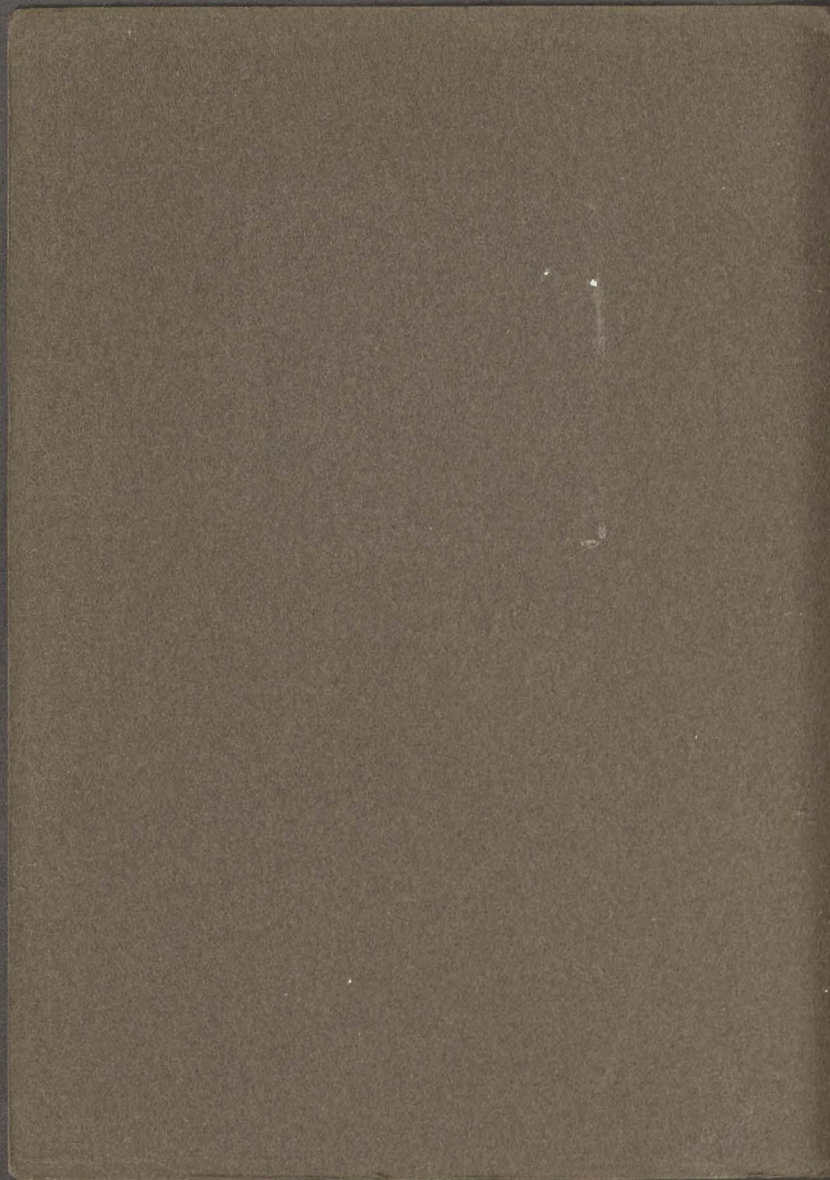


BLOODSTONE
AQUAMARINE



FOREWORD



THE origin of the belief that to each month of the year a special stone was dedicated, and that the stone of the month was endowed with a peculiar virtue for those born in that month, dates back to the first century of the Christian era.

The birth-stones for March possess such individuality, beauty and historical as well as legendary interest, that we have found great pleasure in writing of them. We hope that in some measure we may pass this pleasure on to you.

If you enjoy reading of the things contained herein, you will find our next booklet to be of particular interest. In it we will take up the "King of Gems," the diamond.

H · J · HOWE · INC
SYRACUSE

For the information contained in this little book, we are indebted to the following authors, to whom we wish to extend our thanks:

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BLOODSTONE

Birthstone for March

Symbol of Courage and Wisdom



BLOODSTONE or heliotrope, is the most attractive of the green varieties of quartz known as jasper. This curious mineral contains spots of red jasper that resemble drops of blood, to which it owes its name.

Bloodstone is found in India, Australia, Brazil, and in unimportant quantities in Europe and Scotland. The finest specimens, however, come from India from whence the present-day supply is almost entirely derived.

Although bloodstone is a very beautiful and interesting mineral, it is not as widely used in modern jewelry as in the past. Aquamarine, the alternate birth-stone for those who were born in the month of March, is generally preferred by women, and bloodstone now finds its most exten-

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sive use as a gem for men. Hardy and tough, it is well adapted to use where it must withstand rough treatment, and it is often found in men's rings, plainly polished, or bearing crests, monograms, or similar carvings.

HISTORY

Bloodstone was well known to the ancient Egyptians and Babylonians, and many seals, cups, small vases and statuettes worked from this substance have descended to us from them. It was the material especially preferred by the artists of the Middle Ages for their reliefs of sacred subjects. A mighty recommendation for bloodstone as the most appropriate vehicle for such carvings, was the tradition that it owed its origin to the stones that were lying under the Cross on Calvary. These, it was said, were stained by the Savior's blood, and converted into imperishable monuments of His sufferings. The same reason gave it

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favor with the artists of the Renaissance, besides the more practical recommendation that in their representations of crucifixions and martyrdoms, the red spots lent themselves readily to their skill for expressing the blood-dripping wounds and lacerations of their subjects. It is said that the first work that brought the greatest artist among the gem-engravers, Matteo del Nassaro, into notice, was a Descent from the Cross done in bloodstone with so much art that the sanguine spots exactly depicted the blood trickling from the wounds of the Saviour.

LORE AND TRADITION

The specific name for bloodstone, heliotrope (preferred by mineralogists), is derived from Greek words meaning "sun-turning," and refers to an old belief that the stone, when immersed in water, would change the image of the sun to blood-red. The water was also reputed to boil, and the

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experimental vessel containing the weird material to upturn.

A thirteenth century treatise upon gems tells us that: "A bat, represented upon a heliotrope or bloodstone, gives the wearer power over demons and helps incantations." Bloodstone was believed to be a sovereign remedy for hemorrhages of all kinds, as well as for all inflammatory diseases. It was thought to exercise a calming influence, to remove anger and discord, to preserve the faculties and bodily health of the wearer, to bring him consideration and respect, and to guard him from deception. It was also said, "Whoever bears this stone, which is a gem, and pronounces the name engraved upon it, will find all doors open to him, while bonds and stone walls will be rent asunder."

SPECIMENS WORTHY OF NOTE

While very fine examples of carving in bloodstone are to be found in many gem-

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collections, the finest specimen of this art is a head of Christ, so executed that the red spots of the stone most realistically resemble drops of blood. This gem is now in the French Royal Collection in Paris. Second to this is a head of Christ which is in the Field Columbian Museum, Chicago.

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Alternate Birthstone for March
Symbol of Good Fortune



FEW stones have a more incontrovertible claim upon the attention of lovers of the beautiful than the aquamarine. This gem, its limpid color suggesting the blue-green depths of a summer sea, has occupied a place of high esteem throughout the ages. It was regarded by the ancients as a precious stone of first rank, equal in value to its sister-gem, the emerald. Today be-

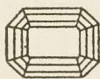
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cause of the discovery of new sources of supply, aquamarine is abundantly obtained and therefore is quite inexpensive. The true gem qualities and the charm of this stone are fully appreciated, however, and in point of popularity it is second only to the beautiful amethyst in the list of semi-precious gems.

Aquamarine like the emerald is beryl, the distinguishing difference between the two gems being one of color alone, although some gem experts claim that ancient specimens of aquamarine show a more perfectly preserved surface polish than emeralds of the same periods.

The oldest source from whence aquamarine was obtained was India. It is possible, however, that the early supply was augmented in a limited measure by the Siberian mines. Today the best gems come from Siberia and Brazil, the latter country supplying clear, transparent stones of fine

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Step Cut



Brilliant



Cushion

color in the utmost profusion. Very fine aquamarines are found in the United States in Maine, Connecticut, North Carolina and California, and gems of a somewhat inferior quality are found in France and Ireland.

While aquamarine is rated as a semi-precious stone, its value varies widely according to the quality of the individual gem. Pale stones may be had at small cost, but the deep sea-green or blue-green gems often command very substantial prices. Aquamarines are to be had in a great variety of cuttings, but as a rule the best specimens are brilliant-cut in front, with the obverse side step-cut.

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HISTORY

Aquamarine was highly prized by the Egyptians who believed that this gem exercised a powerful influence when worn as an amulet. It was generally engraved or worked into the shapes of birds or animals, and there are extant many fine and interesting specimens of such carvings by this people, some of them dating back to a period as early as 2000 B. C.

This gem was also well known in Ancient Rome, and was the only stone which the Roman jewelers cut with facets. Pliny (the Roman naturalist), suspected that the aquamarine and the emerald were the same or of a similar nature, a fact which was not definitely established until eighteen centuries later. Writing about 60 A. D., referring to the aquamarine, Pliny states: "There is not a color more pleasing to the eye than that shown by these gems which imitate the greenness of the clear sea."

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Later, because of Pliny's happy description of this stone, it received its present name. (It seems not amiss to call attention to the fact that in spite of Pliny's enthusiastic appreciation of the aquamarine, he could have been familiar only with the comparatively inferior stones from Egypt.)

CHURCH ASSOCIATIONS

Aquamarine was not only one of the stones which were worn in the breast-plate of the Jewish High Priest, but was worn in the buckles of the shoulder straps as well. In the Middle Ages, this stone was used extensively for the decoration of shrines, reliquaries and similar objects.

A curious instance is recorded wherein a gem of purely secular origin was later employed for ecclesiastical purposes. An exceedingly beautiful, convex, blue aquamarine measuring two and one-half by two and one-eighth inches, engraved with the head of Julia, daughter of Titus, a fine

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work of the Augustan Age, was in the possession of Charles the Bold. This he donated to the Abbey of St. Denys after it had been given a setting of pearls and precious stones. (It was then believed to be an emerald.) In St. Denys it was placed at the apex of a reliquary, which became known as the "Oratorium of Charlemagne." The head of the vain and worldly princess is said to have been venerated for centuries by the pious monks and priests as that of the Virgin Mary. As a work of portrait art, this gem is one of the finest examples descended from classic times. It is now in the French Cabinet des Medailles, in Paris.

LORE AND TRADITION

In Medieval times it was believed that the wearer of an aquamarine was rendered fearless, and a thirteenth century writer reports in addition, that the stone gave help against foes in battle or in litigation, and

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at the same time rendered the wearer amiable, quickened his intellect, and cured him of laziness. In an old German work we read that this stone awakens the love of married people. Another early writer states: "A frog engraved upon a beryl will have the power to reconcile enemies and produce friendship where there was discord." Also:—"A hoopoo (bird) with a terragon herb before it, represented upon a beryl, confers the power to invoke water-spirits and to converse with them, as well as to call up the mighty dead and to obtain answers to questions addressed to them."

THERAPEUTIC USES

Aquamarine was warmly recommended as a cure for injuries to the eyeball, even of the most serious kind. For use in such cases the stone was to be pulverized in a mortar, and the powder then introduced into the eye. Although it was not claimed that where the power of sight had been

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destroyed it could thus be restored, it was believed that even in case of such serious injury the eyeball was healed sooner and assumed a better appearance from its application. In less serious cases a cure was confidently expected. It was also believed that quinsy and swollen glands of the neck would be cured if the affected parts were rubbed with an aquamarine, and if water in which this gem had been steeped were administered to one suffering from an attack of hiccough, immediate relief would be afforded.

LARGE GEMS

Probably the largest and finest aquamarine crystal ever seen was found in 1910 by a miner in Brazil. This gem was greenish-blue in color. It measured nineteen inches in length and sixteen inches in diameter and weighed 243 pounds. Its transparency was so perfect that it could be seen through

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from end to end. This uncut crystal brought a price of \$25,000.

Another large aquamarine is in the British Museum. This stone is table-cut with an oval contour. It is of a beautiful sea-green color and in its cut state it weighs 875 carats.

PRESENT DAY USES

Aquamarine is a favorite stone for pendants, brooches, bracelets, rings and all purposes where a blue or green stone is desired. It possesses great lustre, especially under artificial light, a quality which is by no means common to all of the semi-precious stones. This characteristic, since the earliest times has encouraged the use of the paler gems as fraudulent substitutes for the diamond. In consequence of this similarity of appearance, many have taken pride in their supposed possession of a diamond of enormous size and value, which, on exam-

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ination by a skilful lapidary, has turned out to be an aquamarine.

Sailing under its true colors, however, the aquamarine will be a source of great pleasure to its owner. It has of late become immensely and deservedly popular among women of discrimination for the purpose of accentuating evening gown effects.



