

Postcards relating to Indo-Caribbeans

Print Coll. 40

Finding aid prepared by Alexandra M. Wilder.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2017 June 8

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Title	Postcards relating to Indo-Caribbeans
Call number	Print Coll. 40
Date	late 19th century to 1975
Extent	0.2 linear foot (1 box)
Language	English
Language Note	English, French, and Dutch.
Abstract	The postcards in this collection, dating from the late nineteenth century to 1975, depict Indo-Caribbeans in the British West Indies and Suriname.

Cite as:

Postcards relating to Indo-Caribbeans, late 19th century to 1975, Print Coll. 40, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

Biography/History

After slavery was abolished in the British Caribbean in the 1830s, colonial officials and land-owners

looked to fill positions in labor-intensive industries, especially in the production of sugar. Among these sources for new laborers were the territories making up British India (today's India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan). Beginning in the 1830s, men as well as women and children made the voyage to the Caribbean, largely to Trinidad and British Guyana. Many of these laborers signed contracts in South Asia based on misleading promises and others did so forcibly to satisfy long-standing debts, while some were kidnapped and sold into the trade. Large numbers of such migrants arrived in the Caribbean, more than a quarter million by 1900, permanently changing the demographic and cultural makeup of their new homes. The postcards in this collection document the lives of Indo-Caribbeans as well as their perception by Euro-American travelers who served as the market for the majority of the images in this collection.

Scope and Contents

The 50 postcards in this collection, dating from the late nineteenth century to 1975, depict Indo-Caribbean life and culture in Trinidad, British Guyana, Suriname, and Jamaica. Large numbers of people from the Indian subcontinent arrived in the Caribbean following the end of slavery in British colonies there. Many of these migrants came as indentured servants to work in the labor-intensive agricultural sector. By the twentieth century, Indo-Caribbeans made up close to a third of the population of both Trinidad and British Guyana. The postcards in this collection were produced by a variety of studios, largely for sale to tourists, and include portraits, scenes of everyday life, mosques and temples, as well as the houses and villages of Indo-Caribbeans. A significant number of the postcards depict Indo-Caribbean women and children in staged scenes often dressed formally and adorned with jewelry. The postcards are arranged by country and then by subject. Some of the postcards have been written on and mailed, and feature postage stamps and postmarks, while some of the postcards are blank and have not been mailed. The postcards were mailed to a variety of locations around the world, including: Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia, PA; Springfield, MA; Scarsdale, NY; Manomet, MA; as well as Iceland, Tunisia, France, Holland, and Germany. The postcards that have been mailed are inscribed in English, French, and Dutch.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2017 June 8

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Source of Acquisition

Sold by over two dozen different online postcard sellers in the US, UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany via David Anthem Bookseller, February-April 2017.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Photographic postcards
- Picture postcards
- Postcards

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Guyana
- Suriname
- Trinidad

SUBJECT(S)

- East Indians--Caribbean Area
- Foreign workers, East Indian--Colonies--Great Britain
- Hindu temples
- Hinduism and culture
- Manners and customs
- Mosques
- South Asian diaspora
- Unskilled labor

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
British Guiana: "Coolie hut, British Guiana".	1	1
Dutch Guiana/Suriname: "Mrs. Legene with some little East Indian children, the orphanage, Dutch Guiana".	1	2
Dutch Guiana/Suriname: "Suriname, Britsch indische Koolivrouwen in Feestgewaad".	1	3
Dutch Guiana/Suriname: "Suriname, Hindoestaanse vrouw".	1	3
Jamaica: "Coolie huts, Jamaica".	1	4
Trinidad: "Indian child, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	5

Trinidad: "A Creole Indian at home, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	6
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Trinidad: "East Indian family and hut, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	6
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Trinidad: "East Indian huts, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	6
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Trinidad: "East Indian peasant's home, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	6
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Trinidad: "East Indian huts, Trinidad, B.W.I." [with fields].	1	6
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Trinidad: "Coolie marketplace, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	7
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Trinidad: "East Indian minstrels, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	8
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Trinidad: "East Indian, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	8
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Trinidad: "Indian labourer, cutting cane".	1	8
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Trinidad: "Indian man with home-grown bananas, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	8
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Trinidad: "'Snake charmer,' Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	8
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Trinidad: "Hindu temple and priests, penal, near San Fernando, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	9
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Trinidad: "Hindu temples are among the interesting attractions of Port of Spain, Trinidad-- colorful, polyglot junction of PAA's north, south and west routes.".	1	9
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Trinidad: "Hindu temple, St. James, Trinidad, W.I.".	1	9
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Trinidad: "Hindu temple, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	9
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Trinidad: "Indian mosque, Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	9
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Trinidad: "Indian mosque, Trinidad"	1	9
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Trinidad: "Indian temple, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	9
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Trinidad: "Mohammedan temple, Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	9
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Trinidad: "Hindu priest and acolyte, Tunapuna, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	10
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Trinidad: "Indian priest, Trinidad"	1	10
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Trinidad: "Indian priest, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	10
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Trinidad: "Coolie Hosein festival, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	11
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Trinidad: "Coolie Hosein religious ceremony, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	11
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Trinidad: "Trinidad, Port of Spain, St. Vincent Jetty [and] Queen's Park Hotel".	1	12
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Trinidad: "Coolie bell, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	13
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Trinidad: "Coolie milk vendor, Trinidad".	1	13
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Trinidad: "Coolie type, Trinidad".	1	13
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Trinidad: "The courtyard of the Hindu Mandir, St. James, Trinidad".	1	13
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Trinidad: "Dressed Coolie woman, all gold, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	13
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Trinidad: "East Indian brass shop, Trinidad, W.I."	1	13
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Trinidad: "East Indian girl, Trinidad"	1	13
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Trinidad: "East Indian girl, Trinidad, B.W.I." (two postcards)	1	13
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Trinidad: "East Indian, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	13
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Trinidad: "East Indian types, Trinidad, B.W.I."	1	13
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Trinidad: "Indian woman, Trinidad"	1	13
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Trinidad: "Trinidad, British West Indies"	1	13
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Trinidad: "Trinidad, a wealthy coolie woman awaiting her husband"	1	13
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Trinidad: "East Indian woman and child, Trinidad".	1	14
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Trinidad: "East Indian woman and child, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	14
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Trinidad: "East Indian woman & child, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	14
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Trinidad: "A family in the coolie village, Trinidad".	1	14
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Trinidad: "East Indians, Trinidad, B.W.I.".	1	14
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