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Our main offices and two auction rooms are located in Stanhope Street, opposite the Liverpool Marina. There is free on-road parking. Visits to clients in Wirral, Chester and North Wales are made every week. Evening and weekend visits to clients homes can be made by prior arrangement.

To book your appointments simply telephone **John Crane** personally on either **0151 709 5559** or mobile **07836 209995**

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before the eyes of the invited guests. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip received pre-wedding gifts of no fewer than 11 elaborate wedding cakes of several tiers each, which were put on display for visitors to see.

So my advice to you is this – even if you celebrated the wedding at home in front of the TV and made your own Royal Wedding Cake for your family, store some pieces away carefully until Prince George gets married!

Have you sampled the delights of the great subcontinent of India? (I'm not enquiring when you last went to the Alam Balti House in Bebington!) This small painting, six inches in diameter, is of the Taj Mahal painted in 1905, which perfectly captures the Indian light and architectural detail. The artist was Ellen Louise Clacy.



Taj Mahal by Ellen Louise Clacy

The value to me in paintings is knowing about the lives of the artists, and recognising fine quality pictures which may have been ignored for years by their owners. Biographies of the lives of most artists are available on the internet. When visiting art galleries it is always worth taking your internet technology with you to research on site – background information brings pictures to life.

Artists come in all shapes and sizes, and from different backgrounds – from extremely wealthy to poor and virtually destitute. In the main, disciplined artists became successful but the shambolic lives of many artist who lived dissolute lives in wretched conditions surprisingly produced many fine artistic works which are now highly prized.

Ellen Clacy fell between these two extremes, being born into an impoverished middle-class clergyman's family. Her mother (also Ellen Clacy), a writer and maybe a little bohemian in her lifestyle, gave birth to her daughter on a ship homeward bound from Australia in 1853. That daughter grew up to become an extremely talented and recognised watercolour artist who lived for a time in Liverpool.

The polo season has started again and I suppose I will be making a couple of pilgrimages to Cirencester where are to be discovered the oldest polo grounds in the country. Some people might consider it to be an elitist sport. That may be the case if you are a team owner and that is the way it is – it is not going to change!

Equestrian collectables are big news now. I have illustrated a silver-plated cruet that would possibly grace any pre-polo



Equestrian Cruet

luncheon table in the Clubhouse (more of this in the next issue).

Finally, one of the leading authorities in the UK on the history of the pianoforte recently offered the view that the tone of the concert pianoforte represented the country of manufacture. A serious comment and one worth considering next time you hear a recital if you can get a glimpse of the name above the keys! We are currently seeking a good modern upright pianoforte for a local young person: if you know of one, please let me know.

Despite some auctioneers changing direction to embrace 'novelty', I still firmly believe that our commitment to treating everyone we meet in our working day with old-fashioned courtesy and upholding ethical business practices is standing the test of time. I consider that our clients appreciate this, as our client base is still growing even after 35 years!

Our Heswall Office on The Mount is open every Friday by appointment. Contact me on 0151 342 2321 or of course follow me on Twitter @CatoCrane or our website CatoCrane.co.uk