



BANK OF ENGLAND

News release

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2 July 2002

The Dutch Legacy

Go Dutch at the Bank of England's Museum in Bartholomew Lane, EC2.

England certainly went Dutch in the 17th century and particularly so after the accession to the throne of England in 1689 of William of Orange, 'Dutch William', and his wife Mary, an episode in history now known as 'The Glorious Revolution'. In fact it was William III's need for war finance that led to the establishment of the Bank although, of course, the idea had its opponents. A contemporary comment is recorded thus:- "Others said this project [the idea of a national bank] came from Holland, and therefore would not hear of it, since we had too many Dutch things already...". Nevertheless much of what we take for granted today - freedom of speech and of the Press, and parliamentary democracy - are the supremely important legacies whose foundations were laid by the Glorious Revolution, William and Mary and the Dutch.

William died in 1702 and it is appropriate that in this, the 300th anniversary of his death, the Bank of England's Museum should remind us of our debt to the Dutch. Entitled "The Dutch Legacy", the exhibition looks briefly at how England profited from her exchanges with Holland - exchanges which affected the arts, sciences, commerce and world of ideas in this country. Several rarely-seen items from the Bank's own collections - a magnificently extravagant wine cooler weighing in at 616 ounces, documents bearing William III's signature, a long-case clock with Dutch marquetry work and whose maker was amongst the first of the investors in the Bank of England - are amongst the objects displayed.

The Exhibition will open at the Bank of England's Museum in Bartholomew Lane, EC2, on Thursday 4 July 2002 and the final day is Wednesday 26 September 2002. The Museum and this special exhibition are open from Monday to Friday, 10am until 5pm. Entry to the Museum and the exhibition is free.

Notes for Editors

Preview: A preview of the exhibition will be held from 6pm - 8pm on Wednesday 3 July, at the Bank of England Museum (entrance in Bartholomew Lane, EC2). If you would like to attend please contact the Bank's Press Office on 020 7601 4411. For security reasons entrance is only on presentation of an invitation.

Photographs illustrating the exhibition are available at www.newscast.co.uk.