

J21 THE 'COMET-ASTERISK' SERIES OF POSTCARDS



These are a puzzling series of cards, and are generally scarce, but the Drier photographic collection, held by the East Gippsland Historical Society at Bairnsdale (Victoria) includes a large number of photographic reproductions of the series. Our knowledge of the series largely comes from this collection, which is discussed below.

All are real photographs, and virtually all have the title enclosed in a characteristic and ornate scrollwork frame. The title and frame are overlain on the negative and so appear superimposed on the photograph in white. The cards appear to constitute a single series, although there are several variations in the word or symbol associated with the title and its scrollwork :

'Comet Series' in circle	C
Fern-like symbol in circle	F
Asterisk	*

and they appear on a range of different backs. These include:

Falk & Wilkins	F
Harding & Billing (not seen on a cave card, hence not listed here)	
Kodak K-D print paper.	K-D
Unknown (photographic copy in the Drier collection at the Bairnsdale Museum is the only available example)	U

We firstly proceed to a normal listing of those that we have seen as postcards (see also under Stanthorpe, Queensland and Mole Creek, Tasmania).

J21. COMET / ASTERISK SERIES

F see above

On Falk & Wilkins back in green: with asterisk logo, un-numbered

J21.J21.1218 The Stalactite, Lookers (sic= Lucas) Cave,/Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
(The number does not appear on this card – but it is identical with J21.1218
in
the Drier collection.

On Falk & Wilkins back in green: with comet logo, numbered

J21.J21.1167 Devil's Coach House, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 J21.J21.1173 Tower Chamber, River Cave,/Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 J21.J21.1193 Water Falls, Cave River./ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H
 J21.J21.1203 The Bridge, Outside, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H
 J21.J21.1219 The Grand Column, /Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 J21.J21.1226 Shawls in Monsmeg Chamber, /River Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 J21.J21.1229 The Madonna Cave, Left Imperial, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H
 J21.J21.1239 Mafeking Cave, Lucas Cave,/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 J21.???? ? Lucas Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V [A severely faded card]

We now turn to the complete listing including not only the above, but all those represented in the Drier Collection.

The photographic copies in the Drier collection all have a pencilled date on the back, which was doubtless the date upon which the Drier family copied the original card. Those from Jenolan show various dates in August and September 1939, while all those from Mole Creek are dated Monday 28th. August 1939. Certainly, various of the original photographs were clearly taken long before the date shown. Thus, J21.1165, as noted above, shows the photographic kiosk which was demolished in 1923; J21.1226 has a 19J21.11 date, while 1509 (Mole Creek) has a 1916 date; the clothing styles of visitors suggest an even earlier date.

J21.1154 Charlotta (sic) Arch, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1157 Entrance to Devils Coach House/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1165 The Cave House, /Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H (includes central photo kiosk in view)	C U
J21.1167 Devil's Coach House, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C F
J21.1171 Salt Pans, Right Imperial, /Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V (does not show this view)	F U
J21.1172 Nellies Grotto, Right Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1173 Tower Chamber, River Cave,/Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C F
J21.1173 Tower Chamber, River Cave,/Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1174 Temple of Baal, River Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1175 Entrance to Arch Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1178 Willows, Nettle Cave /Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1179 Shawls, Temple Baal /Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1180 Grand Stalactite, Right Imperial /Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1182 Josephine Grotto, Right Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1183 Sculptures Studio, Nettle Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1185 Crystal Fountain,/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1186 Arch Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1187 Sculptures Studio, Nettle Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1188 Sculptures Studio, Nettle Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1189 Sculptures Studio, Nettle Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1190 Ridley's Short Cut, Right Imperial,/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1191 Gem of the South, Temple Baal / Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1192 Steps leading to Arch Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1193 Water Falls, Cave River./ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	C
J21.1195 Mysteries, Jubilee Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U

J21.1200 The Cemetery, River Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1203 The Bridge, Outside, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	C F
J21.1206 The Arch of Mysteries, Temple Baal/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1207 Corinthian Column, Nettle Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1208 Lot's Wife, Right Imperial, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1209 Ending Arch Cave,/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1210 The Entrance, Arch Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1211 Gem of the West, Right Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1212 Alcove, Arch Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1213 The Grecian Bend, Right Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C F
J21.1214 The Arch Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1215 The Lyne Cave, Jubilee Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1216 The Arch Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1217 The Ball Room, Corinthian Column/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1218 The Stalactite, Lucas Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1219 The Grand Column, /Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C F
SAME	C U
J21.1220 Snowball Cave, Lucas Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W.V	C U
J21.1221 The Monsmeg Chamber, River Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1222 The Terraces, Lucas Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1223 The Bone Cave, Lucas Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1224 The Bone Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1225 The Tower Chamber, River Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1226 Shawls in Monsmeg Chamber, /River Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C F
Shawls in Monsmeg Chamber, /River Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1229 The Madonna Cave, Left Imperial, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	C F
J21.1230 The Mysteries, Left Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1231 The Shambles, Left Imperial, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1233 The Giant Shawls, River Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1235 The Terraces, Lucas Cave,/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U
J21.1236 The Topsy Cave, Lucas Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V (actually depicts broken column)	C U
J21.1237 The Esther Cave, River Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1238 The Minaret, River Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1239 Mafeking Cave, Lucas Cave/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	F U
J21.1242 The Grotto Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V	C U
J21.1243 Architects Studio, Left Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H	F U

The Drier Collection also includes copies of a number of un-numbered cards, all but one of which bear an asterisk symbol. There are several reasons for considering these as part of the same series:

- several negatives overlap as indicated below
- the man who appears in the view of the Madonna Cave below (John Wilson?) also appears in a number of those listed above and is even wearing the same clothes
- the unity of the set in the Drier collection is also suggestive in itself.

The Madonna Cave, Left Imperial, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W.
 Entrance to Nettle Cave/Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 The River, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H
 Jenolan Caves H (photo of cave decoration)
 Pathway/ Cave House/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 Tipsy Cake, Lucas Cave/Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 The Tipsy Cave, Lucas Cave, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V (actually depicts the Broken Column; s.n.a. J21.1236)
 Katie's Bower (Looking Out) Left Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H
 The Shambles, Left Imperial, Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H (s.n.a. J21.1231)
 The Grotto Cave, Left Imperial/ Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 Interior of Devils Coach House Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. H
 Entrance to Devil's Coach House/Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. V
 Broken Column, Jenolan V (no scrollwork surrounding title)
 Crystal Cities. Jenolan. Blue Mountains. H (no scrollwork surrounding title)
 Shawls/ Jenolan/ Blue Mountains V (no symbol, no scrollwork)

Two different origins have been suggested for cards with the asterisk symbol. The first is John Park, a Sydney photographer who was on the staff of Charles Kerry, and then went into business on his own account in Leichardt. (see Newsletter N.S.W. Post Card Collectors Society, 6: 4-5,1981) However, this suggestion is now more or less discarded in favour of William Livermore of the Star Photographic Company (loc. cit., 23: 4-7). The question now is whether either were responsible for the whole of the range described here?