

# The English Playing-Card Society



## Newsletter

## March 1984

# The English Playing-Card Society Newsletter

The English Playing-Card Society was formed in January 1984. Its purpose is to bring together collectors, researchers and interested persons who wish to share information concerning designers and makers of English playing-cards and English children's card games during the period from 1660 to 1960.

## Editorial Comment

With the publication of this first newsletter we would wish to welcome all those who have joined the society. There are already many members from overseas in Europe, Australasia and North America. We would be pleased to hear from these members about particular collecting interests in their own countries. We hope that new members will continue to join at the present rate so please let us know of anyone who would like to receive a complimentary newsletter.

## Who was Bamford?

Following a letter received from Trevor Denning about the article on the King of Hearts we have made an interesting discovery. Trevor pointed out that the Bamford pack illustrated in Gurney Benham, (Playing-Cards the history and secrets of the pack,) does not actually exist. After many hours of searching we have found that Benham's illustration was taken from a Brotherton pack of c.1800. It fits in all the detail, bearing in mind the Benham illustration had been redrawn for the printer. An interesting search and I think the first satisfactory answer to a long-standing problem.

— o o —

If you would like further information on any of your cards we will be pleased to help. Send a clear photocopy to either of us together with a stamped addressed envelope, or an International reply coupon overseas, and we will supply what information we can. English cards only. No valuations.

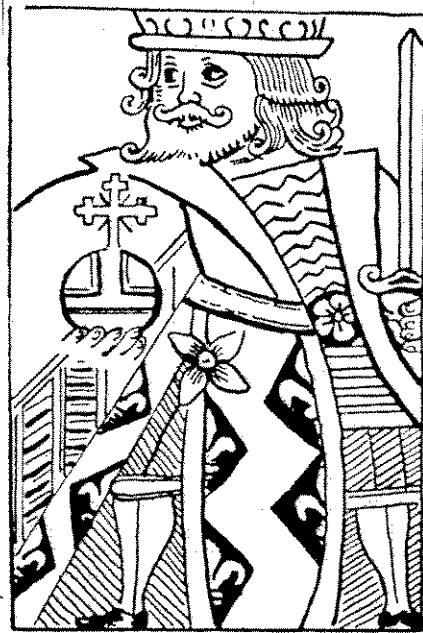
In order not to mark all the illustrations with a copyright sign, please note that all the photosheets, catalogue and numbering systems are protected by copyright internationally.

Major Donald Welsh  
Long Furlong                      and  
Hartland  
Bideford, Devon EX39 6AT

Peter Way  
87a, Castle Street  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire SP1 3SP



Maréchal, Rouen 1570



English 1675



Brotherton 1800

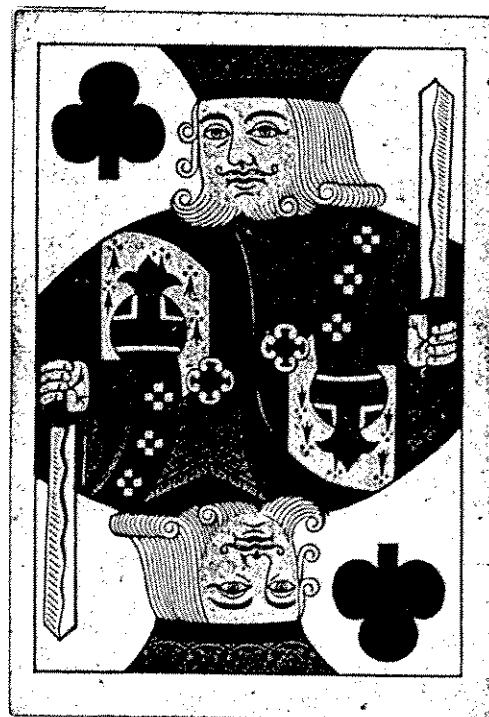
### The King of Clubs

The design of the King of Clubs is noteworthy for two major alterations in his early life. Both of these concern the orb which he is shown to be holding. He does at least have hold of it until the middle of the 19th century when his fingers mysteriously merge with the design of the orb, seen clearly in the De La Rue example. The Rouen ancestor has the cross of Lorraine on the orb which becomes anglicised by 1675 and then transforms into a meaningless bunch of leaves. Interestingly the Goodall version restores a symbolic fleur-de-lis which had completely disappeared with the new double-ended designs. The fleur-de-lis symbols being in the lower part of the earlier costume, barely visible by 1830 and then lost altogether. The flower which hangs at the belt of the Rouen King can be traced all the way through the later designs right up to the central blob on the Goodall example. It is also interesting to see that the sweeping black line derives originally from the edge of the cloak. Other examples of this king can be seen on the auction illustrations. There remains the question of his left-handedness.

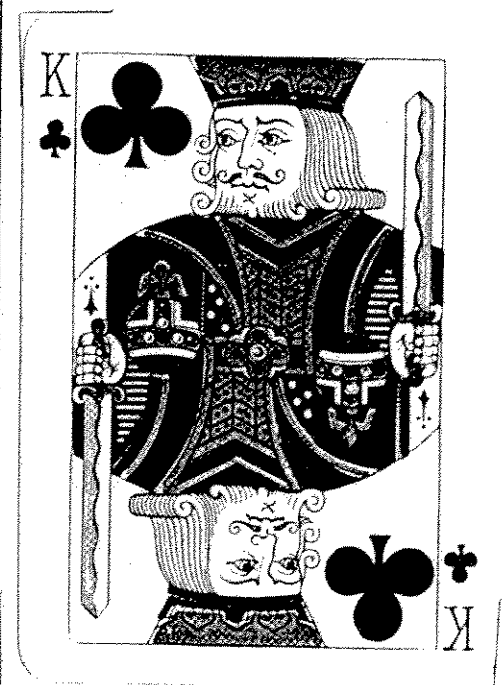
[PCW]



Hunt & Sons 1830



De La Rue 1875



Goodall 1900

**Bancks Bros.  
Card Maker's Bond 1855**

*Know all Men by these Presents, Anthony Bancks of the City of Westminster Card-maker, Robert Aldridge Bancks of the same place Card-maker, Jesse John Justice of Woodland Terrace Greenwich in the County of Kent, Alkali and Coal Merchant, and Charles Septimus of St. Martin's Street Agents Posters in the County of Middlesex, Lead and Glass Warehouse and Card-maker*

are held and firmly bound unto our Sovereign Lady VICTORIA, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, in the Sum of *Five Hundred Pounds* of good and lawful Money of Great Britain, to be paid to our said Lady the Queen, Her Heirs or Successors: To which Payment well and truly to be made, we bind ourselves and each and every of us severally, and any two or more of us jointly, for and in the whole, our and each and every of our Heirs, Executors, and Administrators, firmly by these Presents. Sealed with our Seals. Dated the *Twelfth* day of *September* in the *nineteenth* Year of the Reign of Her said Majesty, and in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and *fifty-five*

WHEREAS the above-bounded *Anthony Bancks*, and *Robert Aldridge Bancks* intend to carry on the Trade or Employment of making Playing Cards, and have applied to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for a License for that purpose, pursuant to the Statute in such case made and provided.

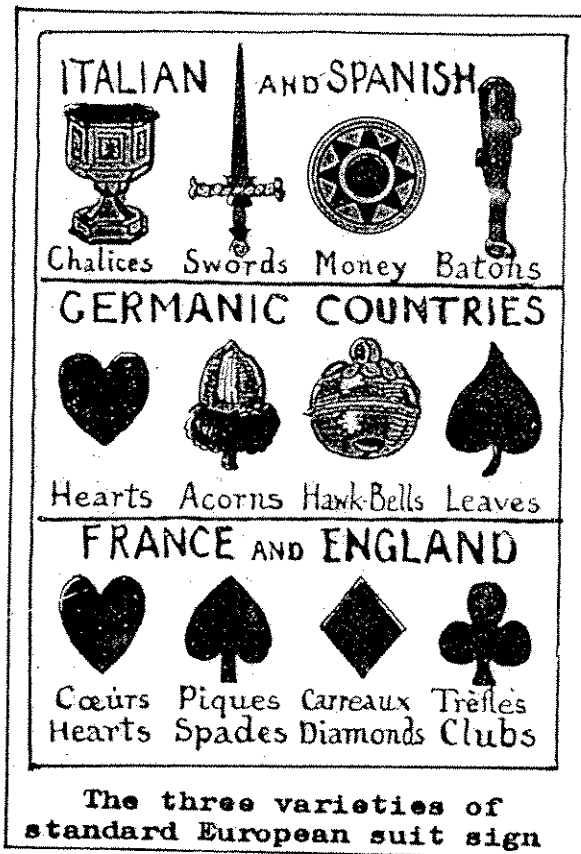
Now THE CONDITION of the above-written Obligation is such, that if the said *Anthony Bancks and Robert Aldridge Bancks* do and shall from time to time and at all times hereafter, so long as *they* shall be concerned or engaged in the making of Playing Cards, well and truly do observe, perform, and fulfil all and every the Acts, Matters, and Things, which by an Act passed in the ninth Year of the Reign of His late Majesty King George the Fourth, entitled "An Act to repeal the Stamp Duties on Cards and Dice made in the United Kingdom, and to grant other Duties in lieu thereof; and to amend and consolidate the Acts relating to such Cards and Dice, and the Exportation thereof," or by any Act or Acts at any future time to be in force, relating to Duties of Stamps on Playing Cards, are or shall be required on *their* parts and behalfs to be done, observed, performed, and fulfilled: And also if the said *Anthony Bancks and Robert Aldridge Bancks* Heirs, Executors, or Administrators, or any of them, do and shall from time to time well and truly pay or cause to be paid to the Receiver General of Inland Revenue for the time being, for the use of Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, all such Duties as the said *Anthony Bancks and Robert Aldridge Bancks* shall be liable to on account of making any playing Cards during the time *they* shall carry on or be concerned in the Trade or Employment of *maker* of Playing Cards; and do and shall also pay and satisfy every such Fine or Penalty as shall be incurred by or adjudged to be paid by the said *Anthony Bancks and Robert Aldridge Bancks* under any Conviction or Judgement for any thing to be done or omitted by *them* contrary to the said recited Act, or any other Act relating to the Duties on Playing Cards which shall be in force at any time hereafter; And also if the said *Anthony Bancks and Robert Aldridge Bancks* Heirs, Executors, or Administrators, or any of them, do and shall well and truly pay or cause to be paid to the said Receiver General for the use of Her said Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, the Sum of One Shilling for every Ace of Spades delivered to the said *Anthony Bancks and Robert Aldridge Bancks* whether for sale or use in the United Kingdom, or for Exportation to the Isle of Man, or other Parts beyond the Seas, which shall not be produced or duly accounted for upon any inspection of the Stock of the said *Anthony Bancks and Robert Aldridge Bancks* by any Officer appointed in that behalf, pursuant to the Statute in such case made and provided, then the above-written Obligation to be void or else to be and remain in full force and virtue.

Signed, sealed, and delivered,  
by the above-bounded  
in the presence of  
*John Key*

*A. Bancks*  
*R. Bancks*  
*J. Justice*  
*Chas. Septimus*



## Why do we call a Spade a Spade?



It has been claimed that the suitmarks represent the four 'estates' of mankind as they existed in medieval days.  
Hearts: the Ecclesiastics, who were the statesmen and the ruling class.  
Spades: the Military or Nobles who held their rank and property as a result of their military service.  
Diamonds: the Commercial and Industrial class  
Clubs: the Peasant or Working class

The English have translated the names of the suitmarks into their own language and in so doing clouded the meaning with both mystery and surprise.

The designs most probably originated in the city of Rouen in Northern France where cards were made and exported to many parts of the European continent. We find that the English when they came to name their suits were also influenced by the Spanish and Italian designs.

Our word for the Spade suit is derived from its Latin equivalent which in Italian is 'Spade' and in Spanish 'Espadas'. The French wishing to simplify the mark without losing its military significance changed the sword into a pikestaff and named the suit 'Piques'.

The French 'Trefles', trefoils, which as leaves would seem to be related to the Germanic Leaves suit became Clubs in England which clearly returns to the Latin suited Batons. The riches of the Coin suit seems to be reflected in our Diamond suit, but the French word for this suit is Carreaux, meaning paving stone, which requires considerable research to establish the real significance of that name. Hearts, Hearts and Coeurs in Germany, England and France all have the same origin, perhaps representing the soul, a more fitting interest for the Ecclesiastics?

There is without doubt scope for a great deal of research into this academic but fascinating question.

[RFEW]

## Bancks Bros. Bond

Although written in the typical style of unintelligible legal jargon the Card Makers bond shown opposite (reduced size) makes interesting reading.

It is dated the 12th September 1855 and licences the Bancks Brothers to make cards and promise to pay the duty. The bond is for £500, an enormous sum of money for those days. There must have been outstanding profits at stake.

Anthony Bancks of 20, Piccadilly, Card Maker

Robert Olddiss Bancks, same address, Card Maker

Jesse John Tustin, 3 Woodland Terrace Greenwich, Alkali and Acid merchant

Charles Leftwich, 20 Munster St. Regents Park, Varnish maker

are the signatories to this bond, but only the Bancks brothers are being licensed. What puzzles me is that the Bancks Brothers registered a Frizzle Ace in 1849, so why is there an apparent delay of six years for the bond?

## Exportation Ace 1828 - 1862

Cards made for the home market in the period 1828 - 1862 were subject to a duty of one shilling. This duty was collected by the Stamp Office through the sale of the specially printed Ace of Spades which the manufacturers had to purchase.

Cards for the export market were not liable for this duty and a special exportation ace was produced for these packs. Like the old Frizzle the plates for these aces were made by Perkins Bacon and Petch and then printed by the Stamp Office.

Because there was no duty on these packs there was a £20 penalty for selling or using such packs in Great Britain, Ireland or the Isle of Man. The Isle of Man had its own type of exportation ace.

The design shares some similarities with the old Frizzle, especially in its general appearance. But closer inspection will show the many details in which it differs. The lion and unicorn are replaced by a rose and thistle design. The royal standard on the central spade sign gives way to a nondescript piece of typical engine-turning. The garter is now more prominent and bears the inscription of the Stamp Office, London. The crown has changed its shape and the royal mottoes have entirely disappeared.



The first exportation ace of this period was registered by HUNT & SONS on June 26th 1828. Other makers registering an ace together with the date of their first registration are:

|                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| CRESWICK, 1828           | HALL & BANCKS, 1828   |
| HARDY & SONS, 1828       | REYNOLDS & SONS, 1828 |
| S. & J. FULLER, 1828     | GOODALL, 1828         |
| STOPFORTH & SON, 1828    | WHITAKER, 1828        |
| HENRY WHEELER, 1828      | DE LA RUE, 1832       |
| J.L. & J. TURNBULL, 1832 |                       |
| WOOLLEY & SABINE, 1836   | T. WOOLLEY, 1839      |
| H. SABINE, 1839          | J.M. KRONHEIM, 1850   |

An unappropriated (un-named) ace was registered in 1851. This was perhaps for the smaller companies whose out-put did not warrant a special plate. The question is which companies could these have been? It would seem that many of the earlier names had by the 1850's either been taken over or had simply ceased business. Or could there have been some connection with the great exhibition in the same year and the consequent boost to exports?

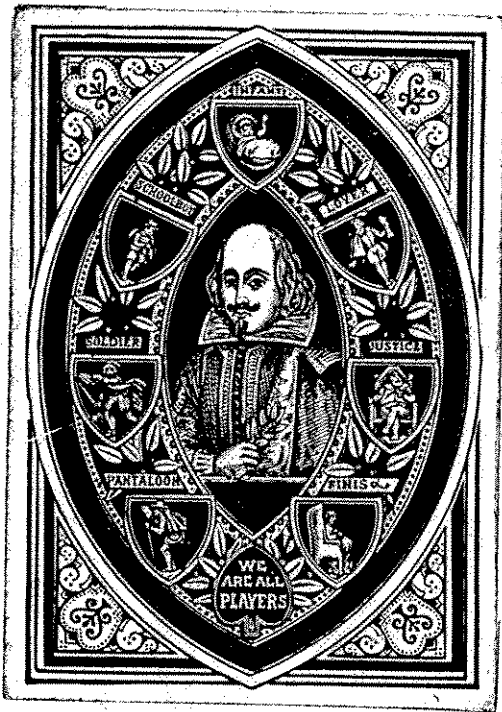
A new ace would have to be registered if the old plate became too worn to be used. De La Rue registered a total of 7 aces and are apparently thus the most likely to be found today. Reynolds & Sons and Whitaker each had 4 registered. The unappropriated ace was registered in 1851, 1852 and 1853 which does seem to suggest a considerable quantity of exportation.

From the dates given above it is also apparent that the partnership of Woolley and Sabine lasted for only three years before they went their separate ways. Woolley registered only one ace in 1836, whereas Sabine registered a third ace in 1849 from which one could conclude that he was the more successful of the two. Perhaps our overseas members might care to search around in their countries for some of these elusive exported aces!

I am most grateful to JOHN CHANDLER for making available the data which he has researched in the records of the Stamp Office. [PCW]

## Shakespeare as a Theme.

Considering the enormous richness of the subject this is possibly an underworked theme in English playing-cards. There are to my knowledge only three non-standard packs which deal solely with Shakespearean characters. All three of these packs are reproduced in full in this edition's photosheets. There have also been a number of packs which have the



bard or his characters as part of the back design. The card illustrated to the left is by GOODALL and dates from about 1865-70. The design which is in black and red on a pale yellow background colour is believed to be by JOHN LEIGHTON. He was a designer and illustrator of some note, working on such papers as The Graphic. He was born in London in 1822 and died in Harrow in 1912. This design was executed around 1864 and it was used by Goodall several times on different editions - later cards would be round cornered of course. I understand that the original drawing may have been left to Harrow School in Leighton's will. Whether it still hangs there I cannot say.

which his plays acquired during the Victorian era. Well-known for their modesty and dislike for any public display of a bawdy nature the Victorians are not likely to have considered Shakespearean games suitable for impressionable young minds.

The card to the right is from a game of snap made around 1870. JAKUES produced a game with the strange title of Shakespeare Fortune Teller, but not surprisingly is rather rare today as it simply consists of 60 quotations.



For the collector of artist drawn backs there are only a few to be found on this theme.

The card shown to the left is by DE LA RUE and was published c.1945 from an original painting by A.L.Grace. It is entitled 'Falstaff and Jester' and was issued as a double pack with its companion 'Jester and Maid'. Two other pairs to look out for are Ann Hathaway's cottage with Stratford-on-Avon and In Shakespeares garden with Shakespeare's cottage of dreams. There is also a single pack called 'Titania' which does not have a companion.





The pack by C.W. Faulkner of London was published in the 1890's. The original paintings for the courts are by John H. Bacon. The printing was done in Germany by B. Dondorf and the name of the publisher appears not only on the ace of spades but also on the Jack of clubs where Dondorf would normally print their own name.

The courts are not named and a separate card lists the characters. These are: Spades, from Hamlet K: Claudius, Q: Gertrude, J: grave digger. Hearts, K: Henry V, Q: Katherine, from Henry V, J: Hubert de Burgh from King John. Clubs, K: Richard III, Q: Lady Anne, from Richard III, J: Jacques from As You Like It. Diamonds, from Henry VIII are K: Henry VIII, Q: Katherine, J: Sir T. Lovell.

Although designed in England there is an unmistakable feeling of Dondorf about these cards. The quality of printing is typical of course and the cards are most attractively coloured, perhaps it is the horizontal double ending which gives them such a continental and un-shakespearean image.

Goodall had a more systematic approach to their designs. Produced at about the same time as the Faulkner pack each suit has been assigned to one particular play and the courts are the principal characters from it. The court cards are named and the ace of each suit carries a design and the title of the play. The colours are muted and each character's face hints at the underlying emotions. Altogether a more thoughtful design with regard to the plays.



Spades, Julius Caesar

K: Julius, Q: Calphurnia, J: Brutus

Hearts, Henry VIII

K: Henry, Q: Katherine, J: Wolsey

Clubs, King Lear

K: Lear, Q: Cordelia, J: Edmund

Diamonds, Henry V

K: Henry, Q: Kate, J: Falstaff




Waddington who had only just arrived on the scene took up the Shakespearean theme with a wholly original pack designed by F.C. Tilney which they published around the early 1920's. The leaflet which accompanies the pack explains Tilney's choice of play and character. Purely from a design point of view the cards are cluttered with a wealth of detail but very attractive. This pack was reproduced in the 70's, there is no chance of mistaking the reproduction.

Spades, Tragedy. K: Richard III, Q: Lady Macbeth, J: Cade. Hearts, Emotional. K: Lear, Q: Isabel of France, J: Launce. Clubs, Strife. K: John, Q: Margaret of Anjou, J: Pistol. Diamonds, Greed. K: Claudius of Denmark, Q: Catherine of Aragon, (a strange choice), J: Poins.

A total of twelve plays have been used. On the back of the cards a design intertwines the roses of England with Shakespearean swans. [PCW]

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
PATENT  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED. MISDEALS PREVENTED.




SERIES A

THOS. DE LA RUE & CO.  
Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

scarlet  
(no Ltd.)

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
PATENT  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED. MISDEALS PREVENTED.




SERIES B

THOS. DE LA RUE & CO. Ltd.  
Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

orange

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
PATENT  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED. MISDEALS PREVENTED.



SERIES E

THOS. DE LA RUE & CO. Ltd.  
Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

blue

'Pneumatic' Cards

'Pneumatic' playing cards were invented by William Thomas Shaw in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Shaw was a partner in the De La Rue company which duly introduced the invention at about the same time as round corners and indices. By impressing a herringbone design onto the back of the card air was trapped to prevent sticking and the cards slid easily during dealing.

There were two editions of the box, as illustrated on this page and the next. One style includes the word 'Patent', and has 'Thomas' and 'Limited' written Thos. Ltd. The second style omits the term Patent and writes the Thomas and Limited in full. The wording on the inner slipcase shows a similar change of style.

The colour of the printing on the box is indicated under the illustration. If you have other examples, or copies of the boxes not illustrated here i.e. 'Patent' C & D or 'Not Patent' A, or Extra Special, please let us know.

red

blue

[RTEW]

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
PATENT  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED. MISDEALS PREVENTED.




SERIES F (Thin).

THOS. DE LA RUE & CO. Ltd.  
Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
PATENT  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED. MISDEALS PREVENTED.



SERIES F (Thick).

THOS. DE LA RUE & CO. Ltd.  
Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

Patented at Home and Abroad.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

EASY SHUFFLING.  
PERFECT DEALING.

The Fronts of the "Pneumatic" Playing Cards are highly finished, whilst the Backs are minutely grooved or indented all over the surface, so as to provide an air-space between the cards, and a roughened surface which acts as a resistance for the thumb in dealing. This prevents misdeals, as the cards slide off one by one and can be dealt with the greatest ease and rapidity.

THOS. DE LA RUE & CO. Ltd.  
Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED.



MISDEALS PREVENTED.

SERIES B

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED.

Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED.



MISDEALS PREVENTED.

SERIES C

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED.

Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED.



MISDEALS PREVENTED.

SERIES D

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED.

Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED.



MISDEALS PREVENTED.

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED.

Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

GAMAGES CATALOGUE 1909

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Extra Special | 2/- |
| Series A      | 1/9 |
| Series B      | 1/4 |
| Series C D E  | 1/- |

No mention of Series F

Colour of print :

B, red : C, green :  
D, brown or silver :  
E, red : F (both) blue:  
unmarked series, blue.

At the bottom of each  
box can be seen the  
term 'licensee' which  
is explained by the  
illustration and short  
article re Bancks Bros.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

EASY SHUFFLING.  
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THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED,  
Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED.



MISDEALS PREVENTED.

SERIES E

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED.

Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED.



MISDEALS PREVENTED.

SERIES F

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED.

Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

DE LA RUE & CO'S  
"PNEUMATIC"  
PLAYING CARDS

MISDEALS PREVENTED.



MISDEALS PREVENTED.

SERIES F (THIN)

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO.  
LIMITED.

Licensees and Manufacturers,  
LONDON.

3. Familiar families or People we have met.

48 cards  
12sets of 4 Mr, Mrs, Miss & Master  
Dabbs the artist  
Chauffeur the motorist  
Rugger the footballer  
Scorcher the cyclist  
Snapshot the photographer  
Dummy the tailor  
Rat-Tat the postman  
Plough the farmer  
Vamper the musician  
'Enery 'Awkins the coster  
Bill Sikes the burglar  
Scissors the barber



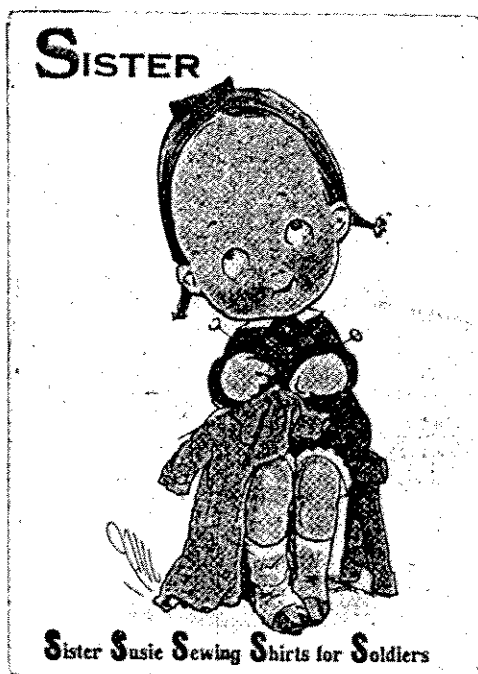
Front:

Red, blue, yellow

Reverse: not illustrated, plain yellow

4. Title not known.

16 cards only  
4 sets of 4  
incomplete



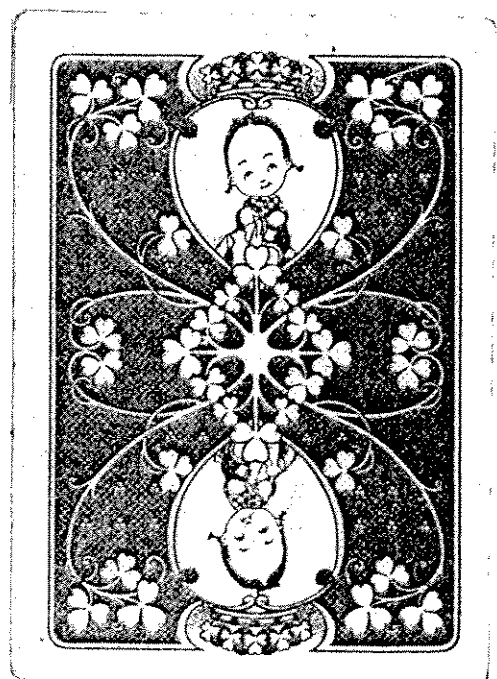
1. Sister Susie sewing shirts for soldiers
2. Hieland Hamish hunting huns in Ham-burg
3. Mac Mactavish making marching music
4. Brother Billy biking boldly into Berlin

Front:

coloured printing of  
the early 20's

Reverse:

Red on white



Could you help to identify these games?

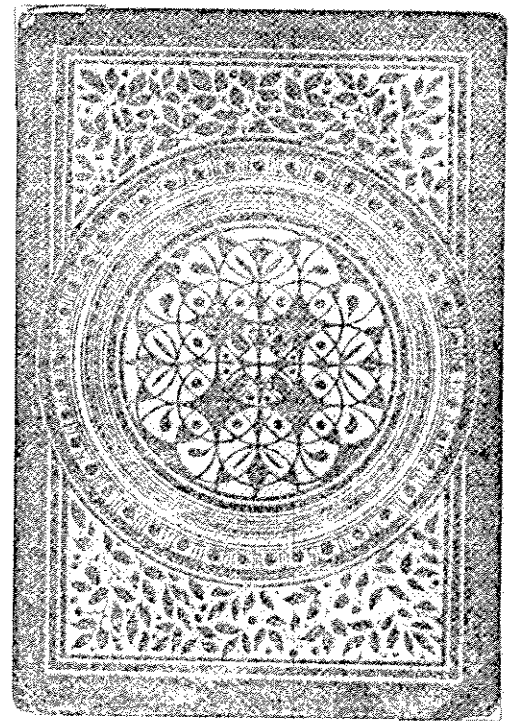
1. Bird Snap



36 cards  
6 sets of 1-6

- Sets:
- Parrot
  - Stork
  - Goose
  - Crow
  - Eagle
  - Owl

Front:  
Black and White  
Reverse:  
White and Green



2. Proverbs



53 cards  
13 sets of 4  
+ master card

- Turkey
- Hen
- Blackbird
- Ostrich
- Parrot
- Tom Tit
- Stork
- Peacock
- Robin
- Kingfisher
- Cockatoo
- Owl
- Pigeon

Front:  
Red, blue, yellow, black  
Reverse:  
Brown on yellow

