

Queen Victoria's Coronet

Addendum 3

A price comparison between the Sapphire and Diamond coronet and the Ruby Bandeau

This ruby bandeau started life in 1843, as illustrated in the attached portrait of Queen Victoria, made at a cost of £594 or nearly £600 half as much again as the cost of the Sapphire and Diamond Coronet yet it was created by the same jeweller within 12 months. It is illustrated here in its original form in an etching of 1843 and in a watercolour completed soon after.

Kitching's firm billed Queen Victoria the following year for altering two existing diamond and ruby brooches and supplying additional rubies for £52.

This ruby set jewel worn by the young Queen, is both simple and elegant, showing Prince Albert and his design skills at their best. Importantly, this documented purchase from the same jeweller provides a cost price for a smaller and inferior jewel to the *Queen Victoria Sapphire and Diamond Coronet* providing conclusive proof that the sapphires were not included in the cost of purchase the previous year.

The sapphires must therefore have been supplied by the Queen to Kitching.

In 1848, Garrard began work on a necklace, mounting eight large rubies in diamond surrounds for £413.15s. It appears as this necklace was reset in April 1849 with eleven additional rubies, all bordered with diamonds. More diamonds were added to this piece shortly thereafter and a brooch and earrings were made, the cost for this work was £1,400.

Queen Victoria's Journal entry for 30 July 1849 reads:

Much pleased with a beautiful necklace, earrings & a brooch of rubies & diamonds, which dearest Albert had arranged for me, out of stones of own, with the addition of new ones I purchased with money inherited from Aunt Augusta and Aunt Sophia. The parure is really beautiful, & Albert has such wonderful taste...

This ruby set bandeau was then modified by Garrard's, again to the designs of Prince Albert, with the insertion of diamonds and rubies into the gold strawberry leaves and between the scrolls above the bandeau causing the original simplicity to be lost.

An entry in Garrard's Royal Ledger appears to cover this work in 1860:

Remounting Ruby and Diamond and head Ornament, addition of Strawberry leaves, scrolls and Ruby between".

To facilitate this reworking, Garrard's "supplied two additional large brilliants, 727 smaller ones, forty-six rose diamonds, seven large rubies and thirty smaller specimens", charging £1,115 for the work involved.

Shirley Bury states that it is reasonable to infer:

That Albert was responsible for "arranging" this tiara to match the set of 1849 and that the Queen regarded it as his design, treat(ing) it as integral to the parure.

A third alteration occurred after the coronet left the Royal family for the Carisbrooke family, when a circlet of rubies and diamonds was added below to give the jewel more height and grandeur.

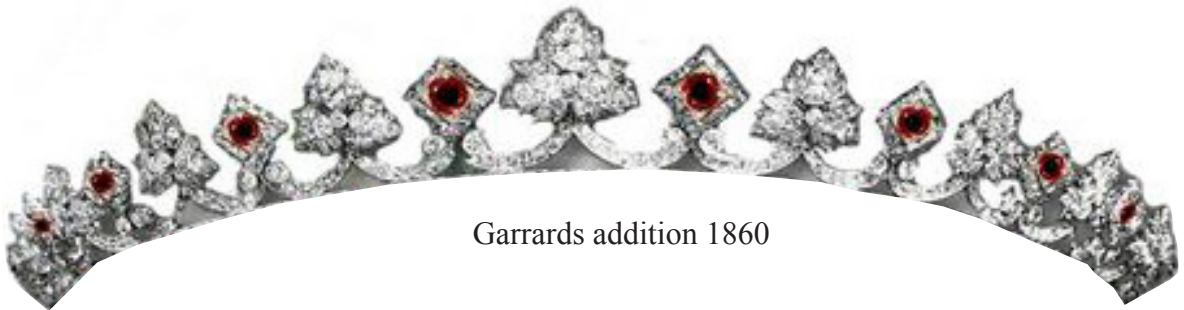
John Hawkins

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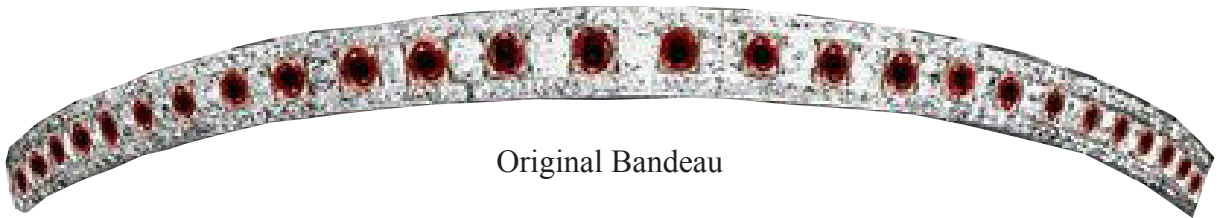


Engraving published May 24th 1843 by William Spooner, 377 The Strand London. This image firmly dates the Ruby Bandeau and gives a good indication of its form for the additions.

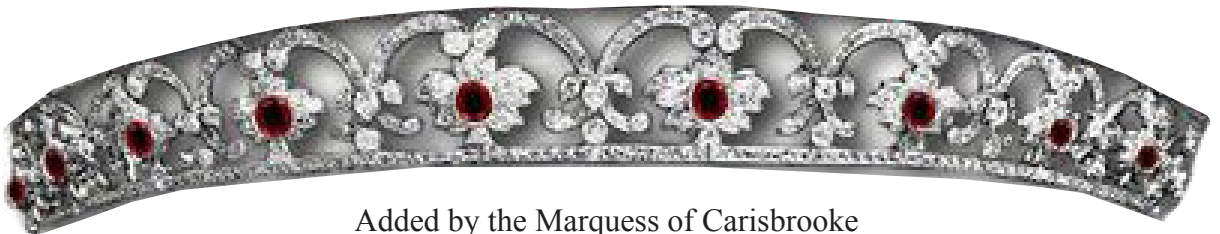




Garrards addition 1860



Original Bandeau



Added by the Marquess of Carisbrooke