

2.2 Off we go! – And now the parachutes soar into the heavens.



This is a military hot-air balloon being used on manoeuvres near Indianapolis. Note the sand bag hanging to one side of the balloon.

Circa 1908, -, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).



Circa 1910s, -, Commercial Colortype Co Illinois, used, Halftone. This is an early parachutist hanging under a hot air balloon with his parachute hanging from the side of the balloon.



1906, -, used, Real Photo (RPPC)? Undivided back.



1907, -, used, Real Photo (RPPC). Undivided back.

The hot-air balloon is racing skywards with the parachute hanging beneath, ready to go.

Notice the small mouth of the balloon. This suggests it was filled by a pipe carrying the hot air instead of the balloon with a large "mouth" being positioned over a fire pit then filling with hot air (like the postcard above).

On Monday 11th June 1906 at the Haworth Gala Lily Cove rose up under her hot-air balloon. At just under 1000ft her parachute opened as planned; however, she was dangerously close to Ponden reservoir. It appears that at about 100 feet she climbed out of her harness and, misjudging either her height or the fact that she was still over ground and not water, jumped. She died on impact.

Quality postcards of this event are very hard to find. This postcard took 20 years to find and remains the only one I have seen in private hands.



1906, -, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).

2.2 Off we go! – The parachute starts to open.



Circa 1920s, Rhodes?, REAL Photographs Liverpool, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).

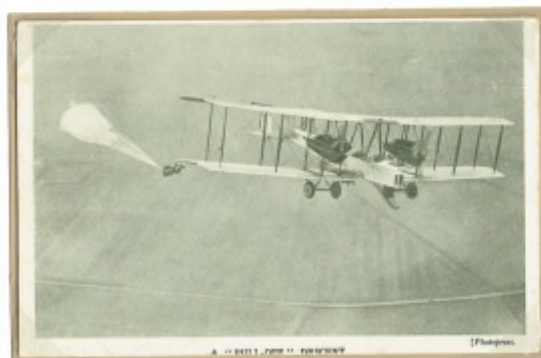
The parachutist has just jumped. You can see the small 'drogue' parachute dragging out the main parachute. A technique that is still used today.

One parachutist has just jumped from the plane, his parachute nearly fully open. A second parachutist appears to be standing on the wing and his parachute is just starting to open. His drogue parachute is just visible.

The aircraft is a Vickers Vimy used by the RAF as a heavy bomber until at least 1925 and it was this type of aircraft that was used for the first non-stop crossing of the Atlantic by Alcock and Brown in June 1919.



Circa 1930s, W. Christmas, REAL Photographs Liverpool, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).



1920s, -, unused, Halftone.

Some parachutists did not use drogue parachutes. Either they used a static line to pull the parachute out of its storage bag or they used a form of 'rip-cord' to release the parachute whilst in free fall. The photograph does not make it clear which method was used on this occasion.

The Japanese caption reads 'Acrobatics in the air by aviator Hino Kumazo at Fukushima racecourse in December'. Hino Kumazo died of malnutrition in 1946.

Note that the parachutes risers (joining the parachute to the parachutist) come together well above his head, just like German parachutes. This makes steering the parachute impossible.



1930s, -, unused, Photogravure.

2.2 Off we go! – The parachute starts to open.



1959, -, General Sales Service Virginia, used, Halftone.

Military parachutist practising jumping, getting into the right position and then landing - all without a parachute!

Depicting sport parachutists jumping from commercial aircraft. The parachutes are starting to open, possibly being pulled out by small pilot parachutes.

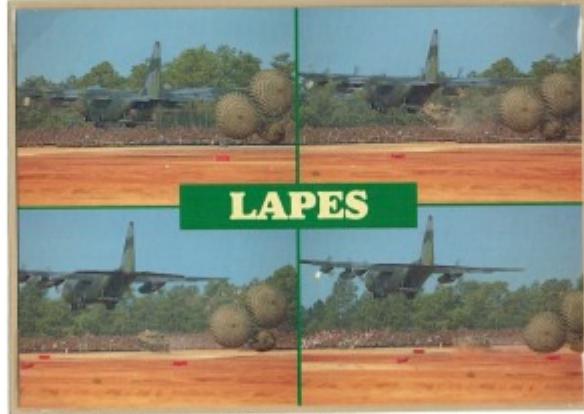


1950s, -, unused, Hand Tinted Line Drawn Lithograph.



British passengers being dropped from a giant plane.

1940s, -, unused, Halftone.



1980/90s, Steve Crawford, US Allegiance Inc Oregon, unused, Halftone.

British parachutists dropping from a converted Whitley bomber. These were used to train parachutists during World War 2.

Some parachute journeys are quite short. This one lasted just for a few seconds as they dragged out a tank from a low flying Hercules transport plane.

A USA Boxcar transport plane delivering supplies by parachute. Note the two parachutes on each pallet suggesting a heavy load.



Circa 1950s, -, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).

2.2 Off we go! – The first few seconds of a parachute opening can cause some concern to the parachutist!



1945, -, Horn Germany, used, Real Photo (RPPC).

The parachutist has just jumped and the parachute is struggling to open. A parachutist in free fall travels at 70mph after only 4 seconds and would have fallen 240ft in this time. Military paratroops often jump from 1000ft in order to minimise the time under canvas, so little time to correct any errors!

This person is trying paragliding. The idea is that a speedboat will travel fast enough to keep you airborne, however, plenty of people have been pulled through the water at speed because the parachute did not open or they landed in the water because the speed boat stopped too early!



Circa 1960s, -, Turmex, Mexico, unused, Halftone.



1926, -, used, Photogravure.

Rene Granveaud jumped from a Paris railway bridge in December 1925. Fortunately the parachute was already partially inflated and he survived the 27m descent. In a free fall he would have hit the road in just over 2 seconds, too short a time for his parachute to open.

Interestingly jumping from Buildings, Antennae (masts), Structures or Earth is called BASE jumping and is very popular today. He therefore can claim to be one of the first BASE jumpers!



Circa 1910s, Dauber, -, unused, Halftone.

Jumping without a parachute is not recommended!

It takes 12 seconds in free fall to achieve terminal velocity of approximately 120 mph, by which time you would have fallen 1500ft.

There are some known and verified cases of airmen in World War 2 falling from aircraft and surviving. Flight Sergeant Nicholas Alkemade fell 18,000 feet from his plane. Fire on the plane destroyed every available parachute, so he jumped without one and ended up falling into a patch of pine trees and only sprained his leg.



Circa 1930s, -, Wilkinson Toronto, unused, Halftone.

2.2 Off we go! – Some parachutes need to work for only a few seconds, or just once, but they must work!



1960/70s, -, Rotacolor Milan, unused, Halftone.

This Italian FIAT G91 aircraft served for many years with the Italian aerobatic team, the Frece Tricolori. The postcard shows its deployed breaking parachute.



Circa 1960s, -, -, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).

Notice the pilot parachute that pulled out the main. This approach meant that the main deployed quicker. Also notice the gaps in the parachute: this is a Ring-sail parachute designed to withstand high opening forces.



1996, G.S. Gallimore, -, used, Halftone.

A Vulcan bomber deploying its parachute on landing – its job done in just a few seconds.



Грандверк Союза Советских Социалистических Республик командир корабля «Восход» лётчик-космонавт Владимир Михайлович КОМАРОВ.

1960s, -, -, unused, Halftone.

Komarov was the first Soviet cosmonaut to fly the new Soyuz 1 spacecraft. Sadly he was killed when the Soyuz 1 space capsule crashed after re-entry on 24 April 1967 due to a parachute failure.



1970s, NASA, -, unused, Halftone.

Three 83 feet diameter parachutes support the Apollo 13 spacecraft before it splashes down in the South Pacific. The parachutes were used just once.

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Although parachutes at this time were always round, they all had different shapes and sizes.



Everything interesting and amusing at the Central Maine Fair

Circa 1910s, -, -, unused, Halftone.

This parachute is round but very flat. To trap the same volume of air it would need to have a bigger diameter than those that are shaped more like half a sphere. The bigger parachute is also more steerable but less stable.

These parachutes are not going to be very effective! A little on the small side! Conventional parachutes are around 28ft in diameter and everybody wears a harness, unlike early parachutists who hung onto a trapeze.

The air balloon is meant to be a depiction of Spruener's balloon that he built in 1902. As France had undivided backs until 1904 this postcard is most likely from the 1902-04 period.



Circa 1903, -, -, unused, Engraved.

Undivided back.



Pierre Labric was a well known Parisian journalist who would try unusual sports – like riding a bike down from the 2nd level of the Eiffel Tower!

Pierre was using a parachute designed by Alfred Franval who was a well known French WWI aviator and flying instructor. Notice, again, that the risers join well above his head making this parachute impossible to steer.

The USA permitted divided backs after 1 March 1907.

Circa 1920s, -, -, unused, Photogravure.

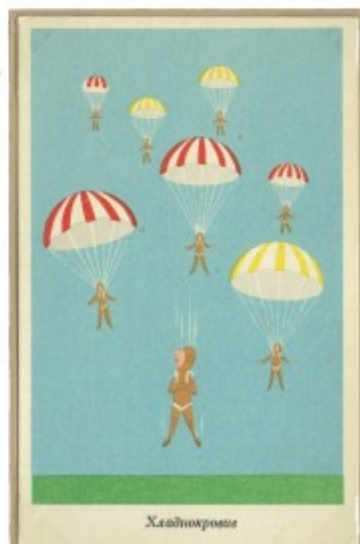


1906, -, Sherman USA, used, Lithograph
Undivided back

These are half-spherical shaped parachutes. Not very steerable but, so long as they have a hole in the top of the parachute, they are very stable.

As for the lone parachute-less parachutist: the translation is 'what's the problem?' Perhaps he should have remembered the unattributed quote 'You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice!'

In this period parachutists did not wear harnesses, they just held a trapeze bar!



1950s, -, Bani Budapest, unused, Lithograph

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Safely under a parachute.



Now safely under a parachute the parachutist is steering the parachute by pulling down on the front risers making the parachute travel forward.

Note the hole at the top of the parachute. Named after its inventor in 1797, Garnerin, this lets the trapped air escape and this helps to stabilise the parachute.

Circa 1950/60s, Rhodes?, REAL Photographs Co. Liverpool, Unused, Real Photo (RPPC).

Apparently pigs parachute as well! And bags of gold spread their load over the waiting people!

Parachutists do drop things: gloves, boots, goggles and glasses are typical dropped items.

The postcard inscription is 'Happy New Year' in Latvian.



1939, -, Ernst Plates Riga, used, Halftone.



1930, -, Unknown but German, used, Halftone.

In 1932 Alan Cobham started the National Aviation Day displays – a combination of barnstorming and joyriding. This consisted of a team of up to fourteen aircraft, ranging from single-seaters to modern airliners, and displays of parachuting skills.

Although not the approved way of parachuting with a dog, dogs have made many parachute jumps. During World War 2 the Allies used them on D-Day. They were trained to find mines and booby-traps.

The most famous dog being Bing who worked with the 13th (Lancashire) Parachute Battalion. A true-to-life replica of Bing is in the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Museum at Duxford.



Circa 1930s, -, Aerofilms Ltd London, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Parachutists are often depicted as being happy.



1930s, -, Dennis Productions, unused, Halftone.

Animals including dogs, cats and a monkey, have been used to test parachutes in the 18th and 19th century. Cats were allegedly parachuted into Borneo in the early 1960s to combat a surge in the rat population.

This is a Pull-out postcard, popular in the 1950s. Under the cat there is a strip of black and white photographs of Ramsgate.

Parachuting displays have entertained crowds for at least 200 years. Interestingly, the artist has forgotten to include the risers on the parachute so the parachute would collapse in reality!



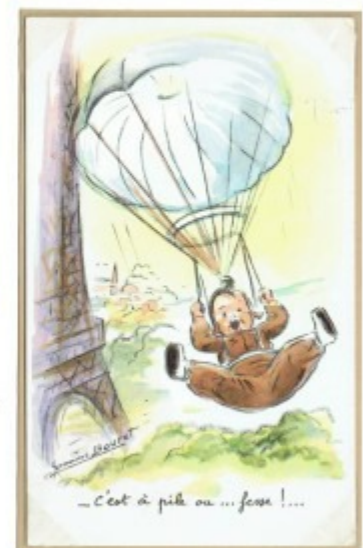
Circa 1950s, -, unknown but from Belgium, unused, Halftone.



1912, -, unknown but German, used, Real Photo (RPPC)

Parachuting from the Eiffel Tower has been very popular over the years. Many have died and today the Paris authorities ban parachuting from the Tower as fatalities are bad for business!

Many early parachutists modelled their costumes on nautical uniforms and gave themselves nautical titles e.g. Captain. This postcard was printed towards the end of the 'parachuting from balloons era' as aircraft became the entertainment vehicle of choice by World War I.



1965, Germaine Bouret, -, used, Lithograph?

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Parachute jumping for all sorts of reasons.



1940s, US Army Air Corps, Weiner News Co. Texas, unused, Linen Hand painted.

Military parachuting is a key driver for the development of parachuting. During WW2 tens of thousands of men and some women were trained to parachute. Today, many nations have parachute forces.

This was a famous parachute ride that had couples descend 180ft under a parachute canopy. Six couples could be 'entertained' at any one time and, as it was the guided by wires, it gave the paying customers a great and safe aerial view of Chicago.



Wedding on the Pair-O-Chutes - Riverview Park, Chicago, Illinois

1940s, -, Unused, Halftone.



1950s, -, Acacia Card Co. New York, unused, Linen, Hand painted block colour.

Parachuting for entertainment and fun. The 12 parachute rides were fixed to a vertical cable making it very safe for each pair of thrill seekers.

Parachute jumping apparently has more than one meaning!!



Circa 1950/60s, -, Bamforth (Comic no. 650), used, Photochrome.



Lots of people parachute just for fun, thousands in the UK alone. It has been described as the most exciting sport with your clothes on!

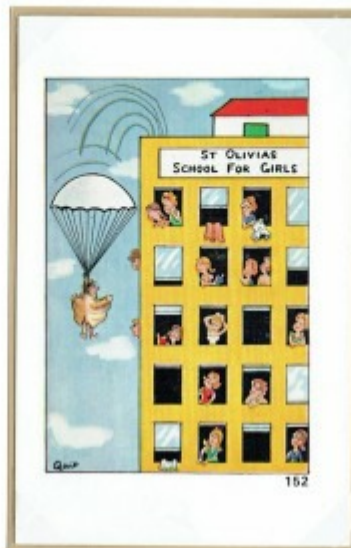
Circa 1920s, -, Aviation Comics, unused, Chromotypograph?

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Some strange behaviour by parachutists on the way down!



1950s, R. Hamel France, -, Unused, Halftone.

An invisible parachutist could be useful! Pity the parachute itself is not invisible as well!



1978, 'Quip', Sapphire UK, unused, Halftone.

This postcard had the back-stamp shown; it is an approval mark for the Isle of Man censor.



Few of these 'censorship approved' postcards exist in private hands. This is the only one I have ever seen with a parachute

A naked parachutist is rarely welcome! It's also rather cold parachuting naked!



Circa 1940s, -, Asheville Postcard Co. USA, unused, Linen.

Most British seaside towns had local censorship committees that approved or rejected 'risky' postcards. Blackpool was the 1st in November 1951. During 1954 the British authorities tried to clampdown on risky postcards, although Bamforth said in a court case in 1954 that his postcards were vulgar not obscene. The jury agreed with him. In the 1960s attitudes started to change and in 1968 the Blackpool committee closed and the last committee to close was the Isle of Man in 1985.

In my experience there is hardly time to write a letter on the way down!

Carrying a broom whilst parachuting seems rather odd! Perhaps it's his spare parachute!



1932, Altona-Eibe Hamburg, used, Photochrome.

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Parachuting in lots of different places.



Circa 1914-1918, -, -, unused, Real Photo (RPPC).

This shows the use of a parachute on the battlefield. This is an Allied observation balloon in World War I being shot down by a German plane and the Observer has just bailed out of the collapsing balloon.

By World War I cameras that could produce postcards for home use were readily available. It is most likely that the photographer took a few 'action' shots making just a few postcards. I have never seen a composition like it in all my years of collecting.



1905, -, Allots Ottawa, used, Halftone. Not divided back.

Parachuting has never caught on as a commuting method in Ottawa or anywhere else!

Canada permitted divided backs in December 1903.



1935, -, Salmon Ltd Sevenoaks, used, Halftone.

Parachuting into remote locations is still very much used. For disaster relief in particular, although mail drops do still happen in parts of the world.

The translation is: "Just off the plane. I came to see you."



1940, -, Tichnor Brothers Boston, used, Linen.

Parachuting at Fairs and Show grounds use to be very common. Sadly, the expense of providing a safe ride makes such experiences harder to find.

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Some parachutists carry odd things during their descent.



Circa 1950s, Jansen? French, -, unused, Halftone.

Dressed in a fur-lined coat and carrying a handbag and a bunch of flowers with a dog hanging on the risers seems an ambitious way to enter the New Year!

This parachutist is more like a mobile perch! And I hope he has a good grip on that gun and axe!



1960s, -, Midwest Map Co. (MWM), unused, Linen.



Circa 1910, Ceko France, unused, Chromolithograph.

Carrying a bunch of flowers in each hand maybe rather romantic but it makes steering the parachute extremely difficult.

A bunch of flowers seems to be essential equipment for the best dressed parachutist!



Circa 1910, Ceko France, unused, Chromolithograph.

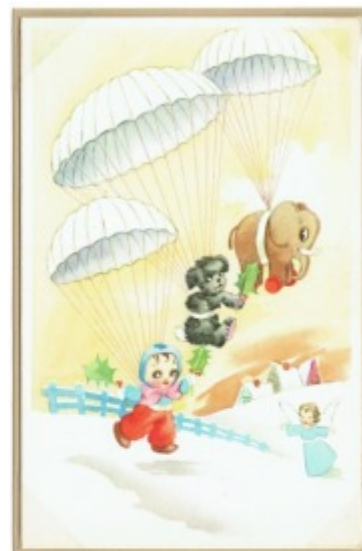
3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Heading for a not-so-soft landing?

This might be a soft landing – but followed by a quick march to the exit!

There is a "Society for the advancement of naked skydivers"? A bit too cold for me!



1942, -, used, Halftone.



Circa 1920s, -, unused, Lithography.

Coming to the point



Landing on a building is an occupational hazard for a parachutist. Landing on the lightning conductor is particularly unfortunate!

On 6th June 1944 John Steele from the 505th Parachute regiment landed on the church tower at Ste. Mère Eglise, Normandy.

Circa 1940s, Hutson Brothers London, unused, Halftone.



This is going to be a soft landing for somebody!

Tandem jumping is now very popular, especially for those wishing to do a charity jump.

Circa 1940s, -, but USA, unused, Linen.

3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Not everybody is heading for a soft landing.



This young lady is heading for an uncomfortable landing. Carrying a dog, umbrella and suitcase and her hat is falling over her eyes!
A modern day military parachutist can carry up to 150lbs of equipment, supplies and weapons.

1946, Phyllis Cooper, Millar & Lang, Used, Key Drawing using chromolithograph.

I'm sure this parachutist will get the point of landing!



1942, Reg Manning, Curteich USA, used, Linen using Colortone.



I never had this sort of landing! It certainly looks more attractive than landing on a grass field.
This is French and translates as: 'let yourself go, you will not get hurt'

Circa 1950s, -, used, Key Drawing using chromolithograph.

Will they end up landing in the sea or on the sand?

This is Dutch and translates as 'The brave parachutists'.



1938, F.C. Lewin, Salmon UK, used, Halftone.

3.0 Ready to go – Coming to the end of the descent.



1939, Blasius Chernitz, -, Used, Real Photo (RPPC).

This looks like it is going to be a hard landing! The wind is behind him giving the parachutist a lot of forward momentum – but I expect the crowd will enjoy watching him land.

With a few feet to go the parachutist should have their feet and legs together and slightly bent, with their hands above their heads. I think this person needs to practice more!



Circa 1930s, -, -, Used, Halftone.



1937, -, -, used, Chromolithograph?

Although the parachutist should walk away from this landing I am not convinced the roses will survive.

The parachutist is in a good position before landing. Feet together and legs slightly bent.



Georges Dathis

Circa 1939, A. Picoche Paris, -, unused, Photogravure.

Some landings are not as friendly as others!



1941, -, Flinger Fotos Germany, used, Key Drawing with chromolithograph.

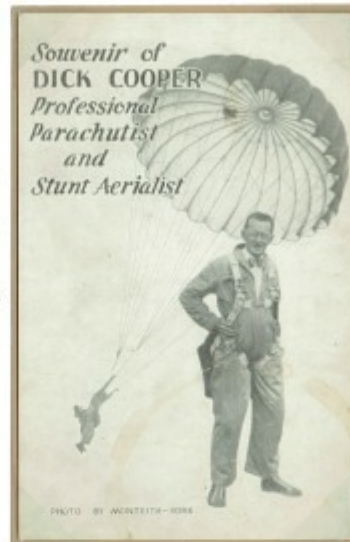
3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – The end of the descent.



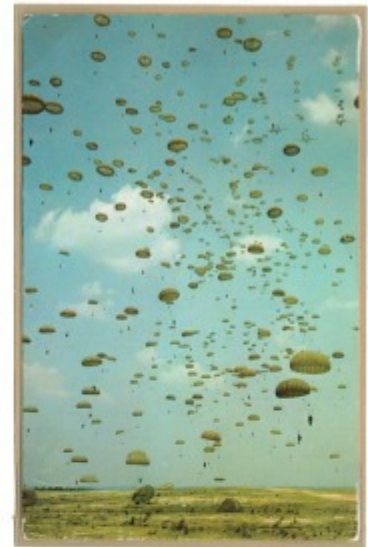
Circa 1950/60s, Arnold Taylor, Bamforth, unused, Halftone.

The closer you get to the ground the more dangers there are!

Feet together, arms up and holding onto the risers, this parachutist is ready to land. Something Dick Cooper did many times to entertain the crowds.



1958, -, Dexter N.Y., used, Photochrome.



Circa 1948, Monteith-York, -, unused, Halftone.
Landing with hundreds of other parachutists can be fun and dangerous!

Landing on somebody can soften the landing!



Circa 1940s, Viola, J. Salmon Ltd Sevenoaks, unused, Halftone.



1940s, -, E.C. Kropp Milwaukee, unused, Linen.

Some descent endings are better than others!