

**IS THIS THE DESK SET STAMMERING KING GEORGE VI WROTE THE KING'S SPEECH ON? KING'S WRITING SET - A VERY PERSONAL GIFT FROM HIS ABDICATED BROTHER - GOES UNDER THE HAMMER**



**By James Tegerdine, Cater News and Neil Shuttleworth, Special Auction Services**

A desk set owned by King George VI is set to go under the hammer in May.

The turquoise cloisonné and gilt writing set - emblazoned with the King's nickname 'Bertie' - could have been used to pen the poignant address to the nation at the declaration and outbreak of World War II.

It had been a gift from the King's brother, the Duke of Windsor, shortly after he abdicated and married divorcee Wallis Simpson.

And the Austrian cloisonné set was so disliked by the King's wife Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, she gave it away to a "titled lady" soon after her husband's death.

Neil Shuttleworth, from Special Auction Services, who are selling the piece alongside 24 other important royal and historical related items, said: "I've never seen anything as wonderful as this piece.

"It has a rich and colourful history, spanning a rather poignant period of war time in our nations history.

"It was a time when King George VI would have written dozens of inspiring speeches to the nation.

"If the story fits, then it is something which has played an integral part in history.

"It could well have been used by the King to write the speeches that inspired the now legendary film."

It is engraved with the initials D & W - standing for David, the name King Edward went by, and Wallis, the divorcee he abdicated to marry.

Underneath is the message: "There, but for the grace of God..."

Eventually the set fell into the hands of the owner, an anonymous 74-year-old collector, who has decided to auction it off - alerting Royalists and memorabilia collectors the world over.

Neil added: "In what is the Queen's Jubilee year, it is a very topical item.

"We are expecting international interest, and undoubtedly wealthy Royal enthusiasts both sides of the Atlantic will be looking to get their hands on this unique piece."

He added: "The desk set's colourful background alone makes it a very sellable item.

"We believe it was given to King George around May 1937 by his brother, soon after he had succeeded him.

"At this time the pair were on good terms, but that soon deteriorated, causing the Queen Mother to dislike the set because of its association with the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, who contravened the Church of England by being divorced, something frowned upon at that time."

The set includes an ink well, letter rack, roller blotter, pen tray, paper knife, stamp box and blotter.

It goes under the hammer at Special Auction Services in Newbury on 10 May together with 24 other royal and historically important works of art and memorabilia.

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