

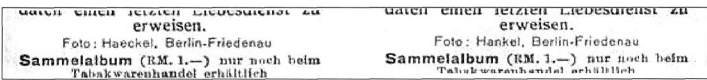
DER WELTKRIEG *by Stuart Arnold*



Some time ago, I wrote a general article about changes which occurred to German cigarette cards between printings. This article only scratched the surface of the subject, and I intended to produce a series of articles looking at specific sets in detail. Having been busy with the web site since then, I have so far only managed to write one article about the Aurelia “Olympiabanner” cards. Now however I have finally been able to produce a second detailed look at a set.

This time, the set I’ll look at is Der Weltkrieg (the world war) which was issued in 1937, so obviously it’s about the first world war. This set was a general issue of the German cigarette industry and I have counted 18 different backs to it. It is still readily available nowadays. I have not found any changes to the pictures themselves, but there are several interesting changes to the text on the backs.

The commonest change relates to a misprint regarding to the source of some of the pictures. In one version, cards are attributed to “Haeckel” and in the other to “Hankel”. I would speculate that



the error arose because at some point during the preparation of the

set, the name was written down by hand in the Suetterlin script which was common at the time. When written like this, “ec” and “n” look very similar and could easily be confused. Two of the most well-known press photographers of the day were the brothers Otto und Georg Haeckel. Otto worked in Berlin-Friedenau after the first world war, and the pictures are almost certainly from him, making “Haeckel” the correct version. All pictures from this source appear to be affected.

Another error occurred on card number 177, showing an otherwise unidentified German bomber. One version gives the bomb load (Nutzlast) of the plane as 1000kg, the other gives it as 5000kg. As far as I know there were no planes in WW1 which could carry five tons so I assume 1000kg is correct. Probably 5000kg refers to the total weight of the plane.

Three cards appear to have been changed for political reasons. Card 226 shows a queue waiting at a soup kitchen. The last sentence of the text has been changed. In the first version we read that



according to statistics, 762796 people died of hunger during world war 1. In the second version, this has been changed to “Above all it is thanks to the discipline of our people that food supplies did not break down completely”. Probably with Hitler being in the

Der Weltkrieg (1915)

Italien, Dardanellen, Orient

Nr. 55

Italienische Bersaglieri

Bei Ausbruch des Weltkrieges war Italien trotz seines Bündnisses mit Deutschland und Österreich neutral geblieben. Im April 1915 verpflichtete es sich durch den „Londoner Vertrag“, an der Seite der Entente zu kämpfen, wofür ihm Gebietszuwachs auf Kosten der Donau-Monarchie und der Türkei zugesichert wurde. Am 23. 5. 1915 erklärte es an Österreich den Krieg.

Der Weltkrieg (1915)

Italien, Dardanellen, Orient

Nr. 55. *Italienische Bersaglieri*

Im Mai 1915 begannen die Feindseligkeiten zwischen Italien und Österreich. Der ital. Generalstabschef Graf Cadorna setzte die Masse seines Heeres an der Isonzofront ein, die vom Golf von Triest bis in die Julischen Alpen verlief, und in der 12 große Schlachten stattfanden. Unser Bild zeigt eine ital. Elite-truppe, die Bersaglieri (bersaglio=Ziel), die ausgewählten Ersatz erhielt und durch ihre breiten Filzhüte mit Federbusch überall besonders auffiel.

process of retaking large pieces of territory by force at the time, it was felt unadvisable to unsettle the population with the thought that if it came to another war they would all starve.

Two cards, numbers 55 and 158, mention the Italians. Card 55 illustrates the Italian “Bersaglieri”, an

elite troop of soldiers. The first version tells us that “At the outbreak of war, Italy remained neutral despite its alliance with Germany and Austria. In 1915 it agreed to fight on the side of the ‘entente’ for which it was promised territory at the expense of the Danube monarchy and Turkey. On 23.5.1915 it declared war on Austria”. The second version tells us that “Aggression between Italy and Austria began in May 1915. General chief of staff Count Cadorna employed the bulk of his army on the Isonzo front running from Trieste to the Julian Alps, where twelve large battles took place. The picture shows an elite troop, the Bersaglieri, (Bersaglio = target), who received selected replacements and were conspicuous everywhere because of their wide felt hats with feathers.”

Card 158 shows the booty from the Germans’ Italian offensive. The first version tells that after the Germans had smashed the Isonzo front, the Italians fled back behind the Piave and would have been destroyed if the English and French hadn’t come to their aid. The second version tells that the Italians initially suffered heavy losses but were subsequently able to set up a new front behind the Piave.

Why should these two cards have been changed?

The answer is most likely

the alliance made between Germany and Italy (and Japan) in November 1937. Until then Italy had been considered more of an enemy, having fought against Germany in world war 1. However with the improvement of relations it was probably also felt that the text of the cards should be changed to present Italy in a better light. This change thus gives a good indication of the time period during which these cards were available.

I don’t know whether those are all the variations but I have checked several thousand cards so there is a good chance I have found them all. If anyone is aware of any others, please let me know.

Readers may also be interested in the following references:

<http://www.germancards.com/MultiIssuerW/Weltkrieg/weltkrieg.htm>

<http://www.dhm.de/magazine/fotografen/haeckel.html>

Der Weltkrieg (1917)

Italien, Orient

Nr. 158

Beute aus unserer italienischen Offensive

Nach Zertrümmerung der Isonzofront durch den deutsch-österreich. Durchbruch bei Flitsch und Tolmein (24. 10. 1917) fluteten die Italiener bis hinter den Piave zurück. Sie wären vernichtet worden, wenn nicht Engländer und Franzosen zur Hilfe geeilt wären, und schon vorher viel Mißgeschick unsere Verfolgung gehemmt hätte.

Foto: Reichsarchiv

Der Weltkrieg (1917)

Italien, Orient

Nr. 158

Beute aus unserer italienischen Offensive

Bei dem Durchbruch der Isonzofront durch deutsch-österreichische Verbände bei Flitsch und Tolmein (24. 10. 1917) hatten die Italiener eine starke Einbuße an Menschen und Material erlitten; dennoch gelang es ihnen, Mitte November eine neue Front hinter der Piave zu bilden. So wurde das Hauptziel der Offensive der Mittelmächte nicht vollständig erreicht.

Foto: Reichsarchiv