COLLECTING JEWELLERY

MONA CURRAN

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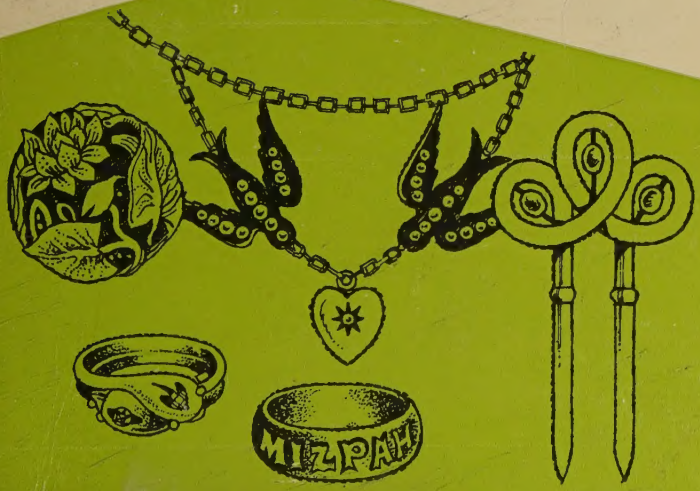

AN ARCO HANDYBOOK

Collecting Jewellery

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Collecting Jewellery

AN ARCO HANDYBOOK

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Author's Note

One of the prerequisites of any form of collecting is a background knowledge of the periods to be covered by the collector. In the present work the author has endeavoured to give a survey of the techniques, styles and designs of the periods from the first Georgian era to the Edwardian, embracing nearly two centuries, from 1714 to 1910.

The book is intended primarily for the small collector and the emphasis is on the attainable rather than on the *rara avis*. Where opulent jewels are described this is done only for the purpose of rounding off the picture of period jewellery design and fashion.

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CHAPTER ONE

Collecting Jewellery

PERIOD jewellery is at once probably one of the most fascinating and the most satisfying subjects for a collector. Like silver, it can conjure to mind the image of the contemporary domestic scene and the fashions of the time, and at the same time bring things of permanent beauty within reach of those sufficiently dedicated to searching the highways and byways for the work of long-dead craftsmen.

Fashions inexorably follow cycles. What was considered hideous in one era may become 'quaint' and desirable in another. Victoriana has been discovered anew and as a consequence the jewels which were not thought worthy, fifty years ago, of being given house-room, now command prices which would have staggered and appalled their original owners. Today, Edwardian art is considered (and in most people's view rightly so) to be unattractive and unworthwhile. Yet, as the cycle turns, Edwardiana will quite surely become as desirable in time as Victoriana is today. The mere passage of time makes the unlovely desirable and the wise collector will smother any aesthetic qualms and, remembering that 'time softens all', will look for the despised and rejected of yesterday that will inevitably be the sought-after of tomorrow. Sad experience has taught many that it does not pay to be too contemporary-minded: experience will show that the wise collector always looks ahead.

As a first step the would-be collector should make a study of the trends over, say, the past hundred years or so. Such a survey of a hundred years or so of jewellery can be

approached in a variety of ways; from a technical point of view, a commercial standpoint, an economist's concern with world markets and the inexorable laws of supply and demand, or even as a sociological treatise – how many people, for instance, left their children a collection of heirlooms in the nineteenth century and how many will do the same in the twentieth? In fact, however, all these aspects can be considered as complementary facets of a single development, bound together into an integrated history by that incalculable but ever-present influence we call fashion.

The custom of wearing precious stones and metals for personal adornment has, of course, been established for many centuries. But the setting and designing of jewellery in a way that is familiar to the modern eye, with many changes brought by science and the opening of new mines and markets, belongs to the past hundred years or so, a period which represents one of the fullest and most fascinating chapters in jewellery's long history. The Victorian era was one of great expansion and invention in every sphere of life, from metal processing to philosophy, and the later Victorian period, despite a certain surface air of stolidity, was also an age of wonder. The Victorians were not, as our contemporaries are, surfeited with the incredible feats and forms of mechanical devices. They marvelled at the intricacies of an engine, the efficiency of a new industrial process, the skill of a gem-setting, with an almost child-like admiration and a sense of personal pride. Everything was interesting and infinitely creditable to the nation which had produced it. It was a brilliant idea to hold a Great Exhibition in 1851 where people could satisfy this appetite for knowledge, where a nation could, as it were, take stock of its achievements and compare them with the colourful quaintnesses of life in other lands. No wonder it was such a success.

The jewels on show attracted enormous interest. A contemporary comment notes that there is 'no display which presents more strikingly the spirit influencing all those who could contribute to render the Exhibition perfect, than the magnificent and valuable gems that are distributed here and there, and which have been so liberally sent by their owners to astonish and delight the public'. Precious stones were shown both in the rough and in the finished state. Among the larger gems on view were the Koh-i-noor lent by Queen Victoria ('Disappointing because it was cut Indian fashion, without sacrificing size to brilliance'), diamonds and emeralds from the Indian collection, and the famous Hope diamond. The Duke of Devonshire's emerald, a 'gigantic crystal' was also much admired, as was a fine aquamarine, a selection of opals, a magnificent beryl, and some large white topazes from 'Van Dieman's Land'. Apart from the diamond, ruby, sapphire and emerald, the most precious stones for ornamental use were generally considered at that time to be the opal, beryl, topaz and garnet. It is interesting to note that the opal, which enjoyed a wide vogue then and in the succeeding years, owed much of its popularity to Queen Victoria who, partly with the idea of aiding the newly opened Australian opal mines, made it quite a practice to give these stones as wedding presents.

Then, as now, the diamond was conceded to be the 'most commonly attractive and generally appreciated of all stones', and the discovery of diamond deposits in South Africa in 1867, and afterwards in other parts of Africa, with the founding of a powerful industry that is completely organized and integrated has only increased the popularity of the diamond without decreasing its value. From a fashion point of view perhaps the highwater mark

of diamond elegance came with the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, when magnificent diamond dog-collars, tiaras, necklaces and bracelets were worn on all important social events.

At the beginning of this hundred years or so period diamonds were cut in two shapes – the flat or rose diamond, and the squared or brilliant diamond. The latter cut was not, strictly speaking, a square for the corners were slightly rounded and the shape was known as 'cushion'. The 'table' or top of the diamond was higher than is usual today and the culet, or point, at the base was blunter. The cutting of diamonds had been an art formerly practised in England, native-cut stones being highly valued, but gradually the craft died out until in the mid-nineteenth century practically all stones were cut in Amsterdam. The art was not revived until the first decade of the twentieth century, when the idea of cutting and polishing diamonds in England, considered then as a daring experiment, was successfully put into practice; so successfully that by 1913 the 'experiment' was an established industry, producing diamonds which were cut and polished with a degree of skill equal to the highest Continental standards. It is worth while noting that the only practical advance made in diamond cutting since the seventeenth century is the sawing process, which was introduced in 1910, and the new "Princess" cut. The stones were generally set in silver as the possibilities of platinum and palladium had not yet been realized. Palladium, indeed, had only been isolated in 1802. Queen Victoria herself was keenly interested in diamonds and amazed Rhodes by her expert knowledge of the subject when questioning him about the South African mines. Both she and the Prince Consort were deeply interested in the re-cutting of the Koh-i-noor, which was entrusted to a Dutch expert.

Styles in the period before the turn of the century favoured natural motifs. Elegant grouped bouquets, studded with small, exquisitely coloured gems were much admired, as were suites of necklace, brooch and bracelet set with opals, rubies and sapphires, and diadems set with rubies, sapphires and diamonds. Red coral was much used for beads, brooches, charms, studs and 'fancy contrivances'. For wrist ornament, gold filigree brooches featuring ivy or vine leaves pinned on a velvet wristband were considered graceful and becoming. A typical brooch of the mid-nineteenth century, which one can only describe as hideous, if skilfully made, takes the form of Britannia standing under a Gothic arch. The brooch was decorated with diamonds, enamel, rubies and a carbuncle.

At this time *the* fashionable colour was *gris poussière*. A taffeta mantelet, or scarf sewn with jet was an elegant complement to a foulard walking dress, according to a Victorian fashion correspondent. But not all fashions met with approval. In the *Illustrated London News* of this time we find a contributor writing 'it is with regret that we have to speak of a fancy which threatens to become a fashion, and we caution our fair readers to hesitate before they adopt the innovation, a white piqué waistcoat – a man's waistcoat – with diamond or malachite buttons'. Later on there is evidence of a penchant for pearl drop earrings and close-throated necklaces. Pearls were also worn in the hair, twisted through a coil and looped over the forehead. Velvet ribbons worn round the throat were clasped by a brooch, most often a cameo. It was considered chic to wear plain gold bangles round the wrist, or alternatively a heavy gold bracelet with gems star-set into the metal. Next came a craze for moonstones, much advertised as 'lucky' gems. These were sometimes combined with diamonds, and were

carved into cherubs, hearts, crescents and suns to adorn bracelets and brooches. The 'daisy' motif was also popular, while animal designs appeared in any number of whimsical forms, as, for instance, a cat and mouse brooch carried out in gold and pearls.

In the turn of the century there was a tremendous vogue for black and white, especially for evening wear. Jet was still high fashion and was much in evidence as embroidery on black or white evening gowns. Crystals, pearls and gold filigree were plentifully used, while Society occasions blazed with diamonds. For day wear diamond buckles, fichu brooches, ribbon slides and hair combs were high fashion. In some jewelled hair combs the gem-studded mount was made detachable for wearing as a brooch as required. Stud, drop and Creole earrings suitable for wearing on unpierced ears were on the market, and so were pearl collars, gold charms and gold scarf pins in the form of golf clubs. Turquoise was in fashion and could be seen, with pearls and diamonds, decorating gold link chains with heart pendants and flexible gold bracelets, or, with diamonds and rubies, studding a wave, circle and wing brooch. The world's supply of turquoise has been considerably extended in the past century and it is not surprising that once again this vivid and lovely stone is coming into fashion. Novelties of 1900 included a gold link chain which had a heart-shaped pendant inset with the wearer's birthstone, and a fan-shaped openwork brooch which had the figures 1900 worked in diamonds between the gem-studded 'spokes' of the fan.

Principal jewel trends from Edwardian days to the present time have been closely allied to trends in dress design. An outstanding example of fashion's influence upon jewel design comes from the 1920s, when artificial silk made its appearance. The delicacy of the fabric would not support

the then prevailing heavy Edwardian type of jewellery, which produced a ridiculous effect by drooping downwards and dragging the material with it. Accordingly lighter jewel forms had to be devised. However, while clothes have imposed an important influence upon the jewellery designs of the past sixty years, they were by no means wholly responsible for jewel trends. Coiffures, for instance, have played a considerable part in inspiring the creation of hair ornaments and earrings.

During the reign of Edward VII imposing tiaras, usually massive affairs studded with diamonds, were much worn by women of fashion. Another popular though simpler form of hair ornament was the jewelled slide in the form of stars, crescents, butterflies and birds. These were worn in profusion and there might be as many as half a dozen adorning an elaborately curled coiffure. About a decade later tiaras in ornate flower designs were worn low on the forehead and were matched by an equally impressive corsage ornament. Now, for the first time, tiaras were made in a curve to fit the head more comfortably. When fashion decreed short hair, diamond slides, or barettes, and bandeaux worn flat on the forehead superseded earlier styles and the wearing of tiaras proper was confined almost entirely to Court and other important functions.

Earring styles seem to have gone through a regular cycle of phases. In Edwardian times the small, button-type of earclip was favoured. In the 1920s the long, dangling earring was all the fashion – since the ear-screw had made piercing unnecessary. This vogue, in turn, was superseded by a period when ears were left severely unadorned. Then the button earclip made a reappearance to be followed by the long 'chandelier' earrings.

Even the ring, probably the most conservative of all

jewel forms, has not escaped fashion's whims. While some of the patterns of fifty or even a hundred years ago still hold good, others are unquestionably dated. Great-grandmamma would, for instance, have been shocked to see women wearing wedding and other rings of any other metal than gold. Among the popular ring forms of her day was the MIZPAH ring, the letters engraved into a plain gold band, or left in relief on an ornamental ground. The gypsy ring, of gold with diamonds deeply embedded in the wide band, was also popular in Victorian times. Gold was used almost exclusively for wedding rings in particular until the white precious metal platinum was 'discovered' by jewellers early in the twentieth century. Then the 'platinum age' set in and remains to the present time. In Victorian times 18- and 22-carat gold were a characteristic yellow; 15-carat somewhat darker, and 9-carat almost invariably nearly a copper-red. The latter became unpopular and in 1900 new methods produced a warm yellow 9-carat gold.

During both the Victorian and the Edwardian eras women wore gold and silver chains of delicate workmanship, often interspersed with garnets, pearls, turquoise and other gems. In the latter period the fashion was for fine chains wound round the neck and hanging down to end in a safety-pin or clasp which fastened a watch to blouse or belt.

CHAPTER TWO

Georgian Jewellery

WHEN the first of the six Georges ascended the throne of England in 1714 the country was influenced in all the domestic arts by those of France. Across the Channel exuberance and opulence reigned. The social scene was brilliant in every way; the art of the cabinet maker, the textile designer, the porcelain artist and the jeweller were in full flower. It was an age of rich ornamentation; gorgeous brocades and silks; dazzling jewellery. For most of the thirteen years of George I's reign the French influence was paramount though towards its end a British style began to emerge. At first, like a swimmer testing unknown waters, it floundered helplessly, the tide of the rococo pulling strongly against the undercurrent of a desire to create a style that owed no allegiance to 'foreigners'. At first designers essayed this by novel forms which were not wholly successful. The natural desire to create a truly British style owing nothing to French or other influences was hampered by the fact that so many natives of France were migrating to Britain, bringing with them their individual and national styles and techniques. Thus the jewellery of the early Georgian period inevitably bears the stamp of French art and influence, despite efforts to create essentially British designs.

Though the British craftsmen were unhappy about this there can be no doubt that it was a felicitous circumstance which gave to Georgian jewellery a fine sense of colour, form and design. The delicacy, the colour, the exquisite lightness of 'tremblant' jewellery gave the pieces of the eighteenth century an appeal that has never since been surpassed. It is

true that gem-cutting as we know it today had not been used and the art was confined to practically only rose and brilliant cut – so far as diamonds were concerned – but the forms, closely allied as they were to those of Nature, gave great beauty to the jewels of that century.

An important factor and one to be borne in mind by the collector, is that jewellery using precious stones was at that time made entirely by hand. None of the mechanical processes which emerged towards the end of the following century had then been discovered. As a consequence each jewel was individually made and bore evidence of each craftsman's own technique, art and skill. Thus the jewels had an individuality that gave character as well as charm to each piece. It meant that the process took a long time; jewellery was frequently 'bespoken' and was not produced in great quantity. But while this was true of jewels using precious stones, jewellery using less precious gemstones such as garnets, jargoons, turquoises, coral, and the imitation stones such as paste and strass were much more freely produced.

The earlier Georgian period, under French rococo influence, pursued the natural theme in jewel designs. Flowers, leaves, birds, insects, as well as ribbons and feathers were firm favourites, bearing a close resemblance to the prevailing designs in rich furnishing silks and dress brocades and satins, There are many jewels extant which reveal this affinity of design – brooches, pendants and corsage ornaments which have their counterparts in form and style in the ormulu-enrichments on French period furniture and in the contemporary patterns in silks, satins and brocades.

It was a period, too, when precious gems were considered to be of more importance than the precious metals in which they were set. The designer seems to have been concerned

chiefly in discovering how many diamonds could be incorporated in a single piece. Baskets of flowers, sprays of flowers complete with foliage, and gracefully curving feather plumes gave great scope in this direction, allowing the craftsman to include literally hundreds of diamonds in a single jewel.

A strong indication of the French influence is afforded by the fashion for enamelling, prevalent throughout the reigns of the three Georges – a fashion which persisted right into the Victorian age. In the early Georgian periods the favourite colour for enamel was a rich, deep blue. This was used for making lockets, brooches, bracelets, and for such bijouterie as patch and snuff boxes, 'necessaires', chatelaines, frames for miniatures and so on. Usually these bore superimposed stars, urns, bows and other designs in diamonds, marcasite or pearls.

Though initially owing its popularity to the use of enamel in French jewellery, the fashion was stimulated in this country by the opening in 1750 – in the reign of George II – of the Battersea enamel works. Here Jensson produced enchanting bijouterie in brightly coloured enamel on copper, pieces which are still avidly sought by collectors from all over the world. The most popular items were the snuff and patch boxes, the latter usually bearing a motto, poesy, or message of endearment. A typical example, in the clear yellow characteristic of the Battersea enamels, bears on the lid, in script and cursive lettering on a white background the romantic message, 'This trifle, though small, will remind you of one whose heart ever will be entirely your own.'

Battersea enamels included many other 'toys' well worthy of the collector's attention. While snuff and patch boxes are perhaps the most sought after, the searcher should not overlook the charm of the enamel buttons, etuis and crosses

made at Battersea – and at Bilston, a rival works which also opened around the middle of the eighteenth century and continued to produce enamel *objets d'art* until the last quarter of that century.

Across the Channel French jewellers were even more prolific in creating exquisite examples in this medium. While the diligent may hope to come across occasional examples of Battersea and Bilston enamels in this country, pieces from French craftsmen are much more likely to be found on the Continent, chiefly in Paris where the craft had its works.

During the reigns of the first two Georges (1714–60) artificial jewellery came into use. Not everyone could afford the diamonds, emeralds, rubies, sapphires and pearls which were worn to such effect and with such grandeur by the upper echelons of society. But most women, particularly those of the prosperous middle-classes, wanted to be in the fashion by wearing impressive seeming jewellery. Paste, strass and rhinestone were substitutes for diamonds, pinchbeck for gold, cut steel and marcasite for silver.

Of these pinchbeck had a great vogue. Invented by Christopher Pinchbeck, a clock and watchmaker who had his works in Fleet Street, London, his metal, which had the appearance of gold, was composed of 83 parts copper and 17 parts zinc. It looked like gold, wore well, and maintained its colour. Most important of all, it was cheap to produce. Its advent led to the production in quantity of chatelaines, buckles, clasps, shoe buckles and jewellery. Set with 'near diamonds' of paste and strass it was used as settings for many of the jewels of the time. Although it had no gold in its composition and the jewels of which it was made were definitely in the 'cheap' category, pinchbeck nevertheless has considerable claims to the collector's interest for it was

the product of an age and belongs inexorably to that period.

In the field of imitation gems as distinct from imitation metals, strass was in the forefront. It was, according to the late Arthur Selwyn, a writer and authority on gems and metals, claimed as a discovery by both France and Germany. The French claimed that the stone got its name from a Frenchman named Stras who was a partner in a Paris firm of jewellers in 1712 and discovered an improved lead glass formula though its manufacture and development were the work of a Martin Lançon, a lapidary from St. Claude in the stone-cutting district of the Jura. The French claim is given some substance by the record of an award for coloured strass which was given to Lançon at the Paris Exhibition of 1819. The German claim credits Strasser, a Viennese goldsmith, while a third claim was made for Strass, a Strasburg jeweller who was said to have invented strass in 1758.

For the paste 'diamonds' a glass with a high percentage of lead was used, colourless where the effect of a diamond was desired, or coloured by the addition of metallic salts to represent the other precious gems. For aquamarine and other blue-green tints copper-oxide was added; for sapphire blue cobalt-oxide; and for violet tints (amethysts, et cetera) manganese-oxide. Flint glass was much used by the French jewellers.

The introduction of these substitutes, welcome as they may have been to the bourgeoisie of Georgian times, nevertheless provide a pitfall for the tyro, largely because they were given the same types of settings as precious stones and followed the same contemporary designs in many cases. Since diamonds at that time were not cut with the same faceting as today (generally having only twenty-four facets as opposed to the modern fifty-eight facets) and so lacked

the brilliance modern cutting gives, it is not easy to distinguish at first sight between the often greyish-looking early Georgian diamond and paste. Again, whilst this naturally affects the intrinsic values, jewels of pinchbeck and artificial stones have their own validity and charm as period pieces and are well worthy of considering as treasure-trove for the collector of early jewellery.

Similarly with cut steel from Birmingham and Sheffield which came into use in the second half of the eighteenth century and continued to be used into the first three decades of the nineteenth century.

Though of small value in themselves, the 'jewels' in these two materials of the period are well worth interest. In particular in the form of shoe buckles and coat and cuff buttons. Marcasite, too, was much used in Georgian times and the marcasite superimposed on a background of coloured enamel made delightful jewels. Marcasite followed the prevailing fashion in cutting and the 'stones' were generally rose-cut like the diamonds of the time. Some Georgian brooches and pendants feature urns, flowers. bows and formal motifs in marcasite set on an enamel background and used also as a surround and to form a surmounting ribbon bow or flower.

Whereas marcasite was iron pyrite cut gem-fashion and set in silver, cut steel 'stones' were polished, cut and riveted into place. Principally the craft of cut steel owed its initial popularity to the fashion for wearing buckled shoes (shoe laces were not used until about 1800). This vogue gave great scope for the creation of elaborate shoe buckles in cut steel – sometimes with the addition of paste – much worn by men. Buttons, too, were an important dress accessory and those in cut steel made by Heeley of Birmingham about 1780 were particularly fine. The collector should, however, con-

centrate on the cut steel buckles and buttons with individually cut stones of the earlier periods rather than on the later pieces made from sheets of 'cut' steel.

Reverting to the paste jewellery of the eighteenth century it should be borne in mind that these artificial stones had attained a considerable vogue in the seventeenth century when 'emeralds' and 'sapphires' of coloured paste set in a form of gilt were beautifully made and highly regarded. The influence – and the manufacture – were French and great artistry was shown in the workmanship. Later, British jewellery followed French trends and additionally used paste opals to which a coloured foil backing gave a pleasing reddish glow. Suites of seventeenth and eighteenth century paste opals in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London show the imaginative use which was made of these stones. Paste 'diamonds' were regarded as legitimate gems in their own right, particularly those of the William and Mary period when they were rose-cut and used for aigrettes, important corsage ornaments, and for pendant crosses. As far back as the reign of Charles II these paste diamonds were set in contemporary jewels. Frequently brooches and pendants were set with large paste stones against a backing circle of real diamonds.

From the beginning of the eighteenth century there had grown a demand for paste which inspired many experiments to secure a finer quality, resulting finally, by the middle of that century, in the discovery of strass referred to earlier. The success of strass, loosely but perhaps properly accredited to its high percentage of lead, nevertheless also owed something to the inclusion of arsenic and of borax – the latter alkali used only as a flux which was volatilized during the process of fusion. The arsenic, according to the expert who describes the formula, was introduced to prevent the

reduction of the oxide of lead to the metallic state and served to give subtle colour distinction to the paste of this period. This was the time, too, when Bristol and Cornish 'diamonds' of rock crystal were used – both named after the districts to which they were indigenous.

All forms of paste were used to decorate the backs of watches and for the frames of miniatures. They were also set in the elaborate shoe buckles of the time, and set into coat and sleeve buttons. Pink topaz paste, ruby, emerald and sapphire pastes were plentifully used for these. Some beautiful parures of the eighteenth century were set with aquamarine pastes combined with diamond pastes, all set in silver backed with gold, in delicate and wholly delightful designs of rosettes and leaves. Garnet pastes were also much used, particularly by Spanish jewellers.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the fashion for engraved gems and intaglios (some using paste) was given impetus by the Scots stonemason, James Tassie, who came to London in 1766 and became famous for his paste impressions, using a paste made from a formula which he kept a close secret to his death. He, with his employer Henry Quin, a physician, invented a new form of vitreous paste with which they cast wax models of gems so good that they defied detection even by the owners of the originals. Tassie's collection of intaglios and cameos – he had been given access to most of the famous collections – was the greatest of its kind and numbered many thousand pieces in every conceivable kind of stone and style. The Empress of Russia was one of his distinguished customers and his gems, even at that time, were eagerly sought by far-seeing collectors. His skill can be studied in the all-embracing collection of his work in the British Museum, London.

Designs of the eighteenth century jewellery were, as today,

influenced by contemporary clothes fashions. At the opening of the century men were wearing tight breeches surmounted by cutaway coats which precluded easy access to waistcoat pockets – the natural habitat for a watch. As a consequence, tailors made watch pockets in the top of the breeches. To obtain a nicely symmetrical effect the *beau monde* not only carried one beautifully enamelled and gem-set watch in one pocket but balanced it with a *fausse-montre* in the other, both joined by an elaborate chain across the middle. Soon the *fausse-montre* was superseded by a bunch of seals and fobs to balance the real watch and here the Georgian jeweller found wonderful scope for his talents. The bunch of seals included examples of Tassie's intaglios, pinchbeck or gold fobs of intricate workmanship and infinite variety. Paste again featured in these dress accessories.

Women, not to be outdone, retaliated to the fob and seal fashion with chatelaines which grew more and more elaborate. By the last quarter of the eighteenth century there was no more popular wedding gift than that of a chatelaine for the bride – the more decorative the better – from which dangled all the appurtenances of her new status, thimble, scissors, etui, vinaigrette, patch box, toothpick, seals, watch and decorative keys. All depended from a stout hook concealed behind a rectangular, oblong, round or shield-shaped plaque from which hung a group of chains of varying length down which were interspersed further panels or cameos. The earlier Georgian chatelaines were very beautiful and much more artistic than the later ones, and were in essence completely decorative.

The reign of George III carried through from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century and it was during the latter years of this period that the Directoire influence was seen in contemporary jewellery. This had a strongly Grecian

flavour, a simplicity of design which was underlined, value-wise, by the use of pinchbeck for gold, and paste, strass, paste opals and rhinestones in place of the more precious gems. Coral, quartz and moss agates were also used. Later the impact of the discoveries at Herculaneum and Pompeii began to be felt. Expressed chiefly in furniture designs and embellishments it soon affected jewellery designers who seized upon the granulation, mythological subjects and the kind of jewelled accessories those long-dead craftsmen had created, now excavated after centuries of entombment. There was an emphasis on goldwork, particularly for hair and neck ornaments and the vogue for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century copies of these classical jewels became widespread both here and throughout the Continent.

An example of this form of granulation was seen in a set of four buttons, sold in London last year, which were mounted as two pairs of earclips, each designed as a circular gold boss, the centre being in the form of a flower set with rubies, emeralds and a rose diamond surrounded with a border of small pearls, the outer edge decorated with gold granulation. Chased scrolls and foliage were another expression of the classical influence, seen in the Sarah Siddons ring which was included in the same sale. This had a single diamond claw-set in gold, the mount carved and chased with scrolls and foliage of Greek inspiration.

Some of the jewels of the Greek and Etruscan periods reproduced in George III's time faithfully copied the styles of the earlier period in every particular. Such a piece came into a London saleroom last year – a gold collar with curved front, with festoons of fine chains on either side of a gold Venetian ducat on a fine chain back, and with an Etruscan worked clasp.

Garnets, turquoises, amethysts and pearls were at this

time set in granulated mounts. A suite of the early nineteenth century is typical – a necklet of oblong-shaped amethysts set in elaborate granulated mounts alternating with small stones, the whole set at intervals with turquoises and half pearls; two matching bracelets, and a pair of pendant earrings, each composed of a pear-shaped and an oval amethyst, the mounts ornamented with granulation and paired leaves, also set with turquoises and half pearls.

Pendants, too, used the ancient art of gold granulation and in an example of the early nineteenth century it is seen used in conjunction with coloured golds in the form of a cross patée with an emerald and pearl cluster centre within a surround of flowers, foliage and cannetille in coloured golds, the arms of the cross in white chalcedony, the loop decorated with gold granulation.

Etruscan work and palmettes set with cameos were a jewel form popular both here and in France at this time. A French gold and cameo suite of the nineteenth century, comprising a flexible bracelet, pendant earrings and a matching brooch exemplifies the trend. The bracelet has the front set with three onyx cameos carved with classical figures in an Etruscan work border with palmette terminals, linked by cylindrical hinges, reeded, and with fir-cone terminals, the sides applied with fine scrollwork. The pendant earrings and the brooch each have a gold amphora pendant below as a drop. Sometimes these classically inspired jewels of the Georgian period were made entirely of gold, such as the gold necklet of the nineteenth century composed of seven graduated circular gold bosses with filigree wheel-shaped decoration and beaded borders. This style was seen in bracelets, pendant earrings and brooches of the 'gold period', and because of the absence of gems in their design, conformed most closely to the jewels unearthed at Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Matted gold and filigree work linked the Directoire and the classical periods of George III. For example, a pair of Directoire quartz topaz and gold ear pendants, each designed as a chandelier, with an oval quartz topaz centre decorated with a semi-circle of pearls, pearl flowers and tassels, further embellished with engraved gold leaves and filigree work of Etruscan influence. A gold and ivory bracelet of the same period carries out the theme with four ivory panels of shaped outline, carved with Chinese scenes in high relief, each intersected and held with gold filigree panels worked with fabulous birds, flowers and foliage.

During the closing years of the eighteenth century and the opening years of the nineteenth, jewels with sentimental or classical subjects were very popular, particularly with French jewellers, inspired, no doubt by Marie Antoinette's device of turtle doves and hymeneal torches at the time of her marriage. Two jewels exhibited in Birmingham last year are typical of this fashion, one a 'sentimental jewel' showing a woman writing at a classical pedestal, with above a lover's knot in hair, the jewel having small pearls set in blue enamel, and the other, a brooch (*circa* 1790) of gold partly enamelled, set with cornelians, emeralds and pearls, described as 'typical of French late eighteenth-century jewellery which often wordlessly expressed sentiment'. The brooch has bows and quivers, hymeneal torches, flaming hearts and doves. More often this type of jewel expressed more lugubrious sentiments such as the memorial jewel in the same exhibition (*circa* 1785) which showed a tomb under a weeping willow composed of human hair, which opens to release a shrouded figure to its heavenly ascent, where a crown set with little diamonds awaits it. There is more hair, plaited, enclosed in the back of the miniature.

CHAPTER THREE

Georgian Bracelets

If the paintings of the period are to be believed, women of the eighteenth century had prettily rounded arms, with slender, graceful wrists. To set off such charms the women adopted with avidity the fashion of jewelled bracelets though many of these 'jewels' consisted mainly of wide bands of velvet around the wrist, adorned by a single-jewelled medallion, miniature or cameo. Sometimes the velvet bracelet consisted simply of a band secured by a large brooch. Later on these gave way to rows of pearls or gold linked chains, again with an important clasp, usually in diamonds or paste, or a miniature in Battersea enamel. Ovals, squares and circles were set with rose-cut diamonds to form these clasps – so important a jewel at that time that bracelet clasps formed the subject of an exhibition at the Royal Academy in the latter half of the eighteenth century. These jewelled ornaments were detachable for wearing as a pendant or a brooch, or the complete bracelet might be worn as a head ornament, for which the jeweller provided a special fitting. One such bracelet was said to have been given by the first Duke of Wellington to his daughter-in-law, the Marchioness of Douro, probably on her marriage in 1839. In this case the bracelet was of diamonds and pearls, the front in the form of a rosette in Gothic style, pavé-set with circular cut diamonds with a bouton pear mounted in a flower-shaped cluster of larger diamonds as a centre, the tapering sides of ladder design being set with bouton pearls to form a graduated row, admirably suited for transformation into a hair bandeau. Another Georgian

bracelet which expresses this adaptability has an oval central panel of vertically mounted diamonds on a gold band of engraved, graduated panels, so designed that the diamond mounts can be taken apart to be worn as a single brooch, or the centre panel alone as a smaller brooch, the appropriate fittings being included for the adaptations. In nearly every example of bracelets having a central jewelled motif, this was removable for wearing as a brooch or as a pendant.

As with most forms of Georgian jewellery, the flower theme was pre-eminent in bracelets. This was particularly true of French jewellery, many Parisian bracelets having a central motif in the form of either a single blossom or a bouquet of flowers, often set in a gold engraved circlet, the gems confined to the central ornament. Swiss jewellers also followed this trend and even at that early period incorporated a watch in the bracelet. A typical example combining artistry and functional use is seen in an early nineteenth-century bracelet in gold, enamels, rubies and diamonds, the front in the form of a hand, jewelled, holding a fan, the panels of which are decorated with flowers and musical instruments. The fan is made to open and when unfurled reveals a watch with richly enamelled reverse.

In Georgian times, as now, there were charm bracelets, each item expressing a poetical or a sentimental mood. Of those in Royal possession one of the most interesting is one which belonged to the Duchess of Cambridge. The bracelet itself is of flexible snake chain and carries no fewer than nine small pendants, including, *inter alia* a heart-shaped padlock of blue enamel set with a single pearl; another heart-shaped locket of lapis lazuli within a wreath of diamonds surmounted by a diamond crown; an oval locket containing hair within a border of blue enamel and dia-

monds; another round locket containing a lock of hair under crystal, set in a border of diamonds; and a circular locket with a painting of the eye of Princess Charlotte within a gold serpent surround, diamond-set and with a diamond loop. This little miniature of Princess Charlotte's eye was bequeathed to the Duchess of Cambridge by the Duchess of Gloucester and is a charming example of the sentimental character of much of the Georgian jewellery. It is extremely likely that the many small lockets which can still be found by the diligent collector were originally designed for wearing on bracelets at this time.

Some of the bracelets composed of rows of pearls referred to earlier bore a miniature set in the central motif, like the bracelet of four rows of pearls which was bequeathed by Queen Victoria to the Duchess of York in 1901. This has an important gold clasp containing an oval portrait in coloured enamels of George III, in which he is shown wearing a red coat, set within a border of rose-cut diamonds.

The serpent theme was expressed in bracelets as in other forms of jewellery of the period and showed great artistry in their design. Though usually of solid gold with emerald eyes, or hollowed gold set all over with turquoises or pearls, there were examples in which the body – sometimes of blue enamel – was cleverly hinged throughout its length, giving complete flexibility to the bracelet. These were sometimes set with rose-diamonds in the head and tail. In some bracelets the coils were adaptable for wearing in tight coils or opened out to extend up the arm.

Cameo bracelets, which reached their heyday in the Directoire period – 1795–99 – echoed the classicism of the time both in subject and in settings. A French gold and cameo flexible Directoire bracelet has the front set with three onyx cameos carved with classical figures in a border

of Etruscan work, with palmette terminals linked by cylindrical hinges. These, in turn, are reeded with fir-cone terminals – all expressive of the classic era in jewellery.

During the George IV period some bracelets embodied a cartouche concealing a miniature compartment which might have held a miniature or a lock of hair. An Italian bracelet of this type in gold, rubies, enamels and pearls, has a central cartouche concealing a miniature compartment enamelled with a design of flowers on a black ground, the black and white openwork border of foliate scrolls being set with rubies and pearls. The use of black enamel and the miniature compartment suggests that this bracelet was designed as a *memento mori*.

CHAPTER FOUR

Georgian Rings

RINGS were among the favourite jewels in all the Georgian periods and displayed a wealth of imagination in their design and workmanship. All kinds of gems and embellishments were used, while the creative talents of the jeweller-designers were further stimulated by the sentimental mood of the times. Even the Victorian age, which is often regarded as the most expressive of domestic sentimentality did not outdo the Georgian in this respect. Though the latter age had its *memento mori*, sentiment was much more concerned with love and its poetical expression. Hence the outpouring of 'love rings' with their engraved couplets, messages and mottoes. All was hearts and flowers and protestations of undying felicity, expressed fancifully and charmingly and providing the collector of today with a rich field for search. The variety was wide and it is worth mentioning, *en passant*, that there were even watch rings – one set with brilliants containing a watch set into the bezel being bequeathed to Princess Augusta by Charlotte Augusta Matilda, eldest daughter of George III.

Some of the best examples of Georgian rings are described in Charles Oman's 'Catalogue of Rings in the Victoria and Albert Museum' which forms a splendid guide to the collector. Among the love rings he mentions one of the late eighteenth century which has the bezel in the form of a crowned heart set with diamonds on a thin hoop of roped gold. This heart motif recurs again and again in varied forms, as, for example, a love ring of the early eighteenth century having a crowned heart set with diamonds held in

silver collets, with the heart this time held between two hands in white enamel. Inside the hoop is inscribed the names of the lovers and the date of their marriage.

Many rings used this theme of a heart between two hands, usually surmounted by a coronet, with hoops of chased, reeded or roped gold. Many used a carbuncle as the heart, the surmounting coronet being set either with small rose diamonds, pearls or marcasite, and they were generally engraved inside the hoop with either a poesy, a motto, or the lovers' names. In spite of using these devices, the bezels were not large as might be expected from their having a heart, two hands, and a coronet. In most rings the hands formed part of the hoop, the heart was small, and the surmounting coronet tiny. Since Georgian women seem to have had small hands this was as well.

Flower motifs were also scaled down and were delightful miniatures of blooms, using coloured gems to give realism to the motifs. One eighteenth-century example shows a ring with an openwork bezel formed as a spray of three tiny flowers set in silver with rubies and diamonds, the shoulders of the ring being spirally gadrooned. Another ring of the late 1770s has its openwork bezel formed as a bowl of flowers set colourfully with diamonds, rubies and emeralds in silver collets with an unusual hoop of silver gilt.

Decoration is a feature of both hoop and shoulders of eighteenth-century rings, chasing, engraving, openwork and piercing being used. Most rings of this time have the stones set in a pierced gallery, with solid metal or partially opened backs which in turn might be plain or grooved. Though the stones in the rings are generally set in silver collets, the backing metal is usually of gold like the hoop. Chasing, ribbing and piercing are particularly featured in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century rings.

Mourning rings of the second half of the eighteenth century were influenced by the classicism of the period which lent itself particularly well to mournful themes such as drooping classical figures, Grecian funeral urns and other subjects with a melancholy aura. These, however, were not considered to be sufficient in themselves to convey sadness; they had to be underlined by inscriptions, marvels of *multum in parvo*. A marquise ring of 1788 shows an angel holding a plaque bearing the words 'To bliss' over a seated figure of a woman who is pointing to another, oval, plaque, with the words 'Not lost, but gone before' in a plain gold frame. The words on both plaques, though minute, can be clearly seen. Another ring, with a beaded surround, bears a picture of a weeping willow (worked in hair) over a tomb surmounted by a Grecian urn, the whole surrounded by blue enamel, *circa* 1748. Not only were close relatives commemorated by these mourning rings; one of 1786 shows a painting of Hope, chin in hand, seated beside an urn-topped tomb in black and white enamel on which are the words 'Sacred to friendship'. A French mourning ring of a little later, signed Babouot, has a large octagonal bezel enclosing a cameo under crystal showing a nude figure seated at the foot of a column supporting an urn.

It was a common practice among members of the upper classes to make provision in their wills for the buying of a number of mourning rings for distribution after their funeral. Since many dozens at a time might be ordered it can be readily appreciated that Georgian jewellers found it lucrative to design more and more ornate mourning rings. Enamelling was used to a greater extent in the earlier Georgian period than in the latter, usually as a background to inscriptions bearing the name and date of death. Typical of these designs is an old-English diamond and enamel

ring of 1724, the band of enamel being inscribed with the name and date of death, the centre enclosing a drawing of a skeleton under a crystal coffin-shaped cover, flanked on either side of the bezel by a rose-cut diamond. Later on, when enamelling formed a part of a memorial ring, it was generally used as a background to the bezel rather than on the hoop, as in a ring of the early nineteenth century with an oval plaque of black enamel within a diamond-set border, applied with an urn in diamonds and with more rose diamonds set in the openwork shoulders. 'Widow' rings of black enamel were worn in the second half of the eighteenth century – simple bands bearing the husband's name and the date of his death inscribed in gold lettering around the band. Not all gifts of rings were *memento mori*, however. In the reign of George IV the Court Jewellers made a limited number of plain gold rings bearing a 'well-executed' medallion of the King set beneath a large diamond, given as tokens to the members of the King's immediate circle.

Cameos of all kinds were used in Georgian rings, particularly when they formed part of a parure. Apart from the shell cameos which flourished in the Directoire period, there were those of jasper ware and gemstones, sometimes in the marquise shape which was a high favourite in the second half of the eighteenth century. One typical Wedgwood cameo ring in the Victoria and Albert Museum is in blue and white jasper ware depicting a youth and maiden in classical pose, the hoop of the gold ring having openwork shoulders applied with a gold leaf at each side of the bezel. In another ring in the same collection the oval cameo is an onyx in three strata bearing the bust of an old man with two diamonds as buttons to his coat, *circa* 1790.

As well as the popular marquise shape already referred to

there were rings with bezels of more rounded oval, half-hoops, clusters, octagonals and oblongs. Massed diamonds, pavé-set, were fashionable for these, generally using small rose diamonds massed around a single, larger diamond. There was a good deal of paste, often used together with real diamonds – a point to bear in mind when attending sales where, quite often, a seven-stone diamond ring will be found to have five of the stones real and two paste, a fact which is invariably pointed out in the catalogue description of the lot.

Quartz topaz was a much liked Georgian stone, allied to a border of rose-cut diamonds, with pink topaz another favourite gem. An alliance of diamonds and rubies or of emeralds and diamonds was frequently seen, but sapphires, oddly enough, appear to have been used but rarely. An eighteenth-century ruby and diamond ring of the late Georgian period shows a bezel of curved diagonal rows of bands alternately set with rubies and diamonds in silver collets and chased shoulders which closely resembles a twentieth-century cocktail ring.

Garnets and amethysts were also used in many Georgian rings, the former in clusters, the latter as a central stone set in a frame of small diamonds. Carbuncles were, as a rule, ornamented by a superimposed star or coronet in rose-diamonds, marcasites or tiny pearls. Quite often jewellers set one gem inside another – a fashion which does not seem to have a modern counterpart. Many Georgian rings used, instead of a background of the prevailing dark blue enamel on a bezel, a dark blue glass backing, rather like the blue glass liners to salt cellars and sugar bowls. Diamond flowers and tiny bouquets were mounted on this background of dark blue glass in the same way as on the enamel with much the same effect.

Not all Georgian rings were designed for finger wear. There were many graceful rings designed for holding the folds of a scarf or a lace fichu, using precious metals and gems, but having an equal width all round instead of the graduated hoop with the bezel of the finger rings. 'Lace rings', as they were called, were especially fashionable in the second half of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER FIVE

Georgian Necklaces & Pendants

FASHIONS of the eighteenth century which bared the neck and often the shoulders found the jewellery designers enthusiastically co-operative – and prolific. The reigns of the four Georges were wealthy in inspiration. There were the discoveries at Herculaneum in 1713 – just before George I succeeded to the throne of England – and those of Pompeii in the 1750s during George II's reign. There was the revival of the skill of the gem engraver and the intaglio cutter. Later still came the Directoire influence and the Classic and Gothic styles – all contributing to a flow of inspiration for designs which expressed the differing prevailing enthusiasms and fully exploited by the creation of imaginative and varied necklaces, long-chains and pendants.

It did not matter if the neckline of the moment were high or low since few Georgian necklaces were secured by a fixed clasp. Most of them terminated at either end in a small ring through which a velvet ribbon was passed and tied in a small bow resting on the nape of the neck. Thus the length of the necklace (which was in general shorter than those of today) could be adjusted as fashion – and the height or depth of the neckline – dictated. Indeed, the presence of these terminal rings is in itself a good indication of the date of a jewel, though in many cases later owners 'improved' their inherited Georgian and William & Mary necklaces by having new jewelled clasps affixed in place of the ribbon rings and by having them made longer at the same time.

Rose diamonds, with their usual twenty-four facets as opposed to the fifty-eight of today, brilliant-cut, and cushion-shaped diamonds were freely used but there was, too, a considerable use of the coloured gems. These, with cameos, garnets, turquoises, pink topazes, tourmalines, moss agates, amethysts – to mention only some of the coloured gems used – combined with coloured enamels gave Georgian necklaces and pendants great charm and beauty. The discoveries of pinchbeck and strass in the mid-eighteenth century provided new materials for the jeweller-craftsmen. Paste, too, having been developed to a higher standard of quality, was extensively used in settings of beautiful design and workmanship.

Throughout the whole of the Georgian periods necklaces were distinguished by an effect of lightness and delicacy despite the use of a great many diamonds. People were generally more concerned with the design of a necklace than with the value of the gems it contained which clearly had its effect on the designers of the time who could thus give full vent to their creative abilities. It explains, too, why paste and imitation gems had settings of as exquisite and meticulous workmanship as those designed to hold precious gems. Despite the lack of preoccupation with the value of the gems used, jewellers managed to include clusters of brilliant-cut, pavé diamonds in combination with openwork settings which maintained an effect of delicacy whilst using gems prolifically for those who presumably preferred the real to the imitation.

The Georgian jewellers' love of natural themes and flowing lines coupled with masses of gems makes it easy for collectors to identify their work. Fluidity was expressed by the use of fringes and cascading drops; the natural theme was provided by flowers, foliage and representations of

feathers, bows and ribbon knots, any or all of which figure somewhere or other in Georgian jewellery.

This taste was not confined to Britain. French jewellers, too, looked to Nature for inspiration and they, too, liked the flowing, fluid line. A typical example of this is seen in an eighteenth-century French diamond necklace in the form of a chain of graceful foliate scrollwork which supports a fringe of pendants in the same design, each with a larger, pear-shaped drop diamond suspended from it. Further embellishment is afforded by a surmount to each section in the form of a clover leaf with another, larger cushion-shaped diamond as a centre, the whole pavé-set and graduating towards the back. As well as expressing the twin themes of flowing lines and naturalistic design, this Georgian necklace also demonstrates the adaptability of the jewellery of the time, for it has six fittings which enable the necklace to be divided so that its component parts can be worn as brooches, earrings, pendant, and a neck ornament. This particular necklace is believed to have belonged to Marie Antoinette. Another expression of this Georgian adaptability is the impressive diamond diadem which was worn by Princess Margaret at her wedding, the base of which can be worn as a necklet, or, by using the vertical bars of the upper part, as a bib necklace.

Italian expression of the natural theme is seen in a necklace of the late Georgian period in gold and pearls, the front in the form of a delicate filigree bow picked out with blue enamel, with vine leaves and clusters of grapes as drop pendants, the sides having similar bows fastening festooned chains of latticed links. Filigree was much used by French jewellers of the late Georgian period, combined with flower themes as seen in a gold and amethyst necklace of the early nineteenth century. The oval amethysts of this

are set in simple gold filigree mounts graduating from the centre and alternating with small daisy motifs in two-coloured gold.

Gold snake chains were a favourite media for Georgian necklaces, their simple flexible lines being given importance by the addition of elaborate jewelled pendants, crosses (plain Latin or more ornate Maltese) and six- or twelve-pointed stars. A typical theme was a connecting ribbon loop or bow joining the pendant to the snake chain, as in the example of a necklace with a plain Latin cross in blue enamel centred with a large diamond hanging from a ribbon bow loop of similar work from a gold snake chain necklace. These ribbon knots appeared, too, in more colourful pendants such as an emerald, pearl, gold and enamel jewel in the form of an engraved gold knot of ribbon with a blue enamel flower centre. This supported in turn a pendant drop designed as folded bands of ribbon with a pearl and blue enamel flower centre enriched with emeralds and pink topazes, with a pink topaz and white enamel pear-shaped pendant drop.

As well as snake chains there were necklets in the form of snakes, many of them gem-set. An example of the fashion is a snake necklet of gold, enamel, pink topazes and diamonds, the head enamelled in royal blue and applied with pink topazes and diamonds as eyes. It should fire the collector with renewed zeal to know that this charming jewel was sold in a London saleroom not very long ago for the modest sum of £40. Sometimes the serpent theme was used to form links, as in a Georgian longchain, each of the links of which is in the form of a coiled serpent enamelled in black and white. Like most longchains of the period, this could be divided for wearing as two shorter necklaces. Usually when worn as a single jewel, the longchain might

reach as far as the knees; invariably they were more than waist-length.

An imaginative use of coloured stones is a notable characteristic of Georgian jewellery as a whole and of necklaces and pendants in particular, one which flourished exceedingly later on when Giulanio and Castellani entered the field. If the trend became over-exuberant in the Victorian age it was sufficiently restrained in the Georgian period to be aesthetically pleasing and light-hearted. Many factors contributed towards this liking for coloured gems and enamels, not the least of them the popularity of 'abroad' and the increasing number of travellers to the Continent many of whom brought back with them souvenirs of jewellery made by French and Italian craftsmen.

Cameos were freely used, particularly with the advent of the French Directorate and its Directoire fashions, and the creations of Wedgwood and Tassie. For necklaces these cameos were generally linked in panels by gold chains or links. Not all were of the carved shell, jasper, or Tassie variety. Sometimes – particularly in the period of the revival of the art of the gem-engraver in the mid-eighteenth century – these were composed of gems carved *en cameo*. One contemporary example is a necklace composed of five oval agates carved *en cameo* with classical subjects, each framed in gold, the frames held and intersected by triple gold chains. Even the Italian jeweller of the eighteenth century did not always employ shell cameos in his jewelled pendants. One jeweller at least – the famous Girometta, born in Rome in 1780 – used a cameo cut in a layer of white chalcedony on bloodstone. This had the design of a satyr holding a bunch of grapes, with a boy satyr behind him, and was set in a lyre-shaped gold and enamelled frame, hanging from four chains. Tassels form another guide to Georgian

period necklaces and pendants; in the latter case hanging either singly as a further pendant drop, though many elaborate pendants carried a long tassel at either side of the main piece.

Georgian necklaces did not escape the *memento mori* theme, usually expressed in the lockets suspended from them. Some extremely interesting examples of these are to be found in the catalogues of Queen Mary's possessions in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Nearly all the lockets shown therein are heart-shaped, maintaining in that form the sentiment which inspired them. The hair was sometimes contained behind a crystal; sometimes the tress was contained at the back of the locket, the front being inscribed with the initials of the departed engraved on the crystal cover. In others the tress was placed in the front of the locket under engraved crystal within a border of seed pearls or rose diamonds. Not all lockets containing hair were *memento mori*, however. Touchingly, many Georgian parents cherished locks from the heads of their children and secured their mementoes for perpetuity in specially made lockets. One of the most remarkable of those described in the Queen Mary catalogue is the heart-shaped locket of crystal in a gold frame containing locks from the tresses of the six daughters of George III and Queen Charlotte. On one side the Monogram M S A beneath a coronet appears over locks from the Princesses Mary, Sophia and Amelia, while on the other side are the tresses and initials of the three elder Princesses, Charlotte, Augusta and Elizabeth, also beneath a coronet and under a crystal cover. This delightful memento was bequeathed to Princess Mary, Duchess of Teck, by the cousin of the Princesses.

Of the *memento mori* lockets described in the Royal catalogue a typical example is one in the shape of a covered

urn set in alternate rows of amethysts and pearls, with suspended garlands of the same stones attached to the cover by cherub heads. This interesting locket contains a lock of Prince Alfred's hair. The dates of the birth and death of the Prince – who was the ninth child and youngest son of George III – are inscribed on the back of the locket.

In seeking to determine the period of necklaces the would-be collector of Georgian jewellery should always look at the backs of the jewels, for the gems – even those of paste or imitation coloured stones backed with foil – were almost invariably totally enclosed in the metal setting, the collets. In the case of diamonds, or of coloured real gems where no foil backing is needed, the settings may be partially open at the back.

Mention should be made of the iron jewellery of the late Georgian period, the necklaces in particular having a delicate lacy design which belies the connotation of heaviness associated with the metal used. Apart from their attractive and unusual appearance – like fine black lace in some cases – these have an historical interest. Just as, during the two World Wars of this century, people yielded up their jewels of gold and silver to the war effort, so did the Prussians in their nineteenth-century war. Unlike the people of this country who accepted a jewel-less state of austerity, the Prussians provided an alternative form of jewellery, using iron. This served a double purpose; it furnished jewels of some elegance and the wearing of it underlined the sacrifices that women had made. The foundry for making iron jewellery was set up in Berlin in 1804 and large quantities of necklaces, brooches, bracelets, pendants, pendant earrings, hair combs, buckles and so on were manufactured there. A fine collection of these can be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, some of which have figured in jewellery exhibitions

throughout the country. Though in the main the jewels used only cast-iron with a dull black finish, some embodied a little gold as a relief. This was seen in a necklace exhibited at the City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in 1960, which showed the cast-iron in settings of reeded gold – a most effective combination.

CHAPTER SIX

Georgian Brooches

EARLY in the reign of George I the influence of a fashion which flourished in the closing years of the seventeenth century – that of stiff bodices, pinched-in waists and extravagantly panniered skirts – focused attention on breast ornaments which became elaborate in size and form. This was the era of the stomacher, that impressive jewelled ornament which could, and often did, extend from the neck-line to the waist, sometimes being as much as ten inches in length. Like any other fashion development, these stiff bodices and their adornment offered scope for the jeweller which was seized upon and exploited to the uttermost.

At the turn of the century the stomacher was a single, immense piece of jewellery. Later, with the advent of the George I period, these became separate single pieces of jewellery which were worn one above the other in stomacher style but were more acceptable in that the single pieces could be worn at different points of the bodice and even worn strategically placed here and there among the folds of the panniered skirt. Trio brooches – sets of three matching brooches of differing sizes – were another modification. The stomacher had followed the Sévigné brooch, named for the famous letter-writing Madame de Sévigné, which was usually a jewelled breast ornament in the form of a bow, a flower, a bird or a fan. Typical of the Sévigné brooch is a Spanish version formed as a bow of finely pierced scrollwork set with rubies and rose-diamonds, with a smaller bow and a pear-shaped drop as a pendant. A later stomacher brooch in the Renaissance style of the eighteenth

century is in silver-gilt and enamel of openwork foliate scroll design set with emeralds and topazes. This unusual gem and colour combination is a feature of much Georgian jewellery, shown again in a brooch using amethysts, emeralds, opals and garnets in a shaped panel with a pear-shaped emerald centre supporting two pear-shaped drops and a loop for a pendant. Many stomachers of the earlier period display the classical influence, shown in a sapphire and diamond stomacher, oblong shaped and pierced with a fine openwork design of palmette and foliate motifs. Four attractive cabochon sapphires are mounted at intervals with three more set below as drops, the centre being set with two oval-shaped sapphires.

Tassels were sometimes used to give an appearance of even greater length to stomacher brooches, as in one eighteenth-century brooch in the form of a rosette interlaced with sprays of leaves and flower blossoms, extended to form a pendant section terminating in a tassel with a pierced crown-shaped top and a pearl and diamond fringe.

Owing nothing to the stomacher, but following the trend for vertical length were the chatelaine brooches of the mid-eighteenth century. These were smaller than the chatelaine proper and were worn on the breast, unlike the chatelaine which was worn at the waist. These chatelaine brooches are delightful jewels which are well within the reach of the modest collector. An antique ruby and rose-diamond chatelaine brooch was sold in a London saleroom as recently as last year for only £38. This had an openwork design of foliate scrollwork in silver and gold set with rose-diamonds and with larger rubies collet-set at intervals.

Essentially the eighteenth-century periods of George I, II, and III were conspicuous for a natural theme in jewellery. Flowers, foliage, feathers, and plant life generally were the

jewellers' chief source of inspiration, best exemplified in the brooches of these periods. Simple art forms such as bows and looped ribbons were extensively used. Woodlands, as well as formal flower gardens yielded subjects for the Georgian jewellery designers. This was equally true of the Continental artist. An example of this is an eighteenth-century French diamond brooch which was shown at The Ageless Diamond Exhibition in London in 1959, lent by Mrs. Paul Wallraf. Designed as trailing sprays of buds and leaves, it held six pear-shaped diamonds which had belonged to Marie Antoinette forming the buds, with leaves trailing artistically at different lengths, supported by a group of pavé-set diamond leaves. Another flower brooch in the same Exhibition, dated 1780, shows the flower theme allied to the tremblant setting which was such a delightful feature of Georgian jewellery. This brooch is designed as a five-petalled flower, each petal mounted tremblant, with a spray of leaves and two buds with diamond stems. Flowers were an apparently inexhaustible theme for Georgian brooches, which sometimes featured coloured diamonds to emphasize the flower form. A typical example is an eighteenth-century brooch designed as a bunch of eight violets in diamonds with pavé-set diamond leaves, the stamens of the violets being emphasized by the use of canary-yellow diamonds, while the diamond stems are 'tied' by a ribbon of calibré-cut sapphires. Sometimes the flower theme was expressed by a single flower head, seen in an eighteenth-century brooch, the delicately curved petals of which are pavé-set, centred with a large, collet-set diamond, the whole mounted tremblant so that the flower moves and glitters with every breath.

Ribbons were used not only to 'tie' bunches of flowers in brooches, but also to frame flower groups. These ribbon motifs are essentially of the Georgian period, especially when

allied to the floral theme. An old English diamond brooch, *circa* 1770, designed as a lily with a briollet-cut diamond forming the stamen, another diamond flower and a spray of leaves, has the diamond-set stems tied with a diamond ribbon. Yet another example of this appealing and well-dated fashion is seen in a brooch in the form of a diamond-set bouquet of flowers comprising a rose mounted tremblant with inner, flexible, petals; a second rose with stamens of rubies and diamonds; four pinks; lilies of the valley; rose-buds and other equally pretty flowers interspersed by leaves, the diamond stems gathered into a diamond ribbon, all making a delightful and appealing posy, expressive of the true artistry and beauty of Georgian jewellery.

Another much-loved jewellery design of Georgian times was that of the single curved feather, diamond-set, of which many beautiful examples are in Royal possession. Sometimes these feather brooches were several inches in length and in that form were adaptable for wearing as an aigrette at the front of a head-band. Such a diamond feather brooch – a particularly fine one – was sold at Christie's by the Trustees of the 7th Duke of Newcastle. Ascribed to the year 1770, the feather fronds of the brooch take a graceful curve to terminate in three very fine pear-shaped diamond drops – a piece which must have looked extremely impressive as a head ornament. A much smaller and simpler matching pair of eighteenth-century diamond feather brooches were sold by the same firm last year for the Princess Royal and fetched £1,800. Though there are many modern versions of the single feather diamond brooch, the authenticity of the Georgian pieces can be tested by the manner of the settings and the usual method of enclosing the backs of the stones with gold or silver. The reason for this, according to Mr. G. D. Llewellyn, head of the jewellery section of Sotheby's,

is that the Georgian jewellers considered that such a backing of precious metal prevented the skin from being marked. Whatever the reason, the result is that the tyro has an excellent guide to the probable age of a piece of attributed Georgian jewellery.

As well as embodying great artistry in their conception, many Georgian brooches showed dexterity in their use. Often, brooches of the eighteenth century were made to be adaptable, such as a pair of old English diamond brooches, *circa* 1780, one composed of four, and the other of three, heads of barley, with two diamond leaves and stems and an extra head of barley to make eight in all, which could be converted into a handsome head ornament for which the Georgian jeweller had created a fitting for easy conversion.

Maltese crosses, diamond-set, and stars were other popular jewelled brooch forms, many of them – as were most important brooches – being fitted with a loop at the top so that they could be worn as pendants for evening functions and as brooches on day dresses. Usually backed with gold or silver the diamond-set stars were frequently made in sets of six, to be worn on the corsage in the early eighteenth century or, later on, as decorations for the hair, placed here and there in the high-piled coiffure.

Of the *memento mori* jewels of Georgian times the brooch was one of the most fashionable and diverse. The death of Princess Charlotte, daughter of George III, was the occasion for giving memorial brooches to her attendant ladies, brooches which were typical of the vogue. Those to commemorate the Princess were made in black enamel and gold with a central panel bearing the monogram 'P C' and a coronet within an inscription IN MEMORY OF DEPARTED WORTH. This bestowing of *memento mori* on friends of the departed was much followed by the Royal families and it is

interesting to note – and encouraging for collectors to know – that the Princess Charlotte memorial brooch, which figures in the Victoria and Albert Museum catalogues of the late Queen Mary's jewels, was bought in by the Princess of Wales in 1905. Usually, mourning brooches were in either black or dark blue enamel, with classical figures of grief – broken columns, drooping females, and funereal urns superimposed on them in diamonds or marcasite. Generally they held a compartment at the back in which was placed a lock of hair or a miniature, and they were often surmounted by a ribbon bow or a coronet. Sometimes the lock of hair was placed in the front of a rectangular brooch under crystal, bordered either with small pearls or marcasites. Where the lock of hair is visible in this way it is sometimes braided to form a lattice or checked pattern.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Georgian Earrings

DANGLING would appear to be the operative adjective for Georgian earrings which were invariably long and free-swinging. Indeed, some were of such extravagant length that they reached the wearer's shoulders. Again there was extraordinary diversity of design and vitality of imagination. Every kind of gem and method setting were incorporated in these jewels, designs which, in one form or another, continued throughout the eighteenth century. Consequently there are no very clear lines of demarcation between early, mid and late Georgian and it was not until Queen Victoria had succeeded William IV that a definite change in style was perceptible,

All the characteristic themes of brooches, bracelets and necklaces were echoed in the earrings – flowers, foliage, ribbon knots, feathers and so on – were included. But whereas massed small diamonds were used extensively for other jewels, many earrings were set with much larger single diamonds or pastes. The drop effect was predominant and the girandole pre-eminent. Even where flowers, foliage and similar designs were used, these were invariably given added length by the addition of pendant drop gems. A pair of late eighteenth-century diamond ear pendants, which exemplifies the fashion, has each earring composed of a spray of flowers emerging from a cornucopia, with three pear-shaped drops falling below girandole style, supported by diamond foliage. Not without reason do the historians refer to these earrings as 'ear pendants' for that much more accurately describes them. A pair of ear pendants of 1780,

for example, could hardly be designated earrings, with their design of six diamond buds, with diamond leaves and a drop diamond at the base supported by a further diamond cluster. Of the same period, *genre* and length is a pair of ear pendants composed of a panel pierced with a bird and scroll design, centred by a single large diamond and supported by a nine-stone diamond cluster top.

The liking for free movement in jewellery found full expression in these ear pendants, particularly in those which had single large diamonds set in swinging frames, such as the eighteenth-century diamond pendant earrings each composed of a drop-shaped diamond of large size suspended within a pear-shaped diamond frame, the stones swinging freely with every movement. The diamond frame itself has a surmount of two diamonds with a smaller stone on top of these. The diamond frame is detachable. This form of jewel was much favoured in the later Georgian periods and there are many examples which show a swinging pendant diamond within a heart-shaped, triangular, or trefoil frame of smaller diamonds. The fashion had great success with French jewellers, too, the favourite style of pendant earrings from France featuring not one but three diamonds, collet-set, suspended within a circular frame of diamonds. Another example of French pendant earrings has an open design of elaborate foliate scrolls with a pear-shaped diamond mounted within a border of smaller stones as a swing centre, with three further smaller drops hanging from the frame. Sometimes the swinging diamonds hang from a chain of graduating collet-set stones so that the movement of the gems is even freer than that of those suspended within a frame.

Canetille work was featured towards the turn of the century, seen in an early nineteenth-century pair of earrings

of gold canetille work set with turquoises, the lozenge-shaped centre pavé-set with turquoises The description 'canetille work' is applied to the use of gold, silver or copper wire which was sometimes used in embroidery of an especially rich character. For jewellery, gold wire was most frequently used though silver was sometimes seen.

Girandole earrings, with triple pendants hanging from a central group of stones, were a Georgian fashion originating in the eighteenth century and were probably of French inspiration. They followed an invariable pattern – a large central ornament from which hung three large drops, either of single large stones or clusters of stones. For these, coloured stones as well as diamonds and pastes were used, following the styles used for girandole brooches and pendants of contemporary date. Though the settings for these stones were usually silver collets, the gems were sometimes set in granulated borders of gold. This practice was most general where carbuncles were used. Grisaille pendant earrings mounted in gold were a charming ear fashion of the eighteenth century grisaille being a style of painting in greyish tones to give the effect of bas-relief, usually done on an ivory background. Portraits were often carried out in this work and were mounted under crystal, but for pendant earrings the chosen subjects were generally of a classical character and were surrounded in some cases by a frame of small rose-cut diamonds or pastes.

Ear pendants of the George IV period included some splendid examples of Berlin ironwork, in open, light designs and of the contemporary shoulder length. A favourite design was a large pear-shaped drop of open design suspended from a small cluster, or there might be three such drops hanging one above the other to make a cascade effect.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Georgian Hair Ornaments

FROM the viewpoint of the small collector it is purposeless to include tiaras and the more important forms of headdress within the scope of this book. Such pieces sometimes realize as much as six figures in the saleroom as, for example, the famous Westminster tiara, splendidly magnificent but at more than £100,000, well beyond the reach of most people.

Far more attainable, and to some extent and to many people, far more attractive, are the simpler jewelled hair ornaments of the Georgian periods, suitable for wearing or for collecting for the mere joy of possession. Bandeaux, which were fashionable in the George IV period are sometimes to be found at pleasingly modest prices. As recently as last April a pearl and rose diamond bandeau in a repeated design of small rose diamond foliate motifs, surmounted by baroque pearls, was sold for only £52, while a diamond tiara of the same period realized £8,500. Clearly, then, it is on the smaller pieces, no less appealing in their own way and period, that the average collectors should set their sights. Some of the late Georgian jewelled bandeaux lend themselves admirably to wearing as choker necklaces or bracelets – an added incentive to those seeking these treasures of the past. The fashion for simpler hair ornaments was more general among girls and younger women, the dowagers following the prevailing vogue for heavy and imposing tiaras and 'fenders', using large and consequently expensive diamonds, which entirely superseded the aigrette in George IV's reign.

Not all Georgian hair ornaments were diamond-set. Many

used amethysts as in a typical antique hair ornament of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. This has oval amethysts graduating in size from a central large stone, mounted in gold and having a base in the form of a pierced silver-gilt frieze of thistle, fir-cones and scroll motifs. Though this particular jewel is French, the use of amethysts for simpler hair ornaments was much followed in this country.

Stars and crescents scattered in the hair, which later became an established fashion in Victorian times, were already making a tentative appearance in the late Georgian era. These were usually made in sets, varying in number from three to six, particularly in the case of diamond stars. A suite of three six-pointed diamond stars of this period is made with four fittings so that they could be worn placed in the hair, pinned to the corsage, suspended singly from a necklace as a pendant, or grouped together to form a tiara. It will be noticed that many of these hair ornaments have a tiny loop at the top, indicating that they could be worn as pendants if desired. When worn in this way they were sometimes suspended from a narrow black velvet ribbon band, tied in a tiny bow at the nape of the neck. Many of the late Georgian hair jewels are sold as brooches but close examination will reveal evidence – where the necessary fittings are not included – that a fitting for such an adaptation was originally made for the jewel. The shape of the brooch itself is sometimes a guide, especially in the case of sprays radiating from a large central stone with a larger stone as a surmount – a design which may almost certainly be accepted as one destined for wearing in the hair. Such designs seem to have been inspired by the central jewelled 'cockade' used by Eastern potentates to decorate the centre front of their headdresses.

As the late Georgian period merged into the William IVth

and the Victorian, these hair ornaments became less formal, adopting their designs from fauna and flora. Some jewelled ornaments were attached to tortoiseshell combs from which they were detachable to wear as pendant or a brooch. A favourite Georgian design was a triangular form set with cushion-shaped diamonds, with larger collet-set diamonds placed at intervals and mounted on a simple two-pronged tortoiseshell hair-comb. Single diamond stars with twelve points were another favourite Georgian hair ornament and were invariably made with brooch fitments and hairpin mounts.

During the Directoire period combs of tortoiseshell were made with high-standing mounts decorated with cameos of classical style. Carved coral beads, often carved to represent acorns, were also worn at this time, again designed so that the mounts were detachable, though to what purpose is not clear, unless they were meant to be worn alternatively as corsage ornaments. In the late Georgian period high combs in Berlin ironwork in delicate open designs were literally high fashion, the dull black of the metal being occasionally enlivened by the addition of reeded gold into the pattern.

CHAPTER NINE

Georgian Shoe & Waist Buckles

No personal accessory is more readily attributable to Georgian times than the shoe buckle, made in such vast quantities in the eighteenth century that there must still be many available to the small collector. Made in every conceivable metal, often gem- or paste-set, their diversity of pattern is extensive and the workmanship in most cases extremely good. The Regency bucks led by Beau Nash with his high-heeled pumps adorned with large buckles, set with diamonds in which he appeared at social functions in Bath in the first half of the eighteenth century, set the fashion. His clothes-conscious contemporaries often wore buckles of precious metals set with quite sizeable diamonds, while the less financially well-placed contented themselves with paste-set shoe buckles of steel or brass.

Solid or openwork gold buckles of ornate patterns were worn at Court, the diamonds with which they were set being cleverly designed to follow the curve of the insteps they adorned. Some buckles were made of silver or silver gilt, the former being the more likely to be found by the modest collector of these 'jewels'. So great was the diversity of designs that it is possible to build up a good collection with no duplication of patterns. Sometimes the silver was pierced into intricate designs, but quite a number of eighteenth-century shoe buckles were made of carved silver faceted like marcasite to give sparkling brilliancy to the design. Later still these designs were carried out in cut steel, giving employment to many thousands of craftsmen in

Birmingham and Sheffield – and as much unemployment later on when the fashion waned.

Because of the physical difficulty of hall-marking a pierced or openwork surface, this means of date attribution is absent from shoe, breeches and waist buckles. There are, however, some pointers which help to date them with a fair degree of accuracy. Prongs are one good guide. In the last half of the eighteenth century shoe buckles had a double prong shaped like a pitchfork and waist buckles had three or four prongs on a central bar. A patent was taken out in 1784 for a fastening which did away with the hitherto used second set of prongs, substituting for this a 'spring box' fastening. In the first half of the eighteenth century the shoe buckles were sharply curved to follow the line of the instep; in the second half they were less curved. It is in the earlier buckles that the finest designs, using the best workmanship and materials, were made. Often the shoe buckles were made to match the smaller buckles which fastened the breeches just below the knee. Though these were invariably executed in precious metals and were set with precious stones, a greater number were made for more modest purses in pinchbeck, pewter, iron and cut steel. Even a form of blackened tin was used for the cheapest buckles. To adorn these less expensive buckles sapphire pastes were substituted for diamonds, while some were set with jasperware cameos and enamels.

Though the shapes were in general geometrical, there were shoe buckles in the form of bows, in silver set with amethysts. Others were adorned with shotwork, a form of decoration in which a large grain is set in the midst of a tiny silver coil in such a way as to catch and reflect the light so that glitter was achieved without the use of gems. When lacing superseded buckles as a shoe fastening at the turn

TE I. (*above*) *Art nou-u* necklace pendant, *circa* 1908

graphs reproduced by court-f the Victoria and Albert um.

PLATE II. (*above*) centre-watch and chatelaine with Hogarthian enamelled miniatures from the Jorcery bequest.

TE III. (*right*) *Art nou-u* necklace of silver, set ı moss agates with ıb similarly set, and ı brooches of the same ool – late Victorian.

Courtesy The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.

LATE IV. (*above*) Five Russian brooches by the mous Fabergé, lent from a private collection.
LATE V. (*below*) Pinchbeck chatelaine (Bugstock equest), *circa* 1760 (central picture) with classical scenes in repoussé work.

Courtesy Victoria and Albert Museum.

Courtesy Victoria and Albert Museum.

of the century it was estimated that many thousands of craftsmen were thrown out of employment as a result.

Waist buckles in the eighteenth century followed the same form and patterns as shoe buckles and here again date attribution is made possible by a study of the prongs by which they were attached to the material. Rectangles, squares, either single or in pairs, were the prevailing shapes, many of which were set with pastes. Though ornate enough in their design, waist buckles in general did not achieve the same opulence as those made for masculine shoe fastenings and adornments.

CHAPTER TEN

Georgian Chatelaines and Vinaigrettes

THOUGH functional, these accessories were decorative enough to justify their being included in the field of personal jewellery, and of sufficient attraction to interest a collector. A few years ago they could have been acquired at a trifling cost and even today it is possible to find charming examples at reasonable prices. Quite often they are included in an auction 'lot' at a price for the whole which makes it quite worth while acquiring for the chatelaine or vinaigrette alone. Much will depend on the metal in which these accessories are made. Chatelaines from the eighteenth century which were usually of gold and fine enamel naturally fetch such high prices that they interest only the serious and financially well-placed collector. But late Georgian ones using pinchbeck, silver and cut steel, while less expensive, are well worth acquiring.

In general the chatelaine began as an ornament designed to carry a watch hanging from a swivel attached to an imposing chain; a watch key on another chain, and perhaps a seal on a third chain. The watch itself might be beautifully enamelled on the back of the case, while its key was adorned with a variety of elaborately patterned heads. The ornament from which these appendages hung might be of pierced gold surrounding an enamelled miniature, or it might be set with precious stones. Later on the chatelaine excited the same acquisitive desire which compels modern women to hang more and more charms from a bracelet: the original three

appendages were increased from time to time by the addition of more seals, scissors, etuis, vinaigrette, thimble-case and so on, until there might be as many as twelve dangling objects. Further embellishment was given by enamelled plaques placed at intervals down the supporting chains. At the height of their ornamental period chatelaines were a favourite wedding gift of the eighteenth century – a welcome 'status symbol' for the bride indicating her new position as mistress of the household.

Generally the chatelaine had a large hook behind the top ornament and this was inserted over the waistband. They were rarely secured by a pin; indeed the weight of all the accessories depending from the ornament would have rendered a pin impractical.

Some of the appendages of the chatelaine were functional as well as decorative and were, in their use, indicative of their period. This is particularly true of the silver nutmeg graters which were among the furnishings of the eighteenth-century chatelaine. These little gadgets were quite small and unscrewed in the middle to reveal a half or a whole nutmeg which was used to flavour the hot punch or syllabubs of the period. At the peak of its popularity the chatelaine became more and more important, carrying scissors, bodkin, buttonhook, pocket knife and vinaigrette in addition to the items already mentioned. Each was suspended from its own ornamental chain. Chatelaines of the rococo period were distinguished by scrolls, ribbons and shellwork in their decoration.

Gradually the vinaigrette, which had in the middle of the 1870s hung from a ring, became an additional item to hang from the chatelaine. Mostly in silver, those of the latter half of the eighteenth century were small and of infinite variety of shape and design. Essentially the container held a

sponge soaked in aromatic oils or vinegars, with a grilled, fretted or pierced inner lid through which the scent filtered when the outer close-fitting lid was opened. Cases of Battersea enamel were particularly beautiful and are commensurately more costly than those of silver or lesser metals. Often the enamel work took the form of exquisite floral designs or pastoral scenes, meticulously executed and beautifully coloured. Nearly all were fitted with swivel rings and were suspended from fine chains, though there were many examples which were carried in the hand or pocket which were without chains or swivel.

Repoussé work was a feature of late eighteenth-century vinaigrettes, with richly pierced inner lids. In the design of these grids the artist-craftsmen expressed every fancy of the day and such was their versatility that repetition was almost unknown until, with the advent of the Victorian age, hand craftsmanship gave way to the forerunners of mass production.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Etuis

STRICTLY speaking, etuis again were not an article of jewellery, having originally a purely utilitarian purpose, but when in the eighteenth century, jewellers made these functional articles an object of their artistic efforts they may truly be said to have entered into the field of personal 'jewels'. One of the richest sources for their beautification was the fashion for enamelling and the craftsmen of the newly opened Battersea and Bilston enamel works saw the creation of Georgian etuis of surpassing beauty. When worn on the person the etui formed one of the indispensables of the chatelaine, but as the jeweller and enameller gave more and more attention to their creation etuis became important *objets d'art* for display in the cabinet, on the table, the *bonheur de jour* and the dressing-table.

One of the finest collections of Georgian etuis was owned by the late Queen Mary and a study of the illustrated catalogues of these and other Royal treasures in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, is a splendid guide for the would-be collector.

The diversity of shapes and forms of these Georgian etuis is only eclipsed by the exquisite designs of their enamelling. Small though they were, the cases were decorated with meticulously delineated pastoral and other scenes. One etui in Battersea enamel of a rich dark blue with gilt ornamentation has each compartment painted with fishing scenes and flowers. Another in green Battersea enamel is decorated on one side with a design of fruits in a basket and a bird, while on the other side there is a half-length

portrait of Mrs. Brooks, an intimate friend of Stephen Theodore Jensson, founder of the Battersea enamel industry at York House, Battersea, and Lord Mayor of London in 1754. In her portrait on the etui Mrs. Brooks is shown wearing a plumed hat and a necklet with a low-cut gown, all in colour.

All the etuis are fitted with the contemporary sewing necessities and one at least in the Royal collection has a miniature watch set in its cover. Standing just over three inches high, this delightful etui is in gold and enamel decorated with arabesques and foliage in black and white enamel, with a Garter encircling a monogram A L surmounted by a crown. Inside the small container there are no fewer than nine sewing utensils. Originally the etui belonged to Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex.

One essential of the etui and the chatelaine which was promoted later to a container of its own is the bodkin – a very necessary implement in Georgian times. This item, too, attracted the jewellers' attention and became a charming vehicle for his talents. Smaller than the etui, the bodkin case of the Georgian period nevertheless bore exquisite decorations in colour of landscapes and flowers. The silver bodkin within (these implements had been used as far back as the Middle Ages) were often beautifully designed and chased in intricate styles.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Victorian Jewellery

WHILE the influence of Georgian jewellery designs prevailed well into the early years of Queen Victoria's long reign, jewellery did begin, with the advent of the young Queen in 1837, to acquire a new character and interest. Even if in these new designs and styles the beauty of Georgian jewellery was absent, sufficient of the influence of the eighteenth century remained to offset any faults in early Victorian design. Certainly the Victorian era offers greater scope than any other for the small collector of jewellery. So much was produced, so much worn, and so much preserved (largely because really precious gems were not used except for very important jewellery) that it is still comparatively easy to build up a most impressive collection representative of this period.

From early in her reign the young Queen showed an interest in the arts and herself inspired many jewel fashions. She was, perhaps, the only reigning monarch to concern herself with a fashion journal and she held decided views on the trends of the day, not hesitant in criticizing nor reluctant in innovating. These factors had the more impact because the days of the 'patrons' were over; patronage disappeared almost entirely with the ending of the eighteenth century. Consequently any lead from the Court was eagerly followed by the artist-craftsmen of the day. The need for inspiration from some quarter was the more acutely felt by reason of the drying-up of sources of inspiration in France. The effects of the ending of the French system of apprenticeship in jewellery and goldsmithing were felt here as well as in

France, for it was from that country that British jewellers had derived much of their ideas. French craftsmen, fearful of disclosing their former preoccupation with the adornment of the hated *aristos*, drifted away to other, more republican and bourgeois tasks. Those workers who turned to the creation of contemporary jewels of a suitably decorous and unostentatious character had no skills and no training. Consequently many of the creations of the Empire period and the closely following years were devoid of artistic merit and, expressed as they were in the cheapest materials, did not stand up to the test of time. Nevertheless, should any jewels of this time come to light they are certainly worth acquiring for their historical interest. Some of them, particularly the high combs of Josephine's time with their cameos, carved corals, moss agates, amethysts, topaz and similarly inexpensive gemstones set in matted gold are pretty, appealing and well worth collecting. So, too, are the somewhat later jewels made entirely of gold and decorated with granulation and millegrain, set occasionally with floral motifs using the same gemstones.

There was an attempt during the first half of the nineteenth century to revive Renaissance styles and those of the last French monarchy. Victorian jewellery was, however, to benefit from the emergence of some of the finest craftsmen-designers of all times. The nineteenth century saw the burgeoning of Castellani with his burning enthusiasm for the work of Etruscan and Greek craftsmen. His copies of the earlier masters were of an outstanding degree of excellence, while the later work of his sons greatly enhanced the standard of jewel design in the Victorian era.

Castellani was preceded by an earlier master. From the beginning of the nineteenth century François Desiré Froment-Meurice (1802–55), a son of a working goldsmith

named François Froment, had a great influence on jewellery design of the first half of the nineteenth century. After the death of his father at an early age and the subsequent re-marriage of his mother, François Desiré Froment added the surname of his stepfather, Meurice, to that of his own, becoming known as Froment-Meurice. In doing so he added to his association with the jewellers' craft, for Meurice, who was also a goldsmith and was both designer and craftsman, became the outstanding Paris jeweller of the Romantic period.

The Froment-Meurice influence was widespread. His use of colour, both by means of gems and enamels, was a forerunner of Giuliano's Renaissance-like jewellery of the late Victorian period. Froment-Meurice's techniques can be studied from the examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. A typical jewel of his creating is a brooch which was shown in the Paris Exhibition of 1855. This is in an intricate design of white-enamelled gold, the centre set with a large diamond, bordered with amethysts and emeralds, with a loop of small pearls at either side, each pearl intersected by an emerald 'spark'. The brooch terminates in a small pendant of white-enamelled gold from which hangs a pear-shaped amethyst set in gold.

With the sixties came Fortunato Pio Castellani of Rome. He was much preoccupied with the work of Etruscan and Greek jewellers and goldsmiths and his excellent copies of these early examples (already briefly referred to) exerted considerable influence on jewellery design of the second half of the nineteenth century. His finest medium was undoubtedly gold, which he worked with impressive skill. His papers on his researches into the ancient methods of granulation make fascinating reading and show his passionate regard for those ancient craftsmen, whose skill in this form

of art he longed to be able to reproduce. He and his sons, Alessandro and Augusto, came commendably close to achieving the painstaking perfection in the art of soldering tiny golden grains on to the surface of gold jewellery. Fortunato Castellani retired in the year of the Great Exhibition of 1851 and when he died fourteen years later was succeeded by his son Augusto. One of the really great jewellery craftsmen of this time, Robert Phillips of London, came very much under the influence of Castellani and until his death in 1881 contributed some interesting and beautiful jewels to the rich Victorian era.

In 1861 Castellani brought a large collection of his works to London from Rome and exhibited them in showrooms in Jermyn Street. According to a review of this collection published in the Art Journal of 1861 Signor Castellani had been driven from Rome 'simply for having executed an order for a presentation sword for the King of Sardinia'.

'The large collection of gold ornaments on view in London,' the writer went on, 'comprise very accurate copies of the most famous antiques. Examples of the peculiar mode by which they applied their filigree decoration has been for the first time successfully reproduced, as well as the cloisonné enamelling and the use of vitreous pastes and mosaics. The elaboration and artistic excellence of these works elevate them far above mere ornate jewellery, nor are the specimens confined to the classical eras alone, but medieval jewels and pendants of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are also imitated with marvellous success. The entire collection may be fairly looked upon as an exposition of the goldsmith's art as practised for a thousand years.'*

The writer thus made claims for the perfection of Castellani's reproductions which the artist himself would have

* *The Art Journal* of 1861.

disclaimed. In his writings he constantly deplored his inability to reproduce with absolute accuracy the methods employed by the Greeks and Etruscans. Nevertheless, he did himself less than justice. Indeed, critics of his work have described Castellani's reproductions as 'too perfect' – the only respect in which it differed from the originals by the early craftsmen.

Castellani's use of granulation in gold jewellery made a tremendous impact on mid and late Victorian jewellery. Suites as well as individual jewels featured intricate gold surrounds with granulation and filigree work in the Castellani manner. It is a curious fact that so much skill and artistry was expended on jewels set with pastes, foiled crystals and the lesser gemstones. At that time – prior to the extensive working of the South African diamond mines – jewellers were less concerned with the gems they used than with the precious metal surrounding them. Thus the collector will find handsome pieces to contain intrinsically valueless gems. As examples of goldwork such jewels are well worth acquiring. The survival of so many pieces can be attributed to this absence of valuable gemstones, though one is unhappily aware that much of this beautiful goldwork was patriotically surrendered for melting down during the 'gold rush' of the war periods.

As in every age the fashions of the day dictated the jewellery that was worn. Early Victorian coiffures, for instance, featured clusters of ringlets over the ears, the back and the top of the head being quite smooth. Obviously this style, and the vogue for poke bonnets with wide ribbons tying under the chin, precluded the wearing of stud type earrings during the day and necessitated dangling pendant earrings for the evening if they were to show. At the same time the *décolletage* was deep and off-the-shoulders so that

necklaces became an important jewellery fashion. Intricately curled coiffures were accentuated by tiaras and frontlets, usually set with diamonds in silver backed with gold. At Court and other important social functions the fashionable woman of 1837–8 wore, in addition to a tiara set rather back on the head, a diamond circlet or an imposing diamond ornament just above the brow. The young Queen herself is shown in an old print wearing a small jewelled crown set far back on the head with a diamond circlet (which could have been a necklace) lower on the front of the head, its central pendant resting on the forehead. A charming jewel fashion of the time was that of a separated double row of pearls worn across the top of the head and ending in a pearl tassel dangling over one ear.

Mid-Victorian jewel fashions were much influenced first by Froment-Meurice and later by Castellani and Carlo Giuliano who brought such colour and form to the jewellery of the second half of the century. Ringlets were now worn at the nape of the neck with the front and sides of the coiffure smoothly dressed, worn either with a softly curled fringe or a sleek centre parting. These styles brought in the 'Alice band' of diamonds, pearls, coral and other coloured gemstones, and small 'frontlets' or half-tiaras. Pearls were worn twined in the cascading back curls.

Later still, with the lovely Princess of Wales setting 'Alexandra' fashions, women began wearing the 'dog-collar' necklace of which the Princess was the innovator. . . . These took many and varied forms, from the dog-collar of five or six rows of diamonds or of pearls as worn by the Princess, to the single-row collet diamond necklace hung with a large, diamond-set cross or tassel. Simultaneously the Alexandra coiffure of close-to-the-head curls with a curled fringe brought in high-pointed diamond hair ornaments and a

return of the aigrette and the diamond bow. The more romantically inclined wore wreaths of simulated flowers and leaves, or even Juliet caps of net set with pearls.

Throughout Queen Victoria's reign Britain waxed prosperous. While the established aristocracy continued to wear much of their entailed heirlooms of an earlier age, the middle classes began to acquire 'modern' jewellery, stimulating the craftsmen to greater efforts of imagination. In the earlier years of the century, before the South African mines and the art of diamond-cutting were fully developed, the Victorian jewellers turned more and more to lesser but more colourful gems. Romanticism flourished; coiffures were pierced with jewelled arrows, or adorned with tremblant flowers, butterflies, dragonflies and birds. The ferronière was ideally suited to the romantic period and was expressed in a diversity of styles. Coral and seed pearls were extensively used, so, too, were cameos and mosaics. Shell cameos gave way later to the Wedgwood jasperware and the moulded glass creations of James Tassie. In keeping with the sentimental mood hair jewellery became popular and a highly-skilled art produced exquisite miniature pictures in woven hair. Pinchbeck was used for secondary jewellery right up to the late Victorian period.

The earlier years of Victoria's reign were notable for the influence of classicism on the jewellery of the period. Doubtless inspired by Castellani, copies were freely made of ancient Greek and Roman designs. Gems were engraved with mythological figures and these also appeared on cameos and in the mosaic jewellery of that time.

Later, topaz, peridots, agates, turquoise, cornelians, garnets, aquamarines and, of course, pearls, were freely used and gave much charm to the contemporary jewellery. Settings generally became much lighter and more open,

using both gold and pinchbeck. Longchains, reaching almost to the knees, were made of fine gold links set at intervals with small gemstones. The variety of materials used for jewellery was widened by the advent in the last quarter of the century of the French jeweller, Lalique, who created fantastic and extremely ornate jewels in horn, ivory, mother of pearl and coloured glass. As '*art nouveau*' his jewels were spectacular rather than wearable. His use of the female form in jewellery design was unique. Most of Lalique's work was commissioned which perhaps accounts to some degree for their extraordinary character. No jeweller of that or any other period would have ventured to produce such *outré* creations on a speculative basis.

Fortunately, the earlier jewellery designers were more concerned with innovations with appeal to the eye rather than to the nerve centres, and the jewels of Castellani, Robert Phillips, Giuliano and their contemporaries whilst breaking entirely new ground in form and the use of colour, were nevertheless beautiful works of art. Their mingling of coloured gems with coloured enamels and gold gave a new delight to Victorian jewellery and their pieces (many of them signed, particularly in the case of Giuliano) are comparable with the more costly and imaginative works of Fabergé. All showed a feeling for Renaissance richness of colour and form which resulted in little masterpieces of design and craftsmanship.

Some interesting jewellery originated from C. R. Ashbee, the architect designer and writer who founded the Guild of Handicrafts in 1888, of which he was the director and supervising designer. One example which was shown in the Goldsmith's Hall exhibition is a peacock brooch, *circa* 1901, set with rose diamonds, blister pearl and ruby on a gold and silver base – a forerunner of the golden peacock pendant

designed by one of his students. In this the bird is set with tiny diamonds, mother of pearl, blister pearls and silver and stands on a ball of green jade.

Colourful as these were, French jewellery was even more exotic, jewellers like Boucheron of Paris, Calderoni of Milan, Cartier of Paris, all used coloured gems as well as diamonds combined with coloured enamels for their Victorian pieces. Later on the exotic designs and exquisite workmanship of the Russian goldsmith and jeweller Gustav Fabergé and, later, Peter Carl and Agathon Fabergé brought a new conception to the art of jewellery. The Fabergé firm received the Royal warrant of the Tsar Alexander III in 1884 and in that year began making their world-renowned Easter eggs of precious metals and gems. Fabergé jewels are not for the small collector, for on the rare occasions when a Fabergé piece comes into the market experts travel from all parts of the world to bid for the treasure. But Fabergé jewels are worth studying (some splendid books have been written about Fabergé) because they had a profound effect on jewellery design. Though they were beyond copying, Fabergé creations undoubtedly influenced Victorian jewellery designs and inspired a new appreciation of colour and form. Unlike Lalique, whose spectacular 'jewels' were more conspicuous for their *outré* character than for their beauty, Fabergé jewels are enchantingly beautiful and endlessly appealing.

Up to the mid-nineteenth century there had been jewels of some delicacy of design but in the third quarter of the century it became more massive, using a great number of gemstones, among them garnets, jargoons (zircons), turquoises, moonstones, moss agates, coral, ivory, amber, peridots and jet. Colour, especially in the sixties, became stronger both by reason of the gems used and by the use of enamelling. The wonderful collection of Victorian jewellery

bequeathed by the late Lady Cory to the Victoria and Albert Museum shows some striking examples of this trend – enormous stomachers richly diamond set, huge flowers pavé-set with turquoises and amethysts and with combinations of turquoises, topaz, pearls and amethysts. Large roses and other flower representations, entirely gem-set, added to their already massive appearance by having each blossom set tremblant, not with the usual fine wire spiral springs of Georgian jewellery, but with a thick coil of silver almost like a pulled-out clock spring. No doubt the weight of the gems made such a substantial spring a necessity.

From about 1850 onwards jewellery varied between these outsize sprays, stomachers and corsage montages and smaller, more delicate pieces which appeared almost understated by contrast. In this category – and certainly more within the reach of the small collector – are slender long-chains of delicate gold links interspersed with gemstones such as garnets, amethysts, moonstones and turquoises, which were worn draped over the bodice and caught to one side with a large brooch. Occasionally these chains carried a prettily enamelled or chased watch and this was caught up and secured by a pin on the breast, or the watch might be tucked into the waistbelt. Also in the small category were fob watches suspended on a short chain from a bow brooch, generally enamelled. The backs of these watch cases were very decorative, often having a superimposed knot of ribbon, a coronet, laurel wreath, or similar motif in diamonds, pearls or marcasites on a dark blue, green, or other one-coloured enamel background.

In 1878 women were wearing black jet necklaces mingled with gold beads with their ball costumes, according to *The Ladies' Treasury* of that year. A contemporary fashion

writer referred in that journal to the fashion for bell-shaped earrings and lockets 'in honour of the successful piece, "Les Cloches de Cornville".' In that same year another fashion commentator wrote of the American girls in Paris, 'They are greatly sought after both on account of their beauty and their wealth. They dress very well, though their dresses are sometimes a little too tight and they wear a little too much jewellery. They even wear diamonds which only married ladies of many years' standing wear in France. But they look so lovely with their diamonds shining like dewdrops in their golden hair that no one can complain.'

Whether these strictures were applicable to British girls is not clear, but certainly at that time women were wearing more diamonds in place of the hitherto fashionable coloured gems. These, with the discovery and working of the South African diamond mines, were relegated to secondary or daytime wear. For evenings and grand occasions *the* gem was the diamond, which scintillated and gleamed from a bewildering variety of jewels. So enthusiastic were the jewellers about this 'new' gem that they re-created the vogue for setting one diamond inside another, larger one.

By the end of the nineteenth century jewellery had become so important a part of fashion that a contributor to the *Queen* magazine was moved to record the role of jewellery in the world of fashion. 'Rarely has jewellery played such an important role in the accessories that perfect the Parisienne toilette,' she wrote. '. . . *Maisons de bijouterie* exhibit scintillating gems and compete with each other in showing most original examples of artistic workmanship in precious stones, filigree chains, pendants, rivieres, buckles, et cetera. The toilette up-to-date is not complete without a long and somewhat massive chain and this season's novelties produce links of every design. A large flat, round

or oval *encadrement* of gold to a marguerite or forget-me-not in coloured enamel is particularly pretty. Heavy pendants in similar pastel shades of this *art nouveau* are enriched with diamonds or emeralds marking the centre or leaves of the flowers; other chains for suspending the *manchon* have long-chased gold links, some alternate at intervals with an enamel flower, whilst the newest neck adornment is a beautiful row of pearls or diamonds with quite a large pendant of that *art nouveau* mounted in coloured gems.'

The same writer goes on to describe attractive pearl collarettes tied in a knot at the back and having tassels in the front, adding, 'But perhaps since being copied too much by the imitators of real jewellery, wearers of costly pearls may not adopt this mode. There is a large assortment of diamond buckles for dress trimmings, especially soft-toned enamelled floral designs. The high tortoiseshell Empire comb for the coiffure is outlined in various designs or studded diamonds.' These tortoiseshell combs were sometimes adorned with *piqué d'or*, so much used in the nineteenth century for decorating pin boxes, snuff boxes and similar objects.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Victorian Necklaces and Chains

COLLECTORS who begin their search by studying the contemporary fashion drawings – a useful exercise for the accurate dating of a style of accessory – will be impressed by the prevalence of chains and necklaces which were featured with every toilette. At all seasons of the year, with high necklines as well as with decolleté gowns, the Victorian woman of fashion invariably wore some jewel around her neck. From the handsome diamond necklaces and dog collars to simple gold chains set with inexpensive gemstones the range was wider in the nineteenth and early twentieth century than at any other period of history.

Obviously the more magnificent necklaces using precious gems are outside the scope of any but the most knowledgeable – and wealthy – collector. For most of us those jewels of a simpler and less expensive character are more easily come by and – to those who like their jewellery to have charm and character rather than intrinsic worth – are infinitely more appealing in many ways. There is a deep satisfaction in securing a job lot of pretty trinkets for a few pounds in a sale in which a mere half-dozen 'important' jewels may fetch as much as a quarter of a million pounds, which often happens. There is satisfaction, too, in knowing that one is happier with one's own little necklace of, say, seed pearl flowers, than one would be with a 'magnificent' necklace of precious gems. It is impossible – and often hypocritical – not to admire the scintillating fire of diamonds; equally impossible not to desire them, but being realistically philosophical about their being out of reach is made

considerably easier if there is a charming if modest little Victorian jewel to compensate.

The immense diversity of designs and materials used for making Victorian necklets, necklaces and longchains is owed, to a large extent, to the rigid protocol of the Victorians. There were certain rules of behaviour which few women would disobey and one of them, rightly or wrongly, was that it was considered improper for a young girl to wear diamonds, or even, for that matter, for a young matron to do so. Diamonds were for dowagers or at best for married women of some years' standing. Young ladies would be labelled *outré* and 'vulgar' if they aspired to wearing precious stones before they had been wed for some time. For them there were the properly modest turquoises, seed pearls, topaz, garnets, amethysts, moonstones and the like. In meekly accepting these fashion strictures the Victorian miss laid up much treasure for the collectors of the twentieth century. Jewellers working in these less expensive materials were freer to experiment and so to create endless variations on the necklace theme. As a consequence modern collectors are constantly discovering something fresh and delightful in Victoriana.

Early Victorian necklaces should more correctly be described as necklets, for they were nearly all of shorter length than the necklace, coming just below the base of the throat and being a little longer in front than the choker necklace. The favourite style at the time that the young Queen Victoria ascended the throne was a necklet of flat gold discs, flower motifs, or circular plaques, of an equal width all round. These were admirably suited to the off-the-shoulder dresses of that period, and the fashion included cameos, flowers, and mosaics as well as the gold plaques. The flowers were made up of massed seed pearls,

turquoises or garnets. Necklets of oval amethysts or garnets in plain gold collet settings linked by small gold circles were also much worn. There were, too, many necklaces of jet, rather longer, a fashion carried over from the period of mourning for William IV. 'Bib' necklaces of latticed jet, or of triple rows of faceted jet beads were high fashion in 1837. These were almost *de rigueur* during the year of full mourning (unrelieved black) and were followed by similar necklets of amethysts in the six months' period of half mourning (shades of purple and mauve). A favourite half-mourning jewel was a necklet with oval amethysts set in gold collets with a large pendant cross of oval amethysts.

With the ending of Court mourning and the revival of social life jewellers turned to the production of more colourful jewels, necklets among them. Turquoises were set into necklets of elaborate gold links; mosaic medallions were joined by fine gold chains; spiked and carved coral enjoyed a considerable vogue. Some necklets made of ornamental links were a fashion of 1838. These ornamental links were a feature of necklets at this time, the links large enough in some cases to form medallions, in floral, scroll and girandole designs. In some necklets the medallions were alternated with shell cameos, or flowers of garnets and diamonds. Later on pinchbeck was used for this type of necklet, many in a twisted rope link and ball design, but without gems.

Serpent necklets were, of course, produced in quantity. Many were pavé-set with turquoises, with ruby eyes. Others were of gold, the body articulated, a characteristic type having the head studded with turquoise, with carbuncle eyes and holding in the mouth a heart-shaped locket studded with a single turquoise, the head diamond-set. These serpents were frequently long enough to encircle the neck in a triple row. At the same time there was a fashion for gold choker

necklaces which were not unlike those which became fashionable a century later. There was much delicate work about the middle of the nineteenth century and one jewel might embody many different techniques as well as colours. A fascinating example of this is seen in a suite of necklace, brooch and earrings of gold set with pink-foiled crystals. The goldwork in which these stones are set is marvellously intricate and includes repoussé work, shellwork, shotwork, and granulation.

A constant and characteristic Victorian necklace design was the flexible circular gold chain with three or four loops at the front, with jewelled motifs between each loop. These came into fashion prior to the mid-nineteenth century and remained popular throughout the remainder of the century. In the creation of these the designers embodied every possible permutation of gems and settings. While the necklet chain itself varied but little – being nearly always the flexible circular chain described as 'snake' chain – the decorative pendants which hung between each festoon depending from the chain varied amazingly. Beautifully modelled bees, their wings diamond-set; gold half-domes with inset diamond stars and flowers; mosaics, cameos enamelled pearl-set medallions – the pendants were endless in their designs and reflected every passing whim of jewel fashions. The theme was carried out in necklets of seed pearls which had festoons of seed pearls looped on a main necklet of linked roses, birds or flowers of seed pearls mounted on mother of pearl, with matching pendants between each festoon. They were, in their own way, little masterpieces of handwork and provide an interesting subject for the collector.

Longchains were a prominent fashion of the mid-Victorian period and here again there was a wealth of differ-

ing designs – some were even made of tiny links of horsehair which were used, one imagines, as muff-chains and appealing only on the score of novelty or as examples of Victorian

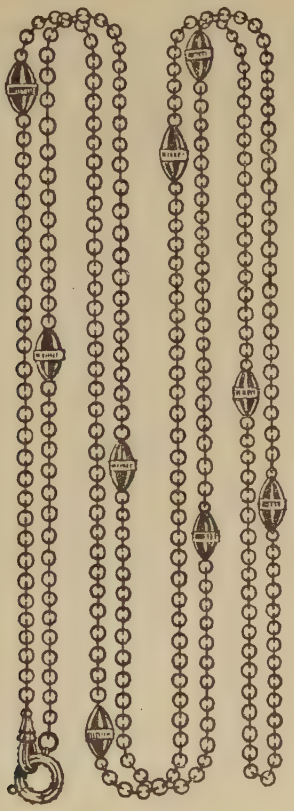

FIG. 1.
Gold muff-chain

hairwork. There were other examples of this fashion, however, such as the interesting hair necklace of the later Victorian period (1877), composed of hair beads

intersected by gold rondels, with a cluster pendant of similar hair beads centred with gold, the reverse holding a photograph of a young boy and having a further trefoil pendant drop. The necklace has matching ear pendants, also with trefoil drops, and a hair bracelet with a gold locket containing another photograph of the same boy encircled by a gold and hair frame.

In complete contrast were the longchains by Giuliano, notably those made of white, green, black, red and blue enamel, each enamelled link set with a pearl between, *circa* 1870. These more decorative longchains succeeded the earlier ones of fine gold chain from which hung enamelled pendants with stars, crescents and other designs of gold enriched with repoussé work. There were also necklaces of gold in reproduction Etruscan work enriched with granulation. This jewellery designer followed the fashion for festoon necklaces with gem-set enamelled pendants hanging between each loop, five or seven pendants with three or four loops, as was the prevailing style.

Choker necklets made of tiger's claws with elaborate gold mounts and tips were another fashion of the eighties. These incline one to believe in the Victorian novelists' tales of thwarted lovers departing in search of big game whenever they were rejected by the lady of their choice. Perhaps these trophies were sent as reproachful evidence of the lengths to which their dismissal had driven the lovers.

For a time there was a fashion for necklaces of long ropes of pearls ending in two long tassels of pearls, usually described as a sautoir, but the most distinctive late Victorian fashion was the fringed necklace. Castellani featured the fashion in flexible gold chokers with knife-edge gold stems radiating all round, each terminating in little florets in coloured enamels topped with a pearl, or, more

elaborately, with fringes of fleur-de-lys alternating with knife-edge gold stems with garnets and diamonds set at each end. Incidentally, not all sautoirs were made of pearls; many were of seed or small pearls combined with amethysts in ornamental gold settings, the tassels combining the two gems.

Dog collar necklets really 'arrived' in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Of pearls or diamonds these fitted closely to the throat, were as much as two inches deep and were fitted with gold bar stiffeners at intervals with a stiff clasp at the back to ensure that they stood up all round the base of the neck like their namesake, the leather dog-collar. These collar necklets were often worn with another, longer, necklace below, not necessarily having the same kind of gems – a pearl collar might, for instance, be worn with a diamond necklace and vice versa. Not for the small collector, these collars are only mentioned as a record of the fashion. What may interest the collector are the more modest necklets which evolved from this fashion created in less expensive gemstones and so more within reach. Among these are the collars of coral, jet, beads, turquoises and amber, and those composed of intricately worked gold and silver filigree, lace-like in their fragile, openwork designs.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Victorian Bracelets

ONE of the focal points of Victorian fashions throughout the Queen's long reign was the sleeve which, in the third decade of the nineteenth century, influenced by French designers, was balloon-shaped, very large at the top and 'confined at the wrist with corded bands', as one writer described it. This style of sleeve and those which succeeded it gave great scope for the display of handsome bracelets which were now 'continuously mentioned in the fashion journals'.

This continued emphasis on the sleeve meant that bracelets showed many changes of design while retaining one constant factor – practically all were wide. Until the last quarter of the century almost every bracelet remained not less than an inch in width. From the early Victorian until the late Victorian era bracelets invariably had, too, an important medallion clasp or imposing central ornament. Some bracelets were of an equal width all round; others tapered towards the clasp. Many were set with miniatures which in turn had removable and entirely separate covers. The late Queen Mary owned one of the latter type – a bracelet of pierced gold set with a miniature of Princess Mary of Cambridge as a child, in a white frock with blue ribbons. The portrait medallion has a removable cover of pierced gold set with turquoises which match the colour of the ribbons in the miniature. This is a tapered bracelet, widest at the front containing the miniature and tapering off to the simple push clasp at the back.

Bracelets were, in fact, a favourite vehicle for carrying a

miniature – reasonably enough, since they could be constantly seen by the wearer, unlike those which hung as a pendant from a necklet though these, too, were in vogue. In many cases these central bracelet motifs and miniatures were transferable. A good example – and rather a touching one – can be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection. This is a massive enamelled gold flexible bracelet set with diamonds which has a large clasp in the form of a miniature set in an elaborate surround of dark blue enamel superimposed with diamond clusters. This miniature, portraying a Mrs. Pandeli Ralli, is interchangeable as a clasp for the bracelet with an exactly similar one except that the miniature is a portrait of her husband, Mr. Pandeli Ralli.

The Gothic influence which was in high fashion during the mid-Victorian period naturally affected bracelet fashions for they were a jewel that lent itself with peculiar aptitude to this style. Gothic designs took many forms of expression, but a bracelet which may be taken as completely typical of this time is in gold with a design of foliate scrolls formed into a rosette with a large stone mounted in a flower-shaped cluster as a centre. The tapering sides are formed of architectural sections, typically cusped and pierced, and pavé-set with cushion-shaped diamonds. The central ornament is, as usual in this kind of bracelet, detachable for wearing as a brooch. Gothic designs were to be seen in many other very wide gold bracelets, panelled and hinged and with decorative clasp terminals. A few years later, following on Castellani's exhibition of his reproduction Greek and Etruscan jewellery, wide gold bracelets were being made, richly decorated with granulation and millegrain work after the style of the master. At this time and later there were deep cuff bracelets of gold, rather on the style of the lace cuffs worn by male sitters for Van Dyck paintings. An example of

this form of jewellery in the Victoria and Albert Museum carries the 'cuff' fancy still further by being 'buttoned' by a pearl surrounded by turquoises, with a row of turquoises representing the buttonhole. The effect of goffering (a form of rounded fluting of material achieved by the use of a hot curling iron) seen in these three-inch deep cuff bracelets must have required a good deal of skill on the part of the goldsmith.

Between the solid wide bracelets of early Victorian times and those of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras there was a vogue for wide bracelets composed of rows of gold chain, pearls and other gemstones strung singly and attached at each end to two important halves which joined together to make an impressive clasp. The earliest ones included two rows of diamonds with a diamond cluster clasp – one of the narrower types. Bracelets with as many as ten rows of gems or chains were much more fashionable, the most popular style being that of ten rows of small pearls joined by a diamond or paste clasp, a cameo, a mosaic, or a miniature. One ten-row bracelet of 1840 has fine tinted and enamelled gold links with wooden beads at each end of every row, culminating in a large gold panel clasp.

Nearly all bracelets continued to be wide, either solid, or hinged; in engraved, incised or repoussé panels. There was, too, a fashion for supple bracelets of gold milanese which were superseded later on in the century by gold strap and buckle bracelets, solid or flexible, but all of a good width. As jewellery design generally became more open bracelets were made of open links of varying shapes, a typical style using paired stirrup-shaped links enclosing gold rondels, with applied half pearls and rose diamond-set stars, the back of each section holding a compartment for hair. A French example of the mid-nineteenth century consists of

a broad, flexible band of small circular chased gold links in diagonal rows, with a piqué pattern secured by an oval slide, engraved and enamelled in black. An English bracelet of the same period has gold chain links of figure 8 form, each link centred by a diamond, with a miniature in a gold frame as a central ornament. In contrast is a contemporary bracelet, pavé-set with turquoises, embellished with stamped leaves, flowers and cherub's heads.

Serpents were featured in Victorian bracelets as in every other form of jewel. As well as composing the whole bracelet the body coiled around the wrist, the head and tail jewelled, the eyes set either with emeralds or rubies, serpents were even used as a surround to a miniature on a bracelet. Queen Victoria owned one of flexible, chased gold, wide in the front, with a miniature portrait of herself as a young girl, at each side of which there is a double serpent with diamond-studded heads and ruby eyes, *circa* 1837. Naturally the Royal liking for the serpent theme was avidly noted and followed by her subjects of every degree which meant that the output of snake bracelets was prolific, especially with the advent, about 1860, of machine-made jewellery. Sometimes these serpent bracelets had matching lockets, generally of an oval shape, the frame encircled by a serpent. Another animal theme was seen in gold bracelets set with a tiger's claw, with matching locket applied with a tiger's claw, surmounted by the modelled figure of a tiger.

The fashion for hairwork extended to bracelets, many of which were made entirely of hair (horsehair as well as human hair was used for these) woven into a hollow 'rope', with a gold clasp in the shape of a pansy ('for remembrance' – the Victorians were great sentimentalists) the petals of amethysts, with yellow topazes forming the 'eyes'. A Royal bracelet of this kind is engraved on the back of its clasp with

the name Augustus. In this case the hair used to make the bracelet was that of Augustus, Duke of Sussex, sixth son of George III.

Sets of bracelets were a fashion of the late Victorian period, worn three on each arm – one on the upper arm, one just below the elbow, and the third at the wrist. These usually had a number of linked rows set at intervals with a cameo or plaque, or panels of stamped and pierced gold. Giuliano made a set of three hinged bracelets in gold and enamels, the three-stone fronts set respectively with a green tourmaline, a pearl and a star ruby, mounted between two diamonds, the sides decorated with enamel work in black and white, each bracelet bearing the signature, C G.

A Georgian fashion which continued into the Victorian era was the bracelet of wide velvet ribbon adorned with a large gem-set clasp, a cameo, or a miniature. It is improbable that the fabric part of such bracelets survived and a collector will usually find the clasp masquerading as a brooch or a pendant since it would be easily adaptable to either of these purposes. Bracelets of carved coral and ivory flowers linked by small gold circlets were worn in the mid-Victorian period and continued as a secondary jewel fashion for many years. Smaller bracelets of natural, spiked coral were much worn by little girls.

A charming fashion which might interest would-be collectors was that for bracelets composed of several coloured miniatures set in simple frames of gold or pinchbeck, portraying a female from babyhood to womanhood. The theme was also expressed in linked models of classical heads in high relief, mostly modelled in silver on gold, and in cameos of classical subjects framed in matted, filigree and granulated gold.

Towards the end of the Victorian era bracelets became

bangles, many of them narrower than hitherto and usually rigid. Solid bands of gold or silver were inset with pearls, diamonds and other gems on the front, the stones set into the metal band itself. Solid wide bangles had inset motifs

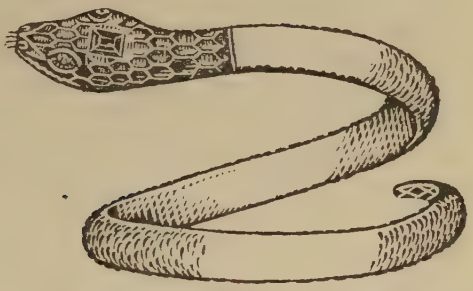

FIG. 2. Serpent bangle (c. 1900)

such as a star, a crescent moon, a coronet, a heart, and so on. Sometimes the gold circlet was divided through the front – the two-part bracelet as it was described – with diamond clusters set between the separated rows. The

FIG. 3. Half-loop bangle (late Victorian)

ubiquitous serpent retained the attention of the jeweller and in the last two decades of the nineteenth century narrow gold bangles were made with a diamond-set serpent twined around it, under and over the bangle proper. At the end of

the century Victorian women were wearing 'curb' bracelets of heavy gold cable link secured by a heart-shaped padlock complete with tiny key which was attached by a fine gold chain; open-ended bangles; deeply engraved bangles with designs of ivy leaves, flowers and formal patterns, rather on the style of the keeper rings then being worn. The sporting themes which were appearing on brooches were also used on late Victorian bracelets, which were usually of flat or D-shaped gold, rigid, rather narrow, with a horseshoe, a whip, a wishbone or similar motifs, gem-set in the centre.

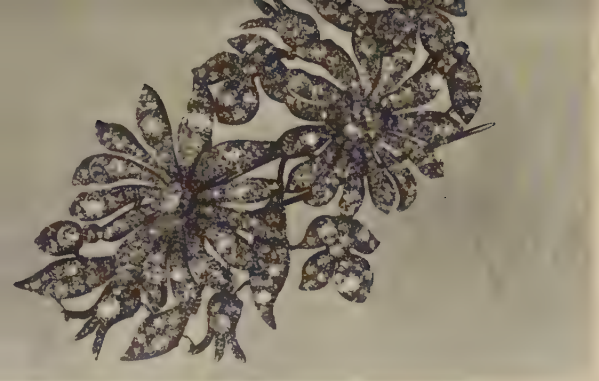

PLATE VII. (*above left*) Double flower brooch, *circa* 1790–1800 of rose and brilliant diamonds set in silver and backed with gold. PLATE VIII. (*left*) Georgian flower brooch showing how gems were cut to a shape to follow the design. PLATE IX. (*above*) Georgian flower spray.

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Courtesy The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.

PLATE X. (*above left*) Georgian brooch-pendant showing the central large diamond inset into another larger diamond. PLATE XI. (*left*) A dog collar of gold, opals and emeralds. PLATE XII. (*above*) Cigarette and match box (1891) by Friedrich Kochli, in gold, diamonds and with a sapphire thumbpiece. The Russian Imperial Crest is in diamonds.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Victorian Brooches

HERE is scope indeed for the collector – brooches were worn by almost every woman and girl in the long Victorian period and their variety is as diverse as their output was prolific. Examples are freely to be found in almost every jewellers' shop as well as in the salerooms. Many can be acquired for the proverbial 'song'.

In the early Victorian age the favourite brooch was undoubtedly the girandole, composed of a central motif from which hung three pendant drops, usually smaller versions of the larger stone in the motif. The fashion was expressed in innumerable ways, but the undoubtedly favourite stone was the carbuncle – a domed and polished garnet. Sometimes a very large carbuncle was used for the main part of the girandole, with three smaller carbuncles framed in gold as the drops. The larger stone had, as a rule, an impressive border of roped, coiled, matted or engraved gold, sometimes with granulation or millegraine. In others a coiled golden serpent would serve as a surround. More important girandoles were set around with diamonds.

It was at this time (1837–50) that those delightful brooches of dark blue enamel with superimposed motifs of marcasites diamonds, or pearls were so popular. Mostly of upright oval or round shape, they carried ribbon knots, stars, single flower blooms or a basket of flowers set on the coloured enamel background and were extremely pretty. The collector of this type of brooch should, however, be warned that there has latterly been an influx of reproductions of these blue

enamel brooches, clever enough to deceive any but the expert. The writer has seen some of these brooches on sale and noted that some were more highly priced than original brooches sold in the salerooms.

Simultaneously with the girandole and blue enamel brooches there was a fashion for true lovers' knots, ribbon bows and ribbon loops, usually diamond-set but quite often using gemstones such as turquoises, amethysts and seed pearls. These were principally sold as shoulder knots, particularly those versions set with diamonds, and were worn on the shoulder or in the corsage of early Victorian evening gowns. Pearls and turquoises were at this time – and remained so throughout the nineteenth century – a favourite combination for brooches, in the form of knots, hearts, flowers and (inevitably!) serpents. The turquoises were mostly pavé-set.

Hairwork extended to Victorian brooches, some being composed entirely of hair, closely woven, and with gold mounts. Strands of hair were intricately woven into a hollow 'rope' which was then formed into a loop, or bows, with a centre of gold. The ends of the rope were set into gold tips rather like the metal tags on shoe laces and sometimes had golden tassels hanging from each. Rectangular brooches with pastoral scenes and flowers were worked in hair, making the most attractive miniature pictures. This work is of exquisite fineness and artistry and speaks well for the skill of the hair-workers. Collectors are inclined to think of hair jewellery as 'mourning' jewellery but the early Victorian use of hair in this way was by no means confined to *memento mori*. Quite often – so great was the enthusiasm for the art – one brooch would hold two hairwork pictures, one in the front of the brooch and the other at the back. Usually the hair was left in its natural colour, but by mingling black,

blonde, brown and silver-grey hair the muted tones of a photogravure were achieved.

Another form of hairwork was as a border for a central stone – a garnet, an olivine, a peridot or a topaz. For this border work the hair was plaited into a fine rope, backed sometimes with gold. In some brooches fine gold wire was intertwined with the hair which covered the surface of the brooch. In others, the gold was used in the form of scrolls backed by woven hair to make a border to a centre of hair 'feathers' under crystal or glass. Dyed horsehair, being much coarser than human hair and more easily worked, was much used for brooches composed entirely of hair in the form of flowers or groups of flowers in girandole style, the characteristic three pendant drops composed of finely worked disc motifs hanging by small gold swivels from the central ornament. These were fashionable in the mid-Victorian period. At this time there was a fashion for garter-shaped brooches of gold or silver set with a Scotch pebble, and for brooches of bog oak. About 1835–7 there were 'romantic' brooches of curled scrolls adorned with medieval subjects, some set with precious gems. Snakestones (fossils from the jet district of Whitby) were also used for brooches, set in silver or gold, and with matching earrings.

Enamelling was never entirely absent from Victorian brooches, though in its quality it had its periods of decline. What helps to make it most appealing is the vividness of the colouring used. Whereas in Georgian times pastel tints of much delicacy were used, the Victorian enameller, infected no doubt by the vigorous colour sense of Castellani, Giuliano and the Italian school generally, used strong reds, greens and blues to achieve a 'natural' effect – cherry red for representations of cherries, vivid green for leaves and so on. The resultant jewellery was lively and interesting. A typical

example of the enameller's love of colour is seen in a large spray brooch of six maple leaves which was presented to the Duchess of Cornwall and York on her visit to Canada by the women of Montreal. For the leaves a vivid green enamel was used, with pink enamel for the shading, each leaf set with diamonds with a single large pearl set in the end of the stem.

Even when following Georgian designs of flower and bouquet brooches the Victorian enameller emphasized the colourings, substituting strong primary colours for pastel tints. Each flower was represented in definite tones; each leaf was an almost emerald green. Where enamelling was used, which was often, as a border for a brooch or as a background, the colour was emphatic and in this way provided an excellent accent to the design or, as often, the superimposed motif. One of the prettiest examples of this technique was seen in a recent auction sale of jewellery. This was a brooch which could also be worn as a pendant, in gold, rose diamonds, pearls and enamels in the form of an open triangle set in a single row of rose diamonds edged with blue enamel. The surrounding border was made up of beautifully enamelled flowers on a white enamelled latticed background and the whole effect was enchanting. Another example which demonstrates the effectiveness of deep colouring is to be seen in a marquise brooch in the Royal collection which has a vivid blue enamelled background on which is superimposed the Prince of Wales' feather crest in diamonds within a star-shaped surround of brilliants. This brooch, like so many of the Georgian and Victorian eras, has a loop at the top to enable it to be worn either as a brooch or a pendant.

Coral was a much favoured medium for brooches in Victorian times and was beautifully carved to form three-

dimensional flowers and other natural subjects. Brooches in the form of a single rose with partially opened petals were great favourites in late Victorian times, usually having smaller coral roses as earrings. These little jewels, when found, are usually modestly priced and are well worth acquiring for the skill displayed in the carving as well as for their attractive appearance. Since the advent of plastics there are many imitations of these Victorian brooches which may lessen the collector's interest. On the other hand the

FIG. 4. A twin brooch set with rose diamonds and pearls (late Victorian)

existence of these synthetics helps to keep down the price of the real thing. Pink coral was much used as cameos, many brooches of coral being carved in relief with a female head, usually in an oval frame of gold filigree.

Serpents inevitably formed the subject of brooches as they did of many other types of Victorian jewels, and there were brooches which consisted almost entirely of a coiled serpent. A typical brooch sold recently at auction was designed as an entwined serpent with pavé-set turquoise head, ruby eyes, gold articulated body, and holding in its mouth a pear-shaped carbuncle.

Wedgwood medallions, grisaille work pictures, mosaics and Tassie cameos surrounded with tiny brilliants or pearls

or a mixture of both were popular Victorian fashions. In the mid-Victorian period brooches used a good deal of filigree, milled wire, grainwork and other gold work, generally as a deep border to a central stone which might be a cairngorm, a Scotch pebble, a garnet, or an amethyst – all fashionable at this time. Foiled crystal set in pinchbeck made larger-type Victorian brooches of little monetary value, but interesting to the lover of Victoriana. Some of them were quite handsome in their own way.

Stars and crescent brooches set with diamonds and other gems came later and did double duty as hair ornaments. As the coiffure went upwards – as it did in the late Victorian period – it was apparently a simple matter to affix a brooch in the hair. Where some support was needed – probably on account of the weight of the gemstones – the brooch was provided with a special pronged fitting for securely attaching it to the hair. Important brooches using large diamonds were almost invariably accompanied by a special fitting for the adaptation.

Seed pearl brooches had their heyday in the declining decade of the nineteenth century. The tiny pearls were threaded on horsehair, formed into the most enchanting and intricate designs and were then attached to a backing plaque of mother of pearl, to the back of which the brooch pin was affixed. A favourite theme for these brooches, and one to which the pearls lent themselves particularly well, was that of bunches of grapes with vine leaves. The artistry displayed in the creation of these delightful brooches is exceptionally fine and the functional use of horsehair on which to thread the seed pearls ensured their long life. Sometimes the backing mother of pearl was itself fretted or pierced into intricate designs.

Meticulous fineness characterized most of the brooches

of the late Victorian period, some of them being marvels of *multum in parvo*. One brooch of this time, a long oval shape about one and a half inches long and about an inch wide, in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection, is a striking example. This has a background of dark blue enamel in a frame of diamond brilliants and, under a crystal cover, a raised gold basket of flowers filled with minute blossoms and grasses set with seed pearls, tiny gold beads, and sliver fine blades of silk 'grass'. The same attention to detail is shown in the grisaille work brooches and in those of hairwork, the hair being used to create minute but extremely accurate representations of musical instruments, usually with a scrolled or matted gold surround.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Victorian Rings

COLOURFUL is the most appropriate adjective for the rings of the Victorian era, particularly the early Victorian, expressing the liking for coloured gems which succeeded the Georgian liking for diamonds. The sentimental mood was strong and seemed to find its full expression in finger rings in which the floral theme was most often featured. Usually small, early Victorian rings bore little daisies or flowerlike clusters of pearls, garnets, turquoises or diamonds. Turquoise forget-me-nots and amethyst pansies were charming styles which had a great vogue, oddly at variance with the continued liking for the serpent theme. A coiled golden serpent with emerald eyes may seem a curious choice for an engagement ring, but it had the support of the first lady of the land, for this was the design of Queen Victoria's betrothal ring, a choice which naturally gave impetus to this fashion. In general, however, prettiness rather than oddity prevailed in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

The marquise ring of Georgian times was superseded by narrower ones, with pearls, garnets, rubies, diamonds and other gems set in enamelled gold circlets. Where the rings had a cluster bezel, the shoulders were invariably open or pierced with a highly decorative design. Sometimes the floral theme was expressed by enamelled flowers on bezel and circlet, generally with the flowers in natural colourings on a dark blue enamel background. Half-hoop rings were most often set with seven pearls or small clusters of pearls centred with a small diamond.

Rings designed to carry handkerchiefs and others to carry

a vinaigrette were generally less decorative and more functional than the dress and betrothal rings. Gold was invariably used for these and instead of being set with gems, these were represented by engraving or repoussé work. Handkerchief rings were rather narrow and their function can be determined by the presence of a loop attached to the back of the ring through which a handkerchief was passed. Vinaigrette rings had a chain attached by a small loop at the back from which the vinaigrette depended so that it could comfortably be carried in the palm of the hand. Great play was made of the use of the vinaigrette in moments of emotion and one can easily imagine the melting effect of tear-filled eyes looking reproachfully over the delicately wielded smelling salts. The effect of a swoon – to which Victorian women were apparently much addicted – could be beautifully indicated and underlined by a resort to the ever-present vinaigrette. No wonder fashionable jewellers made sure this weapon was readily to hand for any *crise de nerfs*.

Another ring fashion was the *le semaine* ring set with seven different stones, the initial of each forming that of a day of the week. This French-inspired design did not enjoy a noticeable vogue in this country. The British version of the idea used six gems – ruby, emerald, garnet, amethyst, ruby and diamond – to form the word REGARD, which were called 'regard' rings' Another sentimental fashion was for rings set with gems the initials of which formed the word DEAREST. Heart-shaped bezels were in favour throughout the entire Victorian period, the heart set with garnets, rubies, diamonds pearls, coral or turquoises and often surmounted by a coronet or a knot of ribbon. Opals were seldom used for engagement rings but were sometimes set in dress rings, surrounded by brilliants.

In the second half of the nineteenth century a broad band was preferred to the rings with a hoop narrowing from the bezel to the back. In a broad gold band of equal width all round gems would be deeply set, often with engraving or enamelling all round the hoop. Diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, as well as the less precious stones were set singly, in threes, or in sevens, into the metal. If a central cluster of stones was used it did not extend beyond the width of the gold band. Buckle rings of gold vied with coiled serpents for pre-eminence, both styles being quite wide. In order to maintain the equal depth all round some late nineteenth-century serpent rings had the head curved over the coiled body, invariably with eyes represented by emeralds. Gypsy rings, in wide D-shaped bands, had either one or three stones set into the hoop itself with incised 'rays' extending outwards from each stone.

Late Victorian rings continued the massive theme, expressed always in gold, 15-carats being the favourite weight for these. They were in their way rather typical of the stolid, bourgeois 'feet on the ground' late Victorian and a far

FIG. 5. A typical late Victorian serpent ring

remove from the Romantic period. These heavy gold rings were in rope, twisted coils, cable, strap and buckle and serpent designs. They were seldom set with gems. Sentiment was largely confined to mourning and memorial rings. Keeper rings were fashionable at this time. These followed the wide band theme, the gold deeply engraved with all-over designs of ivy, hearts, flowers and more formal motifs. Some had the word 'Mizpah' carved so deeply that the word

appeared in high relief. 'Mizpah' jewellery included brooches and pendants bearing the cabalistic word and a collection of these pieces might well commend itself. The jewels were generally unadorned by gems and many were made in silver so that they still can be found quite cheaply on the miscellaneous trays in small shops and stalls.

Wide gold rings continued to be made throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, although towards the last decade wedding rings were becoming narrower (by

FIG. 6.
Keeper ring

comparison; the really narrow ring did not come into fashion until nearly half a century later). In general dress rings were still wide, with the stones set into the gold hoop, either singly, in separate panels, or in double rows. Pearls were a favourite gem and half-hoop rings set with seven pearls with diamond points enjoyed great popularity as engagement rings in the last quarter of the century. Gypsy three-stone rings were set with a central pearl flanked by two diamonds. Pearls and coral were another much-liked combination.

Round about the end of the nineteenth century the marquise ring made a reappearance, pavé-set with diamonds, pearls and even turquoises. An innovation away from the solid gold band, was the style of *circa* 1890 in which the gold hoop was open to form a double or a triple row of gold, with a central cluster of pearls and diamonds. The Victorian jewellers' trade description for these was, respectively, two-part and three-part rings. Actually they were one-part for the two or three circles ran into one at the back

and though separated in the front, graduated to a single, solid band at the back. There was, too, a return at this time to the heart theme which was so prevalent in Georgian times. Single and double hearts were equally popular and many double heart rings had pearl centres framed by tiny diamonds surmounted by a ribbon bow, also diamond-set. There were also some cross-over rings, usually with a single diamond and pearl set one above the other, in gold.

Among the typically sentimental rings of Victorian times were those using human hair with which to work exquisite miniature pictures under a crystal cover. These featured such themes as waterfalls, weeping willows, flowers, birds and similar subjects, with details of almost miraculous fineness. Each must have taken many hours of patient, delicate work, not to be found in any comparable sphere of art today. For this reason alone these rings should certainly commend themselves as the subject of a collector's search for it is highly improbable that anything of their like will ever again be seen. They belong to the gem 'jet' age rather than the modern air jet age.

Late Victorians, influenced by prolonged Court mourning, embraced the fashion for hairwork in the mourning rings of the latter half of the nineteenth century. From 1860 to the end of the century great quantities of these rings were made in an amazing variety of styles and materials. Probably because it was the practice to use the actual human hair of a departed one, these rings have been somewhat shunned by the collector of Victoriana. A natural distaste for the media used apparently outweighs, for many, the exquisite workmanship of these rings. Time, or the more realistic attitude of today is dispelling this over-fastidious approach and more and more people are now making a collection of mourning rings. Though the majority of these rings were in

the form of an oblong bezel of crystal covering the hairwork, bordered by tiny diamonds, seed pearls or garnets, a number were made entirely of closely woven or plaited hair. But perhaps the former is the more attractive and more appealing.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Victorian Lockets and Pendants

LOCKETS and pendants ranged, throughout the nineteenth century, from the Romantic, the Gothic, the classical, the Renaissance, to the *art nouveau*, in that order. While lockets maintained great simplicity combined with small size, with few exceptions, pendants were often extremely ornate and were seldom small. It would seem that lockets were a very personal jewel, designed more as a little treasure house for a cherished picture, a lock of hair, or a poetical poesy exchanged between lovers. They were completely sentimental in character in the majority of cases, in no wise designed merely to decorate the person. Indeed, many lockets were worn beneath the bodice rather than over it, as many contemporary novelists testified.

Because they were much-loved personal possessions and generally unassuming in character a great many Victorian lockets survive to reward the modest collector of these trifles. Heart-shaped, round or oval, usually in gold but often (towards the end of the nineteenth century particularly) in silver, they enjoyed their greatest popularity in the second half of the century, the time when they were simplest in character. Before that there were some lockets of more ambitious design, chiefly in dark blue enamel set with diamonds or pearls in a flower motif on the front. Around the seventies there were some lockets made of two halves of crystal between which were placed dried flowers or leaves – forget-me-nots and shamrocks or four-leaved clover being the favourites. These crystal lockets were simply framed in gold and were mostly round in shape.

During the 1880s the gold locket achieved more distinction by being set with stars, crescents, monograms or even an entire name set in pearls or diamonds. Oval lockets were at this time decorated with chasing and engraving, ivy leaves (presumably intended to denote devotion) being a favoured design. Both back and front of the lockets were similarly decorated. The double theme was also extended to lockets which contained miniatures, an example in Royal possession being a small gold locket containing a miniature of George II in the front and one of Queen Caroline in the back. This is a Georgian jewel; in the Victorian versions the favourite models were a mother and baby. Another sentimental idea was that of a locket of two halves of crystal between which was looped a tress of hair, set in a gold frame bordered with double esses of gold wire. Yet another example of a locket for holding hair, *circa* 1857, is heart-shaped, the front enamelled in pale blue and containing a lock of white hair. Heart-shaped lockets were produced in profusion as containers for a lock of hair throughout the nineteenth century, some with gold covers, some having transparent 'lids' of crystal. Often tresses from every member of a family would be incorporated, the differing shades of hair being used very imaginatively to form a pattern. Queen Mary, in her catalogue presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum library, describes such a locket – heart-shaped, of crystal within a plain gold rim, housing a hair motif woven from the tresses of the six daughters of George III and Queen Charlotte. It was a charmingly sentimental idea which greatly appealed to the family-conscious Victorians who adopted the fashion with enthusiasm. Not all hair lockets were so simple, however; there were currently more elaborate and decorative designs, such as a large round one with an outer border of pearls, an inner surround of cornelian

and, as a centre, a faceted crystal cover enclosing a plaited lock of hair.

Naturally it was the Renaissance-minded Carlo Giuliano who brought most colour and decoration to the locket – a far remove from the unassuming heart-shapes, ovals and round lockets of most Victorian jewellers. Giuliano's work was distinguished, in this field of expression as in others, by a mingling of coloured enamel and gems. A typical locket of his creation is in an oval shape applied with a half pearl and diamond cluster in a foliate mount, the border in black and white champlevé enamel, with half pearls set in box collets. Even the loop from which the locket hangs is decorative – enamelled in black and set with a row of seed pearls. Like all his jewels, this locket bears on the reverse the initials CG. It is encouraging to the more ambitious collector to know that these Giuliano pieces do occasionally come into the salerooms and at fairly reasonable prices – as yet.

Pendants, as distinct from lockets, were a much more decorative and larger jewel and almost as popular a fashion. They were essentially articles of adornment rather than keepsakes or sentimental tokens as were the lockets. Here again Giuliano was at his imaginative best, creating Renaissance-like motifs in his 'signature' media of coloured enamels and gems.

At the beginning of the Victorian era pendants were small, except in the case of pendant crosses set with large diamonds, garnets or amethysts in the simple Latin shape. At this time there were, too, pendant crosses of carved ivory and of coral, many of those in carved ivory representing a tree trunk round which trailed carved ivy leaves. Clusters of roses in carved pink coral were a much-liked theme for early Victorian pendants, usually with earrings *en suite* composed of a single, small rose. Later, Froment-Meurice

created pendants with the currently fashionable classical designs. One example in the Victoria and Albert Museum is of enamelled gold in shell shape, bearing a classical figure in high relief suspended from a swivel hanging from a modelled hand.

During the second half of the nineteenth century Giuliano made smaller pendants, some with a central cameo set within a frame of enamel work and set with rubies, sapphires, pearls and diamonds, or with a central large gem similarly framed. Many pendants of this period were of this type, with an additional gem as a drop to the pendant proper. Practically all had fittings with which to adapt the pendant

FIG. 7. Pendant pin, gold set with pearls

for wearing as a brooch. More delicate styles came in about 1880, in the form of exquisitely fashioned flowers set with gems, or of seed pearls in flower motifs linked by chains of seed pearls. In the seventies Whiteley created interesting black glass pendants rather on the style of the earlier Berlin ironwork, delicate and fanciful in their design. Because of their fragility it is unlikely that many of these have survived but they are worth searching for in the byways of little shops and in the junk trays of stall-holders in country market-places.

Around the eighties some lighter pendants using pearls, peridots and topaz set in pastel enamels were made. Giuliano followed – or perhaps set – the trend towards smaller, more delicate pieces and his pendants of this period were much smaller and more restrained in style than his earlier ones. Still using enamels, these were confined to two or three colours including black and white. At most his enamel colours were in black, cream, white and blue, with perhaps emeralds, rubies or pearls as the main gems.

FIG. 8. Late Victorian pendant in gold, set with pearls

Now the theme was largely sentimental, hearts and flowers abounding. There were still crosses, set with diamonds, garnets, amethysts or pearls. The *art nouveau* school, led by Miault and Ashbee, brought out some 'futuristic' pendants in silver and enamel, rather austere and angular in form, though some of the pendants using carbuncles and amethysts were less *avant garde* and conformed more closely to the conventional. The settings were

usually of silver instead of the more generally used gold. A characteristic Ashbee pendant is included in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection of Victorian jewellery. This is in the form of a ship of enamelled gold hung with three amethyst beads, the full sail composed of a furled slice of opal, the curling waves represented by blue-green enamel, and the rigging by fine gold chains.

Watch pendants were a delightful Victorian fashion and were often very elaborate of which there is a charming example in the Royal collection. This is in the form of a cherry in bright red enamel, hinged at the centre, which opens to reveal a diamond-rimmed watch as the 'heart'. The stem of the cherry bears a furled leaf in bright green enamel, with a diamond 'dewdrop'. This jewel once belonged to Queen Alexandra. Another, even more elaborate watch pendant is in the form of a book, the watch set in the cover which is beautifully enamelled in colour. Within the book are pull-out pages, each with an exquisite picture of floral subjects in their natural colourings.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Victorian Earrings

WITH the exception of two periods – a few years during the forties and again in the nineties – earrings were constantly in fashion throughout the nineteenth century. Their temporary decline in the forties was largely due to the prevailing hair styles in which the ears were covered, and presumably to nothing more than a whim of fashion in the nineties, since at that time the hair was worn off the ears. Apart from these periods earrings were worn at all times, ranging in size and in the type of gems used according to the occasion, though they were smaller in the forties (when they *were* worn, which was infrequently) and in the eighties.

While the fashionable neckline varied from high to low; while the coiffure correspondingly changed from upswept to down-drooping (looped coils or ringlets quite eclipsing the ears), earrings ran the gamut both in the gems and materials they used and in their size. At first, in the early Victorian or Romantic period, they were worn long with off-the-shoulder evening dresses, perhaps because this type of dress called for jewels that bridged the wide expanse between corsage and coiffure. Then again in 1840–50, with the 'spaniel's ears' hairstyle of a smooth top with the hair draped low over the ears, it was necessary that earrings should be of some length if they were to be seen at all. The girandole for this reason was especially popular, mainly made of decorative gold discs hanging from fine gold chains. Vying for popularity with these were long rectangles of engraved, chased and repoussé gold, further lengthened by gold fringes.

During the sixties the ears reappeared, with a consequent

increase in the number of earrings worn, although they were now much smaller in size. There were delightful clusters of flowers and small carved coral roses, just covering the ear lobe, though the drop earring continued in fashion. Those were the days before the invention of the clip-on earrings and consequently practically all earlier Victorian ear ornaments have a simple gold wire hook and in order to wear earrings the ears had to be pierced. This meant that weighty jewels could be worn in complete safety and it meant, too, that very many examples have survived because, in the first place, they were less likely to be lost and secondly, because many have remained unworn by their present owners who prefer the modern clip or screw-on earrings.

As well as the small coral rose earrings of the sixties there were several other versions using this gemstone that had wide appeal, chiefly those in the form of a modelled hand and wrist, and the Creole type consisting of a coral hoop, wider at the base than at the top and polished smooth. These

FIG. 9.
Creole earring (c. 1904)

hoops were attached to a small gold stud at the top, terminating in a curved gold wire hook for passing through the ear lobe. The Creole design was also made in gold, and in gold and hair woven together. Gothic earrings were made in gold rectangles and discs, characteristically decorated with repoussé work and granulation.

An interesting rather than a pretty fashion of this period

was for earrings in *piqué d'or* – tortoiseshell with intricate designs formed by the insertion of small gold rods driven into the tortoiseshell so that only the tops of the rods are visible, forming designs of gold dots. *Piqué d'or* earrings were created in several shapes – girandole, smooth spheres, button-shaped, pear-shaped drops, and maltese crosses, among others. At first these were painstakingly hand-made; later in the century there were machine-made ones. Simultaneously with those of *piqué d'or* there were earrings of tassels composed of very fine gold chains depending from an inverted cup of gold, or of gold chain fringe hanging from a thin gold plaque, each tiny chain terminating in a small gold ball. There was a charming fashion for circular carbuncles with a superimposed star or flower set with pearls or rose diamonds with a gold fringe hanging from the lower half of the carbuncle. This was achieved by attaching each fine chain of the fringe or tassel to the gold disc with which the carbuncle was backed which gave the gold fringing the appearance of hanging from the carbuncle itself. Bunches of grapes, represented either by seed pearls backed by mother of pearl, or by repoussé work on gold, were also worn at this time and there were, too, many earrings of mosaic – oval and pear-shaped – and of parian.

During the late Victorian period there was a passion for animal and insect themes. Ram's heads, squirrels, birds, doves, butterflies, bees – all these and many others were represented in several ways, made either of gold or of gold set with gems. A delightful earring fashion which should appeal to the collector was for earrings of miniature gold cages in which were set small birds in brightly coloured enamel or gem-set, and others in the form of bells with the clapper a knife-edge stem of gold set with a pearl or other gemstone. At the same time – and in complete con-

trast – there were earrings of gold discs, half-moons, and rectangles, all embellished either with engraving or granulation, à là Castellani. The girandole remained a constant favourite – Giuliano saw to that, for he continued throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, despite all the counter-attractions of animal and other themes, to create girandole earrings which embodied his well-loved media of enamels and gems in colourful combination. The exceptions were those made under the influence of the Etruscan designs, for which he used triple pendant drops in disc form, granulated in faithful reproduction of ancient Roman designs.

An innovation in the earring fashions of the seventies were the black glass earrings made by William Whiteley, chiefly in open Gothic style with long drops of inverted pear-shape; elongated stars, and snowflake patterns, very open and strongly reminiscent of Berlin ironwork jewellery. Similarly open and lacelike designs were used for the fashionable silver and gold filigree earrings of this period, as well as less abstract themes such as butterflies, flowers and birds. Oval and round cameos, set in plain or openwork gold surrounds continued to be worn in the daytime.

With the closing decade of the century and the end of the sixty-odd years of Queen Victoria's long reign there was a perceptible falling-off in the amount of jewellery worn, particularly in the daytime. Earrings were smaller and even on formal occasions stud earrings set with a solitaire diamond were more frequently worn than the hitherto ubiquitous chandeliers and girandoles. With the advent of William Morris, Beardsley, Henry Wilson, Lalique, Ashbee and others of the *avant garde*, *art nouveau* flourished. Though there were ear jewels with softly curved lines, the tendency was towards more angular, geometrical lines; a greater use of silver and gold to express the new school of design. These

innovators made few earrings, a form of jewel they evidently preferred to leave to the more conventionally minded jewellery designers. The latter expressed the daytime ear jewel fashions in pendant earrings of decorated gold, tasselled and fringed. A much-liked earring style of the nineties was a long flat oval pendant of gold, gypsy-set with a diamond or a pearl, the pendant bordered with small gold knobs.

Among the 'oddities' of Victorian earring fashions the collector may find it amusing to look for those in the form of Negroes' heads in black enamel with diamond, emerald or ruby eyes; snakestone fossils in a frame of woven hair and gold wire; earrings in parian – a form of porcelain; 'lucky bean' gold earrings; portrait medallions framed in rose diamonds or seed pearls; and the earrings of Abyssinian gold with fine gold fringes.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Victorian Chatelaines

ONE of the personal appendages – as distinct from personal jewels – which the Victorians inherited from the previous century and made their own is the chatelaine. This was especially true of the Romantic period, for it fitted in perfectly with the mood of the times when the young Victorian miss could imagine herself in the role of chatelaine of a medieval castle, languishing in the absence of her knight '*sans peur et sans reproche*'. And, too, was it not the carry-all for her most essential weapon – her smelling salts? Small wonder then that the Victorian chatelaine should be a much-loved jewel and a highly popular gift between friends.

Though the Victorian versions lacked, on the whole, the exquisite beauty and preciousness of the Georgian creations, they were nevertheless attractive in their own way and make an excellent subject for the collector. There are still plenty of them to be found by the diligent searcher and they are still comparatively modestly priced. This is no doubt due to the fact that they were not often gem-set and that many of them were made in base metals such as cut steel, or in silver, in pierced, open and engraved designs.

Victorian chatelaines in general consisted of a large and ornamental decoration with a sturdy hook at the back which was looped over the waistbelt. From this main motif hung from three to six simple chains from which in turn were suspended such functional objects as a vinaigrette, pencil, penknife, silver covered notebook, button-hook, glove-hook and so on. In place of the Georgian fashion for seals there were representations of the currently popular charms –

lucky pigs, lucky beans, coins and similar gadgets. The use of a coin as a charm proves helpful in dating the chatelaine on which it hangs. The ornament at the top was frequently

FIG. 10.
Late Victorian chatelaine

in openwork, in a design of ivy leaves, vine leaves and grapes, cherub's heads, entwined hearts and leaves, as well at abstract, formalized patterns. The few more extravagant

Victorian chatelaines had richly enamelled plaques in the Georgian manner and some were enriched with cameos inset on each of the double chains. One example of the more ornate style is the chatelaine presented as a wedding gift to Princess May of Teck in 1893. This was in gold and bloodstone set with small diamonds, the top in the form of the word MAY, the M of bloodstones set with small diamonds, the A and Y of diamonds beneath a crown set with rubies, diamonds and emeralds. From the letter M hangs a small watch of gold, bloodstone and diamonds, with two further chains carrying on one a key and on the other a seal, both of bloodstone. Silver chatelaine girdles of the late Victorian period were another interesting version of the 'jewel', the girdle in open link form with two long dangling ends which held the usual chatelaine appendages.

Waist chatelaines – those which hooked over a waistbelt – were in fashion until about the sixties, when they practically disappeared until the nineties, when Princess Alexandra revived the vogue. Apparently they had a great appeal for the Princess and her interest in this accessory led others to follow suit. As well as those chatelaines which hooked to the waistbelt there were the agrafe chatelaines of the forties which came into fashion with skirts that were deeply gored at the back to form almost a short train. The difficulty of coping with a skirt trailing on the ground behind was solved by the ingenious invention of an addition to the chatelaine of a clip attached to a long chain, the hook catching up the back folds of the skirt so that the hem cleared the ground. A fashion journal of 1843 refers to the agrafe chatelaine which took the form of a little Negro boy with open arms designed to receive and clasp the folds of the cloth. The boy's arms were operated by a spring which opened and closed at

will. These skirt clasps took many forms, the most universal in the late Victorian period being in the form of a modelled hand of metal, either base or silver. Others were made in the form of various animals and flowers, many of them of precious metal and set with precious stones and gemstones.

Another chatelaine of the later nineteenth century and one which is most sought after by collectors is the fob chatelaine. This had a pin fastening in place of the hook and was worn on the bodice or coat lapel. In this type the chains were shorter and the dangling objects – which invariably included a highly ornamented watch – more decorative. They were made largely of silver, but there were some in gold, gem-set and enamelled.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Miscellaneous Victoriana

AMONG the many trifles which the Victorian jewellers created there is a wealth of selection for the collector of period pieces. Each fashion brought its own accessory unique to the period and consequently of ever-increasing value and interest as time goes on. Not all these 'jewels' were precious in the sense that they used precious metals and gems, but as echoes of a vanished epoch they have much charm and value. From the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a definite attempt to link jewel fashions with those of wearing apparel and this meant the designing of accessories which can be accurately dated in relation to the prevailing dress fashions of their time.

Buckles – shoe, belt, cloak and cape – were produced in profusion from the early Victorian period to the beginning of the twentieth century, and they were fashioned in every conceivable style and material. The earliest belt buckles (about 1837–40) were usually jewelled and highly ornamental, using gold or silver set with diamonds and less precious stones such as garnets, amethysts, turquoises, moonstones and similar gemstones; round, oblong, or oval in shape, they were rather intricate in style. At the same time there was a fashion for bead belts which had decorative clasps, mostly set with paste diamonds or foiled crystals. It was a practice in later, Edwardian, times to use these double belt clasps as shoe buckles, and since they were presumably discarded with the shoes, this type of buckle is hard to find today. About the sixties there were cloak clasps of two symmetrical halves hooking one into the other, in pierced

and engraved silver and in cut steel. These were of highly stylized design to serve as a jewel at the throat when a cloak was worn. Those designed for wearing on black cloaks, particularly those of black velvet, braid trimmed, were made of faceted jet in large and handsome designs. Later in the century buckles and clasps for cloaks and waistbelts became even more impressive, using oxidized silver, pierced

FIG. 11. Cloak clasp

and engraved; gold with repoussé designs; jet; cameos, and the perennial serpent. Faceted jet was also used again and there were many belt clasps consisting of twin portrait medallions rimmed with rose diamonds. Coiled serpents pavé-set with turquoises were high fashion and there were also a great many square buckles set with paste.

Shoe buckles followed the same themes, those for evening wear being sometimes set with diamonds, foiled crystals or with paste or strass. Cut steel and marcasite buckles were worn on daytime shoes, following much the same designs.

Another dress accessory which comes into the category

of jewellery is the button – a fascinating subject for the collector since there was such a tremendously varied output of these adornments. Matthew Boulton of Birmingham had introduced cut steel buttons in 1770 and from that innovation (so far as this country is concerned; French jewellers had been creating exquisite jewelled buttons throughout the eighteenth century), stemmed more and more ambitious versions, ranging from bright steel buttons engraved with scenes from Aesop's Fables to the sulphide portrait medallions with allegorical figures in sulphide on a pale blue trellised groundwork bordered with mother of pearl of the nineteenth century. As the Victorian period progressed decorative buttons were used to illustrate the mood of the times. The Romantic period saw buttons decorated in *verre fixé* with love trophies and musical instruments on a waxed ground, enclosed by powder blue borders with brass rims, and others with figures from the Greek Tragedy painted in polychrome on an ivory black ground and with copper rims. Many buttons of the late eighteenth century were made of copper and enamel, highly decorative and containing minute pictures of much beauty. The usual size of these buttons varied between one and a quarter inches and one and a half inches in circumference. Later on in the nineteenth century buttons of wood and bone back were made, embracing many types of designs, some simulating *passementerie*, others chased with musical instruments, floral or scroll motifs. These were somewhat smaller than the earlier ones, from seven-eighths of an inch to one and a half inch across.

Glass buttons were also made, such as those which appeared recently in the salerooms, of milk-coloured opaque glass decorated with 'vermiculations in gold, yellow-ochre and carmine' as they were described. In the same sale were

some nineteenth-century buttons of deep blue enamel, each button decorated with a fern motif in mulberry colour. Button collectors are warned, however, that their pursuit of these charming trifles can become all-absorbing and many people have fallen victims to the spell of these enchanting fantasies of bygone fashions. Fortunately the Victorian buttons are less expensive to acquire than are the French examples of the eighteenth century, many of which were finely jewelled and each one a work of art.

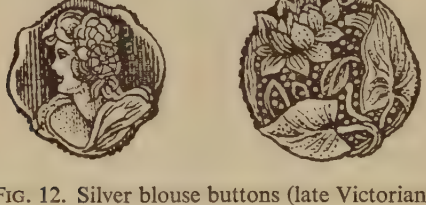

FIG. 12. Silver blouse buttons (late Victorian)

The Victorian habit of commemorating outstanding events by the production of souvenir buttons such as those engraved with the Prince of Wales' feathers and the Colonial buttons provide a fascinating subject for search, as do the Wedgwood jasperware buttons with allegorical figures on the characteristic pale blue ground, mounted on engine-turned mother of pearl with a brass border of the early nineteenth century.

Hairpins and hatpins provide great scope for the collector of Victorian trifles. The former varied with the changes in hair fashions and were a far remove from the simple wire type of the twentieth century. Victorian hairpins were ornate affairs of two prongs, usually in silver, with large and decorative heads of silver, pinchbeck, carved ivory, or matted and repoussé gold. Some had the prongs in tortoiseshell

with surmounts of silver in elaborate openwork designs such as formal scrolls, foliate and flower designs as well as those of Gothic influence. These patterns were also seen in the chignon pins which were worn thrust into the coiled chignon of the later Victorian period. Bonnet and hatpins were also of bewildering diversity, expressing every passing whim of fashion – Gothic, Etruscan, Greek, marine, floral – the list

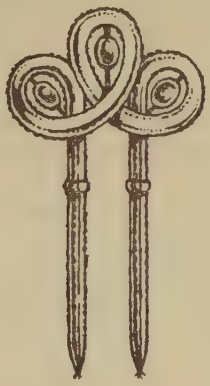

FIG. 13.
Late Victorian hairpin in gold and tortoiseshell

is endless. Generally long for hats, shorter for bonnets, these pins were little jewels in themselves and added greatly to the attractiveness of the millinery creations they adorned. Usually made in pairs or sets, these hatpins had tops in the form of pagodas, helmets, fans, birds, temples, butterflies and, as the century progressed, sporting trophies. As golfing became popular hatpins in the form of silver golf clubs were worn; archery devotees wore hatpins with tops in the form of a quiverful of arrows; fishing interests were represented by hatpins in the form of fishing rods and so on. A complete collection could be made up of these alone, while the more ambitious might turn to the more ornate

Victorian hatpins set with precious gems which were worn at garden parties, Ascot and similarly 'dressy' social functions.

Bouquet holders of pierced silver were a charming fashion of the second half of the nineteenth century. No beau worthy of his salt would dream of escorting a lady to a dance without first presenting her with a small and enchanting Victorian bouquet of tiny, tightly massed flowers which it was her social duty to carry throughout the evening – even while dancing. To facilitate this rather tricky operation jewellers produced the bouquet holder attached to a simple finger ring so that the bouquet could dangle safely through the gyrations of the dance. These bouquet holders were usually trumpet-shaped, open at the narrow end, so that the stalks of the little bouquet could be thrust through and safely anchored. Later on these evoked a smaller version, closed at the narrow end so that it could contain water to serve as buttonhole flower holders, worn on the corsage by women and in the coat lapel by men.

With the advent of sportswomen who daringly invaded the masculine activities such as golfing, tennis, riding, bicycling and other outdoor pursuits a masculine note entered the world of feminine fashions. The long-sleeved blouse with turned back cuff was *de rigueur* for sportswear and inevitably brought sleeve-links into fashion. The prevailing taste was for gold links in the form of golf clubs, tennis racquets, riding-crops, foxes' masks, horseshoes and similar devices. Indoor afternoon blouses of lace, long-sleeved, also had their sleeve links, but these were handsomely set with diamonds, emeralds, rubies and other precious stones, often with a row of matching buttons for the front of the blouse. There were some delightful examples of sleeves links and buttons with pavé-set turquoises, in moonstones and amethysts, and others composed of twin

portrait medallions rimmed with diamond brilliants, or of twin cameos. Many of the jewelled blouse buttons have been converted by their subsequent owners into clip-on earrings, but there are still some to be come by.

Scarf pins and lace pins are other Victorian jewels with appeal. Some of the former of the second half of the nineteenth century were quite large, as a study of the examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection shows. Included in this are those which feature miniature portraits, like the scarf pin in gold bearing a portrait in coloured enamels of Queen Victoria by William Sussex, who died in 1869. This portrait, set in a plain gold surround on an incised gold stickpin, measures about one and a half inches in width by an inch in length. Lace pins, on the other hand, were usually of plain bar shape bearing a central jewel in the form of a little heart, or two entwined hearts, a four-leaved clover, a wishbone, a fox's mask and other sporting trophies, set with diamonds, pearls and other precious gems and gemstones, or all in gold with no gems and each about two inches in length. About the mid-Victorian period jewelled *lorgnettes* were in fashion, with handle pierced in an open design in gold, silver and mother of pearl set with precious gems. They were a strictly evening jewel accessory and were not produced in large quantities. Nevertheless, examples do turn up occasionally in job lots in the jewel sales and usually fetch only modest prices, comparatively speaking.

There has been of late years a revival of interest in little Victorian purses of gold and silver mesh fitting into a solid or expanding gold top. These 'penny purses', as they are sometimes described, are quite small and their tops are usually engraved or repoussé. More elegant ones have a motif in the top set with precious gems and were clearly

designed for evening occasions. Daytime 'penny purses' were strictly utilitarian and were more usually made of silver or even base metal mesh. Nevertheless they have an attraction as a purely Victorian fashion.

Collectors may come across little gold, silver or *piqué d'or*

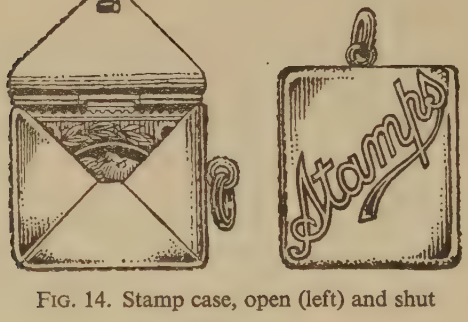

FIG. 14. Stamp case, open (left) and shut

boxes whose function is obscure. These may well be the successors to the vinaigrette, particularly if the lid is pierced or fretted. In the latter part of the nineteenth century the use of a solid perfume was revived, according to C. J. S. Thompson in his paper on 'The Pomander of 1922', 'in the form of a hard cake impregnated with one or other of the powerful synthetic perfumes. This was also worn suspended round the neck like an amulet to ward off infection.' Such boxes were often very decorative, quite small, and were worn on a fine gold chain under the bodice. Other little gold boxes are described by the late Queen Mary in her catalogue as 'saccharine cases', a description which is also given by the Queen to a pencil-shaped case set at the top with a cabochon sapphire surrounded by diamonds. Since saccharines, so far as the writer is aware, were unknown

in Victorian times, these boxes and cases were probably designed to hold pills or cachous. An oblong-shaped little gold box in the same catalogue, engraved on the lid with the monogram S beneath a coronet set with diamonds is described by the Royal compiler as a 'toothpick case'. Heart-shapes were also popular for small gold boxes made in the late Victorian period. An example in the Victoria and Albert Museum has a coronet in diamonds set to the left of the heart, with the year 1893 set in diamonds diagonally across the heart.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Edwardian Jewellery

FOR a period which lasted for only one decade but was at one with the Victorian epoch in its peaceful, solid security, the Edwardian era was an odd mixture in its art expressions. Edward VII was a sophisticate; he was freed of the heavy discipline imposed by Queen Victoria and under his reign the social scene expanded and glittered. The Boer War was over; no other war cloud dimmed the horizon and the social barometer was set fair. Yet the Edwardian age seems to have fallen lamentably short in artistic achievement. Much of the furniture, architecture and textiles was tasteless and even ugly. The firm conviction that everything ultimately becomes desirable by the alchemy of time alone must surely totter when one considers Edwardian 'art'. It is not that one is still standing too close to the period to have acquired appreciation; it is, after all, an age that is more than half a century away, yet even those fifty-odd years have failed to validate some of the creations of the Edwardian artists and craftsmen or to yield much of aesthetic value for posterity.

In jewellery, as in other fields of design, there was singularly little design of outstanding merit; design varied between excellence and mediocrity. The influence of the new school of the previous century – the *art nouveau* – was seen in somewhat formalized designs which, if they were characterized by anything, were noted for the designers' attempts to 'sculpt' precious metals. Designers like C. R. Ashbee, Philippe Wolfers, Lalique, Sir Alfred Gilbert, to name but a few of the *art nouveau* school, introduced the female form as a decorative motif to jewels – successfully or not it is for

posterity to judge. These figures were shown in relief surrounded by openwork silver in swirls and twists, forerunners of the 'Political Prisoner' wire sculpture of the twentieth century. C. R. Ashbee and Henry Wilson showed some affinity with the three-dimensional designs of earlier masters and their brooches in the girandole style were perhaps among their happier jewels. Ashbee, like Giuliano, used coloured enamel to stress a design and so achieved jewels that were really adornments rather than abstract, rather

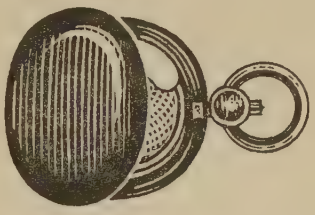

FIG. 15.
Edwardian sovereign case

self-conscious expressions of a form of art. Rene Lalique's bizarre 'jewels' show him to have been the Salvadore Dali of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras; a rebel against 'prettiness' and an undoubted artist in the use of unusual forms and materials. But like others of the *art nouveau* school, his jewels had little influence on the large-scale productions of the jewellery manufacturers.

Many modern critics deplore the commercialism of jewellery designers: they would like to see jewellery as an art form rather than as something to sell. What is overlooked is that whilst women are receptive to experimental contemporary art in painting, sculpture and architecture, they are almost universally unwilling to accept it in the matter of their personal adornment. Nothing so truly emphasizes this than a study of the jewel fashions of the Edwardian era. While the *art nouveau* school struggled valiantly to impose

their interpretations on jewel fashions, jewellers and jewellery designers continued, uninfluenced by their efforts, to create jewels they felt women would want to wear. What happened? While the courageously conceived Guild of Handicrafts founded by C. R. Ashbee went into liquidation in 1907, more practically-minded and (let us face it) less artistically motivated jewellers flourished.

They flourished because, fundamentally and rightly or wrongly, they believed women wore jewels to enhance their appearance, and because designers were shrewd enough to exploit every facet of fashion. Muffs came into vogue and in no time at all jewellers were making long muff chains; with the advent of the feather boa, boa pins came into being; waisted shirt blouses were no sooner in fashion than the jewellers produced highly ornate sets of silver buttons with which to adorn them. Out of such exuberance of creative inventiveness the decade of Edward VII's reign provides an almost limitless range of choice for the collector with an eye to the future and a feeling for period pieces irrespective of their artistic merits or demerits.

The Edwardian years must truly have been the zenith for the production of smaller jewels – important diamond and other precious stone-set jewels are considered to be outside the scope of the present work. No previous age yielded such a variety of accessories – not even the prolific Victorian era. Chains alone were made literally in hundreds of different designs, for a multitude of functional and decorative purposes. For this the introduction of machine-made jewellery in the mid-Victorian period was largely responsible. Chains of every kind could now be made in their hundreds where hitherto they had been hand-made in their tens or so. And the consequent reduction in the cost of their manufacture brought them within the reach of practically

everyone – the prices were infinitesimal by present-day standards.

For those whose hobby is collecting Edwardian chains there is a bewildering range of choice. In 1902 gold muff and long guard chains were made in numberless differing styles. Usually about five feet long, they ranged from the smooth woven Prince of Wales pattern to those having ornaments set at intervals throughout their length – chased and fluted gold beads, faceted oval gold beads, roundel mounts, faceted gold pillars and diamond-faceted ovals – between cable, woven, fancy fetter and other types of links, including one described as 'square secret'. Another Edwardian (and rather governess-y) fashion was for long gold eyeglass chains with a loop hook at one end and a swivel hook at the other. These, too, followed the fashion for ornamental links and smoothly woven gold. These, in 9-carat gold, retailed at three shillings!

Another form of chain fashion peculiar to the Edwardians

FIG. 16. Ladies' 'Albert', 1898

was that for 'ladies' gold Alberts'. These consisted of single, double, or treble rows of very ornamental links with a buttonhole bar at one end and a swivel hook at the other. Some of these, like the guard and muff chains, had motifs set at intervals along the length of the chain, or had a large

central ornament in the form of a chased and repoussé gold heart, a medallion with floral embossed design, a gold padlock and so on. Many had a further short length of chain hanging from the bar end, with a pendant replica of the central motif, or a seal, a small gold box, a pheasant or other replicas of birds. More elaborate gold Alberts had a pair of these short gold chains at one end, carrying long gold chain tassels and a seal.

Fob chains followed the same intricate patterns and were about three or four inches long, suspended from a gold swivel hook at the top with a pendant ornament at the other end, such as an embossed gold ewer, a drum, a seal and a heart. A few had triple charms like a chatelaine, each joined to a gold heart with an open centre containing another, smaller, heart. Silver Alberts were even more ornate and one Albert might have three to five chains, each with a different type of link caught up at either end with a decorative ornament. It is probable that these were worn across the front of a costume coat, from pocket to pocket, in the same way that men wore Albert watch-chains.

The wholly Edwardian gold chain curb bracelets were made in many different patterns although maintaining the invariable form – a single row of links open, closed, plain or engraved – with a gold padlock fastener, generally unadorned, but occasionally embellished with embossing or engraving, the links of an equal width all round. The exceptions to this rule were the link bracelets set with jewels such as turquoises, pearls, opals, garnets and even the more precious diamonds, rubies and sapphires. In these bracelets those links which were gem-set were larger than the unjewelled ones, giving an irregular effect. Some plain silver curb bracelets of 1907 had suspended from them a small silver mesh purse and were known as 'purse bracelets'.

Others had special padlocks forming lockets, with boxes and two glasses for holding photographs. At this time the flexible gold bracelet became much more ornate, with linked bars, oval and curved, instead of the open circular or oval links. Many of these had a central motif in the form of a circular or hexagonal locket with boxes and glasses to hold two photographs. Stirrup-shaped gold links, each set with an amethyst, were another bracelet fashion.

With the Edwardian era the stiff bracelet, or more properly the bangle, which had been introduced in the previous reign became a thoroughly established fashion in the creation of which the contemporary jewellers showed immense versatility. In the main they followed a half-hoop pattern, the slightly wider front half being set with gems and having jewelled motifs varying in width and in the kind of gems with which they were set. In the true half-hoop designs the front of the bangle was set with an even row of pearls, diamonds, sapphires and rubies. Less expensive ones were similarly set with gemstones or with sapphire doublets, amethysts, opals, peridots and garnets. The number of gems set in this type of half-hoop bangle varied from three to nine as a rule, those using three or five stones having them set gypsy fashion, sunk into the metal itself, with incised rays going out from each stone. Other bangles were set with a single large amethyst, olivine or similar

FIG. 17.
Fob chain

gemstone, with elaborate shoulders of pearl-set flowers, leaves, horseshoes and scrolls, the other half of the bangle being either of solid metal, or two-part type.

An attractive Edwardian bracelet fashion which lasted well into the twentieth century was for flexible buckle-clasped gold milanese bracelets, varying in width from a quarter to half an inch. Edwardian serpent bracelets were given interest by reproducing the typical markings along the body, achieved by oxidizing the metal in a zig-zag design. These serpents were, in the main, of finely plaited gold wire, with moulded heads, gold fangs, and jewelled eyes and were usually long enough to coil three or four times around the wrist. Silver Indian-cut bangles, very narrow and worn in sets of six or more, were introduced about 1906 and used a number of different styles of faceting, some simulating gems. These retailed at 1s. 3d. each.

Both men and women wore scarf rings, or slides as they were called, like large finger rings but flattened instead of circular, with a gadget inside the back which secured the slide to the scarf material and anchored it. These slides were high, wide and handsome, rather like Victorian gold

FIG. 18.
A typical scarf ring

keeper rings and were often set with single, triple, or seven diamonds in a row. Those of all-gold were generally in the form of a band and buckle and were either plain or richly chased. Scarf stickpins had jewelled tops in the shape of rabbits, peacocks, hearts, horseshoes, crescents, stars and abstract designs.

For the collector of tiny jewels there is much fun to be had

in hunting up the Edwardian gold and silver charms for they are delightfully imaginative period pieces. Many of them 'worked', like the movable scissors, the old-fashioned (now) mouse-trap which closed with a spring, tiny bells that tinkle, miniature hour-glasses complete with sand, and the working model of a jack-in-the-box. A real find for the collector who is also a vintage car enthusiast would be the charms in the form of models of the motor-cars of the period, strictly accurate reproductions which date themselves.

During the late Edwardian period there was an inexplicable fashion for New Zealand greenstone and with it came a spate of jewellery featuring New Zealand fauna and flora set with this indigenous stone – hearts lockets with the monogram N Z in gold superimposed on greenstone; fern leaves with N Z in gold; bar brooches in greenstone with the words KIA ORA in gold; sleeve links of greenstone carved with kiwis and so on.

Hats at this time were at their most enormous and commensurately large hatpins were made, their tops displaying every imaginable device, from a simple shepherd crook to a large jewelled butterfly; from faceted jet spheres to elaborate and intricately twisted gold coils, they were multitudinous in their designs. To anchor those immense flat-topped hats that women wore on the golf course there was a complete set of hatpins with tops reproducing a putter, a driver, a brassie and a cleek, while for the hockey enthusiast (what an additional hazard to the game these foot-long pins must have been!) there were hatpins in the form of a hockey stick complete with a pearl 'ball'.

With their eyes firmly fixed on the vagaries of fashion, jewellers heralded the waist-blouse, the hour-glass waistline, and the cloak as vehicles for new gew-gaws. Waist clasps, cloak clasps, and silver blouse-buttons were immediately

launched in an infinity of designs calculated to appeal to the feminine eye. In the waist and cloak clasps there was more than an echo of the *art nouveau* school, as there was in the silver buttons. These had repoussé designs of women's heads within formalized flower and foliage surrounds; others were decorated with water-lilies and leaves in high relief, or with cherubs' heads. Many silver buttons were made in sets of six *en suite* with matching waist clasps; others had a matching bar brooch. Cherubs were a favourite theme for waist and cloak clasps, groups of cherubs' heads encircled by clouds forming a separate group of each half of the clasp, or a half group only seen as a whole when the clasp was hooked together. In complete contrast were the clasps of openwork design of scrolls, foliage or abstract patterns. The vogue for long feather boas at this time brought into fashion the boa clasp, in silver and in gold, ranging in form from a simple short chain of open links, to intricately coiled gold loops of rigid metal.

Edwardian chatelaines differed from earlier ones in the absence of the medallions and cameos which decorated the Georgian and Victorian examples. The early twentieth-century chatelaines continued the ornate top medallion – a classic head in a foliated surround was the favourite – but the chains, three, four or five of them, hung freely from this motif, each terminating in a swivel hook. But although the interspersing of motifs down the chains was dispensed with, these Edwardian chatelaines compensated for their absence by the use of highly decorative links in the form of scallop shells, Tudor roses, classical heads, and openwork panels. One triple chain chatelaine of the period had one chain made up of linked shamrocks, the other of Tudor roses, and the third of thistle heads.

Chatelaine fittings were sold separately, each with its own

chain or chains hanging from a silver ring which was attached to the chatelaine swivel hook. These fittings in chased, repoussé, fluted and engraved silver included pincushions, tape measures inside silver spheres, thimbles and thimble buckets to carry them, scent bottles, scissors and scissor sheaths, needle-cases (shaped like a modern lipstick holder), a comb in a comb case, and a condensed diary in a silver sheath case. Chatelaine spectacle cases of silver-covered leather hanging by two chains from a decorative motif backed by a large hook for attaching to a waistbelt were another Edwardian fashion, using pierced, embossed and engraved silver.

Of the Edwardian rings which may interest a collector perhaps the most intriguing are the motto rings of about 1902. These were invariably of equal width all round with a word or motto deeply incised in the gold surface. 'Regard', 'Mizpah', 'Good Luck' (centred with a horse-shoe), 'Hope', 'Souvenir', and 'I Cling to You' were among the themes. Gold rings with similar mottoes in Dutch were also produced in this country. Yet another early Edwardian fashion was for

FIG. 19. Heart and hand ring, closed (left) and open

the triple 'hand and heart' ring. Closed, this showed two hands affectionately clasped; opened out, two hearts were revealed underneath. This period, like the earlier Victorian one, had its mourning rings which took many forms and followed, to a lesser degree, the Victorian practice of embodying the hair of the commemorated departed. Where hair was used, it was woven into a fine pattern like darning

and set between gold borders around the hoop, with the contracted words 'in mem:' panelled on the bezel, or the hair was used as a background to gold lettering of the words in full. Other rings preferred the use of black enamel as a background to inset pearls and diamonds, generally floral in theme, or a pearl-set cross. Double- and single-headed serpent rings had gold bodies in two or three coils, the heads set with rubies, diamonds and sapphires. Buckle rings were another contemporary fashion, broad, D-shaped, and set with diamonds in gypsy style with chased edges. Keeper rings followed the same designs as the motto and buckle rings and were usually made without gems.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

On Collecting

WHATEVER the spark that sets it off, the desire to collect tends to grow with what it feeds on; acquisitiveness can become almost a fever and the would-be collector should be warned before deciding what form his collecting will take not to set his sights too high. It is better – unless money is no object – to choose a modest subject and a period that has not yet reached exhaustion point. This does not necessarily exclude the Georgian periods, oddly enough, for there are still smaller pieces of this long era which are quite reasonably priced – even diamond jewellery. This is probably due to the earlier form of rose cutting in which the diamonds have very little fire and are often greyish-looking; and to the use of Indian and Brazilian diamonds, almost wholly employed until the latter half of the nineteenth century brought the South African diamonds and improved cutting to the fore. Another factor which helps to keep the price of smaller Georgian jewels to reasonable levels is the practice of using foiled crystals and pastes with diamonds which reduces the intrinsic value of the jewels. This is particularly true of small Georgian brooches and finger rings which could, a few years ago, have been bought for under £10 and which are even today to be found at less than £20.

As a first step to collecting it is a good plan to attend the jewel sales in leading auction rooms, first simply as a student of what goes on; then as a student of what is offered; and finally as a bidder. Initially it may be found to be an intimidating experience and only the really foolhardy will plunge

gaily into the fray, pitting their *naïveté* against the poker-faced *cognoscenti* without first studying both the terrain and the technique. Every jewel sale has its charmed circle of experienced dealers who know to a hairsbreadth what they can succeed in buying, and to the last cent what they can expect to have to pay. To the uninitiated there seems to be a sort of freemasonry among these people which enables them to operate successfully in the face of the inexperienced bidder. There is, for the beginner, an almost morbid fascination in watching these bidders at work. Without (apparently) moving a finger, bids are made and the lot knocked down while the uninitiated are still wondering whether they dare venture to cap the last bid. Those who have cut their saleroom teeth in little village auction rooms and whose wildly waving catalogues or loud cries of 'I'll offer half a crown' are accepted with phlegmatic calm by the local auctioneer, will no doubt be stricken into awed silence in the almost cathedral-like quiet of the world-famous salerooms, where the dignified auctioneer's voice is usually the only one heard and then in pitch and tone more appropriate to the dinner table than the soap box. It can be intimidating and frustrating to the inexperienced. The only remedy is, as already suggested, to attend such jewel sales purely in the role of student, content to absorb the atmosphere and study the methods of bidding.

It may well be that even after such an enforced apprenticeship, the would-be bidder finds it impossible to become one of that select circle of experts who can, by the mere twitch of an eyebrow, communicate their bid to the ambassadorial figure at the rostrum (in itself a rather paralysing improvement on the local auctioneer's temporary podium of two upturned crates). For those who so despair there is always that refuge of the timid – the auction room assistant.

Shattered by the experience of having bid 30s. for a Chippendale table which fetched two thousand guineas the author completely lost her nerve and it was not until an auctioneer friend suggested enlisting the help of the auction room assistants in making her bids that she was able at last to venture again into a saleroom. The sensible way to start is to study the lots on view day – usually the day preceding the actual sale – earmarking those desired, then to seek out a friendly-looking assistant and ask him to bid on one's behalf, remembering to state clearly the ceiling price to which you are prepared to go. These men are usually very knowledgeable and will give one a rough estimate of what the lot will realize. They are generally very close in their reckoning, too, but there is always the likelihood that the assistant's assessment will be upset by a bidder who is determined to acquire the same lot no matter what. If a ceiling price has been set the assistant will know when to withdraw: without it he may assume that you, too, are prepared to stay with the bidding until the competitor reaches his limit. The dangers of this to the small collector cannot be overemphasized. In his ignorance he may have chosen to bid for something which, like the Chippendale table, is a collector's piece which may fetch four figures. Much safer, then, to set a limit to the amount to which the proxy bidder may go, and to accept disappointment as one of the inevitabilities of auction sales.

From personal experience it seems that the best bargains are those to be found in job lots. Leading auctioneers usually publish catalogues of forthcoming sales and the title they give to each will serve as a guide to the scope of the sale. Thus the title may be 'Sale of Important Jewellery'; 'Sale of Very Important Jewellery'; or (very alarming this, to the small collector) 'Sale of Magnificent Jewellery'. Even

so, though the last title may include items like the Westminster diamond tiara which fetched six figures, there are quite likely to be small lots, each of a dozen or so small jewels which will go for a surprisingly modest figure. To take an example from a 1961 'Sale of Magnificent Jewels' at which a single jewel was withdrawn at £145,000, a small 'lot' was sold which comprised a 15-carat gold bracelet of a triple row of bar links with gold beads between; a Victorian diamond jubilee gold commemorative medallion; a large gold and citrine seal; a smaller gold and engraved sardonyx seal; a gold signet ring; a gold signet ring set with lapis lazuli; an 18-carat gold regimental brooch; a gold and shell cameo brooch; a 9-carat gold powder compact; a gold identity bracelet; a lady's 9-carat gold wristlet watch; a pair of seed pearl and amethyst earings, imperfect; a pair of gold pendant earrings, imperfect; a pair of gold cuff links; a gold tie-pin of rondel form set with a half pearl; and some oddments – the whole collection fetching £30. This is real treasure-trove for the collector of modest means and strikingly demonstrates that it pays to 'shop around' the salerooms even when the main lots can be truthfully described as 'magnificent jewels'.

It will be readily seen that several of the items are each alone worth the sum paid for the entire lot. And if there is just one desirable piece among a dozen oddments it may still be well worth acquiring the whole collection to secure the one coveted jewel.

While Christie's and Sotheby's are the leading auction rooms at which the majority of period jewels are sold, there are, of course, many others of good repute at which treasures may be found. Notices of forthcoming sales are usually advertised in the daily newspapers and these should be studied by the would-be collector who may find the less

formal atmosphere in these smaller salerooms more to their liking. Since more of the general public go to these sales there is always a host of equally inexperienced bidders to bolster up one's morale. 'Wreathéd nods, and becks, and smiles,' to say nothing of wildly waving arms are common currency in these more informal surroundings so that the beginner tends to feel much more at home. It is certainly a good plan to cut one's bidding teeth in such an ambience and to work up from this to the top-flight auction rooms.

For those collectors who eschew the salerooms there are many other avenues to explore. Many people who recall the veritable el Dorado of the old Caledonian Market may feel that their search should be confined to the open-air street stalls which are still to be found. Unfortunately for those who hope to unearth bargains in the seemingly guileless atmosphere of the street stall, the owners are generally as shrewdly aware as any expert of the real value of the goods they sell. They are, after all, the dealers and no fools. To suppose that they are any more likely than a Bond Street or Regent Street jeweller to be unaware of the exact worth of every item is to be very naïve indeed. What these street stalls can offer the collector, in many cases, are the lesser-sought items such as cut steel buttons and buckles, vinaigrettes, stamp cases and similar articles which do not appear to have, as yet, attracted much attention and are therefore more likely to provide bargains.

Country house sales can sometimes be productive of job lots among which may be real treasure-trove. Another source of 'finds' can be the local bazaars and sales of work with their 'white elephant' stalls. In the writer's case these latter have yielded some entrancing pieces at sixpence and a shilling, though the field is narrowing a good deal.

The car-driving collector is at a great advantage. For him

it is possible to search in little village shops in hidden byways or in the back streets of industrial towns, often a rich source of supply, particularly where the little jeweller's shop is also the pawnbroker's. The latter, in this affluent age, are getting hard to find, but they are well worth while looking for because of the chance of real treasure lying hidden among the unredeemed pledges. Where the shop is an old one, or one that has been in the same family for generations, it often happens that it still carries at least some of the original Victorian stock. It can be a fascinating summer pursuit in which enthusiastic members of the family can join, to make a leisurely tour of towns and villages with the ever-present hope of unearthing treasure-trove en route.

Another source of search is the local newspaper, under the headings of 'articles for sale', and in the personal columns. Many private sellers prefer to offer their jewellery for sale anonymously and do so by advertising above a box number. Provided such items are bought on personal inspection there is a chance of acquiring period pieces at most reasonable prices. Not always, however, for a private seller may – and often does – have an inflated idea of the intrinsic worth of a treasured family jewel, far in excess of its true value. Where there is any doubt in the prospective purchaser's or seller's mind the best plan is to consult an expert valuer, then both parties can be satisfied. With none of the overheads which have to be considered by the jeweller selling a similar object, a private seller can afford to offer goods at a lower price.

Finally there are the jewellers' shops themselves, perhaps the most secure way of collecting. Many jewellers specialize entirely in period jewels, others have special departments for antique pieces. While the compellingly optimistic hope of finding a bargain may be less potent in conventional sur-

roundings it is a mistake to suppose that there aren't bargains to be found. Moreover, reputable and knowledgeable jewellers can be of immense help to the beginner in dating jewels and in assessing their authenticity. Prices are often surprisingly low, and there is the comfort of knowing that the jeweller's expert knowledge is behind one's purchase, with none of the dubiety which must inevitably attend a 'blind' purchase. For most people the antique section of the jewellers' shops will prove the happy hunting ground; the incorrigible bargain hunter will prefer less orthodox channels because to them half the charm of collecting is the possibility of making a wonderful find for oneself. Wherever the jewels are sought and bought, there can be one certain advantage – genuine period pieces are bound to appreciate in value as the years go on, so that even if top prices are paid now, these must inevitably turn out to be 'bargain prices' a decade or so hence.

A final word of caution, from an expert in a world-famous firm of antique jewellers – *do* have any necessary repairs done by experts; do not entrust period pieces to the inexpert handyman. 'Hack repairs have ruined many beautiful Georgian jewels,' this authority declares. 'It is heartbreaking to see a delicate piece of exquisite workmanship crudely "repaired" and utterly ruined in the process.' Above all, having acquired genuine period pieces the collector is urged never, never to have them modernized. So much has already been lost to posterity this way. We owe it to the long-dead craftsmen of the past to preserve intact the heritage they have left us of their skill, jewels that should continue to give pleasure and pride to generations as yet unborn.

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