

Picture Postcards printed by  
**KNACKSTEDT & NÄTHER - HAMBURG**

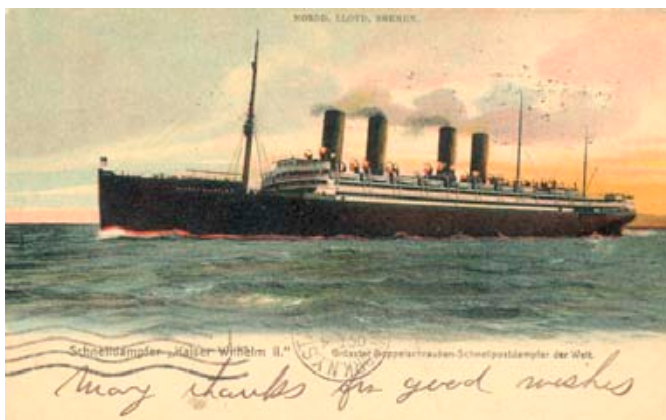


**Valencia, Puente y paseo Glorieta.** No K&N logo but other cards from same series have one. Divided back, no publisher imprint. Another border type design, this is of high quality with heavy glossy finish. Not postally used, with rubber stamp imprint of Dutch coffee trading firm. (Coll. H. Voskuilen.)



**"Land und Leute aus der Haide".** Serie IV, No. 19, published by Louis Koch, Bremen. After an (art) photography taken by "Th. & Osc. Hofmeister", Hamburg 1903. Printed by K&N as duotone collotype. P/u in July 1903. "Rural Life" was also a favourite motif for members of Hamburg's photographer societies. "Simple Life" was in, some then realized that there was a lot of poverty behind the romantic views. We see an older man in typical clothes sitting on the floor of his farmhouse hall and sorting potatoes. (Coll. H. Voskuilen)

Fast ocean liner  
**"Kaiser Wilhelm II"** - Largest twin-screw mail steamer of the world, according to the caption. Typical K&N **Chromolithdruck** quality. Photographed and published by (maritime) firm "W. Sander & Sohn" from Geestemünde (part of Bremerhaven). P/u in Oct. 1904 in the U.S.A. (card supplied by Jim Ward)



**"Samblesbury Hall"** reads the almost hidden caption of this unusual looking card for the British market. Printed by K&N's "Dürer" process, much looking like an old oil painting with aged finish layer on. Despite its dark impression at first sight, the illustration shows many clear details and warm colours. By the way, this card is very difficult to illustrate by b/w halftone. Even this colour reproduction was a bit manipulated by me (brighter and stronger contrast). I don't think K&N found many customers with topo views for this process. There is no publisher listed but an advertising imprint of the publisher/wholesaler "Paustian Gebrüder", Hamburg 58. This K&N printed card (and maybe also others) was enclosed with copies of **"Little Puck"**, **Le Petit Parisien** and **"Don Quijote"**, humorous, entertaining publications from England, France and Spain, distributed by the Hamburg firm.



**Hamburg - Messberg (Market).** Cards like this view show the high quality K&N was able to produce. Perfect collotype printing meets a cautious but fine colouring plus glossy finish give cards like this a almost natural look. This could be a complete K&N production incl. photography. Published and printed by K&N in one (?) of their Hamburg series as number 92. (oval K&N logo). Not p/u, divided back = post 1905. Probably a reprint, or a coloured version of an earlier published b/w card.

This lively view with plenty of readable advertising was photographed some time around 1900 I believe. It shows only a part of the market. The "Messberg" (from "Mesberch" = manure heap) was one of the oldest markets in Hamburg. First mentioned in 1458 and mostly for vegetables and fish from the 17th century on. Hamburg's first electric tram line (1894) crossed the Messberg.



**By the Editor**

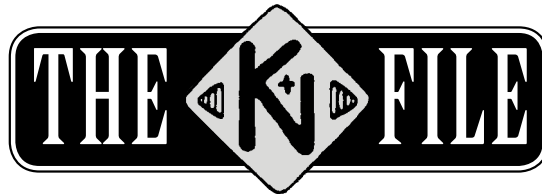
The firm of Knackstedt & Näther (K&N) from Hamburg has always been of special interest to me. See also TPA #9, p28; TPA #10, p16 and Frans Bokelmann's article on K&N's Souvenir border cards as well as some general company history in TPA #11, p45-48.

K&N was one of the big ppc printers and exporters in pre WW1 times, then suddenly closed down and was relaunched as Knackstedt & Co. and a firm with his name stayed in business at least until the mid 1960's.

Of very special interest to me was their co-operation with other printers/publishers mentioned in their adverts. And I strongly believe that it was this close (financial) co-operation then led to the suddenly end of K&N.

Research on this firm turned out to be difficult, and some aspects are not yet fully investigated. Some info found makes no sense yet, and there are still a number of missing links. But I thought it would be worthwhile to make a start, based on what I have found so far and with only a little bit of guesswork. As the history of this firm is too comprehensive for a four page article I decided to published a series of articles, hopefully that more reliable information on K&N can be found in the meantime to back up any present guesswork. I do not intend to bother you with any numbering or identification systems to be cracked or any hypothetical production figures. Just believe me that K&N was very big for some years; they printed for "The Rotograph Co.", NY and famous "LL" Paris, also for the big firm of "Nels", Belgium etc.

What I really appreciate is, after looking at quite a number of K&N cards, the fact that even their cheapest line of ppc printing offered was of good printing quality. Many of the cards produced by K&N do bear their name in full with or without one of their trademarks. Unfortunately there are many others without any K&N identification marks on. This was of course typical for printers working for customers abroad. In many cases it was not so good to boast with Germany as country of origin. Some countries had regulations which forced publishers to include a imprint where their cards originally came from. "Printed in Germany" alone however, is not very helpful for research. The before mentioned quality is very useful as well as certain address side layouts and favoured fonts do help a great deal to identify K&N's work.



**KNACKSTEDT & NÄTHER - HAMBURG**  
— Part I —

Little is known on the family background of the founders of K&N. The Hamburg state archives provided following information:

**Wilhelm Georg Ludwig (Louis) Knackstedt** was born at the city of Peine (Hannover) in 1865 and died some time after/around 1925 in or near Hamburg. His setting up partner **Hermann Gustav Näther** was born at Lindenau in 1866. A reference work dating from 1874 lists a total of 15 different places with the name Lindenau all over Germany and Austro-Hungary. I personally tend to believe that *Hermann Näther* came from (Leipzig) Lindenau. One matter is however clear, neither Knackstedt nor Näther came from Hamburg or surrounding regions, but probably met here and decided to become partners and start their business at Hamburg-Eppendorf. Eppendorf was a small town with a population of around 2,000 people situated on the Hamburg city border in 1874. But this small, still rural place, had an established school / institute for industry/trade and art training. I strongly believe that Louis Knackstedt and Hermann Näther attended this school. This proves that

both must come from middle- or even upper-class families who could afford to pay for this sort of education/training.

Photography at that time was also quite expensive but becoming very popular. The mention of "art" makes me believe that students of the Eppendorf school did also receive photography instructions. And to start a business at Hamburg is only logical, as Hamburg became a booming industrial and trade center at that time. Hamburg had a population of about 600,000 people around 1890 which increased to over 1,000,000 around 1910. Hamburg was *the* (commercial) gateway to the world.

Louis Knackstedt and Hermann Näther established a **studio for industrial photography** on Sept. 28, 1889. Other sources say Nov. 1, 1889. Both in their mid twenties at that time and strongly believed already at the later K&N location "Eppendorferlandstr. 190".

The flash light was invented around 1885 and made it possible to shot also interior views. However, the early flash guns / pans produced much heavy smoke and made the people around run away soon after the first shot.

That photographers entered the collotype printing market was only too normal. Collotype is also called a *photographic* printing process. Almost all early German collotype printing houses were established by photographers

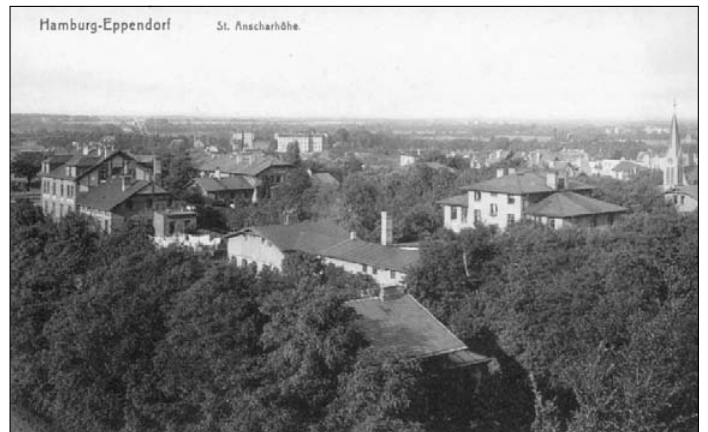
↖ Members of the "Typographische Gesellschaft Hamburg" visiting "Knackstedt & Näther" in April 1909. Posing for a photograph which was made ready for print within one hour and each member received an own copy. The only illustration I have found so far of the building Eppendorfer Landstr. 190. See the nice ornamented entrance with company name. K&N seems to have made good money for some time.

↗ View over Hamburg-Eppendorf. Published by "A. Büttner", Hamburg (card. 672) who is said to have taken over the publishing dept of "K&N". Printed by "Knackstedt & Co." which helps to date this not p/u cards as of post 1910 origin. Good collotype printing on smooth surface ivory card. (coll. H. Voskuilen)

➔ Promotional advert dating from Dec. 1907 (from "Der Deutscher Buch- und Steindruck" - a monthly trade journal). Still listing "allied partners" in Paris, New York and Vienna. The last advert of this type I have found. Sales agent for export was a "Fritz Korf", Hamburg. Offering ppc printing by all modern printing processes, from 1000 printed copies on per view.



Vertreter für Export: Fritz Korf, Hamburg 11.



(for example Römmler & Jonas, Stengel & Co, both from Dresden). Collotype printing process, first done on hand presses, was good for bigger "photo" print orders. The tonal range was almost the same as with real photo and a skilled photographer was able to create almost perfect copies of an original negative by collotype process. Soon bigger, powered flatbed presses were constructed and the ppc printing industry realized collotype to be a perfect process for production. It was also widely used for (art) reproductions. *Emil Römmler* of Römmler & Jonas were the pioneers in this field by the way.

Back to K&N history. The partnership between Louis Knackstedt and Hermann Näther lasted not very long. According an advert found in the "Neue Deutsche Papier-Zeitung" dating from 1913, and supplied by Hans Strassberger, Louis Knackstedt claims to have been the sole owner of K&N for 20 years. Interesting statement because at that time (1913) his firm was already named "Knackstedt & Co". Perhaps he just wanted to show that he was a long-time professional in the ppc printing business. Anyway, if we accept late 1889, better say 1890, as year K&N was established and with the 1913 statement in mind, it means that Hermann Näther left the firm in or around 1893. Any other calculation makes no sense. K&N closed down in June 1910; deducting 20 years from that date would mean Näther left the firm immediately after being established. In this case it would have been unlikely for Louis to use the name K&N furthermore. This was only done when a firm name was introduced in the market and had some reputation. Take a look at the K&N logo I used for the title. The much larger, dominating "K" shows who was the driving force behind K&N.

### K&N's Products

When did K&N start with ppc printing? Well, the earliest postally used K&N card I have seen so far dates from early 1898. Also the first printed and published card by K&N I know of dates from 1898. So, let's say they might have started with picture postcard production some time in 1897. What did they do prior to this date? This was, and partly is, indeed a mystery to me. Some guesswork: Louis and Hermann both worked as photographers, mainly of industrial views until about 1893. Perhaps the business did not run too well, and/or Louis realized the upcoming postcard boom and wanted to participate. This required capital for new printing machinery, to employ skilled workers, larger production sites etc.

Probably the reason why Hermann Näther broke up the partnership. This is of course just guesswork, but it happened in other business partnerships.

A very surprising (at least to me) answer to K&N's pre-picture postcard business field was found in the book "**Das ABC des Luxuspapiers**" by *Christa Pieske* (1983). It is always pointed out that K&N was a "Lichtdruckerei" (collotype printers). Frans Bokelmann did research on K&N's Dutch Souvenir border cards, which are colourful frame designs printed by chromolitho process with inserted individual collotype printed views (offered from 1899 on). This showed already that K&N had many different sides printing-wise.

Christa Pieske writes that K&N was a big producer and exporter of "Reklamemarken"; stamp-like advertising stickers/vignettes. What an surprise! Something I had never thought of! K&N is listed in the 1909-11 Export handbooks published by the "Hamburger Börsenhalle" as *being equipped with the latest machinery for "advertising label" production*. Mrs. Pieske also mentions the British publication "The British Lithographer", issues from 1894-95 carrying advertisements of K&N offering their stamp-like label printing. This answers my question what K&N did before they started with ppc printing mostly. Advertising labels/stickers in stamp form do appear on the scene in greater numbers not before 1895. So now we know that K&N was among the first to serve the market.

### Stereo(scopic) Cards

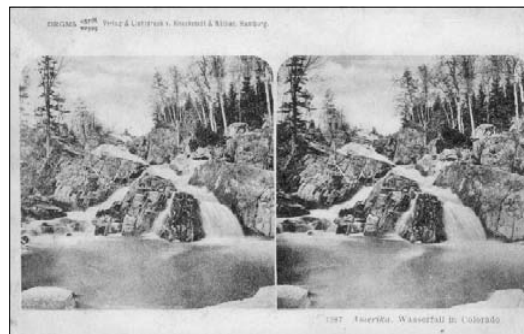
I think this is another "pre-ppc" field of activity by K&N. Unfortunately although the K&N stereo cards are in postcard size, there are only few p/u samples around to prove my theory. The way to produce stereoscopic views was discovered by the British physicist Charles Wheatstone who published an report on this special photography in 1838. Stereo pictures became very popular in the 1850-60's, better ones being hand-coloured. The stereo picture boom faded slowly around 1900. To me it appears as if K&N tried to make some



No. 521 - Auf dem Heimweg /On the way home. Looks a bit like Little Red Ridinghood in winter(?).



No. 754 - England: London, Somerset Haus, with notes of collector, not sure to file it as no. 20, 21 or no. 1.



No. 1287 - Amerika: Wasserfall in Colorado

money with a cheaper version of stereo cards in postcard size while the boom faded, not on stiff cardboard as the "original" stereo cards and different in size, but to be sent through the post if required. If the low cost K&N stereo cards needed a special viewing apparatus different from the regular models, is not known.

K&N published and printed the stereo cards and most do show a D.R.G.M.S. imprint with two registration numbers 83768 and 92395.

An advert from an German 1906 calendar proves the decline of the stereo cards craze. A firm from Berlin offers stereo cards, instead of 40 - 60 Pf per picture, for 20 Pf each with a minimum order of 25. The viewer, equipped with best lenses, costs 2 Marks instead of 4 - 5 Marks. Plus pictures from worldwide, for amusement. New card series announced.



Wir haben es unternommen

## Stereoskope in feinsten Qualität

statt wie bisher zu 40-60 Pfg. ein Bild, bei Abnahme von 25 Stück zu **20 Pfg.** per Bild zu liefern.

Hierzu ein praktischer eleganter **Stereoskop-Apparat** mit besten optischen Linsen, der bisher M. 4.- bis M. 5.- kostete, **für nur M. 2.-**.

Unsere Stereoskopbilder sind belehrend und unterhaltend, zeigen Welt und Menschen, Sitten und Gebräuche in reizenden Bildern von unvergleichlicher Plastik. - Vorrätig sind große Kollektionen von „Aus a. Welt“, Rhein, Harz, Dresden u. Sächs. Schweiz, Thüringen, Riesengeb., Tirol u. Südbayern, Schweiz, Italien, China, Japan, Amerika, Ägypten, Palästina. Kinderbilder, Genrebilder für Familien, Genre amüsanter usw. (Permanent neue Kollektionen).

**Verlangen Sie Probepild u. Katalog gegen Einsendung v. 30 Pfg. vom Berliner Verlags-Institut Berlin W. 30 i.**

D.R.G.M.S. stands for "Deutsches Reich Gebrauchsmusterschutz" = German Empire protection of patterns and designs (register). The DRGM law was issued in January 1876 and I still hope to find out in which year the K&N numbers were used to find a clue when they started with stereo card production. Unfortunately all DRGM registers were deposited at the local county courts from 1891 on, and these original registers with its different product classifications and original samples are in many cases no longer in existence anymore. Somehow I don't believe that K&N's stereo cards were around in pre 1897 years. Research continues.

Please see the table with all current K&N stereo cards I know of. It proves that they used a consecutive numbering system on their cards, although I believe that there were sold in single series; Hamburg; Capitals of Europe; single country series; fairy-tales; "nasty" underwear; Far-away places etc. In all covering many topics and places worldwide.

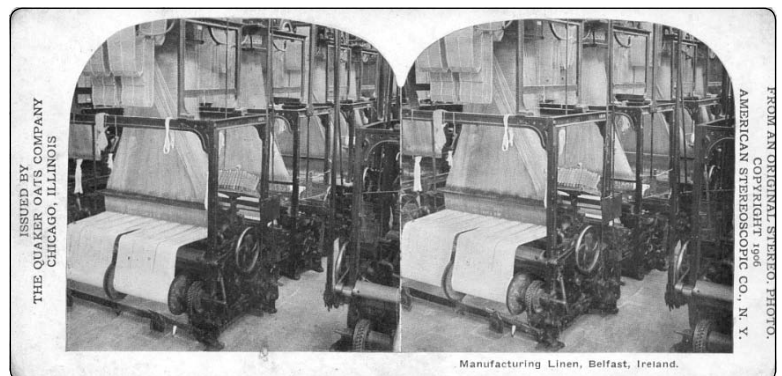
Henry Toms has a nice pair that shows K&N used the identical number for cards published for German or, in this case, Dutch market. All cards I have of the latter type show captions both in Dutch and French language, but have Dutch postcard address side layout only. One card from Stockholm, Sweden, has no K&N imprint but is definitely a 100% K&N card. This example has a U.P.U. address side layout. I also believe that those few handcoloured stereo views found so far were also available as cheaper b/w version. Keeping all this variations in mind the total amount of K&N's stereo card production is quite impressive. Current list start in the 500 range and goes up to over 1,300. Maybe someone has other cards, lower or higher numbered? Very interested in any postally used examples.

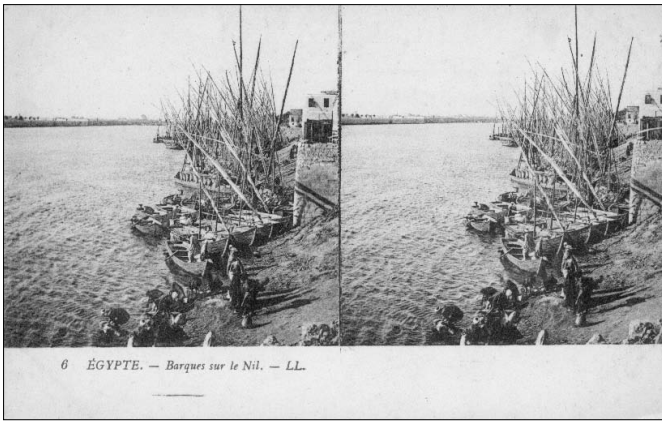
On next page we have two more examples of stereo cards also in postcard size. The Belgian published card is very likely a K&N production. And with "LL", Paris, France, I am not sure, but it is possible that also here K&N was the printer or granted permission to LL to copy this special type of cards. However, there is also a good chance that LL simply copied this stereo card design. The protection of the design was only effective in Germany and not abroad. And "copying" ideas/designs/layouts was a common practice among competing printers and publishers. I tend to believe that LL did not copy the K&N postcard size stereo cards, but that there was some sort of business relationship between both firms. Souvenir border cards with imprints of LL as well as K&N prove this.

K&N No.	Country / Caption	Remarks
501	Havana: Palast des Gouverneur	
507	Florida: Allee von Kokospalmen	
510	Hamburg: Landungssteg am Jungfernstieg	
521	"Auf dem Heimweg" .....	non-topo; fairy-tale
529	Berlin: La rue de Frédérique	
	Duitschland: De Frederikstraat in Berlyn .....	non-German issue; French/Dutch
569	Suède: L'opera à Stockholm.....	no K&N imprint; UPU address side
564	Hamburg: Binnenalster	
595	Waldeinsamkeit .....	"Atmospheric picture"; handcoloured
637	Palestine	
680	Italien: Titusbogen in Rom.....	p/u Jan. 1901
690	Schweiz: Im Grindelwald-Gletscher	
692	Alpenscene.....	p/u Oct. 1899
697	Deutschland: Bildergalerie in Sanssouci .....	handcoloured
708	Hamburg: Jungfernstieg	
738	Palestine	
741	Olyfboomenhaan te Rome	
	Allée des olives Rome .....	non-German issue; Dutch/French
754	England: London, Somerset Haus	
759	Afrika: Fischerjungen in Algier .....	handcoloured
786	L'Italie Venise Église de St. Markus	
	Venedige: Kerk van St. Markus .....	non-German issue; French/Dutch
792	Palestine	
796	Hamburg: Fleth	
797	Hamburg: Im zoologischen Garten	
802	Hamburg: Lagerhäuser	
818	Hamburg: Freihafen-Lagerhäuser	
821	Hamburg: Schwäne auf der Alster	
824	Hamburg: Winsersbaumbrücke	
825	Hamburg: Vor der Börse	
826	Hamburg: Messberg	
829	Hamburg: Lombardsbrücke	
830	Hamburg-St. Pauli	
832	Hamburg: Dampfer am Quai	
837	Hamburg: Blick auf den neuen Jungfernstieg	
837	same picture.....	non-German issue; French/Dutch
862	Brugtoeren te Praag	
	Four au pont Prague .....	non-German issue; Dutch/French
864	Ungarn: Burg in Budapest	
866	Aquileja en Austriche	
	Aquileja in het kusteland.....	non-German issue; French/Dutch
892	Griekenland: Akropolis in Athen	
919	Deutschland: Im zoologischen Garten zu Hamburg (different view as 797)	
989	L'Allemagne: Eilsee, Baviere	
	Duitschland: Aan het Eilmeer in het beyersche Gebergte (French/Dutch)	
1051	Schlosshof in Heidelberg	
1120	"Ein guter Tropfen" .....	non-topo; little bit nasty for that time
1212	Aus "die versunkene Glocke" .....	non-topo; fairy-tale
1287	Amerika: Wasserfall in Colorado	
1288	Palestine	
1305	Frankreich: Grabmal von Napoleon, Paris	
1306	Italien: St. Lucia, Neapel	
1328	Königsstein; Sächs. Schweiz	
1342	Dresden: Goldenes Thor. Königl. Schloss	

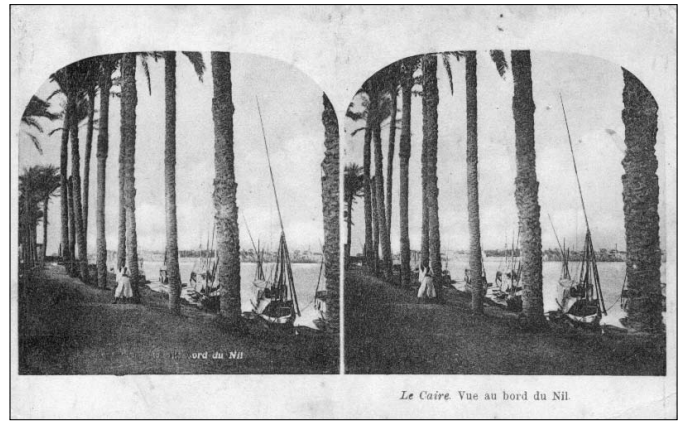
U.S. "Quaker Oats Company" from Chicago, Ill. issued /distributed these "original sized" (178 x 89 mm) stereoscopic cards. Original copyright dates from 1906 by "American Stereoscopic Co." from New York. Illustrated is "Manufacturing Linen, Belfast, Ireland". On reverse some information on other series, besides 11 views from Ireland, also Germany (8 views), Norway & Sweden (9) and Rome (8).

"These pictures are waterproof and when soiled can be cleaned with damp cloth". **Around the world by Stereoscope without leaving your home – just like being there.** Save these colored stereoscopic views from **Pettijohn** packages; arrange them into series and shortly you will have a **library of World Tours of Original Views** of immense interest, instructive, interesting and entertaining. So, stereo cards became a free give-away at that time, enclosed with common products.





Égypte - Barques sur le Nil. - LL. Card no. 6, divided back. Stereo card in postcard size with no special LL nor K&N characteristics. Just another piece in the LL and K&N puzzle.



Le Caire. Vue au bord du Nil. Undivided UPU back of Belgian origin. Typical K&N fonts/layout. Probably for "Nels", Brussels. Left photo shows half removed caption. No publisher imprinted.

I wonder if there are any other stereoscopic cards in postcard size from other publishers/printers around. Especially from non-German sources. The registration of the design gave K&N some legal possibilities to do something against unauthorized production and sale, at least within Germany.

The well known firm LL Paris had also identical stereo cards in their programmes. It makes me feel that this is another business link between both firms. I would never have thought of this possible connection without the earlier find of K&N decorative border cards with LL imprints. Who else could have been the "allied partner" in Paris mentioned in K&N adverts? By the way, I have three more LL stereo cards, all from Swiss with card numbers "La Suisse" 6, 9, 23. All undivided back. This needs more research and hopefully again a find of a "key" card to clear this matter for all times.

I wish to point out that I do not say that all non-German stereo card issues in postcard size were done by K&N, Hamburg. The way how to take a view for stereoscopic use was not patented. You either needed a two lens camera, or seen more often, a apparatus to move the lens (on a carriage) by 65 mm for a second shot from exactly the same position. At first look the pictures on a stereo card do like identical, but they are not. The slightly different shot pictures create a three-dimensionally view when put in a stereoscopic viewer with correct adjusted lenses. Stereoscopic card photographers / printers perhaps had some other own little secrets to perfect their views. K&N produced quite a number of their stereo cards for the public. I think it meant good business for them for some years. —

My thanks to all readers who provided information/cards. Special thanks go to Frans Bokelmann, David Pearlman, Oene Klynsma, Henry Toms.

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### K&N and Hamburg's (amateur) photographers

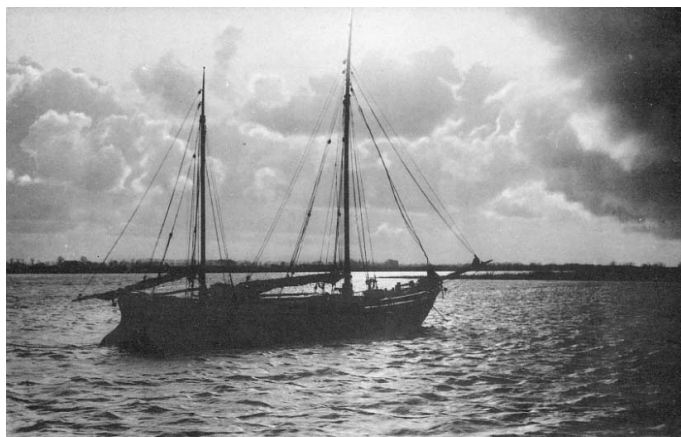
Louis Knackstedt and Hermann Näther were photographers. So it was not surprising that both came in touch with local "Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Amateurphotographie Hamburg". The society's aim was to promote (artistic) amateur photography. Founded on May 22, 1895, after splitting from the "Amateurphotographenverein Hamburg". A third local photography society named "Freie Vereinigung von Amateur-photographen" was founded in 1898.

The "Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Amateur-photographie Hamburg" was the most professional society and had the highest membership fees of all photographer societies in Germany. Membership lists read like a "Who is Who" of Hamburg. Amateur photography with an artistic approach was "in" among the upper and middle-classes at that time. It is very likely

that Louis and/or Hermann were members in this exclusive society. Fact is that they (K&N) worked often for members of this society. Exhibitions were held yearly and I show two cards from the 1903 exhibition. Both printed by "K&N's" *Luxusdruck* process, which was a special duotone collotype printing process, giving the picture a warm, soft appearance. The sailing boat at sunset (Series I.) and the woman sorting apples in traditional costume, Series II. (Vierlande?) were photographed by *Theodor* (1871 - 1937) and *Oscar* (1868 - 1943) *Hofmeister* in 1903. The Hofmeister Bros. were active members in the above mentioned society and earned also international reputation. Famous photographer/publisher *Alfred Stieglitz* took only one German photograph into his collection, and this was by the Hofmeister's. The *Collection Ernst Juhl* (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg) holds two photographs taken by L. Knackstedt and/or H. Näther in

1909 showing regional countryside motifs. K&N printed/published a number of cards of regional photographers, or used work of them for own series. There are also a number of cards of later date showing typical "photographer" series, published by local firms "Trautmann & von Seggern" / "H. v. Seggern & Sohn" and "Ludwig Carstens" with (*gravure*) printed by *Knackstedt & Co.* imprint on. —

END OF K&N FILE, PART I.



Official (exhibition) logo (+ series no.) found on address side; printed in green.

X INTERNATION. AUSSTELLUNG VON KUNSTPHOTOGRAPHIEN HAMBURG KUNSTHALLE · 03 SERIE I.

