

**Eden Valley Museum**  
**OBJECT OF THE MONTH MARCH 2023**



**A SINGLE SILVER CUFFLINK, c.1662.**

*A small and unassuming piece that marks a significant moment in British royal and fashion history*

This month we focus on a small but significant object in our collection - one half of a silver cufflink; a remarkable discovery which we are proud to have on display in the Eden Valley Museum.

The design on the cufflink dates the piece. The arrangement of two hearts with the crown above is a recognised commemorative design celebrating the marriage between Charles II and his bride the Portuguese Princess Catherine of Braganza in 1662. This does not date the piece precisely but, as the design remained popular, it certainly identifies it to have been made during the early 1660's.

In 1660 Charles II returned to Britain to become King after nearly 20 years of the first Civil War and then the Cromwellian Commonwealth. During his exile he had lived in the fashionable court of Louis XIV in France. Among the various French influences that he introduced to Britain were the 'buttons for cuffs' which had become the rage in the Louis court. Previously cuffs had been fastened by soft material ties, or for the fashionable, silk ribbon.

The cufflink was unearthed by a metal detectorist in 2020, working in Chiddingstone. We cannot know who owned this cufflink. However, being silver and decorative it suggests the owner was a person of wealth and fashion. Perhaps it came from the household of Henry Streatfeild (1639-1719). The family had remained loyal to the Crown throughout the Civil War and Commonwealth period and were the wealthy owners of High Street House, later Chiddingstone Castle.

**Whoever it belonged to, they must have been very cross indeed to have lost this expensive and fashionable cufflink!**

Visit the museum to find out more about the history surrounding this delicate object. You can also learn more about the cufflink in *Eden Valley Heritage*, no. 36. £3 from the museum shop, which includes a short article about this object 'Cufflink: A Link to History' by Claire Donithorn