

SPECIAL INTEREST DAY

Monday 20th March, Sedgeford Village Hall

OBSESSIONS, PASSIONS, EXTRAVAGANCE, VOLUPTUARY, THE CORONATION CROWN.

THE ROYAL COLLECTION

THE STORY OF QUEEN MARY AND THE HANDSOME, RICH PRINCE REGENT - HER COLLECTING INTERESTS "MY ONE GREAT HOBBY" AND HIS COLLECTING MANIA, "THE FIRST GENTLEMAN OF EUROPE"

Queen Mary was born in May 1867, the only daughter of Princess Mary Adelaide of Cambridge, the cousin of Queen Victoria, and her husband, Francis, Duke of Teck. As the daughter of a minor (and impecunious) member of the Royal family, her position was somewhat equivocal, but her subsequent marriage to the heir to the throne led to her becoming in 1910 Queen of England and Empress of India. This brought out her sterling qualities. The travails she witnessed in her life, with a complete reversal of all that she had known as a girl, imposed an enormous strain. However, through all these vicissitudes collecting and re-arranging the extensive Royal Collection was, in her own words, "My One Great Hobby". This lecture explores in detail these collecting interests, and shows how her influence remains today.



The Prince Regent was handsome and rich, seemingly he had it all. But this Prince, later George IV, whilst having all these attributes, would undermine all these benefits by a life-style that was not only raffish, extravagant and selfish, but also that of a voluptuary. Ironically, at the same time, through his collecting of works of art, he did much to re-establish the Royal Collection as one of the greatest in the world, and thus restore its pre-eminence, disastrously destroyed at the time of Oliver Cromwell. This talk explores not just the forming of the collection but something of the character of this conundrum of a prince. "The First Gentleman of Europe."

Crown Jewels: Dynastic Diamonds., Coronation Crown - Wherever there is a king there is a crown. A crown sets you apart, invests you with majesty and authority which marks you out as a ruler of men. We discover some of the most fabled gems the world has ever seen. The British Crown jewels are some of the richest in the world, along with the

magnificent jewels of the Indian Princes and Maharajahs, as well as those of Persia and Russia. Vanished though some of these empires might be, their jewels still linger on, perhaps not used for their original purpose, but the allure and magic still cling to them, no matter what the politics of the person who holds it. We will learn about the Imperial State Crown, which has the Cullinan II diamond, cut from the world's largest diamond and hopefully to be seen at the Coronation of King Charles II in May.

Nicholas Merchant has mirrored his abiding interest in antiques. He has worked for some of the major auction houses in London as well as running his own book business devoted to the decorative and fine arts. His particular interest is English 18th century furniture and country houses; he enjoys discussing objects, particularly in their historical context. He lectures extensively in the USA, South Africa, Europe and UK, including the V&A.



TIMETABLE

10:00am	Registration
10:30 - 11:30am	“My One Great Hobby” – Queen Mary and her Collecting Interests.
11:30am	Coffee
12:00 - 1:00pm	The Prince Regent and his Collecting Mania.
1:00 - 2:15pm	Lunch
2:15 – 3:30pm	Crown Jewels: Dynastic Diamonds, Coronation Crown.

Tickets cost £45.00pp and include an excellent lunch including a glass of wine or soft drink.

For additional information please contact Lesley Nadel
E: lesleynadel@aol.com T: 07909 918890