
That said, it is a fine introduction to the topic.

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Christopher Deakes. *A Postcard History of the Passenger Liner*. Essex, CT: Lyons Press, www.lyonspress.com, 2023. 160 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. UK £25.00, US \$29.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-4930-7761-8. (E-book available.)

Originally published in 2005, and again in 2012, this is an unaltered republication of Christopher Deakes' exploration of the history of passenger liners through the postcards created to advertise and immortalize the ships of the various shipping companies. Heavily illustrated (bordering on overwhelmingly so), this book takes the reader through the developments within the passenger liner mode of travel from the 1880s to 1980s. Evolution of ship design, changes in size, routes, and passenger numbers, the role the ships played in colonization and troop transport during wartime, and the effects of international air transportation are laid out in six short, detail-packed chapters. It is a marvelous use of postcards as a research tool and creates an aesthetically pleasing volume.

The use of postcards as artefacts of the past has picked up significantly since the first publication of this book. They have been employed in the study of institutions, such as asylums, orphanages, and hospitals. Postcards sent between soldiers and their families in the First World War are used to provide insight into war's personal impacts. They have even appeared in research on anthropology and colonialism, urban histories, and West Yorkshire canals. The first picture postcard appeared in 1870, in France. The early cards had a picture on one side, with a boarder for any message the sender might like to include. The reverse side was for the address only. Between 1902 and 1907 various countries passed postal legislation allowing for the address side to be divided in two, with one half for the address and the other for the message. The image on the front then consumed the entire side.

The postcards in this volume are from Deakes' personal collection of cards depicting artists' paintings of ships, destinations, and onboard activity. There are no photographs or hand-painted photograph postcards. Some of the cards were created from company advertising posters or artwork commissioned by the companies, while others were specifically painted for the postcard market. A few were done by individuals who later arranged to have postcards made, with or without the shipping company's involvement.

The postcards largely served as advertisements for the companies and their various routes. Cards were left in accommodations aboard ship, could be a tear-off feature on the ship's menu, and were found in tourist and news agent shops. Some cards were maps of routes, or had the company name in large type, with a ship as a background feature. Postcards were a cheap and easy way to communicate, and collecting them was a major hobby in the early twentieth century, known as deltiology. The collection includes early steamships, which retained sails to assist the steam power or replace it if it failed. Technological innovation is depicted across the sample. Ship size increases, coal-fired ships with three and four funnels give way to larger oil-fueled vessels with just one or twin funnels for exhaust. Pools, gyms, restaurants, and accommodations are all rendered on postcards. Every improvement or innovation provided an opportunity to advertise what one company offered that others did not and attract more customers. More could be said about the impact of the passenger industry on postcards and vice versa.

If the reader is looking for exact representations of what a ship looked like at a particular point in time, this is not the place to look. The artists used their license to paint as they saw. Colors did not always accurately reflect how the ship was painted, and artists often elongated the ships. Some ships were painted once and then, with a change of the name on the card, the image reused for other similarly designed ships in the company's fleet. Deakes relates how one artist painted a passenger ship before it was constructed. The postcard was produced and circulated, but the ship was converted to a troopship while still under construction and was sunk during the First World War. More details appear in the earlier images, but over time take a back seat to a more expressionist take on the ship's size, the allure of sailing, or the destinations.

Art deco paintings appear in the 1930s. The postcards through the 1950s and 1960s had a mixture of styles, with a fair number returning to the realism of earlier cards. Deakes discusses the various artists and printing houses that were involved in the postcard trade. Some well-known artists, such as William Wyllie, Charles E. Turner, and Robert Schmidt-Hamburg, were hired to paint pictures of ships for the shipping companies. These paintings were then printed as posters and postcards, with the artist's name seldom appearing on either. Many artists have largely disappeared from art history. Thus, Deakes does a great service by bringing their names forward and giving the reader a glimpse of their work. The final chapter consists of a list of artists with brief bios and provides an excellent resource to begin further research. The bibliography provides sources on art history and deltiology, although it is now somewhat dated.

The messages on the postcards capture a moment in the sender's life. Deakes gives examples of the sorrow at departure, the excitement of coming home, and the call of duty for the colonial administrator and the soldier. Apparently, army censors did not delete words from postcards, even when they revealed unit location or destination. Many cards featured passengers' experiences aboard ship. We read of dancing and games, even shipboard romance, but also the complaints of boring activities, poor food, and for one person of a sea too smooth (they wanted more waves). Those travelling from northern Europe to tropical areas found the heat to be oppressive. One writer noted, "I am nearly a grease spot" (p. 17). Other tropical travelers griped about having to sleep on deck or their profuse sweating. This section reveals the worth of postcards in digging into people's experience aboard ship.

Five hundred and twenty-six images fill this book; a few appear in each chapter, while 500 are arranged over 125 pages in sets of four to a page. The images in the first twenty-five pages illustrate the surrounding textual content. For each card image in the later groupings of four, the name of the ship, the company, and artist (if known) are listed, and a crisp description is provided of the key elements or unique aspects of the card.

The descriptions include information about the ships, such as, "The liner (*Infanta Isabel de Borbon*) and her sister-ship *Reina Victoria Eugenia* were famous Spanish steamers, much larger than any previous vessels" (p. 91). In one description, the public dislike of the card is noted. Deakes draws the reader's attention to detail such as companies that did not put the ship's name on the image, the card's role in the effort to secure immigrants as passengers which was a "big business in the first decades of the century" (p. 71), and impact of the collapse of empire long routes.

This is a book that depends on the images to convey much of the story. It certainly underlines the research potential of postcard images of ships, ports, sailors, and passengers. It will appeal to those interested in the history of passenger liners, maritime art and artists, the role of advertising in passenger shipping, and maritime postcard collecting. Christopher Deakes has curated a dynamic collection of postcards that provide an interesting perspective on the passenger liner industry. The republication of this book brings this fine work to a new audience, which is a very good thing.

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