

A series of sixty geographical cards about 95 x 65 mm. was issued in Russia about 1830, beautifully produced by Konstantin Matveevich Gribanov. The pack consists of a standard set of fifty two playing cards, together with eight extra ones. Each is devoted to a province of the Russian Empire, all with hand-colour.



New York Public Library

The cards have four compartments on the front: the arms of cities or provinces; the suit marks, except on the extra ones; a numbered list of towns; a figure depicting local dress. There is a map of the province on the reverse side, with the towns numbered according to the key in the panel on the front:

*Kingdom of Poland; Courland; Lifland; Tomsk; Vitebsk; Minsk; Ekaterinoslav; Caucasus Oblast; Yakutsk Region; Kostroma; Mogilev; Ormsk; Arkhangelsk; Grand Duchy of Finland; Chernigov; Orenburg (see above); Town of Cherkassk in the Land of the Don Cossacks; Astrakhan; Land of Chukotka; Yaroslavl; Vladimir; Tula; Ryazan; Tambov; Vologoda; Poltava; Grodno; Kamchatka Region; Vilnius; Viatka; Georgia; Voronezh; Kherson; Kiev; Podolsk; Volyn; Saratov; Estland; Irkutsk; Enisei; Kharkov; Kursk; Orlov; Tobolsk; Tavrich; Perm; Kaluga; Kazan; Simbir; Bessarabia; Belostok Region; Moscow; Smolensk; Tver; Penza; Nizhegorod; Novgorod; Pskov; Saint Petersburg; Olonetsk.*

Sets of these cards are rare: there are incomplete ones in the British Museum, Yale's Beineke Library and the Fournier Library in Spain. However, New York Public Library and the National Library of Russia have complete packs and one was sold for £15,000, at Sotheby's London salerooms on 17th November 2015 (lot 81).

*Geograficheskie karty Rossii s izobrazheniem gerbov ... sochinennye Konstantinom Gribanovym.* St. Petersburg, Fabr. Imperatorskago Vospitatel'nago Doma, (1830).