



ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST

The diamonds and their history



Queen Victoria's Small Diamond Crown

Just 10cm in diameter and weighing 140 grams, this crown became the most recognisable jewel of Queen Victoria's old age. She was regularly depicted wearing it, notably in her official Diamond Jubilee Portrait. It was supplied by R & S Garrard & Co. in March 1870 and consists of a silver openwork frame, laminated with gold and set with 1,187 brilliant-, rose- and mixed-cut diamonds and some diamond chips.

The stones were probably taken from a fringe-pattern *chaîne de corsage*. Queen Victoria does not appear to have worn the *chaîne de corsage* after Prince Albert's death in 1861, and when she ordered her Small Diamond Crown in 1870, the fringe elements of the *chaîne* were probably used to provide the stones (see Queen Victoria's Fringe Brooch below). Queen Victoria spent the rest of her life in mourning clothes and the Small Diamond Crown satisfied the need for a formal head ornament of colourless stones, suitable for mourning. The crown was subsequently worn by Queen Alexandra, who relinquished it to Queen Mary. In 1937, King George VI added it to the display at the Tower of London, where it has remained.



Queen Victoria's Fringe Brooch

On display for the first time, this brooch appears to have formed the centrepiece of the fringe-pattern *chaîne de corsage* broken up to provide stones for the Small Diamond Crown (see above). The larger stones in the brooch are thought to have come from one of the two impressive jewels presented to Queen Victoria by the Sultan of Turkey. The Queen's journal of 8 May 1856 shows that she decided she could not wear one of the jewels and wished to have it reset.

The brooch is of typically mid 19th-century style and consists of a large emerald-cut central stone, which, with the immediately surrounding small brilliant-cut diamonds, is detachable as a separate brooch. Nine graduated pavé-set chains are suspended from the outer row of 12 large brilliant-cut diamonds.

Queen Victoria left the brooch to King Edward VII. Queen Alexandra, Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth all wore it regularly, and in 2002 it passed to Her Majesty The Queen. The Queen wore the Fringe Brooch at the State Banquet for the President of Turkey in 2011, along with the Girls of Great Britain and Ireland Tiara, the Coronation Necklace and the Greville Peardrop Earrings, all of which are shown in the exhibition.



The Coronation Necklace

This magnificent necklace acquired its name from having been worn at the coronations as Queens Consort of Queen Alexandra in 1901, Queen Mary in 1911, Queen Elizabeth in 1937 and at the coronation of Her Majesty The Queen in 1953. It has undergone complicated changes since it was originally made. It now consists of 25 graduated cushion-cut brilliant diamonds set in silver with gold links, and a pendant diamond of 22.48 carats, known as the Lahore Diamond. It was made for Queen Victoria by R & S Garrard & Co. in 1858.



The Coronation Earrings

Like the Coronation Necklace, these diamond drop earrings have been worn at the successive coronations of Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth and Her Majesty The Queen. They were made by R & S Garrard & Co. in 1858 for Queen Victoria and consist of four cushion-cut collet-set diamonds, taken from an existing aigrette and Garter Star, and two drop-shaped pendants of 12 and 7 carats.



Queen Alexandra's Kokoshnik Tiara

This tiara, on display for the first time, takes its name from the traditional Russian folk headdress. The headdress was adopted by the Imperial family in the 19th century and used as the inspiration for jewelled tiaras worn at court. Family ties between the Russian and British royal families ensured that the Russian style was adopted in the West, where the kokoshnik tiara became fashionable in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

This example was made for Alexandra, Princess of Wales, sister of Empress Maria Feodorovna, consort of Tsar Alexander III of Russia. It was presented for her 25th wedding anniversary in 1888 by the 'Ladies of Society' (365 peeresses of the United Kingdom) and was made by R & S Garrard & Co. at a cost of £4,400. Each bar is pavé-set with brilliant-cut diamonds, set in white and yellow gold. Like tiaras of a similar design, it could also be worn as a necklace. Queen Alexandra wore it often, notably for the marriage of the Duke of York (later King George V) to Princess Victoria Mary of Teck in 1893. Queen Mary inherited the tiara and wore it frequently. It was bequeathed to The Queen in 1953.



Queen Alexandra's Coronation Fan

The fan was made for Queen Alexandra at the time of the coronation in 1902. The tortoiseshell guards of the fan are set with brilliant- and rose-cut diamonds. The front guard incorporates a design of trailing flowers and foliage set in silver, terminating in a diamond head and silver loop set with brilliant diamonds. The back guard is set with a crowned 'A' cipher, also in diamonds. Fans incorporating ostrich feathers are recorded from as early as the 16th century. Elizabeth I is seen holding a gold and gem-set fan with exotic feathers in one

portrait. The fashion for folding fans with ostrich feathers evolved in the second half of the 19th century. Queen Alexandra acquired a large number of fans and most passed to her daughter-in-law, Queen Mary. Queen Mary gave this fan to Queen Elizabeth at a family lunch at Buckingham Palace, just before the coronation of King George VI in 1937.



Queen Mary's Girls of Great Britain and Ireland Tiara

This has become one of the most familiar of Her Majesty's tiaras as it appears on banknotes and coins. The tiara was given as a present to Princess Victoria Mary of Teck from the 'Girls of Great Britain and Ireland' for her wedding to the Duke of York, later King George V, in 1893, and was supplied by R & S Garrard & Co. The tiara is of scrolled and pierced foliate form, with the diamonds pavé-set in silver and gold. The tiara could also be worn as a necklace or, when dismantled and mounted on a smaller frame, as a coronet. In around

1914, the lozenge-pattern bandeau from the base was removed, enabling it to be worn separately as a headband, to suit the fashion of the time. Queen Mary gave Princess Elizabeth the tiara and the bandeau for her wedding in 1947. The two pieces were reunited in 1969.



The Delhi Durbar Tiara

On display for the first time, this tiara was made in 1911 for Queen Mary to wear to the Durbar, a 'ceremonial gathering to pay homage', in Delhi in 1911, to mark the succession of King George V as King Emperor. The tiara was part of the Queen's parure of emeralds and diamonds made for the occasion by R & S Garrard & Co. The parure included a necklace (see below), stomacher, brooch and earrings. King George V referred to the Delhi

Durbar Tiara as 'May's best tiara'.

The tiara takes the form of a tall circlet of lyres and S-scrolls, linked by festoons of rose and brilliant-cut diamonds. The upper border was originally set with ten of the Cambridge emeralds, acquired by Queen Mary in 1910 and originally owned by her grandmother the Duchess of Cambridge, but these were removed by 1922 for use elsewhere. In 1911, the tiara was altered to take either or both of the two Lesser Stars of Africa – Cullinan III and IV (see below). Queen Mary loaned the tiara to Queen Elizabeth in 1946 for the South African Tour in 1947, and it remained with her until her death in 2002. In 2005, it was loaned by The Queen to The Duchess of Cornwall.



The Diamond Diadem

The Diamond Diadem, which appears on stamps and some coins and bank notes, is one of The Queen's most widely recognised pieces of jewellery. Despite its feminine associations, the piece was actually made for the famously extravagant coronation of George IV in 1821. The event was planned for the summer of 1820, but had to be postponed for a year due to the trial of the King's estranged wife, Queen Caroline. When the coronation finally took place, the Diadem was, in the event, barely visible over the King's large velvet, plumed 'Spanish' hat.

The bill for the work records a cost of £290 for setting the jewels and £800 for the loan of the diamonds – diamonds were often hired for coronations at that time. The Diadem was retained after the coronation, the King having settled a bill for over £8,000. The Diadem is set with 1,333 brilliant-cut diamonds, including a 4-carat pale yellow brilliant. It consists of a band with two rows of pearls either side of a row of diamonds, above which are diamonds set in the form of a rose, a thistle and two shamrocks – the national emblems of England, Scotland and Ireland. Worn often by Queen Adelaide, consort of William IV, the Diadem was inherited in 1837 by Queen Victoria, who was frequently painted and photographed wearing the piece. She also appears wearing it on several early postage stamps, including the Penny Black. The Diadem passed to Queen Alexandra, Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, and then to Her Majesty The Queen.

The Cullinan Diamond

The Cullinan Diamond, the largest diamond ever found, was discovered at the Premier Mine near Pretoria in South Africa in 1905. At first the stone was assumed to be a crystal, as it was three times larger than any other diamond that has been discovered. When it was taken to the mine manager's office, the clerks threw it out the window, unable to believe that something so big was a diamond. Eventually they were persuaded, and the diamond, which weighed 3,106 carats in its rough state, was presented to King Edward VII. Measuring 10.1 x 6.35 x 5.9cm, and notable for its blue-white colour and exceptional purity, it was cut into nine numbered stones, 96 small brilliants and 9 carats of unpolished fragments. The largest two gems are set in the Sovereign's Sceptre and the Imperial State Crown. The other seven principal stones, reunited for the first time in this exhibition, are set in a ring, a necklace and three brooches, one of which, the Cullinan III and IV Brooch, was worn by The Queen during her Diamond Jubilee celebrations on 5 June 2012.



Cullinan III and IV Brooch

In 1911 Queen Mary had Cullinan III, a pear-shaped drop of 94.4 carats and Cullinan IV, a cushion-shaped stone of 63.6 carats, mounted in a lattice-work setting and placed on her new crown. The next year the Delhi Durbar Tiara was adapted to take both stones. Cullinan III was occasionally used as a pendant to the Coronation Necklace in place of the Lahore Diamond. However the stones were most often worn hooked together as a pendant brooch. In 1953, The Queen inherited the brooch and wore it most recently for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations at the National Service of Thanksgiving, at St Paul's Cathedral.



Cullinan V Brooch

This heart-shaped stone weighs 18.8 carats and is mounted in a fine radiating platinum web with a scrolling and foliate *millegrain* and pavé-set border of brilliant diamonds. The mounting of the jewel was designed to be as adaptable as possible. It has been most often worn as a brooch by Queen Mary and by The Queen, who inherited it in 1953. It forms the detachable centre section of the diamond and emerald stomacher made for Queen Mary for the Delhi Durbar in 1911. It can be suspended from the Cullinan VIII Brooch, with the Cullinan VII pendant below.



Cullinan VII (Delhi Durbar Necklace and Cullinan Pendant)

This necklace of diamonds and emeralds set in platinum and gold was one of the principal elements of Queen Mary's parure of diamonds and emeralds created for the Delhi Durbar of 1911. Cullinan VII was cut as an 8.8-carat marquise and is suspended as an asymmetrical pendant on a detachable chain of ten graduated brilliant diamonds, to counterbalance the pear-shaped emerald pendant. The necklace incorporates nine of the Cambridge emeralds, originally owned by Queen Mary's grandmother, the Duchess of Cambridge. The necklace was inherited by The Queen in 1953.



Cullinan VI and VIII Brooch

Weighing 11.5 carats, Cullinan VI was bought by King Edward VII from Asschers in 1908 as a gift for Queen Alexandra. It was mounted by R & S Garrard & Co. in November 1910 into a new circlet, made as a substitute for the Diamond Diadem, which had passed to Queen Mary on King Edward's death. In 1911, Garrard set Cullinan VIII into a radiating platinum mount, in the same style as that for Cullinan V. Cullinan VI and VIII were inherited by The Queen in 1953.



Cullinan IX

The smallest of the nine stones weighs 4.4 carats and was set into a platinum ring for Queen Mary in 1911. The pear shape is known as a pendeloque, and the stone is mounted in an openwork 12-claw setting. The ring was inherited by The Queen in 1953.



The Queen's South Africa Necklace and Bracelet

Princess Elizabeth's 21st birthday, on 21 April 1947, fell during the South African Tour undertaken by her parents King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. The necklace was a present from the Government of the Union of South Africa. It originally consisted of a long chain of 21 graduated brilliants, the largest of 10 carats, each linked by a baguette-cut diamond and two small brilliant-cut diamonds. The snap-piece of the necklace was added afterwards, using a 6-carat stone given to the Princess by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, Chairman of De Beers, when she visited the Big Hole Mine at Kimberley with her parents on 18 April 1947. In 1952, the necklace was shortened and a bracelet made from the stones removed.



The Queen's Williamson Diamond Brooch

The Williamson Diamond is considered the finest pink diamond ever discovered. It was found in October 1947 at the Mwadui mine in Tanganyika, owned by the Canadian geologist and royalist Dr John Thorburn Williamson, after whom the diamond was named. The uncut stone, weighing 54.5 carats, was presented by Dr Williamson, as a wedding present to Princess Elizabeth in 1947. The stone was cut into a 23.6-carat round brilliant. When the Queen acceded to the throne in 1952, there was speculation that the stone might be mounted for use at the coronation. Instead it was set as the centre of a brooch in the form of a jonquil flower, designed by Cartier, in 1953. Dr Williamson wished to add further pink diamonds to the gift, but as these were not forthcoming, he gave The Queen

170 small brilliant-cut diamonds, 12 baguette-cut diamonds and 21 marquise diamonds, which made up the petal, stalk and leaves of the brooch.



Table Snuff Box of Frederick the Great of Prussia

Almost 3,000 diamonds encrust this cartouche-shaped bloodstone box. The stones are rose and brilliant-cut and set in a combination of silver and gold rub-over settings in designs of flowers, foliage, musical trophies, insects and ribbons. This box is one of the finest of a series made in the Fabrique Royale in Berlin, many of the same distinctive shape, for Frederick II of Prussia and his court. Frederick was a moderniser and a great patron of the arts, and musicians, philosophers and artists flocked to the Prussian Court. After the Russian Revolution, the box came to

England and was sold twice before being purchased by Queen Mary in 1932.



The Greville Peardrop Earrings

In 1942, Mrs Ronald Greville bequeathed to Queen Elizabeth her spectacular collection of more than 60 pieces of jewellery. Mrs Greville, the daughter of the millionaire brewer and philanthropist William McEwan, had married the elder son of the second Baron Greville in 1891 and was a leading society hostess and friend of the Royal Family. She was widowed in 1908 and had no children. Mrs Greville left her house, Polesden Lacey in Surrey, to the nation. The jewellery collection that she left to Queen Elizabeth contained pieces by the leading firms of the day, notably Boucheron and Cartier. Mrs Greville purchased these earrings from Cartier in 1938. They are formed of pentagonal tops, each suspending an emerald-cut diamond and pear-

shaped drop set in platinum. The drops weigh respectively 20.66 and 20.26 carats. Queen Elizabeth wore them regularly, and they were bequeathed to The Queen in 2002.



The Greville Chandelier Earrings

These strikingly modern earrings were made by Cartier into their present form in February 1929 for Mrs Greville, who bequeathed them to Queen Elizabeth in 1942. Each earring consists of 16 stones, which serve as a lexicon of modern diamond cuts, incorporating pear-shaped drops, half-moon, trapezoid, square, baguette, baton and emerald-cut stones. The earrings appear to have been altered from existing ones ordered from Cartier in 1918, to which further additions were made in 1922. Queen Elizabeth bequeathed the earrings to The Queen, who wore them regularly in the 1950s and 1960s.



Jaipur Sword and Scabbard

This sword and scabbard is set with 719 diamonds, weighing a total of some 2,000 carats. It was presented to King Edward VII for his coronation in 1902 by the Maharajah of Jaipur Sawai Sir Madho Singh Bahadur. Edward VII, when Prince of Wales, had visited Jaipur during his Indian Tour of 1875–6 and had laid the foundations of the Albert Hall in Jaipur. The Maharajah was among the foreign Heads of State who had travelled to England to pay homage to the new King. At the last moment the coronation, which was to have taken place in June, had to be postponed due to the King's appendicitis.

The coronation eventually took place on 9 August, and in the meantime the Maharajah remained in England with some of his retinue of 400 staff, including his cook and his jeweller. The sword hilt and the scabbard are of gold, enamelled in blue, green and red and set with rose-cut, brilliant-cut and Indian lasque stones, which vary in colour from white to yellow and are set in a stylised design of lotus flowers and leaves. The flat cut of many of the stones is typical of Indian jewellery.



George IV's Diamond-hilted Sword

The hilt of this small sword dates from about 1750 and was probably made in Germany. It was altered in 1820, the year of accession of George IV, by the royal goldsmiths and jewellers Rundell, Bridge & Rundell. George IV's sophisticated artistic taste and extravagance are well documented. He was a prolific purchaser of jewels, including those used in this sword, which cost the considerable sum of £3,687. The hilt is mounted with hundreds of brilliant and rose-cut diamonds in rub-over gold settings applied to gold, which is richly chased with rococo ornament.

The diamond ornament, blade and scabbard all appear to have been produced by Rundell, who added to the existing diamond embellishment of the sword. They submitted a bill dated 7 August 1820, which refers to 'mounting a large diamond & chased Gold Sword, with diamond Shell Helmet richly set with

Brilliants all over the Hilt'. The pommel is in the form of a barred helmet with a lion couchant as a crest, and the forward cross-guard is also fashioned into a lion's head. Rundell's bill records that '2 very large Brilliants' were added to the sides of the grip and '31 large do [diamonds]. Added to the Grip & border of Shell & 772 fine smaller do.', together with a further 439 rose diamonds. The wooden scabbard is set with further brilliant diamonds.

Glossary

Aigrette: A jewelled hair ornament.

Baguette cut: Long narrow rectangular cut with flat top.

Brilliant cut (modern): Diamonds (usually circular) with 58 facets, cut in a pattern perfected around 1920.

Brilliant (old): Diamonds with a flat top or table, in a variety of shapes, sometimes almost square, and without the mathematically precise faceting of the modern brilliant-cut diamond (the standard cut for most 19th- and early 20th-century jewellery).

Carat: A measurement of the weight of diamonds, equivalent to one fifth of a gram.

Chaîne de corsage: Jewelled decoration worn along the edge of the bodice of a dress.

Collet setting: A plain band (normally of silver, gold or platinum) framing an individual stone; often open-backed, to allow maximum translucency.

Cushion cut: A variation of the brilliant cut with curved sides, rounded corners and larger facets to increase brilliance and highlight clarity.

Emerald cut: Rectangular stone with chamfered corners (i.e. octangular in outline), faceted sloping sides and flat top or table.

Lasque: Flat, unfaceted diamonds typical of Indian jewellery.

Marquise: Narrow faceted oval with pointed ends.

Millegrain: Granular or beaded setting formed by pressure from a beaded wheel.

Mixed cut: Various cuts of diamond within one piece of jewellery or jewelled work of art.

Parure: Suite of matching jewellery, often with interchangeable components.

Pavé: Setting giving the appearance of a solid 'pavement' of stones.

Rose cut: A diamond with 24 facets and flat base rising to a point; a style of cutting generally reserved for smaller stones.

Rub-over: Setting in which the upper edge of the collet (*q.v.*) is bent over the edge of the stone.

Stomacher: A jewelled ornament worn over the chest and stomach by women, popular in the 19th century and early 20th century.