

Mystical leaders

From kings and queens to some of the most powerful politicians in the world, famous people from all walks of life consult astrologers and psychics for their insight and prophecy. Celebrity clairvoyant **Valentin Borissov** investigates...

It's not just everyday people who are interested in the fields of astrology and clairvoyancy. Members of royalty, high profile politicians and celebrities have also dabbled in the occult, or at least have sought guidance from alternative belief systems. Among the stars and celebrities from the world of show business today, Madonna might be the best known thanks to her faith in the mystic Cabbalah. Other celebrities such as Britney Spears, Demi Moore, Paris Hilton and the Beckhams have also been reported to follow in her footsteps.

From our present-day royals such as Prince Charles, who is known for his love of mystic philosophies and alternative therapies, to his great, great, great grandmother Queen Victoria, the House of Windsor has long been associated with a strong interest in spiritual practices.

Rasputin

Another descendant of Queen Victoria, the Empress Alexandra of Russia, not only

Clockwise from far left: Demi Moore, Britney Spears, Victoria and David Beckham and Paris Hilton



inherited her maternal grandmother's haemophilia, the bleeding illness that she then passed on to her only son Alexei, she also turned to supernatural powers.

The tsarina came to rely heavily on the visionary monk from Siberia, Rasputin - who seemed to possess supernatural healing powers - to save Alexei whenever

he was on the brink of death after spells of haemophilia-related complications.

Rasputin became the tsarina's personal psychic and would conduct seances at the imperial court. But faith in her advisor and her devotion to him were to create jealousies and intrigues at court, especially among the nobles who decided he would have to be killed.

Rasputin could foresee his own

death and issued this chillingly accurate prophecy to the Tsar and his court: "I am to be killed. If I am killed by my own people, by the peasants, then you will continue to rule in peace and harmony. However, if I am killed by the noble class, then within two years, you and your children and all the royal family will be no more".

The Russian revolution followed, and the tsar and his whole family were indeed killed in Ekatarinenburg in 1918 shortly after Rasputin's prediction. As for killing Rasputin - it proved to be a very difficult task for the noblemen. After he was poisoned and shot twice, his powerful life force was still keeping him alive, and he didn't die until he was thrown into the river Neva, where he eventually drowned.

King Ferdinand of Bulgaria (1861-1948) who was related to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, also had a keen interest in the supernatural. He kept a dark room in his palace in Sofia dedicated to his occult studies that he kept locked at all times. He abdicated in favour of his son Boris III, who was himself addicted to psychics and

Queen Victoria

Distraught after the death of her beloved husband Prince Albert in 1861, Queen Victoria started dabbling in the occult. She appointed her own royal psychic, the gifted Robert Lees, who organised seances for her.

Princess Louise, one of Queen Victoria's nine children, was also interested in spiritualism and her husband Lord Lorne, was reputed to possess second sight. Another member of the family who understood



Victoria's mystical side was her daughter-in-law Alexandra, the then Princess of Wales. She came from Denmark

Painting of Queen Victoria by Franz Xavier Winterhalter

where ghosts were taken very seriously. Communion with the family dead was maintained, for example, by laying out meals for their wandering spirits.

Princess Marie-Louise de Schleswig-Holstein, one of Queen Victoria's numerous granddaughters, also had the gift of second sight. Whenever she found herself in a place where somebody had encountered a violent death, she lived through the tragedy herself, even if many centuries had passed.

Historians and museum curators would later confirm the accuracy of her perceptions.