

**By the Editor**

I had to give up my original idea of telling the story of *Knackstedt & Näther* (K+N) from Hamburg in chronological order. I failed to find reliable information on K+N's boom years 1902-06 yet. In addition I realized the amount of time, energy and funds needed. If I would concentrate on K+N research entirely, there would be no time left at all for other ppc and TPA matters as well as correspondence. So I decided to present research news on this important postcard printer *in portions* and publish a separate publication with all research results on K+N some day.

**K+N Stereo Cards**

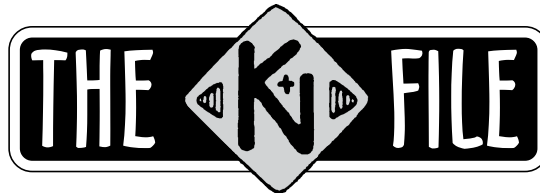
Knackstedt + Näther started their stereocard series early in 1898, the exact date is yet unclear. I was put in touch with a major German stereoscope photography researcher/collector, Dr. Dieter Lorenz, who holds a good collection of K+N stereo cards. Dr. Lorenz reports that to his current knowledge the K+N stereo card production (according to the production numbers imprinted) sums up to about 3000 cards. The same view was published sometimes again in different design/modified view. The stereocard line consisted not only of topo views from various countries but also genre type.

Dr. Lorenz also sent me a couple of photocopies with K+N stereocards from England, Italy and Spain. The identical views were both published by LL and K+N. The only difference is that the views of K+N stereocards are a bit smaller. That LL and K+N published cards from identical photographs means not much. They had probably the same supplier/photographer or more likely they exchanged views.

**K+N's 'allied' Partners: Paris**

The stereocard matter points towards LL being the "liierte Anstalt = allied business partner" of Knackstedt & Näther. But also Neurdin is well placed. LL were publishers and printers, Neurdin was publisher only to my current knowledge. Both companies were in the first league ppc wise. Comparing the picture/printing quality of their pre-1910 cards does not make much sense, all look very alike, especially when you know that colotype printing was a difficult matter and changes in tonal ranges in the same printing were quite normal. And why do I think of a single allied partner in Paris only? I wouldn't be that much surprised to learn one day that K+N supplied cards to both French companies.

What does "liierte Anstalten" really mean? It means co-operation and in most cases also financial involvement. It could stand for business co-operation, for example, K+N distributed something for LL or Neurdin and vice



**KNACKSTEDT & NÄTHER - HAMBURG**

**PART 3**

versa. But I know of nothing suitable. Well, all I can think of is that K+N printed cards for LL and/or Neurdin, was paid directly or received some company shares in return. It seems that only little is known on the LL company history. Here is something I discovered in "Papier-Zeitung", issue 31 (April 18, 1907):

*Lévy fils et Cie, a limited partnership on shares, Paris, 44 rue Letellier, set up a printing firm under the name of "L'Imprimerie Nouvelle Photographique" with a capital of 1,050,00 Francs.*

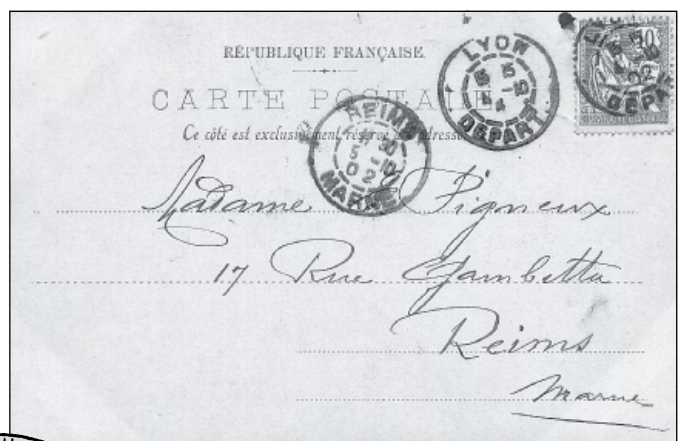
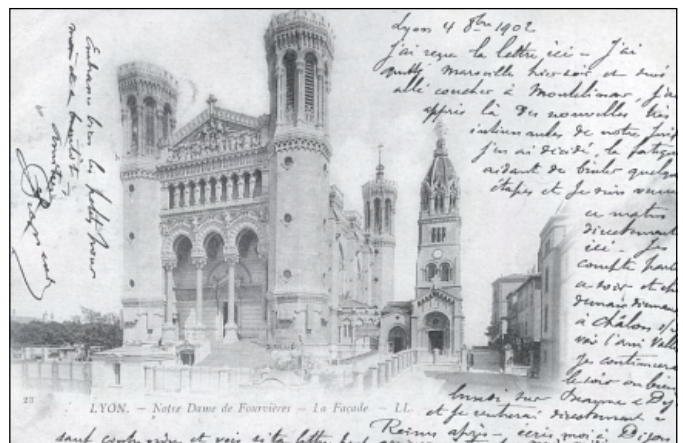
So, LL established a new own big printing firm with quite a impressive business capital for that time. What was before that date? Who were the share-holders of Lévy fils et Cie?

A really interesting find comes from Dutch collector Henk Voskuilen. A LL card (no. 23) from Lyon (*Notre Dame de Fourvières - La Façade*) which has a typical K+N address side layout (see ills please). Address side layout = types/fonts used for imprints, number, length and exact position of writing lines on card, type of dotted lines (not alike). All this is identical with early undivided K+N printed cards. Another interesting matter is the card number found on picture side. The small '23' is "dancing" = not put exactly before caption but in some distance and not holding line. Another peculiarity found on many early K+N printings - BUT also found on many early Neurdin cards. Guess K+N printed for both firms, maybe not at the same time. Research continues!

**K+N's 'allied' Partners: New York**

You have noted my simple survey at bottom of the page and know who is meant: **The Rotograph Co., N.Y. City**. This is not really a surprise, other researchers have already identified K+N as one of the suppliers of Rotograph years ago. Take a number of K+N printed cards and compare these with Rotograph issues. It needs no expert to recognize the identical make. The rise and fall of both companies is closely connected as I know now. Does anybody really know how many cards Rotograph put on the market??

From time to time I check the internet and search for any information available. I found some on Rotograph, however little on their company history. General notes from reference works as Dorothy Ryan's "Picture Postcards in the United States" give the information that Rotograph cards were printed in the Bronx, Germany, England and France. And that Rotograph Co. purchased "National Art Views Co." in 1904. Of course the major interest of collectors and researcher is to compile a catalogue of the great number of Rotograph views, topo as well as topic. (cont')



**Lierte Anstalten: Paris, New York, Wien**

**Allied business partners: Paris, New York, Vienna**

**PARIS:**

**LL** (Léon & Lévy)  
and/or  
**Neurdin** (ND Phot.)



**THE ROTOGRAPH CO. N.Y. CITY**



**WIEN / VIENNA:**







### K+N's 'allied' Partners: New York

To my great surprise and joy there is new US Rotograph site around (<http://rotograph.org>). The people who compiled it present some very interesting finds and facts. Rotograph Co. had a branch in Chicago – approx. 60,000 cards were published, subjects ranged from scenic views of cities and towns to real photo portraits, to stylized greetings, to art reproductions and comics.

I nearly fell off my chair when I saw the letterhead of Rotograph Co. that a observant US collector has found. It dates from 1904 or later because the National Art Views Co. is mentioned. President of **The Rotograph Company** was **Arthur Schwarz**, Vice-President was **Ludwig Knackstedt**, Treasurer and General Manager was a **Frederick Schang**. The latter is unknown to me, Arthur Schwarz however is one of the most enigmatic personalities in the "real photo" postcard world. With reference to the excellent research work of *Andrew Cronshaw* ("Four million postcards a months!" – A history of the Rotary Photographic Co. Ltd., part 1 publ. in 'Picture Postcard Monthly' April 1997) we know that Arthur Schwarz had established the Rotograph Company in New York for the automatic printing of photographs in 1892. This early date had always puzzled me and I was unsure whether the early Rotograph Co. was identical with the later postcard publisher Rotograph. Schwarz founded the **Neue Photographische Gesellschaft (NPG)** in Berlin-Steglitz on July 4, 1894. NPG became the world biggest firm of continuous photographic printing, employing up to 800 workers. **Rotary Co. Ltd.** in England was a German offshoot of NPG formed in March 1898. NPG had also a branch in France: **Societe Industrielle de Photographie** and so on.

Arthur Schwarz and our Wilhelm Georg Ludwig (called Louis) Knackstedt were business partners not only in New York. It seems that they had one thing in common: global thinking in business matters. For some years NPG has a branch or bureau in Hamburg. I guess this was K+N. The mention of NPG Hamburg is not found in post-1910 years.

The Rotograph letterhead lists also Berlin - London - Paris - Hamburg. Could be understood as Rotograph Co. branches, but are more connected with the president (NPG Berlin + London) and vice-president (K+N Hamburg + Paris). NPG and K+N are in my opinion the two investors behind Rotograph. Again we find a 'Paris' connection. A minor chance that NPG's French branch is meant, but it was not found directly in Paris. A find in an junk box with French cards is interesting (see ill at top of page 29 please). LL published huge postcard series of art reproductions covering French, Belgium, Dutch and Spanish museums. All are printed by collotype, mostly sepia duotone on bright yellow card. All these cards are in my file "possibly printed by K+N for LL". Then by surprise I came across two cards showing paintings from "Musée du Louvre", cards no. 222 + 287, with LL imprinted on picture side (bi-lingual caption) and "**The Rotograph Company, N.Y. City (France)**" imprint on address side. Plus "Post Card" and "This side for the Address". Undivided back. Rotograph Co. – LL – K+N?



"*Sunset on the coast*" could be a possible caption for this unusual size (155 x67 mm) "postcard" printed by K+N (duotone "Luxusdruck") for Rotograph Co. No number/series imprint but 'Printed Matter' instead 'Postcard'. Without message (address allowed) the sender had to pay low printed matter rate, with personal message letter rate had to be paid. P/u Oct. 1908.

**POST CARD**  
**POST CARDS FROM YOUR OWN PHOTOGRAPHS.**

Style G.—Machine Colored.

MINIMUM QUANTITY: Three Thousand of any one subject.  
 PRICE: 3,000 of any one subject, \$9.00 per thousand.  
 5,000 " " 7.00 "

DELIVERY: 3 to 5 months from receipt of the order.

PHOTOGRAPHS: We require good sharp photographs, size being optional. We prefer 5x7 or 6½x8½.

COLOR SCHEME: It is very necessary when ordering color d cards to give the color scheme.

TITLES: Special titles or names should be typewritten or written very carefully to avoid mistakes. Be careful to write plainly, full instructions with each order.

THESE PRICES APPLY ONLY IF CUSTOMER FURNISHES PHOTOS.

THE ROTOGRAPH CO. 684 Broadway, New York.

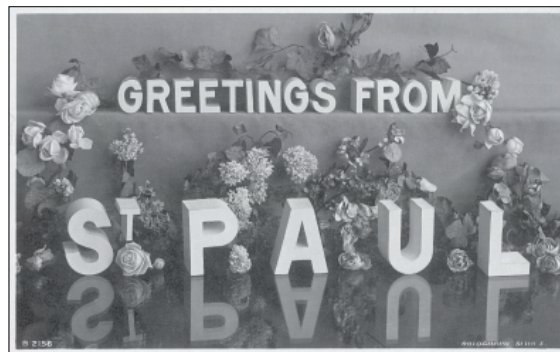
This side for the Address.

The Rotograph Co., N. Y. City, (Germany)

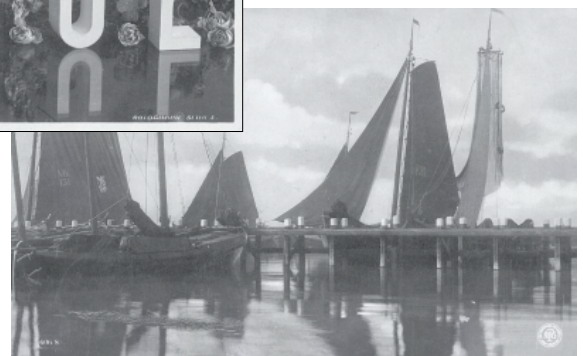
Carl Becker

Place Stamp Here  
 Domestic One cent  
 Foreign Two cents

This advertising imprint is found on reverse of Rotograph card G series, no. 7682 (Soldiers & Sailors Monument, Hackley Park, Muskegon, Mich.). Rotograph copyright 1905. 3000 machine coloured cards cost US \$27; 5000 cards at \$7 per 1000 = \$35. The mention of the long delivery time of 3 to 5 months from receipt of the order (!) alone would identify K+N as printer of this card. K+N had great problems filling orders in time during 1905-07, although the number of presses for production grew. Special thanks go to *Bob Conrich* who discovered this card. *Howard Woody* shows a similar card in his article "International Postcards" (in 'Delivering Views', Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington 1998). Also Style G but now described as *Machine Coloured, Chromo*. Same rates but slightly lower offer for reprints. His sample shows a divided back = 1907 or later. K+N printed the photo by collotype process and added five to six overlay litho colours. Good quality but of course not that good as their "Chromo-Lichtdruck".



**Dutch motif** – in deep blue colours! High glossy bromide photo card, this process was named "Delft". Printed by NPG, Berlin. Rotograph ser. 606/8. Have also card no. 9, looks similar. P/u August 1909 in USA. *All Rotograph cards supplied by Bob Conrich!*



**Greetings from St. Paul** – very good quality high glossy "photo card" from Rotograph series 'S' (?), card reads no. B 2156. Imprint: "This is a Real Photograph on bromide paper". Not p/u, divided back, post-1907 origin.



## The Rotograph Co. & K + N: Two firms heading into decline

I don't know the exact year when Knackstedt & Näther got involved in Rotograph Co. And as said before, K+N were NOT Rotograph's only post card supplier. Stengel & Co., Dresden, delivered their chromolitho gallery series, might have also printed some of the view cards. Then we have NPG who supplied cards as well as photographic paper and supplies. The mention of London I interpret to be Rotary Ltd. And there is at least one more (unidentified) printer from Germany involved in the production of Rotograph cards. Not to forget US printer(s). Nevertheless K+N had tied up quite some capital in New York. The Rotograph Co. also represented Knackstedt + Näther, Hamburg, on the US market for some years.

The following comes all from notes and business columns found in "Papier-Zeitung". A open letter from K+N to the public/press why they ran into financial difficulties, business reports of NPG AG (= Aktiengesellschaft = joint-stock company) who were forced by law to publish regular business reports. The latter is a real gift to researchers indeed!

For better understanding: K+N had TWO printing facilities in Hamburg. The early chromolitho printer H.A.J. Schultz & Co. belonged to the K+N business. (See separate notes on next page please).

Ludwig Knackstedt formed a limited company (GmbH) of his Knackstedt & Näther business together with H.A.J. Schultz & Co. in March 1909. **Knackstedt & Näther GmbH**, 800,000 Marks company's capital. Managing directors were **Ludwig Knackstedt** and **Leopold Wernthal**. I am very sure that the clever businessman Ludwig did know at that date already that K+N was in difficulties. He surely did know of the coming heavy US protective tariff increase. The possible loss of the (enormous!!) company's capital would be the minor misfortune. K+N's "lierte" / closely connected business partners in Paris, New York and Vienna, are last mentioned in adverts in early 1909.

**K+N employed 450 people, had 50 flatbed presses and 80 other machines for postcard production ONLY in 1909.** Knackstedt & Näther was at that time one of the biggest postcard printers in Germany – but the ppc business and profit margins faded away.

**May 2, 1910: K+N's insolvency.** In an open letter addressed to all customers and the trade press, K+N managers tried to explain the reasons. K+N had a bigger share in a NY postcard publishing company (Rotograph) for a number of years. During the ppc boom years before 1907, the business had 'exploded', so that K+N was forced to almost double their printing capacity. The economic crisis of 1907 (?) turned the NY company needy but instead of giving up the share, K+N decided to support Rotograph financially (cards on credit?). This turned out to be a big mistake. Attempts to find printing orders from other sides to compensate lacking US orders failed however. Because of the new strict US protective tariff, numerous printing presses in Germany stood still. The competition severe, prices for picture postcard printing were ruined and K+N had begun to lose money every day.

Furthermore the N.Y. engagement required additional capital in the very near future because it hadn't been possible to liquidate Rotograph Co. in time. This led to drastic lack of company capital at K+N which could not be compensated = insolvency. The business continued, all orders were filled and Ludwig Knackstedt tried to build up a follow-up company (= *Knackstedt & Co*, first advert of this firm appeared already on June 12, 1910!).

K+N had premises at Eppendorfer Landstr. 102-104 (not the former house no. 190!), Wagnerstr. 70 (former H.A.J. Schultz & Co. address and new home of Knackstedt & Co.) and Sierichstr. 160 (no idea what was found here). The first meeting of creditors took place on June 1, 1910. Mr. Hamel, the receiver, placed several large display advertisements in "Papier-Zeitung" offering Eppendorfer Str. + Wagnerstr. premises and part of the machinery, huge stocks of postcards and negatives/plates.

K+N's debts amounted to over 800,000 Marks. Surprisingly almost all creditors received their money back. The part of K+N needed for the production of postcards, the premises at Wagnerstr. 70 and the stock of 80,000 (glas) negatives (mostly German views) was bought by Ludwig Knackstedt to form his new printing company. L. Knackstedt must have been a wealthy man and/or had several bank directors in his family.

### More bad news from Rotograph Co.

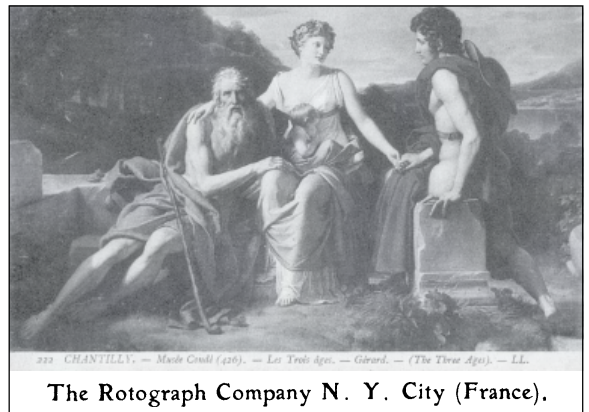
*NPG business report June 1909:* The actual unfavourable market conditions make it necessary to save on business expenses. A number of the employees to be laid off, part of the business space rented, the complete actual stock sold off. The Rotograph Co. business year 1908 ended May 31 and produced considerable losses. The former general manager was fired in Spring 1909. A thorough reorganization has begun including a simplification of the complete organization.

*NPG general business report for 1909 (published May 1910).* The still disadvantageous US market conditions as well as continuing problems with the staff led to losses. NPG hopes to get rid of all their Rotograph shares in 1910. Outstanding claims of 75,000 Marks for previously delivered goods to Rotograph are written off completely.

*And finally a note from May 1907* (when times were happier): Rotograph has presented a dividend of 5% to share-holders for the business year 1905-06. However, Rotograph Co. needs more capital for expansion. NPG's share amounted to US \$14.300.

### K+N's 'allied' Partners: **Vienna**

**Photobrom GmbH** (Neubaugasse 64/66, Vienna VII) was officially formed (Ltd.) in June 1907. Company capital 300,000 crowns (in 1910) of which the Neue Photographische Gesellschaft (NPG), Berlin held shares of 80,000 crowns. *Yes, it is NPG together with K+N again!* The major purpose of Photobrom was to handle collotype printing orders for



The Rotograph Company N. Y. City (France).

K+N and to distribute photographic articles of NPG in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Photobrom represented NPG and K+N in their country alone. Managers were **Alois, Rudolf** and **Arnold Pick**. Noticed the family name 'Pick' in printing trade circles several times before, in Munich as well as in Prague.

I have several samples of K+N printed collotype cards with Photobrom logo on and also one or two NPG cards with the name imprinted. Business went on at Vienna satisfactorily. No "bad news" found. Interesting is that the successor to K+N, Knackstedt & Co., continued to supply cards to Photobrom. Have a series of cards dating from WW1 published by Photobrom and copper gravure printed by K. & Co., Hamburg. I hope TPA readers in Austria can provide some more information on the Photobrom Ltd. history in the future.

Before we continue with Schultz & Co, some data and a few figures that might give you an idea of K+N's collotype printing capacity in **Sept. 1907:**

Knackstedt & Näther employed about 400 workers and had 40 flatbed printing presses of which 19 were designed for collotype printing. Many of their collotype presses were of big format and were capable to print 50 postcards per sheet. Others were "standard size" for 36 cards/sheet. Experienced printers managed to print 500 sheets per day on a collotype press, which is slow and not easy to handle, especially large format. *Juggling with figures:* Let's say all presses were running, a normal working day in pre-1908 years, and calculate only 36 card format: 36 cards each on 19 presses = 684 x 500 sheets per day = 342,000 single cards per day in monochrom. Six days working week: 342,000 x 6 = 2,052,000 cards a week (in theory). I calculated low, did not consider the bigger format, did also not consider that there was lots of working overtime at K+N. Most of K+N's card are coloured however and need 5-6 overlay colours = extra time. Also not everything works out well. But I forget to tell that K+N **did not** only print collotype but also many cards by halftone process. So, a rough estimate of 1,5 - 2 million cards per week was possible under regular conditions, monochrome and full-colour cards. K+N needed 100-120 (railway) wagons card-board for postcard production per year. This figure is of little use to me but sounds good in promotional brochures. In either way, K+N was a international postcard printer in a big way for several years.





zum Ankleben der Freimarke.

## H. A. J. SCHULTZ, HAMBURG

Chromo-Lithographische Kunstanstalt.

Specialitäten:	Specialités:	Specialities:
Plakate, Ansichtspostkarten, Reclamekarten und Taschenkalender für grossartigste Geschäfts-Empfehlung. Etiquetten jeder Branche etc. von der einfachsten bis zur feinsten Ausführung bei billigsten Preisen.	Confection d'affiches, de cartes postales illustrées, de cartes de réclame et d'almanacs de poche pour recommandation, d'étiquettes en tout genre, etc. de l'exécution la plus simple jusqu'à la plus fine.	Execution of Posters, post-cards with views, advertising cards and pocket-almanacs for recommendation, of labels for all business, and the like from the simplest to the highest and finest finish at the lowest prices.
PRIX TRÈS-MODÉRÉS.		

**Lithographie Art-Institute H. A. J. Schultz Hamburg.**

One of many "Bismarck" cards, excellent chromolitho printing. Otto von Bismarck, "loyal servant to the Kaiser Wilhelm I" reads an imprint, died on July 30, 1898. Guess this card was published in 1899-1900 times. "We Germans fear god and nothing else in the world". Wow!

Advertising imprint of H.A.J. Schultz, Hamburg, chromolitho printers on original address side. Message in German, French and English shows the international orientation of the Schultz printing business. The name shows no "& Co.", guess the imprint dates from 1901-03.

**H.A.J. Schultz & Co. - Hamburg**

was a typical German chromolitho printer, who produced many of the today wanted "Gruss aus.." type of cards. Often printed in 10-12 and up to 16 colours, detailed, carefully arranged, the work of highly skilled lithographers and pressmen. Schultz is sometimes mentioned in literature as printer of high-quality postcards for customers in Germany and abroad (Hamburg harbour: the door to the world). No data available how big the business was, medium-sized I guess.

Klimsch directory of 1898 informs that the Schultz printing business was set up in 1893, and found at Wilhelmstr. 26/27. Specialized in (chromo)litho work and poster printing. 1903 edition of the publishing trade addressbook lists a "Heinrich Schultz", chromolitho printing institute and publisher (establ 1893), at a different street address: Am Weiher 4.

H.A.J. Schultz moved into a new building at Wagnerstr. 70 some time after 1903 and I believe that the "& Co." was also added then. Unfortunately I have misplaced my notes with page numbers on where to find more business data in "Papier-Zeitung". No time for search – comes next issue. **L. Knackstedt was a shareholder** of H.A.J. Schultz & Co. – for how long is not yet known. Then Schultz printing business became insolvent as so many other German chromolitho (only) printers between 1905-08. Knackstedt bought the company and continued as **H.A.J. Schulz & Co. Nachf.** (= successor).

Schulz & Co. had a printing process trade name registered on May 6, 1907 (application on Jan. 19, 1907). It was "Niki-Polychrom" and I have no idea what this was or how it looked like, but saw the name mentioned later in K+N adverts.

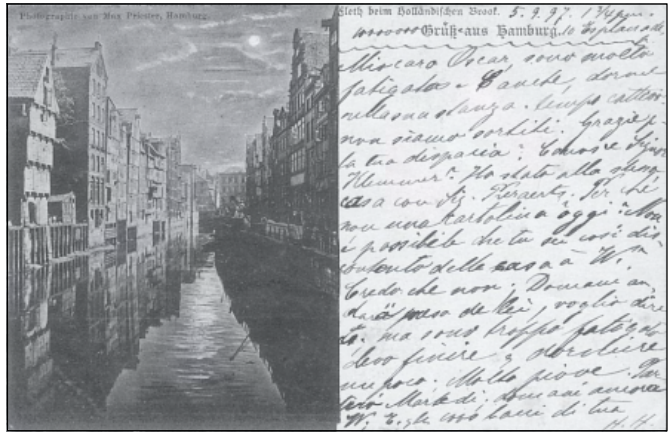
The distinctive "Postcard" imprint on all known German H.A.J. Schultz cards helps with identification. In most cases the full name is imprinted however. (ill. in original size)  
 → Berlin-Wilmersdorf, **Restaurant Otto Hermann**, Grunewald. Mailed by *Willy* (who spilled some beer or wine across the card) on April 1, 1904. Earliest H.A.J. Schulz & Co. printed card I know of.



Kimmelstiel & Co, Hamburg, published this joke card. "The final picture postcard . . . not by any means!!" Printed by Schultz. Postally used in July 1901. (From the collection of Henry Toms)



← The earliest postally used K+N card: **Sept. 5, 1897**, comes from the collection of Henry Toms. Caption: *Gruss aus Hamburg. Fleth beim holländischen Brook*. Photo by Max Priester, Hamburg. K+N's imprint almost cut off entirely. Again one of these "Moonlight cards".



**K+N company name continues to exist!**

Int'l Exhibition of the Book Industry and Graphic Arts, Leipzig 1914, official catalogue, exhibitor group VII, no. 258 (photography). A. Hoffmann, from Cuxhaven (near Hamburg) uses the original name together with "Nachf." = successor. What a surprise! Name rights bought? Former employee?

**258 KNACKSTEDT @ NATHER NACHF.**, Inh. A. Hoffmann, Cuxhaven. Porträts, Freilichtaufnahmen u. Landschaften in modernen Druckverfahren.