

G&G Data Depository: Additional material to accompany review of *Famous Diamonds*, 5th Ed., by Ian Balfour, review by Al Gilbertson, Fall 2009 *G&G*, p. S1.

Donnersmarck

A pair of Fancy Intense yellow diamonds (102.54 ct cushion and 82.48 ct pear) are called the Donnersmarck. Their actual origins are still a mystery, but Balfour recounts the colorful story of La Paiva, one of the most celebrated courtesans of the mid 1800s (who entertained Napoleon, among other famous men). Her eventual marriage to Count Guido von Donnersmarck sets a dramatic backdrop for a portion of these gems' known history. After La Paiva's death, her successor, Katharina Henckel von Donnersmarck, resenting the influence of La Paiva, reset the two diamonds from her Chaumet-designed aigrette into a pendant with detachable brooch that was eventually auctioned at Sotheby's Geneva in 2007.

Kazanjian Red

Like the astonishment of someone who discovers a Picasso in his own attic, the unique chronicle of the Kazanjian Red is all about surprise. A 35 ct piece of boart was sold for 8£ per carat in the South African Lichtenburg diggings in the 1920s, but Sir Ernest Oppenheimer himself suspected something more. He sent it to the Goudvis brothers in Amsterdam, who were puzzled by its unremarkable appearance. One brother thought they were foolish for bothering with the black chunk, while the other held out to have to large windows cut into it. The first brother still claimed to see nothing, while the second thought he saw a faint glimmer through the stone. They cut it down further, to 23 carats, and then cut it again. After this, the stone gained a dark brownish color; however, with a strong lamp a red gleam was finally observed emanating from the stone's heart. After more work, from its core emerged a 5.05 ct squarish emerald cut named the *Red Diamond*.

It was later mistaken for a ruby by an American general when it was recovered from Nazi war loot. Louis Asscher recognized it immediately as the Red Diamond and corrected the general. Surprise again.

It later passed through several jewelry firms until it was sold in 1970. Recently, the Kazanjian Brothers, a firm long known for their fine rubies, was visited by a lady claiming that she had a red diamond. "Do you mean you have a ruby?" questioned Doug Kazanjian, and the more that she insisted it was a diamond, the more he doubted it. When she brought it in, Doug and his father, Michael, studied the diamond in amazement, and having an earlier edition of Balfour's book, realized it was the lost Red Diamond. They purchased the stone in 2007, renaming it the *Kazanjian Red*, and made it the centerstone of The Kazanjian Foundation, a charitable group that arranges jewelry donations of unwanted pieces to worthy causes. Listed as the Red Diamond in Balfour's previous editions, the entry has changed and now reflects the latest chapter in its history.

Lesotho Promise

The 15th largest diamond ever found, a 603 ct crystal discovered in 2006, was named the *Lesotho Promise*. Found by 30 year-old Agnes Phetala in the intermittently worked Letseng-la-Terai deposit (which means "the turn by the swamp"), the crystal was purchased by Laurence Graff. Using advanced computer technology, his team of thirty-

five experts planned its faceting for over a year, determining the best way to divide and cut the crystal to eliminate various flaws. Once cut, the rough yielded an unequalled set of twenty-six D-color, flawless diamonds, and the entire stunning ensemble was set into a single necklace. This account has been added to the section on the 527 carat Lesotho Diamond, also a single rough crystal cut into an assortment of gems. The Lesotho Diamond and the Lesotho Promise are from the same deposit in South Africa.

Kimberley Diamond

The 55 ct Fancy Yellow flawless Kimberley Diamond's position in Balfour's book has changed. Previously relegated to a small-print entry at the rear of the book for "Notable Diamonds," it has been elevated to Balfour's list of the crème de la crème with its own dedicated section.

Mouawad Splendor

The 101 ct D-color, internally flawless Mouawad Splendor is an eleven-sided pear shape. Robert Mouawad's collection contains famous historic diamonds such as the colorless 80 ct Nasak, the D-Flawless 137 ct Premier Rose, the 245 ct Jubilee, the 135 ct D-Flawless Queen of Holland, the D-Flawless Taylor-Burton, and others. He is intent upon acquiring new significant diamonds as well, and also owns the 108 ct D-IF Mouawad Magic and several other more recently found diamonds.

Natasha and Victoria-Transvaal

The champagne-colored Natasha and Victoria-Transvaal are sisters, pear-shaped diamonds cut from the same crystal. The original rough gem, a disputed 280 ct in weight, was found in the Premier (now Cullinan) mine in the Transvaal. De Beers rewarded the miner with a \$100 bonus for its discovery in 1951. Of the two gems cut from the original, the 67 ct Victoria-Transvaal was originally owned by the Baumgold Brothers. The Transvaal (as it was first called) was exhibited numerous times and even graced the neck of Dorothy Hart as she played Jane in the 1952 *Tarzan's Savage Fury*. A timber baron of the northeastern United States purchased the necklace, containing the diamond set with over 100 additional diamonds, for his wife Victoria in 1976. They renamed it the *Victoria-Transvaal* and donated it to the Smithsonian a year later where it is still displayed in the stunning necklace designed by Baumgold. The 64 ct Natasha is privately owned and has rarely been seen in public. First owned by a Middle Eastern royal family, it was sold to an Indian princely family in 1953. Mark Toto of Moboco, a jewelry store in Newport Beach, purchased it in 1988 and has only shown it publicly in 1996.

Sancy

The entry for the 55 ct *Sancy*, a storied pear-shaped double rose cut, was modified to reflect the research of Susan Ronald, whose 2005 book, *The Sancy Blood Diamond*, has rewritten the history of this stone. Balfour writes in his preface, "It is doubtful whether in recent years a historic diamond has been so thoroughly researched and documented as on the Sancy—one can only hope that one day a similar light may be shone on another famous diamond, the Florentine..."

The Sancy was unearthed in the alluvial diggings of Golconda, a legendary source of some of the whitest diamonds. At first known as the Balle de Flandres diamond, its

owners came and went, many dying by “foul means.” It was the largest diamond in all of Christendom for many years; its European history starting in the late 1300s and finally coming to rest in 1595 in the hands of one called Nicholas de Harley, Seigneur de Sancy and Baron de Maule, who was an astute fancier for the French Court. He was known for a great collection of diamonds, and this, the largest of his collection, was named after him. Desperately needing funds, Nicholas de Sancy sold the diamond in 1604 to England’s King James I. The same year James established the Crown Jewels of England, but the Sancy’s position amongst English royalty was short lived. By 1644, King Charles I’s consort, Queen Henrietta Maria, put up the Sancy as security for a loan and could not redeem it. It was soon sold to Cardinal Mazarin of Portugal, who became one of the largest land-owners in France. He had also purchased other jewels from both Charles I and Queen Christina of Sweden. Mazarin bequeathed these to the French Crown, directing that the diamonds should be called *Mazarins* from then on. Thus the Sancy became *Mazarin 1* and part of the French Crown Jewels.

Worn by Marie Antoinette, the Sancy became a victim of the French Revolution, pawned in Madrid for one million francs. From there its history takes several turns, even including a report of it being recut into a brilliant. Nonetheless, it is currently exhibited at the Musée du Louvre in Paris as the original double rose cut.

Additions to Balfour’s list at the end of the book for ‘Notable Diamonds’ include:

- The 75 ct triangular cushion cut black Corroya; owned by the same family since the late 1800s. The original pitted and gnarled 186 ct piece of rough was purchased from a Portuguese trader working for the East India Company, suggesting that it originally came from Brazil.
- The 0.86 ct radiant cut Freedom Red; from the Argyle mine in the 1980s, it was sold at auction in 1986 and then resold to a private buyer in the U.S. Given the rarity of red diamonds, the current value of nearly \$6 million is not surprising.
- The 78 ct emerald cut yellow Porges; Harry Winston purchased this diamond in 1962 and named it after Jules Porges, whose company became one of the principal diamond cutting firms in Amsterdam and they invested heavily in the early Kimberley Mine. (Cecil Rhodes bought out Porges’ shares.)
- The 59 ct oval cut Steinmetz Pink; the world’s largest internally flawless Fancy Vivid pink diamond, it took three years to polish. Steinmetz revealed the extraordinary gem in Monaco in 2003.
- The 61 ct golden-brown Tiger’s Eye; the rough 178 ct gem was found near Kimberley in 1913, and once cut was sold to the Maharajah Jamshid of Nawanganar. It is now privately owned, but has been on exhibition as recently as 2002 in Rome.