

I have to admit that my interest in collecting German postcards of topographical nature is rather limited. I even hesitate to look seriously for cards from my hometown Rastede. Despite this attitude I have 1000's of cards with views of places from all over Germany, which came mostly in form of "junk" card lots in my possession.

I use to look carefully at each and every card I receive, especially because of possible use for printer/publisher research, for which common cards are usually more valuable than sought-after views. But I also like well photographed/arranged cards as well as any "interesting views" in the broader sense. Already some time ago I noticed a card from the city of Hildesheim, Lower Saxony, showing an old, half-timbered house, looking a bit unusual from the architectural view which was described in the caption as "Zuckerhut" (sugarloaf). **See ill. 1.** (duotone black/grey printed on handmade card, deckle-edged and published by "Franz Jander" from Berlin W.62, undivided back, not postally used. Plenty of retouches).

Well, everyone will know the Sugar Loaf Mountain in Rio, Brazil. Some may also have heard of the (notorious for its effect) "Feuerzangenbowle" (red wine punch containing rum which has been flamed off) for which the sugarloaf is absolutely a must. So, what had the mention of "Zuckerhut" to do with this view? I found no answer to this and put the card away and forgot the matter.

While looking for postally used card with the (odd) Emil Pinkau "Dot & Dash" code on for George Webber's research, I came across a coloured

HILDESHEIM

and the
upside down Sugar Loaf

The city of Hildesheim, Germany, is situated about 25 kilometers southeast of Lower Saxony's capital Hannover. Hildesheim was founded as diocese in the year 815 and gained market rights around the year 1000 and a first mention of town charter dates from 1217. Hildesheim became a member of the Hanse (Hanseatic League) in 1367. The city has a varied history and suffered a great deal during the Thirty Years' War. The old city center of Hildesheim was dominated by old artistic designed half-timbered houses/guildhalls, some dated back to 1418 but the majority built in the 15 - 17th century. In total some 700 old buildings which led to the description Hildesheim being the "Nürnberg (Nuremberg) of the North".

WW2 changed this view drastically. The first methodical (US) air raid hit this city on February 22, 1945 causing 360 dead. The old Hildesheim city center disappeared finally on March 22, 1945 after being the target of an British-Canadian air raid with about 1000 dead, two weeks before U.S. troops occupied Hildesheim.

The population of Hildesheim grew because of industrialization in the suburbs very fast. Hildesheim had a population of 17,988 in 1864. Three years later it were 19,547 people. 22,581 in 1875; 42,973 in 1900 and a population of 50,000+ in 1910. Incorporation of nearby villages and towns in the 1930-1970's (population of 82,000 in 1955) led to the current population of about of 107,000.

Several of the reconstructed Hildesheim buildings/churches are found today on UNESCO's world cultural heritage list.

card from Hildesheim showing a old tall house which looked somehow wrong. Maybe because of the angle of vision (did the photographer lay flat on the ground?) A bit like a distorted view. Anyway I remembered the first card and now with the caption "umgestülpter Zuckerhut" together with this illustration the "upside down turned sugarloaf" name/comparison made sense **See ill. 2.** (Genuine multicolour collotype printing by Emil Pinkau & Co., Leipzig for local publisher "Hildesia-Verlag E.B.", card no. 1076. Not p/u but with dated message on from Sept. 1929. Here we see also the St. Andreas Church in background which was left out in ill 1). And now I became interested more seriously in this old odd looking building.

I discovered another view in a approval lot with printing trade/ppc history related cards. It shows half the the "Zuckerhut" house and the passage at the "Andreasplatz". The dealer wanted equiv. to US \$10 for this card because there were a number of (very small) ppc's on display in a shop window of a stationer's/bookbinding shop found in this building. Never understood why the asking price "explodes" as soon as there are some tiny postcards on display. Managed to get the same card for 20% of the above mentioned price from a different source. **See ill. 3.** (fine detailed b/w collotype printing by unidentified printer) again for same local publisher "E.B.H.", card no. 118, p/u in 1910.) Notice the advertising/owners name of the shop now found ("Heinrich Bergholz") which was removed on the first two shown (but believed to be of later publishing date) cards.

(con't)

ill. 1



ill. 2



ill. 3





ill. 4

The mention of "Andreasplatz" was of course a great gift for locating this "Sugar Loaf House". The square named after the neighbouring St. Andreas Church.

Soon more views "poured" in, almost every week, and can be seen as proof that especially this area together with the unusual old house was very popular with ppc publishers and buyers. Many views are almost identical and differ only in size and quality (of retouches). Some are simply the same view reproduced by different printing processes but from one original photograph. You easily find the same view done by colotype, then by gravure process and also as real photo card. Many by local or regional publishers, then again firms who served places all over Germany. **See ill. 4** for a very common view. *Gravure printed, sepia, published by "Kunstverlagsanstalt Bruno Hansmann" from Cassel, as card no. 26690. With correct caption "upside down sugarloaf".* The big ppc publisher Hansmann has the identical view also available as sepia photo card, no. 55128. A luxury version was Hansmann's card no. 32183, again same view but smaller, printed by gravure process, platesunk, on handmade card. None of these cards I have seen were p/u, and could date from 1910-1930's.

See ill. 5 for a slightly different view with imprinted caption "Andreasplatz Passage" published by the big firm of "M. Glückstadt & Münden" from Hamburg as no. 56719, "Gravuryt" quality. The funny thing with all these more or less identical views is the way retouches were made. On most cards you find the advertising "Buchbinderei, Papierhandlung" on the right corner on the second



ill. 5

floor of the "Zuckerhut House", except in ill. 2 and 3. But in ill. 3 we find the shop owner's name/advertising above shop window. It was removed (By printer? Or shop owner?) on the other four illustrated cards.

See ill. 6, which shows the Sugarloaf House from a different position, and now we know the shop had two windows with plenty of postcards on display. *Once again published by Bruno Hansmann, Cassel, as no. 3785, gravure printed (sepia), not p/u.* The small sign over the entrance is almost illegible but I can make out the name "Bergholz" as owner. No advertising over shop window but the "book-binder, stationer's" advertising at typical position.

See ill. 7 now for a completely new angle. *Local publisher "E. B. H." published this fine detailed card as no. 28, very good quality gra-*



ill. 6

vure printed, divided back, not p/u. New is the mention of the bigger left half of this building as "Pfeilerhaus" (house on pillars/buttrest). *Aha, now I understood.* Ill. 6 already showed that there must be some other house the Sugar Loaf House was "attached" to, and not standing alone as the first shown views made believe. The dealer who sold me this card said he was born and raised at Hildesheim. I asked if he knows what happened to this house. According his information this special building (dating from 1500-10) was not rebuilt after being destroyed in late WW2. He supposed it was not reconstructed because of obstruction of traffic(?). Maybe he is right. I haven't been to Hildesheim in person yet, although it is only three hours by car from Rastede. Maybe I will do so in the near future and let you know. (cont)



The fun with this “research” on the “Zuckerhut House” was the fact, that I found all cards in about the same order as illustrated here. I am not sure whether I would have followed this “story” the same way if I had found card no. 6 first for example.

Please take a look at ill. 6 again and see the poor looking tree (burned down?) on the left hand. Guess it was retouched, all leaves removed. This photo was taken NOT in winter. People seen don't wear warm coats and most windows are open to let some air in and, especially to get rid of the humidity inside these houses. Living in such a half-timbered house (without central heating) at that time wasn't so romantic as some people think nowadays.

ill. 8 give now a good answer where the “Pfeilerhaus” got its name from. Indeed standing on pillars and the Sugar Loaf house can also be identified. This card, in typical mid to late 1930's “photo card look”, but printing by colotype and then given a lacquer finish, was published by a local firm named “Fischer & Fassbender”. Sent to Hannover in Sept. 1943, not long before this view disappeared. By the way, there is a “R 37700” number found on down right hand corner on the address side. Don't think this has anything to do with our special ppc printer friend “C.G. Röder”, although they printing masses of such quality cards in small numbers at that time. See the tree which has grown a great deal compared with ill. 6.

We now have made a good panning shot around the Sugar Loaf House, and this should be enough on this matter. A final card, I discovered by accident in my collection, shows part of “Andeasplatz” and in center the now wellknown “Pillarhouse” with attached upside down Sugar Loaf. I



ill. 8

have shown this card in TPA before (*see ill. 9*). It is a fine chromolitho artist (signed “WR”) card published by “Reinecke & Rubin” from Magdeburg. Series title reads: *Künstler Postkarten nach Natur Aufnahmen. Hildesheim No. 119*. This card is not postally used, but has a undivided German address side layout which means it was put in circulation before 1905.

Many of the “Zuckerhut-House” related cards I have seen were published by a local firm, either with “E.B.H” or later “Hildesia E.B” publisher imprint. It **could** even come from the shown “Zuckerhut” shop. Owner(s) was a family “Berg-



ill. 9

holz”, although the first name on the advertising reads “Heinrich” and nothing beginning with an “E”. But there were at least two other firm (Borgmeyer: book shop, publisher and printer; and Bürck: also bookshop and publisher) around in 1903 that could be responsible for all these cards found.

While looking through Röder printed cards not long ago, I suddenly found the answer to “E.B.”. On a postally used card dating from 1918, with a view of the city of Braunschweig, it reads: “Hildesia-Verlag” (E. Baxmann), Hildesheim. No additional info found so far.



*Junge lat dei Appels stahn, süs packet deck dei Huckup an.
Dei Huckup is en starken Wicht, höh mit dei Stehldeiss bös Gericht.*

Legends, old stories, myths including creatures and special characters do belong to old places like Hildesheim. One of them was so popular that it received an own statue (which is still around by the way). It is the “**Huckup**”, a goblin or more like an ill-tempered dwarf living in the woods near Hildesheim.

Shown above is the original wording/rhyme of the inscription found on the statue. It is in a regional Low German dialect, which differs a bit from the “Plattdeutsch” still spoken today in my region. Translation: *Boy leave the (sack with) apples behind otherwise the “Huckup gets you. The Huckup is a powerful goblin and judges strongly with thieves. Aha, with educational message. The face of the boy looks scared, no wonder with a evil dwarf in his neck. Guess it was aimed at children to keep their fingers away from other people's property. Be a good child otherwise the Huckup gets you. This advice surely worked for some time.*

On address side of this card we find another explanation of the Huckup legend in rhyme form. This story is of much older origin than the above one. Try to translate it as good as possible. *There is evil fellow living on the “Ziegenberg” (a wooded hill near the old Hildesheim). When travellers were heading for Hildesheim from a certain direction they had to pass this dark wood. Soon the Huckup jumped onto the neck of the traveller, groaning and moaning. The Huckup cling to the neck tight and the traveller ran down the paths in panic to get rid of the evil dwarf. But when his flight reached the end of the dark woods, the gleaming cross of the Hildesheim cathedral came in sight. This was no good for the eyes of the Huckup, and he jumped off, cursing all the time, returning to “saver” for him regions. Most of these legends do have some real background, which gets lost more and more over the years. Maybe the area to be passed was unsafe for travellers. Of course the “Huckup” was a heathen creature and the christian religion with the cross as major symbol was able to avert him. I think there are many “Huckup” legends around in every country.*

Colored card published by local “Hildesia-Verlag (E.B.) as no. 1086. P/u in Sept 1918.