

(Mobile book) The Exiled Collector: William Bankes And the Making of an English Country House

## The Exiled Collector: William Bankes And the Making of an English Country House

Anne Sebba

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**Anne Sebba : The Exiled Collector: William Bankes And the Making of an English Country House** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Exiled Collector: William Bankes And the Making of an English Country House:

On August 30th 1841 William John Bankes, former Tory MP, pioneer Egyptologist and renowned traveller, was caught in compromising circumstances with a guardsman in London's Green Park. Bankes paid a heavy price for his 'moment of madness': less than two weeks later, well aware that sodomy carried the death penalty, he had fled in to exile, eventually settling in Venice. The British Government declared Bankes an outlaw, a vindictive and archaic procedure, which might have enabled them to seize his house - Kingston Lacy in Dorset. It was the vicarious embellishment of that house, although it could be no more than a memory, that was to be his only enduring passion. Based on extensive research from previously undiscovered archives, this is the first ever biography of William Bankes. Brilliantly written and highly readable, *The Exiled Collector* recounts Bankes' dramatic life story, examines the psychology of collecting, the pain and creativity of exile and affords a revealing insight into the minds of a hypocritical ruling elite in early Victorian Britain.

'A cracking and detailed tale' -- *Antiques Trade Gazette* 20040703 'A torrid tale' -- *Tatler*, *Must Reads* 20040801 'Anne Sebba tells us in *The Exiled Collector* a tale of Byron's friend William Bankes - esthete, member of Parliament, scion of a rich family - who became a notorious pariah in the 1830s when he was arrested not once but twice for approaching soldiers in public places. Bankes fled an England in which a convicted sodomite was still executed and spent the rest of his days in Venice and France compulsively collecting paintings and architectural details for his country house back in England. He knew he would never be permitted to live in the sumptuous interiors he was piecing together but paradoxically this elderly homosexual bachelor was assembling a home for future generations of his family. Anne Sebba has written this record of exquisite taste and brutal suffering with equal measures of verve, tact and eloquence.' -- *Edmund White* 20040801 'This is the first biography of William Bankes and it shows that his story - poignant and colourful by turns - well deserves to be told.' -- *Daily Telegraph* 20040710 'Anne Sebba's fascinating book is more than the portrait of another rich, gay dilettante ... it is the portrait of an obsession ... Sebba illuminates this bizarre but brilliant project by bringing Bankes out of the footnotes to which history consigned him, and back to life.' -- *Financial Times* 20040703 'Brisk, authoritative and readily engaging book ... Anne Sebba is marvellously sure-footed in her grasp of this tale ... lively and illuminating' -- *Daily Mail's Critics Choice* 20040730 'Based on extensive research from previously undiscovered archives, Sebba probes the psychology of collecting and the pain and creativity of exile, and provides and insight into the minds of the ruling elite in early Victorian Britain.' -- *Dover Express Folkestone Herald* 20050714 'Anne Sebba tells this tale of talent and tragedy with great aplomb, producing in the process a wonderful hybrid of a book that is part biography, part tear-jerker, part lesson in art and architectural history, and part guide book ... She even manages to weave in some insights into the psychological make-up of the great collector ... Sebba shows her mettle as a biographer ... by her handling of Bankes's sexuality ... [she] is not afraid to explore ideas that for some might seem politically incorrect ... it focuses on the wonderful detail of Bankes's life' -- *Independent on Sunday* 20040815 'A rich biography of a complex figure... The writing sparkles because Anne Sebba has seen the adventure in Bankes's life.' -- *Christopher Lee, Literary* 20040701 'Anne Sebba tells this tale ... with great aplomb, producing in the process a wonderful hybrid of a book.' -- *Independent on Sunday* 20040815 'Anne Sebba's fascinating book ... (brings) Bankes out of the footnotes to which history consigned him, and back to life.' -- *Financial Times* 20040703 'Brisk, authoritative and readily engaging ! Anne Sebba is marvellously sure-footed in her grasp of this tale ! lively and illuminating' -- *Daily Mail Critic's Choice* 20040730 'Anne Sebba has written this record of exquisite taste and brutal suffering with equal measures of verve, tact and eloquence.' -- *Edmund White* 20040730 'The stuff of which novels are made' -- *Spectator* 20041101 'Anne Sebba is at her most sympathetic and persuasive' -- *The Spectator* 20040807 'Absolutely compelling...there is much more here than the Homeric struggle in New York' -- *Sunday Times* 20041120 'This is the first biography of William Bankes and it shows that his story ... well deserves to be told.' -- *Daily Telegraph* 20040710 About the Author Anne Sebba is a biographer, journalist and former Reuters foreign correspondent. She has written five books including the best-selling *Mother Teresa*, *Beyond the Image* and *Laura Ashley, a Life by Design*. She lives in London.