

Jessie's Locket



The story of Jessie's locket came to me from my mother and my great aunt Ella. It was allegedly one of a set of five, made by silversmith William Leighton for his five daughters, Ada Florence, Frances Mary, Caroline Jessie, Lottie Matilda and Gertrude Fanny.¹ The sisters were the first cousins of my granny and her sister, Auntie Ella. Only one of the Leighton sisters married and none of them had any children. The story was that a decision was made to pass the five lockets to the five girls in the next generation, my mother and her four cousins, Auntie Ella's daughters. According to my mum, she had Gertrude's locket and her cousin Cynthia had Charlotte's, as their initials were the same. I accepted this story and even when I took custody of the locket, I continued to believe that the one I had was Gertrude's.

It wasn't until I looked more closely at the locket in my care, after a family funeral in 2017, that I realised the initials were C J. I had Caroline Jessie's locket. I remember Jessie, as she was known. I visited the home

that she shared with Frances and Lottie in the early 1960s, just after Ada's death. I am privileged to be the custodian of Jessie's locket. Two of the other four lockets have been located and it is lovely to think that the memories of their original owners live on through these tangible reminders.



i The story of the Leighton sisters appears on the Granny's Tales page.