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- SCRAP-PICTURES • SCRAP-STICKER • GIFT-TAGS • TABLE-DECORATION •
- BOOKMARKS • GREETING CARDS • GOLDEN DRESDNER ORNAMENTS / TRIMS •
- DECOUPAGE SETS • PUZZLES • CHRISTMAS-TREE-DECORATION • ADVENTS-CALENDAR •

The History of Scrap-Pictures Production

began in the mid-19th century with the invention of chromolithography, which allowed the mass printing of pictures. Production was further enhanced in 1860 when, for the first time, the manufacturer Hagelberg-Berlin, printed, embossed and punched out the first sheet of several scrap pictures. This led to the introduction of the present-day concept of "bridges", on which the manufacturer's "mark" and sheet number were printed out. (Pieske, Luxuspapiere 190).

Up until the 1900s, the stronghold of scrap-picture production was in Berlin. However, similar companies existed in other German cities, as well as in England, Holland, France, Austria, Hungary, the former Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and in the U.S.A. Rarely were they exclusive producers of scrap pictures. Most produced a variety of articles such as greeting, cigarette and postcards as well as labels. Today, worldwide, Ernst Freihoff is the sole producer devoted exclusively to the age-old tradition of scrap pictures. Up to this day, much of the production of the printed sheets is still done by hand, and the whole procedure starts with the manufacturing of the necessary tools.



From the very beginning, scrap pictures have always been used as items of both collecting and swapping. In Germany, those enhanced with glitter are classed as more valuable. They have also been used as decoration on jewelry boxes and furniture, in Christmas letters and cards from godparents, as paper embroidery, calling cards, "Schultüten" (a large cone made of decorated cardboard, filled with goodies, given to children on the first day of school in Germany), poetry albums, gingerbread and Christmas tree dressings, as well as in "Wundertüten" (a bag of knick-knacks including a surprise gift) and party crackers. Nowadays, scrap pictures are also used in the production of decoupage.



Many regions of Germany have their own local name for scrap pictures, such as "Reliefs, Oblaten, Alumbilder, Rosenbilder, Lackbilder, Stammbuchbilder, Kleeblätter, Matritzen" or "Vielliebchen". However, even in some other countries scrap pictures are well-known under several names, i.e.: in France "feuilles en échantillons" or "images et chromos", in Scandinavia "Glansbilleder" or "Bokmärken", in the Benelux countries as "Poesie Plaatjes", in eastern Europe as "Kiiltokuvia" and in the English-speaking world as "scrap pictures" or "die-cuts".

And ultimately, let's hope that the continued appeal of timeless values and nostalgia of bygone days will keep the tradition of scrap pictures alive for a long, long time to come.

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