

Greeting Card History

Written greetings have existed since ancient times. The Chinese exchanged messages of good will to celebrate the New Year and the Egyptians communicated their greetings on papyrus scrolls. However, it was not until the early 14th century that handmade paper greeting cards started to be exchanged between individuals in Europe. At this time the Germans developed the use of woodcuts for the printing of their cards.

By the 1850s greeting cards had transformed from expensive, handmade and hand delivered to be a more affordable and thus common form of communication due to technical advances in printing which involved mechanisation. These advances resulted in new trends such as Christmas cards. The first recorded Christmas Card was published in London in 1843. Then in the 1860s companies such as Marcus Ward & Co, Charles Bennett and Goodall began the mass production of greeting cards. These companies employed well known artists such as Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway as card designers and illustrators. The development of color lithography in 1930 propelled the manufactured greeting card industry forward to the industry we know today.