

The Photographer Project

CHARLES WEIDNER
Photographer and Postcard Publisher

FRANK STERNAD



San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club
www.postcard.org

PREFACE

Charles Weidner, one of the outstanding San Francisco postcard photographers and publishers, is the latest (and possibly the final) Northern California craftsman to be examined in detail by the San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club. E. H. Mitchell, Frank Patterson, Zan Stark... how many have we covered? We do not recall offhand, but it is easy to find the information on any or all by searching on the home page of www.postcard.org. Enter the name of your favorite local photographer/publisher, and links to any information we have published will appear. Didn't find what you are looking for? Well, it might be up to you to undertake the research and the preparation for posting it on the www.

Until this research was undertaken, Weidner was little more than a name on countless postcards collected for their views of San Francisco before and after the earthquake at 5:12 AM, April 18, 1906. The city changed dramatically and eternally after those few seconds, and clues about the vanished city are still waiting to be discovered on historic postcards. Look closely! Weidner was a favored postcard publisher of several local collectors, notably Liselotte Erlanger Glozer in past years, and continuing to the present, David Parry. Their discoveries and impressions contributed to the Weidner story.

Those who were present at the last club meeting that Lilo attended remember that we had been discussing Weidner when someone asked, "Tell us, Liselotte, is it weedner or widener?" "Neither," she said with her musical, Teutonic accent, "It's *viide-nuhr*."

The SFBAPCC has been extremely fortunate in having a member researcher who is curious, disciplined, and precise and who refuses to take "*Who knows?*" or "*No idea*" for an answer. Frank Sternad has spent many months—countless hours—delving in hardbound books, and since the early 2000s, on legitimate, online, historical websites. There is no way that our enjoyment at reading Frank's writings can equal his own satisfaction. His industry is its own reward. However, our verbal or written expressions of appreciation can only please him. Let me be the first: Thanks Frank!

Another club member who has worked diligently to make all of the club publications accessible to the online world is Webmaster Jack Daley. Since 2003, all issues of the club newsletter, all of our published research projects, and every item of club news have found their way to the worldwide audience along with countless bytes of postcard knowledge. Join me, please: Thanks Jack!

As club Editor for three decades, I had a hand in every publication, from researching to writing. When I look at postcard.org, my head throbs with amazement and, yes, great satisfaction. Picture postcards are no longer a part of everyday lives, but they are invaluable historical artifacts. Their usefulness... their mysteries... their revelations will continue to unfurl like leaves on the Tree of Knowledge.

—LEW BAER, EDITOR (RET.)

Charles Weidner—Photographer and Postcard Publisher

by FRANK STERNAD

The man we know as Charles Weidner established his reputation as a leading San Francisco photographer by creating dramatic images of Chinatown. His “occupational types” paralleled ethnographic portraits taken in Africa and Asia, commonly used to illustrate books and popular magazines. Weidner’s picture “The Cobbler,” for example, was used as frontispiece for the May 1900 inaugural issue of *Camera Craft*, a new photographic journal published on Sutter Street in San Francisco. A hit with subscribers, the photo was reprinted again and again to satisfy demand.

Anthony W. Lee in his 2001 book, *Picturing Chinatown: Art and Orientalism in San Francisco*, provides some insight into the success of Weidner’s compositional style. Regarding the Chinese shoemaker, he points out that although the subject was brought out to the street, studio conventions such as background, props and lighting are also evident:

The studio backdrop has been reinterpreted as a flat doorway. The table that Bret Harte once complained of as the ubiquitous prop has been taken outdoors, now a simple wooden box, complete with small book as domestic adornment. Victorian bric-a-brac has been translated into the boots and slippers of the cobbler’s trade. The heavy furniture and thick paneling of the studio décor are now the massive door jamb and metal railing of a storefront.

Lee was equally impressed with Weidner’s “Chi-

nese Fortune Teller” and “A Morning Smoke,” which he described as displaying elements imported from the language of genre painting. Weidner registered copyrights for the photographs in early 1900 and two years later reproduced them in a format that was skyrocketing in popularity—picture postcards.

Born on July 22, 1867, the future photographer and publisher was baptized Karl Weidner at his birthplace, Jasgtheim in the Kingdom of Württemberg, part of present day Germany. He remained “Karl” to his family and friends the rest of his life. At age 21 Weidner left his homeland to experience the American adventure. He sailed from Bremen to New York in November 1888, then traveled to the great Southwest. A kinsman, Friedrich Weidner (1811-78), had arrived at Galveston, Texas in 1854, and seven years later settled on a ranch in the New Braunfels area. By the late 1880s his son Carl Thomas Weidner (1852-1928) was managing the family farm near Spring Branch in Comal County. It was in this fertile district south of the Guadalupe River that immigrant farmer Karl Weidner remained for a year or two. But visions of



“THE COBBLER” WAS ONE OF CHARLES WEIDNER’S EARLY “ETHNOGRAPHIC” PORTRAITS TAKEN IN SAN FRANCISCO’S CHINATOWN. IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE MAY 1900 ISSUE OF *CAMERA CRAFT*.

enjoying an agrarian life alongside his American relatives gradually dissipated, and he fled rural Texas for Northern California. His mother’s brother, Michael Popp, operated the Mountain Brewery in Placerville, and young Weidner worked for his uncle long enough to secure employment as a “maltster” when he finally settled in San Francisco in 1891. But at some juncture, perhaps even before he arrived



CHINESE COBBLER, CHINATOWN. MULTICOLOR LITHO POSTCARD IMAGE BASED ON WEIDNER'S PHOTO COPYRIGHT APRIL 24, 1900. [G&W 32]



"CHINESE FORTUNE TELLER." PHOTO COPYRIGHT REGISTERED MARCH 26, 1900 BY CHARLES WEIDNER.



CHINESE FORTUNE TELLER, CHINATOWN. POSTCARD IMAGE BASED ON WEIDNER'S PHOTO. [G&W 33]

in California, he discovered his lifelong passion—photography. Karl soon became a member of the California Camera Club, participating in excursions to Napa Valley, Sonoma County's sulfurous Geysers, and further north to Ukiah where he became fascinated with cultural traditions of Native American families working in local hop fields. Colleagues admired his uncommon skill with a camera and enjoyed slide programs he presented to the Concordia Yuenglings Verein (German-American equivalent to the YMCA) where they fondly called him "Professor Charles." Weidner became a naturalized U.S. citizen in January 1894.

In June 1897, Charles married 26-year-old Marie Margaretha Horstmann whose father, a San Francisco saloon owner, had sailed from Hanover more than forty years earlier to strike it rich in the California Gold Rush. Charles and Marie's first son, Arthur, was born in June 1898, daughter Lillian in 1901, and another son, Edwin, in 1905. As soon as he became a married man, Weidner set up shop as a commercial photographer at 121 Post Street. A couple of years later, he moved closer to Market Street at 36 Geary.

When the Commercial Pacific Cable Co. was commis-

WEIDNER CHARLES
 copying, printing, developing, bromide
 enlarging, lantern slides, retouching, kodak
 work, California views and commercial
 photographer, 36 Geary (Old No. 22½)
 room 35, tel. Red 3734, r. 209 Dorland, tel.
 Capp 1165

1901 CITY DIRECTORY AD FOR CHARLES WEIDNER'S COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY BUSINESS AT 36 GEARY STREET.

sioned to lay trans-oceanic telegraph cable between San Francisco and Hawaii in December 1902, the *San Francisco Examiner* convinced Weidner to sail to Honolulu. His photos of the historic event also appeared in *Leslie's Weekly* and *Sunset Magazine*.

First Postcards

In early 1902 Charles partnered with William Goeggel (1852–1933) to produce his first series of picture postcards. Like Weidner, Goeggel emigrated from a district near Stuttgart, the historic capital of Württemberg. A jeweler and watchmaker by trade, Goeggel arrived in New York in 1871, railroded west to settle in the young city of Reno, Nevada in 1877, then to Woodland, California by



WEIDNER'S 1902 PHOTO TAKEN ABOARD SS SILVERTOWN WHILE LAYING THE FIRST SECTION OF THE TRANS-PACIFIC TELEGRAPH CABLE. [LESLIE'S WEEKLY, JANUARY 1, 1903]



WEIDNER POSED THIS MAN SMOKING A PIPE, AND COPYRIGHTED THE PHOTOGRAPH MARCH 26, 1900 AS "A MORNING SMOKE."



HITTING THE PIPE IN CHINATOWN. WHEN THE "MORNING SMOKE" IMAGE WAS PUBLISHED AS A POSTCARD, TOURIST FASCINATION WITH CHINESE OPIUM SMOKING PROMPTED A NEW CAPTION. [CW 140]

in a greenish-black ink and embossed to simulate bas-relief sculpture. The earliest known postmark on these monochrome cards is December 6, 1902.

In addition to the embossed cards (image numbers range from 19 to 82), the G&W imprint is found on un-embossed vignettes in plain black ink, and on multi-color cards. The color cards appeared on the San Francisco market at the same time as the vignettes, with November 18, 1902 the earliest known postmark. The only directory listing for the partnership appeared in 1903: "Goeggel & Weidner, publishers of Souvenir Post Cards, 36 Geary." Checking the fine print on postcards published by G&W reveals they were manufactured in Germany, but more about that later. It is also noteworthy that some of the vignette images were adapted for use on multi-color cards.

1886. He moved to San Francisco in 1898. William Goegel appears to have provided funding for the postcard enterprise but was not actively involved in photography, production and distribution. The firm of Goeggel & Weidner (G&W) registered copyright for 24 of Weidner's "California views" in June 1902, and when the photos were published as postcards a few months later, the partnership name was clearly printed in the margin of each card.



The first G&W postcards were scenic vignettes, lithographed



19 Copyright Goeggel & Weidner, Publishers, San Francisco

CLIFF HOUSE. ONE OF WEIDNER'S EARLIEST PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CLASSIC 1896 RESORT. COPYRIGHT REGISTERED JUNE 2, 1902. [G&W 19, EMBOSSED]



SUNDAY AFTERNOON G. G. PARK. THIS POSTCARD WAS MAILED FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO GERMANY DECEMBER 6, 1902. [G&W 26, EMBOSSED]



G&W IMAGE #19 AS A LANTERN SLIDE FABRICATED BY CHARLES BESELER CO. NEW YORK.



FERRY BUILDING-SAN FRANCISCO. [G&W 23, EMBOSSED]



MUSEUM, G. G. PARK. THE FINE ARTS BUILDING AT THE 1894 CALIFORNIA MIDWINTER INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION BECAME THE FIRST M.H. DE YOUNG MEMORIAL MUSEUM. [CW 20, EMBOSSED]



OPIUM FIEND, CHINATOWN - SAN FRANCISCO. THIS INTIMATE PICTURE OF A ONE-ARMED MAN IN AN OPIUM DEN WAS A BEST SELLER. [G&W 61]



MUSEUM, GOLDEN GATE PARK. TWO AMERICAN FLAGS FLYING IN THE WIND WERE ADDED TO WEIDNER'S IMAGE #20 FOR THIS MULTICOLOR CARD. [CW 5]



CHILDRENS PLAY GROUND, G. G. PARK. THIS MULTICOLOR POSTCARD WAS MAILED DECEMBER 18, 1902. NOTE PRINTER'S "AUTO-CHROM" LOGO IN RIGHT MARGIN. [G&W 6]



U.S. CAVALRY ON FALLEN MONARCH, MARIPOSA BIG TREE GROVE. THE NEWLY CREATED YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK WAS FIRST CONTROLLED BY THE U.S. 4TH CAVALRY, STARTING IN MAY 1891. NOTE "COPYRIGHT SOUTHERN PACIFIC CO." AT LEFT. [G&W 37]



NATIVE SOLDIERS OF THE PHILIPPINES. THIS PHOTO WAS ORIGINALLY TITLED, "PETTY KING OF THE TINGUIANES WITH HIS GUARDS, ABRA, LUZON." WEIDNER WOULD HAVE HAD ACCESS TO SUCH ETHNOGRAPHIC PORTRAITS, BROUGHT HOME AS SOUVENIRS BY MEN WHO SERVED IN THE 1898 WAR. [G&W 78]

Then for some unknown reason, William Goeggel withdrew from the business. Weidner may have settled a financial obligation to his partner, but whatever the reason, starting in late 1903 the postcard imprint changed to "Charles Weidner" with no mention of Goeggel. About this time, some of the partnership's most popular pictures began appearing on cards issued by other San Francisco publishers such as Edward H. Mitchell and Britton & Rey. Weidner's copyrighted images may have been formally assigned to others, but just as likely they were "borrowed" and printed in numerous formats over the years without permission.

When Weidner identified himself as "publisher" on his early color cards, it usually indicated the source photo was taken by someone else. An example is #35 showing a Chinatown joss temple, taken by San Francisco photographer Isaiah W. Taber about 1887. On the other hand, the imprint "Charles Weidner,"



HOTEL DEL MONTE, MONTEREY. IN LATE 1903 WILLIAM GOEGGEL'S NAME WAS REMOVED FROM THE IMPRINT, NOW STYLED AS "CHARLES WEIDNER." THIS CARD IS POSTMARKED DECEMBER 24, 1903. [CW 43]

Photographer" is not always a guarantee he was personally responsible for the image. The photo of a felled giant sequoia on card #154, for instance, is clearly signed "A.R. Moore." Arthur Roland Moore, b. 1849, was a photographer working out of Visalia and Porterville. Similar logging themed cards #153 and #167 were likewise photographed by Moore. Card #370, which shows Gen. John C. Fremont during his visit to the Santa Cruz Big Trees on May 4, 1888, could not have been taken by Weidner because he was still in Germany, yet to cross the Atlantic for a new life in America. And #299 titled "Maid of the Mist," showing ocean waves crashing on the rocks at Santa Cruz, was taken by Charles L. Aydelotte about 1902.

Disaster

In August 1904 Charles Weidner joined a rail excursion from San Francisco to California Redwood Park—a preserve of 3,800 acres of old growth forest at Big Basin in Santa Cruz County, recently opened to the public for hiking and camping. The group of 100 visitors included California notables such as Andrew P. Hill, founding member of the Sempervirens Club, and U.S. Senator George C.



1 Charles Weidner, Photographer, San Francisco. Printed in Germany.

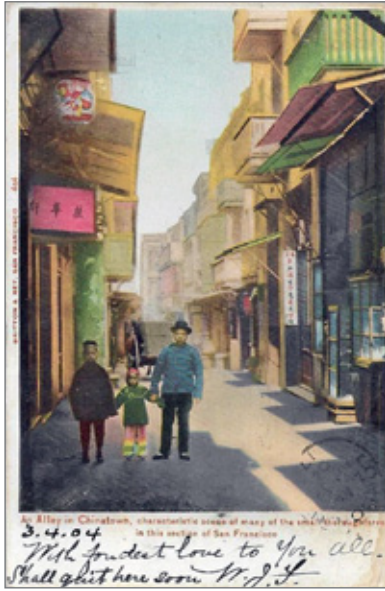
CLIFF HOUSE. ANOTHER EARLY VIEW WHICH SHOWS MORE OF OCEAN BEACH PLUS A COMICAL TROMPE-D'OEIL FOREGROUND. THIS IMAGE WAS HEAVILY COPIED BY OTHER PUBLISHERS. [CW 1]



WEIDNER'S #1, PRINTED BY EDWARD H. MITCHELL AND USED AS A PROMOTIONAL POSTCARD FOR SAN FRANCISCO'S HILLS BROS. COFFEE.



STREET IN CHINATOWN. AN EARLY EMBOSSED VIGNETTE TYPE, POST-MARKED DECEMBER 23, 1902. [G&W 21]



ANOTHER GOEGGEL & WEIDNER VIEW SIMILAR TO #21, PUBLISHED IN MULTICOLOR LITHO BY BRITTON & REY WITH TITLE, "AN ALLEY IN CHINATOWN."



FERRY BUILDING FROM THE BAY. A VIGNETTE TYPE POSTCARD, ONE OF SEVERAL PRINTED IN PURE BLACK INK WITHOUT EMBOSSED. [G&W 49]



GOEGGEL & WEIDNER'S #49 PUBLISHED IN MULTICOLOR LITHO BY RICHARD BEHRENDT. NOTE FLAG ADDED TO FERRY BUILDING TOWER.

Perkins. The trip concluded at the Santa Cruz seaside casino and tent city. Weidner's negatives from the visit, however, along with everything in his 36 Geary Street studio, were lost to fire when the earthquake of April 18, 1906 restructured the cityscape and the lives of everyone living there.

Postcards showing damage caused by the quake and fires, both in San Francisco and in surrounding counties,

first appeared as hastily produced photo cards and printed halftones. Michael Rieder, a publisher in Los Angeles, may have been the first to produce postcards showing the ruins. One of his printed examples was mailed May 1, 1906. Arthur C. Pillsbury, living in Oakland, and Hodson & Walsh from Sacramento were selling photographic cards by mid-May.

The newspaper empire owned by William Randolph Hearst helped sensationalize the disaster by issuing 12



CHARLES WEIDNER WORKING IN HIS 36 GEARY STREET STUDIO CIRCA 1904. BOXES OF POSTCARDS, ORDERED FROM HIS PRINTER IN GERMANY, FILL THE SHELVES.



FIVE IDOLS IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES, JOSS TEMPLE. THIS MULTICOLOR CARD WAS PRINTED BY A COMBINATION LITHOGRAPHY/TYPOGRAPHY PROCESS CALLED AUTOCHROM, SUBSEQUENTLY USED AS AN APPOINTMENT CARD BY SANBORN, VAIL & CO., SAN FRANCISCO STATIONERS. [CW 35]



WEIDNER'S #35 WAS ADAPTED FROM THIS 1887 COPYRIGHTED PHOTO BY ISAIAH W. TABER.



A LOGGING TEAM ON A FELLED CALIFORNIA GIANT. NOTE SIGNATURE OF A.R. MOORE AT LOWER RIGHT, A PORTERVILLE PHOTOGRAPHER WHO TOOK THIS PICTURE IN SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST CIRCA 1905. [CW 154]



MAID OF THE MIST. PHOTO TAKEN AT SANTA CRUZ BY CHARLES L. AYDELLOTTE, PUBLISHED BY WEIDNER IN SEPIA TONE. [CW 299]



GENERAL FREMONT AND PARTY SHOWING CIRCUMFERENCE OF 'GIANT.' THIS PHOTO OF THE FAMOUS EXPLORER AND MILITARY MAN (WHITE BEARD AT REAR) WAS TAKEN WHEN HE VISITED THE BIG TREES RESORT NEAR SANTA CRUZ IN MAY 1888. [CW 370]

crudely lithographed color postcards and inserting them as uncut sheets into May 6th Sunday editions. The *San Francisco Examiner* building was destroyed, but imprints of Hearst's *Boston American*, *New York Journal*, and *Chicago American* are found on the gaudy cards mailed around the world. San Francisco publisher Edward H. Mitchell set up temporary offices at his home on Clay Street near the Presidio and issued nicely printed halftone postcards by the middle of May. E.C. Kropp in Milwaukee printed blue and black "duotones" that appeared on the market in mid-July, and quality lithographed color postcards shipped from Germany to Richard Behrendt in San Francisco hit the racks by late August.

Weidner's studio on Geary was wrecked, but somehow the photographer managed to retrieve a camera before the flames jumped Market Street and capture what are now regarded as iconic images. From the photographer's original negatives, black and white prints were made and sent to printers in Germany along with coloration and caption information. Fortunately for us, several duplicates of those prints survive today at Bancroft Library.



LEFT: PRINTED CARD SHOWING DAMAGE TO SAN FRANCISCO'S EXAMINER BUILDING. PUBLISHED BY M. RIEDER OF LOS ANGELES, MAILED MAY 1, 1906.



RIGHT: THE PARTNERSHIP OF HODSON & WALSH OF SACRAMENTO PRODUCED THIS PHOTO CARD OF THE PALACE HOTEL. THE PENNED MESSAGE IS DATED MAY 11, 1906.



EXAMPLE OF CRUDE COLOR POSTCARDS INSERTED INTO HEARST NEWSPAPERS ON SUNDAY, MAY 6, 1906.



ARTHUR C. PILLSBURY MADE SOME OF THE FIRST PHOTO POSTCARDS REVEALING DEVASTATION OF THE 1906 EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE. THIS VIEW OF THE WRECKED CITY HALL WAS MAILED MAY 14 AFTER THE SENDER INKED COMIC ILLUSTRATIONS AND THE OBSERVATION, "CITY HALL COST \$6,000,000, REQUIRED SIX YEARS TO BUILD, AND SIX SECONDS TO DESTROY." IN TRUTH, THE MASSIVE BOONDOGGLE REQUIRED 25 YEARS FROM CORNERSTONE TO COMPLETION (1872-97).

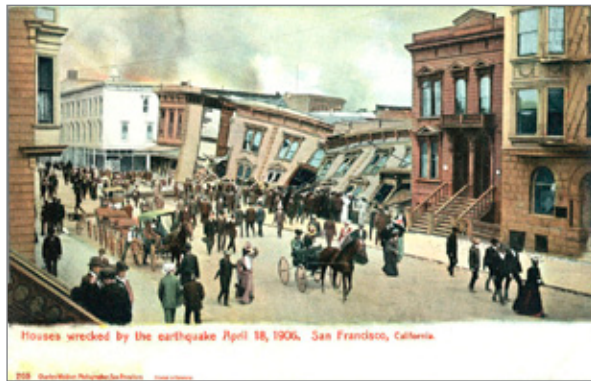


EDWARD H MITCHELL PUBLISHED THIS PRINTED CARD SHOWING THE WRECKAGE ON MONTGOMERY STREET, POSTMARKED MAY 17.

Weidner's earthquake damage cards (numbered 202 to 228) were popular with American buyers as soon as they were put on sale, about six months after the calamity. Earliest known postal use is October 21, 1906.

Weidner's residence on Mission Street in Bernal Heights had been miraculously spared, providing the beleaguered photographer sanctuary and a place to restart his business. But his large stock of Northern California postcards was gone, and most significantly, the famous urban center eagerly visited by tourists the world over had vanished. New strategies would have to be devised to market San Francisco postcards.

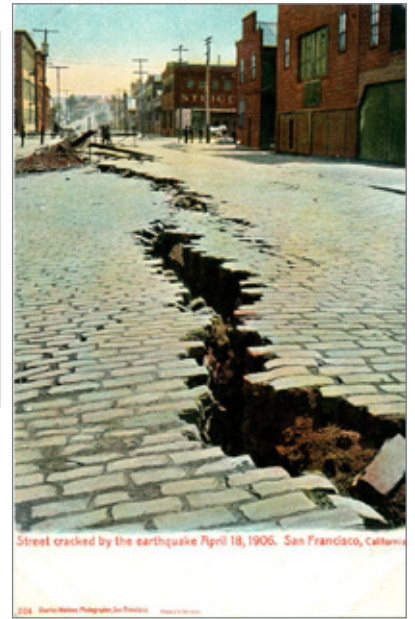
Liselotte Erlanger Glozer, an early collector and aficionado of Charles Weidner's postcards, mused about his earthquake series, "When viewed together, they give the impression of a man relentlessly driven to bequeath to the future a record of the ruined city he had depicted so lovingly before." Nevertheless, Weidner cleverly managed to market his pre-quake images along with the current disaster pictures. When he ordered the new series from Germany, he also had many of his older cards printed from original plates, but with various phrases added to the captions to make them more relevant and salable, for example: *Badly damaged by fire Apr. 18, 1906; Destroyed by earthquake and fire; His business ruined by earthquake and fire; Hotel withstood earthquake but fell a victim to fire.*



▲ HOUSES WRECKED BY THE EARTHQUAKE. [CW 205]

◀ CHARLES WEIDNER'S EARLIEST KNOWN PHOTOGRAPHIC POSTCARD IS THIS VIEW OF A SKELETAL CITY HALL, USED TO DIRECT A MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION TO HIS HOME ON MISSION STREET. SIGNED AND DATED BY WEIDNER, MAY 31, 1906.

▶ STREET CRACKED BY THE EARTHQUAKE. [CW 204]



PRINT MADE FROM WEIDNER NEGATIVE, IMAGE #207.



FLEEING FROM THE BURNING CITY APRIL 18, 1906. [CW 207]



PRINT MADE FROM WEIDNER NEGATIVE, IMAGE #210.



REFUGEES WATCHING THE BURNING CITY APRIL 18, 1906 (FROM LAFAYETTE SQUARE). [CW 210]



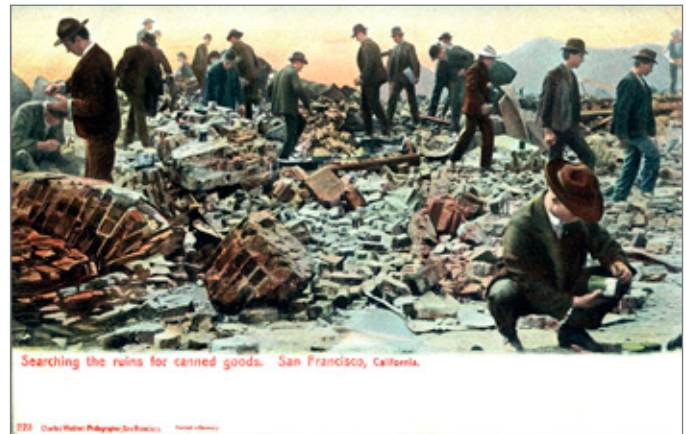
PRINT MADE FROM WEIDNER NEGATIVE, IMAGE #222. NOTE BOY AT CENTER HAS BEEN DELETED IN THE POSTCARD.



REFUGEES WAITING FOR RATIONS. [CW 222]



PRINT MADE FROM WEIDNER NEGATIVE, IMAGE #223. NOTE POSTERIOR OF MAN AT LEFT HAS BEEN ARTISTICALLY ALTERED TO A CLUMP OF BRICKS IN THE POSTCARD.



SEARCHING THE RUINS FOR CANNED GOODS. [CW 223]



◀ MEMORIAL ARCH AT STANFORD'S UNIVERSITY. THE CAPTION FOR STANFORD'S CHURCH ERRONEOUSLY READS "ARCH." [CW 225]

▲ REVERSE OF STANFORD MEMORIAL CHURCH CARD, POSTMARKED OCTOBER 21, 1906, THE MONTH WEIDNER'S EARTHQUAKE POSTCARDS WERE FIRST MARKETED.

▶ CALL BUILDING. THE PHRASE "BADLY DAMAGED BY FIRE APR, 18, 1906" WAS ADDED TO THE ORIGINAL CAPTION WHEN THIS IMAGE WAS REPRINTED IN GERMANY. SANBORN, VAIL & CO. SUBSEQUENTLY IMPRINTED IT FOR THEIR OWN USE. [CW 11]

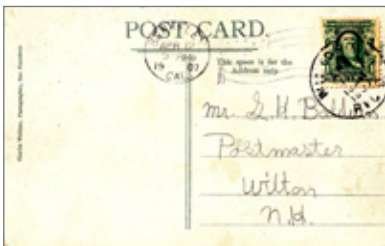




PANORAMA SAN FRANCISCO. THE PHRASE “DESTROYED BY EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE APR. 18, 1906” WAS ADDED TO THE CAPTION WHEN CARD WAS REPRINTED. [CW 13]



HOTEL ST. FRANCIS AND UNION SQUARE. THE PHRASE “HOTEL WITHSTOOD EARTHQUAKE BUT FELL A VICTIM TO FIRE APR. 18, 1906” WAS ADDED TO THE CAPTION. [CW 116]



Louis Glaser, postcard printer in Leipzig, had routinely produced cards for Charles Weidner over the previous four years from plates kept at his plant. During the

reprint process he simply set new type for the captions, appending the descriptive phrases. The highest numbered pre-quake image with an altered caption is CW165, and earliest known postmark is October 4, 1906 (on CW134), again suggesting it took nearly six months for Weidner’s disaster cards to appear on the California market.



OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA POST OFFICE. [CW 174] AND REVERSE SHOWING DIVIDED BACK AND POSTMARK APRIL 12, 1907—A MERE SIX WEEKS AFTER THE DIVIDED BACK REGULATION TOOK EFFECT.



MECHANICS AND WORKING MEN, EATING THEIR LUNCH AT CROCKER CAMP, UNION SQUARE. ONE OF 22 IMAGES ISSUED IN THE FALL OF 1907 TO SUPPLEMENT WEIDNER’S EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE SERIES. [CW 245]



AVILON, CATALINA ISLAND, SO. CALIFORNIA. THIS DIVIDED BACK CARD WAS POSTMARKED JULY 19, 1907. [CW 94]



NEWS-PAPER ROW, ONE YEAR AFTER THE FIRE. [CW 256]



PACIFIC AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ. AN EXPERIMENTAL GROUP OF 20 VIEWS (NUMBERED 293 TO 312) WAS PRINTED IN BLUE INK TO SIMULATE CYANOTYPE PHOTOGRAPHS.



THE DOMES OF YOSEMITE ON CHRISTMAS MORNING. THE GROUP OF 20 POSTCARD VIEWS WAS ALSO PRINTED IN RED-BROWN INK TO IMITATE SEPIA TONE PHOTOGRAPHS. [CW 307]



CHARLES WEIDNER AND CAMERA ABOARD A SURE FOOTED DONKEY IN YOSEMITE, JUNE 1907.



WEIDNER AT WORK AMONG YOSEMITE'S PONDEROSA PINES, JUNE 1907.



THE NEW ROUTE TO THE YOSEMITE ON THE YOSEMITE VALLEY RAILROAD. IN JUNE 1907 THIS NEWLY OPENED SHORT-LINE RAILROAD CARRIED WEIDNER FROM THE TOWN OF MERCED TO THE WESTERN BOUNDARY OF YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK. [CW 321]



POSTCARD MESSAGE WRITTEN JUNE 2, 1908 DESCRIBING RAILROAD AND STAGECOACH RIDES INTO YOSEMITE. [CW 336 REVERSE]



THE ROYAL ARCHES, THE NORTH DOME AND WASHINGTON COLUMN FROM CAMP CURRY, YOSEMITE. IMPRINTED FOR USE BY SANBORN, VAIL & CO. OF SAN FRANCISCO. [CW 335]



INDIAN VILLAGE, YOSEMITE VALLEY. PHOTO STUDIES OF CALIFORNIA'S INDIGENOUS CULTURES WAS ONE OF WEIDNER'S FAVORED SUBJECTS. [CW 347]

Divided Backs

By the spring of 1907, Weidner was well established in a new studio at 1639 Fillmore, near Post. He had been there since the previous September. Of particular importance to him, and to every other postcard publisher in the U.S., was a new postal regulation that finally allowed partitioning of postcard backs—creating space to the left of a vertical line for the message, and to the right for recipient's address. Prior to Postmaster General George Cortelyou's Order No. 1338, effective March 1, 1907, personal messaging had to be done on the "picture side" to qualify for the one-cent rate.

Among Weidner's earliest cards published on divided backs is a reprint of #174 (Oakland Post Office). It bears an April 12, 1907 postmark—just six weeks after passage of the new regulation. Also printed on divided backs were 22 new additions to the popular earthquake group, #229 to 250. Number 228 in the first series (Hall of Justice) was therefore Weidner's highest number issued on an undivided back. Earliest known postal use for the new earthquake images is Dec 16, 1907.

In sync with the city's massive reconstruction efforts, Weidner now published views showing city districts resurrected from the ashes, each subtitled, "one year after the fire" (#254//261). With the switch to divided backs, he also decided to move his identification imprint from front to back, on new cards as well as reprints. Another change, one of short duration, was production of several cards with experimental ink colors—sepia tone and blue tone. The latter imitated a popular photographic finish known as *cyanotype* in which chemicals on the photo paper react with ultraviolet light to form Prussian blue, an insoluble dye. Weidner's sepia and blue tone cards, printed by colotype lithography, showed scenes taken along the California coast and in Yosemite Valley, numbered 293 to 312.

In June 1907, Charles Weidner, William J. Street and other members of the California Camera Club traveled on

the new Yosemite Valley Railroad to El Portal then bounced along dusty roads in a stagecoach for five hours before arriving in the heart of the national park. Their mission was to capture images of its scenic wonders. Weidner's photographs from the trip, including those of Native Americans living in Yosemite Valley, were published as multicolor postcards, #321 to 352.



MARY OF THE YOSEMITE BAND. THIS WAS MARY LEONARD (B. ABOUT 1865), ALSO KNOWN AS "MONO MARY," AND ALLEGEDLY THE GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER OF CHIEF TENAYA. [CW 349]

Reconstruction

By October 1908, Weidner was able to move back into San Francisco's business center, largely restored through laborious debris removal and rebuilding. He leased rooms in the new Investors Building at 787 Market, adjoining the towering Humboldt Savings Bank. A few months earlier, Weidner received another sizable shipment of cards from Germany, numbered 570 to 680. Barring a few exceptions, postcard imprints prior to this series had identified Weidner as "Photographer." For this large order, however, Weidner opted for "Chas. Weidner, Postcard Publisher."



MARKET STREET SHOWING HUMBOLDT BANK AND CALL BUILDING. WEIDNER MOVED INTO THE NEW INVESTORS BUILDING AT 787 MARKET IN LATE 1908. THIS POSTCARD OF THE AREA WAS IMPRINTED TO ADVERTISE HIS RELOCATION TO THE CITY'S RESTORED BUSINESS DISTRICT. [CW 443]

in Germany on Newman backs, they were inscribed on the front, "Photo only copyrighted by Chas. Weidner, 1909." Newman's card numbers for the series are scattered among the range V187 to V282. Supplementing the 1909 reconstruction images were older Weidner views, reprinted on Newman backs that carry the Southern Pacific Co. promotional slogan, "On the Road of a Thousand Wonders." Since the Newman reprints lack the inscription, "Made in Germany," it is assumed they were produced by a domestic printer, supplied with prints from Weidner negatives to create new plates. Image quality for the Newman cards, however, is noticeably inferior to Weidner's originals manufactured in Germany.

The Newman marriage remained amiable for two



HYDRAULIC MINING IN CALIFORNIA. [CW 571]

As 1908 drew to a close, another change was announced. Weidner suddenly agreed to sell his scenic postcard business to the Newman Post Card Company of Los Angeles, yet continue management of sales and distribution for northern and central California from his new quarters on Market Street. An introductory series of 30 views was issued picturing the canyons of new buildings erected in downtown San Francisco. Printed



Chas. Weidner, Postcard Publisher, San Francisco, Cal. No. 651
Made in Germany

ENTRANCE TO FORT MASON SHOWING THE GENERAL'S HEADQUARTERS. [CW 651] IMPRINT ON REVERSE.

years, but by late 1910 Weidner was solo again at 787 Market. Oscar Newman, founder of the Los Angeles firm in 1904, had moved his San Francisco sales office to 2nd Street and transferred his attentions to Edward H. Mitchell for the February 1911 formation of Exposition Publishing Co., a cartel intent on capturing the souvenir postcard privilege at PPIE (see *SFBAPCC Journal*, July 2015). Although Weidner later produced his own elegant color postcards of the expo, he now became enthusiastic about revitalizing his portrait studio and expanding his commercial business, announcing "We do Everything in Photography."

The earliest photo postcards bearing Weidner imprints were 1908 copyright views taken in Calaveras County's forest of big trees. Another series, taken in September of that year, shows the Grand Carnival Parade marching through San Rafael. For the succeeding 22 years, however, Weidner's postcard images were primarily of San Francisco, published as "genuine photo" and printed halftone. His work confirms the reality that although the metropo-



SENDING HORSES TO THE PHILIPPINES, SAN FRANCISCO. THOUSANDS OF CAVALRY AND WORK HORSES WERE SHIPPED TO CUBA, PUERTO RICO AND THE PHILIPPINES DURING THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR. [CW 630]



CHARLES WEIDNER AT RIGHT, POSING WITH FELLOW BIRD HUNTERS.

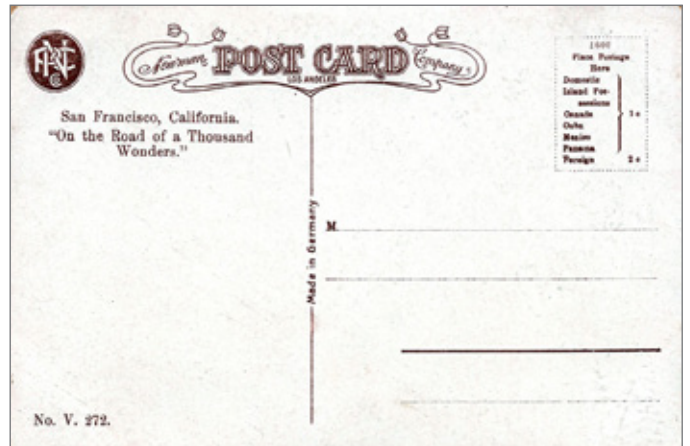
lis had suffered a huge crippling blow, cultural and merchant communities, with Charles Weidner among them, never gave up on the city's future and prosperity. Some of the many events captured on film and published as photo postcards were the 1909 and 1913 Portolá Festivals, California Admission Day and North Beach celebrations of 1910, and the 10-day pioneer aviation meet in January 1911. Charles Weidner was always in attendance, focusing his lens on the action.



THE PARAPET AT SUTRO HEIGHTS. THIS IMAGE WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AS CW 477. [NEWMAN V131]



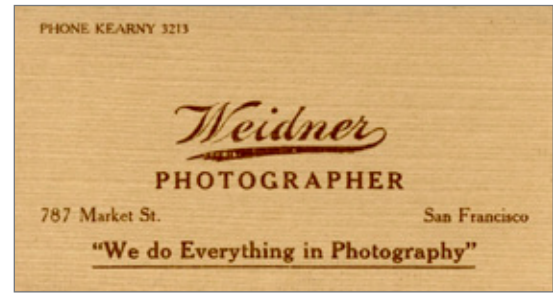
CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND, GOLDEN GATE PARK. THIS IMAGE WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AS CW 475. [NEWMAN V293]



MARKET STREET FROM GEARY, SHOWING LOTTAS FOUNTAIN/PHOTO ONLY COPYRIGHTED BY CHAS. WEIDNER 1909. PUBLISHED BY NEWMAN POST CARD COMPANY OF LOS ANGELES AFTER WEIDNER SOLD HIS SCENIC POSTCARD BUSINESS TO OSCAR NEWMAN. [NEWMAN V272] AND REVERSE



GOLDEN JUBILEE, SAN FRANCISCO SCHUETZEN VEREIN, AUG. 29TH TO SEPT. 5TH 1909/PHOTOS AND POSTCARDS OF PARADE AT WEIDNER'S, PHOTOGRAPHER, 787 MARKET STREET. ANOTHER ADVERTISING CARD PICTURING A LOCAL GERMAN SPORT SHOOTING CLUB, OR SCHÜTZENVEREIN, IN FORMATION ON VAN NESS AVENUE. [HALFTONE PRINT]

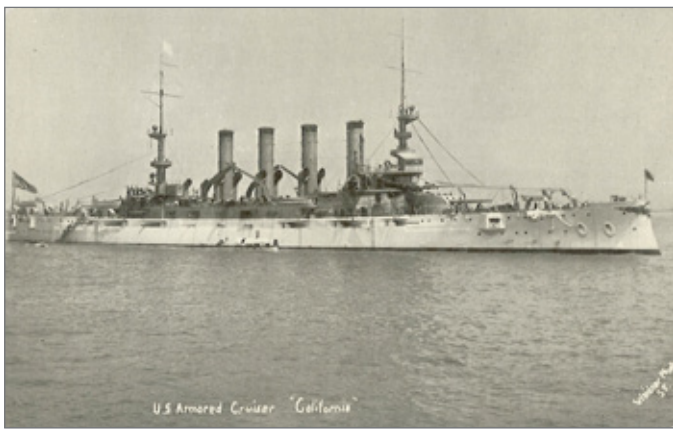


BUSINESS CARD, CIRCA 1911.

BALBOA BUILDING,
MARKET AND FIRST
STREETS.
[NEWMAN V194]



PRIDE OF THE FOREST-
CALAVERAS BIG TREE GROVE.
[CW ©1908 PHOTO CARD]



U.S. ARMORED CRUISER "CALIFORNIA." BUILT BY THE UNION IRON WORKS AND COMMISSIONED IN 1907, THE SHIP JOINED THE PACIFIC FLEET IN TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MAY 1908 NAVAL REVIEW IN SAN FRANCISCO. [HALFTONE PRINT, WEIDNER PHOTO, CIRCA 1908]



CALAVERAS BIG TREE GROVE. GIANT REDWOOD "DANIEL WEBSTER" AT RIGHT. [CW ©1908 PHOTO POSTCARD]



GRAND CARNIVAL PARADE, SEPTEMBER 9, 1908, SAN RAFAEL.
[CW PHOTO CARD]



CHILDREN OF NEW CHINATOWN. A COMPOSITE INCLUDING FOUR OF THE GOLDSMITH BROS. MINI-VIEWS SEEN ON WEIDNER #690. TIME CONSUMING ARTWORK REQUIRED FOR THIS IMAGE MAY EXPLAIN WHY IT WAS NUMERICALLY SEPARATED FROM WEIDNER'S FINAL SERIES OF GERMAN PRINTED POSTCARDS, #570-680. [CW 694]



VIEWS OF NEW SAN FRANCISCO. SIX MINI PICTURES ON ONE CARD. WEIDNER'S #443 AT UPPER LEFT. [CW 681, HALFTONE PRINT]



THEME FOR MANY HEIDELBERG INN POST-CARDS WAS THE 1901 ROMANTIC PLAY, ALT HEIDELBERG. THIS ONE: "THE STUDENTS' CODE." [WEIDNER PHOTO, HALFTONE PRINT BY THE HANSEN CO., SF, CIRCA 1909]



CHINESE CHILDREN, SAN FRANCISCO. SIX MINI PHOTOS CREDITED TO GOLDSMITH BROS., CAMERA SUPPLY DEALERS ON POWELL ST. [CW 690, HALFTONE PRINT, CIRCA 1909]



THE BIG PORTOLÁ FESTIVAL SIGN, YERBA BUENA ISLAND...EACH LETTER 45 FEET HIGH. [WEIDNER PHOTO, HALFTONE PRINT, 1909]



KNOT HOLES OF THE FATHER OF THE FOREST. POKING THROUGH THE HOLES ARE WEIDNER'S WIFE MARIE AND CHILDREN EDWIN AND LILLIAN AT CALAVERAS BIG TREES. [CW ©1908 PHOTO CARD]



GRAND CARNIVAL PARADE 1908 SAN RAFAEL. PARADE FLOAT. [CW 161 PHOTO CARD]



BEAR BARBECUE HELD AT SHORTY ROBERTS 1909. RICHARD "SHORTY" ROBERTS RAN THE SEA BREEZE RESORT ON GREAT HIGHWAY NEAR RIVERA ST. [WEIDNER PHOTO]



NORTH BEACH CARNIVAL, NOV. 24-27, 1910. [WP 16]



NORTH BEACH CARNIVAL, NOV. 1910. KING ANGELO AND QUEEN ERMINIA ATTENDED BY A PAGE. [WP 25]



BATHING PAVILION, BOYES HOT SPRINGS. [HALFTONE PRINT, WP 20]



SAN FRANCISCO BOWLING ALLEY AT 115 POWELL ST. REVERSE OF CARD NOTES THAT THE GROUP IS THE HANNOVER BOWLING CLUB. [WEIDNER PHOTO, CIRCA 1911]



ROSS STATION, MARIN CO. A NORTHWESTERN PACIFIC U.S. RAILWAY POST OFFICE CAR IS AT RIGHT. [WP 12, CIRCA 1911]



GENERAL VALLEJO'S CARRIAGE, PORTOLÁ PARADE OCTOBER 24, 1913. THE GENERAL'S YOUNGEST DAUGHTER, MARIA VALLEJO CUTTER (B. 1857) AND HER DAUGHTER ALMA RIDE IN THE CARRIAGE. [WP 46]



HINDOO TEMPLE. THE ORNATE STRUCTURE AT WEBSTER AND FILBERT WAS CONSTRUCTED 1905-08. DESIGNED BY SWAMI TRIGUNATITA OF THE SAN FRANCISCO VEDANTA SOCIETY, IT WAS CLAIMED TO BE THE FIRST HINDU TEMPLE ERECTED IN THE WESTERN WORLD. [WP 90]

Charles Weidner, Post Card Publisher, San Francisco, Cal.
 Series "On the Road of a Thousand Wonders"
 This card is a genuine photograph.

WANDERPREIS FÜR DEN PACIFIC SÄNGERBUND. KAISER WILHELM OF GERMANY DONATED THIS GRAND PRIZE TROPHY TO WINNER OF THE PACIFIC SINGER'S ASSOCIATION FESTIVAL HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO IN 1910. [WEIDNER PHOTO] IMPRINT ON REVERSE.



Genuine Photo Post Card, Chas. Weidner Publisher, San Francisco, Cal.
 Series "On the Road of 1000 Wonders,"

CORONATION OF "QUEEN CALIFORNIA" ADMISSION DAY CELEBRATION 1910. [WP 5] IMPRINT ON REVERSE.



RIVER STEAMER "ST. HELENA." ONE OF THE MANY STERNWHEELERS THAT CARRIED PASSENGERS AND CARGO BETWEEN INLAND PORTS AND SAN FRANCISCO. [WP 219]



PHILIP PARMALEE IN WRIGHT STANDARD, SAN FRANCISCO AVIATION MEET JAN 7-16, 1911. SPECTACULAR FLIGHTS BY SEVERAL AIR PIONEERS ENTERTAINED VISITORS AT SELFRIDGE FIELD IN SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO (TANFORAN RACETRACK). INCLUDED WAS DROPPING OF AN EXPLOSIVE BOMB FROM PARMALEE'S BIPLANE—REPORTEDLY AN HISTORIC FIRST. [WP30]



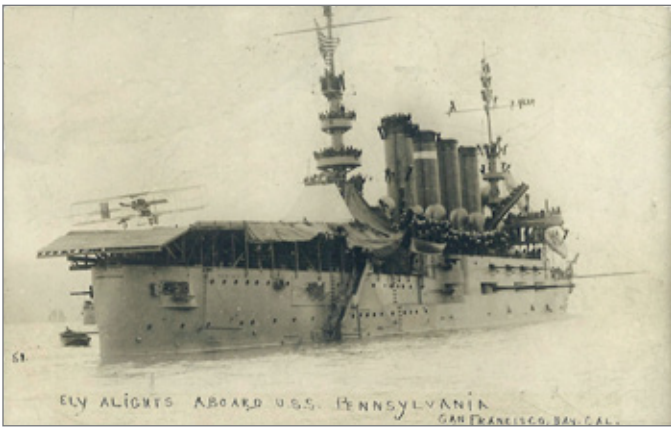
LATHAM FLYING OVER THE BAY IN HIS "ANTOINETTE." PARISIAN HUBERT LATHAM WAS THE FIRST TO ATTEMPT A CROSSING OF THE ENGLISH CHANNEL IN HEAVIER-THAN-AIR CRAFT. DURING THE JANUARY 1911 SAN FRANCISCO MEET HE MANAGED A 50-MINUTE FLIGHT AROUND THE BAY IN HIS FRENCH MONOPLANE. IRONICALLY HE DIED WHILE HUNTING BUFFALO IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA THE NEXT YEAR. [WEIDNER PHOTO]



MAYOR ROLPH LAYING CORNER STONE FOR CITY HALL. GROUND WAS BROKEN FOR THE NEW CITY HALL AT VAN NESS AND FULTON ON APRIL 5, 1913, AND CORNERSTONE LAID OCTOBER 25. MAYOR JAMES ROLPH MOVED INTO HIS OFFICES DECEMBER 28, 1915. [WP 145]



PORTOLA PARADE, OCT. 24, 1913. THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA WAS CREATED IN 1912 AFTER THE QING DYNASTY WAS OVERTHROWN, ENDING MORE THAN 2,000 YEARS OF IMPERIAL RULE IN CHINA. [WP 114]



ELY ALIGHTS ABOARD U.S.S. PENNSYLVANIA. NAVAL AVIATION WAS INVENTED JANUARY 18, 1911 WHEN 24-YEAR-OLD BARNSTORMING PILOT EUGENE B. ELY SUCCESSFULLY LANDED HIS CURTISS PUSHER ON A 133-FOOT WOODEN LANDING STRIP ERECTED ON AN ARMORED CRUISER IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY. [WP 51] AND REVERSE.



STUDIO PORTRAIT OF WOMAN IN OSTRICH FEATHER HAT. [CHARLES WEIDNER, CIRCA 1912] IMPRINT ON REVERSE.



CHAS. WEIDNER
787 MARKET ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.



CHARLES WEIDNER IN HIS MARKET STREET STUDIO, FEBRUARY 27, 1914. NOTE WICKER CHAIR USED FOR PORTRAIT OF WOMAN IN FEATHER HAT.

1915 World's Fair

Charles Weidner's involvement with the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) started with his "We Win" photo cards that celebrated the January 31, 1911 selection of San Francisco as host city for the fair. Quick to follow was a short series of postcards, most of which juxtaposed photos of the city's devastation in April 1906 with views of the same locations taken five years later. They were marketed in May 1911, apparently in cooperation with the Southern Pacific Company. The so-called "then and now" cards touted the significant reconstruction already accomplished in the downtown area.

Weidner began monitoring construction of the expo at the Harbor View site in early 1914, making photographic studies that culminated in a stunning series of 57 post-

cards picturing exposition buildings, fountains, gardens and statuary. Regular sized cards were supplemented with panoramic views published as double, triple, and even quadruple-wide mailing cards. The collotype views were printed in monochrome by the Albertype Company of Brooklyn, NY, then carefully hand-colored. Jean Langford, Charles Weidner's granddaughter, shared the recollection that her teenaged mother, Lillian, helped hand-color numerous postcards at the family home on 30th Street.

Weidner's opting for an American printer to manufacture his PPIE series reflected an international crisis that was stifling European exports at the time, particularly from Germany. In November 1914 the British fleet declared the North Sea a war zone and blockaded German ports. In retaliation, German naval command warned that enemy merchant vessels encountered in the English Chan-



WE WIN—MASS MEETING AT THE MERCHANT'S EXCHANGE ON RECEIVING THE NEWS OF VICTORY UPON GETTING THE FAIR —JAN 31, 1911. [WEIDNER PHOTO]



MARKET AND SIXTH STREETS TODAY. LOOKING EAST FROM GOLDEN GATE AVENUE, TAYLOR STREET INTERSECTING AT LEFT. [WEIDNER PHOTO, 1911]



LOOKING DOWN MARKET ST. APRIL 1906—SAME VIEW TODAY. PART OF A 1911 "THEN AND NOW" SERIES. [WEIDNER PHOTO]



LOOKING DOWN O'FARRELL ST. APRIL 1906—SAME VIEW TODAY. [WEIDNER PHOTO, 1911]



UNION SQUARE APRIL 1906—& SAME VIEW TODAY. [WEIDNER PHOTO, 1911]



HAPPY NEW YEAR 1915. RETOUCED PANORAMIC VIEW OF PPIE CONSTRUCTION AS IT APPEARED IN EARLY 1914. [WEIDNER PHOTO, COPYRIGHT APRIL 20, 1914]



TOWER OF JEWELS AND SCINTILLATOR. A BATTERY OF COLOR-FILTERED SEARCHLIGHTS WAS MOUNTED ON THE BREAKWATER OF YACHT HARBOR, MANNED NIGHTLY BY A COMPANY OF MARINES. [CW 44, HAND-COLORED COLLOTYPE]



THE ZONE. AN EXTENSIVE AMUSEMENT AREA AT THE PPIE COVERED THE BLOCKS BETWEEN VAN NESS AVENUE AND FILLMORE STREET. [CW 17, HAND-COLORED COLLOTYPE]



PALACE OF LIBERAL ARTS, PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION. [CW 11, HAND-COLORED COLLOTYPE] AND, BELOW, REVERSE SHOWING ALBERT-TYPE CO. DIVIDED BACK AND JUNE 17, 1915 MESSAGE. ▼

nel after February 1915 would be torpedoed. The blockades effectively terminated shipments of goods from Germany, including huge quantities of picture postcards. Worldwide marketing and demand for of these novelties throughout the previous 15 years, a phenomenon we fondly call the “Golden Age of Postcards,” had suddenly come to an end.

The dramatic turn of events reinforced Charles Weidner’s decision to concentrate on photo postcards which were becoming increasingly popular for advertising, and as souvenirs. He did order a few color cards from Curt Teich & Co. of Chicago in 1921, and some black/white halftone cards from Bardell Art Co., but the bulk of his post-PPIE output consisted of photographic cards printed from contemporary negatives. Unlike his multi-year output of lithographed color cards, image numbers on Weidner’s photo postcards are not consecutive. Instead, the numbering was restarted for each topical series; and a few were published without numbers. It is estimated from surveyed collections that Weidner was ultimately responsible for more than 600 photo postcard subjects.

In 1917, a year before the WWI armistice, Weidner moved his studio into an 8-story flatiron building wedged between Market and Ellis. Four years later he relocated to 319 Grant Avenue, just south of Chinatown. But in 1923 Charles decided to leave the downtown area and run his photography and art goods business from a storefront on 16th Street near Mission Dolores, closer to his home on Sanchez St. where he and his wife lived with their eldest son Arthur.





Panoramic View of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.
San Francisco, Cal., 1915.

PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION. [CW ©1915, DOUBLE-WIDE POSTCARD. HAND-COLORED COLLOTYPE]



15. ALLIED WAR EXPOSITION PARADE SAN FRANCISCO, CAL. WEIDNER PHOTO

ALLIED WAR EXPOSITION PARADE. THE EXPOSITION WAS A 1917-18 TRAVELING EXHIBIT SPONSORED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION. IN SAN FRANCISCO THE PARADE MARCHED WEST ON MARKET STREET, JULY 8, 1918. [WP 15]



21. ALLIED WAR EXPOSITION PARADE SAN FRANCISCO, CAL. WEIDNER PHOTO

ALLIED WAR EXPOSITION PARADE. PLODDING UP MARKET WAS A BRITISH MARK IV TANK THAT HAD SEEN ACTION IN WWI. BESIDES THE PARADE, OVER 2,000 CAPTURED WAR TROPHIES, MODELS OF FIGHTING SHIPS AND SUBMARINES, RE-ENACTED BATTLES SCENES, AND OTHER ATTRACTIONS WERE EXHIBITED AT CIVIC CENTER PLAZA JULY 7-21. [WP 21, JULY 8, 1918]



56. CLIFF HOUSE BEACH, SAN FRANCISCO CAL. WEIDNER PHOTO.

CLIFF HOUSE BEACH. THE SEAWALL HAS BEEN COMPLETED SOUTH TO THE LURLINE PIER BETWEEN BALBOA AND CABRILLO. [WP 56, CIRCA 1918]



6. WELCOME TO GRIZZLIES SAN FRANCISCO, CAL. WEIDNER PHOTO

WELCOME TO GRIZZLIES. THE 144TH CALIFORNIA FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT MARCHING UP MARKET ST. FROM EMBARCADERO ON JANUARY 18, 1919. [WP 6]



U.S.S. GEORGIA, PACIFIC FLEET. ALTHOUGH THIS BATTLESHIP WAS PART OF THE GREAT WHITE FLEET WHEN IT VISITED SAN FRANCISCO BAY IN 1908, THIS PHOTO SHOWS BB-15 WITH LATTICE MASTS, AND IS DATED TO SEPTEMBER 1919 WHEN SHE WAS ORDERED TO MARE ISLAND NAVY YARD. [WVP 27, AZO2UP STOCK]



FINE ARTS PALACE. THIS PHOTO SHOWS THE PPIE ATTRACTION A FEW YEARS AFTER THE 1915 EXPO CLOSED. [WVP 73, THIS EXAMPLE POSTALLY USED IN 1923]



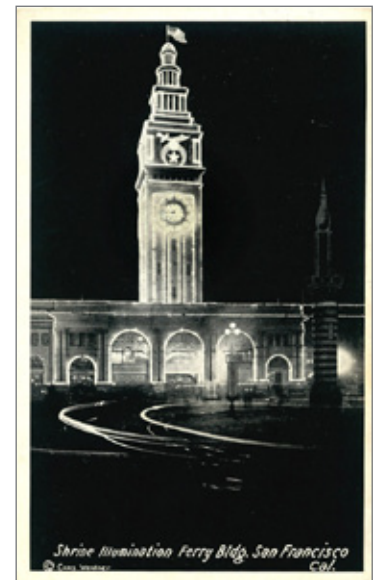
HOTEL SUTTER. THIS COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING POSTCARD SHOWS THE HOTEL AT SE CORNER OF KEARNY AND SUTTER, PRINTED IN AUTO-CHROM BY CURT TEICH & CO. OF CHICAGO. [CW, 1921]



THE PALM GARDEN, 700 GREAT HIGHWAY, COR. BALBOA ST. THIS TROPICS THEMED CAFÉ OPERATED AT THE NORTHERN EDGE OF FRIEDLE AND LOOFF'S CHUTES-AT-THE-BEACH, A POPULAR AMUSEMENT PARK RENAMED "PLAYLAND" A DECADE LATER. [CW, 1921, PRINTED BY CURT TEICH & CO.]



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY. LOOKING WEST WITH LAND-MARK CAMPANILE (SATHER TOWER) IN FOREGROUND. [CW ©1922, PUBLISHED BY PACIFIC NOVELTY CO. IN FOUR-COLOR PROCESS PRINTING]



SHRINE ILLUMINATION FERRY BLDG. SAN FRANCISCO WAS BRIGHTLY DECORATED FOR THE GOLDEN JUBILEE CONCLAVE OF THE ORDER OF THE MYSTIC SHRINE, HELD THE WEEK OF JUNE 12, 1922. AN ESTIMATED QUARTER MILLION VISITORS SWELLED THE CITY DURING THE GATHERING. [CW ©1922, FAUX REAL PHOTO PRINTED BY BARDELL ART CO.]



SILVER JUBILEE OF THE PACIFIC SÄNGERBUND, SAN FRANCISCO AUG. 21 TO 25, 1903. LIVE FLORAL DISPLAY AT THE 1879 CONSERVATORY OF FLOWERS IN GOLDEN GATE PARK.
[WP, LATEST KNOWN PHOTO CARD BY CHARLES WEIDNER]

Charles and Marie moved to Belmont in San Mateo County in 1930, and five or six years later the veteran photographer retired from professional life. Much of the couple's time was spent visiting their son Edwin in Sacramento, daughter Lillian in Vallejo, and son Arthur in San Francisco. Lillian's daughter Jean also recalls that prior to the move to Belmont, her grandfather sold his archive of negatives to Pacific Novelty Company, a major postcard producer controlled by Edward H. Mitchell.

Charles Weidner, one of San Francisco's most prolific and enduring postcard photographers and publishers, died May 15, 1940, in Vallejo, at age 72.

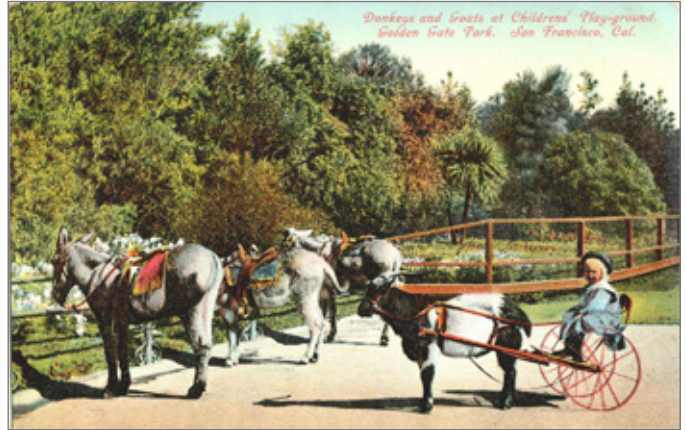
The German Connection

Surprisingly, during the first decade of the 20th century, postcard publishers throughout the world obtained their finest quality and most competitively priced cards from printing firms in Germany. Delivery time was naturally longer than with domestic suppliers, but was worth the wait. Charles Weidner worked with two major firms—Stengel & Co. in Dresden and Louis Glaser of Leipzig, often simultaneously—thus providing some insurance that if one shipment was delayed or lost in transit, the other would make it to San Francisco. Orders started arriving in 1902—monochrome vignettes from Stengel and multi-color cards from Glaser.

Weidner continued to utilize Glaser for production of new and reprint color cards through image #312, then switched to Stengel & Co. for a group of 50 multicolor cards, #313-362. The order for a short run, #363-390, was sent to Glaser, followed by a group of 50 Marin County views, #391-440, assigned to Stengel. Louis Glaser was then selected for an extensive group of views, #441-569, featuring San Francisco under reconstruction, California's big trees, and the attractions at Santa Cruz. Weidner's last order from Germany, #570-680, was a series of rather

murky views of San Francisco in various stages of rebuilding, produced by Stengel & Co.

In retrospect, Weidner's association with his German printers was confined to the brief span of six years, 1902 to 1908, yet he managed the extraordinary output of over 700 different postcard subjects.



DONKEYS AND GOATS AT CHILDREN'S PLAY-ROUND, GOLDEN GATE PARK.
[CW 361, PRINTED BY STENDEL & CO., DRESDEN]

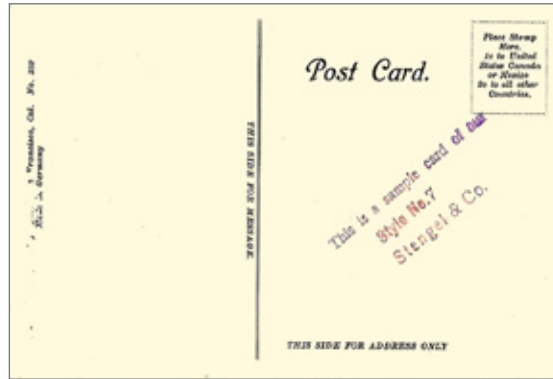


WOOD-CHOPPERS PICNIC, POSING FOR PHOTOGRAPH ON THE LARGEST TREE IN THE WORLD, CALIFORNIA. THE BOOLE TREE, A GIANT SEQUOIA IN THE CONVERSE BASIN GROVE, IS NOW RATED SIXTH LARGEST, WITH THE GENERAL SHERMAN TREE ACKNOWLEDGED LARGEST ON THE PLANET. [CW 368, PRINTED BY LOUIS GLASER, LEIPZIG] AND REVERSE.





THE THREE BROTHERS, YOSEMITE VALLEY.
[CW 332]



THE REVERSE OF WEIDNER'S #332 SHOWS A STENDEL & CO. RUBBER STAMP, "THIS IS A SAMPLE CARD OF OUR STYLE NO. 7." USE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUGGESTS PROMOTION ORIGINATED FROM STENDEL'S NEW YORK OFFICE. NOTE ALSO THAT WEIDNER'S NAME AT LEFT WAS SCRAPPED OFF BY THE STENDEL AGENT.



SANSOME AND CALIFORNIA STREET. NOTE CONSTRUCTION CRANES.
[CW 444, PRINTED BY LOUIS GLASER]



SAN RAFAEL BATHS, MARIN COUNTY, AND REVERSE.
[CW 400, PRINTED BY STENDEL & CO.]



FOOT OF MARKET STREET SHOWING FERRY BUILDING 2 YEARS AFTER FIRE.
[CW 465, PRINTED BY GLASER]



AT THE CONZERT, GOLDEN GATE PARK. GERMAN COMPOSITOR SPOelled "CONCERT" WITH A "Z." [CW 474, PRINTED BY GLASER]



"CALIFORNIA WONDERLAND," THE FREMONT GROUP. NOTE POSTCARDS FOR SALE. BIG TREES GROVE NEAR SANTA CRUZ.
[CW 500, PRINTED BY GLASER]



FISH HATCHERY NEAR SANTA CRUZ. TROUT HATCHERY WAS BUILT ON THE SAN LORENZO RIVER AT BROOKDALE IN 1905. SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD TRACKS ARE SEEN AT LOWER RIGHT.
[CW 507, PRINTED BY GLASER]



CLIFF HOUSE BEACH SHOWING PACIFIC CABLE LANDING. THE PROMINENT PIER IS ACTUALLY THE SALT WATER INTAKE FOR LURLINE BATHS. CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEAWALL IS YET TO START.
[CW 568, PRINTED BY GLASER]



CHINESE OUTDOOR CURIO STORE, CHINATOWN.
[CW 598, PRINTED BY STENDEL & CO.]



LOADING WHEAT AT THE WHARF. RIVER STEAMER "MARY GARRATT" AND BARGE "AJAX" MOORED AT A PIER IN SAN FRANCISCO.
[CW 631, PRINTED BY STENDEL]



INTERIOR OF THE CANTON BAZAAR, THE FIRST LARGE STORE RE-OPENING AFTER THE FIRE IN NEW CHINATOWN.
[CW 674, PRINTED BY STENDEL]

Stengel & Company, Dresden (1885–1945)

Many of the postcards published by Goeggel & Weidner in late 1902 were California scenes printed by collotype lithography—impressive, greenish-black vignettes, carefully embossed to give a bas relief effect. The “relief,” about 0.5 mm deep, provides a convincing 3-D appearance when viewed in slanted light. A thin sheet of paper was pasted over depressions on the back to provide a smooth writing surface. The bas relief cards were supplemented with non-embossed vignettes, printed in standard black ink and no doubt less expensive. Image numbers and captions were typographed in the margins of both styles.

By comparing the California vignettes with European cards of the same type, the latter marked with the manufacturer’s name, it was determined that Stengel & Co. of Dresden was the German printing firm commissioned by Weidner to produce his monochrome vignettes. Another identifying feature on Stengel’s custom cards is the white, 5 or 6-digit number barely visible in the lower part of the image. According to Helfried Luers, postcard specialist in Germany, these cryptic “job” numbers appear only on collotype-printed cards (both monochrome and multicolor) made by Stengel & Co. for customers worldwide. Stengel’s job numbers, 61713 for Weidner’s card #440, and 63083 for #570, reveal the German printer processed some 1370 images for other customers between Weidner’s two final orders from the firm.

The Stengel business was founded

by Emil Stengel and Heinrich Markert when they bought out the collotype printers, Scherer & Engler. After Markert left to start his own print shop about 1889, the firm became Stengel & Co. Offices were opened in Berlin in 1899 and in London two years later. In 1901 a second factory for collotype and halftone printing was completed. Functioning as printer, publisher and distributor, Stengel became the largest producer of postcards in the world. In 1907 they employed 350 workers, manufacturing some 80 million cards on thirty presses. After expanding into chromolithography, they became a major source of art gallery cards, reproducing works of the old masters. Their prints required up to 22 lithographic stones, and as many passes through the press, creating subtle colorations on what are arguably the finest quality postcards ever made. Stengel was represented by Misch & Co. and O. Flammger in London, and by the Rotograph Co. in New York City.

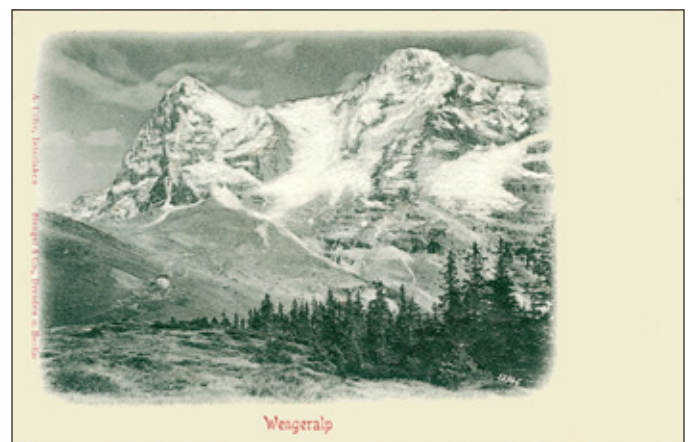
Stengel’s economically priced “Artochrom” postcards were printed by a combination of lithography and typography, known in the trade as *autochrom* (see Louis Glaser below). Minimum order for a single subject was 3000. Weidner’s final order of postcards from Germany was manufactured by Stengel using a process similar to autochrom, except a gelatin-coated litho plate (collotype), rather than typographic halftone, was used to print over the color. Stengel & Co. advertised it as “Chromo-Collotype.”



STREET SCENE IN NEW CHINATOWN. TINY JOB NUMBER IN WHITE AT LOWER RIGHT. [CW 589]



U.S. CAVALRY ON FALLEN MONARCH, MARIPOSA GROVE. STENGEL’S JOB NUMBER FOR THIS CARD INSCRIBED IN LOWER RIGHT CORNER OF VIGNETTE. [G&W 79, EMBOSSED]



WENGERALP. EMBOSSED VIGNETTE IN GREENISH-BLACK INK PRODUCED BY STENGEL & CO. FOR A CUSTOMER IN SWITZERLAND.

Louis Glaser, Leipzig (1868–1928)

Charles Weidner’s alternate supplier of custom postcards in Germany was Louis Glaser of Leipzig. Although Glaser’s name (pronounced gláhzuhr) does not appear on Weidner’s cards, attribution is signaled by “AUTO-CHROM” lettered on a tiny artist’s palette and printed in the border of many of Weidner’s early multicolor postcards. Significantly, the logo appears next to Glaser’s name on European cards.



STREET SCENE IN FISH ALLEY, CHINATOWN.

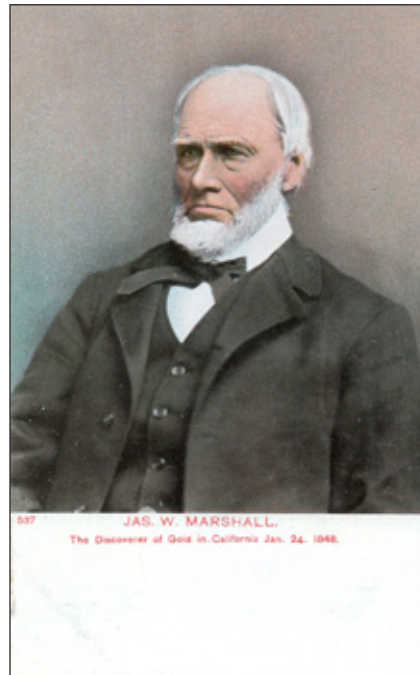
LOUIS GLASER’S “AUTO-CHROM” LOGO AT LEFT. OTHER IMPRINTS INDICATE THIS CARD WAS USED AS A SOUVENIR FOR THE AMERICAN BANKERS CONVENTION HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO IN OCTOBER 1903. [G&W 34]



BAD EMS, VILLENVIERTEL. LOUIS GLASER PRINTED THIS POSTCARD SHOWING AN HISTORIC GERMAN SPA RESORT USING HIS TRADEMARKED “AUTO-CHROM” PROCESS, CIRCA 1903.



Glaser registered his trademark in 1899 to describe the color printing process he helped pioneer—a technique developed to meet the growing demand for multicolor, photograph-based postcards. The established process known as chromolithography produced fine results when in skilled hands, but the method proved too slow and expensive for scenic postcards sold in a highly competitive market. Georg Meisenbach’s 1882 invention of the halftone



JAS. W. MARSHALL, THE DISCOVERER OF GOLD IN CALIFORNIA, JAN. 24, 1848. AN 1880S PHOTOGRAPH OF MARSHALL WAS SKILLFULLY REPRODUCED IN AUTOCHROM BY LOUIS GLASER IN 1908. [CW 537]

printing plate was effectively replacing manually produced wood engravings for newspaper illustrations; and it was a clever application of this technique to postcard printing that revolutionized the industry. The halftone plate, or *autotype*, enabled typographic printing of a photograph’s continuous tone by breaking up the image into various dot patterns. Glaser’s contribution was a combination of lithographed patches of color with black, halftone overlay. In essence, three to five runs of color were laid down from plates created by retouchers in the same manner as chromolithography, followed by one letterpress run in black using a metal plate bearing an acid-etched, halftoned image based on the source photograph—a primitive forerunner to today’s CMYK color process.

Soon after Glaser began using his Auto-Chrom method commercially in 1884, the generic term *autochrom* was adopted for any technique where photographic based halftones were printed over lithographic color. Glaser employed skilled workers who were adept at generating superior detail from customer photos by using fine screen halftones. Other German printers eventually achieved



UNDERGROUND OPIUM DEN, CHINATOWN. THIS EARLY WEIDNER IMAGE WAS REPRINTED BY GLASER AFTER THE 1906 SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE, BUT BEFORE THE MARCH 1907 DIVIDED BACK REGULATION TOOK EFFECT. [CW 31, UNDIVIDED BACK]



THE DETROIT PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY COPIED WEIDNER'S #31 ABOUT 1904. THE PRINTING IS NOTICEABLY INFERIOR TO GLASER'S AUTOCHROM.

similar quality. Emil Pinkau labeled his autochrom cards "Heliocolor," Carl Garte called his "Chromo-Autotypie," and August Frey used the term "Neuchrom." But Louis Glaser was the first to perfect the process and secured a large profit from his endeavors.

The tiny "Auto-Chrom" logo disappeared from Charles Weidner's cards sometime prior to the 1906 earthquake, and is not seen on image numbers above #148. It is unknown if the change was dictated by Louis Glaser or by Charles Weidner. The many multicolor, *undivided* back cards that lack the logo are reprints, ordered during the year prior to the *divided* back option that took effect March 1907.



LOUIS GLASER BILLHEAD, CIRCA 1910, FEATURES THE LEIPZIG, GERMANY FACTORY AND A FEMALE FIGURE DRAWING ON A LITHOGRAPHIC STONE. NOTE TELEGRAPH ADDRESS, "AUTOCHROM, LEIPZIG."

Louis Glaser's commercial billhead claims a founding year of 1868. What can be verified is that the man Louis Glaser (1842-1911) first partnered with lithographer Carl August Garte as "art publishers" during the period 1874-1882, after which Glaser constructed his own factory in the *Graphische Viertel* (Graphic Quarter)—a concentration of Leipzig's major publishers and printers on Johannisplatz (St. John's Square). In 1901 a new wing was added to Glaser's building complex with the street address of Kreuzstrasse 20.

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Chas. Weidner