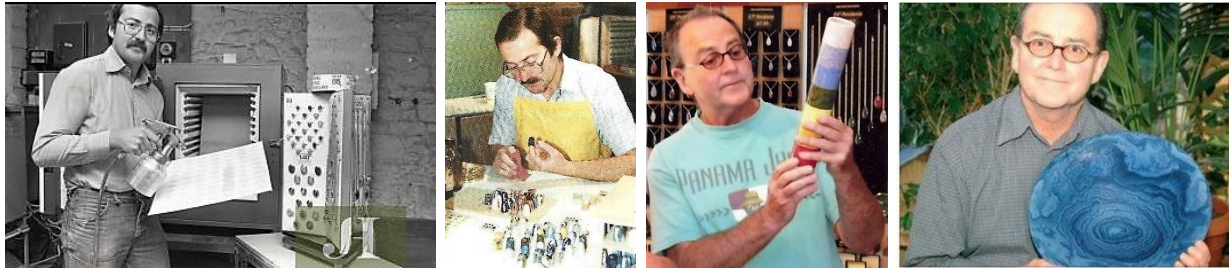


Tony Bouchet's agateware thimbles (Jersey)

1984-2007

It was a suggestion from a Dutch collector that finally prompted me to look at this amazing thimble maker. I had just avoided the topic because I knew of his huge output of agateware thimbles ever since I started collecting thimbles.

In 2007 Vilma Buck and I were visiting Jersey. There we met local thimble collector, Jan Neville. Jan had secured a visit for us to St Ouen, the home of the Agateware Bouchet Pottery. I had only met one thimble maker before. Tony Bouchet is one of the world's true gentlemen and we spent a couple of pleasurable hours with him.



Bouchet in his workshop – Bouchet 1988 - Bouchet 2007 with his latest technique in segmenting colours in vases
Bouchet 2011



inside the store - Vilma and Sue with Tony - Sue, Jan and Vilma outside the shop

Bouchet's father started their pottery business in 1960. Tony worked alongside him in 1965 where he was producing simple agateware pieces. Over the next twenty years he discovered a new technique of making agateware. What was he trying to create? Agateware, said to be extremely difficult to make, is a form of pottery that mixes clays and oxides to produce a marbled agate effect.

His special technique is the reproduction of natural agate stone, achieved by marbling white clay with metal oxides. The clay then rests for one year (what patience). His colours had been formulated and mixed - the mixing process alone required over 2,000 experiments.

Agateware was first made in 1730 by Wedgwood and Spode and discontinued in 1780. It's secrets were long forgotten and had never been attempted successfully until Bouchet conquered Holy Grail of agateware pottery.

It takes three firings to make an agateware thimble and for the final firing circles of 22ct gold are applied by hand. The thimble is then polished giving us the glossy, smooth finish of the thimbles we now associate with the name of Bouchet. By 1984 Tony Bouchet agateware thimbles were ready for the thimble world,

Why did Bouchet choose thimbles to show off his new agateware?



Tony kept a broken piece of agateware to demonstrate how the colours are all thru his pottery.

As all modern thimble makers in the UK Bouchet turned to TTG to market his thimbles, which they did very successfully over the period of agateware thimbles. Where known, the catalogue date is supplied. Initially Bouchet's thimbles were supplied with a TTG certificate. Soon afterwards these were supplied by Bouchet. I cannot find any Bouchet thimbles for sale thru TTG after November 1999. Earlier TTG catalogue entries states "and from Tony's own shop."

APEXES

All thimbles have two lines painted at the rim and have a gold line at the rim of the apex.



three types of apices in Bouchet thimbles



first has a flat indented apex



second has a domed apex with a single gold circle
third has a domed apex with three concentric gold circles

SHAPES

size of the third shape is 300x200mm.



original shape of Bouchet thimbles - squatter than the later ones



first - second - third
the second shape has a slightly domed apex
the third has a more domed apex



don't go looking for these ridged thimbles. They are prototypes and never went into production

NAMED COLOURS

Bouchet named about half of his marbled coloured thimbles: found on certificates and TTG catalogues.

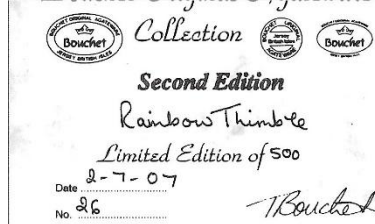
Most of the early catalogues were in black and white.

Tony's thimbles are not named anywhere on the thimble.

Tho sold thru TTG, Bouchet thimbles were always available in Jersey at the Agateware shop.

Other Bouchet's colour names were as follows (no colour photos available):

Bloodstone (October 1985) - Coral Agate (June 1984) - Dawn Agate (May 1985) - Emerald Green Agate (May 1984) - New Green (November 1984) - Red Brown (March 1985) - Shepherd's Delight (December 1985) Yellow Agate (December 1984)



Rainbow 2nd Edition 2007 – Bouchet certificate



Amber Delight



Black & White Agate
(thimble shows as blue, but it's black)
TTG January 1985



Blue Agate
TTG January 1985



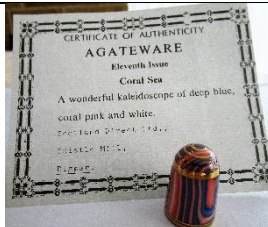
Brown Agate
TTG October 1984



Chestnut Sky



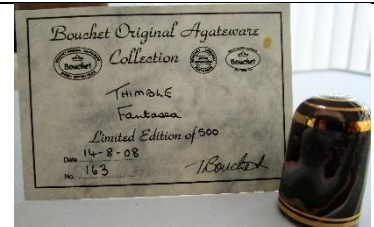
Coral Lagoon



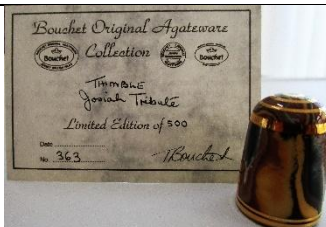
Coral Sea



Cosmopolitan
TTG March 1988



Fantasea



Josiah Tribute



Lavender Morning



Lavenders Green



Lemon and Lime Time



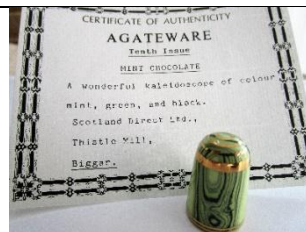
Lemon Dream



Lilac Agate
TTG September 1984



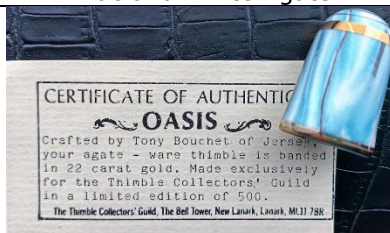
Lilac and White Agate



Mint Chocolate



Mysterious Night



Oasis
TTG June 1985



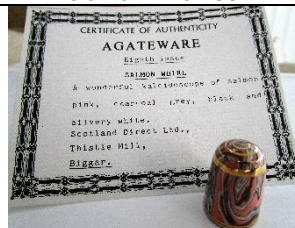
Over the Rainbow
using all seven colours of the rainbow
TTG March 1987
Feldmann 16 1991



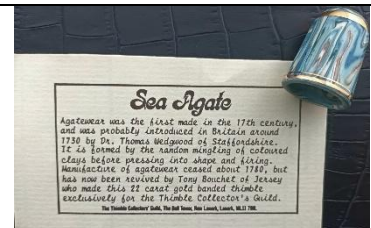
Peppermint Delight



Rainbow



Salmon Whirl



Sea Agate
TTG August 1984



Silvery Primrose
mark 3



Sky Sienna



Spring Mosaic



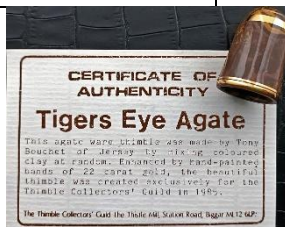
Summer Mist



Sun
TTG July 1985



3
Tangerine Twirl



Tigers Eye Agate
TTG September 1985



Winter Sunset



Whieldon Tribute



MARKS

This section shows the progression of the Bouchet marks. The dates are from the article by Mary Craft. It would be interesting to know whether Bouchet bone china and agateware thimbles were differently priced.

1a.  Lettered on the outside in gold <u>Channel Island Jewellery Jersey C.I.</u> is lettered in outside ring - <u>Made in Jersey</u> in the centre this was the name used by Tony's father 1984	1b.  Identical marks in black – on the inside
2a.  2b.  <u>Bouchet Original Agateware</u> lettered in outside ring <u>Made in Jersey</u> in centre identical marks but <u>Made in Jersey</u> between lines in centre L: 1985 only	3.  <u>Bouchet Original Agateware</u> lettered in outside ring <u>Jersey British Isles</u> in centre 1986 only
4.  <u>Bouchet bone china</u> <u>Jersey British Isles</u> lettered in outside ring <u>Bouchet</u> with crown in centre	5.  <u>Bouchet Original Agateware</u> <u>Jersey British Isles</u> lettered in outside ring, <u>Bouchet</u> with crown in centre 1987-
6.  <u>Bouchet</u> with crown – simplified	

ANOMALIES

We may never know the why and wherefores of these thimbles – recorded here for posterity and answers.

 signed CS in gold there is no image shorter shape	 no gold circles on apex
--	--

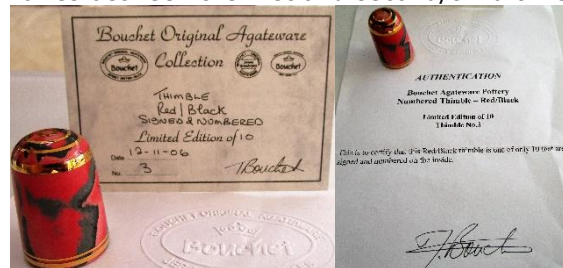
OTHER



crazing may be found on the agateware surface due to their age

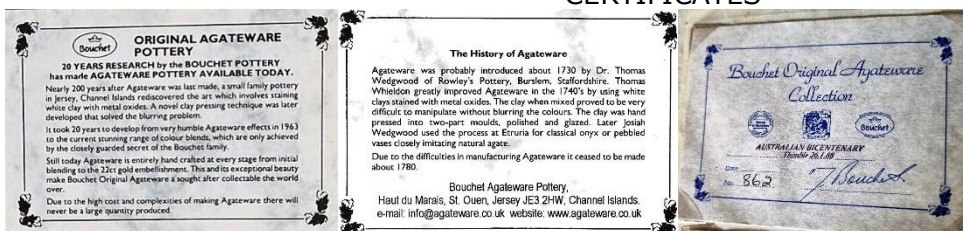


wall thickness varies between the first and second/third timeline of thimbles



only **10** produced with an additional embossed certificate of authenticity signed and numbered on the inside

CERTIFICATES



Bouchet Original Agateware Certificate of Authenticity

Every Bouchet Original Agateware piece is protected by this Guarantee of Authenticity, it is a treasure of British Art and Craftsmanship. The Bouchet family hope that this piece will bring much pleasure to the collector.

J. BOUCHET LTD.,
ST. OVEN, JERSEY JE3 2HW, CHANNEL ISLANDS.



Bouchet certificates (both sides) leaflet and label
label 'Agateware Original Bouchet Made in Jersey'.

R: certificate shows some of the Bouchet marks as well as Bouchet's signature
two at left bottom give details of the history of agateware – colour brochures available around Jersey

I have observed that the certificate's issue date often doesn't match the date of the occasion. They were possibly only dated by the Agateware shop when they were sold?

Talking to the BBC in March 2011 Bouchet advised that "The workshop is now closed and Mr Bouchet has destroyed all his recipes, records, moulds, clay and special equipment. He said that by doing so would give someone else the chance to discover what he knows for themselves.

Sir John Wedgwood came to Jersey to meet him and said after 300 years of trying, even the Wedgwood potters could not make it.

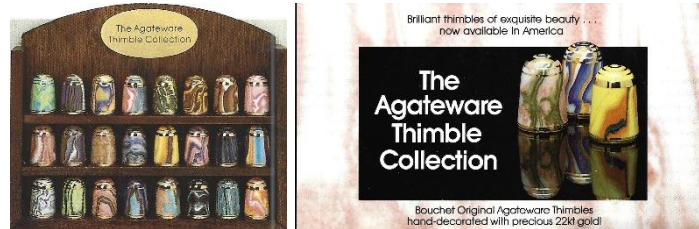
The Wedgwood family now collects Mr Bouchet's creations".

Bouchet had revealed as much over lunch in 2007 but it was a very sad day for collectors to realise there would be no-one taking over his legacy of making agateware thimbles.

I have used a date order for listing the Bouchet thimbles, where appropriate.

Colours of thimbles

Bouchet created a total of fifty thimble colours. Colours can be also seen on the inside of the marbled thimbles. The agateware colours tend to get bolder and brighter over the years.



set of 24 Bouchet thimbles for US market, with leaflet 1988, Thimble Collectors Club (TCC)

The following show some of the huge range of the colours that were created over the years: no two are the same.





dark blues



salmon pink dark greens



greens



pale range



pink-greys



pinks



pink-yellows



burnt orange



three colours



yummy bright colours

Christmas thimbles 1985-2000

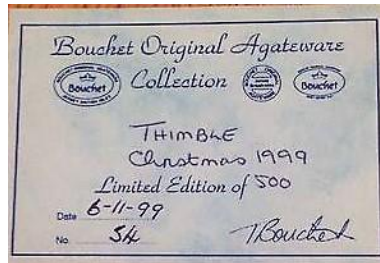
Gold lettering is fairly standard from 1987: the year lettered below the word Christmas. That lettering is enclosed within an oval ring.

For the 1996-1999 thimbles the oval is gold painted. The last issue, 2000 has huge lettering marking the millennium (similar to Bouchet's other millennium thimbles).

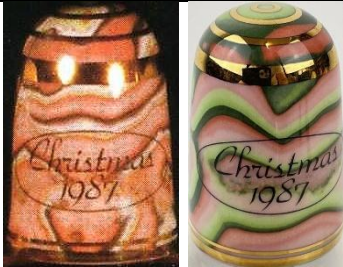
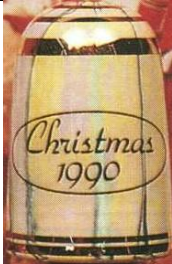
I'll include more than one image if the colours seem different.

Most issued by TTG in November each year until 1997.

Usually limited to **500**.



1999 Christmas Bouchet certificate

			
1985	1986 His only Christmas thimble with a tree on verso	1987 two colourways	1988 mark 5
			
1989 limited to 1000	1990 limited to 1000	1991	1992 L: limited to 700
			
1993 L: limited to 700	1994	1995	1996
			
1997	1998 limited to 400	1999	2000 limited to 2000

Commemorative thimbles 1985-2005

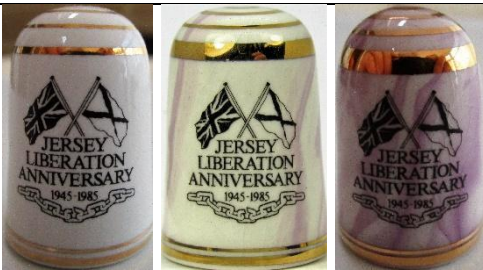
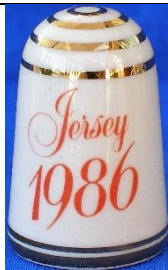
Commemorative thimbles must always have a date. Christmas and British royal family dated thimbles are listed separately.

The Channel Isles were the only part of Great Britain to be invaded by Germany during World War II. It is only fitting that Bouchet incorporated so many thimbles commemorating the anniversaries of the liberation of Jersey.

Limited to **500** unless specified.



2000 Millennium Collection Bouchet certificate
1999

 1985 JERSEY JERSEY LIBERATION ANNIVERSARY 1945-1985 two flags and chains mark 1b	 1986 Jersey 1986	 1987 THIMBLE COLLECTORS GUILD thimble
 H.M. QUEEN VICTORIA 150 ANNIVERSARY JUNE 20TH 1837- 1987 TTG Jun 1988	 1987 PRINSES MARGRIET - MR PIETER VAN VOLLENHOVEN 10 JANUARI 1967 in orange and blues of Dutch royal family Kay Sullivan March 1987	 1988 DUBLIN MILLENNIUM 988-1988 coat-of-arms Irish pale green on verso TTG March 1988 mark 5



1988
THIMBLE COLLECTORS GUILD 1988
Thimble
TTG August 1988



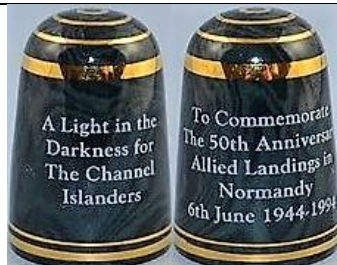
1989
THE THIMBLE GUILD 1989
thimble
limited to **1000**
TTG March 1989



1990
GERMAN OCCUPATION 1940-1945
TO COMMEMORATE THE 50th
ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCCUPATION
OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS 1st July
1940-1990
TTG June 1990



1988
Australia 1788-1988
Australian Bicentenary
L: green and yellow for Australian colours
commissioned by Pan Arts in Sydney in 1987
some thimbles contain backstamp 'Pan Arts Sydney' as well as Bouchet mark
limited to **1000**
R: yellow and green
limited to **1788**
TTG December 1987
mark **5**



1994
A Light in the Darkness for the Channel Islanders
To Commemorate The 50th Anniversary Allied Landings
in Normandy 6th June 1944-1994
mark **5**
TTG June 1994



1995
50
To Commemorate 50th Anniversary Jersey Liberation
9th May 1945-1995
The Liberation sculpture St Heliers – unveiled in May
1995 - flag waving islanders
limited to **750**
mark **5**
TTG May 1995



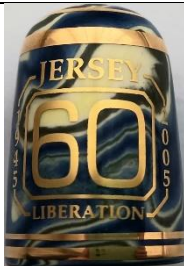
1995
VE
To Commemorate 50th Anniversary
Victory in Europe 1945-1995
TTG April 1995



1995
VJ
To Commemorate 50th Anniversary
Victory over Japan 14th August
1945-1995
TTG August 1995



1999
TOTAL ECLIPSE 11.8.99
no circles on apex, signifying
darkness

 2000 NEW YEAR	 2000 MILLENNIUM 2000 COLLECTION green - blue limited to 6000 TTG November 1999	 2005 60 JERSEY LIBERATION 1945-2005 mark 5
 2005 60 VICTORY IN EUROPE 1945-2005	 2006 ISAMBARD KINGDOM BRUNEL 1806-1859 commemorating bicentenary 1806-2006	

Planets thimbles

The planet's name is lettered along the bottom rim in black between 22ct gold concentric rings.

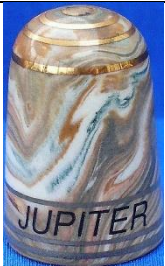
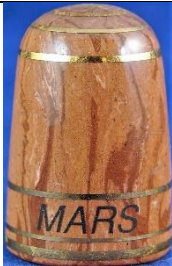
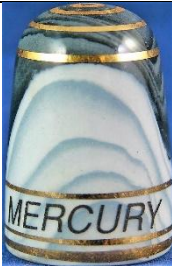
Moon was additional to the set.

Limited to 950 sets.

Set supplied with a black pottery plinth.



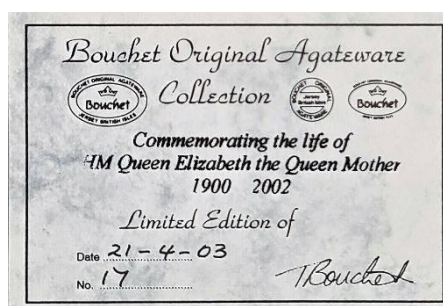
TTG December 1991

 EARTH	 JUPITER	 MARS	 MERCURY
 NEPTUNE	 PLUTO	 SATURN	 SUN

 URANUS	 VENUS	 MOON lettered in gold no concentric circles with apex left white representing full moon
--	---	---

Royal family thimbles 1986-2007

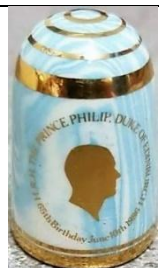
For the royals Bouchet used the same gilt head for each anniversary. Usually limited to **500** unless specified.

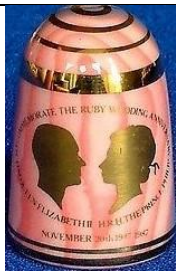


Commemorating the Life of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother 1900 – 2002 Bouchet certificate



some of the royals may have been sold by TTG as The Windsor Collection

 1986 TO COMMEMORATE THE MARRIAGE OF PRINCE ANDREW WITH MISS SARAH FERGUSON 23rd JULY 1986 TTG	 1986 H.R.H. PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDUINBURGH 65th Birthday June 10th 1986 TTG May 1986	 1986 H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 60th Birthday April 21st 1986
--	--	---



1987
TO COMMEMORATE THE RUBY
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY H.M.
QUEEN ELIAZETH II THE PRINCE
PHILIP NOVEMBER 20th 1947-1987
issued with commemorative spoon
and bell
TTG February 1992



1988
TO COMMEMORATE THE DUKE AND
DUCHESS OF YORK THE BIRTH OF
THEIR FIRST CHILD
H.R.H. THE PRINCESS BEATRICE OF
YORK 8th August 1988
limited to **2475**
TTG August 1988



1988
H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES 40th
Birthday November 14th 1988
issued with commemorative silver-
plated spoon
limited to **5000**
TTG August 1990



1990
PRINCESS ROYAL 40th BIRTHDAY
15th August 1990
issued with commemorative silver-
plated spoon
TTG August 1990



1990
TO COMMEMORATE THE DUKE AND
DUCHESS OF YORK THE BIRTH OF
THEIR SECOND CHILD
H.R.H. THE PRINCESS EUGENIE
VICTORIA HELENA OF YORK born
23rd March 1990
limited to **950**



1990
TO COMMEMORATE THE DUKE AND
DUCHESS OF YORK THE BIRTH OF
THEIR SECOND CHILD
H.R.H. THE PRINCESS EUGENIE
VICTORIA HELENA OF YORK born
23rd March 1990
TTG April 1990



1990
H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN
MOTHER 90th Birthday 4th August
1990
issued with commemorative silver-
plated spoon
TTG July 1990



1991
H.R.H. THE PRINCES AND PRINCESS
OF WALES 10th Wedding
Anniversary 29th July 1981-1991
issued with commemorative silver-
plated spoon
TTG August 1991



1991
H.R.H THE PRINCESS OF WALES
30th Birthday July 1st 1991



1991
H.R.H. PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF
EDINBURGH 70th Birthday June 10th
1991



1991
H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 65th
Birthday April 21st 1991



1992
H.R.H. PRINCESS ROYAL AND
COMMANDER TIMOTHY LAURENCE
Ccommemorating Their Wedding
12th November 1992
TTG January 1993

 1992 H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 40th Anniversary of Her Ascension 6th February 1952-1992	 1993 H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 40th Anniversary of Her Coronation June 2nd 1953-1993 pink and blue issued with commemorative silver-plated spoon TTG May 1993	
 1995 H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER 95th Birthday 4th August 1995	 1996 H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 70th Birthday April 21st 1996 limited to 800	 1996 H.R.H. PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH 75th Birthday June 10th 1996
 1997 GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY 1947-1997 limited to 1200	 1998 H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES 50th Birthday November 14th 1998	 1999 THE MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCE EDWARD WITH MISS SOPHIE RHYSES- JONES SATURDAY, 19th June 1999 limited to 500
 2000 H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER 100th BIRTHDAY 4th August 2000 using her favourite colour of mauve	 2000 H.R.H. PRINCE WILLIAM 18th Birthday 18th June 2000	 2002 H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER 1900-2002



2002
QUEEN ELIZABETH II 11 Golden
Jubilee 1952-2002



2003
H.R.H. PRINCE WILLIAM 21st
Birthday 21-06-2003



2006
H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 80th Birthday
April 21st 2006



only the first **ten** of the run were signed
'T. Bouchet' in gold on the inside



2007
H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II & H.R.H THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH Diamond Wedding Anniversary
20-11-2007

Jersey tourist thimbles

most of these tourist thimbles were only available on Jersey. Some of the white unmarbled thimbles are made of bone china.



Elizabeth Castle – Jersey Zoo – Jersey cows



certificates showing the different colours issued for Jersey (map)



(coat-of-arms)
only thimble made in all three shapes



(dodo)
for Jersey Zoo
mark **4**



ELIZABETH CASTLE, JERSEY
mark **4**



GERMAN UNDERGROUND TUNNEL 1942-45 ST
LAWRENCE JERSEY
red and black
mark **3**



Island Jerseys
white and yellow cows
mark **4**



Jersey
(cow's head)
pale – dark
mark **1a**



Jersey
(map with tourist destinations)
pale – dark cows
mark **4**



JERSEY
(map)
some maps in gold colour
mark **5**



Jersey Lily – i
mark **3**



Jersey Lily – ii



Jersey Milk Jug – i
Yellow on yellow - yellow on white – blue
mark **5**



Jersey Milk Jug – ii
s on verso
TTG December 1986



JERSEY ZOO
(dodo)
mark **4**



LILY LANGTRY
Jersey Lily on verso
 TTG June 1988



MTN

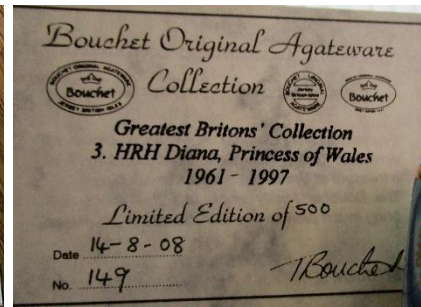
Mont Nicholle School

this is the school in St Brelade which the Bouchet children attended
 bird with one gold-painted wing
 this thimble would never have been sold thru thimble catalogues
 mark **6**

Other thimbles



Monarchs of Twentieth Century set, in shades of red, white and blue
set supplied with mahogany plinth
issued with commemorative silver-plated spoons
TTG February 1989



Greatest Britons' Collection 3. HRH Diana Princess of Wales 1962-1997
showing different dates of issue



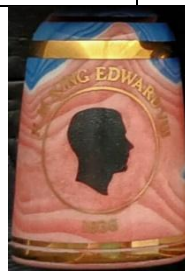
BOUCHET ORIGINAL AGATEWARE JERSEY CHANNEL
ISLANDS
TTG March 1987
mark 4



HRH DIANA PRINCESS OF WALES 1962-1997
3 of 3 in Greatest Britons' Collection



H.M. KING EDWARD VII 1901-1910



H.M. KING EDWARD VIII 1936



H.M. KING GEORGE V 1910-1936



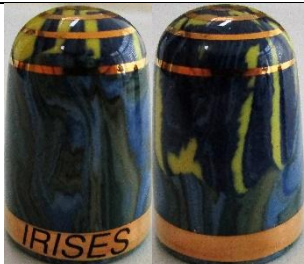
H.M. KING GEORGE VI 1936-1952



H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 1952-



H.M. QUEEN VICTORIA 1837-1901

 Harrods KNIGHTSBRIDGE	 IRISES inspired by Van Gogh TTG October 1992	 ISAMBARD KINGDOM BRUNEL 1806-1859 1 of 3 Greatest Britons' Collection
 SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL 1874-1965 2 of 3 Greatest Britons' Collection mark 5	 SUNFLOWER inspired by Van Gogh TTG October 1992	

Other Bouchet items

 commemorative bell TTG February 1992	 jewellery Channel Island Jewellery	 jewellery TTG June 1988
 pin dish	 rose bowl Josiah Bouchet	 vases – R: segmented
 commemorative spoon TTG July 1990		

References

Vilma Buck *My holiday with Sue Gowan*. Welsh Thimblers Oct 2007
Mary Craft *Bouchet's original agateware thimbles: Christmas thimble set of eleven agateware thimbles by Tony Bouchet 1985-1995*. 2016
Susan Jean Gowan *Thimbles of Australia*. 1988
Norma Shattock *Bouchet agateware*. TCI Bulletin spring 2002
Mave Wiskin *Agateware: Bouchet thimbles* (compiled off his website approx. 2000)

Contributors

Sally Bailey | Linda Bennett | Pawel Brzyski | Micky Garvey | Lin Heggs | Margaret Hickling | Jan Neville
Jean Rose-Miss Rose | Norma Shattock | Jean Taylor (without whose help this topic would have been a non-starter)
Krystyna Zagajewska

This listing of Agateware thimbles by Tony Bouchet Jersey 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

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