

THE MANY FACES OF BERYL

WHAT'S IT WORTH?



JEFF HESS
Owner &
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BERYL BY ANY OTHER NAME ...

We received a package of estate goods last week and we opened it with anticipation. This particular jeweler frequently sends us boxes of things he buys over the counter from his customers and typically there is an item or two of intense interest included with the usual mundane, plain 1940s to 1950s common goods.

He didn't let us us down. As we opened the package like kids on Christmas morning, a large bauble caught our collective eye. An unusually large watch fob.

We like watch fobs. Typically little decorative baubles or jewels and such that adorn one end of a pocket watch chain, this one was just, simply, a monster.

Hanging from this heavy 18k gold beast was a large gemstone of undetermined origin. A quick reading from a refractometer (a small device measuring a stone's refractive index) indicated this oddly colored stone was beryl.



Beryl is a cool gemstone. When it comes out of the ground green, it's called emerald; when it is blue or blue-green it's called aquamarine; when pink, beryl is called Morganite and when yellow, heliodor. We discussed with Katrina and our other gemologists and they all leaned toward plain old white-bread green beryl.

This is the least desirable moniker, but all agreed it was worth a gamble to send it to the final arbiter in our business, GIA. None of us had seen a beryl this size set in jewelry and we imagined it being on the vest of a member of royalty, or perhaps a titan of industry.

As to its value, we will let the general public decide. There really are no comparators. At auction it will appeal to many – watch collectors, vintage jewelry collectors, historians as well as gemstone collectors. Our conservative estimate is \$1,500 to \$2,000, based on the large amount of gold and the oversized pale-green beryl. If GIA had blessed this stone as aquamarine, the price would easily have tripled.

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