



For this project I decided to replicate the gold pendant portrayed in a painting of Elizabeth Vernon (roughly 1573-1655), Countess of Southampton.

The painting was done by an unknown artist c1598 © The Buccleuch Collection, Boughton House.

The pendant appears to be made of gold and has a blue four pointed star shaped stone. I cannot tell from the painting what kind of stone it is. It could be a sapphire, a lapis, or any number of blue stones available at the time. Above and below the stone are what appear to be baroque pearls (the top pearl could be a round freshwater or cultured pearl). It is also difficult to see what the shape of the bale the pendant has. It could be a simple loop or a more complex smaller bale.

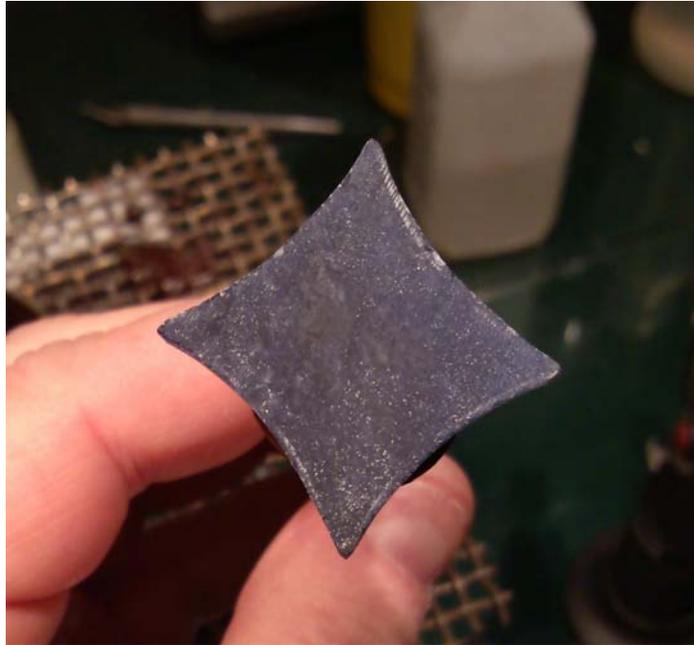
Because of the lack of detail, I am taking some liberties in the recreation of this piece. The most noticeable liberty is that I am using silver instead of gold. I can only guesstimate the size of the pendant and stone as there isn't a way to determine the measurements. If I knew Elizabeth's height I could measure the pendant in the painting and use ratios to make a good approximation.

For the blue stone I decided to use Sodalite. Sodalite can be found in many regions of Italy, Russia, and Greenland, and is a building block for Lapis. Sodalite is often mistaken for Lapis.

For this project I decided to cut, shape and polish the stone myself instead of trying to find one already cut. The first pic shows the original slab of Sodalite and the piece that I cut from it.



Next I shaped the sides to form the star.



As you can see from the picture below, I have not yet started the doming process.



Using successive grits starting at 325 and working my way down to 50,000 on grinding and polishing wheels, the stone took shape and a polish. Below shows the completed stone.

I had three options in the way I could have created the stone. The first is the way I did it which was to use a diamond cabing machine. It took me 2 hours start to finish. The second way was to make it using sandpaper starting from 80 grit and working my way up to 1500 grit then using a polishing paste. This would have taken me roughly 8 hours based on past experience with other stones. The third way would have been to start the shaping using sandstone and then refining using several grits of emery imbedded in lead and on leather then using a final polishing compound on leather. That would have taken me who knows how long but is period. I love my hobby but there are limits.



To complete the project I set the stone in a silver bezel, created a bale, and added two baroque pearls from Thailand. The bale is attached to a silver wire going through the pearl that is wire wrapped to the top of the setting. The bottom pearl is held on by another wire which has one end melted forming a ball to hold the pearl in place, and is wire wrapped to the bottom of the setting. The pictures below show the original pendant on the left and my replication on the right.

As you can see there are some differences



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Websites

<http://www.historyextra.com/tudorpeople> *further description of the portrait of Elizabeth Vernon.*

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