THE QUEEN OF MY HEART
By Peter Endebrock

The Queen of Hearts in playing-card packs suggests by its name that you might relate it to the "Queen of my Heart", and that has been done on postcards several times and in different countries. I am not trying to give a complete overview – I am just showing examples in my collection. Among them are postcards that do not primarily stress the "of my Heart" aspect but just show playing-card Queens from the Hearts suit.

I start with some postcards from Germany, the first shows what looks like a Queen of Hearts playing-card (Figure 1). The text is "Wo ich bin, in meinem Sinn thronest du Herzkönigin!" (Wherever I am you are enthroned in my mind, Queen of Hearts!). This postcard was published by M. Kimmelstiel & Co. in Hamburg, and printed by the Kunstanstalt von H. A. J. Schultz, also in Hamburg. The card was printed in 1901. The design of the Queen seems to be inspired by the Queen of Hearts from Dondorf’s "Baronesse" pack.

Another, but less pronounced Queen of my Heart is on the following postcard (Figure 2) is made by Stengel & Co. in Dresden and Berlin. It is No. 162 in the number 10 series of artists' cards. The text is "Im Wachen und Träumen ich einzig Dich schau', Du inniggeliebte, herzigste Frau!" (Waking and dreaming I see only you, you dearly beloved most hearty woman!). Again, the "Baronesse" pack seems to have been the model.

Another postcard that qualifies is from a series of four Queens corresponding to each of the four suit signs. These postcards exist in different versions, and as far as I know they were printed in Germany and in other countries, like France. The German version I have is just greyscale with only the red suit-signs in colour (Figure 3a), but there is also a coloured version which most probably is from France (Figure 3b). On the greyscale version there is a signature. I did not succeed in reading it, but I think that it is a German name. The greyscale series postcards all have the number 870.

The next examples are from series of postcards which have singers, dancers, actresses and actors on them, accompanied by suit signs (Figure 4). Many of these cards are from Germany (three of those shown), but some of these series were also printed in other countries. Sometimes the postcards are coloured. As you can see, these come from different series and show different artists. The left card shows Lina Cavalieri (1874 – 1944), an Italian soprano. This postcard was printed before 1906. There is a sign with NPG (for Neue Photographische Gesellschaft, Berlin) and the number 466/3 on the card. Next you see Cléo de Mérode (1875 – 1966), a French dancer. The sign here are the intertwined letters RPH (for Rotophot Berlin), and the number is S-319. Then, on the next page, there is Auguste Prasch-Grevenberg (1854 – 1944), a German actress. The sign is again RPH, and the number is S.436. The latter two cards should be from around 1910. On the last card you see Zena Dare (1887 – 1975), an English singer and actress. This postcard is from around 1906 from the “Rotary Photographic Series” and is presumably English.
The next Queen (Figure 5) is from a series of postcards again, No. 550, showing the Queens of the four suits. It is German, and an abbreviation K. V. I. B. 12. (for Kunstanstalt Voremberg in Berlin) is on the back.

Figure 6 shows a real playing-card Queen – at least the postcard was printed by a playing-card maker. It was lithographed and printed in Austria by Ferd. Piatnik & Söhne, Wien XIII/4. It is from around 1905 or a little earlier. I am not sure whether this queen exists as a playing-card.

The next postcard is also from France, but it does not show a Queen but a "Dame de Coeur" (Fig. 8). It is a painting with this name by Consuelo Fould (1862 – 1927). It is no. 17 in the series 201, which has the title "Salon 1901". This indicates that the postcard was printed in this or the following year, and this is certain as mine was posted in July 1902. The maker is abbreviated as S.I.P. (for Société d’Impression Photographique, in Paris). This postcard has also been made without colouration. The playing-card that the woman has in her hand is a Queen of Hearts from a standard international pattern pack – which is a little surprising. I should have expected a standard French pattern card.

Again from France is the next postcard. It does not exactly show a Queen that fits the topic, but a horoscope Queen (Figure 9). It is from a series of twelve postcards with a similar design presenting horoscopes for the twelve court cards. Several editions were printed around 1902 by Edition Phototypie A. Bergeret et Cie, in Nancy (or with the same company name without the “Edition”). The horoscope for the Queen of Hearts says that she is a "Femme douce et amante, excellente amie" (a gentle and loving woman, an excellent friend).

At the top of the next column; moving on to France, we meet “la Reine de mon Cœur” on a postcard with a standard French Queen of Hearts with her face replaced by a photo (Figure 7), and the text explains that “Vous êtes la Reine de mon Cœur” (“You are the Queen of my Heart”). The postcard has a sign with DÉDÉ (from Paris) and the number 1253. It is most probably from the 1920s. When you compare the two faces you will notice that it is the same girl, but looking in different directions.
The next postcard is copyrighted 1909 by E. B. Scofield (Figure 10). There seems to be an artist’s signature at the bottom end of the scarf the Queen has draped around her hat but I cannot decipher it. The text is “Beguile me not with winsome arts. I have the ‘Q’. You’re Queen of Hearts”. The postcard shows a Royal Flush hand.

The “Queen of Hearts” in Figure 11 has a sign with the letters J.V. in the bottom right corner. It is from the “Valentine’s Series” printed in Great Britain: “Valentine’s Series is a Guarantee of British Manufacture”. “J.V.” and the “Valentine” refer to the printing house Valentine & Son, Dundee.

The next postcard shows a real playing-card (Figure 12). This is also from a “Valentine’s Series” and “Printed in Great Britain”, but there is no indication of the maker on the card. It might be made by Valentine & Son again.

Then we have another postcard with a real playing-card figure (Figure 13). It is from a series with the Hearts court cards of the standard international pattern. “If my Queen of Hearts you’d be, It would please me mightily!” No maker’s name is mentioned anywhere.

The next is a postcard from the U.S.A., from a series showing Kings and Queens in playing-card format (Figure 14). They were copyrighted in 1905 by the Ullmann Mfg. Co. in New York, and this card is No. 1557. The Kings are Nos. 1553 to 1556, the Queens are Nos. 1557 to 1560.

Following is another postcard from a series made in the U.S.A. (Figure 15). The design of “The Queen of Hearts” is signed Will Grefé (1875 – 1957), and this and the other cards in the series are copyrighted in 1909 by Moffat. Yard & Co. in New York. The sole distributor was Edward Gross in New York, and the cards were “Entered at Stationers’ Hall, London”.

Then comes a postcard “My Queen of Hearts” made by Arthur Capper, Topeka, Kansas (Figure 16). It has a sign on the back that includes the letters C and T, and it is No. 1307 from the “Theochrom Serie”.

“My Queen of Hearts” in the next picture (Figure 17) is copyrighted 1907 by the Rotograph Co. in New York., and in the bottom right corner is a number B2298.

Next to that is a Valentine Queen: “To My Valentine My Heart is Yours” (Figure 18) from around 1910.
The presumably best-known series of “Queens of my Heart” also comes from the U.S.A. (Figure 19). They are Valentine cards and show what is known as a “Gibson Girl”, a type of girl that was created and made famous by the American illustrator Charles Dana Gibson (1867 – 1944). I do not know whether the designs of these postcards were actually made by Gibson. The postcards form the “Fortune Valentine Series” and they were printed around 1910.

They all have the text “To my Valentine Queen of my Heart”, and the girls have the playing-cards of the Hearts suit arranged around their head. If you look closely you will notice that one card each is missing from two of the illustrations, the Ten on the second postcard in the upper row and the Seven on the bottom right postcard.

The following are my last examples: The first King (Figure 20) is from the same series as the Queen shown in Figure 13. It has the text “If I were King of Hearts I’ll own – That I’d be King of yours alone!”. There are also “Jacks (or Knaves) of my Heart” postcards but I am not showing the Jacks here. This series comes in the Heart and Diamond suits only.

The other King I am showing is also from Great Britain, a young soldier King (Figure 21). Actually, this is not a regular postcard, but a folded card that was intended to be sent in an envelope. It was printed by Raphael Tuck & Sons Ltd. in London (and New York). It is another Valentine card with the text “Will you be my Valentine – and my King of Hearts.” There is also a female counterpart, with a woman soldier as “… and my Queen of Hearts”.

I have shown 28 different postcards with the “Queen of my Heart” or a closely related motif. On first sight this may look a lot, but it is just what is presently in my collection. I know around ten more similar postcards, and I expect that this is still not everything that exists.

Editor’s Note; Thanks Peter - of course I love this article! Not only does it feature Judith, the Queen of Hearts, but also a collectible that is very dear to my heart – postcards with playing card images!