

Ray Nimmo's thimbles (RN) 2007-2020

My first email from Ray was in 2004 in which he signed off with "All the very best to you from upover" – which showed his wicked sense of humour – often portrayed in his thimbles. Examples of this is his use of rebus (where an image replaces a word) and playing with words (nobody's prefect)

"I've never copied an existing thimble though admittedly I've made thimbles "in the style of". You will recognise some of Horner's daisy, star, diamond, Louise, a la Nimmo style. He was fascinated by the tall Jacobean strapwork thimbles – you will find some of his examples here

Ray began creating his handmade thimbles in 2007 – working in his garage. He gradually added to the tools he used, experimenting with various patterns. Some of his thimbles became his stock thimbles, to which he could add embellishments - lettering or symbols to these plainer thimbles, and these are marked # below



Nimmo's stock thimbles awaiting lettering or attachments

Up until 2013 his thimbles are not assayed. He had his mark registered with the Birmingham Assay Office on 11 June 2013. The earlier thimbles were marked STERLING with his maker's mark. Some of Ray's early thimbles have a small mark. It is a griffin mark
Most of the attributed names or descriptions were used by RN which I have marked *. The other names are my best guess

If you are interested in knowing how Ray went about his creating his thimbles, please just ask for a copy of Ray's step-by-step instructions. He was self-taught and wasn't afraid to experiment

Note the many different thimble shapes and sizes used and the many types of rims
Nimmo used various body finishes: satin finish – frosted – textured



satin finish – frosted – textured

With his brass thimbles, Nimmo sometimes used an antiqued finish

Nimmo bought different punches as his expertise grew and used them in different combinations



22 punches

Nimmo's domed apexes are fairly standard



some of Nimmo's apexes



various marks on Nimmo's thimbles

griffin mark (may also look like lion passant mark) – assayed mark 2013- - Nimmo mark + STERLING – range of marks used on his sterling thimbles



brass – nickel silver – sterling

You may notice that a few of Ray's thimbles have a number (DORA, showing 8 and 9) – this is not a size mark as his thimbles were not sized. In this case it is the year that they were made



DORA, Daisy Pattern
Ray Nimmo
Birmingham 2014

RN's distinctive style of displaying his thimbles for sale 2014



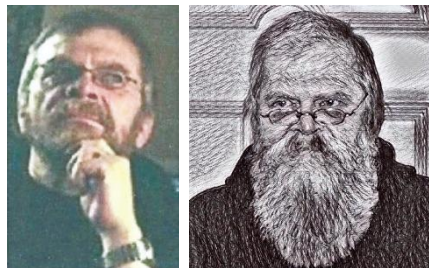
Birmingham Assay Office RN maker's mark stamp granted 11 June 2013



stamp mill used for making silver sheets thin enough for creating RN thimbles



range of Fish of the day designs – pincushion, thimble holder and various size or type of thimble



Ray Nimmo 2010 – sketch 2022

Thimbles are arranged with no regard for their date they were made. Most of Nimmo's thimbles have a distinctive front side – this is the only side I've shown - where the design wraps around, the full scene is shown

Nimmo uses Indian silver for a few of his thimbles. These reflect Raj designs. They are not marked in any way as he couldn't guarantee the silver as sterling



2007



example of Ray's certificate of authenticity 2013

Ray died 2026

Sterling silver thimbles – general



'2009'
snowflakes



'2012'



ai*

L: tapir – ai is the name for a sloth – neither seem to be an ai



(heart) ME

two L: post medieval style*



(bee) MINE (rebus)



alien road map*
2013



anchor



art nouveau fairy*



art nouveau flower* (2013)
different rims



art nouveau girl*
L: 2015



art nouveau moon girl*



atom flowers



atomic*
2013



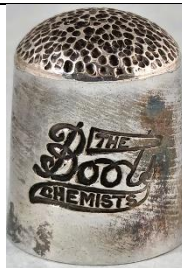
bark* #



beach*



beaten surface #

			
BEE MINE	blackberries 2013	Blackpool Tower	BOLLOCKS!
			
Boots THE CHEMISTS R: 2015		broken glass*	
			
bubbles* # R: post-medieval style			
			
BUGGER BOGNER		bullseye*	
			
butterfly C: 2015			
			
cabbage rose* R: 2015		cat/cats	



catch of the day* 2015

design copied from two brass bangles, flattened and then pressed onto a sterling sheet which had been pressed thru the rolling mill; giving a mirror image



2013 2020



ring



Celtic knot*



Charles loves Diana



cherub



Christmas holly*
2015



post medieval style*
close dimpling * #
C: cartouche
lower: post-medieval style*



cloth weave*



compass



crazy paving



cross
L: in a heart



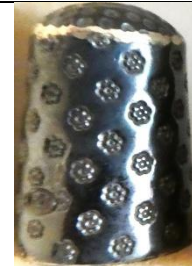
cross pattee*
2013



cupid



daffodils
bee on apex



daisies



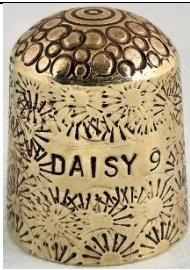
daisies all over*



daisies in rows



daisies in vertical rows



DAISY
nickel silver
2009



deco flower*



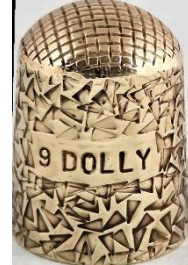
deco waves* #



deer
Indian silver



diagonals



DOLLY
nickel silver
2009



dolphin



donkey with saddle



DORA
R: nickel silver
2008 2009 2012



DORKUS
2009 2013



dormouse



dots with flower border



dove



DREENA
2013



Durer's Praying hands



DUROID



eagle
(USA)



elephant R: made from Indian silver
2nd R: with palms 2015



eyes*
2013



farthing



fingerguard
griffin mark



fleur de lis



flower border



flowers* (large)
2014



flowers (stylised)



flowers*
L: 2013



flowers and leaves



flowers and leaves

Indian silver – showing insides similar to Raj thimbles



forget-me-nots
L: 2013



four leaf clover*
2015



frog/frogs



FROGET-ME-NOT



FU EU



galerie



geometric #



geometric pattern*
L: 2013



girl
brass on silver



GOOD LUCK HORSESHOE
R: 2013



grid diamonds



GRIPPA



heart/hearts



hedgehog



Hermes*



HIC (drunk)



HOME SWEET HOME
2014



HOPE



horseshoe



I (heart) QUILTING



I (heart) TO QUILT



ICH DIEN
Prince of Wales feathers



ichtus*



Indian dieties
made from Indian silver



Irish claddagh ring
L: 2015



Jacobean style (strapwork)
top R: griffin mark



JOY



JUDY



kokopelli

 KURIT	 KWILTA	
 leaves* (2nd L 2013) R: 300 mark		
 lighthouse	 Lincoln imp* 2013	 lion
 LLAMEDOS (sod em all - backwards)	 LONDON 1960	 Louise (asterisks)
 LOVE		

				
Madonna* - Mary* L: 2013	Madonna and child 2015	mayfly* (dragonfly) L: 2015		
 MCMX (1910)				
				
medieval style* griffin mark (not L) 2013				
				
meese*	merde	MMX (2010)	MMXI (2011)	
				
MMXX (2020)	morning glory	MOTHER	mouse	
				
MYRA St Nicholas	Nepal (style)		NIPPA	



NOBODY'S PERFECT
two at R: kokopelli



open top*
L: Louise – R: daisy
2015



OUR FATHER ...
lettered on thread thru a needle



owl and moon



pansy



peace



phoenix



pigs might fly



PRINZ-OBERON
(ferry)



random close punched*



Raphaël's Angel*
L: 2013



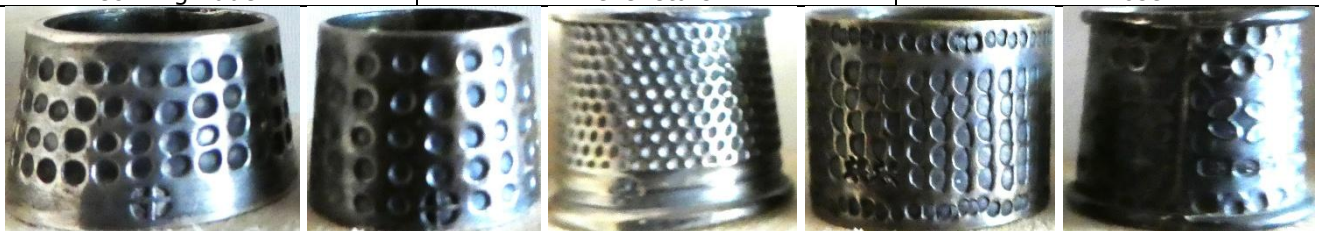
reclining nude*



relief stars*



rose



ring
two at L: additional cross mark



safari*
giraffe antelope buck elephant

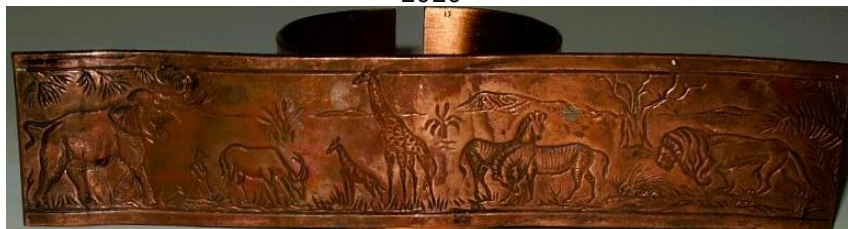


safari*
lion porcupine zebras baboon giraffe



safari*
porcupine zebras giraffe

design copied from napkin ring, flattened and then pressed onto a sterling sheet having been pressed thru the rolling mill. Gives a mirror image
2020



scottie



Scottish thistle*
L: 2015 – C: 2013



sea waves*



Shakespeare



shamrock*



sheep



shell* (fan)
2014



SILVA
nickel silver
L: 2016



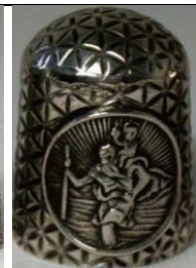
snake



snowflake



spread eagle*
2015



St Christopher



stars*
R: 2013



stercus accidit



studded cross*



sun



SWAN LAKE
with articulated swan opening to
reveal ballerina



swastika



symbols



symphon (unfinished symphony)*



teddy



THE THIMBLE INN



thread winder



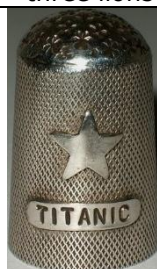
three lions*



tiny stars*



TITAN



TITANIC



tortoises with other animals



Trinity celtic knot*
2015



triskelion



TRY GOD



turtle/turtles



VICTORIA 1837-1901



Victorian design



VICTORY



waffle*
leaf border



waffle*
alternating diamond blocks



wanker
(play on words)



WAT



Westminster Abbey



WISH
(rebus) wish upon a star



yacht



Yorkshire rose*
(2nd R: 2015)



ZG HOLLAND
(beer)





abstract, stylised or geometric designs, many used as base thimbles #

In 2020 Nimmo commissioned engravings by Master Engraver Keith A Raes (KAR) on RH blank thimbles



'Hey Diddle Diddle'



'Humpty Dumpty sat on a Wall'



'Little Miss Muffet'



'Simple Simon met a pieman'



'Three Blind Mice'



'The Royal Coat of Arms' 'Dieu et Mon Droit'

Sterling silver thimble holders with matching thimbles



art nouveau flower



catch of the day
pin poppet – pincushion – thimble holder



cloth weave



DORA



forget-me-nots



Raphaël's Angel



safari



shamrock
pin poppet



Sterling silver thimbles – placenames

Using his variously patterned thimbles as the base, Nimmo engraved placenames or applied city coat-of-arms

Quoting from Ray: "Across the world there are scores of places with naughty or risqué sounding names.

Many are hilarious and worthy of a giggle; some are shockingly rude. Foreign place names are usually pretty innocuous in their native languages but can come as a surprise to English speakers. As place name thimbles are quite commonly collected here is my tribute to the more exotic places I've stumbled across. Made in sterling silver by **WTF** which stands for Willow Tree Forge...or maybe it's what you really think it is!"



						
AACHEN		ALBION		ALTENBURG		ANTWERPEN
						
ANUS (France) WTF mark		AUSTRALIA		AVIGNON		
						
B SCHANDAU		BAHAMAS 2013		BALLYMENA		BARMOUTH
						
BASTOGNE		BATH 2013 2014 2020				

			
BERLIN	BEVERLEY	BIGSWELL	BLACKPOOL
			
BOCHUM	BREMEN	BRUXELLES	BUCKINGHAM PALACE
			
BUDE 2020		BURY 2020	CAEN
			
CALAIS	CANADA 2013	CHARTES	CHESTER
			
CONDOM (UK) WTF mark		COVENTRY	DEAL 2020
			
DOM-KÖLN 2013	DONCASTER	DOVER CASTLE	DUNKERQUE brass applique



EIRE



ELY
2020



ENGLAND



ESSEN
L: 2013



FIRCOMBE HALL



Fucking o-Ö (Austria)
WTF mark



GELDERLAND



GERA



GREVENBROICH



GUERNSEY
R: 2104



HAHNENKLEE



HAMBURG



HANNOVER



HARZ-HEXE



HEIST



HESSE



HULL
2020



I.O.M



ISLE OF WIGHT
2015



JERSEY
R: 2013



KIEL
2014



KNARESBOROUGH



KÖLN



LLANFAIRPWLLGWYNT



LEIPZIG
2014



LIECHTENSTEIN



LINCOLN



LONDON



LOOE
L: 2020



LÜBECK



LUXEMBOURG



LYON
2013



MALTA
2013



MALTA
MOSTA DOME



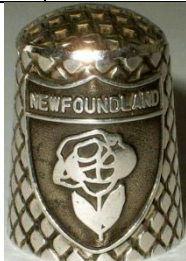
MANNHEIM



METZ



MIANUS CT (USA)
WTF mark

				
MONA triskelion		MUFF (Ireland) WTF mark		MÜNCHEN
				
MONTE-CARLO	NEWFOUNDLAND 2013		NEWQUAY rebus 2013	NORGE 2014
				
OBERAMMERGAU		ONTARIO 2013		OVERIJSEL
				
PARIS				
				
QUEBEC 2015	RHYL		ROUEN	SCHWEIZ
				
THE SHAMBLES YORK	SHEFFIELD 2013		SPA	ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL 2013



SUISSE



SUMENGEN



SVERIGE
L: 2014



TIROL



TOUR EIFFEL
2014



TOWER BRIDGE



TOWER OF LONDON



TWATT (Shetlands)
WTF mark



UTRECHT



VERDUN



WALHALLA REGENSBURG



WARWICK
2013



Wetwang (UK)
WTF mark



WHITBY



WIEN



WUPPERTAL



WÜRZBURG



YORK
C: 2020 – R: 2013



YORK MINSTER
R: 2013



YORKSHIRE



ZEELAND
2014

In 2020 and 2023 Nimmo commissioned engravings by Master Engraver Keith A Raes (KAR) on RH blank thimbles



DOVER CASTLE 2023



LINCOLN CATHEDRAL - IMP RED - ARROWS



MODERN LONDON SKYLINE



WINDSOR CASTLE

Sterling silver thimbles – slogans



AMORA



AMOU SANS FIN
(word play: Fou a coudre)



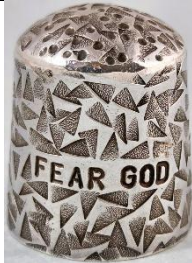
BE NOT IDELL



EVER TRUE



EVERE TRVE



FEAR GOD



FOREVER



GOD IS LOVE



GOTT MIT UNS



I LOVE YOU



MIZPAH



MY HARTE IS THINE



(STICK) TO ME
rebus



TE AMO
ring

Embellishing other maker's sterling silver thimbles

Using Simons of Philadelphia's thimbles, which were plain with a plain wide band, Nimmo added his own embellishments. Included here is a brass thimble

			
cherub	cupid	Federal Housing Administration	GOTTE ...
			
heart	home	imp	lion
			
Raphaël's Angel brass thimble			swastika

Cast thimbles



		
	Raj	

Brass thimbles

Ray began working in brass 2007

Quoting from emails from 2012, Ray wrote "Many of those abandoned in the garage are incomplete and will remain so because of the solder crisis! Not sure if I'll ever make a brass thimble again".



griffin mark (looks like lion passant)

The brass section includes placenames and slogans



acanthus*



amor omnia vinci

example shows the trouble Nimmo was experiencing with the solder joins



arabesque*



BOLLOCKS



Boots THE CHEMISTS
R: die



bubbles
griffin mark



bubbles*
central band of daisies
antiqued finish



bugger bogner



catch of the day*
brass with nickel silver



Chinese rings
L to R: plain – Boots THE CHEMISTS – DOWN LONDON – Feng Shui – stylised flower – flower
L: antiqued finish



cloth weave*



crown over dragon
griffin mark at centre



crown over horse



crown over griffin mark



deco flower*



diamond grid



DICKENS
It was the best of times, it was the worst of times



ever true



EVER TRVE
L: antiqued finish



ewig dein
L: griffin mark - R: ring
L: antiqued finish



FEAR GOD
2020



fingerguards
griffin mark



fleur de lis with blocks of diamonds
R: griffin mark



forget-me-nots



Fukitol™



geometric



GOTT MITTENS
(word play)



GOTT MITTENS
2016



hearts



HINTERTUPFINGEN



HOPE with an anchor



indentations
griffin mark



J. BURGESS PATENT
fingerguard



Louise



LOVE



medieval style*
griffin mark
two at L: antiqued finish
R: star border
Lower: flower border



paris



pebbles



pense moi
ring
antiqued finish



pog mo thoin



Raphaël's Angel*



POOLE



Regard



ring

L: Feng Shui – C: eagle on rim – R: medieval style with griffin mark
antiqued finish



safari*



SHIT HAPPENS



SO SURE
fingerguard



stars



turtles



V R
crown



waffle*
L: griffin mark

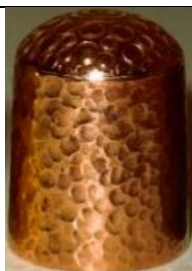




Brass thimble holders with matching thimbles



Copper thimbles



beaten #



Chinese ring



flowers*



Gemini
applied in silver



SODA FIDE (word play)
2020

References

Di Pelham Burn *Welcome to the newcomer* [At your fingertips](#) January 2009

Contributors

Wendi Aguiar | Joanna Blackie | Ray Nimmo | Wolf-Dieter Scholz | Jean Taylor

This listing of Ray Nimmo's thimbles does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects. Rather it invites comments and contributions to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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