

Victoria & Albert Art & Love

Love and art: Queen Victoria's personal jewellery

Charlotte Gere

Essays from a study day held at the National Gallery,
London on 5 and 6 June 2010
Edited by Susanna Avery-Quash
Design by Tom Keates at Mick Keates Design

Published by Royal Collection Trust /
© HM Queen Elizabeth II 2012.

Royal Collection Enterprises Limited
St James's Palace, London SW1A 1JR

ISBN 978 1905686 75 9
First published online 23/04/2012

This publication may be downloaded and printed either in its entirety or as individual chapters. It may be reproduced, and copies distributed, for non-commercial, educational purposes only. Please properly attribute the material to its respective authors. For any other uses please contact Royal Collection Enterprises Limited.

www.royalcollection.org.uk

Love and art: Queen Victoria's personal jewellery

Charlotte Gere

For many people, their default view of Queen Victoria is as a figure in perpetual mourning, wearing black, her pearls and diamonds appropriately colourless, with her costume only slightly enlivened by jet embroidery and lace. Her love of colour and festive trimmings, largely forgotten, was subsumed in her own presentation of her tragic condition after Prince Albert's death. The exhibition in 2010 at The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, on Victoria and Albert as collectors, showed by contrast the happy days of her marriage, when her jewels, rather than commemorating death, reflected her relationship with her husband and family.¹ This essay looks at the story of Victoria and Albert through the jewellery they commissioned, gave to each other and wore on every kind of occasion. The jewels cease to be mere objects and become part of the intimacy of the royal marriage.

Whether by accident or design, in Franz Xaver Winterhalter's 1847 watercolour ([fig. 1](#)), painted for Albert, Victoria has a bouquet in the national colours of red, white and blue. Her white silk dress is trimmed with red and flounces of black lace. She has a wreath of flaming scarlet poppies and handsome jewels including a large brooch, a pendant and a bracelet set with oval blue stones, possibly lapis lazuli. The jewels are fashionable, even rather ahead of fashion. On that evidence and without knowing its history the portrait would appear to date from some five or ten years later, showing that the Queen was a leader rather than a follower of fashion.² The Royal Archives and the Crown Jeweller's royal ledgers, along with the surviving personal jewellery, provide ample evidence of the pioneering jewel tastes of the royal couple and their interest in new materials and techniques. But the overriding impulse behind their exchange of gifts is love and, owing to the Queen's meticulous habit of engraving her personal jewels with donor and occasion, they act rather like a journal of her intimate life during her marriage.

The rapid growth of a print and visual culture was decisive in shaping the direction of an up-to-date monarchy.³ The Court Circular in *The Times* reported fully on what the Queen wore, as did the *Morning Post* and the *Morning Chronicle*.⁴ Society columns came into being at this time, recording costume and jewellery in detail. Indeed, it is almost possible to describe Victoria's appearance at practically every event of her life.

Queen Victoria's fashion sense has been widely derided. In fact she was very interested in dress and jewels – her own largely in relation to Albert's preferences



Fig. 1
Franz Xaver Winterhalter (1805–73),
Queen Victoria, 1847
Watercolour, oval 30 x 23.5cm
Royal Collection, RL 17968

in an objective but uncritical way, and other people's with a true reporter's eye for telling detail. The Queen, so short in stature at less than 5ft tall, was never stylish, but she had the unassailable dignity of royalty. She was eager to fulfil the legitimate expectations of her people as well as her family. On occasion she could take the whole matter very seriously, as for the State Visit to Paris in 1855, when she anxiously assembled a wardrobe fit for the fashion capital of Europe. In Paris the Queen and her family were very exposed, and the interest of the crowds reflected the fact that no reigning English monarch had been seen in the capital since Henry VI had been crowned there 400 years earlier.

A succession of public events tested dresses and jewels to the limit. For a ball at the Hôtel de Ville on 23 August 1855 the Queen's dress, made in Paris as a compliment to her hosts, was of white net embroidered with gold, trimmed with red geraniums, and very full. It was she reported 'much admired by the Emperor'. He asked if it was English and may have been somewhat disconcerted to learn of its Parisian origin.⁵ But she had one weapon that could be deployed against the magnificence of Parisian fashion and the French crown diamonds. This was the legendary Koh-i-nûr diamond, wearable as a brooch or a diadem. In Winterhalter's 1856 portrait (fig. 2) she wears the Grand Diadem and diamond collet necklace passed on to her at her accession by Queen Adelaide, but now with the addition of the famous Koh-i-nûr, recently re-cut at Albert's suggestion and under his supervision, and given a diamond setting by the Crown Jeweller. The collet necklace was lost to Hanover after the resolution of a dispute over the terms of Queen Charlotte's will. It was replaced by Garrard's in 1858, along with other items set with stones identified as Queen Charlotte's diamonds. It is curious to note that among the 1858 diamond jewels, Victoria did not choose to replicate the highly fashionable rococo flower bouquet that had belonged to her predecessor.

'Royal' jewellery suggests these celebrated treasures of the Crown, but from the Queen's own writings we know that such trophies of state were of less interest to her than modest gifts and pledges of love exchanged with Albert. The Prince was not at all well-off but for Victoria, neither value nor cost weighed with her in the significance of the gift. This extended to her family, including her sons-in-law, upon whom she pressed pebbles mounted as pins and studs in the belief that they would treasure them as she did. The Marquess of Lorne, future husband of her daughter Louise, was probably somewhat surprised when presented with a granite pin. The Queen hoped that he would wear it, adding, 'Louise has a brooch just like it made out of the same stone'.⁶

Every piece had associations; this could even descend to the setting of infant teeth. An enamelled gold thistle brooch incorporates Princess Victoria's first tooth, which she shed in Scotland in 1847 (fig. 3). A pendant and earrings in the form of fuchsias, supplied by the Crown Jeweller in 1864, are set with Princess Beatrice's milk teeth (fig. 4). The royal collection boasts a few other rare jewels set with infant teeth.⁷



Fig. 2
Franz Xaver Winterhalter (1805–73),
Queen Victoria, 1856
Oil on canvas, 88.6 × 72.2cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 406698



Fig. 3
Unknown maker, Thistle brooch, 1847
Enamelled gold set with an infant tooth, 2.7 × 2.1 cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 13517



Fig. 4
R. & S. Garrard, Fuchsia pendant and earrings, 1864
Gold and enamel set with milk teeth
Royal Collection, RCIN 52540–1

The royal babies' births were celebrated more conventionally, with enamelled heart-shaped lockets containing baby hair hung on a bracelet (fig. 5). The first, for the Princess Royal, was given soon after her arrival on 21 November 1840; the second followed swiftly, for the Prince of Wales, born just a year later; more were added almost annually, up to Leopold in 1853. The bracelet is just visible in Brian Edward Duppa's photograph of the Queen, taken on 5 July 1854 for presentation to Prince Albert (fig. 6). The Duppa photograph required considerable forethought, since the Prince's photograph had to be taken and processed before the Queen could be photographed holding the oval frame with the portrait in it. She holds it so that it almost touches the bracelet with the children's hair; making plain the importance to her of her husband and family. By this date the hearts numbered eight; Princess Beatrice was born in 1857, so the lockets eventually numbered nine, each addition being detailed in the archives.⁸ Queen Victoria wore the completed bracelet in William Slade Stuart's 1897 Jubilee photograph (fig. 7), among the diamonds and orders – symbols of her reign and dignities as Queen and Empress of India, and with Prince Albert's portrait miniature on pearl strings, treasured emblems of her life story with husband and children that she intended this Jubilee image to embody.

The secluded and austere upbringing of the future Queen did not encourage wearing lavish jewellery. Conduct books of the period unanimously deplore jewellery for very young girls. Apart from some conspicuous exceptions in the form of precious gifts from William IV and Queen Adelaide acknowledging the inevitability of her succession, Victoria's much-treasured girlhood jewels consisted of modest, pretty, inexpensive trinkets like those of her contemporaries in 'polite' society. There are few pictures of her wearing jewellery as a girl, other than long top-and-drop earrings she



Fig. 5
Unknown maker; Bracelet, 1840–57
Gold with enamelled gold heart-shaped lockets,
length 11 cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 65293



Fig. 6 (far left)
Brian Edward Duppa (active 1832–53),
Queen Victoria, 5 July 1854, 1889
Carbon print, 21.7 × 16.6 cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 2906533

Fig. 7
William Slade Stuart (1858–1938),
Queen Victoria, photographic portrait published
by the Rotary Photographic Co., June 1897
Bromide postcard print, 12.4 × 8.1 cm
National Portrait Gallery, NPG x 13850

wears in a widely circulated profile portrait by Richard James Lane (**fig. 8**), taken after her ears were pierced when she was 14. The floral motifs of rose beneath the crown, oak and lily garlands outline ideal attributes for the royal heir; the 'rose of England' supported by strength and purity. She had been christened Alexandrina, but on her accession she took her second name, Victoria, unknown in the British monarchy, and the iconography of ceremonial imagery now identified her as a winged 'Victory'.

Her earliest jewel-memory was of a portrait miniature given by her 'Uncle-King', George IV, in 1826: remembering the occasion in later life, she wrote: 'He said he would give me something to wear, and that was his picture set in diamonds, which was worn by the Princesses as an Order to a blue ribbon on the left shoulder.'⁹ She wore it on her sleeve at the first State Dinner after her accession.

Even in her early Journal entries her birthday and Christmas presents leap off the page. These gifts seem not to survive or not to have been identified, but the Hull Grundy Gift to the British Museum is rich in examples of the types. On her 14th birthday in 1833 she received from her mother 'a lovely hyacinth brooch'.¹⁰ From her cousin George Cambridge she received 'a brooch in the shape of a lily-of-the-valley', and Lady Sarah and Lady Clementina Villiers gave her 'some flowers as a comb and a brooch'.¹¹ These presents meant a great deal to her and were enumerated with care and in detail, but they were simply modish pieces manufactured in quantities.¹² Inevitably the Princess, born on 24 May, received many seasonal lily-of-the-valley jewels over the years. Conflating the lily-of-the-valley brooch with the flower-mounted combs from the ladies Villiers suggests something similar to lily-of-the-valley comb-mounts (**fig. 9**), made by Rundell & Bridge, first Jewellers to the Crown, and of course the choice of those frequenting court circles.

Among its many other messages of purity and the return of spring, lily-of-the-valley stood for 'return of happiness' in the Victorian language of flowers. This became the birthday greeting, 'many happy returns'. Winterhalter's painting *The First of May 1851* (**fig. 10**) shows the Queen and Prince Albert with the infant Prince Arthur and the aged Duke of Wellington against a background of the Crystal Palace, housing the 1851 *Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations*. Prince Arthur offers a bouquet of lily-of-the-valley to the Duke. So, leaving aside its connection with opening day of the Great Exhibition on 1 May 1851, Winterhalter's subject is also birthdays in May. The Duke of Wellington and the one-year-old Prince Arthur were both born on 1 May, so the message conveyed by the nosegay presented to his godfather by Prince Arthur is 'happy birthday'. In more sombre circumstances, the flower stood for being reunited in death with a loved one and was associated with mourning, as Victoria well knew. She sent lilies-of-the-valley to be laid on the grave of General Grey, her private secretary.¹³



Fig. 8
Richard James Lane (1800–1872),
Portrait of Princess Victoria,
published by J. Bouvier, 1837
Stipple engraving printed in colours, 40.5 x 31.8cm
London, British Museum, PD 1852,1009.608



Fig. 9
Rundell, Bridge & Rundell, *Lily-of-the-valley*
comb-mounts, c.1833–7
Tortoiseshell, gold, chrysoberyls and
rubies, length 8cm
London, British Museum,
Hull Grundy Gift, HG Cat. 636



Fig. 10
Franz Xaver Winterhalter (1805–73),
The First of May 1851, 1851
Oil on canvas, 106.7 × 129.5cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 406995



Fig. 11
After Edmund Thomas Parris (1793–1873),
Victoria in an opera box, Drury Lane Theatre,
15 November 1837, 1837
Mezzotint engraving by C.E. Wagstaff,
43.9 × 34.1cm
London, British Museum, P&D 1868,0808.1559

Meanwhile, among Queen Charlotte's diamonds in the various guises they had assumed during the reign of William IV, a ray diadem like the one in Winterhalter's *First of May* (always worn by Queen Adelaide as a necklace) became a favourite with the Queen. She wears it in an image from her early reign (**fig. 11**), Edmund Thomas Parris's likeness of her in an opera box at Drury Lane, which he made by the simple expedient of sitting in the opposite box. The print was so widely circulated that became almost an official portrait.

The next event of great personal significance to the young Queen, her marriage to Prince Albert on 10 February 1840, produced more jewellery. As the example of the lily-of-the-valley shows, she was well versed in flower meanings. It was her choice of orange-blossom wreath and trimmings to her white dress for her marriage that made this almost a uniform for Victorian brides. The suite of orange-blossom jewellery given by Prince Albert over a number of years from the first sprig, an engagement gift accompanied by music of his own composition in 1839, has the obvious flower-language associations with the marriage (**fig. 12**). The second brooch and the earrings were a Christmas present in 1845. The Queen's wedding wreath is perpetuated in the gold and porcelain circlet, the finest item in the suite, with blossoms studied from real, flowering sprigs, received in 1846. Victoria wrote in her Journal: 'My beloved one gave me such a lovely unexpected present ... the leaves are of frosted gold, the orange blossoms of white porcelain & 4 little green enamel oranges, meant to represent our children.'¹⁴ The four oranges would not suffice for long; Princess Helena, their fifth child was born in the same year. Victoria always wore



Fig. 12
Unknown maker; *Orange-blossom parure*, 1839–46
Porcelain, gold and enamel
Royal Collection, RCIN 65305, 65306.1–2, 65307.1–2

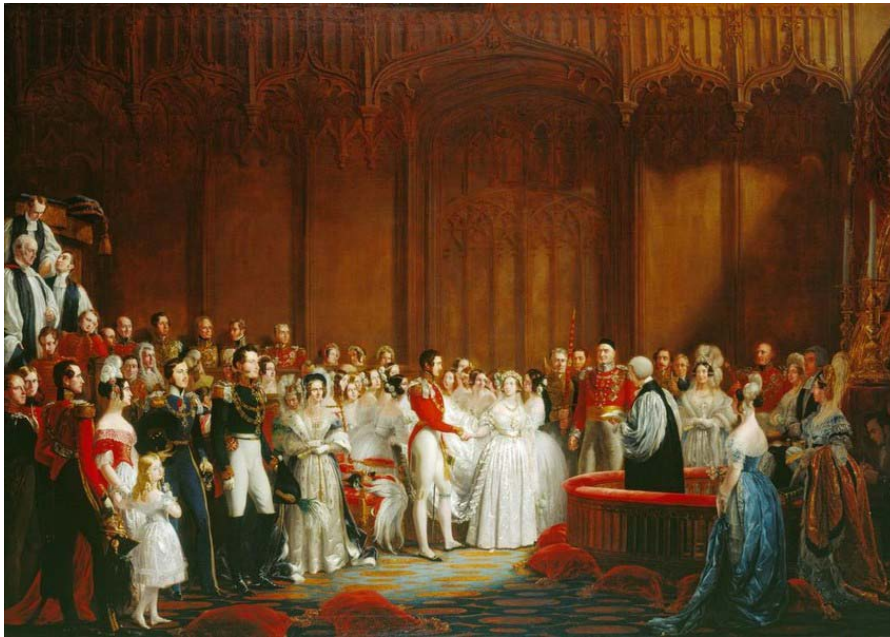


Fig. 13
Sir George Hayter (1792–1871),
The Marriage of Queen Victoria (detail), 1840–42
Oil on canvas, 195.6 x 273.4cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 407165

it on the anniversary of the day, often with the Honiton lace from her wedding dress. At dinner on her wedding anniversary in 1856, she wore a new pink dress from her mother; the Duchess of Kent, with the wreath from the set.¹⁵

This orange-blossom theme surfaces repeatedly in Victoria's correspondence. Constantly renewed with cuttings taken from royal wedding wreaths and bouquets, orange blossom and the myrtle traditional in German marriage ceremonies flourished on the terrace at Osborne House, and sprigs were sent to her married daughters to be worn on their significant anniversaries. Orange-blossom wreaths and trimmings were worn by Victorian royal brides right up to Queen Mary in 1893.

Sir George Hayter's painting of Victoria and Albert's marriage ceremony ([fig. 13](#)) inexplicably omits an item of enormous sentimental significance to Victoria: the large sapphire set in a diamond border given to her by Albert on the eve of their marriage ([fig. 14](#)). She noted her wedding costume in her diary, including the sapphire brooch ('dear Albert's beautiful sapphire brooch') and her 'Turkish' suite of necklace and diamond earrings (Journal, 10 February 1840). Victoria was a severe critic and a demon for detail, and it is surprising that she let this pass when approving the huge group portrait. She left the brooch to the Crown in her will – it was shown with the State Jewels in the 2010 exhibition at The Queen's Gallery – but it was an intensely personal memento.¹⁶

Winterhalter's portrait of the Queen in wedding dress, lace and jewels, painted seven years later for the Prince Consort on the anniversary of their wedding, corrects this omission ([fig. 15](#)): Albert's sapphire brooch is prominent on Victoria's lace collar.¹⁷ The creamy-white silk-satin dress is in the Museum of London, while the magnificent



Fig. 14
English, *Queen Victoria's Wedding Brooch*, 1840
Sapphire, diamonds and gold, 3.7 x 4.1cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 200193



Fig. 15
Franz Xaver Winterhalter (1805–73),
Queen Victoria in her Wedding Dress, 1847
Oil on canvas, 53.7 x 43.4cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 400885

Honiton lace flounce survives the Royal Collection.¹⁸ Her diamond necklace and long earrings were made by Rundells in 1839 from diamonds presented to her by Sultan Mahmúd II in 1838, hence the title of the suite as 'Turkish'.¹⁹

Miniatures and hearts were frequent currency in the exchanges between Victoria and Albert. Victoria had an almost fanatical attachment to the heart locket containing her husband's hair; which she wore constantly. It is her only ornament in Winterhalter's image of her with flowing hair, commissioned for Albert's birthday in 1843 (fig. 16).²⁰ It was known as 'the secret portrait' because it was contrived, with a good deal of difficulty, as a surprise for him. Victoria had begged a lock of Albert's hair four days after their betrothal.²¹ She put it into a modest glass locket and wore it 'night and day', according to her Journal.²² In fact there were two lockets, the second being her betrothal present from Louise, Queen of the Belgians, a diamond-set heart into which she transferred Albert's hair. In portraits it is sometimes hard to decipher the differences, but one or other of the hearts appears in many of them. The Queen responded with a heart-shaped opal brooch-pin for the Prince's birthday in 1840. Although Victoria said she transferred Albert's hair into the diamond-set locket, the locket in Winterhalter's portrait appears still to be the unadorned glass one.

Equally treasured were miniatures of the Prince set as jewels. John Partridge's portrait of the Queen, commissioned in 1840 as a Christmas present for Albert (fig. 17), reflects her jewel tastes at that time. With both a heart and a miniature, it is full of messages for Albert. The bracelet miniature is a version of William Ross's profile in enamel of the same year; considered by Victoria to be the best likeness of him (fig. 18). Partridge, rather a pedantic artist, painted the jewels with care and the heart-shaped locket appears to be rimmed with diamonds; it must be Queen Louise's gift. The other jewels include a ruby and diamond pendant brooch and a



Fig. 16
Franz Xaver Winterhalter (1805–73),
Queen Victoria, 1843
Oil on canvas, 64.8 x 53.4cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 406010



Fig. 17 (far left)
John Partridge (1790–1872),
Queen Victoria, 1840
Oil on canvas, 142.6 x 112.1cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 403022



Fig. 18
Magdalena Dalton, née Ross (1801–74),
Prince Albert, 1840
Watercolour on ivory; gold bracelet clasp
surrounded by diamonds and with brooch
attachment, 3.1 x 2.8cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 4826

ferronnière head-ornament, named after the jewel in Leonardo's painting, *La Belle Ferronnière* and doubtless one of several given her as girlhood presents.²³ She is wearing black velvet, possibly the dress in which she was observed attending one of William Macready's theatre productions, and a matching headdress with silver fringing. Her fan and handkerchief with a deep edging of lace were her signature accessories. The portrait bridges important aspects of the Queen's life, as monarch (connoted by the Garter ribbon, badge and star) and wife.²⁴

In her portrait by John Lucas the infant Princess Royal holds another of her mother's bracelets, which includes her father's portrait of 1839, also by Ross, set in a pearl border (fig. 19). A version in watercolour on ivory of Lucas's portrait, given to Victoria by the Duchess of Kent in 1844 (the Duchess was the owner of the actual portrait), thus shows a miniature within a miniature.²⁵ The full significance of Lucas's portrait of the Princess Royal needs to be seen in the context of another one using the same iconography. Sir William Beechey's 1823 portrait of the Duchess of Kent shows her holding the infant Victoria, who has a miniature likeness of the late Duke of Kent in her hand (fig. 20). Lucas's portrait, made for the Duchess of Kent, must have been conceived as a pendant to it.²⁶

A copy by William Essex of Ross's portrait of the Princess Royal as a baby was ruthlessly cut up for a brooch of her with angel wings set with diamonds, emeralds and rubies, and holding a small gem-set cross in her hands (fig. 21). It was designed by Albert as a gift to the Queen for Christmas in 1841. As the Queen remarked, 'It was entirely his own idea and taste'.²⁷ The miniature of the Princess was inspired by the angel heads in Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* in Dresden, one of a number of angel subjects popular in Victorian jewellery.²⁸ Late in life the Princess (now Empress of Germany) explained its history: 'Papa gave it to Mama – and she always wore it on my birthday'. Included with her note are a little drawing and instructions as to its disposal: 'This brooch was given to me by beloved Mama at Windsor – she had worn it a great deal. I should like it to be left to the Crown of England'.²⁹

Kathryn Jones's mining of the royal archives has unearthed a fascinating list of gifts from the Prince to his wife.³⁰ This presents a vivid picture of intimate exchange in the 1840s and 1850s. Unravelling the fine detail of the personal jewellery sheds an interesting light on the role of Garrard, the Crown Jeweller, acting as a sort of clearing house for a whole team of suppliers to the royal family, many of whom may have hoped for the Crown Jeweller title. As well as the sentiments expressed, the latest scientific and technical innovations were encouraged to benefit British trade. Promotion of the commercial interests of an advanced industrial nation features, even if subliminally, in the Queen's jewellery; it is a reflection of her patriotic and sentimental character and her obsession with associations, but also raises the question of what effect royal example had on choices made by the general public. A direct influence is demonstrably the case, particularly with the 'Celtic fringe'.



Fig. 19
Guglielmo Fajja (1803–73) after John Lucas
(1807–74), *Victoria, Princess Royal*, 1844
Watercolour on ivory laid on card, 6.9 x 5.8cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 420321



Fig. 20
Henry Bone (1755–1834), after Sir William
Beechey (1753–1839), *Duchess of Kent with
the Infant Princess Alexandrina Victoria*, c.1824
Enamel on copper, 26.4 x 21.5cm
Royal collection, RCIN 404239



Fig. 21
Prince Albert (1819–61), designer; William Essex
(1784–1869), after William Ross (1794–1860),
miniaturist; unknown jeweller, *Angel brooch*, 1841
Enamel with wings pavé-set with diamonds,
emeralds and rubies, 3.5 x 6.8cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 4834

Among the presents from her husband are at least six ancient Irish brooch copies (fig. 22), popular at the time through their exhibition in London in 1851 and at Dublin in 1853. The enormous number of surviving examples confirms their popularity with the wider public.

From portraits, archives, memoirs and reporting of all kinds, the Queen and royal family are shown leading the way in popularising jewellery and fashionable accessories at every level. On receiving a deputation from members of the Birmingham jewellery trade Albert expressed astonishment 'that fashion could perversely persist in going abroad for articles of *bijouterie* when it could command so admirable and exquisite a manufacture of them at home'.³¹ On another occasion Victoria was credited with reviving the fortunes of Sheffield tortoiseshell comb makers by wearing a 'Jenny Lind' comb to the opera.³²

Many typically 'Victorian' jewellery types, particularly popular novelties incorporating puns and catchwords, originated in royal circles. However, public interest in royal purchases could have unforeseen consequences: a chatelaine by Thornhill, self-advertised supplier of chatelaines to the Queen, has an almanac for 1849 as one of its pendants, thus establishing its date (fig. 23). It is exactly contemporary with an otherwise unexplained spate of 'chatelaine' jokes in *Punch*. The punchline to one of John Leech's spirited drawings reads: 'How to make a chatelaine a real blessing to mothers' (fig. 24). The inference is plain, although by this date the royal children numbered six.³³



Some of the Queen's personal jewels are not particularly feminine, the 1840 turquoise eagle for the trainbearers at her marriage, for example (fig. 25), made by Charles du Vé of London, and the gem-set Crimean trophy of 1855 (fig. 26), made by John Linnet and given at Christmas, 1855, both designed by Albert. The German spread eagle, *pavé-set* with turquoises for true love, has a ruby eye (for passion), a diamond-set beak (for eternity), and holds pearls (for beauty) in its claws.³⁴ The Queen presented the train-bearers with their brooches in dark blue velvet cases after the wedding ceremony. At Woburn Abbey and Hatfield they remain with the



Fig. 22
Edmund Johnson (active 1831–1868) for West & Sons, Dublin, *Two ring-brooches*, 1849
Silver and silver with garnets, 7.2 x 13.9cm and 7.2 x 13.6cm respectively
Royal Collection, RCIN 12457, RCIN 4833

Fig. 23 (far left)
Thornhill & Co., *Chatelaine*, 1849
Cut and faceted steel, velvet, ivory and ebony, length 49.1cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 45005

Image currently unavailable

Fig. 24
John Leech (1817–64),
'How to make a chatelaine a real blessing to mothers', *Punch*, 1849
Reproduced in Gere and Rudoe 2010, fig. 70

Fig. 25 (centre)
Charles du Vé (active c.1839–40) for R. & S. Garrard, *Eagle trainbearer's brooch*, 1839–40
Gold set with turquoises, rubies diamonds and pearls, 3.7 x 4.6 x 1.8cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 65320



Fig. 26
John Linnet (active 1809–c.1855),
'Alliance flag' brooch, 1855
Silver; gold, rubies, sapphires, diamonds, emeralds and enamel, 5.8 x 4.5cm
Applied label 'JL' for John Linnet, London, 1855
Royal Collection, RCIN 4804

descendants of Lady Elizabeth Sackville West (who married the 9th Duke of Bedford and became Queen Victoria's Mistress of the Robes) and Lady Frances Cowper (whose granddaughter married the 4th Marquess of Salisbury). The Bedford brooch retains the original rosette of white ribbon, to be worn on the shoulder like an order, as is shown in the portrait of the Duchess at Woburn Abbey painted by Richard Buckner in about 1850.

The Prince also designed a Crimean brooch for Florence Nightingale, who wore it for the Queen's benefit at Balmoral – as Lady Augusta Stanley reported, '[s]he wears the Queen's brooch which her soldiers are so proud of, taking it as a *personal compliment* to each individual!' – but Florence otherwise wore it only reluctantly as she felt it looked like an order rather than a pretty dress jewel.³⁵ Queen Victoria acquired a coloured lithograph of the Nightingale brooch for her collection (fig. 27), and it is possible that memories of her first jewel from George IV gave her this predilection for order-like jewels, both for herself and for presentation. When it came to the design of an actual order, the newly instituted Royal Family Order in 1856, the Queen took a bold decision to have the badge set with a cameo rather than the more conventional enamel miniature used for Ladies of the Household (fig. 28).

Victoria and Albert observed the German custom of decorated Christmas trees and birthday tables. Nothing conveys the family atmosphere of the royal homes better than the birthday and Christmas tables arranged for members of the royal family. From 1848 the Queen's birthday was celebrated at Osborne. On the birthday table in 1856 (fig. 29), visible just to the left of centre is a jewel-case containing the



Fig. 27
C. Blunt, Design for Florence Nightingale's Crimean brooch, 1856
Hand-coloured lithograph, 28.4 x 19.0cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 659460

Fig. 28 (below)
R. & S. Garrard & Co., goldsmiths;
Tommaso Saulini (1793–1864), gem engraver;
Princess Helena's badge of the Order of Victoria
and Albert First Class, c.1862
White on brown onyx, silver gilt, enamel,
diamonds, rubies, white silk ribbon, 8.9 x 4.3cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 442015

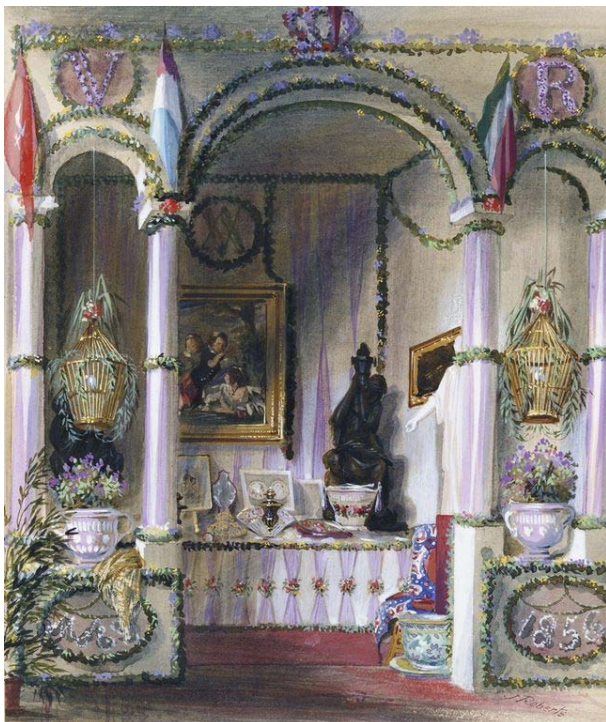


Fig. 29 (left)
James Roberts (c.1800–1967),
The Queen's Birthday Table at Osborne, 1856
Watercolour, 20.9 x 17.2cm
Royal Collection, RL 26522

suite of gold filigree and pearl-set jewellery, comprising head ornaments, necklace, brooch, bracelet and earrings, bought by the Prince in Paris the previous year, when he and Victoria stayed with Napoléon and Eugénie and attended the 1855 International Exhibition.³⁶ Between 1845 and 1861 many of the decorated tables were painted in watercolour by Joseph Nash and James Roberts. It is apparent from the list of Albert's gifts compiled by Kathryn Jones for the 2010 exhibition catalogue (Marsden 2010, pp. 456–60) that there were jewels on nearly every table. For example, the holly brooch set with two stag's teeth and tied with a Royal Stuart tartan ribbon, souvenir of Balmoral, was a birthday gift in 1851 (**fig. 30**).³⁷

Every location was capable of yielding treasure. The earliest of the pebble jewels are mute travel diaries. Royal visits to the stately homes of the great Whig Bedford and Cowper families at Woburn and Panshanger in July 1841 were marked by an agate-set souvenir bracelet (**fig. 31**, top). The itinerary also took in a visit to Brocket Hall, home of Lord Melbourne, now in the final weeks of his premiership. Victoria was in a state of extravagant despair at the imminent fall of the Whigs, and with them her beloved Melbourne. Her hatred of the incoming Premier Sir Robert Peel had not yet been modified by Albert's warm admiration for him. In the unlikely event that he had known of it, the bracelet would have raised unpleasant memories for Peel, of the 'Bedchamber Crisis' in 1839, when the Queen refused to dismiss her Whig Ladies from her Household.



Another pebble bracelet (**fig. 31**) commemorates visits in 1842 to Windsor, Claremont and Brighton, where the royal family circulated before they had their much-loved homes at Osborne and Balmoral. In fact, although they liked Claremont, it was small and was not theirs, being the property of King Leopold of the Belgians, while Brighton, the soon-to-be-abandoned Pavilion, was much disliked by the Queen on account of the complete lack of privacy, while Prince Albert was frankly horrified by its exotic architecture. The brooch, engraved 'Rapley' and dated 1853 (**fig. 31**) is 'composed of 3 pieces of pebble picked up at Bagshot', then the residence of the Queen's aunt, Princess Mary, Duchess of Gloucester. A beetle brooch made from the same pebble and a brooch with the initials 'PA' from another Bagshot pebble found by the Prince are also recorded in the archives. There must be a reason why Rapley in 1853 should mean so much to the Queen.



Fig. 30
R. & S. Garrard & Co., *Holly brooch with Royal Stuart tartan ribbon*, 1850
Enamelled gold set with stag's teeth,
2.0 x 3.7 x 4.0 cm
Engraved on the reverse:
'Dee Sept. 11. 1850/From Albert May 24 1851'
Royal Collection, RCIN 13516



Fig. 31
Attributed to R. & S. Garrard,
Two bracelets and brooch,
1841 (top); (centre); (bottom)
Agates and gold, 18.0 x 1.5cm; (centre)
Royal Collection, RCIN 12453
RCIN (centre); RCIN



On 31 July 1841 Victoria received a 'pebble cut as a double heart set in gold with a pebble drop both picked up by Prince Albert', one of the first of the heart-shaped pebbles mounted as jewellery in the records. These items, dating from 1841 and 1842, come at the start of the Victorian mania for pebbles set in jewellery, before the acquisition of Balmoral opened the floodgates.³⁸ In Germany a sophisticated production of polished and colour-enhanced hard stone ornaments had existed since the eighteenth century, and in fact the royal ledgers describe the onyx used in jewellery as 'German', but lapidaries capable of undertaking this work certainly existed here in the richest pebble locations and these ornaments were turned around very quickly by Garrards.

The country houses of Osborne and Balmoral provided many opportunities for sentimental commemoration. Albert's Christmas present from the Queen in 1845 was a set of studs made from Osborne pebbles by Kitching & Abud, who often acted as backup to the Crown Jeweller.³⁹ Osborne brought out a maritime theme, with yachting jewels and sailor suits, but the Scottish connection is particularly rich in commemorative jewels. Victoria called Balmoral 'this dear Paradise'; the most ordinary pebbles found on the estate and mounted as jewellery had almost the status of holy relics.⁴⁰ At Balmoral the royal family wore 'Highland things' in specially designed Royal Stuart and Dress Stuart tartans with full accoutrements for the men and Scottish ring brooches for the women. One of the Ladies-in-waiting, Eleanor Stanley, disobligingly remarked that Albert was 'rather too fat and substantial' for the Highland outfit he wore in the evening (fig. 32).⁴¹ A ring brooch (fig. 33), set with



Fig. 32 (left)
Carl Haag (1820–1915), *Prince Albert in Highland evening dress with the star and ribbon of the Thistle and the Garter below his left knee, study for An Evening at Balmoral, 1853*
Watercolour with pencil, 35 x 25.2cm
Royal Collection, RL 17280

Fig. 33 (above)
British, *Brooch, 1848*
Enamelled gold set with seed pearls, rubies and a cairngorm from Lochnagar, 5.7 x 2.4cm
Royal Collection, RCIN 4806

a cairngorm picked up by the Prince at Lochnagar in September 1848, one of the finest of the Scottish pieces, was yet another of the Queen's personal jewels singled out to be left to the Crown in her will.

The sporting souvenirs were engraved with the date and place of the kill. Gold-mounted stag's teeth poured in an endless succession from Garrards' workshops (fig. 34). The fringe necklace is the more remarkable for being an elegant and fashionable ornament in contrast to the general run of stag's teeth set in leafy twigs of oak. Setting stag's teeth in precious ornaments was common in Germany at this date. This raises the interesting possibility that both the stag's-teeth items and the pieces set with infant teeth (figs 3 and 4) are examples of Prince Albert having introduced the Queen to German forms of commemorative jewel. The orders, with the Prince often bearing half the cost, persisted until his death in 1861.⁴²

Victoria's correspondence is peppered with mentions of her treasured jewels of sentiment. For example, on her birthday in 1858 she received a 'very small photograph of the Princess Royal in her marriage dress, set in gold with a black velvet band'.⁴³ From Windsor Castle on Christmas Day, 1858, she wrote to the Crown Princess in Berlin, giving thanks for a bracelet from the Princess and her husband:

*I had your picture on my arm (a little photograph in the wedding dress) and Affie's in a locket, and your pretty little locket given me the last evening at dear Babelsberg round my neck – and while I gazed on the happy merry faces – amongst whom you used to be – I thought of the inroad time had made on the 'children'!*⁴⁴

There is an element of premonition here, the preponderance of lockets containing photographs a foretaste of the endless stream of commemorative jewels that flowed from the Crown Jeweller in years to come.

With the Prince's death in December 1861 the character of the jewel gifts changed. The daughters were furnished with trousseaux, the granddaughters with memorial pendants featuring their unknown grandfather. In a little-known full-face portrait of the mourning Queen she wears dense black with a black fan, with only her wedding ring – a much-employed metaphor for tragic widowhood – and fingering a chain with a hidden pendant at her throat (fig. 35). It is more than plausible that this is one of the heart-shaped jewels containing Albert's hair, dating from the earliest moments of their relationship.



Fig. 34

R. & S. Garrard & Co., *Fringe necklace*, 1860
Gold and enamel with stag's teeth pendants,
43.2 x 3.2cm
Clasp inscribed in enamel: 'All shot by/ Albert',
the reverses of the links engraved with location
and date of the kill
Royal Collection, RCIN 13508



Fig. 35

Anonymous, *Queen Victoria in mourning*, 1862
Colour lithograph, 34.8 x 27.8cm
London, British Museum, PD 1902,1011.9194

Notes

1. Marsden 2010.
2. The Queen and her family loved this portrait and it was copied a number of times in miniature and in porcelain for a blotting book. It was published as a print, but being in black-and-white, the significance of the colours in the bouquet was lost. The meaning of the poppies is 'sleep' or 'death', pointing up the dangers in over-interpreting the messages of flowers in portraiture and particularly in respect of the Queen. Victoria often wore real flowers, and wreath-making was a much-valued skill among her ladies.
3. For a detailed examination of this topic, see Plunkett 2003.
4. The Court Circular was instituted by George III in order to counteract inaccurate reporting of his activities.
5. The visit is reported in detail in Mortimer 1961.
6. 'I send you here a little pin made out of a piece of granite I picked up on the path to the Glassalt Shiel on 26th October; with 3rd October engraved on it at the back, and with a wreath of bog myrtle [emblem of the Campbell clan to which Lord Lorne belonged] round it, which I hope you will sometimes wear. Louise has a brooch just like it made out of the same stone', see Longford 1991, p. 133.
7. I would like to thank Geoffrey Munn of Wartski's for his help in assembling this account of the phenomenon of jewels with infant teeth.
8. The third for Alice was added in 1843, a fourth for Alfred in 1844, a fifth for Helena in 1846, a sixth for Louise in 1848 and a seventh for Arthur in 1850. The bracelet was listed among Albert's gifts, on 21 November 1846, as a 'gold chain bracelet with five enamelled hearts'. Royal gifts did not always come as a surprise and there is sometimes an element of contriving to justify the expenditure.
9. Buckle 1926, vol. 1, p. 11. See also Remington 2010: Victoria's account of the gift is quoted fully in the catalogue entry for one of the surviving examples of the miniature, no. 112.
10. The Queen was born on 24 May 1819. For the quotation, see Esher 1912, vol. 1, p. 75.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 76–7.
12. A pair of lily-of-the-valley sprays in pearls and emeralds in the Hull Grundy Gift to the British Museum, adaptable to brooch or comb-mount, is particularly suited to the Princess, since lily-of-the-valley is the birth flower for May and emerald is one of the May birthstones, see Gere and Rudoe 2010, fig. 115. The brooches carved with lily-of-the-valley in ivory illustrated with the emerald and pearl brooches suggest that the imagery was also used for mourning jewellery.
13. Writing to his daughter Sybil, she said, 'they were his favourite flowers, as they are mine. *He* sent them to *me*, on my poor old birthday from *his* garden and I therefore wished that this small tribute of affection and friendship should be placed in *his* last resting-place', quoted in Antrim 1887, pp. 89–90.
14. Bury 1991, vol. 1, p. 303.
15. Stoney and Weltzein 1994, p. 18.
16. For her 26th birthday in 1845 Albert gave her another, described in her Journal as 'a beautiful single sapphire brooch, set round in diamonds, much like the beauty he gave at our marriage but not quite so large' (Journal, 24 May 1845).

17. *The Times* reporter observed that the Queen 'wore no diamonds on her head, nothing but a simple wreath of orange blossoms.... A pair of very large diamond earrings, a diamond necklace, and the insignia of the Order of the Garter; were the personal ornaments worn by the Queen', see *The Times*, 11 February 1840, p. 4. This was not strictly true, as Lady Wilhelmina Stanhope (later Duchess of Cleveland) noted in her journal, she had on her head 'a very high wreath of orange flowers, a very few diamonds studded into her hair behind', quoted in *Picture Post*, 29 November 1947, 'When a Princess Marries'.
18. The cost of the lace veil and flounce, made by Miss Jane Bidney of Beer near Honiton, Devon, with a team of helpers, was reported variously at £1,000 and £1,500; see Roberts 2007, p. 20. As was the convention for royal brides, Victoria's Honiton lace veil is thrown back to reveal her face. For a detailed account of the wedding lace, see Staniland and Levey 1983, pp. 1–32.
19. After the wedding ceremony Victoria asked Hayter to design an engraved seal. The design of clasped hands is a conventional expression of love in jewellery, but in this instance it has a personal meaning in showing the actual moment in the marriage ceremony of the joining of hands by the couple. On the Prince's little finger in the design can be seen the gold ring set with an emerald, given to him as an engagement present by the Queen; she wears a bracelet with a miniature portrait of the Prince by William Ross at the centre. The seal, if it was made, has not been found. A very similar design was used for clasps to Albert's and Victoria's velvet covered prayer books (Marsden 2010, nos 347, 348), given to them by the Duchess of Kent on their wedding day. The prayer book clasp combines wit (clasped hands as a 'clasp') with sentiment of the kind so congenial to Victoria. Lady Lyttelton remembered that a seal was given by Prince Albert to the Queen, engraved with a pineapple and the legend 'S'a gloire n'est pas sa couronne', see Wyndham 1912, p. 338.
20. For the circumstances of the commission, see O. Millar 1992, no. 813. For the locket, see RAVIC MAIN QVJ/1839: 12 November; and Bury 1991, vol. 1, p. 313. Anna Reynolds kindly copied the Journal entries for me, augmenting the information given by Shirley Bury. The locket in the 'secret' portrait is half-hidden and it is difficult to be sure which one is depicted.
21. On 15 October 1839; see Esher 1912, vol. 2, p. 270.
22. Journal entry for 12 November, 1839. Queen Louise's gift was in November 1839.
23. The 'féronières' [sic] received by the Princess may now pass as necklaces; in fact, according to the Crown Jeweller's royal ledgers, much later as Queen she prudently altered at least two of them. In 1856 one was lengthened and in March 1863 an entry shows 'Altering diamond féronière into neckchain'.
24. When the popular print publisher George Baxter issued a version of this portrait, the Queen's black and silver headdress was replaced with the coronation Regal Circlet and the heart pendant with her wedding diamond necklace, presumably to look more monarchical.
25. The miniature is framed en suite with other miniatures intended for the Audience Room at Windsor; see Remington 2010, p. 24.
26. Queen Victoria acquired Henry Bone's miniature after the portrait in about 1861; see Remington 2010, no. 116.
27. Bury 1991, vol. 1, p. 321; Remington 2010, no. 355.
28. The Raphael connection is typical of Prince Albert, whose efforts in documenting Raphael's works were very important for art history. For popular versions of the angel model, see Hinks 1991, p. 111.
29. I am grateful to Stephen Patterson and Kathryn Jones for giving me copies of these documents, recently unearthed in the Royal Archives. It was assumed that the angel brooch had remained in the Royal Collection, but these documents give the full history of its travels.

30. Marsden 2010, pp. 456–62.
31. Report in the *Illustrated London News*, 1845, p. 352, illustrated. The term 'bijouterie' must have been used deliberately here; it signifies jewellery of gold or silver with enamel or stones rather than *joaillerie*, predominantly of precious stones.
32. See Lankester 1876.
33. At the Great Exhibition in 1851 Thornhill's showed a steel chatelaine waist plaque by William Harry Rogers, with the conjoined initials V&A beneath a royal crown, blatantly affirming their claim to royal patronage. Rogers designed the boxwood cradle for Princess Louise in 1850; see Marsden 2010, no. 171.
34. Roberts 2007, p. 19.
35. Bailey 1927, p. 106.
36. The suite of jewellery was made by J. Payen of Paris.
37. A watercolour of the 1850 table shows a bracelet designed by the Prince enclosing a miniature of Princess Louise, who had been born in 1848.
38. Elizabeth Gaskell, in her novel *Cranford* (London 1851, chap. 8), set in the Cheshire town of Knutsford in the 1830s and 1840s, has this description of Miss Pole, decked out for an evening party wearing no less than seven brooches: 'Two were fixed negligently in her cap (one was a butterfly made of Scotch pebbles, which a vivid imagination might believe to be the real insect) ...'.
39. Recently a bracelet of many-coloured Osborne pebbles surfaced on the Antiques Roadshow at Somerleyton Hall, and is identifiable with a March 1848 gift: 'A jointed bracelet composed of 10 pebbles picked up at Osborne & set in gold', to celebrate the birth of Princess Louise. One of the Queen's last presents from the Prince was a bracelet of stones picked up at Shanklin on the Isle of Wight.
40. The popular version of *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands*, priced at 2/6d (25 pence), was immensely successful, selling 103,000 copies in the year of publication alone. For an account of the Queen at Balmoral, see D. Millar 1985. Commemorative pebble jewels start with the first married tours in 1841.
41. Quoted in D. Millar 1995, p. 390.
42. The royal ledgers show Garrard's regularly polishing pebbles and repairing 'cairn gorm pins' (the most popular of Scottish souvenir jewels). In October 1848 they mounted a pebble in silver as a brooch for £2 10s (£2.50p). Masses of deer's teeth were mounted, as studs as well as brooches, earrings and necklaces. In 1858 Garrard's were 'cutting heart-shaped earrings from granite and mounting d[itt]o in silver', charged to the Prince.
43. List of jewellery gifts from Prince Albert to Queen Victoria; see Marsden 2010, p. 459.
44. Fulford 1961, p. 153.

Bibliography

Antrim 1887

[L. Antrim], *Recollections of Louisa, Countess of Antrim* (née Louisa Grey), privately printed

Bailey 1927

A. Bailey, Dean of Windsor, and Hector Bolitho (eds), *Letters of Lady Augusta Stanley: A young lady at court 1849–1863*, London

Buckle 1926

G.E. Buckle (ed.), *The Letters of Queen Victoria: Second series. A Selection from Her Majesty's Correspondence and Journal between the Years 1862 and 1878*, 3 vols, London

Bury 1991

S. Bury, *Jewellery 1789–1910*, 2 vols, Woodbridge

Esher 1912

Viscount Esher (ed.), *The Girlhood of Queen Victoria: A Selection from Her Majesty's Diaries between the Years 1832 and 1840*, 2 vols, London

Fulford 1961

R. Fulford (ed.), *Dearest Child: Letters between Queen Victoria and the Princess Royal, 1858–1861*, London

Gere and Rudoe 2010

C. Gere and J. Rudoe, *Jewellery in the Age of Queen Victoria, Mirror to the World*, London

Hinks 1991

P. Hinks, *Victorian Jewellery*, London

Lankester 1876

E. Lankester, *The Uses of Animals in relation to Industry of Man*, London

Longford 1991

E. Longford (ed.), *Darling Loosy: Letters to Princess Louise, 1856–1939*, London

Marsden 2010

J. Marsden (ed.), *Victoria and Albert: Art and Love*, Buckingham Palace, The Queen's Gallery, London

D. Millar 1985

D. Millar, *Queen Victoria's Life in the Scottish Highlands Depicted by her Watercolour Artists*, London

D. Millar 1995

D. Millar, *The Victorian Watercolours in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*, London

O. Millar 1992

O. Millar, *The Victorian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*,
2 vols Cambridge

Mortimer 1961

R. Mortimer (ed.), *Queen Victoria: Leaves from a Journal. A Record of the Visit of
The Emperor and Empress of the French to the Queen and of The Visit of The Queen
and HRH The Prince Consort to The Emperor of the French, 1855*, London

Plunkett 2003

J. Plunkett, *Queen Victoria: First Media Monarch*, Oxford

Remington 2010

V. Remington, *Victorian Miniatures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*, London

Roberts 2007

J. Roberts, *Five Gold Rings: A Royal Wedding Souvenir Album from Queen Victoria
to Queen Elizabeth II*, London

Staniland and Levey 1983

K. Staniland and S. Levey, 'Queen Victoria's Wedding Dress and Lace', in *Costume:
The Journal of the Costume Society*, 17 (1983), pp. 1–32

Stoney and Weltzein 1994

B. Stoney and H.C. Weltzein (eds), *My Mistress the Queen: The Letters of Frieda Arnold,
Dresser to the Queen*, London

Wyndham 1912

The Hon. Mrs H. Wyndham (ed.), *Correspondence of Sarah Lady Lyttelton*, London