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HELEN RITCHIE

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The Society of
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The Portrait Jewels of Charles Ricketts (1866–1931)

https://www.societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk/JSO_2020_3.pdf

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Front cover:

Hinged enamelled gold pendant, *Pegasus Drinking from the Fountain of Hippocrene* containing a miniature of Edith Cooper. Miniature painted and pendant designed by Charles de Sousy Ricketts, pendant made by Carlo & Arthur Giuliano, 1901, accession number M/P.3 & A-1914 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

The Portrait Jewels of Charles Ricketts (1866–1931)

HELEN RITCHIE

'Painter, modeller, illustrator, designer of stage scenery, writer, editor, connoisseur and collector,' Charles de Sousy Ricketts RA (1866–1931) is remembered as one of the most productive and multi-talented artists working throughout the *fin de siècle* and subsequent decades.¹ His brief six-year spell designing precious jewellery (1899–1905) resulted in the creation of some of the most imaginative pieces made at the start of the twentieth century. Expanding on previous scholarship detailing Ricketts's jewellery designs, this article focuses on two surviving portrait jewel pendants, now in the collections of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, both completed in 1901 (figs 1 and 2).² Like many of Ricketts's designs for jewellery, these two pendants are replete with artistic, historic and mythological allusions but as examples of portraiture, they are exceedingly rare within Ricketts's oeuvre and therefore merit closer inspection. The latter pendant, comprising many symbolic elements, also holds special significance as a physical token of Ricketts's celebration of the homosexual relationship of his friends Katherine Bradley (1846–1914) and Edith Cooper (1862–1913), and his affirmation of their adoption of a combined singular identity, that of Michael Field. Using primary sources, including Ricketts's diaries and the letters and diaries of friends and recipients of his jewels, this article will interrogate the stylistic influences of the portrait jewels and contextualise their production by comparing them to Ricketts's other designs from the same period and to other artworks that he may have encountered. Using these primary sources, this article will also consider these jewels as three-dimensional 'portrait-objects', to use Marcia Pointon's useful term, examining their physical construction and how recipients wore and engaged with them.³

Charles de Sousy Ricketts was born in 1866 in Switzerland to a retired English naval officer and his Italian wife. He spent his youth travelling in Switzerland and France, receiving little formal education until he entered the South London Technical School of Art in Kennington, in 1882, shortly after declaring himself an



Fig.1
Pendant medallion portrait of Ryllis Hacon, gold medallion designed and worked by Charles Ricketts, in a gold and enamelled setting, 1900, accession number WA1952.53 © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

atheist and aesthete.⁴ Here he met the artist Charles Haslewood Shannon (1863–1937), who became his life partner. In 1894, with the help of barrister William Llewelyn Hacon (1860–1910), Ricketts set up a publishing house, the Vale Press, for which he designed and produced over 80 volumes. He painted and sculpted, eventually being elected to the Royal Academy in 1928,

1 Lewis Hind, C. 'Charles Ricketts: A Commentary on His Activities' in *The Studio* XLVIII, January 1910, p. 260.

2 Most notably Scarisbrick, D. 'Charles Ricketts and His Designs for Jewellery', in *Apollo* CXXVI, September 1982, pp. 163-69. Respective accession numbers of pendants: WA1952.53 and M/P.3 & A-1914.

3 Pointon, M. "'Surrounded with Brilliants": Miniature Portraits in Eighteenth-Century England' in *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 83, No. 1, March 2001, p. 48.

4 Delaney, J. P. G. *Charles Ricketts: a biography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990, p. 15.



Fig. 2
Front, reverse and interior of hinged enamelled gold pendant, *Pegasus Drinking from the Fountain of Hippocrene* containing a miniature of Edith Cooper. Miniature painted and pendant designed by Charles de Sousy Ricketts, pendant made by Carlo & Arthur Giuliano, 1901, accession number M/P.3 & A-1914 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

but was best known for his theatre and costume designs, for productions such as Oscar Wilde's controversial *Salomé* (1906), as well as for new plays by W. B. Yeats and George Bernard Shaw. Capable of working on multiple projects in different media, simultaneously, while also attending auction sales and visiting galleries, museums and the homes of artists and collectors, he was described contemporaneously of being 'clever and various' and capable of 'diabolical versatility'.⁵

Ricketts and Shannon openly lived together and hosted teas and dinners regularly, their domestic life 'premised on art'.⁶ Connoisseurial as well as artistic, they were hugely acquisitive, amassing a wide-ranging collection of art encompassing Classical antiquities, Japanese woodcuts and works by European artists including Rubens, Van Dyck, Goya, Delacroix, Holman Hunt, Burne-Jones, Rossetti and Rodin.⁷ Their joint art collection became central to their relationship and to their home, which although unusual in style and 'Aesthetic' in taste was, 'perceived as respectable and admirable by friends, colleagues, and society at large', allowing their intimate relationship to pass 'below the

radar' of societal judgment.⁸

Ricketts's love of jewellery, gemstones especially, was reflected in his collection of ancient cameos and intaglios, the majority of which were set into rings and pendants.⁹ He believed that 'there is no good in any gem we do not raise to the mouth as a sweet', and saw gemstones everywhere – the first time he drank iced water, he wrote that 'it is like drinking rock crystal'.¹⁰ According to his friend, artist and writer Thomas Sturge Moore (1870–1944), these stones were used as a starting point for Ricketts's own jewellery design: 'Ricketts kept a collection of precious stones in a drawer; after arranging a few on a piece of paper, he would design settings for them, with pen and watercolour'.¹¹ His sketchbook of 58 designs, now in the collection of the British Museum,¹² illustrates his highly innovative designs for jewels with a distinctly sculptural quality, incorporating Mannerist-style

5 Lewis Hind 1910, *op. cit.*, pp. 259 and 260.

6 Potvin, J. *Bachelors of a different sort: Queer aesthetics, material culture and the Modern interior in Britain*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014, p. 81.

7 On Ricketts's death in 1931, part of his and Shannon's art collection was lent to The Fitzwilliam Museum. The collection was dispersed after Shannon's death in 1937: some paintings were bequeathed to the National Gallery; the Japanese prints were bequeathed to the British Museum and everything else was bequeathed to The Fitzwilliam Museum.

8 Potvin 2014, *op. cit.*, p. 122; Potvin 2014, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

9 The Shannon bequest to The Fitzwilliam Museum included 50 cameos and intaglios, catalogued in Henig, M., Whiting, M. and Scarisbrick, D. *Classical Gems: Ancient and Modern Intaglios and Cameos in The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

10 Letter from Charles Ricketts (hereafter CR) to Gordon Bottomley, 8 December 1927, in Lewis, C. (ed.) *Self-portrait, taken from the letters & journals of Charles Ricketts, R.A., collected & compiled by T. Sturge Moore*. London: P. Davies, 1939, p. 392.

11 Sturge Moore, T. *Charles Ricketts R.A. Sixty-five illustrations introduced by T. Sturge Moore*. London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1933, introduction (19 pp., unpaginated).

12 British Museum number: 1962,0809.2.

polychromatic enamelling, grotesque masks and gemstones, and occasionally the sinuous curves employed by art nouveau designers such as Henri Vever and René Lalique, most noticeable in the earliest surviving pendant designed by Ricketts, made in 1899 (fig. 3). Ricketts's jewellery designs, like his paintings, illustration and sculpture, teemed with characters and symbols from myth and legend – '...a centaur or a mermaid, anything fabulous and strange.'¹³ This use of the mythical was combined with an admiration for the sixteenth-century jewellery designs of Hans Holbein (c. 1497–1543) and the goldsmithing work of Benvenuto Cellini (1500–71), whose *Treatises on Goldsmithing and Sculpture* had been translated afresh in 1898. Ricketts sought to emulate the cast, chased and enamelled Renaissance jewels designed 'to express ideas and allegories'.¹⁴ The designs in the surviving sketchbook reveal a breadth of styles, including



Fig. 3
Enamelled gold and green turquoise pendant, designed by Charles Ricketts, made by Carlo & Arthur Giuliano, 1899, accession number M.5-1972 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

13 Lewis Hind 1910, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

14 Scarisbrick 1982, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

ornate and bejewelled pendants and mounts for existing 'old cameos', crucifixes, designs in the form of flowers, Tudor roses and birds, pendants in the form of shells, winged cupids and a muse with a lyre (riding a dragon), and various architectural rings. Other written sources mention lost jewels including a pendant in the form of a hound hanging from a lyre, and two large rings set with lapis lazuli and an emerald.¹⁵

Ricketts designed precious jewellery for a brief but productive period, between 1899 and 1905. His intentions were never commercial; his pieces were unique, intended for friends and frequently given as personal gifts. Ricketts lacked the technical skills to make the jewels himself and so commissioned professional jewellers to make the pieces. Their work rarely met his expectations. According to Sturge Moore:

They [the jewellers] thought it a point of honour that work should not easily break, but the old jewellery that Ricketts admired had broken only too easily. Wearers should be as flowerlike as fairies, or circumspect as seraphs whose wings are all eyes. The delicacy he admired would have rivalled gold wreaths made for the dead, for whom economy as well as taste dictated a butterfly frailty.¹⁶

Jewellers patronised by Ricketts included Carlo and Arthur Giuliano (active 1895–1914), who made four of the five pieces by Ricketts in The Fitzwilliam Museum.¹⁷ Although he praised, 'the glorious Giuliano' (probably Arthur) in 1901, by 1904, Ricketts was dissatisfied with the firm's workmanship.¹⁸ His pendant, a gift for the new bride of Sturge Moore (fig. 4), was estimated by Giuliano in 'an uncomfortable interview' as costing £30 to make.¹⁹ Twelve days later, Ricketts checked on the pendant and, 'nearly fainted away at the chased caricature they had hammered out'.²⁰ Although he ordered it to be cast properly, on a further visit two weeks later, Ricketts was so disappointed that he took it upon himself to spend the rest of the day, 'scraping it with

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 164 and 166.

16 Sturge Moore 1933, *op. cit.*, n.p.

17 Attributed to Giuliano: pendant, gold with enamel, green turquoise, pearls and an amethyst drop, 1899 (M.5-1972); *Blue Bird Brooch*, gold with enamel, garnet and coral, 1901 (M/P.2-1914); hinged pendant, *Pegasus Drinking from the Fountain of Hippocrene*, gold with enamel and semi-precious stones, containing a miniature of Edith Cooper, 1901 (M/P.3 & A-1914); Pendant, *Psyche Descending into Hell*, gold with enamel and semi-precious stones, 1904 (M.4 & A-1972). The remaining piece, not thought to have been made by Giuliano, is the *Sabbatai Ring*, gold with a cabochon star sapphire and loose emerald, 1904 (M/P.1-1914). All published in Ritchie, H., *Designers and Jewellery 1850-1940: Jewellery and Metalwork from The Fitzwilliam Museum*, London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2018, pp. 99-115.

18 Letter dated 22 September 1901, quoted in Delaney, J. G. P., *Some Letters from Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon to 'Michael Field' (1894-1902)*. Edinburgh: The Tragara Press, 1979, p. 20.

19 Entry dated 6 April 1904 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58102.

20 *Ibid.*, entry dated 18 April 1904.

a knife graver & nail' in order to 'knock some shape into it'.²¹ Other jewellers with whom Ricketts may have worked include Henry Wilson (1864–1934) and H. G. Murphy (1884–1939). Although Ricketts was occasionally sceptical of the jewellery designed by architect-turned-metalworker Henry Wilson, his and Shannon's collection did contain a large and impressive man's ring by Wilson, set with a black opal (fig. 5).²² Ricketts was also on familiar enough terms with Wilson to invite him to dinner and may have asked him to alter an ancient Egyptian ring that he had purchased, in 1911.²³ Ricketts later had dealings with H. G. Murphy, who provided an estimate for making a jewelled gold pendant. This estimate was tucked inside the back cover of the British Museum album of Ricketts's designs but dates from 1928, long after Ricketts is thought to have stopped designing precious jewellery.²⁴

Although the portrait jewel now in the Ashmolean Museum (fig. 1) has been traditionally attributed to Giuliano, Ricketts's diary hints it was made elsewhere. On 30 April 1901, Ricketts records in his diary a different jeweller – frustratingly abbreviated and not properly recorded, but certainly not Giuliano.²⁵ He further noted that, 'the enamelling [sic] has rather spoilt it, and underlined the cast element in the workmanship',²⁶ and a few months later:

...fell into a row with the jeweller, who, to his inartistic instincts and his consequent inability to meet one halfway even in intention, has proved himself tied by his Trades [sic] Union to the extent of not being able to cut the grooves for the enamel. These are done by the enameller who does them out of his own head!²⁷

This is typical of Ricketts who was often disenchanted with the finished jewels and found that they did not closely match his complex designs. This portrait jewel depicted Amaryllis ('Ryllis') Llewellyn Hacon (1874–1952), wife of barrister William Llewellyn Hacon, Ricketts's partner in the Vale Press. Edith Bradshaw, as



Fig. 4
Enamelled gold pendant with gemstones, *Psyche Descending into Hell*, designed by Charles de Sousy Ricketts, made by Carlo & Arthur Giuliano, 1904, accession number M.4 & A-1972 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

21 *Ibid.*, entry dated 30 April 1904.

22 Entry dated 4 December 1901 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58099. The ring was bequeathed to the Fitzwilliam Museum in 1937, accession number: M/P.7-1937.

23 Letter from Ricketts to Sydney Cockerell, dated 13 July 1911, quoted in Lewis 1939, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

24 This estimate is described in the catalogue entry of British Museum number: 1962,0809.2.1.

25 In a diary entry dated 30 April 1901 (British Library, Add MS 58099), Ricketts records, 'Thence to Sp/fe[...]jilling [illegible] to see my Hacon jewel in course...' The jewel is accompanied by a case marked 'Watherston & Son / 12 Pall Mall East / London', which dates from 1864-1902, but it is unclear whether this case is original to the jewel.

26 *Ibid.*

27 Entry dated 15 June 1901 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58099. Trade Unions sprang up in the wake of the Trade Union Act 1871. As well as ensuring fair pay and working conditions, they often demarcated roles and responsibilities, much to Ricketts's annoyance. The jeweller mentioned here may have been a member of the London Society of Goldsmiths and Jewellers (reg. 2060), which is recorded as having 503 members by 1893.



Fig. 5
Enamelled gold and black opal ring, designed by Henry Wilson, c. 1900–20, accession number M/P.7-1937 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge



Fig. 6
Earlier design for pendant medallion portrait of Ryllis Hacon [fig. 1], pen and ink, by Charles Ricketts, 1900, museum number 1962,0809.2.38 © The Trustees of British Museum



Fig. 7
Later design for pendant medallion portrait of Ryllis Hacon [fig. 1], pen, graphite and watercolour, by Charles Ricketts, 1900, museum number 1962,0809.2.37 © The Trustees of British Museum



Fig. 8
Detail of fig. 1 © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

she was known originally, had been an actress, model and sex worker at the heart of decadent 1890s London. In 1895, she married Llewelyn Hacon through whom she met Ricketts and Shannon, later modelling for Shannon's painting *Tibullus in the House of Delia*²⁸ and for her portrait by him, entitled, *The Lady with the Green Fan*.²⁹ In early 1900, Ricketts began making a medallion jewel of Ryllis and designing a jewel into which it could be set. This was one of his earliest jewellery designs, incorporating polychromatic enamelling, gemstones and natural pearls. However, the inclusion of a portrait is unusual. Ricketts almost never committed himself to portraiture – hardly surprising for an artist, 'never inspired by modern life – his mind works for ever in the past...'.³⁰ Apart from the two portrait jewels and engraving of Charles Shannon discussed in this article, only two other portraits of living people are known to have been attempted by Ricketts: a bronze bust (1927–28) of his friend Charles Lewis Hind (1862–1927), and another portrait jewel (now lost) of a Mrs Green.³¹ Therefore, these two portrait jewels are highly significant in representing a rare element of Ricketts's work. But it is telling that shortly after completing the portraits for both jewels, Ricketts wrote in his diary, 'Decidedly portrait painting is too difficult and responsible a matter. A painter wishing to emulate the Old Masters would hope to paint his friends or chance models only.'³²

The portrait medallion of Ryllis was not sculpted by her husband as has been suggested previously but by Ricketts himself, as recorded in his diary: '...worked all morning on Ryllis

[sic] medal modelling the gold with a knife and lead pencil'.³³ It is also scratched with a tiny 'CR' monogram. Although Ricketts is most often credited as a designer, this term belies the extensive, physical work he often undertook, including gouging and cutting the wood blocks for his engravings, which aligned with the 'intersecting aesthetic, applied, and practical aspirations of the Arts and Crafts movement,' in which Ricketts had trained.³⁴ A few years earlier, he had surprised Oscar Wilde by answering the door to him while wearing his engraving visor.³⁵ Ricketts also fashioned the wax models for some elements of his jewels, making them miniature precursors to his later bronze sculptures.

Ricketts's portrait medal of Ryllis went through several design phases. As discussed previously by Gere and Munn, its first incarnation as seen in Ricketts's jewellery sketch book is more Pre-Raphaelite in design, and significantly more dramatic in its depiction of Ryllis, chin-dipped, her neck obscured by sweeping, snake-like tendrils of hair (fig. 6). This design may have been inspired by the work of Edward Burne-Jones (1833–98), such as *Study for the Head of Medusa* (1876–77), which was later acquired by Ricketts and Shannon.³⁶ The later and significantly more restrained portrait of Ryllis in Ricketts's sketch book (fig. 7) is much closer to that of the finished pendant (fig. 8),

33 See Gere, C. and G. C. Munn, *Artists' Jewellery: Pre-Raphaelite to Arts and Crafts Jewellery*. Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1996, p. 155. Entry dated 2 May 1900 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58098.

34 Cook, M., 'Domestic Passions: Unpacking the Homes of Charles Shannon and Charles Ricketts' in *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 51, no. 3, 2012, p. 620.

35 This occurred on 28 February 1895, see Delaney 1990, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

36 Gere and Munn 1996, *op. cit.*, p. 152. The Burne-Jones drawing is now in the collection of The Fitzwilliam Museum, accession number: PDP 2021. Ricketts particularly admired the work of Burne-Jones and his design for his own *Blue Bird Brooch* was inspired by a similar brooch designed by Burne-Jones and shown at the New Gallery in 1892 (Gere and Munn 1996, *op. cit.*, p. 155).

28 The most complete version of the painting is now in Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery, accession number: NCM 1945-1.

29 Presented by Shannon to Dublin Municipal Gallery in 1904, inventory number: 265.

30 Lewis Hind 1910, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

31 The bust is illustrated in the front matter of Sturge Moore 1933; the lost portrait jewel is mentioned in Delaney 1990, p. 140.

32 Entry from July 1900 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58098.

which has been compared to a Renaissance badge of honour or portrait medal.

Traditionally credited as the invention of the artist Pisanello (c. 1395–c. 1455), the Renaissance portrait medal consciously revived the concept of portraiture found on Greek and Roman coinage without ‘slavishly imitating the form’, instead portraying patrons in contemporary dress.³⁷ Larger than coins, cast from wax models instead of struck, and made in bronze (at a time when currency was produced in only silver and gold), these medals were collected by the same group of scholars who collected ancient coins. Most medals showed an idealised profile portrait on the obverse and allegorical or emblematic images and mottoes on the reverse, representing aspects of the personality or achievements of the subject. Pisanello also drew and painted profile portraits, making fashionable in Italy this style that had originated in Northern Europe.³⁸ Ricketts would have been familiar with the medals of Pisanello found in the collections of European Museums and the British Museum, but he was also connected to a revival of this cast art form through his friend, French artist Alphonse Legros (1837–1911).

Legros was at the centre of a revival of cast medals, some of them in a style after Pisanello. His first medals date from 1881, and were sent to Liard, in Paris, for casting. Shortly afterwards, Legros introduced this subject to the Curriculum at the Slade School of Fine Art (where he had taught since 1876), leading to a brief fashion for this art form among his students and others. After initial success, this trend declined until it was revived in 1898 by some of Legros’s former students.³⁹ The newly-reformed Society of Medallists, of which Legros was made President, showed two exhibitions at Mr Van Wisselingh’s Dutch Gallery in 1898 and 1901. The first of these included 28 contemporary medals by Legros, two of which depicted Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon, highlighted by a reviewer in *The Studio* as demonstrating both, ‘delicacy and strength’.⁴⁰ Photographs of both sides of the medals survive in Ricketts’s and Shannon’s personal collection of photographs (uncatalogued at The Fitzwilliam Museum). Similar to Renaissance portrait medals, the reverse of Legros’s medals display scenes specific to the subject depicted on the obverse. For example, the reverse of the Ricketts medal shows a woodcutter chopping up a felled tree with an axe, no doubt a reference to Ricketts’s well-known skill as an engraver of woodblocks (fig. 9).

Although this revival of portrait medals was contemporaneous with Ricketts’s portrait of Ryllis Llewellyn Hacon, Ricketts’s ‘hands on’ approach, carving the gold directly with a lead pencil, distinguishes his medal from those designed by Legros, whose medals were cast – a process in which he was not particularly interested, as long as the finished medal resembled closely his



Fig. 9
Photograph from the Ricketts and Shannon collection of a medal depicting Charles Ricketts, designed by Alphonse Legros, 1897 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

original design.⁴¹ Although reminiscent of a portrait medal in appearance, Ricketts’s technique aligns his Ryllis medal more closely to his interest in manipulating the three-dimensional – his carved woodblocks, his interest in learning to cut cameos, his love of ‘modelling’ (which by 1910 Ricketts claimed to prefer to any other art form), and his later bronze sculptures.⁴²

However, these cast portrait medals did influence a further example of Ricketts’s portraiture. At around the same time that Ricketts was checking on the production of the Hacon portrait jewel (just under a year after he had finished working the medallic portrait likeness), he was creating two other profile portraits, the first one of his partner, Charles Shannon (fig. 10). In a burst of productivity, Ricketts recorded working on this portrait on 18 May 1901, and engraving the woodblock the very next day.

37 Syson, L. and Gordon, D., *Pisanello Painter to the Renaissance Court*. London: National Gallery, 2001, p. 112.

For more on Pisanello’s medals, see pp. 109–130.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 101.

39 See Attwood, P., ‘The Slade Girls’ in *The British Numismatic Journal*, no. 56, 1986, p. 152.

40 *The Studio*, May 1898, no. 62, p. 264, the medal depicting Shannon illustrated p. 262.

41 Attwood 1986, *op. cit.*, p. 150, note 19.

42 For cameo cutting, see entry from 20 May 1901 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58099.

For love of modelling, see Lewis Hind 1910, *op. cit.*, p. 260.



Fig. 10
Portrait of Charles Shannon, pen and ink, by Charles Ricketts, 1901, museum number 1946,0209.98
© The Trustees of British Museum.

This portrait was to be published in the frontispiece of the forthcoming, *A Catalogue of Mr Shannon's Lithographs* (1902), published by Ricketts at the Vale Press. However, unlike the Hacon medal, this portrait was not entirely original but was after Legros's medal included in the 1898 exhibition at the Dutch Gallery (fig. 11). Legros's preparatory sketch for this medal entered the couple's collection and was later bequeathed to The Fitzwilliam Museum (fig. 12). Ricketts's depiction of Shannon is significantly livelier than Legros's, the hair, fuller and curlier, but it remains true to the profile tradition. Knowing that Ricketts found portraiture difficult, it is not surprising that he chose to copy an existing portrait of the most significant person in his life rather than attempt to create an original from scratch. However, it is perhaps fitting that Ricketts chose to copy this particular depiction of Shannon; it is intimate – originally intended to be held in the hand and admired closely – but also echoes the high status of the sitters in profile in Classical coins and Renaissance medals and portraits, reflecting the high esteem in which Ricketts held Shannon, both as a person and an artist, as well as referring to their shared antiquarianism.

The second profile portrait on which Ricketts had been working, completed on 29 April 1901, was a watercolour portrait miniature of his good friend, Edith Cooper (fig. 13).⁴³ Edith Cooper and her partner Katherine Bradley were close friends of Ricketts and Shannon. The two women were related by blood – Edith was Katherine's niece (her sister's daughter) but the pair enjoyed a long and devoted romantic relationship, sharing a life, a home and a career, writing poetry and plays together under a single male pseudonym, Michael Field. Their real identities were soon discovered and although this affected their commercial success, the two women retained the pseudonym, embracing the notion of themselves as a singular, combined identity for the rest of their lives. They referred to themselves as 'The Fields' and called each other 'Michael' and 'Henry'. However, their

43 Entry dated 29 April 1901 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58099. There is no mention of when Ricketts began working on the pendant.



Fig. 11
Photograph from the Ricketts and Shannon collection of a medal depicting Charles Shannon, designed by Alphonse Legros, 1897 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

penchant for male nicknames was not reflected in their aesthetic. Purposely ignoring the mannish attributes associated with the liberal and educated 'New Woman' of the 1890s, the pair enjoyed their feminine appearance, shopping often for new dresses and praising one another's beauty in their joint diary, entitled *Works and Days* (now in the British Library).

In this way, their partnership mirrored that of Ricketts and Shannon, enabling an open and relaxed relationship between the two couples. After their first proper outing together as a foursome, Cooper wrote, almost with relief, 'He [Ricketts] is an ardent lover of Shannon ... loving him as my love loves me ... these 2 men live & work together & find rest & joy in each other's love just as we do.'⁴⁴ Although Ricketts generally preferred the company of men, especially those, 'who had a sensitivity to art,

44 Entry dated 22 May 1894 in the diary of Michael Field, *Works and Days*, Notebook 7, pp. 92 and 96. The notebooks are in the British Library but all Michael Field diary quotations here were accessed digitally, via the Diaries of Michael Field Online Edition: <https://mf.dev.cdhs.org>

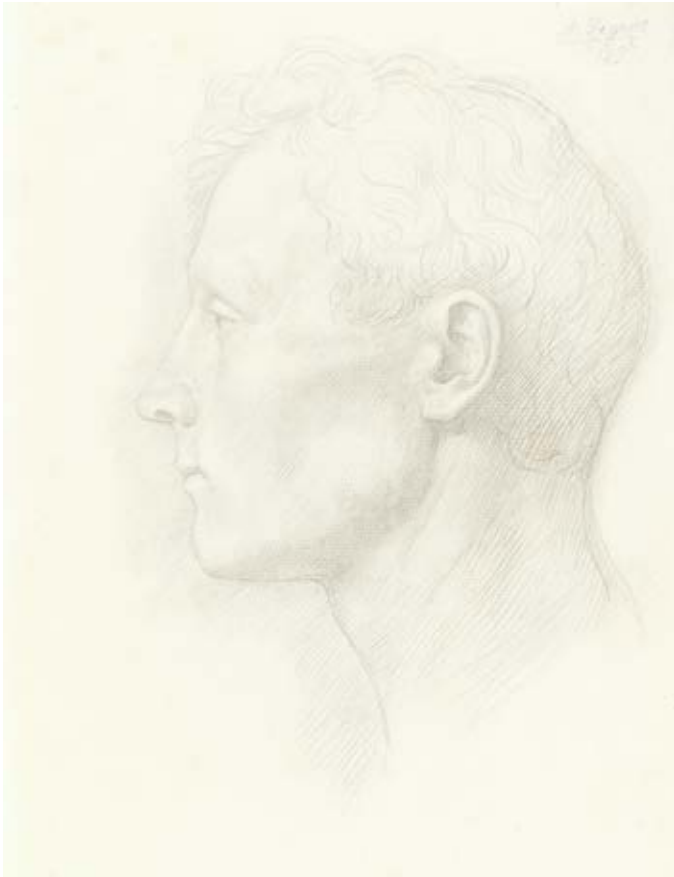


Fig. 12
Preparatory sketch for a medal depicting Charles Shannon [fig. 11],
graphite on paper, by Alphonse Legros, 1897, accession number
PDP 2096 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

and its arrangement and display', he was close to the Fields, admiring their commitment to an artistic life and sharing their love of art and objects, which he helped them to arrange in their home.⁴⁵ The lack of legal ramifications for homosexual women meant that the Fields were less circumspect in their relationship than Ricketts and Shannon, who developed a 'Bohemian network of tolerant friends' and created a scrupulously ascetic home and committed to a punishing work regime in order to maintain a level of respectability.⁴⁶

Although most of the pieces designed by Ricketts were intended for women, he had a gendered view of jewellery more generally, occasionally betraying an unpleasant misogynistic streak. Ricketts believed that only men could appreciate jewels, as they reminded them of substances, 'a drop of milk, or dew or a flame'.⁴⁷ Women, he believed, liked them to be merely 'twinkly'



Fig. 13
Miniature of Edith Cooper in the interior of pendant [fig. 2], painted by
Charles Ricketts, 1901 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

twinkly'.⁴⁸ Ricketts was famous for his low opinion of marriage and on making a pendant to celebrate the marriage of his friend Sturge Moore (fig. 4), he promised to create a piece that would, '...tear all lace and scratch babies'.⁴⁹ The finished pendant (now in The Fitzwilliam Museum) depicts Psyche descending into Hell, a thinly-veiled barb from Ricketts, illustrating his thoughts on entering the state of matrimony.

This sustained closeness with the Fields resulted in Ricketts designing several pieces for them. Most recipients of Ricketts's jewellery received only one or two pieces as he generally felt that gratitude was lacking – after designing a ring for May Morris and discovering that she had only worn it for a week, he called her an 'indolent woman'.⁵⁰ The Fields were more demonstrative in their gratitude and Ricketts's intense spell of jewellery design corresponded exactly with the period during which the two couples were particularly close, living ten minutes' walk away from one another in Richmond-upon-Thames, London. Four pieces of jewellery given to Michael Field survive in the collection of The Fitzwilliam Museum.⁵¹ Furthermore, each gift is noted in the

45 Cook 2012, *op. cit.*, pp. 629-30.

46 *Ibid.* p. 623.

47 Letter from CR to Bernard Shaw, January 1908, in Lewis 1939, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-48. For more on Ricketts's attitudes to women see Cook 2012, *op. cit.*, pp. 630-31.

48 Entry dated 8 October 1900 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 14 (1900), p. 265.

49 Letter from Ricketts to Sturge Moore, quoted in Legge, S., *Affectionate Cousins: T. Sturge Moore and Maria Appia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 229.

50 In the collection of Victoria and Albert Museum, accession number: M.35-1939.

51 See note 17. Those made for Michael Field are: M/P.1-1914, M/P.2-1914, M/P.3 & A-1914 and M.5-1972.

Fields' diary, providing unusually specific details regarding the circumstances of each gift, opinions on initial and subsequent designs and often touching personal reactions.

The miniature of Edith Cooper is tiny, measuring just a few centimetres across, but it made a big impact on its completion in May 1901 and was discussed at length in the Fields' diary. The Fields recorded that it was generally praised by all who saw it, except for the artist Charles Holmes (1868–1936), then-manager of the Vale Press, who saw, '...something haunted, something hunted in the eyes', which he also thought were, 'too light'.⁵² But Sydney Cockerell (friend and later Director of The Fitzwilliam Museum) thought it was the best thing Ricketts had ever done.⁵³ Some elements of the miniature, notably the blue ground and gold lettering, echo the tradition of earlier British miniatures, such as those by Holbein and Hilliard. In one of the most detailed descriptions of any artwork in his diary, Ricketts described Holbein's miniature of Mrs Jane Small (fig. 14), which he saw at Christie's, as, '...a priceless work, unimaginably [sic] delicate in its power, insight & profound art and [...] taste. One of the 2 or 3 unimaginably perfect things I have seen on the market.'⁵⁴ Ricketts would also have been familiar with the miniatures of Nicholas Hilliard (1547–1619) in the Royal Collection, National Portrait



Fig. 14
Mrs Jane Small, formerly Mrs Pemberton, portrait miniature, watercolour on vellum in a decorated case, by Hans Holbein, c. 1536, museum number P.40&A-1935 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

52 Entry dated 11 May 1901 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 15 (1901), p. 129.

53 Entry dated 9 November 1901 in *ibid.*, pp. 300-301.

54 Entry dated 11 May 1904 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58102. This miniature of Mrs Jane Small (formerly Mrs Pemberton) is now in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, accession number: P.40&A-1935.

Gallery and British Museum. Hilliard described his own style of limning as 'imitating' that of Holbein, and recent scholarship has shown that the two artists were linked through a dynasty of artists working in London during 1560s.⁵⁵ However, although Ricketts was clearly appreciative of this style of miniature, his portrait of Cooper does not recall the traditional head-and-shoulders, three-quarter profile style of Holbein and Hilliard, but instead, I propose, refers to portraiture from his most beloved period – the Italian Renaissance. As Ricketts had declared in 1898, 'I am turning away from the 20th century to think only of the 15th'.⁵⁶ Edith Cooper is painted in profile, after fifteenth-century Florentine



Fig. 15
A Portrait of a Woman in Profile, metalpoint on paper, by Leonardo da Vinci, c. 1485–90, Royal Collection Trust Inventory Number 912505 © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020

55 Town, E.. 'A Portrait of the Miniaturist as a Young Man: Nicholas Hilliard and the Painters of 1560s London' in *British Art Studies*, Issue 17, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.17658/issn.2058-5462/issue-17/etown>

56 Ricketts quoted by Michael Field in their entry dated 16 November 1898 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 12 (1898), p. 222.

nuptial portraits of aristocratic women. These small-scale, almost claustrophobic, paintings depict young women from the wealthiest Florentine families, bedecked in large-scale pendants set with jelly-bean cabochons, and delicate pearl necklaces. An observation recorded by Ricketts in his diary makes explicit his appreciation of women in profile, connecting it to the Quattrocento portrait convention. He noted while at the opera in January 1902:

‘...why is it women often look charming in boxes[?] The profile half lit from below had a Botticellian aspect, or rather, a touch of Ghirlandaio, both S. [Shannon] and I were reminded of Lionardo’s [sic] marvelous [sic] profile of girl at Windsor that looks like Ghirlandaio.’⁵⁷

Here, Ricketts makes it clear that, as in most aspects of his life, everything around him appeared through the lens of art that had gone before – in his words, ‘The art of the past remains with us, where the fruits of other noble endeavour have crumbled away’.⁵⁸ Ricketts would have seen (either in person or reproduction) several Florentine profile portraits by the artists he mentions in the diary entry above, including Botticelli’s *Idealised Portrait of a Lady (Portrait of Simonetta Vespucci as Nymph)* (c. 1480), acquired by the Städel Museum, Frankfurt, in 1849⁵⁹ and Ghirlandaio’s *Portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi Tornabuoni* (1489–90), then in the collection of world-famous collector, John Pierpont Morgan (1837–1913).⁶⁰ The portrait ‘by Lionardo’ that Ricketts mentions ‘at Windsor’ is probably the well-defined *Portrait of a Woman in Profile* (c. 1485–90) by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), which has been in the Royal Collection since at least 1690 (fig. 15).

The influence of this portraiture convention on the miniature of Edith Cooper was immediately apparent to contemporary viewers – when Robbie Ross (journalist, critic and literary executor of Oscar Wilde) saw the miniature, he quipped that you would have to go to the Renaissance for such a face.⁶¹ Sturge Moore later commented that this portrait, ‘rivals the best profiles of the Renaissance.’⁶² However, Ricketts successfully altered this representational convention for his own purposes, reducing the

scale to make his portrait small enough to fit inside a pendant jewel, the gold, jewelled and enamelled case designed after the miniature. In the timeline of Ricketts’s oeuvre, this miniature of Cooper echoes the portrait medal that Ricketts had made almost exactly a year earlier but is also an antecedent of the profile portrait of Shannon (discussed previously) that Ricketts began just three weeks after the completion of this miniature.

Sensitive and astute as he was, Ricketts understood the function of the portrait jewel as a vehicle for intimacy – being worn close to the body, or held in the hand, the hinged cover allowing the subject of the portrait to be kept hidden or revealed at particular moments, straddling the public and private spheres. This was understood too by the recipient of the gift, Katherine Bradley (Cooper’s aunt and partner). On 2 May 1901, when the miniature was completed, Ricketts summoned Katherine Bradley to his studio. In a choreographed and highly performative gesture, Ricketts hid the miniature under an upturned saucer, as a surprise. He told Bradley to flip it over. She wrote:

I must turn it back, I tremble, fearing something will start & jump... I look down – her face is there: my eyes grow wet as I look, then I turn to the painter & look long, not speaking. Indeed one cannot speak or write. Afterwards Shannon comes in & asks, “what was the first exclamation?” “A charming blush is the response,” I am grateful he [Ricketts] does not chronicle the exclamation of tears.⁶³

The Fields’ diary also includes Edith Cooper’s reaction on first seeing the miniature when Katherine Bradley brought it home that same day, hidden beneath a bunch of fritillaries. Cooper wrote:

It is myself in a miniature by Ricketts – if I were the detective of myself I should know that little head for mine anywhere. The likeness is most finely caught by those little defects that alone give personality. Beauty is too general to give definition – the differences from its types make all face [sic] characteristic. To give life to these differences, its infinite consecration, is the artist’s work – to find them out with tremulous scrutiny – not with the momentary dead-blot of the camera. The little drag of the lips & nostril, the little lake of shadow between the upper and lower jaw – these are touched vitally. And even in points where the likeness fails, as in the chin & line at the back of the neck, the miniature dominates any objections, for it gives surprise and what is life but surprises? The error springs on the eye the sense of the unexpected; it must not be removed. [...] Afterwards we look at the miniature & she [Bradley] read me my “Old Ivories”, which the miniature simply illustrates. Her beautiful rendering of me & Ricketts’ vision of me work together, with strange accord.⁶⁴

The element of surprise and the unexpected is repeated here

57 Entry dated 6 January 1902 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58100.

58 Entry dated 17 April 1905 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, quoted in Lewis 1939, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

59 Accession number: 936.

60 This portrait was acquired by Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, in 1935, accession number: 158 (1935.6). Ricketts would also have been familiar with Ghirlandaio’s portrait of the same sitter in his fresco *The Visitation* in the chancel of Santa Maria Novella, Florence (c. 1485–90). Other notable portraits in this convention acquired by public institutions in the late nineteenth century include Baldovinetti’s *Portrait of a Lady in Yellow* (c. 1465) acquired by London’s National Gallery in 1866 (accession number: NG758) and Lippi’s *Portrait of a Woman with a Man at a Casement* (c. 1440) acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in 1889 (accession number: 89.15.19).

61 Entry dated 15 December 1901 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 15 (1901), p. 317.

62 Sturge Moore 1933, *op. cit.*, n.p.

63 Entry dated 2 May 1901 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 15 (1901), pp. 125–26.

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 115–17.

and foreshadows the repeated ‘reveal’ of the miniature, when later housed inside its hinged jewelled pendant case. Cooper’s connection of the miniature with her poem, ‘Old Ivories’, which praises a timeless, ever-graceful face (‘a perfect thing’), suggests she thought the same of the miniature, which also displays a stylised timelessness and untroubled brow, in the Quattrocento portraiture tradition:

[...] Her face, looked forth in even and subdued
 Deep power, while all the shining, all the grace
 Came from the passing of Time over her,
 Sorrow with Time; there was no age, no spring:
 On those smooth brows no promise was astir,
 No hope outlived: herself a perfect thing,
 [...] ⁶⁵

At the end of August 1901 (four months after the miniature was completed, shortly after finishing the engraving of Shannon and at the same time as supervising the production of the Hacon jewel), Ricketts designed a hinged pendant to contain this miniature of Edith Cooper. The process was quick. The Fields recorded that on 21 August, after re-reading C. R. Ashbee’s *The Treatises of Benvenuto Cellini on Goldsmithing and Sculpture* (1898), Ricketts was, ‘full of mounting the miniature

for Michael’s birthday’, on 27 October. He was not perturbed by the lack of time and began sketching designs – ‘he sees visions of clustered grapes in pearls.’⁶⁶ Some aspects of this initial design can be seen in the finished jewel and had been carried over from the Hacon jewel, completed earlier in 1901: the pattern on the reverse, made up of intersecting shapes and flowers enamelled in red, white and green; the drop pearl; the Silenus mask with gaping mouth, set with a cabochon, flanked by pearls. However, the original design for the cover (illustrated in the British Museum sketch book) was different, depicting green vine leaves set with mother of pearl and large cabochon garnets (fig. 16). Ricketts showed this design to the Fields on 26 August but would not allow them to ‘fix their minds’ on it as he, ‘has dreamt of a little white Pegasus drinking from a green bank with an azure background. But will Giuliano frères make it daintily absurd enough?’⁶⁷ Ricketts returned with a sketch of this design the very next day. The Fields were thrilled, writing: ‘The little horse is beautifully modelled & drinks with happy senses. [...] There is so much more of Fairy’s [Ricketts’s] very self in this design there is no question as to our choice.’⁶⁸

The next day (28 August) Ricketts returned with the wax model, which Bradley found slightly disappointing. Some of the details had disappeared and Pegasus’ wing was now bent, instead of straight as in the original design but Ricketts said, ‘it must be’.⁶⁹



Fig. 16
 Earlier design for hinged pendant containing miniature of Edith Cooper [fig. 2], watercolour, pen and ink over graphite, by Charles Ricketts, 1901, museum number 1962,0809.2.1 © The Trustees of British Museum



Fig. 17
 Detail of hinged cover of pendant [fig. 2]
 © Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

⁶⁵ From the short poem ‘Old Ivories’ in Parejo Vadillo, A. and Thain, M. (eds). *Michael Field, The Poet*. Broadview Press, 2009, p. 155.

⁶⁶ Entry dated 21 August 1901 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 15 (1901), pp. 223-24.

⁶⁷ Entry dated 26 August 1901 in *ibid.*, pp. 234-35.

⁶⁸ Entry dated 27 August 1901 in *ibid.*, p. 236.

⁶⁹ Entry dated 28 August 1901 in *ibid.*, p. 237.

On 30 August, Ricketts visited in a 'tetchy' mood as he had been told the Pegasus pendant would cost between £17 and £20, and Shannon thought he could have had it made cheaper.⁷⁰

The finished jewel did indeed take this form (fig. 17), depicting the mythological scene of Pegasus drinking from the Hippocrene – a spring on Mount Helicon formed by Pegasus' hooves, the water from which inspired the imbiber with poetry – a particularly apt scene for a poet. However, the interplay between this image on the pendant cover and the image of Cooper within, revealed in one easy movement, suggest a relationship between the two images, perhaps speaking of the way in which Cooper herself represented poetic inspiration to Bradley. Part of Cooper and Bradley's self-fashioning as Michael Field was situated in their joint writing and the inspiration each gave to the other.

The inspiration for the composition, Pegasus stooping to drink, may have been taken from a classical carved gem of the same subject in the Marlborough Collection.⁷¹ Alternatively, Ricketts may have taken the composition from an illustration of a plaster cast illustrated in Seyffert's *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities, Mythology, Religion, Literature & Art*, which was a standard contemporary reference work.⁷² However, the idea of incorporating the Hippocrene at all may have come from Alphonse Legros's portrait medal of Charles Shannon (designed in 1897), which Ricketts was studying in 1901 in order to produce his own profile portrait of Shannon (discussed earlier). The reverse of that medal shows a prostrate figure of a man drinking from a spring below the Latin phrase, 'FONTIS AD ORIGINEM' – 'at the origin of the spring' (fig. 11). This is an allusion to Shannon and his artistic inspiration but, considering that Ricketts may have been recently examining the medal, the scene may also have been the inspiration for Ricketts's pendant design, which brought together Pegasus and the Hippocrene.

The pendant was nearing completion by the end of September 1901, when Ricketts saw it in Giuliano's workshop. He was pleased with what he saw: 'I found the casting and chasing had turned out quite excellently, so well in fact that we must expect something faulty in the enamelling, and I almost regretted that the mask and horse are not to remain mere gold.'⁷³ Just two days



Fig. 18
The Lyte Jewel, gold pendant jewel, enamelled and set with diamonds, English, 1610–11 containing a miniature of James I, painted by Nicholas Hilliard, museum number WB.167 © The Trustees of British Museum

70 Entry dated 30 August 1901 in *ibid.*, p. 240. The very next day, Bradley delivered her Kelmscott Press edition of *The Poems of John Keats* to Ricketts and Shannon to help pay for it. This was only one way in which the Fields tried to raise funds to pay for the jewel – see Scarisbrick 1982, *op. cit.*, p. 167. Expense was the main reason that Ricketts gave up designing precious jewels. However, he later designed hundreds of pieces of jewellery as part of theatrical costumes. None survives but some designed and made for the production of *Attila* (1907) are illustrated in *The Studio*, November 1907, vol. 42, no. 176, pp. 137–38.

71 The entire collection was sold at Christie, Manson & Woods 26–29 June 1899, where a sard intaglio of Bellerophon watering Pegasus at the Hippocrene appeared as lot 329 (sold for £9.10 – to 'Whelan'). As this sale coincided with the height of Ricketts's fascination with gemstones, he undoubtedly viewed the sale.

72 Seyffert, O.A., *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities, Mythology, Religion, Literature & Art*, 2nd edn. London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1895, p. 495.

73 Letter dated 22 September 1901, quoted in Delaney 1979, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

later, he thought it looked ‘a little thick’,⁷⁴ but it was presented to Katherine Bradley with much aplomb on 18 October 1901, nine days before her birthday. She wrote:

I experience bliss on this day. [...] After dinner the jewel is shown. It is handed about as we wear it alternately: the men button up their coats, look like ecclesiastics wearing some starry symbolic gem. Then Ricketts reads me from his closing portion of a letter written to me & not sent, saying the jewel looked like one taken from his hat by Sir Philip Sidney & presented to Queen Elizabeth.⁷⁵

This detailed description of the playful and theatrical presentation of the pendant reinforces its physicality and tactile nature, making clear the pleasure given in both handling and wearing the finished portrait jewel. The reference to sixteenth-century hat badges also makes explicit the historicist aspect of the pendant. Jewels appear frequently in portraiture from this period, and Ricketts would also have been familiar with those in private and public collections, such as the hat badges and jewels from the Waddesdon Bequest at the British Museum, which had been on display there since 1898, including The Lyte Jewel (1610–11), a hinged pendant jewel containing a miniature of James I (fig. 18).

Although Ricketts was best-known for cultivating, ‘...his own garden, an antique garden, shut off from the modern world’, his jewels are not simply replicas of those from an earlier age.⁷⁶ His use of polychromatic enamelling, rubies, garnets and pearls and his inclusion of a miniature in this pendant echo earlier jewels, but elements of the mythological scene on the cover betray his interest in contemporary design and the art nouveau. The asymmetrical composition, the flick of Pegasus’ tail, the curve of the Hippocrene as it flows beyond the laurel wreath frame, and Pegasus’ wing breaking through the frame on the left, are more reminiscent of Ricketts’s contemporary book illustrations than of Holbeinesque jewels. These jewels combine his interest in carving and modelling the three-dimensional with his distinctive flat and two-dimensional style of illustration, rarely incorporating shade but instead relying on the interplay between solid black and the whiteness of the page. In a similarly opaque style, his jewels incorporate blocks of colour in the form of gemstones and enamel.

Ricketts understood the significance of these jewels as symbols of affection, love and loyalty and the importance of this for two women whose relationship did not sit easily within tradition or contemporary society. Tellingly, the miniature is not monogrammed for Edith Cooper as an individual; it is monogrammed ‘MF’ for ‘Michael Field’, emphasising the combined, joint identity of the couple. This is not only a portrait of one person or one

half of a couple, but also a recognition and celebration of the Fields’ union. The miniature includes two interlocking rings, hovering in front of Edith’s forehead (fig. 19). These twinned rings were intended to represent the intertwined nature of the lives of Michael Field, similar to the two interlocking ‘C’s that Ricketts and Shannon used as their first joint collectors’ stamp. The Fields appreciated this detail, noting that, ‘...our rings and initials whisper themselves goldenly’ on the blue background.⁷⁷ These rings also appear subtly on the exterior of the pendant, just below the suspension loop, a detail carried over from Ricketts’s initial design. Described previously as, ‘miniature versions in gold of the emblematic Medici pointed diamond ring’, linked by a tiny quatrefoil, these rings do not appear on the jewels made for the wives of Llewellyn Hacon or Sturge Moore but are unique to the pendant made for the Fields and thus act as another symbol of their togetherness.⁷⁸ Bradley’s description of this pendant as a ‘symbolic gem’ reveals the Fields’ appreciation of the allusions and symbols employed by Ricketts in this complex portrait jewel.

Long after the death of both Bradley and Cooper, Ricketts remained vigilant as to their representation as the single unit, Michael Field. On her death in 1914, Bradley bequeathed the



Fig. 19
Detail of miniature of Edith Cooper [fig. 2]
© Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

74 Entry dated 24 September 1901 in the manuscript diary of Charles Ricketts, British Library, Add MS 58099. Ricketts recorded working on the pendant on 27 and 28 August and took the finished design to Giuliano on 29 August.

75 Entry dated 18 October 1901 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 15 (1901), p. 311.

76 Lewis Hind 1910, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

77 Entry dated 2 May 1901 in *Works and Days*, Notebook 15 (1901), p. 116.

78 Scarisbrick 1982, *op. cit.*, p. 167. A pair of similar, interlinked Medici-type rings also appear on Ricketts’s design for a book cover in the British Museum, number: 1962,0809.1.24. This ring also forms part of the logo of the Society of Jewellery Historians.

Field jewels to The Fitzwilliam Museum. After they had gone on display, Ricketts wrote a letter of complaint to his friend Sydney Cockerell (1867–1962), then Director of the Museum, because the women had not been referred to by their preferred, joint title on the accompanying label: ‘One thing gored me is that the little nest of jewels bequeathed by Michael Field were put down to Misses Bradley & Cooper! While their actual and artistic value is slight, their associated or sentimental or ultimate value is very great.’⁷⁹ Here Ricketts downplays his own artistic skill and makes explicit that the relationship between Michael Field lies at the heart of the jewels he made for them. His portrait jewel, like other portrait-objects that depict couples, invites, as Marcia Pointon has observed, ‘contemplation of the aesthetic and material value of a rich exterior while concealing the representation of something that is beyond price (the relationship between two people).’⁸⁰ Many of the jewels designed by Ricketts show evidence of his artistry, imagination and knowledge of art history, and given as gifts, became physical props in what were often playful and performative relationships. But this portrait jewel, with its additional symbolic elements, can also be read as an attempt by Ricketts to aid Katherine Bradley and Edith Cooper in their construction of Michael Field as a single entity, as well as a celebration of their unorthodox union. It is the ‘sentimental, or ultimate value’ of this portrait jewel that remains with us today.

79 Letter from Charles Ricketts to Sydney Cockerell dated 6 June 1917, British Library, Add MS 52746, no. 58. Ricketts's emphasis.

80 Pointon 2001, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

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