

# Thimble Collectors Club Thimbles

Marlborough <--> Moschendorf Porzellan

## Thimble Collectors Club

### Bird Thimble



MARLBOROUGH  
Fine English Bone China

## MARLBOROUGH CHINA — ENGLAND

The house of Marlborough China was founded in 1876 when Alfred B. Jones started the Grafton China Works. From this early beginning developed not only the esteemed Marlborough chinaware, but also the prestigious title of Royal Grafton. Twenty four years after the founding of the factory, Marlborough China moved to the present site on Marlborough Road, Longton. From the street name a famous title in the world of fine English bone china was created.

Marlborough China has developed, over the years, an international reputation for finely-shaped high-quality tea services and distinctive hand-painted china pieces. Elegant designs and an excellent standard of craftsmanship have, over the decades, become recognizable features of the factory's ware.

This famous English bone china house chose to depict this lovely Bohemian Waxwing bird on their fine bone china thimble for Thimble Collectors Club.

## Thimble Collectors Club

### Penguins MARLBOROUGH, England

The pedigree of Marlborough China goes back over 100 years to when Alfred B. Jones — a famous name in the English potteries — started his china works in 1876. Over the following decades the company developed a high international reputation for finely-shaped high-quality tea services and distinctive hand-painted pieces. Elegant design and an excellent standard of craftsmanship have, over the decades, become recognisable features of the factory's ware.

The talented English artist Alan Baker created the original painting for this delightful thimble especially for the Thimble Collectors Club. What appears to be a rather unruly waiters' convention is, in fact, a group of penguins trying to come to terms with a sudden snowstorm. And what fun the artist must have had creating this all-action thimble. We believe that every time you take this thimble from your collection for closer examination you'll find it difficult to suppress a smile.

## Night Snow at Kambara MARUGO, Japan



THE subject of this beautiful Japanese midwinter snowscape is the little inn at the village of Kambara. The inn offered overnight facilities for travellers, and was known as the 'fifteenth stop' on the road from Edo to Tokyo. Our thimble artist has based his painting on a print by the Japanese landscape master Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858), who travelled this road in 1832 as part of a Tokugawa government delegation to Tokyo. In the following two years Hiroshige produced his remarkable series of colour prints, *Fifty-three Stations of the Tohaido*, which includes this view. After their publication, Hiroshige's work became very popular in Japan, and he is today considered one of the most outstanding exponents of Japanese landscape painting.

The Japanese ceramics house of Marugo came to prominence in the late nineteenth century, when Japan's trading links with the Western world were re-established after a long period of self-imposed isolation. Many wares were then produced for the Western market. Marugo mainly worked in the 'brocade' Satsuma style, making pieces decorated with highly detailed, multicoloured, rural scenes.

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### Panda Family MARUTOYO, Japan

The panda is surely one of the best-loved members of the animal kingdom. Its exotic beauty, coupled with its humorous, black-eyed face and its endearing habit of munching away at bamboo shoots, much like a child with a stick of seaside rock, has earned it a special place in our hearts. Sadly, there are not many pandas left, and their rarity has made them the symbol of conservationists dedicated to preserving all the wonderful species which share our planet.

Marutoyo, who produced this exclusive and charming thimble, is a young company which has swiftly established a formidable reputation. The name Marutoyo means 'harmony' and 'prosperity', qualities reflected in the company's performance and output. Based in Tajimi, Japan, the house specialises in extra pure white porcelain ware and the fine translucency of this thimble exemplifies the quality for which its products are famed. In this collaboration with Marutoyo, the Thimble Collectors Club has commissioned a captivating portrait of a panda family, and the result is a thimble which is truly exquisite.

## Thimble Collectors Club

### Panda Thimble



### MARUTOYO PORCELAIN - Japan

The giant panda, one of the most appealing and best-loved members of the animal kingdom, has been chosen as the decorative motif for this charming porcelain thimble from the Japanese house of Marutoyo. A native of the remote mountain regions of China, the giant panda subsists almost entirely on bamboo. It is currently an endangered species.

Founded in 1953 in the city of Tajimi, this porcelain house has a well-established reputation for the translucency and unusually pure whiteness of its porcelain wares. A small and highly skilled staff of sixteen artists and craftsmen endeavor to reflect the meaning of "Marutoyo" — "harmony, balance, prosperity" — in every aspect of the firm's products. While dedicated to these Japanese traditions of the past, Marutoyo's designers often find inspiration for their decorative motifs in the contemporary world.

The extraordinary quality, craftsmanship and artistry of Marutoyo porcelain wares are beautifully exemplified in the "Panda Thimble," available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Brocade Thimble



### MASON'S IRONSTONE - England

A profusion of delicately hued blossoms, arrayed in a black laquered basket, adorns this distinctive thimble from Mason's Ironstone — one of the most widely recognized names in the history of English pottery-making. Since Charles James Mason took out the now-famous patent for the original Ironstone in 1813 and began producing the hardy and handsome earthenware at Lane Delph, Staffordshire — the Mason name has been identified with the finest English Ironstone.

Manufactured exclusively by the family-owned firm from 1813 through 1827, the dense white Ironstone was not only beautiful enough to grace the tables of the "Nobility and Gentry," but was strong enough to be used for large, showpiece articles such as four-poster beds, five-foot-tall "vestibule vases" and fireplaces! Combining the artistic talents of George Miles Mason with the successful formula developed by his brother, Charles James Mason, Mason's Ironstone wares were noted for elaborate Oriental-style floral motifs in very rich color combinations.

The company's molds, patterns and patents, purchased by other firms over the years, have been carefully preserved. Today, many of the decorative designs from the family's original pattern books are still used on the Staffordshire-made wares which bear the renowned Mason's Ironstone hallmark.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## "Phoenix" Thimble



### MATSUMINE - Japan

One of the four mythical creatures sacred to the Japanese, a stylized phoenix graces this thimble of off-white porcelain from Matsumine. A legendary bird which resembles both the eagle and the pheasant — the phoenix is the "emperor of birds" and a symbol of the sun in both China and Japan.

Located in the world-famous Seto region, the heart of the Japanese ceramic-making industry for over five centuries, Matsumine has supplied porcelainware throughout Europe and Asia. Highly treasured and renowned for the innovative design and skillful craftsmanship of its work, Matsumine has received numerous awards within the Japanese ceramic industry.

The large flower of the peony highlights the unique design of the "Phoenix" thimble. Finished with a band of 22kt gold, Matsumine has crafted this thimble exclusively for the Thimble Collectors Club.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Bird and Flowers Thimble

梅县 广东

### MEIXIAN - China

This Bird and Flowers thimble, hand-painted exclusively for The Thimble Collectors Club by the Meixian Porcelain House of China, is a lovely combination of fine white porcelain, "Huaniao" art, and "Famille Rose."

"Huaniao" or "bird and flowers" has been a popular category of Chinese art. Historically, the fine porcelain used to make this thimble can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.). It was during this dynasty that the Tang Buddhists popularized the art of painting flowers. Later, Chinese painters added birds in an attempt to animate their floral designs.

"Famille Rose," the technique used to add perspective and soften the colors on the delicate motif portrayed on this thimble, can be traced back to the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong Dynasties (1662-1795). In order to enhance and preserve the beauty of the painting, the thimble was kiln-fired each time a new color was applied — resulting in a natural porosity in the colored areas.

With its history, design, and painting technique, the Bird and Flowers Thimble continues The Thimble Collectors Club tradition of providing its members with only the finest thimble art available in the world.

### Treasure Hunt MERCIA CROWN, England

**T**HIS intriguing thimble recalls the romantic but perilous seafaring days of the seventeenth century. From the south-east coast of the United States to the north-west tip of South America, the Caribbean islands lie like a handful of jewels scattered across the azure sea. Fine fortunes were made in these islands, and the great trading ships plied to and from Europe carrying rich pickings of spices, gold, jewellery and treasures of all kinds. The lawless pirates who roamed the waters attacked and plundered these ships with ferocity, and would often bury their treasures in a secret hiding-place, intending to return at a later day. Sometimes, the treasure was never found...

"Treasure Hunt" is a tribute to Mercia Crown Pottery. This small china company was founded by two prominent Worcestershire gentlemen with a particular interest in porcelain. In the early days of experimentation with this fashionable ceramic ware, it was quite common for small enterprises such as this to start up, funded by artistic and far-seeing patrons. Mercia Crown made charming, decorative pieces in fine bone china.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Osprey

### MEYCRAFT, Scotland

The white, slightly crested head, contrasting with the pronounced eye streak and dark upper plumage are the unmistakable features of the magnificent osprey. During the last century, the osprey was a common sight in Scotland, soaring high above the pine trees and fishing in the peaceful lochs. Almost none were seen during the first half of this century, but to everyone's great joy, in recent years it has returned to its former breeding grounds and has even begun once more to raise its young in the lofty Scottish pines.

The osprey puts on a spectacular display as it goes hunting. Hovering above a steely-grey loch, it suddenly plummets with half-closed wings and enters the water, feet first, in a magnificent plume of spray. Within seconds it emerges from the depths carrying a large fish, which it takes to the safety of its nest high in the stately conifers.

This mighty symbol of Scotland's resurgent wildlife has been produced on this enchanting thimble by Meycraft, a family company formed in 1989. Located near the historic Castle of Mey, between John O'Groats and Thurso in the county of Caithness, Meycraft takes pride in producing fine quality china giftware with enchanting decorations that reflect the local heritage and environment.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Oriental Splendour

### MINO, Japan

What striking images the Orient brings to mind! Lotus blossoms, waterlilies on an ornamental lake, cherry blossom in spring, Mount Fuji snowcapped against a clear blue sky, teahouses, and geisha girls in elaborately embroidered kimonos. The Japanese people have always been inspired by their beautiful landscape. It appears again and again in their art – an art which influenced the Impressionist painters in the nineteenth century and has thus made its way into Western consciousness too. Now, we recognise Japanese art and artefacts at a glance. The choice of colours, the turn of a petal, the style of brushstroke and embellishment – all instantly remind us of this most individual country and its romantic history and proud culture.

This exquisitely decorated thimble is from the house of Mino Setto, which was established in 1966 in Mizunami City in the southern part of Gifu-Prefecture. Ever since the fifteenth century this area has been called the 'country of Ming', which means 'beautiful field' or 'rich field'. Mino Setto is only a small porcelain house, but it has a wealth of talent which we know you will appreciate.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Crane MINORU, Japan

Japanese porcelain from Arita, on the island of Kyushu, has long been famed for its superior quality. The manufacture of chinaware was started there in 1616 by Korean craftsmen who produced goods which were known for their strength, pure white colour and vitreous glaze. Local artisans were first taught to decorate the porcelain by Chinese artists in 1644, so that it is the product of a fusion of Eastern artistic skills.

The introduction of modern kilns increased production in the area, and its wares were not only widely distributed in Japan but also exported to Europe. The goods are shipped from the port of Imari and have therefore also become known as Imari porcelain.

It is this long tradition which has resulted in the fine craftsmanship which manifests itself in the exquisite thimble offered to you by the Minoru company. It depicts the graceful crane, whose return each year to the same nest is interpreted as a sign of good fortune. The crane has always had a special symbolic significance in Japanese art and culture, and especially in the sophisticated art of paper folding known as "origami".

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Crane Thimble



MINORU PORCELAIN — JAPAN

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Spring Bouquet MINTON, England

The world-famous house of Minton was founded in 1796 by Thomas Minton, who had started his career in Stoke-on-Trent as an apprentice copperplate engraver. In partnership with Joseph Poulson and William Pownell he built up a pottery whose great reputation was founded on a policy of selling only perfect ware.

However, it was under the direction of Thomas's son, Herbert, that the Minton potters were to become some of the most innovative and influential of the Victorian era. By 1820 the company was producing high-quality bone china. Herbert Minton, impressed by the decorative style of the French porcelain houses, brought artists over from Sèvres and the firm became famous for its highly decorative ornamental pieces of *faïence d'orion*, *Palissy* ware, *majolica* and *pâte-sur-pâte*, amongst others. Between 1808 and 1858, when Herbert Minton died, the workforce had swelled from fifty to over fifteen hundred.

Despite the French influence, Minton continued to produce ware of a very English character as well, incorporating the technical mastery and artistic skills of its craftsmen. The fresh decoration of the Spring Bouquet thimble is a classic design which highlights the enduring creative tradition of Minton, and its pretty pink sprays of flowers capture all the charm of the English Garden.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Spring Bouquet Thimble



MINTON CHINA - England

The experienced collector will see the influence of early 18th-century Chinese porcelain in the softly colored flower which decorates this beautiful bone china thimble from Minton. To this day, many of Minton's most well-known patterns are based on exquisite floral motifs from porcelain wares of the Manchu dynasty.


Thomas Minton founded this celebrated English porcelain house in 1793, with the single-minded purpose of creating chinaware of superior quality. He soon achieved his goal by developing a fine bone china rivaling Josiah Spode's as the best of the period. Under the leadership of Herbert Minton, who succeeded his father in 1836, the firm went on to win acclaim for its decorative artistry as well. Figurines, vases and ornamental wares of remarkable beauty brought royal patronage and international recognition to the house of Minton.

The translucent white bone china and the exquisite artistry of the "Spring Bouquet" thimble reflect the quality which has kept Minton China among the best in the world for nearly 200 years.

# 83

## Thimble Collectors Club

### Flower Wreath Thimble



MONNO CERAMIC INDUSTRIES, LTD. - Bangladesh

A wreath of delicate flowers adorns this unique thimble from one of the leading porcelain houses in Bangladesh.

Monno Ceramics, manufacturer of Supreme Porcelain Houseware and Monnolite Hotelware, has a large modern factory situated in Dhaka, Bangladesh. A privately-owned company, Monno Ceramics employs over 1,000 people and produces over 10 million porcelain items each year. Taking advantage of the most advanced technology and superior raw materials, Monno Ceramics has established an international reputation as one of the leading manufacturers of top quality porcelain.

Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the "Flower Wreath" thimble with its quaint motif and flawless porcelain exemplifies Monno's dedication to quality and will be a delightful addition to any collection.



### Magic Carpet Ride MOOR & VELLUM, England

**S**TORIES of the Arabian Nights have enthralled countless children over many generations. All those little boys and girls, whether born in the days of pony power or accustomed to today's sophisticated high-speed travel, must surely have thrilled to the idea of a magic carpet. With the unfolding of each fantastic tale of sorcery and romance, our imaginations took hold, and – whoosh! We were swept off by a genie on that strangely patterned vehicle to an exotic, perfumed land full of jewels, swords, golden lamps and haunting music. In the world's earliest reference to a thimble, which occurs in an Arabic poem dating from the twelfth century, a thimble is likened to a Moorish soldier's helmet!

The porcelain company of Moors was founded in the early part of the twentieth century to manufacture such unromantic domestic items as washbasins! In the 1920s, however, it amalgamated with the firm of George Vellum in order to extend the range of products to finer pieces, which included full dinner services and a variety of small, decorative wares. Our thimble, which bears the company's attractive stamp, is a fitting memory of this small but respected company.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Chickens

MORGAN GRAHAM, England

His head held high, his handsome chest puffed out and his red cockscomb frilled and erect, the proud rooster struts solemnly around his patch, master of all he surveys. He crows importantly at his harem of hens with their downy broods, who in truth take little notice of his noisy posturing. The brown and speckled ladies are instead intent on pecking at the ground in an endless search for grains and seeds, tasty worms and insects. Every now and then they stop, mid-peck, to cluck anxiously in true mother-hen fashion at their tiny chicks – small dynamos of yellow fluffiness – lest they stray too far. By keeping close to their mothers and following their example, the youngsters soon learn how to flap their wings and revel in a dust bath, how to peck and strut and cluck and crow – all that is needed to survive in the big world.

This fine bone china thimble, with its charming depiction of rural life has been produced for the Thimble Collectors Club by Morgan Graham. A leading artist and designer of top quality fine bone china, his specially commissioned thimbles are highly prized among specialist collectors.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Damascene MORIKEN, Japan

Damascene is a style of decoration that evolved in Damascus hundreds of years ago in the form of fine gilt work applied to weapons and jewellery. Arab craftsmen brought the technique to Toledo in Spain, and it is believed that Spanish seafarers in turn took examples of the work to Japan in the 17th century.

Next year sees the fifty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Moriken in the Nagoya region of Japan. It is a highly specialist porcelain house which chiefly produces ornate, hard-decorated miniature pieces of porcelain.

Each thimble is individually hand-painted, so every thimble has slight variations. The gold work is exquisite, its delicacy ideally suited for this traditional Japanese scene, with the sacred Mt. Fuji brooding in the background.

# Thimble Collectors Club

## Damascene Thimble



## MORIKEN PORCELAIN - Japan

A traditional Japanese landscape, with sacred Mt. Fuji visible in the background, is the motif for this dramatic gold on black thimble from Moriken Porcelain. The style of decorating porcelain by applying intricate patterns in gold or silver on a solid color background was adapted by 17th-century Japanese ceramic artisans from an art which evolved in Damascus centuries ago. Called "Damascening," it was originally used in Arabic countries for ornamenting weapons and jewelry.

"Damascening" is one of the delicate and exacting types of decorating practiced by the skilled craftsmen of Moriken – a small and highly specialized Japanese porcelain house. Established in 1931 in the porcelain-exporting center of Nagoya, Moriken's exquisite porcelain miniatures, painstakingly decorated by hand, have earned admiration among collectors in every corner of the world.

The detailed artistry of "Damascening," with its delicate gilt brushwork, is particularly appropriate for this finely crafted porcelain thimble. Individually painted entirely by hand, this Moriken thimble is available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.



# Thimble Collectors Club

## Country Scene Thimble



MOSCHENDORF  
BAVARIA

MOSCHENDORF PORZELLAN - West Germany

Painted in warm shades of green and brown, a scene of the German countryside is charmingly displayed against the white porcelain background of this thimble from Moschendorf Porzellan.

Named for the little town in which it is located in the northernmost part of Bavaria, Moschendorf's name was well-known throughout Europe, before it became familiar to porcelain collectors on this side of the Atlantic. In the 1930's, the firm became instantly popular in the United States, when it introduced its novel "Schwanentasse," "Swan Cup." The cups were fashioned in the shape of a swan, with the bird's graceful neck and head forming its handle. Today, this family-owned porcelain house specializes in dinnerware and gift ware.

The "Country Scene Thimble" — available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club — exemplifies the high-quality Bavarian porcelain and the meticulous artisanship associated with this fine German porcelain house.

## Dutch Girl MOSCHENDORF PORCELAIN, Germany

A blue-on-white market scene, in which a pretty girl in national dress gaily offers armfuls of freshly cut tulips, can only be set in Holland! Perhaps the windmill in the background gives it away, but everyone knows the Dutch tulip growers to be masters of their craft ahead of all competition. Brought from Turkey in the sixteenth century, tulips became highly prized in the West, and in the following century 'tulipmania' swept northern Europe, with choice bulbs selling for hugely inflated prices. Today hundreds of varieties have been perfected, and a springtime trip to Amsterdam, with its floating flower markets, is an experience never to be forgotten. On the reverse of the thimble, two Dutch lads in traditional clogs and baggy trousers bring luscious fruit to market on a groaning tray.

The Moschendorf porcelain house was founded in 1902 in the little village of the same name near Hof, in Bavaria. The founding family still runs Moschendorf today, although it has been taken under the wing of the local ceramic painting firm of P. Parbus. It mainly produces porcelain for other companies under their own brand names, but delights in the occasional production of gift items under its own name, such as this charming example of its work.

## Thimble Collectors Club "Dutch Children" Thimble



MOSCHENDORF  
BAVARIA

MOSCHENDORF PORZELLAN - Germany

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