

Peter Blanshard pottery thimbles

This potter first came to my attention in the 1st edition of John von Hoelle's encyclopedia (1983). For some reason, the entry for Blanshard thimbles was not included in the 3rd edition of 1986. Maybe he had encountered them thru Roz Belford's Collectors Circle Gazette/The Sewing Corner (New York) at the time of this publication?

Belford was selling Blanshard thimbles in 1970s. Gimbels (Maine) also sold his thimbles (1979).

Blanshard, Peter — British potter who hand makes each thimble on a potter's wheel. His styles are inspired by ancient Egyptian, Meissen and Chelsea designs. See illustration # 47



von Hoelle 1983 – very poor photo for #47 example

The approximate dates Peter created his hand-thrown thimbles were 1970-1980. He was based in York, in the United Kingdom.

Looking at the thimbles that have dates – only 1973, I can't see that these thimbles were made in more than 1972-1973. Do you have a Blanshard with another date?

Blanshard created these thimbles on a miniature pottery wheel. They were not mass produced. He also seems to have a fetish of placing a full stop after some of the lettering.

We have also noted that some of the thimbles – not many – have a painted number in them. Were they an indication of a limited run? The highest sighted is 171; the lowest is 5. From the paucity of Peter's thimbles in existence today, it doesn't seem possible that he would have created that many of any one thimble.

We are very fortunate that one of the thimbles from this period exists with an original sticky label, which identifies the thimble maker. These labels were apt to dry out and fifty years later, there are virtually no examples with the original label.

You could have unsigned and unlabelled Blanshard thimbles in your collection. If you can match them to any of the thimbles below, it will be a Blanshard.



thimble has a scalloped rim

The thimbles are dainty and finely made. Tho the photos don't show it, there is a big range in sizes. Heights range from 24-15mm – widths from 19-6mm. Sizes are included where known.



showing the fineness of his pottery

The commemorative and inscribed thimbles are handpainted and some designs are pierced. Unless the thimbles have a date as part of the design or an inscribed date, the rest are just part of his output. the lettering of Peter's inscriptions is in an elegant cursive.

Most of the thimbles are matt – others are glazed, some quite richly.

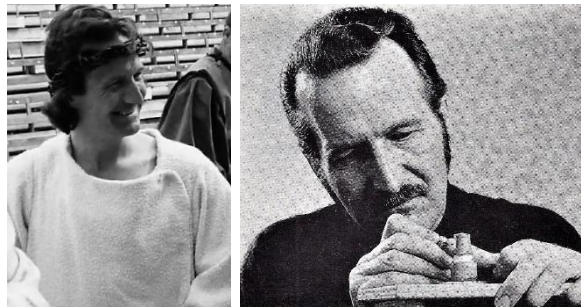
The inside of the thimbles are also glazed – the mark of a patient potter.

Looking at the thimbles featured here, it looks as if he had fun creating his thimbles – some are almost playful – experimenting with various scripts or shapes: more for his own satisfaction and creativity? No two are the same, making them unique as collectors’ pieces.

The thimbles weren’t meant to be used for sewing - look at the various indentations – some have smooth apexes, some just 1-3 indentations, some in a circle etc.



Blanshard is an unusual surname but no record of his pottery in York can be found.



L: Peter Blanshard, Mystery Players, York 1969 – R: at his miniature pottery wheel 1972

For other pottery topics see
Boscastle Pottery thimbles
Peter Blanshard pottery thimbles
Poole Pottery thimbles

Commemorative thimbles



A M 1973
Princess Anne and Mark Phillips
marriage
crown and wedding bells
24mm



A M 1973
Princess Anne and Mark Phillips
marriage
pierced wedding bells
24mm



A M 1973
Princess Anne and Mark Phillips
marriage
pierced wedding bells



A M
Princess Anne and Mark Phillips
marriage
wedding bells



A M 1973
Princess Anne and Mark Phillips
marriage
crown



A M 1973.
Princess Anne and Mark Phillips
marriage
wedding bells



A M Married 14.11.73
crown
19x15mm
numbered 159 inside



Anne Mark 14th November 1973
wedding bells



Peter Blanshard York 1973.



York 1973



York 1973

Inscribed thimbles



G



Love

R: The Sewing Circle 1977



LOVE



P



P



P.



P.B.



Peter

22x22mm



Peter



Peter



Peter.
22x22mm



Peter.

Hand painted thimbles



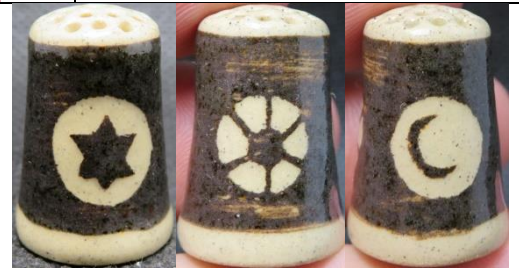
butterfly



19x15mm



sewing



windmill



Meissen inspiration

L: The Sewing Corner 1977 - R: Gimbels 1979

From the photo we have of Peter in the theatre maybe these **theatre masks** are representational?

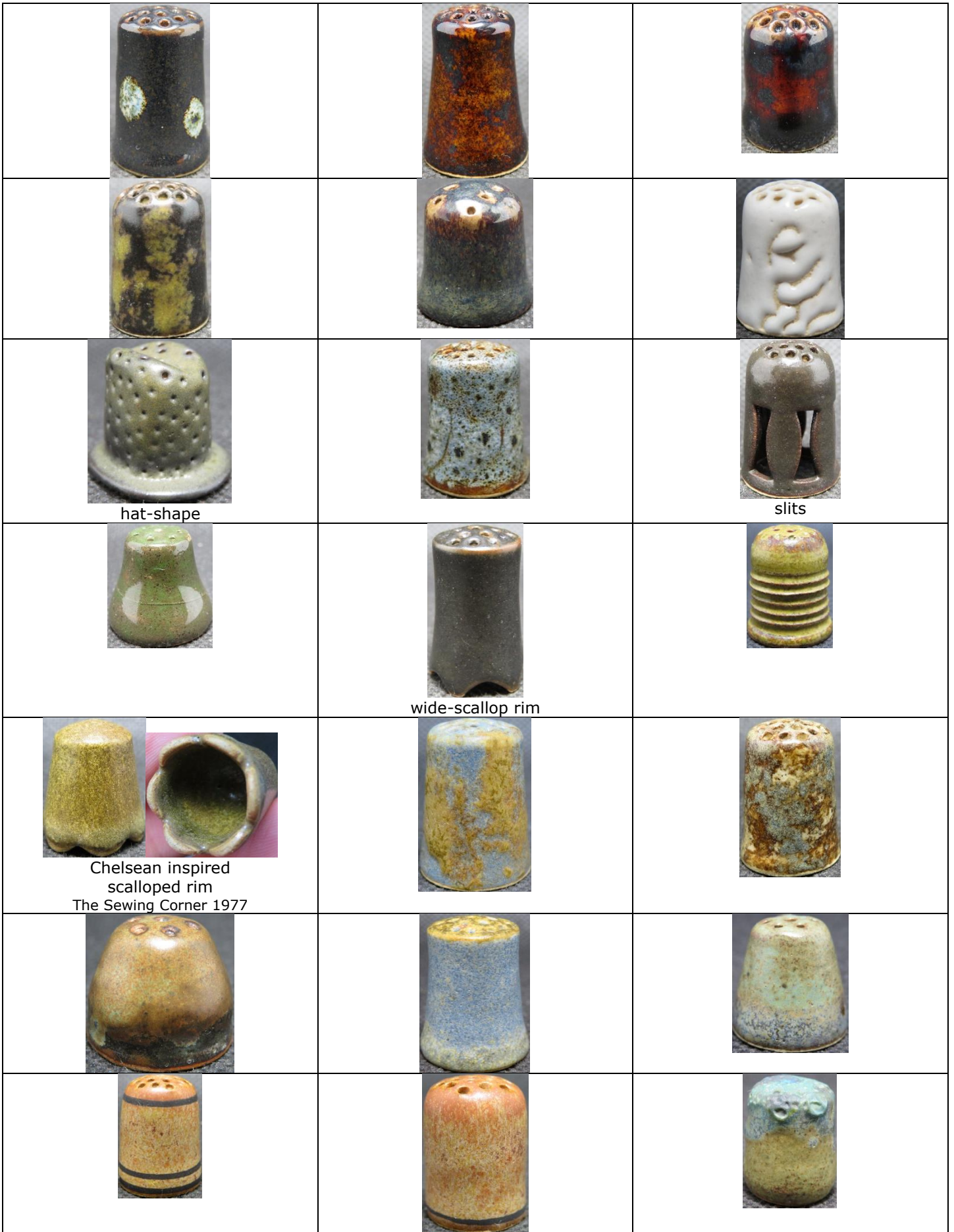


Plain thimbles



		
		 <p>24mm</p>
 <p>15x12mm</p>	 <p>19x22mm</p>	 <p>19x19mm</p>
	 <p>15x19mm</p>	 <p>19x19mm</p>
 <p>15x12mm</p>	 <p>22x22mm</p>	 <p>pointy scalloped rim 24mm</p>
 <p>22x18mm</p>	 <p>15x19mm</p>	 <p>19x6mm</p>
		









References

John von Hoelle *Thimble collectors encyclopedia*. 1983

Contributors

Pawel Brzyski | Ray Nimmo | Wolf-Dieter Scholz | Jean Taylor

This listing of Peter Blanshard pottery thimbles does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects. Rather it invites comment and contribution to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

© Sue Gowan
October 2023

