

# All Things Auctioneering

With Cato Crane Valuers & Auctioneers and John Crane Fine Art

Firm advice sometimes, I think, is appropriate and urgently necessary to protect people who are potentially unaware and vulnerable. Alarm bells start ringing with me when I see full-page newspaper adverts saying 'Jewellery One Day Antiques Roadshow – Sell for Instant Cash!' These travelling dealers might well be reputable, but – as in all types of businesses – not all are, so great caution is advised.

Most jewellery and silver dealers will value items on their weight and the scrap or bullion value of the metal on the day of purchase. They will weigh your item on digital scales and pay you by the 'gram weight' or an amount per troy ounce in silver.

Now my point is this: you don't sell mahogany chairs by weight! It is by quality, design and attractiveness. This is actually how it should be with silver and jewellery. The value of an item is assessed by its quality, maker, condition, rarity and age, and general desirability in today's fashion-driven collectors' market.



An ordinary silver teapot of 1930 is worth about say £150, but a similarly sized example of 1750 by a good maker is worth many times more; some early items are extremely rare and may be worth a hundred times more than scrap value – a huge difference. Would you know these special pieces? Would travelling buyers tell you? Probably not.

In our auction this week we successfully sold a very small, high-quality gold cameo brooch. There were no hallmarks or maker's marks on it, but it was an extremely fine quality antique piece and weighed five grams – its scrap value was about £140. It was advertised internationally and attracted many bidders with the successful bidder paid in total just over £1,200 – eight times its weight value! Again, a successful result for the seller.



So the point of all this is simple. Consult a reputable auctioneer and we will know the items that sell well and those which don't – and we will tell you! The seller and the auctioneer are on the same side to get as many people as possible bidding on your valued family treasures to get the highest price possible – not just an unacceptable scrap value.

Collecting and displaying collections at home seems to revolve in cycles and early, highly detailed Royal Doulton ceramic figures, in my view, still make a statement in a home.



A person's private collection is a narrative of the person's personality. The illustrated figures of King Henry VIII and three of his wives will be offered for sale in the Cato Crane Interiors Auction in August. We do have the monarch and all his wives in the auction, and if you want six wives you can start the bidding at £500!



If you have a few minutes to spare during the summer it is always worth checking your bookshelves and cabinets for long-forgotten childhood books in good condition.