



48 chromolithograph playing cards, with named portraits to verso, one duplicate card.

BULLFIGHTERS AND CHOCOLATE

Baraja Taurina

Author

[DURÁ, Simeon]

Publication date

1916

Publisher

[Simeon Durá],

Publication place

Valencia,

Physical description

48 chromolithograph playing cards, with named portraits to verso, one duplicate card.

Dimensions

95 by 62mm (3.75 by 2.5 inches).

Notes

The Makers

Active in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the opening decades of the twentieth, Simeón Dur of Valencia was among the most prominent cardmakers in Spain. Initially, Durá published decks using the same design as the earlier Manaut Brothers firm, from whom he had

taken over business, but later expanded his range to include original designs printed using modern lithographic equipment. Both the introduction of the card tax in 1904, and the Spanish Civil War decades after, put great strain on the Durá firm, and by the 1950s it had stopped producing playing cards, instead operating as a general printing company, which it continued to do until 1970 under Durá's sons. The present deck was produced for Chocolates Angelical of Barcelona; at this time many Spanish chocolatiers sold their goods accompanied by a collectable card or deck of cards for promotional purposes.

The Cards

The Spanish suit system has been adapted here so that the coins are represented as medallions, each containing a portrait of a famous bull-fighter, and clubs as the torero's banderilla, a short fabric-covered stick with a barbed dart at the end. These reflect the overarching theme of the deck: the bullfight. These symbols, alongside cups and swords, appear on the Two to Nine pip cards in numbers reflecting the card's value. On each of the cups, which appear to be small shot glasses, the iron of a bull breeder is shown. These branding irons had become something like logos for the various farms and breeders that provided bulls for the fights.

On the Ace of each suit are the leading bullfighters of the day – Rafael Molina “La Gartigo”, Rafael Guerra Guerrita and Juan Molina – and on the Cups, the iron of the most prestigious bullbreeder in Spain, the Duque de Veragua. The court cards likewise show prominent fighters, all identified by name. To the verso of each card is also a portrait of a torero, again with his name written outside of the frame, as well as the advertisement for Chocolates Angelical.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £800

Inventory reference: 21532