



John Jaques Chastleton Patience Game Board

John Jaques

£480



REF: 31689

Height: 6 cm (2.4")

Width: 61 cm (24")

Depth: 14 cm (5.5")

Description

Antique Chastleton Patience Board by Jaques

A very rare and unusual Chastleton Patience Board, produced exclusively by John Jaques & Son Ltd., Britain's premier games maker of the period. This beautifully crafted example is housed in a slim, sloping mahogany carrying case, fitted with a brass central carry handle and two securing hooks with pins to keep the lid safely closed during transit.

The exterior retains its original paper trade label, reading:

"The Chastleton Patience Board, designed by Miss Whitmore Jones, sole makers: J. Jaques & Son, Ltd., London" and notably signed by the inventor herself, Miss Mary Whitmore Jones, a condition detail of exceptional importance.

On opening, the interior reveals a carefully engineered playing surface lined with folded fabric webbing, forming twelve rows (known as "slips"), which are periodically pinned to hold miniature playing cards securely in place during play. At the base are sixteen fitted mahogany stalls designed to house the card decks, each stall fitted with metal staples at the head to prevent cards from slipping when the box is closed. This example contains nine packs of miniature playing cards, housed neatly within their stalls (one deck with a card missing). The board is cleverly shaped and hinged so it may be used comfortably either upright or in a prone position, reflecting its original purpose.

The Chastleton Board is a remarkably thoughtful design, conceived sometime between 1875 and 1898 by Mary Whitmore Jones, and intended specifically for use by patients recovering from illness, allowing prolonged play without disturbing the layout, also ideal for the traveller. Its execution by Jaques & Son is both practical and elegant, showcasing the firm's renowned craftsmanship.

The board takes its name from Chastleton House, near Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, built between 1607 and 1612 and long associated with the Whitmore Jones family. The house is now owned by the National Trust. Mary Whitmore Jones inherited the Chastleton estate in 1874, aged 51, following the death of her brother. Though unmarried and without children, she was an extraordinarily accomplished woman. In addition to inventing the Chastleton Patience Board, she authored at least eight substantial books on Patience, beginning with *Games of Patience for One or More Players* published in 1888. Her literary output also included novels, biographies, and historical works on subjects as varied as Chastleton House, the Gunpowder Plot, and the Siege of Derry.

Whitmore Jones eventually entered into an exclusive agreement with J. Jaques & Son Ltd. to manufacture her board, on the strict condition that she personally sign every example sold, making surviving boards especially sought after today. She later passed management of the Chastleton estate to her nephew, moved from the main house, and died in 1915.

A fascinating and highly collectible Victorian games artefact, combining ingenious design, documented provenance, and direct association with one of the most significant figures in the history of Patience.