

Historical News Cuttings Book: Daily Express, 22 October 1938

These names make news

CELLAR LEAVINGS

AUTUMN was like spring in London yesterday. Nelson's grim, gawky monument looked almost gay in its festal trappings, reminding one that

The bay of Trafalgar is Spanish in name
And the Spanish refuse to pronounce it the same.

In "clubland" I saw a puzzling word: "USKANO-PITT."

Name of a suburban villa? No. It was painted on a small slick sports car. Us—i.e. we—can hop it. It was an effective antidote to the sunlight's genial warmth.

MANY people in that neighbourhood who usually lunch amply were having hurried snacks yesterday: auction sales start at hours which must put off many potential buyers.

Yesterday's sale was of wines, "by direction of HM Queen AUGUSTA VICTORIA of Portugal."

She was selling them as her husband's executor; is herself engaged to be married again, to a German named Count Robert Douglas.

She had no representative at the sale. There were no reserve prices. There was, alas, no tasting.

TASTING occurred only during some preliminary lots—"various properties."

Men in green jackets & aprons handed trays of little glasses round to those sitting at the green-balze-covered tables; as in many auction-rooms there was only sky-lighting, which cast harsh shadows on the sipping faces. Almost all wore glasses—pince-nez, rimless, end-of-nose tortoiseshell, old-fashioned wire-frames.

Over them loomed wardrobes, cabinets, old pictures, lots-to-be.

FIRST of the Queen's lots was a dozen of Madeira, dated 1805. It fetched £4 10s.—a bargain, if it's good.

Some 1815 port also went cheap. It was buying blind.

I ventured a bid which would have got me some wine at about

a fifth of what one pays for it in a restaurant. There was a pause. For a tense moment I thought I'd got it. "A disappointing price..." said the auctioneer, a man with medium red hair & a rich, dry, coaxing voice.

SOMEONE in the crowd on my right set the bidding going again. It soared above me.

I looked round. The re-starter was the friend I had come in with. What a pal.

SOME of the old bottles were curiously shaped. Some were impressive magnums.

"We'll see 'em in —'s window next week," whispered my friend. "Covered in dust."

Wine-dealer **BERRY** bought a lot of stuff, his face hardly moving to indicate his bids but flushing slightly at each tussle. Some of what he bought had originally been shipped, years ago, by his own firm: burgundy, for instance, which lay hidden from the Germans in Liège throughout the war.

SEVERAL lots were bought in the name of **WORTHINGTON**.

"Worthington," sang the man when the auctioneer asked whom the lot had gone to; and "Worthington" again.

"I shouldn't mind one myself," said my friend.