



40 engraved playing cards, with green pattern to verso, tax stamp to Ace of Hearts.

DON'T HURT THE HUNGARIANS!

[Hungarian Tarock cards]

Author

WILNER, J[osef]

Publication date

1865

Publisher

Spielkarten Fabriks Actien Gesellschaft in Pest,

Publication place

Budapest,

Physical description

40 engraved playing cards, with green pattern to verso, tax stamp to Ace of Hearts.

Dimensions

100 by 56mm (4 by 2.25 inches).

Notes

The Maker

Josef Wilner, whose name appears on the Jack of Diamonds, was a card-maker who became prominent in Pest during the revival of playing-card production in the city following the Habsburg suppression of the Hungarian revolution. With several decks by Wilner extant today, he seems to have

made cards following a range of themes, including a pack designed for children.

The Cards

The Hungarian variant of the Tarock family of card games originated in nineteenth century from an Austrian version. It is thought that the 48 points required to win the game may be a reference to the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, suppressed by the Russians under Ivan Fyodorovich Paskevich, after whom the game is sometimes known as 'Paskievics'. The Hungarian Tarock deck is made up of trumps (I to XXI, and a Skiz, or Fool), court cards of King, Queen, Cavalier and Jack, and then in the black suit a Ten pip card, while in the red an Ace. The present deck is lacking the two Tens of Clubs and Spades.

The court cards are double-figures and traditionally dressed in royal garb, and the Skiz shows a double-figure jester-like character holding a baton that reads "ne bántsá a magyart" ('Don't hurt the Hungarians'), perhaps a reference to the recent revolution. Interestingly, the Jack of Diamonds holds an open book on which it is written, along the maker's name, "legfőbb kártya" ('nicest card'). The numbered trump cards all show double-sided illustrations of rural scenes and figures. On the XIV, women are shown washing garments, on one side in a stream, and on the other in a wooden basin; on the XV, men water animals, the upper image showing a man allowing his horses to drink from a well, and the lower leading cows to a trough.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £1200

Inventory reference: 21536