

Crown Jewels And Regalia

Treasures Of The Tower The Gems And Their History

(By the Hon. George Bellew, M.V. O., Somerset Herald of Arms)

The Royal Treasure known as the Crown Jewels, which is usually kept in the Jewel House at the Tower of London, consists of six crowns, five ceremonial swords the Diadem of Queen Mary of Modena; six sceptres, and the ceremonial insignia such as Saint George's Spurs and the Coronation Ring. To these must be added a quantity of fine plate, maces, and State trumpets.

The finest gems in the Crown Jewels and Regalia are set in the Royal Crowns, with the exception of one stone, the largest portion of the "Star of Africa," which is set in the head of the King's Royal Sceptre.

Perhaps the most remarkable, though not the most intrinsically valuable, jewel in the entire collection is the "Black Prince's" ruby. This stone, which is polished en cabochon, measures nearly two inches in length. Although it has been valued officially at more than £100,000, it is doubtful really if it is of any great intrinsic worth, as it is probably a spinel ruby and not a true ruby.

The remote history of the stone is unknown, but it is reasonably well authenticated back to 1367, when, being part of the treasure of the King of Granada, it is said to have been taken from that monarch by Don Pedro, King of Castile by the simple expedient of murdering him. Don Pedro gave it to the Black Prince in the same year as a reward for military services rendered. It is said to have been worn by Henry V at Agincourt, and it is possible that it was in the crown which deflected the nearly fatal blow which King Henry received from the Duc d'Alencon during that battle.

After the execution of Charles I the ruby was sold, it is said for the sum of only four pounds; but it was evidently returned at the restoration of Charles II, for the empty setting of King Charles's crown is still in existence, and clearly shows the position which it occupied.

TWO FAMOUS DIAMONDS THE KOH-I-NUR

More renowned but less "English" is the great diamond in Queen Mary's Crown known as the "Koh-I-Nur"; it has a history associated with the East. The name,

translated, means "Mountain of Light." It was originally found in the Golconda mines, and belonged in the seventeenth century to the King of Golconda. It passed, in about 1650, into the possession of the Great Mogul, and remained at Delhi until 1739, when it passed by conquest to the King of Persia. From Persia it went to Afghanistan, under the Duranni dynasty, and next came into the possession of the Maharajah Runjeet Singh, nearly all of its changes of ownership being in "romantic" circumstances.

The British obtained the diamond when the Punjab was conquered in 1849, and it was finally presented to Queen Victoria by the Army of the Punjab. It is said that the original stone weighed about 800 carats. But it has been poorly cut and, when brought to Europe, weighed only 186 carats. It was then re-cut and the weight thereby reduced to 106 carats. Queen Victoria used to wear it as a brooch; but it was set in Queen Alexandra's State Crown.

THE CULLINAN STONE

A diamond of far greater dimensions than the Koh-I-Nur, but not of such interesting antecedents, which adorns in portions several separate items of the Crown Jewels and Regalia, is that known as the "Star of Africa" or "Cullinan." It was found in 1905 in the Premier Mine, South Africa, one of the chief officials of the mine being a Mr. Cullinan. It weighed originally 3,025 carats, and, from its shape, appeared to be only a portion of a still larger diamond.

It was presented to King Edward VII, and was cut in Amsterdam into four major brilliants, the largest of which weighs over 516 carats and is probably the largest cut diamond in the world: it is the "pear-shaped" stone at present set in the head of the King's Royal Sceptre. The next largest portion is in the Imperial State Crown, and the other two are in Queen Mary's Crown.

Two other gems especially worthy of mention are St. Edward's Sapphire and the Stuart or Charles II's Sapphire. The former, which can be seen in the centre of the final cross-patee of the Imperial State Crown, is said to have been in the Coronation Ring of King



The new crown being made for the Coronation of Her Majesty the Queen will be the first to have all the jewels mounted in platinum. Only diamonds are being used, among them the Koh-i-noor, the famous jewel which was set in Queen Mary's crown. The circlet was first made for Queen Victoria. The two column picture indicates the beauty and magnificence of the finished work which is being done by a famous London firm of jewelers. The one column picture shows the new coat of arms being fashioned for Her Majesty, the Bowes-Lyon coat of arms joined with those of the Royal House of



the two supporters one is the crowned Lion of England as in the Royal Arms, and the other an uncrowned lion, parti-colored and red and gold from the Bowes—Lyon family arms.

Edward the Confessor: it is a stone of good quality but not of exceptional size, and was probably re-cut in the seventeenth century. The latter, the Stuart Sapphire, a fine stone measuring about 1-2 in. in length and in breadth, was originally in the State Crown of Charles II. In Queen Victoria's time it occupied the position in the present Imperial State Crown now filled by the Star of Africa: its present position in the same crown is at the back.

Besides the gems described, above, there are many hundreds which, on account of their size alone, are worthy of notice. Perhaps altogether there are as many as 12,000 or 13,000 diamonds in the Crown Jewels: the Imperial State Crown has nearly 3,000, the Imperial Crown of India over 6,000.

The six crowns in the Crown Jewels are the Imperial State Crown, St. Edward's Crown the Imperial Crown of India, Queen Mary's Crown, Queen Mary of Modena's Crown, and the Prince of Wales's Crown. There is also the Diadem of Queen Mary of Modena.

THE CORONATION A CHANGE OF CROWNS

All the crowns are modelled broadly on the same pattern. That which, each one, has four fleurs-de-lis set alternately upon a circlet, arches (a

varying number), and at the summit a "monde" consisting of a ball ensigned with a cross-patee.

The Imperial State Crown, which was made for Queen Victoria in 1838, has four half-arches terminating at the summit in a monde and cross-patee. At the front, in the centre of the circlet, which is of silver edged with pearls, is the second largest portion of the Star of Africa, and at the back, as mentioned above, is the Stuart Sapphire. From the points of intersection of the arches hang magnificent drop pearls, traditionally said to have been worn as earrings by Queen Elizabeth. In the centre of the final cross-patee is St. Edward's Sapphire. At the front of the crown in the centre of the foremost cross-patee is the Black Prince's ruby.

The Imperial State Crown is the crown worn by the King on occasions such as the State opening of Parliament and the Coronation drive. The actual crown usually used for the crowning is St. Edward's Crown; having been crowned with this, the King exchanges it in the Abbey for the Imperial State Crown before proceeding to drive through the streets of London.

St. Edward's Crown is of more simple pattern and appearance. It was made for the Coronation of Charles II by Sir. Robert Vyner,

the Court Jeweller of the period. The "original" St. Edward's Crown was destroyed during the Commonwealth, but it is believed that its pattern and design were closely followed in making the existing version. The framework is of gold, and it has two complete arches.

The Imperial Crown of India, which was made by Messrs. Garrard, the present Crown Jewellers, for the Coronation of King George V in India in 1912, differs somewhat in character from the Imperial State and St. Edward's Crowns in that it has eight half-arches terminating at the top in reverse curves. The whole is very closely set with diamonds, save where at a few points it is embellished with large coloured stones.

Queen Mary's Crown, made in 1911 by Messrs. Garrard, is similar in outline and general design to the Imperial Crown of India. It is, however, lighter and smaller, and there are no stones used other than diamonds, with which like the Imperial Crown of India, it is closely set. It possesses three very important stones. In the centre of the front cross-patee is the Koh-I-Nur, whilst immediately beneath this great gem rests a portion of the Star of Africa, and a further drop shaped portion of the Star of Africa adorns the centre of the final cross-patee, the former portion weighing 96 carats and the latter 64 carats.

The Crown of Queen Mary of Modena, the wife of James II, which was worn by her in the Coronation ceremonies of 1685, follows broadly the pattern of St. Edward's Crown, and is enriched with diamonds and pearls remarkably for their size and beauty.

The golden Crown which the Prince of Wales may wear as the eldest son of the King, has the same character as St. Edward's Crown, but it is much lighter and much more simple; it has only one arch, and the gems and pearls are "modelled" in the metal of which the crown is made. The Prince wears another crown as Prince of Wales.

The Diadem of Queen Mary of Modena was worn by that queen during part of the ceremonies of the Coronation of 1685: it does not appear ever to have been worn since. It consists of a simple gold circlet with no arches, adorned with fine diamonds and edged with large pearls along the top of the rim. It is said to have cost £110,000.

Each of the crowns and the diadem encloses a purple or red velvet cap edged with miniver. The fur edging is attached to the velvet caps, and not to the lower rims of the crowns.

SWORDS AND SCEPTRES

The five ceremonial swords in the Crown Regalia are the Jewelled Sword of State, the Sword of State (not to be confused with the first), Curtana, the Sword of Justice to the Spirituality, and the Sword of Justice to the Temporality. The last three are all of

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