

Dreicer & Company
Forgotten Jewelers of the Gilded Age

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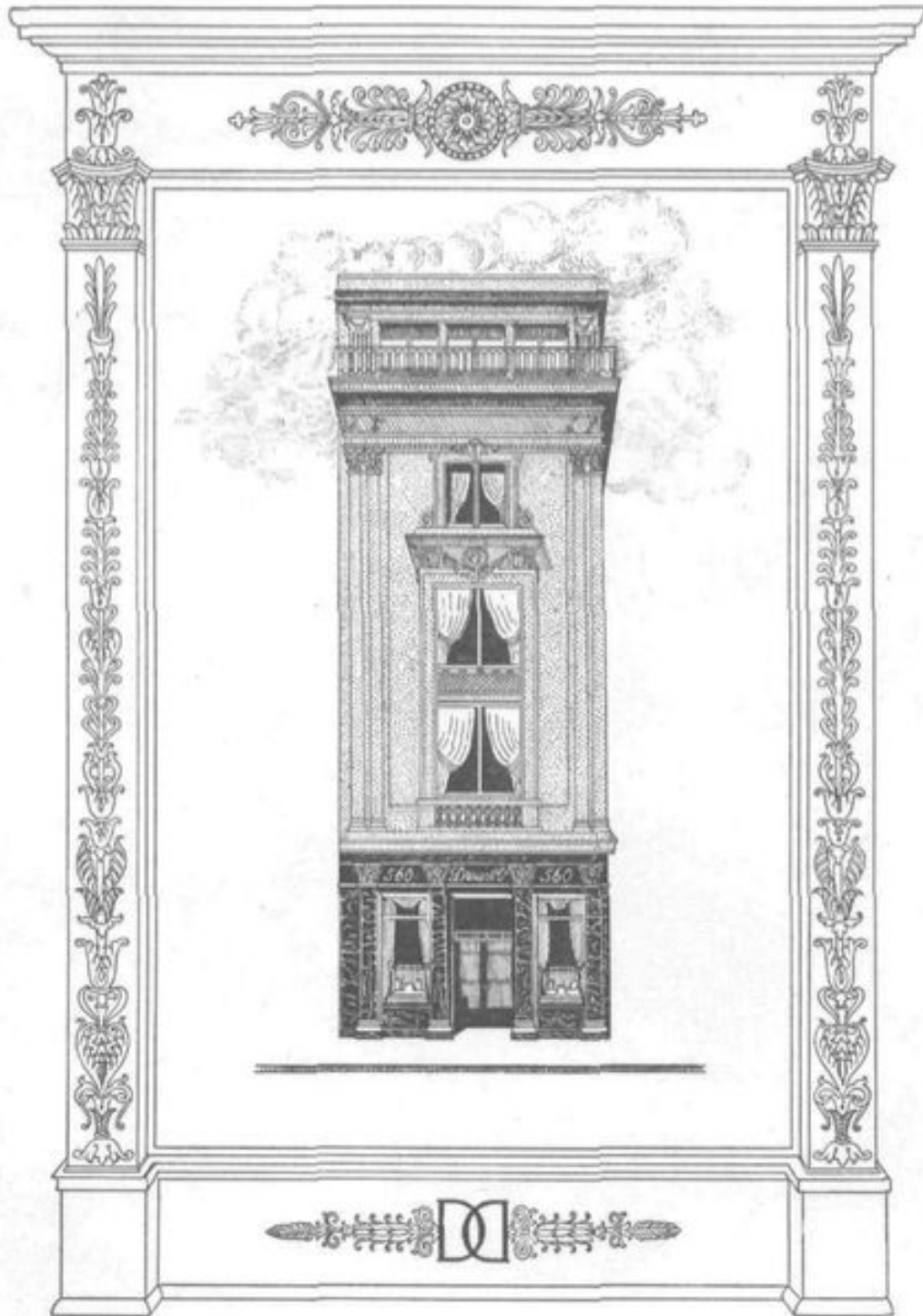
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Liquidation & Conclusion

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Introduction

In the summer of 1921 fifty-four-year-old Michael Dreicer lay dying at Deepdale, his summer mansion in the woods of Long Island. As acting president of Dreicer & Company, the famous Fifth Avenue jeweler, it seemed only appropriate that Michael left this world surrounded by the finest furnishings money could buy. The sprawling Deepdale Estate had been purchased from William K. Vanderbilt in 1917, a gift to Michael from his mother, Gittel.¹ His residence at 1046 5th Ave in New York City was filled with an impressive collection of historic artworks, and the ill man focused his last energies in dictating how these pieces might be distributed after his death. Two recent purchases—a French gothic figure and a Medieval enamel of the Virgin and Child—arrived at his bedside just in time, and “spoke in their own language a word of encouragement before the connoisseur crossed the Great Divide (*Fig. 1*).”²

On August 14th, eighteen days after Michael passed away, his father Jacob Dreicer died. Though Jacob was 82 years old he was in good health, and many close friends believed the death of the son was a causal factor in the death of the father. The two men were mourned in newspapers and trade publications across Europe and America, for they were fixtures in their industry. Jacob and Gittel Dreicer had founded their eponymous company c.1868, and by the nineteen-twenties their son had grown a once-humble endeavor into a business of renown.³ The *Jeweler's Circular* summed up

¹ “Vanderbilt to Sell Home,” *New York Times*, April 11th, 1917, 6.

² “Dreicer’s Deathbed Solaced by his Art,” *New York Times*, August 7th, 1916, 1.

³ Dreicer & Company. Advertisement. *Wall Street Journal*, December 22, 1926, 2.

industry opinion, eulogizing: “Both father and son were noted for their expert knowledge of jewels and for their care in arranging them so as best to present their beauty.”⁴

The family’s well-received aesthetic sense was not limited to jewelry; they also operated a successful real estate development company, Dreicer Realty Co., which was praised for its tasteful contributions to the urban landscape of Manhattan. After Michael and Jacob were buried, the press waxed nostalgic about the million dollar strands of pearls, historic diamonds, and wealthy women that had passed through Dreicer & Company’s doors. The heirs of the estates—the two widows and Jacob and Gittel’s three daughters—made the decision to liquidate the company in order to fulfill trusts created in Michael’s and Jacob’s wills. In March of 1927, after nearly sixty years in business, Dreicer & Company closed its doors. Much of their inventory was sold at a discount to the public, a substantial portion was purchased by long-time business rival, Cartier, and the flagship building that father and son had so proudly built on the corner of 5th Avenue and 46th street was taken over by the Union Pacific Railroad.

Today, although properties developed by the Dreicers still stand in Manhattan, and their jewels command premiums at galleries and auction houses, you are most likely to come across their name at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Upon Michael Dreicer’s death, the museum received a bequest of Medieval and Renaissance art valued at one million dollars. In the American Wing’s jewelry collection is housed one of the jewels that made Michael so rich he could afford to amass such a significant art collection (*Fig. 2*). Fabricated c.1905, it is an impressive collar featuring a tiered cascade of large natural

⁴ “Death of Jacob Dreicer,” *The Jeweler’s Circular*, 83, No.1, (August 5, 1921): 111.

pearls, each surrounded by perfect diamond-studded garlands. It is exquisite, the height of fashion for its day and fit for any queen of Edwardian society. But despite these artifacts, few outside the jewelry and auction industries are aware of the company and family who had such a presence in Gilded Age New York, and who left a legacy of art and architecture still present in the twenty first-century city. No scholar has yet written a comprehensive history of Dreicer & Co., and because their story is consequential in both the history of American jewelry and New York City, I present this paper as a reference and in deference to their lives and work.

The narrative begins long before Michael Dreicer was placing priceless pearls on the necks of heiresses. It starts just after the Civil War when his parents, young Jewish immigrants from Minsk, Russia, stepped off a boat and into New York City, putting in motion a classic tale of the American dream achieved.

Chapter I

Growth of a Business

Mary Dreicer's Affidavit

On February 27th, 1925, Mary Dreicer, the second of Jacob and Gittel's four children, filed an affidavit in the New York courts to defend her family from a large death tax bill levied against her late father's estate.⁵ Jacob and his son Michael had both passed away four years prior, and the estates had been mired in litigation ever since. Shortly before passing, Jacob had transferred the majority of Dreicer & Co. shares to Mary and her siblings, and the courts felt these shares should be subject to an estate tax. Mary held that her father had no thought of death when he had transferred the shares, and explained that Jacob enacted the transfers not as a dying man bequeathing his estate, but because it was his intention that "his children should share in the enterprise they aided in building up."⁶ To prove her point, Mary outlined for the courts the early history of Dreicer & Co. and Jacob's dedication to the family business. Her words were oft referenced in the coming years as the *New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, the *New York Herald*, and other major publications penned retrospectives on the famed business.⁷

Her account begins with her parents arrival in New York shortly after the Civil War ended. Jacob carried with him some Confederate currency that he had hoped to cash in for gold. Although a bit late to find success in this endeavor, he had luckily also

⁵ "Tells how Dreicer Lifted Pearl Myth," *New York Times*, February 28, 1925, 5.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ "Dreicer's to Liquidate," *Wall Street Journal*, November 8, 1926, 2.

brought with him a small cache of pearls and gems sewn into the lining of his clothing.⁸ According to Mary, her parents both had experience in the gem business prior to their immigration,⁹ and using their little stash of gems as a seed they were able to open “a shop in a now forgotten basement on Lexington Avenue.”¹⁰ While Jacob Dreicer tended to the sales, Gittel was largely responsible for the buying and selling of gems, and oversaw the cutting and polishing of rough material. After becoming frustrated when rough she had provided to contracted lapidaries was swapped for inferior substitutes, the Dreicers decided to make the cutting and polishing an internal affair. Gittel set up a workshop in their laundry and oversaw the craftsmen herself.¹¹ From this humble beginning, the Dreicers were able to accumulate funds that would eventually take them from the Lexington basement to a custom-built gilt marble flagship on Fifth Avenue.

While Mary Dreicer’s history is truthful, it appears that she skipped over some of the less-glamorous steps in her parents journey to genteel business people; the city directories of New York City do not list the Dreicers at a Lexington Avenue address until 1879, about thirteen years after she states her parents arrived in the United States.

⁸ E.D. Dakin, “Pearls before House Wreckers,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 30, 1927.

⁹ “Tells how Dreicer Lifted Pearl Myth,” *New York Times*.

¹⁰ Dakin, “Pearls before House Wreckers.”

¹¹ “Tells how Dreicer Lifted Pearl Myth,” *New York Times*.

From Pocket Knives to Pearls

In the eighteen-sixties, Minsk was under the control of Tsar Alexander II of Russia. Although Alexander II is generally remembered as one of the more benevolent Tsars, having liberated the Serfs, his Jewish subjects were still largely forbidden from settling in territories outside the Pale and were restricted from participating in a wide variety of occupations.¹² The Dreicers' specific motivations for immigrating are unknown; perhaps it was the acquisition of the Confederate currency that prompted a move, for they were in fact fourteen years ahead of the massive migration of Eastern European Jews that began in 1881. Whatever the reason, it is from this time and place of prejudice and limits that Jacob and Gittel Dreicer, both in their twenties, made the decision to leave their homeland and sail for the United States of America.

Jacob Dreicer (1839 - 1921) and presumably Gittel (1843 - 1932) arrived in June, 1867 on an unknown ship, and most probably came through the old Castle Garden immigration station.¹³ At the time of the voyage, the couple already had the first two of their four children: Fannie (b. March 18th, 1866) and Michael, only one month old, born

¹² "The Pale of Settlement," Jewish Virtual Library, Accessed March 31, 2018.
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-pale-of-settlement>

¹³ For the purposes of this paper, an arrival date of June 1867 will be used, though there is discrepancy about the date of Jacob & Gittel Dreicer's arrival in the united states. There are vague references to Jacob Dreicer being active as early as 1865 in the Dun reports and *Then & Now*, though this seems unlikely. Mary Dreicer claims 1866 as an arrival date, but the author feels that the date of June 1867 as recorded on Michael Dreicer's passport application is the most likely because of its specificity. The couple does not appear in records of the Castle Garden immigration center, which is where most immigrants entering New York City would have arrived. Possible reasons for the couple not appearing in Castle Garden records are that they are listed under an alternative spelling, or if they were able to purchase a cabin rather than travel in steerage they would not have been obligated to go through immigration. *Time Magazine* states, not without a hint of prejudice, that Jacob Dreicer arrived at the Battery "earlocks but recently sheared off his pious head."

on May 2nd of 1867.¹⁴ Two more daughters, Mary and Regina, would follow in 1869 and 1874, respectively. On visa applications submitted as an adult, Michael claims he did not arrive in the United States until 1871. Possibly because of his young age at the time of his parents immigration, he was left in the care of relatives in Russia until considered old and fit enough to make the voyage. In his naturalization papers, Jacob was described as 5” 5’ with dark brown hair and eyes, an oval face and an angular nose,¹⁵ as corroborated by an undated photograph of Jacob as a young man (*Fig. 3*). No photographs of Gittel or her daughters have surfaced.¹⁶

As elusive as Gittel Dreicer’s appearance, are the whereabouts and activities of the Dreicers during their first years in New York. To date no documentation of the family during the eighteen-sixties has been located. After the Confederate investments proved worthless, it is possible the Dreicers may have found themselves in difficult straights.¹⁷ It is unknown what financial state they arrived in, what level of English was spoken, or if they had any friends or relations to help them. Dreicer & Co. advertisements from later years alternately state that the company was founded in 1868, 1869 and 1870; it is fair to assume that the jewelry business started in some small and nonspecific way during these years.¹⁸

The earliest document concerning the family’s life in New York is the 1870 United States Federal Census, that places them at 300 East 34th St. between 1st and 2nd

¹⁴ Travel Visa Application, Michael Dreicer, January 7 1920. Michael claims his father resided uninterrupted in the United States since 1867, but that he himself since 1871.

¹⁵ Application for Naturalization,” Jacob Dreicer, April 5, 1875

¹⁶ Attempts to reach three separate branches of Dreicer descendents were made, but individuals were either non-responsive or unwilling to contribute. As a result, personal photographs, opinions and motivations of the individual Dreicer family members are unfortunately not terribly present in this work.

¹⁷ Dakin, “Pearls before House Wreckers.”

¹⁸ Dreicer & Co. Advertisement. *Chicago Herald Tribune*, February 13, 1915, 3.

Avenues in Manhattan.¹⁹ According to the census, the Dreicers were the only first-generation Russian family on their block; the majority of their immediate neighbors reported Ireland, Germany and New York City as their places of birth. A few blocks away was the East River waterfront, which at that latitude was occupied by several lumber yards, a varnish works and Bellevue hospital, which operated as the city's morgue and served some of the poorest New Yorkers.²⁰ Despite living within uncomfortable proximity to large industry and a hospital known for spreading infection, 300 E. 34th appears to have been a small step above the teeming tenements of lower Manhattan where so many of the Dreicers' countrymen would find themselves in the coming decades. Occupations of the tenants in the 300 E. 34th building are recorded as: agent, machinist, grocer, mason, and driver.²¹ Jacob's occupation is listed vaguely as "peddler," and an anecdote from the individual writing under the pseudonym Jacob Knickerbocker gives a clue about what exactly Jacob peddled as a new arrival in this country:

The commencement and development of [Jacob Dreicer] is interesting. In the early 60s the Billiard Room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel was a place to drop into view the experts in the new three-ball game... While sitting there occasionally a good-looking Polish Hebrew wearing a cream-colored overcoat—the worse for wear—would approach me, and look wistfully around, jerk open one side of his coat displaying a suspended roll carrying pocket knives, and exclaim: "Don't you vont to buy a knife," and then would quickly close the coat.²²

The well-known Victorian dandy, Berry Wall, recounted a similar story in his memoirs:

I remember him [Jacob Dreicer] when he began his business career—long before he was a jeweler. He used to come to Delmonico's and other restaurants and offer us a new pen-knife for our old one, plus fifty cents. He was always fair dealing

¹⁹ "Draezer, Jacob." 1870 United States Federal Census. New York, New York Ward 21, District 6.

²⁰ "Sheet 10: [Bounded by E. Fortieth Street, First Avenue, E. Twentieth Street and Sixth Avenue.]" New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed March 31, 2018.
<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-49f4-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

²¹ "Draezer, Jacob." 1870 United States Federal Census. New York, New York Ward 21, District 6.

²² Jacob Knickerbocker (pseud.), *Then & Now* (New York: B. Humphries, Inc, 1939), 43.

and soon the people from whom he had his consignments let him have pieces of jewelry on the same terms; from those beginnings he built up a wonderful business.²³

These anecdotes give no exact timeframe for Jacob Dreicer's rise from trench-coat salesman to powerful business owner, but from city directory entries it is possible to infer that his success was slowly won, as there are no mentions of Jacob's professional development until 1876. At this point, he must have outgrown penknives and switched focus to the industry he and his wife knew from Minsk; he is listed in *Trow's* city directory as a "broker" with an office at 162 West 36th Street and a home at 538 2nd Avenue.²⁴ Finally, in 1879 the Dreicers arrived at 177 Lexington Avenue, which would remain their residence until 1888, and was presumably the location where Mary remembered her mother supervising stonecutters in the laundry room.²⁵

In 1880 *Trow's* upgraded Jacob Dreicer's occupational listing from "Broker" to "Diamonds," and in the *1881 Phillip's Business Directory* he is listed as a "Diamond Importer at 4 John Street, in the heart of the old Diamond District."²⁶ It is interesting to note that while Dreicer initially identified himself as a diamond dealer, his tastes and expertise lay more with colored gemstones and pearls. *Time Magazine* recalled "He did not care for [diamonds], least of all when he saw them wired on the stomacher of the Manhattan dame of a Civil War profiteer...but these Americans knew nothing of pearls...only the jangling of diamonds."²⁷ As a stranger in a new land, at first Jacob

²³ E. Berry Wall, *Neither Pest nor Puritan* (Dial Press, 1940), 76-77.

²⁴ "Dreicer, Jacob," in *Trow's New York City Directory 1876-77* (J.F. Trow: New York, 1877).

²⁵ "Dreicer, Jacob," in *Trow's New York City Directory 1879-80* (J.F. Trow: New York, 1879).

²⁶ "Dreicer, Jacob" in *Phillip's Business Directory of New York City for the Years 1881-82* (New York: Phillips & Co., 1882).

²⁷ "Tears for Love," *Time Magazine*, December 13, 1926, 30 - 32.

Dreicer wisely accommodated to the local preferences in spite of his personal feelings. Eventually, his company would rise to the level of tastemaker where his own preferences might be indulged and imposed on a willing clientele.

The earliest large purchase on record belongs to Adelaide Mott Bell, wife of wealthy cotton investor Isaac Bell. She paid \$6000 for an emerald and pearl necklace from Jacob Dreicer in 1876.²⁸ She must have been somewhat of a champion of Dreicer's for *The New Yorker* remembered that Mrs. Bell's contemporaries all "thought she was mad" to make such a purchase from him. Mrs. Bell remained loyal after Jacob opened a shop at 1128 Broadway in 1884.

She would frequently order her victoria to drive up and stand before it. There it would remain for several hours, the footman beside it with a sable rug over his arm. As Mrs. Bell was a member of one of the twenty-five or so families in Manhattan who in those days could be considered 'jewel buyers' this gave the store prestige.²⁹

Her generosity paid off, however, for several decades later she sold "a single center stone" from the necklace for \$90,000, and used the proceeds to establish the Bell Home for Gentlewomen.³⁰

Another high-profile purchaser of the 1870s was future President James Garfield, the first of several United States presidents to frequent Dreicer & Co. *The New York Times* reported that Garfield was a friend of Jacob Dreicer and commissioned a cameo portrait of himself to be mounted in diamonds in 1879. The intricate piece was still not completed when the President was assassinated in 1881, and was kept by the Dreicers

²⁸ "Another Passing" *New Yorker*, November 27, 1926, 20.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid. The Bell Home was built in Nyack, NY c. 1898, and was intended as a place of respite for working class women. For more information see "The Bell Home, Nyack," *The Churman* January 13th, 1900, 55.

and displayed in the window of their shop for some time.³¹ Many years later, the widowed Gittel Dreicer gifted the piece to the late President's son.³² The portrait artist was German immigrant Louis Zoellner (1852 - 1934), who was apprenticed to a cameo cutter as a teenager. He arrived in New York in 1871 and worked on contract for several larger jewelry houses until eventually setting up his own shop. In addition to the portrait of Garfield, he had carved cameos of President & First Lady Rutherford B. Hayes, Cornelius Vanderbilt and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, among others.³³

Concurrent to the business advances taking place in Manhattan, an R.G. Dun Credit Report dated from May 22nd, 1880 indicates that by this date Jacob was operating a proper retail space at No. 16 Grand Union Block at the Grand Union Hotel in the resort town of Saratoga Springs, New York.³⁴ Mention of Jacob staying as a guest at Saratoga hotels as early as 1877 indicates that he was conducting business in that area prior to the opening of an official brick-and-mortar location.³⁵ The family would keep a shop there during the summer season for the next 25 years.

There is little Dreicer jewelry that can be identified to the 1870s and 1880s, when jewelers were just beginning to explore designs that departed from the eclecticism and revivalism of older nineteenth-century styles. Two extant pieces that can be confirmed to this earlier date via the signature "Jacob Dreicer" are both pretty little jewels of diamond

³¹ Natalie Sterns, "Cutting Cameos *Almost Lost Art*," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1927, 14. <http://www.fultonhistory.com/Fulton.html>

³² "Gets Cameo of Garfield," *New York Times*, February 4, 1927, 7.

³³ Sterns, "Cutting Cameos *Almost Lost Art*."

³⁴ 1880 Dun reports state "Has also run a retail place at Saratoga in the season for the last 15 years" which would mean Jacob had been in Saratoga since 1865, but this date does not seem likely and contradicts the statement from the same Dun report saying "Has been known in the trade about 10 years." The earliest mention of Dreicer in Kirwin's Saratoga Springs Directory dates to 1884, where he appears as "Jacob Dreicer, Diamonds. 16 Grand Union block."

³⁵ "Hotel Arrivals," *Daily Saratogian*, July 31, 1877. J. Dreicer is a guest at the Continental Hotel.

and pearl. One is a bracelet of alternating old European cut diamonds and pearls set in articulated square box mounts of yellow gold. The second is a fan-shaped hair ornament of the same materials. They are tasteful, approachable and standard for their day, the sort of items that would have been a moderate extravagance (*Figs. 4 & 5*).

The playboy set at Saratoga was an important demographic for the Dreicer company. The Grand Union shop was well-known to those who summered at the springs during the Gay Nineties. Jimmy Hilton, son of Judge Henry Hilton who owned the Grand Union Hotel purportedly purchased \$20,000 of jewels for the actress Della Fox in one visit. Berry Wall recounted purchasing two men's dress rings, one of sapphire and diamond and the other of ruby and diamond.³⁶ Years later, Michael Dreicer remembered Wall's early patronage, and when Wall found himself in financial straits due to the Panic of 1893, he took back Mrs. Wall's jewels at their original purchase price.³⁷

Reports of a genial shopping spree at the Jacob Dreicer & Co. Saratoga location made national newspapers in 1888 and no doubt helped to spread the reputation of the firm. Feeling exceptionally generous after an evening of drinks and good cheer at the Grand Union, the wealthy dandy George Law bade Jacob Dreicer bring out trays of jewels for all his friends to choose from. The selections were enviously reported in papers from California to Boston:

Handsome Dan Murphy chose a beautiful solitaire diamond ring valued at \$500. Jerry Dunn took a ring set with rubies and diamonds valued at \$650. Joe Coburn's was a \$750 solitaire diamond ring. Johnny Sanders chose a ring set with rubies, sapphires and diamonds, valued at \$450. John Halleck's choice was a ring set with turquoise and diamonds valued at \$450. William Tracey selected a \$5000 diamond ring, but Captain McCue was the lucky one. He got two diamond rings and \$500 in cash. To Colonel Patrick Duffy and Pat Sneezy Mr. Law off-red a

³⁶ E. Berry Wall, *Neither Pest nor Puritan* (Dial Press, 1940), 76.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

\$3,000 pair of diamond earrings which he took from his pocket, but they declined. Mr. Law then footed up the Bill and paid it.³⁸

The beneficiaries were apparently not the sentimental sort, for after a rough few days at the racetrack they sold their gifts back to Jacob who purchased them at a discount and was able to realise a nice little profit from the whole venture.³⁹

There was an enthusiastic description of the pleasures of shopping at Dreicer, Saratoga, published in *The Epoch* in 1891:

If I were a man with a wife or grown daughters, I should never bring them to Saratoga as long as Jacob Dreicer had a shop here. If I had the stoicism of Brutus, I should never be able to refuse to buy them the wonderfully beautiful things in his show cases--and they would never cease to entreat me to purchase, I know. Having no wife and daughters to buy for, I allow myself the occasional pleasure of a peep into Mr. Dreicer's fine store on Broadway here, and price diamond necklaces at \$15,000, the most stunning diamond tiara at \$4500, an exact reproduction in design of Mrs. Astor's famous tiara, and pearl necklaces of two strings with a diamond and ruby clasp—a bagatelle that costs but \$5000.... The other day I saw in Dreicer's a lady looking at diamond tiaras, necklaces, bracelets and combs, pricings thousand dollar rings and fifteen hundred dollar watches. After an hour's careful thought and inspection she bought a little necklace of enamel for *thirty-five dollars!* But it was a little gem--I didn't know there was anything so cheap in the shop. A fine thread of gold, worked like a cable, was to clasp to the throat; from this depended seven little butterflies of the most exquisite enamel, brilliant in color and beautiful in design, and in the back of each butterfly sparkled a tiny diamond. It was immensely effective and such a bargain!⁴⁰

A less sycophantic description published by the *New York Herald* in 1904, after the branch had been operating for about 25 years and surely had become somewhat of an institution in Saratoga, described Dreicer's as "the pretty display of jewels in a window under the Grand Union, where women love to stop and to tell one another which tiara or

³⁸ "They Came Very High," *New York Herald*, August 28, 1888, 4.

³⁹ "Carries his Wealth in His Pockets," *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*, June 28, 1903, 21.

⁴⁰ "A Few Words about Society," *The Epoch*, 10, No.235, 11.

dog collar particularly suits their fancy.”⁴¹ Son-in-law Charles Davidson (married to Frances Dreicer in 1890), who was also a manager at later Manhattan Dreicer locations, managed the branch at Saratoga for many years. He was likely the individual described as a “gray-haired super salesman” who was “a prime favorite with the women and called Lillian Russell by her first name.”⁴² In the summer of 1907 suspicions were raised about Davidson’s fidelity to his wife, and it became apparent that he’d been indulging in extramarital relations with a shop employee named Jennie Allen. Davidson was dismissed from his duties by the next spring, and it appears that 1907 was the last season the Saratoga branch was in operation.⁴³

Made in Manhattan

The year 1884 was important for the Gittel and Jacob: They were able to open a retail space, at first called Jacob Dreicer & Co., at 1128 Broadway in Manhattan.⁴⁴ No images of 1128 during the eight years it was occupied by J. Dreicer & Co. have yet been located. However, Mail & Express’s 1899 *Pictorial History of Broadway* shows the building and block as occupied by the next tenant, silver manufacturers called Meridan Company, about seven years after the Dreicers had moved on to their next location (*Fig. 6*). The choice of 1128 Broadway as a storefront was strategic, as it was just around the corner from the 5th Avenue & 26th street location of DelMonico’s restaurant, a favorite

⁴¹ “Saratoga at the Spa and Track,” *New York Herald*, August 14, 1904, 7.

⁴² Clarence H. Knapp, “Grandeur of the Grand Union,” *The Saratogian*, December 5, 1952, 4.

⁴³ Supreme Court of the State of New York, *Fannie Davidson vs. Charles F. Davidson*. (New York: Chas P. Young & Co., 1909), 6.

⁴⁴“Dreicer, Jacob,” in *Trow’s New York City Directory 1884* (J.F. Trow: New York, 1884).

haunt of “The 400” and a purported stop along Jacob’s peddling route. According to the *New York Herald*:

While his wife tended shop over the noon hour Jacob Dreicer went to Delmonico’s for lunch. His was a delightful character. A raconteur of no mean ability, he soon struck up luncheon table friendships with some of the most substantial business men in town...as he gained the acquaintance of the men he sought he made a practice of carrying to the luncheon table a fine pearl or large emerald, nonchalantly drawing this from his pocket at the psychological moment when the courses were changed or the conversation lagged. As he appraisingly displayed the glittering bauble between thumb and forefinger he could evoke admiration and comment...It was an ideal audience for the sale of an expensive luxury—particularly a rare jewel which could be displayed publicly as an addition to the diamond advertisements at the time. Around Delmonico’s tables Jacob Dreicer negotiated sales that were the start of family pearl collections later destined to take their place among the largest and most famous in America.⁴⁵

Aside from advantageous proximity to DelMonico’s, 1128 Broadway also was next door to competitor Theodore B. Starr’s establishment, which had operated at 1126 Broadway since 1877 (Starr also had an entrance on the 5th Ave side of the building facing Madison Square). An 1888 Dun report indicates that this Dreicer location was open only during the winter, and that the primary business was still the summer season at Saratoga.⁴⁶

In 1885, Michael Dreicer turned eighteen. In addition to putting him through Brooklyn College, his parents had been grooming him to take his place in the family business. Mary Dreicer recounts: “My mother went by herself to Europe to buy rough stones until my brother Michael was 17 years old, when she took him with her, taught

⁴⁵ Dakin, “Pearls before House Wreckers.”

⁴⁶ “Jacob Dreicer” R.G. Dun & Co. Credit Report Volumes. Baker Library Historical Collections. Harvard Business School. Entry May 8th -1888.

him the conditions of the European market and introduced him to the sellers in the foreign markets and instructed him how to buy.”⁴⁷

Gem brokerage was not the only way the Dreicers were able to raise the funds to keep proper shops stocked in both Saratoga and Manhattan. Though the family name became synonymous with fine jewelry, at the same time the Dreicers were building their reputation as diamond dealers they were also investing in real estate. The success of their initial acquisitions would eventually lead to a miniature real estate empire along Fifth Avenue. Jacob Knickerbocker provided some insight into Jacob and Gittel’s early acquisitions: “When better acquainted [with Jacob Dreicer] in discussing financial matters, I found he gave preference to real estate and owned three tenement houses.”⁴⁸

Ownership of tenement houses was a logical goal to work towards for the immigrants whose communities lived in them. Seen as a next step up the social ladder, many tenement landlords were able to achieve a considerable profit.⁴⁹ Jacob Dreicer first appears in the real estate publication *The Record & Guide* in 1877 in reports of minor judgements and chattel transfers relating to a property at 80 Nassau Street. In 1887 Gittel Dreicer makes her first appearance in the *Record* as the purchaser of a three story stone-front dwelling at 115 E. 64th Street.⁵⁰ The brokering of pen knives and diamonds presumably financed the purchase of tenement buildings which in turn financed the

⁴⁷ “Tells how Dreicer Lifted Pearl Myth,” *New York Times*, February 28, 1925, 5.

⁴⁸ Jacob Knickerbocker (pseud.), *Then & Now* (New York: B. Humphries, Inc, 1939), 43.

⁴⁹ Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1890), 126.

Riis postulates with the prejudices of his day, after hearing a Jewish tenement housewife explain her income and budget: “At the least calculation, probably, this sweater’s family hoards up thirty dollars a month, and in a few years will own a tenement somewhere and profit by the example set by their landlord in rent-collecting. It is the way the savings of Jewtown are universally invested and with the natural talent of its people ... the investment is enormously profitable.”

⁵⁰ “Conveyances,” *The Record & Guide*, 40, No. 1032, December 24, 1887, 1618.

development of more genteel properties and storefronts for the jewelry business. By the end of their middle age, Jacob and Gittel Dreicer had secured a number of smart real estate investments. In 1892 alone, *The Record* notes that the couple purchased at least five different Manhattan locations under Jacob's name.

Also in 1892, the business moved from the Broadway location to 292 5th Avenue, and changed its name to J. Dreicer & Son to reflect Michael's growing role.⁵¹ Located at the corner of 30th street, the shop would occupy the former family mansion of Jacob's old friend and client Berry Wall.⁵² *The Record* noted that Jacob had originally planned to modify the existing residence into a place of business, but architects George Edward Harding & Gooch convinced him that tearing it down and creating an entirely new structure was advisable. The new building was supported by an iron frame and clad in a granite and limestone facade. It was furnished with modern amenities such as an elevator, steam heat and electric light.⁵³ A photograph taken about 1911, five years after J. Dreicer & Son had moved out, shows the Dreicer-developed frontage at 292 5th Avenue as occupied by John J. Kennedy: Designer & Maker of Men's Clothes (*Fig. 7*).

As a state-of-the-art Manhattan retail space, a booming summer business in a resort town, and high-society clientele may indicate, by the time 'J. Dreicer & Son' began the firm had achieved a significant spot in the conscious of those who purchased important jewels. Michael Dreicer was a success in his assumption of leadership roles in both jewelry and real-estate arenas, and it was soon recognized that he had inherited his parents' talents in regards to pearls and gemstones. It was said that his "extraordinary gift

⁵¹ J. Dreicer & Son Advertisement, *The National Magazine*, Vol. 16, October 1892.

⁵² Apparently the Walls had to get rid of more than just the family jewels to weather the Panic

⁵³"Out Among the Builders," *The Record & Guide*, 49, No. 1264, June 4, 1892, 888.

for remembering individual pearls ... served important uses in recognizing and identifying stolen pearls even when they had been removed from their original mounting.”⁵⁴ His recognition as a leading connoisseur of pearls was acknowledged when he was called upon as an expert witness for relevant cases. In 1908 he was asked to take the stand as a witness in *Tiffany & Co. v. The United States Treasury Department*.⁵⁵ Import duties could be very high for jewelers in the early twentieth century. Tiffany & Co had imported a suite of pearls for Maurice Guggenheim and paid the 10% import duty for “pearls in their natural state,” but the Board of Appraisers contested that the firm should have paid the 60% import duty on finished jewelry, a difference of \$8,000. Michael’s expertise was required to determine whether drilled pearls more closely resembled “pearls in their natural state” or a “necklace.” Perhaps not surprisingly, he expressed his opinion in favor of “pearls in their natural state.”

Despite this level of success, and what must have been a significant output of product, it is still quite rare to find items signed J. Dreicer & Son that can be conclusively dated to this period (1892 - 1906) of the company’s history. Nevertheless, several jewels have come to light: A ladies’ watch pin in the form of a crown is rendered in emerald green enamel and studded with old european cut diamonds. Multiple iterations of this style were offered, and the two extant pieces present variations on dial colors, diamond arrangements, and complications (*Fig. 8-1, 2*). The watches are detachable from the upper crown-shaped portion, and could have been worn separately on a long chain. Three gem-set pins date about 1900 and are also signed “Dreicer & Son.” Two in the form of

⁵⁴ E.D. Dakin, “Pearls before House Wreckers,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 30, 1927.

⁵⁵ “Testimony Taken before General Appraisers in Tiffany Pearl Case,” *The Jewellers’ Circular-Weekly* November 18, 1908, 74.

sunbursts and one with a platinum-topped bow of diamonds intertwined with sapphire and ruby horseshoes (*Fig. 9*). Perhaps the latter was a souvenir to bring luck at the Saratoga race tracks. These jewels may be considered of fine quality, though somewhat typical in terms of design.

The firm continued to enjoy the patronage of the presidents of the United States, as President McKinley found that diamonds were always favorably received by the First Lady, Ida McKinley. Dreicer gifts on record are “two diamond rings for her fifty-second birthday in June, two diamond bracelets the preceding Christmas, a pair of diamond side-combs the year before that.”⁵⁶ A survival from the First Lady’s diamond collection with an intriguing story is a winged tiara that retains its original J. Dreicer & Son box, stamped with the 292 5th Avenue address. Two diamond wings rest atop a golden circlet, and can be rearranged or removed and worn as brooches (*Fig. 10-1, 2*). In 2014, the tiara appeared on the TV show “Pawn Stars,” and was purchased by the shop-owner on camera for \$43,000. Curators of the McKinley Presidential Library happened to see the episode, and were able to subsequently acquire the tiara for the museum’s collection.⁵⁷

Flagship & Expansion

Both the jewelry and real estate ventures continued to flourish, and in 1906 the Dreicers were able to hire the architects Warren & Wetmore to design a flagship store at 560 5th Avenue. The 1907 Dreicer building still stands on the South West corner of 46th

⁵⁶ Margaret Leech, *In the Days of McKinley* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 466.

⁵⁷ Eve M. Kahn, “What’s a Tiara Like You doing on Reality TV?” *New York Times*, June 19th, 2014.

Street and 5th Avenue. The family's decades of diligence crystallized in the new building. The location was considered an aggressive move in the steady northward march of retail establishments (that same year Tiffany & Co. moved from their "old-fashioned" location on Union Square to 5th Ave & 37th St).⁵⁸ When the Dreicer building opened in November 1907, *Men's Wear Daily* described the store as "the acme of luxurious fitting."⁵⁹ The first floor facade was black marble with gilt-top corinthian pilasters and large windows curtained in silk that displayed a few choice jewels (*Fig 11*). The upper four stories were clad in Indiana limestone, and the top floor originally housed the offices and workshops of Dreicer & Co's "Parisian workmen."⁶⁰ The first lessees were Jules Bach & Co. on the second floor, and the art gallery Eugene Glaenger & Co. on the third and fourth floor.⁶¹ The choice of lessees reflected Michael's interest in the art world, for by this date he had gone beyond collecting and was partnering with various dealers for business purposes.⁶²

The interiors of the shop were a partnership between the firm Nelson of Paris, who was responsible for the Cornelius Vanderbilt House interiors, and Marcotte of New York City. Done in the French Renaissance style, "the rich carving and modeling of walls and ceiling produce[d] at once, upon prospective patrons, the assurance of the firm's

⁵⁸ Robert Grier Cooke, "Seen in the Shops: America's Smartest Shopping District," *Vogue*, October 15, 1910, 17-19.

⁵⁹ "The Show Windows of New York," *Men's Wear*, 24, No. 1, November 6, 1907, 119-120.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ "Building Notes," *The Record and Guide*, 79, No. 2044, May 18, 1907, 969.

⁶² Dreicer & Co. Advertisement. *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 21, 1910, 13. The most notable partnership was with Edgar Gorer, dealer of antique porcelain and jades based at 170 New Bond Street in London. It is possible that some of the carved jade pieces used in Dreicer jewelry were sourced through this relationship. Dreicer billed themselves as "sole agents in the United States" for Gorer, whose wears were given space both at 560 5th Avenue and also Dreicer's branch at the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago. Sadly the partnership was cut short when Gorer perished on the Lusitania in 1915. For a lively overview of Gorer and his business, reference https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ladylever/collections/chinese/goreressay/gorer_v_lever.pdf

reliability and good taste.”⁶³ Dreicer also chose to eschew traditional display cases, and instead opted for “hand-carved rosewood tables, supporting inlaid cases of precious woods mounted in ormolu (*Fig. 12 - 1 to 3*).”⁶⁴ The shortened company name, Dreicer & Company, was first used about this time. It is by this name that the firm is most recognized today.

To Michael Dreicer, the careful design of the new building and investments in artwork were about more than just the perfect home for a jewelry business. He was an avid believer in the “City Beautiful” movement, and 560 5th Ave. was only one of a number of properties Dreicer Realty Co. developed with the intention of improving and beautifying the city that had brought them such success (See Appendix A). By 1919, Michael had been elected Chairman of the 5th Avenue Association, and along with many others whose businesses relied on an elegant atmosphere, spoke out publicly against encroaching factories and the building of skyscrapers above seventy-five feet tall stating “we are anxious to see the beauty and fame of this avenue retained, but our interest is from a civic and not a mercenary point of view.”⁶⁵

In 1908 Michael Dreicer married Masie Seville Shainwald, the beautiful daughter of a wealthy San Francisco businessman and sixteen years Dreicer’s junior (*Fig. 13*). The couple literally “fell in love” when Shainwald tripped down the stairs of a New York-bound ocean liner and into Dreicer’s arms.⁶⁶ Their wedding took place at the St. Regis Hotel, and the *New York Times* reported that Maisie wore “a Worth gown of white

⁶³ “Fifth Avenue Shop Architecture,” *The New York Architect*, 5, No. 2, July, 1911, 184.

⁶⁴ “The Show Windows of New York,” *Men’s Wear*, 24, No. 1, November 6, 1907, 119-120.

⁶⁵ “Want Apartments Kept off Fifth Av.,” *New York Times*, April 18, 1919, 24.

⁶⁶ “Social Gossip,” *Washington Post*, May 16, 1908, 11.

satin and old rose point, and a string of matched pearls.”⁶⁷ The couple would have two sons, and it’s possible to imagine that these boys were to be groomed to follow in their father and grandparents’ footsteps.

In 1910 Dreicer & Co. expanded westward with a branch at the Blackstone Hotel, in Chicago.⁶⁸ A collaboration with Marshall Field & Co. followed in 1918, when Dreicer pearls, diamonds and “rare gems” were shown in the high-end Chicago department store’s jewelry room.⁶⁹ The Blackstone branch, described as a “tiny, exclusive establishment” that was accessible through the hotel’s lobby made headlines in 1916 when “a slender young man of impeccable address” made off with a tray containing \$25,000 of diamonds in broad daylight.⁷⁰ By at least 1912, another hotel branch was established at the Colonnade Hotel in the resort town of Magnolia, Massachusetts.⁷¹ The last branch was opened in 1918 in the Jeanette Building at Palm Beach.⁷² In 1920 Dreicer & Co. reported a booming summer season at this Florida location. When WWI was over, and the Jazz Age beginning, patronesses of the shop inquired after “unusual and expensive” jewels, which Dreicer & Co. was happy to provide in the form of fancy-shaped diamonds and sautoirs of pearl and jade.⁷³

After decades in business, Dreicer & Co., Inc was officially chartered in 1917 with capital of \$6,500,000, which the *Jeweler’s Circular* reported was “probably one of

⁶⁷ “Dreicer-Shainwald,” *New York Times*, May 21, 1908, 7.

⁶⁸ Dreicer & Co. Advertisement. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 21, 1910, 13.

⁶⁹ “Marshall Field Feature Gems,” *Women’s Wear*, December 9, 1918, 24.

⁷⁰ “25,000 Gems Stolen in Shop at Blackstone,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 3, 1916, 1. The embarrassed manager of the branch, Edward L. Smith, had allowed the well-dressed burglar to shop from three trays of rings at the same time, but then reported “The strangest thing about it was that when he came in I suspected him for some reason of being a thief. I watched him narrowly, or thought I did, all the time he was there. How he got away with it I simply cannot imagine.”

⁷¹ Dreicer & Co. Advertisement. *North Shore Blue Book* (Boston: Boston Suburban Book Company, 1912), 1.

⁷² “Palm Beach Season Backwards, but Picking up at Last,” *Women’s Wear*, January 22, 1918, 38.

⁷³ “Blazing Jewels Replace Pearls at Palm Beach,” *Women’s Wear*, March 17, 1920, 26.

the largest amounts for which any jewelry concern was ever incorporated in [New York] City.”⁷⁴ In addition to Michael Dreicer, Augusta A.F. Ollmer and Edwin J. Case were also listed as directors in the incorporation papers.⁷⁵ Jacob, Gittel and their four children were all preferred shareholders and remained active after the incorporation. When the company closed its doors in 1927, the *New York Sun* called Dreicer & Co. “one of the best known jewelry firms in the world.”⁷⁶ It’s fair to say that if Jacob and Michael had not died before the next generation came of age, Dreicer might still be a household name today.

Though the rise from anonymous immigrants to talked-about high society jewelers was impressive, and praise of the business acumen and tenacity of this hard-working family is well-deserved, the Dreicers were a product of their time. Their ascent to the upper echelons of business and culture coincided with a time of unprecedented growth of wealth and industry in the United States. Newly available natural resources, technology and clientele with previously-unimaginable amounts of disposable income were all instrumental in the establishment and ultimate success of their jewelry business.

⁷⁴ “New York Notes,” *Jewelers’ Circular*, 74, No.1, February 7, 1919, 99.

⁷⁵ “Chartered at Albany,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 31, 1917, 2.

⁷⁶ Old Fulton NY Sun record breaking sales

Chapter II

Jewelry in Reconstruction New York City

New Money in New York

When the Dreicers arrived to America in 1867, the Gilded Age had just begun and northern businessmen were cashing in on investments made during the Civil War. Much of this wealth was concentrated in New York City, and in 1868 *Harper's Bazaar* posited that New Yorkers owned a larger number of diamonds than could be found in all the rest of the country.⁷⁷ The frenzied building of important jewelry collections among new-money families during this time should be seen as no surprise. Those who had risen to the top were now beginning to feel comfortable in their fortunes, and were searching for the best way to advertise their new status. Flamboyant and expensive jewelry is a time-honored vehicle for this objective. In these decades of bustling expansion for the jewelry industry, in addition to top-tier firms, New York City directories listed hundreds of jewelers, watchmakers, brokers, dealers, engravers and lapidaries. This population of rank-and-file merchants and craftsmen represents the crowd from which the Dreicers would have to stand out.

⁷⁷ "Diamond & Emerald Jewelry," *Harper's Bazaar*, 1, No. 29, May 16, 1868, 453-454.

Local Business

From the late-eighteenth century through the early-twentieth century the New York diamond and jewelry trade was centered around Maiden Lane, a bustling street that had been laid out in old New Amsterdam. Running parallel to Maiden Lane and also considered part of the jewelry district was John Street, where Jacob Dreicer leased his several offices in the early 1880s.⁷⁸ In 1922 *Scientific American* examined the history of the diamond industry in the United States and observed the business habits of Maiden Lane, largely unchanged since the jewelry industry first settled there:

Every building in the vicinity of Maiden Lane, John and Nassau Streets has its share of diamond dealers, diamond brokers, diamond cutters, and setters. The curb market...is at the corner of John and Nassau Streets, where...a group of a hundred or more men can be found, apparently idling their time away...These men are all recognized diamond merchants and deal chiefly among themselves. Many of them have made a section of this curb their office for thirty years or more. While it is impossible to obtain any figures on the amount of business transacted on the curb it is estimated at several millions a year.⁷⁹

It is possible to imagine that Jacob Dreicer, with his knowledge of diamonds and amicable nature, found the “curb market” an easy entry into the New York jewelry world.

Off the curb, perhaps the most famous of the established American firms was Tiffany & Company, the first iteration of which had been opened by Charles Lewis

⁷⁸ “Jacob Dreicer” R.G. Dun & Co. Credit Report Volumes. Baker Library Historical Collections. Harvard Business School. In 1880 he leased 6 John Street, then moved to 8 John street.

⁷⁹ Harry A. Mount, “Our Diamond Industry,” *Scientific American*, 123, No.1, July 3, 1920, 614.

Tiffany & John B. Young in 1837 as a stationery and fancy goods store.⁸⁰ During the Civil War the company anticipated the needs of the Union Army, and diverted its focus to the importation and manufacture of weapons and other necessities of war.⁸¹ They profited handsomely from this venture, and by 1870 were able to open an impressive new five-story shop at the corner of 15th Street and Union Square. This is the same year that Jacob “the peddler” Dreicer and his family were living about one mile north in their modest apartment on East 34th Street.

Prolific as they were, Tiffany & Co. could not sate America’s desire for jewels, and there was ample room in the market for other operations. Ball, Black & Co. (succeeded in 1874 by Black, Starr & Frost) was another major firm, and claimed to be “the oldest retail jewelry house in New York,” founded in 1810. They were located downtown at the corner of Broadway and Prince Street at the time of the Dreicers’ arrival. Concurrently Starr & Marcus (active 1864 - 1877), a noteworthy partnership of designers T.B. Starr and Herman Marcus was operated at 22 John Street.⁸² Both partners would move on to form their own companies and reach great success in the coming decades. The magnitude of the Dreicers’ ascent is highlighted by the fact that in the decades that followed they would become landlord, neighbor, and prime competitor to these firms and others.⁸³

Many other firms, less-familiar to modern ears but well-established in their day, ran businesses of substance that would have been in direct competition to the fledgling

⁸⁰ Tiffany & Co, “About Tiffany & Co,” accessed April 1, 2018.

<http://press.tiffany.com/ViewBackgrounder.aspx?backgrounderId=33>

⁸¹ George Frederic Heyt, *Charles L. Tiffany & the House of Tiffany & Co.*, (New York: Tiffany & Co., 1893), 25.

⁸² “Starr & Marcus, 1869,” *The Jewelers’ Circular*, 78, No. 1, February 5, 1919, 187.

⁸³ Jacob Dreicer & Co. moved in next to TB Starr by Madison sq. park in 1884, and was their eventual landlord when Starr moved up town. Jacob Dreicer also purchased the Black Starr & Frost building.

Dreicer organization of the 1870s. Schuyler, Hartley & Graham, a major outfit active since 1854 as dealers of firearms, military, and fancy goods advertised their jewelry inventory as “a full general line, containing just such choice ornaments and gems as young ladies delight in.”⁸⁴ They operated out of spaces at 22 John Street and 19 Maiden Lane until the 1890s, at which point they moved their showrooms northward on Broadway.⁸⁵ In the eighteen-seventies Howard & Co. (1866 -1922) offered diamond solitaires and stud earrings of up to five carats in size at their 222 Fifth Avenue shop,⁸⁶ and Magnin, Guedin & Company (1817-1882) at 652 Broadway boasted a stock “particularly rich” in pearls, cameos and fine watches.⁸⁷

Across the Hudson River, Newark New Jersey had become the nation’s capital of jewelry manufacturing, and by the 1860s the industrial city boasted 30 factories producing items for the wholesale jewelry market. Firms such as Krementz, Riker Brothers, Durand & Co., and Unger Brothers took advantage of newly available mechanized production methods to supply hungry markets in New York City and beyond. Many genteel jewelry retailers relied on Newark production to bolster their own inventories.⁸⁸

Fashions of the Day

What might be found in the workshops and windows of established New York jewelers when the Dreicers arrived? The jewels of Reconstruction America, though made

⁸⁴ "JEWELRY." *New York Times*, Dec 23, 1874, 3.

⁸⁵ Roy Marcot, “Marcellus Hartley-Merchant, Financier, Millionaire and Philanthropist,” *American Society of Arms Collectors Bulletin* Vol. 83, 23-37.

⁸⁶ "JEWELRY." *New York Times*, Dec 23, 1874, 3.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Janet Zapata, “Jewelry Industry” in *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*, ed. Maxine N. Lurie & Marc Mappen (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 429.

of fine materials skillfully wrought, can be considered eclectic in style. An article in *Harper's Bazaar*, December 1867, presented a summary of current fashions for the holiday shopper, and provided a thorough overview of jewelers' offerings. "Diamonds and pearls, of course, take precedence," the author states, and adds that "a diamond brooch, larger than the palm of the hand, attracts special admiration. It is a floral design, the rose, leaves and stem made of innumerable small diamonds."⁸⁹ This substantial style is illustrated by an impressive star brooch by Tiffany & Co. (*Fig. 1*) manufactured c. 1870, that features dozens of old mine cut diamonds arranged in hefty settings of sterling silver backed with gold. *Harper's* continued: "A bridal parure of pearls consists of brooch, ear-rings, necklace, and bracelet."⁹⁰ This parure was likely fabricated of tiny seed pearls strung together in florettes atop mother of pearl backings. In 1861 President Lincoln purchased just such a suite of seed pearl jewelry from Tiffany & Co. for his wife to wear to the inaugural ball (*Fig. 2*).

For those who favored color, opals, emeralds, sapphires, rubies, turquoise, coral and topaz were recommended, while carbuncles (red garnet cabochons) were deemed "obsolete" and jet had been replaced by onyx as the mourning jewel of choice.⁹¹ The metal settings for these colorful gems drew inspiration from a variety of sources, and referenced everything from ancient Hellenistic goldwork to Rococo architecture. Jewelry with ancient inspiration was sometimes referred to as "archaeological," with no attempt made to identify any specific culture. *Harper's* struggled to find words for these interesting design-pastiches, and describes "heavy, massive bars of gold, scallop shells,

⁸⁹ "New York Fashions: Holiday Gifts," *Harper's Bazaar*, 1, No. 9, Dec. 28th, 1867, 130-131.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

and emblematic insignia, always with pendants or fringe.” A demi-parure by Ball, Black & Co. illustrates just such an interesting combination, and features red coral bars set in an interpretation of archaeological forms and finished with a dash of Rococo whimsy (*Fig. 3*).

More direct interpretations of ancient goldwork were also made. The undisputed master of revival jewelry was the Italian house of Castellani, who had direct access to jewelry uncovered in Vatican excavations of ancient Etruscan tombs. A Castellani Etruscan necklace in a fitted case from Dreicer & Co. appeared at Freeman’s Auction House in 2014, though it is more likely Dreicer purchased this on the secondary market rather than through any direct relationship with Castellani (*Fig. 4*).⁹² *Harper’s* recommended this sort of “plain” Etruscan jewelry (sometimes called “dead gold” for the matte rather than high-polish finish) for morning wear. Often set in Etruscan-style gold, were much-admired micromosaics in “quaint Medieval styles and after Egyptian models (*Fig. 5*).” Cameos that featured classical vignettes had also returned to vogue. Often jewelry made in these “archaeological” styles was acquired as a souvenir on the Grand Tour, but they were so popular that New York jewelers also kept themselves stocked with jewels of this genre.

Simultaneously, naturalism and depictions of flora and fauna were enjoying great popularity. The 1859 publication of Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* and frustrations surrounding a rapidly industrializing landscape lead to widespread interest in the natural world. In 1867 *Harper’s* observed “many pretty devices in a simple style of enameling ...

⁹² “Lot 85, A fine gold woven fringe revival necklace, Castellani” *Freeman’s Auction House*, accessed April 1, 2018. <http://auctions.freemansauction.com/auction-lot-detail/A%20fine%20gold%20woven%20fringe%20revival%20necklace,%20Castellani,%20arche/1374+++++85/+++737692>

Flowers, feathers, beetles, dragon-flies, and scorpions are imitated to the life...Clusters of violets, a single pansy, and lilies of the valley, a pure white spray on a dark green leaf..." Flower-shaped jewels were a continuation of the romanticism and sentimental themes that permeated art, literature and also jewelry design during the first half of the nineteenth century. Different flowers had different meanings, and the symbolism of a bouquet may be translated with the help of a published guide like *The Language of Flowers*.⁹³ The flowers mentioned above, for example, may represent "modesty", "remembrance", and "the return of happiness" respectively. A charming brooch by the Newark manufacturer, Kremenz (founded in 1866) strikes a sentimental chord with a life-like enameled pansy over a gold crescent decorated with blue forget-me-nots (*Fig. 6*).⁹⁴

Another interesting manifestation of the taste for naturalism was jewelry set with the iridescent green shells of Brazilian tortoise beetles. An English countess had an entire parure crafted of the jewel-toned bugs by the British firm Phillip's of Cockspur, and *Harper's* informed its readers that gentlemen also appreciated "green Brazilian beetles, with diamond eyes, set in beaded borders for shirt-studs (*Fig. 7*)."⁹⁵ Indeed, jewelry was much more a part of a gentleman's wardrobe in nineteenth-century America than it is today. *Harper's* goes on to describe for gentlemen shoppers "massive gold scarf-rings, enameled or set with jewels...dog's heads of amethyst or coral, with collar and lock studded with diamonds, and...signet-rings and watch-chains made of pale yellow gold from New Mexico."⁹⁶

⁹³ *The Language of Flowers* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1835).

⁹⁴ Stacey King, "Kremenz & Co.: An American Story," *JCK Online*, Accessed April 1, 2018, <http://www.jckonline.com/magazine-article/kremenz-coan-american-story/>

⁹⁵ "New York Fashions: Holiday Gifts," *Harper's Bazaar*, 1, No. 9, Dec. 28th, 1867, 130-131.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Despite the broad selection of jewels and precious stones available to the American public, in 1868 *Harper's* speaks candidly and relates that the diamond collections of America's upper crust still paled in comparison to their European counterparts:

Society this side of the water is not old enough, nor is permanence so far with us a characteristic of family fortune, as to admit of great individual diamond wealth... we are quite sure there are not more than three persons resident in the metropolis [New York City] possessing them to the value of \$100,000.⁹⁷

This description captures the aspirations of Americans to be on par with, or even supercede the old nobility of Europe. Their desire manifested in the acquisition of and expansion upon the material culture of the established European aristocracy. America's wealthy families appear to have taken on this challenge enthusiastically during the 1870s, for about a decade after *Harpers* bemoaned the dearth of diamonds in American collections, the *Jewelers' Circular* wrote

It is a well-known fact that this country absorbs more diamonds than any other and that the finest gems that come from the hands of the lapidaries are in greatest demand here. The demand, in fact, for rare gems is so great that it cannot be supplied and fabulous prices are being paid for them. Many wealthy persons regard diamonds as the best class of securities in which they invest their money; they pay no interest certainly, but either do they suffer from depreciation.⁹⁸

Perhaps nothing represents the movement of precious gems from European aristocracy to wealthy American families as well as Charles Tiffany's successful participation in the 1887 auction of French crown jewels. Among his purchases were an impressive four-strand diamond riviére, eventually acquired by Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer, and

⁹⁷ "Diamond & Emerald Jewelry," *Harper's Bazaar*, 1, No. 29, May 16, 1868, 453-454.

⁹⁸ *Jewelers' Circular*, February 1881, 6.

diamond corsage ornaments that were to be purchased by Lady Caroline Astor (*Fig. 8*).⁹⁹ Though the Dreicers had established their shop at 1128 Broadway and it is known that they often made buying trips to Europe during this period, their names are not among the buyers at this historic auction. The items purchased by Tiffany and many others had belonged to Eugénie de Teba, Empress to Napoleon III. And just like the Empress, gilded-age Americans aspired to emulate the art and lifestyle of eighteenth-century France (*Fig. 9*). Revival styles after the fashions of the three French kings Louis were manifest everywhere from architecture to the costumes of fancy dress balls, and of course, in jewelry design (*Fig. 10*). Dreicer was to excel in this reinterpretation of eighteenth-century jewelry, an aesthetic often referred to as the “garland style.”

A portrait of Queen Charlotte of Great Britain as a new bride in 1761 compared to a photograph of Consuelo Vanderbilt taken c. 1905 illustrates the adaptation of bold Georgian court jewels into the graceful garlands worn in the early twentieth century (*Fig. 11-1, 11-2*). Both women are bedecked with ropes of pearls, strung close as chokers and festooned and swagged over the bodice. Diadems, pins, and corsage ornaments set with brilliant-cut diamonds take the form of symmetrical bows, knots, and stylized flora. The difference lies not so much in the motifs, but in the execution of the designs, for advances in technology and newly-available materials allowed jewelers of the late nineteenth-century to achieve greater finesse.

⁹⁹ Tiffany & Co, “About Tiffany & Co,” accessed April 1, 2018.
<http://press.tiffany.com/ViewBackgrounder.aspx?backgrounderId=33>

Platinum & Diamonds

For contemporaries of both Queen Charlotte and Ms. Vanderbilt, impressive suites of pearl and diamond jewelry were considered the most luxurious and precious accessories. New diamond mines discovered in the Portuguese colony of Brazil in 1727 ensured a steady supply of the gems in Queen Charlotte's day, but by the mid-nineteenth century these sources were being depleted. In the 1860s most diamonds imported into the United States were commercial-grade goods of half a carat or less, and it was a challenge even for patrons with means to find larger gems. A gossipy *Harper's* article from 1865 even went so far as to report "of the brilliants exhibited at Newport and Saratoga a large proportion, especially of the larger stones, are mere paste."¹⁰⁰

This problem of scarcity would be reversed when in 1869 an 83.5 carat diamond was discovered on the property of the De Beers family near the small frontier town of Kimberley, South Africa. It was soon realized that there was a seemingly endless supply of diamonds to be mined in South Africa, and men flocked to Kimberley to seek their fortunes as novice diamond miners. Despite the strong market-demand, small-time prospectors quickly flooded the market and many found it a challenge to remain profitable. A young British businessman, Cecil Rhodes, capitalized on the situation, and purchased smaller operations to combine them into the eventual Behemoth that was

¹⁰⁰ "Diamonds and Other Gems," *Harper's Bazaar*, December 1st 1865, 343.

founded as De Beers Consolidated Mines in 1888. Once De Beers had possession of nearly the entire industry's output, they were able to stabilize the market by releasing limited quantities of diamonds at strategic times to create a false scarcity. De Beers would remain firmly in control of much of the world's rough diamond supply for the duration of the Dreicers' business.

In tandem with increased supply came new technologies and advances in diamond cutting. Traditionally, after a rough diamond crystal is cleaved along growth planes, the final shape and facet arrangement is achieved through a process called *bruting*, in which diamonds are ground against a wheel coated with diamond dust. This is an immensely challenging process, and often the octahedral shape of rough diamonds dictated that a squareish cushion-shape was the final form of a gem. These early brilliants (referred to as old mine cuts today) were first produced in the eighteenth century, and remained the height of lapidary art through the mid-nineteenth century. This changed, however, in the early 1870s when Charles D. Morse and Henry M. Field invented a steam-powered bruting machine.¹⁰¹ With this machine, lapidaries could now grind down the girdles of diamonds into near-perfect circles, and the old European cut diamond was introduced. This direct ancestor of the modern round brilliant cut diamond featured fifty-eight facets arranged within a round girdle, and allowed diamonds to reflect more fire and brilliance than ever before (*Fig. 12*). The dazzling effect was a departure from the subtle sparkle of the rose cut and early brilliant diamonds of the eighteenth century. Tiffany & Co. was so inspired that in 1886 they debuted the now iconic Tiffany Setting—a simple six-prong

¹⁰¹ Herbert Tillander, *Diamond Cuts in Historic Jewellery: 1381 - 1910*, (Art Books International, 1995).

solitaire mounting that eschewed heavy metal detailing and removed any distractions from the center diamond, thereby allowing the most light possible to enter the gem (*Fig. 13*).

As wonderful as these new brilliant cuts were, the delicate grace that distinguishes *fin de siecle* jewels from their Georgian ancestors would not have been achievable without the use of platinum. For most of history, gold and silver had been the only precious metals available in significant quantities to jewelers and makers of fine metal objects. In the West it was standard practice when setting diamonds to craft the settings of crimped silver collets with closed foil backings atop an undercarriage of gold (*Fig. 14*). The white color of the silver and foil, when the piece was first produced, would enhance the clarity and luster of diamonds more effectively than yellow gold. Overtime the silver tarnishes to a matte black that is quite beloved by collectors of antique jewels today but likely not the original intent of the designers and a nuisance for their clients. Also, because silver is a relatively soft metal, it was necessary for the settings to be rather substantial to ensure that valuable gemstones were secure when worn. Platinum solved both of these issues; it is an incredibly strong metal, capable of holding its shape even when worked into thin filaments, and like gold, in its pure state will not tarnish.

Platinum first arrived to England from Colombia in 1741 and platinum jewelry was produced for the French kings and shown at the 1819 Paris exhibition.¹⁰² Though platinum's advantages over silver were quickly realized, because of difficulties in refining and working the metal it remained outside of the standard jewelers' repertoire.

¹⁰² Donald McDonald and Leslie B. Hunt, *A History of Platinum and its Allied Metals* (London: Johnson Matthey, 1982), 24.

The largest hurdle was that platinum has a very high melting point, one that was not easily reached with the torches used by craftsmen of the mid-nineteenth century. The obstacle was overcome in 1895, when commercially viable quantities of liquid oxygen became available. With this development, two French engineers, Edmond Fouché and Charles Picard created the oxyacetylene torch. This double-nozzle tool mixed pure oxygen with another fuel, and created a flame that burned much hotter than before, thereby adding platinum-work to the arsenal of skills belonging to goldsmiths of the era.

¹⁰³

At first, jewelers simply used platinum in place of silver, and continued to back diamond jewels in gold, but by about 1905 the major houses had started to produce jewels made entirely of platinum.¹⁰⁴ By this time Dreicer & Company was nearing the height of its success, and their craftsmen had both fully mastered the use of platinum and perfected the garland style. An article in *The Lotus Magazine* from 1915 entitled “Jewelry as Art” features an enormous platinum corsage ornament by the firm, richly decorated with floral garlands and tassels of diamond and pearl (*Fig. 16*). *The Lotus* describes the 9.5 x 6 inch piece as “pure Louis XIV style” and notes that “today the artistic theory in jewelry setting is that the setting of the stone while subservient to the gem must be complementary to it through its artistic motifs.”¹⁰⁵ Platinum allowed this to happen; gems could be arranged and supported in elaborate patterns with minimal visual interference from the metal frames. In further tribute to the exceptional craftsmanship of Dreicer &

¹⁰³ Eugene Bournonville, “Autogenous Welding by the Oxy-Acetylene Flame,” *Iron Age*, 82, No. 19, November 5, 1909, 1507.

¹⁰⁴ Marcel de Banneville, a French jewelry designer who worked with Dreicer for many years saved in his sketchbooks a lovely diadem he drew for Cartier, accompanied by the note “one of the first designs for all platinum jewelry for Cartier, Paris, 1905 (*Fig. 15*).

¹⁰⁵ “Jewels as Works of Art,” *The Lotus Magazine*, 7, No. 2, November 1915, 89-90.

Co., *The Lotus* states “it articulates with every movement of the body; thus becoming as if it were part of the wearer’s personality.”

The cutting-edge art of platinum settings became an important focus for Dreicer, and in 1919 they received a shipment of 20 oz of platinum flown from Great Britain on the R34 dirigible, the first vessel to make the east-west Atlantic crossing by air. Dreicer smartly marketed the occasion by using the platinum to create a commemorative charm. The obverse features the airship, floating over a rocky coast, sun setting in the background. The reverse, an angel lifting a laurel branch to the heavens, and the inscription “To Commemorate the Initial Westward Trans-Atlantic Flight Made from First Aerial Shipment of Platinum to USA Per R-34. July 1919 (*Fig. 17*).”¹⁰⁶

Exciting and beautiful as the garland style and sentimental medals may be, their close connection to the art and architecture of European court design ensured that Dreicer & Co remained comfortably within the field of traditional, formal jewelry. Although the firm was a leader in the early years of platinum use, the majority of their output was mainly conservative in terms of design. For those inclined to break from tradition, Dreicer and many of their contemporaries also stocked *artistic* jewels in the Art Nouveau style. Instead of intricate symmetry rendered in shades of white with expensive gems, Art Nouveau jewels elevated humble glass enamels and semi-precious cabochons with sculptural, curvilinear settings of yellow gold. The spectacular Rehan jewel by Marcus & Co. is an example of American Art Nouveau at it’s finest, and features morning glories fashioned of delicate plique á jour enamel suspended in cells of yellow gold (*Fig. 18*).

¹⁰⁶ “Artistic Charm Commemorating the TransAtlantic Flight of the R-34,” *The Jeweler’s Circular*, 79, No.1, Sept. 3, 1919, 123.

Dreicer & Co designer Marcel de Banneville's sketchbooks, donated by the artist to the Richard T. Liddicot Gemological Library in Carlsbad, mostly represent formal garland style pieces, but do also contain designs for a series of pendants or watch cases in the Art Nouveau style.¹⁰⁷ The drawings feature sunset scenes rendered in enamels and black opal (*Fig. 19*). A watch case attributed to Dreicer & Co., dated c. 1900 is very similar to these designs, and perhaps may cautiously be attributed to de Banneville (*Fig. 20*).

Such was the context in which the Dreicers established their company. They had at their disposal a new class of wealthy clientele eager to possess the finest jewelry rendered the latest fashions. Jacob, Gittel and Michael would prove to be keen observers of trends. They were business people, but they produced exquisite objects for an exquisite era. The key to their success was not in pushing the boundaries of design, but rather a careful and fastidious execution of product and company image. The willingness to invest in fine materials, exclusive spaces, experienced designers, and the latest technologies allowed them to create an image of unimpeachable good taste, and become a fixture of the Gilded Age.

¹⁰⁷ Marcel Banneville, *Sketchbook "Collection of Designs & Photographs of Fine Jewelry"* c.1908-1940, Carlsbad Archives, Richard T. Liddicoat Gemological Library, Carlsbad CA.

Chapter III

Creating the Dreicer Look

Dreicer jewelry may be viewed as distinct for its craftsmanship, elevated interpretations of classic design tropes, deference and attention to fashions of the day, and use of rare and exceptional gems. For the most part, they created fashionable interpretations of traditional motifs; their energies were directed towards perfecting jewels for elite individuals with conservative taste. Dreicer's output may be categorized into two general areas: jewelry featuring heritage pearls or gemstones, and "design" jewels where less-substantial (relatively speaking) gems were arranged and incorporated into larger patterns and forms.

"Design" Jewels

Dreicer pieces of this category focus on highly stylized platinum scrollwork, flora, bow-knots and tassels arranged in pierced openwork plaques, filigree vines or festooned pendants. Unadorned metal surfaces are not present, and the little metal that is visible is for the most part decorated with engraving or milgrain detailing. A fine example dating c.1912 was designed by Baneville when the garland style had reached its peak of popularity and execution (*Fig. 1*). It features a graceful articulated pendant of diamonds and pearls arranged in platinum foliate piercework. The impressive piece is finished with a fringe of pear-cut brilliant diamonds. Later pieces produced in the Art Deco era keep this spirit, but the lace-like openwork of Pre-WWI jewels is overtaken by

delicate geometric arrangements of calibre cut stones (*Fig. 2*). In terms metal, material identifiers that will apply to the majority of Dreicer jewelry will be a preference for platinum and to a lesser extent yellow gold.

Yellow gold was of course relied upon exclusively prior to platinum's availability, and following the general industry trends of metal usage, findings and backings of pre-1906 platinum items are often fabricated of yellow gold. A gentlemen's dress set of platinum and onyx studs featuring gold fasteners made c. 1892 - 1905 being an example of this type of fabrication (*Fig. 3*). Use of white gold appears to have been generally relegated to the bracelets of ladies' wristwatches produced in the late nineteen-teens and twenties.¹⁰⁸ Although other jewelers of the early twentieth-century used silver for stylistic purposes even after the advent of platinum, Dreicer does not appear to have utilized sterling in any major way for their jewelry production. If more jewels were to surface from the earliest iterations of the company, however, it would not be entirely surprising to encounter silver-set diamonds.

Gem material used in the category of "design jewels" generally includes pavé-set diamonds or intricate assemblies of small pearls, both woven in patterns or arranged on carefully ordered posts. Contrast was often introduced to these glittering backdrops of small, white gems with the incorporation of colored stones such as black onyx, rubies, emeralds or sapphires. Larger specimens of diamonds, pearls, jade (both carved and cabochon) and the afore mentioned colored gem varieties would be used as points of

¹⁰⁸ A notable exception being an emerald solitaire ring identified as white gold by Sotheby's (See figure 20-2). If this material attribution is correct, it's possible this ring was produced during WWI when there were restrictions on platinum usage.

focus when hung as pendants or fringe, or set strategically throughout the entire design scheme (*Fig. 4-1,2*).

As taste changed, the *Art Moderne* influenced Dreicer & Co's inventory. Platinum still reigned supreme as the metal of choice for high-jewelry, and was used to set off jade, onyx, and step-cut diamonds to full effect. Since about 1910 the firm had a regular relationship with *Vogue*, both as an advertiser and a lender of jewels for photo shoots, and their pieces were featured frequently. In the 1922 article "A Hair's Length Separates Past and Present," diamond bandeaus by Dreicer adorn carefully curled bobs, and long dangle earrings decorate newly-exposed necks (*Fig. 5*).¹⁰⁹

"Heritage" Jewels

Dreicer & Co. actively promoted the quality of their settings and creativity of their designers, but it was the jewelry falling into the "heritage gemstone" category that captured the imagination of the proprietors and their clients. Unlike the previously discussed jewels, which relied upon intricately patterned metal framework for visual impact, when a truly important gem was to be displayed the setting was kept to a minimum to better highlight the singularity of the stone. Functional settings, chains and clasps fashioned of platinum and embellished with graceful, minimal scrollwork flourishes and diamond accents were appropriately dignified for the important task of securing and displaying singular gems. In a holiday-season advertising booklet released about 1910 - 1920, Dreicer & Co. chose to highlight the five varieties of precious gem

¹⁰⁹ Nikolas Murray, "A Hair's Length Separates Past & Present," *Vogue*, 60, No. 10, November 15, 1922, 39-41.

that are historically coveted above all others (*Fig. 6*). Illustrated with rococo and renaissance-inspired linework, the title page lists the flagship address and states succinctly “Pearls, Sapphires, Diamonds, Emeralds, Rubies.” A later page states, within a frame of cherry blossoms “Nature’s art and that of the Master Craftsman combine in peerless achievement to perfect the Dreicer & Co. Jewels.”¹¹⁰ Extant pieces featuring magnificent examples of all five of these gem varieties are representative of the firm’s output during the height of their fame and fortune. Dreicer placed no images of jewelry in their advertising booklet, instead providing some rather-flowery poetry to convey the romance of their product.¹¹¹

Pearl

Pearls were the signature jewel of the Gilded Age and of Dreicer & Co. in particular. Many publications note, in fact, that it was Jacob and Gittel Dreicer’s affection and understanding of pearls that lead to their popularity in the United States. According to Gittel Dreicer’s obituary in the *New York Times*, at the time of her family’s arrival there was little demand for important pearls in the United States. This was partially due to the superstition that pearls were unlucky and represented tears.¹¹² Mary Dreicer stated “my parents often discussed the fact that genuine pearls were much sought after by members of royal families and wealthy people in Europe, ... and felt that if a superstition

¹¹⁰ Dreicer & Co, *Pearls, Sapphires, Diamonds, Emeralds & Rubies*, (New York: Dreicer & Co, 19--?)

¹¹¹ *Fair Pearl, frail mystery of the soundless seas/Rose-radiance in thy heart, yet close to tears,/Thy Matchless magic beauty born of pain,/Symbol of purest love through countless years/ Red Rubies touched with winter-sunrise fire/Or palest crimson of the after-glow/ Deep Sapphires flashing back the heaven’s own blue/Like gleaming ocean waves that ebb and flow/Cool Emeralds yet greener than the robe/The young Springs casts upon the waking world/Pure Diamonds, sparkling clear as moonlight frost,/Or fountain spray in summer sunlight whirled/These are the gifts supreme, beloved, sublime/For theirs is deathless beauty, for all time.*

¹¹² “Mrs. Jacob Dreicer, Gem Expert, Dead,” *New York Times*, December 7 1932, 21.

in regard to pearls could be overcome a considerable business in such merchandise could be built up in this country.”¹¹³ Whether superstition was overcome due to the Dreicers’ hard efforts, or the American upper classes were so intent on imitating European nobility, who routinely wore pearls, that they were willing to risk any potentially bad luck, by the turn of the twentieth century, ropes of pearls had become *de rigueur* and commanded astronomical prices. In his 1908 publication, *The Book of the Pearl*, gemologist George Frederick Kunz went so far as to state “If one is a wearer of jewels, pearls are an absolute necessity; indeed they are as essential and indispensable for the wealthy as are houses, horses and automobiles.”¹¹⁴

The fame of Dreicer pearl strands was national, and in December of 1911 the *Idaho Statesman* published the article “Who’ll buy this Million-Dollar Necklace,” that contained a to-scale image of a magnificent Dreicer graduated pearl strand (*Fig. 7*). In addition, they hypothesized about which wealthy woman would end up owning the Dreicer rope so magnificent it was internally referred to as just “the Necklace.”¹¹⁵ Michael Dreicer cheekily told the *Statesman* that “anybody has a \$100,000 necklace nowadays,” but the million-dollar strand was ten years in the making and could never be put together again. He went on to hint at the origin of the pearls that made up the strand stating “Some of these pearls have been well known in Spain. The troubles of the royal house of Portugal have been associated with others...the pearl, you know has a way of mixing itself up with the intimate dramas of life. It is a very human gem.”¹¹⁶ The fate of

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ George Frederick Kunz & Charles Hugh Stevenson, *The Book of the Pearl*, (New York: The Century Co., 1908), 440.

¹¹⁵ “Who’ll Buy this Million-Dollar Necklace,” *Idaho Daily Statesman*, December 3, 1911.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

this extraordinary strand is unknown, but other examples assembled for those with slightly more human budgets occasionally appear on the market today. One example is an 18” graduated strand of Dreicer pearls strung on a simple platinum and diamond clasp (*Fig. 8*). Because the tone, luster and shape of the pearls in this necklace are not particularly well-matched, it may be assumed that this would be in the lower to mid-level range of Dreicer & Co’s pearl offerings.¹¹⁷

In 1907, James Buchanan Duke, the tobacco and electricity industrialist for whom Duke University was named, purchased a strand of pearls from Dreicer for his wife Nanaline Holt Inman for the astonishing sum of \$180,000. Nanaline, who preferred more classical jewelry than her famous daughter Doris Duke, is most likely wearing the Dreicer strand in a 1926 portrait by Alexius de Lazlo de Lombos (*Fig. 9*). The importance of the strand is evident in that it was chosen as a feature of this portrait almost two decades after the original purchase.¹¹⁸

Of all the splendid gems celebrated with poetry in this charming booklet, it is interesting to note that Jacob’s original passion, the pearl, received twice as many lines of verse.

¹¹⁷ Advertisement, Dreicer & Co. *Vogue*, 41, No. 8, April 15, 1913, 20. Advertisement states “Pearl necklaces from \$300 to many times \$100,000.”

¹¹⁸ Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, “A Legacy of Glamour: the Jewelry of Nanaline Holt Inman Duke,” 2. Accessed March 2, 2018. http://www.ddcf.org/globalassets/doris_duke_files/download_files/pp33-44---5.pdf

Sapphire

One of many other wealthy clients to frequent Dreicer & Co. was Boston banker and sugar magnate, William Spaulding. He purchased his wife, Katarina Fairlee, a stunning pendant necklace featuring a 47.64 carat cushion cut sapphire and a 26.98 carat old-pear brilliant cut diamond of exceptional color and clarity (*Fig. 10*). Today, unheated Burmese sapphires such as this specimen remain among the most coveted colored stones in the market. The necklace itself is an unassuming bar-link chain with small diamond stations so as not to distract from the impressive size and color of the two featured gemstones. The necklace was eventually bequeathed to the couples' daughter, Contessa Alicia Spaulding, who carried it to Switzerland in a picnic basket when the Nazis invaded Italy. The necklace stayed in the Contessa's possession until 2002, when it was put up for auction. The purchaser subsequently decided to break apart this storied necklace, and has since remounted the two center gemstones in more current settings.¹¹⁹

Diamond

The diamond in the above pendant is also nothing to be ignored. The faceting style indicates that the diamond was mined and cut long before it came into the Dreicers' possession. Modern laboratory analysis identified this stone as a Type II A diamond, meaning the gem is free of the nitrogen impurities found in most diamonds, and therefore

¹¹⁹ "A Magnificent Burmese Sapphire & Golconda Diamond Necklace Pendant," *Christie's Geneva*, November 19, 2003.
<https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/a-magnificent-burmese-sapphire-and-golconda-diamond-4191013-details.aspx>
Also
"A Sapphire Ring," *Christie's Geneva*, May 17, 2017.
<https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/a-sapphire-ring-6068623-details.aspx>

achieves a unique level of transparency. Before standardized diamond grading, this exceptional brilliance was referred to by traders as the diamond's "water," and is associated with the historic mines in Golconda, India, which ceased to produce in the mid-eighteenth century. No doubt this gem was passed down through many generations of old-world nobility before arriving at of Dreicer & Co.

A Dreicer diamond that received a great deal of press coverage in recent years is the stunning 8.72 carat fancy vivid purplish pink cushion cut that appeared in 2015 on the auction block after decades of obscurity (*Fig. 11*).¹²⁰ This exceedingly rare gemstone was purchased by Dreicer in 1904 at an auction of Princess Mathilde Bonaparte's jewels, and then mounted as a ring and sold to corrupt Montana senator and mining magnate William Andrews Clark Sr., one of the richest men in the United States. Clark purchased the singular diamond for his wife, and it was eventually bequeathed to their youngest daughter, Huguette. Huguette famously and voluntarily lived as a recluse in her New York City apartment and hospitals from the 1930s onward. She stored the ring in a bank vault, where it remained untouched from the 1940s until her death 2011.¹²¹

¹²⁰ The "Clark Pink" as the gem came to be called was sold for \$15.7 million at Christie's New York, April 17 2012. The diamond, sans Dreicer setting, was offered for auction again on May 12, 2015 at Sotheby's Geneva and achieved \$15.9 million.

¹²¹ "The Historic Pink," *Sotheby's Geneva*, May 12, 2015.

<http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2014/magnificent-jewels-noble-jewels-ge1502/lot.460.html>

Also

Margalit Fox, "Huguette Clark, Reclusive Heiress, Dies at 104," *New York Times*, May 25, 2011, A1.

Emerald

As may be surmised by the tale of Mrs. Isaac Bell's "mad" purchase of a \$7,000 necklace in the 1870s, fine emeralds had been part of the Dreicer's repertoire since the company's early days. Another patron to purchase beautiful Dreicer emeralds was famed sportswoman and philanthropist Belle Wilcox Baruch (1899 - 1964). Belle was the daughter of Bernard Baruch, a Wall Street Financier and advisor to Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt. In her collection was a two-stone platinum ring by Dreicer & Co. that featured a 5.67 carat old mine cut diamond and a 3.67 carat Colombian emerald (*Fig. 12*).¹²² The gems are arranged horizontally, and the significant caratage ensures that the platinum mounting is barely visible when the ring is viewed straight on. The ring was bequeathed to Baruch by her mother, and a very similar (if not the actual) piece was included in a 1914 *Vogue* Editorial article that was styled with Dreicer inventory and entitled "Jewels of the Bride" (*Fig. 13*).¹²³ *Vogue* informs the reader that the rectangular form of the ring was an extension of the fad for "squaring" jewelry. The technology to facet gemstones as step-cuts was brand-new at the turn of the twentieth century, and by the nineteen-teens designers were taking great inspiration from the novel availability of square and rectangular stones.

¹²² "An Exquisite Art Deco Two-Stone Emerald & Diamond Ring by Dreicer & Co.," *Christie's New York*, October 25-26, 2000.

<http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/lot/an-exquisite-art-deco-two-stone-emerald-and-1899435-details.aspx?from=search&intObjectID=1899435&sid=9eae9d05-3c71-49c6-a3e7-821468104935>

¹²³ "Jewels of the Bride," *Vogue*, 7, No. 2, May 15, 1914, 36.

Ruby

An earlier jewel fabricated about 1900 and signed “J. Dreicer & Son” is a pendant set with a magnificent 9.41 carat Burmese ruby. (*Fig. 14*).¹²⁴ The pear-shaped gem was placed in an double border of diamonds and suspended from a diamond bow knot. The pendant is attached to a 16” diamond chain, allowing the ruby to rest prominently at the wearer’s collar bone. As to be expected from the jewel’s age, the stones are set in platinum and backed with yellow gold. A *Vogue* article from 1896 describes a similar necklace as a successful accessory choice for a fashionable young matron:

[Her] déclotage draped beautifully with a flounce of Point de France, and on the shoulders a panache of black ostrich tips; necklace of pearls, with cabochon ruby pendant. In the hair, at one side, a diamond aigrette tipped with rubies.¹²⁵

With this plethora of ostrich feathers and lace decoration, placing the ruby pendant on a short and simple necklace seems a necessary design choice if one wished the status gem to stand out against the busy couture of the day.

Other Featured Gems

Dreicer did not limit their output to precious stones, and created many jewels featuring fine semi-precious specimens. A platinum piercework brooch c. 1920 displays a black opal, its play of color tending to deep blues and greens with minute flashes of bright red (*Fig. 15*). The cool tones of the opal are reflected in sapphire accents placed at

¹²⁴ “A Belle Epoque Ruby & Diamond Pendant Necklace, by Dreicer,” *Christie’s New York*, December 10, 2009. <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/jewelry/a-belle-epoque-ruby-and-diamond-pendant-5277470-details.aspx?from=sale-summary&pos=10&intObjectID=5277470&sid=bff16ba5-83a9-49e8-9e9d-59f630343392&page=7>

¹²⁵ “Fashion: What She Wears: The Fashion of Wearing Jewels,” *Vogue* 80, No. 80, January 30, 1896. Jan 30 1896, 81.

the four corners of the pin.¹²⁶ A feminine negligee pendant necklace features two large pear brilliant cut aquamarines suspended from a diamond halo on thin platinum chains (*Fig. 16*).¹²⁷ More substantial, a lengthy diamond chain supports a 26 carat bottle-green baguette cut tourmaline bordered with a pretty frame of architectural diamond fringe (*Fig. 17*).¹²⁸ Jade was also a favorite of Dreicer. A stately Art Deco Dreicer & Co. ring features an impeccable cabochon of apple green jadeite set into a minimal platinum mounting accented with sapphires and diamonds (*Fig. 18*).¹²⁹ Carved Eastern jades were also frequently used as the focal piece of a jewel, as seen in an oval platinum and diamond Dreicer & Co. brooch set with a carved nephrite peony. The delicate diamond-studded mounting frames the carving without distracting, as would a gilded picture frame on a fine oil painting (*Fig. 19*).¹³⁰

The “Dreicer Setting”

Tiffany & Co. is famous for developing the unadorned six-prong solitaire mounting, and in a similar fashion it is apparent that a signature Dreicer engagement ring design was developed by the firm (*Fig. 20-1 to 3*). Their setting, crafted in platinum,

¹²⁶ “An Early 20th Century Opal, Diamond & Sapphire Brooch, by Dreicer,” *Christie’s, London, South Kensington*, June 9, 2013.

<https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/jewelry/an-early-20th-century-opal-diamond-and-5696219-details.aspx>

¹²⁷ “Dreicer & Co. Antique Aquamarine Negligee Necklace,” *Lang Antiques*, accessed April 7, 2018.

<https://www.langantiques.com/dreicer-co-antique-aquamarine-negligee-necklace.html>

¹²⁸ “Superb Edwardian Dreicer & Co. New York Tourmaline Necklace,” *Ist Dibs*, Accessed April 7, 2018.

https://www.1stdibs.com/jewelry/necklaces/drop-necklaces/superb-edwardian-dreicer-co-new-york-tourmaline-diamond-necklace/id-j_160184/

¹²⁹ “An Art Deco Jade, Sapphire & Diamond Ring by Dreicer & Co,” FD Gallery, Accessed April 7, 2018

<http://fd-gallery.com/art-deco-jade-sapphire-diamond-ring-dreicer/>

¹³⁰ “Art Deco Dreicer & Co. Jade, Diamond Platinum Brooch,” *Wilson Estate Jewelry*, Accessed April 7, 2018

<https://www.wilsonsestatejewelry.com/collections/brooch/products/art-deco-dreicer-and-co-jade-diamond-platinum-brooch>

featured a four-prong head atop a narrow knife-edge band embellished with diamond pavé and milgrain detailing. Further pavé work adorned the gallery, visible only to the wearer. Unlike the Tiffany setting, the Dreicer setting was not intended exclusively for diamonds, but for any distinguished gem. First Lady Edith Wilson's engagement ring was purchased from Dreicer in 1915. As can be seen in her official portrait, her diamond is set in this style or similar (*Fig. 21*). President Wilson requested that the future first lady have Dreicer send some diamond engagement rings to her apartments so the couple might make their selection in privacy. He explained his choice of jeweler, writing to her "There is a man named Dreicher(sic) who has unusual designs. Tiffany seems to have lost the artistic taste and originality that we formerly looked for."¹³¹

Commissions

Working at the top-end of the market, Dreicer was naturally accommodating to commission requests. Jewels in this category are of particular interest, for they illustrate Dreicer's capability to successfully execute work outside of their normal design vocabulary. The patron of an interesting tiara design by Banneville was recorded as Mrs. George Bakhmeteff, wife of the last tsarist Russian ambassador to the United States (*Fig. 22*). The 1912 diadem features a structured pattern of acanthus leaves accented by pear and round brilliants. The design tapers up smoothly to a point, and the vertical acanthus arrangements form an almost solid plain. This slight departure from more meandering

¹³¹ Woodrow Wilson to Edith Bolling Galt, October 4th, 1915, in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 35*, ed. Arthur S. Link (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 19.

Renaissance-inspired styles may be viewed as a reference to the *kokoshnik* tiaras favored by the ladies of Russia's ill-fated imperial court (*Fig. 23*).¹³² A pencilled note states that the tiara would be made entirely in diamonds.

Another important commission was a hunting knife made in 1909 as a gift for former president Theodore Roosevelt. It is quite unlike any of the objects discussed thus far (*Fig 24*). The steel blade was forged by J. Russell & Co. and etched with the dedication "Presented to Theodore Roosevelt by his Friend James W. Gerard." Gerard was a New York Supreme Court justice, and old friend of Roosevelt's who had served with him during the Spanish American war. The Dreicer & Co. hilt, with a focus on yellow gold and asymmetrical natural imagery, is solidly in the realm of *artistic* jewelry that might be more readily expected from firms such as Marcus & Company or Louis Comfort Tiffany, who embodied America's interpretation of Art Nouveau. Wrought of platinum and yellow gold, the hilt takes the shape of a bald eagle with gem-set eyes. One side of the handle features friezes depicting a hunting scene of Native Americans, and on the other the crest of the United States with Roosevelt's monogram is shown. The handguard is in the form of two bears' heads.¹³³ The nuance and creativity of design, and exactness of execution are a testament to the skill of early twentieth-century goldsmiths.

¹³² A *Kokoshnik* is a traditional Russian peasant headdress, and the form was co-opted for tiar design in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

¹³³ Joel Kolander, "Theodore Roosevelt's Hunting Knife," *Rock Island Auction Company*, Posted August 25, 2016, <https://www.rockislandauction.com/blog/theodore-roosevelts-hunting-knife/?text=Theodore%20Roosevelt>

Distinguishing Dreicer & Co.

Though stunning and worthwhile, a cursorial analysis of the major body of Dreicer designs would not reveal a noticeable departure from other high-caliber jewelers working within the same community of style. Indeed, in Banneville's sketchbooks are not only designs for Dreicer, Tiffany & Co., and Cartier, but also Van Cleef & Arpels and Black, Starr & Frost; therefore many of the jewels made by these firms share an aesthetic. A trio of Art Deco diamond and onyx brooches by Dreicer, Cartier and Tiffany illustrates (*Fig. 25.1 - 25.3*): all three pins take the shape of knotted bows, and are crafted of platinum set with careful patterns of pavé diamonds and black onyx (variations on a motif and color scheme that was in vogue c. 1920). However, while the Cartier and Tiffany brooches both incorporate *trompe l'oeil* construction into their designs to mimic the effect of an actual textile ribbon, the Dreicer design makes no attempt to deviate from the actuality of its rigid materials, remaining precise and two-dimensional throughout. This pursuit of the formal, of a subjective and correct interpretation of beauty may be looked for in the carefully formatted designs of Dreicer jewels.

These distinctions, though subtle, are visible on a larger scale when the details of a Dreicer & Co. corsage ornament published in *Vogue*, 1913 (*Fig. 26*) are considered beside a similar Cartier stomacher dating about 1907 (*Fig. 27*). The massive Dreicer pin is described as “diamonds wreathed into the Louis XVI style” and features bifurcated acanthus garlands festooned from bows and swirled in opposite directions around two

diamond florets.¹³⁴ The Cartier ornament features the same bifurcated scroll pattern, but centers on sapphire florets rather than diamond.¹³⁵ Additionally, three pendants hang from the main body of the Cartier stomacher. The central pendant is the largest, and resembles a wide-mouth urn from which a large pear-shaped sapphire is suspended. This is flanked by two sapphires in pendeloque settings accented by curly ribbons. The playfulness of these ribbon forms and of the individual leaves springing out of the scrolled garlands, as well as the used of airy negative space on the Cartier brooch, may be viewed as a departure from the dense and orderly structure of the Dreicer festoons.

Why shop Dreicer?

In spite of these slight differences in approach, that Dreicer jewels were considered equal in quality to other top firms of the day can be confirmed by a 1913 advertisement from the small San Francisco jeweler J. Magnum Co.: it stated that the designs of Magnum & Co. bar pins could be “compared most favorably with Cartier, Dreicer, and Tiffany.”¹³⁶ The Blackstone Hotel shop in Chicago was the westernmost Dreicer location, and with competition from so many long-established purveyors of similar wares, it is intriguing to ponder what exactly gave Dreicer the edge for recognition as a standard of excellence all the way in California. What enticed a customer to shop with Dreicer over their competitors?

¹³⁴ "Fashion: Old Stones in New Settings." *Vogue* 42, No. 9, November 1, 1913, 55, 92.

¹³⁵ Hans Nadelhoffer, *Cartier*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2007), 43.

¹³⁶ J. Magnin & Co., "Advertisement," *San Francisco Call*, March 2, 1913, 46.

The roots of their success can be traced back to those honorable retail virtues of fair dealing with vendors and clients, and effective customer service. The very first Dun credit report entry on Jacob Dreicer states that the trade “(sold Jacob) his wares with confidence and regard him as safe.”¹³⁷ In 1886 a visitor to the Saratoga location described Michael as “a good-looking fellow, who apparently never gets tired of being amiable, and who will affably bring out ten thousand dollar necklaces to show young women who live on \$10 a week.”¹³⁸ The reputation as a place where one might stop in to enjoy a luxury experience extended well beyond those who lived on \$10 a week. The 560 5th Avenue building was remembered as a place where an established Manhattan *madame* might “make her call at the store without examining any of the firm’s creations—merely dropping in to obtain a bit of tea and have a chat with her old friend Michael and some of the other acquaintances that were almost assuredly there.”¹³⁹

The question may be raised as to whether the Dreicers’ Jewish background was at all of consideration by their clients and business partners. Historian Amelia Peck noted that in the mid-nineteenth century there were very few Jewish-owned businesses that served the anglo luxury market in New York, and Jacob and Gittel Dreicer would have been faced with this reality when they were beginning to set up shop.¹⁴⁰ The old elite of New York City took pride in their Knickerbocker heritage and were grudging to accept those of the Jewish faith (or really anyone who was not Protestant) into their inner circles.

¹³⁷ “Jacob Dreicer” R.G. Dun & Co. Credit Report Volumes. Baker Library Historical Collections. Harvard Business School. Entry May 8th -1888.

¹³⁸ “A Few Words about Society,” *The Epoch*, 10, No.235, 11.

¹³⁹ E.D. Dakin, “Pearls before House Wreckers,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 30, 1927, 9. Perhaps one of the most distinguished women to take tea with Michael Dreicer at the shop was Queen Elisabeth of Belgium, who visited in 1919 to view Dreicer & Co’s collection of rare jewels.

¹⁴⁰ Amelia Peck “Products of Empire: Shopping for Home Decorations in New York City,” *Art and the Empire City* ed. Catherine Hoover Voorsanger & John K. Howat (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), 285.

Edith Wharton's portrayal of Simon Rosedale, a social-climbing Jewish businessman in *House of Mirth*, 1905, illustrates the sort of casual anti-semitism that was ubiquitous at the time:

[Rosedale] had his race's accuracy in the appraisal of values, and to be seen walking down the platform at the crowded afternoon hour in the company of Miss Lily Bart would have been money in his pocket, as he might himself have phrased it.¹⁴¹

Lily Bart, the novel's heroine, chooses financial and social ruin rather than considering marriage to Rosedale; his race being her largest qualm with the proposed union.¹⁴²

Wharton's Rosedale is sometimes said to have been based on August Belmont, a German-jewish immigrant who, as the Dreicers, found enormous wealth in New York City—in his case as the representative of the American interests of the Rothschild family.¹⁴³ For Belmont, assimilation into non-Jewish American culture was relatively easy thanks to an anglo-sounding name, and the protection of one of Europe's wealthiest families. He married the well-born and Episcopalian Catherine Perry, and lived according to the customs and appearance of his gentile colleagues. The Dreicers, not known to have arrived with any powerful connections, would likely have faced greater barriers towards assimilation. Also unlike Belmont, the Dreicer family remained active practitioners of their ancestral faith. In June of 1890, the *New York Times* announced that the wedding of Fannie Dreicer to Charles S. Davidson was conducted by Gustave Gottheil, Rabbi at the

¹⁴¹ Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 22.

¹⁴² Irene C. Goldman Price "The Perfect Jew and the House of Mirth," in *Edith Wharton's The House of Mirth: A Casebook*, Ed. Carol J. Singley (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 172. An unsympathetic reading of poor Lily's motivations, I know, but her prejudice is real and present

¹⁴³ Louis Harap, *Creative Awakening: The Jewish Presence in Twentieth-Century American Literature*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1987), 28.

Jewish Reform Temple Emanu-El, then located at 43rd St. and 5th Avenue.¹⁴⁴ Fannie's siblings all also married within the faith, and their names appear regularly as donors to various Jewish charity organizations. This does not mean religion was an omnipresent priority—Michael's funeral was held at the non-denominational Society for Ethical Culture—but it is evident that the Dreicers' religion was not a secret from clients and associates.

Though the fictional Ms. Bart clearly expressed her desire to avoid fraternizing with the Jewish Rosedale, another excerpt from the same novel reveals a deep longing that may have eclipsed feelings of prejudice for the Gilded-Age debutante:

They had paused before the table on which the bride's jewels were displayed, and Lily's heart gave an envious throb as she caught the refraction of light from their surfaces—the milky gleam of perfectly matched pearls, the flash of rubies relieved against contrasting velvet, the intense blue rays of sapphires kindled into light by surrounding diamonds: all these precious tints enhanced and deepened by the varied art of their setting. The glow of the stones warmed Lily's veins like wine. More completely than any other expression of wealth they symbolized the life she longed to lead, the life of fastidious aloofness and refinement in which every detail should have the finish of a jewel, and the whole form a harmonious setting to her own jewel-like rareness.¹⁴⁵

Beyond the general understanding of how to create a successful and respectable business, the Dreicers were specialists in sourcing items of extraordinary rarity. Gemstones of the highest caliber are one-of-a-kind objects. If a particular stone or suite is sought after, one must be willing to work with whichever company or individual happens to be in possession. In 1901 Dreicer & Son made news by importing a 22 carat blue diamond valued at \$112,000, which Michael believed to be the “Brunswick Blue” — a gem

¹⁴⁴ Building was purchased and demolished by Durst in 1926, congregation merged with Beth-El, and today Emanu-El survives at 5th Ave & 65th street.

¹⁴⁵ Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 22.

cleaved from the same rough as the Hope Diamond.¹⁴⁶ Clientele in search of singular specimens could not afford to avoid working with a man who could procure such stones. Assembling a strand of perfectly matched pearls, for example, was a task that regularly took decades, and in the early twentieth century there was such a demand for fine strings among New York's elite that even "with the best disposition in the world to spend money for pearls, a collector might conceivably have found no opportunity to acquire a fine strand..."¹⁴⁷ The Dreicers scoured the world for exceptional pearls, and "whenever Michael heard of time and place where fine pearls were to be had he made an engagement with himself to be there."¹⁴⁸ Dreicer & Co. was known as a reliable source of the earth's rarest treasures. This was their talent, their trump card, and when combined with the carefully crafted image of their advertising and boutiques, those who might have otherwise have been inclined to snub their noses instead became clients.

Dreicer & Co Advertising & Merchandising

For any luxury company, projecting the correct environment and aesthetic through marketing is as important, perhaps more important, than any quality the product itself may possess. Some of the earliest Dreicer print advertisements appeared in playbills for productions at the Metropolitan Opera in 1893, soon after the new Dreicer & Son

¹⁴⁶ "World's Largest Blue Diamond," *Buffalo Evening News*, November 2, 1901, 5. The *Evening News* reported the stone was 22 cts, which while impressive is not nearly as large as the Hope diamond, weighing about 45 carats. The Hope diamond would come to United States the following year via diamond dealer Simon Frankel. The Dreicer blue diamond was sold to banking and railroad magnate Benjamin P.. Cheney, who presented it to his wife, the actress Julia Arthur, as a Christmas gift in 1901.

¹⁴⁷ "Who'll Buy this Million-Dollar Necklace," *Idaho Daily Statesman*, December 3, 1911.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

location opened at 292 5th Avenue (*Fig. 28*).¹⁴⁹ The advertisements consist of the company's name and address in a simple serif script, and a discreet mention of extended holiday hours. The rest of the page is decorated with acanthus scrolls and the name of the opera house. Another early advertisement appears in the December 9th, 1897 issue of *Vogue*.¹⁵⁰ All text is within a simple line border, and the advertisement states "We would be delighted to show you our holiday creations — exquisite harmonies in color--rare and beautiful gems--new effects...Come now—the crowd grows larger daily. (*Fig 29*).” This understated approach to advertising would remain consistent throughout the firm's existence. It is significant because Dreicer's dedication to this format may be viewed as a departure from the strategies of their closest New York competitors in that the focus of copy is exclusively on jewelry.

While Dreicer carried a variety of fancy goods, their advertisements only ever proffer jewelry.¹⁵¹ Their advertisements also never show any illustrations or photographs of actual inventory — just minimal text, and later in the nineteen-twenties, as taste and printing technology allowed for more elaborate imagery, illustrations of historic jewelry boxes or the Dreicer flagship building (*Fig. 30.1-3*). Early twentieth-century advertisements by Black, Starr & Frost may be a close counterpart in terms of visual austerity, but still discuss non-jewelry inventory (*Fig. 31*).¹⁵² In the nineteen-twenties, Black, Starr & Frost opted for illustrations of their offerings; a 1923 *Vogue* advertisement

¹⁴⁹ We may imagine that the location move necessitated some advertising.

¹⁵⁰ "Advertisement," Dreicer & Co, *Vogue*, 10, No. 24, December 9, 1897, xii.

¹⁵¹ "Customs News," *Women's Wear*, July 15, 1916, 15. *Women's Wear* discusses custom duty woes faced by Dreicer upon importation of "women's fancy handbags," and their partnership with porcelain dealer Gorer is well-documented. While Gorer porcelains *are* referenced in some Dreicer advertisements, it is always mentioned that they are antiques and billed as an exhibition of Gorer's goods in Dreicer's space.

¹⁵² Advertisement, Black, Starr & Frost, *Life*, 39, No. 1014, April 3, 1902, 2.

displays a wide variety of merchandise, including a lorgnette, earrings, bracelets, gentlemen's shirt studs and loose pearls (*Fig. 32*),¹⁵³ but Dreicer remained true to their original, minimal concept until their closure in 1927. Dreicer copy mentioned “pearl necklaces” or “precious gems,” but never offered specifics about one particular object available for purchase. Mentions of price ranges are discrete and infrequent.

A greater contrast still may be seen between advertisements by Dreicer & Co. and contemporary output from competitors Tiffany & Co. and T.B. Starr. With even more prominence than Black, Starr & Frost, these two companies promoted their stock of non-jewelry goods. The companies' advertisements in *Vogue* and other publications discuss everything from Easter crockery to glassware to trophies, often including lengthy pricing and inventory lists and illustrations of the product (*Fig 33*). Advertisements focusing on their jewelry categories were not exempt from the same cluttered treatment, a 1905 Tiffany & Co. advertisement offering a laundry list of items with descriptions such as “Entwined floral design with enamel snowdrop, diamond center - \$ 7.50 (*Fig 34*).”¹⁵⁴

The effect is that Dreicer advertisements portray an establishment with carefully selected, exclusive items while Black, Starr & Frost, T.B. Starr and Tiffany present as more all-encompassing emporiums with a broad range of inventory to sort through. Dreicer was a much newer company than these American competitors, which perhaps allowed it to arrive more quickly at what might be called a modern way to promote a luxury business. Not hindered by brand identities established in the antebellum, Dreicer took a “less is more” approach.

¹⁵³ Advertisement, Black Starr, & Frost, *Vogue*, 62, No. 11, December 1, 1923, 99.

¹⁵⁴ Advertisement, Tiffany & Co., *Vogue*, 25, No. 24, June 15, 1905, iii.

This extended beyond print to the merchandising of the sales floor. The interior of the 1906 Tiffany Building was a cavernous space occupied by long counters filled with perhaps thousands of objects (*Fig. 39*). The 1906 Dreicer flagship took a different approach and reflected the company's advertisements with minimal inventory thoughtfully placed in uncluttered vitrines. The *New York Herald Tribune* reported

only a few small showcases, featuring several of the Dreicer masterpieces, suggested that the room might serve the purpose of business as well as pleasure...Occasionally in the odd corners among the luxurious draperies that swept to the ceiling would be inserted a minute retiring room. Within this discreet recess a client could seek seclusion if she wished to indulge in the embarrassingly intimate process of making a purchase.¹⁵⁵

Dreicer's advertisements hinted at great treasures displayed at in elegant settings, and those whose curiosity was piqued would not be disappointed.

Dreicer & Co.'s approach may have been unique among New York City firms, but it is undeniable that they looked to the venerable house of Cartier as a source of inspiration. Founded in 1847, by the end of the century Cartier had become the preeminent jeweler of Europe. In 1899, Cartier moved to 13 rue de la Paix, Paris, and the ground floor facade of pilasters in black marble served as a direct influence for that of the 1906 Dreicer building (*Fig. 40*). There were apparently no pretenses made about the source of the design, for the *Record & Guide* reported in 1907 that "the new Dreicer building is modelled after that of Messrs. Cartier & Co, the famous jewelers."¹⁵⁶ This was emulation was not limited to architecture, and did not go unnoticed by Cartier; jewelry historian Hans Nadelhoffer called Dreicer & Co. Cartier's "most feared rival" in New

¹⁵⁵ Dakin, "Pearls before House Wreckers."

¹⁵⁶ "Building Notes," *The Record & Guide*, 79, No. 2044, May 18, 1907, 969.

York, and stated that Dreicer “did not shrink from copying models in the Rue de la Paix and putting them on sale faster than Cartier’s American branch could import them.”¹⁵⁷

The Dreicers certainly would have had ample opportunity to observe the latest in French design, as much of their merchandise was purchased on buying trips in Europe. In 1886 the *Daily Saratogian* reported “Jacob Dreicer, the well known diamond merchant, has had his agents in Europe all winter collecting rare gems, which he will display the coming summer in his store under the Grand Union Hotel,”¹⁵⁸ and an 1892 Dun Report stated that local merchants did not really have the opportunity to sell to Dreicer because he “buys his goods in Europe from first hands.”¹⁵⁹

Whether inspiration for design came from Cartier or elsewhere, the result was undeniably upscale. Dreicer kept its image curated and descriptions of their inventory minimal, leaving one with the overall impression that the sort of person who might shop at their locations should already be familiar with what the highest class of jewels looked like.

& Company

Like the buildings erected by Dreicer Realty Co., a piece of their jewelry was the work of many craftspeople all contributing their specific area of expertise. The Dreicers conceived and oversaw the direction of the construction, but without a talented team of

¹⁵⁷Hans Nadelhoffer, *Cartier*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2007), 25..

¹⁵⁸ “Shorts,” *Daily Saratogian*, April 21, 1886, 3.

¹⁵⁹ “Jacob Dreicer” R.G. Dun & Co. Credit Report Volumes. Baker Library Historical Collections. Harvard Business School. Entry May 19th 1892.

architects, engineers, masons, ironworkers and interior designers the concept could not become viable. For jewelry produced internally the gemstones must be sourced, cut and matched. The piece must be designed to show off the gems to best effect, the metal carefully formed and polished, and the stones placed securely in their settings. And, all this must be wearable. To have a sense of the vast network required for the production and sourcing of an inventory as exclusive as that of Dreicer, a few individuals whose names are known may be revealed in more detail.

Before any jewels could be designed, the raw material must be obtained. At the turn of the twentieth century the most sought-after pearls were fished in Venezuela and the Persian Gulf, and the choicest goods brought to market in Paris and London.¹⁶⁰ One pearl dealer known to have worked with Michael Dreicer was Leonard Rosenthal, also a Russian Jew, who like Jacob had worked his way up from peddler to major dealer in the Western market. In his memoirs, Rosenthal recalls arriving in London in 1919 with four years worth of pearl shipments that had been held in limbo during WWI. Michael, along with four of the biggest British pearl dealers, purchased \$4 million of the \$5million inventory.¹⁶¹

It is erroneously published in several places that the Dreicer's business originated at the 1904 St. Louis Louisiana Purchase exhibition, and that Jacob and Michael attended as the American representatives of famed Parisian diamond dealer and lapidary Atanik Eknayan. Eknayan was one of the preeminent men of the diamond industry in both New

¹⁶⁰ Leonard Rosenthal, *The Pearl Hunter*, (New York: Henry Schuman, 1952), 50.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 100.

York and Europe, and while it is more than likely that they did business with the long-established Dreicer, there is no evidence to suggest that they partnered at the 1904 Exposition. In Bennet & Mark's history of the exposition a small article and photograph shows Eknayan working with St. Louis diamond dealer W.F. Drost and his son William Drost, so perhaps this is just a case of mistaken identities.¹⁶² Additionally, in 1904 the *Jeweler's Circular* lists M.A. Harentz, who was the Eknayan representative at their 1 Maiden Lane offices as the individual in charge of the exhibit.¹⁶³

A diamond merchant that the Dreicers did work with quite intimately in the late nineteenth-century was Max J. Lasar, one of the best known diamond importers in New York City. Lasar met Mary Dreicer aboard a steamship in the early 1890s and the couple married when the ship arrived in London. He unfortunately turned out to be quite a cad, and was habitually unfaithful. His wife sued for divorce in 1897, and the proceedings were dragged into the papers when Lasar was accused of smuggling hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of diamonds into the country.¹⁶⁴ One of his more elaborate schemes involved covering large diamonds in sealing wax and placing them inside a child's rattle. The gems made it ashore safely in the arms of a fellow passenger's baby.¹⁶⁵ With the assistance of Michael Dreicer, the US government caught up to Lasar, who was found "in a compromising position with an English girl" at a hotel Jersey City.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Mark Bennet & Frank Parker Stockbridge, *History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition*, (Saint Louis: Universal Exposition Publishing Co., 1905), 635.

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112078710792;view=1up;seq=656;size=175>

¹⁶³ "Worlds Fair Notes," *Jeweler's Circular*, 48, No. 14, May 4, 1904, 15.

¹⁶⁴ "A Big Diamond Seizure," *New York Tribune*, December 4, 1897, 11.

¹⁶⁵ T.C. Bridges, "The Romance of Modern Smuggling," *MacMillan's Magazine*, 2, No. 13, November 1906 - October 1907, 754.

¹⁶⁶ William H. Theobald, *Defrauding the Government* (New York: Myrtle Publishing Co., 1908), 18.

As Dreicer's close attention to the business of Cartier may indicate, although most of their pieces were fabricated in-house it was not "made in America," but the tradition of French craftsmanship and aesthetic that they wished brought to the forefront. A 1911 advertisement in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* asserts that "the setting of pearls and diamonds has been the life study of the French designers of Dreicer & Co and of their generations before them."¹⁶⁷

Marcel Banneville was a principal designer at Dreicer from 1906 to WWI. His father, Hillaire de Banneville was a successful jewelry designer in their native France, and with Renee Lalique had contributed illustrations to *Le Bijoux*, a trade publication meant to advertise the work of French jewelers to foreign interests.¹⁶⁸ Marcel was French-educated and graduated from the French National Academy of Art.¹⁶⁹ It is possible his father played some role in securing the position with Dreicer, who may have been familiar with the Banneville family's work from *Le Bijoux*. Marcel's designs for Dreicer were drawn between 1908 - 1914 in New York. Broad themes present in the Carlsbad sketchbooks include hefty Renaissance or "Louis XIV" garland-style diamond and pearl corsage ornaments, carved jade or sapphire pendants, and impressive diamond brooches (*Figs. 41-43*). Banneville returned to Europe to fight in WWI, but by 1924 at latest had returned to the United States, settling in the Los Angeles area and taking a position as head designer with Brock & Company.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Dreicer & Company Advertisement, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 10, 1911, 11.

¹⁶⁸ Henri Vever, trans. Katherine Purcell, *French Jewelry of the Nineteenth Century* (Thames & Hudson, 2001), 1210-11.

¹⁶⁹ Brock & Company Advertisement, *The Grizzly Bear*, May 1924, 51.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Paul Duparque was another European designer with a long tenure at Dreicer. He emigrated from Belgium in 1904, and became Dreicer's head designer around 1907. He stayed until the firm was liquidated in 1927.¹⁷¹ Duparque was also a painter of landscapes, and participated in exhibitions on both sides of the Atlantic. Little about his life and work with Dreicer is otherwise known.

One designer the company worked with to produce items for clientele appreciating the "artistic" aesthetic was German-born Gustav Manz, who immigrated to New York in 1893. Eventually establishing himself as a manufacturing jeweler, Manz and his firm produced pieces not just for Dreicer but for Tiffany & Co., F. Walter Lawrence, and Black Starr & Frost to name a few. His pieces are delightfully sculptural, and feature wild animals, mermaids and ancient motifs rendered in yellow gold.¹⁷² Manz's business records indicate that Dreicer purchased at least two items from him between 1917 and 1923.¹⁷³

The maker of an elaborate ruby, diamond and platinum necklace retailed by Dreicer & Co. about 1910 is unknown, but the item highlights the impressively broad network of suppliers needed to support such an elite inventory (*Fig 44*).¹⁷⁴ The necklace is stamped with French makers' marks, denoting that it was likely either selected or commissioned abroad and imported as a finished piece. It features a cascading ornament

¹⁷¹ *Jewelers' Circular*, 94, February, 1927,83. "Paul Duparque, head designer for 20 years of Dreicer & Co., which concern is being liquidated, is sailing for Paris and while abroad will make his headquarters with Morgan & Co, 14 Place Vendome "

¹⁷² Courtney Bowers, "The Life and Jewelry of Gustav Manz," *The Magazine Antiques*, posted March 24, 2011. <http://www.themagazineantiques.com/article/the-life-and-jewelry-of-gustav-manz/>

¹⁷³ Courtney Bowers, "Credit where Credit is Due," (Ma Thesis, Parson/Cooper Hewitt, 2008) 5.

¹⁷⁴ "Early 20th century ruby and diamond tiered pendant necklace, made in France c.1910, probably for Dreicer & Co. New York," *SJ Phillips*, Accessed April 7, 2018. <http://www.sjphillips.com/m/Early-20th-century-ruby-and-diamond-tiered-pendant-necklace-made-France-1910-probably-for-Dreicer-New-York-DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=6&tabindex=5&objectid=668866&categoryid=2055>

set with five Burmese rubies surrounded by elegant diamond-studded scrollwork. The pendant hangs from a diamond-link chain with ruby cabochon stations. The necklace originally belonged to Lucie Bigelow Rosen (1890 - 1968), a Gilded Age socialite who became famous as the first famous theremin player. Lucy and her husband Walter T. Rosen are remembered today as founders of the Caramoor Music Festival. An image of Mrs. Rosen wearing what appears to be the same necklace was taken by photographer Edward Steichen for *Vogue* in 1926 (*Fig. 45*).

Stonecutting had been an internal affair since Gittel Dreicer hired lapidaries to work out of her Lexington Avenue laundry room in the 1870s. In 1917, the same year Dreicer & Co. was incorporated, Dreicer Manufacturing was incorporated by J. Julian Tashoff of New York, Muriel W. Stiles of Brooklyn and Jerome D. Guthman of Albany.¹⁷⁵ Aside from their names appearing on the incorporation papers, little is known about the relationship of these individuals to the Dreicer family, though it appears that Tashoff was a lawyer practiced in matters of incorporation.¹⁷⁶ The manufacturing operation worked in tandem with the 560 5th Avenue store and leased space around the corner on the 9th floor of 33 West 46th Street. By 1921, the workshop employed around 90 individuals, and made headlines when the landlords claimed that vast quantities of whiskey had been delivered to Dreicer and were being illegally sold on the premises. In retaliation, the landlords shut off the elevator and electricity. Who was in the right remains a mystery.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Wwd 1917 Dreicer Manufacturing bosses This business was incorporate at the same time ad the Dreicer & Co. retail operation.

¹⁷⁶ An educated guess would be that Stiles and Guthman were long-term employees prior to the incorporation.

¹⁷⁷ "New York," *Lincoln Star Journal*, July 4, 1921, 1.

Not everything was made in-house or custom-designed, and like many jewelers of the day Dreicer & Co. both retailed finished goods, and incorporated findings manufactured elsewhere into their pieces. This was especially economical for the standard styles that every jeweler of the day was expected to have in stock. Gentlemen's dress sets were a necessity for a well-outfitted man of the early twentieth century, and Dreicer & Co. likely retailed suites manufactured by Newark-based wholesalers Larter & Sons (*Fig. 46*).¹⁷⁸ A formal set bearing Larter's mark is housed in a fitted Dreicer & Company box, and features onyx and mother of pearl disks surrounded by a twisted-rope border of platinum and diamonds. Larter was founded in 1865, and in addition to their Newark factory operated showrooms at 21 and 23 Maiden lane. In 1909 they advertised to the trade "the most desirable, up-to-date, and most useful article in jewelry you can offer, is one of our complete sets of Loose Link Buttons, Larter Vest Buttons and Larter Shirt Studs for evening wear."¹⁷⁹

As watch movements and cases are generally signed by the manufacturer, this category of goods can also reveal the manufacturing relationships that are so often invisible. Dreicer sourced mechanical movements from several different Swiss firms, including Frankfeld Freres and Haas Neveux.¹⁸⁰ An exquisite Ladies' pendant watch retailed by Dreicer was manufactured by the French master jeweler and watchmaker

¹⁷⁸ It is possible the Larter set was put into the Dreicer box at a later date, however I feel that it is more likely the set was indeed originally retailed through Dreicer & Co c. 1910 - 1920.

¹⁷⁹ Larter & Sons Advertisement, *Jewelers' Circular*, 59 No. 14, November 3, 1909, 62.

¹⁸⁰ "Frankfeld Freres Platinum Watch for Dreicer & Co," *Heritage Auctions*, December 8-9, 2008. <https://jewelry.ha.com/itm/timepieces/pocket-post-1900-/frankfeld-freres-platinum-watch-for-dreicer-and-co-circa-1920-s/a/687-59403.s>

Also

"Haas Neveux & Co. Platinum & Diamond Ladies' Wristwatch Retailed by Dreicer & Co," *J&P Time Pieces*, Accessed April 9, 2018. <http://jptimepieces.com/product/haas-neveux-ladys-platinumdiamond-wristwatch-retailed-by-dreicer-co/>

Ferdinand Verger (1850 - 1928) (*Fig. 47*). His firm, Verger Brothers, would also manufacture products for Vacheron Constantin, Cartier, Hermés, Van Cleef & Arpels, Tiffany & Co., and others. At the turn of the twentieth century the firm was considered to be one of the best working in the “modern” (that is, Art Nouveau) style.¹⁸¹ In this instance, the case is signed F.V., which dates it c. 1906 -1911. The beveled rectangular case is crafted of 18 karat yellow gold, and features a miniature frieze of a dancing classical maiden rendered in translucent green enamel. The frieze is bordered by single cut diamonds, green guilloché enamel detailing, and a red and white enamel border. The silvered dial is signed Dreicer & Co. A fine pendant watch such as this would have been appropriate for the daytime wear of a lady who was aware of the latest Paris fashions.

Cecil Thomas (1885 - 1976) was a British sculptor and gem engraver known for his work with the house of Fabergé.¹⁸² An emerald cameo signed by Thomas is featured in an interesting ladies’ wrist watch that dates about 1913. The cameo features a pastoral scene of mother and child, and is set in a border of carved rock crystal, which opens to reveal a watch dial signed *Dreicer & Co* (*Fig. 48*).

In January 1921, the jeweler G. Lazar, who had been employed for many years at Dreicer, both in Paris and New York, moved to Boston to start his own business. In a moving announcement published in the *Jewelers’ Circular*, Lazar advertised himself as a “manufacturer of fancy platinum chains, pearl necklaces and collars.”¹⁸³ His tenure with Dreicer was also noted, confirming that fine skills were associated with the company’s

¹⁸¹ Gabriel Mourey, “Modern French Jewellery & Fans,” in *Modern Design in Jewellery & Fans*, “ ed. Charles Holme, (London: Offices of the Studio, 1902), 5-7.

¹⁸² “Cecil Walter Thomas OBE, FRBS,” *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Great Britain & Ireland 1851 - 1901*, Accessed April 8, 2018. http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib2_1208264663

¹⁸³ “Boston,” *Jewelers’ Circular*, 81, No. 2, January 12, 1921, 105.

workshops and could be a boon to a craftsman's resume and reputation even outside of New York City.¹⁸⁴

The timing of Lazar's career change was auspicious, for six months after his exit both Jacob and Michael Dreicer were dead, and the company had begun its transition to liquidation. Prompted by these changes, other long-time employees decided to take the skills they had honed at Dreicer and strike out on their own. The company Wedderien was born out of this situation, and though obscure today, provided high quality jewels in the Dreicer tradition to mid-century New Yorkers. Four Dreicer employees are known to have been involved in the formation of Wedderien: Edwin J. Case, who was acting president after Michael Dreicer, Minnie A. Morgan (nee Cosgrove), a jeweler R Hellstern, and of course Albert Wedderien.¹⁸⁵ Like Lazar, Wedderien hung his reputation on his association with Dreicer & Company, the *New Yorker* stating he was "formerly a prop and mainstay of Dreicer, where he received his training and tradition. He does his own work and takes a loving and craftsmanlike view of it."¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ G. Lazar notes address at 5 Bromfield St, in Boston's jewelry district. Possibly the same as "Lazar, Gabriel jewelry mfr 333 Wash rm 614, h 452 Norfolk Dor" noted in the 1925 Sampson & Murdock Boston City Directory.

¹⁸⁵ Penny Proddow & Debra Healy, *Glamour & Tradition* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 81-82. Aside from Wedderien himself, the association of the other three individuals with the new business at this point comes strictly from Proddow & Healy. Proddow record Minnie A. Morgan as a "pearl strigner" but she was certainly involved past that basic level, however, for according to Michael Dreicer's will she was to receive "\$20,000 for faithful services rendered."

¹⁸⁶ "This and That," *The New Yorker*, August 10, 1929, 44-45.

Liquidation & Conclusion

Liquidation of Dreicer & Co

Paying out of Dreicer & Co., Inc. investors and disposal of Dreicer Realty Co. holdings began almost immediately after Michael and Jacob Dreicer were buried in the summer of 1921.¹⁸⁷ Five years later, on December 3rd, 1926 Edwin J. Case announced that the last day of business would be three months hence, on February 28th, 1927.¹⁸⁸ Theodore Hetzler of the Fifth Avenue Bank, who was an executor of both estates, explained that in order to provide for trusts amounting to more than three million dollars created by the two wills, liquidation was required. When this fact became apparent, “The family was agreed that the retirement of the Dreicer firm should be complete. This decision was reached for sentimental reasons and out of respect to the memory of the founder of the business, Jacob Dreicer, and his son, Michael.”¹⁸⁹ Aside from sentimental reasons, the public’s confidence in the firm was largely weighted on the involvement of Michael Dreicer himself. Stocks had immediately depreciated by 50% upon his death, and the net profit had dropped from \$1,232,312 in 1920 to \$148,950 in 1921.¹⁹⁰

For the first time in the company’s fifty-plus year history, their wares were promoted at reduced prices. “Every Pearl, Pearl Necklace, Jewel & Precious Stone in the

¹⁸⁷ “Estate of Michael Dreicer” Settlement Agreement, Surrogate Court of New York City, June 1st 1928 1-3.

¹⁸⁸ 100,000,000 for Pearls Firm Closing its Doors,” *Buffalo Evening News*, December 4th, 1926, 4. This article states that Dreicer & Co made 65 mill in sales cumulatively, with 1919 best year at \$7.6 million in sales.

¹⁸⁹ “Dreicer Gem Firm to Wind up Affairs,” *New York Times*, November 8, 1926, 12.

¹⁹⁰ “Newspaper Specials,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 16, 1923, 3.

possession of Dreicer & Co will now be offered to the public at a 33 ⅓% discount” read one 1926 liquidation notice.¹⁹¹ A half-page ad in the *Wall Street Journal* was addressed “To the New York Public Who Have Been Clients for Two Generations” and stated “Every jewel is now offered at less than actual cost...it is the desire of Dreicer & Co to give this opportunity to the public rather than sell now to wholesale dealers.”¹⁹² On their last day of business, \$250,000 in sales were recorded. The largest purchase was a \$100,000 pearl necklace, sold to Henry P. Davison.¹⁹³

The poet Leslie Nelson Jennings attended the final sale days and expressed the incredulity felt by many who had grown up knowing Dreicer & Co. as an unmovable stalwart of the luxury industry:

What can have happened here? Alas,
Crowds rush the portals, bold as
brass,
And where soft-spoken experts
made
A ritual of the goldsmith’s trade
Efficient clerks let people paw
What once was viewed with proper
awe.¹⁹⁴

Post-liquidation, the jewelry company faded surprisingly quickly from the public conscious, and once the post-death divestment was complete, the fate of the Dreicers’ fortune also became a matter of private concern only. Gittel Dreicer passed away in December of 1932, and was remembered for her ingenuity and expertise in pearls and

¹⁹¹ Derek Ostergard “Along Fifth Avenue’s Golden Mile,” lecture, *Journal of the American Society of Jewelry Historians*, synopsis by Patricia Kiley Faber, Spring 2012, 14.

¹⁹² Dreicer & Company Advertisement “To the New York Public Who Have Been Clients for Two Generations,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 5, 1927, 3. Clearly, as Cartier has recorded purchasing several million dollars of Dreicer inventory, D&Co were not able to completely realize this gesture.

¹⁹³ “Newspaper Specials,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 2, 1927, 15.

¹⁹⁴ Leslie Nelson Jennings, “Obituary Note,” *The New Yorker*, February 26, 1927, 58.

colored gems.¹⁹⁵ The last home she shared with Jacob and her children still stands at 4 East 78th Street in Manhattan.

Maisie Dreicer, only in her mid-thirties at the time of her husband's death, married twice more. Her second husband was British naval architect Jardine Belle Whyte. The couple became engaged in 1923, and her two sons took their step-father's name. After this marriage ended in divorce, she again wed in 1935 to the Baron Rene de Kerchove. The couple lived in style, and divided their time between New York City, Monaco and London. During her first marriage, Maisie and Michael lived in a five story townhouse at 1046 5th Avenue, almost directly across from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (*Fig. 1*). Much of Michael's art collection was housed at this residence, and in 1917 *Arts & Decoration* published photographs of his display room, which was decorated in a "French Gothic" style so that the art could be viewed in complementary surroundings (*Fig. 2*).¹⁹⁶ In 1940 the property was sold to a developer, after which it was turned into separate apartments and later demolished.

Michael left many artworks to his wife, but the bulk of his collection was bequeathed to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. As other men of import during his time, Michael's collection focused majorly on painting, sculptures and decorative arts of the Medieval and Renaissance periods. The museum installed the collection in the spring of 1922, and stated that the bequest "formed a notable addition to the Museum representation of these periods, both by the high average quality of the collection as a

¹⁹⁵ "Mrs. Jacob Dreicer, Gem Expert, Dead," *New York Times*, December 7, 1932, 21.

¹⁹⁶ Guy Pené Du Bois, "Famous American Collections: The Collection of Michael Dreicer," *Arts & Decoration*, 8, No. 2, December 1917, 58.

whole and by the remarkable excellence of a number of the individual objects.”¹⁹⁷

Michael stipulated in his will that the collection be displayed together for twenty-five years, after which the museum was free to incorporate the objects into the larger collection.¹⁹⁸

Conclusions

Today, the gilt marble halls of the 1906 Dreicer & Co. building have long-since been gutted. Now, the upper floors house office space and the ground floor most recently became the 5th Avenue flagship for Oakley sunglasses (*Fig. 3*). The first floor facade of black marble and gold detailing was removed by the current tenants. The north-facing facade on 46th street, which once featured silk-draped glass windows is now completely covered by a striated stucco wrap also installed by the sunglass chain. But up above the big neon “Oakley,” Warren & Wetmore’s carefully proportioned corinthian pilasters and wide windows framed by elegant wrought iron remain. The building is now surrounded by structures that defy Michael Dreicer’s 1919 suggestion of a seventy-five-foot maximum height, but it remains a distinguished and attractive example of the grand-old New York architecture that exists quietly above the commercial street level cladding.

Dreicer jewels, as demonstrated by Huguette Clark’s fabulous pink diamond, still garner international press and fetch astronomical sums. Even without a rare and important center stone, fine Dreicer pieces are sought after by dealers and collectors.

¹⁹⁷ H.B.W., “The Michael Dreicer Collection,” *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 17, No. 5, May 1922, 100-110.

¹⁹⁸ Dreicer’s stipulations were not adhered to, however. According to the *New Yorker* “The [museum] trustees made a deal with Mrs. Dreicer whereby she got several things back and agreed to let them distributed the remainder among the galleries where they historically belonged.”

More recently than the Clark Pink, a delicate Dreicer & Co. pendant necklace appeared at auction in October 2017.¹⁹⁹ The platinum jewel is strung with a mesh of seed pearls and set with less than two carats of diamonds, but achieved a price well beyond the intrinsic value of the gems (*Fig 4*). The artistry of the setting, designed by Duparque, Banneville or one of their colleagues, is both exemplary of its era and timeless. The Dreicer name still carries weight in the marketplace, and their aesthetic sensibilities remain beautiful in this century.

Jacob, Gittel and their four children were all laid to rest in a family mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx (*Fig. 5*). The domed octagonal structure is built of white limestone. The intricate iron doors are flanked by doric columns and bordered by carved garlands of leaves and ribbons. A stained glass window in the Medieval style lets in light. This structure is a fitting monument to a family whose pursuit of success through beauty and art surely warrants a more prominent place on the stage of New York City history.

¹⁹⁹ “Diamond & Seed Pearl Pendant Necklace, Dreicer & Co,” *Sotheby’s Hong Kong*, April 4, 2007. <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2017/magnificent-jewels-and-jadeite-hk0721/lot.1640.html>

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Appendix A

Timeline

Jacob Dreicer & Company: c. 1868 - 1892

Jacob Dreicer & Son: 1892 - 1906

Dreicer & Company: 1907 - 1927

c. 1867

Jacob & Gittel Dreicer immigrate from Minsk, Russia to New York City. Jacob works as a peddler of pocket knives and eventually begins to deal in precious stones.

1876-1877

Jacob Dreicer, diamond broker, keeps an office at 162 W. 36th Street

1879-1880

Jacob Dreicer, diamond broker, keeps an office at his home at 177 Lexington Avenue

1880-1882

Jacob Dreicer keeps an office at 6, then 8 John Street

1882 - 1884

Reverts to using residence at 177 Lexington Avenue as place of business.

c.1880 - 1907

Dreicer keeps a summer shop at the Grand Union Hotel, Saratoga Springs

1884 - 1892

Jacob Dreicer & Company operates their New York City business out of 1128 Broadway

1892 -1907

Jacob Dreicer & Son operates their New York City business out of 292 5th Avenue.

1907 - 1927

Dreicer & Company operates their New York City business out of 560 5th Avenue.

1910

Dreicer & Company opens a shop in the Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, Illinois.

1912

Dreicer & Company opens a shop in the Colonnade Hotel, Magnolia, Massachusetts.

1917

Dreicer & Company incorporates, along with Dreicer Realty Company and Dreicer Manufacturing Company.

1918

Dreicer & Company opens a shop in the Jeanette Building, Palm Beach, Florida.

1921

Michael Dreicer dies on July 26th; Jacob Dreicer dies August 14th.

1927

March 1st, Dreicer & Company closes its doors for good.

Appendix B

Dreicer-Owned Properties

All information taken from *The Record & Guide*. Below properties were acquired by Jacob, Gittel, Michael or Dreicer Realty Co. Purchases are arranged chronologically by year, unless otherwise noted.

1887

115 E. 64th Street

1892

Parcels at

Bank st. & North East Corner of Washington St.

8th Ave at Horatio Street

8th Ave at 53rd Street

Front St at Dover Street

St. Johns Place at 6th Ave. (*Brooklyn*)

Also

7 Carmine Street

292 5th Avenue

1904

Black, Starr & Frost building, 436 & 438 5th Avenue at 39th Street.

1906

560 5th Avenue

3 E. 41st Street (*sold at this date, purchase date unknown*)

1910

4 East. 78th Street (*personal use; construction at this date, purchase date unknown*)

6 West 56th Street (*sold, purchase date unknown*)

1911

The Howard Building, 576-578 5th Avenue (*Occupied by T.B. Starr*)

21 & 26 E. 48th Street

10 & 12 W. 57th Street (*built by Dreicer, occupied by Henri Bendel*)

1912

Parcel at Whitlock & Barretto St. (*Bronx*)

1913

The Gallatin Mansion, 668 5th Avenue at 53rd Street

873-877 Broadway (*part interest purchase*)

15-17 East 18th Street (*part interest purchase*)

1914

Woodlawn Cemetery Plot

6-8 West 57th Street

7 East 56th Street

1915

9 West 56th Street

1916

Deepdale Estate, Great Neck Long Island (*Personal Use*)

1919

5th Avenue Baptist Church, 2-8 West 46th St

Illustrations

Chapter I



THE LATE MICHAEL DREICER

Fig. 1-1

Portrait of Michael Dreicer, published c. 1921.

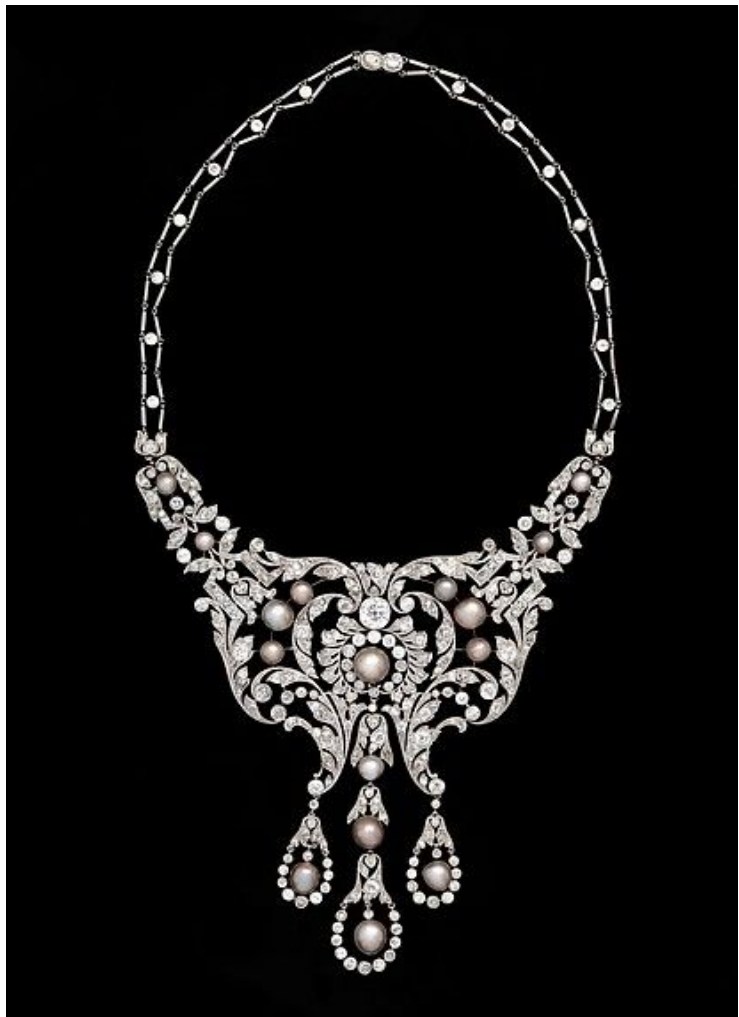


Fig. 1-2 Diamond, Pearl & Platinum Necklace. Dreicer & Co., c. 1905.

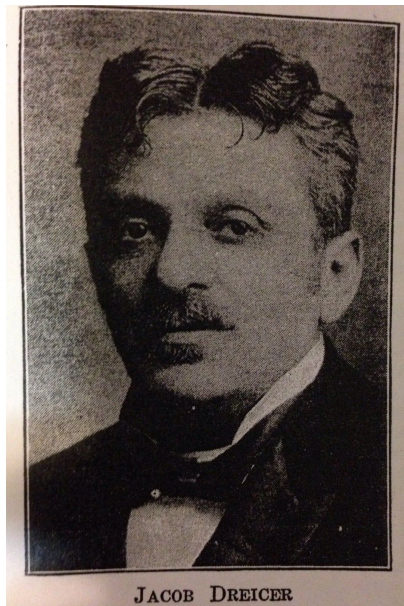


Fig. 1-3

Portrait of Jacob Dreicer as a young man.

Fig. 1-4

Pearl & Diamond Bracelet. Jacob Dreicer, c. 1885.



Fig. 1-5

Pearl & Diamond Pendant. Originally fashioned as hair ornament. Jacob Dreicer, c. 1885.

Fig. 1-6 1128 Broadway (3rd from right) c. 1899. This building was occupied by Jacob Dreicer & Company from 1884-1892.



Fig. 1-7 292 5th Avenue (4th from Right), c. 1911. This building was built by Jacob Dreicer, and occupied by Jacob Dreicer & Son from 1892 - 1906.



Fig. 1-8

Gold, Enamel & Diamond Ladies' Watch w/
Green dial.

Jacob Dreicer & Son, c. 1895.

**Fig. 1-8.2**

Gold, Enamel & Diamond Ladies' Watch, pin
in verso. White dial with second hand subdial.

Jacob Dreicer & Son, c. 1895.

**Fig. 1-9**

Three brooches in yellow gold,
diamond, ruby, sapphire &
emerald. Jacob Dreicer & Son,
c. late-nineteenth century.



Fig. 1-10.1 First Lady Ida McKinley wearing J. Dreicer & Son Tiara, c. 1901.



Fig. 1-10.2 Platinum, Gold & Diamond winged Tiara. J. Dreicer & Son, c. 1892 - 1901.





BUILDING OF DREICER & CO., FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
WARREN & WETMORE, Architects

Fig. 1-11. Dreicer & Company Building, Southwest Corner of 5th Ave & 46th St.
Erected 1906/07. Photograph c. 1912.



Fig. 1-12.1

Interior of Dreicer & Co., Upper Floor, Facing West, 560 5th Avenue. c. 1907.



Fig. 1-12.2

Interior of Dreicer & Co., Upper Floor, Facing East, 560 5th Avenue. c. 1907.



Fig. 1-12.3
Interior of Dreicer & Co., a Parlor Room, 560 5th Avenue. c. 1907.



Fig. 1-13
Miniature Portrait of Mrs. Michael Dreicer (Maisie Saville Shainwald) by Eulabee Dix, c.1910.

Illustrations

Chapter II



Fig. 2-1 Silver-topped Gold & Diamond Star Brooch. Tiffany & Co., c. 1870.



Fig. 2-2.1 First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln Wearing Tiffany & Co. seed pearl jewelry. c. 1861.



Fig. 2-2.2 Mary Todd Lincoln's seed pearl necklace & matching bracelets. Tiffany & Co., c. 1861.



Fig. 2-3 Demi-Parure of Gold & Coral. Ball, Black & Co., New York, Mid-nineteenth Century.



Fig. 2-5 Egyptian Revival Micromosaic Bracelet, Italian, Nineteenth Century.



Fig. 2-4 Gold Etruscan Revival Necklace, Castellani, Rome, Nineteenth Century.

Fig. 2-6 Pansy & Forget-Me-Not Crescent Brooch. Kremenz & Co., Newark c. 1900.



Fig. 2-7 Parure of Brazilian Tortoise Beetles & Gold. Phillip's Brothers. 1884-85.





Fig. 2-8 “Collier aux Quatre Rivières” Bapst, Paris, 1863.



Fig. 2-9 “L’impératrice Eugénie a la Marie-Antionette.” Franz Xavier Winterhalter, 1854.



Fig. 2-10 Portrait, Mrs. Pierson, Mrs. Chas. Marshall, Mr. Cooper Hewitt, etc at the Hyde Ball, Sherry’s Hotel. Byron & Company, New York, 1905.



Fig. 2-11.1 “Her Most Excellent Majesty Charlotte Queen of Great Britain,” Mezzotint, Thomas Frye, 1862.



Fig. 2-11.2 Consuelo Vanderbilt, the 9th Duchess of Marlborough, Dressed for the Coronation of King Edward, 1901.

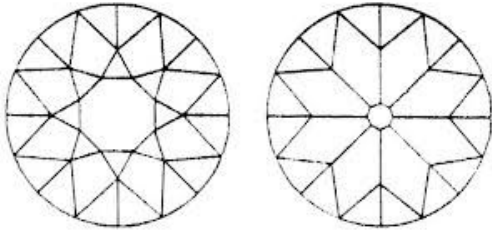


Fig. 2-12 Old European Cut Diagram.

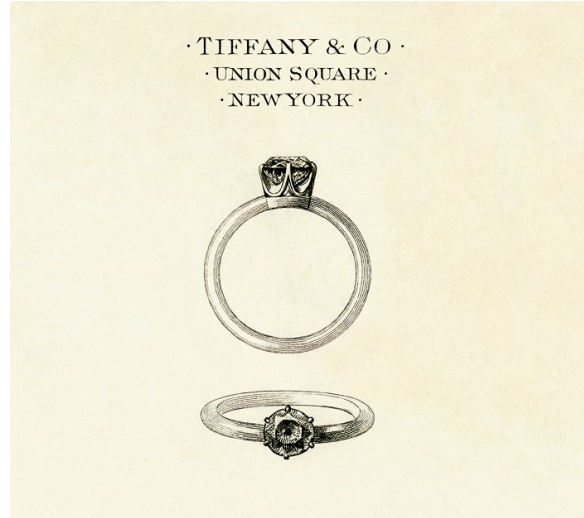


Fig. 2-13 Advertisement Illustrating the “Tiffany Setting,” Tiffany & Co., New York, 1886.



Fig. 2-14 Diamond, Silver & Gold Rivière Necklace with foil-backed collets. Chaumet, Nineteenth Century.

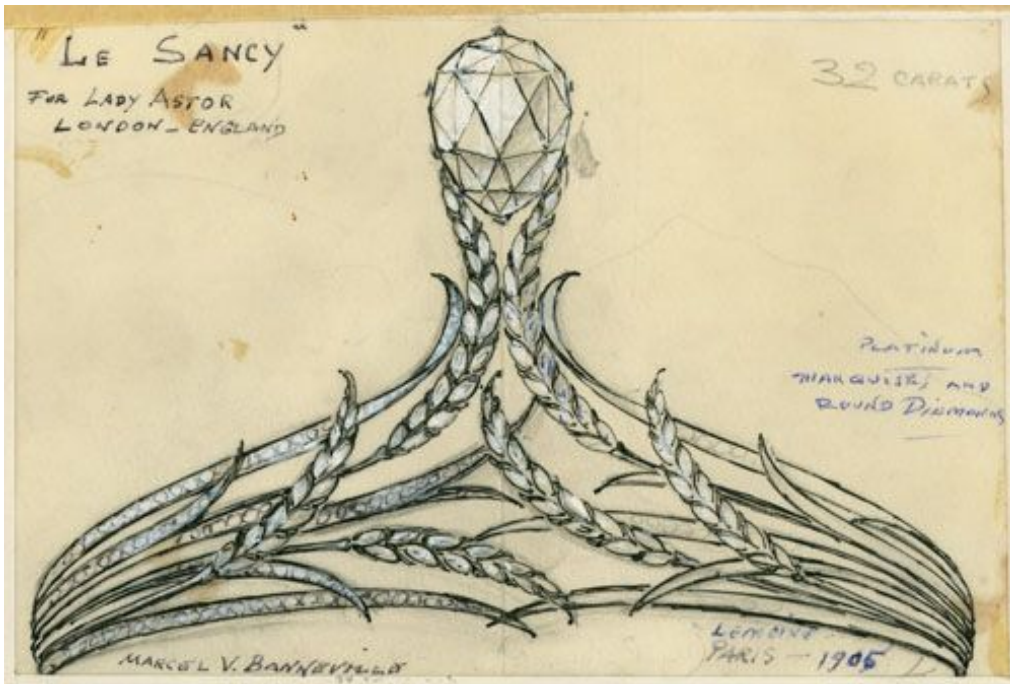


Fig. 2-15 Le Sancy Design Rendering, Marcel de Banneville, Paris 1905.

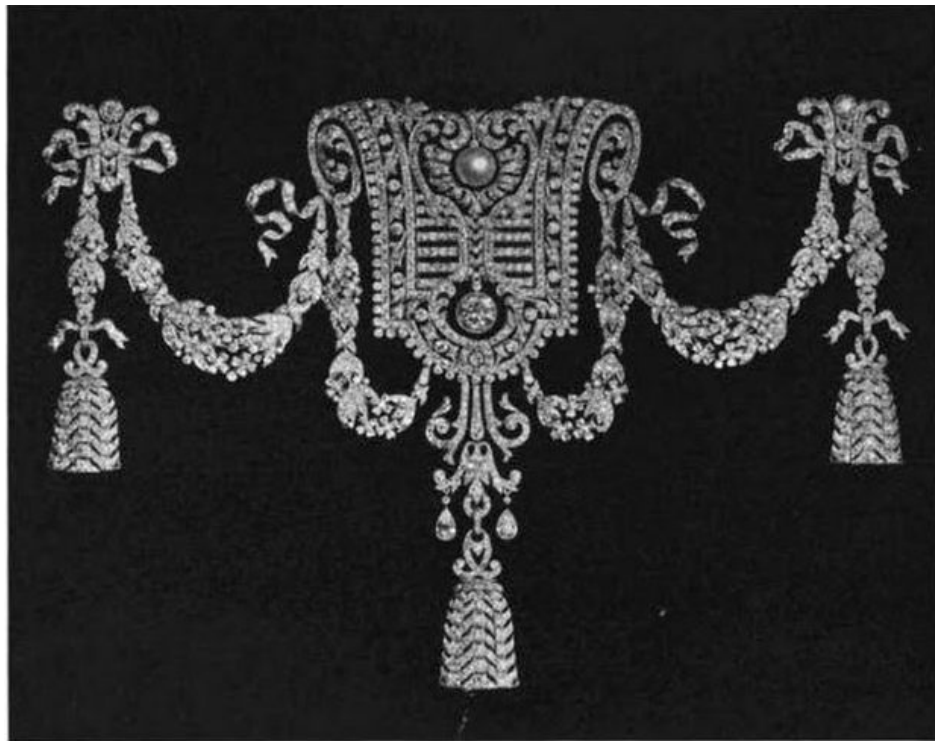


Fig. 2-16 Louis XIV Style Corsage Ornament of Diamonds & Platinum, Dreicer & Co., 1915.

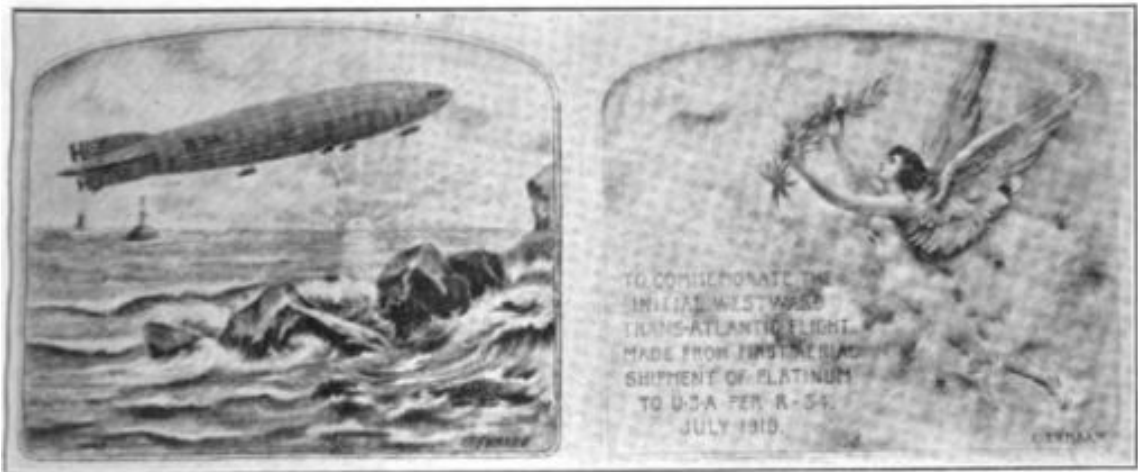


Fig. 2-17 Platinum Medallion Commemorating R-34 TransAtlantic Crossing. Dreicer & Co., 1918.



Fig. 2-18 Jewel Commissioned for the Actress Ada Rehan, Marcus & Co., New York c. 1900.



Fig. 2-19 Gentleman's Watch in Gold, Enamel & Onyx. Dreicer & Co., Early Twentieth Century.

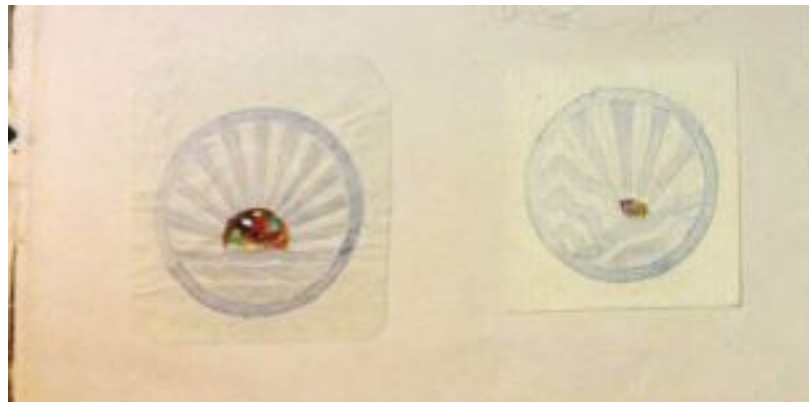
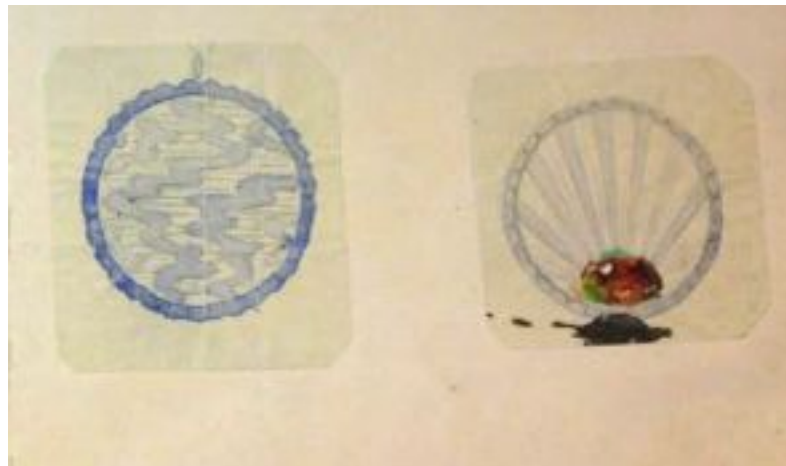


Fig. 2-20 Renderings of Opal & Enamel Pendant for Dreicer & Co. Marcel Banneville, c. 1908.

Illustrations

Chapter III

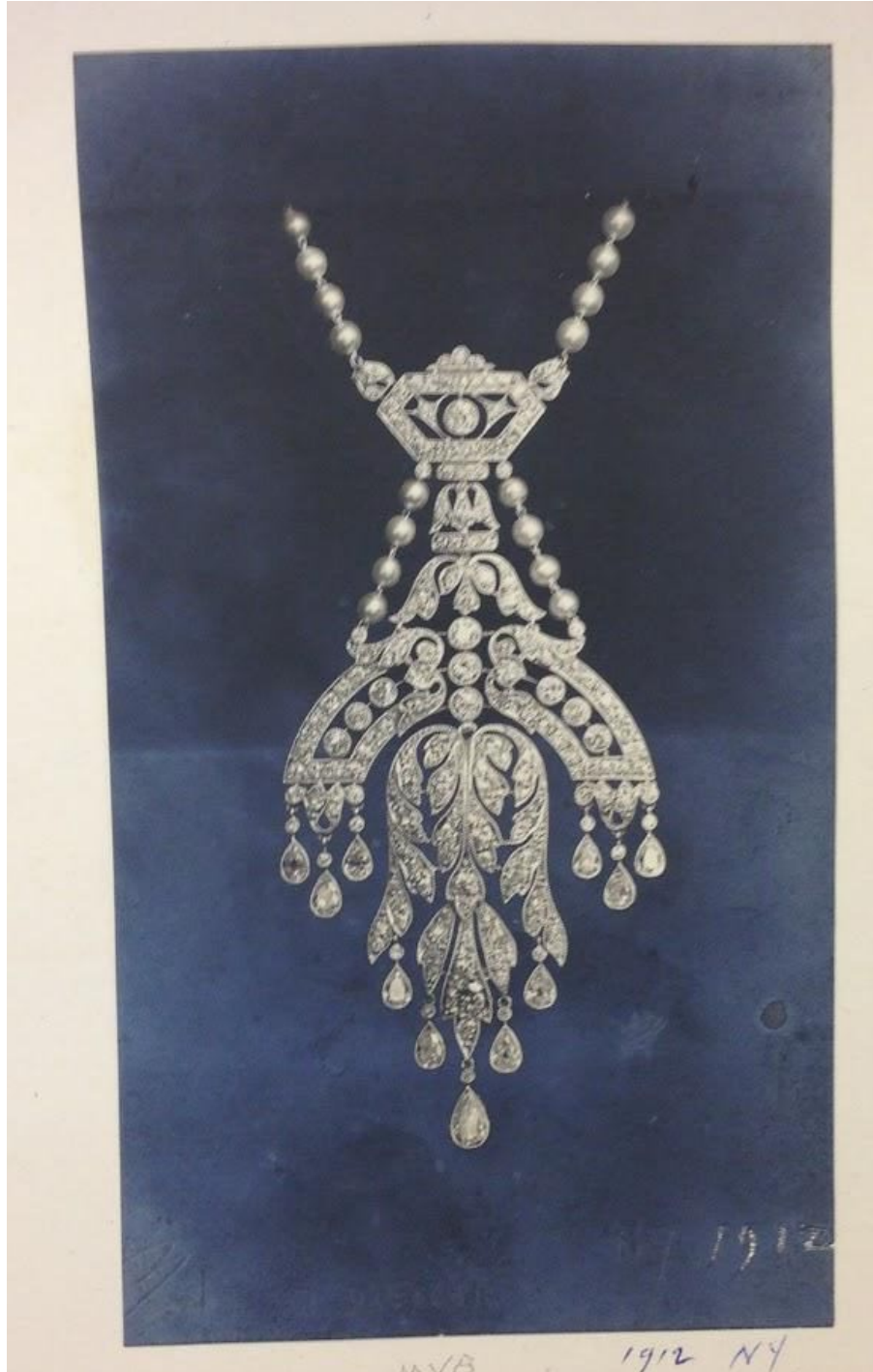


Fig. 3-1 Platinum, Diamond and Pearl Necklace, Dreicer & Co., 1912. Design by Marcel Banneville.



Fig. 3-2 Onyx, Diamond, Platinum & Gold Brooch. Dreicer & Co., c. 1920.

Fig. 3-3 Platinum, Gold, Black Enamel & Diamond Dress Set in fitted Dreicer & Co. Box. Early 20th Century.





Fig. 3-4.1 Ruby, Diamond & Platinum Brooch. Dreicer & Co., Early 20th Century.



Fig. 3-4.2 Emerald, Diamond & Platinum Bracelet, Dreicer & Co, c. 1920.

November 15

39

The wealth of jewellery accompanying a gold metal cloak gown includes a diamond head-band, diamond earrings with pear-shaped emerald drops, a pearl and jade necklace, and diamond and emerald rings. The gown from Bergdorf Goodman; fan from Thurn

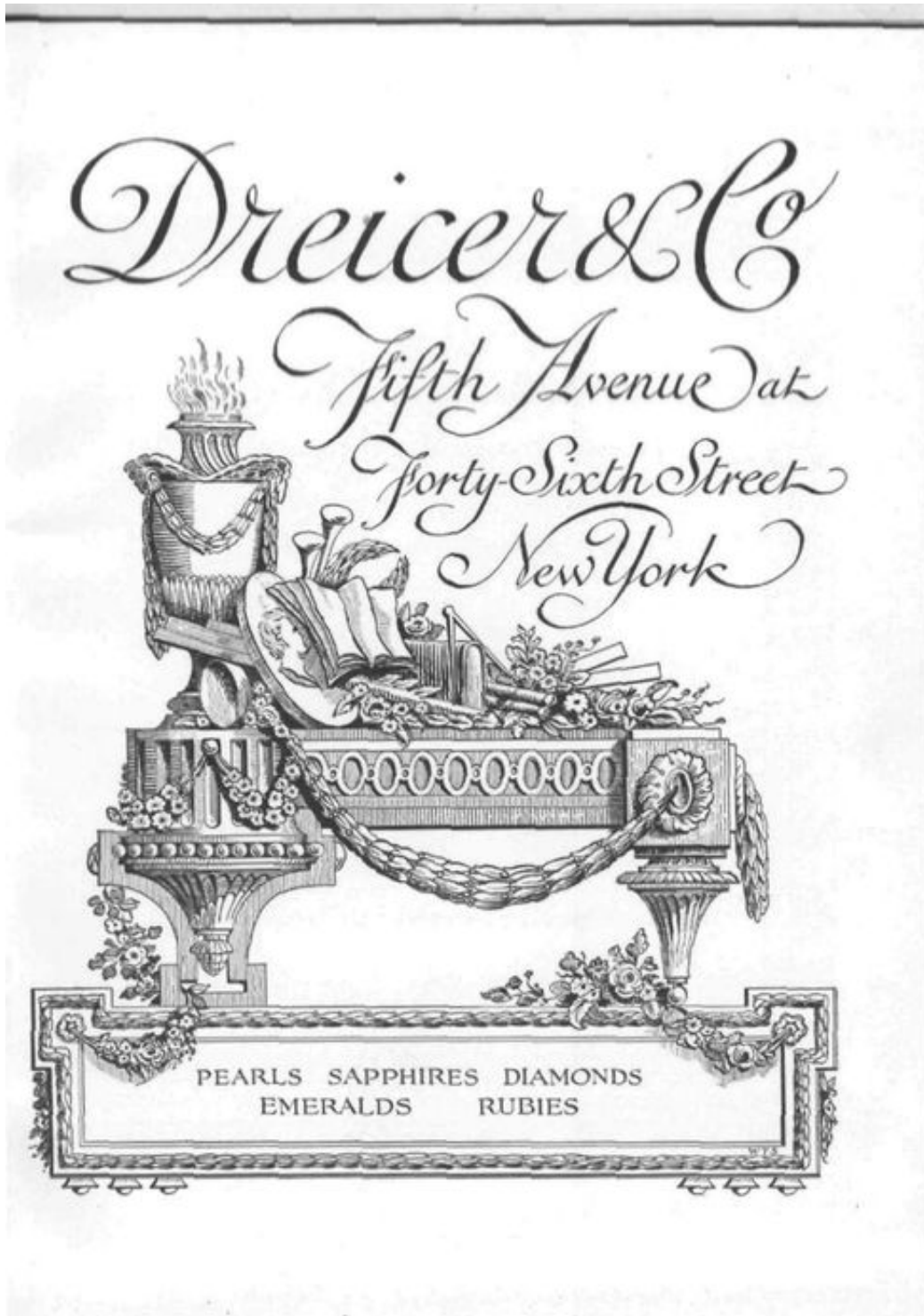


Nickolas Muray

JEWELS FROM DREICER WORN
BY FRANCES HOWARD

A HAIR'S LENGTH SEPARATES PAST *and* PRESENT

3.5 A Model Wearing Dreicer & Co Jewels in "A Hair's Length Separates Past & Present" *Vogue*, November 1922.



3-6 Frontispiece of *Pearls, Sapphires, Diamonds, Emeralds & Rubies*, Dreicer & Co., c. 1907 - 1920.

MRS. WILLIAM B LEEDS
PHOTO BY AIME DUPOINCE

MRS. POTTER PALMER

MRS. H. M'K. TWOMBLEY
PHOTO BY BARN

MRS. W. D. SLOANE

MRS. GEORGE J. GOULD
PHOTOGRAPH BY HARRIS

MRS. E. H. HARRIMAN

AL. SIZE)
fect pearl worn by the Great Mo-
pearl, worth more than \$10,000
of an Indian potentate of the sev-

(ACTUAL 6
From left to right:—Pearl, weigh
by Tavernier to Shalsta Khan (seven
great pearls of the seventeenth cent
hung from the neck of a peacock r
Grand Mogul.

\$1,000,000
POSSIBLE BUYERS OF THE NECKLACE

MRS. GEORGE J. GOULD	MRS. OTTO H. KAHN
MRS. ELBERT H. GARY	MRS. E. H. HARRIMAN
MRS. WILLIAM B LEEDS	MRS. POTTER PALMER
MRS. RODMAN WANAMAKER	MRS. H. M'K. TWOMBLEY
MRS. FRANCIS CAROLAN	MRS. W. D. SLOANE
MRS. W. K. VANDERBILT	MRS. HENRY C. FRICK
MRS. COLLIS P. HUNTINGTON	MRS. HAROLD F. M'CORMICK

3-7
Illustration of
"The
Necklace."
Dreicer &
Company,
1911. Shown
in *Idaho Daily
Statesman*.

3-8 Natural Pearl Necklace
with Platinum & Diamond Clasp.
Dreicer & Co., Early 20th Century.





3-9 Portrait of Nanaline Holt Inman Duke, by Philip Alexius de Laszlo de Lombos, 1926. Pearls most likely purchased at Dreicer & Son.



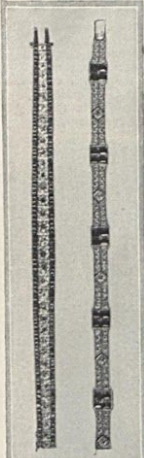
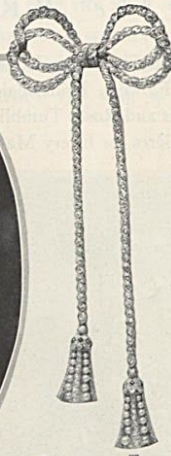
3-10 Sapphire, Diamond & Platinum Pendant Necklace. Dreicer & Co., Early 20th Century.



3-11 “The Clark Pink” Diamond Ring, Dreicer & Company, c. 1910.



3-12 Emerald, Diamond & Platinum Ring from the collection of Belle Baruch Wilcox. Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.

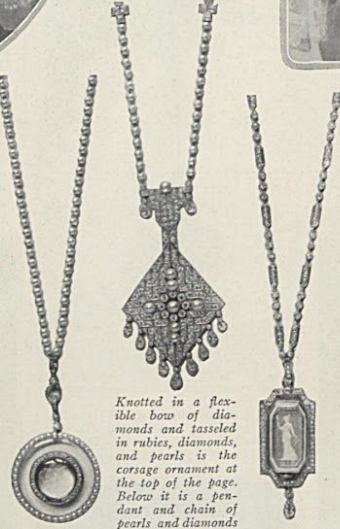


Ever so many little diamonds with a big one set here and there sparkle in the double bow-knot of flexible, finely wrought platinum shown above

Oblong sections of square stones set in flexible platinum, a big diamond edged by sapphires in each section, form the bracelet at the left

Four small sapphires set so they look like one large one are scattered at intervals round and round the bracelet of diamonds shown at the near left

The woman in the moonstone at the right is exquisitely engraved, surrounded by a line of diamonds, and a row of pearls, and held by a pearl chain



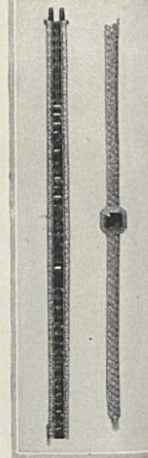
Knotted in a flexible bow of diamonds and tasseled in rubies, diamonds, and pearls is the corsage ornament at the top of the page. Below it is a pendant and chain of pearls and diamonds

Sprinkled with tiny diamonds where there are not large ones is the shield-shaped pendant hung on the diamond-set chain shown above

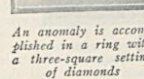
Myriads of small diamonds woven in a delicate rope of platinum supporting one big, square emerald, fashion the bracelet at the right

Bracelets must be showered with diamonds somewhere so the one at the near right lines them up on each side of a row of square sapphires

Even a transparent woman may have something to conceal and this woman of crystal set in a frame of diamonds on a diamond chain hides a tiny watch (shown to left)



The rule of squaring jewelry extends to a diamond and emerald ring



An anomaly is accomplished in a ring with a three-square setting of diamonds



Strips of diamonds centered by a diamond encircled by pearls and edged by circles of diamonds and larger pearls form a brooch



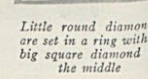
A miniature girdle of diamonds is this brooch with a band in the middle and two picot edges of smaller diamonds



Against a crystal brooch is a band of diamonds set with crosses and butterflies of diamonds. Jewelry from Dreicer & Co.



Diamonds set in diamond shape support a central, inevitably square emerald



Little round diamonds are set in a ring with a big square diamond in the middle

PEARLS AND DIAMONDS, DIAMONDS AND PEARLS, WITH A TOUCH OF COLOR GIVEN HERE AND THERE BY AN EMERALD OR A SAPPHIRE, AND ALL OF THEM SET IN FLEXIBLE PLATINUM ARE THE JEWELS OF THE BRIDE

3-13 Dreicer & Co. items featured in "Jewels of the Bride," *Vogue*, May, 1914, including emerald & diamond ring similar to Fig. 3-12.



3-14 Ruby, Diamond, Gold & Platinum
Pendant Necklace. J. Dreicer & son, c.
1905.



3-15 Opal, Diamond, Sapphire & Platinum Brooch. Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



3-16 Aquamarine, Platinum & Diamond Negligee Necklace.
Dreicer & Company, early Twentieth Century.



3-17
Tourmaline, Diamond & Platinum Necklace. Dreicer & Co., c. 1915.



3-18 Jade, Sapphire & Diamond Ring. Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



3-19 Jade, Diamond & Platinum Brooch. Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



3-20.1,a Emerald, Diamond & Platinum Ring.
Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



3-20.1,b Emerald, Diamond & White Gold Ring.
Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



3-20.2,a Diamond & Platinum Engagement Ring.
Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



3-20.2,b Diamond & Platinum Engagement Ring.
Dreicer & Company, Early Twentieth Century.



3-20.3 Sapphire, Diamond & Platinum
Engagement Ring. Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



3-21 First Lady Edith Bolling Galt Wilson by Adolpho Müller-Ury, 1916. Mrs. Wilson wears her Dreicer & Co. engagement ring.



3-22
 Rendering of
 Tiara for Mrs.
 George
 Bakhmeteff.
 Design by
 Marcel
 Banneville for
 Dreicer &
 Company,
 1912.

3-23 Empress Alexandra Feodorovna in her
 Wedding Dress. Photograph by A. Pasetti,
 November 1894.





3-24 Theodore Roosevelt's Hunting Knife. Handle in Gold, Platinum & Red Stone. Dreicer & Company, blade by J. Russell & Co.



3-25.1 Platinum, Diamond & Onyx Bow Brooch. Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.

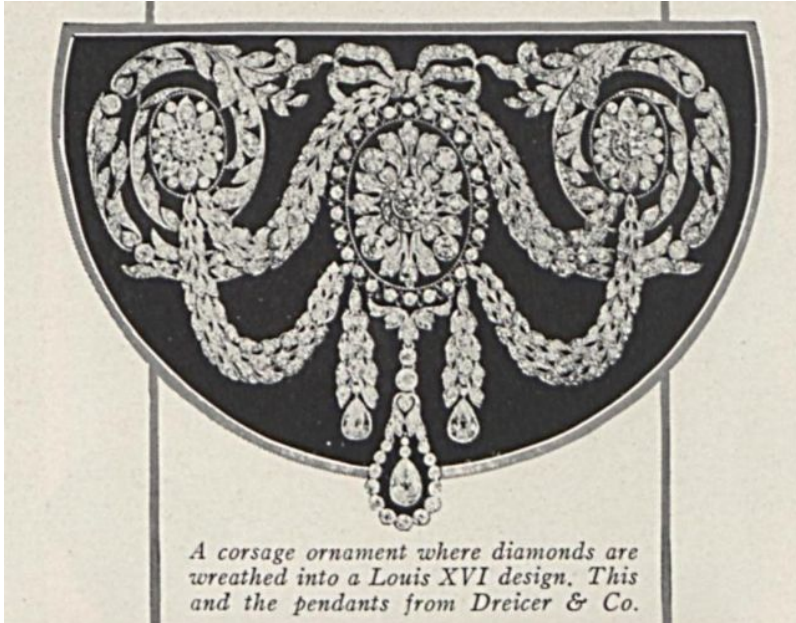


Onyx, Diamond & Platinum Bow Brooch. Tiffany & Co., c. 1915.

3-25.2



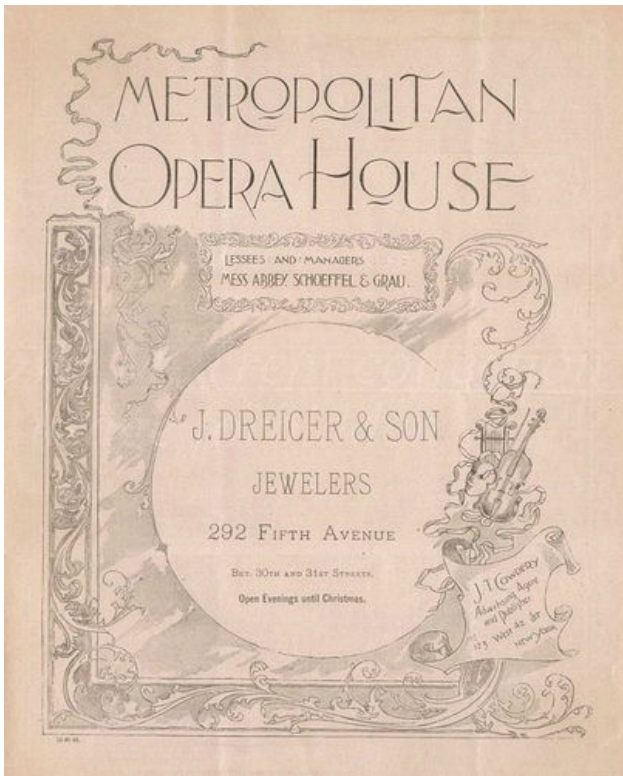
3-25.3 Onyx, Diamond & Platinum Bow Brooch. Cartier, c. 1930.



3-26 Louis XVI Style
Corsage Ornament.
Dreicer & Co., 1913.

3-27 Stomacher Brooch,
Platinum, Diamonds & Sapphires.
Cartier, Paris, Commissioned 1907.





3-28 J. Dreicer & Son Advertisement. Metropolitan Opera House Playbill, c. 1895.

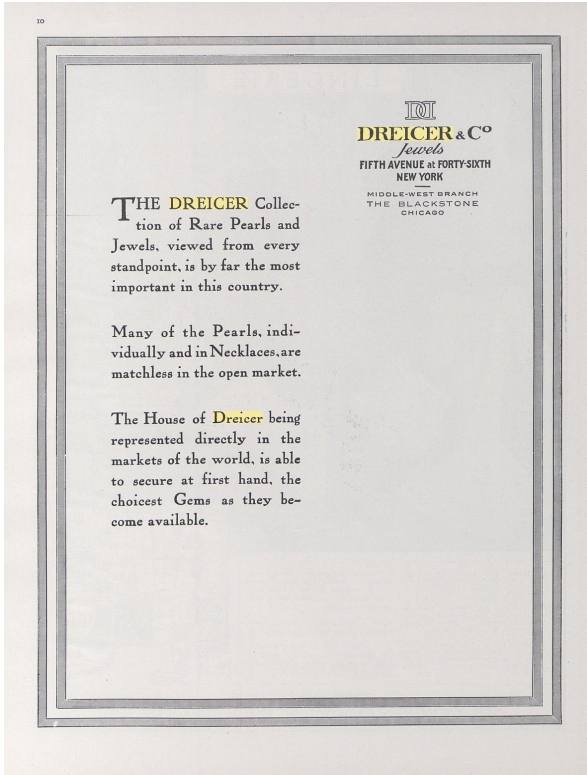
3-29 Dreicer & Co. Advertisement, 1897. Shown in *Vogue*, December 9, 1897.

Dreicer's Jewels
all
Hall-Marked

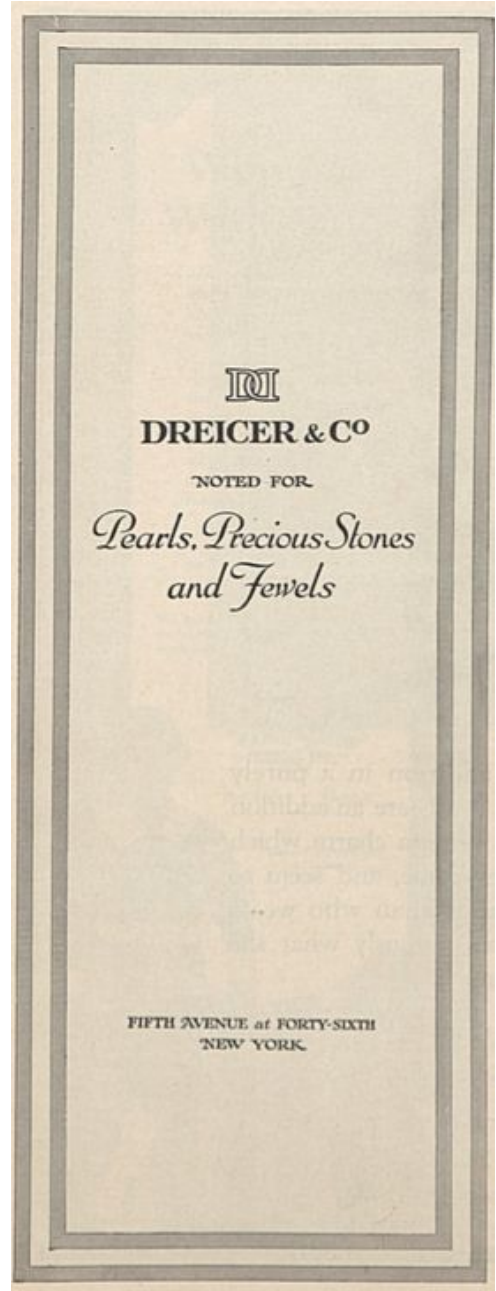
with the ineffaceable stamp of genius in design, exactness in execution. Better quality is impossible. We would be delighted to show you our Holiday creations—exquisite harmonies in color—rare and beautiful gems—new effects. In some pieces we have striven to combine effectiveness with inexpensiveness. It's worth your while to see and you are more than welcome. Come now—the crowd grows larger daily.

Jewelers and Importers of Precious Stones

292 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK



3-30.1 Dreicer & Co. Advertisement, 1913. Shown in *Vogue*, June 1, 1913.



3-30.2 Dreicer & Co. Advertisement, *Vogue*, 1918



3-30.3 Dreicer & Co. Advertisement, 1923. Shown in *Vogue*, April 21, 1923.

BLACK, STARR AND FROST
438 Fifth Avenue, New York

Pearl Necklaces
Precious Stones
and
Wedding Silver

3-31 Black, Starr & Frost Advertisement, 1902. Shown in *Life*, April 3, 1902.

3-32 Black, Starr & Frost Advertisement, 1923. Shown in *Vogue*, December 1, 1923.

December 1 99

THE ONE PERFECT GIFT

Jewelry is personal and intimate. Its purpose is to adorn and beautify. It is peculiarly appropriate on all occasions where gifts are given.

Above are a few suggestions from a wide range of articles to fit any taste and any pocketbook.

A PEARL TO ADD TO A NECKLACE IS A HAPPY THOUGHT FOR A HOLIDAY GIFT.

BLACK STARR AND FROST
JEWELERS
FIFTH AVENUE
CORNER
FORTY-EIGHTH STREET.
NEW YORK.
113th Year

THEODORE B. STARR,

No. 206 Fifth Avenue,
Between 25th and 26th Streets
(MADISON SQUARE).

THROUGH TO 1126 BROADWAY.

JEWELRY AND SILVERWARE,
Importer of Precious Stones, Bronzes,
Clocks and Decorative Porcelains.
NON-MAGNETIC WATCHES.



Paillard's
Patent Non-
Magnetic
Compensation
Balance and
Hair Spring.

The rapidly increasing use of Electricity in its multiform applications makes a watch which is impervious to magnetism an absolute necessity for those who require accurate time-pieces, to be depended upon under all circumstances.

We have now in stock a variety of the celebrated Geneva Non-Magnetic Watches containing Paillard's Patent Non-Magnetic Compensation Balance and Hair Spring, which are uninfluenced by Magnetism or Electricity, and will not rust nor corrode.

These watches, made by the most approved machinery and finished by skilled labor, are unsurpassed for durability and accuracy of performance.

Every watch warranted to give perfect satisfaction.

INSPECTION INVITED.

Send for circular.

3-33 T.B. Starr Advertisement, 1887.

Shown in *New York Tribune*, Nov 23, 1887.

3-34 Tiffany & Company Advertisement, 1905. Shown in *Vogue*, June 15, 1905.

TIFFANY & Co.

Diamond and Gem Merchants
Strictly Retailers. No Agents

Ladies' Gold Brooches

All 14-karat gold. Photographs upon request

No. 7. Scroll with white and blue enameled Forget-me-nots - - -	\$5.00
No. 8. Myrtle with diamond and baroque pearl	6.50
No. 9. Entwined floral design with enameled snow-drop, diamond center -	7.50
No. 10. Crescent with enameled pansies and two diamonds - - -	9.00
No. 4. Enameled four-leaf clover, diamond center, border of half-pearls - -	14.50
No. 2. Wreath half and whole pearls - - -	18.50
No. 3. Diana Crescent with fifteen whole pearls	20.00
No. 5. White enameled daisy, diamond center -	20.00
No. 6. Pink enameled wild rose, pearl center -	20.00

Designs of richer brooches if desired

Mail Orders

Upon receipt of satisfactory references from any National Bank or responsible business house, Tiffany & Co. will send on approval selections from their stock to any part of the United States

The Tiffany Blue Book

Tiffany & Co. have just published the 1905 edition of their annual Blue Book, the last to be issued from their old Union Square store, as within the next few months the firm will remove to their new home in Fifth Avenue. This Book, with its 490 pages, convenient side index and handsome leather binding, is a gradual development of a modest little thirty-page leaflet, their first catalogue, issued just sixty years ago. Through all these years it has been a feature, which were quite as notable in 1845 as to-day. These are its compactness of form and careful avoidance of illustration. It gives concise descriptions and range of prices of nearly everything sold by this establishment, from the most inexpensive trifles to the richest jewelry. It is a valuable guide for shoppers and it is to be had for the asking.—*New York Tribune*

Removal

During the summer Tiffany & Co. will remove to their new building, Fifth Avenue and 37th Street.

Letters sent either to Union Square or Fifth Avenue will receive prompt attention.

Tiffany & Co. always welcome a comparison of prices

Union Square New York



3-35 Interior of Tiffany & Company, 37th St. & 5th Avenue, c. 1910.



3-36 Exterior of Cartier, Paris. Cartier 13 Rue de la Paix, 1899.

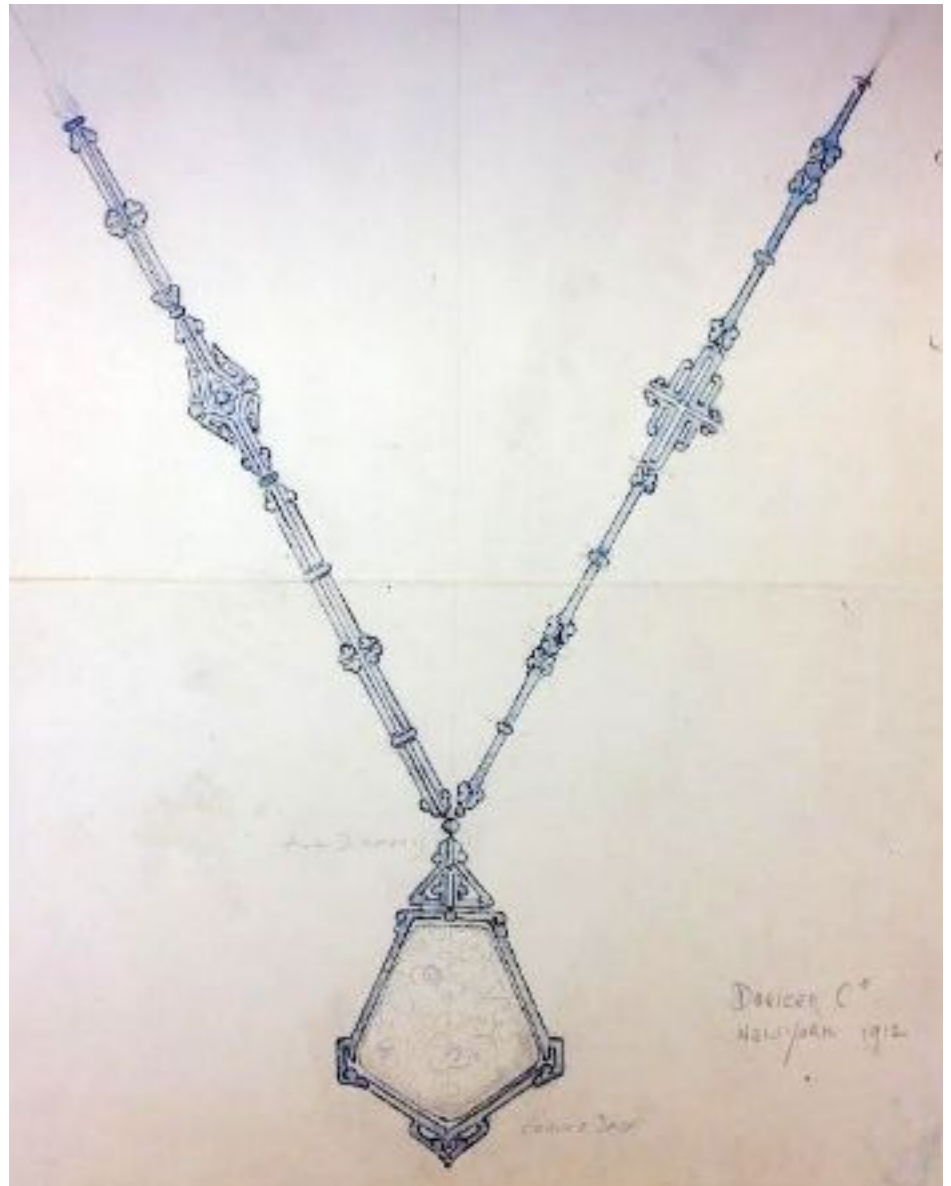


3-37 Rendering of Diamond & Platinum Shoulder Brooch. Designed by Marcel Banneville for Dreicer & Company, 1912.



3-38 Rendering of Diamond & Platinum Renaissance-Style Brooch. Designed by Marcel Banneville for Dreicer & Company, 1910.

3-39 Rendering of Carved Jade Pendant Necklace. Designed by Marcel Banneville for Dreicer & Company, 1912.





3-40 Ruby & Diamond Tiered Pendant Necklace. Made in France, Probably for Dreicer & Company, c. 1910.

3-41 Lucie Bigelow Rosen Holding an Ostrich Feather. Edward Steichen for *Vogue*, February 1, 1926.





3-42 Onyx, Diamond, Mother of Pearl, Platinum & Gold Dress Set. In fitted Dreicer & Company Box, manufactured by Larter & Son c. 1920.

3-43 Yellow Gold, Enamel & Diamond-Set Rectangular Pendant Watch. Ferdinand Verger, Retailed by Dreicer & Company, c. 1907.



3-44 Rock Crystal, Diamond & Emerald Bracelet Watch. Cameo by Cecil Thomas, Watch by Dreicer & Company, c. 1920.



Illustrations

Liquidation & Conclusion



LC-1 1046 5th Avenue, home of Michael Dreicer. New York NY. Wurts Brothers, 1944.



Interior of room in which Mr. Dreicer's collection is shown

LC-2
Michael Dreicer's Home Art Gallery, 1917.



LC-3 Exterior of 560 5th Avenue March, 2018, New York, NY.
As seen from 46th Street, looking south.



LC-4 Diamond, Seed Pearl & Platinum Pendant Necklace. Dreicer & Company, c. 1915.



LC-5 Dreicer Family Mausoleum, Woodlawn Cemetery, the Bronx, NY. Erected c. 1918.

Thanks to Beth Wees, Barry Harwood, Jeannine Falino, Sarah Lichtman, Ethan Robey,
Michael Levinson, and William Canup.
