

Jewellery Studies

The Journal of The Society of Jewellery Historians



Published by the Society of Jewellery Historians



The Society of
**JEWELLERY
HISTORIANS**

The **Society of Jewellery Historians** is a Registered Charity: No.1151393, and a company limited by guarantee, No. 7032947, registered in England. The logo of the Society is the copyright of the Society and shall not be used if the Work is republished in any way other than as an unaltered pdf of the Work in this Publication.

The Society was formed in 1977 with the aim of stimulating the growing international interest in jewellery of all ages and cultures by publishing new research and by bringing together those interested in the subject, whether in a professional or private capacity. The membership includes archaeologists, museum specialists, collectors, art historians, dealers, gemmologists, practising jewellers and designers, scientists and conservators.

The Society runs a programme of lectures from September to June, inviting speakers from different disciplines and many parts of the world.

The lectures are usually held in London at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0HS, and are made available afterwards on the Society's website. In addition, the Society arranges a variety of other occasional events including international symposia on aspects of the history and technology of jewellery, study visits to museums, and private views of special exhibitions.

For full details visit the Society's website at: www.societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk or write to: The Membership Secretary, The Society of Jewellery Historians, Scientific Research, The British Museum, London WC1B 3DG

Jewellery Studies

2021/2

Editor: Susan La Niece

Jewellery Studies is the Journal of the Society of Jewellery Historians, and is the leading academic journal on the subject. Articles cover all aspects of jewellery from antiquity to the present day, and include related material from archives, technical data, gemmology and new discoveries on collections and designers. All papers published in **Jewellery Studies** are subject to peer review.

Jewellery Studies was published in hard copy form from 1977 to 2012, and has been an electronic publication since 2015.

Articles published from December 2020 (2020/3) are Open Access. A full list of all articles published and information on how to access them is available on the Society's website at: www.societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk/js_online and [/js_printed](http://www.societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk/js_printed)

Articles from all issues of **Jewellery Studies** are available free of charge to members as pdf downloads from the website. Members, non-members and libraries can buy the hard copy volumes 2 to 12 online or from the Membership Secretary at membership@societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk (with discount for SJH members).

The Editor welcomes contributions of unpublished material on current research into all topics of jewellery history. See the Notes for Contributors at the end of this paper. Please email suggestions for articles to the Editor at js@societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk

Jewellery Studies is designed by Doug Barned www.design-is.co.uk and published online in digital pdf format by The Society of Jewellery Historians.

The views expressed by authors in their articles published in **Jewellery Studies** are those of the contributors and not necessarily to be taken as those of the Editor or The Society of Jewellery Historians. It must be appreciated that some papers may represent work in progress.

© The Author retains the copyright in this article but has granted the Society of Jewellery Historians an irrevocable worldwide, royalty-free licence to publish this article in printed and electronic format and to include the article in electronic document-delivery services and databases. This article may only be reproduced in whole. The individual images or other elements cannot be used separately or in other contexts without any further necessary consents and permissions being obtained. The Author(s) have warranted that they have made every possible effort to obtain any necessary copyright permission in respect of images. If, however, there are any image copyright queries, then please contact the Author directly or via the Society, at js@societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk.

Old friends and partners: Allan Bowe as an associate of Carl Fabergé

https://www.societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk/JSO_2021_2.pdf

BORIS GORELIK is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Southern African Studies of the Institute for African Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences). Born in Sverdlovsk, USSR, he received his MA in linguistics from the Moscow State University. In 2004, he was awarded the Candidate of Sciences degree in history from the Institute for African Studies for his research into the history of Russian emigration to South Africa.

An author of three books and dozens of academic and public scholarship articles, Gorelik specialises in the history of Russian-South African contacts and Russian perceptions of South Africa. His previous contribution to a Society of Jewellery Historians' publication was 'The Cullinan Diamond and its true story' (*Jewellery Studies*, 2015).

boris.gorelik@inafr.ru



Front cover:

Allan Bowe, Fabergé's business partner and manager of the Moscow shop. His portrait is in the Fabergé enameled gold frame presented to him in 1895, with a dedicatory plaque (fig 1), when the Fabergé shop was relocated from San-Galli Passage. The McFerrin Foundation, Houston. Photograph courtesy of Wartski, London.

Old friends and partners: Allan Bowe as an associate of Carl Fabergé

BORIS GORELIK

Although the history of the House of Fabergé has been thoroughly researched, and many lavishly illustrated volumes of a popular or academic nature have been dedicated to the emergence, development and phenomenal success of that company, some aspects require further exploration.

One of them is the contribution of British immigrants in Russia to the establishment of the firm's international reputation and to the development of its domestic production and distribution.

The foremost of those expatriates was Allan Bowe, a South African-born entrepreneur who worked in partnership with Carl Fabergé from the 1880s to the 1900s (fig 1).

With the help of his younger brothers, Bowe founded and co-owned the first domestic branches of the company outside Saint Petersburg as well as the London branch which served as the centre of the Fabergé export operations. 'My partner Allan Andreyevich Bo, being my helper and main organiser', wrote Fabergé referring to Bowe by his Russian name, 'has acquitted himself well during the fourteen years of his managing my business at the Moscow factory and the branches in Moscow and Odessa.' (Skurlov 2007: 216). This brief comment suggests the importance of Bowe's role while the House of Fabergé grew to be the largest and best-known Russian jeweller,

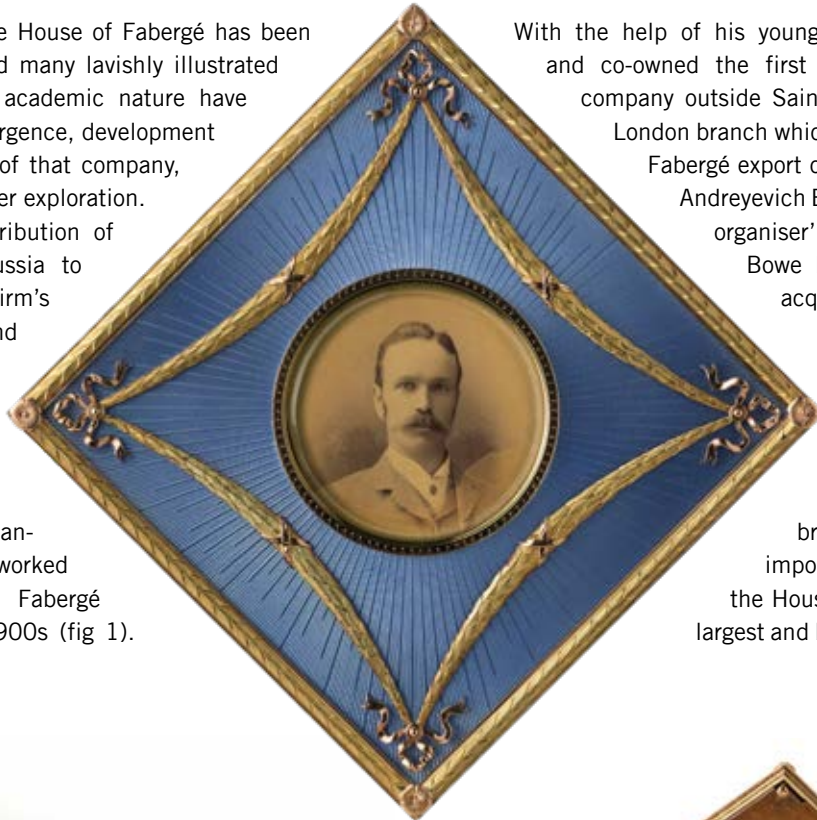


Figure 1:

A Fabergé photograph frame presented in 1895 to Allan Bowe, Fabergé's business partner and manager of the Moscow shop. The gold frame with a dedicatory plaque and the names of his colleagues on the rim of the frame commemorates the relocation of the Fabergé shop from San-Galli Passage. The inscription on the plaque reads: Многоуважаемому Аллану Андреевичу Бо в память открытия нового магазина на Кузнецком мосту д. Купеческого общества 29 октября 1895 (To the much-esteemed Allan Andreevitch Bowe in memory of the opening of the new shop in Kuznetsky Most, Merchant Society Building 29th October 1895). The McFerrin Foundation, Houston. Photograph courtesy of Wartski, London.

however the contribution of Bowe and other British expatriates to the company's development is worthy of further academic investigation. Allan Bowe's great-granddaughter noted that he and other members of his extended family he brought into the business were 'scarcely mentioned beyond the bare facts' even in comprehensive works on the history of the company (Bonus 2010: 31–2). Perhaps Bowe's reputation in the eyes of researchers was tarnished by the fact that his collaboration with the House of Fabergé ended in a complete rupture, with Carl Fabergé accusing his former partner of betrayal.

Apart from the genealogical data discovered by the South African researcher Langham-Carter, no published material had thrown light on the life of Allan Bowe until Wendy Bonus produced her biography of the man and his family based, among other sources, on family lore and his daughter's writings (Bonus 2010; Langham-Carter 1969 and 1970). In the 2010s, British and Russian scholars traced the emergence and development of the conflict between Bowe and Fabergé using their correspondence as well as the Englishman's letters to his brother (1905–1909) in which he expressed his opinions about his collaboration with the company and the subsequent rupture without inhibition (Fabergé et al. 2012; McCarthy 2017). These materials had been discovered at the Russian State Archives of Ancient Acts (RGADA), which holds mostly documents from a much earlier period.

This article attempts to contribute to the understanding of Bowe's role in the House of Fabergé business and its international expansion, the nature of his relations and eventual conflict with Carl Fabergé. The research for this article is based on the primary sources found in the RGADA as well as on genealogical studies and ego-documents (memoirs and correspondence) of the Bowe family, company histories of Fabergé and W.A. Bolin, and the data obtained directly from historians of the Bowe, Fabergé and Shanks families.

Early years

Henry Allan Talbot Bowe (1856–1939), known in Russia as 'Allan Andreyevich Bo', grew up in a family of English immigrants in the Cape Colony, which belonged to the British Empire. His father, Henry, originally from Bloomsbury, was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons. He had worked as a medical doctor in Australia before joining his elder brothers in the Cape in the mid-1850s (Gundry 2015). The rich gold and diamond deposits in southern Africa had not been discovered, so the region was not yet an important destination for migrants from Europe but it was said that Allan's parents emigrated there because their ill health required a favourable climate (Bonus 2010: 10–11).

Henry with his wife and daughter settled on a rented farm in Caledon, seventy miles east of Cape Town where Allan, their eldest son, was born on 2 December 1856 (Langham-Carter 1970). Henry did not seem to have made a decent living in Caledon but his experience in healthcare allowed him to get a position in Namaqualand, a mining area at the northern frontier where copper ore made up the Cape Colony's second

most important export (Smalberger 1969). Most residents were not English-speaking settlers but creolised descendants of Khoisan peoples, who spoke languages that originated in Africa. In that arid and sparsely populated region, which could only be reached after a weeklong journey from Cape Town, Henry was appointed District Surgeon (Langham-Carter 1970).

Allan Bowe spent his childhood and adolescence in Springbokfontein (now Springbok), a miners' village which had been founded shortly before the family's arrival. His younger brothers, Charles Frederick (1861–1946) and John Arthur (1863–1944), were born there; they became his colleagues and associates in his business ventures in Russia and Great Britain. Allan's father travelled across his vast district, attending to the sick and the dying. He often visited the new village that had emerged next to the small Dutch Reformed church, forty-four miles south of Springbok. His patients and their families named it Bowesdorp (the Afrikaans for 'Bowe's village') as a tribute to their doctor (Langham-Carter 1970). The settlement has since disappeared, but the name can still be found on maps of Namaqualand.

Henry Bowe resigned in 1868, and the family moved to Cape Town but within a few years both parents died of tuberculosis. Having inherited a few shares, some furniture and roughly £25 each, Allan and his siblings were left without a livelihood (Gundry 2015; Langham-Carter 1969). Their uncles and aunts in the Cape could not afford to support the six orphans so Allan with his brothers and sisters left for England to be taken care of by their relatives in Devon, and it is thought that the boys were sent to a boarding school (Gundry 2015). At twenty-two, Allan Bowe applied for a passport and went to live with other family members in Switzerland (Bonus 2010: 14; Gundry 2015) where he learned German, the language in which he later communicated with Carl Fabergé.

Shanks & Bolin

From the 1880s, Bowe lived in Russia. He was hired by his great-uncle, James Steuart Shanks whose family owned a flourishing coach-making business in London (Bonus 2010: 15). A graduate of Leiden University, Shanks was involved in Moscow trade for thirty years in partnership with Henrik Conrad Bolin, a brother of a Russian court jeweller. Their business prospered: apart from their *Magasin Anglais* (English Shop) in Kuznetsky Most, an upscale shopping street, they owned large houses in prestigious areas of the city.

The firm's archives have not survived, and no documentation of Allan Bowe's work for Shanks & Bolin has been found. No stories of that period have been preserved in the Bowe family lore either, however, judging by the nature of Allan Bowe's subsequent collaboration with Carl Fabergé, he was involved in the production and distribution of goods under the Shanks & Bolin brand.

In the official register of the largest business owners in Moscow, Shanks & Bolin were listed as traders in textile fabrics and fashion accessories, which implies that production and sale

of jewellery and silver items was not the firm's main activity (*Spravochnaya kniga* 1886).

Members of the Bolin family in Saint Petersburg specialised in tiaras, diadems and other jewelled ornaments, including the Russian Imperial wedding crown. Meanwhile, H.C. Bolin in Moscow, Russia's silversmithing centre, focused on accessories, tableware and other articles from sterling silver. H.C. Bolin commissioned Moscow workshops to craft silver pieces in significant volumes to fill the needs of Shanks & Bolin as well as his brother's business in the capital (Bonus 2010: 66) and also to embellish imported European ceramic, faience, porcelain, crystal and etched glass tableware with silver mounts. Surviving Shanks & Bolin articles are characterised by their 'high quality, originality of designs and distinctively artistic style' (Muntyan 2001:104).

Fabergé's business partner

Allan Bowe had been living in Russia for several years at the time of his first negotiations with Carl Fabergé. According to a family story, the meeting took place on a train from Moscow to Paris in 1886 (Bonus 2010: 1–2). Being ten years older than Bowe, Carl Fabergé had been involved in his family business for two decades. His firm already had a warrant of appointment as a purveyor of gold, silver and diamond articles to the Russian Imperial Court and the first jewelled Easter egg, the House of Fabergé trademark, had been crafted a year before Carl Fabergé's meeting with Allan Bowe.

Bowe apparently had not received formal training in jewellery crafts, however, he seemed to know the Russian market well enough to be able to organise distribution of Fabergé products in Moscow, the country's second most populous city. He had worked for an established Moscow company which had close connections with local silversmiths and such experience could prove useful to Fabergé. In 1887, Carl Fabergé established a Moscow branch of his company in partnership with Allan Bowe. Since the owner of the firm resided in the capital, Bowe oversaw all aspects of the Moscow business: from production and sales to raw material acquisition, property insurance and lease agreements (*Neizvestnyi Faberzhe* 2003). Bowe's role was to be the House of Fabergé's main representative outside the capital, Saint Petersburg, and as a native speaker of English, he could also negotiate in London for purchases of South African diamonds and British sterling silver, considered the best in the world at the time.¹

While in Saint Petersburg the workload was distributed among different Fabergé workshops, in Moscow under Bowe production was centralised, though the company employed about the same number of employees as in the capital. Bowe sometimes chose and hired his staff personally. 'You are under nobody but myself, so that there is no possibility of being bullied by any overseer & c.', he assured a British artist whom he invited to design jewellery in Moscow (Von Solodkoff 1989). In the 1900s, his jewellery designers worked from eight to ten hours a day in a room above the Fabergé shop.

In 1890 a Fabergé production facility was opened in Bolshoy Kiselny Lane, Moscow, although its expansion and modernisation took another four years (Faberzhe et al. 1997: 141; Sorokin 2006). The four-storey factory became the largest of its kind in Russia. The most prestigious and labour-intensive projects continued to be carried out in the capital by highly qualified goldsmiths and lapidaries, however sterling silver articles were produced on a larger scale and more efficiently at the Moscow factory, therefore the profitability of the Moscow branch was on a par with that of the Saint Petersburg business (Muntyan 2006a: 138). The Fabergé factory produced sterling silver items of a superior aesthetic value. 'The predominantly traditional Russian style distinguished the Moscow products from the ones made in Petersburg', recounted the company's senior master craftsman. 'Those were mostly *bratinas* [wine bowls], *zhbans* [mugs], *kovshes* [drinking vessels], caskets, decorative vases, etc. [...] Apart from such works, the Moscow factory produced a large amount of silver cutlery of a quality that matched the best foreign-made articles. [...] Church silverware, both utensils and icons, played a significant part in the output. Many of these works, thanks to their artistic merit, were even exported and drew orders from abroad.' (Faberzhe et al. 1997: 19, 21–22).

In Kuznetsky Most, Bowe and Fabergé opened a shop with several Englishmen on the staff, including Allan's brothers Charles and Arthur (fig 2). As if in defiance of Bowe's great-uncle



Figure 2:
The Fabergé shop in Moscow, 1903. From the personal collection of Tatiana Fabergé, France. Photograph courtesy of Valentin Skurlov, Russia.

¹ V.V. Skurlov, email communication, 11 August 2020.

and former employer, Shanks, the Fabergé shop was located nearly opposite Magasin Anglais. Shortly after Bowe went into business with Fabergé, H.C. Bolin had died. Shanks started his own company, selling, among other things, silver goods which bore his new hallmark, 'Shanks & Co', but were produced by the same suppliers (Muntyan 2001:107–108).²

During the two decades of collaboration with Allan Bowe, Carl Fabergé's company became the largest jewellery manufacturer in Russia. Its staff grew from a few dozen to nearly five hundred people between 1882 and 1896 (Faberzhe et al. 1997: 141). Bowe travelled to various cities in the Russian Empire offering Fabergé products and in 1900, he launched an Odessa branch in partnership with Fabergé. Exports of Fabergé products began in the last decades of the nineteenth century because of the company's success in the domestic market as well as at exhibitions in Europe. In recognition of the outstanding quality and creativity of his work, Carl Fabergé was appointed court jeweller to the Swedish king and awarded the French Legion of Honour (*Ukazatel deistvuyushchikh v Imperii...* 1905).

From the 1900s, the House of Fabergé was actively developing its export business and its first international branch was established in the United Kingdom in 1903. The British aristocracy was familiar with Fabergé creations because of the close relations between the royal families in London and Saint Petersburg. Queen Victoria first purchased Fabergé jewellery in 1897 and Queen Alexandra was a collector since the 1880s, when she received a Fabergé piece as a present from her sister, wife of the Russian tsar Alexander III. From London the firm liaised with clients in Europe and around the world, dispatching orders to Indian maharajas, the King of Siam and American tycoons.

The Bowe brothers had been bringing Fabergé jewellery and other articles to London even before the opening of the branch. The first manager was Allan's brother, Arthur, who had worked in Moscow and sold the company's products elsewhere in Russia. Allan and Arthur Bowe ran the British business on their own because Carl Fabergé did not visit London in the early 1900s. The first Fabergé shop in London was opened at 415 Oxford Street. By early 1906, it had relocated to 32 Old Burlington Street. The shop was probably registered in the name of Arthur Bowe, but the business belonged to Carl Fabergé and Allan Bowe in equal shares (McCarthy 2017: 25–6;



Figure 3:

A silver tray (26in/66cm wide) with an enameled portrait of Bowe commemorating the fifth anniversary of the Fabergé factory in Moscow (1895). The Russian inscription reads, 'To the esteemed Allan Andreyevich Bo from his deeply grateful employees'. Photograph courtesy of Wendy Bonus, Canada.

Fabergé et al. 2012: 529). Among the early clients were the future King George V, Queen Alexandra, and Alice Keppel, the favourite of Edward VII. Fabergé pieces, particularly *objets de fantaisie*, became the 'social currency' of British high society as delightful, desirable and convenient presents that could not compromise the recipient (McCarthy 2017: 15, 17).

In 1905, the Moscow branch suffered heavy losses because of the social and political unrest in Russia. The Fabergé workers joined the jewellery industry strike, and new orders could not be completed on time.³ Eventually, Bowe and Fabergé had to close their Moscow factory and cut staff. Meanwhile, the relations between Allan Bowe and Carl Fabergé's sons deteriorated. Agathon Fabergé wished to establish full control over the Moscow branch: '[Petersburg] is trying to get hold of us seriously, & while I was away, acted as if the place belonged to them!' Bowe wrote to his brother in London. 'Of course there is a limit to all things, and a rupture might happen at any time, so we must get to be independent *as soon as we can!*'⁴ In the end, Bowe offered his share in the Fabergé business in Russia to the owner of the firm who agreed to purchase his stake. 'I will pass on all of my business to my sons soon, and I do not think that you will work well together', he told Allan (McCarthy 2017: 29). Both partners intended to part 'like old friends & gentlemen'⁵ (fig 3). In March 1906, they signed a deed of separation.

2 The jewellery division was taken over by the Moscow and the Saint Petersburg branches of the Bolin family, who continued to produce silver articles and opened a shop under their own brand, also in Kuznetsky Most. The Bolin firm in the capital still purveyed jewellery for the Russian court, but the amalgamation with the Moscow firm did not prevent it from losing ground to the House of Fabergé, which surpassed it in terms of production volume and, probably, sales (Ribbing et al. 2000: 58).

3 Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 21 October 1905. Russian State Archives of Ancient Acts (hereafter RGADA): f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 4.

4 Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 6 February 1906. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 7 rev.

5 Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 4 February 1906. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 10.

In those turbulent times for the firm and for the country, Bowe's employees in Moscow presented to him a farewell message in calligraphic handwriting, decorated in a neo-Russian style. This document had pride of place in Bowe's house for the rest of his life. 'Thanks to you, the financial situation for us and other workers improved, because your example in raising wages was followed in other factories', wrote the former workers of the Fabergé factory. 'Strict and exacting as regards to the execution of your orders, you were also always fair. Saddened by having to part with you, we will always remember everything that you did for us, and, as an expression of our deep gratitude, we are saying our Russian *spasibo*⁶ for everything.'⁷

Rift with Fabergé

Once Bowe and Fabergé terminated their partnership, the Moscow and the Odessa branches were taken over by the House of Fabergé, while Allan Bowe became the sole owner of the London shop.⁸ Bowe expected to remain the Fabergé representative: his British customers were told that he had bought the London business and that 'anything & everything passing from F[abergé] to London' would be channelled through him.⁹ His letterhead and shop sign still bore the name 'C Fabergé'.

However, with the disruptions in supplies caused by the unrest and industrial action in Russia Bowe was unable to replenish his stock and fulfil obligations to his customers. Knowing that Carl Fabergé was experiencing financial difficulties, Bowe sold his London business to Lacluche Frères in July 1906. Bowe made this deal with direct competitors of the Russian firm without Fabergé's knowledge. Together with the shop, Bowe handed over to Lacluche Frères the Fabergé designs, models and reference books that remained at the London office and which Carl Fabergé regarded as his own property.¹⁰ The 'former old friend and partner' accused Bowe of betrayal. 'Instead of making a sale offer to me, the creator of the goods that you sell, I was *sold* by you in the true sense of the word' wrote Fabergé. 'This kind of action is so outrageous that I, for my part, feel obliged to disregard you and to declare once and for all that I sever all relations with you. I therefore do not intend to answer your letter and request you never to make an appearance on my firm's premises in the future.'¹¹

6 Thank you (Russian).

7 A photo of this document is provided by W Bonus, Allan Bowe's great-granddaughter.

8 Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 6 March 1906. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 11; Adolphus Tooth — Allan Bowe, 22 October 1908. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 507, p 13.

9 Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 10 March 1906. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 14.

10 V.V. Skurlov, email communication, 11 August 2020. Also see Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 21 October 1905. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 4; Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, February (?) 1906. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 26.

11 The German original is reproduced in Fabergé et al. 2012: 529.

Bowe still believed that Fabergé would not have bought the London business, but he admitted that he could have underestimated the capabilities of his former partner:

'If it might have been true, then of course it is to be regretted that he did not get it. I should have lost [sic!] less money & would have kept on good terms with an old friend! He refuses to take back the goods we returned from London & will no doubt do many other things to me in the same line. Well, this cannot be helped, I imagine. I'll live without his friendship! Still a rupture like this is to be regretted.'¹²

Bowe did not feel that the deal with Lacluche Frères was profitable enough for him. Besides, the winding up of his affairs with Fabergé caused him much distress. 'Fabergé has thought fit to offer me 7000 for the London returned goods (instead of 9300 odd)!' Bowe complained to his brother. 'It is a disgraceful act on his part, but I have accepted it to finish the matter [...] I have lost 1/3 of my capital & am now living *on my capital*; I have a lot of expenses here in getting into the new house, can't sell my old house, etc, etc, so that economy is absolutely necessary!'¹³

His troubles continued when Carl Fabergé filed a lawsuit against Lacluche Frères the same year. The jeweller alleged that Bowe had no title to the Fabergé brand, which meant, among other things, that the new owner of the London business trading under that name had no right to its goodwill. According to Fabergé, at the dissolution of his partnership with Bowe, the British branch ceased to exist, and thus the brand name reverted to the Russian company. Bowe had to defend the rights that he had assigned to his French buyer. If Fabergé won the case, Lacluche Frères could demand compensation from Bowe for losses that they sustained in the action taken by the Russian company.

After two years of litigation, Fabergé and Lacluche Frères reached a compromise and settled the case out of court in late 1908.¹⁴ The new owner of the London business refrained from trading under the Fabergé name, and the Russian jeweller opened a new shop at 48 Dover Street and, later, at 173 New Bond Street. Henry Charles Bainbridge, who had been hired on the recommendation of Allan Bowe's niece stayed loyal to Fabergé and oversaw the firm's affairs in Britain together with the owner's youngest son, Nicholas. The British upper classes continued to favour the House of Fabergé. The London branch functioned until the February Revolution in Russia (1917), when its stock was purchased by Lacluche Frères.

12 Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 14 July 1906. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 15.

13 Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 12 August 1906. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 22.

14 Adolphus Tooth — Allan Bowe, 16 December 1908 and 1 February 1909. RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 507, pp 15–16.

Later years in Russia and England

In 1906, Bowe's anxiety over the rift with Fabergé led to a nervous breakdown. Having been 'much shaken by these disagreeables', as he admitted in a letter to his brother, he retired to the English countryside. However, it did not restore his peace of mind. On his doctors' advice, Bowe returned to Russia with his family and went into business again, trading in gemstones from his office in central Moscow, at the corner of Bolshaya Dmitrovka Street and Stoleshnikov Lane (Bonus 2010: 46–7). A few years later, he started selling antiques and assorted jewellery in his shop in Kuznetsky Most. From 1913, his business was located just a block away from the Fabergé shop, which he had established decades before (Faberzheet al. 1997: 116; Muntyan 2000: 162).

Once his health improved, he started taking interest in the expatriate British community of Moscow. Bowe sat on a committee for upgrading of the cemetery for Protestants and Catholics (the present Vvedenskoye Cemetery). He was elected vice-president of the British Sports Club, a major sports organisation in the city. He was also a member of the Zamoskvoretsky Sports Club, an English-Russian football club which had the best-maintained pitch in Moscow (Savin 2016).



Figure 4:
Bowe family's house in Moscow. Photograph courtesy of Wendy Bonus, Canada.

With the outbreak of the First World War, the demand for gemstones in Russia fell, and Bowe's financial position deteriorated. In the spring of 1915, the family emigrated to Britain settling in Redhill, Surrey. Allan's wife, Emma, a native of Russia from a family of Anglo-French descent, could not get used to living in England, which was a foreign country to her. Allan's daughter also missed her native land. 'It is rather

funny: England is my country and I love it very, very much and would do anything for it', she confessed in her diary, 'In the abstract I don't even love Russia very much and yet Russia—Moscow—is home for me and it's for Russia I get homesick and not for England' (Bonus 2010: 91–2).

Bowe visited Russia twice more. In 1916, he took a trip to Moscow and Odessa on business, possibly in connection with his investments in Russian companies. In early 1917, before the Bolsheviks came to power, he visited Russia for the last time, accompanying British Labour MPs as their guide and interpreter, he was appalled and distressed by the squalor in wartime Moscow. Later he travelled to Turkey and Cyprus where he helped Russian Civil War refugees to sell their jewellery so that they could afford to move to western Europe. Among his clients was Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna, daughter-in-law of Alexander II (Bonus 2010: 106–7). Under the new communist regime his Russian investments became worthless. Bowe filed a claim against the Soviet government to recover the value of his nationalised property in Russia, but a compensation was only paid to his heirs in the 1990s (Bonus 2010: 109–10).

After the death of his wife in 1922, Allan Bowe resided in Clacton, a seaside town east of London, in a bungalow that his son-in-law bought for him. He called it *dacha*, the Russian for 'holiday home'. Bowe lived on his state old-age pension, supplemented by selling some of the gemstones and jewellery that he had brought from Russia. He died in 1939, having outlived Carl Fabergé by almost two decades. Even in his reduced circumstances, Bowe did not part with souvenirs of Russia. Apart from the farewell message from the Fabergé factory workers, he kept the large silver tray presented to him by the House of Fabergé staff in Moscow, as well as a silver mantel clock and Russian-style silver articles, which he had received for his wedding.

Bowe never revisited the land of his birth, South Africa, which was outside the sphere of his business interests, although his family stayed in contact with their relatives there.¹⁵ When he had operated the London branch of Fabergé the family of Sir Julius Wernher, who controlled dozens of diamond and gold mining companies in South Africa, had been an important client. Another connection to South Africa in the same period was Countess of Dudley, wife of the Colonel Commander of the Worcestershire

¹⁵ See Allan Bowe — Arthur Bowe, 14 July 1906.

RGADA: f. 1468, op. 2, d. 515, p 15.

Yeomanry, who commissioned the House of Fabergé to produce a jewelled and enamelled pear blossom in chased gold, with nephrite leaves, standing in a rock crystal pot to commemorate the regiment's service in the Second Boer War (Munn 2015; Trevelyan 1991). The blossom was the emblem of the Queen's Own Worcestershire Hussars;

Allan Bowe spent nearly half his life in Russia: first as an employee of Shanks & Bolin, then as a partner of Carl Fabergé and, eventually, as an independent trader in gemstones. Bowe assisted Fabergé to develop the House of Fabergé into the leading firm specialising in jewellery and silverware in Russia. As an equal partner, and efficient and progressive manager, Allan Bowe aided Carl Fabergé in establishing the largest jewellery and silverware factory in the country and oversaw the production in Moscow. Bowe also helped to open foreign markets for the company by setting up the London branch to channel the Fabergé exports.

Unlike Carl Fabergé, Bowe did not set himself lofty aims, such as advancement of Russian jewellery art. Motivated largely by economic considerations, Bowe promptly sold his Fabergé business in London when the Russian company faced financial difficulties, without giving his former partner a chance to make an offer. Carl Fabergé, who managed to reclaim his brand name in Britain only after a long and costly litigation, felt betrayed by Bowe. From artistic direction to development of business strategies, Fabergé's contribution to their joint business, was far more significant than Bowe's. Nevertheless, the commercial success of the House of Fabergé in Russia and abroad from the 1880s to the 1900s cannot be ascribed only to the 'the exquisite artistic taste and amazing energy of Carl Fabergé' (Muntyan 2006b: 19). It should also be attributed to the business acumen of his partner, British immigrant Allan Bowe.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Valentin Skurlov (Russia), Wendy Bonus (Canada) and Guy Roberts (United Kingdom) for their comments, corrections and suggestions, and to Katherine Purcell and Kieran McCarthy of Wartski, London, for the colour images.

Bibliography

- Bonus, W. 2010. *The Fabergé Connection: A Memoir of the Bowe Family*. New York; Bloomington: iUniverse.
- Fabergé, T.F. Kohler, E.-A. and Skurlov, V.V. 2012. *Fabergé: A Comprehensive Reference Book*. Genève: Éditions Slatkine.
- Fabержe, T.F. Gorynya, A.S. and Skurlov, V.V. 1997. *Fabержe i peterburgskie yuveliry: Sbornik memuarov, statei, arkhivnykh dokumentov po istorii russkogo yuvelirnogo iskusstva* (Fabergé and Saint Petersburg Jewellers. A Collection of Memoirs, Essays and Archival Documents on the History of Russian Jewellery Art). Saint Petersburg: Neva.
- Gundry, M. 2015. 'Henry Allan Talbot Bowe and the Fabergé connection'. *Familia: Quarterly Journal of the Genealogical Society of South Africa*, 52/3, pp. 43–52.
- Langham-Carter, R.R. 1969. 'The mystery of Allan Bowe, jeweller'. *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library*, 23/4, pp. 118–21.
- Langham-Carter, R.R. 1970. 'Some light on the mystery of Allan Bowe'. *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library*, 24/4, pp. 255–7.
- McCarthy, K. 2017. *Fabergé in London: The British Branch of the Imperial Russian Goldsmith*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: ACC Art Books.
- Munn, G.C. 2015. *Wartski: The First One Hundred and Fifty Years*. Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, pp. 194–5.
- Muntyan, T. N. 2000. *Fabержe. Velikie yuveliry Rossii. Sokrovishcha Oruzheinoi palaty* (Fabergé. Great Jewellers of Russia. Treasures of the Armoury). Moscow: Krasnaya ploshchad.
- Muntyan, T. 2001. 'Shanks, Bolin i Linke. Moskovskie imena' (Shanks, Bolin and Linke. Moscow Personalities). *Bolin v Rossii. Pridvornyi yuvelir kontsa XIX–nachala XX vekov. Katalog vystavki v Muzeiyakh Moskovskogo Kremlya* (Bolin in Russia. A Court Jeweller of the Late 19th–early 20th Centuries. The Catalogue of an Exhibition at the Moscow Kremlin). Moscow: Novyi Ermitazh-odin, pp. 103–10.
- Muntyan, T. 2006a. 'A vsyo Kuznetsky most i vechniye frantsuzy...' (An able and learned jeweller). *Fabержe. Yuvelir Romanovykh* (Fabergé. A Jeweller to the Romanovs). Moscow: ArtHronika, pp. 130–40.
- Muntyan, T. 2006b. 'Ucheniy i obrazovanniy yuvelir' (An able and learned jeweller). *Fabержe. Yuvelir Romanovykh* (Fabergé. A Jeweller to the Romanovs). Moscow: ArtHronika, pp. 17–27.
- Neizvestnyi Fabержe. Proekty i izdeliya firmy Fabержe iz muzeinykh i chastnykh kolleksii* (Unknown Fabergé. Fabergé Designs and Items from Museums and Private Collections). Moscow: Moskovskaya shkola akvareli Sergeya Andriyaki; Russkii antikvariat, 2003, p. 7.
- Ribbing, M. Muntyan, T., Skurlov, V. and Zavadskaya, L. 2000. *Dragotsennosti & srebro. V.A. Bolin — 200 let* (Jewellery & Silver. V.A. Bolin – 200 Years). Vesteros: V.A. Bolin.
- Savin A. V. 2016. *Moskva futbolnaya. Polnaya istoriya v litsakh, sobytiyakh, tsifrakh i faktakh* (A Football Moscow. A Comprehensive History in Biographies, Events, Data and Facts). Moscow: Sport, p.32.
- Skurlov, V. 2007. 'Odesskoe otdelenie firmy Karl Fabержe' (The Odessa Branch of the Firm Carl Fabergé). *Deribasovskaya—Rishelyevskaya: Odesskiy almanakh* (Deribasovskaya-Rishalyevskaya: An Odessa Almanac), 28, pp. 213–22.
- Smalberger, J.M. 1969. 'Aspects of the History of Copper Mining in Namaqualand'. Unpublished master's thesis. University of Cape Town, p. 96.
- Sorokin, V. 2006. *Po Moskve istoricheskoi* (Through the Historic Moscow). Moscow: Izdatelskii Dom TONChU, p. 174.
- Spravochnaya kniga o litsah, poluchivshih na 1886 god kupecheskiye i promisloviye svidetelstva po 1-y i 2-y gildiyam v Moskve* (A Directory of the Holders of Merchant and Manufacturer Certificates of the 1st and the 2nd Guilds for the Year 1886 in Moscow). Moscow, 1886, pp. 83, 271.
- Trevelyan, R. 1991. *Grand Dukes and Diamonds: The Wernhers of Luton Hoo*. London: Secker & Warburg, p. 212.
- Ukazatel deistvuyushchikh v Imperii aktsionerinykh predpriyatii i torgovykh domov* (A Directory of the Joint-Stock Companies and Trading Companies of the Russian Empire). 2nd edn. Vol. 2. Saint Petersburg: E Vern, 1905, p. 280.
- Von Solodkoff, A. 1989. *Masterpieces from the House of Fabergé*. New York: Harry N Abrams, p.153.

Jewellery Studies Notes for contributors - revised version for 2021 onwards

Please go to www.societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk/js_notes for more information

Jewellery Studies is the peer-reviewed academic journal of The Society of Jewellery Historians. The readers of *Jewellery Studies* come from a wide range of disciplines with an interest in the history of jewellery and gemstones. *Jewellery Studies* was published in hard copy form from 1977 to 2012, and has been an electronic publication since 2015, which facilitates more rapid publication. Papers published from December 2020 (vol. 2020/3) are Open Access.

The Editor welcomes contributions of unpublished research (around 4000 – max. 8000 words); you do not have to be a member of the Society. Under the terms of Open Access the author retains the copyright in any paper accepted for publication by the

Society in *Jewellery Studies*, which gives you, the author, the freedom to use and reuse the paper and/or the research pertaining to it in any form. We do not charge authors for publication nor do we pay a fee. Papers should be original research, submitted by the author(s). If it, or any part of it, has previously been published in another language or format, or is being submitted to another publisher, please consult with the editor before sending.

Papers are appraised by at least two appropriate reviewers and are also subject to copy editing. The edited text, with any editorial queries, will be returned to the author for approval, and clarification where necessary, before publication. The Editor's decision is final.

Your paper should be written in English. If English is not your first language, your writing should be checked by a native speaker before it is submitted for consideration.

Papers should be submitted electronically as a doc text without formatting. They should include:

- Title and Author(s) name(s)
- Brief biography of author(s), relevant affiliations, author's email address (preferred but optional)
- Abstract (c. 300 words) outlining the content and stating its approach e.g. archival study/ practising jeweller/technical study
- Brief concluding paragraph(s)
- Acknowledgements - where relevant
- Bibliography in alphabetical author order - at the end of the paper. [details on website]
- Footnotes should only be used when essential to avoid a break in the argument of the text. They should be numbered in the text with a superscript numeral directly after punctuation, e.g. ...in Paris.¹

Illustrations - There is no limit to the number of relevant illustrations.

- Illustrations - submitted as high-resolution digital files (TIF, PNG or JPG format), ideally at a minimum of 200dpi when at a size of 216mm wide, should be submitted by email or via a file transfer website. Where appropriate and/or possible, clipping paths or alpha channels should be included in the file allowing for a transparent background around objects.
- Captions for illustrations, must be listed at the end of the text. Do not embed captions or illustrations in your text. Number illustrations consecutively, at the appropriate place in the paper (fig. 1), (figs 2 and 3). Captions should explain what the illustration shows, pointing out relevant details and include, as appropriate, maker, origin, date, materials, dimensions, owner and accession or inventory number, photographer. Copyright information is essential.

Contributors are responsible for obtaining permissions to use the images from the copyright holder, where relevant, and for paying any reproduction fees.

Go to www.societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk/js_notes for details of style

Papers should be sent to the Editor: js@societyofjewelleryhistorians.ac.uk



The Society of
**JEWELLERY
HISTORIANS**