



52 chromolithograph playing cards, housed in original orange slipcase.

PATRIOTIC PLAYING CARDS

Royal National Patriotic Playing Cards

Author

KIMBERLEY, David

Publication date

[c1892-1905].

Publisher

David Kimberley and Sons,

Publication place

Birmingham,

Physical description

52 chromolithograph playing cards, housed in original orange slipcase.

Dimensions

95 by 62mm (3.75 by 2.5 inches).

Notes

The Maker

Before the publication of their first deck of cards around 1892, David Kimberley & Sons do not ever seem to have worked in the printing or publishing trade. Rather, they were manufacturers of carpenters' saws and planes in Birmingham. Since there is no direct reference to this business on their playing cards, they do not seem to have been a publicity or advertising stunt. The motivation

behind this deck therefore remains something of a mystery, unless it was purely out of “national patriotic” pride!

The Cards

Each suit in Kimberley’s “National Patriotic” deck represents a great nation, its Ace depicting the national flag and the Court Cards its rulers or leaders, with the Jack representing a naval soldier in uniform. On the Clubs is Germany, on Diamonds Britain, on Hearts America and on Spades France. Across a ten year period, the cards were issued in four editions, the present deck being an example of the second, which appeared from 1893-97. The court cards and aces show the same design as the first edition, but the pip cards are different. While the first edition showed huge suit marks, containing two mirror-image Arabic numerals providing the value, here they are the conventional pip cards, with the number of suit marks conveying the value of the card.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £500

Inventory reference: 20697