

Picture Post Cards of the 1899 Hague Peace Conference

Exhibit Scope

This post card exhibit features the picture post cards published before, during and immediately after the International Hague Peace Conference of 1899.

Historical Background (Subject Knowledge)

In 1898, Russian Tsar Nicolas II (1868-1918) headed a Russian nation economically in dire straights due to military expenditures. To reduce the budget for military weapons and ammunition, he introduced a new concept in foreign policy through European pacification and arbitration by promoting disarmament rather than war to be discussed at an international conference.

He offered his proposal to 59 nations in 1898. Queen Wilhelmina (1880-1962) of the Netherlands agreed to host the conference in the *Huis ten Bosch* (House in the Wood), the royal residence in The Hague. The International Peace Conference of 1899 was a first step toward organized disarmament and peaceful arbitration of conflicts between countries. The Conference began on 18 May 1899 and was the first truly international effort to include countries outside Europe to end the arms race, codify the laws of war and form a Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Treatment

The conference also provided an opportunity for artists and post card publishers to depict the people and events of the day. This postcard exhibit reflects the remembrances of the Hague conference for visitors. It provides a glimpse into that time through the beautiful miniature artwork depicted.

The cards are presented in order of postcard subject. Titles, sub-titles and chapter titles are clearly placed on the pages. Short write-ups include pertinent subject, philatelic and deltiologic information.

Challenge, Significance, and Research

The challenge and significance of this exhibit is quite high as little information exists on these cards. The paucity of published material is reflected in only two articles associated with the conference and published by the United Nations (U.S.) and Dutch philatelic societies. The original research factor is high due to the sheer number of cards described and detailed information provided which was never previously recorded.

Condition and Rarity (Challenge)

Cards are selected for the best condition available, bearing in mind the age of the cards. Commercial mail is seldom pristine and post cards were especially affected as they were **only** social greetings. Efforts have been made to include unused specimens when possible, but used examples are also included. This exhibit is the product of 20+ years of collecting this area.

Highlights

- Delegate Cards - Pg 8, only examples outside the German Postal Museum, Bonn, Germany.
- Bloody Sunday Card - Pg 16, 3 examples reported.

Literature References

- Schraer, Konrad: The Hague Peace Conferences and the Establishment of the International Court of Justice, "The Journal" (United Nations Philatelists, Inc), Vol 6, #3, February 1983
- "De Tweede Haagse Vredesconferentie, 'De Postzak'", #205, November 2008
- Adams, Fran:
"The Hague Peace Conference of 1899. Postcards of the Conference", June 2020