



**Bejewelled:
Men and Jewellery in
Tudor and Jacobean England**

Natasha Awais-Dean

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Front cover: Gold and enamelled Great George of the Order of the Garter, set with 44 diamonds, belonging to William Compton, 1st Earl of Northampton, 1628–9, English, height 7.2cm, width 6cm. British Museum, 1980,0201.2

Pg. vi: Detail of gold and enamelled hat ornament set with diamonds, rubies and possibly a garnet showing the Conversion of Saul, mid-16th century, German, diameter 4.5cm, weight 35g. British Museum, WB.171

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For Emilia and Cecily

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Introduction¹

‘FOELIX . CONCORDIA. FRATRVM’: these three simple words, which translate as ‘A happy concord of brothers’, are inscribed on the obverse of a circular bezel of a gold 17th-century ring.² The words encircle a white enamelled death’s head, a device belonging to a group of iconographic images known as ‘memento mori’ that were designed as visual reminders to the living of the transience of life and the inevitability of death. Taking this object quite literally ‘at face value’, we might suppose that it was worn by a man to celebrate male kinship or friendship (a brotherhood) in the present. But when we look at the reverse of the bezel, we find three letters crudely engraved in the form of a triangle with the ‘H’ sitting at the apex above an ‘I’ and an ‘A’. Convention tells us that a trigram such as this represents two individuals who share a surname beginning with an ‘H’.³ The letters below stand for the initial letters of their first names. This detail gives the ring an alternative narrative, one of mourning, perhaps of two brothers who died given the inscription on the front. It is not improbable for both these interpretations to be true; worn first by a man as a commemoration of male sociability, then later maybe by a female relation, in remembrance of her loss. What this indicates is that the meanings of jewels were not fixed; rather they were fluid depending on context and could shift over time.

Portable, and often small, jewels were designed to be worn close to the body. As such, perhaps more than any other form of material culture from the early modern period, they were regarded as highly personal items.⁴ Much Renaissance rhetoric, and indeed modern scholarship, focuses on female consumption so that until recently there has been little attention on men and how they engaged with these diminutive, glittering objects. This book seeks to uncover and interrogate the myriad meanings that jewellery had for men in the 16th and early 17th centuries with specific reference to objects in the British Museum’s collection. At times reflecting ideas of magnificence and lineage, at others sustaining and marking out social bonds and networks of reciprocity, the ownership and consumption of jewels meant much more than mere bodily adornment and their true value often far outweighed any basic fiscal worth. By shifting the traditional skew of gender studies and focusing specifically on male engagement with jewellery, this book aims to align itself with the growing studies on masculinity, community and sociability. A further key concern of this publication is to incorporate archaeological material – using finds reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme at the British Museum, including those declared as Treasure – alongside the often high-status objects found in museums and depicted in portraiture. Combining this with evidence from inventories and wills of more ordinary citizens allows us to reposition jewellery, presenting it not merely as a concern of the elite but as something that was owned, worn and valued by a range of men across English society. For, as we shall see, the wearing, owning and circulating of jewels had meaning for men in the early modern period regardless of whether a jewel was made of gold and studded with precious gemstones or more simply cast from copper alloy.

This book aligns itself firmly with the recent scholarship of Marcia Pointon, and Charlotte Gere and Judy Rudoe,

locating English jewellery of the early modern period within an interpretive framework in a manner comparable to these authors in their works.⁵ By encompassing social, historical and literary narratives and sources it is possible to provide a thorough critical analysis of the role that men had to play in the acquisition, ownership and circulation of jewels, offering additionally a structure within which to interrogate the meanings that these jewels had for their male owners. The book is divided into three parts, addressing these aspects in turn. Part I on acquisition and ownership describes the ways in which a man might purchase his jewellery and then gives insight into the ownership of jewels across the social spectrum, using mainly inventories as evidence. Chapter 1 explores the various modes of acquisition and sites of purchase. Chapter 2 analyses the inventories of men across the social scale, from royalty to ordinary urban citizens, in order to understand the ownership of jewels. The unpublished inventory of William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke, is examined closely here and selections from this archival source appear in Appendix A.

Part II deals with the jewels themselves in greater detail. Chapter 3 introduces a range of men depicted in portraiture and discusses how the jewels performed on the canvas. Chapter 4 reviews jewels that embellish male dress, with a special focus on buttons. Chapter 5 then turns to a specific male aesthetic – the hat ornament – and repositions it, considering it not only as an elite jewel but as one that was worn by a variety of men. Part III looks at the social networks that were sustained through the circulation of jewels in a number of distinct contexts, each of which supported varied manifestations of masculinity. Chapter 6 concentrates on jewels pertaining to the Order of the Garter, a chivalric Order that maintained an elite male network. Rings are the subject of the next three chapters, with Chapter 7 assessing the role of the ring in the context of marriage and betrothal. The rings given by a superior order of barristers, serjeants-at-law, form the discussion in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 discusses signet rings as manifestations of a man's identity and presents a unique group, the Gresham Grasshopper rings. Chapter 10 reflects on posthumous remembrance and considers how jewels had the ability to create a lasting legacy of an individual through bequests and in the particular designation of heritage jewels. Of note is the will of the statesman Sir Thomas Sackville and extracts from this that relate specifically to his jewellery are published in Appendix B. The book closes with a Postscript addressing 19th-century fakes and forgeries of Renaissance jewels. While there is nothing to suggest that any of the jewellery discussed within these pages is not of genuine Renaissance manufacture, there was a market for copies and reproductions and many museums worldwide have had to reattribute items from their collections. It is a subject matter that warrants much further investigation but, in introducing the idea at the end of this book, it not only reminds us to be aware of what is deemed to be 'Renaissance' but also reveals to us a continuing fascination with this period of history.

Defining 'Renaissance'

The timeframe covered by this book begins with the accession of Henry VIII (r. 1509–1547) and ends with the

death of James I of England (r. 1603–1625), although there are some notable exceptions of jewels that are included despite falling outside of these date parameters. This period marks both a significant shift in attitudes towards male consumption of jewels and a changing aesthetic within the jewels themselves.

The 16th century was a time of increased wealth for the nation and its rulers. Henry VIII used his clothing and jewels to reflect his status, often in competition with other European monarchs. Encounters between him and Francis I of France (r. 1515–1547) in the early 16th century provided opportunities for both kings to exploit their clothing 'as a form of competitive magnificence'.⁶ A first meeting took place at the Field of Cloth of Gold, near Calais, in 1520, followed by one at Calais itself in October 1532, where it was observed that 'The French king's doublet was set all over with stones and diamonds [...] and his company far surpassed the English in apparel'.⁷ At a later meeting Henry wore 'a robe of violet cloth of gold, with a collar of 14 rubies [...] valued at more than 400,000 cr'.⁸

By the time of the first Stuart king, jewels had moved beyond mere expressions of wealth and power to take on more complex meanings. As we shall see, the Lyte Jewel was given as a token of thanks by James I to Thomas Lyte (1568–1638) of Lytes Cary in Somerset, following the production of a genealogy of the king by Lyte.⁹ Rather than simply representing the extravagances of the Jacobean court, the motivations of the king were more political, since in the early days of his reign he faced questions over his legitimacy.¹⁰ The Lyte Jewel also holds resonance since the retention of such an item by Lyte and subsequent generations highlights the prevalence of ideas of memory and the notion of lineage, themes that are addressed later in this book. Furthermore, the 17th century saw a shift in jewellery design from the importance of the goldsmith and enameller to a greater penchant for precious stones. The beginnings of this new aesthetic can be witnessed at the Jacobean court, where never before had such extravagance for jewels been seen than under James I and his wife, Anne of Denmark (1574–1619). With courtiers trying to gain favour with the sovereign, the conspicuous display of clothing and jewels was paramount among the men at court.¹¹

Meanings for men

There is now wide acknowledgement that masculinity, like femininity, is a social construct,¹² and an acceptance that masculinity is established just as much between men as in opposition to women. This signals a shift away from a strict male–female dichotomy, which in turn allows for new interpretations of prevailing ideas about how men have presented themselves and have been, in turn, perceived by their contemporary viewers. By drawing on these studies on masculinity, community and sociability, we can begin to explore and understand the multiplicity of ways that men used jewels and bodily ornamentation as forms of exchange and display in England in the Tudor and early Jacobean period. Ultimately, jewels supported alternative meanings of what it meant to be a man at this time.

While almost all of the scholarly work on jewellery has been focused on female use and display,¹³ such consideration

that engagement with jewels was a feminine preoccupation is perhaps a popular misconception. There is overwhelming evidence that men had the power, money, networks and status to commission, wear, give and bequeath jewels in a way that only a widow otherwise could. As we shall discover within this book, in this period men acted as agents for the production of jewels, they often owned the jewels belonging to their wives and they decorated their own bodies with jewels, which are often overlooked because they were stitched onto their clothing. This is not to suggest that jewellery was not important to women. Elite women such as Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603), Elizabeth Talbot (Bess of Hardwick) (c. 1527–1608), Countess of Shrewsbury, and others were avid commissioners of jewels and took great pride in their ability to acquire and display rare examples. Elizabeth I's penchant for jewels was so well known that gifts from courtiers often took the form of unique designs. For example, in 1586 Sir Christopher Hatton (c. 1540–1591) gave a head ornament of 'Gordian knots with alphas and omegas', while an earlier gift in 1572 from Ambrose Dudley (c. 1530–1590), Earl of Warwick, consisted of a jewel in the form of 'a branch of bay leaves, with one white rose and six red roses of enamelled gold on it, a spider and a bee'.¹⁴ We can also turn to contemporary portraiture to see royal and elite women prominently displaying their jewels, such as Elizabeth Knollys (1549–c. 1605), Lady Leighton or Anne of Denmark.¹⁵ Non-elite women, too, were sometimes criticised for their attachment to frivolous expenses that might bankrupt their husbands. The diarist Thomas Platter (c. 1574–1628), travelling in England at the end of the 16th century, commented on the dress of English women remarking that 'some may well wear velvet for the street – quite common with them – who cannot afford a crust of dry bread at home I have been told'.¹⁶

But because so much of contemporary Renaissance and early modern rhetoric has focused on either female display or feminine vanity, the meanings that jewels may have had for men have often been overlooked. In exploring men and their jewellery, here we shift our attention to male social interactions and the tensions and anxieties over the wearing of jewels by men. Excessive display of apparel and jewels could create anxieties either because, as with women, this could be regarded as immoral, wasteful, or worse, as effeminate. This idea was prevalent in some contemporary literature with proclamations that 'all men of worth are taught by reading that Excesse is a great Sinne: that Pride is the first steppe to the downefall of shame'.¹⁷ Some jewels, however, were so closely associated with special status, such as the Order of the Garter, that they never attracted any criticism. How these tensions between appropriate and inappropriate display were negotiated remains a key concern underpinning each of the chapters within this book.

Defining 'jewellery'

In determining the meanings that jewellery had for men in the early modern period, it is necessary to identify the types of jewels that were traditionally worn, owned or circulated by men. In his 1660 multilingual dictionary *Lexicon Tetraglotton*, the historian and political writer James Howell (1594?–1666) included a section entitled 'Habits, or Apparel

for Men'.¹⁸ This proves a valuable resource as it enables a modern reader to ascertain which items of clothing and accessories were considered appropriate for a man in the 17th century. One entry is particularly worth noting for the very fact that while it does not name a specific object type, it describes the possible state of a man's overall appearance as 'Embroidered with Jewels'. The Italian and French translations use words that suggest a visual assault to the eyes: 'tempestato [...] tutto di gioie, ò gemme'; '[...] tout couvert de pierriere' – quite literally studded all over with jewels and gemstones. This is the image of a man from the early modern period that we need to keep in mind.

If we turn to the jewels themselves, it is difficult to establish direct gender associations from empirical evidence alone; it requires considerable contextual information to make sense of who might have owned and used these items. There are some categories of jewels that are usually classified as belonging to men, such as the hat ornament or heavy-set gold chains, but even here there are anomalies. While large gold chains were depicted almost exclusively on men in English portraiture, these same items of jewellery can be found around the necks of Dutch women. Determining the gender of a jewel's owner is equally problematic when an object can be worn by men and women alike, such as the earring. In the early 17th-century tract *Haec-vir*, a response to *Hic mulier*, the character of the Man-Woman references the work of an Italian poet whose words condemn the womanly behaviour of men:

Into his eares two Rings conuayed are
Of golden Wyer, at which on either side,
Two Indian Pearles, in making like two Peares,
Of passing price were pendant at his eares.¹⁹

These words would suggest that the earring was regarded as a jewel primarily to be worn by women, yet 'The Chandos Portrait', supposedly representing the playwright William Shakespeare (1564–1616), clearly depicts the sitter with a gold hoop earring in his left ear.²⁰ Contemporary portraiture also shows men such as Sir Francis Drake (1540–1596) and Sir Walter Raleigh (1554–1618), figures hardly considered womanly in their conduct, with a single earring.²¹ William Harrison may have had these men in mind when he wrote that 'Some lusty courtiers also and gentlemen of courage do wear either rings of gold, stones, or pearl in their ears'.²²

Charles I (r. 1625–1649) is perhaps the most noted male figure to wear an earring. A watercolour miniature from the studio of Isaac Oliver (c. 1565–1617) shows Charles as a boy with an earring in his left ear, while a pear-shaped pearl pendant at his left ear is prominently displayed in the triple painting of the king by Sir Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641).²³ Such was his attachment to this jewel that Charles famously wore it to the scaffold. After his execution it was removed from his ear and given to his eldest surviving daughter, Mary Henrietta, Princess Royal (1631–1660).²⁴ The earring, a drop-shaped, freshwater pearl mounted in a gold and enamelled Imperial crown setting, now resides in the Portland Collection at Welbeck, Nottinghamshire (**Fig. 1**). Its authenticity is confirmed by a manuscript note in the hand of Mary II (r. 1689–1694), also in the Portland Collection (**Fig. 2**).²⁵

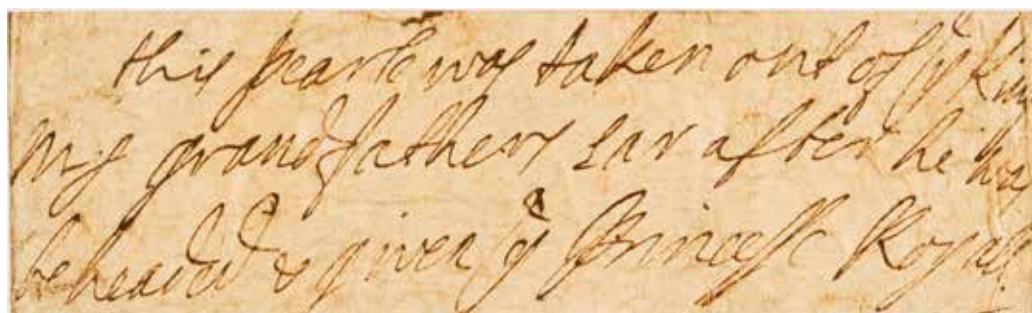


Figure 1 (left) King Charles I's earring, before 1649, pearl, gold and enamel. Portland Collection, Harley Gallery, Welbeck Estate, Nottinghamshire, inv. no. 005669

Figure 2 (above) Manuscript note written by Mary II, late 17th century. Portland Collection, Harley Gallery, Welbeck Estate, Nottinghamshire, inv. no. 005669

Items typically understood as jewellery, such as rings, chains or pendants, were not worn in isolation. Indeed the entire male body, from head to toe, acted as a site for the placing of jewels. By including the concept of 'adornment' as jewellery, we are able to incorporate a whole range of objects that are usually excluded from jewellery studies and whose importance and prominence has now come to light as a result of the 1996 Treasure Act and finds from both metal detectorists and mudlarks working on the Thames foreshore.²⁶ This includes dress ornaments, that is, jewels intended to embellish garments using the fabric backing as a foil. Counted among these are hat ornaments, hooks, clasps,

Figure 3 Hans Eworth, detail of Gregory Fiennes, 10th Baron Dacre, from a double portrait with his mother Mary Neville, Lady Dacre, 1559, oil on panel, 50 x 71.4cm (whole portrait). National Portrait Gallery, NPG 6855



buckles, points and buttons.²⁷ The reintegration of these types of goods with rings, brooches, chains, hatbands, badges, belts and swords needs to be undertaken if we are to understand how men viewed the full display of their wealth, status and lineage in this period.

Gregory Fiennes (1539–1594), 10th Baron Dacre, is depicted by the artist Hans Eworth (fl. 1540–1574) in a portrait in which he stands alongside his mother, Mary Neville (1524–c. 1576), Lady Dacre (**Fig. 3**). Sumptuous clothing indicates clearly the wealth and status of this individual, who had only recently been restored his honours and titles, following the removal of them from his father after the latter's execution in 1541. Yet it is not only his dress that warrants attention. Fiennes's body is also ornamented by a number of jewels: pairs of gold aglets (small tubular-style jewels customarily worn in pairs as decorative elements) and gold buttons have been placed on his fur-lined garment; gold buttons fasten the front of his doublet; a gold chain encircles his neck; the leather belt around his waist has gold strap-ends and buckle; and the hilt of his sword is embellished with gold or gilded decoration. This visual source shows how such items could be worn in combination, demonstrating how a man wished to present himself and contributing also to how he wished to be viewed by his contemporaries.

The growing number of precious-metal dress embellishments, which vary in the manufacturing and decorative techniques applied to them, indicates how ubiquitous such items were in the 16th and 17th centuries. While portraiture shows rulers and members of the aristocracy ornately embellished with gold buttons, hooks, clasps and buckles, the physical evidence is brought to light through the Treasure Act. These reported finds also provide evidence for the wearing of less costly examples in silver and silver-gilt. Archaeological excavations, finds from unstratified contexts on the Thames foreshore and chance finds reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) include similar examples of base metal, demonstrating that the importance of jewels permeated all strata of society.

Small dress embellishments are typically considered in the context of dress.²⁸ This is in part due to the fact that they are often so inextricably tied to clothing, as we see in the image of Gregory Fiennes and as is evident in the following description of an early 16th-century doublet:



Figure 4 Gold ring with rectangular bezel missing its gemstone and inscribed on the outer face of the hoop, dated 1524, French. National Museums Northern Ireland, Ulster Museum, BELUM.BGR.7

A doublet of purpull sylver tynsell maylyd the foreslevys and placard garnysshed with fyvtie and thre dyamundys set in gold and with roullys of perle to the same doublet every Roulle having thre perles set in gold, a hundryth and twelve/the brest being botonyd with twelfe botons of gold blake Inamyld.²⁹

The 12 gold buttons with black enamel and the jewels with 53 diamonds and pearls set in gold are mentioned here as an integral part of the doublet, but objects such as these (along with hooks and clasps) were in fact removable and transferable to different items of clothing. These dress accessories very often appear under entries of clothing within inventories.³⁰ That they were not considered solely as a part of dress and did in fact constitute the goldsmith's craft can be deduced from a brief survey of the Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes of the Goldsmiths' Company. These records list the fines imposed following the submission (or seizure) of substandard goods to the Company.³¹ It would seem, from these accounts, that infringements on these smaller goods, such as pins and clasps, were far more numerous than larger wares, like casting bottles and other items of plate. This suggests that craftsmen perhaps thought it easier to deceive customers with smaller items of substandard weight than bigger ones. It also demonstrates that the Company deemed it worthwhile to regulate these small-scale items, indicating that substantial quantities were sold in the market.

Stories through jewels: seeking Spanish gold

Many objects have layered histories, with ownership passing between male and female hands, sometimes intentionally and sometimes quite by chance. Among a set of jewels, unique in its survival and its quality and now on display in Ulster, are a few items that demonstrate changing gender associations. The *Girona*, a Spanish galleass, was wrecked off Lacada Point, near the Giant's Causeway in County Antrim, present-day Northern Ireland, as it returned home in October 1588 following the defeat of the Spanish Armada. When the ship was recovered in 1967 by the Belgian archaeologist Robert Sténuit off the Antrim coastline at Portballintrae, close to where it had been wrecked, it yielded important finds that provided crucial insights into 16th-century Spanish culture; above all it gave a glimpse into the material goods that gave meaning to an all-male environment and male consumption habits. For when it went

down, the *Girona* was a military ship with only men on board, many of whom were the young noblemen taking part in the Armada enterprise. Yet among the salvaged artefacts were numerous jewels – gold chains, rings and pendants – many set with precious or semi-precious stones, as well as other small objects of personal adornment, such as gold buttons.³² These archaeological survivals, which can be securely sited and dated, help us to understand better the complex relationships that Renaissance and early modern European men had with precious ornaments and jewels.³³

Among the valuables that were recovered from the *Girona* was a large gold ring inscribed with 'MADAME DE CHAMPAGNEY MDXXIII' with a collet that now lacks the gemstone it once held (**Fig. 4**). The ring had originally been given by Nicole Bonvalot of Besançon (Madame de Champagny) (1490–1570) to her husband Nicolas Perrenot de Granvelle (1486–1550) on the birth of their third surviving son Jerome in 1524. It eventually passed into the hands of Bonvalot's grandson, Don Tomas Perrenoto Sobrino de Cardenal Granvela. He died on the *Girona* at the age of 22 along with almost 1,300 men on 26 October 1588.³⁴ In fact, it was the discovery of this ring that enabled the wreckage to be identified conclusively as that of the *Girona*.

Contemporary accounts confirm that Don Tomas de Granvela had been travelling with the highly esteemed captain Don Alonzo Martinez de Leiva (d. 1588) and was among those who had died with him.³⁵ Importantly, it demonstrates that a ring once commissioned by a woman to celebrate her success at producing another son was being worn by a male descendant during battle many decades later. Passing from hand to hand (literally and figuratively), it had acquired an importance that went well beyond its monetary value.

Another ring from the same wreck demonstrates the levels of complexity involved in gendering ownership and use of jewellery. This ring is formed of a hand holding a heart and an open belt-clasp, and contains the inscription 'NO TENGO MAS QVE DAR TE' (I have nothing more to give you) (**Fig. 5**). Its symbolism and the overt statement engraved on the hoop, combined with the fact that it was discovered in the remains of an all-male environment, suggest that this ring was given by a woman to her lover before he set sail for England.³⁶ But had such a ring been found in any other context, it would be plausible to suppose



Figure 5 Gold ring with its bezel formed of a buckle and a hand clasping a heart, inscribed on the outer face in Roman capitals, 16th century, Spanish. National Museums Northern Ireland, Ulster Museum, BELUM.BGR.6

that this was a token of betrothal given by a man to his future bride. Both, of course, could be true. This could be something given by a man to his beloved and then returned for any range of reasons: from the death of a spouse or as a memorial given to the traveller.

Another object acquired by the Ulster Museum in the early 1990s was immediately recognised for its connections with the *Girona* collection. Indeed, this pendant may have come from the same source. This gold and enamelled jewel has a central image of the Madonna and Child surrounded by a sunburst (**Fig. 6**). The picture is inserted within a later border that bears a double-lined inscription in italics with strong traces of black enamelling. The lettering reads:

When Spanneshe fleet fled home for feare [ANNO] This
golden picktur then was founde * Fast fexsed vnto Spanniards
eare [1588] Whoo drowned laye on Irish groūd x.

This unusual record tells us that what had once been a Spanish sailor's earring with a Catholic devotional image was converted into this pendant. The new owner created a gem-set gold border with enamelled scrollwork decoration at

the apex and a fleur-de-lis at the base to which is attached a pearl hanging pendent. The collet, in which a large amethyst of octagonal form is set, was then inscribed at the sides with a further inscription: 'The first gift to Mary'.

While this might be a reference to the Virgin Mary, it seems likely that as it passed into its new context it took on new meanings. Prior to the purchase of the pendant by the Ulster Museum in 1990, this jewel had been sold at Christie's, London, in 1972 by Sir John Simon Every, Bt (1914–1988). A note in the sale catalogue states that the vendor, Sir John, was a direct descendant of the Mary referred to in the inscription.³⁷ Thus if the inscription is to be believed, it came from the ear of a dead, male Spaniard whose body was presumably washed up in Ireland following the English success in the Armada campaign of 1588. It was then transformed from a trophy of war into a token of family love and affection for female hands, and eventually into an important family heirloom. That an object with dimensions of only 30.3 x 59.7mm can have such multiple resonances demonstrates the value of jewelled possessions both for their original owners and for cultural historians today.



Figure 6 Gold and enamelled oval-shaped pendant with an image of the Madonna and Child surrounded by an inscription and on the reverse set with an amethyst and four emeralds, also with a pearl hanging pendent, 16th century, Spanish and English. National Museums Northern Ireland, Ulster Museum, BELUM. A1.1990

The jewels discovered within the wreck of the *Girona* and the pendant earring, although Spanish examples, provide ample opportunities to explore the meanings that such objects had for men in the 16th and early 17th centuries. We can use the same approaches to interrogate an Englishman's relationship with his jewels. Indeed the Armada finds allow us to ask how, as a ring moved from female to male hands, as with the Madame de Champagney ring, it may have accumulated new gendered meanings. But rather than see this as an insoluble problem, these gendered transitions and contexts remain crucial. Jewellery is not intrinsic in its gender. It acquires its associations from the body to which it is attached and the manner in which it is given and received. These concerns remain the same whether considering a man from the Continent or one from Tudor or Jacobean England. Thus this book looks at both how jewels were used to adorn the male body and how those encounters and interactions with jewellery, such as commissioning, ownership, and the bequests and gifts of jewels, involved men. By examining the giving and receiving of jewels in a range of contexts, we are able to assess the formation of bonds and networks of a heterosocial, homosocial or political nature.

Conclusion

Jewellery is ultimately designed to be worn.³⁸ Without being positioned on the human body, the jewels become static. Without interaction with other jewels and clothing, an individual piece loses its full sensory impact. Moreover, jewels function in a manner that speaks to both the wearer and the viewer. But in the crudest sense, jewellery constitutes nothing more than wearable and portable cash. The weights of the individual links of a chain corresponding to the weights of escudo coins (the currency of the time) found in the wreck of the *Atocha*, a Spanish guard ship that sank in the Florida Keys in September 1622, suggest strongly that this was one purpose of these objects. A 16th-century source provides explicit confirmation of this, revealing further information of how payment was made to men on board ships. In his narrative letter Captain de Cuellar, a survivor from a wreck of the Spanish Armada, describes his treatment once he had reached land, revealing at the same time the significance of the chain he wore:

The old man began stripping me as far as my shirt, beneath which I was wearing a gold chain worth more than a thousand reals [...] I was only a poor soldier and this money was what I had earned on board ship.³⁹

Yet, in the early modern period jewels did mean more to their owners, across all social groups, than their intrinsic value alone. By exploring the significance of jewels to men in Renaissance and early modern England, we will see how these items of jewellery had far greater resonance than simple ornamentation or the ability to pull off a link to make a payment, thus repositioning jewellery on the male body.

Abbreviations

BGA: Barclays Group Archive
 BL: British Library
 BM: British Museum
 GCL: Goldsmiths' Company Library
 GLRO: Greater London Record Office
 MoL: Museum of London
 NAL: National Art Library
 NPG: National Portrait Gallery
 NT: National Trust
 PAS: Portable Antiquities Scheme
 RCIN: Royal Collection Inventory Number
 TNA: The National Archives
 VAM: Victoria and Albert Museum

Transcription conventions

Where manuscript sources have been consulted for this publication, the author has applied the following transcription conventions:

Semi-diplomatic transcription; punctuation as the original; contractions expanded and supplied letter inserted in square brackets; superscriptions dropped and supplied letters italicised; <> denotes inserted text by the scribe above the line; [] denotes missing letters silently inserted; {} denotes illegible or missing text; marginalia and notes placed in footnotes.

LH and RH marginalia denotes additional text noted on the manuscript within the left-hand side or right-hand side margins.

Part I

Acquisition and Ownership

Jewels are produced from neutral, ungendered objects, such as a cast ingot made of North African gold (**Fig. 7**). Acquired as part of a group of over 400 coins, broken pieces of gold jewellery and ingots, as well as items of pewter, pottery fragments and a merchant's seal that were all recovered from an underwater site¹ in Salcombe Bay, Devon, the fragmentary nature of the jewellery and ingots suggests bullion destined for England from North Africa that would then have been melted down and used for coinage, plate or jewellery.² If we consider this particular source of the raw material gold, then we can begin to understand how, whether made from precious or non-precious metals and gemstones or their imitations, the individual elements of a jewel are bought and sold without reference to masculinity or femininity. Gendered associations are acquired only later through a social context. Some jewels were given special meanings due to their supposed magical, healing or protective properties; others were bound up closely with particular social rituals. In his lifetime, an Englishman, even one of modest means, might have owned decorative items for his clothing or buy a ring to give to his betrothed. He might have been given a small-scale object in silver or silver-gilt as a gift or as a bequest, or have bought a second-hand gilt decoration for his cap from a pedlar. This section focuses on how men in the early modern period commissioned or bought jewels, and attempts to identify the range of items that men from different social groups might have owned and why. However, it is first necessary to understand *how* the raw materials from which these jewels were made were obtained. The Moroccan ingot highlights the practice of melting bullion but this was just one source.



Figure 7 Cast gold ingot from the Salcombe Cannon Site, 17th century, probably Moroccan, 3.5 x 0.6cm, weight 17.8g. British Museum, 1999,1207.450

Chapter 1

Acquiring Jewellery

Men from a range of backgrounds acquired their jewels in different ways. Goldsmiths and jewellers could be commissioned to make one-off pieces but it seems that they also held stock that could be purchased, with the client able to combine elements to form the final product. We know from the Goldsmiths' Company Records that goldsmiths were selling regularly at the many fairs and markets across England. Jewellery could also be bought from more unexpected places, particularly in rural settings where a local shop might sell a variety of goods or indeed a man might be dependent on the ephemeral and passing pedlar hawking his wares. This chapter addresses this first stage of ownership – acquisition – and seeks to understand how, from where and from whom a man might obtain his jewels.

Accessing precious materials

The first issue for any man who wanted a piece of jewellery made to his specifications was how to obtain the basic ingredients that were needed. Even if this involved only the purchase of silver-gilt buttons or aglets, the buyer needed a good knowledge of where to go and whom to trust. He had to have direct access to gold, silver and gemstones himself, be able to buy a ready-made item or know a reliable source. He might use this knowledge on his own behalf or, as was common, on behalf of other friends and relations, particularly women who had fewer opportunities for public market negotiations and purchases.

In his autobiography, the 16th-century composer Thomas Whythorne (1528–1596) recounted his dealings with a goldsmith whom he commissioned to make a wedding ring, noting that it was to be made of 'old gold' that had been given to him by the intended recipient of the ring.¹ The term 'old gold' is a more complicated description than it at first seems. For it could indicate either the reuse of an old piece of jewellery, or it could refer to the higher standard of angel gold that was used prior to the introduction of a lower standard of gold by Henry VIII in 1526 and the debasement of gold that occurred between 1544 and 1549.²

Whichever is the case, this reference is an important reminder that, as stressed above, obtaining the basic materials to make jewellery, even for something as essential as a wedding ring, was not straightforward and that the finished product was often the result of discussions between client and producer. According to the economic historian T.S. Willan, who has researched extensively on trade in the Tudor period, 'the movement of the precious metals is one of the most elusive features of sixteenth-century foreign trade'.³

David Humphrey has identified a number of ways in which a goldsmith could obtain his supply of precious materials for his craft: from his client, either new or recycled material; both new and recycled material held as stock; acquired locally and legally by the goldsmith; sourced illegally by the goldsmith; and through a conduit, a middleman, who could provide new and recycled goods.⁴ In the case of Whythorne's goldsmith, it is clear that the client supplied the craftsman with the gold required for the ring. Unfortunately, while this anecdote provides evidence for the practice of recycling precious metals, it offers no further information regarding the availability of the other raw materials required by a goldsmith. To understand this, we



Figure 8 'Cheapeside Market', from Hugh Alley, *A Caveatt for the City of London*, dated 1598. Folger Shakespeare Library V.a.318, f.15



Figure 9 Anonymous, print entitled 'Cheapside Cross as it appeared in the Year 1547', 1809, British school, etching. British Museum, 1871,0812.5223

Figure 10 Interior of a goldsmith's shop with plate and vessels displayed on the upper two shelves behind the counter and smaller jewelled goods on the lower shelf and laid out on the counter for the customers. Detail of 'Le jeune page' (the young pageboy) from *Livre des simples médecines*, 15th century, French. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Department of Manuscripts Français 9136, f. 344



need to turn to a wider range of sources concerning trade and guild practices.

A manuscript image providing a contemporary view of Cheapside, the conduit running through the City of London known for its concentration of trades, particularly goldsmiths, is suggestive of the varied modes of selling (**Fig. 8**). A 19th-century print copy of a 16th-century painting depicting Edward VI (r. 1547–1553) passing by the Cheapside Cross on procession to his coronation suggests that goldsmiths did have their own capital, stock and access to gold (**Fig. 9**). The arcades in the lower ground of the image prominently display larger goldsmiths' wares. A manuscript illumination dated to the 15th century shows the interior of a goldsmith's shop. It suggests that once inside these shops potential buyers, both male and female, would then be able to view the smaller ready-made products of the goldsmith's craft, such as rings and jewelled ornaments (**Fig. 10**). A 15th-century painting by the Dutch artist Petrus Christus (c. 1410/20–1475/6) also portrays the range of goods produced and sold by a goldsmith (**Fig. 11**). While



Figure 11 Petrus Christus, *A Goldsmith in his Shop*, 1449, oil on oak panel, 98 x 85.2cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1975.1.110. The Robert Lehman Collection, 1975

both images show that women were able to make purchases for themselves, it would seem that they could not do so unaccompanied. So, it seems the role of men in transactions concerning the acquisition of jewellery remained crucial.

In the absence of any contemporary English visual sources showing a goldsmith's interior, parallels must be drawn from these European examples to understand purchasing practices more clearly.⁵ Certainly the use of a pair of balances and counterweights (visible in the Christus image) was customary in the English trade, as can be deduced from further reading of the Whythorne text. For after discussing the requirements of the commission with the goldsmith, the protagonist informs the reader that he 'received of him a counterpane or weight of the gold'. This is then utilised when Whythorne returns to the goldsmith a few days later to collect the ring. He describes ascertaining that 'the weight thereof [the ring] agreed with my counterpane and weight aforesaid'.⁶ It is not improbable to suppose that the weights and balance used in this transaction would have been similar to an extant 17th-century Dutch example (Fig. 12).

Often, probate inventories relating to an individual involved in a trade give an indication of the tools and implements required by the craftsman. On 24 September 1627 the shop contents of the Bristol goldsmith Humfry Clovill were appraised:

twoe Anvills att £1 10s.

gold & silver weights, 2 bell weights, 2 pearle weights of 128 ounces a peece, 5 paire of skales for silver, 4 paire of powder skales, one cast, 2 bekernes, one spoone moulde & hammer, one greate sheares, one swaging hammer, 2 forginge hammers, 4 spoone hammers, one googe hammer, 2 planishing hammers, 12 drawinge Irons, two greate wedges, one drawinge tonges,



Figure 12 Brass coin-weights and hand balance contained in a wooden box, 1600–54, made by Guillaume de Neve, minted in Amsterdam. British Museum, W.3132

one drawing binche twoe copper boylinge panns, one brasse pann to make fire In, one brasse Stampe & butterles, one silver Ingnett, one goulde Ingnett 3 paire of tonges, one ringe to make fire in, one iron beame & skales. In greate & small weights in lead, one hundred weight, one wheele to twist silver, one gilded bolle, twoe hundred weight of ordinaunce bulletts, one deske, one truncke, one Chest with other small tooles about the shopp. £6
one beame & counter skales of Brasse 10s.
twoe beakers both weighing 16 ozs £4
3 spoones weighing 3 ozs 15s.⁷

In recognising the tools of a craftsman it is possible to have a clearer insight into the complexities involved in the manufacturing process (such as with the different types of hammers) and the types of interaction that could occur between the maker and his client. Not all inventories are so detailed and it is unfortunate that the appraisers of the estate of the single goldsmith among the Ipswich inhabitants (whose wills are discussed in the following chapter) failed to give precise descriptions of the shop's contents.⁸ The only entry contained for the 'shoppe' is 'A paier of bellowes with other tooles belonging to A gold smithe', all of which are valued at £2 of a total estate worth £9 6s. 8d.⁹

A 16th-century woodcut engraving showing the interior of a goldsmith's workshop provides visual evidence of some of the tools listed in Clovill's inventory above and of the techniques used by a goldsmith in this period (Fig. 13). In the foreground a worker is beating a strip of metal with a hammer and at his feet lays a second hammer. Against the right-hand wall are various tools, such as files, knives and pliers. One man attends the fire and two goldsmiths are chasing and embossing vessels that demonstrate the range of goods with which these artisans worked.

Turning now to the output of a goldsmith, records of payments made on behalf of Robert Dudley (1532–1588), Earl of Leicester, to certain goldsmiths give an indication of



Figure 13 The interior of a goldsmith's workshop showing various products and tools, and men embossing and chasing metal vessels, beating a strip of metal and working at the fire. 'Aurifaber. Der Goltschmit (The Goldsmith)' from *Panoplia omnium illiberalium mechanicarum* (*Book of Trades*), 1568, woodcut engraving made by Jost Amman, published in Frankfurt by Sigmund Feierabend. British Museum, 1904.0206.103.16

the range of their production. The accounts kept by William Chancy, from 20 December 1558 to 30 September 1559, demonstrate that goldsmiths were paid for supplying not only smaller items such as pearls, gold buttons and little chains, but also larger goods such as 'white cuppes', that is cups made of silver.¹⁰ The Christus image (see **Fig. 11**) also indicates the varied manufacture of goldsmiths and to the right-hand side two flagons and a double-cup sit on the uppermost shelf. These objects are made of silver, with the foot, finial and lips of the opening of each being additionally gilded.

The practice of recycling old and unwanted goods is also indicated by the accounts kept by another member of Dudley's household, Richard Ellis. Covering the period 1559 to 1561, Ellis records an occasion on which he received 54s. 10d. from Dewes the goldsmith for 'ij smale booles of sylver waing xj oz. iij qtr.' and priced at 4s. 8d. per ounce.¹¹ Accounts kept by William Blounte on behalf of Sir Henry Sidney (1529–1586) from 31 May 1571 to 30 April 1572 show a similar practice. The not insignificant sum of £1036 1s. 6d. was received from the goldsmith known as Mr Marten 'for the sale of plate' and Edward Hynde paid £24 'for a jewel'.¹² Presumably the transaction suited both parties: Dudley and Sidney were able to dispense with outmoded plate and jewels, gaining capital in the process; the goldsmiths were now in possession of valuable raw materials that could be melted down and remade into wares to sell to other

customers. The gemstone sold to Hynde may have been reset into plate or a piece of jewellery.

It was also possible to obtain newly minted or mined gold, silver and gemstones. In the medieval period there was little gold mined within western and central Europe.¹³ From the 13th century, new mines were being discovered in the Rhine Valley, Silesia and Bohemia but still supplies of gold from the Arab empire constituted the largest source to the West. According to Humphrey, prior to the discovery of the New World, gold reached Europe from several African sites, from the Far East (transported via the Silk Route) and, in limited supplies, from mines in Bohemia and Hungary. Silver came mostly from the central European mines of Saxony, Freiburg and Bohemia.¹⁴

As noted above, the economic historian Willan considered the trade of precious metals to be one of the hardest to trace during the 16th century. In his survey of foreign trade during the reign of Elizabeth I, Willan includes a case study on England's trade with Morocco.¹⁵ It emerges that while gold was not a legitimate export, some quantities of it were smuggled out of the country, as a list of Moroccan commodities dated to 1561 that placed gold at the top aptly demonstrates.¹⁶ Since gold was not a part of the permissible export trade in the Elizabethan period, it is very difficult to ascertain the extent to which Morocco was a supplier of this metal to England.

The Salcombe Bay treasure described earlier, discovered in 1995 by a team of amateur divers off the coast of Devon, may provide some indication of how Moroccan gold entered the English market.¹⁷ The majority of the coins and jewels are Moroccan and, while the wreck itself has not been located, it is thought that the vessel may have been travelling to England from Morocco.¹⁸ It is likely that the ship was wrecked in the 1630s or 1640s and that the gold, particularly the broken jewellery, was to be used as bullion. While this discovery relates to the 17th century, it would not be hard to imagine that ships with similar cargo were bound for England in the 16th century.

One concrete reference to the export of Moroccan gold can be traced back to the partnership formed by Robert Dudley and his secretary Arthur Atye, with Alexander Avenon and Richard Staper in June 1585.¹⁹ This partnership was established following the foundation of the Barbary Company, which concerned itself with trade in Morocco, that same year. The Company was not regulated and therefore did not engage directly with trade; rather it oversaw the trade of its members either as individuals or in partnerships. The passive role played by this company may have been the reason for its eventual demise once its charter expired 12 years later on 5 July 1597. There are no records pertaining to the petitioning for its continuation and this indicates strongly that its members saw no purpose to its existence.²⁰

Records show that, in its first year of trading, the Earl of Leicester's partnership imported into England almonds, sugar and gold from Morocco. However, this venture into the gold trade was short-lived for it was wholly unsuccessful. Six hundred new ducats were purchased by the partnership in Morocco for 8s. 4d. per ducat, which amounted to £252, plus a further 17s. 10d. for expenses. These coins were then

sold to the alderman and goldsmith Richard Martin for only £209 13s. 10d., constituting an overall loss of £43 4s.²¹ While this documents a legitimate route for the import trade to England of Moroccan gold, it remains a singular instance. Such imports are not listed in the Port Books, yet surprisingly there are still references to the presence of Moroccan gold in London. Documents from the High Court of Admiralty Examinations dating to 1 July 1601 show that in May 1601 the goldsmith Francis Shute bought Moroccan gold at a stall in Lombard Street. In the same month, the goldsmith William Hayns purchased Barbary gold and pieces of goldsmiths' work to the value of £190 from sailors. Gold was also bought from Moroccan merchants by the goldsmiths Richard Gore, John Newton and Thomas Owen.²²

Alongside African gold, we need to add New World sources that emerged following the voyages of Christopher Columbus (1451–1506) in 1492. There is evidence to suggest that Spanish craftsmen were established in South America by the start of the 16th century.²³ Following Hernan Cortés's (1485–1547) conquest of Central America in 1521 the potential wealth contained within this region was exploited by the Spanish, with regular shipments of emeralds, gold coinage, bullion and indigenous wares to Europe. According to the 16th-century observer Fray Tomás de Mercado (1525–1575) of Seville the trade from America was 'one of the richest that the world had ever seen'.²⁴ An increase in the amount of gold, silver and precious gemstones in the market brought wealth to new groups of men, such as merchants. With this came a desire for these men to reflect their new-found wealth and status, and jewellery was one output for this form of display.²⁵

Goldsmiths did not only deal with precious metals; they also handled precious and semi-precious stones. Many of the gemstones used in the Renaissance came from the East, with India dominating the supply of diamonds in the 16th century.²⁶ These diamonds would arrive in Europe in an unfinished state to be cut in centres such as Antwerp, Lisbon or Paris. Rubies came mostly from Burma and these had a finer hue and quality, but this gem was also found in Thailand, Ceylon (modern-day Sri Lanka) and India. Scientific examinations undertaken in 1980 of the pieces from both the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum included in the *Princely Magnificence* catalogue revealed that the rubies were mainly Burmese in origin, suggesting the high quality of the jewellery contained within these two national collections.²⁷ With control of the Central and South American continent in the hands of the Spanish, Columbian emeralds soon entered the European market. By the mid-16th century, the Spanish were working the mines in the Muzo region. Colombian emeralds are easily distinguished by their inclusions and so determining provenance can be a certainty.²⁸ Gemstones circulated throughout Europe by means of an international network of well-connected merchants, who would sell their goods at fairs and also directly to goldsmiths.

Items of goldsmiths' work could be set also with glass in imitation of precious and semi-precious gemstones and this is known as paste. The early 17th-century treatise *The Art of Glass* written by the Florentine priest Antonio Neri (1576–

1614) includes recipes for the making of these pastes, claiming that 'in colour, splendor, pleasantness and clearness, excepting hardness, [they] excel the natural'.²⁹ Following a description of the making of 'Oriental Emeralds', Neri is explicit in how they might be used: 'These pasts may be cut and wrought, in every thing, as ordinary Jewels, they wholly receive the same polishing and lustre, and are set in Gold with foiles, as the other commonly are'.³⁰ A ring in the Victoria and Albert Museum provides a contemporary example of the use of cheaper pastes in the place of costly gemstones.³¹

It is clear that the sources for the raw materials required by a goldsmith were varied and that to assign provenance to an item of jewellery is complex. This means that trying to pinpoint the 'nationality' of a piece from its manufacture and materials is irrelevant. David Mitchell has highlighted the futility of assigning authorship in his examination of the jewellery trade in London in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.³² He has argued that the transfer of skill, innovation, technique and design between the centres of London, Paris and Antwerp makes such attempts at precise provenance meaningless. Nevertheless, it is true that often jewels are described by contemporaries using terms such as 'Paris work', 'Spanish work' or 'in the German manner'. However, this did not necessarily denote provenance; rather it indicated works that were perceived as characteristic of a region. So while the term 'Spanish work' was used for items recorded in the 1619 inventory of the Holy Roman Emperor Matthias of Austria (1557–1619), the jewels themselves actually hailed from Prague. What was understood by 'Spanish work' was 'heavy enamelled gold with a scrolling pattern in reverse'.³³ Such descriptions may have assisted a customer in communicating their needs to the goldsmith. Equally, choosing an item of basic form, such as a posy ring, allowed a male client to focus on the message inscribed on the surface rather than conceive a complex new design.³⁴

Designing jewels

Styles were passed through a range of mechanisms, from drawings that formed the basis of negotiations between the goldsmith and his customer to prints that circulated widely providing models.³⁵ In 1548 the engraver Thomas Geminus (fl. 1540–1562) published in London *The Moryse and Damashin renewed and increased, very profitable for Goldsmythes and Embroderars*, which contains 28 plates of engraved ornament and was the first known English book of this type.³⁶ Just over a decade later, in 1561, the French goldsmith and engraver Pierre Woëriot (1532–1596) published a book that provides a visual record of French Renaissance jewellery.³⁷ Two plates are of earrings, while the remainder illustrate rings. The 100 or so designs are prefaced by the author's intention to present designs that may enrich the art of goldsmithing. Woëriot stresses that these designs are for his fellow goldsmiths to improve or change as they see fit. While a publication such as this would have served as inspiration for a goldsmith, designs of jewels could be communicated more directly to his client in the form of drawings.

Designs by the French engraver Etienne Delaune (1518–1583) were probably intended to be examples of work



Figure 14 Two designs for a medallion with an emblem of a hand issuing from a cloud resting on a closed book and inscribed 'SERVAR VOGLIO QVEL CHE HO GVIRATO' (I want to observe that which I have sworn). British Museum, SL.5308.22&34

that he could produce. Delaune was active at the court of Henry II of France (r. 1547–1559) and in 1552 was the king's principal medallist.³⁸ A number of his ornamental designs survive, including those for jewellery, with the earliest dating to 1561. Significantly, 26 drawings that are oval in form are likely to have been designs for jewels worn in the hat (see **Fig. 59**). This collection is now in the Albertina Museum, Vienna.³⁹ Delaune was a practising goldsmith and the size of the drawings (they all have dimensions of about 3.4 x 4.3cm) reveals that he often worked on a very small scale. Although no pieces based on these drawings are known to exist, it is highly probable that they were eventually translated into hat jewels.

A number of designs of jewellery and goldsmiths' work by the artist Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/98–1543) have survived in what is now known as the 'Jewellery Book'.⁴⁰ The drawings were once contained within a volume, which may have been the one referred to in the inventory of Henry VIII and described as 'a paper booke conteyning dyuers paternes of Jewelles'.⁴¹ Not only do these drawings document the form and styles of jewels and dress accessories from Henry's reign, but they also probably record actual pieces made for the king and his court. Indicative of the dialogue that may have occurred between a goldsmith and his client over the commissioning of an object are the alternative designs Holbein provided for the same jewel (**Fig. 14**).

The presence of the German-born Holbein at the English court shows that cross-continental currents were not only present in the design and materiality of jewellery; the actual makers of these goods could also be of foreign extraction. In fact, foreign goldsmiths appear to outnumber their English counterparts in Henry VIII's Book of Payments.⁴² Noted among the records for the first year of Henry's reign, 1509, there are payments to various foreigners. On 1 July 1509, the Dutch goldsmith John of Utrecht was paid £142 7s. 6d. 'for gold and setting stones' and on 14 October 1509 a Parisian jeweller known only as Jacques received £257 16s. 8d. One week later, on 21 October, an unspecified number of Frenchmen were paid £223 6d. for jewels. That is not to say that Henry did not patronise English craftsmen as well; under the entry for 29 July 1509 the goldsmith Henry Worley was paid 43s. for the 'garnishing of knives', while in November of the same year London goldsmiths were provided with payment of £333 6s.

8d. towards New Year's gifts from the king.⁴³ Ten years later, in 1519, the story was similar with Henry using both foreign and local jewellers.⁴⁴

Guild regulations

Goldsmiths were, and still are, overseen by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths (Goldsmiths' Company). The London guild of goldsmiths was granted its Royal Charter by Edward III in 1327.⁴⁵ In a period when the precious metal content accounted for the majority of the cost of wares, the importance of honesty with manufacture cannot be underestimated. Every goldsmith's shop had a set of weights and the price of the item to be bought would be balanced against these weights to ensure against any fraudulent practice (see **Fig. 12**).⁴⁶ The price would then be subject to the cost of fashioning.⁴⁷ Thomas Whythorne recounts this practice:

When I had given order to my goldsmith for the making of the ring, with the bigness of her finger, and had received of him a counterpane or weight of the gold, I agreed with him to have the ring made by the fourth day after [...] I went to my goldsmith's for the ring. For the making whereof when I had paid him, and saw that the weight thereof agreed with my counterpane and weight aforesaid, I brought the ring unto my widow.⁴⁸

The weight and counterpane weight had a serious function: to verify that the gold supplied by the client had not been diluted with a base metal. The transparency needed in the context of purchasing from a goldsmith explains why many shops fronted onto the street. All transactions were open, to protect both the goldsmith and the consumer. In order to regulate practice, wardens were appointed to ensure that such honesty was upheld in the interests of the legitimacy of their craft, both in London and in the provinces. The charter of 1327 required all provinces to send two goldsmiths to London to familiarise themselves with hallmarks, while from 1372 London goldsmiths were permitted to visit local fairs to inspect and assay wares.⁴⁹ Malpractice could take the form of manufacturing produce with substandard gold or silver and so the wardens were tasked with testing, or assaying, the metals to ensure they conformed to prescribed standards.⁵⁰

The records and minutes of the Wardens held in the Goldsmiths' Company Library in London give an indication of the practice and regulation of selling substandard wares, a serious concern both for the guild, which wanted to protect

the Company's reputation, and for consumers, who wanted guarantees of quality.⁵¹ These documents also provide evidence of the types of wares produced by goldsmiths in the early modern period. Sampling a selection of the goods that were submitted to Goldsmiths' Hall for assay in the second half of the 16th century presents some evidence of the potential for dishonest practices and the need for consumer knowledge. On Monday 26 May 1567, for example, Thomas Pope was fined 2s. for producing a clasp for a cloak that was substandard by 44 penny weights; Cuthbert Creakesplace was fined 3s. 4d. on Friday 19 September 1567 for four 'SS' that were 14 penny weights lacking; on Monday 13 October 1567 John Lowes submitted two gold rings substandard by 17 penny weights and was fined 12d.; and on 12 November of the same year George Mason was fined 3s. 4d. for two pairs of cast gilt hooks worse by 37 penny weights and two 'whistells white' worse by six penny weights.⁵² There does not seem to be any correlation between the inferiority of the goods and the fine charged, so it must be assumed that a qualitative worth was also considered when determining the levy placed on the goldsmith. Such records within the Company accounts do not only show instances of substandard goods submitted to the Hall for assay; there are entries noting wares seized at various fairs, demonstrating clearly the extent of the authority of the Goldsmiths' Company Wardens.

On Friday 24 September 1568, John Catze was fined for, among other things, the poor quality pearl clasps for a cloak that he was selling at Croydon Fair; a pilgrim by the name of Arnold was found with 18 silver-gilt rings lacking their full weight in precious metal at the fair in Southwark, known as Our Lady Fair, and fined 2s. for this infraction; and at St Bartholomew's Fair, George Counden was fined 10s. for his various substandard small wares.⁵³ Untoward practice even took place at Stourbridge Fair in Cambridgeshire, described by historian and Clarenceaux King of Arms William Camden (1551–1623) as 'the greatest Faire of all England' as a result of 'the multitude of buyers and sellers' and 'the store of commodities there to be vented'.⁵⁴ In 1569 Thomas Hutton of Cambridge was fined 20s. for 20 rings and two pairs of hooks; Edward Purdie's inadequate wares consisted of a single clasp for a cloak and a pair of eyes; while William Wortley was made to pay 6d. for a clasp for a cloak without a ring, and a substandard death's-head ring and gold wedding ring.⁵⁵

Fines for smaller goods seem to be far more numerous than those for large-scale wares, although a faulty communion cup was discovered by a Company Warden in 1569 at Bury, Lancashire.⁵⁶ It suggests perhaps that fraudulent goldsmiths believed that customers would be much less concerned with underselling when dealing with small goods such as clasps and hooks. Nevertheless, the Wardens deemed that regulation of these small-scale articles was fundamental. Further records of goods seized by the Wardens at the 1569 fairs of Bury in Lancashire, Harleston in Norfolk and Woodbridge in Suffolk show the frequency of attempts at selling substandard small wares, which included 'claspes without hooke, claspes for cloke, earepykers, pynnes, whistells, paire of gylte hooke, and paire of eyes and claspes'.⁵⁷

It is clear from these records of fines that goldsmiths were engaged in producing the fastenings and embellishments for

dress that were commonly worn by both men and women in the early modern period. Further, it gives an indication of the types of goods that were popular among English citizens, such as ear-picks and whistles. With people able to purchase items of goldsmiths' work at the many fairs of England, these sites of selling were seen as legitimate venues of commerce.

Sites of purchase

The recurrence of small-scale dress accessories seized at the fairs suggests that these were the places from which many ordinary people purchased such objects. Based on data compiled from 14 almanacs published between 1550 and 1600, Margaret T. Hodgen has calculated that in England alone 822 fairs took place within a calendar year.⁵⁸ The words of William Harrison (1535–1593), rector of Radwinter in Essex from 1558 until his death and author of a social commentary of England entitled *The Description of England* (1577),⁵⁹ in his chapter concerning fairs and markets would seem to support such a figure:

There are (as I take it) few great towns in England that have not their weekly markets, one or more granted from the prince, in which all manner of provision for household is to be bought and sold for ease and benefit of the country round about. [...] as there are no great towns without one weekly market at the least, so there are very few of them that have not one or two fairs or more within the compass of the year.⁶⁰

The many fairs and markets of England were only one place at which jewellery and small wares could be bought. More permanent sites of purchase existed, and in London Cheapside was perhaps the most noted place for goldsmiths' wares. Within this area of the City, people were able to buy a range of goods both from the permanent shops and the market that was held in the main thoroughfare. The produce available included saddler's goods, woollen cloth, spices, silks, fine textiles and goldsmiths' work.⁶¹ Sellers at the market came mostly from the country and in Hugh Alley's *Caveat* of 1598 the folio depicting Cheapside would suggest that these vendors travelled from the Home Counties of Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Surrey and Hertfordshire (see **Fig. 8**).⁶²

Along the south side of Cheapside, from Old Change to Bread Street, there was an abundance of goldsmiths' shops, so that this section became known as Goldsmiths' Row.⁶³ This is confirmed by John Stow in his *Survey* (1603): 'The Goldsmithes of Gutherons lane, and old Exchange, are now for the most part remooued into the Southside of west Cheape'.⁶⁴ A contemporary literary reference, found in the work of the playwright John Marston (1576–1634), supports the argument that this area was popularly known as a site for goldsmiths: 'Ile walke but once downe by the gold-smiths row in Cheape'.⁶⁵ Stow heaped praise on this area of the City later in his work:

Next to be noted, the most beautiful frame of fayre houses and shoppes, that bee within the Walles of London, or else where in England, commonly called Goldsmithes Rowe, betwixt Bredstreet end & the Crosse in Cheape, but is within this Bredstreetewarde [...] It contayneth in number tenne fayre dwelling houses, and foureteene shoppes, all in one frame, vniformely builded foure stories high, bewtifified towards the streete with the Goldsmithes armes [...].⁶⁶



Figure 15 A pedlar with a tray that displays various goods, including playing cards, gloves and a rosary. In his right hand he holds a mirror, a necklace and a case with utensils. 'Institor. Der Kramer (The Peddler)', from *Panoplia omnium illiberalium mechanicarum* (*Book of Trades*), 1568, woodcut engraving made by Jost Amman, published in Frankfurt by Sigmund Feierabend. British Museum, 1904,0206.103.33

The German traveller, Paul Hentzner (1558–1623), commented on this part of the City in his writings:

The streets in this city are very handsome and clean; but that which is named from the goldsmiths who inhabit it, surpasses all the rest: there is in it a gilt tower, with a fountain that plays. [...] There are besides to be seen in this street, as in all others where there are goldsmiths' shops, all sorts of gold and silver vessels exposed to sale; as well as ancient and modern medals, in such quantities as must surprise a man the first time he sees and considers them.⁶⁷

Within the context of the shops of Cheapside it is important to note that retailing was not necessarily a separate activity from production. Very often the workshop was sited towards the back of the shop space, with the front portion designated as an area for selling. According to Nancy Cox and Karin Dannehl, retailing did not mark an intersection between the producer and consumer; rather it was 'an essential performer on the social and economic stage of early modern England'.⁶⁸ We see this played out with business being conducted in the open.

An indication of what a customer might have found at his disposal can be seen in the goods discovered in the Cheapside Hoard, a collection of late 16th- and early 17th-century jewels and loose gemstones unearthed by workmen digging in 1912.⁶⁹ Believed to have been part of a Jacobean goldsmith's stock-in-trade, the Hoard includes items such as buttons, chains, pendants, rings, a gilded brass watch, a jewelled and enamelled scent bottle, a gold, diamond and emerald hat ornament in the shape of a salamander and a watch movement set into a large Columbian emerald of hexagonal form.⁷⁰

Alongside fixed sites and regular fairs, more inexpensive items were available from pedlars, chapmen and itinerant sellers (**Fig. 15**). These individuals operated outside of the guild system and since they were mobile and ephemeral, it is difficult to assess effectively the role they played in the early modern period. A mid-16th-century play by the writer John Heywood (1497–c. 1578) offers some indication of the varied wares of a pedlar. In a discourse with the character of the Apothecary who queries the goods he has in tow, the Pedlar replies that 'In euery tryfull [I] must be a medlar'. He then enumerates some of the items that he has to sell:

Gloues, pynnes, combes, glasses unspottyd
Pomanders, hooks, and lasses knotted
Broches, rynges, and all maner bedes
Lace rounde and flat for womens hedes
Nedyls, threde thymbell, shers, and all suche knackes
Where louers be no suche thynges lackes
Sypers swathbondes rybandes and sleue laces
Gyrdyls, knyues, purses, and pyncases.⁷¹

There was anger that these mobile figures did not have to face the fixed costs of more 'respectable' retailers, who were vehemently opposed to any attempts to license them. Such a move would legitimise them and thus threaten the trade of fixed-site sellers.⁷² In 1597 an Elizabethan statute classed pedlars and petty chapmen along with rogues, vagabonds and beggars. Anyone classified according to the conditions set out in this Act was subject to a whipping 'until his or her body be bloudye' and forced to return to their place of birth.⁷³ However, a royal proclamation passed by James I in 1618 welcomed and permitted pedlars and petty chapmen to continue their trade since they 'hath heretofore bene used for the benefit and ease of our loving subjects dwelling remote from Cities and Market Townes'.⁷⁴ This licence granted by the king was revoked only three years later.⁷⁵ These itinerant traders would have to wait until an Act of 1698 before they were fully licensed to trade.⁷⁶ A record of a sale of goods to Thomas Marshall, a petty chapman from Potton in Bedfordshire, by William Wray on 13 April 1581 would suggest that the wares sold by these itinerant traders were not necessarily of poor quality.⁷⁷ It is therefore unreasonable to infer that only people from the lower social classes bought wares from pedlars.

In the provinces, the sale of precious goods was not necessarily limited to an individual's specialist trade. It was not essential to visit a goldsmith's shop to purchase dress fittings. The account book of William Wray, described as a farmer, draper and haberdasher with a shop in Ripon, North Yorkshire, indicates the wide variety of goods with which he dealt.⁷⁸ In addition to the cloth, silk and buttons of thread and of silk that might be expected of a draper and haberdasher, his records reveal that he also supplied sugar and spices, such as pepper and saffron. But he also dealt in goods of precious metal and on 1 August 1581 Wray sold George Warckope a variety of cloths and 'vi dosse silver buttons' to the value of 9s.⁷⁹

Patterns of purchase

Household account books offer an important indication of purchasing habits. A book recording the expenses for the household of Roger North (1531–1600), 2nd Baron North of

Kirtling, shows that on 14 September 1577 a number of goods were bought at Stourbridge Fair, including fish, a silver salt, kettles, two firkins of soap, a feather bed, a frying pan, horse meat, raisins, matches and sugar.⁸⁰ A record of purchases from the period 17 to 29 June 1579 shows the types of apparel that North was accustomed to wearing:

A riding clocke lijs. doblets 1s.
silk nether Stocks xls. for Yarne –
hose xxxs. ij hats xls. ij pair boot
hose xxiijs. for Camericke an ell
xijs. for Gloves xxs. Garters vjs.
sweet baggs xxij. viij*d.* for Points
4 dozen viijs.⁸¹

Willan has examined the accounts belonging to the Shuttleworths of Smithills and Gawthorpe, gentry from Lancashire.⁸² From the evidence contained within these books, Willan has identified that in the 16th century the family used all modes of acquisition, making their purchases from pedlars, fairs, markets and direct from craftsmen. He speculates that these patterns of purchasing are perhaps indicative of other families in the same social and geographical positioning as the Shuttleworths.⁸³ Using the Shuttleworth accounts to provide a 17th-century analysis, Willan reveals that while this family continued to buy at fairs, there is sufficient evidence to show that they began to buy most of their grocery, mercery and haberdashery from London.⁸⁴

As we have already seen, the household accounts and the disbursement books of Robert Dudley for the periods 1558 to 1561 and 1584 to 1586 provide a fascinating insight into the purchasing habits of an elite courtier.⁸⁵ The importance of these books as a documentary source is noted by the editor: 'In the absence of comparable material from his colleagues, it can be argued that as a source for the Court Leicester's accounts are possibly second only in importance to the Treasurer of the Chamber's account books'.⁸⁶ The references that allude to the purchase of goldsmiths' work are not numerous in the context of the entire published corpus; nevertheless they provide sufficient information on modes of acquisition of jewelled goods, as well as suggesting the types of interaction concerning a man and his jewels in the early modern period.

In the accounts kept by William Chancy, dated 20 December 1558 to 30 September 1559, Edward Roberts was paid 4*d.* for the hiring of a boat to be sent for the goldsmith John Lonison (1523–1582).⁸⁷ This would suggest one of either two possibilities: that Leicester purchased ready-made goods brought to his home by a goldsmith, or that the purpose of the visit was to commission an item of goldsmith's work from Lonison. A number of goldsmiths feature within the household books for Leicester and they supplied him with a range of goods.

Among the names of goldsmiths who appear within these accounts are: Brandon, Hans Frank, Evererd (the king's goldsmith), Gilbert, William Denham, Derek Anthony, Ballett, James Stock, Dewes, Anthony Elspyt, Kettlewood, John Harryson, Parteridge, Arthur, Jacob, Augustyne Beane and Gregory Pryncell. The types of goods they supplied to Leicester's household varied: along with other payments, Hans Frank received £35 13*s.* 4*d.* on 29 December

1588 for the supply of New Year's gifts; Evererd was entrusted with the making of 'a George and a cheyne set with dyamons', receiving £70 for his work; Ballett was paid 77*s.* 9*d.* for 'ij litell white cuppes'; and Anthony Elspyt's payment of £13 12*d.* was for 'the sylver knobbes of the bedd'.⁸⁸ Some of the entries indicate that Leicester was paying off debts to these goldsmiths, supporting strongly the idea that goods and services could be paid for on credit and eventually honoured with payment at a later date. Within the accounts of Richard Ellis for the period 1559 to 1561, a single entry relating to the goldsmith William Denham states that he was paid £50 on 14 May 1560, £100 on 10 June 1560 and £200 on 17 December 1560.⁸⁹

These records also suggest that Leicester retained the services of one or more jewellers and goldsmiths. Hans Carpion, a jeweller, features frequently within the disbursement book for the period 1584 to 1586. On 7 January 1585 he was paid the sum of £18 'for a paire of braceletts garnished with dyamonds and rubies uppon and elke's hooff'.⁹⁰ An entry later in the year is more indicative of Carpion's role within the Leicester household:

Payd by your lordship's commandment to Hans Carpion jeweller at Leaster Hous the xvj of October for thirty buttions of gold garnessed with deyamedes at xxxiijs. a pys for your lordship payd hym at Leaster Hous in the year 1585 the some of xlix*li.* xs.⁹¹

Information found within these sources also indicates that Leicester used the services of middlemen to act as a conduit between himself and the goldsmith. One particular individual, Stephen Johnson, was a servant of the wardrobe for the period covered by the disbursement book of 1584 to 1586. On 28 December 1584 he was paid £4 10*s.* 9*d.* in recompense for the sum 'which he paid for vi dossin and iij buttions weying a oz. di and iij peny wight at lvs. the oz.'; he received 36*s.* on 4 May 1585 for his purchase of nine dozen silver-gilt buttons for boots, costing 4*s.* per dozen; and on 20 May 1585 29*s.* was paid to Johnson 'which he paid for a grose of pointes for your lordship xiijs. and for thre paire of gilte spurres for your lordship xv*s.*'.⁹²

The household accounts and disbursement books relating to Leicester's household for two short periods give an insight into the ways in which a member of the nobility might obtain his jewelled goods. The information offered is by no means exhaustive and indeed the evidence is limited. It does not suggest explicitly where the interactions between Leicester and the various goldsmiths and jewellers from whom he might purchase valuable wares took place, although references to the hiring of boats do suggest that he was able to commission and/or purchase goods from his own home. It would not be surprising to find that, given his status, Leicester did not need to go out to look at goods; he could be assured that high-quality items would be sent to him for inspection.

Moving further up the social scale seemed to open up greater possibilities for acquiring jewellery. There were more options available with regard to the sites of purchase, and the types of goods that could be bought were more likely to be commissioned. Henry VIII, as sovereign, had access to goldsmiths and jewellers active at court. The king's goldsmith would produce plate, small-scale decorative pieces

and dress accessories. On 13 May 1513 Robert Amadas (1470–1532), within the king's service and from 1526 Master of the Jewel House, was paid £1057 15s. 10d. for 'making diuerse things for the kinges grace as whiselles Chaynes braunches bottons aglettes & other diuerse necessities'.⁹³ In this case, the role of the jeweller was as producer and seller; contemporary sources often use the term interchangeably with that of goldsmith. Individuals associated with the role of king's jeweller during the reign of Henry VIII include John Lengram, Peter van der Waal and Richard Astyll.⁹⁴

Henry favoured foreign craftsmen and merchants and he encouraged an influx of goods from the Continent to England. In April 1524 the Florentine merchant Nicoluccio Ninaicciesi was granted a licence to import jewels to England, with the stipulation that they were first shown to the king.⁹⁵ Among the grants given in July 1546 is one that allowed the Parisian jeweller Jean Langue and his son Gilles to import goods into England, with the proviso that 'the King have first choice':

Almaner juelles, perlles, precious stones, as well set in gold and embrawdred in garmentes as unsett, almaner goldsmythes worke of golde and sylver, almaner sortes of skynnes and ffurres of sables and lusardes, clothes, newe gentlelesses of what facion or value the same be, wrought and set or unwrought and not set, in gold or otherwise as he or they shall thinke best for the pleasure of us, our derest wief the Quene, our nobles, gentlemen and other.⁹⁶

In a despatch to Venice by Sebastian Giustinian (1460–1543) dated 10 December 1517 there is an incidental reference to another means of royal acquisition. The Venetian ambassador to England writes that following a recent storm that caused the loss of eight ships, some of which were intended for England, 'the King longs for their coming [...] his Majesty means to go to Hampton, saying he shall purchase many articles of luxury (*gentilezze*), usually brought by said galleys, the which my the Lord send safe'.⁹⁷ This certainly provides evidence to suggest that Henry had first access to imported goods, but it goes one step further and implies that Henry met cargo following its journey along the River Thames.

Concluding remarks

Modes of acquisition by men of different social status seem to have been affected by access to the highest quality (and

the most expensive) stones and materials rather than by the exclusivity of a particular design. The landed gentry, as demonstrated by the household accounts of the Shuttleworths, bought from fairs, markets, pedlars and shops. Robert Dudley may have purchased from fairs and markets but his household accounts show frequent purchases direct from goldsmiths. Henry VIII, as royalty, had first refusal on goods brought from overseas by merchants, goldsmiths and jewellers. He also had goldsmiths and jewellers at court from whom he could commission goods. As one moved up the social scale, there were more options for acquisition, while the act of purchasing became more exclusive.

While the focus has been on the means of obtaining new goods, whether ready-made or commissioned, it is important to acknowledge that jewelled goods also circulated through pawn shops and the second-hand trade. When objects were pawned by their owners they realised their intrinsic monetary value and became little more than a store of wealth. The existence of the second-hand trade in early modern Europe is indicative of the fact that goods did have a financial and measurable worth. As Renata Ago states, 'The second-hand market is a consequence of this monetary status of things'.⁹⁸ The need to pawn jewels affected men regardless of position or status and records show that even James I was compelled to use his treasured possessions to obtain hard cash. Notably, on one occasion, the iconic and historically important Three Brethren jewel, described as being 'in forme of a Flower with three great Rubies balasses One Diamond three great Pearles and one pendant Pearle', was pawned on behalf of James I to the widow of Adrien Thibout for £7,000.⁹⁹ The Three Brethren (or Brothers) jewel was originally the property of Charles the Bold (1433–1477), last duke of Burgundy, from whom it was stolen following a defeat at the battle of Granson in 1475. It was eventually purchased by Jacob Fugger, of the Augsburg banking family, whose son then sold it to Henry VIII.¹⁰⁰ So even at the highest end of society, we cannot assume that men were always able to design their own jewels and dress embellishments. While some pieces were directly commissioned from goldsmiths, others were purchased as second-hand items, and many were given and received as part of a larger cycle of gift-giving. Understanding ownership, therefore, was a multilayered process at all levels of society.

Chapter 2

Owning Jewellery

When we look at evidence for ownership from surviving objects and images, we need to draw conclusions with some care, since an object's full narrative is not always apparent. In contrast, although we cannot easily connect extant jewels to post-mortem inventories and wills, these documents do nevertheless give a snapshot of what was actually considered a man's possessions at the time of his death and indicate what he could (and sometimes what he could not) dispose of at will. For the most part, post-mortem inventories include valuations and this assists with determining the relative fiscal worth of items owned by an individual. This documentary evidence gives information on the types of goods that were owned and used within a certain period. Probate inventories of men and women from lower social groups, for whom written and visual sources are so often lacking, give insight into ownership and consumption at less elite levels of society. So while it is necessary to remain aware of the limitations of using inventories as source material, they do provide excellent written evidence of the goods being consumed by a broad cross section of society. In this chapter, we examine the jewels that are documented in the possession of men who operated on very different scales, from the ruler to the most modest of his subjects. Rather than follow a chronological path, the material presented here is arranged in accordance with social status. Two royal figures, framing the time period under consideration in this book, are followed by two courtly men: one an administrator and favourite of James I, the other a soldier who flourished under four sovereigns. From the court, we then move to the city to look at the goods of an urban citizen who held the position of Lord Mayor of London. The final section turns to the provinces and analyses the late 16th- and early 17th-century inventories of Ipswich inhabitants with a variety of occupations and some unknown. We then return to London and the early part of the 16th century from where the evidence for ownership of jewels among those of a lower social class comes instead from wills. What emerges from analysis of this varied material is not surprising, that distinction between the classes is made through the quantity and quality of jewels owned, but what is unexpected is to find that the most common types of jewels were the same at all levels of society. In addition, owning jewels had the ability to create a distinction between men of the same social background, particularly lower down the social scale where consumption was perhaps less marked than among urban and courtly elites.

The inventory of Henry VIII

The first inventory to be examined is undoubtedly the largest and most impressive: the post-mortem inventory comprising all moveable property belonging to Henry VIII.¹ The inventory began to be compiled following a commission in September 1547, eight months after the king's death. It currently exists in two parts: Society of Antiquaries MS 129 A and B; and British Library Harley MS 1419 A and B. The part found in the Society of Antiquaries manuscript lists money, jewels, plate, ordnance and munitions within the forts, and Henry's ships, as well as providing inventories for the armouries, stables, revels, tents and vestry. The British Library's manuscript details the contents of Henry's palaces and his specialist wardrobes.² The scale of the published

inventory is such that the editor of the work, historian David Starkey, claims that the purchase and consumption of the goods acquired by Henry were not merely for his personal fulfilment but that they operated ‘as a matter of public policy’.³ Indeed, privy councillors under Edward VI stated that the ‘juelles, plate [and] other rich hanginges’ belonging to Henry actually helped shape opinion that saw England ‘reputed to have been ... riche and welthie’.⁴

The entire inventory contains 17,810 numbered entries but this by no means equals the amount of goods owned by Henry.⁵ The true figure would far surpass this. Some of the entries have several of the same item listed, such as the ‘three Cheynes of golde enameled white and blewe’ (2055) or the one hundred ‘Basse shotte’ (4211), while others contain more than one object: ‘Item a Litell Boxe covered withe black vellat conteyneng tenne peces of a womans gerdell of woodde garnished with Silver two thimbles of Silver ix Crampringes silver a Litell keye of golde enameled a knoppe of silver gilte a litell Crowne of silver gilte’ (3407).

The focus here is on Society of Antiquaries MS 129, which constitutes ‘The firste parte of the Inventory of the Juelles plate Stuff Ordenaunce Munition and other goodes’, and in particular folios 150r–245v, which contain those goods housed in the Secret Jewel House at the Tower of London ‘vndre the keeping of the right Honorable William Lorde St John greate Master of the kinges mooste Honorable Housholde’.⁶ The relevant entries run from 2029 to 3692 giving a total of 1,664 entries but some objects such as the ‘Crowne of gold Imperiall made for the kinges majestie our Sovereigne Lorde Edwarde the vjth’ (3279), Edward’s coronation crown, were clearly never in the direct possession of Henry VIII.

An enumeration of the entries that list certain types of jewels can only ever give an indication of the scale of Henry’s jewellery. Where an entry contains more than one jewel it has been counted under each type. So, for example, the ‘Cappe of black vellat garnished with xxj Buttons and xxj paire of aglattes of golde enameled’ (3437) is included in the tally for both buttons and dress ornaments, such as clasps and aglets.

The most frequently itemised object type is the button, with 112 instances in the inventory, 6.7 per cent of the entries in question. For the most part the buttons are grouped in sets, with the high-value materials used in their production being indicative of the king’s standing: ‘xij buttons of golde enameled redde grene and blacke having vppon euerie button twoo small perles’ (2101). There are a number of instances of the buttons being listed as separate entities and sometimes there is even a clue as to their eventual use. A note following the entry for the ‘ix buttons of golde carcan fashion euerie of theym having a flower de luce of Dyamountes’ (2124) states that these were ‘putt vppon a capp of purple vellet made for the king against the comyng of Chatilion the frenche ambassador in May anno 1550’.⁷ Presumably these buttons were once the property of Henry, which were then deemed by Edward to be suitable for reuse in 1550. There are multiple entries for caps and many of these have buttons attached to them at the point at which the inventory was taken. A green velvet cap has gold and pearl buttons placed on one side of the turnover, while on the underside are ‘xvj Buttons of golde sett with small Rubies and Emerades and other buttons of small peerle’ (3260).

At 5.4 per cent of the entries, the next most frequent type of jewellery is the ring. There are 89 instances, with four of these entries relating to signet rings, for example ‘Item vj Ringes of golde hauing ingraven in the kinges Signet’ (3217). A significant number of the rings are set with precious and semi-precious gemstones. One ‘litle white cofer copper and gilte parcell’ contains 11 rolls, each with multiple rings held on it.⁸ These 11 itemised entries equate to 67 rings, set with sapphires, diamonds, rubies and peridots, among others. It is not the scores of gem-set rings that stand out from the inventory, rather it is those that appear to be plainer or for which there is supplementary information that indicates use, such as the ‘Siluer Crampe Ringes lxiiij oz di.’ (2488) and ‘gold Crampe ringes xxv oz di.’ (2489).⁹ Given Henry’s penchant for marriage, two notable entries are those that include wedding rings: ‘ijj wedding ringes of gold’ (2483) and ‘xxvij small rynges and hopes of golde dyuers of them being enameled and one of them being a playne hope like a wedding ryng’ (3214).

All manner of dress accessories, including aglets, clasps and types of fastenings, are also very common. While there are 88 entries that mention such goods, or 5.3 per cent, this does not reflect the vast quantity within the inventory. These small-scale ornaments and fastenings could be worn in great numbers on the body, and while a single entry may indicate a single set, this would be formed of multiple objects: ‘Item xxvij paire of square Aglettes golde enameled blacke whereof xiiij paire euery of them hauing a Dyamounde at thone end and thother xiiij euery of them a Rubie at thone ende’ (2735).

Unsurprisingly, given the sovereign’s role as head of the Order of the Garter, there are a number of items associated with the Order including garters, collars and George pendants. The jewels of the Order of the Garter are discussed later in Chapter 6. Combining these three object types, in all there are 49 entries relating to them in the inventory and this constitutes a proportion of 2.9 per cent. As was decreed in the statutes of the Order, the habit and insignia were meant to be returned to the king upon the death of a Knight-Companion. Some of the entries relating to the insignia are these returned items: ‘Item a collar of gold with knottes and flowers of the garter poiz xxxvj oz di with a George in a shelde with x small Diamountes garnished poiz ij oz quarter di which collar was the late Erle of Surreys conteyneng liiij knottes and garters’ (2529).

In addition to these jewels entering the king’s possession, objects could also leave. A note below an entry for ‘vj Georgies of golde one being garnysshed with small dyamountes’ (3010) states how the George with the small diamonds was given by the king, at this time Edward VI, to William Herbert (see Fig. 25) on 9 December 1549.¹⁰ These and other similar entries show the fluidity of the royal stores.

There are 64 entries that relate to either loose gemstones or stones that are set in gold collets but not associated with a particular object. These items, such as ‘a greate pendaunt peerle lose’ (2142), the ‘x Dyamountes sett in collettes of golde’ (2113) or the ‘greate Saphire sett in golde’ (3470), were presumably waiting to be set into some item of jewellery or had been removed from a piece that was deemed to be outmoded. At times this is made explicit, with references to

‘xj Dyamountes set in broken Collettes of golde’ having been ‘taken from an habillement’ (2737), or ‘xxxvj garneshing peerles [...] deliuered to Everart for the garneshing of the kinges Crowne’ (3680) or ‘foure Trafelles of gold every one having foure peerles and a small pointed diamounde [...] for the garnishment of the duke of Somersettes Cronet’ (3683).

The contents of the Secret Jewel House also included those items that are not typically considered as jewellery but through the expensive materials lavished on their production they became jewelled goods. So while a comb is not usually classed as a jewel, the status of this often mundane object is transformed by being ‘a Combe of golde garnysshed with course stones and perle’ (2922). Other objects like books, including Thomas Aquinas’s *Catena Aurea* (2339) and copies of the Bible (2345, 2347 and 2353), were stored here too, which is suggestive of the value, both monetary and otherwise, that they held.

The snapshot of jewels owned by Henry VIII retained within the Secret Jewel House is merely indicative of the totality of what he owned but there is no doubt that his inventory is impressive both in size and quality. It alludes to Henry’s wealth but, more so, to his status and by extension that of England. Items that can be considered within the remit of jewellery, such as clasps for fastening dress, which had an ostensibly functional purpose, were still embellished to a great degree:

- Item v Claspes gold giving vppon euerie claspe A roose of Diamountes and twoo Rubies (2096)
- [...]
- Item ij Claspes with twoo rooses of dyamountes (2663)
- Item iij Claspes in euery of them one fair dyamounte (2664)
- Item one Claspe with a fair Ballais (2665)
- Item one Claspe with an Emerode (2666).

His position as king of England gave Henry access to and the ability to acquire the finest jewels made of the costliest materials. Henry is considered to have driven the desire in the 16th century for conspicuous consumption and his inventory certainly provides evidence that he succeeded in using his wealth to reflect his magnificence.

The inventory of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales

We now move to the end of our period but remain within royal circles, looking at the jewels owned by the eldest son of James I, Henry Frederick (1594–1612) who died young but possessed a number of jewels befitting his royal station.¹¹ It is interesting how, although relatively young, his collection of jewels is remarkable, suggesting that by the early 17th century the language of consumption was such that it was only proper for a future sovereign to be seen using jewellery to reflect his status. Upon his death in 1612, a list of Henry’s expenditure was drawn up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Julius Caesar (bap. 1558; d. 1636).¹² Among these papers detailing building expenses and the accounts for Henry’s wardrobe is an inventory of the prince’s jewels.¹³ The items listed indicate the royal status of the young man, with the first object being a ‘Crowne sett with Dyamants, Saphirs and Emerandes’.¹⁴ Other pieces that served as symbols of status include a rapier and dagger, both of enamelled gold and set with diamonds, a gift from the King of Denmark, and a cross-hilt sword enamelled and set with



Figure 16 Robert Peake the Elder, *Henry, Prince of Wales*, c. 1610, oil on canvas, 172.7 x 113.7cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 4515

diamonds, given by Lord Harrington.¹⁵ There is also a sword that Henry was given by his mother Anne of Denmark ‘at his creation’, which presumably refers to his investiture as Prince of Wales in June 1610.

Prior to this, Henry was installed as a Knight of the Order of the Garter just a matter of days after his arrival at Windsor Castle on 30 June 1603 and only a few months following his father’s accession to the throne in March of the same year. Many of the jewels recorded in the inventory relate to this honour and there are a number of extant portraits in which the young prince proudly displays his Garter jewels.¹⁶

- A Chayne of Spanish work sett with Dyamants with a great George hanging thereat [...]
- A great George sett with Dyamants upon both sides [...]
- A great Agat George, sett with Dyamants upon the one syde
- Another great George, sett with Dyamants upon the one syde and with Rubies upon the other
- Fyve other Georges sett with Dyamants
- Thre little Georges of plane gold
- One Garter all sett with Dyamants
- One Garter of gold letters with Dyamants thynne sett
- Two Garter of Perles.¹⁷

Not all of Henry’s jewels were associated with honours that he held and a ‘Thistle with Dyamants and Rubies’ is more personal, being indicative of his Scottish upbringing.¹⁸ Another personal jewel is described as a ‘ballat Rubie in forme of an H with perles upon everie syde with a great perle hanging theretoe’.¹⁹ This may be very similar to, if not the



Figure 17 Unknown follower of Hieronymus Custodis, *Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton*, 1594. The Mercers' Company, London

same as, an aigrette-style jewel that is shown affixed to Henry's hat in a portrait by his official artist Robert Peake the Elder (c. 1551–1619) (**Fig. 16**). Even items related to riding become jewellery, with Henry having a pair of bridle bosses that are set with diamonds and a pair of diamond-set gold spurs.²⁰ The buttons owned by Henry, an object type that first and foremost had a practical function, are also suitably ornamented: 'Twelf great Buttons all sett with Dyamants' and 'Fyften dissonne of gold buttons with a Dyamant in top of everie one of them for his highnes owne wearing'.²¹

For someone so young, his jewellery is impressive and the high proportion of goods set with precious gemstones is reflective of his royal position. Perhaps indicative of his age, many of the items either constitute gifts, or were given in association with the honour of being a Knight of the Order of the Garter or in relation to the prince's status as a man destined to be king. It can only be assumed that had he lived to a greater age than 18, a similar inventory would show a far larger number of jewels and more that would have been chosen by him for his personal use.

The inventory of Henry Howard

It is only a short distance from a royal heir to a royal favourite. Henry Howard (1540–1614), Earl of Northampton, was established as a member of James I's Privy Council soon after the king's accession (**Fig. 17**). He received many honours, including being bestowed with his earldom in 1604 and being installed as a Knight of the Order of the Garter only a year later. This latter privilege may have been related to the role he played in negotiating peace with Spain as one of five principal commissioners, an event immortalised in the Somerset House Conference painting.²² The post-mortem inventory taken on 16 June 1614 following the death

of this courtier was discovered in a collection of miscellaneous papers in the possession of Baroness North at Wroxton, Oxfordshire.²³ The manuscript comprises a folio of 25 leaves and, if not the original document, then at the very least it is contemporaneous. The editor of this inventory, Evelyn Philip Shirley, says that 'in the enumeration of plate and jewels it exceeds [...] any [inventories] that have been hitherto published'.²⁴ The document includes an inventory of Howard's plate and jewels, along with another inventory of his 'goodes and howsholde stuffe' at his London properties in Charing Cross (Northampton House) and Greenwich Park.

According to Pauline Croft, author of Howard's entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Howard's estate may have been valued at near to £80,000, while his annual landed income was over £3,000, this latter figure being average for a peer. Howard gained his fortune mainly from this landed income and a monopoly that he held over starch that was both imported and manufactured domestically. This privilege was revoked in 1610 after complaints in parliament, although by way of compensation in 1612 he then received from James I an annual pension of £3,000 and a single payment of £6,000. Other sources of income for Howard include payments to buy his influence. Most noted of these was his Spanish pension, worth £1,000 annually from 1604, which was probably connected to the peace negotiations with Spain.²⁵

The quality and quantity of jewels recorded in the inventory is indicative of Howard's relative wealth. At the time of his death more jewellery was either on order with goldsmiths or awaiting collection.²⁶ Howard's inventory has 572 entries. Forty of these relate to jewels, giving a total of 89 individual items of jewellery. This includes 50 buttons, which, like Henry VIII's, were grouped into sets. So if these six sets are considered rather than the individual buttons, then the number of his jewelled possessions drops to 45. Additionally, however, Howard also owned 82 loose gemstones, comprising 16 diamond sparks, a single large pearl, 15 small rubies, one diamond, one ruby, ten uncut rock emeralds and 38 small diamonds contained within a box.²⁷ These loose gemstones are not considered within an enumeration of Howard's jewels, since they constitute a raw material and not a finished object that could be worn or given away. Yet they are a powerful indication of his ability to commission works to his precise specifications. He did not need to wait for a merchant to arrive with rare goods from abroad nor did he have to rely on any single London-based goldsmith to have enough materials to create new styles.

Howard's jewellery forms 7 per cent of his total goods. The collection was worth approximately £1454 5s., a figure that does not include a gold and enamelled garter or a pomander in the form of St George on horseback with three rubies pendent, both of which did not have values attached to their entries.²⁸ Additionally, the figure discounts a jewel called the Lesser George, for which also no value was provided.²⁹ Further, this sum has used a conservative estimate of the values for 'a great Jewell with sixe faire diamondes and other sixe lesse' and 'a Ringe with a large Table Diamond given by the *Count Palatine*'. Priced at 'viiiC' and 'viiC' pounds respectively, these figures could represent

either £92 and £93 or £108 and £107.³⁰ If the higher figures are counted then the true worth of Howard's valued jewels could be as much as £1484 5s.

Like Henry VIII, the most prolific jewelled item in Howard's inventory was the button (**Table 1**). Fifty of these are grouped into six sets, which were presumably worn together on items of clothing. All the buttons are gold and are set with precious stones. The figures provided by the appraisers allow for the possibility of each button type to be valued individually. Thus it is clear that the costliest button is the gold button set with four pearls and a spark of diamond at £1 8s. apiece. The cheapest buttons are those that are set with only a single pearl, priced at 5s. each.

Again, like the king, the next most common item among Howard's possessions is the ring (**Table 2**). In addition to the five serjeants' rings that he owned, given to him in his capacity as Lord Privy Seal from 1608 until his death, Howard had nine other rings.³¹ Excluding the serjeants' rings, which by their very nature were plain gold hoops engraved with an inscription that referenced the law or the king, all of Howard's rings save 'an olde ringe of golde without stones' are set with precious stones.

Of all the rings listed in the inventory, only two give any hint of information about what significance they may have held for Howard. The diamond-set ring given by the Count Palatine is worth in the region of £100. This somewhat elevated price, when contrasted with the other diamond-set ring, is probably attributed to its provenance.³² Although it is slightly more than double the weight of the other comparable piece, it is priced at more than three times this example. The ring that is set with 15 diamonds forming a true lovers' knot and inscribed with an obscure reference possibly to Psalm 44:3, 'Nec astu nec ense' (Neither by cunning nor by the sword), may have been a gift. Howard died unmarried, and so this may have been intended as a love token or betrothal gift. Equally, it could have been envisaged as a marriage gift. On the marriage of the Scottish courtier Sir Robert Carr (1585/6–1645) to Howard's great-niece Frances Howard (1590–1632) in December 1613 he presented the couple with plate worth £1,500 and the groom received a sword worth £566.³³

Howard was installed as a Knight of the Order of the Garter on 16 May 1605. At the ceremony held at St George's Chapel, Windsor, he would have been presented with a collar at which there customarily hung a jewel called the Great George. These are both recorded in his inventory: 'a Collar of the order waighinge twenty eight ounces five penny waighte', valued at £84, and 'a rounde embossed *George* of gold and enamelled which usuallie hanged at the Collar of the order, and garnished with diamondes small and great, 27 ounces two dim.', valued at £35.³⁴

During the reign of Henry VIII a new jewel was written into the statutes. The Lesser George was required to be worn daily by Knights. Evidence from Howard's inventory would suggest that he had four such jewels: two of agate; one of lapis lazuli; and one set with diamonds, presumably made of gold.³⁵ A previous entry also records 'an olde garnishe for a George'.³⁶ The pendant set with diamonds is not valued but it is likely that given the raw materials used and the association with the Order of the Garter it would have been

Item	Cost
Item ten buttons of golde with Rubies waighing two ounces and a halfe wantinge 17 graines	£10
Item 4 buttons of golde sett withe one round pearle a piece and one without, waighinge 8 penny waighte dim.	20s.
Item ten buttons of gold sett with 4 pearles and one Table Rubie, a piece two ounces	£6
Item 16 gold buttons with eight ragged pearles, a piece 2 ounces 3d waighte wantinge 3 graines	£6
Item five golde buttons with 4 pearles a piece, the other stones beinge taken out, waighinge one ounce wantinge 8 graines	55s.
Item five other golde buttons with fower pearles a piece, and in eache a sparke of Diamond, waighinge one ounce half penny waighte	£7

Table 1 Buttons in the inventory of Henry Howard

Item	Cost
Item a large gold ringe with a large rowghe saphire uncutt waighinge halfe an ounce and twentie graynes	30s.
Item a hoope Ringe of golde with a Rose of Diamondes fower penny waighte 16 graines	£20
Item one golde Ringe withe a Hiacinthe waighinge 3d waighte 3 graines	10s.
Item one golde Ringe with a large Table Emralde waighinge one quarter of an ounce two penny waighte	£18
Item a gold Ringe with a Table Diamond large, waighinge 3d waights, with his stringe	£30
Item a gold ringe sett with 15 Diamondes in a true lovers' knotte with the wordes <i>Nec astu nec ense</i> , waighinge three penny waights thirtene graines	£4
Item a Ringe with a large Table Diamond given by the Count Palatine, waighinge 6 penny waights 10 graines	£93/ £107
Item a hoope ringe with 9 sparkes, one painted [?], the rest wantinge, 2d waighte	£4

Table 2 Gem-set rings belonging to Henry Howard as listed in his inventory

worth a substantial amount. Of the other three Lesser Georges the one made of the semi-precious stone lapis lazuli valued at £6 is the cheapest, probably since it is 'circuled with golde and enamelled onelie'. The first agate piece recorded is worth £100 and is 'circuled with gold and sett with 57 small diamondes, waighinge two ounces', while the second agate Lesser George described as 'havinge on the obverse the figure of *Christ* standinge upon the Dragon circled with golde and garnished with 67 small diamondes, waighinge one oz. 4d w[eigh]ts' is priced a little higher at £120.

Howard's will, dated 14 June 1614, is published by Shirley at the end of the inventory.³⁷ Two of the Lesser Georges are bequeathed: 'To the most noble and hopeful Prince Charles' and 'to my very good Lorde the Earle of Somerset'.³⁸ Prince Charles, later crowned King Charles I, was to receive Howard's 'best George' and the Earl of Somerset, Robert Carr, who assumed Howard's titles of Lord Privy Seal and warden of the Cinque Ports after his death, his 'second George'. Since Howard does not explain explicitly which of his George jewels were to be bequeathed, it is only possible to speculate on how the term 'best' was qualified. Marginalia to the published inventory show that Shirley has

judged 'best' to be the costliest, stating that the agate Lesser George with the image of Christ was given to the Prince and that Carr (also known as Viscount Rochester from 1611) received the other agate jewel. In the absence of further testamentary instructions it is difficult to know precisely Howard's wishes. In addition to the Georges discussed above and demonstrative of the pride and honour had by being a Knight-Companion of the Order of the Garter, Howard owned two other jewels either in the form or with the image of St George on horseback.

Item a pomander *George* with 3 pendant rubies – vacat.

Item a watche *George*, beinge one of those two when the

Inventorie was taken which the L[orship]s subscribed, that then remained in M[aste]r Will[iam] the goldsmithes hands waighinge 2oz: 2d. waighete – £4.³⁹

The quality and quantity of jewels from the inventory are befitting of both Howard's status at court and his wealth. Without exception, all these pieces are made of gold and the majority also have precious or semi-precious stones set within them. The value of Howard's jewelled possessions was considerable, particularly when contrasted with his collection of gold display pieces worth £316 10s.⁴⁰ The remainder of his inventory does indicate his relative wealth and his desire to purchase goods appropriate to his station: his gilded plate was worth £3302 3s.; his silver plate and vessels amounted to £2820 1s.; he owned a number of tapestries and paintings, including many of courtiers and royal figures; and of his wearing apparel, his six doublets are worth £24 and 13 pairs of breeches £41.⁴¹ Howard's inventory is therefore indicative of a man who used his jewels conspicuously to communicate his wealth and favour at the Jacobean court.

The inventory of William Herbert

The unpublished household inventory of the soldier and magnate William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke (1506/7–1570) (see **Fig. 25**), is an impressive vellum-bound volume with three stitched leather straps used for reinforcement, with evidence of a fourth strap remaining to which is affixed a metal buckle.⁴² The inventory is handwritten in English and comprises 118 paper pages, which detail Pembroke's goods, including his gold and silver plate, jewels, clothing and accessories, furnishings, linen and armour.⁴³ The inventory is dated 12 December 1561 and it serves as a record of the goods owned by Pembroke, similar to a modern-day stock-check. It is unique amongst the material discussed in this chapter since it is not a posthumous record and so it serves as a snapshot of a household in action, immortalising a single moment in time.

Appearing before the listing of jewellery that was presumably worn by Pembroke himself is an inventory taken on 31 January 1561 of those jewels that were in his wife's 'custodie'.⁴⁴ While this does not necessarily indicate that these were items worn exclusively by his second wife Anne (1524–1588), daughter of George Talbot (1468–1538), 4th Earl of Shrewsbury, some of the pieces mentioned would appear to be for female use.⁴⁵ Those that were not specifically gendered as feminine were still presumably worn by Anne, given that they were in her keeping. The groups of objects listed here are girdles, billements, collars, carcanets,

bracelets, chains, beads, tablets, flowers, brooches, buttons and aglets. In all, there are 71 itemised entries but these include five for buttons and three for aglets, all of which comprise more than a single item:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Buttons | Spanyshe Buttons of golde beinge enameled blacke and blewe and white viij dosen paires |
| | Buttons with iij pearles in a pece viij dosen paires |
| | Buttons of golde white and blewe enameled w[i]th Cupides bowe viij dosen paires |
| | Buttons of golde enameled blacke v dosen paires and ij buttons |
| | Buttons enameled white and blacke v dosen |
| Agglettes | Agglettes of golde enameled blacke and white vij dosen paires |
| | Agglettes with pearles enameled white vj dosen paires |
| | Greate Agglettes blacke enameled lxij. ⁴⁶ |

The number of buttons comes to 758, while the aglets number 375. Thus the overall total of jewels in Anne's custody leaps significantly from 71 to 1,196. There is no real indication from the descriptions of these objects as to why they were more suited for female use than those equivalents listed in a later section and presumably for Pembroke's own use.

In an addendum to Pembroke's will signed by his son Edward (1547–1595) and the Earl of Leicester of words spoken to them the night before Pembroke's death on 17 March 1570, 'he gave unto my ladie his wife all her apparall and such Jewelles as she brought with her or hathe presentlie in her custodie of his guifte'.⁴⁷ It is significant that such a provision was not included in the original text of the will, which is dated 23 December 1567. It is likely that as Pembroke lay on his deathbed he wished to legalise Anne's ownership and retention of those jewels that were used by her. Importantly, although his wife was using these valuables, until his death on 17 March 1570 all these objects were Pembroke's property.

This section is then followed by another inventory, which lists 'all suche apparell Furres and Jewelles as be in the chardge of Thomas Gregory' as of 17 August 1561.⁴⁸ The total number of itemised entries in this part is 445, of which 84 record jewellery. This constitutes a percentage rate of 18.9 per cent but this figure is skewed since it does not take into account possessions other than Pembroke's wearing apparel and associated jewels. A very conservatively low estimate of the itemised entries from the entire vellum-bound inventory gives a total of 1,626. Incorporating the jewels that were later bequeathed to Anne gives a total number of 155 entries for jewellery. This means that about 9.5 per cent of entries were for jewels, which is probably more accurate since it includes all of Pembroke's property. An approximation of the individual items of jewellery listed among the goods in the care of Thomas Gregory comes to 623, with 491 of these being buttons and 22 being aglets. This does not take into account those buttons that are listed in among the clothing as integral parts, but rather treats those that are listed separately as jewelled items in their own right.

As we have seen before, after dress items the next most popular form of jewellery in Pembroke's wardrobe were rings, including one that was probably his signet ring: 'a ringe with the Dragon graven'.⁴⁹ Since the dragon was Pembroke's crest, this particular object was clearly used as a sealing device. Of the remainder of the rings a large proportion are made of gold and are enamelled and set with a precious or semi-precious gemstone, such as a diamond, ruby, emerald or turquoise.⁵⁰ Additional to these, there are a number of rings that fall into distinct categories: mourning or memento mori rings; posy rings; cramp rings; and rings of a more curious nature:

Firste iij Deathes heddes enameled w[i]th black
Item ij other Deathes heddes enameled white and black
[...]
Item a ringe with a Diall and a white Topias in the toppes
Item ij Ringes of Astronome
[...]
Item xij litle hoopes enameled of divers coolers
Item xv crampe ringes whereof v of golde and x of silver.⁵¹

The image of the death's head was a popular memento mori device, used as a reminder of the transience of life, but it also became applied to the outer face of a mourning ring, a type of ring customarily bequeathed by the deceased to family and friends.⁵²

The inventory includes frequent references to objects that constituted insignia of the Order of the Garter, such as the garter itself. The most common item mentioned, however, is the George. One is recorded as being on a collar and is most likely to be Pembroke's Great George jewel: 'Item a faire Coller w[i]th xl faire peces of golde whereof xx like redde roses w[i]th garters aboute them enameled white blewe, redde, and grene, and thother xx beinge cleane golde w[i]thout amell w[i]th a faire george sett w[i]th vij Diamondes enameled white and grene'.⁵³

The form and decoration of the collar was prescribed heavily in this period and so it was on the George pendant that men were able to lavish expense. A note in Henry VIII's inventory suggests that Pembroke's collar was made by reusing parts from 'a Coller of golde of thorder of saynt michaell' (2752), which was in the royal collection:

Ix decembre 1549 this coller gyven by the kinges majestie to sir william herbert knight master of the kinges horses to make for the said sir wylliam a coller of the garter which coller of St Michell within wrytten was deliuered to hym of the weight of xxx oz of golde by virtue of the counsaillles warraunt.⁵⁴

The timing of this royal gift was perhaps to celebrate Pembroke's appointment as master of the king's horse only the week before.⁵⁵ In the inventory a further 12 Georges are found on chains and two are on carcanets. These are probably the type of jewel known as the Lesser George. Four other Georges are listed as separate objects:

Item a George enameled given my Ladie by my La[di]e Marques
Item a George enameled w[i]th cutte worke on thone side given my L[ord] by my La[di]e Anne Wharton
Item a George w[i]th Kinge Phillippes face on thone side
Item a litle George.⁵⁶

It is perhaps to be expected that a Knight of the Garter in a position such as Pembroke's should have so many items relating to this honour. Since these jewels were indicative of

a privilege bestowed by the sovereign, the wearing of them was not seen as problematic. The jewellery in Pembroke's inventory seems to show that provided there was some ostensible function or purpose, other than mere frivolity, they were legitimate possessions for a man. It is telling that two knives are in fact recorded in the lists of jewels:

A faire knyfe of golde w[i]th a glasse in thende of the hafte, sett w[i]th xxi perles and iiij rubies enameled blewe, redde, and white with a sheethe of black veluett sett w[i]th xxvij perles trymed w[i]th siluer

Another knyfe of golde w[i]th vij rubies on the hafte and vj small perles, blewe, white, and grene enameled w[i]th a sheathe of black veluett garnished w[i]th golde sett w[i]th iiij small rubies grene and white enameled w[i]th a lace of black silke and golde.⁵⁷

In a mid-16th-century despatch to the Doge and the Senate, Federico Badoer (1519–1593), the Venetian ambassador at the imperial court, said of Pembroke that he 'is considered the chief personage in England, having more followers there than anybody'.⁵⁸ For someone so highly esteemed, who was also able to sustain favour with four successive sovereigns from Henry VIII through to Elizabeth I, it is unsurprising that his inventory lists an impressive array and quantity of possessions. As a prolific courtier he needed to ensure that his external appearance reflected his status and wealth, although he maintained a certain degree of propriety and his jewelled possessions were by and large limited to buttons, Garter insignia and rings.

The inventory of Thomas Ramsey

The inventory now under discussion moves away from court circles and into the urban environment.⁵⁹ Sir Thomas Ramsey (1510/11–1590) was Lord Mayor of London in 1577. His will was proved in 1590 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.⁶⁰ Ramsey was a member of the Grocers' Company and, based on the goods listed in his inventory, he is described by F.W. Fairholt as 'a rich merchant'.⁶¹ Ramsey's inventory, with its vast amount of display plate and apparel valued at £75 10s. 2d., is indicative of the consumption required for a man and citizen of his status and wealth living in the early modern period.⁶²

Included within the article in which the inventory appears are copies of Ramsey's two wills, which dispose of personal items and landed property in turn.⁶³ The latter, dated 9 July 1586, is of little relevance. The will that discusses personal bequests is dated to 20 September 1585 and, 'accordinge to the laudable custome of the citie of London', his estate is divided equally in two parts: 'the one equall part shalbe and remayne to my welbelovyd wife Dame Mary Ramsey' and 'the other moitie or halfe I reserve to my selfe therwithe to performe my legaceys'.⁶⁴ Ramsey's bequests are all monetary, with certain individuals given additionally a black gown. In all, 21 people are remembered in such a way and the purpose of these gowns is explained by the bequest of one to the incumbent Lord Mayor of London: 'so that he will come to my buryall'.⁶⁵ It is unlikely that Ramsey left actual garments for these men and women who are in receipt of this bequest; as with mourning rings, it is more likely that Ramsey was providing the money for such gowns to be purchased or made.⁶⁶



Figure 18 Detail of the Collar of Esses, bequeathed in 1545 by Sir John Aleyn, a mercer and Lord Mayor. Mansion House, London

Only a small section of Ramsey's inventory is dedicated to jewellery under the heading of 'Golde chaines, rings, and jewells, as followeth, viz.'⁶⁷ It is difficult to estimate a total for the number of goods owned by Ramsey, due to entries such as that listing his pewter giving only an overall weight and valuation without enumerating the pieces.⁶⁸ The number of actual itemised entries in the inventory is 446, with six of these described as jewellery. This constitutes a rate of only 1.4 per cent. In all, these six entries show that Ramsey owned 12 pieces of jewellery valued at £208 17s. 10d.

Unlike the previous inventories, in which dress accessories, rings and Garter-related jewels stand out, the most notable of all Ramsay's jewelled possessions was a single item that related, at least indirectly, to his office. This was the 'greate chaine of golde', which weighed 39 ounces, three penny weights and half an angel weight and was valued at £110 14s. 4d. The weight is similar to that prescribed by the revised statutes of the Order of the Garter for the collar, set at 30 Troy ounces.⁶⁹ This chain recorded in Ramsey's inventory is not the mayoral chain, since this particular chain-of-office in the form of a Collar of Esses was bequeathed to the City by a former Mayor of London, Sir John Aleyn (c. 1470–1544), in 1545, 'to be used always and worn by the Lord Mayor of this City for the time being' (**Fig. 18**).⁷⁰ It is possible that to reflect the dignity of his office, Ramsey had commissioned a large gold chain for his own personal use.

The next most expensive piece, considerably more than Ramsey's other jewels, is 'a girdell of golde' that weighed 28 ounces and was valued by the appraisers, including the goldsmith Pattricke Brewre, at £81 4s. 6d. While this object was worth less than the chain, it was priced at a higher value per ounce: 57 shillings per ounce, rather than 56 shillings per ounce. This suggests two things: one, that the girdle was wrought to a higher level of craftsmanship; and two, that the appraisers applied their own value judgement towards the fashioning of these jewels.

After these two major pieces, the most common jewelled item in Ramsey's possession was, like his superiors' collections, the ring. He owned eight of these, one of which

was a signet ring. The other seven rings are not described other than being of gold. They are listed together in one group and, as such, their value by weight is identical: 'weyinge ij oz. di. and di. qr. at 48s. per oz.'. Consequently, they are priced at £6 6s. overall. This suggests that they are all similar in form and decoration, for the signet ring with its bezel engraved with 'S[i]r Thomas Ramsey's armes' weighs 1 ounce and is valued at 51s. Once again, the appraisers determined that the value of the item lay not only in its raw material but also in its workmanship. Since no further description is given of the seven gold rings, it is likely that they were simple plain hoops, which may have been engraved on either face with a motto, amatory or otherwise. The presence of a signet ring among Ramsey's goods is not surprising given that he was a merchant who needed a tangible means of legitimising and authenticating business transactions. The signet also served as a means of identification within the world of commerce. That his signet is of gold reflects the economic success he achieved.

Ramsey's jewels, while not numerous, are perhaps indicative of the goods of a wealthy urban citizen who had enjoyed the dignity of a civic office. The value of his jewels is high, but this figure is inflated by two substantial items: the large gold chain or collar, and the gold girdle. Rings are the most common object to be found and this is an appropriate item of male ownership. In particular, the signet is a ring that one would expect to see in an inventory of Ramsey's wealth and status.

The Ipswich inventories and London wills

The inventorial records for the Ipswich inhabitants move us further away from an urban or court context, although Ipswich was by no means a rural community in the 16th century. The earliest recorded inventory published in this collection dates to 1583, by which time Ipswich was ranked among the top ten of all English provincial towns in terms of the wealth and status of its population.⁷¹ The town was involved in trade and commerce, with particular emphasis on the textile industry. The location of Ipswich, on the

estuary of the River Orwell, meant it was ideal for the export and import of goods and it was suitably placed to assist in the transportation of coal between London and Newcastle. Goods and services intended for the county of Suffolk passed through Ipswich and so a certain degree of wealth was generated here.

Statistical analyses have been carried out to gain a greater understanding of the nature of these inventories as a group. The results are merely indicative of this body of evidence and conclusions can only be drawn from the information presented in these sources. A more detailed examination of the jewelled possessions of some of these Ipswich inhabitants is then interpreted within the context of the entire corpus. In the edited publication, the inventories have been numbered; this same format has been respected here for ease of reference and is indicated by the use of bracketed bold numbers.

The gender split of the inventories is such that there are 59 men and 13 women represented, which equates to 82 per cent of the inventories being indicative of male ownership. Roughly speaking, then, there are four times as many men as women in this sample. The majority of the women are recorded as widows with only Ede Riffam (**17**), a maidservant, as the exception. The editor of these inventories has noted that the widows listed here were married to those involved in clothing export, whose wills were proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and whose inventories are no longer extant. The wealth of these men is apparent only through the inventories of their wives.⁷² It is therefore not inappropriate to consider also these inventories belonging to women, since they serve as records of goods that may have once belonged to their husbands.

As a group, jewelled possessions are present in only nine inventories, or 12.5 per cent. By separating the group along gender lines, there is a marked difference in terms of percentages. Just five men possess jewels and this is only 8.5 per cent of the total male inventories, whereas four female inventories list jewels and this equals 30.8 per cent of female ownership. This can be explained by the fact that a number of possessions may have been bequeathed in wills by men and these objects would not then have been recorded in the probate inventory. They reappear many years later in the inventories of their wives.

There are 25 different occupations listed for the men, with the majority of them being involved in the production of goods, ranging from blacksmiths and butchers to linen-weavers and a chandler. Eighteen inventories do not specify the man's occupation. Unsurprisingly, given the location and main trade of Ipswich, there are seven mariners or sailors, one ship carpenter and one merchant represented, along with 14 men involved in the textile industry in some form including five tailors.⁷³ The five men who have jewellery listed in their inventories are John Seely, occupation unknown (**7**); Edward Barnes, a sailor (**14**); Matthew Nicholas, a mariner (**30**); Simon Isam, a tailor (**60**); and Richard Rainsford, a clerk (**71**).

John Seely's inventory is dated 8 September 1584.⁷⁴ Although his occupation is not listed, the quantity of certain items kept in his chamber suggests that he may have been a tailor:

xiiij paire of cruell garters	1s. 9d.
xij dossen pointes	1s.
vijj paire of garters more	8d.
vijj looking glasses	4d.
one thowsande and a halfe of pinnes	3d.
other papers of great pinnes	3d. ⁷⁵

There appear to be no items of personal significance in this inventory and so while the 12 dozen points may have been of some relevance in a different context, here they can be discounted. The relatively small value of these points and the fact that no material is recorded would suggest that they were made of base metal.

The sailor Edward Barnes, whose inventory is dated 14 March 1590, owned 24 silver buttons.⁷⁶ They are itemised with a cupboard and two seacards, the latter making reference to either the card of a mariner's compass or a navigational chart. All these items together are valued at 19s. from an estate worth a total of £24 13s. The inventory is structured in such a way that at least 270 individual items are recorded within only 18 groups. This does not take into account the apparel or unappraised trash valued at £2 and 1s., respectively. Thus trying to determine Barnes's jewelled goods as an overall percentage of his entire estate is slightly problematic. The most accurate method is to consider each item individually, although even this is impossible since the apparel is not itemised. A second issue arises through the terminology used for the silver buttons. They are listed as two dozen buttons, which would suggest that there are two sets of 12 and that it would be perhaps inaccurate to consider them as 24 single buttons. So, by taking 270 as a minimum number of items owned by Barnes and considering the buttons as constituting only two items, his jewellery forms just 0.7 per cent of his entire possessions. Yet if each button is classed separately, this proportion leaps to 8.9 per cent, which is a marked increase.

The next male inventory in the published sequence to have any evidence of jewels is that of Matthew Nicholas, described in his inventory of 25 April 1599 as a mariner.⁷⁷ Among a total of 27 entries is one that lists 'a silver whistell and silver chaine' and these are valued at £1 1s. from an estate worth a total of £19 6s. 3d. There are 117 individual items but this counts only as one item each the entries that refer to 'other apparrell for the sea', 'certaine Lynnes for the sea' and 'monie in his purse'. Without any further information it is impossible to establish how much clothing and linens Nicholas owned. The two jewelled objects in his possession constitute only 1.7 per cent of the total itemised objects. These would appear to be the most valuable of all his goods, fiscally speaking. Given that there are no other references to personal jewels and given his occupation, it is likely that the whistle and chain on which it hung were associated with his professional life. Thus for a man who owned little more than what was needed for everyday living, such as modest furniture, candlesticks and limited clothing, and who ate from pewter dishes, the silver whistle and chain were not a frivolous expense but rather constituted a privilege of his office.

The inventory of the tailor Simon Isam is dated 22 March 1618.⁷⁸ His jewelled possessions are limited to a whistle and a pick (**Fig. 19**), both of silver, which along with a silver spoon



Figure 19 Silver ear- and toothpick found in the archaeological excavations at Jamestown, Virginia, and possibly a more high-status example of the one described in the inventory of Simon Isam, late 16th to early 17th century

are valued at 6s. A conservative estimate of the total number of goods that he owned on his death gives a figure of 584, listed under 130 entries. As with previous inventories examined here, an exact figure for the objects owned by Isam is difficult to come by, since, for example, it is impossible to know how many pieces of pewter he owned from the entry stating ‘35lb of peuter at 8d.’ per pound. Taking the number of entries containing jewels as one and the total entries as 130, Isam’s jewels constitute 0.8 per cent of his entire goods. If instead the very conservative estimate of total goods owned as 584 is used and the whistle and toothpick are considered as individual items, then the proportion of jewels drops to 0.3 per cent.

The final male inventory from this group that contains any jewellery is that of the clerk Richard Rainsford and this is dated 14 June 1631.⁷⁹ Listed among the items in the cellar are two rings and these are valued at £1 10s. from an estate worth a total of £71 8s. 4d. Despite not having an inventory that is particularly lengthy, the goods that Rainsford owned seem to be worth relatively substantial amounts. Of all the Ipswich men discussed here, Rainsford is by far the wealthiest and the types of goods he owned reflect both his wealth and more learned status. In his study is a ‘Lybrarye of Bookes’ worth £10, while ‘His wearing aparell and gown and cassoks’ are valued at £5, which is more than the clothing belonging to Barnes (£2), Nicholas (£4 10s.) and Isam (£2 6s.). Nevertheless, in line with his non-elite status and akin with his Ipswich counterparts, the vessels he uses for drinking and dining are still made of pewter: Rainsford’s ‘severall peeces pewter’ are worth £2 10s.; Barnes owned ‘35 peces gret and small’ to the value of £1 10s.; Nicholas was in possession of 17 pewter items worth only 16s., although a drinking cup is listed separately along with two candlesticks and two salts totalling 2s.; Isam seems to have owned no pewter but rather dishes and platters of wood. As with the above examples, trying to ascertain the exact proportion of jewelled goods that Rainsford owned is problematic. There are 47 items, with the ‘2 rings’ constituting a single entry. This produces a result of 2.1 per cent. If the highly underestimated figure of 161 individual objects is used, with

Item	£	s	d
Item i stone cruese with a small Lyppe and a fote of sylver at	0	4	0
Item i stone pott with a cover and lyppe of sylver at	0	10	0
Item xx silver sponnes wayinge xx oz at iiij s iiij d per oz	4	6	8
Item i silver salte with a cover A sylver Cuppe i small sylver pott beinge parcel gylte wayinge xxxvij ounces q at iiij s vj d per oz	8	7	7½
Item iiij Gould Ryngs at	1	4	0

Table 3 Plate from the inventory of Jane Ward, 27 May 1606

the rings classed separately, then the percentage rate drops to 1.2 per cent.

It was noted earlier how the inventories of certain female Ipswich inhabitants could also reflect goods once owned by men. In the inventory for the widow Jane Ward (40), which is dated 27 May 1606 and worth a total of £47 14s. 7½d., there is listed a separate section for plate (Table 3).⁸⁰ Pewter dishes are recorded earlier and so the presence of silver goods in small numbers would suggest that these were not used for dining, but were rather display plate.

These items, along with the three gold rings, would have previously been the property of Ward’s husband. As is so often the case with inventories though, there is a lack of description of the types of rings present. Although owned by Ward’s husband, they may have been worn by Jane, but equally they may have been rings more suited for male use.

The inventories of certain Ipswich inhabitants clearly represent a less wealthy class of individual than the royal inventories or those of courtiers and London-based urban citizens. The proportion of jewelled goods owned by the group as a whole is remarkably low, and of those in possession of jewels, these items comprise a small percentage of their entire inventoried estate. The inventories can never provide information about objects that were not present when the appraisers valued the goods of an individual and so any bequeathed goods alienated prior to an inventory being taken remain unknown. Given the highly personal nature of jewels, it is not beyond possibility that men would choose to pass on whatever little jewellery they owned to family and friends, removing them from these probate records.

To determine how representative these inventories are of ownership outside of wealthy London and court circles, it would be opportune to look at material from another centre. A published group of Bristol probate inventories for the period 1542 to 1650 offers 108 transcriptions, which the editors claim to be ‘a representative sample of the occupations and social groups to be found in the Bristol inventories’.⁸¹ Taking into account only those inventories that fall within the time period under consideration gives a sample size of 44.⁸² It would not, however, be inappropriate to discuss selected inventories dated to after 1625, since they are still indicative of male ownership earlier in the 17th century.⁸³

Of the 44 inventories, 40 represent men and this is a rate of 90.9 per cent. Of these men only five possess any jewels that would appear to be personal items, which equates to 12.5 per cent and this is not too dissimilar from the Ipswich material. Two inventories do include items that would be

considered as jewellery but these would seem to be more indicative of a craftsman's stock. So the 'ij Gould bands' and 'vij copper bands' recorded in the inventory of the haberdasher Robert Clement, dated 19 March 1589, and 'thrid, buttens, pins, Laces, needles' from John Noble's 1625 inventory give no indication of male ownership.⁸⁴

The men who owned personal jewels were George Baldwin, a gentleman; Francis Baylie, a clothworker; Nathaniel Wright, a haulier; Richard Woodson, a surgeon; and Michael Threkelle, a hosier.⁸⁵ With the exception of Woodson, all these men owned at least one ring. Baldwin was in possession of three gold rings and this may be indicative of his higher status and wealth.⁸⁶ Woodson's inventory was taken on 11 February 1623 and, in addition to the surgical instruments associated with his occupation, he owned a set of 'Instruments of silver and trimmed with silver'.⁸⁷ These, along with 'one silver tooth picker', were valued at £3 18s. 4d. and were presumably status symbols. The single rings owned by Baylie, Wright and Threkelle may have been signet rings stamped with their merchant's marks to assist these men as they conducted their daily business and so these objects would have had a practical function.⁸⁸

Later inventories from this same corpus show that rings were the most frequently owned item of jewellery. Of the five pieces of jewellery present among the goods of the merchant Nathaniel Butcher, four are rings: 'two signett rings, a ringe with a blew saphaire, a little hooped ringe & an old Jewell'.⁸⁹ An inventory taken of Richard Saunders's goods in the house of the widow Margaret Clements on 22 July 1629, 16 days after the first appraisal, revealed that he owned one gold ring. A further addition to the inventory made on 9 September 1629 included 'one dozen of old silke, silver and Gould poynts', 'one silver bodkin', 'one old silke and silver hat band', 'one old small twist silke and silver hatt band' and 'one seale of silver with a boaning handle'.⁹⁰ The shoemaker John Shipway left behind 'two gold rings with a gilt gimmel Ringe'.⁹¹

The English scholar Catherine Richardson has examined a corpus of 1,500 inventories from Kent for the period 1560 to 1600.⁹² The Kent sample size is significantly larger than the Ipswich and Bristol material but Richardson's findings are similar, which suggests that the inventories analysed here are indicative of lower-class ownership. Of the Kent inventories only 10 per cent include jewellery, with nearly half of these having only one item.⁹³ While there is a range of goods represented, the most frequently owned objects were rings and dress fastenings.⁹⁴ Looking specifically at male ownership, Richardson observes that three-quarters of the jewellery that men owned comprised of rings and that their other jewelled possessions included only whistles and silver or silver-gilt buttons.⁹⁵

The inventories of men of a lower social status suggest that rings and small dress accessories were the most common items owned by them and this seems to be a reflection of what occurs at higher levels of society. As a further indication of trends of ownership among the lower classes it is possible to turn to testamentary evidence. More than serving as a mere indicator of the types of goods a person owned, as manifest in inventories, bequests highlight

the significance that bequeathed objects may have had for their male owners. Further, these documents provide crucial insight into the relationships forged throughout a man's lifetime. The memory of the deceased that was evoked in the bequeathing of material artefacts was intensified through the bequest of jewels, since the highly personal nature of such objects and the proximity to the body only served to increase the status of these gifts. Just as with gifts that circulated during someone's life, bequests could flow upwards, as well as downwards, and in a sideways movement. It is in humble terms that Stephen Gardiner (c. 1495–1555), Bishop of Winchester, leaves to his superior, Cardinal Reginald Pole (1500–1558), a diamond ring: 'Item, I bequeathe to my Lord Legates grace a ring with a dyamounte, not so bigge as he is wourthie to have, but such as his poore orator is able to geve'.⁹⁶ The elevated status of William Cecil (1520/1–1598), 1st Baron Burghley, is equally apparent when a bequest he receives from Richard Cox (c. 1500–1581), Bishop of Ely, is more than those bestowed upon other individuals, even though they were each entrusted with being overseers of his will:

And I doe give to my good Lorde Treasurer for a memoriall of my good will towards him a Ringe of golde weying twoe ounces And to Sir William Cardell and Doctor Leedes for a memoriall of my good will towards them eche of them a Ringe of golde of the weighte of one ounce and one halfe hartely praying them all.⁹⁷

A group of wills related to the diocese of London dating from 1492 to 1547 provides insight into the 'thought, environment and possessions of ordinary middle-class men and women of the early Tudor period'.⁹⁸ In all, 245 wills are published and they are in two distinct groups: those from the register Palmer, covering the date range 1492 to 1520; and separate wills dating 1507 to 1547.⁹⁹ The wills from the register Palmer number 95, and 86 of these are those of religious figures who owned few personal possessions. Of the Palmer wills, only nine show ownership of jewels.¹⁰⁰ In the will of Richard Stokley, a chantry priest, dated 27 May 1513, he leaves 'two gold rynges' to a female cousin but it would appear that this is a return of a pledge that she had given to him.¹⁰¹ Two wills record only girdles that are 'harnest' or 'harnessid' with silver and these are both left to male recipients.¹⁰² The remaining six wills document the owning of rings and dress accessories by these men.

The chaplain Robert Steyll, whose will is dated 1 August 1510, bequeaths two silver clasps to one of his executors and a silver clasp with a crucifix to a fellow chaplain.¹⁰³ On 11 June 1516 the clerk Robert Andrewes left to one of his two executors, Thomas Rocheford, a citizen and grocer of London, 'my ryng of gold with a safure abalas' and 'my wrathed ryng of gold with a balas therin'.¹⁰⁴ Two taches of silver-gilt seem to be the only personal jewels belonging to the parson Thomas Awsten when he made his will on 10 July 1518, while it appears that in August 1518 Thomas Belamy owned only one tache of silver.¹⁰⁵ The will dated 23 May 1518 of the clerk Thomas Everade contains no bequests of jewels but the document concludes 'in wittenesse whereof to this my testament I have sett my seale'.¹⁰⁶ This is clear evidence that Everade owned a personal sealing device, although its form is not explicit and it may have been a ring or a handheld

device. The final will from the register Palmer that shows male ownership of jewellery is that of John Hudson and it is dated 19 June 1519.¹⁰⁷ While jewels such as ‘a crosse of gold’ and ‘a nowch [clasp or brooch] of gold’ feature, by far the most numerous jewelled item bequeathed is the ring: Sir John Larke receives ‘a howpe of gold with a saffers face’; Hudson leaves ‘a ryng of gold with a rubye’ to Sir Henry Clerkson; the wife of Jamys Wilkynson receives ‘a ring of gold with a saffiewr’; Thomas Parker’s wife is left ‘a hoope of gold’; Robert Mannyng’s wife is left ‘a ring of gold with subscription on the inside’; the wife of another Hudson from the parish of St Alborough receives ‘a ryng of gold with a rubie’; and William Percevall’s wife is in receipt of ‘a ryng of gold with 2 stonys in itt, the ton a rubye and the other an emerodd’.

Of the remaining 150 wills only 22 contain any jewelled possessions, with 12 of them being made by male testators.¹⁰⁸ Of these 12 male-authored wills, ten conclude with a variation on the term ‘I have putto my seale’, which is clear indication of a sealing device either in the form of a ring or a handheld seal. Only two of these self-sealed wills include additional bequests of jewels, indicating greater ownership of jewelled possessions. These are the wills of William Turke, a haberdasher and citizen of London, and Wylliam Chambarlayn, a skinner and citizen of London. Their wills are dated 14 August 1541 and 20 May 1542, respectively.¹⁰⁹ Turke leaves a ‘ryng of golde of the value of 20s.’ to the overseer of his will, along with a black gown.¹¹⁰ Presumably, since these gifts were for his ‘paynes’ in undertaking his duty, the noting of the monetary value of the ring was necessary to express Turke’s gratitude. Chambarlayn’s bequests include two for rings: ‘a byge houpe off golldde’ and ‘a golde ryng with a dyamond’.¹¹¹ The two wills that contain jewelled bequests but not a sealing device include that of Wyllam Symons, a merchant tailor of London, who in his will dated 28 December 1538 leaves to two nieces ‘a peyre of bedes of corall dobull gawdyd with sylver’ and ‘a peyre of black bedes of get gawdyd with sylver’.¹¹² Only the will of the surgeon Antony Copage, which is dated 14 December 1537, seems to tally with what we have come to expect of male ownership in this period, for he leaves ‘mye ryng’ and ‘the ryng that is a ponne my fynger’ to the brother of Dr Laye and Thomas Austyn’s wife, respectively.¹¹³

Through these documents of less wealthy individuals – the bequests of London citizens and the inventories of Ipswich inhabitants – it is clear that small proportions of men did own jewellery but the jewels they owned were few in number. Nonetheless they were highly significant to the men who owned and used them. The silver buttons that the Ipswich sailor Edward Barnes possessed were presumably

worn on special occasions, and removed from his clothing when he was at sea. The silver whistle and chain owned by the mariner Matthew Nicholas were most likely associated with his occupation and perhaps reflect an elevated position that he held. The tailor Simon Isam also owned a silver whistle, as well as a silver pick (presumably a toothpick). These were possibly items of status, for a silver toothpick seems a particularly extravagant expense. It is unsurprising that the clerk Richard Rainsford owned two rings and one of these may have been a signet ring, to assist him with his duties. The rhetoric of wills often hints at the status of these objects, such as with Robert Andrewes’s bequest to Thomas Rocheford of two gem-set gold rings referred to by use of a possessive adjective and not an indefinite article.

Concluding remarks

The inventory of Henry VIII is undoubtedly the largest of the inventories examined here and it contains a vast range of goods, in terms of quality and quantity. His jewelled possessions reflect his wealth and status, as do the goods of William Herbert, a successful and wealthy courtier. In terms of the number of entries containing jewels, buttons are the most numerous (although not necessarily the most valuable) object owned by Henry VIII, William Herbert and Henry Howard. The second most common item, based on number of entries, for these three men are rings. For Thomas Ramsey rings comprise the largest proportion of his jewelled possessions. In his case, he has no buttons listed in his inventory, not even among his wearing apparel. It may well be that the buttons he wore were integral to his garments and were made of silk or some other fabric. This is perhaps indicative of his status as he was an urban citizen, albeit a relatively wealthy one who held a civic position, and not a courtier. It would seem that gold buttons were a privilege of the elite. Certainly contemporary sumptuary legislation would seem to suggest that this was more appropriate. The numbers of jewelled goods belonging to the Ipswich inhabitants are smaller and this is a trend seen in Bristol and Kent. On the whole, these inventories comprise fewer appraised goods and, as such, any jewellery listed is more remarkable. This is a similar story with the bequeathed goods of London citizens. Nevertheless, it is the inventories of wealthier individuals from both urban and court contexts that are impressive not only for the scale but also for the variety and quality of the goods within them. What is clear from the above analyses is that men owned jewellery. While at lower levels of society ownership of a gold ring was significant in creating distinction, it is important to reflect more on the fact that a glittering garment was indicative of the highest status as much as jewels were for more elite men.

Part II

Display, Ornamentation and Male Dress

In a period when anxieties prevailed over the excessive ornamentation of the male body, there is no doubt that most men were actively interested in making such purchases and in ensuring the safekeeping and transmission of these valuable goods. Contemporary texts were often confusing in the advice that they gave to men. Pamphlets were produced that instructed people on the benefits of thrift over extravagance.¹ The rector William Harrison bemoaned the excesses of appearance, for such desire was seen as detrimental to one's character:

Nothing is more constant in England than inconstancy of attire. Oh, how much cost is bestowed nowadays upon our bodies and how little upon our souls! How many suits of apparel hath the one, and how little furniture hath the other! How long time is asked in decking up of the first, and how little space left wherein to feed the latter!²

While Harrison is not explicit here in expressing how his contemporaries proceeded in 'decking up' their bodies, his words rail against the bettering of one's external self rather than the internal.

Similar concerns over outward appearance prevailed on the Continent and advice on the suitable clothing for a courtier is offered in Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (1528), which ties in with ideas of avoidance of excess: 'I would like our courtier's whole outfit to be clean and delicate and to have a certain conformity of modest attire, but not however, of a vain or feminine nature'.³ However, towards the end of this speech, the same speaker, Federico Fregoso, acknowledges the social value of dress in the 16th century and crucially this is essential to understanding early modern attitudes with regard to clothing and jewels. The appearance of an individual reflected on his character and, ultimately, his reception by others: 'He should decide within himself how he wishes to appear and how he would like to be esteemed, through his clothing, and make sure that his clothing helps him to be seen as such even by those who do not hear him speak or act'.⁴

This same paradox is expressed by the early 17th-century writer Patrick Scot in *Omnibus & singulis* (1619), intended to serve as an advice book from a father to his son:

There is nothing whereby the inward disposition of the minde may bee sooner discouered, then by lightnesse or staydnesse of apparell; a phantasticall attyre being a confirmation of an unsettled minde. I doe advise you, not to follow the frantike humours of new Fashions, neither to bee superstitiously, basely, slightly clothed, nor artificially decked; but to vse your clothes in a cleanly, honest, comely, and carelesse forme. [...] it is an equal indiscretion to estimate a man's worth, either by his bodie or clothes; yet on the other side it is an ineuitable certaintie, that not only the common people and strangers, but euen wisemen are mooued and stirred vp with outward shewes, and their minde (according to those exterior things) prepared to receiue a deepe impression of liking or disliking, fauour, or disfauour, reuerence or carelesse retchlesnesse.⁵

Negotiating the difficult path between appropriate external manifestations and excessive consumption was challenging and potentially hazardous, as too little outward show could reflect poorly on a man's character and impact on his good standing in the community, but conversely

negative opinions could be formed from overt displays. This second view is articulated effectively by the author Robert Greene, in his role as arbitrator in a duel of words between the characters identified only as Cloth Breeches and Velvet Breeches. He describes seeing the figure of a man approaching them:

Apparelled, in a blacke Taffata doublet, and a spruce Leather Jerkin, with Christall buttons, a Cloake fac't afore with Ueluet, and a Couentry cap of the [...] nest wooll: [...] This fiery fac't Churle had upon his fingers as many gold Rings as would furnish a Goldsmiths shop, or beseeume a Pandor of long profession to weare.⁶

It emerges that this character is a pawnbroker, and so clearly the author is commenting that only a man of disrepute would choose to clothe and adorn himself in such a fashion.

However, the use of fashionable clothing and jewels could be employed to one's benefit. Thomas A. King in *The Gendering of Men* (2004) locates the figure of the courtier in a position of subjection to the sovereign. Sartorial display became a necessary means to attract royal favour. Emulative practice in consumption of dress and jewels was therefore both flattering to the sovereign and helped establish a courtier's place within court hierarchies.⁷

Sumptuary legislation was designed to restrict the consumption of specific types of goods by particular classes. An increase in the availability of luxury goods, due to an expansion in commerce and a greater amount of wealth accessible to non-elites within the early modern period, meant that it was necessary to impose laws to maintain degrees of distinction. Unsurprisingly, clothing and adornment were often the focus of these laws, since these had the ability to subvert social mores and undermine systems of hierarchy. Legislation, then, seemed to concern itself with ensuring that people dressed according to their status.⁸ Martha C. Howell observes that 'men were every bit as devoted to extravagant dress as women were. Indeed, most laws showed more consternation with men's dress than with women's'.⁹ This certainly appears to be true in the case of a proclamation issued by Elizabeth I on 12 February 1565 due to the 'excesse in Apparell, both contrary to the Lawes of the Realm, and to the Disordre and Confusion of the Degrees of all States (wherin alwayes diversity of Apparell hath taken place) and fynally to the Subversion of all good Ordre'.¹⁰ This document cites earlier laws set out in the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary I (r. 1553–1558) and adds new regulations from Elizabeth, such as the following:

It is furdre ordrid, That no Man under the Degree of a Barons eldist Sonne, except that he be of the Ordre of the Garter, or of the Pryvy Counsell, or that may dispend fyve hundred Marks by Yere for Tearme of Lyfe in Possession above all Charges, shall weare any Velvet, or Sattin, or any Stuffe of lyke or greater Price in the Upperstocks of his Hose, or in any part therof; or shall garnishe the same with any Embroderye, or any Fringe, Lace, or Passemayn of Gold, Silver, or Silke, nor any other Garnishing with any Silke, except it be for the stitching of the upper part to the Lying. Nor shall weare any manner of silke Netherstocks of Hosen, nor any Carsey or other Things made out of the Queens Majesties Domyinions.¹¹

Clearly the concern was that dress had the ability to form an identity and that, in the wearing of certain fabrics, distinctions of class and rank would be disrupted. These laws were nonetheless prescriptive and while they are indicative of what was prohibited, they usually stemmed from a need to curb habits that were being practised.

Axiomatic is the paradoxical attitude towards consumption of dress and jewels throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. There was an inherent desire to adorn one's self and this was articulated not just through clothing and fabrics, but also with jewels. Despite these concerns, men did participate in this aspect of material culture. This section locates adornment on the male body, reconnecting jewellery with dress and also considering how men chose to represent themselves on canvas. Buttons, points, hooks and other small wares were designed to be portable; they were easily transferred from one garment to another or taken off to act as currency or as a pawn.

By the 16th century male dress required numerous mechanisms for holding the various pieces of a garment together. Buttons (discussed within this section) allowed for tight, form-fitting closings and could be found on doublets, sleeves and breeches. Parts of a man's clothing, including breeches, doublets, stockings and sleeves, were attached with ribbons or strings that required aglets to ease their passage into openings, while hooks and pins performed similar functions. Even when ties were replaced with hooks, garments still displayed elaborate ribbons on their exterior. Whether or not they had a practical function, the decorative nature of many surviving examples of objects such as these indicates that they were worn as embellishments, while their frequency within elite inventories suggests that they were often among a gentleman's most valued possessions. But when worn only in combination with items of clothing, these objects are often appended to publications about dress history and ignored within the context of jewellery.

Among the most elaborate of these decorative items, worn at all levels of society but with very different levels of craftsmanship and materials, were the badges attached to men's hats. The history of the hat ornament is a pan-European one and so, in the discussion that follows, the focus shifts from England to consider this wider Continental fashion. Many of these ornaments for the hat are emblematic in nature and those that are not nevertheless demonstrate either political allegiances, religious affiliation or offer some indication about the identity of the wearer. There is sufficient extant material evidence to show that these types of jewels, which were affixed to hats and clothing, were worn by men of differing social classes. This allows for an investigation into the elite and non-elite wearing of jewels. In turn this suggests that jewels held multiple meanings for their owners, and while monetary value cannot be underestimated, these jewels also had key religious, political and social connotations. We start though by looking at how men wished to be seen by their contemporaries (and beyond) through the medium of portraiture.

Chapter 3

Portraits of Men

Constructing the male image

Surviving portraiture from the early modern period remains an invaluable resource, providing information on an individual's physical appearance and also depicting, mostly with great accuracy, contemporary clothing and jewels. Nevertheless it was a highly mediated art form and, crucially, what is displayed within the space of the painting is an image that the person wished to convey.¹ Very often, the sitter chose to be portrayed in their best clothing and jewels and so this bias must be considered when using this medium as a source.

Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass have identified that the commissioning of a portrait was often undertaken to commemorate key moments in a person's life. They discuss the transformation that is recorded: 'a monarch into an icon, a courtier into the queen's champion, an English aristocrat into a Persian ambassador, a citizen into a gentleman'.² More important than the likeness of the face were the clothing and jewels, for they had the ability to construct the individual's external, and by extension internal, frame.

There is, of course, nothing new about the use of clothing and jewels as a mode of self-expression and this can be witnessed as far back as the Bronze Age. Paul Treherne has conducted a study of the figure of the male warrior, while Marie Louise Stig Sørensen has investigated the construction of identity in this early prehistoric setting.³ Sørensen's concept is of the 'readability' of appearance as 'it contains codes that can be investigated'.⁴ At the other end of the chronological scale, Simon Fraser has assessed how American rap artists have introduced the appropriation of certain types of jewellery among young males, to be readily identifiable as a distinct group.⁵

The early modern period was certainly no different in this respect. Jones and Stallybrass discuss the connotation behind the word 'investiture', defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as 'the action of clothing or robing', and state that it was 'the means by which a person was given a form, a shape, a social function'.⁶ While Jones and Stallybrass focus more specifically on dress than on jewels, they note that their ideas can be translated to almost any item that is worn on the body.⁷

In a satirical comment on the way in which the Englishman fashioned himself in various foreign ways but had no distinct identity to call English, the physician Andrew Boorde (c. 1490–1549) observed how the male image could be constructed. Boorde's view on the figure of the Englishman is of a naked individual carrying shears and cloth, able to fashion himself according to his changing whims and desires.⁸ The underlying fear expressed is of a threat to national identity, aided by an influx of foreign goods, an idea that was developed by Sir Thomas Smith (1513–1577) in his *Discourse of the Commonweal* (published in 1581).⁹

In his noted 1583 publication *The Anatomie of Abuses*, the English Puritan writer Philip Stubbes (c. 1555–after 1610) condemns the sinful nature of apparel. For Stubbes it is the 'wearyng of Apparrell more gorgeous, su[m]ptuous, and precious the[n] our state, callinge, or condition of life requireth' that leads to pride.¹⁰ Jones and Stallybrass have understood his words to mean that clothing 'has the power



Figure 20 Workshop associated with 'Master John', *King Edward VI*, c. 1547, oil on panel, 155.6 x 81.3cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 5511

to constitute an essence'.¹¹ The poet and administrator Edmund Spenser (1552?–1599), writing towards the end of the 16th century, also promoted the notion that a man's clothing affected his behaviour: 'their conditions are oftentimes governed by their garments [...] there is not little in the garment to the fashioning of the minde and conditions'.¹² In Europe too these ideas were present and following a visit by the Italian humanist Gian Giorgio Trissino (1478–1550) to the *studiolo* and *grotta* of the Marchioness of Mantua, Isabella d'Este (1474–1539), he chose to describe her character in terms of her personal adornment: 'Her true liberality can be understood by the splendour of her dress, the magnificent décor of the house, and by the beautiful – one might almost say, divine – fabrics with which the whole is adorned'.¹³

Returning now to thinking more specifically about portraiture, according to Patricia Fumerton the noted limner Nicholas Hilliard (1547?–1619) used the face purely as a background for the ornaments, over which he took great pains to depict as accurately as possible.¹⁴ Fumerton also highlights the fact that Hilliard created new techniques in his painted miniatures that allowed him to replicate precisely the gemstones and precious metals of jewelled

objects.¹⁵ It was perhaps Hilliard's training as a goldsmith that prompted him to take such care over the ornamentation within the frame, but the detailed rendering of these decorative features reflects an understanding by Hilliard that 'the outer layers of artifice and ornament in a limning were the unavoidable thoroughfare to the inner, truthful self'.¹⁶ In this period, then, the identity of an individual represented and immortalised through portraiture was essentially 'composed through textiles and jewels, [it was] fashioned by clothes'.¹⁷ Thus jewelled objects on the surface were not mere ornamentation in paint, just as they were not mere ornamentation when worn on the body.

As stated above, portraiture relied on assumptions that an individual's outward appearance had the ability to convey information about the sitter's inner state. Lawrence Stone has noted that, 'Noblemen and gentlemen wanted above all formal family portraits [...] symptoms of the frenzied status-seeking and ancestor worship of the age. What patrons demanded was evidence of the sitter's position and wealth by opulence of dress, ornament and background'.¹⁸ Convention demanded that it was the accoutrements of a portrait that provided clues as to the identity, occupation and status of the sitter.¹⁹

Portraits should also be viewed within a context of remembrance, both during and after one's life: 'Many of the central social practices of the early modern period, from publishing books to commissioning portraits, become more intelligible when they are seen as the product of this concern with posthumous reputation'.²⁰ Portraiture of the elite, men and women in court circles, was popular during the reign of Henry VIII. Later in the 16th century, this art form became increasingly adopted by members of an urban elite, keen to leave a lasting legacy of their wealth and status.²¹ The author of the royal entertainment performed at Mitcham in Surrey in 1598 noted that 'now every citizen's wife that wears a taffeta kirtle and a velvet hatt [...] must have her picture in the parlour'.²² Rather than seeing this as mere emulation of the elite, these ordinary citizens wished to also participate in the rhetoric of self-display and remembrance, just as men across all social levels chose to perform their masculinity through their jewellery and not only in imitation of wealthier and more noble men.

The jewels depicted in portraiture are accurate renderings of extant pieces and these descriptions match closely what we read in contemporary documents, such as inventories or wills. The paintings also provide an important visual record of how a man wore his jewellery: where on the body certain jewels were placed; how the jewels were worn in combination with each other; and how the jewels engaged with the clothing that also adorned the male body. The discussion that follows provides commentary on the portraits of four 16th-century elite men, including the royal figure of Edward VI. In the paintings of the young king and Sir Christopher Hatton we see how the jewels that are discussed in later chapters – hat ornaments and dress accessories – were positioned on the body to contribute to the overall effect of a glittering garment. The role of the ring, an object type that as we shall see could embody a number of narratives depending on context or use, is considered in an intriguing portrait of Sir Henry Lee (1533–1611), Elizabeth I's first Champion, an office from which



Figure 21 Detail of Figure 20 showing various types of hat ornaments, including the pairs of aglets at the base of the cap

he resigned in 1591. The final portrait returns to a man whose household inventory was discussed in Chapter 2, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. The visual evidence presented supports the documentary sources, showing an individual who owned many jewels and wore them to reflect his station but with propriety and not excess. The portraits here offer carefully constructed images, each with a strict agenda, whether that be political (Edward VI), to show royal favour (Hatton), a possibly coded amatory declaration (Lee), or, more simply, a symbol of remembrance (Pembroke).

Edward VI

A painting of Edward VI, believed to have been made shortly after his accession, shows that from top to bottom the clothing and bodies of elite and royal men were studded with metallic, decorative items (**Fig. 20**). The stance of the young king, aged only nine when he succeeded his father, is in deliberate mimicry of Henry VIII as he appeared in a now lost, life-sized wall mural painted by Hans Holbein the Younger for the Palace at Whitehall, and completed in 1537. All that remains of this is the preparatory drawing in black ink and watercolour for the left-hand side of the mural, which shows Henry VIII facing in the opposite direction to Edward.²³ A later, and much smaller, copy of the entire mural was produced for Charles II (r. 1660–1685) by the Flemish artist Remigius van Leemput (1607–1675).²⁴ That Edward chose to copy his father's strong posturing for this early portrait as king shows he was aware of his precarious position of ruling as a minor and so this painting is clearly politically charged.

Edward's black bonnet is decorated with a number of jewels: small, gold, rectangular pieces that are each set with a precious gemstone, possibly a ruby, encircle the hat; gold tags are sewn between these gem-set jewels; three pairs of gold aglets are visible at the base of the cap; and a larger, oval-shaped gold medallion to which is affixed a feather completes the embellishment at the top of the body. Displayed proudly around his neck is a gold and enamelled collar with its Great George pendant associated with the Order of the Garter, of which, as the sovereign, he was now head. In his right hand Edward holds a sheathed, gilded dagger. Pairs of gold tags or laces fasten the material where there is slashing to his richly embroidered red cloak.

The aglets that have been placed in pairs around the base of Edward's cap may have been similar to a Treasure find from the Thames foreshore (**Figs 21–2**). Aglets were purely decorative items, worn in pairs to embellish hats and doublets.²⁵ This particular piece takes on the form of a cylinder with ridged and grooved decoration that tapers



Figure 22 Two views of a gold aglet with ridge and pellet decoration, found in Greenwich, Greater London, first half of 16th century, English, length 14.177mm; width at the open end: 5.08mm; diameter: 3.98mm; weight: 0.54g. British Museum, 2013,8036.1

slightly to its closed end. A band of pellets circles the open end. The closed end terminates in a filigree cage shaped like a six-petalled flower. It has an overall length of 14.2mm, with a diameter of 4mm and width at its open end of 5.1mm, and it weighs 0.5g. So these were small, delicate pieces that would not have weighed down the wearer, even when they were placed in relatively great numbers on the body.

Sir Christopher Hatton

The gold hooks, possibly each set centrally with a pearl, that cover the cloak and hose worn by Sir Christopher Hatton provide the only ornamentation to the otherwise plain, black fabric (**Fig. 23**). As with Edward, Hatton wears an oval-shaped, gold emblematic hat jewel with a gold frame studded with diamonds and rubies. This is placed prominently at the front of his cap and from it protrudes a large, white feather. The base of his cap is set all around with gold, square-shaped ornaments alternately studded with a pearl and ruby. At his neck hangs a gold chain formed of three strands of links, interspersed with pearls and enamelled plaques. At the

Figure 23 Unknown artist, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, probably 17th century, based on a work of 1589, oil on panel, 78.7 x 65.9mm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 2162





Figure 24 Anthonis Mor, *Sir Henry Lee*, 1568, oil on panel, 64.1 x 53.3cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 2095

base of this chain hangs a cameo portrait of Queen Elizabeth I, which Hatton holds in his right hand and pushes towards the gaze of the viewer. The image of the queen depicted in this portrait is strikingly similar to one that appears on an onyx cameo dating to the later years of the 16th century, suggesting that this was the image of herself that Elizabeth wished to circulate at this time.²⁶ Both images make reference to profiles of Roman emperors, alluding then to the queen's authority and power. The cameo, carved from a dark-coloured hardstone, is set within an elaborate gold frame decorated with dozens of diamonds and some rubies. At the bottom, hangs a pear-shaped pearl.²⁷ The jewel as a whole stands out clearly against the whiteness of Hatton's hand. That Hatton almost forces this jewel upon the viewer's gaze suggests that it might have been an important gift from the queen, with whom he enjoyed a close relationship, or indeed it may have been an affirmation of this special bond that he had with Elizabeth. So although the jewel has clear financial value, its true worth lay in what it represented to Hatton, as a courtier with particular royal favour.

Sir Henry Lee

A portrait of Sir Henry Lee, the queen's Champion, is puzzling for the inclusion of three rings that are not worn as we would customarily expect (**Fig. 24**). Lee's look is a sombre one and at his neck is a red cord, onto which is strung a gold, gem-set ring. His left thumb is placed within this ring. Another ring, set with a point-cut diamond, appears on his left sleeve just above the elbow, also held in position by a red cord. The third is on a cord tied to his left wrist. The portrait was painted when Lee was in Antwerp by the artist Anthonis Mor (1516–1575/6) in 1568, as is evident



Figure 25 English school (?), *William Herbert*, 1560s. Private collection

from a signature on the lower-right corner of the panel: 'Antonius mor pingebat ao 1568'. It has been suggested that the ring on the thumb may make reference to bonds of love or friendship between Lee and Edward, 3rd Baron Windsor (1532–1574), who accompanied Lee to Antwerp, as there is a portrait of him also with his thumb through a ring.²⁸ While this may be the case, another supposition can be considered. There is considerable visual evidence for the wearing of rings on the thumb, although many of these portraits are of women.²⁹ The poet Samuel Butler (bap. 1612, d. 1680) seems to suggest in his 17th-century satirical text *Hudibras* that wedding rings may have been worn in this way.³⁰ Could the ring worn on the thumb here represent Lee's unhappy marriage to the Catholic Anne Paget (d. 1590)? Perhaps it was given by Anne to her husband as he toured the Continent, as a token of remembrance. He holds his thumb in it to show that he is married, as an act of duty, but it is perhaps the ring on his sleeve that represents his strong and unwavering love (manifest in the chosen stone of a diamond) for another, Anna Vavasour (fl. 1580–1621).³¹ In fact, after the death of Lee's wife, the two began to live together, flaunting



Figures 26–7 (left and above) Details of Figure 25 showing the gold and gem-set jewels that decorate Pembroke's clothing and cap, his Lesser George pendant, the gold strap-end on his belt and his ornamented sword-hilt

their disreputable relationship. Lee's commitment to another woman, Queen Elizabeth, as her Champion, is also manifest in this painting, with the true lovers' knots and armillary spheres – personal emblems of the queen – prominent on his sleeves. It is impossible to say with certainty what the meaning behind this portrait is but clearly the viewer is meant to pause and consider carefully this very deliberate act of Lee, with a ring on his thumb and another two on his sleeve.

William Herbert

Two virtually identical paintings of William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke, provide visual evidence for the types of jewels that are listed in Pembroke's household inventory of 1561.³² One painting hangs in the collection of the Earl of Pembroke at Wilton House, Wiltshire, while the other is now in a private collection (Figures 25–7).³³ The discussions that follow concern the latter portrait. The painting itself is dated 1567 but this appears to be a later addition. The frame accompanying the piece has a date inscribed of 1561. A dating to the decade of the 1560s would not be altogether unreasonable, given that Pembroke was nearing the end of his life. The household inventory was taken in 1561, presumably allowing Pembroke to take stock of his affairs. It is not altogether unlikely that he would choose to commission a portrait at a similar time, as a form of remembrance.

The household inventory does list a number of paintings belonging to Pembroke and these are all found within the section taken at Baynard's Castle on 6 January 1561 by Thomas Freman.³⁴ After a long history, with records showing a castle on the site dating back to the late 11th century and subject to rebuilding many times over the years, this building on the bank of the Thames and nestled between Blackfriars and St Paul's Cathedral became a royal residence under Henry VII. Henry VIII then seemed to gift

this palace to his many wives in turn. Eventually, it passed into the hands of Pembroke, whose wife Anne was sister to Henry's last wife, Katherine Parr. The portraits of Pembroke recorded here are described as 'Therle of Pembroke', 'The picture of my Lorde and Higat holdinge his horse' and 'My Lordes pictures – ii'.³⁵ As this shows, apart from the painting with a horse that we can rule out, no details are given on the other two that would allow for identification of either surviving portrait in the inventory.

As the earlier examination of Pembroke's household inventory demonstrated, the earl's ownership was centred mostly on buttons, Garter jewels and rings. What this portrait reveals is that, despite an impressive collection of jewellery as befitting his wealth and status, Pembroke chose to portray a carefully constructed image that allowed him to maintain a sense of propriety, and not excess, through his jewels. At the apex of his body, Pembroke has a cap band encircling his bonnet. The band is formed of gold quatrefoils, each set with a pearl and a central ruby, and joined by pearls. The band is further embellished with a feather aigrette. Pembroke's doublet is adorned with 22 buttons, possibly gold with black silk or black enamelling. Around his neck, he wears a gold necklace set with diamonds, pearls and rubies. At the base of this there is a Lesser George pendant, with the figure of George on horseback placed within a frame set with table-cut diamonds from which hangs a pendant of five diamonds and a pear-shaped red stone, possibly a ruby. The frame is flanked by two figures, which may be nymphs or satyrs. The black fabric of Pembroke's cloak is studded with gold ornaments set with a red gemstone. These may have been described by the appraisers as 'buttons'. Further embellishment is seen on the hilt of the sword at his side, on his belt with its gold strap-end and on his gem-set garter.

Many of the jewels visible in this portrait are not isolated examples, for we know from Pembroke's inventory that he owned vast quantities of jewels and that much of his clothing was adorned with glittering pieces. The extracts below give only a snapshot of the range of jewelled goods owned by Pembroke and how his clothing was adorned all over:

Item a dublett of taffata garded all over with velvett with parcement lace laied upon the garde with iiii dosen golde buttons and a pearle on euery button, white and blacke enameled.³⁶

Item a cote of black satten furred with calibre and edged with sables with iiii dosen viii buttons, black enameled with the garde sutelike to the cape.³⁷

Item a cappe of blacke velvett with a faire brooche hauinge a fier of rubies and a table diamonde sett with xxxii golde buttons with iiii perles on euery button and xxix small buttons white enameled with a fine bande of perle aboute the said cappe.³⁸

Item an arminge sworde with a paier of hiltes of silver and gilte, the handell an agate with skaberd and girdell of velvett.³⁹

The inventory is full of such examples, showing just how vibrant and glistening his wardrobe must have been. While it is not yet possible to identify the items in the portrait as any listed in the household inventory that is not to say that those jewels depicted were not the property of Pembroke. The descriptions of the jewels were made by a number of individuals entrusted with the task of recording all household goods belonging to Pembroke and, as such, are subject to an individual's interpretation. So, the jewels we see on the canvas might be included in the inventory but not described

as we would expect to see. Also, the inventory can only ever provide information on objects that were present at the time of its recording. The objects in the painting may have been elsewhere. Indeed, without being able to date the portrait conclusively, it may be that the jewelled goods portrayed were purchased after 1561 and before the date of the painting.

Concluding remarks

What is evident from the Pembroke portrait and his inventory, as with the paintings of Edward VI and Hatton, is that ownership and consumption of jewels were not inappropriate for a man in the early modern period. The fluid integration of jewels and gemstones with the clothing and bodies of these men enhances the overall image portrayed. While there are numerous pieces that adorn the dress of Hatton and Pembroke, these outward displays do not appear excessive or wasteful. In pictorial representations of royal figures such as Edward VI and courtiers like Hatton or Pembroke, we can presume with some certainty (based on evidence from documentary sources) that the jewels they wore were made of precious materials: gold and gemstones. So too were the decorative embellishments that punctuated their clothing made of gold. Yet comparable silver and silver-gilt examples of decorative dress accessories that have come to light in recent years, having been reported as Treasure as we shall see in the following chapter, now provide us with strong evidence in favour of these objects being worn by men (and indeed women) outside of elite courtly or wealthy urban contexts through cheaper, and therefore more widely accessible, versions.

Chapter 4

'Three Houres a Buttoning': Embellishing Male Dress

A range of objects embellished male clothing in the early modern period. Since many of these, such as buttons, dress-hooks, tags and aglets, are considered as appendages to dress, they have been studied typically within the context of dress history. Nonetheless, these items were usually the product of goldsmiths' work; they were transferable between clothing and thus constitute personal adornment. However, for the most part they do not appear in publications on jewellery history. The noted historian Maria Hayward is one of the few scholars to have paid careful attention to these objects, since they are often found in inventory listings of clothing and textiles that she uses in her work.¹ Here, we reconnect dress accessories to both the male body and to the broader context of the jewellery that men wore, with specific reference to buttons. By using finds reported as Treasure to the British Museum, it is possible to demonstrate that these glittering, decorative jewels were adopted by a broader section of the male population than is perhaps suggested by portraiture and inventories of wealthy individuals. Archaeological data is also integrated through reference to base-metal items recorded in the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. Indeed, archaeological finds from London, in stratified and non-stratified contexts, continue to reveal just how ubiquitous these objects were in the early modern period.

The numerous records of ornaments that literally fell off the clothing of Elizabeth I between 1561 and 1585 show the ease with which such items could become detached from clothing.² This explains the many frequent finds of dress accessories in both archaeological and non-stratified contexts, such as those reported through Treasure. Although these types of objects were easily lost, references to these small-scale jewels in the wills and inventories of early modern men and women underscore their importance as personal goods. They suggest broader meanings for their owners than a purely monetary value. While there is sufficient evidence to show that these embellishments were worn by both sexes, the focus here is to understand specifically what these objects meant to their often overlooked male owners.

Defining dress accessories

Many dress fastenings were worn by women: items such as pins are typically gendered as female, but the focus here is on male use. Men's clothing was ornamented in a number of ways. Many of these decorative objects were functional in nature, since this was a period when clothing was made of detachable parts. These parts were held together by buttons, pins, points, ribbons and hooks and eyes.³ Some accessories were merely ornamental and appear to have had no practical use and this is evidenced by the embellishments that cover Hatton's cloak (see **Fig. 23**). Those ornaments that do have a functional use can be termed collectively as 'dress fastenings', since they did serve to hold clothing together. However, the term 'dress accessories' allows for a wider remit. Nevertheless, this is still limiting for it fails to acknowledge that these items were in fact jewelled possessions. Evidence cited earlier from the records of the Court of Wardens of Goldsmiths' Hall shows that these objects were the products of a goldsmith's output. They



Figure 28 Silver-gilt clasp with hook-and-eye fitting with traces of a green substance, found in Farndon, Nottinghamshire, probably 16th century, English, diameter 8mm. National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum

could be removed and circulated between clothing, and documentary evidence shows that they were bequeathed, which in turn suggests that they had an emotional value and attachment to their owners.

The accounts of Elizabeth's jewels that were lost give evidence for the types of objects that were worn on the body using clothing as a foil. This source is also a useful indicator of those jewels deemed appropriate for a royal body. The original manuscript details the items that left the Wardrobe of the Robes, which was a small subdivision of the Great Wardrobe. In addition to itemising those jewels that were lost from the queen's person it also records material passed to ladies-in-waiting to produce accessories for the queen, material and old garments given to tailors, and gifts of clothing.⁴ According to Janet Arnold, who published this work, the accounts of lost jewels seem to relate to when Elizabeth was on her progresses and would appear to have been added to the day book from notes made on these journeys.⁵

While this source documents 'buttons of golde with diamondes', 'Agletes of gold' enamelled in all manner of colours, 'buttons of gold enameled white and blue' and diamond-set gold clasps, Treasure finds provide material evidence for the wearing of silver and silver-gilt ornaments, and archaeological data record evidence of base-metal examples.⁶ Searches on the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) online database for controlled terms such as 'dress fastener', 'dress-hook' or 'button' give an indication of just how commonplace these items were among ordinary citizens. In recent years there has been an emphasis on ensuring that Treasure finds are also recorded systematically on the database.⁷ Consequently, this makes it much easier to compare like objects regardless of their materiality. Not separating precious metal and non-precious metal objects provides a less anachronistic and false distinction between these ornaments.

A find reported as Treasure certainly had a practical function but the decorative features on its obverse indicate that it was worn in imitation of more costly examples (**Fig. 28**). This silver-gilt fastening comprises a circular face with a cabled border, having an overall diameter of 8mm. The front is decorated with four roundels and within three of these are the remains of a green substance, which is possibly enamel or a paste composition, and probably incorporated to allude to more precious materials. On the reverse a hook has been soldered, which has two loops for sewing to fabric

at the opposite end to the tip. Attached to the hook is an eye-fitting that terminates in two loops. This part would have been affixed to the opposing fabric. It is a somewhat fortunate circumstance that both parts to this fitting have survived adjoined to one another.

Material survivals of buttons

Items such as dress fasteners and dress-hooks have come to light in greater numbers and they are more widely known. Indeed, a selection of dress-hooks is on display within a Tudor context at the British Museum.⁸ Buttons, however, constitute an object type that seems to have been largely neglected, even though London was the principal centre for the trade and manufacture of buttons until the 18th century.⁹ While a search on the PAS database for post-medieval buttons yields over 8,000 results, the Department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory at the British Museum has only 16 buttons in its collections from the period 1501 to 1688.¹⁰ Seven of these are from the collections of the physician and collector Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), whose bequest became the founding collection of the British Museum. First and foremost these seven objects are noted for being an intaglio or cameo and indeed their registration numbers reflect this.¹¹ These objects have then been mounted as buttons. Thus the departmental holdings in effect include just nine buttons: two were discovered (and subsequently acquired) through the Treasure process; two (one of copper and one of pewter) were found in Icklingham, Suffolk and have decorative features to their surfaces; and four came from the Cheapside Hoard.¹² One button of gilt brass can be securely dated from its inscription in Latin: 'LIBERTATIS BRIT: ASSENTOR 1688'.¹³ Depicting the head of a man, it was clearly intended to commemorate William III. The Victoria and Albert Museum fares less well, with the exact same search criteria conducted on the museum's online collection facility producing only a single securely dated result from England: a tin-glazed earthenware button painted with a lion rampant, the letters 'IH' and the date 1651, which was probably made in London.¹⁴ A further example that probably dates to the last quarter of the 17th century is made of woven material over a wooden core.¹⁵

The Museum of London has a vast collection of buttons, comprising the largest of medieval and early modern examples in the country. A search on the museum's online database for the term 'button' and then refined to include

only post-medieval material brings 1,916 records.¹⁶ Many of these buttons were donated to the Museum of London by Tony Pilson (d. 2014) in 2009 along with a vast number of cufflinks.¹⁷ Pilson was a founder member of the Society of Thames Mudlarks, a group of mudlarks that is licensed by the Port of London Authority to search the Thames foreshore for artefacts of potential historical significance.

The buttons in the collection vary in date from the late 14th to the late 19th centuries and a number of materials are represented: silver, pewter and copper alloy, to name just a few. Form, construction and decorative features vary too. Forsyth speculates that these chance finds were presumably as a result of original accidental loss, as men and women travelled on ferries between the two banks of the Thames. Yet this is not sufficient to explain the numbers and variety of finds. She then suggests that they may have been collected from City households as rubbish, since the foreshore was used as a site for the dumping of waste.¹⁸ Unlike the PAS finds, which although recorded and photographed remain dispersed, the Museum of London material is contained together in one institution. This will allow for more scholarly research to be undertaken on this object type, which was undoubtedly an integral part of the dress and adornment of early modern citizens.¹⁹

As evidence of the widespread use of buttons in early modern society by men are those finds recovered from the wreck of the *Mary Rose*, a favourite warship of Henry VIII that sank in the Solent in 1545 and was raised eventually in 1982. The clothing and other ornaments discovered have given us an understanding of the types of goods worn by sailors, soldiers and officers on board the ship, thus allowing for a less elite perspective on these types of objects. At least 30 buttons were found within the wreck.²⁰

Many of these buttons comprised sets that can be associated with particular garment types. The majority are made of wood with a silk covering. Four of these are spherical in form and are covered with red silk in a herringbone weave.²¹ They were discovered in an area of the ship that possibly once housed the officers. They were a rather gruesome discovery, since they were attached to a disintegrated garment with threads of red silk that were in turn found on the spine from a skeleton.²² Contemporary sumptuary laws permitted the use of red silk only by a knight or the son of a lord, which could be taken as evidence of the high status of the original owner, but it is important to consider that sumptuary legislation could be, and often was, flaunted.²³ In addition to the textile-covered wooden buttons, two examples are made of leather.²⁴ Seven buttons were found still connected to three jerkins, while a single button was present on each of a shoe and an ankle boot. These finds reveal how commonplace such items were among men in the 16th century and how they were worn and affixed to clothing.²⁵ While these pieces cannot be considered items of jewellery in the strictest sense, they nevertheless constituted personal adornment that served both a functional and ornamental use.

The quantity of archaeological material has allowed for type series of buttons to be made and the mudlark Brian Read has published his findings to assist with dating and identification. For the post-medieval period Read defines 24



Figure 29 Attributed to Steven van der Meulen, *Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester*, c. 1560–5, oil on oak panel, 91.2 x 71cm. The Wallace Collection, P534

typologies, ranging from ‘cast one-piece copper-alloy buttons with integral drilled shanks’, mostly cast with relief decoration, to ‘die-stamped composite three-piece sheet copper-alloy buttons with separate soldered drawn copper alloy wire shanks’, mostly with engraved decoration.²⁶ Excavations in London, undertaken as part of the London Bridge City redevelopment from 1986 to 1999, yielded a number of base-metal buttons, including copper-alloy pieces with either solid cast heads or sheet heads, and lead/tin examples with solid heads and integral loops for attachment.²⁷

Archaeological finds of buttons made of base metal, as are reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme, in the Museum of London’s collection and elsewhere, seem to outweigh their precious-metal counterparts despite pictorial evidence demonstrating that these objects were used by male courtiers. The richest source of material evidence for the period comes from a Continental context: the *Girona* (see pp. 5–7). Eighteen gold buttons were recovered from this wreck site. While they are now in various states of condition – most are misshapen or flattened and some have worn surface decoration – it has been possible to identify those that were once originally part of a set and thus worn together.²⁸ Their existence within this context provides sufficient evidence for elite male use in Spain.

The quantities of base-metal buttons discovered in England and the gold examples from the *Girona* would indicate that English male courtiers also possessed gold or silver buttons and the overall appearance may have been akin to that of the image of the courtier and favourite of Elizabeth I, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (**Fig. 29**). The



Figure 30 (left) Hans Holbein the Younger, drawing for a button decorated with six fishes, from the 'Jewellery Book', c. 1532–43. British Museum, SL,5308.132

Figure 31 (right) Hans Holbein the Younger, drawing for an ornate button set with a table-cut stone within open foliated scrollwork, from the 'Jewellery Book', c. 1532–43. British Museum, SL,5308.18

front of Leicester's doublet is closed with fastenings or buttons with either a cluster of pearls or white enamelled knops placed within gold settings. Similar ornaments are used to hold together the opposing sides of his slashed sleeves in a decorative fashion.

In the inventory of jewels belonging to Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, which was discussed in Chapter 2, is a section detailing those jewels that remained at the time unpaid but that the prince had agreed upon. These items include 'Fyften dissonne of gold buttons with a Dyamant in top of everie one of them for his highnes owne wearing'.²⁹ Among the drawings of jewels by Holbein in the 'Jewellery Book' are three small circular designs that were probably intended as buttons and further designs for five more ornate buttons (**Figs 30–1**).³⁰ These drawings probably represent

jewels owned or commissioned by Henry VIII and, as such, are an important visual source for documenting high-status objects that are no longer extant. The design on the button in **Figure 31** could represent one similar to that on buttons owned by Henry Frederick.

According to Jones and Stallybrass, in the 16th century there was a notable increase in the use of buttons by men and not just among courtiers. They cite an excerpt from *The Old Law*, a play published in the mid-17th century, in which a courtier derides the fact that older men were participating in fashion: 'They love a doublet thats three houres a buttoning'.³¹ Visible on a portrait of the courtier Henry Carey (1526–1596), 1st Baron Hunsdon, which is dated 1591 when Carey was 66 years of age, are at least 20 gold filigree buttons.³²

Table 4 Breakdown of buttons, cufflinks and dress accessories reported as Treasure from September 1997 to the end of 2009

Treasure Annual Report	Buttons	Cufflinks	Dress accessories	Total post-medieval finds declared to be Treasure ³³
1997–1998	2	1	0	23
1998–1999	0	0	17	78
2000	2	0	15	65
2001	2	0	5	49
2002	1	0	13	44
2003	5	0	14	100
2004	10	0	30	116
2005–2006	31	1	73	136
2007	0	1	6	195
2008	5	1	21	207
2009	12	15	32	202

Table 5 Dress accessories reported as Treasure from September 1998 to the end of 2009

Treasure Annual Report	Dress accessories	Composition
1998–1999	17	Dress-hook (17)
2000	15	Dress-hook (14); aglet (1)
2001	5	Dress-hook (5)
2002	13	Dress-hook (10); tag dress fitting (1); hooked tag (1); hooked fastener (1)
2003	14	Dress-hook (12); dress fitting (2)
2004	30	Dress-hook (24); dress mount (3); dress fitting (2); eyelet (1)
2005–2006	73	Dress-hook (54); dress fitting (9); eyelet (6); dress accessory (3); mount (1)
2007	6	Hooked clasp (5); dress-hook loop (1)
2008	21	Dress-hook (11); dress clasp loop (1); dress fitting (5); mount (2); clasp (1); lace tag (1)
2009	32	Dress-hook (11); dress fitting (7); hooked tag (7); dress fastener (4); clasp (1); hook (1); eyelet (1)

<i>Treasure Annual Report</i>	Crowned hearts	Conjoined hands above paired hearts and crowned	Flaming heart pierced by arrows	Total buttons reported
2001	1	0	0	2
2003	1	0	0	5
2004	2	0	3	10
2005–2006	11	2	6	31
2008	1	1	1	5

Table 6 Buttons with motifs associated with the marriage of Charles II and Catherine of Braganza



Figure 32 Silver button stamped on the obverse with two hearts surmounted by a crown, found in an unknown parish, Norfolk, late 17th to 18th century, English, diameter 16mm. Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, 2008.507



Figure 33 Silver button in three pieces stamped on the obverse with conjoined hands over two hearts and surmounted by a crown, with a shank on the reverse, found in Dunham on Trent, Nottinghamshire, c. 1675–c. 1700, English, diameter 15.8mm, weight 1.04g. Bassetlaw Museum, Retford

Less grand than the jewels depicted by Holbein are those buttons that are reported as Treasure. They represent ownership and consumption at a level higher than the archaeological material found in the Museum of London collections or recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. However, the numbers of buttons in the Treasure reports constitute a relatively small proportion of overall post-medieval Treasure finds (**Table 4**). This trend appears to have continued in the years since the original data were first acquired. For example, in 2021 the online database records a total of 146 post-medieval finds declared as Treasure with only three of these being listed as buttons. Even when in 2011 there are 19 recorded finds of buttons, proportional to the total recorded post-medieval finds which number 1,256, the figure is low.³⁴

Table 4 includes a separate field for cufflinks, since it seems to be significant that in the report of 2009 there are 15 post-medieval finds reported. This is a substantial increase on previous years, when either a single instance was recorded or none at all. This could be as a result of the biases inherent in metal-detecting practices, in particular recovery, reporting and recording, or, alternatively, this could be due to better recognition.³⁵ In the years since original data acquisition, there is a significant increase in the number of cufflinks recorded as Treasure with a mean of c. 24 in the years from 2010 to 2021.³⁶ It should be noted that cufflinks do not appear until the late 17th century and so are outside the period covered by this book, but they remain an interesting form of male dress accessory.³⁷ It is clear from the same table that, overall, buttons are not as frequently found as other types of dress accessories. Apart from the 2005–2006 period when they constituted almost 23 per cent of all post-medieval finds, on the whole precious-metal examples of this object type do not appear to be particularly common. This is somewhat startling when contrasted with the archaeological

material cited above but it could simply raise more issues of biases within the dataset that begin with initial loss or discard of the material culture.³⁸

The term ‘dress accessory’ used in the table covers a broad remit and excludes any items that have been widely accepted as for female use, such as dress pins. It does not include cap-hooks, as these are a distinct category that is dealt with in the next chapter. The exact composition of the groups of dress accessories for each year they are reported as Treasure is detailed in **Table 5**.

By far the most prolific designs, which appear mainly as stamped decoration on the obverse of Treasure buttons, probably date from after 1625 since they have possible associations with the marriage of Charles II to Catherine of Braganza (1638–1705) in 1662.³⁹ There are three distinct types represented in the Treasure reports from 1998 to 2009 (see **Table 6**): two hearts (sometimes conjoined) crowned (**Fig. 32**); joined hands above two hearts, which are surmounted by a crown (**Fig. 33**); and a single flaming heart pierced by two crossed arrows (**Fig. 34**).⁴⁰ These same motifs recur in seven examples of buttons recorded as Treasure from 2010 to 2016, inclusive. There is only one minor



Figure 34 Silver button stamped on the obverse with a flaming heart pierced by two arrows, and a shank and loop attachment on the reverse, found in Little Hampden, Buckinghamshire, late 17th century, English, diameter 13mm. Bucks County Museum

variation in one design, with a single heart appearing below the crowned conjoined hands.⁴¹

In addition to the figures represented in **Table 6** two cufflinks bear the flaming heart pierced by two arrows and these were reported in the periods 2005–2006 (2006 T499) and 2008 (2008 T741), while one cufflink from the 2007 report has the two hearts crowned motif (2007 T77). Further, two copper-alloy buttons, which were reported in 2004 and subsequently declared not Treasure, are ornamented with conjoined hearts crowned (2004 T212 and 2004 T213).⁴²

These base-metal versions of a popular jewel provide strong evidence for similar fashions being enjoyed across a variety of social levels. So while visual evidence documents elite male use of buttons made from precious metals and materials, surviving objects give proof of consumption lower down the social scale. Simpler silver and silver-gilt examples of buttons may have been worn by middle-class men or urban citizens, while the base-metal pieces were reserved for men of minimal means. That these intrinsically low-value items could be ornamented in a way similar to the precious-metal buttons demonstrates that these were still important objects in a man's possession.

Turning to documents

Buttons were not the only ornament used on male clothing in the early modern period. Clasps and other fastenings did adorn the bodies of men and James Howell's 17th-century dictionary makes reference to a number of items that can be considered as embellishments to male dress. While he is not always detailed, the very fact that he records them under 'Apparel for men' is significant.⁴³ His entries reveal which types of objects were suitable for, and worn by, men in the 17th century. Many of these relate to clothing but jewellery is included and, significantly, dress embellishments and associated verbs feature too: buttons, to button up, to unbutton, button loops, points, the tags of the points, to truss one's points, to untruss, embroidered with jewels and a gold hatband. References to this type of material in wills and inventories provide strong evidence of the ornaments a man may have owned and what meanings they may have embodied.

The post-mortem household inventory of the parliamentarian army officer Robert Devereux (1591–1646), 3rd Earl of Essex, begins with 'An Inventorie of the wearing apparell <w[i]th some other small things {...}>'.⁴⁴ This document sheds light on why these dress accessories have been somewhat neglected by jewellery historians, since it deals predominantly with clothing and textiles and there is no separate section listing jewels. However, there are some entries for jewelled possessions including 'A rich gold & siluer Belt Embroydred' and 'one gold & siluer hatbande'.⁴⁵ Of particular interest is 'A <french> scarlet Cloke lined w[i]th black & w[i]th siluier & gold buttons Clopes'.⁴⁶ Likewise in the post-mortem inventory of Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, a reference to small-scale dress accessories is to be found in among the clothing: 'Item a white sattin dublett unlaced cutt and raced with flowers and silver buttons'.⁴⁷ Further, it is an inventory of the plate owned by the courtier Sir Henry Sidney when he was in Ireland in September 1575 and in the possession of George Arglas that reveals that Sidney had 'Two dozen points with silver tags'.⁴⁸

The inventory of William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke, discussed in Chapter 2, includes a section listing his 'Buttons and aglettes beinge on no garmentes'.⁴⁹ This is particularly interesting because it suggests that these jewels were not associated with specific garments and were considered as moveable objects in their own right, not ornamentation to a specific item of dress. However, there are numerous records of precious metal buttons in the inventory that do appear within the context of clothing. For example, the first jerkin that is listed is described as being of 'white perfumed leather laide on thicke with a lace of black silke, golde and silver, lyned with blacke taffata with xxv knott buttons of golde, white and black enameled'.⁵⁰ Another black satin jerkin is 'sett with ii dosen ii golde buttons snaile fashion, white enameled'.⁵¹ These buttons in the form of a snail also feature on a black satin doublet.⁵²

Pembroke was in possession of a vast array of buttons, which were presumably circulated between his items of clothing. The buttons are listed by type and this indicates that they were worn in sets, with Pembroke owning at least 12:

Vlviii buttons enameled blewe and redde w[i]th iii perles on every button.
Item xxxvi buttons of golde black enameled
Item vi dosen buttons, white and blewe enameled fasshioned like the sonne.
Item iii dosen and x buttons enameled white and black w[i]th iii corners.
Item xlii buttons w[i]th iii perles on every button beinge black enameled.
Item xxii paire of aglettes black enameled
Item lxxviii buttons of golde
Item xxii buttons lesser like vnto the same.
Item iii dosen iiiii buttons enameled white called Pannses made by Denham.
Item v buttons white and black enameled
Item iiiii buttons made like snailles enameled white
Buttons
Item ii dosen viii greate buttons bosselike w[i]th a faire perle on the toppe of every button enameled white black and blewe.⁵³

The fact that the majority of Pembroke's jerkins and doublets had buttons attached to them suggests that these buttons that are not associated with clothing must have been particularly special items. They were presumably affixed to his dress when the occasion demanded it. An alternative possibility is that these buttons were spares, but this does not seem a sufficient explanation for the large numbers contained within most of the sets.⁵⁴

While Pembroke's inventory offers detailed written descriptions of the earl's buttons, a Continental inventory offers a glimpse of the actual form and appearance of these small jewels. Dated 16 December 1577, the inventory records the jewels of Vincenzo Gonzaga (1562–1612), later Duke of Mantua, in the keeping of the engraver Giorgio Ghisi (1520–1582).⁵⁵ Alongside entries such as '24 gold buttons with a ruby in each button', '24 gold buttons with four small rubies on each button' and '53 gold buttons enamelled in black and white' appear sketches of the jewels in question.⁵⁶ Like Holbein's 'Jewellery Book', this source is invaluable for it allows us to visualise the types of objects documented elsewhere, particularly in the absence of surviving examples. It also assists with identifying potential owners for rare

extant pieces, for the 53 gold and enamelled buttons listed in the Gonzaga inventory take on a form that is strikingly similar to a single button recovered from the *Girona* shipwreck (Ulster Museum, BELUM.BGR 33). This in turn suggests strongly that the owner of the *Girona* button was indeed a member of the nobility.

While inventories provide documentary evidence of actual ownership of these smaller jewels, showing that they were deemed worthy enough of recording, wills provide more effective evidence of the range of values that buttons and other dress accessories had for their owners. The will of Robert Steyll, chaplain of St Mary Woolchurch in London, dated 1 August 1510, gives insight into the limited possessions of a religious figure.⁵⁷

There are a number of monetary bequests, ranging from four pence left to Ralph Bransby to £3 6s. 8d., which is given to James Fynard, a citizen and goldsmith of London and one of Steyll's executors. Additionally, Fynard receives Steyll's 'best cap'. These are in addition to a further 20 shillings given to Fynard in his capacity as executor. The second executor, Simon Fowlar, also receives 20 shillings for his role but he too is remembered in the will. He receives from Steyll his 'best cloak and a tippet and two clasps of silver and a breviary'. It is likely that these two clasps were worn exclusively with this best cloak and tippet.⁵⁸ Excepting the monetary gifts the majority of bequests are of clothing, save also for Steyll's bed, its furnishings and chamber hangings, which he leaves to a kinsman by the name of Thomas. It is clear then that Steyll is leaving to his family and friends all that was dear to him. The two silver clasps that Fowlar receives are among the few items listed that are not clothing. A fellow chaplain, John Upton, is fortunate to receive the only other jewel: 'a silver clasp with a crucifix'. The only other object made of precious metal is a silver spoon and this is left to Richard Atkynson, along with a primer of parchment. That Steyll saw fit to bequeath the three silver clasps he owned, rather than having them sold to pay for the provisions in his will, suggests that they were personal to him and that he wished for their reuse by individuals close to him.

In contrast, the parson of Nevendon in Essex, Thomas Awsten, was more concerned over his mother's wellbeing and the vast majority of his estate was left to his brother, Rychard Awstyn, to look after her.⁵⁹ However, Thomas does make two named bequests in his will of 10 July 1518. These are both of a 'tache of sylver and gilt'.⁶⁰ The first is left to provide for his parish church 'for to make a howke for the pyx over the high alter ther'. The second is give to Thomas Tendryng, along with a girdle of black silk. Again, while one of these taches is only considered for its monetary worth, Awsten still sees fit to give one to his acquaintances

rather than take advantage of its fiscal value for his mother's care.

Thomas Bellamy, in his will dated 11 August 1518, leaves his witness Robert Hill his best gown, a gelded colt and a tippet of sarsenet 'with my tache of silver'.⁶¹ Bellamy's occupation is not stated but he bequeaths a number of animals and quantities of hay, which suggests that he was a farmer. The remainder of his named bequests include clothing, bedding and vessels of pewter and these goods indicate that his means were relatively limited. So, along with a single silver spoon bequeathed to his brother, Roger Belamy, the silver tache constituted his only precious metal possession and indeed his only item of jewellery.⁶²

The will of the widow Anie Diryckson, dated 17 September 1541, provides evidence of goods that were presumably the possessions of her late husband in the form of a bequest to a certain Garret Kirickell of 'his unculles beste gowne, beste jacket of worsted, blacke cloke and 40s'.⁶³ So it is unclear whether the bequest of a 'peare of sylver hokes' to her cousin Neskyn were items of her personal use or originally belonged to her husband.

Concluding remarks

While the focus of this chapter has been on buttons, the conclusions that can be drawn apply equally to other small embellishments to dress, such as clasps or hooks. These objects, whether made of precious or base metals, constituted items of jewellery in the early modern period. While they are usually considered in the context of dress history, it is imperative that they are also rewritten into the story of jewellery bringing the two back together. Providing both ornamental and functional use, such items adorned male and female dress but here we have situated them within the context of the male body. The often-gilded silver jewels are so similar in style and form to the gold and gem-set jewels represented pictorially in the paintings of elite Tudor men that it is clear this aesthetic was not the exclusive preserve of courtiers and noblemen. While some buttons or clasps remained only functional, being devoid of ornament, a large number do have engraved or stamped decoration. This shows that function was not the only concern when purchasing such objects. Evidence of these dress accessories in inventories and wills highlights their relative importance. The next chapter continues by looking at the jewels that were worn on the caps of men in the early modern period. Providing a distinctly male aesthetic, these form an interesting category of jewels and there is substantial and varying material evidence to support the adoption of this fashion accessory across all strata of society, from royal and courtly bodies to men of much lesser means.

Chapter 5

Hat Jewels

A male fashion accessory

Item a Cappe of blacke vellat with a brouche of golde enameled sett with a Rock Rubie and a table diamounte with three men and a woman with a Scripture over the Rubie the Cappe garnished with lxxij Buttons of golde in every Button three peerles one <perle> lacking.¹

The 'brouche of golde' listed in the 1547 inventory of Henry VIII is in fact a hat ornament. Although it does not survive, it is clearly a very elaborate and expensive version of a jewel that became highly fashionable in Europe in the 16th century. The noted Florentine goldsmith and sculptor Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1575)² commented on the fashion for the placing of ornaments in the hat in both his autobiography and his treatise on goldsmithing, describing in the latter how they were almost sculptural in the rendering of the figures:

At this time you would use some small medals of gold, upon which each man or gentleman liked to have engraved his whim or device; and they would wear these on their hats.³

And among the other beautiful works in my time it was customary to make certain small medals of the finest gold, to place in the hat or cap; and on these medals you would have made figures of low relief, and of half relief, and completely in the round, such a thing made a very beautiful sight.⁴

Images of Tudor men with jewelled ornaments in their caps provide further evidence of this trend (**Figs 35–6**). The type of hats and caps worn by men in this period were suited for the placing of such jewels. Since women were more accustomed to wearing hoods the tops of their bodies were ornamented in different ways, with pearls very often lining the edges.⁵

Despite their frequent depictions in contemporary images the fashion for the placing of these large, brooch-like (often emblematic) ornaments in the hat had a relatively brief history. When Cellini remarked on their popularity he would have been unaware that by the closing years of the 16th century the emblematic hat ornament would have fallen out of favour with male rulers, courtiers and other male members of society throughout Europe. By investigating the history, use and decline of the hat ornament, it is possible to establish why it was a suitable item of male jewellery, how it was indicative of a strong masculine identity and in what ways this object type supports the hypothesis that in the early modern period jewels had a worth far greater than could be measured in monetary terms.

The adoption of this fashion has been attributed to the entry of the French king Charles VIII (1470–1498) and his men into Naples on 22 February 1495. This claim has been propagated by the only monograph to date on the subject of hat badges written by the late Yvonne Hackenbroch, in which a watercolour pen-and-ink drawing of this event has been published (**Fig. 37**).⁶ The manuscript in which this drawing appears is actually a collection of late medieval works, including three chronicles that were written and illustrated in Naples not long after 1498. The compilations are: *Fasciculus temporum*, which is a summary of world history put together by the German monk Werner Rolevinck; *Cronaca di Partenope*, an anonymous history of Naples from the early medieval period to the start of the 15th century;



Figure 35 Detail of hat ornaments from Figure 23: Unknown artist, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, probably 17th century, based on a work of 1589, oil on panel, 78.7 x 65.9cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 2162



Figure 36 Detail of hat ornaments from Figure 42: Unknown Netherlandish artist, *King Henry VIII*, c. 1520, oil on panel, 50.8 x 38.1cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 4690

Bagni di Pozzuoli, which provides an account of the medicinal baths at Pozzuoli; and an untitled history of Naples dating from 1423 to 1498, referred to as *Cronaca della Napoli aragonese* and authored by an individual with the name of Ferraiolo.⁷

The entire manuscript contains about 150 pen-and-wash drawings and about 120 of these are in the *Cronaca della Napoli aragonese*. The drawing of Charles VIII's entry appears in this last section of the manuscript, which covers folios 84r to 150r. The drawings in this chronicle, which is the only known copy in existence, provide exceptional detail of contemporary people and events.⁸ The image of Charles VIII and his men does not seem to show an oppressive invading force and in fact a description provided by the historian Francesco Guicciardini (1483–1540) of this event seems to suggest that Charles was welcomed.⁹

Adopting a new approach to this period of the Italian Wars, Christine Shaw has identified marked differences relating to Charles's entries into the various Italian states. As he entered Florence and the Papal states, Charles wore 'bejewelled armour'. The image he presented was one of a conqueror and he held his lance ready for battle. In contrast to this, Charles arrived in Naples with a smaller retinue, rode a mule, held a hawk (not a lance) and was clothed in dress more appropriate for the hunt.¹⁰ In part, this may have

been due to the fact that Alfonso II of Naples (1448–1495) had abdicated prior to the arrival of Charles.

The manuscript drawing seems to offer an accurate portrayal of this event (or at least an accurate reflection of the description of the entry), while other drawings in the chronicle appear to document the details of Neapolitan dress and culture with some precision. In fact it has been noted in the supplementary information to the catalogue entry that the abstract designs within the margins of the work are very similar in style to contemporary ornament on works of gold and silver. The author of this text even states that, 'They [the designs] are rendered much more authoritatively and convincingly than the human figures'.¹¹ Thus this work has been seen as a useful and reliable source. In particular, Hackenbroch has used the drawing of Charles's entry as visual evidence for the wearing of ornaments in the hat. Charles is seen with a gold circular badge affixed to the brim of his headgear, while the men accompanying him on horseback have badges on their caps.

Shaw has acknowledged that current scholarship is in favour of the fact that the late 15th-century invasion 'marked a new era in Italian and European history' but she is of the opinion that Charles did not set out with this intention.¹² However, one element that perhaps no one could have



Figure 37 Entry of Charles VIII and his army into Naples, February 1495 from *Cronaca della Napoli aragonese*. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MS M.801, f.109



Figure 38 Lead-alloy medieval pilgrim badge from the shrine of St Thomas à Becket, mid-15th century, English, height 12.4cm, width 3.5cm. British Museum, 2001,0702.7

anticipated was the influence that Charles would have on material cultural in the Italian peninsula and beyond. According to Hackenbroch, the French fashions were admired.¹³ Shaw has highlighted the ‘shock and awe’ that came from the sheer brutality of the French invasion. Yet this incursion had another effect, one not considered by Shaw. It had an impact on the way that men would dress in the future. In particular, the 1495 invasion was influential and pivotal for introducing a new form of jewellery for men: the hat ornament. The 16th-century Italian author Paolo Giovio (1483–1552) commented on the origins of this trend for adorning the hat with jewels, providing further evidence that the spread of this object type originated with the French and their invasion of Italy: ‘But in our times, after the arrival of King Charles VIII and Louis XII into Italy, everyone who was accustomed to following the military, in imitation of the French captains, looked to adorn himself with fine and ostentatious emblems’.¹⁴

Figure 39 Stone mould for a pilgrim badge, 14th century, English, height 9.67cm, width 8.5cm, depth 2.37cm. British Museum, 1890,1002.1



As this indicates, the badge of gold worn by Charles VIII was not intended to be a jewel; rather it was a military badge and its purpose was to allow the king to clearly distinguish himself from his army. Giovio’s words support the fact that this ‘form of masculine adornment not seen before in Italy’ was so admired that these military badges were adapted to reflect humanist thought and Renaissance ideas of self-fashioning.¹⁵ Badges used within a military context prevailed through the 16th century and this can be attested to by a surviving hat ornament worn by a Dutch sailor during the Spanish siege of Leiden, Netherlands, in 1573–4.¹⁶ This silver badge is in the form of a crescent moon engraved with facial features and the curved edge is bordered with an inscription to the obverse and reverse: ‘LIVER TURCX * DAN PAVS’ (Rather Turk than Papist); and ‘EN DESPIY.DELAMES’ (In spite of the Mass). The purpose of an object such as this was to declare Dutch religious sentiment in a conspicuous manner.

Possible precedents to the Renaissance hat jewel

Another group of objects has parallels to the hat ornament and this Renaissance jewel may find its origins in the medieval pilgrim badge (**Fig. 38**). Pilgrim badges served as conspicuous symbols of the holy shrines visited by a pilgrim. The example illustrated here was found in Billingsgate, London, but came originally from the shrine of St Thomas à Becket (1118–1170), Archbishop of Canterbury. Following his martyrdom an altar was placed at the site, which became a focus of pilgrimage. The sword in a sheath was a souvenir pilgrim badge popular in the 14th and 15th centuries.¹⁷ These pilgrim badges were often mass-produced by means of casting moulds. A 14th-century example of a stone mould for a pilgrim badge shows a bishop on horseback, with another figure standing on the ground (**Fig. 39**). These objects were mostly manufactured in base metals, such as pewter or lead, but there are instances of more costly materials being used. Visiting the shrine of Our Lady of Boulogne in 1420, the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, Philip the Good (r. 1419–67) and his first wife Michelle of Valois (1395–1422), acquired 16 silver badges, while on a later visit to the same site in 1456 the Duke’s son by his third wife Charles the Bold (1433–77), Comte de Charolais, bought five gold pilgrim badges.¹⁸ Many extant pieces take on the form of the figures represented on them, although there are pilgrim badges that are circular in form and are similar in appearance to the medal, such as the late-medieval circular, lead-alloy pilgrim badge with a central figure of the head of St John the Baptist.¹⁹

At a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, London, in 1908, Sir John Evans (1823–1908) presented a group of 21 pilgrim badges. He acknowledged a shift in form and type from most pilgrim badges, the latter which he described as being ‘of a totally different character from those that are now exhibited, being formed of lead or pewter, having the devices in relief and, as a rule, the outlines made to follow those of the figures forming the badges’.²⁰ It was noted by the then President of the Society and former Keeper of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography at the British Museum, Sir Charles Hercules Read (1857–1929), that the badges presented by Evans were similar in form to 16th-century hat badges.²¹ The jewels to which Read refers marked a shift from the religious and

military spheres into the secular world. These new ornaments became adopted by men as personal jewels and have been termed *enseignes*.

Re-evaluating our understanding of hat jewels

The nomenclature detailed above has arisen from Hackenbroch's monograph on these jewels but it is misleading.²² The term *enseigne* means 'sign' or 'emblem' and while many of the hat ornaments in portraiture and museum collections do display some iconography or emblematic device to convey the personal intent of the wearer or carry a visible message, there are a great number of hat ornaments that are purely decorative in nature. To ensure that no confusion occurs and that all types of jewel worn in the hat are understood, the broader terms of 'hat ornament' and 'hat jewel' are adopted here.

Hackenbroch's work serves as an excellent visual repository of this object type; it documents and illustrates a large corpus of material existing in many collections around the world. In the vein of the subject revisited in the Postscript in this volume, it is to be noted, though, that a number of the jewels recorded by Hackenbroch have, since publication, been identified as 19th-century fakes. Further, it fails to include all the types of jewels that were worn in the hat by men in the 16th century. In spite of this, Hackenbroch's work has continued to exert influence on this area of scholarship. In describing a Renaissance hat ornament that was to be auctioned at a future sale, the author of the text writes that in the 16th century 'a man of standing might wear a badge on his hat or cap as a status symbol'.²³ Nonetheless, since the implementation of the Treasure Act on 24 September 1997 there has been a significant increase in the number of reported finds of ornaments that were worn in the hat, both emblematic and not. Such finds have allowed for a new understanding of this object type and have offered a different perspective about such items of jewellery than that given by Hackenbroch. As we have seen with regard to other ornaments appended to dress, the Treasure finds have provided material evidence that supports the non-elite wearing of jewels. Later in this chapter, we will see Treasure finds of hat jewels in silver that seek to emulate more costly materials. These, plus a group of cast copper-alloy plaquettes in the collection of the British Museum that has been identified as ornaments for the hat, also demand a place in the history of these male jewels and should be re-examined within this context. Close object analysis, therefore, provides strong evidence that this pan-European fashion was enjoyed by men across a broad social spectrum and so moves away from considering this exclusively as an elite male jewel.

The shift into the secular world of these jewels for the hat is mostly summed up by the fact that such pieces were often of unique manufacture (and were very often commissioned), made of precious metals and materials, and were personal to the individual wearer. As with any items of material culture, though, it is impossible to apply hard and fast rules and there are always exceptions. Nevertheless, there is a marked difference between the hat ornament and its possible precursors. While a pilgrim badge stood as a visual symbol of a site visited by a pilgrim and a military badge served to identify and unite men of an army, an emblematic hat



Figure 40 Unknown artist, after Jean Perréal, *Charles VIII of France*, 16th century, oil on panel, 36.5 x 27cm. Musée Condé, PE 576

ornament could display a number of narratives, from political allegiances or religious intent to personality traits, as represented by recognisable iconography. Ultimately, then, these were seen as highly personal jewels.

Jewels for the elite

Pictorial evidence shows that these hat ornaments were popular jewels among European male elites in the 16th century. These images also reflect the variety in form and style that existed. A portrait of Charles VIII shows a square-shaped gold badge affixed to his cap, while Francis I, Henry VIII, the military figure Gian Galeazzo Sanvitale (1496–1550) and Lord High Treasurer William Cecil (1521–1598) each wear a badge on their hats (**Figs 40–4**).

Interestingly, the two English sitters shown here wear jewelled gold ornaments in their hats that are not particularly emblematic in nature. This may lend credence to Hackenbroch's assertion that 'Henry VIII rarely wore *enseignes*' and to her claim that, since contemporary portraiture representing these jewels is limited, 'they were rarely worn'.²⁴ According to Hackenbroch, Henry VIII wanted to distance himself from Continental Catholic rulers, particularly after the 1534 Act of Supremacy, and so ignored this item of male fashion. However, entries from Henry VIII's inventory indicate that he did own hat ornaments of an emblematic nature:

A Cappe of blacke vellat with a brouche of golde conteyneng divers parsonages and sett with vj Diamountes and five small Rubies [...]

A Cappe of blacke vellat with a Brouche of golde containeng vij parsonages a table Diamounte a rock Rubie xix small Rubies.²⁵



Figure 41 Jean Clouet, *Francis I, King of France*, 1515, 35 x 25cm. Musée Condé, PE 241



Figure 42 Unknown Netherlandish artist, *King Henry VIII*, c. 1520, oil on panel, 50.8 x 38.1cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 4690

Figure 43 Francesco Mazzola detto il Parmigianino, *Gian Galeazzo Sanvitale*, 1524, oil on canvas, 109 x 81cm. Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, Q111



Figure 44 Unknown artist, *William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley*, after 1587, oil on panel, 113 x 91.1cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 362





Figure 45 Hans Holbein the Younger, *William Parr, Marquess of Northampton*, c. 1538–42, black and coloured chalks, white bodycolour, pen and ink, and brush and ink on pale pink prepared paper, 31.7 x 21.2cm. The Royal Collection, RL 12231

Hackenbroch also states that Tudor hat jewels enjoyed a limited lifespan and attributes their rise only after the arrival of Hans Holbein the Younger in London in the 1530s. Certainly, the care over the ornaments that are to be included in Holbein's portrait of William Parr (1513–1571), Marquess of Northampton and brother of the future queen, Katherine, that are sketched on the preparatory drawing might support such a statement (**Fig. 45**).

Nevertheless, if not all Tudor men emulated the emblematic nature of this ornament they did still adopt the fashion for wearing jewels on their hats. Despatches of the Venetian embassy in France provide information on the presence of the English delegation in December 1518. These were written by the ambassador's secretary, Hironimo da Canal, from Paris on 17 December. The four English ambassadors present were the Lord Chamberlain (Charles Somerset, 1st Earl of Worcester) (c. 1460–1526), the Bishop of Ely (Nicholas West) (d. 1533), the Lord of St John's (Sir Thomas Docwra) (d. 1527) and the Captain of Guisnes (Nicholas Vaux) (c. 1460–1523):

The Lord Chamberlain was dressed in a vest of crimson satin, lined with sables, and there was a richly jewelled pendant in his cap [...] Near the ambassadors, but behind them, and also on either side, were some twenty English gentlemen, superbly dressed in vests of cloth of gold, with pendants on their bonnets,



Figure 46 Bartolomeo Veneto, *Portrait of a Gentleman*, c. 1512, oil on panel, 73 x 58cm. Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini, Rome Inv. Prov. coll. Torlonia 1892

and chains around their necks and waists, and I even saw one with a girdle, loaded with jewels of immense value.²⁶

Portraits of men wearing hat ornaments are so numerous that they are indicative of this fashion. Particular care over the depiction of these jewels in paintings is demonstrated by two works of the Venetian artist Bartolomeo Veneto (active 1502–1546), who also worked in Lombardy. *Portrait of a Gentleman* (c. 1512) shows an unknown subject in rich clothing, from the furred collar to the full sleeves of his gown (**Fig. 46**). In his hat is placed a circular, gold and enamelled ornament with a design enclosed in a decorated frame. It contains the inscription 'Probasti et cognovisti' (You have tried and you have known) and this may allude to a section of Psalm 138: 'Domine, probasti me et cognovisti me' (Lord, you have tested me and you have known me).²⁷ Another gentleman painted by Veneto wears a broad-brimmed, embroidered hat to which is affixed a gold and enamelled jewel depicting a shipwreck. The legend 'ESPERANCE ME GUIDE' (Hope guides me) is placed within a banner at the top of the hat ornament (**Fig. 47**).

Evidence of actual jewels is recorded pictorially in the inventory of the jewels belonging to Albrecht V (1528–1579), Duke of Bavaria, and his wife Anna (1528–1590) by the court painter Hans Mielich (1516–1573), made between 1552 and 1556. This volume is known as *Kleinodienbuch der Herzogin Anna von Bayern* (Jewellery Book of Anna of Bavaria) and has been in the possession of the Bavarian State Library in Munich since 1 March 1843 when it was gifted by the



Figure 47 Bartolomeo Veneto, *Portrait of a Man*, 16th century, oil on panel, 72.8 x 54.3cm. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, inv. no. 133

Bavarian king, Ludwig I (r. 1825–1848).²⁸ Among the 108 illuminations of the 71 jewelled possessions of the Duke and Duchess are at least three pieces that were almost certainly worn as hat jewels (**Figs 48–50**). Although these are no longer extant – in fact of the entire corpus of jewels depicted by Mielich a collar of the Order of St George is the only known surviving object – they each offer direct parallels with hat jewels still in existence.²⁹

Jewels for urban men

The quality of these jewels is befitting of their owners. In the collection of the British Museum are two hat ornaments that are much cruder in their execution and style. They have been identified as being of English manufacture and, on stylistic grounds, as products of the same workshop.³⁰ Dated to just before the mid-16th century, both share the same distinctly Protestant iconography: the New Testament story of the meeting at the well between Christ and the Woman of Samaria. They are gold and decorated with polychrome enamels (**Figs 51–2**). Unlike the jewels depicted by Mielich these pieces are not set with gemstones, precious or otherwise. This could suggest ownership by a wealthy urban citizen, rather than a courtly man.

Clearly visible on both ornaments are loops for attachment: angular and rounded, respectively. These loops allowed for the jewel to be sewn onto a man's cap and these are also seen in the portrait of Charles VIII (see **Fig. 40**) and the Hans Mielich drawings (see **Figs 48–9**). The composition of the central figures in both pieces respects the circularity of the whole. An examination of the reverse of each reveals the method of manufacture (**Figs 53–4**). This



Figure 48 Manuscript illumination of a gold, enamelled and diamond-set hat ornament depicting Hercules standing before Eurystheus and inscribed 'AD NVLLIVS PAVESCIT OCCVRSVM' (He fears the attack of no one). Mielich 1552–6, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, BSB Cod.icon. 42, f.6r, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00006598-6 (translation of inscription taken from Tait 1986, vol. 1, 62, and the identification of the scene from Hackenbroch 1979, 76)



Figure 49 Manuscript illumination of a gold, enamelled and diamond-set hat ornament with a scene showing the discovery of the writing of Homer by Numa Pompilius and inscribed 'QVAE LATVERE DIV IN LVCEM NOSTRA ATTVLIT AETAS' (Things that have remained hidden our age has brought to light). Mielich 1552–6, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, BSB Cod.icon. 42, f.6v, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00006598-6 (translation of inscription taken from Tait 1986, vol. 1, 62, and the identification of the scene from Hackenbroch 1979, 76)



Figure 50 Manuscript illumination of a gold and enamelled hat ornament of St George and the dragon set with diamonds for the body and sword of St George and a cabochon ruby for his shield, and the foliate frame set alternately with pearls and table-cut rubies. Mielich 1552–6, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, BSB Cod.icon. 42, f.2r, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00006598-6



Figure 51 Gold and enamelled hat ornament of Christ meeting the Woman of Samaria at the well, inscribed '+ OF A TREWTHE. * THOW. ART. THE. TREW. MESSIAH.', c. 1540, English, diameter 5.8cm, weight 34g. British Museum, 1955,0507.1



Figure 52 Gold and enamelled hat ornament of Christ meeting the Woman of Samaria at the well, c. 1530–40, English, diameter 3.3cm, weight 12g. British Museum, 1983,1102.1



Figure 53 Reverse of Figure 51

in turn may offer further information about how jewels of this sort were purchased.

These jewels have been made in a similar manner: the relief figural group has been applied by means of butterfly clips fastened to the backplate, which is likely to have been cast with its frame, to which have been soldered the four attachment loops. Given the nature of construction, it is possible that a goldsmith would have retained a stock of backplates and a selection of relief scenes with different imagery from which a customer could make his choice. A Treasure find of a hat ornament of this type but lacking its backplate supports such a supposition for how these objects were made and purchased (Fig. 55). Discovered in Lancashire in June 2014, what remains of this hat ornament is a thin layer of gold (0.1mm) that has been embossed and



Figure 54 Reverse of Figure 52

chased to create the figural scene of David and Goliath, which conforms to the circular form of the object. Visible on the reverse are three gold butterfly clips, just as we see pushed through the backplates of the two Woman of Samaria pieces above. This suggests a similar mode of production for this extraordinary Treasure find.

The scale of the two Woman of Samaria pieces differs somewhat: the jewel with the inscription on the well has a diameter of about 5.8cm and weighs 34g; and the second ornament, a later acquisition for the British Museum, is 3.3cm in diameter and weighs 12g. The David and Goliath piece at its widest is 3.4cm but this is without a backplate. In its complete state, it may have been of a scale in between the British Museum examples. The availability of a range of jewels in gold, some quite small, would have widened the



Figure 55 Obverse and reverse of gold and enamelled hat ornament possibly depicting David and Goliath, mid-16th century, probably English, length: 33.5mm; height: 32mm; thickness: 0.1mm; weight: 5.84g. Lancaster City Museum

market for such objects. It is also possible that the larger scale of the first piece would have been more suited to prominently displaying the inscription, thus making the wearer's Protestant beliefs clear.³¹

The subjects depicted on hat jewels

Biblical stories and tales from classical mythology or common folklore were all legitimate sources for the iconography of these jewels. Art-historical knowledge provides a modern audience with an understanding of the wearer's intent, but for contemporaries in an age in which the visual was pervasive the message was presumably clear. The images that appeared on these jewels were chosen to reflect the political allegiances, religious affiliations or personality traits of the owner. The choice of subject may also have been influenced by popular imagery.

A jewel with a distinctly humanist flavour is referred to in the 16th-century literary work by the French author François Rabelais (1494–1553), *Gargantua*. The eighth chapter provides a description of the protagonist's dress and it may be seen as a fair indication of contemporary clothing and jewellery.

Figure 57 Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament depicting Laocoön and his son overcome by a serpent, enclosed within a floral wreath border pierced with eight holes, 16th century, Italian, diameter 4.8cm, weight 23g. British Museum, 1915,1216.134



Figure 56 *Laocoön and His Sons*, 1st century BCE, marble, 208 x 163cm. Museo Pio-Clementino, Vatican City, inv. no. 1059

Gargantua's cap is adorned with a jewel: 'for his emblem he had, on a plate of gold weighing sixty-eight marks, a figure of expert enamelling'.³² Rabelais describes the imagery on this piece as being the double human figure that features in Plato's *Symposium* (4th century BC) as the mystical origin of man. It also bears a Greek inscription that captions the image.

The tale from Greek mythology of Laocoön and his sons being attacked and killed by serpents was of particular interest in 16th-century Italy following the discovery in Rome in 1506 of the famous ancient marble group now in the Vatican (**Fig. 56**). On 3 September 1512 Federigo Gonzaga (1500–1540) wrote to his mother Isabella d'Este from Rome and described the possible commission of a hat ornament showing this figural group:

Theobaldo told me that Caradosso would be pleased to execute for Your Excellence or for me a Laocoon with his sons and the serpent, made of gold relief, like the one of marble, raised with a hammer and not cast [...] Furthermore, if it would please you he would render this Laocoon in the form of a medallion of half relief, to wear in a hat.³³

The goldsmith, sculptor and medallist Cristoforo di Giovanni Matteo Foppa (1452–1527), known as Caradosso, never executed this piece.³⁴

A gilded and cast bronze roundel in the British Museum's collections gives some indication of what this jewel may have



Figure 58 Gold and enamelled hat ornament set with diamonds, rubies and possibly a garnet showing the Conversion of Saul, mid-16th century, German, diameter 4.5cm, weight 35g. British Museum, WB.171

looked like (Fig. 57). Although it lacks the characteristic loops for attachment, the wreathed frame is pierced with eight holes by means of which the piece could be fastened to a man's cap. This object is about 4.8cm in diameter and weighs 23g. The quality of the Caradosso commission would have far exceeded this example, not only from its materiality but also through the mode of its production. Caradosso was to have made the jewel using the technique of embossing (or repoussé), which involved using a small hammer to form the relief decoration from the reverse.³⁵ The bronze piece has been cast whole and this is evident from examining its reverse, which remains flat. Casting enabled multiple similar copies to be produced and therefore the jewel would not be unique.

In his *Treatises*, Cellini compares his methods of manufacturing jewels for the hat with those used by Caradosso.³⁶ The main difference was that while Caradosso favoured making a bronze cast of a wax model of the object then working the gold over the bronze, Cellini avoided the need for a bronze cast and used the wax model to guide him as he worked the gold. However, from the Gonzaga correspondence, it would appear that Caradosso did not always insist on casting hat ornaments. Cellini continues his writings by describing a commission that he made for a Siennese gentleman named Girolamo Marretta of a jewel showing Hercules and the Nemean lion. He took such care and patience over this work that a visit by the lauded artist Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564) led to glowing praise of Cellini's skill: 'If this work had been large, or of marble or of bronze, formed with this good design, it would astonish the world, since of this size I see it as so beautiful, that I would never believe that these ancient goldsmiths would have made it so well'.³⁷

Hat jewels within the Waddesdon Bequest

The British Museum has in its collections further examples of hat ornaments that would have been worn by men within

court circles. In addition to the two English Protestant jewels, there are three Continental pieces, which came to the British Museum in the late 19th century as part of the Waddesdon Bequest. These jewels have been catalogued extensively in Hugh Tait's 1986 publication and, where necessary and possible, the objects presented in this work were taken apart to better understand their manufacture.³⁸ The three hat ornaments are all made of gold and have been enamelled. Additionally, they are set with gemstones. They show scenes of a varied nature: a tale from the New Testament, a story of Greek mythology and the legend of St George and the dragon. Each bears a meaning that the wearer wished to convey as indicative of his beliefs or personality. The bright enamels and precious gemstones would have stood out vividly against the black foil of contemporary headgear and so the intent of the owner was overt.

The circular badge showing the New Testament scene of the Conversion of Saul is remarkably similar in form to two of the pieces depicted in the Mielich pictorial inventory (see Figs 48–9). It has four loops for attachment located on the frame and there is an additional loop at the top of the jewel, which suggests that it was used later as a pendant (Fig. 58).

The scene is surrounded by a tubular frame, which is enamelled black and has gold relief lettering that bears the inscription 'DVRVM EST TIBI COMTRA STIMVLVM CALCITRARE'.³⁹ The reverse of the jewel comprises a flat gold panel with an inscription in Italian stating how this ornament had been worn in the hat of Don John of Austria (1547–1578), who then passed it on to the military figure Camillo Capizucchi (1537–1597). There is no sufficient documentary evidence to support ownership by either individual, but the materials used, the execution of this piece and its similarity to the Mielich jewels are highly suggestive of a courtly jewel that may have once been owned by the half-brother of Philip II of Spain (r. 1556–1598). Both Don



Figure 59 Etienne Delaune, 'Aeneas on his way to the Underworld' (possibly), c. 1550. Albertina Museum, Vienna, inv. no. 11159

John and Capizucchi took part in the Battle of Lepanto on 7 October 1571, with Capizucchi proving his military skills to such a degree in the later Mediterranean campaigns that Don John made him captain of the cavalry on 7 April 1573.⁴⁰ It is possible that a member of the Capizucchi family wished to commemorate the gift for posterity by placing the inscribed gold disc on the reverse.

When the backpanel was removed in the 1980s, it was discovered that the figural decoration had been achieved by using the technique of embossing. Some elements of particularly high relief, such as St Paul's right leg, had been modelled separately and then applied before enamelling the whole.⁴¹ The gemstones have been affixed by means of bolting their settings into place. The design of this piece, with the diamonds integrated fluidly within the scene (in this instance forming the architectural features), bears strong

resemblance to the drawings of Etienne Delaune in the Albertina Museum, Vienna (**Fig. 59**). A similar treatment of the setting of gemstones in jewels of this type is present in the drawings by Mielich in his pictorial inventory of court jewels from Bavaria (see **Figs 48–9**).

The online catalogue for the Albertina identifies tentatively the iconography in this drawing as that of Aeneas entering the Underworld.⁴² However, Hackenbroch has suggested that an alternative reading of this image may be that of the Miles Christianus from *Enchiridion militis christiani* or *Handbook of a Christian Soldier* by the humanist scholar Desiderius Erasmus (1467–1536), first published in Antwerp in 1503.⁴³ The message conveyed through such symbolism is of a Christian soldier exposed to the temptations of the world, who is undeterred from the path of virtue. He is shown as a rider able to control a horse without reins and as such he is impervious to sin and passion, which are represented by the wild animals and fire. This was clearly a suitable visual to be placed on a hat ornament as a demonstration of a man's resolute nature and devotion to God (see **Figs 69, 72**).

The Conversion of Saul jewel is 4.5 by 4.7cm at its widest points, so not too dissimilar from the size of Delaune's intended pieces, and it weighs 35g. A much larger jewel shows the figure of St George on horseback slaying a dragon (**Fig. 60**). It is oval in form and its overall height is 7.3cm with a width of 5.9cm, and it weighs a substantial 75g. Despite its size being more suggestive of a pendant, this jewel seems to have been intended as a hat ornament (albeit a rather heavy one) as four loops for attachment are fixed to its reverse, two of which are visible in the lower part of the image. The ground has been embossed in low relief, while the figural group (appearing in high relief) is affixed to the background by means of rivets and these are evident on the reverse. Once more the use of precious gemstones has been employed effectively to integrate with the design as a whole.



Figure 60 (left and below) Gold and enamelled hat ornament set with diamonds, emeralds and rubies with St George slaying the dragon, and with detail showing a rivet on the reverse, 1551–75, German and French, height 7.3cm, width 5.9cm, weight 75g. British Museum, WB.172



Eighteen diamonds have been used artfully to represent the figure of George, in a manner not too dissimilar from the way in which Mielich depicts his George on a hat jewel (see **Fig. 50**). The five table-cut rubies set into the frame provide only decoration.

The final example of a 16th-century hat ornament in the Waddesdon Bequest shows the Judgement of Paris (**Fig. 61**). At 35g, the weight of this piece is more comparable to the Conversion of Saul jewel. It is oval in shape and has a width of 4.8cm, while its height is 4.2cm. The gem-set border is unexpected on a jewel of this type from the 16th century. More usual was an enamelled frame. On closer inspection it becomes clear that this is a later feature, probably added between the 17th and 19th centuries.⁴⁴ This hat ornament has been altered further: the two gemstones set within the relief are not original; and a modern convex back has been added to convert the jewel into a brooch (**Fig. 62**).

When the modern backing was first removed from this jewel in 1962 it revealed that this object had been made using the casting process, and had not been embossed.⁴⁵ This is particularly unusual for gold hat ornaments, since they were mostly unique in their production. The costs of time and money involved in producing a base-metal model from which a mould would be created to pour in the liquid gold would have been significantly high for the creation of a single commission. Tait has speculated, therefore, whether copies of this jewel in base metal were required by the patron to distribute publicly, thus explaining why the Judgement of Paris piece has been cast.⁴⁶ It would have been more customary to produce a gold ornament of this type by embossing.

The backing applied to the Judgement of Paris hat jewel converted this object into a brooch for a woman. This raises interesting issues with regard to the alteration of Renaissance jewels in general, but more pertinently to the change of use of hat ornaments. Given the relatively short history of the hat jewel, many of them were altered after they fell out of fashion in the later years of the 16th century. There is pictorial evidence of this practice occurring much earlier, in the 1540s.

A portrait by Holbein of an unknown lady and discovered only in the mid-20th century shows her wearing a brooch affixed to the front of her bodice.⁴⁷ It is a circular medallion with an enamelled scene of the Judgement of Paris enclosed in a gold border. Clearly visible against her



Figure 61 Gold and enamelled hat ornament set with a peridot and sapphire, bordered by garnets showing the Judgement of Paris, mid-16th century, Italian or French, height 4.2cm, width 4.8cm, weight 35g. British Museum, WB.152

black clothing are four hoops protruding from the brooch. This suggests strongly that the object's original use was as a hat ornament and it is probably being worn by the unidentified woman as a token of remembrance of the ornament's male owner. The original jewel has been altered slightly: it is surmounted by a large stone within a gold setting surrounded by a wreathed border, perhaps to make it a more suitable jewel for a woman. A second portrait of an unknown lady (possibly Lady Jane Grey), dated to the early 1550s and by the Flemish painter Hans Eworth (**Fig. 63**), shows a gold circular medallion worn in a similar manner. Although the loops for attachment are not visible, stylistically it would appear to be a converted hat ornament.

Since this type of jewel was subject to change of use, identification of hat ornaments in museum collections is problematic. It is likely that there are many extant pieces in museums that were intended originally to be placed in the cap but they are now unrecognisable as such. A 16th-century gold embossed plaque chased with a battle scene in the collections of the Fitzwilliam Museum was originally accessioned as the top of a box (**Fig. 64**). It has since been catalogued as being a plaque that was once set within a hat

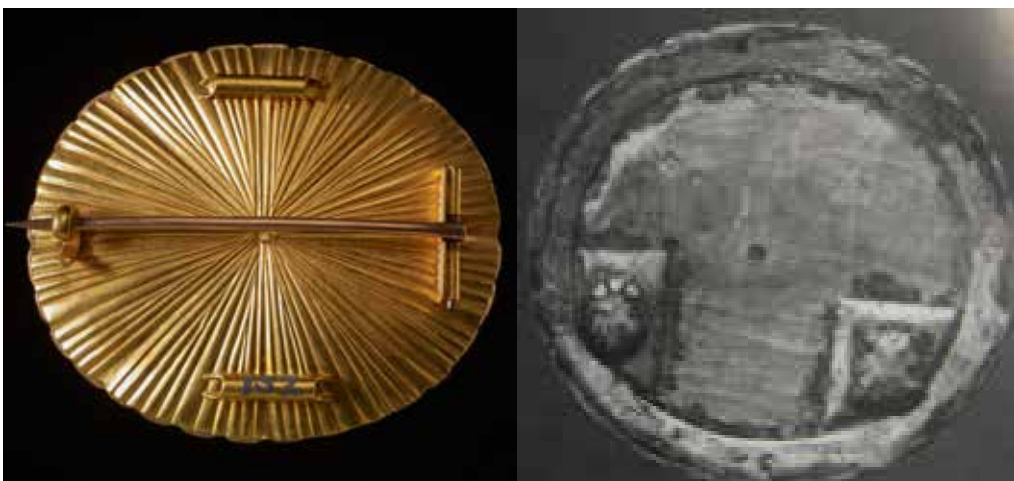


Figure 62 Reverse of Figure 61: on the left, with its modern backing; and on the right, how it originally looked with its later frame



Figure 63 Hans Eworth, *Unknown Lady (perhaps Lady Jane Grey)*, c. 1550–5, oil on panel, 109 x 80cm. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, PD.1-1963

badge frame.⁴⁸ It was probably originally enamelled, but this has now been lost.

Limoges enamel plaques

Plaques that are painted with Limoges enamels are particularly difficult to determine, for they may have been subject to multiple uses. Hackenbroch records four such hat ornaments in her monograph.⁴⁹ The French artist and potter Bernard Palissy (1510–1589) commented on the wearing of Limoges enamelled badges in the hat as part of his treatises: 'I am certain of having seen to give for three sols the dozen

figures for *enseignes* that were worn on hats. These *enseignes* were so well worked and their enamels so well fused on the copper, that there was never any painting so pleasant.'⁵⁰

Cheaper to purchase than gold jewels, objects of this type were probably worn by gentlemen in imitation of courtly practice. In the collection of the British Museum are a number of such plaques of varying size that may have been used originally as hat ornaments, although they were not initially catalogued as such.

A circular copper plaque painted with Limoges enamels with the scene of the Resurrection of Christ is stamped on the reverse with the mark of the workshop of the mid-16th-century French artist Jean Pénicaud II (1515–1588) (**Fig. 65**). There is a significant loss of enamelling to the upper right and bottom of the object. At the four compass points are pierced holes, which provide strong evidence that this plaque was intended to be sewn onto clothing. It is much larger in size than the gold examples that have been examined so far, with an overall diameter of 7.7cm. However, it weighs only 29g. It is impossible to say with certainty whether this was ever worn as a hat ornament but there is no reason to suppose that it was not.

Perhaps more puzzling are those enamelled plaques that are painted *en grisaille*, since the muted monochrome palette would not have stood out as well against dark fabrics. The use of a small copper roundel showing a cavalry skirmish that is set into a parcel-gilt frame is unclear (**Fig. 66**). The frame is certainly suggestive of the tubular type that is seen on examples such as the Conversion of Saul jewel but there are no clear indications of how this would have been attached to a cap. A broken section of metal visible on the reverse may provide a clue. This may have been one of four original loops with which the object was fastened to a man's cap.

A painted enamelled badge showing Jacob dressed as a Roman warrior with a man kneeling before him, whose hands are raised in supplication, provides evidence of how these enamelled plaques were often set into a variety of objects (**Fig. 67**). The copper badge is dated to around 1560 but it has been set into a 17th-century square mount covered with red silk and decorated with gold thread and seed pearls. It has been fastened to the mount by means of two pierced holes, which were probably used originally to affix it to a man's cap. The roundel was presumably set within the mount after it had become redundant as a hat jewel.



Figure 64 Gold hat ornament embossed with a battle scene, 16th century, Italian. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MAR.M.283-1912



Figure 65 Workshop of Jean Pénicaud II, circular, copper plaque painted with Limoges enamels, possibly worn as a hat ornament, c. 1555, French, diameter 7.7cm, weight 29g. British Museum, 1855,0305.3

The Palissy quotation offers contemporary evidence that hat ornaments painted with Limoges enamels were worn by men in their hats. While he describes seeing them as ‘pleasant’, these examples could not match the effect created by gold pieces with their contrasts of high and low relief. The enamelled items were probably used by men outside of courtly circles and those of wealthy urban citizens. For men of more humble means, these pieces provided them with a way of accessing the latest 16th-century fashion at a fraction of the cost. However, such men were not restricted only to the less dynamic, two-dimensional form of the enamelled roundel. The relief decoration of the gold hat ornaments could be replicated in base metal and there is strong evidence in favour of this practice.

The Thomas Whitcombe Greene plaquettes

In the collection of the British Museum is a group of objects catalogued as plaquettes. This group came to the Museum as a gift in 1915 from the collector Thomas Whitcombe Greene (1842–1932), who donated his entire collection of plaquettes.⁵¹ The term plaquette is a 19th-century neologism that describes a series of small Renaissance works that were adopted for a variety of uses, which are ‘small, generally one-sided, bronze, lead or precious metal reliefs’.⁵² An examination of the reverse of these objects reveals that the low reliefs were produced either through casting or repoussé work.

These plaquettes take on various shapes: circular, rectangular or irregular.⁵³ They were originally believed to have been created merely to act as records of goldsmiths’ work, including ornaments worn in the hat:

We designate under the term plaquettes, amongst amateurs, small low reliefs of bronze which seem to us to have had as their purpose the recording of the memory of works of the greatest Italian Renaissance goldsmiths [...] *enseignes, emblems or small medals* which you would affix to your hat [...] You would draw from these beautiful works an imprint in sulphur, or colour them in bronze, to retain the memory of them and to serve as a model and example.⁵⁴



Figure 66 Workshop of Jean Pénicaud II, circular, copper roundel painted with Limoges enamels *en grisaille* and set into a partially gilded frame, possibly worn as a hat ornament, c. 1540, French, diameter including frame 3.7cm, weight 11g. British Museum, 1855,1201.20



Figure 67 Possibly the workshop of Couly Nouhailher II, circular, copper roundel painted with Limoges enamels and bearing the inscription ‘SANCTE IACOBUS’, perhaps worn as a hat ornament and now set within an embroidered silk mount, c. 1560 (roundel), French (roundel), 17th century (mount), English (mount), diameter 5.4cm (roundel), length 14.2cm (mount), weight 97g (whole). British Museum, 1928,1015.1





Figure 68 Obverse and reverse of gilded cast bronze hat ornament (some loss to the gilding) with two pierced holes for attachment, possibly showing the Rape of Lucretia within a garlanded frame, 16th century, Italian, diameter 3.8cm, weight 17g. British Museum, 1915,1216.125



Figure 69 Obverse and reverse of gilded cast bronze hat ornament (some loss to the gilding) with two pierced holes for attachment and depicting Marcus Curtius on horseback leaping into a gulf of flames, 16th century, Italian, diameter 3.3cm, weight 12g. British Museum, 1915,1216.128



Figure 70 Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament with holes pierced within the hollowed-out frame, depicting the obscure literary subject of the enthroned Minos judging who is the greatest hero of classical antiquity – Scipio Africanus, Alexander the Great or Hannibal – all of whom are seated at his feet, c. 1550, German, diameter 4.2cm, weight 21g. British Museum, 1915,1216.130

Only a few years following this statement, it was acknowledged that bronze plaquettes were being produced independently of gold counterparts and thus they were small sculptural creations in their own right.⁵⁵ Art historian Émile Molinier (1857–1906) believed that they became a means of dispersing imagery from works of art throughout the Italian peninsula quickly. When devoid of their context in museums, it is perhaps easy to appreciate how this art-historical understanding of these objects developed in the 19th century. However, by applying a more interdisciplinary approach and by considering plaquettes as items of material culture (and not simply as vehicles of disseminating art) it is possible to attempt to establish what these objects may have

been used for. One use that has been put forward is as hat badges.⁵⁶

A discrete group of cast bronze (copper-alloy) roundels that forms a part of the British Museum's holdings of plaquettes can be readily attributed as hat ornaments (**Figs 68–78**). While pictorial representations of an elite class of men wearing such items and the many extant pieces made of gold and enamel or set with precious gemstones have propagated the belief that such items were the preserve of men at court, these bronze objects suggest that the fashion for the emblematic hat jewel reached lower levels of society. By considering these bronze plaquettes within the history of hat ornaments marks a shift from Hackenbroch's approach in viewing these as courtly



Figure 71 Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament depicting Apollo in armour while Daphne changes into a laurel, 16th century, Italian, diameter 3.6cm, weight 18g. British Museum, 1912,1216.131



Figure 72 Embossed and gilded bronze hat ornament with two holes pierced at the top and bottom, showing Marcus Curtius leaping into a gulf of flames, enclosed within a strapwork frame with two satyrs at the sides and a grotesque head at the base, 16th century, Italian, diameter 4.7cm, weight 31g. British Museum, 1915,1216.132



Figure 73 Embossed bronze hat ornament with traces of gilding and remains of green, red and blue enamel depicting a scene from the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, which is enclosed within a garlanded border, 16th century, diameter 5cm, weight 23g. British Museum, 1915,1216.133



Figure 74 Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament depicting Laocoön and his son (see Figure 57)



Figure 75 Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament showing the classical tale of the Judgement of Paris: Paris is shown sleeping at the foot of a tree, while Hermes stands over him and the three goddesses (Athena, Hera and Aphrodite) are depicted in very low relief in the background, 16th century, German, diameter 3.6cm, weight 18g. British Museum, 1915,1216.135



Figure 76 Gilded bronze hat ornament with a forward-facing bust of a female figure, probably the goddess Diana, which has been applied to the backplate with a single rivet (visible on the reverse) and is enclosed within a wreathed floral and trefoil border pierced in seven places, 16th century, Italian, diameter 3.7cm, weight 15g. British Museum, 1915,1216.136



Figure 77 Gilded and cast hat ornament depicting an angel standing before St Matthew who is seated and writing in an open book upon his knees, all contained within a wreath frame that is pierced twice at the sides, 16th century, Italian, diameter 3.6cm, weight 18g. British Museum, 1915,1216.226



Figure 78 Cast bronze hat ornament with traces of gilding showing the Fall of Phaethon, enclosed within a frame that is pierced with four holes for attachment, 16th century, Italian, diameter 4.3cm, weight 15g. British Museum, 1915,1216.298

jewels. It moves away from the 19th-century view that plaquettes were records of either goldsmiths' work or works of art. This in turn highlights the production and wearing of non-precious-metal jewellery by men.

These objects were catalogued previously only under the term 'plaquette' and while the term 'hat ornament' has now been added to the records by the author for the pieces illustrated in **Figures 68–78**, such identification must be approached with caution. Particular attributes that show affinity with gold hat ornaments signal the possible presence of a bronze object once worn in the hat. Circular in form, the borders of these bronze plaquettes are often pierced with holes to enable fastening to a cap. Each object is either gilded or has traces of gilding; they are of comparable size to the precious-metal examples; and they imitate stylistically the emblematic hat jewels, with the depiction of a symbolic image. While the enamelled gold or gem-set pieces show a variety of themes, ranging from the religious to the classical and the humanist, these gilt-bronze pieces bear scenes only relating to classical antiquity with the exception of one that depicts St Matthew writing his Gospel (**Fig. 77**).

The vast majority of these gilt-bronze ornaments, in a manner similar to the medieval pilgrim badge, have been cast. This would have facilitated the production of multiple copies and, with the mould already made, there would be minimal cost involved in the fashioning of the ornament. This in turn suggests that they were adopted by men of a lower social standing, in imitation of the elite fashion. Casting removed any personal associations that may have been incorporated within the jewel but the inclusion of recognisable classical themes or characters ensured that the message of the jewel was clearly understood. The few examples that show repoussé work are puzzling but they may be instances of a model that was to be made in gold but executed first in base metal to be shown to a patron for approval.

By gilding and enamelling these bronze plaquettes (see the Pyramus and Thisbe plaquette, **Fig. 73**) very little, if any, of the base metal was visible. When placed on a dark-coloured hat, at the apex of the body, an object such as this would have been virtually indiscernible from the gold hat jewels so popular with rulers and noblemen. So for a man who could not afford ornaments of precious metal, these bronze equivalents provided a way for him to participate in contemporary fashions. The identification then of hat ornaments from among the British Museum's holdings of copper-alloy plaquettes has been crucial in revealing that the hat ornament was not only a courtly jewel. Pictorial evidence has provided a bias in favour of this being an elite object but in this period only the wealthy would have commissioned their portraits. The limitations of portraiture are therefore apparent and using material culture as evidence offers another perspective: in this case, one that writes non-elite men into the history of the emblematic hat ornament.⁵⁷

Demonstrating one's character and personal, political or religious allegiances through personal adornment knew no class boundaries. As such, the bronze hat ornaments conveyed messages no less important than their high-end counterparts. Despite not being as intrinsically valuable as objects made of gold and set with gemstones, these

ornaments nevertheless communicated meaning in the contexts in which they circulated. So although perhaps being considered inferior to the more luxurious examples worn by noblemen and courtly individuals, they remained no less capable of contributing towards forming and articulating a man's identity in the early modern period. In addition to these larger, brooch-like ornaments of an emblematic nature, men's caps could be ornamented in other ways with smaller button-like jewels.

Cap-hooks

In the day book from the Wardrobe of the Robes an entry records a gift from Elizabeth I on 5 May 1574 to Thomas Sidney (1569–1595), the third son of Sir Henry Sidney, of 'One Cappe of blak taphata having a bande of goldesmythes worke conteyning xxv Hartes and Roses enameled and with thre litle pearles pendaunte to every harte'.⁵⁸ A hatband was one type of jewel that could decorate male headgear in this period. Thomas Sidney may have also chosen to adorn his hat with separate jewels of enamelled hearts and roses. Affixed individually these would have then been categorised as cap-hooks.

The British Museum has acquired a variety of objects reported as Treasure that have been classified today as just such a 'cap-hook'. There are items that may have been worn in the cap but their attribution has not been made definitive: for instance, one has been named a 'badge', while another has been only tentatively assigned the term 'cap-hook'.⁵⁹ Each of these is either emblematic or purely decorative. They are all made of silver and some are gilded entirely or partially gilded. Until the discovery of a number of these items as recorded through the Treasure process, they had not been classed as a distinct group. So, although gold examples are frequently depicted adorning the hats of English courtiers, such as Sir Nicholas Poyntz (1510–1557), Sheriff of Gloucestershire (**Fig. 79**), or members of the landed gentry, like Simon George of Cornwall (**Fig. 80**), their ubiquitous nature among lower social groups was not truly appreciated until fairly recently.

In their 2002 article, David Gaimster and his co-authors offer a crucial first study of these cap-hooks, along with a number of dress-hooks that were reported through the Treasure Act between 1998 and 2000.⁶⁰ Sampling 15 objects from these two categories they 'assess the role of these accessories in vernacular dress of sixteenth-century England'.⁶¹ To support the material evidence the authors employ a varied range of sources, from the visual to the archival, the latter in the form of wills and probate inventories. Crucially, they distinguish cap-hooks from dress-hooks by stating that the former lack a transverse bar attached to the backplate that is present in some form in the latter.⁶² These cap-hooks, just as with the less elite examples of the larger hat jewels discussed above, allow for a broader understanding of male consumption beyond what is depicted in portraiture or present in the wills and inventories of courtly men.

In 2001, the British Museum acquired two cap-hooks and a third object that has been termed neutrally as a 'badge'.⁶³ A composite, cast, parcel-gilt ornament in the form of a six-spoked Catherine wheel, which is set with a multi-



Figure 79 After Hans Holbein the Younger, *Sir Nicholas Poyntz*, c. 1530–99, oil on paper, 41.5 x 29.2cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 5583. The original Holbein drawing on which this portrait is based is in the Royal Collection (RCIN 912234) and clearly shows that at this early stage Holbein was considering the three larger jewels for the hat and the gold hatband

petalled flower head emanating from a central hemispherical boss, has soldered to its reverse a recurving hook (**Fig. 81**). It has a maximum diameter of 19.2mm and weighs 3.6g. Clearly, this object was intended to be decorative in nature and the effect of the contrasting colours, achieved through the partial gilding to the rim and the central boss, adds to its aesthetic qualities. The prominent central boss may have been an attempt to imitate more costly materials, such as a pearl. Based on pictorial evidence of courtly men with their gold hat ornaments, it is unlikely that an object of this type was worn in isolation: it is much



Figure 80 Hans Holbein the Younger, *Simon George of Cornwall*, c. 1535–40, oak, diameter 31cm. Städel Museum, Frankfurt, inv. no. 1065

more probable that this cap-hook was one of a set. A posthumous painting in the Royal Collection of Arthur Tudor (1486–1502), Prince of Wales, shows how two small, four-petalled cap-hooks are used to hold the folds of the brim of the Prince's cap in place.⁶⁴

The second cap-hook to be acquired in the same year by the British Museum is another composite ornament (**Fig. 82**). It is hollow-cast and takes the form of a domed cushion, which has a circular backplate with a serrated edge. The domed part of this object is pierced and has applied filigree and granular decoration to its surface. This piece is gilded entirely but on some parts of the filigree ornament the gilding is now worn. The central part of this object is set with a glass, oval-shaped cameo, probably depicting the deity Jupiter Ammon. To the reverse is soldered a recurving pin that is now broken. The cameo is thought to be post-classical in date.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the presence of a profile bust of a Roman god suggests that the owner of this piece may have wished to appear erudite to his fellow citizens. The cap-hook is of a similar scale to the previous example: it weighs 4g and is 17.8mm in diameter.



Figure 81 Composite, cast parcel-gilt cap-hook or hat ornament in the form of a Catherine wheel, found in Nettlestead, Suffolk, 16th century, English, maximum diameter 19.2mm, weight 3.6g. British Museum, 2001,0703.1



Figure 82 Composite cap-hook with filigree and granular ornament, set centrally with a cameo of the head of Jupiter Ammon, found in Kingerby, Lincolnshire, 16th century, English, diameter 17.8mm, weight 4g. British Museum, 2001,0310.1



Figure 83 Cast silver-gilt circular badge, probably worn in a cap, engraved with a crowned 'I' flanked by two Tudor roses, found in Raydon, Suffolk, early 16th century, English, diameter 25mm, weight 11.1g. British Museum, 2001,0701.1

The British Museum made a third acquisition in 2001 from those Treasure finds recorded in 1999 that could be classified as hat ornaments. Although this particular item has been accessioned on the Museum's database as a badge, it is included in the Gaimster *et al.* article under the heading of 'Cap-hooks' (Fig. 83).⁶⁶ This object is in the form of a roundel, which is recessed into a deep frame of two concentric circles. It is engraved with a crowned 'I' flanked by two Tudor roses on a hatched ground. To the reverse is soldered the remains of a flat section of a recurving pin. This is a somewhat more substantial piece than the above examples: it has an overall diameter of 25mm and, at 11.1g, it weighs significantly more. The engraved design on the obverse suggests that it was probably worn as a badge of allegiance or to show livery associations.

A later find from the same findspot of Raydon in Suffolk, also acquired by the British Museum, was clearly meant to

be an overt declaration of a man's pious nature (Fig. 84). Weighing only 2g and with dimensions of 13.3 by 10mm, this small silver cap-hook has an overall rectangular form that is comprised of three figures and probably depicts the Crucifixion of Christ. The central figure is Christ, who is flanked by two individuals in profile. A hook with a pointed tip is soldered horizontally to the reverse and it has two bends. An immediate obvious comparison to make is with those medieval pilgrim badges that took on the form of the subject represented (see above). This is so far a unique example of a cap-hook with religious imagery.

Another purely decorative ornament has been cast in the form of a stylised flower with four petals (Fig. 85). These are interspersed with smaller petals. This piece is made of silver and has been gilded, although much of the gilding is now worn. In the centre of this cap-hook is a pyramidal form, which may be an attempt to mimic the facets of a point-cut



Figure 84 Cast silver cap-hook with a Crucifixion scene, found in Raydon, Suffolk, 16th century, English, width 13.3mm, height 10mm, weight 2g. British Museum, 2005,0105.1



Figure 85 Cast silver-gilt cap-hook in the form of a stylised flower, found in Arreton, Isle of Wight, 16th century, English, length 13mm, width 14mm, weight 3.6g. British Museum, 2006,0301.1



Figure 86 Cast silver-gilt ornament for dress, probably a cap-hook, decorated with a Tudor rose, found in North Yorkshire, 16th century, English, diameter 18mm. British Museum, 2009,8037.1

diamond or another precious or semi-precious gemstone. An S-shaped pin with a sharp tip has been soldered to the reverse. It is likely that it was originally one of a set placed around the circumference of a cap. This type of ornamental cap-hook is very similar in style to the gold examples worn by Nicholas Poyntz in the Holbein portrait (see **Fig. 79**).

Next in the sequence of Treasure cap-hooks acquired by the British Museum under discussion here is a circular, silver-gilt example that has been cast entirely in one piece (**Fig. 86**). Eight knops project from the edges and the front is embellished with a Tudor rose. To the reverse is evidence of a hook that has been applied through soldering. It is very likely that this piece was worn in a man's cap, possibly to show allegiance to the Tudor dynasty. It is unclear why this object has not been classed definitively as a hat ornament; its scale and form certainly allude to its use on headgear and the emblematic associations suggest that it was a male-gendered item of jewellery.

The final cap-hook to be discussed here is made of silver, with the obverse gilded (**Fig. 87**). It is 12.5mm in diameter and weighs 2.5g. It takes on the form of a flower with nine petals in two layers and the inner layer is engraved. It has a centrally placed boss. To the reverse a plain silver hook has been soldered and this has been bent back in an S-shape. This purely decorative piece is yet another example of the types of ornament that were generally found adorning the caps of men in the 16th century.

Concluding remarks

Contemporary portraiture shows elite men wearing larger hat ornaments (very often emblematic) in combination with a number of button-like jewels that can be deemed to be cap-hooks wrought of considerably fine materials. The various Treasure finds of cap-hooks suggest that men lower down the social scale would have ornamented their hats too. Without visual or documentary confirmation it is impossible to conclude with certainty as to whether such men would have decorated their caps to the same degree. Nevertheless, a man of lower standing had many options available to him. He may have worn a bronze plaquette along with several purely decorative cap-hooks or indeed he may have chosen a carefully thought-out single Limoges enamelled plaque. But what we do know is that in the 16th century men from all backgrounds participated in this fashion.

The large, medallion-style, emblematic hat ornament fell out of favour by the later years of the 16th century. This did not mean, though, that jewels disappeared altogether from the hat and by the early 17th century the aigrette was the most popular type. This was worn by both men and women and was designed to either hold a plume of feathers or the jewel itself took on the stylised form of feathers. A changing aesthetic in jewellery in this period, which favoured an abundance of gemstones over the art of the goldsmith and enameller, meant that the emblematic and decorative hat ornament was no longer a desired object.



Figure 87 Cast silver-gilt cap-hook in the form of a nine-petalled flower, found in Beeston-with-Bittering, Norfolk, 16th century, English, diameter 12.5mm, weight 2.5g. British Museum, 2010,8019.1

James Howell provides an entry in his dictionary for ‘a gold hat-band’ in the section listing men’s apparel. The corresponding Italian translation, ‘cordone di scintillo’, is evocative of the glistening and shimmering effect of the jewels.⁶⁷ Pictorial evidence seems to suggest that this type of jewel was worn as early as the second half of the 16th century. There are no entries in Howell’s lexicon that can be associated with cap-hooks or the emblematic hat ornament, which provides strong evidence in favour of these particular fashions having become outmoded by the 17th century. Along with the hatband, Howell mentions a variety of feathers, which were worn popularly with the new aigrette-style jewel.

Hatbands, along with the aigrette, no longer bore significant iconography; rather they were richly encrusted with precious gemstones when worn by the elite, such as the ‘riche hatband all of Dyamants with a great Jewell toe it in forme of a Rose’ that had been ordered by Henry, Prince of Wales, prior to his death.⁶⁸ Both the aigrette and hatband seemed to fit the new fashions of headgear that became fashionable in the Jacobean period, as is evidenced from pictorial representations. The taller, stiffer style of hats demanded a more noticeable jewel and the aigrette was perfectly suited for this (**Fig. 88**).

The hat ornament was an important item of jewellery that contributed to constructing a man’s image in the early modern period. It developed from ideas prevalent in the early years of the 16th century regarding self-fashioning and the need to develop a clear identity. Women were excluded from this particular fashion. The nature of these jewels, in communicating clear affiliations and allegiances, made such an object unsuitable for a female. She would have supported first her father and then her husband in his causes and beliefs. Furthermore, her headdress was not suited to the wearing of such items. Previously considered as an elite and courtly jewel, the identification of a group of bronze plaquettes as hat ornaments and the discovery of cap-hooks as Treasure have demonstrated clearly that the value of jewellery for men was immeasurable in monetary terms, as the meanings of these jewels cut across social classes.



Figure 88 After John Critz the Elder, detail of a portrait of *King James I of England and VI of Scotland*, showing a diamond-set aigrette (the Feather Jewel), early 17th century based on a work of c. 1606, oil on panel, 57.2 x 41.9cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 548

Part III

Jewels and Social Networks

Although valuable and surprisingly portable, ornaments that were attached to a man's clothing merged into the garment, transforming it into a sparkling display. We now move onto jewelled goods that were separate from clothing to explore in more detail how such items were used to reinforce social bonds and underscore notions of reciprocity in the Renaissance. By examining the circulation patterns of jewels it is possible to determine the types of relationships that men cultivated. Furthermore, by revealing how these small-scale objects functioned within certain exchanges allows for a better understanding of how they sustained and supported varied meanings of masculinity within the early modern period.

Works on masculinity by historians such as Alexandra Shepard, Keith Botelho, and Amanda Bailey and Roze Hentschell have explored the possibilities of constructed masculinities that subverted traditional patriarchal forms of manhood.¹ Men played multiple roles in society and each role could place an individual within a new hierarchy, making him at once a subordinate, an equal and a superior. Material culture contributed to the assertion of these roles, whether through the wearing of liveries or a badge of allegiance. Significantly, jewellery could highlight social networks and bonds through its giving and receiving. Peter Burke has shown the importance of a need for mutual understanding and reciprocity behind the culture of gift-giving, stating that it is impossible to be a giver without the existence of a receiver to take the gift and, conversely, that a receiver can only take on this role with the existence of a giver.² This circularity of gift-giving is expressed in the Proem to Book 6 of Edmund Spenser's (1552?–1599) late 16th-century epic poem *The Faerie Queene*. In it the author lauds the virtue of his book, courtesy, in a fictive imagining of an exchange of gifts between him and Elizabeth I:

From your selfe I doe this vertue bring,
And to your selfe doe it returne againe:
So from the Ocean all riuers spring,
And tribute backe repay as to their King.
Right so from you all goodly vertues well
Into the rest, which round about you ring,
Faire Lords and Ladies, which about you dwell,
And doe adorne your Court, where courtesies excell.³

The culture of gift-giving within the early modern period was constrained around need or social obligation, whether for favours from the monarch or for assistance or services from a retainer. To give was seen as a 'declaration of intent to request a favour', while to receive led to the 'exposure to the acceptance of requests'.⁴ The movement of gifts was bi-directional: flowing downwards, to echo the Aristotelian virtue of liberality; and upwards, which may have been more politically motivated. Opportunities for the giving of gifts were often linked to the life cycle (including christenings, coronations and weddings), as well as state visits and royal progresses. One occasion above all others provided the nobility and courtiers with a reason to offer gifts to the English monarch, and that was New Year. Very often, though, the motivation behind the giving of jewels may have been less tangible. By exploring these connections it is possible to show that networks, whether between men and women, between a group of men, or between a man and

his ancestors and heirs, were created by objects that were valued for their intangible as well as their tangible value.

As we have seen, men both owned and gave numerous types of jewelled objects, from pearl earrings to diamond-encrusted swords. It would be impossible to cover all the categories involved, so this section focuses on what was probably the most important object type for reciprocal relationships: the ring. Since again the multiplicity of meanings is vast, the ring is explored as used in the context of a betrothal or a wedding ceremony; rings given by newly created serjeants-at-law; the signet ring; and the mourning ring.

Of all items of jewellery, the ring is the most basic in its simplest form, comprising a hoop, shoulders and a bezel. Yet through variations in style, inscriptions and the context of giving and receiving, the ring has the ability to take on myriad meanings. By examining closely the forms of various types of rings, it is possible to understand better the use and context of a ring.

The role of the ring within marriage rituals is significant. The importance of marriage for a man in this period is undeniable: the establishment of a household of which he would be head was a clear assertion of masculine achievement. Such a positioning within the community was only permissible through the forging of a close social bond with a woman. The use of a ring at the point of a marriage contraction was not a compulsory element of the ceremony. In fact, there was no codification relating to this institution. Nevertheless, the wedding ring visualised this union and remained the most potent and visible indicator that a marriage had been contracted. Documentary evidence from marriage depositions shows that very often claims were

made to deny the legality of a marriage, with the ring's intention being called into question.

No less important than a relationship formed between man and woman were those between men. These homosocial relations are considered in connection with the ritual giving of rings by those men admitted to the degree of serjeant-at-law. Certain recipients of these gold rings were dictated by custom and these adhered to a strict hierarchy that governed their weight, while the remainder of the rings were given freely by new serjeants to family members and friends. An examination of a group of signet rings collectively known as the Gresham grasshopper rings investigates further homosocial relations. These particular rings are a set of signet rings of the variety with vivid tinctures set behind some colourless stone and each is engraved on the reverse of its bezel with a grasshopper, the crest of the Gresham family. It is believed that each ring was given by the London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham (c. 1518–1579) to men with whom he had dealings on a professional or personal level. The patterns of dispersal of the rings of the serjeants-at-law and the Gresham grasshopper rings reflect contemporary friendships and networks. They are also indicative of the types of male relationships that a man forged in his lifetime. Relationships that men hoped to sustain after their lifetime through their bequests of mourning rings and other jewels also warrant attention, for it is in these post-mortem wishes that we see connections and bonds of true value. We begin this section, however, with a particular set of jewels associated with the Order of the Garter. Given by the sovereign in an act of ritual, such jewels were of great importance to the Knights of the Order, marking out symbolically a strong bond with the state.

Chapter 6

Jewels of the Order of the Garter

The Most Noble Order and Amiable Company of St George, known more commonly as the Order of the Garter, was supposedly founded in 1348 by Edward III (r. 1327–1377) and, as such, is the oldest extant chivalric order in Europe.¹ According to the 13th-century work *Legenda Aurea*, the Order's patron saint, St George, was a Christian soldier from Cappadocia in present-day Turkey who fought a dragon in Silena, Libya, just as a young princess was to be its latest offering. Mounted on horseback, George thrust his lance into the dragon forcing it to the ground. He then instructed the princess to place her girdle around the dragon's neck, enabling it to be led back to the city where George killed it in public.²

The Order of the Garter has long been subject of a number of histories since it has always been held in great estimation. An accurate history of how it was formed is much debated, due to the absence of the original registers. The most popular account of its establishment concerns Joan of Kent (1328–1385), who in 1361 would marry her cousin Edward, the Black Prince (1330–1376), and the tale probably originates with the 16th-century writer Polydore Vergil (c. 1470–1555). As the future Princess of Wales dances with the king, her garter falls from her leg prompting the king to retrieve it from the ground, which leads to the jeers of the courtiers present. According to the account, Edward III turns to these men saying 'Honi soit qui mal y pense' ('Shame on him who thinks ill of it') and he adds that one day they will all hold this lady's trifle in reverence. However trustworthy accounts of this romantic origin may prove to be, it is unlikely that the Order was borne from this incident.

The founding members of the Order were important to the king in his military campaigns in France and, as such, the Order represented his closest and most trusted companions. The circular form of the garter represented this close-knit circle of brotherhood, crucial to the founding of the Order. For according to the statutes, no knight was permitted to bear arms against a fellow knight. The garter in the 14th century also bore striking similarity to the girdle that features so prominently in the legend of St George and so it is possible that this had some influence on the name.³

The first foreigners to be admitted were in 1408. Prior to this, election had been limited to 25 of the king's subjects, chosen from a political and ruling elite.⁴ So in the early modern period, not only did membership of this Order extend to male networks within England but through the careful selection of foreign princes and rulers, political agendas could be achieved. It was mindful of a political agenda that Elizabeth bestowed the honour upon Frederick II of Denmark (r. 1559–88).⁵ The renunciation of the Order could be equally significant for political affairs. When Philip II of Spain returned his habit and insignia to Elizabeth, it was a clear sign that relations between the two nations had soured. The importance and sanctity of this Order can be witnessed through the inclusion of it in the writings of travellers to England, such as the German diarist Thomas Platter, or William Harrison's discussion of it in his *Description of England*.⁶

In a portrait of about 1575, one of the most important jewels in the possession of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, is depicted encircling both his coat-of-arms and the pendant

jewel that hangs at his neck: the garter pertaining to the Order of the Garter (**Fig. 89**). Leicester used the garter in all his forms of identification. For example, in his household accounts kept by William Chancy for the period 20 December 1558 to 30 September 1559 there is a payment of 30s. ‘for graving your lordship’s seale with the garter’.⁷ Leicester was elected as a Knight of the Order of the Garter on 24 April 1559 and installed on 3 June of the same year.⁸ It is likely that the alteration to his seal was made between these two dates, so that Leicester could show his new honour immediately following his installation. With limited membership, admittance was (and still is) highly coveted.⁹ It is unsurprising, therefore, to find that portraits of knights belonging to this Order show them bearing some indication of their status, by the conspicuous wearing of a jewel associated with it. But, within the context of ownership, while Leicester’s seal was his own it is important to stress that any official insignia related to the Order was neither commissioned nor owned by Dudley.

The jewelled garters, the collar and its associated pendant – the Great George – were customarily ordered by the sovereign, not by the wearer. Thus, in anticipation of the creation of the first Knights of the Garter following the accession of James I in 1603, a Privy Council warrant was sent by Henry Percy (1564–1632), 9th Earl of Northumberland, and Charles Howard (1536–1624), 2nd Baron Howard of Effingham and 1st Earl of Nottingham, to Sir Edward Cary (d. 1618), Master of the Jewel House. This warrant, dated 7 June 1603, referred specifically to the making of the insignia for Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, and James I’s brother-in-law, the Danish king, Christian IV (r. 1588–1648):

His Ma[jes]tie is determined to fill vxx the number of the knightes of the Garter w[i]th six newly to be made by his Ma[jes]tie at the next call whereof the Prince of Wales and the Kinge of Denmark are specially chosen and nominated to be two, And therefore prouision to be made of Georges Garters and Colo.rs fittinge their place and dignity For so much as we doe not certaynely knowe how the Jewell howse is prouided for this service, we haue therefore thought good to lett yo.u knowe this muche and in his Ma[jes]ties name doe require yo.u (in case yo.u be not alredye throughly prouided in the Jewell house) to cause presentlye to be made and putt in reddines Six Georges and seven Garters. whereof twoe to be made of much lesser compas and proportion fittinge the yonge princes leg, to be garnished and sett w[i]th pretious stones and Jewells fittinge the dignity of his p[er]son, and the other of the Kinge of Denmarks to be garnished w[i]th other Matter of meancee value. And like wise to make prouision of fower Collo.rs w[i]th like regard in the proportion to the prince person of the Prince and Kinge of Denmark and the rest to be made and had in readines agaynst the daye of the solempnizac[i]on now at hand. thereof there may be noe Defaulte for suche is his Ma[jes]ties pleasure.¹⁰

The four other men chosen to be honoured on this occasion in 1603 were Henry Wriothesly (1573–1624), 3rd Earl of Southampton; Ludovick Stuart (1574–1624), 2nd Duke of Lennox and Duke of Richmond; John Erskine (c. 1562–1634), 18th or 2nd Earl of Mar; and William Herbert (1580–1630), 3rd Earl of Pembroke.¹¹ According to the warrant, the Jewel House was entrusted to create a Great George and garter for each of these men, with the Prince of



Figure 89 Unknown Anglo-Netherlandish artist, *Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester*, c. 1575, oil on panel, 108 x 82.6cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 447

Wales receiving two of the latter. It is somewhat puzzling, then, that the Jewel House was requested to make provision for only four collars, two of which were designated for the Prince of Wales and the King of Denmark. The need for only two new collars may be explained by turning to the Order’s statutes and surviving material evidence.

In the opening years of the 1520s Henry VIII introduced a series of reforms to the existing statutes. In particular, the form of the collar, the manner and frequency of its wearing and its inalienability were made explicit:

From henceforth for ever, whoever shall be a knight of this Order, shall use about his Neck a gold Collar of thirty ounces Troy weight and no more. This Collar shall be made of Plates in Form of the Garter, one of the Plates shall have within it two Roses, the one red, the uppermost white, and another Plate shall have the lowermost white and the upper one red. In the End of this Collar shall hang the Image of St. George. Which Collar the Sovereign and all the Knights of this Order shall be bound to use, chiefly in the greatest and principal Solempnities of the Year [...] if the Collar is to be mended, it may be delivered to the Goldsmith for that Purpose. Neither ought this Collar to be enriched or filled up with Jewels, unless that be done to the Image, which at the Pleasure of the Knight may be well adorned with Gemms or Otherwise. But Care is to be taken that this Collar be not sold, lent, or any Manner alienated, or given for any Cause or Necessity, but ought to be preserved for the Honour of the Order and the Knight.¹²

By tradition the collar was formed of 26 garters separated by tasselled knots, with each garter representing the number of knights within the Order – the sovereign and his 25 chosen knights. With the form and weight of this collar codified, it



Figure 90 Gold and enamelled collar of the Order of the Garter with Great George pendant belonging to William Compton, 1st Earl of Northampton, 1628–9, English. British Museum, 1980.0201.1 (collar) and 1980.0201.2 (George)

would not be incorrect to assume that every collar presented to each knight of the Order was essentially the same, with no distinction of rank. However, it would appear that this was not always the case. For the collar belonging to William Compton (d. 1630), Earl of Northampton, which is dated to 1628 or 1629, is comprised of only 25 garters (**Fig. 90**). A comparison of this collar with the late 17th-century example in the Royal Collection, possibly made for James II (r. 1685–1688), has led to speculation that Compton's collar may have been made from recycled elements, for three of the garters differ from the rest.¹³

Upon his death, each knight (or rather his heirs) was expected to surrender the habit and insignia that had been received by him.¹⁴ In theory, then, the sovereign could reissue any items to new knights. This would certainly explain why the warrant to the Jewel House requested provision for only four collars, rather than six. The sovereign also had the ability to create new jewels for new knights by calling on the remains of older versions that deceased members of the Order were obliged to return. Yet in practice this did not always occur. Very often insignia was bequeathed to a male heir, in the hope that he would soon be bestowed with the honour of being in the Order and therefore use the testator's jewels. Nevertheless, the three anomalous garters present on Compton's collar suggest that a returned piece was broken up and its elements used to repair another old and damaged collar. Certainly there is

evidence from the published inventory of Henry VIII to suggest that Garter insignia were formed from the recycling of jewels.¹⁵

Much of the clothing and the most substantial jewels relating to this Order were worn only on feast days and other special occasions.¹⁶ Yet in the 16th century, under the reign of Henry VIII, along with the codification and clarification of official insignia, a new jewel was introduced. Henry dictated that each knight was to wear the Lesser George daily in addition to the garter, the latter worn on the left leg.

The garter

The garter was made of embroidered blue velvet and often embellished with gold, pearls and precious stones. That the garter incorporated the colours of blue and gold is reflective of 14th-century politics. Edward III chose deliberately to use these French emblematic colours, in order to lay his claim over that kingdom. Any further embellishment to the garter was dependent on rank and status. For example, the garter presented to Francis II (r. 1559–1560) in the sixth year of Elizabeth's reign 'was richly wrought with Letters of Gold, garnished with stones: the *Buckle* and *Pendant* weighing three ounces and a half and a half quarter, was richly set with Rubies and Diamonds'.¹⁷

The garter presented to Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden (r. 1611–1632), in 1627 was eventually sold at the sale of goods belonging to the late Charles I. Prior to this it had

Letter	Number of diamonds	Letter	Number of diamonds
H	10	I	4
O	12	M	11
N	11	A	10
I	4	L	6
S	11	Y	6
O	12	P	10
I	4	E	9
T	10	N	11
Q	13	S	11
V	9	E	9
Total no. of diamonds on the letters = 183			

Table 7 Enumeration of the number of diamonds present on each letter of the motto on the garter presented to Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden (information taken from Ashmole 1971, 203)



Person or degree	Number	Item
Sovereign	Unlimited	Garter with gold letters
Prince (of Wales)	Unlimited	Garter with gold letters
Duke	120	Garter with gold letters
Marquis	110	Garter of silk
Earl	100	Garter of silk
Viscount	90	Garter of silk
Baron	80	Garter of silk
Banneret	70	Garter of silk
Knight	60	Garter of silk

Table 8 Summary of the number and type of garters appropriate depending on rank (Harrison 1994, 108–9)



Figure 91 Detail of a velvet garter showing the applied gold and enamelled letters spelling the motto 'HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE' (left) and reverse of enamelled gold buckle (right), belonging to William Compton, 1st Earl of Northampton, 1628–9, English. British Museum, 1980,0201.4

been sent to Windsor Castle to be placed in the custody of the Dean, Christopher Wren (1589–1658). On this occasion on 24 May in the 14th year of Charles I's reign, the garter was detailed in an inventory. The total number of diamonds present on the garter was 411, with the letters of the motto containing almost half of these (**Table 7**).

Such itemisation gives further insight into the extent of embellishment that could be applied to an object of this type. But it may also indicate the type of garters that were to be made for the Prince of Wales and Christian IV in 1603, as mentioned in the above warrant. The garter belonging to William Compton has applied gold letters that are enamelled in red and white, with a green and white enamelled buckle and tongue (**Fig. 91**). Although the gold buckle and tongue are set with a total of 28 diamonds, this garter is clearly not as embellished as those presented to royal knights. A man could own a number of garters and William Harrison suggests the extent of the ownership depended on rank (**Table 8**).

While the garter is undoubtedly the most important of all the Order's insignia, being the Order's namesake, the collar and the Georges were significant components that contributed to the overall image of the knight. We have seen how the form and style of the collar were codified in the reign of Henry VIII. The statutes also make reference to the George pendants.

The collar and Great George

A gold collar was (and still is) synonymous with dignity and office. The wearing of collars by princes and foreign dignitaries appears to date back to the reign of Richard II (r. 1377–99).¹⁸ The use of the collar as a component of the

Order of the Garter seems to have been introduced in the reign of Henry VII (r. 1485–1509). A collar is mentioned as being among the symbols presented to Philip of Castile (r. 1482–1506) at his investiture into the Order in the 22nd year of Henry VII's reign.¹⁹ A vellum book of the statutes written in French was sent to the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian (1459–1519) and dated 5 June 1508. Article 41 of these earlier statutes mentions a gold collar that was to be worn by the Knights of the Order 'coupled together by several pieces of Links in fashion of Garters, with a Vermillion Rose, and the Image of St. George hung thereat'.²⁰ In his will dated 10 April 1508/9, John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford (1442–1513), leaves 'to his cousin John Veer his Coler of Garters and rede Roses of Gold'.²¹ As already discussed, Henry VIII's new statutes made certain stipulations regarding the collar.²²

Although the weight of the collar was ordained to be 30 Troy ounces, there are certainly exceptions to this, just as there seem to be exceptions to the prescribed form. Gustavus Adolphus received a collar on his election that weighed 34¼ ounces, while in 1611 the future Charles I was presented with a collar of 35½ ounces.²³ Although these collars were beautifully enamelled and, as products of the Jewel House, were of the highest execution, the statutes prohibited the use of precious stones. Any use of stones was restricted to the Great George pendant that hung at the base of the collar and this was 'at the Pleasure of the Knight'. Distinction between ranks becomes apparent here, either due to affordability or propriety. From extant pieces, it seems clear that much wealth was expended on this jewel. For example, the Great George owned by William Compton is set with 44 diamonds (**Fig. 92**).



Figure 92 Gold and enamelled Great George of the Order of the Garter, set with 44 diamonds, belonging to William Compton, 1st Earl of Northampton, 1628–9, English, height 7.2cm, width 6cm. British Museum, 1980,0201.2

The complete set of insignia presented to Christian IV and discussed in the 1603 warrant has been preserved at Rosenborg Castle in Denmark. While it has been suggested that this set was the one given to Christian’s father, Frederick II, since it was returned, the 1603 warrant suggests otherwise.²⁴ Christian IV’s jewels were never returned after his death in 1648, as they should have been. Civil unrest in England that paved the way to the establishment of a republic was cited as justification for the retention of the insignia. Its survival intact is thanks, therefore, to this foresight. A comparison of Compton’s jewel with the Great George presented to Christian IV clearly demonstrates that although this brotherhood of knights created a seemingly homogenous unit, a hierarchical system still operated (**Fig. 93**). This George is more sculptural and more dynamic in its execution, with greater attention to the detail of the enamelling and individual components. The Henrician statutes allowed for this Great George to be ornamented according to the preference of the Knight-recipient. Yet evidence from the Privy Council warrant strongly suggests



Figure 93 Gold, enamelled and jewelled Great George pendant presented to King Christian IV of Denmark, 1603, English. Rosenborg Castle, no. 1.40

that the Jewel House alone was responsible for the production of the insignia. So while there may have been an element of choice with regard to the form and embellishment of the jewel, ultimately its creation was highly mediated. This was to maintain strict social hierarchies, ensuring that no knight wore a jewel more sumptuous than was appropriate for his rank and positioning within the Order.

The Lesser George

The Lesser George was a new jewel pertaining to the Order of the Garter, introduced in the 13th year of the reign of Henry VIII. Its name was chosen to distinguish it from the Great George that was required to be worn on the collar. Although the iconography remained the same, with St George on horseback slaying the dragon, the form of this new jewel differed substantially and was used at different times.

And in other dayes of the yere shall be holden to were a small Chayne of Gold with the Ymage of Saynt George dependyng at the ende of the said Chayne, excepte in tyme of Warre, Sickenes, longeviage; Then it shall suffice hym to were alonely a lase of sylke with the said Image of Saynt George.²⁵

Table 9 Lesser George pendants from the estate of Charles I sold to Thomas Beauchamp (information cited in Ashmole 1971, 228)

Item	Valuation (l, s, d)	Sale price (l, s, d)
George containing 161 diamonds, from the Countess of Leicester and discovered by Cornelius Holland	60 00 00	71 02 00
George cut in an onyx, with 41 diamonds in the garnish	35 00 00	37 00 00
Small George with a few diamonds	8 00 00	9 00 00
George with 5 rubies and 3 diamonds, and 11 diamonds in a box	10 00 00	11 00 00
George cut in a garnet	7 00 00	8 00 00
TOTAL	120 00 00	136 02 00



Figure 94 (left) Double-sided gold and enamelled Lesser George pendant with St George on horseback slaying the dragon within a blue enamelled gold garter border and set with four diamonds and 14 Burmese rubies, belonging to William Compton, 1628–9, English, height 8.4cm, width 3.7cm. British Museum, 1980,0201.3



Figure 95 (right) Gold and enamelled Lesser George pendant of St George on horseback slaying a dragon (with the sword or spear now missing), within a blue enamelled gold garter border, supposedly belonging to Thomas Wentworth, c. 1640, English, estimated height 9.3cm, estimated width 4.5cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, 273–1869

The Great George and collar were to be worn at the feast of St George's day (23 April), the installation feasts of new knights and a number of holy days and saints' days.²⁶ This Lesser George was to be worn every day as a marker of belonging to the revered Order.

Every Knight of the Order, should wear loosely before his Breast, the Image of St. George in a Gold Chain, or otherwise in a Ribband, the same to be thence forward placed within the ennobled Garter; to the end a manifest distinction should thereby appear, between the Knights-Companions and others.²⁷

The statutes of Henry VIII do not dictate the material from which this jewel was to be made, and while gold was the most commonly used, examples were also made in semi-precious stone, such as onyx or agate. In the sale of the late Charles I's goods the following Lesser Georges were sold to Thomas Beauchamp (1623–c. 1697), Clerk of the Trustees of the Estate (**Table 9**).

The jewel worn by Charles I at his execution was an onyx image of St George surrounded by a garter set with 21 large diamonds. On its reverse was a watercolour miniature of his queen, Henrietta Maria of France (1609–1669), which was also surrounded by a garter set with 21 diamonds. This reverse was set in an enamelled gold case.²⁸

The various forms of these jewels can be demonstrated clearly in surviving objects. Perhaps the most distinctive type is similar to those belonging to William Compton (**Fig. 94**) and Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), 1st Earl of Strafford (**Fig. 95**). Although the latter was elected to the Order of the Garter in 1640, he was tried and executed by parliament before his installation. A jewel within the British Museum's collection has been identified as being a Lesser George, yet the absence of reference to the Order's motto is puzzling (**Fig. 96**). Whether this was a jewel worn by a Knight of the Garter as his everyday mark of distinction is

debatable. It is true that the statutes decreed by Henry VIII did not explicitly demand for the image of St George to be surrounded by a garter. Yet it would be strange for a knight required to wear a jewel as an indication of his status to omit the crucial signifier of the blue garter with its motto. The

Figure 96 Gold and enamelled pendant of St George on horseback slaying the dragon, set with rubies, 1600–25, English, length 4.3cm, width 3.3cm. British Museum, OA.2371

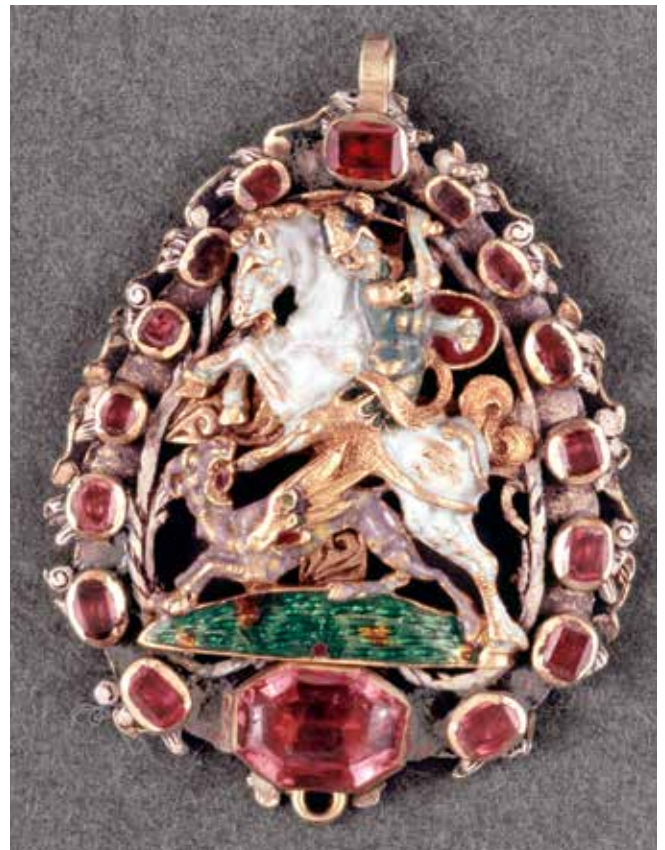




Figure 97 Cast and engraved silver seal matrix with the arms of Sir Henry Lee (made Knight of the Garter in 1597) and encircled by a garter with the motto 'HONI SOIT QVI MAL Y PENSE', c. 1597, English. Victoria and Albert Museum

importance of a visible display of one's position is evident from the adoption of the garter and motto to enclose an individual's coat of arms, as can be seen on the personal seal of Sir Henry Lee (**Fig. 97**) and on a portrait of Robert Dudley where the garter easily matches in scale the size of Dudley's head.²⁹ The need for an overt declaration of one's knightly and highly coveted status was perhaps all the more necessary since the iconography of this saint and the dragon was not limited exclusively to the Order. It was an image also used by the emperors of Russia, the dukes of Mantua and the German counts of Mansfield.³⁰

The Lesser George was required initially to be worn on a gold chain (see **Fig. 89**), although this quickly became interchangeable with a silk ribbon. While originally the ribbon was black (see **Fig. 16**), this soon became substituted for a blue ribbon, which echoed the colours associated with the garter itself and the mantle. On 22 May 1622, James I issued a decree to establish the use of a blue ribbon, although the practice can be witnessed as early as the end of Elizabeth I's reign: 'That for the future it should always be of a Blue Colour, and no other: nor in time of mourning for any of the Knights-Companions, of what Degree soever, should the Colour be changed'.³¹

The pendant usually hung around the neck, although when riding or engaged in battle it could be worn over the left shoulder to fall under the right arm. A miniature of



Figure 98 Isaac Oliver, *Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales*, c. 1612, English, watercolour on vellum laid on a playing card, 9.4 x 7.4cm (including frame). Royal Collection, RC420057

Henry, Prince of Wales, in armour reflects this practice (**Fig. 98**), which was later to become the standard mode of placement at the request of Charles II in 1681.³²

Concluding remarks

The Great George and collar were to be worn on feast days and solemn occasions only, while the garter and Lesser George pendant were required to be worn on a daily basis. As such, the form and style of the pendant are more indicative of the image that a Knight-Companion wished to make visible to those around him. It stood as a marker of the reverence and esteem placed on him by the state and sovereign. But although an everyday object, it was nevertheless limited to a very small and privileged number of the English and European male populations, as a visible symbol of masculine achievement.

Chapter 7

'That Tool of Matrimony': The Ring in Early Modern Betrothals and Weddings

The intent of the ring

Within the early modern period, marriage was a key male preoccupation, with one modern commentator stressing that a 'Wedding was *the* male rite of passage'.¹ For it was only after marriage and with the establishment of his own household that a man could begin to determine an independent, patriarchal role or indeed assert his masculine authority. As we shall see, marriage was not codified in this period, and indeed was a complex issue, so certain signs or symbols became associated with a union. It is in this context that the ring became a powerful visual marker of betrothal or marriage. Through its physicality it served to visualise, quite conspicuously, a social bond.

The French words engraved and hidden on the inside of a gold posy ring (**Fig. 99**) translate to 'Accept with willingness' and find their origin in the 15th century, but the Roman capital script and lozenge-shaped decoration are more suggestive of a later date.² The rhetoric implies a mutual giving and receiving of the ring, which was an important factor in early modern betrothals and marriages. Therefore, the significance of the motto is that it indicates this ring might have been a declaration of intent to marry. What was understood by a wedding ring is expressed effectively in the manuscript autobiography of the Elizabethan composer Thomas Whythorne:

The next day I went again to the widow [...] in words concerning marriage, she was far off and there was no promise to be had of her that way. Notwithstanding, she upon some talk desired me that I would get her a ring to be made; and she would deliver me some gold to make it withal. Unto the which I agreed quickly and demanded of her what fashion she would have it to be made. To the which she answered that she would have it after the manner of a wedding ring. I thereupon imagining that she meant some marriage, and that she would not have requested me to get the ring to be made on that fashion except I should be privy of the marriage, in hope to put the ring on her finger, seemed (as I was indeed) to be very glad that she would commit such a matter to be done by me.³

Discovered in 1955 this text provides a fascinating insight into Tudor life from a male perspective. Both internal and external evidence suggest a probable dating of the manuscript, now held in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, to 1576.⁴ The importance of this text for literary historians, scholars of music and even researchers of gender studies soon becomes apparent. Yet this piece also offers evidence of cultural practices and attitudes that is invaluable to the scope of this research. The passage cited above is but just one extract from the manuscript that captures the complexities and ambiguities regarding courtship and marriage in the



Figure 99 Gold and enamelled posy ring inscribed on the inside with the amorous motto '+PRENES + EN + GRE', found in Wilberfoss, Yorkshire, 16th to 17th century, English, diameter 20mm, width 4mm. British Museum, 2002,0501.1

early modern period. The preoccupations of Whythorne with regard to being married certainly support the view that a change in status only possible through marriage was so crucial to a man's identity and one way for him to perform his masculinity. The text also illuminates the role played by the ring in betrothal rituals and marriage ceremonies.

By weaving together extracts from Whythorne's autobiography and evidence from published marriage depositions it is possible to demonstrate that the ring, while not a compulsory component of the marriage ceremony, nevertheless remained the clearest and most visible indicator of marriage. In the early modern period, a ring was customarily only given to the bride by her husband. A two-way exchange of rings does not seem to occur as regular practice until the 19th century, although there are always exceptions. For example, we read in the records from the London Consistory Court that upon contracting their marriage William Greene gave Margaret Swinerton 'a hoope ring of gowld' and received in return from Margaret 'a iemowe ring of gowld in Confirmation of the same Contract of matrimonie betwixt them'.⁵

The giving of a ring could occur within other contexts. Throughout the courtship process, rings and other gifts were exchanged as love tokens. In William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* there are references to rings given by female characters to their male lovers.⁶ Rings were also offered as signs of friendship, as was the case with the gold and carnelian ring presented to Desiderius Erasmus in 1509 by Alexander Stewart (c. 1493–1513), the illegitimate son of James IV of Scotland (r. 1488–1513) and later Archbishop-designate of St Andrews.⁷ However, here we consider only those rings used in the context of betrothals and marriages.

In his late 16th-century work, *Arcadia*, the Elizabethan author and courtier Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586) describes marriage through the words of the character Euarchus:

Marriage being the most holy conjunction that falls to mankind, out of which all families and so consequently all societies do proceed, which not only by community of goods but community of children is to knit the minds in a most perfect union; which whoso breaks, dissolves all humanity, no man living free from the danger of so near a neighbour.⁸

This and other contemporary literature indicate that marriage was regarded a fundamental state in early modern society yet, surprisingly, there were no codified norms dictating betrothal and marriage practices. In trying to understand these practices during this period, scholarship has often turned to marriage depositions.⁹ These legal documents are indispensable tools for they illuminate contemporary perceptions associated with marriage and promises thereof. The underlying purpose of these records dictates language and form, while content is mostly centred on documenting actions and words that would assist in determining whether or not a marriage had in fact taken place. While it would be unfair to dismiss such accounts for being constrained by conventions, it is necessary to consider them within their legal framework and to remember that these are merely records of failed marriages.

The Whythorne text stands in stark contrast to these since it provides a personal and descriptive narrative. Nevertheless, it is important to retain perspective and

remember that this is the autobiography of a self-professed gentleman looking perhaps to further his ambition at the Elizabethan court. Interestingly, both this autobiography and the marriage depositions contain evidence of a common nature, at once revealing courtship and marriage rituals and highlighting contemporary anxieties. Through these texts a modern reader is forced to reconsider somewhat anachronistic romantic notions of betrothal and marriage in the early modern period.

A close reading of the Whythorne text reveals the subtleties attached to love tokens, in particular the ring. The passage cited at the start of this chapter brings this particular story between the protagonist and a young widow of 'worshipful parentage' to an interesting juncture. Up to this point, Whythorne has recounted how he has been introduced by a mutual friend to this widow. At five or six years his junior, childless and with a dowry worth £20 a year, she is considered to be a suitable choice. The negotiations that ensue are noted by Whythorne and the widow's changeable manner is evident throughout.¹⁰ So when the widow asks Whythorne to have a ring made for her 'after the manner of a wedding ring', the author's immediate understanding is that her words indicate an agreement to marriage. The events that follow demonstrate how each party was acutely aware of their role within this negotiation. How typical these actions were, particularly those of the widow, is not clear but there is a definite sense of the investment that each has made to ensure that there is a semblance of balance of power.

She went unto her chest and fetched out of it as much old gold as was worth nigh about a mark; the which she said that she would have bestowed in the ring. And then she, looking on certain rings that I wear on my little finger, seemed to like one of them and said that she would wear it a while for my sake; whereupon I offered to give it unto her, but she would not take it of gift.¹¹

The widow's actions make an overt statement about contemporary understanding of betrothal and marriage practices. In her examination of the London Consistory Court depositions from 1586 to 1611, Loreen Giese argues that women were often not the passive recipients of gifts and that sometimes there 'included a calculation of the worth of the gifts sent by them or their suitors seemingly in order to quantify the extent of their obligation or relieve themselves of an obligation by indicating an equal exchange of goods'.¹² In the case of Thomas Wye versus Agnes Bushey, Katherine Freame recalls how Agnes sent a gift to Thomas on one occasion 'in recompence of some parte of his gyftes he had before tyme sent her, but nott in respecte of marriage as this respondent verily thinketh'.¹³ The use of the term 'in recompence' is significant. By equalling the monetary worth of the gifts she has received, Agnes has relieved herself of any financial obligation and therefore she is also free of any emotional ties and she is clear that her intent is not one of marriage.

In a similar manner, the widow provides Whythorne with the gold to make the ring, which signals that she considers the ring to be hers, with him merely acting as an agent. She takes his ring as a form of guarantee for the gold that she has supplied. But in refusing to accept Whythorne's ring as a gift, she is ensuring that this is a purely financial transaction,

for an acceptance of the ring as a gift would place her in his debt and possibly make her beholden to a promise of marriage: 'While no gifts "proved" consent in a legal sense, betrothal tokens were strong circumstantial evidence, for people recognized that such tokens were qualitatively different from mere courtship gifts. When such a ring was given and received there could be little doubt what was intended.'¹⁴

Evidence from marriage depositions shows that the lines were somewhat blurred with regard to the meaning of the acceptance of a ring and often other reasons were cited for the gift. In the case of *Juliane Marden versus Tusnothe*, Marden claimed that the silver ring she received was in fact a New Year's gift and not a ring associated with marriage.¹⁵ The shrewd behaviour of Whythorne's widow suggests that she wished to avoid her actions being misinterpreted. This is particularly important given that the exchanges between her and Whythorne took place within the context of a premise of marriage. Whythorne expresses his suspicion but nonetheless continues with the widow's request. He liaises with a goldsmith concerning the fashioning of the ring and an inscription that is to be engraved on its inner surface:

'The eye doth find, the heart doth choose, and love doth bind till death doth loose.' I do write this sentence in this sort because it is not of my making; yet so well liked of me as, if I should make another wedding ring, it should have the same sentence.¹⁶

The interactions with the goldsmith show Whythorne to have gained a more dominant role in the proceedings. For although he uses the widow's gold, Whythorne alone is responsible for instructing the goldsmith on the form of the ring. The widow offered no indication regarding its appearance other than it should be a 'wedding ring'. Unfortunately, the result is that Whythorne fails to commission a ring to the widow's liking. She bemoans the fact that it 'was not of the newest and best fashion', while Whythorne defends his choice claiming 'It is of the best fashion that I do know'.¹⁷

This encounter reveals that there was no prescribed form to the betrothal or wedding ring. While traditionally jewellery historians have attempted to categorise certain rings under the headings of marriage or betrothal, Charles Oman noted with some accuracy that 'it is the use and not the shape which distinguishes the wedding and betrothal ring'.¹⁸ Therefore, it is the context of marriage (interpreted as such by both parties) that transforms a ring into a wedding ring. However, by considering the demand made by Whythorne's widow when she asks him to have a ring made for her 'after the manner of a wedding ring', we must acknowledge that perhaps there was some contemporary understanding regarding the form of a wedding ring that remains inaccessible to a modern reader. Whythorne's statement regarding fashion certainly suggests that particular conventions may have governed this object type.

It is certainly true that there are particular motifs such as clasped hands (the *fede* symbol), a pierced heart and the pansy, among others, that could signify love and affection but these are by no means definitive indicators that a ring was used in a marriage ceremony.¹⁹ By tradition, there has been one type of ring most associated with use in a wedding



Figure 100 Gold and enamelled Jewish wedding ring inscribed in Hebrew with the initial letters for 'Mazel Tov' (Congratulations), 16th century, German, diameter 43mm, weight 22g. British Museum, AF.1417

ceremony and that is the Jewish wedding ring. However, research by Dora Thornton published since the 2017 edition of this text now casts doubt on such attribution, suggesting instead that those rings historically termed Jewish wedding rings may in fact have no link with the marriage ceremony in accordance with recorded Jewish ritual.²⁰ The British Museum's collection contains 27 rings of this type, most frequently identifiable from its broad band, ornate filigree and boss embellishments to the hoop (often decorated with enamel). The bezel, sometimes formed by a gable, is traditionally thought to symbolise either the Temple of Jerusalem or the new house of the couple (**Fig. 100**). Rings of this type seem to have appeared in the 14th century and their use continued into the 19th century. It was widely believed that they were either retained by families as heirloom pieces or may have even been the property of the synagogue, so not necessarily considered as personal jewels.²¹ Given this and the uncertainty around their use, these types of rings do not form a part of the discussion for this chapter. The focus remains practices within England and rings of English provenance, although a notable Continental example should be mentioned here. This 15th-century, northern Italian gold ring set with a faceted diamond in the bezel is inscribed in black letter script on the shoulders of the hoop 'Lorenzo * a Lena Lena' (**Fig. 101**).

Figure 101 Gold, enamelled and diamond ring inscribed 'Lorenzo * a Lena Lena', 15th century, Italian, diameter 19.5mm, weight 4.8g. British Museum, AF.1090



Luke Syson and Dora Thornton believe this ring to be a marriage ring from a groom to his bride, since the abbreviated form of Elena or Madalena in the inscription to indicate the woman's name is suggestive of intimacy.²² The use of a diamond strengthens this supposition, since this precious stone was regarded as a symbol of marital fidelity.²³

Returning to the question of the agency that Whythorne had in determining the form of the ring, we can consider the inscription that was selected to be engraved on its inner surface. Although the author admits that the posy chosen was not of his own composition, nevertheless it is his poetic sentiment that is expressed to the widow and to be worn by her.²⁴ A contemporary parallel in which the man selected the motto to be engraved on the wedding ring to be worn by his bride is the ring given by Edward Seymour (1539?–1621), Earl of Hertford, to Lady Katherine Grey (1540?–1568). Despite both parties being willing participants, this marriage was subject to an inquiry over its legitimacy on the orders of Elizabeth I. Surviving documents reveal the various stages of negotiations, the betrothal and the wedding itself, with one section explaining how the ring came into being: 'And concerninge the Wedding Ringe he saith that a lyttle before the saied Marriadge he caused a Ringe of Golde to be made of fower or fyve lincks wrytten uppon everie linck with certain English Miter of his owne makinge conteyning matter of good Will'.²⁵ The sentiment expressed on the ring was 'of his owne makinge' and Lady Katherine had no agency in this. In fact, during the part of her interrogation when she discusses the receiving of the ring, she claims that 'whether it weare made for that purpose or not shee cannott tell'.²⁶

In the Whythorne text cited above there is another stark reminder of how love and courtship in the early modern period operated under different parameters than those of the modern day when the author states that should he marry again he would choose the same posy for a ring. This suggests that there was no desire to create a sentiment that was personal to his potential wife, but rather that this sentence was merely his own expression of commitment.

The tale ends with the widow's resolution that she will not marry Whythorne, although not before he has been recommended by his friend to give her a ring in the presence of others: 'Seeing that she is so tickle and fleeting I do think it meet that ye be ensured together before her brother and me, and that you do give her a ring on that condition'.²⁷

In the context of the negotiations that have taken place prior to this and by the giving of a ring in front of witnesses, there is an underlying acceptance by the male characters that a legitimate marriage will have been contracted. However, a further refusal by the widow convinces Whythorne to cease his pursuit. Almost immediately his thoughts turn to the investments that he has made in this relationship thus far, and he seeks to sever the ties that exist between him and the widow as a result of the possession of certain objects exchanged during the perceived courtship period:

I remembered that I had as yet the widow's ring, and that she had mine. Of the which I thought to have made an exchange with her [...] quoth I, 'here I have brought you your ring; and if you will pay me for the making thereof and will also redeliver unto me the tokens which ye received of me, you shall have your ring.' Immediately after my words so spoken, she paid me the

money for the making of the ring and delivered me my tokens again. Upon the receipt whereof I delivered her her ring.²⁸

The returning of gifts was a visible declaration marking the end of a relationship, and should this not take place infidelity could be claimed if either party began courting with another.²⁹ The importance of the retention of gifts and the confusion that could arise by a third party taking possession of a gift is evident in a number of contemporary plays. In Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* Nerissa becomes upset that Gratiano no longer possesses the ring she gave him, which is inscribed 'LOVE ME, AND LEAVE ME NOT':

What talke you of the posie or the vawlew:
You swore to me when I did give you,
that you would weare it till your houre of death,
and that it should lie with you in your graue.³⁰

Later in the same play a similar sentiment of retention is manifest: 'I gaue my Loue a ring, and made him sweare/ neuer to part with it'.³¹ In the play *Cymbeline* an exchange of a ring and a manacle between Innogen and Posthumus becomes symbolic of a marital bond. The character Iachino later takes possession of the manacle from Innogen and spies her mole surreptitiously, in order to prove to Posthumus that he has slept with Innogen and so win a wager. It is not the knowledge of the mole that troubles Posthumus but rather the sight of the manacle in Iachino's possession that compels Posthumus to believe the tale of infidelity.³²

Whythorne was acutely aware of the significance of the returned gift, as is demonstrated in an earlier part of the story. Five days following the first encounter between Whythorne and the widow, he meets with her to confirm that she is still in agreement with the marriage: 'Whereunto she said that such a promise she made unto him and was willing to perform it. Upon the which words I gave unto her a token of good will and she received it'.³³

It later ensues that the widow changes her mind, reasoning that 'The which promise was no such contract but that it may be broken again'.³⁴ Following a further discussion regarding her change of heart, Whythorne recalls that 'she fetched the token which the two days before I had given unto her. And she would have delivered it unto me again, but I would not then receive it'.³⁵ By his refusal of the return of this token, there is a clear sense that Whythorne believes that her possession of the token implies a commitment and obligation on her part.

The significance of marriage for a man

Throughout the whole exchange between Whythorne and the widow, one question that seems to dominate for a modern reader is why Whythorne persists in his pursuit of marriage when the widow's temperament seems so changeable. A contemporary view of marriage is expressed by the English clergyman William Gouge (1575–1653), indicating the importance of marriage for both men and women in the early modern period. In an enumeration of the privileges of marriage, Gouge writes that:

1. By it men and women are made Husbands and Wives.
2. It is the only lawfull meanes to make them Fathers and Mothers.

3. It is the ordinarie meanes to make them Masters and Mistresses. [...]
4. It is the most effectuall meanes of continuing a mans name and memory in this world, that can be. Children are liuing monuments and liuely representations of their parents.
5. Many priuileges haue of old beene granted to such as were married. In pleading causes, or giuing sentence, they had the first place; and in choice of offices they were preferred. In meetings they had the vpper hand.³⁶

The observations of the commentator John Gillis, in his 1988 publication charting British marriage from the start of the 17th century to the present day, shed further light on Whythorne's continuous pursuit of marriage. He observes that in terms of the social implications behind marriage in the 16th and 17th centuries a 'Wedding was *the* male rite of passage'.³⁷ Whythorne even muses on the subject at one point and says 'I hoped to become a married man, with the rest of that holy estate'.³⁸ This is an important point to consider, particularly in the context of the literature on the subject of marriage that looks to the role and the changing status of the woman. Gillis is quite correct in his assertion that 'a woman was a dependent whether a daughter or a wife'.³⁹ By the acceptance of a ring during a marriage ceremony, the woman remained as a subordinate; it was the man's status that was transformed. Moreover, through this ceremonial movement the ring itself is transformed and becomes a wedding ring and hence symbolic of the union.

The widow in the Whythorne text is in a strong position, since she is not considered an unmarried woman. For despite being a widow, she is dowered and therefore has her place in society. For Whythorne, however, marriage would permit him to establish a separate household. With marriage firmly linked to this idea of the creation of a new family unit comes the necessity to be able to sustain it. For a man of a lower class, he would need to wait until he had land that he could work and would therefore marry in his late 20s. The story was similar for men of the artisan class too, 'for it was not until a man was a guild member that marriage was even conceivable'. Indeed, in 16th-century London marriage and the achievement of freeman status were closely tied.⁴⁰ Resulting from the lengthy seven-year apprenticeship system in London, becoming a freeman usually occurred at about the age of 26, with 'marriage, setting up a household, and other events in the transition to adulthood' being deferred until this stage.⁴¹ It was not until about two years later that a man was generally in a position to establish a household and subsequently marry, since he needed to first work as a journeyman to then become financially independent.⁴² Whether able to truly afford to maintain a household though, the semblance of this ability was paramount and Whythorne dresses conspicuously to convey this, once he has decided to find a wife: 'And, upon that resolution, after I had furnished myself with convenient apparel and jewels so well as I could (with the glorious show of the which, among other thing, a young maiden must be wooed), I took on me this aforesaid conquest and enterprise'.⁴³

The selected extracts from Whythorne's autobiography presented here reveal the complexities of courtship, betrothal and marriage in the early modern period.

Evidence from contemporary marriage depositions published in numerous studies provides similar accounts and further promotes a sense of ambiguity with regard to what constituted a valid marriage in the 16th and 17th centuries. The only certainty concerning marriage is that there was no clearly defined process during this time. This is somewhat strange considering the importance placed on being in the state of marriage, for as Gillis points out 'marriage was the central economic and social institution' during the early modern period.⁴⁴

The form of marriage

A Treatise of Spousals, or Matrimonial Contracts is the only contemporary treatise that deals with the issue of marriage. Posthumously printed, this tract was written in the 17th century by Henry Swinburne (c. 1551–1624), a judge of the Prerogative Court in York.⁴⁵ For Swinburne the single most important element that constituted a marriage was the mutual consent of both parties (otherwise known as spousals) in the presence of a witness. This consent could take the form of words, writing, signs or tokens. Common to the court depositions are various forms of testimony that could uphold the legality of a marriage, much of which was still subject to interpretation. These included the exchange of letters, tokens or rings; talking together; eating and drinking together; kissing and embracing; and the joining of hands.⁴⁶ Mutual consent remained the ultimate indicator, although this alone was not sufficient, for there needed to be a witness to the event.

The aforementioned marriage between Lady Katherine and Hertford in 1561 was deemed void by the Commission of Inquiry that was established to determine its validity. Despite the extensive and corroborative statements provided by both Lady Katherine and Hertford, in addition to their mutual consent, they were unable to produce the single witness of the event: the priest who married them. It seems that even the production of the wedding ring did not constitute proof of a legal marriage. The priest was eventually presented as a witness, although much too late for Lady Katherine who died in 1568, and the marriage was finally established in 1606.⁴⁷

Despite contrary belief, this practice of mutual consent was not limited to England. The doctrine of consent actually dated from the late 12th century following a failed attempt by Pope Alexander III (c. 1100/05–1181) to enforce the need for a church ceremony to validate a marriage. Roman law did offer rituals for the marriage ceremony, although they were not compulsory and mutual consent alone was sufficient.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, there are notable accounts that document the various rituals practised by certain social groups, such as Marco Antonio Altieri's *Li nuptiali*, which comments on the practices of 15th-century Roman aristocracy.⁴⁹ Of particular interest is the ring day (*anellamento*), since it focused on the ritual placing of the ring on the woman's finger by the man, thus elevating the status and significance of the ring.⁵⁰

The Catholic Church found itself unable to reform the marriage ceremony since 'there was no scriptural warrant for a requirement of ceremony, banns, endowment or parental consent for a valid marriage' and so marriage by

consent remained fully legal.⁵¹ Therefore solemnising a marriage in church was not a requisite, although it was encouraged in order to provide concrete evidence of marriage. Elizabeth Chadbourne rejected the receiving of a gold ring as proof of a marriage between Thomas Powell and Katherine Garnett alias Armsted, for she asked ‘if she weare married indede’ and ‘if she weare married in ... the Churche’.⁵²

Marriage in church did not become legally enforced until the Hardwicke Act of Marriage of 1753, which ended the practice of mutual consent as was permitted by canon law. The idea of a civil marriage was introduced during the Civil War with a Commonwealth Statute of 24 August 1653, although this was repealed on 26 June 1657 and reintroduced only in 1836.⁵³ While in Catholic Europe, after the 24th session of the Council of Trent in 1563, a marriage could not be upheld to be valid unless it was presided over by a priest in the presence of two or three witnesses.⁵⁴ Therefore, with no legal requirement for a church ceremony in early modern England, marriages could be conducted informally and so the need to demonstrate one’s consent clearly was paramount.

Marriage and rings

While ‘no one Form of Desponsation [was] more lawful than another’,⁵⁵ Swinburne considered the ring to constitute the clearest and most tangible sign of this mutual consent to contract spousals or matrimony, provided the occasion for giving and receiving was explicit:

If any words were uttered, the delivery and acceptance of the Ring is no more but a Confirmation of such a contract as those words do import [...] If in earnest, then the manner of delivery and acceptance thereof, is to be regarded; for if it were not delivered in a solemn manner (as if he did not put it on her fourth Finger, but gave it her otherwise into her hands) it doth not signifie Matrimony, no more than when a Man sendeth a Ring to a Woman by a Messenger, which is understood to be a Gift or Token of good will, and not a sign of Matrimony or Spousals. And albeit by the Opinion of some it may seem, that the Ring being delivered by the Party himself into the Womans hand, without putting the same on her Finger, Spousals are thereby presumed to be contracted betwixt them; yet dare not I deliver this Conclusion for current, as well because in this Case, it seemeth rather a Gift or an Argument of friendly good will, than an earnest penny of Spousals: As also, for that by this means, as by a Bait, many simple Maids might easily be hooked, e’re they were advised, and so contracted before they consented; a matter no less unreasonable than unlawful.⁵⁶

Although the ring was considered an indicator and the act of placing it on the woman’s finger by the man was symbolic of the mutual consent of both parties, it was by no means necessary for contracting the marriage. It would also seem that the ring did not need to have any intrinsic value. Therefore, it is merely a sign of marriage and not a requisite thereof. Yet in his examinations of depositions, Ralph Houlbrooke claims that ‘No other sort of gift was so closely associated with marriage in the eyes of the law’.⁵⁷

In the case of Richard Thompson versus Helen Butt, John Sharp recalls in his deposition the events following the minister asking Richard for a ring:

Thompson answered that hee had none, and theareupon the other man whom ... [he] supposeth to be an hostelier stooped down and made a ring of rush and would have given it them but they took not the same for the stranger tolld them it mattered not for any ring.⁵⁸

The use of rush was perhaps not such an unusual substitute for a ring as we see in a literary reference found in Robert Greene’s *Menaphon*, first published in 1589. Following an exchange between the pair of poor country lovers Doron and Carmela, the author interrupts the narrative to address the gentlemen to whom the book is dedicated: ‘Well, ’twas a good world when such simplicity was used, says the old women of our time, when a ring of rush would tie as much love together as a gimmon of gold’.⁵⁹

Despite the sometimes peripheral role played by the ring in marriage depositions, it does constitute a fundamental part of the marriage ceremony as instructed by the Book of Common Prayer that was introduced in 1549, during the reign of Edward VI:

Then shall they again loose theyr handes, & the man shal geve unto the woma[n] a ring, laying the same upo[n] the booke, with the accustomed dutie to the Priest and Clarke. And the Priest taking the ryng, shal delyver it unto the ma[n], to put it upon the fourth finger of the woma[n]s left ha[n]d. And the ma[n] taught by the Priest, shal say.

With this ring I thee wed [...]

[...] So these persons may surely performe and kepe the vowe and couenaunt betwixte them made, wherof this ryng geven, and received, is a token & pledge, and euer remain in perfect loue & peace together, and liue according unto thy lawes [...]

For asmuche as R. and R. have co[n]sented together in holy wedlocke, and haue witnessed the same before God, and thys company, and therto haue geven and pledged their trouthe eyther to other, & haue declared the same by geuyng and receiuyng of a ryng, & by ioynyng of handes I pronounce that thei be man and wife together.⁶⁰

In the First Book of Common Prayer, not only is the presence and significance of the ring notable for the role it plays in contracting the marriage, but the positioning of it is also prescribed.

This is the first mention of the ring being placed on the fourth finger of the left hand, for prior to this it had been placed on the right hand. An ancient text of the grammarian Aulus Gellius (c. AD 125–after 180) suggested that a vein flowed directly from this finger to the heart. It seems that over time this was misinterpreted to be the right hand. So with the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer, this mistake was corrected.⁶¹ Roman Catholics on the Continent adopted this practice in 1614 in their religious book, the *Rituale Romanum*, but recusants were defiant and continued to wear a wedding ring on the right hand until the 18th century. In his work *A Confutation of a Sermon*, the author John Rastell mentions this discrepancy in the Protestant and Catholic traditions between the hand on which to place the woman’s ring in a section entitled ‘A Challenge against Protestants’: ‘18. Or that the man should put the wedding ring vpon the fourth finger of the left hand of the woman, and not of the right hand of her, as it hath ben many hundred years continued.’⁶²

There were also challenges to the use of the ring and in fact during the Commonwealth the ring in the marriage ceremony was abolished, since it was seen to have ‘heathenish origins’ from its association with bishops’ rings.⁶³

Others were for Abolishing
That Tool of Matrimony, a Ring,
With which th’ unsanctify’d Bridegroom
Is marry’d onley to a thumb.⁶⁴

The 17th-century satirical text *Hudibras* by the poet Samuel Butler (bap. 1613–1680) offers a commentary of an earlier period. The above section of the text is illuminating for the insignificance it assigns to the validity of the ring used in marriage. Furthermore, it provides interesting reference to the practice of wearing a wedding ring on the thumb. A painting once housed at Stanford Court in Worcestershire supposedly showed five Elizabethan ladies of the Salway family demonstrating this practice.⁶⁵ Unfortunately, a fire in 1882 destroyed much of the original house along with the collections of manuscripts and paintings.⁶⁶ Portraiture does offer evidence for the wearing of rings on the thumb but without further research it would be impossible to say definitively that the ring had been used in a marriage ceremony.⁶⁷

Despite the prominence given to the ring by Swinburne and the role that it plays within the solemnisation of the marriage ceremony in the Book of Common Prayer, there is still no prescription of form and we see evidence in the depositions of all manner of rings performing within the contexts of betrothal and marriage. While references to a plain gold hoop are most common, this was by no means the only type of ring given to the woman. Giese has identified memento mori and signet rings in the London Consistory Court records, as well as ‘a gowld ring inamuled’ and ‘a ringe of gold with a Dyamond in’.⁶⁸ That the type of ring used as a wedding ring could not be determined even by contemporaries is evident in an exchange between Lady Katherine Grey and Sir Owen Hopton (c. 1519–1595) as the former lay on her deathbed, a prisoner in the Tower of London, on 27 January 1567:

Then she said vnto Sir owene I shal further desire *you* to deliuer from me certene Com[m]endationes, and tokens vnto my Lorde, & calling vnto her woman she said give me the boxe wherin my weddinge Ringe is, and when she had it she opened it, and tooke oute a Ringe with a pointed diamond in it and said here Sir owene delyuer this vnto my Lorde, this is the Ringe that I receaued of him when I gaue my selfe vnto him, and gaue him my faith, what saye you madam said Sir Owen was this *your* weddinge Ringe, No Sir Owene she said, this was the Ringe of my assurance vnto my Lord, and ther is my weddinge ringe takynge an other Ringe all of goulde out of the boxe, sainge delyuer this also vnto my Lorde.⁶⁹

Sir Owen’s initial perception is that the wedding ring is the hoop set with a point-cut diamond. Lady Katherine corrects him and informs him that this particular ring was actually used on the occasion on which they were betrothed. The wedding ring in this instance takes on a more simple form being made of plain gold. This contradicts the idea proposed by Diana Scarisbrick that all who could afford to

do so chose to marry with a gem-set ring. She argues that a simple gold or silver-gilt hoop was only for those that were less wealthy.⁷⁰ Lady Katherine’s wedding ring was actually formed of five interlinking gold hoops and on four of these the following words were engraved:

As Circles Five by art compact shewe but one ringe in sight
So trust uniteth faithfull minds, with knott of secrete might
Whose force to breake but greedie death noe right possesseth
power
As tyme and sequels well shall prove my Ringe can saie noe
more.⁷¹

That this is a complex ring is undeniable, but nonetheless it remains a ring made only of gold.⁷² In a late 17th-century comedy written by William Cavendish (bap. 1593–1676), 1st Duke of Newcastle, the character of Sir Richard Huntlove lauds the benefits of going to the country to his lady. He tells her that she will ‘not be asham’d to weare youre owne wedding ring with the old posie’.⁷³ This would seem to indicate a plain gold hoop with an inscription engraved on the inner face. Even on the occasion of the marriage between Mary I and Philip II of Spain in 1554 there was discussion in the Council of the form of ring with which Mary should be married. Eventually, Mary decided not to have a gem-set ring, ‘for she chose to be wedded with a plain hoop of gold, like other maidens’.⁷⁴ There is no doubt that a gem-set ring could have been afforded on this occasion but a choice of a gold ring in its simplest and purest form suggests a desire for a pure and wholesome marriage.⁷⁵

Gimmel rings and posy rings

Despite there being no standardised form to the wedding ring, there were certain types that remained popular during the 16th and 17th centuries. The gimmel ring is perhaps a type most often associated with love and marriage. The name derives from the Latin *gemellus*, meaning twin. This type of ring is usually comprised of two intertwined hoops each with their own inscription or stone and therefore forming half a ring, that when joined make the ring complete.⁷⁶

A notable example is the supposed wedding ring of the London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham, possibly depicted on the finger of Gresham in a full-length portrait and exhibited in a London exhibition in 1933.⁷⁷ Both hoops contain biblical invocations, with one containing the words ‘QVOD DEVS CONIVNSIT’ (What God has joined together), and the other bears ‘HOMO NON SEPERAT’ (Let no man separate); one hoop is set with a ruby stone, and the other with a diamond. When joined, the stones unite and the words are concealed. A cavity in the ring at one time held two gold figurines of loves or genii.⁷⁸ A contemporary German example with the same inscriptions as the Gresham ring, set with a ruby and an aquamarine and similarly decorated with elaborate scrollwork and enamelling, is in the British Museum’s collection (**Fig. 102**).⁷⁹

This ring type was popular in the 15th century and in the following century it became more elaborate, with sculptural detailing on the hoop and shoulders, and chasing and enamelling on the sides of the quatrefoil bezel. Traditionally, the two hoops of a gimmel ring could be separated and,



Figure 102 Gold and enamelled gimmel ring formed of two interlocking hoops, the bezel set with a ruby and an aquamarine and in the shape of a quatrefoil flower with scrollwork decoration, inscribed 'QUOD DEUS CONJUNXIT HOMO NON SEPARET', 16th century, German, diameter 29mm, weight 11.1g. British Museum, AF.1097



Figure 103 Gold posy ring inscribed 'In * god * is * my * trost ***', 16th century, English, diameter 20mm, width 3.5mm. British Museum, 1961,1202.189



Figure 104 Silver-gilt posy ring inscribed '+THINKE x ON x ME', 16th or 17th century, English, diameter 20mm. British Museum, AF.1383



Figure 105 Copper-alloy posy ring inscribed 'I LYKE MY CHO', 16th or 17th century, English, diameter 22mm, width 3.5mm. British Museum, 1961,1202.37

when a couple was betrothed, each party received one part. At the marriage ceremony, the two hoops were rejoined to symbolise the union of the couple. Often the names of the couple were inscribed on each hoop:

A Curious Artist wrought 'em:
With joynts so close as not to be perceiv'd;
Yet are they both each others Counterpart.
Her part had *Juan* inscrib'd, and his had *Zayda*.
(You know those names are theirs;) and in the midst,
A heart divided in two halves was plac'd.⁸⁰

Perhaps, though, the most ubiquitous of all rings that can be associated with love and marriage is the posy ring. The term posy derives from the French word *poésie* for 'poetry', since the inscription usually rhymed. Strictly speaking a posy ring can be any type of ring that contains a posy, or motto. As Ormande Dalton points out, 'many rings, which from their type or the nature of the subjects engraved on them were probably made for other uses, have been transformed into love-rings by the addition of amatory mottoes'.⁸¹ George Puttenham discusses this practice in *The Art of English Posie*: 'There be also other like Epigrammes [...] and neuer contained aboue one verse, or two at the most, but the shorter the better, we call them Posies, and [...] vse them as deuises in rings and armes and about such courtly purposes'.⁸²

On the whole, the majority of extant posy rings in museum collections in their most basic form consist of a hoop, plain on the exterior and with an English inscription (the posy) on the inner face. A great number of these are gold, although there are a few examples in silver and even base metal, such as copper (**Figs 103–5**). Gold was the most common metal to be used for the making of a wedding ring and an explanation for this is offered by a 13th-century bishop:

One Protheus made a ring of iron with an adamant enclosed therein, as a pledge of love, because as iron subdueth all things, so doth love conquer all things, since nothing is more violent



Figure 106 Gold-alloy posy ring inscribed 'FERE GOD ONLI', 15th or 16th century, English, diameter 21mm, width 7mm, weight 2.7g. British Museum, 1961,1202.148



Figure 107 Gold posy ring inscribed in black letter script 'en bon an', 15th century, English, diameter 18mm. British Museum, 1960,1103.1



Figure 108 Detail of a gold posy ring inscribed in Roman capitals 'x CONTINEW x CONSTANT x', 16th or 17th century, English, diameter 22mm, width 5mm. British Museum, 1961,1202.65



Figure 109 Detail of a gold posy ring inscribed in italic script 'As love hath joyn'd our harts together/So none but death our harts shall sever', Robert Tyte, Salisbury, 1595–1633 (active), diameter 22mm, width 6mm. British Museum, 1961,1202.93

than its ardour, and, as an adamant cannot be broken, so love cannot be overcome, for love is strong as death. In course of time gold rings set with gems were substituted for the adamantine ones of baser metal, because, as gold excelleth all other metal, so doth love excel all other blessings, and as gold is set off with gems, so is conjugal love set off by other virtues.⁸³

Many of the posy rings have a diameter of around 20mm and a width often no more than 5mm. This small-scale nature means that these rings are fairly lightweight and thus more suited for a woman's delicate hand. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that a posy ring formed of a wider band and sharing characteristics most associated with those rings commissioned by serjeants-at-law – a Roman capital inscription and hallmarks to the outer face between raised borders – was accessioned as a serjeant's ring upon entering the British Museum in 1961 (**Fig. 106**).⁸⁴ In this instance it is only the inscription, and not any intrinsic qualities of the ring itself, that indicates this was intended as a posy ring, for the mottoes found on serjeant's rings were predominantly in Latin and made reference to the law.⁸⁵

A large number of the posy rings that survive are from the 17th or 18th centuries, but there are also a few from earlier centuries. Posy rings increased in popularity in the 15th century and these are frequently characterised by a French inscription to the outer face in Lombardic script or, later in the century, in black letter (a type of 15th-century script). This is then surrounded by floral or foliate motifs often enamelled in white (**Fig. 107**). By the 16th century, the posy becomes written increasingly in the vernacular, it is transferred to the inner face of the ring and is written in Roman capitals (**Fig. 108**). Moving into the following

century, the inscriptions begin to be italicised thus providing more space on the surface of the ring and therefore permitting longer posies (**Fig. 109**). These style conventions have been established from dated examples, such as mourning rings, and can be applied to assist in dating other rings, although as with any object type there are always exceptions. The posies from the wedding rings of Thomas Whythorne and Lady Katherine Grey cited above are both from the late 16th century, yet the length of the inscriptions is indicative of a period after this. This may indicate that the adoption of longer posies became fashionable sooner than was previously thought and so a re-examination of posy rings may be required to determine more accurate dating.⁸⁶

There is only a single conclusive sign that a ring has a connection with marriage and that is the existence of the marriage trigram. This triangular arrangement of three initial letters is the definitive indicator of marriage. Giese notes one such reference in the depositions, which she admits is rare in these records: 'ther was made an R an O and a K for bothe their names'.⁸⁷ This arrangement of letters occurs in at least one ring in the British Museum, an example of which has the letters R and A surmounted by the initial L, with the latter indicating the first letter of the couple's surname and the two that sit below it representing the first names of the man and woman (**Fig. 110**). The same ring is also inscribed on the inner face with the following posy over two lines: 'I lick I loue I liue content/I made my chois not to repent'.

Unfortunately, the frequency of such marriage trigrams on surviving rings is limited and so there is a need to turn to the posies themselves and interpret their sentiment. The nature of the inscriptions on many rings is significant and



Figure 110 Gold ring inscribed with a posy in italics, a marriage trigram and maker's mark 'P' in a triangular punch, 16th or 17th century, English, diameter 21mm, width 4mm. British Museum, 1961.1202.28

variations of the same sentiments appear frequently that answer the need for mutual consent. Just under half of a sample group of 38 from the several hundred posy rings in the British Museum's collection demonstrate rhetoric of choice, of an unchanging mind or of lifelong commitment. As noted by Swinburne and others, mutual consent was essential if a marriage was to be legally contracted. So the use of rhetoric that implies free choice and an unwavering mind would surely be a clear sign of this consent and intent to marry. Thus the presence of such posies would seem to indicate that these rings were used either for betrothal or marriage and, as such, were more customarily worn by women (and given by men).

The noted jewellery historian Diana Scarisbrick prefers to identify the characteristic features that suggest a love ring and does not confine her work to only considering words as indicative of love, but also includes symbolism.⁸⁸ While such symbols are valid in determining love tokens, they cannot provide any proof of use as a tool of matrimony. Scarisbrick acknowledges that symbolism is merely indicative and accepts that without the presence of inscriptions there is no conclusive proof of marriage.⁸⁹

The origin of many posies has been investigated by Dame Joan Evans in *English Posies and Posy Rings* (1931), in which she researched the posies contained on rings in her possession, a large number of which were donated to the British Museum in 1961. This work is invaluable but is by no means comprehensive, particularly as many more posy rings have come to light since the Treasure Act of 1996. Determining a date for the first instance of a motto provides a start date for the production of a ring. Not all posies refer to love; some have biblical invocations, while others are more enigmatic and therefore difficult to contextualise and consequently date. 'No cut to unkindnes' is one such peculiar inscription that appears on a ring, which has been dated broadly from the 16th to 18th century (Fig. 111). However, it would not be unreasonable to date this ring to the 17th century based on sources relating to the inscription.

This ring was originally in the Braybrooke collection and the relevant catalogue entry acknowledges the difficulty in



Figure 111 Gold posy ring inscribed 'No cut to unkindnes', 16th to 18th century, English, diameter 21mm. British Museum, AF.1349

identifying the posy and postulates that it bears some reference to the words of Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*: 'a paltry ring/that she did giue me, whose posie was/for all the world like Cutlers poetry'.⁹⁰ This is seemingly an allusion to the practice of engraving verses on the blade of a knife and so Gratiano's words seem to reflect more the placing of a posy on the outer face of a ring and therefore conspicuously, rather than relating to this particular posy. The ring's inscription is listed in *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, where the entry cites the following references:

1599 William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene 2, line 183 – 'This was the most unkindest cut of all';

1621 Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, I, ii, IV, viii (1651), 169 – 'No cut, to unkindness, as the saying is: a frown and hard speech, ... especially to courtiers, or such as attend upon great persons, is present death';

1659 James Howell, *English Proverbs*, 13a – 'No cut to unkindness'.⁹¹

The motto bears no amorous undertones. Posies could therefore be inscribed on rings that were not intended to be used as love tokens, although the term posy ring has now become synonymous with love and marriage. Whythorne cites an example of a non-amatory motto when relating his encounters with another widow. He is her schoolmaster and servant but soon becomes her favourite, to the extent that she provides him with either money to buy clothing and jewels, or the materials with which to make such things. Whythorne soon perceives that the relationship, innocent though it remains, is being discussed within the household. His course of action in response to this is to commission a gold ring for himself:

In the which I caused to be graven this sentence following: 'where wily whispers wait work wisely, quod W'. This counsel I made so as every word began with a 'W' for my name. But the chief cause why I made it was to put me in mind to beware in all my sayings and doings, especially afore common whispers.⁹²

Concluding remarks

Evidence from marriage depositions reveals that one of the fundamental difficulties in determining whether a ring was

considered a legitimate token exchanged in the marriage ceremony and thus constituting a wedding ring is the fact that this was all subject to the interpretations of both the giver and receiver. These legal documents commonly show the defence claiming that the ring had been given and received merely as a token of goodwill, rather than as a symbol of contracted marriage or the future promise of a marriage.

In the case of *Thomas Wye versus Agnes Bushy*, Katherine Freame comments on the exchanges between the two saying ‘which [...] [Agnes] with much adoe received [...] telling her that she would take them, butt nott in the way of any marriage’.⁹³ Presumably, then, the presence of a posy that referred to the constancy of the wearer would mean that the marriage was more difficult to contest, although this appears not to be the case in the instance of *Mary Porredge of Ospringe versus John Colyer*. For, according to one deposition, Mary sent John ‘a weddinge ring with this poysy in yt viz yow have my harte till deathe departe’.⁹⁴ It is difficult to conceive that the presence of such an inscription could be indicative of anything else but a promise of marriage. Yet this simply provides more evidence of the complex and ambiguous nature of betrothal and marriage in the early modern period.

Returning to the satirical comments of Samuel Butler cited above, he provides an interesting commentary on contemporary practices in *Hudibras* and makes explicit his thoughts on how the ring actually signifies nothing, for the woman is free to change her mind following the ceremony:

That Tool of Matrimony, a Ring,
With which th’ unsanctifi’d Bridegroom
Is marry’d onley to a thumb;
[...]
The Bride to nothing but her Will,
That nulls the After-marriage still.⁹⁵

The idea of broken promises dominates the language of marriage depositions and this is to be expected, for such documents are only in existence as a result of failed marriages. Promises can be made and broken at the stages of both betrothal and marriage, as is evident from the various cases cited above. Since a marriage could only be legally upheld if there was witnessed mutual consent from both parties, there was some degree of flexibility should one party wish to dissolve the marriage and could prove a lack of consent. There were particular actions and words that served to indicate that a marriage had taken place, with the ring as the most visible and tangible of all signs. Yet since this was all subject to interpretation by the witnesses there was no certainty of the outcome.

Demonstrating a profound sensitivity towards this interpretative nature that governed marriage under canon law is a final cautionary tale from Whythorne.⁹⁶ He shows acknowledgement of how witnessed words and behaviours could be construed as signs of consent to marriage or betrothal. On a Thursday, the protagonist accompanies the chaplain to breakfast at the house of a certain Mr G. who is



Figure 112 Gold and enamelled gimmel ring with clasped hands inscribed inside each hoop ‘AS HANDS BE SHVT’, ‘SO SEWERLY KNYT’, 16th to 17th century, diameter 22.8mm, weight 4.9g. British Museum, 1959,0209.40

at this time not present, although his housekeeper, Mistress Elsabeth, is. Once they have finished dining, the housekeeper makes reference to Whythorne being her husband. Whythorne, believing this to be in jest, ‘smiled and said to her that, if she had me to be her husband, she should then be well husbanded’. The naming of someone as your spouse could be cited in court cases as proof of marriage. When Whythorne makes a toast to his host, she takes offence to his formal address saying ‘And why not wife? Will ye not be my husband?’ Whythorne is compelled to humour Mistress Elsabeth, referring to her as his ‘gentle wife’. When she responds with the words ‘I pledge you, good husband’, the priest immediately offers to formalise this exchange and attempts to join their hands. The joining of hands served as another visible sign of marriage, one also used in the church ceremony, and the *fede* motif was popular on rings associated with love and marriage (**Fig. 112**). Whythorne explains how he then had to retract his words and refuse her hands, as he felt the situation may have been misinterpreted.

Although he considered the words and actions solely as a form of merriment, Whythorne remained fully aware that too many indicators of marriage in the presence of a witness, no less a priest, may have been understood as consent to marriage. As the story progresses, the reader learns that Mistress Elsabeth has taken the event more seriously. Thus perceptions of marriage and betrothal in the early modern period were as potent as the signs and symbols that constituted it. While the ring served as tangible evidence that has survived to the present day, it could by no means be used to determine that a marriage was legally contracted and indeed upheld. Surviving material evidence needs to be considered in the context of betrothal and marriage practices, and the nature of the inscriptions incised upon posy rings requires analysis within such an interpretative framework. Since marriage was a key factor in demonstrating the potential for mature, patriarchal authority, the ring (as a visual indicator of a union) was a very powerful tool and was itself representative of masculine ideals.

Chapter 8

Homosociability: Rings of the Serjeants-at-law

The Order of the Coif

Rings that circulated within a context of marriage or betrothal were customarily given by men to women. But there was a whole category of rings that was designed to be given by men to other men. The ritualistic giving of gold rings by newly created serjeants-at-law is one such example that allows us to consider the role of jewellery in marking out male–male relationships and networks.

As described by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a serjeant-at-law is ‘A member of a superior order of barristers’.¹ In his history of this order, the Order of the Coif, John Hamilton Baker makes it clear that ‘The serjeants had a degree, not an office, and they graduated by “creation”’.² By becoming a serjeant, these lawyers were granted exclusive rights to plead in the Court of Common Pleas, one of three of the superior English courts for the trial of civil cases. As such, lawyers of this rank had reached ‘the highest degree of the legal profession’ and were required to wear their robes at all times in public, to ensure that they were instantly recognisable and that they maintained their professionalism.³ The Order of the Coif was firmly established by the 14th century and this can be attested to by the inclusion of a serjeant-at-law as one of the pilgrims in Geoffrey Chaucer’s (c. 1340–1400) late 14th-century work, *The Canterbury Tales*.⁴ In the prologue to the text, the character is defined as one who is ‘wise and wary [...] one of great excellence, judicious, worthy of reverence’.⁵ Following the enforcement of the 1873 Act of Judicature in 1875, it was no longer necessary for a judge of the High Court or the Court of Appeal to be admitted first to the rank of serjeant and thus subsequently after May 1875 no new appointments to the Order of the Coif were made. It seems that throughout the recorded history of the Order just over 1,000 serjeants were appointed in total.⁶ Creations were not made every year and the number of serjeants elected at each ‘call’ was not consistent. So, in 1510, Henry VIII appointed only two serjeants but the following year 11 serjeants were created.⁷

Gold rings

As noted above, a key element of admittance to the Order was the giving of gold rings. So when the London citizen and merchant tailor Henry Machyn (1496/1498–1563) described in his diary the events surrounding the creation of seven serjeants-at-law in 1552, he made explicit reference to this important characteristic associated with the Order:

The xvij day of October was made vii serjants of the coyffe; at ix of the cloke they whent to Westmynster halle in ther gownes and hodes of morrey and russet, and ther servants in the sam colers, and ther was gyffyn a charge and othe by the kynges juges, and the old serjants. This done, they retornyed with the juges and the old serjants, and men of law, unto Gray-yn to dener, and mony of the ... for ther was a grett fest, and my lord mayre and the [aldermen], and many a nobull man; and the new serjants gayf to [the judges], and the old serjants and men of the law, rynges of gold, every serjant gayff llyke ryngs.⁸

The significance of gold rings is described in an account of the call of 1577 by the serjeant-at-law William Bendlowes (1516–1584),⁹ who wrote reports on legal cases for the period 1534 to 1579: ‘There ringes that they giue be of gold w[hi]ch is on of the best mettalls, the same betokeneth thaire

Sovereign (reign dates)	Number of serjeants appointed	Number of surviving rings
Henry VIII (1509–1547)	45	6
Edward VI (1547–1553)	14	1
Mary I (1553–1558)	10	2
Elizabeth I (1558–1603)	63	5
James I (1603–1625)	51	0
Total	183	14

Table 10 Extant rings of the serjeants-at-law, 1509–1625

bountifullnes, they be round they haue no end it sheweth theire integritie'.¹⁰

This practice seems to date back to the 14th century and the earliest written record relates to the charitable bequest of five gold rings made by Thomas Morice in 1368, following his elevation to a higher legal rank some years earlier.¹¹ The giving of rings by new serjeants seems to stand in stark opposition to the receipt of insignia by those bestowed with the honour of entering a chivalric order, such as the Order of the Garter. A published catalogue of the known surviving rings associated with the Order of the Coif draws together pieces from museum and private collections, thus allowing for comparative research.¹² There are 86 entries, yet over the 500 years during which rings were known to be given by serjeants-at-law there may have been between 112,000 and 224,000 rings produced for this purpose.¹³ During the period covering the reigns of Henry VIII to James I, 1509–1625 inclusive, a total of 183 serjeants were appointed, with only 14 of their commissioned rings surviving today (**Table 10**).¹⁴

Given that such quantities of these rings were produced, the low survival rate suggests that these objects were perhaps valued more for their intrinsic worth than their emotional worth. A notable case of this is with reference to rings given to the sovereign. Despite the fact that the sovereign received a ring from every serjeant-at-law created from 1555 to 1875, the Royal Collection holds only one such ring. An entry in the 1897 inventory of jewels at Windsor Palace may provide a clue as to the fate of the royal gifts:

4 Gold Basins – 3 of them made entirely of the Rings presented to the Queen by the Sargeants at Law on being called to that state & degree – the fourth one that of the largest size, also chiefly made from the rings, the small portion of gold added, taken from the setting of one of the pieces of Indian Jewellery sent to the Queen in 1863.¹⁵

This record shows that Queen Victoria (r. 1837–1901) prized these gifts of gold only for their material worth and thus their ability to be recycled (in this instance) into gold basins.¹⁶

Traditionally, every newly created serjeant-at-law was required to present a ring of gold to various offices and these were known as *fidei simbolo*, or 'rings of duty'. An account of the creation of ten serjeants in 1522 gives an indication of the recipients of these rings of duty and the manner of receipt.¹⁷ Chosen 'for ther konnyng, discrecion, and wysdome, [...] by the kyng's highnes, and his honorabill councelle, to the gret promocyone and dignytie of the office of a serjaunt of the lawe',¹⁸ these men, from the eldest to youngest in turn, had their rings delivered by existing serjeants:

And then he that dealith the Ryngs for the eldest of the newe Seraunts shall ryse up as he sittyth amonge the Offycers of the

Comyne Place, and shall stonde upone the myddes of the borde of the Comyne Place [...] he shall knele downe byfore my Lord Chaunceler; and seye, that the seid eldest of the new Serjaunts recomendith hym to his Grace; and sendith hym a tokyne of his Creasione, and kysse it, and delyver it to hym: and in lyke maner he shall delyver a Ryng to my Lord Treasurer: and anoder to my Lord Prive Seall, and anoder to the chieff Justice of the Kyng's Benche; and anoder to the chieff Justice of the Comyne Place; and so forth to the oder Justices, Pronotaries, and oder Officers of the Place. And then shall the secund and the third of the eldest of the olde Serjaunts fetch the secund of the newe Serjaunts, and demeane them sylff as the fyrst dyd [...] And then he that shall deale the Ryngs for hym shall demeane hym sylff as the fyrst dealer dyd. And after lyke maner, shall the residew of the eldest and newe Serjaunts and ther dealers demeane them sylff. And when all that is doone, then my Lord Chaunceller shall geff them thanks for their Ryngs, and a gret commendacion, and his soleme blyssing.¹⁹

The call of 1555

When William Bendlowes was admitted to the order in 1555, along with six other men, further details are given about their call, such as the food that was served at their celebration feast held at Serjeants' Inn and the draper appointed to make their robes and servants' liveries.²⁰ Crucially, there is substantial information provided about the rings that were to be given:

These Serjeants made choice of one Nicholas Deering, Goldsmith, to make their Rings of Gold, who was allowed for the fashion of those Rings, which were given to the King and Queen; viz. for each Ring 20*d*. And for the fashion of every other Ring 12*d*.

It was also agreed, that all the Rings of 10*s*. in gold, and above, should be made with Swaies; and all under that value, their fashion to be plain. Likewise that every Ring of gold of 20*s*. value, should contain in gold weight 18*s*. two shillings being allowed for the fashion of every such Ring. And that every Ring of 16*s*. in gold, to weigh 14*s*. and two shillings to be allowed for the fashion. Likewise that every Ring of 6*s*. 8*d*. in gold, to bear his own making. And every Ring of 5*s*. 4*d*. in gold, to have allowed 6*d*. for fashion, and no more. And every Ring of 4*s*. in gold, to bear his full weight in gold, besides the fashion. And lastly that all the said several gold Rings should be of one value, and contain one weight *secundum ratum*, as afore; and that every Ring do contain one value, without diminution, in form severally before agreed on.

Note, that each Serjeant disbursed and delivered to the Goldsmith, towards the provision of Rings, viz. in half Sovereignes, the weightiest that could be gotten, £20.

The Rings given to the King and Queen, were made of the finest Angel gold, every Ring being in value, besides fashion, – £3 6*s*. 8*d*.²¹

The making of these rings was therefore highly regulated, to ensure that each recipient was given a ring appropriate to his

Recipient	£	S	d
Lord Chancellor Lord Steward Lord Treasurer Lord Privy Seal Lord Chamberlain Chief Justice of the King's Bench Chief Justice of the Common Pleas Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer	0	20	0
Justices of the Benches x 6 Master of the Rolls	0	16	0
Barons of the Exchequer x 3	0	14	0
Each existing Serjeant-at-Law King's Attorney General King's Solicitor General	0	6	8
Clerk of the Council <i>Custos Brevium</i> of the Common Pleas Clerks of the Warrants	0	4	0
Clerks of the Crown x 2	0	4	8
Chirographer Prothonotaries x 3	0	5	0
Filazers & Exigenters x 16	0	2	6

Table 11 Recipients and values of the ordinary rings given by the serjeants-at-law, 1555 (Information taken from Dugdale 1666, 130)

station and that each new serjeant could not show greater largesse in the giving of more expensive gifts. It is also significant that Philip II of Spain and Mary I are mentioned and this seems to be the first instance of the sovereign and consort being presented with a ring by each serjeant. At least two extant rings from this call are known, with one being in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum (**Fig. 113**). Neither seems to be of significant enough weight to suggest royal ownership.²²

Information is also provided that shows how wide the network of obligation by the new serjeants extended, as well as revealing the strict hierarchy that governed the presentation of these rings of duty. Clearly the sovereign and her consort received rings with the greatest quantity of gold and more was spent on the fashioning of these rings, which suggests they may have been decorated more than is indicated by surviving pieces. The cost of the rings that were given in an official capacity provides strong evidence of rank of particular offices.

In all, at the 1555 call the newly created serjeants each spent £20 4s. on the ordinary rings listed in **Table 11**, with a

Figure 113 Gold serjeant's ring engraved to the outer face with the inscription 'LEX + EST + ARMA + REGVM', made by Nicholas Deering, 1555, English, diameter 21mm. Victoria and Albert Museum, M.54–1960



Recipient	£	S	d
Queen Mary Prince Philip of Spain	3	6	8
Warden of the Fleet Master Marshall	0	11	0
Steward of the Feast Comptroller of the Feast	0	20	0

Table 12 Recipients and values of other rings that were given by the serjeants-at-law, 1555 (Information taken from Dugdale 1666, 130)

total expense lavished on this tradition being £141 8s. This figure did not include the extra rings given to the sovereign and her consort, nor those listed also in **Table 12**. In addition to these rings of duty, serjeants could commission rings to be given to family and personal acquaintances. According to Baker, in 1736, while 1,409 rings of duty were presented about 4,500 private rings were also given.²³ Given the prolific nature of these rings, it is therefore somewhat surprising to note their absence from certain standard books of reference on jewellery.²⁴

These rings, commonly referred to as serjeants' rings, formed an integral element of the institution of the Order of the Coif. While most memberships to orders involved the receiving of insignia, serjeants instead gave gifts of gold in the form of a ring and these acts of giving reinforced male social bonds and networks of obligation. The only exception to this male receipt of these rings occurred on occasions when the sovereign was female.²⁵ What is important to remember is that the ceremony associated with the Order was not an investiture; rather it signalled an admittance into a rank and one that required payment in the form of rings.

According to John P. Dawson, the gold given at this ceremony was to balance out the privileges that the new serjeants would receive.²⁶ Likewise Edward Warren considers the rings as a form of payment for admittance into the Order, concluding this from an analysis of the term 'pony' that was used for the person chosen to present the rings on behalf of a serjeant. He states that the 16th-century slang term for hard cash, 'legem pone', must have become associated with the rings and thus synonymous with the giver of the rings.²⁷

Machyn's observation that 'every serjant gayffllyke ryngs' is accurate to a certain extent. As noted above and illustrated

Figure 114 Gold serjeant's ring inscribed to the outer surface 'PLEBS x SINE x LEGE x RUIT', 1552, English. Lynn Museum, KILLM: 1978.260



Location	Museum no.	Diameter (mm)	Weight (g)	Inscription
British Museum	AF.1746	21.336	3.43	LEGIS + EXECVCO * REGIS * PSERVACIO *
British Museum	1879,0820.1	22.352	2.07	LEGIS + EXECVO * REGIC + PSERVA ^o *
Chester Museum	Unknown	17.78	1.88	LEG ^e + EX ^o * REGIS . PRES ^o *

Table 13 Rings from the call of June 1521

in **Tables 11–12**, the size, weight and thus value of the rings were all highly regulated, adhering to a strict hierarchy. By ‘same’, Machyn is actually referring to the form of and the inscription on the rings that were termed ‘ordinary rings’. Fortunately, it is possible to establish the exact form and style of ring mentioned by Machyn in 1552: an example was discovered at East Rudham in 1977 and is now in the collections of the Lynn Museum in Norfolk (**Fig. 114**).

The mottos

The main feature of the rings given by the serjeants is the inscription of a motto to the visible outer surface. This motto made reference mostly to the crown or the law, but also to classical texts or a recent political event. So, at the first call following the Restoration of the monarchy in May 1660 the motto was ‘Adest Carolus magnus’ (The great Charles is here).²⁸ While the mottos were mostly in Latin there are a few exceptions to this that occur later.²⁹ Every call to the rank of serjeant was characterised by its unique motto and it is often this information that assists with the dating of the rings.³⁰ Prior to the call of 1510, however, it appears that the motto ‘VIVAT REX ET LEX’ (Long live the king and the law) was adopted for a number of years, since there are stylistic differences between the extant rings bearing this inscription.³¹

The identification of the Lynn Museum ring with the call of 1552 results from a passage in a manuscript at Lincoln Inn’s Library that appears to have been written by Sir James Dyer (1510–1582). Dyer recalls how on 19 May 1552 he received a royal writ stating that he was to be called to the degree of serjeant later that year, along with Robert Brooke (d. 1558), Thomas Gawdy (d. 1556), William Stamford (1509–1558), William Dalyson (d. 1559), Rudolph Rokeby and Richard Catlin.³² It would seem that from Machyn’s diary entry, the actual creation took place on 17 October 1552 and, according to Dyer, at this time the seven serjeants ‘gave rings with this motto, *Plebs sine lege ruit*’ (Without the law the people go to ruin).³³

The sergeants’ rings are all of 22 carat gold formed of a flat, broad band that does not terminate with a bezel or shoulders. Based on surviving material evidence, the earliest example of the form that became distinctive of this object type through to the 19th century is a ring in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum dated to 1555 (see **Fig. 113**). On this type of ring the motto is flanked by double raised borders at the top and bottom of the hoop. However, it would seem that this form was not necessarily employed exclusively in the making of the rings given by the serjeants-at-law. This is evidenced by a ring in the British Museum that came from the collection of the antiquarian Sir John Evans. It was recorded by him as ‘A Serjeant’s ring. Hemel Hampsted (sic) 1864’, in reference to its original findspot (see **Fig. 106**).³⁴

Although the form of the ring alludes to those of the serjeants’ commissions, there are certain elements that make it unlikely to be such a ring. The quality of the metal and lightness of the ring would suggest that it is not made of 22 carat gold and scientific analysis undertaken at the British Museum in 2007 confirmed that it is made of a gold alloy. While the motto being in English is unusual, although not improbable, the fact it makes no reference to the law or the crown is problematic. Furthermore, this particular inscription appears on a posy ring with a possible dating to the 17th or 18th centuries.³⁵ Finally, a silver-gilt ring in the British Museum of similar form and style and inscribed on the exterior ‘+ THINKE x ON x ME’ is quite clearly a posy ring (see **Fig. 104**). These examples demonstrate that caution must be had when determining a ring’s usage. Assumptions cannot be based on form and every element of the object must be considered as part of the whole. Ultimately, though, it is the context of giving that essentially defines a ring as a serjeant’s ring.

Where a number of rings survive bearing the same motto, striking similarities are often evident that would point to a single maker. The practice of using the same goldsmith can be proven in later years, when the rings often bear the punch of a maker.³⁶ Despite the absence of a maker’s mark, it has been suggested that three extant rings relating to the call of June 1521 were made by Oliver Dawes.³⁷ Each is virtually identical, although the orthography of the mottos varies slightly. Furthermore, one that is now in the Chester Museum has enamelled lettering. This may imply that all of these rings were at one time enamelled, or it could indicate that the Chester ring was a personal gift and not a ring of duty. Interesting to note are the dimensions of these three rings, for the slight differences in weight provide evidence for the hierarchical structure governing the production of these rings (**Table 13**).

Networks of obligation

There are a few contemporary references that underscore the importance of the value of the rings. Perhaps most notable is Sir John Fortescue (c. 1397–1479) writing between 1468 and 1471 in *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*. He notes that after having received the state and degree of serjeant-at-law, the new serjeants ‘will give away gold, according to the custom of the realm’.³⁸ Fortescue explains that ‘Each of them [the serjeants] will give gold rings to the value in all of £40 at least in English money’, not failing to add that when he was appointed to the rank of Serjeant he spent £50 on rings.³⁹ He then itemises the recipients of the rings and the values that each ring should equate to, mentioning also that it was customary to give rings to friends.⁴⁰ It is only possible to speculate on how and why Fortescue spent more on the commissioning of his rings. If the practice was not yet at this time strictly regulated then this could account for the 25 per

cent increase in expected expenditure. The elevated cost could also indicate a larger number of private commissions, although it would appear more as if Fortescue was highlighting his largesse in relation to the rings. Almost two centuries later he is referenced as an authority on the subject of these rings by Sir John Kelyng (bap. 1607–1671), Lord Chief Justice from 1665 until his death and a recipient of rings by newly appointed serjeants:

Seventeen serjeants being made the 14th day of November, a daye or two after, Serjeant Powis, the junior of them all, coming to the King's Bench bar, Lord Chief Justice Kelynge told him that he had something to say to him, viz. the rings which he and the rest of the serjeants had given weighed but eighteen shillings apiece; whereas Fortescue, in his book *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*, says, 'The rings given to the Chief Justices and the Chief Baron ought to weigh twenty shillings apiece;' and that he spoke not this expecting a recompence but that it might not be drawn into a precedent, and that the young gentlemen there might taken notice of it.⁴¹

Comments such as these suggest that these rings held no value other than that of their monetary worth and that it was deemed important to acknowledge rank and superiority through these gifts of gold. Although Kelyng sought no payment from the serjeants with regard to the rings lacking 2 shillings worth, his need to make the fact known is interesting. The scarcity of such rings today is certainly indicative of them being recycled for hard cash when financial hardship demanded it. These serjeants' rings seem to be no more than a form of payment upon admittance into the Order of the Coif. That there was no distinguishing feature to indicate differences between rings given by the serjeants to a single recipient means that there was no personal attachment between giver and receiver. In fact, once the goldsmith had been selected by the serjeants he would simply be producing *en masse* a number of rings that conformed to the expected value of an individual recipient.

Even the circumstances of giving removed completely any possible attachment between commissioner and recipient: 'every Serjeant made choice of the Benchers of that House, whereof he was a member, to see the disposing of the Rings, in a decent manner, unto the persons'.⁴² Thus, through the mediation of a third party the rings were handed from serjeant to receiver. This maintained degrees of distinction and consequently the networks of obligation, while forging homosocial bonds between the serjeant and the intermediary. Nevertheless, from Henry VIII's reign a sense of brotherhood was retained, with existing serjeants offering rings on behalf of the newest members. As for the rings that were given to the sovereign, it would appear that tradition prevailed; rather than existing serjeants presenting the gold, this honour was given to the incumbent Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. At the call of 1577 Sir Nicholas Bacon (1510–1579), as Lord Keeper, was addressed directly by the eldest of the seven new serjeants:

The auncient of those vij saide to the saide lorde keep[er] these wordes or other in effect as do followes scil. Yf it please you my lord keep[er] by the auncient order in this realme it hathe bene accustomed that the newe Serieantes at theire Creac[i]on should gyue to the kinges or queenes highnes of this Realme for the tyme being a ringe of gold in token of theire dueties and thanks to theire maiesties, and also it hathe bene the olde custome that the same serieantes shoulde humblie desyre the lorde Chauncelor of this Realme or the lord Keep[er] of the great seale of Englande for the tyme being to receiue that Rynge of them and to delyuer it to his or her Ma[ies]tie: Therefore I and my brethren here most humblie praie yo[u]r good lordshipp to take this rynge and to delyuer the same accordingly, and then he to kysse that rynge and sende it vp by him, who kysseth his hande & taketh it and promyseth to delyuer it.⁴³

The single puzzling element of this text is the reference to the ring in the singular. The words seem to indicate a merging of resources by the new serjeants. It may be that, by this time, only a single ring was produced. However, this did not appear to be the case in the first instance of the sovereign's receipt of such a ring in 1555, with those presented to Mary and her consort, Philip of Spain.

Concluding remarks

It is difficult to ascertain contemporary attitudes towards these rings presented by the serjeants-at-law. An entry in the inventory taken on the death of Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, in 1614 may provide some means of assessing these views. Howard held the position of Lord Privy Seal from 1608 until his death and it was in this official capacity that he was in receipt of rings from new serjeants.⁴⁴ There are no known surviving serjeants' rings from this period, but in the 1614 inventory there is a record of 'V sergeantes ringes waighinge one ounce, three quarters, 4 graines', which have a combined value of £4 10s.⁴⁵ Further research to determine whether Howard bequeathed these rings could provide an insight into attitudes towards such gifts. For, if they were given in a will, then over the course of time personal attachment would have dissipated, which is perhaps understandable. If Howard himself neglected to bequeath the rings, this could indicate that he was not concerned with their subsequent fate of inevitable recycling, and that these rings of duty were nothing more than a means of acknowledging entry into a fraternity.

Understanding what these rings meant to a serjeant or a recipient is not of primary concern. More important is to recognise that the rings given by a newly created serjeant-at-law marked out physically his networks of obligation and indicated his personal relationships. So while commentators of relatively modern times have suggested that the rings were no more than a payment for the receipt of the privilege to plead in the Court of Common Pleas, they actually served to indicate a man worthy of an honour. The rings then mapped out male–male relationships that were vital in the early modern period.

Chapter 9

Signet Rings: Reflecting a Man's Identity

The signet ring was an important piece of jewellery within a man's possessions acting first and foremost as a symbol of his personal identity. It could also reflect his lineage, as well as his role and authority. It described (and sometimes invented) a heritage that he could leave to others. Importantly, these objects were not the exclusive preserve of those to whom arms had been granted, as the survival of examples without true heraldic devices indicates. Nor was the signet reserved for male use, as the extant ring of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots (r. 1542–1567), and other references in documentary sources demonstrate (**Fig. 115**). The signet ring also links to ideas of social connections, through the roles and responsibilities of an individual that it could represent. Ultimately, the signet ring was a marker of identity in both its physical presence and in its absence, through the impression it left on a document. One gold signet ring (**Fig. 116**) is engraved on the bezel with a shield bearing three horseshoes on a bend cotised, which is surrounded by a cabled border. The style of the ring is typical of those bearing heraldic devices that date to the 16th and 17th centuries. According to Ormande Dalton, these arms were used by the families of Ferrers, Ferrier, Crispe of Kent and Dethick.¹ It would be almost impossible to discover the precise identity of the ring's male owner from the object alone, but when it was worn it served as a marker of his identity as a member of an established family granted permission to bear arms. The practical nature of a signet, used to seal and authenticate documents, made this an acceptable form of male jewellery that was emulated by men lower down the social scale, with examples bearing non-armorial devices or made of silver or base metal.

Non-literate cultures have traditionally relied on images and symbols for communication. The signet is perhaps the most ancient of all objects to be used to authenticate documents and symbolise the ruler's authority. It appears to date back in areas of western Asia to at least 5000 BC.² The use of a signet on a ring can be traced back to Egyptian cultures as early as c. 1800 BC, with the form of a scarab beetle constituting a rotating bezel that is engraved with pictorial devices representing the owner on the underside.³ The utilisation of rings for sealing purposes was common practice in ancient Rome, with the signet engraved onto semi-precious stone or metal bezels.⁴ Although signet rings in the 16th and 17th centuries did not require literacy, they still demanded legibility. Whether the bezel of the ring bore

Figure 115 Gold, enamel and chalcedony signet ring engraved with the achievement of Mary Queen of Scots, c. 1548–58, possibly French, diameter 21.2mm, weight 13.7g. British Museum, 1856,1015.1



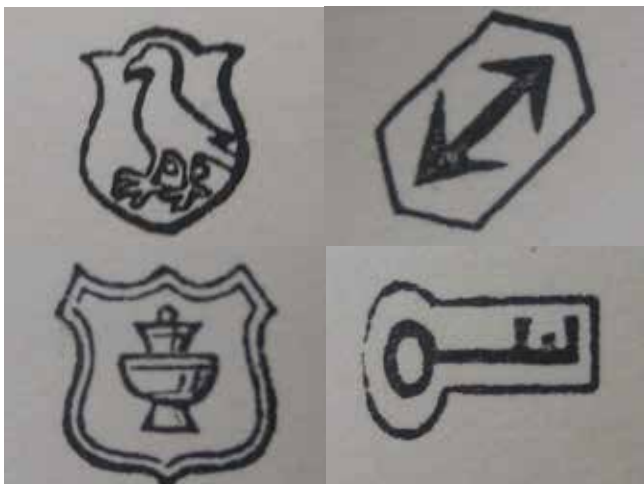


Figure 116 Gold signet ring with a shield displaying three horseshoes on a bend, possibly the arms of Ferrers, Ferrier, Crispe (Kent) or Dethick, early 17th century, English, diameter 23mm, weight 11.7g. British Museum, AF.830

a coat of arms, the mark of a merchant or initial letters, the visual imagery (impressed on wax as a seal or shown as the matrix in reverse) had to be understood by both wearer and viewer for the object to function as intended.

Understanding visual imagery was important for an early modern citizen since signs and symbols were ubiquitous in this period. One example of this was the adoption of signs to identify houses, workspaces and their occupants prior to the implementation of house numbers in 1760. These served as mnemonic devices and needed to reflect the trade or occupation of the owner. So a glover may have adopted the image of a hand and a glove, while a fishmonger may have chosen to display a dolphin or a salmon.⁵ Change of ownership of premises required a change in name, although inns and taverns generally retained their names. That signs were synonymous with individuals is also made evident from the earliest goldsmiths' marks. A statute of 1363 decreed that a maker's mark should be placed onto all work produced by master goldsmiths.⁶ Originally these took the form of a device, often the same as the premises of the goldsmith (**Fig. 117**). Later, initials became commonplace, although there

Figure 117 (left to right) The possible marks of Thomas Bampton, at the 'The Falcon' c. 1567; John Harysson, at the 'Broad Arrow' in 1569; John Mabbe, of the 'Cuppe' in 1569; and Manasses Stockton of the 'Keye' in 1569 (taken from Cripps 1914, 419–22)



was a period of overlap in the 16th century between the use of symbols and initial letters as makers' marks (**Fig. 118**).

While the primary function of a signet ring was to seal the wax on documents and letters as a mark of authentication, it was the object that remained highly visible on a man's hand. The ring could prove functional even when not employed as a sealing device. In Thomas Heywood's early 17th-century play, *If You Know Me Not, You Know Nobody*, when the character of the London merchant Thomas Gresham sends his relative, John, to collect a payment, the production of Gresham's signet ring provides suitable guarantee for the legitimacy of the transaction:

Gresham: I was bethinking me whom I might send
To fetch this hundred pound I am set to pay
To Sir Thomas Ramsey.

[...] Here, John, take this seal ring:
Bid Timothy presently send me a hundred pound.

The potency of the sight of this object that bears the reverse coat of arms of Thomas Gresham provides enough surety for the character Timothy to hand money over to an individual he had never seen before:

John: [...] Here's his seal
ring; I hope a warrant sufficient.

Timothy: Upon so good security, John, I'll fit me to
deliver it. [...] Here John; accept my duty to my master.

I must tell you, John, I would not have trusted you,
John, without so sufficient a discharge.⁷

It is clear that without knowledge of Gresham's arms the signet ring would have had no impact on Timothy and the transaction would not have been completed. Therefore, a seal ring could only be valid and function as intended when it was read correctly.

In defining a signet ring as a marker of a man's identity and authority, it becomes clear that such an object did not necessarily need to bear an armorial design that reflected a man's lineage. The image graven on the bezel needed only to be a visual or representative device of an individual, something that was enough to create a distinctive, identifiable sign. In addition to rings bearing heraldic

Figure 118 Detail of a maker's mark formed of Roman capital 'M' in an angular shield, stamped on the reverse of the bezel of a gold signet ring, 16th century, English, diameter 20.1mm, weight 11g. British Museum, AF.814



imagery, signet rings could also display a para-heraldic device, a merchant mark, a rebus or initials.⁸ Many rings with non-heraldic devices attempt, in part, to make reference to true heraldry. Rings displaying para-heraldic imagery only allude to heraldry but this was done to add legitimacy to a man's descent. This could in turn elevate a man's status socially and this was one means of defining his masculinity.

Heraldic devices

Coats of arms as devices of recognition began to appear in western Europe around the 12th century and developed from the need to identify knights on a battlefield. Slowly, the adoption of heraldry became more widespread and eventually became hereditary within lineages. Heraldry was not regulated until 1417 when the heralds were given the task of ensuring proper usage. Prior to this, a man could use any arms provided it was not employed by another. With the sovereign demanding greater control, there were understandably those who did not agree with these new policies, sharing the view of Nicholas Upton that the arms granted by the heralds 'be of no more auctorite then thoos armys the wich be take by a mannys awne auctorite'.⁹ This was perhaps also in response to the fact that such a ruling seemed to mark a shift to the taking up of arms by the nobility alone.

By the 16th century, then, coats of arms were strictly governed with regard to their composition and use (**Fig. 119**). Crucially in the early modern period, it is almost impossible to identify an individual from a coat of arms alone, since these arms are markers of family lineage and not representative of a single person. When heraldic devices are present on a material object, often to denote ownership, it is usually only possible to determine, in the first instance, the family entitled to bear those arms. When presented with an engraved gold signet ring, devoid of the armorial tinctures that are often the only distinguishing factor between similar arms, the task of identification is much harder. In order to attempt an identification of the individual who may have possessed the ring other evidence must be employed.

Within heraldry, an understanding of cadency marks can help with the identification of particular family members. Marks of cadency (also known as differences or distinctions) are applied to a shield by each son according to his position within the family. The eldest son, and heir, is usually represented by the placing of a label with three tabs at the top, while a crescent moon denotes the second son and so this continues down the hereditary line. Complications with this system can arise. Upon the death of the father, it was customary for the eldest son to remove his label and adopt the arms of his father. It is doubtful whether this was enforced strictly, as it would involve changing any depictions of heraldry to reflect this new status as head of the family. Equally, while the crescent moon indicated a second son it could also be used to demonstrate that a family line had descended from a second son.¹⁰

As an example of just how difficult it can be to establish ownership of a signet ring without the use of supplementary information is the signet ring of Sir Roger Wilbraham (1553–1616). Solicitor-General for Ireland in 1586 and, later, Master of the Court of Requests and Surveyor of the Court of Wards and Liveries, Wilbraham was the second son of his



Figure 119 Armorial achievement of the College of Arms, London, identifying the various components. The arms, crest, badge and motto could be used independently. Illustration by Robert Parsons MBE

father Richard Wilbraham (1528–1612).¹¹ The signet ring associated with Roger comprises a gold hoop with crystal set into the bezel. The face of the bezel is engraved with the arms of Wilbraham in reverse and the tinctures of the arms show through the colourless stone (**Fig. 120**). The reverse of the ring's bezel is engraved with the initials 'RW', which are separated by a figure-of-eight motif and the motto 'Cominus quo minus' (**Fig. 121**).¹²

Significantly, on the uppermost part of the arms is the mark of distinction indicating a second son: a crescent moon. The same arms, with a crescent moon and motto, appear in an early 17th-century portrait of Roger Wilbraham, painted by the circle of Marcus Gheeraerts (1562–1635) (**Fig. 122**).¹³ The portrait is inscribed in the top right corner with a date of 1604 and gives the age of the sitter as 50. The armorial components present in the portrait are identical to those on the signet ring. Given that the sitter of the painting has been conclusively identified as Sir Roger Wilbraham, it is only logical to assume that the ring was the property of this same gentleman. With the arms representing the Wilbraham family, it is the incorporation of the mark of difference – the crescent moon – that signals a second son, who in this instance is Roger Wilbraham.¹⁴

Private correspondence held on the object file for the signet ring at the British Museum offers further information regarding ownership of the ring. Sections of the will of Roger's father, Richard Wilbraham, are recorded and these include a bequest to Roger. The will is dated 30 October 1611 and Richard leaves to his son Roger 'my second best goulde Ringe w[i]th a stone engraved in the same and in Coulo[rs] of Armes'.¹⁵ This would seem an accurate description of the



Figure 120 (left) Gold and crystal signet ring engraved with the arms of Sir Roger Wilbraham, 1528–1611, English, 28.3mm, weight 17g. British Museum, 1927,0216.57

Figure 121 (right) Detail of reverse of bezel of Figure 120

British Museum ring. In support of this identification, Richard was the second son of his father Ralph Wilbraham (d. 1552) and so he too would have incorporated the crescent within his arms. A signet ring of plain gold with the same arms, but with the crescent centrally placed, and surmounted by the initials 'RW' in reverse is now in the collections of Nantwich Museum, Cheshire (**Fig. 123**).¹⁶ It is thought to be the ring of Richard Wilbraham.

This type of signet ring (with the arms engraved on a colourless stone revealing the heraldic tinctures beneath) was fashionable in the 16th century, although it seems to have developed in the preceding century. The earliest record of such a signet is of the one belonging to John II (1371–1419),

Figure 122 Circle of Marcus Gheeraerts (1562–1635), *Sir Roger Wilbraham, Half-length, in a Black Doublet and Ruff, Feigned Oval*, early 17th century. Private collection



Duke of Burgundy.¹⁷ In addition to the information gleaned from understanding the heraldry, testamentary evidence also assists with securing a finite range for the date of production of the British Museum's Wilbraham ring. The latest date of production must be 1611, when it is mentioned in Richard's will. More research is needed on the motto that is present on the ring and portrait. If it was personal to Roger then the inscription on the reverse of the bezel was certainly a later addition made by him, perhaps to identify the ring as his and not his father's. While the will provides documentary evidence to prove that this signet ring did indeed belong to Sir Roger Wilbraham, it unveils a longer history and actually places original ownership of this object with Richard Wilbraham, his father.

The types of visual imagery placed on a signet ring are multiple, but ultimately all must be understood as devices that support recognition. The signet rings that commonly appear in museum displays are those that incorporate heraldry. Heavy-set rings of gold and engraved with a coat of arms or a crest are most frequently associated with the term 'signet ring' (**Figs 124–5**).

The ring with the arms of the Urswick family (**Fig. 125**) was previously in the collection of Richard Cornwallis Neville, 4th Baron Braybrooke. In the catalogue of rings from the Braybrooke collection the author, assumed to be Braybrooke, underscores the difficulty of identifying an owner from just the coat of arms alone.¹⁸ Sir Charles George

Figure 123 Gold signet ring of Richard Wilbraham, 1528–1611, English. Nantwich Museum





Figure 124 (left) Gold signet ring engraved with the reverse arms of Sir John Tirrell and inscribed above the shield 'IT' in reverse, surrounded by a cabled border and with foliate decoration on the shoulders, late 16th century, English, diameter 30.5mm, weight 37g. British Museum, AF.810



Figure 125 (right) Gold signet ring engraved with a shield depicting the arms of the Urswick family of Lincoln and Yorkshire enclosed within a cabled border, c. 1600, English, diameter 21mm, weight 7.3g. British Museum, AF.818

Young (1795–1869), Garter King of Arms from 1842, informed Braybrooke that the coat of arms represented the Urswicks of Lincoln and Yorkshire. From this family, there was a strong candidate to have been associated with the ring: the courtier Christopher Urswick (1448?–1522) who, among other positions he held, was Dean of Windsor from 1496 until 1505. Braybrooke enumerates a few of the most notable events in Urswick's life, which may have made the possession of a gold signet ring by him very likely. However, mindful of the difficulties concerning heraldry and in the absence of any supporting evidence, Braybrooke concludes the catalogue entry: 'There is pleasure therefore in referring this ring to the possession of so eminent a man, though there is no other evidence than the arms it bears'.¹⁹

In the absence of a shield, an armorial signet ring may have featured the crest only (**Fig. 126**). Two components of the engraved image of this sejant greyhound indicate that this signet ring shows a true heraldic device: the crescent moon debruising the body; and the crest wreath, on top of which the canine is seated. The crest wreath is a definitive sign that the image of the dog is the family crest, while the cadency mark represents the second son within the family lineage. The ring weighs 43.5g and this is a substantial weight, especially when compared with other types of ring, such as the posy ring, many of which weigh only 2g. Such a heavy-set ring therefore commanded authority when worn.²⁰ Presumably, though, this assisted with understanding signets in the early modern period. When used to authenticate documents, the physical impression left on the wax would have been larger and more prominent, and when present on a man's hand, it was a visible sign of his identity, authority and lineal descent.

Referred to above in the context of the Wilbraham ring, a type of armorial signet ring that developed in the 15th century seemed to gain in popularity during the 16th century. This took the form of a gold ring set in the bezel with a crystal, or other colourless semi-precious stone, onto which the arms were engraved in reverse. The heraldic colours were then either applied by the use of coloured foils placed behind the setting or the stone was reverse-tinted, gilded or silvered.²¹ A signet ring produced in such a manner allowed for the tinctures of the coat of arms to be represented. Since the colours remained on the surface behind the crystal face, the lustre of the original hue could be retained. Unfortunately,

any cracks on the surface stone could cause degradation. Noted early modern men including Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556), Archbishop of Canterbury, and Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, are depicted in portraits wearing signet rings of this type (**Figs 127–8**). This style of ring also seems to have been favoured in Germany, and the Victoria and Albert Museum has examples dating to the second half of the 16th century.²² In 2005, a ring of this variety was sold by the auction house Bonhams.²³

The Bonhams ring bears the arms of Sir Thomas Tyringham (d. 1595), Sheriff of Bedford and Buckingham in 1560, and is a remarkable survival since it is dated and the colours have retained their original vibrancy due to the crystal bezel remaining intact. As testament to its rarity, this piece sold for the relatively high sum of £15,600. Thomas Tyringham was second son of his father, also Thomas.²⁴ To mark his familial position heraldically, Thomas should have adopted the crescent moon within his arms but this is not present on the ring. This absence is explained by the fact that following the death of the elder Thomas in 1526, the eldest son and heir, Robert Tyringham, was unable to accept his position as head of the family since he died as a minor in 1532.²⁵ The estate then transferred to Thomas, along with the right to use the original arms without the need to apply any marks of distinction.

A plain gold signet ring devoid of its heraldic colours may have failed to communicate effectively, and so a ring set with rock crystal or the like and displaying its tinctures bypassed



Figure 126 Gold signet ring with an oval-shaped bezel engraved with a seated greyhound and enclosed within a cabled border, 16th century, English, diameter 28.6mm, weight 43.5g. British Museum, AF.809



Figure 127 Gerlach Flicke, *Thomas Cranmer*, 1545–6, oil on panel, 98.4 x 76.2cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 535



Figure 128 Unknown artist, *Sir Nicholas Bacon*, 1579, oil on panel, 62.9 x 49.1cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 164

such an issue. Furthermore, the materials and craftsmanship employed in the making of such a ring would have far surpassed the simplicity of an engraved gold ring. It is perhaps for these reasons that a ring of this type was favoured by a number of high-profile men in the early modern period, being representative of the dignity of their office and status. Additionally, since gold signet rings bearing non-heraldic devices were in use, the foiled examples remained the exclusive preserve of men granted a coat of arms.

Non-armorial signet rings

In addition to rings bearing armorial imagery, there are those signets that allude to heraldry, a feature known as para-heraldry. Behind para-heraldry lay the belief that the actual content of a coat of arms was not important; rather it was the presence of an image that aligned itself to such a marker of nobility. The identification of a signet ring bearing a para-heraldic image demands an understanding of heraldry. The ring with the seated greyhound discussed above was marked with clear indicators of true heraldry: the crest wreath and the cadency mark. Para-heraldic devices make close reference to true heraldry and are often confused with a representation of the badge or crest of a coat of arms. Subtle signifiers could indicate this practice of para-heraldry.²⁶ The inclusion of initial letters within the shield might suggest an attempt to assimilate heraldry, although as is customary when working with material objects, this is not a hard and fast rule. Where no shield is present, an armorial signet would depict the crest. A signet ring with a para-heraldic symbol would attempt to replicate this and the lack

of a crest wreath would highlight this attempt (**Fig. 129**). This ring engraved with a ship is therefore unlikely to show a true heraldic symbol, since the initial letters have been placed within the image and there is a clear absence of a shield or a crest wreath. A cabled border has been added to allude further to those signet rings with genuine armorial devices. Given that this was a period in which the visual was so crucial to the identification of an individual, as attested to by the use of maker's marks or the signs of shops and inns, it is very likely that this ring was associated with a man connected to sea trade or the docks. Such a supposition is strengthened by the fact that, when it was discovered in 1921, it was located 14 feet below the surface at London Bridge.

The use of a signet ring engraved with an image of this type raises questions of whether para-heraldry was ever used to deceive intentionally. It is more likely that signet rings were engraved with the visual device most associated with an individual, whether armorial or not. The use of a beaded or cabled border was perhaps nothing more than convention. The choice of gold as a material was reserved for those who could afford this precious metal, regardless of whether they were permitted to bear arms. So the ship ring was probably not trying to make any attempt at heraldry; rather it simply reflected how Master R.H. chose to represent himself to his contemporaries. The inscription on the reverse of the bezel, 'A freinds guift', is a potent reminder that in this period the reciprocal culture of gift-giving was rife. Since a signet ring was presumably worn daily to conduct business transactions, the owner of this ring would have had a constant reminder of the gift he had received and for which favours undoubtedly needed to be returned.



Figure 129 Gold signet ring engraved with a ship and the initials 'RH' in reverse, and inscribed on the reverse of the bezel in italics 'A freinds guift' and stamped with a maker's mark of a capital 'R' within a circular punch, early 17th century, length 16.5mm. British Museum, 1928,0507.1

Another common type of signet ring consists of those that bear only initial letters on the bezel. Often these letters are joined by a tasselled knot (**Fig. 130**). Clearly a ring of this type is a non-armorial signet in a very simple form. It may be that such rings were adopted by those who were permitted to bear heraldic devices, as a means of personal identification. A signet ring engraved on the front of the bezel with the initial letters H and M has traditionally been thought to have been a betrothal gift to Henry Stewart (1545/6–1567), Lord Darnley, from Mary Stuart before their marriage in 1565.²⁷ The letters stand for their names of Mary and Henry and these are joined by a true lover's knot.²⁸ The reverse of the bezel is engraved with the royal arms of Scotland and the inside of the hoop bears the inscription 'Henry L. Darley 1565', although these are now thought to be 19th-century additions. Consequently, the authenticity of the 'Darnley' ring remains unclear.²⁹ It is difficult to ascertain ownership of a ring of this type with initial letters, but it is likely that they were used by individuals of various social classes for whom a ring made of gold was a legitimate purchase.

There were also non-armorial signets that featured a rebus to represent the name of the individual more literally. So a gold signet ring engraved with the image of a cluster of hops above a tun (cask) was once the property of a man with the surname Hopton.³⁰ The motif comprising a hare in a sun was adopted by the author of *The Description of England*, William Harrison. More obscure visual imagery symbolising an individual is found within merchant marks.

The marks of merchants appear on many extant rings and such objects can also be called signet rings, since the image engraved on the bezel is a visual symbol representing the identity and authority of the owner. Such rings functioned in a way that was no different to an armorial signet. Ownership is difficult to determine since there is no comprehensive record or database of merchant marks and the men who used them. Nevertheless, contemporaries would have recognised and understood these symbols. While it is not common to find armorial signets made of a material other than gold, rings with merchants' marks exist in a range of materials, including base metals (**Fig. 131**). This reflects their frequent use in business transactions and the overriding need for functionality over ornament. This does not exclude the possibility of a merchant's signet being

made of gold. These rings were worn daily to assist with business transactions and to stand as a mark of authority. Therefore it would not be unreasonable to assume that an individual would commission a ring of the finest material that he could afford. This would further enhance his reputation as a successful merchant. A particularly fine example of a signet has a swivelled bezel, which reveals that the underside has been engraved and enamelled with a memento mori device: a white enamelled skull (**Fig. 132**). It is very plausible that this ring was worn by a merchant to be ever mindful of the transience of life and the futility of worldly goods, a stark reminder while conducting his business that true rewards were not to be found in monetary affairs.³¹ This is further supported by the inscription engraved on the upper side of the bezel, which reads '+ MORS BONIS * GRATA' ('Death is pleasing to the good'). Although weighing only 19g, the craftsmanship employed in its creation (from the bezel to the chased arabesque and scrollwork shoulders) would suffice to impress any person looking upon the object, as the owner dealt with his daily affairs.

Figure 130 Gold signet ring with a flat oval bezel inscribed with the monogram TW in reverse joined by a tasselled knot with foliate decoration, 16th century, English, diameter 23.9mm, weight 18g. British Museum, AF.798





Figure 131 Bronze signet ring with an octagonal bezel engraved with a merchant's mark and the initials 'G i f o', 16th century, English, length of bezel 14.2mm. British Museum, 1904,0420.3

The various types of signet ring underscore that the purpose of a signet remained the clear identification of an individual in a period when an understanding of visual imagery was much stronger than today. Early modern citizens were well versed on the meanings of signs and symbols: they could recognise armorials, non-heraldic devices and merchants' marks. Whether or not a ring bore a legitimate heraldic device was not a concern; what mattered more was its legibility to others. There is sufficient evidence in support of the fact that signet rings were used by a broad spread of the population in the early modern period. In terms of extant physical material, rings that are engraved with non-armorial imagery indicate usage by men other than those that were granted arms. This in itself is suggestive of ownership among the non-elite. Additionally, signet rings made of less costly materials than gold are proof that men from a variety of social levels engaged with this form of material culture. The need for a signet ring, while important in an official capacity for the authentication of documents, was perhaps more common as a symbol of a man's identity and masculinity.

Avoiding fraud

The issue of fraud is pertinent to a discussion on signet rings, particularly when we consider that these items were indeed

indicative of a man's identity and authority. The seriousness and potential implications of access to such a personal object are aptly demonstrated by the practices associated with the Fisherman's Ring. This ring, belonging to the incumbent pope, by tradition bears an image of St Peter fishing from a boat. Until the mid-19th century the Fisherman's Ring served as a signet for authenticating personal correspondence and papal briefs, since which date a stamp and red ink have been used. The ring is now merely symbolic of papal authority and responsibility. On the death of a pope the ring was ceremonially destroyed, to avoid the circulation of fraudulent documents. This is no longer the case and the rings are customarily retained by the Vatican. Prior to the election of Pope Benedict XVI (b. 1927) in 2005 the Roman goldsmith Claudio Franchi was asked to design his Fisherman's Ring. Franchi designed and made two rings: one that was more fluid and modern in its interpretation of the subject matter; the other more traditional in its execution (**Fig. 133**).³² A similar practice of destruction occurred with the Great Seal of England. In his journal entry for 19 July 1603, following the accession of James I, Roger Wilbraham records how the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Sir Thomas Egerton (1540–1617), was entrusted with delivering a new Great Seal '& had the old defaced & cutt in peces by the king himself'.³³ This took place in the presence of the council. This symbolic act of destroying the old seal was significant, since it marked a transition in the authority of the Crown: from Elizabeth to James.

That fraudulent behaviour with regard to armorial devices may have been carried out can be extrapolated from a letters patent appointing Edward Pike as Deputy Herald of Exeter and Devon in 1688.³⁴ Dated 14 August and signed and sealed by Sir Henry St George (1625–1715), Clarenceux King of Arms, this letters patent refers to one of the duties to be undertaken by Pike:

Moreover to prohibit forbid and straitly command That no/ Painter Glazier Goldsmith Graver or any other Artificer whatsoever he or they be within the said Province shall take upon them to paint grave glaze carve cut devise or set forth by any ways/ or means any manner of Arms Crests Cognizances Pedigrees or other Devices appertaining to the Office of Arms, or in any other manner or form than they may lawfully do and shall be allow'd/ by me the said Clarenceux.³⁵



Figure 132 Gold signet and memento mori ring with a hexagonal-shaped bezel with curvilinear sides containing an oval plate on a swivel mechanism. One side of the plate is engraved with a white enamelled skull; the other has an engraved merchant's mark and the monogram, 'RE' in reverse. The bezel is inscribed in Roman capitals '+ MORS BONIS * GRATA', 16th century, English, diameter 27.3mm, weight 19g. British Museum, 1871,0302.5



Figure 133 Modern (left) and classic (right) versions of the Fisherman's Ring designed and created by Claudio Franchi, in collaboration with the workshop Franchi Argentieri, for Pope Benedict XVI, 2005, Rome

It is highly significant that the heralds were involved with regulating the practice of craftsmen, including goldsmiths, with regard to the depiction of heraldic devices. That such an issue was raised in the document suggests that malpractice was known to occur within this field. It would seem that the heralds were concerned about the creation of fake pedigrees, which was not uncommon in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.³⁶

In addition to the creation of incorrect arms on a variety of material goods and thinking back to the above-cited section from Thomas Heywood's play, deception could have been carried out by the presentation of a signet that belonged to another. Documents reveal that signet rings were often stolen. While there is no evidence to suggest that the specific target of the theft was the signet ring, the very fact that an individual could be despoiled of a jewel that represented his identity and authority was potentially worrying. When Robert Boothe was robbed of a number of goods as he travelled in Shoreditch in 1606, it is unlikely that the four men responsible, John Jeffery, George Coke, Robert Pleasington and John Riccard, intended to take the 'silver seal called "A Seall of Armes"'. Given the relatively high value of the remainder of the goods, which included bonds worth £500, the seal, priced at 2s. 6d., was of little intrinsic value.³⁷ Its true worth lay in its symbolic and representational meaning to Boothe.

The Gresham grasshopper rings

While heraldic specialists have long recognised the importance of signet rings for indicating family and authority, they have rarely considered how the objects also indicated a community. We can see evidence of this with a group of rings, which, despite being owned by different men, can all be associated with the London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham and are known affectionately as the Gresham grasshopper rings. Each ring, of the type with an engraved clear stone bezel and tinctures of the coat of arms set behind, has engraved on the reverse of its bezel the image of a grasshopper. The grasshopper is the crest of the Gresham family, chosen presumably since it is a rebus of the name in Anglo Saxon, 'graes ham'.³⁸ That the sign of the grasshopper

was adopted by Thomas Gresham is supported by the fact that he sealed his will with this crest; the Royal Exchange, which he founded in 1565 as a meeting place for merchants and opened in 1571 by Elizabeth I, was carved with grasshoppers; and his tomb, at St Helen's Bishopsgate in London, is adorned with his arms, including the grasshopper crest.³⁹ Gresham's London residence at 68 Lombard Street was converted into business premises in the early 1560s when his household moved into Gresham House on Bishopsgate Street.⁴⁰ Gresham seems to have operated under the sign of the grasshopper here. Today, a sign of a golden grasshopper with the date of 1563 and the initials of Gresham hangs outside these premises in commemoration of this Tudor gentleman.

Until recently, only five Gresham grasshopper rings had been referenced in jewellery studies as a homogenous group.⁴¹ Of these five, three are in the collections of national museums and the remaining two are in private ownership. The ring of Sir William Fleetwood (c. 1525–1594), recorder of London from 1571 to 1591, has been in the British Museum since 1897 (**Fig. 134**). It was bequeathed by the collector and former Keeper of the then Department of British and Medieval Antiquities, Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826–1897). The ring displaying the full armorial achievement of the prominent military engineer and architect Sir Richard Lee (1501/2–1575) came to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1928 (**Fig. 135**). The third publicly owned ring is that of Gabriel Goodman (1528–1601), Dean of Westminster (**Fig. 136**). This is held by St Fagans, National History Museum, Cardiff, along with two other gold rings with inscriptions that belonged to the Goodman family. These three rings and three paintings of members of the same family were bequeathed to National Museum Wales in 1930 by the Honourable Mrs Lawrence Brodrick, to whom they had descended.⁴² The grasshopper ring is listed among the items bequeathed in Goodman's will dated 2 March 1600 – 'a ring of gold w[i]th mine armes ingraven & a grasshopp thereon' – although unfortunately he does not explain how he came to own this ring.⁴³ He left it to his nephew, Gabriel (c. 1578–1641), eldest son of his late brother Godfrey (c. 1539–1587) and his wife Jane.



Figure 134 The Fleetwood ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with rock crystal engraved with the arms of Fleetwood, with the arms tinctured behind. The reverse of the bezel is engraved with a once-enamelled grasshopper, 16th century, English, diameter 27mm, weight 16.5g. British Museum, AF.636



Figure 135 The Lee ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with chalcedony engraved with the arms of Lee. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper, enamelled green, 1544–75, English, diameter 26mm, depth 20mm. Victoria and Albert Museum, M.249–1928



Figure 136 The Goodman ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with rock crystal engraved with the arms of Goodman, with the arms tinctured behind. The reverse of the bezel is engraved with a grasshopper, enamelled green, 1573–9, English. St Fagans, Natural History Museum, 30.236.2

A ring that was formerly owned by the collector Thomas Whitcombe Greene (1842–1932) and is now in private ownership was identified by W.J. Hemp as being that of Jacques Wingfield (c. 1519–1587) (**Fig. 137**). The arms bear a mullet, the cadency mark of a third son. Further, a ‘sun in splendour’ is another difference that appears on the arms and crest. Hemp recognised this as being present on the Garter plate of the diplomat Sir Richard Wingfield (b. in or before 1469–1525), asserting that this was not used by any other branch of the family. Thus he concludes that, as the third son

of Sir Richard and his second wife Bridget (d. 1533/4), Jacques Wingfield, Master of the Ordnance in Ireland, must have been the owner of this grasshopper ring.⁴⁴ The ring was last sold at Christie’s, London, on 19 December 1977.⁴⁵ More recently it has been published by the jewellery historian Diana Scarisbrick along with another ring in private hands, that of Sir Robert Taylor (**Fig. 138**).⁴⁶ The latter was displayed at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1980–1 in the exhibition *Princely Magnificence* and in *Elizabeth I and Her People* at the National Portrait Gallery in 2013–14.⁴⁷



Figure 137 The Wingfield ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with crystal engraved with the arms and crest of Wingfield behind which the arms are tintured with foils or reverse-painted. The reverse of the bezel is engraved with a grasshopper and was probably originally enamelled, c. 1570s, English. Private collection (Christie's 1977, colour frontispiece and plate 1)



Figure 138 The Taylor ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel engraved with the arms of Taylor and reverse-painted, silvered and gilded behind, and dated 1575. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper, enamelled green, 1575, English. Private collection

In the sale catalogue for the Wingfield ring there is mention of a further two rings: those with the arms of the Woodhouse and Tremayne families, stating that the former was presented to the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1742.⁴⁸ The *Princely Magnificence* catalogue entry for the Taylor ring references this ring, although not by name. It states that 'In 1740 the Society of Antiquaries was shown a grasshopper ring dated 1557 which had been found on the Gresham estate in Suffolk'.⁴⁹ In fact, according to the minutes for the Antiquarian Society of London it would seem that the ring was shown at a meeting on 23 September 1742:

Mr West shewed a seal gold ring weighing better than half an ounce found in the Gresham estate in Budsdale in Suffolk the Arms were cut in Christtal over the arms above the shield is 1557. the ground is foyle underneath bearing the Colours of the seild quarterly Ermine or a Lyons Face, a Crescent in the centre – a Grasshopper is Engraved on the inside of it.⁵⁰

Following the entry a sketch of the ring lying on its side has been drawn, clearly showing the date of 1557 (**Fig. 139**). Unfortunately, there are no further references to this ring that allow for its current whereabouts to be discovered. The same Christie's sale catalogue notes that the Tremayne ring (**Fig. 140**) was then in the possession of Martin's Bank, prior to which it was owned by the collector and benefactor to the V&A, Walter Hildburgh (1876–1955).⁵¹ Scarisbrick was aware of this ring's existence but she believed it to be untraceable following its presentation at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries in 1930.⁵² Further, while it is included in a 1999 article appearing in two subsequent issues of the

Wingfield Family Society Newsletter, much of the information regarding the grasshopper rings seems to have been lifted directly from the earlier Christie's sale catalogue or the Hemp article.⁵³ It looks as if this particular ring had been forgotten by writers on jewellery.

Yet the Tremayne ring should not have escaped the notice of historians of jewellery, for it was exhibited in London alongside the Goodman and Wingfield rings in 1933.⁵⁴ Notes added by hand to the British Museum's copy of the Hemp article reference this exhibition, providing catalogue numbers for the two illustrated rings and noting that there was 'A ring with foiled crystal, arms & ED, and grasshopper

Figure 139 Detail from 'Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries: 1717–1751 with a list of Members to 1758, and of Purchases and Donations to 1753', vol. 1, showing a grasshopper ring supposedly with the arms of Woodhouse. British Library, Egerton MS 1041, f.274r, p. 503





Figure 140 The Tremayne ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with crystal engraved with the arms of Tremayne and bearing the initials 'ET' in reverse for Edmund Tremayne. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper atop a mound with strong traces of green enamel, c. 1570s, English. Barclays Group Archive (BGA) Ref. 9/4

exh[ibite]d anonymously at Eliz 'Exh' London, 1933, Cat. no. 478'.⁵⁵ But far from this being an additional grasshopper ring, it is in fact the Tremayne ring. The initials have been engraved in a stylised way and so when exhibited in 1933 and published in the associated catalogue the 'T' was mistaken for a 'D'.⁵⁶

At the time of the 1977 Christie's sale, Martin's Bank no longer existed following an amalgamation with Barclays Bank plc in 1969. It is possible that information provided for the sale was taken from the first volume of George Chandler's history of Martin's Bank, which was published in 1964. He refers to the opening of the Royal Exchange and states that Gresham may have commissioned rings to be presented to certain individuals to commemorate this event.⁵⁷ This proposition was first suggested by Hemp nearly 40 years earlier and, although he acknowledges that this is 'mere conjecture', such a view seems to have been accepted until the publication of the catalogue for the *Princely Magnificence* exhibition.⁵⁸ Chandler writes that 'One of the rings has been acquired by the Grasshopper and is on exhibition in its banking hall'.⁵⁹ The 'Grasshopper' referred to by Chandler is the premises once occupied by Gresham at 68 Lombard Street. This became the site of the principal London office of Martin's Bank, which was the first national bank to be based outside London. It is possible that the ring continued to be displayed there until the office at 68 Lombard Street was closed in 1981. Following this closure, all archival material and artefacts were transferred to 54 Lombard Street. From here, all material was then moved to the Barclays Group Archive in Manchester in 1990. The ring was among the objects and is now within this archive, which also contains papers that relate to its acquisition in 1947.⁶⁰

A memorandum written on 18 June 1947 and read at a meeting of the London Board of Martin's Bank on 20 June 1947 discusses the offer of a signet ring to the bank:

The bank has been offered a signet ring for £60 by a Mr. Hildburgh of 8, Elvaston Place, who is a collector of antique rings.

It is a heavy gold ring with a coat of arms engraved on a crystal bezel. On the inner side of the ring there is a grasshopper which shows signs of having been originally engraved with green enamel.⁶¹

It is noted further that, according to the College of Arms and the Victoria and Albert Museum, where it had been exhibited for a short time, the arms engraved on the face of

the bezel are those of Edmund Tremayne (c. 1525–1582), Clerk of the Privy Council under Elizabeth I, whose will was proved on 3 December 1582.⁶² The rings of Goodman, Fleetwood, Lee and Wingfield are recorded as comparable examples.⁶³ A handwritten note that is located alongside these papers but dated 25 July 1947 advises that the purchase has been completed.⁶⁴

The 1947 autumn edition of *Martin's Bank Magazine*, issued to the bank's customers, includes a piece about the recent acquisition of the Tremayne ring.⁶⁵ The author speculates on the reason for the existence of all the grasshopper rings. Since these rings all bear the Gresham crest on the reverse of their bezels, it has been widely accepted that they were gifted to these men by Gresham himself. The author puts forward the hypothesis that if the rings can all be dated to between 1569 and 1575, marking the granting of arms to the Goodman family and the death of Lee respectively, then they were probably given on the opening of the Royal Exchange in 1571.⁶⁶ The author considers that the rings were actually given by Gresham at a banquet that was held at his London home before the formal opening by the queen. Since there is no record of who attended this feast, it is impossible to prove or disprove this theory based on this information alone.

An article written over two decades prior to the acquisition of the Tremayne ring offers a similar view but with some key differences.⁶⁷ Hemp dates the granting of arms to Goodman to 1573 and this is clearly significant for it not only narrows the production of the rings to between 1573 and 1575, but it also means that Goodman's ring could not have been a gift at the opening of the Royal Exchange. Hemp suggests that the Lee and Wingfield rings were given shortly after the opening, while the Goodman ring was produced after 1573. Scarisbrick has provided a different rationale, suggesting that the rings were given by Gresham following his retirement from his post of Crown Agent in the Netherlands, in recognition of past services and assistance related to this role.⁶⁸

Hemp was not aware of the Tremayne ring but information from the *Martin's Bank Magazine* and Scarisbrick's assumptions seems to indicate that much of the speculation over the reason for the existence of these rings has been based on the assumption that they were all produced around the same time for the same purpose. While it is true that Tremayne was Clerk of the Privy Council and as such would have communicated with Gresham, as an agent in Antwerp, Tremayne was not sworn

Owner	Description of arms	Tinctures present (yes/no)	Grasshopper enamelled (yes/no)	Orientation of grasshopper	Other information	Location of ring	Date of ring
William Fleetwood (Fig. 134)	Red ground with shield (black and gold)	Yes	No	Right	Crack to the crystal bezel	British Museum, since 1897	
Richard Lee (Fig. 135)	Shield, helm, mantling and crest	No	Yes	Right	Inscribed to the inside of hoop 'FLAME.ET.FAME'; granted arms in 1544	V&A, since 1928	1544–75
Gabriel Goodman (Fig. 136)	Red ground with shield (black and gold)	Yes	Yes	Left	Arms granted to brother in 1573	St Fagans, since 1930	1573–9
Robert Taylor (Fig. 138)	Red ground with shield (with black and gold)	Yes	Yes	Left	Dated on bezel, 1575	Private collection	1575
Edmund Tremayne (Fig. 140)	Shield, helm, mantling and crest	No	Traces	Right	Grasshopper atop mound; initials 'ET' engraved to bezel; cracks to bezel; appointed in May 1571	Martin's Bank, from 1947; Barclays archive since 1990	
Jacques Wingfield (Fig. 137)	Blue ground with shield, mantling, helm and crest in varied colours	Yes	No	Right		Private collection	

Table 14 Extant rings bearing the grasshopper crest of Sir Thomas Gresham

into this role until May 1571.⁶⁹ He did not occupy this elevated status when Gresham held his dinner in January of that year and so there is little reason to suppose that he would have been invited. The publication of the Taylor ring throws up more information about these rings. This particular ring is dated 1575. The date is not a later addition, since the digits are placed behind the setting. Further, the untraceable Woodhouse ring is dated to 1557.⁷⁰ Given the wide range of dates of these grasshopper rings, it is highly unlikely that they were given to mark the opening of the Royal Exchange. Variations in the design of the grasshoppers and the depiction of the arms also point to different craftsmen being commissioned to manufacture the rings at different times. **Table 14** identifies the differences and similarities between the rings for which visual or material evidence is present.

The differences manifest in these six rings provide strong evidence that they were not commissioned together and were not made to commemorate an event such as the opening of the Royal Exchange or anything else. Instead, as the authors of the *Princely Magnificence* catalogue suggest, these rings were probably standard gifts from Gresham to those whom he owed some thanks or with whom he felt he shared a bond.⁷¹ An earlier reference to the 17th-century play by Thomas Heywood, *If you Know me Not, You Know Nobody*, raised issues of authority and identity embodied within a signet ring. The influence of Gresham may have been such that a signet presented with the Gresham crest on the reverse would provide evidence of the trustworthiness and creditworthiness of the individual. So, while these may have been gifts circulated to men within Gresham's network, they may have served a practical purpose too. While the true reason for the commissioning and giving of these rings to a

number of high-profile Tudor men by Gresham may never be revealed, what is more significant perhaps is that their existence begins to map out physically Gresham's network of male associates.

Removing these grasshopper rings from the context of the Royal Exchange, it is highly probable that many more were initially made. Further extant pieces may come to light, which may in turn allow for a fuller understanding of these gifts. Annotations to the British Museum's copy of the Hemp article include the following note: 'Grasshopper ring with arms of Herbert (per pale, az. & gu, 3 lions ramp. in chief a mullet or) said to have been given to Charles Herbert Esq. father of Sir Edw. Herbert, Attorney General to Charles I, in possession of Mrs B C Canavan [...], see letter 28/4/1982'.⁷²

Unfortunately, this file is now missing from the archives in the British Museum and all that remains is a letter dated 3 July 1982 from Mrs Canavan thanking the curator for the information he provided on the Gresham grasshopper rings.⁷³ If Charles Herbert of Aston, Montgomeryshire (a man on whom very little seems to be known), was also a recipient of a grasshopper ring, there is no reason to suppose that more rings bearing the grasshopper crest on the reverse of their bezels should not come to light. The existence of further such rings would indicate to an even greater extent the reach of Gresham's personal and business networks, and their very presence allows for a wider understanding of male sociability in the early modern period. As signet rings, these items served as visual symbols of these men's individual identities and so were important in this regard. The added association with Gresham and his network that was created through the engraving of a grasshopper reinforced an alternative manifestation of masculinity, one that referenced a community of men.

Case Study I: Sir Thomas Smith and His Signets

Sir Thomas Smith who, among other offices, held the position of Principal Secretary under Edward VI and Elizabeth I has been attributed with the authorship of a work first printed in England in 1581, although it is accepted that he composed it in 1549.¹ *A Discourse on the Commonweal of This Realm of England* was written in response to the contemporary economic situation in England, most notably 'severe inflation'. By the 1580s prices of goods were valued at three and a half times that of levels in 1500, while by 1600 this figure had risen to five and a half times higher.² The 'commonweal' of the title makes reference to the common good prevailing over private and personal interests. The narrative is in the form of a discourse that ensues between five speakers. The character of the Doctor is likely to have been modelled on Smith, since they share similar attitudes particularly with regard to 'extravagance of clothing and the maintenance of luxurious establishments'.³ Thus, this work is somewhat revelatory about Smith and his beliefs.

He advocates supporting domestic production over the importation of foreign goods, which placed unnecessary pressure on the nation's coffers:

What number first of trifles comes hither from beyond the seas that we might either clean spare or else make them within our realm, for the which we either pay inestimable treasure every year or else exchange substantial wares and necessary for them, for the which we might receive great treasure? Of the which sort I mean glasses as well looking as drinking as to glass windows, dials, tables, cards, balls, puppets, penhorns, inkhorns, toothpicks, gloves, knives, daggers, owches, brooches, aglets, buttons of silk and silver, earthen pots, pins, points, hawks' bells, paper both white and brown, and a thousand like things that might either be clean spared or else made within the realm sufficient for us.⁴

When questioned by the character of the Knight about what measures should be taken – 'You would have a law made that no such ware should be brought from beyond the sea to be sold here of such things as could be made here as well as there?' – the Doctor (and by extension Smith) is unequivocal in his response: 'Yea, forsooth, so I would wish'.⁵

Smith's thoughts, as expressed through his mouthpiece the Doctor, about luxury items and excessive opulence are made explicit in his diatribes against the influx of foreign wares. In the second dialogue, the Doctor underscores the superfluous nature of 'wines, spices, linen, cloth, silks, and collars' by stating that 'though we might live so-so without them, yet far from any civility should it be'.⁶ Later, the Doctor bemoans again the need to import items from abroad, such as perfumed gloves, glasses, cherries and oranges, since he saw them as 'more to serve pleasure than necessity'.⁷ These glimpses into Smith's beliefs on luxury goods are perhaps not altogether unsurprising, particularly if the *Discourse* was written in 1549 at a time when Smith was Principal Secretary and



Figure 141 Silver seal with an ivory handle, the matrix bearing the shield, scrolling mantle, helm and crest of Sir Thomas Smith, and the handle having a posthumous inscription 'Sigillum Thomasi Smyth Equites aurati Hill Hall Co. Essex AD 1585', c. 1572–3, English, height 9.2cm, length 3.3cm (face), width 3cm (face). British Museum, 1982,0701.1



Figure 142 Silver seal with an ivory handle, the matrix engraved with the flaming salamander crest of Sir Thomas Smith and encircled by the inscription 'QUA POTE LUCET', c. 1572–3, English, height 8.7cm, length 2.6cm (face), width 2.2cm (face). British Museum, 1982,0701.2



Figure 143 Gold signet ring with a rock-crystal bezel engraved with the arms of Sir Thomas Smith with the tinctures visible c. 1572–3, English, length 2.5cm (face), width 2.3cm (face). British Museum, 1982,0701.3

therefore involved with the finances of the nation. What is surprising, however, is that someone as vocal as Smith on issues of wasteful and conspicuous consumption did not find it inappropriate to own at least three sealing devices made of precious and semi-precious materials.

The set of seals in the collection of the British Museum comprises two personal handheld silver and ivory seal-dies and a gold and rock-crystal signet ring (Figs 141–4). These three objects demonstrate the various types of armorial imagery that were commonly depicted on a signet: a coat of arms; a crest and motto; and shield, mantle, crest and helm. Despite visual differences, each of these seal matrices could be employed for the purposes of authenticating a document. Each of these objects, then, could legitimately singly represent Smith's authority and identity. It is unclear why there was a need for two personal handheld desk seals but it is possible that their use depended on the formality of the document to be sealed. Perhaps the crest alone was sufficient for personal and informal correspondence, while greater armorial detail was required in more formal circumstances. Thus these two objects were considered by Smith to be constitutive of elite status and administrative responsibilities, and not conspicuous signs of luxury.

The signet ring served its purpose when Smith was not seated at his desk. It is a large heavy-set gold ring with a near-circular bezel, the dimensions of which are 2.5 by 2.3cm. The bezel is set with rock crystal onto which Smith's shield has been engraved in reverse, with a centrally placed crescent to show that he was the second son of his father, John Smith (d. 1557). The colours of the arms are represented either through coloured foils placed behind the stone or the stone has been reverse-painted, gilded and silvered. The portability of the ring meant that it was seen by numerous people, as Smith wore it on his person to conduct his daily affairs. Significantly, it is unlikely that the silver matrices of the desk seals would have been seen by many individuals, since the form of such an object dictated that it would stand upright on this surface. All that was discernible of these objects was their ivory handles and the impression left in wax. Therefore, the only signet that was fully visible was the ring.

That Smith chose his ring to be of the rock crystal variety with visible tinctures, rather than a solid gold ring, may be indicative of his predilection for the latest fashions even with an object that had a practical use. Given the higher status of this type of signet ring, Smith may have also deemed such an object to be more suited to the privileges of his office, along with others of his contemporaries such as Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal (see Fig. 128). Together these three objects were vital personal possessions for Smith. They represented his identity, status and lineage, and are clear markers of Smith's masculinity.



Figure 144 The set of sealing devices belonging to Sir Thomas Smith, now in the British Museum, showing how the two handheld seals would have appeared when not in use with only their ivory handles and sides of their silver matrices visible. The ring, with its tinctures, stands out from the group. When seen together, the scale of the objects in comparison to one another is also evident

Case Study II: The Sealing Devices of Sir Walter Raleigh

A set of seals belonging to the Elizabethan courtier Sir Walter Raleigh is indicative of the various roles and responsibilities that he held within his life. Since none of these seal matrices is set in a ring the emphasis is less on the object and more on the image engraved on the flat surface.

The first of the three is a circular, silver seal matrix that has a semicircular hinged handle, engraved with a floral scroll design (**Fig. 145**). The matrix is engraved in reverse with a mounted knight: both knight and horse are in full armour. The knight holds a shield in his left hand and the arms depicted on this appear also on the trappings of the horse. The figures are surrounded by a double pearly border, between which there is an inscription that runs over two lines: '+ SIGILL. DNI. WALTERI: RALEGH: MILITIS: GARDIAN: STANNAR: CORNVB: ET: DEVON: +CAPITAN: GARD: REG: ET: GVBERNATOR: INSULÆ: DE: IERSEY'.

There are three positions of responsibility mentioned within the inscription: Warden of the Stannaries; Captain of the Guard; and Governor of Jersey. This would suggest that this particular seal was used by Raleigh in all these capacities. Based on the information provided by the inscription, it is possible to date the seal. A short while after the death of Francis Russell (1526–1585), 2nd Earl of Bedford and Warden until 1580, Raleigh received his appointment as Warden of the Stannaries.¹ The Stannaries refers to the 'districts comprising the tin mines and smelting works of Cornwall and Devon formerly under the jurisdiction of the Stannary courts'.² As Warden, Raleigh was responsible for regulating mining privileges, dealing with any disputes regarding customs, officiating over the Stannary parliament and commanding the Cornish army. The honorific position of Captain of the Guard was not bestowed on Raleigh until the death of Sir Christopher Hatton in November 1591, although he had been named as Hatton's successor as early as 1587. In this role, Raleigh was entrusted with keeping Elizabeth I safe. The third position mentioned is that of Governor of Jersey and he was appointed this in August 1600. This seal matrix can therefore not have been made before that date. Following the death of the queen in 1603, Raleigh's political and royal favour declined rapidly as a result of rumours of his opposition to James I's succession. Raleigh was stripped of his honours and titles in May 1603.³ Thus the latest date of production for the seal is 1603. In the final years of Elizabeth's reign Raleigh found himself increasingly alienated by key courtiers and it would not be too unreasonable to presume that this particular handheld seal was used to legitimise his position at court. It served as a constant reminder to those who saw the seal-die and its impression that this was a man who had been granted many privileges by the reigning sovereign.

The second handheld seal is another circular, silver matrix, which has a semicircular hinged handle pierced with scrollwork (**Fig. 146**). The matrix is engraved with the arms of Raleigh: five fusils in a bend with a martlet for difference (the sign of a fourth son), a helmet, two wolves as supporters, mantling, and a crest in the form of a stag. The date of 1584 is engraved within the field and on a scroll beneath the shield is a motto within a banner: 'AMORE.ET.VIRTUTE'. Encircling the graven image is the inscription: '* PROPRIA+ TNSIHNIA + WALTERI+ RALEGH+ MILITIS+ DOMINI+& GVBERNATORIS+



Figure 145 Silver seal matrix belonging to Sir Walter Raleigh, 1600–3, English, diameter 4.8cm. British Museum, 1904,0113.1



Figure 146 Seal matrix belonging to Sir Walter Raleigh, 1584, North America, diameter 5.7cm, weight 83g. British Museum, 1904,0113.2

VIRGINIÆ+ &'. This refers to Raleigh's appointment as Governor of the colony on Roanoke Island in Virginia, following the expedition of men he sent to colonise North America. So this seal served as a public and proud declaration of the privileges he enjoyed in this role, master of a 'private fiefdom' claimed for the queen.⁴

The third item within this set is a circular, silver seal matrix with a cylindrical socket to the reverse (**Fig. 147**). The matrix is engraved with the personal arms of Sir Walter Raleigh: a shield with 16 quarterings; two wolves as the supporters; and three crests above the helmets, which are a fleur-de-lis, a stag's head caboshed with a fleur-de-lis between the attires, and a stag statant. At the base of the arms is Raleigh's motto 'AMORE.ET.VIRTUTE' on a scroll. This motto appears on a portrait of Raleigh dated to 1588, which is in the National Portrait Gallery.⁵ The 16 quarterings of the shield have been

mostly identified.⁶ The greater the number of quarterings on a shield reflected a greater pedigree. A shield with very similar quarterings (there are minor differences) can be found on a line engraving of Raleigh by the noted engraver Simon de Passe (1597–1647), which was published in 1617 by Compton Holland (d. 1622).⁷ The seal has been dated to 1584 and is possibly the same item listed in an inventory 'of Such Things as Weare Found on the Body of Sir Walter Rawley, Knight' that was made as Raleigh entered the Tower of London on 10 August 1618: 'Item, an aunciant seale of his own armes, in silver'.⁸ At this stage in his life, the only signet that reflected his identity was the one displaying his personal arms. This seal with its 16 quarterings to show that he was of very noble birth, at a point in his life when he had no favour at court, may have been one of the most important possessions on Raleigh's person at that time.

The significance of these three different seals is that they all represented Raleigh at various points in his life and reflected the different roles and responsibilities granted to him: governor of a new colony; a favoured courtier of the queen, granted privileged duties; and a private elite citizen with perhaps nothing more to fall back on than his pedigree. It is undeniable that these three seal matrices were important and constitutive elements of Raleigh's identity.



Figure 147 Seal matrix belonging to Sir Walter Raleigh, 1584, English, diameter 4.1cm. British Museum, 1904,0113.3

Chapter 10

Jewellery and Posthumous Remembrance

Bequeathing jewels

And here's the sad remembrance of his life, ----- *The Scarfe*.
Which for his sake I will for euer weare.¹

These words are spoken by the character Borachio as he reports on the falsified death of Charlemont, nephew of his master D'Amville, to the young man's father, Baron Montferrers. The inclusion of this small utterance by the author, the literary and military figure Cyril Tourneur (c. 1575–1626), in his 1611 publication *The Atheist's Tragedie* is significant for the resonance and weight it confers on an object of personal use. The proximity that an item of clothing such as a scarf had to the skin gave it a strong intimate attachment to its wearer. It is as a result of this connection that Borachio claims that he is to retain the scarf: a tangible memento of Charlemont and his life.

That an object had the potential to act as a signifier of an individual is further attested to in William Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well*. Upon seeing the ring that once belonged to Helena, the king is convinced of her death. The physical distance between object and owner can indicate only one of two possibilities: that she is dead; or that Helena has given up the ring willingly to Bertram upon succumbing to him. Retention of this ring by Helena is pivotal to her character and identity. Being parted from her property alters her very state of existence: either she is lifeless, and therefore devoid of her identity; or in a contracted union, and thus has assumed a new identity as a wife to a man of more noble birth than she. The king is unable to accept that Bertram would have had a change of heart with regard to marrying Helena and begins to mourn her death:

she call'd the saints to surety
That she would never put it from her finger,
Unless she gave it to yourself in bed, ---
Where you have never come, --- or sent it us
Upon her great disaster.
[...]
And she is dead, which nothing, but to close
Her eyes myself, could win me to believe,
More than to see this ring.²

The potency of an object to carry on the memory of an individual is found not just in literary sources but also in the testamentary instructions that are left by individuals upon their death. The wishes of Henry Grey (1541–1615), 6th Earl of Kent, were recorded in a sermon given at the time of his death and then published the following year. While this publication provides some insight into how individuals chose to be remembered, with perhaps the most overt and lasting legacy being the mausoleum founded by Grey in 1605 'as an Emblem to *his posteritie*', it is the gift he wished to leave to the relatively new servants within his household that is of particular interest.³ These individuals 'hee honoured either with a Ring of remembrance or comforted with halfe a yeeres wages for their present maintenance'.⁴

Evidence from early modern wills does not always provide answers for why some recipients were to be given sums of money while others received material objects, and it is often more confusing when the testator's wishes are not entirely clear as to the exact nature of the bequest. So when the mercer John Leek of Boston laid out instructions in his will



Figure 148 Gold puzzle *fede* ring of five interlaced hoops, 18th century, diameter 27mm, weight 13.5g. British Museum, AF.1155

dated 19 August 1527 he concluded by providing for his executors, George Garner and Thomas Gybson. However, the men were not to receive identical recompense: ‘ether off them geffing unto other off them xxvjs. viij*d*.; and to other off them a goblyt off sylver and a blake gown, the price off a yerde vs.’⁵ No further instructions were provided as to who was to receive the money and who was to receive the silver goblet and black gown, which casts some doubt as to the personal value attached to these two material objects. Likewise, in the case of Grey there is no way of determining conclusively how many rings of remembrance were in fact given and to whom, and indeed whether they had any real substantial value in creating a sense of remembrance of Henry Grey. It is likely that in instances such as this, the object bequeathed was sold in order to unlock its intrinsic monetary worth.

Instructions in early modern wills often also called for the selling of some objects of personal possession, including items of jewellery. The will of William Herbert (see **Fig. 25**), 1st Earl of Pembroke, is dated 23 December 1567. Within it he leaves ‘five hundredth markes in monnye and in Jewelles’ to his daughter Anne Talbot (1550–1592), with the remainder of his moveable goods (including jewels) being left to his heir, Henry Herbert, 2nd Earl of Pembroke.⁶ An addendum made the night before his death allowed for his wife to keep all of her jewels and also bequeaths ‘to the Quenes Majestie his best jewell which he named his greate ballace’.⁷ In spite of these jewelled bequests, Pembroke also made it clear that same night ‘that the residewe of his Jewelles not bequeathed be solde by his sonne and heire Henrie lord Herberte of Cardif to be ymployed in such uses as his lordship ment if he had lyved’.⁸ The selling of jewels in this way meant that they were reduced to their mere economic value. Pembroke realised that his jewelled possessions did also constitute a vast store of wealth that could provide charitable benefit.

The term ‘ring of remembrance’ as noted by Henry Grey seems to signify a particular object type, according to the historian and political writer James Howell in his multilingual dictionary *Lexicon Tetraglotton* (1660). Described in English as simply ‘two or three interchain’d’ hoops, the Italian and French translations expand on this and explain how it was worn on the finger with one of the hoops being left to hang down as a reminder of something.⁹ This entry appears under the section that refers to ‘Womens Apparel’ and is not included in the previous one that lists the clothing and jewels worn by men. The information given by the foreign language translations suggests that this type of ring was worn by a woman at a specific point in her life, possibly in mourning. However, an entry in the 1611 French–English



Figure 149 Gold puzzle *fede* ring of seven interlaced hoops, no date, diameter 31mm, weight 8.9g. British Museum, AF.1158

dictionary by the English lexicographer Randle Cotgrave (fl.1587–1630?) indicates that a ring of remembrance was also worn by men. He refers to it as ‘a Ring with many hoopes, whereof a man lets one hang downe when he would be put in mind of a thing’.¹⁰ The type of ring in question is today commonly called a puzzle ring, possibly in reference to the way the wearer would need to figure out the arrangement of all the hoops before placing it on his/her finger.

There are 48 puzzle rings identified as such within the collection of the British Museum, including five of Chinese origin. Of the 43 European puzzle rings only one has been determined a Roman artefact, while the remainder have either no definitive date of production or are broadly defined as being of 17th- to 19th-century manufacture.¹¹ The difficulty in the dating of such rings is due to the popularity of this object type, which still prevails in modern times.¹² The number of hoops that form each ring varies from two (strictly speaking this would be called a *gimmel* ring) to as many as a dozen.¹³ Ornament to these rings includes precious and semi-precious gemstones, engraved decoration and symbolic representations (**Figs 148–9**).

Thus while a ring of remembrance was an object type that served a mnemonic function resulting from the mode of its use, it remained clearly distinctive from the rings that were given *in* remembrance, which played a mnemonic role through their representation alone and not through any physical properties. A ring given in remembrance is often referred to today as a mourning ring. There does not appear to be any indication that such terminology was adopted by 16th- and early 17th-century men and women, and in fact the earliest recorded usage of the term is in 1653.¹⁴ Despite the slight anachronism, for clarity, rings that were used in remembrance during the early modern period will be referred to as mourning rings.

Mourning rings

Common practice in the 16th and early 17th centuries seems to have been the provision of money in wills for the creation of mourning rings, rather than bequests of actual rings. Shakespeare followed this tradition in his will dated 25 March 1616 by providing the sum of 26*s*. 8*d*. to seven individuals for the purchase of rings.¹⁵ While the will does not define these rings as mourning rings, it remained clear that the purpose of the ring was to act as a remembrance of Shakespeare. Alternatively, the executors of a will might have been instructed to spend a determined sum of money on the purchase or commissioning of rings, which would then be circulated to others in remembrance. This course of



Figure 150 Previously enamelled gold mourning ring with skull, crossbones and foliate decoration, inscribed in italics 'In mem: S: P: obt 4 Nov 85 aetat 21', made by goldsmith IC, inscription dated 1685, English, diameter 18.8mm, weight 6g. British Museum, AF.1601



Figure 151 Detail of the inscription on Figure 150

action was decided upon by Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and he left £40 for the purpose: 'Item, I will to be bestowed uppon ringes to geve to my especiall good lordes and freendes to remembre me withall, at the discrecion of myn executours, xl li'.¹⁶

In most instances relating to the bequests of mourning rings, there is only generic mention of rings. The will of Lady Anne Newdigate (1574–1618), however, is unique for the detail it provides. In her provision for the making of rings 'of ten or twelve shillings price', Lady Newdigate also stipulated the precise nature of their form. The rings were to have 'a pansy being my father's Crest, engraven on the outside and two letters for my name enamelled with black on either side the pansy and an inscription within to be in latin, these words following: Death is the beginning of life'.¹⁷ In his will dated 27 November 1538, Roger Corbet (1501/2–1538/9) provides for the making of 30 gold rings to the value of five shillings each 'which Rynges shal be marked w[i]th a R and a C'. These were to be given 'to seuerall and trusty frends for a remembraunce'.¹⁸

Such specificity concerning mourning rings was uncommon and in fact there was no real prescription that determined their form, an idea that also governed wedding rings. As we saw earlier in Chapter 7, it was not the form of the ring that defined it as a marriage ring; rather it was the context of its exchange. Similarly, then, mourning rings were those that were created in memory of the deceased. Later in the 17th century mourning rings did begin to establish a convention of form. To the inner surface of the hoop there is often an inscription that provides information about the deceased: their initials, date of death and sometimes age. Emblems typically used on memento mori devices populate the outer face of the hoop and are enamelled (**Figs 150–1**).

Much plainer examples of this sort do prevail and a ring dated to 1723 demonstrates this low-key form of remembrance, for it is a plain gold hoop of D-shape cross section inscribed only with the initials 'AS' and the date.¹⁹ A late 16th-century example takes on this same form and contains the inscription 'W.I.L. 1592'.²⁰ A mourning ring that can be dated to 1670 as a result of its inscription is typical of many late 17th-century survivals. The find was reported through the Treasure Act (1996) and the ring was subsequently acquired by Elmbridge Museum in Surrey. It comprises a flat gold band with a skull engraved on the exterior face; inside it bears the inscription 'prepare to follow FV. Ob; 16 May 70' in addition to a maker's mark (**Fig. 152**).²¹

While this ring is not unusual in that it is characteristic of other contemporary mourning rings, documentary evidence exists that indicates strongly the identity of the individual referred to by the initials FV. The parish registers for Stoke d'Abernon record the death of Sir Francis Vincent (c. 1621–1670), 3rd Baronet, on 16 May 1670, with his burial taking place four days later.²² Sir Francis's will was drawn up in the year preceding his death and he discusses certain bequests of mourning rings:

Item I give and bequeath vnto my Loving Sister Mrs Katherine Vane the Sume of Tenn pounds to buy her a Ring Item I give and bequeath vnto my said cousin Matthew Carleton thre pounds and to his wife Forty shillings to buy them Rings if they shal be aliue at the tyme of my Decease [...] Item I give and bequeath unto my said Louing Brother and Friends S[i]r Walter Uane S[i]r William Howard and Arthur Onslowe the Sum[m]e of Tenn pounds a peece to buy them Rings.²³

While it is impossible to say with certainty that the ring discovered in 2008 is one of the rings discussed in the will of Sir Francis, there is no reason why it could not be. Based,

Figure 152 Gold mourning ring, found in Cobham, Surrey, 1670, English, 24 x 18 x 5mm. Elmbridge Museum, Surrey, 3.2010





Figure 153 Palmerston gold chocolate cups, c. 1700, English, height 6.5cm, circumference 59mm. British Museum, 2005,0604.1&2

though, on the weight, size, form and simplicity of the ring, it is unlikely that it came to the value of £10 and so is most probably that of Matthew Carleton or his wife.²⁴

Significantly, mourning rings had never been the property of the testator. The nature of the bequest was therefore not to provide an individual with an item that once had some personal attachment to the deceased. Instead, a mourning ring marked out the relationships that a man within the early modern period had forged. While not only indicative of his closest and strongest bonds, the patterns of movement created in the circulation of these rings from a central locus (the deceased) reflected and acknowledged the web of networks that a man had made during his lifetime.

With life expectancy being relatively low during the 16th and early 17th centuries, it is possible that an individual (particularly one of fairly high social standing) may have amassed a number of mourning rings over a lifetime.²⁵ The survival of a pair of gold chocolate cups said to have been made from the gold of a group of mourning rings certainly supports this theory and also provides an interesting and novel approach to disposal (**Fig. 153**).²⁶ Made for, and later bequeathed by, Anne Houlblon, Viscountess Palmerston (d. 1735), from rings left to her male relations, it is not altogether surprising that she would have chosen to recycle the gold content of a group of mourning rings to which she had no emotional attachment. However, she retained the memorial nature of the original objects through the inscriptions on the underside of the base and the inside of the handle of each cup. These cups offer a unique case of how jewellery could be recycled and no other recorded example exists of mourning rings being melted down for use in this way. However, the very nature of their creation does suggest also that as generational distance increased, personal attachment decreased and jewels of any nature were likely to face the melting pot in order to unlock their basic material worth.

Memento mori jewels

Mourning rings are not to be confused with memento mori rings. The term translates to 'remember you must die' and so these rings were worn by the living as a constant visual reminder of the transience of life. Such rings are distinguishable by the decorative elements that appear on the outer face of the hoop: crossbones, skeletons, death's heads and hourglasses. They also usually bear inscriptions on the interior surface in English or Latin that have some resonance to the inevitability of death. Such emblems were not only restricted to rings and there are a number of recorded examples of items that functioned as a memento mori. A coffin-shaped gold and enamelled pendant, complete with a rock-crystal hinged cover, conceals a skeleton in high relief (**Fig. 154**). This is not an isolated example of such a jewel: the British Museum has a similar piece in enamelled gold and, although the coffin remains empty, there is an inscription engraved on its sides.²⁷ Miniature coffins in carved boxwood and in silver demonstrate that this was a popular object type.²⁸ Another gold and enamelled coffin, dated to the mid-16th century, still containing its skeleton and with the inscription 'THROUGH THE RESVRRECTION OF CHRISTE WE BE ALL SANCTIFIED' was discovered in the ruins of Torre Abbey in Devon and is now in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum.²⁹ The overt symbolism of the coffin in all these jewels, which mirrored the form of contemporary coffins, ensured that the message of the certainty of death was clearly understood.

That items containing memento mori devices were used during an individual's lifetime is attested to by references such as that which appears in the 1618 will of John Davies: 'Item, I give and bequeathe unto my beloved freinde, ---- Cox, draper, my rynge of goulde with a deathes heade in yt'.³⁰ The use of the possessive pronoun 'my' suggests



Figure 154 Gold and enamelled pendant, 16th century, possibly French, length 28mm. British Museum, 1978,1002.117

strongly that this ring was used by Davies throughout his life. Jewels such as these were adopted to demonstrate the fragility of life and the futility of worldly goods.

A poignant reminder of this is found in the final words and actions of Lady Katherine Grey, recorded for posterity as she lay prisoner in the Tower of London.³¹ She instructed her guardian, Owen Hopton, who became lieutenant of the Tower in 1570, to pass her a box of rings.³² The final ring she took from the box bore the image of a death's head and this she wished to be delivered to her husband Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, along with several other rings.

This shalle the Laste tokene vnto my Lorde that euer I shall send him, it is the picture of my selfe the wordes about the deathes heade weare these, (whill I lyue yores).³³

The popularity of memento mori jewels in the 16th and early 17th centuries signalled a deep appreciation for the passing of time and the fleeting nature of life. The sentiments conveyed by these jewels are echoed in other contemporary media, including paintings, such as in the accumulation of *vanitas* in *The Knight's Dream* (c. 1650) by Antonio de Pereda (c. 1611–1678) or in the presence of the anamorphic skull in Holbein's *The Ambassadors* (1533).³⁴ Keith Thomas addresses the concerns of early modern citizens with the afterlife in the final section of *The Ends of Life* (2009).³⁵ Since the memory of a person could endure far beyond their brief human existence, according to Thomas thoughts turned to ways of ensuring posthumous fame to avoid anonymity and obscurity. This parallels contemporary thought, as the poet John Weever (1575/6–1632) wrote in his narrative poem, *The Mirror of Martyrs* (1601), on the proto-Protestant martyr Sir John Oldcastle (d. 1417): 'For naught but fame man after death inherits'.³⁶

Jewels and lineage

Contemporary wills serve to highlight particular measures that were taken by citizens in the early modern period to preserve an individual's memory. Propriety demanded that a certain level of convention was adhered to within these wills and the preambles are fairly formulaic: the wish for the soul to be bequeathed to God; and the provision of money to pay towards regular prayers and intercessions, which not only aimed to aid the soul of the departed to enter heaven

but also provided for continued remembrance. And these acts of remembrance were important.³⁷ Yet there were other steps that could be taken, which preserved one's memory through more tangible means.

As Thomas rightly points out 'Many of the central social practices of the early modern period, from publishing books to commissioning portraits, become more intelligible when they are seen as the product of this concern with posthumous reputation'.³⁸ Within a religious environment, the commissioning of monuments or statues served as a constant reminder of the departed. However imposing such objects proved to be, large-scale gestures of this sort were not accessible to all. Perhaps providing an even more potent and tangible reminder of the deceased were those bequests that constituted items of personal possession, for the act of passing on personal property to family and friends signalled and reinforced the bonds of kinship that were forged over a lifetime. In examining early modern wills, it is possible to appreciate the value of both the recipient and the bequeathed article. When the Lincolnshire mercer John Leek left a number of items, including his late wife's wedding ring, to Alice Arley in 1527, he also passed on a tangible reminder of his wife, himself and their union. Being in receipt of such a symbolically charged bequest, it is not improbable to suppose that Arley was a valued kinswoman.³⁹

The evidence that can be gleaned from wills with regard to jewellery reveals two key concerns related to death for men in the early modern period: lineage and remembrance. In bequests for mourning rings there is clear emphasis on remembrance. Jewels also performed as tools to create lineage and this had great significance for a man at this time. Perhaps more than any other type of material culture, jewels were suited to being passed down a family line to establish a sense of heritage. Despite this, the survival of Renaissance and early modern jewellery, intact and unchanged from its original design, is extremely rare. Unsurprisingly, the high intrinsic value associated with the precious materials often used in their production meant that such objects were melted down and recycled, both in times of economic need and when fashions became outdated. A changing aesthetic in the 17th century favoured an abundance of gemstones, with gold merely acting as a setting. The Arnold Lulls *Book of Jewels* serves as an excellent visual repository of this new fashion (**Fig. 155**).⁴⁰ The work of the enameller and goldsmith so popular in the preceding century ceased to be fashionable and so jewels were altered, often beyond recognition. This was certainly not an unknown practice. Prior to the discovery of the New World mines, raw materials were often obtained from existing objects.

Mindful of the proclivity of future generations to break up a jewelled object (favouring fashion over heritage), the French king Francis I selected eight jewelled objects and gave them the status of 'Jewels of the Crown'.⁴¹ Such a ruling made these French Crown Jewels inalienable. This may have also, in part, had to do with an attempt by Mary Tudor (1496–1533) to claw back those jewels given to her during her brief marriage to the French king Louis XII (r. 1498–1515). In a despatch dated 2 January 1516 the Venetian ambassador to England, Sebastian Giustinian, wrote of three complaints that Henry VIII had had regarding the treatment of his

sister Mary Tudor following the death of Louis XII. He wrote that the final complaint was for her to 'receive back the jewels which King Louis gave her as personal ornaments'.⁴² With this new ruling, a foreign consort such as Francis I's second wife Eleanor of Austria (1498–1558) or Mary Queen of Scots, the wife of Francis II of France, was permitted use of these items only during her marriage. Following the death of both kings, in 1547 and 1560 respectively, neither Eleanor nor Mary could lay claim to these jewels nor remove them from France. It is certainly not coincidental that Francis I established the Crown Jewels only weeks before his marriage to Eleanor in July 1530.

This act by Francis I seems to have been prompted more by the fear of losing precious stones to a foreign bride than a bid to preserve his jewels intact. His ruling allowed for the items of jewellery to be altered, providing only that the number and weight of the gemstones remained the same.⁴³ In doing so, the integrity of the original royal jewels was not maintained but nonetheless there was an attempt to ensure that these objects were not reused in the production of plate or other items. Francis I did not set out stricter guidelines governing the fate of the French Crown Jewels but the motivation for his ruling appears to be one of conferring status on a group of objects, rather than the preservation of heirlooms. Perhaps this was because these jewels were effectively state-owned, rather than personal items. There are examples of elite Englishmen who wished to sustain their own heritage through their jewels and a small number of these survive today, thanks to their efforts.⁴⁴ Two such men who tried to attach concepts of personal achievement and patrilineage to the jewels they left as part of their inheritance were Thomas Lyte and Sir Thomas Sackville (see below).

We have seen how important marriage was for a strong masculine identity. Marriage allowed for the formation of one's own household within a community, which in itself was an overt statement of independence. Marriage also indicated sexual maturity and, in the eyes of God and the law, it enabled the creation of legitimate heirs. A male heir was essential to ensure a family's survival. Posthumous fame could be fortified by literary and physical monuments, but nothing would secure heritage more than a son. As Sir William Monson (1568?–1643) explained to his son in 1625: 'the great-grandfather of your grandfather was a knight by title and John by name: which name we desire to give to our eldest sons [...] because man cannot himself live for ever, he desires to live in his posterity; and if I had a hundred sons, my greatest hope must depend on you, as you are my eldest'.⁴⁵

A man's posterity embodied in his male descendants could also be manifested through the physicality of material objects that were deliberately designated as pieces that should be passed from generation to generation. This concept is evident in the reply that Bertram offers to Diana after she requests his ancestral ring as a token of his affection in Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well*:

I'll lend it thee, my dear; but have no power
To give it from me.
[...]
It is an honour 'longing to our house,
Bequeathed down from many ancestors
Which were the greatest obloquy i' the world
In me to lose.⁴⁶



Figure 155 Arnold Lulls, design for a pendant c. 1585–1640, probably English, pencil, pen and ink, wash, body-colour and gold. Victoria and Albert Museum, D.6:3–1896

The significance of the ring in this context is discussed in some depth by Garrett A. Sullivan Jr in his essay "Be this sweet Helen's knell, and now forget her": forgetting and desire in *All's Well That Ends Well*.⁴⁷ He asserts that the emphasis on it having been 'Bequeathed down from many ancestors' [4.2.43] is representative of 'an aristocratic, masculinist identity' to which the character Bertram appeals when pushed by the king towards marrying Helena, who is of lesser birth. There is the suggestion by David Berkeley and Donald Keesee that should a union such as this proceed, her lower social status would taint the blood of Bertram's descendants.⁴⁸ They cite the contemporary author Andrew Boorde, with his claims of 'good blode, in the which consysteth the lyfe of man'.⁴⁹ Thus this 'coerced contamination' threatens 'Bertram's masculinist identity'.⁵⁰

For Bertram the ring symbolises simultaneously patrilineage, family memory and his individual identity. In constructing this dialogue, Shakespeare drew on contemporary practice that used testamentary requests designed to prevent the alienation of precious pieces even when heirs found themselves in financial difficulties. To stop a less caring or more desperate generation from betraying family memory, a sale (or indeed any other form of alienation) has to be seen as just that, a betrayal of one's ancestors.⁵¹ This explains why Bertram describes such an act as 'the greatest obloquy i' the world' [4.2.43].

For the scholar Michael Friedman a piece like this not only created links to the past for an individual and reminded him of his lineage, but it also extended forwards to future generations:



Figure 156 Unknown artist, *Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset*, 1601, oil on panel, 110.5 x 87.6cm. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 4024

Bertram's ring represents not only his duty to emulate his honorable forbears, but also his link in a chain of inheritance that has endured for several generations. In order to avoid 'the greatest obloquy i' th' world,' Bertram must both keep the ring (the honor of his house handed down to him intact by his father) and eventually produce a 'sequent issue' (5.3.196) to whom he may bequeath it. Thus, Bertram's responsibility extends to future generations as well as to the past; he owes it to his father and his son to serve as the intermediary between them.⁵²

In acknowledgment of the significant meaning to his past, present and future that is embodied in this single object, Bertram utters the following words as he gives away his ring to Diana: 'My house, mine honour, yea, my life, be thine' [4.2.52].

These exchanges within *All's Well That Ends Well* and the significance that the ring continues to play within the narrative parallel contemporary concerns with lineage. The will of Sir Thomas Sackville reflects these same ideas. It provides ample evidence for the creation of heirloom jewels, as well as being even more remarkable for the details given of these and other bequeathed items of jewellery.

The will of Sir Thomas Sackville⁵³

Thomas Sackville (c. 1536–1608), Baron Buckhurst and from 13 May 1604 the 1st Earl of Dorset, cuts an austere figure in the portrait of him in his later years (**Fig. 156**). Sackville held the position of Lord Treasurer from 1599 and in 1601 he became Lord High Steward. So noted was his work as an administrator and statesman that he appears in a prominent position in a painting of the 1604 Somerset House Conference, which resulted in a peace treaty between England and Spain.⁵⁴

In recognition of his successful negotiation at this event, Sackville was given a pension, a ring and a chain from Philip III of Spain (r. 1598–1621).⁵⁵ The image of Sackville, in his sombre dark dress, is not one of a man who was excessive in his apparel. Yet he still owned and valued a significant number of jewels. These items, therefore, must have retained some value that outweighed their ornamental and aesthetic worth. Sackville's will is dated 11 August 1607 and he died the following year on 19 April. There are many bequests of jewels given to Sackville's close friends that reflect his desire to be remembered by them and show the high esteem with which he regarded these individuals. This rhetoric of remembrance is repeated throughout the will:

Item I giue vnto the reuerend Father in god {blank} Bishopp of London my ~~very~~deere good Lord and freinde a Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is sett an Emerald of the olde Myne vppon a foyle being tabled longe wise. Desiring hys Lordship to weare it & keepe it as a Remembrance of my hartie love vnto hym.⁵⁶

It is clear from the jewelled bequests that Sackville was in possession of a large and fine jewellery collection. He left many of them to his wife, Cicely (d. 1615), whom he made joint executor along with his heir, Robert Sackville (1560/1–1609), 2nd Earl of Dorset.⁵⁷ Of all the jewels received by Cicely, the most interesting to note are those pieces that Sackville states were originally for his personal use, two of which are detailed here:

Also I do giue will and bequeathe vnto her out of those Jewelles of gould pearle and pretious stone which I keepe and reserue as Jewelles for my selfe and to myne owne priuat vse during my life these twoe Jewelles folowing that is to saye: One Rope of fayer round orient and greate pearle conteyning the number of one hundred and three score pearle having a Carnation Rybben silke lace sewed to eache end of the sayed Rope. And one other Jewell of gould made into the fashion of a Crosse or Crucifix beyng on the one syde sett with twelue greate Dyamondes, whereof one Diamond set in the Toppe is a faier greate Table Diamond And twoe other Diamonds set on the sydes ar[e] fayer greate Triangle Diamonds And one other Diamond set on<in> the lower parte of the sayed Jewell is a very faier and great Triangle Dyamond. And sixe other Diamonds which make the Crosse in the myddest ar[e] faier greate Table Dyamonds one of them beyng muche longer than the other fyve. The other syde of the said Jewell beyng faier enameled with diuers coloures: And which sayed Jewell hath three faier greate peare pearles pendant to the same. Both which said Jewelles I do fullie and absolutely giue will and bequeathe vnto my said most Deere lie beloued wife.⁵⁸

The pendant cross described above, with its 12 diamonds, three pear-shaped pearls and intricate enamelling, is an elaborate example of a personal devotional jewel. A comparable piece listed in the inventory of the jewels of Vincenzo Gonzaga is described as having a cross of diamonds with four rubies and two large pearls.⁵⁹ Similar pieces are recorded by Hans Mielich in the inventory of jewels belonging to Anna of Austria and her husband Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria (**Figs 157–8**).

There are a number of extant pieces of similar form, although since they incorporate comparatively cheaper materials they are far less grand than Sackville's jewel. Within the collection of the British Museum and the



Figure 157 Manuscript illumination showing the obverse and reverse of a gold and enamelled pendant cross set with table-cut and triangular diamonds with three pear-shaped pearls hanging pendent. Mieliich 1552–6, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, BSB Cod.icon. 42, ff.34r–v, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00006598-6



Figure 158 Manuscript illumination of obverse and reverse of a gold and enamelled pendant cross set with table-cut and point-cut diamonds, with three pear-shaped pearls hanging pendent. Mieliich 1552–6, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, BSB Cod.icon. 42, ff.36r–v, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00006598-6

Victoria and Albert Museum are two not dissimilar gold cross pendants set with the semi-precious stone turquoise (**Figs 159–60**). Both are enamelled on the reverse and according to the authors Hugh Tait and Charlotte Gere ‘the quality of the enamelling and the palette’ on the British Museum piece suggest that it is of English manufacture.⁶⁰ The cross in the Victoria and Albert Museum is probably of French origin and was made in about 1630. An object that perhaps approaches more closely the type of jewel described by Sackville in his will is a Spanish example from the early part of the 17th century (**Fig. 161**). This more stylised version of a pendant cross is set with table-cut crystals, rather than diamonds, and gives some indication of how impressive Sackville’s cross must have been.

All three pieces are suggestive of the form of Sackville’s cross, with the two terminals and base being hung with pendent elements. It is not surprising that an individual of the status and wealth of Sackville would choose to own a

religious jewel with such a high intrinsic material value. The inclusion of expensive materials was clearly an overt declaration of his social position. The rhetoric employed throughout the description highlights the worth assigned to the diamonds and pearls: the repeated use of ‘fair’ and ‘great’ indicates both qualitative and quantitative importance.

That Sackville had great admiration and respect for his wife is evident throughout this will, for he repeatedly refers to her as his ‘dearly beloved wife’, and so the significance of these two gifts is not to be underestimated. These bequests demonstrate clearly the importance of both the recipient, in this case Cicely, and the bequeathed goods. The possession and use of a pendant cross by Sackville is not altogether unsurprising or inappropriate for a man described by the modern scholar Rivkah Zim as someone who ‘upheld and promoted the religion of the established Elizabethan church’.⁶¹ What is perhaps surprising, however, is the rope of

Figure 159 Gold pendant cross set with cabochon-cut turquoises with *basse-taille* enamelling on the reverse, late 16th century English, length 6.5cm, width 3.3cm. British Museum, 1978,1002.115



Figure 160 Gold pendant reliquary cross set with turquoises and hung with pearls with enamelling on the reverse, c. 1630, French, height 5.3cm, width 3.3cm, depth 1cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, M.127–1975





Figure 161 Gold pendant cross set with table-cut crystals and with enamelled decoration, 1600–25, Spanish, height 8.8cm, width 5.1cm, depth 0.6cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, M.128–1975

pearls. Composed of 160 orient pearls, this was a substantial piece of jewellery. The pearl had come to signify the purity of Elizabeth I and also England's dominance during the final years of the 16th century.⁶² Both traits are visualised by the iconic 'Armada' portrait of 1588 attributed to George Gower (d. 1596).⁶³ There is little, if any, pictorial evidence of men in pearl necklaces and, although there are numerous entries within Henry VIII's inventory of such ropes of pearls, this type of jewel was more often associated with women.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Sackville asserts in his will that this item of jewellery was for his 'owne priuat vse'.

While the jewels that Sackville leaves to his wife Cicely reflect the status of both the gift and the recipient, four of his jewelled possessions seem to have far greater importance. Sackville writes that these four jewels 'I keepe and reserve as Jewelles for meselfe' and he bequeaths them to his 'welbeloued sonne Robert Lorde Buckhurst after my Decease for and during his life only'.⁶⁵ He then describes them in detail:

1. One ringe of gould enamelled blacke and set round ouer all the whole Rynge with Diamondes to the number of twentie whereof fyve Diamondes beyng placed in the vppermost parte of the sayed Rynge do represent the fashion of a Crosse and the other fyftee ar[c] sett rounde and ouer all the sayed Rynge.
2. One picture of the late famous Quene Elizabeth being cutt out of an Aggett with excellent similitude ovall fashion and sett in gould with twentie sixe Rubies abowte the Circle of the same. And one orient pearle pendant to the same.
3. One Ringe of gould enameled blacke, wherein is set a greate Table Diamonde beyng perfect and pure and of muche worthe.
4. One chayne of gould Spanishe worke conteyninge in it fortie eghte seuerall peeces of gould of Diuers sortes enameled white and fortie sixe ouall lynkes of gould likewise enameled white, whereof twelue of the biggest sorte of the sayed fortie eght peeces beyng also enameled white haue likewise in euery <one> of them twoe Diamondes and⁶⁶ so in all one hundred fortie fower Diamondes ouer and besides fortie sixe ouall lynkes of gould which do houlde and knytt the sayed peeces and them selues together in forme of a Cheyne.⁶⁷

Crucially, each object is prefaced by the phrase 'the sole vse and occupation onlie'. This means that although they were bequeathed to Sackville's heir Robert, they were not to become his actual property for him to dispose of as he wished. In fact, Sackville makes this explicit by asserting that Robert was to have these jewels 'during his life only'. Sackville's testamentary instructions do not end with his son and heir Robert. He continues by making clear his wishes that following Robert's death these four jewels were to be passed onto his eldest son and heir, Richard Sackville (1589–1624), 3rd Earl of Dorset, 'for and during his life onlie'. Following this named bequest to his grandson, Sackville then expresses what is to happen to the two gold, enamelled and diamond-set rings, the gold chain and the agate jewel depicting Elizabeth I:

And after his Decease then vnto the next heire male begotten of the bodye of the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue for and during his life onlie. And so from heire male to heire male of the Sacuilles after the Decease of euery one of them seuerally and successiuelie for and during the life and liues onlie of euery suche heire male seuerally and successiuelie chardging and earnestlie requiring all and euery my saied heire males before specified.⁶⁸

By his will, then, Sackville sought to establish these jewels as family heirlooms. He even makes this intention explicit: 'the saied two ringes picture and chayne of gould intended by me to remayne as our heiriloom to the house and familie of the Sacuilles'.⁶⁹ His son Robert died only ten months after him on 27 February 1609 and his will is dated 10 February 1608.⁷⁰ In this, Robert acknowledges the terms of his father's will that relate specifically to the four jewels that Sackville wished to be passed successively along his male line.⁷¹ This is not surprising, however, given that the date of Robert's will preceded his father's death.

Not only is Sackville's will interesting for the concern that it shows he had in desiring to bestow upon future generations of his family items of jewellery that he wore and that were undoubtedly important to him, but this document also reveals why these four objects were held in such esteem. First he discusses the gold ring that is set with 20 diamonds:

In the begynning of the monethe of June one thowsand sixe hundred and seven This Ringe thus sett with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed was sent vnto me from my most gracious souraigne Kinge James by that honorable personage the Lord Haye one of the gentlemen of his highnes Bedchamber the Courte then beyng at Whitehall in London and I at that tyme remaining at Horsely House in Surrey twentie myles from London where I laye in suche extremitye of sicknes as it was a Common and <a> Constant Reporte ouer all London that I was dead and the same confidentlie affirmed euen vnto the kinges highnes hymselfe. vppon which occasion it pleased his most excellent maiestie in token of his gracious goodnes and greate favoure towardes me to send the saied Lord Hay with the saied Ringe and this Royall message vnto me namelie that his highnes wished a speedie and a perfect recouerye of my healthe with all happie and good Successe vnto me, and that I might liue as longe as the Dyamonds of that Rynge (which therewithall he Deliuered vnto me) did indure. And in token thereof required me to wear it and keepe it for his sake. This most gracious and comfortable message restored a newe life vnto me as coming from so renowned and benigne a Soueraigne vnto a Seruaunte so farre vnworthie of so greate a favoure.⁷²

Following this detailed account Sackville then proceeds to explain briefly the circumstance of his receipt of the other three jewels intended as heirloom pieces. The 'sayed picture was bequeathed' by his 'Sister the Ladie Anne Dacres [...] as a special remembrance of her Love'.⁷³ It would appear that this image of the late Queen Elizabeth was a particularly fitting gift for Sackville, since he had 'receyued from her maiestie many special graces and favoures', including being made a Knight of the Order of the Garter and a member of the Privy Council, to name but two.⁷⁴ The second ring set with a single table-cut diamond and the gold chain were also royal gifts and were given as thanks for the role that Sackville played in the Somerset House Conference:

Likewise the sayed Rynge of gould with the greate Table Diamond sett therein togeather with the saied Cheyne of gould Spanishe worke and with a hundred fortie fower Diamondes therein set were allso giuen vnto me by the Kinge of Spayne I beyng then a Commissioner Deputed with other by my most gracious Sovereigne Kinge James at his first Entrance into this Kingdome for the Conclusion of the peace betwixt my saied renowned Sovereigne of the one parte and the saied Kinge of Spayne and the Archdukes of th[e] other parte.⁷⁵

While the descriptions in Sackville's will of these jewels show that these were lavish creations, made of valuable materials, it would seem that their significance and true worth lay in the nature of the giver and the circumstances in

which they were given. By recounting how he came to be in possession of these jewels, particularly the ring from James I and the ring and chain from Philip III of Spain, Sackville wished presumably to ensure that each object was endowed with a worth far greater than its intrinsic monetary value. Each jewel marked a relationship that Sackville had formed in his lifetime and which he wished his heirs to remember. In creating these heirloom jewels, not only did he intend to retain ownership of these important objects within his family, but also he wished to keep a remembrance of himself alive in the minds of his descendants. Despite his best efforts, however, his jewels seem not to have stood the test of time and were instead likely sold or broken up by later generations.

The Lyte Jewel

The Lyte Jewel, like Sir Thomas Sackville's possessions, provides a concrete example of the complex layers of meaning in men's jewellery (**Fig. 162**).⁷⁶ Its survival since the early 17th century makes it remarkable but its interest lies also in the various narratives that it acquired when it was produced and as it passed through generations of members of the Lyte family.

This pendant jewel was originally presented to the relatively unknown genealogist Thomas Lyte of Lytes Cary, Somerset, by James I in recognition of the genealogy 'in

Figure 162 The Lyte Jewel: gold, enamelled and diamond-set pendant jewel with a miniature on vellum by Nicholas Hilliard, 1610–11, English, length 6.5cm (closed, without pearl), width 4.8cm, weight 50.3g (without pearl). British Museum, WB.167





Figure 163 Unknown artist, *Sir Thomas Lyte*, 1611, English, oil on panel, height 57cm, width 44cm. Museum of Somerset, Taunton

ritch coulers' created for him by his subject.⁷⁷ An uncoloured pen-and-ink version of the genealogical tree from Lytes Cary, which remained with the family for centuries, survives.⁷⁸ While it is probably smaller in size than the version presented to the king, a feat that took about seven years to produce, its scale (1.9 by 2.1m) and detail nevertheless give some sense of the undertaking of such a work. The illuminated genealogy traces James I's ancestry back to Brutus of Troy, the mythical founder of Britain. The early years of James's reign had been spent trying to legitimise his claims to the throne and so the public presentation of the genealogy before the court at the Palace of Whitehall on 12 July 1610 was a highly significant political move.⁷⁹

The Lyte Jewel contains a miniature of James I by the limner Nicholas Hilliard. This is hidden within a gold and enamelled locket with an openwork cover and frame, set with table-cut diamonds. The cover bears the royal monogram 'IR', while the reverse of the locket is enamelled. It measures 6.5 by 4.8cm and weighs a substantial 50.3g. It was given to Thomas Lyte as a form of thanks for his

creation and its supposedly spontaneous, although presumably highly mediated, presentation at court.⁸⁰ This symbol of royal favour was so significant that less than a year later Lyte's portrait was painted, in which he proudly wears the jewel on a red ribbon, providing a secure dating for the jewel to between July 1610 and April 1611 (**Fig. 163**).

The inclusion of the Lyte Jewel in the portrait is highly significant. In fact, it may have provided the main impetus for the painting's creation. For it is the pendant, above all else, that contains the narrative. The portrait served as a commemoration of the jewel, recording it for posterity. The jewel enhanced the status of both giver and receiver: James I showed his magnanimity to a loyal subject; while Lyte, by no means a prominent individual, had been privy to royal favour. The portrait and the pendant jewel remained within the family until the 19th century and the 18th-century will of a later Thomas Lyte refers to the objects, showing that even after almost 150 years the significance of both was understood:

I also give unto my said daughter, Silvestra Blackwell, during her life, the possession and use of my great grandfather's picture, and of the jewell which is set round with diamonds, and hath also some other diamonds on the top thereof, and in the inside hath the picture of King James the First – the same being given by him to my said great grandfather – and of which jewell there is also a picture under my said great grandfather's picture. And my will and desire is that the said jewell and my great grandfather's picture may after my said daughter's death go and remain for the use of her daughters successively and their respective issue, the elder and her issue first to enjoy the same: and if both my said grandchildren shall die without issue, I then give the said jewell and picture unto my nephew John Lyte, only son of my nephew Thomas Lyte of Lytescary in the said county of Somerset and his heirs forever.⁸¹

The portrait was retained by the family until it was sold at Sotheby's on 3 February 1960.⁸² It was eventually purchased by its present owner, the Museum of Somerset in Taunton, from the National Portrait Gallery, London, in 1960. The pendant jewel was sold in the 19th century and later entered the 10th Duke of Hamilton's (1767–1852) collection from which it was sold at the Hamilton Palace Sale in 1882. It was later acquired by Baron Ferdinand Rothschild (1839–1898) and was finally bequeathed to the British Museum, forming part of the Waddesdon Bequest.⁸³

The survival of any jewel in its original form is remarkable. The Lyte Jewel may have remained intact thanks to both its royal connection and through its immortalisation within Lyte's portrait.⁸⁴ Whenever jewels were bequeathed, the owner was making an overt statement about their non-monetary worth. In bequeathing jewels, these items continued to have meaning beyond their 'first life' and served as a mark of posthumous remembrance.

Conclusion

‘Various objects adapted to personal ornament, precious in themselves or rendered precious by their workmanship’ is how the historian Harold Clifford Smith defined jewellery in the preface to his early 20th-century work, *Jewellery*.¹ He later wrote of how a love for jewellery was part of an inherent desire to make the self beautiful and how this desire for ornamentation can signal how civilised a society is. In his view, decorated male bodies are a marker of an uncivilised nation.² Many years later, Joan Evans spoke of jewellery in similar ways, claiming its allure was in the intrinsic beauty of the objects and stemmed from a basic desire to beautify oneself.³ These sentiments no longer ring true, for as we have discovered in this volume, jewellery meant far more than just a simple need to provide a pleasing aesthetic. Even when the overall result was a glittering garment, motivations for consumption of jewels were manifold and multilayered. Indeed, where items of jewellery may have had little intrinsic value, it was through the context in which they circulated that they gained their true significance. It is also certainly not the case that adorning the male body signalled a less enlightened land. For the importance of jewellery for a man in the early modern period is evident, from the rank of the monarch with his voluminous inventory of jewels to courtiers who owned many pieces and right down to the most humble and ordinary of men, who may have owned only a single set of silver buttons or a pair of clasps.

Men owned, wore and circulated jewels. They used them to underscore a multiplicity of manifestations of masculinity. The jewels could mark out the relationships that a man cultivated during his lifetime and these bonds, whether homosocial or heterosocial, were fundamental to the making of a man. While there were concerns over the propriety of bejewelling the body, it was acknowledged that a man’s outward appearance could reflect on his inner self, even though it was a tricky path to negotiate. With such beliefs, ideas of magnificence, lineage and identity prevailed through these often small-scale objects. Just as with all aspects of material culture, jewels mattered. They mattered to the men who engaged with them. Through a deeper understanding of the historical and social contexts in which they operated, they matter to us today. For to be bejewelled signalled more than mere ornament; it reflected what it meant to be a man.

Postscript

Fakes and forgeries

In recent years, a number of jewels and other products of goldsmiths' work thought to date from the Renaissance (and published as such) have been revealed to be of 19th-century manufacture. Where provenance has been doubted, more thorough investigation has been undertaken to establish authenticity. It was the discovery in the late 1970s by Charles Truman (1949–2017) of a large cache of drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum of goldsmiths' work in the medieval, Gothic and Renaissance styles that allowed for the reattribution of many pieces.¹ Attributed to the 19th-century goldsmith Reinhold Vasters (1827–1909), when these drawings were accessioned in 1919 they were catalogued correctly as 'designs for modern goldsmiths' work'.² However, it seems that later generations believed these to be records kept by Vasters of existing Renaissance craftsmanship.³ Instructions on some of the drawings about colour and execution suggested that these were designs for items to be made. Further research concluded that several of the drawings related closely to objects sold in the 1893 posthumous sale of the collection of the Parisian dealer Frédéric Spitzer (1815–1890).⁴ When sold, the collection was deemed to be the greatest of Renaissance objects ever put together, leading to museums and private collectors vying for his goods.⁵ However, it seemed that Spitzer worked alongside Vasters in Aachen and the Parisian jeweller Alfred André (1839–1919) to produce works in the Renaissance style. In 1993, Rudolf Distelberger, then of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, announced the discovery of hundreds of models and casts owned by André's living descendants of pieces that he had created, later publishing photographs of some of these.⁶ This provided further evidence of André's forgery.⁷ Salomon Weininger (1822–1879) must also appear in this list of names. As with Spitzer, he seemed to position himself in a sphere of individuals who made Renaissance-style works for him.

Figure 164 Hat ornament mounted as a pendant depicting the **Playing of Marsyas**, with additions by Alfred André, gold, enamel and diamonds, first half 16th century and 1859–86, height 6.7cm, width 5.7cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975.1.1523





Figure 165 The Naylor ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with crystal or a colourless stone engraved with the arms of Naylor. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper enamelled green, 1564–71, English. Private collection

Known also for having copies of genuine artefacts produced (often multiples of the same object), it was the unearthing of copies of two pairs of bronzes that he had been asked to restore that led to his imprisonment at the end of his life.⁸

Nineteenth-century fakes are known to have been purchased by a number of avid collectors, whose works have found their way into museums, and by museums themselves.⁹ Robert Lehman's collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, must have in earlier times seemed like a worthy collection of Renaissance jewels, yet many of the items were either produced later or have more recent additions. For instance, the enamelled backplate and enamelled and gem-set frame from an early 16th-century hat ornament, probably Italian in origin and depicting the Flaying of Marsyas, which Yvonne Hackenbroch asserted to be late 16th-century additions, in fact seem to be late 19th-century products of André (**Fig. 164**).¹⁰ At least four pieces from the British Museum's Waddesdon Bequest are confirmed as products of Vasters and dated securely to the period 1866–72.¹¹ Museums continue to undertake analysis (for example, of enamels) and investigation to determine attributions for Renaissance jewels that might be dubious.¹²

An interest in Renaissance jewels as items worthy of collecting developed in the later 18th century, taking off considerably in the 19th century with the growth of a class of new wealth. Collections were formed in the style of Renaissance *Schatzkammern*, such as the one put together by Baron Ferdinand Rothschild in the New Smoking Room at Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire. There was limited genuine 16th-century material, which is what seems to have prompted a market for fakes and forgeries.¹³ The question remains though as to whether these items were produced to deceive intentionally, or whether they were made and sold as 19th-century copies of Renaissance works. Truman was unequivocal in his stance, stating that 'It is evident that "Renaissance" works of art were being made with the intention to deceive the purchaser from as early on as about 1815'.¹⁴

When dealing with Renaissance goldsmiths' work, particularly jewellery, caution is to be had with regard to its authenticity. Thanks to scientific advances and greater awareness of the 19th-century fakers, there are more comparable pieces as a body of material from which to determine genuine Renaissance items from those later works. This is an area of research that will continue



Figure 166 Gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with a carnelian intaglio engraved with a profile bust of a classical male figure. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper, which was likely originally enamelled. Possibly 16th century (ring). Private collection

to develop, allowing for a more interpretive framework to be placed on the notion of 19th-century fakes and forgeries.

Grasshopper rings

In the first edition of this book, the section dealing with the group of rings collectively referred to as the Gresham grasshopper rings (see pp. 101–5) concluded with the supposition that more rings bearing a grasshopper engraved to the reverse of their bezel might emerge. Fortuitously then, in 2018 I was contacted by a dealer in antique jewellery who was working with the owner of a private collection to alert me to the existence of two rings with grasshoppers. One of the rings (**Fig. 165**) is typical of the known extant pieces; it is a gold ring with a bezel set with an engraved colourless stone, behind which the tinctures of the coat of arms are clearly visible. The arms displayed show the shield surmounted by a helm, mantling and crest. The grasshopper faces to the right and the green enamelling remains intact. Dr Clive Cheesman, Richmond Herald, provided identification of the arms present on this ring and some additional contextual information, noting that the arms were granted in 1564 to William Naylor (d. 1571), who was one of the Six Clerks in Chancery.¹⁵

The second ring is somewhat more puzzling, as the bezel does not display any arms; instead, it is set with a carnelian intaglio with the profile bust of a classical male figure (**Fig. 166**). It is only the grasshopper engraved onto the reverse of the bezel that provides any possible connection to Thomas Gresham. While there is no surviving enamelling, there are nevertheless signs of keying to the surface of the ring suggesting that at one time the grasshopper may have been enamelled.¹⁶ At present, the authenticity of this ring is unclear and so further research is required to determine whether it is possible to include it within the grasshopper collective.

That in a relatively short period of time after the publication of the first edition of this book, two more rings with a possible connection to Gresham have been identified is remarkable. It certainly raises the prospect of further surviving rings coming to light, thereby furthering our understanding of Gresham's personal and business networks, connecting him to an even wider community of men, which in turn suggests the extent of male sociability in the early modern period.

Appendix A: Selections from the Inventory of William Herbert, 12 December 1561

f.1r: An Inuentorie of all the Gold and Sylver plate, Jewelles apparell and wardrobe stuffe, with the Furniture of Stable Armorie and all other implementes of householde belonging to the right honorable William Earle of Penbroke: vewed at the comaundement of the seyd Earle, by the L[ord] Harbert of Cardyf his sonne, John Hownde, William Jordan, John Dysteley Morgan Lloyd Servantes to the seyd Earle the xii of December Anno D[omi]ni 1561. Regni Elizabethe Regine quarto.

f.13r: Casting Bottells.

A Casting Bottell all gylte and Chased with Dyamond poyntes poiz – vij oz iij q[ua]rteres

<geuen to the christning of morganes child by my Ladey>

¹ Sixe Casting Bottelles whereof ~~four~~<fyue> being in the Jewell house in Morgane keping at this present inuentorie taking and two with my Ladie poiz – xliij oz

One Casting Bottell chased with Antiue worcke with a Satyr and a woman on the one syde poiz – vij oz q[ua]rter

A casting bottell of a Sheld wrought like an aget garnished w[i]th Siluer and gilt geuen by m[aste]r Starley of the mynt

f.31r: An Inventory taken the Last Dayes of January and in the fourthe yere of the raigne of o[u]r Soueraigne Ladie Elizabethe of al suche iewelless as were then in my Ladies Custodie Gyrdelles.

First a girdell of golde sett with pearle conteynninge lvij knottes beinge Lincked together, one knott with an pearle and the other with counterfect saphires and Rubies hauinge a knappe at thende accordingly and one of the peces broken poiz x unces q[ua]rter farthinge golde weight

A girdell of golde sett with pearle cont[eyninge] lxxvj peces with a knappe to hange at the ende sett with pearle and Litell Chaynes hanginge at it poiz xj vneces iij q[ua]rters di[mi] farthinge golde weight

A girdell of golde enameled with blacke white and grene conteynninge x knottes and lxxxvj Linckes and a knobbe hanginge at the ende poiz x vneces iij q[ua]rteres

An other girdell of golde conteynninge x knottes enameled with blewe grene white and redd conteynninge ciuii Linckes an hooke and a knobbe at the ende enameled grene white and redd poiz xi vneces iii q[ua]rteres

An other girdell of golde enameled wit[h] blacke and white cont[eyninge] cxvj grete Linckes with a claspe. xj grete pillars and a knoppe likewise enameled poiz xvj vneces q[ua]rter

² An other girdell of golde white enameled cont[eyninge] cxxix Linckes a claspe xxj knottes and a knobbe at theinde and Litell chaynes at it poiz xxiiij vneces iij q[ua]rteres one farthinge golde.

³ An other girdell of golde enameled with black cont[eyninge] xcic Linckes xxv knottes and a knobbe white and blacke enameled at it the chaynes beinge changed.

f.31v: ⁴ A fore p[ar]te of a girdell with xxiiij^{ti} Diamundes and cc pearles & apott at thende w[i]th xxiiij p[ear]les & vij Dyamondes

f.32v: Collers and gargenettes.

A Coller of golde sett w[i]th Diamondes and pearleviz x Diamondes and x pearle cont[eyninge] x peces
A Gargnet of golde cont[eyninge] xvi peces enameled w[i]th blacke white and blewe and havinge xvj pearle hanginge at it.

⁵ A Sabelles heade with xxti Diamondes and a ringe with a rubie in his mouthe and with x sparckes of Diamondes with iiij clawes of golde and Diamondes therein and a Chaîne hanginge at it

f.33r: Bracelettes.

A paire of bracelettes of golde beinge enameled with white, blewe and redd havinge one Diamond in every one of theim
A paire of bracelettes sett with viij Diamondes viij Rubies and xxxijti pearle.

A paire of bracelettes of flaggon facion w[i]th hoopcs

A paire of bracelettes sett with xxiiijti pearles ij Diamondes ij Turkasyes ij rubies ij Emerawdes ij Saphires one Topias and one Amathiste.

f.33v: Chaynes exchanged.

A Chaîne of golde havinge x knobbes blacke enamelede and with plaine Linckes.

A Chaîne of muske w[i]th lxxiiij peces of golde

A Chaîne of golde given to my Ladie by my Lorde Robert.

A Chaîne with xviiij Diamondes & xviiij small Rubies.

A Chaîne blacke and white enamelede w[i]th pillers and Litell pearle.

f.34r: A paire of beades of redde Currall cont[eyninge] xlti stones of Currall tenne gaudies of golde and xl Litell beades of golde to goe betwene.

A paire of beades of white Currall cont[eyninge] xxxiiij beades viij gaudies of golde and xlti Longe peces of golde betwixte the beades

A paire of beade of small garnettes conteyning betwene the beades lviiijti small peces of golde and viij gaudies of golde enamelede with redde and white

A paire of Litell garnettes with ix gaudies and lviiij golde beades betwene.

A paire of beades of greate Agate cont[eyninge] xxiiij Agates sett with pearles xxiiijti gaudies of golde with with a tassell of pearle.

A paire of beades of tennes of Lapis Lazulares cont[eyninge] x stones sett in golde xxiiijti garnettes and xjji peces of golde.

f.34v: Tablettes.

A greate Tablett of golde beinge all blacke enameled on the backside and one the other side blacke and white w[i]th an aguet.

An other tablett with a scripture on the backside and in the fore p[ar]te a mullett and x Diamondes with ij Rubies and iiij other Diamondes on the sides.

⁶ A Tablett cont[eyning] viij Rubies on theone side and a greate Emeraude on the other side with a cluster of pearles hanginge at it conteyninge iiij peare facion pearle

A Tablett of kinge Phillippes face on the one side and his fathers Charles Themperores on thother side.

⁷ A Tablett w[i]th ix greate Diamondes on the one side and a P on thother side with viij Diamondes and a greate platted

Chaîne with it.

A unicornes bone sett in golde with one Turkois twoo Rubies and iiij Diamondes.

A booke of golde with ij Saphires and viij Rubies sett in it.

A booke of gold with an knotte enameled blacke and white of Gilbertes workinge.

A booke of golde w[i]th iiij Saphires havinge in it the History of David daunsinge before the arke.

f.35r: Flowers at the Court.

A flower with a greate Emerawde and a greate Dyamonde with a pearle at it beinge enameled blewe, white, and redd.
An Amethiste sett in golde.

A Topias sett in golde with a pearle at it

⁸ A flower with iiij table rubies and one rocke ruby with iiij faire pearles hanginge at it

A flower of golde enameled with blacke cont[eyning] in it ij pointed and vi table Diamondes with a greate pearle poiz one vnce di[mi] q[uar]ter farthinge gold weight

A flower of golde with v Diamondes poiz iiij q[uar]ter di[mi] farthinge golde w[eigh]te

⁹ A flower of golde w[i]th v roses of Diamondes w[i]th a pearle poi zed nces di[mi] q[uar]ter farthing golde weight

f.35v: Flowers

A flower enameled with white sett w[i]th an Emerawde a Rubye and pearle pendant poiz di[mi] vnce farthinge golde weight.

¹⁰ A flower of golde with ij greate table Diamondes and one greate pointed Dyamonde enameled w[i]th blewe white and redde with a peare facion pearle at it pendant

A flower of golde with a rubye and an emerawde with Antiques at the toppe white enameled & a pearle hanginge at it

¹¹ A greate ballise with a pearle pendant sett with Snakes grene enameled

A Crosse of golde sett with vi table Diamondes and iiij Triangle Diamondes and iiij pearles pendant.

f.36r: Brooches.

A brooche of golde enameled with black and blewe with a balleise in it poiz ij vnecs and farthinge golde weight.

f.36v: Buttons.

Spanyshe Buttones of golde beinge enameled blacke and blewe and white viij dosen paires.

Buttons with iiij pearles in a pece viij dosen paires.

Buttons of golde white and blewe enameled w[i]th Cupides bowew viij dosen paires.

Buttons of golde enameled blacke v dosen paire and ij buttones.

Buttons enameled white and blacke v dosen di[mi]

f.37r: Agglettes.

Agglettes of golde enameled blacke and white vij dosen paire.

Agglettes with pearles enameled white vj dosen paires.

Greate Agglettes blacke enamled lxiiij.

f.38r: An Inventory of all suche apparell Furies and Jewelles

as be in the chardge of Thomas Gregory the xvij of August anno d[omi]ni, 1561.

Item a Longe gowne of blacke satten with Longe sleeves garded with blacke veluett with ij weltes of veluett on both the sides of the garde Laide betwene vppon the garde with blacke satten and Lace of blacke silke with xliij buttons of golde and iij pearles on every button furred throughout w[i]th sables.

Item a Longe gowne of blacke Damaske w[i]th a garde of veluett and a welte of veluett on either side of the garde Laide vppon with a pomell Lace of silke purled on thone side sett with viij greate buttons of golde with iij pearles in every button blacke grene and blewe enameled furred with sables.

f.59r: Hattes.

Item a Cappe<hatt> of black veluett<felt> trymmed aboute the edge with a p[a]rcement Lace of golde the bande of black veluett covered nettwise havinge a white aget faced like Hercules with iij Diamondes vppon the same enameled grene and blewe

Item a hatt of black taffata stitched all overwith silver with a plate bande and buckle of silver having an agat of a womans face enameled rounde aboute with white and grene and a plume of silke with a herries toppe trymmed with silver.

Item a blewe thrimmed hatte edged about w[i]th a cheine Lace of blewe silke and silver the bande trymmed with silver havinge an agat called Lapis Lazulus faire sett enamled blacke and blewe with a plume of purple silke trymed w[i]th golde.

Item a thrimmed hatte edge aboute w[i]th silver cheine Lace with a bande of crimsen silke and silver havinge an agett of a womans face with a snake runnyng downe her necke sett with iij emeraldes enameled white and a plume of crymsen silke trymed with golde

Item a blacke thromed hatte edged w[i]th a cheine Lace of black seilke and siluer with a bande of black silke and siluer havinge a faire brooche w[i]th a face like a women redde enclosed in golde enameled black w[i]th a plume of black silke trymed w[i]th golde.

f.61v: Cappes.

A cappe of black veluett w[i]th a faire bande of golde of billiment worke havinge an agett of a Deathes heed enameled white and black the bande cont[eyninge] xxix*ti* peces doble.

Item a cappe of black veuett with a bande of golde havinge xix golde buttons white and blewe enameled and a faire perle on every button.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a bnade of pomandre trymed with golde full of small perle and xxij*ti* small Agatt of sundrie pictures the bande beinge very swete and made cheine wise.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a bande of xvj golde buttones and a faire pearle on every button trymed w[i]th liij*ti* smaller buttones w[i]th iiij small perle on every button havinge a very faire brooche sett w[i]th xxiiij*ti* Diamondes and ix rubies enameled white, grene, and black.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a bande of xij longe buttones havinge ij pearles on every button and a ruby

betwene the perles on every button, and also twoe very faire pearles thone sett w[i]thin a greate button, and thother in the foote of a Dragon all enameled redd, white and grene. Item a cappe of black veluett with a bande of blacke silke.

f.62v: Cappes

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th an agath like an aungell sett with vj Diamondes redde & blewe enameled, the cappe also trymed w[i]th golde and xxxv*ti* golde buttones like snakes blewe enameled.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a faire brooche havinge a faire fier of rubies, and a table Diamonde sett w[i]th xxxij*ti* golde buttones w[i]th iiij perles on every button and xxix small buttons, white enameled w[i]th a fine bande of perle aboute the said cappe.

f.73r: Buttons and aglettes beinge on no garmentes.

vlvii*ti* buttons enameled blewe and redde w[i]th iij perles on every button.

Item xxxvj*ti* buttons of golde black enameled

Item vj dosen buttons, white and blewe enameled fasshioned like the sonne.

Item iij dosen and x buttons enameled white and black w[i]th iiij corners.

Item xlij buttons w[i]th iij perles on every button beinge black enameled.

Item xxij paire of aglettes black enameled

Item lxxij buttons of golde

Item xxij buttons lesser like vnto the same.

Item iij dosen iiij buttons enameled white called Pannses made by Denham.

Item v buttons white and black enameled

Item iiij buttons made like snailles enameled white

f.73v: Buttons.

Item ij dosen viij greate buttons bosselike w[i]th a faire perle on the toppe of every button enameled white black and blewe.

f.74v: Brooches Buttons and agattes beinge on neither cappes nor hattes.

Item a brooche w[i]th an agat havinge a mans face and a womans sett with iiij table Diamondes white, redde, russett, and black.

Item an Agatt of a woman morens hedde with a white Launde vppon the hedde sett with iiij Rubies and iiij Diamondes enameled white and black w[i]th one hundred and xvj buttons black enameled.

Item a brooches of blowen worke of naked men with a rocke rubie in the foote and iiij table Diamondes w[i]th a hundred and xiiij buttons white and black enameled.

Item an agat of a morens hedde enameled white black russett and greene w[i]th Cxliij buttons black enameled.

Item another Agat of a morens hedde enameled white, black, and grene, havinge iij Litle rubies iij Litle Diamondes w[i]th Cxx buttons black enameled

Item viij pictures of Dyvers Sortes inclosed with Leather and gilte.

f.75v: Georges Cheines garters and Coller.

Firste a faire cheine one Lincke in anither Doble w[i]th a faire George enameled white redde and grene black and blewe.

Item another cheine w[i]th a george beinge vpon enameled white, redde, blewe, and grene

Item another cheine w[i]th a faire george sett w[i]th x Diamondes enameled white blewe and grene.

Item a knitte cheine of golde w[i]th a george enameled white, blewe, redde, and grene.

Item another cheine of gold w[i]th a george and a clock in the same.

Item a george vppon a pied horse enameled black and grene sett with v Diamondes the cheine thereof given by my Lorde at the Christeninge of Hipolita the Tartarian.

Item a george vppon a white horse w[i]th ij ringes and ij buttons of ogld the george beinge enameled blewe redde and greene the cheine thereof delivered to my Ladie to hange her tablett at.

Item a faire Carkanett of xx*ti* buttons of golde whereof x w[i]th a faire Diamonde vpon every button and thother x ij perles on every button with a faire george sett with xvj Diamondes the horse beinge white and the Dragon all grene.

f.76r: Georges &c.

Item another Carkanett w[i]th xxiiij*ti* buttons whereof xij like knottes and thother xij like roses w[i]th a garter aboute the xij roses enameled blewe, redde, and grene and george enameled white grene and blewe

Item a faire Coller w[i]th xli*ti* faire peces of golde whereof xx*ti* like redde roses w[i]th garters aboute theim enameled white blewe, redde, and grene, and thother xx*ti* beinge cleane golde w[i]thout amell w[i]th a faire george sett w[i]th vij Diamondes enameled white and grene.

Item a Cronett of golde with the cappe to the same.

Item a garter of the ordre w[i]th buckle pendante xx*ti* l[ett]res and vj pescoddes of goldes and on every L[ett]re ij small perles sett w[i]th x Diamondes enameled redde, and white

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res buckle pendaunte and vj studdes of golde, sett w[i]th x Diamondes enameled white, redde, and grene.

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res buckle pendaunte and vj stoddess of golde, white, redde, blewe, and grene, and a faire perle on the pendante.

Item another garter with xx*ti* L[ett]res buckell pendaunte and vj studdes of golde w[i]th a Diamonde on the pendante enameled white blewe and redde.

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res buckell pendant and vj stoddess of golde, enameled white, blewe, redde, and grene.

f.76v: Georges &c.

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res of perles imbrodered all over with perles and buckle pendante and ij studdes of golde enameled white, blewe, and redde.

f.77v: Cheines and other things delyvered to Thomas Gregorye by my ladie xij Febr[uary] 1561.

Item a Longe Cheine enameled white, blewe, and redde with a faire george belonginge to the same.

Item a girdell of siluer w[i]th buckelles and other furniture

to the same of massie siluer.

Item a george enameled given my Ladie by my La[die] Marques.

Item a george enameled w[i]th cutte worke on thone side given my L[adie] by my La[die] Anne Wharton.

Item a george w[i]th kinge Phillippes face on thone side

Item a litle george

Item a paire of corall beades w[i]th the v woundes and a crosse of golde.

Item a paire of Tennes of agat and a faire crosse enameled w[i]th the v woundes, a greate ringe, and ij other peces of golde aboute the same, the agettes also garnished w[i]th golde.

Item a purs of Russett silke and siluer w[i]th a ringe of siluer enameled.

Item another purse of russett silke and siluer and golde w[i]th a damaskin ringe.

Item ij Skutchions of my L[ordships] armes thone bigger than thother.

f.78r: Del[i]ured by my Ladie

Item xxx*ti* compters of siluer of a straunge coine

Item xxxv*ti* compters of siluer of the frenche coine of xviiiij*d*. the pece.

Item xxv*ti* other compters of siluer.

Item a litle purs of black veluett olde.

f.79r: Rynges deliuered by my lady to Tydio demoye the vj of Febr[ary] 1561.

Firste ij Deathes heddes enameled w[i]th black

Item ij other Deathes heddes enameled white and black.

Item one yelowe Topias

Item a ringe with a Diall and a white Topias in the toppe

Item ij Ringes of Astronomye

Item a ringe with the Dragon graven

Item a faire ringe w[i]th a face graven of Lapis Lazulus.

Item a ringe w[i]th a stanche stone given my L[ordship] by my L[ordship] of Beddes.

Item xij litle hopes enameled of Divers Colers

Item xv crampe ringes whereof v of golde and x of siluer.

f.79v: Rynges Cheines Buttones georgies and other things remayninge with Tidio Demoye the xji of Febr[uary] 1561. A faire table Diamonde enameled white, blewe, and redde. A ringe w[i]th a table Diamonde blewe and redde enameled.

Another table Diamonde enameled blacke white and redde. Two table Diamondes enameled black, white, blewe and redde

A Litle Diamonde enameled white black & grene

A Table Diamonde sett w[i]th xiiij small rubies enameled white and black.

A pointed Diamonde sett w[i]th viij other Diamondes black and grene enameled

A ringe w[i]th an emeraude enameled white & redde

A ringe with a Turques black and redde enameled

A ringe w[i]th ix turquesses black enameled.

A ringe w[i]th a rubie enameled white, redde, blewe and grene.

f.8or: W[i]th Tidio

A ringe w[i]th a rubie enameled white and redde
A ringe with a faire rubie enameled white grene and blewe.
A ringe w[i]th a faire amyteste orientall enameled black
white, and grene.
A ringe w[i]th a lile rubie enameled white & grene.
A ringe w[i]th a stone called a shepes eie enameled black
and white.
A ringe w[i]th a faire cutte Diamonde
Another ringe w[i]th small table Diamonde
Another ringe w[i]th a small table Diamonde blewe
enameled
A faire knyfe of golde w[i]th a glasse in thende of the hafte,
sett w[i]th *xxiij* perles and *iiij* rubies enameled blewe, redde,
and white with a sheethe of black veluett sett w[i]th *xxvij*
perles trymed w[i]th siluer
Another knyfe of golde w[i]th *viiij* rubies on the hafte and *vj*
small perles, blewe, white, and grene enameled w[i]th a
sheathe of black veluett garnished w[i]th golde sett w[i]th
iiij small rubies grene and white enameled w[i]th a lace of
black silke and golde.

f.81r: Cheines, Georgies, Buttons, and other thinges
deliuered to Thomas Gregory by Tidio the vij of Febr[uary]
1561.

A faire Cheine of Christalline and golde w[i]th a george
vppon a white horse enameled white blewe redde and grene
on thone side and a george of the mother of perle on thother
side havinge lxxxx Christallynes.

A girdle of Christalline and golde and beinge very faire at
the einde trymed w[i]th golde, and Cix smaller
Christallynes

A very faire and greate perle w[i]th a smaller perle
garnisshed w[i]th golde blewe and redde enameled & w[i]th
in it *vj* emerades in L[ett]res beinge this worde IHVS
Item a p[er]le trymed w[i]th golde to hange at ones eare
Item *xxxii* frenche compters of *ixd*. A pece gilte in a litle
purse of blacke silke and siluer.

Fowre Dosen very faire buttons hollowe wrought *iiij* square
white blewe and black enameled
iiij Dosen buttons called Pannses white and blewe enameled
A faire cheine *iiij* piller fasshion hollowe wrought w[i]th *xij*
buttons sett all over w[i]th perle musked w[i]th a faire george
on bothe sides enameled blewe, redde, white, and grene.

f.81v: with Thomas Gregory from Tidio.

A faire cheine w[i]th *xxvj* Camewes and *xxvj* p[er]les
garnisshed very faire with golde blewe enameled w[i]th a
faire george of an agat trymed w[i]th golde
A pece of the same of golde w[i]th *vj* Camewes and *vj* perles.

Appendix B: Extracts from the Last Will and Testament of Thomas Sackville, 11 August 1607

f.3v: And further I giue will and bequeathe vnto her^r all suche Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone as at any tyme heretofore have ben giuen vnto her either by my selfe or by any other or els boughte and provided by her selfe, and which ar[e] particularlie set downe and conteyned in an Inventory in wryting thereof made vnder this title folowinge viz: An Inventory in wryting conteyning the seuerall Sortes parcelles and valewes of all suche Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone as at any tyme heretofore haue ben giuen to the Right honorable the Lady Cicelie Countesse of Dorsett either by the Right honorable Thomas Earle of Dorsett Lord heighe Treasurer of England her husbände or by any other or els boughte and provided by her selfe made the {blank} Daye of June in the yere of oure Lorde god one thousand sixe hundred and seaven and in the yere of the raigne of oure most gracious Soueraigne Kyng James namely of England France and Ireland the fist and of Scotland the fortithe, beyng subscribed to euery page thereof with the hande and name of the saied Lorde Treasurer and whereof one parte remayne with his Lo[rds]hip and the other parte with the saied Countesse his wife. This farre the title. All which sayed Jewells of gould pearle and precious so giuen vnto her or boughte and provided by her selfe and particularlie set downe and conteyned in this saied Inventorye in wrytinge bearing Date the {blank} Daye of June & as is aforesayed or so muche thereof as shall remayne at the tyme of my decease I do fullie and absolutelye giue will and bequeathe vnto my sayed most deerelie beloued wife. Also I do giue will and bequeathe vnto her out of those Jewelles of gould pearle and pretious stone which I keepe and reserue as Jewelles for my selfe and to myne owne priuat vse during my life these twoe Jewelles folowing that is to saye: One Rope of fayer round orient and greate pearle conteyning the nomber of one hundred and three score pearle having a Carnation Rybben silke lace sewed to eache end of the sayed Rope. And one other Jewell of gould made into the fashion of a Crosse or Crucifix beyng on the one syde sett with twelue greate Dyamondes, whereof one Diamond set in the Toppe is a faier greate Table Diamond And twoe other Diamonds set on the sydes ar[e] fayer greate Triangle Diamonds And one other Diamond set on the lower parte of the sayed Jewell is a very faire and great Triangle Dyamond. And sixe other Diamonds which make the Crosse in the myddest ar[e] faier greate Table Dyamonds one of them beyng muche longer than the other fyve. The other syde of the saied Jewell beyng faire enameled with diuers coloures: And which sayed Jewell hath three faire greate pearle pendants to the same. Both which sayed Jewelles I do fullie f.4r: and absolutelye giue will and bequeathe vnto my said most Deerelie beloued wife. More I do fullie and absolutlye giue will and bequeathe vnto her all her Apparrell whatsoever together with all her wearing Lynnen and other necessaryes of all sortes, appertinent ~~and~~ ^{or} serving for the vse and ornament of her Bodye Cushion Cubbards, Cabonettes and Boxes whatsoever.

f.10r: Furthermore I giue will and bequeathe vnto my saied Sonne Buchurst, all and singular my Robes of all sortes whatsoever as well belonging to the most honorable Order of the Garter as to the highe state and Dignitie of an Earle

togeaether with all other ornamentes and pertinentes incident and belonging to them or either of them. Except neuerthesse all and euery my Chaines, Garters, and Georges of gould or sett with pearle or precious stone which I haue vsed to weare or might haue worne as Knighte of the most noble order of the Garter. And I do likewise giue will & bequeathe vnto my saied sonne Buchurst all my Apparrell garmentes and wearinge Lynnen whatsouer beyng particularlie set downe and conteyned in one Inventory in wryting thereof made vnder this Title folowing viz An Inuentarye in wryting conteyning the seuerall sortes and quantities of all all manner of Apparrell garments and wearing Lynnen and other suche like necessities whatsoeuer appertinent to the person of the righte honorable Thomas Earle of Dorsett Lorde highe Treasurer of Englande made the {blank} Daye of June in the yere of o[u]r Lorde god one thowsond sixe hundred and Seauen and in the yeres of the Raigne of o[u]r most gracious Soveraigne Kinge James viz of England France and Ireland the fist and of Scotland the forthie beyng subscribed to euery page thereof with the hand and name of the saied Lord Treasurer and whereof one parte remayne with his Lordshipp and one other parte with those twoe gentlemen that ar[e] Attendants vppon the saied Lord Treasurer in hys chamber. All which saied Robes of all sortes with their ornaments and pertinentes whatsoeuer, and all which saied apparrell garmentes wearinge Lynnen and necessaryes of all sortes appertinent to my person as is aforesaid and not beyng noated or specified in the saied Inuentarie as by me giuen away or as otherwise put out of the chardge of the saied Inuentarye and which shalbe remayning at the tyme of my decease I do whollie giue will and bequeathe vnto my saied Sonne Buchurst his executors administratores and assignes. More I giue will and bequeathe vnto hym my Coronett of gould and guilte Cuppe of Assaye apperteyning to the state and Dignitie of an Earle. And likewise my Collor of gould according to the order of Saint George, having in it sixe and fortie seuerall peeces, whereof three and twentie peeces ar[e] made every one of them after the forme of a Rose and like to the fashoon of a garter abowte the same peece and other three and twentie peeces ar[e] made every one of them ~~like~~ in the forme of a knott of gould togeaether with one George of gould pendant to the same Coller the saied George beyng set all over with Diamondes and Rubies vppon the one side of the same George.

f.11r: Also I giue will and bequeth vnto my saied welbeloued Sonne Robert Lorde Buckhurst after my Decease for and during his life only out of those Jewelle of gould pearle and precious stone which I keepe and reserve as Jewelles for meselfe The sole vse and occupation onlie of one Ringe of gould enameled blacke and set round ouer all the whole Rynge with Diamondes to the number of twentie whereof fyve Diamondes beyng placed in the vppermost parte of the sayed Rynge do represent the fashion of a Crosse and the other fyfteene ar[e] sett rounde and ouer all the saied Rynge. And likewise the sole vse and occupac[i]on onlie of one picture of the late famous Quene Elizabeth beyng cutt out of an Aggett with excellent similitude ovall fashion and sett in gould with twentie sixe Rubies abowte the Circle of the

same. And one orient peare pearle to the same. And likewise the sole vse and occupac[i]on onlie of one Ringe of gould enameled blacke, wherein is set a greate Table Diamonde beyng perfect and pure and of muche worthe. And likewise the sole vse and occupation onlie of one chayne of gould Spanishe worke conteyninge in it fortie eighte seuerall peeces of gould of Diuers sortes enameled white and fortie sixe ouall lynkes of gould likewise enameled white, whereof twelue of the biggest sorte of the sayed fortie eighte peeces beyng allso enameled white, haue likewise in euery <one> of them twoe Diamondes, and² so in all one hundred fortie fower Diamondes ouer and besides fortie sixe ouall linkes of gould which do houlde and knytt the sayed peeces and them selues togeaether in forme of a Cheyne. And after the Decease of my saied Sonne Buchurst Then I giue will and bequeathe the like sole vse and occupc[i]on onlie of the saied ringe sett with twentie Diamondes and of the saied picture of the late Quene Elizabeth and of the saied Rynge with the greate table Diamonde and of the saied Chayne Spanishe worke set with one hundred fortie fower Diamondes and of all and euery of them vnto my sayed neiphue Richard Sacvill his eldest Sonne for and during his life online. And after his Decease then vnto the next heire male begotten of the bodye of the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue for and during his lifeonline. And so from heire male to heire male of the Sacuilles after the Decease of euery one of them seuerallyand successiuelie for and during the life and liues onlie of euery suche heire male seuerallie andsuccessiuelie chardging and earnestlie requiring all and euery my saied heire males before specified euen as they regarde the last request of hym by whose greate travell care and industrie is the diuine prouidence of god that hath vouchsaffed to giue it shall so please to contynewe it they are like to peceiue the addition and advancement of so greate honoure possessions and patrimony That allthoughe percast in the strickt course of the Common Lawes of this Realme thentayle of goodes and chattelles maye hardlie stande vprighte that it for the preservac[i]on and contynewaunce of this guifte of myne, namelie of the saied twoe rynge picture and chayne of gould intended by me to remayne as our heiriloom to the house and familie of the Sacvilles so longe as Almightye god (according to the effectes of his former goodnes vnto that house by the contynewaunce thereof during the sapce of so many hundred yeres past) shall please to vphould the same, they and euery of them will forbear in any sorte to oppugne it or to bringe it in question, or to brandle or Controuert the will of their so well Deserving Auncestor, and speciallie in a f.11v matter so honest reasonable fitt and conveyent as this is. But rather with all willing readie and contented myndes to suffer the same to passe as an heirelome from heire male to heire male according to the true Intent and meaning of this my last will and testament in that behalfe. All and euery which saied <fower> Jewelles before specified and namlie the saied twoe Rynge, the sayed picture and the sayed Cheyne. But farre aboue all the Rest the saied Rynge sett allouer with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed I desire and chardge my sayed Sonne Buchurst vppon my blessing and in like sorte all other the heires male whome god shall vouchsaffe from age to age to raise vnto my house and familie, and vnto whome is the heighest so please my hartie

desire and meaninge is the sayed twoe Rynges picture and Cheyne, but farre aboue all the rest the sayd Rynge set with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed may lyniallie and successiuelie descend and come for euer. Namelie that with prouident care and heedfull Circumspection they will saffellie keepe, reteyne and preserue all and euery the saied twoe Rynges picture and cheyne but speciallie the sayed Rynge set with twentie Diamondes as it aforesayed (whensoeuer and as often as they or any of them shall come to their handes and possession) even as one of the greatest guiftes and Jewelles which in true estimac[i]on all Circumstances confidences I haue to lease vnto them. And to the Intent they may knowe howe iust and greate cause bothe they and I haue to hould the sayed Rynge with twentie Dyamondes in so heighe esteeme, it is most requisite that I do here set Downe the whole Cause and Circumstance howe and from whome the same Ringe did come to my possession which was this. In the begynning of the monethe of June one thowsand sixe hundred and seven This Ringe thus sett with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed was sent vnto me from my most gracious souraigne Kinge James by that honorable personage the Lord Haye one of the gentlemen of his highnes Bedchamber the Courte then beyng at Whitehall in London and I at that tyme remaining at Horsely House in Surrey twentie myles from London where I laye in suche extremitie of sicknes as it was a Common and <a> Constant Reporte ouer all London that I was dead and the same confidentlie affirmed euen vnto the kinges highnes hymselfe. vppon which occasion it pleased his most excellent maiestie in token of his gracious goodnes and greate fawoure towardes me to send the saied Lord Hay with the saied Ringe and this Royall message vnto me namelie that his highnes wished a speedie and a perfect recouerye of my healthe with all happie and good Successe vnto me, and that I might liue as longe as the Dyamonds of that Rynge (which therewithall he Deliuiered vnto me) did indure. And in token thereof required me to weare it and keepe it for his sake. This most gracious and comfortable message restored a newe life vnto me as coming from so renowned and benigne a Soueraigne vnto a Seruaunte so farre vnworthie of so greate a fawoure and vppon whome not longe before it had pleased his Ma[ies]tie yea in that very first daye wherein we all had the happynes to behould hym, not onlie to bestowe the honor of a prerie Councillor but allso without any awnsverable Desert or meritt of myne proceeding to confirm that most honorable place of heighe Treasurer of England vnto me, which the late Quen Elizabeth after fourteene yeres service and tenne yeres folowing her Courte but not before vouchsafed I must needes yet saye most graciouslie so farre as it became voide to graunte vnto me.

f.12r Allso it shall not be impertinent that I do here likewise set downe the manner and Circumstance howe those other three Jewelles aforesaid namelie the picture of the late Quene Elizabeth: the saied Rynge sett with a greate Table Dyamond and the saied Cheyne of goulde sett with a hundred fortie fower Diamondes did come to my handes and possession. Whereof the sayed picture was bequeathed vnto me by my Sister the Ladie Anne Dacres Deceased sometymes wife to Gregory Fynes and so expressed in her

will vnto me: beyng a guifte which she very well did knowe would of all other be most pleasing and acceptable vnto me. I having receyued from her maiestie many speciall graces and favoures as first in my younger yeres beyng by her particular choise and liking selected to a contynewall privat attendance vppon her owne person, and ymeadiatlie after my Fatheres Decease by calling me to be a Baron and pere of the Realme: And next to the honor of the moste noble order of the garter. Then sent at twoe seuerall tymes with the honor of her Embassador speciall abowte matteres of greate truste and importance. As first into France concerning a secrete Treatise of a marriage betwixt her ma[ies]tie and Henry the fourthe sonne of Harrie the eighte <of France> began with her H. by Katherine de medice then Quene mother of France. And after into the lowe Countries abowte motion of a peace betwixt her maiestie and Spayne vnder hande first moued to her highnes euen by the Duke of Parma her<him> selfe and by me to be imparted to the States and with them to Debate the consideration thereof. And after this by choosing me to be one of her prerie Councill. And last of all by advancing me to a most emynent place of greate state and Dignitie in the common wealthe as namelie to be highe Treasurer of England which she did notwithstanding a most earnest opposic[i]on of some greate p[er]sons whoe then very mightelie withstood the same. All which favoures were muche the more to be esteemed by me because they proceeded from her that may iustlie be accompted amonge the number of the most rarest wisest and worthiest Quenes of the worlde of whom I maye trulie saye that whylest she liued she was feare full and formidable to all her Enemyes abroad gratefull and faithfull to her confederate Frendes and neighbours And lastlie at home by all her Servauntes and Subiects both hartelye beloued and Loyallie obeyed. And nowe that she is gone to god her blessed name remayneth glorious f.12v: and famous to all posteritie and nations yea even to the very vttermost endes of the worlde. Likewise the sayed Rynge of gould with the greate Table Diamond sett therein togeather with the saied Cheyne of gould Spanishe worke and with a hundred fortie fower Diamondes therein set were allso giuen vnto me by the Kinge of Spayne I beyng then the Commissioner Deputed with other by my most gracious Soveraigne Kinge James at his first Entrance into this Kingdome for the Conclusion of the peace betwixt my saied renowned Soveraigne of the one parte and the saied Kinge of Spayne and the Archdukes of th[e] other parte [...] Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto the Countesse of Dorsett my saied most deerlie beloued wife after my decease for and duringe her life the safe keeping and custodie only of suche Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone as hereafter ar[e] here mentioned and set downe beyng parte of those Jewelles which I keepe and reserue as Jewelles for me selfe that is to saye <of> One Jewell of gould beyng a fayer color conteyning twentie seaven peeces seuerall peeces and one litle pendant Jewell fixed to the middle peece thereof of which saied twentie seaven peeces sixe of them ar[e] eche one enameled white and made like to the fashion of a Rose and so resemblen a white rose with a table Rubie in the myddest of euery one, and a faire peare pearle pendaunt to the same: And other sixe of the sayed Twentie seaven peeces ar[e] each one

enameiled redd and made likewise to the fashion of a Rose and so resembleth a Redd rose with a Table Diamond in the myddest of euery one and a faire peare pearle likewise pendant to euery one. And other fourteene peeces of the sayed twentie seaven peeces beyng of a smaller bignes then the saied roses ar[e] sett betwene euery of the sayd white and red roses to make a Deuision betwixt them, having faire round orient pearle fastened to either end of euery of the saied fourteene peeces. And the last of the sayed twentie seaven peeces beyng the middle peece of them all dothe likewise <somewhat> resemble the fashion of a Rose, having one bigge Dyamond in the myddest thereof, and sixe lesser Diamondes abowte the same and three litle Diamondes in the Topp: At the end of which middle peece is fixed the saied litle pendant Jewell. For the vpper parte of which litle Jewell is sett a faire greate Table Rubie and vnder the same Rubie a very faire large and longe Table Diamond of greate price with a faire orient greate pearle pendant to the same. The sayed Coller of gould having a shorte blacke rybin lace sowed to either end thereof. And likewise of one other Jewell of gould enameled on the one side with diuers Coloures and beyng set on the other side with fyve riche precious stones as namelie In the toppe of that other side with one faire oval Opall, and next vnder that with one faire table Diamond: And on the lefte side of the saied Jewell with one faire Table Saphire blue and on the righte syde thereof with one faire table Emerald and next vnder the saied Saphire and Emerald with one faire Table Rubie And vnderneathe them all having one very faire greate peare pearle pendant to the same. And likewise of one other Jewell of gould fashioned like the forme of a feather Deviding it selfe into twoe sprigges of gould featherwise whereof the one haue three faire greate pearles pendant thervppon, and the other hath likewise other three faire greate peare pearles pendant thervppon. The sayed Duple sprigg beyng on the one side enameled with white and redd and on the other syde appearing all playne gould. And likewise of one other Jewell of pearle conteyning sixe and fiftie greate pearle beyng a riche karkanet made into twoe shorte ropes of pearle whereof the one conteyneth twentie seaven of the sayed fiftie sixe pearle, and the other conteyneth twentie nyne of the sayed fiftie sixe pearle. The saied karkanett having a shorte blue silke rybin lace sowed to either end thereof. Of all and singular which saied fower Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone last before men^{tio}n^{ed} as namelie of the saied Coller and of the saied Jewell set with fiue riche precious stones and of the saied Jewell fashioned like the forme of a feather. And of the sayd Jewell of pearle f.13r: conteyninge fiftie sixe greate pearle made into twoe shorte ropes of pearle I do giue will and bequethe the onlie custodie and safe keeping in manner and forme folowinge that is to saye. First to my saied most deerelie beloved wife for and during her life and after her decease Then in like manner to th[e] sayed Lorde Buchurst myne elsest Sonne for and during his life. And after his Decease then to the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue for and during his life. And after his Decease Then to my next heire male for and during his life. And so from heire male to heire male of the Sacvilles after the Decease of euery one of them seuerallie and successiuelie when and so often and for so longe tyme as any suche custodie and safe keeping shall at

any tyme happen to fall and belonge to them or any of them according to the course, order, tenor and true meaning of this my present last will and testament on that behalfe. Prouided neuerthelesse and so I ordayne and Declare my will to be that if the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue or any other my next heire male or heires male for the tyme beyng shall at any tyme happen to take a wife and marry by and with the consent of his father and mother or any one of them surviving, or if they shall bothe be Deceased Then by and with the consent of any Two or moe of his next or nearest kynnes. That then my mynde and meaning is that all and euery suche wyfe or wyves which he or they or any of them from tyme to tyme shall so happen to marrye shall haue and so accordinglie I do giue will and bequeathe vnto her and them and euery of them the sole vse and occupac[i]on onlie of all and euery the saied Fower Jewelles as namelie of the saied Coller and of the saied Jewell sett with fyve riche precious stones and of the Jewell fashioned like to the forme of a feather and of the saied Jewell of pearle conteyninge Fiftie sixe greate pearle made into twoe shorte ropes of pearle and of all and euery of them for and during her and their life and livers and the life and liues of her and their husbände and husbandes ioyntlye. And then I do instantlie chardge and require the saied Countesse my wife, the saied Lord Buchurst myne eldest Sonne and the saied Richard Sacvill my neipue as all and euery other my next heires male and heire male whatsoever in whose handes and possession the saied fower Jewelles last aboue mentioned or any of them shall <then> happen to be and remayne that within convenient tyme after any such marriage so had and solempnized or fullie concluded and agreed vppon as it aforesayed they make present Delivery of all and euery the sayed fower Jewelles vnto all and euery suche wife and wives which so successivelie shall happen to marrye as it aforesayed. And she to haue and to hould the sole vse and onlie occupation thereof for and during her life and the life of euery suche one her husband ioyntly. And to the end that as well the saied Countesse my wife, the <saied> Lord Buchurst myne eldest Sonne, the saied Richard Sacvill my nepiue and all and euery other my next heires male and heire male whatsoever as likewise all and euery such wife and wyves so married or to be married as it aforesayed may orderlie and iustly execute and performe their seuerall partes and duties respectiuelie as well in deliuering as in receyving of the saied fower Jewelles according as the order course tenor and true meaning of this my last will and testament shall directe bynde them in that behalfe. Therefore my mynde and meaninge is, and so I do hartelie Declare will and ordayne that the saied fower Jewelles last before mentioned and euery of them shall from tyme to tyme and at all tymes when and as often as any suche Deliuerie and receipte is to be performed according to the order course tenor and true meaninge of this my last will and testament be then deliuered and receyved by wryting Indented to be made betwixt the partie or parties so Deliuering and the partie or parties so receyving the same: Wherby as well the Deliuerer may haue good warrant for his Discharge as allso the Receyver may be at all tymes sufficiently chardged to awnswere the same. Prouided allso and so I ordayne and Declare my will to be that when and so

often as at any tyme hereafter my next heire male at the tyme of the Decease of his Auncestor shall fortune to be within age: That then and in suche case the executor or executores or if theire be noe executores then the Administrator or Administratores of euery suche Auncestor so deceasing shall presentlie and with all conuenient speede Demaund take and receyve into his or theire handes and possession as well the saied Rynge of gould enamyed blacke³ £.13v.; wherein is sett a greate Table Diamonde and allso the sayed Cheyne of gould Spanishe worke beyng sett w^{[i]th} Diamondes to the number of one hundred fortie fower, as likewise the saied Jewell of gould beyng a faire Collor conteyning twentie seauen ~~peeces~~ seuerall peeces and one litle pendant Jewell fixed to the middle peece thereof. And allso the sayed Jewell of gould enameled on the one side with diuers Coloures and beyng set on the other side with fyve riche precious stones: And allso the saied Jewell fashioned like the forme of a feather. And allso the saied Jewell of pearle conteyninge fiftie six greate pearle beyng a riche karkanett made into twoe seuerall ropes of pearle and all and euery of them: namelie of all and euery suche person or person as then shall happen to haue and possesse the same or any parte thereof either by force and vertue of this my last will and testament or by any other meanes what soeuer: And then I chardge will and instantlye desire the saied Executor or Administrator that within some conuenient tyme, after they haue so receyued the same, they make choise of one principall Discreete person and of fower <other> trustie and sufficient men to attende hym and they fyve to carry and Conduct all and euery the saied Jewelles last abouemen^[t] io^[n]ed vnto the newe Colledge in Oxford⁴ there to be Deliuered into the handes and Custodye of the warden of the saied Colledge for the tyme beyng, and to suche senior fellowe of the same Colledge ioyntlie as there shall happen to be present there, by wryting Indented conteyning the seuerall sortes and parcelles of the saied fower Jewelles according to the particular description thereof in this my last will and testament. One which parte of which writing Indented shall remayne with the saied executor or administrator for the tyme beyng that so shall deliuer the same and the other parte with the saied warden and senior fellowe that so shall receyue the same: vnto whose safe keeping and custodye I do whollie Commend and Commit the saied fower Jewelles pearle and precious stone before specified to be kept and preserued by them during the minoritie of my sayed next heire male with their best endevores, care and prouidence within the saied Colledge in a stronge Chest of Iron vnder twoe seuerall keyes the which I will provide for that purpose whereof the one key shall remayne with the saied warden and the other key with the senior fellowe of the sayed Colledge not meaning to haue them chardged or awnsverable for the same if by any vyolence or mishappe without their owne consent or privitie or their owne willfull and corrupt negligence (the Doubte or suspicion whereof the Lorde of heauen dothe knowe bothe is and euer shalbe farre from my thoughte) the same should fortune to be lost or taken awaye. And when my sayed next heire male shalbe come to his fullage: Then vppon Request by suche heire male to be made <vnto> the saied warden and senior fellowe My desire will and

meaninge is that all the saied Jewelles be redeliuered vnto hym by the saied warden and senior fellowe by writing Indented and in manner and forme mutatis mutandis as is before set downe and specified for the Deliuery thereof vnto them. So as my sayed next heire male do then paye vnto the saied warden and senior fellowe for and towards their greate Care and paynes taken for the safe keeping and preserving of the saied Jewelles for the first yere viz. To the saied warden tennes poundes. To the saied senior fellowe fyve poundes. And to all the fellowes and Schollers besides for encrease of their Diet at some one Dynner or Supper in suche manner and measure as by he saied warden and senior fellowe shalbe order be set downe the somme of twelue poundes, the more to moue them all to a generall Care and assistance for the safe keeping and preserving of the saied Jewelles. And allthoughe it should so happen that my next heire male do aryve to his fullage before the saied Jewelles shall haue remayned in the Custodye of the saied warden and senior fellowe one whole yere compleate and therevppon shall require the Deliuery of them accordinglie: Yet it is my meaninge and so I do herebie explyne and Declare my will to be that the saied tenne poundes, fyve poundes and twelue poundes shall vppon receipt of the saied Jewelles be payed and satisfied in manner and forme as is before set downe, howe soone soeuer my next heire male shall come to his full yeres. But if his minorite of yeres shall fortune so longe tyme to contynewe as that it last by the space of twoe, three, fower, fyve, sixe or moe or lesse beyng more then one yere Then my will and meaninge is that for euery yere besides the saied first yere there shalbe a farther allowance in money to be made vnto them in forme folowinge that is to saye To the saied warden ouer and besides the aforesaid tenne poundes for the first yere the somme £.14r. of three poundes more for the second yere. To the senior fellowe ouer and besides the aforesaid fyve poundes for the first yere the somme of fortie shillings more for the seconde yere. And to the Fellowes and Schollers ouer and besides the saied twelue poundes for the first yere the some of fyve markes more for the second yere and so for euery yere during the minoritie of my sayed next heire male ouer and besides the sayed allowance of tenne poundes, fyve poundes and twelue for the first yere. The like Allowance of three poundes, fortie shillings and fyve markes more as is set downe for the sayed second yere. And so my will and meaning is that from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter when and as often as my sayed next heire male at the tyme of the Decease of his Auncestor shall fortune to be within age That then and in suche case the Executor or Administrator of euery suche Auncestor so Deceasinge as is aforesaid shall presentlie and with all conuenient speede Demaunde take and receyue into his handes and possession all and singular the saied Jewelles of all and euery suche person or persons as then shall happen to haue and possesse the same or any parte thereof as is aforesaid. And within some conuenient tyme to carry and conduct the saied Jewelles vnto newe Colledge in Oxford there to be Deliuered and kept in manner and forme as is before specified and Declared. And so in like manner from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter when and as often as any suche heire male shall come to his full age, then vppon request as is aforesayed the saied fower Jewelles to be

redeliuered to hym agayne by the saied warden or Subwarden and senior fellowe for the tyme beyng by writing Indented and in manner and forme as is before specified and declared. This travell Care Circumspecc[i]on and labour by the saied warden and Subwarden and senior fellowe to be taken and susteyned as is afores[aie]d beyng a worke of pietie and charitie to further and fullfill the good and godlie Intention of and will of the Dead I am the boli[e]uer thus when I am gone to recommend and Committ vnto them, the rather because the as well the saied Lorde Buchurst myne eldest sonne as all other my younger my younger sonnes were and haue ben bred and broughte vp in their studdyes of Learninge within the Wares and walles of the saied Colledge: And for that me selfe besides havinge the honor to be the Chauncellor of that vniuersitie haue euer ben bothe glad and readie to performe all good offices travelles and endeuours not onlie for the good and benefit of the whole vniuersitie in generall, but cheifelie euen for that Colledge in especiall & or as betwixt that Colledge and my selfe and betwene my sonnes and that Colledge there is and hath ben a pecualiar and reciprocall bond of speciall Loue and liking thus knytt and tyed betwixt vs whereby I am strengthened with the more confident hope that so worthie a warden Subwarden and Senior as that Colledge is like allwayes to possesse will not at any tyme refuse (bothe for their owne Creditt and reputac[i]on and in the memorye of hym that once was a principall Ruler in that vniuersitie amongst them, and in all their priuat causes and occasions most readie to helpe and further them even with willing myndes to vndergoe the satisfaction and performance of this my reasonable iuste and last request vnto them): for the whiche thoughte I in this worlde from whence I must Depart should not sufficientlie requyte them: Yet god shall rewarde them in the worlde to come with a farre better recompense then I or any worldelie man is able to giue them. Also I do giue will and bequeathe vnto my saied Sonne Buchurst all my Georges and Garters of gould whatsoever not before by me given willed nor bequeathed. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto the Right reuerend father in god John Archbischopp of Canterburye my deere good Lord and freind a Rynge of gould enameled greene, wherein is sett with Clawes of gould a faire square table Emerald set with a foyle and enameled greene: Desyring his grace to weare and keepe it as a memorye of my hartie Love vnto hym [...] Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my very good Lord and Kynnesman Charles Earle of Nottingham f.14v: Lord highe Admirall of England One cheyne of gould made of wyer worke conteyning three fouldes and havinge a George pendant thereunto, the saied George beyng sett vppon the one side thereof w[i]th Eleaven Diamondes and fower Rubies and the other side only enameled. And one garter of purple veluet layed on each side with twoe litle Chaynes of gould and with diuers Letters of gould in the same garter enameled blue and white, and set with three Diamondes seaven smale rubies and twoe greate Rubies and one litle Emerald. And one Ringe of gould enameled white wherein is set one faire greate Table Rubie. Desyring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a remembraunce of my hartie Loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my speciall good Lorde and Kynnesman Thomas Earle of Suff[olk] Lord

Chamberleyn of the Kinges house One cheyne of gould made of wyer worke conteyning eighte fowldes and havinge a George pendant therevnto. The saied George beyng sett vppon the one side thereof with nyne Dyamondes and seaven Rubies, and on the other side with seaven Diamondes and nyne Rubies. And one garter layed with twoe litle cheynes of gould on each syde havinge {blank} And one Rynge of gould enameled black wherein is set a faire great Diamond rysing slope to the forme of a litle table in the toppe. And one Ring of gould enameled blacke wherein is set with Clawes of gould an opall like to the forme a Slowe worme desyring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a Remembraunce of my hartie love vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my dere good Lord and freind Gilbert Earle of Shrewsburye one Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is sett a faire poynted Dyamond and one George on bothe sydes beyng of gould enameled and with three litle Cheynes on the topp to hang the same by. And one Garter of purple veluet layed on each syde with twoe litle cheynes of gould, and with Diuers letters of gould enameled blue and set with one Diamond vppon the End of the same garter desyring his Lordshipp to weare and keepe them as a Remembraunce of my hartie loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my very good Lord and freind William Earle of Worcester one Ringe of gould enameled white wherein is sett with Clawes of gould a faire Emerald put lozendgewise and rising slope to the forme of a litle table in the toppe and standinge without a foile. Also one George on bothe sides beyng of gould enameled and with three litle cheynes on the topp to hange the same by. And likewise one Garter of purple veluett laied on each side with twoe litle cheynes of gould and with diuers Letters of playne gould and with sixe trafles enameled white to make seperac[i]on betwixt the wordes. Desyring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a Rememraunce of my hartie loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my very good Lord and freind Harry earle of Northampton one Ringe of gould enameled white wherein is set vppon a foule a greate square Emerald rising slope to the forme of a Table in the topp. And one faire longe George of blue Aggat stone wherein on the one side is formed out of the saied blue Aggat stone it selfe the picture of Saint George on horsebacke with sixe Diamondes and sixe Rubies set on the same side. And on the other side the like picture is formed in gould Ennameled with twelue Diamondes and twelue rubies set likewise on that other side, and with one greate pearle pendant to the same <George> Desyring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a Remembraunce of my hartie loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my singular good Lorde my most speciall and dearest freind the Earle of Salisburie one cheyne of gould of open Spanishe worke enameled with diuers Coloures and conteyning fiftie one seuerall peeces of three seuerall sortes, whereof thirteene peeces beyng of the first biggest sorte ovall fashion do hange in the Chaine longe ovall wise, and other thirteene peeces beyng of a lesser second sorte and likewise ovall fashion do hang in the Chayne Crosse ovallwise and twentie fyue other peeces beyng of the leaste and third sorte ar[e] made to hould and knitt together the other twoe sortes of ovall fashion and themselves each to other and so all together

do make the forme of a faire Chayne with a George on bothe sides pendant to the same chaine and set on the one side thereof with three Rubies and twelue Diamondes: And likewise on the other side thereof with the like number of three Rubies and Twelue Diamondes. And likewise a Garter of purple veluett layed on eache syde with twoe f.15r: litle chaines of gould and with diuers Letteres of gould enameled white and set with twelue Diamondes and one greate Diamond in the middest of the buckle. And one Rynge enameled blacke wherein is et a faire greate Diamond rising slope to a litle Table in the toppe. And one Rynge of gould enameled white wherein is sett a faire table Rubie. And one Rynge of gould likewise enameled white wherein is set with Clawes of gould and without a foule a faire Rocke Rubie: And one Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is set an Emerald vppon the foyle tabled longe wise of the newe myne. And one Rynge of gould enameled white wherein is sett a faire table Saphur blewe. And also one ryng of gould enameled blacke wherein is set with Clawes of gould a rare Opall fashioned like a harte Desiring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as faithfull memoryes of my most hartie loue vnto hym. Beyng most assured that his Lordshippe according to the noblenes of his owne nature and the sincere meritt of my true harte towards hym will not behould the value of the guifte vnto hym (which bothe hymselfe and meselfe may iustlie esteeme as a mere trifle) but rather the value of the giuers harte towards hym, which allwayes hath ben is and euen wilbe so longe as life endureth as firmelie and as trulie Deuoted and knitt unto hym as it is possible for one freinde to be vnto another: With which faithfull bond the heauenlie god dothe knowe I haue felt my harte theise many yeres fast tyed vnto hym. Not onlie my respect of those privat particular benefittes and fauoures which he so often and so amplie hath shewed bothe towards me and myne (wherein meselfe likewise so with neither hath nor <euer> wilbe founde so ungratefull either vnto hym or any other as not to seeke to the best of my power euen with all kyndenes and thanckfullnes to requite the same agayne.

f.15v: Item I giue vnto the reuerend Father in god {blank} Bishopp of London my verydeere good Lord and freinde a Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is sett an Emerald of the olde Myne vppon a foyle being tabled longe wise. Desiring hys Lordshipp to weare it <& keepe it> as a Remembraunce of my hartie love vnto hym.

Ff.17r–19v: A codicil appended to the will, dated 1 June 1607 ('A Codicill annexed to the Testament aforesaide')

f.17v: And whereas heretofore I haue Deliuered and Committed to the safe keping and custodye of my sayed most Derelie beloued wife Diuers and sundrye Jewelles as well of pearle as of precious Stone with certeyne parcelles of guilte plate and certeyne parcelles of siluer vessell, the sayed Jewelles beyng estimatiuelie valewed to be worthe one thowsand and Eleaven poundes and the weighte of the saied guilte plate conteyning also by estimate one thowsand three hundred & thirtie nyne ownces quarter and a halfe or thereabowtes beyng likewise estimatiuelie valewed f.18r: is sett downe to be worthe one hundred twentie twoe poundes one shillinge twoe pence halfepennye farthing.

f.18r: And whereas likewise I haue heretofore Deliuered and committed to the safe keepinge and custodye of my sayed most Derelie beloued wife certeyne Jewelles sett and garnished with gould precious stone and pearle as namelie Eighte pendants of ~~pearle~~ gould enameled beyng estimated worthe eighte hundred fower score and twelue powndes [...] The vse and fruition of which <such> Jewelles and pendants I did euer meane and intend Duringe myne owne life vnto meselfe and after my Decease then to the vse and behoofe of my saied Deereli beloued daughter the Ladye Marye Nevell.

f.18v: And whereas likewise I haue heretofore Deliuered and committed to the safe keeping and custodye of my sayed most Derelie beloued wife, aswell one Cheyne of pearle conteyning in number one thowsand pearles as also certeyne Jewelles sett and garnished with pearle and precious stone, as namlie twoe Bracelettes fower and twentie Buttons with opalles and Rubies and fower opalles to serue for eare pendants, the sayed pearles and Jewelles beyng esimated to be worthe one thowsand fower hundred sixtie and fower poundes or thereabouts [...]. The vse and frui[t] ion of all which Jewelles and pearle I did euer meane and intend during myne owne life vnto my selfe and after my Decease then to the vse and behoofe of my saied Deerelie beloued Daughter the Ladie Anne Glenham.

f.19v: To my Cosen Garrawaye to buye a Ringe to weare for my sake twoe hundred poundes. To John Surtlinge to buye a Ringe to weare for my sake twoe hundred poundes.

Abbreviations

BGA: Barclays Group Archive
 BL: British Library
 BM: British Museum
 GCL: Goldsmiths' Company Library
 GLRO: Greater London Record Office
 MoL: Museum of London
 NAL: National Art Library
 NPG: National Portrait Gallery
 NT: National Trust
 PAS: Portable Antiquities Scheme
 RCIN: Royal Collection Inventory Number
 TNA: The National Archives
 VAM: Victoria and Albert Museum

Notes to Introduction

- 1 This book is the result of a doctoral thesis completed in 2012 as part of an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded Collaborative Doctoral Award with Queen Mary, University of London and the British Museum. Where appropriate, the bibliography has been updated with new and relevant publications that have appeared since 2012 and these works have been referenced in the text. There have been some significant developments since the thesis was finished. For example, the Cheapside Hoard was exhibited at the Museum of London in 2013 and a new display of the Waddesdon Collection opened at the British Museum in 2015. Where relevant, reference has been made to the resulting publications.
- 2 Gold and enamelled mourning ring, 17th century, English, 21mm. BM, AF.1521.
- 3 See pp. 85–6 and **Fig. 110** for evidence of a trigram being used on a ring to represent a marriage.
- 4 The term 'early modern' is a relatively recent invention of the last 50 years or so. It has been applied by various historians to indicate a start date of anywhere from 1350 to 1560, and an end date ranging from 1660 to 1800. For further discussion on this, see Thomas 2009, 4.
- 5 Pointon 2009; Gere and Rudoe 2010. The literature on jewellery for the early modern period, broadly speaking, is concerned either with courtly jewels or archaeological material and it often comprises general surveys or object-specific discussions. The following works provide a good survey of the existing material: *Princely Magnificence* 1980; Clifford Smith 1908; Evans 1970; Goetz and Joannis 2008; Hackenbroch 1979; Scarisbrick 1995; Egan 2005; Egan and Pritchard 1991; Scarisbrick 1993; Hackenbroch 1996. Other literature is limiting, for example: Tait 2008 is too general in nature; Evans 1970 limits the geographical area to 'more civilised parts of Europe', privileging jewels from an artistic tradition rather than a tribal tradition (see pp. 39–40). The following works consider the objects themselves, allowing for close analysis: Hackenbroch 1996 is an excellent visual repository but has as its focus the subjects and themes of the jewels, rather than their material nature; Scarisbrick 1993; Scarisbrick 2007; Scarisbrick and Henig 2003; Scarisbrick and Toyama 2004. Scarisbrick 1994 is one of the few works to situate jewellery in its historical, social and literary narrative. More recent (i.e. since 2012) and important works to offer stronger historical understanding and a more robust framework of jewels are, and these include exhibition catalogues in which jewellery features: Forsyth 2013; Cooper 2013; Thornton 2015; Dmitrieva and Murdoch 2013. There are more recent publications that should be mentioned for their importance in highlighting some previously unknown jewels: Hindman 2014; Hindman 2015; Chadour-Sampson and Hindman 2016; Tabakhova 2017.
- 6 Hayward 2007, 227.
- 7 Brewer, Gairdner and Brodie 1862–1932, vol. 5, no. 1484, taken from 'Henry VIII: October 1532, 25–31', in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, Volume 5, 1531–1532, ed. James Gairdner (London, 1880), pp. 619–36. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol5/pp619-636> [accessed 1 December 2020].
- 8 Brewer, Gairdner and Brodie 1862–1932, vol. 5, no. 1485, taken

- from *ibid.* ‘Cr’ denotes the old denomination of a gold crown, introduced by Henry VIII in 1526. It was worth five shillings.
- 9 See Chapter 10 in this volume.
 - 10 Thornton 2015, 238; Tait 1986, vol. 1, cat. 33.
 - 11 Osborne 1658, vol. 1, 274–5.
 - 12 See, in particular: Smith 2000; Botelho 2009; Shepard 2003; Bailey and Hentschell 2010. Other useful works on this topic are: Brod 1987; Tosh 1994, 180; Connell 2005; Fisher 2006.
 - 13 ‘In Western societies, acts of exchange and consumption have long been obsessively gendered, usually as female’, cited in De Grazia 1996, 1.
 - 14 Evans 1970, 117.
 - 15 *Elizabeth Knollys* (NT 597954), and *Anne of Denmark* (NPG 127).
 - 16 Platerus (the Younger) 1937, 182.
 - 17 Greene 1583, C2v.
 - 18 Howell 1660, section xxxiii.
 - 19 *Haec-Vir* 1620, C3r. This extract was taken from Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* (1516) translated by John Harington, London, 1591, and shows how the character of Rogero becomes effeminate in his pursuit of Alcyna.
 - 20 *William Shakespeare* (NPG 1): scientific analysis has shown that the earring is contemporary with the portrait. Discussion on the identity of the sitter is in Cooper 2006, cat. no. 3.
 - 21 *Sir Francis Drake* (NPG 1627) and *Sir Walter Raleigh* (NPG 7).
 - 22 Harrison 1994, 147.
 - 23 Charles I as a boy (NPG 3064), and as portrayed by Sir Anthony van Dyck (RCIN 404420).
 - 24 The earring remained in royal hands until it was given to Hans Willem Bentinck (1649–1709), 1st Earl of Portland, in 1688 by either William III (r. 1689–1702) or Mary II.
 - 25 I am grateful to Derek Adlam, Curator of the Portland Collection, for providing me with information regarding the history and provenance of this earring and for alerting me to the existence of the supporting manuscript document.
 - 26 The term ‘mudlark’ is used to describe those who scour the tidal mud of a river or harbour for usable debris. Their importance in uncovering artefacts of historical significance is undeniable.
 - 27 The Treasure Act of 1996 requires the reporting of metal-detector finds that have a precious metal content of at least 10 per cent and are more than 300 years old. Since the implementation of this Act on 24 September 1997, there has been a marked increase in known examples of small-scale artefacts. The focus of this book is to reintegrate these smaller dress accessories into jewellery history, but other items such as watches, pomanders, sword pommels and daggers can also be incorporated into a wider classification of jewellery as a further area of study.
 - 28 See, for example, Hayward 2007. For more on the importance of integrating dress history into this new approach on jewellery studies and on the methodology applied to this study, as well as historiography of this field, see Awais-Dean 2012, 33–42.
 - 29 BL, Royal MS 7.F.XIV, f.124r, cited in Hayward 2007, 100.
 - 30 For example the ‘white satin dublett unlaced cut and raced with flowers and silver buttons’ in the 1614 inventory of Henry Howard: Shirley 1869, 367. See also examples in Starkey 1998 and Hayward 2004a.
 - 31 For a brief discussion of this, see Thornton and Mitchell 2003, 490.
 - 32 The jewels recovered from the *Girona* and now in the Ulster Museum, Belfast, were consulted by the author and catalogued. See Awais-Dean 2012, Appendix A, 312–38.
 - 33 Other important shipwrecks for understanding male ownership of jewels include the *Atocha* and the *Santa Margarita*, both guard ships from the 1622 *Tierra Firme* plate fleet which sank and were recovered in the 1970s–80s off the coast of Key West, Florida. A number of jewels (now dispersed) were salvaged from the *Atocha* site and these provide a record of the ownership of jewellery of the 48 male passengers and 220 crew members. Of particular interest are the gold chains and dress ornaments. A fuller discussion of this is in Awais-Dean 2012, 20–2. See also Mathewson III 1986, 59–62; Christie’s 1988, 26–30.
 - 34 Sténuit 1972, 210–11.
 - 35 Duro 1884–5, vol. 2, 364; Allingham and Crawford 1897, 65; Sténuit 1972, 211; Flanagan 1995, 33. Don Alonzo was in command of the Genoese carrack, the *Sancta Maria Encoronada*, and with him were many young noble men. For an account of the circumstances that led to many of the young Spanish noblemen from the Armada being on board the *Girona* and eventually perishing with their jewels see Sténuit 1972, 103–39.
 - 36 Sténuit 1972, 13.
 - 37 Christie’s 1972, lot 30.
 - 38 Evans 1970, 9.
 - 39 Hardy 1966, 67.

Notes to Part I

- 1 The ship has never been found but the numismatic evidence suggests that the finds originated in 17th-century Morocco.
- 2 Porter 1997, 1288; see also Porter and Morison 1998, 16–17.

Notes to Chapter 1

- 1 Whythorne 1962, 159. This source will be dealt with more extensively in Chapter 7 in this volume.
- 2 In 1526 Henry VIII introduced the ‘crown gold’ standard of gold coinage of 22 carats, alongside the existing ‘angel gold’ at 23 carats 3.5 grains. A 20-carat standard of gold came in during the Great Debasement between 1544 and 1549. Dr Barrie Cook of the British Museum has speculated on whether references to old gold in fact indicate the higher standard of angel gold, although he thinks that such usage for the term is more likely in the years immediately following the introduction of the crown gold standard: Cook 2010 and personal correspondence on 31 August 2012.
- 3 Willan 1959, 299–300.
- 4 Humphrey 2012.
- 5 See Cox and Dannehl 2007, 29, in which the authors claim that there is no illustrative material of shops existing from before 1700.
- 6 Whythorne 1962, 159–60.
- 7 George and George 2002, no. 46, 63–4.
- 8 Reed 1981: the 72 inventories cover the dates 1583 to 1631 and are the earliest surviving probate inventories that have been discovered within the archives of the Archdeacons of Suffolk and the Consistory Court records for the diocese of Norwich. These are discussed in detail later in this book (see pp. 26–8).
- 9 Reed 1981, 25.
- 10 Adams 1995, 86, 90, 91.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 117.
- 12 Kingsford 1925, vol. 1, 246.
- 13 Information regarding the availability of gold within the medieval period has been taken from Cherry 1992, 18–21.
- 14 Humphrey 2012.
- 15 Willan 1959, chapter 4.
- 16 H. de Castries, *Les Sources inédites de l’histoire du Maroc. Première série. Archives et bibliothèques d’Angleterre* (Paris, 1918, 1925), vol. 1, 29, cited in Willan 1959, 120. It is important to note that gold was not a product of Morocco. It came to England by way of imports from the Sudan, which increased greatly after the 1591 conquest.
- 17 Porter 1997, 1288, 1290–1; Porter and Morison 1998, 16–17.
- 18 According to Porter the ship may have been owned by one of three possible groups: the English, the Dutch or Barbary pirates: Porter 1997, 1290–1.
- 19 Willan 1959, 255.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 266, 296.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 256.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 299.
- 23 Jobbins 1980, 16; Muller 2012, 36.
- 24 Fray Tomás de Mercado, *Summa de tratos y contractos* (Seville, 1587), A2, cited in Pike 1965, 465.
- 25 For a discussion of ‘the commercialization of the nobility and the ennoblement of wealthy merchants’ in 16th-century Spain, with a particular focus on Seville, see Pike 1965.
- 26 Humphrey 2012.
- 27 Jobbins 1980, 15–16.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 29 Neri 1662, book 5, chapter 75, p. 124.
- 30 *Ibid.*, book 5, chapter 77, p. 129.
- 31 VAM 659–1871 is an Italian gilt-bronze ring set with a rectangular yellow paste. It is dated to the late 15th or early 16th century. The shoulders are engraved with a cardinal’s hat and a mitre surmounting a coat of arms. According to the object’s catalogue

record this type of large ring may have been worn by mounted couriers over their riding gloves to verify their credentials. The low monetary value of these jewels prevented their wearers from being robbed on the road. In the 2017 version of this publication, reference was made to VAM M.17-1929 as an example of an early 17th-century English enamelled, gold ring set with seven red stones in the form of a six-petalled flower. At the time of writing, it was believed that the stones were pastes. Since then, however, it has been confirmed that the stones are in fact garnets (personal correspondence on 8 December 2020 with Dr Richard Edgcumbe, then Senior Curator of Jewellery at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London).

32 Mitchell 2012.
 33 Somers Cocks 1980, 5.
 34 For example, when Thomas Whythorne discusses an inscription to be placed on a ring, the form of the object is instantly understood: Whythorne 1962, 38. Posy rings are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7 of this volume.
 35 Pattern books of ornamental prints circulated throughout Europe and their designs were transferable between embroidery, larger items of metalwork and smaller jewelled objects. See, for example, Pellegrino 1908, pl. 10.
 36 Tait 1985, 32; Evans 1970, 89.
 37 Woeiriot 1978.
 38 'Delau(l)ne, Etienne (Stephanus)', in Newman 2005.
 39 Albertina, Vienna, Etienne Delaune, various titles, Zeichnung collection, inv. nos 11153–11178. See also Hackenbroch 1979, fig. 180 A–L, where she has published 12 of the designs.
 40 It is also known as Sloane 5308 and accessioned at the British Museum as SL.5308. For a full discussion on the history and contents of the book, see Rowlands 1993, vol. 1, 152–76.
 41 Ibid., vol. 1, 152; Starkey 1998, no. 2163.
 42 Clifford Smith 1908, 208.
 43 Brewer, Gairdner and Brodie 1862–1932, vol. 2, 1441–4.
 44 Ibid., vol. 3, 1533–9.
 45 T.F. Reddaway and Lorna E.M. Walker, *The Early History of the Goldsmiths' Company. 1327–1509* (London, 1975), 222–4, cited in Forbes 1999, p.18.
 46 In 1360 the Goldsmiths' Company stipulated that the weights used by a goldsmith were to be sized and standardised on a regular basis, and from 1370 it was necessary for these weights to be hallmarked: Cherry 1992, 59.
 47 Forbes 1999, 31.
 48 Whythorne 1962, 159–60.
 49 Cherry 1992, 57.
 50 The standard of gold changed over the years, rising from a minimum of 19.2 carats in 1300 to 22 carats by 1576: see *ibid.*
 51 I am grateful to Dr David Mitchell for introducing me to these sources and to David Beasley and Eleni Bide of the Goldsmiths' Company Library (GCL) for assisting me.
 52 'Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes', *Goldsmiths' Company. K-L. 1566–7. ELIZ to 1573–14. ELIZ*, vol. 9, GCL, ff.354, 369, 370, 374. With silver there are 20 penny weights to the ounce and 24 grams to each penny weight, and so in the case of Thomas Pope the clasp he produced weighed just over 2 ounces less than it should have done.
 53 'Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes', GCL, f.420.
 54 Camden 1637, 489. This fair took place in September on Stourbridge Common, Cambridge.
 55 'Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes', GCL, f.424.
 56 Ibid.
 57 Ibid.
 58 Hodgen 1942, 391.
 59 Harrison's work was written as an introduction to Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577).
 60 Harrison 1994, 246, 253.
 61 Archer, Barron and Harding 1988, 9.
 62 Ibid., 90, f.15 shown on p. 65 and pl. II.
 63 Rogers 1931, 7.
 64 Stow 1971, vol. 1, 81.
 65 Marston 1604, A4v.
 66 Stow 1971, vol. 1, 345.
 67 Hentzner 1797, 31–2.
 68 Cox and Dannehl 2007, 9.
 69 Some pieces from the Cheapside Hoard are in the British Museum

and the Victoria and Albert Museum but the majority of the collection is at the Museum of London, where it was the subject of an exhibition, *The Cheapside Hoard: London's Lost Jewels* (11 October 2013–27 April 2014). The exhibition addressed some of the many questions that surround the Hoard, such as who owned it, when and why it was hidden and why it was never reclaimed.

70 Forsyth 2013; Forsyth 2003; Mortimer Wheeler 1928.
 71 Heywood 1908.
 72 Cox and Dannehl 2007, 50.
 73 39 ELIZ c.4, cited in *ibid.*
 74 J.F. Larkin and P.L. Hughes (eds), *Stuart Royal Proclamations: I. Royal Proclamations of King James I, 1603–25* (Oxford, 1973), 393, cited in *ibid.*
 75 J.F. Larkin and P.L. Hughes (eds), *Stuart Royal Proclamations: I. Royal Proclamations of King James I, 1603–25* (Oxford, 1973), 394, n. 3, cited in Spufford 1984, 8.
 76 Cox and Dannehl 2007, 50.
 77 Fowler 1896, 117.
 78 Ibid., 54–7, 76–81, 117–20, 178–80, 212–14, 242–4, 278–81.
 79 Ibid., 118.
 80 Stevenson 1821, 295.
 81 Ibid., 299.
 82 See Harland 1856–8.
 83 Willan 1976, 70–1.
 84 Ibid., 76.
 85 Adams 1995.
 86 Ibid., 2.
 87 Ibid., 45. John Lonison was Master of the Mint in 1572.
 88 Ibid., 86, 89, 91, 127.
 89 Ibid., 121.
 90 Ibid., 210.
 91 Ibid., 322.
 92 Ibid., 206, 248, 255.
 93 TNA, E36/215; also calendared in 'The King's Book of Payments, 1513', in Brewer, Gairdner and Brodie 1862–1932, vol. 2 (1515–1518), 1458–63, cited in Hayward 2007, 334.
 94 Hayward 2007, 337.
 95 Ibid., 336.
 96 'Henry VIII: July 1546, 26–31', in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 21 Part 1, January–August 1546*, ed. James Gairdner and R.H. Brodie (London, 1908), pp. 663–97. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol21/no1/pp663-697> (accessed 29 December 2020). The citation can be found in 1383 ('Grants in July 1546'), no. 96. Also cited in Hayward 2007, 336.
 97 Giustinian 1854, vol. 2, 139.
 98 Ago 2008, 57.
 99 'Enclosure – Note of Jewels Pawned in Holland', January 20/30 1636, TNA, SP 84/151 f.32r. See also Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 27.
 100 Clifford Smith 1908, 209–10.

Notes to Chapter 2

- Starkey 1998.
- Ibid., vii.
- Ibid., x.
- J.R. Dasent *et al.* (eds), *The Acts of the Privy Council*, 46 vols (London, 1890–1964), II (1547–50), 21, cited in *ibid.*, x.
- References to entries from the published inventory are shown by bracketed bold numbers.
- The first part of the inventory is published in Starkey 1998, 1–175, with the contents of the Secret Jewel House recorded in *ibid.*, 65–102.
- Ibid., 67.
- Ibid., 68.
- Cramp rings were traditionally blessed and given by the sovereign on Good Friday, in the belief that they held curative powers.
- Starkey 1998, 84. There seems to be no corresponding reference in Herbert's household inventory to a George pendant being given to him by the king.
- This young prince was the subject of an exhibition that explored his life and image, and the outpouring of grief at his death (*The Lost Prince: The Life and Death of Henry Stuart*, October 2012–January 2013, National Portrait Gallery, London), and the related publication: MacLeod 2012.
- Bray 1806, 13.

- 13 Ibid., 18–20.
- 14 Ibid., 18.
- 15 Ibid. Lord Harrington refers to John Harrington (1539/40–1613), 1st Baron Harrington of Exton.
- 16 See, for example, MoL A23271; NPG 2562, NPG 4515, NPG 407; RCIN 420058.
- 17 Bray 1806, 18–19.
- 18 Ibid., 19.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid., 19–20.
- 22 NPG 665.
- 23 Shirley 1869; Croft 2004.
- 24 Shirley 1869, 347.
- 25 Croft 2004.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Shirley 1869, 349.
- 28 Ibid., 350. The space for the values for these two items reads ‘*vacat*’ suggesting that neither object was present at the time of appraisal.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid., 349.
- 31 The rings given by the serjeants-at-law are discussed in more detail in Chapter 8 in this volume.
- 32 The term Count Palatine is not easily identifiable with any single individual. It was given to those men who had been granted powers by the sovereign to rule within their provinces, particularly applicable in the Holy Roman Empire. It could also signal the longer title of Count Palatine of the Rhine, which was an alternative for the Elector Palatine: a German prince entitled to elect the emperor. In the absence of further information it is impossible to determine conclusively from whom Howard’s ring was a gift and what the circumstances of the gift might have been.
- 33 Croft 2004.
- 34 Shirley 1869, 350.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid., 349. This is included alongside the above-mentioned ‘olde ringe of golde’.
- 37 Ibid., 375–8.
- 38 Ibid., 375–6.
- 39 Ibid., 350.
- 40 Ibid., 348. This comprises two standing cups of gold, one rock-crystal bowl in the form of a shell set in gold, three gold bowls, a clock made of gold and crystal and set with rubies and diamonds, and an hourglass with a gold frame and set with eight diamonds.
- 41 Ibid., 351–3, 366–7.
- 42 ‘Inventory of Gold and Silver Plate, Jewells and Apparrell Etc. Of William, Earl of Pembroke’, 12 December 1561, NAL, MSL.1982–30. Selections from this inventory appear in Appendix A of this volume.
- 43 Descriptive details of the inventory taken from Turner 1998, 10.
- 44 NAL, MSL.1982–30, ff.31r–37r.
- 45 Pembroke’s first wife was Anne Herbert (before 1514–1552), lady-in-waiting to all of Henry VIII’s wives and younger sister of the king’s sixth consort Katherine Parr (1512–1548). By her he had issue: Henry Herbert (b. in or after 1538–1601), 2nd Earl of Pembroke; Sir Edward Herbert; and Lady Anne Herbert (1550–1592).
- 46 NAL, MSL.1982–30, ff.36v–37r.
- 47 Straton 1909, vol. 2, 557.
- 48 NAL, MSL.1982–30, ff.38r–81v.
- 49 Ibid., f.79r.
- 50 Ibid., ff. 9r–80r.
- 51 Ibid., f.79r.
- 52 For more on memento mori and mourning rings, see Chapter 10 in this volume.
- 53 NAL, MSL.1982–30, f.76r.
- 54 Starkey 1998, 80.
- 55 Sil 2004.
- 56 NAL, MSL.1982–30, f.77v. Two of these were gifts from women, with one being placed in the custody of Pembroke’s wife. Presumably, a piece of jewellery related to the Order of the Garter was seen as an appropriate gift for a high-ranking courtier such as Pembroke.
- 57 Ibid., f.80r.
- 58 Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, 1555–1556, no. 31, cited in Nightingale 1878, 32.
- 59 Fairholt 1866, 311–42, 323–41.
- 60 ‘Will of Sir Thomas Ramsey, Alderman of City of London’, 29 May 1590, TNA, 11/75/405.
- 61 Fairholt 1866, 311.
- 62 Ibid., 312.
- 63 Ibid., 315–20.
- 64 Ibid., 315.
- 65 Ibid., 317.
- 66 Mourning rings are discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 in this volume.
- 67 Fairholt 1866, 337.
- 68 Ibid., 330. The total worth of Ramsey’s pewter was £45 17s. 1d.
- 69 A Troy ounce is customarily used for the weighing of precious metal. It is equivalent to about 31.1g, so slightly heavier than a normal ounce measurement of 28.35g.
- 70 Corporation of London Records Office Rep. 11, f.215, cited in Archer 1988, 82. See also Stow 1971, vol. 1, 112, in which he notes that Sir John Aleyn ‘gaue to the Cittie of London, a rich collar of goulde, to bee worne by the maior’. The collar is still used by the Lord Mayor of London today (although he uses a replica for daily affairs) and forms part of the Mansion House plate collection.
- 71 Reed 1981, 1.
- 72 Ibid., 3.
- 73 These 14 men are involved in the following occupations: five tailors; one woollen-weaver; one dyer; one shoemaker; two linen-weavers; two poldaris (a coarse canvas used for sail cloth, originally made in Poldavide (now Finistère) in Brittany) weavers; one glover; and one clothworker.
- 74 Diocesan archives in Norfolk and Norwich Record Office, Norwich (NRO) INV/2, no. 37, cited in Reed 1981, 22–3.
- 75 ‘cruell’: a worsted yarn used in ornamental needlework.
- 76 Archdeaconry archives in Ipswich branch of Suffolk Record Office (SRO (I)) FE1/2, no. 104, cited in Reed 1981, 30–1.
- 77 NRO INV/16, no. 135, cited in *ibid.*, 51–2.
- 78 NRO INV/29, no. 29, cited in *ibid.*, 93–7.
- 79 NRO INV/37, Box 47, no. 106, cited in *ibid.*, 110–11.
- 80 Reed 1981, 65–8.
- 81 George and George 2002, xi.
- 82 The final inventory within the time frame 1509–1625 is that of a single woman, Katherine Ware, and is dated 8 November 1625.
- 83 The jewels of Nathaniel Butcher, merchant (inventory dated 25 November 1628), Richard Saunders, plumer (a craftsman who works with feathers) (inventory dated 6 July 1629) and John Shipway, shoemaker (inventory dated 16 October 1634) will be discussed but these inventories do not form part of any statistical analysis.
- 84 George and George 2002, 6, 56.
- 85 Ibid., nos 13, 24, 25, 27, 28.
- 86 Ibid., 18. Baldwin’s inventory of 23 February 1614 shows that he was also in possession of silver and silver-gilt plate worth about £50.
- 87 Ibid., 36.
- 88 For more on signet rings, including those with merchant’s marks, see Chapter 9 in this volume.
- 89 George and George 2002, 64.
- 90 Ibid., 71.
- 91 Ibid., 88.
- 92 Richardson 2011, 182–201. Richardson states that just over one third of the inventories are those of women: note 7.
- 93 Ibid., 183–4.
- 94 Richardson notes that objects such as buttons, girdles, whistles, toothpicks and earpicks are present in the inventories but over 60 per cent of jewels are rings and almost 20 per cent are dress fastenings: *ibid.*, 183–4.
- 95 Ibid., 184. She also notes that for women, just over half of their jewelled possessions consisted of rings, while almost one third were dress fastenings.
- 96 Nichols and Bruce 1863, 42.
- 97 ‘Will of Richard Cox, Bishop of Ely’, 10 August 1581, TNA, PROB 11/63/420, ff.232r–233v, f.233v. See also Strype 1725, vol. 3, chapter III, anno 1581, p. 26, where he also gives values for the rings, stating that Burghley’s ring was worth £6 and the others were worth £4 10s.

- 98 Darlington 1967, ix. In this period the diocese of London covered the City of London, Middlesex, Essex and the majority of Hertfordshire.
- 99 GLRO DLC/354 (register Palmer); GLRO DLC/418, cited in *ibid.*
- 100 *Ibid.*, nos 7, 12, 30, 51, 58, 65, 68, 83, 86.
- 101 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 102 *Ibid.*, 30, 35.
- 103 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 104 *Ibid.*, 18.
- 105 *Ibid.*, 38, 40. The term ‘tache’ is listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as ‘A contrivance for fastening two parts together; a fibula, a clasp, a buckle, a hook and eye, or the like; a hook for hanging anything on. *Obs.* or *arch.*’. ‘tache | tach, n.2’, *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, September 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/196873?rskey=V5jIUZ&result=2> (accessed 26 November 2016).
- 106 Darlington 1967, 48.
- 107 *Ibid.*, 50–1.
- 108 *Ibid.*, nos 108, 116, 118, 120, 125, 126, 130, 131, 148, 209, 213, 230.
- 109 *Ibid.*, nos 148, 230.
- 110 *Ibid.*, 82.
- 111 *Ibid.*, 143.
- 112 *Ibid.*, no. 116, p. 66.
- 113 *Ibid.*, no. 108, p. 61.

Notes to Part II

- See Thomas Tusser, *The Five Hundred Good Points of Husbandry* (1557), 14, 18–19, cited in Muldrew 1993, 179.
- Harrison 1994, 146.
- Translation author’s own from Castiglione 1965, book II, chapter 27, 65: ‘voglio che ‘l nostro cortegiano in tutto l’abito sia pulito e delicato ed abbia una certa conformità di modesta attillatura ma non però di maniera femminile o vana’.
- Translation author’s own from *ibid.*: ‘che debba fra se stesso deliberar ciò che vol parere e di quella sorte che desidera esser estimado, della medesima vestirsi, e far che gli abiti lo aiutino ad esser tenuto per tale ancor da quelli che non l’odono parlare, né veggono far operazione alcuna’.
- Scot 1619, G2v–G3v.
- Greene 1583, D1r.
- King 2004, 50–5.
- Howell 2010, 221. See also 208–60.
- Ibid.*, 220.
- Strype 1709, Appendix, 13–17, 13.
- Ibid.*, Appendix, 15.

Notes to Chapter 3

- Cooper 2008, 4.
- Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 34.
- Treherne 1995; Sørensen 1997.
- Sørensen 1997, 93.
- Fraser 2007.
- ‘investiture, n.’, *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, September 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/99050?redirectedFrom=investiture> (accessed 26 November 2016); Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 2.
- Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 3. For more recent works in support of this view see the various essays in Richardson 2004, particularly Richardson, ‘Introduction’, 1–25; Hentschell, 49–62; Storey, 95–107; Bartrum, 137–49; Hayward, 165–78.
- Boorde 1562, A3v.
- See Smith (attributed) 1969. According to Hazel Forsyth this text did have the desired impact and from the late 16th century there seemed to be a marked shift towards greater domestic production: Forsyth 2012.
- Stubbes 1585, C1.
- Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 3.
- Edmund Spenser, Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley, *A View of the State of Ireland: From the First Printed Edition (1633)* (Oxford, 1997), 72–3, cited in Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 4.
- Jardine 1998, 413.
- Fumerton 1991, 78–9.

- Ibid.*, 78.
- Ibid.*, 80.
- Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 35. Jones and Stallybrass point out that very often the clothing and jewels worn by a sitter were rented, a practice that can be evidenced in the 17th-century post-mortem inventory of the Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675), which lists clothing identifiable in his paintings: Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 40.
- Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558–1641* (Oxford, 1965), 712, cited in Tittler 1998, 311.
- For information on the politics of portraiture and the use of clothing and accessories in Tudor and Jacobean paintings, see Howard 1995 and Cooper 2008.
- Thomas 2009, 240. See Chapter 10 in this volume for a further discussion of remembrance in the early modern period.
- Cooper 2008, 4.
- Eric Mercer, *English Art, 1553–1625* (Oxford, 1962), 165, cited in Cooper 2012, 2.
- NPG 4027.
- Henry VII, Elizabeth of York, Henry VIII and Jane Seymour*; Remigius van Leemput; dated 1667. On display at Hampton Court Palace, RCIN 405750.
- Hazel Forsyth, Treasure report for 2011 T44, a post-medieval gold aglet found in Greenwich, Greater London.
- BM, 1914.0926.1. It is published in Natasha Awais-Dean, ‘Cameo with bust of Elizabeth I’, in Cooper 2013, 74, cat. 14.
- This jewel is comparable to the one described by Sir Thomas Sackville in his will. See Chapter 10 in this volume.
- See online catalogue entry for NPG 2095: <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw03838/Sir-Henry-Lee> (accessed 10 December 2022). The portrait of Windsor is in the collection of the Earl of Plymouth and was painted around the same date and with a similar composition.
- For a list of portraits showing this practice, see Chapter 7, note 67.
- Butler 1684, Part III, Canto II, 100.
- For a note on the diamond and its meaning, see Chapter 7, note 83.
- ‘Inventory of Gold and Silver Plate, Jewells and Apparrell Etc. Of William, Earl of Pembroke’, 12 December 1561, NAL, MSL.1982–30. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the inventory and Appendix A for extracts.
- I am very grateful to the owner for allowing me to reproduce the portrait of William Herbert here. I am also grateful to Simon Gillespie for allowing me to view the painting during its cleaning and conservation.
- The contents of Baynard’s Castle are found in NAL, MSL.1982–30, ff.83r–93v.
- Ibid.*, ff.85v, 86v, 92r.
- Ibid.*, f.51v.
- Ibid.*, f.45r.
- Ibid.*, f.62r.
- Ibid.*, f.63r.

Notes to Chapter 4

- Hayward 2004a; Hayward 2007; Hayward 2009.
- Arnold 1980.
- Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 24.
- Arnold 1980, 9.
- Ibid.*, 14.
- Ibid.*, entries 45, 52, 53, 64, 71, 126, 248; Egan 2005, 39–52; Read 2005; Read 2008.
- In 2008 Finds Liaisons Officers were requested to create a PAS record for each new Treasure case reported to the British Museum. So from this date onwards, all Treasure finds should be accessible on the PAS site (finds.org.uk/database). In the past there was a volunteer project to ensure that reports made pre-2008 were incorporated within the PAS database. Some of this has been achieved but momentum has slowed, since there are now in the region of 1,000 Treasure finds each year. Estimates from 2012 suggested that about 60 per cent of all Treasure finds had PAS records. Resulting from an increase in Treasure finds year on year since then, each of which has a record on the PAS database, this percentage rate will now be higher. (Information taken from personal correspondence with Ian Richardson, Treasure Registrar,

- Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure, British Museum, on 25 July 2012 and updated on 28 November 2016).
- 8 British Museum, Gallery 46, case 6 (August 2022).
 - 9 Forsyth 2012. For the cultural and social significance of the button throughout history, including its varied forms and functions see Edwards 2012.
 - 10 A search on the PAS database for 'button' and 'post-medieval' gives 8,264 results (correct on 27 August 2022) of varying materials including copper alloy, lead alloy, silver, lead, pewter, tin or tin alloy, white metal, gold, glass and base silver. The end date for a search on the BM's database marks the end of the Stuart reign with the Glorious Revolution of 1688.
 - 11 BM, SLAIntaglios.146, SLAIntaglios.148, SLAIntaglios.157, SLAIntaglios.172, SLBCameos.236, SLBCameos.242, SLBCameos.272.
 - 12 BM, 2002.0711.1 (Treasure ID: 2001 T364), 2010.8036.1 (Treasure ID: 2009 T462); 1934.1213.1; 1934.1213.3, 1914.0423.17, 1914.0423.18, 1914.0423.19, 1914.0423.20.
 - 13 BM, OA.1154.
 - 14 VAM C.111–1938, on display in Ceramics, Room 138, The Harry and Carol Djanogly Gallery (location correct as of 27 August 2022).
 - 15 VAM T.609–1996.
 - 16 This information is correct as of 7 August 2022.
 - 17 In total, Pilson donated on this occasion 2,566 items to the Museum of London: Forsyth 2012.
 - 18 Forsyth and Egan 2005, 24–5; Forsyth 2012.
 - 19 The collection is documented with photographs, and dimensions and material type have been recorded. It now awaits further analysis.
 - 20 Gardiner and Allen 2005, 96.
 - 21 Information taken from the online artefact database: 80A1837, 80A1928, 80A1929, 80A1937. Three of these have identical catalogue descriptions and are each 10mm in diameter. Only 80A1937 differs in that it is described as an oblate sphere and it has an overall diameter of 8mm, with a height of 5.6mm. No height is recorded for the other examples from this set.
 - 22 Gardiner and Allen 2005, 97.
 - 23 Ibid.
 - 24 82A4749 and 80A1383.
 - 25 81A2592, leather jerkin with two buttons to the front; 81A2888, wool jerkin with one button to the back; 81A4693, jerkin with four buttons; 82A0877, leather ankle boots with a single button; 82A0755, leather shoe with one button.
 - 26 Read 2005, 30–97. Read has published a similar survey of post-medieval hooked clasps and eyes: Read 2008, 45–233.
 - 27 Egan 2005, nos 178–219.
 - 28 See Appendix A (BGR 32a–o, BGR 32, BGR 33 and 'unknown'), in Awais-Dean 2012 for detailed information, including physical descriptions and dimensions, on the jewellery from the *Girona* shipwreck in the collections of the Ulster Museum, Belfast.
 - 29 Bray 1806, 20.
 - 30 Three designs for buttons: BM, SL.5308.149, SL.5308.132, SL.5308.134; and five designs for ornate buttons: BM, SL.5308.18, SL.5308.106, SL.5308.103, SL.5308.100, SL.5308.99, SL.5308.100.*; SL.5308.99.* (the last two are designs for halves relating to the previous two buttons). For more information on the history and contents of Sloane MS 5308, see Rowlands 1993, vol. 1, 152–76.
 - 31 Massinger, Middleton and Rowley 1656, 16; also cited in Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 24.
 - 32 This portrait by an unknown Anglo-Dutch artist is from the collection at Berkeley Castle, Berkeley, in Gloucestershire. It was exhibited in *Shakespeare: Staging the World*, 19 July–25 November 2012, at the British Museum, and is also in the accompanying publication: Bate and Thornton 2012, fig. 32.
 - 33 These figures have been taken from the statistical information provided in the Treasure Annual Reports but discount any objects contained in the reports that were deemed not to be Treasure, either because they did not have a precious metal content of at least 10 per cent or because they were not at least 300 years old.
 - 34 Information taken from finds.org website, date accessed 26 November 2022.
 - 35 Robbins 2012, 25–7, 36–48.
 - 36 Information from finds.org website, date accessed 26 November 2022.
 - 37 Forsyth 2005, 40–1.
 - 38 Robbins 2012, 25–9.
 - 39 This connection seems to have first been proposed by Ivor Noël Hume in Noël Hume 1969, 89, fig. 22. David Gaimster and Dora Thornton put forward this theory with the first recorded Treasure example of this type found in Rochester, Kent, in the *Treasure Annual Report*, 2001 (BM, 2002.0711.1). Michael Lewis acknowledges that the motif did appear prior to the 1662 marriage but seems to have had religious connections (Lewis 2013). This association is not confirmed, however, and, in the absence of any known documentary sources, this is mere hypothesis. Brian Read also acknowledges that this link between the motif and the royal marriage is only supposition (personal correspondence, 27 August 2015). Nevertheless, the objects reported through Treasure do appear to date from the late 17th century and, even if the motif has a longer history, it is not implausible for it to have been adopted to commemorate the royal marriage.
 - 40 Lewis has analysed finds bearing this 'crown and heart' motif up to 31 December 2012 and has identified three additional types to those listed above: clasped hands above two flaming hearts; two cherubs supporting a crown over a flaming heart; and a quatrefoil with four loops between which sit four hearts: Lewis 2013.
 - 41 2011T279 is this latter example. The other buttons are: 2010T146; 2010T312; 2011T239; 2013T164; 2013T231; 2016T597. Information taken from the finds.org website, date accessed 26 November 2002.
 - 42 The findspot for both copper-alloy buttons is Cundall, North Yorkshire, although they were discovered by two separate finders in September 2003 and April 2004.
 - 43 Howell 1660, section xxxiii, unnumbered pages.
 - 44 'Household Inventory of Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex (1596–1646)', 1646, BL, Additional MS 46189, ff.150–65, f.150.
 - 45 Ibid., ff. 150–150v.
 - 46 Ibid., f.151. 'Clopes' probably refers to 'clasps' and these may have been associated with this particular cloak.
 - 47 Shirley 1869, 367.
 - 48 Kingsford 1925, vol. 1, 276.
 - 49 NAL, MSL 1982–30, ff.73r–73v. This particular section comes under the inventory that lists the 'apparell, fures and jewelles as be in the chardge of Thomas Gregory' taken on 17 August 1561, ff.38r–81v.
 - 50 Ibid., f.48r.
 - 51 Ibid.
 - 52 Ibid., f.51r.
 - 53 Ibid., ff.73r–73v.
 - 54 See Fig. 25 for the gold ornaments that adorn Pembroke's cloak and the buttons used to fasten its sleeves and the front of his doublet.
 - 55 'Inventario dei gioielli di Vincenzo Gonzaga', 16 December 1577, Archivio di Stato di Mantova, AG, b.400, ff.320r–v, illustrated in Venturelli 2005, figs 37–8.
 - 56 'Botoni d'oro no. 24 co[n] vno Rubino p[er] ciascheduno botone', 'Botoni d'oro no. uintiquatro co[n] quatro rubinetti p[er] botone', 'Botoni d'oro no. 53 smaltati de nero et bianco': Venturelli 2005, figs 37–8.
 - 57 Darlington 1967, 8–9, no. 12.
 - 58 A tippet could refer to either a short cloak usually made of fur or wool, or a piece of cloth hanging down from the sleeve.
 - 59 Ibid., 38, no. 65.
 - 60 For the term 'tache', see Chapter 2, note 105.
 - 61 Darlington 1967, 40, no. 68.
 - 62 Ibid. Elyn Belamy is in receipt of a great candlestick and saucer but there is no mention from what material these are made.
 - 63 Darlington 1967, 80, no. 144.

Notes to Chapter 5

- 1 Starkey 1998, no. 3263.
- 2 Cellini is one of a few Florentine goldsmiths mentioned by the author Giorgio Vasari who was brought to the court of Alessandro de' Medici (1510–1537): Vasari 1991, vol. 2, 735, note 22.
- 3 'Se usava in questo tempo alcune medagliette d'oro, che ogni signore e gentiluomo li piaceva fare scolpire in esse un suo capriccio o impresa; e le portavano nella berretta': Cellini 1973,

- book 1, XXXI; Cellini and Tassi 1833, vol. 1, 55. See also Cellini 1998, 52.
- 4 'Et in fra l'altre belle opere in nel tempo mio si usava di fare certe medagliette di oro sottilissime, per portare nelle berrette e ne' cappelli; et in queste medaglie si facevano drento figure di basso rilievo, e di mezzo rilievo, e tutte tonde, la qual cosa faceva un vedere bellissimo': Cellini 1857, 71–2.
 - 5 See, for example, Mary Neville, Lady Dacre, in the double portrait by Hans Eworth (NPG 6855).
 - 6 Hackenbroch 1996, fig. 2. Since this is the only publication to have dealt with the subject of hat ornaments as a distinct object type, it has become established as an authoritative voice. Its limitations are addressed later in this chapter in an attempt to provide a fuller understanding of the wearing of ornaments in the hat by men in the 16th century.
 - 7 Information taken from the Pierpont Morgan Library online catalogue record for MS M.801, <http://corsair.themorgan.org/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=146991> (accessed 30 August 2022).
 - 8 For the text of this chronicle and some colour and black-and-white plates, see Ferraiolo 1956. In particular, see no. 75, pp. 128–9 and plate 40 for the entry of Charles VIII into Naples.
 - 9 Guicciardini 1763, vol. 1, 233–4.
 - 10 Shaw 2010. See also Mallett and Shaw 2014, p. 26.
 - 11 <http://corsair.morganlibrary.org/msdescr/BBM0801a.pdf>, p. 2, Pierpont Morgan Library, Manuscript Descriptions MS M.801 (accessed 30 August 2022).
 - 12 Shaw 2010.
 - 13 Hackenbroch 1996, 90.
 - 14 'Ma à questi nostri te[m]pi dopo la venuta del Rè Carlo Ottoauo e di Lodouico XII in Italia, ogn'vn, che seguिताua la militia, imitando i Capitani Francesi, cercò di adornarsi di belle e pompose Imprese': Giovio 1559, A4v.
 - 15 Hackenbroch 1996, 90.
 - 16 Nederlands Scheepvaart Museum, Amsterdam, discussed and illustrated in Rodriguez-Salgado 1988, cat. 6.9 and fig. 116.
 - 17 Information taken from the Curator's Comments field in the online catalogue record for BM, 2001,0702.7.
 - 18 L.E.S.J. de Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, part II: *Prevues*, 3 vols (Paris, 1849–52), vol. 1, 181, 465, cited in Evans 1970, 79.
 - 19 BM, 1856, 0701.5210.
 - 20 Evans 1908, 102–3.
 - 21 Ibid., 117. The Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography underwent many name changes, until an amalgamation of its later incarnation as Department of Medieval and Modern Europe with the Department of Prehistory and Early Europe in 2003 led to the creation of the Department of Prehistory and Europe. It was renamed as Britain, Europe and Prehistory in 2013.
 - 22 Hackenbroch 1996.
 - 23 Bonhams 2009, 8. The jewel was later sold at 'Fine Jewellery', 9 December 2009, New Bond Street, London, lot no. 26, where it achieved a price of £48,000 including the buyer's premium.
 - 24 Hackenbroch 1996, 324.
 - 25 Starkey 1998, nos 3262, 3264. See also no. 3263, cited on p. 46.
 - 26 Giustinian 1854, vol. 2, 300 (Appendix 1).
 - 27 Psalm 138:2 of The Latin Vulgate version of the Bible. In English versions of the Bible this becomes Psalm 139:2.
 - 28 Mielich 1552–6. For a note of the gift by Ludwig I, see f.lv.
 - 29 'Mielich (or Muelich), Hans', in Newman 2005. The collar is currently within the Schatzkammer collections of the Munich Residenz, Germany: Evans 1970, 106.
 - 30 Tait 1963, 147–53, 147–8.
 - 31 According to Hackenbroch many of these English 'ornaments show a predominance of Old Testament themes'. She attributes this to a strong desire to avoid association with Catholic interpretations, as this was at a time when Henry VIII was embattled with the Pope over his wish to divorce his queen, Catherine of Aragon (1485–1536): Hackenbroch 1979, 281.
 - 32 'Pour son image avoit, en une platine d'or pesant soixante et huyt marcs, une figure d'esmail competent': Rabelais 1919, 41.
 - 33 Cited in Hackenbroch 1979, 17.
 - 34 A. Bertolotti, 'Le Arti Minori alla Corte di Mantova' in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, V (Milan, 1888), 496, cited in Hackenbroch 1996, 161, note 54.
 - 35 'embossing', in Newman 2005.
 - 36 Cellini 1857, 72–6.
 - 37 Translation author's own from *ibid.*, 76: 'Se questa opera fussi grande, o di marmo o di bronzo, condotta con questo bel disegno, la farebbe stupire il mondo, sì che di questa grandezza io la veggo tanto bella, che io non credo mai che quegli orefici antichi facessero tanto bene'.
 - 38 Tait 1986, vol. 1. More recently, two of these objects (WB.171 and WB.172) have been published in Thornton 2015, 204–11.
 - 39 An extract from Saul's debate with Christ (Acts 9:5), which translates to 'it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks', as cited in Thornton 2015, 204.
 - 40 Giansante 1975.
 - 41 Tait 1986, vol. 1, 61.
 - 42 See [http://sammlungenonline.albertina.at/?query=Inventarnummer=\[11159\]&showtype=record](http://sammlungenonline.albertina.at/?query=Inventarnummer=[11159]&showtype=record) (accessed 30 August 2022). See also Knab and Widauer 1993, cat. 27.
 - 43 Hackenbroch 1996, 56 and fig. 59.
 - 44 Tait 1962, 243.
 - 45 Ibid., 243.
 - 46 Tait 1986, vol. 1, 84.
 - 47 Ganz 1952.
 - 48 See the online collections record for object number MAR.M.283-1912, <https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/119032> (accessed 30 August 2022).
 - 49 Hackenbroch 1996, figs 95–6, 98–9. A set of three enamelled medallions (probably worn as hat badges, as identifiable by the pierced holes at the edges) were sold by Christie's Paris on 23 June 2014.
 - 50 Translation author's own from Bernard Palissy, *Les Oeuvres* (Paris, 1880), 374, cited in Hackenbroch 1996, 82: 'Je m'assure avoir vu donner pur trois sols la douzaine des figures d'enseignes que l'en portoit aux bonnets, lasquelles enseignes estoient si bieng labourées et leurs esmaux si bien parfondus sur le cuivre, qu'il n'y avoit nulle peinture si plaisante'. I am grateful to Corinne Thepaut-Cabasset for providing assistance with some of this translation.
 - 51 Hill 1917, 103.
 - 52 Molinier 1886, vii; Leino 2003, 20.
 - 53 Leino 2003, 21.
 - 54 Translation author's own from Piot 1879, 414–18, 414: 'On désigne sous le nom de *plaquettes*, parmi les amateurs, de petits bas-reliefs de bronze qui nous paraissent avoir eu pour objet de conserver le souvenir des ouvrages des meilleures orfèvres de la Renaissance italienne [...] *enseignes, impresse ou medagliette* que l'on attachait aux bonnets [...] On tirait de ces beaux ouvrages des empreintes en soufre, ou on les coulait en bronze, pour en garder la mémoire et pour servir de modèle et d'exemple'.
 - 55 Molinier 1886, viii–ix.
 - 56 Leino 2003, chapter 6. Of the 533 15th- and 16th-century Italian plaquettes in Leino's database, only 33 show any physical signs that they were used as hat ornaments: p. 131.
 - 57 There is limited documentary evidence of the lower classes wearing hat ornaments to embellish their headgear. For example, the Siennese baker Bartolomeo wore a gilded medallion in his straw hat: see 'Inventory of the baker Bartolomeo di Andrea, Archivio di Stato di Siena, Curia del Placito 279 (1591), f.111r., cited in Hohti 2017, 163.
 - 58 Arnold 1980, entry 171.
 - 59 BM, 2001,0701.1 and 2009,8037.1.
 - 60 Gaimster *et al.* 2002.
 - 61 Ibid., 157.
 - 62 Ibid., 169.
 - 63 These three objects have all been published in *ibid.*, 169–73, and the physical descriptions included here of these pieces have been adapted from this article.
 - 64 RCIN 403444; Gaimster *et al.* 2002, 173, fig. 19.
 - 65 Gaimster *et al.* 2002, 173.
 - 66 Ibid., 170–1, fig. 13.
 - 67 Howell 1660, section xxxiii, unnumbered pages.
 - 68 Bray 1806, 19.

Notes to Part III

- 1 Shepard 2003; Botelho 2009; Bailey and Hentschell 2010.
- 2 Burke 1980, 11. In her unpublished doctoral thesis Sarah Bercusson

examines the gift-giving of three female Hapsburg consorts at their respective Italian courts in the 16th century and writes that ‘Dependency in exchange for gifts and privileges is the key to understanding the complications innate in the construction and maintenance of the female court’: Bercusson 2009, 122, see also 17–18, 139–40. For more on gift-giving, see Mauss 1954 and Appadurai 2010. For literature specifically on the early modern period, see Davis 2000; Heal 2008; Howell 2010, 145–207.

- 3 *The Faerie Queene*, 6. Proem.1 – *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, ed. Edwin Greenlaw *et al.*, 11 vols (Baltimore, 1932–57), cited in Fumerton 1991, 29.
- 4 Burke 1980, 8–11, 11.

Notes to Chapter 6

- 1 Bellew 1954, 18.
- 2 De Voragine 1995, vol. 1, 238–40.
- 3 Bellew 1954, 18.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 22.
- 5 Kirchner 1945, 9.
- 6 Platerus (the Younger) 1937, 187, 206–7, 213; Harrison 1994, 103–11.
- 7 Adams 1995, 69.
- 8 Adams 2004.
- 9 Today, Queen Elizabeth II holds the position of head of the Order with several senior members of the royal family also being Knights of the Garter. An additional 24 knights are then chosen in recognition of their work.
- 10 ‘Privy Council Warrant to Sir Edward Cary, Master of the Jewel House, for Georges, Garters and Collars for the Prince of Wales and the King of Denmark to Be Made Knights of the Order of the Garter’, 7 June 1603, BL, Additional MS 29975, f.11.
- 11 *Perfect Catalogue* 1661, 28.
- 12 *Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter* 1724, vol. 2, 339–41.
- 13 See under the Curator’s Comments field for object number BM 1980,0201.1, where it states that the three differing garters have larger lettering and four cross dots. It is also worth noting that the Royal Collection collar (RCIN 441924) is formed of only 21 knots and garters but weighs 330z 10dwt, a practice that seems to have been introduced following the accession of James II in 1685.
- 14 See, for example, Starkey 1998, no. 2529, also cited on p. 20 in this volume.
- 15 Starkey 1998, 80, no. 2752, also cited on p. 25 in this volume.
- 16 The mantle, collar and Great George pendant were for solemn occasions.
- 17 Ashmole 1971, 203.
- 18 *Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*, vol. 1, 110.
- 19 Ashmole 1971, 221–2.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 222.
- 21 *Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*, vol. 1, 121.
- 22 See p. 71 in this volume.
- 23 Ashmole 1971, 220.
- 24 Scarisbrick 1994, 131. For further information on the return of the insignia, see Cheyney 1929, 13.
- 25 *The Statutes and Ordinances*, Article 38, cited in Ashmole 1971, Appendix.
- 26 Ashmole 1971, 233.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 226.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 228.
- 29 Anglo-Netherlandish School, *Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1532–1588)*, c. 1564. National Trust, Waddesdon Manor, 14.1996.
- 30 Ashmole 1971, 229.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 227.
- 32 Bellew 1954, 22.

Notes to Chapter 7

- 1 Gillis 1988, 76.
- 2 The phrase comes from a poem by Christine de Pizan.
- 3 Whythorne 1962, 158.
- 4 In May 1577 Whythorne married a spinster named Elizabeth Stoughton of St Martin-in-the-Fields. Given the nature of the text, with details of his amorous encounters divulged throughout, it is hard to imagine that Whythorne would purposely omit this defining moment in his life. One of the last events recorded in this book is the death of the Archbishop Parker, which occurred in 1575.

This work was therefore written at some stage between these two events, and so a definitive year of 1576 has been given by the editor of this particular edition.

- 5 Giese 2006, 139. A ‘iemowe’ is a ‘gimmel’ ring.
- 6 See p. 80 in this volume.
- 7 Correspondence from Erasmus to Willibald Pirckheimer dated 14 March 1525: ‘Quum Senae discederem ab eo, detractum e digito tradidit <Accipe> inquires <pignus amicitiae nunquam inter nos intermoriturae>’, cited in Schmitt 2009, 50, note 5; also pp. 9–11. For a translation, see Erasmus 1994, 66; Rowlands 1980, 50–4, fig. 2.
- 8 Sidney 1977, 814–15.
- 9 Between 1072 and 1076 William the Conqueror (1027/8–1087) issued an ordinance that discussed the jurisdiction of the English bishops. The subject is addressed in Morris 1967, 449–63. The relevant section of this ordinance states that any matters relating to the enforcement of marriage were to be dealt with in the church courts and this remained as such until the mid-19th century: see Sokol and Sokol 2003, 18. For work that covers the Diocese of London (including the City of London, Middlesex, Essex and parts of both Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire) during the period 1586 to 1611, see Giese 2006; for the Durham Consistory Court depositions from 1560 to 1630, see Rushton 1985–6; for ecclesiastical court depositions from the diocese of Canterbury from 1542 to 1602, see O’Hara 1992, 1–40; see also Ingram 1982; Houlbrooke 1985; for a wider view on marriage, how it was inextricably linked with ideas of community and kinship, and how tokens of all sorts could be used to define a bond see O’Hara 2002.
- 10 Whythorne 1962, 152–7.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 159.
- 12 Giese 2006, 86.
- 13 DL/C/213/831, cited in *ibid.*, 88.
- 14 Carlson 1994, 127.
- 15 Tusnothe v. Marden, (1565), MS.X.10.12, ff.182r–v, Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library, Canterbury, cited in O’Hara 1992, 21.
- 16 Whythorne 1962, 159–60. The source of this motto remains unknown.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 160.
- 18 Oman 1993, vi.
- 19 *Le Grand Frisson* was an exhibition held at Chaumet, Paris, in 2008, which brought together jewellery spanning 500 years up to the present day to explore the theme of love. Many of the objects included were from private collections and all demonstrated a broad range of love motifs used on jewellery: see Scarisbrick 2008. See also Bayer 2008.
- 20 See Thornton 2019, 190–4.
- 21 Scarisbrick 2007, 112–13; Bayer 2008, 102; Descatoire 2009, 60–3.
- 22 Syson and Thornton 2001, 65.
- 23 Bayer 2008, 100. See pp. 203–4 for a 13th-century view of the virtues of diamonds.
- 24 This posy is recorded by Joan Evans as being in a manuscript at Sion College: Evans 1931, 34.
- 25 ‘Commission of Inquiry of the Marriage of Lady Katherine Grey to Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford’, 12 September 1561, BL, Harley MS 6286, f.46v: from the Earl of Hertford’s examination at the Tower of London undertaken by William Marquis of Winchester (1474/5?–1572), Sir Richard Sackville (d. 1566), Sir Edward Warner (1511–1565) and William Rosewell (c. 1520–1566).
- 26 *Ibid.*, f. 48r: from Lady Katherine Grey’s examination at the Tower of London, undertaken by the same four that conducted the Earl’s interrogation.
- 27 Whythorne 1962, 162.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 164.
- 29 Gillis 1988, 33.
- 30 Shakespeare 1939, Act 5, Scene I, lines 151–4.
- 31 *Ibid.*, lines 170–1.
- 32 Wayne 2002, 288–315, 289–94.
- 33 Whythorne 1962, 152.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 153.
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 Gouge 1622, 210–11.
- 37 Gillis 1988, 76.
- 38 Whythorne 1962, 63.

- 39 Gillis 1988, 75.
 40 Ibid., 13.
 41 Rappaport 1989, 49.
 42 Ibid., 327.
 43 Whythorne 1962, 63.
 44 Gillis 1988, 54.
 45 Swinburne 1686.
 46 Giese 2006; O'Hara 1992.
 47 For a copy of the Commission of Inquiry, see BL, Harley MS 6286; the original document is a barely legible manuscript in the TNA, SP 46/10. For the establishment of the marriage in 1606, see Brydges's Edition of Collins's Peerage, vol. i, 173, cited in Ellis 1969, vol. 2, 290. Lord Beauchamp's 1604 appeal against the sentence of the Commission is in BL, Cottonian MS Vitellius C.XVI, ff.412, 458, 516 and 522. Sir Julius Caesar's notes of the reversal of the sentence can be found in BL, Lansdowne MS 732.
 48 Sokol and Sokol 2003, 74–5.
 49 Altieri 1995.
 50 Klapisch-Zuber 1985, 178–212, 181–7.
 51 Carlson 1994, 24.
 52 DL/C/216/234v, DL/C/216/251v and DL/C/216/293r, cited in Giese 2006, 138–9.
 53 Gillis 1988, 85, 104–5; Sokol and Sokol 2003, 75.
 54 Westermarck 1926, 225; and H.J. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 183, cited in Giese 2006, 156.
 55 Swinburne 1686, 7.
 56 Ibid., 209–10.
 57 Houlbrooke 1985, 344.
 58 DL/C/214/118, cited in Giese 2006, 139.
 59 Greene 1996, 170. A 'gimmon of gold' refers to a gimmel ring, which was usually made of two conjoined hoops that when made as one completed the form of the ring, and when separate often revealed otherwise hidden messages. This type of ring is discussed in full later in this chapter.
 60 *Book of Common Prayer* 1844, ff.97r–v.
 61 'There is a Vein of Blood which passeth from that fourth Finger unto the Heart, called *vena amoris*, Loves Vein': Swinburne 1686, 208.
 62 Rastell 1564, 163.
 63 Jones 1877, 289.
 64 Butler 1684, Part III, Canto II, 100.
 65 Jones 1877, 289, note 1.
 66 'Parishes: Stanford on Teme', *A History of the County of Worcester: volume 4* (1924), 341–5, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42907> (accessed 31 August 2022).
 67 The following portraits show women wearing a ring on the thumb: Hans Holbein, *Anne of Cleves* (1515–57), c. 1539, Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. 1348; Alonso Sanchez Coello, *Catalina Micaela de Austria, Duchess of Savoy*, 1584–5, Museo del Prado, Madrid, Po1139; Alonso Sánchez Coello, *The Infanta Isabel Clara Eugenia and Magdalena Ruiz*, 1585–8, Museo del Prado, Madrid, Po0861; Juan Pantoja de la Cruz, *The Infanta Isabel Clara Eugenia*, 1598–9, Museo del Prado, Madrid, Po0717; Juan Pantoja de la Cruz, *Margaret of Austria*, 1606, Museo del Prado, Madrid, Po2563; and Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Portrait of a Lady*, c. 1540, Winnipeg Art Gallery, G-73-51.
 68 DL/C/218/122 and DL/C/219/313v, cited in Giese 2006, 140.
 69 'A breefe Discourse of the speech & manner of the Departing out of this Life of the Lady Katherine wife to the Earle of Hertford, & Daughter to Henry: Gray: Duke of Suffolk then she being prisoner in the Towre the 27 of January 1567', BL, Harley MS 39, ff.373r–374v.
 70 Scarisbrick 2007, 81.
 71 BL, Harley MS 6286, f.44r; TNA, SP 46/10, f.24r; also cited in Ellis 1969, 290; Jones 1877, 412.
 72 A similar ring, formed of six flat gold hoops, was discovered in the tomb of Count Palatine Friedrich (1557–1597). It is now in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. T4231: see *Princely Magnificence* 1980, cat. 75d.
 73 BL, Harley MS 7650, f.5r; also published as Cavendish 1999, lines 153–5.
 74 Jones 1877, 295.
 75 For a reference to 'a playne hope like a wedding ryng', see Starkey 1998, no. 3214 cited on p. 20 of this volume.
 76 Gimmel rings formed of more than two hoops are more commonly referred to as puzzle rings (see p. 111 and **Figs 148–9**).
 77 'A loan exhibition' 1933, no. 503. The portrait is in the collection of the Mercers' Company, London.
 78 Discussed in Burgon 1839, vol. 1, 51–2 and illustrated in the same volume, 3.
 79 Another ring of a similar date bears the same inscription, but is simpler in that it is not set with gems and the hoops join to form clasped hands at the bezel: VAM 851–1871.
 80 Dryden 1690, 122.
 81 Dalton 1912, xlvii.
 82 Puttenham 1589, Lib. I, chapter XXX, 47.
 83 Cited in Jones 1877, 295, note 1. The word 'adamant' is an ancient term for a diamond and is from the Greek *adamas* meaning 'unconquerable' – see 'adamant' in Newman 2005, 12.
 84 The rings of the serjeants-at-law are dealt with in Chapter 8 in this volume.
 85 Note the anomalous example of a 19th-century serjeant's ring with a French inscription: BM, 1961.1202.16.
 86 Many rings are punched with a maker's mark on the inner face. While in the past these marks have been noted, scholarship was unable to sufficiently assign rings to particular makers. Work undertaken by the late Anthony Dove at the British Museum to identify these makers has allowed for many rings in the collection to be attributed to individual goldsmiths and therefore more accurately dated. Dove's work extended to the collections of the Museum of London and the V&A, and it is hoped that in the future a wider understanding of the extent of the work of English goldsmiths will be achieved.
 87 DL/C/214/552, cited in Giese 2006, 140.
 88 Scarisbrick 2007, 59–119.
 89 Ibid., 81. A gimmel ring whose bezel forms the *fede* motif and inscribed CLEMEN.KESSELER DEN-25.AUG.AD.1607 certainly alludes to being a wedding ring, but without an overt statement relating to marriage it cannot be ascribed as such: VAM 854–1871, see *Princely Magnificence* 1980, cat. 61.
 90 Shakespeare 1939, Act 5, Scene I, lines 147–9. The Braybrooke collection belonged to Richard Cornwallis Neville (1820–1861), 4th Baron Braybrooke. He was presented this ring by William Fuller Maitland on 14 March 1857. See Neville 1873, cat. 187.
 91 Wilson 1995.
 92 Whythorne 1962, 32–8.
 93 DL/C/213/829, cited in Giese 2006, 88.
 94 Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library, Canterbury, MS.J/J2 18, Colyer v. Porridge, (1596–7), cited in O'Hara 1992, 27.
 95 Butler 1684, Part III, Canto II, 100.
 96 Whythorne 1962, 75–6.

Notes to Chapter 8

- 'serjeant | serjeant, n.', OED Online, Oxford University Press, December 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/176417?redirectedFrom=serjeant> (accessed 19 December 2016).
- Baker 1984, v.
- Ibid., 67.
- Edward H. Warren traces the origins of the Order to at least as early as the reign of Henry II (r. 1154–1189) and names the 13 serjeants called by the sovereign: Warren 1942, 911–50, 919 and note 18. In the reigns of Edward III and Richard II, under which Chaucer lived, 57 and 21 serjeants were created, respectively (Warren 1942, note 14).
- Chaucer 2008, 9.
- See Warren 1942, note 14, where he has enumerated the serjeants for each reign from an alphabetical list of all serjeants created from 1164 until 1875, as cited in Pulling 1897, unpaginated pages following the table of contents.
- Dugdale 1666, 'Cronica Series', unpaginated.
- Nichols 1848, 26.
- 'Reports of Law Cases by William Bendlowes, Serjeant-at-Law; 25 Hen. VIII. - 21 Eliz. [1534–1579], with Index', BL, Additional MS 25189.
- Ibid., f.133r.
- 'Item I leave to the image of the said St Mary five gold rings which were left over when I gave gold in the lord king's court' ('Item lego ymagini sancte Marie predicte quinque anulos aureos qui remanserunt quando dedi aurum in curia domini regis'): London

- Records Office, Court of Hustings roll g6/101, cited and translated in Baker 1984, 94–5.
- 12 Emanuel 2008.
 - 13 Ibid., 3. Emanuel uses information provided by Baker on the estimated amounts of gold used in the rings (from half to one ton) and calculates the number of rings made by taking 70 grains as an average weight per ring: see Baker 1984, 465.
 - 14 See Warren 1942, note 14.
 - 15 Windsor Castle, Inventory of Jewels (1897), f.457 (Sundries etc.), cited in Emanuel 2008, 5, note 11.
 - 16 Caution is advised with taking this example as being indicative of attitudes in the 16th and early 17th centuries, for the Order ceased to exist beyond 1875 and therefore Victoria may have considered the rings as mere tokens of an outmoded institution.
 - 17 Dugdale 1666, 116–17. The serjeants admitted on this occasion were William Rudhale, John Fitz-Jamys, John Porte, Thomas Faierfax, John Spilman, John Broune, William Shelley, Thomas Willughby, Robert Norwich and Thomas Inglefeld.
 - 18 Herbert 1804, 361.
 - 19 Dugdale 1666, 116–17.
 - 20 Ibid., 129, 131–5. The draper was Mr Albany of Watling Street.
 - 21 Ibid., 130.
 - 22 Both rings are published in Emanuel 2008, cats 13–14. No. 13 is VAM M.54–1960 and it has a diameter of 21mm and height of 6mm. No. 14 is in a private collection and was first published in the Inner Temple Year Book (2004/5), 53, with Emanuel noting that Baker commented on the lightweight nature of this ring.
 - 23 Baker 1984, 97.
 - 24 There is no mention of serjeants' rings in Tait 2008, Scarisbrick 1994 or Scarisbrick 2007.
 - 25 For the period under consideration here, the only female rulers were Mary I and Elizabeth I, although note that the earliest record of the sovereign being given rings by the serjeants dates to 1555.
 - 26 J.P. Dawson, *The Oracles of the Law* (1968), 14, 17, 23, cited in Baker 1984, 4.
 - 27 Warren 1942, 940 and note 58.
 - 28 Baker 1984, 468.
 - 29 'Tout temps prist' (Always ready) appears on a ring of 1853 in the British Museum (1961.1202.16), while Emanuel 2008, cat. 86 is another example in French belonging to the Inner Temple. Emanuel also states that there was one motto in English and at the last call the motto was in German, 3.
 - 30 Broad dating of these rings can also be achieved by examining the script of the motto. Early rings and those of the first half of the 16th century have mottoes in a Lombardic script; this is then followed by Roman capitals, which continue to be used until a cursive script is adopted from the 18th century onwards.
 - 31 Note that of these rings published by Emanuel, cats 3, 4 and 5 are all similar in style and appear to date from the late 15th century. Cat. 6 was discovered in 2002 and is of the same style but its current whereabouts is unknown so further comparison is not possible.
 - 32 Dyer and Vaillant 1794, vol. 1, O3r. I was alerted to the existence of this manuscript by Tim Thorpe, Collections Officer at the Lynn Museum, Norfolk, as a copy of the relevant page from a Latin edition of Dyer's *Reports* (1666) is kept on the object file for the Lynn Museum ring.
 - 33 Dyer and Vaillant 1794, vol. 1, O3r. I would like to thank Arlene Holmes-Henderson for assisting with this translation.
 - 34 Noted in the object's acquisition record held in the Department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory at the British Museum.
 - 35 BM, AF.1231: the inscription is spelt 'Feare God Only' and is placed on the inner surface of the hoop.
 - 36 For example, the mark of the goldsmith Richard Dipple (active from 1778) is present on four extant rings with the motto 'Reverentia Legum' (Respect of the law), which was used at the call of February 1787: see Emanuel 2008, cats 39–42. Two of the rings are in private collections, while one is in the British Museum (AF.1748) and one is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (M.57–1960).
 - 37 Emanuel 2008, cats 8–10.
 - 38 'Dabit aurum secundum consuetudinem regni': Fortescue and Chrimes 1942, 122–3.
 - 39 'quilibet eorum dabit anulos de auro ad valenciam in toto xli^a librarum ad minus monete Anglie': *ibid.*
 - 40 *Ibid.*, 123–5.
 - 41 I Modern, Case 30 (Mich.), cited in *Notes and Queries*, 1852, 181; Warren 1942, note 58.
 - 42 Dugdale 1666, 131.
 - 43 BL, Additional 25189, ff.131v.–132r.
 - 44 There were no creations in 1608. From 1609 until Howard's death in June 1614 five men were created serjeants-at-law: in 1609, John Denham and Edward Bromley; in 1610, the Recorder of London, Henry Mountagu; in 1611, William Methwoud; and in 1612, John Davis. The next creation took place on 23 June 1614, seven days after Howard's death. Information taken from Dugdale 1666, Appendix 'Cronica Series', unpaginated.
 - 45 Shirley 1869, 350.

Notes to Chapter 9

- 1 Dalton 1912, no. 620.
- 2 Tait 2008, 229.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 229–30; Scarisbrick 1993, 9.
- 4 Tait 2008, 230.
- 5 Rogers 1931, 10.
- 6 37 Edw.III c.7; Forbes 1999, 19.
- 7 Collier 1851, vol. 2, 87, 89.
- 8 The term para-heraldry was coined and brought to my attention by Dr Clive Cheesman, Richmond Herald at the College of Arms, London, to whom I am grateful for discussing with me the main debates concerning heraldry, as well as for introducing me to the College of Arms' manuscript collection.
- 9 Translated in *The Boke of St Albans* (1486), BL G.10547, cited in Marks and Payne 1978, 13 and cat. 40.
- 10 See the letter in the object file for BM, 1927.0216.57 (**Fig. 120**) dated 20 October 1986 to Iona Cairns of Sotheby's, Bond Street, from Patric L. Dickinson, Clarenceux King of Arms then Rouge Dragon Pursuivant, in which he states that 'it was often the case that a whole branch of a family descended from a second son would bear such a mark on their arms as a more or less permanent mark of difference'.
- 11 Burke 1834, vol. 1, 317.
- 12 The motto appears in the form 'Comminus quo minus' in Claude Paradin's collection of imprese and relates to an anecdote in Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconica* 234c–d, about a Spartan whose shield design was a (life-size) fly. While others mocked that this was for him to go unnoticed, the Spartan responded that in fact he fought so close to the enemy that even this small design would be seen. The motto is best translated as 'how much the lesser, so much the nearer' and this may have been used by Wilbraham in reference to the wolf's head on a small canton that appears on his shield, as visible on the ring and portrait (**Figs 120, 122**). I am very grateful to Dr Clive Cheesman for offering the Latin translation, the reference to Plutarch and for providing this full explanation.
- 13 Now in a private collection, it was sold at auction on 11 April 1997, 'British Pictures', sale 5774 (lot 56) Christie's, London, King Street, http://www.christies.com/lotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=184340 (accessed 3 September 2022).
- 14 The arms of the Wilbraham family are illustrated in Burke 1834, vol. 1, 315.
- 15 In the object file for BM 1927.0216.57 is a letter dated 17 February 1987 from Susan Pritchard, former Curator of Nantwich Museum, to Judy Rudoe of the British Museum with which is enclosed a copy of the will of Richard Wilbraham dated 30 October 1611. A note on the first page of the transcription states that the will was transcribed at the Cheshire Record Office on 16 June 1986. The reference to the gold and crystal armorial signet ring appears on page 2 of the transcription.
- 16 The ring was sold in London in 1986: see Sotheby's 1986, lot 205. See the letter in the object file for BM 1927.0216.57 dated 17 February 1987 from Susan Pritchard, then Curator of Nantwich Museum, to Judy Rudoe of the British Museum in which she confirms the purchase of this gold signet ring.
- 17 Oman 1993, 11, although Oman notes that the bezel of this particular ring was set instead with a white sapphire: see Edmund Waterton, *Dactylotrocha Watertoniana: a descriptive catalogue of the finger-rings in the collection of Mrs Waterton* [manuscript] (1866), no. 249, currently in the NAL, Manuscript MSL/1879/1275; Scarisbrick 2007, 31.

- 18 Neville 1873, no. 1.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Pictorial evidence seems to indicate that such rings were worn on the index finger but without written evidence to support this theory it is difficult to know whether this is merely convention of portraiture. See, for example, **Figs 127–8**.
- 21 I am grateful to Joanna Whalley (formerly V&A) for this information on the application of colours.
- 22 VAM M.219–1975 and VAM 736–1871.
- 23 Bonhams 2005, sale 12061, lot 29, <https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/12061/lot/29/> (accessed 3 September 2022). The current location of this ring is unknown.
- 24 Lipscomb 1847, vol. 1, 519.
- 25 'Parishes : Tythingham with Filgrave', in Page 1927, 482–5, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol4/pp482-485> (accessed 3 September 2022).
- 26 Meeting with Clive Cheesman, Richmond Herald at the College of Arms, London, 27 January 2010.
- 27 VAM 841–1871; Scarisbrick 1994, 150; Oman 1993, no. 559 and pl. 24; Oman 1974, pl. 45 A & D, p. 105.
- 28 Scarisbrick 2007, 39.
- 29 See the object record on the V&A's Search the Collection: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O62552/the-darnley-ring-ring-unknown/> (accessed 10 September 2022).
- 30 BM, AF.787.
- 31 The Victoria and Albert Museum also has a ring of this type, combining the practical function of a merchant's signet with the more spiritual aspect of a memento mori jewel: VAM M.18–1929.
- 32 Franchi 2006.
- 33 Wilbraham 1902, 61.
- 34 Ailes 2006.
- 35 Ibid., 105–6.
- 36 Cust 2007, 25–34.
- 37 'Middlesex Sessions Rolls: 1606', in Jeaffreson 1887, 15–25, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/middx-county-records/vol2/pp15-25> (accessed 10 September 2022).
- 38 *Princely Magnificence* 1980, no. 30.
- 39 Chandler 1964, 1968, vol. 1, 23.
- 40 'Gresham, Sir Thomas (c.1518–1579)', Blanchard 2004.
- 41 Scarisbrick 1993, 48; Scarisbrick 1994, 150. In *Rings* (1993), Scarisbrick does mention a recent discovery of a crystal signet of Sir William Filding (will proved on 29 November 1547: see TNA PROB 11/31/690), although it is not clear if this is also engraved on the reverse with a grasshopper. She makes no mention of it in subsequent publications or in personal correspondence dated 15 February 2012.
- 42 The bequest comprised a plain gold ring inscribed 'C.G. Concordia fratri 4. Ja 1583' (inv. no. 30.236.3), a plain gold ring inscribed 'God increase our love' (inv. no. 30.236.4), and portraits of Edward Goodman (1476–1560) (NMW A 3450), Godfrey Goodman (1583–1656) (NMW A 3452) and Gawen Goodman (1526–1604) (NMW A 3453): private correspondence with Elen Phillips, Curator: Costume & Textiles at St Fagans, National History Museum, Cardiff, on 14 February 2012. For a discussion of how the rings became the property of the Hon. Mrs Lawrence Brodrick, see Hemp 1925, 404–5.
- 43 Hemp 1925, 404.
- 44 Ibid., 406.
- 45 Christie's 1977, lot 1, colour frontispiece and pl. 1.
- 46 Scarisbrick 1993, 48. The Taylor ring was sold in London in 1978: see Christie's 1978, lot 1. It is mentioned in Scarisbrick 1993, 48, and later illustrated in Scarisbrick 1995, 33.
- 47 *Princely Magnificence* 1980, no. 30; Awais-Dean, 'Grasshopper signet ring', in Cooper 2013, cat. 58, 160.
- 48 Christie's 1977, lot. 1.
- 49 *Princely Magnificence* 1980, no. 30.
- 50 'Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries: 1717–1751 with a List of Members to 1758, and of Purchases and Donations to 1753', vol. 1. BL, Egerton MS 1041, f. 274r, p. 503.
- 51 Christie's 1977, lot. 1. At the sale of the Taylor ring the following year, the same information on the Tremayne ring is given: Christie's 1978, lot 1.
- 52 'Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries', *The Antiquaries Journal*, X, no. 3 (July 1930), 303–14, 304, cited in Scarisbrick 1997, 57.
- 53 Wingfield 1999a; Wingfield 1999b.
- 54 'A loan exhibition' 1933, nos 477–9.
- 55 Annotations to Hemp 1925, 408.
- 56 'A loan exhibition' 1933, no. 478.
- 57 Chandler 1964, 1968, vol. 1, 40.
- 58 Hemp 1925, 407; *Princely Magnificence* 1980, no. 30.
- 59 Chandler 1964, 1968, vol. 1, 40–1.
- 60 Information on the movements of the archive from personal correspondence with Maria Sienkiewicz, Group Archivist, Barclays Group Archives, on 16 March 2012.
- 61 'Signet Ring Offered to the Bank' in *Minutes of the London Board of Martin's Bank*, 18 June 1947, BGA, ref. 38/665, f. 1.
- 62 'Will of Edmond Tremayne of Collocombe, Devon', 3 December 1582, TNA, PROB 11/64/534, ff. 350v–352r.
- 63 *Minutes of the London Board of Martin's Bank*, 18 June 1947, BGA, ref. 38/665, f. 1.
- 64 *Minutes of the London Board of Martin's Bank*, 25 July 1947, BGA, ref. 38/665, f. 3.
- 65 'A Gresham relic' 1947, 28–9.
- 66 Ibid., 28.
- 67 Hemp 1925.
- 68 Scarisbrick 1978, 300.
- 69 'Office-Holders: Clerks of the Privy Council (1540–1644)', List of appointments, provisional list compiled by J.C. Sainty, April 2004, <http://www.history.ac.uk/resources/office/privycounc> (accessed 20 December 2016).
- 70 'Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries', BL, Egerton MS 1041, f. 274r, p. 503.
- 71 *Princely Magnificence* 1980, no. 30.
- 72 Annotations to Hemp 1925, 408.
- 73 'Letter from Mrs Canavan to Timothy Wilson', 3 July 1982, personal correspondence archive, Department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory, British Museum.

Notes to Case Study I

- 1 Smith 1969, xix.
- 2 Ibid., ix.
- 3 Ibid., xxiii.
- 4 Ibid., 63–4.
- 5 Ibid., 67.
- 6 Ibid., 62.
- 7 Ibid., 68.

Notes to Case Study II

- 1 Russell only held the role of warden of the stannaries until 1580.
- 2 'stannary, n.', OED Online, Oxford University Press, December 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/189018?rskey=JfgAL3> (accessed 10 September 2022).
- 3 Nicholls and Williams 2004.
- 4 Bate and Thornton 2012, 233. There is further discussion here on the colonisation of Roanoke Island.
- 5 NPG 7.
- 6 Numbering begins at (1) Raleigh, (2) Stockhay, (3) Peverell, (4) Lamborne, (5) Beaupel, (6) D'Amory (?), (7) unidentified, (8) Clare, (9) Fitzhamon, (10) Marshall, (11) Clare (co. Pembroke), (12) Peverell, (13) Colleton, (14) Newton, (15) Dawnay, (16) Ferrers: see 'Reports and Transactions of the Devonshire Association', xxxii, 309ff. for information on the Raleigh pedigree, cited in Tonnochy 1952, cat. 348.
- 7 NPG D25421.
- 8 Edwards 1868, vol. II: Letters, 496.

Notes to Chapter 10

- 1 Tourneur 1611, D3.
- 2 Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*, Act V, Scene III, lines 108–12, 118–20, in Shakespeare 1999, 782.
- 3 Bowle 1615, Fir. The mausoleum still stands today in Flitton and is a Grade I-listed building holding 21 monuments of the De Grey family.
- 4 Ibid., Fir.
- 5 'The testament of John Leek of Boston (mercator), 19 August 1527' [Lincoln Court Consistory Wills, 1520–31, f. 108] 'Lincoln wills: 1527 (July–December)', in Foster 1918, 35–58, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/lincoln-wills/vol2/pp35-58> (accessed 10 September 2022).

- 6 Straton 1909, vol. 2, 556.
- 7 Ibid., 557–8.
- 8 Ibid., 558.
- 9 ‘Ricordi, sono tre anelli l’uno con l’altro incatenati, i quali portandoli nel dito, uno d’essi si lascia pendolone, per ricordarsi di qualche cosa; Une souvenance, sont trois anneaux attachez l’un dans l’autre, lesquels portez au doigt, on en laisse pendiller un, pour se souvenir de quelque chose’ (Memories, they are three rings enchain’d with one another, which wearing them on the finger, one of them you leave hanging to remind yourself of something): Howell 1660, Section 34 ‘Womens Apparel’.
- 10 Cotgrave 1611, ‘souvenance’.
- 11 Of the puzzle rings that have a production date of the 17th to the 19th centuries, three have been dated to the 17th century, two to the 18th century, and two to the 19th century.
- 12 Ward *et al.* 1981, pl. 227. The authors state that in Edmund Waterton, *Dactyliotheca Watertoniana: a descriptive catalogue of the finger-rings in the collection of Mrs Waterton* [manuscript] (1866), NAL, Manuscript MSL/1879/1275, Waterton gives as the purpose of puzzle rings the explanation offered by Fortunio Liceti of Genoa in *De annulis antiquis liber singularis* (Udine 1645) as mnemonic or memory rings.
- 13 For more information on the gimmel ring, see Chapter 7 in this volume.
- 14 Nicholas Hookes, *Amanda, a Sacrifice to an Unknown Goddess, Or, A Free-will Offering of a Loving Heart to a Sweet-heart* (London, 1653), cited in ‘mourning, n.1’, OED Online, Oxford University Press, December 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/122947?redirectedFrom=mourning+ring> (accessed 10 September 2022).
- 15 Shakespeare gave this sum of money to four of his Stratford-upon-Avon friends: Hamlet Sadler (d. 1624), William Reynolds (1575–1633), Anthony Nash (d. 1622) and Thomas Nash (1593–1647). His London colleagues John Heminges (d. 1630), Richard Burbage (1568–1619) and Henry Condell (1576–1627) each received the same sum of money for the same purpose. ‘The will of William Shakespeare’, TNA, PROB 1/4, discussed in Cooper 2006, cats 92a–c.
- 16 Nichols and Bruce 1863, 43–4.
- 17 Lady Anne Emily Newdigate-Newdegate, *Gossip from a Muniment Room: Being Passages in the Lives of Anne and Mary Fytton, 1574 to 1618. Transcribed and Edited by Lady Newdigate-Newdegate*, 2nd edn (London, 1898), 157, cited in Scarisbrick 1994, 105–6.
- 18 ‘Will of Roger Corbett’, 1 February 1539, TNA, PROB 11/27/408, f.194v.
- 19 BM, 1961.1202.4.
- 20 BM, AF.1525.
- 21 Lewis 2010, no. 443.
- 22 Bannerman 1917, 35. I am grateful to David Taylor for alerting me to this reference.
- 23 ‘Will of Sir Francis Vincent of Stoke D’Abernon, Surrey’, 29 June 1670, TNA, PROB 11/333/253, ff.67r–69r, f.68v. I am grateful to David Taylor for alerting me to this reference. See also the report on Sir Francis Vincent by David Taylor, local historian of Cobham, dated 10 September 2008, to be found on the Portable Antiquities Scheme website for object record SUR-676831 A POST MEDIEVAL RING, <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/231085> (accessed 10 September 2022), although Taylor’s transcription for this document is not entirely accurate.
- 24 Email correspondence with Sue Webber, Collections Officer, Elmbridge Museum, on 10 January 2012 confirms the weight of the ring as 3.4g and that a local jeweller believes it to be of 24 carats.
- 25 The average life expectancy in London was between 30 and 40 years: Forsyth and Bryson 2005, 62. See also Rappaport 1989, 69–71, particularly p. 69 where he cites data from Finlay 1981, 100, 108, table 5.16 (four London parishes), and 92, table 5.5 (elsewhere in England) to show that in poorer London parishes life expectancy was 20 to 25 years, half that of the rest of England, while in richer parishes life expectancy was about 30 to 35 years.
- 26 For a fuller discussion of the Palmerston gold chocolate cups (BM, 2005.0604.1&2), see Awais-Dean 2012, 268–9.
- 27 BM, AF.2971: the inscription reads ‘COGITA. MORI VT VITAS*’ (Think on death so that you may live).
- 28 BM, WB.240 and AF.2970.
- 29 VAM 3581–1856.
- 30 Nichols and Bruce 1863, 88. The editors speculate that the author of the will is possibly the poet and writer, John Davies of Hereford (1564/5–1618).
- 31 ‘A Breefe Discourse of the Speeche & Manner of [Th]e Departing out of This Life of the Lady Katherine’, 27 January 1576, BL, Harley MS 39, ff.373r–374v. This narrative can also be found in BL, Cotton Titus MS 107. This text seems to have provided the basis for a poem written by the author Thomas Churchyard (1523?–1604) entitled ‘A dollfull discourse of a Lady and Knight’ (1572): see Schutte 1984. For more information regarding the circumstances of Katherine Grey’s imprisonment, see Chapter 7 in this volume.
- 32 Information on Owen Hopton of Cockfield Hall, Yoxford in Suffolk, taken from Doran 2004.
- 33 ‘A Breefe Discourse’, BL, Harley MS 39, f.373r. The section discussing the rings can also be found in Churchyard’s narrative poem. See Churchyard 1575, ff.27r–38r.
- 34 For more information on the Holbein painting, see Foister, Ashok and Wyld 1997; North 2004; Rowlands 1985.
- 35 Thomas 2009, Chapter 7 ‘Fame and the Afterlife’, 226–67.
- 36 Weever 1601, F2.
- 37 Thomas 2009, 235–7, 242–3.
- 38 Ibid., 240.
- 39 ‘To Alys Arley my wyffys wedding ryng, and a ambre that standyth in the smalle ale buttre, and all the ix shelffes that be there, and a long table and the trestyls that is in the halle, and a carpyt cloth, a chare in the haule, a blak chyst carvyd in the chamber, ij formys, ij bed stedes and all the payntyd clothys in the chamber, and a pendent and a bokyll off sylver for a gyrdyll’: ‘The testament of John Leek of Boston, mercer’.
- 40 Hayward 1986, 227–37 and pl. LXXXII–LXXXVIII.
- 41 Somers Cocks 1980, 3.
- 42 Justinian 1854, vol. 1, 160.
- 43 See Constant German Bapst, *Histoire des joyaux de la couronne de France d’apres des documents inédits...Ouvrage orné de cinquante gravures* (Paris, 1889), 3, cited in Somers Cocks 1980, 3.
- 44 For example, the Hunsdon Jewels which were gifts from Elizabeth I to Henry Carey (1526–1596), 1st Baron Hunsdon. The girdle prayer book, bracelet, cameo and ship pendant remain as heirlooms within the Berkeley family and are on loan to the V&A, where they are displayed in the British Galleries.
- 45 M. Oppenheim (ed.), *The Naval Tracts of Sir William Monson* (Navy Recs Society, 1902–14), vol. 1, 102, 111, cited in Thomas 2009, 257.
- 46 Shakespeare, *All’s Well That Ends Well*, Act IV, Scene II, lines 40–1, 42–5, cited in Shakespeare 1999. Subsequent references within the text relate to this edition. Lineation is indicated by square brackets within the main body of text.
- 47 See Sullivan 2005, 44–64.
- 48 Berkeley and Keese 1991, 247–58, 248.
- 49 Andrew Boorde, *A Compendious Regyment or a dyetary of Helth* (1542), EETS, Extra Series 10, chapter 3, 235, cited in Berkeley and Keese 1991, 248. See also Boorde 1547, Aiiiv.
- 50 Sullivan 2005, 56.
- 51 Ibid., 57.
- 52 Friedman 1995, 85.
- 53 See Appendix B in this volume for selected extracts from this testamentary document.
- 54 See NPG 665.
- 55 Zim 2004. The ring and chain are discussed in Sackville’s will.
- 56 ‘Will of Thomas Sackville’, 31 January 1609, TNA, PROB 11/113/77, ff.2r–26r, f.15v.
- 57 In a codicil appended to the will, Sackville then declares his wife Cicely as his sole executor: TNA, PROB 11/113/77, f.17v.
- 58 Ibid., ff.3v–4r.
- 59 Venturelli 2005, fig. 38.
- 60 Gere and Tait 1984, vol. 1, cat. 282.
- 61 Zim 2007, 893. The article explores the religious stance of Sackville in a period when the terms ‘Protestant’ and ‘Catholic’ were subject to multiple meanings.
- 62 Raber 2011, 159.
- 63 There are versions of this painting in the collections of Royal Museums Greenwich and Woburn Abbey.
- 64 Raber states that while men did incorporate pearls into their

- clothing, lengths of pearls draped around the neck were more the preserve of English noblewomen: *ibid.*, 165.
- 65 TNA, PROB 11/113/77, f.11r.
- 66 RH marginalia: 'fashioned like the true SS haue in euerie one of them The diamondes good other twelue of a lesser sorte of the said fortie eight peeces being fashioned ouall wise haue in euery one of them two diamondes and twentie fower peeces of a saied lesser sorte of the said fortie eighte peeces being'.
- 67 TNA, PROB 11/113/77, f.11r.
- 68 *Ibid.*
- 69 *Ibid.*
- 70 'Will of Robert Sackville', 11 March 1609, TNA PROB 11/113/239.
- 71 Collins 1727, 448.
- 72 TNA, PROB 11/113/77, f.11v.
- 73 *Ibid.*, f.12r.
- 74 *Ibid.*
- 75 *Ibid.*, f.12v.
- 76 For new discussions on the significance of the Lyte Jewel in the context of the culture of gift-giving in the Jacobean court, the importance of the tablet in this period and the possibility of the king's jeweller George Heriot being the maker of this jewel, see Hunt, Thornton and Dalglish 2016, 185–97. The jewel has been discussed more recently in Thornton 2017, 192–4.
- 77 The genealogy is described and recorded in Lyte's own hand on the flyleaf of a small volume written to accompany the visual source: 'Britaines Monarchie', 1605, British Library, Additional MS 59741, as cited in Tait 1986, vol. 1, 183. Lyte's father was Henry Lyte (1529?–1607), author of *The Light of Britayne: a Recorde of the Honorable Originall and Antiquitie of Britaine* (1588), a copy of which was presented to Elizabeth I in November 1588 when she went to St Paul's to give thanks for success in the Armada campaign. Tait speculates whether Thomas Lyte's interest in the subject of genealogy was fostered by his father's work: *ibid.*, vol. 1, 179; Boulger and McConnell 2004. For new insights into the genealogy and in particular in relation to contemporary discussions on the Anglo-Scottish union and the Stuart successions, see Hunt, Thornton and Dalglish 2016, 169–84.
- 78 'The Lyte Pedigree', BL, Additional MS 48343. Also illustrated in Thornton 2015, 236, fig. 2; Tait 1986, vol. 1, figs 162–4.
- 79 Tait 1986, vol. 1, 179, 183–7. This was one of a few genealogies presented to the king soon after his accession that would have served not only to gain favour at court for the author but also spoke to the contemporary concerns of an Anglo-Scottish union and Stuart succession – see Hunt, Thornton and Dalglish 2016, 180.
- 80 For information on the intellectual context of this object and its transfer from James I to Lyte, see Bate and Thornton 2012, 208–11.
- 81 'Will of Thomas Lyte, Gentleman of Saint Clement Danes, Middlesex', 16 November 1748, TNA, PROB 11/765/492, cited in Tait 1986, vol. 1, 177.
- 82 Tait 1986, vol. 1, 179.
- 83 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 177; Hunt, Thornton and Dalglish 2016, 199; Thornton 2015, 240. The Waddesdon Bequest was left to the British Museum by Baron Ferdinand Rothschild in 1898 and it is comprised of almost 300 items once housed in the 'New Smoking Room' at Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire. The collection includes the types of objects that would have suited a Renaissance *Kunst-* or *Schatzkammer*. For more on the Waddesdon Bequest, see Tait 1981; Thornton 2001; Thornton 2015; Shirley and Thornton 2017.
- 84 It is evident from the portrait that a trilobed drop set with diamonds hung originally at the base of the pendant. Following its loss, at some point in the 19th century a pendant pearl was added as

a replacement. This was later removed to preserve the integrity of the jewel. See Tait 1986, vol. 1, 174.

Notes to Conclusion

- 1 Clifford Smith 1908, xxxiii.
- 2 *Ibid.*, xxxvii.
- 3 Evans 1970, 39.

Notes to Postscript

- 1 There were 1,079 drawings discovered at this time. See Truman 2012, 95–151, 98; Truman 1979.
- 2 Truman 2012, 98.
- 3 Drayman-Weisser and Wypyski 2005, 81.
- 4 For more on Spitzer's career, see Cordera 2017.
- 5 Truman 2012, 96; Truman 2000, 82–3.
- 6 See Kugel, Distelberger and Bimbenet-Privat 2000.
- 7 Drayman-Weisser and Wypyski 2005, 81–2.
- 8 Truman 2012, 99.
- 9 Paulus Rainer has recently noted that 'In fact, there is probably no museum of significance that does not have fake (or at the very least questionable) works of art among its holdings', see Rainer 2017.
- 10 Truman 2012, cat. 26, pp. 105–7.
- 11 Thornton 2001, 192.
- 12 See Drayman-Weisser and Wypyski 2005, 90–101 for a discussion of their scientific analysis, results and conclusions on pieces within the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.
- 13 Truman 2000, 82.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Email communication, January 2019.
- 16 Email communication with Max Michelson on 2 October 2018.

Notes to Appendix A

- 1 LH marginalia: one of these Six geuen to the christening of mistress Rachell Hopthones child by my La[*die*] poiz xi oz q[uar]tr.
- 2 LH marginalia: *note* that the knobbes & litel chaynes do lock & iiii lynkes.
- 3 LH marginalia: *note* that the knobbes, knott & iiii linkes.
- 4 LH marginalia: *note* that he is but xiii dyamondes & Dyreck had the {xx}st to make my Lordes chaynes.
- 5 LH marginalia: my Lord at the Court.
- 6 LH marginalia: The pearles be Lost.
- 7 LH marginalia: at the Court.
- 8 LH marginalia: at the court.
- 9 LH marginalia: These Diamoendes are in my Lordes collar of Diamondes.
- 10 LH marginalia: at the Court.
- 11 LH marginalia: at the Court.

Notes to Appendix B

- 1 His wife, Cicely.
- 2 RH marginalia: fashioned like the true SS haue in euerie one of them The diamondes good other twelue of a lesser sorte of the said fortie eight peeces being fashioned ouall wise haue in euery one of them two diamondes and twentie fower peeces of a saied lesser sorte of the said fortie eighte peeces being.
- 3 RH marginalia: And sett round over all the whole ring w[i]th diamonds to the nomber of twentie all so the said picture of the late famous Queene Elizabeth and also the said ring of gold enameled blacke.
- 4 LH marginalia: the true name of the Colledge.

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