



HELEN & MICHAEL
OPPENHEIMER

FAMOUS DIAMONDS



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Ian Balfour

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To Maria

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FOREWORD

Great diamonds have, ever since biblical times, exercised a strange fascination on mankind. As objects of exceptional beauty and rarity they have naturally always been highly prized and valued. They have moreover become entwined in legend, have played a romantic part in history and have often come to be regarded with superstitious awe as talismans and bearers in some cases of good fortune and others of disaster. An informed history of the famous diamonds of the world could hardly fail therefore to have great human appeal.

But famous diamonds are much more than natural curiosities. They are the most spectacular elements in a worldwide industry which has played, and continues to play, a major part in the economic development of many countries in the world. When the first important diamond was discovered in South Africa it was observed with great prescience at the time, 'on this rock the future prosperity of South Africa will be built', and recently major discoveries of diamonds in Botswana have become the base of the economy of that new country.

Diamonds are of great interest, not only to wearers of jewellery and as an accepted and indestructible symbol of love, but also to geologists, mining engineers, businessmen and economists around the world. Diamond

cutters and polishers have used their exceptional skills to build up important manufacturing industries in Belgium, Israel, India and the United States and artists of distinction have devoted themselves to the design of diamond jewellery.

The financial organisation of this industry worldwide is unique and has proved its value over many years. Indeed, it may possibly be that in some respects it may be able to suggest means of bringing greater stability to other industries dealing with raw materials which, in the long run, are likely to be scarce in relation to demand.

Ian Balfour is especially qualified to write a book of this sort. He has a true feeling for the romance of diamonds and has carefully researched his subject. He has, in addition, knowledge and experience which make him especially qualified to present the famous diamonds about which he has written in the context of the diamond industry as a whole. This has added significantly to the value and interest of his book. He is a romantic but a realist at the same time and is able to see diamonds not only as objects of exceptional beauty but also as an industrial raw material and this is a strange combination which, for me anyhow, gives the subject of diamonds a very special interest and fascination.



HARRY OPPENHEIMER

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The world of famous diamonds places before us an extraordinary panorama of characters: it extends from kings and queens, emperors and empresses, other potentates, soldiers, statesmen, politicians – who generally don't come out too well – to the more mundane businessmen, bankers, brokers, diamond dealers, cutters, cleavers, and the shadowy world of paramours, parasites, swindlers, smugglers and other assorted criminals including a murderer or two.

I have learned this since the day, more than a quarter of a century ago, when I was asked to revise some notes on famous diamonds. At that time my acquaintance with the subject was slight: I had once paid a cursory visit to the Tower of London to see the Crown Jewels; I retained memories of that fine exhibition 'The Ageless Diamond' held in London in 1959, and had been down the Premier Mine, vaguely aware that it had been the source of a fine diamond known as the 'Cullinan'. Beyond that I was ignorant. Then I met with a stroke of fortune; I found in a second-hand bookshop a copy of Edwin Streeter's *The Great Diamonds of the World*. For a long time this was the only book in English on the subject and it still remains a fascinating and valuable source of information to which frequent reference will be made in this book. It has two drawbacks: first, it was published at a time when the first discoveries in Africa, the principal diamondiferous continent, had only just been made; secondly, its style is probably for most readers today too verbose. It was written for a more leisurely age, unlike ours when speed, including the speedy impartation of facts, is valued above all else. My acquisition of Streeter's work was followed by that of other publications so that in time I built up a small library and formed some general impressions on the subject. I was able to revise the notes, publish a booklet, and contribute a number of articles to various books and magazines.

In the late 1970s my old friend John Rudd, in his capacity as editor of the magazine *Indiaqua*, asked me whether I might contribute an article on a particular diamond to each issue. In his own words he wanted to metamorphosize the magazine, then almost exclusively devoted to the field of industrial diamonds, to include more of the gem diamond world. I was happy to do so – and the work I began for *Indiaqua* started me on the trail that has led, eventually, to this book.

It has been difficult to decide exactly which diamonds to include and which to leave out, and I am sure some will disagree with my final choice. There are, in fact, one or two publications which have accounts (albeit considerably shorter ones) of more than twice the number of diamonds that appear here. However, I do believe that some of the diamonds they have listed are noteworthy rather than notable.

As my researches progressed, I was struck by the very great

confusion surrounding so many of these diamonds' histories. Often the facts about one stone in one publication had been substituted for those of another in a different one. It sometimes seemed as if one were groping in a minefield enveloped in a thick fog. The apparent disappearance of many exceptional diamonds following events such as the sack of Delhi in 1739 by the Persians or the theft of the French Crown Jewels from their place of safekeeping in 1792 contrived to make the position even more confused. Two major conflicts this century, contributing to the loss or disappearance of several notable diamonds, have further complicated matters; it is quite possible that some of these lost diamonds do exist today after having been recut to avoid detection. In addition there is the understandable reluctance of owners to admit ownership or to divulge information, both from the point of view of security and the fear of punitive measures being taken by a government. Such obstacles, therefore, make detection of the table-cut diamond of Shah Jahan and the identification of the 'Great Table' diamond all the more remarkable achievements.

This book is an attempt to give as straightforward and accurate an account as possible of the world's greatest diamonds. It will not be the last word on the subject because new information is constantly coming to light. Clearly there are also grey areas of theory, guesswork, supposition and even an occasional resort to a hunch or two in an effort to arrive at the truth. My own background has been that of rough diamonds so I approach the subject from a slightly different angle from previous writers who for the most part have been jewellers or gemologists. This has enabled me to cast doubt upon certain previously published facts about some diamonds, in particular their origin.

In the quest for accuracy there is a danger that, by adhering to cut-and-dried factual accounts, one is liable to throw out the legends that have become attached to some of the most famous stones. I believe that there is sufficient romance left without resorting to spurious 'facts' to give 'colour' to certain histories.

There are those who maintain that diamonds are useless baubles, valueless and not worth a moment's attention. I shall merely reply by quoting Ruskin's words that we should 'remember that the most beautiful things in the world are the most useless'. I believe that such persons would be equally dismissive of a drawing by Leonardo da Vinci, a sonnet by Shakespeare or a string quartet by Beethoven; they are usually piqued, permeated with envy or plain Philistines. Fortunately, to judge from my own experience, there are enough individuals aware of the beauty of a fine diamond and the romance and history attached to many of the most celebrated specimens to justify a book on the subject.

INTRODUCTION

Diamonds date from almost the dawn of time. They were formed from gases, in this instance carbon, which crystallized under a combination of terrific heat and pressure deep down in the earth, from which they were forced upwards by volcanic eruption. This left the lava containing the crystals to cool and become the diamondiferous substance known as *blue ground* which is mined from these volcanic *pipes*, so-called because of their conical shape. Subsequently, erosion of the earth's surface by rain, sun and wind released many of the diamonds and carried them down ancient river beds to form alluvial deposits. Volcanic pipes and alluvial deposits constitute the two sources from which diamonds are recovered.

The word 'diamond' derives from the Greek *adamas*, meaning the unconquerable; its Latin equivalent is *diamas*. There is a long and extensive literary history of diamonds. The earliest references, perhaps dating from 1200 BC, occur in the Book of Exodus. In Chapter XXVIII, where details are recounted of the tabernacle and its furnishings, a description is given of the High Priest's breastplate which, in the eighteenth verse, states 'And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire and a diamond'. This is repeated as the eleventh verse of Chapter XXXIX. Other references include one, dating from about 600 BC, in Chapter XVII of Jeremiah. The first verse reads, 'The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars.' This verse is of particular interest because it shows that diamond was recognized not only as a decorative item but also a stone of exceptional hardness. We are thus confronted with early recognition of the two parts of the modern diamond industry, the field of industrial diamonds and the world of the gem diamond.

Biblical allusion will reveal another fact about diamonds. In the third chapter of the Gospel according to St Matthew details are recounted of John the Baptist's sojourn in the wilderness. The fourth verse reads: 'And the same John had his raiment of camel hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.' Clearly it was not the insect which John the Baptist ate but the fruit of the carob or locust-tree (the botanical name being *Ceratonia siliqua*) which abounds in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. It is sometimes known as 'St John's bread'. The ancient pearl traders were astute enough to note that the weights of the dry seeds of the carob were remarkably uniform; the minute differences found were less than one thousandth part of an ounce, assuredly too small to have been measurable by the primitive balances then in use. This may be the origin of the word 'carat' – the unit of measurement of

the weight of diamonds or other precious stones. However, opinions differ concerning the true derivation of the word 'carat': some maintain that it is a corruption of 'carob' while others believe that it derives from the Greek name for the tree which is '*Keration*'.

EARLY SOURCES

The Arab traders, who first used the carat as a unit of measurement, were instrumental in developing trade between India and Europe. Therefore, it was India which, as the oldest known producer, must have yielded the diamonds referred to in the Bible.

Diamonds have been found in several areas but the most important source has been between the Godavari and Krishna (Kistna) rivers near Hyderabad. This extensive mining area became known as Golconda after the ancient, now deserted and ruined fortress of that name which served as the commercial centre for the diggings and where diamond cutting, albeit in a primitive fashion, was carried out. The term 'Golconda', however, has survived to describe a type of diamond peculiar to India, one of unusual limpidity, colourless but with an occasional faint bluish tinge.

The Indian deposits were alluvial, the diamonds distributed in river gravels, clays and surface soil. The first European to describe the scene at Golconda (in 1565) was the Portuguese, Gaveia de Orta, who was physician to the Viceroy of Goa. But for a detailed account we must turn to the famous French jeweller and traveller, Jean Baptiste Tavernier (1605–89), a remarkable man who did much to develop trade between India and France. *Six Voyages of Jean Baptiste Tavernier*, written in 1676, provides invaluable information concerning the mining of diamonds and the methods of trading, with drawings and descriptions of some of the legendary Indian stones.

Tavernier would have been one of the last literate European travellers to have seen the Golconda fields because, although they were still being fully worked, the output declined sharply at the end of the seventeenth century. A few hundred carats are still produced annually in India, principally from alluvial deposits in the Panna district of Madhya Pradesh.

Tavernier also referred to the existence of the diamond fields of Borneo, thus indicating them to be one of the earliest sources. The deposits, which are situated in the western and southern regions of the island, have continued to yield diamonds right up to the present day.

At the time that the Indian output was beginning to decline, diamonds were found in 1725 in a very different part of the globe. Prospectors searching for gold in the Tejuco region of

Minas Gerais, Brazil, some 480 km (300 miles) north of Rio de Janeiro, found diamonds. Tejuco was renamed Diamantina in honour of the discovery and became the scene of feverish mining. Diamonds were produced in such quantities that prices in European markets dropped sharply. To improve them, merchants spread stories that the Brazilian diamonds were inferior quality Indian stones which were being shipped to Brazil and then exported to Portugal. The Brazilians retaliated by selling their diamonds in Europe as first quality Indian diamonds, not a difficult ploy because the Brazilian stones, though comparatively small, were of fine quality.

Brazil remained the foremost producer until diamonds were found in Africa, but by that time the alluvial deposits at Diamantina were nearing exhaustion. Large diamonds are still occasionally found in Minas Gerais (meaning 'General Mines') by *garimpeiros* (diggers or prospectors) while there have been discoveries in others of the country's twenty-seven provinces. In particular the southern part of Bahia, where the first discoveries were made in 1894, has yielded a species of diamond known as *carbonado*: a black, grey or brown stone which is the toughest kind of industrial diamond.

Two other diamondiferous countries in South America are Venezuela and Guyana. In the more important of the two, Venezuela, alluvial deposits in the eastern part of the country are worked by small concerns or individual diggers.

SOUTH AFRICA

There are indications that diamonds were being picked up in southern Africa in the middle of the last century; it is thought that Bushmen may have found a use for them. But the first in a chain of events which ultimately was to transform large areas of the continent is generally held to have occurred late in 1866, when the daughter of a poor farmer picked up a stone close to the Orange River in the Hopetown district of Cape Colony, 800 km (500 miles) north of Cape Town. The stone was eventually sent to a mineralogist who verified it as a diamond weighing 21 carats.

The 'Eureka', as the diamond came to be named, was shipped to London where it elicited little interest. But others in South Africa were on the alert for diamonds and events took a dramatic turn in March 1869. A Griqua shepherd boy found a diamond of 83.5 carats which a farmer, previously involved in the discovery of the 'Eureka', bought for 500 sheep, ten oxen and a horse – truly a king's ransom to the boy. A few days later, the farmer sold the stone for more than £11,000. The discovery of this diamond, the 'Star of South Africa', set the whole scene alight. As news of its discovery spread, fortune seekers and prospectors swarmed to the area of the Orange and Vaal rivers, many travelling hundreds of kilometres (miles) in ox-wagons over the rough and arid Karoo. In 1870 a rich find was made at Klip Drift on the banks of the Vaal River. The same year a fine 50-carat diamond was found nearly 200 km (120 miles) away on the farm Jagersfontein near Fauresmith in the Orange Free State: this marked the beginning of the famous Jagersfontein Mine which during its

life of a hundred years was destined to yield many fine stones. Two more discoveries were made around 1870 on the neighbouring farms Dorstfontein (later called Dutoitspan) and Bultfontein, 32 km (20 miles) south of Klip Drift.

The early diggers worked on the soft yellow ground on the surface; many gave up on reaching the harder ground below, believing that the deposits were exhausted. Little did they realize that this yellow ground was merely weathered blue-ground and that far greater riches lay below. By 1871 many were thinking of abandoning their claims or had already done so when news of fresh discoveries reached them, causing them to hasten to the new diggings. These were situated on the farm Vooruitzicht, purchased for £50 by two brothers, Johannes Nicolaas and Diedrick Arnoldus de Beer. Two separate deposits were found, later to become the De Beers and Kimberley Mines. The brothers eventually sold their farm to a Port Elizabeth firm for six thousand guineas but not before they themselves had dabbled in digging and tried to limit the number of prospectors on their land, an impossible task because an immense diamond rush took place with not only the old diggers from neighbouring farms reappearing but also thousands of other people from many different countries and walks of life. By 1872 more than 50,000 were in an area where there had once been nothing but barren veldt: now an enormous mining camp existed, complete with hotels, offices and saloons built of mud, brick and tin. This encampment, known as 'New Rush', was proclaimed as the town of Kimberley in 1873, after the British Secretary of State for the Colonies at the time.

The Kimberley deposits were mined by thousands of individual claimholders and small syndicates so that ten years after their discovery they were gigantic craters in which diggers worked at varying speeds and at different levels. As time went on, inevitably the risks became apparent: falling rock, flooding, caving-in and accidents of all sorts took their toll of men and equipment. It was a young Englishman, Cecil John Rhodes, who foresaw the path the industry should pursue in South Africa. The son of a country parson, Rhodes, then seventeen, had come out in 1870 for reasons of health to join his eldest brother who was farming cotton in Natal. Then he followed his brother who had forsaken farming and trekked to the diggings. Between 1871 and 1873 Rhodes laid the foundation for his capital base by supplying drinking water and ice to the perpetually thirsty digging community. Next, in partnership with another Englishman, Charles Rudd, he rented steam-driven water pumps to the claimholders as well as acquiring exclusive rights to supply explosives.

Rhodes realized that the sole hope for a stable and prosperous future for the mines at Kimberley lay in their consolidation as one concern. Accordingly with the fortune he had amassed as the result of his various enterprises, Rhodes, partnered by Rudd, began acquiring claims within the De Beers Mine where he had bought his first claim in 1873. In 1880 they amalgamated their holdings into De Beers Mining Company with a capital of £200,000. Next they turned their

attention to the much richer Kimberley Mine largely controlled by their great rival, Barney Barnato, and after a titanic financial struggle, succeeded in gaining the control necessary to ensure the mining of the deposit as a single unit.

On 13 March 1888, De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited was incorporated: it represented the whole of the De Beers Mine, three-fourths of the Kimberley Mine and a controlling interest in the Bultfontein and Dutoitspan Mines. The Company's Articles of Association became the widest ranging of any concern since the founding of the famous East India Company: they signified Rhodes's aspirations for the future of not merely the diamond industry but the whole of southern Africa. It was De Beers' money which built roads and railways, pioneered fruit-farming, cattle-raising and the manufacture of explosives for the mining industry.

The discovery of diamonds in South Africa brought a new dimension to the worldwide diamond trade – and with it new problems, in the form of selling the output, which greatly exceeded anything known before. Cecil Rhodes believed that the necessary corollary to the amalgamation of the mines into one company lay in the sale of its production through a single channel. After the merger in 1888 a trade depression occurred and a number of merchants were left holding considerable stocks. So as to restore confidence and avoid serious dislocation of the industry, which would have come from competitive liquidation, a system of co-ordinated selling was instituted. This arrangement proved so successful that in 1889–90 a joint buying and selling organization was formed by Rhodes. It came to be known as the London Diamond Syndicate and comprised ten firms, each of which was allocated a specific quota of the entire De Beers output. It was essential that supply and demand were perfectly balanced. Shortly afterwards the Syndicate arranged to buy the Jagersfontein production.

London was chosen as the location of the Diamond Syndicate because it had been the most important centre for the distribution of most of the world's diamonds since around 1650 as a result of its mercantile links at that time with the British East India Company.

For a time the Syndicate worked satisfactorily, but a series of diamond discoveries throughout Africa during the first three decades of this century was to undermine its success. The structure of the Syndicate had been designed to handle only the output of De Beers and invariably the directors or proprietors of the new concerns wished to market their diamonds on their own. The first discovery took place in 1902 when the existence of a huge pipe near Pretoria was proved: this marked the site of the Premier Mine (a fifth mine discovered at Kimberley in 1890 had been so named but with the new find it was renamed Wesselton). It is recorded that the realization of the size of this deposit and the potential threat it posed to the stability of the trade caused one of the De Beers directors, on a visit to the mine, to have a severe heart attack. After protracted negotiations the directors of the newly formed Premier (Transvaal) Diamond Mining Com-

pany consented to sell their diamonds through the Syndicate.

The Premier Mine was closed briefly during the First World War, by which time excavations had reached more than 90 metres (300 feet), and again in 1932 due to the depressed state of the diamond market. Eighty per cent of the mine's output has consisted of industrial quality stones and it was the growing demand for such stones that gave the mine a new lease of life in the 1940s: a shaft was sunk and underground mining resumed. Premier Mine has produced a quarter of the world's great diamonds weighing more than 400 carats.

The next major diamond find was made in one of the most inhospitable and inaccessible parts of Africa. In 1908 a German railway inspector working on the line near Kolmanskop, south of Lüderitz, in what was then the German colony of South West Africa, now Namibia, was handed some bright pebbles by one of his labourers who had previously worked for De Beers. Having satisfied himself that they were diamonds, he handed in his resignation and obtained prospecting rights from the company owning the mineral concession in the area. This discovery led to the opening up of several deposits near Lüderitz, in an area imprisoned between the ice-cold currents of the sea to the west and the barrier of sand dunes and mountains to the east.

Between 1908 and the outbreak of the war, the output of diamonds from this area was immense and the various companies were able to declare dividends ranging from 30 per cent to the fantastic figure of 3800 per cent. The sales were controlled by the Diamond Regie, a German government body with its headquarters at Lüderitz. The war brought mining to a halt but after General Botha's successful invasion, the South African government allowed nine companies to resume work at the end of 1915. After the war and at a time when the deposits showed signs of having been worked out, the German companies were anxious to sell. In 1920 they were amalgamated into the Consolidated Diamond Mines of South West Africa by Ernest Oppenheimer.

Further discoveries followed in this region. In 1925 a German geologist noticed that diamonds were being found in conjunction with a line of fossilized oyster shells running parallel to the sea. These diggings, situated at Alexander Bay, south of the Orange River, became known as the 'Oyster Line'. Then immediately to the north of the river, rich diamond-bearing terraces were found: under a blanket of sand often 10–20 metres (30–60 feet) deep, the terraces extended north for at least 40 km (25 miles). This area has proved to be the richest producer of diamonds in the world, some 90 per cent of these coastal diamonds being high quality gem stones.

How have diamonds come to be found along this desolate coast? The generally accepted theory is that they came from eroded volcanic pipes in the interior of southern Africa. Then they were borne by an ancient river following the course of the Orange River down to the sea and thence carried northwards along the coast and deposited by storm surf on prehistoric marine terraces. Over geological ages, some of these terraces were moved several kilometres from the sea

and covered by massive deposits of desert sand. The action of ocean currents has had a grading effect upon the diamonds in that the average size of the stones becomes smaller the further they have been carried north from the mouth of the Orange River. Conversely the larger stones tend to be found close to the mouth of the river.

In the early 1960s the first of several attempts to recover diamonds from the sea began. Not surprisingly in these treacherous waters, spurred on by the strong Benguela current, there were losses of both men and materials but the research continues. In addition, Consolidated Diamond Mines started to mine a part of the foreshore along the coast beach. The construction of a sea-wall made of excavated sand has enabled mining to take place 280 metres (918 feet) beyond the original high water mark and some 18 metres (50 feet) below sea level.

OTHER AFRICAN DISCOVERIES

In 1906 a Belgian company began prospecting in the territory formerly known as the Belgian Congo, now Zaire. The next year a prospector found a minute bright stone in the gravel of the Kimimina River. Lacking the facilities to test his belief that the stone was a diamond, the party's geologist sent it with other panning samples to the company's office in Brussels. Had it not been for his thoroughness in making careful diary entries, this discovery might have gone unnoticed – the label came off the bottle during its journey. Two years later, prospectors returned to the area and in a month collected 258 diamonds along the Kasai and Kabambaie rivers.

There are two diamond fields in Zaire, the production of each displaying very different characteristics. The first, in the Kasai district and the site of the original find, is situated near the border with Angola; although half of its output consists of industrial diamonds, it includes gem diamonds of small but good quality. The other field lies 480 km (300 miles) to the north-east of Kasai in the Bakwanga district; its huge production consists principally of boart, nowadays a necessary component in industry. Boart is the most inferior quality of industrial diamond, so badly flawed and constructed that it is suitable only for being crushed into abrasive powders for a multitude of industrial purposes.

In 1912 diamonds were found in the north-east of the neighbouring territory of Angola. The prospecting was a continuation of that already being undertaken in Zaire; Belgian officials supplied the base camps due to the total absence of facilities in Angola. However, unlike its neighbour, Angola's deposits produce a large percentage of gem as opposed to industrial quality stones.

Seven years later, in 1919, the chain of discoveries was extended to West Africa when geologists found diamonds near Abomuso, on the Birim River, in Ghana, formerly the Gold Coast. For many years Ghana remained the second largest diamond producer, being surpassed only by Zaire; its output has consisted for the most part of very small stones, many of them averaging 400 to the carat. Only about 15 per

cent have been of gem quality.

West Africa's rating as an important producer was further established by the finding of diamonds in Sierra Leone in 1930. The initial discovery was made about 225 km (140 miles) east of the capital, Freetown. The deposits are alluvial but more recently pipes have been located so that it is hoped to prolong the country's output by mining them. The greater part of Sierra Leone's production has consisted of gem quality stones which have included some exceptional finds. Two of the neighbouring territories, Guinea and Liberia, have also yielded diamonds from alluvial sources.

The next African discovery occurred in the eastern part of the continent. A Canadian geologist, Dr John Williamson, was instrumental in the discovery of a diamond deposit in the Shinyanga district of Tanzania, then Tanganyika. This led to the opening up of the largest pipe in the world: at the surface it measures 146 hectares (361 acres), almost eight times the size of the Premier Mine. However, as mining became deeper the size of the pipe became smaller so that at a depth of 50 metres (164 feet) it had shrunk to 14.5 hectares (36 acres).

The two most recent discoveries have been made in the southern part of Africa. In 1961 two amateur prospectors, A. T. Fincham and E. Schwabel, were evaluating an asbestos deposit 160 km (100 miles) north-west of Kimberley when aerial reconnaissance in this arid region revealed scrub amid the endless veldt. Intrigued by this feature, the two men decided to investigate further. They discovered that the moisture needed for the scrub derived from the comparatively soft kimberlite. So the mine, later named the Finsch (from the two prospectors' names), was found. In terms of caratage it is the largest of South Africa's diamond mines.

The most recent discovery in the continent has been in Botswana known as the Bechuanaland Protectorate prior to independence. In 1955 De Beers geologists started to search for diamonds in the east of the territory, but it was not until twelve years later that the first pipe was found. This was to become the location of the Orapa Mine, so named after the cattle post in this remote area. It was followed by the discovery of two more mines, Letlhakane and Jwaneng. The latter has been described as the most significant discovery since Kimberley, both in terms of size and richness of content.

RUSSIA

Russia is one of the older known sources of diamonds; since 1829 deposits have been exploited in the Ural Mountains, which constitute the dividing line between Europe and Asia. Not long after the end of the Second World War, Madame Molotov, the wife of the Soviet Foreign Minister, gave Mrs Churchill, as she then was, a ring set with a diamond found in the Urals and cut in Russia. A note was appended which ran, 'May relations between our two countries be as bright, pure, and lasting as this stone.'

A leading Soviet geologist, Vladimir Sobolev, predicted in 1937 that diamonds would be found elsewhere in the country, namely in the region of Yakutiya, which lies close to the Arctic

Circle. He contended that there was a distinct similarity between the geology of this area and that of the diamondiferous plateaux of central and southern Africa.

Dr Sobolev believed that primary deposits would be found between Lake Baikal and the Arctic Sea, more than 1600 km (1000 miles) east of Moscow. The war put a stop to exploration but upon resumption a few alluvial deposits were located in 1948. The important step was to discover the primary source, a feat which was duly accomplished in a surprising manner six years later. A woman geologist, Larissa Popugayeva, was walking through the snow-covered forest when she caught sight of a red fox slipping between the pine trees; she also noticed that its belly was stained blue. She fired her rifle, not to kill the animal but to track it to its lair, which, as she had expected, turned out to have been dug into blue kimberlite.

So the first Siberian pipe, named Zarnitsa (thunderflash), was found; investigation revealed that it covered 21.5 hectares (53 acres) but was poor in diamond content. In 1955 another geologist working not far from the fox's lair radioed the now celebrated message, 'Have Started Smoking Pipe of Peace, Tobacco Good.' The discovery of this pipe, named Mir (peace), marked a new era in the history of diamond production. It was followed by Udachnaya (Success) in the same year, by Sputnik in 1959, Aikhal (Glory) in 1960 and Internationalnaya in 1969. Since that time, Soviet geologists have ascertained that there are 450 specific kimberlite pipes on the Siberian platform, although not all of them are diamondiferous.

There is no more inhospitable part of the world where diamonds have been found. Yakutiya is the coldest province in Siberia: in the winter the terrain is frozen solid and the rivers are ice-free only for about three months in the year. The task of diamond recovery, therefore, presents almost insuperable problems; nevertheless the Soviet authorities have succeeded in surmounting them so that in carat terms their current production is exceeded only by that of Australia and Zaire. The industrial diamonds are retained for domestic consumption while the gem diamonds have been exported to the West.

AUSTRALIA

Further evidence that diamonds tend to exist in the remoter corners of the globe has been supplied by this latest discovery. Like Russia, Australia had already developed a small source before the major discovery, alluvial deposits being known to have existed in New South Wales since the middle of the nineteenth century. In particular the Copeton district has yielded a species of exceptionally hard diamond. But in the 1960s interest centred upon a remote region in the far north of Western Australia, then populated by only a handful of aborigines and cattle-ranchers. Curiously this district was called the Kimberley, named after the same British Colonial Secretary who gave his name to the South African town and mine.

The first exploration work in the Kimberley was under-

taken in the period between 1967 and 1971: a few alluvial stones were found. By October 1973, several more stones were recovered from the King George River area in the north Kimberley. Then a number of pipes were found in 1976. But the real breakthrough occurred in 1979 when geologists came upon the Argyle pipe; this is situated at the headwaters of Smoke Creek, in a valley in the Ragged Range some 120 km (74.5 miles) from the nearest town, Kununurra. Kununurra lies about 2200 km (1370 miles) north-east of Perth and is 35 km (22 miles) downstream from Lake Argyle. The Argyle Mine has emerged as the country's most important producer, with an expected life of twenty-five years.

Until the discoveries of diamonds in Western Australia, kimberlite was considered the sole terrestrial primary source of diamond. However, in the Kimberley region, diamonds occur in lamproites. These are volcanic rocks with a different subsidiary mineral content and chemistry to those of kimberlite.

OTHER SOURCES

The existence of alluvial deposits in China has been known since the late 1940s, but more than a decade was to elapse before Chinese geologists started to undertake extensive exploration for diamonds. This has led to the discovery of several deposits of which at least six have been brought into production. Four of these, namely the Yuan River, Changde County in Hunan province; Yingcheng in Hubei Province; and Linshu and Tancheng counties in Shandong province are secondary or alluvial. In the other two districts – the Binhai mine near Fuxian in Fu County, Liaoning province, and the Changma district in Mengyin County, Shandong province – diamonds are mined from kimberlite.

Several large stones have been unearthed as the result of diamond mining in China, a relatively recent occurrence. When both the promising results to date and the size of this vast country are taken into consideration, it is not unlikely that more deposits will be revealed which will place China among the forefront of diamond producers.

A few other diamondiferous countries remain to be noted. The territory to the north of Zaire, the Central African Republic, contains alluvial deposits, as does the Ivory Coast in West Africa. In the southern part of the continent the tiny land-locked kingdom of Lesotho contained a pipe high up in a mountainous region from which diamonds were extracted for a number of years. Finally a single pipe has operated near Murfreesboro, Arkansas, in the United States, where visitors have been allowed to search for diamonds on payment of a small fee. Other scattered finds have been made in areas of the USA, but most have been of little value.

Diamonds are thus widely distributed, being found in twenty countries spread over four continents. Over the years output has risen following increased demand and improvements in both the detection and mining of deposits. But only large concerns equipped with adequate financial and technical

resources can undertake viable mining operations. Diamonds are sufficiently rare that in order to recover them from a pipe mine, an average of 250 tonnes (tons) of diamondiferous rock has to be mined, hauled to the surface and processed to produce a one-carat polished diamond of gem quality.

SORTING AND SELLING

Between the time that diamonds leave the mine and reach the cutter or industrial consumer, much preparatory work is necessary. Unlike other mining products, mostly homogeneous, which can be refined to a standard purity and, therefore, command a standard price, diamonds occur in many thousands of different varieties and must be handled individually. Each rough stone must be classified and given a specific value before it is marketed.

When diamonds arrive in the sorting offices they will have been washed, but are otherwise in exactly the same condition as they were before extraction from the surrounding rock or gravel. The first process in sorting is to remove the stones of industrial quality. There is no definite line of demarcation between a gem and an industrial diamond; some marginal stones exist which may be used either in industry or for jewellery according to the dictates of the market. The gem-quality stones are then classified according to size, shape, quality (purity) and colour. The six shapes in which rough diamonds are found are stones, shapes, cleavages, maccles, flats and cubes. These six categories apply to stones of more than one carat. Below this weight there are two sub-divisions: *melee*, which are stones or shapes below a carat, and *chips* which are small cleavages or irregularly shaped crystals. Examining diamonds for quality, or purity, is the most exacting task for the sorter and the one which takes longest. Only a minute proportion of diamonds are entirely flawless; the majority possess one or more of the most common types of inclusion – spots of carbon (*piqués*), cracks and oxidization. Besides the size of the inclusions, consideration must be given to their position within the stone because this affects the cutting of a clean gem.

The grading of diamonds for colour similarly calls for expert judgement because such refinements of colour, however slight, will exert an influence upon the value of the polished gems. Ideally a diamond should possess no colour at all: it ought to resemble a piece of ice. Unfortunately the proverbial ‘blue-white’ is a rare object; most diamonds show a degree of colour, usually yellow or brown, which may extend from a slight tinge to a deeper shade. Diamonds are found in a wide range of colours but some of them such as pink, lilac-pink, green, dark blue, amber and canary yellow are very rare and command a value of their own. In the trade they are known as ‘fancies’.

About 80 per cent of the world output of rough diamonds is handled or distributed through the Central Selling Organisation in London which was created by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, the Chairman of De Beers, in the 1930s. Sir Ernest accomplished on an international scale what Cecil Rhodes

had accomplished on a local scale; following a crisis in the industry between 1929 and 1930 he obtained the agreement of the producing concerns outside the control of De Beers to market their diamonds through a single channel. The Central Selling Organisation has developed its skills above all to maintain both stability in the diamond trade and confidence in diamonds as jewels of beauty and lasting value. Stability is necessary for the well-being of the industry, not because production is excessive or demand is falling, but simply because wide fluctuations in prices would destroy public confidence in a luxury item such as a gem diamond. Large quantities of diamonds are held in the form of jewellery by the general public.

DIAMOND CUTTING

The Central Selling Organisation sells to clients who are called *Sightholders* ten times a year – these will be manufacturers, who own cutting factories, or dealers who act as secondary distributors. Each one has tended to specialize in cutting a particular type and/or size of stone, a fact that is duly recognized by the Central Selling Organisation’s distributions, or ‘allocations’, to the various centres. The principal diamond-cutting centres are in Belgium, Israel, India and the USA.

Apart from India and the newer cutting centres in the Far East, the trade in cutting has witnessed Jewish domination. There is a historical reason for this fact. The Inquisition in Spain and Portugal saw the expulsion of Jews, many of whom were occupied in trading and cutting. They settled in the Low Countries where diamond cutting took root, principally in Amsterdam. This city remained the most important venue until the period between the two World Wars, when it was superseded by Antwerp. The Second World War led to many refugees fleeing from Holland and Belgium to establish diamond cutting in the USA, Great Britain and what was then Palestine.

Diamond cutting has changed little over the centuries. The basic principle of ‘diamond cut diamond’ still stands, with the introduction of machines to perform a part of the operation being the only innovative aspect. Essentially it is the expertise of the individual that matters. Before a stone is cut, it is examined for its cleavage plane and any flaws. Like timber, diamonds have a grain: they may be cleaved along the grain or sawn against it. In cleaving, a nick is made with another diamond and, after mounting the diamond to be cut in a holder, a heavy steel blade is placed in the nick: one sharp blow is usually sufficient to split the stone cleanly. Sawing is carried out by a thin disc of phosphor-bronze coated with oil and diamond dust, which revolves at high speed and cuts through the diamond. It takes many hours to saw through even a small stone.

The shape of the rough stone will dictate the cut of the polished gem. If the diamond is to be fashioned into a brilliant, the most popular cut, its circular shape is achieved by ‘bruting’: it is fixed in a lathe and held against another

diamond as it revolves, thus rounding off the corners and edges. The final process is polishing the diamond's facets. The polishing instrument is a round plate of porous cast iron with a steel spindle running through it. The surface is coated with a mixture of olive oil and diamond dust. The plate is spun at high speed – 2500 revolutions per minute. The diamond is fixed in a holder at the precise angle required to obtain a perfect facet; regular inspection is necessary to ensure the facet is being correctly shaped. Then the facet is polished on a specially prepared part of the plate: this eliminates the tiny lines and irregularities caused by grinding and imparts a mirror-like surface to the gem. On completion of the facet the polisher will turn the diamond to the position of the next facet and repeat the process until all the facets have been polished. Mathematical precision for the angles of the facets in relation to each other is required in order to achieve maximum brilliance. A brilliant will have 58 facets, 33 on top and 25 underneath. Other polished shapes, although varying in the number of facets, have numbers standard to type. They are all polished similarly and with the same tools.

During the course of the various processes employed in cutting a diamond a very high degree of skill is called for. This will ensure the completion of a polished gem which has a

brilliance unequalled by that of any other gemstone.

A NOTE ON THE CARAT

Before the discovery of diamonds in South Africa the weight of the carat was somewhat ill-defined, varying in different countries. Around 1871 a Frenchman recommended that the carat weight should be standardized at 0.2053 grammes. At the time this recommendation was internationally accepted. Then in 1914, presumably for convenience, the United States of America, Great Britain and other European countries agreed to introduce the metric carat, weighing 0.2000 grammes. Nine years later South Africa followed suit. The metric carat is, it will be observed, lighter than the old carat in the ratio of 2000:2053.

It follows that books published before the year 1914 will have recorded the weights of diamonds in old carats. However, since that date certain publications have maintained this practice and chosen to ignore the metric carat which is universally employed in the diamond industry today. In order to clarify the situation, where the weight of a diamond in metric carats is known for sure, this is the weight given in the text. In other instances the weights will be recorded in old carats together with the calculated weights in metric carats.

KOH-I-NOOR



The 'Koh-i-noor' diamond.

It has been said that whoever owned the 'Koh-i-noor' ruled the world, a suitable epithet for this, the most famous of all diamonds and a veritable household name in many parts of the globe. Legend has suggested that the stone may date from before the time of Christ; theory indicates the possibility of its appearance in the early years of the fourteenth century; history confirms its existence for the past two and a half centuries.

A propos the first, one writer has stated:

Regarding its traditional history, which extends 5000 years further back, nothing need be said here; though it has afforded sundry imaginative writers with a subject for highly characteristic paragraphs we have no record of its having been at any time a cut stone.

The earliest authentic reference to a diamond which may be the 'Koh-i-noor' is found in the *Baburnama*, the memoirs of Babur, first of the Mogul rulers in India.

Born in 1483, Babur (meaning 'The Lion of the North' – the name was not conferred on him at birth but appears to be a prolongation of the Arabic and Persian *Bābur*, signifying Lion

or Tiger) was descended in the fifth generation from Tamerlane on the male side and in the fifteenth degree from Genghis Khan on the female side. With the blood in his veins of two of the greatest conquerors Asia had witnessed, it is not surprising that Babur should have become a great conqueror in his own right.

As a young man Babur owed his survival and success on the political and military battlefields to a combination of winning personal qualities and swift opportunism; these were to ensure his conquest of the plains of northern India. But in addition to being a warrior Babur was a cultured and civilized man – a writer and a poet.

In the *Baburnama*, Babur alluded to the Sultan Ala-ed-Din Khalji, the ruler of Delhi from 1295 to 1316. The year before his accession the Sultan had led an expedition to the Deccan or 'The South', the high and relatively cool plateau between the Narmada and the Tungabhadra-Krishna river, where he conquered Malwa and captured a large amount of booty. At that time, Ala-ed-Din was just a prince serving under his



The Emperor Babur distributing treasure at the Occupation of Agra in 1525.

uncle, Jalal-ud-Din, but in 1295 he murdered his uncle in cold blood and became ruler himself. In 1297 Ala-ed-Din defeated the last king of Gujrat and secured more treasure. One account states that he got his hands on a great diamond at Gujrat; another says that he obtained the stone from the Deccan. The second version is not impossible because after his defeat the vanquished king fled southwards where he was plundered for the second time, on this occasion by Ala-ed-Din's generals.

More than two centuries later, at the time of Babur, northern India was divided among largely autonomous chiefs who were in no mood to resist a determined invader. After several probing raids into India, Babur was eventually invited by Daulat Khan, the ruler of the Punjab, to help him in his fight

against his nephew Ibrahim Lodi, Sultan of Delhi, who was proving to be a despotic ruler. In 1526 Babur defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodi at the battle of Panipat; another who was slain was Vikramaditya, the former Rajah of Gwalior who had fought on the side of Ibrahim Lodi. Before going into battle Vikramaditya had despatched all his jewels to the Fort of Agra of which he was the Qilidar. Among these jewels was a notable diamond. It has been considered possible, though, in view of his disposition, improbable, that originally Ala-ed-Din may have rewarded Vikramaditya's ancestors, two faithful brothers, not only with Gwalior but also with the diamond.

Babur came to Agra on 4 May 1526, and the great diamond was most likely tendered to him there the next day. There is one reference to it in the *Baburnama* which reads:

When Humayun [Babur's son] arrived, Vikramaditya's people attempted to escape, but were taken by the parties which Humayun had placed upon the watch, and put in custody. Humayun did not permit them to be plundered. Of their own free will they presented to Humayun a peshkash, consisting of a quantity of jewels and precious stones. Among them was one famous diamond which had been acquired by Sultan Alaeddin [Ala-ed-Din]. It is so valuable that a judge of diamonds valued it at half of the daily expense of the whole world. It is about 8 mishquas. On my arrival, Humayun presented it to me as a peshkash, and I gave it back to him as a present.

There is another account which relates that the diamond was owned, not by Vikramaditya, but by Ibrahim Lodi. According to this version of events the mother of Ibrahim Lodi was responsible for handing it over to Humayun, the son and successor of Babur, who had been deputed to take possession of all the jewels that had belonged to the slain Sultan of Delhi. After Humayun's men had ransacked the Royal Treasury and failed to find the diamond, the servants and Treasury officials were questioned. They remained silent and even after they had been threatened with dire punishments, none came forward with the information. In the end a servant pointed towards the royal palace.

When Humayun entered the palace the female members of Vikramaditya's family were weeping, so he assured them their honour would be safe in his hands and that he would treat them according to their high station. It was then that Ibrahim Lodi's mother went silently into a room and emerged with a gold box which, with trembling hands, she handed to the young prince. Humayun opened the box and took out the diamond.

This version, however, is not considered the true one by most writers, and the recovery of the diamond from the fort at Agra is regarded as the authentic one. There has also been much discussion and divergence of opinion concerning the method of calculating the weight of the diamond: its weight of around 8 mishquas, as recorded by Babur, has given rise to a variety of mathematical equations. Of especial significance is the fact that a majority have arrived at a figure of around 186

(old) carats.

Four years after Babur's decisive victory at Panipat, Humayun fell ill. Doctors could do nothing for him; he continued to deteriorate. Then someone suggested to Babur that he should sacrifice his dearest possession to save his son. Doubtless this individual was hoping that the emperor would consider the diamond to fulfil such a role. If so, he was disappointed, because Babur did not fall in with this suggestion, maintaining that his most precious possession was his own life. The story goes that Babur moved around the bed of his ailing son, praying that Humayun's life would be spared and his own life be sacrificed instead. From then on Humayun's condition improved while Babur declined and died in December 1530.

The reign of Humayun lasted for twenty-six years but it was subject to much interruption. After an initial period of about nine and a half years' rule he was driven out of India by the Afghan forces under Sher Khan. Humayun fled first to Sind, then to Persia, and did not return to India until after fifteen years' exile. Having regained his throne his reign was fated to last a mere six months: one day, hearing the call to prayers, he

hurriedly got up, but fell headlong down the stairs of his library, possibly under the effects of opium.

After his defeat by the Afghans and during his subsequent wanderings there is evidence that Humayun carried with him the great diamond that his father had handed back to him at Agra. For the next two hundred years or so, it came to be known as 'Babur's diamond'. Leaving behind his kingdom, only daughter and his numerous wives – he even abandoned his son Akbar when fleeing from Afghanistan – Humayun clung to the diamond. His reverence for it is illustrated by one incident. The ruler of a domain where he had sought sanctuary wanted to acquire the gem so, taking advantage of the refugee's plight, he sent one of his courtiers, disguised as a merchant, to bargain with him. When this man presented himself and explained the purpose of his visit, Humayun was furious and replied:

Such precious gems cannot be bought; either they fall to one by the arbitrament of the flashing sword, which is an expression of divine will, or else they come through the grace of mighty monarchs.

The emissary departed quietly.

There is also evidence of Humayun's forgetfulness: on one occasion he took off his purse containing his jewels while performing his ablutions and forgot to pick it up. Fortunately his honest ewer-bearer was at hand to rescue it.

Humayun's wanderings finally took him to Persia where the country's ruler, Shah Tahmasp, received him cordially. The exiled Mogul Emperor was so kindly treated by the Shah that ultimately as an expression of his gratitude he gave him valuable jewels. One historian, Abul Fazal, who later was to be employed as secretary to Akbar, Humayun's successor, has told in his *Akbarnama* that among the jewels which Shah Tahmasp received was the stone known as 'Babur's diamond', so precious that it was worth the revenue of climes and countries. Another writer referred to Humayun's gift of a diamond and other jewels and related that Shah Tahmasp was so astonished at seeing them that he sent for his jewellers to appraise them. They told him that they were 'above all price'. This was the way in which Babur's diamond was always spoken of – the value of other diamonds could be estimated, but Babur's could not be appraised except by a fantastic reference to the expenditure of the world.

The presentation of this exceptional diamond to the ruler of Persia by Humayun was confirmed by Khur Shah, the Ambassador of Ibrahim Qutb, King of Golconda, at the Persian Court. He told of the gift of a diamond of six mishqals, that was reckoned to be worth the expenditure of the whole universe for two and a half days. However, he also stated that Shah Tahmasp did not think so highly of it and that afterwards he sent it to India as a present to Burhan Nizam, the Shah of Ahmednagar. But the emissary entrusted with the diamond, Mehtar Jamal, may have failed to deliver the stone because Shah Tahmasp later sent out orders for his arrest.

These events took place in 1547. From then on until the



Babur (seated) with Timur (left), Humayun (right) and his chief attendants standing in front of him.

sack and plunder of Delhi in 1739 the diamond's history must be one of supposition and speculation. In the meantime a series of happenings took place which have an important bearing upon the history of Babur's diamond.

In the early 1650s the reigning Mogul Emperor was Shah Jahan, the great-grandson of Humayun. He appointed his third son, Aurangzeb, to the Governorship of the Deccan. Aurangzeb, in his turn, was keen to conquer the independent states in this region of India, one of which was Golconda, where the king's domain included the country's principal diamond mining area.

At that time the King of Golconda's First Minister was Mir Jumla, a diamond dealer of considerable repute in Persia who had travelled southwards, attracted by the lure and promise which the diamond fields held out for him. Simultaneously with the administration of his master's State, Mir Jumla contrived to do a lot of business on his own behalf, above all in diamonds. The king put him in charge of most affairs pertaining to the mines and trading, and not surprisingly the Persian amassed a fortune. But Mir Jumla overstepped the bounds of caution, being caught in a compromising situation with the mother of the king. He was thus obliged to leave Golconda forthwith for his safety.

Mir Jumla met Aurangzeb early in 1656, then travelled to Delhi where he met Shah Jahan. According to an agent of the East India Company who happened to be in the vicinity at the time, Shah Jahan received Mir Jumla courteously and gifts were exchanged between the two – Jumla's to the Emperor including a diamond of 160 ratis in weight. Another account, by the French traveller François Bernier, records that:

Jumla, who had by his address contrived to obtain frequent invitations to the Court of Shah Jahan, proceeded at length to Agra and carried the most magnificent presents in the hope of inducing the Moghul Emperor to declare war against the Kings of Golconda and Bijapur and against the Portuguese. It was on this occasion that he presented Shah Jahan with that celebrated diamond which has been generally deemed unparalleled in size and beauty. He dilaected with earnestness on the benefits which would accrue from the conquest of Golconda, whose precious stones were surely more deserving of his consideration than the rocks of Kandahar, whither the Moghul Emperor was about to lead an army; his military operations in that Kingdom ought not to cease, until the conquest of his armies extended to Cape Comorin.

Yet a third writer has asserted that Mir Jumla gave one diamond to Shah Jahan and a second to Aurangzeb, the latter being an uncut specimen thought likely to have been cut later by the Venetian, Borgio.

Although the evidence is slender, the gift of a diamond by the wily Jumla to both father and son accords with his character and should not be dismissed out of hand: it would have been a means of ensuring his future whichever way the wind was to blow. In the event he chose to ally himself with



Shah Tahmasp of Persia, who did not think highly of the diamond, in solitary meditation.

Aurangzeb while Shah Jahan's last years were marked by his declining health and a struggle for power among his four sons. Aurangzeb emerged victorious and lost no time in ridding himself of his brothers and incarcerating his father in the fort at Agra. That the luckless Shah Jahan did possess some jewels during his imprisonment is confirmed by two sources. Bernier has stated that Shah Jahan, after he had been imprisoned, became so reconciled to Aurangzeb that he sent him some of the jewels which at first he had refused him. Apparently Aurangzeb received them only after his father's death. Jean Baptiste Tavernier's version is different. He wrote:

During his Reign he [Shah Jahan] had begun to build the city of Jehanabad, though he had not quite finish'd it, and therefore he desir'd to see it once more before he dy'd; but Aurangzeb would not give him leave, unless he would be

content to go and come back by water, or else to be confin'd to the Castle of Jehanabad, as he was at Agra, which refusal of his son did torment him, that it hasten'd his end. Which as soon as Aurangzeb heard of, he came to Agra, and seiz'd upon all the jewels which he had not taken from his father while he liv'd. Begum Saheb had also a quantity of jewels, which he had not taken from her when he put her into the Castle. But now, because she had formerly taken her Father's part, he found out a way to deprive her of them after a very plausible manner, making a show of bestowing very great Honours and Caresses upon his Sister, and taking her along with him to Jehanabad. But in a short time after we heard the news of her death; ... and all people suspected her to have been poisoned.

At this point in the story it is necessary to try to identify the large diamonds that figured among the jewels given to Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. The big stone, said to have been uncut, must clearly be the 'Great Mogul' which Aurangzeb showed Tavernier in 1665. But which is the diamond mentioned by Bernier as the one which Shah Jahan received from Mir Jumla, described as, 'that celebrated diamond which has been generally deemed unparalleled in size and beauty'? Is it Babur's diamond? These and other questions were raised by several authorities following the arrival of the 'Koh-i-noor' in England in 1850. First, there were those who maintained that the 'Koh-i-noor' was the 'Great Mogul' and that Babur's diamond was separate; secondly, there were those who believed that the 'Koh-i-noor' was in fact Babur's diamond; thirdly, there were others who identified the 'Koh-i-noor' with both Babur's diamond and the 'Great Mogul'.

One of the first to air his views on the subject was the distinguished mineralogist James Tennant, who described the 'Koh-i-noor' when brought to England as:

exhibiting two cleavage planes, one of which had not even been polished, and had been distinctly produced by fracture.... No one can examine the authentic sketches and models of the 'Koh-i-noor' without feeling a strong presumption that it must have been mutilated, after cutting, and that it cannot have been left in such an incomplete condition by the jeweller who cut and polished it.

Tennant went on to note that in addition to its possessing defects similar to those described by Tavernier as having been in the Mogul's diamond,

the 'Koh-i-noor' had a flaw near the summit which, being on a line of cleavage parallel to the upper surface, may very possibly have been produced when the upper portion was removed – the weight of which, together with that of two portions removed from the sides, and the loss occasioned by the regrinding of four facets on the upper surface may very easily have represented the difference in the weights of the two stones, namely $82\frac{1}{3}$ carats.

Another writer who discussed the matter of the 'Koh-i-

noor's' identity was Edwin Streeter, the nineteenth-century London jeweller and author of two most valuable books on diamonds and other gemstones. In his earlier book *Precious Stones and Gems* he stated that, 'any doubt as to the 'Mogul' and the 'Koh-i-noor' being identical is but rarely entertained'. But in his later work *The Great Diamonds of the World* he wrote that, 'all are agreed that Babur's diamond and the 'Koh-i-noor' are identical and the Mogul's distinct'. This contradiction was pointed out by Valentine Ball who in 1889 published a translation of Tavernier's *Six Voyages* with extensive notes and appendices. Ball ventured to believe that the view which Streeter had expressed in his earlier book was the sounder of the two. He himself wrote:

It must be at once plainly stated that there is no direct evidence that a diamond of that weight (186 or 187 carats) [i.e Babur's diamond] was in the possession of the Mogul Emperors at any subsequent period, up to the time of Nadir Shah's invasion. We know nothing as to the weight of the 'Koh-i-noor', as such, till about the time it was brought to England, namely the year 1850....

Tavernier did not see any stone of the weight above attributed to Babur's diamond in the possession of the Great Mogul, Aurangzeb, nor can we suppose that he heard of any such diamond being in the possession of Shah Jahan, who was confined in prison, where he retained a number of jewels in his own possession. If either he or Bernier had heard of such a stone he would surely have mentioned it.... It is possible that Babur's diamond may have been in Shah Jahan's possession when Tavernier saw Aurangzeb's jewels and that the latter obtained possession of it when Shah Jahan died, and so ultimately it passed to Persia with other jewels taken by Nadir Shah....

Ball continued:

The necessary conclusion is that: it is not the Mogul's diamond which, through failure of being historically traced as some authors assert, has disappeared, but it is Babur's diamond the history of which we are really left in doubt. The fixing of the weight of Babur's diamond at a figure identical, or nearly so, with that of the 'Koh-i-noor' when brought to England, though used as a link in the chain, has, as I think I have shown, effectively disposed of its claim to be identified with the Mogul's diamond in the first place, and secondly with the 'Koh-i-noor'.

In April 1899 an article entitled *Babur's Diamond, was it the Koh-i-noor?* appeared in the Asiatic Quarterly Review; it was written by Henry Beveridge, the husband of the translator of the *Baburnama*. Although in the end he was unable to decide whether or not Babur's diamond was the 'Koh-i-noor', Beveridge did make one point of relevance: he drew attention to the unconscious confusion caused by there being two diamonds which led Tavernier on one page to say that the great diamond was presented to Shah Jahan and on another page to say that it was presented to Aurangzeb. Hence the fact

of there being two diamonds obviates many difficulties and may also explain the statement of a Persian nobleman, mentioned in Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs*, and quoted by Ball, about two large diamonds being carried off by Nadir Shah.

Almost a century later we are in the fortunate position of having information that was unavailable to earlier writers. In particular we now have details of the treasures amassed by the Czars, Shahs and miscellaneous monarchs. We know for sure that there are three diamonds in existence which have a direct bearing upon the questions raised concerning the identities of the 'Great Mogul' and Babur's diamond. They are the 'Orlov', weighing 189.62 metric carats and now in the Kremlin; the 'Darya-i Nur', estimated to weigh between 175 and 195 metric carats and presumed still to be among the Iranian Crown Jewels; and the 'Koh-i-noor', whose former weight before it was recut was 186 carats, equivalent to 190.3 metric carats.

Tavernier referred to the shape of the 'Great Mogul' as 'of the same form as if one cut an egg through the middle', and drew it. Both Tavernier's drawing and description of the 'Great Mogul' are applicable to the 'Orlov' diamond as we know it to be today. There is, of course, an obvious discrepancy between the weights of the two stones, that of the 'Great Mogul' being almost 100 carats more. But if the diamond seen by Tavernier had been ground down the resemblance would become even more marked. The resultant loss of weight by the action of such grinding would bring the weight of the 'Great Mogul' to approximately that of the 'Orlov'.

Ball's reference to the 'Orlov' is as follows:

Several writers, among them Professor Schrauf of Vienna (1869), have suggested that the Mogul's diamond is to be identified with the similarly shaped Orloff now belonging to Russia. Apart from the discrepancy in the weights and in the size, as shown by Tavernier's drawing, which was intended to represent the natural size of the former, it is tolerably certain that the Orloff was obtained from the temple of Srirangam on an island in the Cauvery river in Mysore. It was therefore a possession of the Hindus, and it is most improbable that it ever belonged to the Moguls.

Now this convenient dismissal of the 'Orlov' by Professor Ball cannot be allowed to pass. Just as he alleges that Tavernier would have referred to the 'Koh-i-noor' as a separate diamond, if it had existed as such, equally would he not have referred to this huge stone at Srirangam as a separate diamond? For this is a diamond which even today, following the discoveries elsewhere, still ranks among the ten largest of undoubted authenticity. The temple at Srirangam is situated not so far from the diamondiferous regions of India that Tavernier, in his capacity both as a traveller and connoisseur of precious gems, could not have learned of the existence of such a notable stone.

But where Ball's theory concerning the identities of these diamonds falls down is in his reference to the 'Darya-i Nur'

about which he has written:

It has already been intimated that the Darya-i Nur, a flat stone which weighs 186 carats and is now in the Shah's Treasury, may very possibly be Babur's diamond. . . . I have in vain sought for any well-authenticated fact which in the slightest degree controverts or even throws doubt on the suggestion that the Darya-i Nur, the 'Ocean of Light', may very possibly be Babur's diamond.

In the light of the examination of the contents of the Iranian Treasury undertaken in the 1960s, it has been conclusively proved that the 'Darya-i Nur' constitutes the major portion of the 'Great Table' diamond which Tavernier saw – and tried to buy – at Golconda. In all probability this diamond had been mined not long before his attempted purchase, thereby discounting it from having an earlier history, let alone one involving the Mogul Emperors. Furthermore the descriptions of Babur's diamond as being 'valued at half the daily expense of the whole world' and so forth, are surely inapplicable to the flat rectangular-shaped 'Darya-i Nur': one would think that a more appropriate metaphor would have been to describe it as the source of half the water needed for the world per day. Curiously the sole point whereby the 'Darya-i Nur' may be identified as Babur's diamond lies in a passage from a book on the life of Babur which reads:

The gifts were on a grand scale, being precious jewels, among these the great diamond now identified as the Koh-i-noor. This enormous rose-tinted stone weighed 320 ratis on Humayun's scales.

The 'Darya-i Nur' is indeed rose-tinted but there has assuredly been a mistranslation here: 'rose-tinted' being substituted for 'rose-cut', the erstwhile shape of the 'Koh-i-noor'.

Finally on the subject of identifying these truly historic diamonds with gems that we know exist today, the suggestion that the 'Koh-i-noor' and the 'Great Mogul' once formed parts of the same stone is impossible: the 'Koh-i-noor' is a white diamond whereas the 'Orlov' – if we assume it to be the 'Great Mogul' – possesses a slight bluish-green tint. Therefore, the 'Darya-i Nur' has been identified for sure as the 'Great Table' diamond; a very strong case exists for identifying the 'Orlov' as the 'Great Mogul'; and a less strong, but nevertheless valid, case can be made for identifying the 'Koh-i-noor' as Babur's diamond.

After lasting for nearly fifty years the reign of the strong and bigoted Aurangzeb ended in 1707. It marked the zenith of the rule of the Moguls: there followed a decline with no less than six weak Emperors reigning within a space of thirteen years, each of them dying in unnatural ways. Contemporaneously with the setting of the sun in the Mogul Empire a new one was rising to the west in Persia. Nadir Kuli, or 'The Slave of the wonderful' as he was called, was a young shepherd who, when eighteen, was abducted together with his mother by a raiding party of Uzbeks to Khiva. Four years later the mother died in



slavery, but the young Nadir succeeded in escaping to Khorasan where his first step up the ladder of power was his entry into the service of the Governor of Abivard (then the capital of the district). Under Nadir Kuli, who in 1732 dethroned the weak ruler of Persia and usurped the throne in his stead four years later, Persia became a major power. After he had defeated the Afghans and the Turks and caused the Russians to evacuate the Caspian provinces, Nadir Shah turned his attention eastwards towards the declining empire of the Moguls. The reigning Emperor, Mohammed Shah, who had ascended the throne in 1719, was a wretched descendant of the once omnipotent Moguls: he was described as 'never without a mistress in his arms and a glass in his hand'. Rich pickings thus awaited the Persians as the Emperor realized his predicament far too late. The decisive battle of Karnal in 1738 was over in two hours: the vast Indian army was routed, more than twenty thousand slain on the battlefield, a greater number taken prisoner and an immense horde of spoils captured. In triumph Nadir Shah marched into Delhi where he was entertained sumptuously by the vanquished Mohammed Shah. Among the treasures which the Emperor handed over to Nadir Shah was the famed Peacock Throne which Tavernier described thus:

The largest throne, which is set up in the hall of the first court, is in form like one of our field beds, six feet long and four broad. The cushion at the base is round like a bolster: the cushions on the side are flat. The under part of the canopy is all embroidered with pearls and diamonds, with a fringe of pearls round about. Upon the top of the canopy, which is made like an arch with four panes, stands a peacock with his tail spread, consisting all of sapphires and other proper coloured stones. The body is of beaten gold enchas'd with several jewels, and a great ruby upon his breast, at which hangs a pearl that weighs fifty carats. On each side of the peacock stand two nosegays as high as the bird, consisting of several sorts of flowers, all of beaten gold enamelled. When the king seats himself upon the throne there is a transparent jewel with a diamond appendant of eighty or ninety carats, encompass'd with rubies and emeralds, so hung that it is always in his eye. The twelve pillars also that uphold the canopy are set with rows of fair pearl, round, and of an excellent water, that weigh from six to ten carats apiece. This is the famous throne which Tamerlane began and Cha Jehan finish'd, which is really reported to have cost 160 million and 500,000 livres of our money.

The identity of the large diamond set as a pendant has always been a matter for conjecture: possibly it may have been the 'Shah'. But nowhere in Tavernier's account is there

ABOVE *Nadir Shah, under whose rule Persia became a major power. He obtained the 'Koh-i-noor' from the Indian Emperor Mohammed Shah.*

LEFT *Shah Jahan seated on the Peacock Throne which was among the treasures which Mohammed Shah was forced to hand over to Nadir Shah.*



a reference to the 'Koh-i-noor'; indeed the Mogul Emperor must have taken steps to ensure that this treasured gem did not fall into the hands of his conqueror. However, Nadir Shah was fully equal to the task of finding the gem. There are two stories of how he procured it. One says that Mohammed Shah gave it to Nadir Shah, possibly in gratitude for sparing either his life or his empire. This seems unlikely, and in any event the second, which has come to be accepted as the true version, is both more plausible and colourful.

The disclosure of the secret hiding place of the 'Koh-i-noor' was made by one of the Emperor's harem; she told Nadir Shah that Mohammed always wore it hidden in his turban. So the cunning Nadir Shah had recourse to a clever trick. He ordered a grand feast to be celebrated a few days later to coincide with the restoration of Mohammed Shah to his throne. During the course of it Nadir Shah suddenly proposed an exchange of turbans, which is a well-known oriental custom signifying the creation of brotherly ties, sincerity and eternal friendship. Mohammed Shah was taken aback by his quick-thinking rival but at the same time was hardly in a position to resist such a request. With as much grace as he could summon – in fact his composure was such that Nadir Shah thought he had been hoaxed – he accepted. Eventually when Nadir Shah had retired to his private apartment he unfolded the turban and found the diamond concealed within. It was when he set eyes on it that he exclaimed 'Koh-i-noor', meaning 'Mountain of Light'. So the most famous diamond in history acquired its name.

One observation must be made concerning Nadir Shah's obtainment of the diamond. Clearly he must have known of its existence beforehand and must have eagerly sought it. This suggests that it was known in Persia for generations, probably from the time of Humayun's period of exile in that land, and adds weight to the theory of its always having existed separately from the 'Great Mogul' diamond.

A peaceful end to Nadir Shah's sojourn in Delhi was shattered by an outbreak of rioting. This was followed by the dreadful sacking and pillaging of the city in 1739: the value of the spoils being estimated at between £87,500,000 and £30,000,000. The loot included the 'Koh-i-noor', which thus left India for Persia for the second time, and one other exceptional diamond which must have been the 'Darya-i Nur'. Further victories were secured by the Persians in battle, but Nadir Shah became corrupted by his success and the remaining years of his life were marked by growing avarice and cruelty so that he became detested by the very people whom he had freed from the foreign yoke. In 1747 he was murdered while asleep in his tent one night. With the murder of Nadir Shah the unity of Persia collapsed and the army broke up as a composite unit.

The next sixty years or so were the most barbarous and blood-stained in the history of the 'Koh-i-noor'. The same pattern of events occurred after the demise of Nadir Shah as after that of Aurangzeb: a strong ruler followed by a series of weak ones. Nadir Shah's successor was Ali Kuli who ascended

the throne as Adil Shah, or 'The Just'. His first act was to rid himself of all possible claimants to the throne of Persia with the solitary exception of Shah Rukh Mirza, the fourteen-year-old grandson of Nadir Shah. But after a short and inglorious reign Adil Shah was dethroned and blinded by his brother Ibrahim, who, in turn, suffered the same fate before being captured and put to death by his own troops. Then Shah Rukh took the throne but another pretender soon emerged so that the young king was defeated, also having his eyes put out. Shah Rukh was to reign in name, if not in fact, for almost fifty years: on several occasions he was imprisoned by contenders for the throne. One of his supporters was Ahmad Abdali, an Afghan who had been one of Nadir Shah's ablest generals, before he returned to Afghanistan, subdued it and established himself as its ruler. For the help which he had received from him, Shah Rukh gave Ahmad Abdali important jewels that included the 'Koh-i-noor'.

Ahmad Abdali (later called Ahmad Shah) seems to stand out like a shining beacon among the various rulers which the people in this part of the world were forced to endure at this point in their history. In addition to being the unifier of Afghanistan he also possessed an abundance of civilized virtues, somewhat rare at the time. His death in 1773 put an end to the comparative peace which the sightless Shah Rukh had enjoyed. Civil strife followed in Persia which culminated in the rule of the individual usually regarded as the most horrible and repulsive of all the characters connected with the 'Koh-i-noor'. This was Aga Mohammed Khan, the first of the Qajar dynasty that was destined to rule Persia from 1794 to 1925. As a boy of five he had been captured and castrated by Adil Shah, a misfortune that – somewhat naively, perhaps – has been deemed to account for his extreme vindictiveness and cruelty. The inherent evil and unpleasantness of the person is evident in paintings of him.

Shah Rukh paid dearly for his gift of the 'Koh-i-noor' to Ahmad Shah because Aga Mohammed Khan was convinced that the unfortunate man was still in possession of it. Deserted by his sons who were unaware of the jewels that he had once owned, the blind Shah Rukh was forced to endure the most horrific torture by the cruel eunuch who had an insatiable appetite for gems. As the torturing continued jewels hitherto hidden were given up one by one. The final degradation which Shah Rukh suffered at the hands of the monstrous Aga Mohammed Shah was to have his head closely shaved and encircled with a thick paste upon which boiling water was then poured. The last gem he gave up was a great ruby which had once belonged to Aurangzeb. The torture then ceased, but Shah Rukh died from its terrible effects not long afterwards.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, the country where the 'Koh-i-noor' was being held, Ahmad Shah had been succeeded by his son Timur, a weak ruler but nevertheless a virile one since he left no less than twenty-three sons to contest his succession. Internecine warfare then broke out with the eldest son, Zaman Shah, becoming king in 1793. Six years later his



Ranjit Singh, the 'Lion of the Punjab'.

brother Mahmud blinded him and seized the throne; then in 1803 another brother, Shuja, imprisoned Mahmud and usurped the throne. Seven years after that event Mahmud escaped and resumed his reign, but he never obtained the 'Koh-i-noor' because Zaman Shah had taken it with him and had had it embedded in the plaster of his prison cell's walls. Next Shah Shuja regained the throne, and the 'Koh-i-noor' – the latter's place of concealment having been pointed out to him by Zaman Shah. Finally in 1810 the Saddozai of Afghanistan, founded by Ahmad Shah, broke up and the two ill-fated brothers, Zaman Shah and Shah Shuja, sought refuge with the Sikh leader Ranjit Singh, known as the 'Lion of the Punjab'.

Shah Shuja had the 'Koh-i-noor' with him and the ruler of the Punjab must have known about the famous gem because he soon showed his desire to own it. He aimed to extort it from Shah Shuja as the price of giving him and his family sanctuary. However, the exiled Afghan tried by every means to prevent Ranjit Singh from getting hold of it. Once he told him that the stone had been pawned with a money-lender. On another occasion he said that it had been lost along with some other jewels. On a third occasion Shah Shuja sent Ranjit Singh a large topaz, saying that it was the diamond; when his court jewellers examined it and told him that it was not a diamond,

the 'Lion of the Punjab' was furious. He posted a guard around Shah Shuja's residence with orders that he was not to receive food or water for two days. In the end Shah Shuja, realizing his hopeless position, agreed to surrender the diamond to Ranjit Singh provided that he arrived in person to receive it from him.

Ranjit Singh accepted Shah Shuja's proposal and on 1 June 1813 went to his residence to claim the diamond. The customary greetings took place, then the two kings sat opposite each other in silence for some time before Ranjit Singh reminded Shah Shuja of the purpose of his visit. A servant was then ordered to fetch the gem from another room; when he returned with a bundle Ranjit Singh unwrapped it and found the 'Koh-i-noor' inside. Without saying a word he left the room. But the possession of the diamond only awakened Ranjit Singh's greed for more jewels, as well as persuading the two exiles that their wisest course of action would be to quit the Punjab. They accomplished this by escaping from Lahore to Ludhiana, which was in territory that had been annexed by the British.

The 'Lion of the Punjab' became very proud of his ownership of the 'Koh-i-noor', wearing it set in an armlet between two smaller diamonds. He took great delight in showing the gem to distinguished visitors to his court. Shortly before his death in June 1839 an attempt was made to induce Ranjit Singh to seek the favour of the Gods by presenting the diamond to the temple of Jaganath in Puri but his treasurer, Beli Ram, dissuaded him from doing so, maintaining that it was State Property. Instead the 'Koh-i-noor' remained among the treasures at Lahore.

Ranjit Singh was the first and the last powerful Sikh king; he was followed by three weak kings each of whom died prematurely. In 1843 Dhulip Singh, the last of Ranjit Singh's sons, then a minor, became the recognized ruler of the Punjab. During his reign the two Sikh Wars were fought, in due course leading to the annexation of the Punjab by the British. On 29 March 1849, the British colours were hoisted on the Citadel of Lahore and the Punjab was formally proclaimed to be a part of the British Empire in India. The terms of the Treaty of Lahore were as follows:

- (1) His Highness Maharajah Dhulip Singh shall resign for himself, his soldiers and his successors, all rights, titles and claims to the sovereignty of the Punjab or to any sovereign power whatsoever.
- (2) All property of the State of whatever description and wheresoever found shall be confiscated to the Honourable East India Company in part payment of the debt due by the State of Lahore to the British Government and of the expenses of the war.
- (3) The gem called the Koh-i-noor which was taken from Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk by Maharajah Ranjit Singh shall be surrendered by the Maharajah of Lahore to the Queen of England.
- (4) His Highness Dhulip Singh shall receive from the Honourable East India Company for the support of

himself, his relatives and the servants of the State, a pension of not less than four and not exceeding five hundred thousand of the Company's rupees per annum.

- (5) His Highness Dhulip Singh shall be treated with respect and honour. He shall retain the title Maharajah Dhulip Singh Bahadur and he shall continue to receive during his life such portion of the pension above-mentioned as may be allotted to him personally, provided he shall reside at such place as the Governor-General of India may select.

The Governor-General responsible for the ratification of this treaty on 5 April 1849 was Lord Dalhousie who, on his arrival at Calcutta in January 1848, at the age of thirty-five, had become the youngest holder of this office to set foot in India. More than anyone Dalhousie was also responsible for the British acquisition of the 'Koh-i-noor' in which he continued to show great interest for the rest of his life. Not long after the signing of the Treaty of Lahore Dalhousie was to become embroiled in the controversy that raged in England concerning the acquisition of the diamond. Writing to his friend Sir George Couper in August 1849, he stated:

The Court [of the East India Company] you say, are ruffled by my having caused the Maharajah to cede to the Queen the Koh-i-noor; while the 'Daily News' and my Lord Ellenborough [Governor-General of India (1841-44)] are indignant because I did not confiscate everything to Her Majesty, and censure me for leaving even a Roman Pearl to the Court. ... I was fully prepared to hear that the Court chafed at my not sending the diamond to them, and letting them present it to Her Majesty. They ought not to do so - they ought to enter into and cordially to approve the sentiment on which I acted thus. The motive was simply this: that it was more for the honour of the Queen that the Koh-i-noor should be surrendered directly from the hand of the conquered prince into the hands of the sovereign who was his conqueror, than that it should be presented to her as a gift - which is always a favour - by any joint-stock company among her subjects. So the Court ought to feel. As for their fretting and censuring, that I do not mind - so long as they do not disallow the article. I know I have acted best for the Sovereign, and for their honour too.

A British subject, Dr (later Sir) John Login, was entrusted with two charges: the responsibility for taking the 'Koh-i-noor' out of the Toshakhana, the jewel-house, and the guardianship of the young Dhulip Singh. A cousin of Lady Login wrote to her that the old treasurer, Misr Maharaj, had given every assistance with regard to the former task and had said that it was a great relief to be free of responsibility for the diamond, adding that it had been the cause of so many deaths to so many of his own family that he never expected to be spared. The old man gave Login some advice on showing the jewel to visitors: he should not let it out of his own hand, and he should twist the ribbons that tied it as an armlet around his

fingers. It was still set as in the time of Ranjit Singh.

The 'Koh-i-noor' was formally handed over to the Punjab Government consisting of three members, Sir Henry Lawrence, his younger brother John (afterwards Lord Lawrence), and C. C. Mausel. The other two members entrusted the safekeeping of the diamond to John Lawrence, believing him to be the most practical and business-like of the trio. In their assessment they were to be proved totally wrong because the nearest the diamond came to being lost was while it was in John Lawrence's custody. He put the small box containing the diamond into his waistcoat pocket and continued working. Then when changing for dinner he threw his waistcoat aside and thought no more about the gem.

Some six weeks later a message came from Dalhousie saying that the Queen had ordered the 'Koh-i-noor' to be transmitted to her. Henry Lawrence mentioned the subject at a Board meeting. When John Lawrence said quietly, 'Send for it at once,' his brother rejoined, 'Why, you've got it.' In a flash John Lawrence's carelessness struck him: he was horror-stricken and, as he used to describe his feelings later on when telling the story, he said quietly to himself, 'Well, this is the worst trouble I have ever got into.' But such was his composure that he gave no visible sign of trepidation. 'Oh yes, of course, I forgot about it,' he said, and went on with the meeting as if nothing had happened. However, he soon found an opportunity of slipping away to his private room and, with his heart in his mouth, sent for his old bearer, saying to him, 'Have you got a small box which was in my waistcoat pocket some time ago?'

The man replied, 'Yes, Sahib, I found it and put it in one of your boxes.'

'Bring it here,' replied Lawrence, whereupon the old man went over to a broken-down tin box and produced the little one from it.

'Open it,' said Lawrence, 'and see what is inside.'

He watched the old man anxiously as fold after fold of small rags was taken off and was mightily relieved when the precious gem appeared. The bearer seemed to be unaware of the treasure which he had in his keeping and remarked, 'There is nothing here, Sahib, but a bit of glass.'

The 'Koh-i-noor' was immediately shown to the Board who forthwith prepared for it to be despatched to the Queen. But first it had to travel from Lahore to Bombay, then a hazardous route swarming with robbers and other criminals. No less a person than the Governor-General, who, when he had first set eyes on the diamond had remarked, 'It is a superb gem,' was responsible for its transportation. On 16 May 1850, Dalhousie wrote:

The Koh-i-noor sailed from Bombay in H.M.S. Medea on the 6th April. I could not tell you at the time, for strict secrecy was observed, but I brought it from Lahore myself. I undertook the charge of it in a funk, and never was so happy in all my life as when I got it into the Treasury at Bombay. It was sewn and double sewn into a belt secured round my waist, one end of the belt fastened to a chain

round my neck. It never left me day or night, except when I went to Ghazee Khan when I left it with Captain Ramsay (who now has joint charge of it) locked in a treasure chest, and with strict instructions that he was to sit upon the chest till I came back. My stars! What a relief to get rid of it. It was detained at Bombay for two months for want of a ship, and I hope, please God, will now arrive safe in July. You had better say nothing about it, however, in your spheres, till you hear others announce it. I have reported it officially to the Court, and to her sacred Majesty by this mail.

The 'Koh-i-noor' was placed in an iron box which was kept in a despatch box and deposited in the Government Treasury. For security reasons this piece of news was suppressed even from officers of the Treasury – and withheld from the ship's Captain, Commander Lockyer. The only individuals who knew the truth were the two officers entrusted with the custody of the despatch box, Lieutenant-Colonel Mackeson and Captain Ramsay. Nevertheless H.M.S. *Medea*'s voyage proved to be perilous and there were two occasions on which disaster was narrowly averted. When the ship reached Mauritius, cholera broke out on board and the local people refused to sell the necessary supplies to its crew, requesting the ship's immediate departure. When the *Medea* did not move, they asked the Governor to open fire and destroy the vessel. A few days after it had left Mauritius the *Medea* faced a new danger, a severe gale which lasted for about twelve hours before subsiding. Eventually the *Medea* reached Plymouth where the passengers and mail were landed but not the 'Koh-i-noor' which was forwarded to Portsmouth. From there the two officers took the diamond to East India House, handing it over to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Company. The latter delivered it to the Queen at Buckingham Palace on 3 July 1850.

In addition to giving rise to both historical and gemological arguments, the arrival of the 'Koh-i-noor' in England was accompanied by unease on the part of some, aware of superstitions attached to the gem. Unfortunately such people were presented with an early opportunity of voicing their feelings not long after the diamond's arrival when a retired officer of the 10th Hussars lost his reason and struck Queen Victoria. Some promptly assigned the blame for this occurrence upon Dalhousie who, in a letter dated 1 September, was equally quick to reply thus:

I received your letter of 16th July yesterday. The several sad or foul events in England on which it touches have been mentioned by me heretofore, and they are too sad to refer to. You add that you knew these mishaps lie at my door, as I have sent the Koh-i-noor which always brings misfortune to its possessor. Whoever was the exquisite person from whom you heard this (nobody could be so stupid except Joseph Hume), [a Scottish radical politician] he was rather lame both on his history and tradition. . . . As for tradition, when Shah Shoojah [Shuja], from whom it was taken, was afterwards asked by Runjeet's [Ranjit Singh's] desire, 'What

was the value of the Koh-i-noor?' he replied, 'Its value is Good Fortune, for whoever possesses it has been superior to all his enemies.' Perhaps your friend would favour you with his authority, after this, for his opposite statement. I sent the Queen a narrative of this conversation with Shah Shoojah, taken from the mouth of the messenger.'

The Directors of the British Museum wished to have a model of the 'Koh-i-noor', so 19 April 1851 was appointed for removing the diamond from the setting in which it had arrived from India. The operation was performed by William Chapman (goldsmith) in the presence of Lord Breadalbane (the Lord Chamberlain), Lord Cawdor (the Trustee of the British Museum), Colonel Phipps (Keeper of Her Majesty's Privy Purse), and Sebastian Garrard (Keeper of Her Majesty's Jewels). After its removal Sebastian Garrard found it to weigh 186 $\frac{1}{10}$ carats instead of 279 as stated by Tavernier. This was probably the reason for an extraordinary passage which appeared in *The Times* and read:

Some conversation took place respecting the doubts imputed to have been cast by Sir David Brewster upon the identity of the Koh-i-noor, but the general opinion among those best acquainted with the subject appeared to be that it was impossible for Dhulip Singh to have palmed off a fictitious diamond, when the constant habit of wearing it upon State occasions must have rendered it perfectly familiar to thousands who would instantly have detected any attempt at substitution. The more probable assumption was stated to be that the weight of 'The Mountain of Light' had been somewhat exaggerated.

The public were given an opportunity of seeing the 'Koh-i-noor' when the Great Exhibition was staged in London's Hyde Park. The correspondent of *The Times* reported that:

The Koh-i-noor is at present decidedly the lion of the Exhibition. A mysterious interest appears to be attached to it, and now that so many precautions have been resorted to, and so much difficulty attends its inspection, the crowd is enormously enhanced, and the policemen at either end of the covered entrance have much trouble in restraining the struggling and impatient multitude. For some hours yesterday there were never less than a couple of hundred persons waiting their turn of admission, and yet, after all, the diamond does not satisfy. Either from the imperfect cutting or the difficulty of placing the lights advantageously, or the immovability of the stone itself, which should be made to revolve on its axis, few catch any of the brilliant rays that it reflects when viewed at a particular angle.

The *Illustrated London News* reported that:

A diamond is generally colourless, and the finest are quite free from any speck or flaw of any kind, resembling a drop of the purest water. The Koh-i-noor is not cut in the best form for exhibiting its purity and lustre, and will therefore disappoint many, if not all, of those who so anxiously press

forward to see it.... The shape of the Koh-i-noor is that of a pear, or rather more oblong; and it would be much reduced in size if cut by a European diamond merchant. Its marketable value would however be increased. It would probably become, if properly treated, one of the finest diamonds in Europe.

In India the Governor General was continuing to take an interest in the diamond. On 13 July he wrote:

I see all sorts of sketches and pictures of the contents of the Exhibition. If you can get me anything presenting *well* the Koh-i-noor in its cage, coloured, I shall be much obliged.

Next month Dalhousie commented:

The Koh-i-noor is badly cut: it is rose-not-brilliant-cut, and of course won't sparkle like the latter. But it should not have been shown in a huge space. In the Toshakhana at Lahore Dr Login used to show it on a table covered with a black velvet cloth, the diamond alone appearing through a hole in the cloth, and relieved by the dark colour all round.

Another who was disappointed in the lack of brilliance of the 'Koh-i-noor' was Prince Albert, the Prince Consort. He contacted Sir David Brewster, the scientist principally renowned for his investigation into the phenomenon of polarized light, as to how the diamond might best be recut. Brewster found several small caves within the stone which, in his view, were the result of the expansive force of condensed gases. Together with other flaws he thought that they would make the recutting, without a serious diminution of weight, a very difficult task. Professor Tennant and the Reverend W. Mitchell, Lecturer in Mineralogy at King's College, London, were also consulted. Accordingly they prepared a report wherein they admitted the improvement which the proposed alteration in shape would have upon the stone, but at the same time they expressed fears lest any lateral cutting should endanger its integrity.

In the end it was decided to seek the advice of practical and experienced cutters, so Messrs Garrard, the Crown Jewellers, were instructed to obtain a report from such persons. Their choice fell upon Messrs Coster, of Amsterdam – regret was expressed that the diamond-cutting trade had ceased to exist in Great Britain. Messrs Coster, while noting the accuracy of the fears expressed in the Tennant report, nevertheless considered that the dangers were not so formidable as to prevent the intended operation from being carried out. Their opinion was sufficiently encouraging for preparations to be made for the erection of the requisite machinery on the premises of Garrards. A small steam engine from two to four horse-power was set up while two gentlemen from Messrs Coster, Mr Voorzanger and Mr Fedder, travelled to London to undertake the recutting of the diamond.

On the afternoon of Friday 17 July 1852, the Duke of Wellington, who had shown great interest in the proposed recutting and attended several meetings during the course of the preparations, rode up on his favourite grey charger to

Garrards, at Panton Street, off the Haymarket. The 'Koh-i-noor' was embedded in lead, with the exception of one small salient angle that was intended to be the first to be submitted to the cutting operation. *The Times* reported that:

His Grace placed the gem upon the scaife, an horizontal wheel revolving with almost incalculable velocity, whereby the exposed angle was removed by friction, and the first facet of the new cutting was effected.... The Koh-i-noor is intended to be converted into an oval brilliant, and the two smaller diamonds which accompany it are to be similarly treated as pendants. The present weight of the principal gem is 186 carats, and the process now in course of progress will not, it is anticipated, diminish in any material degree its weight, while it will largely increase its value and develop its beauties.

While work on the diamond was proceeding, some expressed doubts whether or not it might have been wiser to have had the recutting carried out in Amsterdam instead of London. Certainly the distraction provided by the visits to Garrards of numerous professors and experts might have been a sufficient cause for a change of venue. The fact that quite a few of them thought that the stone would split into pieces during the operation was scarcely encouraging to those engaged in the delicate process. Indeed, Robert Garrard, when asked the question, 'What would you do supposing the Koh-i-noor does fly to pieces?' readily retorted, 'Take my name-plate off the door and bolt.' However, Sebastian Garrard did meet with misfortune; while he was superintending the erection of the machinery, he fell through a hole in the floor and broke a bone in his leg, an accident which prevented him from being present on the day the Duke of Wellington initiated the cutting.



The Duke of Wellington, initiating the recutting of the 'Koh-i-noor' on 17 July 1852.

A day-to-day account of the operation that has been preserved, discloses that on 19 July the cutters turned their attention to the flaw described by Tennant and Mitchell as having been made for the purpose of holding the stone more firmly in its setting and noted by them still to have had particles of gold adhering to it. Not being certain as to whether the flaw, or incision, was natural, the cutters decided to investigate it, so they altered the position of the stone and proceeded to cut directly into it. It was revealed to be a natural flaw of a yellow tinge, a defect often met with in smaller stones: the two experts considered that the part at which the flaw was situated would prove to have been the external plane of the octahedron. Two weeks later, after examining the stone, Mitchell thought that it had become much whiter as the yellow flaw had almost disappeared.

One particular facet which the cutters began working on during 4 August proved especially troublesome. It increased in hardness so much that after work on it had proceeded for about half an hour it seemed to stop altogether. After another hour's work it was found that not the slightest progress had been made in the reduction of this facet. As the work on the following day progressed no more smoothly, the cutters decided to increase the speed of the engine turning the cutting wheel from seventy-five to ninety-five times per minute which resulted in three thousand revolutions per minute of the scaife. At this speed the cutter was obliged to take the diamond off the scaife every minute to cool it.

The cutting of the 'Koh-i-noor' lasted for thirty-eight days and cost £8000. The final yield was an oval brilliant weighing 108.93 metric carats, which represented a loss of weight of just under 43 per cent. There is no doubt that such a substantial reduction in the gem's weight came as a disappointment to many, not least to the Prince Consort who voiced his views on the matter in no uncertain terms. One authority observed that owing to the flattened and oval shape of the stone, the brilliant pattern selected by the Queen's advisers 'entailed the greatest possible waste', adding that Mr Coster himself would have preferred the drop form. There was also comment that the cutting of the 'Koh-i-noor' revealed the painful fact that the art of diamond cutting was extinct in England, while even the cutters from Amsterdam and Paris had lost much of their former expertise.

One of the first to see the 'Koh-i-noor' in its new form was Dhulip Singh, who was then living in London under the guardianship of Lady Login: she had been appointed to this post on the death of her husband. Since his arrival in England no one had broached the subject with the young Maharajah; it was realized that the diamond must have had a special meaning for him, something beyond a mere jewel of great value. But an opportunity of raising the subject presented itself. Lady Login was present at the sittings for a portrait of the young prince that took place at Buckingham Palace. At one of them the Queen asked Lady Login whether the Maharajah ever spoke of the 'Koh-i-noor' and, if so, did he regret its loss. The Queen herself said that she had never



The portrait of Dhulip Singh, for which the sittings took place at Buckingham Palace. The Prince was one of the first to see the 'Koh-i-noor' in its new form.

mentioned the diamond to him and that she would feel a certain delicacy about wearing it in his presence. Lady Login replied that he had never spoken of it since his arrival in England although he had done so in India; at the same time he had been greatly interested in the descriptions of the operation of recutting it. The Queen then said that she hoped that before the next sitting Lady Login would ascertain Dhulip Singh's feelings on the subject and whether he would care to see it in its recut form. The Queen was informed that the prince would very much like to see the famed jewel. He is said to have answered, 'I should like to take it in my power, myself, to place it in her hand now that I am a man. I was only a child when I surrendered it to Her Majesty by the Treaty, but now

I am old enough to understand.'

During the following day's portrait session the Queen, who had heard Dhulip Singh's response, walked to the dais on which the Maharajah was posing, with the diamond in her hand. She asked if he thought it had been improved and whether he would have recognized it again. After he had finished his inspection, Dhulip Singh walked across the room, and with a low bow expressed in a few graceful words the pleasure it afforded him to have the opportunity of placing it in her hands.

The unease concerning the acquisition of the 'Koh-i-noor' continued in Great Britain: some people considered that it had not been the property of the State, but the personal possession of Dhulip Singh. This may have arisen from the news of Dhulip Singh's presentation of the diamond to the Queen. The news reached Dalhousie who wrote from Government House on the 26 August 1854 saying that:

L...s talk about the Koh-i-noor being a present from Dhuleep Singh to the Queen is arrant humbug. He knew as well as I did that it was nothing of the sort: and if I had been within a thousand miles of him he would not have dared to utter such a piece of trickery. Those 'beautiful eyes', with which Dhuleep has taken captive the court, are his mother's eyes – those with which she captivated and controlled the old lion of the Punjab. The officer who had charge of her from Lahore to Benares told me this. He said that hers were splendid orbs.

But the worries over the supposed misfortune that the 'Koh-i-noor' was reputed to bring to its owner refused to die down and they ultimately led to Dalhousie writing his most extended and emphatic letter on the subject of the diamond. On his way home, he wrote from Malta on 7 January 1858 as follows:

The rumour you mention as to the Koh-i-noor I have seen in former years in an English paper, but never anywhere else. It is not only contrary to fact but contrary to native statements also. Did the Koh-i-noor bring ill luck to the great Akbar, who got it from Golconda, or to his son or grandson? Or to Aurangzeb, who rose to be the Great Mogul? And when that race of Emperors fell (not from the ill-fortune of the Koh-i-noor, but from their feeble hand) did it bring ill-fortune to Nadir Shah, who lived and died the greatest Eastern conqueror of modern times? Or to Ahmed Shah Doorani who got it at Nadir's death and founded the Afghan Empire? Or did it bring ill-fortune to Runjeet Singh, who got it from the Dooranis, and who rose from being a sower on twenty rupees a month at Goojeranwalla to be the Maharajah of the Punjab, swaying the greatest force in India next to ourselves? And has it brought ill-luck to the Queen? Especially representing the Punjab, has it shown that State an enemy to us? Has it not, on the contrary, shown it our fastest friend, by whose aid we have just put down the traitors of our own household? So much for the facts of history as to the Koh-i-noor. Now for the estimation

in which its former owners held it. When Runjeet Singh seized it from Shah Shoojah [the Doorani Emperor] he was very anxious to ascertain its real value. He sent to merchants at Umritsir, but they said its value could not be estimated in money. He sent to the Begum Shah, Shoojah's wife. Her answer was thus, 'If a strong man should take five stones, and should cast them, one east, one west, one north, and one south, and the last straight up in the air, and if all the space between those points were filled with gold and gems, that would not equal the value of the Koh-i-noor.' Runjeet (thinking this rather a vague estimate, I suppose) thus applied to Shah Shoojah. The old man's answer was: 'The value of the Koh-i-noor is that whoever holds it is victorious over all his enemies.' And so it is. The Koh-i-noor has been of ill-fortune to the few who have lost it. To the long line of Emperors, Conquerors and potentates who through successive centuries have possessed it, it has been the symbol of victory and empire. And surely never more so than to our Queen, ever since she wore it, and at this moment. The anecdote I have given was told me by Fuqueer Nooroodden at Lahore who was himself the messenger who went to the Begum and Shah Shoojah. It was fully narrated to the Governor when the Koh-i-noor was sent home. However, if Her Majesty thinks it brings bad luck let her give it back to me. I will take it and its ill-luck as speculation.

In the event Queen Victoria did not return the 'Koh-i-noor' to Lord Dalhousie. Instead, in 1853 Garrards mounted it in a magnificent tiara for the Queen which contained more than two thousand diamonds. Five years later Queen Victoria ordered a new regal circlet for the 'Koh-i-noor' which the Crown Jewellers delivered the following year. Then in 1911 Garrards made a new crown which Queen Mary wore for the Coronation: it contained only diamonds in its decoration, among them being the 'Koh-i-noor'. In 1937 the diamond was transferred to the crown made for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, which was based on Queen Victoria's regal circlet. The 'Koh-i-noor' is set in the Maltese Cross at the front of the crown.

The twentieth century has witnessed further controversy surrounding the 'Koh-i-noor', namely the question of its rightful ownership. It would not be uncharitable to suggest that, in the majority of occasions on which this subject has been raised, rather has it been due to the efforts of politicians anxious to score political points off one another than to any initiative on the part of those who may harbour deep-seated feelings about the diamond.

In 1947 the Government of India asked for the return of the 'Koh-i-noor': at the same time the Congress Ministry of Orissa claimed that the stone really belonged to the God, Jaganath, despite the opinion of Ranjit Singh's treasurer that it was the property of the State. A further request followed in 1953 on the occasion of the Coronation of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. But the real furore erupted in 1976 when the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in a letter to



The 'Koh-i-noor', set in the Maltese Cross at the front of the Crown made in 1937 for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

the British Prime Minister, James Callaghan, submitted a formal request for the return of the diamond to Pakistan. This was refused but was accompanied by an assurance by Callaghan to Bhutto that there was no question of Britain's handing it over to any other country. The view of the British Government was reported at the time to have been that the history of the diamond is so confused and that Britain has a clear title, in that the diamond was not seized in war but was formally presented – the last statement being a somewhat curious interpretation of events in the nineteenth century. Pakistan's claim to the 'Koh-i-noor' was disputed by India which made another formal request for its restoration. Then an influential newspaper in Teheran stated that the gem ought to be returned to Iran.

The debate in the British Press, conducted in both the so-called 'quality' papers and the more popular ones provided evidence of the keen interest which the topic engendered. People and pressure groups hastened to put pen to paper. Lord Ballantrae, the great-grandson of Lord Dalhousie, submitted his own claim on the grounds that for just over a year his relative had been its owner. A second correspondent wrote that if the 'Koh-i-noor' was to be handed back, then the marbles must be restored to Greece or Lord Elgin, the Isle of Man to Lord Derby and the Channel Islands to France – he was not sure to whom the Isle of Wight belonged but felt there would be a long and acrimonious dispute within the British

Isles themselves. A third writer suggested that the solution to the problem was to partition the stone.

An authoritative and thoughtful contribution to the debate that raged in the Press was contained in a letter to *The Times* by Sir Olaf Caroe, a distinguished British administrator who had spent a lifetime's service in the East, including tenure of the post of Foreign Secretary to the Government of India from 1939 to 1945. Sir Olaf pointed out that the 'Koh-i-noor' had been in Mogul possession in Delhi for two hundred and thirteen years, in Afghan possession in Kandahar and Kabul for sixty-six years, in Sikh possession in Lahore for thirty-six years and – at the time of writing – in British possession for one hundred and twenty-seven years. He remarked that it is true that when acquired by the British it was at Lahore, but other and prior claimants in the field existed. The Moguls in Delhi were of Turkish origin and the rulers in Lahore, when the stone came into British hands, were Sikhs. Finally, he felt that the word 'return' was scarcely applicable.

Historically, therefore, it is difficult to pass judgement on the validity of the various claims: on the other hand from a gemological aspect, the Indian claim must be paramount because it was in that country that the 'Koh-i-noor' first saw the light of day. However, his country's claim to the diamond was renounced by a man who was a statesman, not a mere politician; Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India, once said, 'diamonds are for emperors and India does not need Emperors'.

SANCY



The 'Sancy' has the most confused history of all the famous diamonds. It is, as Edwin Streeter so aptly described it, 'the very sphinx of diamonds'. At several points in the story, which spans four centuries of European history, there are varying accounts of what may have occurred, while there are at least three diamonds which have borne the name 'Sancy' (four, in fact, if one recalls that some have referred to a diamond called the 'Cent-six' – presumably evidence of faulty dictation on somebody's part or of someone hard of hearing). The diamond which has come to be recognized today as the authentic 'Sancy' weighs 55.23 metric carats. It is fitting that it is now displayed in the Louvre, in Paris, because its history is so entwined with that of France.

The diamond takes its name from Nicolas Harlay de Sancy, a descendant of the younger branch of the family of Harlay.

The 'Sancy' diamond.

Born in 1546, he rose to become the Master of Requests to the French Parliament in 1573, a position within the Council of State. Two years later, King Henry III appointed him Ambassador to Switzerland. Sancy pursued a versatile career as lawyer, diplomat and, above all, financier. At a time of religious strife within his homeland, it was noted that he had few scruples over this particular subject and that he was prepared to change his religion according to circumstances, a fact which led to the writing of a biting satire entitled *The Confession of M. de Sancy* by the poet Agrippa d'Aubigne.

It is not known for sure when, where or from whom Sancy acquired his diamond. One version has it that he bought the stone from Dom Antonio de Castro, the natural son of the Infante Dom Luis of Portugal who, following the death of the

Cardinal King Henry in 1580, had proclaimed himself King. Philip II of Spain refused to recognize Dom Antonio's claim to the throne and despatched an army under the command of the Duke of Alba which defeated him in 1580 and led to the annexation of Portugal to Spain. The vanquished Dom Antonio escaped to London with some of the Portuguese Crown Jewels with which he hoped to raise funds so as to carry on the struggle against his rival. He tried to interest Elizabeth I in the jewels, among which was a large table-cut diamond known as 'The Mirror of Portugal'. There is no record of the 'Sancy' among this collection although, as will be seen later, it was destined to play a part in English history.

A second account of how Sancy obtained his diamond is probably nearer the truth, but at the same time raises several questions. In his invaluable book *The Great Diamonds of the World*, Edwin Streeter tells of a statement made by Robert van Berquiem, among others, to the effect that the diamond was brought from the East by M. de Sancy, the French Ambassador at the Ottoman Court, after he had purchased it for a large sum in Constantinople about the year 1570. Three pages further on, Streeter quotes an extract from Robert van Berquiem's book *Merveilles des Indes* published in 1669 which reads:

There are some [diamonds] of extraordinary size and perfection. The present Queen of England has the one brought by the late M. de Sancy, from his embassy in the Levant, which is almond-shaped, cut in facets on both sides, perfectly white and pure, and weighing 100 carats.

There are three errors in Van Berquiem's account. First, Nicolas de Sancy – who died in 1627 – never held the post of French Ambassador to Turkey, although his second son Achille de Sancy did. Secondly, if it is taken to mean that in 1669 the English Queen owned the diamond, then that statement is not true because by then the Dowager Queen had already pawned it and the reigning Queen never had possession of it. Thirdly, the 'Sancy' diamond known to us today has never approximated to a weight of 100 carats. It is of course possible that Achille de Sancy may have owned such a diamond when he returned from his embassy in 1617 but there is no record of his own interest or involvement in diamonds. On the other hand, it is likely that during his travels in the Far East the elder Sancy may have acquired his eponymous diamond with others in Constantinople since that city served as an important trading centre for produce emanating from countries to the east.

Robert van Berquiem's ancestor was the celebrated cutter Ludwig van Berquiem who, around the year 1476, is said to have cut three exceptional diamonds for that celebrated warrior Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. Charles was defeated and killed by the Swiss at the battle of Nancy in 1477 and he is said to have lost these three diamonds among all his possessions on the battlefield. Some authorities have maintained that the 'Sancy' was one of the three diamonds, but Robert van Berquiem's description of the diamond owned by



Henry III of France, who in January 1589 purchased diamonds and other jewels from Nicholas de Sancy.

the Queen of England as almond-shaped and cut in facets on both sides disproves this theory because that was a shape and cut peculiar to India and then unknown in Europe.

Nicholas de Sancy served two French monarchs loyally, the first being Henry III (1574–89), the third son of the notorious Catherine de' Medici. During the reign of his elder brother, Charles IX, he assisted his mother, the instigator in organizing the holocaust which resulted in the killing of many Huguenots (French Protestants) throughout the kingdom on the night of 23/24 August 1572. This infamous deed has become known as the Massacre of St Bartholomew's Day. The reign of Henry III was characterized principally by his struggle with the Huguenots while his own indolence, vice and vanity – he became prematurely bald and wore a little turban on his head, his 'toque' as it was called, ornamented in front with a large diamond – contributed to the popularity of Henry of Lorraine, Duke of Guise, who aspired to the throne of France. In 1588, Henry III arranged the murder of the Duke and his brother. By the following year, which witnessed the death of the dominant Catherine de' Medici, many provinces were in rebellion.

A document dated 31 January 1589 relates to the purchase of some diamonds and other jewels by the King from Sancy and their being pledged by Sancy for the purpose of raising troops in Switzerland. It reads as follows:

A great flawless diamond, facet cut, weight 37 to 38 carats or thereabouts, set in a golden frame at the end of which hangs a great round pearl, flawless and perfect, of about 20 carats; also a great heart-shaped ruby set in gold at the base of which hangs a great pear-shaped pearl, for the price of 20,000 ecus. The large jewels were pledged and put into the hands of the said Sieur de Sancy that he might pawn them in Switzerland, Germany or elsewhere with the charge that if they were pledged for less than 24,000 ecus, His Majesty will only pay to the said Sancy the price for which they were pledged.

It will be noted that there is a discrepancy between the weight of this diamond and that of the gem acknowledged today as the 'Sancy'. This smaller diamond has become known as the 'little Sancy' or the 'Beau Sancy'; after this date it has a history totally different from that of the 'Sancy' or 'Great Sancy' as it is sometimes known. The existence of the 'Beau Sancy', however, demonstrates the reputation of Nicolas de Sancy as an important early collector of diamonds and the value which he attached to them for raising funds.

In 1589, Henry III was assassinated by a Dominican monk and, as he died childless, the House of Valois which had ruled France since 1328 came to an end. On his deathbed, he nominated as his successor Henry of Navarre, who ascended the throne as Henry IV, the first of the Bourbon dynasty. By the time of the new monarch's accession, Nicolas de Sancy had become Colonel General of the Swiss troops which he had raised for Henry III and he was able to perform a singular service for his new sovereign by bringing them over to his side. Brought up as a Protestant, Henry IV was obliged to spend several years fighting against the forces of Spain and the Catholic league in order to secure his position on the throne. In July 1593, he became a Catholic and the papal absolution two years later facilitated the conquest of his kingdom which was predominantly Roman Catholic. He expressed the motive behind his conversion in the celebrated remark attributed to him: 'Paris is worth a mass.'

Henry IV sought to pacify domestic disturbances and restore prosperity to France; one of his first acts was to appoint Sancy as his Superintendent of Finance. On numerous occasions Sancy employed his diamond on behalf of his sovereign. In 1593, the gem was pledged to Rodericques, a money-lender, for a third of its value. Next year it passed to a citizen of Lucca from whom Sancy redeemed it in 1595.

There is a lurid description of an episode in the King's dealings with his minister. Wishing to raise a further contingent of Swiss troops the King sent a messenger with the diamond to the Swiss – alternatively it is said that Sancy sent him to the King – but he disappeared on the way. Some time passed before it became known that he had been waylaid and killed. Full of confidence in his emissary's ability and loyalty, Sancy himself went to the forest where the crime had been committed. After a search the body of the unfortunate man was found, disinterred and opened. Inside the stomach was

found the diamond which – as Sancy had suspected – the faithful messenger had swallowed to prevent it falling into the hands of his murderers.

Whether this tale is true or not (if true, Sancy would certainly have suffered from feelings of revulsion), Sancy made several attempts all over Europe to sell the diamond. Henry IV wanted to buy it but he lacked sufficient funds. Eventually the brother of Nicolas de Sancy, M. de Montglat, who had succeeded him as French Ambassador in London, sold it in 1604 to King James I for 60,000 ecus, of which 20,000 was to be paid at once, 20,000 on 10 September and the balance on 10 March of the following year.

In the *Inventory of the Jewels in the Tower of London* dated 22 March 1605 appears an item described as:

A greate and ryche jewell of golde called the 'Myrror of



James I of England (James VI of Scotland) who bought the 'Sancy' diamond in 1604 from the French Ambassador in London.

Greate Brytayne' conteyninge one verie fayre table dya-
monde, one verie fayre table rubye, twoe other lardge
dyamondes cut lozengewyse, the one of them called the
'Stone of the letter H of Scotlande' garnyshed wyth smalle
dyamandes, twoe rounde perles fixed and one fayre dya-
monde cutt in fawcettis, bought of Sauncey.

In the same year James I promulgated a decree in which he
named the Imperial Crown and a number of royal and
princely ornaments, including the 'Mirror of Great Britain', to
be 'indivisible and inseparate, for ever hereafter annexed to
the kingdom of this realm'. It represented an attempt to
preserve the Crown Jewels for posterity but it proved to be a
short-lived move because almost from the start of his reign,
his son and successor Charles I (1625–49) was short of money.
In 1625, Charles I disposed of the 'Mirror of Great Britain' but
retained the 'Sancy' diamond. The ensuing Civil War between
the Royalist forces and those of the Parliamentarians ren-
dered the King's financial position even more desperate. In
1644, his consort, Queen Henrietta Maria, the daughter of
Henry IV of France, left for her home country taking with her
many of the jewels in the Royal Treasury. Then she negotiated
with the Netherlands for the purchase of supplies and
ammunitions needed to assist the Royal cause. Mr Herbert
Tillander has suggested that Thomas Cletscher, the Crown
Jeweller and Mayor in the Hague, was probably acting as the
Queen's agent: he has drawn attention to the sketchbook of
Cletscher in which the 'Sancy' is illustrated in three different
settings.

Neither the 'Sancy' nor the 'Mirror of Portugal' which the
Queen had taken with her were sold in the Netherlands.
Instead the Queen contracted loans to a total of 427,566 livres
with the Duke of Epemon, and among the jewels which she
gave as surety were these two diamonds. As she was unable to
repay the loans, the Duke was allowed to retain or sell the
diamonds in return for the extinction of 360,000 livres of this
debt. Therefore, on 19 May 1657 the Duke of Epemon bought
both of these historic stones and discharged the exiled Queen
from payment of the rest of the debt which at the time was
outstanding. He, in turn, sold the 'Sancy' and the 'Mirror of
Portugal' to Cardinal Mazarin.

Cardinal Jules Mazarin was an outstanding figure in
seventeenth-century France. Following the death of Cardinal
Richelieu in 1642, Mazarin took on the function of First
Minister of the Crown, a position which he held until his
death. His foreign policy led to the establishment of peace on
the basis of French pre-eminence in Europe. He acquired
great personal wealth during his ministry and became one of
the biggest landowners in France. He was also an important
patron of the arts, an avid collector of books, paintings – and
diamonds. Before his purchases from the Duke of Epemon,
Mazarin had already bought some jewels which had belonged
to Charles I, and others formerly owned by Queen Christina of
Sweden. In his will, he bequeathed the 'Sancy' and the 'Mirror
of Portugal' to the French Crown, requesting that they be
added to the other sixteen which he had also bequeathed to

the Crown, and that they should thereafter be known as the
'Mazarin' diamonds.

So the 'Sancy', which was the largest of the Mazarins,
became not only 'Mazarin I' but also a Crown Jewel of France.
However, some writers have preferred a different version of
how the 'Sancy' came into the royal collection. According to
them, Queen Henrietta Maria presented Edward Somerset,
third marquess of Worcester, with some jewels in token of the
valuable service which he had rendered the Royalist cause. In
1682 he was created Duke of Beaufort and remained in exile,
refusing to subscribe to the oaths of allegiance to William III.
In about 1695 he is said to have sold these jewels, which
included the 'Sancy', to that diamond-loving monarch, King
Louis XIV of France, for 625,000 francs (= £25,000). However,
this version of events does contain a number of assumptions
and unsubstantiated statements, and makes no mention of
Cardinal Mazarin's acquisition of the 'Sancy', a fact which has
been well documented. It is, therefore, the first version which
is today considered to be the authentic one.

In the Inventory of the Crown Jewels of France made in
1691, the 'Sancy' was valued at 600,000 livres and its weight
was recorded as 53¾ (old) carats. Undoubtedly, its most
splendid setting was in the great crown made by the Crown
Jewellers for the Coronation of Louis XV in 1722. This also
contained the 'Regent' diamond which henceforth was consi-
dered the principal gem in the Crown collection. Louis XV
also wore the 'Sancy' in a large agraffe (loop and hook
fastening) in his hat, with the 'Regent' set in a knot of pearls
and diamonds on a shoulder ornament. His Queen, Marie
Leszcynska, also wore the 'Sancy', set in a pendant to a
necklace, at many of the great state occasions at which she
was obliged to appear.

During the reign of the next king, Louis XVI, the great
crowns and other jewels were broken up and the diamonds
employed in more delicate ornaments worn by the Queen,
Marie Antoinette. In the 1791 inventory of the Crown Jewels,
the 'Sancy' was valued at 1,000,000 livres and its weight
recorded as 53½/16 carats. By this time the French Revolution,
culminating in the execution of the king in 1793, had broken
out. The ruling authorities employed some of the jewels in
financial transactions. A diamond weighing 53¾ carats,
which can only have been the 'Sancy' was pawned to the
Marquess of Irlanda in Madrid to raise 1,000,000 francs. This
Spanish nobleman was one of several persons who supplied
horses to the army. Thereafter some authorities have stated
that the diamond came into the hands of the widow of Charles
IV of Spain who is then said to have given it to her lover,
Godoy, known as the 'Prince of Peace'. Godoy is said to have
tried to resell the stone to Charles X of France in 1828 through
the intermediary of a Paris lawyer, but negotiations broke
down.

In the same year, Prince Nicholas Demidoff bought the
'Sancy'. The Demidoffs were the owners of large industries
and silver mines in Russia – one member of the family
married Princess Mathilde, the daughter of Jerome Bona-



Queen Marie Leszcynska who on occasions wore the 'Sancy' set in a pendant to a necklace.

parte. In 1829, Prince Nicholas died and the 'Sancy' passed to his son Paul who in 1836 married a Finnish lady by the name of Aurora Stjernvall, a maid of honour at the Russian court. According to the noted Finnish gemologist, Herbert Tjander, it is customary in the Nordic countries for the bride to receive a 'morning gift' on the morning after the wedding ceremonies. On this occasion, the bride was the fortunate recipient of the 'Sancy' diamond. Paul Demidoff died in 1840, and six years later his widow married Andrew Karamsin, a captain of the guards. In 1854, she was widowed once more and finally settled in Helsinki.

While the 'Sancy' was in the ownership of Paul Demidoff, it featured in a famous lawsuit. The Director of the Society of the Mines and Forges of the Grisons, Switzerland, M. Levrat, agreed to buy the diamond for £24,000 but a dispute arose over its value. Levrat maintained that the gem was not worth a third of that sum since it had been recut as a brilliant and its weight greatly reduced. Demidoff accordingly consented to accept 145,800 francs (£5,830) payable in three instalments at intervals of six months. But Levrat failed to honour the first instalment whereupon Demidoff brought an action against him to have the contract cancelled and recover possession of the diamond which Levrat had by then placed in the hands of the State Pawning Establishment, known as the Mont de Piété. Judgement was given in Demidoff's favour and he was

authorized to withdraw the diamond on payment of the customary expenses to the Mont de Piété while Levrat was obliged to pay the legal costs of the action.

The facts surrounding this case are strange. There is no record of the 'Sancy' either having been recut as a brilliant or of its weight having been reduced. It is quite possible in the circumstances, therefore, that the litigation may have revolved around a totally different diamond because confirmation that the 'Sancy' retained the same cut and the same weight is supplied by a drawing which appeared in the issue dated 11 March 1865 of the *Illustrated London News*. Part of the accompanying note read:

The illustration shows the exact shape of the celebrated Sancy diamond which has been purchased for £20,000 by Messrs R and S Garrard & Co of the Haymarket for Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, the great Parsee merchant of Bombay.... This diamond is of peculiar form, being neither a brilliant nor a perfect rose cut. It is what is called a briolette – that is, a solid drop; but it differs from a briolette in having flattened tables back and front, a perfect briolette being cut to a point. The facets are very regular and well cut, which leads to the belief that, although the stone retains its original form, the work has been gone over and improved at no very distant date. We are more inclined to this idea from the fact that the stone was said to weigh originally 55 carats, but its weight is now only 53¼ carats.

The weight of the diamond in Paris, which is considered to be the authentic 'Sancy', is 55.25 metric carats, equivalent to 53.8 old carats. Over the centuries, there has thus been no diminution in its weight while it still retains the same shape.

The reference above to Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy now inaugurates another chapter in the confused history of the 'Sancy'. In 1867, the stone was exhibited by Bapst, the French jeweller, at the Paris exhibition: it was on offer for 1,000,000 francs. But at this same exhibition the Maharajah of Patiala – a keen collector of diamonds who two decades later was to purchase the great 'De Beers' diamond exceeding 200 carats – is said to have bought the 'Sancy'. In addition, he is said to have worn the 'Sancy' on his turban with other large diamonds, at the Durbar held during the visit to India by the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VII. Some have maintained that the Patiala 'Sancy' is the famous historical diamond but this belief is not held by most individuals who have examined the question.

Recent information which has come to light suggests that the diamond bought by Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy was in his family's possession probably until the late 1880s. In 1889, the stone was bought by Lucien Falize, goldsmith, historian, archaeologist and painter. Three years later, William Waldorf Astor bought the 'Sancy' for his wife. Astor had served a term in the legislature of the State of New York and from 1881 to 1885 had been Minister for the United States in Italy. In 1899, he became a naturalized British citizen and in 1917 was created Viscount Astor. His daughter-in-law achieved fame



Lady Astor who wore the 'Sancy' set in a tiara on numerous State occasions.

when in 1919 she became the first woman to sit as an MP in the House of Commons. Lady Astor wore the 'Sancy' in a tiara on numerous State occasions.

In 1962, the 'Sancy' was exhibited at the Louvre, with two other famous diamonds that have featured in French history, the 'Regent' and the 'Hope', at the exhibition entitled 'Ten Centuries of French Jewellery'. In 1978, the fourth and present Viscount Astor sold the 'Sancy', reputedly for \$1,000,000, to the Banque de France and Musées de France. This famous gem is now on view at the Galerie d'Apollon in the Louvre Museum.

The belief held by the French authorities that this diamond is the authentic 'Sancy' is shared by the Gemological Institute of America whose officials had earlier stated:

The diamond which is in the possession of Lord Astor weighs 53.75 (old) carats and has dimensions identical with models generally accepted as authentic. The diamond owned by the Indian potentate weighs 60.40 carats and, although pear-shaped, actual measurements do not corres-

pond to the accepted ones.

The exact measurements and other details of the 'Sancy' were released in 1976 after the diamond had been examined in London. Mr E. A. Jobbins, of the Institute of Geological Sciences, has kindly supplied the following information:

The 'Sancy' diamond is pear-shaped and approximates to a double rose cut, with mostly triangular facets but with a central pentagonal facet on each side, the latter facets roughly parallel to each other. There are slight scratches on one of the pentagonal facets. The maximum dimensions of the stone are 25.7mm [1.01 inch] long, 20.6mm [0.81 inch] wide and 14.3mm [0.56 inch] deep. The weight is 11.046 grams or 55.23 metric carats, and the specific gravity (determined in toluene) is 3.519.

The stone is reasonably clean, apart from a small flaw near the surface (repeated by reflection in the facets). Comparison stones were not available to us and we were, therefore, unable to colour-grade the stone, but the general appearance suggests a good colour. The stone is lively and the fire (dispersion) is well displayed....

The fluorescences of the stone by ultraviolet light are extremely interesting. By short-wave (253.7mm) UV light, the stone fluoresces a deep yellow, but we saw no phosphorescence on cutting off the radiation. By contrast, under long-wave (365 mm) radiation, the stone fluoresces a pale salmon pink, with a very noticeable greenish-yellow phosphorescence. This behaviour is not common and, in itself, would serve as a good identification test for the stone. We were unable to detect any absorption spectrum when white light was passed through the stone.

Contact immersion photographs (by exposing photographic paper upon which the stone rests in water to short UV light) reveal that the stone is transparent to this radiation (253.7mm) [210.3 inches] and would appear, therefore, to be a Type II diamond, as are many other large diamonds.

We may remain in the dark about much of its past history but, as a result of this thorough examination, the 'sphinx of diamonds' has given up its secrets from a physical aspect.

MIRROR OF PORTUGAL

At various times three Royal Houses of Europe owned this rectangular table-cut diamond.

After the death of the Cardinal King Henry of Portugal in 1580 his illegitimate nephew, Dom Antonio de Castro, known as the Prior of Crato, proclaimed himself King. Philip II, King of Spain, refused to recognize Dom Antonio's sovereignty and despatched an army which defeated him in 1580 and led to the annexation of Portugal to Spain. The vanquished claimant then went to Paris: with French assistance he sent a naval expedition to the Azores, where he was still recognized as the King of Portugal, but was defeated by the Spanish squadrons. Dom Antonio escaped to London, taking with him some of the Portuguese Crown Jewels. In his absence he was condemned to death, one of the charges being that he had unlawfully taken the jewels with him. Among the items was the 'Mirror of Portugal', then reputed to have weighed around 30 carats. Dom Antonio hoped to interest Queen Elizabeth I in the jewellery, thereby raising funds sufficient to enable him to continue the struggle against his adversary. The Queen sent a fleet which effected a landing near Lisbon in 1589 but the expedition proved a costly failure. Then feeling that she had done enough to help Dom Antonio, Elizabeth kept the Portuguese jewels; the 'Mirror of Portugal' was mounted in a chain of gold, enamelled and surrounded by flowers. Impoverished and in poor health, Dom Antonio returned to Paris where he died in 1595.

In 1623 the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Charles I, travelled to Spain to make an alliance with that country; it was intended that it should be sealed by his betrothal to the Infanta. His father, James I, ordered that a selection of the finest jewels in the Tower of London should be available to his son so that he might make a good impression. The 'Mirror of Portugal' was chosen, set with a large pearl as a pendant. In the event the Prince's suit proved to be unsuccessful, and in 1625, as Charles I, he married Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV and Marie de Medici of France. Van Dyck painted a portrait of the Queen which depicts her wearing a brooch containing the 'Mirror of Portugal' and four lesser diamonds. This picture is now in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad.

Almost from the outset of his reign (1625–49) Charles I was short of money, the situation rendered even more difficult by his dispute with the parliamentarians and the ensuing civil war. For her part Queen Henrietta Maria, who was devoted to her husband, showed the courage and determination that were natural to the daughter of two such strong-minded parents. On the other hand the Queen never understood English politics and thought that a military coup would overthrow the parliamentarians. In 1644 she sailed to the Netherlands to sell jewels and raise funds for the King,

returning with munitions. Among the items from the Treasury which the Queen took with her were the 'Mirror of Portugal' and the 'Sancy': henceforth for a century and a half these two diamonds were to pursue the same historical path.

Neither diamond was sold in the Netherlands, so the Queen contracted loans with the Duke of Epemnon amounting to 427,566 livres. Because he feared that he might not be repaid the money, the Queen pledged the 'Mirror of Portugal' and the 'Sancy' as surety. Alas, the Duke's fears proved to be justified as the Queen was unable to repay the loans; therefore, in return for the extinction of 360,000 livres of the debt he was permitted to keep both diamonds. He sold them to Cardinal Mazarin, the 'Sancy' becoming 'Mazarin No I' and the 'Mirror of Portugal' becoming 'Mazarin No III' in his famous collection. Cardinal Mazarin bequeathed them to the French Crown when he died in 1661.

At some stage the 'Mirror of Portugal' was recut, most likely after its purchase by Cardinal Mazarin, since in the 1691 Inventory of the French Crown Jewels its weight was recorded as 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ carats. It was then valued at 150,000 livres. The diamond must have been recut a second time because in the inventory of the Crown Jewels made one hundred years



Queen Henrietta Maria painted by Van Dyck. She is wearing a brooch containing the 'Mirror of Portugal' and four lesser diamonds.

later its weight had been reduced to $21\frac{1}{8}$ carats but its value had increased to 250,000 livres.

The 'Mirror of Portugal' was one of the jewels stolen during

the infamous robbery of the Garde Meuble that occurred on the night of 16 September 1792. Since that melancholy episode there has been no trace of this historic stone.

AGRA

On 22 February 1905, Christie's put up for sale in London, 'A magnificent rose pink diamond of the highest quality (weight $31\frac{13}{32}$ carats)'. Although no name was attached to the stone by the auctioneers, authorities considered that it was the 'Agra', a historic stone with a historic name.

No one should be surprised that an Indian diamond be named after Agra: it is venerated as the site of the Taj Mahal, held by generations of travellers and art critics to be the most sublime building in the world. The city was founded by the Mogul emperors who made it their capital for more than a hundred years in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries until Aurangzeb, the sixth emperor, transferred the seat of the monarchy to Delhi in 1658. It was in Agra that Akbar received a letter from Queen Elizabeth I of England and Jahangir issued a charter to the British East India Company in 1612, granting it freedom to trade in India.

After his success on the battlefield, Babur, the first Mogul emperor, sent his son Humayun to occupy Agra, a feat which he duly accomplished, in the process capturing members of the family of the slain Rajah of Gwalior. Their lives were spared: it is said that as an expression of gratitude they presented their captors with jewels and precious stones. Since history has it that the 'Agra' diamond was worn by Babur in his turban, the stone was probably among these jewels. The 'Agra', which weighed $41\frac{3}{4}$ carats, remained in India until the middle of the nineteenth century.

The story of how the diamond thought to have been the 'Agra' left India was recounted to Edwin Streeter in 1896 by the 5th Marquess of Donegall. Lord Donegall stated that in 1857 he was serving in India when the diamond was taken from the ruler of Delhi; at the time he was engaged as secretary and belonged to the same regiment as the young officer who had obtained possession of the stone.

The officers then decided amongst themselves to smuggle the diamond home to England rather than give it up, and to share the loot money, but the question arose as to how to get it there. Nobody seemed able to suggest a method that would prove successful until the evening before the departure of the regiment. During the course of dinner the youngest subaltern suddenly jumped to his feet and said: 'I have it: we will conceal the diamond in a horse ball and make the horse swallow it.'

The plan met with general approval: a ball was secured, the inside scooped out, the diamond inserted and the end stopped up. Finally the unfortunate animal was made to swallow it. When the regiment reached the port of embarkation, the horse – not surprisingly – was taken ill and had to be shot. The diamond was then taken from its stomach and brought over to England.

It is then asserted that the eccentric Duke of Brunswick, one of the nineteenth century's great collectors, acquired the 'Agra'. The Duke did indeed purchase the stone but thirteen years before the events related by Lord Donegall. According to the 1860 catalogue of his diamonds and other precious stones, he bought the 'Agra' on 22 November 1844, from 'Blogg'. This person must clearly have been George Blogg, of the London firm of diamond merchants, Blogg & Martin. In addition the Duke of Brunswick bought three other diamonds from Blogg on 22 November, and had bought four more from the same source on 8 November. The 'Agra', for which he paid 348,600 francs, was by far the most important purchase; a note specifically drew attention to its having been taken by the Emperor Babur, in Agra, in 1526.

It would in the normal course of events be unreasonable to expect a serving officer to possess a detailed knowledge of precious stones: on the other hand accuracy would be expected of the compiler of a catalogue such as that of the Duke of Brunswick's fine collection. One can only conclude, therefore, that the diamond devoured by the horse and subsequently smuggled to England was not the same stone as the Duke of Brunswick's, unless Lord Donegall's memory had played him false and the account he had given to Streeter referred to happenings before 1844. Possible further confirmation of there having been two diamonds is supplied by other writers who have stated that the smuggled diamond weighed not 41 but 46 carats.

At some stage the 'Agra' was reduced in weight by recutting to its last recorded weight of $31\frac{13}{32}$ carats (32.24 metric carats); this was done so as to eliminate some internal black spots. The truth is made even more difficult to come by as the result of the statement by an American visitor to Paris (the scene of the recutting) in 1899. He believed that the stone was the same one which he had owned for some time and which had originally weighed 71 carats. Had the unfortunate



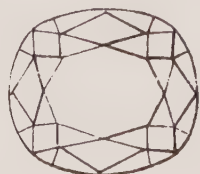
The building of the Red Fort at Agra in the 16th century.

horse then been forced to swallow an even greater caratage?

Whatever may have occurred earlier, the 'Agra' came to form part of Edwin Streeter's collection, presumably in 1896, the year of Lord Donegall's account. If he had known earlier of the existence of the 'Agra', doubtless Streeter would have included a history of it in one of his books.

After he retired from business Streeter's successors dispersed the collection. A large quantity of the lower-priced articles in the stock were acquired by Debenham & Freebody. The remainder, comprising the more valuable items, were

auctioned by Christie's at the aforementioned sale. *The Times* reported that the sale attracted a large crowd of people, including a number of Indian collectors, doubtless attracted by the historic interest of the 'Agra' diamond. The gem was the final item in the sale. The first bid was an offer of £1000: at £5100 it was knocked down to Mr Max Meyer, with Mr S. H. Harris as the underbidder. Since that occasion nothing has been heard of the 'Agra'.



The 'Agra' from the Duke of Brunswick's 1860 catalogue.

AKBAR SHAH

This is one of the historic Indian diamonds which, before an act of vandalism, bore two inscriptions in the Persian language. In *The Great Diamonds of the World* Streeter incorrectly ascribed the first inscription to the reign of the third Mogul Emperor, Akbar (1556-1605) whereas the date gives the name of the diamond's first recorded owner as his son Jahangir (1605-27). This ruler's wife was Persian and he encouraged Persian culture in Mogul India.

The son of the Emperor responsible for the building of the great citadel of Fatehpur Sikri, Jahangir was the father of another great builder, Shah Jahan. He took the title of Jahangir, meaning the 'World-Grasper' on ascending the throne, but he was for the most part content to let others perform the task of conquest. Jahangir's interests lay in other directions – principally in women and the culture of his court. He was also a lover of jewels, and his journal, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* or *Memoirs of Jahangir*, contains several references to diamonds and the methods of mining that are of especial interest.

The first inscription on the misnamed 'Akbar Shah' diamond denotes that it was officially entered into Jahangir's treasury between 10 March and 7 December 1619. It is possible that it may have been one of a group of diamonds which he acquired in September 1618, while he was in Gujarat. He recorded the occasion as follows:

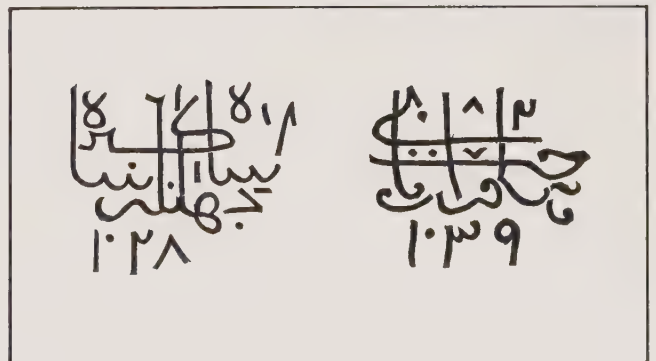
On Friday the 5th, [i.e. of the Persian month Mihr] Bahram, son of Jahangir Quli Khan, came from the province of Bihar, and had the good fortune to pay his respects. He laid before me some diamonds he had obtained from the mine at Kokra.

There are three references to the diamond deposits situated within the province of Bihar whence Bahram had travelled westwards to Gujarat. In the spring of 1616 the Emperor wrote:

The third piece of news was the conquest of the province of Khokara and the acquisition of the diamond mines, which were taken by the excellent exertions of Ibrahim Khan. This province is one of the dependencies of the Subah of Bihar and Patna. There is a river there from which they procure diamonds. At the season when there is little water, there are pools and water-holes, and it has become known by experience to those who are employed in this work that above every water-hole in which there are diamonds, there are crowds of flying animals of the nature of gnats, and which in the language of India they call ihinga. Keeping the bed of the stream in sight as far as it is accessible they make



Jahangir holding a portrait of his father, Akbar.



The two inscriptions on the misnamed 'Akbar Shah' diamond.

a collection of stones (sanqchin) round the water-holes. After this they empty the water-holes with spades and shovels to the extent of a yard or 1½ yards [about 1 metre] and dig up the area. They find among the stones and sand large and small diamonds and bring them out. It occasionally happens that they find a piece of diamond worth 1,000,000 rupees.... That province is now in the possession of the imperial servants of the State. They carry on the work in the bed of the stream, and bring to Court whatever diamonds are found. A large diamond, the value of which has been estimated at 50,000 rupees, has lately been brought from here. If a little pains are taken, it is probable that good diamonds will be found and placed in the jewel-room.

The Emperor's second reference to this particular source occurs in his account of the summer of 1618 after he has mentioned the existence of another mine in the province of Khandesh which, he considered, produced finer diamonds. It reads:

Of the second rank is the mine of Kokhra, which is on the borders of Bihar; but the diamonds of that place are not obtained from the mine, but from a river which in the rainy season comes down in flood from the hills. Before that they dam it up, and when the flood has passed over the dam and there is little water, a number of men who are skilled in this art go into the river bed and bring out the diamonds.

The third mention of diamonds from Bihar in Jahangir's journal occurs just after his account of receiving diamonds from Bahram in September 1618. He wrote:

Some of the diamonds that Ibrahim Fathjang had sent to Court after the taking of the mine had been given to the Government lapidaries to cut. At this time Bahram suddenly came to Agra and was going on to the Court (in Gujarat). Khwaja Jahan (the Governor of Agra) sent along with him some diamonds that were ready. One of them is of a violet colour, and cannot be outwardly distinguished from a sapphire. Up to this time I had not seen a diamond of this colour. It weighed several surkh, and jewellers estimated its value at 3000 rupees, and represented that if it had been white (safid) and had had perfect marks, it would have been worth 20,000 rupees.

The mines which Jahangir has referred to are situated at Khukra, about 64km (40 miles) west of Ranchi in the Chota Nagpur district of the State of Bihar. Little is known about diamonds from this region: indeed more often than not it is omitted from lists and maps of India's diamond-bearing areas. The methods employed to recover the stones do not appear to differ much from those in use in alluvial areas in other parts of the world more than three hundred and fifty years later. But what is of exceptional interest is the revelation of the discovery of a diamond of a violet colour, not outwardly distinguishable from a sapphire. This description, of course, fits the 'Hope' diamond perfectly. It is not suggested

that the original rough piece from which that famous gem was fashioned came from this region of Bihar – it is usually considered to have come from the Kollur deposits in Hyderabad – but it may possibly have been found there.

The second inscription that appeared on Jahangir's diamond recorded its ownership by his son and successor Shah Jahan (1628–58), who took the title *Sahib-i Qiran-i Sani*, meaning 'The Second Lord of the (Auspicious) Conjunction' in emulation of his ancestor Timur. The description denotes that the diamond came into his treasury some time between January and August 1629, although Shah Jahan would have inherited it on his accession in January of the preceding year.

Tradition has it that the 'Akbar Shah', which weighed 116 carats, was set as one of the eyes of the famous and fabulous Peacock Throne. On the other hand, as the largest of the three candidates (the others being the 'Shah' and the 'Jahangir') it may have been the big diamond which Tavernier described as having been set as a pendant. Whatever its setting may have been, the stone was lost sight of until it came to light in Constantinople in 1866. It is reasonable to assume that this was one of the diamonds carried off by Nadir Shah and the Persians when they sacked and pillaged Delhi in 1739. George Blogg, of the London firm of Blogg and Martin, purchased it in Turkey where it was known as the 'Shepherd's Stone' – could such a name have had any connection with Nadir Shah, who in his youth was a shepherd? Blogg brought the diamond to London where a cutter named Auerhaan recut it to a pear-shape of 71.70 (old) carats, equivalent to 73.60 metric carats. During the process of recutting the vandalic act of obliterating the ancient inscriptions on the diamond was perpetrated. In the following year Blogg sold the diamond to that famed collector, Mulhar Rao, Gaekwar of Baroda, for £35,000. That is the last known fact in the history of the gem.

It is puzzling that Streeter should have headed his account of this diamond 'The Akbar Shah, or Jehan Ghir Shah' and one can only wonder whether he was aware of the existence of a different diamond altogether called the 'Jahangir' or whether he thought they were one and the same stone. The 'Jahangir', weighing approximately 83 metric carats, is another diamond bearing two inscriptions. The upper inscription is partly obscured by the hole that has been pierced through the stone but enough remains to show that it reads: 'Shah Jahangir-e (son) of Akbar Shah 1021' (AD 1612). The lower inscription reads: 'Shah Jahan (son) of Jahangir Shah 1042' (AD 1632). This diamond was formerly owned by the Maharajah of Burdwan who sold it in London in 1954 thereby contravening the (Indian) Antiquities Export Control Act. He and a Calcutta jeweller were fined £13,000, the amount it fetched at the sale, but the Indian Government subsequently upheld the Maharajah's appeal against the fine on the grounds that it had failed to inform him that the gem was a historic one whose export was prohibited until after the sale had taken place. The buyer on that occasion was Mr Stavros Niarchos who, three years later, put it up for auction at Sotheby's in London where it was bought by an Indian businessman, Mr C. Patel.

SHAH JAHAN TABLE-CUT



On 16 May 1985, Christie's put up for sale in Geneva what was described as 'A spectacular historic table-cut diamond'. It was an unmounted table-cut of octagonal outline, weighing 56.71 (metric) carats, and measuring 44.6 by 33 by 3.6mm (1.76 by 1.3 by 0.14 inches). The vendor thought that such a stone might once have formed a part of the 'Great Table' diamond which Tavernier had seen at Golconda in 1642. However, as the result of the examination of the Iranian Crown Jewels undertaken by leading Canadian gemologists in the late 1960s, it has been proved that two diamonds, the 'Darya-i Nur' and the 'Nur ul-Ain', have almost certainly been cut from that legendary diamond. Nevertheless this table-cut stone has been demonstrated to

The 'Shah Jahan Table-cut' diamond.

possess a history of its own, every whit as fascinating as that of the 'Great Table'.

Before the sale, the owner of the diamond showed it to Miss Anna Somers-Cocks, of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, who suggested that it might be taken to the Institute of Geological Sciences for further examination. It was examined there by Mr E. A. Jobbins and Dr R. R. Harding, whose attention was then drawn by Miss Sue Stronge, also of the Victoria and Albert Museum, to paintings in the Freer Gallery, Washington, of Jahangir Shah, the fourth Mogul emperor who reigned from 1605 to 1627. Jahangir is depicted

wearing wrist bracelets containing flat table-cut stones which are not dissimilar to the stone Mr Jobbins and Dr Harding were examining. But even more revealing is a miniature dated 1616/17 in the Victoria and Albert Museum; this shows Shah Jahan, the third son and successor to Jahangir Shah, displaying a *sarpech* (turban ornament) in his left hand, made of gold and set with a cushion-shaped emerald with pearl and gold sprays. The octagonal diamond below the emerald closely resembles this table-cut: the resemblance becomes even more convincing when the hand of Shah Jahan is enlarged to almost actual size. The contours and size of the



Shah Jahan, the fifth Mogul Emperor, holding a turban ornament. The octagonal diamond below the emerald closely resembles the 'Table-Cut' diamond.

two stones become unquestionably one and the same. As Christie's pointed out in the splendid catalogue of the sale, the accuracy of this pictorial rendering is the more admirable as Nadir uz-Zaman, the artist, endeavoured to convey an image of artistic vision which did not primarily rely upon gemological precision. The court miniaturists in the Mogul Empire enjoyed both high rank and the confidence of the Emperor which enabled them to study precious stones in detail before portraying them.

In 1657 Shah Jahan fell ill, so precipitating a struggle for power among his four sons, Dara Shikuh, Murad Shikuh, Aurangzeb and Shah Shuja. It was the third son who emerged victorious and declared himself Emperor in 1658, confining his father in the Agra Fort until his death there in 1666. The French traveller and jeweller Jean Baptiste Tavernier was received at the court of Aurangzeb in 1665, where he was shown some of the Emperor's jewels. After he had inspected the 'Great Mogul' diamond, the chief treasurer of the jewels showed him:

another diamond of pear shape of very good form and fine water, with three other diamonds, table-shaped, two of them clean and the third with some little black specks. Each weighs fifty-five to sixty ratis, and the pear sixty-two and a half.

In *The Great Diamonds of the World* Edwin Streeter included an entry headed 'The Three Tables' wherein he calculated that, according to Tavernier's scale of reduction, the weights of the three stones would be from 48 to 52 old (from 49.5 to 54.05 metric) carats. As Christie's observed in the sale catalogue, the similarity to the weight of 'Shah Jahan's Table-cut' is more than coincidental, especially as it is difficult to ascertain how accurate Tavernier's assessment was in India more than three hundred years ago.

Streeter concluded his account of the three table-cuts by stating that none of them had been traced since the time of Tavernier nor had any stones answering to their description ever been seen in Europe. In both respects he was wrong – as will shortly become apparent, at least one of the table-cuts was known to have existed during his lifetime. However, more than likely he was right in suggesting that they had probably been carried off by Nadir Shah after the sack of Delhi in 1739.

The year 1851 was marked by the staging of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, London. In June of that year the following comment appeared in *The Times* under the heading 'The Great Exhibition':

In the British department, among the gorgeous and costly display of jewellery and gold and silver plate, there is a small case which attracts considerable attention. It contains imitations in crystal of all the largest diamonds in the world.

Among these models was one that is clearly Shah Jahan's table-cut. The notes that accompanied it placed it under



'Russia' and described it as:

A flat Table Diamond Scollop'd at the Corners, adorns the Gripe of the Emperor's sword:-68 carats. £36,992.

The existence of 'The Russian Table' was known to Streeter who wrote:

A Russian Secret

It is not a little remarkable that it should often be so difficult to discover the whereabouts of a great and famous diamond, the more so when we discover its financial value. The 'Russian Table' is in evidence, both in works of history and of travel, but that is all. Its existence is chronicled, and its size; but we know of no person who has seen it, and as yet have not unearthed a single 'biographic' incident connected with it. Possibly in future editions of the present work, our correspondents may help us. The secrets of Russian jewels are in some cases as well kept as those of Turkey. The 'Table' is reported to be a fine stone, though of course its form is the least attractive style of diamond cutting. It weighs 68 carats.

Two discrepancies obviously exist between the model and the real stone: the weights and the position of the drill holes. These holes had been drilled near one edge of the diamond to allow wire, or some form of cord, to be threaded through, thereby enabling it to be worn as a pendant.

In 1985 at the time of the sale, it was stated that the 'Shah Jahan Table-cut' came into ownership of the vendor's family in 1893 when his father had it in his possession during a visit to Paris. Therefore, the display of a model of the diamond at the Great Exhibition denotes that its existence was known at least forty years before. Its attribution to Russia in the notes that accompanied the models may have been correct because it is more than likely that the stone travelled westwards to

The 'Russian Table Portrait' diamond, weighing 25 carats, now in The Kremlin. The flat, mirror-like stone reflects the image of the beholder.

that country from India. In 1741 Nadir Shah sent an emissary to the recently proclaimed Empress Elizabeth at St Petersburg with gifts that included various jewelled artefacts, among them being a ring once worn by Shah Jahan. It is a moot point whether or not the table-cut diamond became a Russian Crown Jewel: if it did enter the Treasury then clearly it was one of the jewels which the Czars – or the Czarinas – on occasions gave away as presents, usually for political reasons. It is of interest to note that a smaller and less imposing diamond, cut in a style not altogether dissimilar from that of Shah Jahan's diamond, has been retained in the Russian Treasury: this is the so-called 'Russian Table Portrait' diamond, weighing 25 carats.

A description of the 'Shah Jahan Table-cut' by Mr Jobbins and Dr Harding appeared in 1984 in *The Journal of Gemmology*. They noted that the diamond shows a distinct pale pink colour: a grading might be 'fancy light pink' but the stone was not examined under ideal grading conditions. The corners by the drill holes appear to have been ground away, while there is some evidence from marks along the edge of the diamond of earlier drill holes. Therefore, there may have been attempts to drill more widely spaced holes which failed because of fracturing, and the stone may have weighed considerably more before the existing set of holes were drilled. There are no prominent inclusions, but iron staining is present in cracks near one corner. Cleavage traces are present in several areas, and these were carefully noted with a view to orientating the stone within an octahedral framework.

At the auction in Geneva this most interesting and unusual diamond remained unsold.

GREAT MOGUL

The legendary 'Great Mogul' is the largest diamond yet recorded to have been found in India. That is according to the accepted accounts of its history – which is wrapped in mystery. However, even though it may be heretical to do so, one must query its original weight, stated to have been 787½ carats.

The stone is believed to have been unearthed in the Kollur diggings, in the vicinity of Golconda, around 1650, thus placing its discovery during the reign of the fifth Mogul Emperor, Shah Jahan. But it was that ruler's son and successor, Aurangzeb, who was responsible for having the diamond shown to Jean Baptiste Tavernier. Tavernier referred to the stone three times in his *Six Voyages*. The first reference is in Volume II, where he wrote:

On November 1st, 1665, I was at the palace to take leave of the King. But he sent word to say that he did not wish me to leave without seeing his jewels, since I had seen the splendour of his fête. Early next day there came five or six officers from the Nabob Jafer Khan to summon me to the King's presence. On my arrival at the Court the two keepers of the royal jewels, of which I have elsewhere spoken, accompanied me to his Majesty, and after the customary salutations they brought me to a small room at one end of the hall where the King was seated on his throne, and whence he could see us. In this room I found Akel Khan, chief keeper of the State jewels, who on seeing us ordered four of the King's eunuchs to fetch the jewels which were brought on two large trays, lacquered with gold leaf, and covered with small cloths, made on purpose, one of red velvet, the other of embroidered green velvet. After uncovering and counting over the pieces there several times, an inventory of the same was drawn up by three scribes present on the occasion. For the Indians do everything with great care and composure, and when they see anyone acting in a hurry or irritated they stare at him in silence and laugh at him for a fool.

The first piece that Akel Khan placed in my hands was the great diamond which is rose cut, round and very high on one side. On the lower edge there is a slight crack, and a little flaw in it. Its water is fine, and weighs 319½ ratis, which makes 280 of our carats, the rati being ⅞ of a carat. When Mirgimola [Mir Jumla], who betrayed his master, the King of Golconda, presented this stone to Shah Jahan, to whom he withdrew, it was in the rough state (brut), and at that time weighed 900 ratis, which makes 787½ carats, and there were several flaws in it. Had this stone been in Europe it would have been treated differently: for some fine pieces would have been taken from it, and it would have remained

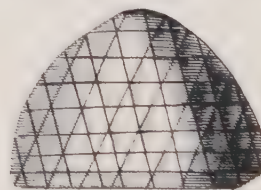
heavier than it now is, instead of which it has been quite ground down. It was Hortensio Borgis who cut it, for which he was also badly paid. When it was cut he was reproached for having spoilt the stone which might have remained heavier, and, instead of rewarding him for his work, the King fined him 10,000 rupees, and would have taken more if he had possessed more. If Hortensio knew his business well, he would have taken from this large stone some fine pieces without wronging the King, and without having so much trouble to grind it down. But he was not a very skilful diamond cutter.

Fifty pages further on occurs Tavernier's second reference:

A number of stones are now found here from 10 to 40 carats, and even occasionally of much larger size. But amongst others, the great diamond which weighed 900 carats before being cut, and which Mirgimola [Mir Jumla] presented to Aurangzeb, as I have elsewhere said, had been taken from this mine.

The third reference occurs when Tavernier gives details of all the large gems which he had encountered during his travels, illustrating his accounts with drawings. Tavernier describes the stone as follows:

This diamond belongs to the Great Mogul, who did me the honour of showing it to me with all his other jewels. The form is shown in which it remained after being cut, and having been permitted to weigh it, I found that it weighs 319½ ratis, which make 279⅞ of our carats. In the rough state it weighed ... 907 ratis, which make 793 carats. This stone presents the form of an egg cut in half.



Tavernier's drawing of the 'Great Mogul' diamond.

Tavernier was surprised at the heaviness of the diamond when he weighed it, but was assured that it was the same stone which had originally come from the Kollur diamond field. His surprise was justified because, although the rough stone had possessed numerous flaws, the loss of weight incurred in the grinding down operation amounted to more than 64 per cent. He would also have been aware of the oriental preference for size above all qualities, a considera-



Aurangzeb (left) with a courtier. Shah Jahan's third son and successor, he showed his jewels to Tavernier when the latter visited his court in 1665.

tion that ought too to have been uppermost in the mind of the cutter. Furthermore the process of reducing the stone's weight to 280 carats or thereabouts must have occupied weeks, months – even a year or two – so that it is likely that the Emperor would have been kept informed of the progress of the work that was being laboriously carried out on a unique diamond whose weight apparently greatly exceeded that of any diamond hitherto found in India.

The account of the recutting of the 'Great Mogul', as it has come down to us, is baffling. It comes as no surprise that the unsatisfactory results of the work of the Venetian cutter,

Hortensio Borgio, should have led to him being heavily fined. However, the Indian author N. B. Sen, in his book *Glorious History of Koh-i-Noor* considers the whole story of the diamond's cutting, including the involvement of Borgio, to be unbelievable. He has observed that there is no support for it in contemporary Indian chronicles which have contained authentic and accurate accounts of the period, some of which are directly connected with the diamond. In his view, if a European cutter had ruined the stone, such an event would not have gone unrecorded in the history of Shah Jahan.

Mr Sen has given another reason for suggesting that the story of the Venetian's handling of the 'Great Mogul' ought not to be regarded as historically correct. Far from Indian cutters of the time being looked upon as inferior practitioners of their craft, it was the Europeans who were so regarded; the local cutters possessed greater experience and were considered more skilful. In particular, while not denying the presence of Borgio on the scene at the time, he was known to have been bad at his trade so that it is inconceivable that the Mogul Emperor's choice of cutter would have fallen on him.

In Mr Sen's opinion the complete story of the cutting of the 'Great Mogul' is incorrect. On the other hand Tavernier's account explicitly refers to the Venetian – although he misspells his name – and to the earliest history of the stone: but it was not what he himself witnessed but what he was told by others. So his surprise, nay his incredulity, at the huge reduction in the weight of the diamond may perhaps suggest that the 'Great Mogul' weighed less in its rough state than 787½ carats and that the cutting had not been in fact such a lamentable operation.

We can be certain of one fact; Tavernier did cast his eyes on the diamond, remarking that its shape was like half an egg. This observation is important when considering the complicated question of the subsequent history of the 'Great Mogul' which is discussed elsewhere, under the 'Koh-i-noor' and the 'Orlov'. Let it suffice here to suggest that Edwin Streeter erred when he wrote that in his opinion the 'Great Mogul' had ceased to exist as such, and to assert that this legendary diamond is none other than the 'Orlov'.

GREAT TABLE

The examination and documentation of the contents of the Iranian Treasury in 1966 by a team of Canadians, experts in various fields, resulted in the disclosure of much valuable and fascinating information. Subsequently this appeared in *Crown Jewels of Iran*, published in 1968 by the University of Toronto Press. From the

gemological aspect the most interesting fact that emerged was the revelation that the principal diamond among the jewellery, the 'Darya-i Nur', constitutes the major portion of the legendary 'Great Table' which Tavernier had seen and drawn when he was in India in 1642. The history of the 'Great Table' is, therefore, discussed under the 'Darya-i Nur'.

FLORENTINE

The history of this, one of the most famous of all diamonds and variously known as the 'Florentine', 'Tuscan', 'Grand Duke of Tuscany' or the 'Austrian Yellow', has over the centuries become very confused.

In 1880 the Austrian authorities issued a publication entitled *Catalogue of the objects contained in the Treasury of the Imperial Royal House of Austria* which only served to add to the confusion. The account of the 'Florentine' contained therein stated that the diamond had once been in the ownership of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy (1433–77). The name of this mediaeval warrior, who devoted a large part of his energies to establishing Burgundy as a powerful and independent kingdom, often crops up in diamond literature. It has been stated that in 1476 the Duke of Burgundy handed over three diamonds for cutting to the celebrated cutter Ludwig van Berquiem, who is credited with having been the first to conceive the idea of cutting diamonds to a deliberate geometrical design, thereby releasing their brilliance and 'fire' to an unprecedented degree. According to Ludwig's descendant, Robert van Berquiem, the Duke of Burgundy gave away two of these diamonds: a triangular-shaped stone that was presented to Louis XI of France, with whom he had allied himself, and a thinly cut stone that was presented to Pope Sixtus IV.

Charles the Bold retained the third diamond, a thickly cut stone set in a ring, which at the time was described as 'one of the largest diamonds in Christendom'. It was of a pyramidal shape, 15.8mm ($\frac{5}{8}$ inch) square at the base, with the apex cut into a four-rayed star coinciding with the middle of each face of the pyramid. It is often alleged, as in the above-mentioned catalogue, that this diamond is none other than the 'Florentine'.

Other accounts have identified it with yet more famous diamonds, while it has further been stated that, according to the custom of the day, the Duke of Burgundy always went forth into battle with his jewels, first to keep them under observation, secondly on account of the mysterious powers attributed to precious stones. However, if one were to believe the various accounts of the exploits of Charles the Bold it would almost seem as if he went into battle with a portmanteau marked 'Famous Diamonds' and that he lost all his possessions on a variety of battlefields! Two facts are beyond doubt: first, that his pyramidal-shaped diamond is a different gem from the 'Florentine', and secondly that he was defeated and killed by the Swiss at the Battle of Nancy in 1477.

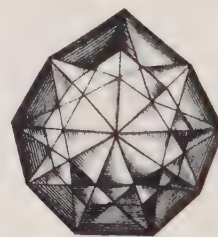
The authentic history of the 'Florentine' begins with its ownership by the Medici, one of the most famous and powerful families in Europe, whose name appears in Florentine chronicles as early as the twelfth century. The Medici

started as rich merchants in Florence, became rulers of the city during the Renaissance and, in due course, Grand Dukes of Tuscany in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. That indefatigable traveller and collector of gems, Jean Baptiste Tavernier, visited the Court of the reigning Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand II (1610–70), in 1657 and he was able to examine and weigh the 'Florentine', which had probably reached Italy via one of the customary trade routes from the East. In his celebrated work *Six Voyages of John Baptiste Tavernier* (an English edition was published in London in 1678) he wrote as follows:

The Great Duke of Tuscany's Diamond weighs 139 carats, clean and well-shaped cut in facets every way; but in regard the water inclines somewhat toward the colour of Citron; I do not value the first carat above 135 livres; so that by the rule the Diamond ought to be worth 2608336 livres.

Five pages further on in his book, Tavernier drew the diamond and wrote:

Number 2: Is the figure of a Diamond belonging to the Great Duke of Tuscany. It weighs 139 carats and a half; the fault of it is that the water inclines somewhat to a Citron colour.



Tavernier's drawing of the 'Florentine' diamond.

According to the current system of weights, the 'Florentine' would weigh 137.27 metric carats. When Tavernier saw the diamond it was the largest known in Europe. If the measurements of the Duke of Burgundy's diamond have been correctly reported, such a gem would not have approximated the weight of the 'Florentine'. The great diamond was cut as a double rose, with 126 facets and with an irregular nonagonal outline, giving it the appearance of a nine-rayed star. This style of cutting was recognized as being typically Indian which renders it even more unlikely that it was one of the diamonds which Van Berquiem cut for the Duke of Burgundy.

When it became evident that the Medici family was nearing the end of its long and illustrious reign, the European powers made arrangements in 1735 whereby Tuscany would come under the rule of the Dukes of Lorraine. Following the death of the last male Medici, Gian Gastone (1671–1737), this plan

was put into effect, but not without considerable resistance from Gian Gastone's sister, Anna Maria Medici. It was due to her efforts that a considerable part of the treasures amassed by the Medicis were preserved for the city of Florence and its citizens. The 'Florentine' diamond, however, did leave the home of the Medicis in 1743 to become part of the Crown Jewels of Austria when that country's ruler, the Empress Maria Theresa, was betrothed to Francis Stephen, Duke of Lorraine, who had earlier inherited the Dukedom of Tuscany. At his coronation as the Emperor Francis I, he wore the 'Florentine' diamond set in a crown. Subsequently, the gem was set in a hat surrounded by other diamonds.

After the collapse of the Hapsburg Empire in 1918, the Crown Jewels, including the 'Florentine' which was then set in a brooch, accompanied the royal family into exile in Switzerland. Since then, nothing has been definitely known of the whereabouts of this famous gem. According to a spokesman for the Empress, it may have been among the jewels which a member of the royal family's entourage, who proved less than honest, suggested selling in South America. The Crown Jewels in exile had many adventures, including a lawsuit after they had been put up for sale in Lucerne.

The question of the whereabouts of the 'Florentine' has continued till today to arouse the interest of gemologists and historians alike and there has been considerable speculation on the subject.

In 1923 a large yellow diamond, weighing 99.52 carats, appeared in the United States. Significantly, this diamond, known as 'The Shah of Persia', showed evidence of having been recut and there were veiled suggestions that it may have been the missing 'Florentine'. It was claimed that 'The Shah of Persia' had a history of its own: that it had been brought to America by General V. D. Starosselky, a Russian military expert, who had been loaned to the Persians by the Czar and subsequently rewarded with the diamond by the Persian government in appreciation of his excellent command of its army.

Several facts about the history claimed for 'The Shah of Persia' are, to say the least, puzzling. Considering the prevailing political situation at the time, it would appear strange that the last Czar would have done anything at all to assist the Persians. Furthermore, there is no mention of a General Starosselky in any one of the standard encyclopaedias, works of reference or historical studies on either side of the Atlantic devoted to this period of history. One should surely have expected even a slight reference to someone of this importance. Who was General V. D. Starosselky? Truth to tell, he sounds like the invention of one of the French naturalist school of authors – a White Russian who had strayed into the red-light quarter of some city! Lastly, recent research on the Crown Jewels of Iran has disclosed that the country's rulers were by nature rather more prone to acquire jewels than to give them away.

However, 'The Shah of Persia' is cushion-shaped and it is, therefore, debatable whether a diamond of this particular



Emperor Francis I of Austria, who wore the 'Florentine' set in a crown at his Coronation.

cut, with a weight of almost 100 carats, could have been fashioned from the 'Florentine'. The only way to resolve the question of the identity of 'The Shah of Persia' vis-à-vis the 'Florentine' would be to submit the former to a thorough examination. If it originally came from South Africa, the source of so many large cape-coloured diamonds, its 'water' would differ considerably from that of an Indian gem.

At the conclusion of the Second World War there came a report that the 'Florentine' had been returned to Vienna. Previously Hitler had seized what remained of the Austrian Crown Jewels and, for safety's sake, ordered them to be buried in a salt mine near Salzburg. This area of Austria came into the American zone of occupation at the end of the war and General Mark Clark had all the loot restored to Vienna in a public ceremony. Amid much rejoicing, someone reported that the 'Florentine' had returned to its former home. Alas, the report proved false. Officials of the Treasure Room in the Museum of Art confirmed that the gem had left with the last Emperor and had never been seen since in Vienna.

The final chapter in the story of the 'Florentine' has taken place in more recent years. A court in Vienna was petitioned to settle a dispute between Archduke Otto, son and heir of the last Emperor, and a Dr Theodor Salvator, who has claimed direct descent from the Emperor Francis Joseph. In his application, Dr Salvator requested the court to order the Archduke to produce a record of all the Imperial valuables in his possession. Dr Salvator was hopeful that the 'Florentine' diamond would turn up in the inventory. The outcome of this litigation is not known – nor, unfortunately, is the fate of the 'Florentine'.

DARYA-I NUR

A

ll who write about the history of diamonds must forever remain grateful to Jean Baptiste Tavernier, the eminent seventeenth-century French traveller. His descriptions of the alluvial mining in India, the methods of valuing stones and, perhaps above all, some of the great diamonds which he was able to examine there and elsewhere constitute a valuable source of information to later writers.

In Chapter XIX of Part II of his *Travels in India*, published in 1676, Tavernier made eight drawings in which he illustrated six stones, two of them twice. This chapter is headed 'Observations upon the fairest and largest diamonds and rubies which the author has seen in Europe and Asia...; as also upon those which the author sold to the King upon his last return from the Indies: with the figure of a large Topaz and the fairest Pearls in the World'. The King to whom Tavernier referred was Louis XIV of France (1643–1715).

Tavernier's comments upon these drawings were as follows:

Number 1.

This Diamond belongs to the Great Mogul, being cut into the same form; and it weighs 319 Ratis and an half, which makes 279 carats and nine 16th of our Carats: when it was rough, it weigh'd 907 Ratis, which make 973 Carats.

Number 2.

Is the figure of a diamond belonging to the Great Duke of Tuscany. It weighs 139 carats and an half: the fault of it is, that the water enclines somewhat to a Citron-colour.

Number 3.

Is a stone that weighs 176 and one 8th Mangelins, which makes 242 Carats and five 16th. A Mangelin coming to one and three 8ths of our Carats. Being at Golconda I saw this Stone; and it was the biggest that ever I saw in my life in a Merchant's hands. It was valu'd at 500000 Roupies, or 750000 Livres of our Money: I offer'd 400000 Roupies but could not have it.

Number 4.

Is the figure of a Diamond which I bought at Amadabat; and it weigh'd 178 Ratis, or 157 Carats and a quarter.

Number 5.

The fore-mentioned Diamond after it was cut.

Number 6.

Another Diamond I bought. It weighs 63 carats and three 8ths.

Number 7 and Number 8

Two pieces of Stone that was cut in two, which being entire weigh'd 104 Carats. Though of good water it seemed foul in the middle. A Hollander bought it and cutting it in two found in the middle of it 8 Carats of filth like a rotten weed. The small piece happened to be clean but for the other wherein there are so many cross flaws there was no way but to make seven or eight pieces of it.

The drawing under Number 1 refers to the legendary 'Great Mogul' diamond whose present whereabouts are not known for certain; however, it has been identified with several famous stones, the most likely being the 'Orlov' now displayed in the Kremlin, in Moscow. The second diamond depicted by Tavernier is the 'Florentine' which has not been seen since shortly after the First World War.

It is the table-cut stone under Number 3 which interests us here. Tavernier saw it at Golconda in 1642 and it has come to be known as the 'Great Table' diamond. The owner of this extraordinary stone allowed Tavernier to make a casting of it which he sent to two of his friends in Surat, drawing their attention both to its great beauty as well as its price.

It would be surprising if all trace had been lost of such an exceptional diamond, the more so in the case of the 'Great Table' because in Tavernier's time it was, so to speak, on the market instead of being hidden away in some potentate's collection of jewels or a sacred place of pilgrimage. In *The Great Diamonds of the World*, published in 1882, Edwin Streeter considered that the unusual shape and size of the stone would allow it to be easily recognizable should it ever come to light again, but he suggested that it was more likely that it had been broken up by being cleaved into two or more stones. Streeter suggested that the so-called 'Russian Table'



Tavernier's drawing of the 'Great Table'. Recent research has disclosed that the 'Darya-i Nur' constitutes the major part of the diamond.

diamond, whose weight he recorded as 68 carats, might possibly be one of the fragments. Nothing is known for sure of such a stone today, although among the contents of the USSR Diamond Fund there is a thin, flat, irregular pear-shape, known as the 'Russian Table Portrait' diamond. But this stone, which weighs 25 carats, cannot have any connection with the 'Great Table' diamond for a very obvious reason which will become apparent later in this account. Streeter also wrote of the 'Great Table' diamond that '... since the time of Tavernier it has not been seen by any European expert'. As we shall see, he was totally, but intriguingly, wrong on this point.

In the meantime another theory concerning the 'Great Table' was put forward by the late Professor Samuel Tolansky, a physicist from London University, who was one of the first group of scientists chosen to examine dust brought to earth by the crews of the Apollo moon missions. In a pamphlet entitled 'The Great Table Diamond' which he published in 1962 Professor Tolansky drew attention to Tavernier's precise differentiation between 'diamond' and 'stone' in the captions to his illustrations. Tolansky put forward the suggestion that Tavernier's 'Great Table' was not a diamond but a ruby.

To support this theory Tolansky pointed out that the shape of the stone was completely anomalous as a diamond and that nothing resembling it had appeared before or since. He concluded by stating that Tavernier never said explicitly that Number 3 was a diamond: instead he referred to it as a stone whilst using the word diamond for other gems. The mystery of the disappearance of Tavernier's great diamond had, therefore, been solved – it was never a diamond in the first place.

Four years later Professor Tolansky's theory about the 'Great Table' was to be refuted as the result of one of the most absorbing and painstaking pieces of detection in the field of gemology for many a year. This arose from a grant from the Birks Family Foundation which enabled three officials from the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Dr V. B. Meen, Dr A. D. Tushingham and Mr G. G. Waite, to study and to authenticate the Crown Jewels of Iran. Their researches led to the publication in 1968 of a book, *Crown Jewels of Iran*, which is the most exhaustive and valuable record ever to have been published on this legendary collection of jewels. It remains indispensable to anyone writing upon the subject of historical diamonds and is all the more valuable in the light of subsequent events which were to take place in Iran in the late 1970s.

Since the Persian invaders under Nadir Shah sacked and pillaged Delhi in 1739, carrying off hordes of booty, it has been taken for granted that the treasury in Teheran contained several famous diamonds. Indeed if certain accounts were to be relied upon, it would appear that the belligerent Nadir Shah should be held responsible for the disappearance of the majority of the celebrated diamonds of Indian origin! In the event research has revealed that the Iranian Crown Jewels contained two famous historical diamonds, the 'Darya-i Nur' and the 'Taj-i Mah', both weighing over 100 old carats,

as well as a number of lesser Golconda stones. In addition there were several large cape-coloured diamonds, clearly of South African origin, which had probably been purchased during the visit of Shah Nasir ud-Din to Europe in 1889.

The 'Taj-i Mah', meaning 'Crown of the Moon' is a fine unmounted oval Mogul-cut diamond weighing 115.06 metric carats. But it is surpassed by the 'Darya-i Nur', or 'Sea of Light', which is the principal gem in the collection and one of the great diamonds of history. It proved impossible to ascertain the exact weight of the 'Darya-i Nur' because it was mounted in a setting containing many smaller Indian diamonds. It is estimated to weigh between 175 and 195 metric carats, a figure which accords with the weight of 186 old carats (= 190.9 metric carats) given by Sir John Malcolm (1769–1833), an administrator and diplomat, in his book *Sketches of Persia* which he published in 1827. Malcolm visited Teheran early in the nineteenth century and was permitted by the Shah to inspect the Persian regalia. He noted that the 'Darya-i Nur' and the 'Taj-i Mah' were set as the principal gems in a pair of bracelets, valued at nearly one million pounds.

The 'Darya-i Nur' almost certainly came from the alluvial diamond fields in the vicinity of Golconda. It is a rectangular, step-cut tablet with a crown so shallow as to be almost negligible. It measures 41.4mm (1.6 inches) long by 29.5mm (1.16 inches) broad (at the centre) by 12.15mm (0.47 inches) thick. The pavilion consists of few large step-facets which terminate in a culet about 20 to 25mm (0.78 to 0.98 inches) square and considerably off-centre, an additional shallow step-facet having been added to the pavilion on the narrow end. The finish on the table is superb. On one of the pavilion facets is a Persian inscription: 'The Sultan, Sahib Qiram, Fath Ali Shah, Qajar 1250' (AD 1834 – the year of his death). The 'Darya-i Nur' is pale pink, flawless and possesses that exceptional limpidity, so characteristic of the finest Indian diamonds. Its weight makes it by far the largest pink diamond in existence and leads one to speculate whether Edwin Streeter was aware of its true colour when he wrote, 'the "Darya-i Nur" which in imagination might seem to flash blood red rays'.

It was the colour of the 'Darya-i Nur' which led to the detection of the diamond's true identity by the Canadian gemologists. Their conclusion was that the 'Darya-i Nur' constitutes the major portion of Tavernier's 'Great Table' diamond.

The clue was supplied by a reading of the introduction to *The Dynasty of the Kajars* by Sir Harford Jones Brydges (1764–1847), a diplomat and author who, after entering the service of the East India Company, was later appointed envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Court of Persia from 1807 to 1811. In 1791 Harford Jones, as he then was, visited Luft-Ali Khan, the last of the Zend dynasty which then ruled Persia. This ruler wished him to act as agent in the sale of the 'Darya-i Nur' and other gems in order to raise funds to pursue his war against the Qajar chief, Aga Mohammed Khan.



Harford Jones had visited Persia before and had become a trusted and respected visitor to the country with the additional attraction to Luft-Ali Khan of a knowledge of gems.

As a result of this invitation from the Persian ruler Harford Jones was able to handle and examine his collection of jewels. He described the 'Darya-i Nur' as a 'table diamond', its colour 'a slight tinge of a palish pink' and its 'water ... perfect and brilliant'. Furthermore, he stated that 'the shape and size of the gem perfectly agreed with the size of the drawing given in Tavernier'. This is Number 3 of Tavernier's drawings in his book, a copy of which Harford Jones had with him at the time. The one discrepancy which apparently caused him some concern lay in the question of the precise weight of the diamond which was reported to him as being '176 carats and a small fraction' whereas Tavernier had stated the stone he had seen at Golconda had 242 carats. Dr Meen and his colleagues suggested that the weight that was reported to Harford Jones should have been '176 mangelins and a small fraction' not '176 carats and a small fraction'. Such an error could have arisen either through a slip of the tongue by the jeweller in reporting the weight to him, through a fault in his inspection or an error in recording. In any event all are agreed upon the validity today as much as then of Harford Jones' statement that 'it was not likely that there should be two stones in the world of such magnitude without it being known in whose possession they were'.

However, if it is agreed that the diamond known as the 'Darya-i Nur' is identical to the 'Great Table' stone of Tavernier, it will become apparent that there is a difference between the 'Darya-i Nur' which Harford Jones saw in 1791 and the diamond of the same name in existence today.

The existing 'Darya-i Nur' is considerably shorter than Tavernier's 'Great Table' and a comparison also indicates that the breadths are similar and that both taper towards one end. The diamond known to us today has a few facets cut round the girdle and on the pavilion. In addition, the diamond

The ancient city of Golconda in India, once a centre for diamond trading and cutting.

which Harford Jones saw apparently bore no inscription whereas the present-day gem now bears the name of Fath Ali Shah and a date equivalent to 1834.

The 'Darya-i Nur' may now possess a greater symmetry to the western eyes but this would appear insufficient reason to have persuaded an oriental potentate to have reduced so drastically the size of the gem. One recalls that in the East a gem's size rather than its symmetry or brilliance has always been appreciated as its most prized asset. This fact suggested to the Canadian experts that at some stage in its history the 'Darya-i Nur' had suffered some accident, most likely around the year 1834 which is the date inscribed on the pavilion facet.

If, therefore, the 'Darya-i Nur' comprises the major part of Tavernier's 'Great Table', what then became of the rest of the diamond? This question was answered by the discovery of another pink diamond among the Iranian Crown Jewels. This is the 'Nur ul-Ain' or 'Light of the Eye', a slightly drop-shaped oval brilliant-cut measuring 30 by 26 by 11mm (1.18 by 1.02 by 0.43 inches), and of a pink colour and limpidity that matches perfectly those qualities of the 'Darya-i Nur'. The 'Nur ul-Ain' is the central stone in a tiara created by Harry Winston for the Empress Farah at the time of her wedding, and is estimated to weigh approximately 60 metric carats.

So as to test the possibility of the 'Nur ul-Ain' having been cut from the remaining part of the 'Great Table', Mr Waite made precise models of that stone, assuming that its thickness was identical to that of the 'Darya-i Nur' as we know it today, the 'Darya-i Nur' itself and the cleavage piece which would have remained. From the latter, after much experimenting, he fashioned a model of the pink brilliant which corresponded with its dimensions. Indeed, Mr Waite discovered that the very shape of the fragment dictated the cutting

of the pink brilliant as a shallow stone with the slight drop-shape and asymmetric shoulders which it actually possesses.

Because the 'Great Table' is said to have been flawless, some concern was caused by the presence of a slight flaw in the 'Nur ul-Ain'. However, far from becoming an obstacle to the theory, the existence of such a flaw was considered to have provided further confirmation of its validity. Examination showed the flaw to be incipient cleavages. Consideration of the orientation of these cleavages led to the conclusion that when the crystallographic orientation of the 'Nur ul-Ain' was matched to that of the 'Darya-i Nur' the former lay in the position it must have occupied to have been cut from the cleavage fragment. Furthermore it was clear that the flaw lay on the surface which had been adjacent to the existing 'Darya-i Nur': this fact, in turn, suggested the reason for the large asymmetrically placed pavilion facet on the 'Darya-i Nur'.

In the accident which befell the diamond which Harford Jones had seen, incipient cleavage was formed in both pieces. When the larger piece of the 'Great Table' was cut into the existing 'Darya-i Nur' it was returned to its flawless condition by grinding away the incipient cleavage, thus forming the asymmetrically placed facet. The inscription bearing the name of the ruler at the time together with the date 1834 strongly suggest that the accident to the 'Great Table' had occurred shortly before.

The date of the recutting of the smaller piece into the 'Nur ul-Ain' is unknown but it is thought most likely to have taken place during the long reign of Nasir ud-Din (1848–96). Not only was this monarch apparently responsible for the recutting of some of his predecessors' acquisitions but it was almost certainly during his reign that a number of very large South African stones were purchased, following the opening up of the diamond deposits in that country in the 1870s and 1880s. The Golestan Palace in Teheran contained workshops where diamond cutting was carried out. Concerning the 'Nur ul-Ain' it is fortunate that the oriental preference for size rather than brilliance manifested itself and that the cutter did not remove the flaw in the gem because it served as a vital clue linking it to the 'Darya-i Nur' and, in turn, identifying both diamonds with the legendary 'Great Table'.

There remained one discrepancy in the theory advanced by Dr Meen and his colleagues for linking these three diamonds, and it remains unresolved. The weight of the 'Darya-i Nur' together with that of the 'Nur ul-Ain' exceeds the weight of the 'Great Table' as reported by Tavernier; furthermore it does not allow anything for loss in cutting. But experiments made with the models clearly demonstrated that originally the 'Great Table' must have weighed over 300 old carats and that its weight, recorded by Tavernier as 242 carats, is incorrect. In any event it is important to remember the remark of Sir Harford Jones Brydges that it was unlikely there would be two stones of such size in existence without their ownership being known. Two hundred years on, the validity of his observation remains indisputable.

Since the publication of the book *Crown Jewels of Iran* momentous events have taken place within the country. The overthrow of the Pahlevi dynasty in 1979 has led to the rule of the Ayatollahs. The fate of the Crown Jewels during this turbulent period is not known. It was rumoured that the late Shah had succeeded in removing most of them with him and his entourage – surely an unlikely event for several reasons, not least the size of the collection – but this has always been denied by the Empress. Then in 1982 it was reported that the Iranian authorities planned to sell some major pieces including the 'Darya-i Nur' to help finance the Gulf War with Iraq. Dealers from the USA, Japan and elsewhere were supposedly to be sent invitations to visit Teheran and inspect 'several hundred pieces' that would be offered for sale. But the invitations never arrived, so presumably the matter was dropped. However, it is rumoured that the Iranian government has been paying for arms direct in diamonds.

Then in August 1984 four Afghan smugglers were apprehended by the Pakistani police in a village near the border with Iran, apparently trying to get away with a loot of jewels and art treasures said on first sight to be worth several million dollars and to include 'a diamond as big as an apricot'. Iran has formally requested the return of these goods but so far there has been neither any news of this happening nor of their identification. In the circumstances one can only hope that one of the world's truly historic diamonds has suffered no further damage and remains intact.

One fact which the Canadian scholars were able to ascertain during their researches was that the 'Darya-i Nur' had never at any time left the treasure vaults of the Central Bank of Iran in Teheran. This confirms, therefore, that it was not the same diamond as the one entitled the 'Derrea-i-noor' or 'Sea of Light' which the East India Company showed at the Great Exhibition held in London's Hyde Park in 1851. It was reported that this stone weighed 66 carats and was valued at £34,848 and that compared with the 'Koh-i-noor', universally adjudged to be the lion of the exhibition, it was 'much more brilliant and effective from the large surface it exposes, although comparatively insignificant in point of value'.

At the conclusion of the 1851 Exhibition the Nawab of Dacca is said to have bought this diamond. Eventually it was set in a gold bracelet and in this same setting the family of the Nawab offered it for sale in 1955 and again in 1959.

CONDÉ

Known as the 'Condé' or the 'Great Condé', this is a pink pear-shaped diamond of 9.01 carats. If its weight is small in comparison with that of most historical diamonds, nevertheless the gem deserves to be labelled 'great' on account of the career of the man after whom it is named.

The Princes of Condé were the heads of an important French branch of the House of Bourbon. Their most illustrious representative was the fourth Prince, Louis II, Prince de Condé (1621–86), called 'Le Grand Condé'. By the age of seventeen he was already Governor of Burgundy. Then he began to assume a major role in the Thirty Years War which culminated in the Battle of Rocroi in 1645 against Spain. This was the greatest French victory for a century and beyond question was due to Condé's personal efforts. In 1645 came another victory at Nördlingen, against the Bavarians. By 1648 Cardinal Mazarin was obliged to give Condé the Flanders command and in August of that year the battle of Lens crushed the Spanish forces and secured the signing of the peace at Munster.

Recognizing Condé as an increasing rival, Mazarin had him arrested in January 1650 while they were both attending Court: he was then imprisoned for thirteen months. Condé rebelled in 1651 and entered into the service of the Spanish,



Louis II, Prince of Condé in France, who was called 'Le Grand Condé'.



The 'Condé' diamond.

undertaking various campaigns. After he had been pardoned in 1660 he returned to his seat at Chantilly, north of Paris, which became a centre for the arts and was visited by the most brilliant men in Europe. The Prince was an ardent patron as well as being an ardent womaniser – although one of his admirers remarked that his achievements on the battlefield were not matched by those in the bedroom.

Louis XIII gave the diamond to Condé, probably after the Battle of Rocroi, which took place shortly before his death, in appreciation of the great services which he had rendered his country. It remained in the ownership of the Condé family until 1886 when a descendant, the Duc d'Aumale, bequeathed it to the Institut de France together with the Château de Chantilly. It is on display there and according to the terms of the Duc d'Aumale's will it must always remain there.

The sole occasion on which the diamond has left Chantilly was on the night of 11 October 1926, when it was stolen by two thieves from Alsace. It was recovered a few days later when it was found in an apple which the thieves had left in a Paris hotel room.

SHAH

This historic gem is not a cut diamond: it has been partly polished from its original weight of 95 carats to its present one of 88.7 metric carats. The 'Shah' is light yellowish in colour but possesses the limpidity characteristic of so many fine Indian diamonds. The stone has variously been described as a table-cut, a portrait-stone or bar-shaped; it has three cleavage faces and one that has been faceted. It represents, therefore, an early form, albeit somewhat primitive to our modern taste, of the art of diamond cutting that was practised in the East centuries ago.

However, the 'Shah' is of exceptional interest for a different reason. The diamond's three cleavage faces are beautifully engraved with the names of three rulers who once owned it. As such the stone is one of the few diamonds still in existence having engraved inscriptions, other notable ones being the 'Jahangir' and the 'Darya-i Nur'.

The three inscriptions tell us something about the history of the 'Shah'. The first date is that of the year 1000 in the Muslim calendar, which corresponds to our 1591, and refers to Burhan II, the ruler of Ahmदनagar. This old kingdom, situated in the north-west Deccan of India between Gujarat and Bijapur, fell to the Mogul Emperor Shah Jahan in 1636.

The second inscription reads 'Son of Jahangir Shah, Jahan Shah 1051', corresponding to 1641. Shah Jahan (1623–58) was of course the ruler who built the Taj Mahal at Agra. After much dispute he was succeeded by Aurangzeb (1658–1707), the third of his four sons, into whose hands the diamond passed. The famous French traveller and connoisseur of gems Jean Baptiste Tavernier visited the Emperor's court in 1665 and described the scene as follows: 'On the side of the throne which is opposite the Court, there is to be seen a jewel consisting of a diamond of about 80 to 90 carats weight, with rubies and emeralds around it, and when the King is seated he has the jewel in full view.' This diamond was almost certainly the 'Shah', for around its upper edge runs a small groove made most likely for the purpose of securing the cord with which it was suspended.

The third inscription is that of the Persian ruler Fath Ali Shah (1797–1834), Shah of Persia in the year 1824. Undoubtedly the Persians must have acquired the diamond following their invasion of India in 1739 under Nadir Shah; they sacked Delhi and plundered much booty including many jewels, one of them being the most famous diamond of all, the 'Koh-i-noor'. But whereas that gem eventually found its way to Great Britain, the 'Shah' travelled to Russia to become part of that country's Crown Jewels.

There are two differing accounts of how the 'Shah' became Russian property. Some authorities have stated that a grandson of Fath Ali Shah presented the gem to Czar Nicholas I

during the course of a visit to St Petersburg in 1843. Yet, considering the value and pride of ownership attached to great diamonds by Eastern potentates it is difficult to envisage the gift of such a precious object. The other account, which is the one agreed upon by its Russian owners, seems altogether more plausible.

After a dispute between Russia and Persia war was declared in 1827. At first the Persians carried all before them, recovering much lost territory, but due to the parsimony of Fath Ali Shah most of his troops had to be disbanded when the Shah refused payment during the winter. Thereupon the Russians gained the upper hand and forced the ignominious treaty of Turkmanchai upon the Persians in 1828. The man who successfully negotiated the treaty, whereby the Russians gained much territory, was Alexander Sergeyevich Griboedov, a diplomat and dramatist, best known in the latter role as the author of a satirical play in verse called 'The Misfortune of Being Clever' – perhaps the last century's equivalent of today's 'too clever by half'.

Griboedov was decorated by the Russians and appointed Minister of Persia. He tried scrupulously and forcefully to enforce the treaty of Turkmanchai; however, the Persians



The 'Shah', presented by the Persians to Czar Nicholas I. It is one of the few existing historic diamonds with an engraved inscription.

considered its terms harsh and feelings of resentment towards Griboedov were intense. Insult was added to injury when two Armenian girls escaped from the Shah's harem and took refuge in the Russian Legation. Originally they had come from Russian Armenia and wished to return there. Griboedov had no choice but to give them shelter, an act which inflamed the situation to such an extent that a mob stormed the Legation on 30 January 1829 and killed Griboedov.

As a 'token of grief' Fath Ali Shah despatched the 'Shah' diamond to Czar Nicholas I. It not only helped to placate the Czar but undoubtedly averted further warfare between the two countries.

In July 1914 the diamond was removed from the Diamond Room in the White Palace at St Petersburg and taken to Moscow for safekeeping. After the Revolution in 1917 the strong boxes containing the jewels were unlocked and the 'Shah' diamond was found. It remains today one of the most important treasures in the USSR Diamond Fund and is on display in the Kremlin. May the day never come when cutters either from the East or the West get their hands upon this historic gem just for the sake of recutting it!

Czar Nicholas I, who received the 'Shah' diamond from the Persians.



TAJ-I MAH

When the contents of the Iranian Treasury were opened up in the 1960s, the existence of three legendary Indian diamonds was revealed. They are the 'Darya-i Nur', the 'Nur ul-Ain' and the 'Taj-i Mah'. It has been conclusively proved that the first two diamonds had been cut from the same stone. The 'Taj-i Mah', meaning 'Crown of the Moon', is an imposing stone and the largest unmounted Indian diamond in the collection. Almost certainly of Golconda origin, it is irregular, Mogul-cut, colourless and of the finest quality, slightly worn on top. The diamond weighs 115.06 metric carats and measures 52.0 by 24.5 by 14.7mm (1.2 by 0.96 by 0.58 inches).

The presence of the 'Taj-i Mah' among the Crown Jewels in the Iranian capital has been known for a long time. The British administrator and diplomat Sir John Malcolm, who visited Persia early in the nineteenth century, was allowed by

Nasir ud-Din Shah, who was responsible for the enlargement of the collection of the Persian Crown Jewels.



Fath Ali Shah (1797–1834) to inspect the Regalia. He wrote:

The 'Darya-i Nur', or 'Sea of Light' weighs 186 carats, and is considered to be the diamond of the finest lustre in the world. The 'Taj-i Mah', or 'Crown of the Moon' is also a splendid diamond. It weighs 146 carats. These two are the principal in a pair of bracelets, valued at near a million sterling. Those in the crown are also of extraordinary size and value.

The diamond content of these bracelets, or armbands, is somewhat puzzling. Other travellers have specifically stated that the 'Koh-i-noor' was worn by Fath Ali Shah in one of his armbands. In this connection it is of interest to recall the fact that before the 'Koh-i-noor' was recut to its existing weight, it weighed approximately 186 carats. Could it, therefore, have been the 'Koh-i-noor' (Mountain of Light) rather than the 'Darya-i Nur' (Sea of Light) which was the companion

diamond to the 'Taj-i Mah' in the ornament? It has always been stated that the 'Darya-i Nur' and the 'Taj-i Mah' were sister stones. This may have been true from a historical point of view, but certainly not from a gemological one, since the 'Darya-i Nur' is light pink in colour while the 'Taj-i Mah' is colourless. Indeed the colour of the latter is not unlike that of the 'Koh-i-noor', so that they would have been well matched.

Whatever may have been the truth about the jewel of Fath Ali Shah there is no doubting the existence of three separate diamonds today. With regard to the discrepancy between the past and present weights of the 'Taj-i Mah', it is quite possible that at some stage in its history the stone may have undergone recutting. This is most likely to have taken place during the reign of Nasir ud-Din Shah (1848–96), the ruler who was responsible for the purchase of the numerous large diamonds, clearly of South African origin, that are among the Iranian Crown Jewels, and for the recutting of some of his predecessor's acquisitions.

NUR UL-AIN

The identification of this lovely diamond came about during the examination and documentation of the Iranian Crown Jewels undertaken by the team of distinguished Canadian gemologists in 1966. Their most significant discovery had been the realization that the most important diamond in the collection, the 'Darya-i Nur', comprised the major part of the 'Great Table' diamond which

Tavernier had seen in a merchant's hands at Golconda and tried unsuccessfully to buy. But whereas the 'Great Table' had weighed the equivalent of more than 250 metric carats, the

The 'Nur-Ul-Ain', set in the tiara designed for the marriage of Muhammed Reza Shah in 1958. The diamond is thought to have been cut from the 'Great Table'.



'Darya-i Nur' was estimated to have weighed merely between 175 and 195 carats (due to its setting in a diamond-encrusted ornament its weight could not be gauged with total accuracy). What then had become of the rest of the 'Great Table'? It was surely unlikely that the remaining portion of such a unique stone did not exist in some form or another.

The answer was supplied by the discovery in a tiara of the 'Nur ul-Ain', meaning 'Light of the Eye', a pink, slightly drop-shaped oval brilliant-cut, estimated to weigh about 60 metric carats. A comparison of the 'Nur ul-Ain' with the 'Darya-i Nur' showed that they possessed identical colour and clarity. Models that were made by the gemologists showed not just the probability but the certainty that they had been fashioned from the same source. It was considered that the 'Nur ul-Ain' had most likely been cut during the reign of Nasir ud-Din

(1848–96). This ruler was responsible for the addition of a number of large South African diamonds to the Crown Jewels, which were cut and polished in the workshops in the Golestan Palace in Teheran.

The 'Nur ul-Ain', which measures 30 by 26 by 11 mm (1.18 by 1.02 by 0.43 inches), has been set as the centre ornament in a magnificent tiara created by Harry Winston; the tiara was one of a number of important pieces of jewellery designed for the marriage of Muhammad Reza Shah in 1958. The diamond is surrounded by a mixture of yellow, pink, blue and white diamonds. Several exceed 10 carats, the most notable being a pink cushion-cut, estimated to weigh 19 carats. One can only hope that this beautiful tiara, last heard of when housed in the National Bank in Teheran, has survived the turbulent events of recent Iranian history.

WITTELSBACH

How often does one sadly come across phrases such as 'present location unknown' or 'all trace of the diamond has been lost' when undertaking research into the histories of famous diamonds. It is all the more satisfying, therefore, to recall an item in a newspaper that appeared in January 1962, under the heading of 'Rare diamond reappears'. This referred to the 'Wittelsbach', a diamond of a rare dark blue colour whose reappearance, admittedly after a mere three decades, was nevertheless an exciting and welcome event. The 'Wittelsbach' weighs 35.50 metric carats and measures 24.40mm (0.96 inch) in diameter and 8.29mm (0.326 inch) in depth; it is pure apart from a few fine scratches that have probably been caused during removal from its setting. The diamond has been cut with 50 facets arranged in an unusual pattern.

The first record of the 'Wittelsbach' dates from the latter part of the seventeenth century. One fact is thus certain: the diamond must be of Indian origin. Furthermore it has been suggested that a diamond of such a rare colour must once have formed part of the famous 'French Blue' diamond, weighing 112.5 old carats, which Tavernier bought in India and later sold to Louis XIV of France. The principal gem which this yielded is the 'Hope', weighing 45.52 carats, so that technical reasons alone clearly preclude the possibility of the 'Wittelsbach' from having been fashioned from the same piece of rough. The sole possibility of a connection between the 'Wittelsbach' and the 'Hope' lies in Tavernier's 'French Blue' diamond being merely part of a much larger piece of rough that had at some time been split into two (a most unlikely occurrence). However, it would be interesting to

ascertain whether the 'Wittelsbach' shares the same unusual physical properties of the 'Hope'. Certainly examination of the gem in the laboratory of the eminent Swiss gemologist, Dr Gubelin, has disclosed that under a short-wave ultraviolet light an orange phosphorescence was clearly visible.

The history of the 'Wittelsbach' has been uneventful; for the most part it has been passed down from one Royal owner to another. The gem formed part of the gift which Philip IV of Spain gave to his fifteen-year-old daughter, the Infanta Margareta Teresa, upon the occasion of her betrothal to the Emperor Leopold I of Austria in 1664. (Any chance of tracing the earlier history of the 'Wittelsbach' undoubtedly was lost when the Madrid archives were destroyed during the Spanish Civil War of 1936–39.) The bride's father commanded the Treasurer to compose a dowry from a recent acquisition of precious stones from India and Portugal. The resulting selection included a large blue diamond. Unfortunately the marriage between the Emperor and the Infanta ended with her early death in 1673. Her jewels passed to her husband, and are listed in a document dated 23 March 1673:

Diamond ornament ... consisting of ... a large brooch with a Great Blue Diamond in the centre, to which belongs a bow-shaped jewel set with rubies.

Leopold I later gave all the jewellery he had inherited from the Infanta to his third wife the Empress Eleonore Magdalena, daughter of the Elector Palatine. The Empress outlived her husband, dying in 1720. By then she had already made arrangements to bequeath the 'Great Blue Diamond' to her younger grand-daughter the Archduchess Maria Amelia,



ABOVE *The Spanish royal family with the Infanta Margareta Teresa and her ladies-in-waiting, by Velasquez. Her father, Philip IV, gave her the 'Wittelsbach' on the occasion of her betrothal.*

daughter of the Emperor Joseph I.

In 1717 the Archduchess made the acquaintance of the man she was destined to marry, the Bavarian Crown Prince Charles Albert. Born in Brussels in 1697, he was subsequently brought up and educated in Austria. Their wedding in 1722 was an event that heralded an important change in the future of the blue diamond. Henceforth it became the 'family diamond' of the ruling House of Bavaria, the Wittelsbachs; it remained so until the abdication of the last king in 1918. The diamond was the principal item in Maria Amelia's dowry and was described under the heading of diamond ornaments as, 'No 1. A large blue brilliant encircled with small brilliants', and valued at 240,000 guilders, proof of the value attached to the gem, especially when its worth is compared to that of other valuables recorded in contemporary inventories.

It was not long after the wedding of the Crown Prince to the Archduchess that his father, the Elector Maximilian Emmanuel, found himself in financial difficulties. As the head of a Royal Family he was responsible for the welfare of its members which in turn, meant that he was free to do as he pleased with all their worldly goods. Borrowing money from a banker named Oppenheim, he thus pledged both the 'Wit-

BELOW *The 'Wittelsbach' diamond.*



telsbach' diamond and a golden dinner service. They were redeemed four years later for 543,781 guilders but the Elector, who died shortly afterwards, left his son and successor the task of covering this amount. In addition the Elector left his family an impoverished one; the redemption of the diamond raised the total deficit to 4,000,000 guilders.

The new Elector, Charles Albert, clearly had an affection for the 'Wittelsbach' because during his lifetime he had its setting altered several times, each one more beautiful than the last. His successor, Maximilian III Joseph ordered yet another setting for the gem which was undertaken by a Munich jeweller. The 'Wittelsbach' was set in a circle of brilliants with a border of larger brilliants in a floral design. Suspended from this was a loop or bow of brilliants with horizontal rays radiating from a large oblong brilliant-cut diamond of a pinkish tint in the centre. Altogether a total of 700 brilliants were employed in this extravagant setting.

The last King of Bavaria to wear the blue diamond was Louis III who reigned until 1918 when Germany became a republic. After his abdication he retired to his estate in Hungary, dying there in 1921. His interment in the Theatinerkirche in Munich was a ceremonial occasion of splendour and it marked the last time that the 'Wittelsbach' diamond accompanied a monarch to his final place of rest.

In the aftermath of the First World War, Bavaria became a republic and the possessions of the former House of Wittelsbach were placed under the control of an equalization fund. The members of the Royal Family received an indemnity which, however, was soon to prove worthless in the ensuing period of inflation. Since legislation did not permit the conversion of landed property into money, the members of the Royal House were soon left in an impoverished state. Accordingly the State agreed in 1931 that certain Crown Jewels of the House of Wittelsbach should be sold to alleviate the hardship experienced by descendants of the last king.

The honour of auctioning the Bavarian Crown Jewels fell to Christie's in London, who, in November 1931, announced that the sale would take place the following month and that the contents would include 'a famous Blue diamond'. Public interest was remarkable; the sale comprised thirteen lots and lasted for over two hours. The first lot consisted of the blue diamond; it had what was apparently considered to be a good start at £3000 and the bidding rose to £5400. Although it was knocked down at that figure to a purchaser named 'Thorpe' the general impression was that the diamond remained unsold. Among the items that were sold was one described as 'a fine cinnamon-yellow oblong brilliant' for £1500 which may have been the previously mentioned diamond of a pinkish tint that featured in the jewel made for Maximilian III Joseph.

Then the mystery of the whereabouts of the 'Wittelsbach' truly begins. Whatever transpired at Christie's in December 1931, the diamond did not return to its former place of display in Munich; in its place visitors were shown a worthless piece of blue cut glass. Rumours included one that the stone had been sold illegally in 1932 through a Munich jeweller and had



Louis III and Queen Theresa of Bavaria. He was the last member of a royal family to wear the diamond.

reappeared in Holland. Later research unveiled the fact that the 'Wittelsbach' had been sold in Belgium in 1951 and that it had changed hands again in 1955. Three years later millions of visitors came to Brussels for the World Exhibition and many must have cast eyes upon the exhibition of jewellery which included a large blue diamond. But not one person appeared to have had any inkling that this was in fact a missing famous gem – the 'Wittelsbach' diamond.

Credit for the recognition of the true identity of the blue diamond must go to the late Mr Joseph Komkommer, a leading figure in the Belgian diamond industry and the fourth generation of a diamond family.

In January 1962, Mr Komkommer received a telephone call asking him to look at an old-mine cut stone with a view to its recutting. When he opened the envelope he received a shock – a dark blue diamond is among the rarest and most precious gems. Mr Komkommer at once recognized that the diamond was one of historical significance and that it would be sacrilegious to recut it. With the assistance of his son, Mr Jacques Komkommer, he identified the diamond as the 'lost' blue diamond that was formerly owned by the House of Wittelsbach. Mr Komkommer thereupon formed a consortium of diamond buyers from Belgium and the USA which purchased the diamond, then valued at £180,000. The vendors were the trustees of an estate whose identity remained undisclosed. Finally the 'Wittelsbach' was acquired by a private collector in 1964.

HORTENSIA

King Louis XIV was responsible for the addition of this pale pink diamond to the Crown Jewels of France. However, the 'Hortensia' was not one of the diamonds which the King had purchased from Tavernier, because the largest stone of this particular colour which he brought back from India weighed only 14½ carats. The 'Hortensia' was the foremost diamond in the third of the nineteen florets of buttonholes listed in the inventory of the Crown Jewels of France, made in 1691.

The diamond, which weighs 20 carats (20.53 metric), is pale pink, rather flat and rectangular in shape, and is cut on five sides. In the 1791 inventory of the Crown Jewels it was valued at no more than 48,000 livres on account of a crack extending from the edge of the girdle to the culet. It takes its name from Hortense de Beauharnais, Queen of Holland, doubtless because she wore it: Hortense was the daughter of the Empress Josephine, the step-daughter of Napoleon Bonaparte, and the mother of Napoleon III.

The 'Hortensia' was among the jewels stolen from the Garde Meuble in September 1792. One year later it was



Hortense de Beauharnais, Queen of Holland, after whom the diamond is named. She was the step-daughter of Napoleon Bonaparte.



The 'Hortensia' diamond.

recovered from an old house in the Halles district of Paris. As he was on the point of being executed, a man named Depeyron disclosed that he had hidden it in a bag containing gold and other diamonds, including the 'Regent', in a garret.

During the First Empire the 'Hortensia' was mounted on the fastening of Napoleon's epaulette braid. Later it was set in the centre of the head-band of the great diamond-encrusted comb made by the Court Jeweller, Bapst, for the Empress Eugénie in 1856. In between, in 1830, the diamond was stolen again, on this occasion from the Ministry of the Marine, but it was quickly recovered.

When the French Crown Jewels were sold in 1887 the 'Hortensia' was one of the items excluded because of their historic or artistic interest. It is currently displayed in the Galerie d'Apollon of the Louvre.

MAZARINS

Cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602–61) was the Chief Minister of France during the early part of the long reign of Louis XIV. He became a man of both power and affluence, leaving his fortune, which included pictures, books, houses, jewels and money, to the King. According to Louis XIV's biographer Nancy Mitford, Mazarin considered that none of these equalled his most precious legacy to his Sovereign – Colbert. Jean Baptiste Colbert (1619–83) was the man who proved to be the most able minister in French history, particularly in financial affairs.

Nevertheless as an ardent collector of jewellery, Louis XIV would have been an enthusiastic recipient of the eighteen diamonds left him by his former minister on the understanding that they became known as the 'Mazarins'. Two of the diamonds were the celebrated 'Sancy' and 'Mirror of Portugal' which became Mazarins I and III respectively. The collection was recorded in the 1691 and 1791 inventories of the French Crown Jewels as follows:

		1691		1791		1987
		Weight in carats	Value in livres	Weight in carats	Value in livres	Weight in metric carats
I	'Sancy'	53 $\frac{3}{4}$	600,000	53 $\frac{13}{16}$	1,000,000	55.23
II		33 $\frac{3}{8}$	260,000	24 $\frac{1}{6}$	240,000	24.81
III	'Mirror of Portugal'	25 $\frac{3}{8}$	150,000	21 $\frac{1}{16}$	250,000	21.68
IV		24 $\frac{1}{4}$	100,000	13 $\frac{10}{16}$	60,000	13.97
V		21 $\frac{5}{8}$	120,000	22 $\frac{6}{16}$	160,000	22.97
VI		18 $\frac{3}{4}$	80,000	19 $\frac{12}{16}$	140,000	20.27
VII	'Grand Mazarin'	21	75,000	18 $\frac{9}{16}$	75,000	19.10
VIII		18 $\frac{3}{4}$	55,000	14 $\frac{12}{16}$	30,000	15.14
IX		15 $\frac{1}{4}$	75,000	14 $\frac{13}{16}$	150,000	15.27
X		17	50,000	16	50,000	16.42
XI		17 $\frac{3}{4}$	40,000	20 $\frac{6}{16}$	50,000	20.91
XII		17	50,000	17	50,000	17.45
XIII		13	40,000	10 $\frac{9}{16}$	25,000	10.52
XIV		11 $\frac{1}{3}$	35,000	8 $\frac{7}{16}$	25,000	8.66
XV		10 $\frac{3}{4}$	20,000	8 $\frac{16}{32}$	12,000	8.72
XVI		8 $\frac{3}{4}$	16,000	6	8,000	6.16
XVII		21 $\frac{1}{2}$	70,000	21 $\frac{9}{16}$	25,000	21.94
XVIII		22	70,000	21 $\frac{8}{16}$	25,000	22.07

- I 'Sancy'. A white pear-shape
- II A white table-cut
- III 'Mirror of Portugal'. A white square table-cut
- IV A brownish heart-shape
- V A 'crystalline' almond-shape



Cardinal Mazarin, an enthusiastic collector of jewellery, who bequeathed his collection of 18 'Mazarins' diamonds to Louis XIV.

- VI A 'crystalline' almond-shape
- VII 'Grand Mazarin'. A slightly yellowish square-cut
- VIII A white square-cut
- IX A 'crystalline' marquise
- X A greyish square-cut
- XI A white square-cut
- XII A 'crystalline' extended square-cut with a reddish tinge
- XIII A brownish square-cut
- XIV A 'crystalline' square table-cut
- XV A yellow/brownish square table-cut
- XVI A yellowish square table-cut
- XVII A brownish heart-shape
- XVIII A brownish heart-shape

It is apparent that several of the 'Mazarins' were recut between 1691 and 1791, most likely in the years from 1774 to 1788 when numerous stones were sent to Amsterdam or Antwerp for recutting, a procedure that, not surprisingly, was unpopular with the local cutters. Alterations must also have

been made to the numbering of the stones since some of them had increased in weight by the time of the later inventory – great advances may have taken place in the technique of cutting diamonds but so far nobody has devised a method of increasing their weight.

Being part of the Crown Jewels of France, the 'Mazarins' were housed in the Garde Meuble when thieves broke in on the night of 16 September 1792. In addition to the 'Sancy', numbers IV, VII, VIII, XIII and XVI were afterwards recovered. The 'Grand Mazarin', the seventh in the series, at the time of the First Empire was set in a diadem for the Empress.

Since the theft it has proved difficult to establish the whereabouts of the Cardinal's diamonds. From time to time a number of diamonds stated to have been owned by him have made their appearance, but on nearly every occasion their weights have not corresponded with those listed in the 1791 inventory. It is likely that many of the diamonds may have been recut so that, with one definite exception, it would be

unwise to dismiss them as not being the original 'Mazarins'.

At the sale of the former French Crown Jewels in 1887 a number of diamonds were listed as 'Mazarin' diamonds. However, French authorities have stated that the only authentic 'Mazarin' which figured in the sale is Number VII, the 'Grand Mazarin', which has been preserved and is now displayed in the Louvre. Later sightings have included the showing by Cartier's of two diamonds said to have been 'Mazarins', at an exhibition in 1900. Their weights are stated to have been $18\frac{1}{16}$ and $16\frac{9}{16}$ carats, so it is possible that they may have been recut from numbers II, III, V, VI, XI, XVII or XVIII. In 1928 the same firm showed another gem said to have been a 'Mazarin', weighing 15.88 carats. Finally it was reported that an emerald-cut of 30.58 carats, which came up for auction in December 1964, was a former 'Mazarin'; however, this cannot have been so because the sole diamond in the collection known to have weighed as much is the 'Sancy'.

REGENT

Not long ago it was rumoured that this beautiful and historic diamond was up for sale. A French journalist, confronted with this news, expressed his utter disbelief at such a possibility, adding that it was tantamount to Great Britain disposing of 'Cullinan I' from among the Crown Jewels. He was wholly justified in drawing such an analogy because the 'Regent' diamond, as well as being the best-loved and most important item in the French Crown Jewels, has played its part in helping to shape the fortunes of France.

The rumour of a sale proved entirely without foundation. It transpired that the diamond had been removed temporarily from its place of display in the Louvre Museum in Paris so as to allow certain alterations to be made.

While the history of the 'Regent' is primarily linked with France it must be remembered that before it became the property of France it had been owned by an Englishman, Thomas Pitt. The gem was, therefore, known for some years as the 'Pitt' diamond and its owner became known as 'Diamond Pitt'. Thomas Pitt (1653–1726) was a British merchant whose persistent involvement in Oriental trade frequently brought him into conflict with the mighty East India Company. Indeed, in 1674 the Company had Pitt arrested and fined. Such an action, however, did not prevent Pitt's election to Parliament nor his success in procuring a seat for his family through the purchase of the manor of Old Sarum. In 1693 he embarked on another venture in the East;

finally, as it was unable to curb his activities, the East India Company made him President of Fort Madras.

During his tenure of office there Pitt became involved in the diamond trade, but he complained bitterly to the Company of the limitations that were being placed on him. He entertained hopes of realizing an income of £3000 per year from this source, but was disappointed in that respect. Nevertheless he did manage to acquire the great diamond of 410 carats that was unearthed in the Partial deposits in 1701. Situated on the lower Kistna river, these deposits formed part of what have become known over the years as the Golconda mines, although Golconda itself is the name of a mountain fortress near Hyderabad. It included a diamond storehouse and was a centre for trading.

There are differing accounts of how Pitt obtained his great diamond. One relates how a slave found the diamond and in order to secure his find, cut a hole in the calf of his leg and concealed it either in the wound itself or the bandages tied around the injury. Since the diamond weighed over 400 carats it seems reasonable to suppose that the bandages hid it rather than the cavity! The slave escaped to the sea where he met an English skipper and took him into his confidence regarding the diamond. In return for his freedom, which was to be procured by giving him passage to another country, the slave offered the Captain a half-share in the value of the diamond. The latter took the slave on board, then, after getting hold of the stone, murdered the poor wretch and threw his body





ABOVE Thomas Pitt, President of Fort Madras, who became known as 'Diamond Pitt'. The 'Regent' diamond was first named after him.

overboard. Afterwards the Captain sold the diamond to Thomas Pitt for £1000 but, overcome by remorse, squandered the money in a bout of dissipation before hanging himself.

It may never be known to what extent the facts contained in this account represent the truth. However, it is known for certain that soon after Pitt had returned to England, ugly rumours began to circulate. All of them suggested that the means by which he had obtained the diamond constituted foul rather than fair play. It is generally considered that the poet and satirist Alexander Pope was alluding to Pitt when he penned the following lines in his *Epistle to Bathurst*:

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
An honest factor stole a gem away;
He pledged it to the Knight, the Knight had wit,
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was bit.

LEFT The 'Regent' diamond.

The stink of dead fish surrounding the diamond reached Pitt when he was visiting Norway. Accordingly in October 1710, he despatched a letter from Bergen setting forth the true facts concerning his acquisition of the stone. Thomas Pitt's family preserved a copy of this document and they arranged for its publication in the *Daily Post* of 3 November 1743, seventeen years after Pitt's death, when once again rumours about the stone were started up by political opponents of his family.

In this account Pitt relates how, soon after his arrival in Madras, he learned of reports concerning the discovery and sale of large diamonds in the country and how, three years later, one of the most eminent Indian diamond merchants named Jamchund (surely Jamchand?) appeared with a large stone of 305 mangelins (equivalent to 410 old carats) and a number of smaller ones. After much bargaining they eventually agreed upon a figure of 48,000 pagodas, or a little over £20,000, for the sale of the big stone. No mention is made in the account of any slave and his accompanying misadventures. On the back of this declaration the following words were written: 'In case of the death of me, Tho Pitt, I direct that this paper, sealed as it is, be delivered to my son, Robert Pitt.'

Pitt's account concerning this acquisition of the diamond is said to have been confirmed by a 'Mr Salmon' who was present on the occasion. But, the name of this gentleman may have been 'Salomon' or 'Salamons'; whereas 'Salmon' is by no means a name often encountered in English, the others frequently occur in Jewish commercial circles. This is substantiated by a book entitled *Diamonds and Coral* by Dr Gedalia Yogeve which constitutes the most exhaustive and enthralling account of the prominent part played by English Jews in international trade during the eighteenth century.

Dr Yogeve has disclosed that there were few firms among the Jewish-Portuguese community of London which did not at one time or another become involved in the diamond trade. The East India Company gave permission for a number of Jews to settle at Madras while another succeeded without the Company's permission in settling at Golconda. Therefore, it comes as no surprise to learn that Thomas Pitt came to rely upon advice from Jewish experts during the course of acquiring his great diamond. Pitt consigned it to London in October 1702, addressed jointly to his son Robert, his chief agent Sir Stephen Evance and one of the Jewish merchants, Alvaro da Fonseca. Earlier Pitt had requested a Dutch Jew, Isaac Abendana at Madras, to make a model of the stone to facilitate its eventual cutting; this was duly sent to London together with Abendana's opinion of the diamond.

The important contribution made by the Jewish community to the trading in diamonds extended to their cutting. Thus Pitt's diamond was duly cut in London by Joseph Cope, who was thought of as the only person in England capable of undertaking the task. Cope, who maintained that he had never seen a model as bad as that made by Isaac Abendana, spent two years cutting the stone, the whole operation costing £5000. The result was a cushion-shaped brilliant, weighing

140.5 (metric) carats and measuring 25.4mm (1 inch) in breadth, 25.4mm (1 inch) in length and 19mm ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch) in thickness, which may lay claim to be considered the most perfectly cut of all the celebrated diamonds of old. The 'Regent' possesses that unique limpidity characteristic of so many of the finest Indian diamonds together with a beautiful light blue tinge. Contemporaries of the cutter noted the only flaw as being a speck which was invisible in its setting, but later on the French Court Jeweller Bapst stated that there were two almost invisible cracks within the gem. The cleavage and dust, resulting from the cutting, was valued between £7000 and £8000 and sold to Abraham Nathan. According to Lord Twining's *A History of the Crown Jewels of Europe*, rose-cut diamonds were fashioned from the cleavage material and sold to Peter the Great of Russia.

The possession of the magnificent gem, however, gave Thomas Pitt no peace of mind. Even after he had refuted the calumnies on his name and reputation – a man of merely naked ambition in commerce generally needs to count his enemies simultaneously with his cash – he was constantly haunted by fear of losing or being robbed of the diamond, which had already become famous throughout the West. While he kept possession of the gem Pitt never spent two nights running under one roof and moved about in disguise, never giving notice of his arrival nor departure from London. Consequently it was not surprising that he endeavoured to sell the diamond. Such a transaction, however, proved to be infinitely more difficult and lengthy than the cutting and polishing of the gem. It proved almost impossible to determine a price because it was so much bigger than any customarily on offer at the time. Robert Pitt consulted several experts in Amsterdam but all to no avail.

In 1712 another merchant, Marcus Moses, travelled to Paris taking with him a model of the cut diamond. Thomas Pitt had arranged for Moses to meet Pierre Dulivier, the Governor of Pondicherry, who was then in Paris. Marcus Moses worked in partnership with the banker and goldsmith Sir Richard Hoare. Sir Richard, as well as dealing in jewellery in France and Germany, also dealt in diamonds; he was the founder of C. Hoare & Co., the oldest Private Deposit Bank in Great Britain.

Pitt continued to try to interest various royal families in Europe in purchasing his diamond, then considered incomparably the finest seen. In October 1714 it was shown to the jewellery-loving Louis XIV of France at Fontainebleau, but even he declined to buy it, presumably because his finances and those of his country were at a low ebb after thirteen years of continual warfare.

But Pitt's chances of selling it improved the following year with the accession of Louis XV to the throne of France. Following the deaths of other male members of the Royal Family Louis XV succeeded his great-grandfather Louis XIV as King of France at the tender age of five. Until he attained his legal majority in February 1723, France was governed by Philippe II, Duke of Orleans.

Accordingly in 1717 a model of Pitt's gem was once again despatched to Paris, on this occasion to John Law, a Scottish banker and financier who from 1716 to 1720 tried unsuccessfully to extricate the French government from its financial difficulties. Law took the model first to the Duke of St Simon, who agreed with him that France ought to possess such a gem. The Regent of France, the Duke of Orleans, was shown the gem but because of the parlous state of the Treasury, he was reluctant to spend a large sum on it. In the end the Duke of Orleans yielded to the combined blandishments of St Simon and Law and consented to the sum of 2,500,000 livres or £135,000 being spent upon the purchase of the 'Pitt' diamond.

The French Crown Jeweller, Rondé, came to London to take delivery of Pitt's diamond, and, accompanied by an escort of Grenadiers, it crossed the Channel to Calais. Its purchase proved popular in France and the name was changed to the 'Regent'. As a first instalment on the payment Thomas Pitt received £40,000; the complete transaction thus restored the fortunes of his family. It is ironical to recall the great part that this same family was destined to play in the wars against France later that century. John Law also profited by the deal to the extent of £5000; but his fortunes later declined sharply, to the detriment of France, so much so that after his death in 1729 in Venice, the *Mercure de France* contained the following epitaph:

... cet Ecosais célèbre
Ce calculateur sans égal
Qui par les règles de l'algèbre
A mis la France à l'hôpital.

Due principally to Louis XIV, the Crown Jewels of France represented the richest collection in Europe early in the eighteenth century. It must have, therefore, been a dazzling occasion when Louis XV appeared on 21 March 1721, at a magnificent reception held at Versailles to mark the arrival of Turkish Ambassadors. The young monarch wore the 'Regent' diamond set in a knot of pearls and diamonds on a shoulder ornament, another famous diamond, the 'Sancy', in his hat, and a flame-coloured coat with the diamond buttons and buttonholes of his predecessor. The following year he attended a solemn *Te Deum* at Notre Dame, celebrating the conclusion of an alliance between France and Spain, when he wore a lilac velvet costume and the same diamond ornaments.

In September 1725 Louis XV married Marie Leszcynska, daughter of the exiled King of Poland. The Crown Jewels were reset for the ceremony: the ornaments formerly worn by the King were broken up and adapted for the Queen as various items of jewellery. The 'Regent' shone in a headband. The next Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, consort of Louis XVI, had entirely different tastes in jewellery; she preferred light

OPPOSITE *The 'Regent' diamond was set in the hilt of Napoleon Bonaparte's sword.*



and delicate settings to heavy ornaments so that many of the Crown Jewels were reset. They were often reset again and again at the behest of the Queen. The most important change to the Crown Jewels during the reign of Louis XVI was the recutting of a number of large stones in the Low Countries: fortunately the 'Regent' did not figure among them.

Events moved quickly during the reign of Louis XVI, culminating in the French Revolution of 1789 and the subsequent imprisonment and execution of the King and Queen in 1793. The Crown Jewels were removed from Versailles to the Garde Meuble, a building in Paris which served both as museum to house the royal treasures and as a furniture store. The guardian of the jewels, Thierry de la Ville-d'Avray, made frequent representations to the authorities concerning the lack of security and, after it was rumoured that there had been a plan to carry them off, a new inventory of the jewels was made in June 1791. The 'Regent' was valued at 12,000,000 francs. Thierry perished in the massacre of 2 September 1792 so that the supervision of the Crown Jewels became the responsibility of a man named Santerre, assisted by two Commissioners of the Commune who were present on the pretext that they were representatives of the interests of the State.

The fears for the safety of the jewels entertained by Thierry proved only too well founded when, on the morning of 17 September 1792, it was discovered that thieves had entered the Garde Meuble during the night and had carried off most of the treasures. Of the great diamonds in the collection, which had included the 'Sancy', the 'Mirror of Portugal', the 'Blue Diamond' and the 'Côte de Bretagne' as well as the 'Regent', some disappeared for ever. Others only came to light many years later. Fortunately the 'Regent', which had exceeded all the others in weight and importance, was discovered in a Paris attic a year after.

All the jewellery which had been recovered was placed in the coffers of the Public Treasury, to which were added many items confiscated from private owners. During this period of French history, the country was ruled by the Directory who were faced with the enormous cost of arming and maintaining fourteen armies in the field. It was at this point in its history that the 'Regent' truly became the National Diamond of France, being employed in a number of complicated financial transactions. The most important was the double loan agreement concluded by Parceval the Adjutant-General in charge of army recruitment; in the first he pawned the 'Regent' to Treskow, a Berlin banker, for 4,000,000 francs. The diamond was taken to Berlin but was redeemed before being given to a Dutchman named Vandenberg as a guarantee for a series of loans. Apparently this gentleman lived lavishly in Amsterdam and entertained 'everybody who was anybody' at the time, displaying the diamond prominently in one of his reception rooms. On returning the 'Regent' to the French government he confessed that it was only a model that had been displayed: the real gem had been constantly worn by his wife round her neck under her bodice.

When Napoleon Bonaparte came to power in 1799 he and the Minister of Finance redeemed all the diamonds, except the 'Sancy', in an effort to put the country's finances in order. The 'Regent' diamond had certainly played its part in putting the French armies in order and in assisting Bonaparte to win the decisive battle of Marengo in 1800, because the cavalry there had been mounted on horses procured by the Crown Jewels. In 1802 Napoleon ordered the 'Regent' to be set in the hilt of his sword which he carried at his coronation as Emperor of France two years later.

At the dawn of the Napoleonic era it should be remembered that the man who had led Britain throughout the turbulent years of the French Revolution and was to lead her at the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars was none other than William Pitt the Younger. He was the great-grandson of Thomas Pitt, the former owner of the 'Regent'.

After Napoleon's exile in 1814 the diamond experienced numerous adventures. Along with other Crown Jewels it was carried off by the Empress Marie-Louise, Napoleon's second wife, first to the Château de Blois, thence to Austria. But her father, the Emperor Francis I, returned the diamond to Louis XVIII of France. On hearing of Napoleon's escape from Elba and landing in France Louis XVIII fled by night to Ghent taking many of the Crown Jewels with him. Napoleon gave him a safeguard to leave the country and demanded the Jewels back, but they were not returned to him. After Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo and the Second Restoration of the Bourbon dynasty, Louis XVIII ordered a new inventory to be made. His younger brother who succeeded him as Charles X in 1824 was more a lover of ostentation and he decided to revive the coronation ceremony, which was held with great splendour the following May. Charles X wore the 'Regent', which was set in the surmounting fleur-de-lis of his crown.

The 'Regent' remained in this crown until the advent of the Second Empire. On the occasion of the marriage of Napoleon III to Eugénie on 29 January 1853 the Crown Jewels were dismantled and new ornaments were designed. Two important diadems, the 'Russian' and the 'Greek', were made for the Empress; the latter contained a socket in which the 'Regent' could be inserted when not set in another item of jewellery. A degree of opulence and extravagance returned to the French Court at the period of the Second Empire, enhanced by the great effect with which the Crown Jewels were worn by the beautiful Empress Eugénie. Some of the jewellery, including the 'Regent', was displayed to the public at the Paris Exhibition of 1855.

The Second Empire came to an abrupt end in 1870 with the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War and the ensuing insurrection in Paris. At the beginning of the Third Republic a proposal for the sale of the Crown Jewels was laid before the Commune by a deputy named Benjamin Raspail. Twenty years before, his father had unsuccessfully brought a similar proposal before the National Assembly. But the son finally triumphed, the motion being approved on 20 June 1882; it took a further four years to be passed by the Senate.



Charles X, the last Bourbon King of France. The 'Regent' was set in the surmounting fleur-de-lis of his crown.

The sale of the Crown Jewels of France began in 1887. *The Times* of London reported that 'there are 48 lots but the "Regent" diamond and others of most historical interest are not included in the sale, though their time may perhaps come if this first instalment succeeds'. Whether or not it proved successful – the net proceeds amounted to 6,927,509 francs – considerable relief was experienced by the jewellery trade when it was all over since the announcement of the sale so long before had depressed the market.

The 'Regent' diamond, which according to the valuation of the Crown Jewels represented two thirds of their value, was fortunately not included in the sale. The unique position occupied in French history by this wonderful diamond was fully recognized: instead it was decided to display it permanently in the Galerie d'Apollon of the Louvre.

The only period during which the 'Regent' has not been on display there occurred during the Second World War, when, shortly before the fall of Paris in 1940, the diamond was removed and taken to Chambord, one of the most famous châteaux of the Loire. It remained hidden behind a stone panel but was eventually returned to its former home in 1945. People queued to get another look at it.

A particularly memorable occasion was the exhibition entitled 'Ten Centuries of French Jewellery' held in the Louvre in May 1962. Not only was the 'Regent' displayed but also several other famous diamonds, including the 'Sancy' and the 'Hope' which had last been together in the Garde-Meuble on that fateful night in September 1792. Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, when expressing his love of diamonds, once remarked 'diamonds speak to me'. If diamonds were given the gift of speech how revealing it would have been to eavesdrop on a conversation between these three historic gems and to learn the truth about their adventures during the past two centuries!

BRAGANZA

Confusion, conjecture and considerable doubts about its authenticity as a diamond surround the 'Braganza' or 'King of Portugal' as it is sometimes called. The stone is said to have been the size of a goose's egg and to have weighed no less than 1680 carats in the rough; such a weight would have meant that in the event of it having been a diamond, it would have exceeded all known gem-quality diamonds before the discovery of the 'Cullinan'. However, there have always been suggestions that the 'Braganza' was not a diamond but some other species of gemstone, most likely a white topaz. The earliest and most detailed version of

the stone's discovery appeared in John Mawe's *Travels in Brazil*, published in 1812. Mawe wrote:

A few leagues to the north of the Rio Plata is the rivulet named Abaité, celebrated for having produced the largest diamond in the Prince's [King of Portugal's] possession, which was found about twelve years ago. ... Three men having been found guilty of high crimes were banished into the interior, and ordered not to approach any of the capital towns, or to remain in civilized society on pain of perpetual imprisonment. Driven by this hard sentence into the most

unfrequented part of the country, they endeavoured to explore new mines or new productions, in the hope that, sooner or later, they might have the good fortune to make some important discovery, which would obtain a reversal of their sentence, and enable them to regain their station in society. They wandered about in this neighbourhood, making frequent searches in its various mines, for more than six years, during which time they were exposed to a double risk, being continually liable to become the prey of the anthropophagi, and in no less danger of being seized by the soldiers of the Government. At length they by hazard made some trials in the river Abaité, at a time when its waters were so low, in consequence of a long season of drought, that a part of its bed was left exposed. Here, while searching and washing for gold, they had the good fortune to find a diamond nearly an ounce [28g] in weight. Elated by this providential discovery, which at first they could hardly believe to be real, yet hesitating between a dread of the rigorous laws relating to the diamonds and a hope of regaining their liberty, they consulted a clergyman, who advised them to trust to the mercy of the State, and accompanied them to the Villa-Rica, where he procured them access to the Governor. They threw themselves at his feet, and delivered to him the invaluable gem on which their hopes rested, relating all the circumstances connected with it. The Governor, astonished at its magnitude, could not trust the evidence of his senses, but called the officers of the establishment to decide whether it was a diamond, who set the matter beyond all doubt. Being thus by the most strange and unforeseen accident put in the possession of the largest diamond ever found in America, he thought proper to suspend the sentence of the men as a reward for their having delivered it to him. The gem was sent to Rio de Janeiro, from where a frigate was despatched with it to Lisbon, whither the clergyman was also sent to make the proper representations respecting it. The sovereign confirmed the pardon of the delinquents and bestowed

some preferment on the holy father.

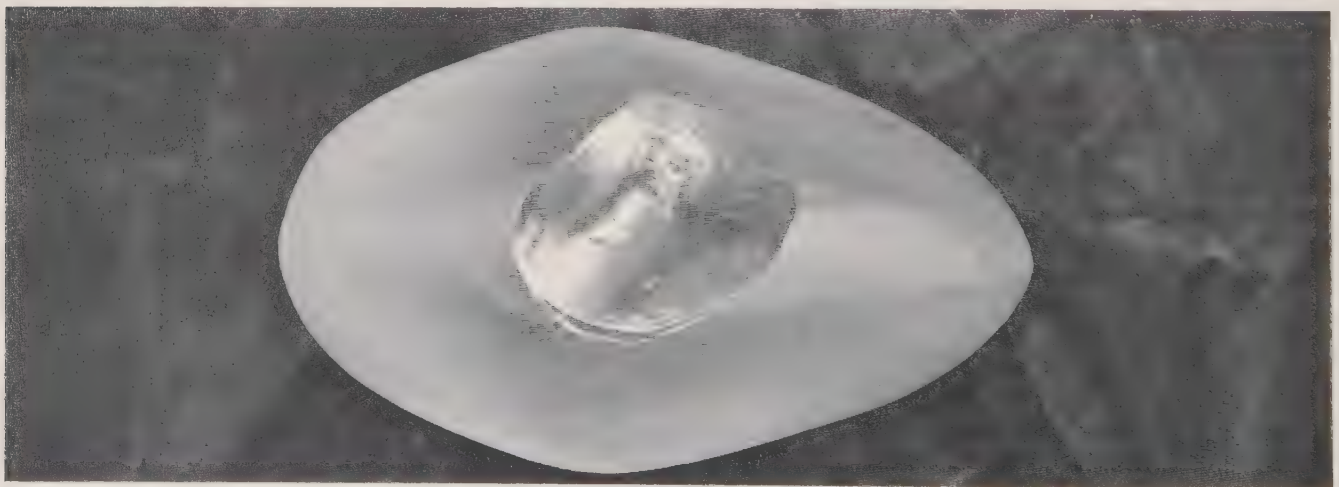
It is interesting to note that Mawe states that the weight of the diamond was about one ounce (144 old carats): moreover he repeated this figure in his *A Treatise on Diamonds and Precious Stones* which was published in 1823. Later authorities who have written about the 'Braganza' have incorrectly attributed the weight of 1680 carats to Mawe and this figure has subsequently been repeated in most accounts of the stone's history. If the 'Braganza' had weighed as much, Mawe would certainly not have referred to it as having been merely the largest diamond found in America but the largest ever found anywhere. However, elsewhere he has written:

The largest of all the undoubted diamonds is that mentioned by Tavernier, as being in the possession of the Grand Mogul. In form it is an oval, about the size of half a hen's egg. According to the same traveller, who weighed it, its weight was 296 carats; it was probably facetted all round in rose, as he does not state it was brilliant cut. This gem was found in the washings near Caldore, to the east of Golconda, about the year 1550.

There is on record the discovery of a diamond in 1791 which weighed 144 carats in the rough and was almost an octahedron in shape. Since it too is said to have been found by three criminals who, with the assistance of a priest, subsequently gained their freedom, it is clear that this must be the same stone which Mawe refers to as the 'Braganza'. In this connection Brazilian mineralogists have said that the area this stone was found does not contain topazes, only diamonds.

Nevertheless there have been indications that an immense stone was in the possession of the Portuguese Royal Treasury. It has been reported that the Regent John, who assumed this position in 1792 when his mother lost her reason and who

A model of the 'Braganza' diamond in its rough state.





Jean-Andoche Junot, Duke of Abrantes, from the painting by Jacques-Louis David.

reigned as John VI from 1816 to 1826, owned a huge gem in which holes had been drilled and which he wore suspended round his neck on gala days. Successive Portuguese governments were always reluctant to give information about this stone: they may have considered it politic to preserve the legend of the 'Braganza' by saying nothing to dispel the illusion surrounding their great national possession. Certainly a king with a topaz around his neck would compare poorly, if not ridiculously, with one of the Mogul emperors who had similarly worn an Indian diamond.

In answer to a request for information concerning the 'Braganza', officials of the mining company *Companhia de Diamantes de Angola* in more recent times have drawn attention to the activities of Andoche Junot, Duc D'Abrantès (1771–1813), French general and Napoleon Bonaparte's first aide-de-camp. In 1805 Napoleon sent him as Ambassador to Lisbon. Two years later he returned to Portugal in a military capacity but in this respect his career was chequered: in 1808 he was defeated at the battle of Vimeiro by Wellington during the Peninsular War. His wife was the author of some celebrated memoirs: while in Portugal she entertained on a lavish scale, deeming it her duty to give a high opinion of French women. Napoleon's opinion of her was, however, somewhat low – he called her 'la petite peste' and ordered her

to be banished from Paris upon her return to France.

When the Duc D'Abrantès was obliged to retreat from Portugal into France, he sent to his wife a case containing 40,000 Portuguese gold coins. On arrival at his house the case fell and burst open, displaying these coins to the eyes of his family, servants and bystanders who were both astonished and envious of so much money. For several days afterwards the rain of Junot's gold was the principal topic of conversation. In addition it was rumoured that he had possessed himself of the great diamond of Portugal, 'the largest of all known and much finer than that of the Great Mogul'. The Duchess referred to the diamond in her memoirs, saying it was in Portugal in 1805. An imitation of the stone, in crystal, having the identical shape and dimensions, was, she said, to be seen in the Lisbon Natural History museum.

The Duchess D'Abrantès affirmed that the Regent John and his suite, when they fled from Portugal, took with them all the Crown diamonds, both cut and rough, and even the imitation of the great diamond which they had seen three years before in the Natural History Museum. What became of that stone and whether in fact it was a diamond is exceedingly unlikely ever to be known.

An added complication in the saga of the 'Braganza' is provided by the reported existence of another diamond called the 'Regent of Portugal'. Its rough weight does not appear to be known, but it is said to have been cut into a round gem of 215 carats. Now there are two points of interest to note concerning this diamond. First, its name obviously suggests that it was discovered sometime during the Regency of the future King John VI; no other regents ruled Portugal. Secondly, if the weight of the gem were 215 carats it would have surpassed any other cut diamond known at the time; indeed, only a few gems would surpass it today. Such a stone would certainly have merited the description of the 'Great Portuguese Diamond'. It clearly would not have had a hole drilled in it if it were round in shape but would have been worn in a more traditional ornament.

We are thus left with several possibilities: that the 'Braganza' was not a diamond but a huge specimen of some other kind of gemstone; that it was a diamond but one weighing considerably less than 1680 carats, possibly 144 carats, in the rough; that it might have been known alternatively as the 'Regent of Portugal', not the 'King of Portugal'. We will probably never know the truth but can only speculate.

Finally, Lord Twining, a distinguished colonial administrator, and the author of the monumental study *A History of the Crown Jewels of Europe*, has drawn attention to the fact that among the Portuguese Crown Jewels which have survived the vicissitudes of the country's history and which are kept in the National Palace of Ajuda at Lisbon there is a large, rough uncut aquamarine, the weight of which is given as 1750 carats. He has noted the fact that the putative weight of this stone is sufficiently close to the weight of the 'Braganza' to make it possible for the two stones to be identical. Could this, after all, be the solution to the mystery of the 'Braganza'?

CUMBERLAND

More questions are posed than answers supplied by the 'Cumberland'. The Duke of Cumberland after whom the diamond, which weighs 31.97 (old), or 32.82 metric carats, is named, is always considered to have been William Augustus, the third, but second surviving, son of George II. He pursued a military career, becoming a Field Marshal and Commander-in-Chief. After he had joined his father in Hanover, he took part in the battle of Dettingen 1743: this was the last such engagement in which a British sovereign actively participated. Cumberland fought bravely and sustained injuries. Two years later he commanded the army at the battle of Fontenoy where he was defeated by the French. Then a need arose to reinforce the English forces in Scotland who were fighting those of Prince Charles Edward, the 'Young Pretender', the grandson of James II and the Stuart claimant to the throne.

There followed the events for which Cumberland was to become famous – or rather, infamous. The Battle of Culloden, east of Inverness, was decided within less than half an hour; the Highlanders fought bravely but stood little chance against the superior arms and greater numbers of Cumberland's forces. Cumberland was held responsible for the terrible atrocities that followed Culloden and many stories came to be collected of his own personal brutality.

In the southern part of the kingdom, however, Cumberland was regarded as a hero. At the time of Culloden, Parliament was sitting and both Houses conferred upon him the annual sum of £25,000 in augmentation of the £15,000 that had earlier been settled on him by an Act of Parliament passed in 1739. It is recorded that:

A run of addresses, like the waves of the sea jostling out each other, crowded out upon the throne from every quarter; the pulpits and theatres sounded with the praises of our Deliverer; the streets rang with his eulogium, the presses teemed with the recital of his virtues, and the newspapers were filled with his applause; the sons of genius vied in his encomium.

Cumberland received the Freedom of York on 23 July 1746, and the Freedom of the City of London on 6 August 1746. It has often been stated that on the latter occasion Cumberland was presented with a diamond for which the City of London had paid £10,000. Authors have justifiably remarked that to have been worth such an amount, the diamond must have been an exceptional stone.

There is no official record of the City of London ever having made such a presentation. The Records of the City of London reveal that at the Common Council held in the Guildhall on Thursday 23 January 1746:



ABOVE *William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, after whom the diamond was probably named.*



ABOVE *The Battle of Culloden, 16 April 1746.*

A Motion was made and Question put that the Freedom of this City be presented in a Gold Box to His Royal Highness William Duke of Cumberland for his magnanimous behaviour against the Rebels and for his vigilant care in protecting this City in a late time of imminent danger. The same was resolved in the Affirmative and ordered accordingly.

The City's cash accounts for the year ending at Michaelmas (29 September) 1746 record amongst the foreign charges, the bill for the gold box:

To John Curghey in full of his Bill for a gold box and Case to present His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland with the freedom of this city ... £144.10.00.

At a meeting of the Common Council on 3 December 1745 the Council paid £1000 into the subscription fund which had been opened in the Chamberlain's Office towards the relief of soldiers of His Majesty's Forces during the winter season in the suppression of the 'present unnatural rebellion'. This is the only sum of money paid out by the Common Council which may have mistakenly been increased tenfold by an earlier writer.

Similarly there is no record of the presentation of a diamond by the Mercers' Company who admitted Cumberland to its Freedom. The Order of the Court of the Mercers' Company dated 8 May 1746 reads:

The Worshipful John Sadleir, Master of the Company, informed the Court he believed That upon the return of His Royal Highness Prince William Duke of Cumberland to St James's He Will be presented with the Freedom of this City for the indefatigable Care and Pains He has taken in the service of this Nation by defeating the Rebels in Scotland. Whereupon the Court unanimously authorized and desired the Master & Wardens to admit His Royal Highness into the Freedom of this Company if he will please to accept the same. And the Clerk is ordered to wait upon the Right Honourable Sir Richard Hoare Knt Lord Mayor with a Copy of this Resolution.

Gradually there was a perceptible shift in the feelings of the populace towards Cumberland, largely due to the machinations of his elder brother, Frederick, Prince of Wales, who had become jealous of his younger brother's popularity. This prince, though generally held to have been amiable, had an unfortunate knack of putting his foot in it on almost every occasion that presented itself. His epitaph is contained in the well-known lines:

Here lies Fred
Who was alive and is dead;
There's no more to be said.

The Prince of Wales was so successful in his intrigues that a stream of satire and invective emanated from his supporters. It did its work by fastening upon Cumberland the nickname of 'Butcher'. One contemporary has stated that when a proposal was made to elect him as a Freeman of a City

Company – in addition to the Mercers' – one Alderman was heard to shout: 'Ay, then let it be the Butchers.'

Cumberland died unmarried in 1765. Along with military affairs, his interests centred on women, gaming, breeding horses and racing – he was responsible for the construction of the course at Ascot and the founding of the Royal Meeting. Cumberland professed to despise money but his style of living certainly necessitated it: his expenditure was put at £40,000 per annum. However he did possess jewels which may have formerly belonged to Queen Caroline of whom he was the favourite son. In addition, under the terms of the will of George II, dated 11 April 1751, Cumberland was left 'all my jewels except those already disposed of by my former will (April 3rd) or belonging to the Crown and what at my demise may be in my Scritoires or strong boxes'. Lady Suffolk described the jewels as comprising sixteen pieces, valued at £53,930, including a Stomacher of £25,900. On 9 April 1761, George III instructed the Lord Chamberlain, the Duke of Devonshire, to purchase his uncle's jewels at a valuation; subsequently he gave them to his bride, Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, as a wedding present. It is more than likely that the jewels included the diamond which became known as the 'Cumberland', but the question as to whether it was George II or Queen Caroline who had bequeathed it to the Duke of Cumberland must remain a matter for conjecture.

Queen Charlotte kept the jewels she received from the King apart from those which she had received from other sources and ordered Rundell & Co, the Crown Jewellers, to fit the cases with small brass plates engraved with an inscription relating their origin. In her will she bequeathed them to her descendants according to the laws of the House of Hanover. When her eldest son, the Prince Regent, succeeded as King George IV in 1820, he appropriated all these jewels, believing them to be his own private property. However, they did pass to his brother, the Duke of Clarence, who succeeded him as William IV in 1830, and it was in a reference to the jewels worn by that King's consort, Queen Adelaide, that the name of a diamond called the 'Cumberland' appears for the first time.

When the whole question of the ownership of the Hanoverian Crown Jewels came to be considered in 1843, Sir Frederick Pollock, who was the Attorney General from 1841 to 1846, wrote to the Prince Consort a report on the Royal Collection as it was on the death of King William IV in 1837. He had examined the jewellery together with Mr Bridge of Rundell & Bridge. In this report item no 24 is given as 'The Stomacher of the late Queen' [i.e. Queen Charlotte] and, according to this report 'on the coronation of King William the Fourth, most of the diamonds of the stomacher were used to form a Crown for Queen Adelaide, which crown was subsequently broken up and the diamonds composing it now form what is called the "Grand Diadem"'. The diamonds of the stomacher included a large stone 'bought for £18,000 st. and a second for £5,800. ...' In a list dated April 1853, headed 'An Account of Diamonds broken out of the Grand Tiara as worn by Queen Adelaide' the first item is referred to as '1 Large



Queen Adelaide, Consort of William IV. The 'Cumberland' diamond is thought to have been used in her Crown.

Centre Brilliant (the Cumberland) 32 cts'.

The dispute concerning ownership of the Hanoverian Crown Jewels – which has a vital bearing on the history of the 'Cumberland' diamond – revolved round Prince Ernest Augustus, the fifth son of King George III. Of all that monarch's sons, Prince Ernest Augustus is deemed to have had the strongest will, the finest intellect and most courage. Early on in his life he realized his ambition of taking up a military career and he distinguished himself in numerous campaigns. As a result of a scar and an eyeless socket – injuries sustained in battle – he became known as the 'ugly' son of George III. Then in 1810 he sustained a terrible head wound which would have been fatal had the assassin's weapon not struck against his sword; in the next room his valet lay with his throat cut. The Prince was completely absolved of any crime by a jury of seventeen, summoned to

inquire into the matter, but his political enemies, the Whigs, lost no opportunity of casting aspersions upon the conduct of the Prince or the verdict of the inquiry.

In 1799 George III created his four younger sons peers of the realm: Prince Ernest Augustus became Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale. In 1837, under the regulations of the salic law, he succeeded his brother, William IV, as King of Hanover, while his niece, Victoria, ascended the throne of England. A dispute concerning the Hanoverian Crown Jewels soon arose between the two Courts. Since William IV had not been particularly meticulous in such matters, it was not clear which of the Hanoverian possessions and heirlooms had belonged to the family as such and, therefore, ought to return to Hanover, and which had belonged to the Sovereign of England. The Whigs were again presented with an opportunity of getting their own back on the King of Hanover who, when he had spoken in the House of Lords, had proved to be a formidable opponent. The Whig Attorney General and the Law Officers advised Queen Victoria to claim these heirlooms as belonging to the British Crown, in the process advancing claims which were thought absurd, even for a layman.

On the recommendation of his friend and confidant, Lord Strangford, the King of Hanover submitted a legal claim for the jewels. Endless arguments then ensued among the legal profession and, as no agreement could be reached, the British Government set up a commission of three High Court Judges to investigate the matter. Considerable delays in dealing with the case followed and on the very day that the commission was due to have met to pronounce a decision, one of the three members died. Since the remaining two members could not agree, no award could be given; the Lord Chancellor refused to renew the commission so the dispute between the two Crowns continued.

In 1843 King Ernest Augustus visited England but his stay was thoroughly soured by the argument with the Court. He pressed upon Queen Victoria the necessity of bringing about a settlement concerning the Crown Jewels of Hanover. The Whigs were no longer in power and Lord Aberdeen, the head of the new Administration, proved more reasonable so that it was resolved to settle the matter by arbitration, as the King himself had suggested six months before. He had only to wait for the appointment of the commissioners from the Government side, then he would name his own and leave. Writing to his son, the Crown Prince of Hanover, he declared, 'Thus stands the business now and more plague I never had in my life, and had I not taken it in hand myself, I doubt its ever coming to a close.'

In fact the affair dragged on. In June 1851, the King wrote to Strangford: 'I hear that the tomfool Ball was rather a failure, as no one was pleased, and the little Queen herself in a very bad humour, but that she was loaded with my diamonds, which made a very fine show.' He paid his last visit to England that year, but not at a time when the Great Exhibition was taking place. Concerning this event the King wrote that, 'even were I in England would not put a foot in

Hyde Park, as I disapproved of the whole thing and I feared it would bring all the ruffians and canaille from all parts of the world into the country, which might lead to very serious mischief....' He died in November of that year but it was not until 1857 that the British Government established a commission to decide the destiny of the Hanoverian Crown Jewels. Eventually when it did pronounce a decision, it was unhesitatingly in favour of the late King. According to one of its members, they 'had ample evidence and they were all quite satisfied upon this point'. Not surprisingly Queen Victoria was annoyed by the decision of the commission. In 1853 she had ordered from Garrards, the Crown Jewellers, a splendid regal tiara in which the 'Cumberland' was set.

On 28 January 1858, the jewels were officially handed over to the Hanoverian Ambassador in London, Count Kielmansegge, on behalf of King George V of Hanover, who had professed his satisfaction with the outcome of this protracted business. The Schedule of Jewels was listed as:

1. Two brilliant Sleeve Bows.
A pair of three dropped brilliant earrings.
A pair of single dropped brilliant earrings, set with several brilliants at the back.
A large stoned brilliant necklace; and a brilliant cross.
2. A large brilliant stomacher.
3. A beautifully set brilliant Crown, small, to put on head-dress.
4. A large pearl necklace; and large dropped pearl earrings.
5. A large brilliant nosegay.

It may be supposed that the stomacher, listed as No 2, was the jewel in which the 'Cumberland' had been set before its transfer to the tiara in 1853. There was no specific reference to the handing over of the diamond to Hanover in 1858 and several writers have given 1866 as the date when it was most likely returned. This was the year when King George V of Hanover, Queen Victoria's first cousin, was forced by Bismarck to abdicate with the result that Hanover became a province of Prussia. One fact is certain: the 'Cumberland' ceased to be part of the British Crown Jewels, because more than three quarters of a century later it was to appear on the international market.

À propos the handing back of the 'Cumberland' to Hanover, Lord Twining has considered that it would have been returned as an heirloom of the Dukes of Cumberland, not as a Hanoverian jewel. Surely not. Each successive dukedom of Cumberland had been a newly created, not an inherited peerage, so that it would not have entailed the passing down of possessions and heirlooms from one holder of the dukedom to the next. Throughout the correspondence of King Ernest Augustus there is not a single mention of a diamond known as the 'Cumberland': indeed it is possible that he was aware of neither the existence nor the appellation of the stone. If he had been cognisant of these facts there is every reason to suppose that the King would have doubled his efforts to claim



Queen Victoria by Hayter. The large circular stone in the centre of the tiara's lower tier is probably the 'Cumberland'.

the diamond, both as an heirloom of the Dukes of Cumberland and a Crown Jewel of Hanover. In addition it must be remembered that between 'Butcher' Cumberland and the King of Hanover there was another Duke of Cumberland, one who, in his straitened financial circumstances, would assuredly have been glad to have owned the stone. One year after 'Butcher' Cumberland died, his nephew, Henry Frederick, fourth son of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and a younger brother of George III, attained his majority and was created Duke of Cumberland. He had been educated by his mother who allowed him to mix with no sort of society except for his own dependants, so that, when released from her control, he became notorious for his excesses. In 1770 his brothers had to help him find £10,000 which Earl Grosvenor recovered against him for 'having criminal conversation' with the Countess. After leading a controversial life Cumberland died without issue in 1790.

Following the annexation of Hanover in 1866, the Prussian invaders endeavoured to secure the Crown Jewels, but they were thwarted by a series of mainly nocturnal ruses engineered by members of the Royal Household to safeguard them. In due course many items were smuggled into England. The next mention of the 'Cumberland' did not occur until 1935 when Cartier's were offered but declined to buy it on account of its 'banal colour and shape'. However, the fact that

they were willing to act on behalf of the owner is evinced by Hans Nadelhoffer's fascinating book entitled *Cartier ... Jewellers Extraordinary*, wherein he relates how another Royal Family was offered the chance of buying the diamond. In 1938 representatives of Cartier travelled to Albania where the marriage of King Zog to Queen Geraldine was being celebrated. The Queen chose a few items of jewellery while the King 'appraised the "Cumberland" diamond and waved a magnifying-glass about, but bought nothing'. A further visit to Albania, marking the tenth anniversary of the King's reign, again proved fruitless so far as the diamond was concerned: instead, Cartier's displayed it at their branch in St Moritz.

One last and puzzling point concerning the 'Cumberland' remains to be noted. Drawings of the stone made in the last century have always depicted it as a round gem, which is as it was when it was last displayed. However, Twining evidently has considered that it may have been triangular-shaped. He suggested that it may have been identical to the stone which was sold in London by Christie's on 16 December 1953. On that occasion the jewel was described in the sale catalogue as 'an important diamond brooch composed of a large triangular-shaped diamond in a diamond border of hexagonal form supported by a single diamond in a lozenge-shaped collet, a pear-shaped diamond drop.'

The triangular-shaped diamond sold in London in 1953 is thought by Twining to have been the 'Cumberland'.



DRESDEN GREEN

In the rough, greenish diamonds tend to occur as one of three types: a stone, often a crystal, possessing a light tinge rather like the colour of water in a swimming pool; a stone with a dark green skin not dissimilar to the colour of a well-known brand of gin bottle; a yellowish-green stone characterized by a degree of lubricity. After they have been cut and polished, diamonds of the first and second types usually lose their greenish tinge to become fine blue-white gems or, alternatively, become yellower, as silvery capes. The few green polished diamonds, therefore, originate from the third type. The famous collection of De Beers 'fancies', which has been displayed in many places throughout the world, includes some beautiful examples.

Since this is an account of a truly unique gem, a scientific explanation for the phenomenon of green diamonds is called for. The green colour is usually caused by the crystal's coming in contact with a radioactive source at some moment during

its lifetime and in geological times. This is measured in millions of years. The most common form of irradiation encountered by diamonds is by the alpha particles which are present in the magma or kimberlite in minute quantities. Long exposure to these particles forms a green spot on the surface of the diamond, or sometimes produces a thin green coating which is only skin deep and can easily be removed by polishing the stone on a scaife. But bombardment by beta and gamma rays as well as neutrons will discolour the stone to a greater depth and in some cases turn the whole of the stone's interior green.

Heating the stone may sometimes improve its colour but care must be taken to keep the temperature below 600°C, because at this critical temperature the green colour is liable to turn to a light yellow or brown. The change in colour is due

OPPOSITE *The 'Dresden Green', mounted in an epaulette.*



to the change in the crystal's lattice structure. Before bombardment by radioactive particles the crystal's lattice was stable but the initial radioactive shock was sufficient to disturb the equilibrium and produce a green discolouration. Annealing will distort the lattice further and produce another change of colour. This phenomenon is analogous to a piece of elastic that has been overstretched at some time; it will come back so far, but never returns to its original length. Similarly, after treatment the diamond's lattice remains permanently distorted.

Research has disclosed that green or irradiated diamonds are common in all areas where diamonds are mined: Africa, India, the USSR, or South America. But green stones of any size are rare; in this respect the 'Dresden Green', which probably weighed over 100 old carats in the rough, is unique among the world's famous gems. The gem is of an apple-green colour and superb quality. It is cut as a pendeloque, with 58 facets, and weighs 40.7 metric carats. It measures 29mm long by 19.7mm wide (1.14 by 0.77 inches); the total thickness is 10.2mm (0.4 inch) of which 5.3mm (0.21 inch) is in the upper part (above the girdle) and 4.9mm (0.19 inch) in the lower part. It is perhaps problematical to speculate on the diamond's original shape in the rough, but it is more than likely that it was an elongated unbroken piece since greenish diamonds seldom occur as cleavages.

Unlike some other famous diamonds, the 'Dresden Green' has led a comparatively untroubled existence. It derives its name from the Saxon capital where it has been on display for more than two hundred years. In 1742, Frederick Augustus II (1733–63), the Elector of Saxony, purchased the gem from a Dutch merchant at the Leipzig Fair for 200,000 thalers (£30,000). However, it was this ruler's father, Frederick Augustus I (1694–1733), known as Augustus the Strong, who transformed Dresden into a centre of intellectual and artistic activity as well as a marvel of baroque architecture. He was a man of luxurious and extravagant tastes who sought to model his court upon that of Louis XIV at Versailles.

Frederick Augustus I was responsible for the erection of some outstanding buildings in Dresden which he duly filled with great collections of rare and costly treasures – sculpture, paintings and *objets d'art*. He amassed a collection of Crown Jewels as the ruler of Saxony, and when he was elected to the throne of Poland in 1697 he commanded new regalia to be made for his coronation. Frederick Augustus set aside a series of eight rooms in Dresden Castle to house his collection of jewels and other treasures. The rooms were named the Green Vault, their interior decoration being entrusted to Parisian designers; the final result was considered to be one of the finest examples of the baroque. The collection of Crown Jewels was housed in the eighth room.

The Green Vault was already in existence by the time that Frederick Augustus II bought the 'Dresden Green' diamond, so that no more fortuitous choice could have been made to adorn the Crown Jewels of Saxony. The jeweller J. F. Dinglinger set the gem in the Decoration of the Golden

Fleece, but in 1746 the Viennese jeweller Pallard remodelled the decoration and substituted the 'Dresden White' diamond, weighing 49.71 metric carats, for the 'Dresden Green'. Finally in 1768, another jeweller, Diessbach, worked the diamond into a hat clasp along with two other white brilliants weighing a total of almost 40 carats and a number of smaller diamonds.

In 1806 Saxony became a kingdom, and the royal line continued until 1918 when the last king abdicated. The contents of the Green Vault remained on display to the public until the beginning of the Second World War. In 1942 they were moved to the Saxon Castle Konigstein, situated on the River Elbe, thus escaping the shattering air raid by the Allies on the night of 13 February 1945 which devastated Dresden. Later the same year the Soviet Trophy Organization, which had made its headquarters in the Pillnitz castle near to the ruined city, undertook the systematic removal of the contents of the Dresden museums. The Crown Jewels were among the first gems to travel to Moscow. However, in 1958 the Soviet government returned the Saxon treasures to Dresden and the green diamond is now on display again in its former home.

There is one more point of interest about this wonderful diamond. It has always been stated that it is of Indian or East Indian origin. Yet if it had been mined in the East it is perhaps a little surprising that nothing appears to have been known in Europe about such a stone until the middle of the eighteenth century. Surely one of the jewellery-loving monarchs of western Europe in the previous century would have heard of its existence and made efforts to procure it? The seventeenth century was the time when the output of diamonds from the East was at its zenith; it had declined by the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Perhaps the answer to this question is provided by just one clue. It will be recalled that Frederick Augustus II bought the diamond at the Leipzig Fair from a *Dutch* merchant. Now although Amsterdam was at its peak as a cutting centre one hundred years earlier, and declined in importance during the earlier part of the eighteenth century, the discovery of diamonds in Brazil in the 1720s gave a new impetus to the cutting industry. The authorities in Amsterdam sensed new possibilities, with the result that the Dutch Consul in Rio de Janeiro was able to make arrangements for sending stones to Amsterdam where the industry started growing again. Is there not, therefore, a distinct possibility that the 'Dresden Green' was among those diamonds sent from Brazil to Holland? It may be that the reason it was unknown before 1742 was because it had only recently been unearthed.

ORLOV

Legend, fact, supposition and theory – each must be accorded its place in any historical account of this celebrated diamond. Nowadays the ‘Orlov’ is one of the most important items in one of the world’s greatest collections of gems and jewellery, the Treasures of the USSR Diamond Fund, which is displayed within the buildings of the Kremlin in Moscow. The USSR Diamond Fund comprises many of the historical jewels that were amassed by the rulers of Russia before the 1917 Revolution as well as some of the exceptional diamonds unearthed during the past three decades that testify to the Soviet Union’s current position as a leading world diamond producer.

The ‘Orlov’ is mounted in the Imperial Sceptre which was made during the reign of Catherine the Great (1762–96). Its weight has been recorded as 189.6 metric carats and it measures 47.6mm ($1\frac{7}{8}$ inches) in height, 31.75mm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ inches) in width and 34.92mm ($1\frac{3}{8}$ inches) in length. The clarity is typical of the finest Indian diamonds and its colour possesses a slightly bluish-green tint. The shape of the diamond has been described as resembling half of a pigeon’s egg and its upper surface is marked by concentrated rows of triangular facets with corresponding four-sided facets appearing on the lower surface. The total number of facets is roughly 180. On one side of the diamond there exists a slight indentation.

The unusual shape of the ‘Orlov’, the pattern of its facets and the presence of the flaw intriguingly suggest that this diamond can be identified with a long-lost legendary stone.

Among the first Europeans who were permitted to examine the gems possessed by the Mogul rulers of India was Jean Baptiste Tavernier, who provided illustrations of several stones he had seen, in his work *Six Voyages of Jean Baptiste Tavernier*.

Tavernier’s drawing of the diamond which has come to be known as the ‘Great Mogul’ is of particular interest and importance because it is the only one of this legendary stone known to have survived. According to all the available accounts of its history the ‘Great Mogul’ was found about the middle of the seventeenth century in the Kollur diamond deposits situated by the Kistna River in Hyderabad, and weighed no less than $787\frac{1}{2}$ carats. In due course it found its way into the Mogul treasury and was shown to Tavernier by Aurangzeb (1658–1707), the third son of Shah Jahan, who had successfully fought off the challenge of his three brothers and usurped his father’s throne. The cutting of the ‘Great Mogul’ was entrusted to an Italian, Hortensio Borgio, who reduced the weight of the stone to $279\frac{9}{16}$ carats. The results of the efforts of the cutter, however, so displeased Aurangzeb that instead of rewarding him for his services, he fined him 10,000

rupees – and would have extracted more had the wretched man possessed it.

Tavernier makes several references to the ‘Great Mogul’, which are included under that entry.

It is clear that the ‘Great Mogul’ was certainly the leviathan of all the old Indian diamonds and that it was appreciated as such. But the mystery remains: what fate could have befallen such a great gem of which all trace appears to have been lost? Some have suggested that it was cut into several smaller gems. Others have suggested that it does exist today in the guise of another diamond, and the names of three in particular have been put forward, the ‘Darya-i Nur,’ the ‘Koh-i-noor’ and the ‘Orlov’.

The contents of the Iranian Treasury were opened up in the 1960s for examination and cataloguing by three Canadian experts. Their researches demonstrated that the ‘Darya-i Nur’, the most important gem in the whole collection, bears



Catherine the Great ordered the ‘Orlov’ to be set in the top of the Imperial Sceptre.

no resemblance whatsoever to the 'Great Mogul'. The 'Darya-i Nur' is light pink in colour while its flat oblong shape has been demonstrably proved by the Canadians to have been fashioned from the so-called 'Great Table' diamond which figured as No. 3 of Tavernier's drawings.

The evidence for identifying the 'Koh-i-noor' with the 'Great Mogul' is stronger. When that diamond was brought to England in 1850 drawings were made which showed that its diameter approximated to that of the 'Great Mogul'. The stone was considerably flatter but it showed the surfaces whence portions had been removed by cleavage. On the other hand some authorities have always maintained that the existence of the 'Koh-i-noor' has been known long before the advent of the 'Great Mogul' and have identified it as the great diamond owned by Babur (1483–1530), the first of the Mogul dynasty. Babur reigned about a century and a half before Aurangzeb. It is unlikely that anyone will ever know for certain one way or the other the truth about the earliest history of the 'Koh-i-noor'.

There remains the 'Orlov'. When a comparison is made of Tavernier's drawing of the 'Great Mogul' with photographs of the diamond in the Kremlin, it immediately becomes apparent that there are similarities between them. The first lies in the shape. It will be recalled that the 'Orlov' has been described as resembling half of a pigeon's egg and that Tavernier referred to the 'Great Mogul' as presenting 'the form of an egg cut in half'. Throughout history there cannot have been many diamonds of such an unusual form. Secondly, the pattern of facets of the two stones is not dissimilar. Thirdly, the previously mentioned slight indentation that exists in the 'Orlov' must correspond to Tavernier's note to the effect that 'there is a slight crack and a little flaw in it' concerning the 'Great Mogul' diamond. In addition, as will shortly be shown, the story of the 'Great Mogul' would appear to have no known ending while that of the 'Orlov' would appear to have no beginning for sure, further historical evidence that they are probably one and the same diamond.

On the other hand a discrepancy between the weights of the two stones must be noted. After being cut by the Venetian Borgio, the 'Great Mogul's' weight was reduced to around 280 carats, whereas the 'Orlov' is estimated to be less than 200 carats. In this connection two points must be made. First, it has been shown by others that Tavernier may not always have recorded with accuracy the weights of the various stones he examined; for example it is almost certain that he erred in his weight of the 'Great Table' diamond. Secondly, it is not at all unlikely that at some point in its complicated history a further attempt may have been made to alter the state of the 'Orlov' – to improve upon the efforts of Hortensio Borgio. By grinding away a portion of the top of Tavernier's diamond to resemble the shape of the 'Orlov' today, a reduction in the weight of the 'Great Mogul' would necessarily ensue.

Finally the noted Soviet authority on gems, Academician Alexander E. Fersman, who examined all the former Crown Jewels from a gemological point of view, was in no doubt that

the 'Orlov' is the same diamond as the 'Great Mogul'.

According to one account, the earliest known fact about the 'Orlov' is that it was set as one of the eyes of an idol in a sacred temple in the south of India. This temple is stated to have been situated at a site alternatively spelled by past authors as 'Srirangen', 'Sherigan', 'Scheringham' and Sheringham. But its true location is Srirangam, a town in the Tiruchirapalli (Trichinopoly) district of Madras which stands on an island formed by the bifurcation of the Cauvery River, about 3.2km (2 miles) north of Tiruchirapalli city. The island, measuring 27km (17 miles) long and 1.5 to 2km (1 to 1¼ miles) wide, was strategically important as a base during the struggle between the English and French forces for Trichinopoly in the eighteenth century.

The great temple at Srirangam, dating from the seventeenth century, is dedicated to Vishnu and is regarded as one of the most sacred shrines of southern India. It is composed of seven rectangular enclosures, one within another, the outermost having a perimeter exceeding 11.25km (7 miles) in length. A remarkable feature of the temple is the Hall of a Thousand Pillars, with its colonnade of rearing horses.

A French soldier deserted and found employment in the neighbourhood of Srirangam. From local reports he came to learn that the temple contained within a celebrated idol of a Hindu god, the eyes of which were formed by two large diamonds of inestimable value. Thereupon he made a plan to seize these gems, a feat which necessitated years rather than months of planning since no Christian was ever admitted beyond the fourth of the seven enclosures. So in order to effect his evil purpose he embraced the Hindu faith and eventually obtained employment within the walls of the temple. Slowly by degrees he gained the confidence of the unsuspecting Brahmins and was allowed in as a frequent worshipper at the inner shrine because of his apparent veneration for this particular divinity. Ultimately he secured the appointment of guardian to the innermost shrine within which lay the object of his attention.

Then came the moment for which the Frenchman had waited so long, a stormy night with the idol frequently masked in fitful shadows. He laid his sacrilegious hands upon the deity entrusted to his care and prised one of the diamond eyes out of its socket. Losing his courage he then fled from the scene leaving the other diamond behind. He scaled the walls of the temple, swam the river and escaped through the surrounding jungle to the comparative safety of the English army encamped at Trichinopoly, all this while the tempest raged. Finally he made his way to Madras where he sold the diamond for £2000 to an English sea captain who brought it to London where he sold it to a Jewish merchant for £12,000. The merchant, in turn, is said to have sold it to another one, an Armenian by the name of Khojeh Raphael who had left Persia as a young man, sailed to Surat and then travelled eastwards towards Bengal. After residing there he travelled by sea to England and then to Russia passing through Amsterdam. Apparently his travels had taken him to most European

countries before he decided to settle as a merchant in the Italian port of Leghorn. According to a Persian traveller, Khojeh was 'a complete old scoundrel, who had seen a great deal of the world and understood a number of languages'.

This colourful account of the 'Orlov' cannot be relied upon as authoritative. The real point of interest raised concerns the identity of the second diamond set in the idol. Which diamond could have possibly been set as an eye? The candidates are few, with the 'Koh-i-noor' foremost among them, but we know that this historic gem had been taken from Delhi in 1739 by the Persian, Nadir Shah. Perhaps the second eye of the idol was filled by some other precious stone – or had the idol itself at some time suffered the fate of Nelson at Calvi?

Another version of the 'Orlov's' travels to Europe is even more lurid. This account begins with the diamond belonging to the Mogul rulers and being among the loot carried off from Delhi by the Persians under the aforementioned Nadir Shah. Shortly after Nadir Shah had been murdered in 1747, an Afghan soldier, formerly in his service, appeared in Bassorah, a large town situated on the Shatt-el-Arab, some 112km (70 miles) north of the Persian Gulf. The original city of Bassorah, of *Thousand and One Nights* fame, was founded by Caliph Omar I in AD 636, some 12.8km (8 miles) from the modern city of Basra, which, like its predecessor, is an important port and trading centre for produce from the east.

As well as the diamond the Afghan brought with him many other expensive jewels, all of which he offered to an Armenian merchant called Grigori Safras, then residing with his two brothers in Bassorah. Safras was astonished at such a valuable horde in the hands of a poor soldier who was obviously unaware of its true value. He was obliged to postpone the chance of doing business with the soldier in order to find sufficient funds. In the meantime the Afghan became suspicious of the merchant's delay and, believing that a trap was being laid for him, disappeared from the city as mysteriously as he had entered it.

The soldier made his way to Baghdad where he met a Jewish trader to whom he sold his treasure for 65,000 piastres, then about £500, and two fine Arab horses. But instead of returning home he proceeded to squander his newly acquired riches in a bout of dissipation. Unfortunately in the middle of his revels he met up again with Safras who this time determined not to lose sight of his man. He was disappointed to learn that the Afghan had sold his treasure; however, he was able to learn from the soldier the whereabouts of the trader's residence, and promptly lost no time on calling on him. He offered the merchant twice the amount he had received for the diamond alone but he was unwilling to part with it. Thereupon Safras consulted his two brothers who by now had joined him in Baghdad; they decided to acquire the diamond by foul means. Having successfully accomplished this it became obvious that the Afghan would also need to be disposed of because his evidence would incriminate the brothers. So, taking advantage of his liking for riotous living, they easily induced him to join them the next day in a bout of

drinking during the course of which they administered poison to him. The bodies of the Jewish trader and the Afghan soldier were placed together in a sack and thrown by night into the River Tigris.

The slaughter had not yet finished. Events had run smoothly for the murderers up to that point but when it came to the distribution of the plunder each of the three brothers insisted on having the diamond. As it was impossible to divide the gem into three equal parts, and as neither of his brothers was prepared to waive his claim, the wily Safras treated them in exactly the same way that they had treated their unfortunate victims. So Safras perpetrated a double fratricidal act and another sack was dumped in the Tigris. After such a spate of killings, the Armenian wisely considered it prudent to move on; accordingly he made his way to Constantinople, then through Hungary and Silesia, before arriving in Amsterdam. Here he set himself up as a dealer in precious stones: one can only hope that it was the city's pre-eminence as a trading centre that attracted him rather than its aqueous situation.

Now according to Edwin Streeter's book *The Great Diamonds of the World*, this second version of the history of the 'Orlov' diamond does not refer to the 'Orlov' at all but to a totally different diamond called the 'Moon of Mountains', which weighed 120 carats. However, no trace exists of such a diamond today, least of all in the USSR Diamond Fund. In addition the Soviet authorities have brought to light records which indicate that around 1768 their great diamond had indeed passed into the hands of an individual by the name of Safras. Moreover they have also referred to the city of Astrakhan in their account of the 'Orlov', a reference needing a further explanation which is possibly provided by Streeter.

He states that after setting up in Amsterdam as a dealer, Safras drew the attention of certain European rulers, among them being Catherine the Great of Russia, to his jewels. The Empress was apparently much taken by the description of the Armenian's great diamond and invited Safras to her capital, St Petersburg, where she put him in touch with the Court jeweller, I. L. Lazarev. Negotiations broke down over an agreed price for the gem, the amount requested by Safras being considered exorbitant. However, Count Panin, the favourite minister of the Empress at the time, proved equal to the occasion and ultimately showed himself to be more than a match for the astute Armenian. The demands of Safras were neither agreed to or rejected: instead he was gradually led into a style of living which proved beyond his means with the result that he ran heavily into debt. When his means were exhausted Panin abruptly terminated the negotiations and informed Safras that he could not leave Russia or even St Petersburg until all his creditors had been satisfied. Safras was thus at the mercy of the minister; nevertheless he was determined not to sacrifice his diamond and he succeeded in raising enough money to settle his outstanding debts by selling other gems amongst the Armenian community in St Petersburg. Thereupon he withdrew from the Russian capital.

A few years later the Russian Court learned that Safras was residing in Astrakhan and negotiations were reopened for the sale of the diamond, which he was induced to part with, apparently at the original terms. However, at this point in the diamond's history, there is yet more confusion. It has always been thought that the diamond's eponymous purchaser bought the gem in Amsterdam; there were reports in the London press to that effect. So the conclusion to be drawn is that the business was not successfully completed in Astrakhan – Count Orlov had to travel to Amsterdam to complete the purchase. By this time the gem had become known as the 'Amsterdam' diamond.

Count Grigori Grigorievich Orlov (1723–83) was a Russian nobleman and an army officer of great distinction. He was wounded no less than three times during the various campaigns of the Seven Years War. On one occasion he was detailed to escort an important Prussian officer as a prisoner-of-war to St Petersburg where in 1759 he was presented to the Grand Duke Peter and his consort, Catherine. Leading a riotous life in the capital, he caught the fancy of the Grand Duchess and became her lover. After the accession of Catherine's husband to the throne as Peter III, Orlov and his younger brother, Count Aleksei Grigorievich, organized the coup of July 1762 whereby the weak Peter III was dethroned in favour of Catherine and then murdered.

Catherine made her lover a Count and appointed him adjutant-general, director-general of engineers and general-in-chief, but Count Panin, who was then her political mentor, frustrated the intention of the Empress to marry Orlov. Orlov, however, continued to serve Catherine in various official capacities but he became deeply resentful when she took Aleksander Vassilchikov, then Grigori Potemkin as her lovers in his place and he left Russia in 1775.

Two years earlier Orlov had visited Amsterdam, where he came to learn of the existence of Safras' great diamond. He bought it for a sum reputed to have been 1,400,000 florins, equivalent to 400,000 roubles. Such a purchase doubtless would have been made both to remind Catherine of the role which Orlov had played in her accession to the throne and hopefully to restore himself to his former position as her favourite. This possibility appeared even stronger at the time because Catherine herself had refused to accept Safras' original asking price for the diamond. Orlov presented the diamond to the Empress on her Saint's Day; she accepted it and had it set at the top of the Imperial Sceptre, designed by Troitnoki. The Empress gave Orlov a marble palace at St Petersburg but she never rewarded him with his former position as her favourite. In 1777 Count Orlov married his cousin but following her death in Lausanne five years later, he became mentally deranged and returned to Russia to die there the following year.

Interestingly there is supposed to be in existence a document signed by both Orlov and Lazarev, the court jeweller at St Petersburg, which places an entirely different interpretation upon the circumstances surrounding the former's pur-



Count Grigori Grigorievich Orlov, the Russian nobleman after whom the diamond is named.

chase of the diamond. The Soviet author suggests that the role of Count Orlov was merely that of a go-between in the transaction and that it was Catherine the Great herself who purchased the diamond. The Empress employed intermediaries for two reasons: first, she wished to contrast her own alleged 'German frugality' (she had been born a German princess) with the reckless spending habits of her predecessors, and secondly, she considered that it would not have been proper for a monarch to bargain over the purchase price – something which Orlov himself could do. And it was for this service to the Empress that Orlov earned the honour of giving his name to the diamond.

The 'Orlov' diamond was set in a position immediately beneath the golden eagle. There is a legend concerning the diamond dating from the time of Napoleon. As the Emperor of France's forces were approaching Moscow during the campaign of 1812, the 'Orlov' was secreted in the tomb of a priest in the Kremlin. When Napoleon entered Moscow he gave orders that the gem be sought. After he had learned of its whereabouts, Napoleon in person, accompanied by his bodyguards, proceeded to the Kremlin to secure the diamond. The tomb was opened to reveal the great gem. One of the bodyguards stretched out a hand to take the diamond but before he had touched it the ghost of the priest rose up and cursed the invaders. Napoleon and his bodyguards are then supposed to have fled empty-handed from the Kremlin. Now on almost all counts this would appear to be nothing more than a legend. However, the legend is worth repeating because it adds yet one more detail to this already complex and colourful story.

PIGOT

The name of one of the most controversial figures in the annals of British administration of India is perpetuated by this diamond. Born in 1719, George Pigot at the age of seventeen joined the East India Company as a writer and was sent out to Madras. In 1755 he was appointed Governor and Commander-in-chief of Madras, becoming responsible for its defence when in the winter of 1758/9 the French forces, led by Lally, besieged the city. Pigot is deemed to have defended the city efficiently if not brilliantly. In 1763 Pigot resigned and returned home. Two years later he entered the House of Commons and remained a member until his death – despite his service overseas and his elevation to a peerage in 1766. Since he received an Irish peerage he was not debarred from membership of the Lower House.

In 1775 Pigot had been appointed to a second term as Governor and Commander-in-chief of Madras, but on resuming office immediately found himself at odds with some members of his council. The dispute centred on the contest between the Nawab of Arcot and the Rajah of Tanjore, each member of the council taking a side. The situation deteriorated and matters came to a head in August 1776, when Pigot was arrested by Colonel Stuart, leader of the refractory members of the council, and imprisoned at St Thomas's mount, nine miles from Madras.

The news of these occurrences caused much discussion in England. At a meeting of the directors of the East India Company in April 1777, it was resolved that the powers assumed by Lord Pigot were 'neither known in the constitution of the Company nor authorized by charter, nor warranted by any orders or instructions of the Court of Directors'. But Pigot's friends successfully resisted the passing of this resolution: instead they carried two resolutions condemning Pigot's imprisonment and calling for the suspension of those members of the council who had supported such an act. At the same time a resolution was passed which condemned Pigot's conduct in receiving certain trifling presents from the Nawab of Arcot, receipt of which he had openly avowed in a letter to the court of directors. Pigot died in jail in May 1777, his health impaired by his experiences and the climate.

Two years after his death, one of his brothers brought the subject of his brother's deposition before the House of Commons. The Commons supported his case, and recommended the prosecution of Pigot's opponents on the council, then residing in England. They were tried and found guilty of arresting, imprisoning and deposing the Governor: each was fined £1000, upon payment of which they were discharged.

During his years in India Pigot obtained at least two diamonds including the stone which bears his name. Some say that he received them from the Rajah of Tanjore, or from

the Rajah's mother, but a contemporary of Pigot's remarked, 'Can it be believed that this great man would betray his trust to the Company for to receive a present from the Rajah of Tanjore? No it cannot!' Others have declared that the diamonds were among the 'trifling presents' which he admitted to receiving from the Nawab of Arcot, the same prince who had given seven diamonds to Queen Charlotte including the two notable pear-shapes that have become known as the 'Arcot' diamonds. But, whoever the donor was, the receipt of such gifts was frowned upon by the directors of the East India Company.

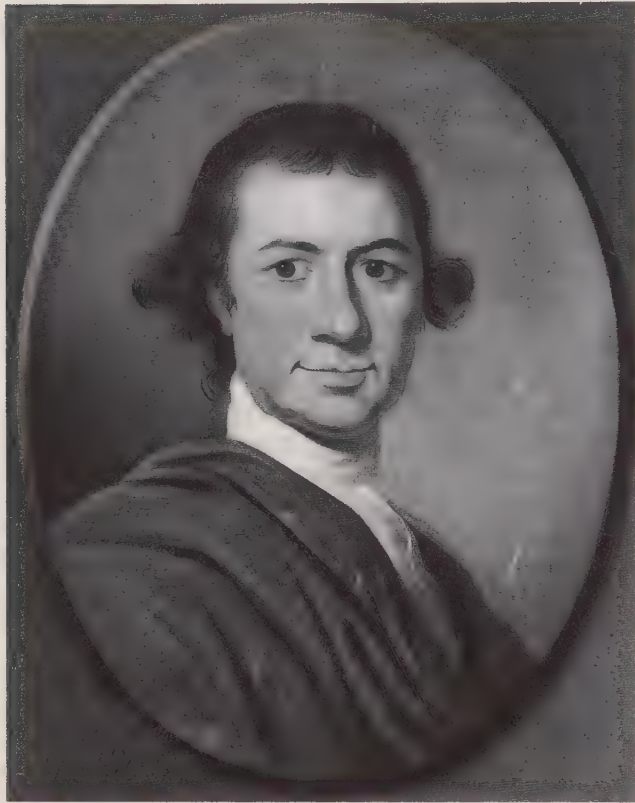
Pigot bequeathed his eponymous diamond to his sister and two brothers. Thirteen years after his death his surviving brother, sister and the widow of his elder brother disposed of the 'Pigot' diamond in a most unusual manner; they promoted a Private Act of Parliament to sell it by lottery. Hansard (the official printed record of British parliamentary debates), therefore, records as follows:

An Act to enable Sir George Pigot Baronet, Margaret Fisher, and Frances Pigot, to dispose of a certain Diamond therein mentioned, by a lottery.

[20 July 1800.]

Whereas the Right Honourable George Lord Pigot, being possessed, at the time of his Decease, amongst other Things, of a Diamond of very considerable Value, duly made and published his last will and Testament in Writing, bearing Date the Sixteenth Day of April in the Year One thousand seven hundred and seventy five, and thereby gave and bequeathed all the Rest, Residue and Remainder of his Personal Estate and Effects (whereof the said Diamond was Part) unto his brothers Sir Robert Pigot Baronet (then Robert Pigot) and Hugh Pigot, late Vice Admiral in His Majesty's Navy, and his sister Margaret Fisher widow, their Executors, Administrators and Assigns, in equal Shares and proportions, Share and Share alike....

And whereas the said Diamond is esteemed by skilful Lapidists to be but little inferior in weight, and equal in Water and Brilliancy, to any known Diamond in Europe; and the value thereof is now estimated at a Sum little short of Thirty thousand Pounds: And whereas the said Diamond has at various times been shown for Sale, but owing to its very great Value, no Individual hath yet been willing to purchase it; whereby the several Persons interested therein have, for a great Number of Years, lost all the Benefit and Advantage which they otherwise would have derived therefrom, had the same been sold and disposed of: And whereas there is not now any Prospect of selling and disposing of the same, to the best Advantage, other than



George Pigot, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Madras, who acquired the diamond during his term of office.

and except by way of Lottery or Chance; in order therefore, that the said Sir George Pigot, Margaret Fisher and Frances Pigot, may be enabled to sell and dispose of the said Diamond, to the best Advantage; May it please your Majesty, ... that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same...

II. Provided always, and be it enacted, That the Money so to be raised shall not exceed the Sum of Twenty three thousand nine hundred and ninety eight Pounds and Sixteen Shillings upon the Sale of the said Diamond; and that the Number of Tickets shall not in the whole exceed Eleven thousand four hundred and twenty eight, to be numbered respectively from One to Eleven thousand four hundred and twenty eight, both inclusive, at and for the Price of Two Guineas for each ticket.

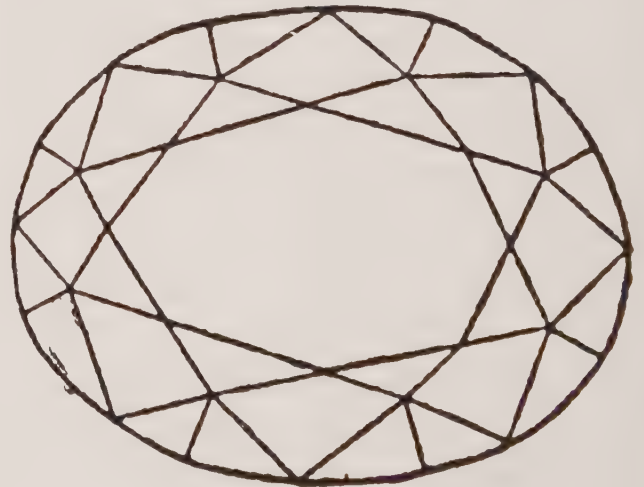
The winner of the lottery was a consortium, the members of which had purchased a good many tickets, gaining the prize through this unusual procedure.

At this point in the diamond's history there are two different versions of what transpired. George Fox, the author of the history of Rundell & Co, the noted firm who were to be

appointed Crown Jewellers in 1804, has stated that after a great deal of negotiation the 'Pigot' was sold by the consortium – he refers to it as a 'Club' – to Rundell's and to a Mr Parker of Fleet Street for around £10,000. On the other hand *The Times* recorded its sale by Christie's on the 12 May 1802 for 9500 guineas to Parker; the auctioneer gave a poetical description of the diamond for the occasion and remarked that it was unfortunate for the owners to be selling at a time when prices were so low in a place 'where the charms of the fair needed not such ornaments and whose sparkling eyes outshone all the diamonds of Golconda.' The diamond, however, did become the joint property of Rundell's and Parker and was described in the following glowing terms:

Its form is of a perfect oval about one and a quarter inches [31.75mm] in length by three-quarters of an inch [19.05mm] broad. The water of it is of the most pure description and there is but only one imperfection in it and that does not interfere in the least with either its colour or brilliancy and must indeed be pointed out before it can be discerned. The defect alluded to is a very small red foul (so called by Jewellers) very near the girdle or edge of the diamond. The weight of this most beautiful Jem is 187½ gr.

The scene now switches to France where in May 1804 Napoleon Bonaparte was proclaimed Emperor. Napoleon attached great importance to his forthcoming coronation in December of that year; it was arranged that he should be anointed by the Pope before being crowned in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame. Rundell & Co. were also taking a keen interest in the ceremonies, particularly as it was known that Napoleon was buying gemstones for the occasion. So, with the consent of Parker, they decided to send the 'Pigot' to Paris in the strong expectation that they might be able to dispose of it to the new Emperor. But the state in which Europe then found



A 19th-century drawing of the 'Pigot' diamond.

itself – England and France were at war – made it no easy matter for them to accomplish their plans. After much consideration the firm decided to send the stone over in the custody of one of their employees, Philip Liebart, an accomplished diamond setter who came from Liège but who had left his native city during the time of the Revolution.

Liebart left for France with the ‘Pigot’ safely sewn up in the ‘waistband of his small clothes’ to prevent either its loss or discovery. His route took him via Holland to Liège where some of his family were still living: one of them was his brother, a priest, whom he consulted on the best way to travel to Paris without attracting the attention of Napoleon’s ever-active and vigilant police. He managed to arrive there successfully and, in accordance with his instructions, to deposit the diamond with Messrs Lafitte & Co, the eminent bankers, and to deliver his letter of introduction and instruction to those gentlemen. Soon after, the diamond was shown to Napoleon, whose vanity was greatly excited by having it offered to him and who at first appeared keen to buy it.

But something must have aroused Napoleon’s suspicions: having taken time to consider the subject he became fully persuaded that the diamond was English property and that it had lately been smuggled into France. He refused to have any more to do with it and the police started to inquire as to how Lafitte’s had obtained the stone. The unfortunate Liebart, therefore, had to get out of Paris secretly, leaving the diamond behind him. He was obliged to travel by the least public routes so that it was only after much delay and discomfort that he was able to reach his brother in Liège and then with his assistance to pass through Holland, thence to London.

None of the parties in London involved in the abortive transaction blamed Liebart, who indeed had done his utmost for his employers. It was the opinion of some that had they been endowed with sufficient foresight and forethought they would never have embarked on such a scheme to sell the ‘Pigot’. In 1804 the diamond left Paris in the custody of Lafitte & Co. and did not return until twelve years later. Apart from the loss of interest in it during this period the stone became the subject of three Chancery Suits, one in England, two in France. The first of them, in London, was Parker versus Rundell & Co, which, after years of litigation, ended in giving Rundell’s the entire property of the diamond and in their paying to Parker a sum of money to indemnify his claim for his interest in it.

After the restoration of Louis XVIII to the French throne, Mr J. W. Rundell went to Paris and initiated a lawsuit in the French courts for the recovery of the diamond which Lafitte & Co. had improperly allowed to pass out of their hands. The suit, prosecuted with zeal and ability by Rundell’s lawyers, was about to be closed when news came of Napoleon’s escape from Elba. Everything in Paris was thrown into turmoil and Rundell was glad to make a hasty retreat from the city, even without the diamond. After the so-called ‘Hundred Days’, which culminated in Napoleon’s defeat at the decisive battle of Waterloo in June 1815, Rundell again visited Paris, fully

expecting to have the ‘Pigot’ delivered to him without further trouble and expense. In this he was to be disappointed: he was obliged to begin all over again his action for the restoration of the diamond. Finally, after several months’ delay, he obtained possession of the stone and returned to London with it at the end of 1816.

Rundell & Bridge, as the firm had now become, made new efforts to sell the ‘Pigot’; they tried to interest the Prince Regent, members of the Royal Family and several European monarchs. Models of it were cut in glass and crystal and despatched with suitable letters to many famous and distinguished persons in Europe, Egypt and India.

A long and protracted correspondence with the Pasha of Egypt, conducted through the firm of Briggs Brothers & Co., of Minorities in the City of London, ultimately brought its reward with the sale of the diamond to that ruler in 1822. He paid £30,000 for it, on which Rundell & Bridge agreed a commission of five per cent to Briggs Brothers. During the course of the negotiations the Pasha showed that he was very keen to obtain the ‘Pigot’ and he urged every argument he could summon up to induce Rundell & Bridge to accept consignments of corn and cotton in exchange. However, the jewellers too often previously had experienced the unsatisfactory effects of accepting various commodities in lieu of money and were having nothing of it.

George Fox, in his history of Rundell & Bridge, summed up the firm’s experiences with the ‘Pigot’ diamond as follows:

It had long been the opinion of those best acquainted with the Pigot’s history during the time Rundell & Co. had an interest in it that if those gentlemen had made a present of £10,000 at the time they became the purchasers of it instead of having that sum for the diamond, that they would have been considerable gainers in the end notwithstanding they got so large a sum for it from the Pasha. And this appears very probable when the great loss of interest and the enormous expense of the three lawsuits are taken into account, not to say anything about travelling expenses, and the expense of living many months in Paris and leaving out of consideration the anxiety and great loss of time to the partners of the house as well as of many of the persons employed by them whose time would have been more beneficially employed but for their engagements in respect of the Pigot diamond.

Travellers to Egypt who visited the Pasha stated that after he had received the ‘Pigot’ diamond from England he presented it to the Grand Signor (the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire) to induce him to acknowledge the Pasha’s right to be Governor of Egypt. This indicates that the buyer of the stone was Mohammed Ali (1769–1849), Ottoman Viceroy of Egypt from 1805 to 1848 and the founder of the dynasty that ruled Egypt until 1952. His origins are disputed: most have concluded that because of his association with Albanian troops he was Albanian, but according to family tradition, his ancestors were Turks from Anatolia who later settled in Konya. From



The Battle of Aboukir Bay in 1798, at which Mohammed Ali, thought to have been the owner of the 'Pigot', nearly perished.

there his grandfather emigrated to Macedonia where he was born.

When in 1798 Napoleon landed in Egypt at the head of a French army, Mohammed Ali accompanied a contingent of Macedonian Albanians that was sent with an Ottoman expeditionary force to resist the invaders. After disembarking at Aboukir they were repelled into the sea and the future Pasha was nearly drowned. He survived the defeat and by 1801 had risen to be one of the two officers commanding the Albanian forces in Egypt. Following the departure of the French, Egypt lapsed into anarchy. By force and intrigue Mohammed Ali systematically disposed of his rivals for power so that in July 1805, the Sultan bowed to reality by appointing him Vali of Egypt. In 1831 Mohammed Ali invaded Syria and declared war on his Imperial master, gaining a succession of victories which demoralized the Ottoman Empire. Ten years later the Sultan granted Mohammed Ali the hereditary rule of Egypt in exchange for his ceding certain territories.

Whether or not it was Mohammed Ali who purchased the 'Pigot' and presented it to the Sultan of Turkey is a question that has been much debated among gem historians. There are those who have maintained that the buyer was another Albanian, just as cunning and ruthless as the ruler of Egypt; this was Ali Pasha (1741–1822), called 'The Lion of Janina' who succeeded eventually in establishing his authority over large areas of the Ottoman Empire. But if Ali Pasha was the buyer he would not have had long to contemplate the diamond's beauties because Rundell & Bridge only managed to sell it in 1822, the year of Ali's death. Moreover it should be noted that he was never the Pasha of Egypt, the title of the ruler specifically stated by the jewellers as the purchaser of the diamond. But the name of Ali Pasha does feature in the particular episode of the 'Pigot's' history for which it is best remembered.

Ali Pasha followed in his mother's footsteps, becoming a notorious brigand leader. In 1768 he married the daughter of the rich Pasha of Delvino but turned treachery and murder to

his own account, in the process neglecting the interests of his father-in-law. He obtained the Pashalik of Janina: then by intriguing with the Greeks and the Albanians he further extended his authority as well as increasing his own wealth. Although he progressed further up the ladder of power by being appointed Viceroy of Rumelia, Ali Pasha repeatedly failed to carry out the orders of his master, the Sultan: instead he sent him presents and plausible excuses. By 1819 the Sultan, Mahmud II (1808–39), who had decided to centralize the Government of the Ottoman Empire, considered that the time was ripe for getting rid of Ali Pasha.

An old adversary of Ali Pasha's, Ismail Pasha Bey, was appointed to Janina to remove him; however, he found the task beyond him, so Khurshid Ali was chosen to undertake it. There are differing accounts of how Ali Pasha met his end on 5 February 1822, each one more lurid than the last. One has it that he was shot by Khurshid's men at a small island monastery situated in the lake of Janina. Another states that Ali Pasha was induced by a ruse to admit an emissary from the Sultan whose attendants succeeded in overpowering and killing him. He was decapitated and his head was sent to the Sultan at Constantinople. The best known – and the least plausible, though surely worthy of dramatic adaption – relates how on his deathbed after being wounded he desired that his favourite wife, Vasilika, should be poisoned. Then he gave the 'Pigot' diamond, which he always wore in a green silk purse attached to his girdle, to a certain Captain D'Anglas, with orders that it be crushed to powder in his presence. Vasilika survived as did the obedient officer who bitterly regretted his folly, the destroyed diamond haunting him in his dreams for months afterwards.

Ali Pasha's reputation has drawn forth widely varying accounts. His barbarism and cruelty are said to have surpassed that of Mohammed Ali. He has been described as the most monstrous being that ever walked on earth – his customary methods of achieving his ends having been beheading, impaling and roasting. But the poet Byron, who commemorated him in his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, in 1809 wrote of him:

He said he was certain I was a man of birth, because I had small ears, curling hair and little white hands.... He told me to consider him as a father whilst I was in Turkey, and he said he looked on me as his son.

Then in 1822 after Ali Pasha's death, Byron wrote,

I never judge from manners, for once I had my pocket picked by the civillest gentleman I ever met with: and one of the mildest persons I ever saw was Ali Pasha.

It is more than likely that the 'Pigot' found its way to Turkey whether Mohammed Ali or Ali Pasha was its buyer. If it was Mohammed Ali, we have the reliable statement of Rundell & Bridge to the effect that soon after he bought the stone he presented it to the Sultan of Turkey. This undoubtedly would



Ali Pasha, who may have owned the 'Pigot' diamond, and who was described by Byron as 'one of the mildest persons I ever saw'.

have been before 1831, because in that year he sent his army into Syria and declared war against the Sultan. If Ali Pasha had bought the 'Pigot' then it is probable that his Turkish assassins would have been obliged to take the diamond back with them to the Sultan, who undoubtedly would have been aware of the existence of such a renowned gem. The story of the diamond's destruction must be viewed as not only a historical improbability but also a technical impossibility; although diamonds are brittle and can be damaged, they cannot easily be pulverized. Somehow one doubts that the necessary technical apparatus was available on the island in Janina to have fulfilled the wish of the dying Ali Pasha.

A final point about the 'Pigot' remains to be discussed and that is the question of its weight which has been variously

reported as being from 47 to 85.80 (old) carats. But Fox has stated clearly that it weighed $187\frac{1}{2}$ grains, which is equivalent to 47.375 (old) or 48.63 (metric) carats, and that was the weight of the diamond given in the notes accompanying the glass models of celebrated diamonds that attracted such interest when displayed in the Great Exhibition of 1851. Perhaps the reports of the stone weighing considerably more, derive from rather optimistic models made at the behest of Rundell & Bridge. The mineralogist James Gregory – who was destined to play a notorious role in connection with the early diamond discoveries in South Africa – presented one to the Natural History Museum in London: it is equivalent to a diamond weighing 93.3 carats.

Although the 'Pigot' must for the moment be considered as having vanished, efforts to locate it have continued. In the early 1960s a leading firm of auctioneers heard of the existence in Egypt of a diamond identical in weight to the 'Pigot', but unfortunately neither its shape nor its colour bore resemblance to it. Then a 49.03-carat pear-shape came up for sale in London. It was said to have been sent for sale by a royal personage, rumoured to have ruled over 'a small Adriatic country' so Janina, Ali Pasha's locality, sprang to mind. But once more the shape, colour, and in this instance, the weight could not be reconciled to those of the 'Pigot'. Then a mysterious stone, said to have weighed 49 carats, featured in a court case in London: no other details were made available. Finally a diamond weighing exactly 48.63 metric carats came up for sale in New York in 1984, but its weight was the sole point of resemblance between it and the missing diamond. Provided that it has not suffered recutting, perhaps this gem, possessing such a varied and interesting history, will come to be recognized.

EUGÉNIE

The contrasting fortunes of two Empresses are linked by the history of this diamond.

The earlier of the two was the formidable Catherine the Great of Russia. Born in 1729, the daughter of an obscure German Prince, at the tender age of fourteen she was chosen to be the bride of the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, the grandson of Peter the Great, who, as the Grand Duke Peter, was heir to the throne of Russia. She arrived in that country in 1744 and married the following year. At that time Peter the Great's daughter, the Empress Elizabeth, ruled Russia, her twenty-year reign doing much to stabilize the monarchy. The Empress was devoted to luxury and pleasure and longed to

impart to her Court the brilliancy which characterized so many others in Europe. In that way she was to pave the way for Catherine.

The marriage between the Grand Duke Peter and his young bride proved to be a complete failure. Catherine, who was a woman of charm, possessed both a lively intelligence and great energy; she was not only bored with and constantly humiliated by her husband, but because of her serious and studious disposition, was regarded with suspicion by many at the Russian Court. Following the death of the Empress Elizabeth in 1762, it was not long before the new Emperor Peter III discredited himself by numerous foolish actions,

principally of a political nature, and prepared to rid himself of Catherine. But she enjoyed the support of both the Imperial Guard and the more enlightened elements of the nobility. In July 1762 she led the regiments that had rallied to her cause into St Petersburg and had herself proclaimed Empress. Peter III abdicated and eight days later was assassinated. On 9 July the Empress was crowned with great ceremony in Moscow as Catherine II, beginning a reign which was to last for thirty-four years.

With the Russian Court's traditional love of opulence and splendour, it was not surprising that Catherine showed a fondness for jewels. She was able to secure the services of some highly skilled jewellers such as Posier and Duval so that there was a continuous stream of items of jewellery through the Treasury for remodelling and of rose-cut diamonds for recutting as brilliants. Among the diamonds which the Empress came to own was an oval-shaped brilliant, slightly blunt at one end, weighing 51 old carats (52.35 metric), which was set as the centre stone of a hair ornament.

At the time nothing appeared to have been known about this diamond, so where could it have come from? It is, of course, quite natural to assume that the stone came from India. However, it does not appear to be so in this instance because the most detailed account of the important Brazilian diamonds, *Os Grandes Diamantes Brasileiros* written by Esmeraldino Reis and published under governmental auspices in 1959, includes this diamond. Under the name of the 'Empress Eugénie' it is stated to have weighed more than 100 carats in the rough and to have been found about 1760 in the region of Chapada Diamantina, an area in the province of Minas Gerais which has yielded several other notable stones. Afterwards the 'Empress Eugénie' is said to have been cut in Holland, a more than likely occurrence because many of the biggest Brazilian diamonds were then being exported to Lisbon before being sent on to Amsterdam for cutting. At that time the Dutch capital flourished both as a trading and cutting centre for diamonds; a few years later it was to be the location for the purchase of the 'Orlov', the most celebrated of all the diamonds that ended up in Russia.

Among Catherine the Great's supporters in the coup of July 1762 was Grigori Aleksandrovich Potemkin (1739–91). He distinguished himself in the war between Russia and Turkey which began in 1768 and was not resolved until six years later. The year 1774 marked a watershed in Potemkin's career: he became the lover of the Empress and the most powerful man in Russia. Potemkin was the only one of Catherine's lovers to play an extensive political role in the running of the country. Generally the Empress refrained from mixing business with pleasure – doubtless an admirable precept, increasingly disregarded during this century – and chose her ministers for their abilities. Potemkin's liaison with Catherine lasted for only two years but he was always treated as an equal by her and was the only one of her favourites to whom she referred as 'my husband'.

The Empress bestowed upon Potemkin the surname of



ABOVE *Catherine the Great, the first of the two Empresses to own the 'Eugénie'.*

OPPOSITE *The Empress Eugénie, Consort of Napoleon III.*

Tavrishesky (a name taken from the Khersonesus Taurica or Crimea, an area added by Potemkin to the Russian Empire); a magnificent palace called the Tauride, later the seat of the Imperial Duma (Parliament); and the 51-carat brilliant which for a time became known as the 'Potemkin' diamond. The gem was just one of the objects in the vast personal wealth which Potemkin amassed; he revelled in ostentatiousness and on one occasion is said to have given a banquet which cost more than 20,000 roubles. After his death he bequeathed his large collection of jewellery to his favourite niece, Countess Branitsky, who, in turn, left it to her daughter, Princess Coloredo.

The second of the two Empresses to have owned the diamond now appears on the scene. She was born in 1826, Eugenia Maria de Montijo de Guzmán, the daughter of a Spanish nobleman who had fought on the French side during Napoleon's Peninsular War in Spain. Eugenia travelled to Paris when Louis Napoleon became President of the Second Republic in December 1848. Unlike Catherine the Great, Eugenia was a great physical beauty so that she soon attracted the attention of the President. After he had been proclaimed Emperor, Napoleon III married Eugenia (who became the Empress Eugénie) on 29 January 1853. He bought



Potemkin's diamond from Princess Coloredo as a wedding present for his young bride. Henceforth the diamond became known as the 'Eugénie' and was set as the centre stone in a fine diamond necklace.

The Empress became known as a leader of fashion, so that jewels were constantly being added to her collection, but the diamond named after her always remained her favourite gem. At the same time it also became apparent that her influence upon her husband's policies, both domestic and foreign, was bad. She encouraged extravagance at Court; is credited with having had a preponderant voice in the disastrous decision to create a French-sponsored kingdom in Mexico; and urged Napoleon III to fight Prussia. This last step led to the calamitous defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and the collapse of the Second Empire.

The Empress escaped to England (where she was befriended by Queen Victoria) with a few of her jewels, including the 'Eugénie' diamond, which were placed in the

custody of the Bank of England for safekeeping. It is believed that they had been smuggled out of the Tuileries in Paris wrapped in newspapers. In 1872 Christie's auctioned some of these jewels in London but the sale did not include the 'Eugénie' diamond. This was bought privately for £15,000 by that celebrated collector of diamonds, Mulhar Rao, the Gaekwar of Baroda. After his deposition in 1875 the 'Eugénie' disappeared but eventually reappeared in the ownership of Mrs N. J. Dady of Bombay. Since her death there has been no trace of the gem and efforts to ascertain its whereabouts have unfortunately proved to be unsuccessful.

The Empress Eugénie on coming to England settled first at Chislehurst in Kent, before moving to Farnborough in Hampshire. After the death of her husband in 1873 she continued to play a dominant role in Bonapartist political activities. Her only child, the Prince Imperial, was killed while fighting with the British forces in the Zulu war of 1879. The Empress herself died while on a visit to Madrid in 1920.

MARIE-ANTOINETTE BLUE

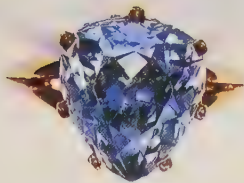
Queen Marie Antoinette of France was born in 1755, the fourth daughter of Maria Theresa and the Emperor Francis I of Austria. In 1770 she was betrothed to the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XVI, of France. Her unconventional behaviour and extravagance were to make her unpopular in France while her implacable hatred of radical politicians played a part in the events leading up to the French Revolution. She was guillotined on 16 October 1793, after a trial during which her dignity and courage impressed even her judges.

One example of the Queen's extravagance was her preoccupation with jewels. Her taste differed from those of her predecessors with the result that many items among the Crown Jewels were constantly being set and reset to please her. When she arrived in France she brought with her this greyish-blue heart-shaped diamond, weighing 5.46 (metric) carats, which was set in a ring. It remained the private property of Marie Antoinette so was not among the Crown Jewels that were deposited in the Garde Meuble in 1791. Shortly before her execution she gave the ring to Princess Lubomirska, one of her closest confidantes.

Princess Lubomirska, who was Polish, was an ardent collector of works of art: during the period of the French Revolution she bought quantities of eighteenth century furniture which she shipped back to Poland. After her death and in the absence of a male heir her vast estates passed to her four



Marie-Antoinette, the Consort of Louis XVI, whose taste in jewellery differed markedly from that of earlier French queens.



The 'Marie-Antoinette Blue' diamond.

daughters, three of whom married members of the Potocki family. It is recorded that the blue diamond was owned at some time by Count Wladimir Potocki. Next it turned up in the possession of a Mr Poplavisky who gave it to his wife, Nina; subsequently she married Mr Godovannikov. In 1955 the diamond was shown at the exhibition entitled 'Marie Antoinette, Archiduchesse, Dauphine et Reine' staged at the Château de Versailles. Prior to then it had been displayed at earlier exhibitions, notably those held in Paris in 1892 and 1900.

In 1967 the 'Marie Antoinette Blue' was sold at the Palais Galliera in Paris to a private European buyer. Finally Christie's put it up for sale in Geneva on 12 May 1983: on that occasion it remained unsold.

ARCOTS

The Hanoverian rulers of Great Britain accumulated a large collection of personal jewellery and Queen Charlotte, the Consort of King George III, was certainly no exception. She received many jewels, the most notable being the diamonds she received from the Nawab of Arcot. These included five brilliants, the largest of which weighed 38.6 carats, was oval-shaped and subsequently set in a necklace with the two smallest stones. The other two diamonds were pear-shaped and were set as earrings; one weighed 33.70 carats and the other 23.65 carats. These two have become known as the 'Arcot' diamonds.

Arcot, a town near Madras, became famous for its capture and defence by Clive in 1751, during the war between the rival claimants to the throne of the Carnatic. It passed into British hands in 1801 following the resignation of the government of the Nawab Azim-ud-daula, who had given the diamonds to Queen Charlotte in 1777.

The Queen died in 1818 and under the terms of her will the 'Arcots' were ordered to be sold to Rundell & Bridge, who in 1804 had been appointed jewellers and silversmiths to the Crown by George III. The clause about her 'Personals' read:

... of chief value being the jewels. First those which the King bought for £50,000 and gave to me. Secondly those presented to me by the Nawab of Arcot ... I give and bequeath the jewels received from the Nawab of Arcot to my four remaining daughters, or to the survivors or survivor in case they or any of them should die before me, and I direct that these jewels should be sold and that the produce ... shall be divided among them, my said remaining daughters or their survivors, share and share alike.



Queen Charlotte, Consort of King George III, who was an avid collector of diamonds.



However a delay ensued in implementing the Queen's will. This was the result of the attitude towards the will taken by her eldest son, George IV who, upon the death of his father in 1820, decided that the whole of his father's property devolved upon himself, not upon the Crown. Consequently he appropriated the money and the jewels and acted in a similar manner with regard to his mother's jewellery. The 'Arcots' were, therefore, set in the crown made for George IV and later in the crown made for Queen Adelaide, the Consort of his successor, William IV.

The terms of Queen Charlotte's will concerning the items of jewellery were thus not executed until many years after she had died. In 1834, John Bridge of Rundell & Bridge died; the firm was sold and his Executors ordered the sale of the 'Arcots' together with the round brilliant, which may have been the 'Hastings' diamond and which had also been set in

The Westminster tiara: the three large diamonds are the pear-shaped 'Arcots' and the round brilliant which may have been the 'Hastings'.

the crown made for George IV. The historic sale took place at Willis's Rooms in London's St James's on the 20 July 1837. The first Marquess of Westminster bought the 'Arcots' for £11,000 as part of a birthday present for his wife; he also bought the round brilliant and the 'Nassak' diamond.

The 'Arcots' and the other diamonds remained in the possession of the Grosvenor family for many years. In 1930, the Parisian jeweller Lacroix mounted the 'Arcots' in the Westminster Tiara, of bandeau form, together with the round brilliant and no less than 1421 smaller diamonds. The tiara was pierced to form a design of pavé-set scrolls with arcading, and with clusters of navette-shaped diamonds between the

sections, tapering slightly at the sides, with baguette diamond banding framing the large centre stone and with diamond baguettes dispersed singly throughout the ornament. In her memoirs, Loelia, Duchess of Westminster, third wife of the second Duke, wrote of the 'Arcots', 'fixed by themselves on the safety-pin they looked extremely bogus, so that a friend who saw me that evening remarked, "What on earth does Loelia think she's doing, pinning those two lumps of glass on herself?"' (The diamonds could be extracted from the tiara and worn separately as earrings.)

In June 1959, the third Duke of Westminster sold the Westminster Tiara to help meet the cost of heavy death-duties. Harry Winston paid £110,000 for it at the Sotheby's auction – then a world record price for a piece of jewellery. Subsequently Mr Winston had the two 'Arcots' recut to obtain greater clarity and brilliance, the larger to 31.01 metric carats and the smaller to 18.85 metric carats. Each was remounted as a ring and sold to American clients in 1959 and 1960 respectively.

HASTINGS

O Diamond! Diamond! Thou little knowest the mischief done!' was a rebuke administered by Isaac Newton to his dog of that name after it had knocked over a candle, thereby causing the destruction of papers containing some valuable work of the great scientist. Newton's words addressed to the gem rather than to a dog might well serve to express the feelings of several individuals whose fortunes suffered as a result of their involvement with diamonds.

Events in France during the early 1980s provide a perfect illustration. It will be recalled that during the last years of his tenure of office, the former French President, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, became embroiled in the so-called 'Bokassa diamonds' scandal. Giscard had received a present of diamonds from the self-styled Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic, which he put to his own account rather than that of the State. Allegations filled the air, books were said to have been written on the subject, while inevitably the gossip columns of the press had a field day at the time. Subsequently, Giscard stated that 'the accusations had become so far-flung, so preposterous, there was no answering them.' Nevertheless, the taint of scandal undoubtedly helped to undermine the former President's campaign for the Presidency, leading ultimately to his defeat at the polls on 10 May 1981.

The principal participants in an earlier French scandal, the celebrated affair of the 'Queen's Necklace' which took place towards the end of the eighteenth century, were treated rather more harshly.

Four years before the onset of the French Revolution, a necklace said to have contained diamonds worth 1,800,000 francs was secretly purchased from the court jeweller, presumably for Queen Marie Antoinette and on her own instructions. The necklace – not yet paid for – was delivered into the hands of no less a personage than Cardinal Prince de Rohan, first prelate of the Church of France. He, in turn, gave it to the femme fatale of the whole affair, the notorious

Comtesse de la Motte-Valois, who claimed she was acting on behalf of the Queen. It was then handed to a messenger, supposedly from the Queen, before vanishing without trace, never to be seen again. The arrest of the Cardinal and his subsequent trial on charges of theft and lèse-majesté set off a scandal which became just one in the chain of events leading up to the Revolution. The reputation of the unfortunate Queen, who to the end denied that she had had anything to do with the necklace, suffered most and she paid the full penalty. She was guillotined on 16 October 1793.

At about the same time as these momentous events were taking place in France, a lesser scandal involving a diamond was occupying the stage in English affairs. It centred on the figure of Warren Hastings (1732–1818), the first and most famous of the Governors-General of India and without doubt one of the great men of Britain's imperial past. The first stage of Hastings' rule lasted for two and a half years, and was the most placid and constructive. The second phase began with the arrival in India of three councillors appointed under the Regulating Act passed by Parliament in 1773. The previous year, the East India Company had been driven to ask the British Government for a loan of one million pounds to avert bankruptcy. One of the three councillors who were appointed was Philip Francis who hoped to succeed Hastings as Governor-General. In Macaulay's words, Francis was 'a man prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue', and he was mainly responsible for initiating the contest which was to colour the whole of Hastings' life.

During the years 1780–84, England suffered several reverses in the western part of the world, notably during the American War of Independence. Hastings succeeded in avoiding similar disasters to British interests in the East. However, the tenseness of the situation and the dire peril of the East India Company's position in India are considered to account for some of his high-handed actions which were later to be bitterly attacked by his enemies.



The execution of Marie Antoinette, 16 October 1793.

Following the passing of the India Act in 1784 by the administration of William Pitt the Younger, Hastings became convinced that there was no future for him in the East and he returned to England the following year. At first, Pitt was friendly to Hastings but then he turned against him, being unable to support him on one particular issue. Spurred on by the ever-malicious Francis, now a Member of Parliament and keen to continue his vendetta against the former Governor-General, the Whigs – led by Edmund Burke – succeeded in having charges brought against Hastings.

It was precisely at a time when Hastings needed all the support he could muster that a diamond, weighing 101 carats, appeared on the scene as a source of embarrassment to himself and one of delight to his opponents.

The diamond had been sent as a gift to King George III by Nizam Ali Cawn, the most important and influential of the Indian princes. At a levee held in St James's Palace, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Lord Sydney (after whom the Australian city is named), formally presented the diamond together with a rich purse containing a letter from the Nizam to his Sovereign. Unfortunately for himself, Hastings was present on this occasion, a circumstance quickly seized upon by his enemies. They lost no time in spreading a story to the effect that in order to obtain the support of the King, Hastings had offered him a bribe in the form of a valuable diamond. It was certainly considered not difficult to gain the support of Queen Charlotte by these means since she enjoyed the reputation of being very avaricious where jewellery was concerned.

It was not long before caricatures and scurrilous writings began to circulate in London. One particular poster that appeared under the heading 'The Great Stone Eater' and advertised a juggler who claimed he could eat and digest

stones like an ostrich provided a heaven-sent opportunity for the satirists. They substituted the King for the juggler and depicted him as 'the Greatest Stone Eater' with a diamond in his mouth and a pile of others ready for consumption.

When reference was made in the House of Commons to the scandal surrounding the diamond, Major Scott, a personal friend and prominent champion of Warren Hastings, supplied the House with the full facts about the stone. During the Commons debate on the East India Company's Relief Bill on 26 June 1786, Scott referred to the affair of the diamond. His speech was reported as follows:

... he [Major Scott] would, with the permission of the House, say a very few words relative to the diamond that had lately made so much noise in town: and he trusted the House would permit him to do this, because he had been calumniated very much for a few days past, in consequence of what an hon. gentleman (Mr Sheridan) had dropped a few evenings ago, without any serious design, he believed: but what appeared then so farcical, was now become very serious; and he wished to retrieve his character from the imputation under which it laid.

The Major said that, on 2 June, when he was in the House of Commons, a Member of Parliament whose name he could not recollect, delivered to him the following letter:

2 June, 4 o'clock

My dear Scott, I have just received a packet, of such apparent importance as alarms me for the consequences of keeping it in my possession, and I therefore give you this unseasonable trouble, to request that you will take the

earliest possible means to communicate this information to Lord Sydney, with the following circumstances relating to it, which are all I yet know concerning it. The packet was delivered to me by Mr Blair, brother-in-law to Mr Richard Johnson, and I have given him my receipt for it. It was directed to me: I opened it and found it to contain an English endorsed paper, sealed, which I have not opened, a letter from the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn to the King, a letter from the same Nabob to myself, damaged, and scarce legible ...; and a small bulse [pouch] sealed with three (or I believe four) seals bearing the Nabob's principal title. These are all much soiled with the sea water, having been originally sent on board the Hinchinbrooke, and recovered from the wreck. Besides the above, there were a letter of a more recent date, from the same Nabob to me, and other English papers. – I guess the purport of the effaced letter to be a commission to me to deliver a letter to the King and most probably the bulse with it, the contents of which I have not a clue to conjecture. Supposing that it may contain something of value, and in that case of no small value, I think it neither consistent with my interest or credit to keep it an hour longer in my custody than absolute necessity may require, and therefore request that I may be relieved from the charge; and that for that purpose you will be so good as to endeavour to obtain Lord Sydney's permission so that you may deliver the packet with all its contents to him; concluding that, while the present inquiry lasts, his lordship would prefer that mode to my own personal attendance.

Your affectionate, Warren Hastings

The central part of Major Scott's speech in the House of Commons then consisted of a long account of the delay on his part in meeting Lord Sydney and acquainting him with the facts concerning the packet containing the diamond. Eventually, the report of his speech concludes:

Having thus stated all the circumstances of an affair which has been grossly misrepresented, he [Scott] begged leave to say, that if there was a blamable delay in delivering this packet to Lord Sydney, it rested solely with him – that he delivered it publicly, not as a matter of secrecy, or to be concealed; for he did conceive it to be of infinite importance to the prosperity of this country, as connected with India, that Nizam Ali Cawn, the first prince in part of family in Hindostan, and of great power and weight, who had formerly been so hostile to our nation, and so connected with France, should, for the first time, seek a connexion with us, and that he should have addressed a letter to the Sovereign. With regard to the mode of doing it, it was highly respectful on the part of Nizam Ali Cawn, being the invariable mode in which an inferior addresses a superior – nor could there be a man acquainted with the established customs of Hindostan, who would have supposed he could have commenced a correspondence in any other manner.

Scott declared that he was utterly ignorant of the contents of the bulse, but he was convinced it had never been opened

after it left Hyderabad, as it was sealed with the Nizam's seal when he delivered it to Lord Sydney.

Major Scott's explanation of the circumstances surrounding the diamond was received with incredulity by the hostile faction. Events took their course, however, and two years later Hastings was formally impeached. Amid great excitement, proceedings began in Westminster Hall in February 1788; they were to drag on for seven years and three months. The trial stands unique in British history both on account of its length and the eloquence of the opposing counsel. In the end, it resulted in the acquittal of Hastings on all accounts in April 1795. Though acquitted, he was financially ruined and denied further office, but in 1813 when he appeared before the House of Commons to give evidence on Indian affairs, the whole House rose in his honour. In the following year he was appointed a Privy Councillor.

Since the presentation of the 'Hastings' diamond to George III nothing more appears to have been heard of it.

Now a diamond in the rough weighing more than 100 carats is a rare object at any time, but even more so in the eighteenth century when the total world output constituted only a fraction of what it is today. It is, therefore, somewhat strange that all trace appears to have been lost of such an outstanding diamond. The King would surely not have refused it as a gift from the most important and influential of the Indian princes; refusal would not only have been insulting to its donor but also



Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of India.

politically damaging to British interests in India. Furthermore, the Queen would never have pardoned negligence on anyone's part in not having shown her such a diamond. Doubtless she would have been more than pleased to have added to her jewellery collection, of which the most notable items were probably the two fine pear-shaped diamonds given to her by another Indian potentate, the Nawab of Arcot. On all accounts, it is more than reasonable to suppose that Hastings' diamond somehow found its way into the Crown Jewels.

Assuming this to be so, is there a diamond among the British Crown Jewels which may at some time be identified as the 'Hastings' diamond? The answer is yes.

George III died in 1820 and was succeeded by his eldest son, formerly the Prince Regent who, as George IV, was crowned on 19 July 1821. In the chapter devoted to England in his monumental work, *A History of the Crown Jewels of Europe*, Lord Twining relates some interesting information about the regalia, in connection with the coronation of the new King, that derives from an account of Rundell, Bridge & Co, the noted firm of jewellers who had been appointed jewellers and silversmiths to the Crown by George III. The author of the account, George Fox, wrote as follows:

The crown made for this occasion was really a magnificent one, very many remarkable fine ornaments were introduced into it, the principal one being a very fine round stone of the diameter of a shilling weighing.... It was cut in the truest style and its proportions being mathematically correct. This stone was valued at the sum of £12,000 but on being sold in the year 1837 when many other large and fine diamonds belonging to Rundell & Bridge came to be auctioned by Messrs Sharp of Winchester Street at Willis's Rooms, King Street, St James's, it was knocked down to Emmanuel Brothers for.... These gentlemen bought it with other fine jewels at that sale for the Marquis of Westminster, in whose possession the whole of the diamonds thus bought still remain.

The figures showing the weight of the diamond and the amount it fetched at the sale were left blank in the original manuscript of Fox. However, the weight of the diamond is elsewhere recorded as 125½ grains, equivalent to 32.20 metric carats.

Nothing appears to be known about the origin of this diamond or how it came to be included among the Crown Jewels. A contemporary, John Mawe, in the second edition (1823) of his *A Treatise on Diamonds and Other Precious Stones* wrote of the 'Hastings' diamond that 'it made a most perfect brilliant'. It would seem, therefore, not unreasonable to suppose that this clearly exceptional gem in the crown may have been cut from none other than the original rough diamond which had caused so much trouble to the former Governor-General of India.

The Marquis of Westminster paid £3,500 for the circular diamond as a birthday present for his wife. At the same sale,



George IV, painted by Thomas Lawrence.

he bought the 'Arcot' pear-shapes and another notable diamond, the 'Nassak', which had originally been brought to London by the East India Company before being sold to Messrs Rundell & Bridge.

The round brilliant and the 'Arcot' pear-shapes were subsequently set in the Westminster Tiara, the former being contained in the centre section. It was detachable and could be worn as a corsage ornament for which two additional diamond sections with fittings were supplied. Harry Winston purchased the tiara at an auction held in London by Sotheby's on 25 June 1959. He had the circular diamond removed from its setting and, to improve its brilliance, recut to 26.77 carats. Set as a ring, it was sold to an American client later in the same year. Finally it came up for auction in New York on 9 December 1970.

MATAN

An air of mystery has always surrounded the 'Matan', or the 'Mattam' as it has sometimes been called: some accounts refer to it not being a diamond at all, merely a rock crystal. The stone takes its name from the Rajah of Matan, a town situated in the west of Borneo. This island, which has been called 'a treasure house of gems', has numbered gold, diamonds, antimony, mercury and gypsum among its diverse products. It is not recorded when diamonds were first found in Borneo; however, it must be one of the oldest sources since its existence as such was known to Tavernier who wrote:

The principal reason that dissuaded me from going to the Island of Borneo was because I understood that the Queen of the Island would not permit any strangers to carry away any of those diamonds out of the Island. Those few that are exported, being carry'd out by stealth, and privately sold at Batavia. I say the Queen and not the King, because in that Island the Women have the Sovereign Command, and not the men.

The Bornean deposits have been located principally in the Landak area in the western part of the island and in the south. Diamonds of varying hues including bottle green, pale blue, brown and even red are said to have been found. The diggings are alluvial, the stones being recovered from river beds and deposits at the foot of the mountains. Work has usually been carried down to a depth of 3 to 9 metres (10 to 30 feet) and it was ascertained that as the diggings went deeper, so the gems became both larger and more plentiful. The deposits have been worked ever since the Malays established settlements on the coast. In the nineteenth century there were ten mines at Landak, each worked by between twenty to thirty labourers.

For a long period much of Borneo's trade was in the hands of the Dutch East India Company, founded in 1602 to regulate Dutch trade in the Indian Ocean. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Company had almost completely monopolized trade in this part of the world, setting up its headquarters at Batavia. For the year 1738 the Dutch East India Company exported diamonds to the value of 200,000 to 300,000 guilders from the Landak area. After the annexation of Holland by France, Dutch influence in the East declined, to be superseded by that of the British.

No one did more to secure the maritime supremacy of the Eastern Sea for Great Britain than Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781-1826). This eminent man, with such a resounding, almost fictional name, possessed an extensive knowledge of the East; his advice was constantly sought by his superiors in London, in particular by Lord Minto, the President of the

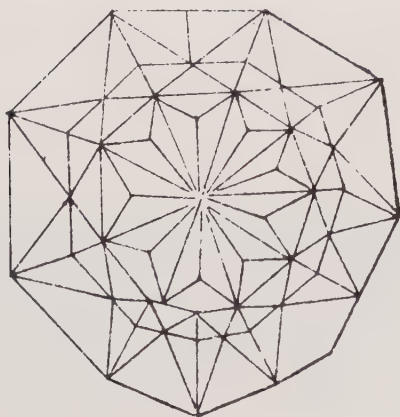


Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles who was responsible for the furtherance of British interests in the East Indies.

Board of Trade. In 1810 Raffles was appointed lieutenant-governor of the Island of Java. Seven years later he published a *History of Java* and doubtless would have written more had disaster not struck him. In 1824 the steamer in which he was sailing home caught fire with the result that he lost all his thousands of papers, drawings, notes and memoirs for an intended history of Borneo and Sumatra.

Concerning the Dutch dealings in diamonds Raffles wrote:

Few courts of Europe could boast of a more brilliant display of diamonds than, in the prosperous times of the Dutch, was exhibited by the ladies of Batavia, the principal and only mart yet opened for the Bornean diamond mines, and whence those known in the European world have been procured. With the decline of the Dutch government, however, the demand has decreased, and the mines are now much neglected, the numerous diamond-cutters not being able to obtain a livelihood. Formerly, when more Chinese were employed in the mines of Landak, diamonds from 10 to 13 carats were common in the public markets. The Pangéran (Rajah) of Landak now wears one of 18, and another of 14 carats.



The drawing of a Bornean diamond entitled the 'Rajah' from the Duke of Brunswick's catalogue. It is thought by some to have been the same stone as the 'Matan'.

For more than a century the mines in the west of Borneo were worked mainly by the Chinese. But in 1842 the 'Celestials', as they were known, were attacked, being either massacred or driven out of the country by the Dyaks (aborigines). It has been stated that the cause of the upheaval was the harsh treatment of the Dyaks by the Chinese.

It was a Dyak who was responsible for finding the legendary 'Matan'. Again we are indebted to Raffles who wrote:

Among the larger diamonds which mines have produced, it may not be uninteresting to mention that the great diamond now in the possession of the Sultan of Matan, which has been seen and examined by Europeans, weighed 367 carats; it is of the shape of an egg, indented on one side. It is however, uncut. . . . This celebrated diamond, known by the name of the 'Matan' diamond, was discovered by a Dyak, and claimed as a droit of loyalty by the Sultan of the country, Gurn-Laya, but was handed over to the Pangéran of Landak, whose brother, having got possession of it, gave it as a bribe to the Sultan of Sukadana, in order that he might be placed upon the throne of Landak. The lawful prince, however, having fled to Bantam, by the aid of the prince of that country and the Dutch, succeeded in gaining possession of his district, and nearly destroyed Sukadana. It has remained as an heirloom in the family for four descents, and is almost the only appendage of royalty now remaining.

It is more than likely that Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles actually cast his eyes on the diamond and, therefore, was not relying upon a hearsay description of it. If that were so then his description of its shape as ovoid adds to the confusion surrounding its history because replicas that have been made of the 'Matan' have always depicted it as a somewhat crudely shaped drop. However, a drawing which appeared among those of celebrated diamonds extant in 1860, when the Duke of Brunswick's jewels were catalogued, shows a gem of a more sophisticated cut.

On the other hand it is possible that this drawing is of another Bornean diamond, known as the 'Star of Sarawak'. Edwin Streeter refers to its purchase around 1878 by the Rajah of Sarawak from a Chinese seller. The stone weighed 70 carats and was said to have been of the finest colour.

The supposition that the 'Matan' was not a diamond but a rock crystal derives from the Sultan's habit of showing such a stone to strangers. It is said that since he had been robbed of so much of his territory, he did not want to lose this last remaining emblem of royalty to his powerful and greedy neighbours at Pontianak, to the north. Nevertheless John Mawe, in his book *A Treatise on Diamonds* maintains that the Sultan did retain the real diamond; he tells of a friend who was permitted to see it but asked not to touch it. The gem was about the size of a walnut, with a bluish metallic colour.

Further evidence that the 'Matan' may be a diamond is supplied by one of its owners who apparently valued it so highly that he refused to part with it. One particularly tempting offer came from the Dutch government, anxious to obtain possession of a talisman associated with its former empire. Early in the nineteenth century the Governor sent an emissary to the Rajah to negotiate the purchase of the stone. The emissary offered 150,000 guilders, and two large war brigs, with a full complement of guns and ammunition, as well as other arms, but the Rajah declined to sell.

The truth about the 'Matan' may never be known. During the Second World War many homeward-bound Japanese vessels carried quantities of gems obtained during the occupation of Borneo. One cargo, reported to have had a value of nearly £4,000,000, was in the cruiser *Ashigara* when she was sunk off the coast of eastern Sumatra. According to survivors at least one and possibly five boxes of diamonds were aboard at the time. In 1960 the president of Japan's largest salvage firm said that the wreck had been located under 30 metres (100 feet) of water and that it might be possible to salvage the ship's contents.

In the meantime Borneo has continued to yield diamonds. The most notable specimen that has emerged in the years following the war is the 166-carat 'Tri-Sakti', found in the Banjarmasin diggings of Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo) in the late 1960s. Asschers Diamant Maatschappij of Amsterdam fashioned an emerald-cut weighing 50.53 carats, reported to be flawless and blue-white in colour, from the rough. Afterwards it was sold in Europe to an undisclosed buyer on behalf of the Indonesian government, whose leader at the time, President Sukarno, boldly predicted that there were more diamond deposits in Kalimantan than in Kimberley, South Africa.

NASSAK

About 180 km (110 miles) north-east of Bombay is situated Nasik, the chief town of a district of Maharashtra. It lies on the Godavari river, some 48 km (30 miles) from its source. The name of the place has been variously written as Nassac, Nassik or Nessuck but the diamond named after it is nowadays known as the 'Nassak'.

Nasik is venerated by Hindus as one of the homes of Rama and Sita. Numerous cave-temples are found in the neighbourhood and during the period of the Mahratta ascendancy the town became a noted place of pilgrimage for worshippers of Siva. Siva is one of the principal deities of Hinduism and is worshipped as the paramount lord by the various Saiva sects of India. The God is one of the most complex, combining within himself seemingly contradictory qualities: he is both the destroyer and the creator. Siva's consort is known as Uma, Sati, Parvati, Durga or Kali; and it is said that the divine couple, together with their sons, dwell on Mount Kailasa in the Himalayas. Siva's mount is the bull Nandi; a sculpture of Nandi sits opposite the main sanctuary of every Siva temple. In temples and private shrines Siva is worshipped in his fundamental form of the lingam, or phallus.

It is more than likely that one of the Mahratta chieftains acquired the 'Nassak' diamond and placed it in the eye of a statue of Siva within one of the temples. So long as the power of the Mahratta confederacy flourished, treasures accumulated in places of worship but when that power was loosened theft and pillage of sacred places took place.

In 1818 the British forces finally defeated the one remaining Peshwa in the last of the Mahratta Wars. Among the horde of booty which they captured was the 'Nassak'. The Peshwa had concealed the diamond from the British but it was brought to light by Colonel Briggs who forthwith handed it over to the Marquess of Hastings, the Governor-General and Commander in Chief of forces in India from 1813 to 1822, as part of the 'Deccan booty'.

Hastings presented the diamond to the East India Company, doubtless an honourable act only to be expected by a Commander in Chief, but one which he and his family might well have regretted. For Hastings, a friend and confidant of the Prince of Wales (later George IV), was a man of habitual extravagance and he left his family so badly off that in 1827 the East India Company voted a further sum of £20,000 to his son, in addition to substantial funds allocated earlier.

When the 'Nassak' arrived in England it was triangularly shaped and had been cut in the old, somewhat primitive, Indian style. Its weight was recorded as 89 carats and 2 grains. A noted authority on jewellery and precious stones at the time, John Mawe, described the 'Nassak' as: 'a diamond of great purity but of a bad form ... it is cut and polished, so as

to retain the greatest possible weight, but it exhibits none of the qualities which it would so proudly display if it had been well proportioned.'

The East India Company handed the diamond for custody to the famous firm of Rundell & Bridge who had originally been appointed jewellers and silversmiths to the Crown by George III. Rundell & Bridge decided to have the 'Nassak' recut, and this was successfully achieved with the loss of only 10 per cent of the diamond's original weight. They adhered to the policy of keeping as close as possible to the original triangular shape while at the same time increasing its brilliance. In July 1831 Emanuel Brothers bought the 'Nassak' for £7,200: this sum represented scarcely one third of the previous estimate of the gem's worth and the low figure is accounted for by the fact that the sale occurred during a period of severe financial depression.

Six years later the 'Nassak' came up for auction at an important sale held in Willis's Rooms in London. *The Times* reported that the room was:

filled with all the cognoscenti in precious stones and all the principal dealers, attracted by the announcement that the celebrated 'Nassak' diamond, the 'Arcot' diamonds and a variety of most other costly diamonds and pearls, the property of the late Mr Bridge, of Ludgate Hill, would be sold by auction by Mr Sharp. The sale commenced at 3 o'clock. Mr Sharp, previously to the sale, entered into a short description of the principal lots.

In all there were twenty-four lots and considerable competition ensued for some of them; nevertheless, it was generally considered that the prices realized amounted to far below expectations. The names of the buyers were recorded in *The Times* but oddly enough there was no mention of the eventual



Photograph of the town of Nasik, on the Godavari River in India. The 'Nassak' is thought to have been set in a statue in one of the temples there.



The first Marquess of Westminster, who purchased the 'Nassak' and the 'Arcots' diamonds in 1837.

purchaser of the 'Nassak' who was none other than the first Marquess of Westminster. It may, therefore, be supposed that either he did not wish for the disclosure of his identity or else he bought the diamond privately after the sale.

The Marquess also bought the 'Arcot' diamonds, two very fine pear-shapes weighing a total of 57.35 carats that had originally been presented to Queen Charlotte, the consort of George III, by the Nawab of Arcot in 1777, as well as the brilliant weighing 32.20 carats which may have been cut from the stone that fifty years before had caused so much embarrassment to that great colonial administrator Warren Hastings and which is named after him. At the Drawing Room on Queen Victoria's eighteenth birthday, not long after she had ascended the throne in 1837, the Marquess wore the 'Nassak' on the hilt of his sword. It was intended that the Marchioness should have worn the 'Arcot' diamonds but owing to indisposition she was unable to attend. The 'Nassak' remained in the Grosvenor family until 1926 when the second Duke of Westminster sold it to Georges Mauboussin, the Paris jeweller.

In the same year the 'Nassak' made the first of its voyages across the Atlantic when, after failing to find a European buyer for the gem, Mauboussin sent it to the United States for display as an 'artistic antique'. This caused the American jewellery industry to rise up in arms because it was well known at the time that M. Mauboussin's intention was to offer the diamond for sale. However, the United States Customs

Court upheld its importation as an 'artistic antique' and it came into the country duty free. The jewellery trade thereupon arranged an appeal to the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals and the former decision was reversed. The gem returned to Paris where it was bought by Harry Winston Inc. Then Mr Winston shipped it to New York where he had it recut to its present shape as an emerald-cut weighing 43.38 carats. He sold it to the New York jewellers, Trabert and Hoeffler. In 1944 Mrs William B. Leeds of New York became the owner of the 'Nassak', wearing it in a ring set with two tapered baguettes.

The 'Nassak' came up for auction again, on this occasion at the Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York on 16 April 1970. Bidding started at \$200,000: five bids and two minutes later it was all over. The buyer was Mr Edward J. Hand, of Greenwich, Connecticut, who paid \$500,000 for the diamond. It was reported that a large chain of jewellers had been the underbidder at \$475,000. Mr Hand, who was once married to the tennis star Gussie Moran – older devotees of the game will recall the sartorial sensations she caused on court in the early 1950s – remarked: 'I think it was a bargain. I was prepared to go as high as \$750,000.' Nevertheless, at the time the 'Nassak' realized the second highest price ever paid for a gem at an auction, the amount only being exceeded by that which Richard Burton had paid for the 'Taylor-Burton' diamond the previous year; perhaps earlier disappointments attached to the sale of the 'Nassak' had been overcome and the true worth of the gem had at long last been recognized.

In due course a partnership of J. & S. S. De Young, the Boston estate goods firm, and Bulgari of Italy acquired the 'Nassak'. In 1977 they offered the diamond to the King of Saudi Arabia, but he declined to buy it, considering it unattractive – despite a grading report from the Gemological Institute of America stating that the stone was D/Flawless. (It is considered today that its graininess would disqualify the diamond from a flawless rating.) However, when the King was shown the 'Nassak' a second time, he was sufficiently impressed by its history to purchase it, together with a large Burma ruby.

POLAR STAR



The 'Polar Star' derives its name from the eight-point star cut on its pavilion. A Golconda diamond of cushion shape, weighing 41.285 metric carats, the 'Polar Star' has been described as the 'brightest diamond ever seen'. The symmetry of its cutting is so perfect that it can be balanced on its culet.

The history of the gem can be traced back to its ownership by Joseph Bonaparte, the elder brother of Napoleon, who for a short time ruled as the King, first of Naples, then of Spain. A great lover of gems, he acquired the 'Polar Star' from an unnamed source. After he had lost both his crown and his kingdom he sold the diamond before he set sail for America where he spent the remaining years of his life.

The 'Polar Star' was at some time bought by Princess Tatiana Youssoupov (1769–1841), a member of one of the richest and most influential families in Imperial Russia, later related to the Imperial family. The diamond has also been

The 'Polar Star' diamond.

known as the 'Youssoupov'. The Youssoupov family is perhaps best known for its involvement with the strange figure of Raspoutine, the Russian courtier and religious figure whose influence at the Russian Court was for a time paramount. Raspoutine was credited with alleviating the haemophilia of the young Czarevich, thereby gaining influence over the Empress Alexandra and, through her, the Czar Nicholas II. Raspoutine used his influence indiscriminately and during the First World War he made and unmade cabinet ministers at will: all who opposed him suffered disgrace and banishment.

Alarmed by the harmful effect Raspoutine was having upon the Court, Prince Felix Youssoupov and others conspired to kill him. On the night of 16 December 1916, the Prince entertained Raspoutine to dinner, poisoning his wine. When this attempt failed the conspirators shot him and thrust his



The 'Polar Star' showing the eight-point star cut on the pavilion.

body beneath a tributary of the River Neva.

After the Revolution Prince Felix Youssoupov fled from Russia taking the 'Polar Star' with him. In 1925 the jewellery cache of the Youssoupovs in their former palace was discovered. According to reports, the whereabouts of the hiding-place was betrayed to the authorities by the son of the mason who had originally devised it in 1917. Secret passages from the picture gallery led to two underground dungeons which contained a huge collection of jewels and other treasures. However, Prince Felix had by that time succeeded in getting other family jewels as well as the 'Polar Star' out of Russia. These included two other notable diamonds, the 'Sultan of Morocco', a steel-coloured diamond of 35.67 metric carats said to have been owned by the Youssoupov family since 1840, and the 'Ram's Head', a light pinkish gem of 17.47 carats.

In 1924 Prince Felix embarked upon series of negotiations with Cartier's. The 'Polar Star' was lodged, with interruptions, with their London branch before being pledged along with other family jewels with the London firm of T. M. Sutton until Cartier's redeemed it. In 1928 they sold the diamond to Lady Deterding, the wife of the oil magnate Sir Henry Deterding, who was the founder of Royal Dutch Shell. Finally after her death and acting on the instructions of her executors, Christie's auctioned the 'Polar Star' in Geneva on the 20 November 1980. On that occasion a dealer from Sri Lanka paid 8 million Swiss Francs (£1.9 million) for the gem.

The sole contentious point concerning the 'Polar Star' is the date of its acquisition by the Youssoupovs. In 1949 Prince Felix stated that it had been in his family's ownership for a

century, a fact corroborated by Dieulafait who published his *Diamonds and Precious Stones* in 1874. But Streeter considered this to be a 'curious statement', maintaining that the 'Polar Star' had been purchased in England for the Imperial Regalia of Russia. However, the existence of another oval-cut diamond among the former Russian Crown Jewels is confirmed by Twining in *A History of the Crown Jewels of Europe*. He has listed a fine oval brilliant with a rosy-white or light-pinkish tint weighing $40\frac{12}{32}$ (old) carats: at the same time he points to it being too long in the oval. Now if the weight of this stone is converted into metric carats its weight is less than that of the 'Polar Star', which moreover certainly cannot be described as being irregular in length – indeed it is beautifully proportioned. It is clear that the diamond described by Twining is the principal stone among the former Crown Jewels that were put up for sale by Christie's in London in 1927. Consequently there are two different diamonds: the declarations of both Prince Felix Youssoupov and Streeter are thereby validated.

ABBAS MIRZA

Abbas Mirza was a member of the Persian royal family, the second son of Fath Ali Shah (1797–1834) and a leader of his country's forces, at that time principally engaged in fighting the Russians. It is stated that his elder brother, Muhammad Ali Mirza, was once asked by the ruling Shah, his great-uncle, what he would do if he became Shah. 'I would kill you,' was the boy's reply, so leading to the wise choice of his younger brother as heir-apparent to their father.

The military campaigns of Abbas Mirza against the Russians for the most part consisted of a series of disasters which ultimately led to the signing of the Treaty of Turkmanchai in 1828. Under its terms the Persians ceded much territory and it came to be resented by them. This resentment boiled over with the murder of the Russian Ambassador, Griboedov, and resulted in the despatch of the 'Shah' diamond to St Petersburg by Fath Ali Shah in an attempt to mollify the feelings of the Czar, Nicholas I.

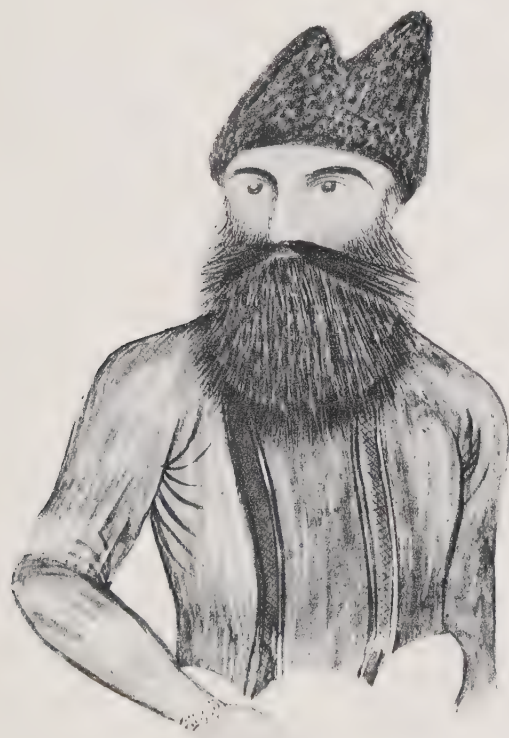
By the seventh article of the Treaty of Turkmanchai, Abbas Mirza was formally recognized as the heir to the throne of

Persia, but in the event he died one year before his father. His final campaign was fought in Khorassan, in the eastern part of Persia, where the ruling Qajar dynasty was detested. Abbas Mirza was entrusted with the task of restoring order and defending Persian rights. It was during this campaign that the 'Abbas Mirza' diamond came to light. The news of its existence was conveyed to a meeting of the British Association in 1851 when Dr Beke, of the Chemical Section, made a statement entitled, *On a diamond slab supposed to have been cut from the Koh-i-noor*. It read as follows:

It appears that in 1832, the Persian army of Abbas Meerza for the subjugation of Khorassan found at the capture of Coocha among the jewels of the harem of Reeza Kooli Khan, a large diamond slab, supposed to have been cut from the Koh-i-noor; it weighed 130 carats and showed the marks of cutting on the flat or largest side. The only account that could be obtained of it was the statement that it was found in the possession of a poor man, a native of Khorassan, and that it had been employed in his family for the purpose of striking a light against a steel, and in this rough service it had sustained injury by constant use. The diamond was presented by the Prince of Persia to his father Futteh Ali Shah. The Armenian jewellers of Tehraun asked the sum of 20,000 tomauns (about £16,000) for cutting it, but the Shah was not disposed to incur the expense. These particulars had been forwarded to Dr Beke by his brother, Mr W. G. Beke, late colonel of engineers in the Persian service and Khorassan campaign.

The subject of the 'Abbas Mirza' diamond was pursued at the next meeting of the British Association when Professor James Tennant, the London mineralogist, read a paper, *On the Koh-i-noor Diamond*. The issue of the *Athenaeum* dated 25 September 1852, stated that:

Professor Tennant was induced to record his opinion of the probability of this [Dr Beke's theory that the 'Abbas Mirza' had been cut from the 'Koh-i-noor'] being correct. He had made models in fluorspar, and afterwards broken them, and obtained specimens which would correspond in cleavage, weight and size with the Koh-i-noor. By this means he was enabled to include the piece described by Dr Beke, and probably the large Russian diamond, as forming altogether but portions of one large diamond. The diamond belongs to the tessellar crystalline system: it yields readily to cleavage in four directions, parallel to the planes of the regular octahedron. Two of the largest planes of the Koh-i-noor, when exhibited in the Crystal Palace, were cleavage planes – one of them had not been polished. This proved the specimen to be not a third of the weight of the original



Abbas Mirza, a member of the Persian royal family and a military leader.



Professor James Tennant, the eminent 19th century mineralogist.

crystal, which he believed to have been a rhombic dodecahedron; and if slightly elongated, which is a common form of the diamond, would agree with Tavernier's description of it bearing some resemblance to an egg.

Tennant's statement was followed by some remarks from Sir David Brewster, the Scottish physicist and inventor of the kaleidoscope. He agreed with the opinion put forth that the 'Abbas Mirza' was only a part of a much larger and very fine diamond. Brewster also pointed out that the English translation of Tavernier's book omitted minute details which had appeared in the original, a fact which Edwin Streeter eagerly seized upon in *The Great Diamonds of the World*.

Streeter deplored the mistake whereby writers confused the identity of the 'Koh-i-noor' with that of the 'Great Mogul' (in fact, one hundred years later, this point is still being discussed). He rightly considered that the 'Abbas Mirza', weighing 130 carats or thereabouts, could scarcely be viewed as only a small part of the 'Koh-i-noor' since that stone had never been known to weigh more than 186 carats. The large diamond, therefore, of which it is assumed the 'Abbas Mirza' formed only a small part could only, Streeter contended, have been the 'Great Mogul'. But one must disagree with this hypothesis too, since it is now generally thought that the 'Orlov' – 'the large Russian diamond' referred to above – is none other than the 'Great Mogul'. In addition a slab-shaped diamond is so totally at variance with the shape of one described as resembling an egg that it is impossible to envisage them as having any connection at all.

Whatever may have been the origins of the 'Abbas Mirza', it cannot be identified with any existing diamond; the gemologists who were able to examine the Iranian crown jewels have stated that no diamond approximates to the 'Abbas Mirza' in that legendary collection. It is more than likely that its somewhat primitive shape, judging by previous accounts, would have been recut to suit the more sophisticated tastes of a later age.

HOPE



nd the Curse shall be on thee
For ever and ever.'

In the eyes of many people these words by the English poet, Southey, could serve as the motto of this most celebrated gem, probably the best known diamond after the 'Koh-i-noor'. The 'Hope' is well known for its rare colour, a sapphire-like dark blue, but above all it has acquired a reputation as the bringer of misfortune to many of its previous owners, so that mention of it invariably leads to such questions as 'Does it really bring bad luck?' or 'Have all its owners died suddenly or violently?' It may, therefore, come as something of a disappointment to learn that the 'Hope' has not always brought

misfortune to its owners, nor has it been the cause of their early demise; in fact many who have owned the so-called 'Diamond of Disaster' lived to a ripe old age. Most of the myths which have become attached to the gem, some of them invented for a deliberate purpose, are examined and summarily dismissed in a book entitled *Blue Mystery, The Story of the Hope Diamond*, written by Susanne Steinem Patch and published in 1976 by the Smithsonian Institution Press. It is the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC that owns the 'Hope' today.

The earliest known facts about the blue diamond which is generally recognized as the precursor of the 'Hope' date from the middle of the seventeenth century. The Kollur mine in the

vicinity of Golconda is said to have been its source. According to some accounts the blue diamond is yet another of these old Indian stones that were set as eyes in a sacred idol before being stolen. Suffice it to say that there is no evidence to support this fact and that to judge by drawings of the diamond which have come down to us, the shape of the idol's eyes would have had to be somewhat unusual to have accommodated this particular stone. In addition, since dark blue diamonds are extremely rare, the idol would almost certainly either have been heterochromatic or possessed just one eye.

What is known for sure is that the indefatigable Jean Baptiste Tavernier bought a dark blue diamond which he sold to Louis XIV of France early in 1669, not long after he had returned from his sixth and final voyage to the Orient. According to most authorities Tavernier had purchased the diamond as early as 1642, yet it is difficult to believe that he would have kept such a rare gem for more than a quarter of a century before showing it to his Sovereign, whose penchant for jewels, diamonds in particular, was widely known and who would certainly have soon come to learn of its existence. Therefore, the suggestion made by others that Tavernier did not acquire the blue diamond in India but instead bought it later in some other trading centre, possibly Venice, whence it had travelled from the East, appears to be not unreasonable in the circumstances.

The diamond which first became known as the 'Tavernier Blue' appears as No. 1 in drawings of the twenty finest diamonds which Tavernier sold to Louis XIV. Its shape corresponds to that of a typical Indian gem, transformed from the rough with only minimal loss of weight. In a lecture entitled 'The "Hope" Diamond and its Lineage', which he presented at the 15th International Gemological Conference held in the Smithsonian Institution in October 1975, Herbert Tillander has argued that the weight of the diamond, recorded as $112\frac{3}{16}$ carats, was probably measured in Florentine carats and that since the Florentine carat was equivalent to 197.2 milligrams, the original weight of the 'Tavernier Blue' must have been about 110.50 metric carats.

A contemporary of Louis XIV, writing about the diamonds which Tavernier had brought back with him from his travels to the East, stated that 'their brilliance seemed even more resplendent owing to their distant and somewhat mysterious origin'. The King was enthralled by the diamonds Tavernier showed him and ordered Colbert to buy a number of them; ultimately he purchased 44 large diamonds in addition to the blue stone and no less than 1122 smaller ones. The total price amounted to 897,731 livres. When the purchases which the Sun King made from other sources are added to those which he made from Tavernier it is not surprising that the Crown Jewels of France became the finest collection of gems amassed in Europe and probably in the world at that time.

Jean Baptiste Colbert (1619–83), the statesman and Minister of Finance, has been described as the most remarkable minister in the history of France. Colbert revolutionized his country's finances and established them on a sound

foundation; it is tempting to consider that his acquiescence in his master's multitudinous purchases of diamonds displayed not only an appreciation of their intrinsic beauty but also their commercial value.

Although Tavernier was a Protestant, Louis XIV rewarded him for his services by granting him certain letters which conferred upon him a title of nobility. Therefore, Tavernier bought the Barony of Aubonne in Switzerland which he later sold to Duquesne, the great navigator. Tavernier was one of the owners of the blue diamond who certainly did not labour under any 'curse' bestowed by the stone; he died in Russia at the age of eighty-four and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Moscow. The extraordinary myth that he was 'torn apart by wild dogs' was apparently perpetrated by an individual who will figure later on in this account.

Louis XIV retained the 'Tavernier Blue' in its existing shape for four years until 1673 when he ordered his goldsmith Pitau to recut it, thereby sacrificing the oriental preference for the size of a gem to the occidental liking for brilliance. The blue diamond became a heart shape weighing $67\frac{1}{8}$ carats, equivalent to 69.03 metric carats. The King appropriated the gem together with the other Crown Jewels of France for his own use. He owned two complete sets of diamond coat and waistcoat ornaments, one consisting of 123 buttons, 300 jewelled button holes and 19 button hole decorations for the frock coat and a further 96 button holes for the waistcoat. To this set belonged a hat adorned with 7 diamonds, a spray for the frock coat and a cross and wide ribbon. The other set consisted of 168 buttons, 336 button holes, 19 button hole decorations for the frock coat, 48 buttons and 96 button holes for the waistcoat as well as more diamonds for the accompanying hat. The blue diamond which now assumed the name 'Blue Diamond of the Crown', was employed in various ways. It is recorded that not long before his death, Louis XIV received the Persian Ambassador at his court in February 1715, and that on that occasion he wore a large blue diamond suspended from a ribbon around his neck in addition to jewels estimated to have been worth 12,000,000 livres. It is perhaps doubtful whether any other historical personage has ever equalled the caratage of jewels that were worn on such occasions by the Sun King.

Louis XIV incorporated jewels in the insignia of orders of chivalry, a custom which his great-grandson and successor Louis XV maintained. In 1749 Louis XV ordered Jacquemin, the Crown Jeweller, to mount both the blue diamond and the spinel known as the 'Côte de Bretagne' in the decoration of the Golden Fleece. The insignia which resulted from this was considered to have been a masterpiece of the jeweller's art as well as an object of exceptional value. This same ornament was worn by the next King of France, Louis XVI, who succeeded his grandfather in 1774.

After the splendour of the French court during the two previous reigns, a less lavish epoch set in with the accession of Louis XVI. His consort, Marie Antoinette, was a lover of jewellery but she preferred light settings in which stones

were set for design purposes rather than ornaments designed specifically to show off the qualities of a great gem. It has often been asserted that Marie Antoinette was one of those 'cursed' by ownership of the blue diamond; however, there is no record of her having worn it nor is it likely that she did so because it remained in its setting in the Golden Fleece, an exclusively male ornament. Nor was the blue diamond one of the diamonds which were despatched to Amsterdam and Antwerp for recutting, thereby upsetting French jewellers and craftsmen.

The start of the reign of Louis XVI coincided with the first stirrings of unrest within the country. The King's main interest was hunting and he showed such scant interest in the affairs of state that on the day the Bastille fell (14 July 1789), the sole entry in his diary was 'nothing'. However, events moved quickly, albeit too quickly, for the monarchy: the attempted flight of the King and Queen in June 1791 was followed by the storming of the Tuileries, the imprisonment of the royal couple, their trials and subsequent executions in 1793.

Two years before, the ruling Constituent Assembly had ordered an inventory to be made of the Crown Jewels; the 'Blue Diamond of the Crown' was valued at 3,000,000 francs. During this period of upheaval in France the jewels were removed to the Garde Meuble, part a museum, part a furniture store. On certain days members of the public were permitted to view the treasures – a singularly rash decision which doubtless greatly assisted the eventual robbers on the fateful night of 16 September 1792. On the following morning it was found that thieves had broken the seals that had been placed on the display cabinets and removed most of their priceless contents. The truth about the theft has never been properly established and has given rise to much conjecture: every party appeared only too ready to place the blame on another.

One fact did emerge from this melancholy affair: the blue diamond was one of the jewels that disappeared, never to be seen again in its original form. But there was a curious sequel to these turbulent events to which some authorities have drawn attention. Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, was in command of the Prussian and Austrian armies fighting the French and one of his tasks was to rescue the beleaguered King and Queen. Just at the time when militarily he was gaining the upper hand, inexplicably he retreated; this occurred not long after the robbery at the Garde Meuble. It has been suggested that the Government of France used some of the Crown Jewels to bribe the Duke to evacuate Champagne; one writer has even suggested that he was bribed with the blue diamond alone. Such an assertion is incomprehensible to anyone acquainted with the military mentality which seeks and throughout history has always sought victory as its first and foremost objective. Charitably one wonders whether the authority who put forward this suggestion was in any way influenced or confused by the possible connection between the blue diamond and a later Duke of Brunswick, the



Louis XV, wearing the decoration of the Golden Fleece, in which the diamond was set, on a ribbon around his neck.

grandson of Charles William Ferdinand.

Seven years after the 'Blue Diamond of the Crown' disappeared from the Garde Meuble, the Spanish artist, Francisco José Goya y Lucientes, painted two portraits of the Spanish royal family in which Queen Maria Luisa is shown wearing a large oval dark blue gem. One copy of this painting is in the Prado gallery in Madrid, another in the Taft Museum of Cincinnati, Ohio. The identity of this gem has given rise to some interesting speculation. Some have considered it to be a sapphire or a dark blue aquamarine while others have opted in favour of it being a diamond. Apart from the former French Crown Jewels, the only other dark blue diamond known to have existed at the time was the 'Wittelsbach' which has a history of its own and whose ownership was never then in dispute.

We are thus left to decide whether or not the gem in the Goya portrait was the former 'Blue Diamond of the Crown'. Susanne Patch has written that a close examination of the necklace reveals a stone which appears to be significantly larger than the existing 'Hope' diamond, which weighs 45.52 metric carats. This fact is corroborated by Herbert Tillander in his aforementioned lecture wherein he calculates that at this point in its history the blue diamond must have weighed 55% old carats, equivalent to around 57.25 metric carats.

In 1808 the Spanish King, Charles IV, was forced to abdicate: he was succeeded by Joseph Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon. It is possible that he may have taken the gem with

him into exile in France and Italy whence it found its way to London, the city which was beginning to act as a focal point for trading in polished diamonds. One authority, writing in 1813, noted that at that time London possessed three main sources of diamonds: India, Brazil and the French Revolution. The city acted as a haven for exiled members of the French nobility and other immigrants, many of whom sought shelter from the shattering events on the continent, bringing with them quantities of jewellery. On the other hand, before the blue diamond's eventual arrival in London it may have been recut in Amsterdam, then the foremost diamond-cutting centre in Europe. Several lurid events have come to be written about in connection with this city's involvement in the history of the diamond. A Dutch cutter named Wilhelm Fals, or Hals, is said to have recut the stone to a brilliant of 44 1/2 carats; he is then said to have died of grief after his son, Hendrik, had stolen the diamond. The son in turn is said to have committed suicide in London in 1830. Alternatively a Frenchman, François Beaulieu, is said to have obtained the diamond from a nameless suicide, presumably Hendrik Fals or Hals, then been obliged to sell it for a fraction of its true value – before dying the next day of starvation! In other versions of these events, Beaulieu figures as the individual

who brought the stone to London.

It is difficult not to believe that this whole chain of events may have been concocted so as to give additional weight to the so-called 'curse' attached to the diamond. There is no record of an inquest ever having been carried out in London on an individual by the name of Fals, Hals or Beaulieu in either 1830, the previous year or the following year. As for the story of an individual dying of starvation the day after selling the diamond – well, on medical grounds alone it is, of course, preposterous. But, as will shortly be explained, there is one indisputable fact to suggest that at some time in its history the blue diamond may have spent some time in the Dutch capital.

Early in the nineteenth century a dark blue diamond mysteriously made its appearance in London. A lapidiary named John Françillon, of 26 Norfolk Street, Strand, reproduced a sketch to which a note was appended:

The above drawing is the exact size and shape of a very curious superfine deep blue diamond. Brilliant cut, and equal to a fine deep blue sapphire. It is beauty full and all

Goya's painting of the family of Charles IV of Spain. Queen Maria Luisa (centre) is depicted wearing a large dark blue gem which may have been the 'Hope'.



perfection without specks or flaws, and the colour even and perfect all over the diamond.

I traced it round the diamond with a pencil by leave of Mr Daniel Eliason and it is as finely cut as I have ever seen a diamond.

The colour of the drawing is as near the colour of the diamond as possible.

dated: 19th Sept 1812.

John Françillon
No. 26 Norfolk Street
Strand, London.

The existence of this diamond was known to John Mawe, the author of *A Treatise on Diamonds and Precious Stones*, because in a footnote to the first edition, published in 1813, he wrote:

There is at this time a superlatively fine blue diamond of above 44 carats in the possession of an individual in London which may be considered matchless, and of course of arbitrary value.

In the second edition, published ten years later, Mawe wrote:

A superlatively fine blue diamond weighing 44 carats, and valued at £30,000, formerly the property of Mr Eliason, an eminent Diamond Merchant is now said to be in the possession of our most gracious sovereign.'

Although it is possible that Eliason, the London diamond merchant who appears to have been either the first person to have owned it in England or to have been the agent for others, endeavoured to interest George IV in the blue diamond there is no evidence to substantiate Mawe's statement that the King ever had possession of it. In addition, according to Mr Tillander, this same author had erred in his statement concerning the weight of the diamond. On the other hand, according to Susanne Patch, checks made with the Smithsonian have confirmed that the dimensions of the sketches made by Françillon and Mawe are identical to those of the 'Hope'. Clearly at this point in the history of the diamond there is need for considerable clarification of the facts known to us today.

The 'Hope' acquired its name when Henry Philip Hope, a member of the banking family, Hope & Co, purchased it. The date of the transaction is uncertain. If Eliason was the vendor then Hope must have bought it before 1825 because Eliason died towards the end of 1824. If Hope bought the diamond in 1830, as has generally been thought, then he must have obtained it from another source. Hope & Co, formed in 1762, became a firm with an international reputation, making loans to many countries; one of them was Russia whose ruler at the time, Catherine the Great, had so esteemed Henry Hope, the uncle of Henry Philip Hope, that she offered to ennoble him, an honour which he subsequently declined. After 1808 the fortunes of Hope & Co. waned so that by 1813 the house was a shadow of its former self: its assets, together with those of

Henry Hope & Co. of London, were purchased for £250,521 by Alexander Baring, a member of the merchant banking family whose bank, Baring Bros. & Co. Ltd, still exists today.

It is of special interest to note that for a long time this great and opulent branch of the Hopes had been settled as merchants in Amsterdam. The link with that city provides the sole authentic piece of evidence to suggest that the diamond may have been recut there. If that was indeed so, undoubtedly news of the existence of such a stone would have reached Henry Philip Hope because, interestingly, he was an early collector of 'fancy' coloured diamonds; he would surely have made every effort to secure such a unique diamond either in Amsterdam or London.

Hope requested Bram Hertz, himself an expert on gems and a collector, to catalogue his collection, said to have been worth £150,000. The resulting *Catalogue of the Collection of Pearls and Precious Stones formed by Henry Philip Hope, Esq.*, was published in 1839 and consisted of two parts: the first comprised descriptions of the jewels and the second showed line drawings of them.

The catalogue of Hope's jewels contained descriptions of fifty diamonds, nine of which were coloured stones of the highest quality weighing from 23 to 3.70 carats, thirty six 'fancy' coloured stones in sizes starting from almost 30 carats including only four weighing less than a carat. In addition, there were four engraved diamonds and a few that had either been cut with unusual shapes or possessed rare inclusions. Only ten stones were unset. The 'Hope' diamond figures as No. 1 in the collection, under the heading 'Polished Diamonds', and merited the following description:

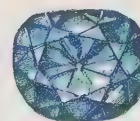
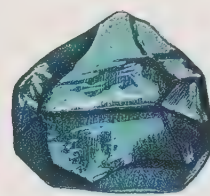
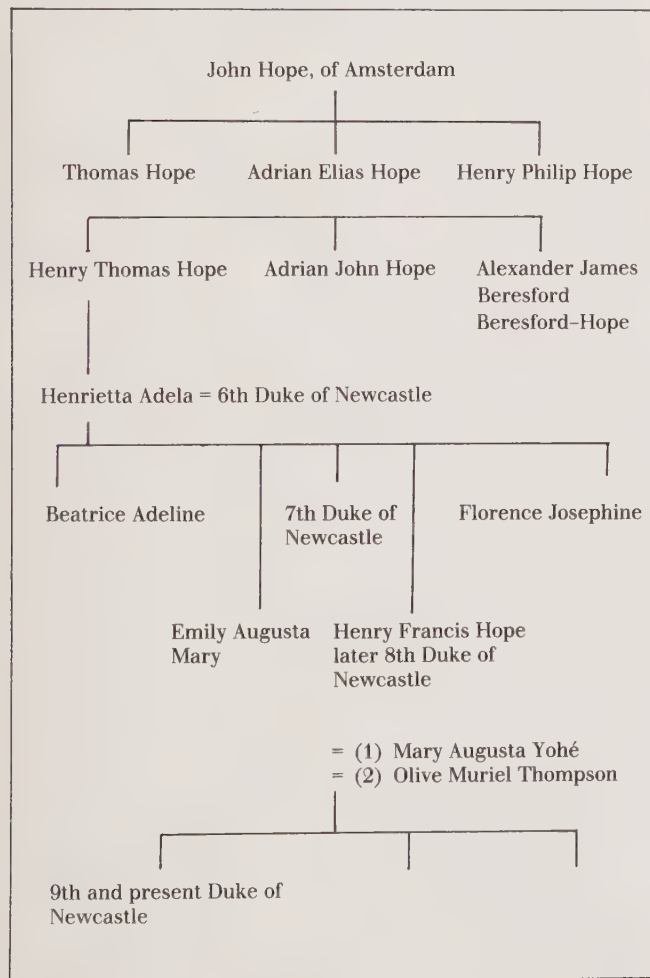
A most magnificent and rare brilliant of a deep sapphire blue, of the greatest purity, and most beautifully cut; it is of true proportions, not too thick, nor too spread. This matchless gem combines the beautiful colour of the sapphire with the prismatic fire and brilliancy of the diamond, and, on account of its extraordinary colour, great size and other fine qualities, it certainly may be called unique; as we may presume that there exists no cabinet, not any collection of crown jewels in the world, which can boast of the possession of so curious and fine a gem as the one we are now describing; and we may expect to be borne out in our opinion by our readers, since there are extant and historical records and treatises on the precious gems, which give us descriptions of all the extraordinary diamonds in the possession of all the crowned heads of Europe as well as the princes of Eastern countries. But in vain do we search for any record of a gem which can in point of curiosity, beauty, and perfection, be compared with this blue brilliant.

Diamonds are found of almost every colour which is proved by the great variety of coloured diamonds in this collection; but the blue colour is the most rare and most valuable, since there has very seldom been found a diamond of any size of a fine deep sapphire blue, those which are termed blue diamonds being generally of a very

light or of a steel-blue colour; it would, therefore, be a difficult task to form a just estimate of the value of this unrivalled gem, there being no precedent, the value cannot be established by comparison. The price which was once asked for this diamond was 30,000 livres ... but we must confess, for the above-stated reasons, that it might have been estimated even at a higher sum. To convey to the reader by a description a just conception of the beauty and splendour of this unique production of nature would be a vain attempt.

This beautiful gem is most tastefully mounted as a medallion with a border en arabesque of small rose diamonds, surrounded by 20 brilliants of equal size, shape and cutting, and of the finest water, and averaging four grains each. Its weight is 177 grains. This gem, particularly on account of its mounting, could not be placed in the drawer with the diamonds, but is left in Drawer 16 together with the other extraordinary specimens of this collection.

As well as indulging in his liking for collecting diamonds and other precious stones, Henry Philip Hope also bought paintings which he added to a collection begun earlier by his eldest brother. Hope himself never married and when he died



The 'Tavernier Blue' diamond (top) with two of the gems, the 'Brunswick Blue' (second) and the 'Hope' (third and bottom) which may have been cut from it.

in 1839 he left large fortunes to each of his three nephews. The eldest, Henry Thomas Hope, who had inherited from his father the family residence in London and the mansion at Deepdene, in Surrey, bought the 'Hope' diamond from his uncle's estate. He displayed the gem at the Crystal Palace Exhibition, held in Hyde Park in London in 1851, and at the Paris World Exhibition in 1855; on the latter occasion the Emperor, Napoleon III, ordered a model to be made of it.

Henry Thomas Hope's period of ownership of the diamond marked a quiet phase in its history but those who are always ready to attribute sinister qualities to it may point out that Hope died at the comparatively early age of fifty-four. His widow and his daughter, Henrietta Adela, were his heirs: the latter married Henry Pelham-Clinton, who was destined soon to succeed his father as the sixth Duke of Newcastle. Mrs Hope retained the gem and in 1887 bequeathed it to her younger grandson on condition that he added the name 'Hope' to his patronymic of Pelham-Clinton. He accepted the terms of the will and thus became Lord Henry Francis Hope Pelham-Clinton-Hope, although during the ensuing bout of

litigation he was always referred to simply as Lord Francis Hope. If he were to die without issue his eldest sister stood to inherit the life interest and if she died thus, the second sister would inherit the life interest and so on through the family.

In 1893, six years after receiving his inheritance, Lord Francis Hope was in financial difficulties that were caused principally, it appears, by his fondness for gambling. He petitioned the Court for permission to sell some of the Dutch and Flemish paintings which his grandmother had left him but his brother and three sisters opposed the sale so the petition was withdrawn. In the following year Hope married in secret an American actress named Mary Yohé. According to her, her husband gave her 'a string of gorgeous pear-shaped pearls' for which he paid a substantial sum despite his financial situation. In 1895 Hope was declared bankrupt but next year was discharged from bankruptcy. His wife enjoyed some success on the English stage and contributed to their support.

However, in May 1899 Lord Francis Hope was in Court again, on this occasion asking for an order approving a provisional contract drawn up in December 1898 between himself and L. M. Lowenstein & Co. for the sale of the 'Hope' diamond. The sum mentioned as the price for the diamond was not stated in Court but was understood to approximate to £18,115. On behalf of the appellant, this was the value estimated by Mr Edwin Streeter, the jeweller of Bond Street.

In an affidavit read on behalf of Hope, Streeter said that when arriving at his estimate of the diamond and the surrounding brilliants he had taken into consideration its historical interest. However, he had valued it less than he would have a short time ago because recently a large blue diamond (double the size of the 'Hope' diamond in the rough) had come on to the market, which had been cut into a fine lozenge-shaped diamond and a fine drop, weighing in the aggregate 34 carats. He added that the 'Hope' diamond had previously been considered the only blue diamond of any importance known, but the advent of the two diamonds mentioned above naturally reduced its value. In addition to this opinion of Streeter, Lord Francis produced other expert evidence in support of the diamond not being worth more than the contract price.

Counsel on behalf of Hope's eldest sister said that she would be desirous of wearing the diamond in the event of her surviving Lord Francis and that she and her elder brother, the Duke of Newcastle, were united in their wish that the diamond should not be sold. Evidence was produced on their behalf that the diamond was worth far more than the contract price: furthermore it was stated that one of the Counsel in Court had been instructed by an intending purchaser to make a higher offer than the price stated in the contract.

In his submission, Hope's Counsel referred to the jewel as being absolutely useless to the tenant for life and a 'Damnosa Hereditas'; it was a mere curio – its future value was problematical, and as an heirloom it had no real ancestral association; being a comparatively recent purchase. To this

submission Counsel for the other members of the family rejoined by saying that the diamond was in fact a unique possession, highly regarded by the family as such.

The Judge said that he could not sanction the contract under any circumstances because the evidence that had been before him showed such a wide difference between the experts that he could not say he was satisfied a fair market price was going to be given for it; furthermore every member of the family was opposed to the sale. Not unexpectedly the judge refused the application for approval of the contract.

In July of the same year the appeal of Lord Francis was heard in the Court of Appeal; on this occasion his Counsel was that eminent lawyer, Sir Edward Clarke, Q.C., who four years earlier had appeared for Oscar Wilde at his famous trial – the Duke of Newcastle was again represented by a Mr Benn.

The Master of the Rolls, who heard the appeal, said that this was not a case in which they ought to differ from the learned Judge in the court below. He did not wish to say anything unkind or unpleasant about Lord Francis Hope but it was obvious that he had brought himself into difficulties by his own fault. It was impossible to say that the proposed sale was for anybody's benefit except his: the sole object of it was to increase his income. Not only did nobody want the sale to go through, but everyone objected to it. He could not ignore the fact that this was a unique diamond of a colour the like of which had not been seen till quite recently and he was satisfied that there was no reasonable probability of the value of the diamond becoming diminished. The appeal failed.

In 1901 Lord Francis succeeded in securing permission to dispose of the 'Hope' diamond; it was sold by order of a Master in Chancery. The vendor's solicitors announced on 13 November that Hope had sold the diamond to Adolf Weil of 25 Hatton Garden. They added that it was understood that a large diamond merchant of New York was also interested in the purchase and that the diamond's destination was America.

So the blue diamond finally passed out of the hands of the family which had bestowed upon it the name by which it is still known today. According to the present Duke of Newcastle, who was the son of Lord Francis Hope's second marriage – he divorced his first wife in 1902 – his father, who succeeded to the dukedom in 1928, would never talk about the 'Hope' diamond. He lived till seventy-five and would surely have disapproved of his obituary notice in *The Times* of 22 April 1941, which was headed 'The Duke of Newcastle. Former owner of the Hope Blue Diamond.' The notice went on to say that the diamond 'has provided romanciers with many a tale and novelists with many a plot. It is a stone of 44 ½ carats and was probably a part of the Regent diamond, a blue brilliant of 67 ⅞ carats which was brought to Europe early in the eighteenth century and was for a time the property of the Duc d'Orleans, Regent of France.' On this occasion clearly the diamond provided the obituary writer with total confusion rather than romance: he was guilty of mixing details of the 'Hope' with those of that famous stone, the 'Regent'. But in

mitigation it is only fair to recall that at that time most people were preoccupied with rather more serious matters than the histories of gemstones.

Amidst all the legal proceedings that surrounded the wish of Lord Francis Hope to sell the diamond the most puzzling part lies in the contents of the affidavit which Edwin Streeter supplied to the court. It will be recalled that Streeter valued the 'Hope' diamond less than he had previously, owing to the recent appearance of two stones weighing a total of 34 carats; up to that time the 'Hope' had been considered the only dark blue diamond of any importance to have been discovered. Now Edwin Streeter was much respected both as a jeweller and a chronicler of the history of gems, having published two books, *The Great Diamonds of the World* and *Precious Stones and Gems*. In both the author had carefully examined the question of the recutting of the former 'Blue Diamond of the Crown' and had concluded that the 'Hope' constituted the major portion of it; because this diamond was straighter on one side than the other it strengthened his argument that the stone had been cleaved. He then went on to state that the dark blue pear-shape, weighing between 12 and 13 carats, included in the sale of the jewels belonging to the late Charles, Duke of Brunswick, held at Geneva in 1874, probably formed the other part of the famous French crown jewel. In later editions of *Precious Stones and Gems* Streeter suggested that a third diamond, the 'Pirie' weighing a carat, that was in his possession, might also have been cut from the 'Blue Diamond of the Crown'. Later writers, however, have dismissed Streeter's theory by stating that it would have been technically impossible to have fashioned the three diamonds from the one piece.

In the last century (and in this one) a dark blue diamond is a rarity, all the more so if its weight is between 12 and 13 carats. It is strange then that when he stated in his affidavit that the 'Hope' diamond was considered the only dark blue diamond to have been found Streeter appears to have overlooked the existence of the Duke of Brunswick's diamond – or did he, perhaps, consider it to be of little significance? Another writer has put forward the theory that if, as Streeter declared, the 'Brunswick Blue' and the 'Pirie' were identical in colour to the 'Hope', then it is more likely that all three had been fashioned from the same original piece, or pieces, of rough diamond found in the Kollur Mine. Additional evidence to support this theory is provided by the fact that even today whenever diamonds running from a steely blue to the darker shades of blue are found they are almost always cleavages in the rough.

The New York diamond merchant previously mentioned as being interested in acquiring the 'Hope' diamond was Simon Frankel of Joseph Frankel's Sons. The sum which he is stated to have paid for the gem was £33,000. There follows another series of lurid and bizarre events which are alleged to have befallen the diamond. First, a French broker named Jacques Colot (or Colet) is stated to have bought it before becoming insane and committing suicide; a Prince Ivan Kanitowsky,



Mlle. Ladre, an actress at the Folies Bergère: it is said that she was shot across the stage footlights by her lover, a Russian Prince, the first time she wore the diamond.

variously described as a Russian or Eastern European prince, either gave or loaned the diamond to a Folies Bergère actress who was shot across the footlights next day by her lover or by the prince as she wore the stone; the prince himself was stabbed to death by revolutionaries; a certain Simon Montharides, a Greek jeweller, after selling the diamond to the Sultan of Turkey, was thrown over a precipice while riding in a car with his wife and child. However, there is no evidence to substantiate any of this except for the fact that there was a record of a jeweller by the name of Colot and the Sultan of Turkey, Abd al-Hamid II, certainly existed.

Alternatively it has been stated that Frankel sold the 'Hope' to the dealer Salomon Habib who was rumoured to have been acting on behalf of the Sultan. Known as 'Abdul the Damned' or the 'Great Assassin', the Sultan was a keen collector of jewels. After his deposition in 1909 his jewellery came up for sale in Paris on 24 June of that year; the 'Hope' was one of the items but it was withdrawn from sale before being sold to the Parisian dealer, Rosenau. According to Pierre Cartier, of that well-known firm, it was Rosenau from whom he bought the stone.

The part which Cartier played in the history of the diamond is threefold; first, according to Tillander, it was Cartier who had the 'Hope' removed from its setting and its girdle faceted; secondly it was he who sold it to Mrs Evalyn Walsh McLean, the lady whose name was to be bracketed with the 'Hope' for the next thirty years or so; thirdly it appears that he was the person who put about the story that the diamond brought misfortune not only to its owners but also to those who had even touched it. No doubt his powers of inventiveness were stimulated by the fact that Mrs McLean had informed him that objects of ill-luck actually produced the opposite effect upon her.

Mrs McLean was the daughter of Thomas F. Walsh; her early childhood was spent in a succession of mining camps in Colorado and South Dakota. Her father 'struck it rich' so that

the fortune which he amassed in gold mining enabled him to have his daughter educated in style in Washington DC and in Europe. In 1908 she married Edward Beale McLean, whose father John R. McLean was the owner of two newspapers, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* and the *Washington Post*. While on their honeymoon trip the newly-weds walked into Cartier's store in the Rue de la Paix in Paris to look for the wedding present which Walsh had promised his daughter. Mrs McLean said that the salesman on this occasion 'hypnotized me by showing me an ornament that made bright spots before my eyes'. The ornament was a necklace of square links of platinum set with diamonds from which hung three loops of diamonds. Attached to the bottom loop was a pearl of $21\frac{1}{4}$ grains, the size of a little finger tip; suspended below it was a six-sided emerald weighing $32\frac{1}{4}$ carats, and hanging below that was the 'Star of the East', a pear-shaped diamond weighing 94.80 carats. This gem had formerly been owned by the Sultan Abd al-Hamid II.

On their next visit to Paris, in 1910, which occurred not long after the birth of the McLeans' first child and the death of Mrs McLean's father, Pierre Cartier came to call on them at their hotel with the 'Hope' diamond. He reminded Mrs McLean of an earlier conversation during which she had told him that when they were visiting Turkey on their honeymoon she had seen one of the members of the Sultan's harem wearing a great blue stone around her throat (possible evidence that the Sultan had indeed once owned the 'Hope'). At this meeting apparently Mrs McLean did not contradict Cartier's assertion, but later in her autobiography, which was published in 1936, she wrote that she did not in fact, recall seeing the 'Hope' although she had seen other jewels that 'made my finger itch'. On this occasion no deal was done, Mrs McLean informing her husband that she did not like the setting.

Cartier, however, was nothing if not persistent and in October of the same year he travelled to New York with the diamond. In the meantime he had had the girdle faceted and the gem set in a magnificent new necklace. The Cartier establishment in Fifth Avenue informed Mrs McLean that M. Pierre Cartier had arrived from Paris with documents – presumably the aforementioned concocted history – concerning the 'Hope' diamond which he wished to show Mrs McLean. However, it transpired that not only did Cartier want her to study the documents but the diamond too, requesting her to keep it over the weekend. The strategy worked because over the weekend Mrs McLean decided that she wanted the diamond.

The deal hung fire for several months before a final selling price of \$180,000 was agreed upon. Mrs McLean agreed to pay \$40,000 at once, and, within three years, \$114,000. As part of the price Cartier accepted an emerald and pearl pendant with a diamond necklace, probably the one that had supported the 'Star of the East'.

Mrs McLean loved diamonds and was financially always in a position to add to her collection. She remained a customer of Cartier's and there is a story of an occasion when salesmen

from the firm called on her. Trying on a pair of earrings with pendants of diamonds she suggested that one more diamond be added to each pendant. The designer suggested discreetly and politely, 'My dear madam, no lady would possibly wear earrings with more than these,' to which Mrs McLean replied, 'Dammit, I'm no lady, put on some more diamonds.' The salesman promptly obeyed.

Soon after she had bought the 'Hope', Mrs McLean took it to a priest to have it blessed; from then on she became inseparable from the diamond, wearing it as a charm. As a leading figure in the social life of Washington, she entertained lavishly and was invariably photographed wearing the blue diamond, often along with her other jewels. There is a photograph taken of her wearing three necklaces, the 'Hope' on its diamond-studded chain, the 'Star of the East' on another necklace, and a third necklace of diamond-studded links, plus diamond earrings, a pair of diamond clips and a wristful of bracelets. (Such caratage would appear to surpass even that of Louis XIV!) Once when asked why she wore so much jewellery, Mrs McLean replied, 'If I take out one or two pieces to put on when I dress up I might as well put it all on and then I know where it is.' At the same time as entertaining the social and government elite of Washington, Mrs McLean was a warm-hearted and generous person who during the Second World War entertained many servicemen recuperating in local hospitals. Often she would allow some of her women guests to wear her diamonds for the evening and on one occasion she allowed a bride to wear the 'Hope' at her wedding.

Although Evalyn Walsh McLean refused to believe the legendary curse that has come to be associated with the 'Hope' her life was marked by a series of personal tragedies. Following the early death of her brother, her eldest son was run over and killed by a car when he was nine years old; she divorced her husband who drank heavily and eventually died in a mental institution; while the crowning blow was the death of her only daughter from an overdose at the age of twenty-five in 1946. Mrs McLean never recovered from the last of these tragedies and died from pneumonia at the age of sixty in the following year. Even after her death tragedy continued to haunt her family for her grand-daughter Evalyn McLean died at Dallas in 1967 also at the age of twenty-five.

The day of Mrs McLean's death, 26 April 1947, was a Saturday, a fact which was to cause problems to her executors. After they had spent some time in collecting the jewellery – bracelets, brooches, necklaces etc., had apparently been scattered around the house in numerous locations while the 'Hope' reposed in the back of a table top radio – they were confronted by the problem of where to put it for safe-keeping. Since it was a Saturday evening all the banks were closed and they were unable to find a bank manager who was willing to take charge of it. Finally they appealed to the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover, who gave permission for the jewellery to be placed in one of the FBI's secure safes.

In her will Mrs McLean requested that her jewellery be



held in trust until the youngest of her grandchildren at the time when the will was drawn up had attained the age of twenty-five. It was then to be divided equally between those and any future grandchildren. This would have meant that the jewellery could not be distributed until 1968. However, two years after Mrs McLean's death the court granted a petition of the executor, trustees and members of the family to sell the jewels so as to pay debts and claims against the estate. In the official appraisal the 'Hope' was valued at \$176,920 and the 'Star of the East' at \$185,000. In addition there were seventy-two other pieces of jewellery.

When the jewels became available for purchase there was no lack of prospective buyers for the 'Hope': an individual

The 'Hope' diamond.

from Ohio disclosed how keen he was to obtain it while it was reported that the Soviet Government sought to purchase it in an effort to assemble Catherine the Great's collection of jewellery. It is impossible to believe the latter since there is no known connection between that monarch and the gem. However in April 1949 Harry Winston bought Mrs McLean's entire collection of jewellery for an undisclosed sum but believed to have been between \$1,250,000 and \$1,500,000.

Mr Winston displayed little concern about the so-called curse attached to the 'Hope' and carried it across the Atlantic

on several occasions. He especially enjoyed telling the following story concerning it:

A few years ago I travelled to Lisbon with my wife. Since our two sons were quite young at the time we decided to return home on separate planes, as people with children often do. It was arranged that my wife would leave Lisbon for New York on the Friday evening and that I would take a plane on the following day. My wife's plane took off on schedule and landed at Santa Maria (in the Azores) for the usual refuelling. There some slight engine trouble caused a delay of two or three hours. While waiting for repairs to be done, the passengers chatted among themselves, and the fact that Mrs Harry Winston was on the plane was soon known to all. One man went as far as to refuse to continue the journey and asked to be booked on the next plane.

On the way to the airport the next day I was handed a cablegram from my wife announcing her safe arrival. I hastily crammed it into my pocket with other papers. Climbing aboard the plane, I took a sedative and settled down, glad to notice that the adjacent seat was vacant and I could sleep in peace. I awoke from a pleasant nap when we touched down at Santa Maria to refuel and got out to stretch my legs for a while.

When we reboarded the plane to take off for New York I found that the seat that had been vacant was now occupied. Its occupant was bubbling over with a story about his escape from travelling on the same plane as the wife of the owner of the 'Hope' diamond. 'I'm not superstitious', he said 'but why should I tempt fate? I decided then and there to change planes and here I am, safe and sound!' He talked animatedly for some time, but eventually grew quiet enough for me to drop off to sleep again. Then his voice broke in on my slumber: 'I wonder if that plane arrived safely?' I couldn't resist it. I fished the cablegram from my pocket and handed it to him, saying nothing. He gazed dumbly at me, and didn't open his mouth again that night.

On 10 November 1958 Mr Winston presented the 'Hope' to the Smithsonian Institution, saying that he hoped that this would be the beginning of a national collection which in time would rival that in the Tower of London. He had long wished to start such an undertaking and was glad that he was in a position to afford it. During the nine years in which he had owned it, the 'Hope' had travelled many thousands of kilometres (miles), being insured for \$1,000,000 while in transit, and had raised millions of dollars for charity. Within the first three days of its display at the Smithsonian, attendance rose sharply – 9504 compared to 5519 the same period the week before. The diamond is housed in a special safe in the Gem Room; closed at night, the door to the safe is opened during the exhibit hours, thus enabling visitors to obtain a good view of it through a glass cover. For the sake of security the glass is more than 2.5cm (1 inch) thick, which unfortunately cuts down the effective brilliance of the diamond by 25 per cent.

Since its presentation the 'Hope' has left the Smithsonian on two occasions, the first being in 1962 when it was taken to Paris for the exhibition in the Louvre entitled *Ten Centuries of French Jewellery*. At first the authorities of the Smithsonian refused the request to lend the diamond to the Louvre, being reluctant to deprive visitors of a chance to view the diamond for a month during the spring, always a busy time, and concerned for the safety of the diamond. It was ultimately through the intervention of the wife of President Kennedy, who had been appealed to by M. André Malraux, the French Minister of Culture, that the Smithsonian agreed to despatch the diamond. (Subsequently there was a gracious and civilized response when the Louvre permitted Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa to be exhibited in Washington's National Gallery of Art.) While the 'Hope' was on exhibition in the Louvre it met up with two of its former companions among the French Crown Jewels, the 'Regent' and the 'Sancy'. The last occasion on which they had been housed under the same roof was the fateful night of 16/17 September 1792.

In 1965 the Smithsonian lent the 'Hope' for exhibition at the Rand Easter Show in Johannesburg. On that occasion senior officials from the De Beers Research Laboratory were able to examine the diamond scientifically.

Like other natural blue diamonds, ranging in colour from a light metallic blue to a fancy dark blue, the 'Hope' was found to belong to the rare Type IIb variety. This is characterized by its blue colour, indeterminate crystal shape in the rough and, in particular, by the fact that it is a semi-conductor of electricity. These properties are a consequence of the occlusion of boron atoms in substitutional positions in the diamond lattice, i.e. some carbon atoms have been replaced by boron atoms. These boron atoms, at a concentration of a few parts per million only, contain one electron less than their surrounding carbon neighbours. This leads to an interchange of electrons and a state whereby the diamond is rendered semi-conductive. Some absorption of light in the red part of the spectrum also occurs, resulting in the diamond appearing blue in colour.

The fact that the 'Hope' is a diamond of such a rare category did not surprise the officials: what intrigued them was that up to that time Type IIb diamonds had been known to have come from only one source – the Premier Mine. The Kollur mine, then, appears to be the only other known source of Type IIb diamonds.

The dimensions of this historic gem are as follows: depth 12.05mm (almost ½ inch), length 25.6mm (just over 1 inch), width 21.9mm (0.86 inch), table 11.8 by 14.5mm (0.456 by 0.571 inch), height above the girdle 2.7mm (0.107 inch), depth below the girdle 11.3mm (0.445 inch). It is a mixed cut, producing a nonsymmetrical gem with 58 facets, plus 2 extra facets between the girdle and the top of the main pavilion facets. There are additional facets on the girdle.

A century and a half later, Frañillon's statement that the diamond was 'all perfection without specks or flaws' has also been confirmed.

HOLLAND

At the time of the 1851 Exhibition in London the available information about this gem was that, 'The King of the Netherlands is in possession of only one [diamond], called the *Cone*. It is of unfortunate form in proportion to its weight; it, however, is of the purest water. It weighs 36 Carats, and is valued at £10,368.' Twining has pointed out that there are no Crown Jewels in the Netherlands: all State jewellery is the private property of the Royal Family. It is not known whether this diamond is currently owned by a member of the Dutch Royal Family.

Several authors have considered the possibility of the 'Holland' being the same diamond as the 'Bantam' which Tavernier saw during his visit to Java in 1648. In view of the longstanding connection between the Netherlands and the East Indies this may be so and it is likely that the 'Holland' came to light there. According to Tavernier, the Rajah of Bantam (once the most important Javanese port for trade with Europe, situated in the extreme north-west of the island, and now in ruins) showed him a dagger which he was having set in the Turkish style. The handle was to be encrusted all over with diamonds but as he did not have sufficient diamonds in his Treasury he commissioned the Frenchman to obtain the necessary quantity to complete the work. The top of the hilt was already covered and in the plaque there was one large faceted diamond, which 'was worth at least fifteen

or sixteen thousand crowns'. The Rajah told Tavernier that he had received it as a gift from the Queen of Borneo and that he had sent it to Goa to be cut.

The last statement is of interest because it reveals that cutting was being undertaken in Goa some time before the discovery of diamonds in Brazil early in the eighteenth century. It is known that trading was already being done there in the previous century: it is recorded that a Portuguese went to Goa and sold a large diamond weighing 434 carats. Goa remains a cutting centre today.

There is one mystifying fact to note concerning the 'Holland'. The notes that accompanied the models of celebrated diamonds displayed in the 1851 Exhibition referred to another diamond weighing 36 carats and also valued at the precise figure of £10,368. This was called the 'Auckland', presumably named after Lord Auckland (1784-1849), a distinguished British statesman who twice held office as First Lord of the Admiralty and was Governor-General of India from 1835 to 1841. It is surely stretching coincidence too far to suppose that the 'Holland' and the 'Auckland' are different diamonds.

Historical picture of Goa, a diamond trading and cutting centre for many centuries.



NIZAM

Founded about 1591 and lasting until 1948, Hyderabad was once the largest and most populous of the former princely states of India. The Nizams (Administrators) were Muslim rulers of the state which included the country's principal alluvial diamond fields and the old fort of Golconda within its boundaries.

It is perhaps hardly surprising that a diamond emanating from this region should bear the name 'Nizam': the diamond so named is a stone shrouded in mystery, about which little appears to be known for sure. The one fact upon which all seem to agree is that the 'Nizam' is only a partially cut diamond.

In his *Famous Diamonds of the World*, the distinguished American gemologist Robert M. Shipley, the founder of the Gemological Institute of America, cites a meeting of the Asiatic Society held in 1847 at which Henry Piddington, a geologist and curator of the Museum of Geology at Calcutta, presented a model of an unusual stone together with some notes of a Captain Fitzgerald of the Bengal Artillery, attached to the Nizam's service. Captain Fitzgerald wrote:

About 12 years ago a large diamond was found in the Nizam's country. . . . The model now shown is of a part only, a piece having been chipped off, which after passing through many hands was purchased by a native banker for 70,000 rupees. The larger piece, as represented by the model, is in the possession of his highness the Nizam.

Piddington estimated the weight of the diamond at, '1,108 grains . . . equal to 277 carats of weight of the rough diamond. We shall then have $155\frac{3}{4}$ carats if it had been cut and polished entire. . . .' Shipley has pointed out that Piddington's estimated weight is at variance with the model shown in his accompanying sketch.

Another drawing of the same diamond, which shows a



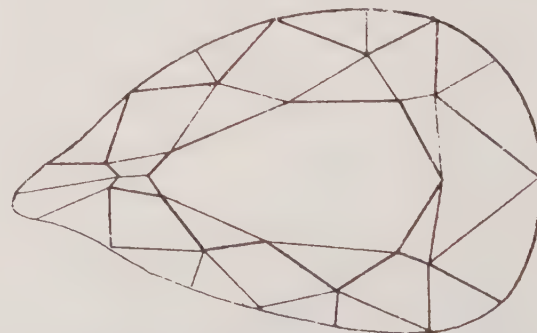
The 'Nizam' diamond, a mid-19th century drawing by Henry Piddington, geologist and Curator of the Museum of Geology at Calcutta.



View of Hyderabad, formerly the largest and most populous of the princely states of India.

stone of a more sophisticated cut and is hard to reconcile with Piddington's sketch, appears in the second part of the Duke of Brunswick's 1860 catalogue. In this section, devoted to the celebrated diamonds extant at the time, the diamond is called 'Indien' and labelled as No 1. The entry refers to, 'Un brillant, forme pendeloque, pesant 250 carats, se trouve aux Grandes-Indes, dans les mains d'un prince: valeur 12,500,000 fr.'

The most recent confirmation that the 'Nizam' remains only semi-cut comes from an interview which Herbert L. Matthews, a well-known American newspaperman, had with the seventh Nizam, Sir Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur, in 1934. The Nizam stated that when he was a small boy, the largest uncut diamond in the world was used as a paperweight on his father's desk. Since the Nizam's death in 1977, the bulk of his jewels were removed to the Bank of India: presumably the 'Nizam' diamond remains among them, although there has never been confirmation of this.



'L'Indien' diamond which is referred to in the Duke of Brunswick's 1860 catalogue. Clearly this refers to the 'Nizam'.

STAR OF THE SOUTH

Women as well as men have played an important part in the discovery of diamond deposits. The dramatic discoveries made by the Russian geologist, Larissa Popugayeva, near Daaldinsk on the Siberian platform in August 1954, have culminated in the opening up of the Soviet Union's huge diamond field situated in the remote region of Yakutiya. Exactly a quarter of a century later, Maureen Towie, in partnership with her husband John, was the first to find diamond samples in the Kimberley Ranges, located in the northern part of Western Australia.

A third woman made a discovery in yet another part of the world, but hers was not so much the finding of a diamond deposit as of a solitary diamond. In the early 1850s, a black slave, whose name is unknown, at work in the alluvial deposits of Brazil, picked up a stone weighing 254½ carats, equivalent to 261.24 metric carats.

She found the diamond in diggings situated near the small town of Bagagem in Minas Gerais, approximately 480km (300 miles) north-west of the provincial capital, Belo Horizonte. In honour of the diamond the name of the town was later changed to 'Estrela do Sul' meaning in Portuguese 'Star of the South'. This area over the years has yielded several large diamonds, the most recent being a cape-coloured stone of 260 carats, discovered by a 'garimpeiro', the Brazilian term for a digger or prospector, early in 1983.

According to the prevailing custom in Brazil, the fortunate finder was rewarded with her freedom and in view of the exceptional size of the diamond, with a pension for life. Nowadays it still remains the policy of most diamond mining companies to reward honest employees. Concerning the practice employed in Brazil in the last century, Edwin Streeter has written as follows:

There are many laws and regulations to prevent the negroes concealing and smuggling diamonds. As a means of encouraging honesty, if a negro finds a stone of 17½ carats, he is crowned with a wreath of flowers and led in procession to the manager. Then his freedom is bestowed upon him, plus a suit of clothes and permission to work for wages. If a negro finds one from eight to ten carats weight, he receives two new shirts, a suit of clothes, a hat and a handsome knife. For smaller but valuable stones, other rewards are given. For unfaithfulness, the negroes are beaten with sticks, or have iron bands fastened round their throats; and on repetition of the fault, they are not admitted to the works again. Notwithstanding all these rewards and punishments, one third of the produce is supposed to be surreptitiously disposed of by the labourers. Manifold are the tricks used by the negroes to appropriate and barter the

gems they discover. In the very presence of overseers they manage to conceal them in their hair, their mouths, their ears or between their fingers. Not infrequently they will throw them away and return for them at the dead of night.

Whether or not Streeter considered it somewhat indelicate to pursue the matter further – it must be remembered that his book was published in 1882 during the middle of the so-called moralistic Victorian era – any mine manager or customs official will confirm the fact that the corporal places of concealment employed by smugglers today are rather more diverse than Streeter has specified.

The slave's master, Casimiro de Tal, did not perceive the true value of the diamond his slave had found and was induced to part with it for a mere £3000. But the buyer, who promptly deposited the stone in the Bank of Rio de Janeiro, received an advance of no less than £30,000 on its security alone. The diamond was examined by several mineralogists including the Frenchman Dufrénoy, who described it as being an irregular rhombic dodecahedron with convex faces. In a few places it showed small octahedral impressions of other diamonds as if the larger diamond had once formed one of a group of crystals; in other places the octahedral cleavage was discernible. A few small black plates enclosed in the stone were considered to have been ilmenite (titaniferous iron ore) since this mineral has been shown to occur as an enclosure in diamond.

After being the subject of several deals, the diamond was eventually sent to Amsterdam to be cut. The cutting operation lasted three months and was undertaken by Mr Voorzanger of the famous firm of Coster. Only a year or two previously he had been entrusted with the task of recutting the 'Koh-i-noor'. The Brazilian diamond was fashioned into a beautiful oval-shape of great purity, weighing 128.8 (metric) carats and measuring 35mm (1.38 inches) long, 29mm (1.14 inches) wide, and 19mm (0.78 inch) thick. The reflected light is perfectly white but curiously assumes by refraction a noticeable rose tint.

It has been stated that this phenomenon is doubtless due to the peculiar prismatic form imparted to the crystal, perhaps unconsciously, by the cutter. Confirmation of this has come from Dr Raal of the De Beers Diamond Research Laboratory, who has kindly supplied the following explanation:

The rose tint evidenced by the diamond when viewed in a certain way is indeed most probably due to its 'peculiar prismatic form'.

White light is comprised of violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red components, the so-called spectral colours also to be seen in a rainbow. A regular diamond

prism would disperse or split a white light into these colours. The reason for this is that red light has a longer wavelength than violet light which has the shortest wavelength. The prism bends light according to its wavelength, thereby effecting a split into spectral colours with the violet light being bent most and the red least.

Dependent upon the angle of the prism and that of the incidental white light, it is quite feasible for the violet, indigo and blue components, say, to be bent so much that they do not emerge on the other side of the prism but get reflected internally. This phenomenon is known as total internal reflection.

The emergent light now consists of the longer wavelengths, viz. red, orange, yellow, and if they overlap or merge to a certain degree, the resultant colour could easily be a 'decided rose tint'.

Following the cutting of the diamond in the Netherlands, a Paris syndicate of dealers bought the gem and appropriately named it the 'Star of the South'. The syndicate displayed the diamond at the London Exhibition of 1862 and the Paris Exhibition of 1867; on both occasions it attracted considerable attention on account of its great beauty. The principal member of this syndicate was a Mr Halphen who later was to be one of the buyers at the 1874 sale of jewellery belonging to the eccentric Duke of Brunswick. That celebrated collector of jewels made an offer to buy the 'Star of the South' which, valued at 3,250,800 francs, figures as number 6 in a survey of the world's largest diamonds included in the 1860 catalogue of his jewellery.

However, it was not to be: instead the diamond was despatched to India for possible purchase by an Indian prince. But the prince's offer of £100,000 proved unacceptable to its owners so that the gem returned to Paris.

It was while negotiations were proceeding in India for its sale that news of the existence of the 'Star of the South' reached Mulhar Rao, the Gaekwar of Baroda. Next to the Duke of Brunswick he was probably the most notable collector of jewellery during the last century. The Gaekwar gave a commission for buying the diamond to the London dealer Edward Dresden who, four years later, was to become the owner of another Brazilian diamond, the 'English Dresden'.

A propos the Gaekwar's purchase of the 'Star of the South', Dresden informed Edwin Streeter that:

A few years after the death of the late Emperor Napoleon, his Empress sold through Smith, Fleming and Co. her famous collection of diamonds (amongst which was a pair of splendid drops), to that same ruler of Baroda so that he now possesses a matchless quantity of diamonds, including the 'Star of the South', which I had the commission to buy, and for which I paid Halphen in Paris, two million francs (£80,000), inclusive, of course, of the mountings which were very costly.

It will be noted that the Gaekwar of Baroda's price for the

'Star of the South' was £20,000 less than the amount the other Indian prince had offered the Paris syndicate. No reasons have been given for their acceptance of the lower offer so one must assume that Mr Dresden was, to say the least, an extremely persuasive agent.

Mulhar Rao was a noted collector of large diamonds, but it was because of his involvement in a sinister episode to do with smaller diamonds that he was destined for notoriety. The Gaekwar's rule did not begin auspiciously. Succeeding his brother in 1872, by whom he had for some time been kept a close prisoner, he was charged with the murder of his late brother's Prime Minister and other influential personages; nothing came of these charges which were semi-officially denied in the Indian press. But the Gaekwar's principal activities were to become centred on Colonel Phayre, then the British Political Resident at Baroda. It transpired that every morning the Resident was in the habit of drinking a glass of



Mulhar Rao, the Gaekwar of Baroda, who was one of the most important collectors of diamonds in the 19th century. He purchased the 'Star of the South'.

sherbet. On several occasions he had noticed an unusual taste and consequently had thrown away the contents of the glass. At last his attention was drawn to a sediment at the bottom, which, on being submitted to chemical analysis, was found to consist of a mixture of arsenic, diamond dust and copper. Several persons were arrested on suspicion and the general impression remained that the attempt to poison the Resident was due to political and not to private motives. A Police Commissioner was duly sent to Baroda to investigate the matter.

Not unnaturally the Indian press discussed the affair at great length while *The Times* in London continued to report it regularly. In its issue dated 15 December 1874, the latter contained the following despatch from its Indian correspondent:

In the absence of any official statement as to the facts ascertained by the recent investigation held at the Residency relative to the attempt to poison Colonel Phayre, the strangest rumours fill the air in Baroda. It is asserted that no less than two persons who were in a position to be useful witnesses have died by poison and have been burnt. It is needless to say that it is not imagined that they committed suicide. Two other possible witnesses are spoken of as having been spirited away. The one thing which is certain is that the affair is universally regarded as most serious.

Six days later *The Times* reported:

The official inquiry has been closed and the report presented to the Bombay Government but it has not yet been made public.... It is said that the man who brought the poisoned glass to the Resident died almost immediately after, and his body was burnt in great haste, and the conclusion drawn from this circumstance is that he knew too much to be safe and was therefore put out of the way by the conspirators. Another report is that one of the persons implicated has confessed, stating that he was offered £10,000 to be paid on the death of Colonel Phayre, and that he actually received £150 by way of earnest and it is added that he pointed out where this money is hidden. Search was made and the exact sum was found in the place indicated.

Then on 31 December 1874, this dramatic item appeared in *The Times*:

The Police Commissioner sent to Baroda to investigate the late attempt to poison Colonel Phayre has returned here. The *Bombay Gazette* believes his report will show that the Guicowar [*sic*] of Baroda was directly implicated in the attempted crime.

The Gaekwar was duly indicted on a charge of complicity in the attempt to poison the Resident and the trial opened at Calcutta on 23 February 1875, before a jury comprising three Britons and three Indians. The trial lasted a month with the proceedings being reported almost daily in *The Times*.



Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy of India, who was responsible for the deposition of the Gaekwar of Baroda.

Readers were regaled with accounts of an endless series of bizarre goings-on and revelations such as are of the very essence of drama; in fact they provided a perfect example of Byron's words that truth is always strange; stranger than fiction. One of the revelations in court came from the Gaekwar's Private Secretary: he stated that on two occasions he had bought arsenic, diamonds and diamond dust on the orders of the Gaekwar. The prince had said the diamonds were for a crown for the High Priest of Akulkote.

In the end the jury could not agree on a unanimous verdict. However, the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, deposed the Gaekwar on the grounds of his unsatisfactory government of Baroda and placed his ten-year-old son on the throne. Although it appeared to be universally agreed that a bad ruler had rightly been dismissed it was also thought in India that neither the Viceroy nor the Government of India had handled the affair in a dextrous manner.

In 1934, the new Gaekwar of Baroda, then an elderly and greatly respected ruler, informed Robert M. Shipley that both the 'Star of the South' and the 'English Dresden' were mounted in a necklace among his family's jewels. In recent years it has been reported that the 'Star of the South' is owned by Rustomjee Jamsetjee of Bombay, but there has been no confirmation of this fact.

IDOL'S EYE

The various published accounts of the early history of the 'Idol's Eye' are worthy of being included in *A Thousand and One Nights*; unfortunately for the most part they must be considered to be entirely spurious. It is possible that the diamond may have been found at Golconda around 1600 but seven years later it was certainly not seized from the Persian Prince Rahab, by the East India Company as payment for a debt. There is no such person recorded in the history of Persia while the East India Company did not start to trade in that country until several years later.

The first authentic fact in the diamond's history was its appearance at a Christie's sale in London on 14 July 1865, when it was described as 'a splendid large diamond known as the "Idol's Eye" set round with 18 smaller brilliants and frame-work of small brilliants'. It was knocked down to a mysterious buyer designated simply as 'B.B'. Later it is stated that the 34th Ottoman Sultan, Abd al-Hamid II (1842–1918), owned the 'Idol's Eye'. However the 'Idol's Eye' would never,

as has often been asserted, have been set in the eye of a temple in Benghazi because there are neither temples nor idols in that city. Benghazi has been Muslim since the eighth century AD.

When consideration is given to the shape of the 'Idol's Eye' – something between a cushion and a pear – it is not difficult to envisage its setting elsewhere as an eye, so justifying its name. Indeed the stone compares favourably with others deemed to have been set in this manner: they suggest that certain idols found in sacred buildings in the East have had very oddly-shaped ocular orifices. The 'Idol's Eye' weighs 70.20 metric carats and is clearly a Golconda stone, possessing that slight bluish tinge so characteristic of many diamonds from that source.

Abd al-Hamid II presided over the most autocratic regime that the Ottoman Empire had experienced since the eighteenth century. He was eventually defeated by the internal opposition which coalesced as The Young Turks. After his deposition in 1909 he lived in exile, first in Salonika, then in Istanbul where he died in 1918. It is said that the Sultan, sensing in which direction the political wind of his country was blowing, made provisions for his coming enforced retirement, which included the despatch of his jewels to a place of safety. Unfortunately the servant entrusted with them turned traitor and sold them in Paris. Whether or not this is the true version of events, it is known that the 'Idol's Eye' was one of several large diamonds belonging to the dealer Salomon Habib that came up for auction in Paris on 24 June 1909. Subsequently a Spanish nobleman bought the diamond which he kept in a London bank for some years.

After the end of the Second World War the 'Idol's Eye' re-emerged when it was acquired by a Dutch dealer from whom Harry Winston bought it in 1946. In the following year Mr Winston sold it to Mrs May Bonfils Stanton, daughter of Frederick G. Bonfils, the publisher and co-founder of the *Denver Post*. If many of the earlier characters associated with the diamond's history have proved to be fictitious, Mrs Stanton goes some way to make up for them. Once a great beauty, she became a legendary figure in American life. From her early girlhood she displayed an interest in jewels and began to assemble a famous collection. In addition to the 'Idol's Eye' it was to include the 'Liberator' diamond and a diamond necklace studded with twelve emeralds weighing 107 carats, once owned by the Maharajah of Indore. Mrs Stanton lived in splendid isolation in a palatial mansion copied from the Petit Trianon in Versailles. It is reported that she wore the 'Idol's Eye' at her solitary breakfast every morning. The gem was set as the pendant to a diamond necklace containing forty-one brilliants, weighing about



Abd al-Hamid II, the 34th Ottoman Sultan.



22.50 carats, and forty-five baguettes weighing about 12 carats.

Mrs Stanton was also a supporter of numerous philanthropic causes in her native state of Colorado. After her death, in her eighties, in March 1962, her jewels were auctioned in November by Parke-Bernet Galleries Inc. of New York; in accordance with the directions contained in her will the proceeds were distributed among various charities.

The Chicago jeweller Harry Levinson bought the 'Idol's Eye' for \$375,000. In 1967 he loaned it to De Beers for exhibition at the Diamond Pavilion in Johannesburg. Six years later Mr Levinson put the diamond up for sale in New York but subsequently withdrew it when the bidding failed to reach his

The 'Idol's Eye' diamond set in a necklace.

minimum of \$1,000,000. In 1979, Laurence Graff, of London, purchased the 'Idol's Eye'; he loaned it in 1982 for display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, at a reception celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Harry Winston Inc. In the following January Mr Graff sold the 'Idol's Eye' together with the 'Emperor Maximilian' and a 70.54-carat, fancy yellow diamond, named the 'Sultan Abd al-Hamid II' and thought to have been part of that ruler's jewellery collection. The sale of these three stones to the same buyer is reckoned to have been one of the highest priced transactions of diamonds known.

PASHA OF EGYPT

The diamond takes its name from Ibrahim Pasha (1789–1848), Viceroy of Egypt under Ottoman rule. He purchased the gem for £28,000. The London jeweller, Emanuel, described it as of octagonal shape, excellent colour and quality and weighing 40 carats (41.06 metric). It became the finest stone in the Egyptian Treasury.

In 1863 Ismail Pasha (1830–1895) became the ruler of Egypt. Under him the country experienced a period of accelerated economic development – but at a cost. By 1876 Egypt's debt amounted to £100,000,000 for which the policies adopted by Ismail Pasha were largely responsible. Eventually the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire deposed him and he went into exile in 1879. Contemporary historians recorded that when Ismail Pasha left Egypt he carried with him a huge horde of valuables, amongst which was the 'Pasha of Egypt'. Subsequently the diamond was reported to have been sold to an Englishman, a likely happening because Britain and France were the two powers with whom the Pasha had had most dealings during his reign.

The Englishman is stated to have put the diamond up for sale. In 1933 the London firm of T. M. Sutton offered it to Cartier's. Then the 'Pasha of Egypt' returned to Egypt in the possession of King Farouk. The Italian jewellers, Bulgari, brought it from him before selling it to the American millionairess Barbara Hutton. However, the octagonal shape of the diamond displeased her so that she had it recut at Cartier's to 38.19 carats and set into a ring. After further recutting, it now weighs 36.22 carats and is privately owned in Europe.



Ibrahim Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt. He was the adopted son of Mohammed Ali of Cairo.

EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN

At a time of linguistic over-emphasis and exaggeration, both conversationally and on the printed page, some words, notably certain adjectives and adverbs, have come to be used so often as to have lost much of their true meaning. One such word is 'tragic' which people nowadays tend to apply to comparatively minor misfortunes. But it remains the most appropriate epithet to describe the fate which befell the unfortunate Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico (1832–67) during the last century.

The Archduke Maximilian was the younger brother of

Francis Joseph I, the Hapsburg Emperor of Austria, whose own life was marked by a series of personal tragedies; his wife, only son and his heir-presumptive nephew all met sudden death by violence. In 1859 some Mexican exiles whose property had been confiscated by the Liberals under Benito Juarez approached Maximilian with the suggestion that he assume the throne of Mexico. The country was then in a state of anarchy, and Maximilian, though he was tempted by the challenge, turned their proposal down. He did, however, decide to visit the New World. The Archduke displayed a keen



ABOVE *The Empress Carlotta, wife of the ill-fated Emperor who gave her another diamond known as the 'Maximilian'.*



ABOVE *The 'Emperor Maximilian'.*

interest in the sciences, particularly botany, and in 1860 he travelled to Brazil on a botanical expedition.

While he was in Brazil, Maximilian acquired two diamonds which have been named after him. The smaller of the two was a cushion-cut with a greenish-yellow tint weighing 33 carats. It became known as the 'Maximilian' diamond. Maximilian gave it to his wife, the former Princess Charlotte (known as Carlotta), daughter of King Leopold I of Belgium, who wore it as a pendant. The larger diamond, which has the more resounding name of 'Emperor Maximilian' weighs 41.94 (metric) carats and is also cushion-shaped. It is not known where either diamond was cut but it is possible that they were cut in Brazil which until the present day has possessed a diamond cutting industry, albeit on a smaller scale than those in some other countries.

Having failed with their initial proposition to Maximilian, the Mexican exiles then approached the Emperor Napoleon III of France. They succeeded in convincing him that with the assistance of the French army he could obtain glory by regenerating Mexico with a Catholic Prince. Consequently Napoleon III urged Maximilian to accept the throne of Mexico; on the other hand the Emperor of Austria endeavoured to dissuade his brother from taking such a step. In the end Maximilian accepted the crown, whereupon he and his wife set sail, arriving in Mexico in May 1864.

The venture was an ill-fated one from the start. Neither Maximilian nor Carlotta was acquainted with the country and its problems and it was not long before it became clear to Napoleon III that the Archduke Maximilian was temperamentally unsuitable as a ruler. The reigning government lacked popular appeal and relied solely on French military support, while a series of bad decisions and reports of extravagance came to alienate the people. In addition, Benito Juarez, a native Mexican and the Republican leader, constantly opposed Maximilian and the French.

By the spring of 1865 Napoleon III realized that the Mexican venture was a failure, and that he could not continue with it on account of growing opposition within France itself. Then the United States government refused to accord recognition to the Mexican Empire and urged the withdrawal of the French forces. In the following year the French agreed to retire within eighteen months and in October 1866 Maximilian drafted an abdication proclamation. However, he allowed himself to be persuaded to remain in Mexico, and determined not to desert his supporters. Meanwhile the Empress Carlotta returned to Europe to seek aid for her husband.

As a result of the treachery of one of his officers, Maximilian was captured on the night of 14 May 1867. Some foreign governments petitioned to have the Emperor sent back to Europe, but in vain. On 19 June 1867, Maximilian was court-martialled and shot at Querétaro with two of his generals.

It is reported that the Emperor walked to the spot which had been assigned him and then asked for the men who were going to shoot him and gave each of them one ounce of gold. It has also been stated that on this dreadful day he wore the

'Emperor Maximilian' diamond in a small satchel tied around his neck when he faced the firing squad.

After the perpetration of this infamous deed, which did little credit to the various parties concerned, the 'Maximilian' diamond disappeared. It came to light in 1901 when two Mexicans were apprehended trying to smuggle it into the United States. The customs officials seized the diamond which later that year was auctioned by the United States government; it was bought for \$120,000 by a Congressman named Levy. In the following year Levy sold it to William R. Phelps, a jeweller of New York's Maiden Lane, the precursor of 47th Street. In 1946, another jeweller from New York, Morris S. Nelkin, bought the 'Maximilian' and he kept it until one fateful day fifteen years later when a member of his family, suspecting that a burglar was in the house, hid the stone with other valuables in the rubbish bin. Subsequently the rubbish was collected and despite an intensive search of the municipal dump the diamond has never been recovered.

Fortunately the 'Emperor Maximilian' has survived. After the Emperor's execution the diamond was returned to his widow who, as the result of events, was to remain mentally deranged until her death near Brussels in 1927. The gem was sold in order to help pay her medical expenses. In 1919, a Chicago diamond dealer named Ferdinand Hotz acquired the 'Emperor Maximilian' which he displayed at the Century of Progress Exhibition held in that city in 1934. Despite several offers to buy it, one of which came from Lord Anglesey, Hotz refused to sell the stone and he kept it until he died in 1946,

when it was sold to a private collector in New York.

The name of this purchaser has never been revealed and the diamond remained in her possession, mounted in a ring by Cartier, until Christie's auctioned it in New York on the 20 July 1982. On this occasion the sale catalogue stated that the diamond was the property of a lady, sold by order of the Trustees. It was expected that the diamond would fetch \$330,000 (£194,110) but in the event it was sold for \$726,000 (£427,050). The sale of the 'Emperor Maximilian' attracted worldwide interest from collectors and journalists alike; during the sale the bidding was so keen that by the time the auctioneer had reached \$500,000 no less than ten hands still remained in the air.

The purchaser of the 'Emperor Maximilian' diamond was Laurence Graff, the London jeweller, who has since added the purchases of other notable diamonds to this particular one. Mr Graff had been prepared to go up to \$1,000,000, having gone to New York specially to bid for it. He remarked:

It is a wonderful stone, cut like a modern one, and to do anything to it is unnecessary and would be a shame. I've never seen such a stone – the way it shines with a purple glow in the sunlight is extraordinary – with such a high fluorescence. Several offers have already been made to me for it.

In January 1983, Mr Graff did sell the 'Emperor Maximilian', together with the 'Idol's Eye' and the 'Sultan Abd al-Hamid II' in a single transaction to the same buyer.

KASIKCI

Few cities occupy such a strategic position as Istanbul, formerly Constantinople: from the Western point of view it represents the gateway to the East; from the Eastern point of view it stands as the gateway to the West. Consequently the city has for centuries played a vital part in trade between the two continents, a point of transit and a location for purchases. Among diamonds at least two, the 'Sancy' and the 'Akbar Shah', have been acquired there and the likelihood is that many others from the East have come via this route.

Two other diamonds did not travel further west than Constantinople, but remained in that city. Edwin Streeter named them as 'The Turkey I and II', and recorded their weights as 147 and 84 carats. The larger of the two was called the 'Ottoman' and was owned by the Grand Sultan in the middle of the nineteenth century; it was stated to have been a stone of great beauty and of the first water, valued at

£156,800. Although its weight was reported to be 140 carats, slightly less than Streeter's figure, it was almost certainly none other than 'Turkey I'. The whereabouts of this stone is not known today.

The other diamond, known as the 'Kasikci' or 'Spoonmaker's Diamond', is undoubtedly the 86-carat (metric) stone that is on view in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul. This building, formerly the Sultan's Seraglio, was begun in 1462 and served as the residence of the Sultans until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Nowadays it houses the treasures of the Sultans including collections of china, jewels, armour, textiles and manuscripts.

We are a little more fortunate than Edwin Streeter in

OPPOSITE *The 'Kasikci', also known as the 'Spoonmaker's Diamond', which is now in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul.*



knowing about the smaller diamond at least; his correspondent in Constantinople, whom he described as 'a gentleman holding an official position in the East' clearly found it hard to come by any information on the subject. On 19 July 1881, he wrote as follows:

In reply to yours of 11th inst., I beg to say that I shall endeavour to get the information you seek; but as the Turkish fast, the Ramadan, is now coming on, it is quite useless to attempt anything till after Bairam, that is in five weeks. I shall then apply, through the Embassy, for a firman to inspect the jewels, which may or may not be given. At that time I shall also endeavour to get such drawings and legends as you wish for. I may, however, say that of late years immense robberies have gone on; and very likely the stones you speak of have disappeared....'

Five months later Streeter's correspondent wrote:

I have your memorandum of 2nd inst., and can well understand that you are surprised at my long silence. I regret, however, to say that I am not one whit nearer the information you desire than when you first wrote to me about it; and that I doubt very much if I shall ever get anything reliable to communicate to you. I have taken no inconsiderable amount of trouble in the matter, and have approached several high and influential men on the subject;

but with absolutely no result. It is not at all a question of money; but simply this, that the reign of terror in the palace is so absolute, that no one would ever dare to ask a question referring to crown jewels.

The man responsible for this reign of terror was the Sultan Abd al-Hamid II, whose recourse to a spy system, censorship, imprisonment, exile and even murder of his opponents exceeded any of his predecessors. He was the owner at one time of several notable diamonds but at the moment when he was most in need of them, at his deposition, he was deprived of them by the treachery of one of his servants who went and sold them himself. It is not known whether he regarded the 'Kasikci' as a part of the Turkish Regalia and therefore inviolable or whether he was thwarted in an attempt to remove that stone too.

The diamond is a pear-shape and is set in a frame of forty-nine diamonds. The alternative name of the gem, the 'Spoon-maker's Diamond', revolves around its discovery in a part of Istanbul and its subsequent exchange for three spoons by a merchant. A goldsmith then bought it from the spoonmaker and showed it to one of his colleagues who recognized it as a diamond and demanded a part of its value. On learning about this dispute the chief goldsmith removed the diamond and paid each of the two men 500 piastres. Soon after, the Sultan demanded to see the stone and decided to keep it for himself.

ENGLISH DRESDEN

The man who gave his name to this diamond was Edward Z. Dresden, of Gracechurch Street, London: he was listed in the Post Office directory simply as 'merchant'. However, as the stone was shipped to Holland for cutting, it is not unreasonable to assume that he was connected with the diamond-dealing firm Gebr. Dresden & Co, of Keizersgracht, Amsterdam.

The 'English Dresden' was found in 1857 in diggings by the Bagagem river in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, close to where the 'Star of the South' had been found four years earlier. In fact the two diamonds were destined to follow similar historical paths.

Acting on behalf of Dresden, agents purchased the stone in Rio de Janeiro whence it was sent first to London, then to Amsterdam to be cut by Messrs Coster. After a great deal of preliminary study they cut it into a finely proportioned pear-shape, both colourless and flawless, which weighed $76\frac{1}{2}$ (old) carats, 78.53 metric. Since the rough piece had weighed $119\frac{1}{2}$ carats, little more than a third was lost in the cutting.

Contemporary accounts have testified to the fact that the 'English Dresden' was regarded as a very fine gem. Mr Dresden himself wrote:

There is no diamond known in the world to come up to it. I matched my drop with the Koh-i-Noor at Garrards one day, and to the surprise of all present, the latter's colour turned almost yellowish: a proof of how perfectly white my diamond must be.

Another person who saw the gem declared:

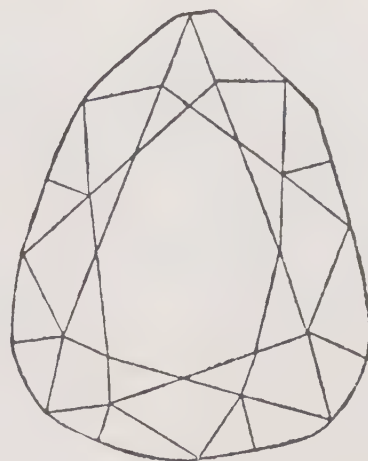
It is perfectly pure, free from defects, and has extraordinary play and brilliancy. Indeed the quality of the stone is superior to the Koh-i-Noor. Yet when a half share in this magnificent jewel was offered to a noted West End jeweller for the relatively small sum of £12,000 he declined it.

After this refusal the 'English Dresden' was apparently offered to, and refused by, members of several European ruling houses. Then it came to be much admired by an Indian

prince who is said to have visited London in 1863 chiefly for the purpose of adding this diamond to his collection of jewels. He was unable to meet the asking price of £40,000 and was reluctantly compelled to decline the purchase. However, on this occasion he was accompanied by an English merchant from Bombay who, upon seeing Dresden's diamond, immediately expressed a desire to own it. At the time no one paid any attention to his wish, but within a year the merchant found himself in a position of being able to afford to buy the diamond. It chanced that he was a holder of substantial stocks of cotton when, as the result of the Civil War in the United States, there was a steep rise in the price of this commodity. After he had sold off his stock at enormous prices and thus realized a fortune, he wrote to Mr Dresden with an offer to purchase his diamond.

The handling of the negotiations was entrusted to an agent of the Bombay merchant who took the opportunity of doing a stroke of business on his own account. He persuaded Dresden to accept a figure of £32,000 for the diamond: then he informed the cotton dealer that the original asking price of £40,000 had to be paid without question, thereby lining his own pockets to the tune of £8,000. So this merchant became the proud owner of the 'English Dresden' whose possession he had earlier described as 'the dearest wish of his heart'.

Unfortunately he was destined to enjoy ownership of the diamond for only a short time. He continued to do a substantial business in cotton and found himself a large



The 'English Dresden', drawn soon after it had been cut in the middle of the 19th century.

holder when the price collapsed as suddenly as it had risen. After this misfortune he died and his estate had to be wound up; his executors considered that they were fortunate in being able to recover the £40,000 by selling the diamond to that avid collector, Mulhar Rao, the Gaekwar of Baroda.

The 'English Dresden' remained among the jewels of the rulers of Baroda until 1934 when it was reported to have been acquired by Cursetjee Fardoonji. So far as it is known the diamond still remains in India.

BRUNSWICK BLUE

The mysterious affair of the 'Brunswick Blue' diamond has long continued to interest gem historians. It suggests the title of a work of fiction and, indeed, the central character in the chain of events appears to a considerable extent more fictitious than real.

The diamond's eponymous owner, Charles II, Duke of Brunswick, was an unpopular ruler who, after an unfortunate reign, was driven from his land by a popular rising in 1830. He was also an ardent collector of jewels – and an eccentric. He owned a collection said to have been valued at £500,000, a princely sum, indeed, for that time, which he kept in his house in Paris. Such was his passion for his prized jewels that he would not spend a single night away from his residence, which had been built more from the point of security than comfort. It was surrounded by a high thick wall on top of which was a 'chevaux-de-frise', so arranged that when a hand was laid upon one of the spikes, a bell immediately rang.

The diamonds were kept in a safe let into the wall and the

Duke's bed was situated in front of it. If an attempt had been made to force open the safe, four guns would have been discharged, thereby hopefully killing the burglar on the spot, and connected with the discharge of the guns was a mechanism which would ring alarm bells in every room of the house to arouse the household.

The bedroom had only one small window; the bolt and lock of the door were made of the stoutest iron and could only be opened by someone who knew the secret. Finally, a case containing twelve loaded revolvers stood by the side of the bed.

It is reassuring to know that diamonds were as highly prized in the last century as they are today, but doubtless the Duke had in mind the events surrounding the theft of the French Crown Jewels from the Garde Meuble, in September 1792.

After the Duke of Brunswick's death in 1873 some of his jewels were put up for sale in Geneva in the following year.



Charles II, the eccentric Duke of Brunswick, who amassed one of the greatest collections of diamonds in the 19th century.

One of them, the 30-carat 'Brunswick Yellow' diamond, was bought by Tiffany's. Among the other gems was at least one diamond of a rare dark blue colour, the weight of which remains uncertain to this day.

Unwittingly, the noted London jeweller and gemologist, Edwin Streeter, is partly to blame for this uncertainty, for in his two books he has written contradictory accounts of the diamond's weight. When he examined the stone he concluded that it must have been cut from the 'French Blue' diamond, weighing 67.5 (old) carats, which had been among the Crown Jewels since the time of Louis XIV. It has always been assumed that the 'Hope' diamond, weighing 45.52 metric carats, (equivalent to 44.34 old carats), constitutes the major portion of this legendary stone and that some time after its theft from the Garde Meuble it had been recut to avoid detection. In the 1882 edition of his celebrated work *The Great Diamonds of the World* Streeter considered that after it had been cleaved the 'Hope' became the larger piece while an irregular triangular-shaped piece would have remained. (If the 'French Blue' had been fashioned to produce the 'Hope' diamond around the year 1800 it would, for technical reasons, have been cleaved, not sawn.)

Streeter thought that if a drop shape of the same colour as the 'Hope', weighing from 12 to 13 (old) carats with its base corresponding to the straight side of the 'Hope', were to be found then there was enough presumptive evidence to suggest that it must have formed part of the 'French Blue' diamond. He wrote as follows:

Such a stone did actually come into the market in April 1874. It was purchased in Geneva at the sale of the late Duke of Brunswick's jewels. The purchaser put the stone for a short time into my hands and I examined it in juxtaposition with the 'Hope' diamond. It is identical in colour and quality.

I know not how to avoid the conclusion that the Duke of Brunswick's 'Blue Drop' diamond once formed the triangular salient gibbosity which formerly appears to have characterized the stone now known as the 'Hope' brilliant. Besides the 'Hope' and Brunswick diamonds, there are only three diamonds known in Europe that can justly be termed 'blue', and these all differ from the 'Hope', and from each other in colour.

Yet in the sixth edition of *Precious Stones and Gems* published in 1898 Streeter's account differed considerably. Here he stated that the original 'French Blue' had been cut into three, not two, pieces. The 'Hope' diamond remained the larger portion while the weight of the Duke of Brunswick's diamond was reduced to an estimated weight of between 6 to 7 (old) carats, to allow for the existence of a third piece.

Streeter stated that he bought this third diamond, known as the 'Pirie', for £300 in Paris; it weighed 1 (old) carat and was identical in colour to the 'Hope'.

It is extraordinary, to say the least, that such an expert could have written two such varying accounts of these stones. However, the earlier theory about the weight of the Duke of Brunswick's diamond has been clearly disproved by Albert Monnickendam in his book *The Magic of Diamonds*. In Mr Monnickendam's opinion it would have been technically impossible to have cut a drop-shape weighing from 12 to 13 carats if the principal piece, i.e., the 'Hope', cut from the 'French Blue' weighed as much as 44 or 45 carats. In his view, which is the one currently agreed upon by modern authorities, the pear-shaped diamond could not have weighed more than about 10 carats.

We are left, therefore, with Streeter's second account stating that the 'Brunswick Blue' diamond weighed between 6 and 7 carats. If such a stone comes to light then the owner will possess not only a gem of a colour still rare today, in spite of further discoveries in southern Africa, but one of exceptional historical interest. Ultimately scientific examination may produce the answer to the mystery. When the 'Hope' diamond came to South Africa in 1965 to be put on exhibition, the opportunity was taken to make a thorough investigation of its physical properties and it was found to be the only blue diamond known to phosphoresce following exposure to ultraviolet light.

EUREKA

In the middle of the last century, southern Africa was a pastoral land. The economy of the oldest and most populous of the colonies, Cape Colony, was both backward and poor, with wool the most important export. There was little in this part of the globe to attract the steady stream of European emigration that was making its way to Australia, New Zealand and the Americas. By 1820 almost four thousand British immigrants were settled in the eastern areas of Cape Colony. In the 1840s and the 1850s there were numerous schemes of emigration to Natal. Between 1858 and 1862 more settlers were brought to the Eastern Cape but many left during the prolonged economic depression of the 1860s, brought on by the American Civil War. In 1853 the Cape Colony was granted representative institutions by the British Government and elections were held; in 1872 the Cape received responsible government.

The discovery of diamonds in South Africa in the 1860s and the subsequent opening up of the diamond fields not only marked the beginning of a new era in southern Africa but has ultimately led to the transformation of large areas of the continent of Africa.

Before the events pertaining to the discovery of what became recognized as Africa's first diamond, the 'Eureka', are recounted it would be as well to remember that it is possible earlier finds may have preceded it. There are stories that the Bushmen may have known about diamonds and have found some use for them. Moreover it is of interest to relate the facts concerning two diamonds which found their way into European hands before the 'Eureka' was discovered.

In February 1852, the British troopship, HMS *Birkenhead*, was wrecked off the Cape of Good Hope with the loss of 445 lives. The disaster spawned the saying 'women and children first' as the troops and seamen aboard were ordered to stand fast on the deck while eight women and thirteen children were taken off by lifeboat. One of the officers who had been aboard was Captain McGeough-Bond-Shelton of the 12th Royal Lancers. He had previously bought a rough diamond in Cape Town which he hid for safe-keeping by sewing it into the waistband of his trousers. When HMS *Birkenhead* foundered he was thrown into the shark-infested waters and while he struggled to stay alive, a shark snapped at him. Fortunately it only caught the torn cloth of his trouser leg, ripping it off just below the diamond in his belt. Eventually, after being rescued he arrived in London where he had the diamond cut into a gem of 18 carats. In 1873 he returned to his family seat in Co Tyrone, Ireland, and when he was married he gave his bride a pendant in which was set the diamond.

In 1858 a diamond passed into the hands of Captain E. S. Hanger, of the Bloemfontein Rangers, who had fought in the

Basuto War of that year. The stone, which had been found in clay, was said to have been a fine yellowish octahedron; such a stone is of course a characteristic South African diamond and one scarcely peculiar to either the diamond fields of India or Brazil, till then the only known sources of diamonds. Captain Hanger sent the diamond to Amsterdam where it is said to have been polished into a fine rose-cut gem. The Countess of Charlemont, who also happened to live in Co Tyrone, bought Captain Hanger's diamond for £300, depositing it in a bank in the hope that the gem, which she could not then afford to have made up, might in due course become very valuable.

Now Lord Charlemont was at one time the Lord Lieutenant of Co Tyrone; it is, therefore, likely that he was aware of the existence of Captain McGeough-Bond-Shelton and more than probable that he knew him personally. Could the realization that South Africa was a diamondiferous country have thus spread further afield?

In September 1866, a sale of leases of Crown Lands took place at Hopetown, situated in the most northerly part of Cape Colony, about 800km (500 miles) north-east of Cape Town. Included among the advertisements of farms for sale were notices advertising the sale of the neighbouring farms of 'De Kalk' and 'Holpan'. The former was owned jointly by Schalk Jacobus van Niekerk and his stepfather Siewert Christiaan Wiid while the same Van Niekerk and his brother Hendrik Jacobus were the owners of 'Holpan'. In November of that year Schalk van Niekerk agreed to sell his share of 'De Kalk' to Daniel Johannes Jacobus Jacobs for £1125. This sale is of particular interest because probably in December 1866 the 'Eureka' diamond was found there. The Jacobs family had lived in the area for many years; Johannes Jacobus is reputed to have been a bywoner (tenant farmer) of Schalk van Niekerk at one time.

Recent investigation has suggested that the 'Eureka' was picked up in a hole probably made by a Bushman digging for roots, somewhere within 180 to 360 metres (200 to 400 yards) of an old dam wall on the western side of the Orange River, on the farm 'De Kalk'. The spot is between 0.4 and 0.8 km (a quarter and a half of a mile) from the Jacobs' homestead, the ruins of which are visible today. It has always been thought that the finder of the diamond was Erasmus Jacobs, the fifteen-year-old son of the farmer, and many years later when he was an old man he maintained that this was so in an affidavit which he made. However, it is of interest to note that *The Times* of London in a report dated 30 September 1867, by which time a degree of excitement about the Cape discoveries had ensued, stated that 'the first diamond was picked up by a little girl at Hopetown'. Further confirmation that it was the

daughter, not the son of Johannes Jacobus Jacobs who found the 'Eureka' is provided by Marian Robertson, the South African writer and broadcaster, in her book *Diamond Fever, South African Diamond History 1866-69 from Primary Sources*. Mrs Robertson discovered the primary sources among the Cape Archives: consequently she has written by far the most compelling and comprehensive account of these momentous years in African history. All later writers owe her an incalculable debt. Whether it was the boy or girl who found the 'Eureka' Mrs Robertson thinks it likely that both were present at the historic moment and that a quarrel took place, probably during a game of Five Stones. (This resembles the Roman game whereby the pebbles are placed on the knuckles of a clenched fist: then they are thrown up and attempts are made to catch them all in the hand.)

Early in 1867 the 'Eureka' was destined to pass through the hands of several individuals. The first was Schalk van Niekerk whose involvement in the story of the diamond is best summarized in a long letter which William Buchanan Chalmers, then Civil Commissioner and Resident Magistrate at Hopetown, wrote to the *Grahamstown Journal*; an abbreviated version later appeared in other newspapers including *The Times*. Mrs Robertson's opinion is that of all the personalities who came to be involved with the diamond's discovery, it was Chalmers who provided the most reliable account of the facts therein. Chalmers wrote as follows:

...The first diamond was discovered by pure accident. It was used for a long time by the children of a Dutch farmer called Jacobs, as a plaything. These people are very ignorant ... This diamond might have been lost or thrown away ... but fortunately another Dutch farmer, a Mr Schalk van Niekerk, a very observant man, and one more intelligent than the rest of his countrymen in this district, happened to visit Jacobs' place. Seeing the children playing with some nice stones he had a look at them, and at once took notice of the gem. He had no idea that it was a diamond, but thought it was a rare-looking stone, very different from the others. He took it up, feeling it heavier than the weight of an ordinary pebble of such a size, his enquiring mind thought he would try to find out what sort of stone it was. He offered to purchase it from Mrs Jacobs, but she laughed at the idea of selling a stone, and told him that if he took a fancy to the stone he could have it for nothing. Niekerk then took it to O'Reilly, and asked him to find out what sort of stone it was...

There were indications that Van Niekerk's powers of observation definitely extended to pretty pebbles. Interestingly, another much earlier writer on the diamond fields, George Beet, tells of a story about the Van Niekerk family to the effect that a government surveyor named Von Ludwig had told Schalk van Niekerk that the country appeared to be of a diamondiferous nature. Von Ludwig is said to have given Van Niekerk a book on precious stones and told him to keep his eyes open. Examination of the folio of Hopetown farms in the

Cape Town Registry of Deeds has revealed that W. F. J. Von Ludwig was one of the Government surveyors surveying Crown Lands along the Orange River during 1859. Among the farms which Von Ludwig surveyed was 'De Kalk' together with others upon which diamonds were subsequently found.

The next person to figure prominently in the history of the 'Eureka' was the O'Reilly aforementioned in Chalmers' account. John Robert O'Reilly, son of the former Civil Commissioner of Somerset East, Cape Province, was a hunter and trader. He happened to be returning from an expedition in the interior when Van Niekerk showed him the stone and asked him to find out what it was. According to Chalmers, Van Niekerk mentioned to O'Reilly his suspicions that it was a diamond because of its hardness, its weight and because of the fact that it cut glass so easily and well. However, O'Reilly always maintained that he was the first person to have recognized it as a diamond. He travelled to Hopetown where he showed it to everyone saying so, but because they laughed at him he nearly threw the object away. But he persevered and went on to Colesberg where apparently one half believed this theory and the others scoffed at it.

Whatever the truth may be, O'Reilly never stopped trying to get full credit for the discovery of the 'Eureka' as a diamond. On 27 July 1869 he petitioned Parliament; the petition, presented by one member and seconded by another, read 'Mr John Robert O'Reilly of Colesberg, praying the House that as it was through his instrumentality the valuable discovery of Diamonds in South Africa was made public, he may be awarded a Grant of Land or a Sum of Money in recognition of his Services.' The Speaker ruled that the petition could not be received by the House as it was contrary to the Standing Rules and it was, therefore, withdrawn. Three years later O'Reilly petitioned again and once more he was unsuccessful. Although presented for the 'favourable consideration of the House' it was withdrawn after discussion. In 1894 he petitioned for the third time and it was referred to the Select Committee on Pensions, Grants and Gratuities but the petition was not recommended for any recognition, pension or reward. In addition O'Reilly wrote to Cecil Rhodes in his capacity as a Director of the British South Africa Company requesting his influence with the Company to give him a farm in Matabeleland. The Secretary of the British South Africa Company also forwarded a copy of O'Reilly's letter for consideration by the Board of Directors of De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited.

Whether or not O'Reilly has been treated unfairly concerning the part which he claimed to have played in the discovery of the 'Eureka', he can at least derive some posthumous satisfaction in knowing that the stone is still today often referred to as the 'O'Reilly' diamond.

To return to Colesberg, O'Reilly's son stated in an interview

OPPOSITE *The 'Eureka' diamond, weighing 10.73 carats. The original rough stone is considered to be the first authenticated South African diamond.*



that when his father visited the place, some men grabbed hold of the diamond, threw it out of the window and poured scorn on his father's opinion! Next morning he was obliged to hunt for hours before he found the precious stone. Fortunately O'Reilly acted upon the suggestion of Chalmers that he send the stone to the man who proved to be the first person to authenticate the 'Eureka' as a diamond.

By 1867 Dr William Guybon Atherstone, of Grahamstown, already had a notable career behind him. He had the distinction of being the first doctor in South Africa and the first person outside Europe and America to use an anaesthetic for an operation. Atherstone had also become a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, a distinction that reflected his lifelong preoccupation with geology, mineralogy and botany. His fame as an amateur geologist was widespread so that it was not surprising that Chalmers should have suggested the stone be sent to him for examination.

After receiving O'Reilly's stone by post, Atherstone submitted it to the necessary tests: he pronounced it to be a veritable diamond weighing $21\frac{1}{4}$ carats, worth £800. In his letter of confirmation to Richard Southey, the Colonial Secretary, Cape Colony, Atherstone, as befits a man of many parts, only mentioned this fact in the third paragraph of his letter. However, from the same communication we can see that it was Atherstone who inspired the idea of sending the diamond for display in the Cape Colony's stand at the forthcoming Paris Exhibition. Atherstone wrote similarly to Lorenzo Boyes, Clerk to the Civil Commissioner and Clerk of the Peace, Colesberg, with the result that the latter's local paper, the *Colesberg Advertiser*, lost no time in printing the following piece:

The Wonderful South African Diamond.

There is a story this morning afloot in the village. It has just been told us by a lady, and we give it just as we have heard it. A Mr. John O'Reilly, a hunter, explorer, &c., something of the Dr. Livingstone stamp, though not yet quite so well known, in his travels in the North Country – somewhere about the Orange River, picked up a stone two or three months since, which he thought had something remarkable about it, and brought it down with him. It was shown to several persons here, and was at length sent down to Dr. Atherstone of Grahamstown to be examined, and as the lady told us, a letter has come by this morning's post from the Doctor, saying that it is a Diamond and worth £800.—Now we quite expect that the 'Great Eastern' will have a grand laugh at us about the South African Diamond, as he did some time ago about the Orange River Serpent—but we have stated the report just as we have heard it.—Stranger things, however, have come to pass in the world than the discovery of Diamonds in South Africa.

The Colonial Secretary acknowledged Atherstone's letter and suggested he send the diamond to him at Cape Town for eventual forwarding to the Crown Agents in London for examination, and, if it should prove to be a genuine diamond,

for exhibition afterwards. On 18 April Southey wrote:

I have had it examined by such persons as I could find competent to judge – among others, one Louis Hond, a Hollander, and a professional Diamond Polisher of 22 years standing; and another Hollander, a Diamond Cutter; both of whom pronounce it to be a genuine Diamond, of good quality equal to the Bahia diamonds. Also, Mons. Heritte, the French Consul, who knows a good deal about these matters; and he concurs. Hond weighed the stone and found it, according to his scales $21\frac{3}{16}$ carats and his estimate of value is £500 in the rough and £800 after being cut and polished which he thinks would reduce its weight to between 12 and 15 carats. This morning he offered me £400 for it. Of course I cannot sell; and, as it may be worth much more, it is better to let it be sold in England for account of O'Reilly.

There is evidence to show that Hond, the experienced Dutch diamond cutter, was a somewhat shifty character. Moreover, it is interesting to speculate upon the reason for him leaving his home country and settling in the Cape; could it have been that while he was working in Holland he came to learn of the presence of diamonds in South Africa as the result of the cutting in Amsterdam of Captain Hanger's diamond?

At any rate Hond, who was soon to move to Hopetown and set up a business there, tried to obtain his cut out of his visit to the Colonial Secretary's office, sending in an account for the part he played in the valuation of the diamond. On the other hand it is clear that Southey was more than justified in seeking the opinion of M. Heritte, the French Consul at the Cape since August 1864. In a letter to Southey, dated 18 June 1867, Heritte clearly showed a considerable knowledge not only of the diamond itself but of the workings of the diamond trade such as it existed at the time. A century later he would certainly not have been out of his depth in the contemporary diamond industry! But somewhere along the line, dismissal of his knowledge, professional jealousy or probably suspicions of his nationality must have wounded the susceptibilities of the Consul because earlier the following letter to Southey had appeared in the columns of the *Cape Argus*:

Cape Town, April 26, 1867

Monsieur The Colonial Secretary – The Advertiser and Mail having published an article doubting the statement which I made respecting the Stone which was shown to me at the Colonial office, and which at the distance of six paces I declared to be a real diamond – not, as the Argus stated, because I am a Frenchman, and that all Frenchmen have knowledge of diamonds, which is a great mistake, but because I have a knowledge of mineralogy, especially of precious stones – I am ready now to purchase the stone in its present rough state for £500. The stone is worth more, but as there are risks attending its internal organism and the cutting on that account I reduce my offer to £500. Should my offer be accepted by the Government at once, I will pay the £500 so soon as the stone shall be received by me, and I

am ready to give in writing an undertaking to that effect.

Receive, Monsieur the Colonial Secretary the assurance of my deepest respect.

Heritte, Consul of France.

The interest, indeed almost excitement, in some quarters in the Cape died down as the 'Eureka' was despatched to England in the Union Company's Steamship *Celt* which, after a voyage of thirty-two days, arrived at Plymouth on 21 May 1867. *The Times* of London drew its readers' attention to the fact that the ship had brought two unusual items of cargo, two live koodoos, the first of this species of antelope to be brought to England, and a specimen of some stones found in the Orange River and pronounced by the Colony to be diamonds.

The Agent for the Cape Colony in London, Penrose G. Julian, lost no time in collecting the diamond from the Colonial Office and submitting it to the Crown Jewellers, Garrard & Co. On 8 June they wrote to Julian informing him that the stone submitted for valuation was a diamond of good quality, slightly coloured, having one or two small defects, weighing 21 $\frac{7}{8}$ carats, and worth about £500. Southey, in due course, received the following letter from Julian which he must have been keenly awaiting:

The gem which you sent me by that last Mail proved to be a veritable Diamond, the estimated value of which is about £500 in its present state.

Seeing the possibility of some unfair play being practised upon me if I submitted the Stone direct to the diamond dealers who are the only reliable judges as to quality and value, I thought it best to place the matter in the hands of Garrard and Co who are from time to time entrusted with the Crown Jewels and who have large dealings in Diamonds. They at once pronounced it a real stone, but before sending me the letter of which a copy is enclosed, they submitted it to a Mr Costa who is considered a great authority on diamonds, and their note may be considered as expressing his opinion as well as their own. The far famed 'Kohi-nor' [sic] was cut by Mr Costa on the premises of Messrs. Garrard, indeed he is probably more extensively engaged in cutting diamonds than any man in Europe.

I shall wait for the arrival of the next Mail before I take any steps to Exhibit it in Paris, as there will be considerable risk and expense attending such a step, and if it is to be sold I think I may possibly make it a condition with the purchaser that he is to exhibit it there, as 'The Cape Diamond' – or failing that, to Exhibit a model instead of the real thing. Mr Currey strongly advocates the latter course, as he does not relish the responsibility attending its custody. If this should lead to the discovery of a Diamond field equal to that found at Pasaquassu, in Brazil, in the year 1845, it will be a fine thing for the Colony.

Messrs. Garrard would I think be glad to buy any number of such gems as you could produce at the market price of the day.

The diamond was taken to Windsor for inspection by Queen

Victoria. Doubtless much to the relief of J. B. Currey, the man entrusted with the management of the Cape Colony's stand at the Paris Exhibition, it was not exhibited there; instead, Currey's suggestion was adopted and a replica in crystal of what the 'Eureka' would look like after cutting was sent. Although neatly arranged, this Exhibition attracted little notice among the profusion of magnificent objects on display and added only slight interest to the Colony's stand. However, the tone of another letter which Julian wrote at this time to Lorenzo Boyes indicated that doubts still existed in London about the 'Eureka': not so much about the genuineness of the stone as a diamond but whether some kind of hoax had been perpetrated and it had not come from Africa at all. Meanwhile the diamond remained in the safe of the Crown Agents until after it had been purchased.

Its purchaser was none other than Sir Philip Wodehouse, the Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner during the period of the 'Eureka's' discovery. By then Sir Philip had already purchased for £200 the second diamond to have been found in South Africa; however, his desire to purchase the 'Eureka' was to involve numerous individuals in voluminous correspondence for the rest of the year 1867. Some of this was caused by the claim of Wiid, the stepfather of Van Niekerk, that he was the owner of the farm 'De Kalk' and was, therefore, entitled to the proceeds from the sale of the diamond.

The Governor considered that this particular matter was of no concern of the Government at the Cape as he had understood that in sending it to England for examination the Colonial Secretary, Richard Southey, had acted only as a personal friend. Eventually Wiid was obliged to waive his claim to any of the proceeds. It was John O'Reilly who was to receive the £500 which the Governor paid for the diamond. According to the promise which he had made to Van Niekerk, O'Reilly gave half the amount to him and told him to give the little boy, Erasmus Jacobs, something; it is possible that Van Niekerk, as one of the vendors of 'De Kalk' to the Jacobs family, may have taken the share of proceeds of the 'Eureka' off the price of the farm. However in 1932, by which time he was over eighty years of age, Jacobs recorded that neither he nor any of his family had ever received any money from their neighbour or O'Reilly for the original diamond, or from the South African Government in recognition of the fact that they had made the discovery which had brought so much prosperity to the Cape. Sadly Jacobs spent the last years of his life in extreme poverty.

Sir Philip Wodehouse is known to have purchased five diamonds that passed through the hands of the Colonial Secretary as well as the 'Eureka'. Following his relinquishment of the office of Governor of Cape Colony and his return to England in 1870, he had all his diamonds cut and subsequently sold. Towards the end of the century the third Marquess of Bute bought the 'Eureka'. His biographer has written that he purchased some jewellery for Lady Bute in the 1870s at the time of the birth of his son and heir so that it is

possible that the 'Eureka' was among the items. Lady Bute survived her husband by some thirty years during which time her youngest son, Lord Colum Crichton-Stuart, continued to live with her. At some time in this period Lord Colum received the diamond as a present from his mother for it was he who sold it at Christie's after the Second World War. On 17 April 1946, *The Times* reported that on the previous day £5700 had been given for a diamond bangle, the entire circumference mounted with twenty large stones graduating from the centre – the centre oval diamond being the 'Eureka', the first diamond discovered in South Africa. The bangle was listed in the catalogue of sale as the '*property of a nobleman*'.

Mr Peter Locan was the buyer on this occasion; he lent the bangle for display at the splendid exhibition entitled 'The Ageless Diamond' that was staged on the premises of Christie's in 1959. Eight years later, and exactly one hundred years after it had been found, the 'Eureka' came back to South Africa. In April 1967 it was announced by De Beers that the company had bought the diamond and presented it to the Speaker of the House of Assembly as a gift to the people of

South Africa. Finally, in October 1983 De Beers announced that the 'Eureka' was coming home. The South African government had decided that Kimberley would be the most fitting place for its display. So it is now on permanent loan to the Mine Museum, situated near the old Kimberley Mine, or 'Big Hole' as it is familiarly known to many.

If the 'Eureka' were to be displayed alongside many of the most celebrated diamonds it would probably attract comparatively little attention from an aesthetic aspect. It weighs merely 10.73 metric carats, is off-colour, possesses numerous internal imperfections and has not even been well cut – it has a flattish appearance thus imparting little of the brilliance one normally hopes to receive from such a gem. Yet from an historical point of view its importance cannot be over-emphasised, for as the first African diamond to have gained authenticity and to have been the harbinger of such momentous events, it illustrates to perfection the truth of lines written by an eighteenth-century English poet:

Large streams from little fountains flow
Tall oaks from little acorns grow.

STAR OF SOUTH AFRICA

More than one hundred years have passed since the discovery of the 'Eureka' so that we are now able to assess the historical significance of that event. It is doubtful if anyone then living either in South Africa or Great Britain could have foretold what lay ahead for the southern land or the chain of events set in motion by the finding of this diamond.

Indeed there were numerous influential persons in England who were sceptical about the provenance of the 'Eureka' and who, even if it were proved to be of African origin, remained unaware of the importance it held for the future of the country. When Queen Victoria examined the diamond at Windsor she doubted its origin, being under the impression that diamonds came only from India or Brazil. Sir Roderick Murchison, a noted geologist who twice held office as President of the Geological Society, doubted whether the matrix of the diamond existed in South Africa. Penrose Julian wrote to Richard Southey:

All the Diamond Merchants of London have I think seen the real Stone, and short paragraphs have appeared in some of the Newspapers about it, but it is almost impossible to get them to take any interest in the matter.

Despite their valuation of the stone, Messrs. Garrards

expressed their lack of interest in investigating the discoveries unless diamonds were found in sufficient quantities. Lastly, at governmental level, the Secretary of State for the Colonies seemed to take little interest in the matter: after a few more diamonds had been picked up he merely requested the Foreign Office to ascertain from its representative in Rio de Janeiro what system the Brazilian government employed to license diamond dealers.

The prevailing lack of interest shown in London appeared to be shared by persons in authority within South Africa. The Governor, Sir Philip Wodehouse, displayed more interest in buying the best specimens that came to light than in any form of systematic exploration of possible diamond deposits. He shared the interest shown by members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council in the possibility of locating gold deposits to the north. But at the time the 'Eureka' was discovered, Sir Philip's principal preoccupation centred on the silver discoveries in South West Africa. Believing that the territory along the coast northwards of the Cape Colony might prove to be rich in certain minerals, principally silver, he enquired whether the British Government might be prepared to annexe the territory. Sir Philip considered that in the event of mineral deposits being found there, it would be undesirable if the region were left without



the presence of any constituted authority capable of governing it and on the other hand that such a valuable territory situated next to a British possession ought not to fall into the hands of a foreign power. But the Secretary of State replied discouragingly on the matter so the question of annexation was dropped.

Similarly the attentions of Sir Richard Southey, a man with a lively mind and of many interests, were for the most part devoted to matters other than diamonds despite his own involvement in the 'Eureka'. In particular Southey was keenly interested in the possibilities of developing deposits of copper and gold and in the promotion of the silk industry, a project first attempted in the days of the Dutch East India Company.

Therefore, it was fortunate that there were individuals of lesser standing in South Africa alive to the significance of the diamond's discovery. One of them was the itinerant hunter and trader, John O'Reilly. While on his way to Hopetown he passed a farm where he was shown a stone together with

The 'Star of South Africa', the discovery of which caused the greatest excitement in that country.

other crystals, that had been picked up some 457 metres (500 yards) from the Orange River. Through the knowledge which he had acquired from the finding of the 'Eureka' he was at once able to perceive that the stone was a diamond and he promptly bought it and forwarded it to Cape Town. It was verified as a gem of the first water weighing $8\frac{13}{16}$ carats and its discovery prompted the Governor to send the following message, dated 17 June 1867, to Parliament on the subject of mineral rights in the Colony:

The Governor thinks it right in consequence of the discovery of another Diamond in the Northern part of the Colony, to bring to the notice of the Honourable House of Assembly that the ownership of Precious Stones found, is by Law, as he understands, vested in the Crown. Looking, however, to

the great difficulty of enforcing this claim, and considering how desirable it is to encourage all efforts at developing the mineral resources of the Colony, the Government does not propose, unless requested so to do by the Honourable House to impose, for the present at least, any restrictions on the researches of private individuals, or to make any claim on the fruits of their labours.

This discovery was followed by others which showed a growing awareness on the part of some people in the neighbourhood of the presence of diamonds and their potential value. In particular the finder of the eighth diamond, weighing 15½ carats and afterwards pronounced by Dr Guybon Atherstone to be a stone of the finest quality and for which the Governor offered £400, was a Griqua who declined to reveal where he had found the diamond beyond the fact that he had picked it up by the Vaal River. Furthermore he refused to sell it until he had ascertained its full value. At the same time perhaps the clearest evidence that the village of Hopetown was starting to assume some importance as a trading centre for diamonds was supplied by the Dutch cutter, Louis Hond, who had left Cape Town and journeyed north to make his headquarters there. He thus became the one person on the spot who possessed the ability to identify and appraise a diamond – a true professional among the amateurs. From what is known about him, Hond was not likely to have missed out on any business opportunities which presented themselves, nor were his persistence and determination ever in doubt, for he continued to press for the fee he claimed for his part in valuing the ‘Eureka’.

Before Hond arrived in Hopetown another firm, Lilienfeld Bros, had already established itself there. This concern, which began dealing in diamonds some time in 1868, maintained a business connection with A. Mosenthal and Co, who were leading wholesale merchants in Port Elizabeth. This city was starting to become an important centre for the marketing of diamonds with their acquisition by various trading firms from Griquas and others inland. The clearest evidence of this fact is supplied by the diaries of Sir Lewis Michell who had arrived in South Africa in 1864 to join the London and South African Bank to which he was appointed General Manager two years later. He wrote:

Our commercial troubles were ere long terminated by the discovery of diamonds though at the outset it led to unlimited gambling and heavy losses. Both the Queenstown banks applied to me for support and early in 1869 I met their Managers in Grahamstown and with them proceeded to Queenstown to discuss the situation ... The Queenstown trip ... resulted in my affording both banks the support they desired, but my Board, always timid in the wrong place, viewed my action with undisguised alarm and passed a resolution after the style of the Medes and Persians, that under no circumstance whatever were diamonds to be regarded as any security for advances ... This was the last straw ... I endeavoured to reduce my Board to mitigate

their drastic decision ... and then, failing to carry the Board with me, I resigned.

This far-sighted man joined the Standard Bank, becoming one of their most famous General Managers and the confidant of Cecil Rhodes, whom he succeeded as Chairman of De Beers Consolidated Mines in 1902. It is evident that diamonds were appearing in 1868 and 1869 in sufficient quantities to impress a leading bank manager. In 1868 one diamond worth £150 featured among the Cape Colony's list of exports; the Governor's own diamonds were not listed – probably discretion reigned in this matter – nor, it would appear, were most of the others found in that year. In 1869, one hundred and forty seven diamonds were listed, their value of £34,813 making them the Colony's sixth largest export.

The news of the importance which Port Elizabeth was starting to assume in matters pertaining to diamonds in due course reached the ears of the Colonial Secretary at Cape Town. Although gold fever raged and in August 1868 Parliament had decided a commission should be sent to the gold fields, Southey had begun to appreciate the implications of the diamond discoveries because in a letter to Chalmers, dated 5 June of that year, he had written:

I wish you would give me as near as you can the exact position of where each of the diamonds that have been sent from Hopetown were found and the relative position of this one ... I want by and by to publish a short history of each with a view to benefit the country by dispelling the idea now existing that these gems have been brought here from Foreign parts....

Now the idea that there were people who deliberately shipped diamonds from an existing source to another part of the world where new deposits had been found so as to disguise the discovery was not a novel one. Certainly the London diamond merchant, Harry Emanuel, of Bond Street, was aware of it since in his book *Diamonds and Precious Stones*, published in 1867, he had written as follows concerning the discovery of diamonds in Brazil in the early part of the preceding century:

The European traders, who had never seen or dreamt of any other but the Indian diamond, and who feared that if an indefinite number were thrown on the market by this discovery of new mines, their stocks would thus be depreciated, and perhaps become valueless, endeavoured by every means to discourage their sale and spread a report that the so-called Brazilian diamonds were only the refuse of the Indian mines exported from Goa to Brazil, and thence to Europe; and at first succeeded in preventing the sale. The Portuguese merchants, however, turned the tables on them by exporting them from Brazil to Goa and then offering them for sale as Indian diamonds.

Undoubtedly Emanuel would have recalled these events when diamonds, allegedly of South African origin, started to

make their appearance on the London market. In 1868 the quantities were sufficient for him to appoint J. R. Gregory to travel to South Africa to investigate the diamond situation there. In her book *Diamond Fever, South African Diamond History 1866–69 from Primary Sources*, the South African writer Marian Robertson considers that there is only circumstantial evidence to suggest that Emanuel was receiving diamonds from that source; nevertheless his reputation in gemological circles was such that he would have been a frontrunner among candidates to whom someone in South Africa might have chosen to send diamonds.

Gregory, described in the *Journal of the Society of Arts* as ‘a gentleman well known in geological and mineralogical circles’, duly arrived in South Africa. Once there he kept his movements as quiet as possible; it would appear that others were prepared to keep quiet about them too. However, in July 1868 he did meet Southey in Cape Town, and told him he was unimpressed by the mineralogical investigations then being undertaken. In November Emanuel’s notorious denial of the existence of diamonds in South Africa was published in the *Journal of the Society of Arts*. It contained the following choice extracts:

Sir, As the report of diamonds having been found at the Cape has excited considerable interest, and as it is possible that some unfortunate persons may thereby be induced to embark on a fruitless errand, I think it advisable to make public some facts with which I have become acquainted in connection with this subject. Some months ago my attention was called to the report of diamonds having been discovered in or near to the Orange River and I was shown a diamond of fair quality (resembling Indian Rough material) said to have been found thereabouts. Being naturally desirous of discovering or developing a new source of supply to supplement the gradually decreasing yield of the Brazilian and Indian mines, I commissioned Mr J. R. Gregory ... thoroughly to explore the districts where diamonds were said to have been found.

Mr Gregory has just returned and reports having carefully visited the Orange, Vaal, Buffalo and Fish Rivers, as well as the adjacent country as far as 120 miles [193km] into Griqualand, and has failed to find anywhere these geological and mineralogical signs which have hitherto been invariably seen whenever diamonds have been found and nowhere does the formation of the country warrant the inference that diamonds could exist there....

Mr Gregory, who is a perfectly competent authority, after exploring all the places said to be ‘diamondiferous’ and over 2000 miles [3220km] of other Cape territory is clearly of opinion that no diamonds have or ever will be found in the Cape Colony – saving such as are deposited there for a purpose....

These so termed ‘diamond (and gold) discoveries’ have been extremely puffed and unless the true facts are made apparent, I fear that many adventurous persons might be

induced to risk their all in emigrating to a Colony where everything is very dear and subsistence hardly to be earned; and I fancy they would derive small comfort in their ruin from the consideration that emigrating might eventually lower the price of labour and thereby benefit the established colonists.

Predictably the contents of this letter aroused the utmost indignation and scorn among those persons in South Africa who had become involved in the diamond scene. It was alleged that Gregory had never visited the sites of the discoveries: that he had only spent a fortnight in trekking 193km (120 miles) beyond the Orange River and that when a diamond was brought to him while he was visiting Hopetown he made the extraordinary assertion that it must have been dropped by an ostrich and that if other diamonds were found in that part of the country they must have all been brought there and dropped by ostriches.

Dr Atherstone lost no time in refuting Gregory’s theories one by one. Altogether the so-called expert’s pronouncements upon the existence – or rather the non-existence – of both gold and diamonds within South Africa constitute one of the most erroneous and outrageous statements ever delivered in this particular field of science: no wonder that for years to come the expression ‘*to do a Gregory*’ became a household one in southern Africa. Yet, as will be shown later on, there was a motive behind the whole of Gregory’s involvement which O’Reilly, for one, did not lose sight of. In a letter which he sent to the *Colesburg Advertiser* he wrote:

Mr Gregory entertains the hope of turning the discovery to his own particular benefit, in which perhaps his learned and charitable sponsor might share. I shall simply remark that Mr Gregory told several persons here that he expected to return to the Cape very shortly, and leave the public to draw their own conclusions and judge for themselves which is most likely to be the true way of accounting for the nature and style of his reports.

Gregory’s theories were soon blown sky-high by an event which the new Civil Commissioner and Resident Magistrate of Hopetown, H. F. Burton, who had replaced Chalmers, mentioned in a postscript to a letter dated 18 March 1869, to Richard Southey:

P.S. Since writing the above a diamond has been brought in weighing about 83 (eighty three) carats. It is said to have been found in the Colony. Schalk van Niekerk who found the first diamond brought it in.

On the same day Burton’s clerk wrote excitedly and rather more extensively on the same topic to Richard Southey:

*My Dear Sir,
I sit down to communicate to you the fact that the largest diamond yet found has been brought in here by Mr Schalk van Niekerk of ‘De Kalk’ the same party who found the first No. 1 which was bought by the Governor for £500. That*

brought in today weighs 83½ (eighty three and a half) carats and has been valued by some amateurs at between £25 and £30,000 – it is a real beauty. Mr Schalk van Niekerk gave for it 500 sheep, 10 head of cattle and 1 horse (value about £150) this is the gem which I was told a year ago was in possession of a native doctor who used it as a talisman in his professional visits. It was found (the seller assures Niekerk) in the Colony below Niekerk's farm 'De Kalk'. Mr Niekerk himself told me this, so you may rely upon its being the truth. Hond has not yet valued the stone. The inhabitants are in a great state of excitement and Gregory's name has not been made use of in very favourable terms. It is not very likely that this stone was dropped by an ostrich, or placed where it was found by the native to enhance the value of the farm.

Pray excuse this hurried note, my object is to be the first to inform you of this good news.

*Yours my dear Sir,
very truly,
Fred Steytler*

Mr Niekerk intends taking up the diamond to Cape Town himself, as advised by me, and you will be enabled to have a good view of it there. Perhaps I shall have to apply for leave of absence to go with him to take it to the Governor and yourself – this is by no means certain however.

It was ironic that Southey should have received these letters only a few days after he had written to Julian saying that he did not feel they should 'be in too much hurry' to publish anything about diamonds officially. As was to be expected the news of the discovery of such a large stone caused the greatest excitement at Hopetown and other places. Some lost no time in calling the diamond the 'S.A. Koh-i-noor' while others referred to it as 'The Niekerk's Pandalok'.

According to Louis Hond he was the first person to call the diamond by the name by which it is chiefly known, the 'Star of South Africa'. Hond was shortly to play an important part in the purchase of the diamond but not before James Wykeham, the Deputy Sheriff for Hopetown, had made determined efforts to buy it. Wykeham offered Van Niekerk £11,000 but Lilienfeld Bros, assisted by Hond, offered £100 more. Van Niekerk did not go back to Wykeham and his partner in search of a higher offer – they had been prepared to go as high as £13,000 – and it appears as if either Lilienfeld or Hond cast doubt on Wykeham's ability to raise the sum he had offered for the stone. Van Niekerk was talked into accepting the lower figure and he was probably informed of the business connection between Lilienfeld Bros and Mosenthal's in Port Elizabeth, itself a guarantee of payment. In the end Van Niekerk accepted £11,200 for the diamond and signed a Bill of Sale with Lilienfeld's, but it was drawn up in such a manner that Wykeham feared Van Niekerk had lost the security of Mosenthal's.

The purchase of the 'Star of South Africa' by Lilienfeld's soon gave rise to legal proceedings, initiated by The Diamond Metal and Mineral Association. This company, which was wholly South African, had obtained the concession from Waterboer, the Chief of the Griquas, to sole prospecting rights in the territory which lay to the north of the Orange River. It was the DMMA's submission that the diamond had been found on this side of the river thus entitling Waterboer to the ensuing financial benefit from the diamond. Accordingly on 31 March 1868 an application was made in Colesberg by Waterboer and others to restrain Lilienfeld Bros from selling, parting with, or in any way disposing of the 83½-carat diamond which they had recently purchased.

Before the case came to the Supreme Court extraordinary scenes had taken place in the Colesberg and Hopetown districts of the Colony. Most of them centred round the finder of the diamond, a Griqua boy named Swartboy (his name has been variously spelled Swaartboy, Zwartboy, Zwartbooy and Swartbooi).

His statement to the effect that he had found the diamond within 180 metres (200 yards) of a hut on a kopje situated on the northern side of the Orange River appeared in an affidavit provided by a Government Land Surveyor to assist the cause of the DMMA and Waterboer. However, Lilienfeld's lost no time in collecting evidence which showed that the boy had picked the stone up on the south, i.e. Colonial, side of the river. Affidavits were collected by both sides and appeared like leaves on trees. But the most astonishing fact was the virtual kidnapping of Swartboy on two occasions, one by each side, so as to induce him to alter this story of the discovery of the diamond. No wonder that he should have said:

... before and since he had sold the ... diamond he was repeatedly asked by several persons where he had found the ... stone but was always very reluctant in describing the locality where he had found it ... that when persons residing on the other side of the Orange River asked where he had found it, he invariably told them that he had found it on this side of the river in the Colony, and when persons residing in this Colony asked him where he had found it, he invariably told them that he had found it on the opposite side of the River in Waterboer's territory because ... he was afraid that the stone might be claimed and taken from him.

On 19 May 1869 the case was heard by the Supreme Court in Cape Town. Almost the first thing the Judges did was to rule that the affidavits produced by the DMMA were based on hearsay evidence and that they were therefore inadmissible. But the principal reason for the DMMA's losing the case – or as the *Cape Argus* put it, why they 'came to grief' – lay in the alleged concession granted by Waterboer. This raised territorial questions outside the jurisdiction of the Court which presented difficulties in the way of granting the DMMA's application. After the Court had found in favour of Lilienfeld Bros, they asked for their costs to be paid by the DMMA and Waterboer. The losing side had insufficient financial resour-

ces to risk any further Court actions so that the 'Star of South Africa' could then be disposed of. The result of the hearing was duly reported in the *Colesberg Advertiser* which noted that many citizens went to Leopold Lilienfeld to wish him good luck. The Union Jack floated before his house and in the evening the inhabitants 'testified their joy by throwing turpentine balls and fireworks and by serenading Mr Lilienfeld'. An anonymous letter appeared in the press pointing out the dangers of such amusement – although it appears as if one of the Municipal Commissioners had supplied the materials for making the fireballs!

On 2 June 1869 the 'Star of South Africa' was exhibited at the Commercial Exchange in Adderley Street, Cape Town. Not surprisingly the diamond was also shown to the Governor, who on this occasion, it appears, did not make an offer to buy such a stone. The 'Star of South Africa' made its final appearance in South Africa at an exhibition in Port Elizabeth before being shipped to Great Britain on 4 June in the steamship *Celt*, the same vessel which two years before had carried the 'Eureka'. On the later trip the cargo included wool, feathers, hides, sheep and goat skins, oil, wine, raisins, ivory, a box of diamonds from Adler & Co. of Port Elizabeth and five live zebras.

It has been recounted how at some time before the 'Star of South Africa' left the shores of Africa, the diamond was placed upon the table in Parliament during the Session and that the Colonial Secretary uttered the oft-quoted words: 'This diamond, gentlemen, is the rock upon which the future prosperity of South Africa will be built.' In this connection Mrs Robertson has pointed out that the Parliamentary Session did not open until 23 June, by which time the *Celt* had sailed for London. Furthermore, no record exists among the parliamentary papers of Southey having spoken these words after the diamond had left and the Session had begun, nor in the minutes of the Executive Council. But even if he did not utter these resounding words there is no doubting their accuracy. The discovery of the 'Star of South Africa' was the momentous event which successively led to a horde of people appearing on the alluvial diggings by the Orange and Vaal Rivers, the discovery of the dry or 'pipe' deposits in the area of Kimberley leading to the formation of De Beers Consolidated Mines in 1888. The finance engendered by the diamond discoveries in turn led to the development of the gold field on the Witwatersrand and the opening up of the territories to the north. In a nutshell the 'Star of South Africa' transformed South Africa from the pastoral land it was once, to its position as the most industrialized country of the whole continent today.

The news of the finding of the diamond involved Southey in correspondence with several individuals in London. In a letter which he received from Julian he read:

The finding of your Great Diamond has created quite an excitement among those interested in such matters and desire is expressed by the knowing ones to see it. If genuine, Mr Gregory's opinions will henceforth have little weight.

But Southey must have drawn particular satisfaction from a letter he received from the diamond merchant Emanuel which read as follows:

18 New Bond Street, May 18, 1869

Sir, I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter for which I am much obliged. I am happy to see that you do not share the absurd notions entertained by the Colonial newspapers viz that I had any interest in preventing the discovery of diamonds at the Cape becoming known. The facts are these. I had a firm belief that diamonds were found at the Cape and under that impression engaged Mr Gregory, who is favourably known to the Geological Society officials and to the Authorities at the Museum to examine into the matter. When I tell you that I had to remunerate him for his time and for the loss of his business which was at a standstill till his return you will readily believe it was at no inconsiderable expense to myself that I induced him to go out. On his return (long before the time specified) he made a report which I published verbatim, giving his name so that I cannot consent to bear the onus of my misstatement on his part.

I had no means of judging excepting through his statements, but yet at a meeting of the Society of Arts I publicly stated that I was not bold enough to assert that diamonds were not existent in South Africa but that if so they occurred (according to Mr Gregory's statements and if the minerals he brought home were a fair sample) in a deposit in which as yet no diamonds had been hitherto found. I am perfectly ready to admit that facts are far too strong for any hypothesis based on Scientific knowledge. After your kind communication I can no longer have any doubt of the fact of Diamonds being found in your Colony, and shall be very glad if you can keep me informed of the progress being made in the discovery. In return if my poor services can be of any use to you, I shall be happy to place them at your disposition. I have the honour to remain, Sir,

*Your obedient servant,
Harry Emanuel*

P.S. If you think fit I shall have no objection to the publication of this letter.

However, although the somewhat obsequious tone of this letter appears to indicate that Emanuel was merely eating humble pie, the suspicion must remain that the merchant's conduct was rather more disingenuous in the matter. This is borne out by the July 1869 issue of the *Geological Magazine* which contained Gregory's reply to Dr Atherstone's letter. In this Gregory admitted to having purposely deceived him 'and everyone in the Colony' as to the real purpose of his visit. In August Atherstone wrote an indignant letter which probably came near to the truth: he accused Gregory of '... ministering to the interests of his monied friend the Diamond Merchant to try to stamp out the diamond discovery here and so keep up

for a time at least the price of diamonds, of which I am told Emmanuel [sic] had a very large stock on hand....'

So it seems as if the suspicions which O'Reilly had held concerning the real motive for Gregory's visit and which he had aired in his letter to the *Colesberg Advertiser* were entirely justified. At the same time the whole episode can have done little to enhance the standing of diamond merchants in London; one suspects that this was not high even before the discovery of the 'Eureka', and the events pertaining to the 'Star of South Africa' clearly led to its further debasement.

In due course Lilienfelds despatched the 'Star of South Africa' to Amsterdam where it was cut into a flawless pear-shape weighing 47.69 (metric) carats. The diamond was sold to the second wife of the first Earl of Dudley who wore it as a hair ornament: since then it has sometimes been known as the 'Dudley'. After nothing had been heard of it for some years this historic gem reappeared in 1974 when Christie's put it up for sale in Geneva on 2 May. The seller's name was not disclosed but as the sale catalogue stated that the diamond had been owned by the family of the vendor for more than sixty years, Lady Dudley must, therefore, have sold it before her death in February 1929. At the time of the sale the 'Star of South Africa' was suspended from a detachable pendant set with brilliant-cut diamond collets with round-cut diamond intersections: the pendant of bow-shape with vertical suspension-link and calyx-shaped terminals. It was expected that this jewel would fetch well over £100,000; in the event it was sold for £225,000. The name of the buyer was not disclosed.



The Countess of Dudley, second wife of the first Earl, who owned the 'Star of South Africa' and wore it as a hair ornament.

PORTER RHODES

Although mining operations ceased as long ago as August 1914, the famous Kimberley Mine, or the 'Big Hole' as it is affectionately known to many, remains a truly awesome sight – the largest hand-excavated hole in the world. No wonder that civil aircraft often make a detour to allow passengers a sight of it. A few statistics will suffice to give some idea of its size; the area at the surface is over 15 hectares (38 acres); the perimeter 1.6km (1 mile); the depth of the mine (underground) 1100 metres (3610 feet); the ground excavated 25,400,000 tonnes (22,500,000 tons); diamonds produced totalled 14,504,566 carats. Before it was pumped dry, water used to rise at the rate of 76mm (3 inches) a week.

An examination of the diamonds produced by the Kimber-

ley Mine, made in the year of its closure, revealed the following characteristics of its output: fairly considerable quantities of boart and shot boart (a term used in South Africa to describe spheres of translucent diamond of somewhat oily lustre and matted surface, the colour varying from light to dark grey, sometimes with a tinge of pink, sometimes inclining to stone brown); numerous large maccles or twin crystals; diamonds of a peculiar pinkish-brown colour; white octahedral stones; a small percentage of fine white cleavages, and peculiar aggregates of diamond crystals held together by boart.

In comparison with other South African diamond mines the Kimberley Mine produced few very large stones. This can be seen by an examination of the table of large diamonds found



in South Africa which appears in *The Genesis of the Diamond*, the monumental work of Alpheus Williams, a former General Manager of De Beers. A stone that figured in Williams's list, however, has come to be regarded as one of the finest ever to have been discovered in South Africa. This was the 'Porter Rhodes' which was found during the early days of mining at Kimberley. Discovered on 12 February 1880, in the claim of Mr Porter Rhodes, it was a beautiful, colourless octahedron, which weighed 153.5 metric carats and was valued at £200,000.

Porter Rhodes, who was not related to Cecil Rhodes, later became one of the first Directors of De Beers Consolidated Mines; at the second Annual General Meeting of the Company in 1890 Julius Wernher was appointed in his place.

Following the discovery of his diamond Porter Rhodes travelled with it to London where it was exhibited at the Bond Street museum of Edwin Streeter. He sent Streeter a letter containing details of the discovery of the diamond which included the following information.

It transpired that on the day of the discovery Porter Rhodes had been detained by proceedings at the local Magistrates' Court and could not leave until after noon, by which time mining activity had come to a halt for the dinner break. So he went in the direction where he was most likely to meet up with his chief overseer; fortunately he saw him in the street and at a glance was able to tell that something unusual had

The Kimberley Mine in its early days. Some claimholders worked harder than others, hence the varying depths of the diggings.

occurred. In reply to his question, 'Anything good today?' the overseer produced a stone which was so uncommonly white that Porter Rhodes thought someone was playing a joke on him until he soon realized it was genuine.

Porter Rhodes had always impressed upon his overseers the need to maintain silence in the event of something unusual turning up. The reason for this lay in the fact that members of the diamond-dealing community liked to be in the position of knowing that a diamond, or a parcel of diamonds, purchased from the claimholder had not been shown to anyone else. By these means Porter Rhodes firmly believed that he was able to obtain higher prices. Accordingly he kept news of the finding of the diamond to himself for four months. Eventually when the news was released and the stone displayed in an office, it became difficult to restrain the crowd, each of whom was keen to handle the stone. People willingly paid a sovereign to examine it so within one hour £100 had been taken: in the end almost £500 was donated to the management committee of the local hospital on the diamond fields. Porter Rhodes noticed that most of the dealers kept 'test stones', equivalent to the modern sample parcels, for making colour comparisons of stones offered to



A street of diamond dealing offices in Kimberley. Porter Rhodes warned his employees to be wary of the dealers.

them. Many produced such stones but when placed next to Porter Rhodes's diamond none could compare with it for perfection of colour.

When Porter Rhodes arrived in England, the Colonel in charge of the Crown Jewels made arrangements for him to visit Queen Victoria, then residing at Osborne House in the Isle of Wight, to show her the diamond. On 19 January 1881, Porter Rhodes was presented to the Queen, who was accompanied by her son Prince Leopold and her daughter Princess Beatrice. The Queen immediately recognized the stone's beauty but asked whether it could really have come from the

Cape. Next Porter Rhodes was taken to Osborne Cottage, then the temporary residence of the Empress Eugénie, to show her the diamond too. In view of her knowledge of diamonds – doubtless due to her erstwhile familiarity with the French Crown Jewels – it probably came as no surprise that the Empress should also cast doubts upon the origin of the diamond, being under the impression that Cape stones were generally yellowish in colour and, therefore, of comparatively little value.

The 'Porter Rhodes' diamond thereby helped to dispel the myth that South African diamonds were inferior in colour to those found in India and Brazil; it also aroused great interest while it was on display in London. In due course it was fashioned into an old-mine cut without the faintest tinge of blue in it – simply a dead white gem. After being cut it was believed that the 'Porter Rhodes' became the property of the Baring-Gould family. In 1930 the second Duke of Westminster bought it as a wedding present for his third wife. Then it passed into the ownership of the London jewellers Jerwood & Ward, who were responsible for having the diamond recut in Amsterdam from its former weight of 73 carats into an emerald-cut of 56.60 metric carats. In 1937 the Maharajah of Indore purchased the 'Porter Rhodes'. Harry Winston bought it from the Maharajah in 1946 before selling it to a client in the United States. Finally Mr Winston repurchased the diamond before selling it to another client in Texas.

TIFFANY

It is debatable whether Truman Capote's novel *Breakfast at Tiffany's* did much to increase the prestige of this famous New York jewellery store because long before 1958, the year of the book's publication, it had become a household name within the United States and a well-known one outside. Doubtless some people continue to enquire whether the store does serve breakfast to its clientele, but of course what the delightfully-named heroine, Holly Golightly, sought was not refreshment of the stomach but of the spirit, which was supplied by the sight of the magnificent gems on display in the showcases.

Founded by Charles Louis Tiffany in 1837, Tiffany & Co. came to the fore among diamond merchants during the second half of the last century. During the political disturbances in Paris in 1848, which culminated in the overthrow of King Louis Philippe, the firm bought a large quantity of jewels. At the sale of the French Crown Jewels in 1887 Tiffany's bought the great diamond necklace of the Empress Eugénie, considered at the time to have been the finest single

item to go on sale, four diamonds which may have been among the former 'Mazarins', as well as several other pieces. In the end Tiffany's emerged as the largest buyer, with twenty-four out of a total of sixty-nine lots.

Between these two events in French history came the discovery of diamonds in South Africa. Tiffany's were active here too, buying a light yellow cushion-cut of 77 (old) carats cut from a rough stone weighing fractionally less than 125 (old) carats and another fine yellow gem weighing 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ (old) carats. Both of these two diamonds were amongst the first large stones to be cut in New York City. They were surpassed, however, by the famous gem whose name has become synonymous with that of its owners. In the rough the 'Tiffany' was a beautiful canary-yellow octahedron weighing 287.42 (metric) carats.

It is believed that the 'Tiffany' was found either in 1877 or 1878. The lack of exact information concerning the correct date of its discovery extends to its location as well; this has variously been described as 'the De Beers Mine', 'the Kimber-



ley Mine', 'the De Beers mines' or 'the Kimberley mines'. The finding of the 'Tiffany' took place at a time preceding the maintenance of accurate records of the discovery of large diamonds from South Africa. However, the clue to its location is surely supplied by one writer who has stated that it was found in the mines of the French Company. This was the colloquial name for the Compagnie Française de Diamant du Cap, an important mining concern, the existence of which sparked off the most momentous financial struggle which the diamond industry has witnessed.

Tiffany & Co.'s offices at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street, New York. It was the first fully air-conditioned building in the city.

In the belief that the only solution to the problems posed by the inefficient and haphazard mining methods employed in the Kimberley deposits lay in the amalgamation of the multitude of claims into one unit, Cecil Rhodes and his colleagues by 1887 had succeeded in making the De Beers Mining Company, formed seven years before, the sole owner

of the De Beers Mine. Rhodes's second objective was the amalgamation of all the principal mines in the vicinity of Kimberley into one company, thereby ensuring a rational system of both producing and selling diamonds. With this aim in view Rhodes turned his attention to the Kimberley Mine, by far the richest deposit in the area. The largest mining concern within this mine was the Kimberley Central Mining Company, which was then headed by the flamboyant Barney Barnato.

Born Barnett Isaacs in 1852, the son of a small shopkeeper in Petticoat Lane, one of the best-known streets of London's East End, Barnato was in every respect the complete antithesis of Rhodes. Barnato was an extrovert, imbued with Jewish-Cockney wit and humour. After leaving school at fourteen, he obtained a number of odd jobs including being a 'bouncer' at a public house and appearing on the stage at a music hall. Several of his relatives left for South Africa on hearing of the discovery of diamonds there so Barney eventually followed them. His only capital on arrival at the diamond fields consisted of boxes of cigars – of doubtful quality – which he hoped to sell to the diggers. He became an itinerant buyer of diamonds, his genial personality proving a useful asset. In time he bought four claims in the centre of the



ABOVE *The flamboyant Barney Barnato, one of the most colourful figures in South Africa's early diamond days.*

Kimberley Mine and prospered so that he was able to form the Barnato Diamond Mining Company. Like Rhodes, Barnato kept on buying up claims. In 1885 Barnato merged his company with that of Baring-Gould's Kimberley Central Mining Company, thus giving him as strong a hold in the Kimberley Mine as that of Rhodes in the De Beers Mine.

Since his company was doing so well Barney Barnato saw no reason at all why he should join any scheme of Rhodes for amalgamation. However, one obstacle lay in the path of the Kimberley Central, namely the Compagnie Française de Diamant du Cap. By virtue of its position within the Kimberley Mine and the policy it pursued, the French Company impeded any success of future operations by Barnato's company. Consequently Barnato made proposals to the French: but Rhodes had already done likewise and had succeeded in raising the finance necessary for the purchase of the French Company in Paris. Rhodes then laid a trap for his rival. He told Barnato that he could acquire the French Company if he wanted it and that he would not ask for cash in payment, only the equivalent of the price paid in Kimberley Central's recently issued new shares. By this means Rhodes was able to secure a useful foothold in the form of one-fifth of Kimberley Central's issued capital; all the time this had been his real objective, not the control of the French Company. Barnato acquiesced in this plan, falling right into the trap set for him.

The stage was now set for a titanic battle for the remainder of the Kimberley Central's issued capital. Both Rhodes and Barnato bought recklessly, and at a time when the price of diamonds barely covered the cost of production, the company's shares soared from £14 to £49 within a few months. Eventually Rhodes and his associates could claim to own three-fifths of the Kimberley Central's issued capital and Barnato realized he had been beaten. He surrendered in March 1888, accepting terms which gave Rhodes the control he had sought. On 13 March, De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited was formally incorporated. The new company took over assets representing the whole of the De Beers Mine, three-quarters of the Kimberley Mine and a controlling interest in the Bultfontein and Dutoitspan mines. Rhodes and Barnato were appointed among the Company's first Life Governors.

Some of Kimberley Central's shareholders, however, disapproved of Barnato selling out to Rhodes and challenged the merger in the Courts. Rhodes's advisers told him that if Barnato agreed to put Kimberley Central into voluntary liquidation, De Beers could simply purchase its assets. Accordingly this is what the company did: Rhodes wrote out a cheque for £5,338,650 for the assets of Kimberley Central, at that time the largest sum ever covered by a single cheque.

Further evidence that the 'Tiffany' diamond must have originated in the claims of the historically important French Company is shown by the fact that the stone was shipped to Paris to be cut. Experts studied it for one year before it was cut

OPPOSITE *The 'Tiffany' diamond.*



in 1878 under the supervision of the distinguished gemologist George F. Kunz. It yielded a cushion-cut brilliant of 128.51 (metric) carats, measuring 27mm ($1\frac{1}{16}$ inches) wide, 28.5mm ($1\frac{1}{8}$ inches) long, and 22.2mm ($\frac{7}{8}$ inch) high. It was given a total of ninety facets: forty-eight on the pavilion, forty on the crown, a table and a culet. The extra facets were cut not to give the diamond more sparkle, rather to make it smoulder as if it were on fire. The gem retains its rich colour by artificial light but is even more beautiful by day.

The head of Tiffany's office in Paris, Mr Gideon Reed, bought the 'Tiffany' for \$18,000, on behalf of his firm, whence it was imported into the United States in 1879. Initially little publicity attended the diamond after its arrival there, a deliberate policy which has been ascribed to Charles Tiffany's fears that as yellowish diamonds were being produced in South Africa in greater quantities than ever before, this particular diamond might merely be one of many such stones. However, it is important to draw a distinction between light yellow and yellowish diamonds and those of the rare deeper canary yellow; the 'Tiffany' remains one of the largest examples of the latter category.

It was not long before the existence of the 'Tiffany' did become widely known. In 1896 one of the triumvirate who ruled China, the Viceroy, Li Hung-Chang – about whom President Grant is said to have remarked, 'There are three great men in the world, Gladstone, Bismarck and Chang, but the greatest of these is Chang' – visited New York. He announced that the one thing he wished to see was the 'Tiffany' diamond, a request that was duly met with by the firm.

Since being viewed by this distinguished visitor the 'Tiffany' has been seen by millions of others in almost seventy years of continuous display in Tiffany's store. It has also been shown at numerous exhibitions: they include the Chicago Columbian in 1893, the Pan-American in 1901, the Chicago Century of Progress in 1933–34 and the New York World's Fair in 1939. The first occasion on which the diamond was worn was in 1957 at the Tiffany Ball held in Newport, Rhode Island, when the chairwoman of the ball had the honour of wearing it, mounted for the occasion in a necklace of white diamonds. In 1971 the 'Tiffany' returned to South Africa for the exhibition which marked the centennial celebration of the Kimberley Mine. After an absence of forty years from London, Tiffany's re-opened their branch in Old Bond Street in 1986 and displayed the diamond to herald their return.

The sole hiatus in the otherwise uneventful history of the 'Tiffany' has centred on reported attempts to sell the diamond, which was valued at \$12,000,000 at the end of 1983. In 1951 the new chairman of Tiffany's recommended that the gem should be sold, a decision which not surprisingly horrified some members of the old Board. A buyer agreed to pay \$500,000 for the stone but the deal fell through because the chairman wanted a cheque in full whereas the prospective buyer wished for other financial arrangements to be made. Then in 1973 the *New York Times* carried an advertisement by Tiffany's offering to sell the diamond for \$5,000,000. However, in the circumstances it would be as well to recall the story of the eager new salesman who, when he asked what he would get if he sold the famous gem, was promptly told by the head of the firm 'Fired'!

VICTORIA

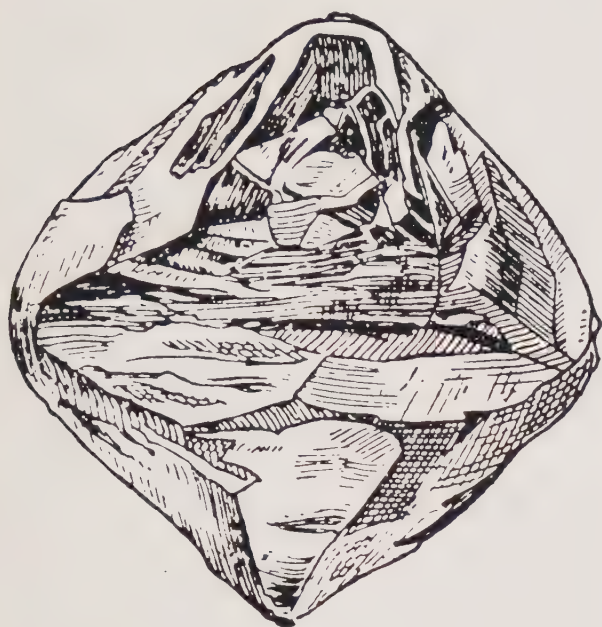
From the very beginning an aura of mystery attended the discovery of this stone, which weighed 457½ (old) carats in the rough. Also called the 'Imperial' or 'Great White', it remained the biggest octahedral diamond from South Africa until 1896 when it was surpassed by one weighing 503¼ (old) carats that was found in the De Beers Mine.

The doubts about its origin were clearly expressed early on because under the heading of 'A Large Diamond' two letters from correspondents appeared in *The Times* in London. The first, dated 20 August 1884, read as follows:

Sir. This gem is of a blue-white colour, similar to the finest stones from the Jagersfontein Mine, which is said to be (and most probably is) the true locality of this gem. There is

somewhat of a mystery attached to the true origin of the stone, and from the secrecy displayed at its first discovery, it is not improbable that it has been procured through an 'illicit' at the mine from which it is reported to come.

By the existing laws in connexion with diamond mines, it is necessary for persons to hold licences for the traffic in diamonds, but, unfortunately, the jurisdiction extends only to a limited circle. For instance, in the Cape Colony proper, the purchasing and selling of gems is unrestricted, no such law existing. The Jagersfontein Mine, in the Orange Free State, has for some time been only partially worked, and I believe many diggers could tell a rueful tale of their unsuccessful operations. If this monster stone has been found and sold in a strictly legitimate manner, it seems astonishing that all the diamond world has not heard of this



Drawing of the 'Victoria' in the rough, made shortly after it was found.

wondrous gem before. It also seems peculiar that it should have been consigned to this country by a Port Elizabeth house....

Report says that it was purchased in the first instance for £15,000, and the syndicate now possessing it ask £200,000. Should it prove to be the wondrous gem reported this latter sum is certainly not too high a valuation for such a marvellous and unique stone.

That letter drew the following forthright reply which appeared two days later.

Sir ... It may preserve your columns from further fiction, may satisfy public curiosity, and give the unrivalled beauty a fair start in society if the simple pedigree is given, for which I am indebted to a letter, dated 30 June, from my near relative, Mr Allenberg, of Port Elizabeth, who shipped the stone for sale to the London market.

The diamond was found on a Dutchman's farm in the Orange Free State by one of his 'belongings' and kept in secret by him for nearly a year, purely from a dread that, if known, his farm would be 'jumped' by a crowd of diggers and he driven from house and home. At length - by what arguments is not given in the letter - an old friend of Mr Allenberg's obtained sight of the stone and induced the owner to forward it for sale.

No doubt presumably the exact locality must become known. I am ignorant of it, and cannot therefore gratify the curious or the money-making....

It is true that the stone was sold to a syndicate of the leading diamond merchants in London. There has been no secrecy from first to last.

The guess of the price in The Times is not correct.

Despite the affirmative tone of the second letter, experts continued to harbour doubts about the source of the 'Victoria'. In this connection it is important to note that while the Jagersfontein Mine definitely did produce many fine white stones, they were nearly always cleavages in the rough; octahedral diamonds were characteristic of three of the Kimberley mines, De Beers Mine, Kimberley Mine and Dutoitspan Mine.

In the issue of *Science* dated 5 August 1887, an interesting article entitled 'Four Large South African Diamonds' appeared under the name of George F. Kunz, the distinguished gemologist under whose supervision the 'Tiffany' diamond was cut. Mr Kunz first discussed the 'Victoria'. Aware of the correspondence in *The Times* indicating the Orange Free State as the source of the stone he wrote:

It is, however, believed that it was found by someone in one of the Kimberley mines, South Africa. The first intimation that any of the various mining companies had of its existence was when they heard of its safe arrival in London. It is generally supposed that in the month of June or July 1884, the stone had been found by one of the surveillance officers of the Central Mining Company in the Kimberley mines. It being his duty to search others, he had the privilege of not being searched himself, and so the stone was passed through the searching-house, and he was afterwards supposed to have found means of communicating with four illicit diamond-buyers. Owing to the stringency of the diamond laws of Griqualand West, the trading in rough diamonds is forbidden any one not owning one of the 'patents' or 'licences', as they are called, costing £200 and a guaranty of £500. All purchases made by them must also be entered in a special registry, and are duly signed each week by the police authorities. £3000 was the price paid to obtain the stone from the first possessor. To prepare themselves for the ordeal of transporting the stone out of the district, they assembled at night, commenced drinking, then gambling, and after a night's debauch two of the party lost their share in the big stone. The other two reached Cape Town in safety, where the diamond laws are not in force, and from a dealer there received £19,000 cash for their stone. An outward duty of one-half per cent is collected on shipments of diamonds from Cape Colony; but this diamond is said to have been carried by one of the passengers of a mail steamer, and was hence undeclared. We next hear from it in London, causing considerable sensation in Hatton Garden, the great diamond market. After considerable time had been spent in trying to find a capitalist who could afford to buy such a gem, it was at last arranged by a former resident of the Cape mines to form a company of eight persons, who bought the stone together for £45,000 cash, on condition that if they should dispose of it each should receive a ninth share in the eventual profits. Mr Kunz went on to add that it was finally decided to cut it

into the largest possible brilliant, rather than into numerous small stones, and that Amsterdam was selected as the place where the gem could best be cut.

The 'Victoria' was despatched to the firm of Jacques Metz where a special workshop was constructed for its cutting. First, a piece was cleaved off which eventually yielded a brilliant of 19 (old) carats. This stone was later bought by the King of Portugal; its location is unknown today but it may be one of the brilliants among the former Crown Jewels on display in the Ajuda Palace in Lisbon. The cutting of the largest piece of the 'Victoria' began on 9 April 1887, in the presence of the Queen of Holland: the operation took about a year because the preliminary processes in cutting a diamond were by-passed and it was polished solely on the scaife. A great deal of time was consumed by the cooling of the stone as it became heated after an hour's running on the wheel. The cutter was Mr M. B. Barends.

The finished gem was a slightly oval-shaped brilliant cut with 58 facets. It measured 39.5mm ($1\frac{9}{16}$ inches) long, 30mm ($1\frac{11}{16}$ inches) wide and 23mm ($1\frac{1}{16}$ inch) thick. In his article, Mr Kunz noted that the form of the 'Victoria' was not entirely even and that on one side of the girdle there was quite a flat place, a natural unpolished surface, necessary, in cutting, to preserve the large weight of the stone. Its weight was ultimately 184.5 (metric) carats.

The Nizam of Hyderabad bought the 'Victoria' and it was this Prince's purchase which was to inaugurate a second period of mystery surrounding the diamond.

When the British withdrew from India in 1947 and the Indian sub-continent was partitioned into India and Pakistan, the ruling Nizam of Hyderabad, the son of the purchaser of the 'Victoria' diamond, chose to remain independent, refusing to accede to either of those countries. Eventually, after the breakdown of negotiations and subsequent armed intervention by Indian forces, Hyderabad acceded to the Indian Union as a State in January 1950. Later Hyderabad was partitioned among three neighbouring states. The Nizam, General His Excellent Highness Sir Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur, who had loyally supported the Allied cause during the Second World War, retired to Bombay to live on a pension granted him by the Government of India. It was said that the Nizam lived so frugally that his personal expenses amounted to merely 7s. 6d ($37\frac{1}{2}$ p) a day.

The Nizam placed his collection of jewels, stated unofficially at the time to have been worth between £13,000,000 and £15,000,000, under trust, dividing them into two groups: the first comprised forty pieces which the trustees could sell; the second and slightly larger group consisted of pieces that were not for sale, unless, in the Nizam's own words, some unforeseen calamity should befall his family. There was no mention of the 'Victoria'. On the other hand a diamond called the 'Jacob' was specifically included in the second category.

On more than one occasion there were reports that the Nizam was experiencing financial difficulties, caused apparently by his family and his dependents of whom there were

said to be more than a thousand. Then in April 1951, it was stated that the 'Jacob' was to be offered for sale along with other jewels. The Indian States Minister told Parliament that the proceeds from the sale would be invested in government securities and used to benefit Hyderabad. Simultaneously came reports that the Indian government was refusing to allow any more of the famous jewels to leave the country and that the 'Jacob' diamond would almost certainly be listed as 'national treasure'. Again, there was no mention of the 'Victoria'.

Five years later it was reported that the 'Jacob', then held by the Bank of India, was for sale. An American dealer described it as 'white, not blue' in colour, adding that it was not the most brilliant gem which he had seen.

After the death of the Nizam in 1977 his jewels were again in the news. The trustees wished to sell some of them to help meet the family's staggering tax liabilities. Millionaires flocked to India to attend the sale. Certain conditions were laid down for prospective buyers: anyone who wanted to examine a single jewel on sale was obliged to pay a non-refundable fee of £100; no one could bid without depositing £2000 security which would be refunded only after all transactions had been completed; one-tenth of the price offered for each piece of jewellery had to be furnished with the bid, the remainder within ten days of an offer's acceptance.

The auction was stalled because of public outcry. Many Indians felt that, like the British Crown Jewels and the jewellery collection housed in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, the jewels that had belonged to the Nizam of Hyderabad should be regarded as a part of the country's national heritage and, therefore, should be preserved in India. The matter has since rested with no more reported attempts to dispose of them.

Throughout these proceedings there was no mention of a diamond entitled 'Victoria', 'Imperial' or 'Great White'. On the other hand mention continued to be made of the 'Jacob', its weight being reported variously as 100, 150 and, more significantly, $184\frac{1}{2}$ carats. The last figure is, of course, the reported weight of the 'Victoria'. Is it possible then that a diamond with a somewhat mundane name is the same stone as another with such a resounding title? The answer is supplied by John Lord in his book *The Maharajahs*, published in 1972, where he recounts the strange story of A. M. Jacob.

Alexander Jacob was an Armenian Jew who arrived in Simla in 1871, where he became a dealer in precious stones. Lord writes:

Jacob was notorious, from Simla to the fashionable spa of Homburg, for his powers of magic. The gullible credited him with the ability to walk on water and even the least credulous granted him powers of mesmerism and telepathy. It was generally believed by British and Indians alike that he practised white magic, and it was variously supposed that he was a Jew, an Armenian, a Russian agent,

a British agent. It was obvious to all that he was the most important dealer in jewels and antiquities in India, and known to a few that he had in fact undertaken missions for the Secret Department of the government of India. He travelled by private train. His little store in Simla was a pantechnicon of riches, blazing with gold and smokey with incense, and in it Jacob squatted, pale and subtle, keeping a diary full of secrets.

It is not surprising that such a character as Jacob should have served as the model for at least three characters in fiction, the most celebrated being Lurgan in Rudyard Kipling's novel *Kim*. This tale was published in 1901, ten years after the lawsuit that had spelled ruin for Jacob. John Lord describes the case as follows:

Jacob had agreed to purchase for the Nizam a famous diamond kept in England, then called 'the Imperial' (and later 'the Jacob'), for the sum of three hundred thousand pounds, half of which His Highness had paid as a deposit. Now Jacob delivered the diamond in person with only the Nizam's valet as a witness. He left, with the Nizam still owing half the purchase price. Unknown to Jacob, the Resident had heard about the transaction. A worthy, wordy man whose lust was legalities and propriety, the Resident sought to save the Nizam's almost bankrupt government from the folly of buying yet another bauble. The Nizam froze. He was not allowed to pay the rest of the money and he would not return the diamond. He wrapped it in an ink-stained cloth and dropped it into a drawer. Jacob was forced to defend his investment by suing in a Calcutta court; though he won the case he was broken. His legal expenses were great. No prince in India would deal with him again and he died in penury, even his magic spent, in Bombay.

The Nizam of Hyderabad, reputedly the richest man in the world during his day and the buyer of the 'Victoria' diamond.



COLENZO

The story of this diamond unites the careers of two remarkable and controversial men of the latter part of the nineteenth century. The stone itself is a pale-yellow octahedron with rounded edges – longest edge 2.5 cm (almost 1 inch), major axis 3.2 cm (1.26 inches) – and triangular markings on its faces. It weighs 133.14 metric carats.

The ‘Colenso’ is one of the earliest notable diamonds to have come from the diggings in South Africa and it was found at a period when complete records of important discoveries were not kept. Some doubt consequently has arisen about its exact source. The General Manager of De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited, Alpheus Williams, listed the ‘Colenso’ as a discovery in the famous old Kimberley Mine, in 1883; on the other hand his contemporary, Arend Brink, Chief Valuator to De Beers, considered that, to judge from its characters, the diamond had come from one of the upper levels of the De Beers Mine.

A comparison of the output of large diamonds from the five principal mines in the Kimberley area between 1880 and 1912 may provide the answer. (Wesselton, originally named Premier in honour of Cecil Rhodes but renamed when the existing Premier Mine was discovered, was found some years after the other mines and was transferred to the control of De Beers in 1891.)

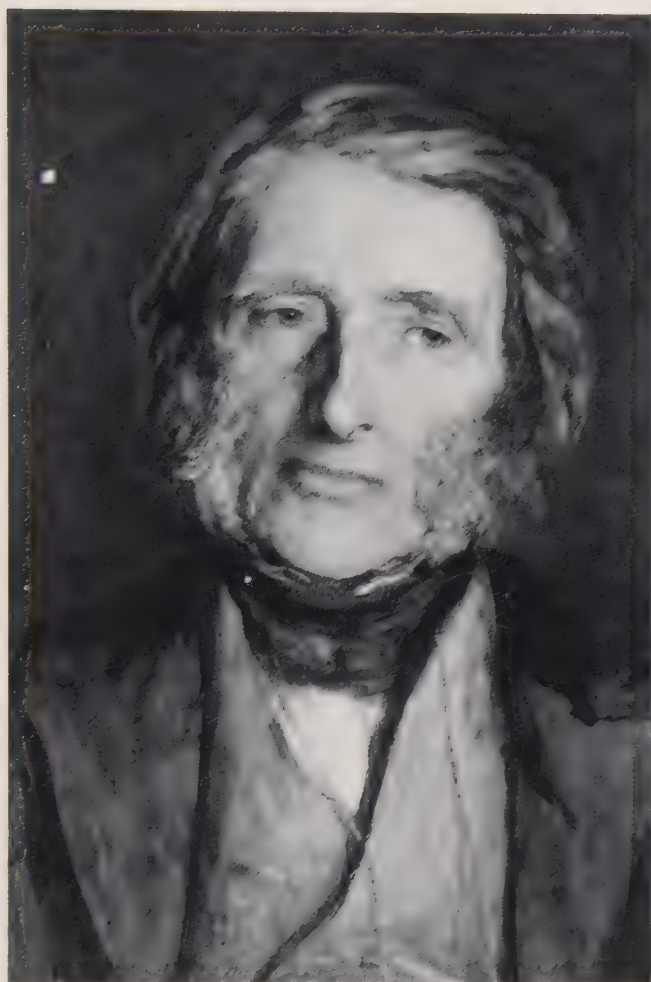
	Bultfontein	De Beers	Dutoitspan	Kimberley	Wesselton
500 carats and above	–	1	–	–	–
400 to 500 carats	–	2	–	–	–
300 to 400 carats	–	7	1	–	–
200 to 300 carats	–	48	10	4	–
100 to 200 carats	4	523	154	158	–

A considerable difference in the number of large stones yielded by each of the mines is thus apparent. But even greater interest lies in the difference between the types of diamonds themselves, no more so than in the case of the diamonds produced by the adjacent properties, Bultfontein and Dutoitspan, where stones of the greatest dissimilarity are found. The main output from the Kimberley Mine consisted of substantial quantities of boart and shot boart; occasionally large yellowish diamonds were found, the most famous specimen being the ‘Tiffany’. But De Beers Mine abounded in large stones, many of which were yellow octahedrons, so this mine would seem to be the more likely source of the ‘Colenso’.

According to an article which appeared in *The Strand Magazine* for April 1896, the diamond came to light in the following circumstances. A storekeeper at the Cape left his shop and went up country to try his luck at prospecting for

A roadway through the Kimberley diamond diggings. Because of the chaotic mining conditions these roads frequently collapsed causing loss of life.





John Ruskin who advised people to wear their jewels uncut – unpopular advice among diamond cutters.

diamonds. He invested £2000 in a claim in which he had two partners. After some time, when the claim appeared to be valueless, two of the partners decided to give up, leaving the third to go on alone. The workings fell in on this unfortunate man – by no means an uncommon occurrence in the early days of open-cast working on the diggings – and the other two, who were afraid of being accused of murder, went home. After some months had elapsed the former storekeeper returned to give the body a decent burial and found interred with it several loose diamonds, of which the largest was the one now known as the 'Colenso'. He brought it to England and sold it to R. C. Nockold of Soho, well-known as a dealer in precious stones.

Here the diamond was seen by John Ruskin (1819–1900), the author, art critic and social reformer, who did more than anyone else to influence the taste of Victorian England. At the same time, Ruskin outraged the opinions of many during his lifetime; his views on social welfare and the need for reforms caused a furore in the somewhat cosy *laissez-faire* atmosphere that prevailed in England during the later years of

Queen Victoria's reign. He is probably today best remembered for his views on painting, which tended to veer between extreme praise and vilification. The most celebrated example of the latter led to the famous libel action which the American painter James McNeill Whistler brought against him in November 1878, following Ruskin's abrupt dismissal of some of his 'Nocturnes' – pictures which depicted the Thames at Chelsea. Ruskin wrote, 'I have seen and heard much of the Cockney influence before now but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask for two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.' Considerably puzzled by the affair, the jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff (Whistler) who was awarded damages of one farthing!

Ruskin also displayed an interest in geology throughout his life and read this subject while an undergraduate at Oxford. As a frequent visitor to Nockold's shop he was, therefore, instantly appraised of the arrival of the yellow diamond from South Africa. He apparently received it on approval and sent the following letter to the Nockolds:

*'Brantwood'
Coniston,
Lancashire*

My Dear Couple, – I had nearly congealed into a diamond myself with fright when I opened the box. I thought in your first letter that 130 (it was written like that) meant 13½ carats, or I never would have asked for the loan! I'm most thankful to have it, for it is safe here and is invaluable to me just now; but what on earth is the value of it? I don't tell anybody I've got such a thing in the house.

Ever gratefully and affectionately yours,

J. Ruskin

Later he asks:

And now, please will Mr Nockold and you advise me whether to buy this diamond for Sheffield Museum or not?'

He eventually bought it for £1000 and he and his secretary, W. G. Collingwood, spent weeks studying the diamond: many sketches were made of it but unfortunately their present whereabouts is unknown.

Ruskin was the founder of the Guild of St George, which was largely financed by him, and it was his original intention to present the diamond to its museum. It was at this stage called the 'Guild' or 'St George's' diamond. However, he was on very friendly terms with Mr (later, Sir) Lazarus Fletcher, Keeper of Minerals in the British Museum (Natural History) and suggested that the museum might like to have the diamond on loan. He was asked if he would like it to be called the 'Ruskin' diamond, to which he replied:

The Diamond is not to be called the Ruskin, nor the Catskin, nor the Yellowskin diamond. (It is not worth a name at all, for it may be beaten any minute by a lucky Cape digger.)

In February 1884, the diamond was deposited in the

museum and exhibited at Professor Ruskin's own risk. In January 1887, he decided to present it to the museum on condition that it should always be exhibited with the following description:

The Colenso Diamond, presented in 1887 by John Ruskin, in Honour of his Friend the loyal and patiently adamant First Bishop of Natal.

Ruskin also stipulated that the diamond should never be cut; this was in accordance with the views propounded in his book *Deucalion and other studies in rocks and stones*, in which he wrote:

For literal truth of your jewels themselves absolutely search out and cast away all manner of false, or dyed, or altered stones. And at present to make quite sure, wear your jewels uncut; they will be twenty times more interesting to you so. The ruby in the British Crown is uncut; and is, as far as my knowledge extends, – I have not had it to look at close, – the loveliest precious stone in the world. And as a piece of true gentlewoman's and true lady's knowledge learn to know these stones when you see them uncut. So much of mineralogy the abundance of modern science may, I think, spare, as a piece of required education for the upper classes.

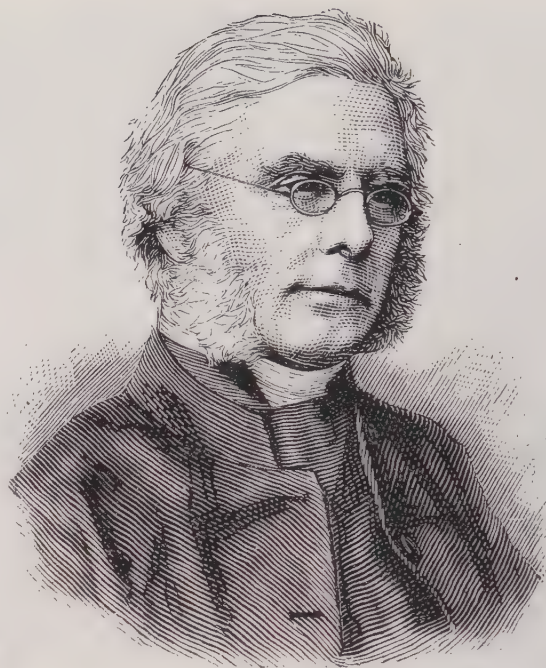
Then when you know them and their shapes, get your highest artists to design the setting of them.

Doubtless Ruskin was sincere in promulgating such a view of gemstones but at the same time he was possibly somewhat naive, or simply uninformed, if he imagined that every diamond was as perfectly shaped as the beautiful specimen which he had presented to the British Museum. Certainly a fine octahedral diamond is as mouthwatering an object of mineralogy as one could wish for but when one begins to ponder over all the other extraordinary shapes found in diamond, it soon becomes apparent that it would need a most oddly shaped human figure to wear them!

No less controversial a figure is the friend of Ruskin after whom the diamond is named.

John William Colenso (1814–83) was both a notable mathematician and the first Anglican Bishop of Natal. Born in Cornwall, he was chosen for the newly created diocese of Natal and consecrated in 1853. Colenso became a pioneer of written Zulu, translating both the scriptures and the Prayer Book as well as compiling a Zulu-English dictionary containing more than 10,000 entries. The Bishop's enlightened views on African customs that were publicized in his *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury on Polygamy* (1861) infuriated the orthodox missionaries. But it was on purely theological matters that Colenso was destined to offend the susceptibilities and beliefs of so many Christians.

In 1862 Colenso published a six-volume work entitled *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined* (the Pentateuch comprises the first five books of the Bible). This work, together with an earlier one, caused a sensation and



John William Colenso, the Bishop of Natal. Ruskin named the diamond after this friend of his.

upset the Church. For a Bishop to participate in an attempt at a reinterpretation of the scripture and of the Church's dogma in the light of new knowledge, profoundly disturbed the Anglican hierarchy, who promptly demanded his resignation. But Colenso refused to resign, an act which led to his subsequent excommunication and deprivation at Cape Town by the nominal Bishop. The sentence, however, was nullified on appeal by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in 1865. Colenso retained his position as Bishop of the Church of England in Natal, although he remained cut off from the main body of the church.

During the last ten years of his life Colenso proved a stalwart champion of Zulu interests and once helped to expose a serious miscarriage of justice by the government of Natal. He became known by his Zulu name of Sobantu meaning 'the father of his people'. The British statesman Benjamin Disraeli clearly had Colenso in mind when he once commented, 'A remarkable people the Zulus, they convert our bishops, they defeat our generals and they alter the history of Europe' (the last being a reference to the death in action of the young Prince Imperial of France).

The final episode in the history of the diamond named after the Bishop, alas, is a melancholy one. After gracing the display of gems at the Natural History Museum in London for so long and surviving two World Wars, the 'Colenso' diamond fell a victim to a thief one night in April 1965. It has never been recovered and, merely for the sake of its donor, one must hope that it has not been cut and polished.

DE BEERS



Not long after the incorporation of De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited, in March 1888, a huge, light-yellow octahedron was found in the De Beers Mine. The stone weighed $428\frac{1}{2}$ (old) carats – equivalent to 439.86 metric carats – and measured 47.6mm ($1\frac{7}{8}$ inches) through its longest axis and 38.1mm ($1\frac{1}{2}$ inches) square. Excluding the 'Victoria' or 'Great White', the source of which remains doubtful, the 'De Beers' was the largest diamond at the time to have been recovered from the four mines at Kimberley.

The Annual Report and Accounts of De Beers for the year ending 31 March 1890 recorded that:

The 'De Beers' diamond.

A $428\frac{1}{2}$ carat rough, 1.78 inches long, was found in the De Beers mine by a native whose 'brother' gave information which led to its recovery while being taken from the mine. It was cut and exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1889. Its weight after cutting was 228.5 carats, having lost 200 carats in the cutting.

Expressed in metric carats, i.e. 234.50, the weight of the 'De Beers' places it as the fourth largest polished diamond if



one excludes the 'Nizam' which is reputed to be only partially cut. It is not known where the 'De Beers' was cut into its shape as a cushion-cut, but because of its pre-eminence as a cutting centre at the time it may be assumed that the work was carried out in Amsterdam.

Following its display in Paris the Maharajah of Patiala bought the 'De Beers': in 1925 Cartier's set it as the centrepiece of a ceremonial necklace. Sometime during the 1930s the diamond was acquired by its present owners who loaned it in 1973 for an exhibition staged in Israel.

On the 6 May 1982, the 'De Beers' came up for auction by Sotheby's in Geneva. It was generally thought that bidding might reach as much as 4.5 million dollars. In the event the stone was bought in when the highest bid of 3.16 million dollars (£1,750,000) remained below its undisclosed reserve.

The 'De Beers', the fourth largest cut diamond in the world.

In his book *Precious Stones and Gems*, Edwin Streeter has unwittingly been the cause of some confusion concerning this diamond. He declared that it was shown at the Paris Exhibition as the 'Victoria'; this has led to the listing in some publications of a diamond called the 'Victoria I', weighing 228.5 old carats, also found in 1888 and afterwards sold to an Indian prince. A mathematical calculation will show that this is precisely the same stone as the 'De Beers' and not to be confused with the even larger diamond variously referred to as the 'Imperial', 'Great White' or 'Victoria' which had been found in somewhat mysterious circumstances four years before.

CLEVELAND

This diamond is associated with the firm of Maurice S. Dessau Co., Inc, which is believed to be the oldest diamond tool manufacturing company in the United States. It has passed its 140th anniversary, one of only thirty-six American companies with such a long history.

The origins of the firm are unusual. In 1841, the lawyer David S. Dessau of New York somewhat reluctantly accepted as a legal fee a bag containing pebble-like objects. They were, in fact, rough diamonds of industrial quality. Dessau exam-

ined them with a despairing curiosity. He scraped the window pane in his office with one of the stones and found that it scratched the glass with ease. This simple experiment may well have been the first application of industrial diamond in the United States. At any rate, it led David Dessau to investigate the capabilities of industrial diamonds and shortly

The Kimberley Mine, or the 'Big Hole' as it is popularly known.





Grover Cleveland, the twenty-second President of the United States. The diamond was named in honour of him.

afterwards he abandoned his law practice and began manufacturing diamond cutting tools for the glass industry and other trades, so putting to practical use his newly-earned industrial diamonds.

Not surprisingly such an old company is bound to have had more than its share of colourful experiences, traditions and memories. In the industrial field it won the gold medal award in 1880 at the Millers International Exhibition in Cincinnati, Ohio: the best barrel of flour had been ground from stones dressed with Dessau diamonds. In addition, however, both David Dessau and his son, Simon, had been trained in the art of diamond cutting and they were the first in the United States to cut a large diamond. In the summer of 1884 they purchased a diamond that had been found ten years before in Kimberley – possibly the Kimberley Mine itself. It was then smuggled to London where it was purchased and held by a syndicate for eight years until its sale to the Dessaus.

The stone, which weighed more than 100 old carats, was cut into a gem which a leading magazine at the time described as ‘white, without a flaw or fault of any kind ... in all

respects an absolutely perfect stone. It is cut in the cushion shape, having 64 facets upon the upper and an equal number on the lower surface.’ Its weight of 50 carats meant that it was the largest diamond to have been cut in the United States at the time. Its value was in excess of \$50,000 – at a time when a dollar bought more than two packs of cigarettes. The gem was exhibited at the New Orleans Exhibition where it attracted considerable attention. It was eventually named after Grover Cleveland who had just been elected the twenty-second President of the United States.

During the Presidential election the Messrs. Dessau, father and son, favouring rival candidates, agreed that the successful one should enjoy the distinction of christening the gem: the result was seen in the choice of Mr Dessau, Senior. Some of the President-Elect’s friends proposed a popular subscription with which to procure and present the stone to him, but it was not certain at the time whether such a gift would have proved acceptable to the official who publicly stated his determination not to accept presents. So despite giving his name to the diamond, President Cleveland was not its recipient.

Instead the ‘Cleveland’ diamond was given to Minnie Palmer, a musical comedy star of the time whom a newspaper described as a ‘pretty, pert, petulant, pouting bit of humanity with the step of a fairy, the carol of a bird and the exuberance of a schoolgirl.’ Nobody is certain who gave Ms Palmer the diamond, but it may have been Simon Dessau himself – then a forty-two-year-old widower who dabbled in the theatre and was known to have been infatuated with the star. Others contend that it was the gift of her agent, John R. Rogers, to whom Minnie was married for some years. Mr Rogers had other claims to fame, among them that he crossed the Atlantic one hundred and eleven times and that in ninety-two years he never drank one drop of water.

Rogers also had a temper. While Minnie and he were engaged, he became so annoyed with persistent swains that he had an advertisement inserted in a newspaper warning of dire consequences if she were not left alone. But it had little effect: Minnie continued to receive presents, £6000-worth while on a tour of Great Britain, and enough to bank £20,000 during the tour. Newspapers headlined their accounts with ‘Hearts at Minnie’s feet’ and ‘An American Girl who Befuddled English Lords’.

Like the ‘Hope’ diamond, the ‘Cleveland’ came to be associated with misfortune. Most of Simon Dessau’s many business enterprises came a cropper in the Panic of 1907 while Minnie herself fell on hard times. As far as is known she died in 1936 while living in a Home on Long Island: she was either seventy-one or seventy-six, depending upon which account can be believed.

In 1966 Dessau’s grandson Stephen announced that he wanted to buy back the ‘Cleveland’ diamond so that he could present it to the Smithsonian Institution. However what befell the diamond is unknown: the last time it was seen, Minnie was wearing it.

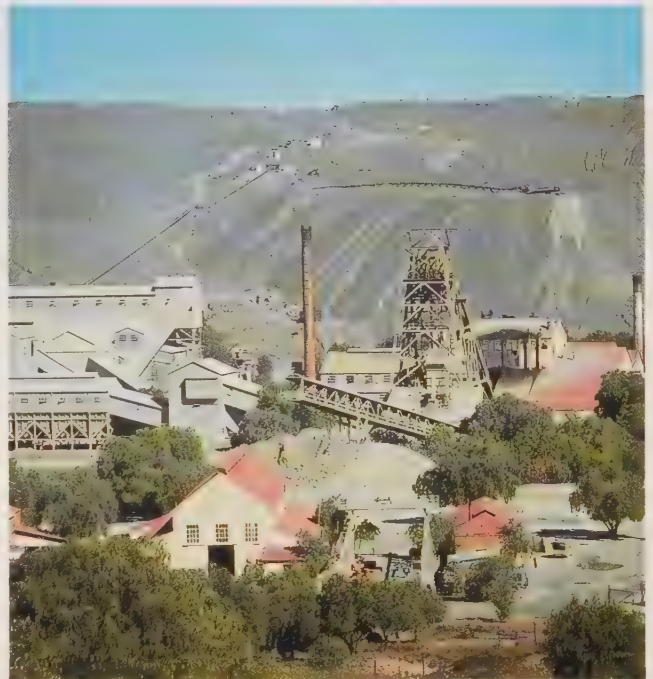
EXCELSIOR

On 28 May 1971, a sad but inevitable event in mining history occurred: operations finally ceased at Jagersfontein. Not long before, the mine had celebrated its centenary, the first diamond having been picked up in the valley of Jagersfontein, which lies in the Orange Free State, in August 1870. Although Jagersfontein was the first of the South African 'pipe' or 'dry' mines to have been discovered, its fame was always overshadowed by that of the mines in the Kimberley district, some 130km (80 miles) north-west. Yet the output of the mine was sufficient to give rise to the use of the term 'Jagers' in the trade to denote a diamond of a beautiful faint bluish tint. In addition Jagersfontein was the source of two of the largest and finest diamonds ever to have come to light.

The earlier of these discoveries provided the most dramatic moment in the mine's history. On the evening of 30 June 1893, an African picked up an immense diamond in a shovelful of gravel which he was loading into a truck; he hid it from his overseer and delivered it directly into the hands of the Mine Manager. As a reward he received £500 and a horse equipped with saddle and bridle.

The diamond weighed 971 old carats, equivalent to 995.2 metric carats. It did indeed possess that marvellous blue-white colour, characteristic of the finest Jagersfontein diamonds, especially cleavages, and was of very fine quality although there were numerous internal black spots, another Jagersfontein characteristic. In shape the stone was flat on one side and rose to a peak on the other, rather like a loaf of rye bread. Apparently it was this fact which caused the diamond to be given the name of 'Excelsior', meaning higher.

The 'Excelsior' may justly claim to be the Great Unknown of famous diamonds. As will be explained later on, there is no single 'Excelsior' gem of exceptional size which would have helped to keep its name in the public eye. In addition, except for having stimulated some interest among local diggers, the finding of such a mighty stone seems to have made singularly little impact. No account of the discovery appeared in the more authoritative and prestigious British newspapers, for instance, which often reported lesser discoveries made at the time. Perhaps if the diamond had originally been given a rather less prosaic name its fame might have spread further afield. Yet consider the facts! Prior to the discovery of the 'Excelsior' the only rival to the stone was the legendary 'Great Mogul' of Indian origin, generally thought to have weighed 787.5 old carats. The so-called 'Braganza', which was found in Brazil in the eighteenth century and according to some sources weighed 1680 carats, was considered to have been a white sapphire, topaz or aquamarine, certainly not a diamond. So the 'Excelsior' still rates as the second largest rough



The Jagersfontein Mine shortly before its closure in 1971. The 'Excelsior' was the largest diamond ever found there.

diamond of gem quality ever to have been found, being surpassed only by the 'Cullinan'.

After various vicissitudes the Jagersfontein mine eventually became the sole property of the New Jagersfontein Mining and Exploration Company Limited, formed in April 1887. It so happened that on the very day that the 'Excelsior' was found the contract between the mining company and the syndicate of London firms which purchased the mine's output expired. Had the diamond been found a few hours earlier it would have made a substantial difference in profit to the parties concerned. However, the 'Excelsior' was shipped to the London offices, located at 29 and 30 Holborn Viaduct, of Messrs Wernher, Beit & Co, the largest of the ten firms that comprised the London Syndicate. Wernher, Beit & Co. endeavoured to insure the diamond for £40,000 but at first could only effect insurance to the extent of £16,250.

In the Directors' Report for the year ended 31 March 1894, the Chairman of the New Jagersfontein Mining and Exploration Company stated:

In addition to the foregoing the Company still retains an undivided one-half share in the 'Excelsior' diamond weigh-

ing 971 carats, found on 30 June 1893, which (although it is impossible at the present moment to place any exact value upon, and has therefore not been stocked at all) will ultimately prove a very valuable asset of the Company.

The valuable asset remained in London where it was joined in 1895 by the second of the two great diamonds to have originated in Jagersfontein. This weighed 634 carats, equivalent to 650.8 metric carats and was first named the 'Reitz' after F. W. Reitz, then President of the Orange Free State. It was renamed the 'Jubilee' when it was cut in 1897, the year which marked Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Accordingly the Chairman of the Mining Company, at the Annual General Meeting held in Kimberley 28 May 1896, stated:

Since the last meeting a large and very fine diamond of 634 carats, named the Reitz Diamond, has been found, and although neither the 'Excelsior' nor this recent acquisition has yet been disposed of, your Directors have deemed it advisable, in the interests of present shareholders, to stock the Company's one half interest in both diamonds, but the actual figure, as will be obvious to all, it is most injudicious to state publicly.

The very next day after this meeting, the minutes of a Company Board meeting recorded the receipt of the following letter to the Secretary, New Jagersfontein Mining and Exploration Co. Limited, Kimberley:



ABOVE *A contemporary drawing of the 'Excelsior' in the rough.*

BELOW *The eight largest stones cut from the 'Excelsior'.*



Dear Sir, I beg to inform you that Messrs Wernher, Beit & Co, Barnato Bros & Mosenthal Sons & Co have accepted your offer to buy your Company's half interest in the two Stones called the 'Excelsior' and 'Reitz' Diamonds weighing 971 and 634 carats respectively for the sum of £25,000 (twenty five thousand pounds) cash.

It is specially agreed upon that the price paid as above is not to be disclosed outside the Diamond committee or your Board of Directors.

I should thank you to confirm the terms of this letter and shall on receipt of your reply pay your Company the stipulated £25,000 on behalf of the above-named firms.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours faithfully, Herrman Hirsche

The minutes continue: 'Resolved that the above offer be accepted and the Secretary was instructed to confirm the same.'

Thus was concluded what can only be described as one of the most profitable transactions – from the purchaser's point of view – ever to have been made in the diamond trade. As a result of the sale the 'Jubilee' diamond was cut in the following year into two gems. The larger of the two is a cushion-shape weighing 245.35 carats, which ranks as the third largest polished diamond in the world. But no buyer appeared on the scene for the 'Excelsior' and eventually, in 1903, it was despatched to I. J. Asscher of Amsterdam. This famous firm, destined to cut the 'Cullinan' diamond, had been founded by Mr J. J. Asscher (1843–1902).

Yet again misfortune dogged the 'Excelsior' since it was destined not to be one of those diamonds which yields a single magnificent gem; instead, it was cut into several smaller ones. There were suggestions that no prospective buyer could be found owing to the diamond's exceptional size. In his book *Some Dreams Come True*, Alpheus F. Williams, who succeeded his father as General Manager of De Beers, entertained no doubts about the matter, considering the decision to cleave the diamond into several smaller fragments as the greatest tragedy of modern times in the history of famous diamonds. He wrote:

It was unpardonable that this exquisite diamond was so cleaved that the largest stone cut from it weighed only 70 metric carats. The intrinsic value meant more to its owners than its historical importance, so different from the spirit of the owners of the Cullinan diamond who, in deciding to have the diamond cleaved into nine pieces, insisted that

one of the pieces so cleaved should be, when cut, the largest diamond in the world.

On the other hand two points should be borne in mind when considering this extract from Mr Williams's book. First, it will be recalled that the owners of the 'Excelsior' had also been the owners of the 'Jubilee'; no accusation, therefore, could be levelled at them of necessarily wanting to place value before historical importance since the 'Jubilee' had been fashioned so as to yield one truly exceptional gem. Secondly, a comparison between the 'Cullinan' and 'Excelsior' diamonds is meaningless. Whereas the 'Cullinan' had only one large black spot in the heart, as stated earlier, the 'Excelsior' possessed numerous internal black spots. The Dutch cutters, who were recognized as the foremost in the world, found that these flaws were so placed that inevitably a considerable reduction must result from their elimination.

After prolonged study it was, therefore, decided first to cleave the diamond into ten pieces: this operation, which was performed by Mr A. Asscher, resulted in the three largest pieces weighing 158, 147 and 130 carats. The polishing was supervised by Henri Koe and yielded 21 gems, ranging from 70 carats to less than 1 carat. They totalled 373.75 carats which represented a loss in weight of almost 63 per cent. The final result, however, was considered to have been better than both the owners and the Asschers had dared to forecast. The details of the larger gems cut from the 'Excelsior' are as follows:

Excelsior I	69.68 carats (metric)	Pear-shape
Excelsior II	47.03 carats	Pear-shape
Excelsior III	46.90 carats	Pear-shape
Excelsior IV	40.23 carats	Marquise
Excelsior V	34.91 carats	Pear-shape

Excelsior VI	28.61 carats	Marquise
Excelsior VII	26.30 carats	Marquise
Excelsior VIII	24.31 carats	Pear-shape
Excelsior IX	16.78 carats	Pear-shape
Excelsior X	13.86 carats	Pear-shape
Excelsior XI	9.82 carats	Pear-shape

The 'Excelsior' gems were sold separately, three of them being bought by Tiffany & Co, in their old store in Union Square in New York City. The names of the other buyers have not been disclosed but it is known that De Beers displayed one of the marquises at the New York World Fair in 1939.

In January 1984, Graff Diamonds Limited, of London, announced the acquisition and subsequent sale of five exceptional diamonds among a series of transactions to clients. The most historic stone was 'Excelsior I' which, according to Laurence Graff, had remained in the possession of the same family in the United States until his firm's purchase of it.

It is possible that two more of the larger gems cut from 'The Great Unknown' diamond may have come to light within recent years. At an exhibition called 'The Court of Jewels', presented by Harry Winston, Inc., in San Antonio, Texas, in 1949, there was a 40-carat marquise, measuring 25.4 by 19mm (1 by $\frac{3}{4}$ inches), among the many notable exhibits. Little appears to have been known about this diamond before its purchase by Mr Winston from a prominent American family. Could it have been 'Excelsior IV'?

On 23 January 1957, a diamond necklace with a pendant, owned by Mrs John E. Rovensky, came up for auction at the Parke-Bernet Galleries. The pendant was a pear-shaped diamond weighing approximately 46.50 carats. Since it had originally been acquired from Tiffany's, is there not a distinct possibility that this gem was none other than 'Excelsior III'?

JUBILEE

This magnificent colourless, cushion-cut diamond with a weight of 245.35 carats ranks as the third largest in the world, being surpassed only by the two principal gems cut from the 'Cullinan'.

The original rough stone, in shape an irregular octahedron without definite faces, weighed 650.80 (metric) carats; it was found in the Jagersfontein Mine towards the end of 1895. A syndicate of London diamond merchants comprising the firms Wernher, Beit & Co, Barnato Bros and Mosenthal Sons & Co, acquired the 'Jubilee' together with the 'Excelsior'. At first the stone was named the 'Reitz' in honour of Francis

William Reitz, then President of the Orange Free State in which Jagersfontein is situated.

In 1896 the syndicate sent the diamond to Amsterdam where it was polished by M. B. Barends, under the supervision of Messrs Metz. First, a piece weighing 40 carats or so was cleaved; this yielded a fine, clean pear-shape of 13.34 carats which was bought by Dom Carlos I of Portugal as a present for his wife. The whereabouts of this gem is unknown today. The remaining large piece was then polished into the 'Jubilee'. When during the cutting it became evident that a truly superb diamond of exceptional size and purity was being produced, it



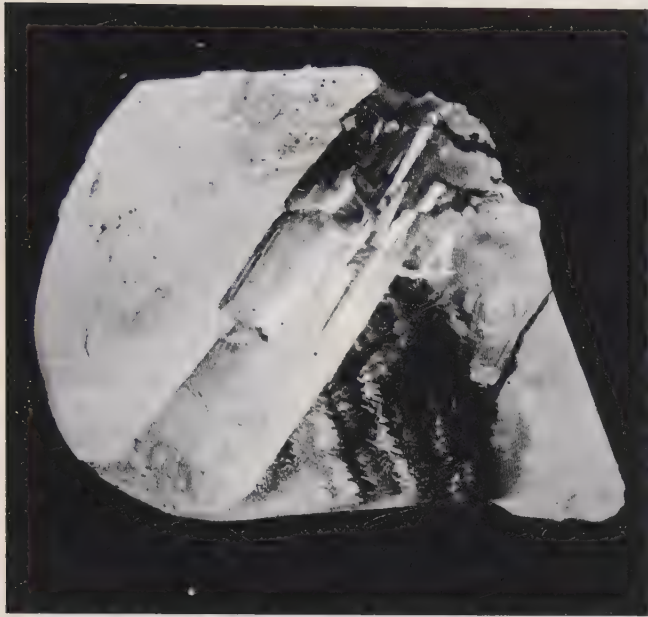
ABOVE *Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The name of the 'Jubilee' diamond was changed from the 'Reitz' in celebration of this event.*

LEFT *The 'Jubilee', the third largest cut diamond in the world, surpassed only by 'Cullinan I' and 'II'.*



was planned to present it to Queen Victoria. In the end this did not materialize and the diamond remained with its owners. The following year marked the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria so the gem was suitably renamed the 'Jubilee' to commemorate the occasion. In the world of diamonds the event was also marked by the introduction of the Jubilee-cut; this has the characteristics of both the rose and brilliant cuts in that the table is replaced by eight star facets, the total number of facets being increased to eighty-eight. It is not often encountered today.

In 1900 the syndicate displayed the 'Jubilee' at the Paris Exhibition where it was one of the centres of attraction. It was then valued at 7,000,000 francs. Shortly afterwards Sir Dorabji Jamsetji Tata bought the diamond. He was the Indian industrialist and philanthropist who laid the foundation of his country's iron and steel industry; these and the cotton mills founded by his father formed the cornerstone of modern India's economic development.



The 'Jubilee' in the rough.

Sir Dorabji Tata died in 1932. Three years later his heirs sent the 'Jubilee' to Cartier's for sale, who in December of that year mounted it in a display of historic diamonds. For a buyer the firm looked first to the Gaekwar of Baroda who in 1928 had appointed Cartier's as his sole advisers on purchases of precious stones. Their representatives were prepared to sell the 'Jubilee' to the Prince for £75,000. Having sought authorization from the treasury department in Baroda for the purchase, and despite the encouragement of its officials, the Gaekwar declined to buy the diamond. So in 1937 Cartier's sold the 'Jubilee' instead to M. Paul-Louis Weiller, the Paris industrialist and patron of the arts, who remains its present owner. The diamond's former setting was changed into a baguette diamond brooch, suggestive of either a six-pointed star or a stylized turtle.

M. Weiller has lent the 'Jubilee' to several exhibitions including one staged at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington in 1960 and another held in Geneva in December of the same year. In 1966 the 'Jubilee' returned to South Africa where it featured in the De Beers Diamond Pavilion in Johannesburg.

RED CROSS

This canary-coloured square diamond weighs 205.07 (metric) carats. It is said to have weighed 375 carats in the rough and to have come from the De Beers Company's mines in 1901. The largest stone found that year weighed only 307 carats but two more, weighing $337\frac{1}{2}$ and 363 carats, were found in the De Beers Mine in 1899. Whichever may be incorrect, the date of discovery or the rough weight, there is no doubting the fact that the 'Red Cross' is a typical South African diamond.

The original syndicate of dealing firms who bought the output of De Beers presented the diamond as a gift to the art sale held in London by Christie's in April 1918 on behalf of the British Red Cross Society and the order of St John. The stone had been cut in Amsterdam; *The Times* wrote:

Large and square-shaped, it has been cut with many facets and is of that pale canary yellow colour which is so much sought after by Indian Princes. The play of the stone is very vivid. In artificial light it is much more luminous than a white stone. After exposure to brilliant light it emits the rays it has absorbed, and thus becomes self-luminous in the dark. Another rare feature is that a Maltese Cross is distinctly visible in the top facet. Hence the double appropriateness of its name, the Red Cross Diamond.

The 'Red Cross' was the highlight of the third day of the sale which brought £35,575 out of the total proceeds of £52,238. It was reported that:

The hope expressed by the auctioneer that this jewel would fetch 'a price worthy of its name' was fulfilled. The first bid was £3000, from which a quick advance was made to £6000. Thence by two hundreds, it was taken to £8000; from that, by two and three hundreds, to £9000; and at £10,000 the diamond was knocked down to S. J. Phillips. On behalf of the anonymous purchaser they state that he is willing to hold the diamond for one month at the purchase price of £10,000, at the disposal of any buyer who will guarantee to hand it back to the British Red Cross Society and the order of St John to be used as the societies think best for the benefit of their funds.

In due course it was stated that a member of a European Royal family bought the 'Red Cross'; however it was not he but an undisclosed American businessman who put it up for sale half a century later. In June 1973 the stone was auctioned in Tokyo but as the highest bid only reached £820,000 it was withdrawn from sale. The auctioneers had expected it to be sold for £2,000,000. Since then the diamond has 'been around a



bit', that is, most of the diamond trade have been aware that it is on the market and many have viewed it. In November 1973, Christie's put it up for sale in Geneva. It was then deposited in Switzerland before being put up for sale again in 1977. The identity of its present owner is not known.

The 'Red Cross' diamond.

CULLINAN

On 26 January 1905, one of the most momentous events in the entire history of gemstones took place when the 'Cullinan', the mightiest and most magnificent of all diamonds, was found in the Premier Mine in South Africa.

The diamond was named after Thomas (later Sir Thomas) Cullinan, born in South Africa in 1862 of Irish descent. His grandfather, James Cullinan, who came from Co Donegal, had originally decided to emigrate to America and in 1836, accompanied by his wife, crossed the Irish sea to England where he intended joining one of the emigrant ships sailing for New York. His plans were wrecked by his over-enthusiastic celebration of his pending departure; not only did he contrive to miss the ship but to lose nearly all his spare cash. Stranded in England almost penniless he could afford to

travel neither to New York nor to Donegal. He solved this problem by joining the British Army. In due course his regiment was sent to South Africa for garrison duties on the borders of the old Cape Colony.

James Cullinan's grandson, Thomas, who was to make the family name famous throughout the world, became a successful building contractor on the Witwatersrand where he resided for nine years. But his main interest lay in prospecting and he was obsessed with the idea that one day he would discover a diamond mine. Cullinan was especially interested in the fact that diamonds were turning up in increasing

South Africa's Premier Mine (1960), which has produced a quarter of the world's great diamonds exceeding 400 carats in the rough.



quantities on farms outside Pretoria, a district easily accessible from his home in Johannesburg. While prospecting on a farm called Franspoort he found some alluvial stones washed down into the valleys and the spruits by storm water; but his main concern was to discover the exact origin of these diamonds. The most likely explanation for their presence in the area was that they had been thrust to the surface in a volcanic 'pipe' and it was the pipe which Cullinan hoped to find. This theory was derided by knowledgeable prospectors in the district who maintained that the geology of the Pretoria area differed completely from that of Kimberley.

Yet there were others at work prospecting in the region which was interesting Cullinan: according to some old-timers, the first man on the scene was Perceval White Tracey, who had worked a claim on the original De Beers mine in Kimberley and been well known to Cecil Rhodes. When gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand, Tracey moved northwards to Johannesburg, becoming connected with one of the gold mines there. At the same time he started prospecting for diamonds and came upon very definite signs of a diamond pipe not far from Pretoria.

On one of his expeditions Tracey was confronted by the irate owner of the farm on which he had begun to dig. He could not have encountered a more dangerous adversary in Willem Petrus Prinsloo, a man with a strong personality, above all imbued with a deep distrust of all who dared to approach his property to prospect for minerals. Twice previously Prinsloo had been persuaded to sell for handsome sums properties on which he had settled. The first farm had proved to be the birthplace of the East Rand gold mines while the second, the farm Kaalfontein, in the Orange Free State, had been the site where the Kaalfontein Diamond Mining Company was subsequently established. In his third attempt to secure privacy, Prinsloo retired beyond the expected reach of prospectors to the farm Elandsfontein, situated about 38 km (24 miles) east of Pretoria. Every day he would load his rifle, sit on the stoep of his farm house and scan the horizon for any sign of interlopers. It was in these circumstances that Tracey first came face to face with the farmer and it is not to be wondered at that he withdrew, deciding that discretion was the better part of valour.

Thomas Cullinan also displayed interest in visiting Elandsfontein, particularly after he had been shown a fine blue-white stone that had been found there. He joined forces with Tracey and according to one story they presented themselves as cattle inspectors on the lookout for anthrax in the district; at the same time they succeeded in confirming the existence of diamonds on Prinsloo's property. The outbreak of war in South Africa put an end to all mining operations in the Transvaal. But the war also was disastrous for the Prinsloo family, who were reduced to a state of near poverty, so that after hostilities had ceased they were obliged to listen to offers which the newly-formed Premier Syndicate Limited, led by Cullinan, made them. The particular part of the farm Elandsfontein which the Syndicate wished to purchase was

then owned by Maria Elizabeth Prinsloo, the daughter of old Prinsloo, who had died in 1898. Eventually after protracted negotiations the Syndicate purchased this portion for £52,000 and a new company, Premier (Transvaal) Diamond Mining Company Limited was formed in 1903 to raise this sum. Thomas Cullinan was appointed Chairman. The new company was named 'Premier' in honour of Rhodes, the Premier of the Cape Government who had died the previous year. The mine also known as 'Premier', situated at Kimberley, was later renamed Wesselson following the discovery of the mine to the north.

Thomas Cullinan and his colleagues proved to be correct in their supposition that Prinsloo's farm indicated the presence of a sizeable diamond deposit. Operations were to prove the existence of a pipe, roughly oval in shape, about 0.8km long by 0.4km wide (half a mile long by a quarter of a mile wide). Opencast mining began in April 1903, the diamondiferous ground being raised by endless rope haulage. Washing pans were used to separate the diamonds from the sludge. In the following year a pulsator plant was built to speed up operations.

Not long after mining had begun at Premier, Sir Alfred Beit, one of the original directors and life governors of De Beers, visited the scene. Both the size of the pipe and the scale of mining greatly impressed Sir Alfred; at the same time there has been much controversy over the precise effect which it had upon him physically. According to one writer, the sight of such a rival to De Beers' own operations gave him such a shock that he 'dropped down in a fit of apoplexy never fully recovered and died a few years afterwards'. But another individual asserted that Beit had informed him that the cause of the slight stroke which he suffered had been the exertion entailed in walking all over the property on a very hot day after a heavy meal. Sir Alfred Beit died in England three years later from another stroke which doctors at the time said 'was not connected with the first one'.

The most dramatic moment in the history of the Premier mine occurred early in its life.

It was late afternoon on Thursday 26 January 1905, and the men were going off shift when a mineworker came running up breathless with excitement to F. G. S. Wells, the mine's Surface Manager; he wanted to draw his attention to a shiny object in the side wall of the open mine that was reflecting the rays of the setting sun. The sparkling came from a point high up in the earth wall of the 9 metre (30ft) deep crater, near enough for Wells to clamber down for a closer inspection. He climbed down to the place (the exact spot is situated in the Western half of the mine today) and with his pocket-knife he finally succeeded in prising out a diamond of colossal proportions. According to a bystander Wells' only coherent statement was 'Cor, Mr Cullinan will be pleased when he sees this!'

Scarcely being able to accept the evidence of his own eyes, Wells rushed to the mine office to have the stone weighed. When he arrived there he was kept waiting because the



ABOVE *The Premier Mine in its early days.*

BELOW *William McHardy, first General Manager of the Premier Mine, holding the 'Cullinan' diamond, with Thomas Cullinan (left) and Fred Wells (right).*



Manager was busy. Members of the staff wanted to know what he had come about so Wells showed them the diamond, whereupon someone exclaimed, 'This is no diamond,' and slung it out of the window.

Wells quietly went out and retrieved the diamond. Eventually when they condescended to weigh it, the stone tipped the scale at $3025\frac{3}{4}$ carats, equivalent to 3106 metric carats or almost $1\frac{1}{3}$ lb avoirdupois.

That same evening Cullinan was entertaining friends to dinner when a telegram bringing news of the discovery was handed to him. He was not impressed and as he handed the message round the table he remarked casually, 'I expect they are wrong. It is probably a large crystal.'

When the stone was confirmed as a diamond Cullinan, as a first celebration, promptly had twelve replicas made of glass, one for himself and the others for his eleven dinner guests. Mr Wells was given a bonus of £2000 and the mineworker also suitably rewarded. Both Cullinan and Wells may be forgiven if they thought that a practical joker had embedded a piece of glass in the mine instead of a diamond because up to that time the largest authenticated diamond had been the 'Excelsior', found in Jagersfontein mine in 1893, which weighed a mere 995.2 metric carats. In addition to its remarkable size – it was 101mm long, 63.5mm high, and 50.8mm broad (4 inches by 2.5 inches by 2 inches) – the 'Cullinan' was notable for its marvellous blue-white colour and exceptional purity. Intriguingly the stone also possessed a cleavage face on one side which was so smooth as to suggest the possibility of it having once formed part of a much larger crystal. On this much discussed and debated topic, Dr Molengraaf, a former State Geologist of South Africa, to whom the directors of the Premier Mining Company had given the opportunity of examining the stone, wrote as follows:

This big diamond is a portion of a much larger stone, the original form of which can only be roughly guessed at. Four pieces of this original stone have been broken off along cleavage-planes, which we know to have the position of octahedral planes.

Each of these pieces has been a considerable size. Consequently the stone itself shows only a portion of its original natural surface (called 'nyf' in the diamond cutter's jargon) the greater portion being formed by these four flat cleavage-planes. The remaining part of the surface shows one octahedral face and a curved irregular surface roughly corresponding to six faces of the dodecahedron, while one very irregular face of the hexahedron is indicated by quadrilateral impressions which are characteristic of these faces in minerals which possess the octahedral mode of formation.

The stone is a single crystal, no twinning planes or twinning lamellae being present. The stone is quite colourless, its perfect transparency being best compared to that of fine ice or of the variety of siliac known as 'hyalite'.

There are a few grains (inclusions) and also some flaws

or internal cleavage-planes – 'glessen' as the diamond cutters call them – in it, but their position is such that they do not detract from the value of the stone as a gem. It is certainly the purest of all the very big stones known.

The question is whether there is any likelihood of finding the other parts which have been detached from this stone by cleavage. It is, of course, possible, but nobody can say whether or where they will be found in the mine. Diamonds are formed at very great depths from carbon dissolved in the molten basic igneous rock (blue ground), from which, under the conditions of enormous pressure and very high temperature which prevail at these depths, the carbon crystallizes out in the form of diamond. During the period of eruption the diamonds were carried to the surface with great force and the extensive friction which must have existed in the magma during the ejection through the water pipe caused the fragments to be cleaved from the original stone. They may have been blown out during the eruption, or they may still be in the volcanic chimney (diamond pipe) and may be unearthed some other day in the long and promising life of this big mine.

Sir William Crookes, the President of the Royal Society from 1913 to 1915 and recognized as one of the greatest physicists and chemists of the day, concurred with this view, believing that the 'Cullinan' constituted only the smaller part of an octahedron broken by natural process at its cleavage-planes. On the other hand, Dr J. R. Sutton, the author of *Diamond. A Descriptive Treatise*, agreed with the opinion voiced by Mr R. Weatherby, the valuator of The Diamond Corporation, that the 'Cullinan' was a whole stone as nature made it, saving minor accidents'.

Dr Sutton was writing at the time of the discovery of the 'Jonker' diamond, which has been just one of several large diamonds found in the region, the discovery of which has served to keep alive the question of the missing half of the 'Cullinan'. First came a fine stone of 334 carats found shortly after the 'Cullinan' and near the spot where it was unearthed; next came a large diamond, estimated to have weighed 1500 carats, that was found in 1919 but unfortunately disintegrated, a victim of the mine's crushing gear. Most recently have been the discovery of the 426-carat 'Niarchos' in 1954, and the 353.9-carat 'Premier Rose' in 1978.

The news of the discovery of the 'Cullinan' not unnaturally created great interest in the outside world and caused an appreciable rise in the price of Premier shares overnight. It is difficult to be impressed by certain comments in the British press which accompanied reports of the great discovery; they tended to vary from the malicious to the mendacious. For instance the *Morning Post* stated:

Yesterday, the 5/- preference shares of the company rose $\frac{1}{16}$ to £9.50; the 2/6 deferred shares rose $2\frac{3}{4}$ to £18. Thus the £80,000 capital of the company is now valued in the market at £7,240,000. There may be other and more imposing stones of the same kind in the Premier Mine. By the way, at

the last meeting of the poor little De Beers company whose deferred shares yesterday fell $\frac{1}{8}$, the Chairman stated that 'notwithstanding the fact that prospecting was carried on everywhere De Beers has as yet found no formidable rival.

The *Daily Express* added the following to its report of the discovery:

According to diamond merchants in Hatton Garden, the immense gem was the one theme of discussion. The opinion was freely expressed that the Premier Mine is destined to become the greatest of the world's diamond producers. Until now, the De Beers group has ruled the diamond market of the world and by automatically restricting the supply of diamonds has succeeded in keeping up the price of the precious stones. But now, unless the two great competitors decide to come together, a trial of strength may ensue. Such an event would mean an increase in the quantity of diamonds and a consequent fall in price.

At the same time the directors of the mining company were taking a somewhat different view of the situation, since there seemed little prospect of finding a buyer for such a diamond. Their dilemma is apparent in an extract from the Third Annual Meeting and Directors Report for the year ended 31 October 1905, which stated:

This stone is the world's record, both as regards size and colour. Your Directors have not finally decided what course to adopt regarding the eventual disposal of this enormous asset but they hope to arrive at a decision during the Financial Year. It will be noted that your Directors have included this stone in the item 'Diamonds on Hand' at the purely nominal figure of £3,290: 4/7, thus forming a very strong inner reserve.

The Premier directors also considered that if more such stones were unearthed, the value of diamonds, especially large ones, might be considerably diminished. At the time their fears seemed well-founded because between September 1903 and June 1905, no fewer than twenty-two diamonds weighing more than 100 carats had been found at Premier; four of them exceeded 300 carats, two weighed between 200 and 300 carats while sixteen weighed between 100 and 200 carats.

After being put on display at the offices of the Standard Bank in Johannesburg where it could be viewed by the public, it was decided to send the 'Cullinan' to London. Not surprisingly the transport of such a valuable gem posed problems throughout the journey. It reached Capetown safely after being hidden in the hatbox of the wife of an employee of the South African postal service. When it came to the sea voyage it was heavily insured before being despatched in February 1905 by ordinary parcel post, with a purely nominal recovery value while, as a blind, a dummy stone in a carefully sealed package was placed in the captain's safe on board a mailship and assiduously guarded by detectives throughout the voyage

to Britain. Both stones reached their destination safely, the genuine one being deposited in a bank vault. Shortly after its arrival it was taken to Buckingham Palace for inspection by King Edward VII before being returned to the vault.

For the next two years the 'Cullinan' remained a public wonder, no one being prepared to pay the asking price. The diamond was shown to many prospective customers and whenever it was removed from the bank it was insured by a 'floater' policy of £500,000 even though it was at all times guarded by a squad of detectives. A suggestion appeared in the *Transvaal Leader* that the gem be purchased by public subscription and presented to the King but nothing came of it. However, in the end a solution to the problem was found as the result of the imagination of a man who may claim to be considered one of the most magnanimous soldiers and statesmen this century has witnessed.

General Louis Botha (1862–1919) had not long before been a leader of the Boer Commandoes during the South African war and had strenuously opposed the British by force of arms;



General Louis Botha, the South African soldier and statesman, who introduced a motion authorizing the purchase of the 'Cullinan' by the government of Transvaal.

he had also been one of those who had negotiated the Treaty of Vereeniging in 1902 which put an end to the hostilities. On 6 December 1906, the British Government had issued letters patent granting self-government to the Transvaal and in the ensuing elections General Botha's party gained a majority in the Legislative Assembly. On becoming Prime Minister of the Transvaal in 1907, Botha introduced a motion authorizing the Government to acquire the 'Cullinan' and present it to the King 'in token of the loyalty of the Transvaal people and in commemoration of the grant of responsible Government'. However, there was considerable opposition to the proposal as is recorded by *The Times* correspondent in Johannesburg, whose despatch dated 19 August 1907 read as follows:

The situation created by General Botha's motion for the purchase of the Cullinan diamond is not rendered any less delicate by the circumstance that the motion was forced through the House of Assembly after a division. Whatever the advantages or disadvantages of the original proposal may have been, there is no question that the Progressives represent a very large body of a public opinion in holding that such a gift, made at a moment of appalling poverty and distress, is inopportune and unjustifiable. As Sir George Farrar said 'We are faced with the fact that owing to the financial position of the Colony and the acute depression which consequently exists large numbers of his Majesty's subjects, very many of whom proved their loyalty most unmistakably during the late war, are, through no fault of their own, daily losing their employment owing to retrenchment and in many cases are without certain means of livelihood, while large numbers are unemployed and do not know where tomorrow's meal is to come from. We cannot help thinking that it would be a source of greater satisfaction to his Majesty, to know that such people were duly provided for.' Moreover, the motion was deliberately brought in in the face of Sir George Farrar's solemn warning to General Botha and to Lord Selbourne, [High Commissioner for South Africa] that his party would feel it their unwelcome duty to oppose it. In these circumstances even those who feel the glamour of the gift most strongly regret that the Government should have disregarded Sir George Farrar's appeal for postponement and so laid themselves open to the charge of making party capital out of a motion which under happier conditions would have been endorsed spontaneously by the whole colony.

Strong stuff! Nevertheless General Botha continued to plead for unanimity in order to make the gift a national one. He said he did not contemplate fresh taxation: the Premier Company had been unable to sell the diamond and were content to accept payment over some years. Jan Smuts, the Colonial Secretary, added his opinion by stigmatizing the action of the opposition as churlish and unworthy. The Government, he said, had been accused of slowness but their motives were of the highest. Moreover, not long since the opposition had been anxious to present the Imperial Govern-

ment with a £30,000,000 loan towards the expenses of the war. They had been magnanimous; now they were most scrupulous. In the end General Botha's motion was carried by forty-two votes to nineteen in the Legislative Assembly, the Labour Party voting with the Government.

Since the proposal to present the diamond to the King had not been unanimous and opposition to it had emanated from the Progressives, who were predominantly of British stock, the government in Britain began to feel somewhat unenthusiastic about the King's acceptance of the 'Cullinan'. When the question came before the Liberal Cabinet of the day, the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, wrote to the King declaring that 'they did not really want to shirk the responsibility' – which is precisely what they did – and suggesting that 'in matters of this sort his judgement was so good that the decision might safely be left in his hands'. But young Winston Churchill, the Colonial Under-Secretary, who had been General Botha's prisoner in the Boer War, chided the Cabinet for taking a very unimaginative view. Both he and the High Commissioner for South Africa urged that the King should accept the gift while the Prince of Wales, later George V, wrote to his father, who was then abroad, telling him that he had heard from General Botha how disappointed the Dutch would be if the offer was refused. In due course the Cabinet reached a unanimous decision that refusal would be difficult and the King telegraphed from Biarritz that he would accept the gem as soon as it was officially or formally offered by General Botha.

The offer of the diamond was formally conveyed by the Transvaal Government in a telegram sent by the Deputy-Governor of the Colony to the Colonial Office on 19 October 1907. It read:

My Ministers request you to approach His Majesty The King and enquire if he would be pleased to accept on his Birthday the gift of the Cullinan diamond as a token of the loyalty and attachment of the people of the Transvaal to his Majesty's person and Throne, together with their hearty congratulations on his birthday and best wishes for a long, happy and peaceful reign.

On behalf of the King, Lord Elgin, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, replied on 9 November:

The King commands me to desire you to inform your Ministers that he has read with the greatest pleasure the communication received from them, and that he acknowledges with much satisfaction the cordial congratulations and good wishes which it conveys. His Majesty accepts for himself and his successors the valuable gift of the Cullinan diamond as being, in the words of your Ministers, a token of the loyalty and attachment of the people of the Transvaal to his Majesty's throne and person and he will cause this great and unique diamond to be kept and preserved among the historic jewels which form the heirlooms of the Crown. The King also wishes me to express his warm desire for the welfare and prosperity of the people

of the Transvaal.

Accordingly Sir Richard Solomon, the Agent-General of the Transvaal in London, and Sir Francis Hopwood, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, to whom had been entrusted the duty of presenting the diamond to the King, travelled by train in a reserved first class compartment to Wolferton Station in Norfolk, the nearest to Sandringham House where the Royal Family and guests had assembled to celebrate the King's sixty-sixth birthday. They were accompanied by a Chief Inspector and an Inspector of Scotland Yard who had actual custody of the diamond.

In both its rough and polished state the 'Cullinan' made several excursions but it is doubtful whether it ever enjoyed such protection as it did during its brief sojourn in Norfolk. One wonders whether it was solely due to the pomp and circumstances surrounding the occasion or whether there had been a tip-off that someone was planning 'something big' because the safety precautions taken in this rather remote part of rural England certainly were extraordinary. It was reported that:

The police force in the vicinity of Wolferton and Sandringham was considerably strengthened. A large number of detectives were assembled on the platform of the station, a considerable body of country policemen in plain clothes guarded the outside of the station, and along the whole route to Sandringham House, uniformed constables were stationed at short intervals.

On their arrival at Wolferton the party

was met by an Inspector, Chief of His Majesty's private detective force as they entered a closed carriage, and policemen on bicycles rode on either side; behind it in a wagonette were other plain-clothes Superintendents of the Norfolk Constabulary; other detectives followed also driving.

The same precautions were taken on the return journey.

The Transvaal Government paid £150,000 for the 'Cullinan'; as it exacted a tax of 60 per cent upon all diamonds mined within its jurisdiction, the actual outlay was only 40 per cent of that amount. The gift did not include the cost of cutting it. After consultation with Mr Arthur Levy, the senior partner of the firm of diamond dealers M. J. Levy and Nephews, of Holborn Viaduct, it was decided to entrust the task of cutting to the celebrated firm, I. J. Asscher of Amsterdam. They had been the cutters of the 'Excelsior' diamond in 1903. So three members of the Asscher family travelled to London and the diamond was handed over to them at the Colonial Office on 23 January 1908. The three men decided to return by train from Calais to Amsterdam, choosing to cross from Dover to Calais because it was the shortest route, thereby reducing the perils of the sea to the minimum. Unfortunately for them their train was delayed by fog and they missed their connection at Brussels and were obliged to spend a night in the city before

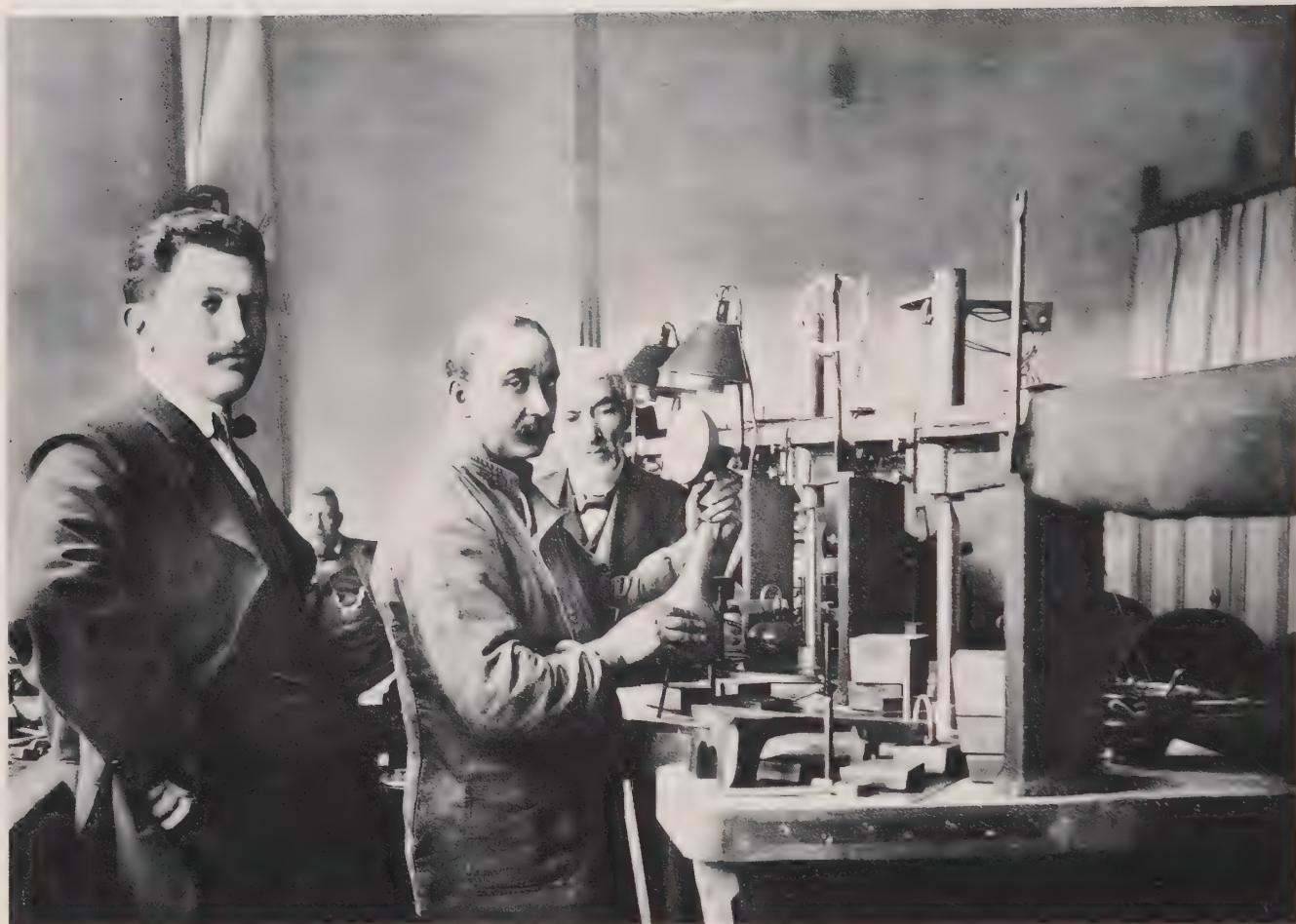
continuing their journey the following morning.

The task of cutting such a huge stone presented difficulties at each stage of the operation. So large a crystal could not be cut into a single gem: it would, therefore, have to be cleaved or sawn. For some time before it arrived in Amsterdam experts at Asschers had been considering how this could be best done so as to avoid the flaws which existed inside the stone and obtain the largest gems possible. After the diamond had come into their hands they continued to study it closely for about a fortnight and to practise with over-sized tools on glass and waxed models before coming to a final decision.

It was thought inadvisable to employ the saw for splitting the 'Cullinan' because there was always the risk that the sawing disc, having penetrated some distance into the stone, might bend and so cause the cut to deviate from the desired line. Therefore, it was decided to cleave the stone. The making of the groove into which the steel cleaving knife is inserted proved a laborious process with the 'Cullinan' because it had to be made about 6.5mm (about a quarter of an inch) deep – around three times deeper than usual. The work was begun on 6 February 1908, and by the afternoon of 10 February the stone was ready to be split.

Joseph Asscher, who was recognized as the most skilful cleaver in the firm, clamped the diamond in a specially made holder and inserted his cleavage knife in the groove which he had ground in its surface. Then, as his assistants watched with excitement, he struck the blade with a hammer consisting of a heavy steel rod. At the first blow the knife broke and the diamond remained intact. With beads of sweat on his face, in tense silence, stretched almost to breaking point, Asscher fitted a second cleavage knife and tapped it sharply. On this occasion the diamond split into two pieces, weighing 1977.5 and 1040.5 (old) carats, with a few splinters. The story that Joseph Asscher collapsed in a dead faint is apocryphal; as his nephew, Louis Asscher, has remarked, 'No Asscher would faint over an operation on a diamond. He's much more likely to open a bottle of champagne!'

On 14 February the task of dividing the larger of the two pieces was taken in hand. This operation proved even more anxious than the cleaving of the original stone. Its shape at the point where the split had to be made was such that had an attempt been made to carry it out in the usual manner, the fingers of the craftsman's left hand, with which he held the knife in position, would have been liable to be hit with the hammer. Nervousness induced by this possibility might have been sufficient to have spoiled the blow with the probable result of damage to the stone. It was, therefore, decided after much consultation and with the approval of all the experts concerned to make an innovation in the accustomed methods of diamond splitting by employing a knife with two handles, which was held in the groove, not by the cleaver, but by two assistants. The results completely justified the experiment – for experiment it was, though one which, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, was unavoidable – and all the subsequent splittings required for the stone were performed



likewise. Curiously enough the same two-handed knife broke just as the last of them was completed.

The next process, of grinding and polishing the various parts into which the diamond had been divided, was started on 2 March. Work was begun on the largest piece while the second largest piece was held in reserve. No decision had yet been taken about what should be done with the latter and it was considered advisable to have it available for the production of a large gem lest any mishap occur in dealing with the largest piece. In the end, the King, who followed the process of cutting the 'Cullinan' with much interest, wished it to be cut into a second large gem (Cullinan II), and the cutting was begun on 29 May. For the polishing of all the gems a special room was constructed on the third floor of the factory that could be overlooked from the windows of the private office of the heads of the firm. All the subsequent operations were carried out here under the supervision of Henri Koe, a polisher of exceptional ability who had been twenty years with Asschers. Mr Koe was a Londoner by birth though his parents were Dutch. Owing to the size of the stones special appliances had to be provided for the task and special precautions taken to prevent them from accidental damage – for instance the floor of the room was thickly carpeted to

Members of the Asscher family about to cleave the 'Cullinan'.

minimize the risk of them being chipped if dropped.

When it came to the polishing of the 'Cullinan' gems specially large tools were again necessary. The diameter of the scaife was increased from the customary size of about 240mm (9½ inches) to double that size, while it was thought prudent to reduce the normal speed of 2400 revolutions a minute to 2000. The dop made for the 'Cullinan' measured about 140mm (5½ inches) in diameter and weighed over 8 kg (18 lb). In addition the weights placed upon the dop as a means of forcing it down against the scaife weighed as much as 20.5 to 25kg (45 to 55 lb). It was realized that if the diamond were brought suddenly or roughly in contact with the cutting disc it would run the risk of being damaged or even shattered so Henri Koe fitted up a device whereby whenever the dop was raised a thick pad of felt was automatically interposed between it and the disc, thus ensuring that if the diamond had slipped from his hand it would have fallen on a soft substance.

The most thorough precautions were taken for the safety of the 'Cullinan'. Nobody was permitted to leave or enter the cutting room unaccompanied by a member of the firm. At



night the diamond was kept in a strongroom guarded by four policemen and every half hour a night-watchman made a certain mark at the strongroom to show everything was properly guarded. The walls of the strongroom, of iron and cement, were 0.685 metres (2.25 feet) thick and the door was opened by a combination known only to the three heads of the firm. Within, the safe was hidden behind a mahogany cupboard with two handles but no locks visible. There were nine locks, however, behind a sliding panel, and two safes in one of which was the diamond, and the door of the safe was of 200-mm (8-inch) steel.

The task of faceting and polishing the gems cut from the 'Cullinan' began on 3 March 1908 and took three polishers, working fourteen hours a day, eight months to complete. If Joseph Asscher did not faint, Henri Koe suffered a nervous breakdown as a result of the strain imposed on him and was sent to South Africa to recover. The work on the greatest of all diamonds was finished on 12 September and the resulting gems were brought to London by members of the Asscher family where they were deposited in a bank.

On 21 November the two largest gems were formally presented to King Edward VII at Windsor.

The total weight of the gems cut from the 'Cullinan' amounted to 1055.90 carats, this represented a loss in weight in cutting of 65.25 per cent. The nine principal diamonds are:

Cullinan I	530.20 carats (metric)	Pear-shape
Cullinan II	317.40 carats (metric)	Cushion-shape
Cullinan III	94.40 carats (metric)	Pear-shape

The nine principal gems cut from the 'Cullinan' in their rough state.

Cullinan IV	63.60 carats (metric)	Cushion-shape
Cullinan V	18.80 carats (metric)	Heart-shape
Cullinan VI	11.50 carats (metric)	Marquise
Cullinan VII	8.80 carats (metric)	Marquise
Cullinan VIII	6.80 carats (metric)	Oblong-shape brilliant
Cullinan IX	4.40 carats (metric)	Pear-shape

The magnificent 'Cullinan I' which measures 58.9 by 45.4mm (2.3 by 1.7 inches) is by far the largest cut diamond in the world; on account of its great size it was decided to increase the number of facets in a brilliant-cut to seventy-four. King Edward VII decided to call it the 'Great Star of Africa' and ordered it to be set in the British Royal Sceptre where it has remained ever since. The Crown Jewellers had to re-design the Sceptre to accommodate the great diamond and they successfully achieved this without upsetting the Sceptre's magnificent and traditional style.

'Cullinan II' which measures 44.9 by 40.4mm (1.7 by 1.5 inches) and is cut with 64 facets, is the second largest cut diamond in existence. It is set in the brow of the British Imperial State Crown.

Two days after they had been presented to the King, these two great diamonds were placed among the Crown Jewels in the Tower of London for inspection by the public. However, it would appear that the authorities there were hardly conver-

sant with displaying the King's 'historic jewels which form the heirlooms of the Crown' because, incredibly, in its issue of 25 November, *The Times* reported that:

Their magnificent fire and brilliance are scarcely, however, exhibited to full advantage, since those responsible for putting them in position have not remembered that a brilliant is meant to be looked at with its table facing the observer, and placed them so that their tables are turned downwards, and consequently only their collets and the portions below their girdles are presented to view. It is to be hoped that this mistake will be promptly rectified, and the public given the opportunity of seeing the faces of the stones, instead of merely their backs.

Fortunately that mistake has been rectified and the two stones are today on permanent display in the underground Crown Jewel House at Waterloo Barracks within the Tower.

King Edward VII expressed a wish to see the actual implements with which the cleavage of the 'Cullinan' had been performed. So Messrs Asscher presented him with the knife and hammer which were also for a time exhibited at the Tower. In the edge of the knife, which bears the inscription 'Cullinan Gekloofd' and the date, may be noticed a nick where a portion of the steel broke away as the stone split into two pieces. Nowadays they are on permanent display in the Asscher factory.

The 'Great Star of Africa' and 'Cullinan II' are Crown Jewels. By arrangement, the 'chippings' from the 'Cullinan' were to be retained by Messrs Asscher in remuneration for their services, and a small part presented to Mr (later Sir) Arthur Levy and Mr Alexander Levy, who had acted as expert supervisors of the operation in Amsterdam. The 'chippings' constituted the whole product of the 'Cullinan' except for the two principal stones. The King immediately bought 'Cullinan VI' as a present for Queen Alexandra; it is now a drop pendant in an emerald and diamond necklace owned by Queen Elizabeth II. The other six large gems, ninety-six small brilliants and a quantity of unpolished fragments weighing about 19.5 carats were bought by the Transvaal Government in 1910, again on the insistence of General Botha and on the suggestion of Messrs Levy and Nephews who feared that they might pass into private ownership. It was their intention that they should be presented to the Princess of Wales (later Queen Mary) on the occasion of her proposed visit to South Africa with her husband for the purpose of opening the first Parliament of the Union of South Africa. The visit had to be cancelled because of the death of King Edward VII in 1910: instead the diamonds were presented to Queen Mary at Marlborough House by the High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, on behalf of the Government and people of South Africa.

Together with 'Cullinan II' the third and fourth gems have become known as the 'Lesser Stars of Africa'. 'Cullinan III' and 'Cullinan IV' were originally set in the new crown made for Queen Mary on the occasion of the Coronation of King

George in 1911 but in such a way that they could be detached for personal wear. Queen Elizabeth II inherited these two gems from her grandmother: they have become affectionately known as 'Granny's Chips' and are now set in a brooch. When the Queen paid a State Visit to the Netherlands in March 1958 she wore this brooch during a tour of the Asscher factory: this was the first time the diamonds had returned to Holland for half a century. Her Majesty wears the heart-shape 'Cullinan V' in a brooch; 'Cullinan VII' and 'Cullinan VIII' are together set in another brooch, while 'Cullinan IX' is set in a ring. These smaller gems frequently travel with the Queen.

One of the ninety-six small brilliants cut from the 'Cullinan' was exhibited in London in June 1932. It was named the 'Romyn' after Jacob Romijn (later Romyn) who had worked in Amsterdam, first as a cleaver then as a diamond broker: in the latter capacity he came into contact with many of the leading firms including Messrs I. J. Asscher. Jacob Romijn was one of the joint founders of the first trade union in the diamond industry. Subsequently he became involved in the diamond industry in South Africa as well as in that country's political situation in which he had dealings with General Louis Botha.

More recently two others, a marquise weighing 2.5 carats and a brilliant weighing 1.5 carats, were displayed at the exhibition 'The Jewel Box 1966' arranged in Johannesburg by De Beers to commemorate the centenary of the discovery of diamonds in South Africa. They had been a gift to General Botha. Presumably the General must also have received a third gem because in April 1977 Sothebys auctioned in Johannesburg a marquise, weighing 1.58 carats, mounted in a plain gold ring, which he had presented to his daughter Helena, the late Mrs de Waal, on her seventeenth birthday. Known as the 'De Waal' diamond, it was bought by a Johannesburg jeweller for 25,000 rand – more than three times the estimated price. An official of the De Beers diamond laboratory was able to examine the stone and described it as being 'without a shadow of doubt the purest form of diamond I have ever encountered'.

Unlike so many historic diamonds the 'Cullinan' has enjoyed a peaceful existence; the only cloud on its horizon was caused by the controversy surrounding its presentation to King Edward VII by the Transvaal Government but even that gesture served to bring about a degree of reconciliation between previously warring factions. However, one strange episode deserves to be recounted.

In 1907, within two years of the discovery of the great stone, a Black South African named Johannes Paulus, said to have worked at one time in the Premier Mine, indicated that he had an enormous diamond in his possession for which he was asking £1000 in gold. Paulus said that it was larger than the great diamond which had recently been given to the King. A farmer, and apparently a notorious criminal, Johannes Fourie, heard of Paulus' diamond and decided to contact him.

OPPOSITE: 'Cullinan I' and 'II', the two largest diamonds in the world. 'Cullinan I' is known as the 'Great Star of Africa'.



Accordingly a meeting was arranged between the two men at dead of night on the lonely veldt between Premier and Pretoria. Fourie produced a bag and opened it to reveal a handful of sovereigns but Paulus, already suspicious, plunged his hand deep in the bag and found under the sovereigns only some metal washers. He fled and was not seen again. But also present at the mysterious meeting was a Detective-Superintendent of the Police who, together with a doctor, had accompanied Fourie to the rendezvous. This man declared that in the dim light of the lamp he saw what appeared to be a huge diamond 'one side flat and smooth, the other obviously broke from a much larger stone'.

Fourie did not give up hope in his search for the diamond and later he learned that a tribal Chief, Amos Mathibe, living in the vicinity of Pretoria, had obtained a very large diamond. He became involved in the intrigues surrounding the chief and after the latter's death was sentenced to death as one of his murderers by poison. Before he was hanged Fourie said: I alone know the man who has the other half of the great diamond. He is a man of Mathibe's tribe. Had it not been for the diamond I should never have got into this trouble, for while searching for it I got to know this business of the tribe.

In 1920, after the First World War, there was a further

report of the existence of this diamond, still believed to be the missing part of the 'Cullinan'. A German woman, owner of a boarding-house in a small town in the Northern Transvaal, had among her lodgers a prospector who is alleged to have given her a present of a large piece of diamond, struck off a monster stone by means of a chisel. Apparently the woman returned to Germany taking the diamond with her.

Finally, in 1923 it was rumoured that the huge diamond had turned up in the possession of a Black South African living in a kraal near Krugersdorp, a few miles west of Johannesburg. He was said to have asked £1000 for the stone. Some citizens of Krugersdorp and the neighbourhood organized an expedition to the kraal to do business with the owner but on their arrival he was stated to be unwell and in no condition to transact any business. Since then there has only been silence and the mystery remains unexplained.



ABOVE 'Cullinan III' and 'IV'.



ABOVE *The Imperial Sceptre of Great Britain: Edward VII ordered the 'Great Star of Africa' to be set in it.*

OPPOSITE *The Imperial State Crown of Great Britain: 'Cullinan II' is set in the front.*



STAR OF THE EAST

Nothing is known of either the source or the location of the cutting of this fine 94.80 carat, 'D' coloured pear-shape. It is possible that the jewel-loving Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Abd al-Hamid II, may have once owned it. In the year before his deposition and exile in 1909, Cartier's in Paris definitely owned the 'Star of the East': it was mounted on a chain beneath a hexagonal emerald of 34 carats and pearl of 32 grains.

In the same year of 1908 a young American couple were on honeymoon in Paris, each of whom had received \$100,000 from their respective fathers as a wedding present. Edward B. McLean was the heir to the dollar millions of several newspapers, including the *Washington Post*; his bride, Evalyn Walsh, was the daughter of a successful prospector who had made a fortune with his discovery of the Camp Bird gold mine in Colorado. Mrs McLean was also a lover of jewels so was entranced when Pierre Cartier showed her the 'Star of the East'. 'Ned,' she said to her husband, 'it's got me. I'll never get away from the spell of this.' Her husband – who was unimpressed by jewels – replied, 'A shock might break the spell. Suppose you ask the price of this magnificence.' But the young bride refused to listen to him and purchased the 'Star of the East' for \$120,000, in the process using up some of his paternal wedding money. Mrs McLean pointed out the diamond's merits as an investment and that she could tell her own father that it represented a double gift to cover both her wedding and Christmas presents.

Two years afterwards, the McLeans returned to Paris and Mrs McLean began the negotiations which led to her eventual purchase of the 'Hope' diamond. The two gems were to remain in her ownership for forty years or so, often being worn on the same necklace. On another occasion she was photographed wearing the 'Star of the East' as an aigrette with what appeared to be a feather from some exotic bird in a diamond bandeau: the 'Hope' lay somewhat lower as the pendant to a pearl necklace.

In 1949 Harry Winston bought both diamonds from the estate of Mrs McLean. Two years later he sold the 'Star of the East' and a fancy-coloured oval-cut diamond to King Farouk of Egypt. By the time of the King's overthrow in 1952 Mr Winston had still not received payment for the two stones but three years later an Egyptian Government legal board, entrusted with the disposal of the former royal assets, ruled in



Evalyn Walsh McLean who owned the 'Star of the East' and the 'Hope'. Another of her diamonds, the 31.26 carat 'McClean', was bought by the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and sold by Sotheby's in Geneva, April 1987.

his favour. Nevertheless it needed several years of litigation before he was able to reclaim the 'Star of the East' from a safe-deposit box in Switzerland.

In 1969 Harry Winston sold the 'Star of the East', the new owner asking him to remount the gem as the pendant to a V-shaped diamond necklace to which two flawless, matching pear-shapes could be attached. The 'Star of the East' was displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1978, at a reception marking the fiftieth anniversary of Harry Winston Inc.

PORTUGUESE

Diamonds were discovered in Brazil in 1725, and for the next hundred years the Portuguese monarchs derived great wealth from the country by establishing a royal right to every diamond weighing more than 20 carats. This right lasted until Brazil claimed its independence in 1822. Among the large diamonds found during the early period of Brazilian diamond mining were two giants weighing 630 and 657 carats.

Theoretically it is possible, therefore, that this emerald-cut of 127.02 metric carats may have originated in Brazil. In addition, as has been asserted, the gem may at some time have been among the Portuguese Crown Jewels. If that is so then it must have been before 1910 when Portugal became a republic and the last King, Manuel II, went into exile. It was not among the jewels that remained in Lisbon.

On the other hand Laurence Krashes in his book, *Harry Winston, The Ultimate Jeweller* states that no information has been uncovered to substantiate the diamond's ownership by the Portuguese kings. The 'Portuguese' is believed to have been recut to its present shape from a cushion-cut that weighed 150 carats: the rough stone is said to have been found in South Africa in 1912. This is possible because that year yielded two large stones, both from Jagersfontein, that could

have been manufactured to produce a gem of 150 carats.

According to Mr Krashes, the New York newspapers on 13 March 1928 reported the sale of an emerald-cut diamond to Peggy Hopkins Joyce, a lady given to the collection of rich husbands and large gems. In 1951 Harry Winston bought the diamond from her and then frequently displayed it in the United States in his Court of Jewels. In 1957 an international industrialist purchased the 'Portuguese' from him but five years later traded it back. In 1963 Mr Winston presented it to the Smithsonian Institution where it remains on display today. The diamond has been described as the 'unknown' among the great collection housed there, an epithet which it does not deserve because it is a very fine stone. Its shape is unusual: it has a nearly octagonal outline, the corners being almost the same length as the sides and ends.

The 'Portuguese' measures 32.75 by 29.65mm (1.29 by 1.17 inches) and is 16.01mm (0.62 inch) deep. In addition to its brilliant colour flashes, the diamond has a slight milky fluorescence that causes it to 'glow' even in artificial light.

The 'Portuguese' diamond which was presented by Harry Winston in 1963 to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.



TERESCHENKO

To gem historians and, judging by the reaction of the Press, to the general public as well, it is always something of an event when the existence of an unusual stone, hitherto known only to a handful of people, becomes more widely known. This is what occurred in 1984 when Christie's announced that they would be auctioning this fancy-blue, pear-shaped diamond of 42.92 metric carats. Its weight places it as the fourth largest recorded fancy-blue diamond.

The original owners of the gem, the Tereshchenko family, were sugar-kings in pre-1917 Russia. One member, Mikhail (1886-1956), who held advanced political views, became Kerensky's Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1917. Four years before, Mikhail had deposited the diamond with Cartier's in Paris. In 1915 he instructed Cartier's to mount the stone as the centre-piece in a necklace containing a variety of fancy-coloured diamonds. The jewel was unique in combining forty-six marquise, round, pear and heart-shaped diamonds ranging from 0.13 to 2.88 carats. Their various colours were described as 'jonquil, lemon, aquamarine, sultana-green, gold button, grey, blue, crevet, lilac, rose, old port, madeira and topaz'. As such, the necklace ranked among the most important creations of this century in fancy-coloured diamonds.

In 1916, on the eve of the Russian Revolution, the 'Tereshchenko' diamond was secretly taken out of Russia. Then it passed into private ownership.

Like other fancy-blues, the 'Tereshchenko' belongs to the rare category of Type IIb diamonds. It is not known where it was found: theoretically it may have come from either the Kollur alluvial deposits in India or from the Premier Mine in South Africa. However, by 1913 the Premier Mine had been in existence for barely ten years and, since there is no report or record of it having yielded such a rare and unusual gem, it must be assumed that the diamond is of Indian origin.

Days before the sale in Geneva, four dealers contacted Christie's separately, offering to buy the diamond directly at the estimated price, between three and four million Swiss Francs, thereby saving at least the 10 per cent charge added to the selling price. Christie's refused the offers. In addition a syndicate suggested that the auctioneers ought to have the diamond certified by the Gemological Institute of America. They pointed out that while the certificate of the Swiss laboratory in Lucerne, mentioned in the sale catalogue, was impeccable it would make commercial sense to have the diamond certified by the GIA because its certificate was better known, particularly in the Middle East and Asia. A sale would thus be made easier in those regions. Christie's duly obliged: the gem was flown to the New York branch of the GIA



The 'Tereshchenko' diamond.

and was returned with the necessary documents.

The 'Tereshchenko' came up for sale on 14 November 1984. At 10 p.m. excitement ran high in the brightly lit ballroom of the Hotel Richemond when the Chairman of Christie's announced: 'We are now selling Lot 454. We shall start the bidding at three million Swiss Francs.' The price seemed to surprise no one in the room which was full of important dealers from all over the world and several billionaires too. It took forty seconds for the bidding to reach six and a half million Swiss Francs, a figure far in excess of Christie's most optimistic estimate. Ultimately a shout of 'Ten million Swiss Francs' came from the back of the room and the auctioneer brought down his hammer. An unidentified Saudi Arabian dealer had won the prize. The figure of \$4.6 million (£3,180,000) became the world record price for a diamond.

KIMBERLEY

There is an old legend about the finding of diamonds in Griqualand West which George Beet, once known as Kimberley's 'Grand Old Man', recounts in his book on the diamond fields. It runs:

After the passing of many moons, and when there was great sorrow in the land, a spirit, pitying the wants and difficulties of mankind, descended from Heaven with a huge basket filled with diamonds. The spirit flew over the Vaal River, starting beyond Delpot's Hope, and dropping diamonds as it sped on; past Barkly West and Klipdam it flew along towards the place now called Kimberley, ever throwing out handful after handful of gems from its huge basket. On reaching Kimberley, where at that time large trees were growing, one of the spirit's big toes got caught in a branch of camelthorn tree, and tripping, it upset the basket, emptying out all the diamonds, and thus forming the Kimberley mines.

This may not quite aspire to the level of Hans Andersen or the brothers Grimm, but it does perhaps go a little way to explain some of the mystery and history that visitors to the unofficial Capital of the Diamond World often come to feel about the place. On a less poetical, more realistic level, Beet also relates an old story told to him by a digger:

One of my friend's servants, a venerable Griqua, who claimed to have lived in the vicinity of the mines in the days when the land there was virgin veld, told him that the place had been a favourite hunting ground of the Griquas, as it was well covered by 'groot klompies' of camelthorn trees, which the larger game, and even lions, loved to frequent. He stated that immediately after rains a peculiar mist arose from the ground, and the natives came to believe that the place was 'spooked' or haunted. This peculiar mist is easily understandable, as white residents of about thirty years ago, and even later, will recall how during the rainy season, sulphuric fumes arose from the reef on the south side and enveloped the town.

But it was not so much the mist as the dust and the flies which remained the abiding memory of one of early Kimberley's most distinguished visitors, the novelist Trollope. Locals who hoped that he might report more favourably upon the place were to be disappointed: 'Dust so thick,' he commented, 'that the sufferer fears to remove it lest the raising of it may aggravate the evil, the flies so numerous that one hardly dares slaughter them by ordinary means lest their dead bodies should become noisome.' However, Trollope was impressed by the 'Big Hole' – the Kimberley Mine in its early days.

Fourteen years later another distinguished comer to the

diamond fields, Lord Randolph Churchill, father of Winston Churchill, was equally unimpressed by both the town and its product. On one occasion he toured the mines accompanied by the wife of a De Beers official and was shown a pile of diamonds which drew forth his celebrated comment: 'All for the vanity of woman,' to which his companion tartly replied, 'And for the depravity of man.'

Among the pile which Lord Randolph saw would certainly have been yellow octahedrons – 'capes' as they are known in the trade – which have become a trademark of the local output. Doubtless Tavernier's reservations concerning the 'citron' tinge of the 'Florentine' diamond would have been expressed in stronger terms had he seen these specimens. It is, therefore, appropriate that the diamond named after Kimberley should be yellowish in colour. Although this stone, weighing 490 carats, is reported to have come from the Kimberley Mine, it is far more likely that it came from the De Beers or Dutoitspan mines. The largest diamond on record to have come from the 'Big Hole' weighed merely 213½ (old) carats.

The 'Kimberley' was cut to a flawless emerald-cut of 70 carats in 1921. Then in 1958 its owners, the celebrated New York firm of Baumgold Bros, recut it to its existing weight of 55.09 (metric) carats in order to improve the proportions and increase the brilliancy of the gem. It was then valued at \$500,000. The 'Kimberley' returned to South Africa in 1966 when it featured in the Diamond Pavilion in Johannesburg. In 1971 Baumgold Bros sold it to a private collector in Texas.



The 'Kimberley' diamond.

UNZUE HEART



Some accounts refer to this rare diamond as the 'Eugénie Blue' although it is now recognized that there is no evidence of its having been owned by the Empress. Had she owned it, might the Empress Eugénie not have chosen to flee with this valuable gem rather than the diamond which is named after her? However, a French connection does exist because the cutting firm of Atanik Eknayan of Neuilly, Paris cut this heart-shape, weighing 30.82 metric carats and of a rare dark blue colour, in 1909 and 1910. This date raises the question whether the rough stone came from India or Africa.

In 1910 Cartier's purchased the diamond and sold it to an

The 'Unzue Heart' diamond.

Argentinian woman named Mrs Unzue; it was then set in a lily-of-the-valley corsage. Van Cleef & Arpels acquired the gem in 1953, and exhibited it as the pendant to a necklace valued at \$300,000; they sold this item to a European titled family. In 1959 Harry Winston acquired the diamond, selling it five years later, mounted in a ring, to Marjorie Merriweather Post. Finally Mrs Merriweather Post donated the 'Unzue Heart' to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington where it is on display today.

QUEEN OF HOLLAND



There are differing points of view concerning the provenance of this notable cushion-cut diamond of 135.92 metric carats. The Dutch firm F. Friedman & Co. cut it into its present shape in 1904. They owned it for at least a score of years because they were its exhibitors at the 1925 Paris Exhibition of Arts and Industry. The Dutch Sovereign from whom the stone takes its name was Queen Wilhelmina who reigned from 1890 to 1948.

These facts indicate the likelihood of the 'Queen of Holland' having been mined in South Africa; nothing is known of the diamond's earlier history until it arrived in Amsterdam at a time when numerous South African diamonds were finding

The 'Queen of Holland', named after Queen Wilhelmina.

their way there. Yet there are experts who, after examining it, think that the 'Queen of Holland' is a typical Golconda stone. It has been classified as an 'intense blue': although it is a white diamond it does possess a definite blue tint, rather like the colour of cigarette smoke. The Gemological Institute of America has graded the 'Queen of Holland' as 'internally flawless' and 'D' colour; the only larger diamond which has been classified thus is the 'Premier Rose'.

Whether or not the 'Queen of Holland' came from the Golconda fields, it does have an Indian connection for sure,

because in 1930 it attracted the attention of Shri Kumar Ranjitsinhji, the Maharajah of Nawanagar (1872–1933). He made his name first as a great cricketer then as an enlightened ruler. After coming down from Cambridge, he played for Sussex (captaining the county from 1899 to 1903), and no less than fifteen times for England versus Australia. It has been recorded that whenever he batted 'he evoked an atmosphere of magic by the effortless grace and speed with which he scored runs' – qualities which, almost a century later, are found in abundance in so many of his countrymen's performances. After Ranjitsinhji succeeded as Maharajah of Nawanagar in 1906 he became a progressive ruler and statesman. He represented the Indian States at the League of Nations Assembly in 1920 and ten years later he attended the first Round Table Conference to consider the constitution of India.

The Maharajah's interest in the 'Queen of Holland' diamond was aroused in 1930. In his book *The Magic of Diamonds* Albert Monnickendam relates how he received a telephone call from the Prince's Court Jeweller asking him to visit the Maharajah at his magnificent house at Staines, outside London. After lunch he accompanied the Maharajah to a large room flooded with north light from a bay window. As well as the Maharajah, his ADC, the Court Jeweller and a powerfully built servant in Indian clothes were present. Mr Monnickendam has written:

The reason for my attendance was soon explained. A very important diamond had been offered to Ranji Singh for purchase; and although he was a keen judge himself, and had already consulted several experts, he wished to have a final opinion before making a decision. In his native tongue he spoke a few words to his servant, who quickly extracted from a safe a large gold jewel box. His Highness asked me to sit near him and to my amazement opened the lid of the box and took out a magnificent diamond of about 130 carats set in a pendant. He placed it in my hands asking, 'What do you think of this?'

On examination I found the stone to be absolutely perfect, of the finest colour and quality. In fact it resembled the famous Regent diamond in every way. Whilst I was examining the diamond, I felt the Maharajah's eyes continually watching me, and when I looked up there was an expression of pleasure and hope on his face. It was obvious that he was greatly fascinated by the stone. When I told him that it was one of the finest diamonds in the world, and that it must be a famous stone, he told me that it came from the Russian crown jewels, but did not mention its name ... When I was asked its value I put it at approximately £250,000, though no true market price can be given for such a stone....

The Maharajah of Nawanagar did purchase the 'Queen of Holland' and Cartier's set it as the centrepiece of the pendant to the magnificent ceremonial necklace of the Prince. Jacques Cartier, who assembled the necklace, referred to it as 'a really superb realization of a connoisseur's dream'. Cartier's even-



Ranjitsinhji, the Maharajah of Nawanagar, a noted cricketer and statesman who owned the 'Queen of Holland'.

tually bought the diamond from the Maharajah's family and sent it to their London branch in 1960 where it was on offer. In 1978 Mr William Goldberg of New York purchased the diamond and had it recut from its former weight of 136.25 carats to its existing weight. He sold it the same year for around \$7,000,000.

MAHJAL



In November 1983, Christie's auctioned in Geneva two very fine yellow diamonds, both clearly of South African origin: a cushion shape of 139.38 metric carats and a rectangular cushion shape of 132.42 metric carats. The larger of the two, known as the 'Mahjal', was sold for 1,320,000 Swiss Francs (£412,500). It is said to have been worn as a turban piece by Jagatjit Singh Bahadur, Maharajah of Kapurthala, a small princely state in the Punjab.

The Maharajah of Kapurthala (1872–1949) was a colourful figure. He was entitled to a salute (personal) of fifteen guns

The 'Mahjal' diamond.

and salute (local permanent) of fifteen. On a quieter note he was the owner of a vast array of clocks which necessitated the employment of a servant for the express purpose of keeping them wound up. He was also a great lover of France which led him to build a palace closely modelled on Versailles; the incongruity of such a building within sight of the snow-capped Himalayas was not unnaturally apt to take visitors by surprise.

INDORE PEARS

These two diamonds are linked to the 'Malabar Hill Murder', an excellent title, no doubt, for a detective story, but nevertheless a real crime with a colourful background with which readers of the British and Indian presses were regaled at the time.

In January 1925, it happened that one evening at an hour when the hanging gardens of Malabar Hill, one of the most salubrious parts of Bombay, were crowded with people taking the air, an official of the Bombay Corporation was driving along the ridge of the hill, accompanied by a friend and a Muslim woman. Suddenly their car was attacked by another, full of armed men. The official was murdered and the other occupants badly injured. Four British officers passing by went to the aid of the victims, and a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers, though thrice wounded, managed to detain one of the assailants who was later found to have 2000 rupees on him. The Press reported that the evidence had disclosed that robbery was not the motive for the crime, thought to have been one of revenge or an attempt at abduction. *The Times of*

London stated that the Bombay police were offering a reward of 10,000 rupees for information but at the same time added darkly that 'it is feared however that the organization behind the gang is so powerful, wealthy and unscrupulous, that it would offer even greater inducements to remain silent'.

During an earlier case before the Bombay High Court it was revealed that the Muslim woman had been a dancing girl at the Court of Tukoji Rao III, Maharajah of Indore, one of the three great Maratha states in central India. Her name was Mumtaz Begum, and she had been one of the many concubines of the thirty-four-year-old Prince. He was captivated by her, but alas she did not return his feelings. While the entourage of the fabulously rich Maharajah was under way, the girl succeeded in jumping off his private train and escaping to Amritsar, thence to Bombay where she came under the protection of a rich merchant. It was agreed that the crime on Malabar Hill could not be ignored: Mumtaz

The 'Indore Pears' diamonds.



Begum had recognized her assailants who were revealed as an aide-de-camp of the Maharajah, a Captain of the Indore Infantry, a Sub-Inspector of the Indore Imperial Lancers and members of the Indore Mounted Police. The participation of the Maharajah in the crime was never made public but he was given the choice of either appearing at the subsequent official inquiry or of abdicating in favour of his son. In the following year he chose the latter course.

While he was travelling in Switzerland after his abdication, the former Maharajah met Nancy Anne Miller, a rich young American from Seattle, Washington. Amid much publicity the couple were married in 1928, the bride having embraced the

Hindu religion in preparation for her marriage. Among the jewels which she came to wear were two pear-shaped diamonds weighing 46.95 and 46.70 metric carats; after her divorce they were sold to Harry Winston. Mr Winston had the gems recut to 46.39 and 44.14 carats and shown in his famous exhibition called 'The Court of Jewels'. In 1953 he sold them to a client from Philadelphia, repurchasing them five years later and selling them to another client in New York. Then in 1976 Mr Winston bought the 'Indore Pears' yet again before selling them to a member of a royal family. Finally Christie's auctioned the diamonds in Geneva in November 1980.

RED DIAMOND

Among diamonds of unusual colour those of a red hue are extremely rare. Edwin Streeter related that he had bought one weighing just a carat which subsequently he sold for £800. It was known as the 'Halphen Red Diamond', presumably because it was at some time owned by that prominent nineteenth century dealer in Paris. Streeter adds that a fine red specimen was found in Borneo but was not of so deep a red as the 'Halphen' diamond. This diamond, therefore, weighing 5.05 metric carats, is probably the largest example of its kind.

In 1913 a South African geologist, Dr H. Harger, had predicted that rich alluvial deposits in an area of the Western Transvaal awaited discovery. His prophecy was fulfilled in 1926 when he found fifty stones in the river-gravels on a farm near Lichtenburg.

The result of Harger's find was to cause several of the most spectacular diamond rushes in South Africa, in 1926 and 1927. When so many diggers sought to establish claims on the diggings, such rushes were organized on an official basis; an official appeared, read a proclamation, raised his hand and gave the signal to start. With a roar the line surged forward: there may not have been any four-minute milers – sometimes there were men on crutches participating – but within moments the runners had come to a halt and thousands of pegs had been stuck into the ground, each one demonstrating somebody's hope of making a fortune.

The main rush at Lichtenburg took place on 20 August 1926 when 6000 people (the number may have been as high as 10,000) ran off in response to the starter's signal to peg claims in the alluvial soil. Within three and a quarter years Lichtenburg had produced more more than £10,000,000 worth of diamonds, which were sold by diggers impervious to the current state of the diamond market. Coming as it did then, the production from the Lichtenburg field contributed hugely

to the ensuing weakness and almost collapse of the diamond trade in the late 1920s. Today a few diggers remain on the site producing just a handful of diamonds each month.

One unusual stone at least came from Lichtenburg: it was a 35-carat piece of boart. After some haggling over the price, a diamond broker named Houthakker, who was a regular visitor to the diggings, paid £8 per carat for it. Houthakker showed the stone to Sir Ernest Oppenheimer who, recognizing its unusual qualities, suggested that it might be sent to Amsterdam for cleaving or polishing. So the diamond was sent to the office of the Goudvis Brothers in that city. When it arrived and the brothers looked at it the youngest brother at once said that the broker must have been crazy to have bought such an object: the eldest demurred and suggested they should examine it more closely. 'I see light', he said, holding the stone up under lamplight.

The firm's master-cutter was then called in and after further discussion it was decided to make two windows on each side of the stone: 2 carats were lost but the stone still remained black. Once more the eldest brother maintained he saw light. Windows were then made on all sides of the diamond which by now had been reduced to 23 carats. The stone remained merely brownish. Then the cutter made a sort of crystal shape out of the stone and he too saw a beam of light within. Under a strong lamp a reddish glow could now be seen in the diamond.

After animated discussion concerning the eventual shape of the stone and seven months of studying and polishing it there emerged an emerald-cut weighing 5.05 carats. By now all the brothers had become excited. When the diamond was eventually finished they looked at it by candlelight. Except for the candle the room was totally dark and in the flicker of its beam it was as if a drop of blood had fallen upon the hand that held the gem. It was of an extraordinary deep ruby red colour.



The Lichtenburg Rush which took place on 20 August 1926. At least 6000 diggers participated in order to stake their claims.

There was no dealer in Amsterdam who would make a firm estimate of the diamond's price. The Goudvis brothers themselves thought that it might fetch 100,000 guilders but Hugo Prins, the famous authority on polished stones, placed its value much higher. So the brothers decided to send the diamond to New York in the custody of the youngest. In New York, no one showed any interest, so back it came to Europe.

No sooner had it arrived than a cable was received from Tiffany's: 'Have customer for red stone.' Again it crossed the Atlantic to be shown to Tiffany's client who was looking for an expensive present for his fiancée. He offered \$100,000. Cables then flashed to and fro: the eldest brother wanted to sell but the others demanded \$150,000 – a special price for something extra special. The customer then withdrew his offer and was no longer interested. So once more the diamond made the by-now-familiar crossing.

With the onset of the war the 'Red Diamond' was placed in a safe in the city of Arnhem. In 1944, together with all the other diamonds, it was stolen from the safe and disappeared. Two years later the US army found in a saltmine in Germany a parcel which they said contained a lot of diamonds and one ruby. This solitary 'ruby' was the 'Red Diamond'. Its identification was facilitated because of the certainty that part of the parcel had come directly from the Goudvis brothers' safe. The diamond, in turn, helped to identify many others.

By the end of the war all the Goudvis brothers were dead and, as their heirs owed money to the bank, the stone was sold by tender for 57,000 guilders. The buyer was the well-known broker, George Prins. In 1968 the 'Red Diamond' was offered for sale and bought by Asscher's Diamant Maatschappij: they had tried to buy it many years before. Finally in 1970 Asscher's sold the diamond to a private collector of fancy-coloured stones.

JONKER

The career of a diamond digger is very different from that of a diamond miner. Whereas the latter may be exposed to a greater degree of physical risk – although the safety record of diamond mines is second to none – he will also enjoy all the benefits that a large corporate concern can confer upon him both during his active working life and his retirement.

On the other hand diamond digging is generally a very precarious occupation and even the most experienced diggers barely make enough money to keep body and soul together. However, hope springs eternal in the human breast and this faith alone is enough, it would seem, to spur diggers on to continue to work their claims, in spite of the tremendous odds stacked against them.

Occasionally a lucky digger has struck it rich and made an exceptional discovery. One such person was sixty-two-year-old Johannes Jacobus Jonker who for eighteen years had been trying his luck at various claims throughout the country. At the time of his momentous find he was working a claim at

Elandsfontein, just 4.8km (3 miles) from the Premier Mine and about 40km (25 miles) east of Pretoria, South Africa's administrative capital. It was said of Jacobus Jonker that he was always on the brink of fortune but always poor – and he had seven children.

17 January 1934 dawned a raw, windy day. After the lashing rain had ploughed up the earth, Jonker decided to stay at home as he had been extremely out of luck and was feeling discouraged. Instead, he sent his son Gert, along with two of his Black employees, to direct operations on the claim. One of them, Johannes Makani, was washing a bucketful of gravel when suddenly he stopped dead in his tracks and picked up something. Without saying a word he walked to the cleaning camp and scrubbed the object which he had found. Then he threw his hat in the air and shouted, 'Oh God, I have found it.' He rushed across to Gert Jonker who at first thought he was looking at a piece of glass, but when he realized it was a real diamond he jumped on to his bicycle and rushed to tell his father. When he found him, all he received was a paternal

rebuke for riding recklessly. However, when Jacobus Jonker too realized it was a diamond he went down on his knees and thanked God.

The object indeed turned out to be a diamond: an oblong-shaped piece measuring about 63.5 by 31.75mm (2.5 by 1.25 inches), of superb ice white colour, weighing 726 carats. At the time of its discovery the 'Jonker' was the fourth largest gem quality stone ever to have been found; it was relegated to fifth place four years later when the 'President Vargas', weighing 0.6 of a carat more, was unearthed.

Naturally no one in the Jonker household had ever cast eyes upon a diamond about the size of a hen's egg and some still doubted whether it could be a diamond. Mrs Jonker, however, was taking no chances; she plunged it down a stocking and tied the stocking round her neck. She went to bed but did not sleep while men kept guard at the door of the poor hut with loaded revolvers.

The story of the 'Jonker' diamond brings together the names of several men prominent in the annals of the diamond industry. One of them was Joseph Bastiaenen who had started his career in the London offices of the Diamond Syndicate, the precursor of the modern Central Selling Organisation, after the First World War. Ten years later he was sent by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer as head sorter to The Diamond Corporation's office in Kimberley; then he was appointed a buyer for the Corporation on the alluvial fields and it was in that capacity that he bought the 'Jonker' against severe competition from buyers representing famous diamond firms from all parts of the world.

About a week after the purchase of the 'Jonker' Mr Bastiaenen brought the diamond into the Kimberley office where his colleagues proceeded to bombard him with questions, many of which were pertinent to the parlous state of the diamond trade at the time and the vast amount of money that the stone had cost the company. In the midst of these deliberations the great diamond fell off the sorting table and rolled on to the floor and in a light-hearted moment one or two more boisterous members of the staff started kicking it around the office, much to the consternation of the man who had so recently paid a king's ransom for it.

Reports of the exact amount paid for the 'Jonker' varied between £61,000 and £75,000. The transaction actually involved another large stone weighing 287 carats, which had been found within 91.5 metres (100 yards) of the 'Jonker' a few days earlier. This was the 'Pohl', named after another digger, J. M. Pohl; however, although of an extremely fine colour, it was very flawed in quality.

Soon after the sale of the 'Jonker' diamond to The Diamond Corporation, the South African government was quickly on the scene demanding more than one-third of the stone's value – the equivalent of six years' work – in income tax, super-tax and provincial tax. The Minister of Mines agreed that certain sums of money spent in the discovery of the stone should be deducted from the purchase price and exempted from taxation. Accordingly the Jonkers claimed:

£14,755	cost of digging operations for eighteen years
£ 3,600	'donations'
£ 1,000	preliminary expenses
£ 1,000	costs of negotiating the sale
£ 755	donations to churches
£ 200	travelling expenses

The Receiver of Revenue disallowed all items except for the first and the last. He cut the allowance for digging operations from £14,755 to £2,000 and reduced the travelling expenses from £200 to £100. Thus faced with a reduction of the exemption from £21,310 to a mere £2,100, the Jonkers petitioned the House of Assembly to grant them the exemption they claimed – but in vain. Truly the good Jonker must have thought himself a citizen of the Holy Roman Empire rather than of the Union of South Africa and recalled in his Bible, St Luke Chapter 2, verse 1: 'And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.'

This misfortune proved only the first for Jonker. His diamond may have brought him riches but it totally destroyed his peace of mind. For years he had led the life of an indigent digger, wandering from one diamond field to another with never a fixed abode – when his famous gem was found he was living in a prospector's shack in poverty. With the money he received for the diamond he bought a farm, some cattle and a grand limousine. But alas Jonker remained at heart a simple countryman and to the end of his days was never able to cope with the realities of the commercial world into which his great discovery had pitch-forked him. This had a disastrous effect on his capital and within a few years all he had left were his good name and his memories; fame and fortune had forsaken him.

The discovery of the 'Jonker' in diggings a mere 4.8km (3 miles) from the Premier Mine and the superb colour and quality of the stone inevitably led to speculation as to whether it had once been part of the 'Cullinan' diamond. It will be recalled that this mighty gem, which had been found in the Premier Mine twenty-nine years before, possessed a cleavage face on one side so smooth as to suggest the possibility of it having previously formed part of a much larger crystal. Indeed the 'missing half of the Cullinan' has remained to this day a topic for discussion in diamond circles. Among those who examined the question was Dr J. R. Sutton, the author of *Diamond, A Descriptive Treatise*. On 20 March 1934, he wrote the following letter to a gemological publication:

Dear Sir, I have delayed answering your letter until I could see the newly found Jonker diamond. This I have seen and compared it with the fine glass model of the Cullinan. Also I have discussed the matter of the latter stone with Mr E. Weatherby, Valuator of The Diamond Corporation, who had examined it carefully after it was found.

The resemblance between the Cullinan and the Jonker stones is remarkable. In fact, if the latter were four times its actual size the two would almost be twin brothers. Each

stone has the same broad base (Cleavage plane). Each has suffered damage by splintery fracture; and what is significant, the base on each is surrounded by a small rounded bevel mainly conforming to the dodecahedral plane both about $\frac{1}{10}$ of an inch [2.5mm] across. The chief difference is that whereas the base on the Cullinan is not exactly plane, though smooth, the base of the Jonker is not smooth and carries some small projections.

Mr Weatherby is emphatic that the Cullinan is not a cleavage piece in the mineralogical sense. He never had any doubts that it was a whole stone as Nature made it, saving minor accidents. All this confirms me in my opinion.

Of the authors you quote is there one who can be regarded as an expert in the study of the natural diamond, especially diamond and cleavage? Is there one whose knowledge is equal to, say, a week's work in a big diamond office? They have all been in museums and elsewhere, and Crookes experimented somewhat on the stone. But their united testimony only comes to this: that one copies what the other has said, all taking Corstorphine's 'technical description' as gospel!

I have seen an unbroken diamond fresh from the mine which I would wager diamond to paste that every one of the same authors would have said had been roughly shaped by a cutter. ... My definition of cleavage would be 'the opened face of a split diamond'. Cleavage as a trade term includes both broken diamonds and unbroken misshapen lumps. Both the Cullinan and the Jonker would be trade cleavages.

I left Corstorphine's technical description behind in South Africa; but speaking from memory there was no suggestion in it of a proper examination of the 'cleavage faces'. With few exceptions octahedral faces of the diamond crystals carry triangular indentations. But on 'occasional so-called glassies' one may look in vain for these markings: the surface being as mirror-like as a cleavage face. ... All things considered it seems to me that those who claim the Cullinan as a piece of a much bigger stone have a stiff proposition to prove.

P.S. The Jonker and Cullinan clearly grew under identical conditions. Therefore, the Jonker not being a portion of a much bigger stone it is a fair argument that the Cullinan is also not a fragment.

As well as being an event in itself, the discovery of the 'Jonker' recorded several firsts in diamond lore. The stone became the first large one to be sold through the De Beers Central Selling Organisation which, under the guidance of Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, had superseded the old syndicate of diamond buying firms. The 'Jonker' was shipped by ordinary registered post to the group's London offices in Charterhouse Street.

Simultaneously Harry Winston became interested in acquiring the diamond. In 1935 he contacted Hugo Prins who, in turn, referred him to his brother George Prins, then senior partner of the firm of I. Hennig & Co, who were already



George Prins, Harry Winston's agent in London who acted on his behalf in the purchase of the 'Jonker' and several other notable diamonds.

brokers to a number of important firms in the diamond cutting industry. Ultimately these contacts led to Mr Winston's purchase of the 'Jonker' and marked the first of many successful important purchases of large diamonds which the firm of Harry Winston Inc. was to make over the years from the Central Selling Organisation. In the case of the 'Jonker' the negotiations lasted several weeks, with Hennig's acting on behalf of Mr Winston. It was believed that the 'Jonker' was sold for a figure in excess of £150,000 with the 'Pohl' diamond once again being included in the transaction.

The year 1935 marked the Royal Silver Jubilee celebrations and in order to accommodate the many prominent persons who had come to London for the event and who wished to inspect the 'Jonker', Mr Winston consented to it being left in London for a while. The decision to let the stone remain there was also influenced by the suggestion emanating from several influential quarters that the 'Jonker' would make an appropriate Jubilee gift to King George V and Queen Mary, both of whom had viewed the diamond. It was believed that a popular subscription with this objective in view was considered but in the end nothing came of it and the 'Jonker' duly made the trans-Atlantic trip to Mr Winston's offices in New York.

When the 'Jonker' reached New York Harry Winston received numerous requests throughout the United States to place it on exhibition, so he consented to its display at the Natural History Museum. But the more immediate and important problem of cutting the diamond presented itself. No diamond of comparable size or value had been cut in the United States. Mr Winston's choice of cutter fell on Lazare Kaplan, who was descended from three generations of jewellers and had learned the craft of diamond cutting in Belgium. Mr Kaplan had established a reputation as an outstanding cleaver and cutter, known especially for his



insistence on obtaining the maximum fire and brilliance in a gem even if this resulted in a slightly greater loss of weight. In 1914 Mr Kaplan transferred his business to the American continent and he was the pioneer in establishing the diamond cutting industry in Puerto Rico.

An additional reason for choosing Lazare Kaplan to cut the 'Jonker' was the fact that, not long before, he had successfully cut its constant companion, the 'Pohl'. The yield had been fifteen gems, all flawless except for one, and even that sold for \$50,000. The largest, an emerald-cut of 38.10 metric carats, has retained the name 'Pohl' and was once owned by Bernice Chrysler Garbish, daughter of the founder of the Chrysler Motor Corporation. But the task of cutting the 'Jonker' confronted Mr Kaplan with a far greater challenge – the biggest he had ever met. Only two diamonds comparable to this stone had been found, the 3106-carat 'Cullinan' and the 995.2-carat 'Excelsior' and of the two only the former had been cleaved. The task of cutting the 'Jonker' was not made easier by the fact that it possessed a degree of frostiness on its surface, thereby rendering its cutting and polishing an even more hazardous operation. In addition, the insurers refused to cover the cutting of the diamond, although they had been prepared to let it travel to New York by ordinary registered mail!

Lazare Kaplan studied the 'Jonker' for months: he made many models of it, precisely reconstructing the crystallization of the diamond. Altogether at the time it was said that he lived, ate and breathed the stone. His minute examination of the 'Jonker' paid off, for he noticed a small ledge on the stone – a fact which opened his eyes to the mistake that those European experts who had studied it and made suggestions about its cutting had earlier made. It took strong self-assurance to follow his conviction but Mr Kaplan became aware that there lay only one way in which the diamond could be cleaved. Calmly he marked the cleavage lines with Indian ink, a device which he originated but which some regarded as mere affectation on his part. Afterwards he stated that the

The 'Jonker' and the twelve principal diamonds cut from it.

'Jonker' was a freak of nature; what resembled the cleavage plane was not in fact the cleavage at all. At one point he had been about to split the stone when he noticed a microscopic bend in a slight surface crack. At the crucial moment all his calculations therefore went awry.

Finally came the day when the first cleavage took place. It was 27 April 1936 when a 35-carat section was split: this piece yielded the solitary marquise among the gems. Two more cleavings took place, then the rest of the division was achieved by sawing. The figures below indicate the course of the cutting and polishing of the 'Jonker'; perhaps it is of especial interest to note how close the final weights of the thirteen gems were to earlier estimates that Lazare Kaplan had given to Harry Winston.

Rough Wt	Estimated Dimensions	Approx Wt	Actual Finished		
			Dimensions	Weight	
1 - 35.82	30 × 12mm	17 ct	29.5 × 12.2	1 Mq - 15.77	VIII
1 - 79.65	23 × 17mm	42	23.2 × 18.3	1 Ec - 41.29	II
1 - 43.30	17 × 14mm	20	17.3 × 14.6	1 Ec - 19.76	VII
1 - 54.19	21 × 16mm	30	21.7 × 16.2	1 Ec - 25.78	V
1 - 52.77	22 × 16mm	35	22.8 × 16.3	1 Ec - 30.71	IV
1 - 65.28	24 × 15mm	35	24.8 × 16.5	1 Ec - 35.45	III
1 - 13.57	16 × 7.5mm	6	15.5 × 8.8	1 Ec - 5.70	XI
1 - 53.95	20 × 15mm	25	20.3 × 15.2	1 Ec - 24.91	VI
1 - 10.98	10.5 × 10mm	5	10.8 × 10.3	1 Ec - 5.30	XII
1 - 220.00	33 × 31mm	150	33.7 × 30.8	1 Ec - 142.90	I
1 - 29.46	15.25 × 12.25mm	14	15.3 × 12.2	1 Ec - 11.43	X
1 - 27.85	16.5 × 12.5mm	14	16.5 × 12.3	1 Ec - 13.55	IX
1 - 8.28	Baguette	4	12.3 × 7.2	1 Ec - 5.53	XIII
695.10	Total				
10.74	Rough and miscellaneous fancies returned to Harry Winston Inc.				
5.37	Cleaving loss				
13.22	Sawing loss				
1.57	Opening loss				
726.00	carats				

Abbreviations in table: Mq = Marquise, Ec = Emerald Cut, Wt = weight, ct = carat



The largest diamond, which has retained the name 'Jonker', originally weighed 142.9 carats, cut with 66 facets. Later the proportions were changed, to impart to it a more oblong outline and greater brilliance. It was thus reduced to a weight of 125.65 carats, cut with 58 facets. In the opinion of many who have inspected it, 'Jonker I' is perhaps the most perfectly cut gem in existence. Whenever it was put on exhibition in various parts of the United States, it attracted even more attention than the rough stone had done before.

In 1949 King Farouk of Egypt bought the gem but following his deposition and subsequent exile in 1952 its whereabouts became a mystery. It reappeared, however, in the ownership of Queen Ratna of Nepal. In 1977 it changed hands again when it was sold privately in Hong Kong for a sum reported to have been around £1,300,000. So far as is known the 1977 buyer of

'Jonker I', considered to be one of the most perfect cut diamonds of all.

the diamond still remains the owner of it today.

The exact disposition of the remaining gems is not known for sure. It was reported that the Maharajah of Indore was the purchaser of Jonkers V, VII, XI, and XII while John D. Rockefeller Jr was rumoured to have been the buyer of 'Jonker X'. On 16 October 1975 'Jonker IV', set in a platinum ring, came up for auction at Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc. in New York and was sold to a South American private collector for £276,609. On that occasion the gem was given a superb gemological rating – a tribute both to the quality of the original rough stone and to the skill of the master who had fashioned it thirty years earlier.

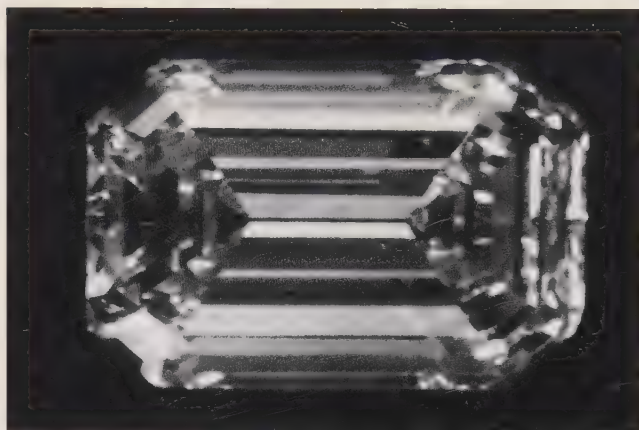
PRESIDENT VARGAS

Diamonds have been found in several of Brazil's twenty-seven provinces but Minas Gerais (General Mines) remains the principal source. Stones from the various areas often exhibit their own peculiar characteristics. One unusual deposit exists in the province of Bahia where a species of very tough, generally black, industrial diamond known as Carbonado is found. In 1905 one such monster known as the 'Sergio' was recovered; it weighed no less than 3167 carats, thereby surpassing the weight of the great 'Cullinan' diamond.

On 13 August 1938 'Terra Magica' (Brazil) revealed her greatest gem when a diamond weighing 726.6 carats was picked up in the gravels of the San Antonio River in the Coromandel district of Minas Gerais, an area that was destined to produce several other large stones. Two garimpeiros (diamond diggers or prospectors), Joaquim Venancio Tiago and Manoel Miguel Domingues were the lucky finders. Yet their good fortune alas did not extend very far, because not long after they had sold the diamond to a broker for \$56,000, the same man took the stone to the provincial capital, Belo Horizonte, where it was sold for £235,000. The buyer was a merchant named Oswaldo Dantes dos Reis who, in turn, sold the gem to a Dutch syndicate represented by the Dutch Union Bank (Hollandsche Bankunie) of Amsterdam. By then the diamond had been named 'President Vargas' in honour of Getúlio Dornelles Vargas who was President of Brazil from 1930 to 1945 and from 1951 to 1954.

While the stone remained in the bank's safety deposit vault Harry Winston learned of its existence through his brokers in Brazil; they advised him of its rare quality and exceptional size. After negotiations by wire and telephone, Mr Winston left for Brazil only to find upon arrival that the diamond had been sent to Amsterdam. He travelled to London then on to Amsterdam where he finally purchased the 'President Vargas'. The stone was duly shipped to New York by ordinary registered mail at a cost of seventy cents although it had been insured by Lloyds for \$750,000.

The 'President Vargas' was a very fine piece of rough without carbon spots, and blue-white in colour except for a faint yellowish tinge on two of its edges. The only other flaw was a slight incipient fracture which suggested that in the process of its recovery some tool, perhaps a pickaxe, had struck the stone. The shape of the diamond was unusual, being somewhat flattened and strangely bearing some resemblance to the outline of Brazil. It showed two faces of the rhombic dodecahedron and a large cleavage face: it measured 71mm (2.8 inches) long, 56mm (2.2 inches) wide and 22.8mm (0.9 inch) thick. In ultraviolet rays the diamond displayed a beautiful bluish-violet fluorescence.



The 'President Vargas' diamond.

On account of its unusual formation it was decided to cleave the 'President Vargas'. The grain, after being seen at the top, suddenly disappeared into the stone and did not meet with the grain formation from the opposite direction. Accordingly, a 20-carat piece was sawn from the top before the first cleaving; from this a pear-shape, weighing 10.05 carats, was fashioned. After that, the cleaving grain appeared on a 45 degree angle from the sawing plane. À propos the cleaving of the diamond into two pieces, one of 150 carats and the other of 550 carats, Harry Winston was quoted as follows:

My chief cleaver was nervous about breaking up the \$700,000 diamond, so I didn't dare tell him in advance when we were going to cut. Then one day I suggested casually that he practise a bit with the steel rod that we use to strike the cleaving wedge. After about twenty minutes, he said the stroke felt just right, so I told him to go ahead. Just as he brought the rod down to strike it was as though an invisible hand had stopped his arm, for the tap he gave the 'Vargas' wouldn't have dented a cream puff. He was the colour of the stone itself and I yelled, 'Hit it! Hit it!' so he upped again with the rod and came down with the neatest blow I ever saw. The diamond couldn't have fallen apart better and neither could that cleaver. He took one look at the job and passed out cold.

In all, twenty-nine gems were fashioned from the 'President Vargas', nineteen sizeable and ten smaller ones weighing a total of 411.06 carats. They comprised sixteen emerald-cuts, one pear-shape, one marquise and among the lesser gems, ten triangles and one baguette. The name 'President Vargas' has been retained by the largest gem, an

emerald-cut weighing 48.26 carats. For a number of years this diamond was owned by Mrs Robert W. Windfohr, of Fort Worth, Texas, who had purchased it in 1944. In 1958 Harry Winston repurchased and recut it to a flawless 44.17-carat stone, selling it again to an undisclosed buyer in 1961. The identities of the other buyers are not known but in 1948 it was reported that the Gaekwar of Baroda had bought one of the 'Vargas' gems.

As a sequel to the discovery of the 'President Vargas' another large diamond, weighing 460 carats, was found on 8 June 1939, just 2km (1.25 miles) from the site of the earlier find. A garimpeiro, Ramiro Martines Lemos, found this large brown diamond which was happily named the 'Darcy Vargas' after the wife of the President.

LIBERATOR

The name Venezuela means 'little Venice'. It is said to have been bestowed by Portuguese explorers because the Indian villages built along the swampy shores of Lake Maracaibo reminded them of Venice. Nowadays the lake itself is pitted with structures sticking out of the water: oil derricks which testify to Venezuela's importance as one of the principal non-Middle East members of OPEC. Less well known is the fact that Venezuela is also a diamondiferous country with an annual output of approximately 800,000 carats, making it probably the eighth largest producer in the world today. Doubts about its true position in the current league of diamond producers are explained by the fact that in certain territories accurate statistics relating to output are hard to come by.

Yet it is not so much the size of Venezuela's diamond production that is of especial interest as the very fact of the existence of diamonds themselves in this particular country. The presence of diamonds in this part of the world is perhaps further evidence of continental drift, a theory which proposes that continents have undergone massive horizontal movements relative to one another and to the oceans during the course of one or more episodes of geological time.

Geological study has suggested that the continents we know today are not immovable but drifting fragments derived from the break-up of an ancient supercontinent named Pangaea. The evidence for this came from the way in which certain continents, now far apart, seemed to have fitted together and how geological structures and formations appeared to join up across such a fit.

One fact immediately becomes apparent from a study of a map of the world today: no two pieces of the jigsaw seem to fit as conclusively as the two continents of South America and Africa. An awareness of this fact can be traced as far back as the early seventeenth century, when Francis Bacon speculated upon the meaning of the parallel coastlines of Africa and South America which cartographers were then beginning to draw.

Geologists have pointed to the existence of diamond deposits in the two continents as just one piece of evidence of their having once been interlocked. Can a more detailed knowledge of the characteristics of the actual diamonds add anything further?

It is certainly a recognized fact that within the continent of Africa alluvial diamonds vary considerably from one adjacent country to another, e.g. Zaire and Angola. Perhaps even more startling are the differences in diamonds mined from neighbouring pipes of blueground, e.g. the mines in the Kimberley area. So the mere fact of superficial points of resemblance between diamonds found in certain areas of Latin America's largest territory, Brazil, and those found in the adjacent countries of Central and Southern Africa does not really contribute much one way or the other. However, further north the evidence appears more promising. It cannot be denied that some diamonds from Venezuela and neighbouring Guyana do share certain characteristics, notably a slight greenish tinge and a coated exterior, with those of West African origin. Is it possible, therefore, that the two continents were once joined together?

Another intriguing, albeit disturbing, theory has been put forward by some. Assuming that the two continents were at some time joined together before splitting apart, could it be that the source of the diamonds found in both South America and Africa might lie in the intervening area, namely the vast South Atlantic ocean? It is disturbing because the existence of huge untapped reserves would pose a serious threat to the orderly system of marketing, so necessary for the continued well-being of the industry. As Cecil Rhodes once exclaimed, 'Diamond production is a good thing if rightly handled, but if there is overproduction it brings misery and disaster to all.' If there were diamonds in the ocean, they would lie in the continental shelf and not in the deep ocean floors. Fortunately the financial outlay necessary for the recovery of diamonds from such a source would be so colossal as to deter all but the financially strongest concerns.

Diamonds were first discovered in Venezuela in 1887, in the Pavichi area north of San Pedros de los Bocos on the Caroni river in the State of Bolívar. In 1925 more discoveries were made on the Gran Sabana near the head-waters of the Caroni and its tributaries on the borders of Venezuela and Brazil. By 1930 the number of miners at work had increased to 50, and by 1943 to over 1000. Alluvial diamonds have been mined in a series of 'bomba' or rushes; one that occurred in 1969 caused more than 15,000 prospectors to converge on the inhospitable jungle. Today it is estimated that there are probably about 10,000 miners working in the humid jungles in the south-eastern part of the country, digging in temperatures of over 100 degrees fahrenheit, braving deadly snakes, spiders larger than a man's hand and malaria-carrying mosquitoes – yet another instance of diamonds almost invariably being found in either inaccessible or inhospitable terrain.

Because many individual miners are involved in searching for diamonds, control of their activities and accurate reporting of their discoveries is difficult. A 75-carat stone, estimated to have been worth \$250,000, was reported to have come from the San Salvador de Paul diggings in February 1970. However, the outstanding diamond to have been discovered in Venezuela remains the fine pear-shaped stone weighing 155 carats that was found in November 1942 by three prospectors named James Hudson, Rafael Solano and Israel Jaime in the Gran Sabana. The three men named it the 'Solano' diamond but the Minister of Mines had the name changed to the 'Liberator' in order to lend importance to the diamond.

The liberator after whom the diamond was named was Simón Bolívar (1783–1830) the South American soldier and statesman, who was the outstanding leader in the liberation of northern South America from Spanish Imperial rule. It was not until November 1823 that the last Spanish stronghold in Venezuela capitulated. Once free of the Spanish yoke, Venezuela, together with New Granada and Ecuador, formed the state of Great Colombia with Bolívar as President. Seven years later Venezuela withdrew and set itself up as an independent republic under José Antonio Páez, an outstanding general in the wars of independence. Bolívar himself died of tuberculosis in December 1830, a disillusioned man.

The 'Liberator' diamond was shipped by air mail for forty cents from Caracas, by the Banco Holandes Unido, who held it on deposit to the Chase National Bank in New York where a



Simón Bolívar; outstanding leader in the liberation of northern Southern America from Spanish rule and after whom the 'Liberator' was named.

number of diamond dealers were able to inspect it. Harry Winston outbid the other dealers and paid a price reputed to have been around \$200,000 for the stone. Since there were many complications involving several owners, final settlement was only reached upon the intervention of the Minister of Mines in Caracas.

On behalf of Mr Winston, a New York cutter, Adrian Grasselly, after prolonged study, cleaved the diamond into two pieces, weighing 115 and 40 carats. The yield was four gems: three emerald cuts, weighing 39.80, 18.12 and 8.93 carats, and one marquise of 1.44 carats. This represented slightly over 44 per cent of the weight of the rough stone.

The four gems were sold privately. May Bonfils Stanton, the daughter of the publisher of the *Denver Post*, purchased 'Liberator I'. When her jewellery collection was auctioned on 14 November 1962 by Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc, the gem was then set in a platinum ring with two tapering baguettes. On that occasion Mr Winston bought 'Liberator I' for \$185,000, before reselling it to a private buyer.

WOYIE RIVER

What was he doing, the great god Pan, Down in the reeds by the river?" asks Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her poem 'The Musical Instrument'. To which one can only surmise that if the river chanced to be the Woyie in Sierra Leone, then it is more than probable that Pan was on the look-out for diamonds, for this particular river has been a prolific source of large stones. In reality the Woyie is neither quite one thing nor the other; at some sections it gives the appearance of being a very small river, while at some other sections illicit mining has turned it into a morass where the outline of the original stream has been obliterated.

During the 1940s the recovery plant operated by Sierra Leone Selection Trust Limited unearthed three exceptional diamonds from the river gravels. The first, weighing 249.25 carats, was found in March 1943, and the second, weighing 532 carats, was found in the following June. The third and largest weighed 770 carats, equivalent to 154g or nearly 5.5 oz, and was discovered on 6 January 1945 (almost forty years after the discovery of the 'Cullinan'). As well as becoming known as the 'Woyie River' diamond it was also called the 'Victory', in commemoration of the ending of the war in Europe four months later. There were also suggestions at the time that the stone might be called 'The Star of Sierra Leone'; however, that name was to be kept on ice and not to be bestowed until more than a quarter of a century later when the great 968.9 carat diamond was found. Nevertheless, until the discovery of 'The Star of Sierra Leone' the 'Woyie River' remained the largest alluvial diamond to have been found.

The diamond was somewhat lozenge-shaped and measured 71mm (2.8 inches) long, 53mm (2.09 inches) broad and 32mm (1.26 inches) thick. It was not clean internally, possessing numerous black spots, but it was of the finest colour. A conspicuous feature of the stone is the presence of pronounced triangular pits, known as trigons, on one of its faces. This was one of the points underlined in the very thorough and interesting account of the three large diamonds of Sierra Leone, written in 1945 by the late Professor W. T. Gordon, then Professor of Geology, University of London. He wrote as follows:

As with diamonds from other localities, the crystal faces are pitted. Octahedral faces have triangular or, rarely, hexagonal pits and the triangles are equilateral in shape; cube faces have square pits with their edges diagonal to the cube edges.... The largest and latest to be found [in Sierra Leone] has one octahedral face with triangular pits that are larger and deeper than any previously recorded. Some of them measure nearly 6mm [0.23 inch] on edge and are about 1mm [0.04 inch] deep. They are arranged in parallel



Alluvial diamond diggings in Sierra Leone.

position as usual and set with their sides towards the points of the ideal octahedra. The spacing of the pits is such that the areas between them assume raised shield-shaped, triangular forms; the points of the shields and those of the pits are in ranks facing opposite directions.

Another unusual feature of the 'Woyie River', an exceptionally smooth face, drew this comment from Professor Gordon:

The area of this cleavage face is 11.5 sq.cm. [nearly 1.8 square inches], and it is so clean a fracture that the blow which produced it must have been a sudden, sharp impact in precisely the correct direction. The surface is exceedingly smooth, whereas most cleavage faces show a certain stepping from layer to layer while keeping in the same general direction. The blow need not have been a heavy one, but the marvel of the smoothness of the fracture-face can only be appreciated by those who have tried to cleave a diamond using the cleavers' tools.

In conclusion, Professor Gordon suggested that the stone might once have been larger, but that there was no sign of it having been merely the smaller piece of a much larger diamond.

The Diamond Trading Company subsequently purchased the 'Woyie River' and included it among a display of rough diamonds shown to Queen Mary when she visited the Company's offices in October 1947. The public was given an opportunity of viewing the stone when it was exhibited at the British Industries Fair of May 1949.

Eventually the task of cutting the 'Woyie River' was entrusted to the London firm of Briefel and Lemer. They had previously cut the rose coloured 'Williamson' diamond, presented to Princess Elizabeth (now Queen Elizabeth II) on the occasion of her marriage in 1947. As had been the case with other large diamonds, prolonged study of the stone was necessary and a cement model of it was made; a special machine for the sawing operation was also devised.

Because of the number of internal impurities the 'Woyie River' was destined not to be one of those diamonds fashioned into one principal gem. Instead, initially it was separated into 30 different pieces weighing 695.71 carats, from which 30 gems weighing a total of 282.36 carats were cut; this represented 36.67 per cent of the weight of the original diamond – a very fair yield for a stone containing so many

flaws and a tribute to the skill and expertise of Sidney Briefel who was in charge of the cleaving operation. Ten of the gems weighed over 20 carats, seven between 5 and 10 carats and thirteen less than 5 carats; they comprised ten brilliants, eight emerald cuts, five marquises, two pear-shapes and five others of various fancy shapes. All the gems, which were of the finest colour, were sold privately.

The largest gem cut from the 'Woyie River', an emerald cut weighing 31.35 carats, has retained the name 'Victory'. It reappeared at the jewellery sale held in New York by Christie's on 11 April 1984, as part of the jewels owned by Florence J. Gould. The diamond was bought by a Saudi Arabian buyer for \$880,000, which represented a price of \$28,070 per carat.

WILLIAMSON

As the twentieth century grinds slowly on, more and more does it appear to be the age of collectivity. Fortunately there have been a few individuals who have survived to make their mark in their own fields, to the ultimate benefit of the community as a whole. One who did so in the field of diamonds was a Canadian geologist, Dr John Thorburn Williamson.

Williamson was born in Quebec in 1907. At first he studied law but then changed to geology in which he graduated from McGill University, Montreal, that eminent cradle of geologists the world over. For a time he pursued his career as a geologist in Canada before transferring his attention to Africa. He obtained a post with a mining company in what was then Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia, but resigned in 1936. His interest in geological possibilities spurred him on in a northerly direction so that he joined the Tanganyika Diamond and Gold Development Company, owners of the Mabuki diamond mine near Mwanza, a port situated on the southern shores of Lake Victoria.

After the Tanganyika Diamond and Gold Development Company closed down their operations in Tanganyika, Williamson became self-employed, carrying out his own private prospecting; he paid particular attention to the region of Shinyanga, some 14.5km (9 miles) to the south of Mwanza. Williamson was convinced that a rich diamond deposit existed in this area, an opinion not shared by surveyors employed by the British government: they scoffed at the idea and informed him that 'the area was valueless from a mineralogical point of view'. This was despite the publication in 1939 of a Tanganyika Geological Survey, written by a New



Dr John Williamson, the Canadian geologist whose belief in the existence of an important diamond deposit in Tanzania was to be proved correct.

Zealand geologist, G. J. Williams, employed by the colonial government, which specifically drew attention to the area geologically favourable for diamonds, namely the Shinyanga district.

One day in March 1940, Williamson and his party, which included two local prospectors whom he had trained and were working for him, had camped under a baobab tree at a remote spot called Mwadui, situated in what is today Tanza-



nia but was then the territory of Tanganyika. Now the Creator must have been seized by a fit of imagination when the baobab or monkey-bread tree, as it is sometimes called, was made because it looks as if it had been planted upside down. It is planted to give shade in some tropical countries since its trunk sometimes attains a diameter of over 9 metres (30 feet) and the span of its branches may reach over 18 metres (60 feet).

One of the two prospectors, James Ashton, was the first to notice some typical kimberlite minerals on the surface in the area later to prove so rich in diamonds. When he reported this find, Williamson despatched him to the place with some labourers and a 1.2-metre (4-foot) diameter, hand-operated,

Queen Elizabeth II had the 'Williamson' set in the centre of a flower spray brooch created by Cartier's.

diamond pan (with the Swahili name of 'Malaya', i.e. 'the wandering one'). Ashton washed some gravels and found the first diamond.

Following this, Williamson started prospecting and the development of the deposit. A private company, Williamson Diamonds Limited, was formed in March 1942, with Dr Williamson as the sole governing Director and General Manager. It resulted in the opening up of what has proved to be the kimberlite pipe with the largest surface area ever to have been found.

Approximately one half of the diamonds recovered from the Mwadui pipe have proved to be of gem quality. They contain mostly clear and colourless stones but do include a few small 'fancy' diamonds, in colours such as green and pink. A few large stones have also been unearthed, notably one of 155 carats in 1945, an exceptionally fine blue-white piece of 114 carats in 1949, and the largest to date, a fine stone weighing 256.07 carats that was valued at £30,725. On one occasion in 1945, the Governor of Tanganyika, Sir William Battershill, chanced to visit Mwadui when a 65-carat stone was found: it was suitably named after the visitor.

But all these discoveries were eclipsed in October 1947 by that of the diamond which bears Dr Williamson's name. This was a beautiful pink stone weighing 54.5 carats. In shape it was a cleavage, almost circular at its widest part and rounded over the top but tapered in the short conical lower half.

The pride which Williamson took in his mine was equalled by the affection which he felt for this diamond. Long after it had travelled overseas the mine's chief security officer related how Dr Williamson used to hide a replica of the stone in the topsoil. Then he would take an unsuspecting visitor to the spot, halt for a moment and start to shuffle his feet in the dust. The visitor would share in the ensuing excitement when the hidden object was revealed, only for him to learn that it was merely a plastic replica of the famous diamond. Some poignancy is added to this charade when it is recalled that the discovery remains a unique one to this day, no other pink stone of comparable size ever having come to light at Mwadui.

Dr Williamson was, as expected, struck by the beauty of the diamond. He was also a passionate admirer of the Crown so that its discovery enabled him to present it as a gift to Princess Elizabeth (now Queen Elizabeth II) on the occasion of her wedding on 26 November 1947. Such a gift was undoubtedly among the most valuable wedding presents that she received.

The task of cutting the valuable diamond was entrusted to the firm of Briefel and Lerner, whose premises were located in Clerkenwell, one of the oldest parts of London, where diamond cutting had long been carried out. One of the partners, Sidney Briefel, had a theory about the origin of pink diamonds, namely that they were coloured by the first sunset ever to have shone on carbon crystals still swimming in seas of lava!

However, Mr Briefel is a gentleman imbued with practical as well as imaginative qualities and he soon realized that prolonged study of the diamond would be necessary before deciding how best to cut it. There was no doubt in his mind that it ought to be cut as a brilliant so as to make the most of both the size and colour of the stone. But its shape presented a special problem because in the lower half of the diamond there was a deep cavity, equal in size to a stone of about 3 carats. It was thought that the cutting needed to remove all trace of this hole would be such that the final polished gem could not possibly weigh more than 18 carats. Some experts in fact doubted whether the eventual yield would exceed 14 carats.

An unusual feature of the cutting of the Williamson Pink lay in the fact that neither of the initial processes of shaping a diamond, cleaving or sawing, was employed. Mr Briefel devised a method of grinding the rough stone in such a way as to retain its natural maximum diameter. It was cut and polished entirely on the scaife and the future shape of the gem was achieved by the polisher grinding away the circumference in a series of small straight facets. First, the rounded tip was slowly polished away until the largest possible table was obtained above the girdle. Then, fraction by fraction, other parts of the diamond were polished away.

Accompanied by her grandmother, Queen Mary, the Princess visited the factory on 10 March 1948 to see how the cutting was progressing. The cavity had been much reduced and now appeared merely as a dent in one of the facets. So far nothing had been lost from the maximum diameter of the stone.

By the end of March 1948, after two months' work, the time had come when the cutter knew he dared not leave the stone on the scaife a moment longer. The facet had reached its correct forty-one degree angle and its top edge was defined clearly and sharply, together with the bottom of the girdle. If any sign of the hole then remained, the entire stone would have had to have been reduced proportionately.

He lifted the stone and examined it. The last vestige of the cavity had disappeared.

The work continued until 14 April, when the Princess's private secretary was informed: 'The finished brilliant has achieved a weight of 23.60 carats and it has retained the pink colour which it displayed in the rough.' The gem, indeed, was completely pure and flawless.

For some time Princess Elizabeth was undecided about the manner in which the pink gem should be set. Eventually, in 1953, the year of her coronation, the Queen had the diamond set in the centre of a flower spray brooch created by Cartier's. It was jonquil shaped, with curved petals of marquises: one on each side of the stalk represented the leaves. The brooch was made of platinum and measured 114.3mm (4.5 inches) long. All the accompanying white diamonds originated from the mine at Mwadui and included:

21 marquises, with a total weight of 9.73 carats
12 baguettes, with a total weight of 4.64 carats
170 brilliants, with a total weight of 12.40 carats

This most beautiful jewel was displayed at 'The Ageless Diamond' exhibition held in London in the summer of 1959. Subsequently Her Majesty wore the brooch on one of her tours to Africa and on the occasion of the wedding of her first cousin, the Duke of Kent, in York Minster in 1961. But the event which surely provided most evidence of the affection which the Queen clearly feels for the pink diamond was the wedding of the Prince of Wales on 29 July 1981. Millions of viewers worldwide who watched the ceremony on television saw Her Majesty wearing the brooch set against the background of a blue dress. It is safe to assume that no famous diamond has ever

been seen by so many people at the same time.

Sadly, after a long illness, Dr Williamson died from cancer of the throat in 1958. His grave lies under the foot of a baobab tree at Mwadui. Not long afterwards the Government of Tanganyika and De Beers Consolidated Mines became joint owners of the mine, with Harry Oppenheimer becoming Chairman of the reconstituted board of directors. Mr Oppenheimer paid tribute to the founder of the mine when he said, 'I am sure that Dr Williamson will finally be recognized as the

man who set going a process which will eventually, in its repercussions, raise the standard of living generally throughout the territory.' Although with the passage of time production has declined at Mwadui, it still makes an important contribution to the economy of Tanzania. But it is difficult to forget what the situation would be today if the opinions of government officials had been allowed to triumph over those of an individual.

KHEDIVE



The name of this diamond derives from Ismail Pasha (1830–95). Born in Cairo and educated in Paris, he succeeded his uncle as Viceroy of Egypt in 1863. Ismail obtained two concessions from the Ottoman Sultan. One was a right of direct succession in accordance with the principle of progeniture; previously the succession had passed to the oldest member of the royal family. The other was the title of Khedive, an ancient Persian title meaning 'Ruler'.

It was during the reign of Ismail Pasha that the Suez Canal was completed (1869). Work had begun on this project ten years earlier and it was eventually built at a cost of £29,725,000. Originally it was the French Consul who had

The 'Khedive' diamond.

obtained from Said Pasha, ruler of Egypt, a concession to establish La Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez. The Company was formed in 1858 with a capital of 200,000,000 francs, most of the shares being bought by the French, Turks and Said Pasha himself. French involvement in the enterprise had been paramount so it was scarcely surprising that the Empress Eugénie should have been the recipient of gifts to mark the ceremony of the canal's opening. Among the items which she received were two brooches in the form of anchors pavé-set with diamonds; subsequently these came into the possession of Kathleen, Duchess of

Newcastle, sister-in-law of the owner of the 'Hope' diamond.

It has been asserted that the Empress Eugénie was also presented with the 'Khedive', a rectangular light yellow diamond of 36.61 carats, recut from its former weight of 43 carats to make it flawless. Now light yellow diamonds were known before the advent of diamonds in South Africa – they were poorly looked upon compared with white stones – but the 'Khedive' has the appearance of a typical Cape stone. Therefore, if it had been found in Africa, it would have been one of the first recorded diamonds from that source; it would have helped to strengthen the belief of the Empress that diamonds from the Cape were usually yellowish in colour – a belief that she was later to express in words when she was confronted with the 'Porter Rhodes' diamond in 1881.

Recent inquiries in France have failed to find any reference

to the 'Khedive' among the list of gifts exchanged at the opening of the Suez Canal. One writer has suggested that the linking of the diamond with the Empress Eugénie is totally fallacious and that it has been manufactured to impart 'colour' to its history. The same person has drawn attention to the film *Suez* made in the late 1930s, starring Tyrone Power and Loretta Young, and wondered whether somebody's imagination may have been fired by this piece of screenwork.

What is not disputed is the ownership of the 'Khedive' by the Miami jeweller, Jack M. Werst. He sold it in 1953. In 1976 the stone was exhibited with other notable diamonds at the opening of the Hall of Minerals and Gems of the Museum of Natural History of New York. Thereafter it remained on display until it was put up for sale by Christie's in Geneva on 15 May 1986, when it fetched 484,000 Swiss francs.

NIARCHOS

Unlike the proverbial cat, the Premier Mine can expect to enjoy only four lives. The first lasted from the discovery of the diamond pipe in 1902 until the outbreak of the First World War when the mine was shut down and put on a caretaking basis. By January 1916 it was working again and production continued up to 1932 when mining operations ceased due to the depressed state of the diamond industry. Working resumed in 1950. The fourth life began in 1979 with the opening up of the mine below the Gabbro Sill, an intrusion of barren rock which cuts right across the pipe 400 metres (1300 feet) below ground. Production from this source, which virtually necessitates the establishment of a new mine at greater depth, will ensure a very long life for the property.

In the early years of its existence Premier produced many large diamonds including, of course, the 'Cullinan' in 1905. However, since working was restarted in 1950 the mine has continued to yield some exceptional stones. The most exciting moment occurred early on the morning of Saturday, 22 May 1954 when a diamond measuring just under 51mm (2 inches) long, just over 25mm (1 inch) wide and 19mm ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch) thick, appeared on the grease tables in the recovery plant. It was immediately apparent to the officials at the mine that this was an exceptional find. The diamond weighed 426.5 carats, was internally flawless but was slightly chipped, probably due to contact with the mine's underground crusher. Sir Ernest Oppenheimer considered that it possessed the most perfect colour of any diamond he had seen – an opinion shared by others who were fortunate enough to view it.

In due course the still-unnamed stone was shipped to

London and in February 1956 it was announced by The Diamond Trading Company that a sale of rough diamonds totalling £3,000,000 had been made to the firm of Harry Winston Inc. of New York. At the time this transaction represented the largest single sale ever made to an industrial firm. The shipment comprised more than 50,000 stones and included the 426-carat diamond; its sale price was not disclosed but it was understood that a provisional valuation of not less than £100,000 had been placed upon it.

On 1 February 1956 the stone, in a brown paper bag, was



The grease tables, the last stage in the recovery of diamonds. The 'Niarchos' was first spotted at this point.

brought from Idlewild airport by a messenger for a customs broker and duly delivered to its purchaser. Accompanying him, and, like him, unattended by any special guard, was a postman bearing three cardboard boxes containing the rest of the diamonds for the firm. The shipment had been made to New York by registered post and the actual postal charges amounted to the princely sum of approximately £1.75.

Harry Winston and his cutting staff spent weeks debating whether to fashion one large gem or several smaller stones from the rough. In the end they decided on one large diamond. Mr Winston stated that although it would have proved easier to sell the smaller stones he felt that the historical value of creating one fine gem was most important.

Once the decision had been made plans were laid to ensure the cutting of a perfect final gem. The cutters made more than three hundred lead models of the proposed finished gem to guide them in their task. The actual cutting was performed by Winston's chief cutter, Bernard de Haan, who spent the entire year working on the project. The first severance took five weeks: from the 70-carat piece removed a 27.62-carat marquise was fashioned. The second took equally long and produced a further 70 carats from which an emerald-cut of 40 carats was cut. A piece of rough weighing about 270 carats remained. For some 1400 hours in all de Haan worked at grinding it into a great gem. Ultimately it yielded a pear-shape weighing 128.25 carats, cut with a total of 144 facets. On 27 February 1957, the gem, now named the 'Ice Queen', was unveiled to the world.

Later that year Stavros Niarchos bought the gem as a present for his wife, formerly Charlotte Ford, for a reported \$2,000,000. For that amount he is surely entitled to bestow his name upon the diamond which he has lent to many exhibitions. Members of the Ford family, however, were not so polite, referring to the diamond as 'The Skating Rink'.

Subsequently Mr Niarchos purchased the two smaller gems



The 'Niarchos' diamond.

that had been fashioned from the original rough piece. In 1966 the 'Niarchos' returned to South Africa where it was displayed in the exhibition, 'The Jewel Box 1966', held as part of the Rand Easter Show in Johannesburg.

STAR OF ARKANSAS

The 'Star of Arkansas' came from the only known diamond pipe of significance in the United States, the Crater of Diamonds State Park, 4km (2.5 miles) south of Murfreesboro, Arkansas.

The discovery of this pipe took place in the latter part of the last century when the owner of the land was a handyman-farmer, John Wesley Huddleston. He worked in partnership with one John Branner, who became interested in the many luminous pebbles that could be seen on the farm. Early one morning Huddleston decided to venture out alone. He searched the land thoroughly, finding a few of the small stones, but he noticed that many more were to be located on the ground of a neighbouring farm. He hastened over to the startled owner – who looked at him as if he had lost his reason – asked for, and received, an option on the nearly 73 hectares (180 acres) adjoining his own property. The price was \$1000. Although Huddleston's entire capital then consisted of two tired old mules, he talked so fast that the neighbouring farmer finally agreed to take one of the animals as a down payment.

Later that day Huddleston was in town carrying a couple of the larger stones that he had found on his newly-acquired land. At the County Bank he showed them to the cashier and asked how much they were worth. 'Oh, I'd say about fifty cents,' the cashier laughed, to which Huddleston retorted, 'Y'know what them stones are? Them's diamints, and I got a hull crop of 'em.'

Huddleston was sure of his discovery but he still wanted substantial proof, so after consulting the equally incredulous County Bank President and a local jeweller he packed the stones off to Tiffany's in New York for appraisal. There the famed gemologist and vice-president of the company, George F. Kunz, together with a government expert in rare gems, pronounced them to be genuine diamonds of a fine quality. One weighed 2.75 carats, the other 1.35 carats.

The deposit at Murfreesboro was identified as a kimberlite pipe. Huddleston later sold his holdings, after days of haggling, to the Union Trust Company for \$36,000. His subsequent mode of living is not known for sure: some say he died soon after the sale, while others have stated that he passed away twenty-seven years later as a pauper, having lost everything in a series of ill-fated investments and reckless gambling.

After it had changed hands several times the Crater of Diamonds came into the ownership of Austin Q. Millar, who bought it with his son Howard in 1912 and operated a test plant there for five years. But in 1919 the operating plant was destroyed by a series of mysterious fires. The Millars' investment of more than \$250,000 was burned up and they were unable to rebuild. Thereafter the land was opened to



The State capital building at Little Rock, Arkansas. The sole diamond pipe in the United States, at Murfreesboro, is situated within the State's boundaries.

visitors to look for diamonds on payment of a fee.

On 4 March 1955, a Mrs A. L. Parker, of Dallas, Texas, turned over a clod of dirt and discovered a diamond weighing 15.33 carats. Flawless and colourless, it was an elongated and thin stone measuring 38.1 by 11.1 by 6.3mm ($1\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{7}{16}$ by $\frac{1}{4}$ inches). The New York firm of diamond cutters, Schenk & Van Haelen, cut it into a marquise of 8.27 carats which was named the 'Star of Arkansas'. The value of the gem was originally established at between \$11,000 and \$15,000 but its fine quality and unusually large size for an Arkansas stone ultimately led to several jewellers reappraising its value. In 1968 the 'Star of Arkansas' was purchased by a jeweller from Tucson, Arizona, and afterwards sold to a private collector for \$50,000.

WINSTON

A 'legend in his lifetime' and 'the twentieth-century Tavernier' are some of the designations that have been applied to Harry Winston – and deservedly so, because no one in his time did more to promote or preserve the many celebrated diamonds which he and his firm handled. It is, therefore, fitting that a gem should commemorate his name: in this instance, a fine blue-white and flawless pear-shape of 62.05 carats. The rough stone, weighing 154.5 carats, came to light in the Jagersfontein Mine in 1952.

In 1959 the 'Winston' was sold to King Saud of Saudi Arabia for a reported \$600,000. Eighteen months later the King asked Mr Winston to come to Boston, Massachusetts, where he was undergoing eye surgery, and handed the diamond back to him. He explained: 'I have four wives, and if I give one stone to one wife, well, my life won't be worth a moment's peace – unless of course you have three others like this.' Unfortunately Harry Winston did not have available any stones which would have eased the predicament of the King, an extremely valuable client of his, so he took the diamond back. He loaned it for display at the International Exhibition of Modern Jewellery 1890–1961, held in Goldsmiths Hall, London, in 1961.

Three years afterwards Harry Winston was luckier. Asked to value some jewellery that had belonged to a daughter of Jack Chrysler, the automobile tycoon, he came across a pear-shape weighing 59.46 carats. This diamond made an almost perfect match with the 'Winston', with the result that they were set as a pair of earrings and subsequently sold to a Canadian client. In November 1980 they came up for auction in Geneva where they fetched \$7,300,000.



The 'Winston' diamond.

LESOTHO

The scenario is set in a small country in southern Africa, Lesotho, formerly known as Basutoland and a British Protectorate until 1966. Lesotho, or the 'Mountain Kingdom' as it is popularly known, is 30,000 square km (11,600 square miles) in area and has a population of 1.2 million. It is an enclave ringed by the Republic of South Africa and two of its Black homelands, in the south-east by the Transkei and in the north by QwaQwa.

For many years the Basotho workers had provided the

diamond mines at Kimberley with much of their labour force – they had therefore ample opportunity to become acquainted with diamonds and 'blueground'. Once back in their own country they had clearly put this knowledge to good use, because one day in 1954 a District Commissioner in a northern part of Lesotho received a report from the Kao Valley, in a remote part of his district, to the effect that a woman had died when a pit in which she had been working suddenly collapsed. Such an incident, to say the least,

appeared unusual so the Commissioner despatched a police patrol to investigate. A week later the police reported that more than one hundred people were digging on a hill slope for diamonds and that diggers had been at work there for almost a year. Since some of the pits had extended to a depth of 4 metres (13 feet) the authorities forthwith banned further digging operations on the grounds of safety.

But the news of the digging was out. In 1955 Colonel Jack Scott, a colourful veteran of the South African mining scene, received a licence to prospect the whole country for diamonds. When they had been properly evaluated the Kao diggings turned out to be a huge kimberlite pipe – then the sixth largest known in the world. More kimberlite pipes were found eastward of Kao at a point known as Letseng-la-Terai, the ‘turn by the swamp’. However, confronted by ever increasing demands on his personal resources without expectation of an early return, Colonel Scott in 1959 entered into an agreement with De Beers who undertook to assist him with the prospecting programme.

Lest it be thought that southern Africa for the most part consists of continuously sun-drenched terrain it would be as well to realize that the diamondiferous areas of Lesotho lie more than 3000 metres (9800 feet) above sea level and are exposed to every permutation of the elements – wind, sun, rain, cloud, hail, sleet, frost and snow. Thus a combination of an awkward and remote geographical location and an inhospitable climate rendered working conditions very difficult and frequently hazardous. Because the diamondiferous area was almost inaccessible, and appeared to be too low in grade for exploitation, De Beers withdrew from the scene in 1960. The government at once set about establishing a public digging at Letseng-la-Terai. Claims 3 metres (10 feet) square were pegged out over the whole area of the pipe and were offered to Basotho at the rate of 50 cents per month for each claim.

The early recovery of some fine quality diamonds exceeding 50 carats stirred up interest with the result that foreign diggers, bringing with them finance and skill gained from experience of the South African diggings, entered into partnerships with the local diggers. In addition, buyers, principally from South Africa, appeared on the scene, setting up offices and appointing representatives in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho. The buyers usually visited Maseru twice a month to buy from the diggers who made the long trip down from the mountain to the capital on foot or on pony. Some of the buyers used to fly up to the diggings once a month using the air-strip for light aircraft that had been constructed on the top of a hill.

The method of mining was primitive but effective. In October 1965 a stone weighing 527 carats was found by a 67-year-old digger who promptly fled to the hills, saying he feared for his life. The great moment of discovery, however, took place on Friday, 26 May 1967, when a brown stone weighing 601.26 carats was found. This was the ‘Lesotho’ diamond which ranks as the eleventh largest of gem quality in

the world. Moreover it is the largest ever to have been discovered by a woman. Its finder was Mrs Ernestine Ramaboa, the wife of a 38-year-old digger, Petrus Ramaboa, of Thabana-Morena.

Since the start of their digging the Ramaboas had experienced reasonable luck, finding several stones including one of 24 carats. Petrus Ramaboa decided to walk the 225km (140 miles) to sell them and it was while he was away that his wife came upon the big diamond when sifting gravel from the deposit. When Mrs Ramaboa set eyes on the object she knew at once that it was a diamond, even though at the time it was dull and cloudy. Without a word to her fellow diggers she stuffed it into her dress pocket and departed to her hut to await her husband’s return. When he saw it he decided they should set off at once for Maseru, Mrs Ramaboa telling the other diggers she was not feeling well. The couple walked for four days and nights stopping only briefly for sleep and food from villages. Petrus was obliged to use up most of the proceeds he had just received from the sale of the smaller stones, so that by the time he and his wife reached Maseru he had only 28 shillings in his pocket. On arrival he at once showed the diamond to an independent buyer from Kimberley, who examined it but made no offer for it. News of the find spread rapidly among the other buyers in Maseru and eventually the government stepped in for the Ramaboas’ own protection.

A meeting was arranged between the Minister of Economic Development, Senator C. D. Molapo, and representatives of the registered diamond buying firms for discussion on the government’s procedure for selling the diamond. After the Minister had outlined the procedure to be followed, the buyers were allowed to discuss fully the new method of buying. The dealers were shown the diamond at a local bank and were requested to submit sealed tenders. Although it was pale brown in colour, the ‘Lesotho’ was expected to realize between 150,000 and 200,000 rand.

On the following Monday the tenders were examined by a committee of three, consisting of the Minister of Economic Development, the Assistant Commissioner of Police and the Diamond Control Officer. Senator Molapo announced the amount offered by the highest bidder on the lawns of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The sum was 216,000 rand, offered by Eugene Serafini, a Bloemfontein buyer who had been accompanied by a Dutch colleague, J. W. Vermey. Mr Serafini had previously been the purchaser of the 527-carat diamond for which he had paid 116,000 rand. Representatives of De Beers were among those unsuccessful at the ‘Lesotho’ tender.

Shortly afterwards Mr Vermey contacted Harry Winston to ask whether he was interested in acquiring the ‘Lesotho’. He replied that he was, so the stone was sent to his office in Geneva, where it was put on display, thence to New York. The price was not divulged but it was believed at the time that Mr Winston had paid roughly twice the amount Eugene Serafini had originally offered.

The arrival of the diamond in the United States was



followed by that of Mr and Mrs Ramaboa who came to New York to watch the cleaving operation at the invitation of Mr Winston. They brought with them their only child, a nineteen-year-old girl who was deaf and spoke only with difficulty. The opportunity was taken of consulting top specialists over her affliction.

After weeks of study and the making of more than twenty replicas, the 'Lesotho' was cleaved into two pieces by Harry Winston's cutter, Pastor Colon, Jnr, on 5 March 1968. According to Ronald Winston, the decision to cut was made 'at the point where nature left a crack in its surface'. The delicate operation of cleaving was shown live on television. The polishing of the 'Lesotho' was completed the following year and resulted in eighteen gems weighing a total of 242.5 carats, equivalent to 40.33 per cent of the original rough weight. They were noticeably lighter in colour than had been expected. The details of the gems are as follows:

		Carats	Cut
Lesotho	I	71.73	Emerald
	II	60.67	Emerald
	III	40.42	Marquise
	IV	16.35	Pear
	V	11.19	Pear
	VI	6.98	Pear
	VII	4.33	Pear
	VIII	4.15	Pear
	IX	4.07	Pear
	X	3.87	Emerald
	XI	3.50	Emerald
	XII	3.22	Marquise
	XIII	2.75	Square
	XIV	2.32	Pear
	XV	2.15	Emerald
	XVI	1.86	Marquise
	XVII	1.86	Pear
	XVIII	1.08	Round

Lesotho II appeared in a jewellery sale held by Christie's in Geneva on 22 November 1979; it was accompanied by a Gemological Institute of America certificate: colour light brown, clarity flawless.

Back in his own country Petrus Ramaboa was able to expand his digging operation by increasing both the number of his claims and the number of men working for him. Asked whether he thought there was a chance of finding other large stones, he replied, 'I am sure of it. That diamond had broken off another one. You could see from the surfaces. Somewhere there is another one just as big. But it's a hard life up there.'

In the late 1960s production at Letseng-la-Terai started to decline and soon the only mining operation in Lesotho was that being carried out at the Kao diggings, managed by a



Cleaving the 'Lesotho' diamond.

government agency with technical assistance given by De Beers. This too closed down in 1967. Six years later the country's ruler, Chief Jonathan, whose great ambition had been to see the creation of a large mining operation within Lesotho, asked Harry Oppenheimer whether De Beers might conduct yet a further evaluation of the Letseng-la-Terai deposit. Mr Oppenheimer referred the request to his colleagues and, after negotiation, De Beers agreed to proceed.

In November 1977 a modern mine was officially opened, at a capital cost of 36 million rand. Sadly its life was destined to be one of short duration. The Letseng-la-Terai deposit proved to be one of the lowest grade diamond mines in the world, producing only three carats per ton. It also yielded an exceptional number of large stones: in the space of five years it produced more than one hundred diamonds weighing more than 100 carats, including one of 213 carats. However, due to the depressed state of the diamond market in the early 1980s, particularly for the larger, high quality stones produced at Letseng-la-Terai, the mine had been operating at a loss for some time. The partners examined ways of keeping the mine in operation but it became apparent that the plan to extend the life of the mine by developing a satellite pit had become uneconomic under the prevailing conditions. Reluctantly it was, therefore, decided to close the mine down.

One can only hope that conditions in the world diamond market will sufficiently improve so as to allow Petrus Ramaboa to locate and to sell what he considers to be the missing part of his great discovery.

OPPOSITE ABOVE *Mr and Mrs Ramaboa. Mr Ramaboa is holding the diamond which his wife found.*

OPPOSITE BELOW *Letseng-la-Terai diamond mine in Lesotho.*

TAYLOR-BURTON

Few celebrities in the second half of the twentieth century have done as much as Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor to draw attention to the appeal of diamonds, large ones in particular. Their well-publicized dealings have been a source of interest to people in all parts of the world.

Richard Burton's first purchase for Miss Taylor was the 33.19 carat 'Krupp' diamond which had formerly been part of the estate of Vera Krupp, once the wife of the head of the German munition-making concern. Miss Taylor wore the diamond in a ring. In the following year Mrs Harriet Annenberg Ames, the sister of Walter Annenberg, the American Ambassador in London during the presidency of Richard Nixon, sent a pear-shape weighing 69.42 carats to Sotheby

Parke-Bernet Inc. in New York for auction. It was offered for sale on the understanding that it could be named by the buyer. Mrs Ames had bought the diamond from Harry Winston in 1967 who, in turn, had had it cut from a blue-white cleavage found in the Premier Mine the previous year. This stone had weighed 240.80 carats.

Before the sale on 23 October 1967 the auctioneers had arranged to fly the diamond to Switzerland for inspection by Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. It was reported in the Press that Mrs Jacqueline Onassis was among those who were showing an interest in the gem. In the event Cartier's bought it for the record price of \$1,050,000 and accordingly named it the 'Cartier'. Harry Winston himself had been one of the bidders at the sale. Four days later Cartier's sold the stone to Richard Burton for \$1,100,000. However, Robert Kenmore, Chairman of the Board of Kenmore Corporation, the owners of Cartier's, made it a condition of the sale that they could display the by-now-named 'Taylor-Burton' in New York and Chicago. An editorial in the *New York Times* was distinctly acidulous on the matter. Under the heading 'The Million Dollar Diamond' appeared the following comment:

The peasants have been lining up outside Cartier's this week to gawk at a diamond as big as the Ritz that costs well over a million dollars. It is destined to hang around the neck of Mrs Richard Burton. As somebody said, it would have been nice to wear in the tumbril on the way to the guillotine.

In 1978 Miss Taylor announced that she was putting the 'Taylor-Burton' up for sale and was planning to use part of the proceeds to build a hospital in Botswana. Dare one hope that this was adequately reported in the *New York Times*? In June of the following year Henry Lambert, the New York jeweller, said that he had purchased the diamond for nearly \$3,000,000. By December he had sold the 'Taylor-Burton' which was last reported to be in Saudi Arabia.



Elizabeth Taylor wearing the 'Taylor-Burton' diamond.

STAR OF SIERRA LEONE

The feast of Saint Valentine, which falls on 14 February, appears to be intended to commemorate two saints of the same name. According to legend one was a Roman priest who suffered martyrdom during the persecution of the Emperor Claudius, and the other a Bishop who apparently was also martyred in Rome. In their present form the acts of both martyrdoms are legendary but appear to be based on historical foundation. It is possible that they may actually be different developments of the same original account and refer to only one individual.

The present significance of St Valentine's day as a lovers' festival – and doubtless a boon to the coffers of the Post Office which is obliged to handle a surfeit of mail in the form of greetings cards – has no connection with the saint or with any incident in his life. However, if a diamond is considered to be a token of love and affection, on what more suitable day of the year could one first make its appearance? And that was precisely what occurred in Sierra Leone on 14 February 1972, in the rich diamond fields of the Kono area, situated in the country's Eastern Province, some 320km (200 miles) east of Freetown.

On that day, Mr E. O. Williams, the Sierra Leone engineer in charge of the Separator Plant operated by the National Diamond Mining Company (Sierra Leone) Limited (Diminco), and Mr W. D. Adams, the Security Officer, were astonished to see a huge diamond appear on the glass-enclosed picking table which forms the final stage in the long and arduous process of the recovery of diamonds. It is reported that on seeing it their first words were unprintable! No wonder, because the stone weighed 968.9 carats, which is approximately 0.22kg (8 oz) and measured 63.5mm (2.5 inches) long by 38.1mm (1.5 inches) wide. It was a cleavage, the size of a hen's egg and roughly rectangular.

As soon as it became clear that this was an exceptional discovery of great value, the diamond was conveyed under close security escort to Freetown where the country's President, Dr Siaka Stevens, named it the 'Star of Sierra Leone'.

The 'Star of Sierra Leone' is the third largest diamond of gem quality to have been found, being surpassed only by the 'Cullinan' and the 'Excelsior'. Since both of those great stones originated in diamond pipes, the 'Star of Sierra Leone' thus remains to this day the largest diamond ever to have been recovered from an alluvial source. The record had previously been held by another great stone from Sierra Leone, the 770-carat 'Woyie River' diamond. Although the 'Star of Sierra Leone' was somewhat internally flawed in quality, with numerous black spots and oxidization in one corner, it also possessed a marvellous colour, characteristic of so many very fine diamonds found in Sierra Leone.



The 'Star of Sierra Leone' in the rough; it was the largest diamond to have been recovered from an alluvial source.

Diminco was owned jointly by the Sierra Leone Government and the Sierra Leone Selection Trust Limited. The joint owners requested the De Beers Central Selling Organisation to handle the sale of the diamond on their behalf. Representatives of the Organisation flew out from London to Sierra Leone to view the stone and early in May it was transferred to their headquarters in London. On 30 June, at the Sierra Leone High Commission in London, Dr Davidson Nicol, the High Commissioner, showed the 'Star of Sierra Leone' to a gathering of some hundred journalists, photographers, and radio and television reporters.

Arrangements were then made by the Central Selling Organisation for the world's diamond dealers and merchants to be given the opportunity of viewing the stone, and the date for the sale by tender was set up for mid-July. At the time it was understood that those invited to view included a few important dealers who were not on The Diamond Trading Company's accredited list of buyers.

The formal conditions of the tender were as follows:

- (a) Persons tendering must produce bank guarantees of ability to raise not less than £1,000,000.
- (b) Any sealed bids must be accompanied by a deposit of £100,000.
- (c) The 'Star of Sierra Leone' will be sold to the highest bidder, provided that:
 - (1) his bid is not less than the reserve price and
 - (2) payment in full is made to NDMC [National Diamond Mining Company] within fifteen days follow-

ing the date when the tender bids are opened. Should payment in full not be received within the stated period, the deposit will be forfeited to NDMC and the procedure repeated with the second highest bidder as if he had submitted the highest bid and so on.

- (d) Unsuccessful bidders' deposits will be returned to them on completion of the sale.
- (e) The successful bidder to give reasonable publicity to Sierra Leone.

On 18 July, the sealed tenders submitted by the prospective buyers were opened by the Sierra Leone Minister of Mines, Mr S. B. Kawusu-Conteh, in the presence of Dr Nicol and Mr A. E. Oppenheimer. Alas expectations were not fulfilled: the diamond had failed in the five bids submitted to reach its reserve price. Thereupon the Minister decided not to proceed with the sale but to report back to the President and other members of the government.

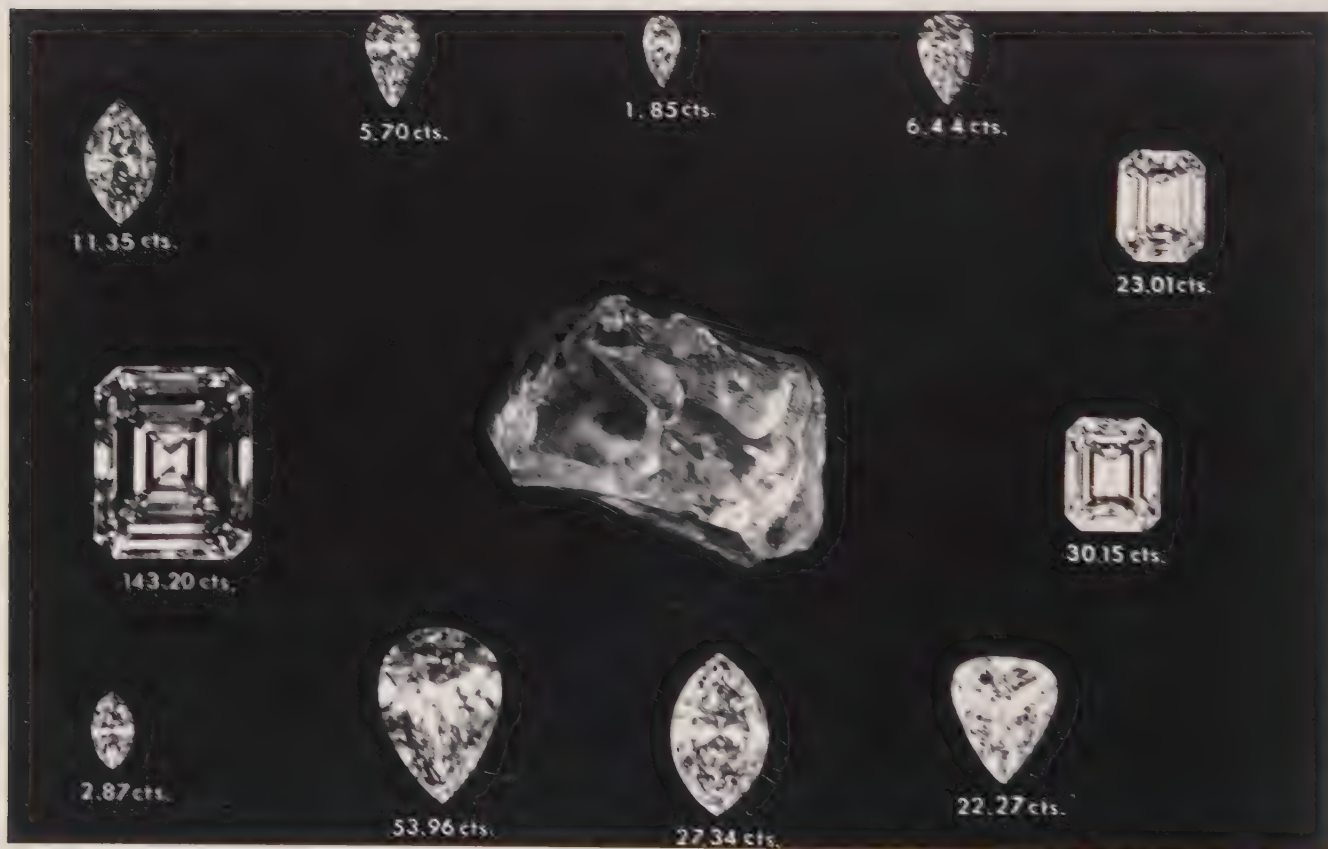
A period of silence ensued. Then on 5 October, the President of Sierra Leone announced that the diamond had been sold to Harry Winston of New York and that the price paid was well in excess of any tender received. The purchase price has never been revealed but according to Mr Winston it was 'in the vicinity of several million dollars'.

So the 'Star of Sierra Leone' had found its buyer and it is perhaps stating the obvious to assert that it could not have

found a more suitable one. Harry Winston had bought and cut so many of the world's greatest diamonds – the 'Jonker', 'President Vargas', 'Niarchos' and 'Lesotho' for instance – and had purchased many other historical diamonds, such as the 'Hope', 'Nepal', 'Portuguese' and the 'Star of the East'. In addition he had assisted in building up the great collection of diamonds housed in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC. The 'Star of Sierra Leone' was surely his most significant purchase. His name coupled with that of the diamond itself helped to arouse the maximum publicity in the various capitals of the world where the 'Star of Sierra Leone' was put on exhibition – the proceeds going to various charities in its country of origin.

After several months of study, the 'Star of Sierra Leone' was cut in New York. Herein lies one of the recent tragedies of diamond cutting, for it was Mr Winston's intention, regardless of the difficulty in finding a buyer, to have the diamond cut so as to yield one exceptional gem. Sadly the great emerald-cut, which weighed 143.20 carats, was found on completion to be flawed. Consequently Harry Winston, being a perfectionist, decided that the gem must be recut. The final yield was seventeen gems totalling 238.48 carats.

The 'Star of Sierra Leone' and the eleven principal diamonds originally cut from it. The largest, weighing 143.20 carats, was subsequently recut because of an internal flaw.



No.	Cut	Carats			
I	Pear	53.96	XII	Marquise	3.73
II	Emerald	32.52	XIII	Pear	3.25
III	Emerald	30.15	XIV	Marquise	2.97
IV	Marquise	27.34	XV	Marquise	2.87
V	Emerald	23.01	XVI	Marquise	2.86
VI	Pear	22.27	XVII	Pear	1.85
VII	Marquise	11.35			
VIII	Pear	6.44			
IX	Pear	5.70			
X	Marquise	4.29			
XI	Marquise	3.92			

Thirteen of the seventeen gems were flawless. All the gems were sold in 1975. The seven which resulted from the recutting of the big emerald cut were numbers II, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV and XVI and, with the exception of the largest, they are now set in the 'Star of Sierra Leone' brooch.

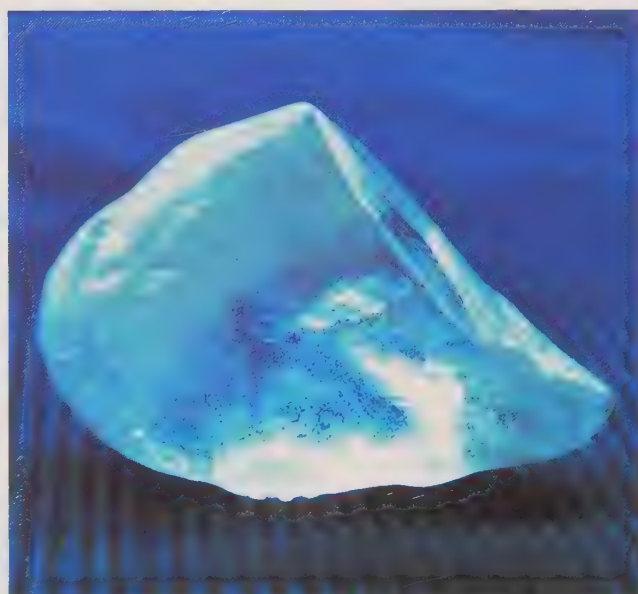
PREMIER ROSE

In March 1978, the Premier Mine yielded yet another remarkable diamond, a triangular-shaped cleavage of the finest colour, weighing 353.9 carats. Like an earlier stone found at the Premier, the 'Niarchos', this one too travelled right through the various stages of mining recovery only to emerge at the final one, the grease table in the recovery plant. A spokesman for De Beers stated that the stone had been mined at a depth of 457 metres (1500 feet), thus seemingly discounting any possible connection with the 'Cullinan' diamond, which had been found merely 1.8 metres (6 feet) below the surface.

For reasons of security the news of the finding of the diamond was not released for two months. After it had been disclosed, the Press lost no time in speculating about possible destinations for the eventual polished gem. Prince Rainier of Monaco was obliged to deny reports that he was planning to buy it as a wedding present for his daughter, Princess Caroline, who was shortly to be married; another European royal family was rumoured to be interested; finally Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Empire, who had already spent £20,000,000 on his coronation, was said to have made an offer for the stone. In the end the Johannesburg firm, Mouw Diamond Cutting Works, purchased it for around £2,500,000. The diamond was named after Mrs Rose Mouw, who was renowned for her prowess in marking diamonds, the first process in cutting a gem.

The cutting firm then contacted their American partner, William Goldberg, who promptly purchased a share in the stone. When he set eyes upon it, Mr Goldberg exclaimed, 'A lot of people are going to be interested - this is an unusually exciting diamond.'

The cutting was carried out in South Africa and produced three gems which became known as members of the 'Premier



The 'Premier Rose' diamond in the rough.

Rose' family. The largest, which has retained the name 'Premier Rose', is a pear-shape weighing 137.02 carats, cut with 189 facets and measuring approximately 43.40 by 23.20 by 18.93mm (1.71 by 0.91 by 0.74 inches). It was submitted to the Gemological Institute of America for certification where it received a 'D' flawless rating, symbols for the finest qualities of colour and clarity. It was the largest stone of this calibre to have been certified by the GIA. The weight of the 'Premier Rose' makes it the second biggest pear-shaped diamond, surpassed only by 'Cullinan I'. The 'Little Rose' is also a pear-shape and weighs 31.48 carats, while the 'Baby Rose' is a



brilliant of 2.11 carats. The final yield of 48 per cent was a high figure to obtain from what had been considered a very difficult, awkwardly shaped piece of rough.

The William Goldberg Diamond Corporation of New York handled the sale of the gems. The 'Premier Rose' was sold in 1979 to an undisclosed buyer for about \$10,000,000; the sale of the two smaller diamonds followed soon after.

The cut 'Premier Rose'.

ADDITIONAL FAMOUS DIAMONDS

MIRROR OF NAPLES

European politics dominate the history of this long-lost diamond. Its name is connected with the Italian campaigns of Louis XII of France who reigned from 1498 to 1515. Having pursued the claims of his predecessor, Charles VIII, to the Kingdom of Naples, in 1500 Louis XII concluded the Treaty of Granada with Ferdinand II of Aragon for the partition of the kingdom. In the following year Naples was conquered but a dispute, eventually leading to war, broke out between France and Spain over the partition. By 1504 the French king had lost all Naples: in the following year he renounced his claims in favour of a niece.

Louis XII became a widower in 1514 and in November of that year he married Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, King of England. It was a match between a man of fifty-two, broken in spirit and ailing in health, and a young and beautiful bride of eighteen, who was already in love with another man. This was Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, who after the death of Louis XII on New Year's Day 1515, headed the embassy from England to congratulate the new king, Francis I, upon his accession to the throne of France.

Suffolk used this convenient opportunity to win the hand of the young widow. However, she feared opposition to the marriage, above all from her brother. Despite Suffolk's promise to Henry VIII to delay any action until his return from France, he secretly married the Queen, thereby incurring the wrath of the English king. Through the intercession of Cardinal Wolsey Suffolk was ultimately pardoned on payment of a heavy fine and the surrender of all the former Queen's jewels and plate. The jewels included the diamond known as the 'Mirror of Naples', then considered a stone of fine quality and valued at 60,000 Crowns. Nothing has been heard of it since the time of Henry VIII.

GUISE

A rectangular-shaped diamond weighing $33\frac{1}{4}$ carats was once the property of the House of Guise, a branch of the House of Lorraine, which played an important part in France during the sixteenth-century Wars of Religion. In 1665 Louis XIV of France bought it with some other diamonds from his cousin, Marie de Lorraine. In 1786 during the reign of Louis XVI the 'Guise' was recut: it retained its rectangular shape but now with slightly rounded corners and a large culet. Its weight became $28\frac{3}{8}$ carats (29.1 metric carats) and it was described as faultless, white and fiery. Valued at 250,000 livres, the 'Guise' was mounted in a setting for Queen Marie Antoinette. In 1792 the diamond was stolen during the robbery of the Garde Meuble; but fortunately it was recovered shortly afterwards, along with some lesser diamonds, from the house of one Tavenal.

French sources have stated that the 'Guise' was among the former

crown jewels that were sold by the Third Republic in 1887 but it does not appear in Lord Twining's list of the contents that were disposed of on that occasion. Nor is the diamond among the items that were specifically excluded from that sale and which are on display today in the Louvre. The whereabouts of this jewel are, therefore, unknown.

STAR OF ESTE

Weighing approximately 25 (old) carats, this diamond was once owned by the House of Este, one of the oldest Italian princely families. It was reputed to have been of perfect form and quality. The 'Star of Este' became a jewel of the Hapsburgs when the daughter of the last Duke of Este married Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, third son of the Emperor Francis I. This branch of the Hapsburgs died out in 1875 and the title and possessions passed to Archduke Francis Ferdinand whose murder at Sarajevo in 1914 was the spark that touched off the First World War.

According to a reliable source the 'Star of Este', together with other Hapsburg jewels, was sold in order to help pay the expenses of the exiled Imperial family. The diamond may have come to light in 1951. In that year agents acting on behalf of King Farouk of Egypt purchased in San Sebastian, Spain, a diamond whose description matched that of the 'Star of Este'; it weighed 26.16 metric carats, equivalent to 24.48 old carats. But it was never officially confirmed that it was the same diamond.

FRANKFURT SOLITAIRE

In 1764 the Emperor Francis I of Austria bought this diamond, together with a ring, at Frankfurt-am-Main, for 28,000 louis d'or. He had the diamond, a brilliant-cut of fine colour weighing $44\frac{5}{8}$ (old) carats, mounted in a hat buckle. After his death, his widow, the Empress Maria Theresa, ordered all her late consort's jewellery, including the 'Frankfurt Solitaire', to be handed over to the Treasury for safe custody. The diamond was subsequently set as the centre-piece of a diamond tiara.

The 'Frankfurt Solitaire' remained in the Treasury until November 1918, when the last Hapsburg Emperor, Charles, ordered the High Chamberlain of the Imperial Court to remove those jewels that constituted the personal property of the Imperial Family. In addition to the 'Frankfurt Solitaire' they included the 'Florentine' diamond, the 'Baden Solitaire' of 30 carats, and a rose-coloured brilliant of just over 26 carats.

Some of these jewels were sold to help in paying the expenses of the Imperial family which had gone into exile in Switzerland in 1918,

while others were unfortunately stolen by an unfaithful employee. It is not known into which category the 'Frankfurt Solitaire' fell but there has been no news of its whereabouts since that time.

PAUL I

Paul I (1754–1801), Emperor of Russia from 1796, was the son of Peter III and Catherine the Great. His short reign was looked upon as a period of frenzied despotism; it ended with his murder on the night of 23 March 1801, by a group of officers who had succeeded in entering the St Michael's Palace in St Petersburg.

The diamond bearing the name of this ruler is a very pure, light pink cushion-shape of 13.35 (metric) carats, for which Paul is said to have paid 100,000 roubles. The colour of the 'Paul I' has been described as 'blood-red', but according to Alexander Fersman, the noted Soviet mineralogist, this false colour was imparted to the stone by a backing of red foil. Today it is mounted on silver foil, the centre stone of a diamond diadem which now forms part of the Treasures of the USSR Diamond Fund that are displayed in the Kremlin.

SULTAN OF MOROCCO

The Youssoupov family is said to have owned this 35.27-carat bluish-grey cushion-cut since 1840: if that is so then clearly it is not of African origin. Cartier's, who handled the sale of many of the Youssoupov jewels, purchased the 'Sultan of Morocco' from Prince Felix Youssoupov in 1922. Sometime towards the end of that decade they sold it to a buyer in the United States. In 1969 Cartier's loaned the diamond to the New York State Museum for their exhibition entitled 'The World of Gems'. In July 1972 F. J. Cooper Inc, the Philadelphia jewellers, acquired the gem before selling it in the following November to a private American buyer.

Presumably the diamond at some stage in its history was owned by a Moroccan ruler but his identity does not appear to be known. It may have been Moulay Abd al-Hafidh who is said to have been in possession of the 'Moon of the Mountain' diamond – evidence, perhaps, that he was a collector of diamonds. This Sultan signed the Treaty of Fez which established Morocco as a French protectorate.

ASHBERG

It is said that this amber, cushion-shaped diamond, weighing 102.48 metric carats, was formerly part of the Russian Crown Jewels. It must then have been a late addition to that collection because the stone bears all the characteristics of one from South Africa. In 1934 the Russian Trade Delegation sold the diamond to Mr Ashberg, a leading Stockholm banker. The Stockholm firm of Bolin, former Crown Jewellers to the Court of St Petersburg, mounted it as a pendant. In 1949 the 'Ashberg' was displayed at the Amsterdam Exhibition, the aim of which was to attract new workers to the diamond industry; on that occasion it was mounted in a necklace containing diamonds and other gemstones.

Ten years later the Bukowski auction house in Stockholm put the 'Ashberg' up for sale but it failed to reach its reserve and was withdrawn. Then its owner succeeded in selling the gem to a private buyer whose name was not revealed. Finally in May 1981 Christie's

auctioned the diamond in Geneva where once again it failed to reach its reserve and was withdrawn from sale.

STEWART

Weighing 296 (metric) carats, this light yellow octahedron was for many years the biggest alluvial diamond found in South Africa. It was discovered in July 1872 at Waldeck's Plant – alluvial diggings on the Vaal River some 48km (30 miles) from Kimberley – in a claim considered as almost valueless, which the original owner, F. Pepper, had sold for £30. The buyer, named Spalding, did not have high hopes of it either, but as other diggers were finding diamonds nearby he thought it just possible that something might turn up.

Spalding handed the claim over to Antonie Williams to work. One day while showing one of his labourers where and how he wanted him to work, Williams's pick struck a rock so hard that it bounced: suddenly he was spellbound by the sight of this large diamond. It is said that Williams was so excited he could not eat for two days.



The 'Ashberg' diamond.

Eventually Spalding and Williams sold the stone for £6000 to a Port Elizabeth merchant named Stewart; he sold it shortly afterwards to Messrs Pittar, Levenson & Co for £9000. The cutting, most likely carried out in Amsterdam, yielded a brilliant of 123 carats, last heard of in private hands.

PEACE

The Parisian businessman Salomon Habib was a notable, if somewhat mysterious, collector of fine diamonds in the earlier part of this century. On 24 June 1909, part of his collection appeared in Paris for sale – it included several exceptional diamonds, among them the ‘Hope’. A further auction of jewels that remained unsold the first time was held in Paris in 1933.

The ‘Peace’ diamond was offered by Sotheby’s for auction in London in December 1938 by Habib who, according to a Press report, was understood to be suffering from war wounds. Weighing 12.25 (metric) carats, it is a very fine white Golconda stone, cut as a cushion-shaped heart and of great brilliance. After bidding had opened at £500, it was sold for £1550.

ARCHDUKE JOSEPH

Named after the Archduke Joseph, who for a short period after the First World War was Regent of Hungary, this diamond was auctioned by Sotheby’s in London on 22 June 1961. At the time it was believed to be the largest unmounted fine quality diamond ever to be auctioned in Great Britain. A note in the sale catalogue read as follows:

Minutes taken 1 June 1933 ... record that the stone, then the property of HRH Archduke Joseph, was at that time deposited with the Hungarian General Credit Bank in the presence of a State Counsellor and representatives of the National Bank of Hungary.

Archduke Joseph François, who was born in 1895, is a descendant of the Emperor Leopold II, son of Maria Theresa ... It passed into the ownership of the Vendor in 1936.

Weighing 78.54 metric carats, the ‘Archduke Joseph’ was described as being of ‘elongated cushion shape and of mixed cutting’. It possessed a very fine colour with that limpidity so characteristic of the finest stones from Golconda whence it had clearly originated. But, according to Harry Winston, there was a slight imperfection in the diamond in the form of a thin white line, thus detracting from its value.

The ‘Archduke Joseph’ was withdrawn from sale when the bidding stopped at £145,000. Subsequently it was reported that a syndicate of Hatton Garden buyers had made an unsuccessful bid for the diamond of which there has been no news since that time.

MOON

On 20 August 1942, Sotheby’s auctioned in London this large diamond of 183 metric carats. According to an eye-witness the stone was a well-cut brilliant, almost circular, rather on the thick side but showing good fire in any light. It had a faint tinge of yellow – doubtless an additional reason for naming the diamond thus.

The ‘Moon’ reached London from Paris where it had been in the possession of its anonymous owner for twenty-five years. The stone was reputed to have been formerly among the Russian Crown Jewels, a fact which could not be substantiated at the time of the sale nor has been since. It was knocked down to a Mr Thorne for the low figure of £5200 before passing into the hands of a foreign potentate whose identity was not disclosed.

PRINCIE

When this 34.64-carat pink diamond came up for sale at Sotheby’s in London on 17 March 1960, the name of the vendor was not disclosed. It was reported at the time that it might have come from the Nizam of Hyderabad’s collection of jewels. However, it is of interest to read of an extract from *Memories of a Diamond Dealer of the Good Old Days* by Etienne G. Fallek, of Paris. In 1927 he drew up a 23-page report on the State Jewels of the Republic of Turkey; among the rare diamonds which he handled was, ‘The rectangular, old-cut brilliant, weighing 36 carats, of pure rose or salmon-rose hue, from Golconda, in India.’

Despite the reported difference in the weights of the two diamonds and the fact that rectangular may not mean cushion-shape, large pink diamonds from Golconda have not been found in such abundance so as to exclude the possibility that the gem which M. Fallek saw may have been the same one which came up for auction in London in 1960. Certainly the ‘Princie’ was a very beautiful diamond of Indian origin: it contained one black spot inside. What was remarkable about it was that when exposed to ultraviolet rays it had an orange fluorescence and phosphorescence.

Van Cleef & Arpels bought the diamond for £46,000. They sent it to their Paris branch where it was christened at a party in its honour. The guests included the Maharanee of Baroda and her fourteen-year-old son, whose pet family name was ‘Princie’. Mounted as a pendant on a necklace of baguette-cut diamonds, Van Cleef & Arpels later sold the diamond to an undisclosed buyer.

GOLCONDE DORÉ

On 17 May 1962, Sotheby’s auctioned this diamond in London when it was bought by a London dealer for £8200. The sale catalogue contained the following note:

Salomon Habib was a notable French collector of unusual diamonds, part of whose collection, including the famous blue ‘Hope’ diamond, was sold by auction in Paris on 24 June 1909.

The stone now being offered is understood at one time to have belonged to the Sultan Abdul Hamid [Abd al-Hamid] who wore it as an armlet. It is believed to have been purchased by M. Habib in 1909 and to have been recut in Amsterdam at a later date. This stone with others from M. Habib’s collection was put up for sale at auction by the Credit Municipal de Paris at the Hotel Drouot on 8 February 1933 as Lot 5 by the description of ‘Golconde Doré’, the weight in the catalogue being incorrectly given as 95.35 carats, whereas the true weight is 95.40 carats. The stone was withdrawn from sale and remained in the ownership of M. Habib until his death in 1961.

For a stone of such exceptionally large size it possessed a high degree of purity.

Some have asserted that I. J. Asscher, of Amsterdam, cut the 'Golconde Doré'; however, this famous firm neither cut nor recut the diamond. In 1962 Dunklings the Jewellers of Melbourne, Australia, purchased the gem and they were its owners when thieves stole it during an exhibition in Sydney Lower Town Hall in October 1980. Since then there has been no news of the 'Golconde Doré'.

DEEPDENE

For many years this golden-yellow, cushion-cut diamond, weighing 104.88 metric carats, was loaned to the Museum of the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences by Cary W. Bok, a member of the family that founded Curtis Publications. The diamond takes its name from the estate of Mrs Bok's family, situated outside Philadelphia. Coincidentally Deepdene was also the name of Thomas Hope's estate, near Dorking in the south of England.

In 1954 Harry Winston purchased the 'Deepdene' from Mr Bok and had it mounted in a clip surrounded by thirteen diamonds weighing a total of 18 carats. The following year the 'Deepdene' was sold to a Canadian buyer, Mrs Eleanor Loder.

On 27 May 1971, Christie's put up for auction in Geneva a diamond of a cut and colour similar to that of the 'Deepdene'. It weighed 104.52 carats, and was thought to be the 'Deepdene'. The Paris jewellers Van Cleef & Arpels paid £190,000 for the gem. However, subsequent examination by British and Swiss gemologists showed that this diamond had been artificially coloured; it was, therefore, returned to its German owner. Meanwhile it is presumed that the 'Deepdene' is still owned by Mrs Loder.

COPENHAGEN BLUE

This beautiful dark blue emerald-cut was named after the Danish capital during an exhibition staged there in 1960. Danish jewellers were quick off the mark to name it thus – it could equally have been named after some of the other locations where it had been exhibited.

The gem weighs 45.85 metric carats and was fashioned from a piece of rough found in the Jagersfontein Mine in South Africa. It ranks as the second largest dark blue diamond, being surpassed by an unnamed brilliant weighing 51.84 carats. The emerald-cut is set in a bracelet with white diamonds, weighing a total of 87 carats, while the brilliant is set as the pendant to a diamond necklace containing 116 white diamonds, weighing a total of 120 carats. In addition two other dark blue brilliants, whose combined weight is 23.39 carats, are set as earrings together with 26 white diamonds weighing a total of 28 carats. The whole of this unique suite of diamonds is in private ownership today.

BLACK ORLOV

Regrettably most accounts of the early history of this diamond must be treated with the utmost scepticism.

It has been stated that the stone, alternatively known as 'The Eye of Brahma', weighed 195 carats in the rough and was then set in an idol near Pondicherry before being owned for a time in the middle of the eighteenth century by the 'Russian Princess Nadia Vyegin-Orlov'.

But firstly, there is no evidence of black diamonds being found in India, let alone one of such size; secondly, it is unlikely that a black diamond would have been retained because by and large black is not considered an auspicious colour among Hindus; thirdly, there was never a prince or princess of the aforementioned name because all Princes Orlov descend from the brothers of Catherine the Great's lover, Count Grigori Grigorievich Orlov; and fourthly, the cushion shape of the diamond indicates that it has been polished probably within the past hundred years.

Weighing 67.50 carats, the cushion-shaped 'Black Orlov', so called on account of its colour, which has been described as 'dark gun-metal', is by no means an uninteresting diamond. Charles F. Winson, a dealer from New York City, owned the stone for many years, exhibiting it at numerous events, including the display mounted by the American Museum of Natural History in 1951, the 1964 Texas State Fair in Dallas, and the Diamond Pavilion in Johannesburg in 1967. In July 1969, Winson sold the 'Black Orlov', then valued at \$300,000 and set in a diamond and platinum necklace.



The 'Black Orlov' diamond.

NEPAL

The exhibition entitled 'The Ageless Diamond' sponsored by Christie's and De Beers in London in 1959 provided few exhibits as breathtaking as this very beautiful pear-shaped diamond, weighing 79.41 metric carats, mounted as a pendant with a diamond chain. Little is known of its early history, though it is believed to have come to light in the alluvial diamond fields in the vicinity of Golconda. Certainly both the colour and quality of the gem were worthy of this source. Unlike so many fine Indian diamonds this one did not travel westwards but instead went to Nepal, situated on the north-eastern frontier of India, where it remained for several generations, passing from one ruler and one potentate to another.

In 1957 Harry Winston purchased the 'Nepal' from an Indian dealer, and had it slightly recut from its original weight of 79.50 carats. After 'The Ageless Diamond' exhibition he sold the diamond to a European client. It was set as a pendant to a V-shaped diamond necklace that also contained 145 round diamonds weighing a total of 71.44 carats.

LA BELLE HÉLÈNE

The rich diamond deposits situated along one of the world's most inhospitable coastlines, aptly named the 'Skeleton Coast', in the extreme south-west corner of Africa, have yielded no diamond finer than the one weighing 160 carats found early in 1951. Of a perfect, blue-white colour, the stone was wedge-shaped and had a cleavage plane that suggested it was part, possibly the bigger part, of an even larger diamond. Interestingly it was a Type IIa stone. It was found in the region known as Area G, one of the southernmost workings of the mine, at a spot some 640 metres (700 yards) from the Atlantic Ocean. At this point the workings were approximately 4.5 metres (15 feet) above sea level, in the lowest of the marine terraces containing diamondiferous gravel. The stone lay in a depression in the bed-rock in an area from which a number of other diamonds had been recovered by the same working shift on that day.

A leading Belgian diamantaire, Romi Goldmuntz, who chanced to be visiting South Africa at the time, bought the diamond at a price of £500 per carat, as part of a deal totalling £80,000. He named it 'La Belle Hélène' after his wife, thereby disappointing several who had suggested that it might be named the 'Van Riebeeck', so commemorating the 500th anniversary of the founding of the Cape. The stone was eventually cut in New York where it yielded three fine gems: two matching pear-shapes of 30.38 and 29.71 carats, and a marquise of 10.50 carats, which were sold through Cartier's to private buyers.

LIGHT OF PEACE

In 1969, Zale Corporation, of Dallas, purchased in Antwerp a fine blue-white stone weighing 434.6 carats, the source of which was stated simply as 'West Africa'. More specifically it had almost certainly come from Sierra Leone. After two years' work in New York the outcome was thirteen gems totalling 172.46 carats. The biggest, a pear-shape cut with one hundred and eleven facets, weighs 130.27 carats and has been named the 'Light of Peace'. The twelve smaller gems are the Marquise (9.11 carats), Marquise (9.04 carats),

Brilliant (6.93 carats), Heart (3.63 carats), Oval (3.55 carats), Marquise (2.73 carats), Pear (1.83 carats), Pear (1.55 carats), Pear (1.51 carats), Pear (1.13 carats), Marquise (.81 carats) and Pear (.37 carats).

The choice of name for the large diamond was explained by Morris Zale, one of the two brothers who had founded Zale Corporation. He stated, 'Once we acquired the diamond, it was suggested that perhaps we could use this great find to make a small contribution to promoting peace. We also felt that it was time for private industry to begin taking a more active role in promoting peace which has, up to now, been essentially a governmental function.' Accordingly Zale Corporation set up a fund from money received from the many showings of the diamond; the proceeds being donated to a cause for peace.

In 1980 Zale Corporation sold the 'Light of Peace' to an undisclosed buyer. Explaining the decision to dispose of the diamond, Donald Zale said, 'Over the years we had so many enquiries about the diamond that we put a price on it and said not to call unless the enquirer were willing to pay the price ... Somebody called.'

GREAT CHRYSANTHEMUM

In 1963 a brown diamond weighing 198.28 carats came to light in South Africa and was bought by Julius Cohen of New York. He entrusted its cutting to the firm of S. & M. Kaufman, who polished a pear-shape of 104.15 carats, measuring 25 mm (0.98 inches) wide,



The 'Great Chrysanthemum' diamond.

39 mm (1.54 inches) long and 16 mm (0.63 inches) deep. The diamond has a total of 189 facets, 67 on the crown, 65 on the girdle and 57 on the pavilion. After it had been cut, the gem's colour turned out to be a deep, rich golden-brown, with overtones of sienna and burnt orange, hence the name given to it. The 'Great Chrysanthemum' was mounted as the centre stone in a yellow-gold necklace containing 410 oval and marquise-cut diamonds, valued by its owner at \$540,000.

As well as being exhibited in the USA the diamond has twice returned to South Africa, for display at the Kimberley Centenary Exhibition in 1971 and the Diamond Pavilion in Johannesburg six years earlier.

EARTH STAR

The 'Earth Star' was fashioned from a rough stone of 248.90 carats found in the Jagersfontein Mine on 16 May 1967. It travelled right through the recovery process until it appeared on the grease table in the recovery plant. Not surprisingly its appearance caused a stir at the mine; it caused surprise to many in the industry too because among the numerous fine diamonds produced by Jagersfontein, there had been few brown stones. In all its long existence – it was destined for closure within four years – the mine had never been noted for yielding large stones of this colour. Moreover this specimen came from the 762-metre (2500-foot) level of the mine workings which is exceptionally deep in a diamond pipe for a stone of such size to be found.

Messrs Baumgold Bros of New York purchased the stone and cut it into a pear-shape weighing 111.59 carats, the biggest cut brown diamond in the world. The gem was found to possess a greater degree of brilliance than is usually found in a stone of such a strong

colour: the combination of colour and brilliance led to Joseph Baumgold naming it the 'Earth Star'. The diamond returned to South Africa in 1971 for display at the exhibition held to commemorate the centenary of the discovery of the Kimberley Mine. It was bought by Stephen Zbova of Naples, Florida, for \$900,000 in 1983.

AMSTERDAM

One of the leading firms in the field of industrial diamonds, D. Drukker & Zn, of Amsterdam, purchased a black stone, weighing 55.85 metric carats, in 1972. At the time it was not recognized as having an unusual value and was destined either to be used for a specific industrial purpose or to be crushed into diamond powder. The stone passed through the hands of several experts without comment. Its value was not more than six dollars per carat.

Drukkers tried to cleave the diamond. However, its great hardness at once became apparent, as well as the fact that every splinter was of the deepest black and not transparent. Subsequently the diamond was polished laboriously over several months into a pear-shape weighing 33.74 metric carats, with the normal proportions of that cut. It was given a total of 145 facets, the extra facets being polished on the girdle. The 'Amsterdam' is remarkable because even with optimal lighting it is absolutely opaque (most black diamonds possess grey spots and are transparent when put under strong light). The colour is probably caused by a dispersion of ultra-fine sub-microscopic inclusions, but the depth and quality of blackness are such that it must be an unusually uniform dispersion. The inclusions are probably carbon in one of its many forms.

In February 1973 the diamond was publicly displayed for the first time and named the 'Amsterdam' by the wife of the Burgomaster of that city. It was set in a specially designed piece of jewellery and was exhibited on the occasion of the 700th anniversary of the city. Soon after its first public appearance a photograph of the stone was printed in a well-known French magazine: this led to an offer to purchase it from someone in France who had not even set eyes on it. The offer was refused as were others from other countries. Since then the 'Amsterdam' has been shown on numerous occasions for charitable purposes and will remain available only for very special offers.

GRAND COEUR D'AFRIQUE

In the spring of 1982 a very fine cleavage, weighing 278 carats, was unearthed in the West African state of Guinea, some 645 km (400 miles) east of the capital, Conakry. After protracted negotiations Laurence Graff, the London jeweller, bought the stone and despatched it to New York for cutting. First, two smaller gems were cut, a marquise of 14.25 carats, which was sold at once in New York, and a flawless heart-shape of 25.22 carats. The latter became known as 'Le Petit Coeur' and was set in a necklace. Work then started on the major part of the stone which ultimately yielded a flawless heart-shape weighing 70.03 carats. Called 'Le Grand Coeur d'Afrique', it became the largest example of this cut in the world. It was set in a spectacular necklace containing almost 70 carats of smaller heart-shapes.

In August 1983 newspapers reported that two billionaires were interested in buying 'Le Grand Coeur d'Afrique' to present to their



The 'Earth Star' diamond.



The 'Grand Coeur d'Afrique' diamond.



The 'Carlotta' diamond.

'extremely beautiful wives'. At the same time it was stated that 'both need to be a little more generous towards their beautiful wives, however'. In the end somebody must have shown the required degree of generosity because in December of that year Graff sold 'Le Grand Coeur d'Afrique' to a buyer whose name was not disclosed.

CARLOTTA

This 40-carat pink pear-shaped diamond was named in memory of Mrs Lazare Kaplan, formerly Miss Charlotte Kittower. It was cut from a rough stone that had been found in Lesotho.

Lazare Kaplan died in 1986 aged 102. During his lifetime he came to be looked upon in the industry as the doyen of diamond cutters. Apprenticed to an uncle in Antwerp in 1897, he soon established a reputation as an outstanding cleaver and cutter: he was known for his insistence upon the maximum fire and brilliance as being the essential prerequisites of a finished gem even if it led to a slightly greater loss in weight. As he once said,

The diamond is the gem that can render the most brilliance. Sapphires and rubies are beautiful for their colour but with the diamond the reflection is its beauty and that is why the cut is so important.

Kaplan's prowess and fame as a cleaver were fully put to the test in the 1930s when he was entrusted by Harry Winston with the cutting of first the 'Pohl', then the 'Jonker' diamond. Another of his accomplishments was the development in 1954 of the oval cut, a shape which, in the opinion of some, rivals that of the round cut in its brilliance.

VAINER BRIOLETTE

When considering which diamond cutting centres are the most important, it is unlikely that London springs to mind as one of them.

The city's role in the diamond trade has lain in other directions, namely as the point of distribution of rough diamonds. The London Diamond Syndicate, formed in 1889 as a joint buying and selling organisation for the output of the De Beers mines, has been succeeded by the modern Central Selling Organisation, so that most of the leading diamantaires the world over are still obliged to consult travel schedules to London. At the same time, for almost two centuries a small cutting industry has contrived to exist in the British Isles and the greatest diamond which it has worked on has been the 'Regent', or the 'Pitt' as it was then known. The largest rough stone handled has been the 'Woyie River', cut in the early 1950s by Briefel & Lemer, who shortly before had been entrusted with the cutting of the 'Williamson'. With the cutting of the 'Vainer Briolette' London has been placed on the cutting map again.

In the autumn of 1984 associates of M. Vainer Ltd informed them of the existence of a 202.85-carat stone, yellowish, lightly spotted but of almost perfect octahedral shape. Instead of cutting the customary brilliant from such a stone Milosh Vainer and his master cutter, Michael Gould, had other, more audacious ideas: they decided to cut a briolette. This is a comparatively rare diamond cut. One older specimen was owned by Henry Philip Hope, the banker whose collection of unique gems included the famous gem named after him. The 'Briolette of India', weighing 90.38 carats, was thought to have a history extending to the Middle Ages; unfortunately recent research has revealed that it was cut in Paris in 1908/9. Four more briolettes, all yellowish, are the so-called 'June Briolette' of 48.42 carats and three sold in Geneva by Christie's in May 1984, that weighed 44.61, 32.32 and 29.17 carats.

These have all been surpassed by the 'Vainer Briolette' which weighs 116.60 carats, cut with 192 facets. The Gemological Institute of America certified that both the polish and symmetry were excellent and the colour as light fancy yellow. The diamond also enjoys, therefore, the distinction of being the largest diamond to have been cut in London since the 'Regent'. It was purchased by the Sultan of Brunei. In addition the rough stone yielded five smaller gems weighing a total of 14.93 carats, all of which were polished in keeping with the historical style of cutting of the principal stone.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST CUT DIAMONDS

<i>Polished Weight in Carats</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Country of Origin</i>	<i>Last Reported Owner or Location</i>
—	Braganza (see note A)	—	—	—	See note A.
530.20 (m)	Cullinan I	White	Pear	South Africa	Tower of London. Crown Jewels of Great Britain.
—	Matan (see note B)	—	—	—	Borneo.
317.40 (m)	Cullinan II	White	Cushion	South Africa	Tower of London. Crown Jewels of Great Britain.
—	Nizam (see note C)	—	—	India	India.
245.35 (m)	Jubilee	White	Cushion	South Africa	Paul-Louis Weiller.
234.50 (m)	De Beers	Light Yellow	Cushion	South Africa	Auctioned in Geneva, May 1982.
205.07 (m)	Red Cross	Yellow	Square Brilliant	South Africa	Auctioned in Geneva, November 1973.
202 (?)	Black Star of Africa	Black	—	—	Exhibited in Tokyo, 1971.
189.6 (m)	Orlov	White, slightly tinted	Half of an egg: Rose cut above, flat and unfaceted below	India	Kremlin, Moscow. Treasures of the USSR Diamond Fund.
Estimated between 175–195 (m)	Darya-I-Nur	Pale Pink	Rectangular Step-cut	India	Teheran. Crown Jewels of Iran.
184.5 (m)	Jacob, formerly Victoria, Imperial or Great White	White	Oval	South Africa	Late Nizam of Hyderabad (died 1977).
183.00 (m)	Moon	White, with faint yellow tinge	Round	South Africa	Auctioned in London, August 1942.
170.40 (m)	Star of Peace	Light Brown	Pear	—	—
152.16 (m)	Anon	Silvery Cape	Rectangular old brilliant cut	South Africa (?)	Teheran. Crown Jewels of Iran.
—	Turkey I (see note D)	—	—	—	—
140.50 (m)	Regent	White, with a blue tinge	Cushion	India	Louvre Museum, Paris.
139.385 (m)	Mahjal	Yellow	Cushion	South Africa (?)	Auctioned in Geneva, November 1983.
137.27 (m)	Florentine	Light Yellow	Irregular, nine- sided, double- rose cut	India	Stolen in 1920 from the Imperial Family of Austria.
137.02 (m)	Premier Rose	White	Pear	South Africa	Sold by William Goldberg Diamond Corp. to an undisclosed buyer in 1979.
137 (m)	Anon (see note E)	—	—	—	Saudi Arabia.
135.92 (m)	Queen of Holland	White with a blue tint (intense blue)	Cushion	India (?)	Sold by William Goldberg Diamond Corp. to an undisclosed buyer in 1978.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST CUT DIAMONDS

<i>Polished Weight in Carats</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Country of Origin</i>	<i>Last Reported Owner or Location</i>
135.45 (m)	Anon	Cape	High (old) cushion cut	South Africa (?)	Teheran. Crown Jewels of Iran.
135 (o)	Mountain of Splendour (see note F)	—	—	—	Iran.
133.03 (m)	Algeiba Star	Yellow	Square, antique modified brilliant	South Africa (?)	Privately owned.
132.42 (m)	Golden Hue	Yellow	Cushion	South Africa (?)	Auctioned in Geneva, November 1983.
130.27 (m)	Light of Peace	White	Pear	Sierra Leone	Sold by Zale Corporation to a private buyer in 1980.
130.00 (m)	Great Brazilian	White	—	Brazil (?)	Shown at Sears Roebuck Stores in 1956.
128.80 (m)	Star of the South	White	Oval	Brazil	Rustomjee Jamsetjee, Bombay.
128.51 (m)	Tiffany	Yellow	Cushion	South Africa	Tiffany & Co., New York.
128.25 (m)	Niarchos	White	Pear	South Africa	Stavros Niarchos.
127.02 (m)	Portuguese	White	Cushion	?	Smithsonian Institution. Washington DC.
125.65 (m)	Jonker	White	Emerald	South Africa	Sold in Hong Kong in 1977.
125.93 (m)	Anon	Silvery Cape	Cushion	South Africa (?)	Teheran. Crown Jewels of Iran.
123.00 (o)	Stewart	Yellow	Brilliant	South Africa	—
123.00 (o)	Julius Pam	Yellow	—	South Africa	—
121.90 (m)	Anon	Yellow	Multi-faceted octahedron	South Africa (?)	Teheran. Crown Jewels of Iran.
118.05 (m)	Meister	Yellow	Cushion	South Africa (?)	Walter Meister, Zurich.
118 (o)	Anon	—	—	—	Formerly owned by Princess Vera Lobanov De Rostock. Auctioned at Lausanne, Switzerland in 1920.
116.60 (m)	Vainer Briolette	Yellow	Briolette	Southern Africa	Sultan of Brunei.
115.06 (m)	Taj-i Mah	White	Mogul-Cut	India	Teheran. Crown Jewels of Iran.
115.00 (m)	Edna Star	White	Emerald	—	Sold by Harry Winston Inc. to an Arabian client in 1957.
114.28 (m)	Anon	Silvery Cape	High (old) cushion cut	South Africa (?)	Teheran. Crown Jewels of Iran.
114.03 (m)	Anon	Yellow	Cushion	South Africa (?)	Purchased at auction in London, October 1962, by W. Jackson.
112 (o)	African Yellow (see note G)	—	—	South Africa	—
111.59 (m)	Earth Star	Coffee	Pear	South Africa	Purchased by Stephen Zbova of Naples, Florida, in 1983.
109.26 (m)	Cross of Asia	Champagne	—	—	Exhibited at Joske's, San Antonio, Texas in 1947.
108.93 (m)	Koh-I-Noor	White	Oval	India	Tower of London. Crown Jewels of Great Britain.
107.46 (m)	Rojtman	Yellow	Cushion	South Africa (?)	Mrs Marc Rojtman, New York in 1966.
107.07 (m)	Cartier	White	Pear	South Africa	Reported to have been sold to an unnamed lady in December 1984.
106.75 (o)	Star of Egypt	White	Emerald	India	London, 1939.
105.54 (m)	Soleil D'Or	Yellow	Emerald	—	Privately owned by an American collector.

<i>Polished Weight in Carats</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Country of Origin</i>	<i>Last Reported Owner or Location</i>
104.95 (m)	Golden Door	Yellow	Shield	—	Privately owned.
104.88 (m)	Deepdene	Yellow	Cushion	—	Harry Winston, Inc.
104.52 (m)	Anon	Yellow treated	Cushion	—	Auctioned at Geneva, May 1971.
104.15 (m)	Great Chrysanthemum	—	Pear	South Africa	Julius Cohen, New York.
102.48 (m)	Ashberg	Amber	Cushion	—	Auctioned in Geneva, May 1981.
101.25 (m)	Anon	Yellow	Briolette	—	M. Vainer Ltd, London.
100.52 (m)	Sunrise	Yellow	Emerald	—	Privately owned.

NOTES

- A. The 'Braganza', weighing 1,860 (o) carats, is considered most likely to have been a white topaz, not a diamond.
- B. The 'Matan', which weighed 367 (o) carats, is generally thought to have been a rock crystal.
- C. The 'Nizam' is believed to be only a partially cut diamond: its weight has been variously reported at 340 or 277 (o) carats.
- D. According to Streeter the larger of two diamonds formerly in the Turkish Regalia weighed 147 (o) carats. Nothing is known today of this stone.
- E. Diamond Selection Limited's *Diamond Digest*, 1979, reported the sale of a finest quality diamond of this weight to a Saudi Arabian client. It is assumed that this is the 'Premier Rose'.
- F. Murray mentions in his *Sketches of Persia*, published in 1838, the existence of a diamond of this name, weighing 135 (o) carats. It cannot be identified for certain with an existing diamond today.
- G. Streeter listed a diamond of this name, of 112 (o) carats. It was obviously one of the earliest large South African diamonds, the location of which remains unknown today.

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GLOSSARY

ALLUVIAL DEPOSITS	Deposits of diamonds laid down on land with subsequent erosion by constituents such as water, wind, glaciers and gravity. They contain not only diamonds but often many other types of gemstone as well.	BOART	The lowest quality of diamond, so badly flawed and constructed that it is suitable only for being crushed into abrasive powders for use in a variety of industrial applications, among them being the polishing of gem-quality diamonds.
AMBER	A shade of yellow approximating to the colour of amber in which diamonds sometimes occur.	BRILLIANT	The round shape into which diamonds are cut. The modern brilliant-cut possesses 57 facets and sometimes a polished culet on the base of the stone. It is the most popular of the various shapes into which diamonds are cut.
BAGUETTE	A style of step cutting employed for small, rectangular-shaped diamonds.		Formerly the word was often used to describe any diamond, irrespective of the shape of the cut gem.
BANDING	Different colour zones sometimes found in diamonds.	BRIOLETTE	A drop-shaped gem with a circular cross section covered entirely with triangular facets. A style of cutting rarely encountered today.
BLUE GROUND	The rock that may contain diamonds and which occurs in some extinct volcanoes. Once it has been weathered blue ground changes colour to yellow and is known as yellow ground. Also called 'kimberlite'.	BRUTING	Also known as 'girdling', the process whereby a stone is given its circular shape. It entails turning the diamond to be bruted round and round on a lathe while another diamond is held against it, thereby causing both stones to chip and grind until the desired shape is obtained.
BLUE WHITE	Ideally a diamond with a faint tinge of blue: in reality the term is used to describe a colourless diamond. It is also sometimes employed incorrectly to describe a diamond with a faint tint of yellow.		

CANARY YELLOW	A shade of intense yellow colour rarely found in either rough or polished diamonds. The term is frequently misused to denote diamonds merely of a yellowish hue.	FANCY-CUT	Any polished diamond not cut as a brilliant.
CAPE (capital 'C')	Cape Province, one of the four provinces of the Republic of South Africa, in which Kimberley is situated.	FLAT	A rough diamond that is relatively thin in shape.
CAPIES (small 'C')	A broad range of diamonds of a yellow colour.	FLAT-STONE	A polished diamond that has been cut with a very thin crown and pavilion.
CARAT	The unit of weight used for measuring diamonds and other gems. The metric carat universally employed today = $\frac{1}{5}$ gramme or 200 milligrammes.	FLAW	Only a minute proportion of rough diamonds occur without flaws, of which the most common are internal cracks and specks or spots of carbon. It is the task of the cutter to eliminate as many as possible in order to produce the cleanest gem.
CARATAGE	Either the weight of a stone or the output of a mine.	GIA	The Gemological Institute of America. The foremost and oldest organization of its kind whose system of grading diamonds according to their colour by means of letters 'D' to 'Z' is universally accepted today.
CARBONADO	A species of exceptionally hard industrial diamonds usually black in colour. The province of Bahia in Brazil is the principal source.	GIRDLE	The dividing line between the crown and pavilion of a cut gem, and the outer edge or widest point of a polished stone by which it is usually set. Occasionally diamonds may have faceted girdles.
CHIPS	Small cleavages weighing less than a carat.	GIRDLING	Another name for 'bruting'.
CLEAVAGE	An irregularly shaped rough diamond, broken at some stage of its existence, that necessitates its being cleaved rather than sawn before it is polished.	GOLCONDA	A highly transparent, limpid diamond, often colourless or with a faint tinge of blue, that was mined in the alluvial deposits near the ancient city of this name in India.
CLEAVAGE PLANE	The direction in which a stone may be cleaved.	GRAIN	The visible evidence of the cleavage direction within a gemstone which will determine the cutter's or polisher's procedure for fashioning the gem.
CLEAVING	A preparatory stage in the cutting of a diamond. The stone is split along the grain parallel to one of its octahedral faces either to remove impurities within or to eliminate major flaws or cracks.	GREASE TABLE	The last stage in the recovery of diamonds in the treatment plant. A sloping table coated with grease along which water flows; diamonds adhere to the grease while most other minerals pass by.
COLLET or CULET	The pointed end of a cut diamond which is sometimes polished and thereby slightly flattened. If it has been polished it represents the 58th facet of a brilliant-cut.	HEART SHAPE	A style of cutting which represents a variation of the pear shape.
CROWN	The part of any faceted gemstone which lies above the girdle.	KIMBERLITE	Another name for 'blue ground'; derived from Kimberley.
CUBE	A basic shape in which rough diamonds are found. Cubes possess six square faces that make 90° angles with one another, similar to dice; the faces may be flat, concave or convex.	LAMPROITE	Volcanic rock, occasionally containing diamonds, found in the deposits in Western Australia. It is the only known diamondiferous rock with a subsidiary mineral content and chemistry different from that of kimberlite.
CUSHION-CUT	A polished gem with a squarish outline and rounded corners. The side view is similar to that of a brilliant-cut. This style of cutting is no longer undertaken on a commercial basis.	LILAC-PINK	A very rare kind of 'fancy-colour'. Such diamonds have come mainly from Brazil and, more recently, from Australia.
D-COLOURED	The 'D' denotes a diamond of the finest colour as recognized by the GIA.	MACCLE	A rough diamond consisting of twinned crystals, generally triangular in shape and often flattish. The side is marked by a curious fishbone pattern with the grain going in one direction on the top and in another on the bottom.
D-FLAWLESS	A diamond of the finest colour and quality as recognized by the GIA.	MANGELIN	An old Hindu weight for gems, equal to approximately 1.4 metric carats.
DIAMANTAIRES	Persons engaged in dealing in diamonds, mostly wholesalers.	MARQUISE	A style of cutting in which the outline of the girdle is shaped like a boat.
DODECAHEDRON	A crystallographic shape containing twelve faces in which diamonds sometimes occur.	MELEE	(a) Small unbroken octahedral diamonds weighing less than 1.0 carat. (b) A selection of small polished brilliant-cut gems weighing up to 0.20 carat.
DOP	An instrument used to hold a diamond during the sawing, bruting or faceting processes.	MOGUL CUT	An ancient style of cutting, principally from cleavages, employed in India. The result was a
EMERALD CUT	A polished shape, usually rectangular in outline, into which diamonds may be cut.		
FACET	A flat surface which has been polished on a diamond or some other gemstone.		
FANCIES (or fancy colour)	Diamonds of an unusual natural colour: they command a special price on account of their comparative rarity.		

	somewhat bulky gem with a broad, often asymmetrical base, an upper part, consisting of usually four shallow facets or a table, plus two or more areas of strip facets parallel to the base and oriented vertically.	SAMPLE PARCELS	A selection of either rough or polished diamonds, carefully graded according to colour or quality, that diggers, dealers, merchants, etc. may carry to enable them to compare the colour or quality of a particular stone.
NAVETTE	Another word for a marquise: derived from the Latin <i>navis</i> (boat).	SAWING	A preparatory stage in the cutting of a diamond and an alternative method to cleaving. Sawing is carried out against the grain whereas cleaving is undertaken with or along it.
OCTAHEDRON	The classic shape of a rough diamond. It has eight equilateral, triangular faces, each of which intersects all three of the crystallographic axes at an equal distance from the centre.	SCAIFE	The flat, horizontal grinding wheel on which a diamond is polished; it measures between 30 and 45 cms (12 and 18 inches) in diameter and is impregnated with a mixture of olive oil and diamond powder.
OLD-MINE CUT	An early form of the brilliant-cut: as opposed to being circular, the girdle has an almost square or cushion-shaped contour.	SEPARATOR PLANT	Another name for 'Recovery Plant'.
OVAL CUT	Also called the 'oval-brilliant' cut: a style of cutting in which the girdle is a rounded oblong in outline.	SHAPE	A category of rough diamond: an irregularly-shaped, unbroken stone with a less regular formation than a 'stone'. A 'shape' is thinner or more elongated.
OXIDIZATION	A species of impurity found in some rough diamonds. The presence of iron oxide within the cracks in a stone imparts an orange or reddish-brown colour which, after removal, may leave a gem of a fine colour. Occasionally it may remain in a polished gem (e.g. the 'Pigot' diamond).	SILVERY CAPE	A subdivision of diamonds of a yellowish colour.
PAVÉ-SET	A style of setting in which small diamonds are set as close together as possible thereby showing the least amount of metal.	SQUARE CUT (or 'square shape')	A variation of the emerald cut: the four sides are equal in measurement.
PAVILION	The lower half of a faceted gemstone lying below the girdle.	STEP CUT	A style of cutting wherein the facets are four-sided and in steps both above and below the girdle, such as in the emerald cut.
PEAR SHAPE	A style of cutting in which the girdle has the outline of a pear; it represents a variation of the brilliant cut and may possess the same number of facets.	STONE	An unbroken rough diamond of good formation, usually an octahedron.
PENDELOQUE	Similar to the pear-shape in outline but with the narrower end longer and more pointed.	TABLE	The large facet on the top of a gemstone.
PICKING TABLE	A flat or slightly sloping platform on which diamondiferous ore is separated from other material. Small operations still employ the device: elsewhere it has been superseded by the grease table.	TABLE CUT	An early style of cutting in which the opposite points of an octahedron were ground down to squares to form a large culet and a larger table, the remaining parts of the eight octahedral faces being polished.
PIPE	The primary source of diamond: a conically-shaped extrusion of volcanic rock (blue ground) which may or may not contain diamonds.	TRIGON	A triangular-shaped indentation that is sometimes found on the octahedral faces of rough diamonds, notably those from Sierra Leone.
PIT	A kind of indentation found on the surface of a rough diamond.	TYPE I and II	Diamonds are classified into two main groups of 'types', Type I and Type II, depending upon the concentration levels of nitrogen and boron within. Each group is then subdivided into two: Types Ia, Ib, IIa and IIb. Type Ia. This represents about 98 per cent of all natural diamonds and is characterized by the presence of nitrogen in fairly substantial quantities. Type Ib. This accounts for less than one per cent of natural diamonds; they contain smaller quantities of nitrogen and usually have a yellow colour. Type IIa. A very rare category of natural diamond. They contain minute amounts of nitrogen and are usually colourless. Type IIb. The rarest of the subdivisions. They contain more boron than nitrogen and also exhibit electrical conductivity; they are usually blue or grey in colour although sometimes colourless.
PORTRAIT STONE	A thin polished diamond, cut from a flat, that enables one to see through to any object over which it has been placed.	WATER	A term used to describe either the degree of colour or transparency of a diamond, e.g. a diamond of the 'finest water' denotes a stone with the faintest tinge of blue.
RECOVERY PLANT	A building close to a mine where the blue ground from a 'pipe' mine or the gravel from an alluvial deposit is treated in order to recover the diamonds.		
RHOMBIC-DODECAHEDRON	(See under 'Dodecahedron')		
ROSE CUT	An early style of cutting which, in its usual form, consists of a base of one large facet and a somewhat dome-shaped top covered with numerous triangular facets terminating in a point. Nowadays it is employed only for small diamonds or for the repair of old jewellery.		
ROUND CUT	(See under 'Brilliant')		

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