

Diamond Mounters'

THE diamond jubilee of a firm of diamond mounters should call for something special in the way of a celebration and the well known London firm of Hirschfelds Ltd. have chosen as their method a move into one of the most commodious and completely equipped buildings in the industry. The firm occupies a leading position in the trade, having an enviable reputation in the two great jewellery centres of Birmingham and Hatton Garden and among the principal retail buyers up and down the country and abroad.

It was founded in 1875 by Tobias Hirschfeld, originally at Myddleton Square, Clerkenwell. Like many large firms it began in a rather humble way, manufacturing gold and gem jewellery for the wholesale trade. In 1888 a move was made to Birmingham where the firm remained for nearly forty years. It was first in premises in Warstone Lane, then in a larger place in Spencer Street and finally in Vyse Street. Twenty-five years ago Mr. T. Hirschfeld took into partnership his son Alex and the title of the firm became T. & A. Hirschfeld. In 1922 Mr. T. Hirschfeld retired. He died at the age of eighty-three only two years ago, having ended his days in Birmingham where he was well known and respected.

In 1926 the business was removed to London and established at 11 Kirby Street, Hatton Garden. It was incorporated as a limited company with the title of Hirschfelds Ltd. in 1933. This year, as we have mentioned, a removal has been made to No. 43 Kirby Street, to the fine premises illustrated in this article.

The retail trade has been familiar with the name for some forty years and the special feature of the firm's dealings has been the personal attention given to every detail by the principal of the business himself. The sole direction is now in the hands of Mr. Alex Hirschfeld, who makes a point of calling personally on many of his customers. Shortly he will be joined in the control of the business by his two sons, one of whom will devote his attention to manufacturing and the other to stock and sales.

No finished goods whatever are factored, every article sold by the firm being designed and mounted on its own premises. The excellent layout and roominess of the workshops can be judged from the photographs. The offices are notably roomy. Almost the entire first and second floors of the building are devoted to offices, reception rooms and store department. Above these are found the studios for the designers and the mounting and setting shops.

Trade visitors to London are invited to view these premises, where they will find much to interest them in the way of efficient layout, completeness of equipment, plenty of daylight and fresh air, and many arrangements making for the health and comfort of the workers, thereby assisting in the production of good work.

Hirschfelds Ltd. may be said to be one of the few firms of specialists confining their attention entirely to diamond and gem-set jewellery of a good medium quality. With the good designing and careful finish put into the articles these become high grade jewels offering excellent value for money. They concentrate on articles for a popular demand, paying attention to good and safe setting which makes for hard wear, if such a term can be applied to diamond jewellery.

The firm is continually introducing novelties and has one particularly successful patent to its credit, an all-diamond-set expanding watch bracelet of which many have been made and sold since it was



(Above) The modern building in Kirby Street now occupied by Hirschfelds Ltd.

(Below) Mr. Alex Hirschfeld and some of his staff in the office.



Diamond Jubilee

first introduced. Of rings, that regular bread and butter line of every jeweller, they keep a remarkable selection, both in popular styles and fine single stones and other specimen gems. They claim to hold the largest range in London of the popular diamond double-clip brooches so much in vogue at the moment.

Before leaving the subject we would mention that Hirschfelds Ltd. were one of the original makers of diamond-set platinum watch cases. When first produced in Birmingham they created considerable interest and were quickly snapped up by the trade.

By the time these notes are in print there will be available for distribution an excellent catalogue which has been designed to be handy for counter use by the retailer. It illustrates in actual size nearly one hundred new and special designs of watch bracelets, both expanding and ordinary flexible; diamond heads on platinum expanders and also for bands and cords; inexpensive diamond set heads; all-diamond bracelets, earrings, clips, brooches, pendants and rings.

This admirable catalogue is produced in particularly attractive form with a metal cover and is available to all responsible retailers on request.



(Above) Diamond Mounters at their well-lighted workbench.

The JOURNAL is pleased to have had the opportunity of publishing the first complete history of this well known firm, and to be able to bring its products before the notice of the many progressive retailers who form the bulk of its readers.

(Below) A view in the workshop, with its large roof lights as well as windows.



Twice Blitzed — but Carried On!



It was apparent in 1939, on the declaration of War upon Germany that the industry upon which this firm had been engaged for 70 years would become redundant, and difficult though the project seemed, the decision was made to turn our production over to the War effort.

Many of our younger men asked permission to join the Services immediately, and this we readily granted knowing the urgent need for men. Our remaining staff commenced work upon Precision Instruments, perhaps a little labourious after the jewellery trade, but they made headway.

Unfortunately, these endeavours were cut short when in October, 1940, our premises at 43, Kirby Street, were totally destroyed in the blitz which had just begun.

Again we started—at 63, Hatton Garden—only after a very short time to lose these premises, but we then knew what a blitz could mean, and we transferred ourselves to new premises in 31, Hatton Garden, with very little delay, and in spite of our difficult experiences managed with the assistance of our staff to carry on production of vital war supplies.

By this time the high calibre and accuracy of our Precision work had been recognised by the various Government Departments, such as: Woolwich Arsenal, Enfield, the Ministry of Supply and the Admiralty, and orders were pouring in.

In 1942, we established ourselves at our present address: 40/41, Hatton Garden.

We are proud to know that in our own way we became one of the indispensable cogs in the immense War machine which has ultimately brought us Victory and Peace.

We think a fitting tribute can be paid to those of our staff who have paid the supreme sacrifice by our endeavours in the future to maintain that hard won Peace.

With the return to a more normal life and our own trade, we look forward to the renewal of acquaintance with our many friends both at home and abroad, and we hope personal contacts will soon be possible when, with the re-establishment of the B.I.F. we are able once again to display the emblems of our peace-time trade—high-class Diamond Jewellery.

HIRSCHFELDS LTD.

DIAMOND MOUNTERS & JEWELLERS

40/41, HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.1.

Telephones: HOLborn 1536/7 & 1207
Telegrams: Diawatch, Smith, London