



Chapter 1

THE PASSION BEGINS LETS GET IT RIGHT

THE NASTY BIT SORTED FIRST

The side to collecting that all should be aware of, the field isn't all bulldogs and happy memories I'm afraid but by following your initiative and these words you could be ok whilst enjoying your passion.

Fake pieces, reproduced pieces at antique prices, rare pieces make sure you research before buying.

There are also con artists, dubious sellers and some auction and antiques dealers spinning a yarn for a sale.

Please do let this worry you so much, if you're covered and paid that way you will get your money back but most do not realise what they have is a fake till the knowledge kicks in so **DO YOUR RESEARCH**

PAYMENT SORTED

Since the decline of mainstream collections there is an amazing choice out there for all collectors all budgets and all tastes, so where do you start and what do you look for? Well before all that get to grips with payment methods, returns, refunds and dodgy sellers.

First things, first is to sort out a safe method of making payments and receiving refunds etc. Sellers take cards and more and more are opting for **PayPal** and this would be a suggestion to heed to. With **PayPal** you are insured and if anything goes wrong then you can get a refund within their policy allocated time given.

DO NOT pay through friends and family this is a no no, there will be info further on about friending your sellers but never be urged or prompted to use this half of **PayPal** as your money lies in the honesty of the seller it's not insured and you cannot reclaim any monies once paid through this account.

If you pay through goods and services your totally covered, this is for refunds and any dissatisfaction you may have with your purchase and it's imminent return to the seller. Please note if paying by debit or credit card make sure you know your carriers policies not just on the interest you pay on top but their security features against insurance and money back as all card companies and banks have rules that vary.

Shipping returns and currency

Once you have a secure way of paying comes the knowing that you will be receiving lots of parcels and not all will make it to your front door intact.

Your rights for a refund should not be effected by bad couriers and postmen. Most outlets will take the object back but some sellers are reluctant to pay any shipping so use confidence to let the seller know that you know your rights, they will be reimbursed by their postal service so should not charge you for return shipping.

Shipping is a major factor in the collecting world I mean it just doesn't matter that your covered does it? You want your chosen treasures to arrive in pristine condition, nine times out of ten your parcel is fine but do expect the occasional mishap. If something does arrive broken take pictures and contact the seller.

Most sellers will happily take the piece back you may have to negotiate whom pays return shipping but be warned there are many sellers out there that will try and fob you off, blaming

the postman the service and sometimes even the buyer sellers forget that with PayPal your covered yet some do try and pass the buck.

Another way around this disappointment is called a compromised partial refund this is where the piece can be fixed / repaired and you except to keep it and the seller will refund you the amount you agreed upon, this stops them from losing so much money and saves the buyer shipping Funds. It's obvious this wouldn't work on ceramics and such but some pieces may be able to be saved.

We live in a world where countries have their own currency and when used to pay for things in other countries the amount your using could be either higher or lower than the amount you have, you can get around this simply by using a currency converter, this will do the number crunching and tell you what you funds are worth in different currencies.

Chapter 2

SPACE

Once you have a safe and secure way of buying and understand returns, compromises and greedy sellers the next thing to analyse is **SPACE**, this is not in the forefront of collectors minds when starting yet it one subject that needs to be thought about or it might come back to haunt you further down the line.

Practically has to come before Pretty I'm afraid, for example there are single Curios (Cabinets) out there in people's homes looking beautiful with just the right amount of pieces on each shelf and spaced out evenly. Then there's the opposite either old Curio one after another crammed with pieces or homemade shelving units designed to store entire sub collections.

Once you have your Curios / display space ready it's time to think about what kind of collector you will be and how best you will fill those spaces, suggestions include **DO NOT** place anything near the displays lighting **DO NOT** place bronzes, metal and solid heavy pieces on glass shelves, not only can a topple smash the shelf but also scratching the glass can weaken it.

Think about weight ratio distribution when placing your pieces and always use toughened glass or wooden shelves for all metal objects, and use your normal glass shelves to display beautiful ceramics. Use the strength area of the shelf to your advantage and place the heaviest of your pieces where the shelf is strongest.

As collections grow and become bigger space becomes a premium and why there's a chapter just on this one subject, there are a few options to choose from but as it's collection memorabilia the options are limited, putting the less desirable pieces away could create some space, another option is to manually rearrange your cabinets this could free up a little bit more but for the answer to space management here is pre determine what you're going to collect.

I have a top tip to add here it could save you money and some heartache too, when displaying and adding pieces gently put your thumb or a finger over the tail and when placing back your finger will be able to feel the back of your Curio so not to snap off the pieces tail, when tails are snapped off they can be glued back on but this does detract from the overall value of the pieces original price.

Chapter 3

WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE

Now the basics are covered it's time for you to close your eyes and envision what kind of collection you want what type of collector do you want to become.

Do you want the kind of collection full of antiques and bulldog history that should give you a healthy return on your long term investment or are you going to collect without the investment side and just get what you love and pieces you desire even if mass produced or modern that's what's known as for the love of it.

Each choice will have an impact in years to come with some needing that financial boost and others either well off already or have no intention of making money down the line.

Both choices are noble and one is not any less important than the other.

CHOICES

If your one that wants to start collecting for the love of it then this choice is by far the easiest of the two there's no research involved unless your comparing prices and there's millions of pieces on the market to choose from, this choice is often preferred by mature collectors that love memories more now than the passion they used to have (part of life's cycle) so they collect without investment in mind they still love what sits behind the glass but for these lovers of bulldogs they are not bothered about a pieces worth if anything bulldog gifts from friends are seen with the highest regard.

This of course is just one example of a collector that follows their passion out of love there are many other reasons including budget, space, taste, accessibility and other factors but as long as the passion is there then they love their treasures as much as others love their own collections,

Collecting for investment is a different matter entirely and **RESEARCH** is key here.

I really mean do your **RESEARCH!!**

This will give you knowledge to be able to spot right from wrong, know the market, sale prices for pieces, Tell fakes from the real thing, make choices that get you amazing investable pieces and maybe learn a thing or two at the same time.

Do not rush with excitement beforehand when collecting some pieces will be pricey and the right frame of mind is needed before committing to a sale.

TIP NUMBER 2

When your researching for pieces do not just think of the obvious this method normally ends up with you being directed to mainstream online websites eventually, one tip is to think outside of the box i.e. when googling experiment with keywords and then press images, more often than not you can find little online stores that have a special piece that's not on any of the normal auction sites, Tip two when researching one maker try variations when searching Royal Copenhagen was stumbled upon when researching the English artist Henry Doulton.

Chapter 4

PATHS CHOSEN NOW WHERE

The principle here applies to those that collect for investment and those that just love collecting and that's the question "where can I find pieces" Well there's a few different choices and dependent on budget too, most collectors cannot afford to pay out lots and have or work from a budget.

The first place to look is the popular auction sites online just sign up to these and save keywords so that your notified when new pieces come up, remember most are home sellers and their descriptions of what they are selling cannot be seen as 100% correct, this is not to say no sellers do their homework just be wary and after a while you will notice this when you see mass production pieces stated as rare.

The second option is get out there, car boot sales, flea markets, estate sales, garage sales, there's also the option to go into the antiques part of your home town and have a look or try a town or two away, you will be surprised just how many pieces can be found just be going that little further.

Turning this into a day out is a great way to go bulldog searching, have lunch etc. plus its good exercise too.

There is the option of auctions too you can find your nearest one online these are great places to pick up bargains and most of the time you pay a lot less than the other popular auction sites online, you have to pay your commission on top of the bid (if you win) but as auctions dictate the market price the value of the piece is at it's true price.

If you cannot get to an auction but want to have a go at bidding you can do this from the comfort of your own home these days, contact the auction to register and you can either leave a bid, bid over the internet, or you can bid over the phone, auction houses do their best to get the description right but they too sometimes get it wrong selling the occasional fake unwittingly.

Surprisingly social media is a great way to find pieces other collectors groups and likeminded people, though these formats you may find new contacts, collectors liquidating their collections and sellers using pages to sell their goods, the best thing about social media is that the collectors that do not invest will find many popular artists and artisans selling on the formats.

This next form of searching involves google images and smaller individual stores that sell online the only problem buying from these outlets is the price hike, its true people need to make a living but these shops can be expensive, as their bills rise they put this onto their stock to of set the difference, if money isn't a problem then this form of shopping is great just google what your after check out images and find the shop the piece is being advertised from.

Tip number 3

This tip not only serves to act as getting a new contact but on occasion can save you money, on most of the advice above this tip should work accordingly. The idea is after you make a transaction or have inquired about a piece ask the seller to remember you if and when they get in more bulldog memorabilia. Of course there's a lot of sellers that will not remember you but surprisingly many do and contact you with new offers and usually discounted for being a repeat buyer.

Chapter 5

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Everything with a bulldog seems to sell these days if you put a motif on a box and advertise it it's sold but for most you want some kind of quality don't you? Let's start off small and work upwards giving all collectors choice when researching, so starting small.

The first piece of advice in starting small is more of a tip and that's to search "animal / dog ornaments into search engines on places like eBay the reason being there's usually bulldog pieces that have either been misdescribed or the seller hasn't bothered with the description.

Staying with this theme try finding other countries with different pieces for sale i.e. Germany has its own **eBay** site as do other countries, the only downfall to this is the language barriers but if you can use a free tool like google translate then that should help the transaction go smoother be mindful that many sellers in European countries prefer bank transfers to **PayPal** so do make sure you have read **PAYMENT SORTED**.

Once you have searching capabilities done and dusted you can start looking for smaller collectibles these could be Kevin Francis and Peggy Davis collectibles there's Mack truck and American university mascot pieces to collect, Lenox, Leonardo, manor collectibles are to name just a few of the pieces affordable to start up collectors, post war Japanese pieces are a good price piece and some are highly collectible too.

This part could be a bit hazy the amount of collectibles at a bottom to mid-range budget is staggering, most of these pieces can be found on auction sites like eBay, Ruby lane, Etsy etc. and start at a small amount going up dependant on the piece your buying, the reason I say hazy is there's no point adding all the pieces affordable in this section. Check for yourself think of a random price then check these sites there's always something to buy dependant on taste of course.

If you want to climb the ladder or half way up already then it's time to start doing some **RESEARCH**, there are mid-range priced pieces out there pieces from different eras, from around the world and usually have the provenance of the artisan whom made it or a back story that pushes the price up, European pottery is popular and plentiful place to start and this is at the point where you decide whether you want to start the beginning of investment collecting or keep your passion as a hobby.

When you think of investment collecting it is daunting the fact that your spending a large amount of money on a piece or pieces your hoping will give you a return in years to come and it is a risk at first, if you have managed to pluck up the courage to strike up a connection with sellers you may be lucky and get up to 15% off larger priced pieces this goes for antiques shops too and online auction sites, it does not hurt to ask and some sellers are happy to drop their price a bit to make a sale.

Top end pieces can run into hundreds and thousands so it's imperative that you do your **RESEARCH** ask the seller all the right questions and make sure you've covered all the bases before buying, please feel free to use Collectibulldogs as a spring board if you're stuck on what high end pieces maybe please note that even though the collection is impressive there's still much more out there to collect.

Majolica, top end manufacturers, antique pieces, pre 1914, old photographs, early postcards, authentic bronzes, concept and custom made pieces, these are the kinds of pieces to look out for The obvious is the likes of Royal Doulton Crown Devon there's also many pieces made since the 1800s that will only grow in value the older they get. A suggestion here would be versatile the market changes all the time and your collection of one maker worth lots now could lose value and not be worth as much down the line just one of the risks faced when choosing this style of collecting.

Chapter 6

TAKING CARE AND INSURE

The beginning here relates mostly to ceramic and resin pieces but does really apply to most materials the urge to pick up beautiful pieces and have a proud look is something all

collectors do but this has a couple of pitfalls that could leave you feeling rather annoyed with yourself.

Apart from a pre-arranged cleaning schedule and you have displayed your pieces they should be left where they are.

This of course is your choice but it's one of the easiest ways of damaging your pristine piece, we all get complacent sometimes and the last thing you want is to accidentally knock the leg, break the tail or worst of all drop the piece altogether, this applies to other pieces too, a bronze may bounce across the floor and bends a leg and silver dents needing work done to fix it, so it's always best to display how you want and then just sit back and admire.

Insuring your collection is not a hard prospect and depending on the size quality you can buy collectors insurance or go and have a chat with your bank, your collection could be covered under house contents and if a larger collection then the bank may ask that you pay an extra fee for the cover. Independent insurers will offer collection insurance but will need a list of contents to give you a quote or you can submit your collection through a PDF of sorts and get a response that way it just depends how computer savvy you are.

If your Now at investment collecting level and pieces are ranging from hundreds to thousands for each piece then you need specialist collection insurance which may include a paid appraisal of your collection by someone in person, this person not only sees what you have but makes a record and figures out the collections overall worth.

This is the crunch time! Deduct the amount you have spent Does the amount said make you happy if so **SUCCESS**.

Chapter 7

RESEARCH

Some may see this as the boring part of collecting and for others it's all part of the passion of collecting yet it's one of the most important factors to collecting.

The main reason for research is so you know what you're getting and to learn about pieces you may be interested in but do not know much about the piece nor its origins nor maker.

The second part to researching is learning and knowledge, you will be surprised just how much you can learn when researching and often this leads to side-lining the piece your researching because you have stumbled upon a totally different make or piece, all this sinks in and before you know it your looking up pieces you've never heard of or seen before.

Makers markings, silver, gold and other such pieces are the most common reason for researching especially in the silver market, the hallmarks are easy to look up and if you find the right site or article it's often easy to find a makers mark or the pattern number too, it's

easier to find silversmith markings than it is ceramics markings and the suggestion of buying a cheap book or two is a good idea as not everything is documented online.

Research is key to a successful investable collection just buying what you see will give you pleasure but without researching what you're going to put on your shelves will not guarantee a nice return if and when you go to sell the collection on, not everything needs researching as the piece will be described when you buy it but imagine buying a piece that your told is rare and you paid a lot of money and a while later you find out it's either mass produced or even worse a worthless fake, Research only applies to hobby collectors for their own muse that's unless a rare piece is stumbled upon.

Chapter 8

HELPFUL TIPS

The first tip and it's a big one and that's check out courier services both with eBay and with auction houses, with eBay if the seller is using eBay's own parcel service do not use that seller or ask for normal shipping, the courier used has a poor rate for getting pieces to you intact and it's not fair when you fall for a piece pay all the fees just to take a Rattling box of the postman your end.

Not all auction houses will pay shipping and ask that you make your own arrangements this policy protects them from having to ship larger pieces like furniture and it also stops them for taking responsibility if anything breaks before arrival, the more Bespoke of auction houses will deliver as they can afford the insurance and it makes them look more professional to their clients.

Make acquaintances with sellers strike up a kind of business relationship this could lead to new contacts, payment plans for the budget minded, if you like a piece and do not have the money you could ask for a graceful layaway, this is where mutual trust comes in and the seller will take the piece off the market on the promise that's it's paid for by the predetermined date arranged. Once you get to know contacts it becomes easier to ask for discounts and eventually your given good discounts especially if your contact knows that you know your craft too.

Turn your collection into sub collections this helps to keep track of what you have and makes it easier to remember each piece, ceramics, metals, woods, glass, club, the list can go on and on so sub collections that are categorical and placed as such really help the mind-set it's also a nicer way of displaying and takes us to the next tip

Never mix your pieces up, it's not a good idea to have ceramics and glass pieces anywhere near metal pieces and for obvious reasons, chipping a piece is the most common mistake and when cleaning to put back scratches can happen ruining the patina of your piece.

Keep your metals together giving thought to the weight when your buy a home for them.

Silver is a weakness to magpies and crows and to us humans as well it's the same and many of us love the shiny element, from modern artists today to the master silversmiths of the past

your given a brilliant choice of silver made bulldog related collectibles, from Victorian silver, bulldog club presentation, through to figurines and charms the choice Is mind blowing.

The down side I'm afraid is silver is seen as its raw form so essentially when you're paying premium prices for silver you're paying retail and not it's true value which is classed as **SCRAP!!!** It's a shame that history is melted away to make silver bars but that's the truth behind silver.

By following these basics you could well be on your way to creating your own collection, now if it's because you want to invest or if it's for the love of it that's up to the individual entirely, the premise behind collecting could change your life change your mind-set or for those wanting to lose vices like smoking this is a healthier addiction to have, collecting can also be engaging good fun and people can meet other likeminded folks from around the world whom love their collecting passion and we all know socialising is also good for us.

The last tip no matter what you decide is be happy and have fun with it these are guidelines to help those that want to grow a collection but choose what you love and love what you choose no matter what, till next time happy collecting.

Credits

Credit goes to Effion Ashdown, the owner of www.collectibulldogs.com for authoring this book and for owning a fantastic collection of bulldog collectible items.



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