

One-sided playing card decorated with engraved map, fine original hand-colour

MAP OF THE MALDIVES PLAYING CARD

6 Isles Maldives [Playing card]

Author
[MORTIER, Pieter]

Publication date
c1721]

Publisher

Publication place
[Amsterdam

Physical description
One-sided playing card decorated with engraved map, fine original hand-colour

Dimensions
82 by 55mm. (3.25 by 2.25 inches).

Notes
This map of the Maldives is presented on a charming eighteenth century playing card.

In 1685, Pieter Mortier founded a map publishing group in Amsterdam, and in 1710 he produced a set of cartographic playing cards. The four suits of this deck each featured a different continent, with the individual cards displaying a map of various countries or regions. The six of diamonds displays the Maldives, and like many of Mortier’s maps, it is based on a French map of the islands.

After travelling to Paris in the early 1680s, he was awarded the right to publish the maps of French cartographers in Amsterdam. On his death, Mortier's business was inherited by his sons and continued in partnership with another publisher until the 1780s, by which time the company had a monopoly over the production of cartographic playing cards. In 1721, they created a new game to be played with them, the Covens & Mortier "Jeu de Geographie, ou sont les quartres parties du monde", for which the deck was issued with an instruction manual. The very nature and purpose of playing cards makes them vulnerable to damage and loss, and for this reason Mortier playing cards are extremely rare.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £1500

Inventory reference: 15287

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