

Overview of our Celluloid Card Collection

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Purpose:

We have investigated the details of our celluloid card collection and created a database to enable various searches.

We would like to report on the characteristics of our collection that have become apparent in the process of our investigation.

1. Overview of our collection:

(1) As shown in Table 1, there is a total of 516 cards, of which about 60% are in French.

Table 1 : Number of cards by language

Language of Cards	Number	%
French	322	62
English	140	27
Other language	39	8
Picture only (no language)	15	3
Total	516	

(2) Card type and purpose of use:

As shown in Table 2-1 and Figures 1 to 3, cards can be classified into three types: postcards, simple cards and composite cards.

The main uses of the cards are shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-1 Type of Cards

Type	I: Postcard	II: Simple Card	III: Composite Card	Total
All cards	265	118	133	516
Inclu. French ones	205	109	8	322
Inclu. English ones	39	5	96	140
Inclu. others	21	4	29	54

Table2-2 Main uses of the Cards

Type I French postcards	New Year's celebration, celebration of first name saint's day
Type II French simple cards	first communion, words of prayer
Type III English composite cards	Christmas/New Year celebration, birthday celebration

Figure 1

Type I: French postcard, celebration of first name saint's day (Card No.16)
 First name is Marie and the holiday of Mother Marie is August 15th.
 Design side and address/message side are shown. Posted with a stamp of 10 centimes (10/100 franc)
 This is a handwritten card and the coloring on the celluloid card never fades as of today.



Bonne Fête (Have a nice holiday)

(Sender) Leon Petit

Message :

18 Août 1907. Vœux de Bonne Fête Bonne Santé
 (August 18, 1907. Happy holiday and wishes for good health)

(Destination)) Madame M. Rouzeliy 40 Rue des
 Entrepreneurs Paris

Figure 2




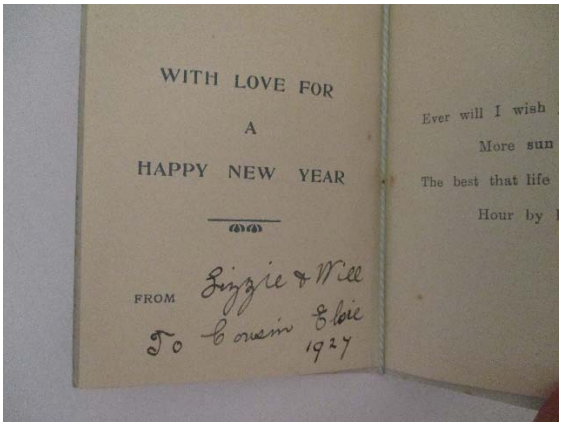
<p>Type II: French “simple card”, first communion The host, which represents the body of Christ (with a cross in a circle), the chalice, which represents the blood of Christ, and the flowers, symbolize the First Holy Communion. The design has been changed from the traditional one (Card No. 207) to the handwritten type, holding a simple beauty (Card No.15).</p>	
Card No.207	Card No.15
	
<p>26 Mars 1893 Souvenir de 1ère Communion (March 26, 1893, Memory of First Communion)</p>	<p>Souvenir de Première Communion, (the following words are written on the back side: Yvonne Boyer 29 mai 1904 St-André-de-Sangonis) (St-André-de-Sargonis is located in the south of France)</p>

Figure 3

<p>Type III: English “composite cards” Appearance of Card No.477 (decorated with celluloid) and inside message card (paper). The manufacturer’s name is shown on the card : Raphael Truck & Sons Ltd. Produced in UK</p>	
	
<p>Happiness be yours</p>	<p>With Love for a Happy New Year From Lizzie and Will to Cousin Eloie 1927</p>

(3) Period of card use:

The time of card use has been identified by the description on the card, or on the postmark in the case of postcards.

In conclusion, we estimate the period when each type of card was primarily used; shown in Table 3.

Table 3 : Period of card use

Type	Period
Type II French “Simple Card”	Before 1905
type I French Post Card.	Between 1906-1920
Type III English “composite cards”	After 1906

The French postcards in our collection were produced and used during what is called the “Golden Age of Postcards” (the period from 1904 to 1918). It should also be noted that this period was also called the “Belle Epoque” (the period when Paris prospered, from the end of the 19th century to the outbreak of the World War I in 1914).

(4) Area of use:

We have estimated the area of use from the description on the card and the address of the postcard’s sender/recipient.

There were only 11 cards which were related to places out of France and England.

Therefore, we concluded that the main area of use of our collection was the domestic territory of France or England.

Also we observed that French postcards and first communion cards were not just sent to any particular region; rather, to all of France.

2. Conclusion and future task

It was found that

- Our celluloid card collection consists of cards that were made in the late 19th century and early 20th century
- The cards were mainly used in France and England.
- The periods of use and purposes of the use were different, depending of the type of cards.

We also observed that, taking into account celluloid cards’ limited period of use, due to their high flammability, there are few surviving celluloid cards nowadays. Therefore, our collection, with such a large number of celluloid cards, must be very valuable for the further study.

We would like to examine the following points as our future assignments:

- Examination of paintings and typefaces, especially approaches from cultural and art history, with fashion and symbolism in mind.
- Consideration of the usage of the cards from the perspective of life history and religion.
- Consideration of the postal system. The stamps affixed to postcards can determine when they have been used.
- Consideration of the technical history of the celluloid industry with development of manufacturing, processing, and printing technology in mind. Is the reason why France continued using hand-drawn designs while new celluloid cards were being manufactured in England and Germany, because of the backwardness of the celluloid industry in France?
- Approach from the commercial perspective of sales and distribution of the cards.

Celluloid House Yokohama hopes to exchange information with those who are interested in celluloid cards, those who have card collections, and related academic researchers.

End of the message