoeft's company was the printer. The Bender family in Croydon being German and importing German photo materials would be very likely readers of 'Der Photograph'.

All this is final proof that a lot of these Bender cards were printed by Bernhoeft. (Not all these Bender cards are of Luxembourg origin, some were printed in Hamburg, but this is another story). So in answer to the question "Why do complicated collotype printing in Luxembourg?" the answer turns out to be straightforward, the noted photographer Ch. Bernhoeft wanted his photographs printed by the best process possible and if this meant setting up a collotype factory, then so be it! The factory was so successful that it took on overseas orders as well. For 'Printed in Luxembourg' cards this Bender/Velograph court card range is a good place to look.

The Gruber Photo Printing Machine

Helmfried mentions this Gruber machine on page 52 of TPA 23. Bender of Croydon took up the use of this machine very enthusiastically. I gave full details of their involvement with this photo printing machine in 'Picture postcard Monthly' for June 1996. They formed a new company 'The Photo Printing & Publishing Co.' and I show a typical advertisement of theirs. I also show an advertisement for the Gruber machine on next page.

The Photo Printing & Publishing Co.,

55, Berners Street, Oxford Street, LONDON, W.
Works: 242 & 244, London Road, CROYDON.

London Telephone: 5275 Central.
London Telegrams: "Pappfabrik, London."

Croydon Telephone: 221 P.O., Croydon.
Croydon Telegrams: "Crayon, Croydon."

THE LEADING Printers of Postcards in Real Photo Style.

QUALITY. Unsurpassed.

EDITIONS. From ONE GROSS per subject.

DELIVERY. Within 3 or 4 days, or for urgent orders within 24 HOURS, through our SPECIAL EXPRESS DEPARTMENT.

Also in

Collotype, Doubleprint, Colour.

Particulars, terms, and samples on application.

Designers and Printers of CALENDARS, CHRISTMAS and SHOW CARDS, etc., etc.

SPECIALITY: In Real Photo and Airbrush Style.

In conjunction with above

BENDER & CO.,
Photographic Enlargers in all Processes.

This is a whole page advertisement from a Photographic Year Book for 1912. It shows that Bender & Co. and PP&P Co. were virtually one and the same.

Bender claimed to be the leading printers in the real photo style. This is believable judging by the availability of their cards in today's collectors market. The Bender family were Germans and their activities ceased very abruptly in 1914 at the start of WW1. I have always been curious to know what happened to them, were they sent back to Germany or were they interned for the duration of the war?

The Bender family were involved at the beginning of the British ppc, pre 1900 and were heavily involved with real photo cards at the end of the ppc boom up to 1914. They did issue cards in between, but not on a large scale. This family seem to "top and tail" the start and finish of the British ppc boom quite neatly!

This shows that 'Photo Printing & Publishing Co.' of Croydon were repeat customers for this Graber machine.

The advertisement is from a 1915 Photographic Year Book, compiled in 1914. The Bender family, being German, ceased business in England at the outbreak of war in 1914. Their company was wound up, I do not know what happened to them after that.

Editor's Note: George Webber sent in his article already some time ago. Since then and, since TPA 23 had come into distribution time has passed. I take the liberty to add now some own material I have collected on the 'Luxembourg Case'.

Bernhoeft · Schmitt · Frings & Girms · Dr. Huss · and?

Charles Bernhoeft installed own collotype printing equipment in order to produce multiple copies of the same image in good and most of all in constant quality. This is what many other photographers did. Charles might have started some time in the early 1890's, perhaps even earlier. The beginning postcard boom together with the introduction of the improved/faster/bigger format collotype flatbed press might have convinced him to take part in the game. Numerous collotype printings firms, large and small were set up in the late 1890's – already 1899/1900 there was too much capacity and prices down. As the 1899 advert in TPA 23 proves, the name of the company was 'Luxemburgische Graphische Anstalt Ch. Bernhoeft, Owner Frans Schmitt'. So, Charles had sold his postcard printing business by that date. Biographical data on the internet mentions that Ch. Bernhoeft concentrated on photography at the turn of the century, incl. portray work for wealthy customers. Perhaps he still had some money in the firm that carried his name.

From January 1907 on August Frings and Georg Girms took over the firm = 'Luxemburger Kunstdruckerei formerly C. Bernhoeft', although the latter part is often omitted in advertising. This company chapter (and the years before) is of special interest to me. Frings & Girms installed bigger format presses, offered various qualities. *I wonder if there are any cards around from post-1900 date showing an imprint "Printed in Luxembourg".* The firm took over another (collotype) printing company (Bruno Scholz, Strasbourg, Alsace) early 1908. But it did not work out. Adverts in 'Papier-Zeitung' from June 1909 (see ill.) mention a new owner: **Dr. M. Huss**. Research continues.

Below: Fine coloured Bernhoeft (collotype printed) card from **Strasbourg** (Alsace), although the entire picture side is ruined by strange stripes and dots (chemicals?). Vosges series card no. 43 – total number 575. Mailed to Glarus, Switzerland in early 1902.



Postmark Error! Date on picture side reads: 5 Jan 1902; postmark 6 Jan 1903; arrival postmark (Switzerland) 7 Jan 1902. Collector item?



"THE PRESTO" (GRABER'S)

AUTOMATIC TYPE PRINTING AND CUTTING MACHINE FOR SENSITIZED CARD MAKERS



is designed to print from the roll, and to produce 3,000 to 4,000 Post Card Headings per hour, from two plates, placed side by side, with Publishers' imprints as required, and works from 11 in. roll. Imprints are easily changed. The machine cuts off automatically in lengths of 6's or 12's. Singly if required. After printing 6, a patent automatic movement allows a gripper edge of 1 in. at top (namely 21 1/2 in.); or, 1/2 in. top and bottom (namely 22 in.) when required. A patent impression bed and

Type Chase facilitates a quick make ready. Works easily and accurately by hand or power.

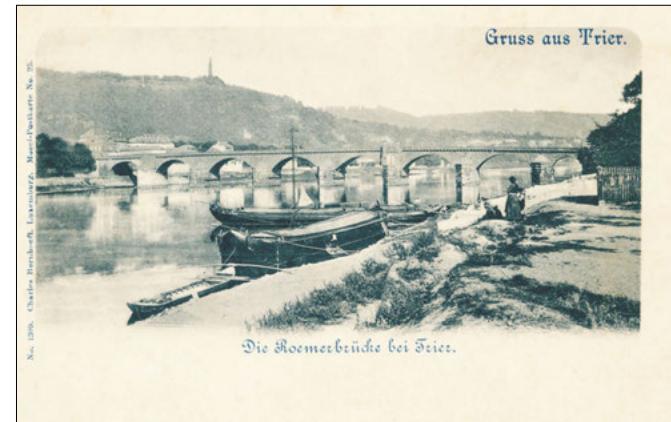
SOME USERS of my MACHINES.

All Shukri Bey, Constantinople.
Baughaw & Son, Doncaster.
Mark Blow, Sydney, Australia.
H. E. Bucher, Zurich, Switzerland.
Harold H. Camburn, Tunbridge Wells.
P. O. Collier, Reading.
Wm. Curtis Kilmsey, Skipton.
C. H. Davis, New York.
E. T. W. Dennis & Sons, Ltd., Scarborough.
Dorrett & Martin, London, S.W.
*Fred. Hardie, Aberdeen.
*Harvey, Barton & Sons, Ltd., Bristol.
*Iford, Ltd., Iford.
*Jones, Williams & Co., Preston.
*Judges, Ltd., Hastings.
*Kodak, Ltd., London.

*REPEAT ORDERS.

Percy Lancaster, Tunbridge Wells.
Frederick Lewis, Birmingham.
Lilywhite, Ltd., Halifax, England.
Lyall Photo Co., Ltd., Winnipeg, Canada.
J. Mason, Bradford.
Millar & Lang, Ltd., Glasgow.
R. Muller, Bohemia, Austria-Hungary.
Paget Prize Plate Co., Watford.
F. J. Parsons, Ltd., Hastings.
*Photo Printing & Publishing Co., Croydon.

A. G. Shortman & Co., Bristol.
U. S. A. Studios, London.
A. G. Stumpf, New Jersey, U.S.A.
A. J. Sutton, Moose Jaw, Canada,
and many others.



The Roman Bridge at Trier (Treves), an often seen view. Ch. Bernhoeft imprint (River) Mosel postcard no. 25. Total 'no. 1309'. With the same lettering George refers to. It was especially this series that got Bernhoeft in severe competition with (big) local printer/publisher 'Schaar & Dathé'.

unter 1. 1/944 erobert.

Luxemburger Kunstdruckerei

Dr. M. Huss

vormals Frings & Girms, Luxemburg

Lichtdruck + Steindruck

Buchdruck

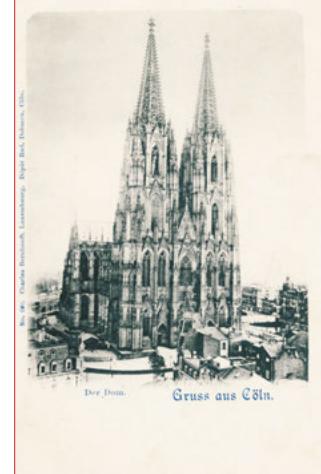
Ansichtskarten in allen modernen

Ausführungen, Alben, Kunst-

blätter, Kataloge, wissenschaft-

liche Illustrationen etc. — Billigste

Preise bei bester Bedienung.



Greetings from Cologne - another common view. Ch. Bernhoeft firm liked to publish/print German views. This is card no. 590, not p/u, c. 1900 with interesting mention of local publisher Rud. Dohmen holding a Bernhoeft "Dépôt". Similar Dohmen cards show no such imprint.