

## PRESS RELEASE

### **GUNS BELONGING TO ROYALTY AND NOBILITY TO FEATURE IN DECEMBER SALE OF SPORTING GUNS**



Guns made for Royalty and Nobility will be offered in Gavin Gardiner Ltd's sale of **Modern & Vintage Sporting Guns & Rifles** which takes place on **Tuesday, December 1, 2015** at **Sotheby's New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA**.

Just in time for the Boxing Day shoot, the auction of more than 300 lots of vintage sporting guns, rifles and shooting accessories, is the only sale of Sporting Guns to be held in the heart of London's Mayfair and will have a strong section of 12-bore Sporting Guns by England and Scotland's finest makers such as Purdey, Holland & Holland and Boss & Co.

Among 65 lots from the John Bunney Collection is a rare 15-Bore double ignition flintlock sporting gun by Ezekiel Baker built for **His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Prince Regent** which is estimated at £10,000-15,000. Engraved "Gunmaker to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales", it is also inlaid with gold Prince of Wales feathers above a presentation inscription "Gift to My Friend Bob" [See Notes to Editors for more biographical details] (See image above).



Also included in the sale is a fine French 16-bore boxlock ejector gun, built for **King George of the Hellenes** by Soci t  Stephanoise d'Armes which is expected to fetch £15,000-20,000.

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George I was King of Greece from 1863 until his death in 1913. His reign was the longest in modern Greek history and was characterised by territorial gains as Greece established its place in pre-World War I Europe. He was assassinated in 1913 during the first Balkan war. The vendor states that the gun was presented as a gift to the Chief of the Greek Royal Police by King Paul and Prince Petros of Greece, who was related to them by affinity (See image on pg 1).

Continuing the Royal theme is a magnificent pair of Keith Thomas engraved exhibition quality 28-bore self-opening sidelock ejector guns by Watson Bros, which carry an estimate of £70,000-90,000. They are engraved with game scenes and images of the **Royal residences and castles** of England and Scotland such as Windsor Castle, Sandringham House, Tower of London, Edinburgh Castle, Balmoral Castle and Holyrood House. The maker confirms that the guns were completed in 2004, appear little used and retain virtually all of their original finish (See image). A trio of 12-bore self-opening sidelock ejector guns by James Purdey & Sons built for **Lord de Rothschild** in 1908 is expected to fetch £12,000-18,000. Lionel Nathan de Rothschild (1882-1942), scion of the famous banking family, is best known today for the creation of the famous Exbury gardens in the New Forest, a 200-acre woodland garden filled with rhododendrons and azaleas, camellias, magnolias and rare specimen trees. He was also a keen pioneer in the early days of motoring, briefly held the world water-speed record and was a fine amateur photographer. This set of three Purdeys was given to him on his birthday and has been in the family ever since, being used first by Lionel's older son Edmund and then by



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Edmund's sons, Nicholas and Lionel on their family run shoot at Exbury (See image on previous page).

Also with a banking connection is a fine .577 percussion prize rifle by Thomas Jackson engraved "Prize Rifle Presented by Sir Francis H. Goldsmid, Bart. MP to the First Berks Volunteer Corp, 1861" is estimated at £6,000-8,000. **Sir Francis Henry Goldsmid, 2nd Baronet** (1808-1878) was a member of the Goldsmid banking family and was the first Jew to become an English barrister. He was made Queen's Counsel in 1858 and he entered Parliament in 1860 as Member for the Reading constituency (See image above).

The sale will include a strong section of accessories and

more curious items – which could make wonderful Christmas gifts such as set of nine glass and pewter cartridge shot cups which are estimated at £200-400 or a leather stalking set containing a leather mounted Thermos flask and polished sandwich tin (est: £300-400) and a leather bar set which is expected to fetch £80-120.



**NEXT AUCTION: APRIL 13, 2016  
AT SOTHEBY'S, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON**

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

The Prince Regent was born on August 12, 1762, the eldest son of George III and Queen Charlotte. He was crowned George IV on January 29, 1820, having been made Prince Regent in 1811 due to his father's insanity. When he was only 15 years old, his tutor said of him that he would become "either the most polished gentleman or the most accomplished blackguard in Europe - probably both". During his life he had a great reputation for extravagance - a cause of considerable concern within Parliament during what was a period of great economic distress.

He built up a considerable personal debt and by 1783 owed £160,000. He then undertook a costly extension of Carlton House, London, adding an Ionic portico and redesigned the gardens; while in Brighton he started to build the Royal Pavilion, the epitome of 18th century opulence.

He married Princess Caroline of Brunswick in 1794 and only two years later £600,000 worth of his debts were liquidated by Parliament. This affected the gun trade considerably as he owed Durs Egg £1,837, John Manton £113 and Henry Nock £281.

The majority of the Prince's creditors were asked to prove their claims to the Commissioners of the Prince Regent's Accounts and luckily the gunmakers received debentures payable over two or three years.

At the end of the 18th century, he showed a great deal of interest in the work of Ezekiel Baker, one of the leading London gunmakers, following the success of Baker's infantry rifle which had been adopted by the British Army in 1800. Baker sold many guns to the Prince, including some elaborately engraved silver mounted flintlocks and it appears he spent a great deal of time shooting with the Prince.

In his book, "Remarks on Rifle Guns", Baker illustrates three targets shot by the Prince at Brighton in 1805 using a pair of pistols and a rifle. In 1828 Baker won a silver medal from the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufacturers.

The Prince Regent formed a considerable collection of guns, firearms and armour, many of which are housed at Windsor Castle.

### **GAVIN GARDINER LTD**

Gavin Gardiner is the only specialist firearms auctioneer holding his auctions in the heart of London's West End, where he holds two sales each year as well as his prestigious sale at the Gleneagles Hotel, Scotland in August. Gavin has over 20 years experience in this field. Coming from a traditional background, he was brought up with guns and shooting and has been involved with the Gun Trade from an early age. He first worked for Sotheby's in 1982 helping with weekend viewing of a Sporting Gun auction, while still at School. From that moment he was hooked and has been involved in almost every Sotheby's Sporting Gun auction since. His passion became a full time job in 1987 when he joined Sotheby's initially as a porter on a one day a week assignment to the Gun Department, this soon became five days and he never looked back. He has been involved with many memorable auctions over the years, including Sotheby's sales in New York and Geneva as well as the renowned Gleneagles auction that has remained the market leader in this sector for over twenty years. He has also worked for one of the leading London Gunmakers which gives him a unique perspective in this field. Returning to Head Sotheby's Sporting Gun Department Worldwide in 2001 he doubled turnover in his first year, and has continued to develop and refine the auctions since. He left Sotheby's at the beginning of 2006 to establish his own company.

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